Business as Unusual: An Analysis of a 19th Century Do-It-All Entrepreneur

By Jodi Witcher

BACKGROUND

- · B. Stephenson House
- · Palemon Winchester
 - Son-in-law
 - Lawyer
 - Entrepreneur
- Interpretive Museum
 - Period characters
- · Why?



Palemon Winchester's Day Book



- · Springfield, IL.
- Size and Pages
- July 1823 October of 1832
- 4 Categories
 - Goods
 - Cash received/paid
 - Legal services
 - Unclassified

GOODS: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

- · Entries haphazard
 - Selling or buying?
 - Information missing
 - Dates out of order
- Change in Palemon's Character
 - Trial 1825
 - Carlinville 1830



GOODS: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

- 47% of Entries
- Sugar 15%
- July 1823 –
 September 1832
- Whiskey 16%
- Flour 15%
- · Total Goods Entries
- Sundries 26%

CASH RECEIVED/PAID

- 29% of Entries
- Received/paid?
- · Formality (or lack thereof)
- · Banker?

LEGAL SERVICES



- 7% of Entries
- Significant Dates
 - April 1824
 - June 1832
- Significant Names
 - Wallace
 - Walker
 - Harly

CONCLUSION

- Research
 - More needed to interpret character correctly
- · Faulty Record Keeping
 - Inconsistent, missing items
- Unusual Mix of Business
 - Goods, Legal Services, Banking?
- Then and Now