

Stephen Bleecker Luce Papers

A Finding Aid to His Papers in the Naval Historical Foundation Collection in the Library of Congress



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

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm70052787>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms012084>

Prepared by Ruth S. Nicholson

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012

Collection Summary

Title: Stephen Bleecker Luce Papers

Span Dates: 1799-1955

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1842-1912)

ID No.: MSS52787

Creator: Luce, Stephen Bleecker, 1827-1917

Extent: 8,000 items

Extent: 23 containers

Extent: 9 linear feet

Extent: 19 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm70052787>

Summary: Naval officer. Correspondence, journals, order books, subject files, scrapbooks, notebooks, newspaper clippings, and miscellany documenting Luce's naval career, including his work to establish the United States Naval War College and the Naval Historical Society, his service with the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, and his diplomatic role in the arbitration of the Canadian fisheries dispute (1887).

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

Aldrich, Nelson W. (Nelson Wilmarth), 1841-1915--Correspondence.
Alger, Philip R. (Philip Rounseville), 1859-1912--Correspondence.
Bainbridge-Hoff, William, -1903--Correspondence.
Belknap, George E. (George Eugene), 1832-1903--Correspondence.
Bonaparte, Charles J. (Charles Joseph), 1851-1921--Correspondence.
Boutelle, Charles A. (Charles Addison), 1839-1901--Correspondence.
Chandler, William E. (William Eaton), 1835-1917--Correspondence.
Dewey, George, 1837-1917--Correspondence.
English, Earl, 1824-1893--Correspondence.
Folger, William Mayhew, 1844-1928--Correspondence.
Gleaves, Albert, 1858-1937--Correspondence.
Goodrich, Caspar F. (Caspar Frederick), 1847-1925--Correspondence.
Hart, Albert Bushnell, 1854-1943--Correspondence.
Jones, Israel C.--Correspondence.
Lodge, Henry Cabot, 1850-1924--Correspondence.
Luce, Stephen Bleecker, 1827-1917.
Mahan, A. T. (Alfred Thayer), 1840-1914--Correspondence.
Moore, John Bassett, 1860-1947--Correspondence.
Peary, Robert E. (Robert Edwin), 1856-1920--Correspondence.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 1858-1919--Correspondence.
Sherman, John, 1823-1900--Correspondence.
Sims, William Sowden, 1858-1936--Correspondence.
Sophocles, E. A. (Evangelinus Apostolides), 1807-1883--Correspondence.
Stevens, John Austin, 1827-1910--Correspondence.
Watson, John Crittenden, 1842-1923--Correspondence.
Whitney, William C. (William Collins), 1841-1904--Correspondence.

Organizations

Columbus (Ship of the line)
Exposición Histórico-Americana (1892 : Madrid, Spain)

Haytien Republic (Steamer)
Monitor (Ironclad)
Naval Historical Society (U.S.)
Naval War College (U.S.)
United States. Navy.
United States. Navy. East India Squadron.
United States. Navy. South Atlantic Blockading Squadron (1861-1865)

Subjects

Dry docks.
Exhibitions--Spain--Madrid.
Fisheries--Canada.
Nautical training-schools.
Naval education.
Naval gunnery.
Naval strategy.
Naval tactics.
Navy-yards and naval stations.
Ordnance, Naval.
Sea poetry.
Sea songs.

Places

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Blockades.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Naval operations.

Occupations

Naval officers.

Provenance

The papers of Stephen Bleecker Luce, naval officer, were deposited in the Library of Congress by the Naval Historical Foundation in 1950 and converted to a gift in 1998.

Processing History

The papers of Stephen Bleecker Luce were processed in 1968. The finding aid was revised in 2011. In 1984, the Luce Papers were prepared for microfilming and the register was amended. This revised register is included on the first reel of a microfilm edition of the collection.

