

# Guide to the Thomas Percy Correspondence

OSB MSS 39



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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 39

**CREATOR:** Percy, Thomas, 1729-1811

**TITLE:** Thomas Percy correspondence

**DATES:** 1770-1807

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, mainly concerning Percy's duties as a Court preacher, including the scheduling of sermons with various other clergymen. Almost every letter is accompanied by a typed transcription. There is also correspondence from Henry Meen about literature; Meen's work on translations from Greek; and his correction of proofs for Percy.

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

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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.tpercy>.

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  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Cleanth Brooks in 1979.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Thomas Percy Correspondence is 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

Thomas Percy Correspondence. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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## Processing Information

This finding aid was produced from a previously existing card set in the Manuscripts Catalog, or from another inventory. All pertinent bibliographical information has been retained.

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## THOMAS PERCY, 1729-1811

Thomas Percy, the son of a grocer, was born in Bridgnorth, Shropshire on April 13, 1729. Educated at Christ Church, Oxford, Percy was ordained in the Church of England in 1753 and held the livings of Easton Maudit and Wilby; served as chaplain to the Duke of Northumberland and chaplain-in-ordinary to King George III; and became Dean of Carlisle in 1778 and Bishop of Dromore (Ireland) in 1782.

Percy published a number of literary and antiquarian works, including the narrative poem *The Hermit of Warkworth* (1770); translations and adaptations from Chinese, Icelandic, Hebrew, and Spanish; and an edition of the "household book" of the Earl of Northumberland for 1513. He is best known, however, for *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, a three-volume collection of early English and Scottish ballad texts which included the first publication of "Sir Patrick Spens" and "Edward, Edward," among others. *Reliques* inspired two generations of antiquarians and poets both to preserve and study early ballads and to compose original poems in the form.

Percy married Anne Gutteridge in 1759. The couple had six children, of whom only two daughters survived. Thomas Percy died in Dromore on September 30, 1811, and is buried in Dromore Cathedral.

For further biographical information on Thomas Percy, see the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Volume XV; and the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Volume 104.

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## Scope and Contents

[The Thomas Percy Correspondence](#) consists almost entirely of letters to Thomas Percy. The papers span the dates 1770-1809 and have been organized into one series, *Letters*, which is arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Almost all of the letters are accompanied by typed transcripts.

The majority of the letters, including those by Nicholas Boscawen, Zachary Brook, John Cleaver, Thomas Francklin, and Andrew Wood, date from Percy's service as Chaplain-in-Ordinary to King George III and concern the scheduling of sermons before the court at St. James and of times for "waiting on the King."

The only letter by Percy in the collection is addressed to Thomas Wilkinson and congratulates him on enjoying an "independent Competency" without the "Splendid slavery" of a public position.

The letters of Henry Meen, classical scholar and rector of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, are located in folders 9-17. Subjects include Meen's proposed edition of the works of Lycophron and his articles for the *European Magazine*; corrections to proofs for Percy, including one on blank verse before Milton which was destroyed in a fire at the publishers; and other literary and antiquarian topics.

Folder 25 contains a transcript of an announcement of Percy's translation of the Song of Solomon and an unidentified bibliographical note on a Latin ode.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Letters, 1770-1809

0.21' (1 box)

Series I, *Letters*, is arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

	BOSCAWEN, NICHOLAS, 1720-1793	
b. 1, f. 1	2 AL in the third person and 1 ALS to Thomas Percy; London	1772-76
	BROOKE, ZACHARY, 1716-1788	
b. 1, f. 2	ALS to Thomas Percy; Cambridge	n.y. Nov 20
	CLEAVER, JOHN, CA. 1737-1776	
b. 1, f. 3	2 ALS to Thomas Percy; Oxford With: Percy's reply to letter of Jul 17; 1p (fragment), dated Jul 23	1770 Jul
	DALRYMPLE, JOHN, SIR, 1726-1810	
b. 1, f. 4	3 AL to Thomas Percy; [London]	
	DOW, ALEXANDER, D. 1779	
b. 1, f. 5	ALS to Thomas Percy; London With: "A Specimen of Oriental Elegy from the Persian of Diwan Shorit;" manuscript	1772 Mar 14
	FRANCKLIN, THOMAS, 1721-1784	
b. 1, f. 6	7 ALS to Thomas Percy	1770-76
	HATSELL, J.	
b. 1, f. 7	ALS to Thomas Percy; Angel Inn	n.d.
	HUNTER, DAVID	
b. 1, f. 7	ALS to Thomas Percy; St. Andrews	1770 Apr 14
	MALONE, EDMOND, 1741-1812	
b. 1, f. 8	ALS to [John] Nichols; Foley Pl.	1809 Aug 9
	MEEN, HENRY, D. 1817	
b. 1, f. 9	5 ALS to Thomas Percy	1796
b. 1, f. 10	6 ALS to Thomas Percy	1797
b. 1, f. 11	ALS to Thomas Percy	1799 Nov 25
b. 1, f. 12	ALS to Thomas Percy	1800 Aug 29
b. 1, f. 13	ALS to Thomas Percy	1801 Apr 8

## MEEN, HENRY, D. 1817 (continued)

b. 1, f. 14	2 ALS to Thomas Percy	1802
b. 1, f. 15	ALS to Thomas Percy	1803 autumn
b. 1, f. 16	ALS to Thomas Percy	1804 Jul 30
b. 1, f. 17	ALS to Thomas Percy With: extract of review of Meen, 1815	1807 Jan 20
NICHOLS, JOHN, 1745-1826		
b. 1, f. 18	ALS to [Thomas Percy]; [London]	[1802] Aug
NORMANTON, CHARLES AGAR, EARL OF, 1736-1809		
b. 1, f. 19	ALS to Thomas Percy; Dublin	1773 Oct 26
PERCY, THOMAS, 1729-1811		
b. 1, f. 20	ALS to Thomas Wilkinson; Carlisle Accompanied by engraved portrait of Percy	1783 May 27
SELBY, HENRY C.		
b. 1, f. 21	ALS to Thomas Percy; Northumberland House	1786 Jul 12
STEEVENS, GEORGE, 1736-1800		
b. 1, f. 22	ALS to Edmond Malone; London	[1792] Jan
b. 1, f. 23	Letter (copy) to Henry Meen; Hampstead Heath In Meen's hand. With: draft of Meen's reply, and a memorandum by Meen	1793
WOOD, ANDREW, CA. 1715-1772		
b. 1, f. 24	ALS to Thomas Percy; Gateshead	1770 Jul 22
UNIDENTIFIED		
b. 1, f. 25	Unidentified note and transcript of advertisement	n.d.

## **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**

Clergy -- Great Britain  
English poetry -- 18th century  
Preaching -- Great Britain  
Sermons, English -- Great Britain -- 18th century

### **Names**

Meen, Henry, 1744-1817  
Percy, Thomas, 1729-1811