

## AN UNBROKEN CHAIN OF CUSTODY

### PENDANT PORTRAITS OF ENOCH AND SUSAN PARKER PARROTT OF PORTSMOUTH, NH

BY  
SAMUEL F.B. MORSE

A Case Study Demonstrating the Role of Genealogy and Provenance in Solving Issues of  
Attribution and Authentication<sup>1</sup>

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On June 24, 2002, a pair of portraits (5.1) attributed to Samuel F.B. Morse was sold at a Butterfields Auction in San Francisco, California.<sup>2</sup> On the stretcher of the female sitter's portrait is an ink inscription: "Mrs. Susan Parker Parrott died April 21, 1852, aged 72 years." Below that on the lining is an inscription: "Mrs. Susan Parker Parrott." On the stretcher of the portrait of the male sitter there is an ink inscription in the same hand that reads as follows: "Painted by Morse inventor of the telegraph." On the lining below, in the same block lettering as that identifying Susan, the sitter is identified as "Mr. Enoch Greenleaf [sic] Parrott." Neither painting is signed.<sup>3</sup>



5.1

*Enoch Greenleafe Parrott & Susan Parker Parrott*

Oil on canvas. Height 29 inches. Width 26 inches.

Collection of Donald Neiman

On view at Samuel F. B. Morse Historic Site, Locust Grove, Poughkeepsie, NY

The dimensions of the portraits are identical. They are executed in oil on the same type of pre-primed linen support, using the same technique. It is apparent the portraits were painted by the same hand and intended to be pendant portraits. The sitters are the same scale, face each other, and share a similar plain background. Both are housed in matching gilt frames which are not original to the paintings.

The portraits were consigned to auction by the children of the late Merrill Spalding, a direct descendant of the sitters. Included with the lot was a typewritten letter “Markings on Chairs,” dated July 18, 1914, and addressed “Dear Merrill.” At the bottom of the page was a penciled notation: “the Parrott portraits of Grandfather EGP and Grandmother painted by S. F. B. Morse winter 1817-1818.” The notation is in the same handwriting as the inscriptions on the stretchers of the portraits.

Other lots citing a Parrott provenance consigned to the same sale included a pair of card tables (5.2).



5.2

Spalding-Parrott Family Pair of Classical Carved Mahogany Card Tables

Portsmouth, New Hampshire

1815-20

Height 31 ½ inches.

Butterfield’s Auction. San Francisco, CA. 6/24/2002. Sale No. 7336G. Lot 7181

Current whereabouts unknown

Are the identifying inscriptions on the backs of the portraits accurate? Could the sitters be Captain Enoch Greenleaf Parrott and his wife Susan Parker Parrott? And can the portraits be attributed to Samuel F. B. Morse (born Charlestown, MA, 1791-1872)?

From the size and prominence of the Parrott memorial tablet (5.3) in the vestibule of St. John’s on Chapel St. in Portsmouth, it appears the Parrotts were a family who had sufficient resources to patronize the arts.



5.3

*Parrott Memorial Tablet*

Vestibule St. John's Church, Chapel St., Portsmouth, NH  
Photograph courtesy Portsmouth Athenaeum.

According to family tradition, the portraits are correctly identified. Amongst Dr. James Spalding's correspondence there is a 1928 annotated typewritten letter (5.4), similar to that consigned with the paintings. It is addressed to his cousin Margery Arden Hall, another avid family historian and genealogist. Spalding writes: "*SFB Morse who painted Grandfather and Grandmother Parrott was the same Morse who invented the telegraph. He spent the winter of 1817 and 1818 in New Hampshire and painted several portraits most successfully. I had photographs of the portraits and have Grandma's here now but what has become of the others I don't know. This house needs a documental house cleaning and arrangement...*"<sup>4</sup>



5.4

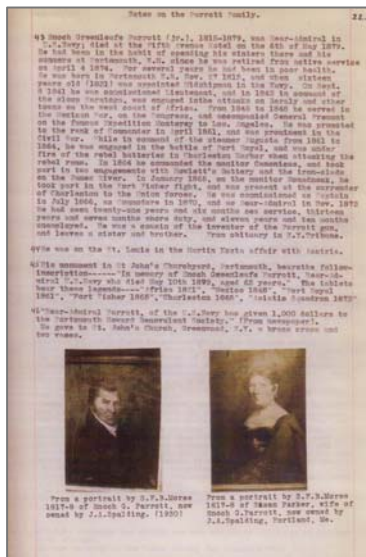
Dr. James Spalding. Excerpt letter, Jan. 7, 1928.

**John Fabyan Parrott Papers, 1779-1937.** New Hampshire Historical Society. 1984-64 (Box 1, folder 16)

James was born in 1846, so he did have some first-hand acquaintance with one of the sitters of the pendant portraits-- his grandmother, who died in 1852.

