Collection Summary

Title: John Bigelow Papers
Inclusive Dates: 1492-1936
Bulk Dates: 1866-1936
ID No.: MSS12724
Creator: Bigelow, John, 1854-1936
Extent: 25,000 items
Extent: 76 containers plus 2 oversize
Extent: 30.4 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English with French, German, Italian, and Spanish
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78012724

Summary: Army officer, professor, and author. Correspondence, research notes, manuscripts of articles and books, photostatic copies of manuscripts in foreign archives, bibliographical material, photographs, drawings, maps, clippings, card files, and printed matter relating largely to canals especially, the Panama and Suez canals, along with the early history of Latin America, and also including material on the American Revolution, Civil War, Robert E. Lee, Monroe Doctrine, military education, and American foreign policy.

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
Bigelow, John, 1854-1936.

Organizations
Massachusetts. Militia.

Subjects
Canals--Rates and tolls.
Canals.
History, Ancient.
International law.
Military education.
Military history.
Military policy.
Monroe doctrine.
Saratoga Campaign, N.Y., 1777.
World War, 1914-1918.

Places
Eastern Hemisphere--Maps.
Egypt--History.
Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States.
Latin America--History.
New York (State)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783.
Nicaragua Canal (Nicaragua)
Panama Canal (Panama)
Panama--History--To 1903.
Acquisition Information

The papers of John Bigelow, army officer, professor, and author, were given to the Library of Congress by Mrs. John Bigelow in 1942 and by Mrs. Thomas H. Ellett from 1949 to 1951.

Processing History

The collection was processed by Manuscript Division staff circa 1951. The finding aid was revised by Melinda K. Friend in 2011.

Additional Guides


Transfers

Maps have been transferred to the Library's Geography and Map Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of John Bigelow is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of John Bigelow 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, John Bigelow Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1854, May 12</td>
<td>Born, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>Graduated United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877-circa 1891</td>
<td>Served with Ninth and Tenth Cavalry regiments in the American West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Married Mary Braxton Dallam (died circa 1941)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Published <em>Principles of Strategy: Illustrated Mainly from American Campaigns</em>. London: T. Fisher Unwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894-1898</td>
<td>Professor of military science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898-1903</td>
<td>Served in the Spanish-American War with Tenth Cavalry Regiment; wounded four times in attack on San Juan Hill and awarded Silver Star during Spanish-American War; later investigated Spanish war claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-1910</td>
<td>Retired from army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1909</td>
<td>Professor of French, Massachusetts Institute of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Published <em>The Campaign at Chancellorsville</em>. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Published <em>World Peace: How War Cannot Be Abolished; How It May Be Abolished</em>. New York: Mitchell Kennerley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Published <em>Breaches of Anglo-American Treaties</em>. New York: Sturgis &amp; Walton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-1918</td>
<td>Professor of military science, Rutgers College, New Brunswick, N.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1919</td>
<td>Recalled to active duty and assigned to history branch of general staff, War Department, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Retired from army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936, Feb. 29</td>
<td>Died, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scope and Content Note

The papers of John Bigelow (1854-1936) span the years 1492-1936, with the bulk of the collection dating from 1866 to 1936. The collection was organized as received and material relating to a single topic is dispersed throughout the papers. Many items in the collection, including notes taken by Bigelow, are in French, German, Italian, and Spanish as well as in English. The papers are organized into the following series: *Series I*, *Series II*, *Series III*, and *Oversize*.

*Series I* contains material on the Panama and Suez canals mostly under subheadings that Bigelow titled "Panama Canal file" and "Suez Canal file." Both files are organized into an alphabetical subject file filled with notes, books, pamphlets, photostatic copies of manuscripts in foreign archives, clippings, and maps, and a chronological correspondence file containing copies of historical letters as well as research letters sent and received. There is also a large number of maps of the Old and New Worlds. Other topics of interest include the choice of routes for the Panama Canal, tolls, the Nicaraguan Canal and Tehuantepec Canal, and the minutes of the Isthmian Canal Commission. Material relating to the early history of civilization, the Panama Canal, and other canals is supplemented by card files in *Series II*.

