

# Guide to the Arthur Williams Wright Papers

MS 1860



compiled by Christopher Geissler and William Massa

August 2005

Yale University Library  
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## Collection Overview

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

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1860

**CREATOR:** Wright, Arthur W. (Arthur Williams), 1836-1915

**TITLE:** Arthur Williams Wright papers

**DATES:** 1755-1876

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.75 linear feet

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of materials written and/or collected by Arthur Williams Wright, primarily his writings and notes on scientific topics, such as meteorite analysis.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1860>

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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.1860>.

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

Gift of Barbara Hoblitzelle Newell, 2005.

## Conditions Governing Access

Due to the physical nature of the letterbook in box 2, staff supervision is required.

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Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain.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

Arthur Williams Wright Papers (MS 1860). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Associated Materials

Natural Sciences Manuscript Collection (MS 583), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Arthur Williams Wright was born on September 8, 1836, in Lebanon, Connecticut. He received his Yale College B.A in 1859 and his Ph.D. in 1861, the year Yale became the first American university to award this degree. He served as a Yale College tutor in Latin from 1863 to 1866 and in natural philosophy from 1866 to 1868. Wright was an instructor in physics from 1867 to 1868. He furthered his studies with a year at Heidelberg and Berlin. In 1871, he was appointed professor of molecular physics and chemistry at Yale, and in 1878, professor of experimental physics, a position he held until his retirement in 1906. In addition to his academic appointments, Wright was a consultant to the U. S. Signal Service, 1881-1886; the Annual Assay Commission in 1887; and a member of the party sent out by the United States Naval Observatory in the summer of 1878 to observe the total eclipse of the sun. In 1876, he observed for the first time the occurrence of gases in stony meteorites, analyzed them as those of iron meteorites, and investigated their spectra and the relation of these to the spectra of comets. Following the discovery of X-rays in 1895, he was the first American to obtain results from using X-rays. Wright was married to Susan Forbes Silliman. He died in New Haven on December 19, 1915. The Arthur W. Wright Nuclear Structure Laboratory on the Yale campus is named for him.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers consist of materials written and/or collected by Arthur Williams Wright, primarily his writings and notes on scientific topics, such as meteorite analysis.

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## Arrangement

The papers are arranged by type of material.

## Collection Contents

### Inventory, 1755-1876, undated

Diaries		
b. 1, f. 1	[Lyon, William?], Journey to Quebec English	1823 May 20- August 7
b. 1, f. 2	[unknown author], French and Indian War English	1755-1761
Memorabilia		
b. 1, f. 3	Map of the Hudson River	1829
b. 1, f. 4	Miscellaneous loose pages	1817, undated
Writings		
b. 1, f. 5	"Benjamin Silliman, Professor of Chemistry, Pharmacy, Mineralogy, and Geology" [notes and printed document] English	undated
b. 1, f. 6	Geometric problems [journal and loose pages]	undated
b. 1, f. 7	"Images produced by lightning" English	[187?]
b. 1, f. 8	"The Laboratory" [printed document] English	undated
b. 1, f. 9 - 18	Meteorite analysis [notes]	[1875?] December 18- [1876?] February 29, undated
b. 1, f. 19	Miscellaneous notes	undated
b. 1, f. 20	"On the Gases contained in Meteorites" English	1876 March 18
b. 1, f. 21	"On the Polarization of the Zodiacal Light" English	1874 April 6
b. 1, f. 22	"On the Spectrum of the Zodiacal Light" English	1874 June 5
b. 1, f. 23	"Solutions of Problems proposed July, 1857" English	1857
b. 2	Letterbook of G. & D. Cook & Co. [carriage company?] Due to the physical nature of the letterbook, staff supervision is required.	1861-1862

## **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.

### **Names**

Wright, Arthur W. (Arthur Williams), 1836-1915

### **Corporate Bodies**

Yale University. Physics Department

Yale University -- Faculty