

PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM

Inventory for
Manuscript Collection

PMM 77

Albert V. Nickels Account Books

1859 - 1897

4 volumes
.25 linear feet
Accession No. LB2021.2

Stephen Phillips Memorial Library

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PMM 77

Albert V. Nickels Account Books

Nickels, Albert V., 1838-1902

Account books, 1859-1897

4 volumes (.25 linear feet)

Sea captain from Searsport, Maine

Four account books from Captain Albert V. Nickels of Searsport, Maine. Three contain Nickels's accounts with the bark SARAH A. NICKELS, ship ODESSA, and ship WILLIAM MCGILVERY, recording the vessels' expenses and income for each voyage. These also contain accounts with individual sailors, balancing wages against advances and shipboard purchases of slops. The fourth volume is a daybook for Nickels's investments, largely in shares of ships, after he retired from the sea.

In English

LB2021.2

Finding aid available; folder level control

Subject Headings:

Nickels, Albert V., 1838-1902

SARAH A. NICKELS (bark)

WILLIAM MCGILVERY (ship)

Account books

Investments

Merchant mariners

Ship captains

Shipowners

Shipping

Local Subject Headings:

Cape Horn trade

West Indies trade

Acquisition:

These volumes may have been given by Lincoln Colcord circa 1940.

Restrictions

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

Condition:

This collection is largely in good condition. Covers are worn, but bindings are sturdy. Some pages were cut from the three vessel account books. The papers glued into the scrapbook are becoming fragile with age.

Related Materials:

Penobscot Marine Museum has two collections related to Albert Vinal Nickels. PMM 49, the Nickels Family Estate Papers, has wills, deeds, and probate records from Albert Vinal Nickels and his family. PMM 76, the William McGilvery Papers, has business records from Nickels's father-in-law, with whom Nickels worked closely.

Maine Maritime Museum has more records from Albert V. Nickels's command of the ship IROQUOIS in MS-22, the Sewall Family Papers.

Historical Note:

Albert V. Nickels (1838-1902) was a sea captain from Searsport, Maine. The son of David and Catherine (Clifford) Nickels, he spent most of his career on Searsport vessels. His first command was the bark SARAH A. NICKELS, which he sailed in the West Indies and South American trades in the late 1850s. He married Elizabeth McGilvery, the daughter of Searsport shipbuilder William McGilvery, in 1860, and subsequently commanded the ships ODESSA, S.F. HERSEY, and WILLIAM MCGILVERY, all owned by his father-in-law. In these vessels, Nickels sailed more widely in global commodity trades, frequenting ports like Cardiff, Montevideo, Valparaiso, and Calcutta. His last command was the new ship IROQUOIS, built by A. Sewall & Co. of Bath in 1881 for the California grain trade.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains four account books kept by Captain Albert V. Nickels of Searsport. Three of the volumes contain Nickels's accounts with the bark SARAH A. NICKELS, ship ODESSA, and ship WILLIAM MCGILVERY. These contain a record of the ship's profits and expenses, calculated in every port, including freight charges, crew wages, repairs, towage, provisions, and supplies. They also include more detailed accounts with individual members of the crew, balancing wages against withdrawals for advances, clothing, and tobacco. Two of these were later reused by members of the Nickels family: one for school lessons on historical figures, and one as a scrapbook for magazine illustrations.

The fourth volume is a daybook in which Nickels listed income and expenses for investments in various vessels, including the HENRIETTA, BELLE OF BATH, and IROQUOIS, between 1891 and 1897. Most entries are for Nickels's own investments, but he also handled business for his wife, sister-in-law, and other Searsport residents. In addition to the finances of owning vessels, this book also records the disposition of estates and other major financial transactions for members of the family.

Box and Folder List:

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|--------|---|
| MS 67 | Account book, bark SARAH A. NICKELS, 1859-1861, and ship WILLIAM MCGILVERY, 1869-1873 |
| MS 297 | Account book, bark SARAH A. NICKELS and ship ODESSA, 1861-1867.
Re-used as a scrapbook, c. 1875-1900 |
| MS 300 | Account book, ship WILLIAM MCGILVERY, 1871-1873 |
| MS 60 | Daybook, Albert V. Nickels family investments, 1891-1895 |