

Trenton Buzzzone and Jessica Parker (editors)

*“True friendship is the noblest gift”:
The Album of Memory of Jennie Farr (1858-1882)*

Shelfmark

California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).
University Archives and Special Collections.
S-887.

Rare & Unusual Books,
Pamphlets & Manuscripts of the 15th-20th Centuries Collection.
Album of Memory.
May 1, 1858, to August 29, 1882.
One volume.

Introduction

The following is a critical edition of the *Album of Memory* owned by Mrs. C. W. Farr (née Jennie Richards), contained in a black-leather-bound volume of seventy-four pages with gold embossed lettering on the cover. The manuscript is held in the University Archives and Special Collections at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), purchased from an unknown vendor (Larson's?) in September 1968 for \$3.00. Measuring twenty-one by seventeen centimeters, there are twenty-seven entries which include engravings, drawings, and written entries; the rest of the pages has remained unused and blank (with the exception of engraved pictures that were included by the printer). The pages are well preserved, and the entries were made with dark ink, either blue or black. There is one drawing that has been colorized (Page 17).

Mrs. Farr's album begins with her preliminary dedication in 1858 (before the Civil War, during the height of this type of album's popularity in America) and spans over two decades until 1882 with entries from nineteen separate authors, including men and women, as well as Mrs. Farr herself, from four separate states, namely, Illinois, Iowa, California, and Massachusetts. Some of the entries include bits of poems or hymns, a few have original drawings, and there are five professionally engraved pages that were part of the original album. The tone of the entries suggests that most of the authors are close friends of Mrs. Farr's and are sad to be parted from her; one exception—albeit sharing in the same sentiment—is an entry by a “collective,” namely, the Sigourney Literary and Historical Society. It is unclear whether Mrs. Farr moved to Sigourney, Iowa, from California and had left the book with the friends she was leaving behind, or whether Mrs. Farr had moved to California from Iowa, and these were her new acquaintances. Entries from 1858, 1859, and 1869 were composed by people in Sigourney; entries from 1879 were composed in Santa Barbara, California, and by 1882, entries were composed in Santa Ana, California.

Little information can be found about Mrs. Farr outside the manuscript itself, which provides the minimal information that she received the book in 1858 while unmarried (she signs the book as Jennie Richards) and living in Sigourney, Iowa. Sometime between 1858 and 1865, she married a Mr. C. W. Farr, as an entry on Page 18, dated to 1865, is addressed to “Mrs. Farr.” Most of the entries are by people from Southern California—Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Santa Ana—with a few entries from Sigourney (The Literary and Historical Society and “Gregg”), and one each from Illinois and Massachusetts. The sequence of entries sheds little light on where Mrs. Farr was geographically, as they are not in chronological order (perhaps individual authors had “reserved” their pages in advance?).

While not a historical account of the years between 1858 and 1882, Mrs. Farr’s album does illuminate specific social aspects not commonly detailed in other accounts—namely the communication and interaction of women in the mid-nineteenth century. While we have little information about Mrs. Farr herself, some of the authors of the entries in her book are rather well known. Willella and A. J. Howe were prominent doctors in Santa Ana, the Kelloggs (Mary, Fannie, and F. E.) came from prominent farming families in Santa Barbara County and Napa Valley, and Lydia Dearing was the wife of a well-known Methodist minister in Santa Ana. Many of the entries are bits of poems or hymns, some of them actually edited from their original versions to fit the author’s intended message to their friend, and a majority of the entries were made by women. That Mrs. Farr knew these individuals well enough to have them complete entries in her book suggests a circle of acquaintances who were well-to-do and well-educated. Readers will also notice that there is little mention of the American Civil War, and only one entry was made during the war (April 1865). This could be a reflection of Mrs. Farr and her friends’ social status or—just as likely—a reflection on Iowa’s and California’s status during the war as sites of non-aggression (they mostly assisted the war effort monetarily and with supplies). On an academic note, the poems and hymns quoted by the authors also inform readers what types of literature were popular during these decades, especially since many of the entries are direct copies from magazines, newspapers, and books. In addition, the engraved plates contained in this album were ubiquitous in these types of albums: in fact, when searching online for other *Albums of Memory*, many of the same engravings appear.

