

Mary Emma Jocelyn diary

Ms. Codex 1770

Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.

Last updated on May 09, 2019.

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

September 2016

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Jocelyn, Mary Emma, 1832-
Title	Mary Emma Jocelyn diary
Call number	Ms. Codex 1770
Date [inclusive]	1851-1852
Extent	1 volume (+ 1 leaf)
Language	English
Abstract	This volume contains the diary of Mary Emma Jocelyn of Williamsburg, New York, spanning ten months from November 1851 to September 1852.

Cite as:

Mary Emma Jocelyn Diary, 1851-1852, Ms. Codex 1770, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Mary Emma Jocelyn was born in New Haven, Connecticut to antebellum abolitionist, clergyman, and

engraver Simeon Smith Jocelyn (1799-1879) and Harriet Starr (d. 1877). The Jocelyn family moved to Williamsburg, Brooklyn in 1844 where Simeon Smith Jocelyn was installed as the pastor of the First Congregational Church. Mary Emma was the fifth of eight children born to the Jocelyns. Her siblings are Harriette Luceannah (1823-), Simeon Starr (1825-), Albert Higley (1827-), Caroline Eliza (1830-1868), Nathaniel (1835-1852), Cornelius Buell (1838-1864), and Frederick Henry (1841-).

Scope and Contents

This volume contains the diary of Mary Emma Jocelyn spanning ten months from November 1851 to September 1852. The first entry in the diary was recorded on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1851. At the top of the page is written "Journal continued." Jocelyn made daily entries in her diary and recorded her life with her family and friends while living in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York. A brief note on the weather begins each entry. Jocelyn described her daily activities including sewing, reading, seeing family and friends, and distributing tracts. She attended church on Sundays chiefly at her father's church, the First Congregational Church, and singing class with her sisters Carrie (Caroline) and Harriet. She was often visiting or receiving friends including Mary Reeve and Hannah Hudson among others. Jocelyn attended lectures and events at the Lyceum in Brooklyn. She also visited her sister in Brooklyn and mentions ferrying over. The Jocelyn family and the Hudson family appeared to be close friends and the Jocelyn siblings spent much time with brothers George and Henry and their sister Hannah. Jocelyn wrote often of Henry Hudson and worried about his crisis of faith. Major events in the family are described throughout the ten-month period, including the joyous wedding of her sister Harriet to Douglas Murphy on June 30, 1852 and the death of her brother Nathaniel (Natty) in August 1852. Thirty pages in the diary were dedicated to Natty's illness and death. This lengthy entry is dated September 27, 1852 and describes the family's anguish and grief over Natty's passing. Other notable entries include her father Simeon's travels, her lengthy description of a dream, helping a young Irish immigrant, her interest in an essay by Edgar Allen Poe, and the celebration of the founding of Williamsburg in January 1852. The diary is in chronological order from November 27, 1851 through April 1, 1852. After April 1 the diary is arranged as follows: July 8 to August 8, 1852; 23 pages dated September 27, 1852; April 29 to June 8, 1852; April 3 to April 28, 1852; June 9 to July 5, 1852. Bound in at the end are seven pages continuing the September 27th entry. Laid in the volume is a printed flier for an exhibition and sale at Montague Hall, Brooklyn for "articles offered for sale at the Anti Slavery Fair" November 30, 1851 with notes on the verso by Mary Emma Jocelyn.

Administrative Information

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Access Restrictions

This codex is available for research.

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Source of Acquisition

Sold by Philadelphia Rare Books & Manuscripts Company (Philadelphia, Pa.), 2016.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Codices (bound manuscripts)
- Diaries
- Fliers (printed matter)
- Manuscripts, American--19th century

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Williamsburg (New York, N.Y.)--Social life and customs--19th century

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Jocelyn, Simeon Smith, 1799-1879

SUBJECT(S)

- American diaries--19th century--Specimens
- American diaries--Women authors--19th century

Collection Inventory

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