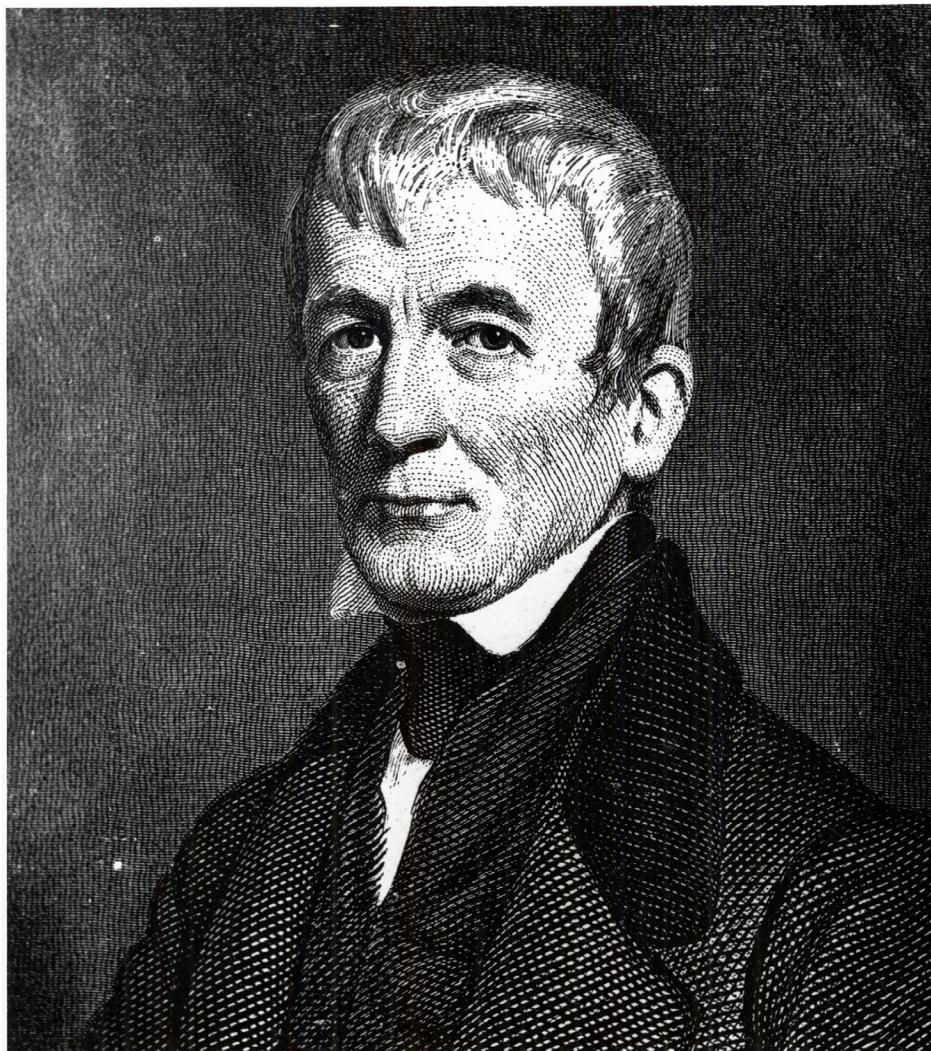


Lowell Notes

Patrick Tracy Jackson

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lowell National Historical Park



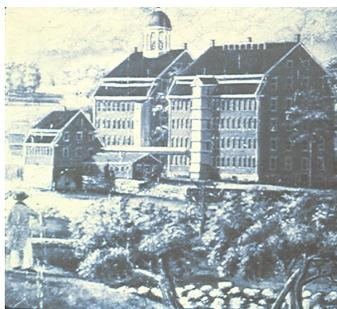
Lowell National Historical Park

“If our plans succeed, as we have reason to expect, we shall have as large a population on our territory in twenty years, as we had in Boston twenty years ago.”

Patrick Tracy Jackson
-1824

Patrick Tracy Jackson was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts on August 14, 1780, the youngest son of Jonathan and Hannah (Tracy). His maternal grandfather, Patrick Tracy, had migrated penniless from Ireland. His father was a member of the Continental Congress in 1782. Jackson was educated at Dummer Academy. He and his brother-in-law Francis Cabot Lowell, built a cotton manufacturing mill in Waltham in 1815 and form the nucleus of the group later referred to as the Boston Associates.

