

A GUIDE TO THE  
**MARY HAYS**  
MANUSCRIPT MATERIAL  
**IN THE PFORZHEIMER COLLECTION:**  
BEING A COMPLETE AND ANNOTATED LIST  
OF ALL THE HANDWRITTEN LETTERS  
**BY HAYS HERSELF,**  
HELD BY THAT REPOSITORY.

COMPILED BY  
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Bibliographer of the Pforzheimer Collection.

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*'how much further ...  
does a little nature go  
than mere philosophy'*  
— Hays letter to Godwin,  
29 April 1796

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**The New York Public Library**

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**THE CARL H. PFORZHEIMER COLLECTION  
OF SHELLEY AND HIS CIRCLE**

2009

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### A Guide to the Mary Hays Manuscript Material in the Pforzheimer Collection

<b>Associated catalog record title:</b>	Mary Hays manuscript material
<b>Main entry:</b>	Hays, Mary, 1759 or 60-1843.
<b>Size:</b>	36 items
<b>Date range:</b>	1779-1807
<b>Abstract:</b>	Mary Hays, English novelist. Active in London radical and dissenting circles in the end of the eighteenth-century, Hays was a protégée of the pioneer feminist Mary Wollstonecraft and the anarchist philosopher William Godwin. Perhaps best known for her semi-autobiographical <i>Memoirs of Emma Courtney</i> , Hays also wrote children's books, and a pamphlet arguing against the Biblical justifications of sexism, <i>Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in behalf of Women</i> (1798).
<b>Access:</b>	Admission to the Pforzheimer Collection is granted through application.
<b>Citation:</b>	The Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle – The New York Public Library – Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

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## Biographical sketch

Mary Hays was born in London on 4 May 1759 to John Hays, a mariner, and his wife Elizabeth. The Hayses were rational dissenters, and Mary had at least five siblings. Little else is known about her early life, but she would later characterize her youth as affected by loss; her father died in her adolescence, and her fiancé, John Eccles, died only weeks before their planned wedding in 1780.

Hays's introduction to London's radical political and dissenting circles came about following the publication of her 1792 *Cursory Remarks on an Enquiry into the Expediency and Propriety of Public Worship*, a defense of dissenters from an attack by the controversialist Gilbert Wakefield. Over the following years, Hays formed important relationships with both Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin, and is credited with encouraging their marriage. Her close but unresolved romantic friendship with the dissenting writer William Frend inspired her first novel, *The Memoirs of Emma Courtney* (1796), which was considered scandalous for its portrayal of a woman in frank and relentless pursuit of the man she loves.



Hays worked in a variety of genres throughout the next two decades, many of her works sharing a feminist perspective. Her *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in behalf of Women* (1798) is a philosophical argument similar to Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), and her novel *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799) attacks the social importance ascribed to a woman's chastity. Hays wrote two major biographical works, *Female Biography* (1802) and *Memoirs of Queens* (1821), as well as articles and children's books.

Mary Hays died on 20 February 1843, age 83, and was buried on 25 February in Abney Park cemetery, Stoke Newington, London.

**ABOVE:** From the frontispiece of Hays's *Family Annals, or The Sisters* (1817), engraved by L. Romney after C. Corbould. **BELOW:** The postscript to Hays's letter to William Godwin on 8 June 1796 (MH 0023), in which she urges him to spare the feelings of Mrs. I[m]aly, i.e., Mary Wollstonecraft.

MS. Do not tell Mrs. G. that I suspected she did not like criticism — I love her — a word in which is comprehended every thing that is kind — It would grieve me to offend her.

## The Pforzheimer Collection

The Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle is one of the world's leading repositories for the study of British Romanticism. Comprised of over 20,000 items, the collection is conceptually centered on the life and works of the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and his friends, relatives, and contemporaries. Formerly a part of the much larger and now dispersed Pforzheimer Library, the Pforzheimer Collection came to The New York Public Library in 1986.

