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Guide to the Sir John Thomas Duckworth Papers 1808-1812



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Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Acknowledgments | 3 |
| Descriptive Summary | 3 |
| Information on Use | 3 |
| Access | 3 |
| Digital Images | 3 |
| Citation | 4 |
| Biographical Note | 4 |
| Scope Note | 4 |
| Related Resources | 4 |
| Subject Headings | 4 |
| INVENTORY | 4 |

Descriptive Summary

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| Identifier | ICU.SPCL.DUCKWORTH |
| Title | Duckworth, Sir John Thomas. Papers |
| Date | 1808-1812 |
| Size | 1.75 linear feet (2 boxes) |
| Repository | Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A. |
| Abstract | Contains correspondence, naval orders and instructions, and reports. Also includes an 1811 broadside printed in Newfoundland. Topics highlight some of Duckworth's decisions as British governor and naval commander of Newfoundland on the eve of the War of 1812. |

Acknowledgments

Information on Use

Access

No restrictions.

Digital Images

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Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Duckworth, Sir John Thomas. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

John Thomas Duckworth, a minister's son, was born in Surrey, England on February 28, 1748. He attended Eton at an early age, but left to enter the British Navy when he was eleven. At the outbreak of the American Revolution he was commissioned a first lieutenant, and served in American waters for nearly the duration of the war - achieving his first command in that period. In 1799 Duckworth was promoted to Rear Admiral rank, and in 1810 became a full Admiral. From 1810 to 1813 he served as Governor and Commander-in-Chief in Newfoundland where, according to the Dictionary of National Biography, "he is said to have earned the good opinion of the inhabitants both in his naval and his civil capacity." In 1812 he was elected MP for Romsey, a position he held until his death in 1817. Duckworth was created a Baronet in 1813, and in January of 1817, just shortly before he died, was named Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth.

Scope Note

With the single exception of a love letter written in 1808, all the materials in the Duckworth Collection are dated between 1810 and 1812; the last, in May of that year. Less than a month later, Great Britain and the United States were at war. What makes the orders, instructions, and correspondence in this collection as interesting and important as they are is Duckworth's official capacity as British Governor of Newfoundland on the eve of the War of 1812. As area naval commander his papers make frequent reference to precisely those issues over which contemporary Americans thought they were fighting, such as "Free Trade and Sailor's Rights." Many of his orders and instructions to captains under his command were directly concerned with American fishing rights on the Grand Banks, the prohibition of American trade with British colonials, the searching of American ships for contraband, and the impressments of seamen.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Subject Headings

- Duckworth, John Thomas, Sir.
- United States -- History -- War of 1812.
- Newfoundland and Labrador -- History.
- Broadships.

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Administrative orders and instructions

- Thirty one standing orders to captains of H. M. vessels anchoring in Saint John's harbor. July 21, 1810.
- Fourteen instructions to captains of H. M. vessels employed in the waters about Newfoundland.
- Seven additional instructions.
- A list of facts to be ascertained by captains of H. M. vessels in these waters, concerning American fishing practices and trade.

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/duckworth-0001-001>

Box 1**Folder 2**

Duckworth's order book, containing copies of sailing orders to captains of vessels under his command, April 13 to October 25, 1810.

View digitized documents, part 1. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/duckworth-0001-002-01>

View digitized documents, part 2. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/duckworth-0001-002-02>

Box 1**Folder 3**

Correspondence, November 1811 to May, 1812, from captains of vessels under his command, acknowledging orders similar to those in folder 2.

View digitized documents, part 1. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/duckworth-0001-003-01>

View digitized documents, part 2. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/duckworth-0001-003-02>

View digitized documents, part 3. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/duckworth-0001-003-03>

Box 2**Folder 1**

Miscellaneous

- Love letter from Duckworth to Susan Buller, his second wife, January 21, 1808.
- Printed broadside issued by Duckworth's order giving the conditions for leasing certain lots of ground by public auction. 1811. Goodspeed's catalogue describes it as: "Probably printed at St. John's in 1811...This is a rare, early, and important Newfoundland imprint."

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/duckworth-0001-005>

Box 2**Folder 2-7**

Operational reports

- Forms from captains under Duckworth's command, reporting on condition of ships, extent of provisioning, ship's complements, and sick lists, 1812
- Four completed forms, listing vessels convoyed by captains under Duckworth's command, 1812
- Report on the condition of the "top mast studding sail" of EMS Antelope, July 1810.

View digitized documents, part 1. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/src/md/duckworth-0001-004-01>

View digitized documents, part 2. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/src/md/duckworth-0001-004-02>