

Yale University Library
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Guide to the Alger Leroy Adams and Jessie M. Wells Adams papers

WA MSS S-4335



Sarah Lerner

October 2020

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-4335

CREATOR: Adams, Alger Leroy, 1910-1992

TITLE: Alger Leroy Adams and Jessie M. Wells Adams papers

DATES: circa 1860s-1997

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 5 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Photographs and photograph albums, scrapbooks, personal papers, and other materials relating to Reverend Alger Leroy Adams, Jessie M. Wells Adams, and the Daniels family, circa 1860s-1997. Materials relating to Alger Adams include a caricature of Adams, scrapbook of Adams's columns for the Amsterdam News, a photograph of Adams's colleague and society editor for Ebony magazine Gerri Major, and a letter of congratulations upon Adams's receiving of an honorary degree. Materials relating to Jessie Adams include a certificate of attainment for Houston public schools; a diploma from Phillis Wheatley School in Houston, Texas; an autograph and photograph album documenting her time at the school; a scrapbook documenting her time at Howard University; a letter of recommendation; and a photographic portrait of Wells. Materials relating to the Daniels family include the marriage certificate of grandparents Eugene P. Daniels and Rebecca Jeff Daniels; marriage certificate of parents Arthur Simon and Eva Daniels Wells; the Daniels's family Bible; 2 photograph albums and 12 loose photographs (including 4 tynypes); and other papers.

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

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.ajadamspapers>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from William Reese Co. (Swann Galleries sale, 2019 March 28, lot 200 and lot 253) on the Frederick W. and Carrie S. Beinecke Fund for Western Americana, 2019.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Alger Leroy Adams and Jessie M. Wells Adams Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Alger Leroy Adams and Jessie M. Wells Adams Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit. These materials have been arranged and described according to national and local standards.

For more information, please refer to the Beinecke Manuscript Unit Processing Manual.

Alger Leroy Adams (1910-1992)

Reverend Alger Leroy Adams (1910-1992) of Omaha, Nebraska, became the first Black student to receive a degree from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York, in 1932. Adams later studied at the General Theological Seminary in Manhattan, helping build churches in New York between 1947 and 1955. In 1950, he and his wife Jessie M. Wells Adams purchased The Westchester County Press, a weekly paper, seeking to give the Black community a cohesive voice. In 1962, the couple developed The Creative Printery, specializing in the publication of high school and college newspapers.

Jessie M. Wells Adams (1917-1997)

Jessie M. Wells Adams (1917-1997) was the daughter of Arthur Simon and Eva B. Daniels Wells Simon (1894-1953) and granddaughter of Eugene P. Daniels (1861-1931) and Rebecca Jeff Daniels (1866-1919), pecan farmers in Concordia Parish, Louisiana. Jessie attended Howard University circa 1931 to 1934.

Scope and Contents

Photographs and photograph albums, scrapbooks, personal papers, and other materials relating to Reverend Alger Leroy Adams, Jessie M. Wells Adams, and the Daniels family, circa 1860s-1997.

Materials relating to Alger Adams include a caricature of Adams, scrapbook of Adams's columns for the Amsterdam News, a photograph of Adams's colleague and society editor for Ebony magazine Gerri Major, and a letter of congratulations upon Adams's receiving of an honorary degree.

Materials relating to Jessie Adams include a certificate of attainment for Houston public schools; a diploma from Phillis Wheatley School in Houston, Texas; an autograph and photograph album documenting her time at the school; a scrapbook documenting her time at Howard University; a letter of recommendation; and a photographic portrait of Wells.

Materials relating to the Daniels family include the marriage certificate of grandparents Eugene P. Daniels and Rebecca Jeff Daniels; marriage certificate of parents Arthur Simon and Eva Daniels Wells; the Daniels's family Bible; 2 photograph albums and 12 loose photographs (including 4 tinypes); and other papers.

Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. Alger Leroy Adams Papers, 1946-1983. II. Jessie M. Wells Adams Papers, 1926-circa 1940s. III. Daniels Family Papers, circa 1860s-1997.

Collection Contents

Series I: Alger Leroy Adams Papers, 1946-1983

Series I contains materials relating to Alger Adams. Included are a caricature of Adams, scrapbook of Adams's columns for the Amsterdam News, a photograph of Adams's colleague and society editor for Ebony magazine Gerri Major, and a letter of congratulations upon Adams's receiving of an honorary degree.

Series I is arranged chronologically.

b. 1, f. 1	Scrapbook	1946-1947
b. 3	Caricature	1958
b. 1, f. 2	Portrait of Gerri Major	circa 1940s
b. 2, f. 5	Letter of congratulations from G. James Flemming	1983

Series II: Jessie M. Wells Adams Papers, 1926-circa 1940s

Series II contains materials relating to Jessie Adams. Included are a certificate of attainment for Houston public schools; a diploma from Phillis Wheatley School in Houston, Texas; an autograph and photograph album documenting her time at the school; a scrapbook documenting her time at Howard University; a letter of recommendation; and a photographic portrait of Wells.

Series II is arranged chronologically.

b. 2, f. 6	Certificate of attainment	1926 August 17
b. 1, f. 3	Diploma	1930 May 13
b. 2, f. 7	Autograph and photograph album	circa 1930
b. 1, f. 4	Scrapbook	1931-1934
b. 2, f. 8	Letter of recommendation	1934 January 27
b. 2, f. 9	Portrait	circa 1940s

Series III: Daniels Family Papers, circa 1860s-1997

Series III contains materials relating to the Daniels family. Included are the marriage certificate of grandparents Eugene P. Daniels and Rebecca Jeff Daniels; marriage certificate of parents Arthur Simon and Eva Daniels Wells; the Daniels's family Bible; 2 photograph albums and 12 loose photographs (including 4 tynypes); and other papers.

Series III is arranged chronologically.

b. 4	Family Bible	1861-1997
b. 2, f. 10	Marriage certificates	1886, 1940
b. 2, f. 11-14	Photograph albums and photographs (4 folders)	circa 1860s-circa 1930s
b. 2, f. 15	Other papers	1904-1985, undated
b. 2, f. 16	Pressed flowers	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.

Preferred Titles

Amsterdam news

Genres / Formats

Caricatures
Marriage certificates
Photograph albums
Photographic prints
Photographs
Scrapbooks
Tintypes (prints)

Occupations

Journalists -- New York (State) -- 20th Century

Subjects

African American high school students -- Texas
-- Pictorial works
African American journalists -- New York
(State)
African Americans -- Louisiana -- Pictorial
works
African Americans -- New York (State)
African Americans -- Portraits
African Americans -- Texas -- Pictorial works
African American women -- Texas
High school students -- Texas
Women -- West (U.S.)

Geographic Names

Louisiana -- Pictorial works
Texas -- Pictorial works

Families

Daniels family

Names

Major, Gerri, 1894-1984 -- Portraits

Corporate Body

Howard University -- Students

Contributors

Adams, Alger Leroy, 1910-1992
Adams, Jessie M. Wells, 1917-1997

Acquired From

William Reese Co., bookseller
Swann Auction Galleries, auctioneer