

Parsons Paper Company Payroll & Employment Analysis - Stat 210

Anna Zhou and Sarah Edelson

2023-02-28

Table of contents

Introduction	1
How many days in a pay period?	6
How many employees during this era?	10
What types of jobs are there?	10
Tracking employment by job type for first 6 months of the register (Jan-Jun 1861)	11
How do Parsons wages compare to the Massachusetts state averages?	13
References	17
Appendix	18

Introduction

The Parsons Paper Register contains nearly 400 pages of employee, payroll, and financial records from January 1861 to April 1869 from Parsons Paper Company in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Founded in 1853 by Joseph Parsons, Parsons Paper Company was the oldest and largest manufacturer of cotton-based high quality writing papers in Holyoke until its liquidation in 2005.

The original pages of the register, which is now property of the Holyoke Public Library, were scanned on January 10, 2023 as part of this class (STAT210: Mining the History of Holyoke) and screenshots are included in the analysis below. Pages contain information such as employee name and signature, role, days worked, daily pay, and total wages earned, and are organized by separate pay periods. We are focused mainly on the payroll, which is comprised by pages 1-316 of the register.

The goal of the following report is to explore patterns in employment by groups of employees over time by analyzing the payroll records in the 1861-1869 time period, both before and after the end of the Civil War.

In the first section we aimed to quantify the length of a single pay period as well as the number of employees working at Parsons Paper Company during the era spanning the register.

The 1860s were a time of great growth for the company, and by the beginning of the Civil War in 1861 Parsons Paper Company had already become the largest manufacturer of writing and envelope paper in the United States. Secondly, we examined the distribution of different roles within the company, ranging from women who worked in the “rag room” where the raw material for paper was cut and processed, to men who worked in the engine room and repairs. Most paper mills in the North purchased rags from companies in the South, and Parsons’ rag room was considered an “anomaly” (n.d.). Finally, we are also interested in clarifying the meaning of the “Price” column of the payroll, which appears to denote the daily wage rate of the different employees in cents, although the exact meaning and calculation of the fractions remains unclear.

One of the central goals of this class is to make the information contained in the Parsons Paper Register and related materials more accessible and widely available to those interested in the rich history of Holyoke. A Shiny app is available to view individual scans of the register at r.amherst.edu/apps/nhorton/Parsons-Paper/. We hope that this report can provide some insight into the different day-to-day operations at Parsons Paper Company, as well as the individuals who worked there, many of whom stayed for several years.

In the illustrative analysis below, we used a transcribed copy of page 253 (see Figure 1) of the register to compare the number of employees who were able to sign their own signatures to the number of employees who were not able to on a singular page, and examine whether there was a relationship between literacy and pay. Table 1 displays the transcript of page 253.

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum prefixed to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to February 1st 1867.

NAMES.	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William Johnson	242 1/2	6	62 87	100	6287		1737		Wm Johnson
John Johnson	24 1/2	6	34 98	117	3498	3028			John & Fred
William Connor	25 1/2	6	65 75	725	6575	6150			William Connor
Martin Kennedy	28 1/2	6	87 88	725	8788	8738			Martin Kennedy
James Casey	28 1/2	6	51 00	51	5100				James Casey
John Gallivan	25 1/2	6	87 80	725	8780	8750			John Gallivan
John Vaughan	25 1/2	6	50 00	50	5000				John Vaughan
John Doyle	27 1/2	6	110 00	100	11000	10050			John Doyle
Sam'l F. Knight	25 1/2	6	55 00	725	5500	7250			G.T. Knight
Philip Silday	28 1/2	6	57 00	57	5700	57			Philip Silday
John Conchen	28 1/2	6	56 00	625	5600	4975			John Conchen
Frank Russell	25 1/2	6	48 12	900	4812	3912			Frank Russell
Charles Johnson	25 1/2	6	35 63	725	3563				John Johnson
William Conroy	27 1/2	6	94 50	725	9450				Wm J. Conroy
John Flynn	28 1/2	6	67 50	725	6750	6750			John Flynn
E. V. Wellington	27 1/2	6	57 75	625	5775	8150			E.W. Wellington
Stephen Ward	27 1/2	6	147 70	725	14770	10070			Stephen Ward
John McKee	25 1/2	6	48 31	900	4831	3895			John McKee
Charles Shring	27 1/2	6	58 50	725	5850	5850			Charles Shring
J. A. Allen	27 1/2	6	40 50	500	4050	3550			J.A. Allen
John Doyle	31 1/2	6	56 83	725	5683	5683			John Doyle
John Steiger	25 1/2	6	46 50	725	4650	4650			John Steiger
Mark McGinnis	29 1/2	6	53 17	725	5317	5317			Mark McGinnis
Edward Ford	25 1/2	6	40 63	725	4063	4063			Edward Ford
Cat. Loyalty	28 1/2	6	44 62	117	4462	4462			Cat. Loyalty
Cat. O'Neal	27 1/2	6	48 88	500	4888	3888			Cat. O'Neal
Joe Beaudoin	25 1/2	6	9 75	500	975	475			Joe Beaudoin
Joe Beaudoin Jr	25 1/2	6	45 50	725	4550	4550			Joe Beaudoin Jr
John Daugler	27 1/2	6	47 25	725	4725	4725			John Daugler
Eugene Healey	26 1/2	6	39 00	725	3900	3900			Eugene Healey
Curran W. Davis	26 1/2	6	39 75	725	3975	3975			Curran W. Davis
John Shea	28 1/2	6	27 75	725	2775	2775			John Shea
John Curran	26 1/2	6	75	725	75	75			John Curran
Mary Conley	11 1/2	6	12 37	725	1237	1237			Mary Conley
Kate Kilian	27 1/2	6	30 87	725	3087	3087			Kate Kilian
Kate Moran	30 1/2	6	27	725	27	27			Kate Moran
Kate Baldwin	23 1/2	6	28 87	725	2887	2887			Kate Baldwin
Philip Giddings	25 1/2	6	7 12	725	712	712			Philip Giddings
George Dickey	25 1/2	6	100	725	100	100			George Dickey
Receiv'd	25 1/2	6			17300	14617	111840		
Austin Ely	25 1/2	6	76 50	725	7650	4550			Austin Ely
Walter Buckley	27 1/2	6	61 50	725	6150	3650			Walter Buckley
J. M. Alden	25 1/2	6	62 50	725	6250	6250			J. M. Alden
Martin Kewell	23 1/2	6	61 78	117	6178	4978			Martin Kewell
Pat. Casey	25 1/2	6	52 82	725	5282	5282			Pat. Casey
Austin Ely	27 1/2	6	81 00	725	8100	8100			Austin Ely
Walter Buckley	27 1/2	6	81 00	725	8100	8100			Walter Buckley
J. M. Alden	27 1/2	6	67 50	725	6750	6750			J. M. Alden
Martin Kewell	27 1/2	6	60 75	400	6075	5675			Martin Kewell
Pat. Casey	33 1/2	6	53 62	725	5362	5362			Pat. Casey
					303 100	400	329 50		
						45 25	22 25		

Figure 1: Page 253 of register - February 1st, 1867. Payroll of the Parsons Paper Company (Holyoke, MA)

William Connor	27 3/4	9450	9450	Wm J. Remeroy
John Flynn	87 1/2	6780	6780	John Flynn
E. W. Wellington	27 7/8	8775	625	E. W. Wellington
Aspinwall	27 9/10	14470	4470	Aspinwall
Wm McLean	30 4/7	4831	933	Wm McLean

Figure 2: Close-up of page 253 of register from Figure 1. Signatures with an 'x' in the middle (like John Flynn above) indicate the worker was not able to sign their own name

Table 1: Example Portion of Parsons Paper Company Register - Page 253.