As a literary type, the *Album of Memory* is the descendent of the “autograph book,” exchanged among friends and colleagues to be filled with poems, drawings, personal messages, small pieces of verse, and other mementos. The more remote origin is a practice among graduating university students in late medieval Europe to have their personal Bibles signed by classmates and instructors. These signatures expanded to actual messages, poetry, and sketches, and publication companies later responded by appending blank pages at the end of newly published Bibles. Eventually, publishers began offering small, decorated books with only blank pages. These early “books of friends” or

“friendship books” were common throughout Germany by the end of the sixteenth century, and students kept the books with signatures from their instructors and classmates, which began to function as a sort of scholarly credential, depending on who had signed. German immigrants transported the tradition to American culture in the late eighteenth century, but they were replaced in popularity after the Civil War era by yearbooks, though young women were known to continue using them. Overall, Mrs. Farr’s “book of friends” shows the social circle of an educated woman and the types of literature she and her friends enjoyed in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The transcription below preserves the lines, spelling, capitalization, and underlinings of the original. Any additions are enclosed by square brackets. Loss and illegible deletions are indicated by three dots enclosed by square brackets.

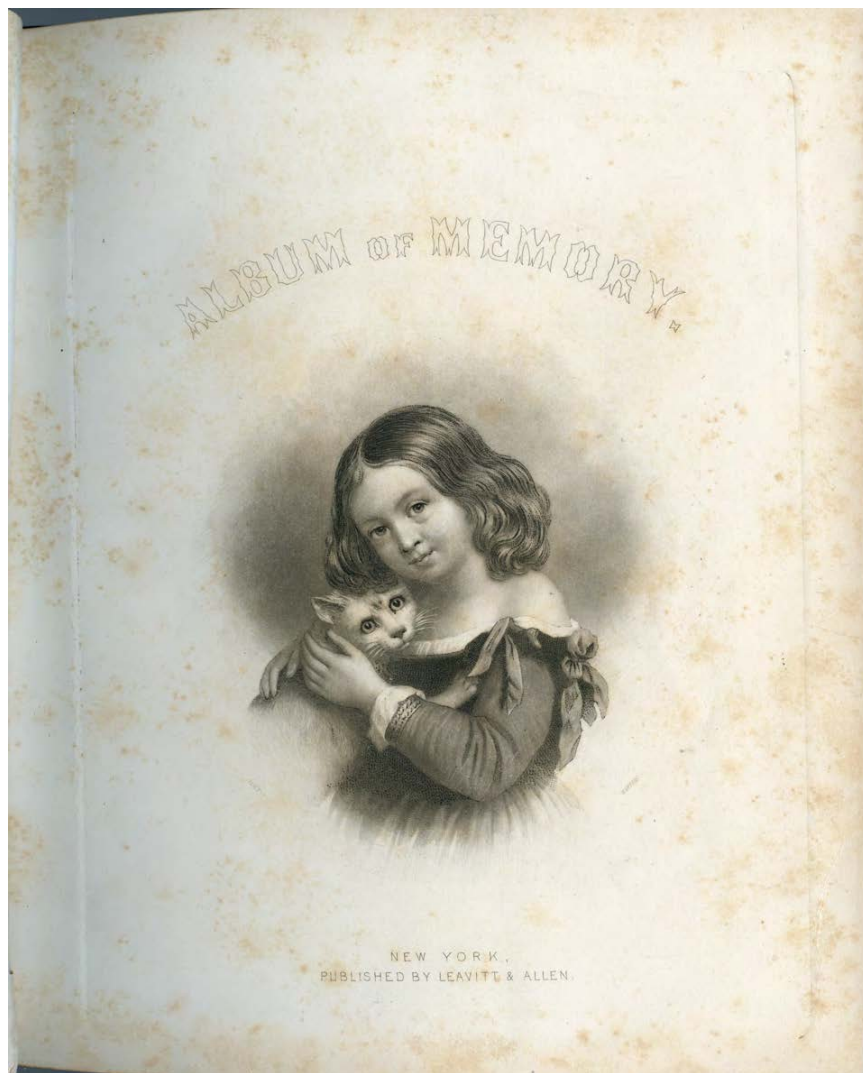


Figure 1: *Album of Memory*, page 4.

