

Guide to the Mary and Agnes Berry Collection

LWL MSS 50



by Lewis Walpole Library Staff

April 2024

154 Main Street
P.O. Box 1408
Farmington, CT 06034-1408
860-677-2140
860-677-6369
walpole@yale.edu
<https://walpole.library.yale.edu>

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Collection Overview

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CALL NUMBER: LWL MSS 50

CREATOR: Berry, Mary, 1763-1852

TITLE: Mary and Agnes Berry Collection

DATES: 1788-1852

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.42 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English; French

SUMMARY: The Mary and Agnes Berry Collection contains letters to and from the sisters, primarily Mary Berry, and other material that sites them in their network of social, historical, and literary friends and colleagues. Many of the letters relate to Mary Berry's literary efforts, and her reading habits. Highlights of incoming correspondence are multiple letters from authors Benjamin Constant, Thomas Hope, Alexander William Kinglake, Sir James Mackintosh, and William Roscoe. Highlights of outgoing correspondence include thirty-two letters Berry wrote to the publisher Richard Bentley, eleven notes to Rev. Henry Hart Milman and his wife Mary Ann Cockell Milman, and four letters to Henrietta Browne, Viscountess Dillon. Series III, Other Papers, holds the sisters' bookplate, a poem by Mary Berry about Horace Walpole, and a poem to Berry by William Sotheby.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/lwl.mss.050>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/lwl.mss.050>.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

W. S. Lewis purchased much of the collection from various sources. Bequest of Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis (Yale 1918), 1979.

Additional material has been and will be acquired from various sources. For more information see the finding aid.

Custodial History

Prior to June 2023 the material in LWL MSS 50 had been interfiled in the Lewis Walpole Library Manuscript Miscellany (formerly LWL MSS MISC, now LWL MSS 36).

All material purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., in July 2010 was from a collection formed by A.M. Broadley in 1903.

All material purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers in November 2023 was formerly in an album of autograph letters compiled by Lady Theresa Villiers Lewis.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Mary and Agnes Berry Collection is the physical property of the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the W. S. Lewis Librarian/Executive Director.

Preferred Citation

Mary and Agnes Berry Collection. The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

Processing Information

The material in Box 1, Folders 1-34 was purchased by Wilmarth S. Lewis; all material in boxes and folders following those was purchased by the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

Mary and Agnes Berry

Mary Berry (1763-1852), author, was born at Stanwick, Yorkshire, England. She and her younger sister Agnes (1764-1852) began a close friendship with the author Horace Walpole in 1788; he spoke of them as his "twin wives." He established the sisters at Teddington in 1789, and two years later offered them the use of his nearby secondary residence, Little Strawberry Hill, in Twickenham. In 1824 the sisters took up residence at 8 Curzon Street in London, where they established a salon frequented by many prominent figures in society including William Makepeace Thackeray, Maria Edgeworth, and Madame de Staël. Mary Berry's literary productions include an edition of the Works of Horace Walpole (1798); the comedy *Fashionable Friends* (1802); *A Comparative View of the Social Life of England and France from the Restoration of Charles the Second to the French Revolution* (1828); and its sequel *Social Life in England and France from the French*

Revolution in 1789 to that of July 1830 (1831). The Berry sisters both died in 1852, Agnes in January and Mary in November, and were interred in St. Peter's Churchyard in Petersham, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. The inscription on their shared ledger stone was composed by public servant and poet George William Frederick Howard, 7th Earl of Carlisle.

Scope and Contents

The Mary and Agnes Berry Collection contains letters to and from the sisters, primarily Mary Berry, and other material that sites them in their network of social, historical, and literary friends and colleagues. Many of the letters relate to Mary Berry's literary efforts, and her reading habits. Highlights of incoming correspondence are multiple letters from authors Benjamin Constant, Thomas Hope, Alexander William Kinglake, Sir James Mackintosh, and William Roscoe. Highlights of outgoing correspondence include thirty-two letters Berry wrote to the publisher Richard Bentley, eleven notes to Rev. Henry Hart Milman and his wife Mary Ann Cockell Milman, and four letters to Henrietta Browne, Viscountess Dillon. Series III, Other Papers, holds the sisters' bookplate, a poem by Mary Berry about Horace Walpole, and a poem to Berry by William Sotheby.

Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. Mary Berry Correspondence, 1798-1852. II. Agnes Berry Correspondence, 1845-1849. III. Other Papers, 1786-1788.