Last Name	First Name	# of Days	Price 1	Price 2	Total	Rent/Board	Paid	Signed	Daily Pay
Johnson	William	24.50	16	6	67.37	NA	67.37	yes	2.750
O'Brien	John W.	21.50	9	9	34.95	4.67	30.28	yes	1.626
Connor	William	25.00	16	6	68.75	7.25	61.50	yes	2.750
Kennedy	Martin	23.00	9	9	37.38	0.00	37.38	no	1.625
Casey	James	25.50	12	0	51.00	0.00	51.00	no	2.000
Gallivan	Thos	25.00	9	0	37.50	0.00	37.50	no	1.500
Vaughn	John W.	25.00	12	0	50.00	0.00	50.00	no	2.000
Doyle	Pat K.	27.00	9	0	40.50	0.00	40.50	no	1.500
Knight	Samuel L.	27.50	12	0	55.00	7.25	47.75	no	2.000
Gilday	Phillip	28.50	12	0	57.00	0.00	57.00	yes	2.000
Couchon	John	28.00	12	0	56.00	6.25	49.75	yes	2.000
Russell	Frank	27.50	10	6	48.12	9.00	39.12	yes	1.750
Johnson	Chancy	28.50	7	6	35.63	0.00	35.63	no	1.250
Pomeroy	William	27.00	21	0	94.50	0.00	94.50	yes	3.500
Flynn	John	27.00	15	0	67.50	0.00	67.50	no	2.500
Willington	E.	27.00	19	6	87.75	6.25	81.50	yes	3.250
Moran	Martin	27.50	9	9	44.70	0.00	44.70	no	1.625
McKay	William	31.25	19	6	98.31	9.33	88.98	yes	3.146
Strong	Chester	27.00	13	0	58.50	0.00	58.50	yes	2.167
Allen	J.H.	27.00	9	0	40.50	5.00	35.50	no	1.500
Ryan	Mick	31.00	11	0	56.83	0.00	56.83	no	1.833
Bergin	Pat K.	31.00	9	0	46.50	0.00	46.50	no	1.500
Markham	Mick	29.00	11	0	53.17	0.00	53.17	no	1.833
Woolf	Edward	25.00	9	9	40.63	0.00	40.63	yes	1.625
Moriarty	Pat K.	25.50	10	6	44.62	4.67	39.95	no	1.750
O'Hare	Pat K.	27.00	9	9	43.88	5.00	38.88	yes	1.625
Beaudeax	Jos	6.00	9	9	9.75	5.00	4.75	no	1.625
Beaudeax	Jos Jr.	28.00	9	9	45.50	0.00	45.50	no	1.625
Naughton	John	27.00	10	6	47.25	0.00	47.25	no	1.750
Hurly	Eugene	26.00	9	0	39.00	0.00	39.00	no	1.500
Davis	Hiram	26.50	9	0	39.75	0.00	39.75	yes	1.500
Shea	John	18.50	9	0	27.75	0.00	27.75	no	1.500
Warren	John	0.50	9	0	0.75	0.00	0.75	yes	1.500
Donlan	Mary	11.00	6	9	12.37	0.00	12.37	no	1.125
William	Kate	27.00	6	9	30.37	0.00	30.37	no	1.125
Moran	Kate	24.00	6	9	27.00	0.00	27.00	no	1.125
Baldwin	Kate	23.00	6	9	25.87	0.00	25.87	no	1.125
Gilday	Phillip	NA	NA	NA	7.12	0.00	7.12	yes	NA
Flynn	John	NA	NA	NA	1.00	0.00	1.00	no	NA
Ely	Austin	27.00	18	0	81.00	0.00	81.00	yes	3.000
Buckley	Matteo	27.00	18	0	81.00	0.00	81.00	yes	3.000
Alden	J.M.	27.00	16	0	67.50	0.00	67.50	yes	2.500
Newell	Martin	27.00	13	6	60.75	4.00	56.75	yes	2.250
Casey	Pat K.	33.00	9	9	53.62	0.00	53.62	yes	1.625

55% (22/44) of the employees at Parsons Paper Company were illiterate, especially the women and immigrants, who largely lacked formal education. Additionally, employees who were literate received significantly higher wages compared to employees who were illiterate (see Figure 3).

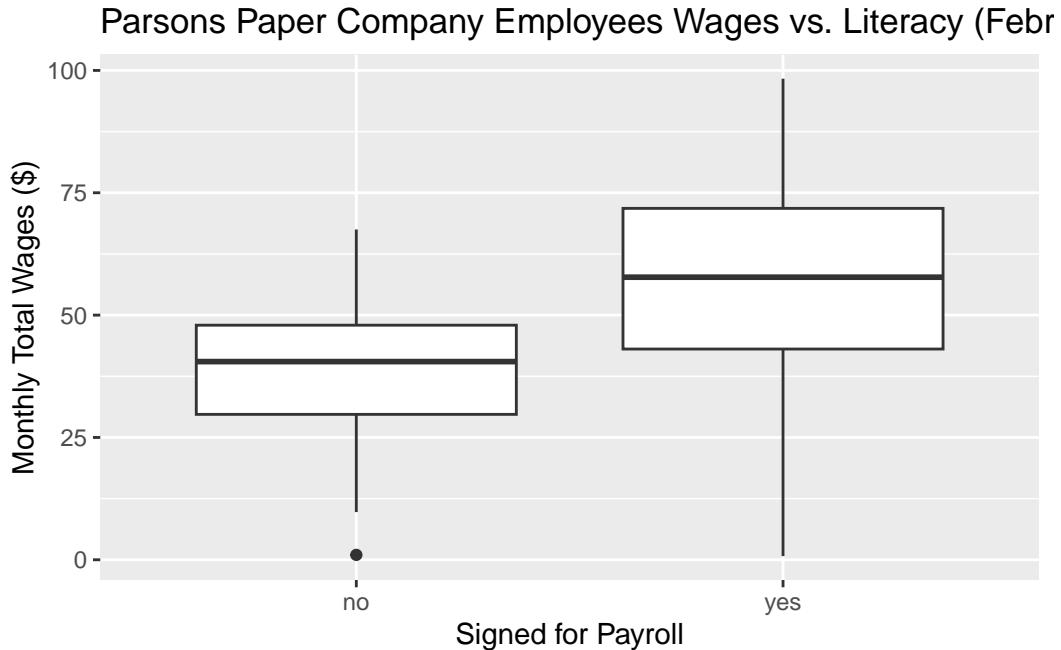


Figure 3: This plot shows the distribution of total wages for 44 employees at Parsons Paper Company in February 1867 from Table 1. Literacy is measured by an employee's ability to sign their own name in the payroll.

