



The New York Public Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

William Ronckendorff letter book

1858-1861

MssCol 2594

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Summary

Cre: Ronckendorff, William, 1812-1891

Title: William Ronckendorff letter book

Date: 1858-1861

Size: .04 linear feet (1 volume)

Source: Purchase from an unidentified source made possible by the James Owen Proudfit Fund, 1915.

Abstract: William Ronckendorff (1812-1891) of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was an American naval officer. He joined the U.S. Navy as midshipman in 1832 (passed 1838), and was commissioned as Lieutenant in 1843, Commander in June 1861, and Captain in 1866, retiring as Commodore in 1874. The letter book of Lieutenant William Ronckendorff, 1858 October 18 to 1861 January 4 (1 volume) contains his official correspondence commanding the U.S. steamer M.W. Chapin on the Paraguay Expedition, from fitting out at Philadelphia to his return in May 1859, and his subsequent detachment to the United States Coast Survey, commanding the schooner Arago and steamer Bibb. Ronckendorff resumed command of the Arago at Charleston, South Carolina in May 1860, arriving on the Texas coast in June. Upon the ship's return to Philadelphia he requested detachment from the Survey due to illness, and reported himself ready for naval duty on January 4, 1861. Letters concern the fitting out and staffing of ships, and reports of arrival, departure, activities, and repairs. A letter to Alexander Dallas Bache dated May 2, 1860 reports on the Bibb's passage through a severe gale off North Carolina in late April, and damage to the ship. The letter book, written from both ends, also contains school exercises and drawings by his son Thomas P. Ronckendorff, as well as household and ship accounts.

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: William Ronckendorff letter book, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

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Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Letter books

Occupations

Naval officers.

Names

Bache, A. D. (Alexander Dallas), 1806-1867

Ronckendorff, William, 1812-1891 -- Correspondence

Ronckendorff, William, 1812-1891

Paraguay Expedition (1858-1859)

United States Coast Survey

United States. Navy -- Officers