A guide to the Apollo (ship) records, 1849, 1852

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A Guide to the Apollo (ship) records

HDC0029

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Title: Apollo (ship) records
Date: 1849, 1852
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author: Beach, Joseph Perkins, 1828-1911
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Abstract: APOLLO (ship) records (SAFR 13575, HDC 29) is comprised of three logbooks, a letter, and one chart. The three rough logs were kept from January 16, 1849 to November 12, 1849 by Joseph Perkins Beach, the son of the ship’s owner, during its voyage from New York to San Francisco. The chart is hand-drawn and shows the voyage from New York to San Francisco. The letter is dated August 1852 and is addressed to Henry Day Beach from William B. Cooke. The collection has been processed to the collection level. It is open for use without restrictions.
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Language(s): In English.
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Preferred Citation
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Acquisition Information
SAFR-00001
This collection was transferred from Golden Gate National Recreation Area to San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.
Historical or Biographical Note
The APOLLO was built in 1831, by Samuel Badger of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for the original owners John Haven and Robert Rice of Boston. It was a 3 masted, fully rigged ship of 121’L x 27’W and 13.5’ draft, rated at 413 tons. The ship was originally intended for both the European packet trade, and the southern US cotton trades. Like many packet ships, the Apollo also had accommodation for passengers in the ’tween decks.
In 1836 the ship operated between Boston and New Orleans under the "Regular Line."
In 1841, the APOLLO was sold to new owners; and in 1843 it was trading between Boston and Savannah under the "Dispatch Line."
In 1845, the APOLLO was sold again and its home port changed to New York. In 1847 it was trading between New York, New Orleans and Natchez as part of the Union Line.

In 1848, Charles Coffin was appointed Master. The ship made a voyage to London, where it was re-coppered, and returned to New York by November of that year. It was sold to Moses Beach, who intended to use the ship for trading to California, retaining Charles Coffin as master.

The APOLLO left New York for San Francisco on January 16, 1849. The collection contains a complete log and journal of the voyage, which was kept by Joseph Perkins Beach, the son of the ship's owner. The APOLLO arrived in San Francisco on September 18th, 1849.

The crew abandoned the ship shortly after arrival. The owner's, unable to find outbound work for the ship, decided to employ her as a store ship. The APOLLO was pulled to shore and served as a floating warehouse for several years. In the fire of May, 1851, the ship was burned to its waterline. Over subsequent years, land was filled in around the ship's timbers. Some remains of the ship were excavated in 1901, 1921 and 1925, when the land was developed for the former site of the San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank, at what is now Sacramento and Battery streets.

The Log of the Apollo, edited and annotated by James P. Delgado and published by the Book Club of California in 1986, reproduces the log of Joseph Perkins Beach, and gives a full history of the vessel.

**Collection Scope and Content**

APOLLO (ship) records (SAFR 13575, HDC 29) is comprised of three logbooks, a letter, and one chart. The three rough logs were kept from January 16, 1849 to November 12, 1849 by Joseph Perkins Beach, the son of the ship's owner, during its voyage from New York to San Francisco. The chart is hand-drawn and shows the voyage from New York to San Francisco. The letter is dated August 1852 and is addressed to Henry Day Beach from William B. Cooke. The collection has been processed to the collection level. It is open for use without restrictions.

The logbooks total a 117 pages in three volumes and have daily entries that keep track of course, record winds, etc. The entries have a tone of humor when describing the discontent and disorder among passengers. There is frequent mention of the passengers “grumbling” about the food, breaking into the galley at night, drinking, gambling and being noisy. Among the comments about the majority of the passengers are mentions of the Episcopal minister and an occasional service performed by him. Also there is mention of kinds of fish seen and caught. In San Francisco, there is more narrative and description including desertion of crew members.

**Collection Arrangement**

This is a collection of five items.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Gold Rush--California--1840-1850
Death at sea
Beach, Joseph Perkins
Apollo (ship)
Logbook