

# PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM

Inventory for  
Manuscript Collection

**PMM 62**

**Melvin E. Colcord Papers**

1864-1912

4 boxes  
2.75 linear feet  
Accession No. LB2009.8

**Stephen Phillips Memorial Library**

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# PMM 62

## Melvin E. Colcord Papers

### **Colcord, Melvin E., 1844-1912**

Papers, 1864-1912

3 boxes and one oversize box (2.75 linear feet)

Sea captain from Stockton Springs, Maine

Correspondence, accounts, shipping papers, and other records from Captain Melvin E. Colcord of Stockton Springs, Maine. Colcord was active in the transatlantic, West Indies, and South American trades. This collection has detailed business records from Colcord's vessels, as well as material related to his later investments in rental housing, barrel stave manufacturing, and activities as part of the local Democratic Party. There is a small amount of family material.

In English.

George and Alice Tsetsilas; Gift; 2009; LB2009.8

Finding aid available; folder level control

### Subject Headings:

Colcord, Melvin E., 1844-1912

DAVID BABCOCK (barkentine)

ISAAC HALL (bark)

MIGNON (barkentine)

Stockton Springs (Me.)

Democratic Party (Me.)

House furnishings

Merchant mariners

Merchant ships

Shipping

Ships—Equipment and supplies

Staves and stave trade

### Local Subject Headings:

West Indies trade

Transatlantic trade

### **Acquisition:**

This collection was given to the Penobscot Marine Museum by George and Alice Tsetsilas. Melvin E. Colcord's son, Arthur B. Colcord, gave the collection to them circa 1970.

### **Restrictions**

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

### **Condition:**

The papers are in good condition, with light wear and deterioration commensurate with age.

### **Related Materials:**

Some of these papers arrived in a cigar box, which has been preserved with the collection.

### **Historical Note:**

Captain Melvin E. Colcord (1844-1912) was the son of Josiah E. and Martha J. (Berry) Colcord of Prospect, later Stockton Springs, Maine. He started his career at sea after the Civil War, taking command of the schooner DAVID BABCOCK in 1867. He subsequently commanded the bark ISAAC HALL in the early 1870s, the barkentine DAVID BABCOCK in the late 1870s, the bark MIGNON in the early 1880s, and, for shorter periods, the brig CHILLIANWALLAH, barkentine CARRIE HECKEL, schooner CLARA E. COLCORD, and bark ROSE INNES. Rather than specialize in a single cargo or route, Colcord sailed to a variety of ports like Matanzas, Antwerp, Cronstadt, Rio de Janeiro, and New York, as well as other ports in the West Indies, Europe, and South America.

Many of Melvin E. Colcord's early commands were built and owned in Stockton or nearby towns. Colcord purchased shares in vessels he commanded, and invested in other local vessels as well. On retiring from the sea, Colcord expanded his investments to include a variety of business interests, including land development in Stockton Springs, rental housing, and barrel stave manufacturing. He was also very active in the Democratic Party and local partisan politics.

Colcord married Roxanna Cleaves in 1866. They had six children: Marietta (b. 1867), Elizabeth B. (b. 1869), Evelyn L. (b. 1877), Edgar M. (b. 1879), Arthur B. (b. 1884), and Ethel M. (b. 1886).

### **Scope and Content:**

This collection contains correspondence, accounts, bills, deeds, and other material from Melvin E. Colcord's sailing career and subsequent business concerns. There is also a small amount of personal material from Colcord and his immediate family.

Papers from the bark ISAAC HALL, barkentine DAVID BABCOCK, barkentine MIGNON, and other vessels that Melvin E. Colcord commanded make up about half of this collection. There are letters from merchants and brokers about finding and loading cargoes, summary accounts listing expenses and profits, and bills and receipts for provisioning, towing charges, and other specific expenses from stops in port. Some of Colcord's accounts with individual sailors are preserved as well, though many of these are undated.

