Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History
Middlebury, Vermont

Manuscript Collection Inventory

Chapman Family Papers, 1827-1891

Range 1K4-5

15 Volumes, 1 Box

SMRC00737

Scope

These are business records of a couple of generations of Middlebury merchants.

Daybooks and ledgers, 1827-1848, of Asa Chapman's store, which once stood on Court Square where the Chittenden Bank is. The Chapman building was moved to Seminary St. Extension. This is a good run of store accounts with many Middlebury names, showing what they bought.

East Middlebury Forge Teaming Accounts, 1845-1848. A "Teaming Book" for forge fuel and iron ore. The teaming occurs in 1845 and 1846. On the back page are the "Expenses for building Forge" between the dates of Nov. 1847 and April 1848. The building expenses are for the second time the forge was built, as the first one was destroyed in a freshet Oct. 30, 1847. There are also a few pages of materials purchased for the store.

Store records, 1884-1888, of Thaddeus M. Chapman.

Miscellaneous loose papers, 1845-1891, including two bank books of Chapman & Co., 1888-1891. Most of these are invoices and bills for Thaddeus Chapman's store, but some are for Asa's store. Also included are two agreements with M.D. Hall signifying the beginning of the Vergennes and Troy Line. An agreement between Wightman Chapman and Hall in 1845 lasted for two seasons, which was a partnership basically on the liability on the boats. The 1847 agreement is between Asa Chapman and Hall, and it is at that point that the term Vergennes and Troy Line was coined.

Background

Erastus and Polly Chapman had nine children, two of whom were Wightman (the oldest of the nine) and Asa. They were born in Hartford, Vermont. About 1805, while they were young, the family moved to New Haven, Vermont. Wightman Chapman, born March 15, 1786; died March 27, 1869 (survived by three of his siblings); married 1st: Mary Squires of New Haven. They had three children, all of whom died within a few weeks of each other and their mother. Wightman then moved to Middlebury.

Married 2nd: (1819) Anna Willson (married May 23, 1819). They had seven children, four of whom survived their father. He was in business with his brother Asa from 1813-1828; with Francis Willson from 1828-1830. For 32 years (from 1821 on) he lived in Weybridge, then moved to Brandon, then in 1863 moved back to Middlebury. He was a member of St. Stephen's Church. Albert, a son of
Wightman and Anna, died Oct. 23, 1893, aged 70. Wightman's obituary is in the Middlebury Register, March 30, 1869, page 3, column 1.

Asa Chapman, born October 13, 1787. In 1812 he and Wightman opened a store in Middlebury, which Asa continued until 1848 when it closed. From 1813-1828, he ran it with Wightman; and from 1841-1848 he ran it with his son George C. Chapman. In May of 1849 Asa was appointed Postmaster of Middlebury, continuing until July 1853. He was railroad agent for several years after that. He was a member of the Congregational Church. Died September 29, 1859. In 1814 he married Lucina Bell, daughter of Harvey Bell, who died in March of 1836. Children who survived Asa were:

Miss Mary B. Chapman
Nancy Slade (Mrs. William Slade, of Ohio)
Harvey B. Chapman, died Apr. 12, 1879, age 56
George C. Chapman married Adelia Fletcher of Bridport. Their children (may have been others):
Charles P., died Dec. 15, 1888, age 41
P. Fletcher (?)
Thaddeus M. (see below)

Asa's obituary: Middlebury Register Oct. 5, 1859, p. 2

Thaddeus M. Chapman, born 1845, died 1922. Married Jessie Hammond of Orwell, Sept. 10, 1875. He was a sheriff, horseman, and merchant. He was in business with his brother, Charles P. Chapman from 1870-1875; with P.F. Chapman and John Flint from 1875-1883; and with Elijah Bird from 1883-1885. He owned a great deal of land in Ripton and East Middlebury. He lived at The Heights, South Main St., Middlebury, just past West Cemetery. He was survived by two daughters:
Mrs. Jessie Louise Jacobs
Mrs. Florence Kodjianoff and by two granddaughters:
Sylvia Kodjianoff, who married David Keiser, and Florence Noble.

Thaddeus' obituary is in the Middlebury Register, February 24, 1922, page 1.

Container List

Volume 1
Daybook 1833-1834
Volume 2
Daybook 1837-1838
Volume 3
Daybook 1838-1839
Volume 4
Daybook 1839-1840
Volume 5
Daybook 1840-1848
Volume 6
Ledger 1827-1833
Volume 7
Ledger 1829-1835
Volume 8
Ledger 1832-1840
Volume 9
Ledger 1841-1848
Volume 10
Teaming Book 1845-1848
Volume 11
Account Book 1884-1886
Volume 12
Account Book 1884-1886
Volume 13
Chapmans with stores in Middlebury according to H.L.S. Scrapbook

Merchants in Middlebury
Asa
1813-1828 with Wightman
1826-18 alone
1841-1848 with his son

George C. Wightman
1813-1828 with Asa
1828-1830 with Francis Willson

George C.
1841-1848 with Asa, his father
1857-1865 with Nelson P. Barbour
1865-1868 alone
1868-1870 with Charles P., his son
1884- backed P. Fletcher and Julius Pitts

Harvey B.
1848-1849 with Lorin Wainwright

Charles P.
1868-1870 with George C., his father
1870-1875 with Thaddeus M., his brother

Thaddeus
1870-1875 with Charles P., his brother
1875-1883 with P.F. Chapman and John Flint
1883-1885 with Elijah Bird

P. Fletcher
1875-1883 with Thaddeus
1876-1878 alone
1878-1882 with Frank Farnsworth (Farnsworth alone after 1882.)
1884-1899 Chapman & Co., backed by George C. P. Fletcher Chapman and Julius Pitts, workers
1899 Remick & Dickinson succeed P. Fletcher