Descriptive Summary
Repository: Martha’s Vineyard Museum
Call No.
Title: William Cooke Pease Collection
Quantity: 1.5 cubic feet
Abstract: The William Cooke Pease Collection, 1838-1906, includes the professional and personal papers of Capt. William Cooke Pease, of Edgartown, who spent his adult life as an Officer in the U.S. Revenue Marine Service, the forerunner of the Coast Guard.

Administrative Information
Acquisition Information: The Pease Collection was acquired by the Martha’s Vineyard Museum in __________ by __________________________. They were assembled by Florence Kern, Capt. Pease’ biographer, in the 1980’s.
Processing Information: Nancy Young
Access Restrictions: none
Use Restrictions: none
Preferred Citation for Publication: Martha’s Vineyard Museum, William Cooke Pease Collection 1840-1906, Record Unit 330.

Index Terms
--Coast Guard, History of the
--Custom Collectors
--Edgartown
--Kern, Florence
--Martha’s Vineyard
--Pease Family
--Pease, Serena
--Pease, William Cooke
--U.S. Revenue Marine Service

Series and Subseries Arrangement
Series I: Personal Papers, 1838-1893
Series II: Personal Correspondence, 1840-1906
    Subseries A: Incoming and Outgoing Letters of William Cooke Pease, 1840-1906
    Subseries B: Incoming and Outgoing Letters of Serena Pease, 1866-1893
Series III: Professional Correspondence, 1842-1864
Historical Note:
Capt. William Cooke Pease (1819-1865) was a son of Jeremiah Pease of the influential Pease family of Edgartown, who named his son after his employer and friend Thomas Cooke, Jr. Among his brothers were Joseph Thaxter Pease, Collector of Customs, Sheriff Isaiah Pease, and his twin Cyrus, the painter. He and Serena, his wife, daughter of Capt. Valentine Pease, conducted their troubled marriage at long distance in his absences.

In 1839 he joined the U.S. Revenue Marine Service and quickly rose in rank, spanning the transition from sail to steam. Stationed in San Francisco, the California coast and the Northwest Territory of Washington, his Revenue Marine Cutters were important representatives of the U.S. Government’s authority. Capt. Pease designed and built new Cutters for the Great Lakes and refitted many aging vessels on the West Coast. He and his crew were commended for a dramatic ship rescue in 1854 off the Carolina coast. He died of typhoid in December, 1865, age 46, aboard his Cutter in Charleston, S.C. His body was brought back to Edgartown by Cutter. He is regarded as a founder of the modern Coast Guard, and the Coast Guard Academy has more of his papers.

Scope and Content Note:
The William Cooke Pease Collection consists of logs and inventories of U.S. Revenue Marine Cutters on which Capt. Pease served, letters to the Collector of Customs in Washington and to the U.S. Treasury, bills and receipts for work done on various Cutters. Other papers include his correspondence with ship builders and his official appointments as Officer in the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service as well as other papers relating to his service, including a petition to the U.S. Congress in 1855 for reimbursement of Treasury funds lost in a bank failure that he made good. There are also letters of support for him after his dismissal as Commanding Officer of the Cutter Shubrick at San Francisco in 1863. Personal papers include correspondence with his wife, Serena, his brother, Joseph Thaxter Pease, and letters from Serena written after his death. In addition, the collection contains letters and notes from Pease’s biographer (Florence Kern).

Series Description
Series I. Personal Papers 1838-1893
Box 1 of 3
Folder 1: Album of autographs etc. kept by Serena Pease, 1838
Folder 2: Deed for purchase of house on Road to the Slough, (S. Water St.), Edgartown, 1848,
Folder 3: Expenses for house 1848-1850
Folder 4: Oregon’s dispute with the Hudson Bay Co., 1848-1851.
Folder 5: Certificate of appointment of William Cooke Pease as Notary Public for the County of Solano, Ca, June 8,1843.
Folder 6: “Early American Hurricanes” by David Ludlum of WCP’s account of the Key West hurricane of October 11/12.1846 aboard the U.S. Revenue Cutter Morris.
Folder 7: Scrapbook of clippings and sailing directions kept by William Cooke Pease, 1844.
Folder 10: Receipts for money loaned by William Cooke Pease.1858.
Folder 11: Envelope of signatures collected by William Cooke Pease
Folder 12: Official valuation of William Cooke Pease estate,1865, listing commemorative silver pitcher. Letter from Serena Pease to her son Willie giving him his father’s commemorative silver pitcher and her desire that he keep it in the family. 1893.

Series II: Personal Correspondence 1840-1906
Subseries A: Incoming/Outgoing Letters of William Cooke Pease 1840-1906
Box 1 of 3
Folder 14: Two letters from William Cooke Pease to his brother, Joseph Thaxter Pease, re: his ambitions for advancement, loans, life aboard. From Cutter Ewing, 1842, and Cutter Jackson, 1843.
Folder 15: Letters to Serena Pease Pease, (Mrs. William Cooke), 1849-1865. Letters from William Cooke Pease to Serena Pease, 1852, and 1865.

