



Guide to the Franklin E. Smith papers, 1818-1890 and undated

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David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

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Summary

Collection Title:

Franklin E. Smith papers, 1818-1890 and undated

Creator:

Smith, Franklin E.

Abstract:

Sea captain and naval officer, of Linwood (Delaware Co.), Pennsylvania
Correspondence and other papers of Franklin E. Smith and his family, concerning Smith's various sea voyages from about 1818 to 1860, his marriage to Mary Carolina Trainer, his service in the Mexican War, his blockading activities aboard the U.S.S. Bienville during the Civil War, other events of the Civil War period, Smith's post-war life, and his conversion to Catholicism. Correspondents writing to the Smiths include Thomas F. Bayard, Henry R. Bringhurst, John M. Clayton, Charles I. Du Pont, George P. Fisher, Arthur H. Grimshaw, and Henry H. Lockwood.

Extent:

3 Linear Feet
Approx. 939 Items

Physical Location:

For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Language:

English

Language:

Material in English

Collection ID:

RL.01213

Permalink:

<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/smithfranklin/>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Franklin E. Smith Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

The collection is chiefly made up of correspondence, containing much information on Smith's family, his career and journeys as a sea captain, and the Civil War period. The earlier material in the collection consists of letters from Smith to his parents and to his first wife, Elizabeth, and concerns Smith's voyages on the trading vessel Eutaw, carrying coffee and cotton between Delaware and Calcutta, India; his transfer to the brig Mary in 1831, his connection with the shipping firm of Grinnell, Minturn and Company; and the wrecking of the ship Sampson in 1841.

For the period 1838 to 1846 the correspondence relates to Smith's second marriage, 1838, to Mary Caroline Trainer of Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, and his settling on a farm with his wife and daughters, Sarah and Hannah. For the period 1846-1852 the collection concerns Smith's return to the sea on the brig Osceola; his service in the Mexican War; the wrecking of his ship Vera Cruz, owned by the firm Burling and Dixon; a voyage around Cape Horn, 1851; a trip to San Francisco, 1851-1852; and his sailing the Messenger for the firm Ritchie, Osgood and Company, transporting goods of William Platt and Sons.

The pre-Civil War material concerns African American crews on sailing vessels, 1841, British negotiations for the purchase of Cuba, 1841; the Revolution of 1848 in France; U.S. food prices, 1849; a cholera epidemic, 1849; agricultural conditions in Pennsylvania, 1851; Shanghai, China, 1851; the Taiping rebellion in China, 1853; a description of Savannah, Georgia, 1855; education of young girls, 1856; James Buchanan's inauguration, 1857; Stephen A. Douglas's nomination, 1860; Republican Party election in Pennsylvania, 1860; and seizure of the English vessel Patras, bearing contraband.

The Civil War material deals chiefly with Smith's blockading activities aboard the U.S.S. Bienville under the command of Samuel Francis Du Pont. Among the other Civil War topics mentioned or discussed are arrival of U.S.S. Bienville at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, 1861; the battle and capture of Port Royal, South Carolina, 1861; Copperhead activities in Delaware, 1861; financing of the 1st Delaware Volunteer Regiment, 1861; a recommendation by Charles I. Du Pont to William Burton that Dr. Arthur H. Grimshaw be made colonel of the 4th Delaware Regiment, 1861; activities of Federal ships off South Carolina, 1861; "Yankee" depredations, 1862; the son of James Gordon Bennett, 1862; the Democratic party, 1862; capture of Fernandina, Florida, 1862; David L. Yulee, 1862; political corruption, particularly in the Republican Party, 1862; escape of African Americans from the Confederacy to the Federal forces, 1862; propaganda, 1862; second battle of Manassas, 1862 retreat to Washington, 1862; Confederate activities around Cincinnati, Ohio, 1862; removal of George

B. McClellan, 1862; attempt of ironclads to attack Charleston, South Carolina, 1863; attack on Vicksburg, Mississippi, 1863; conditions in New Orleans, 1863; Richmond campaign, 1863; arrest of C. L. Vollandigham, 1863; Confederate invasion of Pennsylvania, 1863; battle of Gettysburg, 1863; abolitionists, 1863; Lincoln-McClellan campaign, 1864; commodity prices, 1864; capture of blockade runner Annie, 1864; Sherman's activities of destruction, 1864; attack on Fort Fisher, North Carolina, 1864; and Franklin E. Smith's trial and acquittal for disobedience, 1864.

The postwar letters are chiefly concerned with family affairs and include references to life in a small Pennsylvania town; Franklin E. and Mary Caroline Smith's attitude toward Sarah's becoming a Catholic, and Sarah Smith's job as governess to Lily Apeley, daughter of a merchant in Boston, Massachusetts. Included also are anti-Republican speeches, and documents of the Southern Railroad Company. Among the correspondents writing to the Smiths are Thomas F. Bayard, Henry R. Bringham, John M. Clayton, Charles I. Du Pont, George P. Fisher, Arthur H. Grimshaw, and Henry H. Lockwood.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Acquisition Information

The Franklin E. Smith papers were acquired by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library in 1942.

Processing Information

Processed by Rubenstein Library staff, September 2011

Encoded by Paula Jeannet Mangiafico, Matthew Warren, April 2014

Accession(s) from 1942 are described in this finding aid

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Names and Subjects

- Seafaring life
- Mexican War, 1846-1848 -- Naval operations
- United States. Navy -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
- Catholic converts
- United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Naval operations
- Voyages and travels
- United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Blockades
- Bienville (Ship)
- Lockwood, Henry Hayes, 1814-1899
- Smith family
- Smith, Franklin E.
- Bayard, Thomas F. (Thomas Francis), 1828-1898
- Bringhurst, Henry R.
- Clayton, John M. (John Middleton), 1796-1856
- Du Pont, Charles I.
- Fisher, George Park, 1827-1909

- Grimshaw, Arthur H.

Collection Inventory

Franklin E. Smith papers, 1818-1890 and undated

Physical Description: 5 boxes

Papers, 1818-1853	Box 1
Papers, 1854-1863 May	Box 2
Papers, 1863 June-1886	Box 3
Papers, 1887-1890 and undated	Box 4
Papers, undated	Box 5

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