

Yale University Library
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Guide to the Marie-Louise Osborn Letters to Family

OSB MSS 436



Sarah Lerner

December 2022

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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CALL NUMBER: OSB MSS 436

CREATOR: Osborn, Marie-Louise

TITLE: Marie-Louise Osborn Letters to Family

DATES: 1934-1968

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2.58 linear feet (7 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Letters sent from Marie-Louise Osborn and occasionally James M. Osborn to their parents Clare Marshall Osborn and Mildred Sleeper Osborn, and John Flourney Montgomery and Hedwig Louise Wildi Montgomery, as well as other relatives, 1934-1968. Letters primarily relate to the Osborn's daily routines and social activities, travels, and children James M. Osborn, Jr. and Thomas Montgomery Osborn. Documented are the Osborn's life at Shotover Cleve in Oxford, England; their life in New Haven, Connecticut; their cattle farm (Whirlwind Hill Farm) in Wallingford, Connecticut; and James M. Osborn's teaching and curation at Yale University. Letters sent during World War II mention James M. Osborn's work as an air raid warden and Marie-Louise Osborn's work with various aid organizations. Letters are chiefly typescript "Family Newsletters" dictated by Marie-Louise Osborn to secretaries and addressed to "Dear Family." Some letters are accompanied by additional copies. Letters were sent roughly weekly.

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

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.osbornfamilyletters>.

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.

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

b. box

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Bequest of James Marshall Osborn, 1976.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Marie-Louise Osborn Letters to Family 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.

Preferred Citation

Marie-Louise Osborn Letters to Family. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

These materials have been arranged and described according to national and local standards. For more information, please refer to the Beinecke Manuscript Unit Processing Manual.

Some duplicates (primarily carbon copies) were removed and filed at the end of the collection prior to 2022. Others remain filed chronologically. Some duplicates in Box 6 and Box 7 have manuscript annotations and additions from Marie-Louise Osborn.

Marie-Louise Osborn

Marie-Louise Osborn (1905-1968) was the daughter of John Flournoy Montgomery (1878-1954) and Hedwig Louise Wildi Montgomery (1881-1953). She was born in Ramsey, Minnesota, and by 1920 was living in New York City. Following her graduation from Vassar College, she married James M. Osborn in 1929 and by April 1934 had two sons: James M. Osborn, Jr. and Thomas Montgomery Osborn (1934-2006). Marie-Louise Osborn died in New Haven, Connecticut, on December 23, 1968.

James M. Osborn

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.

Scope and Contents

Letters sent from Marie-Louise Osborn and occasionally James M. Osborn to their parents Clare Marshall Osborn and Mildred Sleeper Osborn, and John Flournoy Montgomery and Hedwig Louise Wildi Montgomery, as well as other relatives, 1934-1968. Letters primarily relate to the Osborn's daily routines and social activities, travels, and children James M. Osborn, Jr. and Thomas Montgomery Osborn. Documented are the Osborn's life at Shotover Cleve in Oxford, England; their life in New Haven, Connecticut; their cattle farm (Whirlwind Hill Farm) in Wallingford, Connecticut; and James M. Osborn's studies, teaching, and curation. Letters sent during World War II mention James M. Osborn's work as an air raid warden and Marie-Louise Osborn's work with various aid organizations.

Letters are chiefly typescript "Family Newsletters" dictated by Marie-Louise Osborn to secretaries and addressed to "Dear Family." Some letters are accompanied by additional copies. Letters were sent roughly weekly.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Collection Contents

b. 1	1934-1935	1934-1935
b. 2	1936-1940	1936-1940
b. 3	1941-1945	1941-1945
b. 4	1946-1950	1946-1950
b. 5	1951-1967, undated	1951-1967, undated
b. 6-7	Duplicates	1934-1968

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.

Geographic Names

Connecticut -- Social life and customs -- 20th Century
Great Britain -- Social life and customs -- 20th Century
New Haven (Conn.)
Oxford (England)
Whirlwind Hill Farm

Subjects

Americans -- Great Britain
Cattle -- Breeding -- Connecticut
College teachers' spouses -- Connecticut
Families -- Connecticut
Women -- Connecticut
Women -- Societies, etc. -- Connecticut
World War, 1939-1945 -- War work

Names

Osborn, James M., Jr. (James Marshall)
Osborn, James M. (James Marshall), 1906-1976
Osborn, Marie-Louise
Osborn, Thomas Montgomery, 1934-2006

Families

Osborne family

Corporate Bodies

University of Oxford -- Students
Yale University -- Faculty

Contributors

Osborn, Marie-Louise
Osborn, James M. (James Marshall), 1906-1976