

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

NAME OF COLLECTION:

Gilman Family, Papers, 1810-1894

LOCATION(S):

Mss. boxes "G"

SIZE OF COLLECTION:

one manuscript box (140 items)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COLLECTION:

For biographical sketches of Samuel and Caroline Gilman, see the *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 7, pp. 298-299, 305-306.

SOURCE OF COLLECTION:

Gift of Mrs. Eliza W. Lippitt, 1898

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION:

Samuel Gilman (1791-1858), the son of Frederick and Abigail Hillier (Somes) Gilman, was born in Gloucester, Mass., on 16 February 1791. He graduated from Harvard in 1811 and was a tutor of mathematics there from 1817 to 1819. On 1 December 1819, he was ordained minister of the Second Independent Church of Charleston, S.C., an Unitarian church, and remained there until his death on 9 February 1858, in Kingston, Mass.

Gilman was also known as an author. His most famous poem, "Fair Harvard," was written in celebration of Harvard's 200th anniversary in 1836. Toward the end of his life he was considered the leading literary figure in Charleston.

Gilman married, on 25 September 1819, Caroline Howard. They had seven children, three who died in infancy.

Caroline Howard Gilman (1794-1888), the daughter of Samuel and Anna (Lillie) Howard, was born in Watertown, Mass., on 8 October 1794. She lived in Cambridge, Mass., for several years until 1819, when she married Samuel and moved to Charleston. She, too, was a writer and edited a literary magazine. She considered herself primarily a writer for children and was one of the most popular women writers of her day. She lived in Charleston until 1870, when she returned to Cambridge. She died, on 15 September 1888, in Washington, D.C.

This collection of papers consists mostly of family letters and poetry of Samuel and Caroline Howard Gilman. The two major recipients of their letters are Samuel's sister, Louisa Gilman Loring (1797-1868) of Salem, Cambridge, and Boston, Mass., and Caroline's sister, Harriet Howard Fay (1782-1847) of Cambridge. There are also many letters from Samuel to Caroline while he was in Boston or on other trips along the East Coast. The letters discuss personal, family, and social matters, literature, religious subjects (especially Samuel's ministry and Unitarianism), the slavery issue, and life in Charleston. There is also some discussion of the literary magazine, *Rose Bud*, and the English writer, Harriet Martineau (1802-1876). The letters are valuable historically in that they contain various observations and comments made by two New Englanders living in the antebellum South.

The collection also contains ten sermons by Samuel, as well as tributes to the memory of Samuel and Caroline.

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American Antiquarian Society
MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT

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