

PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM

Inventory for
Manuscript Collection

PMM 34

R.J. Peacock Canning Co. Papers

1904-1997

3 boxes
1.5 linear feet
Accession No. LB2013.7

Stephen Phillips Memorial Library

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PMM 34

R.J. Peacock Canning Co. Papers

R.J. Peacock Canning Co.

Papers, 1904-1997

3 boxes (1.5 linear feet)

Sardine cannery in Lubec, Maine

Business records, stock certificates, publications, ephemera, and newspaper clippings from the R.J. Peacock Canning Co. of Lubec, Maine. The collection documents the Peacock Sardine cannery's business across much of the twentieth century, as well as the evolution of Maine's sardine fishery in the same period. Some papers and clippings related to the Peacock family are here as well.

In English.

Organized into two series: Series I. Cannery Papers, and Series II. Family Papers.

Robert and Jeanne Peacock; Gift; 2013; LB2013.7

Finding aid available; folder level control.

Subject Headings:

R.J. Peacock Canning Co.

Lubec (Me.)

Atlantic herring fisheries

Business enterprises—Maine—Lubec

Canned fish industry

Fish canneries—Maine—Lubec

Sardine industry

Acquisition:

This collection was given to the Penobscot Marine Museum by Robert and Jeanne Peacock, in memory of Carroll B. and Robert S. Peacock.

Restrictions:

There are no restrictions on this collection.

Condition:

The collection is mostly in good condition. Newsprint and other cheap papers are fragile with age, and there is occasional mouse damage.

Related Materials:

Photographs of the R.J. Peacock Cannery and related subjects, which came with this collection, have been transferred to PMM's photo archives.

Robert and Jeanne Peacock also donated a file of material from Lewis Delesdernier, the first customs collector for the Passamaquoddy district, which may have come from the family of Carroll B. Peacock's wife, Sarah I. Marston. These are now in the Family Papers Collection at PMM.

Historical Note:

The R.J. Peacock Canning Company of Lubec, Maine, was a sardine cannery founded in 1917 by Robert J. Peacock (1863-1933). Peacock started his career as a fisherman from Lubec in the 1880s and briefly owned a controlling interest in the Gun Rock Packing Co. in the 1890s. In 1901, he became a managing owner of the Lubec Packing Company, a position he held until starting his own sardine cannery in 1917.

On founding his own plant, R.J. Peacock became one of the major players in Lubec's sardine industry. In 1923, he joined with a number of other Lubec businessmen to acquire the Seacoast Canning Company, one of the major canning syndicates on the Maine coast. In 1929, Peacock formally merged his own firm with Seacoast. In 1933, when Seacoast Canning Co. was broken up, Peacock took several of Seacoast's Lubec canneries and went into business again under his own name.

In 1933, the major partners of the R.J. Peacock Canning Co. were R.J. Peacock, his son Carroll B. Peacock, Milroy Warren, and John Toft. Carroll B. Peacock's son, Robert S. Peacock, took over the firm in 1977, followed by his own son, Robert J. Peacock II, in 1988. The Robert J. Peacock Canning Company eventually expanded to own factories in Eastport (1935-1956) and Portland (1932-1971), while the Lubec plant continued production into the 1990s.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains business records from the R.J. Peacock Canning Company of Lubec, Maine, as well as a few family papers from the Peacock family and publications and ephemera that the firm accumulated through its participation in the sardine industry. It is divided into two series: Series I, Business Papers; and Series II, Family Papers.

Series I contains papers generated or accumulated by the R.J. Peacock Canning Company from the early twentieth century to the mid-1990s. The bulk of these are financial, dealing with stock transfers, sales and other affairs related to the many corporate re-incarnations of the business. A minute book, containing records of annual and monthly meetings from 1978 to 1996, documents the final years of the company. There is also material from Robert J. Peacock's earlier business ventures, including the Lubec Packing Co., as well as material from the Seacoast Canning Company for the years portions of that business were controlled by R.J. Peacock.

Series I also contains ephemera from company operations, including the War Food administration's "A" Award, given for exemplary production during World War II. A collection of booklets, published reports, and articles about the sardine industry provide a glimpse into the changing industrial, ecological, and cultural context of the sardine fisheries in the mid-twentieth century.

Series II contains limited personal material from four generations of the Peacock family. This includes clippings about family members and topics of interest around Lubec, supplemented with a few manuscript documents.

Box and Folder List:

Series I: Cannery Papers

Obj. ID	Box	Folder	
34-1	1	1	Sardine Carriers, R.J. Peacock Canning Co. (includes research notes) R.J. Peacock Canning Co. Records:
34-2		2	Preferred Stock Certificates
34-3		3	Stock Certificates, bound
34-4		4	Minute Book, 1978-1996
34-5	2	1	Business records, 1904-1979 R.J. Peacock Canning Co., Ephemera:
34-6		2	"A" Award, War Food Administration, 1944
34-7		3	Safety posters, Traveler's Insurance Company
34-8		4	Warning signs, Traveler's Insurance Company
34-9		5	Newspaper clippings about the company Pamphlets and Publications:
34-10		6	Sardine fisheries reports
34-10	3	1	Sardine biology
34-10		2	Foodways—sardines
34-10		3	Sardine industry history
34-10		4	Advertisements for equipment
34-11		5	American Can Co., Universal Can Closing Machine, manual
34-12		6	General Motors Diesel Engine Operator's Manual
34-13		7	Maine Sardine Council Annual Report, 1988

Series II: Family Papers

Obj. ID	Box	Folder	
34-14	3	8	Robert J. Peacock: Lubec Trade Council and tourism information
34-15		9	Carroll B. Peacock, John Toft
34-16		10	Newspaper clippings, Carroll B. Peacock
34-17		11	Robert S. Peacock: United States Navy, water survival booklet, c. 1945
34-18		12	Newspaper clippings, Robert S. Peacock
34-19		13	Robert J. Peacock II: genealogy notes
34-20		14	"Hand Trawling on the North Atlantic," photo series, Fishing Gazette, undated