



## Guide to the Worcester Papers, 1790-1835

### Administrative Information

**Title and Dates:**

Worcester Papers, 1790-1835

**Repository:**

New Hampshire Historical Society

30 Park Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-228-6688

<http://www.nhhistory.org/>

**Collection Number:**

1984.022

**Author of Finding Aid:**

Updated by Katelynn Vance, 2014

**Creator:**

Worcester, Noah, 1758-1837

Worcester, Thomas, 1768-1831

**Language:**

The materials in this collection are in English.

**Extent:**

1 Manuscript Box

**Abstract:** The Worcester Papers, 1790-1835, is comprised of correspondence and papers from Noah Worcester, Thomas Worcester, and Deborah Lee Worcester. The Noah Worcester papers are principally correspondence with John W. Foster, secretary of the Portsmouth Peace Society, 1818-1823. The Thomas Worcester papers include correspondence with other clergyman, accounts, and sermons.

## Access and Use

### **Acquisition Information and Provenance:**

The Worcester Papers were a gift to the New Hampshire Historical Society.

### **Processing Information:**

This finding aid was updated by Katelynn Vance in October 2014. This finding aid follows the standards set-forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

### **Access Restrictions:**

Available for research.

### **Location:**

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

### **Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:**

Some of the items within the collection are in a fragile condition.

### **Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:**

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Researchers are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

### **Preferred Citation:**

Item title, Worcester Papers, 1984.022. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date Accessed.

## Collection Overview

### **Biographical Information/ Administrative Information:**

Noah and Thomas Worcester were born in Hollis, NH to Noah and Lydia Taylor Worcester. Both sons became Congregational ministers, as did two other sons in the Worcester family.

Noah Worcester (1758-1837):

Noah Worcester, founder of the Massachusetts Peace Society, was born on November 25, 1758. He was licensed to preach and became minister of Thornton in 1786. He came to Salisbury, NH as assistant to his brother Thomas in 1810 and published, *Bible News*. The doctrine of this was condemned by the Hopkinton Association of Merrimack County as being too Unitarian. His tracts defending his views attracted the attention of Dr. Channing and others and he was called to Boston, MA to edit *The Christian Discipline*, later *The Christian Examiner* in 1813, making his home in Brighton, MA. His *Solemn*

*Review of the Custom of War*, published in 1815, led to the formation of the Massachusetts's Peace Society, of which he was secretary until 1828. In 1818, he left *The Christian Examiner* and started *The Friend of Peace*, a quarterly. He died at Brighton, MA on October 31, 1837.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Worcester (1768-1831):

Thomas Worcester was born on November 22, 1768 and ordained as minister of Salisbury, NH in 1791. The following year he married Deborah Lee of Manchester, MA. He shared his brother's Unitarian views. These were investigated by the Hopkinton Association in 1813; he was given a good character and allowed to continue preaching in spite of his unorthodox views until 1823. In that year he was dismissed by his church, but continued to live in Salisbury, NH until his death on December 24, 1831. Several of his tracts and sermons were published.<sup>2</sup>

### **Collection Scope and Content Note:**

The Worcester Papers, 1790-1835 includes approximately 150 papers and 1 volume.

The Noah Worcester papers are principally correspondence with John W. Foster, secretary of the Portsmouth Peace Society, 1818-1823 (42 items). There are also 8 tracts and letters concerning financial difficulties with Jacob Abbott Cummings and Hilliard, publishers of *The Christian Disciple*, 1813-1817.

The Thomas Worcester papers include letters, 1790-1831, mostly from other clergymen; some tracts and copies of letters concerning the inquiry of the Hopkinton Association; sermons, and an account book. The accounts of Thomas Worcester run from 1795-1823. They were kept in a volume belonging to James Lee, merchant of Manchester, MA, whose accounts were kept from 1763-1775.

### **Arrangement:**

- Folder 1      Noah Worcester: *The Christian Disciple*
- Folder 2      Noah Worcester: *The Friend of Peace* re: Portsmouth Peace Society
- Folder 3      *Intelligence*
- Folder 4      Thomas Worcester: Correspondence, 1790-1812
- Folder 5      Thomas Worcester: Unitarian Controversy, 1811-1813
- Folder 6      Thomas Worcester: Correspondence, 1814-1831
- Folder 7      Deborah Lee Worcester: Correspondence, 1814-1835
- Folder 8      Thomas Worcester: Sermons, 1800-1817

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<sup>1</sup> Nat. Cyclopaedia, I:185; Hist. Hollis, p. 314; D.A.B.

<sup>2</sup> Nat. Cyclopaedia, I: 203; Hist. Salisbury; Hist. Hollis.

Folder 9      Thomas Worcester: Sermons, undated  
Account Book for James Lee and Thomas Worcester.

## **Subject Terms**

### **People:**

Arnold, Thomas  
Bartlett, Samuel  
Cummings, J. A. (Jacob Abbot), 1772-1820  
Farman, D. L.  
Foster, John W.  
Harris, Rev. Walter  
Newell, Mary  
Norton, Rev. Jacob, 1764-1858  
Patrick, Rev. William, 1791-1872  
Smith, Ethan  
Stuart, Rev. Moses, 1780-1852  
Tappan, John  
Wheelock, James R., Rev., active 1832-1838  
Wood, Rev. Horatio  
Worcester, Deborah Lee  
Worcester, Rev. Noah  
Worcester, Rev. Samuel  
Worcester, Rev. Thomas

### **Organizations:**

Portsmouth Peace Society (Portsmouth, N.H.)  
Massachusetts Peace Society  
Massachusetts Peace Society, Committee of Inquiry

### **Subjects:**

Unitarianism  
Unitarianism – History  
Congregationalism  
Congregationalism – Early works to 1800  
Sermons  
Ministers  
Accounts

### **Locations:**

Hollis, NH  
Salisbury, NH

Cambridge, MA  
Brighton, MA  
Manchester, MA

**Occupations:**

Ministers  
Preachers

**Related Materials**

A volume of church records kept by Thomas Worcester was copied with the Salisbury Town Records, on microfilm in the New Hampshire State Library.