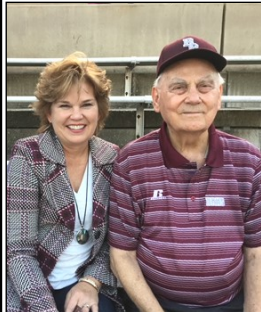




## The May 2023 Newsletter

The May Meeting will be Tuesday, May 23, 2023  
at 3:00pm in the Meeting Room  
of the McMillan Museum  
on the College Campus.



**Kim with Her  
Father.**

### The Program: Guest Speaker Kim Brooks Will Present a Program on Her Father and His Work with the Apollo Program at Marshall Space Center in Huntsville, AL

Kim Pemberton Brooks is a native of Huntsville, AL where her father, Jimmy Pemberton, worked in space exploration and our nation's defense. Kim went on to become an Auburn Engineer like her Father, married an Auburn Engineer, and had one son, also an Auburn Engineer. After a career in Telecom, Kim became an investor in Real Estate in the Atlanta market. She has donated her father's collection on military history to ECHS and the McMillan Museum.

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**The May Meeting**  
There will be refreshments. Plan on bringing your favorite finger food. Drinks will be supplied by the society.



**April Speaker for ECHS, Admiral Cozak, visiting with members of the audience and autographing his books after the program.**

**The June Meeting**  
The Program will be Show and Tell, always a popular topic. Plan on bringing a favorite item of family history to briefly tell its story. However, No Weapons Please.

**The July Meeting**  
Dale Cox of Two Egg, FL will present a program on new information about Fort Crawford.



Fire Station on Scott St.  
in Montgomery, Ala.  
Date Unknown

Volume 50 No. 5  
May 2023

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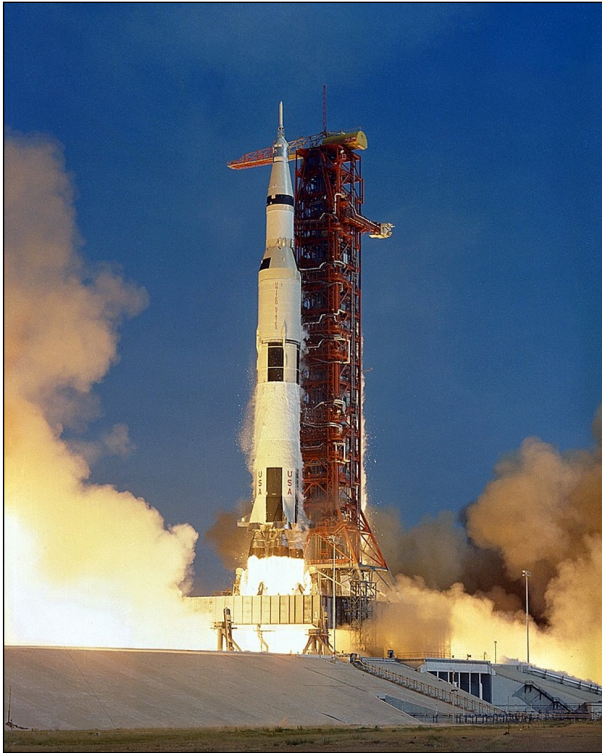
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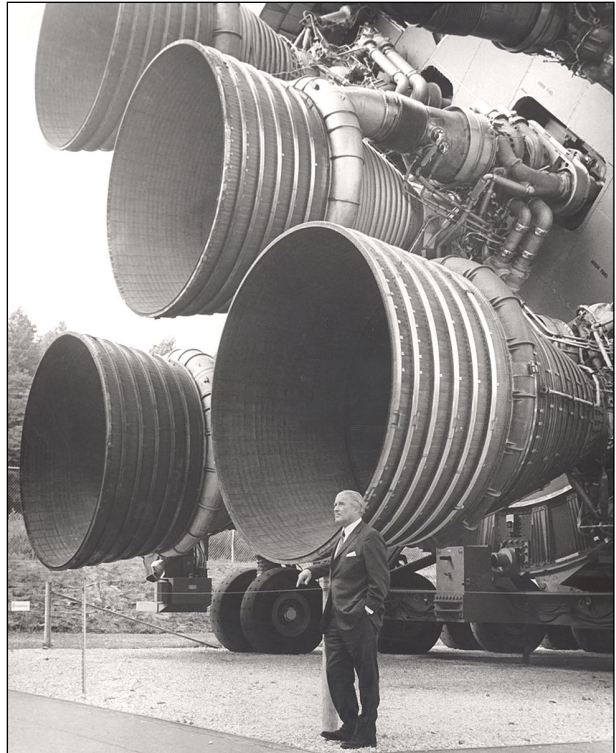
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# Saturn Five



