



**DALLAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

*Remembering Dallas' past builds her future*

## **Franklin and Ann Chase papers, 1824-1883**

**A.40.155**

### **Finding aid**

#### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Franklin and Ann Chase

**Title:** Franklin and Ann Chase papers

**Dates:** 1824-1883

**Quantity:** 6 boxes, 2.5 linear ft

**Abstract:** Franklin Chase was a U.S. consul in Tampico, Tamaulipas, Mexico, and a merchant in partnership with his wife, Ann McClarmonde Chase. Ann Chase became known as the "Heroine of Tampico" for her activities during the U.S.-Mexico War. Papers are comprised of manuscripts, journals, correspondence, news clippings, and poems.

**Identification:** A.40.155; A.44.18

**Location:** In the archives of the Dallas Historical Society

**Language:** The materials are in English.

**Repository:** Dallas Historical Society

#### **Biographical Sketch**

Franklin and Ann Chase were business merchants located in Tampico, Mexico during the 1800's. Both were actively involved in local government and commerce. During the Mexican American War (1846-1848), in which the border of Texas was in dispute, Mexico forced American citizens, including Franklin Chase, to evacuate and leave their possessions for the Mexican government. Ann Chase, being of British citizenship, remained in Tampico and became an integral part of the war for the United States of America.

Franklin Chase was born June 3, 1807, in Newcastle, Maine, an inlet port town. Sometime prior to the mid-1830s, he established himself as a foreign merchant in the Mexican port of Tampico, in the state of Tamaulipas. From his first consular appointment in 1837 (as vice consul) through 1870, he would build a double career in commerce and government. Although he lamented the taxes and tariffs imposed on his trade by various Mexican authorities, Chase built or acquired for himself and his wife a "castle"-like mansion in Tampico which also came to serve as the customs house. He married Ann McClarmonde in 1838 and came to rely on her as business partner, agent

in the U.S., and informant. After his consular service ended and the Tampico enterprise closed, the Chases relocated to Brooklyn, New York. Widowed in 1874, Franklin Chase married Laura Adele Renaud de St. Felix. He died about 1893.

Ann McClarmonde Chase was born in Northern Ireland in 1809 and immigrated with her widowed mother and siblings to the United States in 1824. Shortly after arriving in New York, one brother established himself in business in Philadelphia. The mother died in 1825, after which time Ann joined her brother in Philadelphia and began keeping his books and in other ways assisting him in his work. The brother and sister moved to New Orleans in about 1834, and then to Tampico, where Ann would meet Franklin Chase. They married in 1838. In addition to a social role in Tampico's elite enclave of foreign merchants, Ann Chase also functioned as a businesswoman and full partner with her husband in the commercial firm of F&A Chase. When the U.S.-Mexico War began in May 1846, the Mexican government ordered all U.S. citizens to evacuate the country. Anna Chase's husband signed over his property to her in a successful effort to thwart its confiscation by the Mexican authorities. He left the country on June 7, and she stayed in Tampico to manage the family business. Her official status as a British subject exempted her from the evacuation order. Chase actively learned as much as she could about the port city's defenses. She spied on troop movements and even provided misinformation to local military officials. She passed along information to the U.S. Navy through neutral British sailors in the city. Local authorities suspected Chase of espionage, but she avoided arrest by stressing her supposed neutrality as a British subject and informing them that thousands of U.S. troops were preparing to take Tampico. She greatly exaggerated the number of troops. Upon finding out that U.S. troops had landed at Tampico, she raised a U.S. flag over her home. The invading troops named their fortifications after Chase: Fort Ann. She achieved a measure of celebrity because of her efforts and was nicknamed "The Heroine of Tampico." In later years, she kept the legend going, seeking a publisher for her book, and soliciting support in Washington for her husband and their firm during consular and financial disputes. She collected and wrote poetry and corresponded with other relatives and friends as well as with her husband and contacts in government and trade. Ann Chase died of cancer in Brooklyn on December 24, 1874.

Sources:

Chase Family Papers finding aid, AR343, Special Collections, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

A Continent Divided: The U.S. Mexican War, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries: <https://library.uta.edu/usmexicowar/collections/history/bio-Chase.htm>

<b>Scope and Contents Note</b>
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Papers are comprised of manuscripts, journals, correspondence, and news clippings from Ann Chase.

