

# CAPE ANN Museum

## Library & Archives

1+ 978-283-0455 x19

library@capeannmuseum.org

---

### JAMES G. TARR & BRO. WHOLESALE FISH DEALERS COLLECTION

<b>Creator:</b>	James G. Tarr & Bro. Wholesale Fish Dealers
<b>Dates:</b>	1894-1901
<b>Quantity:</b>	1.75 linear feet (4 manuscript containers)
<b>Acquisition:</b>	Accession #: 1997.38 ; Donated by: Roland & Martta Blanchet.
<b>Identification:</b>	A06 ; Archive Collection #06
<b>Citation:</b>	[Document Title]. The [name of collection] Collection, [Box #, Folder #, Item #], Cape Ann Museum Library & Archives, Gloucester, MA.
<b>Copyright:</b>	Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be addressed to the Librarian/Archivist.
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Finding Aid:</b>	Howard Thomas, June 1998; supervisor, Ellen Nelson, archivist

---

### Biographical Note

The James G. Tarr & Brother Wholesale Fish Company was just one of the business activities in which the Tarr brothers were involved. The 1869 *Gloucester City Directory* lists James G. Tarr as being with Dodd, Tarr & Co., also Tarr & Wonson, also James G. Blatchford & Co. (See 1869 Directory p. 92)

Andrew Dodd and James G. Tarr started a fisheries business at Rocky Neck in 1855. By 1859 business had grown to the point that they owned several fishing vessels. With Typical Yankee ingenuity, they established a marine railway to service their own vessels and others as well.

27 Pleasant Street, Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930 USA

+1 978-283-0455

[capeannmuseum.org](http://capeannmuseum.org)

Dodd, Tarr & Co. was a grocery and supply store located at Rocky Neck, owned and operated by Stephen Dodd, James G. Tarr and David Tarr.

James G. Blatchford & Co. was listed in the 1869 directory as ship painters, and included the names of James G. Tarr and Augustus H. Wonson.

According to David Tarr's undated obituary, Andrew Dodd left the firm in 1864 and Stephen Dodd (son?) left in 1874. At this time the name of the firm became James G. Tarr & Bro. Advertisements in the 1875 directory show Stephen Dodd & Co. as a wholesale fish dealer at the Gloucester National Bank Building and James G. Tarr Bro. as wholesale fish dealers at Rocky Neck.

Tarr & Wonson was the copper paint manufactory established at Tarr's wharf in 1863 by Augustus Wonson and James G. Tarr. The paint business was so successful that it moved in 1870 to its present location. An advertisement in Pringle's *History of Gloucester, Mass. 1623-1892* published in 1892, shows James H. Tarr as the manufacturer of New England Brand Copper Paint. James H. was the son of James G.

An ad appears on the same page in Pringle's for Jas. G. Tarr & Brother, wholesale fish dealers and includes the names of five Tar men: James G., D. Sherman, B.N. (Benjamin, David, and T.L. the name of the Firm remained Jas. G. Tarr & Brother.

As early as 1858, Dodd(s) and Tarr(s), with others, had owned shares together in fishing vessels. In the 1870 issue of *List of Vessels Belonging to the District of Gloucester*, Dodd, Tarr & Co. owned thirteen vessels and the Tarr Bros. owned five. By 1853, the next issue available, Dodd is not listed and James G. Tarr & Bro. own fourteen vessels. A spot check of the years, 1870 to 1908, show that the Tarrs registered between eleven and fourteen vessels each year.

---

## Scope and Content of the Collection

This collection provides a vignette on the everyday operation of the Gloucester wholesale fish dealer, James G. Tarr & Bro., from 1894 to 1901.

This collection was received in a weathered cardboard carton containing papers haphazardly scattered and two full, moldy commercial organizers. The organizers were labeled "B" and "C" but the material stuffed into them and the other papers in the box had no apparent relationship to these letters. The names of all the firms and individuals represented in the carton fall between the letters "A" and "N" of the alphabet and the dates range from 1894 to 1901 with one exception. This indicates that this group of papers is a small part of the Tarr

Company's complete office filing system and it also indicates that the Tarr Company probably used an alphabetical, chronological filing system.

We have arranged these papers in subject series, which may or may not have been used by the Tarr Company, while at the same time trying to maintain an alphabetical, chronological arrangement within each series.

---

## Series Description

- I. Series 1 General Correspondence
  - a. Accounts
  - b. Credit companies' reports
  - c. Rail shipment notices
  - d. Items regarding vessels and fisherman
  - e. Solicitations from other businesses
  - f. Personal
  - g. Outgoing – copies
- II. Series 2 Traveling Salesmen's correspondence and orders
  - a. Lane, Albert W. (Bert)
  - b. Babson, N.H.
- III. Series 3 Merchandise broker's correspondence and orders
  - a. Edward J. Davis, broker
  - b. Miscellaneous wholesale fish dealers
- IV. Series 4 Miscellaneous

---

## Container List

Series 1 General Correspondence

Box 1

- Folder 1
  - A. Accounts
- Folder 2
  - B. Credit Companies' reports
- Folder 3
  - C. Rail Shipments
- Folder 4
  - D. Vessels and fishermen
- Folder 5
  - E. Business and solicitations

Folder 6

F. Personal

Folder 7

G. Outgoing

Series 2 Traveling salesmen, correspondence and orders

A. Lane, Albert W. (Bert)

Folder 8 February 16, 1900 to April 11, 1900

9 May 4, 1900 to August 16, 1900 (includes note from Mrs. Lane Feb. 9, 1901

B. Babson, N.H.

Folder 10 July 13, 1899 to March 31, 1900

11 April 2, 1900 to may 15, 1900

Box 2

- Folder 1 May 2, 1900 to June 30, 1900
- 2 July 1, 1900 to July 25, 1900
- 3 August 2, 1900 to August 16, 1900

Series 3 Merchandise Brokers

A. Edward Davis

- Folder 4 February. 1 1894 to December 1, 1894
- 5 January 14, 1895 to December 21, 1895
- 6 January 1, 1896 to July 17, 1896
- 7 March 3, 1899 to March 12, 1900

B. Miscellaneous wholesale fish dealers (arranged alphabetically by company then chronologically within company)

- Folder 8 Akron Grocery Co. to Ayer & Andrews Co.
- 9 Babcock, Hurd & Co. to Barton & Wheadon

Box 3

- Folder 1 Bateman & Co. to E.H. Betts
- 2 Bliven to G.F. Burton
- 3 S.D. Chamberlin & Sons to C.H. Critchett
- 4 C.E. Crouse & Co. to C.A. Curtze
- 5 Davis Brothers to A.W. Doolittle
- 6 Dries back to Dwyer & Vhay
- 7 E.E. Eagle to H.C. Fisher

Box 4

- Folder 1 Jobst, Bethard & Co. to Judge & Co.
- 2 C.T. Keene to Krause, Ingham and Hiester
- 3 Lackawanna Store Assn., Ltd. To S. H. Levin's sons
- 4 Likens' to Geo. T. Moon (also includes Phelps, Brace & Co. and Riggs Market
- 5 Single items from other fish dealers

Series 5 Miscellaneous

- Folder 6 Office supplies
- 7 Fish price list
- 8 Boston Fish Bureau report
- 9 Tarr Company advertisements
- 10 Stock certificate book