

American Antiquarian Society

Manuscript Collections

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Gage Family, Additional Papers (Series II), 1813-1917

LOCATION:

Not at AAS

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

3 manuscript boxes; 2 octavo volumes

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

For biographical data concerning members of the Gage family, see Thomas Hovey Gage, *Amos Gage of Bethel, Maine* (Worcester: privately printed, 1924). See also *History of Waterford, Oxford County, Maine* (Portland, Me.: s.n., 1897), p. 246-247, 303, and *History of Bethel* (Augusta, Me.: Press of the Maine Farmer, 1891), p. 514 (Coffin genealogy).

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Property of Mr. and Mrs. William A. Wheeler, III

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Anne Sargent Gage (1794-1876), nee Nancy Brown, was born out of wedlock and her birth "...was a Boston Society scandal of the last decade of the 18th century." Her parents, both from prominent Boston families, were Daniel Sargent (1764-1842), a wealthy merchant and insurance executive, and Hepzibah Atkins Brown (-1800). Hepzibah was the daughter of Henry Atkins, also a distinguished Boston merchant, and the widow of James Brown (-), whom she married in 1788, but who died shortly thereafter. She married, in 1796, James Durfee (-), with whom she had a daughter, Mary.

For the first two years of her life, "Nancy" was raised by her mother. In 1796, her father placed her in the care of the family of a Mr. John Hall of Dorchester, Mass. There she remained until 1808 when it was decided that she disappear from Boston society. She was sent to live with Rev. Lincoln Ripley (1761-1858) and Phebe Emerson Ripley (1772-), sister of Rev. William Emerson (1769-1811) and aunt of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), in Waterford, Me. Also at that time her name was changed to Anne Brewer. She had no further contact with her father, though he provided for her financially. Around the time of her marriage she wrote her father telling him that she wanted to be married with the name Anne Sargent. He never responded, either agreeing or disagreeing with the request, and Anne went ahead and did so.

In adult life, Anne was in contact with some of her blood relations, including Thomas Oliver Walker (1816-1894). Walker was the son of Mary Durfee Walker (1797-1835), Anne's half-sister. His son, Henry Oliver Walker (1843-1929) was an artist.

Anne Sargent Gage lived most of her life in Waterford, except for the sixteen years towards the end of her life, when she lived in Worcester, Mass., with her son Thomas. She died on 21 July 1876 and was buried in Waterford next to her husband, Dr. Leander Gage.

Dr. Leander Gage (1792-1842), the son of Amos and Lois Hovey Gage (1759-1842) of Bethel, Me., was a physician and active community leader in Waterford, Me. He married, on 7 October 1820, Anne Brewer Sargent. They had eight children: Phebe Hovey (1821-1890); Frances (1823-1904), who married Humphrey Cousens (1817-); Irene Bliss (1823-1873); Thomas Hovey; Ann Louisa (1828-1878), who married Calvin Foster (-1898); Mary Sargent (1830-1909); Lois Maria (1832-1888); and George Manlius (1834-1910), who married Elizabeth S. (Webber) Gage.

Amos Gage (1758-1833), the father of Dr. Leander Gage, had several brothers and sisters, including Abel Gage (1755-1846), who lived in Pelham, N.H. In addition to Leander, Amos and Lois Hovey Gage had three other children: Thomas Hovey (1789-1823), who married Frances Angier Stockbridge (-1882) and lived in Bath, Me.; William (1795-1820); and Amos (1797-1869). Thomas Hovey Gage's daughter, Lois (1817-1876), married Joel Holkins (1812-1853).

Rowena Coffin (1813-) taught the Gage children in Waterford in the early 1830s. She then taught at the Concord (N.H.) Literary Institution and Teacher's Seminary. Between 1835 and 1837, several of the Gage daughters attended the Concord school. In 1838, Rowena married Charles Whitman (1792-1850), a lawyer from Portland, Me., who had practiced in Waterford, and thereafter the Whitmans lived in Washington, D.C.

This collection consists mostly of family letters of Anne Sargent Gage, her husband, Dr. Leander Gage, and their children. The family lived in Waterford, Me., and several members later lived in Worcester, Mass. Much of the correspondence is between Anne Sargent Gage and her children.

The papers of Dr. Leander Gage include school exercises and medical notes, 1815-1828, as well as general and professional correspondence, 1813-1840. There is a folder of correspondence between Leander and Ann Sargent at the time of their courtship, 1819-1820.

The correspondence from the 1830s includes numerous letters to and from Rowena Coffin Whitman while she was living in Concord, N.H. Many letters from Concord in this period are partly written by the Gage daughters. Much of the correspondence from the 1840s is between the Gage and Whitman families while the Whitmans were residing in Washington, D.C.

There is a folder of school exercises, lectures, poetry, etc. undated and 1835-1856, of Phebe Gage. In the general correspondence are numerous letters to Phebe after she was committed to the Lunatic Asylum in Augusta in 1856.

In 1850 Frances married Humphrey Cousens and afterwards lived in Gorham, Me. She wrote many letters in the 1850s and 1860s to her mother and sisters.

More than one hundred lengthy letters from Mary Gage to her sisters detail her stay in Europe from 1885-1888. In this period, Mary lived in Kassel, Germany; Geneva, Switzerland; and France, evidently working as a governess for an American family.

Separate folders include letters from Abel Gage to the Gages in Waterford, and letters written in Bath, Me., by Thomas Hovey Gage (1789-1823) and his wife Frances between 1816 and 1827. There are also two folders of letters written by Joel Holkins and Lois Gage Holkins from 1831 to 1850.

The two octavo volumes were written by Anne Sargent Gage's daughters. One is a commonplace book, primarily of poetry, kept by Frances Gage between 1839 and about 1893. The other is a diary kept by Ann Louisa Gage while teaching school in Newton Center, Mass., in 1849 and 1850.

There are also a few financial records in the collection. Included are IOU's of people owing money to Dr. Leander Gage or Anne Sargent Gage in the period 1817-1853, and a small group of receipts dated 1830-1845. Anne Sargent Gage's indebtedness in the years after her husband's death is documented by her accounts in the years 1848-1853 with Oliver Porter, a Waterford merchant who subsequently owned the Gage house.

This collection is closely related to the Gage Family Additional Papers deposited at the American Antiquarian Society by William A. Wheeler, III in 1980. Manuscripts of many of the same individuals are present in both collections.

This collection is available on reels 25 through 30 of the microfilm series New England Women and Their Families in the 18th and 19th Century. (Bethesda, Md.: University Publications of America, 1998).

See Contents List.

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3	4	Mostly from Lois Gage Holkins, 1840-1850
3	5	Henry Oliver Walker to Thomas Hovey Gage, n.d.; 1915-1917; Miscellaneous, 1907-1931 I.O.U.s, etc., n.d.; 1817-1852 (arranged alphabetically)
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3	9	Probate materials following the death of Leander Gage, 1842-1854
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Octavo Volume

1	Frances Gage, Commonplace book (mostly poetry), 1839-ca. 1893
2	Ann Louisa Gage, Diary (kept while teaching in Newton Center, Mass.), 1849-1850