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Nassau Hall Bible Society Records, 1813-1877: Finding Aid

Summary Information

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Location:	Princeton University Library. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library. Princeton University Archives. 65 Olden Street Princeton, New Jersey 08540 USA
Size:	0.85 linear feet (1 archival box and 1 custom box)
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Abstract:	The Nassau Hall Bible Society was a student religious organization at the College of New Jersey, active from 1813 through the 1840s and from 1864 through the 1880s. It distributed Bibles and New Testaments throughout New Jersey and across the country. These records contain minutes and financial records of the Society's work.

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History of the Nassau Hall Bible Society

In February 1813, students of the College of New Jersey at the encouragement of college president Ashbel Green founded the Nassau Hall Bible Society, the first college Bible society. Its task was to distribute Bibles and New Testaments to those who did not have them; the students concentrated on Navy Ships and New Jersey's poor. The Society raised money on campus and in the community to buy and distribute the Bibles. In 1827, in a nationally-noted campaign, they distributed copies to five thousand of the seven thousand New Jersey households without Bibles.

The Society's influence spread beyond New Jersey. In 1816, two members of the Society participated in the founding of the American Bible Society. It donated Bibles to settlers in the West, and received financial support from the British and Foreign Bible Society of London. By the mid-1840s, however, student interest in the Society waned, and its work fell dormant.

In 1864, an agent of the American Bible Society living in Princeton urged the revival of the Society. The student members continued giving Bibles to the local poor and to missionary Sunday Schools, as well as raising money for the American Bible Society. The Princeton Society operated as an arm of the Philadelphian Society; the two groups held their annual meetings at the same time. The Bible Society went out of existence by the late 1880s.

Description

These materials record the Society's work during both phases of its existence. Bound volumes contain minutes of the Society's annual meetings—including reports from its managers (during the early years)—and of its board (1864-1866). Several pamphlets recount the semi-annual meeting of the Society; others give the reports of the Nassau Hall Bible, Tract, and Education Societies. The remainder consists of ledgers, donation records, and receipts from the Society's earliest years. A few historical notes conclude the collection.

Access and Use

Access

Collection is open for research use.

Restrictions on Use and Copyright Information

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish material from the collection must be requested from the University Archivist. Copyright is held by the Trustees of Princeton University.

Processing and Other Information

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Nassau Hall Bible Society Records, Box and Folder Number; University Archives, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Daniel Sack in July 1995. Finding aid written by Daniel Sack in July 1995.

Encoding

Machine-readable finding aid encoded in EAD 2002 by Techbooks and Cristela García-Spitz on October 20, 2006.

Descriptive Rules Used

Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

Subject Headings

These materials have been indexed in the [Princeton University Library online catalog](#) using the following terms. Those seeking related materials should search under these terms.

- American Bible Society.
- International Bible Society.
- Nassau-Hall Bible Society.
- Nassau-Hall Tract Society.
- Philadelphian Society (Princeton University)
- Princeton University -- Students -- Societies, etc. -- 19th century.
- Bible -- Publication and distribution -- New Jersey -- Princeton -- Societies, etc.
- College students in missionary work -- History -- 19th century.
- Student volunteers in social service -- New Jersey -- Princeton -- 19th century.
- Princeton University

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