

## Guide to the Sarah Low Collection, 1864-1962, bulk 1864

### Administrative Information

**Title and Dates:**

Sarah Low Collection, 1864-1962, bulk 1864

**Repository:**

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

**Collection Number:**

2013.033

**Author of Finding Aid:**

Sandra L. Wheeler

**Creator:**

Low, Sarah, 1830-1913

**Language:**

The materials in this collection are in English.

**Extent:**

1 box and 1 album ; 0.21 linear feet

**Abstract:**

This collection consists primarily of photographs (carte de visite) of men and women who worked with or were patients of Sarah Low during her service as a nurse at the Armory Hospital in Washington, DC, from 1862 to 1864, during the Civil War. About half of them are identified, but none are dated. The collection also includes a few images of Sarah Low herself, as well as printed matter ranging from undated newspaper clippings about her to a pamphlet about her Civil War work (1962) that includes excerpts from her letters.

## Access and Use

### **Acquisition Information and Provenance:**

The Sarah Low Collection was purchased by the New Hampshire Historical Society in July 2013.

### **Processing Information:**

This collection was processed by Sandra L. Wheeler in September 2021. The finding aid was written by Sandra L. Wheeler in September 2021. 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 majority of materials in this collection are paper based and have no special technical requirements for use. Tintypes should be handled with gloves.

### **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, Sarah Low Collection, 2013.033. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, NH.  
Date accessed.

## Collection Overview

### **Biographical Information:**

Sarah Low (1830-1913) was born in South Berwick, ME, on February 2, 1830, the daughter of Nathaniel and Mary Ann (Hale) Low. In 1833, her family moved to Dover, NH. Little is known of Sarah's early years. As a young woman in 1858, she wrote a book entitled "May Daie" and 900 copies were published through the Graefenburg Company in New York City. Sarah wrote several newspaper articles during and after the Civil War under the pen name of Rachel Rollins. Her articles closely paralleled letters written to her family describing war conditions.

When Sarah returned to New Hampshire after the war, she brought back with her a dog named General and a black war orphan named John, who she apparently raised. The remainder of Sarah's life cannot be determined through letters written to friends and relatives.

Sarah Low died on December 14, 1913 in Andover, MA, and was buried in Pine Hill Cemetery, Dover, NH.

**Collection Scope and Content Note:**

The Sarah Low Collection contains primarily photographs (carte de visite and a few cabinet cards) of men and women who worked with or were patients of Sarah during her service as a nurse at the Armory Hospital in Washington, DC, from 1862 to 1864, during the Civil War. About half of them are identified, none are dated. The collection also includes a few images of Sarah Low herself, as well as a variety of printed matter including three copies of her 1856 book *May Daie*, undated newspaper clippings about her, and a pamphlet about her Civil War work (1962) that includes excerpts from her letters. The photograph album, housed separately, contains a note stating it was presented to Miss Sarah Low by the soldiers of Ward B on January 20, 1864.

**Arrangement:**

The collection is arranged by genre (photographs, printed matter), then either alphabetically or chronologically.

**Contents List****Box 1**

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Folder 1 | List of donors of the album which originally contained the photographs, 1864   |
| Folder 2 | Photographs: Low, Sarah, undated   |
| Folder 3 | Photographs of identified men, A-F, undated<br>Arms<br>Beale<br>Benedict<br>Buker<br>Christy<br>Cross<br>Fenner<br>Foute |
| Folder 4 | Photographs of identified men, G-L, undated<br>Gordon<br>Harris<br>Houghton<br>Hutze<br>Kincaid<br>Kirby<br>Lowell       |
| Folder 5 | Photographs of identified men, M-Z, undated<br>Mallet<br>Marsh<br>Oakes<br>“L.P.P.”<br>Robbins<br>“Sanger”<br>Specht     |

- Stoothoff  
Wixon
- Folder 6      Photographs of unidentified men in uniform, undated
- Folder 7      Photographs of unidentified men not in uniform, undated
- Folder 8      Photographs of women, undated  
                  Aunt Nancy and Delia Parker  
                  Dixon, J.L.  
                  Gilson, Helen [?]  
                  Hill, Annie  
                  Lowell, Anna [?]  
                  unidentified
- Folder 9      Photographs of places, undated  
                  Building exteriors  
                  Hospital ward with patients  
                  Graveyard, Hampton VA  
                  unidentified church/chapel
- Folder 10     Photographs, various, undated  
                  Bone (human)  
                  Dog
- Folder 11     Printed matter: Low, Sarah, *May Daie*, 1856
- Folder 12     Printed matter: *Sarah Low: Dover's Civil War Nurse*, Northam Colonist  
                  Historical Society, Dover, NH, 1962
- Folder 13     Printed matter: newspaper clippings, undated
- Loose
- Volume 1     Photograph album, 1864

**Separated materials:**

An encased daguerreotype of Sarah Low has been removed to the vault. A reference copy of the image is in Folder 2.

**Subject Terms**

**People:**

Low, Sarah, 1830-1913

**Organizations:**

Armory Square Hospital (Washington, D.C.)

**Subjects:**

Carte de visite photographs  
 Nursing  
 Photographs  
 Portrait photography  
 United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865

**Locations:**

Washington, DC

**Occupations:**

Nurses  
Soldiers

## Related Materials

### Archives

Frost and Sawyer Family Papers, 1986.041

Sarah Low Papers, 1965.010

Sarah Low portrait, S 1992.519.03

Sarah Low portrait, S 1992.519.04

Sarah Low portrait, S 1992.519.05

Sarah Low portrait, S 1992.519.06

### Museum

The museum has the lap desk given to Sarah Low by the former patients and military staff from Armory Hospital in 1864. The desk contained the album which held the photographs in this collection. 2013.012.01

The museum has a watercolor painting of the nurses' station at Armory Hospital done by a patient. 2013.012.02