

PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM

Inventory for
Manuscript Collection

PMM 91

**Harold G. and Orlando W. Foss
Papers**

1891 – 1957

14 volumes
1 linear foot
Accession No. LB1986.25-33

Stephen Phillips Memorial Library

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PMM 91

Harold G. and Orlando W. Foss Papers

Foss, Harold G., 1881-1965

Foss, Orlando W., 1845-1926

Papers, 1891-1957

14 volumes (1 linear foot)

Sea captains and businessmen from Hancock, Maine

Logbooks, account books, and a scrapbook from Harold G. Foss and his father, Orlando W. Foss, of Hancock, Maine. Eleven of the volumes are log-books and account books documenting Harold G. Foss's career as a steamship captain in the U.S. Merchant Marine during and after World War II. Orlando W. Foss is represented by a log-book and account book kept for his schooner, JOHN PAUL, in the 1890s, as well as a scrapbook assembled on the death of his son, Captain Boyd P. Foss.

In English

Doris Gilmour; Gift; 1986; LB1986.25-33

Finding aid available; folder level control

Subject Headings:

Foss, Harold G., 1881-1965

Foss, Orlando W., 1847-1926

JOHN PAUL (schooner)

Cargo ships

Logbooks

Merchant marine

Merchant mariners

Schooners

Ship captains

Local Subject Headings:

West Indies trade

Acquisition:

This collection was donated to the Penobscot Marine Museum by Doris Gilmour.

Restrictions

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

Condition:

This collection is mostly in good condition, with light wear commensurate with age and use.

Historical Note:

Orlando W. Foss (1847-1926) was a sea captain from Hancock, Maine. His commands included the schooners ANNIE E. RICKERSON and JOHN PAUL, which he principally sailed in the West Indies trade. Later in his career, Foss invested in shares of local vessels, including his own JOHN PAUL and the schooner JOHN MAXWELL. He retired from the sea around 1900 and spent the rest of his life serving an officer of the Liberty National Bank as a Republican representative in state and local politics.

Foss married Caroline G. Moore in 1874 and had nine children. Their two eldest sons, Boyd P. and Harold G. Foss, both became schooner captains. Boyd died in 1910 of typhoid fever while in command of the JOHN MAXWELL.

Harold G. Foss (1881-1965) started his career in the coasting and West Indies trade, and was in command of the schooner SALLIE C. MARVIL by 1910. In 1917, he was appointed as a U.S. Consular agent in Venezuela. Shortly after that, he moved to Melrose, Massachusetts and began importing fertilizer from Venezuela, a business he maintained into the 1930s. He returned to sea during World War II, commanding liberty ships for the U.S. Merchant Marine. He continued to captain cargo ships until the late 1950s.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains log-books, account books, and a scrapbook from Harold G. and Orlando W. Foss's varied maritime careers. Eleven volumes, the bulk of the collection, are from Harold G. Foss's service in the U.S. Merchant Marine during and after World War II. Most of these are unofficial log-books kept by Foss which record his ship's daily positions, average speed, weather, and fuel used while at sea. In port, Foss used these books as a brief diary, with notes on loading and unloading cargo, hiring and managing crew, interactions with customs agents and inspectors, and activities with friends. The earliest of these is from Foss's command of the liberty ship JAMES G. BLAINE during World War II. Later volumes reflect the post-war merchant marine, with trips from ports in the United States to Japan, Korea, South America, and Croatia. There is also one account book, which contains records of the crew's wages, slops, and petty cash aboard the Isbrandtsen Line ship SIR JOHN FRANKLIN, and a few official deck and engine room logs.

Orlando W. Foss is represented by two volumes, a log-book and an account book from the schooner JOHN PAUL, as well as some loose accounts. The account book covers the schooner's career in the coasting and West Indies trades from her launch in 1891 to 1910, while under the command of both Orlando and his son Boyd P. Foss. The log-book records voyages to various Caribbean islands during the early 1890s.

The final volume in this collection is a scrapbook assembled by Orlando W. Foss on the death of his son, Boyd. The scrapbook contains obituaries, photographs, memorials, and letters of condolence from friends and neighbors across the Foss's social circle.

Box and Folder List:

Orlando W. Foss:

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|-----------|---|
| MS 442a | Account book, schooner JOHN PAUL, 1891-1910 |
| Folder 1 | Loose documents stored in account book, 1903-1911 |
| MS 442b | Log-book, schooner JOHN PAUL, 1892-1894 |
| Folder 2 | Loose documents stored in log-book, 1895 |
| LB1986.25 | Scrapbook, obituaries and condolence for Boyd P. Foss, 1910 |

Harold G. Foss:

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| MS 441 | Log-book, SS JAMES G. BLAINE, 1942-1943 |
| MS 440 | Account book, SS SIR JOHN FRANKLIN, July 1948-January 1949 |
| MS 437 | Log-book, SS HARPOON, March-November 1953 |
| MS 438a | Log-book, SS HARPOON, November 1953-September 1954 |
| MS 438b | Log-book, SS HARPOON, September-November 1954 |

MS 439a Log-book, SS WIND RUSH, April-September 1955
MS 439b Log-book, SS WIND RUSH, September 1955-March 1956
MS 436 Log-book, SS WIND RUSH, March-July 1956
MS 443a Bridge Log, SS DUKE VICTORY, January-March 1957
MS 443b Bridge Log, SS DUKE VICTORY, March-May 1957
MS 443c Engine Department Log, SS DUKE VICTORY, May-July 1957