



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

Guide to the

Collection of Sir Richard Birnie letters and related materials

1791-1837

Pforz MS

Summary

Creator: Birnie, Richard, 1758 or 1759-1832

Title: Collection of Sir Richard Birnie letters and related materials

Date: 1791-1837

Size: 1 box, 35 items : .25 linear feet

Abstract: Sir Richard Birnie, Scots-born police magistrate in London. Includes 18 Richard Birnie letters, most to his wife, Louisa; 4 letters to Birnie (correspondents including John Beckett, Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and T. B. Mash of the Lord Chamberlain's Office); 4 letters from Louisa Birnie to her children; and one letter to Louisa from her father, James Birrell. Also including: an 1806 Captain's Commission document to Birnie; an 1812 official document to Birnie on behalf of the King; an 1822 Banff Literary Society diploma to Birnie; a manuscript list of police officers stationed under Birnie; and various documents on Birnie family history and the Birnie coat of arms.

Preferred citation: Collection of Sir Richard Birnie letters and related materials, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Creator History

Sir Richard Birnie, Scots-born police magistrate in London.

Scope and Content Note

Includes 18 Richard Birnie letters, most to his wife, Louisa; 4 letters to Birnie (correspondents including John Beckett, Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and T. B. Mash of the Lord Chamberlain's Office); 4 letters from Louisa Birnie to her children; and one letter to Louisa from her father, James Birrell. Also including: an 1806 Captain's Commission document to Birnie; an 1812 official document to Birnie on behalf of the King; an 1822 Banff Literary Society diploma to Birnie; a manuscript list of police officers stationed under Birnie; and various documents on Birnie family history and the Birnie coat of

arms.

Key Terms

Subjects

Police magistrates -- Great Britain -- 19th century -- Correspondence

Names

Beckett, John, 1775-1847

Birnie, Louisa, 1773-1838

Birnie, Richard, 1758 or 1759-1832

Mash, T. B. (Thomas Bancutt), -1840

Banff Literary Society

Container List

1790s

Richard Birnie to James Birrell, autograph letter signed 14 November 1791

MISC 4500 (4 pages double sheet)

From Banff; begins, "I took the Liberty of writing you about Six Days ago und[er] Lord Fife's Cover"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birrell, autograph letter signed 21 February 1793

MISC 4501 (4 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "As an inducement for Miss Birrell to take the trouble of reading this, I beg leave to assure her, it is the last I mean to write her"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birrell, autograph letter signed 12 December 1796

MISC 4502 (2 pages double sheet)

From London; begins, "I hope you got safe to Cherster, and that you have not catch'd a cold"

1800s

James Birrell to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 21 September 1801

MISC 4503 (1 page double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "Mr. Birnie read to me a part of the letter you sent, wherein you justly tax me"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed [before 1802]

MISC 4504 (4 pages double sheet)

From H[ay]M[arket]; begins, "I have received your letter for Coach for which I paid one shilling"

Captain's Commission to Richard Birnie 10 March 1806

MISC 4505 (2 pages double sheet)

Printed document accomplished in manuscript. "I the said Marquis of Titchfield, do, in his Majesty's Name, by these Presents, constitute, appoint, and commission you the said Richard Birnie to be a Captain of a Company in the Corps of the Prince of Wales's Volunteers" With red wax seal of Titchfield.

1810s

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 18 May 1810

MISC 4506 (2 pages double sheet)

From London; begins, "I am grieved beyond measure at that part of your letter which says that James is certainly consumptive"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 5 June 1810

MISC 4507 (4 pages double sheet)

[From London]; begins, "Sitting for Mr Nares at B[ow] S[treet], and nothing doing, I thought it right to devote my time ever more to you" Mentions William Cobbett.

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 13 June 1810

MISC 4508 (4 pages double sheet)

From Oxendon Street [London]; begins, "Last night at B[ow] S[treet] with MR but although it is holiday time we are all perfectly quiet" Mentions William Cobbett.

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 17-18 June 1810

MISC 4509 (1 page single sheet)

From Oxendon Street [London]; a "continuation," apparently of MISC 4508; begins, "John did not get home till 12."

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 17 July 1810

MISC 4510 (3 pages double sheet)

From London; begins, "John had sad luck; I sent Charlotte with the parcel & letters"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 24 July 1810

MISC 4511 (2 pages double sheet)

From London; begins, "I had your letter yesterday & really lament that it did not occur to me that the [haunch?] would be acceptable to Mr Bond"

1810s (cont.)

