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Samuel B. Woodward Papers (1806 – 1848): A Finding Aid

Lamar Soutter Library, Office of Medical History and Archives
University of Massachusetts Medical School

Descriptive Summary

Repository: Lamar Soutter Library, Office of Medical History and Archives
University of Massachusetts Medical School

Identification: SC 13

Creator: Samuel B. Woodward

Title: Samuel B. Woodward Papers

Date(s): 1806 - 1848

Quantity: approximately 23 GB (1124 files)

Abstract:



Samuel Bayard Woodward, M.D., (1787-1850), physician, educator, and publicist, was the first superintendent (1832-1846) of the State Lunatic Hospital (later the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital) and the co-founder and first president (1844-1848) of the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane (later the American Psychiatric Association). This collection contains digitized versions of essays, addresses, obituaries, letters, and verses created by Woodward from 1806 to 1848 and cover various medical, social, financial, educational, and personal topics.

Access Restrictions: Access to material in the digital collection is unrestricted. Currently, the papers of Dr. Samuel B. Woodward, in two bound volumes, are located at the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital.

Preferred Citation: The proper citation for any item from this collection should include the following information:

These digital images are from two bound volumes of the collected works of Samuel B. Woodward located at the Worcester State Recovery Center and Hospital. Scanning and online access courtesy of the University of Massachusetts Medical School Archives, Lamar Soutter Library, Worcester, Massachusetts, with support from the National Library of Medicine, Regional Medical Library, New England Region.

Processing Information: This collection was processed by Dina Litvak in 2015. The Finding Aid was created by Dina Litvak and Kristine Sjostedt in 2016.

Biographical/Historical Note:

Samuel Bayard Woodward was born in Torrington, Connecticut, on June 10, 1787. He was the first son of Polly Griswold Woodward and Samuel Woodward, a physician and Torrington's representative in the Connecticut General Assembly. Samuel B. Woodward was educated in the district school of Torrington and Morris Academy of South Farms, Connecticut. Morris Academy, founded by James Morris in 1792, was one of the first co-educational schools in America. This school, described as "devoted to science and the classics," however had a strong religious orientation. Woodward attended Morris Academy from 1806 to 1807 where he wrote several essays including "Swearing," "Pride," and "Benevolence."¹

Medical education during this time period was largely informal and very few had formal training. Training was usually obtained by apprenticing oneself to an experienced physician. Woodward began his medical training and experience when he was twenty years old by attending to patients with his father and observing him in his office. He also read the works of great clinicians, such as John Brown's "Elements of Medicine" or Thomas Cooper's "Anatomy of the Human Body". In 1809, Woodward received his medical license from the Connecticut Medical Society. He moved to Wethersfield, Connecticut the following year where he set up a general practice. In 1815 he married Maria Porter of Hadley, Massachusetts with whom he had eleven children. Woodward received an honorary medical degree from Yale College in 1822 and was one of its medical school's examiners. He was physician to the Connecticut State Prison and from 1817 to 1832 Woodward was a fellow of the Connecticut Medical Society. He was the Society's clerk in Hartford County and in 1827 was elected secretary of the Connecticut Medical Society. Woodward was considered one of the most well known physicians in New England and was one of the key figures in the establishment of the Hartford Retreat for the Insane in 1824.

Woodward employed practical and random methods in his medical practice and at times favored treatments from such non-traditional medical systems as homeopathy and Thomsonian medicine (founded by Samuel Thomson, 1769-1843). Other times he rejected these alternatives and considered traditional medicine to be the true science. Woodward eventually came to believe that disease was caused by violations of natural law and that fresh air, exercise, morality, and a simple diet were the keys to prevent disease.

In 1832 the State Lunatic Hospital was founded. Renamed the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester in 1834, the Worcester Lunatic Hospital in 1885, Worcester Insane Hospital in 1899, Worcester State Hospital in 1909, and the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital in 2012, it was the first hospital in Massachusetts and one of the first in the United States built to care for the insane. Horace Mann (1796-1859), a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, chairman of a committee to investigate the insane, and chairman of the board of trustees of the new hospital, chose Woodward as the hospital's first superintendent. Until this time Woodward had not had much experience treating patients with mental illness. He believed that rather than a consequence of sin as the Puritans had thought, insanity was due to a physically or psychologically unhealthy brain caused by a person violating the natural laws of proper living. He believed that nearly every insane patient could be cured if treated in an appropriate manner. This concept of "moral therapy" employed a humane means of treatment through occupational therapy, socialization, exercise, temperance, proper diet, and fresh air. Woodward was also

in great demand as an expert witness on insanity at court trials. His views that the maniac is not responsible for his crime, made his testimony usually favorable for the defendant.²

Woodward authored numerous publications and was the co-founder and first president (1844-1848) of the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane (later the American Psychiatric Association).³ He retired as superintendent of the State Lunatic Hospital in 1846. Woodward continued to work for education reform and advise on matters relating to insane asylums and prisons after his retirement. He wrote numerous articles about personal hygiene for the *Northampton* (Massachusetts) *Gazette*. He died on January 3, 1850 in his home in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Notes

¹Lawrence V. Perlman, "Samuel Bayard Woodward, M.D. (1787-1850), New England Physician and Reformer," thesis, Yale University, 1957.

²Woodward, S.B. *Medical Jurisprudence*, 1848; Samuel B. Woodward Papers (1806-1848), Series 2 Vol. II Medical Papers (1810 – 1848), folder 29.

³Gerald N. Grob, *The State and the Mentally Ill, A History of Worcester State Hospital in Massachusetts, 1830-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966).

In addition to the sources noted above, the following biographical sources were consulted:

Howard A. Kelly and Walter L. Burrage, *Dictionary of American Medical Biography*, (Boston: Milford House, 1971), p. 1332.

