

Paul Atwood Gibson
 (1823-1861)
 Pelham, N.H.
 Lowell, Mass.

Diaries 1840-1861 20 volumes

The diaries start in 1840 when Paul Gibson was 17 years old. The entries throughout are short but informative, i.e. "boys dug mud & picked cranberries", "Father bought melodeon", "felt half sice & sick of trading with Paddies". Beginning in 1849, he summarized his yearly expenses, balancing his income of salary and investments against expenditures.

He did the usual farm chores and worked intermittently in a general store in Pelham, N.H. The year 1853 found him trying various occupations in Lowell and Boston, Mass. and Pelham. He finally obtained permanent work in May 1854 in a dry goods store, Hosford's in Lowell, where he worked until his death in 1861. In addition to working in the store, he fashioned articles from leather - wallets, pocketbooks, Masocinic aprons.

The entries recorded while living in Lowell relate the type and price of the articles sold, lectures and church services attended, comments on national and state (usually N.H.) events. He is concerned about his health (probably a victim of tuberculosis from the description of the symptoms). The diaries reflect social conditions of the period such as working 6 days aweek, starting at 7 a.m. and closing the store as late as 10:30 in the evening, losing pay because of illness and vacation, boarding house life, as well as social attitudes of the day when he refers to "niggers" and "Paddies".

Jesse Gibson
 (b.1816)

Diaries 1855 & 1857 2 volumes

The two volumes of Jesse Gibson are less informative - short entries about trips to Lowell, delivering wood, family visits.

These diaries were purchased in 1939.

Cards in the Catalog

Gibson, Paul A.

Diaries
 Accounts
 Pelham, N.H.
 Lowell, Mass.
 Clerk

Paul Atwood Gibson 29 Sept 1823 - 4 Sept 1861
Pelham, N.H. and Lowell, Mass.

- 1840 - farming, short entries
- 1841 - road work, farming, muster
- 1842 - no diary
- 1843 - attended school 9 weeks, muster (looks as if the entries maybe by several individuals because of content and handwriting)
- 1844 - weather, school, goes to meetin
- 1845 - trips to Nashua, Hudson, Boston, Concord
- 1846 - in Lowell, Mass.; had typhus fever September; paid state, county and school tax of \$1.46
- 1847 - September picked cranberries; went to Fox Island, Maine for vacation; muster
- 1848 - dancing school; list of expenses; living with Capt. Woodbury
- 1849 - bargined to work for J. Woodbury for second year; June 16 - "very warm, I took off drawers"; Sept 1 - "I smoked cigar"; muster; personal accounts
- 1850 - ill often with diarrhea and headache; went to Swampsctt, Mass. for vacation and salt water
- 1851 - worked in "shop" - leather, made wallets, six pocketbooks; seems to have been district (?) tax collector
- 1852 - tended store for Woodbury, frequently, often for a full week; "Father bouth meolodion \$49.00"; painted rooms in house; pointed up walls, took out cupboards; attended Teachers' Institute November 22 & 23 in Milford
- 1853 - 10 Feb "We had two tinker men"; 28 Feb began work in Post Office for Mr. Alfred Gilman (Lowell, Mass.) dischared 21 May (change in post master 11 May) began work in Boston 6 June 1853 for John B. Hanson; told would not answer purpose as bookkeeper; last day 2 July; began work in Lowell for South Waste & Co. 25 July; left 13 August; made wallets and purses at home; Oct - braided husks and mats; "leathered" a trunk; yearly account
- 1854 - family delivered wood to Lowell, Mass; worked in shop made purses; began work for Daniel West, Lowell, Mass. store on 27 March; 14 April Cochituate bank failed, Grocer's bank doubtful; 18 April, drank beer with clubs; 20 April had daguerreotype taken; 22 May - West sold his store and began to work for Hosford on the 26th, large store with 8-10 clerks; visited Lowell Museum often; worked late hours 7½ to 10½ at night often - starts before 7 a.m.; ill health often, low spirits; clerks have "treats" on Saturday nights when income is over \$1,000; ale & ice cream, had 3 oysters for the first time

- 1855 - Lowell, Mass. 2 March, Whipple's Powder Mill blew up yesterday; Father had auction 8 March, P.A.G. kept account - was their home on "Old Beard Farm" Pelham; 27 March, parents moved to Pelham Center; still working for Hosford; gives details on items sold, amount of profit; 3 July pay raised to \$1.25 per diem; 15 July great fire in Manchester, account in paper on 16th; 3 days illness deducted from pay; 11 Aug Father took him from Lowell to Pelham because of illness; returned to work 27th; 6 Sept "feel half sic & sick of trading with Paddies"; 10 Oct I wore paper collar; series of lectures at Adelphi (Lowell) - Oliver Wendell Holmes, Horace Mann
- 1856 - Lowell- 30 Jan - museum burned; 9 May at Prescott St. Vestry. Charles Foster Esq. spoke on slavery and cursed Pres. Pierce; 26 June - a large number of witnesses to court at Concord (N.H.?) on licquor cases - had a band and procession; 30 Sept "my father went to Concord, N.H. to reception of President"; notes having a bad cough for 3 or 4 weeks and becoming alarmed
- 1857 - January, quite sick; Lowell; 27 May attended "concert of Ole Bull & declare it to be much the best I ever attended; left Lowell 10 August for Pelham for week's vacation; 8 Oct - "Ballon" lighted o'er the River at 5 p.m. from Concord, NH.; 14 Oct. the banks in Boston & Lowell suspended specie payment; 13 Nov. - Gen. Pierce left Concord for Maderia to spend winter; 12 Dec - N.Y. banks resumed specie payment; 14 Dec. - Boston banks resumed specie payment; 15 Dec - Dean Wendell Philips lecture at Lycieum (Lowell)
- 1858 - Jan/Feb started stdying for Masons; 19 April - Hosford cut down his wages; 5 May - took 2nd degree in Masons; 5 August - "News! that the Atlantic Cable is successfully laid"; 11 Sept - Suffolk Bank of Boston tried to break Merchant Bank of Lowell be demanding species on \$15,000 of their money; 10 Oct - the (Donati) comet so plain to be seen beginning to grow less
- 1959 - 17 March - "The Irish had band & procession at noon & eve; 19 Mar - high water, 10 ft. above usual; cutting watch bands, bosoms; still working in store (5 years); 7 April - mills all stopped, everybody out - Fast in N.H. & Mass; 10 April - nigger stood at the door (Foster's meeting house) beg money to buy his 3 children
- 1860 - March "our milkman began to go everyday"; volunteers drilling on Common, May.
4 September 1861 " P.A. Gibson died this day"

Diaries of Jesse Gibson Jr. (b.10 June 1816)
Oldest son of Jesse and Sarah Gibson of Pelham, N.H.
Brother of Paul Atwood Gibson

1855 - 14 Jan - Paul went home; very short entries, mostly about
weather, trips to Lowell, getting wood, etc.

1857 - entries only in the first portion of the year, very sparse