

JULIA HILL NEWELL COLLECTION
SC1998.8

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Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music
University of Rochester

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DESCRIPTION OF COLLECTION

Accession number: SC1998.8

Shelf location: M2A 3,4

Extent: .25 linear feet

Biographical Sketch

Julia Hill was born in Rochester, New York, likely in or around the year 1837, for the census of 1850 lists her as the daughter of Benjamin Hill, aged 14. Benjamin was a music teacher who had immigrated to the United States from London by 1832, when the "Rochester Gem" (v. 4 p. 103, col. 2) cites him as being on the faculty for the opening of the Rochester Seminary of General Education. Julia proved to be a precocious musician and made her public debut at the age of eight, when on February 27th, 1845 she accompanied her father, who sang and played the flute (as a printed program in the scrapbook indicates). By the late 1840s Julia had acquired a reputation locally as a fine pianist. In 1851, Benjamin took Julia on a European tour for both perform and study. Her scrapbook, retained in this collection, indicates that she was extremely well received, as do local newspaper clippings and other documents in the collection.

On their return to the United States, Benjamin appears to have been broken both financially and in health, and Julia was forced to devote her energy to supporting the family through teaching. A proposed second tour of Europe, mentioned by Julia in a letter (May 9th, 1852) to her friend Emma, was deferred and ultimately did not take place. In 1861 Julia's friends supported a benefit recital on her behalf, the purpose of which was to raise funds to support the purchase of a piano for her, which she could not otherwise have afforded. A note in the collection indicates that Julia married T. S. (Thaddeus Selby) Newell, a successful lawyer and financier, on July 22nd, 1869, and bore three children: Albert, Mabel, and Anna. On August 10, 1892, the Rochester *Union Advertiser* carried a brief obituary stating simply "Julia, wife of T. S. Newell, died Monday night at 247 University Avenue."

Provenance

The Julia Hill Newell Collection was the gift of Professor David Rakowski (then of Spencer, Massachusetts), great-great-grandson of Julia Hill Newell. It was received by the Sibley Music Library on February 26th, 1991. Professor Rakowski made a further gift in November, 2016 of the autograph album housed in folder 19.

Scope and Content

The collection contains documents and clippings compiled for the most part by Julia Hill Newell, mainly during the 1850s and most relating to her European tour. To these materials have

been added, as the result of research, a few items of sheet music bearing the name of Albert S. Newell and of such a date as possibly to have been owned by Julia herself. Some material relating to research conducted on the collection and its creator has been appended, mostly photocopies from contemporaneous local newspapers.

Restrictions

None.

Associations

RTWSC maintains a file of ephemera pertaining to local (i.e., Rochester, NY) music history; the file's earliest documents date back to the 1850s, and so are contemporary with Julia Hill's peak period of musical activity. Elsewhere, RTWSC holds items of printed sheet music bearing the stamp "Gift of Albert S. Newell" which likely refers to Julia's son Albert, who died on January 6th, 1939 aged 68. This would accord with the genealogical document in the collection that states that Julia's son Albert was born on December 29th, 1871. It appears that Albert S. Newell donated a collection of sheet music to Sibley Music Library before his death.

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

Series 1: General

This series is comprised of all of the items donated by Professor Rakowski, including the scrapbook, letters, clippings, and other items of ephemera. An appendix file of modern origin, including photocopies of contemporaneous newspaper articles and also research notes, is also included. The items are arranged by type in order of importance.

Series 2: Printed Music

This series is comprised of a few items bearing the owner marks of Albert S. Newell, which are of such a date and nature as possibly to have been the property of Julia Hill Newell.

Series 3: Manuscript Music

This series is comprised of one manuscript, that being an introduction to the piano (1852) by Alexander Dreyschock.

