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## Burke Library collection on Allen Wright4492519

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Description is written in: English.

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Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Telephone: (212) 851-5606

[burke@library.columbia.edu](mailto:burke@library.columbia.edu)

URL: <https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
<b>Creator:</b>	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
<b>Title:</b>	Burke Library collection on Allen Wright
<b>ID:</b>	4492519
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	circa 1957 -- 1988
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.25 linear feet 0.25 linear feet; 1 folder in 1 box
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	This collection contains material related to Allen Wright (Kiliahote), a Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation (1866-1870) and the first Native American graduate of UTS (class of 1855), including biographical material, as well as correspondence about and programs for ceremonies honoring Wright at the Capitol in Oklahoma City and at UTS.

### Preferred Citation

Item description, UTS1: Burke Library collection on Allen Wright, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Allen Wright (1826-1885) was a Presbyterian minister, scholar, and leader; Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation from 1866-1870; and was the first Native American to graduate from Union Theological Seminary, as part of the Class of 1855. Born in Mississippi in November of 1826 and given the name Kiliahote (Choctaw: "Come, let's make a light"), his family left Mississippi in October 1833 and settled in what is now McCurtain County, Oklahoma, in March 1834, during the period of forced Indian Removal by the federal government from the Southeast. Renamed Allen Wright, after the Rev. Alfred Wright (a noted Presbyterian missionary among the Choctaw), upon attending school in 1834, Wright studied under Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury from 1840-44 and graduated from Union College at Schenectady, New York,

in 1852, and from Union Theological Seminary in 1855, after which he was ordained as a Presbyterian minister and elected to the Choctaw General Council in 1856. He twice served in the Choctaw House of Representatives and was thrice chosen national treasurer. He was elected principal chief in 1866, was reelected in 1868, and served until 1870. Wright also served as superintendent of schools for the Choctaw Nation from 1880 to 1884. During the Civil War, Wright signed the Choctaw treaty of alliance with the Confederacy in 1861, and he served in the Confederate army. The Choctaw and some of the other Southeast tribes believed the Confederacy's promise of establishing a Native American state if they won the war. He represented the Choctaw at the Fort Smith Council and signed the Reconstruction Treaty of 1866, to reestablish peace with the United States. When U.S. commissioners proposed the consolidation of Indian Territory's tribes under an intertribal council, Wright suggested that the region be designated the "Territory of Oklahoma." Wright is also known for translating laws of the Chickasaw Nation from English into Chickasaw; compiling a Choctaw dictionary for use in tribal schools; and translating the Book of Psalms (from the Bible) from Hebrew into Choctaw. Wright married Harriet Newell Mitchell, a Presbyterian missionary to the Choctaw Nation, in 1857; they had eight children. Wright died at Boggy Depot in present day Atoka County, Oklahoma on December 2, 1885, and was buried in the Boggy Depot cemetery.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection contains material related to Allen Wright (Kiliahote), a Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation (1866-1870) and the first Native American graduate of UTS (class of 1855), including biographical material, as well as correspondence about and programs for ceremonies honoring Wright at the Capitol in Oklahoma City and at UTS.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged in one series in original order.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Onsite storage.

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

The exact provenance of this collection is unknown.

### Processing Information

Some material was cataloged by Lynn A. Grove on 1988-07-15. Metal clips and staples were removed from materials and folded items were flattened. Acidic items were separated from one another by interleaving with acid-free paper as needed. The finding aid was created by Leah Edelman in 2023.

### Conditions Governing Use

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Letters (correspondence)
- Clergy

- Wright, Allen, 1826-1885

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## Burke Library record group:

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Union Theological Seminary Archives: UTS 1, papers of faculty and students

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## Collection Inventory

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### Burke Library collection on Allen Wright, circa 1957 -- 1988

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Conditions Governing Access:

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Title/Description	Instances
Allen Wright materials, circa 1957 -- 1988	box 1

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