Edition

Cover: [Black leather, embossed, with the book's decorated title ("Album of Memory" in gold.)]

Page 1: [top left of page] 3⁰⁰ [top middle of page, different hand] 200192 [top right of page, same hand as first] Rare [white circular sticker below, about ¼ inch diameter] S887 [bottom left side along edge, different hand] 9/68 Larson's 3.00 [bottom middle of page, same hand as previous] Cal-State Fullerton

Miss Jennie Richards' Album,
Presented By A Friend,
Sigourney Iowa¹. May 1st, 1858

Page 2:

Preliminary

This little volume will, I hope, in time
become to me, a casket in which
friendship's richest jewels may be found.
From this as from a mirror, will be
reflected on "Life's meandering way," the
fond remembrance of other days.
Upon the perusal of each line,
as verse, or gem of precious thought,
which in this book shall be traced; or
when I scan the well known initials which shall
here be found, what pleasant recollections of bygone
days will march along the line of memory's
beaten course.² Oh: This will reappear the scenes
of other days, scenes forever passed; but
never to be forgotten.
With these few words of hasty thought,
I now leave thee, little book to fill thy
mission; may angels guard thee, and may the hands that from time, to time, shall
touch thee be unstained
by sin; and may they work for thee moral
renovation of the human race, a cause for which
I always shall aspire.
Jennie. R_____

¹ Small town settled in 1843 in Keokuk County, Iowa. Named for nineteenth-century American poet Lydia Sigourney (1791-1865). Population remained under 1,000 residents until the 1880 census.

² Where a word is underlined with dots, it is a reflection of the author creating a double underline, with the top line solid and the second line dotted. On this page, this type of underline only appears twice, under "course" and "other days."

Page 3: [Engraving of a young woman wearing an off-shoulder dress painting under a tree while looking off frame. The engraving is framed by an antique ivy pattern with the title "Sketching / from / Nature" included in the bottom of the framing. Under the ivy frame on the left side in small printed letters is "Wm. Barclay," on the right side is "Illman & Sons."³]

Page 4: [In a concave arch is the title "Album of Memory" in jagged, hollow lettering above a picture of a young girl in an off-the-shoulder dress holding a cat and looking out at the reader. At the bottom of the engraving is printed in small capital letters "New York, / Published by Leavitt & Allen."⁴]

Page 5: [The pages with written entries are more yellowed than the pages with engravings, suggesting a different writing material. This page is written in the same hand as Page 2 with similar ink and underlining style, but instead of a double line, the author uses one solid line over a dotted line. The entry continues onto the back of the page.]

To My⁵ Friend. (Who Gave Me This Book.)

How sadly sounds the word farewell,
 When friends are doomed to sever;
 It may be for a little while,
 Or it may be forever.
 For life hangs by a brittle cord,
 Which may be quickly broken;
 While still within the mind remains,
True friendships words last spoken.
 I cannot say farewell to thee,
Without regretful feeling;
 Without a friendly tear upon my cheek,
A trace of pain revealing.
 For thou hast brightened many hours,
 Which sorrow else would have shaded.
 And kindly strewn with friendship's flowers,
A path by thorns invaded.
True friendship is the noblest gift,
 That God to us has given;

³ Prolific and high-profile engraving and printing firm in Philadelphia, founded by Englishman Thomas Illman and his two sons. Upon Thomas's death in 1845, his five brothers took over the business as the Illman Brothers (famous for historical and fashion engravings), and his sons continued on in a separate firm, Illman Sons.

