Guide to the Charles H. Eldredge Papers, 1861-1916
MS0098

The Mariners' Museum Library
at
Christopher Newport University

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Mariners’ Museum Library  
Title: The Charles H. Eldredge Papers  
Inclusive Dates: 1861-1916  
Catalog number: MS0098  
Physical Characteristics: 119 items, including orders (military records), fliers (printed matter), typescripts, telegrams, and clippings  
Language: English  
Creator: Eldredge, Charles Henry, 1839-1916  

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL SKETCH
Charles Henry Eldredge was born in Massachusetts in 1839 and grew up in New York. When the Civil War broke out, he joined the United States Navy as assistant paymaster on the USS Supply, where he remained until he was promoted to paymaster in February 1862. Assigned to the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, Eldredge served on the USS Canandaigua, the ship that rescued the crew of the USS Housatonic after it was struck by the CSS H. L. Hunley on February 17, 1864.

Following the war, Eldredge’s career as paymaster took him to many locations, where he served both on shore duty and on ships. He was often called for duty on examining boards. He served on the USS Idaho briefly before being assigned to the Navy Yard at Pensacola FL. He was promoted to pay inspector in July 1871 during his tour of duty as storekeeper for the Asiatic Fleet. This was followed by three years at the Navy Pay office in Portsmouth, NH. As fleet paymaster for both the South Pacific Squadron and the South Atlantic Squadron, his home was the USS Richmond from August 1875 to September 1877. While serving as Inspector of Provisions & Clothing at the Norfolk Navy Yard he was promoted to pay director in August 1881. He moved between Norfolk, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore in the last years of his career serving in increasing important positions of responsibility and finally earned the rank of rear-admiral. He retired on his sixty-second birthday, September 21, 1901. He died on July 16, 1916 at the age of seventy-five.

SCOPE AND CONTENT
This collection relates to Charles H. Eldredge’s career in the United States Navy between 1861 and 1916. Mostly, it consists of military orders: Board of Examination assignments, correspondence, leave of absence requests, medical examination, assignments and detachments. Also included are a record of service and fifty-three obituaries from newspapers across the country.

The Papers are organized into two series: Military Documents; and Biographical Materials. They are arranged alphabetically by genre.
ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession number
CK131

Accession date
1995

Restrictions
Collection is open to all researchers.

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Preferred Citation

SERIES DESCRIPTION

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1900-undated
This series is arranged chronologically. It consists of records of Eldredge’s military service, the notice of his retirement, and clippings from a clippings service of his obituaries.

Series 2: Military Documents, 1861-1895
This series is arranged chronologically. It consists of letters of recommendation and military orders, transferring Eldredge from one duty station or assignment to another over the course of his career.

FILE GUIDE

BOX 1

Folder 1 Finding Aid/Background

SERIES 1: Biographical Materials
Folder 2 1900-1916
Photocopied article:
“Charles H. Eldredge, Pay Director, United States Navy, in Charge of the Norfolk Pay Office.” Virginian-Pilot Supplement (Norfolk, VA), June 1900.
July 21, 1916: Washington, Navy Department
Secretary of the Navy Daniels to Mrs. Kate G. Eldredge. 1 page letter of sympathy on death of Pay Director Charles H. Eldredge on July 16, 1916.
Obituaries: 53 clippings from newspapers across the country.
Folder 3  Undated
Service Record: not titled, one page typed service record with positions
and dates.
Service Record: two-sided handwritten copy of Charles Eldredge’s entry
in Lewis R. Hamersly’s Records of Living Officers of the U.S. Navy and
Marine Corps. [1901]

SERIES 2: Military Documents

Folder 4  1861
July 10, 1861: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Acting Paymaster Charles H. Eldredge. Appointment as
Acting Paymaster in the U.S. Navy. Ordered to report for duty on board
the USS Supply.
July 13, 1861: Navy Yard, New York
Charles Eldredge to Gideon Welles. Secretary of the Navy.
Acknowledgment and acceptance of appointment as Acting Paymaster in
the U.S. Navy on temporary service.
October 11, 1861: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Eldredge. Appointment as Assistant Paymaster in the
U.S. Navy.
October 21, 1861: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Eldredge. Notice that Eldredge’s official bond was
received.

