Guide to the Lafayette Manuscripts 1792-1834

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Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.LAFAYETTEMSS

Title  Lafayette Manuscripts

Date  1792-1834

Size  0.5 linear feet (1 box)

Repository  Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract  Contains 37 documents, primarily correspondence written by or to Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Montier, Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834). Also included are letters related to Lafayette's son, George Washington du Motier de Lafayette (1779-1849) and grandson, Edmond du Motier de Lafayette (1818-1888). Codex Ms 303.

Information on Use

Access  The collection is open for research.

Digital Images

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Citation
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Lafayette Manuscripts, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Scope Note
The Lafayette Manuscripts (Codex Ms 303) comprise 37 chronologically organized documents written by or to Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Montier, Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834). Also included are letters related to Lafayette’s son, George Washington du Motier de Lafayette (1779-1849) and grandson, Edmond du Motier de Lafayette (1818-1888).

Many of the earlier letters in the collection bear witness to Lafayette’s fortunes and activities during the revolutionary period in France. Though placed in command of an army that was to attack the Austrian Netherlands in 1792, he was declared a traitor to the Legislative Assembly, and captured while trying to flee the country in August 1792. He was held in Prussian and Austrian prisons until 1797. A letter sent to Lafayette by General Alexis Paul Michel le Veneur (August 11, 1792) documents his military activities, while a fragmentary letter from an American correspondent to an unidentified newspaper on May 26, 1796 protests the conditions of his imprisonment.

Letters dating from 1800 to 1812 document Lafayette’s retirement to his country estate during the Napoleonic era.

Soon after the Bourbon Restoration, Lafayette became a deputy, speaking and voting consistently on the liberal side. He took an active interest in revolutionary activities abroad, particularly in South America, Poland, Naples, Spain, Greece and Belgium. The largest group of letters in the collection document Lafayette’s political activities and private life during this period. Of particular note is an 1825 letter from Lafayette to inventor and artist Samuel F. B. Morse expressing condolences upon the death of Morse’s wife.

The final letters in the collection are related to Lafayette’s son and grandson, and primarily document private and family affairs.

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


Bonaventure-Lafayette Collection (Ms 304)
Lafayette-Crawford Correspondence (Ms 916)

Subject Headings

- Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, 1757-1834
- Lafayette, Georges Washington Louis Gilbert Du Motier, marquis de, 1779-1849
- Lafayette, Edmond de
- France -- History -- Revolution, 1789-1799

INVENTORY

Box 1
Folder 1
Notarized letter concerning the Marquis de Lafayette's estate, 1754 June 5.

Box 1
Folder 2

Box 1
Folder 3
View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/srcm/md/lafayettemss-0001-003

Box 1
Folder 4

Box 1
Folder 5
View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/srcm/md/lafayettemss-0001-005

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View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/lafayettemss-0001-014

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View digitized documents. http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/lafayettemss-0001-037