Much of the remainder of the collection is devoted to Colcord's later activities in and around Stockton Springs, Maine. This includes accounts for house construction and rental properties, correspondence about shipping barrel staves, and negotiations about land development, including the right-of-way for the Bangor and Aroostook Railway. Colcord's work with the Democratic Party is also well represented, particularly an 1893 effort to install a Democrat as the postmaster in Stockton Springs.

Family material is limited to some of Roxanna (Cleaves) Colcord's correspondence, bills from furnishing the family home in 1880, and a folder of ephemera from the couple's children.

### **Box and Folder List:**

Box	Folder	
1	1	Melvin E. Colcord, correspondence, general, 1869-1879
	2	Correspondence, general, 1880-1893
	3	Correspondence, general 1900-1909
	4	Correspondence, general 1910-1912
	5	Correspondence, postcards, 1871-1912
	6	Correspondence, Stockton Springs Post Office, Democratic Party, 1893-4
	7	Correspondence, Bangor & Aroostook Railroad, 1905

- 8 Correspondence, Keys-Church Co., barrel manufacturing, 1910-1912
- 9 Roxanna (Cleaves) Colcord, correspondence, 1864-1887
- 10 Colcord children, correspondence and ephemera, 1886-1911

Shipping papers:

- 2 1 Schooner DAVID BABCOCK, 1869-1869
- 2 2 Bark ISAAC HALL, accounts with Captain Melvin E. Colcord, 1870-1875
- 3 3 General shipping papers, 1870-1872 (see also: oversized)
- 4 4 General shipping papers, 1873-1875
- 5 5 Barkentine DAVID BABCOCK, 1876 – August 1877
- 6 6 Rio de Janeiro to Savannah, October 1877 – January 1878
- 7 7 New York to Cronstadt, Russia, April – May 1878
- 8 8 Cardiff, August 1878
- 9 9 St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, October 1878
- 10 10 New York to Gibraltar and Cadiz, November 1878 – February 1879 (see also: oversized)
- 11 11 Multiple ports, 1879-1881
- 12 12 Crew accounts, mostly undated
- 13 13 Barkentine MIGNON, 1882-1886
- 14 14 New York to Havana, March 1887
- 15 15 New York to Matanzas, August 1887
- 3 1 Bark CARRIE HECKLE, c. 1891
- O.S. Registration and classification certificates, barkentine DAVID BABCOCK, barkentine MIGNON, and schooner CLARA E. COLCORD
- 2 Bills of sale, bark ROSE INNES and schooner M.H. READ
- 3 Earnings statements, bark ROSE INNES, 1906-1907
- 4 Maritime business cards, advertising, and circular letters
- 5 Maritime licenses and associations, Captain Melvin E. Colcord

Business and personal records:

- 3 6 Land deeds and development, Melvin E. Colcord & family
- 7 Bills and accounts, house remodeling, 1880
- 8 Accounts, house construction, George Weymouth, 1906-1907
- 9 Rental properties, 1898-1912
- 10 Democratic Party: canvass books, petitions and ephemera (see also: oversized)
- 11 Bills, personal, miscellaneous, 1869-1912
- 12 Checks and bank receipts
- 13 Taxes
- 14 Stock certificates, Denislow Hall Association
- 15 Probate documents, Arno Freeman estate, 1896-1897
- 16 Advertising and ephemera (see also: oversized)
- O.S. Newspapers and periodicals (see oversized)

Oversize:

- 4 1 Ships broker's envelopes for bills in port (8)
- 2 Oversize papers, bark ISAAC HALL
- 3 Oversize papers, barkentine DAVID BABCOCK

- 4 Registration and classification certificates, barkentine DAVID BABCOCK,  
barkentine MIGNON, and schooner CLARA E. COLCORD
- 5 Oversize papers, Democratic Party
- 6 Advertising, oversize
- 7 Newspapers and periodicals