

ENDICOTT COLLECTION:

RANTOUL FAMILY PAPERS, 1773-1915

MSS: 003

Processed By: Amanda Martinson
November 2010

Volume: 2 linear feet

Abstract: Papers of the Rantoul family of Beverly, Massachusetts from 1773 to 1915. Includes correspondence, receipts and invoices. Robert Rantoul and Robert Rantoul, Jr. are the main correspondents.

Provenance: The Rantoul Family Papers is part of the Endicott Collection, which was donated to Historic Beverly by the Estate of Robert Rantoul Endicott in 1915.

Conservation: The material was placed in acid free folders and all metal fasteners were removed. Fragile documents were placed in protective archival sleeves.

Copyright: Requests for permission to publish material from the collection must be submitted in writing to the Curator of Collections of Historic Beverly .

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Captain Robert Rantoul (1753-1783) was born in Middleton, Kinross, Fife, Scotland and immigrated to America in 1769. He married Mary (Preston) Rantoul (1755-1816) in 1774 and the couple had four children: Robert Rantoul (1778-1858), Samuel Rantoul

(1781-1802), William Rantoul (d. 1816, 22 years old) and Mary “Polly” Rantoul Peabody (1783-1836). Captain Rantoul was lost at sea in 1783, while commanding the ship *Iris*.

Robert Rantoul (1778-1858) was born in Salem, Massachusetts, the eldest child of Captain Robert and Mary Preston Rantoul. Only partially educated, he was apprenticed to a druggist and opened his own apothecary in Beverly in 1796. In addition to owning the apothecary, Rantoul was highly visible in Beverly politics. He served as the overseer of the poor of Beverly from 1804 to 1854 and was a parish clerk of the First Parish Church of Beverly from 1808 to 1858. Rantoul was a Justice of the Peace and an acting trial justice from 1808 to 1858. He was elected Senator for Essex County in 1820, 1821 and 1882 and served a total term of 25 years. Rantoul was an original member of the Massachusetts Temperance Society and a trustee of the Institution for the Education of the Blind. He married Joanna (Lovett) Rantoul (1780-1848), with whom he had seven children: Joanna Lovett Rantoul Endicott (1803-1863), Robert Rantoul, Jr. (1805-1852), Mary Elizabeth Rantoul (1809-1821), Samuel Rantoul (1813-1831), Charlotte Rantoul (1816-1840), Elizabeth Augusta Rantoul (1819-1837), and Hannah Lovett Rantoul (1821-1898).

Robert Rantoul, Jr. (1805-1852) was born in Beverly, Massachusetts, the eldest son of Robert Rantoul and Joanna (Lovett) Rantoul. He was educated at Philips Academy in Andover and entered Harvard in 1822, where he studied political science and the languages and literature of continental Europe. He studied law with John Pickering and Levrett Saltonstall, both of Salem, Massachusetts, and was admitted to the bar in 1829. Rantoul, Jr. practiced law in Salem, South Reading, Gloucester and Boston. In 1843 he became the Collector of the Customs for the Port of Boston and Charlestown and from 1845 to 1849 he was a United States District Attorney for Massachusetts. Rantoul, Jr. was opposed to capital punishment and interested in banking reform; his political involvement evolved over the course of his life. In 1851, Rantoul, Jr. was asked to fill the seat of United States Senator Daniel Webster. Rantoul, Jr. died of a skin infection (erysipelas) caused by a streptococcus bacteria at Washington, DC, during the first session of the Thirty-Second Congress in 1852. He married Jane Elizabeth (Woodbury) Rantoul (1807-1870) in 1831, with whom he had two children: Robert Samuel Rantoul (1832-1922) and Charles William Rantoul (1839-1918).

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Rantoul Family Papers contains mainly correspondence and receipts for four generations of the Rantoul family. The collection includes school compositions, notebooks, hand drawn maps, news paper clippings, pamphlets and speeches. The materials have been divided into series based on family member, beginning with

Captain Robert Rantoul and ending with extended family correspondents. Each series is arranged chronologically, with undated material at the end.

PROCESSOR'S NOTE

The papers had been processed at some point in the past and were all in folders. Most of the metal fastenings had been removed but a few stray straight pins were found and removed. Original order is unknown and due to the lack of record, it was decided to re-order the collection in a way that would suit potential researchers. The folders are labeled and have been placed back in the file drawer where they had been stored previously.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Rantoul, Robert S. *Some Material for a History of the Name and Family of Rentoul Rintoul-Rantoul*. Salem: The Salem Press, 1885.

