ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

A Guide to the Cranch-Greenleaf Papers

Summary Information

Repository

Albany Institute of History & Art Library

Creator

unidentified

Title

Cranch-Greenleaf Papers

Identifier

CU 552

Date

1749-1917

Physical Description

2 boxes

Physical Location

The materials are located onsite in the Museum.

Language of the Material

English

Abstract

Papers of several families related to John and Abigail Adams, including the families of Reverend William Smith, Richard Cranch, William Cranch, Christopher Pearse Cranch, Daniel Greenleaf, and John Greenleaf.

This collection contains correspondence, bills of sale, maps, estate records, and property records

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Cranch-Greenleaf Papers, 1749-1917, CU 552. Albany Institute of History & Art Library, Albany, New York.

Conditions Governing Access and Use

Restrictions on Access

None

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Accession: # unidentified

Accession Source/Date: Gift of Lewis Greenleaf, Jr., 1947

Processing Information

Processed by S. Deen-Clingan, January 2004; finding aid updated by H. Cox, June 2021.

Biographical/Historical

Abigail Adams, (1744-1818) was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts to William Smith, a Congregational minister, and Elizabeth Quincy. In 1764, she married John Adams and had five children. Abigail was the first lady of the United States of America from 1796-1800. She was interested in politics and history, and owned a farm in Braintree, later Quincy, Massachusetts. Abigail was buried in the First Church.

John Adams, (1735-1826) was the second President of the United States of America, from 1796-1800. Born in Braintree Massachusetts, now Quincy, he was the son of John Adams. John graduated from Harvard College in 1755 and was sworn in as an attorney in 1758. He also served as a member of the Continental Congress. John married Abigail Smith Adams in 1764 and had five children. He wrote the Massachusetts state constitution, which was adopted in 1780, and helped write a peace treaty to end the Revolutionary War in Paris, which was approved in 1782, and ratified in 1783. Adams served as Vice President of the United States under Washington in 1788 and 1792. During retirement, he lived in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Matthew Carey, (1760-1839) was born in Dublin, Ireland. Matthew was the son of Christopher Carey and Mary Sherridan. He published the Pennsylvania Evening Herald from 1785 to 1787. In 1787, Carey started the American Museum magazine. He married Bridget Flahavan in 1791 and had nine children. Carey published many books starting in 1794. He helped found the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of National Industry in 1819 and founded the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements in 1824.

Richard Cranch, (?-1811) was a watchmaker, judge and legislator in Massachusetts.

William Cranch, (1769-1855) was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts. He was the son of Richard Cranch and Mary Smith. Cranch graduated from Harvard and was admitted to the bar in 1790, later serving as a jurist and Supreme Court Reporter. He married Nancy Greenleaf in 1795 and had five children. Cranch taught at Columbian College, now George Washington University, and served as chief judge of the District of Columbia Circuit Court. Cranch died in Washington, D.C.

Josiah Quincy, (1772-1864) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. He was the son of Josiah Quincy and Abigail Phillips. Quincy graduated from Harvard College in 1790, and became a Federalist Congressman in 1804. He married Eliza Susan Morton in 1797 and had seven children. Quincy became mayor of Boston in 1823, and became the 15th president of Harvard University in 1829. He died in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Scope and Contents

The Cranch-Greenleaf Papers are arranged chronologically. This collection has no historical connection with the Albany area except that the Greenleaf donors lived in Loudonville. The collection concerns the families of Reverend William Smith (1706/7-1803), Richard Cranch (?-1811), William Cranch (1769-1855), Christopher Pearse Cranch (1813-1892), Daniel and John Greenleaf and their relatives, friends and neighbors of Boston, Quincy, and Hingham, Massachusetts. These friends and neighbors included Mr. and Mrs. John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Thomas Boylston Adams, as well as members of the Peabody, Apthorp, Whitney, and Dawes families.

The correspondence of these individuals covers local gossip, family matters, legal problems, litigation, national politics and international business from the late 18th Century to the middle of the 19th Century. There are letters by John and Abigail Adams, poems by John Quincy Adams, and a sketchbook of Christopher P. Cranch, clergyman and artist.

The collection as a whole gives an idea of life as it was lived by some of the men and women who helped found the United States of America. The correspondents are judges, lawyers, politicians, farmers, druggists, watchmakers, clergymen, merchants, and artists whose home addresses range worldwide.

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- 10. Manuscript copy from National Intelligencer of death of Mrs. Lucy Greenleaf, February 1846;
- 11. Printed Obituary of Reverend Isaac Smith;
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- 13. Signed Richard to Brother. I have closed the sale for the old mansion, 17 January 1857;
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- 23. A manuscript prayer signed Sabbath morning;
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9. Another printed letter about Bible, 18 October 1802;	
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10. From R. Cranch, Quincy to M. Carey about the Bible to be		
published, 4 November 1802;		
11. Printed letter of M. Carey about subscribers to the Bible, 7 January		
1803; 12. Printed program of ordination of Reverend F.A. Whitney at the 1st		
Congregational Church, Brighton, 21 February 1844;		
13. Printed and typed will of E.P. Greenleaf, 21 November 1874;		
14. Typed Inventory of estate of E.P. Greenleaf;		
15. Holy Baptism certificate of R.C. Greenleaf Jr., 21 September 1917;		
16. Enrollment of L.S. Greenleaf as a member of Forest and Stream		
Society to conserve forests, streams, and wildlife		
1. Records. Land sale on Black River, New York. R. Cranch and		13
Greenleaf		13
1. Abigail Adams to Mary Cranch. A personal letter. Mentions S.		14
Adams, 16 July 1766;		17
2. Mrs. A. Adams to Mrs. M. Cranch. About M. Cranch paying a visit		
that A. Adams thinks holds no purpose;		
3. Mrs. A. Adams to R. Cranch. Adams wants R. Cranch to read several		
materials. Talks about a rebellion, 10 May 1787;		
4. Mrs. A. Adams to Mrs. M. Cranch. There is trouble at home and at		
father's;		
5. Part of letter from J. Adams to R. Cranch. The people have been		
deceived by artful guise. Original in CP 547, 25 March 1797;		
6. From J. Adams to R. Cranch. No serious propositions of peace in		
France. Original letter in CP 547, 17 June 1782		
1. A passport in French to R.C. Greenleaf, 14 April 1871;	2	1
2. Sketchbook of C.P. Cranch. Oversize.		
1. Certificate of initiation of Dr. W. Greenleaf Jr. to FreeMasonry.		2
Oversize, 15 March 1778;		
2. Certificate of membership of J. Greenleaf in the Humane Society,		
Massachusetts Oversize, 7 May 1787;		
3. Letter from Charles Francis Adams to Mr. Greenleaf. Saving old		
letters. Oversize, 1 November 1878		