Additional Guides

In 1969, the Library published *David Foote Sellers and Stephen B. Luce, a Register of Their Papers in the Library of Congress*.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Stephen Bleecker Luce 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.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of these papers is available on nineteen reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Stephen Bleecker Luce Papers, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1827, Mar. 25	Born, Albany, N.Y.
1841	Appointed midshipman Duty in USS <i>North Carolina</i>
1842-1845	Duty in USF <i>Congress</i>
1845-1848	Duty in USS <i>Columbus</i> , East India Squadron
1849-1852	Duty in USS <i>Vandalia</i> , Pacific Squadron
1854	Married Eliza Henley
1860-1861	Assistant to the commandant, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1861	Duty in USS <i>Wabash</i> , which blockaded the South Carolina coast
1861-1863	Head, Department of Seamanship, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1863	Published <i>Seamanship</i> . Newport, R.I.: J. Akinson
1863-1865	Commanded USS <i>Nantucket</i> , USS <i>Sonoma</i> , and USS <i>Pontiac</i> Cooperated with William T. Sherman in the capture of Charleston
1865-1869	Commandant, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.
1869-1872	Commanded USS <i>Juniata</i> , European Squadron
1874-1875	Captain, Boston Navy Yard
1875	Published <i>The Young Seaman's Manual</i> . New York: D. Van Nostrand
1875-1878	Commanding officer, training ship USS <i>Minnesota</i>
1881-1884	Commanded United States Naval Training Squadron
1883	Published <i>Naval Songs</i> . New York: William A. Pond
1884	Appointed first president, United States Naval War College Commanded North Atlantic Squadron
1885	Promoted to rear admiral
1889	Retired
1892-1893	Commissioner general, Columbian Historical Exposition, Madrid, Spain
1901-1910	Special duty, United States Naval War College
1917, July 28	Died, Newport, R.I.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Stephen Bleecker Luce (1827-1917) span the period 1799-1955, with the bulk of the material dating from 1842 to 1912. The collection consists of journals, correspondence, memoranda, orders, reports, writings, photographs, printed matter, and other papers and is organized into five series: [Journals and Orders](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Letterbooks](#), [Subject File](#), and [Miscellany](#).

The Luce Papers document a naval career beginning with service as a midshipman at fourteen in 1841 and ending with special duty at the United States Naval War College as a retired rear admiral in 1910. There is material on naval tactics, strategy, and training, the establishment of the naval war college over professional and civilian opposition, the creation of a nautical school for boys, and the Naval Historical Society.

Also documented is Luce's Civil War service with the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron from 1863 to 1865. There is material concerning his service as commissioner general of the Exposición Histórico (Columbian Historical Exposition) in Madrid, 1892-1893; his role in the arbitration of the Canadian fisheries dispute, 1887; the seizure of the American steamer *Haytien Republic*; and his service aboard the USS *Columbus* of the East India Squadron, which made a visit to Japan in 1845. The [General Correspondence](#) and [Letterbooks](#) reveal his prolific activity as a writer. The [Subject File](#) contains material on naval bases, drydocks, legislation, naval songs and poetry, the USS *Monitor*, ordnance, and gunnery.

Among the correspondents in the collection are Nelson W. Aldrich, Philip R. Alger, William Bainbridge-Hoff, George E. Belknap, Charles J. Bonaparte, Charles A. Boutelle, William E. Chandler, George Dewey, Earl English, William Mayhew Folger, Albert Gleaves, Caspar F. Goodrich, Albert Bushnell Hart, Israel C. Jones, Henry Cabot Lodge, A. T. Mahan, John Bassett Moore, Robert E. Peary, Theodore Roosevelt, John Sherman, William Snowden Sims, E. A. Sophocles, John Austin Stevens (1827-1910), John Crittenden Watson, and William C. Whitney.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

- [Journals and Orders, 1842-1900](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1799-1955](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1862-1878](#)
- [Subject File, 1839-1917](#)
- [Miscellany, 1806-1917](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOXES 1-5 REELS 1-3	<u>Journals and Orders, 1842-1900</u> Manuscript volumes and loose leaves of mainly handwritten and printed copies of orders sent and received. Arranged by type of volume and therein chronologically.
BOXES 6-13 REELS 4-12	<u>General Correspondence, 1799-1955</u> Letters sent and received. Chronologically arranged.
BOXES 14-16 REELS 13-14	<u>Letterbooks, 1862-1878</u> Manuscript volumes and loose leaves of letters sent. Chronologically arranged.
BOXES 17-20 REELS 14-17	<u>Subject File, 1839-1917</u> Memoranda, reports, summaries, lectures, addresses, notes, drafts, articles, photographs, sketches, pamphlets, and clippings. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOXES 21-23 REELS 18-19	<u>Miscellany, 1806-1917</u> Scrapbooks and notebooks, newspaper clippings and pamphlets, and an incomplete card index to the collection. Organized by type of material.

Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 19,003

Container	Contents
BOXES 1-5 REELS 1-3	Journals and Orders, 1842-1900 Manuscript volumes and loose leaves of mainly handwritten and printed copies of orders sent and received. Arranged by type of volume and therein chronologically.
BOX 1 REEL 1	USF <i>Congress</i> , July 16, 1842-Mar. 8, 1845
BOX 1 REEL 1	USS <i>Vixen</i> , May 27-Oct. 29, 1863
BOX 1 REEL 1	USS <i>Columbus</i> , May 28, 1845-Mar. 13, 1848
BOX 1 REEL 1	USS <i>Vandalia</i> , Aug. 9, 1840-Oct. 4, 1852
BOX 1 REEL 1	USS <i>Macedonian</i> , May 15-Aug. 27, 1858; USF <i>Potomac</i> , Nov.-Dec. 1855 2 1-2
BOX 2 REEL 1-2	USS <i>Jamestown</i> , Dec. 1, 1857-Nov. 7, 1861
BOX 2 REEL 1-2	Private journal and log, June 1, 1863-Apr. 30, 1869
BOX 2 REEL 1-2	USS <i>Nantucket</i> , May 13, 1864
BOX 2 REEL 1-2	USS <i>Juniata</i> June 19, 1869-May 9, 1871 May 10, 1871-July 1, 1872
BOX 3 REEL 2	North Atlantic Fleet, Feb. 3-28, 1874 (naval tactics)
BOX 3 REEL 2	USS <i>Hartford</i> Nov. 1, 1875-Dec. 31, 1876 Jan. 1, 1877-Sept. 30, 1878
BOX 3 REEL 2	USS <i>Minnesota</i> Oct. 1, 1878-June 20, 1880 June 21, 1880-June 11, 1881
BOX 4 REEL 2-3	USS <i>Constitution</i> , June 12, 1881-July 13, 1882
BOX 4 REEL 2-3	USS <i>Portsmouth</i> , July 14-Oct. 7, 1882; USS <i>New Hampshire</i> , Nov. 19-Dec. 14, 1882
BOX 4 REEL 2-3	USS <i>Richmond</i> , May 14, 1887-Dec. 8, 1888; USS <i>Galena</i> , Dec. 9, 1888-Feb. 13, 1889
BOX 4 REEL 2-3	Orders and circular letters, 1862-1864
BOX 4 REEL 2-3	Orders, South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, 1863-1865
BOX 5 REEL 3	Orders, 1862-1900
BOX 5 REEL 3	Orders, USS <i>Pontiac</i> , 1864-1865
BOX 5 REEL 3	Orders, USS <i>Juniata</i> , 1869-1872
BOX 5 REEL 3	Circulars and squadron orders, 1870-1880
BOX 5 REEL 3	Orders, North Atlantic Squadron 1874-1876 1876-1877
BOXES 6-13 REELS 4-12	General Correspondence, 1799-1955 Letters sent and received. Chronologically arranged.