How many days in a pay period?

As mentioned in the introduction, the Parsons Paper Company register stored in the Holyoke Public Library comprises monthly pay periods from January 1861-April 1869 (p.1-316 of the register). Pay periods appear to be a month long with employees typically getting paid on the 1st of the next month. Based off Table 1 from p. 253, most employees work between 20-30 days each pay period, with the average being around 27, so most employees work at least 6 days/week.

In Chapter IV of Constance Green's *Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America* (Green 1939), it is reported that male Holyoke paper makers worked 58-72 hours a week. Working 11.25 hours five days a week in addition to 8.75 hours on Saturday was typical for Holyoke textile mills, while women tended to work slightly shorter hours.

Pgs. 223-225 (see Figure 4) appear to comprise an entire pay period for the month of April in 1868 (most pay periods span 3 pages in the register)

*Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum prefixed to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1867.*

NAMES	NO. POUNDS.	NO. REAMS.	NO. DATE.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
George Papillion	2 ² / ₃	13		6187	61.87	Apr 15			George Papillion
James P. Dowd	24 ³ / ₄	9		3742	37.42				James P. Dowd
Walter F. Lord	28 ² / ₃	3		5600	6.25	4675	"		Walter F. Lord
George P. Day	26 ¹³ / ₁₆	5		5850	6.25	5225	"		Geo. A. Day
Olive Whalley	23 ¹ / ₂	19		4419	12	5219	"		Olive Whalley
P. Wilson Sykes	26 ¹ / ₂	6		3467	13 1/4	2153	"		P. Wilson Sykes
Lawrence Fairall	24 ¹ / ₂	6		4200	13 1/4	2886	"		Lawrence Fairall
Samuel Lawrence	16 ² / ₃	3		1925	12	725	"		Samuel Lawrence
Charles Morgan	15 ¹ / ₂	4		1000		10	"		Charles Morgan
Mary J. Dowd	26 ¹ / ₂	9		26		26	"		Mary J. Dowd
Mary Holland	26 ¹ / ₂	9		26		26			Mary Holland
Ellen Dowd	24 ² / ₃	4		2459		2459	"		Ellen Dowd
Olive Morgan	26 ¹ / ₂	9		26		26	"		Olive Morgan
Isabella Stock	26 ¹ / ₂	9		26		26	"		Isabella Stock
M. Casey (Horgan)	23 ⁵ / ₆	4		2350		2350	"		M. Casey (Horgan)
Mary Peigle	25 ¹ / ₂	4		2575		2575	"		Mary Peigle
Emilia Marsh	25 ¹ / ₂	4		2525	12	1325	"		Emilia Marsh
Malina Colby	26 ¹ / ₂	9		26		26	"		Malina Colby
Audina Colby	24 ² / ₃	4		2450	9 1/2	1550	"		Audina Colby
Mes Smith	18 ² / ₃	4		1850		1850	"		Mes Smith
Emily Strong	25 ¹ / ₂	9		25		25	"		Emily Strong
E. Tomlinson	26 ¹ / ₂	9		28	3	23	"		E. Tomlinson
Jennie Gill	25 ¹ / ₂	9		2550	12	1350	"		Jennie Gill
J. A. Reale	25 ¹ / ₂	9		25	6 85	1815	"		J. A. Reale
G. Whittemore	25 ¹ / ₂	9		25		25	"		G. Whittemore
Carrice Galonec	25 ¹ / ₂	9		2575		2575	"		Carrice Galonec
Alice J. Perry	25 ¹ / ₂	9		25		25	"		Alice J. Perry
Maria Bush	25 ¹ / ₂	9		2475	12	1275	"		Maria Bush
E. A. Barnes	25 ¹ / ₂	9		2050		2050	"		E. A. Barnes
Abby Allen	9 ³ / ₄	2		810		810	"		Abby Allen
Mary E. Kelt	18 ¹ / ₂	4		18	986	814	"		Mary E. Kelt
Mary Comin	26 ¹ / ₂	9		26		26	"		Mary Comin
Elizabeth Dowd	3 ¹ / ₂	3		3		3	"		Elizabeth Dowd
Margaret Kalan	17 ¹ / ₂	6		1150	6	550	"		Margaret Kalan
H. Cross	String 1567 46349			1864	12	664	"		H. Cross
Jessie Dowd	C. & G. 1227 52 53			3045	6.25	2420	"		Jessie Dowd
Suey Allen	12351								Suey Allen
J. Cormac	1174 582 53			3574		3574			J. Cormac
Sarah Francis	829 46 53			2687	9 1/2	1797	"		Sarah Francis
E. A. Allen	118 123 53			789	258	376	"		E. A. Allen
Julia Brown	Seton 1520	2		26		26	"		Julia Brown
H. Brown	" 757	2		1514		1514	"		H. Brown
Margaret Dowd	" 724	2		1448		1448	"		Margaret Dowd
E. M. Seitz	" 1118	2		2236		2236	"		E. M. Seitz
Martha Wright	" 939	2		1878	700	1178	"		Martha Wright
Julia Cormac	" 421	2		842	59	792	"		Julia Cormac
O. R. Miller					10702	17052	9720		
L. Parrott									
R. P. Sykes									
Kun L. Lawrence									

C. & G. 1227 52 53
Seton 1520
1174 582 53
829 46 53
118 123 53
1567 46349

1864
12
664
2420
3574
1797
376
26
1514
1448
2236
1178
792
17052
9720

1864
12
664
2420
3574
1797
376
26
1514
1448
2236
1178
792
17052
9720

Figure 4: Page 223 of register (April 1st, 1867), also see pages 224-225 in 'Appendix.'

Pgs. 223-225 and Pgs. 261-263 (see Figure 5) are exactly one year apart in the register (April 1st 1867 vs. April 1st 1868).

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum prefixed to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1868.

