Guide to the Richard Hazen Ayer Papers, 1803-1861

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:
Richard Hazen Ayer Papers, 1803-1861

Repository:
New Hampshire Historical Society
30 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-228-6688
http://www.nhhistory.org/

Collection Number:
1972.020

Author of Finding Aid:
Unknown; rewritten and formatted by Sandra L. Wheeler

Creator:
Richard Ayer Hazen, 1778-1853

Language:
The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:
One box, approximately 350 items

Abstract:
These are primarily business, estate, legal, and financial papers of Richard Hazen Ayer (1778-1853) and his relatives. Ayer lived at various times in Hookset, Portsmouth (where he was Naval Store-Keeper at the Navy Yard for 8 years), and Manchester, NH and owned a variety of businesses as well as being active politically on both the local and state levels.
Access and Use

**Acquisition Information and Provenance:**
The Richard Hazen Ayer papers were purchased in 1972.

**Processing Information:**
This collection was processed by an unknown person at an unknown date. The finding aid was written by an unknown person at an unknown date but rewritten and formatted by Sandra L. Wheeler in April, 2014. This finding aid follows the standards set-forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

**Access Restrictions:**
Available for research.

**Location:**
The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:**
This collection is on paper; there are no technical requirements for use.

**Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:**
For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Researchers are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

**Preferred Citation:**

Collection Overview

**Biographical Information**

Richard Hazen Ayer was born January 12, 1778 in Concord, NH to Richard and Susannah Ayer and was one of 11 children. In 1807, he married Mary Green, daughter of Colonel Peter Green and had two daughters. From 1808 until his death, he served as Justice of the Peace for Hillsborough County. He also served as Naval store-keeper at the Portsmouth Naval Yard and President of Amoskeag Bank. In 1850, he was a member of the convention to revise the state constitution. He died February 5, 1853 in Manchester, NH.

1778 January 12: born in Concord, NH, oldest son of Richard and Susannah (Sargent) Ayer, who had 11 children. Richard’s siblings included: Samuel, physician of Eastport, ME; Susan, wife of Governor Isaac Hill; Elizabeth,
wife of Richard Bradley; Mary, wife of I.F. Williams; Charlotte, wife of W. Williams. Richard H. was apprenticed to his father, tanner and currier.

1806 One of four contractors who built bridge across the Merrimack at “Isle of Hookset Falls” and 8 miles of road to Concord for the Londonderry Turnpike Corp. The following year, he went to live there.

1807 Married Mary Green, daughter of Col. Peter Green. They had two daughters, Susan Rebecca, who married Dr. Enoch B. Barnes, and Mary Green, who married Dr. Amos G. Gale of Manchester. Lumber business.

1808 Justice of Peace for Hillsborough County. J.P. until his death.

1810 Representative from Dunbarton for 7 years. Democrat.

1816 Chosen Presidential Elector

1817 Elected to Council of Governor Plumer. On Council 5 years, Governor Bell.

1822 Town of Hookset incorporated; Ayer chosen representative and selectman of new town.

1823 Chosen sheriff of new county of Merrimack.

1823-1824 Built a cotton factory at Hookset Falls, with Governor Bell, John Bell, and Isaac Hill.

1829-1837 Naval store-keeper at Portsmouth Navy Yard, appointed by President Jackson. Moved to Portsmouth. Chairman of Board of Selectmen, committee to build almshouse, instrumental in building Rockingham House.

1837 Returned to Hookset, where he owned woodlands and clay. Made bricks for building Manchester; stock of Hooksett factory merged with Amoskeag. Returned to legislature from Hooksett.

1845 Moved to Manchester, where he had bought much real estate.

1848 President of Amoskeag Bank.

1850 Member of Convention to revise state constitution.

1853 February 5: died in Manchester, aged 75 years.

Collection Scope and Content Note:
The Richard H. Ayer, 1803-1861, Papers consist mainly of legal documents related to the life of Richard Hazen Ayer (1778-1853) and his relatives. The majority of papers concern woodlands in Hooksett and buildings in Manchester. Probate papers of relatives as well as Ayer’s will are also located in the collection. There is some correspondence between Ayer and his brother-in-law, Isaac Hill, and Ayer and the Secretary of the Navy, John Branch. There are no personal/family letters. Other papers in the collection include insurance policies and other miscellaneous documents.

Arrangement:
The papers are arranged by Richard Hazen Ayer’s activities:
Portsmouth Navy Yard Store Keeper, 1829-1837
Agent for Union Boating Company, 1821-1825
Londonderry Turnpike, 1842
Concord and Claremont Railroad, 1855
Miscellaneous papers (deeds, etc.), 1803-1846
Insurance papers, 1843-1851
Deeds, 1809-1852
Probate papers for estates of various relatives, 1831-1853

