


[Home](#)

Who
WE ARE

Visit
US

Explore
OUR COLLECTIONS

> Selections From the
NJHS Collections

> Museum: Artifact
Collections

> Archives: Documents,
Manuscripts,
& Photographs

> Library: Published
Books, Periodicals,
& Maps

> Other Resources

Do
HISTORY

For
TEACHERS

Get
INVOLVED

Archives Documents, Manuscripts, Maps, & Photographs

Manuscript Group 1221, Annis Boudinot Stockton (1736-1801), Poet

Copybook, 1753-1791, 0.2 linear feet / 1 volume

Call Number: MG 1221

- [Summary](#)
- [Biographical Note](#)
- [Provenance Note](#)
- [Scope and Content Note](#)
- [Related Collections](#)
- [Index to poems](#)

Summary:

Manuscript verse written in several hands, but predominantly in the hand of Annis Boudinot Stockton, poet and wife of Richard Stockton, one of New Jersey's signers of the Declaration of Independence. This volume includes odes to George Washington, elegies on the deaths of Warren and Montgomery, copies of letters to and from George Washington and several lengthy pastorals.

Gift of Captain and Mrs. G. H. Cairnes, 1985.

Biographical Note:

The Boudinot family were French Huguenots who came to New York from England in 1687. Annis Boudinot was born on July 1, 1736 in Darby, Pennsylvania to Catherine Williams and Elias Boudinot, III (1706-1770), a silversmith and merchant. She was their eldest daughter and the second of ten children, though the first to be born in North America (her parents having just returned from Antigua where her father had run a plantation).

The family settled in the Princeton area of New Jersey around 1755, and it was there that Annis was exposed to the intellectual and social circles of the area. Little is actually known of Annis Boudinot's early life. She was from a well-to-do family and her parents found it proper to give her an education. She learned to read and to write and became particularly interested in poetry, an unusual pastime for a woman in her time period.

It was in Princeton that she became acquainted with the Stockton family. She married Richard Stockton (1730-1781) in late 1757 or early 1758 and became mistress of the Stockton estate. The young couple built up the house and gardens on their property, and Annis gave the estate the poetic name of *Morven*, after the ancient Scottish King Fingal's home. Annis and Richard were very happily

Search
JerseyHistory.org:

[GO](#)

Search Archives:

[GO](#)

[Browse the Archives](#)

married and close confidants. They had six children together: Julia (b. 1759), Mary and Susan (b. 1761, twins), Richard (b. 1764), Lucius Horatio (b. 1768), and Abigail (b. 1773).

In 1766, Richard Stockton left for a sixteen-month stay in England and Scotland, acting as a representative for both the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University) and for the American colonies in general. He argued the colonies' viewpoint on the taxation issue, but to no avail, and left England convinced that the matter would not be easily resolved. Stockton returned to New Jersey in September of 1767, rejoined his wife at *Morven* and resumed his law practice.

Although Richard urged moderation until the start of the war, he publicly sided with the patriots in June of 1776 and was soon elected as a delegate to the First Continental Congress. He signed the Declaration of Independence and became one of the rebel leaders in New Jersey (along with his brothers, the Reverend Philip Stockton and the Honorable Samuel Witham Stockton, his brother-in-law, Elias Boudinot, and his son-in-law, Dr. Benjamin Rush).

The Stocktons did not fare well during the Revolutionary War. In November 1776, Washington retreated across New Jersey and the Stocktons left *Morven* for a safer location. Annis fled the estate with her children after she buried the family silver and the papers of the American Whig Society, a secret society that many of the Princeton patriots were active in. (After the war, she was elected the only female member of the Society in recognition of her efforts.) She left behind her household belongings, along with her beloved books, poetry, and letters.

The family relocated to Monmouth County and it was there that Richard was captured by loyalists and imprisoned. Being a signer of the Declaration of Independence, he was treated harshly by his captors until, under pressure, he was traded and released in January of 1777. One of the requirements of his release was an oath of non-participation in the Revolution. Stockton kept his word and withdrew himself from Congress and from active politics. He soon became ill, getting cancer in 1778 and dying on February 28, 1781.

To make matters worse, when the war passed through New Jersey in 1777, Cornwallis' troops marched through Princeton and set up headquarters at *Morven*. The British army ransacked the Stockton estate, burned the furniture and library, and trashed the house and lands. The Stockton family suffered great financial losses, but Annis soon returned to *Morven*, rescuing what she could from the house and library. Most of the family papers, including Annis and Richard's correspondence during his trip to England, were lost in the library fire.