⁴ Publishing firm located in Manhattan, the partnership of George Ayres Leavitt (son of Jonathan Leavitt, a Massachusetts bookbinder, who founded several of New York's earliest publishing firms) and his classmate John K. Allen. The two took over Leavitt's father's publishing house on his death in 1851, renamed the firm Leavitt & Allen, and expanded the firm until its collapse during the American Civil War due to credit issues.

⁵ Where a word is underlined with dots, it is a reflection of the author creating a double underline, with the top line solid and the second line dotted. On this page, all of the underlines are of this type.

Page 6:

And 'though the plant in this cold world may grow
 The flowers will bloom again – In Heaven.
 Then please accept this (my humble tribute);
 As fadeless friendship's token;
 I will think of thee, (wilt though of me?)
 'Till memory's spell be broken.
 Sigourney Iowa. Jennie R. _____
 Jan' 25th 1859.

Page 7: [The engraving is of a small female child in a short dress and hat, asleep under a tree, while her dog kills a snake that was set to attack. The engraving is titled "Trusty Guardian," which is written underneath. Unlike other plates, this one does not indicate the printer or engraver.]

Page 8:

Lulu Howe⁶
 My Very Dear Mrs. Farr: _
 Other friends may crave for you a
 life devoid of shadows and a path strewn with
 flowers; but I know you will think the sunshine
 all the brighter after the clouds have drifted away.
 If our earthly home were our
 vast gardens, from which we could gather flowers at
 will, we would soon tire of their fragrance and
 beauty. God knew what was best for us when he bade
 the rose to spring up by the thistle, and cast
 the stones in the way in which our feet should
 tread. Let us live (you and I) ever
 thankful for the sunshine and never murmur at
 the shadows life's trials will cast upon us.
 Santa Ana, Los Angeles So. Cal.
 August, 28th 1882.
 Willella Howe⁷
 Yours truly
 Willella Howe

Page 9:

Santa Ana, Aug, 28, 1882.

⁶ Willella and A. J. Howe's oldest of two daughters. Born in 1875, she would have been 7 or 8 when she signed the album above her mother's entry.

⁷ Willella Earhart Howe-Waffle, one of the first female doctors in Orange County, California; she practiced for 38 years. Her house is currently preserved by the Santa Ana Historical Society as the Howe-Waffle House and Medical Museum, an 1889 Queen Anne style home in Santa Ana.

With best wishes for your
 future health and prosperity
 I am yours truly
 A.J. Howe⁸

Page 10:

“Better to weave in the web of life
 A bright and golden filling.
 And to do God’s will with a ready heart,
 And hands that are waiting and willing.
 Than to snap the delicate minute threads
 Your curious life asunder,
 And then blame Heaven for the tangled ends,
 And sit and weep and wonder.”⁹
 Yours Ever. N E. Lacy.
 Santa Barbara. June 12. 1879.

Page 11: [The writing here is especially difficult to read, not only because of the loose handwriting but also several misspellings of words. Spelling by the author are indicated below by [sic].]

To Miss Jennie
 Since I have the honour [sic] with those who
 may from time to time deck thes [sic] pages to
 inscribe a few lines in remembrance
 of the past
 May Some Kind Spirit
 inspire my mind to breathe [?] Some thought
 by which I may be remembered
 When past Scenes are
 being forgotten lend a thought for
 the writer of these lines and maybe
 claim an interest in Your Prayer
 and well wishes
 May Joys perpetual greet
 Your way and in wisdom as in
 Years advance and may You Ever
 be Happy through Life and through
 Eternily [sic] is this wish of Your Friend
 Gregg

⁸ Dr. Alvin J. Howe, Willella’s first husband. They divorced in 1897.

⁹ Part of a work by Mary Frances Tucker (née Tyler), an American poet, which made the rounds of several publications in the 1870s. The poem is alternatively titled “The Golden Side” or “The Bright Side.”

