

CAPE ANN Museum

Library & Archives

1+ 978-283-0455 x19

library@capeannmuseum.org

SOLOMON JACOBS COLLECTION

Creator:	Alice Cox
Dates:	1882-1954
Quantity:	1.0 linear foot (2 document boxes)
Acquisition:	Accession #: 2007.02; Donated by: Mary Peterman from the estate of Alice Cox.
Identification:	A48; Archive Collection #48
Citation:	[Document Title]. The Solomon Jacobs Collection, [Box #, Folder #, Item #], Cape Ann Museum Library & Archives, Gloucester, MA.
Copyright:	Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Librarian/Archivist.
Language:	English
Finding Aid:	Processed by Linda Johnson, Library/Archives Assistant, 2007. Supervised by Stephanie Buck Archivist.

Biographical Note

Solomon Jacobs was born June 7, 1847 in Twillingham, Newfoundland, to Master Mariner Simon Jacobs and Mary Ann (Roberts) Jacobs. At the age of 17, with very little formal education, he went to sea in a square-rigger. In a short time, he became second mate of the ship *J. S. Winslow* of Portland, Maine.

In 1872 he arrived in Gloucester after hearing stories of the money that could be made in this port. His first trip out of Gloucester was on the Schooner *Nevada* with Captain William Lawrence to Georges Bank. After two trips on her he started fishing with Capt. Benjamin

27 Pleasant Street, Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930 USA

+1 978-283-0455

capeannmuseum.org

Wonson who taught him how to mackerel seine. A year later, at the age of 26, he became master of the *Sabine* and then the *S. R. Lane*, one of the Samuel Lane Co. fleet. It was on this vessel that he brought in the first of many record-breaking catches, landing 124,000 pounds of cod in 1875.

In 1878 he bought his first schooner, the *Sarah M. Jacobs*, named for his wife, and in 1880 his second - the schooner *Edward E. Webster*. In 1884 the *Molly Adams*, named for the daughter of Moses Adams of the American Net and Twine Co., was built for Jacobs in Kennebunk, ME. With these vessels he pursued and caught large numbers of mackerel, selling for as much as \$34,000 in one trip, and became known as the Mackerel King.

In 1887, he sent the *Molly Adams* and the *Edward E. Webster* to the West Coast to fish while he traveled by train across country to meet them. He sent a few cargoes of Halibut back, but most spoiled before reaching Gloucester, so he sold the schooners, stayed on as captain of the *Molly Adams*, and went sealing. Harassed from all sides and thrown into a Canadian jail he returned to Gloucester broke but undaunted.

In 1891 he had Moses Adams of Essex build him the *Ethel B. Jacobs*, named for Solomon's oldest daughter. She was an extremely fast vessel becoming "Queen of the Mackerel Fleet" and making Solomon the high liner in four of the years between 1892 and 1896.

In 1899, hearing that there was plenty of mackerel to be found off the coast of Ireland, he sailed across the Atlantic to become the first American Seiner in Ireland. But bad luck again followed. First, she was seized by a British cutter, and upon release ran up on a reef and sank.

This time Solomon tried his hand with a motor-powered vessel, and had the schooner *Helen Miller Gould* built for him by John Bishop in Gloucester. Named for the daughter of New York financier Jay Gould, she was the first gasoline-powered vessel in the Gloucester fleet. Again, Solomon became a high liner.

When the *Helen Miller Gould* was lost to a fire in 1901 Solomon turned to yet another new form of power - steam. The *Alice M. Jacobs*, named for his youngest daughter, was launched from Arthur D. Story's yard in Essex in 1902. He broke all mackerel records with her and in 1903 pulled in a catch that shared out at \$185,000 per man. Then disaster struck again and the *Alice M. Jacobs* also ran aground on a reef.

In 1904 he bought the A.M. Nicholson of Buckport, ME. and by 1908 was again high liner. But this was his last banner year and he stopped fishing in 1915.

Solomon was married twice, first to Elizabeth McCabe in 1875, who died a year later, and then to Sarah M. McQuarrie in 1877. They had four children, sons Arthur and Albert and daughters Ethel, who married Albert Dodge, and Alice who married Peter Cox.

Alice and Peter Cox were the parents of Alice Cox who donated these papers.

Solomon Jacobs died at his Prospect Street home on February 7, 1922.

An open area at the foot of Harbor Loop was dedicated as Solomon Jacobs Park on June 17, 1975, with a compass rose plaque designed by sculptor Adio diBiccari placed there.

Scope and Content of the Collection

This collection was compiled by Alice Cox, granddaughter of Solomon Jacobs. It consists of original documents, photographs, and newspaper clippings about Solomon Jacobs' life, family and some of the vessels he sailed.

