

# **Guide to the Henry C. Murphy papers ARC.189**

**Finding aid prepared by Larry Weimer**

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Brooklyn Historical Society
<b>Creator</b>	Murphy, Henry Cruse, 1810-1882
<b>Title</b>	Henry C. Murphy collection
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	Bulk, 1830-1880
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	circa 1700-circa 1880
<b>Extent</b>	1.25 linear feet in 3 manuscript boxes and 1 oversize folder
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Language of Materials</b>	The bulk of the materials are in English. Some documents are in Dutch, some of those with English translations. Other languages in the collection include French and Latin.
<b>Abstract</b>	Henry Cruse Murphy (1810-1882) was a Brooklyn lawyer, Democratic Party politician, U.S. Minister to the Netherlands (1857-1861), officer of the New York Bridge Company, and historian. The bulk of the collection reflects Murphy's interest in history, and is comprised of his research notes, transcriptions, translations, abstracts, and draft writings concerning the European exploration and colonization of the Americas. The research material relates to both Murphy's intended works and his published works concerning Henry Hudson, Verrazano, and others. There is substantial correspondence from E. B. O'Callaghan concerning Bohemia Manor, the Labadist settlement in Cecil County, Maryland. The collection also includes many documents related to Murphy's political and commercial interests, such as two letters from candidate and president-elect James Buchanan and a letters-patent for a horse wheel to propel boats, and his observations on the Netherlands while representing the U.S. in that

country. The bulk of the collection is in English, but some documents are in Dutch, French, or Latin.

**Preferred Citation**

Identification of item, date (if known); Henry C. Murphy papers, ARC.189, Box and Folder number; Brooklyn Historical Society.

## Biographical/Historical note

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Henry Cruse Murphy (1810-1882) was a Brooklyn lawyer, Democratic Party politician, U.S. Minister to the Netherlands, businessman, editor, and historian. Murphy was the eldest son of John Murphy and Clarissa Runyon, a couple originally from New Jersey who had moved to Brooklyn after their marriage. John Murphy became a leading figure in Brooklyn's public and commercial life; among other notable accomplishments, Murphy, with Rodman Bowne, invented and patented a horse-powered wheel used to propel ferries across the East River.

Henry Murphy, born in Brooklyn on July 5, 1810, graduated from Columbia College in 1830. He studied law under Peter W. Radcliffe of New York, and started his own practice in 1833, with offices in the Apprentices' Library Building at Pineapple and Fulton. Murphy became actively involved with the newly-incorporated city of Brooklyn in several ways, including as corporation counsel and as mayor. Murphy was active in local Democratic Party circles as a partner in the politically influential firm of Lott, Murphy and Vanderbilt. On the national political stage, he served two terms in the U.S. Congress (1843-1848) and was an active supporter of James Buchanan in his successful candidacy for U.S. President in 1856. Murphy's support was rewarded in 1857 with his appointment as U.S. Minister to the Netherlands (1857-1861). After returning to Brooklyn, Murphy was elected to the New York State Senate six times, beginning in 1863. As a state senator in the late 1860s, Murphy was involved in the creation of the New York Bridge Company, the corporate entity responsible for building the Brooklyn Bridge, and later became an officer of the company.

Throughout his adult life, Murphy also pursued an interest in literary and historical matters. He amassed a large library; translated historical works, notably those written in Dutch; and conducted research concerning colonial American history in various archives, including the Dutch Archives while he was in Europe. Murphy authored several works, including monographs on Henry Hudson, Giovanni da Verrazano, and Jacob Steendam, a Dutch poet in New Netherlands. Murphy was a founder of the Long Island Historical Society (now Brooklyn Historical Society), which published his translation of the *Journal of a Voyage to New York* by Jaspas Dankers and Peter Sluyter.

Murphy died on December 1, 1882, and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery.

(Principal source: *Memoir of Hon. Henry C. Murphy, LL.D., of Brooklyn, N.Y.* by Henry Stiles. Available in the Brooklyn Historical Society library, call number CT275.M87.S85.1883).

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## Scope and Contents note

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The bulk of the collection is comprised of Murphy's research notes, transcriptions, translations, abstracts, and draft writings concerning the European exploration and colonization of the Americas. Much of this

material is related to Murphy's published works on Henry Hudson, Giovanni da Verrazano, and Jacob Steendam, a Dutch poet in New Netherlands. Yet much is also related to broader research he conducted, apparently in anticipation of writing a more encompassing history of the period. Accordingly, material on the explorers Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon, Ponce de Leon, Estevan Gomez, and Champlain, among others, is in the research notes. Murphy's analyses of various maps of the New World are in the notes, along with correspondence indicating the sources of some of the maps he used. New Netherlands is one point of Murphy's research emphasis, and his notes include his English language abstracts from the Dutch colonial records held in the New York State Archives at Albany and from Bushwick town records of the late Dutch period. Writings related to the English period of colonization in New York are in the notes. The research material also includes substantial correspondence from New York State Librarian E. B. O'Callaghan and others concerning Bohemia Manor, the Labadist settlement in Cecil County, Maryland. Although most of the research material is in English, or has English translations, some of the notes are in Dutch or Latin.

