



Catalogue of the Wilberforce Letters

Date range of material: 1856-1939, most 1856-1866

Ushaw College Library
September 2023

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Preface

Creation of catalogue

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Introduction

Collection title: Wilberforce Letters

Reference code: GB-0298-UC/P21

Dates of creation: 1856-1939, most 1856-1866

Extent: 2 files

Repository: Ushaw

Creator: Henry W. Wilberforce

Language of material: English

Contents

Correspondence, mostly from Henry Edward Wilberforce and Arthur Wilberforce to their father, Henry W. Wilberforce, and mother, and [?sisters] Caroline and Agnes, written during their time at Ushaw College. The letters are rich in detail and cover most aspects of college life. Some letters are also written from the Oratory at Birmingham and include references to conversations with John Henry Newman.

Henry E. Wilberforce is referred to throughout the correspondence as "Harry" by his family, although the catalogue has retained his original christian name throughout.

About the creator

Henry Edward Wilberforce and Arthur Wilberforce were the sons of Mary and Henry W. Wilberforce, journalist and Catholic convert. Henry Edward was born in 1845 and educated in his early years at the Oratory School. In 1863, he was sent to Ushaw and placed, firstly, in High Figures before reaching the school of Poetry. Poor health forced him to leave in December 1866. After a period at Stoneyhurst he later became an officer of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice, in which capacity he served for 36 years. He died in 1938. Less is known about his brother Arthur, although he was also educated at Ushaw and held the position of Elocution Master. Once he was ordained, Arthur joined the Dominican Brotherhood and later became known as Fr. Bertrand Wilberforce O.P.

Provenance

Presented to Ushaw College by Mrs Wilberforce, June 1939

Series brought together by Rev. Michael Sharratt as part of the Old Series of documents in Ushaw College Library. Previous series number OS/O.

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/P21, or the collection name (Wilberforce 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.

Bibliography

P. Grant, "Henry Edward Wilberforce: the letters of a schoolboy", *Ushaw Magazine*, XLIX (March, 1939), p.26-60.

UC/P21/1 21 September 1856

Letter from Arthur Wilberforce to his parents [Henry W. and Mary Wilberforce]: receiving his tonsure, his determination to become a priest, feeling homesick and comforted by Fr Suffield.

2f

UC/P21/2 3 May 1857

Letter from Arthur to his parents: his laundry is cleaned privately at Hill Top, having a dream about Dominicans.

2f

UC/P21/3 21 October 1857

Letter from Arthur to his parents: his fondness for Fr Suffield, replacing his leaping pole, sharing a room.

2f

UC/P21/4 [December 1858]

Letter from Arthur to his parents: he won't be allowed home for the Christmas vacation.

2f

UC/P21/5 [June 1859]

Letter from Arthur to his parents: Chadwick and Vavasour leaving Ushaw, criticisms of Protestant education.

4f

UC/P21/6 23 May [1860s]

Letter from Arthur to Henry E. Wilberforce: congratulating him on his first communion, a description of Venice.

2f

UC/P21/7 24 March 1861

Letter from Arthur to his parents: he has finished his prize essay, the death of Mr Caley.

2f

UC/P21/8 1 April 1861

Letter from Arthur to his parents: the death of Charles Moore.

6f

UC/P21/9 24 July 1861

Letter from Henry to his mother: wishing her a happy wedding anniversary, Arthur wants Harry and Wilfred to come to Ushaw College, the benefits of an education there.

2f

UC/P21/10 24 September 1861

Letter from Arthur to Caroline [?Wilberforce, sister]: his retreat, seeking advice about the peace of the soul, enjoys theology with Dr Reinerding and Mgr Consitt, hopes that his brother will come to Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/11 19 December 1861

Letter from Arthur to his mother: Prince Albert's death, his evening meetings with Charles Newsham and conversations concerning Protestants, in particular the possibility of converting bigots who are likely to be more sincere than Liberals.

2f

UC/P21/12 24 January 1862

Letter from Arthur to his parents: the death of John Culshaw, the Hartley colliery disaster.

2f

UC/P21/13 13 March 1862

Letter from Arthur to his parents: the concept of the priesthood.

2f

UC/P21/14 6 April 1862

Letter from Arthur to Caroline: her retreat.

2f

UC/P21/15 8 June 1862

Letter from Arthur to his mother: requesting his father to bring back four dozen rosaries from Rome, the prospects of him teaching next year.

2f

UC/P21/16 10 June 1862

Letter from Arthur to his mother: the possibility of him teaching, the political situation in Ireland.

2f

UC/P21/17 [June 1862]

Letter from Arthur to his mother: writing a sermon for a club, a visit to Rome by his uncle [Henry Manning].

2f

UC/P21/18 [June 1862]

Letter from Arthur to his mother: his father's visit to Rome, criticism of Bulwer Lytton, asking his mother to persuade his father to visit Ushaw, the need to teach Wilfred the rudiments rather than Ovid.

4f

UC/P21/19 22 July 1862

Letter from Arthur to his mother: his play, his father enjoying his Ushaw visit. Also includes an addition by his father envying Ushawmen their reunion because Oxford converts have lost this by becoming Catholics.

2f

UC/P21/20 23 July 1862

Letter from Henry to his mother: his anxiety over Wilfrid, Arthur's play, the defence of his thesis.

2f

UC/P21/21 [September 1862]

Letter from Arthur to his parents: his subdiaconate retreat, his certainty that the priesthood is his vocation.

2f

UC/P21/22 21 September 1862

Letter from Arthur to his parents: on being made a subdeacon, Fr Suffield leading the retreat.

2f

UC/P21/23 2 October 1862

Letter from Arthur to his parents: his reading of Ruskin, the Protestant drawing master (Newton), questions why Suffield walks round in a blanket, Newsham's health.

2f

UC/P21/24 12 October 1862

Letter from Arthur to his parents: officiating as a subdeacon, being made president of the Archaeological Society, its proceedings, Newsham's health, the retirement of Orrell to Ushaw, his (Orrell's) sister offering relics to Ushaw.

3f

UC/P21/25 [July 1863]

Letter from Arthur to his mother: his travels in St Pierre de Vauvray.

2f

UC/P21/26 6 July [1863]

Letter from Arthur to his mother: his travels en route to St Germain en Laye.

2f

UC/P21/27 14 August [1863]

Letter from Arthur to Henry: his health.

2f

UC/P21/28 22 September 1863

Letter from Arthur to his parents, written from the Oratory in Birmingham: attending Newman's classes, Manning's encouragement to pursue his vocation in the priesthood, Newman's opinion that Ushaw is a good place but would probably not accept him.

2f

UC/P21/29 30 September 1863

Letter from Arthur to Agnes [?Wilberforce, sister], written from the Oratory in Birmingham: Faber's death, his success in his studies.

4f

UC/P21/30 20 October 1863

Letter from Arthur to his parents, written from the Oratory in Birmingham: Newman's opinion that Harry should go to Ushaw, a financial dispute with Bishop Wilberforce, his intention to stay a night with Newman on the way back to Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/31 8 November 1863

Letter from Arthur to his parents, written from the Oratory in Birmingham: land for sale at Malvern, Harry's decision to go to Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/32 10 November 1863

Letter from Arthur to his father, written from the Oratory in Birmingham: Newman's support for Harry's decision to go to Ushaw rather than become a Oratorian.

2f

UC/P21/33 [12 November 1863]

Letter from Arthur to his father, written from the Oratory in Birmingham: his father's finances, the sale of a house and land at Malvern, advising abandoning a claim against Bishop Wilberforce, Suffield's mission in London, advising his father to go on a retreat, his plans to return to Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/34 17 November 1863

Letter from Henry to his parents: his safe arrival back at Ushaw, a visit to Brancepeth. Additional information from Arthur concerning Harry's marks in High Figures and the possibility of a promotion at Christmas, and Tate's decision for philosophers to study for the London M.A.

2f

UC/P21/35 19 November 1863

Letter from Arthur to his father: Wilfrid's illness, informing him that he (Arthur) should be deacon by Christmas, Tate's splendid lectures on the Romans, that God will reward his father for renouncing his claims on Bishop Wilberforce.

2f

UC/P21/36 29 November 1863

Letter from Arthur to his parents: Harry's progress at Ushaw, his belief that Malvern is a better place than Stroud, his ordination on 21 December.

2f

UC/P21/37 30 November 1863

Letter from Henry to his parents: his belief that Ushaw is not rough and better than the Oratory, a playday, following the hunt.

2f

UC/P21/38 12 December 1863

Letter from Arthur to his parents: his diaconate retreat, he cannot decide whether he should be a secular or regular, his decision not to teach as a minor professor.

2f

UC/P21/39 22 December 1863

Letter from Arthur to his parents: his stay at Clare Abbey, Darlington, before his ordination, his belief that being religious is the most perfect state of life, his desire to become a Dominican.

4f

UC/P21/40 28 December 1863

Letter from Henry to his parents: his disappointment at not being home for Christmas, the lack of games and exercise at the Oratory in comparison to Ushaw. Addition by Arthur on Harry's examination results, and needing to be ordained as a priest before joining the Dominicans.

2f

UC/P21/41 2 February [1864]

Letter from Henry to his parents: the anniversary requiem for Newsham, attending squirrel hunts, being involved in an operetta, doing well at his studies.

2f

UC/P21/42 28 February 1864

Letter from Arthur to Henry: his father's reservations over Dominican life, his belief that the Anglican Church is breaking up and that Charles Kingsley will not attack Newman again, the death of Fr Goodwin in Liverpool.

3f

UC/P21/43 20 March 1864

Letter from Arthur to Agnes: the health of Joseph Zuletta, and hoping that his father will make a retreat in Woodchester.

1f

UC/P21/44 [10 April 1864]

Letter from Arthur to his parents: he has been very happy at Ushaw but is looking forward to being a Dominican, his ordination, the death of a young priest from typhus at Liverpool.

2f

UC/P21/45 30 October 1864

Letter from Henry to Agnes: his hopes for a hard winter with skating, requiring permission to allow him to write letters other than to his family.

2f

UC/P21/46 28 December 1864

Letter from Henry to Agnes: church services, decorations at Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/47 21 February [1865]

Letter from Henry to his father: his three weeks of skating, Wiseman's death and Ushaw's dirge and requiem, description of a play by the Juniors, article on Wiseman in the *Register*, distractions in prayer, his preparation for matriculation.

4f

UC/P21/48 22 March 1865

Letter from Henry to Agnes: his composition to Wiseman, the death of Michael Greene's brother, Newcastle Dominicans, a squirrel hunt on St Cuthbert's Day.

2f

UC/P21/49 6 April [1865]

Letter from Henry to Agnes: Wilfrid's progress and his hopes that he may come to Ushaw, the murder of an Ushawman, Charles Readley.

2f

UC/P21/50 15 April 1865

Letter from Henry to his parents: Holy Week ceremonies, the impending Reading Up ceremony.

2f

UC/P21/51 21 April 1865

Letter from Arthur to Henry: his anniversary on leaving Ushaw, his opinion that religious can do more for God than seculars.

2f

UC/P21/52 7 July 1865

Letter from Henry to his parents: resolving to do better, his difficulty in playing Richard II, his shock at the drowning of a Dominican brother.

2f

UC/P21/53 22 December 1865

Letter from Henry to his parents: looking forward to midnight Mass, the need to pray for Bishop Wilberforce, the decorations in St Cuthbert's Chapel, general confession and communion.

2f

UC/P21/54 23 December 1865

Letter from Henry to Arthur: Watson and Walmsley, his appointment as prefect of discipline and subsequent unpopularity, Ushaw's football is very different from Edgbaston's, the unsuitability of Ushaw for Wilfrid.

2f

UC/P21/55 27 December 1865

Letter from Henry to Agnes: thanking her for her letters and parcel, the Christmas services.