**The Apollo 11 Saturn V rocket launch vehicle lifts-off with astronauts Neil A. Armstrong, Michael Collins and Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr., at 9:32 a.m. EDT July 16, 1969, from Kennedy Space Center's Launch Complex Pad 39A.**



**Von Braun with the F-1 engines of the Saturn V first stage at the U. S. Space and Rocket Center, Huntsville, AL**

## History of Saturn Five

*From the article [Saturn V](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saturn_V) at <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saturn\\_V](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saturn_V)>.*

Saturn V is a retired American super heavy-lift launch vehicle developed by NASA under the Apollo program for human exploration of the Moon. The rocket was human-rated (capable of safely transporting humans), with three stages, and powered with liquid fuel. It was flown from 1967 to 1973. It was used for nine crewed flights to the Moon, and to launch Skylab, the first American space station.

As of 2023, the Saturn V remains the only launch vehicle to carry humans beyond low Earth orbit (LEO). Saturn V holds

**The Saturn V was the largest in a family of liquid-propellant rockets that solved the problem of getting to the Moon. A total of thirty-two Saturns of all types were launched; not one failed.**

*From <<https://airandspace.si.edu/exhibitions/space-race/online/sec300/sec384.htm>>.*

**The three-stage Saturn V was taller than a 36-story building. It was the largest, most powerful rocket ever launched.**

*From <<https://airandspace.si.edu/exhibitions/space-race/online/sec300/sec384.htm>>.*

records for the heaviest payload launched and largest payload capacity to low Earth orbit: 310,000 lb. (140,000 kg), which included the third stage and unburned propellant needed to send the Apollo command and service module and Lunar Module to the Moon.

The largest production model of the Saturn family of rockets, the Saturn V, was designed under the direction of Wernher von Braun at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama; the lead contractors were Boeing, North American Aviation, Douglas Aircraft Company, and IBM. A total of 15 flight-capable vehicles were built, plus three for ground

testing. Thirteen were launched from Kennedy Space

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Saturn Five



**At left, top, First stage Saturn V "Moon Rocket" booster, on display at Michoud Assembly Facility, New Orleans. Used in the Apollo Moon program, these rocket boosters manufactured at the Michoud facility in the 1960s and 1970s.**

**At left, bottom, restored Saturn V at the Saturn V Center at Florida's Kennedy Space Center.**

**At right top, Saturn V Mock Up, U.S. Space & Rocket Center, Huntsville.**

*(Continued from page 2)*

Center with no loss of crew or payload. A total of 24 astronauts were launched to the Moon from Apollo 8 (December 1968) to Apollo 17 (December 1972).

## **How Big Was the Saturn V?**

From *NASA Knows* <<https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/5-8/features/nasa-knows/what-was-the-saturn-v-58.html>>.

