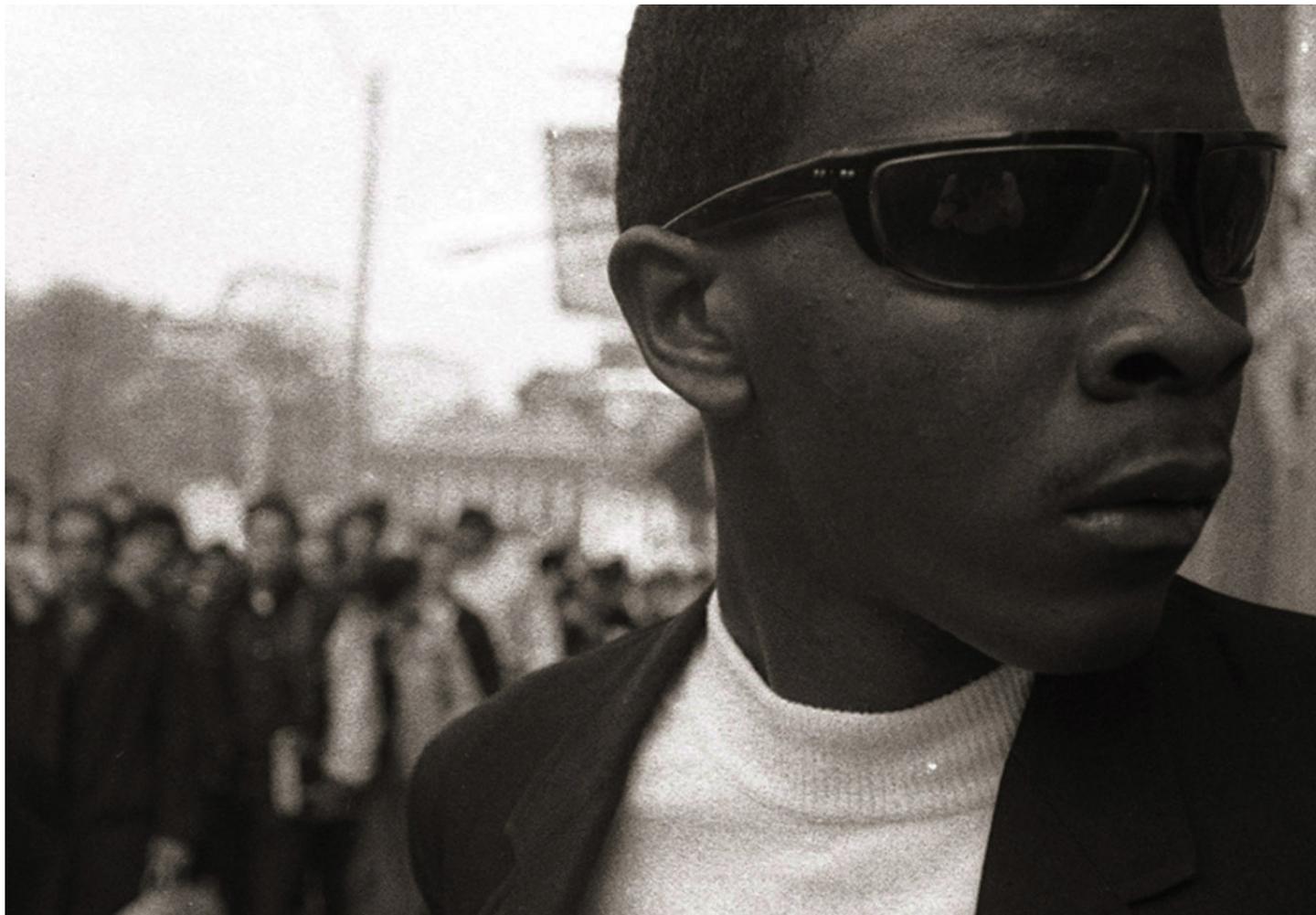


Undertaker and Home Furnishings Dealer Account Book

1881

1 box, 1 volume

Call no.: MS 171

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Owner of business (identity unknown) who served in the Wrentham, Massachusetts-area as a purveyor of home decorating supplies and furnishings and undertaker. Includes goods for sale and services provided (repairing and upholstering furniture, packing bodies in ice, carrying to tomb, grave digging, etc.); forms of payment (cash, exchange of goods such as soap, eggs, tables, and chairs, and exchange of services); and lists of customers, including City Mills Felting Company, A.H. Morse, J.A. Guild, Joseph Hutchingson, Charles Scott, and Foster Smith.

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Scope of collection

The owner of the business recorded in this account book served the needs of Wrentham, Massachusetts-area families from the cradle to the grave, as both a purveyor of home decorating supplies and furnishings (including cradles) and an undertaker.

The owner's identity remains uncertain. The Massachusetts Register and Business Directory for 1878 lists both Henry Bemis and G.O. Fuller as undertakers in Franklin (formerly part of Wrentham) but not as dealers in home decoration supplies or furnishings, which in the account book seems to be the greater focus of the business. There are no undertakers listed for Wrentham. Additional research into Wrentham's town history did not yield further possible identities.

Most of the goods sold were rolls of paper (probably wallpaper) and borders by the yard, along with carpeting and painting supplies. Among furnishings sold were bedsteads, spring beds, hair mattresses, pillows, chairs, looking glasses, plates and cups, sinks, lamps, and brooms. The company also repaired and upholstered furniture.

Most accounts were settled by cash; occasionally goods were exchanged (soap, eggs, berries, tables, and chairs) or services were accepted (hair cutting, work). Major customers were City Mills Felting Company, A.H. Morse, J.A. Guild, Joseph Hutchingson, Charles Scott, and Foster Smith.

Of great interest are the accounts for undertaking services performed sometimes for the town and at other times for individuals. To be found among these accounts are the charges for a casket, box, shroud, pillow, packing in ice, laying out, flowers, wreath, hearse, carrying to tomb, removing from tomb to graveyard, and grave digging.

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from Charles Apfelbaum, 1987

Processing Information

Processed by Linda Seidman, August 1987.

Language:

English

Acknowledgments

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Copyright and Use (More information)

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Search terms

Subjects

Undertakers--Massachusetts.

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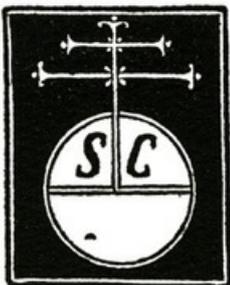
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