

PENOBSCOT MARINE MUSEUM

Inventory for
Manuscript Collection

PMM 80

Martin Bailey General Store Accounts

1823 - 1878

15 volumes
2 linear feet
Accession No. 1980.1

Stephen Phillips Memorial Library

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PMM 80

Martin Bailey General Store Accounts

Bailey, Martin, 1801-1884

Account books, 1823-1878

15 volumes

Storekeeper in Swanville and Searsport, Maine

Fourteen account books from a general store in Swanville and Searsport, Maine, likely kept by Martin Bailey, recording purchases and payments for groceries and small domestic dry goods from 1849 to 1878. There is also an account book recording Martin Bailey's activities as a cooper, agricultural laborer, and small-scale merchant in Swanville between 1823 and 1848.

In English

William H. Pendleton; Gift; 1980; 1980.1

Finding aid available; folder level control

Subject Headings:

Bailey, Martin, 1801-1884

Searsport (Me.)

Swanville (Me.)

Account books

Coopers and cooperage

General stores

Grocers

Acquisition:

This collection was given to the Penobscot Marine Museum by William H. Pendleton, part of a larger gift that included account books from Andrew S. Pendleton (PMM 79) and Phineas Pendleton (MS 57).

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. There are no special restrictions.

Condition:

This collection is mostly in good condition. The covers and spines of most volumes are worn, and some show insect damage. The spines of some are partially missing. However, the bindings and text blocks are in good condition.

Processing Note:

There is no name or location inscribed in any of the fourteen general store ledgers and daybooks. The only written indication tying them to Martin Bailey are two sheets of loose accounts, bearing Bailey's name, tucked into the cover of MS 51. However, all fourteen are consistent in style and handwriting; the customers are consistent; and the business shifts from Swanville to Searsport about the time that Bailey also moved between towns. They have therefore been attributed to Bailey.

This collection was originally grouped with PMM 79 as the Andrew S. Pendleton Papers. The two collections were part of the same donation, and Bailey's second wife was Andrew S. Pendleton's aunt. However, as no relationship could be discerned between the Martin Bailey Store and Captain Andrew S. Pendleton's activities, a decision was made to catalog them separately.

Historical Note:

Martin Bailey (1801-1884) was a cooper, peddler, and finally, storekeeper in Swanville and Searsport, Maine. He was born in Scituate, Massachusetts, but moved to Swanville by the early 1820s. There, he worked as a cooper, hired himself out for day labor, let out a wagon and oxen team to neighbors, and did other casual agricultural work. He listed himself as a cooper in the 1850 census. In 1860, he had moved to Searsport and called himself a “peddler.” By 1880, he was listed as a retail grocer in Searsport.

Bailey married Mary Houston (1801-1836) in 1824. They had three children: Louisa Jane (1829-1910), who married Stephen H. Pike; Rowland (b. 1831), who became a mariner; and Caroline Matilda (1833-1877), who married Captain Isaac Carver Park. After Mary’s death in 1836, Bailey married Abigail Pendleton (1800-1881), the sister of Captain John Park Pendleton of Searsport. They had one child: Mary A. (1838-1916).

Scope and Content:

This collection contains fifteen account books, all likely kept by Martin Bailey. The earliest, and the only one with a definite attribution, covers the period from 1823 to 1848, when Bailey was a cooper in Swanville. The volume records making and mending barrels alongside a wide variety of agricultural activities, like reaping, haying, mending shoes, hiring time for himself and his team of oxen, and selling cloth and foodstuffs. Payments are recorded in cash, days of labor, wagon hire, and goods.

The remaining fourteen account books are daybooks and ledgers for an unidentified general store business between 1849 and 1878, likely that run by Martin Bailey. The store sold retail quantities of groceries like eggs, meal, vinegar, strawberries, tea, meat, and vegetables. It also sold a range of dry goods, including needles, yarn, notebooks, glass, nails, soap, and “Johnson’s Liniment.” Small services, like postage and mending shoes, also appear. Accounts were settled with cash, agricultural products, or services like hauling. Prior to 1860, most of the store’s customers came from Swanville, Monroe, Frankfort, and Searsport. After that, they were almost exclusively from Searsport.

Box and Folder List:

MS 50	Account book, Martin Bailey, 1823-1848
MS 39	Daybook, general store, 1855-1856
MS 37	Daybook, general store, 1856-1858
MS 41	Daybook, general store, 1858-1860
MS 38	Daybook, general store, 1867-1868
MS 43	Daybook, general store, 1870-1872
MS 42	Daybook, general store, 1873-1874
MS 44	Daybook, general store, 1874-1875
MS 40	Daybook, general store, 1875-1877
MS 45	Daybook, general store, 877-1878
MS 49	Ledger, general store, 1849-1853
MS 53	Ledger, general store, 1853-1856
MS 51	Ledger, general store, 1855-1856
MS 46	Ledger, general store, 1859-1866
MS 56	Ledger, general store, 1871-1876