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Guide to the G.J. Whyte-Melville Collection circa 1860s



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.WHYTEMGJ
Title	Whyte-Melville, G. J. Collection
Date	circa 1860s
Size	0.25 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract	George John Whyte-Melville (1821-1878) was a Scottish novelist and poet. The G.J. Whyte-Melville Collection contains a small series of correspondence between Whyte-Melville and John W. Parker, an English publisher.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Whyte-Melville, G. J. Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Biographical Note

George John Whyte-Melville was born on June 19, 1821, at Mount Melville near St. Andrews, Scotland. He was the son of Major John Whyte-Melville and Lady Catherine Anne Sarah Osbourne. He was educated at Eton, and entered the army in 1839. He became captain in the Coldstream Guards in 1846, but retired shortly after in 1849. He married The Honorable Charlotte Hanbury-Bateman in 1847. Together, they had one daughter, Florence Elizabeth.

After translating the work of the Roman poet Horace, Whyte-Melville published his first novel in 1853, *Digby Grand*. Encouraged by the success of his first novel, he went on to publish twenty-one novels in total and became a popular figure in sporting society for his hunter-characters and depictions of the contemporary sport. Whyte-Melville also began to publish poetry in the late 1860s, though he remained most well-known for his novels.

Whyte-Melville was briefly involved in the Crimean War (1853-1856) as a volunteer major of the Turkish irregular cavalry, the only period in which he was not writing. Whyte-Melville died in 1878 during a hunting accident and was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's, Tetbury, a few feet from his property.

Scope Note

The G.J. Whyte-Melville Collection contains five letters from the author to John William Parker (1792-1870), an English publisher. The letters concern the publication of Whyte-Melville's works, such as *Holmby House* (1860), *Digby Grand* (1853), and *The Interpreter* (1858). The letters carry day and month dating, but no years. As such, it is difficult to tell when they were written, though the novels mentioned suggest they date to the 1860s. The letters are order chronologically by dates available, though as mentioned, the lack of year-dating leaves some risk that they are not in true chronological order.

The collection was previously part of the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/topics.php>

Subject Headings

- Parker, John William, 1792-1870
- Whyte-Melville, G. J. (George John), 1821-1878
-
- Authors and publishers -- Great Britain -- History -- 19th century

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Correspondence, G.J. Whyte-Melville to John W. Parker, circa 1860s

- January 3
- January 18
- April 18
- August 12
- October 19