

Massachusetts General Hospital Archives and Special Collections
MC 36
Charles Greenough Collection of Historical Documents
1677-1851

0.33 cubic feet in 1 container
(1 document box)

Processed: by Jeffrey Mifflin, 2016; and Jeannie Casey, 2017

Acquisition: Gift of Charles Greenough to MGH Library, November 1919.

Accession No. 2007-13: The materials were found in a storage closet beneath the roof of the Ether Dome in 2007.

Access: There no restrictions on access to the collection.

Copyright: Requests to publish materials from the collection should be directed to the MGH Archivist.

Scope and Content Note:

This collection consists of about 100 original hand-written documents collected by Charles Greenough some time before 1919. The documents have been mounted on paper (a common practice among 19th and early 20th century manuscript collectors) originally enclosed loose in a protective box, which had deteriorated. The label on the box read "Doctors," but many of the documents have no apparent relationship with medicine.

The documents include 18th-century recipes for preparing medicines from herbs, wine, and other substances (Series II); engravings of medical men such as Benjamin Rush (Series V); inventories (Series I); wills; indentures (Series III); and correspondence between doctors (Series IV). Topics include vaccination and the expected visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to the MGH in 1825. The collector seems to have had a particular interest in the era of the American Revolution. Some documents refer to the Greenough family. Some discuss the formative years of the Massachusetts Medical Society, ca. 1780s.

It isn't clear whether or not all of the documents are American in origin, although the bulk of them are American. Places mentioned, or from which letters were posted, include Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

Families Mentioned in the Greenough Collection:

Greenough Family

David Stoddard Greenough (David S. Greenough I, 1752-1826), lawyer and merchant, was the son of Thomas and Sarah (Stoddard) Greenough. In 1784, he married Anne Doane (1744-1802), daughter of John and June (Collier) Doane, widow of Elisha Doane, and mother of John Doane. After the Revolution, they moved to the former Loring house in Jamaica Plain (Roxbury), Mass. Their only child was David Stoddard Greenough, Jr. (David S. Greenough II, 1787-1830). An ardent patriot, David S. Greenough I was a member of the "Sons of Liberty" and on the Committee of Public Safety under George Washington. He served the state of Massachusetts as a justice of the peace in both Norfolk and Suffolk counties. From his mother Sarah (Stoddard), he inherited one-sixth of Noddles Island. With his brother William, he exchanged a share of a Chelsea farm for another two-sixths of Noddles Island, thus increasing his share of the island to one-half.

David Stoddard Greenough, Jr. (David S. Greenough II) (1787-1830) was the son of David S. Greenough I and Anne (Doane). A member of the Harvard College class of 1805, he practiced law, served as a justice of the peace in Massachusetts, and was lieutenant colonel of the Boston Independent Cadets. In 1813, he married Maria Foster Doane (1793-1843), daughter of Elisha and Jane (Cutler) Doane of Wellfleet and Cohasset. They resided in Jamaica Plain (Roxbury) and had five children: David Stoddard (David S. Greenough III, 1814-1877), John (d. 1846), Anne, James, and Jane (d. 1847). David S. Greenough II was the heir of one-half of Noddles Island. Upon his

death, the land was sold to William Hyslop Sumner, who later sold it to the East Boston Co.

Shrimpton Family

Samuel Shrimpton (1643-1698) served as a lieutenant colonel in the militia and on the Governor's Council under Gov. Andros and King James II. He married Elizabeth (Roberts) Breedon (d. 1713), daughter of Capt. Nicholas and Elizabeth Roberts. Their son was Samuel Shrimpton, Jr. (1673-1703). Col. Shrimpton and his wife were in possession of several properties, including Noddles Island in Boston Harbor. Upon the death of Col. Shrimpton, his widow was married to widower Simeon Stoddard (1650-1730).

Samuel Shrimpton, Jr. (1673-1703), son of Col. Samuel and Elizabeth (Roberts) Breedon Shrimpton, was a Boston merchant who married in 1696 Elizabeth Richardson (1680-1757). Their only child was Elizabeth Shrimpton (1702-1721). She married in 1720 John Yeamans (d. 1743), London merchant and lieutenant-governor of Antigua. Upon the death of her grandmother Elizabeth R. B. S. Stoddard in 1713, she inherited Noddles Island in Boston Harbor. The couple's only son was Shute Shrimpton Yeamans (1721-1769).