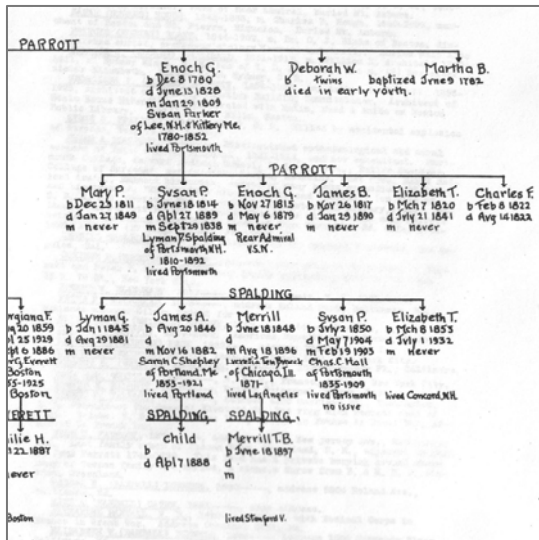
This letter further supports the attribution of the 1914 letter addressed "Dear Merrill" to James Spalding. Merrill was James' younger brother and the editor of his unpublished manuscript *What I know about the Parrotts and Toskans of Portsmouth, Greenland, Brookfield, Middleton, and Lancaster, all in New Hampshire (John Fabyan Parrott Papers, 1779-1937, New Hampshire Historical Society, 1984-64)*. The letters are in the same typeface, have similar editorial changes and the same rambling and disjointed narrative. More importantly, the repeated reference to "Morse who invented the telegraph" and his distinctive handwriting confirm it was James who wrote the inscriptions on the stretchers of the portraits sold at Butterfield's. Upon James' death in 1938, Merrill inherited the balance of his brother's estate including the chairs that James had described as marking in his 1914 letter.

The clearest documentary proof verifying the history of ownership of these portraits is also located at the New Hampshire Historical Society. In her 1930 typescript, Margery Hall states "S.F.B. Morse (of telegraph fame) spent the winter of 1817-18 in NH." While there he painted the portraits of E.G. Parrott and his wife Susan Parker Parrott that are now (1930) owned by J.A. Spalding, Portland, ME." Period thumbnail photographs of portraits are included in the New Hampshire Historical Society copy of her transcript (5.5)



5.5  
 Margery Arden Hall. **The Descendants of John Parrott, 1742-1790, of Broadhempston, Devonshire, England, and Portsmouth, NH.** 1930. Typescript. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH, p. 22.

Another family biographer Benjamin K. Hough has "Notes on the Parrott family" attached to his genealogical chart (5.6). His citation for Enoch G. Parrott includes the following remark: "Portrait 1817-8 by S.F.B. Morse owned by grandson Dr. J.A. Spalding of Portland, Maine." Hough's cites Dr. James A. Spalding as an authority on Parrott Family, Toscani, Spaldings et al., who owns many Parrott heirlooms."<sup>5</sup>



## 5.6

Benjamin K. Hough

Detail of **Genealogical Chart of Parrott family, 1934.**

New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH.

Although all three family chroniclers mention Morse painted the portraits in the winter of 1817-18 in New Hampshire, they do not specify where in New Hampshire Morse painted the portraits of Enoch and his wife. Hall and Hough, as they clearly state, were relying on James Spalding for much of their information on this branch of the family. Undoubtedly the erroneous citing of Morse painting the portraits in the winter of 1817-1818 instead of 1816-1817<sup>6</sup> originated with James Spalding.

A search for legal documents which could further substantiate the provenance of the portraits has been challenging. Enoch and Susan's son James's 1890 estate inventory (Docket 6321, old series, Rockingham County, NH) cites a portrait and two pictures but provides no further details. The only property he specifies to be given to certain individuals in his will is his silver and his books. Ditto for his Elizabeth Parkhurst Spalding (1803-1878) (Docket 2560, new series, Rockingham County, NH). As their sister Susan Parrott Spalding (1814-1889) was the only married one with surviving children, it was undoubtedly understood that Susan should be the keeper of the portraits.<sup>7</sup>

Upon her spouse's death in 1892, their property was then divided equally between their four remaining children (Lyman Dyer Spalding will, Docket 7304, new series, Rockingham County, NH). Their son Merrill later became the recipient of all the family properties as he had the only surviving heir—Merrill T. B. Spalding the Second (born Illinois 6/18/1897-7/1972)<sup>8</sup>. In 2002, his two sons consigned the portraits along with other family items to the Butterfield auction. In summary, the portraits descended directly from the sitters to the consignors of the portraits.

