

Guide to the Temple Family Correspondence

OSB MSS 44



by Beinecke Staff

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: OSB MSS 44

TITLE: Temple family correspondence

DATES: 1667-1776

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The correspondence consists of 29 letters addressed to various members of Sir William Temple's family, particularly his sister, Lady Giffard. The letters discuss domestic and personal concerns, including the health of family members, preparations for visits, and purchases of supplies. Several to Lady Giffard offer condolences on the death of Sir William. A letter from James Butler, Duke of Ormonde to Sir William details his view of Irish affairs.

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Requesting Instructions

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Bequest of James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

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

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE, 1628-1699

Sir William Temple, eldest son of Sir John Temple, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, was born in London in 1628 and raised by his uncle, Dr. Henry Hammond, at Penshurst. He entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1644 and left for the Continent in 1648. He courted Dorothy Osborne over a period of several years and married her in Middlesex in 1655.

A protege of Henry Bennet (later Earl of Arlington), Temple received his baronetcy in 1666 and two years later negotiated the Triple Alliance among England, the Netherlands and Sweden. Most of his diplomatic career was focused on the Netherlands; in 1673 he published *Observations on the United Provinces* and in 1677 assisted in arranging the marriage of James II's daughter Mary to William of Orange.

Temple retired from politics in 1681 and devoted his time to his estate of Moor Park and to composing memoirs, essays and miscellaneous pieces, some of which were published during his lifetime and widely praised. In 1689, Temple hired Jonathan Swift, then 22, as his secretary. Swift remained with Temple until his death in 1699, and oversaw the publication of his posthumous *Works* in 1701.

Although the Temples had several children, none survived them. The only child to reach adulthood, John Temple, drowned himself in the Thames in April 1689. Lady Dorothy Temple died at Moor Park in 1695, and Sir William Temple also died there in 1699. He was buried in Westminster Abbey beside his wife; but his heart was buried under a sundial in the garden at Moor Park.

LADY MARTHA (TEMPLE) GIFFARD, 1638-1722

Lady Martha Giffard was the younger sister of Sir William Temple. She married Sir Thomas Giffard of Castle Jordan in April 1662. He died in the following month, and Lady Martha joined her brother's household, where she remained for the rest of her life, apparently taking an active role in managing the house and estate. After Temple's death, she wrote the memoir of his life that prefaced his collected works (attributed to "A Particular Friend") but quarreled with Jonathan Swift over some aspects of the posthumous publication.

Scope and Contents

[The Temple Family Correspondence](#) consists of letters addressed to Mary, Lady Giffard and other members of the Temple family. The letters span the dates 1667-1776, with most of the letters predating Lady Giffard's death in 1722.

Sir William Temple is represented in the collection by one translation of a highly complimentary letter written in the name of Gabriel Portello, "who taught her Spanish," to Lady Giffard; a 1680 letter to him from James Butler, Duke of Ormonde, who discusses his view of the Irish situation; and a letter in Italian of 10 December 1688 describing the flight of James II and his family from London and accusing Londoners of "poltroneria e infidelta a lor Principe."

Lady Giffard's correspondents include Lady Dorothy Dixwell, who in a letter dated January 1, 1671 describes preparations for Lady Strangeway's country house production of Etheridge's *The Comical Revenge; or, Love in a Tub*; Dorothy, Dowager Countess of Sunderland, who describes the dismissal of Ormonde as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and current Court gossip, including an incident between Lord Rochester and Thomas Killigrew, in an undated (1669) letter; and the Marquis de Marsay, who asks for news of Lady Portland and discusses his health and studies.

Other letters received by Lady Giffard are primarily condolence letters on the death of her brother, invitations, or thank you notes for presents of cherries or medicines.

