Joseph Hodges Choate Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2011

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

Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78015768

Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms011034

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2011
Revised 2021 March
Collection Summary

Title: Joseph Hodges Choate Papers
Span Dates: 1745-1929
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1852-1917)
ID No.: MSS15768
Creator: Choate, Joseph Hodges, 1832-1917
Extent: 11,000 items
Extent: 40 containers plus 1 oversize
Extent: 16 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78015768

Summary: Lawyer, author, and diplomat. Correspondence, letterbooks, addresses, lectures, legal memoranda, memorabilia, scrapbooks, printed matter, and other papers relating primarily to Choate's student days at Harvard University, his law practice in New York, his charitable work, and his diplomatic career.

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
Adams, Charles Francis, 1835-1915--Correspondence.
Balfour, Arthur James, 1848-1930--Correspondence.
Balfour, Arthur James, 1848-1930.
Beck, James M. (James Montgomery), 1861-1936--Correspondence.
Bryce, James Bryce, Viscount, 1838-1922--Correspondence.
Carter, John R. (John Ridgely), 1862-1944--Correspondence.
Choate family.
Choate, Caroline Sterling--Correspondence.
Choate, Caroline, 1834-1889--Correspondence.
Choate, George F. (George Francis), 1822-1888--Correspondence.
Choate, Joseph Hodges, 1832-1917.
Choate, Mabel, 1870-1958--Correspondence.
Choate, Margaret Manning--Correspondence.
Choate, William Gardner, 1830-1920--Correspondence.
Cleveland, Grover, 1837-1908--Correspondence.
Curzon of Kedleston, George Nathaniel Curzon, Marquess, 1859-1925.
Eliot, Charles William, 1834-1926--Correspondence.
Evarts, William Maxwell, 1818-1901--Correspondence.
Foster, John Watson, 1836-1917--Correspondence.
Greene, F. V. (Francis Vinton), 1850-1921--Correspondence.
Hay, John, 1838-1905--Correspondence.
Hay, John, 1838-1905.
Joffre, Joseph Jacques Césaire, 1852-1931.
Lansdowne, Henry Charles Keith Petty-FitzMaurice, Marquess of, 1845-1927--Correspondence.
Morgan, Edwin T.--Correspondence.
Oliver, Henry K. (Henry Kemble), 1800-1885--Correspondence.
Paunceforte, Julian, 1828-1902.
Phillips, William, 1878-1968--Correspondence.
Rantoul, Robert S. (Robert Samuel), 1832-1922--Correspondence.
Reid, Whitelaw, 1837-1912--Correspondence.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919--Correspondence.
Root, Elihu, 1845-1937--Correspondence.
Rowe, William V.--Correspondence.
Sanderson, Thomas Henry Sanderson, Baron, 1841-1923--Correspondence.
Taft, William H. (William Howard), 1857-1930--Correspondence.
Trevelyan, George Otto, 1838-1928--Correspondence.
Viviani, René, 1863-1925.
White, Henry, 1850-1927--Correspondence.
Wilson, Woodrow, 1856-1924--Correspondence.
Withington, Lothrop, 1856-1915--Correspondence.

Organizations
Algeciras Conference (1906 : Algeciras, Spain)
American Bar Association.
American Museum of Natural History.
Great Britain. Treaties, etc. United States, 1900 February 5.
Harvard University--Students.
International Peace Conference.
Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.)
New York (State). Constitutional Convention (1894)
Union League of America.

Subjects
Canals, Interoceanic.
Canals--Central America.
Charities--New York (State)
Diplomatic and consular service, American--Great Britain.
Eastern question (Far East)
Practice of law--New York (State)--New York.
World War, 1914-1918.

Places
Alaska--Boundaries--Canada.
Canada--Boundaries--Alaska.
China--Foreign relations--United States.
China--History--Boxer Rebellion, 1899-1901.
France--Foreign relations--Morocco.
France--Foreign relations--United States.
Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States.
Morocco--Foreign relations--France.
Morocco--History--20th century.
New York (State)--Politics and government.
United States--Foreign relations--China.
United States--Foreign relations--France.
United States--Foreign relations--Great Britain.

Titles
Hay-Pauncefote Treaty (1901 November 18)

Occupations
Authors.
Diplomats.
Lawyers.
Provenance

The papers of Joseph Hodges Choate, lawyer, author, and diplomat, were deposited in the Library of Congress in 1930 and 1931 by his daughter, Mabel Choate. In 1946 the deposit was converted to a gift. An additional letter was purchased in 1981 to add to the collection.