After her husband's death, Annis continued on as the mistress of *Morven*, raising her children and retaining a high social standing. Her two brothers, Elisha Boudinot (1749-1819) and Elias Boudinot (1740-1821), were both active in politics. Elisha was a lawyer and New Jersey Supreme Court Justice from 1798-1804. Elias was a lawyer, Congressman, and later, the Director of the Mint. He married Richard Stockton's sister Hannah, bonding the

two families closer together. Elias Boudinot became President of the Continental Congress in 1782, and when Congress moved to Princeton in 1783, he resided with his sister at *Morven*. She thus became acquainted with important personages of the time, developing a close friendship with the Washingtons. When the war brought General Washington to the area, he stayed at *Morven*.

Although she missed her husband until her own death, Annis remained active throughout her lifetime. Like so many in her family, she supported the rebels and served on a committee of New Jersey women who supported the patriot soldiers. She was a member of high society and, as mistress of *Morven*, often acted as hostess. With her husband's death, she became the manager of the estate, and supervised the servants, slaves, and daily household matters. She was also well educated and an avid reader and writer. It was during the period after the Revolution that Annis had a number of her poems, especially odes to George Washington, published. Over the years, Stockton published a total of twenty-one poems in contemporary newspapers and magazines.

Although Annis's son Richard had inherited *Morven* upon his father's death, Annis remained mistress of the estate until 1795. At that time, she moved into a private house in Princeton. She stayed there for two years at which time she moved to White Hill in Burlington County, New Jersey to live with her youngest daughter Abigail Field. She remained there until her death on February 6, 1801.

Provenance Note:

The Annis Boudinot Stockton copybook was donated by Christine Carolyn McMillan Cairnes and her husband, Captain George H. Cairnes, in 1985. Mrs. Cairnes is a direct descendant of Annis Boudinot and Richard Stockton.

Scope and Content Note:

Annis Boudinot Stockton's copybook is not only important as the largest collection of her work, but as documentation of an early American female writer. The copybook contains poems written by Stockton throughout her lifetime. The dates in the book range from 1753-1791, however, the poems were probably copied sometime during the 1780s and 1790s. It is unclear whether the included dates refer to the writing, editing, or copying. Some dates conflict with other known copies of the poems and therefore might be inaccurate. A large number of poems are not dated at all.

The poems included are in the neoclassical style and cover both private and public topics. There are odes, epistles, addresses, elegies, sonnets, hymns and others. They cover such topics as George Washington, Congress, the Revolutionary War, and on a more personal level, the death of her husband, marriages of friends, and friendship. The inscription in the book reads, "Mrs. Stockton's book of Manuscripts only for the eye of a Friend," and was probably intended as a gift for her close friend and fellow writer, Elizabeth Graeme Fergusson.

Stockton's pen name of Emelia is used occasionally in the book.

The first third of the book is not in Annis Stockton's hand, but probably that of one of her daughters, either Mary Stockton Hunter or Abigail Stockton Field. There are corrections in Annis Stockton's hand in the early section, and the final two-thirds of the poems are copied in her hand. The poems are not arranged by date or subject matter, though most of the included published poems are located in the first third of the volume. Poems located further back went largely unpublished, though some were published anonymously.

The copybook is in fairly good condition although it is missing a number of pages.

Related Collections:

[Manuscript Group 368, Stockton Family \(Princeton, NJ\) Papers](#)

[Manuscript Group 633, Elisha Boudinot \(1749-1819\) Family Papers](#)

[Manuscript Group 1411, Elias Boudinot Stockton \(d. 1918\) Genealogy Collection](#)

In 1995, all known poems of Annis Boudinot Stockton were published together in one volume. The accession by The New Jersey Historical Society of Stockton's copybook provided the motivation for the project. In this published edition, all poems are transcribed and fully annotated. The citation is:

* Annis Boudinot Stockton, edited by Carla Mulford. *Only for the Eye of a Friend: The Poems of Annis Boudinot Stockton*. (University Press of Virginia: Charlottesville, 1995).

Index to the Poems in this copybook (in alphabetical order):

28th of February 1791, pg. 278.

A birthday ode, pg. 282.

A Hymn written in the year 1753, pg. 102.

A Pastoral Elegy, on the anniversary of Mr. Stockton's death 1782, pg. 66.