The Saturn V rocket was 111 meters (363 feet) tall, about the height of a 36-story-tall building, and 18 meters (60 feet) taller than the Statue of Liberty. Fully fueled for liftoff, the Saturn V weighed 2.8 million kilograms (6.2 million pounds), the weight of about 400 elephants. The rocket generated 34.5 million newtons (7.6 million pounds) of thrust at launch, creating more power than 85 Hoover Dams. A car that gets 48 kilometers (30 miles) to the gallon could drive around the world

**With a cluster of five powerful engines in each of the first two stages and using high-performance liquid hydrogen fuel for the upper stages, the Saturn V was one of the great feats of 20th-century engineering.**

**Inside, the rocket contained three million parts in a labyrinth of fuel lines, pumps, gauges, sensors, circuits, and switches--each of which had to function reliably, and did.**

From <<https://airandspace.si.edu/exhibitions/space-race/online/sec300/sec384.htm>>.

around 800 times with the amount of fuel the Saturn V used for a lunar landing mission. It could launch about 118,000 kilograms (130 tons) into Earth orbit. That's about as much weight as 10 school buses. The Saturn V could launch about 43,500 kilograms (50 tons) to the moon. That's about the same as four school buses.

## **How Did the Saturn V Work?**

From *NASA Knows* <<https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/5-8/features/nasa-knows/what-was-the-saturn-v-58.html>>.

The Saturn V that launched the Skylab space station only had two stages. The Saturn V rockets used for the Apollo missions had three stages. Each stage would burn its engines until it was out of fuel and would then separate from

the rocket. The engines on the next stage would fire, and the rocket would continue into space. The first stage had the most powerful engines, since it had the challenging task of lifting the fully fueled rocket off

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## Saturn Five

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the ground. The first stage lifted the rocket to an altitude of about 68 kilometers (42 miles). The second stage carried it from there almost into orbit. The third

stage placed the Apollo spacecraft into Earth orbit and pushed it toward the moon. The first two stages fell into the ocean after separation. The third stage either stayed in space or hit the moon.

## Coca-Cola's Classic Coolers and Original Formula

Janice Goolsby Baker writes in a post for the Escambia County Historical Society Facebook page "Lost In The 50's Tonight!" (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/223394524364985>):

### Lost in the Fifties

"The photo looks like the Coca-Cola drink box in my parent's General Merchandise Store on Highway 29, Damascus Alabama. (15 miles from Brewton, Alabama).

"As a young girl, I remember helping drain the water into a huge bucket, toss the water on the ground behind the store, scrub the box, line the bottom with chipped ice, fill it up with clean water & drinks. In a short time you would have ice, cold colas in glass bottles. Just pop the ice cold bottle with the bottle opener on the front side of the drink box.

"People received a few cents per bottle if they brought the empty cola bottles back to us to be recycled @ the bottling plant. We stored the empty bottles under a beautiful, huge Oak Tree behind our General Merchandise Store. The Cola Company Truck driver loaded the crates of empty bottles on his truck to take to the Recycling Plant. The load of new drinks were stored in a supply storage room in our store to be put in the drink box as needed.

"It took a great deal of time & hard work keeping those old fashioned drink boxes clean but well worth the effort. Ah! I can still remember the cooling pleasure of drinking that ice cold drink in a hot Alabama summer and they were the best colas I have ever tasted! Some customers filled the colas with a bag of salted peanuts or enjoyed a Moon Pie with their ice cold drink."



**In 1928, Glascock Bros. began manufacturing coolers directly for Coca-Cola. These rectangular coolers with ice above and a rack for empties below were sold to retailers beginning in 1929. Over 32,000 were sold in the first year; they could be purchased for \$12.50.**

### Don't Mess with a Classic

John Stith Pemberton, a pharmacist in Atlanta, Georgia (via Coca-Cola Company), Pemberton created syrup derived from cocaine in the coca leaf and the caffeine in the Kola nut. On May 8, 1886, he sold the first glass of Coca-Cola at Jacobs' Pharmacy in downtown Atlanta. Serving nine drinks per day in its first year, Coca-Cola was new refreshment.

The first bottling of Coca-Cola occurred in Vicksburg, Mississippi, at the Biedenharn Candy Company on March 12, 1894, just the syrup first and then the syrup with carbonated water in a bottle.

