
Guide to the Journals of the Schooner Ellen MS 202

Finding aid prepared by Jody Valente

Collection processed as part of grant project supported by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) with generous funding from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.

San Diego History Center Document Collection

1649 El Prado, Suite 3

San Diego, CA, 92101

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Title: Journals of the Schooner Ellen

Identifier/Call Number: MS 202

Contributing Institution: San Diego History Center Document Collection

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 0.25 Linear feet(1 box)

Date (inclusive): 1891 June 16-1894 June 25

Abstract: The collection contains two journals of the Schooner Ellen, a vessel that was involved in coastal trade between the United States and the Baja California Peninsula, Mexico.

creator: Ellen (Schooner).

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Processing Information

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Preferred Citation

Journals of the Schooner Ellen, MS 202, San Diego History Center Document Collection, San Diego, CA.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically.

Biographical / Historical Notes

The Schooner Ellen was a coastal trading vessel, sailing between San Diego, California and the Baja California Peninsula, Mexico. Details on the Schooner Ellen are minimal. Records document voyages throughout the late 19th century, interactions with other ships trading provisions, and hunting for abalone, seals, birds, turtle, and cacti.

Scope and Content

The collection contains two journals for the Schooner Ellen recording activities from June 16, 1891 to June 25, 1894. Each journal entry heading includes the date and the journal entry number. A journal entry number is recorded for each voyage that leaves San Diego for the Baja Peninsula. From left to right, the journal notes the time of day, the journal entry, and the wind direction. Many entries note the weather, documenting the winds and seas, along with bearings.

The first journal (June 16, 1891-September 30, 1892) documents hunting seals and abalone, and of unloading meat at various ports. The Schooner Emma is referenced on multiple occasions, as the two schooners cross paths frequently. Turtle Bay (Bahia de Tortugas) is also referenced frequently as a site that is sailed past. The last page and inside back cover notes seal pups, cows and bulls hunted and the locations of the hunts.

The second journal (October 12, 1892-June 25, 1894) includes documentation of ships sighted at sea and in ports. Time is largely spent gathering shells and cacti, fishing, hunting for birds and turtles, and gathering guano and salt.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Chase, Captain

Ellen (Schooner).

Emma (Schooner).

Grosse, Captain

Bahia de Tortugas (Mexico)

Baja California (Mexico : Peninsula)

Cedros Island (Mexico)

Coronado (Calif.)

Guadalupe Island (Mexico)

Hunting

Jorres Wharf (San Diego, Calif.)

Marine mammals

Marine reptiles
Natividad Island (Mexico)
Point Loma (San Diego, Calif.)
Punta Colonet (Mexico)
Round Island (Mexico)
San Diego (Calif.)
Schooners
Sea birds
Seafaring life
Shipping
Shipping companies (Marine transportation)
Steamship Wharf (San Diego, Calif.)

Scope and Content

This journal of the Schooner Ellen records sailing from San Diego to various locations on the Baja California Peninsula. Guadalupe Bay, Rosalia Bay (possibly Santa Rosalita or Rosarito), and Natividad Island of Mexico are frequently visited. Time at port is frequently spent hunting for abalone shells, and in the latter part of the journal, seal hunting. Passengers are sometimes dropped off at ports, though details on the passengers are not recorded.

Entries of interest:

June 19-23, 1891: Notes sailing near the Schooner Emma. The two schooners frequently sail and port in the same location.

June 24, 1891: Retrieves 60 pairs of giant pectens (scallop shells) and records getting stung by a sting ray.

June 27-28, 1891: "Boated off" 11 loads of copper ore.

July 5, 1891: Anchors at San Fernando, Mexico and then passes by Round Island.

July 7, 1891: Sites Guadalupe Island, Mexico (Isla Guadalupe).

November 23, 1891: Anchors in Rosalia Bay (possibly Santa Rosalita or Rosarito) and "puts off" passengers and one ton of freight.

November 26, 1891: Anchors in Turtle Bay (also known as Bahia de Tortugas, Mexico) and finds a China junk at anchor [a junk is a boat used in China].

November 28, 1891: Anchors off Elephant Beach (Playa Elefante), looks for abalone but is unsuccessful.

November 29-December 4, 1891: Anchors at Abreojos Point (Punta Abreojos) and gathers 201 baskets of abalones.

December 5-12, 1891: Boils and dries abalones.

December 18, 1891: Sites the whaling brig Alexander.

February 16, 1892: Passes by Cape Callnet (possibly a reference to Colonet), St. Martin's Island (Isla San Martin), Point Baja (Punta Baja), and Round Island.

February 21, 1892: Passes by Turtle Bay, San Pablo Point, San Rooks Point (San Roque), Asuncion Island (Isla de Asuncion), and anchors at Hipolito Point (Punta Hipolito).

March 5-6, 1892: Tacked off shore of Natividad Island (Isla Natividad) and anchors at south end of Cedros Island (Isla Cedros). Abalone shells are sought, but none are found.

March 10, 1892: Retrieves sample sack of guano off Chester Rocks.