Processing History

The papers of Joseph Hodges Choate were arranged and described in 1962. A letter was added to the collection in 1984, and the finding aid was revised in 2011.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Joseph Hodges Choate in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Joseph Hodges Choate 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, Joseph Hodges Choate Papers, 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>1832, Jan. 24</td>
<td>Born, Salem, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>A.B., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>LL.B., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855-1917</td>
<td>Practiced law with the firm of Butler, Evarts and Southmayd (later Evarts, Choate, Sherman and Leon), New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Married Caroline Dutcher Sterling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869-1917</td>
<td>Founder and trustee, American Museum of Natural History, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870-1917</td>
<td>Incorporator, trustee, and at times vice president, chairman of the law committee and member of the executive committee, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Member, commission to revise the judicial system of New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>President, New York Constitutional Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>Candidate for the United States Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1905</td>
<td>United States ambassador to Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>United States ambassador and first delegate, International Peace Conference at the Hague, Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917, May 14</td>
<td>Died, New York, N.Y.</td>
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Scope and Content Note

The papers of Joseph Hodges Choate (1832-1917) span the years 1745-1929, with the bulk of the material dating from 1852-1917. The papers are in English and are arranged into the following series: Family Correspondence, General Correspondence, Letterbooks, Subject File, Legal File, Addresses, Miscellany, Scrapbooks and Albums, and Oversize.

The papers relate primarily to Choate's family, 1745-1925; his attendance at Harvard University, 1848-1855; his law practice in New York, 1855-1917; his association with the American Museum of Natural History, 1869-1917, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1870-1917; his service as president of the New York Constitutional Convention, 1894; his work with New York charities, 1895-1917; his service as United States ambassador to Great Britain, 1899-1905; First Delegate to the International Peace Conference at the Hague, Netherlands, 1907; and his chairmanship of the New York committee for the 1917 reception of British and French commissions headed by Arthur James Balfour, Earl of Balfour, René Viviani, and Joseph Jacques Césaire Joffre.

In the Family Correspondence series, Choate's wife, Caroline Sterling Choate, received and sent correspondence under the name of "Carrie." Choate also had a sister who received and sent correspondence under the name of "Carrie." Letters sent and received by Mabel Choate, daughter of the Choates, are filed with Caroline Sterling Choate's correspondence. Other correspondents included in the Family Correspondence are Choate's parents, George F. Choate and Margaret Manning Choate, and his brother, William Gardner Choate.

The papers pertaining to Choate's service as ambassador to Great Britain, especially the correspondence between him and John Hay and with President Theodore Roosevelt, indicate the diplomatic inter workings connected with the two Hay-Pauncefoote treaties, the Open Door policy of the United States in the Far East, and the final settlement of the Alaskan boundary dispute. The papers include correspondence between Choate and President Roosevelt about the Algeciras Conference in Spain in 1906, concerning France's relationship to the government of Morocco. Other topics featured in the collection are the Union League of America, the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900, the American Bar Association, and Choate's work with Harvard University alumni.

Correspondents include Charles Francis Adams; Arthur James Balfour, earl of Balfour; James M. Beck; James Bryce, viscount Bryce; John R. Carter; Grover Cleveland; George Nathaniel Curzon, marquis of Curzon; Charles William Eliot; William Maxwell Evarts; John Watson Foster; F. V. Greene; John Hay; Henry Charles Keith Petty-FitzMaurice, marquess of Lansdowne; Edwin T. Morgan; Henry K. Oliver; William Phillips; Robert S. Rantoul; Whitelaw Reid; Theodore Roosevelt; Elihu Root; William V. Rowe; Thomas Henry Sanderson, baron Sanderson; William H. Taft; Sir George Otta Trevelyan; Henry White; Woodrow Wilson; and Lothrop Withington.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in nine series:

- Family Correspondence, 1745-1926
- General Correspondence, 1847-1919
- Letterbooks, 1899-1905
- Subject File, 1852-1918
- Legal File, 1853-1916
- Addresses, 1852-1917
- Miscellany, 1848-1917
- Scrapbooks and Albums, 1864-1929
- Oversize, 1848-1917
Description of Series

Container              Series
BOX 1-11               Family Correspondence, 1745-1926
                        Letters sent and received.
                        Arranged into two groups: Caroline Sterling Choate and Joseph Hodges Choate.
                        Correspondence to and from Caroline Choate is arranged chronologically. Correspondence
to and from Joseph Hodges Choate is arranged alphabetically.

BOX 11-16              General Correspondence, 1847-1919
                        Letters sent and received.
                        Arranged alphabetically.

BOX 17-19              Letterbooks, 1899-1905
                        Three volumes of letterpress and letter copy books of letters sent and received.
                        Arranged chronologically and indexed.

BOX 20-22              Subject File, 1852-1918
                        Correspondence, memoranda, reports and clippings.
                        Arranged alphabetically by topic and therein chronologically.

BOX 23-24              Legal File, 1853-1916
                        Correspondence, memoranda, and printed matter.
                        Arranged by type of material.

BOX 25-31              Addresses, 1852-1917
                        Manuscript, typescript, and printed copies of addresses delivered by Choate. There is
                        considerable correspondence filed with his more important speeches, particularly those
                        delivered in England while serving as ambassador to Great Britain.
                        Arranged alphabetically by title or subject.

BOX 32                 Miscellany, 1848-1917
                        Printed matter and memorials to Choate.
                        Arranged by type of material.

