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## Merrick Gay Accounts

1844-1849

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A successful merchant from Gaysville, Vermont, Merrick Gay (1802-1866) operated a general store in his village for many years, later establishing a woolen factory. Gay served his community variously as postmaster, town clerk, and state senator.

These two daybooks document Gay's business transactions with local individuals and firms and with the Town of Stockbridge and Narrows School District. The entries record the name of each customer, the method and form of payment (cash and goods), and Gay's purchases, including labor costs for hauling freight.

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## Background on Merrick Gay

Born in Windsor County, Vt., on Nov. 15, 1802, Merrick Gay was one of seven children of Daniel Gay, the proprietor of a brick factory on the White River in the northeast corner of the town of Stockbridge, Vermont, which was the founding industry of the village of Gaysville. At the age of 25 in September 1828, Merrick married Sarah Whitcomb, uniting two of the most prominent families in Stockbridge. The couple eventually had six children.

By the 1840s, Merrick Gay had become a prosperous Gaysville merchant on his own, amassing an estate worth nearly \$17,000 by 1850, and in the years following, he established a small woolen factory that increasing his worth to about \$23,000 by 1860. A sign of his local prominence, Gay secured a post office for the village of Gaysville and served as postmaster for almost thirty years, while serving as town clerk for twenty-two years and for one term as a state senator. He died in 1866 at the age of 64. His second son, Nelson, who had joined Gay in business in the 1850s, succeeded his father in several of these activities.

## Scope of collection

These two daybooks document Gay's general store business in the latter half of the 1840s, apparently just at the start of his mercantile business or just as he began to implement a daybook and ledger system. The numbers in "Journal A" next to customer transactions on the first pages are in consecutive order beginning with 1, and presumably correspond to page numbers in a set of account books. The volumes contain approximately 400 different accounts.

Although most of Gay's transactions were with individuals, there are several entries for the Town of Stockbridge (Vermont), for the Narrows School District (in Gaysville), and for a few local businesses (the Gaysville Manufacturing Company, the Claremont Manufacturing Company, and the Gaysville Forge Company). Most of the transactions are routine: as a general merchant, Gay dealt in a wide range of goods, receiving in payment an equally wide variety of commodities (beef, cheese, rags, coal, ashes, butter, hay, shingles, brooms, and cloth) in addition to cash. Gay also purchased large numbers of books (see v. 2, page 483), perhaps as an agent for the local school.

Gay's daybooks also record hires for pay, especially hires for hauling freight, principally by Captain A. Perkins and Fred Gilson. In addition, there are entries for payment to Solomon Blanchard, a shoemaker, for \$43 in 1847, and to Israel Waller for one year's work in 1848 (\$150).

## Administrative information

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Acquired from Charles Apfelbaum.

### Processing Information

Processed by Ken Fones-Wolf.

### Language:

English

### Acknowledgments

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### Copyright and Use (More information )

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## Search terms

### Subjects

Barter--Vermont--Gaysville--History--19th century

Blanchard, Solomon, b. ca. 1816

Books--Prices--Vermont--History--19th century

Claremont Manufacturing Company

Freight and freightage--Rates--Vermont--History--19th century

Gay, Merrick, 1802-1866

Gaysville (Vt.)--Economic conditions--19th century

Gaysville Forge Company  
Gaysville Manufacturing Company  
General stores--Vermont--Gaysville  
Narrows School District--History  
Stockbridge (Vt.)--Economic conditions--19th century  
Waller, Israel

### Contributors

Gay, Merrick, 1802-1866 [main entry]

### Genres and formats

Daybooks

### Link to similar SCUA collections

Mercantile

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