## Arrangement

The collection is organized by type of material, then chronologically.

## Restrictions

### Access Restrictions

Open for research by appointment.

### Use Restrictions

Permission to publish materials must be obtained from the staff of the Dallas Historical Society. Standard copyright restrictions apply.

## Related Material

M.45.26, silver tea set given to Franklin Chase by French residents of Tampico, 1866, and a painting of Ann Chase.

L.40.37.1 and L.40.37.5 (these books are in box 5 of this collection)

## Separated Material

NA

## Other Finding Aids

NA

## Index Terms

### Subjects (Persons):

Chase, Ann (Anna)

Chase, Franklin

### Subjects (History):

Mexican American War, 1846-1848.

### Places:

United States.

Texas.

Mexico.

Tampico (Tamaulipas, Mexico)

### Document Types:

Manuscripts (documents)

Correspondence  
Newspaper clippings

**Titles:**  
Historical Manuscripts Collection

<b>Administrative Information</b>
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**Preferred Citation**

Collections of the Dallas Historical Society, Franklin, and Ann Chase papers.

**Acquisition Information:**

Gift of Mr. And Mrs. George Rawson.

**Finding Aid authors:** Kaitlyn Price

-Updated May 2022 by Yaima Villarreal

<b>Description of Series</b>
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The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection/papers/records.

Box #	Folder #	Title/Description	Date
1	A.40.155.1	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1824;1836;1843
	A.40.155.2	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1846-1851
	A.40.155.3	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1852-1855
	A.40.155.4	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1856-1860
	A.40.155.5	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1862-1866
	A.40.155.6	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1867-1869
	A.40.155.7	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1870
	A.40.155.8	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	1871-1876
	A.40.155.9	Correspondence-Franklin Chase	undated
	A.40.155.10	Correspondence-Ann Chase	1847-1871; undated
	A.40.155.11	Correspondence-Ann and Franklin Chase	1852-1859
	A.40.155.12	Correspondence-Ann and Franklin Chase	1865-1870
	A.40.155.13	Correspondence-British and Foreign Bible Society	1863
	A.40.155.14	General Correspondence (1 item filed with oversize archives)	1839-1874; undated
	A.40.155.15	Notes: The State of Tamaulipas, Mexico	1869
	A.40.155.16	Envelopes	1869; undated
	A.40.155.17	Original Poetry – Ann Chase	1845
	A.40.155.18	Poetry – Miscellaneous	1858; undated
	A.40.155.19	Receipts	1837-1871; undated

	A.40.155.20	Official Documents (2 items filed with oversize archives)	1842-1870; undated
	A.40.155.21	Register – Department of State (United States of America)	1869-1870
2	A.40.155.22	Newspaper Clippings	1854-1883; undated
	A.40.155.23	Printed Material - Religious	undated
	A.40.155.24	Printed Materials – Miscellaneous	1862-1882
	A.40.155.25	Calling Cards	undated
	A.40.155.26	Miscellaneous	undated
	A.40.155.27	Photographs	1859; 1871; undated
	A.40.155.28	Photographs	undated
	A.40.155.29	Photographs	undated
	A.40.155.30	Photographs	undated
	A.40.155.31	Key to Ann Chase’s script/handwriting	undated
	A.40.155.32	Manuscript – Miscellaneous, loose manuscript pages, historical account of the Revolution of 1808, Notes by FC on Tamaulipas, Notes on Mexico, soil, and production	1852; undated
	A.40.155.33	Handwritten manuscript written by Ann Chase– Geography of Mexico and The Population of Mexico, Chapters 1 and 2 are bound together, with two additional copies or versions of chapter 2	undated
	A.40.155.34	Handwritten manuscript written by Ann Chase – Chapter 3, The Social Life, Customs and Manners of the Mexicans, multiple versions of this chapter, some may be incomplete	undated
	A.40.155.35	Small date book and ledger, 1834 (printed date) – “Thoughts of Life”, including list of accounts, list of clothing items. Towards the end, Ann Chase uses book as a diary, entry July 28, 1838, Tampico	1838
	A.40.155.36	Handwritten manuscript – pp. 1-134, journal kept by Ann Chase, includes poetry, personal thoughts, history	1844
	A.40.155.37	Handwritten manuscript written by Ann Chase – pp. 135-230	1844
	A.40.155.38	Handwritten manuscript written by Ann Chase – pp. 231-348, includes paper cover titled “Manuscript No. 3 – 1845 Tampico – March 21, 1845, Ann Chase”	1845
3	A.40.155.39	Handwritten manuscript – pp. 349-467, titled “Ann Chase’s Book M.S. No 4”, June 19, 1845 – May 13, 1846	1845-1846
	A.40.155.40	Manuscript – Journal of Events, Tampico, June 7, 1846, Journal kept by Ann Chase when her	1846

