

Mary Bridges Beck commonplace book

Ms. Codex 2004

Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.

Last updated on August 07, 2019.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

August 2019

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Beck, Mary Bridges, 1718-1799
Title	Mary Bridges Beck commonplace book
Call number	Ms. Codex 2004
Date [inclusive]	1737-1799
Extent	1 volume (+ 1 leaf)
Language	English
Abstract	This volume is a combination of commonplace book and recipe book written by Mary Bridges Beck of Bristol, England spanning the years from 1737 to 1799.

Cite as:

Ms. Codex 2004, Mary Bridges Beck Commonplace Book, 1737-1799, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Daughter of George and Elisabeth Bridges, a prominent, philanthropic Quaker family in Bristol, Gloucestershire, England. Mary Bridges married Bristol merchant Joseph Beck in March 1742. The couple had four children: Ann, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Mary. Daughter Elizabeth Beck married Edward Ash and the couple had ten children one of whom was Mary Ash Were.

Scope and Contents

This leather-bound volume is a combination of commonplace book and recipe book written by Mary Bridges Beck of Bristol, England spanning the years from 1737 to 1799. The commonplace book consists 18th-century literature, elegies, letters, maxims, poems, prose, and religious writings. Authors of letters and literature include Lord Byron, William Diaper, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, and Elizabeth Singer Rowe. Also included are sayings by Beck's father entitled "Some serious reflections". Reading the volume from back to front are culinary, and medicinal recipes on 160 numbered pages preceded by a by a table of contents. Culinary recipes include breads, cakes, jellies, meat dishes, picklings, puddings, and soups. Medicinal recipes include remedies for several ailments such as ague, asthma, bruises, convulsions, coughs, dog bites, deafness, and prevention of miscarriages. Among the recipes is information concerning Colston Hospital and the 1754 Bristol election. There are few household recipes in the volume for blacking, cement, killing bugs, and plaster. Many of the recipes include attributions and comments by Beck. Some text in the volume is written parallel to the spine. An example of micrography written in concentric circles, dated 1782 is laid in the volume. The writing includes the ten commandments, prose of creation, prayers, and local information of Bristol. Written on the second page of the volume: Mary Bridges September 1737; This book for Mary Ash Were by her G. mother M. Beck 1799. Covers are detached and there are several loose leaves.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

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Source of Acquisition

Sold by Dean Byass Manuscripts & Rare Books (Bristol, England), 2018.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Codices (bound manuscripts)
- Commonplace books
- Excerpts
- Manuscripts, English--18th century
- Poetry
- Recipes

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Bristol (England)--History--18th century--Sources

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Were, Mary Ash, 1772-1823

SUBJECT(S)

- Commonplace books--England--Bristol--18th century--Specimens
- Cooking, English--18th century
- English poetry--18th century
- Quakers--England--Bristol--18th century
- Traditional medicine--18th century--Formulae, receipts, prescriptions

Collection Inventory

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