

# **Guide to the James Marshall Osborn Research Files on Edmond Malone**

**OSB MSS 169**



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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** OSB MSS 169

**CREATOR:** Osborn, James M. (James Marshall), 1906-1976

**TITLE:** James Marshall Osborn research files on Edmond Malone

**DATES:** 1928-1974

**BULK DATES:** 1950-1970

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 17.56 linear feet (25 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of subject files, photocopies, and card indexes compiled by James Marshall Osborn in the course of his research for a planned biography of Edmond Malone. Contents include a chronologically arranged set of photocopies of Malone correspondence and a highly detailed set of notes on the events in Malone's life.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.emalone>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.emalone>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Bequest of James Marshall Osborn, 1976.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The James Marshall Osborn Research Files on Edmond Malone are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

James Marshall Osborn Research Files on Edmond Malone. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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## Processing Information

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization, in 2010. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are based on those provided by the creator. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases.

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## James Marshall Osborn (1906-1976)

James Marshall Osborn, literary historian, founder of the James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection at Yale University, and Holstein cattle breeder, was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1906. He graduated from Wesleyan University in 1928, and joined the investment advisory department of Guaranty Trust in New York. The next year, he married Marie-Louise Montgomery, a graduate of Vassar.

In 1932 Osborn left Guaranty Trust to study for a Master's degree in English at Columbia University. Two years later, the Osborns moved to England with their two sons, and James began to work toward a B.Litt degree at Oxford University. While at Oxford, Osborn pursued his interest in eighteenth-century literary history and began to acquire the literary and historical manuscripts that would form the core of the James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection.

Osborn was appointed Research Associate in English at Yale University in 1938; he held the position until his death. He was named Adviser on Seventeenth Century Manuscripts to the Yale Library in 1954, and in 1963, when he began the transfer of his collection to Yale, became the first curator of the Osborn Collection.

Osborn's publications include *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne* (1961); an edition of Joseph Spence's *Observations, Anecdotes and Characters* (1966); and *Young Philip Sidney* (1972).

In addition to his scholarly activities, Osborn was also a noted dairy cattle breeder and promoter of Holsteins from 1940 to 1960. He received the D.Litt from Oxford University in 1968, and was named Curator Emeritus of the Osborn Collection in 1972. James Marshall Osborn died in New Haven on October 17, 1976.

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## Edmond Malone (1741-1812)

Edmond Malone, literary scholar and editor of Shakespeare, was born in Ireland, the second son of a member of the Irish House of Commons and Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. He received his B.A. from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1762, and began studying law at London's Inner Temple in 1763. During his studies, in 1764, Malone met the writer Samuel Johnson, who encouraged his interest in a literary career; however, Malone was financially obliged to return to Ireland, where he practiced law in Dublin.

In 1776, his uncle Anthony Malone died and bequeathed Edmond an annuity of 1,000 pounds. Malone almost immediately ended his legal career and moved permanently to London, although he continued to visit his Irish relatives. Malone assisted George Steevens on the second edition of the Johnson-Steevens *Shakespeare*; the first volume contained Malone's groundbreaking *An Attempt to Ascertain the Order*

*in which the Plays Attributed to Shakespeare Were Written* (1778). Malone next edited Shakespeare's narrative poems, sonnets, and apocryphal plays.

As Malone became known in the London literary world, he renewed his friendship with Johnson and became close to several in Johnson's circle, particularly Sir Joshua Reynolds. In 1782 he was elected to Johnson's Literary Club, and was its treasurer from 1784 until his death. As a result of his membership, Malone developed close friendships with several members of Johnson's circle, including Charles James Fox, Charles Burney, Joseph Banks, and James Boswell.

Malone's proposed edition of the complete works of Shakespeare was announced by his friend John Nichols in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in August of 1783. Malone conducted extensive documentary research, consulting many of the early quartos as well as the folio editions in an effort to establish an authoritative text, and interpreted his findings with historical insight. The resulting *Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare* was published in 1790 to wide acclaim, although Joseph Ritson, among others, were highly critical of Malone's preference for the text of the first folio over that of the second folio.

While editing Shakespeare, Malone was also aiding James Boswell in his efforts to write the biographical works on Johnson that would make him famous. Malone revised the manuscript of *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D* and saw it through publication in 1785. For the next six years, Malone provided invaluable support and assistance to Boswell as he wrote the *Life of Johnson*, editing the text as Boswell produced it, encouraging Boswell through depression and illness, and helping Boswell with the final revisions before its 1791 publication. Malone was one of Boswell's executors, and it was Malone who had Boswell's papers and manuscripts organized and returned to Boswell's family at Auchinleck House when Boswell died in London in 1795.