Folder 5  1862
February 24, 1862: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Eldredge. Orders detaching Eldredge from the USS
Supply.
March 4, 1862: Navy Yard, New York
Charles Eldredge to Welles. Acknowledges receipt of his commission as
Paymaster in the U.S. Navy. Gives his address as No. 102 West Warren
St. Brooklyn, L.I.
June 3, 1862: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Eldredge. Orders to report on board the US Sloop of
War Canandaigua.

Folder 6  1864-1865
June 28, 1864: USS Philadelphia, Port Royal Harbor, FL.
Dahlgren to Eldredge, Lawrence and Burbank. Orders to form a board for
examining qualifications of Acting Assistant Paymaster Horace Tuttle for
a promotion.
October 29, 1864: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Eldredge. Orders detaching Eldredge from the USS
Canandaigua.
May 26, 1865: Bureau of Navigation & Office of Detail
P. Drayton to Eldredge. Orders to report to Commodore Bell as a member
of a Board.
Folder 7

1866
January 31, 1866: Bureau of Navigation & Office of Detail
Orders to report for duty on board the USS Idaho.
May 23, 1866: Bureau of Navigation & Office of Detail
Orders to settle accounts for the USS Idaho and consider himself detached.
August 1, 1866: Bureau of Navigation & Office of Detail
Jenkins to Charles Eldredge. Orders to proceed to Pensacola, FL for duty as Paymaster of the Navy Yard and Station.
October 10, 1866: Bureau of Navigation & Office of Detail
Orders granting Eldredge 30 days leave of absence.

Folder 8

1867-1868
January 14, 1867: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Charles Eldredge. Notice that Eldredge’s bond will expire and needs to be renewed.
February 7, 1867: Navy Department
Gideon Welles to Charles Eldredge. Notice that Eldredge’s official bond was received.
July 20, 1868: Navy Department
Orders detaching Eldredge from the Pensacola Navy Yard.

Folder 9

1871-1872
May 25, 1871: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders detaching Eldredge from duty as Store Keeper of the Asiatic Fleet.
June 13, 1872: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders to proceed to Portsmouth, NH for duty as Purchasing Paymaster.
March 6, 1872: Brooklyn, NY
Charles H. Eldredge to Daniel Ammen, Chief of Bureau of Navigation. Notification that the public stores, accounts, and money in his charge were transferred to Paymaster Charles F. Guild and that he has returned home.

Folder 10

1875, June-August
June 11, 1875: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders to transfer duties to Paymaster A. J. Clark, detach from duties as Paymaster at the Portsmouth, N.H. Navy Yard and await orders.
August 20, 1875: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders sending Eldredge to South Pacific Station duty on board the USS Richmond. He is to take passage in a mail steamer which leaves on the 30th.
August 25, 1875: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders delaying departure date; sending Eldredge on next steamer, date of departure unknown yet.
August 28, 1875: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders sending Eldredge to South Pacific Station on the steamer leaving September 15th.

Folder 11

1875, September
September 3, 1875: Washington, Navy Department
Acting Secretary of Navy to C.H. Eldredge. Permission granted to negotiate Bills of Exchange in London. Urged to comply with April 12th flier relating to bills of exchange, a copy of which is enclosed.

Folder 12
1877, September 3-21
September 3, 1877: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders discharging Eldredge from the USS Richmond and awaiting orders.
September 21, 1877: forwarded from Charleston, MA
Telegram from J. C. Howell, Acting Secretary of the Navy to Charles Eldredge. Re-open the USS Richmond accounts. Twenty-thousand dollars issued.
September 21, 1877: Washington, Navy Department
Acting Secretary of the Navy to Charles Eldredge
As per telegram, order to re-open Richmond accounts and further orders to pay men in Boston, and then to proceed to New York and Philadelphia, contact and pay men there.

Folder 13
1877, September 28 – October 11
September 28, 1877: Washington,
Telegram from John C. Howell, Acting Secretary of the Navy to C. H. Eldredge. Orders stating that after paying the crew in Boston, to go and pay the crew found at the sailors home in NY. Then transfer the accounts back to his office.
October 4, 1877: Brooklyn, NY
To J. C. Howell from F.O.S. Letter in response to September 28th orders stating that orders to pay men in Boston and New York lately discharged from the USS Richmond were accomplished and that the accounts of those remaining were transferred to the Fourth Auditor. Also copies the text of his orders to clerks William McMurray and Richard Norris.
October 11, 1877: Washington, Navy Department
R.W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy to Eldredge. Orders to proceed to Boston to settle accounts of the USS Richmond and await orders.