## Holdings and provenance

This guide lists and describes the manuscript materials held by the Pforzheimer Collection that were created by Mary Hays. Most of these materials were purchased in the 1970's from Jill Organ (later Hansen) of Islington. Organ's friend, Anne F. Wedd, was Hays's great-grandniece and first twentieth century editor, and had left Organ the manuscripts upon her death in 1958. Since the 1986 move of the Pforzheimer Collection to the New York Public Library, seven additional Hays letters (all to William Tooke) have been accessioned.

Because the Pforzheimer Collection collects actively, its holdings in Mary Hays manuscript material may grow in the future as items become available for acquisition.

## Related materials

In addition to manuscript letters by Mary Hays, the Pforzheimer Collection holds a considerable number of letters addressed to Hays, including some by William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, John Aikin, and several of Hays's family members. Also held are a number of Hays's early printed editions, including a copy, in original boards, of her *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women* (1798); a copy of her 6 volume *Female Biography* (1803); and a copy of her first book for children, *Harry Clinton* (1804).

Among the Collection's Hays-related printed secondary sources are the two books of her correspondence edited by A. F. Wedd, *The Love-Letters of Mary Hays* (1925) and *The Fate of the Fenwicks* (1927); and Marilyn L. Brooks's edition of Hays's letters (2004).

## Scope and content

The Mary Hays manuscript material in the Pforzheimer Collection consists of 26 letters to the philosopher and novelist William Godwin; 7 letters to the writer and translator William Tooke; 1 letter to an unidentified recipient; and a bound volume containing a manuscript copy of 102 letters between Hays and John Eccles. Also held is Hays's copy of Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), with Hays's signature on the title page. Many pages contain light penciled annotations, some of which may be in the hand of Hays. The annotations are described and transcribed in full in the Appendix of this guide.

## Correspondence

The letters are listed below in alphabetical order, by recipient, with reference to their location in Marilyn L. Brooks's edition of Hays's letters.

## ITEM

## REFERENCE

- To **John Eccles**, her neighbor and fiancé :
  - 52 [autograph?]<sup>1</sup> letters signed (copies) entered into one manuscript volume : 13 Feb 1779 – 21 Nov 1779 [transcription date unknown] : (MH 0028) : in the *Hays-Eccles Correspondence Volume*; interspersed with copies of Eccles's letters to Hays; preceded by an introduction by Hays. Shelved with bound manuscript volumes under "Hays." *Brooks, p. 36-202*
  
- To **William Godwin**, philosopher and novelist :
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 14 Oct 1794 : (MH 0001) : from No. 2 Paragon Place, Surry Road; begins, "Perhaps no apology could be equally proper for a stranger addressing Mr. Godwin, and presuming to solicit a favor, as a plain statement of the truth!" *Brooks, p. 382.*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 7 Dec 1794 : (MH 0002) : from No. 2 Paragon Place, Surry Road; begins, "I have perused the book you obligingly put into my hands with avidity & attention..." *Brooks, p. 384*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 1 Jan 1795 : (MH 0003) : from No. 2 Paragon Place, Surry Road; begins, "Never did I peruse a work with greater earnestness & pleasure, nor arrive at the conclusion with more unaffected regret, than the enquiry into the principles of political justice!" *Brooks, p. 388*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 6 May 1795 : (MH 0004) : from No. 2 Paragon Place, Surry Road; begins, "The last time I had the pleasure of seeing you in Paragon Place, I fear I was a little troublesome." *Brooks, p. 390*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 10 May 1795 : (MH 0005) : *Brooks, p. 393*

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<sup>1</sup> A. F. Wedd believed this volume (as well as a second volume, now lost) was in the hand of Hays's friend Mrs. Collier; Marilyn L. Brooks believes the hand is probably that of Hays herself.

from No. 2 Paragon Place, Surry Road; begins, “How much is a favour enhanced by a ready & obliging compliance!”

