

# Guide to the Ralph Emerson Papers

RG 285



Andover Newton Theological School and Yale Divinity Library staff

2017

409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301

[divinity.library@yale.edu](mailto:divinity.library@yale.edu)

<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Divinity Library  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301  
divinity.library@yale.edu  
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

**CALL NUMBER:** RG 285

**CREATOR:** Emerson, Ralph, 1787-1863

**TITLE:** Ralph Emerson Papers

**DATES:** 1807-1871

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 7 linear feet (19 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The Ralph Emerson Papers (1807-1871) primarily document the professional work of Emerson as a Congregational clergyman and faculty member at Andover Theological Seminary. Letters to and from his wife Eliza are included in the correspondence.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.285>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.285>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.        box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Transferred from Andover Newton Theological School Collection, 2017

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Preferred Citation

Ralph Emerson Papers (RG 285), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

### Chronology

Date	Event
1787 August 18	○ Born in Hollis, New Hampshire
1811	○ Graduated from Yale College
1814	○ Graduated from Andover Theological Seminary
1814-1816	○ Tutor, Yale College
1816 June 12	○ Ordained (Congregational)
1816-1829	○ Minister, First Congregational Church, Norfolk, CT
1829-1853	○ Brown Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Andover Theological Seminary
1829-1853	○ Minister, South Congregational Church, Andover, MA
1842-1853	○ President of the Faculty, Andover Theological Seminary
1853-1858	○ Minister, Newburyport (MA) Congregational Church
1858-1863	○ Lecturer, Chicago Theological Seminary
1863 May 20	○ Died in Rockford, IL

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## Scope and Contents

The Ralph Emerson Papers (1807-1871) primarily document the professional work of Emerson. The collection is arranged according to the following categories: journal, correspondence, student lecture notes and essays from Yale College and Andover Theological Seminary, lectures, essays, addresses, sermons, publications, and notes on readings. Included in the correspondence are letters to and from his wife, Eliza.

The majority of sermons are in a shorthand system probably devised by Emerson. There is no extant key to the system, although it might be possible to compile a key by analyzing a letter of Emerson to Charles Prentice, November 7, 1829, of which there are two, one in shorthand and one in longhand.

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## Arrangement

Series I. Journals

Series II. Correspondence

Series III. Notes, Lectures and Writings

Series IV. Sermons

Series V. Publications

Series VI. Notes on Readings

Series VII. Financial Records.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Journals

b. 1	Entries	1808 January 1 - 1811 September 12
b. 1	Entries (in Daybook I, student papers, Andover Theological Seminary, p. 10)	1811 November 25-27
b. 1	Entries (in Daybook II, student papers, Andover Theological Seminary, p. 37)	1812 January 17 - June 26
b. 1	Entries	1829 October - December
b. 1	Entries	1846 August 18 - October 18
	Reminiscences of myself and others (autobiographical essay)	1855 September 20

**Series II: Correspondence**

For a complete list of letters, see the original finding aid, which is linked to from <https://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections/andover-newton>.

b. 1	Undated correspondence, primarily to Eliza Emerson from Charlotte and Mary Rockwell	No date
b. 1	Letters to / from Ralph Emerson and Eliza Emerson Correspondents include Rockwell family, Pierce family, Leonard Woods, B. Wisner, First Congregational Church, Norfolk, CT.	1809–1837
b. 2	Letters primarily to Ralph Emerson and Eliza Emerson Correspondents include Rockwell family, Pierce family, and others.	1838–1853
b. 3	Letters primarily to Ralph Emerson and Eliza Emerson Correspondents include Rockwell family, Pierce family, and others.	1854–1871
b. 19	Association: Letters: Charles Rockwell to Mrs. Charles Rockwell; from Pontiac, MI (May 18, 1846) --- to D. P. Colburn; from ---	1846

**Series III: Notes, Lectures and Writings**

For a full list of titles, see original finding aid, which is linked to from <https://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections/andover-newton>.

