



State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
Tennessee State Library and Archives

Albert Gleaves Berry Papers, 1865-1971

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COLLECTION SUMMARY

**Creator:**

Berry, Albert Gleaves

**Inclusive Dates:**

1865-1971, bulk 1869-1909

**Scope & Content:**

Papers consist primarily of correspondence, military orders, invitations, and memorabilia from Rear Admiral Albert Gleaves Berry's life and career as a naval officer. Correspondence to and from Berry throughout his naval career and through his retirement is included. The papers are stored in two boxes and one oversize folder.

A letter from Berry while attending the U.S. Naval Academy mentions covertly smoking in his room, while others kept watch. Another discusses the 1866 cholera epidemic that struck Annapolis. A number of others detail daily life aboard the U.S.S. *Tennessee* while stationed in France in 1907. The contents of the letters recall meeting local officials, dancing, and conversing in French with townspeople.

The only certificates are from correspondence school for completing a French grammar course and membership to the Navy Mutual Aid Association. Invitations to various dances, dinners, weddings, and other engagements addressed to Berry and his wife comprise an entire folder of material. Most are in English, but a few are in French. Included among these are two elegantly gilded invitations to balls at Iolani Palace with Liliuokalani, Queen of Hawaii, and one to a dinner and musical at the palace. There are a number of invitations to various dinners and events related to the Jamestown Exposition, including the formal opening.

The memorabilia is a collection of assorted items Berry obtained in his travels while serving in the Navy. Among the items are a piece of handwritten music, possibly Hawaiian; a map of the Mediterranean, with a sea route charted, probably obtained during Berry's service; and a list of the final examination scores for the Naval Academy Class of 1869. Additionally, various calling cards, postcards, tickets, souvenirs, drawings, a few samples of Japanese writing and prints obtained while stationed in Japan, and the blueprints for the "modification of time and percussion fuze" proposed by Berry in 1887 complete the folder.

Filed among the military orders are Berry's letter of admission to the Naval Academy, his appointments to master, lieutenant, commander, captain, and rear admiral, as well as his various ship assignments. A few orders commanding Berry to serve on courts-martial are interspersed. There is also a letter from the Treasury Department awarding Commander Berry prize money for the capture of an enemy vessel during the Spanish-American War. Berry's commission to inspect and command the U.S.S. *Tennessee* is included, signed by Secretary of the Navy Charles Bonaparte, a distant relation to Napoleon I. The newspaper clippings come from a variety of sources and primarily relate to either Berry himself; a conflict in which he participated; the *Tennessee*; or Julia Newberry, a woman he courted early in his life. Photocopied obituaries come from various newspapers. There are four different obituaries for Rear Admiral Berry; one for his wife, Lillian Merriman Berry; one for C. D. Berry; one for James Rogers, an employee of Mrs. C. D. Berry; and two for William Tyler Berry.

The pamphlets include a copy of *McClure's Magazine* from September 1899, with Edwin Markham's poem about the Dreyfus Affair, and a biographical sketch of Admiral William T. Sampson; "Deck Routine and Instruction, U.S.S. *Trenton*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Rate, Asiatic Squadron"; "Foreign Services"; "Our Cruise in the U.S.S. *Monongahela* to China and Japan"; and "The Truth About the Schley Case." Included are a special passport issued to Lieutenant Albert Berry and a letter from the U.S. Consulate in Spezia, Italy, allowing him free movement in Europe.

Many photographs depicting Berry, his family, other naval crewmembers and scenes, and the U.S.S. *Tennessee* constitute a large portion of the collection. Programs for various events he attended throughout his career make up a fraction of the remaining materials. The ten-year reunion of the Naval Academy Class of 1869 program, dance cards for assorted Naval Academy balls, and a program to a dinner with the Queen of Hawaii at Iolani Palace, are unique items within the programs folder. His daughter's short handwritten biography of Rear Admiral Berry is included, as are various speeches Berry delivered throughout his lifetime, and the speech Governor John I. Cox gave at the dedication of the *Tennessee*. The writing is an excerpt from Tyler de Saix's *The Man Without a Head*.

