Colby Mitchell Chester Papers
A Finding Aid to the Papers in the Naval Historical Foundation Collection in the Library of Congress

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2010

Contact information: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact

Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm70078410

Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010004

Prepared by Ruth S. Nicholson
Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2010
Collection Summary
Title: Colby Mitchell Chester Papers
Span Dates: 1913-1928
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1913-1917)
ID No.: MSS78410
Creator: Chester, Colby Mitchell, 1844-1932
Extent: 300 items
Extent: 1 container
Extent: 0.4 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm70078410
Summary: Naval officer. Correspondence, research notes, and unpublished manuscripts relating to Chester's study of Commodore Dudley Saltonstall and the Penobscot Bay Expedition in 1779.

Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Chester, Colby Mitchell, 1844-1932.
Saltonstall, Dudley, 1738-1796.

Subjects
Penobscot Expedition, 1779.

Places
Maine--History--Revolution, 1775-1783.
Penobscot Bay (Me.)--History.
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Campaigns.

Occupations
Naval officers.

Provenance
The papers of Colby Mitchell Chester, naval officer, were deposited in the Library of Congress in 1964 by the Naval Historical Foundation and converted to a gift in 1998.

Processing History
The papers of Colby Chester Mitchell were arranged and described in 1973. The finding aid was revised in 2010.

Additional Guides
Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Colby Mitchell Chester is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Colby Mitchell Chester are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Colby Mitchell Chester Papers, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1844, Feb. 29</td>
<td>Born, New London, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Graduated, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Duty in <em>Richmond</em> (steam sloop of war), West Gulf Blockading Squadron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>Duty in <em>Kickapoo</em> (monitor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869-1873</td>
<td>Duty in <em>Alaska</em> (screw sloop of war), Pacific Squadron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Married Melancia Antoinette Tremaine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874-1877</td>
<td>Duty at United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885-1888</td>
<td>Commanded <em>Galena</em> (steamer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Served on Naval Board to select naval site on the Pacific coast, Puget Sound Navy Yard, Wash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-1894</td>
<td>Commandant of midshipmen at United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Commanded <em>Richmond</em> (steam sloop of war)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897-1898</td>
<td>Commander in chief, South Atlantic Squadron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Duty in Constantinople to support an American damage claim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1906</td>
<td>Superintendent, United States Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Promoted to rear admiral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Authorized by President Theodore Roosevelt and the State Department to aid in the establishment of American trade in western Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-1909</td>
<td>Delegate to the Ninth International Congress of Geography, Geneva, Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Commandant of the Naval Unit, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932, May 4</td>
<td>Died, Rye, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Colby Mitchell Chester (1844-1932) span the years 1913-1928, with the bulk of the material dating from 1913 to 1917. The papers are arranged in two series: Correspondence and Book File.

The collection is devoted primarily to research, correspondence, and unpublished manuscripts concerning Dudley Saltonstall (1738-1796) and the Penobscot Bay Expedition. Saltonstall was the American naval commodore who led an ill-fated attempt to recapture Bagaduce (now Castine) in Penobscot Bay from the British in 1779. Commanding nineteen vessels outfitted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Saltonstall failed to move against the three British sloops of war in the bay while he still outnumbered them, and, upon the arrival of the British fleet, fled the area. After two of his ships
were captured and the others were destroyed to prevent capture, Saltonstall was dismissed from the navy. In preparing the manuscripts, Chester was writing a critical analysis of the expedition and a defense of Saltonstall.

**Arrangement of the Papers**

This collection is arranged in two series:

- Correspondence, 1913-1928
- Book File, 1917
## Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td><strong>Correspondence, 1913-1928</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primarily incoming letters to Chester. Arranged chronologically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td><strong>Book File, 1917</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typescripts and notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged chronologically.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 1     | **Correspondence, 1913-1928**  
                      Primarily incoming letters to Chester.  
                      Arranged chronologically. |

| BOX 1     | 1913  
                      25 June, Gardner Weld Allen to Chester  
                      27 June, Richard M. Saltonstall to Chester  
                      24 Aug., Charles W. Noyes to Chester  
                      29 Aug., Charles W. Stewart to Chester  
                      12 Sept., Magnus S. Thompson to Chester |

| BOX 1     | 1914  
                      20 Nov., Otto H. Tittmann to Chester  
                      30 Nov., Otto H. Tittmann to Chester |

| BOX 1     | 1928  
                      8 May, Chester to Dudley W. Knox |

| BOX 1     | **Book File, 1917**  
                      Typescripts and notes.  
                      Arranged chronologically. |

| BOX 1     | “Commodore Dudley Saltonstall, the Continental Navy, and the Defeat of the Penobscot Bay Expedition in 1779”  
                      Unpublished typescript with a chart of Penobscot Bay, 1917  
                      Unpublished typescript with a chart of Penobscot Bay, undated  
                      Carbon copy of typescript with illustrations of Penobscot Bay, undated  
                      Notes relating to Saltonstall and the Penobscot Bay expedition, undated |