

The Filson Historical Society

**Tevis, Julia A. (Julia Ann), 1799-1880
Papers, 1841-1884**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, contact the collections department at research@filsonhistorical.org

Size of Collection:

0.33 cubic foot

Locator number:

Mss. A T353

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Biographical Note

Julia Ann Hieronymus was born in Clark County, Kentucky, to Pendleton Hieronymus (ca. 1775-1820) and Mary “Polly” Bush (1778-1833). When she was a child, her family moved to Washington, D.C., in search of better educational opportunities for her and her siblings. Her father had trouble finding work and took a job as an Indian agent in Missouri, where he died in 1820.

After her father’s death, Tevis became her family’s breadwinner and supported her mother and younger siblings with her salary earned as a school teacher. She eventually took a teaching job in Abingdon, Virginia, where she met Rev. John Tevis (1792-1861), a Methodist minister from Kentucky. The two married in March 1824.

A year later, in March 1825, Tevis opened Science Hill Female Academy in Shelbyville, Kentucky, with just 18-20 pupils, though by 1852, there were 250 students in attendance. Tevis and her husband ran the school together until his death in 1860, and she continued running it alone until 1879, when she sold it to Dr. Wiley Taul Poynter. The Poynter family ran the school until it closed in 1939.

Tevis had at least four children:

- Benjamin Pendleton Tevis (1824-1899): Married Sarah Belle Bayles (1823-1901) and had three children: Arabella Thurston Tevis Hubbell, John Tevis, and Sallie Hamilton Tevis
- Mary Smith Tevis (1827-1828): Died in infancy
- Belle Tevis Speed (1835-1916): Married John James Speed (1816-1885)
- Robert Crowe Tevis (1829-1910)

In 1878, Tevis published a memoir of her life, *Sixty Years in a School-Room*, which provides information about her and her husband’s life and can be read for free online through Google Books.

References:

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/90541170/julia-ann-tevis?_gl=1*_1n5hlo*_ga*MTc1NDY4ODI5Ny4xNjM0NjY3MDcy*_ga_4QT8FMEX30*MTY2Njg4NTAyOC4yMC4xLjE2NjY4ODg5ODguNjAuMC4w
<https://filsonhistorical.omeka.net/exhibits/show/women-at-work/teaching-women/julia-tevis>
https://www.google.com/books/edition/Sixty_Years_in_a_School_room/hkIFAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover

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Scope and Content Note

A small collection of personal and professional papers related to Julia Tevis and her work running Science Hill Female Academy.

Folders 1-2 contain correspondence mostly to or from Julia Tevis. Several of the letters are to or from her children Ben, Robert, and Belle. Other letters are from Science Hill students or the parents/guardians of students/prospective students.

Folder 3 contains undated handwritten papers that seem to have been written by Julia Tevis about her family and teaching experiences, many of which are likely discarded drafts from Tevis's 1878 autobiography.

Folder 4 contains miscellaneous writings and school assignments, presumably from Science Hill students. The folder includes a set of bound papers from what seems to be a Science Hill student literary society called "The Attic Bee." The bound papers include poems, stories, essays, jokes, and undated minutes/news about society members and other matters.

Folder 5 contains Science Hill-related publications, including a pamphlet from the 1884 memorial service for Julia Tevis.

Folder 6 contains miscellaneous material, including a partial list of names and a small book of writing by Miss Nannie (?) Shelby of Anchorage, Kentucky.

CONDITION NOTE: Most records from the Tevis years at Science Hill were either lost or destroyed. These papers were found stuffed up the chimney of the old Tevis house on the Science Hill grounds, now part of the Wakefield-Scarce Gallery. The papers have been cleaned as much as possible, but some soot residue remains. Many of the papers may be partially illegible from the damage.

Related Collections:

Poynter Family papers, 1895-1910 [Mss. A P892]

Poynter Family added papers, 1887-1992 [Mss. A P892a]

Science Hill Female Academy papers, 1825-1975 [Mss. BI S416]

Science Hill Female Academy photograph collection [021PC54]

Shelby County Public Library Collection on Science Hill Female Academy, 1852-2004 [Mss. BI S544]

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Folder List

Box 1

Folder 1: Correspondence, 1841-1882

Folder 2: Correspondence, undated

Folder 3: Tevis autobiographical writings / autobiography drafts, undated

Folder 4: Creative writing, school assignments, "The Attic Bee" literary society material, 1868 and undated

Folder 5: Science Hill-related publications, 1884 and undated

Folder 6: Miscellaneous material, 1884 and undated

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Subject Headings

German Americans.
Immigrants - United States - History - 19th century.
Literature - Societies, etc.
School enrollment - Kentucky.
Science Hill Female Academy (Shelbyville, Ky.)
Speed, Belle, 1835-1916.
Student activities.
Student publications.
Tevis, Benjamin Pendleton, 1824-1899.
Tevis, Robert Crowe, 1829-1910.
Women - Education.