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### Letter Book of U.S. Corvette *St. Louis*, 1852-1855

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#### Collection Summary

<b>Title:</b>	Letter Book of U.S. Corvette <i>St. Louis</i> , 1852-1855
<b>Call Number:</b>	MS 87-06
<b>Size:</b>	0.25 linear feet
<b>Acquisition:</b>	Purchased from Sotheby's
<b>Processed By:</b>	LTM: 9-15-1986; JEF, 12-18-1997; MN, 10-2008
<b>Note:</b>	None
<b>Restrictions:</b>	None

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#### Restrictions

None

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#### Content Note

The letterbook of the U.S. Corvette *St. Louis*, August 1852-May 1855, is the record of correspondence kept by the Corvette's commander, David N. Ingraham, while on duty in the Mediterranean. Found by Samuel Peacock, Jr. of Middletown, Delaware, among old papers, the volume was rebound in October 1881.

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#### Administrative History

Most of Commander David N. Ingraham's letters deal with disciplinary problems relating to his crew on the U.S. Corvette *St. Louis*, a fast sailing ship, but a portion deals with the "Martin Costa (Kosztá) Affair." Koszta, a Hungarian nationalist, was kidnapped by Austrian officials, but had declared U.S. citizenship. While U.S. diplomats tried to fight for Koszta's release, the Austrians planned to take him to Austria to stand trial for revolutionary activities. At this point, Ingraham demanded his release. Finally, the diplomats managed to get Koszta under joint custody of the French, American, and Austrian consulates until his citizenship could be decided. This is an early

example of "gunboat diplomacy." Ingraham was praised and Koszta was allowed to return to the United States.

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## Detailed Description: Box and Folder Listing

Box 1	Introductory Note	Middletown, Delaware, October 15, 1881: Samuel Peacock mentions in this introductory note that he found the letterbook of the U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> during the Martin Koszta Affair (1852-1855) among some old papers. He says where he could not preserve the letters he copied them by hand. Finally, Peacock informs us that the letters belong to Commander David N. Ingraham who was captain of the ship during this time.
Box 1	Leaf 1	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Norfolk, August 9, 1852: Ingraham informs Com. R. B. Cunningham of the Norfolk shipyard that he has six 100 gallon casks to unload.
Box 1	Leaf 1	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Norfolk, August 17, 1852: Ingraham requests Brig. Gen. Hunderson Col. commandant of the Marine Corps that a Corporal Adam Kuhn be allowed to leave the Marine Corps and serve on board the U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> .
Box 1	Leaf 1	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Norfolk, August 17, 1852: Ingraham informs John P. Kennedy, Secretary of the Navy, that his ship and officers passed inspection.
Box 1	Leaf 1	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , At Sea, August 24, 1852: Ingraham informs Kennedy that the ship did not get to sea until the 24th due to high winds and heavy rain.
Box 1	Leaf 2	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Port Mahon, December 2, 1852: Ingraham informs S. H. Stringham, Commander in Chief of Naval and Marine forces in the Mediterranean, that he has brought formal charges against seven of his sailors.
Box 1	Leaf 2	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Genoa, February 18, 1853: Ingraham informs Stringham that he arrived at Genoa the 15th after three and a half days from Marsailles.
Box 1	Leaf 3	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Spezia, February 24, 1853: Ingraham informs Stringham that he has obeyed his orders to sail for the different parts along the Mediterranean.
Box 1	Leaf 4	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Spezia, February 24, 1853: Ingraham informs Stringham that the ship is ready to sail and is loaded with provisions.
Box 1	Leaf 4	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Alexandria, April 22, 1853: Ingraham allows Lieutenant E. H. Parrott a leave of absence from the ship until the 38th to visit Cairo.
Box 1	Leaf 4	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Alexandria, April 22, 1853: Ingraham allows Acting Master W. D. Austin to leave for Cairo as well.
Box 1	Leaf 4	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Alexandria, April 22, 1853: Ingraham allows Assistant Surgeon W. T. Corrington to leave for Cairo as well.
Box 1	Leaf 5	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Alexandria, April 24, 1853: Ingraham informs Midshipman Edgar Broahead that he is excused from duty.

