CONTENTS OF COLLECTION

This account book documents the changing merchant activities of Amos Parker of Groveland in Essex County, Massachusetts. The first two-thirds of the account ledger covers the years 1827 to 1835, when the business appears to have been of a general store. Parker (born in 1792) sold a wide variety of goods, principally for cash but also in exchange for labor or some commodities like butter or eggs. In the early 1830s, Parker also began to specialize somewhat in the sale of 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.

Provenance


Acknowledgments

Encoding funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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Subjects

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- Shoe industry--Massachusetts--Essex County--History--19th century--Sources.

Names

- Aaron P. Emerson Co. (Orland, Me.)
- Parker, Amos, b. 1792.

Genre Terms

- Account books.