

# Guide to the Richard Henry Green Papers

MS 2005



compiled by Matthew Gorham

August 2014

Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
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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 2005

**CREATOR:** Green, Richard Henry, 1833-1877

**TITLE:** Richard Henry Green papers

**DATES:** 1855-1948

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.4 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** The materials are in English.

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of the papers of Richard Henry Green and family, graduate of Yale College, Class of 1857, and its first African American graduate. The papers include correspondence and financial records of Richard Henry Green, as well as correspondence and account books of his wife, Charlotte A. Green; correspondence of his daughter, Charlotte M. Whiteley; correspondence and business records of his brother-in-law, John Caldwell; and memorabilia. Richard Henry Green's correspondence includes letters written to and from friends and Yale classmates, as well as letters written to his wife and mother during his service in the navy during the U.S. Civil War.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.2005>

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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.2005>.

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 William Reese, 2014; purchased from Nate D. Sanders Auctions, 2014.

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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

Richard Henry Green Papers (MS 2005). Manuscripts and Archives. Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Richard Henry Green was born in New Haven in 1833, the son of Richard Green, a local bootmaker and one of the founders of St. Luke's Episcopal Church. In 1853, the younger Green was admitted to Yale College, where he was active in campus life, becoming a member of the literary society Brothers in Unity as well as the fraternity Delta Sigma. Green was awarded a bachelor of arts degree in 1857.

Following his graduation from Yale, Green was a teacher in Milford, Connecticut. He subsequently moved to Bennington, Vermont to teach at the Bennington Seminary, and later studied medicine at Dartmouth College, where he received an MD in 1864. In 1863, Green enlisted in the United States Navy and served as an acting assistant surgeon aboard the U.S. *Steamer State of Georgia*, and the *Steamer Seneca* during the U.S. Civil War. During his service in the Navy, he married Charlotte Caldwell of Bennington.

After the war, Green and his wife settled in Hoosick, New York, where they had a daughter, Charlotte. He lived and practiced medicine in Hoosick until his death in 1877. In a letter written to Yale's secretary following his death, the elder Green described the cause of his son's death as a "disease of the heart."

Very little is known about how Richard Henry Green identified or presented himself racially, but in official documentation his and his family's racial identification varied. Green grew up in a neighborhood of New Haven known at the time as "Negro Lane," and in the New Haven City Directory, his father was regularly listed as "col'd (colored)." However, the 1850 federal census listed the younger Green as mulatto, as Black in the 1860 census, and in 1870, the census listed him, his wife, and his daughter as white. Though Yale holds no records mentioning Green's racial identity, research conducted into his background following the acquisition of his papers in 2014 indicates that he was the first African American graduate of Yale College, a distinction previously attributed to Edward Bouchet of the Class of 1874.

## **Scope and Contents**

The collection consists of the papers of Richard Henry Green and family, graduate of Yale College, Class of 1857, and its first African American graduate. The papers include correspondence and financial records of Richard Henry Green, as well as correspondence and account books of his wife, Charlotte A. Green; correspondence of his daughter, Charlotte M. Whiteley; correspondence and business records of his brother-in-law, John Caldwell; and memorabilia. Richard Henry Green's correspondence includes letters written to and from friends and Yale classmates, as well as letters written to his wife and mother during his service in the navy during the U.S. Civil War.

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## **Arrangement**

The papers are arranged according to creator and document type.



## **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**

Green, Richard Henry, 1833-1877

### **Corporate Bodies**

Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1857

Yale University. Alumni