

## GUIDE TO THE RUSSELL FAMILY PAPERS

The Russell Family Papers, consisting of approximately 150 items dated from 1713 to 1867, have been received as gifts to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association from various sources. Most of the biographical information below is taken from genealogical notes on the Russell family in George Sheldon's *History of Deerfield* and John Montague Smith's *History of the Town of Sunderland, Massachusetts*.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The majority of the papers are those of John Russell (1731-1775), who came to Deerfield from Wethersfield, Ct., in 1756, and those of his descendants. The son and grandson of John's brother, Timothy, are represented, as are Russells of Hatfield, South Deerfield and Sunderland, Mass. The manuscripts are accompanied by a typescript study, "Washington to Greenfield," by Margaret Ballard McMahan, correspondence with George Sheldon and others, and miscellaneous genealogical information relating to Russell family members.

### **Biographical Notes and Descriptions of Series**

**John Russell**<sup>2</sup>, son of Elijah Russell<sup>1</sup>, was born in Wethersfield, Connecticut, in 1731. He came to Deerfield in 1756 and lived for a time at John Sheldon's house [Historic Deerfield's Sheldon House], working at his trade as tailor. In 1758 he married Hannah Sheldon and the couple went to Newington, Ct., but returned to Deerfield in 1763. John bought Lot no. 15 in 1767. There Benjamin Munn built a shop for him where he carried on his tailoring trade, well-known for making leather breeches. He was also a trader and innkeeper. After his death in 1775, his widow carried on the business, purchased Lot no. 18 around 1789, and lived until 1814. Three of their five children are named below.

His papers include a small gathering of accounts with Deerfield residents, a letter from his brother Hezekiah, August 2, 1756, an incomplete letter written in Winchester, NH, in February 1767, receipts, and a sheriff's writ of attachment in Russell's favor, 1772. With these is a typewritten transcript of an account book with entries dated 1753-1766.

The papers of his widow, Hannah (Sheldon) Russell, consist of a gathering of accounts dated between 1779 and 1784, a photocopy of the inventory of John Russell's possessions as presented by Hannah to the Probate Court in 1785, two sheriff's writs of attachment in Hannah's favor in 1788, and deeds to land she purchased from her son Elijah in 1799 and her son, Lemuel, in 1802.

**Elijah Russell**, son of John<sup>2</sup> and Hannah (Sheldon) Russell, was born in Deerfield in 1765. His wife was Orra, daughter of Simeon Harvey. Elijah died in 1811, his widow in 1862.

He is represented by deeds to land in Deerfield, purchased from the administrator of the estate of John Hinsdale in 1791 and from his brother Lemuel in 1804.

**John Russell**<sup>4</sup>, son of John<sup>2</sup> and Hannah (Sheldon) Russell, was born in 1767. He was a jeweler who learned his trade from Isaac Parker of Deerfield. He served as major of militia. About 1790 he moved to Northampton and later to Greenfield, Mass., where he died in 1839. In 1796 he married Electa, daughter of Nathaniel Edwards of Northampton. The couple had seven children.

His papers consist of an undated militia roll which he signed as captain, a writ of attachment for debt in his favor (1790) and three in favor of himself and his son Lemuel (1804). These are accompanied by typewritten transcripts of advertisements pertaining to jewelry by John and others in the *Franklin Herald* and *Greenfield Gazette and Franklin Herald*, 1813-28.

**Charles Cotesworth Pinckney Russell**, son of John<sup>4</sup> and Electa (Edwards) Russell, was born in 1801. He entered Amherst College in 1821, and Yale in 1822. The following year he left because of ill health. After studying theology at Andover, he became minister at Candia, N.H. He moved to Washington, D.C. about 1841 and died there in 1874. In 1837 he had married Louisa, daughter of William M. Richardson [U.S. Representative 1811-15; Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Hampshire, 1816-38]. The couple had five children.

Charles, Louisa and their children are represented by a series of letters received as a gift from Mrs. Margaret Ballard McMahan. The material has been kept as a unit; a complete listing is included in the Container List, below.

**Lemuel Russell**<sup>5</sup>, son of John<sup>2</sup> and Hannah (Sheldon) Russell, was born in Deerfield in 1769. He was a trader in Conway, Mass., in 1802, and later moved to Montague, Mass., where he kept a tavern. In 1802 he married Hepzibah, daughter of Paul Hawks. Their three sons are mentioned below. After Lemuel's death in 1813, Hepzibah married Captain David Dennison. She died in 1850.

Lemuel's papers include two deeds to land purchased from his brother, Elijah, in 1799; his acknowledgment of a debt owed to Justin Ely of Springfield, Mass., in 1800; and a printed handbill, dated Oct. 20, 1807, of his appointment as Deerfield's representative to a committee of "Republicans" to meet in Northampton to discuss the county's relationship with the Court of Common Pleas [formerly PVMA N-pers. 12686].

