

Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 099, F953
Title: Percy H. Muir letters to Rev. James Brown
Inclusive Dates: 1951-1964
Extent: 35 items (63 p.)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 099, F953, Percy H. Muir letters to Rev. James Brown, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Box 66, F953: Shelved in SPEC MSS 099 manuscript boxes
Location: Special Collections, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
Source: Purchase, October 2013.
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Biographical Notes

Percy H. Muir

British author, bibliographer, and antiquarian bookseller Percy H. Muir (1894-1979) compiled bibliographies of the first editions of such authors as Aldous Huxley and George Eliot; and wrote numerous books on book collecting, including Victorian Illustrated Books (1970) and Book Collecting as a Hobby: In a Series of Letters to Everyman (1944).

As a director of various antiquarian bookshops and booksellers for over fifty years, Muir was instrumental in the founding of the British Antiquarian Booksellers Association and the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers.

Percy Muir also wrote a regular column, "Notes on Sales," for the Times Literary Supplement from 1940-1945, and articles and reviews for AB Bookman’s Weekly, Colophon, and Library.

Rev. James Brown

The Reverend Dr. James Brown was the parish minister for the Colmonell Parish Church (Church of Scotland) and later the Stranraer parish in Scotland.

Rev. Brown was an avid collector of French illustrated books of the Romantic period, as well as nineteenth century edition of English and French literature. Rev. Brown bequeathed this collection of books, illustrations, and two printing blocks to the National Library of Scotland in 1984. The James Brown Collection is now part of the Special and Named Printed Collections in the library. Some of the books in this collection were purchased from Elkin Mathews Ltd., which Percy Muir represented.

Sources:


Scope and Content Note


During this correspondence, Percy Muir was a director at the noted British antiquarian bookseller, Elkin Mathews Ltd. Muir's long and interesting letters to Rev. Brown suggest Brown's interest in Muir's bibliographic work and similar work being done by Rev. Brown. Some letters and invoices in this collection were written by Laurie Deval, an associate at Elkin Mathews Ltd., who also worked with Rev. Brown during the 1950s. Muir and Deval, on occasion, sent Brown illustrations for his advice as to the creator or for dating. In one letter, Muir notes that a particular Granville drawing will be "recatalogued in the light of your further discoveries" (March 22, 1951).

The letters also mention Deval's evaluation of books owned by Rev. Brown which he wished to sell. Many of the letters offer descriptions of the items being offered to Rev. Brown, as well as the discounted price the firm would offer him. There are also several invoices documenting specific items purchased by Brown.

Over the years, Percy Muir and Rev. Brown developed a friendship in addition to transacting business. In later letters, Muir discussed his travels to Europe, and when asked, offered advice regarding Brown's planned trip to the continent. The two men occasionally scheduled social visits and shared personal tragedies, such as a death in the family.

The collection which Reverend James Brown was creating, partially through purchases from Elkin Mathews Ltd, would ultimately become the James Brown Collection in the National Library of Scotland, at Brown's bequeath in 1984.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Muir, Percy H. (Percy Horace), 1894-1979--Correspondence.

Brown, James (Reverend)--Correspondence.

Deval, Laurie (1923-1981)--Correspondence.

Topical Terms

Booksellers and bookselling--Great Britain--History--20th century.

Illustration of books--France--History--20th century.

Form/Genre Terms

Correspondence.

Invoices.

Occupation

Booksellers.

Collectors.

Personal Contributors

Brown, James (Reverend), correspondent.

Deval, Laurie (1923-1981), correspondent.

Corporate Contributors

E. Mathews (Firm)

Related Materials in this Repository

This item forms part of MSS 099 Miscellaneous Literary and Historical Manuscripts.

MSS 099, F297, Percy H. Muir, review of The British Union Catalogue of Early Music

MSS 099, F953, Percy H. Muir, "The Typographic Adventure of William Morris"

MSS 099, F799, Percy H. Muir letters to Mrs. H. W. Roberts
Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.
**Detailed Description of the Collection**

- Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1951 March 22 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (2 p.)

- Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1951 April 6 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (1 p.)

- Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1952 October 22 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (2 p.)

- Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1952 November 26 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (2 p.)

- Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, 1952 December 4 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (1 p.)

- Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1953 April 14 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (2 p.)

- Typed invoice from Elkin Mathews Ltd., 1953 June 13 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (1 p.)

- Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1954 January 3 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (1 p.)

- Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1954 January 21 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (3 p.)

- Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1954 February 13 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (2 p.)

- Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1954 March 19 [Box 66 F953]
  1 item (2 p.)
Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1954 March 23 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Typed invoice from Elkin Mathews Ltd., 1954 March 27 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1954 April 6 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Typed invoice from Elkin Mathews Ltd., 1954 April 14 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, 1954 May 1 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, 1954 June 15 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, 1954 November 30 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, 1954 December 31 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, [1955] January 10 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (4 p.)

Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, 1955 January 20 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, [1955] February 10 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, [1955] March 12 [Box 66 F953]
Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, 1955 August 17 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1957 June 4 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1957 June 8 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (4 p.)

Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1957 June 26 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1957 October 9 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (4 p.)

Autograph letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1958 May 21 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1964 June 2 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (2 p.)

Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1964 June 5 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (3 p.)

Typed letter signed from Muir to Brown, 1964 June 19 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Typed letter signed from Laurie Deval to Brown, circa 1951-1959 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)

Photocopied page from a catalog, circa 1951-1959 [Box 66 F953]
1 item (1 p.)