BOX 33-40              Scrapbooks and Albums, 1864-1929
                        Scrapbooks, containing newspaper clippings and printed matter, and albums, containing
                        autographs of friends in London, England, and memorial volumes of newspaper clippings
                        and citations.
                        Arranged by type of material and the scrapbooks are further arranged chronologically within
                        each volume.

BOX OV 1               Oversize, 1848-1917
                        Diplomas and citations.
                        Arranged chronologically.
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</table>
| BOX 1-11  | Family Correspondence, 1745-1926  
Letters sent and received.  
Arranged into two groups: Caroline Sterling Choate and Joseph Hodges Choate.  
Correspondence to and from Caroline Choate is arranged chronologically. Correspondence to and from Joseph Hodges Choate is arranged alphabetically. |
| BOX 1     | Choate, Caroline Sterling (wife) |
| BOX 1     | Letters received |
| BOX 1     | 1860-1876 |
| BOX 2     | 1877-1890 |
| BOX 3     | 1891-1900 |
| BOX 4     | 1900-1918 |
| BOX 5     | 1917-1919 |
| BOX 5     | Letters sent |
| BOX 5     | 1858-1861 |
| BOX 6     | 1861-1883 |
| BOX 7     | 1884-1921 |
| BOX 7     | Choate, Joseph Hodges, family and friends |
| BOX 7     | A-D, 1745-1917 |
| BOX 8     | E-J, 1822-1917 |
| BOX 9     | L-M, 1855-1919 |
| BOX 10    | M-P, 1848-1926 |
| BOX 11    | P-W, 1851-1919 |
| BOX 11-16 | General Correspondence, 1847-1919  
Letters sent and received.  
Arranged alphabetically. |
| BOX 11    | A-B, 1887-1919 |
| BOX 12    | C, 1850-1917 |
| BOX 13    | C-H, 1847-1917 |
| BOX 14    | Hay, John, 1899-1905 |
| BOX 15    | I-Q, 1875-1917 |
| BOX 16    | R-Y, 1879-1917 |
| BOX 17-19 | Letterbooks, 1899-1905  
Three volumes of letterpress and letter copy books of letters sent and received.  
Arranged chronologically and indexed. |
<p>| BOX 17    | 1899-1902 |
| BOX 18    | 1902-1904 |</p>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 19</td>
<td>1904-1905</td>
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</table>
| BOX 20-22 | **Subject File, 1852-1918**  
Correspondence, memoranda, reports and clippings.  
Arranged alphabetically by topic and therein chronologically. |
| BOX 20    | A-C, 1898-1918 |
| BOX 21    | C-H, 1852-1917 |
| BOX 22    | H-W, 1852-1917 |
| BOX 23-24 | **Legal File, 1853-1916**  
Correspondence, memoranda, and printed matter.  
Arranged by type of material. |
| BOX 23    | Cases, 1878-1916 |
| BOX 23    | Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., lectures, 1853 |
| BOX 24    | Cases, 1896 |
| BOX 24    | References on Petit Jury, undated |
| BOX 25-31 | **Addresses, 1852-1917**  
Manuscript, typescript, and printed copies of addresses delivered by Choate. There is considerable correspondence filed with his more important speeches, particularly those delivered in England while serving as ambassador to Great Britain.  
Arranged alphabetically by title or subject. |
| BOX 25    | A-C, 1869-1917 |
| BOX 26    | C-E, 1871-1916 |
| BOX 27    | E-F, 1878-1917 |
| BOX 28    | F-H, 1852-1916 |
| BOX 29    | H-N, 1864-1913 |
| BOX 30    | N-S, 1855-1917 |
| BOX 31    | S-W, 1874-1917 |
| BOX 32    | **Miscellany, 1848-1917**  
Printed matter and memorials to Choate.  
Arranged by type of material. |
| BOX 32    | Diplomas and certificates, 1848-1917 [See Oversize] |
| BOX 32    | Printed matter, 1833, 1897 |
| BOX 32    | Memorials, 1917 |
| BOX 33-40 | **Scrapbooks and Albums, 1864-1929**  
Scrapbooks, containing newspaper clippings and printed matter, and albums, containing autographs of friends in London, England, and memorial volumes of newspaper clippings and citations.  
Arranged by type of material and the scrapbooks are further arranged chronologically within each volume. |
| BOX 33    | 1864-1897 |
### Scrapbooks and Albums, 1864-1929

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<td>BOX 34</td>
<td>1896-1905</td>
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<td>BOX 35</td>
<td>1899-1929</td>
</tr>
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<td>BOX 36</td>
<td>1871-1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 37</td>
<td>1899-1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 38</td>
<td>Bench and Bar banquet, 1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 39-40</td>
<td>Memorials to Joseph Hodges Choate, 1917</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BOX OV 1**

**Oversize, 1848-1917**

- Diplomas and citations.
- Arranged chronologically.

**BOX OV 1**

- Miscellany

**BOX OV 1**

- Diplomas and certificates, 1848-1917 (Container 32)