

THE RUFUS WILMOT GRISWOLD COLLECTION

**MSS 183
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE
SERIES LIST**

**SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
JEAN AND ALEXANDER HEARD LIBRARY
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY**

419 21st Avenue South
Nashville, Tennessee, 37240
615-322-2807

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Rufus Wilmot Griswold was born February 13, 1815 in Benson, Vermont. He was an editor and literary critic best known for his anthologies of American poetry and prose which were widely disseminated in the mid 19th century and for his often tumultuous and contentious relationships, both personal and literary.

He had a strained relationship with Edgar Allan Poe that continued even after Poe's death, with an obituary written under the pen name of "Ludwig" that was highly derogatory towards the deceased. Griswold subsequently became Poe's literary executor under mysterious circumstances and continued to defame Poe in a written "Memoir of the Author," included in a posthumous collection of his works, that combined false accusations with character assassination that was not refuted for many years and became the standard Poe biography.

He was married three times, had three children and, after a period of declining health, passed away in New York on August 27, 1857.

Rufus Wilmot Griswold Collection

Scope and Content Note

The Rufus Wilmot Griswold Collection (1815 – 1857) consists of one Hollinger box (0.417 linear feet) and includes holograph letters, photographs, articles and photostats of letters written by and to Rufus Wilmot Griswold.

The collection was formed in the 1930's by Joy Bayless of Nashville, Tennessee while researching her biography of Rufus Wilmot Griswold which was published by Vanderbilt University Press in 1943. No records have survived as to when or how the Collection was acquired by the Vanderbilt Library.

RUFUS WILMOT GRISWOLD COLLECTION

Folder

1. Catalogue of The Rufus W. Griswold Collection of Manuscripts in the Boston Public Library. 114 p., typed carbon.
2. 2 original holograph letters by Griswold, 1 dated January 1855, to Jos. T. Fields, Esq., the other dated Monday, to Dr. Somer.
3. Pictures of Griswold and his first wife. 1 engraving of Griswold, 1 photograph of an engraving of Griswold, 2 photographs of paintings of Griswold, 1 photograph of a painting of Mrs. Griswold .
4. Offprint articles: "Another Rufus W. Griswold as a Critic of Poe," by Joy Bayless; "The Letters of Edgar A. Poe to George W. Eveleth," ed. by James Southall Wilson.
5. Photostats from Boston Public Library, February 1939, about Poe.
6. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to Griswold, 1842-56.
7. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to Griswold, 1842-56.
8. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to Griswold, 1842-55.
9. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to Griswold, 1848-56.
10. Photostats from Boston Public library, letters to Griswold, 1834, 1854.
11. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to and from Griswold, 1848-56.
12. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to Griswold, 1850-56.
13. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to Griswold, 1840, 1853.
14. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters from and poems by Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, 1838, 1847.
15. Photostats from Boston Public Library, letters to and from Griswold, 1843, 1847.
16. Photostats from Connecticut State Historical Society, letters from Horace Greeley and Mrs. Sigourney to Mrs. Stephens, 1842, 1843.

17. Photostats from Cornell University Library, letters from Griswold to B. Taylor, 1843, 1846.
18. Photostats from Harvard College Library, letters from Griswold, 1842, 1849.
19. Photostats from Historical Society of Pennsylvania, letters to and from Griswold, 1842-1856.
20. Photostats from Historical Society of Pennsylvania, letters to George R. Graham, Esq., 1841-1845.
21. Photostats from Huntington Library, letters from Griswold, 1853.
22. Photostats from Huntington Library, letters to James Fields from Griswold, [n.d.]
23. Photostats from Huntington Library, letters to James Fields from Griswold, 1841-1845.
24. Photostat from Library Company, letters from Griswold to J. Smith, 1854.
25. Photostats from New York Historical Society, letters to and from Griswold, 1847-1854.
26. Photostats from New York Public Library, letters from Griswold, 1839-1844.
27. Photostats from New York Public Library, letters from Griswold, 1847-1856.
28. Photostat from Widener Library, Griswold to Longfellow, 1847.
29. Photostats from Yale University Library, letters from Griswold, 1841-1854.
30. Typed and handwritten copies of letters from various collections: Poe Foundation, Lilly Collection, American Antiquarian Society, Pierpont Morgan Library. Also 1 unidentified photostat of poem.
31. Typed and handwritten copies of letters owned by Gerrit Griswold of Batavia.
32. Typed copies of two Nathaniel Hawthorne letters, from Huntington Library and Historical Society of Pennsylvania.