# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .................................................................................................................. 3  
Requesting Instructions ............................................................................................................ 3  
Administrative Information ..................................................................................................... 4  
  Immediate Source of Acquisition ....................................................................................... 4  
  Conditions Governing Access ............................................................................................ 4  
  Conditions Governing Use ................................................................................................. 4  
  Preferred Citation .................................................................................................................. 4  
Biographical / Historical ......................................................................................................... 4  
Scope and Contents .................................................................................................................. 5  
Collection Contents .................................................................................................................. 6  
  Inventory .............................................................................................................................. 6  
Selected Search Terms ............................................................................................................. 9
Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
Yale University Library
P.O. Box 208240
New Haven, CT 06520-8240
mssa.assist@yale.edu
http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/

CALL NUMBER: MS 191

CREATOR: Edwards family

TITLE: Edwards family papers

DATES: 1805–1874

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 5.25 linear feet (9 boxes, 1 half archive box)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Correspondence and scrapbooks of the fourth and fifth generations
of the family of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) chiefly relating to their
health and welfare. Includes the correspondence of Jonathan Edwards
(1789-1875), a politician from upper New York State; his brother-in-law,
George Champion, a missionary to the Zulus in 1838; and his son, Jonathan
Edwards, Jr. (1841-1886), who studied medicine but did not practice and who
edited Yale’s catalogue of Greek and Roman coins. Subjects covered in the
letters include the Know Nothing movement, business risks in New York in
the 1840’s, religious conversions, the Civil War, temperance, and descriptions
(1861-1862) of Albert Hamilton Emery’s inventions for the cannon. Includes a
letter from Jeremiah Clemens, Senator from Alabama, relating to Aaron Burr.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://
hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0191

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use
the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/
mssa.ms.0191.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/
ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number,
collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder
Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Conditions Governing Access
The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
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Preferred Citation
Edwards Family Papers (MS 191). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

JONATHAN EDWARDS, SR., 1798-1875

JONATHAN EDWARDS was born in Hartford, Conn., Sept. 27, 1798, and was the eldest son of Jonathan Walter Edwards (Y. C. 1789), a distinguished lawyer of Hartford, and son of the younger President Edwards. His mother was Elizabeth, daughter of Capt. Moses Tryon, of Wethersfield, Conn.

After leaving college, he studied law with Chief-Justice Zephaniah Swift (Y. C. 1778), of Windham, Conn., was admitted to the bar in 1824, and was for a few years a practicing attorney in Hartford. In 1830 he went to the island of Cuba to reside, but the death of his father in April, 1831, changed his plans, and induced him to return to his native city. In 1835 he was appointed by the state legislature judge of probate for the district of Hartford, and held the office for one year. In 1836 he was nominated by the Whigs for secretary of state, but was defeated, with all his associates on the ticket. He removed in 1838 to Troy, N. Y., where he was subsequently mayor of the city (1854 and 1855) as well as a member of the state legislature in the same years.

He was married, March 1, 1837, to Maria Champion, of Colchester, Conn. After her death he removed in the spring of 1867 with his son to New Haven, Conn., where he spent the remainder of his life in invalid retirement. He died in this city, quite suddenly, of a congestive chill, Aug. 23, 1875, in his 77th year. His only son graduated at this college in 1863.

Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale College Deceased from June, 1870, to June, 1880. p. 209

JONATHAN EDWARDS, JR., 1841-1886

*JONATHAN EDWARDS, son of Jonathan (Y.C., ‘19) and Maria (Champion) Edwards, was born at Troy, N. Y., October 5, 1841. He was prepared for college in the city of New Haven.

Immediately after graduation he made a tour through some of the Western States, and commenced the study of medicine in Troy, in January, 1864. Later he attended lectures in the Albany Medical College, and
from October, 1865, to March, 1867, was a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in New York City, from which he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine in the latter month.

He never practised his profession, but devoted all his time to the care of an invalid father, with whom he fixed his residence in New Haven. For several years he acted as Class secretary, and edited the first history of the Class. During his residence in New Haven he was greatly interested in the collection of coins, devoting much of his time and labor gratuitously to the care and increase of the college collection, and also having a valuable collection of his own. He prepared a catalogue of Greek and Roman coins in the numismatic collection of Yale College, which he edited and printed, largely at his own expense. He also devoted considerable time to making a collection of facts for the history of the Edwards family. He made several trips to Europe, from the last of which he returned with his constitution undermined by Roman fever, passing the rest of his life in New Haven in increasing weakness, where he died June 19, 1886.

He married, February 28, 1882, Marion Collins, daughter of Clarissa and the late David C. Collins.

_A History of the Class of 1863, Yale College._ New York, 1889. p.58

**Scope and Contents**

The Edwards Family Papers consist of letters, a diary, financial and numismatic material, genealogical notes, and miscellaneous papers of Jonathan Edwards, Sr. (1798-1875), Maria (Champion) Edwards (d.1867), Jonathan Edwards, Jr. (1841-1886), and their Edwards and Champion relations.

