

# Guide to the John Edwin Kimball Papers

MS 1008



compiled by Janet Elaine Gertz

July 1983

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New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
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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  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1008

**CREATOR:** Kimball, John Edwin, 1833-1916

**TITLE:** John Edwin Kimball papers

**DATES:** 1850-1878

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.5 linear feet

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, minutes of meetings, essays, and printed matter chiefly related to Kimball's experiences as a member of the Yale College Class of 1858. Among the groups with which Kimball was associated are the Linonian Society, as its president, the Society of Inquiry, the Wooden Spoon, and the DeForest Prize Orations. Letters to his family after his graduation describe his experiences as a teacher in Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Chicago, Illinois. Letters from Kentucky in 1860 describe the consequence of his pro-Lincoln position. His major correspondent is Miriam Sherman, another teacher, writing from Chicago, Illinois.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1008>

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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.1008>.

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 John B. Blake, 1975.

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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

John Edwin Kimball Papers (MS 1008). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

John Edwin Kimball, B.A. 1858

Born July 18, 1833, in Webster, Mass.; Died September 7, 1916, in Worcester, Mass.

John Edwin Kimball, son of William and Polly (Robinson) Seaman Kimball, was born in Webster, Mass., July 18, 1833. His father, who fought in the War of 1812, was for many years superintendent of a mill at Webster and later a carpenter and builder in Oxford, Mass. He was the son of Samuel Kimball, a soldier in a Connecticut regiment in the Revolutionary War, and Phebe (Burrell) Kimball, and a descendant of Richard Kimball, who in 1634 came from Ipswich, England, to Watertown, Mass. The Robinson family from which his mother was descended has been well known since Revolutionary times in the southern part of Worcester County, Mass. Mrs. Kimball was the daughter of William and Molly (Dudley) Robinson, and the granddaughter of Silas and Mary (Learned) Robinson.

John Kimball was prepared for Yale at the Nichols Academy, Dudley, Mass., and at the Leicester (Mass.) Academy. He first entered Yale with the Class of 1856, but withdrew in July 1853, returning in 1854 with the Class of 1858. In Sophomore year he was given two prizes in English composition and one in declamation, and in 1857 he was the orator for the Statement of Facts for Linonia. He served on the editorial board of the *Yale Literary Magazine* in Senior year.

In November 1858, he became principal of the high school at Oxford, Mass., where he remained until the following March. The next year was spent as private tutor with a family near Louisville, Ky., from which position he withdrew to allay the commotion excited by his having voted for Lincoln. He then served for a year as principal of the Ogden School in Chicago, Ill. Removing to St. Louis in 1862, he was for the next eighteen years identified with the public school system of that city. After serving successively as principal of the Washington School and the Central High School, and as assistant principal of the First High School, he organized, in 1871, a branch high school, of which he was for a time the head. In 1879, after having had charge of several grammar schools for a number of years, he was placed in charge of the Polytechnic Branch High School, which had just been formed by the consolidation of five branch high schools. For some time, he

also held the position of principal of the O'Fallon Polytechnic Institute, an evening school. In October 1880, he left St. Louis to accept an appointment as superintendent of the schools of Hartford, Conn. A year later he took a similar position in Newton, Mass., where he was located until his retirement in 1884.

Since that time Mr. Kimball's home had been in Oxford, Mass., where he had taken an active interest in town affairs. For twelve years he was moderator of the town meetings. He served several terms as a member of the Board of Selectmen and of the School Committee, was chairman of the building committee of the Larned Free Public Library, for several years serving as a trustee of the institution, and was at one time chairman of the standing committee of the North Congregational Church, of which he was a deacon. For three years Mr. Kimball was a member of the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture, and acted on the committee having oversight of the Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst. He was an associate member of the Philosophical Society of Great Britain, a director of the Oxford National Bank, a vice-president of the Interstate Petroleum Company, and president of the Osage Consolidated Oil & Gas Company and of the Boston & New Mexico Copper Company. For many years during his residence in St. Louis Mr. Kimball was a deacon in the First Congregational Church.

