

Guide to the John E. Parsons Papers

MS 792



compiled by Staff of Manuscripts and Archives

March 1983

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 792

CREATOR: Parsons, John Edward, 1903-1976

TITLE: John Edward Parsons papers

DATES: 1960-1976

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 3 linear feet (7 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of manuscript drafts, research notes, correspondence, and copies of original documents concerning the unpublished work *The Aroostock Dispute and the Bounding of Maine*. Also included is correspondence related to research and publication of *West on the 49th; Red River to the Rockies, 1872-1876* (1963) and copies of other published writings of John E. Parsons.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0792>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0792>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Mrs. John E. Parsons to Beinecke Rare Book Library, 1976; transferred to Manuscripts and Archives, 1977

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

John Edward Parsons Papers (MS 792). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Processing Information

The Parsons Papers were received in no particular order. A rough sorting of the original bundles has been made and their contents placed in numbered folders according to type of material. Where appropriate, folder titles correspond to Mr. Parsons' notations on the original bundles.

Biographical / Historical

John Edward Parsons

Graduating from the Yale Law School in 1928, John had the interesting experience of a year's service as law clerk to Chief Justice William Howard Taft of the U.S. Supreme Court. He was associated with Winthrop, Stimson, Putnam & Roberts in New York from 1929 to 1936 and has since been independently engaged in practice, also devoting considerable time to writing. He is the author of *The Peacemaker and Its Rivals* (1950) and *Henry Deringer's Pocket Pistol* (1952), both published by William Morrow & Company, and of *The First Winchester*, which is still to be published, and is the coauthor of *Firearms in the Custer Battle* (Stackpole Company, Harrisbury, 1953). He has contributed articles and book reviews to the *New York Historical Society Quarterly*, the *Atlantic Salmon Journal*, and *The American Rifleman*.

He was admitted to the New York State Bar in 1931 and belongs to the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, of whose committee on state legislation he was a member from 1935 to 1940. He is a trustee of both the New York Historical Society and the Lenox (Mass.) Library Association and from 1939 to 1941 served on the board of directors and the executive committee of the Radio-Keith-Orheum Corporation.

John, who was on active Navy duty from May, 1942, to November, 1945 (lieutenant, then commander), served for forty months as assistant U-boat tracking officer at the Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Fleet in Washington, with temporary duty in London in 1943 and aboard the *Guadalcanal* in the Atlantic in 1944. He was awarded a Navy Commendation Ribbon, A Navy Unit Citation, and the Order of the British Empire. In December, 1953, he was transferred to the Retired Reserve.

On June 27, 1927, he was married in Tuxedo Park, N. Y., to Fanny Haven Wickes. They had three children: Fanny Forsyth, born January 3, 1930, Richard Arnot on November 18, 1935, and John E., Jr., on January 11, 1938. Fanny, who graduated from Foxcroft in 1947 and then attended Bennington with the class of 1951, was married on January 20, 1951, to Edward D. Culleton and has two children: Dale Arnot, born July 18, 1952, and Ruth McIlvaine on May 15, 1954. Hohn, Jr., was a member of the St. Paul's class of 1956.

Thirty Year Record of the Class of 1925, Yale College, pages 286-287

Scope and Contents

The papers of John Edward Parsons (1903-1976), lawyer, naval officer, and historian, consist almost entirely of drafts and corrected copies of an unpublished historical monograph, entitled "The Aroostook Dispute and The Bounding of Maine", and research materials used in its preparation. The manuscript narrates the diplomacy and survey of the Maine-Canada border in the 1840's and is a logical extension of the author's earlier work on the history of the demarcation of the Canadian-U.S. boundary west of the Great Lakes: *West on the 49th parallel: Red River to the Rockies, 1872-1876* (New York, 1963).

Two holographs by James Duncan Graham and Thomas J. Lee have been transferred from this collection to the Graham Papers in the Beinecke Library. Photographs of John E. Parsons, and life at Yale during the 1920's, have been transferred to the Yale Picture Collection, Individuals Series, under the surname Parsons.