Box 1	Leaf 5	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Alexandria, April 28, 1853: Ingraham requests Captain Thomas Crabbe of the U. S. Steam Frigate <i>Sam Jacinto</i> to send a medical survey on Seaman Edward Lyons and Seaman Thomas Suce.
Box 1	Leaf 5	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Piraeus, June 16, 1853: Ingraham informs Stringham that he has sailed according to his orders and landed in such ports as Joffa, Beirut, Alexandria, and will leave for Smyrna.
Box 1	Leaf 6	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Piraeus, June 20, 1853: Ingraham informs Commodore Stringham of a disciplinary problem with Seaman Parker.
Box 1	Leaf 6-Leaf 7	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, June 24, 1853: Ingraham informs American consul at Smyrna Edward Offley that he is outraged by the conduct of the Austrian consul upon Martin Costa, to take him by force to an Austrian warship, since he claimed to be an American citizen. Unfortunately, he has no passport and has not strictly lived up to the regulations to become an American citizen. Yet Ingraham desires help.
Box 1	Leaf 6-Leaf 7	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, June 25, 1853: Ingraham has requested clarification on Costa's citizenship from Consul Offley.
Box 1	Leaf 8-Leaf 9	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, June 28, 1853: Ingraham reports to George P. Marsh the U. S. Minister to the Ottoman Porte the events involving Martin Costa. He is an Austrian subject, but he signed an intention for U. S. citizenship, but under U. S. law he cannot be technically protected by the U. S. government. Also, Ottoman officials will not help in this matter.
Box 1	Leaf 9	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna Roads, Evening, June 28, 1853: Ingraham requests that the Commander of the <i>Husar</i> turn Costa over to Ingraham by 4:00 p.m. the same day.
Box 1	Leaf 10-Leaf 11	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, July 5, 1853: Ingraham informs James C. Dobbin, Secretary of the Navy the events in the Costa affair and defends his action in this situation. Costa is released into the joint custody of the French, American, and Austrian consulates until Costa's citizenship can be determined.
Box 1	Leaf 11-Leaf 12	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, July 5, 1853: Ingraham informs George P. March, Minister of the United States at Constantinople, the events of the "Costa Affair" and hopes March will back him up.
Box 1	Leaf 12	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, July 6, 1853: Ingraham informs Commodore Stringham of the "Costa Affair" and says that he will give a full account of the events personally at Spezia.
Box 1	Leaf 13	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, July 10, 1853: Ingraham was delighted to hear that George March, United States Minister at Constantinople approved his action in the "Costa Affair."
Box 1	Leaf 13	U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Spezia, August 17, 1853: Ingraham informs Commodore Stringham that he has just arrived at Spezia and plans to receive Mr. DeLeon Consul General to Alexandria on board as soon as they dock.
Box 1	Leaf 13	U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Spezia, September 19, 1853: Ingraham informs Consul General DeLeon that his ship is at his disposal whenever he wishes to take him anywhere.

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| Box 1 | Leaf 14 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Gulf of Spezia, September 20, 1853: Ingraham acknowledges the communication that a seaman was acquitted by the Spezia court and will be received aboard the <i>St. Louis</i> .                       |
| Box 1 | Leaf 14 | U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Spezia, October 10, 1853: Ingraham informs Lieutenant J. T. Stevson that he is released from arrest and is to return to duty.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 14 | U.S.S. <i>St. Louis</i> , Spezia, November 5, 1853: Ingraham informs Commodore Stringham that he is ready to sail for Alexandria later that same day.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 14 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Malta, December 9, 1853: Ingraham informs Commodore Stringham of the whereabouts of his voyage.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 15 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Port Mahon, December 31, 1853: Ingraham reports to Commodore Stringham that many repairs have to be made on the ship before he can sail again, but hopes to sail again by mid January.               |
| Box 1 | Leaf 15 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , At Sea, January 27, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham of a personnel problem with a Lieutenant Stevson. Stevson has been drunk on duty and has been arrested and dismissed of his duties.             |
| Box 1 | Leaf 16 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Genoa, February 1, 1854: Ingraham informs Lieutenant J. Fenwick Stevson that he has to resign his commission until his case can be brought before Commodore Stringham and the Secretary of the Navy. |
| Box 1 | Leaf 16 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Spezia, February 13, 1854: Ingraham informs the Secretary of the Navy that he does not want to return home because his health has improved. However, he does wish to bring the ship home soon.       |
| Box 1 | Leaf 17 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Naples, February 28, 1854: Ingraham informs Commodore Stringham that the Costa Affair has been resolved, but the government has requested Ingraham to journey to Messina to conclude the matter.     |
| Box 1 | Leaf 17 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Constantinople, March 29, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham of the developments that are taking place to become the Crimean War.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 18 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Constantinople, May 14, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that 18,000 British troops are stationed in Constantinople to head toward the Crimea soon.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 18 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Constantinople, May 15, 1854: Ingraham informs Acting Lieutenant W. D. Austin that he has been commissioned as a Lieutenant.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 18 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Constantinople, May 15, 1854: Ingraham informs Acting Master Edward Barrett that he has been commissioned to Master.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 19 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Constantinople, May 16, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that his ship does not need to go the the Bosphorous to protect American interests since the British troops are in the area.                |