A sarcasm against the ladies in a newspaper, pg. 167.

A satire on the fashionable pompoon worn by the ladies in the year 1753 by a gentleman, pg. 169.

Acrostic, pg. 274.

Addressed to a student of divinity, pg. 292.

Addressed to Col. Schuyler, on his return to Jersey after two years captivity in Canada,

pg. 6.

Addressed to General Washington in the year 1777, after the battles of Trenton and Princeton, pg. 15.

After a night of perplexing dreams, pg. 106.

Almira to Celadon founded on a story in a magazine, pg. 251.

An acrostic, pg. 265.

An Elegiac ode on the anniversary of Mr. Stockton's death 1783, pg. 70.

An Elegiac ode on the anniversary of the death of Mr. S., Feb. the 28th 1788, pg. 144.

An elegy in the extreme illness of a friend whose disorder was the bursting of a blood vessel in his breast, pg. 189.

An Elegy on the death of Mrs. Wilson, April the 19th 1788, pg. 142.

An Elegy on the death of Richard Stockton Esq., who departed this life the 28th of February 1781, pg. 63.

An epigram to Mr. B- and Dr. S who had pretended not to understand the meaning of something that was said in Company by Mrs. - and did it so seriously that she began to be apprehensive lest her words would admit some Construction that she was Ignorant of, pg. 2004 (pg. 204).

An epistle to a friend who urged to have some poetry sent her in the year 1759 in the winter, pg. 10.

An epitaph written in the beginning of the year 1757 in the beginning of a severe illness, pg. 168.

An extempore ode, in the sickness of Mr. Stockton, pg. 61.

An impromptu Ode before day on the 24th of December, Christmas morning; labeled pg.19 and 86, but comes between pg. 109 and 110.

An invitation ode to a young lady in New York from her friend in the country; page not numbered, comes in between 90 and 91.

An Ode, pg. 5.

An Ode, pg. 288.

An Ode for Christmas day, pg. 20013 (pg. 213).

An ode on the birthday of the illustrious George Washington, President of the United States, pg. 285.

An Ode to Amanda, pg. 176.

An ode to Doctor Smith on his birthday
March the 16th 1791, pg. 20022 (pg. 222).

An ode to Doctor Smith on his birthday
March the 16th 1791, pg. 234

An ode to solitude inscribed to Mrs.
Boudinot, pg. 127.

Anniversary Elegy inscribed to Richard
Stockton, Esq. 1786, pg. 110.

Anniversary Elegy, February 28, 1783, pg.
74.

Composed in a dancing room, December 69,
pg. 20024 (pg. 224).

Copy of a letter from his Excellency General
Washington in answer to the foregoing
pastoral, pg. 36 (see pg. 26 for the
pastoral).

Copy of a letter from his Excellency General
Washington in answer to the foregoing
pastoral, pg. 52 (see pg. 38 for the
pastoral).

Doubt, a pastoral Ballad, 1762, pg. 2002
(pg. 202).

Elegy, pg. 298.

Elegy on the death of Miss Chandler as if
written in her fathers churchyard, pg. 83.

Elegy on the death of Mrs. Dickinson, the
event was communicated at the seashore,
pg. 260.

Elegy on the destruction of the trees
occasioned by the icicles the 17th of January
1788, pg. 136.

Elegy the third, Tears of friendship, pg. 81.

Epigram to Fidelia, pg. 192.

Epistle to General Washington, pg. 113.

Epistle – To Lucius, pg. 200.

For the Gazette of the United States, pg.
268.

Fragment, pg. 109.

Fragment, pg. 276.

Fragment, Meditation on the 3rd verse of the
28th chapter of Matthew, And the angel
answered and said unto the woman Fear not
ye for I know that ye seek Jesus which was
crucified, pg. 108.

Fragment on hearing the account of Mrs. Ramsey's death, pg. 85.

Fragment on the death of a minister, pg. 277.

Fragments, pg. 104.

Ill penserosa, an ode, pg. 228.

Impromptu epigram upon being asked to accompany three or four very fine girls with some gentlemen in a rural walk, pg. 248.

Impromptu epitaph on the gravedigger of Princeton, 1769, pg. 194.

Impromptu on hearing that a print of the Guillotine with our beloved President's figure under it was executed in Mr. Genet's family under his Sanction, pg. 284.

