

# Guide to the James Gregory Mumford Papers

MS 1328



compiled by Diane E. Kaplan and William E. Brown, Jr.

September 1985

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1328

**CREATOR:** Mumford, James Gregory, 1863-1914

**TITLE:** James Gregory Mumford papers

**DATES:** 1874-1915

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.25 linear feet (3 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist of correspondence and writings documenting James Gregory Mumford's education and training as a physician and his career as an essayist and author.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1328>

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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.1328>.

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

Transferred from the Yale University Medical Historical Library, 1980.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

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## Preferred Citation

James Gregory Mumford Papers (MS 1328). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

James Gregory Mumford was a physician in Boston, Massachusetts and an instructor at the Harvard Medical School. He was the author of books and essays on medicine, surgery, and the history of medicine. At the end of his life he was physician-in-residence at Clifton Springs Sanitarium, New York.

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## Scope and Contents

The James Gregory Mumford Papers consist of correspondence documenting Mumford's education and training as a physician and writings on topics in medicine, surgery, and the history of medicine. Only a few items relate to Mumford's practice of surgery in Boston, Massachusetts, his position as instructor on the Harvard Medical School faculty, and his appointment as physician-in-residence at the Clifton Springs Sanitarium. The bulk of the papers date from 1878-1892.

Letters from Mumford to his family begin in 1874. He writes regularly from St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, beginning in 1879. These letters detail life at boarding school. In 1880 Mumford graduated from St. Paul's, but he remained there until the spring of 1881 to prepare for admission to Harvard. Letters from Harvard College commence in October, 1881. In the beginning these letters are addressed to Mumford's mother, but Julia Hills Mumford died in the spring of 1882, and weekly letters following this date are addressed to "Dear Papa" or "Dear Auntie". Mumford describes his athletic, dramatic, and social interests and includes frequent requests for financial support in these letters. The letters also relate the activities of younger brothers at St. Paul's and Harvard. In 1885 Mumford was elected to the Hasty Pudding Club, and the correspondence at this point contains a few items of club memorabilia.

Following graduation in June, 1885, Mumford enrolled in the Harvard Medical School. Mumford's letters home primarily concern personal and financial subjects, though his first operation and work in the dissecting room are also mentioned. As his medical studies progress the letters detail Mumford's acquaintances in the Boston Medical Community. In February, 1889, Mumford began a two year term as a house officer at Massachusetts General Hospital. Even with the heavy work load he found time to continue the letters, which depict his labor, social life, advanced medical knowledge, and plans for a future medical practice. His father was particularly curious for details of "interesting" cases, and Mumford provided descriptions of patients suffering from mental disorders, a case of hydrophobia, and obstetrical visitations. The letters come to an end when, following Mumford's marriage in January, 1892, his father suddenly died. A few scattered letters primarily addressed to Mumford's aged aunt are dated 1909-1914.

The original letters are complemented by a typescript of Mumford's letters. There are some copies of original letters already mentioned, but there are also copies of letters to professional colleagues and

friends not otherwise found in the papers. Correspondents include Elwood Worcester, the leader of the Emmanuel movement, which sought to bring together physician and minister in healing the sick. Several letters are to Harry A. Garfield, like Mumford a trustee of St. Paul's, and concern school business, especially the search for a new rector. There are also letters concerning the development of the Clifton Springs Sanatorium and Hobart College.

The papers also include a number of Mumford's writings, though none of his books. There are two folders of published articles; a draft and typescript of two chapters of Mumford's autobiography concerning his childhood in Rochester, New York; speeches; copies of the *Clifton Medical Bulletin*, which Mumford wrote for and edited; and poems and other "scraps" contained in a copybook which also includes notes on therapeutics.

Folder 27 contains a topical file dating from Mumford's service on the Harvard Medical School faculty. The material concerns the faculty debate over admissions requirements and proposals for faculty reorganization. Memorials and obituary clippings following Mumford's death in October, 1914, are found in folder 29, while folder 30 contains letters to Harvey Cushing, who collected the Mumford papers for the Yale University Medical Historical Library.

## Collection Contents

### Inventory, 1874-1915

Correspondence		
b. 1, f. 1-9	1874-1888	1874-1888
b. 2, f. 10-14	1889-1914	1889-1914
b. 2, f. 15-17	Typescripts	1878-1914
Writings		
b. 2, f. 18-19	Autobiography	Undated
b. 2, f. 20-21	Articles: published	1893-1914
b. 3, f. 22	<i>Clifton Medical-Bulletin</i> English	1913-1915
b. 3, f. 23	Harvard College Class of 1885	1885-1910
b. 3, f. 24	Manuscript: "Doctor Primrose and his Problems"	Undated
b. 3, f. 25	Speeches	1914, undated
b. 3, f. 26	Copybook, drafts, votes	1895-1911, undated
b. 3, f. 27	Harvard Medical School Faculty	1907-1910
b. 3, f. 28	Photograph, notebook	Undated
b. 3, f. 29	Obituaries and memorial tributes	1914-1915, undated
b. 3, f. 30	Harvey Cushing correspondence	1914-1915

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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

Boarding schools  
Education  
Emmanuel movement  
Hospitals -- Massachusetts -- Boston  
Medical students  
Medicine -- Study and teaching  
Physicians  
Surgery

### Geographic Names

Rochester (N.Y.)

### Genres / Formats

Autobiographies

### Names

Cushing, Harvey, 1869-1939  
Mumford, James Gregory, 1863-1914  
Worcester, Elwood, 1862-1940

### Corporate Bodies

Clifton Springs Sanitarium and Clinic (Clifton Springs, N.Y.)  
Harvard Medical School  
Harvard University. Class of 1885  
St. Paul's School (Concord, N.H.)