

Domestick Education manuscript

Domestick Education manuscript
undated, c. 1846-1848

Title Statement

Domestick Education manuscriptGuide to the Domestick Education manuscript MSS.16939

Author: Eric Willersdorf, Student Accessioning Assistant

Publication Statement

Publisher: Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library
P.O. Box 400110
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22904-4110
URL: <https://small.library.virginia.edu/>

4 February 2026

This record is made available under an Universal 1.0 Public Domain Dedication Creative Commons license.

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-03-05 17:47:22 +0000.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MSS.16939

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/3/resources/1852

Unit Date

undated, c. 1846-1848

Mixed Materials

BW 60 (box)

Container

1 (folder)

Language

English

Extent

0.04 Cubic Feet One legal-sized file folder

Condition Description

Good

Repository

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is minimally processed and open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

NoC-US: No Copyright - United States: <http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/NoC-US/1.0/> The Library believes that all or nearly all material in this collection is likely to be in the public domain, free of copyright restrictions. Visit our Permissions and Publishing page for more information about use of Special Collections materials. The library can provide copyright information upon request, but users are responsible for making their own determination about lawful use of collections materials

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was purchased from Marginalia by the Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia on 19 December 2025.

Preferred Citation

MSS 16939, Domestick Education manuscript, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia Library.

Content Description

This collection contains a four-page autograph manuscript folio entitled "Domestick Education." The unsigned, undated manuscript presents a two-chapter, dual-perspective narrative of Kitty, a frustrated domestic servant, and her mistress, Mrs. Makadoo. The focus on female characters and knowledge of domestic work suggests a likely female authorship. The spelling suggests an American author, although the story is vaguely set in the United Kingdom. Mention of Charles Dickens' *Dombey*, published in parts between 1846 and 1848, gives us a rough date for when this may have been written.

Chapter one is from Kitty's perspective. Kitty is described as overworked and overburdened by the Makadoo family – expected to complete the tasks of a cook, scullery maid, housemaid, valet, nanny, and lady's maid every day. Despite being overworked Kitty maintains a calm and collected demeanor around the Makadoo family. One night, Kitty, charged with additional tasks by Mrs. Makadoo and her daughter, Miss Annetta, while preparing supper, refuses to take the blame for the subpar bread, about which Mr. Makadoo complains. She exposes the dysfunctional nature of domestic labor. Mrs. Makadoo then accused Kitty of disloyalty to the family, to which Kitty defended herself.

In the second chapter, we have Mrs. Makadoo's perspective. She expresses deep discontent with being challenged by someone of a lower class, much less the family's own servant. She is also offended that Kitty contrasted the Makadoo family with the Haywoods, Kitty's previous employer. Kitty claimed that the women of the Haywood family sought to "learn something about housekeeping" so that they would act as more just managers of their servants. Outraged, Mrs. Makadoo visits the Heywoods to prove Kitty a liar. Upon arrival, Mrs. Makadoo finds Isabella, the young Heywood heiress, answering the door and providing refreshments to guests. This was a stark break from the traditional practices by the Makadoos, but was apparently rather commonplace in the more modern Heywood household. Following her visit with the Heywoods, Mrs. Makadoo's perspective on domestic labor changed, and she resolved to make sweeping changes in the household. The narrative ends with Annetta "changing the course of her conduct" and becoming "an expert at housekeeping."

Keywords

Women -- Social conditions

Women authors, American

Short stories