

# **Guide to the James David Gillilan Papers**

1878-1933



## **ARCHIVES & HISTORY**

General Commission on Archives and History

**THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**



## James David Gillilan Papers

1878-1933

1.65 cubic feet

gcsh.ms.682

The purpose of this finding aid is to help you understand the nature of this collection and to assist you in the retrieval of material from this collection. The following pages contain a brief biographical history of the person, or persons, who created or collected these papers, followed by a general description of the collection in the scope and content note. If more detailed information is warranted then series descriptions also appear. The container listing appears last and is the listing of material in each box, or container, of this collection. To request material you need to turn to the container listing section. It is essentially a listing of file folders, or artifact items, in the collection. Each folder, or item, has a call number associated with it. Each folder also lists the inclusive dates of the material in the folder. On the material request form list both the call number and the folder, or item, title. Use a different line for each folder, or item, requested. When your request sheet is complete, or full, bring it to the archivist and the material will be retrieved.

### Biographical Note

James David Gillilan (1858-1935) Methodist missionary in Utah. He was also a minister, principle, and presiding elder. He was born on May 19, 1858, in Jackson, Ohio. His early schooling was in the public schools there, but mostly he educated himself. On May 19, 1880, he married Alice Wiseman.

He joined the Pittsburgh Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1883. He was sent to the Utah mission, where he served for fifteen years, including several as superintendent. He joined the Idaho Conference in 1898, and served there until his retirement in 1933. During this time, he served as the superintendent of the La Grande District, (1904-1910), and of the Boise District, (1911-1917). He was named delegate to the General Conference three times, 1904, 1912, and 1916. In 1918, he served on a commission sent to the Orient to survey the Church's missionary work there.

He died in 1935. The date and location are unknown.

### Scope Note

The collection provides a detailed account of Gillilan's life, and of Methodism in Ohio and Utah. The most significant items in the collection are Gillilan's thoroughly kept diaries. In addition, he was a meticulous keeper of scrapbooks, collecting many articles about Methodism and religion in his time. He was also a published author, and copies of many of his published poems and essays are present in the collection. It seems that he sometimes wrote under the pseudonym Strickland Gillilan. It is possible that this is a family member. In his collection are also present two threatening letters. One dates from 1886, and is from Gillilan's time in Tooele, Utah. It relates to issues of polygamy and Mormonism. The other is less specific, but threatens Gillilan's "precious throat." Gillilan's papers contain approximately 2000 sets of sermon notes, numbered from 5 to 2394. The system by which these numbers were assigned is unknown. One of Gillilan's diaries, the largest, contains several pages of what seem to be land ownership claims and mining records. He may have obtained this book, already used, and subsequently used it for his journal. Another of his diaries contains several pages written in a substitution code, and several more in shorthand. The key to Gillilan's code is in the Diaries: General File. Many of the books and documents are fragile, and should be handled with extreme care.

### Arrangement

Material has been arranged in the following manner. The collection is arranged by record type. All material is arranged chronologically, with undated material placed at the front of folders. Note that

materials found loose in the diaries were photocopied and placed in a general file, but the original materials were returned to their places.

## Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding this collection.

## Preferred Citation

When citing material from this collection please use the following format: Direct reference to the item or its file folder, J. D. Gillilan Collection, United Methodist Church Archives - GCAH, Madison, New Jersey. Do not make use of the items' call number as that is not a stable descriptor.

## Subject Terms

### *Additonal Creators - Personal*

Gillilan, Strickland.

### *Subject Names - Corporate*

Methodist Episcopal Church

### *Subject Topics*

Missionaries

Missions.

Mormons

Poetry

### *Subject Geographic*

Oregon

Utah

### *Genre*

Clippings

Diaries

Manuscripts

Pins (Jewelry)

Scrapbooks

### *Occupations*

Missionary

Presiding Elder.

## Table of Contents

## Container List

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1342-5-1:1	Diaries I	1878-1879
1342-5-1:2	Diaries II	1887-1901
1342-5-1:1	Diaries III	1880-1881
1342-5-1:2	Diaries IV	1882-1883
1342-5-1:3	Diaries: General	Undated
1342-5-1:4	Published Writings	1897-1898
1342-5-1:5	Correspondence	1886
1342-5-1:6	Sermons I (Numbers 5-1841)	Undated
1342-5-1:7	Sermons II (Numbers 1842-2127)	Undated
1342-5-1:8	Sermons III (Numbers 2128-2394)	Undated
1342-5-1:9	Photographs	1933
1610-1-1:1	Scrapbook I: Financial	1880-1887
1610-1-1:2	Scrapbook II	Undated
1610-1-1:3	Scrapbook III	Undated