INVENTORY

Series 1: General

- Folder 1 Scrapbook, its coverage describing Julia Hill Newell (ca. 1845-1850s).
Comprised of twelve pages bearing pasted content, with an additional document tipped in between the first and second pages. The individual press items annotated with citations added by hand.
- Folder 2 Letter from Julia to her Mother. — London, Sept. 20th, 1851.
4 pages, in ink.
- Folder 3 Letter from Julia to Emma. — Berlin, May 9th, 1852.
4 pages, in ink. Accompanied by its envelope.
- Folder 4 Letter to Julia from Martha Gauss[?]. — Death notice dated April 16th, 1879.
4 pages, in ink.
- Folder 5 Dreyschock Certificate (translation).
Certificate from pianist and teacher Dreyschock, attesting that Julia had studied with him briefly and also as to her talent.
Letter (3 pages, in ink) with Certificate (1 page, in ink).
- Folder 6 Attendees list
Attendees at a recital given by Julia May 6th, 1852; the names include those of composer Meyerbeer and several members of the nobility.
2 pages, in ink.
- Folder 7 Newspaper clippings
Four clippings relating to Julia's performance in the St. Lawrence Hall, Toronto, on November 8th, 1858 under the patronage of Lady Head.
- Folder 8 Benefit Concert of January 7, 1861
Program and newspaper clippings relating to the event in Corinthian Hall [Rochester, NY] for the purpose of purchasing a piano for Julia.
- Folder 9 Thalberg Farewell Concert
Brief newspaper clipping announcing Julia's performance of a Duett [sic] with Mr. Thalberg on his U.S. tour.
- Folder 10 Poem on the Death of Benjamin F. Hill.
A news clipping embodying "Lines suggested by the Decease of Benjamin F. Hill," their author identified merely as "Carrie". Mr. Hill's death indicated as having occurred in 1858.
- Folder 11 Poem "A Soldier from Bingen"

Poem by the Hon. Mrs. Norton, clipped from *Democrat and American*, issue of February 17th [year not provided]. Consists of seven stanzas; its connection with Julia is obscure.

- Folder 12 Envelope addressed to Julia
 Bears the imprint and picture of Chapman's Commercial Academy, Corner of Main & St. Paul Streets, Rochester, N.Y..
- Folder 13 Genealogical notes
 Handwritten genealogical notes on Julia's marriage and children.
 1 page, in pencil; accompanied by envelope.
- Folder 14 Appendix
 Research notes and photocopies of press items compiled in the 1990s. Also includes two copies of "Julia Hill Newell: Rochester's Forgotten Virtuoso", a biographical statement of Julia Hill Newell elaborated upon with societal observations, written by Sion M. Honea (1998) for a Sibley Music Library display.
- Folder 19 Album
 Constitutes a bound autograph album, having belonged to Julia Hill in the 1850s; printed by J. C. Riker (New York, New York). Square 8vo. Title page signed by Julia A. Hill. Contains 19 handwritten entries (one in Italian, one in German, and the rest in English); many pages left blank; also contains four picturesque hand-painted floral plates. The binding embellished with floral vignettes; spine deteriorated.

Series 2: Printed Music

- Folder 15 Lyons, Mr.. *Preludes for the Piano Forte*. Publisher's imprint lacking.
For piano, 2 hands
Provenance: Gift of Albert S. Newell.
- Folder 16 Kalkbrenner, F. *God Save the King: varié pour le piano-forte*, op. 17. Leipzig:
chez Fr. Kistner, [s.d.] Plate no. 510.
For piano, 2 hands
Provenance: Gift of Albert S. Newell.
- Folder 17 Slapp, William *Six Sonatinas for the piano forte*, op. 4. London: Printed by
Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter, & Co., [s.d.]
For piano, 2 hands.
Provenance: Gift of Albert S. Newell.

Series 3: Manuscript Music

Folder 18 Introduction composed for Miss Julia Hill / by A. Dreyschock. — Prague the 17th
April 1832.
1 page of music, containing 24 measures of music for solo piano. at end: attacca
Rapsodie.