Collection Contents

Series I: Mary Berry Correspondence, 1798–1852

52 Folders

The series holds letter written to and by Mary Berry, and forms the bulk of the collection. Some of her letters discuss literary projects, while others have to do with social engagements.

Series I is organized into two subseries: Letters to Berry, and Letters from Berry.

Letters to Berry

b. 1, f. 35	Albany, Louise Maximiliane Caroline Emanuele, Princess of Stolberg-Gedern, calling herself Countess of, 1752-1824 In French; an affectionate and friendly letter sending greetings to both Berry sisters as well as discussing medical remedies and visits from compatriots to Florence, including Lady Charlemont with her sister and her mother. Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.	1819 September 11
b. 1, f. 43	Beaumont, George Howland, Sir, 1753-1827 Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1813 February 28
b. 1, f. 44	Broglie, Albertine Ida Gustavine de Staël-Holstein, duchesse de, 1797-1838 Broglie was the daughter of Berry's close friend Anne Louise Germaine de Staël-Holstein. Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	undated
b. 1, f. 45	Brougham and Vaux, Henry Brougham, Baron, 1778-1868 Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	circa 1830
b. 1, f. 46	Constant, Benjamin, 1767-1830 Three letters from Paris, two in French, with a two-page undated manuscript essay on Berry's written works. Constant's essay was published in Lady Theresa Lewis's <i>Extracts of the Journals and Correspondence of Miss Berry from the year 1783 to 1852</i> (1865) as "Criticisms by M. Benjamin Constant" (in vol. 3, pages 375-376.). Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	circa 1820, 1830, undated
b. 1, f. 47	Dover, George Agar Ellis, Baron, 1797-1833 Agar-Ellis offered his suggestions for edits to her <i>Social Life in England and France from the French Revolution in 1789 to that of July 1830</i> (1831). Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1829 February 13
b. 1, f. 1	Dudley, John William Ward, Earl of, 1781-1833 Purchased from Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, March 1949.	undated
b. 1, f. 2	Hallam, Henry, 1777-1859 Purchased from Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, March 1949.	1844 February 27
b. 1, f. 3	Hope, Thomas, 1769-1831 Purchased from Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, March 1949.	1828?

Letters to Berry (continued)

b. 1, f. 48	Hope, Thomas, 1769-1831 Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	undated
b. 1, f. 49	Kinglake, Alexander William, 1809-1891 Two letters from Kinglake to Berry, and one from Kinglake to Lady Augusta Morley regarding a portrait of Berry. Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1849–1852
b. 1, f. 4	Kinglake, Alexander William, 1809-1891 Purchased from Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, March 1949.	1852 February 2
b. 1, f. 50	Lally-Tolendal, Trophime-Gérard, marquis de, 1751-1830 Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1816, 1820
b. 1, f. 51	Mackintosh, James, Sir, 1765-1832 Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1813–1819
b. 1, f. 5	Mackintosh, James, Sir, 1765-1832 Purchased from Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, March 1949.	[after 1824] April 6
b. 1, f. 6	Martineau, Harriet, 1802-1876 Purchased from Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, March 1949.	[before 1848] August 6
b. 1, f. 52	Price, Uvedale, Sir, 1747-1829 An exchange of letters between Berry and Price, with her invitation to join her in Malvern, and his reply regarding the possibility of his doing so. Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1798 August
b. 1, f. 53	Richelieu, Armand-Emmanuel du Plessis, duc de, 1766-1822 A note to Berry and a letter to an unidentified military officer about Berry. Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1816, 1820
b. 1, f. 54	Roscoe, William, 1753-1831 Two letters discussing Madame du Deffand's letters, his visit to the real Castle of Otranto, and offering praise of Horace Walpole. Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	1798, 1811
b. 1, f. 55	Sharp, Richard, 1759-1835 Sharp wrote his opinion of Dr. James Graham "the most noted Charlatan of his time in England." Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	[no year] March 11
b. 1, f. 7	Siddons, Sarah, 1755-1831 Purchased from Emily Driscoll, February 1961.	[between 1805 and 1817] July 1
b. 1, f. 56	Smyth, William, 1765-1849 Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.	undated