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 1 September 1810
MISC 4512 (3 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "Your letter of yesterday to John is full of doubts & fears"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed [12 September 1810]
MISC 4513 (3 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "By this time I hope my suffering babe is at rest"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed [17 September 1810]
MISC 5414 (3 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I am favoured with your kind & consolatory letter today"

John Beckett to Richard Birnie, autograph letter signed 21 February 1812
MISC 4515 (1 page double sheet)

From Whitehall; begins, "I am directed by Mr Secretary Ryder to acquaint you that you are hereby authorized to execute the duties of Police Magistrate"

Official document to Richard Birnie on behalf of George III 3 March 1812
MISC 4516 (3 pages double sheet)

In a clerical hand; signed by Richard Ryder; appointing Birnie "to execute the office of a Justice of the Peace at the . . . public office at Union Street in the Parish of St. Saviours in the Borough of Southwark"

John Beckett to Richard Birnie, autograph letter signed 19 September 1814
MISC 4517 (1 page double sheet)

From Whitehall; begins, "I am directed by Lord Sidmouth to acquaint you that you are authorized to consider yourself authorized to execute the duties of a Police Magistrate"

1820s

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie (his daughter), autograph letter signed 20 May 1820

MISC 4518 (1 page double sheet)

From Bow Street; begins, "That was a homestroke in John's letter vizt. 'Father never wrote to me in all my life.' I hope and trust that you do not thereby wish to insinuate that Father is not fond of you"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 23 August 1820
MISC 4519 (4 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I really and truly do not see how I can leave town for which I am sorry"

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed "Thursday Evg." [1821]
MISC 4520 (1 page double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "Sir Robert Baker has resigned, and Lord Sidmouth sent for me today and informed me that I was appointed Chief" Enclosed in same folder: a small handbill printed on parchment bearing the text of the Riot Act proclamation (see record in NYPL catalog: Proclamation in case of riot, &c.).

Thomas Bancutt Mash to Richard Birnie, autograph letter signed 25 September 1821

MISC 4521 (1 page double sheet)

From Lord Chamberlain's Office; begins, "I beg to acquaint you that the fees on your receiving the honour of knighthood amount to £108.2.8"

Banff Literary Society diploma for Richard Birnie 1822
MISC 4522 (1 item)

[From Banff]; begins, "Omnibus sit cognitum, Ricardum Bernie Equitem, Honorarium Socium Societatis Literaria Banffiensis" With red wax seal in ovoid metal tray, connected to green ribbon.

List of police officers "To be stationed at Windsor under the immediate orders of Sir R.d Birnie" [post 1821]

MISC 4523 (1 page single sheet)

Written on card; including "1 Inspector / 1 Sub-inspector / 20 Patrol"

1820s (cont.)

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 23 February 1825

MISC 4524 (2 pages double sheet)

From Bow Street; begins, "I was delighted yesterday to hear from JRB, by word from our own Louisa that you was better"

[Jas. Marshall?] to Richard Birnie, autograph letter signed 20 July 1829

MISC 4525 (3 pages double sheet)

From 7 Northampton Terrace, City Road; begins, "I inform you that the name of the person who intruded himself at the Earl of Abingdon's some evenings since was Chas. Harris"

1830s

Richard Birnie to Louisa Birnie, autograph letter signed 15 October 1830

MISC 4526 (3 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I thank you for your letter received this morning"

Louisa Birnie to her "dear Children," autograph letter signed [29 April 1832]

MISC 4527 (1 page single sheet)

[No place]; begins, "All is over. This morning at 4 oC[lock] -- calm and peaceful"

Louisa Birnie to Louisa Birnie (her daughter), autograph letter signed 8 March 1836

MISC 4528 (2 pages (double sheet) + letter cover)

From Acton Green; begins, "I have long since give you all my Jewellry, and every thing of that sort" Letter cover with "LB" red wax seal.

Louisa Birnie to James Birrell Birnie, autograph note signed 7 April 1837

MISC 4529 (2 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I trust my dear son James, will console Louisa when the parting day comes"

Louisa Birnie to her "dear Children," autograph letter signed 27 January 1837

MISC 4530 (1 page double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "It is my particular wish and will that my funeral shall be as plain as possible"

Papers re: Birnie family history, etc

"Copy of an old letter, written by Sir Richard Birnie's father" [no date; copy date circa late 1880s?]

MISC 4531 (2 pages single sheet)

[From Banff]; on family history; begins, "In the year 1680 Mr Davidson Esq of Newton & Locher was married to Mrs Jean Abercrombie" With genealogical notes on page 2, tracing the family line to the 1880s.

Notes on the Birnie coat of arms, etc July 1884

MISC 4532 (8 pages 2 double sheets)

Titled, "Birnie of that Ilk"; begins, "Mr. John Birnie of Broomhill, great-grandson and representative of William Birnie" With four engraved armorial bookplates (2 different versions) of Richard Birnie, mounted on a sheet.

Ink and colored pencil drawing of the arms of Birnie of Broomhill [no date]

MISC 4533 (1 page single sheet)

With the motto: "Sapere Aude Incipe."

Assorted accompanying materials [various dates]

MISC 4534 (1 folder)

2 cards with mounted later 19th century cuttings from publications; 6 pages in hand of late 20th/early 21st century compiler (unidentified) describing Birnie manuscripts, giving biographical information, including a family tree and timeline of important dates; photocopies of entries from ONDB and Australian DNB.