



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

Guide to the
Thomas Medwin manuscript material
1821-1865
Pforz Ms

Compiled by Charles Cuykendall Carter, November 2017.

Summary

Creator: Medwin, Thomas, 1788-1869

Title: Thomas Medwin manuscript material

Date: 1821-1865

Size: 41 items

Abstract: Thomas Medwin, English writer and biographer. The Thomas Medwin manuscript material in the Pforzheimer Collection consists of writings and correspondence. The writings include a holograph essay, "Gossip on Smoking in General, Smokers in particular"; autograph emendations for a next edition in a copy of his *Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*; and several poems, including translations from Catullus. The bulk of the correspondence is dated between 1821 and 1847. Correspondents include Richard Bentley, the printer and publisher; Ferdinand Freiligrath, the German poet and translator; Charles Ollier, the publisher, writer and editor; Jane Williams of the Shelley circle; and over a dozen others.

Preferred citation: Thomas Medwin manuscript material, Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Compiled by Charles Cuykendall Carter, November 2017.

Related Materials:

In addition to manuscripts created by Thomas Medwin, the Pforzheimer Collection holds two manuscript letters addressed to him: one from Edward Ellerker Williams, Shelley's friend who died with him at sea; and one from Mary Shelley. Also held are a manuscript report (S'ANA 0573), in a clerical hand, recording financial transactions of Medwin's between 1825 and 1830; and a 20th century family tree (S'ANA 0570), drawn by the writer John Gawsorth, connecting himself to Medwin.

Printed Thomas Medwin materials held by the Pforzheimer Collection include numerous copies and editions of both his *Conversations of Lord Byron* and his biography of Shelley; a copy of his scarce verse-drama, *Ahasuerus, The Wanderer*; several copies of his *Angler in Wales*; and copies of his

volumes of verse, *Nugæ* and *Odds and Ends*. Secondary sources include Ernest J. Lovell's *Captain Medwin* (1962), and *Horsham's Forgotten Son* (1995), by Susan Cabell Djabri and Jeremy Knight.

The Pforzheimer Collection also holds a photograph portrait of Medwin, taken late in life, and endorsed on the verso in the hand of his granddaughter.

Creator History

Thomas Medwin, English writer and biographer.

Custodial History

The establishing purchases of the Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle were made at the 1920 auction of the library of H. Buxton Forman, the Shelley bibliographer. Among Carl Pforzheimer's acquisitions from that sale were two special copies of the first edition of Medwin's *Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*: one with the author's annotations for a later edition, and one with a tipped-in note from the author to an unidentified "Sir," possibly the publisher Thomas Cautley Newby. Sporadic acquisitions of Medwin autograph letters over the next few decades led to an accumulation of sixteen pieces in Medwin's hand by the time of Pforzheimer's death in 1957. Through the 1960's, '70's and early '80's, under the auspices of the Pforzheimer Foundation, another seventeen Medwin manuscripts were acquired, including his 1825 last will and testament; and his essay, "Gossip on Smoking." Since the Pforzheimer Collection's move to the New York Public Library in 1986, only two Medwin manuscripts have been accessioned.

Scope and Content Note

The Thomas Medwin manuscript material in the Pforzheimer Collection consists of writings and correspondence. The writings include a holograph essay, "Gossip on Smoking in General, & Smokers in particular"; autograph emendations for a next edition in a copy of his *Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*; and several poems, including translations from Catullus. The bulk of the correspondence is dated between 1821 and 1847. Correspondents include Richard Bentley, the printer and publisher; Ferdinand Freiligrath, the German poet and translator; Charles Ollier, the publisher, writer and editor; Jane Williams of the Shelley circle; and over a dozen others.

Key Terms

Subjects

Authors, English -- 19th century -- Correspondence
English essays -- 19th century -- Manuscripts -- Specimens
English poetry -- 19th century -- Manuscripts -- Specimens
Legal documents -- 19th century -- Manuscripts -- Specimens

Occupations

Biographers -- Great Britain -- 19th century -- Correspondence

Names

Medwin, Thomas, 1788-1869

Container List

Series I: Writings

Holograph notebook of poems [circa 1808-1812]

MED 0037 (106 manuscript pages 57 total leaves)

[From Horsham]; signed at both ends; original verse and transcriptions of poems, some by Byron; bound in brown reversed calf.

