

Inventory

Ship's Papers, Mostly relating to USS CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise, 1931-1934

Papers: 1925-1940; 1946; 1954; 1958 (1931-1934)

Size: 6 manuscript boxes

Processed By: Sarah Watkins
December 1996

Accession Number: None

Acquisition: The collection has been on permanent loan from the United States Navy since 1974.

Access: Unrestricted

Copyright: Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the Curatorial Department.

Preface

This collection of Ship's Papers has not yet been accessioned by the USS Constitution Museum. The delay in accessioning is, in part, due to the lack of paperwork available providing critical information about deposit, such as when, from whom and under what conditions the collection came to the Museum. The first time that the collection is mentioned in Museum records is in the inventory of the Museum's archives compiled in the early 1980s by then Associate Curator Gregor Trinkaus-Randall. Before processing the collection, I tried to find the missing provenance. I conducted a fruitless search of the Museum's Institutional Archives. Specifically, I looked at Curatorial files, minutes from early Board meetings, the Museum's first accession book, the Navy's relic books and the Director's files from the founding of the Museum in 1974. Half way through processing the collection, however, I discovered that the collection had been microfilmed by the Museum's first Curator and former CONSTITUTION crewmember (1971-1973), Robert Badmington, in 1974. I conclude from the 1974 date, which coincides with the closing of the Boston Navy Shipyard (now known as the Charlestown Navy Yard) and the founding of the USS Constitution Museum, that this collection of Ship's Papers, like artifacts that form the nucleus of the Museum's collections, were transferred to the Museum by the United States Navy at that time. The fact that the first Curator was former Navy previously assigned to USS CONSTITUTION may have facilitated the transfer of Ship's Papers. The lack of paperwork is probably due to the chaotic nature of the closing of the Navy Yard, the fact that the collection has no significant monetary value unlike the artifacts that were documented, and the lack of museum and archival training of the Museum's first Curator. It is presumed that because the records were generated by the United States Navy that the USN retains ownership. The USN's policy is to provide material to the Museum on a permanent loan basis. This collection therefore will be considered on permanent loan from the Navy and will be accessioned in the near future.

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 - C. Related National Cruise material in the Museum's Collections

Arrangement Note

Since this collection of Ship's Papers mostly relating to USS CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise was not processed archivally upon its arrival at the Museum, vital information concerning original order was lost. In consulting two of the three reels of microfilm of this collection which can be located, it is apparent that the collection's original order was disturbed before it was filmed in 1974. Since 1974, however, it is apparent that the original order has been further altered. In addition, documents that were microfilmed as part of the collection in 1794 have since been separated. The original file folders were discarded and most of the metal clamps, paper clips and staples gathering groups of pages together were removed thus destroying these relationships within the collection. The correspondence and associated material that is known to have been attached together have been kept together with plastic clips. These pages are arranged chronologically based on the letter on the top which is normally the last sent.

Series were formed based on labels found on the file folders that replaced the originals. The assumption here is that when the contents were transferred to the acid-free folders the identifying labels were copied. In most cases annotations found on the correspondence collaborate this operating principle.

Papers with a different provenance were also found as part of this collection of Ship's Papers. Files containing correspondence and work orders from the Maintenance and Repair Division relating to USS CONSTITUTION'S 1950s restoration were removed from this collection and will be processed separately. Correspondence in the Materials and Artifact series written by the Commanding Officer of CONSTITUTION immediately following the National Cruise were retained in this collection. This decision is based on the lack of any time gap, the fact that it was coming from the same office, and that the few years following the cruise which saw the further development of CONSTITUTION as a museum was in a way an extension of the cruise.

Historical Sketch

During USS CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise (1931-1934), CONSTITUTION visited 76 ports along the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific coasts of the United States. She was towed around the country by USS GREBE, a 950-ton mine-sweeper commissioned in 1919. Dubbed the "Thank You" cruise, CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise was made to thank the children and adults across the country who contributed to the National "Save 'Old Ironsides'" fundraising campaign (1925-1931) that, in a large part, financed USS CONSTITUTION'S four year, \$987,000 restoration from 1927-1931.

USS CONSTITUTION was recommissioned "in an inactive status for exhibition purposes only" on July 1, 1931. She embarked on her cruise the following day with 6 officers, 60 sailors and 15 marines. The Commanding Officer of USS CONSTITUTION for the duration of the cruise was Louis Joseph Gulliver (ca. 1883-17 April 1962). Gulliver, a native of Maine, graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1907. He was transferred to USS CONSTITUTION from USS ROCHESTER on 14 March 1931.