Aside from their impeccable provenance, do the portraits fit with what is known of Captain Parrott and his wife? Enoch was born in Portsmouth in 1781. He had been a successful sea captain who retired to pursue mercantile land-based activities in his

hometown. From 1814 through 1816, Enoch served as a selectman in Portsmouth<sup>9</sup> and in the legislature in Concord, New Hampshire as State Representative from 1816 through 1819. He was also the Navy Agent at Portsmouth, a position he maintained from 1825 until his untimely death in 1828.

Susan Parker who he married in 1809 was the daughter of Captain Robert Parker (1735-1819) and Sarah Sherburne (1741/2-1804). Captain Parker was a successful sea captain and merchant who had retired to a mansion he had built in Lee, New Hampshire where Susan was born in 1780.<sup>10</sup>

The newlyweds appeared to be financially secure. During the War of 1812, Enoch was part owner along with his brother John and his brother-in-law William Rice in the legendary ship called the *Fox*. Often termed the "million dollar privateer", on her seven cruises she gained at least twenty-four prizes and was never captured. According to Piscataqua maritime scholar Richard Winslow, war profiteers had no place in Portsmouth once peace was declared in 1815.<sup>11</sup> Certainly Enoch adapted quickly to the change in circumstances. At the June 14, 1815 auction of the *Fox* conducted by Samuel Larkin in Portsmouth, Enoch was the successful bidder and immediately entered the *Fox* into the West Indies trade.<sup>12</sup>

To have pendant portraits done would also be keeping with what is known of the couple's relationship. From the surviving letters Enoch wrote home, it would seem he had great affection for his wife and liked to indulge her with gifts. For example, in an 1810 letter from Tonnington, England, to Susan, Enoch writes: "Have sent by Captain Woodward of Newburyport...a small package containing two shawls and a piece or pattern for a gown; having goods on board, wished to divide the risque."<sup>13</sup>

At this time, the family was residing in Woodbury Langdon's mansion house on State Street which was undoubtedly had handsomely furnished. (5.7) (5.8).



5.7

Tea Table

Collection of Historic New England (1991.114)

Purchased from Mrs. Merrill Spalding (1911-2001)

Inscriptions: This table came from/my mother's mother/Sarah Parker Sherborne's house. I don't know whether it came from Sherborne's or Skillings/ Susan Parker Parrott Spalding, Sept. 5 1883.<sup>14</sup> Inscription written in ink on a paper label pasted beneath the top.



5.8

Chest of drawers, dated 1765-1785

Collection of US Department of State.

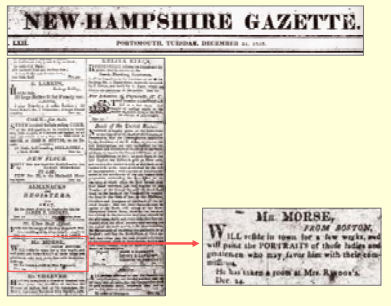
Purchased from Mrs. Merrill Spalding (1911-2001).

An early 20<sup>th</sup>-century typed paper label, pasted on the dressing slide, reads "Enoch Greenleaf Parrott, Portsmouth about 1800...It may have belonged before that to his Father and Mother, John Parrott and Martha Brackett Parrott."<sup>15</sup>

In such a setting, it seems fitting that Enoch and his wife would want to have their portraits done. They were a well-established couple in the community and having formal portraits done would further establish their authority.

Is it possible Samuel Finley Breeze Morse painted these portraits? First Morse is documented as being in New Hampshire as early as 1816. As Lucretia Walker (1799-1825), Morse's future bride remarked in an 1816 letter from Concord, NH [where she lived] to Mrs. Sarah Livermore "*Mr. Morse (son of Dr. Morse of Charleston [sic]) is now in town --he is a celebrated painter lately returned from London.*"<sup>16</sup>

Local newspaper advertisements (5.9) further attest to the fact that Morse had been in Portsmouth<sup>17</sup> and actively soliciting commissions for portraits.



5.9

New Hampshire-Gazette, Dec. 31, 1816.

Stylistically, this pair of portraits has all the hallmarks of Morse. Morse had just returned from overseas studies with Washington Allston and Benjamin West at the Royal Academy in London, England. The sitters are sculptural in form and, although handsome in their presentation, far from idealized. An 1817 date also coincides well with the life dates of the sitters. Enoch Parrott would have been 36 years old<sup>18</sup>, Susan 37.

In brief, the portraits are exactly what one would expect of Morse at this juncture in his career. He was young and full of enthusiasm about pursuing a career in art and keen to demonstrate his skills.<sup>19</sup> Although a London-trained artist with studio space in Boston and ambitions to be a history painter, Morse had to travel in search of portrait commissions. Undoubtedly he thought his dearth of patrons was just a temporary setback and not at all related to his inability to flatter his sitters.



