

William Pitt Fessenden

A Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress

Prepared by Frank Bourdon

Revised by Michael Spangler



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2005

Contact information: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mss/address.html>

**Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress
Manuscript Division, 2007**

Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms007018>

Collection Summary

Title: Papers of William Pitt Fessenden

Span Dates: 1832-1878

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1861-1867)

ID No.: MSS20446

Creator: Fessenden, William Pitt, 1806-1869

Extent: 1,000 items; 8 containers; 1.5 linear feet; 5 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

Abstract: U.S. secretary of the treasury, U.S. representative and senator from Maine, and lawyer. Correspondence pertaining chiefly to Fessenden's service on the Senate Finance Committee and as secretary of the treasury under Abraham Lincoln.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Names:

Fessenden, William Pitt, 1806-1869
Allen, Elisha Hunt, 1804-1883--Correspondence
Birney, John--Correspondence
Bradford, Gamaliel, 1831-1911--Correspondence
Cisco, John J.--Correspondence
Dale, Nathaniel--Correspondence
Davis, Timothy, 1821-1888--Correspondence
Fish, Hamilton, 1808-1893--Correspondence
Galt, A. T. (Alexander Tilloch), Sir, 1817-1893--Correspondence
Griffin, R. M.--Correspondence
Johnson, Andrew, 1808-1875--Impeachment
Ketchum, Morris, fl. 1864--Correspondence
McCulloch, Hugh, 1808-1895--Correspondence
Maxwell, Robert A.--Correspondence
Morse, Freeman H. (Freeman Harlow), 1807-1891--Correspondence
Porter, Wm. D. (William Dennison), 1810-1883--Correspondence
Stewart, John Aikman, 1822-1926--Correspondence
Towle, George M. (George Makepeace), 1841-1893--Correspondence
Ware, Joseph A.--Correspondence
Williams, J. E.--Correspondence
Fessenden family
United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Finance
United States. Dept. of the Treasury. Office of the Secretary

Subjects:

Antislavery movements--United States
Financial crises--United States--History--19th century
Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)
Slavery
Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States
Maine--Politics and government
Northeast boundary of the United States
United States--Economic policy--To 1933
United States--Foreign relations--Great Britain
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Finance
United States--Politics and government--19th century

Occupations:

Cabinet officers
Lawyers
Representatives, U.S. Congress--Maine
Senators, U.S. Congress--Maine

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of William Pitt Fessenden, lawyer, United States representative and senator, and secretary of the treasury, were purchased between the years 1910 and 1958.

Processing History:

The papers of William Pitt Fessenden were processed for microfilming by Frank Bourdon in 1968. The finding aid was revised in 2005.

Copyright Status:

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

Microfilm:

A microfilm edition of these papers is available on five reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan.

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, William Pitt Fessenden Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1806, Oct. 16	Born, Boscawen, N.H.
1823	Graduated, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine
1827	Admitted to the Maine bar
1829	Entered into law partnership with his father, Portland, Maine
1832	Member, Maine House of Representatives Married Ellen Maria Deering
1835-1855	Practiced law in partnership with William Willis, Portland, Maine
1837	Accompanied Daniel Webster on a tour of the western states
1841-1843	United States representative from Maine
1854-1864	United States senator from Maine

1864-1865	Secretary of the treasury
1865-1869	United States senator from Maine
1869, Sept. 9	Died, Portland, Maine

Scope and Content Note

The papers of William Pitt Fessenden (1806-1869) span the years 1832-1878, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1861-1867. Correspondence with related clippings and printed matter primarily document primarily Fessenden's service on the United States Senate Finance Committee and as secretary of the treasury under Abraham Lincoln. The material is organized chronologically in volumes of letters received and copies of letters sent. Letters received comprise the majority of the items in the first seven volumes, while the eighth volume is a copybook of letters sent by Fessenden while serving as secretary of the treasury.

The collection documents Maine and national politics, abolitionism, operations of the Treasury Department in 1864-1865, financing of the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the impeachment of Andrew Johnson. Letters and legislative notes by Fessenden in 1832 concern disputed territorial claims in Maine during his first term in the state legislature. Correspondence from 1863 to 1867 relates to major financial crises in America at that time. Family and personal correspondence is also contained in the collection.

Correspondents include Elisha Hunt Allen, John Birney, Gamaliel Bradford, John J. Cisco, Nathaniel Dale, Timothy Davis, Hamilton Fish, Alexander T. Galt, R. M. Griffin, Morris Ketchum, Hugh McCulloch, Robert A. Maxwell, Freeman H. Morse, William D. Porter, John A. Stewart, George M. Towle, Joseph A. Ware, and J. E. Williams.

A card index arranged by correspondent is located in the Manuscript Division Reading Room.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is organized chronologically in volumes of letters received and copies of letters sent.

Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 14,133

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Letters received
REEL 1	
BOX 1	1832, Feb. 15-1861, Mar. 16
REEL 1	
BOX 2	1861, Mar. 17-1863, Nov. 2
REEL 2	
BOX 3	1863, Nov. 3-1864, July 29
REEL 2	
BOX 4	1864, Aug. 1-Oct. 29
REEL 3	
BOX 5	1864, Nov. 1-1865, Apr. 27
REEL 3	
BOX 6	1865, May 12-1867, Sept. 10
REEL 4	
BOX 7	1867, Sept. 20-1878, Aug. 15
REEL 4	
BOX 8	Letters sent, 1864, July 4-1865, Mar. 3
REEL 5	