



Otis Company Records

1846-1847

2 folders (1 envelope) (0.25 linear ft.)

Call no.: MS 310

Collection overview

The Otis Company of Ware, Massachusetts, was founded in 1839 and became a major producer of textiles, including checks, denims, and cotton underwear. At the height of their operations, the company operated three mills with a workforce of over 1,300. The collection contains correspondence between Otis agent Henry Lyon and the firms of Parks, Wright & Co. (1846-47) and Wright, Whitman & Co. (1847), both of Boston. It includes bills, invoices, letters, and memos, covering orders for such goods as lamp glasses, patent starch, whale oil, gas pipes, bales of cotton, pot and pearl ashes, fish glue, sour flour, fire buckets, potato starch, tar, sheet copper, and indigo.

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Background on Otis Company

The Otis Company of Ware Massachusetts was founded by James W. Otis in 1839 with capital of \$350,000. It purchased a part of the property of the Hampshire Manufacturing Company that lay north of the Ware River, and at the time of its incorporation in 1840, the company employed 211 people, later swelling to a workforce of over 1,300. A manufacturer of textiles, including checks, denims, and cotton underwear, the company operated three mills, including one in Palmer (Three Rivers).

Scope of collection

The collection consists of correspondence from Parks (Luther), Wright (John S.), & Co. (1846-1847), and later from Wright, Whitman (E. P.) & Co. (1847), merchants of Boston (97 Milk St.), to Mr. Henry Lyon, agent of Otis Company. Included among the correspondence are bills, invoices, letters, and memos, covering orders for such goods as lamp glasses, patent starch, whale oil, gas pipes, bales of cotton, pot and pearl ashes, fish glue, sour flour, fire buckets, potato starch, tar, sheet copper, and indigo. The correspondence principally deals with routine information relating to the invoices and bills. Other information of a "non-routine" nature is also present; especially significant are the letters of February 2 and May 21, 1847 concerning a vote of the board of directors respecting a "Guarantee Account" and a letter respecting eight Richmond Looms, for No. 3 Mill, to make gingham.

The individual items in this collection are arranged chronologically from September 1846 through September 1847. The invoices and bills are identified with an original numerical identity [#355-409, Nos. 2-8], as well. The records are not complete as evidenced by the existing chronological and numerical gaps.

Inventory

Parks Wright and Co., Correspondence	1846	Box
# 355, Bill for lamp glasses	1846 September 22	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting Patent Starch	1846 October 3	Box 1: 1
# 357, Invoice bale books, oil & labels	1846 October 5	Box 1: 1
# 358, Inv. bags of bran (error in order- send back)	1846 October 8	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting marks for sheeting	1846 October 10	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting 178 bales of cotton	1846 October 10	Box 1: 1
# 359, Bill for Pipe	1846 October 13	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting 178 bales of cotton	1846 October 16	Box 1: 1
# 360, Invoice pot and pearl ashes and fish glue	1846 October 21	Box 1: 1
# 363, Invoice pipe, etc.	1846 November 2	Box 1: 1
# 364, Bill blocks	1846 November 3	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting box of pipe	1846 November 11	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter for 4 kinds good for [S.F.] Morse & Co.	1846 November 19	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting mark for sheeting	1846 November 19	Box 1: 1
# 365, Invoice whale oil	1846 November 24	Box 1: 1
# 366, Bill for 100 barrels of sour flour	1846 November 25	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting tickets being put on all the goods (quote from letter will probably go to Palmer first")	1846 December 3	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter requesting receipt for \$500 for William Crampton	1846 December 5	Box 1: 1
# 368, Invoice 2 casks oil	1846 December 7	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting tickings and sheetings	1846 December 8	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting cases	1846 December 16	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting tickets	1846 December 16	Box 1: 1
letter, Letter respecting goods for S.F.Morse	1846 December 16	Box 1: 1
# 369, Invoice oil	1846 December 25	Box 1: 1

Parks Wright and Co. and Wright, Whitman & Co. Correspondence	1847	
letter, Letter respecting five buckets and Insurance on No.2 & No.4 mills	1847 January 03	Box 1: 2
letter, Letter respecting stripes sold Beebe & Co.	1847 January 07	Box 1: 2
letter, Letter respecting no. of lamps wanted altered	1847 January 18	Box 1: 2
letter, Letter respecting D.D.Ticks and Denims	1847 January 20	Box 1: 2
letter, Memo of vote of Bd. of Directors respecting Guarantee Account	1847 February 02	Box 1: 2
letter, Letter sending fixtures for 155 lamps	1847 February 03	Box 1: 2
# 384, Bill for pickers (sent to Ware by H. Hobbs & Son)	1847 March 13	Box 1: 2
# 392, Invoice 8 casks potatoe starch	1847 April 07	Box 1: 2
# 393, Invoice gas pipe and winter oil	1847 April 28	Box 1: 2
# 395, Invoice 1 barrel tar	1847 May 01	Box 1: 2
# 396, Invoice 1 sheet copper	1847 May 03	Box 1: 2
# 397, Bill 55 barrels flour	1847 May 07	Box 1: 2
letter, Letter respecting color of denim	1847 May 14	Box 1: 2
letter, Letter respecting 8 Richmond looms for No. 3 Mill to make gingham	1847 May 21	Box 1: 2
letter, Letter respecting flour & starch for use in sizing	1847 May 22	Box 1: 2
# 403, Invoice southern flour & winter oil & indigo	1847 May 27	Box 1: 2
# 406, Bill red cotton yarn (sample)	1847 June 3	Box 1: 2
# 409, Invoice hemp lines & gold twine	1847 June 15	Box 1: 2
letter, order for goods I&S and J.W.B.	1847 July 13	Box 1: 2
# 2, Invoice labels for denims & flour	1847 July 13	Box 1: 2
# 3, Invoice potatoe starch	1847 July 15	Box 1: 2
# 4, Invoice bale twine	1847 July 16	Box 1: 2
# 5, Invoice 3 casks winter oil	1847 July 19	Box 1: 2
#8, Invoice 1 barrel tar	1847 August 10	Box 1: 2
letter, Invoice 200 bales cotton (purchased in New Orleans by Whiting Wright & Co.)	1847 August 19	Box 1: 2
letter, order for D.D.Ticks	1847 September 04	Box 1: 2
Bills of sale	1863, 1866	Box 1: 3

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from John Foster, Agricultural and Resource Economics Department, University of Massachusetts Amherst, May 1990. The records were found by him in the attic of Draper Hall in a departmental file folder labeled with the date "1964/65". This collection is part of Accession #90-020.

Related Material

This collection is part of Accession #90-020.

Bibliography

Gay, William Burton, ed. *Gazetteer of Hampshire County, Mass., 1654-1887*. Syracuse, N. Y. : W. B. Gay & Co., [1886?]. **Call no.:** F72.H3 G2 1886.

Processing Information

Processed by Mike Milewski, summer 1990.

Language:

English

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Search terms

Subjects

- Textile industry--Massachusetts--Ware.
- Textile manufacturers--Massachusetts--Ware.
- Ware (Mass.)--Economic conditions--19th century.

Contributors

- Otis Company **[main entry]**
- Otis and Co.
- Parks, Wright, and Co.
- Wright, Whitman, and Co.
- Lyon, Henry.

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