Stoddard Family

David Stoddard (1685-1723), son of Mary (d. 1708) and Simeon Stoddard (1650-1730), was a London and Boston merchant and a Shrimpton family agent at Boston. He married Elizabeth (Richardson) Shrimpton (1680-1757) in 1713, and their children were Mary, Sarah, and Mehitable.

Anthony Stoddard (1678-1748), son of Mary (d. 1708) and Simeon Stoddard (1650-1730), married Martha Belcher in 1705. Their children were Simeon (1707-1776), Anthony (1728-1776), and Martha (1720-1785). Martha Stoddard married (1st) John Fitch; (2nd) Ebenezer Holmes, an executor of the estate of Anthony Stoddard; and (3rd) Boston merchant John Stevens (b. 1715). The Stevenses owned multiple properties, including one in Ashford, Conn.

Erving Family

John Erving (1690-1787), a native of Scotland, arrived in Boston around 1706 and rose to be a wealthy merchant. In 1720, he married Abigail Phillips, member of a prominent Welsh family. Their children were: John, George, James, William, Elizabeth (m. James Bowdoin, governor of Massachusetts), Mary (m. Col. Scott), Anne (m. Duncan Stewart), and Sarah (m. Col. Waldo).

Colonel John Erving (1728-1816), Boston merchant, was the son of John and Abigail (Phillips) Erving. A 1747 graduate of Harvard College, he married in 1754 Maria Catherina Shirley, daughter of Gov. William and Frances (Baker) Shirley. Their sons were Shirley and John. For a while an active Whig, he served as a justice of the peace

(1756) and in 1768 served with John Hancock on a committee to enforce the pre-Revolutionary embargo. Later, however, he and his brother George were appointed to the "Mandamus Council," a Boston council charged with upholding the authority of the British monarch. He moved to Halifax and later to England. With his brother George, he was proscribed by an act of 1778 and his property confiscated. He died in England.

George Erving (1738-1806), Boston merchant, was the second son of John and Abigail (Phillips) Erving. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1757, and in 1768 he married Lucy Winslow (d. 1770), daughter of Isaac and Lucy (Waldo) Winslow. Their only son was George William Erving (1769-1850), later a prominent American diplomat. After the death of his first wife Lucy, he married in 1775 Mary (Polly) McIntosh. Once an active Whig, he later broke with his party because he was opposed to the idea of secession from England. He moved to England, then back to Froyle, New Hampshire, and again returned to England, where he died.

Major William Erving (1734-1791), son of John and Abigail (Phillips) Erving, was graduated from Harvard College with the class of 1753. He was married for a short time to Catherine ----- and fathered a son named William, both of whom must have died very early. For many years, he was a major in the British Army, serving as a military engineer. He participated in the second siege of Louisburg, was an aide-de-camp to General Wolfe at the siege of Quebec, and was at the capture of Havana in 1762. In the years preceding the Revolution, he resigned from the army and repatriated himself. Much of his correspondence (particularly that addressed to his brother George) appears in this collection. David S. Greenough I was the executor of his will.

Processing Note:

All documents were removed from the acidic enclosure in which they were found and were placed in acid-neutral folders and re-housed in an acid-neutral box.

The collection benefit from the addition of folder titles and a list of the individual documents. In many cases, handwriting is difficult to read.

Charles Greenough added notes to a few of the documents, explaining who the writers were and/or what the significance of the document was. But much additional research would be required if a thorough job of processing and description were to be attempted.

Series List:

Series I. Payment Receipts and Bills, n.d., 1677-1817

Series II. Remedies and Recipes, n.d.