5.10

*John Adams*, 1816

Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 inches

Brooklyn Museum of Art (32.114)

Note the realism of his portrait of John Adams of 1816 (5.10) a commissioned portrait that was to be engraved for Delaplaine's *Repository of the Lives and Portraits of Distinguished American Characters* until the publisher rejected it. Apparently Delaplaine was appalled by Adams' portrait and considered it a "brutal piece of reportage of the effects of old age."<sup>20</sup>

Amongst the Samuel F.B. Morse papers at The Library of Congress, a letter contains a reference to a Captain Parrott and Mrs. Parrott. The letter is addressed to the artist in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and dated March 15, 1817. It is from his father Jedidiah and involves a discussion of picture along with the following accounting (5.11):



Mr. Foster	2. frames	—	8.00
Mr. Shores	2	—	8.00
Mr. Blake	1	—	4.00
Mr. Parker	1	—	4.00
			<hr/>
			24.00
Mr. Payson	for repairing		5.00
Cpt. Langdon	Frame &c.		49.12
Capt. Shaw	Portr.		20.00
Mr. T.			20.00
J. Peason			35.00
Capt. Manning			35.00
Mr. Freeman			35.00
Mr. Bartlett			20.00
Capt. Parrott			
Mr. P.			
			<hr/>
			237.12
			70.

5.11

Letter from Jedidiah Morse addressed to his son S. F. B. Morse, Portsmouth, NH, March 15, 1817. **Samuel F. B. Morse Papers at the Library of Congress**, Correspondence, Bound volume--- 30 January 1816-28 December 1818. Item 47 of 100. Electronic Image 171.

Between 1798 and 1810, Portsmouth was a busy port and Enoch being a prominent citizen would have been a good contact for Morse. Morse himself had good social credentials. His father Jedidiah was a prominent Congregational minister and a geographer who was well known in the Piscataqua region.



5.12

In Enoch's portrait (detail 5.12), he addresses the viewer with a sense of purpose and confidence that is fitting with his position in New Hampshire society.

In 1817, when Morse was painting portraits in Portsmouth, Enoch and his wife Susan were living at the Woodbury Langdon house,<sup>21</sup> an easy walking distance to Morses' lodgings at Mrs. Rindge's on Jaffrey Street (now Court Street). The reference here to a Captain and Mrs. Parrott must be to Enoch and his wife Susan.



5.13

*Bird's eye view of Portsmouth, Rockingham Co., New Hampshire 1877. A. Ruger del. D. Bremner & Co. Lith.*

Library of Congress. <http://memory.loc.gov>.



5.14 *Susan Parker Parrott*



## 5.15 Detail shawl

The portrait of the female sitter also fits with what is known of Susan Parker Parrott's personality and circumstances. She already had three children when she sat for her portrait for Morse in 1817. Her fourth child James Brackett Parrott would be born later that year.<sup>22</sup>

The sitter is well aware of fashion as evidenced by her hairstyle and red silk gown with its high bodice, draped with a luxurious shawl (5.15).<sup>23</sup> Her choice of jewelry, gold and opal earrings, a sea pearl necklace (5.16), a Georgian pin (5.17), are befitting for a woman of Susan's wealth and pedigree. The large lapis and garnet stones in her pin likely came from the Far East and were set by a London jeweler in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when this type of symmetrical arrangement was favored. When compared to other documented portraits of Morse sitters, the type and amount of jewelry she wore is distinctive and appears to be unique to her.<sup>24</sup>



5.16



5.17

A description of Susan at a party in 1820 confirms such an interest in fashion (5.18): She [Susan] was dressed in a light blue satin, trimmed with white silk fringe, something like ball trimming, only a great deal larger---a blue satin hat trimmed with lace, 2 blue feathers—she looked larger than ever.”

A handwritten note in cursive script, enclosed in a rectangular border. The text reads: "Portsmouth, N. H. Dec. 11, 1820".

Dear mother I went to the assembly with Mrs. E. Parrott - she was dressed in a light blue satin, trimmed with white pick fringe, something like ball trimmings, only a great deal larger - & a blue sallow hat, trimmed with lace, & blue feathers - she looked larger than ever. I myself danced a voluntary dance with her, & although she is so large she is a good partner, being very attentive - The first dance I danced with Mrs. Jones; the second, Herman Harris - & the third, being a voluntary dance, with John Blunt. We had the head of the dance - what do you think of that for one, who never danced twelve couples dances in my life - However, we had a paper with the figure written on it, & Mr. Blunt explained

it to me, & I made out very well - Theodore Blast, danced in the same set with one one; he danced well enough, only that he took rather too long steps - John Blunt, insists upon it that Mrs. E. Parrott was the belle, & Samuel Long the best! - But the truth is that Sarah Langdon was the belle - Ann & Louisa Sheafe, spoke to me that evening for the first time since I have been here - I like Louisa best - Mrs. Parrott introduced me to Mrs. Pushing, a bride, lately from Rhode Island; I sat next her during supper time; & she was being agreeable indeed; I was much pleased with her - Miss Mary Hart sends her love to you, & waits for a letter from you - Yours, etc. Elizabeth P. S.

