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**Daniel Dobbins Collected papers
1800-1849 / Five Reels
M65-2**

Call Number: M65-2
Creator: Daniel Dobbins
Title: Collected papers [microform] : 1800-1849 / Daniel Dobbins.
Date(s): 1800-1849
Language(s): English
Location: Reading Room, microfilm wall

Acquisition Information:

Donor:

Restrictions:

Preferred Citation: Buffalo History Museum Research Library, M65-2, Collected papers [Microform] : 1800-1849 / Daniel Dobbins.

Processing Information: Collection reprocessed and retroconverted by Peter Nelson, July 21, 1993

Notes: Reproduced by Microfilm Corp. of Pennsylvania, 1949. 5 microfilm reels; 35 mm.

Biographical / Historical Note: Daniel Dobbins, Great Lakes navigator, ship builder during the War of 1812, engineer, and agent for the U.S. Revenue department, was born in a pioneer's cabin near the present site of Lewiston, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania. In 1796 he first came to Erie, the city that was to be his home for most of his life. He married Mary West (ca. 1779-1879) in 1800.

From 1800 to 1812, Daniel Dobbins was engaged in commerce on the Great Lakes and was in command of the schooner *Sauna* in 1812 when war broke out and he was captured by the British. He managed to escape and make his way to Presque Isle (near Erie, Pa.) and eventually to Washington, where he reported the fall of *Macinac* and the surrender of General Hall to President Madison. Madison concluded that the only way to secure victory was to control the lakes, and he gave Dobbins a commission in the Navy to take preliminary charge of building a naval fleet at Presque Isle, the site favored by Dobbins.

In September 1812, Dobbins undertook the work with little support from military officers or the War Department and a great shortage of skilled workers experienced in building naval warships. Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, the dashing naval hero of the War of 1812, arrived at Presque Isle in March of 1813 to take over the building of the fleet, and Dobbins offered staunch support. When the work was completed Dobbins was given charge of the *Ohio*, a dispatch boat, and was actively involved in the Battle of Lake Erie on September 10, 1813. His support of Commodore Perry earned Dobbins Perry's highest esteem.

Dobbins was active in the naval service throughout the rest of the War of 1812, and remained in the Navy until

1826. From 1829 to 1841 he was an officer of the U.S. Revenue Service. As commander of the cruiser Rush in 1838, he was actively involved in Buffalo in helping to keep order there during the Canadian Rebellion.

Daniel and Mary West Dobbins had ten children. Four of his sons are represented in this collection, primarily David Porter Dobbins. David Porter Dobbins (1816 or 17-1892) was involved in lake shipping until 1851, was a marine inspector for a Buffalo insurance firm, and operated boats on the Erie Canal, but he is most noted for his role in establishing the United States Life-Saving Service (later known as the Coast Guard), beginning around 1855. From 1876 until his death he was superintendent of the 9th District of the U.S. Life Saving Service. He married Mary Richards ca. 1838.

James Platt White (1811-1881) was a Buffalo physician and one of the founders of the University of Buffalo in 1846. He married Mary Elizabeth Penfield in 1836 (see biographical sketch: box 1, folder 2). His nephew and adopted son James P. White (1844-1894) married Anna Dobbins, daughter of David Porter Dobbins.

Scope and Content Note: Genealogical and biographical material concerning the Dobbins, White, and Penfield families; Dobbins family correspondence, 1811- 1890; general business, financial and legal papers of Daniel Dobbins, 1799-1862; maritime logbooks, impost books, enlistment records, contracts, ledgers, receipts and other records of Dobbins' career in maritime, naval, engineering and Dept. of Revenue service, 1800-1853; and accounts and commemorations of the Battle of Lake Erie, 1856-1875.

Arrangement: Organized on five reels of microfilm, processed by Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1949. This microfilmed collection is arranged differently than the paper/manuscript collection. During 1993, rearrangement of the paper/manuscript collection, original order, as understood, was broken.

We believe that the material on these films is a subset of the original papers, and that the papers of Dobbins' sons were not microfilmed. To see the papers of Dobbins' sons, the original Dobbins collection (Mss. C00-2) must be consulted in person at the Buffalo History Museum.

Subject Headings:

Dobbins, Daniel	U.S. Revenue Service
War of 1812	U.S. Life Saving Service
Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry	U.S. Coast Guard
Battle of Lake Erie	Seneca Nation of Indians
Great Lake Trading	Dartmouth College
Great Lake Vessels	West Expedition
U.S. Navy Yard	

MICROFILM REEL LIST

Reel 1:

Vessels, 1800 – 1830. (Index plus 92 images)

- Registers for various sloops, schooners and open boats including *Mary*, *Good Intent*, *Hydrerally*, *Gen. Wilkinson*, *Harlequin*, *Red Jacket*, *Geo. Washington*, *Diligence*, et al.

Impost Book "A", 1800 – 1805. (111 images; vessels listed in alphabetical order by name)

Manifests and Cargos Cleared at the Port of Presque Isle

- Listings for various sloops, schooners, and open boats carrying goods to and from U.S. and Canadian ports
- Listing includes various Masters of Ports from U.S. and Canada
- Sloops, schooners and open boats are listed along with goods they carry.
- Ships include *Good Intent*, *Schenectady*, *Gen. Wilkinson*, *Cleveland*, *Harlequin*, *Nancy*, and *Lark*.
- Account of Tonnage of Vessels at the Port of Presque Isle

Impost Book "B", 1805 – 1812 (146 images)

Manifests and Cargos Cleared at the Port of Presque Isle

- Sloops, schooners and open boats to and from U.S. and Canadian ports
- Ships include *Hunter, Ranger, Tracy, Mary, Dover, Loder, Ebenezer R. Hawley, Packet, Contractor, Salina, and Union*

Ledger of Capt. Daniel P. Dobbins, 1805 – 1813 (90 images)

- Ledger for Schooner, *Ranger*, pg. 1 – 13
- Payments/Credits to various ships and individuals, pg. 14 – 90

Reel 2:

Daniel Dobbins Journal/Daily Log, Sept – June, 1818 (22 images in bound volume)

- Daily entry for journal
- Discussion of location of vessels, weather encountered cargos, trades, etc.

Cargos That Were Shipped, Aug. 1810 – June 1811 (10 images)

Log Book, Remarks and Inventory of the schooner *Salina*, July 1809 – July 1812 (58 images)

"Log Book 'A' of the Schooner *Geo. Washington of Presque Isle, Capt. Daniel Dobbins, Commencing 24th May, 1816*" (54 slides)

Weekly Report of the Work done at U.S. Navy Yard, Erie PA" Jan.- Aug., 1819 (39 images)

Erie PA 1822 – 1823 (140 images)

- The sale/trade of alcohol

Ledger Book, Erie PA, 1822 – 1826

- Daniel Dobbins, sales ledger for various individuals

Enlistments of Privates, 1809 – 1814 (13 images)

- Includes date of enlistments, and supplies given to each.
- These include caps, coats, shoes, trousers, blankets, etc., given at point of enlistments

Indexed Papers – Various Dates (398 images)

List of Original and Copies of papers relating to and connected with Perry's victory 10th Sept. 1813 and Construction of the Fleet

- Miscellaneous papers regarding Mexican War
- Miscellaneous papers regarding Lake Marine
- Miscellaneous papers regarding Clay – Randolph Duel
- Miscellaneous papers regarding Patriot War of 1837 – i.e.: Upper Canada Rebellion

Reel 3:

Miscellaneous Papers spanning Daniel Dobbins career, 1800's – 1870's (~600 images)

- James K. Polk, President, greetings to Daniel Dobbins
- Log Book, Ashtabula, OH
- Various letters, correspondence and indexes with dates and places, including Navy Department, Treasury Department, Buffalo, Erie, Baltimore, Detroit, Ashtabula
- Various Articles of Agreements
- Weekly reports of work done at U.S. Navy Yard, Erie, PA

Reel 4:

Miscellaneous Papers spanning Daniel Dobbins' career, 1800's – 1880's (~600 images)

- Letters and correspondence to and from Daniel Dobbins
- Places of origin include: Ashtabula, Washington, Wesleyville, Erie, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Oakland CA, Navy Department, Detroit, Philadelphia, Toronto, Cincinnati, Burlington, and Harrisburg
- Correspondences with official letterhead include:

Equitable Aid Union #385

Maumee Valley Monumental Association

Atlantic Publisher and Engraving Company, relating to Daniel Dobbins biography

Rhode Island Historical Society

Adjunct Generals Office, Washington DC

Rooms of the Battle of Lake Erie Monument Association

“To Show Cause” notice against David Porter Dobbins, 1842

Record of the Family – Charles & Mary Dobbins and Samuel & Evelin Dobbins

- Articles of Agreement and Various Indenture Deeds
- News clippings: War of 1812 remembrances, celebrations, obituaries, and history of Erie County, PA

Reel 5:

Miscellaneous Papers (484 images)

- Letter from G.W. Clinton (son of Dewitt Clinton), June 4, 1844 – “Brothers...”
- Various treaties, stipulations and agreements between Native American Tribes and U.S. Government
- *A Book of Memorandum, 1840* by Maris B. Pierce, Dartmouth College. Pierce was an official interpreter, advocate for Seneca Nation rights and welfare, and teacher at multiple Indian schools
- Two journals of the “West Expedition” commanded by Major General Sullivan, 1779
 - Major James Norris
 - Major John Burrows
- O.H. Marshall *Index Rerum* – Native American /English: handwritten Index of indigenous names, places and translations

Collection reprocessed and retroconverted:
Peter Nelson, July 21, 1993
Scanned and converted to MS Word:
Cynthia Van Ness, Nov. 22, 2010
Microfilm Arrangement and Description:
Shane Stephenson, May 12, 2012
Updated:
Amy Miller, November 8, 2012