**Physical Description/Extent:**

1 cubic ft.

**Accession/Record Group Number:**

71-184

**Language:**

English

**Permanent Location:**

III-K-6

**Repository:**

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

## **Administrative/Biographical History**

Albert Gleaves Berry was born on September 16, 1848, in Nashville, Tennessee, to William Tyler Berry and Mary Margaret Tannehill. After attending the Campbell School in Nashville, he was admitted to the United States Naval Academy and graduated with the Class of 1869. Upon graduation, Berry was assigned to the *Sabine* and then the flagship of the European squadron, the *Franklin*. He received a promotion to ensign by December 18, 1871, and assigned to the *Portsmouth* followed by the *Lancaster*, the flagship of the South Atlantic Squadron. By January 13, 1873, Berry was promoted to master and assigned to the *Wasp*. After almost two years of service in South America aboard the *Wasp*, he was promoted to lieutenant on December 15, 1875.

Berry reported for torpedo service on June 1, 1876, in Newport, Rhode Island, and was briefly assigned to the *Colorado*, before he reported to the training ship *Monongahela* on March 19, 1877. He served aboard the *Monongahela* in the Asiatic squadron until November 21, 1879, when he was detached. Berry was then attached to the receiving ship *Passaic*, on which he served from May 3 to July 15, 1880. Upon detachment, Lieutenant Berry was immediately appointed to the Hydrographic Office, where he served until June 6, 1881, when he was attached to the *Despatch*. Berry was granted one month leave on September 26, 1881, to wed Lillian Reed Merriman. Upon his return, he was ordered to undergo ordnance instruction at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C.

In September 1883, Lieutenant Berry took an assignment on the *Trenton*, and one year later he was appointed as the executive officer and intelligence officer of the

*Palos*, both a part of the Asiatic Squadron. From August 1885 until April 1886, Berry served on Rear Admiral John Lee Davis's staff aboard the *Trenton* stationed in Yokohama, Japan. Upon completion of his Asiatic tour, he returned to the Washington Navy Yard where he remained until requesting a one-year leave to remain abroad. Upon his return, he was ordered to report to the *San Francisco*, the flagship of the South Pacific squadron, where he served for approximately three years. He briefly served aboard the *Richmond* toward the end of 1893. Afterward, he received an assignment on the U.S.R.S (receiving ship) *Minnesota* and U.S.R.S *Vermont*. From 1895 until 1897, Berry served on the *New York*, conducting various investigations and courts martial. After this assignment he was promoted to lieutenant commander, and appointed executive officer aboard the *Amphitrite* where he saw service in the Caribbean during the Spanish-American War. On May 10, 1899, Berry was detached from the *Amphitrite*, and designated assistant inspector in charge for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lighthouse District. During his two years as lighthouse inspector, he received a promotion to commander. Commander Berry was given command of the *Puritan*, a training ship, on December 10, 1901, and served until the vessel was decommissioned in April 1903. Following the decommissioning of the *Puritan*, Berry reported for instruction at the Naval War College on June 1, 1903. After one month of training at the college, he was assigned for duty as Inspector of Ordnance and Steam Engineering material at Bethlehem Steel Company where he served for almost three years. Berry was promoted to captain on June 28, 1905, while carrying out his duties at Bethlehem Steel.

