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Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Guide to the Robert Marsham- Townshend Papers

GEN MSS 482



by Diana Smith

March 2001

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New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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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: GEN MSS 482

CREATOR: Marsham-Townshend, Robert

TITLE: Robert Marsham-Townshend papers

DATES: 1853-1910

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1.67 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Letters and diaries belonging to Robert Marsham-Townshend containing descriptions of his travels around the world. Many of the letters are written to him, though there is a group of 22 letters written by him to a relative named Harriet, dated 1856-1864. Correspondents include Henry Alabaster, interpreter to the King in Siam; scientists W. S. Atkinson and Robert Stirling; George Ferguson Bowen, first governor of Queensland, Australia; in addition to numerous family members and other acquaintances. Stirling writes at length from the Sandwich Islands describing earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, a particular interest of Marsham-Townshend's. There are also fifteen letters from Youhannah El Karey, a missionary from Nablous, near Jaffa, Palestine. The 18 diaries span the dates 1853-1876, and carry descriptions of travel to Brazil, Egypt, Hong Kong, the Philippines, China, Japan, Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Panama, El Salvador, Honduras, California, Australia, Indonesia, Siam, India, Persia, the Middle East, South Africa, Russia, and Europe. There is a great deal of geographic and volcanic observation, as well as descriptions of cities, cultures, and peoples encountered. Accompanied by a bound notebook with notes on volcanoes throughout the world, two passports for Marsham-Townshend to use in Persia, and three contracts and receipts for hiring mules and drivers in Persia.

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

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.marsham>.

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

Purchased from Charles Apfelbaum on the Edwin J. Beinecke Book Fund, 2001.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Robert Marsham-Townshend Papers 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.

Preferred Citation

Robert Marsham-Townshend Papers. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

ROBERT MARSHAM-TOWNSHEND (1834-1914)

Robert Marsham, later Robert Marsham-Townshend, British world traveller, was the second son of Charles Marsham, 2nd Earl of Romney. He was a fellow of the Royal Geographic Society, worked in the Diplomatic Service from 1855 to 1859, and served as Lieutenant in the Kent Militia Artillery from 1859 to 1869. Marsham married Clara Catherine Paley in 1877.

Scope and Contents

The Robert Marsham-Townshend Papers consist of letters and diaries containing descriptions of Robert Marsham-Townshend's travels around the world. The collection is arranged into three series: [Correspondence](#), [Diaries](#), and [Other Papers](#), and spans the dates 1853-1910.

Many of the letters are written to him, though there is a group of 22 letters written by him to a relative identified only as Harriet, dated 1856-1864. Correspondents include Henry Alabaster, interpreter to the King in Siam; scientists W. S. Atkinson and Robert Stirling; George Ferguson Bowen, first governor of Queensland, Australia; in addition to numerous family members and other acquaintances. Stirling writes at length from the Sandwich Islands describing earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, a particular interest of Marsham-Townshend's. There are also fifteen letters from Youhannah El Karey, a missionary from Nablous, near Jaffa, Palestine.

The 18 diaries span the dates 1853-1876, and carry descriptions of travel to Brazil, Egypt, Hong Kong, the Philippines, China, Japan, Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Panama, El Salvador, Honduras, California, Australia, Indonesia, Siam (Thailand), India, Persia (Iran), the Mideast, South Africa, Russia, and Europe. There is a great deal of geographic and volcanic observation, as well as descriptions of cities, cultures, and peoples encountered.

The papers are accompanied by a bound notebook with notes on volcanoes throughout the world, two passports for Marsham-Townshend to use in Persia, and three contracts and receipts for hiring mules and drivers in Persia.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1856-1910

0.21 linear feet (1 box)

Series I, *Correspondence*, is organized into Outgoing and Incoming correspondence, and is arranged in alphabetical order.

OUTGOING

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| b. 1, f. 1 | Marsham, Margaret | 1861 Oct 31 |
| b. 1, f. 2-3 | [----?], Harriet | 1856-64 |

INCOMING

| | | |
|-------------|--|-----------------|
| b. 1, f. 4 | "A-C" general | 1866-68 |
| b. 1, f. 5 | Alabaster, Henry | 1868 Jan 13 |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Atkinson, W. S. (William Stephen) | 1867 |
| b. 1, f. 7 | Bowen, George Ferguson | 1866 Dec 17 |
| b. 1, f. 8 | Cayley, Henry | 1867 Aug-Nov |
| b. 1, f. 9 | "D-H" general For a letter by C. Hunt dated 1868 Mar 4, see: Marsham, Margaret, folder 16 | 1867-1910, n.y. |
| | El Karey, Youhannah | |
| b. 1, f. 10 | Correspondence | 1882-84 |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Correspondence | 1897-99 |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Canceled check, carte-de-visite photographs, flower cards, and empty envelopes | 1899, n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 13 | "I-M" general Letter from Anne Marsham dated 1868 Jul 11 encloses a letter from Charles Marsham, Earl of Romney | 1867-68 |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Jennings, P. H. | 1886 May |
| b. 1, f. 15 | Knox, Thomas George | 1867 Jan-Apr |
| b. 1, f. 16 | Marsham, Margaret Encloses a letter from C. Hunt, dated 1868 Mar 4 | 1868 Jul 11 |
| b. 1, f. 17 | Pelly, Lewis | 1868 May 4 |
| b. 1, f. 18 | "R-S" general For a letter by Charles Marsham, Earl of Romney dated Jul 11 1868, see: Anne Marsham, folder 13 | 1867-68 |
| b. 1, f. 19 | Shaw, Madan | 1868 Jan-Jul |