Letters to Berry (continued)

b. 1, f. 57	<p>Stanhope, Philip Henry Stanhope, Earl, 1805-1875</p> <p>Stanhope was at the time styled Lord Mahon.</p> <p>Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.</p>	1844
b. 1, f. 58	<p>Wolff, Joseph, 1795-1862</p> <p>Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.</p>	1838 March 13
b. 1, f. 59	<p>Unidentified correspondent</p> <p>In a letter signed "Anacharsis" and addressed to his/her cousin General Sir Ronald Crawford Ferguson (-1841) in Kircaldy, Scotland, the author writes of an upcoming sea journey to Bremen, but most of the narrative is a somewhat sardonic review of the National Grand Jubilee held in Hyde, Green, and St. James's parks in London on August 1, 1814, illustrated by his/her small drawing of "A Volcano of Rockets." The event featured a "naval fight on the Serpentine" and a Chinese pagoda that was destroyed when it caught fire during the celebratory fireworks. The letter was readdressed to the Berry sisters.</p> <p>Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.</p>	[1814]
b. 1, f. 60	<p>Unidentified correspondent</p> <p>Letter from Whitehall, with indecipherable signature, responding to Berry's request to drive in her carriage through St. James's Park.</p> <p>Purchased from Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers, November 2023.</p>	1846 March 12
Letters from Berry		
b. 1, f. 36	<p>Austin, Mrs.</p> <p>Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.</p>	1846 May 26
	<p>Bentley, Richard, 1794-1871</p> <p>Bentley was one of the foremost London publishers; Berry worked with him to produce her two-volume 1844 work <i>A Comparative View of Social Life in England and France</i>.</p> <p>Most of the letters were purchased from Maggs Bros. (Hodgson & Co. sale, June 1, 1945), June 1, 1945. The sale featured material owned by Lucy Rosamond Bentley, widow of Richard Bentley (1854-1936, the grandson of publisher Richard Bentley). Letters not acquired at the Hodgson sale were the gift of Lucy Bentley in 1937 and March 1952.</p>	
b. 1, f. 8	<p>Letters</p> <p>Twenty dated notes and letters from Berry; most discuss her work with him, social engagements, and the return of books she has borrowed.</p>	1833-1844
b. 1, f. 9	<p>Letters</p> <p>Thirty-two notes and letters from Berry; all have month and day dates but no years. The contents are similar to the dated material above.</p>	undated
b. 1, f. 10	<p>Envelopes</p> <p>An empty envelope and cover, with manuscript note on a paper scrap.</p>	1840, 1851
b. 1, f. 11	<p>Bull, Richard, 1725-1806</p> <p>Formerly loose in folio edition of <i>Horace Walpole's Reminiscences</i>.</p>	[before 1806] April 30

Letters from Berry (continued)

b. 1, f. 12	Dillon, Henrietta Browne, Viscountess, 1789-1862 Four letters written between April 16 and October 5, with no year noted. Purchased from Brick Row Bookshop, November 1945.	undated
b. 1, f. 13	Dorothy Schulze & Son Provenance unknown.	1844 September 8
b. 1, f. 14	Douglas, Mr. Purchased from Winifred A. Myers, Ltd., May 1962.	[no year] September 30
b. 1, f. 37	Drummond, Charles U. Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.	1850 July 3
b. 1, f. 15	Godfrey, Phillipa Purchased from Myers & Co., Ltd., April 1940.	undated
b. 1, f. 16	Graves, Mrs. With addressed envelope; she is possibly the wife of Sir Thomas Graves (c. 1747-1814) of Woodbine Hill, Honiston, Devon. Provenance unknown.	1844, undated
b. 1, f. 38	Lamb, Mrs. Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.	[no year] March 12
b. 1, f. 17	Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme Gift of Arthur Rogers, March 1955.	[after 1824] February 7
b. 1, f. 18	Milman, Henry Hart, 1791-1868, and Mary Ann Cockell Milman, 1804-1871 Eleven notes to Rev. and Mrs. Milman, some addressed to both and others to one or the other. Three note are dated 1849 and the rest have only months and days. Purchased from Brick Row Bookshop, November 1945.	1849, undated
b. 1, f. 19	Murray, John, 1778-1843 Purchased from Winifred A. Myers, Ltd., February 1958.	[after 1824] April 13
b. 1, f. 39	Murray, John, 1778-1843 Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.	undated
b. 1, f. 20	Richmond and Lennox, Charlotte Gordon, Duchess of, 1768-1842 Gift of H. Wade White, Waterbury, Connecticut, March 1952.	1810 October 8
b. 1, f. 21	Twiss, Horace, 1787-1849 Gift of Thomas S. and Ellie Lamont, May 1964.	1819 May 24
b. 1, f. 22	Westmacott, Richard, 1799-1872 Provenance unknown.	[1850] January 11