A manuscript copy of Bigelow's "Suez Canal-Panama Canal" appears in *Series I* with a second manuscript containing appendices appearing in *Series II*. Also relating to Panama is an abstract from the diary of Bigelow's father and diplomat, John Bigelow (1817-1911). Bigelow's article, "The So-called Bartholomew Columbus Map of 1506," is also split between *Series I* and *Series II*. Correspondence relating to his book *Principles of Strategy: Illustrated Mainly from American*...
Campaigns appears in both Series I and Series III, while correspondence relating to Breaches of Anglo-American Treaties is in Series I.

Series I also contains research material on American subjects such as the Saratoga Campaign in New York during the Revolutionary War, the Constitution, the Civil War, relations with Great Britain, the Monroe Doctrine, and westward expansion. Other topics include Egypt, the St. Lawrence Seaway, and international law. A card file related to the Saratoga Campaign is located in Series III.

Series II contains correspondence, manuscripts, and notes related to Bigelow's writings including The Campaign at Chancellorsville, "The Russo-German War: A Military Sketch," "How Theodore Roosevelt Took Panama," and "Alabama Claims." Included also are subject files on Central America, international law, origin of the name America, and World War I. Also of interest is the correspondence of the Nicaraguan Canal Commission.

Series III contains manuscripts, correspondence, and notes regarding Bigelow's work on Robert E. Lee, his book Mars-la-Tour and Gravelotte, and a proposed biography of St. Christopher. Also of interest are the bibliographies of Panama Canal records from 1857 to 1932, an index to the maps collected by Bigelow, bibliographies on other topics, and papers and correspondence relating to Bigelow's service in the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in four series:

