

ELNATHAN PARSONS'S ACCOUNT BOOKS

OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

- Repository:** Crandall Public Library.
Center for Folklife, History, and Cultural Programs,
Glens Falls, NY.
- Creator:** Elnathan Parsons.
- Title:** Elnathan Parsons's Account Books.
- Dates:** 1838-1866.
- Abstract:** These two volumes are account books of Elnathan Parsons, leather dealer, maker of boots and shoes, who lived on Warren Street in Glens Falls, New York. The second volume after 1852 includes accounts for labor, listing the number of days worked by people employed by Parsons.
- Quantity:** 2 volumes.
- Identification Number:** Archives & Manuscripts: Account Books

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Elnathan Parsons (1787-1863) arrived in Glens Falls from Long Island about 1812. By 1834 he owned a tannery on the south side of Warren Street and a shoe store, shoemaking shop, and house on the north side. E.H. Newton's list of Glens Falls inhabitants of that year calls him a tanner and farmer. The 1850 census lists him as a farmer and currier (a leather finisher). Parsons married twice. His first wife, Sarah Moore, the mother of his sons, died in 1838 at the age of 52. According to A.W. Miller, in 1840 he married Amanda Davis who was born in Amsterdam in 1817. Also in that year he built the house on the NE corner of Warren and Locust street which was subsequently owned by Jones Ordway. Elnathan Parsons died in 1863 and is buried in Bay Street Cemetery. His wife Amanda is variously reported in the Bay Street Cemetery records as having died in 1849 or 1889. As she is listed on the 1850 census, it would seem that the 1889 date is correct.

Parsons' older son, Henry M. Parsons, attended Williams College in the 1830s and became a teacher, minister and writer. The other son, Charles, became a farmer and assistant editor of the *Messenger* (newspaper).

[Information for this note assembled from Folklife Center Vertical Files, Bay Street Cemetery transcription, E.H. Newton transcription].

Note: The Folklife Center has a transcription of a long letter from Henry M. Parsons to his parents, written in 1835 from Augusta, GA, and a small leather-covered journal kept by him in 1838.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE RECORDS

These two volumes are account books of Elnathan Parsons, leather dealer, maker of boots and shoes, who lived on Warren Street in Glens Falls, New York. [see 1851 map of Glens Falls]. Portions of the books are set up listing debits on the left hand page and credits on the right, with each double page referring to one person. These appear to be the men who worked for Parsons in the shoemaking business. The debits appear to be cash paid to the workmen, or, more often, payment for items the workmen charged(?) at other merchants' businesses (as: "paid Briggs for candles," "Paid Cheney & Arms per bill" "Paid your road tax.") The credits (called "Contra") list work done, usually by the piece (as "Nov. 22 3 pair boots 3.50") but sometimes by the week. In other instances the accounts appear to be customers – as Eugene Goodniss, who paid for \$19.38 worth of shoes and boots by sawing 19 cords of wood at One Dollar a cord. Both volumes also include lists of payments for leather and hides in several different years, and Volume 1 starts with the "Expense of Keeping my Black Mare." In addition to the names of Parsons' workers, the account books contain mentions of many transactions with other Glens Falls firms. After Parsons' death in 1863 the account book was probably kept up by his son Charles.

INDEX TERMS

Topics: Leather goods—New York (State)—Glens Falls.
Shoemakers—New York (State)—Glens Falls.

Places: Glens Falls (N.Y.)—Commerce.
Glens Falls (N.Y.)—History—Sources.

Important People: Parsons, Elnathan.
Parsons, Charles.
Ameden, Warren.
Barber, Daniel.
Bennett, Solomon.
Benson, Jacob.
Bently, Joseph.
Bowtwell, John
Brown, John.
Burdick, William.
Conklin, Willett.
Fowler, John
Goodniss, Eugene.
Helms,

Hodgins, John.
Kenyon, George.
Kilmore, Simon P.
Langdon, Everett.
La Point, Casmir.
Lord, Andrew.
Lord, Levi.
Morgan, John.
Numan, Lewis.
Parriss, Ansell.
Prouty, Mrs.
Salter, William.
Scott, .
Seeley, Lewis.
Smith, Alonzo.
Smith, Francis.
Smith, Wallace.
Spencer, Ambrose.
Stewart, Solomon K.
Tucker, John
Turner, Charles F.
Vachas(?), Oliver.
Whelor, Abiathas

Form/Genre: Account books.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation: Elnathan Parsons's Account Books,
Center for Folklife, History, and Cultural Programs,
Crandall Public Library, Glens Falls, NY.

Accession Information:

Processing Information: Arranged and described by Albert W. Fowler. Additional description by Erica Wolfe Burke, 2010.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

Volume 1, 1838-1844.

Account book of Elnathan Parsons, Glens Falls, New York, leather dealer and maker of boots and shoes. Includes a list of the morning temperatures in the last week in January 1844 (the warmest was 2 degrees below zero).

Volume 2, 1845-1866.

Account book of Elnathan Parsons, Glens Falls, New York, leather dealer and maker of boots and shoes. Beginning in 1852 the second volume includes accounts for labor, listing the number of days worked by people.