NAMES.	NO. POUNDS.	NO. REAMS.	NO. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
Geo Papillion	24	18	4	64.32	64.32				George Papillion
Jenny P. Davis	22	10	1	3.98	3.98				Jenny P. Davis
J. T. Lord	23	18		63.75	7.25	56.50			Haller Lord
Elo A. Day	24	15		60.63	7.25	53.38			Elo A. Day
O. S. Whaler	27	14		5.01	17.71	32.66			O. S. Whaler
A. L. P. Sykes	26	18		45.50	17.71	27.79			A. L. P. Sykes
L. Daniels	21	15		5.25		5.25			L. Daniels
Chas. Robertson	26	16		82.50	17.71	14.79			Chas. Robertson
Cho. A. Morgan	26	5		2.16		2.16			Cho. A. Morgan
Ellen Donohue	25	6		2.50		2.50			Ellen Donohue
Jos. A. Shattuck	26			3.03		3.03			Jos. A. Shattuck
R. Casey	25	6		2.50		2.50			R. Casey
Anna Brown	20			2.05		2.05			Anna Brown
Elo A. Whittemore	26			26.00	13.29	12.71			Elo A. Whittemore
Sarah Storer	25			23.50	13.29	10.21			Sarah Storer
Cara Wadsworth	24			24.00	13.29	10.71			Cara Wadsworth
Eliza Burley	26			26.00		26			Eliza Burley
Mary Burley	26			26.00		26			Mary Burley
Felicity Norton	29			21.50	13.29	8.21			Felicity Norton
J. Buckland	18			18.00	9.86	8.14			J. Buckland
E. Carlton	13			1.00		1.00			E. Carlton
Lizzie Dawson	26			26.00	13.29	12.71			Lizzie Dawson
S. Mandeville	26			26.00		26.00			S. Mandeville
Julia Dart	26			26.00	13.29	12.71			Julia Dart
Maria Brown	15			1.32		1.32			Maria Brown
Meredith Dart	25			25.00	13.29	11.71			Meredith Dart
Louisa Heath	25			2.50		2.50			Louisa Heath
Sarah Camp	24	6		2.00		2.00			Sarah Camp
Yours Gould	26	6		26.00	13.29	12.71			Yours Gould
L. A. Smith	21	12	3	27.64		27.64			L. A. Smith
Lucy Allen	25	18	1	2.97		2.97			Lucy Allen
M. Brown	27	24	40	20.09	13.29	6.80			M. Brown
M. Brown	21	27	40	28.71		28.71			M. Brown
E. A. Allen	11	1	2	2.34		2.34			E. A. Allen
Mary Conford	78	0		1.56	15.60	0.0			Mary Conford
G. A. Lord	90	6		1.81		18.12			G. A. Lord
Matthew Wright	75	6		1.51	7.00	8.12			Matthew Wright
E. Conford	106	9		2.13	18.29	8.09			E. Conford
S. Bennington	91	0		1.83		18.91			S. Bennington
D. Bennington	7	6		7.00		7			D. Bennington
Adie Conner	27	9		14.64		14.64			Adie Conner
M. Brown	20	25	58	5.51		5.51			M. Brown
J. S. Hackeloff	23	18	9	5.51		5.51			J. S. Hackeloff
Julia Conner	21	4	2	4.28		4.28			Julia Conner
M. Brown	16	2		3.36		3.36			M. Brown
S. Bennington	12	6		4.50		4.50			S. Bennington
Mary Davis	68	2		13.60	6.25	7.35			Mary Davis
"	24	2		6.00		6			"
260	3			7.50		7.50			260
Mary Holland	70	2		14.04		14.04			Mary Holland
"	49	3		14.85		14.85			"
Mary Conford	40	2		8.00	5.83	2.17			Mary Conford
				101.960	14.807	97.462			

Figure 5: Page 261 of register (April 1st, 1868), also see pages 262-263 in 'Appendix.'

Table 2: Number of Parsons Paper Company Employees by Year Each April

Year	Number of Employees	Subset Page Numbers
April 1861	92	8-10
April 1862	122	43-45
April 1863	141	79-81
April 1864	128	115-117
April 1865	159	151-153
April 1866	144	187-189
April 1867	131	223-225
April 1868	153	261-263
April 1869	153	314-316

How many employees during this era?

To quantify this, we counted the number of employees throughout each of the following pay periods by hand by going through the pages of the register one by one. We found that the average number of workers employed at Parsons Paper Company across the measured 9 years spanning the register is **136 employees between 1861-1869**. From Table 2, we can see that the number of employees generally increased over the years, with a noticeable boom in employment towards the end of the Civil War in 1865. In Chapter IV of *Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America*, Green mentions that these paper mills had abnormally high employee retention rates compared to other industries. We also know that at the end of 1867, Parsons employed 150 people and had “nineteen engines for grinding rags,” turning out “800 tons of paper yearly” (Burt 1867, 79).

What types of jobs are there?

In *History of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers*, L.H Everts provides more information about the layout of the two Parsons Paper Company mills and the different departments of employment, which helped us determine job names that we could not originally decipher (i.e. “jobber”). Everts writes that,

“The buildings of this company are situated on the river-bank near the dam, and were built in 1853. They are two in number, the **main mill**, where the paper is made, and what is known as the **finishing-mill**, where it is finished. The former is a structure three stories and a basement high. The upper floor and attic are devoted to drying purposes, while the second story contains the storehouse and **rag-rooms**. About 175 persons are employed on the two floors. On the ground-floor is the **engine-room**, which contains sixteen 450-pound and fourteen 250-pound engines. The mill has three Fourdrinier machines, two of them are 62-inch and the other 72-inch. It has two bleach-boilers, of 3 1/2 and 2 1/2 tons respectively, and 4 sheet calendars and a web calendar and 2 hydraulic presses. The finishing-mill is also situated on the bank of the river, a short distance from the other mill, and, like that, is a

brick structure three stories high. The attic and third floor are used for **packing**, and on the second floor the paper is **reeled** and **jogged**. On the first floor are eight 6-roll calendars and three powerful hydraulic presses, and in the basement is a box-factory and plating-machines” (Everts 1879, 919).

Tracking employment by job type for first 6 months of the register (Jan-Jun 1861)

[Link to full spreadsheet](#)

Table 3 displays the different roles recorded for the first six months of the register, from January to June of 1861. The role labels on the register become very sporadic and difficult to track after 1861, however, ‘Repairs’ and ‘Repairs and Watchmen’ remain in their own section at the bottom of the register pages throughout all of the pay periods. There were 5 people under “Repairs” for April 1st, 1867 (see Figure 10 in ‘Appendix’) and 8 people under April 1st, 1868 (see Figure 11 in ‘Appendix’).

The first pages of each pay period are typically comprised of unlabeled laborers (presumably the majority worked in the engine and machine rooms), in addition to Repairs and Watchmen, who are all males. The sorters, stampers, sealers, count and folders, and rag room/cutter roles all appear to remain throughout 1861-1869, although there are much fewer of them compared to the unlabeled male laborers. These roles are largely held by women, and their wages tend to be significantly lower than male workers, which can be seen in the next section.

Table 3: Parsons Paper Company Employment by Job Type (January-June 1861)

Month	Year	Page Number	Job	Count	Monthly Total Workers
January	1861	1	MFC	25	77
January	1861	1	repairs	4	77
January	1861	2	rag room	25	77
January	1861	2	finishers	23	77
February	1861	3	MFC	25	75
February	1861	3	repairs	4	75
February	1861	4	rag room	24	75
February	1861	4	finishers	22	75
March	1861	5	foreman	1	85
March	1861	5	machine room	3	85
March	1861	5	engine room	7	85
March	1861	5	loft hands	4	85
March	1861	5	fireman	2	85
March	1861	5	size hands	2	85
March	1861	5	joggers	3	85
March	1861	5	watchmen	4	85
March	1861	6	rag room	23	85
March	1861	6	repairs	4	85
March	1861	7	finishers	21	85
March	1861	7	sorters	5	85
March	1861	7	stamper & sealer	2	85
March	1861	7	count & folders	2	85
March	1861	7	sorters	2	85
April	1861	8	rag room	6	93
April	1861	8	cutters	17	93
April	1861	8	repairs	4	93
April	1861	9	MFC	1	93
April	1861	9	machine room	3	93
April	1861	9	engineers	7	93
April	1861	9	loft hands	3	93
April	1861	9	size hands	2	93
April	1861	9	joggers	5	93
April	1861	9	fireman	4	93
April	1861	10	finishers	25	93
April	1861	10	stamper & sealer	2	93
April	1861	10	count & folders	3	93
April	1861	10	sorters	11	93
May	1861	11	no label	25	105
May	1861	11	stamper	1	105
May	1861	11	sealer	1	105
May	1861	11	count & folders	2	105
May	1861	11	sorters	9	105
May	1861	11	extra	1	105
May	1861	12	no label	34	105
May	1861	12	repairs	3	105
May	1861	13	no label	25	105
May	1861	13	borders	4	NA
June	1861	14	no label	17	95
June	1861	14	repairs	3	95
June	1861	14	borders	6	95
June	1861	15	no label	24	95
June	1861	15	sorters	8	95
June	1861	15	count & folders	2	95
June	1861	15	stamper	1	95
June	1861	15	sealer	1	95
June	1861	16	no label	33	95