Subseries B: Incoming and Outgoing Letters of Serena Pease, 1866-1893
Box 1 of 1
Folder 17: Letter from Serena Pease to crew of U.S.Revenue Cutter Kewannee in reply to their letter of condolence. Feb. 3 1866. Letter (to Serena Pease ?) re mourning gloves.
Folder 18: Letter from Serena Pease to her son Willie giving him his father’s commemorative silver pitcher and her desire that he keep it in the family. 1893.

Series III: Professional Correspondence, 1842-1864
Box 2 of 3
Folder 2: Copy of letter from U.S. Revenue Cutter Morris, to the US Consul in Havana inc. list of needed supplies and armament July 11, 1846. Letter from Capt. Waldron of the Morris re: newspaper article.
Folder 3: Letters of support for William Cooke Pease’s petition in Congress re reimbursement for Government funds lost in a bank failure that he made good. 1855.
Folder 6: Collector of Customs to William Cooke Pease suspending him from command of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Shubrick, December 3 1862.
Folder 7: Pamphlet of letters recommending William Cooke Pease’s appointment as Master of a Revenue Cutter to be stationed in San Francisco Harbor. March 1863.
Transcripts of letters of recommendation and support for William Cooke Pease signed by San Francisco merchants, March 1863., after his dismissal from the Shubrick.
Folder 8: Letter to the Collector of Customs, Wash. D.C. from William Cooke Pease re his medical condition and rumors of drunken behavior, Jan. 11, 1864.

Series IV: Professional Papers
Subseries A: Ship Logs
Box 2 of 3
Folder 12: Transcript of log U.S. Revenue Cutter Shubrick, Oct. 1862 (photocopy)
Folder 13: Log of U.S. Revenue Cutter Kewanee with entry of the death of the ships Commander, WCP. Dec. 30. 1865, Charleston, (photocopy)

Subseries B: Ship Accounts
Box 2 of 3
Folder 14: Inventory for unnamed U.S. Revenue Cutter. (n.d.)
Folder 15: Inventory of U.S. Revenue Cutter Howell Cobb Oct.1, 1847
Subseries C: U.S. Revenue Marine Cutter Service Material
Box 3 of 3
Folder 2: Charges of Neglect of duty by Capt. Fatio of Cutter Jackson, Jan. 1843.
Folder 3: Testimony at Court of Inquiry in Newport (n.d.)
Folder 4: Receipt for salary paid to 2nd Lt William Cooke Pease at Newport, March 7, 1849
Folder 5: “Charts and Sailing Directions for California”. Wash. 1851, Inscribed: “U.S. Revenue Cutter Argus, W.C. Pease, 1st Lt. commanding”
Folder 6: Papers and letters incoming and outgoing among William Cooke Pease, Sec. of the Treasury, and builders Merryman & Gay re: designing/building of 6 new Revenue Cutters on Lake Erie.
Folder 7: Officer lists for the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, 1844 and 1853.
Folder 8: Diary-Journal 1853 (incomplete) clippings, accounts
Folder 9: Appointment of William Cooke Pease as Captain, signed by Pres, Franklin Pierce, 1853. Appointment of William Cooke Pease as Captain, signed by Pres Abraham Lincoln, 1864 (photocopy) with letter from Florence Kern.
Folder 10: Letters of various dates
Folder 12: Internal Regulations of U.S. Revenue Marine Service

Subseries D: Miscellaneous Material
Box 3 of 3
Folder 14: Letter from Leavitt Thaxter, of Edgartown, Collector of Customs, to Collector in Washington, Feb. 6, 1850, re: importance of presence of a U.S. Revenue Cutter in Vineyard Sound especially at Holmes Hole. (photocopy)
Folder 15: Log of the U.S. Revenue Cutter J.C. Dobbin, Capt. T.D. Walker, commanding, on Edgartown station, April 1865, mention of 21 gun salute, April 5 to celebrate Union victories by order of the President and on April 18, colors at half-mast for funeral of Pres. Lincoln.

Series V: Newspapers and Clippings 1854-1986
Box 3 of 3
Folder 16: Puget Sound Courier, Dec. 14, 1855 signed by William Cooke Pease
Folder 17: New Orleans newspapers for Oct. 1846 that printed William Cooke Pease’ account of the Key West hurricane.
Folder 18: Article about William Cooke Pease, ship rescue and awarding of the silver pitcher Vineyard Gazette, 1854.

**Series VI: Florence Kern**

**Historical Note:** Florence Kern, formed the William Cooke Collection in the 1980’s from the archives of the MVM, and material she gathered from other sources as she researched the Revenue Marine Service and the early years of the Coast Guard. She wrote about him not only in the *Intelligencer* but a book length biography.

**Subseries A: Publications, 1982-1984.**

Box 3 of 3

**Subseries B: Correspondence**

Box 3 of 3
Folder 25: Letter from Florence Kern with photocopy of Appointment of William Cooke Pease as Captain, signed by Pres. Abraham Lincoln, 1864