
Sarah Ann Haynesworth Gayle (1804-1835), Collection

SARAH ANN HAYNESWORTH GAYLE (1921-1990)

Collection c.: NAB No. 46

Size: 1 Hollinger Box

Accession number: 89-0261

Location NCCRW

SOURCE OF ACQUISITION:

Donation of her great, great grandson, George Denegre.

RESTRICTIONS:

None

ORGANIZATION AND ARRANGEMENT:

The material is organized into five series: I. Biographical Information; II. Correspondence; III. "The Letters of Sarah A. Gayle and John Gayle"; IV. Historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's paper; V. Journal of Sarah H. Gayle.

NOTES:

The bulk of this material is contained in series five -- Journal of Sarah H. Gayle. Material from all series has been refoldered, and some metal fasteners have been removed. The originals of Sarah Gayle's Journal and other papers in this file are located at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

FINDING AIDS:

Inventory, with complete descriptions of the series is available in the repository.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

Sarah H. Gayle is known best for the journal she kept consistently from 1827 until her death in 1835. Sarah was born in South Carolina in 1804 and moved with her family in 1810 to the newly established Alabama territory. In her journal she writes of memories she had of the long journey to Alabama; how she met General Andrew Jackson his men, Samuel Houston and Davie Crockett. Sarah, in 1833, also had the opportunity to befriend and exchange writings with the patriot poet, Francis Scott Key, who was at that time Federal Commissioner to the State of Alabama. Key became friends with Governor John Gayle and thus spent many nights with John and Sarah and their family at their home in Greensborough, Alabama.

In 1819, Sarah married a family friend, John Gayle, who was strongly involved in the political development of the Alabama Territory. Throughout her diary, Sarah describes in detail the trials of raising a family and being mistress of a household without having her husband at home; his political career as State Legislator, Supreme Court Judge, and Governor kept him in the capital city for months at a time. Because Sarah's journal is a consistent, well written account of everyday life of southern womanhood, historians like Elizabeth Fox-Genovese have

used it as a valid historical text of woman's issues in the antebellum south.

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- I. Biographical Information
 - A. Dictionary of Alabama Biography clipping on John Gayle
 - B. Newspaper clipping on Sarah Gayle as a "Slave holder"
 - C. Yale University Library Gazette, "When Francis Scott Key Was An Ambassador"
 - D. Souvenir Booklet, The University of Alabama --"Gorgas House"

- II. Correspondence
 - A. Letters between Professor Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, Editor, The Alabama Review and George Denegre, Sarah Gayle's great, great grandson
 - B. A Francis Scott Key poem written to Sarah Gayle's daughter, Sarah Ann

- III. "The Letters of Sarah A. Gayle and John Gayle"
 - A. Correspondence between the two while John was away on government business

- IV. Historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's paper
 - A. Family and Female Identity in the Antebellum South: Sarah Gayle and Her Family

- V. Journal of Sarah H. Gayle
 - A. Complete version
 - B. Sarah Haynsworth Gayle and Her Journal as edited by her grandson, Hugh A. Bayne