Guide to the Thomas Percy Correspondence

OSB MSS 39

by Diane J. Ducharme

October 2003

P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.tpercy

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 http://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.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition


Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.
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.

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.
Collection Contents
Series I. Letters

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 14</td>
<td>2 ALS to Thomas Percy</td>
<td>1802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 15</td>
<td>ALS to Thomas Percy</td>
<td>1803 autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 16</td>
<td>ALS to Thomas Percy</td>
<td>1804 Jul 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 17</td>
<td>ALS to Thomas Percy&lt;br&gt;With: extract of review of Meen, 1815</td>
<td>1807 Jan 20</td>
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### NICHOLS, JOHN, 1745-1826

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 18</td>
<td>ALS to [Thomas Percy]; [London]</td>
<td>[1802] Aug</td>
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### NORMANTON, CHARLES AGAR, EARL OF, 1736-1809

<table>
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<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 19</td>
<td>ALS to Thomas Percy; Dublin</td>
<td>1773 Oct 26</td>
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### PERCY, THOMAS, 1729-1811

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 20</td>
<td>ALS to Thomas Wilkinson; Carlisle&lt;br&gt;Accompanied by engraved portrait of Percy</td>
<td>1783 May 27</td>
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### SELBY, HENRY C.

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<th>No.</th>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 21</td>
<td>ALS to Thomas Percy; Northumberland House</td>
<td>1786 Jul 12</td>
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### STEEVENS, GEORGE, 1736-1800

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<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 22</td>
<td>ALS to Edmond Malone; London</td>
<td>[1792] Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 23</td>
<td>Letter (copy) to Henry Meen; Hampstead Heath&lt;br&gt;In Meen’s hand. With: draft of Meen’s reply, and a memorandum by Meen</td>
<td>1793</td>
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</table>

### WOOD, ANDREW, CA. 1715-1772

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 24</td>
<td>ALS to Thomas Percy; Gateshead</td>
<td>1770 Jul 22</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### UNIDENTIFIED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1, f. 25</td>
<td>Unidentified note and transcript of advertisement</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
</tr>
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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