Sigourney Iowa February 19. 1869

Page 12:

“Oh, why and wither? God knows all;
I only know that he is good,
And that whatever may befall
On here or there, must be the best that
could.
For he is merciful as just;
And so, by faith connecting sight,
I bow before his will, and trust
However they seem he doeth all things
right.”¹⁰

Feb. 25, 1879

Mrs. A. J. Ellison

Goleta Cal.

Page 13:

“There is a scene where spirits blend.
Where friend holds fellowship with friend
Though sundered far, by faith we meet
Around one common Mercy Seat”¹¹

A. W. & C. C. Clark

August 16th 1879

Santa Barbara

Cal

Page 14: [This entry is a whimsical drawing of a bird and what looks like wheat stalks. Within the drawing, its author/artist has written: “compliments / Elmer E. Foster / Jacksonville, Ill.”]

Page 15:

To Miss Jennie R.
In behalf of the Sigourney Literary and
Historical Society we tender you our
thanks for the Interest you have taken
in our Society during your Stay in.
our village and as often as you may
Chance to look on this page to

¹⁰ Part of a much longer poem, titled “The Shadow and the Light,” by John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892) in 1860, inspired by St. Augustine’s *Soliloquies*, Book VII.

¹¹ From the hymn, “From Ev’ry Stormy Wind that Blows,” based on Exodus 25:21. Text written by Hugh Stowell (1799-1865), a minister in the Church of England, and published in *The Winter’s Wreath: A Collection of Original Compositions in Prose and Verse*, from 1828. He rewrote the hymn in 1831 to be accompanied by music in church service.

remember that we regret very much
 your departure and the loss of your
 presence at our Meetings.
 We hope to retain you as a friend
 of the Society generally and to have the
 Satisfaction of believing that if removed [sic]
 far from us as a Society we still have
 in you the Same friend
 Should you ever return to our
 village again we hope to greet you
 with that Same Friendship and
 be able to Exhibite [sic] the Society as Flourishing
 and prosperous as ever
 With Much Esteem
 S. L. & H Society
 Through the President

Page 16: [The engraving is of an official looking man in a coat and hat, speaking with a woman in a bonnet and dark dress on her doorstep, with a forest in the background. The woman's daughter is pulling a small toy which the man's dog is watching. The engraving is titled "The Widow" and does have the names of the printer and engraver at the bottom left and right of respectively. While the name of the printer is illegible, the name of the engraver appears to be A. Robin]

Page 17: [The entry is surrounded by a hand-colored wreath of leaves and blue flowers, probably forget-me-nots, likely done in colored pencil or pen as there is no impression on the opposite side of the page. All text below is encased within the wreath's borders.]

Mrs. C. W. Farr.

Santa Barbara_Cal

"There are a thousand nameless ties
 Which only such as feel them know;
 Of kindred thoughts, deep sympathies,
 And untold fancy shells, which throw
 O'er ardent minds and faithful hearts
 A chain, whose charmed links do blend
 That the light circles but imparts
 It's force in these fond words — my friend."¹²
 Oh! Let my friendship in the wreath,
 Though but a bud among the flowers,
 Its sweetest fragrance round thee breathe —
 In memory of past days and hours.

¹² This first part is a sampling from a poem titled "Friendship" by American poet Anna Peyre Dinnies (1805-1886). The second composition seems to be original to the author of the page.