At each stop during her National Cruise, a committee was formed that pre-arranged the docking plans and official program for the entire stay. Upon arrival, the Ship, which contained artifacts relating to her history in cases below decks, was open to the public from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM every day. Boy Scouts were on hand to help visitors on and off the vessel and CONSTITUTION'S crew was available to questions. Sail handling demonstrations were also held in the morning before visitors came aboard.

During CONSTITUTION'S stay, the officers and crew of CONSTITUTION and GREBE were invited to a range of sporting events and special festivities held in their honor. The officers and crew of CONSTITUTION reciprocated by delivering talks on her history and staging radio dramatizations reenacting some of her most famous battles.

Inspired by CONSTITUTION'S visit, souvenir pins were manufactured, mementoes were given to the crew, artifacts with a CONSTITUTION association were donated to the collection aboard and commemorative plaques and silver marked the ship's stay.

After being gone for three years, traveling 22,000 miles and hosting 4,614,762 visitors, USS CONSTITUTION and GREBE returned to Boston on May 7, 1934. On June 8, 1934, CONSTITUTION was placed "out of commission" but "in service." Gulliver was reassigned to a recruiting station in San Diego and CONSTITUTION'S crew was reduced to 4 officers and 26 enlisted men. Lieutenant Butler was left in charge of CONSTITUTION, which remained opened to the public. In the years immediately following CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise, efforts were made to increase her value as a museum. Appropriate

artifacts were solicited and historical research was done to enhance her displays aboard. For more information, see *A Most Fortunate Ship* by Tyrone G. Martin.

Scope and Content Note

The collection of Ship's Papers, 1927-1937 mostly relates to USS CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise, 1931-1934. It is a rich collection which provides insight into CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise and her development as an historic exhibit and museum.

The collection includ3w incoming, outgoing and internal correspondence (memos, ship's orders, notices); addresses; articles; press releases; radio dramatizations; summaries of port visits; carbon copies of letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy; and inventories of artifacts.

As the Commanding Officer of USS CONSTITUTION, most of the incoming correspondence is addressed to Commander Gulliver, and the outgoing correspondence is signed by him. It was, however, the responsibility of the Executive Officer (second-in-command) to oversee the ship's papers and files. Gulliver received the incoming correspondence but the Executive Officers oversaw the reply based on the response indicated by the Captain. The Executive Officer in turn would usually have a Yeoman first class (YN1) or another sailor actually write the letter. The final reply was ten signed by Gulliver, initialed by the XO to indicate that he checked it, and typed on the top right corner the Yeoman's initials who wrote the letter appears as well as the XO's.

The outgoing correspondence was written in triplicate. Most of what's in this collection are press or carbon copies. I presume that the original was sent to the addressee, one was retained for the ship's files and the third was sent to the Navy Department. I presume that the later copy can be found in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

Official Navy correspondence such as communications between Naval Operations and the Ship have reference numbers. The reference number is a combination of a unit identification number which in USS CONSTITUTION'S case was her bow number "IX-21" and for Naval Operations it was "OPNAV" followed by a subject identification code such as "A9-4" and then a unique serial number. The ship would likely have had a log for all official Navy correspondence based on the subject identification code and classification scheme was based on the NAVAL FILING MANUAL adopted in 1925.

This collection of Ship's Papers provide a wonderful overview as well as great details of CONSTITUTION'S National Cruise from the pre-commissioning activities in 1931 to her decommissioning in 1934. One can learn about the organization aboard ship, the daily routine, her maintenance and repair needs, the preparations involved with each port visit, the ceremonies and events scheduled at each port, the social agenda for the officers and crew of CONSTITUTION and GREBE, the publicity, including radio dramatizations, promoting her visits, and her development as a museum.

It should be noted that some port files are missing and not every port is equally represented. Also absent is persona correspondence and classified material such as references to disciplinary action.

I would recommend that anyone researching any aspect of the National Cruise should set aside the time to go through the entire collection.

Series List

- I. "Save 'Old Ironsides'" Campaign, 1925-1931
- II. Ship's Data, 1931; n.d.
- III. Ship's Structure, 1932-1934; n.d.
- IV. Port Files, 1931-1934
- V. Postal Cachets, 1931; 1933-1934
- VI. Radio Dramatizations, 1932-1933; n.d.
- VII. Articles, n.d. [1931-1934]
- VIII. Artifacts, 1927-1940; 1954; 1958
- IX. Materials, 1933-1937; 1946
- X. USS GREBE, 1931-1934

Series Description

SERIES I

“Save ‘Old Ironsides’” Campaign, 1925-1931; n.d.