• Series I, 1775-1934
• Series II, 1492-1914
• Series III, 1775-1933
• Oversize, 1823-1907
Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1-53</td>
<td><strong>Series I, 1775-1934</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence, research notes, photostatic copies of manuscripts from various archives throughout Europe, manuscripts of books and articles, maps, clippings, photographs, drawings, diary abstract, and printed matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged as received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 54-65</td>
<td><strong>Series II, 1492-1914</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence, research notes, photostatic copies of manuscripts from various archives throughout Europe, manuscripts of books and articles, card files, maps, clippings, and printed matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged as received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 66-76</td>
<td><strong>Series III, 1775-1936</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence, research notes, photostatic copies of manuscripts from various archives throughout Europe, manuscripts of books and articles, card file, maps, clippings, printed matter, and bibliographical material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged as received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 1-OV 2</td>
<td><strong>Oversize, 1823-1907</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 1-53  | **Series I, 1775-1934**  
Correspondence, research notes, photostatic copies of manuscripts from various archives throughout Europe, manuscripts of books and articles, maps, clippings, photographs, drawings, diary abstract, and printed matter.  
Arranged as received. |
| BOX 1     | "Suez Canal-Panama Canal," manuscript |
| BOX 2     | "The So-called Bartholomew Columbus Map of 1506"  
Background information, undated  
(6 folders)  
Manuscripts, 1935  
(2 folders)  
Maps, 1895-1907 *See also Oversize*  
Memoranda, 1931  
Saratoga Campaign, New York  
Notes |
| BOX 3     | Manuscript (Parts 1 and 2)  
Woodrow Wilson and canal tolls  
*Breaches of Anglo-American Treaties and Principles of Strategy*, correspondence |
| BOX 4     | Saratoga Campaign, New York, letters, 1775 |
| BOX 5     | Maps, photostatic copies and blueprints of maps, and notes  
Columbus, Christopher  
(8 folders)  
Photostatic copies  
Pleitos (lawsuit) corrections  
Old World  
(5 folders)  
(6 folders)  
Old and New World  
(3 folders)  
(7 folders)  
(8 folders)  
(5 folders) |
| BOX 6     | Panama Canal file  
Alexander VI-Cartography  
Central America  
Contracts for transportation |
| BOX 11    | Description-Diplomatic history |
| BOX 12    | Chagres River-Darien route |
| BOX 13    | Demarcation line-Honduras |
| BOX 14    | Humboldt, Alexander von-Martyr, Peter (1457-1526)  
Medina, Pedro de-New York  
Nicaragua |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 16</td>
<td>1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 17</td>
<td>Panama and Monroe Doctrine Panama Canal and international law Panama Canal, construction-views Panama Canal Bill-Panama Canal Zone Panama City, Panama Panama Commerce Correspondence 1841-1843 (2 folders) 1844-1884 (6 folders) 1885 Jan.-Feb. 1886-1889 (5 folders) 1900-1902 (3 folders) 1903 Jan.-Oct. (3 folders) 1904 Nov.-Dec. (5 folders) 1905-1931 (2 folders) Geography-Revolution Ríos, Pedro de los-Traffic Paterson, William-San Blas Coast Solís, Juan Díaz de-Yucatán (Mexico) Suez Canal (Egypt) file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container</td>
<td>Contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| BOX 26    | Abyssinia-Constantinople  
Degree-Europe |
| BOX 27    | Florence, Italy-Imperialism  
India |
| BOX 28    | India  
Indian Ocean-Mediterranean |
| BOX 29    | Mensuration-Neutralization  
Nile River |
| BOX 30    | Nile River  
Ophir-Silk |
| BOX 31    | Suez  
Correspondence, 1863-1931  
(6 folders)  
Cost-Utility  
Suez and Panama canals-Xerxes Canal |
| BOX 32    | Ancient religion  
Early history of civilization  
Ancient Egypt  
General  
Geography  
Egypt  
General, 1923  
Photographs of boats  
Egypt and France, 1882  
Evolution, collective  
Greeks, ancient Alexandrians, and early Egyptians  
The Negro  
North Africa  
Orientation of the mihrāb in mosques  
Population(human geography) |
| BOX 33    | Kharga Oasis, Egypt  
China-Tibet  
(2 vols.)  
China I & II  
(2 vols.)  
Navigazione nei Porti del Regno, 1877  
Tenativo dei Navigatori e Scopritori Genovesi per riuscire all' India lunghesso la Costa Occidentale dell' Africa . . ., 1881  
Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, Feb. 1880  
France  
British empire  
British constitution |
| BOX 34    | British policy  
Canada and U.S.  
Canadian government  
Disarmament on the Great Lakes  
