



Sarah H. Bixby Smith (1871-1935) was a California writer and an advocate of women's education.

Sarah Hathaway Bixby was born in 1871 to Llewellyn Bixby, a rancher, and Mary Hathaway Bixby, at Rancho San Justo near San Juan Bautista, California. Her father was a sheep rancher and, with his brother and 3 cousins, arrived in California in 1852 after driving sheep and cattle from the East. By 1855, the men had amassed large landholdings throughout Southern California: Rancho San Justo, Rancho Los Cerritos, Rancho Los Alamitos, Rancho San Juan Cajón de Santa Ana, and part of Rancho de los Palos Verdes.

Sarah spent her childhood on the San Justo, Los Cerritos, and Los Alamitos ranches. She earned her bachelor's degree from Wellesley College in 1894 and became a writer and advocate for women's independence and higher education.

Sara Bixby Smith is known for three highly personal memoirs of California history. The first, "*A Little Girl of Old California*" (published 1920), was a brief memoir of her girlhood. It later expanded into the book *Adobe Days* (published 1925). *Adobe Days* uses details of her childhood on the family sheep ranches to tell the story of the Bixby family as it rose to prominence and the development of Los Angeles from its frontier-town days to the end of the 19th century. At the time of her death, she was working on a book about the history of Southern California.

Sarah was involved with women's groups and served at various times as president of the Friday Morning Club and vice-president of the American Association of University Women. She was a trustee of Scripps College and a member of the Claremont School Board and the Historical Society of Southern California board.

Sarah Bixby Smith died of an infection in September, 1935, age 64. Her correspondence, photographs, press clippings, and other documents are housed in the Charles E. Young Research Library, Dept of Special Collections, at UCLA. The Rancho Los Cerritos Museum houses the Sarah Bixby Smith Manuscript Collection and has four of her oil paintings on display.