By 1985, Coca-Cola had been losing market share to other diet soft drinks and non-cola beverages for several years and so the Coca-Cola

recipe was reformulated. Blind taste tests suggested that consumers preferred the sweeter taste of the new formula for coke rather than the classic formula.

On April 23, 1985, Coca-Cola Company chairman and CEO Roberto Goizueta stepped before the press gathered at New York City's Lincoln Center to introduce the new formula, but the negative reaction was overwhelming. Shares of Coca-Cola dropped and the company received 5,000 phone calls of protest a day.

Seventy-nine days after their initial announcement, Coca-Cola executives once again held a press conference on July 11, 1985—this time to announce the return of the original formula under the label "Coca-Cola Classic."

Christopher Klein writes, "Coca-Cola's disastrous attempt at rebranding Coke in 1985 delivered a painful lesson: "Don't Mess with a Classic" (<https://history.com/news/why-Coca-Cola-new-coke-flopped>).

# The ECHS *Journal* Section

## Sarah Gayle and Violence in the Southwest

By **Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins**,  
**Alabama Heritage**,  
**Winter 2015.**

*An early nineteenth-century journal illuminates the dangers facing those who lived in Alabama during its earliest years as a state* <[https://issuu.com/alabamaheritage/docs/e115838\\_wiggins\\_sarahgayle](https://issuu.com/alabamaheritage/docs/e115838_wiggins_sarahgayle)>.

Violence has a long history in the south, and it was commonplace in early nineteenth century Alabama, then known as the Old Southwest. Often reported in the press or given passing mention in correspondence, detailed contemporary descriptions of outbursts of violence are rare, especially those of behavior recorded by a woman. However, details of such scenes were described in a journal maintained by Sarah Haynsworth

Gayle, an observant young housewife in Greensboro and Tuscaloosa. Her journal provides a window into a world only recently transformed from wilderness to frontier to settlement as well as a record of daily domestic concerns.

The frequent and lengthy absences of John Gayle, her husband, on judicial or political business left her alone with her children and slaves. An only child with no relatives in Alabama, she coped with loneliness by building a close network of relationships with women – neighbors as well as relatives of her husband – and by beginning a journal that she maintained from 1827 until her death in mid-1835. Calling her journal a “substitute for social intercourse,” she treated it as if it were a living confidant during her husband’s absences. Sarah’s journal opens to readers a window into the mind and daily world of a young housewife in that era and also details the violence that she witnesses.

When a modern reader looks at her background, Sarah Haynsworth Gayle seems an unlikely person to provide one of the most important surviving documents of Alabama’s early history as a state. Born on January 18, 1804, near Sumter, South Carolina, she was six years old when her family moved west as

### **The Gorgas Family** **Amelia Gorgas (1826-1913)**

Daughter, third child of Sarah and John Gayle. Librarian at University of Alabama, University Library named after her.

### **Josiah Gorgas (1818-1883)**

Husband of Amelia.

One of the few Northern-born Confederate Generals, later president of the University of Alabama.

### **William Crawford Gorgas (1854-1920)**

Son of Amelia, Grandson of Sarah, Surgeon Gen. of U. S., emphasis on sanitation and control of mosquitos eradicated Yellow Fever, and controlled Malaria, allowed successful completion of Panama Canal, Knighted by George V.

part of the migration of farmers from the exhausted Piedmont of the seaboard states. The Haynsworths settled on the fertile lands of southwest Alabama near today’s Mount Vernon.

After the Creek Indian War ended in 1814, the family moved again, this time east across the Alabama River, and settled near Claiborne in Monroe County, which, at that time, was a lone white settlement among Indian tribes. On this rich Black Belt soil, the Haynsworths developed a farm that Sarah named Sheldon Plantation.

This raw country offered little opportunity for education or culture for a child and limited her formal education to a few years at St. Stephens Academy. Yet she was not uneducated as an adult

because she possessed an insatiable intellectual appetite that she fed with voracious reading. In books she found the intellectual stimulation and companionship absent from her daily life.