March 15-17, 1892: Anchors near Laguna Head and a man comes to the boat with letters that are sent to Davis and Ybarra (Ybarra is also mentioned later in journal). April 1, 1892: Goes aboard Schooner Ruby, retrieves 5 gallons of water and 2 ounces of tobacco, and mends sails.

April 8, 1892: Passes by Coronado and Point Loma, and anchors off Jorres Wharf (also known as Culverwell & Jorres Wharf). Custom house comes aboard.

May 17-19, 1892: Anchors at Watter Bay. Captain Grosse arrives. William Behn is met onshore. Several shots are fired onshore and Behn and Grosse were shot. They were "dangerously wounded."

May 20-21, 1892: Anchors in Santa Rosalia Bay (possibly Santa Rosaliita), leaving Behn and Grosse there. When Schooner Ellen returns from San Andres, Behn and Grosse are found "yet alive." A letter is read from Ybarra.

May 29, 1892: Retrieves 200 pairs of pecten gigantea.

July 11-15, 1892: Anchors in Rosalia Bay, Mexico (possibly Santa Rosaliita or Rosarito) and goes to San Andres Ranch. Goes hunting at Elide Island and retrieves 29 seal pups and cows, and one bull. Salts skins.

July 18-19, 1892: Anchors at Natividad Island and hunts 19 seal cows.

July 21-August 6, 1892: Just over 1000 seal pups and cows are hunted.

August 21, 1892: Turtle is traded for provisions. The steam Schooner Farallon arrives from San Diego from Ensenada custom house and comes aboard. (This may be the S.S. Farallon that shipwrecks in the Cook Inlet of Alaska, on January 5, 1910.)

September 4-8, 1892: 496 pounds of abalone shells are retrieved.

September 18-19, 1892: Makes Guadalupe Island, Mexico (also known as Isla Guadalupe), and anchors in Whaler's Bay. Gather 150 pounds of abalone shells.

Scope and Content

This journal of the Schooner Ellen records sailing from San Diego to various locations on the Baja California Peninsula. The Jorres Wharf of San Diego is typically the wharf of entry and departure. The Schooner sails frequently to Guadalupe Island, Cedros Island, and Turtle Bay, with one of the southern-most regions visited being Creciente Island. The journal records sighting of other ships, along with those that are at port. Entries record the weather and the winds, along with experiences gathering shells and cacti, fishing, hunting for birds and turtles, and gathering guano and salt.

Entries of interest:

October 12, 1892: "Let go" from Steamship Wharf, San Diego.

October 14, 1892: Sights San Martin Island, Mexico (Isla San Martin).

October 26, 1892: Sixteen sacks of salt are gathered and one ton of cargo is taken on board.

November 3-4, 1892: Anchors under Lagoon Heads and discharges cargo. Receives gold and letters from Ybarra.

November 14-16, 1892: Arrives at Punta Eugenia and sends boat ashore for barrels and boxes. Anchors at Turtle Bay and gather shells and salt. Four turtles are caught.

November 18-30, 1892: Anchors near San Ignacio, hunts, and looks for shells. The "boys" go to San Ignacio and return to the Schooner with three men.

January 15-18, 1893: Anchors at south end of Turtle Bay and sees China junk. Receives rice and tobacco from the Chinese sailors. Catches 100 pounds of fish and salts it.

April 16, 1893: Goes ashore on Coyote Island (Isla Coyote) and gathers shells.

May 9-19, 1893: Catches, dresses, and salts over 550 fish.

August 8-August 16, 1893: Sails to Guadalupe Island (Isla Guadalupe), San Isidro, and San Jose Point (Punta San Jose).

November 25-26, 1893: The Panama Steamer passes. Schooner Ellen anchors under North Heads of Cerros Island (Isla Cedros). Delivers cargo and takes on a passenger.

December 3-12, 1893: Gather shells and pectens (scallops), fishes for jewfish, and hunts over 100 curlew.

January 10-15, 1894: Anchors under Round Island and goes on shore to gather over 160 sacks of guano. The S.S. Pachecho passes by.

January 31-February 1, 1894: Anchors under San Thomass (Puerto Santo Tomas) and goes ashore for 35 gallons of water. Honey and wood is also gathered.

February 5-7, 1894: Anchors at Jorres Wharf, discharges guano, and goes to beach in order to paint.

March 16-18, 1894: Sets sail from Jorres Wharf. Notes seeing U.S.S. Albatross (the vessel departed from the port of San Francisco on January 2, 1894, and conducted a biological survey of San Diego Bay through March, 1894), along with the S.S. Progress, S.S. Corona, and S.S. National City.

March 20-23, 1894: Makes Cape Colnett (possibly Colonel) and anchors under St. Martins Island (Isla San Martin). Passes Point Baja, Round Island, and Rosalia Bay.

April 12-14, 1894: Anchors under Ballast Point of Margarita Island (Isla Santa Margarita). Gathers 1300 black murex seashells.

April 18-22, 1894: Goes to Creciente Island (Isla Creciente). Gathers and dries sea fans. Gathers 100 maguey plants and nearly 400 cacti.

June 6-9, 1894: Sails by Natividad Island. Sights the Junk Hong Kong and the Schooner Lou.