

Mary Frances Bean Stewart Diary

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1953

Title Statement

Mary Frances Bean Stewart DiaryGuide to the Mary Frances Bean Stewart Diary SC 00783

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Descriptive Summary

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Unit ID

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Unit Date

1953

Language

English

Creator

Stewart, Mary Frances Bean

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Repository

Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

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Scope and Contents

Travel diary of Mary Frances Bean Stewart, recording a car trip she took with her husband Robert Stewart from Contra Costa, California to Nashville, Tennessee from June to August, 1953. Returning via Chicago, Illinois and Park Rapids, Michigan, the Stewarts crossed a total of 17 states, visiting relatives, sites and shopping for antiques. Includes list of antiques purchased on the trip and recipes collected in the southern states. The following description was provided by the seller: "Original, handwritten diary of Mary Frances (Bean) Stewart. 1953 automobile trip from northern California with travel through southwestern and southern states, to Nashville, Tennessee. Return by way of Indianapolis, Chicago, Park Rapids, Minnesota and other northern locales. June 15 through August 26, 1953. 72 pages with 12 additional pages of notes. 6 x 8 inches. Binding fine. Handwriting clear and readable. No staining or wear. "In this well-written and enjoyable diary (the Stewarts were college professors and professional authors) Mary Frances and her husband Robert start out by car from their home in "Shore Acres", Contra Costa County, California to visit family and friends in Benton, Arkansas, Nashville, Tennessee, Indianapolis, Indiana, Chicago, Illinois and Park Rapids, Minnesota. "In their trip they travel through 17 states and put 3825 miles on their odometer. Moving along at not too fast a pace in the heat of the summer, they drive what seems like the less traveled highways, staying in motels, eating at roadside restaurants and indulging in their hobby of antiquing in the small antique stores and junk shops they come across. Mary Frances comments on the characters they encounter, their roadside accommodations and the antique finds they make. "When they are in Charleston, Arkansas, Mary Frances writes: "Bob had the car gassed. One stop this a.m. at a Skelley station where we got a really fine map and the sweet man insisted I have a drink of ice water from a real clean --ain't been used oncet-- paper cup." Her next entry, June 23, is from an Arkansas motel: "Clock ticked all night. Water dripped. Fan whirred. Heat poured in." "Arriving in Tennessee during what must have been a hot summer, she notes: "The country became flat. Into Memphis for the 5 o'clock rat race. Never, never felt so sticky. Being dipped in molasses couldn't make it worse." "While returning to California, Mary Frances and Robert spend more time visiting antique stores. They particularly look for glass items. Near Beardstown. Illinois (July 22) she writes: "He directed us to Miss Glass Rushville, 'the last of de line.'" An old home, not on highway but out (on) Laffettee Street. Miss Glass lacked force but we got some glass stoppers & cookie cutters for 15 cents each. Ironstone platter and vegetable dish, and in desperation, over no Haviland, a \$5.75 ironstone soap dish in perfect condition. Total \$10 to Miss G." "The Stewarts make more antique stops, one near Missoula, Montana: "Lady told us about Mrs. Paul Phillips, 419 Lord Street, who sells antiques so after a nap went there. Mrs. P is interested intellectually in antiques and I had a marvelous time with her ... bought a cup and platter \$6.75." "At the end of the diary Mary Frances makes a list of the antiques they purchased on the trip. She also has eight pages of recipes collected from friends in the south, including one for "Black John" which requires New Orleans molasses. "The Stewarts were the authors of "Adolph Sutro, A Biography" published in 1962. Sutro was a Nevada financial pioneer who went on to become mayor of San Francisco and America's leading collector of early printed books (mostly destroyed in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.)."

Keywords

United States--Description and travel--20th century

United States--Social life and customs

Women--Diaries

Description of Subordinate Components

Diary

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Unit Date 1953

Mixed Materials Small Collections Box 39 (Box)

Container 1 (folder)

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