NEW START



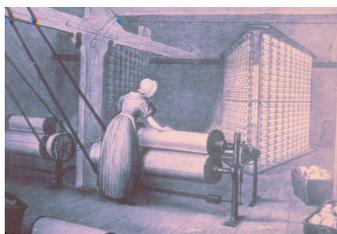
Patrick Tracy Jackson first became an apprentice merchant at age 15. He then went on to a short career at sea working for his older brother Henry from 1799 to 1808.

Jackson met with his brother-in-law Francis Cabot Lowell upon Lowell's return trip from England. Lowell had traveled to the British Isles for his health. He took interest in the country's cotton manufacture process and when he returned to his native Massachusetts he built two

cotton manufacturing mills of his own along the Charles River in Waltham. Jackson was put in charge of the Waltham operations.

With an agent salary of \$3,000 a year, Jackson soon became the largest investor, owning 20 shares of stock.

A SPINNING SUCCESS

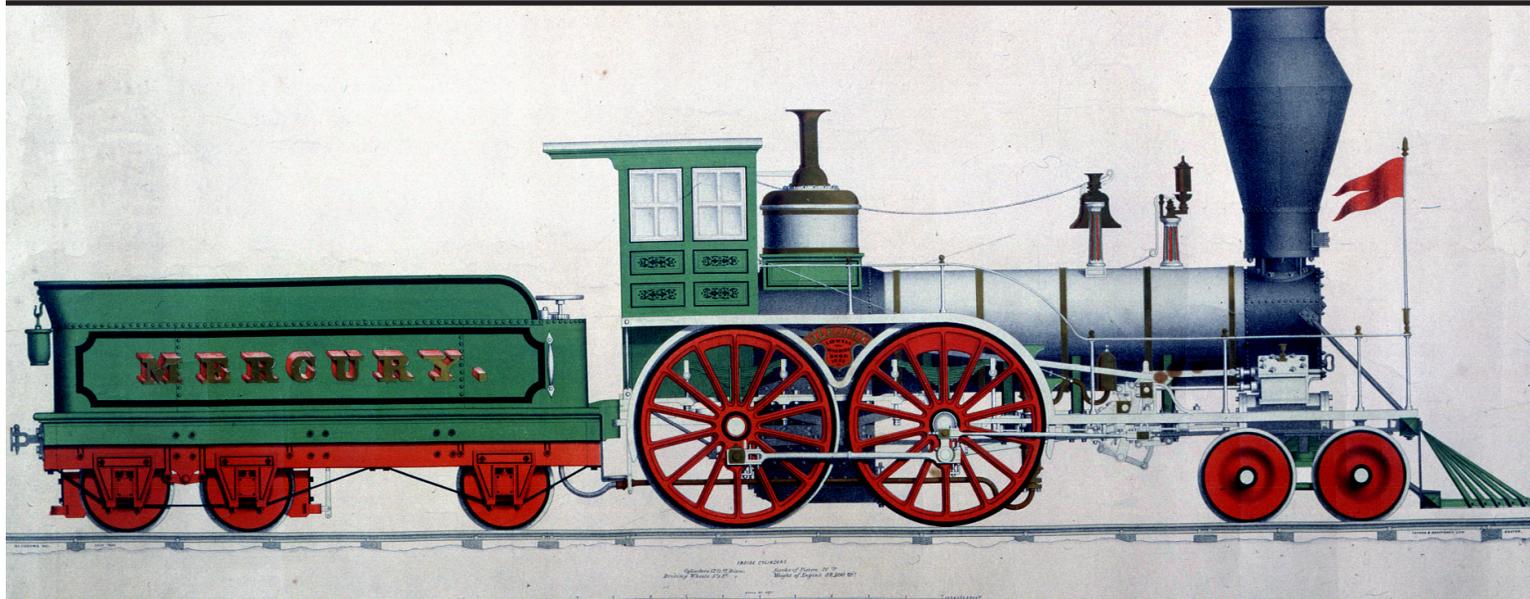


Lowell and Jackson combined for an \$80,000 commitment to the mills and were realizing dividends by the end of the first two years.

