Guide to the Turner family papers, 1797-1846 (bulk 1823-1846)

Collection overview:

- **Title:** Turner family papers
- **Date range (inclusive dates):** 1797-1846
- **Bulk dates:** 1823-1846
- **Creator:** Turner family
- **Extent:** 0.2 linear feet (5 folders)
- **Abstract:** Deeds, accounts, court martial proceedings, and correspondence concerning various members of the Turner family of both East Greenwich and Newport, Rhode Island, particularly Dr. Peter Turner (1751-1822), Dr. William Turner (1757-1837), and Commodore Peter Turner (1803-1871).
- **Language of materials:** English
- **Repository:** Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island
- **Collection number:** RLC.Ms.573

Access and use:

- **Access to the collection:** Access is open to members and researchers at the Redwood Library and Athenaeum.
- **Use of the materials:** This collection is owned by the Redwood Library and Athenaeum. Permission to publish materials must be obtained in writing from the Special Collections Librarian of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum.
- **Preferred citation:** Turner family papers, RLC.Ms.573, Redwood Library and Athenaeum.

Administrative information:

- **About the collection**
  - **Acquisition:** Acquisition is unknown.
  - **Processing information:** Prior to processing in 2014, these materials were found within the Steel Cabinet Collection: Drawer 14, Folder 2.
- **About the finding aid**
  - **Author and Encoding:** Elizabeth Delmage, 2014 Oct
  - **Descriptive rules:** Finding aid based on Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)
Biographical note:

Dr. William Turner (1712-1754), originally from Newport, Rhode Island, married Mehitable Foster (b. 1715) and the couple had four children: Lydia (b. 1746), William (1748-1755), Daniel (1751-1837), and Peter (1751-1822). Dr. Turner attended Harvard and worked as a physician and surgeon in Newark, New Jersey. Dr. Turner’s youngest son, Peter Turner (1751-1822), was born on September 2, 1751, in New Jersey. Peter Turner graduated from Princeton and served as a surgeon in the Continental Army from 1776-1781. He married Eliza Child (1752-1819) on March 21, 1776, and they had nine children including Mehitable Foster (1780-1853). After the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), Peter Turner and his family moved to East Greenwich, Rhode Island, where he ran a successful surgical practice until his death on February 14, 1822.

Captain Daniel Turner (1750-1837), the second eldest son of Dr. William Turner (1712-1754), married Sarah Foster (1754-1809) with whom he had ten children. One of their sons was William Turner (1775-1837), born on September 10, 1775, in Perth Ambroy, New Jersey. William Turner (1775-1837) began to practice medicine at the age of nineteen after graduating from Princeton. He married his first cousin Mehitable Foster (1780-1853), the daughter of Peter Turner (1751-1822). William and Mehitable had nine children including Peter Turner (1803-1871) and moved to Newport, Rhode Island, sometime before 1824. Dr. William Turner (1775-1837) also served as an assistant surgeon in the United States Army and on at least one occasion served as a Special Judge Advocate for a general court martial held at Fort Wolcott. He died on September 26, 1837, in Newport.

Peter Turner (1803-1871), the son of William (1775-1837) and Mehitable Turner had a successful career in the United States Navy rising the ranks from Midshipman to Commodore throughout his forty-eight years of service. He was named Commodore in 1862 and was stationed at the Philadelphia Naval Asylum, where he remained until his death in 1871. Peter Turner married Sarah Stafford Jones (1826-1875) and they had five children.

Scope and content note:

This collection consists of deeds, accounts, court martial proceedings, and correspondence relating primarily to Dr. William Turner (1757-1837) and his son Commodore Peter Turner (1803-1871). Also included is a deed from Turner’s uncle, Dr. Peter Turner (1751-1822) regarding his property in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, and financial accounts regarding various members of the Turner family.

The papers of Dr. William Turner (1757-1837) are comprised of deeds, mortgage deeds, an insurance policy, and documents from a court martial at Fort Wolcott in 1822. Turner’s legal documents concern his land holdings and purchases in Newport, Rhode Island, for both his personal residence and physician’s office. Also found are correspondence and court proceedings from a general court martial held at Fort Wolcott, a small Army fortification on Goat Island in the Newport Harbor, that Turner
served as Special Judge Advocate. In this court martial, Turner and other Army representatives decided on the sentences for soldiers charged with desertion and disobedience of orders.

Papers concerning Commodore Peter Turner (1803-1871) include letters he sent and received in regards to his deceased father’s unpaid mortgages and estate in Newport, Rhode Island. They also reference his mother’s interest in the estate and his plans on moving forward to sell the property.

Arrangement:
This collection is arranged in chronological order.

Inventory:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuscripts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Peter Turner (1751-1822) deed</td>
<td>1797 Apr 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Turner family accounts</td>
<td>1814 Oct 17-1815 Jun 20,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1830 Apr 30, 1839 Jan 25</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>William Turner (1757-1837) deeds, insurance policy</td>
<td>1823 Dec 26-1833 Jan 3</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>and undated</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Proceedings of a general court martial held at</td>
<td>1828 Jan 24-May 21</td>
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<td>Fort Wolcott with William Turner (1757-1837) as</td>
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<td>Special Judge Advocate</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Peter Turner (1803-1871) correspondence</td>
<td>1831 Jun 11, 1846 Feb 4-Jun 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access terms:

Names:
- Turner, Peter, 1751-1822
- Turner, Peter, 1803-1871
- Turner, William, 1757-1837

Subjects:
- Courts-martial and courts of inquiry
- East Greenwich (R.I.)
- Newport (R.I.)

Genre terms:
- Accounts
- Deeds
- Letters (correspondence)
- Mortgage deeds