



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the William D. Stone General Store Ledger and Papers

NMAH.AC.1358

Franklin A. Robinson, Jr.

2015

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	William D. Stone General Store Ledger Book and Papers
Date:	1865-2003 (bulk 1865-1885)
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1358
Creator:	Stone, William Dickinson, 1836-1908 (Creator) Perdue, Crispin (Donor)
Extent:	0.3 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	A general store ledger and business papers from the William D. Stone General Store located in Franklin County, Virginia and a Stone and Parker family history.
Digital Content:	Image(s): William D. Stone General Store Ledger Book and Papers

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated to the Archives Center, National Museum of American History, by Crispin Perdue in 2015.

Processing Information

Processed by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., archivist, 2015; supervised by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Franklin Robinson, 2015.

Preferred Citation

William D. Stone General Store Ledger Book, 1865-1867, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

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Biographical / Historical

William Dickinson Stone (1836-1908) was the son of Edmond and Nancy Stone. He was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He joined the Confederate Army at Chatham, Pittsylvania County in May 1861. He served in Company F, 6th Virginia Cavalry for the duration of the war. He reportedly returned home from the war to find his land confiscated. He and his brother opened a country store at Novelty, Franklin County, Virginia, which he operated from 1865 until he married Mary Rosabelle Parker in 1867. He purchased a farm in Franklin County. They raised a family and left many descendants. Stone died in October 1908 and was buried in the Stone family cemetery, at Rocky Mount, Franklin County, Virginia.

What is commonly known as the general store grew out of farm store, or plantation store, culture. This was a store where landowners could sell goods and food stuffs produced on their own land while also speculating and selling goods imported from elsewhere. This later grew into the general store being independent of a particular farm and standing on its own as a mercantile establishment solely dependent on its own success as a store for survival. During the 19th century general stores were a common feature of many towns and rural by-ways. The stores carried general merchandise, a variety of goods and staples needed by the surrounding community. These general stores may also have functioned as post offices, trading centers, and local banks. Items often were bartered when ready cash was not available. General stores were not unique to any one region of the United States and while they may have been called by a different name in different parts of the country, they were a staple of the rural agrarian lifestyle of the United States well into the early 20th century.

Scope and Contents

The William D. Stone General Store Ledger and Papers consists of a ledger book from a general store in Franklin County, Virginia, containing account information about products purchased, by whom, and the prices paid for a two year period, 1865-1867. The ledger is comparable to other general store ledgers of the time in what it documents and records. There is one folder of assorted business papers containing legal papers, correspondence, promissory notes, and lists. There is also a folder containing a Stone and Parker family history written in 2003. The bulk of the materials covers the time period, 1865-1885.

Arrangement

The collection is organized in one series.

Series 1: General Store Ledger and Papers, 1865-2003, undated

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Civil War, 1861-1865
- Commerce -- 1860-1870
- General stores -- 1860-1870
- Merchants -- 1860-1870
- Storekeepers -- 1860-1870

Types of Materials:

- Financial records -- 1860-1870

Ledgers (account books) -- 1860-1870

Places:

Novelty (Va.)
Virginia -- 19th century

Container Listing

Series 1: William D. Stone General Store Ledger Book and Papers, 1865-2003 (bulk 1865-1885)

Box 1, Folder 1 Papers, 1865-1885

Box 1, Folder 2 Stone/Parker Family History, Stone, James Austin, 2003

Box 1, Folder 3 [General store ledger, 1865-1867](#)

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