In addition to research notes, the collection includes some documents related to Murphy's career. Political correspondence includes two letters to Murphy from candidate and president-elect James Buchanan concerning the 1856 election, references and invitations from presidents Tyler and Polk, and draft remarks on the importance of a local election to the country. Correspondence from the colonel of the 1st New York Infantry Regiment stationed in California during the Mexican War requests funds from Congress for transport of the regiment back to Brooklyn and includes many observations about the poor economic prospects of California for a Northerner. Murphy's time in the Netherlands is represented with documents recording his observations and conclusions, summaries of what appear to have been discussions with others about the country, anecdotes and folktales, and a small amount of correspondence, some of which is in Dutch and French.

A few documents represent Murphy's business interests, including some notes concerning the Brooklyn Bridge, a list of payments made by Murphy as treasurer of the Atlantic Bank Association (1836-1838), and a letters-patent granted to Murphy's father and Rodman Bowne for a horse-wheel to propel boats (1818), signed by President James Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams. The collection also includes a commonplace book of literary matter, certifications of Murphy's elections to the New York State Senate, a copy of his appointment letter from President Buchanan as Minister to the Netherlands, his diploma of graduation from Columbia College, and other such documents.

The collection also includes various original artifacts collected by Murphy. These include inscriptions taken from a Dutch cemetery in Brooklyn; a birthday ode, original document in Dutch, with English translation (1700s); two letters, from Edward Bridgen to John Adams and to Benjamin Franklin (1786); two pages from a published index of New York marriages (circa 1664-circa 1783); an advertising flier for property in a temperance village in Brooklyn (circa 1849), and a draft agreement for a teacher in Newtown and Bushwick (circa 1701).

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## Arrangement note

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Murphy's research notes, translations, abstracts, drafts, correspondence concerning research, and the like comprise about two and one-half of the three manuscript boxes of material in the collection. This material is presented first and is arranged in rough historical order by chronology and topic (from first European explorations to later colonial periods). The date range within the folder description indicates the approximate period covered by the topic of the documents; the date range of the folder itself indicates the approximate date that Murphy prepared the material.

The final one-half box of material principally holds material related to Murphy's political and commercial interests, and his position as Minister to the Netherlands. The final folder holds miscellaneous documents.

The material is not necessarily in its original order. Several of the documents appeared to be disordered or incomplete, and a best effort was made during processing to put related documents and loose pages of documents together, but there can be no assurance that this was done with complete accuracy.

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## **Administrative Information**

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### **Publication Information**

Brooklyn Historical Society April 2011

### **Conditions Governing Access**

Open to researchers without restriction.

### **Conditions Governing Use note**

Materials in this collection are in the public domain.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

The bulk of the collection was given to the Long Island Historical Society (now the Brooklyn Historical Society) by Murphy's son, Henry C. Murphy, Jr., in 1901.

### **Processing Information note**

Collection arranged and described by Larry Weimer, April 2011.

This collection combines the following 14 accessions: 1973.119, 1973.204, 1973.205, 1973.206, 1973.207, 1973.208, 1973.209, 1973.210, 1973.211, 1974.163, 1974.167, 1977.004, 1977.421, and 1977.645.

## Related Materials

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### Related Archival Materials note

#### *Material at BHS*

The Henry Onderdonk papers (ARC.045) includes correspondence from Murphy to Onderdonk.

The Thomas N. Schroth and Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., Brooklyn Eagle collection (ARC.093) holds at least one image of Murphy, a founder of the paper.

The Davenport family papers (1977.345) includes material concerning Murphy.

The Danckaerts and Sluyter journals (1974.024), acquired by Murphy, are held by BHS. The journals are in Dutch. Murphy's published translation is available in the BHS library at call number E162.D36 J68 1966.

Several of Murphy's published works and his speeches, as well as material about Murphy, are available on the BHS library shelves. These can be found by searching Murphy's name in the on-line catalog, Bobcat.

A property map related to the South Brooklyn temperance village flier found in the miscellaneous folder of the collection can be found in the BHS map collection at call number B P-[184?].Fl.