Collection Contents

Manuscript of "The Arroostook Dispute and The Bounding of Maine":

b. 1, f. 1	Chaps. 1-12. Ribbon copy corrected to March, 1976	1976
b. 1, f. 2	Chaps. 13-19. Ribbon copy corrected to March, 1976	1976
b. 1, f. 3	Corrected copy. Pp. 1-123	
b. 1, f. 4	Corrected copy. Pp.124-249; with footnotes, bibliography	
b. 1, f. 5	First draft, 1970-71. Chaps. 1-12	
b. 1, f. 6	First draft, 1970-71. Chaps. 13-19	

Manuscript of "The Aroostook Dispute and The Bounding of Maine":

b. 2, f. 7	First draft; revisions, 1970-71	1970-1971
b. 2, f. 8	First draft corrected, 1970-71	1970-1971
b. 2, f. 9	First draft corrected; revised introduction, 1970-71	1970-1971
b. 2, f. 10	Revisions, August, 1973	1973
b. 2, f. 11 - 12	Revised drafts. Chaps. 1-14	
b. 2, f. 13	Revised drafts. Chaps.15-19. Corrections and recopies	
b. 2, f. 14	Original manuscript and outlines	
b. 2, f. 15	Drafts of new chapters. 1969 Jan - Feb	1969 January - February
b. 2, f. 16 - 17	Old 2nd xerox copy. Incomplete	
b. 2, f. 18	Revised pages for xerox copy; and old pages	
b. 2, f. 19	Addenda and Rutgers University press and readers report	
b. 2, f. 20	Thomas Bartlett Papers. Miscellaneous xerox copies	

James B.Bucknall Estcourt Papers:

b. 3, f. 21 - 22	Miscellaneous xerox copies	
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John Fairfield Papers:

b. 3, f. 23 - 26	Miscellaneous xerox copies	
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Sir John Harvey Papers:

b. 3, f. 27	Miscellaneous xerox and typescript copies	
b. 4, f. 28	Miscellaneous xeros copies	
b. 4, f. 29	Issac Hodsdon Papers. Miscellaneous xerox copies	

b. 4, f. 30	Miscellaneous manuscripts relating to Maine. Xerox and typescript copies	
b. 4, f. 31	Miscellaneous printed sources relating to Maine:	
b. 4, f. 32	Land Agents reports. Xerox copies	
b. 4, f. 33 - 34	Articles, pamphlets, newspaper clippings. Xerox copies	
	"The Aroostook Dispute and The Bounding of Maine":	
b. 5, f. 35	Early research notes, 1964-66	1964-1966
b. 5, f. 36	Research notes, 1968-69	1968-1969
b. 5, f. 37	Research notes on the St. John River, 1966-68	1966-1968
b. 5, f. 38	Miscellaneous research notes, n.d.	
b. 5, f. 39	Maps and topographical drawings. Photographic copies	
b. 5, f. 40	Illustrative material. Photographic copies	
b. 5, f. 41	Aerial photographs of Maine border	
b. 5, f. 42	Correspondence relating to research and publication, 1964-68	1964-1968
b. 6, f. 43	Correspondence relating to research and publication, 1968-76	1968-1976
b. 6, f. 44 - 45	Correspondence relating to research and publication of Parsons, <i>West on the 49th Parallel ...</i> (1963), 1960-72	1960-1972
b. 6, f. 46	Published and unpublished writings of John E. Parsons: author's manuscripts	
	Published writings of John E. Parsons:	
b. 6, f. 47	Author's copy of <i>Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Percussion Colt Revolvers and Conversions...</i> (N.Y., 1942)	
b. 6, f. 48	Author's copy of <i>Sam. Colt's Own record...</i> (Hartford, 1949)	
b. 7, f. 49	Author's copies of <i>Firearms in the Custer Battle...</i> (Harrisburg, Pa., 1953); <i>A student at New York University in 1847...</i> (N. Y., 1954); "New Light on Old Colts" (1955); "A Grandfather in the Gold Rush..." (1957); "Steamboats in the 'Idaho' Gold Rush" (1960)	
b. 7, f. 50	Author's copies of "Nine Cousins in the California Gold Rush"(1964); "Down the St. John River"(1969); "St. John Headwaters Revisited"(1970); Review of Frederick Merk, <i>Fruits of Propaganda in the Tyler Administration</i> (1971)	
b. 7, f. 51	Newspaper clippings on environmental problems	
b. 7, f. 52	"History of the Wild Lands of Maine". Mimeograph copy English	

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.

Subjects

Aroostock War, 1939
Historians

Geographic Names

Maine -- History -- 1775-1865
New England

Occupations

Authors

Names

Parsons, John Edward, 1903-1976