Herdman, John David, Jr. (1770-1832)

John Herdman's Day Book
1816 January 2-1818 June 30

Abstract: This Newark, Delaware, hotel and tavern daybook belonged to owner, John David Herdman, Jr. It covers transactions for two-and-a-half years of the business with over 3000 entries, including the sale of beer, wine, and spirituous liquors from the tavern as well as charges for lodging at the hotel.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 096, Item 147
Creator: Herdman, John David, Jr. (1770-1832)
Title: John Herdman's Day Book
Inclusive Dates: 1816 January 2-1818 June 30
Extent: 1 v. (154 p.); 32 cm.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 096, Item 147, John David Herdman, Jr., John Herdman's Day Book, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Item 147: Shelved in SPEC MSS 096
Location: Special Collections, 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: Purchase, May 2012.
Processing: Processed and encoded by Marrette Pearsall, October 2012.
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Biographical Note

John David Herdman, Jr., (1770-1832) was a tavern and hotel owner. This business had previously been owned by Joseph Hossinger and was located in the town of New Ark, now Newark, Delaware. Herdman's son, William David Herdman (1805-1882), served in the Delaware House of Representatives and the State Senate during the 1830s.

This extensive account of a local business's financial transactions may contain useful information on the way of life for Delaware citizens in the early 19th century. Some of the customers listed in the book are William Watson, George Crookham, John Brower, David Colwell, John Atkins, Benjamin Holland, and Doctor Handy.

Sources:

Biographical information derived from collection.
Scope and Content Note

John David Herdman, Jr.’s, mostly single-line daybook shows the transactions for his hotel and tavern, located in New Ark (now Newark), Delaware. The daybook includes the purchase of alcoholic beverages with the price, product, and amount sold. The types of alcohol include: brandy, gin, wine, "cherry," beer, porter, cider, and whisky; whisky being the most frequently purchased. The serving sizes for the tavern include: half-gill, gill, mug, half-pint, and pint. Included among the purchases are charges for lodging in the tavern, apparently to men only, and money loaned.

Herdman’s establishment had a competing business in the opposite end of the city, but attracted travelers from a nearby turnpike. The book includes payments for turnpike bills. In 1811 Herdman raised funds to have roads paved in Newark by managing a lottery. Another transaction not related to the tavern and hotel is a $12 payment to a Sarah Massey for the services of a "black boy" who was being returned to her.

The book itself, paper sheets and binding, were made locally. The paper came from the Milford Paper Mill, built by Thomas Meteer in the late eighteenth-century and operated by the family until 1841. The Curtis family purchased the mill soon after and operated it until 1997. The book has comb pasted paper covered boards for the exterior; decorative, scissor-cut paper label, titled in the manuscript, applied to the upper board; 77 leaves of laid paper with the watermark "Meteer" containing 154 pages of ink and, occasionally, red pencil manuscript or more modern ballpoint pen.

Listed on the front endpaper of this account book are names of expensive brands of alcohol: "Madeira Wine, Champagne, Lisbon Wine & Malaga d[itt]o., Sherry & Tenneriffe [sic] Wine, Sicily Muscat Port & Burgundy." These items do not appear in the daybook, but may have been in the inventory for wealthier clientele.

On the front, inside cover is an attached sheet with the genealogy of John David Herdman’s family written on lined paper with ballpoint pen.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Herdman, Jr., John David (1770-1832)

Topical Terms

Taverns (Inns)--Delaware--Newark--History--19th century--Sources.
Taverns (Inns)--Records and correspondence.

Geographic Names

Newark (Del.)--Commerce.

Form/Genre Terms

Account books.
Daybooks.

Occupation

Hotelkeepers.

Related Materials in this Repository

MSS 206, James Hossinger papers
This item forms part of MSS 096 Account Books and Ledgers collection.
Detailed Description of the Collection

John Herdman's Day Book, 1816 January 2-1818 June 30 [Item 147]

1 v.