This series contains Navy Department Press Releases regarding the 1925-1930 fundraising campaign referred to as the Save ‘Old Ironsides’” Campaign; promotional material from the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks (a sponsor of the portion of the campaign known as the Pennies Campaign aimed at school children across the country); a copy of the winning essay from the essay contest promoting patriotism sponsored by the Elks; a list of individual contributions; and a semi-final report of the funds raised.

Because of the direct link between CONSTITUTION’S National “Thank You” Cruise and the Save ‘Old Ironsides’” Campaign, this file contained important background material for Gulliver and his crew.

SERIES II

A9-16 Ship’s Data, 1931; n.d.

Arranged chronologically

This series contains basic historical and statistical data regarding USS CONSTITUTION. This file retained its USN classification subject code “A9-16” which is assumed to represent Ship’s data. This file was likely used to respond to queries about CONSTITUTION.

SERIES III

Ship’s Structure, 1932-1934; n.d.

This series contains material relating to the over-arching internal structure of CONSTITUTION during her National Cruise: orders and procedures, daily routine, and the organization of ship’s company. Included is an index to Ship’s and Executive orders, which were added throughout the cruise. Many of the orders that follow the index are missing. Any researcher interested in the internal structure of the ship during the National Cruise should also look in the port files which includes memorandum to CONSTITUTION’S officers and crew at different points during the cruise.

SERIES IV

Port Files, 1931-1934

Arranged chronologically by port

This series which contains incoming and copies of outgoing correspondence, carbon copies of letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy responding to requests to have CONSTITUTION visit individual ports, telegrams, internal memos, press released, and final reports is arranged into subseries of each port. Correspondence in each port file mostly relates to CONSTITUTION'S visit to that port. However, in many instances correspondence was filed in the port files based on where CONSTITUTION was when the letter was sent or received. For this reason, researchers interested in CONSTITUTION'S visit to a particular port should look all around that port for information.

To give a sense of the range of dates in each port file, the date of CONSTITUTION'S visit to the port is listed on the container list in parenthesis and the beginning and end date including day and month of the material inside the folder follows. Please note that some port files are missing and not every port is represented equally.

Also note that some of the correspondence related to requests Gulliver made of different newspapers for clippings of articles and photographs from CONSTITUTION'S port visits for the Ship's National Cruise Scrapbook. Similarly some letters and addresses have been identified as destined for the scrapbook. The USS Constitution Museum has three National Cruise scrapbooks that contain the newspaper clippings, photographs, correspondence and addresses.

SERIES V

Postal Cachets, 1931; 1933-1934

Arranged chronologically

This series contains correspondence with philatelists requesting the cancellation of postal cachets commemorating CONSTITUTION'S visit to each port. This series begins with the bond papers for the Naval Postal Clerk, Harry Moore and ends with the disposal of the postal equipment upon CONSTITUTION'S return to Boston in 1934. It should be noted that the USS Constitution Museum has many of the postal cachets produced during the cruise.

SERIES VI

Radio Dramatizations, 1932-1933; n.d.

This series contains scripts and correspondence relating to the radio dramatizations performed by the officers and crew of USS CONSTITUTION during the National Cruise. The radio dramatizations cover three periods in CONSTITUTION'S history, her involvement in the Barbary War in 1804, her battle against HMS GUERRIERE in 1812 and her 1844-1846 Around the World Cruise.

SERIES VII

Articles, n.d. [1931-1934]

This series contains non-dated articles about USS CONSTITUTION written mostly by Commander Gulliver during her National Cruise. Dated articles and press releases are arranged by date in the port files.

SERIES VIII

Artifacts, 1927-1940; 1954; 1958

Arranged chronologically

This series contains lists of artifacts exhibited aboard USS CONSTITUTION during her National Cruise, noting where on the ship the artifacts were displayed and how the artifacts were procured. Correspondence following the National Cruise relates to CONSTITUTION'S development as a museum. It includes solicitations for historical research and War of 1812 artifacts.

SERIES IX

Material Papers, 1933-1937; 1946

Arranged chronologically

This series contains correspondence regarding maintenance and repair items requested and performed on USS CONSTITUTION during her National Cruise and the years immediately following the cruise.

SERIES X

USS GREBE, 1931-1934

This series contains correspondence with USS GREBE. The correspondence relates to the crew of GREBE, repairs, and requests for crew members from CONSTITUTION to sit on court-martial hearings held aboard GREBE.