#### *Material Outside BHS*

Correspondence from Murphy is found in the papers of E. B. O'Callaghan at the Library of Congress and in the papers of Thomas S. Boccock at the University of Virginia.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Corporate Name(s)

- United States. Army. New York Infantry Regiment, 1st (1846-1848). -- Correspondence

### Genre(s)

- Certificates
- commonplace books
- Correspondence

- diplomas
- letters patent
- Manuscripts (document genre)
- Research notes
- transcripts
- translations (documents)

### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) |x Politics and government |y 19th century
- California |x Description and travel
- Netherlands |x Description and travel
- New York (N.Y.) |x History |y Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775

### **Personal Name(s)**

- Buchanan, James, 1791-1868 -- Correspondence
- Murphy, Henry Cruse, 1810-1882
- O'Callaghan, E. B., (Edmund Bailey), 1797-1880 -- Correspondence

### **Subject(s)**

- History |x Research |z North America
- History |x Research |z South America
- Labadists |z Maryland

## Collection Inventory

	Dates	Box	Folder
Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (1 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	1
<b>General note</b>			
Includes analyses of maps by Mercator, de la Cosa, Ruysch, etc. and their relation to accounts of expeditions.			
Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (2 of 10)	1868	1	2
<b>General note</b>			
Includes analysis of different editions of Waldseemuller's <i>Cosmographiae Introductio</i> .			
Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (3 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	3
<b>General note</b>			
Includes Vespucci and claims for European discovery of America.			

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Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (4 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	4
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**General note**

Includes de Leon, Narvaez, Magellan, del Castillo, de Cordova.

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Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (5 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	5
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**General note**

Includes Estevan Gomez (Portuguese) and Spanish explorations.

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Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (6 of 10)	circa 1874	1	6
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**General note**

Includes land grant charges against Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon (circa 1526)

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Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (7 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	7
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**General note**

Includes Norse/Northmen and Champlain.

Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (8 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	8
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**General note**

Includes Northern explorations, Verrazano, Hudson, Cabot.

Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (9 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	9
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**General note**

Includes summaries of various research sources.

Research Notes: European Exploration of the Americas, 1500s-1600s (10 of 10)	circa 1860- circa 1880	1	10
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**General note**

Includes Sweden, Daniel Ebeling work, Delaware, New York

Transcriptions: New France, 1627-1672 (3 folders)	circa 1860	2	1-3
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**General note**

Principally includes abstracts, in English, of the Jesuit *Relations*.

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Transcriptions: Articles re: American Indians, 1744-1818	circa 1870	2	4
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Research Notes: Dutch and New Netherlands, 1600s (4 folders)	circa 1860- circa 1880	2	5-8
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**General note**

Includes Bushwick records (translated extracts, 1660-1664), Jacob Steendam, Danckaerts, Dutch West India Company.

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Translation: A Brief Account of the Situation in New Netherland, 1662	circa 1836	2	9
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Transcriptions: New Netherlands, 1664-1665	circa 1836	2	10
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Translation: Ebeling on New Netherlands, 1600s	circa 1830s	2	11
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Research Notes: Dutch Manuscripts at Albany, 1638-1669 (folder 1 of 4)	circa 1870s	2	12
Research Notes: Dutch Manuscripts at Albany, 1638-1669 (folders 2, 3, and 4 of 4)	circa 1870	3	1-3
Extracts from John Thurloe's State Papers, 1653-1656	circa 1860	3	4
Transcription: "In relation to the fleet sent over by the protector to surprise the Dutch," 1654	circa 1860	3	5
Manuscript: New York and Benjamin Fletcher, 1693-1694	undated	3	6
Transcriptions: English Colonial Government Records, 1639-1779	undated	3	7
Transcription: Attack of Fort William Henry / Colonel Frye's Journal, 1757, 1776	circa 1870	3	8

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Transcriptions: English Colonial Records and Writings, 1605-1780	1841- circa 1870s	3	9
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Memoranda Taken from Tombstones, Old Dutch Burying Ground, Fulton St. near Smith St., 1685-1845	1862-1863	3	10
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Commonplace Book of Lighter Selections	1831	3	11
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**General note**

Includes extracts from poems, plays, essays, and historical and biographical writings.

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Correspondence: Labadists at Bohemia Manor, Maryland	1859-1860	3	12
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Correspondence: Historical Research	circa 1700, 1840-1879	3	13
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**General note**

Includes a draft agreement for a teacher at Bushwick and Newtown, circa 1700.

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Correspondence: European	1858-1861	3	14
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**General note**

Includes documents in Dutch and in French.

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Correspondence: Political Matters	1844- circa 1859	3	15
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**General note**

Includes correspondence from Col. Stevenson of the 1st Regiment, New York Infantry (1848); 2 letters from candidate and president-elect James Buchanan (1856); and one letter from president John Tyler.

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Notes on the Netherlands	circa 1860	3	16
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Commercial Matters	1818- circa 1880	3	17
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**General note**

Includes Atlantic Bank Association and New York Bridge Company. A letters patent for a horse wheel is in the oversize box.

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Certificates, Degrees, Appointments	1830-1870	3	18
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**General note**

Columbia College diploma moved to oversize box.

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Miscellaneous Documents	1701- circa 1849	3	19
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**General note**

Includes a birthday ode, original document in Dutch, with English translation (1700s); 2 letters, from Edward Bridgen to John Adams and to Benjamin Franklin (1786); two pages from a published index of New York marriages (circa 1664-circa 1783); advertising flier for property in a temperance village in Brooklyn (circa 1849).

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Oversize Material	1818-1830	4	1
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