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Amos Parker Accounts

1827-1863

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The son of Stephen and Abigail (Bailey) Parker, Amos Parker was born in Bradford, Mass., on Jan. 2, 1792, but lived most of his adult life in neighboring Groveland. Although his father died when he was young, Parker came from a family that had been settled in the region for at least a century, and enjoyed some success as a trader and proprietor of a general store.

Parker's accounts include goods for sale (such as lumber and hardware) and the methods and form of payment (principally cash but also in exchange for labor or commodities like butter or eggs). The volume also documents Parker's role in the burgeoning shoe industry exchanging and receiving shipments of shoes, and supplying local shoemakers with tools.

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Background on Amos Parker

The son of Stephen and Abigail (Bailey) Parker, Amos Parker was born in Bradford, Mass., on Jan. 2, 1792, but lived most of his adult life in neighboring Groveland. Although his father died when he was young, Parker came from a family that had been settled in the region for at least a century, and enjoyed some success as a trader and proprietor of a general store. He lived at 94 Salem Street in an elegant house near Kimball's Corner.

Parker was married twice: first in 1832 to Sophia Adams Kimball (1808-1836) and second, in 1837, to Louisa Shattuck (1806-1894). With no surviving children from his marriage, he and Louisa raised a family of six. Amos died on Oct. 31, 1871, and is buried in Riverview Cemetery in Groveland.

Scope of collection

This account book documents the changing mercantile activities of Amos Parker of Groveland, Mass. The first two-thirds of the account ledger covers the years 1827 to 1835 when Parker appears to have been running a general store, selling a wide variety of goods for cash or occasionally in exchange for labor or commodities like butter or eggs. In the early 1830s, Parker also began to trade in lumber and hardware, primarily as a commission agent for Aaron P. Emerson Co. of Orland, Maine (first entry, p. 137).

The last third of the ledger demonstrates the growing importance of the burgeoning shoe industry in the local economy. Essex County was the center of the nation's shoe production and merchants played a prominent role. Parker began to accept shoes in return for credit at his store in the early 1830s, but by mid-decade he was more heavily involved in exchanging and receiving shipments of shoes (see the entries from Stickney & Balch, p. 227, and Manly Hardy, p. 228). His responses to the needs of local shoemakers are reflected in the large shipments of awls he ordered from Charles Lincoln between 1842 and 1850 (p. 260), and his immersion in the shoe industry is reflected in his later dealings with the Aaron P. Emerson Co., when he exchanged large shipments of shoes for the lumber he sold (pp. 235-236). Although Parker never became a shoe industry merchant capitalist, the industry impacted heavily on his operation.

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

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Aaron P. Emerson Co. (Orland, Me.)

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Parker, Amos, b. 1792.

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Contributors

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