Guide to the George C. Mason letters
1876-1888

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Collection overview

Title: George C. Mason letters
Date range: 1876-1888
Creator: Mason, George C. (George Champlin), 1820-1894
Extent: 0.01 linear feet (1 folder)
Abstract: This collection consists of letters written by George C. Mason (1820-1894) regarding the selling of his books, Newport and its cottages, and The old house altered.
Language of materials: English
Repository: Redwood Library and Athenaeum
Collection number: RLC.Ms.544

Scope & content

This collection consists of four letters written by George C. Mason to Sidney S. Rider, a bookseller in Providence, Rhode Island, and G. P. Putnam and Son, a major book publisher in New York City. These letters generally concern the selling of Mason’s books, Newport and its cottages (published in 1875) and The old house altered (published by G. P. Putnam and Son in 1878).

The October 17, 1876 letter to Sidney S. Rider is a photocopy, the whereabouts of the original letter is unknown.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in chronological order.

Biographical note

George Champlin Mason (1820-1894) was born into a prominent family in Newport, Rhode Island, on July 17, 1820. Following his education in Newport, Mason worked at a dry goods
establishment in New York City from 1835 to 1841, leaving on account of ill health. From 1844 through 1846, Mason studied art in Paris, Rome, and Florence, and upon his return to the United States he dedicated himself to landscape painting of architectural subjects in Newport. On August 10, 1848, Mason married Frances Elizabeth Dean and in August 1849, they had their son, George C. Mason, Jr. (1849-1924). After 1858, Mason began to study architecture and established a successful architectural firm in Newport. In 1871, his took his son into partnership and renamed his firm, George C. Mason and Son, which remained in operation until his death in 1894. During Mason’s architectural career, one hundred fifty houses were erected by his firm in Newport, but he also worked throughout the Northeast.

Throughout his career, Mason also found the time to author books and newspaper articles. In 1851, he became the editor and part proprietor of the Newport Mercury and in 1854, he began to write letters on general subjects for the Providence Daily Journal and continued to do so until his death. Mason was also a correspondent for the New York Evening Post starting in 1876. Mason wrote and published a number of historical and art works, mostly regarding Newport and its architecture and landscapes. In addition, Mason was influential in the establishment of the Newport Historical Society and the Newport Hospital. He was also involved with the Redwood Library, the Rhode Island Historical Society, the Rhode Island State Society of Cincinnati, and the Newport Sanitary Protection Association. George C. Mason died on January 30, 1894, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was buried in the Island Cemetery of Newport.

Access & use

Access to the collection: Access is open to members and researchers at the Redwood Library and Athenæum.

Use of materials: This collection is owned by the Redwood Library and Athenæum. Permission to publish materials must be obtained in writing from the Special Collections Librarian of the Redwood Library and Athenæum.

Preferred citation: George C. Mason letters, RLC.Ms.544, Redwood Library and Athenæum

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Administrative information

About the collection

Aquisition: Gift of Frances Hubbert.

Processing information: This collection was initially processed by Aimee Saunders in 2010.

About the finding aid

Author: Finding aid prepared by Elizabeth Delmage.

Encoding: Finding aid encoded by Elizabeth Delmage 2013 October 23

Descriptive rules: Finding aid based on Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)

Additional information

Related material: • George C. Mason, Jr. letters, RLC.Ms.524, Redwood Library and Athenæum.
   • George Champlin Mason papers, MSS 742, Rhode Island Historical Society.

Bibliography:


Search terms

Names: G. P. Putnam and Son
   Rider, Sidney S. (Sidney Smith), 1833-1917

Subjects: Booksellers and bookselling
Types of materials: Letters (correspondence)
Inventory