

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

Manuscript Collections

<p>Name of collection:</p> <p>Brownell, Abner, Diary, 1779-1787</p>	<p>Location:</p> <p>Octavo vols. "B"</p>
<p>Size of collection:</p> <p>2 octavo volumes</p>	<p>N.U.C.M.C. number:</p> <p>N.A.</p>
<p>Finding aids:</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>Source of collection:</p> <p>Gift of Hannah C. Brownell, 1919</p>	<p>Copies available:</p> <p>Electrostatic <u> X </u></p> <p>Microfilm <u> X </u></p> <p>No copies <u> — </u></p>
<p>Collection description:</p> <p>Abner Brownell (1756-1851) of Dartmouth, Mass., son of Benjamin and Phoebe Potter Brownell, was a tailor of indifferent Quaker faith until a conversion experience after participation as a Son of Liberty in an alarm in 1775 or 1776. He soon became an ardent follower of Jemima Wilkinson (1752-1819), the "Public Universal Friend," and took to travelling throughout Southeastern Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and extreme Southeastern Connecticut on behalf of the Friends. He married Hannah Crary (1761-1837) in 1784; she bore him ten children, eight of whom survived him.</p> <p>These two volumes contain essays on religious themes and a brief autobiographical preface (written in 1779); but generally they record Brownell's travels throughout Southeastern New England. There is a careful log of meetings conducted in various communities, a record of where meals were taken and where shelter for the evening secured.</p> <p>Initially a member of the retinue of Jemima Wilkinson, Brownell began to travel and preach on his own, even teaching school. He settled in Dartmouth, Mass., in 1785. The diary is sketchy after 1784, and there is no information pertaining to the balance of Brownell's long life.</p>	