

**Sir John F. W.(John Frederick William)
Herschel correspondence, 1793-1874
1793-1874
Mss.B.H435p**

American Philosophical Society
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Summary Information

Repository	American Philosophical Society
Title	Sir John F. W.(John Frederick William) Herschel correspondence, 1793-1874
Date [inclusive]	1793-1874
Call number	Mss.B.H435p
Extent	40.0 Item(s)
Extent	40 items.
Location	LH-MV-C-10
Language	English
Container	1
Abstract	This collection concerns astronomical observations, earthquakes, meteorology, photography, physics, professional associations, publications, and scientific instruments. The correspondents include Augustus De Morgan, Dionysius Lardner, Sir Francis Beaufort, and Sir Edward Ryan.

Background note

Sir John Frederick William Herschel (1792-1871) was an astronomer and prominent member of several British scientific societies of his day.

J. F. W. Herschel was born at Slough, England, March 7, 1792. His father, Sir William Herschel, was a renowned astronomer. After studying at Dr. Gretton's School at Hitcham, and at Eton, J. F. W. Herschel was educated at home by a mathematician by the name of Rogers. Herschel graduated as Senior Wrangler from St. Johns College, Cambridge at the age of seventeen. He founded, along with George Peacock and Charles Babbage, the Analytical Society of Cambridge – an intellectual discussion group which encouraged its members to “do their best to leave the world wiser than they found it.” In 1813 Herschel was elected a fellow of the Royal Society.

In 1814 he entered as a student at Lincoln's Inn to study law. He turned, however, to science. He reported in his journal on the 10 September, 1816 that he is “going under my father's direction to take up stargazing.” Herschel distinguished himself in astronomy for the rest of his life.

Herschel co-founded the Royal Astronomical Society, and served two terms as president, starting in 1827. In 1829 he married Margaret Brodie. In 1831 he was knighted. Of particular scientific interest to Herschel were double stars and sun spots. He made numerous advances in the development of telescopes and microscopes, as well as the fields of magnetism and optics. He published one hundred fifty two papers and was a trustee of the British Museum.

J. F. W. Herschel died in 1871 and was buried in Westminster Abbey near the grave of Sir Isaac Newton.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

American Philosophical Society

Provenance

Acquisition Information

Purchased from Amram and accessioned, 12/--/1956. See in-house shelf list for additional accession numbers and dates.

Related Materials

Related Material

There is also correspondence (1836-1868, 19 items) with Sir Charles Lyell in the Lyell Papers in the American Philosophical Society Library (see PAAV87-A166).

Indexing Terms

Personal Name(s)

- Beaufort, Francis, Sir, 1774-1857
- De Morgan, Augustus, 1806-1871.
- Lardner, Dionysius, 1793-1859
- Ryan, Edward, Sir, 1793-1875

Subject(s)

- Astronomy.
- Beyond Early America
- Earthquakes.

- Meteorology.
- Photography -- Early works to 1850.
- Physics.
- Science -- Societies, etc.
- Scientific apparatus and instruments.

Other Descriptive Information

This manuscript collection falls outside the geographic scope of the Early American guide (British North America and the United States before 1840). It may be of interest to scholars interested in global history, international relations, imperialism, or the U.S. in the world.

Collection Inventory

Papers

Herschel, [Sir] W[illia]m, 1738-1822. Jan. 6, 1793 9-1/8x7-1/4

Letter to Mr. Gerning, London;

Slough, Eng., A.L.S. 1p.add.end. Info. about a book. Inform Prof. Schmidt that Newtonian telescope is ready.

Not Found: 3/14/2011

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 1817 12-3/4x7-3/4

Epitaph on...;

Slough, Eng. A.M.S. 1p. Epitaph, in verse, to his sister?, with a sketch.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 25 April, 1820 9x7 1/2

Letter to ---.

ALS. 4p. illus. with typescript. Explores polarizing of light in crystals and other polarizing experiments. 1. Newton, Sir Isaac, 1642-1727. 2. philosophical Society, Cambridge. 3.

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Frederick William), 1792-1871 Nov., 1821

Letter to ----;

[received] Xerox of A.L.S. 2p.,end. Recommends Henslow for post at Trinity. NOT TO BE QUOTED OR COPIED.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 Aug. 18, 1823 10x8

Letter to [Dinoysius Lardner];

Papers

A.L.S. 3p.and add. Concerning his publications. Suggests Whewell for crystaleography and Fitton for geology. Plates of optical department to be uncolored.

Lardner, Dionysius, 1793-1859. Herschel, April 30, 1827 9x7-1/2
[Sir] J[ohn] F[rederick] W[illiam],
1792-1871.

Letter to Dionysius Lardner;

A.L.S. 3p. Praises Airy. Concerning works on calculus.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick July 25, 1828 9x7-1/2
William), Sir, 1792-1871

Letter to Dionysius Lardner;

A.L.S. 3p. M,ght contribute an article on light. Is finishing an article for the encyclopaedia.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick June 27/28, 1831 7x4-1/2
William), Sir, 1792-1871

Letter to J[ames] Hudson, [Sec. of Royal Society], London;

Slough, Eng., A.L.S. 3p.add. Gives references for tables of Italian measures.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick February 15, 1833 9x7¼
William), Sir, 1792-1871

Letter to D. Robertson, Westminster;

A.L.S. 2p. add., end. Acknowledges that "the contingencies of a long residence in so distant a Part of the world may very well render it extremely inconvenient to retain my name on the tracts in question".

