

Connecticut Historical Society
museum & library

Noah Scovell Papers, 1783-1819

A Guide to the collection at the Connecticut Historical Society

Collection Overview

Repository:	Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut
Creator :	Scovell, Noah (1759-1821)
Title :	Noah Scovell Papers
Dates :	1783-1819
Extent :	1 linear foot (1 box)
Location:	Ms 56660
Language:	English and French

Biographical Sketch

Noah Scovell was born in 1759 in Potapogue Parish, Saybrook, Connecticut, the son of William and Ruth Webb Scovell. Noah married Desire Pratt (1759-1819) of Essex and they raised five children, namely Noah (b. 1781), Lewis (1783-1806), Sebra or Seabury (1785-1805), Amos (1787-1852) and Maria (1789-1834). Noah was a merchant and shipbuilder. His vessels primarily traded in the West Indies and along the Eastern seaboard. They included the Dolphin (Brig), Friendship (Brig), Patty and Julia (Ship) and Fairplay (Schooner). Between 1810-1812, he and his son Noah experimented with importing Merino sheep from Spain. Son Noah moved to New York to carry on the merchant trade and assist his father.

Scope and Content

This collection is gathered from several purchased sets of papers. The bulk of the collection, containing Scovell's correspondence, financial records and papers pertaining to the Brig Dolphin, was purchased in one group. Additional papers, many relating to other ships owned and/or captained by Scovell, came from other collections. The papers have been arranged chronologically.

The first nine folders contain letters written to Mr. Scovell between 1785 and 1819, with an additional folder for undated correspondence. The majority of these letters are about business matters, shipping opportunities and questions about purchases. Also included are family letters and letters written to Noah Scovell, Jr. There are also five letters, each transcribed in pencil, about a black girl owned by Mr. Scovell named Violet. In 1802 she ran away, in 1803 he considered selling her, and in 1808 he wrote his son to tell him of her death.

Included in the collection are a handful of letters that do not appear to involve either Noah Scovell or his son. One, dated 1823, is addressed to Mr. Luther Holey and is from his son. Another, dated 1802, is an address from the Farmington town committee. Two more, from 1832, are addressed to Mr. John Slater.

Eight folders contain financial records dated between 1783 and 1811, plus many undated papers and some written in French. Many of these are connected with Scovell's shipping concerns. There are also bills of lading and other papers for many of the ships Scovell owned or captained, including the Caroline, the Friendship, the Fairplay and the Patty and Julia.

There are also nine folders containing papers relating to the Brig Dolphin. Included are letters to Scovell about the ship, general financial records, and voyage accounts from 1786 to 1789. There is also a "minet book" with records relating to a single voyage of the Dolphin.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Use Restrictions

Use of the material requires compliance with the Connecticut Historical Society's Research Center regulations.

Subject Headings

Personal Names

Scovell, Noah, 1759-1821.
Scovell, Noah, b. 1781.

Subjects

Coastwise shipping.
Dolphin (Brig).
Fairplay (Schooner).
Friendship (Brig).
Merchant ships --Connecticut --Saybrook.
Patty & Julia (Ship).
Saybrook (Conn.) --History --Sources.
Ship captains --Connecticut --Saybrook.
West Indies.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Item, Collection Title, Collection number (Box #, Folder #). Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut.

Processing Details

Collection was processed by Robert Johnston in 2008.

EAD Finding Aid created June 2011.

Accruals

The collection is closed.

Contents:

Papers

Box	Folder	
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1	1	Correspondence, 1785-1789
1	2	Correspondence, 1790-1793
1	3	Correspondence, 1794-1795
1	4	Correspondence, 1796-1797
1	5	Correspondence, 1799-1801
1	6	Correspondence, 1802-1804
1	7	Correspondence, 1805-1807
1	8	Correspondence, 1808-1819
1	9	Correspondence, undated

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1	10	Family correspondence
1	11	Noah Scovell, Jr. correspondence
1	12	Account of runaway black girl named Violet
1	13	Non-Scovell family correspondence
1	14	Financial records, 1783-1787
1	15	Financial records, 1788
1	16	Financial records, 1789-1790
1	17	Financial records, 1791-1799
1	18	Financial Records, 1800-1811
1	19-20	Financial Records, undated
1	21	Financial records, in French
1	22	Bills of lading
1	23	Ships' papers
1	24	Brig Dolphin, correspondence
1	25-27	Brig Dolphin, general financial
1	28	Brig Dolphin, "Minet Book" 1789
1	29	Brig Dolphin, voyage accounts, 1786-1787
1	30	Brig Dolphin, voyage accounts, 1788, 1 of 2
1	31	Brig Dolphin, voyage accounts, 1788, 2 of 2
1	32	Brig Dolphin, voyage accounts, 1789