*Pforz BT (Medwin, T. 03)

Holograph essay (fragment?), "His Courage" [1824 or later]

MED 0015 (4 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "Capt Benson in his account of Ld. Byron's Voyage to Sardinia . . ."

SC File

Holograph last will and testament 1 April 1825

MED 0022 (1 page double sheet)

From Vevey; begins, "I Thomas Medwin being of sound mind and understanding declare this to be my last will and testament . . ."; appointing his wife Anne Harriet the "sole Executrix and Legatee . . ." With red wax seal, twice, depicting Pegasus and Medwin's initials.

SC File

Holograph poem, "Suggestions during the Hot Weather," signed [watermark = 1827]

MED 0029 (3 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "They tell us (those Historic drudges / who labour days & nights for fame) . . ."; addressed to the "Editor of the 'Age'" [i.e., Charles Molloy Westmacott], with a brief note.

SC File

Holograph verse adaptation of Petrarch, signed 25 May 1828

MED 0020 (5 pages 1 double sheet; 1 single sheet)

From Paris; with the title, "Canzone XXI+"; begins, "Italy! my own dear Italy! since to you / T'were vain to plead or to appeal . . ."

SC File

Holograph essay, "Gossip on Smoking in General, & Smokers in particular"

[circa 1840's?]

MED 0030 (6 pages 1 double sheet, 1 single sheet)

Ainsworth, William Harrison, 1805-1882 (Addressee)

[No place]; in double columns; addressed to "Wm. Harrison Ainsworth Esq. / Kendall Manor House / Harrow road"; begins, "Many and various are the ways and means by which the Natives of different countries are distinguishable . . ."

SC File

Autograph emendations in a copy of his Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley (1847)

[between 1847 and 1869]

MED 0016 (1 volume)

[No place]; in preparation for a next edition; in volume 1 only of Pforzheimer copy 1.

*Pforz BT (Medwin, T. 01)

Autograph additions and alterations in a copy of his Nugæ (1856) [after 1856]

MED 0031 (1 volume)

[No place]; in ink, with "Edited" above the title-page statement of responsibility, and "The Translations signed I. J. J. P. / by Isaac John James Pocock" below it; the motto credited to "Byron." On page 93 are translations, in English and Greek, of the Latin epigram "Scriptum," printed on the same page, on Byron and Shelley.

Pforz (Medwin, T. Nugæ)

Series I: Writings (cont.)

Three holograph poems, translations from Catullus 28 March 1860

MED 0028 (3 pages double sheet)

From Heidelberg; included at end of 28 March 1860 letter to unidentified recipient; includes "To the Peninsula Sirmio," "To Strangers,"; and "To Varrus," all of which were published in Medwin's Odds and Ends (1862).

SC File

Four poems, in English and Italian [copied 1869 or later]

MED 0024 (8 pages 4 single sheets)

[No place]; possibly in the hand of Medwin's granddaughter; probably copied after his death. Preceded by a biographical statement, in Italian. Poems include, "On Ephimera" [sic]; "Written at Chamonix"; "I Fa[?---]lle"; and "On Harriet's Tomb in the Cimitero [sic] of Leghorn."

SC File

Series II: Correspondence

To William Harrison Ainsworth, novelist:

Ainsworth, William Harrison, 1805-1882 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 10 February 1843

MED 0019 (3 pages double sheet)

From Heidelberg : begins, "I just received Lady Singleton -- and ran my eye over the two first volumes"

SC File

To Richard Bentley, printer and publisher:

Bentley, Richard, 1794-1871 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed [circa 1834]

MED 0004 (1 page double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I have been at your Brother's this morning & find that the Poems have not yet been sent"

SC File

Autograph letter signed [circa 1834]

MED 0012 (2 pages double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "Your letter found me in a high fever & the contents of yours did not contribute to abate it."