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Sept. 30, 1836
Frederick William), 1792-1871

Letter to the Albany Institute, Albany, N.Y.;

Cape of Good Hope, South Africa, A.L.S. 3p.and add.,end. Thanks for meteorological observations and suggests method for constants in making such observations. Hopes they will continue, and send them to him at the Royal Society next year.

Papers

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 November 30, 1837 9x7½

Letter to "Sir";

A.L.S. 2p. Asks correspondent to expedite the shipping of the remaining portion of Smith's collection as "it is more desirable that in the ensuing spring months the Exhibition should be made as complete and attractive as possible."

Other Descriptive Information

See: (Herschel papers.)

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 August 27, 1838 9-3/4x8

Letter to the Earl of Melbourne, London;

Newcastle on Tyne. A.L.S. 1p., add., enc. wanting. Sends copy of resolutions passed by the British Association. Will meet with him "for the purpose of affording every explanation of the reasons which have weighed with the Association in their adoption".

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 14 Jan., [18]39 9 x 7 1/2

Letter to John Stewart, London;

Slough, A.L.S. 4p. add. end. Makes arrangements to see Gassiot's battery exper., if schedule permits. Has Royal Soc. business. Would like to see Babbage. Family new. Mentions James Grahame.

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Frederick William), 1792-1871 Aug. 1, 1839

Letter to Capt. [Sir Francis] Beaufort;

A.L.S. 3p. and add. Concerning observations, based on Lacaille's law. Maclear's comments of assistants available.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 June 13, 1844 5¼x4¼

Letter to Tho[ma]s Thomson;

Papers

Collingwood, A.L. in 3rd 2p., add., enc. wanting. Takes the liberty to forward a few specimens of Tritonia Uvaria. Explains their care and flowering schedules. Mentions Stuart.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 April 16, 1846 5x4½

Letter to -;

A.L.S. 1p., end. Fragment. Extends compliments to his correspondent's wife "in which my wife begs to join".

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 December 30, 1847 7½x4½

Letter to "Dear Sir";

Collingwood, A.L.S. 2p. Concerns Gerhardt's collecting of Leibniz correspondence. Mentions Encke.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 April 18, 1850 6x4

Letter to ----;

Collingwood, A.L.S. 3p. Expresses thanks for an invitation to the British Association meeting at Edinburgh. Refers to Captain Jacobs; mentions heliometer.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 September 21, 1853 7x4½

Letter to J. Buckley, Exeter;

A.L.S. 3p. and env. Herschel comments on a meteor described by Buckley.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 Jan. 17, 1854 7x4-1/2

Letter to "My dear Sir;"

A.L.S. 3p. Letter on the death of "the Marshall" arrived too late so could not attend funeral.

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Frederick William), 1792-1871 July 24, 1859

Letter to ----;

Papers

Collingwood, (?) A.L.S. 1P. Has no alterations to suggest for any of the plates.

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Frederick William), 1792-1871 April 16, 1860

Letter to [Sir Edward?] Ryan;

Collingswood, A.L.S. 3p. Concerning Willy's appointment and the need for good administration in the position.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 Dec. 16, 1862 7x4-1/2

Letter to "My dear Sir Henry;"

A.L.S. 4p. Concerning Herschel's translation. Enjoyed Sir Henry's book on physical geography of the sea [Gulf Stream], etc.

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Frederick William), 1792-1871 Jan. 1, 1863

Letter to ----;

Collingwood, A.L.S. 3p. His views on earthquakes.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 May 31, 1865 7¼x4½

Letter to "My dear Sir";

Kent, A.L.S. 3p. Concerns wave lengths.

Other Descriptive Information

See: (Herschel papers.)

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 June 23, 1865 7x4-1/2

Letter to ----;

A.L.S. 4p. States that the article is not worthy of publication in its present form.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871 Nov. 3, 1866 7x4½

Letter to "Dear Sir";

Papers

Collingwood, A.L.S. 2p. Asks whether he should ask Brayley to write a review of a book he received sometime ago. Mentions the London Institution and Alexander Stewart Herschel.

Other Descriptive Information

See: (Herschel papers.)

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871	Oct. 6, 1870	3-1/2x4-3/4
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Letter to A[ugustus] DeMorgan, London;

Collingwood, A.L.S. on postal card. 1p. and add. Asks a series of riddles of his correspondent.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871	June 22, 1871	6-1/4x4
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Letter to ----;

A.L.S. 3p. Vision. Concerning underwater use of cameras.

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Frederick William), 1792-1871	Oct. 23, 1874	
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Letter to "Dear Sir"

A.L.S. 2p.

Astronomical Notes	Undated	
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A.D. 2p.

Herschel, John F. W., Sir, (John Frederick William), 1792-1871	Undated	
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Letter to ----;

Monday, 18th. A.L.S. 3p. Concerning copper content in the ore.

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871	Undated	7x4½
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Letter to "My dear Sir";

A.L.S. 2p. Preparations for a forthcoming voyage prevented him from dining with the Royal Society Club.

Papers

Other Descriptive Information

See: (Herschel papers.)

Herschel, John F. W. (John Frederick William), Sir, 1792-1871	Undated	7¼x4½
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Letter to "Dear Sir".

A.L.S. 2p. Concerns Herschel's thoughts on salary matters.
