Moses Brown papers

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Moses Brown papers
Dates: 1788-1816
Collection Call Number: mssBrown, Moses papers
Extent: 188 items
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: Correspondence and business papers belonging to the shipping merchant Moses Brown in relation to his business in the West Indies, Spain, and Portugal.
Language of Material: The records are in English.
Access
Collection is open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, please go to following web site.
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Moses Brown papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Acquisition Information
Biographical Note
Moses Brown was born in 1742 and raised on the Brown farm in West Newbury, Massachusetts. Brown learned the carriage trade as a boy and later moved to Newburyport, where he established his own chaise making and repair shop. Having acquired capital in the years before the Revolutionary War, he invested it in the importation of sugar and molasses, profiting handsomely, and investing thereafter in the West Indies trading, in ships of trade and in real estate. By 1790, Brown was the second wealthiest man in Newburyport. In 1792, he purchased the land, wharf, and flats at the foot of Green Street, where he established his distillery manufacturing New England Rum. Moses Brown invested his profits in widespread real estate purchases. As the largest holder of real estate in Newburyport, Brown owned many buildings, be he is best remembered for the one built at his direction on the public square of his creation - the Brown Square House now known as the Garrison Inn.
Scope and Content
This collection contains correspondence and business papers belonging to the shipping merchant Moses Brown in relation to his business in the West Indies, Spain, and Portugal. The letters are from agents and sea-captains to Moses Brown regarding his cargo. Also included are: bills of lading, invoices, accounts of sales of cargo, port changes, etc. The collection also contains several legal papers such as contracts and agreements. The collection is organized by the region of Brown's trade and commerce: Cuba and St. Thomas; Guadeloupe and Haiti; Jamaica; Martinique; Spain and Portugal; and Trinidad, St. Lucia, and Sint Eustatius (these categories are general in nature and not mutually exclusive; some of the ports show up in more than one of the categories). Browns' cargo consisted of various items including, but not limited to: sugar, potatoes, beef, fish, soap, butter, candles, coffee, lumber, lard, molasses, etc.
Arrangement
The collection is arranged by the region of Brown's trade. It is housed in one box.
Personal Names
Brown, Moses, 1742-1827 -- Archives
Subjects
Cargo ships -- United States
Coastwise shipping -- United States
Intercoastal shipping -- United States
Merchants -- Massachusetts -- Newburyport
Shipping -- Massachusetts -- Newburyport
Ships -- Cargo

Geographic Areas
Newburyport (Mass.) -- History -- 18th century -- Sources
Newburyport (Mass.) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources
Portugal -- Commerce -- United States
Spain -- Commerce -- United States
United States -- Commerce -- Portugal
United States -- Commerce -- Spain
United States -- Commerce -- West Indies
West Indies -- Commerce -- United States

Genre
Bills of lading
Letters (correspondence) -- 18th century
Letters (correspondence) -- 19th century
Ships' manifests
Ships' papers

Box 1  Moses Brown papers

Folder 1  Letters and documents: Cuba and St. Thomas (1793-1801)
          25 items

Folder 2  Letters and documents: Guadeloupe and Haiti (1789-1800)
          13 items

Folder 3  Letters and documents: Jamaica (1789-1809)
          30 items

Folder 4  Letters and documents: Martinique (1790-1816)
          52 items

Folder 5  Letters and documents: Spain and Portugal (1788-1800)
          32 items

Folder 6  Letters and documents: Trinidad, St. Lucia, and Sint Eustatius (1790-1802)
          36 items