Parsons Paper Company Employment by Job Type in 1861

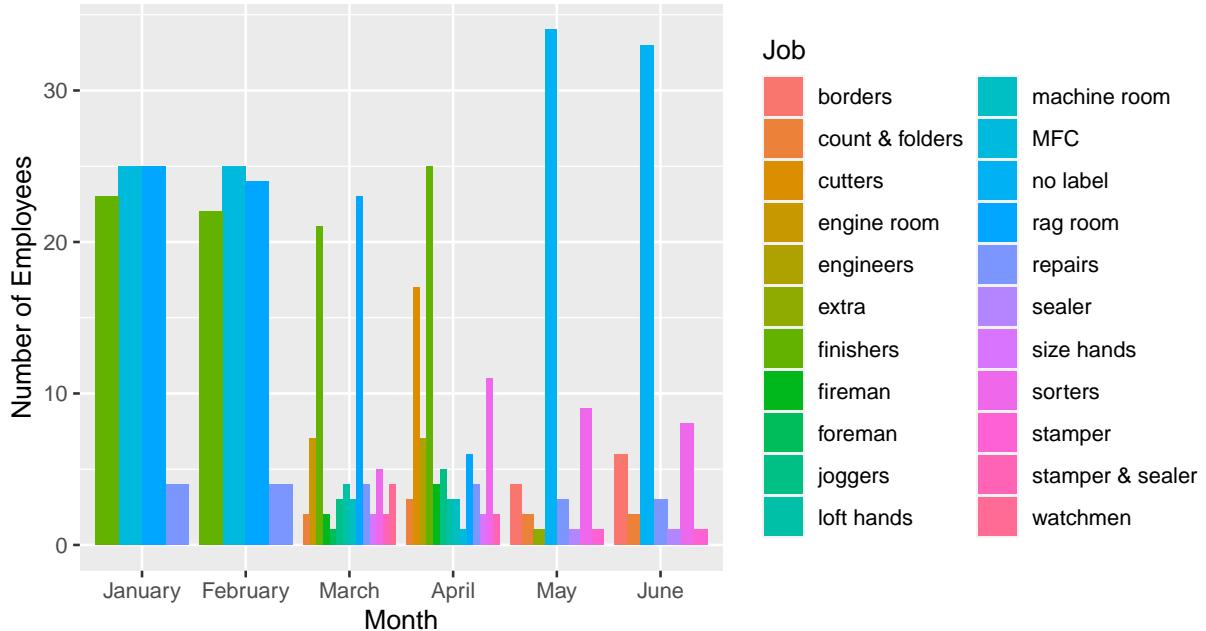


Figure 6: This plot shows the distribution of different roles within the paper company during the first six months of 1861. The unlabeled male laborers, MFC mill workers, finishers, and rag room workers appear to be the most popular roles.

How do Parsons wages compare to the Massachusetts state averages?

Table 4 and Figure 7 are adapted from Judith McGaw's *Most Wonderful Machine: Mechanization and Social Change in Berkshire Paper Making, 1801-1885*, (McGaw 1987, 314), which used data from the *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor* (Statistics of Labor 1879, 74),

Table 4: Weekly Wages of Massachusetts Paper Workmen, 1860-78

Job	1860 Weekly Wages (\$)	1872 Weekly Wages (\$)	1878 Weekly Wages (\$)
Foreman	16.63	16.00	26.49
Millwright	9.86	16.00	15.21
Paper-machine tender	10.00	16.00	15.25
Mechanic	9.75	NA	13.20
Finisher	7.70	11.33	10.20
Rag-engine tender	7.90	14.67	10.41
Engineer/fireman	6.64	10.52	8.77
Finisher's helper	5.80	NA	7.27
Cutter	6.90	8.89	7.95
Bleacher	6.70	8.89	7.56
Men on stock	5.88	9.33	6.57
Laborers	5.50	9.33	6.55

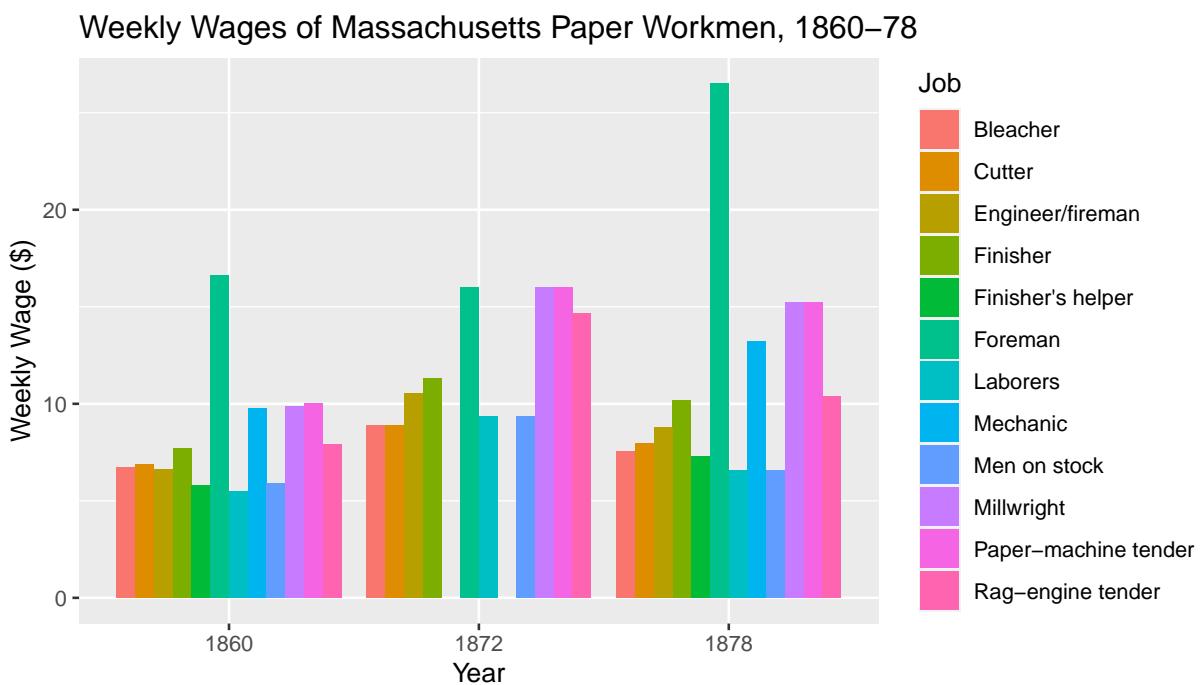


Figure 7: This plot, adapted from Table 4, displays average weekly wages for various roles in paper factories across Massachusetts between 1860-1878.