When Lowell died in 1817, the Associates voted to raise Jackson's salary to \$5,000 a year. Jackson and Nathan Appleton were now the leading stockholders and ventured to find a new location north along the Merrimack River to expand operations. In November 1821, Jackson, Appleton, Kirk Boott, Paul Moody, John Boott and Warren Dutton made their first visit to the Pawtucket Falls in East Chelmsford. By Decem-

ber, Jackson and Appleton had subscribed for 180 shares. The location by the 32-foot falls was transformed from the village of East Chelmsford to the town of Lowell in 1826, and then to the city of Lowell in 1836.

In 1822, because he was still committed to Waltham, Jackson recommended Kirk Boott as an agent of the first major manufacturing company built along the Merrimack River, the Merrimack Manufacturing Company. Boott had resigned from his regiment in the British military when it was ordered to America in 1812. Boott



Locomotive Engine for Passengers as built by the Lowell Machine Shop, Lowell Massachusetts, 1852

soon became a town planner, architect, engineer and leading citizen with Lowell cloth as his calling card. The fledgling Merrimack Manufacturing Company, at \$28 a spindle, cost a total of \$164,764 to equip.

Jackson appointed himself as agent of Proprietors of Locks and Canals on the Merrimack

River later in 1822 and could now determine first hand who could start what mill and where in Lowell, and for how much. Unfortunately, Jackson's other speculations cost him more than one fortune, but at this point he always seemed to recover.

ENGINEERING INNOVATION

Jackson also conceived the idea of a railroad, and by 1835 he had the engineers of the Locks and Canals Company working on the Boston & Lowell Railroad. Jackson brought in an engine broken down from England and sent it in parts up the Middlesex Canal to Lowell. On May 27, 1835 the engine 'Stephenson' had Jackson,

George Washington Whistler and James E. Baldwin aboard for its first trip to Boston. By 1853 the Middlesex Canal, which had fostered Jackson's idea of a railroad had been replaced by newer, stronger, and faster locomotives coming out of the Lowell Machine Shop.

POLITICAL POWER-PLAY

Jackson was like a field commander in Waltham, with a salary including a house. In Lowell, he acted as superintendent, managing the day to day business. He opened new doors and was soon dominating the ranks of the stockholders.

With Nathan Appleton, Jackson became the prime mover in setting up the Lowell, Appleton, Hamilton and Merrimack mills. Jackson became so popular that the locomotive 'Jackson' named after him was changed to the 'Patrick' so as not to confuse the public with the unpopular sitting Democratic President, Andrew Jackson.

At the time President Jackson, aka 'Old Hickory', angered the Northern Whigs, as he all but quashed their attempt to charter a Second National Bank.

Nine years later, Patrick Tracy Jackson went so far as to back Democratic President John Tyler's tension-filled veto of fellow Whig Party leader Henry Clay's bill to reestablish the Bank in 1841.

FINAL YEARS

Jackson began his career in cotton manufacturing on the verge of bankruptcy, worth only \$13,000. In the next 25 years he made \$400,000.

For all his successes, Jackson was haunted by questionable business decisions. In the late 1830s, he liquidated almost his entire interest in the mills and put the proceeds into real estate which turned into a disaster. Mercantile shipping brought in money and so did his investment in the 1835 Boston to Lowell and Boston to Worcester Railroads. He became a member of the Board of Directors of the regional Suffolk Bank. After Kirk Boott's death in 1837, Jackson resumed direction of the Proprietors of Locks and Canals in Lowell for seven years as "he alone was...fully capable of supplying that gentleman's place."

In 1846, Jackson wrote an eleven page book entitled: *Boston Memorial on the Cotton Manufacture: To The Senate and House of Representatives in Congress Assembled.*

Due to his financial problems, Jackson was forced to stay in one textile business or another until his death, from a sudden attack of dysentery, at his seaside Beverly, Mass. home on September 12, 1847.

"The cheerful dignity with which he met his reverses; ...and the almost youthful alacrity with which he once more put on the harness, were themes of daily comment to his friends..." - *Lives of American Merchants*, Freeman Hunt, 1848.