



Independence
Seaport Museum

Exploring America's Maritime Heritage

Penn's Landing at
211 South Columbus Blvd. & Walnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-3199

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Lee Family Papers

Creator: Thomas Lee
Francis B. Lee

Dates: 1803 – 1835, 1893, 1896

Quantity: 1 box (134 items in 10 folders)

Call Phrase: Lee Papers

Provenance: Donated by Dorothy J. Best. ISM number: 2007.15

Processed by: Judy Stevenson, 2007

Biographical Note: Thomas Lee was a lawyer and ship-owner from Port Elizabeth, Cumberland County, New Jersey. Between 1803 and 1835, he and James Lee owned a number of sloops and schooners that operated along the east coast of North America.

Francis B. Lee was an attorney in Trenton, NJ in 1896.

Scope and Content: This collection consists of three distinct sub-groups: the business papers of James and Thomas Lee (c.1803 – 1835), letters received and sent by Francis B. Lee (1896), and ship-related newspaper clippings (c.1893).

The business papers of James and Thomas Lee consist of receipts, business correspondence, bills of sale, and contracts regarding a number of ships owned by the Lee family. The collection includes papers pertaining to the Schooners *Two Brothers*, *Cincinnati*, *Eliza Young*, *Transport*, *Deborah*, and *Industry* and the Sloops *Lorana & Jane*, *Ploughboy*, *Betsey*, and *James of Philadelphia*, as well as the Brig *Ocean*. Papers from some unidentified ships are also in this collection.

The letters of Francis B. Lee are in regards to the rescue of the crews of two ships, the American bark *S.R. Bearce* and the schooner *Carrie A Buckman* by Capt. Harry Chester of the tug *Gladisfen* off the coast of Bermuda. Lee, after reading a news article about the heroic rescue, brought the act to the attention of William McAdoo, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, in the hopes of securing a Life-Saving Medal for the captain. This collection consists of correspondence between Lee and McAdoo, the Treasury Department, the

State Department, Capt. Chester, and Edward N. Willets, a commercial agent. The collection also includes several newspaper clippings regarding the rescue.

The final sub-group of this collection consists of newspaper clippings from New York newspapers. Articles related to a variety of Navy ships, merchant ships, and pleasure boats are included. Of special interest are a number of clippings about the *Columbia's* speed trial.

Container List:

- Folder 1: Schooner *Transport*
- Folder 2: Schooner *Cincinnati* (sic)
- Folder 3: Schooner *Two Brothers*
- Folder 4: Sloop *Betsy*
- Folder 5: Schooner *Eliza Young*
- Folder 6: Schooner *Chancellor*
- Folder 7: Various Ships (*Deborah, James of Philadelphia, Ocean, Industry, Ploughboy, and Lorana & Jane*)
- Folder 8: Unidentified Schooners
- Folder 9: Francis B. Lee Letters
- Folder 10: Newspaper Clippings