

1977-100

Dr. Ammi Ruhamah Cutter (1735-1820)

Papers 1754-1831 - 30 items

The Dr. Ammi Ruhamah Cutter Papers were purchased by the Society in February 1977 from Dr. Donald Roth of Liberty, New York, through the offices of Roger Butterfield, an antiquarian bookseller of Hartwick, New York. Dr. Roth did not indicate how he acquired these New Hampshire papers.

Penciled notations of R.C. Cutter (Sewall to Cutter, May 1769, Meserve to Cutter 5 November 1770). According to Cutter Family of New England (p.61 & 69), Ralph C. Cutter of Brooklyn, New York, a grandson of ARC, owned diaries and library (ca.1871). Letters in the appendix (7 now in the possession of the New Hampshire Historical Society) were the property of Ralph Cross Cutter. There are additional penciled notations on the letter dated 15 July 1831 of Hannah Ladd to her mother stating that Hannah was the wife of Ralph Cross Cutter and the mother of Ralph Ladd Cross.

Dr. Ammi Ruhamah Cutter, born 15 March 1735 in North Yarmouth, Maine, graduated from Harvard with honors in 1752. It was during this period that he became friendly with John Wentworth, who was to be the last Royal Governor of the Province of New Hampshire. Although Dr. Cutter early became a member of the political forces opposing Governor Wentworth, they remained friends.

Dr. Cutter studied medicine in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, with Dr. Clement Jackson and served as surgeon in Rogers Rangers during the Indian Wars of 1756-1758. Returning to Portsmouth, he married Hannah Treadwell on 24 August 1758 and became the father of ten children.

In 1777 Dr. Cutter was appointed by Congress as the Physician General of the Eastern Departments and was stationed at Fishkill, New York, on the North River for the better part of a year. He was not active politically, except serving in the New Hampshire Constitutional Convention, but was well acquainted with persons of both factions.

An original member of the New Hampshire Medical Society, Dr. Cutter became its third president and served for thirteen years in that office. Harvard College conferred upon him the Honorary Degree of M.D. in 1792.

He died in Portsmouth on December 8, 1820, at the age of eighty-five.

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The correspondence in this collection covers the time period of 1754 to shortly before Cutter's death in 1820. (There

are two additional items of 1831 written by descendants.) Two letters from John Wentworth (1754) were written while Wentworth was a student at Harvard. Gen. John Sullivan wrote a detailed discussion of "my old disorder" and his own suggested remedy. There are letters requesting medicine, supplies for the army, medicines being shipped from London, etc. from various individuals including Jeremy Belknap, William Whipple, and Nathaniel Sparhawk.

Two letters discuss the mills at Wolfeboro (1770 and 1820) where Dr. Cutter was an original and large landholder with Gov. John Wentworth.

A nephew by marriage, Dr. Ammi R. Mitchell of Yarmouth, Maine, writes of his studies and experiences in hospitals in France. Dr. Mitchell had studied medicine under Dr. Cutter in Portsmouth. It is probable he was named for Dr. Cutter's father, who had been a minister and physician in Yarmouth. David Mitchell, another correspondent, was Dr. Mitchell's father.

Seven letters, dated 1769 to 1772, from Hugh Hall Wentworth, Lieut. Gov. of Grenada in the West Indies, was the grandson of Gen. John Wentworth. He recounts details of the management of family plantations in Grenada, commercial transactions which included the shipment of medicine. H.H. Wentworth's maternal grandfather Hall was from the island of Barbados.

References: Cutter Family of New England by William R. Cutter. Boston, David Clapp & Son, 1871 pgs. 60-74; children pgs. 166-174; letters pgs. 311.

Notable Americans Vol. III, Boston, Biographical Society, 1904.

The Wentworth Genealogy: English and American by John Wentworth, Boston, Little Brown & Co., 1878.

History of Wolfeborough (New Hampshire) by Benjamin Franklin Parker, Wolfeboro, N.H., Town of Wolfeboro 1901 (?) pgs. 56-57, letters from John Wentworth; pgs. 74-77 and other pages.

Name cards made for the catalog:

Cutter, Dr. Ammi Ruhamah
Belknap, Jeremy
Folsom, Nathaniel
Foster, Isaac
Hallowell, Richard
Hughes & Whitlock
Leyard, Isaac
Meserve, George
Mitchell, Ammi Ruhamah
Mitchell, David
Murray, John
Moody, Samuel
Pepperell, Lady Mary
Sewall, David
Sparhawk, Nathaniel
Sullivan, John
Wentworth, Hugh Hall
Wentworth, John (1737-1820)
Whipple, William

Subject cards made for the catalog:

Boston Tea Party
Dartmouth College
Medicine
Mills
Ministers
North Yarmouth, Maine
Physician
Revolutionary War
West Indies

Prepared by


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March 1977