

Nathaniel Wright Family Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the
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Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff



Manuscript Division, Library of
Congress

Washington, D.C.

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Collection Summary

Title: Nathaniel Wright Family Papers

Span Dates: 1787-1917

ID No.: MSS46664

Creator: Wright, Nathaniel, 1789-1875

Extent: 23,400 items; 77 containers; 31 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Lawyer of New Hampshire and Ohio. Correspondence, diaries, journals, legal documents, and other items concerning Nathaniel Wright and his family. Relates chiefly to the careers of Wright, his son Daniel Thew Wright, and his son's legal partner, Maskell E. Curwen, including material pertaining to the settlement of estates, railroad litigation, internal improvements, and the family's education, social life, and travels.

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.

People

Curwen, Maskell E.

Wright family.

Wright, Daniel Thew.

Wright, Nathaniel, 1789-1875.

Places

New Hampshire--Social life and customs.

Ohio--Social life and customs.

Occupations

Lawyers.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The family papers of Nathaniel Wright, lawyer, including his sons, William Burnet Wright and Daniel Thew Wright, and grandson, Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, were purchased in 1937.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1962. The finding aid was revised in 2010.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of the Nathaniel Wright family in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The family papers of Nathaniel Wright are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Nathaniel Wright Family, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1789, Jan. 28	Born, Hanover Parish, N.H.
1806-1807	Taught school in New Hampshire while in college
1811	Graduated, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H.
1811-1815	Principal of academy in Portland, Maine; read for law career in local lawyer's office
1815-1816	Left New England to become tutor in Virginia Continued legal studies and passed bar
1817	Emigrated to the West, admitted to bar and opened law office in Cincinnati, Ohio
1820	Married Caroline Augusta Thew President, director and legal counsel to several railroads and improvement projects
1842	Retired because of deafness but remained active in church and civic affairs and in promoting internal improvements, especially Lane Theological Seminary and medical and law schools in Cincinnati, Ohio, and in the work of his minister-son
1875	Died, Cincinnati, Ohio

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Nathaniel Wright (1789-1875) and his family span the period 1781-1917 and consist of legal, personal, and family correspondence, letterbooks, diaries, journals, accounts, receipts, deeds, agreements, briefs and other legal documents, biographical and literary writings, and related material. The collection is organized in seven series: [Diaries and Related Matter](#), [General Correspondence](#), [Letterbooks](#), [Legal and Financial Records](#), [Miscellany](#), [Legal Briefs](#), and [General Miscellany](#).

The bulk of the papers are concerned with Nathaniel's career as a teacher and lawyer and, after his retirement, with the law practice of his son, Daniel Thew Wright, and his son-in-law, Maskell Curwen, who were partners in Cincinnati, Ohio. Much of Wright's legal business concerned the settlement of estates and litigation in connection with railroad, canal, insurance and other enterprises with which they were associated. Family letters begin with Nathaniel's student days at Dartmouth College and continue through his own and his sons' educational and social careers.

After Wright's retirement from law practice due to deafness in 1842, he became interested in his church's business affairs, in Lane Theological Seminary and law and medical schools in Cincinnati, and also in the work of his son, Reverend William B. Wright. In addition to the immediate family,

there are papers generated by in-law members such as Mary F. Wright and Maskell Curwen, Louisa W. Stephenson and Reuben H. Stephenson, Eliza W. Lord and Henry C. Lord, William B. Wright, Chester Wright, Joel Wright, and Jemima Dewey.

Correspondents include Lyman Beecher, Catherine E. Beecher, Jacob Burnet, William J. Duane, George H. Dunn, Stephen Elliott, J. A. Giddings, Casey S. Goodrich, William Henry Harrison, Jr., Samuel Lewis, Edwin Noyes, William Pennington, William V. Peck, John Reiley, Samuel Perry, Daniel Vail, Chauncey Whittesey, and John Woods.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in seven series:

- [Diaries and Related Matter, 1787-1826](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1788-1906](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1824-1875](#)
- [Legal and Financial Records, 1790-1917](#)
- [Miscellany](#)
- [Legal Briefs](#)
- [General Miscellany](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1	<u>Diaries and Related Matter, 1787-1826</u> Diaries, journals, law material and notes, financial accounts and related matter. Organized by type of material.
BOX 2-40	<u>General Correspondence, 1788-1906</u> Correspondence and related matter. Arranged chronologically
BOX 41-45	<u>Letterbooks, 1824-1875</u> Letterbooks of correspondence sent by Nathaniel Wright, his son Daniel Thew Wright, son-in-law, Maskell Curwen, and the law firm of Curwen & Wright. One volume pertains chiefly of letters from Nathaniel Wright to family members. Arranged chronologically within volumes.
BOX 46-60	<u>Legal and Financial Records, 1790-1917</u> Legal and financial material including bills, receipts, accounts, briefs and opinions, other case material, and related matter. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 61-65	<u>Miscellany</u> Charts, maps printed matter, and legal documents relating chiefly to Cincinnati, Ohio and to litigations involving railroads. Arranged by topic, locale, or company.
BOX 66-74	<u>Legal Briefs</u> Legal briefs and opinions, other case material, and related matter. Arranged alphabetically by name of case.
BOX 75-77	<u>General Miscellany</u> Biographical material, essays, poetry, photographs, broadsides and legal pamphlets, and miscellaneous printed matter. Arranged by type of material.

Container List

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General Correspondence, 1788-1906

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Legal and Financial Records, 1790-1917

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
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