Jonathan Edwards (1798-1875), a prominent upper New York State politician, was defeated as a Whig candidate for Secretary of New York State but elected Mayor of Troy in 1838. In 1837 he married Maria Champion of Colchester, Connecticut, and thus acquired for a brother-in-law the Reverend George Champion, one of the first missionaries to the Zulus. The Edwards’ only child, Jonathan Edwards, Jr. (1841-1886), graduated from Yale in 1863, proceeded to obtain a medical degree only to be called home to tend his declining father, a guardianship which prevented the resumption of his profession. In 1875 he removed to New Haven where he devoted much time to the College’s numismatic collection. Largely at his own expense he edited and published the _Catalogue of Greek and Roman Coins._

The bulk of the letters in this collection are exchanges between the elder Jonathan Edwards, his wife, and their son, pertaining primarily to their frets - “Today I am afflicted with a cold” - and joys - “Your chirography has certainly improved.” Rather than focusing on the specifics of political life, they convey a sense of endurance in the face of hardship: death, fire, and business failure. Spotted throughout the collection are insights into community life: the Know-Nothings (1854 Nov 8, Dec 27), the risk of business in New York (1841 Feb 9, Apr 1), religious conversions (1838 Aug 24), appropriation of wartime rhetoric by temperance advocates (1861 Feb 22, May 10). Letters from the engineer, Albert Hamilton Emery (1834-1926), give carefully detailed descriptions of his new inventions for the cannon (1861 Jul 22, 1862 Jul 30); and a letter from Jeremiah Clemens (1814-1865), senator from Alabama, concerns his desire to redress Aaron Burr’s unfavorable reputation resulting from his involvement in setting up another government in the Southwest. Letters from George Champion (1810-41) describe conditions in Natal in 1838, shortly after the Zulu chief Dingaan had killed the Boer leader Piet Retief and begun his effort to wipe out the rest of the Boers as well.
## Collection Contents

### Inventory

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Family correspondence</td>
<td>1805 April 4–1838 September 19</td>
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<td>1838 October 1–1843 August 28</td>
<td>1838 October 1–1843 August 28</td>
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<td>b. 3</td>
<td>1843 October 11–1849 November 26</td>
<td>1843 October 11–1849 November 26</td>
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<td>1850 January 2–1859 February 21</td>
<td>1850 January 2–1859 February 21</td>
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<td>b. 5</td>
<td>1859 March 4–1861 May 8</td>
<td>1859 March 4–1861 May 8</td>
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<td>1861 May 10–1863 March 30</td>
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<td>1863 April 1–1866 October 27</td>
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<td>1866 October 28–1883 July 27</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Class of 1819 correspondence (by or about)</td>
<td>1859–1870</td>
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b. 8 Abbell, James
b. 8 Bishop, Elijah
b. 8 Booth, David
b. 8 Buffett, William L.
b. 8 Bulkley, Ichabod
b. 8 Bull, Norman
b. 8 Chapin, Edward
b. 8 Hubbard, Samuel
b. 8 Huntington, Asahel
b. 8 Payson, Joshua
b. 8 Porter, Theodore
b. 8 Riddell, Freeman
b. 8 Sheldon, George
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<td>Strong, Maltby</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Brewer, Josiah</td>
<td>1864–1882</td>
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<td>Brown, Edward F.</td>
<td>1864–1882</td>
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<td>1864–1882</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Emerson, Thomas A.</td>
<td>1864–1882</td>
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<td>Scott, Henry</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Sheldon, Charles</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Whitehead, Courtland</td>
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<td>Financial papers</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Receipts</td>
<td>1765, 1802–20, 1853–54, 1868</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Record of sales of land</td>
<td>[1818–33?]</td>
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<td>b. 8</td>
<td>Record of auction sales</td>
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<td>Jonathan Edwards, Sr.</td>
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<td>“Old Political Squib” regarding the censure of J. Q. Adams</td>
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<td>“Epitaph for [Sidney Smith?]”</td>
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<td>[Maria (Champion) Edwards, d. 1867?]</td>
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<td>b. 9</td>
<td>Notes on Books of the Bible</td>
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<td>Jonathan Edwards, Jr.</td>
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<td>b. 9</td>
<td>Letterbook</td>
<td>1854 August 11–1860 August 23</td>
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<td>Diary</td>
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<td>“Coin Journal for 1858”</td>
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<td>“Coin Journal for 1859”</td>
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<td>Catalogue of the Cabinet of Coins</td>
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<td>b. 9</td>
<td>Coin catalogue</td>
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<td>Account book, thermometrical and meterological register</td>
<td>1852–1864</td>
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<td>b. 10</td>
<td>Diploma for the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology conferred on Jonathan</td>
<td>1787 September</td>
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<td>Edwards (1745-1801) from Princeton University</td>
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<td>b. 10</td>
<td>Diploma for the degree of Doctor of Medicine awarded to Jonathan Edwards</td>
<td>1867 March 12</td>
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<td>(1841-1886) from Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons</td>
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Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library’s online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

**Subjects**
- Business
- Coins
- Families
- Missionaries
- Ordnance
- Religion
- Zulu (African people)

**Geographic Names**
- Africa
- Kwazulu-Natal (South Africa) -- History
- New York (State) -- Politics and government -- 1775-1865
- United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
- United States -- Politics and government

**Genres / Formats**
- Diaries

**Occupations**
- Politicians

**Names**
- Bliss, William, 1806-1886
- Boardman, Derek L.
- Burr, Aaron, 1756-1836
- Champion, George, 1810-1841
- Champion, Henry, 1751-1836
- Champion, Ruth Robbine, 1782-1863
- Clemens, Jeremiah, 1814-1865
- Deming, Abigail Champion
- Dingane, King of the Zulu, approximately 1793-1840
- Edwards, Eugene, 1819-1899
- Edwards, George, 1789-1896
- Edwards, J. E. (John Erskine), 1809-1873
- Edwards, Jonathan, 1798-1875
- Edwards, Jonathan, 1841-1886
- Edwards, Maria Champion, d. 1867
- Edwards, Timothy, 1738-1813
- Edwards, Walter, 1801-1882

**Families**
- Edwards family

**Corporate Bodies**
- American Party
- Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1819
- Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1821
- Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1863
- Yale University -- Students
- Yale University. Numismatic Collection -- Library

Emery, Albert Hamilton, 1834-1926