

Edmund Roberts Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Prepared by Nancy L. Hayden



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2012

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/mss.contact>

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012

Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms012093>

Collection Summary

Title: Edmund Roberts Papers

Span Dates: 1803-1905

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1832-1836)

ID No.: MSS37960

Creator: Roberts, Edmund, 1784-1836

Extent: 1,000 items ; 5 containers ; 2 linear feet ; 3 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish

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

Abstract: Merchant and diplomat. Official and family correspondence, journals, manuscript drafts of Roberts' s book *Embassy to the Eastern Courts of Cochin-China, Siam, and Muscat . . . During the Years 1832-34*, diplomatic documents, legal and financial papers, and miscellaneous material chiefly documenting his service as a special agent of the U.S. to negotiate treaties with Siam, Muscat, and Cochin China.

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.

People

Dickerson, Mahlon, 1770-1853--Correspondence.

Jackson, Andrew, 1767-1845.

Livingston, Edward, 1764-1836--Correspondence.

Roberts family--Correspondence.

Roberts, Edmund, 1784-1836.

Roberts, Edmund, 1784-1836. Embassy to the eastern courts of Cochin-China, Siam, and Muscat; in the U.S. sloop-of-war

Peacock ... during the years 1832-3-4. 1837.

Vail, Eugene A.--Correspondence.

Woodbury, Levi, 1789-1851--Correspondence.

Organizations

Peacock (Sloop of war)

United States. Navy--Foreign service--Pacific Ocean.

Subjects

Arts--Asia.

Arts--South America.

Diplomatic and consular service, American.

Places

Asia--Description and travel.

Asia--Languages.

Asia--Religion.

Asia--Social life and customs.

Japan--Foreign relations--United States.

Muscat (Oman)--History.

Oman--Foreign relations--United States.

South America--Description and travel.

South America--Languages.

South America--Religion.

South America--Social life and customs.

Thailand--Foreign relations--United States.

United States--Foreign relations--1829-1847.

United States--Foreign relations--Japan.

United States--Foreign relations--Oman.
United States--Foreign relations--Thailand.
United States--Foreign relations--Vietnam.
Vietnam--Foreign relations--United States.

Occupations

Diplomats.
Merchants.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Edmund Roberts, merchant and diplomat, were deposited in the Library of Congress in 1910 by the estate of Mrs. J. V. L. Pruyn and converted to a gift in 1914. A gift of three items by David Hunter Miller in 1929 was transferred from the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection in 2012.

Processing History

The papers of Edmund Roberts were arranged and described in 1973. The finding aid was revised with an addition to the collection of transferred items in 2012.

Copyright Status

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

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Edmund Roberts are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Microfilm

A microfilm edition of part of these papers is available on three reels. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition. 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, Edmund Roberts Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1784, June 29	Born, Portsmouth, N. H.
1808	Married Katherine Langdon Whipple
1827	Sailed in ship <i>Mary Ann</i> to Zanzibar
1832	Appointed special agent of the United States to negotiate treaties with Siam, Muscat, and Cochin China Sailed on the U.S. sloop Peacock

1833	Concluded treaties of amity and commerce with Siam and Muscat
1836, June 12	Died, Macao, China
1837	Posthumous publication of <i>Embassy to the Eastern Courts of Cochin-China, Siam and Muscat . . . During the Years 1832-1834</i> . New York: Harper and Brothers

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Edmund Roberts (1784-1837) span the years 1803 to 1905, with the bulk of the material between 1832 and 1836. The papers include journals, drafts of his book, *Embassy to the Eastern Courts of Cochin-China, Siam, and Muscat . . . During the Years 1832-34*, family and official correspondence, diplomatic documents, legal and financial papers, and miscellaneous items consisting of maps, drawings, and various types of printed matter. Collection material is in English, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Robert's journal material and the drafts he used in writing his book describe the people, customs, languages, religions, and arts Roberts encountered in South America and Asia. Although the drafts are undated, an attempt has been made to arrange them in sequence.

Roberts's correspondence with his wife and children, like his journals, is filled with commentary on his travels and personal experiences. Some official correspondence in later years reflects his difficulties in obtaining remuneration from Congress for expenses incurred during his voyages. Correspondents include Mahlon Dickerson, Edward Livingston, Eugene A. Vail, and Levi Woodbury. A file of diplomatic documents treats Roberts's service as a special agent of the United States to negotiate treaties with Siam, Muscat, and Cochin China.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is organized by type of material as reproduced on microfilm. A small addition of photocopies of an 1835 commission in three languages signed by Andrew Jackson to negotiate a treaty with Japan has not been filmed.

Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 16,069

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Journals
REEL 1	
BOX 1	1804, 1805
REEL 1	
BOX 1	1805
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BOX 1	1829-1830
REEL 1	
BOX 1	1832
REEL 1	
BOX 1	1832-1834
REEL 1	
BOX 1	Drafts of <i>Embassy to the Eastern Courts</i> , 1837
REEL 1	
BOX 1	"Passage from Rio de Janeiro" to "From Mozambique"
REEL 1	
BOX 1	"Bombay" to "Passage from Anjier"
REEL 1	
BOX 1	"Sailing from Boston" to "Sailing from Lintin"
REEL 1	
BOX 1	"Siam"
REEL 1	
BOX 2	"Passage from the Red Sea" to "Voyage from Muscat"
REEL 1	
BOX 2	Miscellany
REEL 1	
	(2 folders)
BOX 2	Family correspondence
REEL 1	
BOX 2	1803-1831
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BOX 2	1832
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BOX 2	1833
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BOX 2	1834
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BOX 2	1835-1836
REEL 1	
BOX 2	1842, undated
REEL 1	
BOX 2	Official correspondence
REEL 1	
BOX 2	1818-1831

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<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
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BOX 2	1869, 1904, undated
REEL 1	
BOX 3	Diplomatic documents
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Bound copy of treaties with Siam, Muscat and United States
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Presidential letters of introduction, 1832
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Papers stating objective of visit, 1833, Jan. 6
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Letter from envoy to King of Cochin China, 1833, Jan. 7
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Letter from envoy announcing his arrival, 1833, Jan. 7
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Letter from envoy to minister of commerce, 1833, Jan. 30
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Letter from envoy to superintendent general, 1833, Feb. 18
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Treaty of amity, 1833
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Mar. 5
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Mar. 10
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Mar. 15
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Mar. 20
BOX 3	Mar. (rejected copy)
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Papers relating to Muscat, 1833-1835, undated
REEL 2	
BOX 3	Miscellaneous papers
REEL 2	
BOX 3	In English, 1835-1836
REEL 2	

Container List

Container

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BOX 3 REEL 2	In Vietnamese, 1832, undated
BOX 4 BOX 4 REEL 3	Legal and financial papers relating to Roberts's voyages 1828-1832
BOX 4 REEL 3	1833
BOX 4 REEL 3	1834
BOX 4 REEL 3	1835
BOX 4 REEL 3	1836, undated
BOX 4 REEL 3	Transcripts, 1804-1905
BOX 4 REEL 3	Family correspondence
BOX 4 REEL 3	1807-1830
BOX 4 REEL 3	1832
BOX 4 REEL 3	1833
BOX 4 REEL 3	1834
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BOX 4 REEL 3	Official correspondence
BOX 4 REEL 3	1823-1828
BOX 4 REEL 3	1832
BOX 4 REEL 3	1833
BOX 4 REEL 3	1834
BOX 4 REEL 3	1835
BOX 4 REEL 3	1836-1905
BOX 5 REEL 3	Biographical material, undated
BOX 5 REEL 3	Diplomatic documents, 1832-1833
BOX 5 REEL 3	Extracts from, <i>Narrative of a Voyage Round the World During the Years 1835, 1836, and 1837</i> , by William Samuel Waithman Ruschenberger
BOX 5	Journal extracts and related material, 1804-1833, undated
BOX 5 REEL 3	Miscellany

Container List

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BOX 5 REEL 3	Invitations, 1835-1836
BOX 5 REEL 3	Drawings
BOX 5 REEL 3	Maps
BOX 5 REEL 3	Christian catechism translated into Siamese
BOX 5 REEL 3	Printed material, 1830-1837, undated
BOX 5 REEL 3	<i>Canton Gazette</i> , 1832
BOX 5 REEL 3	Fragments and unidentified material
BOX 5 REEL 3	Unused notebook
BOX 3	Addition, photocopies of commission signed by Andrew Jackson to negotiate a treaty with Japan, in English, Latin, and Dutch, 1835