

Asa Gray Papers

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Prepared by Edward T. Green, Sr.



Manuscript Division, Library of
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Collection Summary

Title: Asa Gray Papers

Span Dates: 1840-1859

ID No.: MSS84489

Creator: Gray, Asa, 1810-1888

Extent: 75 items; 1 container; .2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Botanist and professor of natural history at Harvard University. Invitation and correspondence of Asa Gray, his wife, Jane Loring Gray, and others to Elizabeth Carrington Morris and Margaretta Hare Morris and undated drafts of articles possibly by the entomologist Thomas Say intended for publication in the *Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Personal Names

Agassiz, Louis, 1807-1873--Correspondence.

Gray, Asa, 1810-1888.

Gray, Jane Loring, 1821-1909--Correspondence.

Haldeman, Samuel Stehman, 1812-1880--Correspondence.

Harris, Thaddeus William, 1795-1856--Correspondence.

Morris, Elizabeth Carrington, 1775-1865--Correspondence.

Morris, Margaretta Hare, 1797-1867--Correspondence.

Say, Thomas, 1787-1834.

Silliman, Benjamin, 1816-1885--Correspondence.

Organizations

Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

Harvard University--Faculty.

Subjects

Botany--Study and teaching.

Entomology.

Natural history.

Occupations

Botanists.

Educators.

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of Asa Gray, botanist and professor of natural history at Harvard University, were purchased by the Library of Congress in 1999.

Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Asa Gray is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions:

The papers of Asa Gray are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Asa Gray Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Event</i> |
|---------------|--|
| 1810, Nov. 18 | Born, Sauquoit, N.Y. |
| 1825-1826 | Attended Fairfield Academy, Clinton, N.Y. |
| 1826-1831 | Attended Fairfield Academy College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York, Clinton, N.Y., receiving a medical degree |
| 1830 | Began to collect and exchange plants with John Torrey |
| 1836 | Published <i>Elements of Botany in New York</i> . New York: G. & C. Carvill and Co. |
| 1836-1838 | Member, U.S. Exploring expedition under command of Charles Wilkes |
| 1838-1843 | Professor of botany, University of Michigan, Detroit, Mich. Published with John Torrey <i>Flora of North America</i> . New York and London: Wiley and Putnam. 2 vols. |
| 1842 | Appointed professor of natural history, Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass. |
| 1847 | Published <i>Manual of Botany of the Northern United States</i> . Boston: L. Munroe and Co. |
| 1848 | Married Jane Lathrop Loring |
| 1858 | Published <i>Botany for Young People and Common Schools</i> . New York: Ivison Blakeman, Taylor, and Co. |
| 1873 | Retired, Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., to work on revisions of his book on North American flora |
| 1876 | Published <i>Darwiana; Essays and Reviews Pertaining to Darwinism</i> . New York: D. Appleton and Co. |
| 1888, Jan. 30 | Died, Cambridge, Mass. |
| 1893 | Posthumous publication of <i>Letters of Asa Gray</i> , edited by Jane Loring Gray. Boston: Houghton Mifflin |

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Asa Gray (1810-1888), botanist and professor at Harvard College from 1842 to 1873, span the years 1840-1859 and consist chiefly of letters from Gray and his wife, Jane Loring Gray, to botanist Elizabeth Carrington Morris and her sister, Margaretta Hare Morris, a naturalist. Gray became an influential botanical taxonomist in America after he introduced a new system of classification based on biological similarity. Most of the correspondence between Gray and the Morris sisters is scientific and technical in nature and concerns botany and the natural sciences. Also included are letters to the Morrises from other prominent American scientists, including Louis Agassiz, Samuel Stehman Halderman, Thaddeus William Harris, and Benjamin Silliman, together with two undated articles possibly by the entomologist Thomas Say for the *Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*.

Container List

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Contents</i> |
|------------------|---|
| BOX 1 | Farlow, W. G., invitation from Asa Gray, undated |
| BOX 1 | Ingham, Charles C., letter to unidentified Morris sister, 1856 |
| BOX 1 | Morris, Elizabeth Carrington |
| BOX 1 | Correspondence from |
| BOX 1 | Gray, Asa, 1842-1859 |
| | (2 folders) |
| BOX 1 | Gray, Jane Loring, 1856-1857 |
| BOX 1 | Silliman, Benjamin (1816-1885), 1859 |
| BOX 1 | Morris, Margaretta Hare |
| BOX 1 | Correspondence |
| BOX 1 | From |
| BOX 1 | Agassiz, Louis, 1853, undated |
| BOX 1 | Haldeman, Samuel Stehman, 1849, 1854 |
| BOX 1 | Harris, Thaddeus William, 1850-1852 |
| BOX 1 | Silliman, Benjamin (1816-1885), 1841 |
| BOX 1 | To Benjamin Hornor Coates, 1841 |
| BOX 1 | Say, Thomas (1787-1834), two articles possibly by Say for the <i>Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia</i> , undated |