In 1819, she married John Gayle, another South Carolinian who had moved to Alabama seeking economic opportunity. Sarah was not yet sixteen, and John was twenty-seven. No portrait or drawing of Sarah has been found, though she was reputed to have been a great beauty at this time with dark hair and eyes. Her husband was a rising figure in Alabama politics. A graduate of South Carolina College, John read law and opened an office in Claiborne. Already involved in territorial politics, he moved into state politics as a judge, legislator, speaker of the state House of Representatives, and governor. The couple eventually had six surviving children (two were stillborn). Their first child was born in 1820 when Sarah was sixteen and another child followed almost every other year. One of her daughters was Amelia, who later married Josiah Gorgas, Confederate ordnance chief.

Around 1825 the Gayles moved from Claiborne to

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# The ECHS *Journal* Section

## Sarah Gayle and Violence in the Southwest

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Greensboro, where they built an unpretentious farmhouse. They lived in this house that symbolized their modest economic circumstances until 1833, and during this time Sarah began her journal. Without relatives of her own, and with a husband absent on business for extended periods, Sarah found herself desperately lonely in her new life in Greensboro. Foregoing self-pity, she addressed her emotional needs herself, using the same solutions that family counselors and psychiatrists would advise today.

She built a network of friends and relatives of her husband around her, and she began a journal. Aware of the constant peril of disease, death and economic ruin in the Old Southwest, she understood that family was crucially important and the primary unit of the southern world around her. The southern ritual of visiting also nourished her network of friendship. Sarah instinctively understood the strength of inter-generational kinship ties and knew that to have great friends she also must be a great friend and return in kind the assistance received from relatives and companions. She resigned herself to the fact that dependency was a woman's fate in her male-dominated world, where educated men refused to discuss serious subjects with her because she was a woman. She described her situation as "my sort of widowhood," given her husband's "endless wanderings" on legal and political business.

Experiencing loneliness and depression, Sarah sought comfort in opium, which was considered harmless in the nineteenth century. It was as acceptable an indulgence as drinking alcohol or sniffing snuff in antebellum southern society or as smoking cigarettes in the twentieth century south. Easily available as a tonic, it was frequently dispensed to women to relieve nervous or gynecological disorders with no more alarm than the use of paregoric for children's earaches in the twentieth century. Sara's addiction manifested itself in her unending health problems: tooth decay, vision difficulties, inflammation of her mouth and throat, depressions, nausea, listlessness, exhaustion and constipation.

But Sarah was an astute observer of her world, and her journal provides documentation not found in any other contemporary source. She recorded conversa-

tions and thoughts about books she read. She commented on the social and domestic lives of her social circle, but she also recorded startling revelations – both threatened and real – that she faced as a woman living in the beginning of Alabama's statehood.

When Sarah came west as a child, Alabama was still territorial land, wild and untamed with the threat of violence coming from many sources. Although Gayle began her journal after her marriage, she described her earliest memories of traveling through the wilderness of the territory. Her recollections about these years examine the perils faced in what was a primitive and foreign land to many settlers, and her earliest memories of Alabama were based around the dangers her family faced during its journey from South Carolina.

The family traveled with the US Army as it cut down and split trees, laying the Federal Road that would connect Washington, DC, and New Orleans to provide communication through Creek Indian territory. The journey made the family uneasy. Her father always slept "with arms under his head, and any stir amongst the horses at night, roused all and put them on their guard." Thus, Sarah's first impressions of Alabama suggested that danger and violence lurked just below the surface of life.

The fear that accompanied potential threats posed by Creek Indians mirrors the danger Sarah felt concerning the slaves that the family owned. Young and inexperienced, and with her husband constantly absent, Sarah admitted her inability to manage servants effectively. She was often outmaneuvered or intimidated, and her journal recorded unsettling encounters with some of her slaves.