Mary Kellogg¹³
1878

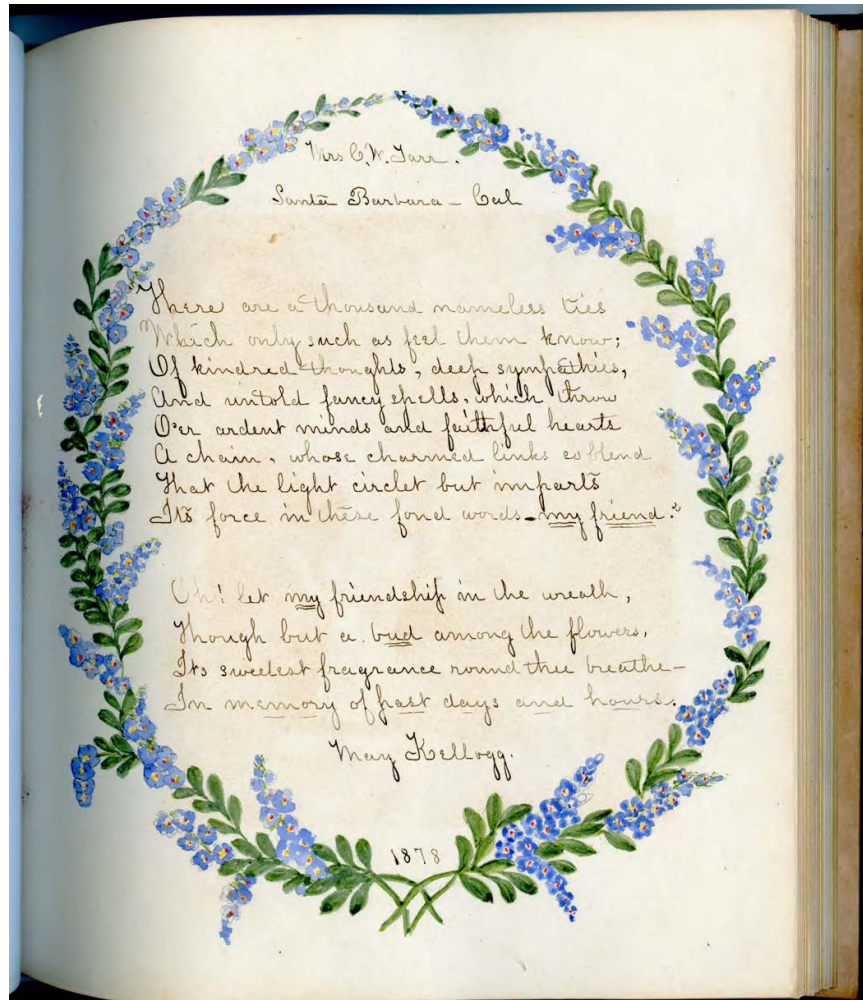


Figure 2: Album of Memory, page 17.

Page 18:

For Mrs Farr's Album

Fair book: thou art memory's treasure
To shrine in the depth of the heart -
A charm, to awaken new pleasure
When others, less cherished, depart.
And love, truth, and friendship forever
Shall sparkle the brightest for thee,

¹³ Mary Elizabeth Kellogg (1857-1941) was the daughter of Benjamin F. E. Kellogg and cousin of Franklin Kellogg, whose entry is on Page 20 of this manuscript. In 1880, she married Byron Orlando Clark, a prominent Pasadena planter. Mary moved to northern California after her husband's death and was a Red Cross worker in Butte County during World War I.

Till death all these friends dissever,
 And memory ceases to be.¹⁴
Sarah. F. Chesnutwood[sic].¹⁵
April the 6, 1865.

Page 19:

In pleasant and loving remembrance,
 Of our first days in Santa Ana.
 Minnie Gardner,¹⁶
 Nantucket
 Aug 19th 1882
 Mass.

Page 20: [The entry on this page is a large drawing of what looks like Minerva (from the California state seal) on the left side of the page, walking in the direction of the bottom left corner of the page and looking to her left at a centurion, walking directly toward the page's edge on the right. Both are holding a long scroll that reads, "in God we trust." Below them is a large, unfurled scroll with two columns containing Psalm 20:7 on the left and Psalm 46:3 on the right, and the signatures of the authors of this entry below each Psalm column.]

"Some trust
 in chariots, and
 some in horses:
 but we will
 remember the
 name of the
 Lord our God."
 Psalm-20-7.
 Fannie Kellogg
 "He shall
 subdue the
 people under
 us, and the
 nations
 under our
 feet."

