INDUSTRIALIZATION (1877-1900)

Almshouse Account Book

This account book of Rehoboth's almshouse dates to 1879. Almshouses provided town-funded housing, often on a farm, for men, women, and children; those able to work performed tasks on the farm.

From this account book, we learn that the inhabitants ate a variety of foods, including corned beef, fresh fish, and clams, as well as harvest from the farm. It also reminds us of the difficult reality of the almshouse: on December 26, the warden purchases a coffin for $7.00.

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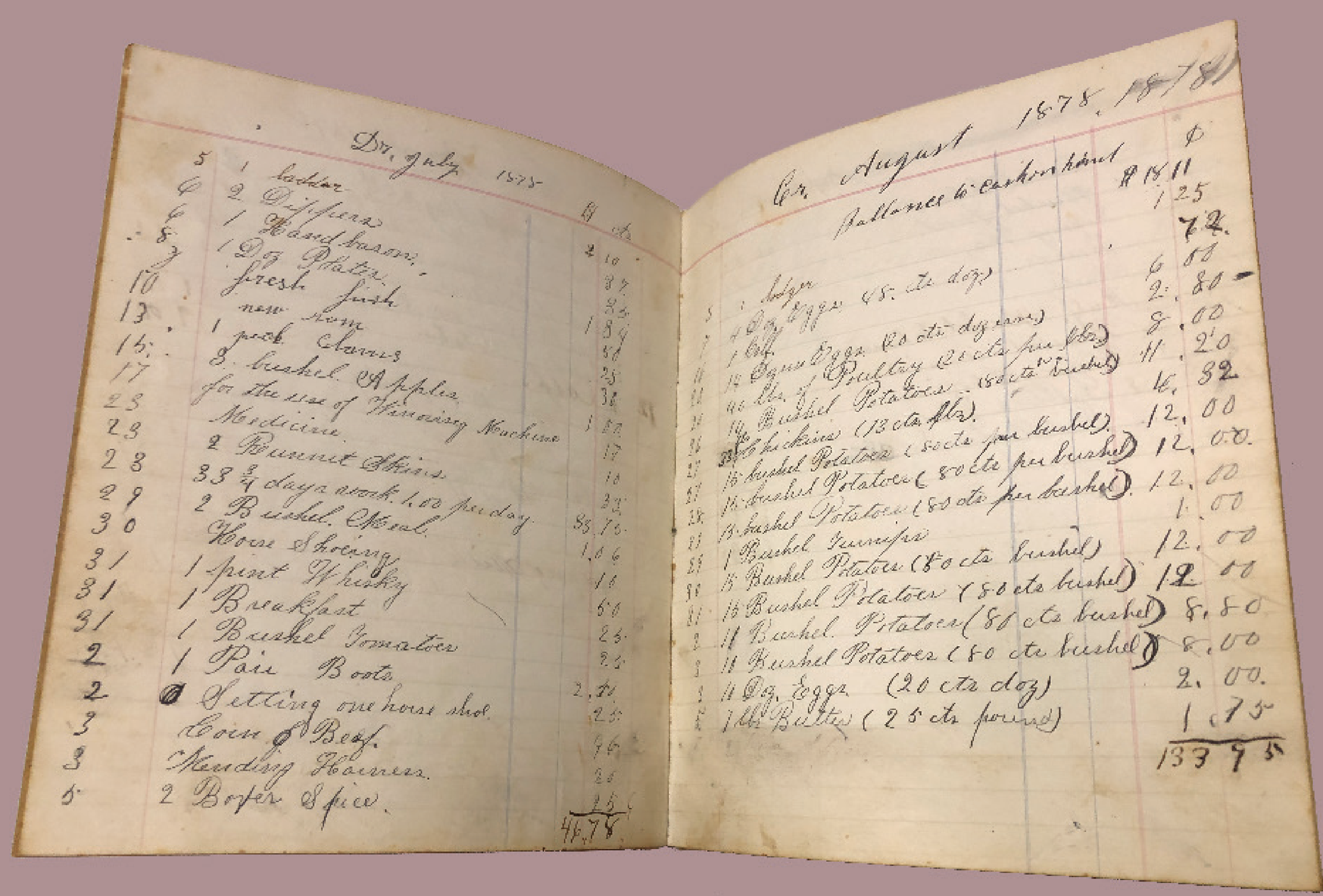

1882 Rehoboth manufacturer Darius Goff launches the first mohair plush industry in America, which provides the material to upholster seats for railroad cars and, later, automobiles.

1883 The Northern Pacific Railway is completed, stretching from the Great Lakes to the Pacific.

1889 Hull House is opened in Chicago by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr. This settlement house and others like it across the U.S. provide resources and educational opportunities to the working classes and their families, including recent immigrants to America.

1892 Ellis Island opens, serving as the gateway for more than 12 million immigrants to the U.S. over the course of six decades.

1895 A motion to grant women's suffrage, or the right to vote, is struck down at a Rehoboth town election by a narrow margin.

1898 Despite strong opposition from north Rehoboth, the trolley car line is re-routed south to pass through Rehoboth Village on its way from Taunton to Providence.