Student papers		
Yale College		
b. 4	Lecture notes Including "Chemical lectures", "Hebrew Grammar", and lectures by Dr. Timothy Dwight and Professor George Edward Day	1809–1811
b. 4	Essays Titles include "On profanity", "Comparison between a spendthrift and a miser", and essays on God, on Yale students, on human nature	1808-1811, no date
b. 4	Notebooks Including notes on sermons preached at Yale	1807–1811
Andover Theological Seminary		
b. 4	Daybooks 1-9 All but #9 have sustained fire damage. Including notes on lectures by Professors Stuart, Woods, Park	1811–1814
b. 4	Dissertation: The greatness of the preach[er]'s task. (for examination in the department of sacred rhetoric) Fire damaged	1814 September 28
Course documentation		
b. 5	Church history lectures	
b. 6	Pastoral theology lectures	
b. 6	Questions for classes	1828–1849
Essays		
b. 6	Essays arranged by title Titles include "Epitome of history", "Evils against which a pastor & his people should especially guard after a season of awakening", "General report presented to the Peace Society in the Theological Seminary, Andover, at their annual meeting, Aug. 1832", "Jerome's account of monkery in Egypt"	No date
Addresses		
b. 7	Addresses arranged by date Titles include "Valedictory oration on energy of character", "Ecclesiastical history as an element in female education"	1810–1860

**Series III: Sermons**

For a full list of sermon texts, see the original finding aid, which is linked to from <https://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections/andover-newton>.

b. 7	Fragments and undated sermons arranged by text	No date
b. 7	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1813–1816
b. 8	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1816–1817
b. 9	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1817–1819
b. 10	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1819–1820
b. 11	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1821–1824
b. 12	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1824–1842
b. 13	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1843–1853
b. 14	Dated sermons and sermon notes	1853–1862

**Series IV: Publications**

## Articles

b. 14	Fragments (3)	No date
b. 14	Can there be a wordless thought? (for the New York Observer)	No date
b. 14	A history of Congregationalism (first draft prepared at the request of Dr. Sprague for insertion in his Annals of the American Pulpit, of which only an abstract was published)	No date
b. 14	History of the rise of the Protestant system	No date
b. 14	Obituary notice of the Hon. William B. Bannister of Newburyport, Mass. for the Congregationalist	No date
b. 14	A plea for the un mutilated version of the Bible as made by King James' translators	No date
b. 14	Review of Jesse's History of the House of Stuart	No date
b. 14	Review of Palfrey's History of New England, volume 1 (2 folders)	No date
b. 14	Verbal inspiration	No date
b. 14	On the origin and commencement of the Reformation; from Planck's Protestant theology. American Biblical Repository 9 (1837): 332-358; 10 (1837): 104-141, 253-297 translated by Emerson; (proof sheets with some corrections in RE's hand)	1837
b. 14	On provoking our children to wrath. The Mother's Magazine and Family Library 11 (1843): 183-189, 193-202 (MS)	1843
b. 14	The early history of monasticism; from the original sources. Bibliotheca Sacra 1 (1844): 309-331, 464-525, 632-699 (4 folders--proof sheets, with corrections in RE's hand)	1844
b. 14	Early history of monkery in the church--from original sources. (rough draft of above)	1844

## Books

b. 15	Wiggers, G.F. <i>An historical presentation of Augustinism and Pelagianism from the original sources</i> . Trans. Ralph Emerson. Andover: Gould, Newman & Saxon, 1840	1840
b. 16	Life of Rev. Joseph Emerson, pastor of the Third Congregational Beverly, Ms. and subsequently principal of a Female Seminary, Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1833. Incomplete manuscript	1833

## Proof sheets

b. 17	Proof sheets of articles by Emerson [?]: Church history, Review of the works of Nathanael Emmons, D.D.	No date
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**Series IV: Notes on Reading**

b. 17	Notes on reading arranged by title	No date
b. 17	Unitemized notes	No date

## Series V: Financial Records

b. 18-19

Bills and receipts

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## **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**

Congregationalists -- New England

### **Names**

Emerson, Ralph, 1787-1863

### **Corporate Body**

Andover Theological Seminary