

PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM

Inventory for
Manuscript Collection

PMM 40

Stephen S. Stone Papers

1828 – 1869

11 boxes
5.5 linear feet
Accession No. LB2012.14, LB2016.11, and LB2019.18

Stephen Phillips Memorial Library

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PMM 40

Stephen S. Stone Papers

Stone, Stephen S., 1805-1883

Papers, 1828-1869

11 boxes (5.5 linear feet)

Ship owner and hotel proprietor from Massachusetts

Bills, accounts, correspondence, and other business papers from Stephen S. Stone.

The bulk of the collection consists of documents from ships that Stone owned and managed, which were active in the antebellum cotton trade. The remainder is primarily receipts and correspondence from hotels that Stone managed in Boston and Baltimore, along with some personal bills.

In English

Organized in two series: Series I. Vessel Management; Series II. Hotel Management

Emily Johnson; Gift; 2012; LB2012.14. Douglas E. Fry; Gifts; 2016 and 2019; LB

2016.11 and LB2019.18

Finding aid available

Subject Headings:

Stone, Stephen S., 1805-1883

Pendleton, James Gilmore, 1821-1903

Pendleton, Nathan, 1808-1857

BELL ROCK (ship)

DUMBARTON (ship)

GOLCONDA (ship)

JOHN GARDNER (bark)

LEGHORN (brig)

Cotton trade

Emigration and immigration

Furniture

Hotels

Hotelkeepers

Merchant mariners

Ship captains

Shipowners

Ships

Ships—equipment and supplies

Sugar trade

Acquisition:

This collection was given to the Penobscot Marine Museum by Emily Johnson and Douglas E. Fry. The papers came from Arthur M. Johnson and his cousin, Natalie Johnson Hunt, who were the great-grandchildren of Stephen S. Stone.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. There are no special conditions.

Condition:

This collection is mostly in good condition. Some documents are torn, have ingrained surface dirt, or minor mouse damage.

Processing Note:

Almost all of the papers in this collection were originally folded and bound in paper bands labeled by Stephen S. Stone. Stone's heirs subsequently used the papers to research the family history, but they apparently kept the labels with the original groupings. The current arrangement of the collection reflects those original groupings.

Historical Note:

Stephen S. Stone (1805-1883) was a ship owner and hotel keeper based in Boston, Massachusetts. His early career is obscure. By the late 1830s, he was the proprietor of the Commercial Coffee House in Boston, then took charge of the Pavilion Hotel in the early 1840s. Stone also began investing substantially in shipping, becoming the primary owner and manager of at least five vessels and a wharf in Chelsea by the early 1850s. In 1856, however, he moved to Baltimore to be the proprietor of the new Gilman House Hotel there. He exited the shipping business shortly thereafter, selling his last vessel about 1860. Stone stayed at the Gilman House, Baltimore, through the early years of the Civil War, but eventually moved back to the Boston area.

Stone owned large vessels that primarily sailed in the transatlantic cotton trade between New Orleans and England, sometimes carrying immigrants on return voyages. Stone's vessels also carried sugar, timber, and mixed cargoes, according to the markets.

As a ship owner, Stone worked closely with Maine shipbuilders, captains, and investors. Stone's fleet consisted of the ship DUMBARTON, brig LEGHORN and bark JOHN GARDNER, all built in Belfast, and the ships BELL ROCK and GOLCONDA, built in Warren. He often partnered with Nathan Pendleton (1808-1857) of Searsport, later Bangor, who was a major co-owner and sometimes captain of Stone's vessels. Many of the captains of Stone's fleet were likewise from Maine, including Captain James G. Pendleton (1821-1903) of Searsport and Ebenezer Colburn (b. 1795) of Belfast.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains bills, accounts, correspondence, and other business records from Stephen S. Stone. It provides a detailed record of both antebellum American shipping and of the social and material world of American hotels. Series I. contains shipping records from vessels that Stone owned and managed. This forms the bulk of the collection. Series II. has receipts and correspondence from hotels that Stone managed in Boston and Baltimore. There are a few bills for personal items, mostly filed (by Stone's own system) with Series II.

Series I., Vessel Management, contains papers from the ships BELL ROCK, BERWICK, DUMBARTON, and GOLCONDA, the bark JOHN GARDNER and the brig LEGHORN. These include bills for customs fees, dockage, cargo handling, provisioning, maintenance, and other expenses in each port that the ships visited. There are also letters between Stone and his captains, merchants, and business partners. The bulk of Series I deals with regular business in the antebellum cotton trade, but also includes detailed records of carrying immigrants from Ireland in the late 1840s and a trip to San Francisco shortly after the beginning of the Gold Rush.

Series II., Hotel Management, contains material from Stone's tenure as proprietor of the Commercial Coffee House, the Pavilion, and the Gilman House hotels. Most of these are bills for food, liquor, furnishings, and other goods purchased for the hotels. There is also a booklet containing a detailed list of the furniture of the Pavilion in 1852, and a large group of letters from guests at the Gilman house in Baltimore spanning the outbreak of the Civil War. This series

also contains a few bills for clothing, school fees, and other personal expenses for the Stone family.

Collection Overview:

Series I. Shipping Papers

Correspondence and general shipping papers, 1828-1869. 1 box.

Ship BELL ROCK, 1849-1857. 2 boxes.

Ship BERWICK, 1839-1845. ½ box.

Ship DUMBARTON, 1838-1851. 3 boxes.

Ship GOLCONDA, 1854-1863. 1 box

Bark JOHN GARDNER, 1853-1854. ½ box.

Brig LEGHORN, 1846-1853. 2 boxes.

Series II. Hotel Papers

Commercial Coffee House, Boston, 1838-1841. ¼ box

Pavilion Hotel, Boston, 1846-1852. ¼ box

Gilmore House, Baltimore, 1854-1862. ½ box

Personal bills and receipts, 1838-1850. ¼ box