The collection also includes a few letters pertaining to the Bacon family. Two from Sheppard Frere thank John Bacon for presents of venison. A 1690 letter from John Montagu, Rector of Trinity College, Cambridge, to his sister (Lady Catherine Bacon) regrets that he could not secure a fellowship for someone she had recommended to him.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence

0.26 linear feet (1 box)

"ANON., SIGNOR"		
b. 1, f. 1	Letter to Sir William Temple; London Describes chaos in London, flight of James II. In Italian.	1688 Dec 10
AUMONT, LOUIS-MARIE-VICTOR, DUC D', 1632-1704		
b. 1, f. 2	ALS to [John Temple]; Boulogne	1688 Sep 30
BACON, JOHN		
b. 1, f. 3	AL to Mr. and Mrs. Bacon; Shrubland, Coddenham	n.d.
BERKELEY, WILLIAM BERKELEY, BARON, D. 1741		
b. 1, f. 4	3 ALS to Lady Giffard; [n.p.] Concerning the death of John Temple? and the illness and death of Sir William Temple.	[1689-99?]
BREVAL, D.		
b. 1, f. 5	ALS to Lady Catherine Bacon; Westminster	1701 Apr 8
CARLISLE, ANNE (HOWARD) HOWARD, COUNTESS OF, D. 1703		
b. 1, f. 6	ALS to Lady Giffard; [n.p.]	[n.y.] Oct 13
DIXWELL, BASIL, SIR, 1665-1750		
b. 1, f. 7	ALS to an unnamed recipient; Broom	[1749] Aug 10
DIXWELL, DOROTHY, LADY, D. CA. 1718		
b. 1, f. 8	3 ALS to Lady Giffard; [East Sheen] Letter of 1671 Jan 1 describes a country-house production of Etherege's <i>Comical Revenge</i> .	1670-71
EDGAR, D.		
b. 1, f. 9	ALS to the Rev. B. Gardeman; [London] Accompanied by another letter to Gardeman, from an unknown correspondent, 1720 Jun 9.	[1720]
ESSEX, ELIZABETH (PERCY) CAPELL, COUNTESS OF, 1636-1718		
b. 1, f. 10	ALS to [Lady Giffard]; [n.p.]	[1699] Jan 11
FRERE, SHEPPARD, 1715-1780		
b. 1, f. 11	ALS to John Bacon; Roydon	1772 Jul 31
b. 1, f. 12	ALS to John Bacon; Roydon	1776 Aug 8

	MARSAY, CHARLES-HECTOR DE SAINT GEORGE, [MARQUIS DE, d. 1753]	
b. 1, f. 13	3 ALS to [Lady Giffard]; Geneva In French.	1719-21
	MONTAGU, JOHN, 1655-1728	
b. 1, f. 14	ALS to Lady Catherine Bacon; Cambridge	1690 Oct 2
	ONSLow, ARTHUR, 1691-1768	
b. 1, f. 15	ALS to Montagu Bacon; Clandon	1713 Aug 28
	ORMONDE, JAMES BUTLER, DUKE OF, 1610-1688	
b. 1, f. 16	ALS to Sir William Temple; Kilkenny	1680 Sep 28
	PORTLAND, JANE MARTHA (TEMPLE) BERKELEY, [COUNTESS OF, 1672-1751]	
b. 1, f. 17	AL to Lady Giffard; [n.p.] On the death of Sir William Temple?	[1699]
	ROMNEY, HENRY SIDNEY, EARL OF, 1641-1704	
b. 1, f. 18	ALS to Lady Giffard; [n.p.] On the death of Sir William Temple.	[1699] Feb 15
	[SUNDERLAND, DOROTHY SIDNEY?, COUNTESS OF, 1617-1684x	
b. 1, f. 19	ALS to Lady Giffard Reporting the dismissal of the Duke of Ormonde as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and court news, including the recent banishment of "my Ld. of Rochester" for striking "Tom Keeligrew" and the lack of Valentine's day favors for the Maids of Honor.	[1669?]
	SUNDERLAND, ROBERT SPENCER, EARL OF, 1640-1702	
b. 1, f. 20	ALS to Lady Giffard; Althorp	[1699] Jan 30
	TEMPLE, WILLIAM, SIR, 1628-1699	
b. 1, f. 21	Letter (translation) to (his sister) Lady Giffard; Antwerp This letter was originally written in Spanish over the pseudonym Gabriel Portello. A later endorsement states that this translation was made by Lady Giffard. Printed (in Spanish) in Letters (1700), I, 84-6.	1667 Mar 30
	UNIDENTIFIED	
b. 1, f. 22-23	Two unidentified letters	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

Country life
Families -- England -- Domestic relations
Irish question

Names

Giffard, Martha, Lady, 1638-1722
Ormonde, James Butler, Duke of, 1610-1688
Temple, William, 1628-1699