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RELATED COLLECTIONS

MSS 001 Robert Rantoul Papers, 1796-1854

Rantoul Family Papers [unprocessed]

RANTOUL FAMILY PAPERS, 1773-1915

SERIES LIST

SERIES I: Captain Robert Rantoul

SERIES II: Mary (Preston) Rantoul

SERIES III: Samuel Rantoul (d. 1802)

SERIES IV: William Rantoul

SERIES V: Robert Rantoul

SERIES VI: Joanna (Lovett) Rantoul

SERIES VII: Joanna Lovett Rantoul (d. 1863)

SERIES VIII: Augusta Rantoul Endicott (daughter of Joanna Lovett Rantoul)

SERIES IX: Mary Elizabeth Rantoul

SERIES X: Samuel Rantoul (d. 1831)

SERIES XI: Charlotte Rantoul

SERIES XII: (Elizabeth) Augusta Rantoul

SERIES XIII: Hannah Lovett Rantoul

SERIES XIV: Robert Rantoul, Jr.

SERIES XV: Jane Elizabeth (Woodbury) Rantoul

SERIES XVI: Robert S. Rantoul

SERIES XVII: Other Correspondents

CONTENTS LIST

SERIES I: Captain Robert Rantoul

Folder

Contents

Date

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Invoices and Receipts | 1773-1781 |
| 2 | Invoices and Receipts | 1782-1795 |

SERIES II: Mary (Preston) Rantoul

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 3 | Invoices and Receipts | 1783-1786 |
| 4 | Invoices and Receipts | 1787-1791 |
| 5 | Invoices and Receipts | 1792 |
| 6 | Invoices and Receipts | 1793-1799 |
| 7 | Invoices and Receipts | 1800-1802 |
| 8 | Invoices and Receipts | 1803-1805, 1807-1810 |
| 9 | Invoices and Receipts | 1811-1816 |

SERIES III: Samuel Rantoul (d. 1802)

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 10 | Childhood Compositions, Invoices, Correspondence | 1791-1802 |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|

SERIES IV: William Rantoul

| | | |
|----|----------------------------------------|-----------|
| 11 | Cipher Book, School Invoices, Poems | 1802-1805 |
| 12 | Notebooks, Invoices | 1810-1811 |
| 13 | Notebook, Invoices | 1812-1813 |
| 14 | Notebook, Invoices, Correspondence | 1814-1816 |

SERIES V: Robert Rantoul

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 15 | Invoices, Correspondence | 1769-1799 |
| 16 | Invoices | 1800 |
| 17 | Invoices, Military Commissions | 1801 |
| 18 | Invoices, Correspondence | 1804-1819 |
| 19 | Correspondence | 1820-1822 |
| 20 | Correspondence | 1823-1824 |
| 21 | Correspondence | 1825 |
| 22 | Correspondence | 1826 |
| 23 | Correspondence | 1827-1828 |
| 24 | Correspondence | January - April 1829 |
| 25 | Correspondence | May - June 1829 |
| 26 | Correspondence | July - September 1829 |
| <u>Folder</u> | <u>Contents</u> | <u>Date</u> |
| 27 | Correspondence | October - December 1829 |
| 28 | Correspondence | 1830-1831 |
| 29 | Correspondence | 1832 |
| 30 | Correspondence | 1833-1834 |
| 31 | Correspondence | 1835-1836 |

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------|---------------|
| 32 | Correspondence | 1837-1838 |
| 33 | Correspondence | 1839 |
| 34 | Correspondence | 1840-1842 |
| 35 | Correspondence | 1843-1849 |
| 36 | Correspondence, Will | 1851-1857 |
| 37 | Newspaper clippings, Legal Publications | 1896, undated |
| 38 | Correspondence, Invoices | undated |
| 39 | Legal Pamphlets, Composition Book | undated |

SERIES VI: Joanna (Lovett) Rantoul (d. 1848)

| | | |
|----|----------------|-----------|
| 40 | Correspondence | 1819-1848 |
|----|----------------|-----------|

SERIES VII: Joanna Lovett Rantoul Endicott

| | | |
|----|----------------|-----------|
| 41 | Correspondence | 1820-1839 |
|----|----------------|-----------|

SERIES VIII: Augusta Rantoul Endicott

| | | |
|----|------------|-----------|
| 42 | Sketchbook | 1848-1850 |
|----|------------|-----------|

SERIES IX: Mary Elizabeth Rantoul

| | | |
|----|----------------|---------------|
| 43 | Correspondence | 1816, undated |
|----|----------------|---------------|

SERIES X: Samuel Rantoul (d. 1831)

| | | |
|----|----------------|------------|
| 44 | Journals | 1825, 1828 |
| 45 | Correspondence | 1821-1829 |
| 46 | Correspondence | 1830 |
| 47 | Correspondence | 1831 |

SERIES XI: Charlotte Rantoul

| | | |
|----|----------------|--------------------|
| 48 | Correspondence | 1828-1838, undated |
|----|----------------|--------------------|

SERIES XII: (Elizabeth) Augusta Rantoul

| | | |
|----|----------------|--------------------|
| 49 | Correspondence | 1831-1833, undated |
|----|----------------|--------------------|