In 1796, Malone's publication of *An Inquiry into the Authenticity of Certain Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments* demonstrated convincingly that the sensational "discoveries" of supposed Shakespeare manuscripts by William Henry Ireland were purely modern forgeries, ending Ireland's celebrity.

Malone continued his Shakespeare research in his later years, but interrupted it for a variety of other projects, including editions of the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds and John Dryden. He died on May 23, 1812 in London; his mass of research materials and notes on Shakespeare were edited and published by James Boswell the younger (1778-1822), who also wrote Malone's obituary for the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

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## Scope and Contents

The James Marshall Osborn Research Files on Edmond Malone consist of subject files, photocopies, and card indexes compiled by James Marshall Osborn in the course of his research for a planned biography of Edmond Malone.

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## Arrangement

Organized into three series. I. Research Materials, 1928-1974. II. Index Card Files. III. Oversize

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Research Materials, 1928-1974, undated

3.67 linear feet (6 boxes)

The series consists of subject files containing notes, photocopies, and printed material collected by Osborn in the course of his research for a planned biography of Edmond Malone. There is an extensive run of photostats and photocopies of Malone's own correspondence, assembled from various sources and chronologically arranged, followed by copies of letters by friends of Malone.

The material is arranged in the order in which it was received by the library.

b. 1	Malone data	undated
b. 1	Queries sent about Malone	1937-1965
b. 1	George Steevens - letters and documents concerning him	1967-1971
b. 1	James Boswell the Younger - 1825 sale catalogue	1973
b. 1	Photostats of correspondence - Clinton Papers (Fettercairn)	undated
b. 1	David Fairer	1971-1972
b. 1	Lady Philippa Sunderlin	undated
b. 1	Hyde	1964
b. 1	A.N.L. Munby	1971
b. 1	Beattie, Dr. William	1969
b. 1	Cape Town, University of	1974
b. 1	Huntington	1935
b. 1	Shakespeare's Birthplace Museum, Stratford	1939-1940
b. 1	Boston Public Library	undated
b. 1	Malone - Confirmation	undated
b. 1	Harvard	1937
b. 1	Malone and/or Shakespeare references in 19th century sale catalogues	undated
b. 1	Stratford-upon-Avon, Corporation of Malone and Shakespeare	undated
b. 1	William Windham	undated
b. 1	"The Malone Family Baronston Branch" from "The Annals of Westmeath"	undated
b. 1	Mrs. Malone snr.	undated
b. 1	Catherine Malone	undated
b. 1	Colin Clair notes	1964

b. 2	Harriet Malone	undated
b. 2	Notes on Malone's annotations to Dr. Johnson's Dictionary	undated
b. 2	Edmund Burke	undated
b. 2	George Hardinge	undated
b. 2	Books owned by Malone	undated
b. 2	R.G. Sawyer notes and correspondence	1946
b. 2	<a href="#">"The Club"</a>	1971-1972
b. 2	Articles on Malone	1940-1964
b. 2	<a href="#">Verses on "The Club"</a>	1972
b. 2	Miscellaneous photostats	1971
b. 2	Malone - Outline	undated
b. 3	Correspondence with no mention of Malone	undated
b. 3	Illegible xeroxes, scraps	undated
b. 3	Wills of Henrietta and Catherine Malone, Lady Sunderlin	undated
b. 3	Ancillary materials in Folger manuscripts	undated
b. 3	Illustrations for Malone book	undated
b. 3	Commemorative plaque notes	undated
b. 3	Dr. Samuel Parr	undated
b. 3	George Steevens	undated
b. 3	William Temple to Sir William Forbes	undated
b. 3	Malone; book collection	undated
b. 3	Malone's will	undated
b. 3	Malone-Boswell	1973
b. 3	Malone Queries	undated
b. 3	Plaque invoice	1962
b. 3	Articles on Malone	1960-1964
b. 3	London County Council press release on Malone plaque	undated
b. 3	Notes	undated
b. 3	Bodley manuscript Malone notes	undated
b. 3	"The Club"	undated

