This volume is a daybook/journal from one of the earliest general stores in Lebanon, the seat of Laclede County, Missouri. The proprietors were John B. Harrison (1809-1860) and Joseph Thomas Hooker (1831-1894).

Laclede County was organized in 1849 from parts of Camden, Pulaski, and Wright counties. The first county court selected a site in Lebanon Township for the county seat, and the town of Lebanon was platted in 1850. Located along the Springfield road, Lebanon was a natural stop for travelers to and from southwestern Missouri. The village grew into a prosperous business center before the Civil War.

The proprietors of the H & H Store, John B. Harrison (1809-1860) and Joseph Thomas Hooker (1831-1894) were members of pioneer families in central Missouri. Harrison came to the state with his family in 1818. He held several civil offices in Gasconade and Miller counties, and was a founder of Tuscumbia, Missouri. He led the survey team that laid out Lebanon, and received several land grants in the area in 1852. Beginning in 1853 and until his death in 1860, he operated a general store with Joseph Thomas Hooker. Hooker then continued to run the store, perhaps in partnership with his brother, until the Civil War, when he left Lebanon to join the Confederate forces. Additional biographical information can be found in the Goodspeed, Nyberg, Gleason, and Laclede County Historical Society’s histories of the county. The December 1980 issue of the Laclede County Historical Society’s Newsletter, containing data on the Harrison and Hooker families, is included in the Information Folder.

Credit records for this period styled the firm as “Williams, Hooker & Harrison.” Williams was identified only as “a yng man without much cap. But a gd bus man, marrd.” Probably he was O. S. Williams. The account book microfilmed for this collection has only “H & H” written clearly on the inside title page, with the location, “Lebanon,” at the head of each page. The credit records called the firm “Hooker & Harrison” by early 1855. Hooker was described as “a returned Californian,” while Harrison was called “an old responsible merchant.” The credit report for 5 July 1860, in the wake of Harrison's death, said “no bus.,” but in October of the same year the brothers J. T. and J. H. Hooker were considered “safe” for one or two thousand dollars.

This account book is a standard financial record for a general mercantile establishment of the period. Many of the early residents of Lebanon and Laclede County were among the patrons. There are daily entries, excluding Sundays, from 2 September 1853 through 28 October 1854. The entries shed no light upon the identity of “Williams,” although there are several transactions with the firm of “Williams & Hooker,” and with an individual named O. S. Williams.
Harrison, John B., 1809-1860
Hooker, Joseph Thomas, 1831-1894
Laclede County (Mo.)
Lebanon (Mo.)