


10-1-2014

Sears Family Papers (MSS 518)

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Western Kentucky University, mssfa@wku.edu

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Recommended Citation

Folklife Archives, Manuscripts &, "Sears Family Papers (MSS 518)" (2014). *MSS Finding Aids*. Paper 3614.
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Descriptive Inventory

MSS 518 SEARS Family Papers

½ box. 8 folders. 35 items. 1829-1991. Originals, typescripts and photographs.

SC2014.106.1

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In June 1842, Chauncey and Emily (Hollister) Sears joined the Shaker community at New Lebanon, New York, where several members of Emily's family were already members. The Sears children at the time included: Florinda (1825-1901), Louisa "Emma Louise" (1826-1857), Francis "Frank B." (1828-1912), Charles May (1829-1900), Adaline (1831-1886), Chauncey Edward (1833-1889), Julia Levisa (1835-1906), Elizabeth Ann (1837-1916). Three of the daughters stayed with the Shakers and never married: Florinda, Adaline, and Elizabeth Ann. The others children eventually married and left the Shakers, including Chauncey Edward who married Shaker eldress Polly Ann Smith on 7 June 1873 in Columbus, Ohio. After leaving the Shakers they moved to Circleville, Ohio, and established a cannery. Chauncey died in New York City on 7 February 1889; Polly Ann lived until 10 December 1921. She practiced medicine in the community. They had no children.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection contains information about the family of Chauncey and Emily (Hollister) Sears who joined the Shaker community in New Lebanon, New York. Most of their eight children lived with the Shakers for varying numbers of years. The collection contains collected historical and genealogical information about the Sears family (Folders 5,7,8) and a short treatise on the Shakers (Folder 6). Folder 5 also includes typescripts of two letters written by William Henry Sears, one to his mother and one to Shaker Anna Maria Graves thanking her for hospitality during a 1912 visit. Folder 2 includes a bound Shaker manuscript hymnal commenced by Polly Ann Smith at New Lebanon in 1848. It includes songs dated through 1862. Folder 2 also includes eleven manuscript hymns on individual sheets of paper sent by different individuals to Smith to include in her hymnal. Folder 3 includes a copy book kept by Chauncey Edward Sears in which he copies poetry, essays and religious articles from the popular press. Most of the original material by Sears is generally noted as such. About one-half of the poetry in the back of the leather bound volume is credited to Chauncey. He occasionally will note the year he composed the poem or essay. The copy book starts with a lengthy, undated letter written by James Whittaker to his parents in England. A label inside the copy book's cover indicates that the volume was bound by Henry De Witt of New Lebanon.

Folder 4 includes a letter from Rufus Bishop (perhaps copied by Chauncey Sears)—believed to have been written to himself—in which he admits his struggles with the ways of the world and his gratitude to the Shakers for their moral guidance and encouragement. This appears to be a contemporary copy, if not an original letter. The penmanship is flawless.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1	Sears Family Papers	1829-1991	35 items
Folder 1	Inventory and genealogical charts	n.d.	3 items
Folder 2	Shaker manuscript hymnal with loose hymns (11) commenced by Polly Ann Smith in 1848 at New Lebanon, NY	1848-1862	12 items
Folder 3	Copy book containing essays, poems, and occasional writings of Chauncey Edward Sears, a Shaker at New Lebanon, NY, and selected works by popular and historic authors	1850-1870	2 items
Folder 4	Letter written by Rufus Bishop to Rufus (believed to be himself) in which he admits his struggles with the ways of the world and thanks the Shakers for their moral instruction and encouragement	1829	1 item
Folder 5	Short biographical sketches of Charles May Sears and Chauncey E. Sears, as well as two letters written by William H. Sears, one to his mother and one to Shaker Maria Graves at New Lebanon	1912	4 items
Folder 6	Information related to the Shakers and the relationship with the Sears family	n.d.	1 item
Folder 7	Historical/genealogical sketch of the Sears family by Burton Peabody Sears and his obituary and letter from his widow	1938-1975	2 items
Folder 8	Photos taken at Hesper, Kansas of a Friends meeting house and cemetery with connections to the Sears family	1991	10 items

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS SEARS Family Papers 1829-1991
518

Shaker manuscript hymnal commenced by Polly Ann Smith in 1848; copy book of Shaker Chauncey E. Sears, 1840-1870, which includes occasional original poems and essays by Sears as well as short examples of popular and historical authors; an 1829 letter from Rufus Bishop that extols the moral virtues of the Shakers; historical and genealogical information about the Sears family.

1/2 box. 8 folders. 35 items. Originals, typescripts and photos.
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SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Bishop, Rufus, d. 1852 B1,F4
De Witt, Henry – Mentioned B1,F3
Graves, Anna Maria, 1833-1914 – Letter to, 1912 B1,F5
Hesper Friends Academy – Hesper, Kansas – Photos B1,F8
Hesper Friends Church – Hesper, Kansas – Photos B1,F8
Hesper, Kansas – Photos B1,F8
Hinkley, Barnabas, d. 1861 – Comments about B1,F3
Hollister, Alonzo Giles, 1830-1911 B1,F3
Motherhood – Comments about B1,F3
Patriotism B1,F3
Poetry B1,F3
Sears, Burton Peabody, 1887-1974 – Relating to B1,F7
Sears, Charles May, 1829-1900 – Relating to B1,F5
Sears, Chauncey, 1802-1881 – Relating to B1,F5
Sears, Chauncey Edward, 1833-1889 B1,F3
Sears family
Sears, Louise (Kaes), b. 1899 B1,F7
Sears, Mary Ann (Smith), 1835-1919 – Letter to, 1912 B1,F5
Sears, Polly Ann (Smith), 1826-1921 – Relating to B1,F2
Sears, William Henry, 1858-1933 B1,F5
Shakers
Shakers – Hymnals, 1848-1862 B1,F2
Shakers – Music, 1848-1862 B1,F2
Whitaker, James, 1751-1787 B1,F3

SEE or SEE ALSO

Smith, Polly Ann, 1826-1921

See:

Sears, Polly Ann (Smith), 1826-192

Jeffrey 10/01/2014