Container List

BOX	Folder	
		SERIES I
		"Save 'Old Ironsides'" Campaign, 1925-1931; n.d.
1	1	Elk's Promotional Material, 1925-1928
1	2	Winning Essay, n.d.
1	3	USN Press Releases, 1925-1931
1	4	Semi-Final Report, 1930
1	5	Individual Contributions, n.d.
		SERIES II
		A9-16 Ship's Data, 1931; n.d.
1	6	A9-16 Ship's Data, 1931; n.d.
		SERIES III
		Ship's Structure, 1932-1934; n.d.
1	7	Ship's and Executive Orders, 1932-1934
1	8	Organization, n.d.
1	9	Ship Routine, n.d.
1	10	Lighting Circuits, n.d.
		SERIES IV
		Port Files, 1931-1934
1	11	Boston, MA (1-2 July 1931), March 20-July 16, 1931
1	12	Portsmouth, NH (3-12 July), March 20-Oct. 8, 1931
1	13	Bar Harbor, ME (13 July 1931), Mar. 23-Oct. 8, 1931;n.d.
1	14	Bath, ME (14-17 July 1931) Oct. 8 & Nov. 7, 1931
1	15	Gloucester, MA (23-29 July 1931) Jul 10-Oct. 8, 1931
1	16	Marblehead, MA (29-30 July 1931) June 26-Oct. 8, 1931
1	17	New Bedford, MA (31 July-6Aug. 1931) Aug 3 & Oct. 8, 1931
1	18	Providence, RI (6-10 August 1931) Oct. 8, 1931
1	19	Newport, RI (10-13 August 1931) Aug. 11 & Oct. 8, 1931
1	20	New London, CT (13-20 August 1931) Aug. 12-31, 1931

1	21	Montauk, NY (20-25 August 1931) Oct. 8, 1931
1	22	Oyster Bay, NY (25-28 August 1931) Oct. 8, 1931
1	23	Wilmington, DE (16-18 Sept. 1931) Nov 8, 1931
1	24	Philadelphia, PA (18 Sept.-1 Oct. 1931) Sept. 24, 1931
1	25	Norfolk, VA (9-16 Oct. 1931) Oct. 12-15, 1931; n.d.
1	26	Annapolis, MD (2-5 Nov. 1931) Nov. 5, 1931
1	27	Washington, DC (7-18 Nov. 1931) Nov. 16, 191
1	28	Pensacola, FL (6-11 Jan. 1932) n.d.
1	29	Mobile, AL (11-18 Jan. 1932) Jan. 4, 1932
1	30	Houston, TX (25 Feb.-1 Mar. 1932) Dec. 9, 1931-June 25, 1932; n.d.
1	31	Beaumont, TX (8-12 Mar. 1932) Mar 2, 1931-Apr. 27, 1932; n.d.
1	32	Port Arthur, TX (12-17 Mar. 1932) Aug. 6, 1932-Mar. 19, 1932; n.d.
1	33	Orange, TX (17-19 Mar. 1932) Dec. 30, 1931-Mar. 30, 1932; n.d.
1	34	Lake Charles, LA (19-22 Mar. 1932) Feb. 23-Apr. 3, 1932

BOX	FOLDER	
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2	1	Gulfport, MS (25-29 Mar. 1932) Oct. 21, 1931-Apr. 7, 1932
2	2	Port St. Joe, FL (30 Mar. -1 Ap. 1932) Jan 22-Apr. 3, 1932
2	3	Tampa, FL (3-7 Ap. 1932) Sept. 26, 1931-Apr. 26, 1932; n.d.
2	4	St. Petersburg, FL (7-9 Apr. 1932) Aug. 10-Nov. 5, 1932; n.d.
		Washington, DC (16 Ap. -8 Dec.1932)
2	5	Internal Correspondence, June 17-Nov. 1932
2	6	External Correspondence, Dec. 11, 1931-Oct. 14, 1932
2	7	External Correspondence Oct. 18, 1932-Mar. 9, 1933 Publicity
2	8	Press Releases, Ap. 25, 1932-Dec. 3, 1932; n.d.
2	9	Addresses, n.d.
2	10	Clippings, n.d.
2	11	Alexandria, VA (11-12 May 1932) Ap. 15-May 14, 1932
2	12	Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (14-19 Dec. 1932) Dec. 8-17, 1932
2	13	Balboa, Canal Zone (27 Dec. 1932-Jan. 7, 1933) Dec. 19, 1932-Jan. 2, 1933

