Russel, William, 1777-1858.

William Russel ledgers
1808-1885

Abstract: Includes two ledgers kept by the Russel family of Lewes, Delaware, primarily documenting the accounts of William Russel's tannery, farming, and dry goods services, but also containing miscellaneous items related to other pursuits or other family members.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 096, Item 76
Creator: Russel, William, 1777-1858.
Title: William Russel ledgers
Inclusive Dates: 1808-1885
Extent: 2 v. ; 39 cm. or smaller
Language: Materials in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 096, Item 76, William Russel ledgers, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Item 76: Shelved in SPEC MSS 096
Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
Source: Gift of Bernard L. Herman, 1983.
Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.
Terms Governing Use and Reproduction: Use of materials from this collection beyond the exceptions provided for in the Fair Use and Educational Use clauses of the U.S. Copyright Law may violate federal law. Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. Please contact Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library, http://www.lib.udel.edu/cgi-bin/askspec.cgi
Biographical Note

William Russel or Russell was born on May 16, 1777, in Broadkill Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware, and died on December 20, 1858. He was the son of Emanuel Russel and Esther C. Heavelo. He learned the trade of tanner and currier in Milford, Delaware, and later established himself in that trade in the town of Lewes providing his customers with bridles, shoe leather, cordovan, shoe soles, and other leather items, all made of goatskin, calfskin, sheepskin, and occasionally vealskin. Often customers provided him with a piece of hide as payment for leather or provided other services such as sawing or farming, in exchange for goods. In addition to operating a tanning business, Russel cultivated a farm and by 1823, his goods included farm products such as potatoes, corn, hay, cotton, indigo, and tobacco. Accounts were often carried over the course of years. At some point, probably around 1835, Russel also formed a partnership called Russel & Rodney which allowed him to extend his services to include various dry goods.

He married Elizabeth Coleman and had seven children; Robert (b.1813), James H. (b. 1816), Elizabeth Maud, William T. (b. 1827), Edward (b.1830), Mary P. (b. 1833), and Esther (b.1836). Russel's business and home was located along what is now called Pilottown Road in Lewes.

Sources:

Biographical information derived from the collection.
Scope and Content Note

Includes two ledgers kept by the Russel family of Lewes, Delaware, primarily documenting the accounts of William Russel's tannery and dry goods services, but also containing miscellaneous items related to other pursuits or other family members. In addition to the business figures, customer indices, notations on hired help, lists of trees planted, school work, and drawings of house and barn plans recorded on the pages of each volume, several clippings, study leaflets, letters, hymnal pages, receipts, and plant and feather specimens are also laid into the volumes. The contents of each volume are described in greater detail in the contents list below.
Selected Search Terms

**Personal Names**

Russel, William, 1777-1858.
Russel family.

**Corporate Names**

Russel & Rodney.

**Topical Terms**

Tanners--Delaware--Lewes--History--19th century--Sources.
Dry-goods--Delaware--Lewes--History--19th century--Sources.
Farmers--Delaware--Lewes--History--19th century--Sources.

**Geographic Names**

Lewes (Del.)--History--19th century--Sources.

**Form/Genre Terms**

Ledgers (account books)

**Occupation**

Tanners.
Farmers.

**Personal Contributors**

Russel, Edward, b. 1830.
Russel, William.
Russel, Elizabeth (Bessie) Coleman.

**Related Materials in this Repository**

This item forms part of MSS 096 Account Books and Ledgers collection.
Detailed Description of the Collection

1808-1885 [Volume 1]

39 cm.

This ledger was used for multiple purposes including keeping accounts, drawing of house and barn plans, children's school assignments and drawings, and as a scrapbook. The ledger was used by various family members including Edward Russel, Edward's son, William, and Edward's mother, Bessie C. Russel. Pasted to the endpapers and loose pages that had previously been written on are assorted poems including religious poems. Many pages of the ledger have come loose from the binding. Account holders include A. Prettyman, members of the Burton family, James Prettyman, Lewes Canon, and an account for Bessie C. Russel.

1822-1881 [Volume 2]

33 cm.

Annotated as "Ledger C," the front board contains an account for Thomas Summers as well as assorted figures. The ledger contains an alphabetical listing of accounts and corresponding page numbers, however, the page of names beginning with the letter "A" is missing. Included in the ledger are the names of many prominent families such as the Hazzard family, the Waples family, the Rodney family, the Maull family, the Marvil family, the Prettyman family, the Paynter family, and the Beebe family. Also included are accounts for Russel's children, Robert, James, Elizabeth, and William, and expenses paid out for education and support. The ledger also contains employment records both for employees who worked for Russel and work that Russel performed for others. Towards the rear of the ledger, there are drawings of plots of land, a list of peach trees set in 1873 and 1883, lists of apple trees set in 1858, 1859, and 1877, and a list of peach trees ordered in 188?. The back cover contains figures and notes. Laid into the ledger are various notes, figures, receipts, a list of fruit trees, a list of different lyes for sale, religious tracts and lessons, and assorted letters, including an 1880 letter from Essie (Russel) Dean to her brother Edward.