On one occasion when she announced her intention to use the only horse left with the family while John was absent, a slave bluntly told her that "he wanted him too," to ride to work. She described another slave as "insolent," while still another often laughed in her face when given instructions. One servant openly followed her directions no further than was agreeable to him. And when her orders were followed, murmuring, and "sour looks & often surly language" accompanied obedience. Such behavior suggested that a restless rebellious spirit seethed just below the surface of what appeared to be a tranquil world of slaves and

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# The ECHS *Journal* Section

## Sarah Gayle and Violence in the Southwest

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owners.

Although she experienced no overt violence between herself and her slaves – indeed, she had some very caring relationships with a few – Sarah did record very real acts of violence that occurred close to home. One purpose for which Sarah maintained her journal was that it might serve as a guidebook for her daughters as they grew to womanhood. She addressed her writing to the girls in the event that she did not live to see them reach maturity, filling it with advice on many subjects, especially marriage.

She quietly observed contemporary patterns of courtship and marriage but her journal entries also warned of the reality many women faced regarding domestic violence. She noted that she had seen glorious courtships dissolve into disastrous marriages, mentioning stories about husbands who beat their wives, even when the women were pregnant, and chased them into the nearby swamp.

Though her own marriage was not a violent one, Sarah recorded acts of violence that occurred within her extended family. One incident in 1823 described a long-standing enmity between two Gayle relatives that eventually exploded into tragedy. John's sister, Maria, had married Albert Woodson, a person Sarah described as "a man utterly without principle." Earlier Albert had quarreled with Benjamin (Ben) Gayle, Maria's Cousin, and one night attacked Ben, beating him senseless; as a result, Ben vowed revenge.

Albert ridiculed and cursed his wife's family and respected his wife's brothers only because he feared them. When the family gathered, anticipating the death of old Mrs. Gayle, Albert and Maria were among them. When Ben arrived, Albert was lounging on a sofa and announced that he was going outside to load his pistols. As he passed the doorway of a room where the men of the family were gathered, Sarah recorded that someone said to Ben: "Damn it, follow him." A few minutes later, shots rang out and one of Maria's brothers ran into the house carrying Albert, who was bleeding, raving, and cursing. Sarah nursed Albert until he died in agony the next day, but in telling the story, Sarah noted that no charges were filed.

Sarah also recalled one Saturday night in 1833 when a neighbor was shot while eating his supper.

Upon examination of the body, Sarah explained that seventeen buckshot were found in his side. Local rumors, she said, suggested that his killers were some of his own servants. If such events caused any stir or shock among Greensboro residents, Sarah did not note their alarm in her journal.

Such events were accepted, as were the smaller domestic incidents Sarah recorded in the journal. For instance, she mentioned John's exceptional patience with his maddeningly improvident brother, Levin, who repeatedly asked John for thousands of dollars. During the nine years that Sarah maintained her journal, Levin never held a job, though he was full of promising ideas. But his financial insecurity plagued the family. In 1828 alone, Levin was sued seven times for non-performance of certain promises and ordered to pay court costs associated with the lawsuits.

To provide funds to meet the financial demands of his brother, John first sold the slaves that Sarah had inherited from her father and then the slaves that he had purchased from her father. Next, he had to sell the family carriage and finally, his own horse. When John and Sarah moved to Tuscaloosa (then spelled Tuskaloosa) in 1833, Levin moved into John's house (in Greensboro) with his wife and five children and kept boarders until John sold the house in Greensboro out from under him a year later.

Domestic life and violence close to home were not the only types of conflict that worried Sarah. She also devoted space in her journal to writing about the often violent political sphere of early Alabama. John was a political figure throughout his life and was involved in numerous political controversies that worried his wife. For example, while he was speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives in 1829, his handling of a procedural matter so infuriated one legislator that he became threatening toward John. John defused the situation by appointing a legislative committee to study the complaints of their colleague and to report to the House as a whole. The committee subsequently quietly resolved the controversy.