Letters from Berry (continued)

b. 1, f. 23	Wright, J. (John), 1770?-1844 Gift of H.W. Liebert, August 1978. From the collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps, who added in pencil "1840" and "Miss Berry."	[1840] October 15
b. 1, f. 24	Unknown recipient Purchased from Winifred A. Myers, Ltd., May 1966.	[1818?] October 19
b. 1, f. 40	Unidentified recipient Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.	1846 November 11
b. 1, f. 41	Unidentified recipient Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.	1849 May 22
b. 1, f. 25	Unknown recipient Purchased from Winifred A. Myers, Ltd., May 1962.	[no year] April 24
b. 1, f. 26	Unknown recipient Provenance unknown.	[no year] August 18
b. 1, f. 27	Unknown recipient Provenance unknown.	undated

Series II: Agnes Berry Correspondence, 1845–1849*5 Folders*

The series holds letters written by Agnes Berry to friends; the letters to publisher Richard Bentley were sent on behalf of her sister Mary.

Series II is organized into one subseries: Letters from Berry.

Letters from Berry

b. 1, f. 28	<p>Bentley, Richard, 1794–1871</p> <p>Four letters, three of which were sent on behalf of Mary Berry; the fourth thanks him for the loan of a book.</p> <p>Two letters were purchased from Maggs Bros. (Hodgson & Co. sale, June 1, 1945), June 1945, and two were gifts from Lucy Rosamond Bentley, 1937.</p>	undated
b. 1, f. 29	<p>Elliot, Jane Perry, -1861</p> <p>Elliot was married to Thomas Frederick Elliot (1808-1880) and was the daughter of newspaperman James Perry (1756-1821).</p> <p>Purchased from Myers & Co., Ltd., July 1955.</p>	undated
b. 1, f. 30	<p>Lewis, Theresa, Lady, 1803-1865</p> <p>Gift of H. W. Liebert, December 1953.</p>	1845, 1849
b. 1, f. 42	<p>Perry, Kate, approximately 1810-1901</p> <p>Perry was the daughter of newspaperman James Perry (1756-1821), and sister of Jane Perry Elliot.</p> <p>In her note, Agnes Berry wrote of the July 25 marriage of Lady Georgina Augusta Kerr and Rev. Granville Hamilton Forbes, in Petersham, Surrey.</p> <p>Purchased from John Wilson Manuscripts, Ltd., July 2010.</p>	1849 July 29
b. 1, f. 31	<p>Unknown recipient</p> <p>Purchased from Winifred A. Myers, Ltd., May 1962.</p>	[after 1824] November 26

Series III: Other Papers, 1786–1788**3 Folders**

The series holds items other than correspondence, including the sisters' bookplate and two poems.

Series III is organized alphabetically.

b. 1, f. 32	Bookplate	[1786]
	An engraved and etched bookplate for the sisters Mary and Agnes Berry, designed by Henry Tresham and engraved by Pietro Marco Vitali. It features two women in classical dress gesturing to a stone slab incised with the words "Miss Berrys." The bookplate is attached to a fragment of an envelope addressed to "Mrs. Bawden, Chard, Somerset" and date stamped 4 August 1813.	
	Provenance unknown.	
b. 1, f. 33	Poem to and about Horace Walpole, by Mary Berry	[1788]
	An 8-line poem dated "Twickm. Common Monday night," and below in a late hand (likely Maria Brodie) "1788." For Horace Walpole's copy of the poem, see Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory, 1788 Oct 19. Printed in: <i>Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence</i> 11, liii.	
	Provenance unknown.	
	.	
b. 1, f. 34	Poem to Mary Berry by William Sotheby, 1757-1833	undated
	In William Sotheby's hand and signed with his initials.	
	Purchased from Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, March 1949.	

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 and publishers -- Great Britain
Female friendship

Names

Berry, Agnes, 1764-1852
Berry, Mary, 1763-1852
Constant, Benjamin, 1767-1830
Graham, James, 1745-1794
Hope, Thomas, 1769-1831
Kingleake, Alexander William, 1809-1891
Lally-Tolendal, Trophime-Gérard, marquis de,
1751-1830
Lewis, Theresa, Lady, 1803-1865
Martineau, Harriet, 1802-1876
Price, Uvedale, Sir, 1747-1829
Roscoe, William, 1753-1831
Siddons, Sarah, 1755-1831
Sotheby, William, 1757-1833