Folder 14
1878, July
July 5, 1878: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to report on July 15 in Washington, D.C. to serve on a board for examination of candidates for the position of Assistant Paymaster.
July 13, 1878: Washington, Navy Department
Notice that J. D. Murray will be president of the Examining Board, not Pay Director Looker as previously indicated.
December 9, 1878: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Preliminary orders to Eldredge for duty as Inspector of Provisions & Clothing at the Norfolk Navy Yard.

Folder 15
1878, December – 1879, January
December 10, 1878: Brooklyn, NY
Eldredge to William Whiting, Chief of Bureau, acknowledging preliminary orders for duty as Inspector of Provisions & Clothing.
December 13, 1878: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail

January 7, 1879: Treasury Department, Fourth Auditor’s Office
S. J. W. Tabor to Eldredge. Acknowledges the receipt of Eldredge’s orders dated December 13, 1878.

Folder 16
1880
September 21, 1880: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders granting Eldredge a month’s leave of absence.
November 3, 1880: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders extending Eldredge’s leave of absence by two weeks as per his request.
December 10, 1880: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders granting Eldredge a leave of absence up to 30 days beginning January 27, 1881 as per his request.

Folder 17
1881-1882
September 27, 1881: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders granting Eldredge a month’s leave of absence as per his request.
November 5, 1881: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to Eldredge to report to Medical Director John M. Browne for physical examination at 10:00 a.m. on November 8.
November 5, 1881: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to Eldredge to report to Pay Director J. S. Cunningham at noon on November 8 for the examination preliminary to promotion.
August 14, 1882: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders to transfer duties as Inspector of Provisions & Clothing to replacement and to await orders.

Folder 18
1883-1884, April
June 11, 1883: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to report on June 16 in Washington, D.C. to serve as a member of a Naval Examining Board until June 30th.
January 3, 1884: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to report on January 8th in Washington, D.C. to serve as a member of a Naval Examining Board until February 1st.
April 3, 1884: Bureau of Navigation and Office of Detail
Orders to report on April 15 for duty as Pay Inspector at the New York Navy Yard. Employment is until April 15, 1887.
April 4, 1884: Brooklyn, NY

Folder 19
1884, August-1886
August 16, 1884: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to report on August 20th in Washington, D.C. to serve as a member of a Naval Examining Board until September 1st.
August 18, 1884:
Telegram from Pearson to Eldredge indicating that orders from Secretary of the Navy were received.
August 18, 1884:
Telegram from Eldredge to Secretary of the Navy indicating that he is too ill to report for duty on the Examining Board.
August 19, 1884:
Telegram from Earl English, Acting Secretary of the Navy revoking order of August 16th.
July 24, 1885: Washington, Navy Department
Orders granting Eldredge a month’s leave of absence as per his request.
January 11, 1886: Washington, Navy Department
Orders detaching Eldredge from the New York Navy Yard and assigning him to the Navy Pay Office in Philadelphia. Employment is until February 1889 unless otherwise ordered.

Folder 20
1889-1890
January 29, 1889: Washington, Navy Department
Orders detaching Eldredge from the Navy Pay Office, Philadelphia and awaiting orders.
April 11, 1890: Washington, Navy Department
Orders transferring Eldredge from General Store Keeper at the Norfolk Navy Yard to Director of Navy Pay Office, Norfolk.
July 17, 1890: Bureau of Provisions and Clothing
Paymaster General to Eldredge. Notice that his accounts as General Store Keeper at the Norfolk, Navy Yard from April 1 to 25 have been audited.

Folder 21
1893
March 31, 1893: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to transfer and settle accounts as Norfolk Navy Pay Director and to await orders.
May 8, 1893: Bureau of Navigation
Orders to report on May 11th in Washington, D.C. to serve as a member of a Naval Examining Board.
May 26, 1893: Washington, Navy Department
Orders to assume charge of the Navy Pay Office in Baltimore, MD by May 31st.

Folder 22
1894-1895
Envelope
C. H. Eldredge Record of Service 1894
January 10, 1895: Bureau of Navigation
Orders appointing Eldredge President of a Naval Examining Board convening on January 12th.

SUBJECTS
Welles, Gideon, 1802-1878
Supply (Ship : 1846)
Canandaigua (Steamship : 1862)
Idaho (Steamship: 1866)
Richmond (Steamship: 1861)
United States. Navy-Pay, allowances, etc.
United States. Navy-Personnel records