He suffered a stroke of paralysis in February 1912, and was afterwards confined to his bed. In August 1916, he was removed to a sanitarium in Worcester, Mass., where he died the seventh of the following month. His body was taken to Oxford for burial in the family lot in South Cemetery.

He was unmarried. His brother, Thomas Dudley Kimball, a non-graduate of the Class of 1863, who served as captain of Company G, Fifty-first Regiment, Infantry, and later of Company A, Second Regiment, Heavy Artillery, Massachusetts Volunteers, during the Civil War, survives him.

Taken from *Yale University Obituary Record*, 1915-1920, pages 283-285.

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## Scope and Contents

The largest portion of the John Edwin Kimball Papers deals with Kimball's experiences as a member of the Yale College Class of 1858. Included are letters, memorabilia, and printed matter relating to Yale and other institutions.

The correspondence contains letters exchanged between Kimball and his family during and after his study at Yale, many of which describe his life at Yale and his brother's life as a student at Phillips Academy in Andover. The letters dating after 1858 concern Kimball's teaching career in Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Chicago; the letters of November and December 1860 refer to his being forced to leave Kentucky due to his pro-Lincoln attitude. There are also a number of letters from friends and acquaintances from Yale and elsewhere which discuss the College, family news, and social events. The largest group of these were written by Kimball's friend and fellow teacher Miriam Sherman, describing her teaching in Chicago and other matters. The remaining miscellany of letters from businesses, social organizations, and individuals deal with Kimball's teaching career, financial matters, social activities, and similar issues.

Other papers in the collection include debate questions, minutes of meetings, and printed matter from the Leicester Academy and the Oxford Lyceum, as well as an assortment of papers relating to Yale. Included are programs, minutes, brochures, and printed matter from the DeForest Prize Orations, the Society of Inquiry, the Wooden Spoon, and other Yale organizations, among them the Linonian Society, of which Kimball was president for a time. There are also manuscript essays, debate questions, and similar materials, and miscellaneous printed matter relating to clubs, religious societies, and other organizations to which Kimball belonged.

The bulk of these papers was donated to Yale University in 1975 by John B. Blake. The Society of Inquiry papers were given in 1932 by George E. Thompson.

## Collection Contents

Correspondence		
b. 1, f. 1 - 2	Letters to family members	1852-1861
b. 1, f. 3 - 4	Letters from family members	1851-1861
b. 1, f. 5	Letters from Miriam Sherman	1863-1866
b. 1, f. 6	Letters from other friends	1852-1872, undated
b. 1, f. 7	Miscellaneous	1852-1878
b. 1, f. 8	Leicester Academy (Worcester), social fraternity: notices, questions, minutes	1850, undated
Yale College		
b. 1, f. 9	DeForest Prize Orations: programs	1853, 1856
b. 1, f. 10	Linonian Society: questions, programs, miscellaneous papers	1855, 1858, undated
b. 1, f. 11	Society of Inquiry: constitution, minutes	1852, 1856, undated
b. 1, f. 12	Wooden Spoon: brochures	1853, 1857
b. 1, f. 13	Miscellaneous	1853, undated
b. 1, f. 14	Oxford Lyceum (Massachusetts): questions	[1858-1859?]
Manuscripts of xxx		
b. 1, f. 15	Manuscripts	1850-1857, undated
b. 1, f. 16	Manuscripts by persons other than John Kimball	1851, 1856, undated
b. 1, f. 17	Miscellaneous printed matter	1865, 1872-1878

## **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.

### **Geographic Names**

Kentucky  
United States -- Politics and government --  
1857-1861

### **Subjects**

Educators

### **Names**

Kimball, John Edwin, 1833-1916  
Sherman, Miriam

### **Corporate Bodies**

Yale College (1718-1887). Class of 1858  
Yale College (1718-1887). Linonian Society  
Yale University. Yale College Missionary Society  
Yale University -- Students