In January 1906, Berry received an appointment as general inspector for the U.S.S. *Tennessee* (ACR-10) and given command upon commissioning of the armored cruiser, on July 17, 1906. The *Tennessee* departed for Panama on November 8, 1906, as an escort for the *Louisiana*, on which President Theodore Roosevelt sailed to observe the construction progress of the Panama Canal. After participating in the Jamestown Exposition from April to June 1907, the *Tennessee* departed for Royan, France, for duty with the Special Service Squadron. Upon his return to Virginia in October 1907, Berry was detached from the *Tennessee* and given command of the *Lancaster*, a training vessel, until June 1909. Upon relief, he was ordered to report for duty in San Francisco as commandant of the Pacific Naval District and the senior member of the board to conduct general surveys on vessels on the Pacific coast. It was in this capacity that Berry was promoted to rear admiral, on July 8, 1909. Rear Admiral Gleaves served in the aforementioned positions until his retirement from the Navy on September 16, 1910.

Berry died on May 12, 1938 at his home in Coronado, California. He was buried in the United States Naval Academy Cemetery along with his wife Lillian Merriman Berry. Albert and Lillian had two children, Mary Lillian and Albert Gleaves Berry, Jr. Albert Berry Gleaves, Jr., rose to the rank of lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy.

## Organization/Arrangement of Materials

Collection is arranged alphabetically by document type.

## Conditions of Access and Use

### Restrictions on Access:

No restrictions

### Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:

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## Index Terms

### Personal Names:

Berry, Albert Gleaves, 1848-1938

### Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:

United States. Navy -- Military life

United States. Navy -- Officers

### Subjects:

Naval law -- United States

Ordnance, Naval

Spanish-American War, 1898

Spanish-American War, 1898 -- Campaigns -- Cuba

### Geographic Names:

Annapolis (Md.) -- History -- 19<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources

Coronado (Calif.) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources

Jamestown (Va.) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources

Nashville (Tenn.) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources

New York City (N.Y.) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources

Puerto Rico -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources

Royan (France) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography --

Sources

San Francisco (Calif.) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources  
Yokohama (Japan) -- History -- 19<sup>th</sup> century -- Biography -- Sources

**Document Types:**

Albumen prints  
Blueprints (reprographic copies)  
Card photographs (photographs)  
Clippings (information artifacts)  
Correspondence  
Invitations  
Memorabilia  
Orders (military records)  
Pamphlets (information artifacts)  
Passports  
Photographs  
Postcards  
Writings (document genre)

**Acquisition and Appraisal**

**Provenance and Acquisition:**

The Albert Gleaves Berry Papers were donated by Mary Lillian Berry in 1971.

**Processing and Administrative Information**

**Preferred Citation:**

Albert Gleaves Berry Papers, 1865-1971, Tennessee State Library and Archives

**Processing Information:**

Processing completed by Zachary Keith in September 2016.

**Related Archival Materials:**

Catherine Berry Pilcher Avery Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives

## DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

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### CONTAINER LIST

Contents/Item Title	Date	Box	Folder
Certificates -- A. G. Berry	1880-1907	1	1
Correspondence -- Baldrige, H. A.	1939	1	2
Correspondence -- Berry, A. G.	1866-1935	1	3
Correspondence -- Berry, Lillian	1895-1971	1	4
Invitations	1881-1939	1	5
Memorabilia	undated	1	6
Military Orders -- Naval	1865-1893	1	7
Military Orders -- Naval	1894-1910	1	8
Newspaper clippings	undated	1	9
Obituaries	1883-1938	1	10
Pamphlets	undated	2	1
Photographs -- Albert G. Berry	undated	2	2
Photographs -- Albert G. Berry family	undated	2	3
Photographs -- Naval ships -- U.S.S. <i>Tennessee</i> , et al.	undated	2	4
Photographs -- Naval subjects	undated	2	5
Photographs -- Unidentified	undated	2	6
Programs	1879-1912	2	7
Sketches -- Biographical -- A. G. Berry	undated	2	8
Speeches -- A. G. Berry	undated	2	9
Speeches -- Governor John I. Cox	1906	2	10
Writings -- A. G. Berry, Jr. -- <u>Shaw-Aquitania</u> collision	October 9, 1918	2	11
Writings -- Excerpt	undated	2	13
Passports -- Albert G. Berry	1907	Oversize Folder 1	