¹⁴ A generic album dedication, written by Helen Augusta Brown found in *Peterson Magazine*, Volumes 45-46 (1864), which had a collection of engravings, poems, short stories, etc.

¹⁵ Presumably this is meant to be "Chestnutwood," with the author leaving out the first "t."

¹⁶ Daughter of Lydia M. Dearing (Page 27 of this manuscript) and the latter's first husband Charles P. Gardner. Minnie would have been 15 years old at this time, possibly visiting from Massachusetts where she lived with her father, while her mother had moved to Santa Ana, California, with her new husband, the Reverend Dearing.

Psalm 46:3¹⁷
 F. E. Kellogg¹⁸
 Goleta-March
 7th 1879
 California.

Page 21:

“Fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed
 For I am thy God” Isa. 41-10.
 “The wind may blow, and the billow roll,
 Hope is the anchor of our soul;
 In fastens on a land unknown,
 And moors us to our Father’s throne.”¹⁹
 Very Truly Yours
 G. E. Brand
 Santa Barbara
 May 19th 1879

Page 22:

Santa Barbara
 May 20th 1879
 In moments of darkness should
 deep rooted sorrow
 Refuse to thy heart the relief of a tear
 What deep grueling sympathies
 still it may borrow
 From fountains that friendships
 Will open thee here.²⁰
 Your sincere friend
 Amelia D. Brand

¹⁷ This passage is actually from Psalm 47:3 in most translations at this time. It can appear as Psalm 46 in the Latin (Vulgate) and Greek (Septuagint) versions of the Bible.

¹⁸ Franklin Erwin Kellogg (1851-1923) was the son of Florentine and Rebecca Kellogg who planted one of the first vineyards in Napa Valley in 1848 and were the first to plant English Walnuts in California. In 1877, together with his wife Sarah “Fannie” Frances (1850-1931), Frank moved to Goleta, where they farmed a variety of crops and started the Goleta Dairy and Creamery, the first creamery in Santa Barbara County. Frank was also a popular teacher and principal at Rafaela School (now Goleta Union School) and a member of several community committees. He is first cousin to Mary Kellogg who appears on Page 17 of this manuscript.

¹⁹ Quote adapted from a sermon, titled “The Anchor” and delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, on May 21, 1876, by Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), an English Baptist pastor in London for 38 years.

²⁰ Part of a poem written by Henry S. Bartlett in 1835 in his future wife’s autograph album.

Page 23: [The engraving is of a young child in an off-the-shoulder dress and cap, astride a pony. The horse faces to the left of the page, the child looks out at the viewer. Titled "The Young Cavalier," under the engraving on the left is "Printed by Wm. Salter," on the right is "Engraved by J. Sartain."²¹]

Page 24:

With pleasant remembrances
Of co-operative days. I am very
sincerely your friend
Laura E. Cole
Santa Ana
Aug. 29th 1882.