- 1 autograph letter signed : 28 Jul 1795 : (MH 0006) : *Brooks, p. 393*  
from No. 2 Paragon Place, Surry Road; begins, “If it were not unreasonable (you have said) I would ask you, when your mind was full of thought, to write me as you would to your genius in the moon!”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 1 Oct 1795 : (MH 0007) : *Brooks, p. 398*  
from No. 30 Kirby Street, Hatton Garden; begins, “Your last obliging letter has restored me to freedom & enabled me again to take up my pen & scribble to you ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 13 Oct 1795 : (MH 0008) : *Brooks, p. 401*  
from No. 30 Kirby Street, Hatton Garden; begins, “I always see you with pleasure & am sorry when you take your leave.”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 5 Nov 1795 : (MH 0027) : *Brooks, p. 405*  
from No. 30 Kirby Street, Hatton Garden; begins, “I have been much indisposed since I saw you, & being but little accustomed to bodily pain, bear it with a very ill grace.”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 20 Nov 1795 : (MH 0009) : *Brooks, p. 407*  
from No. 30 Kirby Street, Hatton Garden; begins, “I think, yes! I do think, that you refine too much, & that many centuries will elapse ere some of your opinions will afford proper foundation for practice.”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : [16] Dec 1795 : (MH 0010) : *Brooks, p. 413*  
from No. 30 Kirby Street, Hatton Garden; begins, “My philosophy will, I doubt, become sadly deranged if I must banish the terms & the ideas of cause & effect...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : [Jan 1796] : (MH 0024) : *Brooks, p. 417*  
begins, “I love to flatter myself sometimes, as well as to be flatter’d, & I felt a pleasure in believing your last visit, so prompt, so immediately succeeding my letter, was a new instance of your kindness & friendship ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 11 Jan 1796 : (MH 0011) : *Brooks, p. 422*  
begins, “You think me incapable of heroism, I fear so, & yet, I am call’d to great exertions ...”

- 1 autograph letter signed : 6 Feb 1796 : (MH 0012) : *Brooks, p. 424*  
begins, “You retort upon me my own arguments, & you have cause ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 9 Feb 1796 : (MH 0013) : *Brooks, p. 431*  
begins, “I write only a line, to say, I feel as if I had done you some injustice ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 14-20 Feb 1796 : (MH 0014) : *Brooks, p. 433*  
begins, “How is it, my friend, that after so many conversations & so many letters, we do not seem thoroughly to comprehend each other?”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 1 Mar 1796 : (MH 0015) : *Brooks, p. 436*  
begins, Give me leave to say, the distress that can be laughed away is no distress at all ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 8 Mar 1796 : (MH 0016) : *Brooks, p. 442*  
begins, “Now, you have given me an agreeable subject, upon which, having so long harassed you with painful ones, I must expatiate a little ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 10 Mar 1796 : (MH 0017) : *Brooks, p. 444*  
begins, “Now, I cannot settle anything, till I have sat down to make an apology to you for the blunders of the morning.”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 23 Mar 1796 : (MH 0018) : *Brooks, p. 446*  
begins, “I take up my pen to address you, prompted by inclination, as well as by grateful esteem ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 4 Apr 1796 : (MH 0019) : *Brooks, p. 448*  
begins, “I am glad you allow, that individual attachment has in it the spirit of true philanthropy ...”
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 29 Apr – 3 May 1796 : (MH 0020) : *Brooks, p. 451*  
begins, “I wonder, if I were to say – I should write you no more, which I should punish most, you or myself?”
  
- 1 autograph letter (fragment) : [ca. May 1796?] : (MH 0025) : *Brooks, p. 454*  
begins, “If you are susceptible to sympathy, which I have no reason to doubt, I need not attempt to describe to you, the painful situation of mind in which you left me, on your last visit.”  
Erroneously recorded as (MH 0013) in Brooks’s footnote.
  
- 1 autograph letter signed : 11 May 1796 : (MH 0021) : *Brooks, p. 456*  
begins with a quotation from one of John Gay’s verse



fables, “Lord, Madam, what a squinting leer! / No doubt the fairy has been here ...”