SC File

Autograph letter signed 18 February 1834

MED 0010 (1 page double sheet)

From 42 South Molton Street; begins, "I have just completed a work of the nature of the Wild Sports of the West"

SC File

Autograph letter signed 20 May 1834

MED 0009 (3 pages double sheet)

From 42 South Molton Street; begins, "As I perceive that there is no chance whatever of my work being printed for 3 months, & during the last 3 weeks I have only had two sheets to correct, I have made up my mind to start immediately for Ireland"

SC File

Autograph letter signed [January 1837 or later]

MED 0003 (1 page double sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I am very desirous of obtaining a complete set of your Miscellany from the first"

SC File

To James Carpenter and Son, booksellers:

James Carpenter and Son (Addressee)

Series II: Correspondence (cont.)

To James Carpenter and Son, booksellers: (cont.)

Autograph letter signed "Saturday" [between 12 June and 31 August 1834]

MED 0025 (1 page single sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I enclose you a Paper signed X which as that ill fated periodical our Mag. is abandoned I will thank you to return to the writer."

SC File

To James Christie, antiquary and auctioneer:

Christie, James, 1773-1831 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed [3 July 1828]

MED 0033 (1 page double sheet)

[From London]; begins, "I should wish to know the result of yesterday's sale and what balance will have to come to me"

SC File

To [Mr.] Clarke:

Autograph letter signed [no date]

MED 0017 (1 page double sheet)

[No place]; in Italian; begins, "Ho ricevuto i libri . . ."; addressed on page [4] to "Signor Clarke / A S M."

SC File

Autograph letter signed "Monday morning" [1840's or later]

MED 0018 (1 page double sheet)

[From Heidelberg]; begins, "Mrs. de Crespigny desires me to be her secretary to say that her sister intends to go to the Wolfshausen & round by the Castle this afternoon . . ."; addressed on page [4] to "Mons. Clarke / [chg?] Anglian Wolf / Museum Platz."

SC File

To Henry Colburn, publisher:

Colburn, Henry, -1855 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 1 January 1831

MED 0006 (1 page double sheet)

From Geneva; begins, "I take this opportunity of sending you by a private hand 4 mss. - a Translation of Eschylus in 2 Volumes - a Play called The Conspiracy of Fieschi in 5 Acts - A Drama - Prometheus The Fire Bearer - accompanied by an Eclogue or Elegy on Shelley, & 2 Indian Scenes."

SC File

To Ferdinand Freiligrath, poet and translator:

Freiligrath, Ferdinand, 1810-1876 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 3 December 1841

MED 0021 (3 pages double sheet)

[From Heidelberg?]; begins, "Accept my sincere thanks for your kind and obliging letter, & the observations you are pleased to make on my poor version of your glowing original." On stationery engraved with a scene from Heidelberg, depicting "Castle and town, from the Hirschgasse."

SC File

To A. and W. Galignani and Co., publishers:

A. and W. Galignani and Co. (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 15 January 1825

MED 0038 (1 page double sheet)

From Vevey; begins, "I have sent by this day's post your weekly register containing my answer to Mr. Murray"

SC File

To James Hannen, later Lord Hannen, judge:

Hannen, James Hannen, Baron, 1821-1901 (Addressee)

Series II: Correspondence (cont.)

To James Hannen, later Lord Hannen, judge: (cont.)

Autograph letter signed 12 May 1844

MED 0036 (1 page single sheet)

From Heidelberg; begins, "I take the opportunity of Eyre's return to Town, to thank you for your kind attention to my literary requests."

SC File

To Mary Catherine Medwin, his sister:

Medwin, Mary Catherine, 1792-1859 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 19 April 1821

MED 0032 (4 pages double sheet)

From Rome; begins, "Many thanks for your very affectionate and most welcome letter my dear Sister which reached me on the 16th."

SC File

To [?Thomas Cautley Newby, publisher and printer]:

Newby, Thomas Cautley (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 15 October [1847?]

MED 0014 (1 page single sheet)

From Mannington Hall, Aylsham; begins, "Will you have the goodness to send me two copies of my Life of Shelley for Lord Orford" Tipped into volume 1 of Medwin's Life of Percy

Bysshe Shelley (1847), Pforzheimer copy 2.

*Pforz BT (Medwin, T. 02)

To Charles Ollier, publisher, writer and editor:

Ollier, Charles, 1788-1859 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 31 August 1834

MED 0013 (2 pages double sheet)

From Cheltenham, 1 Bath Place; begins, "When I left town I meant as I told you -- to visit Ireland -- but gave up that intention"

SC File

To James Ollier, publisher:

Ollier, James (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 5 March 1834

MED 0008 (1 page double sheet)

From 42 South Molten Street; begins, "Let me know what you think of the title I proposed."