5.18

Excerpt of letter from Elizabeth Parkhurst Spalding (1803-1878) to her father Lyman Spalding (1775-1821), New York City, NY.

**Spalding/ Parrott/Toscan Papers, 1784-1887.** New Hampshire Historical Society, 1981-27 (Box 1, folder 24).

A letter written by Morse to his father, dated March 11, 1817, indicates the portraiture business was brisk in Portsmouth: "I must postpone my return in consequence of the press of business. I shall have 3 begun tonight, one sat yesterday (a large one) and 2 will sit today (small) and 3 more have it in serious contemplation."<sup>25</sup>

Undoubtedly much of the business Morse was engaged in could be attributed to the Parrotts. Enoch and Susan were moving in the right social circles to influence others to have their portraits done. Recall their place of residence at this time was Woodbury Langdon's mansion home and the couple were noted for their social gatherings. This interpretation is further supported by Morse's father's accounting of March 15, 1817 (5.11) which cites no monetary charge for the portraits of Captain and Mrs. Parrott (Figure 6). Morse may well have rewarded them for securing commissions for him by presenting them with their portraits *gratis*.<sup>26</sup>

In terms of Jedidiah Morse's listing (figure 6), aside from the Parrotts only two portraits have been located. One is the portrait of their neighbor Captain Abraham Shaw (1775-1828), an unfinished canvas in the collection of the Portsmouth Athenaeum. The second is the portrait of Dr. Eliphalet Pearson (1752-1826) in the collection of the Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA.<sup>27</sup> Pearson was a graduate of Harvard and one of the founders of Phillips Academy in Andover, Morse's alma mater. He was also a close friend of the artist's father and a regular visitor to Greenland, New Hampshire, site of the Parrott family enclave.

The fact that Morse seldom signed and dated his portraits has made locating them problematic. "Mrs. Parker" citation could refer to Susan Pickering Parker (1753-1858), aunt of Lucretia Walker, Morse's future bride, but her portrait has yet to be located. Her

spouse Nathan Parker sat for Morse on more than one occasion—an 1817 portrait in the collection of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard (H131) and a second one shown here. (5.19).<sup>28</sup>



5.19

*Nathan Parker* (1782-1833)

Oil on canvas

Height 30 inches. Width 25 inches.

Collection Portsmouth Public Library

Within their immediate social circle, the Parrotts knew other patrons of Morse not cited in the listing (5.11). In a letter to his parents dated January 16, 1817, Morse mentioned painting Mr. Joseph Haven.<sup>29</sup> Joseph's engaging portrait is illustrated here (5.20). The Parrotts were also acquainted with Honorable William Pickering of Greenland who sat for Morse in 1824.<sup>30</sup>



5.20

**Joseph Haven** (1757-1829)

Oil on canvas

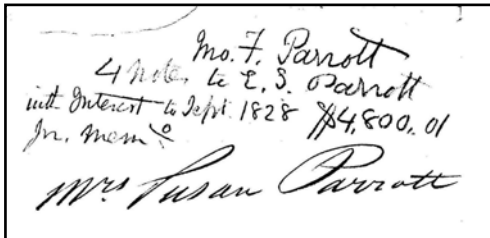
Height 30 inches. Width 25 inches.

Collection Portsmouth Historical Society.

Why does there appear to be no primary 19<sup>th</sup> century documentation other than the Jedidiah Morse's 1817 letter (5.11) to his son citing "Captain Parrott and Mrs. Parrott"? First, the portraits by Morse were complementary, so no bill of sales would have been issued for them. Nor do inventories help either. Pictures in inventories in the 19<sup>th</sup> century mostly refer to prints, reverse paintings on glass and maps. When oils are mentioned, it was not customary for an artist or maker to be cited. For example, Joseph Haven's 1829 room by room inventory of his Pleasant Street home makes no reference to his portrait (5.20).<sup>31</sup> In the 1828 inventory of Enoch Parrott (Docket #11624, old series, Rockingham County, NH), there is no specific listing of a pair of portraits by Morse, but it did include "4 pictures valued at .80", "2 Pictures valued at 1.50" and "8 Pictures valued at 2.37"

To complicate matters further, on March 17 1829, a notice appeared in the **Portsmouth Journal** noting the personal estate Enoch G. Parrott was not sufficient by the sum of 12,000 dollars to answer just demands owed. William Rice (Enoch's brother-in-law) asks for an 1829 auction of Enoch's said items.