Series III. Estates and Deeds, 1748-1793

Series IV. Personal Correspondence, n.d., 1713-1851

Series V. Miscellaneous Documents, n.d., 1688-1825

Folder List

Box 1

Series I. Payment Receipts and Bills, n.d., 1677-1817

Payment receipt from Samuel Shrimpton to Mary Drury, 1677
Bill for pine boards, 1682 – Isaac Waldron
Payment receipts of Samuel Shrimpton, 1694
Bill from N Roberts and G Shippen to Samuel Shrimpton, 1702
Bill from Dr Lancelot Lake to Samuel Shrimpton, 1702
Account of monetary transaction by Charles Chauncy and Edw. Hutchinson, 1704
Payment listing from Increase Sumner to Dr Thomas Williams, 1705
Payment receipt from Dr Willard to David Greenough, 1707
Receipt of Dr Oliver to David Stoddard, 1713
Receipts to Anthony Stoddard, 1718
Bill from Dr Anthony Stoddard, 1747
Payment receipt from G Hugh Kennedy, 1748
Payment receipt for Dr G Tailer, 1748
Payment receipt from Alex Malcolm, 1750
Bill for prisoner Samuel Brownson, 1754
Payment receipt for Dr William Lee Perkins, 1775
Payment receipt from G Boylston, 1776
Payment receipts for Dr James Lloyd, 1776
Military Payment to Dr Isaac Rand, 1777
Payment to Dr Ehrenzeller from US Government, 1779
Payment request – Jonathan Bagly, 1780
Payment receipt from A Holbrook to Mrs Doane, 1781
Payment receipt from Dr John Sprague, 1782
Payment receipt from Dr Joseph Gardner to Elisha Doane, 1783
Payment receipt from William Erving to Dr Oliver Smith, 1784
Payment receipts for Dr John Warren, 1784,, 1795
Payment receipt of John Doane, 1788
Payment from estate of Martha Stevens to Dr James Lloyd, 1789
Receipt from Dr Wm Aspinwall, 1792 (and other information on him)
Receipts from Dr Wm Jackson, 1791, 1792
Receipts of Aaron Dexter, 1791, 1794
Payment receipts from Dr John Warren, 1795, 1809
Payment receipt for Dr James Lloyd, 1796
Payment receipt from Dr John Bartlett, 1797
Payment receipts from Dr John Bartlett to David Greenough, 1810, 1816, 1817
Receipt of Collection monies – Rev. Anthony Stoddard, n.d.

Series II. Remedies and Recipes

Remedies for indigestion, hiccups, purge, rheumatic pains
Remedy for Cough
Remedy for “Foulness of Blood”
Remedy for Plague, Smallpox and Measles

Remedy for Dropsy, Fever
Remedy for un-named ailment
Recipe for "Eye Water"
Recipe for Purge
Recipe - untitled
Recipe – untitled
Recipe – untitled

Series III. Estates and Deeds, 1748-1793

Deed of Sale by John Fowler, 1748
Estate of Anthony Stoddard, 1749
Last Will and Testament of Thomas Brocas, 1751
Deed record, 1772
Estate of Major Hill, 1772
Estate transaction – Elisha Doane to Nathaniel Truman, 1783
Estate of Major Wm Erving, 1793

Series IV. Personal Correspondence, n.d., 1713-1851

Personal letter from G Saltonstall to David Stoddard, 1713
Personal Letter from Solomon Drowne, 1774 to Dwight Foster
Personal Letter from James Cogswell, 1776 – Revolutionary Surgeon
Personal letter from Mr Bourn to Elisha Doane, 1779
Personal Letter from Wm Shippen, 1780
Personal letter from Chas. Pyncheon to Dwight Foster, 1780
Personal Letter from Richard Perkins, 1781
Personal letter from Samuel Prentice, 1784
Personal letter from Nathaniel Appleton to George Thatcher, 1789
Personal letter from Josiah Dwight to Dwight Foster, 1799
Personal Letter from Dr John Williams to Archibald McIntire, 1799 (and bio information on John Williams)
Personal letter from Dr Henry Martin to Dr E James, 1819
Personal letter from Samuel Mitchell to Henry Meigs, 1822
Personal letter from L V Bell, 1843
Personal letter from John Francis to Mr Webster, 1851
Personal letter from A Dexter to Mr Greenough, n.d.
Personal note from B Waterhouse, n.d.

Series V. Miscellaneous Documents, n.d., 1688-1825

Tax Levy to King of England, 1688
Suit Settlement Zabdiel Boylston MD vs Joseph Newmarsh, 1720
Declaration by Jonathan Caram, 1727
Business Contract – William Clark, 1733
Appointment of Dr Edward Chaddock by John Cochran, 1778
Extracts from the Statute Book of the Mass Medical Society, 1782
Announcement of Mass Medical Society Meeting, 1784
Power of Attorney – Dr John Jeffries to John Joy, 1807

Lafayette Visit, 1825

Includes transcription

Petition against Dueling presented to South Carolina Senate, n.d.

Bio Information on Dr Ammi Cutter

Engraving of Jared Eliot

Engraving of Benjamin Rush MD

Engraving of Dr John Clarke

Unknown list of names/unknown note

Greenough Collection family information