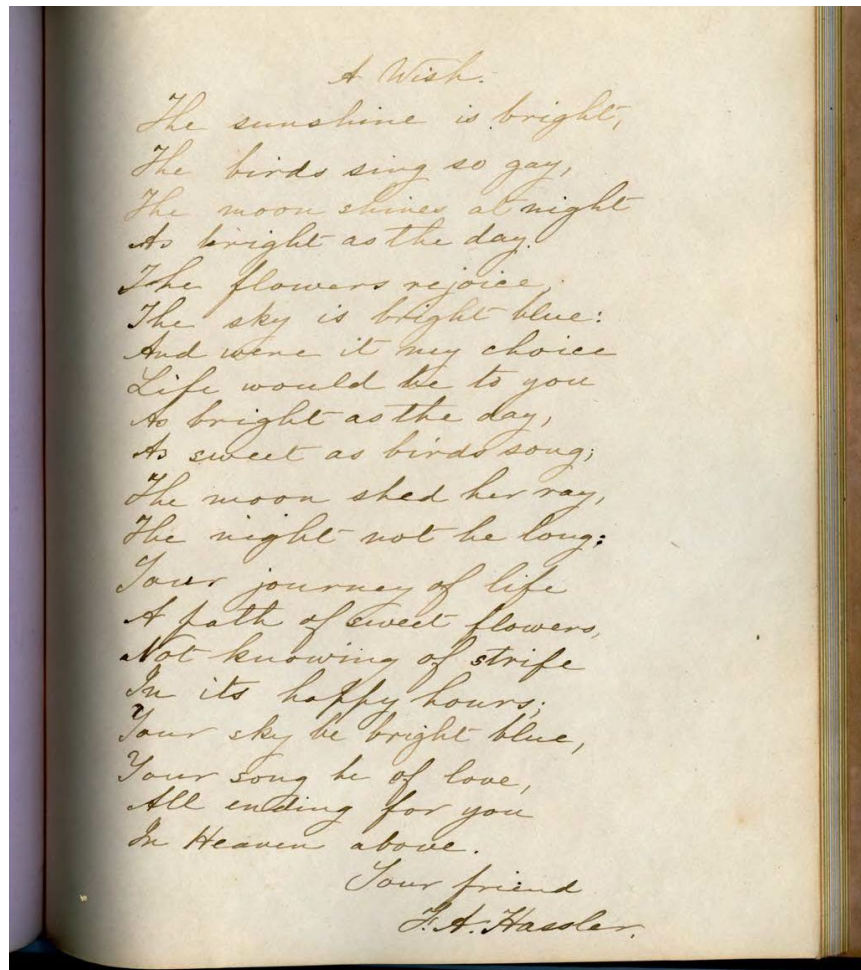


Figure 3: Album of Memory, page 25.

²¹ A similar print was printed by William Salter and engraved by John Cochran. John Sartain (1808-1897), an English-born American artist, pioneered the mezzotint engraving style in the U.S., which allows half tones (greys) without dots or hatch marks, allowing for a smoother finish. A friend of Edgar Allan Poe, Sartain was also known for his work in other arts, like architecture. He belonged to the committee working on the Washington Memorial in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Page 25:

A Wish.

The sunshine is bright,
The birds sing so gay,
The moon shines at night
As bright as the day.
The flowers rejoice,
The sky is bright blue:
And were it my choice
Life would be to you
As bright as the day,
As sweet as birds song;
The mood shed her ray,
The night not be long;
Your journey of life
A path of sweet flowers,
Not knowing of strife
In its happy hours;
Your sky be bright blue,
Your song be of love,
All ending for you
In Heaven above.
Your friend
T. A. Hassler.

Page 26:

Santa Ana Cal. Aug 28. 1882
Passing through life's field of action
Lest we part before It's End.
Take with in your modest volume
This memento from a friend.
Minnie Young.

Page 27:

"The Past is still in Gods keeping
The Future his mercy will clear
And what looks dark in the distances
May brighten as we draw near"²²

²² Adapted from a poem, titled "He Knows" and written by an anonymous author, but published in a number of newspapers across the country in the 1880s.

Your friend

Lydia M. Dearing²³

Santa Ana Cal

Aug 25 1882

Back cover: [Black leather, embossed.]

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ABOUT THE EDITOR: *Jessica Parker of Santa Maria, California, earned her two B.A. degrees in History and Religious Studies from San Jose State University (2017) and her M.A. in History from California State University, Fullerton (2020). She is currently working for CSUF's College of Humanities and Social Sciences as a data analyst for the Student Success Center. The primary-source edition published above originated in the "History and Editing" course offered by CSUF's History Department.*

²³ Lydia M. Dearing (née Thomas) was the third of four wives of the Reverend Albert Lincoln Dearing from Maine, a veteran of the Indian and Civil Wars, a carriage maker, and Methodist minister. Mother of Minnie Gardner, whose entry appears on Page 19 of this manuscript, she left her daughter with her ex-husband in Massachusetts and moved to Santa Ana, California, with her new husband in 1882. They purchased a twenty-acre ranch, were married for 28 years until Lydia's death in 1910, and had one son.