Table 5: Parsons Weekly Wages - 1861

Job	Weekly Wages (\$)
repairs	14.12
foreman	14.00
machine room	14.00
repairs	12.25
machine room	11.79
engineer	10.50
overseer	10.50
watchmen	10.50
fireman	8.75
watchmen	7.00
finishers	4.38
cutter	4.38
rag room	3.50
rag room	3.50

From Table 5, we can see that Parsons Paper Company employees were, for the most part, paid at comparable rates to other Massachusetts paper factory workers across the state, although the pay for several common roles, especially those held by women (finisher, cutter), is noticeably lower compared to the state average, while other more “important” roles such as engineer and mechanic tended to be paid more at Parsons compared to other Massachusetts paper mills. It may be beneficial to compare the Parsons Paper Company wages to those of other paper mills in Holyoke, as opposed to the entire state, to get a better understanding of how the Parsons Paper Company paid relative to its direct competitors.

Weekly Wages of Parsons Paper Company Workers – 1861

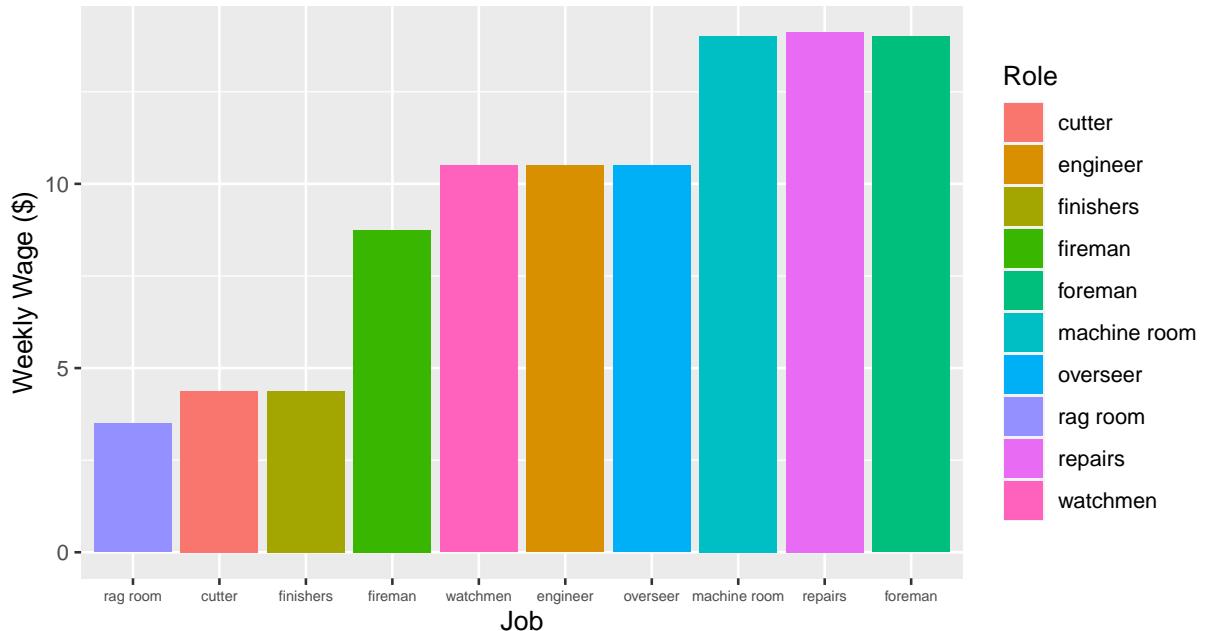


Figure 8: Weekly wage breakdown for various worker roles in Parsons Paper Company in 1861

From Figure 8, we can see that the top paying roles at Parsons Paper Company in 1861 were the foreman, followed by repairs and machine room workers, who each made nearly 15 dollars a week. From John P. Hickey's 1954 University of Massachusetts thesis *The Holyoke Area Paper Industry*, we know that repairs were undertaken on Sundays, typically the only day off for many paper workers: "In replacing a wire on a Fourdrinier paper machine, workers in the Holyoke mills receive half a day's pay besides their regular pay during the hours they work on the replacement. This acts as an incentive to the workers to get the machine back in operation as soon as possible" (Hickey 1954, 94).

In contrast, female laborers who worked in the rag room and as cutters and finishers were paid much lower wages, with almost all women being paid less than 5 dollars a week.

From Hickey's thesis, we also found the following quote:

In 1861, after a period of severe readjustment just prior to the Civil War, twenty-one of the thirty-six manufactures of fine papers met at Pittsfield...to organize a protective association. They desired to raise prices which had fallen drastically as the result of a decrease in demand. They agreed to reduce output by about one-third for about three months. This was the first trade association established in the paper industry of the United States....The Parsons Paper Company and the Carew Manufacturing Company were charter members of this organization" (Hickey 1954, 108).

This agreed upon reduce in output in 1861 is important because it may indicate that at the start of the register, employee wages were lower than they would have been under normal circumstance. Any subsequent change in payment patterns throughout the rest of the 19th century is important for future analysis, as it can indicate both local and domestic economic shocks and sector-specific economic factors.

References

- n.d. Available at <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/pz50hj728> (Accessed 03/05/2023).
- Burt, Henry Martyn. 1867. *Burt's Illustrated Guide of the Connecticut Valley: Containing Descriptions of Mount Holyoke, Mount Mansfield, White Mountains, Lake Memphremagog, Lake Willoughby, Montreal, Quebec, &c.* New England Publishing Company, Northampton, MA. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moa/AAB2140.0001.001/83>.
- Everts, Louis H. 1879. *History of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers.* J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, PA. <https://archive.org/details/historyofconnect02lhev/page/n7/mode/2up>.
- Green, Constance McLaughlin. 1939. *Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America.* Yale University Press, New Haven, CT. https://archives.yale.edu/repositories/12/archival_objects/1572349.
- Hickey, John P. 1954. "The Holyoke Paper Industry: 1899-1951." Master's thesis, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts.
- McGaw, Judith A. 1987. *Most Wonderful Machine: Mechanization and Social Change in Berkshire Paper Making, 1801-1885.* Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv8pz9mw>.
- Statistics of Labor, Massachusetts Bureau of. 1879. *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor.* Rand, Avery, & Co., Boston, MA. <https://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/757013>.