Impromptu on seeing a very agreeable gentleman and lady, particular friends conversing together, pg. 266.

Impromptu on the morning of my sons wedding day which was ushered in by a fall of snow and soon after cleared by a very bright sun, pg. 230.

Impromptu written with a pencil in a Chinese temple in the garden of Mr. Elisha Boudinot, pg. 296.

Lavinia and Amanda, a Pastoral, pg. 20.

Lines impromptu on Miss Morgans birthday, pg. 186.

Lines on a young gentleman who died of the yellow fever at Princeton a day or two after he fled from the city for fear of it, pg. 280.

Lines on seeing Mrs. Elizabeth Witherspoon put in the grave, pg. 272.

Lines on the death of Mrs. Hill supposed to be spoken by her sister Mrs. Clymer, pg. 128 (there are two page 128s).

Lines on the death of Mrs. Petit of Philadelphia, pg. 20026 (pg. 226).

Lucinda and Aminta, a Pastoral on the capture of Lord Cornwallis and the British army by General Washington, pg. 26.

Ode, pg. 269.

Ode to Constantius, pg. 82.

On an enclosure of roses in which is the grove of Miss Mary Morgan a young lady of 13 years of age daughter of Col. Morgan, pg. 246.

On Doctor Rush's birthday the 5th of January - after ten days thick fog, pg. 138.

On hearing that General Warren was killed
on Bunker Hill, on the 17th of June 1775, pg.
9.

On Hearing the cooing of a dove, a song, pg.
139.

On reading Dr. Beaties Hermit, pg. 194
(there are two page 194s).

On seeing Mrs. McCauly Graham, pg. 194
(there are two page 194s).

On the birthday of the Rev. Doctor
Witherspoon 1788, pg. 234.

On the celebration of the birth of the
Dauphin, pg. 18.

On the death of General Montgomery, pg.
13.

On the return of Col. Laurens from his
Confinement in the tower of London, pg.
137.

On the sun's setting clear after a three days
storm, pg. 120.

Peace, a Pastoral dialogue, Part the second,
pg. 38.

Resignation – an Elegiac ode on the
anniversary of the Death of Mr. S., 1788,
pg. 140.

Sensibility, an Ode, pg. 187.

Soliliquy in a sleepless night, pg. 196.

The bridal wish addressed to Mr. S. Stockton
and his Lady the morning after their
marriage, pg. 90.

The disappointment, an ode 1756 to Mr.
Stockton, pg. 133.

The dream, an ode 1756, pg. 134.

The General's Answer, pg. 56 (see pg. 54 for
previous letter).

The Prospect, inscribed to XXXX, pg. 180.

The restoration of a stolen fan, pg. 193.

The tears of friendship elegy, the 4th, pg.
118.

The vision inscribed to General Washington
soon after the taking of York Town, pg. 256.

The wish on a wedding day morning, pg.
294.

Thought on the Pythagorean System, pg.
97.

To a friend going to sea, pg. 266.

To a friend who had persuaded Emelia to marry, an Ode, pg. 175.

To a little Miss a year older than the one to whom the glass was promised with a toy looking glass, pg. 86.

To Amanda – Who was obliging enough to delight her friend with singing every evening two songs, which she was very fond of, pg. 198.

To Apasio, pg. 117.

To Doctor Smith on his birthday March 16th 92, pg. 235.

To Doctor Smith on his birthday, March the 16th 1790, pg. 20021 (pg. 221).

To General Washington, pg. 54.

To General Washington, An Epistle, pg. 59.

To little Miss with a toy looking glass, pg. 85 (there are two page 85s in a row).

To Miss Mary Stockton an epistle, pg. 130.

To Mr. Lewis Pintard on his rural retirement at New Rochelle, pg. 232.

To Mr. Stockton in England, An Epistle, pg. 7.

To Mr. Stockton on his departure from America to England, pg. 88.

To Mrs. B, an epistle, pg. 91.

To Mrs. Rush on her birthday, pg. 89.

To Richard John Stockton, Esq. in closing the preceding Elegy, pg. 112 (see pg.110 for elegy).

To the President of the United States after he had passed through Jersey in his way to New York, pg. 253.

To the Visitant, a periodical paper written in Philadelphia in the year of 1769 on reading his paper No.3, pg. 290.

Processed by Kim Charlton, October 1999 as part of the "Farm to City" project funded by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

[Submit a request to copy part of this collection](#)

[back](#)

Title Line: