



Catalogue of the Thomas Wilkinson Papers

Date range of material: 1845-1909

Ushaw College Library
September 2023

Contents

Preface	iii
Introduction	1
Catalogue of material:	

Preface

Creation of catalogue

Catalogued by Jonathan Bush, January 2012

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Introduction

Collection title: Thomas Wilkinson Papers

Reference code: GB-0298-UC/P 16

Dates of creation: 1845-1909

Extent: 2 files

Repository: Ushaw

Creator: Thomas W. Wilkinson

Language of material: English

Contents

Mostly correspondence between Wilkinson and others, notably George Talbot, John Butt, and Herbert Vaughan. The letters cover a broad range of religious and political topics in the second half of the nineteenth century, including his father's attitude towards his conversion to Catholicism, the local Catholic community in Crook, support for the pope during the *Risorgimento*, a controversy between George Lane Fox and H.E. Manning, the non-Catholic university question, opposition to the Education Bill, protests against the papal decree on censorship, and other matters of episcopal administration. A number of letters also refer to Wilkinson's role as president of Ushaw College, most notably opposition to Herbert Vaughan's plans to reform Ushaw into a purely ecclesiastical seminary.

The collection also contains a series of letters from his sister residing in the Convent of Perpetual Adoration in Taunton, as well as a series of letters and telegrams of condolences following Wilkinson's death.

About the creator

Thomas William Wilkinson was born in 1825. His father was a well-known barrister who was appointed as the county court judge of Northumberland in 1847. Wilkinson was educated at Harrow before entering the recently established University of Durham. He was ordained there in 1845 and was appointed to a clerical position at the Anglo-Catholic and semi-monastic community of St Saviour's, Leeds. Within eighteen months both he and his other companions had converted to the Catholic Church. Wilkinson spent the next two years at Oscott College training for the priesthood although he was actually ordained at Ushaw in 1848. His first appointment following ordination was as a missionary at Wolsingham where, for the next four years, he not only ministered to the population of the town but also to the rapidly expanding mining community of Crook, as well as engaging in directing building at Ushaw. In 1865, and in recognition of his work, he was appointed as a canon of the chapter of the diocese of Hexham. Following a breakdown in health five years later, Wilkinson was forced to retire from active work and, for the next 20 years, he spent most of his time directing his estate at Thistleflatt. In 1889, Wilkinson was appointed bishop of Hexham and Newcastle but he also spent a great deal of time exercising jurisdiction over Ushaw, with the result that he was appointed president there in the following year. During his presidency, Wilkinson was able to place the college finances on a proper footing and, through an excellent relationship with the procurator, raise enough money for repairs, alterations and improvements, including the building of a new dormitory, the reconstruction of the sanitary block and the modernising of the system of gas lighting. He remained president and bishop until his death in April 1909.

Provenance

Presented by Dr. E. Towers to Ushaw College, 29 January 1948

Collection brought together by Rev. Michael Sharratt as part of the Old Series of documents in Ushaw College Library

Previous custodial history

Previous reference number OS 1 H

UC/P16/71-103: originally part of the Ushaw Personal Papers series

Arrangement

The letters and other papers follow the original arrangement of the collection which is broadly chronological. The exception to this arrangement is a handful of letters added to the end of the numbering sequence at a later date.

Conditions of access

Open for consultation.

Copyright and copying

Permission to make any published use of material from the collection must be sought in advance from pg.library@durham.ac.uk and, where appropriate, from the copyright owner. The Library will assist where possible with identifying copyright owners, but responsibility for ensuring copyright clearance rests with the user of the material

Finding aids

Card catalogue with item list

Form of citation

The form of citation should use the code GB-0298-UC/P16, or the collection name (Wilkinson Papers), followed by the *reference number*

To order items in the searchroom, use the collection reference code(s), derived by removing the repository code (GB-0298-), followed by the reference number. Citing the section of the finding aid is useful.

UC/P16/1 27 January 1845

Prayer for Wilkinson's deceased mother.

This originally included a lock of his mother's hair.

1f

UC/P16/2 18 June 1845

Certificate of Licentiate in Theology from the University of Durham.

1m

UC/P16/3 1 January 1847

Certification by Henry Walmsley confirming Wilkinson's reception into the Catholic Church.

1f

UC/P16/4 12 January 1847

Letter from George Wilkinson to his son Thomas: his dismay at his conversion to the Catholic faith, requesting him only to visit the family if he promises not to influence them, giving him a codicil of £100 pa for life.

2f

UC/P16/5 7 October 1847

Letter from George Wilkinson to Thomas: assuring him of his codicil.

2f

UC/P16/6 2 October 1848

Letter from George Wilkinson to Thomas: expressing his gratitude on receiving Thomas's letter and on hearing the news that he is to be working as the parish priest at Tow Law, although warning him not to try to convert any members of the family to Catholicism.

2f

UC/P16/7 23 April 1855

Letter from George Wilkinson to Thomas: asking him to ensure that Harperley is ready for their arrival, the appointment of Charles to a 90-gun screw-steamer (*Orion*) to be sent to the Crimean War, news of the marriage of his cousin John.

2f

UC/P16/8 20 July [1860s]

Letter from William J. Bell to Thomas: a detailed report, with names, of parishioners who cause scandal by drinking, including a number of Catholics drinking in a Protestant public house in Crook.

2f

UC/P16/9 20 August 1864

Letter from George Talbot to Wilkinson: thanking Wilkinson for sending the £40 Peter's Pence and agreeing to send it on to Rome.

1f

UC/P16/10 3 October 1864

Letter from George Talbot to Wilkinson: the pope sends a blessing and indulgence to thank him for the Peter's Pence donation.

1f

UC/P16/11 24 October 1865

Letter from George Talbot to Wilkinson: thanking Wilkinson for sending a further donation of £60.

1f

UC/P16/12 20 October 1868

Letter from A.B. Gurdon to Wilkinson: the suitability of a boy sent over by Wilkinson to fight for the papal army against Garibaldi, criteria for suitable and unsuitable soldiers, the difficulty faced by English and Irish soldiers.

2f

UC/P16/13 30 October 1870

Letter from E.D. Shafto to his uncle, Wilkinson, sent from Bangalore: giving Wilkinson his impression of the land, people, customs, and animals in India.

3f

UC/P16/14 [1869]

Address from the Crook parishioners of Willington to Wilkinson: thanking him for his service, hoping that he may stay as the parish priest.

2f

UC/P16/15 [1870]

Letter from Robert Tate to Wilkinson: inviting him to the Ushaw College president's feast, the troubles of the Church, his opinion that Bismarck is a disgrace to the human race.

2f

UC/P16/15a 12 December 1871

Letter from E.J. Penswick to Wilkinson: his work serving on a committee relating to Catholic seminaries

4f

UC/P16/15b 14 March 1872

Letter from [E.J. Penswick] to Wilkinson: commenting on the London and Oxford University examinations and their attitude towards Catholic students, including his views on John Stuart Mill

Imperfect: wanting final folio(s)

6f

UC/P16/16 13 August 1879

Letter from James Swarbrack to Wilkinson: sending 45 guineas for a cow, a detailed report of Wilkinson's herd, further comments on other breeds of cattle.

2f

UC/P16/17 23 October 1886

Statement from John Thornton to Wilkinson: the settlement of an account for the sale of a house.

1f

UC/P16/18 27 May 1888

Letter from George P. Wilkinson to Wilkinson: congratulating him on being nominated to succeed as auxiliary bishop of Hexham and Newcastle.

2f

UC/P16/19 19 - 26 August 1888

Two letters from Robert C. Laing to Wilkinson:

The first concerning an argument against allowing the boys at St Cuthbert's Grammar School to take the matriculation examination before coming to Ushaw as it conflicts with the syllabus.

The second rejecting his (Laing's) candidature for president because he considers himself to be too inexperienced and financially incompetent, the lack of a replacement for his current role as prefect of studies, and Newton's or Coulston's suitability for president.

10f

UC/P16/20 26 August 1888

Notes by G.A. on the episcopal coat armour.

1f

UC/P16/21 22 December 1888

Letter from Wilkinson to Dr James Lennon: apologising for his unwelcome request to Rome to grant Ushaw priests certain privileges, opposition to his appointment as auxiliary bishop, his intention not to offend Lennon.

2f

UC/P16/22 24 April 1889

Letter from Bishop John Butt to Wilkinson: on allowing James Hope to go to Oxford and Gardiner to go to Cambridge, his opinion that most bishops would never give permission and most Catholics are at these institutions without permission.

2f

UC/P16/23 [January 1889]

Letter from Bishop John Cuthbert Hedley to Wilkinson: congratulating him on his appointment as bishop of Hexham and Newcastle.

2f

UC/P16/24 1 January 1890

Letter from Thomas Ord to Wilkinson: congratulating him on his appointment, with criticism of his (Ord's) trusteeship of a mortgage in Hartlepool and Stockton.

2f

UC/P16/25 23 October 1891

Copy letter from Henry Edward Manning to George Lane Fox: urging him not to go to Ireland where he is likely to be exploited by the anti-clericalists, he will be in opposition to the bishops and the pope, he will lose his reputation for prudent conduct.

1f

UC/P16/26 26 October 1891

Copy letter from Fox to Manning: questioning whether Rome has forbidden support for the Union, is venturing to Ireland as an organiser for the Primrose League and not as a party representative, complaining that his treatment seems one-sided, Manning leaves no room for individual conscience, he may appeal to the pope.

2f

UC/P16/27 26 October 1891

Letter from Fox to Wilkinson: his correspondence with Manning, he has written to Rome, his schedule of meetings in Ireland, his concerns over religious interference in politics, asking for Wilkinson's opinion on the matter.

2f

UC/P16/28 27 October 1891

Letter from Manning to Fox: closing the correspondence as he cannot accept Fox's ignorant opinion.

1f

UC/P16/29 [1894]

Letter from Wilkinson to Herbert Vaughan: requesting his (Wilkinson's) resignation on the grounds of ill health.

1f

UC/P16/30 27 February 1894

Letter from Vaughan to Wilkinson: advising him not to resign but to appoint a coadjutor.

2f

UC/P16/31 30 August 1894

Letter from John F. Bentley to Wilkinson: thanking him for his payment for the Bede altar and decoration, his preference for an early English style for the new cathedral at Westminster.

2f

UC/P16/32 30 December 1894

Letter from Bishop William Gordon to Wilkinson enclosing a note written by Manning: the non-Catholic university question, his opposition to Vaughan's scheme, questioning the idea of Catholic colleges becoming preparatory schools, stating that he would rather resign than contribute to the scheme.

2f

UC/P16/33 15 November 1894

Letter from Bishop Edward Isley to Wilkinson: a discussion on the binding nature of college rules, his intention to put his views to the Oscott staff and students

2f

UC/P16/34 19 January 1895

Letter from John Norris to Wilkinson: thanking him for allowing him to stay at Ushaw.

3f

UC/P16/35 26 January 1895

Letter from A.B. Gurdon to Wilkinson: questioning why bad priests are ordained, the north has many supporters of bad priests and enemies of good ones.

2f

UC/P16/35a 30 October 1869

Letter from the Duke of Norfolk to Wilkinson: enclosing an appeal for Council members to manage St Edmund's House, Cambridge, and to establish it as a Catholic college of the University of Cambridge

2 items

UC/P16/36 6 February 1897

Letter from Vaughan to Wilkinson: commiserating with him on his accident, rejecting the idea of an archbishopric in the north although he is unwilling to make this assertion public because of his position as archbishop at Westminster.

2f

UC/P16/37 17 March 1897

Letter from Luke Rivington to Wilkinson: Maturan's conversion, believing there will be many more after the archbishop's worthless reply [to *Apostolicae Cuare*].

4f

UC/P16/38 25 April 1897

Letter from John Norris to be sent to all bishops: protest that the new decrees of the Index [on the censorship of books] are too narrow and will cause serious difficulty if promulgated in England without a liberal interpretation.

3f

UC/P16/39 25 April 1897

Letter from Norris to Wilkinson: enclosing the above, requesting that the bishop of Clifton should see it.

1f

UC/P16/40 [1897]

[Norris, John], *Notes and observations on the general decrees on the prohibition and censorship of books* [1897].

9p

UC/P16/41 [1890s]

Draft letter from Wilkinson to Vaughan as a covering letter for extracts from the meeting of bishops co-interested in Ushaw: expressing the fear that Ushaw may lose its tradition of educating lay and church students together following Vaughan's comments on Oscott as an ecclesiastical seminary.

1f

UC/P16/42 7 October [1890s]

Letter from Herbert Vaughan to Wilkinson: fears that Ushaw may lose its tradition of educating lay and church students together, arguing that Oscott is entirely clerical because it teaches senior students only, the similarity between Ushaw and Old Hall, his desire to help Ushaw in any way he can.

2f

UC/P16/42a 10 June 1902

Letter from Wilkinson to "Vicer" [?Vice-President]: his gratitude in being able to hand over his work to George [?] owing to his advancing age

2f

UC/P16/43 14 April 1904

Letter from William Buckley to Wilkinson: Father Clavering's unproven will which leaves paintings to Ushaw.

2f

UC/P16/44 9 March 1905

Letter from Wilkinson to Robert Hugh Benson: congratulating him on *By what authority?* which is currently circulating Ushaw, he is the only survivor of Newman's converts.

2f

UC/P16/45 4 April 1906

Letter from Norris to Wilkinson: wishing him a happy 82nd birthday, urging him to continue protesting against the dangers of the Education Bill, the growing interest in John Henry Newman.

2f

UC/P16/46 14 May 1906

Letter from Norris to Wilkinson: his paper given to the new Society of St Cecilia at Westminster, attending a very successful meeting on the Education Bill at the Albert Hall and Charles Bowden's requiem mass, the support of Irish MPs over the Education Bill, his confidence for the future with Archbishop Bourne.

3f

UC/P16/47 25 May 1906

Letter from Norris to Wilkinson: his Newman Society dinner at Oxford, his plans to attend a conference at St Edmund's, his growing hopes over the Education Bill, Belloc voting for the second reading.

2f

UC/P16/48 20 July 1906

Letter from Norris to Wilkinson: his belief that the Lords will not throw out the Education Bill, completing 38 years of work for the Oratory School.

2f

UC/P16/49 August 1906

Typescript paper by John Morris entitled "Intellectual manhood" delivered to the Young Men's Society in Dublin.

12p

UC/P16/50 6 June 1907

Letter from Wilkinson to Benson: looking forward to Benson's visit, the success of his books among Ushaw students, his status as an Old Harrovian and the last of Newman's converts, asking Benson to contribute an article to Ushaw's centenary.

2f

UC/P16/51 14 December 1908

Letter from Wilkinson to Benson: asking Benson to organise an Ushaw retreat in Holy Week, plans to celebrate his diamond jubilee.

2f

UC/P16/52 16 December 1908

Letter from Wilkinson to Benson: arrangements for a September retreat.

1f

UC/P16/53 23 April 1909

Letter from E. Granville Ward to Joseph Broadhead: Wilkinson's death.

2f

UC/P16/54-70 13 February - 19 November [1874]

Sister Mary of Jesus [Wilkinson] of the Convent of Perpetual Adoration (Taunton) to her brother, Thomas: mostly of a personal nature concerning news on family friends, finances, celebration of feast days and other religious devotions, as well as aspects of convent life.

UC/P16/69 is a letter from Sister Mary to Charles Wilkinson.

17 letters

UC/P16/71-103 17 - 20 April 1909

Letters and telegrams from various people, including Mgr Brown, C. Powell, Bishop F. Chavasse, E. Burton, L. Casartelli, Bishop Turner, Bishop H. Singleton, R. Ward and others, to Joseph Corbishley, vice-president of Ushaw College, expressing condolences on the death of Thomas Wilkinson.

20 letters and 13 telegrams

Previous custodial history

Ownership history: Originally part of the Ushaw Personal Papers series

UC/P16/104 [?late 19th century] - [?1909]

Notes by Wilkinson on the life of Charles Newsham for a projected biography

2f