Appendix

224

*Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum perfoiced to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1867.*

NAMES.	No. Pounds.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William Kelly	26	18	75	8 54	69 66	Sp 05	9 55	Sp 05	William Kelly
Samuel S. Knight	26	12	52	6 25	45 75	"	"	"	J. T. Knight
Michael Ryan	26	9	1225	5 00	37 25	"	"	"	Michael Ryan
Catharine Brady	25	7	29 17	"	29 17	"	"	"	Kate X Brady
Ellen Conroy	25	7	29 17	"	29 17	"	"	"	Ellen X Conroy
Bridget McNamee	4177	90	37 59	2 00	24 36	"	"	"	Bridget X McNamee
Louisa Exner	2929	"	20 56	"	35 33	"	"	"	Louisa Exner
Catherine O'Hare	5703	"	53 55	"	38 49	"	"	"	Kate X O'Hare
Mary Murphy	3765	"	58 49	"	32 03	"	"	"	Mary X Murphy
Rebecca Gould	3659	"	52 03	"	32 53	"	"	"	Rebecca X Gould
Ellen Stone	3614	"	52 53	"	34 52	"	"	"	Ellen X Stone
Mary Daugherty	3836	"	39 52	"	29 21	"	"	"	Mary X Daugherty
O'Leary - O'Sullivan	3216	"	39 52	"	34 52	"	"	"	O'Leary X O'Sullivan
Margaret Fitzgerald	3135	"	39 52	"	33 27	"	"	"	Margaret X Fitzgerald
Julia Head	3647	"	50 27	"	19 87	"	"	"	Julia X Head
Mary Quinlan	2085	"	19 87	"	13 48	"	"	"	Mary X Quinlan
Ella O'Keefe	2352	"	26 98	7	35 20	"	"	"	Ella X O'Keefe
Patrick Maloney	3911	"	35 20	"	31 92	"	"	"	Patrick X Maloney
Margaret Kelly	3675	"	31 92	"	31 90	"	"	"	Margaret X Kelly
Margaret Haffey	1822	"	31 90	"	30 91	"	"	"	Margaret X Haffey
annah Scallan	3434	"	50 91	"	24 09	"	"	"	annah X Scallan
Catharine Steverson	3434	"	51 09	700	24 37	"	"	"	Catharine X Steverson
Ezra Davis	2760	"	29 14	"	33 82	"	"	"	Ezra X Davis
Elizanna McCarley	3738	"	33 82	"	27 93	"	"	"	Elizanna X McCarley
Mary Gaughan	3103	"	29 03	"	19 52	"	"	"	Mary X Gaughan
Rosa McNamee	2169	"	19 52	"	19 52	"	"	"	Rosa X McNamee
Oliver Stock	3230	"	29 55	"	29 26	"	"	"	Oliver X Stock
Tom Kennedy	4224	"	58 38	"	38 38	"	"	"	Tom Kennedy
Mary McNamee	1863	"	16 77	"	16 77	"	"	"	Mary X McNamee
Margaret Vaughan	3949	"	55 54	"	55 54	"	"	"	Margaret X Vaughan
Julia Sullivan	4753	"	57 56	"	57 56	"	"	"	Julia X Sullivan
James Torney	3108	"	27 97	"	27 97	"	"	"	James X Torney
Ezra Rogers	3666	"	27 60	"	27 60	"	"	"	Ezra X Rogers
Mary Delaney	3442	"	30 88	"	30 88	"	"	"	Mary X Delaney
Mary Mahoney	2957	"	26 61	"	26 61	"	"	"	Mary X Mahoney
Mary McGeough	1714	"	15 42	"	15 42	"	"	"	Mary X McGeough
Johnna Shee	3169	"	28 52	"	28 52	"	"	"	Johnna X Shee
Johnna O'Kearan	4244	"	58 16	"	38 16	"	"	"	Johnna X O'Kearan
Mary O'Hare	2086	"	18 77	"	18 77	"	"	"	Mary X O'Hare
	11232		125 10	55 59	120 826				




Figure 9: p. 224 of register - April 1st, 1867

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum prefixed to said Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1867.

NAMES	NO. POUNDS.	NO. YEARS.	NO. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William J. Pomroy	26 325	84 50			84 50 Apr 15				Wm. J. Pomroy
E. H. Wellington	27 375	74 25	6 25	68	"				E. H. Wellington
John Duffy	26 250	66 25	6 25	60	"				John Duffy
John Flynn	22 225	49 50			49 50 "				John Flynn
P. O. Harr	26 70	52 25			52 25 "				P. O. Harr
Charles Strong	26 12	52 00			52 "				Charles Strong
Joh G. Allen	26 91	59 00	5		54 "				J. G. Allen
Michael Ryan	17 70	29 75			29 75 "				Michael Ryan
John Carroll	37 20	63 62			63 62 "				John Carroll
John Slaughter	22 99	55 75			55 75 "				John Slaughter
Richard Marshall	26 10	45 50			45 50 "				Richard Marshall
Kate Baldwin	26 57	21 67			21 67 "				Kate Baldwin
Martin Moran	26 91	59 00			59 "				Martin Moran
James Moran	23 9	54 50			54 50 "				James Moran
Jefferson Powell	26 29	59 75			59 75 "				Jefferson Powell
William Johnson	25 15	63 12	8 54		54 78 "				William Johnson
Pat Donelan	26 9	54 00	4 00		35 "				Pat Donelan
Wm. Corry	26 39	66 87	8 34		58 63 "				Wm. Corry
Patrick Kennedy	26 9	59 00			59 "				Patrick Kennedy
James Casey	27 22	55 00			55 "				James Casey
John Gangar	26 3	52 00			52 "				John Gangar
Patrick Higgins	39 9	51 00			51 "				Patrick Higgins
J. D. A. Ballou	26 136	58 50	8 34		50 16 "				J. D. A. Ballou
Wm. C. Tidley	25 84	47 20			47 20 "				Wm. C. Tidley
Frank Russell	25 29	55 25			55 25 "				Frank Russell
Nich. Haley	24 9	36			36 "				Nich. Haley
Joseph Bordeau	25 9	44 13	10		30 63 "				Joseph Bordeau
Ed. C. Chapman	23 7	40 30	10		30 30 "				Ed. C. Chapman
Frank Cummings	23 9	35 25			35 25 "				Frank Cummings
Edmund Cain	26 9	39			39 "				Edmund Cain
Patrick Ryan	27 9	43 88	11		32 88 "				Patrick Ryan
" in April	7	81			81 "				
Frank Cummings	4 9	6 00			6 00 "				Frank Cummings
Morris L. Sammons	12 9	18			18 "				Morris L. Sammons
" Mar	28 9	42 75			42 75 "				Morris L. Sammons
Thomas Jepson	25 9	25			25 "				Thomas Jepson
John Couchon in Apr	9 4 7	16 93			16 93 "				John Couchon in Apr
	150 078	77 52	1495 26						

Repairs &c

Austin Ely	26 15	65 00	65	"	Austin Ely
J. M. Allen	26 15	65 00	65	"	J. M. Allen
H. C. Walter	26 250	65 00	8 34	56 66	H. C. Walter
Patrick Casey	32 79	52 00	52	"	Patrick Casey
Martin Newell	18 225	44 50	40 50	"	Martin Newell



Figure 10: p. 225 of register - April 1st, 1867

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum specified to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st, 1868.

