

# Preliminary Guide to the Alexander Maclaren Witherspoon Papers

MS 528



compiled by John Espy

June 1980

Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
(203) 432-1735  
(203) 432-7441

[beinecke.library@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.library@yale.edu)

<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

---

# Table of Contents

Collection Overview ..... 3  
Requesting Instructions ..... 3  
Administrative Information ..... 3  
    Immediate Source of Acquisition ..... 3  
    Conditions Governing Access ..... 3  
    Conditions Governing Use ..... 4  
    Preferred Citation ..... 4  
Biographical / Historical ..... 4  
Scope and Contents ..... 4  
Collection Contents ..... 5  
Selected Search Terms ..... 7

---

## 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 528

**CREATOR:** Witherspoon, Alexander M. (Alexander Maclaren), 1894-1964

**TITLE:** Alexander Maclaren Witherspoon papers

**DATES:** 1916-1964

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 31 linear feet

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Lectures, notes, subject files, exams, and correspondence from Witherspoon's teaching career at Yale University. Also included are correspondence and manuscripts of Albert Hampton Barclay.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0528>

---

## 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.0528>.

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

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Charles A. Walker, 1969.

---

### Conditions Governing Access

Gradebooks in Box 31 are restricted until January 1, 2024 as established by [Yale Corporation regulations](#).

---

## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for 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.

---

## Preferred Citation

Alexander Maclaren Witherspoon Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

---

## Biographical / Historical

Alexander M. Witherspoon (1894-1964): Educator; B.A., Yale, 1918, M.A., 1921, Ph.D., 1923; instructor in English, Yale, 1923-1926, assistant professor, 1926-1935, associate professor, 1935-1963, professor emeritus, 1963-1964.

He was the author of *The Influence of Robert Garnier on Elizabethan Drama* (Yale Press, 1924) and *Common Errors in English* (Doubleday, Doran, 1943) and he was the editor of *Titus Andronicus* in the Yale Shakespeare Series (Yale Press, 1926) and the co-editor of *Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry* (1929, 1946) and *The College Survey of English Literature* (1942, 1952), both published by Harcourt, Brace. Since 1953 Witherspoon has been on the editorial board of *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (eight volume—Yale Press, 1953—), and he was co-editor of Volume Four of the series, published in 1953. He was also a member of the editorial board of the Masterworks Series (five volumes—Doubleday, Doran, 1946-50). He belonged to the Modern Language Association of America, the Modern Humanities Research Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the American Association of University Professors (secretary-treasurer of the Yale chapter, 1940-44), the Elizabethan Club (formerly president), the Graduates Club, "The Club" of New Haven, and United Church. He was unmarried.

*History of the Class of 1918 Yale College, Forty Years On*. Vol. II (1954), pp. 371-372.

---

## Scope and Contents

Lectures, notes, subject files, exams, and correspondence from Witherspoon's teaching career at Yale University. Also included are correspondence and manuscripts of Albert Hampton Barclay.

---

## Collection Contents

b. 1	Lectures: notes, typescripts, student papers, course materials, printed matter.	1934-1948
b. 1	Bible class: notes, printed matter	1934-1943, 1961-1962
b. 1	<i>The College Survey of English Literature</i> : volumes, with AMW's annotations, notes, and printed matter. One volume in Box 4	1942-1948
b. 2	Miscellaneous: typescripts, printed matter, some correspondence	1947-1950
b. 4, 3, 5	"Collateral notes" (hereafter CN): lecture and research materials on various writers and subjects: notes, printed matter, some typescripts and student papers. Materials are sorted into manila envelopes, but envelopes are not in any order English	1930-1959
b. 6	CN on Milton	1916-1919
b. 6	CN on Thomas Browne	1955-1959
b. 7	CN, including drawings by a student	
b. 7-8	Note cards	undated
b. 8	Comprehensive Study Group: stencils	undated
b. 8	Departmental papers	
b. 8	Exams, course hand-outs, miscellaneous	1938-1963
b. 9	Exams (suggested questions), miscellaneous	1945-1959
b. 9	Correspondence, some re: <i>Complete Prose Works of John Milton</i>	1948-1963
b. 10	CN	
b. 10	Exams	1953-1960
b. 10	Note cards	undated
b. 11	CN (Dryden and others), including stencils	
b. 13, 12	Albert Hampton Barclay: correspondence, MSS, printed matter	1916-1938
b. 13	CN	
b. 13	Photographs (framed)	1944, undated
b. 13	Glass ball containing metal dog	undated
b. 14	CN	
b. 15	CN on Milton	
b. 15	Printed map	1931
b. 16	CN	

b. 16	Correspondence	1926-1929
b. 16	Scrapbook of clippings, mostly weather records	1938-1958
b. 17	CN	
b. 17	Exams	1958-1961
b. 17	Milton Fund: correspondence and financial statements	1952-1963
b. 17	Scrapbook of clippings on Milton	1928-1937
b. 18	Exams: Freshman English	1917-1940
b. 19, 18	CN, especially on Milton and Shakespeare	
b. 20	CN	
b. 20	Exams	1918-1935
b. 20	<i>The College Survey of English Literature</i> : critical correspondence	1942-1948
b. 21, 25, 24, 23, 22	CN	
b. 25	Stencils	undated
b. 25	Photographs	undated
b. 26	Notebooks kept by AMW as a student	undated
b. 26	Textbooks	
b. 26	Stencils	undated
b. 26	Printed matter	
b. 27	Exam booklets (blank, or used as notebooks)	1957-1961
b. 27	Stencils	undated
b. 27	Financial records	1963-1964
b. 27	Death announcements and materials re: memorial service	1964
b. 28-29, 27	CN	
b. 29	Note cards	undated
b. 31, 30	CN	
b. 31	Grade books Grade books are closed until January 1, 2024 as established by <a href="#">Yale Corporation regulations</a> .	1939-1942, 1949

## **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**

Educators  
English literature -- Study and teaching  
Literature -- History and criticism

### **Geographic Names**

United States -- History -- Revolution,  
1775-1783

### **Names**

Barclay, Albert Hampton, 1869-1951  
Witherspoon, Alexander M. (Alexander  
Maclaren), 1894-1964

### **Corporate Body**

Yale University -- Faculty