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Hays, William Shakespeare (MSS 28)

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Manuscripts & Folklife Archives
 Department of Library Special Collections
 Kentucky Library & Museum
 Western Kentucky University
 Bowling Green, KY 42101

MSS 28 HAYS, William Shakespeare, 1837-1907

Descriptive Inventory

2 1/2 boxes. 29 folders. 1,032 items. 179?-1949. Originals.

1949.12.1

BIOGRAPHY

William Shakespeare Hays (19 July 1837-23 July 1907) was born in Louisville, Kentucky, and resided most of his life in that city. Hugh Hays, his father and a native Pennsylvanian, migrated to Louisville in 1832 where he married Martha Richardson. Will showed signs of musical talent at an early age and took a few violin lessons, but that seems to have been all of the musical training that he received. During 1856 and 1857, Will attended colleges in Hanover, Indiana; Clarksville, Tennessee; and Georgetown, Kentucky. While at Georgetown, he became known as the "boy poet." His first published song was "Little Ones at Home," which was written while he was at Hanover. This incident ignited a prolific writing career which resulted in Hays penning innumerable poems and newspaper columns in addition to approximately five hundred songs. He signed his manuscripts as "Will S. Hays." Some of his poetry was written to his future wife, Belle McCullough of Louisville. They were married in 1865.

Hays always had a love for the river, and his newspaper columns were based on river happenings and occurrences. During the Civil War, he commanded a river transport on the Mississippi, between Vicksburg and New Orleans. He continued to work on riverboats periodically during the sixties and the early seventies.

Hays began his newspaper work in Louisville in the late 1850s and maintained a position with the *Democrat*, and later, with the *Courier-Journal and Times* until his death. He served as marine editor for several years.

When he died in 1907, he was survived by his wife and two children, Dr. Samuel Brown Hays (1878-1933), and Mattie Belle Hays [Mrs. Fauche Warren Samuel] (1868-1947).

Bibliographical Notes

The Collection.
Dictionary of American Biography.
 Grise, George. Thesis, "Will S. Hays."

THE COLLECTION

The correspondence of Hays is comprised mainly of his letters to Belle McCullough, his future wife, written during the years of 1863 to 1866. Also, there is a diary entitled "My Leisure Moments to Belle," written by Hays during this same period while residing in Nashville, Tennessee. A few letters to Mattie Belle Hays Samuel and to Samuel Brown Hays constitute the Hays family letters. Manuscript poems, songs (chiefly lyrics), and newspaper columns of Hays, with accompanying typed and manuscript copies, are included. There are royalty and copyright contracts as well as lists of Hays' works. Many newspaper clippings of Hays' various endeavors are included, too. Additionally, there is a folder of George Grise's correspondence from 1947 to 1949, which he collected while researching and writing his thesis on Hays.

For additional information about Hays' musical compositions, consult the sheet music collection in the Kentucky Library.

SHELF LIST

| BOX 1 | Hays family papers | 179?-1949 | 259 items |
|--------------|--|----------------------|------------------|
| Folder 1 | Letters to Belle McCullough | 1863-1866 | 54 items |
| Folder 2 | Wills (1) John McCollock, and (2) Thomas Kyle, both of Belfast, Ireland | 179?-1810 | 2 items |
| Folder 3 | Incoming letters to Hays, royalty and copyright contracts, and lists of compositions | 1847-1913 | 14 items |
| | 3a - Letter from mother | 1847 | 1 item |
| | 3b - Letter from W. W. Hite | 1904 | 1 item |
| | 3c - Royalty and copyright contracts | 1867;1884;1911; 1913 | 4 items |
| | 3d - List of compositions | | 8 items |
| Folder 4 | Incoming letters to Mattie H. Samuel | 1935; 1941 | 3 items |
| Folder 5 | Letters, clippings, etc., of Samuel B. Hays | 1888; 1933 | 7 items |
| Folder 6 | Letters written to George Grise while he was writing his thesis | 1947-1949 | 57 items |
| | 6a - Letters - Steamboats | 1947 | 4 items |
| | 6b - Letters - "The Drummer Boy of Shiloh" | 1948; 1990 | 4 items |

