

James Adam diary

Ms. Codex 1948

Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.

Last updated on May 09, 2019.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

August 2018

Table of Contents

Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	3
Scope and Contents.....	4
Administrative Information.....	4
Controlled Access Headings.....	5
Collection Inventory.....	7

Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Adam, James, 1834-1908
Title	James Adam diary
Call number	Ms. Codex 1948
Date [inclusive]	1857-1863
Extent	2 volumes
Language	English
Abstract	Diary comprising two volumes spanning the years from 1857 to 1863 written by James Adam, a 19th century psychiatrist. Volume 1 contains Adam's descriptions his journey from Scotland to India as a medical officer. Volume 2 has Adam's sporadic entries describing his arrival and work at Bethnal House Asylum with Dr. Ritchie. and Dr. Miller.

Cite as:

James Adam diary, 1857-1863, Ms. Codex 1948, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

One of five children born in Edinburgh, Scotland to James and Mary Square Adam. He attended St. Andrews where he received his medical degree. He then studied surgery at Edinburgh University. Adam was a medical officer and spent the years from 1857 to 1859 in Calcutta, West Bengal, India; Burma; and Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. After Adam returned to Scotland he moved to London and worked at Bethnal House Asylum from 1861 to 1871. Adam continued his career in psychiatry caring for patients at Caterham Asylum, where he was superintendent from 1872 to 1879. He then took a position at Scotland Crichton Royalist Asylum. In 1883 Adam opened a private asylum in England in West Malling Kent where he cared for mentally ill patients until his death. In 1874 Adam married Edith Emma Drew and the couple had nine children. In 1892 Adam wrote a five-page article entitled Self-mutilation published in A dictionary of psychological medicine.

Scope and Contents

Diary comprising two volumes spanning the years from 1857 to 1863 written by James Adam. Volume 1 contains Adam's descriptions his journey from Scotland to India as a medical officer. On August 15, 1857 Adam departed from London on a steamer ship the Candia. He wrote of his sea voyage including officers he traveled with, the weather, landscapes, missing his family, sea sickness, and miles traveled. He arrived at Kalkota on November 5, 1857. Adam worked at a hospital and witnessed a portion of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. In February 1858 Adam was deployed to the ship Belgravia to take charge of the wounded and sick at the South African Cape. He traveled with his servant Harold. Once anchored at Table Bay Adam described the native people, seeing Dr. Livingstone. Adam noted he had a muster of forty natives whom he reluctantly treated for skin diseases. There is a copy of a letter to his parents and pencil drawings of the Cape of Good Hope. On the journey back to Calcutta there was an incident with the captain regarding ailing horses. In June 1858 Adam mentioned seeing cholera cases, reading Weston and works on homeopathy. Adam also worked off of the H.M.S. Proserpine. In March 1859 Adam began his voyage back to England on the Ivanhoe he mentioned playing chess and catching fish. Reading volume 1 from back to front are poems and songs. One of the poems was "written on board the Candia". Tables of daily latitude and longitude for the voyages to India and England are in the volume. Some accounting of receipts and expenditures is in the volume. Adam arrived back in Edinburgh on August 5, 1859. Volume 2 commences in 1861. In sporadic entries Adam described his arrival and work at Bethnal House Asylum with Dr. Ritchie. and Dr. Miller. In August 1863 Adam wrote of his trip to Scotland and attending a wedding in Portobello. He mentioned seeing family members in Edinburgh. Reading volume 2 from back to front is a clipping of an epitaph for Lord Clyde pasted over writing in pencil. Adam wrote an autopsy of a young woman named Ann Jones aged 23. A majority of volume 2 is blank. Inscribed on the first leaf of volume 1: J. F. Adam journal, commenced August 13, 1857 on leaving home for the first time to sail for India. Inscribed on the last leaf of volume 1: James F. Adam, Surgeon, H.M.S. Proserpine. Volume 2 is inscribed: Private, Jame Adam M.D., January 20, 1861.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

August 2018

Finding aid prepared by Donna Brandolisio.

Access Restrictions

This codex is available for research.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Source of Acquisition

Sold by Dean Byass Manuscripts & Rare Books (Bristol, United Kingdom), 2018.

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Codices (bound manuscripts)
- Diaries
- Manuscripts, English--19th century
- Sketches

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Kolkata (India)--Description and travel--19th century
- Kolkata (India)--History--Sources

SUBJECT(S)

- English diaries--19th century--Specimens

- English diaries--Male authors--19th century

Collection Inventory

	Volume
James Adam diary, 1857-1863.	1
James Adam diary, 1857-1863.	2
