

George P. Fisher Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2012

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm75020636>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms012072>

Prepared by Edward Bachman
Revised by Karen Linn Femia

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Collection Summary

Title: George P. Fisher Papers

Span Dates: 1772-1905

ID No.: MSS20636

Creator: Fisher, George P. (George Purnell), 1817-1899

Extent: 200 items

Extent: 2 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 1 linear foot

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm75020636>

Summary: Public official and judge of the supreme court of the District of Columbia. Correspondence, legal papers, commissions, biographical sketches, essays, speeches, and other material relating to Fisher's legal career and other topics.

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

Buchanan, James, 1791-1868--Correspondence.
Clay, Henry, 1777-1852--Correspondence.
Clayton, John M. (John Middleton), 1796-1856--Correspondence.
Clayton, John M. (John Middleton), 1796-1856.
Crittenden, John J. (John Jordan), 1787-1863--Correspondence.
Du Pont, Ann Ridgely, 1815-1898--Correspondence.
Fisher, George P. (George Purnell), 1817-1899.
Hamlin, Hannibal, 1809-1891--Correspondence.
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865--Assassination.
Morris, Edward Joy, 1815-1881--Correspondence.
Ridgely, Nicholas, 1762-1830.
Seward, Frederick William, 1830-1915--Correspondence.
Surratt, John H. (John Harrison), 1844-1916--Trials, litigation, etc.
Webster, Daniel, 1782-1852--Correspondence.
Weed, Thurlow, 1797-1882--Correspondence.

Organizations

District of Columbia. Supreme Court (1863-1936)

Subjects

Courts--Washington (D.C.)
Lincoln Assassination Conspiracy Trial, Washington, D.C., 1865.
Mexican War, 1846-1848.
Practice of law--Delaware.
Practice of law--Washington (D.C.)
Trials (Conspiracy)

Places

Delaware--Politics and government.
Oregon--Boundaries.

Titles

George Purnell Fisher papers

Occupations

Judges.
Public officials.

Provenance

The papers of George P. Fisher, public official and judge of the supreme court of the District of Columbia, were given to the Library of Congress by Ann Fisher Cahoon in 1907.

Processing History

The papers of George P. Fisher were arranged and described in 1974 and a finding aid created in 1979. The collection was revised in 2012.

Additional Guides

An index of the general correspondence and special correspondence of others is available as a [PDF](#) document.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of George P. Fisher 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, George P. Fisher Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

| Date | Event |
|---------------|---|
| 1817, Oct. 13 | Born, Milford, Del. |
| 1838 | Graduated, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa. |
| 1841 | Admitted to the bar and commenced legal practice, Dover, Del. |
| 1843-1844 | Member, Delaware house of representatives |
| 1846 | Secretary of state of Delaware |
| 1849 | Confidential clerk to Secretary John M. Clayton, State Department |
| 1850-1852 | Commissioner to adjudicate claims against Brazil |
| 1857-1860 | Attorney general of Delaware |
| 1861-1863 | Representative to U. S. Congress, Unionist Party |
| 1863-1870 | Judge, supreme court of the District of Columbia |
| 1870-1875 | District attorney for the District of Columbia |
| 1889-1893 | First auditor of the Treasury Department |
| 1899, Feb. 10 | Died, Washington, D. C. |

Scope and Content Note

The papers of George P. Fisher (1817-1899) span the years 1772-1905. The collection consists of correspondence, legal papers, commissions, biographical sketches, essays, speeches, and other material relating chiefly to Fisher's legal career. Letters to Fisher from John M. Clayton concern Delaware politics, the Oregon boundary question, Mexican War, and opposition to Clayton as secretary of state. Other letters include information on the legal practice of Nicholas Ridgely of Delaware. Included is an essay by Fisher on the trial of John H. Surratt for plotting to assassinate Abraham Lincoln. Correspondents include James Buchanan, Henry Clay, John J. Crittenden, Ann Ridgely Du Pont, Hannibal Hamlin, Edward Joy Morris, Frederick William Seward, Daniel Webster, and Thurlow Weed.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged into correspondence files, legal files, commissions, writings, and miscellany. Folders are arranged alphabetically therein.

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|-----------|--|
| BOX 1 | General correspondence, 1845-1896 <i>See Index</i> |
| BOX 1 | Special correspondence, not by or to Fisher, 1793-1897, undated |
| BOX 1 | Legal case file |
| BOX 1 | Ambler v. Whipple, circa 1885 |
| BOX 1 | Ambler v. Whipple and Dickerson, 1871 |
| BOX 1 | The "Brothers," 1871 |
| BOX 1 | Eckler v. Bentz, 1875 |
| BOX 1 | Fast v. Fast, 1866 |
| BOX 1 | Leefe v. Washington and Georgetown Railroad Co., circa 1865 |
| BOX 1 | United States v. Harpers Ferry Water Power and Manufacturing Co. of West Virginia, 1873 |
| BOX 1 | United States v. Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Co., undated |
| BOX 1 | United States ex rel. Spear and Hine v. Breck, undated |
| BOX 1 | Van Antwerp v. Hulburd and Spinner, 1870 |
| BOX 1 | Washington, Alexandria and Georgetown Railroad Co. v. Mayor . . . of Washington, 1863 |
| BOX 1 | Watertown Steam Engine Co. v. James B. Davis, 1875 |
| BOX 1 | Unknown case, opinion on question of recall by defense of witnesses for the prosecution, undated |
| BOX 1 | Commissions, 1841-1886 <i>See also Oversize</i> |
| BOX 2 | Legal papers of others |
| BOX 2 | Bonds, 1787-1798 |
| BOX 2 | Deeds, 1772, 1821 |
| BOX 2 | Indentures, 1819, 1823 |
| BOX 2 | Miscellaneous, 1792-1799, 1830, 1849, 1862 |
| BOX 2 | Writings |
| BOX 2 | Biographical, undated |
| BOX 2 | "John Middleton Clayton" |
| BOX 2 | "John Vining" |
| BOX 2 | Essays |
| BOX 2 | "The Monroe Doctrine and the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty," circa 1898 |
| BOX 2 | "The Moors of Delaware," circa 1895 |
| BOX 2 | "The Senatorial Imbroglio," 1897 |
| BOX 2 | "The Trial of John H. Surratt," undated |
| BOX 2 | Speeches |
| BOX 2 | "The Monroe Doctrine," 1898 |
| BOX 2 | Miscellaneous |
| BOX 2 | Reconstruction, 1866 |
| BOX 2 | Republican ticket in Delaware, 1896 |
| BOX 2 | Miscellany |
| BOX 2 | Comegys, Joseph P., "The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty," circa 1860 |
| BOX 2 | Facsimile of Delaware's ratification of the Constitution, undated |
| BOX 2 | "George P. Fisher of Delaware," by unknown author, circa 1894 |
| BOX 2 | Invitations, 1873-1905 |

Container List

| Container | Contents |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| BOX 2 | Newspaper clipping, 1844 |
| BOX 2 | Vining, John, "Eulogism," undated |
| BOX OV 1 | Oversize |
| BOX OV 1 | Commissions, 1841-1886 (Container 1) |