



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Alexander Dallas Bache Papers, 1821-1869

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Alexander Dallas Bache Papers
Identifier:	Record Unit 7053
Date:	1821-1869
Extent:	3.47 cu. ft. (5 document boxes) (3 half document boxes) (2 microfilm reels) (6 oversize folders)
Creator::	Bache, A. D. (Alexander Dallas), 1806-1867
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7053, Alexander Dallas Bache Papers

Descriptive Entry

This record unit consists of the papers of Alexander Dallas Bache (1806-1867) relating to his study of European education, magnetic and meteorological observations at Girard College, his appointment as Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey, his professional discourse with other scientists on a broad range of topics, his own research, and his work on the Light House Board. Materials include diaries, 1836-1837, of his study of educational institutions in Britain; correspondence, 1821-1866, documenting his European trip; his work on education during the years 1839-1841; and his contact with the American scientific community. Materials also include small collections of papers concerning the Coast Survey, the Light House Board, and the Smithsonian Institution; letters to his wife, Nancy Clarke Fowler Bache; and a small collection of posthumous papers.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Meteorology

Types of Materials:

Diaries

Manuscripts

Names:

Bache, A. D. (Alexander Dallas), 1806-1867
Bache, Nancy Clarke Fowler
Girard College
Smithsonian Institution
United States Coast Survey
United States. Light-House Board

Container Listing

Series 1: DIARIES, 1836-1837.

This series includes diaries from Bache's 1836-1838 trip to Europe to study educational institutions in preparation for the establishment of Girard College. Both volumes record parts of his visitations in Britain. Materials include information used in his *Report on Education in Europe*, 1839; incidental details of his trip; and impressions of persons he met.

Box 1

Box 1 of 8

Folders 1-4 Diaries, 1836-1837 (2 volumes), and photocopies of each diary

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Series 2: OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE, 1836-1841.

This series includes outgoing correspondence, usually tissue copy but occasionally a draft copy, and a few other documents inserted. Materials include correspondence, 1836-1838, while Bache was in Europe conducting a study of education for Girard College; correspondence with scientific figures; and personal correspondence.

Box 2

- Box 2 of 8 Volume 1 October 1836-August 1838. Letters written during the period of Bache's visit to Europe, including England and the Continent; correspondence regarding details of his visitations to educational institutions and reports to Nicholas Biddle, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Girard College; and correspondence with scientific figures, including Michael Faraday and Joseph Henry.
- Box 2 of 8 Volume 2 November 1836-August 1838. Letters written during the same period as volume one, and many to the same persons regarding the visitations; correspondence not directly related to the survey of educational institutions; and family correspondence.
- Box 2 of 8 Volume 3 September 1838-February 1841. Letters written during the last few months in Europe and thereafter, mostly from Philadelphia where Bache published his report on education in Europe and reorganized the public schools of Philadelphia before his return to the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania in 1841; letters regarding the report and schools in Philadelphia; and a substantial amount of correspondence with scientific figures.

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Series 3: INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE, 1821-1866.

This series consists of incoming letters to Bache concerning a broad range of scientific topics and other business. The correspondence in box 4 is apparently part of a larger, very structured series of letters, and may well be Coast Survey correspondence.

Box 3

Box 3 of 8 Folders 1-38 Incoming Correspondence, 1821-1857

Box 4

Box 4 of 8 Folders 1-13 Incoming Correspondence, 1858-1866 and undated

Box 4 of 8 Folders 14-36 Private Incoming Correspondence, 1849 and undated

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Series 4: COAST SURVEY PAPERS, 1849, 1853-1854.

This series includes correspondence, 1849, 1853-1854, mostly from scientific institutions and important figures, endorsing Bache's administration of the Survey; two reports, one printed on the Survey, 1849, by a committee on the Franklin Institute and the American Philosophical Society; and related materials.

Box 5

Box 5 of 8	Folders 1-3 Coast Survey Correspondence, 1849
Box 5 of 8	Folder 4 Coast Survey Miscellany
Box 5 of 8	Folder 5 Coast Survey Reports
Box 5 of 8	Folder 6 Coast Survey Correspondence, 1853-1854

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Series 5: LIGHTHOUSE BOARD PAPERS, 1853-1864.

