

**AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS**

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Northampton Association of Education and Industry,
Records, 1836-1853

LOCATION(S):

Folio vols. "N"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

eight folio volumes

CONTENTS LIST:

yes

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

Charles A. Sheffield, ed., *History of Florence* (Florence, 1895).
Arthur E. Bestor, Jr., "Fourierism in Northampton ..." *New England Quarterly*, 12 (1940), pp. 110-122.
Alice E. McBee, *From Utopia to Florence ...* (Northampton: Smith College Studies in History, 1947).
The Northampton Book (Northampton: Tercentenary Committee, 1954), pp. 102-120.
Christopher Clark and Kerry W. Buckley, eds., *Letters from an American Utopia ...* (Amherst, c2004)

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Seven volumes were the gift of Ross W. Beales, Jr., 1984. The volume entitled "Daybook No. 4" was purchased from Robert F. Lucas, 1985.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

The Northampton Association of Education and Industry was founded in 1841 near Northampton, Mass., as an utopian socialist community by such men as Hall Judd (1817-1850), William Adam (1796-1881), David Mack (1804-1878), George William Benson (1808-), who served as president, and Samuel Lapham Hill (1806-1882). A contemporary of Brook Farm, the Association was a middle-class experiment in transcendentalism and Fourierism that attracted world-wide attention. It stressed the importance of productive labor as a duty, enjoyment of the fruits of labor, self-improvement, racial equality and equality of the sexes, freedom of worship, individual dignity, and strong family relations. It decried the war-like atmosphere in the world and its evils of poverty and ignorance. The Association was short-lived (it dissolved in 1846), but resulted in the development of Florence, Mass., a thriving industrial town.

The Association, which grew out of the Northampton Silk Company, was comprised of a Stock Company and an Industrial Community. Children were required to devote a specific portion of each day to assigned labor when they were not attending the Association's highly-regarded school. Membership in the Association was based on the purchase of stock. Among notables active in the community were William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and Sojourner Truth.

The records of the Northampton Association, which, until recently, were thought to have been destroyed, span the period 1836 to 1853 and provide important information concerning daily business activities, qualifications for membership, and personal commentaries on its principles and purpose. The volumes include a laborers' account book, the record of proceedings, the membership register, a letterbook, and four account books. The records delineate the expectations of its members, requirements for membership, and the "goods" drawn on various departments of the Association by its membership. The latter includes members' accounts with the store department, as well as the agriculture, lumber,

mechanical, and buildings (rents) departments. They also trace the reasons for the dissolution of the Association, such as poor investments, lack of commitment on the part of some members, and internal feuding.

Folio volumes 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are available on one microfilm reel, while folio volumes 1, 2, and 4 are available on another.

See Contents List.

31 October 1984
addition 14 November 1985
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AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT

NORTHAMPTON ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY, RECORDS, 1836-1853
CONTENTS LIST

FOLIO VOLUME	CONTENTS
1	Membership Register, 1842-1853 <i>--includes names, dates of entry, birth dates, places of birth, residencies, withdrawal dates, death dates, and remarks.</i>
2	Record of Proceedings, 1842-1848 <i>--includes the articles of association, bylaws, and meeting notes of the Association. The meetings concerned such subjects as the best methods of selling silk, child labor rules, membership requirements, reasons for acceptance/rejection of members, and, on p. 126, reasons for the Association's failure. There are two different printed copies of the principles and regulations.</i>
3	Laborers' Account Book, 1836-1846 <i>--includes productions and debts of members, transactions of individuals, companies, and the Association's various departments (e.g., secretarial, furniture, buildings).</i>
4	Letterbook, 1843-1847 (with three loose items) <i>--includes outgoing correspondence to purchasers of silk and to prospective members for the period. The correspondence concerns orders for silk and purchases of raw silk, as well as requirements for membership. There is a letter, 30 June 1846, from Samuel Lapham Hill to David Mack concerning Mack's attitude toward the community when it did not immediately refund his investment upon his withdrawal.</i>
5	Daybook, 1842 April-1844 May <i>--includes a statement of assets and liabilities and the daily record of members' debts to each department, i.e., items drawn by members from the lumber, mechanical, store, agriculture, and building departments.</i>

**FOLIO
VOLUME****CONTENTS**

- 6 Daybook, 1842 November-1843 August ("Day Book No. 2")
--includes daily listings of stores drawn by various individuals and departments from the store department.
- 7 Daybook, 1844 December-1846 June ("Day Book No. 4")
--includes daily listings of stores drawn by various individuals and departments from the store department.
- 8 Daybook, 1843 June-1846 December;
Account Book, 1849 October-1853 July
--includes a daily accounting of silk manufactured and sold from the silk manufacturing department. The volume contains a folder of six loose items, as well as detailed accounts concerning James D. Atkins (1818-) and silk purchased and returned by him for the period 1849 October to 1853 July.