[1809]

To John Mellen Esqr and the other Selectmen of the Town of Cambridge

Gentlemen,

The inhabitants of several towns in this Com-
-monwealth, impressed with the awful effects of a spreading
of small pox, have taken effectual measures to secure
themselves & offspring from this dreadful contagion, by
adopting that easy substitute afforded them by Divine
Goodness, the Kine Pock Inoculation.

It has been, however a subject of general remark,
that Cambridge, where the first experiment was tried;
and from whence the practice began, should never
have adopted a general vaccination. The reason
is obvious to those who know that the thing has never
been started among us. — I have long since been
convinced that the great blessing of vaccination will
never be extensively felt until the means of attaining
it be placed within the reach of every one. The poor
must have it gratis.

I write this therefore to ask the Selectmen of Cambridge
to take this important matter under their consideration;
and take the sense of the Town thereon. It has already
been

been done by the towns of Milton - New Bedford - and Canton, which towns, with an exception of a very few obstinate individuals, are now rendered invulnerable to the most dreadful scourge that ever afflicted the human race.

For my own part I feel ambitious that the Town of Cambridge should set the example for the other Towns of Middlesex to follow after.

My general idea is, that the Town should recommend and patronize a general vaccination, but that it should be no expense to the town treasury. That it would be worth calling a Town meeting no one can doubt, who considers that the object of it is as far beyond all others, as life is above money.

All which is submitted, with a high degree of respect, by your, & their fellow townsman

Benj.n Waterhouse

P.S. I enclose a publication from the Town of Milton.

Lowell
Newburyport,
& other items $ 25.00

John Mellen Esqr
Chairman of the Selectmen
of the Town of Cambridge