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|--------------|---|------------------|------------------|
| Folder 7 | Newspaper writings for various named columns | 1863 | 105 items |
| | 7a - "Driftwood" columns | | 14 items |
| | 7b - "Old Ike" columns | | 22 items |
| | 7c - "Our Log" columns | 1870; 1883 | 30 items |
| | 7d - "Syah" columns | 1863-1864 | 5 items |
| | 7e - Hays' newspaper writings - River column | | 12 items |
| | 7f - Hays' miscellaneous news - paper writings | | 22 items |
| Folder 8 | Newspapers - <i>The Inland Voyager</i> , published by the Green Line Steamers, Oct. 2-20, 1939, and related letter, Jan. 9, 1940 | 1939; 1940 | 17 items |
| BOX 2 | Poems | 1864-1907 | 519 items |
| Folder 1 | Poems, A-G | | 101 items |
| Folder 2 | Poems, H-M | | 90 items |
| | 2a - Poem, "Marthy, John An' Jim" (Original in C1-D1,F3) | Jan. 1, 1888 | 1 item |
| | 2b - Poems with accompanying information | | 1 item |
| | 1. "The Hopewell Hymn" | | |
| | 2. "Old Shep" | | |
| Folder 3 | Poems, N-S | | 83 items |
| Folder 4 | Poems, T-Y | | 97 items |
| Folder 5 | Poems, copies (holographic and printed) | | 38 items |
| Folder 6 | Poems, untitled | | 44 items |
| | 6a - Untitled poems, originals | | 39 items |
| | 6b - Untitled poems, holographic and typed copies | | 5 items |
| Folder 7 | "In Memoriam" poems | 1864-1906 | 55 items |
| | 7a - In memoriam of Capt. Pink Varble | 1892 | 2 items |
| | 7b - In memoriam poems; no date, | | 25 items |

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|--------------|--|------------------|------------------|
| Folder 8 | alphabetized by title Poems, typed and printed | | 2 items |
| Folder 9 | Poems written to and in honor of | 1882; 1885 | 2 items |
| Folder 10 | Poems written in 1907 | 1907 | 7 items |
| BOX 3 | Miscellaneous materials | 1864-1907 | 254 items |
| Folder 1 | Manuscripts lyrics for songs | | 126 items |
| | 1a - Song, "When Sherman Marched Down to the Sea," and front cover from sheet music of the same | | 2 items |
| | 1b - Copies (holographic) of songs | | 5 items |
| | 1c - Photostat of Hays' song "Old Ike" | | 1 item |
| | 1d - Article - Authenticity of song "Goodbye Susan Jane" | | 1 item |
| Folder 2 | Material concerning composer of "Dixie" | | 22 items |
| Folder 3 | List of Hays' songs in Kentucky Library | | 6 items |
| Folder 4 | Diary - "My Leisure Moments to Belle McCullough," (Original, photocopy, and two bound typed copies) | 1864-1865 | 1 item |
| | 4a - Diary (typescript) | | |
| Folder 5 | Compositions | | 5 items |
| Folder 6 | Indices to collections of Hays' materials | | 4 items |
| Folder 7 | Scrapbooks - Belle's book, poems of Belle and of Will | 1862-1864 | 3 items |
| Folder 8 | Papers - Hays' 50 th and 57 th birthday celebrations | | 7 items |
| Folder 9 | Printed items | 1899-1947 | 68 items |
| | 9a - Steamboats - Article | | 1 item |
| | 9b - Hays' newspaper | 1899 | 10 items |

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|-----------|---|------|----------|
| | columns - Clippings | | |
| | 9c - Will S. Hays and his works - Clippings | 1941 | 15 items |
| | 9d - George Grise's inquiries concerning Will S. Hays - Clippings | 1947 | 4 items |
| | 9e - Hays' poems and songs - Clippings | | 24 items |
| | 9f - Authorship of "Dixie" - Clippings and photostats | | 9 items |
| | 9g - Will S. Hays - Tributes | 1907 | 5 items |
| Folder 10 | Photographs and pictures | | 9 items |
| Folder 11 | Will S. Hays - Biographical material | | 3 items |

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS HAYS, William Shakespeare, 1837-1907 179?-1949
28

Correspondence, poems, lyrics, newspaper marine columns, and royalty and copyright contracts of William Shakespeare Hays of Louisville, Kentucky. Many clippings of a biographical nature and of his works.

2 1/2 boxes. 29 folders. 1,032 items.
1949.12.1

SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Columnist and columns – Marine
Composers – Kentucky
Contracts – Royalties and copyrights
Copyright – Contracts
Diaries, 1864-1865 – Hays, William Shakespeare, 1837-1907
Essays
Grise, George Calvin, 1918-1961
Hays, William Shakespeare, 1837-1907 – Photos
Ireland – Wills, 179?, 1810
Journalism – Columnists
Louisville – Social life and customs, 1863-1866
Lyrics
McCullough, Belle, d.1935
Musicians
Poets – Kentucky

Poetry
Scrapbooks – McCullough, Belle, d. 1935
Steamboats

SEE AND SEE ALSO CARDS

Hays, Belle McCullough
See:
 McCullough, Belle

Columnists and columns
See also:
 Journalism

Lyrics
See also:
 Poetry; Songs

Jeffrey 11/10/2011