French and others in Mexico |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 35    | Great Lakes to Atlantic Ocean passage  
St. Lawrence Seaway  
1932-1934  
1846-1898  
Mexico and U.S., 1849, 1890  
(2 folders)  
Church and state, Mexico  
Texas and U.S., 1899  
Italy |
| BOX 36    | Church and state  
Clippings, circa 1930-circa 1931  
Pamphlets, circa 1900-circa 1901  
International law, 1909-1910  
(2 folders)  
International right  
Neutrality  
Roman Catholic doctrines |
| BOX 37    | America before Columbus  
Bigelow, John (1817-1911), diary abstract regarding Panama, 1886-1911  
Exploration and discovery  
Greece, Italy, Spain, and Arabia  
Naval architecture  
Neutral rights at sea  
Ribero, Diego (died 1533)  
Spain, law and government  
Strategy.  
Tidal and upland waters  
Tides |
| BOX 38    | Anthropology  
European waterways  
Maritime history and insurance  
Suez Canal (Egypt), neutralization, 1854-1906  
United States inland waterways, 1807- |
| BOX 39    | Le Canal de Suez, bulletin, 1922  
Clédat, Jean, pamphlets on Suez Canal, 1909-1924  
Istroceanic Canal, 1892-1897  
Isthmian Canal Commission, 1906  
Suez Canal (Egypt), various notes and pamphlets |
| BOX 40    | Canals, navigation, and irrigation, 1886-1908  
Nicaraguan Canal, 1887-1889, 1902-1932  
Tehuantepec Canal, 1869-circa 1884 |
| BOX 41    | Caribbean Sea, 1875-circa 1934  
Hydrography  
Nicaragua, 1840-1859  
Nicaraguan Canal, 1929  
Turkey |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 42    | Colombia, reparation  
|           | I, circa 1903-1915  
|           | II, 1916-circa 1921  
|           | "Interoceanic Ship Canal Discussion," *American Geographic Society Bulletin*, 1879  
|           | Panama, 1903-1924  
|           | (2 folders)  
|           | Polar exploration  
|           | Proto-America  
|           | Travels and voyages  
| BOX 43    | Atlantic and Pacific Canal Co.  
|           | Choice of route, 1879-1893  
|           | Junction of Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, 1839-1843  
|           | Menocal route (prism)  
|           | Isthmian Canal Commission, minutes, 1905  
|           | Panama Canal, 1905-1909  
| BOX 44    | *Canal Inter-Océanique par le Nicaragua*, 1875, 1879  
|           | Clipping, 1885  
|           | *Les États-Unis et le Canal Interocéanique*, 1904-1905  
|           | Nicaragua, 1860-1886  
|           | Nicaraguan Canal, 1899-1901  
|           | (3 folders)  
|           | Senate hearings on S. 428, 1910  
|           | (2 folders)  
|           | Tehuantepec Canal, 1857, 1885-1913  
| BOX 45    | Nicaragua, 1892-1894  
|           | Nicaraguan Canal  
|           | Board of Engineers, 1895  
|           | Cost, 1898  
|           | General, 1888-1891  
|           | Hydrography, 1898  
|           | Report  
|           | Panama  
|           | General, 1879-1884  
|           | Pamphlets and clippings, 1915, 1926  
|           | San Blas Coast, 1857-1858  
| BOX 46    | *Annuaire des Valeurs Admises à la Cote Officielle*, 1926-1927  
|           | *Diplomatic History of the Panama Canal*, 1914  
|           | "Historical notes relative to the Universal Interoceanic Canal Company (1880-1894) until the organization of the new Company"  
|           | House of Representatives hearings, 1899  
|           | "Memorial of Wm. H. Aspinwall, John L. Stephens, and Henry Chauncey in Reference to the Construction of a Railroad Across the Isthmus of Panama," 1848  
|           | Panama, 1899  
|           | Panama Canal, 1878-1894  
|           | Choice of route, 1902  
|           | (2 folders)  
| BOX 47    | (1 folder)
"El Canal de Panama en 1886," *Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica de Madrid*, 1887
Colombia, separation, circa 1903-circa 1916
General Ulysses S. Grant and the Panama Canal, 1879
Miscellany
Panama, 1885-1886, 1904-1911
   (5 vols.)
**BOX 48**
Interoceanic Canal, Panama, 1885-1886
Johnson, Emory R., *Panama Traffic and Tolls*, statement, 1912
Panama, 1850-1880, 1898, 1906
   (3 vols.)
Panama Canal, 1912-1913
*The Panama Canal and Our Relations with Colombia*, 1914
Panama Canal tolls, 1931
*Political Relations of the United States of America and the Republic of Columbia [sic] to the Panama Canal, under the Treaty of 1846-8, and the Concessions to the New Panama Canal Company*, undated
*Special Message of the President of the United States concerning the Panama Canal*, 1906
Taylor, Hannis, *Why the Pending Treaty with Colombia Should Be Ratified*, 1914
**BOX 49**
Pan America, 1911-1916
United States history
   Colonial
      Miscellaneous, 1822-1934
      Monroe Doctrine
   United States revolution
      Vol. I
**BOX 50**
   Vol. II
Civil War
Expansion-U.S., Louisiana
Party doctrines, 1896-1920
United States and Great Britain
   1780-1855
   1856-1868
   1869
   1870
United States Constitution
   Article I