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| Box 1 | Leaf 19 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Smyrna, May 31, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that he has just arrived in Smyrna and British troops have been sent to Varno to operate against the Russians.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 20 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Spezia, July 13, 1854: Ingraham informs Acting Master Barrett that he has a pass to visit Florence.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 20 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Gulf of Spezia, July 20, 1854: Ingraham informs Midshipman Smith he has a pass to visit Florence.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 20 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Gulf of Spezia, July 24, 1854: Ingraham gives Stringham a progress report of all the ports he has visited up to date and he is ready to sail again.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 21 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Naples, September 15, 1854: Ingraham informs Midshipman Parker that he is under arrest until his case can be heard.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 21 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Naples, September 16, 1854: Ingraham informs Lieutenant Taylor that he cannot return to duty due to his misconduct.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 21 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Naples, September 20, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that he could not land at Barcelona and Palermo due to a cholera epidemic but sailed for Malta to repair his ship.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 22 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , At Sea, September 23, 1854: Ingraham informs Midshipman Parker that he is under arrest until his case can be heard.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 22 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Civita Veechia, September 29, 1854: Ingraham informs Midshipman Parker that he can visit Rome.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 22 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Naples, October 12, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham of the misconduct of Midshipman Parker in detail.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 23 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Spezia, October 14, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham of sailors who are under arrest. They were arrested for desertion, assault, or violence.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 23 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Spezia, October 20, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that he cannot find out if some of his men broke the carriage of Soavla until he is willing to identify them. He also says that a reward has been placed for the capture of several deserters. |
| Box 1 | Leaf 24 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Spezia, October 25, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that he tried to sail for Barcelona and Palermo but the cholera was still there but instead sailed to Tripoli, Malta, Naples, Civita Veechia, and finally Spezia as ordered.                   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 24 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Spezia, October 7, 1854: Ingraham informs the American consuls at Seghorn and Genoa that Seaman George Corbett has been Court Martialed and they are not to help him in any way.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 24 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Barcelona, November 14, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that he has arrived in Barcelona as ordered and will sail for   |

Marseilles soon.

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| Box 1 | Leaf 25         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Marseilles, December 6, 1854: Ingraham informs Acting Lieutenant Austin leave until the 15th.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 25         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Marseilles, December 8, 1854: Ingraham informs Stringham that the sails and the mast have been damaged in a storm and needs repaired.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 25         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Marseilles, December 12, 1854: Ingraham informs the Secretary of State William Macy that he has received the gifts that were sent to him from workers in England.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 26         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Marseilles, December 18, 1854: Ingraham informs the Secretary of the Navy, J. C. Dobbin, that he has received the gifts that were sent to him by workers in England.                                       |
| Box 1 | Leaf 26         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Genoa, January 12, 1855: Ingraham informs Stringham that Sailmaker B. B. Burchsted was drunk while on duty.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 26         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Genoa, January 15, 1855: Ingraham informs Washington Riddick, Judge Advocate, that Sailmaker Burchsted will be notified of his sentence the next day.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 26-Leaf 27 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Gulf of Spezia, February 11, 1855: Ingraham informs Commodore Charles Morris, Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography that target practice with the cannon went well.                              |
| Box 1 | Leaf 27         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Spezia, March 12, 1855: Ingraham informs Captain John C. Song of the United States Steam Frigate <i>Saranoc</i> that he is to transfer a ton of powder to the <i>Saranoc</i> .                      |
| Box 1 | Leaf 27-Leaf 28 | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Spezia, March 13, 1855: Ingraham informs Stringham that Midshipman Charles B. Smith is to be Court Martialed for drunkenness.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 28         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , At Sea, March 15, 1855: Ingraham informs Midshipman Smith that he is under arrest until his case is brought to trial.  |
| Box 1 | Leaf 28         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Bay of Gibraltar, April 2, 1855: Ingraham informs Stringham that he has just arrived at Gibraltar and will sail for the United States as soon as possible.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 28         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , At Sea, May 7, 1855: Ingraham informs Midshipman Smith that he will allow Smith to send a message to the Secretary of the Navy to help his case.   |
| Box 1 | Leaf 29         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Philadelphia, May 11, 1855: Ingraham informs John Senthall, Chief of Bureau of Construction, Equipment and Repairs that he left behind at Spezia a good anchor and replaced it with an old one as ordered. |
| Box 1 | Leaf 29         | U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Philadelphia, May 11, 1855: Ingraham informs Secretary Dobbins of Midshipman Smith's case and will allow him to decide Smith's fate.   |

Box 1	Leaf 29	U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Philadelphia, May 11, 1855: Ingraham informs Secretary Dobbin that the <i>St. Louis</i> arrived in Philadelphia the night before.
Box 1	Leaf 30	U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Philadelphia, May 12, 1855: Ingraham informs (?) that he was not aware of James C. Blake's health problem.
Box 1	Leaf 30-Leaf 31	U.S. Corvette, <i>St. Louis</i> , Philadelphia, May 14, 1855: Ingraham informs Commodore Charles Morris, Chief of Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography that the ship is in pretty good shape and ends by giving the dimensions of the ship.

For information, please contact us at:

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