b. 4	Notes from Thorpe's catalogues by individuals	undated
b. 4	Miscellaneous notes	1968-1969
b. 4	Edward Malone pedigree	1944
b. 4	Malone Miscellaneous	1938-1948
b. 4	Notepad	undated
b. 4	General notes from Thorpe's and Magg's catalogues	1963
b. 4	Malone on Chatterton and Ireland	undated
b. 4	Questions to be used in character analysis for biographical purposes	undated
b. 4	Malone	1967
b. 4	Malone miscellaneous notes	undated
b. 4	Extracts from prefaces etc.	undated
b. 4	Malone's chronology of Shakespeare - J.M.Osborn notes	1967
b. 4	Early appendices to Dryden F+P	undated
b. 4	Notes - King Lear and Antony and Cleopatra	undated
b. 4	Steevens' Shakespeare notes	undated
b. 4	Coriolanus notes	undated
b. 4	History of stage notes	undated
b. 4	<a href="#">Steevens and Capell notes</a>	undated
b. 4	Malone's Shakespearian activities to 1795	undated
b. 4	Malone chronology	undated
b. 4	Shakespeare miscellaneous notes	undated
b. 4	Dublin plans	1963
b. 4	Published items on early editions of Shakespeare	undated
b. 4	Malone family correspondence with J.M.Osborn notes	undated
b. 4	Miscellaneous notes	undated
b. 4	Miscellaneous publications	1933-1968
<b>Photostats of Malone-related correspondence</b>		
b. 5	<a href="#">Correspondence, January 1752-March 1812</a>	undated
b. 6	"Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century" by D. Nichol Smith	1928
b. 6	George Steevens to Dr. Michael Lort	undated



## Photostats of Malone-related correspondence (continued)

b. 6	Alexander Boswell and Sir William Forbes	undated
b. 6	Sir Joseph Banks to George Steevens	undated
b. 6	G.B.	undated
b. 6	Portland	undated
b. 6	F. Sayers to R. Amyot	undated
b. 6	Euphemia Boswell and Sir William Forbes	undated
b. 6	James Boswell, Jr. and Sir William Forbes	undated
b. 6	Veronica Boswell and Sir William Forbes	undated
b. 6	Alexander Chalmers	undated
b. 6	Reverend James Davenport, Malone's letters to	undated
b. 6	Charles Dilly to Sir William Forbes	undated
b. 6	Sir William Forbes to Thomas Barnard	undated
b. 6	Sir William Forbes to James Boswell	undated
b. 6	Sir William Forbes to T.D.Boswell	undated
b. 6	Charles H. Hunt to Reverend James Davenport	undated
b. 6	William Jephson	undated
b. 6	Newcastle	undated

**Series II: Index Card Files, undated***10.42 linear feet (16 boxes)*

The series consists of several sets of card indexes, including a chronologically arranged and highly detailed set of notes on events in Malone's life ("Malone Chronology") and three boxes of notes on "Malone and Shakespeare."

The material is arranged in the order in which it was received by the library.

	<b>Malone Chronology</b>	undated
b. 7	Malone Chronology 1741-1785	undated
b. 8	Malone Chronology 1786-1790	undated
b. 9	Malone Chronology 1791-1797	undated
b. 10	Malone Chronology 1798-1804	undated
b. 11	Malone Chronology 1805-1812	undated
	<b>Malone and Shakespeare</b>	undated
b. 12	Malone and Shakespeare (J. Roche's notes)	undated
b. 13	Malone and Shakespeare	undated
b. 14	Malone and Shakespeare I	undated
	<b>MS Malone</b>	undated
b. 15	MS Malone 1-36	undated
b. 16	MS Malone 37-44	undated
b. 17	Malone as a book collector	undated
	<b>Malone's Life of Dryden</b>	undated
b. 18	Malone's Life of Dryden Index A-O	undated
b. 19	Malone's Life of Dryden Index P-Z	undated
b. 20	Index to Malone MSS in the Bodleian	undated
b. 21	Malone notes (alphabetical)	undated
b. 22	Malone - list of correspondents	undated

**Series III: Oversize, undated***3.47 linear feet (3 boxes)*

b. 23	Malone notes on Shakespeare in Folger MSS <i>15 Folders</i>	undated
b. 24	Malone portrait	undated
b. 24	Photocopies of Malone texts <i>9 Folders</i>	undated
b. 25	Malone notes and photocopies <i>4 Folders</i>	undated

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Authors, English -- 18th century  
Editors -- Great Britain  
Literary historians -- Great Britain

### **Names**

Malone, Edmond, 1741-1812  
Osborn, James M. (James Marshall), 1906-1976