Contents List

Box 1
Folder 1  Inventory and genealogy of Ayer family [see also folder 16, below]
Folder 2  Portsmouth, NH, 1829-1837
Appointment as Naval Store Keeper, Portsmouth Navy Yard, 1829. (Col. John P. Decatur was promoted from that office to Collector of Customs, Portsmouth.) Agreement to rent house from Joseph Haven.
Correspondence with John Branch, Secretary of the Navy, concerning reduction of salary with four letters from Isaac Hill, one with political news Letter from Isaac Hill about appointments, with opinions of Clay, Calhoun, and Webster. Interesting letter from John P. Decatur to Henry Eckford, Shipbuilder, 1830, with papers relating to a debt.
Folder 3  Union Boating Co., 1821-1825; Boston & Concord Boating Co., 1834
Folder 4  Londonderry Turnpike, 1842.
Grant of shares in Corporation to Amos G. Gale and Richard H. Ayer, signed Richard Bradley, President and Amos G. Gale, Clerk. [2 items]
Folder 5  Concord and Claremont Railroad, 1855 [9 items]
Folder 6  Miscellaneous Papers, 1803-1846
Deed to land in Concord, 1803.
Expenditures made by Samuel Green as guardian for Mary Green, 1800-1807, settled 1831. Agreement for cutting hoop poles, 1831.
Mortgage deed for personal property, 1839
Mortgage of land in Concord to Mechanics Bank, 1840
Lease of bookstore, counting room and safe in Concord, 1841
Deed for sale of 3,000 chestnut posts & rails, 1841
Receipt for a painted shower bath, 1846
Folder 7  Insurance, 1843-1851
New Hampshire Mutual Fire Insurance Co., R.H. Ayer President, policy on block of brick houses in Manchester, 1843
Bonds of Hamilton Hutchins as Treasurer, 1845
William Kent as Secretary, 1846
Other policies: Equitable Mutual Fire Insurance Co., People’s Mutual Fire Insurance Co., dwelling house and furniture in Manchester
Folder 8  Deeds, 1809-1822
Chiefly land in Chester, Dunbarton and Goffstown that became Hooksett, 1822, purchased by R.H. Ayer
Layout of road, 1821
Description of lots in Chester

Folder 9
Deeds, 1823-1845
Land, chiefly in Hooksett, purchased by R.H. Ayer. Includes sketch of house and outbuildings of James Collins in Goffstown, made 1838 [these have been removed to oversize maps]
Two tax collector’s deeds
Sketch of lot #50 granted by Rebekah Duncan to Richard Bradley and Richard H. Ayer
Several deeds and lands sold to Ayer by his son-in-law, Amos Gale, 1838-1843

Folder 10
Deeds, Manchester, 1845-1852
Property in Manchester, lots on plan of Amoskeag Manufacturing Company.
Mortgage to Amoskeag Co., 1845

Folder 11
Deeds: Dr. Amos G. Gale, 1833-1861
To land in Hooksett, Bow, Manchester. Some from his father-in-law, Richard H. Ayer

Folder 12
Papers: Dr. Amos G. Gale, 1842-1861
Purchase of horse and wagon
Deed 1856
Insurance policies, property in Manchester
Account with Mace Moulton, settled 1842
Account with Daniel Rowe, settled 1842
Will, 1856
Contract for granite tomb, 1855, with bill and correspondence

Folder 13
Estate: Richard Ayer (1757-1831), 1831-1843 [see also folder 16]
Died intestate. Appointment of son, Richard H. Ayer, administrator
Account with Richard Bradley
Notes in handwriting of Isaac Hill with receipt, 1841

Folder 14
Estate: Levi Brigham, 1826-1831
Housewright of Boston, MA, husband of Ann Ayer, died intestate,
Richard H. Ayer, brother-in-law, administrator
Insurance policies on house, 1827, 1831
Inventory of household goods, sale at auction
Administrator’s account

Folder 15
Estate: Samuel Ayer, 1834-1841
Physician, Eastport, ME. Died intestate.
Richard H. Ayer, brother, appointed guardian of Harriet O. Ayer, a minor child, 1834
R.H. Ayer appointed administrator of estate, 1836
Administrator’s account, bill, 1841

Folder 16
Estate: Richard H. Ayer, 1853-1855
Copy of will, showing all relatives and property with Amos G. Gale appointed executor, 1853
Suit by Richard Bradley for amount owing from estate of father, Richard Ayer
John H. George, notes and letter

Folder 17 Miscellany
Estate of John Severance, bills etc.
Estate of Moses Burbank
A few executions addressed to R.H. Ayer as Sheriff
Schedule of lands purchased by Thomas W. Thompson for 4 men, various towns, shows original proprietor, distance from Merrimack River, 1806. 1 volume

Separated Materials:
Oversize item, sketch of house and outbuildings of James Collins in Goffstown, 1838, moved to East Storage map collection

Subject Terms

People:
Ayer, Richard H., 1757-1831
Ayer, Samuel
Bell, Samuel
Bradley family
Bradley, Richard
Branch, John
Brigham, Levi
Burbank, Moses
Cady, Albe
Cilley, Daniel
Collins, James
Coolidge, Joseph
Decatur, John Pine, 1786-1832
Dexter, Aaron
Eckford, Henry, 17775-1832
French, Joseph
Gale, Dr. Amos G.
George, John H.
Green, Samuel
Greenleaf, Abner
Haven, Joseph
Hill, Isaac
Hutchins, Hamilton
Kent, William
Severance, John
Sullivan, John L.
Sullivan, William
Thompson, Thomas
Whitney, Samuel

Organizations:
Amoskeag Manufacturing Co.
Atlas Insurance Co., Boston
Concord and Claremont Railroad
Equitable Mutual Fire Insurance
NH Mutual Fire Insurance Co.
Peoples Mutual Fire Insurance
Portsmouth Navy Yard
Union Boating Co.

Subjects:
Architecture – 19th Century
Deeds
Estate inventories
Genealogy – Ayer family
Household goods
Lumbering
Merrimack River
Politics – New Hampshire
Roads – Londonderry Turnpike
Wills

Locations:
Concord, NH
Goffstown, NH
Hooksett, NH
Manchester, NH
Portsmouth, NH

Occupations:
Coopers

Related Materials