

**R.(Robert) Frazer papers, 1814**  
**1814**  
**Mss.B.F868**

American Philosophical Society  
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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	American Philosophical Society
<b>Creator</b>	Frazer, R., (Robert)
<b>Title</b>	R.(Robert) Frazer papers, 1814
<b>Date</b>	1814
<b>Call number</b>	Mss.B.F868
<b>Extent</b>	0.25 Linear feet 16 items; 2 maps
<b>Extent</b>	15 items; 2 maps.
<b>Location</b>	LH-MV-C-10
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Container</b>	1
<b>Abstract</b>	These are letters to Thomas Clarke, Isaac Roberdeau, and Jonathan Williams, Jr., about the defense of Philadelphia against possible British attack.

## Background note

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Robert F. Frazer (1771-1821) was a lawyer, district attorney for Delaware County and a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1795.

Frazer was born on August 30, 1771 in Middletown, Pennsylvania to Persifor Frazer, an iron manufacturer and merchant, and his wife Mary Smith. Frazer entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1786. He graduated A.B. in 1789 and received a semi-honorary A.M. in 1792. After completing his bachelor's degree, Frazer began to study law with Jared Ingersoll; in 1792 he was admitted to the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. In 1795 he went on to serve in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives before becoming the District Attorney for Delaware County, Pennsylvania. Frazer married Mary Ball (1778-1798) in 1798, and after her death married Elizabeth Fries (1778-1815) in 1803. After Elizabeth's death in 1815, he married Alice Pennel Yarnell (1778-1830). He had six children with his second wife: John, Jacob Taylor, Anne Fries, Persifor, John Fries, and Mary Worrall. His sons John and Jacob, and daughter Mary, died in infancy. Frazer also had a son with his third wife, Joseph Pennell. Robert Frazer died on January 20, 1821.

Frazer's son John Fries Frazer (1812–1872, APS 1842), also a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, became a geologist and chemist. He was appointed to the first Pennsylvania Geological Survey in 1836 and in 1844 succeeded Alexander Dallas Bache as Professor of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania. John Fries Frazer's son Persifor Frazer (1844–1909, APS 1872) was a geologist and handwriting expert.

## **Scope & content**

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The collection consists of two maps as well as fifteen letters to and from Robert Frazer, dated 1814. All of them deal with the defense of Philadelphia in the fall of 1814. The material includes lists of expenses, surveys, and plans for fortifications. A typed table of contents is included in the box.

## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

American Philosophical Society

## Provenance

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### Acquisition Information

Purchased and accessioned, 1957 (1957 1450ms).

## Indexing Terms

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### Genre(s)

- Maps and Surveys
- Maps.
- Military Records

### Geographic Name(s)

- Philadelphia (Pa.) -- History -- War of 1812.
- United States -- History -- War of 1812.

### Personal Name(s)

- Clarke, Thomas, 1787-1860
- Roberdeau, Isaac, 1763-1829
- Williams, Jonathan.

### Subject(s)

- Military History
- Philadelphia History
- War of 1812

## **Other Descriptive Information**

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The Robert Frazer Collection is a small but rich series of letters detailing Philadelphia's military defenses during the War of 1812. The letters contain accounts of Greater Philadelphia's geography and include hand drawn maps of fortifications and areas of Philadelphia deemed vulnerable to attack.

## Collection Inventory

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### Papers

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**Philadelphia. General Committee of Defense**                      Sept. 15 to Oct. 16, 1814                      12-1/2x7-3/4

Expenses of the topographical engineers to Isaac Roberdeau;

D. 2p., end. by Roberdeau, Oct. 19, 1814. (see R. Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no.1.) The entries cover the period from Sept. 15 to Oct. 16, 1814.

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**Frazer, R., (Robert)**    Sept. 30, 1814    13-1/2x8

Letter to I[saac] Roberdeau;

A.L.S. 2p.and end.and map. Draft (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no.2.) Concerning the topography of an area for the defense of Philadelphia.