2f

UC/P21/56 27 April 1866

Letter from Henry to Agnes: Knox as Superior of the Oratory, priests with typhus at Liverpool, *terna* (3 names submitted for a see) for Hexham and Newcastle: Platt, Consitt and Chadwick (his confessor).

3f

UC/P21/57 10 June 1866

Letter from Wilfrid to Henry: settling in to Beaumont which is preferable to the Oratory School, his visit to Eton with his father.

UC/P21/58 8 June 1866

Letter from Henry to Agnes sending Wilfrid's letter: Oratory boys were vulgar towards him (Wilfrid), prays for the conversion of Bishop Wilberforce, Chadwick is favourite for the bishopric.

2f

UC/P21/59 10 July 1866

Letter from Henry to Agnes: Mrs Fetham's death, looking forward to the holidays, matriculation, confident that Bishop Wilberforce will be converted.

2f

UC/P21/60 21 July 1866

Letter from Henry W. Wilberforce to his son, Henry: Wilfrid's good spirits.

2f

UC/P21/61 29 October 1866

Letter from Henry to Agnes: laundry expenses, his uncle (Henry Manning) and his appearance at Chadwick's consecration.

2f

UC/P21/62 5 November 1866

Letter from J.A.V. Maude to Henry: how lucky Henry is to be at Ushaw, Newsham was almost a saint, Arthur giving his first retreat at the London Oratory, Watts Russell has now joined the Oratory. Sent on to Arthur by Harry with an addition that he sometimes feels he wants to leave Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/63 18 November 1866

Letter from Henry to his parents: his attempts to overcome his humours, Lingard's *Anglo-Saxon Church* was not a popular read in the refectory, the gift of a crozier by the Ushaw students to Chadwick.

2f

UC/P21/64 3 December 1866

Letter from Arthur to his parents: Ushaw's good treatment of Harry during his sickness, granted permission to go to Newcastle if necessary, regards to professors at Ushaw, the success of his sermon.

2f

UC/P21/65 30 November 1866

Letter from Mary to her children (at Ushaw): Henry's illness.

2f

UC/P21/65a 7 December 1866

Letter from Mary to her children (at Ushaw): Henry's health, the beauty of the Statue of Our Lady.

2f

UC/P21/66 13 December 1866

Letter from Mary to Agnes (at Ushaw): Henry's health, Waterton's collection in the museum, the college being allowed to have an extra hour's extra sleep on a Thursday. Additional note by Henry to say that he is improving.

2f

UC/P21/67 6 May 1875

Letter from T.J. to Agnes, written from the Franciscan Convent in Woodcheste: the cornelian cross and other family possessions.

2f

UC/P21/68 [November 1863]

Letter from Henry to his mother, written from the Oratory at Birmingham: Wilfrid's health, his wish that Mr and Mrs Whatley were Catholics, attending a meeting in support of the relief of the blind in Birmingham Town Hall.

2f

UC/P21/69 [1860s]

Letter from Henry to his parents: the introduction of bathing facilities at Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/70 [1860s]

Letter (incomplete) from [Henry] to [?his parents]: Waterton's collection in the museum.

2f

UC/P21/71 [1860s]

Letter (incomplete) from [Henry] to [?his parents]: his disappointing Reading Up place, a play by the Big Lads, his impressions of the Waterton collection.

2f

UC/P21/72 [1870s]

Letter from Arthur to his mother: his health, his return visit to Ushaw.

2f

UC/P21/73 [1860s]

Letter from Arthur to his parents: his father's difficulties, the role of faith in combatting worldly difficulties, his fears over the Judgement of God.

2f

UC/P21/74 [1860s]

Letter from Henry to Agnes: his play day, family news, his hopes for his examinations, an elocution performance in the hall.

2f

UC/P21/75 14 June 1939

Letter from R. Corboy to Mother Frideswide: the Wilberforce letters, the publication of an article in the *Ushaw Magazine*.

1f

UC/P21/76 18 July 1939

Letter from Helan Wilberforce: asking Fr Paul to send any of Henry E. Wilberforce's letters back to her.

1f

UC/P21/77 [late-19th century]

Biographical information on Henry E. Wilberforce.

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