

Guide to the Stephen Williams Family Papers

MS 1430



compiled by Diane E. Kaplan and John Espy

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	3
Requesting Instructions	3
Administrative Information	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition	3
Conditions Governing Access	4
Conditions Governing Use	4
Preferred Citation	4
Biographical / Historical	4
Scope and Contents	5
Collection Contents	6
Selected Search Terms	7

Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 1430

CREATOR: Williams, Stephen, 1722-1795

TITLE: Stephen Williams family papers

DATES: 1742-1815

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of a diary kept by Stephen Williams, 1742-1747, of daily life and religious reflection; diaries of his son Andrew Williams, 1783-1785, while teaching school in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and diaries and notes of another son Timothy Williams, 1783 and 1788-1790, which document his education at Yale College and his life in Woodstock and Norwich, Connecticut.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1430>

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.1430>.

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

Gift of Donald C. Johnson, 1968. The papers were originally part of the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection, MS 352.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain.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

Preferred Citation

Stephen Williams Family Papers (MS 1430). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

Stephen Williams, 1722 - 1795

Stephen Williams, the second son of the Rev. Dr. Stephen Williams (Harv. 1713) of Longmeadow, and grandson of the Rev. John Williams (Harv. 1683), of Deerfield, Massachusetts, the "Redeemed Captive," was born in Longmeadow, January 26, 1721-22. His mother was Abigail, eldest daughter of the Rev. John Davenport (Harv. 1687) of Stamford, Connecticut. Two of his brothers were graduated here, in 1745 and 1755 respectively.

He studied theology with his father, and in February 1744, was recommended by the Hartford North Association to the society in what is now the town of Granby, as a candidate for their pulpit; and again, in January 1745, the Fairfield East Association advised the church in what is now Trumbull to apply to him. Late in the same year he accepted a call to the church in East Hartford, but for some (now unknown) reason the plan was not carried into effect. Early in 1746 he began to preach to the villagers in New Roxbury, or West Woodstock, a newly constituted parish in Woodstock, Connecticut, where he received a formal call to settle, on the 8th of July. On the 2th of June 1747, he was ordained over the church (called the Second Church in Woodstock), which was gathered in the same connection.

He continued in this position through his life, sustaining "a very amiable and worthy character," and died there, May 6, 1795, in his 74th year.

He married, October 18, 1748, his second cousin, Martha, eldest child of Captain Jonathan and Thankful (Strong) Hunt, of Northampton, Massachusetts, who died a few years before him. They had three daughters and four sons; the younger sons were graduated here in 1783 and 1785 respectively.

From: F.B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College*, Vol. I, pp. 695f.

* * * * *

Timothy Williams, 1764 - 1849

Timothy Williams, the youngest son of the Rev. Stephen Williams (Yale 1741), of West Woodstock, Connecticut, was born in Woodstock on April 16, 1764. He joined College in February of the Freshman year.

He studied theology, and was licensed to preach by the Windham Association of Ministers on May 15, 1792; and after his father's death, in 1795, he supplied the vacant pulpit in West Woodstock for a time. His active life was, however, mainly given to teaching, and in a lesser degree to evangelistic labors.

He taught in an academy in Norwich, Connecticut, for several years, and in 1796-97 was the Preceptor of the Academy since known as Lawrence Academy, in Groton, Massachusetts. Later he taught in an Academy near Albany, New York, and in another in Hampshire County, Virginia -- in which latter State he resided for twenty years.

He fulfilled several appointments as a missionary in the employment of the Presbyterian Church and preached as a supply in many parts of the North and South, though never ordained.

He returned to New England about 1840, and made his home in the place of his birth, where he died in February, 1849, in his 85th year. He was unmarried.

From: F.B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College*, Vol. IV, p. 446.

Scope and Contents

The Stephen Williams Family Papers are composed of the diaries of Stephen Williams and two of his sons, Andrew Williams and Timothy Williams. Some of the diaries also refer to another son, Stephen Williams (1762-1822, Y. 1783). The papers were donated to the Yale Library by Donald C. Johnson in 1968 and were transferred from the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection in 1985.

Stephen Williams's diary contains brief notations of weather conditions, names and texts of religious offerings heard, local deaths, and religious reflection. At the end of the diary the entries also record Williams's travels to preach in the West Woodstock area. Andrew Williams (b. 1761) kept his diaries while teaching in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He records some details of his school, weather conditions, and occasionally events witnessed or talked of in the Boston area. He also notes travel to visit his family in West Woodstock and work on the farm there. Timothy Williams's diaries contain somewhat longer entries. The 1783 volumes depict student life at Yale and study with his father. Later volumes are dated from Woodstock and Norwich, Connecticut, where he taught school.

Collection Contents

	Williams, Stephen	
b. 1, f. 1	Diary	1742-1747
	Williams, Andrew	
b. 1, f. 2	Diaries	1783-1785, undated
	Williams, Timothy	
b. 1, f. 3 - 4	Diaries	1783, 1788-1790
b. 1, f. 5	Miscellaneous notes	1783, 1794, 1815, 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
Congregationalism
Families
Religion

Geographic Names

Cambridge (Mass.) -- Social life and customs
West Woodstock (Conn.) -- Social life and customs

Genres / Formats

Diaries

Names

Williams, Andrew, b. 1761
Williams, Stephen, 1722-1795
Williams, Timothy, 1764-1849

Corporate Body

Yale University -- Students