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**Clarke, Thomas, 1787-1860**                                      Oct. 4, 1814    9-3/4x8

Letter to Robert Frazer, Philadelphia;

Chester, A.L.S. 2p.and add.,end. (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no. 3.) Concerning the defense of Philadelphia. Mentions General Cadwalader and Colonel Wadsworth.

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**Roberdeau, Isaac, 1763-1829**                                      Oct. 4, [1814]    9-1/2x8

Letter to Robert Frazer, Philadelphia;

Chester, A.L.S. 2p.and add., end. (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no.4.) Concerning fortification for defense of Philadelphia. Refers to Col. Wadsworth and J.Williams.

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**Frazer, R., (Robert)**    Oct. 6, 1814    8-1/4x5-1/4

Letter to [Thomas Clarke?];

Philadelphia, A.L. 2p. Draft. (see R.Frazer. Correspondence...; 1814, no. 53.) Concerning the defense of Philadelphia. Refers to Roberdeau.

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**Frazer, R., (Robert)**    October 9, 1814



## Papers

## Report to General Gaines

"Rough draft of report made to General Gaines on the face of the country between the Schuylkill and the Brandywine."

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**Roberdeau, Isaac, 1763-1829**

Oct. 10, 1814

9-1/2x8

Letter to Robert Frazer, Philadelphia;

Chester, A.L.S. 2p.and add. (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814 no. 7.) Concerning J.Williams orders. Concerning the defense of Philadelphia.

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**Williams, Jonathan.**

Oct. 25, 1814

13-1/4x8-1/4

Letter to Major [Isaac] Roberdeau;

Philadelphia, L. 1p. Copy. (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814.no. 8.) War orders.

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**Frazer, R., (Robert)**

Nov. 6, 1814

10-1/4x8-1/4

Letter to Major Isaac Roberdeau, Chester;

Philadelphia, A.L.S. 1p.and add.,end. (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no. 9.) Friendly letter. Military information for the possible defense of Philadelphia.

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**Frazer, R., (Robert)**

Nov. 26, 1814

10-1/4x8-1/4,

Letter to Tho[ma]s Clarke;

9-1/2x15-3/4

and

8-1/4x6-3/4,

13-1/4x8-1/4

Philadelphia, A.L.S. 3p.and add.and enc, of 2 leaves. (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no.10.) ---Concerning fortifications for the defense of Philadelphia. Includes drawings of fortifications. Includes draft and final version of letter. Refers to Roberdeau.

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**Frazer, R., (Robert)**

[1814]

12-3/4x8

Letter to Jonathan Williams;

A.L. 1p. Draft. (see R.Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no. 11.) Concerning the defense of Philadelphia.

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**Roberdeau, Isaac, 1763-1829**

[1814]

8x6-1/2

## Papers

Letter to Robert Frazer, Philadelphia;

Darby, Thursday morning A.L.S. 3p. and add. (see R. Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no. 14.) Will send report on the defense of Philadelphia. Refers to J. Williams.

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**Roberdeau, Isaac, 1763-1829**

[1814]

7-3/4x6-1/2

Letter to Robert Frazer, Philadelphia;

Sunday afternoon A.L.S. 1p. (see R. Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no. 13.) Asks a favor.

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**Roberdeau, Isaac, 1763-1829**

[1814]

7-3/4x6-1/2

Letter to Robert Frazer, Philadelphia;

Sunday evening, A.L.S. 2p. and add. (see R. Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no. 12.) Friendly letter. Concerning preparations for the defense of Philadelphia.

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**Roberdeau, Isaac, 1763-1829**

[1814]

10-1/4x8

Letter to Robert Frazer, Philadelphia;

A.L.S. with initials. 1p. and add. (see R. Frazer papers. Correspondence...; 1814. no. 15.) Friendly letter. Refers to J. Williams.

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