

Butler, Mills, Smith, and Barker Daybook

1837-1845

1 volume

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Partners who owned a small wool manufacturing mill in Williamstown, Massachusetts. Includes mixed personal and business expenses, information about employees and production in the two woolen mills in town, and information concerning the cost of commodities, labor, and boarding workers in the town.

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Scope of collection

This daybook lists transactions made by a small woolen manufactory in Williamstown, Massachusetts. The two most active partners were Henry Mills (b. 1810 in Williamstown) and Silas Butler (d. 1841); Asa Barker and Ebenezer Smith also appear to have been involved, although the accounts do not make clear to what extent. Toward the rear of the volume, there are

memoranda of wool purchases by two different combinations of partners-Butler, Mills and Barker, and Butler, Smith, and Mills. The first fifty pages reflect principally the expenses incurred by the partners. Among the expenses were charges for freight, soap, oil, wool, repairs on a regulator, potash, boarding for weavers, use of horses and wagons, labor, glue, and wood, as well as foodstuffs. Although it is not clear that personal and business expenses were kept separately, the accounts provide much information concerning the cost of commodities, labor, and boarding in the town.

Unlike the neighboring towns of Adams and North Adams, Williamstown never became a manufacturing center. In 1837, the town had two woolen mills (presumably one of which was that of Butler and Mills) employing 22 workers and producing 43,370 yards of cloth. By 1845, after the Butler, Mills, Smith and Barker partnership had dissolved, the town had only one woolen mill employing 10 and producing but 16,000 yards of satin. However, the daybook does demonstrate the impact of even a small manufacturer on the local economy. A number of local residents added to their income by selling soap, oil, and wool to the mill, by boarding its workers, by taking in weaving, or by hauling freight for the business.

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from Charles Apfelbaum, 1986.

Processing Information

Processed by Ken Fones-Wolf.

Language:

English

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Copyright and Use (More information)

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Search terms

Subjects

Barker, Asa.

Butler, Mills, Smith, and Barker.

Butler, Silas, d. 1841.

Mills, Henry, b. 1810.

Smith, Ebenezer.

Williamstown (Mass.)--Economic conditions--19th century--Sources.

Woolen and worsted manufacture--Massachusetts--Williamstown--History--Sources.

Contributors

Butler, Mills, Smith, and Barker **[main entry]**

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Account books.

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