

## Connecticut Historical Society

## museum & library

### Scovell Family Papers, 1780-1847

#### A Guide to the collection at the Connecticut Historical Society

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#### Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut
<b>Creator :</b>	Scovell family
<b>Title :</b>	Scovell Family Papers
<b>Dates :</b>	1780-1847
<b>Extent :</b>	1 linear foot (2 boxes)
<b>Location:</b>	Ms 98732
<b>Language:</b>	English

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#### 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 Maria (Sloop), Peggy (Brig), Nancy (Ship), Patty and Julia (Ship) and Manufacture (Brig). 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.

The elder Noah Scovell's siblings were William, Matthew (1743-1805), Ezra (1748-1824) who lived in Berlin, Connecticut, and Dan (1752-1781), a resident of Colchester.

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#### Scope and Content

The dealer from whom the collection was purchased organized the papers by subject. That arrangement has been changed to more nearly reflect the individuals and vessels central to the collection. The two Noah Scovell's were both called "Captain" at various times, so there may be occasions

when correspondence has been assigned to the wrong individual. It was also impossible to separate business from personal correspondence. As a result, the correspondence has only been divided into incoming and outgoing, then by date.

Business correspondence and ships papers comprise the bulk of the collection. The letters of Noah and Noah Jr. are arranged first in the collection, followed by missives written by or to other family members. Legal papers, financial records and ships' papers cover the activities of both men and no attempt was made to distinguish between them.

Noah Scovell, Sr., wrote letters to his ship captains, including his son Noah, with instructions for selling cargo. Epaphroditus Champion invested in Scovell's ships and was a frequent correspondent. According to his letters, Noah's brother Ezra shipped meats and other goods on Noah's vessels. James Arden, based in New York City, frequently informed Noah about the ships entering and leaving port. Other correspondents included Judson Canfield, Amos Peck and Nathaniel Ingraham, another New York City merchant. Among son Noah's correspondence are reports from Spain about the type and number of Merino sheep being loaded aboard various ships, 1810-1812. As with his father, Noah Scovell Jr.'s correspondence is primarily business related. He wrote one letter in 1806 commiserating with his parents on the loss of their son, his brother, Lewis.

Amos Scovell wrote a mix of personal and business letters to his brother Noah Jr., 1805-1808. Noah Sr. appears to have been executor of his brother Dan's estate and guardian of his son, Dan, according to papers, 1780-1792 filed under Dan Scovell. Noah's son Lewis wrote to his father from Major Rufus Hitchcock's house in Cheshire, 1798, and in 1805 kept brother Noah apprised of the health of their brother Seabury. Business and personal topics were mixed in Seabury's letters to his father and brothers, 1798-1805.

Legal records of both son and father Noah, 1785-1810, consist of an apprenticeship agreement to teach John Williams Jr. how to be a mariner, 1785, an agreement between Amos Peck and Noah Scovell to keep Noah's mother, 1795, summonses, an agreement between the master and fishermen of the Sloop Girl, 1805, and estate papers, 1801-1822.

Assorted business and personal financial records, namely bills, receipts, orders of payment, promissory notes and accounts, are arranged chronologically from 1784-1847. Medical bills, correspondence and "recipes" were separated by the dealer and remain so in this organization. They are also arranged chronologically, 1782-1829.

Ships' papers include customs documents (many in a foreign language), lumber inspections, bills of exchange, accounts, bills and invoices, and correspondence. Where possible, the papers were arranged by name of vessel and the vessels are organized alphabetically. Of particular note is the

contract for building the Peacock (Ship), and a sailor's brief journal of his voyages aboard Scovell's vessels.

The final folder in the collection contains the correspondence and notes of Reverend B. F. Case who at one time appears to have owned or at least had access to this collection.

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## **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.

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## **Subject Headings**

### **Personal Names**

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

### **Family Names**

Scovell family.

### **Subjects**

Dolphin (Brig).  
Nancy (Ship).  
Patty and Julia (Ship).  
Peacock (Brig).  
Peggy (Brig).

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

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

### Processing Details

Collection was processed by Barbara Austen.

EAD Finding Aid created June 2011.

### Accruals

The collection is closed.

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### Contents:

#### Papers

Box	Folder	
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1	1	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1784-1793
1	2	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1794
1	3	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1795-1796
1	4	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1797-1799
1	5	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1800-1802
1	6	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1803-1806
1	7	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1808-1810
1	8	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence, 1811-1817, undated
1	9	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence from Judson Canfield, 1805-1818
1	10	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence from Amos Peck, 1798-1811
1	11-14	Noah Scovell Sr. incoming correspondence from Ezra Scovell, 1786-1811
1	15	Noah Scovell Sr. outgoing correspondence, 1794-1820
1	16	Noah Scovell Sr. outgoing correspondence to Noah Scovell Jr. 1798-1819
1	17	Noah Scovell Jr. Incoming correspondence, 1796-1802
1	18	Noah Scovell Jr. Incoming correspondence, 1804
1	19	Noah Scovell Jr. Incoming correspondence, 1805-1807
1	20	Noah Scovell Jr. Incoming correspondence, 1808-1810
1	21	Noah Scovell Jr. Incoming correspondence, 1811-1825, undated
1	22-23	Noah Scovell Jr. outgoing correspondence, 1798-1829, undated
1	24-25	Noah Scovell Jr. outgoing correspondence to Noah Scovell Sr., 1799-1829
1	26-27	Amos Scovell correspondence and bills, 1805-1819, 1807, 1821

- 1 28-30 Dan Scovell papers, 1780-1797, undated
- 1 31 Lewis Scovell correspondence, 1798-1805
- 1 32 Seabury Scovell correspondence, 1798-1805
- 1 33-34 Noah Scovell Sr. and Jr. legal records, 1785-1822

**Box Folder**

- 2 1-17 Financial records, 1784-1847, undated
- 2 18 Tax lists and receipts, 1797-1804
- 2 19-21 Medical bills, 1782-1829, undated
- 2 22 Medical recipes, undated
- 2 23 Lumber inspections, undated
- 2 24 Customs documents, 1790-1819
- 2 25 Bills of exchange, 1793-1819
- 2 26-27 Ships' papers, 1785-1819, undated
- 2 28 Ships' papers, Dolphin (Brig), 1786-1789
- 2 29 Ships' papers, Gallant (Schooner), 1797-1798
- 2 30 Ships' papers, Maria (Sloop), 1790
- 2 31 Ship's papers, Manufacture (Brig), 1811
- 2 32 Ships' papers, Nancy (Ship), 1794
- 2 33 Ships' papers, Patty & Julia (Ship), 1792-1794
- 2 34 Ships' papers, Peacock (Brig), 1790-1801
- 2 35-37 Ships' papers, Peggy (Brig), 1793-1796, undated
- 2 38 Unidentified materials
- 2 39 Rev. B. F. Case correspondence and genealogical notes, 1915, undated