NAMES, &c.	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William Johnson	26 164	9 150			71 80				Wm Johnson
John O'Brien	26 90	3 910		488	488				John O'Brien
William Connor	26 166	7 100			725	6425			Wm Connor
Matthew Kennedy	26 94	6 50					4550		Matthew Kennedy
James Casey	26 127	5 350					5350		James Casey
John Gallagher	26 97	3 9					39		John Gallagher
John Langan	26 124	4 9					49		John Langan
John Shea	26 97	4 360					4360		John Shea
John E. Knight	26 12	5 200			725	4825			John E. Knight
Philip Cudahy	26 136	6 010					6010		Philip Cudahy
John Conahan	26 124	5 3			625	4675			John Conahan
Frank Russell	25 106	4 975			700	3675			Frank Russell
Chinnery Johnson	26 76	8 250					3250		Wm Johnson
Warren McGann	24 97	3 187					3187		Hiram H. Davis.
William Conroy	26 24	9 100					9100		Wm. Conroy
John Flynn	27 18	6 750					6750		John Flynn
E. W. Wellington	26 196	8 450			625	7425			E. W. Wellington
Martin Moran	26 99	4 307					4307		Martin Moran
Mr. McCay	26 96	8 400			933	7517			Mr. McCay
Charles Strong	26 13	5 638					5638		Charles Strong
Joe H. Allen	26 91	3 9			500	34			Joe H. Allen
Mark Ryan	26 111	5 957					5957		Mark Ryan
Pat Beglin	15 111	3 750					2750		Pat Beglin
Mark Marshall	28 11	5 224					5224		Mark Marshall
John Wolf	26 106	4 687					4687		John Wolf
Pat McCarthy	26 106	1 594			467	4121			Pat McCarthy
Pat O'Kane	27 96	0 388			500	5888			Pat O'Kane
Joseph Beaucheaix Jr	25 70	4 963			500	3563			Joseph Beaucheaix Jr
John Naughton	26 106	4 550					4550		John Naughton
George Kunkel	21 97	3 150					3150		George Kunkel
Pat Doyle	26 11	3 987					3987		Pat Doyle
Michael O'Brien	25 1	3 750					3750		Michael O'Brien
Thomas Sherry	26 1	3 937					3937		Thomas Sherry
Mary Donlon	26 69	2 925					2925		Mary Donlon
Kate Littleton	26 "	2 925					2925		Kate Littleton
Kate Moran	26 "	2 925					2925		Kate Moran
Kate Baldwin	24 "	2 700					2700		Kate Baldwin
Jessie Keefe	7 9	1 050			1050	1050			Jessie Keefe
John Flynn	24	1 00					100		John Flynn
					17 300	13 000			
Rehans &c.									
Aspinwall	26 18	7800					78		Aspinwall
John Buckley	21 18	6300					63		John Buckley
J. M. Allen	23 18	6437					6437		J. M. Allen
Matthew Kennedy	22 18	4957			400	1550			Matthew Kennedy
Pat Casey	8 12	8120					5120		Pat Casey
John Sullivan	7 106	1225					1225		John Sullivan
Edgar Downey	8 99	13400					13400		Edgar Downey
Henry Blackmore	7 12	1400			400	10			Henry Blackmore
					34 830	8 000	13 733		



1 Austin, G.W.
John Buckley
J. M. Allen
John McNamee
Michael May
John Sullivan
Edgar Downey
Henry Blackmore

Figure 11: p. 262 of register - April 1st, 1868

263

*Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum prefixed to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1868.*

NAMES.	NO. POUNDS.	NO. REAMS.	NO. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William Kelly	26181	7800	953	6867					William Kelly
Michael Ryan	2839	4032	500	4132					Michael Ryan
Ellen Cavanaugh	2671	3033			3033				Ellen Cavanaugh
Kate Sheridan	2641	8033	700	2333					Kate Sheridan
Anna Cavanagh	2671	8033			3033				Anna Cavanagh
Mary Davenport	2369	2587			3587				Mary Davenport
John McCarley	2094	2280			2280				John McCarley
Catharine Payay	12476	80	1980		1980				Catharine Payay
Katherine Shulian	2193			746					H & Shulian
Mary Morgan	22784			2203					Mary Morgan
Bridget Kilkenny	42215			1772					Bridget Kilkenny
Anna Emerson	52003			1602	300	1402			Anna Emerson
Mary Erdmann	62771			2210		2216			Mary Erdmann
Kate O'Han	72777			2205		2205			Kate O'Han
Bridget Kilman	83527			2821		2821			Bridget Kilman
Bridget Cleary	92057			1640		1640			Bridget Cleary
Ann Firmy	10500			400		4			Ann Firmy
Alice Finnerty	112422			1937		1937			Alice Finnerty
Agnes Lynch	122250			1800	500	1300			Agnes Lynch
Bridget Flynn	131850			1480		1480			Bridget Flynn
Ellen Shinn	148050			2440		2440			Ellen Shinn
Mary Powers	152457			1965		1965			Mary Powers
Mary Donohue	162013			2822		2822			Mary Donohue
Mary Shahan	172587			2031		2031			Mary Shahan
John O'Sullivan	192670			2130		2156			John O'Sullivan
Mary Mahoney	202158			1726		1726			Mary Mahoney
Julia Shay	21826			660		660			Julia Shay
Ellen Shahan	222871			2296		2296			Ellen Shahan
Mary Shahan	238129			2503		2503			Mary Shahan
Kathleen Somes	242862			2289		2289			Kathleen Somes
Mary Shay	252571			2056		2056			Mary Shay
Bridget Mulroy	260380			2704		2704			Bridget Mulroy
Edgar Burke	273188			2550		2550			Edgar Burke
Bridget Linton	283204			2563		2563			Bridget Linton
Mary Sullivan	291754			1403		1403			Mary Sullivan
Bridget Kennedy	303703			3018		3018			Bridget Kennedy
John O'Brien	311924			1539		1539			John O'Brien
Eliza Powers	321798			1566		1566			Eliza Powers
Horace Martin	322659			2120		2120			Horace Martin
Ellen Stack	332532			2025		2025			Ellen Stack
Ann Kennedy	336264			2907		2907			Ann Kennedy
Bridget Kennedy	448448			2734		2734			Bridget Kennedy
John Sullivan	442880			2304		2304			John Sullivan
Julia Sullivan	458751			3160		3160			Julia Sullivan
Mary Duckford	462099			1679		1679			Mary Duckford
Eliza Powers	462703			2210		2210			Eliza Powers
Horatio Brinkman	462106			1684		1684			Horatio Brinkman
Julia Powers	462839			2811		2811			Julia Powers
Margaret Gilmour	462893			2242		2242			Margaret Gilmour
Mary Powers	463149			2512		2512			Mary Powers
John O'Sullivan	472652			2276		2276			John O'Sullivan
Mammie Culkin	573880			2664		2664			Mammie Culkin
Isabel Johnson	57421			336		336			Isabel Johnson
Margot Burns	531448			1158		1158			Margot Burns
Kate Brady	59892			713		713			Kate Brady
					121972	2033	110139		

Figure 12: p. 263 of register - April 1st, 1868