

Greenfield Gazette & Courier Collection 1848-1932

Gift of Norman Schneider, 1999

Collection Overview

The Greenfield *Gazette and Courier* newspaper collection spans the period 1848-1932, and provides insight into the functions of a community newspaper: printing, advertising, and distribution. Additionally, the collection provides a glimpse into the commercial life of a newspaper and job printer in a flourishing western Massachusetts community.

Founded in 1792 by Thomas Dickman, the *Impartial Intelligencer* (soon after renamed the *Greenfield Gazette*) became the first newspaper in what would become Franklin County, and is still published today as *The Recorder*. Dickman sold the paper in 1810 to John Denio who operated it only until 1811, when he sold the newspaper to Ansel Phelps, of Northampton, MA. Denio continued to print and sell books in Greenfield, and he and Phelps formed and dissolved their partnership several times between 1812 and 1823. During that period the newspaper's name was changed to *The Traveller*, the *Franklin Herald*, and finally, the *Franklin Herald and Public Advertiser*. Phelps formed a partnership with Charles. J.J. Ingersoll in 1829 which continued on and off until 1841 when Ingersoll retired. During that time, Samuel S. Eastman and Joseph Kneeland, both of Northampton, began a newspaper titled the *Courier* in Greenfield. The paper merged with Ansel Phelps' to form the *Gazette and Courier* in 1841. When Ansel Phelps died in 1868, Eastman took on Eben Allen Hall as a partner. Hall assumed control of the newspaper in 1876, and brought his son, Albert, into the business in 1899. The next year when his father died suddenly, Albert Hall continued the business until 1926.

Description of the Collection

The collection consists of 43 bound volumes that include day books, cash books/ledgers, account books, post rider books, sample books, order books, and check books. The records detail the newspaper's financial transactions and show the newspaper's wide range of customers. The majority of the records relate to the business of E.A. Hall, run by Eben. Allen Hall (1839-1900). Later records relate to the business of E.A. Hall & Son, run by Eben. Allen and his son, Albert Hall (d. 1926). The earliest account books relate to the business of Ansel Phelps (1789-1868), and Samuel Sheldon Eastman (1816-1876), known as S.S. Eastman & Co.

Day books record the daily business transactions of sales and payments by individuals or corporate bodies for subscriptions for newspapers, payment for advertisements, or small printing jobs such as town reports. The transactions of the day book were transferred to the cash book. At the end of the week the transactions of the cash book were tallied to determine agreement between the day books and cash books.

Cash books contain the information that was transferred from the day book. The left page in the cash book is marked “debt”; the right “credit”. At the end of each week the accounts were tallied to determine agreement between the two records of accounting. When the company was under the ownership of Phelps and Eastman, the early cash book weekly tallies were signed by them. Hall discontinued this practice. The cash book provided an indication of the activity and financial health of the company, as well as a method of validating the day book entries.

Account books provide a comprehensive record of the entire business. Each book lists the date of transactions by individual, group, or company, and the services provided with cost and remittances of that client over a period of time. The first part of the book records those transactions with businesses and the second part records those of individuals. The earliest account books record payments in goods and labor, as well as cash. For example, the cabinet makers Miles and Lyons of Greenfield paid for advertising by making an ink table for the printing office.

The check ledger contains stubs from the First National Bank for checks written between 1877 and 1880. Most of the checks are for business-related expenses, such as paper, employee labor, equipment, coal, insurance, etc. There are some personal expenses as well; for a cow, a fur collar, and a sewing machine.

Post riders’ books indicate the scope of the circulation of the newspaper, which extended coast to coast as well as the method of distribution. The use of post riders sheds light on the relationship between the post rider and newspaper and helps to account for the large circulation of a rural newspaper. These books are organized by route and rider. For each town there is a list of individual subscribers. These subscribers were designated as receiving their paper from the post rider, by mail, by train, or at locations such as the dry goods store or the printing office itself.

Sample books provide examples of format and type choices for advertising or personal cards.