- 1 autograph letter signed : 6 Jun 1796 : (MH 0022) : *Brooks, p. 459*  
begins, “I perceive, that I am again about to write you a desultory letter ...”
- 1 autograph letter signed : 8 Jun 1796 : (MH 0023) : *Brooks, p. 462*  
begins, “I had sent my letter to the post before I receiv’d your note ...”
- To **William Tooke** (d. 1820), writer and translator :
  - 1 autograph letter signed : [May 1799?] : (MH 0035) : *Brooks, p. 323*  
begins, “Be so good as to send by the bearer, the anti-Jacobin Review.”
  - 1 autograph letter signed : May 1803 : (MH 0029) : from No. 9 – St. George’s Place, Camberwell; begins, “Will you allow me to remind you that I am still in existence, by, presuming on your former friendship, to request of you a favour.” *Brooks, p. 331*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 4 Jun 1803 : (MH 0030) : from No. 9 – St. George’s Place, Camberwell; begins, “Will you allow me once more to presume on your friendly offices, & to request that you will have the goodness to communicate the enclosed, in my name, to Messrs Longman & Co. and Messrs Baldwin ...” *Brooks, p. 336*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 24 Jan 1807 : (MH 0031) : from No. 3. Park Street, Islington; begins, “I have sent, for the examination of your friends, to whom I shall feel myself indebted to you for an introduction, a fair specimen and proportion of my MS.” *Brooks, p. 342*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 16 Feb 1807 : (MH 0032) : from No. 3. Park Street, Islington; begins, “Will you have the goodness to leave out for me the remaining vols of Hume ...” *Brooks, p. 342*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 12 Nov 1807 : (MH 0033) : from 54 Coram St.; begins, “My earnest desire of relieving my friend, in some degree, from the pressure of her present distress, has not, I hope, made me guilty of an impropriety ...” *Brooks, p. 344*
  - 1 autograph letter signed : 4 Dec 1807 : (MH 0034) : *Brooks, p. 345*

from Islington; begins, “Will you think me importunate, my good friend, if I ask, whether I am likely, through your kind interposition, to have any acceptable intelligence to give to my friend Mrs. Fenwick.”

· To an unidentified recipient:

- 1 autograph letter unsigned, to “My dear friend” : [ca. 1795] : (MH 0026) : begins, “I shall send the review to Hamiltons in its present state, I shall then have discharged my duty: Dr. G may afterwards curtail, or omit, it, as he pleases ...” Written on a scrap of a printed legal form.

*Brooks, p. 303*

## Call Number Index

- (MH 0001) ALS to William Godwin, 14 Oct 1794  
 (MH 0002) ALS to William Godwin, 7 Dec 1794  
 (MH 0003) ALS to William Godwin, 1 Jan 1795  
 (MH 0004) ALS to William Godwin, 6 May 1795  
 (MH 0005) ALS to William Godwin, 10 May 1795  
 (MH 0006) ALS to William Godwin, 28 Jul 1795  
 (MH 0007) ALS to William Godwin, 1 Oct 1795  
 (MH 0008) ALS to William Godwin, 13 Oct 1795  
 (MH 0009) ALS to William Godwin, 20 Nov 1795  
 (MH 0010) ALS to William Godwin, [16] Dec 1795  
 (MH 0011) ALS to William Godwin, 11 Jan 1796  
 (MH 0012) ALS to William Godwin, 6 Feb 1796  
 (MH 0013) ALS to William Godwin, 9 Feb 1796  
 (MH 0014) ALS to William Godwin, 14-20 Feb 1796  
 (MH 0015) ALS to William Godwin, 1 Mar 1796  
 (MH 0016) ALS to William Godwin, 8 Mar 1796  
 (MH 0017) ALS to William Godwin, 10 Mar 1796  
 (MH 0018) ALS to William Godwin, 23 Mar 1796  
 (MH 0019) ALS to William Godwin, 4 Apr 1796  
 (MH 0020) ALS to William Godwin, 29 Apr – 3 May 1796  
 (MH 0021) ALS to William Godwin, 11 May 1796  
 (MH 0022) ALS to William Godwin, 6 Jun 1796  
 (MH 0023) ALS to William Godwin, 8 Jun 1796  
 (MH 0024) ALS to William Godwin, [Jan 1796]  
 (MH 0025) AL (fragment) to William Godwin, [ca. 1796?]  
 (MH 0026) ALS to [?], ca. 1795  
 (MH 0027) ALS to William Godwin, 5 Nov 1795  
 (MH 0028) *Hays-Eccles Correspondence Volume*, 13 Feb 1779 – 21 Nov 1779  
 (MH 0029) ALS to William Tooke, May 1803  
 (MH 0030) ALS to William Tooke, 4 Jun 1803  
 (MH 0031) ALS to William Tooke, 24 Jan 1807  
 (MH 0032) ALS to William Tooke, 16 Feb 1807  
 (MH 0033) ALS to William Tooke, 12 Nov 1807  
 (MH 0034) ALS to William Tooke, 4 Dec 1807  
 (MH 0035) ALS to William Tooke, [May 1799?]  
 (MH 0036) Signature and annotations in Hays's copy of Wollstonecraft's *Rights of Woman*