		husband had evacuated due to war (June 7-Dec 31, 1846)	
	A.40.155.41	Manuscript - Poetry, thoughts of life. Copies of letters from 1847, from A. Harrison, detailing Ann Chase's role in the occupation of Tampico (pp. 57-61)	1854-1860
	A.40.155.42	Manuscript written by Ann Chase- History and Notes on Mexican Republic, journal, notes on Mexico, and smaller group of papers, inset that includes "List of Mexican Navy, dated Feb. 14, 1846	1859
	A.40.155.43	Journal kept by Ann Chase, Tampico, January 14, 1860	1860
	A.40.155.44	Journal, written by Ann Chase, Tampico September 29, 1860, 7 loose pages	1860
	A.40.155.45	Small ledger book	1863 -1871
	A.40.155.46	Journal kept by Ann Chase, "Notes on particular events in Mexico and in which all parties are engaged" Tampico May 1866, and July 1866	1866
		*Two additional folders included in Box 3 contain photocopies of the above listed manuscripts	
4	A.40.155.47	Manuscript written by Ann Chase, "Journal of events of the wars against Mexico by the Americans" Tampico January 1, 1847	1847
	A.40.155.48	Journal kept by Ann Chase. Includes ledgers and poems written by Ann to Franklin Chase, as well as poems written to Ann, honoring her actions. Many pages have been cut out of the journal near the back	1844-1857
	A.40.155.49	Handwritten Manuscript, draft of part of Ann Chase's Historical account of Mexico, Chapter 1 - History of Mexico, Chapter 2 - Population of Mexico	1850's
	A.40.155.50	Ledger/scrapbook. Ledger book with news clippings on the Mexican American war pasted over ledger accounts, middle of the book has ledger lists, and drafts of letters have been written in the back.	1858-1863
	A.40.155.51	Manuscript/ journal kept by Ann Chase, first entry titled- "Notes on Mexico and other subjects"	1859-1860
	A.40.155.52	Journal kept by Ann Chase. Many of the pages are blank. Inside front cover a poem that seems to be clipped from a newspaper is pasted, titled "To Mrs. Chase The Heroine of Tampico"	1864
	A.40.155.53	Handwritten table of contents/index for Ann Chase's Manuscript- A.40.155.54-A.40.155.62	undated

5	A.40.155.54	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 1-128, "Ann Chase - Journal of Mexican events from 1834 to the close of the war between the United States and Mexico in May 1848, No. 1"	1834-1850
	A.40.155.55	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 129-266, "Historical journal of events... by Ann Chase, 1850, No. 2"	undated
	A.40.155.56	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 267-372, "Journal of Historical events in Mexico by Mrs. Ann Chase, No. 3"	undated
	A.40.155.57	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 373-480, "Journal of Mexican Events by Mrs. Ann Chase" (No 4)	undated
	A.40.155.58	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 481-615, "Journal of Mexican Historical Events by Mrs. Ann Chase No 5"	undated
	L.40.37.1	The Book of Common Prayer – this miniature book previously belonging to Ann Chase is housed in Box 5	
	L.40.37.5	El Nuevo Testamento – this miniature book is housed in Box 5	
6	A.40.155.59	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 616-800, "Journal of Mexican Historical Events by Ann Chase of Tampico, Santa Anna de Tamaulipas Book No 6"	undated
	A.40.155.60	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 801-985, "Journal of Historical Mexican Events by Ann Chase of Tampico of Santa Anna de Tamaulipas Book No 7"	undated
	A.40.155.61	Handwritten manuscript - pp. 986-1088, "Journal of Ann Chase Tampico de Tamaulipas Mexico 1847" (No 8)	1847
	A.40.155.62	Manuscript - pp. 1089-1360, "Historical Events – War of Mexico with U.S. Journal continued by Ann Chase of Tampico Mexico"	undated