INCOMING (continued)

| | | |
|-------------|------------------|---------|
| b. 1, f. 20 | Stirling, Robert | 1867-68 |
| b. 1, f. 21 | "T-W" general | 1856-99 |

Series II: Diaries, 1853-1876*0.31 linear feet (2.5 boxes)*Series II, *Diaries*, contains diaries listed in chronological order.

| | | |
|-------------|---|---------|
| b. 2, f. 22 | June 17 - August 13 1853 Paris, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Italy | 1853 |
| b. 2, f. 23 | March 7 - Sept. 17 1856 Voyage to Brazil, and his stay there | 1856 |
| b. 2, f. 24 | Directions. Sept. 21 - Nov. 4 1857 List of addresses in the front, travel journal kept while traveling in Brazil in back | 1857 |
| b. 2, f. 25 | Tocantins excursion 1858 Travel to Tocantins River, Brazil October 5 - December 18. Back of book includes drafts of letters dated October 1858 - March 1859 | 1858 |
| b. 2, f. 26 | April 17 - August 4 1861 France, Egypt, Singapore, Hong Kong, Canton | 1861 |
| b. 2, f. 27 | August 5th 1861 to April 3d 1862 Japan, China, Singapore, Sri Lanka | 1861-62 |
| b. 3, f. 28 | July 8 - Decr. 31 1862 Portugal to Brazil and Argentina. List of mail either sent or received at different ports between 1862 and 1868 in front | 1862 |
| b. 3, f. 29 | Jany. 1 - June 28 1863 Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru | 1863 |
| b. 3, f. 30 | "Ascent of the Volcano of Arequipa etc. etc. 1863" Diary of two ascents, June 10 and 17 1863, with notes on previous ascents in front of volume in Spanish and English | 1863 |
| b. 3, f. 31 | June 29th 1863 to March 4th 1864 Peru, Panama, California, Panama, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras | 1863-64 |
| b. 3, f. 32 | July 6th 1865 to June 9th 1866 Australia, New Zealand | 1865-66 |
| b. 4, f. 33 | June 9 - Novr. 29 1866 Indonesia, Philippines, Siam | 1866 |
| b. 4, f. 34 | Novr. 29th 1866 to Feby. 21st 1868 Siam, India. Folded sheet of paper carrying handwritten journal from July 16 to July 27 laid in loose | 1866-68 |
| b. 4, f. 35 | Feby. 21 - July 23 1868 India, Persia, Arabian Peninsula, Russia, Germany | 1868 |
| b. 4, f. 36 | June 17 - Sept. 23 1871 Gibraltar, Spain, Portugal, France | 1871 |

| | | |
|--------------|---|------------|
| b. 4, f. 37 | March 12 - July 3 1872 France, Italy | 1872 |
| b. 4, f. 37a | March 22 - July 18, 1873 and June 1 - December 11, 1876 1873: France, Mideast, Italy, Austria, Germany. 1876: Mideast, Reunion, Mauritius, Madagascar, South Africa | 1873, 1876 |
| b. 4, f. 38 | Sept. 3, 1875 to Jan. 3, 1876 Eastern Europe, Italy, Corfu, Majorca, Algeria | 1875-76 |

Series III: Other Papers, 1868, n.d.*0.11 linear feet (.5 box)*Series III, *Other Papers*, contains miscellaneous other writings, documents, and financial papers.

| | | |
|-------------|--|--------------|
| b. 4, f. 39 | Volcanoes &c. Bound volume Notes on volcanoes around the world, with mathematical tables, a sketch of a volcano | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 40 | Passports in Persian Language | [1868] |
| b. 4, f. 41 | Contracts and receipts | 1868 Apr-Jun |
| b. 4, f. 42 | Notes on sizes of buildings | 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

Earthquakes -- Hawaii
Volcanoes
Voyages and travels

Geographic Names

Asia -- Description and travel
Australia -- Description and travel
Central America -- Description and travel
Europe -- Description and travel
Middle East -- Description and travel
South Africa -- Description and travel
South America -- Description and travel

Genres / Formats

Diaries

Names

Alabaster, Henry, -1884
Atkinson, W. S. (William Stephen), 1820-1876
Bowen, George Ferguson, 1821-1899
El Karey, Youhannah
Marsham-Townshend, Robert
Stirling, Robert