

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY  
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

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**NAME OF COLLECTION:**

Dennie, Joseph, Papers, 1790 – 1816

**LOCATION(S):**

Misc. mss. boxes "D"

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**SIZE OF COLLECTION:**

2 folders

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**SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:**

Joseph Dennie biographical information from the American National Biography.

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**SOURCE OF COLLECTION:**

Purchased from Marcus McCorision, 2010

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**COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:**

Joseph Dennie (1768 – 1812) was born in Boston, MA, the son of a merchant, Joseph Dennie and Mary Greene. An essayist, critic and editor, Dennie was a pioneering American man of letters, best known for his literary journal, *Port Folio*.

After attending Harvard, Dennie studied law in Charlestown, NH, however did not pursue a law career. He instead turned to literature and began writing for local newspapers, including the *Morning Ray; or, Impartial Oracle* (Windsor, VT) and the *Eagle; or Dartmouth Centinel* (Hanover, NH.) A Federalist in politics, Dennie met like-minded lawyer Royall Tyler and the two formed a partnership in 1794. Dennie and Tyler contributed prose and poetry to local newspapers under the title "From the Shop of Colon and Spondee." Dennie also wrote for the Boston newspaper the *Federal Orrery*, and began his own magazine, the *Tablet* (Boston) in 1795, which ran for thirteen weekly issues.

In 1795, Dennie began writing for the *New Hampshire Journal; or, Farmer's Weekly Museum*, Isaiah Thomas' newspaper. His essay series "Lay Preacher" served as a forum to discuss cultural and political topics, including his strong opposition to democracy. Dennie later served as editor of the *Museum* from 1796 through 1799. In 1801, Dennie began work on his journal, *Port Folio*, which ran until 1811. Highly critical of American writers, and even at times ruthless, *Port Folio* was considered "the most influential and longest-lasting literary journal of its time."

This collection consists primarily of letters from Dennie to his friend Roger Vose. Vose was a Harvard classmate, and also a contributor to Dennie's "Lay Preacher" series in the *Museum*. Vose served in Congress from 1813 – 1817.