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Sally Sayward Barrell Keating Wood collection, 1800-1998

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Maine Women Writers Collection

Abplanalp Library
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URL: <http://www.une.edu/mwwc>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Maine Women Writers Collection
Creator:	Wood, Sally Sayward Barrell Keating, 1759-1855
Title:	Sally Sayward Barrell Keating Wood collection
ID:	0418
Date [inclusive]:	1800-1998
Physical Description:	.25 linear foot 18 folders
Language of the Material:	English

Preferred Citation

Sally Sayward Barrell Keating Wood collection, Maine Women Writers Collection, University of New England, Portland, Maine

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Biographical/Historical Note

Sally (Sarah) Sayward Barrell Keating Wood (1759-1855)--'Madam Wood'--lived more than nine decades, authored four novels and one collection of tales, and was renowned as Maine's first novelist. The oldest of eleven children, Sally Sayward Barrell was born in York, Maine, on October 1st, 1759, in the impressive home of her maternal grandfather, Judge Jonathan Sayward, one of the richest men in Maine and a Loyalist during the American Revolution. Sally was named after her mother and probably to avoid confusion in a busy household, was sometimes called Sarah. Sally lived in her grandfather's home for most of her first 19 years. In 1778, she married Richard Keating, a schoolmate and a clerk in her grandfather's office. Grandfather Sayward gave the young couple a house as a wedding present, and Sally and Richard Keating settled into the cultivated social life that had surrounded Sally's childhood. They had two daughters and a son. Richard Keating died suddenly in 1783, and Sally Keating, now 25, settled down to raise her three children. During a period of extended widowhood, she wrote four novels. Her work was well received, and she gained a considerable literary reputation. Sally Keating had been a widow for 21 years when she married General Abiel Wood in 1804, and moved to Wiscasset. There she helped to establish a woman's club believed to be the oldest in America. After General Wood's death in 1811 Madame Wood, as she was then known, went to live in Portland, where she was honored as a celebrity in local society. She published her fifth and final book in 1827 when she was 68 years

old. From 1820 to 1833, Wood lived in New York to be near her only living child, Richard Keating, a sea captain. After his drowning death, Wood returned to Maine to live with her granddaughter and great grandchildren in Kennebunk, where she died on January 6, 1855, at the age of 95. Obituaries in regional newspapers fondly recalled her as a striking figure, a gracious representative of the Old School of Manners and attire; she was accustomed to wear on the streets a high turban or plain black bonnet which almost hid her features. Madame Wood's published works include: *Julia and the Illuminated Baron* (1800); *Dorval; or The Speculator* (1801); *Amelia; or The Influence of Virtue* (1802); *Ferdinand and Elmira: A Russian Story* (1804); and *Tales of the Night* (1827). A facsimile edition of *Tales of the Night* was published in 1982 as part of the sesquicentennial observances of Westbrook College. Wood's writing career falls into two distinct phases, both of which occurred during her periods of widowhood. This curious fact, and the prefaces to her books, suggest a certain ambivalence about female authorship. Her books were published anonymously, and she makes it perfectly clear that her womanly duties were never neglected.

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Collection Scope and Content

The collection consists of material about the author's life and her literary career taken from 20th century newspapers and from journal articles; also a master's thesis, focusing on her work. A daguerreotype of Madame Wood, early 19th century ephemera promoting her publications and a manuscript entitled *Recollections*, written in 1845-55, are also included.

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Arrangement

This collection is organized as a single series.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Maine Women Writers Collection

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Access

Collection is open for research.

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Controlled Access Headings

- York (Me.)
- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Clippings
- Obituaries
- Daguerreotypes
- Negatives
- Wood, Sally Sayward Barrell Keating, 1759-1855
- Wood, Sally Sayward Barrell Keating, 1759-1855

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Correspondence - Barry Greenlaw to Grace Dow, 1963	Box 1	Folder 001
News articles, 1922, 1938	Box 1	Folder 002
19th Century list of books	Box 1	Folder 003
Display photographs, negatives, scans	Box 1	Folder 004
Death notice, Portsmouth NH Journal of Literature and Politics	Box 1	Folder 005
"A Speculating Spirit" by Karen Weyler - refers to Dorval	Box 1	Folder 006

Legacy Profile of Wood by Karen A. Weyler, 1998	Box 1	Folder 006a
William Dwight Barrell article, 1996	Box 1	Folder 007
Photographs of grave	Box 1	Folder 008
Photocopy of page from family Bible listing "Births"	Box 1	Folder 008a
Daguerreotype of Sally Wood in brown tooled-leather hinged case	Box 1	Folder 009
Advertisement for Julia and the Illuminated Baron, in J. Ruffell's Gazette, 1800 July 24	Box OVS 2	Folder 010
Advertisement for "Tales of the night" (scan), 1827	Box 1	Folder 010a
Advertisement for Tales of the Night, in unidentified Maine newspaper, 1827	Box OVS 2	Folder 011
"Recollections" - 12 page letter by Sally Wood, 1845-1855	Box 1	Folder 012
"...Mrs. Wood's Letter I-V" (photocopy of Portsmouth, NH newspaper installments), 1903	Box 1	Folder 012a
"A Lady of Maine: Sally Sayward Barrell Keating Wood, 1759-1855" by Doris Marston [Masters thesis, UNH], 1970	Box 1	Folder 013
Records of the Female Society of Wiscasset [Me.] in Sally Wood's handwriting, 1805	Box 1	Folder 014