That same year, however, Sarah worried about her husband's strained relationship with future governor Arthur Bagby. Concerned about the two men meeting in court, she said that the prospect gave her "infinite

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# The ECHS *Journal* Section

## Sarah Gayle and Violence in the Southwest

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uneasiness,” inflamed as the two were toward each other. On another occasion she noted that Bagby “refused to fight a duel while his antagonist waited for hours on the ground.” By the 1820’s, settling quarrels by the formality of dueling was rare in Alabama, yet fears of a challenge to a duel still existed. Although these and other difficulties were peacefully resolved, Sarah fretted about the possibility that her husband could be challenged. Her concern demonstrated that Alabama, though it had become sufficiently civilized to have achieved statehood, was still a violent place. In this era it was not uncommon for an attorney to appear in court with a pistol evident in his hip pocket, partially covered by a handkerchief.

A larger incident in 1833 concerning a states’ rights controversy threatened to degenerate into violence between federal and state governments. In 1832 the federal government had guaranteed Creek Indians possession of land in central Alabama generally east of present-day Montgomery and Autauga counties; the area from Montgomery County to the west was open to white settlers. Despite incomplete land surveys, settlers, intoxicated with “Alabama fever,” rushed into the entire area, ignoring promises made to the Indians. When Pres Andrew Jackson ordered federal troops to remove settlers from Creek lands, John, now Governor Gayle, championed the settlers’ rights, arguing that federal intervention violated state sovereignty, and he organized a state militia. A soldier shot a settler (who was known as a “complete scoundrel,” ) in self-defense while trying to remove him from Creek lands. A Russell County grand jury indicted the soldier for murder, and Governor Gayle demanded punishment.

President Jackson sent Francis Scott Key, US attorney in Washington DC to resolve the problem. Land surveys were completed, the accused soldier disappeared, and no trial occurred. Only settlers on land guaranteed to the Creeks were removed, and they could purchase land titles from the Indians. Later, the legislature adjourned without determining who was right in this dispute. Key wrote Governor Gayle that this was how he “always wished the business to terminate.” This controversy severely damaged the long friendship between Jackson and John, though John

denied that he had joined the states’ rights advocates then opposing Jackson.

Local political violence also captured Sarah’s attention, and it sometimes occurred on the streets of Greensboro over the most trivia of issues. She recorded an incident involving one candidate running for the office of justice of the peace in 1834—a man named Street. Sarah explained that J. S. W. Hellen, a local doctor, made some remarks about Street’s “talents” that were repeated to Street. His reply was that he paid no attention to what was said by a “drunken vagabond.” These remarks quickly reached Hellen, who sought out Street and attacked him. In the scuffle Hellen was stabbed and killed. Street was tried and acquitted on the grounds of self-defense, though he had been holding his knife in his hand when attacked.

In 1833 the legislature required the governor to reside in the city that was the state capital and John moved his wife and children to Tuscaloosa. Here the Gayles lived in cramped rooms in local taverns for the next two and a half years. Privacy was nonexistent and Sarah was pregnant for the eighth time

Sarah again organized a network of women to cope with her loneliness during her husband’s absences. In Tuscaloosa Sarah became friends with Almira Woods, wife of Dr. Alva Woods, the first president of the University of Alabama. In the 1830’s the university had not yet built a stately mansion to serve as the residence for the university president, and he, as well as the faculty, lived in houses on campus.

When Woods, who was a New Englander, arrived in 1833, he established regulations governing student behavior as well as academic matters. Unfortunately, the students, many of whom had grown up on the raw semi-frontier, were accustomed to total freedom of conduct and few rules. The young men owned pistols and bowie knives that they knew how to use, and they brought both to the university when they enrolled. Woods’ efforts to transform unruly teenage ruffians into gentlemen scholars provoked resentment frequent protests, and outright rebellion that is shocking by today’s standards.

Sarah recounted that one evening in 1833 while she was visiting the president’s family, the “students amused themselves by throwing the reflection of a looking glass into the room where we sat.” On an ear-

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# The ECHS *Journal* Section

## Sarah Gayle and Violence in the Southwest

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lier occasion, students had broken into Woods's study, destroyed papers, and damaged furniture. Sarah believed it to be "shameful" that students disgraced "themselves and their parents by such conduct."