Money was a recurrent problem in the family. As grandson Dr. James Spalding relates: "My mother Susan Parker Parrott lived in comparative affluence until her father's death when she was 14 [1828]. From that time on they all lived together practicing most strict economy and were sometimes obliged to sacrifice their silver and other personal property to keep the house going."<sup>32</sup> He later observes: "the great defect in the character of the Parrotts was their foolish endorsements on notes (e.g. 5.21) for other people and in being bondsmen for friends.



Mo. F. Parrott  
4 notes to E. S. Parrott  
with interest to Sept. 1828 \$4,800.01  
Mr. Mem?  
Mrs Susan Parrott

5.21

**Spalding/ Parrott/Toscan Papers, 1784-1887.**

New Hampshire Historical Society, 1981-27 (Box 1, folder 22).

These two varieties of recklessness cost my grandfather's estate, at first it was thought, some \$50,000. This was largely cut in two within a year or two, but even then in the transition period of settling the estate, the family were obliged to leave their handsome home in the Langdon mansion and live in a small house on State Street<sup>33</sup>

As previously stated, no specific citation regarding the Morse portraits would appear in the family wills because their value was purely sentimental rather than monetary: they were likenesses of beloved ancestors. In this close knit family, genealogy was of great

interest and they were thorough and painstaking in their research.<sup>34</sup> It also explains the presence of labels on their paintings and furniture.

In conclusion, there is no reason to doubt the attribution of these portraits to Morse or the identity of the sitters. They had just traveled a long distance and been in the possession of a family too far removed from its rich New England heritage to easily verify what they are: two very fine portraits of Enoch Parrott and his wife Susan Parker Parrott painted in Portsmouth, New Hampshire in the winter of 1817 by Samuel F. B. Morse.

But this study does not end there. In 2004, a number of Parrott items appeared on the market in Portland, Maine. Included with the offerings was an account book (22.1) kept by Susan Parker Parrott of transactions at the family Piscataqua farm.<sup>35</sup> Here was the last missing piece of the puzzle: an inventory of Susan's estate taken after her death in 1852. It included the following critical notation: "Portraits of EGP, SPP" with no assigned monetary value (22.2). As stated earlier their value was sentimental: they were likenesses of beloved family members. The chain of custody is complete.



## 5.22

Susan Parker Parrott  
*Account Book, 1830-1838*  
 Portsmouth Athenaeum

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to extend special thanks to Jane Porter and Carolyn Marvin for reading this manuscript and for their insightful comments throughout; Richard Candee for referring the project to me; Donald Neiman for acquiring these portraits, lending them for public display at Locust Grove as well as encouraging scholarship on this artist; Tom Hardiman who inspires us all on a daily basis. Finally I dedicate this paper to the late Rita Conant, curator of the Portsmouth Athenaeum, whose careful note keeping still sets the gold standard for us all.

<sup>2</sup> Butterfields Auction Sale 6/24/2003. 7336G. Lot 7183. Provenance cited: Spalding-Parrott family, Portsmouth, NH.

<sup>3</sup> According to painting conservator Quentin Rankin who relined the portraits, there was no evidence of earlier inscription or labels on the back of either canvas. But as he notes in his report 2/1/2003, inscriptions if they did once exist could have been scraped away in a previous restoration. Both paintings had been restored by Gumps in California during the 1950s and during the course of lining, the tacking margins of each canvas had been trimmed before mounting them back on what appears to be their original butt-end stretchers.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. James Alfred Spalding (1846-1938) was a prominent alumnus of Dartmouth College, a resident of Portland, Maine, a noted physician, and a published author. He assumed the role of family biographer, chronicler, and genealogist. In the community of Portsmouth, he was an active member of the Federal Fire Society and the Piscataqua Pioneers and well known to the Portsmouth Athenaeum and the Portsmouth Public Library. According to the Portland, Maine Record Office, there is no record of a will or an inventory of his estate. Upon his demise, his obituary made front page on the **Portsmouth Herald and Times** of February 28 1938.

<sup>5</sup> Benjamin K. Hough. **Chart of Parrott family**. Brookline, MA: 1934. Collection New Hampshire Historical Society.

<sup>6</sup> **Portsmouth (NH) Oracle**. 2/22/1817, p. 3, column 4: "Take notice. Mr. Morse will leave town in two or three weeks..." Citation courtesy Richard Winslow III.