This series consists of correspondence, mostly incoming but including outgoing and copies of letters, resulting from Bache's work as a member of the Lighthouse Board; notices of Lighthouse Board meetings, 1854-1864; reports, 1857-1858; salaries, circa 1860; a list of committees, 1861-1862; papers relating to Congress, circa 1862; and papers organized by topics, as follows: Buoys, Cape Race Proposal, Fog Whistle at Gull Island, Lights in Delaware and Chesapeake Bays, Nantucket South Shoal, and miscellaneous Lighthouse Board Correspondence. Correspondents include: James Alden, H. Bache, H. W. Benham, William B. Franklin, Thorton A. Jenkins, William E. Morris, R. Semmas, W. B. Shubrick, and W. P. Trowbridge.

Box 5

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 7 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Alden, James, 1860 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 8 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Franklin, William B., 1854, 1858-1860 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 9 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Bache, H., 1855-1856 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 10 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Benham, H. W., 1855 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 11 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Jenkins, Thorton A., 1853-1855 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 12 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Morris, William E., 1855 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 13 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Semmas, R., 1859-1860 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 14 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Shubrick, W. B., 1860 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 15 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Trowbridge, W. P., 1855 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 16 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Notices of Meetings of Board Committees, 1854-1857 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folders 17-23 Lighthouse Board Correspondence: Notices of Meetings of the Board, 1858-1864 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 24 Lighthouse Board |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 25 Lighthouse Board Reports, circa 1857-1858 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 26 Lighthouse Board: "Lights in Delaware and Chesapeake Bays" |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 27 Lighthouse Board: "Nantucket South Shoal" |

Box 5 of 8	Folder 28 Lighthouse Board: "Salaries," circa 1860
Box 5 of 8	Folder 29 Lighthouse Board: "Committees, 1861-1862"
Box 5 of 8	Folder 30 Lighthouse Board: "Buoys"
Box 5 of 8	Folder 31 Lighthouse Board: "Cape Race" Proposal
Box 5 of 8	Folder 32 Lighthouse Board: "Fog Whistle at Gull Island"
Box 5 of 8	Folder 33 Lighthouse Board: Temporary and Permanent Members
Box 5 of 8	Folder 34 Lighthouse Board: Miscellany

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Series 6: LECTURES, REPORTS, AND PAPERS.

This series includes a Water Wheel Report and Water Wheel Experiment Book, circa 1830-1831; a lecture on the Social and Political Life of Vienna, circa 1839; "The Wants of Science in the United States," delivered at the April 1844 meeting of the National Institute; and an address at the Exhibition of American Manufactures, 1842 (see *Journal of the Franklin Institute*, 3rd series, 1842).

Box 5

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 35 Lecture on the Social and Political Life of Vienna, circa 1839 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 36 "The Wants of Science in the United States," delivered by Bache at the April 1844 meeting of the National Institute |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 37 Address delivered at the close of the Twelfth Exhibition of American Manufactures, October 1842 |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 38 Water Wheel Experiment Book |
| Box 5 of 8 | Folder 39 Water Wheel Report |

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Series 7: SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION NOTES, CIRCA 1847-1855.

Box 6

Box 6 of 8

Folder 1 Smithsonian Institution Notes, circa 1847-circa 1855. Papers pertain mostly to the Smithsonian Building construction and the library.

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Series 8: LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FOR BACHE AS SUPERINTENDENT OF THE COAST SURVEY, 1843.

Box 6

Box 6 of 8

Folders 2-8 Letters of Recommendation. Many letters are copies.

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Series 9: HONORS AND APPOINTMENTS, 1821-1869.

Box 6

Box 6 of 8

Folders 9-15 Honors and Appointments, 1821-1865 and miscellaneous

Oversize

Oversize

Honors and Appointments (6 oversize folders)

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Series 10: LETTERS TO MRS. BACHE, 1859-1869.

Box 6

Box 6 of 8

Folder 16 Letters to Mrs. Bache, 1859-1869

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Series 11: BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS.

Box 6

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Box 6 of 8 | Folder 17 Collected Material on the Death of Alexander Dallas Bache |
| Box 6 of 8 | Folder 18 Summary of Letters regarding Bache's Funeral, February 1867 |
| Box 6 of 8 | Folder 19 Miscellaneous |

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Series 12: MAGNETIC AND METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS AT GIRARD COLLEGE.

Boxes 7-8

Boxes 7-8 of 8

Magnetic and Meteorological Observations Taken at Girard College

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