Container List

BOX 1:

Folders:

1. Bills of lading and other ephemera concerning the Steamer Alice M. Jacobs.
2. Bills and ephemera concerning the Ethel B. Jacobs.
3. Vital statistics on the Sarah M. Jacobs.
4. Letter from Solomon Jacobs and photo of the girl for whom the Mollie Adams was named.
5. Bills of lading and other ephemera for the Schooner A.M. Nicholson.
6. Bills of lading for the Schooner Helen M. Gould.
7. Letters, checks, bills and other ephemera.
8. Republican convention June 19, 1900 alternate delegate medal and campaign posters.
9. Jacobs Park.
10. Newspaper clipping on the life of Solomon Jacobs.
11. Article on the history of the halibut industry.

BOX 2:

Folders:

1. Photos of Solomon Jacobs vessels
2. Jacobs family photos
3. Scrapbook beginning in 1882 covering Sol Jacobs (There is also a copy of this - #98)

Solomon Jacobs Scrapbook - Index

1. Advertisement for copper paints dated September 22, 1882 endorsement made by Solomon Jacobs
2. Article 25 years ago December 22, 1908 Mollie Adams Solomon Jacobs old schooner sold again
3. Newspaper clipping about Solomon Jacobs pressing a claim against the United States and England for 150,000. The governments had stopped his seal hunts in the "Behring" seas.
4. Another article about the 150,000 claim

5. Article dated 1894, crew of the Schooner Marguerite Haskins in a race with Ethel B. Jacobs. Article from the Gloucester Daily Times dated March 12, 1956 about the Newfoundland herring industry and Gloucester fishermen.
6. Newspaper article on the Ethel B. Jacobs. "Sneaker boats" vs. "toothpick or clipper". A poem about the Ethel B. Jacobs.
7. Newspaper article about Wesley Pierce marine painter.
8. Newspaper clipping "Sol Jacobs saved by a huge wave. Article from the Cape Ann Advertiser dated October 6, 1893 Gloucester fish landings.
9. Sol Jacobs equips seine boat with gasoline engine.
10. Sol Jacobs names new schooner for Helen Miller Gould.
11. Letters from Helen Miller Gould dated March 20 1900- April 1901
12. ibid
13. ibid
14. Cape Ann Advertiser dated March 1, 1901, list of American fishing vessels that obtained fishery licenses from Canada.
15. Cape Ann Advertiser June 28, 1901 list of marine and fishery notes. Article dated 1901 from the Boston Globe of the destruction of the Helen Miller Gould by fire.
16. Gordon Thomas article listing vessels that were built in Gloucester.
17. Photo of the Helen Miller Gould from the Gloucester Daily Times August 23, 1954
18. A toast to the Helen Miller Gould
19. Gordon Thomas article on the Helen Miller Gould. Article Sol Jacobs wears Mackerel Crown.
20. Alice Jacobs photo.
21. Article from the Cape Ann News, April 16, 1902 about Sol Jacobs's new steamer Alice M. Jacobs.
22. Sol Jacobs had a big mackerel trip
23. Newspaper article new boat being built in Essex to replace Helen M. Gould.
24. Architectural drawing of new design for Sol Jacobs new steam fisherman. Political cartoon about Jacobs fishing on the Alice M. Jacobs.
25. Newspaper article from the Gloucester Daily Times 1900, Sol Jacobs record breaking mackerel haul.
26. Various newspaper articles about the Alice M. Jacobs
27. Newspaper article from the Gloucester Daily Times December 15, 1951 on the Alice M . . . Jacobs.
28. ibid
29. Solomon Jacobs's obituary dated February 8, 1922 from the Gloucester Daily Times.
30. ibid
31. Atlantic Fisherman tribute to Sol Jacobs dated February 1922.
32. Fishing Gazette tribute from March 1922. (Side note from the family stating wrong facts).
33. Sol Jacobs article explaining how he made and lost three fortunes. (family notes wrong facts)
34. Several misc. articles on Sol. Jacobs

35. Detroit Times article from December 1902 Jacobs “wants warships sent to the Grand Banks.” Another article Capt. Sol will fight his luck has lost six ships two by fire.
36. Article c 1919 “Gloucester veteran planning to try mackerel fishing in an airplane.”
37. Article dated June 24, 1903 from the Gloucester Daily Times about clock given to Prospect Street Methodist Church by Sol Jacobs. Another article about flag staff dedicated at the Bethany Church and flag was given by Sol Jacobs.
38. Nathaniel Babson letter to Jacob’s about Taft’s good work.
39. Poem about the Mackerel King.
40. Official Massachusetts Credential for the 1900 Republican National Convention. Sol Jacobs was an alternate.