   Article II
   Clippings
   Pamphlets
**BOX 51**
Bryce, James, *The Predictions of Hamilton and De Tocqueville*, 1887
Expansion-U.S., Texas
Monroe Doctrine
Prohibition and the U.S. Constitution
   (2 vols.)
Smith-Marshall question (Roman Catholicism and politics)
United States foreign policy
   Vol. I
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 52 | Vol. II  
*Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field*, 1863, 1898, 1902  
Panama Canal, *Congressional Record*, 1913-1914, 1921  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 53 | Miscellaneous clippings, pamphlets, and printed matter |
| BOX 54-65 | **Series II, 1492-1914**  
Correspondence, research notes, photostatic copies of manuscripts from various archives throughout Europe, manuscripts of books and articles, card files, maps, clippings, and printed matter.  
Arranged as received |
| BOX 54 | *The Campaign at Chancellorsville*, correspondence and notes, circa 1906-circa 1912  
(4 folders)  
Franco-German War (1870-1871)  
Laws of war  
"The Russo-German War: A Military Sketch," 1914  
World peace |
| BOX 55 | World War I  
A-G  
(3 folders) |
| BOX 56 | I-R  
(5 folders) |
| BOX 57 | S-W  
(4 folders) |
| BOX 58 | "How Theodore Roosevelt Took Panama," manuscript and notes  
"The So-called Bartholomew Columbus Map of 1506," background information, circa 1492-circa 1538  
Central America  
1838-1841  
1842-1911 |
| BOX 59 | Name origin of America |
| BOX 60 | "Suez Canal-Panama Canal," manuscript and appendix  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 61 | Alphabetical file |
| BOX 62 | "Alabama Claims," manuscript and notes  
Correspondence, 1862-1865  
"Naval Scouting, 1903-1904," manuscript and notes  
Notebook of editorial corrections  
Tyler, Julia Gardiner, "Reply to the Duchess of Sutherland and the Ladies of England," 1853, Jan. 24 (handwritten copy) |
| BOX 63 | Alphabetical file, "General" (E-S)  
International law, alphabetical file  
Nicaraguan Canal Commission, correspondence, 1897 |
| BOX 64 | Card file  
Early history of civilization and Panama Canal |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BOX 65</strong></td>
<td>Canals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **BOX 66-76** | **Series III, 1775-1936**
Correspondence, research notes, photostatic copies of manuscripts from various archives throughout Europe, manuscripts of books and articles, card file, maps, clippings, printed matter, and bibliographical material.
Arranged as received. |
| **BOX 66** | Index of maps
Ptolemy, Claudius
- Article and book regarding
- Research notes and photostatic copies
  (8 folders) |
| **BOX 67** | *Mars-la-Tour and Gravelotte*
- Lecture notes
- Notes and correspondence
- Text
- St. Christopher, notes and photographs for a biography |
| **BOX 68** | Lee, Robert E.
- Manuscripts, circa 1936
  (3 folders)
- Research notes
  - Chronological, 1775-1935
    (6 folders) |
| **BOX 69** | Miscellaneous
- Army regulations |
| **BOX 70** | *Principles of Strategy*, correspondence, 1890-1892
(2 folders)
- Miscellaneous notes and correspondence
  - Civil War
  - El Alish and Convention of Cintra
  - Falkland Islands
  - Military education
  - Revolutionary War records
  - Western posts |
| **BOX 71** | *Di Alcuni Lavori Ed Acquisti Della Biblioteca Vaticana*, 1892
- Miscellaneous book lists and notes
- Notebook |
| **BOX 72** | Bibliographies of Panama Canal records, 1857-1932
(2 folders)
*Bulletin du Canal Interocéanique*, 1888
- Landings in Panama, 1848-1904
- Notes regarding books |
| **BOX 73** | Panama Canal
- Clippings and notes
- Printed matter |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 74    | Bigelow, Jane Poulney, correspondence, 1913  
|           | Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, correspondence and papers, 1906-1909  
|           | Miscellaneous material  
|           | Clippings, notes, and printed matter, circa 1896-circa 1935  
|           | Maps and notes  
|           | Notes on army regulations  
|           | Paper money from Italy  
|           | Photographs and postcards, circa 1913  
|           | Unpublished essays |
| BOX 75    | Card file, Saratoga Campaign catalogue |
| BOX 76    | Civil War, correspondence and papers, 1862-1863  
|           | Panama Canal, correspondence, 1931  
|           | World War I  
|           | Miscellaneous material  
|           | Map of New York state, 1823 See Oversize  
|           | Notes on books  
|           | Photostatic copies  
|           | Saratoga Campaign clippings |
| BOX OV 1-OV 2 | **Oversize, 1823-1907**  
|           | Maps.  
|           | Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed. |
| BOX OV 1  | Series I  
|           | *Mappamondo Catalano della Estense*, 1907 (Container 2) |
| BOX OV 2  | Series III  
|           | Map of New York state, 1823 (Container 76) |