SC File

Autograph letter signed [no date]

MED 0005 (1 page single sheet)

[No place]; begins, "We are getting on hurriedly slow."

SC File

To Jane Williams, of the Shelley circle:

Williams, Jane, 1798-1884 (Addressee)

Autograph letter signed 30 October 1823

MED 0011 (4 pages double sheet)

From Tenby; begins, "What will you have thought of my long silence?"

SC File

To Charles Molloy Westmacott, journalist and blackmailer:

Westmacott, C. M. (Charles Molloy), 1787 or 1788-1868 (Addressee)

Autograph note signed [watermark = 1827]

MED 0029 (1 page double sheet)

[No place]; at end of poem, "Suggestions during the Hot Weather," addressed to "Editor of the 'Age'"; begins, "If you like this I may send you some more - if you dont, hand it down to Posterity"

SC File

Series II: Correspondence (cont.)

To unidentified recipients:

Autograph letter signed to "My dear Sir" "Sund.y M.g" [watermark = 1823]

MED 0002 (1 page single sheet)

[No place]; begins, "Allow me to introduce you to my friend Mr. [?--ges], a worthy [?] of Porson, & well known in the Classical world."

SC File

Autograph letter signed to "My dear Sir" "Thursd.y" [February 1834]

MED 0007 (1 page single sheet)

From 42 S. Molten St.; begins, "If you will send me the ms. I will endeavor to add to it . . ."

SC File

Autograph letter signed to "Sir" "Wednesday" [1834]

MED 0026 (2 pages single sheet)

From 42 South Molten Street; begins, "I have to propose to you a work of the same kind as The Wild Sports of the West -- the scene of which is laid in Wales."

SC File

Autograph letter signed to "Sir" 12 March 1860

MED 0028 (4 pages double sheet)

From Heidelberg; begins, "Like Catullus's Phasellus I have been long laid up . . ."; includes three poems by Catullus, translated into English by Medwin.

SC File

Autograph letter signed to "Dear Sir" 14 January 1865

MED 0034 (1 page single sheet)

From 10 Kings road, Bedford Square; begins, "I beg to enclose you a Letter from my friend Mrs. Southwell . . ."

SC File

Autograph letter signed to "My dear Sir" 24 J[une?] 1865

MED 0035 (2 pages single sheet)

From Horsham; begins, "The intense fog of Saturday drove me out of town but I shall return . . ."

SC File

Autograph letter signed to "My dear Sir" "Mond.y M.g"

MED 0001 (1 page single sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I know that the Chapters want their headings -- & I was to have seen the 2 former proofs."

SC File

Autograph letter signed to "Sir" [no date]

MED 0027 (1 page single sheet)

[No place]; begins, "I beg to offer you my best thanks for your insertion of my Defence &c. in your Gazette of this day . . ."

SC File

Series III: Presentation inscriptions

To the Rev. Peter Elwin, rector of Rector of Itteringham :

Elwin, Peter James, 1817-1908 (Addressee)

Autograph presentation inscription 16 October 1862

MED 0023 (2 pages within volume)

From Mannington Hall; in volume I of a copy of Medwin's Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley (1847); reads in full: "To the Rev.d Peter Elwin / from his friend / The Author."

*Pforz BT (Medwin, T. 04)

To Samuel Longfellow, Unitarian minister and author of belles lettres :

Longfellow, Samuel, 1819-1892 (Addressee)

Series III: Presentation inscriptions (cont.)

To Samuel Longfellow, Unitarian minister and author of belles lettres : (cont.)

Autograph presentation inscription 22 June 1862

MED 0041 (1 page within volume)

From Heidelberg; in a copy of Medwin's Odds and Ends (1862); on the front fly leaf verso;

reads in full: "To Samuel Longfellow Esq. / from / The Author / Heidelberg / 22d June 1862."

At the head of the title page is written in Medwin's hand: "Unpublished. 90 Copies printed";

and under the statement of responsibility: "Translator of Eschylus."

Pforz (Medwin, T. Odds and ends)