The papers of his widow **Hepzibah**, all dated after her marriage to Captain Dennison, include a lease to his son, Joseph B. Dennison, of her dower rights in return for a payment of money annually; a letter from her son Edward Russell; a deed to land in Deerfield; and her signed will.

**Edward Russell**, eldest son of Lemuel<sup>5</sup> and Hepzibah (Hawks) Russell, was born in Deerfield in 1805. In 1831, he married Leonora, daughter of Dennis Stebbins. They had one daughter who died in infancy. Edward died in 1851.

His papers consist of a receipt for carding wool, a bond he and his brother, Lemuel, signed in relation to a tavern stand, two commissions as lieutenant of light infantry, an invitation to a Thanksgiving Ball, and two letters from his brother, Paul (1849, 1851). Filed with his papers are those of his wife, Leonora E. (Stebbins) Russell, which consist of a letter from

her aunt, Aurelia Saxton (1832), a deed from her husband's mother to the home lot and her personal property (1849 and 1850), a deed to the Henry Catlin lot in Deerfield (1853), and a letter from her brother-in-law Paul in 1865.

**Lemuel H. Russell**, son of Lemuel<sup>5</sup> and Hepzibah (Hawks) Russell, was born in Deerfield in 1807. He was a shoemaker. In 1831, he married Martha, daughter of Joseph Stebbins. The couple moved to Shelbyville, Illinois, and Lemuel died there in 1838. His widow moved to Virginia to join her brother, and died in Ashland, Virginia, in 1888.

His papers consist of letters from Roswell Willard and others concerning business matters, receipts, and an account. In a separate file are papers relating to the mill on "Bijah's Brook." Those papers include an indenture of agreement between Ralph Williams and Pliny Arms on the one part, and Lemuel H. Russell and Joseph Stebbins on the other part, by which the latter party obtained the right, privilege, and use of the stream known as Bijah's Brook (1836) and papers relating to the burning of the mill the following year and the obtaining of an insurance settlement.

**Paul Hawks Russell**, son of Lemuel<sup>5</sup> and Hepzibah (Hawks) Russell, was born in 1809.

His papers consist of two letters: one from Charles Williams when Paul apparently worked for him shaving shingles in Wilmington, Vermont (1845); the other from Paul's brother, Edward, informing him of the death of their mother (1850). At that time he appears to have been living in Hornellsville, New York.

**William Russell**<sup>6</sup>, son of Timothy<sup>3</sup> and Electa (Demming) Russell of Wethersfield, Connecticut, was born in that town in 1771. He was a carpenter, agent for the proprietors of the upper locks and canal at Montague, Mass., and a farmer in Deerfield. He bought Lot no. 14 in 1806. His wife and the mother of his five children was the former Hannah Phelps of Northampton, Mass. William died in 1853.

His papers consist of probate court documents and other papers relating to the settlement of his estate, and legal papers of his daughter, Mary Russell Nims, relating to her father's debts.

**Philip Russell** and **Daniel Russell**, sons of Philip and Mary (Church) Russell of Hatfield, Mass., were born in 1688 and 1691, respectively. Daniel was one of the first forty settlers of Sunderland, Mass. His wife was the former Jerusha Dickinson of Hatfield, Mass.

The brothers are represented by four deeds filed in the folio collection: (1) a 1713 deed from Philip to his brother Daniel for half of a tract of land in Hatfield formerly owned by their father; (2) a deed from Philip, then of Harwich, Barnstable County, to his brother, Daniel, for land in Hatfield, 1715; (3) a deed to land from Daniel Russell to Philip Smith, both of Sunderland, 1723/24; and (4) a deed to land in Sunderland from Richard Scott to Daniel Russell, both of Sunderland, 1723/24.

**Roswell Russell**, son of Jonathan<sup>6</sup> and Anna (Ashley) Russell, was born in Sunderland, Mass. In 1795 he married Fanny, daughter of William Anderson. He died in 1822.

He is represented by a deed to land in Deerfield, purchased from Benjamin Parker and his wife of Whately in 1802.

**Amos Russell**<sup>14</sup>, son of Jonathan<sup>6</sup> and Anna (Ashley) Russell, was born in Sunderland, Mass., in 1782. He kept a tavern at Bloody Brook (South Deerfield) when it was a relay station on the stage route between New Haven and Montreal. He was also a farmer, served the town as selectman, and served in the State legislature for several terms. In 1809, he married Hanna, daughter of Deacon Elijah Hubbard; the couple had thirteen children.

His papers consist of a single letter that he wrote to Joseph Denison of Leyden, Mass., in 1835.

**John Edwards Russell**, son of John<sup>4</sup> and Julia (Witner) Russell, was born in Greenfield, Mass., in February 1834. He married Caroline Russell and died in Leicester, Worcester County, in 1903. He was a businessman, agriculturist, politician, traveler, drama critic, lecturer, etc.

