

# Guide to the James Lockwood Wright papers

MS 1078



July 2008

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
(203) 432-1735  
(203) 432-7441  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1078

**CREATOR:** Wright, James Lockwood, 1810-1871

**TITLE:** James Lockwood Wright papers

**DATES:** 1828-1858

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of eleven volumes of a journal kept by Wright from his first years at Yale College in 1828. While there he reports on a lecture by Elias Boudinot on behalf of the Cherokee nation and various temperance and abolition activities. The journals are chiefly devoted to religious meditations and describe the various revival movements of his era and his evangelical work with black residents of New Haven. He also records various aspects of his personal life including five mental breakdowns between 1828 and 1853, his family's health, and gives an account of the birth of his fourth child. The journals also include transcriptions of his sermons as well as those by others. With the papers is a letter from James Heyden Wright to Marion Wright Messimer on the journal.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1078>

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## 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 <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1078>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](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

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

The collection was donated to Yale University by Marion Messimer in 1948.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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### Preferred Citation

James Lockwood Wright Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of James Lockwood Wright consist of an eleven volume journal kept for thirty years, from the beginning of his study at Yale College in 1828 through 1858. While Wright does describe various events in his life and the world around him, his major concern in with his inner religious condition. As a young man he constantly doubted the sincerity of his faith and his fitness for the ministry, and lamented his frequent lapses from Godly behavior and recurrent fits of depression (1828 Nov 29, Dec 20, 1831 Mar 14, 1835 Feb 1, 1842 Mar, 1853 Oct 15). Much interested in the revival movements of his era, he participated both as a student and as a minister (1831 Mar 14, 1833 Sep, 1851 Jan 27, 31, 1858 Jan 27), and describes evangelical work with black residents of New Haven (1833 Feb 3), the process of conversion of one of his parishioners (1851 Jan 31), and a multitude of sermons, both his own and others.

Other topics which Wright mentions include his activities as a Yale student, including attendance at a lecture by Elias Boudinot on behalf of the Cherokee nation (1832 Feb 14) and various temperance and abolition activities (1833 Sep 3). After graduation Wright lived by farming, teaching school, and occasional preaching before taking a full-time position as minister, first in Burlington, Connecticut, in 1848, and then in Haddam, Connecticut, in 1855. His journal briefly records his activities along with notes on slavery (1841 Oct 22, 1850 Mar-Apr), local politics (1850 Mar-Apr), and his own and his family's health. He describes in some detail a bout of illness apparently combined with some sort of mental breakdown which he suffered (1853 Oct 15), and provides a lengthy account of the birth of his fourth child, in preparation for which his wife underwent a series of water treatments and a diet of graham bread.

In addition to the journal, this collection contains a letter from James Heyden Wright to Marion (Wright) Messimer concerning the journal.

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## Collection Contents

### Original accession

b. 1, f. 1	Letter of James Heyden Wright to Marion Messimer	1936 June 21
Journals		
b. 1, f. 2	1828 Nov 26 -1833 Apr 8	
b. 1, f. 3	1832 Oct 31 -1833 Dec 13	
b. 1, f. 4	1833 Sep 3 -30	
b. 1, f. 5	1833 Dec 25 -1835 Aug 27	
b. 1, f. 6	1835 Dec 28-1841 Jun 8, 1842 Mar	
b. 1, f. 7	1840 -1843	
b. 1, f. 8	1843 Apr 13 -May 12	
b. 1, f. 9	1845 Dec 6 -1849 Nov 28	
b. 1, f. 10	1849 Nov 30 -1851 Nov 7	
b. 1, f. 11	1852 Jan -1857 Jan 10	
b. 1, f. 12	1852 Jan 12 -1858 Mar 24	

## **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**

African Americans -- Religion  
Cherokee Indians  
Childbirth  
Clergy  
Depression, Mental  
Education  
Evangelicalism -- Connecticut  
Mental illness  
Religious thought -- 19th century  
Temperance

### **Geographic Names**

Connecticut

### **Genres / Formats**

Diaries  
Sermons

### **Names**

Wright, James Heyden  
Wright, James Lockwood, 1810-1871

### **Corporate Bodies**

Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1832  
Yale University -- Students