



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

West Virginia General Store Ledger (Daybook)

NMAH.AC.0142

Grace Angle

1986

Archives Center, National Museum of American History

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	West Virginia General Store Ledger (Daybook)
Date:	1879-1880.
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0142
Creator:	McCrum, L. L. (store owner) (Author)
Extent:	0.15 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	A daybook from a general store in Aurora, West Virginia.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Former National Museum of American History curator Richard Ahlborn purchased the ledger from an antique dealer in Charleston, South Carolina, 1986.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Grace Angle, 1986

Preferred Citation

West Virginia General Store Ledger (Day Book), 1879-1880, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

This ledger is the day book of a general store in West Virginia. Though not unquestionably identified as to owner or location, internal evidence points to L.L. McCrum, whose first name was probably Lloyd, as the owner, and to Aurora, West Virginia, as the location of the store. An occasional page in the day book is headed "Aurora, West Virginia" in addition to the date. There are also occasional notes addressed to "L.L. McCrum", headed "Aurora, West Virginia". These ask that merchandise or cash be provided to the bearer and billed to the signer of the note. At least one is addressed to "Lloyd McCrum".

Scope and Contents

Entries in this daybook begin September 3, 1879 and end December 22, 1880. The store seems to have provided for most of the needs of the community. It acted as a post office, selling stamps, envelopes and stationery; as a bank advancing cash and adding the amount to the customer's account; as a pharmacy supplying medicines; a book store for school texts; a hardware store; a dry goods store and clothing store. There is an entry for an organ and another for violin strings. There are transactions relating to game, e.g., venison, wild turkeys, pheasants. County accounts are entered by number, are for higher amounts than most of the individual accounts, and are not broken down by items. There are occasional entries authorized for individuals by Entries in the daybook begin on September 3, 1879 and end on December 22, 1880. The store seems to have provided for most of the needs of the community. It acted as a post office, selling stamps, envelopes and stationery; as a bank advancing cash and adding the amount to the customer's account; as a pharmacy, supplying medicines; a book store for school texts; a hardware store; a dry goods store and clothing store. There is an entry for an organ and another for violin strings. There are transactions relating to game, for example, venison, wild turkey, and pheasants.

Food entries include such items as sugar, salt, tea, coffee (both green and roasted), chestnuts, eggs, potatoes, rice, mustard, honey, spices, and beans. Muslin, cambric, calico, flannel, needles, and thread appear frequently as do ready-to-wear clothing such as hats, shoes, boots, undershirts, men's suits and overalls. Entries indicate a steady business in tobacco and snuff. Hardware entries include such items as lamp globes, linseed oil, coal oil, cartridges, shot, tacks, nails, screws, hinges, plow points. Spirits of camphor, castor oil, paregoric and seidlitz powders are among the medicines.

County accounts are entered by number, are for higher amounts than most of the individual accounts, and are not broken down by items. There are occasional entries authorized for individuals by the overseer for the poor. There are a number of entries for amounts owed to James Trotter for hauling from the railroad. Most entries are written in ink. A few are in pencil. All are legible.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Business
- Commerce
- General stores -- 1840-1900
- Retail trade
- Storekeepers -- 1870-1880

Types of Materials:

- Daybooks -- 1870-1880
- Ledgers -- 1860-1920

Names:

- McCrum, L.L.
- McCrum, Lloyd
- Trotter, James

Places:

- Aurora (W. Va.)
- West Virginia

Container Listing

Box 1

Daybook, 1879 - 1880