BOX	FOLDER	
3	1	San Diego, CA (21 Jan.-16 Feb. 1933) Dec. 16, 1932-June 22, 1933; n.d.
3	2	San Pedro, CA (17 Feb.-10 Mar. 1933) Dec. 6, 1932-Mar. 16, 1933
3	3	Long Beach, CA (10-19 March 1933) July 24, 1931-April 18, 1933; n.d.
3	4	San Francisco, CA (24 March-12 April 1933) Dec. 29, 1932-June 14, 1933; n.d.
3	5	Oakland, CA (12-26 April 1933) Jan. 1-May 24, 1933
3	6	Vallejo, CA (26 April 1933-2 May 1933) Feb. 3-May 29, 1933; n.d.
3	7	Astoria, OR (6-15 May 1933) May 17-June 7, 1933
3	8	Port Angeles, WA (27-31 May 1933) Jan. 2-June 16, 1933; n.d. Seattle, WA (31 May-15 June 1933)
3	9	Correspondence Jan. 4, 1933 – June 19, 1933; n.d.
3	10	Handbook
3	11	Publicity, May 2, 1933; n.d.
3	12	Clippings, March 10, 1933
4	1	Tacoma, WA (15-22 June 1933) Sept. 12, 1932-June 26, 1933
4	2	Olympia, WA (22 June-1 July 1933) Jan. 26-July 6, 1933
4	3	Bremerton, WA (1-7 July 1933) Jan. 3-July 15, 1933
4	4	Everett, WA (7-14 July 1933) Jan. 6-Sept. 10, 1933
4	5	Bellingham, WA (14-20 July 1933) Jan. 6-August 12, 1933
4	6	Anacortes, WA (20-26 July 1933) Jan. 19 – July 30, 1933
4	7	Port Townsend, WA (26-30 July 1933) Feb. 1-August 10, 1933 Portland, OR (2-22 August 1933)
4	8	Correspondence, Jan. 1-Nov. 10, 1933
4	9	Publicity, August 18-22, 1933; n.d.
4	10	Kalama, WA (22-24 August 1933) Feb. 8-Sept. 16, 1933; n.d.
4	11	Longview, WA (24-28 August 1933) Feb. 10-Sept. 26, 1933
4	12	San Francisco, CA (31 August-15 Sept. 1933) July 21, 1933-April 4, 1934

BOX	FOLDER	
		Oakland, CA (15-29 Sept. 1933)
4	13	Correspondence, Sept. 6-Oct. 17, 1933
4	14	Press Items, Sept. & Oct. 21, 1933
4	15	Progress Report, March 17, 1933
5	1	Santa Monica, CA (5 Oct. 1933) Feb 2-Oct. 10, 1933
5	2	Long Beach, CA (6-19 Oct. 1933) Sept. 25-Nov. 18, 1933
5	3	San Pedro, CA (19 Oct. –2 Nov. 1933) Jan. 20-Nov. 30, 1933 San Diego, CA (3 Nov 1933-20 March 1934)
5	4	Correspondence, Oct. 15-Nov. 30, 1933
5	5	Correspondence, Dec. 1, 1933-Jan. 31, 1934
5	6	Correspondence, Feb. 1-April 24, 1934; n.d.
5	7	Grace's Wedding, Feb. 24-Mar. 17, 1934; n.d.
5	8	Press Items, Nov. 14, 1933-Mar. 19, 1934; n.d.
5	9	Directory, Oct. 2, 1933 & Jan. 1, 1934; n.d.
5	10	Canal Zone (2-8 April 1934) March 21-April 12, 1934 St. Petersburg, FL (14-23 April 1934)
5	11	Correspondence, March 31-April 29, 1934
5	12	Handbook, n.d.
5	13	Charleston, SC (27 April – 3 May 1934) April 17-May 11, 1934; n.d.
5	14	Boston, MA (7 May 1934), March 9-June 8, 1934; n.d.
		SERIES V
		Postal Cachets, 1931; 1933-1934
6	1	Postal Cachets, 1931; 1933-1934
		SERIES VI
		Radio Dramatizations
		"Constitution at Tripoli"
6	2	Correspondence, 1932
6	3	Script, n.d.
6	4	"Constitution vs Guerriere," March 10, 1933
6	5	"Cruise Around the World," August 27, 1932
		SERIES VII
6	6	Articles n.d.
		SERIES VIII
6	7	Artifacts, 1927-1928
6	8	Artifacts, 1930-1931
6	9	Artifacts, 1934
6	10	Artifacts, 1935

BOX	Folder	
6	11	Artifacts, 1936
6	12	Artifacts, 1937
6	13	Artifacts, 1938-1939
6	14	Artifacts, 1940; 1954; 1958
		 SERIES IX
6	15	Materials, 1933-1934
6	16	Materials, 1935
6	17	Materials, 1936-1937
6	18	Materials, 1946
		 SERIES X
		USS GREBE
		Correspondence
6	19	Ship's Company, 1931-1934
6	20	Repairs, 1933-1934
6	21	Court Martial, 1931-1934
6	22	Misc., 1933; 1934