



The New York Public Library  
Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle

Guide to the

**William Cowper manuscript material**

ca. 1784-1799

Pforz MS

## Summary

**Creator:** Cowper, William, 1731-1800

**Title:** William Cowper manuscript material

**Date:** ca. 1784-1799

**Size:** 32 items

**Abstract:** Holograph commonplace book : 1790-1799 : (MISC 0660) : includes part of Cowper's translation of the Aeneid, Book VIII, beginning at line 18 ; also a 65-line translation from Ovid, beginning: "You bid me write t'amuse the tedious hours, / And save from with'ring my poetic powers ..." Both pieces were first published in 1815 at the arrangement of John Johnson. A pencil drawing of trees and soldiers is on p. 2 (at front). Shelved with oversized bound manuscript volumes.

**Access:** Restricted access.

**Preferred citation:** William Cowper manuscript material : 32 items, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library

## Creator History

William Cowper, English poet.

## Scope and Content Note

Holograph commonplace book : 1790-1799 : (MISC 0660) : includes part of Cowper's translation of the Aeneid, Book VIII, beginning at line 18 ; also a 65-line translation from Ovid, beginning: "You bid me write t'amuse the tedious hours, / And save from with'ring my poetic powers ..." Both pieces were first published in 1815 at the arrangement of John Johnson. A pencil drawing of trees and soldiers is on p. 2 (at front). Shelved with oversized bound manuscript volumes.||||Holograph preface to Cowper's translation of Homer : 2 draft fragments : ca. 1790 : (MISC 3564) (MISC 3607).||||Holograph translations of The Iliad : 2 bound volumes and 1 loose leaf : ca. 1784-1786 : -- (MISC 0662) : bound volume : 32 p. ; including book 11, and parts of books 10 and 12, with many corrections. Shelved with bound manuscript volumes. -- (MISC 0729) : bound volume : ca. 850 p. ; includes 15 complete books and 4

incomplete books (with 5 books missing). More than half of the volume, and the corrections to the remaining half, are in Cowper's hand. Tipped in at the front is a copy of the 1786 Proposals for Printing by Subscription a New Translation of the Iliad and Odyssey, with Cowper's manuscript annotations (MISC 0728). Shelved with bound manuscript volumes. -- (MISC 0850) : 1 p. ; in envelope : "Argument of Book 15" : with a note from Cowper's friend and publisher John Johnson, dated 10 Mar 1824, attesting that the leaf was presented to Mrs. F. C. Pratt of Peterborough. |||Holograph corrections to the first edition of The Iliad : 2 bound volumes and 1 sheaf of unbound pages : -- (MISC 0726) : bound volume : 51 leaves. Shelved with bound manuscript volumes. -- (MISC 0727) : 19 p. ; in envelope. -- (MISC 0731) : bound volume : ca. 150 p. ; nearly all in Cowper's hand. Cowper's book-plate is mounted on the front paste-down. Shelved with bound manuscript volumes. |||Holograph translation of The Odyssey : 24 Sep 1788 - 26 Aug 1789 : (MISC 0730) : bound volume : ca. 800 p. ; complete manuscript draft. Shelved with bound manuscript volumes. |||Holograph corrections and variations of The Odyssey : 24 Jul [1798?] - 8 Mar 1799 : (MISC 0732) : 109 p. loose ; laid in a half-calf box. Shelved with bound manuscript volumes. |||Holograph lines from The Odyssey, Book XIII : ca. 1790 : (MISC 3608) : with a note from John Johnson, dated 9 Jan 1828, attesting that the slip was presented to writer Hannah More. |||Holograph chapter (fragment), Observations on St. John's Gospel : [no date] : (MISC 0851) : 3 p. folio. |||Manuscript biography, "A Narrative of Cowper's Experience, Written by Himself" : 1821 : (MISC 4029) : 44 p., in an unknown hand. Includes a frontispiece pencil drawing of Cowper, signed "A. A. March 10th 1821." A pencil note on the first leaf states: "This ms. originally belonged to a vicar of Selby & [Orierton?] to whom it was given by a member of the Unwin family with whom Cowper was connected." |||To William Hayley, poet and biographer : 7 autograph letters signed : 1792-1793 : (MISC 0095-0101). |||To Lady Hesketh (his cousin) : 5 autograph letters signed : (MISC 0091-0094) (MISC 3606) : 1788-1790 : on various subject including his translations of Homer, personal matters, the poetry of Burns, and Pitt's new plan regarding slave trade. (MISC 3606) incorporates two eight-line verses written for Mrs. Throckmorton. |||To Joseph Johnson, publisher : 1 autograph letter signed : 24 Sep 1788 : (MISC 0090) : on James Hurdis's Adriano, which Johnson had sent Cowper for his perusal. Includes 10 p. of holograph notes, entitled, "Remarks on Adriano" (MISC 0090a) and 4 p. of holograph corrections (MISC 0090b). |||To Samuel Rose, lawyer : 2 autograph letters signed : 1791-1793 : (MISC 0656-0657).

## Key Terms

### Titles

Cowper, William : manuscript material

### Subjects

English poetry -- 18th century -- Manuscripts -- Specimens

Poets, English -- 18th century -- Correspondence

### Names

Cowper, William, 1731-1800

Hayley, William, 1745-1820

Hesketh, Harriet, Lady, 1733-1807

Homer

Hurdis, James, 1763-1801

Johnson, John, 1769-1833

Johnson, Joseph, 1738-1809

More, Hannah, 1745-1833

Ovid, 43 B.C.-17 A.D. or 18 A.D.

Rose, Samuel, 1767-1804

Virgil