His papers consist of a scrapbook.

**Stoddard Russell** (not identified in the genealogical notes in Sheldon's *History of Deerfield* or in Smith's *History of the Town of Sunderland*).

He is represented by a deed to land in Bloody Brook (South Deerfield), purchased from Russell Cooley in 1828.

## **Container List**

### **Box 1**

Folder 1 Papers of John Russell <sup>2</sup> 1741, 1756-1775	(13 items)
Folder 2 Papers of Hannah (Sheldon) Russell 1779-1802	(6 items)
Folder 3 Papers of Elijah Russell 1791, 1804	(2 items)
Folder 4 Papers of John Russell <sup>4</sup> 1790-1804 and undated	(5 items)
Folder 5 Letters exchanged by Charles Cotesworth Pinckney Russell, his wife Louisa (Richardson) Russell, and their children; and letters from Louisa to her friend "Katy" [Catherine French Wells], as follows:	

Letters to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney Russell:

1852, Nov. 4 from his wife; 1862, Nov. 5 from his daughter Louisa; 1862, Nov. 16 from his son Nathaniel

Letters to William R. Russell, Son of Charles and Louisa:

1856, Mar. 22 from his brother Charles; 1860, Aug. 27 from his sister Louisa; [1860] from his mother; 1865, Feb. 10 from his sister Louisa

Letters to Louisa, daughter of Charles and Louisa:

1861, Sep. 29 from her father; 1861, Oct. 27 from her mother; 1861, Nov. 3 from her mother; 1861, Nov. 17 from her mother; 1861, Nov. 22 from her mother and her brother, Nathaniel; 1862, Feb. 2 from her mother with penciled note from her father; 1862, Feb. 9 from her mother; 1862, Feb. 16 from her mother; 1862, Mar. 16 from her mother; 1862, Mar. 23 from her mother with penciled note from her father; 1862, Mar. 30 from her mother; 1862, May 5 from her mother; 1863, Jan. 4 from her mother; 1863, June 7 from her mother and father; 1865, Apr. 5 from her mother with penciled note from her father

Letters to Nathaniel E. Russell, son of Charles and Louisa:

1862, Nov. 9 from his mother; 1862, Nov. 27 from his parents; 1862, Dec. 28 from his mother; 1863, Jan. 18 from his mother; 1863, Mar. 15 from his parents; 1863, Mar. 29 from his parents; 1863, May 17 from his mother; 1863, June 21 from his mother; Letters to "Katy" [Catherine French Wells]; 1855, July 10 from Louisa Richardson Russell; 1856, June 16 from Louisa Richardson Russell; 1867, Jan. 16 from Louisa Richardson Russell

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| Folder 6 Papers of Lemuel Russell <sup>5</sup> 1799-1812   | (5 items)                         |
| Folder 7 Papers of Hepsibah Hawks Russell 1840-1846  | (4 items)                         |
| Folder 8 Papers of Edward and Leonora Stebbins Russell 1828-51<br>and 1832-1865  | (7 items)<br>(5 items)            |
| Folder 9 Papers of Lemuel Henry Russell 1835-37 (14 items); 1836-38  | (32 items)                        |
| Folder 10 Papers of Paul Hawks Russell 1845, 1850  | (2 items)                         |
| Folder 11 Papers of William Russell <sup>6</sup> and his son Thomas Russell <sup>9</sup> 1832, 1820  | (2 items)                         |
| Folder 11a Papers relating to the estate of William Russell <sup>6</sup> and his daughter,<br>Mary Russell Nims                                    | (20 items)                        |
| Folder 12 Papers of Philip Russell <sup>2</sup> 1715<br>and deeds to land in Hatfield and Sunderland of his sons Philip and Daniel<br>1713-1723/24 | (1 item)<br>(in folio collection) |
| Folder 13 Papers of Roswell Russell and his brother Amos Russell, 1802, 1835   | (2 items)                         |
| Folder 14 Paper of Stoddard Russell 1828   | (1 item)                          |
| Folder 15 "Washington to Greenfield: Letters of Louisa Richardson Russell,"<br>Typescript study by Margaret Ballard McMahan                        |                                   |
| Folder 16 Correspondence (mainly with George Sheldon) including genealogical<br>information relating to the Russell family, 1875-1907, 1986        |                                   |
| Folder 17 Miscellaneous manuscript and printed material relating to the Russell family   |                                   |

## Box 2

### Scrapbook of John Edwards Russell, 1854-1911

His scrapbook contains a hodgepodge of articles on topics such as: theater, politics, foreign countries, poetry and cartoons, history, art, horses, New York, his lectures and career, obituary of his father, military, etc. Sketches and photographs appear on pages 97-99. With them is a letter to his mother.

