



The Sutcliffe Letters

“You are in a far and distant land...”

In a cardboard box in the Homestead attic, there is an envelope upon which is simply written “Sutcliffe Letters.” Within are eight letters sent from England between 1820 and 1870.

Who were the Sutcliffes? How do these letters add to the Homestead history? What do the letters tell us about the senders and the recipients?

Stephen T. Mather’s wife, Jane Thacker Floy, was the great-granddaughter of John Sutcliffe and Ann Greaves. Ann was the recipient of the first six letters, her daughter Grace, of the last two.

John and Ann Sutcliffe left Leeds England in 1819. After arriving in New York, on September 27th 1820, their one-year-old son William died. According to a bible in another box in the attic, William was buried at Trinity Church New York.

The family, John, Ann, and three children, moved to Savannah, Georgia. John then died in June 1822 of “Remittent Fever,” (either malaria or yellow fever) and was buried in Colonial Park Cemetery.

The earliest letter was sent from Mary Greaves, Ann’s mother, in December 1820. She acknowledges William’s passing with just a sentence, but goes on to share the current local gossip...

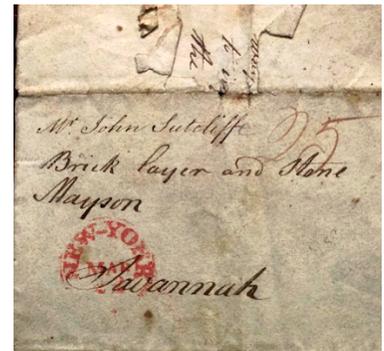
“You desired to know the reason of Mrs. Sedall hanging herself. Her father had left them a House & some Land & her Husband was a Drinking Man & had nearly spent all, so I expect she was in Despair; she was buried by the side of 11 of her Children in Wittington...”

The next letter, from Leeds in October 1822, comes from Henry Sutcliffe, John’s father and is addressed to Ann in New York City.

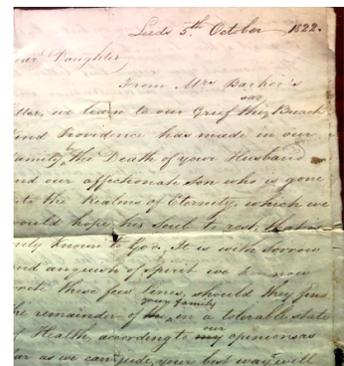


William Sutcliffe Died 27 September 1820 was Buried at Trinity Church new York

John Sutcliffe Died on the 26 of June 1822 In the City of Savannah State of Georgia



Envelope from December 1820 letter



October 1822 Letter

In the letter, he urges Ann to return to England. "You are in a far and distant land but not out of the reach of Providence..." And he writes, "We think that it will be much better for the Children and yourself to return to your own native land..."

Four subsequent letters, either Henry Sutcliffe, or from John's younger brother, and written between 1824 and 1834, continue to press Ann for details of her life and urge her return,

"...give us all particulars of your Occupation and how things are with you...I beg you will stick close to your Children and by doing so & will be paying a proper regard and doing great respect to the memory of one that is gone..." From 1824

"It would give us great pleasure were it possible to see you, and the Children in your own Native Land..." From 1826

Ann Greaves Sutcliffe did not yield to the entreaties but remained in New York with her three children, all of whom reached adulthood, married, and had children of their own. Her daughter, Grace Sutcliffe, married John Roberts Hoole in September 1836. Their first child, Sarah Ann, would become Jane Thacker Floy's mother.

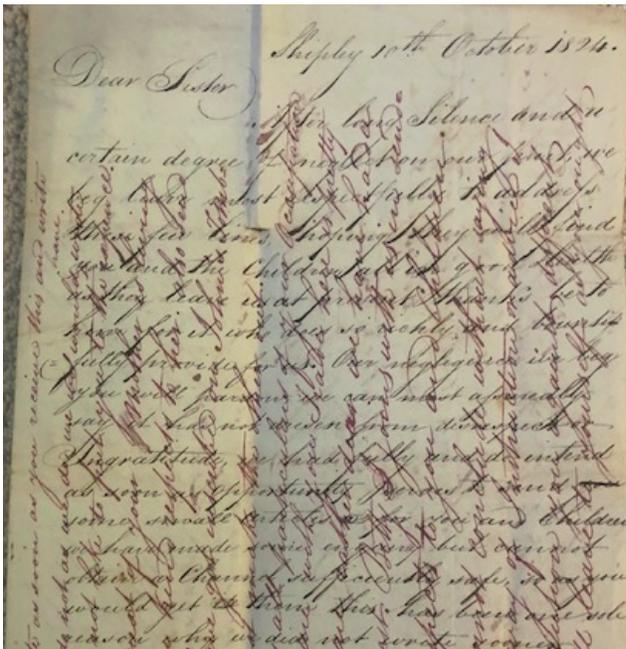
Ann Greaves Sutcliffe died in New York on February 15, 1865 at the age of 80. She is buried in the Trinity Church and Mausoleum.



Envelope 10th October 1824 Letter:



Ann Sutcliffe Headstone
Trinity Church and Mausoleum NYC



Letter from Shipley 10th October 1824
NOTE: Vertical writing over the horizontal text in a different ink in order to remain within "Single Sheet" postal rules and pricing