Woodward, S.B. *Heat and Cold*, 1810; Samuel B. Woodward Papers (1806-1848), Series 2 Vol. II Medical Papers (1810 – 1848), folder 4.

Scope and Content: The bulk of this collection contains essays, addresses, obituaries, letters, and some other miscellaneous materials written by Woodward from 1806 to 1848 and covering various medical, social, financial, educational, and personal topics.

Series and Subseries in the Collection: The collection is arranged in three series. The series in the collection are as follows:

Series 1: Volume I (to be acquired)

Series 2: Volume II – Medical papers (1810 – 1848)

Series 3: Volume III – Essays and addresses (1806 – 1847)

Series 1: Volume I (to be acquired)

Series 2: Volume II – Medical papers (1810 – 1848)

Scope and content: This series includes typed copies of essays written by Woodward from 1810 to 1848 and covering various medical topics. The titles and dates listed are shown as typed on the originals.

1. Origin and progress of the medical sciences, I-II, 1832 (?)
2. Physiology, 1833
3. Medical Papers, 1810 – 1820
 - Case of colic
 - Case for diagnosis
 - Dangers of patient medicines
 - Case of traumatic epilepsy
 - Case of poisoning by water hemlock
 - Nux vomica in paralysis of the bladder, relaxation of the heart, etc., etc.
 - Cholera
 - Letter to Dr. Tully on virtues of *actea racemosa*
4. Heat and cold, 1810
5. Pneumonia I-II, 1834 (?)
6. Malignant fever, 1810 (?)
7. Spotted fever, 1810
8. Dr. Miner on typhoid fever, 1823
9. Croup, 1827
10. Cases illustrating the typhoid form of croup, 1833
11. Cases of poisoning by stramonium, 1833
12. Cases of poisoning by *datura stramonium*, 1833
13. Inflammation, 1834 (?)
14. Midwifery, 1810
15. Puerperal diseases, 1826
16. Puerperal fever, 1834 (?)
17. Puerperal convulsions, 1824
18. Case of *anteversio uteri*, 1826 – 1827
19. Uterine hemorrhage, 1833
20. Cholera infantum, 1830 (?)
21. Palsy of the bladder, 1830 (?)
22. Case of remarkable costiveness, 1833 (?)
23. Diseases of 1826
24. A disease of 1827

25. Fever in Berlin, Conn. In 1828
26. History of an autumnal fever, 1833
27. Improvements in the practice of medicine during the last year, 1840 (?)
28. History of Medicine, 1830 (?)
29. Medical Jurisprudence, 1848
30. Case of trial for infanticide, 1835 (?)

Series 3: Volume III – Essays and addresses (1806 – 1847)

Scope and content: This series includes typed copies of essays, addresses, obituaries, letters, and other miscellaneous materials created by Woodward from 1806 to 1847, covering various social, financial, educational, and personal topics. The titles and dates listed are shown as typed on the originals.

1. Dr. Combe's characterization of Dr. S.B. Woodward, 1839
2. Errors of education I-II, 1840 (?)
3. Coeducation of the sexes, 1843
4. Management of children, 1838 – 1840
5. Miscellaneous papers, 1827 – 1844 (?)
 - History of Torrinford, in a letter to his children
 - The Bible
 - Medical biographies – a fragment
 - Training of children
 - Account of luminous belt across the heavens in 1827
6. Was the discovery of America a benefit to the human race?, 1815 (?)
7. State and private banks versus national banks, 1828 (?)
8. The manufacture of maple sugar, 1833(?)
9. Brief remarks on domestic economy I-II, 1845(?)
10. Registration of births, deaths and marriages, 1844
11. Election of 1847
12. Address, 1811
13. Oration, July 4, 1809
14. Obituary of Eli Todd, M.D., 1835 (?)
15. Obituary of Hon. Stephen Mix Mitchell, 1835
16. Biographies of Drs. Todd and Sheldon
 - Biography of Dr. Todd
 - Doctor Daniel Sheldon

17. Essays written at Morris Academy I-II, 1806 – 1807

Education
 Swearing
 Pride
 Life of Columbus
 Happiness and riches
 Friendship
 Benevolence
 Gaming, drinking, etc.
 Ardent spirits
 Louisiana
 Sincerity and truth
 Silence and wisdom
 Vanity of the world
 Death
 The review
 Progress of youth
 Slavery

18. Papers read before a literary society, 1810

Effects of the discovery of America
 Self interest

19. On the conduct of life and religious belief, 1813 - 1816

20. My views of Christian duty, 1835 (?)

21. Letters to Horace Mann, 1833 – 1845

On a patient called Trask
 On Hospital needs
 On Hospital needs
 On escape of Trask
 On heating public buildings
 On his desire to resign
 On school houses
 On children
 On his resignation

22. Miscellaneous letters, 1834 – 1846

Declining position of superintendant of Hartford retreat

Describing first train over Boston and Worcester R. R.

Declining position of superintendant of State Insane Hospital, Utica, NY

Letter to Charles Sedgwick, Esq.

Resignation of position as superintendent Worcester State Lunatic Hospital

Answer of trustees accepting same

Letters concerning a bust of himself, now at State Hospital

23. Prayers, 1832 – 1846

24. Verses on various subjects, 1836 – 1841

To the Hon. S.B. Woodward (Anon.)

Hymn written for the dedication of the chapel (Croswell)

The insane hospital (Woodward)

Mourner's hymn (Woodward)

On the death of a child (Woodward)

The mother and the dying infant (Woodward)

On the death of President Harrison (Woodward.)

On his mother's death (Woodward)

Hymn on the death of Dr. Miner and Mrs. Hitchcock (Woodward)