

**American Antiquarian Society  
Manuscript Collections**

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**NAME OF COLLECTION:**

Sweetser, Benjamin Goodwin, Account Book, 1804-1818

**LOCATION(S):**

Folio vols. "S"

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**SIZE OF COLLECTION:**

one folio volume (166 leaves, 110 blank)

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**SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:**

For a biography of Benjamin Goodwin Sweetser, see: Philip Starr Sweetser, *Seth Sweetser and his Descendants* (Philadelphia: Integrity Press, 1938), p. 149.

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**SOURCE OF COLLECTION:**

Gift of Matt B. Jones, 1932

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**COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:**

Benjamin Goodwin Sweetser (1783-1853) was born in Charlestown, Mass., the son of Henry Phillips Sweetser (1742-1792) and Sarah Kettell Sweetser (1743/44-1786). In 1811 he married Lydia Kettell (1792-1877) and lived primarily in Newburyport, Mass., where he was a merchant and operated a general store. Sweetser served as a sergeant with the Massachusetts 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, during the American Revolution.

This ledger, for the period 1804 to 1818, contains entries concerning items sold by Benjamin Goodwin Sweetser to specific individuals and companies who frequently paid in kind rather than in cash. While his business was conducted generally on a relatively small scale (e.g., small quantities of foodstuffs, clothing, and household articles), there are occasional entries which reflect a sizable warehouse-supply trade, such as large quantities of sugar, herring (which was provided to ships sailing from Newburyport), liquor, and foodstuffs. For the most part, however, Sweetser's entries are non-specific and appear only as "sundries."

Sweetser accepted as payment for his goods such items as shoes, wood, room and board from his landlord, paper, cider, household items, food, and the performance of several days' work. His customers included William Woart (1773-1841), Ephraim Williams Allen (1779-1846), Webb and Kettell, and Brown and Sweetser.