<sup>7</sup> 1860 United States Federal Census, Portsmouth, NH, M653, roll 679, p. 773: cites following family members all born in NH: Lyman D. Spalding, age 49, iron store, Susan P., age 45, Lyman G. age 15, James A. age 13, Merrill age 12, Susan P., age 9, Lizzie T. age 7. 1870 United States Federal Census, Portsmouth, NH, M593, roll 848, p. 461: Lyman *Spaulding*, aged 60 retired merchant, Susan P. age 55, Lyman G. age 28, civil engineer, James A., age 25, physician, *Morrill* aged 21, clerk in store, Susan P. aged 20, Elizabeth T., aged 17. 1880 United States Federal Census Portsmouth, NH, NA film number T9-0768, paged 42D: Lyman *Spaulding* age 70, retired merchant, Susan 66, Lyman G. age 35, James A. age 34, Merrill age 32, Susie G. age 29, Elizabeth age 27.

<sup>8</sup> 1910 United States Federal Census Boston, MA T624, roll 625, page 179: Merrill Spalding, age 61, born NH, head of household, engaged real estate; wife Lucretia, age 39, born in Iowa; son Merrill T. B. Spalding, age 12, born Illinois. 1920 United States Federal Census Brookline, MA T625, roll 721, p. 78: Merrill *Spaulding*, age 71, born NH, no occupation, l/w mother-in-law Mary A. Ten Broeck, age 80 born ME, wife Lucretia, age 48, born Iowa, son Merrill T.[en] B.[Broeck], age 22, born Illinois, no occupation. Social Security Death Index records cite a Merrill Spaulding born June 18 1897, died July 1972, Palo Alto, California.

<sup>9</sup> Portsmouth Town Officers. **New Hampshire Genealogical Record**. Vol. 11, 1905. 157-165.



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<sup>10</sup> Sarah Parker Rice Goodwin (1805-1896) in her memoir "**Pleasant Memories**" recalls her grandfather [Robert] Parker: "Before the Revolution he bought land in Lee and built a fine large house with a double pitch roof, dormer windows and large hall and staircase. He was very ambitious about his farming and had the largest outbuildings in this part of the country. He dearly loved ...all beautiful things in nature and art..." (Thayer Cummings Library, Strawberry Banke Museum.MS 4, Box 9, folder 2, p. 5)

<sup>11</sup> Richard E. Winslow III. "**Wealth and Honour**" **Portsmouth During the Golden Age of Privateering, 1775-1815**. Portsmouth, NH: Portsmouth Marine Society, 1988, p. 229.

<sup>12</sup> Winslow, **Wealth and Honour**, p.234.

<sup>13</sup> **Spalding/ Parrott/Toscan Papers, 1784-1887**. New Hampshire Historical Society. 1981-27. Box 1, folder 22.

<sup>14</sup> Brock Jobe, editor. **Portsmouth Furniture. Masterworks from New Hampshire Seacoast**. Published by HNE. Hanover, NH: Univ. New England Press, 1993, catalog entry #47. Although Susan transposes her grandmother's maiden and married names Sarah Parker Sherburne (1741-1804) when she made this notation, she cites her great-grandparents surnames correctly: her mother's mother's parents were Ephraim Sherburne (1702-1781) and Hannah Skilling (1705-).

<sup>15</sup> Clement E. Conger. **Treasures of the State**. Fine and Decorative Arts in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms of the U.S. Department of State. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991. Catalogue entry #62 by Brock Jobe. He speculates this is "the chest of drawers" valued at 12 s. in the inventory of the Portsmouth, NH estate of John Parrott. (John Parrott, Inventory, April 8, 1790, Docket 5518, Rockingham County Probate Records, Rockingham County Courthouse, Exeter, New Hampshire.)

<sup>16</sup> Her friend Mrs. Sarah Livermore was staying with Portsmouth-born merchant Levi Bartlett (1784-1864) **Samuel F. B. Morse Papers at the Library of Congress**, Correspondence, Unbound Letters 1810-1816. Item 5 of 8. Electronic Image 11 of 22. [Possibly Levi was the Mr. Bartlett cited in 5.11]

<sup>17</sup> **New Hampshire Gazette** ran similar advertisements Dec. 24 1816 & Jan. 7, 1817.

<sup>18</sup> All three Parrott sons were known as Captain Parrott as was their father John Parrott (1742-1790). The sitter is far too youthful to be John Fabyan Parrott (1767-1836) who in 1817 would have been 50. William Walker Parrott (1773-1858), Enoch's other half-brother, was a busy merchant based in Gloucester, MA (1820 United States Federal Census Gloucester, MA, M33, Roll 49, 400).

<sup>19</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the artist's career and good color plates of Morse's work, see William Kloss' monograph **Samuel F. B. Morse** (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988).

<sup>20</sup> Paul J. Staiti. "Samuel F. B. Morse and the Search for the Grand Style" **Samuel F. B. Morse**. Exhibition at Grey Art Gallery and Study Center, NYU. Sept.-Oct. 1982, p. 25.

