



The New York Public Library Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the

Simeon Baker papers

1796-1848

MssCol 3568

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Summary

Creator: Baker, Simeon, 1779-1821

Title: Simeon Baker papers

Date: 1796-1848

Size: .2 linear feet (1 volume, 1 folder)

Source: Source unknown.

Abstract: Simeon Baker (1779-1821) was a ship captain based in New York City for much of his career, sailing as master of various ships in the transatlantic trade. In 1818 he married Jemima Cock of Mill Neck, in the township of Oyster Bay, Long Island. The Simeon Baker papers, 1796-1848, comprise his loose letters received and documents, 1796-1821 (one folder), and an account and letter book, 1810-1812, 1832-1848 (1 volume). Sailing destinations in Europe, the West Indies, South America, and along the eastern U.S. coast are mentioned, with cargoes including flour, coffee, sugar, onions, and hides. Baker used the volume to record accounts for the ship Charles and as a copy book for letters sent regarding the Charles, 1810-1812. The later accounts, 1832-1848, were kept by an unidentified farmer in the township of Oyster Bay, probably his wife Jemima Baker. Among the many names encountered are members of the Allen, Cock, Frost, Silleck, Smith, Townsend, Valentine, Weeks, and Youngs families.

Preferred citation: Simeon Baker papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

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Creator History

Simeon Baker (1779-1821) was a ship captain based in New York City for much of his career, sailing as master of various ships in the transatlantic trade. From at least the time of his marriage to Jemima Cock in 1818, he lived in the township of Oyster Bay. She was the youngest child of Thomas Cock (1738-1812) of Mill Neck (west of Mill Neck Creek) and Mary Smith. Simeon Baker died March 23, 1821, and

his brief will of 1820 was probated in Queens County (of which Nassau County was then a part) in 1823. In United States census records for 1850-1870, Jemima Baker is documented as living and holding property near family members in the Locust Valley-Mill Neck area, signing her will in Buckram (Locust Valley) in 1863. She took into her care George T. Allen (1825-1892), a son of her sister Freeloove Cock (1793-1846) and John Allen (1785-1843), who resided on her farm and was the principle heir in her will. Jemima Baker died in Locust Valley on March 5, 1872.

Scope and Content Note

The Simeon Baker papers, 1796-1848, comprise his loose letters received and documents, 1796-1821 (one folder), and an account and letter book, 1810-1812, 1832-1848 (1 volume). Sailing destinations in Europe, the West Indies, South America, and along the eastern U.S. coast are mentioned, with cargoes including flour, coffee, sugar, onions, and hides. Baker used the volume to record accounts for the ship *Charles* and as a copy book for letters sent regarding the *Charles*, 1810-1812. The later accounts, 1832-1848, were kept by an unidentified farmer in the township of Oyster Bay, most likely his wife Jemima. Among the many names encountered are members of the Allen, Cock, Frost, Silleck, Smith, Townsend, Valentine, Weeks, and Youngs families.

Letters received, 1802-1818, are from merchants and shipping agents in New York; Charleston, South Carolina; and London. These pertain to Simeon Baker's mercantile voyages on various ships in the transatlantic trade, beginning with the schooner *Good Intent*, New York to Madeira and Tenerife, 1802, to the schooner *William & Mary*, New York to Port au Prince, 1818. Destinations in Europe, the West Indies, and South America are mentioned, with cargoes including flour, coffee, sugar, and hides. Documents, 1796-1821, include bills of lading, mercantile and personal invoices, receipts, and agreements for voyages. There are also two ship rolls for the ship *Jupiter* of Philadelphia, master Simeon Baker, for voyages out of London in 1808 (to La Coruña, Spain) and 1810 (to Philadelphia), and a ledger sheet for the account of James Allen Jr., mate of the *Jupiter*, with Baker, 1808-1809. An 1803 receipt for payment signed by Isaac Coles lists charges for the board, nursing and burial of Henry Cock, presumably Jemima Baker's uncle who died that year. Some items are addressed to Baker via the agent N. Allen & Son, New York. An 1820 invoice is addressed to Mrs. Baker.

The volume was first used by Simeon Baker as an account book for the ship *Charles*, 1810 October 20-1812 January 11, with his copied letters sent, 1810 November 11-1812 March 13, found at end. Disbursements are entered chronologically and by location within, for New York, Virginia, and points in Great Britain, Sweden and Russia. Letters are written from Virginia, the Isles of Scilly, and New York, to Watkinson, Hall & Barton and another firm, concerning a delayed and difficult voyage of the ship *Charles* from Virginia to Europe.

The bulk of the volume was used as an account book, 1832-1848, by an unidentified farmer in the township of Oyster Bay, probably his wife Jemima. Among the many names encountered are members of the Allen, Cock, Frost, Silleck, Smith, Townsend, Valentine, Weeks, and Youngs families. Accounts, in very rough chronological order beginning in 1836, are chiefly payments for labor relating to the farming of corn, potatoes, wheat, rye, oats and other crops; maintenance of livestock; and clearing and cutting wood from a swamp; as well as payments for foodstuffs, goods and services. Credits are interspersed. There are also debits and credits for room and board, and serving tea and meals to named visitors and locals, especially in the mid-to late 1840s. The accounts notably include wages for named agricultural and household workers, with details of their tasks. Randomly grouped entries include accounts with Dr. Kellogg for medical needs, an annual account of Jemima Smith with Jemima Baker for the years 1832-1847, expenses for George Allen (Jemima Baker's nephew), and expenses for Mary Allen in 1834. In the last few pages of the accounts are found instructions for planting cranberries, a recipe for pickled

tomatoes, and a medicinal recipe.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Account books
Accounts
Recipes
Ships' papers

Subjects

Accounts -- New York (State) -- Long Island
Agricultural wages -- New York (State) -- Long Island
Agriculture -- New York (State) -- Long Island
Farms -- New York (State) -- Long Island
Ship captains -- United States
Shipping -- United States -- History -- 19th century

Occupations

Farmers.
Merchants.
Ship captains.

Geographic Names

Long Island (N.Y.) -- History -- 19th century
New York (N.Y.) -- Commerce
Oyster Bay (N.Y. : Town) -- History -- 19th century

Names

Baker, Simeon, 1779-1821
Allen family
Cocke family