



Guide to the Gavuetta “Detta” (Goodhue) Sawyer Papers, 1874-1936

Administrative Information

Title and Dates:

Gavuetta “Detta” (Goodhue) Sawyer Papers, 1874-1936

Repository:

New Hampshire Historical Society
30 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-228-6688
<https://www.nhhistory.org/>

Collection Number:

2023.019

Author of Finding Aid:

Sandra L. Wheeler

Creator:

Sawyer, Gavuetta M., 1859-1936

Language:

The materials in this collection are in English.

Extent:

2 boxes ; 0.63 linear feet

Abstract:

Gavuetta “Detta” (Goodhue) Sawyer (1859-1936), daughter of James Boswell Goodhue (1831-1905) and Mary Gavett Fiske (1825-1911), lived most of her life in and around Webster, NH. After working as a school teacher, she married Harvey Calvin Sawyer (1868-1948), a farmer and Methodist minister. They adopted the daughter of Harvey’s brother (Orrin Sawyer, 1865-1910), Orinne Gavuet Sawyer (1909-1986) shortly after her birth. This collection contains Gavuetta’s diaries, poems and essays, some Goodhue family photographs and writings.

Access and Use

Acquisition Information and Provenance:

The Gavuetta “Detta” (Goodhue) Sawyer papers were given to the New Hampshire Historical Society by Susan E. Schnare in 2023. Ms. Schnare also donated a previous and related collection, the Goodhue, Sawyer, and Fisk Family Papers (2003.013).

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by Sandra L. Wheeler in June 2024. The finding aid was written by Sandra L. Wheeler in July 2024. This finding aid follows the standards set-forth by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Location:

The collection is housed at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The materials in this collection are on paper and do not require special handling. There are some photographic negatives, which require gloves and a lightbox for use.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

For permission to reproduce or publish materials from this collection, please contact the New Hampshire Historical Society. Users are responsible for following all copyright and intellectual property laws.

Preferred Citation:

Item title, Gavuetta “Detta” (Goodhue) Sawyer Papers, 2023.019. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH. Date accessed.

Collection Overview

Biographical Information:

Gavetta/Guavetta/Gavuetta (1859-1936) was known to everyone as “Detta.” The spelling of her first name is highly variable, but her tombstone has “Gavuetta” and that version will be used throughout this document. Born May 1, 1859 in New Hampton, NH, she was the only daughter of James Boswell Goodhue (1831-1905) and Mary Gavett Fiske (1825-1911) who also had Charles “Charlie” (1854-1936), William “Will” (1861-1938), and Senter (1865-1932).

Detta married Harvey Calvin Sawyer (1868-1948) of Andover, NH, on August 15, 1894 in Webster, NH. They had no children together, but adopted the daughter of Harvey’s brother, Orrin (1865-1910) and his wife, Minnie Waterman Sawyer (1866-1931) in 1910. The baby was named Clarissa at birth, but renamed Orrine on February 14, 1911, according to a Probate Court record.

Harvey's working life was as a Methodist minister and a farmer. He appears to have served churches in various small New Hampshire towns, but the family could seldom live on that income and they raised chickens for meat and eggs, cows for milk, and sold garden produce in larger or smaller quantities throughout their lives.

Gavuetta died in Concord, NH, on November 26, 1936. Harvey died in Franklin, NH, on May 14, 1948.

Collection Scope and Content Note:

This collection of Gavuetta "Detta" (Goodhue) Sawyer's papers, 1874-1936, consists primarily of her writings, some meant to be published and others recording her thoughts and activities. Detta kept diaries intermittently and wrote essays and poems, most of which are undated. The poetry is light and often slightly sarcastic and meant to amuse, providing quirky takes on her life and times; some was published in local newspapers (undated clippings are included among her papers) and others circulated among her family. Her brothers Charles and William especially seem to have also written light poetry. Her prose essays and fragments are sometimes very detailed about her activities, with lists of chores accomplished and amusing behaviors of her toddler daughter. One, "Wanted a Minister's Wife," is a sardonic list of expected tasks and comportment of a woman in that position.

There are also a few Goodhue family photographs and papers. This collection supplements another about the same family (Sawyer, Goodhue and Fiske Family Papers, 2003.013) which contains more about Detta's husband and daughter. Note that Gavuetta's name is spelled variously in public documents and census returns. The spelling used here is taken from her tombstone.

Arrangement:

Gavuetta "Detta" (Goodhue) Sawyer's papers are arranged by genre, then chronologically, though most items are undated. Materials relating to other family members and photographs follow.

Contents List

Box 1

Folder 1	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue correspondence, incoming, 1915, undated
Folder 2	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue commonplace books, undated
Folder 3	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue diaries, 1891, 1892, 1893
Folder 4	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue diaries, 1894, 1895
Folder 5	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue ephemera, 1887, 1894, undated
Folder 6	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue ephemera, autograph book, 1874-1883 [includes a brief Fisk genealogy written by her grandfather, John Fisk, in 1874]
Folder 7	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings, autobiographical, undated
Folder 8	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings: diaries, lists, notes, poems, undated
Folder 9	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings: essays, school, undated
Folder 10	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings: essays, 1894, undated

Folder 11	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings: poetry, 1888, 1903, 1905, 1936
Folder 12	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue, writings: poetry, 1919, 1936, undated
Folder 13	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings: poetry, undated
Folder 14	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings: poetry, undated
Folder 15	Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue writings: poetry, undated
Folder 16	Goodhue family (including Charles, William), writings, undated
Folder 17	unidentified author(s): Minutes, Junior Epworth League, 1900-1902, undated [Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue Sawyer was the superintendent]

Box 2

Folder 1	Photographs: Goodhue family, undated Charles, Hazel, James, Marguerite, Mary, Nellie, Walter, William Fisk, F.F.
Folder 2	Photographs: Sawyer, Gavuetta "Detta" Goodhue, Harvey, and Orrine, 1911, undated
Folder 3	Photographs: friends, places; includes unidentified baby, possibly taken post-mortem, 1876, undated Stevens, Grace; Walker, Jane Mansfield, 1876; Couches Pond, Webster NH; unidentified baby
Folder 4	Photographs, unidentified, undated ["Gem" tintypes]
Folder 5	Photographs cased and uncased, undated Cased: Gavuetta Goodhue, aged 8 months Charles Goodhue, age 7 with Gavuetta, age 2 Uncased: Unidentified man, daguerreotype, undated Uncased "gem" tintype of unidentified child, mounted in ivory or bone, undated Uncased tintypes: Goodhue, Will; Goodhue, Gavuetta, undated
Folder 6	Photographs, negatives (people and places; a few landscapes) unidentified, undated

Subject Terms

People:

Goodhue family
Goodhue, Charles, 1854-1936
Sawyer, Gavuetta M., 1859-1936
Sawyer, Harvey Calvin, 1868-1948
Sawyer, Orrine, 1909-1986

Organizations:

Junior Epworth League

Subjects:

Diaries
Farm life
Methodist Church
Photographs

Poetry

Postmortem photography

Locations:

Penacook, NH

Webster, NH

Occupations:

Clergy

Farmers

Housewives

Related Materials

Archives

Sawyer, Goodhue and Fisk Family Papers, 2013.003