

FONDS DESCRIPTION (MBMS-5)

John McLean & Sons fonds

1858-1971

9.5 cm of textual records
155 photographs
78 blueprints & drawings

John McLean was born in 1835 at Port Clyde, in Shelburne County. In 1861, he married Agnes Elizabeth Blysteiner of Mahone Bay, where McLean established a shipyard in 1865. He also worked as a local photographer. As his shipbuilding business grew, McLean was joined in 1882 by his son Charles Angus (born in 1865). Another son, William Delmont (born in 1875), joined the firm in 1897. The two brothers continued to expand the business following their father's death in 1910. In 1917, they acquired the John H. Zwicker yard. After Charles's death in 1950, William continued to operate John McLean & Sons until 1961, when he retired and sold the business. During the 1941-1950 period, the yard was leased and operated as the Mahone Bay Shipbuilding Company.

Fonds consists of legal documents, correspondence, notes, blueprints, and photographs that primarily document the shipbuilding activities of the John McLean & Sons shipyard in Mahone Bay. The photographs feature annotations (on the front or back of mounts) that identify vessels, members of the McLean family, some shipyard workers, and other subjects, including some early views of Mahone Bay. Among the vessels depicted are the schooners *Crofton U. McLeod*, *H.H. MacIntosh*, and *John W. Miller*. There is also a photograph of the CPR steamer *Mount Temple* aground on West Ironbound Island in 1907. The blueprints and related textual records document vessels built by both John MacLean and Sons and the Mahone Bay Shipbuilding Company. The legal documents primarily pertain to real-estate issues. An accrual processed in 2020 comprises a group of 29 photographs (mostly tintypes) and a group of 70 glass negatives. The tintypes and related photographs date from the c. 1861-1890 period and consist mostly of portraits of John McLean's wife and children. The glass negatives date from c.1891-1895 and consist of street views of houses, portraits of people (including two portraits of John McLean), and one military photo. The glass negatives have been attributed to John McLean who was best known as a local shipbuilder but self-identified as a photographer in the 1871 census and on his daughter's marriage record in 1879. It is possible that McLean was also responsible for the tintypes.

The photocopy of the document concerning the Mahone Bay Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. and the Winding-Up Act was received from the Yarmouth County Museum in 2003. The

photographs and legal documents were donated to the Mahone Bay Museum in 2010 by Judith Van Ryckevorsel. The shipbuilding blueprints and related textual records were received from the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in 2010. The group of 29 photographs in the 2020 accrual were donated by Judith Van Ryckervorsel c. 2010 (Acc, Nos. 2010.2.1-2010.2.27). The 70 glass negatives (which were originally found in a building adjacent to a property previously owned by John McLean) were donated in 2019 by the Heritage Boat Yard Co-op (Acc. Nos. 2019.5.1-2019.5.60AB). Another accrual was donated by Judith Van Ryckervorsel in 2022 and processed in 2025.