

# Guide to the James Harvey Linsley Family Papers

MS 1424



compiled by Diane E. Kaplan and John Espy

July 1986

Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
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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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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1424

**CREATOR:** Linsley, James H. (James Harvey), 1787-1843

**TITLE:** James Harvey Linsley family papers

**DATES:** 1815-1858

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.5 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of correspondence, notes, school compositions, other writings, and accounts of the Linsley family. James Harvey Linsley's papers reflect his interest in natural history and include newspaper articles and student notes from Yale College.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1424>

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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.1424>.

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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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

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## Preferred Citation

James Harvey Linsley Family Papers (MS 1424). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

James Harvey Linsley, the eldest of ten children of James and Sarah (Maltby) Linsely, of Northford, in (North) Branford, Connecticut, was born on May 5, 1787. His parents were Baptists, and after he had taught for several years he became a member of the church and decided to study for the ministry. He was obliged to teach during much of his College course, to obtain money, and this excessive labor injured permanently his constitution.

After graduation he continued to teach in New Haven, where he was married, on February 1, 1818, to Sophia Brainard, daughter of Colonel William and Lois (Masfield) Lyon.

In May 1818, he took charge of the New Canaan Academy, which he left in April, 1821, to establish a boarding school for boys in Stratford, which was thenceforth his home.

In addition to his teaching, he began in 1828 to preach as he had opportunity, though not regularly licensed until January 1831; and on desiring to undertake stated ministerial work, he was ordained as an Evangelist on June 9, in Meriden, at a meeting of the Baptist State Convention.

At the same time he gave up his school to devote himself wholly to his new duties.

For nearly five years he was exclusively occupied with preaching, having also the pastoral care of two Baptist societies which he had gathered, in Milford (1832) and Bridgeport (1835).

Early in 1836 the constant exertion of his voice brought on an alarming attack of bronchitis, which forbade further public speaking.

He then had leisure to indulge his enthusiasm for natural history, and in his remaining years he gave himself with all his wonted energy and perseverance to the preparation of exhaustive catalogues of the birds, mammals, reptiles, fishes, and shells collected by himself in Connecticut.

Meantime his health was precarious, and after a brief final illness he died at his home in Stratford, on December 26, 1843, in his 57th year.

His widow died in Stratford on January 31, 1866, in her 84th year. Their children were two daughters, the younger of whom married the Rev. Dr. Sylvanus Dryden Phelps (Brown Univ. 1844).

F.B. Dexter, *Biographical Notices of Graduates of Yale College*, pp. 21f

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## Scope and Contents

The James Harvey Linsley Family Papers consist of correspondence, writings, notebooks, and other papers of several member of the Linsley family. The bulk of the material reflects James Harvey Linsley's interests. Two notebooks contain his notes and catalogs of shells and botanical terms, while a scrapbook contains

clippings of his writings on political and agricultural topics as printed in the *Gospel Witness* and the *Republican Farmer*. The papers also contain a notebook kept by Linsley at Yale College.

Papers of Jesse Linsley and Reuben Linsley relate to North Branford, Connecticut, where James Harvey Linsley was born. These papers include an account book of Jesse Linsley and an inventory of the estate of Reuben Linsley showing the division of property between his daughter Polly and his widow Tryphena Linsley.

Papers of James Halsey Linsley relate to his education at the normal school in New Britain, Connecticut and his teaching career. His compositions include instructions on how to teach. James Halsey Linsley's relation to the other Linsley family members represented in the papers is unclear.

The Linsley Papers were transferred from the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection (MS 352) in 1985. Some of the papers were donated to the Yale Library by William Lyon Phelps, a grandson of James Harvey Linsley, while others were apparently purchased from a dealer.

## Collection Contents

Linsley, James Halsey		
b. 1, f. 1	Correspondence	1848, 1854
b. 1, f. 2	School compositions, miscellanea	1854-1858, undated
Linsley, James Harvey		
b. 1, f. 3	Letter to Durrie & Peck, enclosing copy of letter from Cornelius Conway Felton	1841
Notebooks		
b. 1, f. 4	Notes on shells	1839, 1843, undated
b. 1, f. 5	Student notes on Jeremiah Day's lectures on philosophy and James Luce Kingsley's lectures on history; miscellaneous notes	1816, undated
b. 1, f. 6	"Vocabulary of botanical researches in 1820 in New Canaan" English	1820
b. 1, f. 7	Scrapbook of newspaper articles by Linsley	1837-1840
Linsley, Jesse		
b. 1, f. 8	Account book	1837-1843
	Commonplace book of maxims	1815
Linsley, Reuben		
b. 1, f. 9	Estate records	undated

## **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**

Clergy  
Natural history

### **Geographic Names**

North Branford (Conn.)

### **Names**

Linsley, James H. (James Harvey), 1787-1843

### **Families**

Linsley family

### **Corporate Bodies**

Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1817  
Yale University -- Students