

# A Guide to the Logbook of the Whaling Ship William Wirt, 1850-1875

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1850-1875

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A Collection in University Archives, McConnell Library, Radford University SC 100.1  
University Archives, McConnell Library, Radford University

## History

**Processed by:** Processed by Gene Hyde.

## Title Statement

A Guide to the Logbook of the Whaling Ship William Wirt, 1850-1875

**Subtitle:**

**Collection:** SC 100.1

**Author:** Processed by Gene Hyde.

## Publication Statement

**Date:** © By Radford University. All rights reserved.

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from MARC record, created by Kaitlin Scott, 29 June 2017

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Descriptive Summary

### Collection number

SC 100.1

### Language

English

### Abstract

McConnell Library's collection of William Wirt material includes a logbook of the William Wirt beginning in 1850-1851 containing information about voyages of the William Wirt and the ship Anadie from 1851-1852. This information takes up the first half of the logbook while the second half consists of a diary documenting the years 1858, 1861 and 1864-1893 of the ship's activities. After the diary entries several recipes and home remedies are recorded. The other material in this collection consists of a letter written from J.F Connolly to Clarence P.Smith detailing the circumstances of acquiring the logbook.

### Collector

J. F Connolly and Clarence P Smith

### Physical Characteristics

1.0 Linear feet.

### Location

Located in locked compact shelving, level 1, shelf 12B.

### Repository

University Archives, McConnell Library, Radford University

# Administrative Information

## Access Restrictions

An appointment is required for research. Collection is open to research. No interlibrary loan.

## Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

## Acquisition Information

Donated by Clarence P. Smith of Radford, VA.

## Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Special Collections, McConnell Library, Radford University, Radford, VA. Logbook of the Whaling Ship William Wirt, Accession # SC 100.1, University Archives, McConnell Library, Radford University

## Accruals

No additional accruals are expected.

## Custodial History

The logbook was purchased by Clarence P. Smith of Radford, VA, from J.F. Connelly, who obtained it from a dealer in New England in the fall of 1944. The enclosed letter outlines the details of the transaction. The logbook and letter were donated to Radford College.

## Biographical/Historical Information

In 1841, the William Wirt encountered a whaling boat, the Acushnet, which counted Herman Melville as a crewman. Melville scholars have used early logbooks of the William Wirt (part of Harvard Library's collections) to help reconstruct Melville's life on a whaling ship. The research of these scholars is documented in Herman Melville's Whaling Years, written by Wilson Lumpkin Heflin, Mary K. Bercaw Edwards, and Thomas Farel Hefferman (Vanderbilt University Press, 2004).

## Scope and Content

McConnell Library's collection of William Wirt material includes a logbook of the William Wirt beginning in 1850-1851, while the ship was under the command of Captain Owen Fisher. In addition to the voyages of the William Wirt, this logbook also logs the voyages of the Anadie from 1851-1852. These nautical logbook entries take up the first half of this volume (a number of pages have been removed from the center of the book.) The second half of this volume consists of a diary starting in March 1858, documenting daily life, the arrival and departure of ships, letters from ships' captains, and other incidents surrounding sea life. The diary continues through 1861 and picks up again in the period from 1864-1893. Following the diary entries are a number of recipes and a few home remedies, along with some accounts (possibly from a sailing ship). The author(s) of the diary entries is unknown. Several of the pages toward the end of the book are written in pencil and are very faded.

## Arrangement

Arrangement of this collection is as follows:

Folder 1: Logbook of the William Wirt, plus additional writings in the same notebook

Folder 2: Letter from J.F. Connolly to Clarence P. Smith, describing the acquisition of the logbook from a New England dealer, dated November 13, 1944