

# PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM

Inventory for  
Manuscript Collection

**PMM 96**

**Amos Nichols Diaries**

1884 – 1900

3 volumes  
.4 linear feet  
Accession No. 1982.20

**Stephen Phillips Memorial Library**

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## PMM 96

### Amos Nichols Diaries

**Nichols, Amos, 1860-1950**

Diaries, 1884-1900

3 volumes (.4 linear feet)

Sea captain from Searsport, Maine

Three diaries kept by Captain Amos Nichols while at sea on the bark HERBERT BLACK and ship GOVERNOR ROBIE. Entries are almost entirely related to the business of the ship while at sea, including winds, weather, navigation, sail maneuvers, and ships seen or spoken to. Entries that cover time spent in port, notes on the crew, or personal observations are rare.

In English

Anonymous; Gift; 1982; 1982.20

Finding aid available; folder level control

**Subject Headings:**

Nichols, Amos, 1860-1950

GOVERNOR ROBIE (Ship)

HERBERT BLACK (Bark)

Diaries

Ship captains

**Local Subject Headings:**

Cape Horn trade

Case oil trade

China trade

**Acquisition:**

This collection was donated to the Penobscot Marine Museum.

**Restrictions**

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

**Condition:**

The collection is mostly in good condition. Covers are worn. The volume for the years 1885-1900 is covered with a hand-stitched brown twill fabric cover, which is fragile and separating along creased edges.

**Historical Note:**

Amos Nichols (1860-1950) was a sea captain from Searsport, Maine. His commands included the bark HERBERT BLACK, which was built and owned in Searsport, and the ship GOVERNOR ROBIE, built and owned by William Rogers of Bath, Maine. Nichols sailed primarily on long-distance, deep sea routes around Cape Horn, frequenting ports like New York, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Manila, Valparaiso, and Newcastle (Australia). Nichols often carried case oil (kerosene) as an outbound cargo from the United States, returning with cargoes like hemp and Sulphur. After retiring from the sea, Nichols served as the postmaster for Searsport, Maine.

**Scope and Content:**

Three diaries kept by Captain Amos Nichols of Searsport, Maine while in command of the bark HERBERT BLACK and ship GOV. ROBIE. Entries, kept daily while at sea, record the winds, weather, sea state, sail plans and maneuvers, the vessels' positions, and notes on navigation. Nichols kept these diaries for every voyage he made between 1884 and 1900, often covering the same routes between ports like New York, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Manila, London, Valparaiso, and Wellington, New Zealand. Weather and sailing are the focus of the diaries; mentions of the crew or Nichols's own activities are extremely rare. Nichols also did not keep these journals while in port, though he often noted the cargo and pattern of loading at the beginning of a voyage. He also occasionally notes taking a voyage off to go home to Searsport.

**Item List:**

MS 411	Diary kept aboard the bark HERBERT BLACK and ship GOV. ROBIE, 1884-1890
MS 412	Diary kept aboard the ship GOV. ROBIE, 1890-1894
MS 413	Diary kept aboard the ship GOV. ROBIE, 1894-1900