SERIES XIII: Hannah Lovett Rantoul

| <u>Folder</u> | <u>Contents</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| 50 | Autograph books, Correspondence | 1831-1836 |
| 51 | Composition, Copy Book | 1837 |
| 52 | Correspondence | 1838-1839 |

| | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------|
| 53 | Correspondence | 1840-1843 |
| 54 | Correspondence | 1844-1845 |
| 55 | Correspondence | 1846-1847 |
| 56 | Correspondence | 1848-1849 |
| 57 | Correspondence | 1850-1851 |
| 58 | Correspondence | 1852-1859 |
| 59 | Correspondence | 1860-1862 |
| 60 | Correspondence | 1864-1868 |
| 61 | Correspondence | 1869 |
| 62 | Correspondence | 1870, 1871, 1875 |
| 63 | Correspondence, Booklet | 1880, 1885-1886 |
| 64 | Receipt, Estate Inventory | 1891, 1895, 1898 |
| 65 | Correspondence | undated |
| 66 | Correspondence | undated |

SERIES XIV: Robert Rantoul, Jr.

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 67 | Journal, Correspondence, Map | 1814, 1816, 1818 |
| 68 | Correspondence | 1819 |
| 69 | Correspondence | 1820 |
| 70 | Correspondence | 1821 |
| 71 | Correspondence | 1822 |
| 72 | Correspondence | 1823-1825 |
| 73 | Correspondence | 1826-1827 |
| 74 | Correspondence | 1828-1829 |
| 75 | Correspondence, Notebooks | 1830-1831 |
| 76 | Pamphlets of Speech | July 4, 1832 |
| 77 | Correspondence | 1832-1833 |
| 78 | Correspondence | 1834 |
| 79 | Correspondence, Pamphlets | 1835 |
| 80 | Correspondence | 1836 |
| 81 | Correspondence, Speech | 1837 |
| 82 | Correspondence | 1838 |
| 83 | Correspondence | 1840 – July 1843 |
| 84 | Correspondence | August 1843 |
| 85 | Correspondence | September 1843 |
| 86 | Correspondence | October 1843 |
| 87 | Correspondence | November – December 1843 |
| 88 | Correspondence | 1844-1845 |
| 89 | Correspondence | 1846-1847 |
| <u>Folder</u> | <u>Contents</u> | <u>Date</u> |
| 90 | Notebook | 1847 |
| 91 | Correspondence | 1848-1849 |
| 92 | “United States Magazine and Democratic Review” | October 1850 |
| 93 | Correspondence | 1850-1851 |

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 94 | Speeches [published] | April 1851 |
| 95 | Correspondence | 1852 |
| 96 | Copy of Treatise on Ether | 1852 |
| 97 | Speeches [published] | 1852 |
| 98 | Correspondence and Notes | undated |
| 99 | Correspondence and Notes | undated |
| 100 | Correspondence and Notes | undated |
| 101 | Correspondence and Notes | undated |
| 102 | Speech and Booklet on Banks | undated |
| 103 | Report on Liquor Licensing, Boston | undated |
| 104 | News clippings [about R. Rantoul, Jr.] | 1838, 1852, 1868, 1889, undated |

SERIES XV: Jane Elizabeth (Woodbury) Rantoul

| | | |
|-----|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 105 | Correspondence | 1833, 1842, 1844-1845, 1851-1852, 1864, 1870, undated |
|-----|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|

SERIES XVI: Robert S. Rantoul

| | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 106 | Correspondence | 1837, 1845, 1852-1853, 1861 |
| 107 | Correspondence News clippings | 1881, 1895, 1910, 1915 1894, undated |
| 108 | Correspondence | undated |
| 109 | Memoir on Edmund B. Wilson | 1895 |
| 110 | Henry Fitz-Gilbert Waters | 1914 |

SERIES XVII: Other Correspondents

| | | |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 111 | William Endicott | 1826, 1838, undated |
| 112 | Elizabeth Abbot | 1830, 1837 |
| 113 | Mrs. Everett, A.W. Abbot, M.R. Peabody | 1842 |
| 114 | Lovett Family | 1791, 1794, 1799, 1804, 1818, 1834, undated |
| 115 | Miscellaneous Families [Rantoul, Watson, Whitney, Gould] | undated |

| <u>Folder</u> | <u>Contents</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 116 | Miscellaneous Families [Dike, Peabody], News clippings | undated |
| 117 | Legal Papers: Dodge, Baker Crosfield, Moses, Batchelder | 1834, 1844-1845, 1888 |
| 118 | Deeds for land in Nova Scotia: | 1893, 1895 |

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----------|
| | M.E. Collicutt, M.E. Salter | |
| 119 | Hand drawn maps – Spain | undated |
| 120 | Shipping Accounts | 1793-1796 |
| 121 | Shipping Accounts | 1797-1799 |
| 122 | Shipping Accounts | 1800-1805 |
| 123 | Shipping Accounts | undated |