<sup>21</sup> No city directories exist for 1817 but correspondence to Susan is addressed to her in Portsmouth. Amongst Spalding/Hall correspondence, James Spalding states "J.M. Toscan and Elizabeth F. Parrott married in Purcell house next to the Rockingham. Her brother John Parrott lived there, so did Enoch her half-brother later on. Enoch afterwards moved into E.W. Langdon house now the Rockingham. (New Hampshire Historical Society. 1984-64. Box 1, folder 11.)

<sup>22</sup> Parrott Avenue, Portsmouth was named for him following his handsome bequest of \$1000 to the city of Portsmouth to be used to embellish the borders of South Millpond. (**Federal Fire Society of Portsmouth**. Published by society 1905, p. 66.)

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<sup>23</sup> Sarah Parker Rice Goodwin (1805-1896) in her memoir "**Pleasant Memories**" recalls "When I was a child they came up with this new style of shawl being woven in beautiful pastels and costing between 20 and 40 dollars. (Thayer Cummings Library, Strawberry Banke Museum, MS 4, Box 9, folder 7, p. 4.)

<sup>24</sup> See Martha Gandy. **Jewelry in America 1600-1900**. Woodbridge, Suffolk, Eng.: Antique Collector's Club, 1995. She contends that sitters in early American portraits generally owned the jewelry with which they are portrayed. (p.12)

<sup>25</sup> **Samuel F. B. Morse Papers at the Library of Congress**, Correspondence, Bound volume 30 Jan 1816-28 December 1818. Item 46 of 100. Electronic image 168.

<sup>26</sup> Refer to Kloss, p. 39-40. He suggests the oil on board pendant portraits of Reverend Asa McFarland and his wife of Concord, NH (12 x 10", Private Collection) were likely gifts of the artist.

<sup>27</sup> Pearson's portrait is also cited in an autograph letter: **Samuel F. B. Morse Papers at the Library of Congress**, Correspondence, Unbound letters---1817. Item 3 of 12. Electronic image 11 of 45. Portrait illustrated Carleton Mabee, **The American Leonardo. The Life of Samuel F. B. Morse**. New York: Purple Mountain Press, 2000, p. 14.

<sup>28</sup> "Mr. Parker painted for one of his parishioners" see **Samuel F. B. Morse Papers at the Library of Congress**, Correspondence, Unbound letters---1817. Item 1 of 12. Electronic image 2 of 45.

<sup>29</sup> **Samuel F. B. Morse Papers at the Library of Congress**, Correspondence, Unbound letters---1817. Item 1 of 12. Electronic image 2 of 45.

<sup>30</sup> June 14, 1816, Enoch Parrott writing from Concord, New Hampshire, to his wife mentions he had an invitation for Sunday to spend in company with William Pickering if the weather permits. (New Hampshire Historical Society 1981-27; box 1, folder 22.)

<sup>31</sup> For copy of inventory see "Pleasant Street" house files, folder "Joseph Haven House," on deposit at Portsmouth Athenaeum.

<sup>32</sup> Dr. James Spalding **What I know about the Parrotts and Toskans of Portsmouth, Greenland, Brookfield, Middleton, and Lancaster, all in New Hampshire**, p. 178. 1984.64, box 1, folder marked 2 items, 1 & 13.

<sup>33</sup> Dr. James Spalding **What I know about the Parrotts and Toskans of Portsmouth, Greenland, Brookfield, Middleton, and Lancaster, all in New Hampshire**. p. 179. This change in material circumstances is further illustrated in a letter, dated May 6<sup>th</sup> 1829, from her brother-in-law which reads as follows: "John F. Parrott regrets to inform Mrs. Susan Parrott, that, in consequence of recent occurrences, he cannot consent to her occupancy of the house in Congress St....in this particular, he can now only deplore the misfortune which puts it entirely out of his power. (see **Spalding/ Parrott/Toscan Papers, 1784-1887**. New Hampshire Historical Society. 1981-27, box 1, folder 22)

<sup>34</sup> Susan Parrott Spalding and her four children even traveled to England to study the records first hand in order to verify Abraham Parrott was their paternal ancestor as family tradition maintained. See Hall, **The Descendants of John Parrott**, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> The site of the actual farm is still under investigation. Grandson James Spalding mentions Enoch spending his summers at the Ursula Cutts farm at Riverside. (James Spalding "Jean Joseph Marie Toscan" **Granite Monthly** Vol. LX (1928, p. 321). In his 1914 letter to his brother Merrill, he mentions the Parrott Farm "Riverside" Portsmouth, but goes on to say "some similar name (it slips me now)." In her correspondence Susan, the keeper of the account book, makes reference to a Piscataqua Farm but gives no location.