Order books provide a wide range of items printed, the fee for the service, and the customers served.

List of Items

Account Books (4)

1848-1856, 1856-1865, 1865-1877, 1905-1919

Index to Account Books (2)

There are two undated indexes to the account books. The second book is in better condition and list additional customers than the first book. The dates are possibly 1856-1865.

Day Books (14)

1860-1862, March 1864-November 1865, December 1868-January 1871, January 1871-1873, July 1881-1884, 1898-1903, 1919-1927, February 1921-May 1923, October 1925-August 1927, September 1927-January 1929, January 1929-October 1929, October 1929-June 1930, July 1930-March 1931, March-December 1931

Day Book of Advertising Accounts (1)

June 1923-October 1928

Cash Books (6)

November 1860-March 1863, March 1863-September 1865, December 1868-September 1869, September 1869-May 1872, May 1872-May 1874, May 1874-June 1876

Cash Ledgers (2)

1869-1870, 1928-1930 (includes cash received/cash disbursed)

Order Book (1)

1875-1877

Check Ledger (1)

1877-1880

Accounts of Advertising (3)

1905-1916, 1916-1925, 1925-1932

Job Book Advertisements (1)

1921-1928

Sample Books (3)

Book 1

Business advertising cards and calling cards:

Greenfield Joint Stock Company
Avery and Plummer, Painter Glazer
M.E. Sunday School
L.D. Seymour, M.D., Greenfield
R.S. Gardiner
H.W. Warner's Adjustable Skates
National Exhibition of Horses
Giles H. Whitney, Attorney, Winchendon, Ma.
Hobart & Robbins, Type Foundry, Boston
Chas. T. White Co., Type Founders, NY
Mrs. L.D. Cary, Dealer in Millinery and Fancy Goods, Coleraine
B.W. Wright Yarn, Conway
W.B. & C.A. Powers, Clothes Dryer, Gill
M. Wunsch, Accoucheur, Greenfield
Franklin Co. Agricultural Society
John Thayer
Conway Mutual Fire Insurance Co., Conway
Spring & Bennett, Sash & Blinds, Hatfield
Gunn and Amidon, Clothes Wringer, Greenfield
C.K. Wilkinson
New Haven Printing Ink
New Year's Ball 1860
Ring and Richardson, Children's Carriages
W.H. Page & Co., Wood Type, Greeneville, Ct.
Massasoit Insurance Co., Springfield
Minier & Strong, Windows, Doors, Blinds, Greenfield
Barney's Ink Extractor
Henry Female Seminary & College
Gunn, Amidon & Holland, Clothes Wringer, Greenfield
Charles C. Smith, Tailor, Greenfield
Wendell T. Davis, Attorney, Greenfield
Sons of Temperance Festival
Stetson Livery Stable, Greenfield
Beecher's Lecture, February 11, 1861
John Wilson Pension, Bounty Lands
J.B. Hubbard, Carriages, Greenfield
H.W. Warner, Carriages, Sleighs, Greenfield
L.N. Bailey, Tailor, Greenfield
Lyman Conant, Cane and Wooden Seats, Shelburne
George B. Sheldon, Brooms and Brushes, Deerfield
George Eddy, Dry Goods, Greenfield

Book 2

Labels, order sheets - the majority of items are for the Millers Falls Co.

Book 3

Stationary, envelopes, posters, forms, announcements, invitations, wedding announcements

Post Rider Books (5)

Eastern Mail and Express, Post Riders, Office Bundles and Village Subscribers, 1862

Northern, S. Falls, Leyden, Colrain, and Southern Mails and all Single Wrappers, 1862-1863

Northern, S. Falls, Leyden, Colrain, and Southern Mails and all Single Wrappers, 1864-1865

Eastern Mail and Express, Office Bundles and Village Subscribers, 1866-1869

Atwood's Route, Whately, Hatfield, Bernardston, Gill Post Routes, etc., no date

Related Collections:

The account book for the *Franklin Herald* for the years 1812-1822 is part of the PVMA collection of account books.