

A.L. Avery General Store Records, 1859-1905
S 381.14 A954a, Manuscript
36 boxes

Biographical Information

Amos L. Avery (1831-1917) began his career as a storekeeper at an early age. He was only 23 years old when he began working at the Easthampton General Store. From there, he worked in the Bernardston, Massachusetts general store for 5 years. Following his marriage in Hawley, Massachusetts, Amos returned to his hometown of Charlemont, Massachusetts to go into business with Thomas Mayhew in a general store. An earlier general store existed in the 1850s under the name Mayhew & Avery.

In 1861, Amos and his brother, William bought out Mayhew, and formed W.B. & A.L. Avery. A few years later, in 1866, Amos bought out William's share and formed A.L. Avery. A year later, Amos also bought the building that housed the store. "The Baltimore," as it was known, was built by the Mayhew family. Amos would run the business as the sole proprietor until 1890, when his son Oscar would join him, resulting in the name change, A.L. Avery & Son. Amos died in 1917, leaving the business in the family, as Oscar's son Henry L. Avery would join as a partner in 1927. The Avery General Store stayed in the same family for over 140 years, making it one of the oldest family run businesses in the country.

About the Collection

The collection primarily focuses on the time of Amos' sole proprietorship, 1866-1890, with some earlier and later records. Receipts make up the bulk of the collection. There are scrapbooks and boxes of bills and receipts from suppliers and distributors, as well as freight bills, and butter receipts. Also included in the collection are account and daybooks. One account book dates back to 1859, making it likely it is from the earlier incarnation of Mayhew & Avery. The collection has several books of correspondence of Avery, mostly ordering supplies.

In 2011, two digital files were added to the collection. The first is a DVD containing the scanned records of the Avery and Goodwin Family Archives in North Carolina. The second is a DVD of the ceremony at "Yankee Doodle Days" on 7/23/11 celebrating 150 years of the Avery store. Both can be found in Box 5, along with further information about them.

Container List

Receipts and Correspondence

Box 1

“The Golden Rule” newspaper
Bills and Receipts, 1861
Bills and Receipts, Feb.-May, 1862
Bills and Receipts, June-Oct., 1862
Bills and Receipts, Nov.-Dec., 1862
Bills and Receipts, 1863
Bills and Receipts, 1864
Bills and Receipts, Jan.-June 1865

Box 2

Bills and Receipts, July-Dec., 1865
Bills and Receipts, 1866
Bills and Receipts, 1871, 1873
Bills and Receipts, Jan.-July, 1875
Bills and Receipts, Aug.-Dec., 1875
Bills and Receipts, 1877
Bills and Receipts, 1878

Box 3

Bills and Receipts, 1879
Business and Personal Correspondence, 1874
Business and Personal Correspondence, 1875
Business and Personal Correspondence, Jan.-Mar., 1879
Business and Personal Correspondence, April-Aug., 1879
Business and Personal Correspondence, Oct. -Nov., 1879
Business and Personal Correspondence, Dec., 1879

Box 4

Business Correspondence, June 1861-Jan., 1862, 1866
Business Correspondence, Jan.-Mar., 1877
Business Correspondence, April-June, 1877
Business Correspondence, July-Sept., 1877
Business Correspondence, Oct.-Dec., 1877
Business Correspondence, Jan.-March, 1878
Business Correspondence, April-June, 1878

Box 5

Business Correspondence, July-Sept., 1878
Business Correspondence, Oct.-Dec., 1878
Business Receipts and Correspondence, Jan.-Mar., 1876
Business Receipts and Correspondence, April-June, 1876

Business Receipts and Correspondence, July-Oct., 1876
Business Receipts and Correspondence, Nov.-Dec., 1876
Personal Correspondence, 1876-1877
Avery and Goodwin Family Archives DVD and A.L. Avery & Son-150 years-7/23/11 DVD

Butter Sales

Box 1

1861-1863
1873
1874
1877
1879
1880
1881

Box 2

1882
1883
1885
1886
1892

Freight Receipts

1861-1866
1871
1874
1876-1877

Bound Volumes

Account Books, 1866-1871
Account Books, 1871-1875
Butter Consignment Books, 1874-76, 1878-1879, 1881-1883
Cash Ledgers, 1872-1878
Daybooks, 1859-1864
Daybooks, 1865-1866
Daybooks, 1867-1869
Daybooks, 1869-1873
Daybooks, 1870-1873
Daybooks, 1873-1874
Daybooks, 1874-1875
Daybooks, 1875-1876
Daybooks, 1876-1877
Letter Books (1-4), 1866-1874

Letter Books (5), 1888-1891

Letter Books (6-7), 1899-1905

Miscellaneous—(Bank Pass books, Accounts payable and receivable, Poison sales, Name index,
First Congregational Society)

Receipt Book, Nov. 1, 1875-August 1877

Receipt Book, April 11, 1880-Jan. 1, 1881

Receipt Book, Jan. 1, 1881-Jan. 1882.

Receipt Book, 1882

Receipt Book, 1883

Receipt Book, 1884

Receipt Book, 1885

Receipt Book, 1886

Receipt Book, 1887

Receipt Book, 1888

Receipt Book, 1889