## Appendix

### Annotations in Hays's Copy of Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

(MH 0036)

The Pforzheimer Collection's "copy 4" of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was formerly owned by Mary Hays, and bears her ink signature on the title-page. A good number of the pages contain light pencil markings, almost exclusively vertical lines and curly brackets highlighting sections of the text. Nine pages (p. 11, 16, 50, 104, 169, 214, 219, 394, 414) contain light, mostly very minor, pencil annotations, in at least two, possibly as many as four different hands. Many of the annotations are extremely light, and some are smeared beyond legibility. None of the annotations are certain to be Hays's; it is possible that none are. Below is a transcription of the annotations, as best could be done.

Page	Right margin	Text	Left margin	Responsibility
p. 11		dices, and they will naturally fall into their subordinate, yet respectable station in life.		
		It seems scarcely necessary to say, that I now speak of the sex in general. Many individuals have more sense than their male relatives; and, as nothing preponderates where there is a constant struggle for an equilibrium, without it has naturally more gravity, some women govern their husbands without degrading themselves, because intellect will always govern.	<i>A ver[y]</i> <i>comm[on]</i> <i>case</i> <i>Not at</i> <i>all</i>	[hand A]  [hand B]
			[letters cropped on the right]	
p. 16	<i>a poor</i> <i>[?]nd this</i>	For what purpose were the passions implanted? That man by struggling with them might attain a degree of knowledge denied to the brutes; whispers Experience.		[hand A]

Page	Right margin	Text	Left margin	Responsibility
p. 50		[four lines of very light, rubbed and smeared pencil annotations at foot of page]  ...  the heart. To endeavour to reason love out of the world, would be to out Quixote Cervantes,		
		<i>[The?] prevailing opinion of a [?] character with sb[?] [?] [lesson to his?] [?????]</i>		[hand A?]
p. 104		...  Formed thus by the discharge of the relative duties of her station, she marries from affection, without losing sight of prudence, and looking beyond matrimonial felicity, she secures her husband's respect before it is necessary to exert mean arts to please him, and feed a dying flame, which nature doomed to expire when the object became familiar, when friendship and forbearance take place of a more ardent affection. This is the natural death of love, and domestic peace is not destroyed by struggles to prevent its extinction. I also suppose the husband to be virtuous; or she is still more in want of independent principles.  ...	<i>how [Hay?] thought it was</i>	[hand B]
p. 169		ing received a masculine education, have acquired courage and resolution; I only contend that the men who have been placed in similar situations, have acquired a similar character – I speak of bodies of men, and that men of genius and talents have started out of a class, in which women have never yet been placed.  ...	<i>Do you</i>	[hand B]

Page	Right margin	Text	Left margin	Responsibility
p. 214	<p>...</p> <p><i>[V?]not[?]</i> <i>[??]y's[?]</i></p>	<p>...</p> <p>No, beauty, gentleness, &amp;c. &amp;c. may gain a heart; but esteem, the only lasting affection, can alone be obtained by virtue supported by reason. It is respect for the understanding that keeps alive tenderness for the person.</p> <p>...</p>		<p>[hand C?]</p>