General Correspondence, 1799-1955

Container	Contents
BOX 6 REEL 4	1799-1866 (24 folders)
BOX 7 REEL 5	1867-1879 (13 folders)
BOX 8 REEL 6	1880-1887 (9 folders)
BOX 9 REEL 7-8	1888-1893 (8 folders)
BOX 10 REEL 9	1894-1899 (6 folders)
BOX 11 REEL 9-10	1900-1904 (6 folders)
BOX 12 REEL 11-12	1905-1908 (4 folders)
BOX 13 REEL 12	1909-1955, undated (8 folders)
BOXES 14-16 REELS 13-14	Letterbooks, 1862-1878 Manuscript volumes and loose leaves of letters sent. Chronologically arranged.
BOX 14 REEL 13	US Practice Ship <i>John Adams</i> , 1862
BOX 14 REEL 13	US Practice Ship <i>Marion</i> , 1863
BOX 14 REEL 13	USS <i>Macedonian</i> , 1863, 1866
BOX 14 REEL 13	USS <i>Nantucket</i> , 1863-1864
BOX 14 REEL 13	USS <i>Pontiac</i> , 1864-1865
BOX 14 REEL 13-14	USS <i>Juniata</i>
BOX 14 REEL 13-14	1869-1871
BOX 15 REEL 13-14	1871-1872
BOX 15 REEL 13-14	Boston Navy Yard, Boston, Mass, 1872-1878
BOX 15 REEL 13-14	USS <i>Hartford</i>
BOX 15 REEL 13-14	1875-1876 (2 vols.)
BOX 15 REEL 13-14	1876-1877
BOX 16 REEL 14	1876-1877
BOX 16 REEL 14	1877 (2 vols.)
BOXES 17-20 REELS 14-17	Subject File, 1839-1917 Memoranda, reports, summaries, lectures, addresses, notes, drafts, articles, photographs, sketches, pamphlets, and clippings. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Administration and policy, 1889-1908
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Bases, drydocks, and yards, 1863-1909
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Biographical material and personal miscellany, 1841-1917
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Court of inquiry, collision of the <i>Minnesota</i> and the <i>Abbie Pitman</i> , 1880
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Fisheries (North Atlantic), 1887-1888

Subject File, 1839-1917

Container	Contents
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	"The Fleet," 1907 (3 drafts, with emendations)
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Foreign naval and merchant data, 1839-1912
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Legal and financial papers, 1866-1902
BOX 17 REEL 14-15	Legislation concerning the U.S. Navy, 1868-1911
BOX 18 REEL 15-16	Maps and blueprints, undated
BOX 18 REEL 15-16	Miscellaneous notes and writings, 1892-1910, undated
BOX 18 REEL 15-16	Naval songs and poetry, 1849-1910 (3 folders)
BOX 19 REEL 16-17	Naval War College, 1891-1911
BOX 19 REEL 16-17	Organization and reorganization of the Navy Department, 1899-1911
BOX 19 REEL 16-17	Photographs
BOX 19 REEL 16-17	Statistical data regarding ships, ordnance and tonnage, 1865-1909
BOX 19 REEL 16-17	"The Story of the <i>Monitor</i> ," 1886-1887
BOX 20 REEL 17	Strategy, tactics, campaigns, and related matters, 1898-1912 (2 folders)
BOX 20 REEL 17	Training, 1875-1909, undated
BOXES 21-23 REELS 18-19	Miscellany, 1806-1917 Scrapbooks and notebooks, newspaper clippings and pamphlets, and an incomplete card index to the collection. Organized by type of material.
BOX 21 REEL 18	Scrapbook containing notes on seamanship and gunnery, includes cartoons and poetry, 1842-1843
BOX 21 REEL 18	Scrapbook of clippings, manuscript notes, cartoons, and poetry, 1871-1887
BOX 21 REEL 18	Fleet drill book, undated
BOX 21 REEL 18	Naval tactics, handwritten copy of a "Translation of a treatise by Rear Admiral Casey of the French Navy," undated
BOX 21 REEL 18	Notebook on naval tactics, seamanship, and related topics, undated
BOX 22 REEL 18-19	Printed matter
BOX 22 REEL 18-19	Newspaper clippings, 1880-1917 (3 folders)
BOX 22 REEL 18-19	Brownson/Rixey affair, 1907-1908
BOX 22 REEL 18-19	Naval training (<i>New York Herald</i> , Paris edition), 1893
BOX 22 REEL 18-19	Miscellany, 1806-1917
BOX 23 REEL 19	Card file: incomplete index of correspondence and subject material in the collection for the period 1841-1917
BOX 23 REEL 19	Notes on the collection