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Mr. Eliot Porter
Rt. 4
Box 33
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Dear Mr. Porter:

I am a historian, writing a biography of Dr. Alice Hamilton, whom I believe you saw fairly often in the 1920s, and perhaps later as well. I am interested in any recollections you might have of her as well as anything else you cared to say about the context in which you knew her. In addition, I wonder whether you would be willing to help me identify some of the individuals whom she mentions in her letters. For, in addition to writing her biography, I am editing a volume of Dr. Hamilton's letters for the Harvard University Press. Some of the individuals she mentions that seem to be associated with you are: Ruth Porter, Nancy Porter, and Marian Porter. I believe that Ruth Porter was your mother and Marian Porter your first wife. I would be particularly interested in knowing how Alice Hamilton came to know your mother (if that was the original connection). Is your family perhaps related to that of Sue Creighton Williams Porter, a cousin of a cousin of Alice Hamilton's? The context of Alice Hamilton's letters suggests that there were other individuals whom you may have known about whom I have no information whatever. These are Betty Swift, Marta Adams, and perhaps also Mary Straus. The latter seems to have known Alice Hamilton quite well, yet I am at a loss to identify her; perhaps she was connected in some way with Hull House.

In addition to trying to garner as much information as possible for my books, I am also trying to track down additional letters that Alice Hamilton wrote. She was an extremely gifted letter writer, and I have already arranged to have many of her letters deposited in the Schlesinger Library of Radcliffe College (those of Katherine Codman, for example). Might you have any of Alice Hamilton's letters that you would either be willing to deposit in the library or lend me so that I might copy them. And, finally, do you know of anyone else living who might have some? One possibility is Valentine Mott Porter, who may also be related.

Forgive me for piling on so many requests. But I am an unreconstructed Alice Hamilton admirer and hope very much that you can assist me.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Barbara Sicherman
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