

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

A Guide to the Dibblee and Brown Records Inventory

Summary Information

Repository

Albany Institute of History & Art Library

Creator

unidentified

Title

Dibblee and Brown Records Inventory

Identifier

GJ 777-37

Date

1822-1850

Physical Description

9 boxes and unboxed material

Physical Location

The materials are located onsite in the Museum.

Language of the Material

English

Abstract

Dibblee & Brown operated from the early 1820s to 1838 in Albany, New York. Located at the corner of State and Dock Streets, Dibblee & Brown were merchants, and commission and forwarding agents. They owned sloops, towboats, and canal boats, and chartered sloops and steamboats to transport goods and commodities on the Hudson River and Erie Canal. Partners included Allen Brown (1768-1852) and Henry Dibblee (1778-1840), while Silas and Stanton Brown managed the business in New York City. Elias Brown, son of Allen Brown and his wife Nancy, was a Hudson River pilot and captain of the steamboat *North America*.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Dibblee and Brown Records Inventory, 1822-1850, GJ 777-37. Albany Institute of History & Art Library, Albany, New York.

Conditions Governing Access and Use

Restrictions on Access

None

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Accession: # unidentified

Accession Source/Date: unidentified

Processing Information

Inventory finding aid updated by H. Cox, June 2021.

Biographical/Historical

Allen Brown (1768-1852) was likely born in New York City and died in Roxbury, New York. He came to Albany in 1788 and married Nancy Lockwood (1785-1867), daughter of Captain Jared Lockwood (?-1823), an Albany merchant, in 1812. Allen and Nancy's children included four boys who died young, Edward, Augusta, Elias, Nathaniel, and Harriet. Allen Brown was a founder and director of the New York State Bank of Albany; Trustee of the Second Presbyterian Church; Director, Albany Insurance Company;

President Citizens Committee for Celebration of Opening of the Erie Canal; President and Chief Engineer of the Albany Volunteer Fire Department; and the founder of the New York Steamboat association which operated such boats as the *Constitution*, *Constellation*, *Dean Richmond*, and *Independence*.

Henry Dibblee (1778-1840) became a partner of Allen Brown in 1824 or 1825.

Elias Brown, one of the sons of Allen and Nancy Brown, was a Hudson River pilot and second captain of the steamboat North America.

Silas and Stanton Brown were brothers of Allen Brown who managed the New York City end of the business.

Scope and Contents

This collection of 24 ledgers, day books, inventory and receipt books and one box of loose correspondence concerns the business affairs of the Albany firm of Dibblee and Brown, merchants, commission and forwarding agents with stores and warehouses on the corner of State and Dock Streets. The business operated from approximately 1824 to 1838, when Brown transferred his headquarters to New York City. This firm dealt in a variety of merchandise throughout the length of the Hudson River and by way of the Erie Canal after 1825. They owned sloops, canal boats, and towboats and chartered sloops and schooners as well as steamboats to carry on their wide and varied freight handling business. A list of the boats used by them is included in this summary.

Account books for several of the sloops are among the collection. Also included are two ledgers of the firm of Cady and Schuyler of Minaville, New York, who did business with Dibblee and Brown for many years. This collection presents a picture of the business of forwarding agents predating the railroad, with details of cargoes, expenses of operation, explanations of delays, and salaries paid to captains and crews.

Another large section of the correspondence contains records of Allen Brown's nineteen-year guardianship of Mary and Elizabeth Benham, daughters of Albany merchant Vincent J. Benham, who, with his wife, died in New Orleans in 1822, presumably of yellow fever. The twin girls were born in 1821. Legal papers, bills, and other papers including account books dealing with the guardianship are included, along with correspondence from the two girls to their guardian.

Contents List

The following section contains a listing of the materials in the collection.

| Description | Box | Folder |
|-------------|-----|--------|
|-------------|-----|--------|

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| | | |
| Correspondence | 1 | |
| Correspondence | 2 | |
| Account Book, 1823; Account Book, 1827-1835 | 3 | |
| Account Book, 1830-1837; Account Book, 1837-1838 | 4 | |
| Account Book, 1837-1838; Account Index, 1822; Cash Book | 4A | |
| Cash Book, 1826-1829; Cash Book, 1828; Cash Book, 1830; Cash Book, 1830-1834 | 5 | |
| Cash Book, 1834-1838; Day Book, 1823; Day Book, 1823-1825 | 6 | |
| Day Book, 1824; Day Book, 1833-1837; Day Book, 1837; Ledger, 1832 | 7 | |
| Cady Schuyler Account Ledger, 1837-1850 | 7A | |
| Oversized Volumes, 1826-1838 | unboxed | |
| Bound Volumes | | |
| Cash book 1, Allen Brown (before partnership with Dibbles), 1822 | | |
| Cash book 2, Dibblee and Brown, 1826-1829 | | |
| Cash book 3, Dibblee and Brown, 1830-1834 | | |
| Cash book 4, Dibblee and Brown, 1834-1838 | | |
| Account book 1, Dibblee and Brown, 1823 | | |
| Account book 2, Dibblee and Brown, 1827-1835 | | |
| Account book 3, Dibblee and Brown, 1837-1838 | | |
| Accounts Receivable 1, Dibblee and Brown, 1830-1837 | | |
| Accounts Receivable 2, Dibblee and Brown, 1837-1838 | | |
| Receipt Book 1, Dibblee and Brown, 1825-1833 (with signatures of canal boat and sloop Captains for goods received on board by them for delivery) | | |
| Receipt Book 2, Dibblee and Brown, 1834-1837 (with signatures of canal boat and sloop Captains for goods received on board by them for delivery) | | |
| Ledger 1, Dibblee and Brown, 1830-1837 (Accounts of merchants doing business with Dibblee and Brown) | | |
| Ledger 2, Dibblee and Brown, 1832-1838 (Accounts of merchants doing business with Dibblee and Brown) | | |
| Day Book Sloop <i>Canal</i> , 1823-1825 (A trip account of goods carried and to and from whom) | | |
| Day Book Sloop <i>Dewitt Clinton</i> , 1837 (A trip account of goods carried and to and from whom) | | |