The "drunken extravagancies" of students led them to "shaving of horses' tails and tying balls dipped in brimstone and set on fire to those of the professor's harmless dogs, and philosophic geese." As months passed, Sarah said that students continued to "behave badly both in church and everywhere else." A month later Sarah observed that students had been assailing Woods' study again. Expressing no patience with such behavior, she pronounced, "Were I in his place I would positively make myself an object of fear to them, if I could not be one of love and reverence"

Sarah's descriptions of student violence pale when compared with those of Clement Claiborne (C. C.) Clay, a Huntsville student at the university during the same time. He wrote to his father, Congressman Clement Comer Clay, that students were in an "open & audacious rebellion." C. C. described an incident when approximately ten students dressed in white and carrying "pistols and clubs, commenced firing, shooting." They pursued Woods and threw "brick bats at him." Woods fled around the corner of a house, and when a pistol was fired at him, he "availed himself of an open window and jumped in it." Fortunately for Woods, the students lost sight of him and went into the cellars and then to the woods searching for him

Next they threw rocks at his windows and finally started up the stairs to take him out if he should be in his room. A faculty member told the students that Woods was not there, lectured them on the "impropriety of their conduct & begged them to desist" while they cocked their pistols at him. The crowd then headed home but on the way broke into the chapel, rang the bell and stoned the windows of another faculty member. C. C. concluded, "I would not risk my life in Dr. Woods' situation for his salary; for I believe that there are students in college who would shoot him if they did not fear the laws of the land. There is constant firing of pistols from dark till midnight during some nights of the week." A few months later C. C. described more disturbances. Two students had "garbed themselves in dark face & over-

coats," and they attacked Woods at the door of his residence with cowhide.

In February 1835 university students collided with local police when a prominent citizen suspected that a runaway "servant girl of his" was being "harbored at the College." Armed with a search warrant and accompanied by local sheriff and "some 15 or 20 assistants," the owner sought to "examine every room in the Dormitories." Students warned the townsmen "that their entrance was to be effected at the risk of life," but "a sound drubbing" of the students occurred. In her journal, Sarah judged the students to be "in general, a lawless set."

Sarah Gayle's journal ends abruptly with her death on July 31, 1835. For years she had an ominous foreboding about dental work, as she worried about how the loss of her teeth damaged her once renowned beauty. While John was away on business with the Chickasaw Indian Nation, she arranged to have some dental work done. Routine daily dental care was unknown in the 1830s, as was hygiene during surgery. Sarah developed tetanus approximately ten days after the dentist's visit and lay in excruciating pain waiting for her husband's return. John was "sent for," and as she had so often done throughout her married life, she listened for the sound of his approaching horse to signal his arrival.

With her raven hair falling around her, and her brilliant black eyes fixed in speechless agony upon the group of helpless little ones who surrounded her, she lay eagerly listening to every sound, hoping to hear the familiar sounds that she had so often greeted with rapture, until, as the hours went anxiously, she realized that the shades of death were closing around her. Sadly, Sarah died before John returned. She was only thirty years old. The death scene of her listening for approaching hoof beats, waiting for her husband, was a microcosm of her marriage.

Sarah Haynsworth Gayle's journal is unique; it is the only woman's journal describing the rough world of early nineteenth-century Alabama, though many manuscript collections survive from this period. Today, the journal survives in the Gorgas family papers in the W. S. Hoole Special collections library at the University of Alabama. Through the eyes of this sensitive, perceptive, observant young woman, we see the struggle to civilize a raw and violent Old Southwest just beyond being a frontier wilderness.

**ECHOES**  
THE NEWSLETTER FOR  
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

251-809-1528 or  
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**We're on the web!**  
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*ECHOES, The newsletter for the Escambia County Historical Society, a 501 (c) (3) corporation, is published monthly except November. Comments are welcome. You may email the Society at [escambiahistoricalociety@gmail.com](mailto:escambiahistoricalociety@gmail.com) or call 251-809-1528.*

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