Sir Francis Beaufort Papers: Finding Aid

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Manuscripts Department
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Overview of the Collection

Title: Sir Francis Beaufort Papers

Dates (inclusive): 1710-1953

Bulk dates: 1780-1890

Collection Number: mssFB 1-1920

Creator: Beaufort, Francis, Sir, 1774-1857.

Extent: 2,143 pieces in 38 boxes.

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Abstract: This collection is comprised of three sets of distinct papers concerning members of the Beaufort, Edgeworth, and Larpent families. The bulk of the collection consists of the papers of Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort (1774-1857), hydrographer of the British Navy and member of the Royal Society, as well as papers of other members of the Beaufort family. Subject matter includes naval operations of the British Navy, particularly during the Napoleonic Wars; geography and hydrography; Irish affairs; the Royal Society and scientific affairs in England; and family affairs. In addition there are also papers of Beaufort's daughter Lady Strangford, Emily Ann Smythe (1826-1887), a travel writer and illustrator, and papers of English diplomat John James Larpent (1783-1860) and his family.

Language: English.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item]. Sir Francis Beaufort Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance


Processing/Project Information

This collection was initially processed by Huntington Library staff, and cards for individual items were created and filed in the chronological and alphabetical sections of the Manuscripts Catalog. In 2000, the finding aid was encoded and revised by Xiuzhi Zhou. In 2016, Dorothy Auyong and Diann Benti updated and expanded the finding aid.

Access

Open to qualified researchers by prior application through the Reader Services Department. For more information, contact Reader Services.

Scope and Content

This collection is comprised of three sets of distinct papers concerning members of the Beaufort, Edgeworth, and Larpent families that were purchased from a shared descendant. The bulk of the collection consists of the papers of British hydrologist and admiral Sir Francis Beaufort and his family; in addition there are also papers of Beaufort's daughter Lady Strangford, Emily Ann Smythe (1826-1887), a travel writer and illustrator, and papers of English diplomat John James Larpent (1783-1860) and his family. Some organic material [dried plant specimens] is contained in the collection.

Sir Francis Beaufort Papers (1,967 pieces in 35 boxes)

The papers of Sir Francis Beaufort, dating from 1710-1953 (bulk 1780-1890), consist of diaries, journals, account books and correspondence of Beaufort and members of the Beaufort and Edgeworth families including his father Daniel Augustus Beaufort, first wife Alicia Magdalena Wilson Beaufort (died 1834). The collection includes information related to British naval history (especially during the Napoleonic Wars), Irish affairs, hydrography, scientific research in England in the early 19th century, and the Near East, including research for Sir Francis's work Karamania (1817).

Emily Smythe, Viscountess Strangford Papers (78 pieces in 1 box)

The papers of Emily Smythe, Viscountess Strangford, dating from 1836-1888, contain correspondence of Lady Strangford and her husband, Percy Ellen Frederick William Smythe, as well as Lady Strangford's travel journals (1876-1877) from
Bulgaria, and various legal papers.

**John James Larpent, Baron de Hochepied, Papers (98 pieces in 3 boxes)**

The papers of John James Larpent, Baron de Hochepied papers, dating from 1814-1859 and consisting of diplomatic correspondence accumulated by Larpent during his term as British consul in Belgium. These items notably document diplomatic relationship between England and Belgium, particularly at the time of the French Revolution of 1830. In addition, there are letters from Larpent’s sister-in-law Catherine Elizabeth Reeves, the diary (1853-1859) of his daughter Clarissa de Hochepied Larpent, and the journal (1860-1876) of his wife, Georgiana Frances Reeves Larpent.

- Anna Margaretta Larpent diaries (mssHM 31201)
- John Larpent papers (mssLA 1-2503)

**Related materials in the Huntington Library**

- Beaufort, Francis, Sir. *Karamania, or A brief description ...* (1817). Author’s proof copy.
- Microfilm copies of diaries and journals of Cornelis, Daniel Augustus, Louisa Catherine, Mary Waller Beaufort and correspondence of William Lewis are available in the Library upon request. The microfilms were taken from originals at the Trinity College Library, Dublin, and are not to be reproduced without the Trinity College Library’s permission.
  - Beaufort family [microform] : manuscripts (MSS MFilm 00688, reels 1-2).

The information file for this collection also includes the following relevant items:

- David, Andrew C. F. *A Description of the Surveys of Sir Francis Beaufort Held in the Archives of the Hydrographic Department, Ministry of Defence, Taunton Somerset, England*. 1977 (19 pages)
- Waller, M. W. B. Craig. *Some Notes on De Hochpied and Larpent. Also notes from a letter re the spelling of Emily Anne (Beaufort) Smythe, Viscountess Strangford.* 1976 (3 pages)
- Friendly, Alfred. *Solution to Sir Francis Beaufort’s cipher.* 1974 (1 page)

For a fuller description of the collection please see:


**Arrangement**

Organized in the following series:

1. Sir Francis Beaufort Papers (Boxes 1-34, 38)
2. Emily Smythe, Viscountess Strangford papers (Box 35)
3. John James Larpent, Baron de Hochepied papers (Boxes 36-37)

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library’s Online Catalog:

**Subjects**

Aleksandŭr I, Prince of Bulgaria, 1857-1893 -- Correspondence.
Beaufort, Daniel Augustus, 1739-1821 -- Archives.
Beaufort, Francis, Sir, 1774-1857 -- Archives.
Beaufort, Alicia Magdalena Wilson, -1834 -- Archives.
Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, 1744-1817 -- Archives.
Edgeworth, Maria, 1768-1849 -- Archives.
Eliot, George, 1819-1880 -- Correspondence.
Hillyar, James, 1769-1843 -- Correspondence.
Larpent, John James de Hochepied, Baron, active 1825-1837 -- Correspondence.
Lear, Edward, 1812-1888 -- Correspondence.
Strangford, Emily Anne Beaufort Smythe, Viscountess, -1887 -- Archives.
Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, 1819-1901 -- Correspondence.
Great Britain. Royal Navy -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Great Britain. Hydrographic Department -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Royal Society (Great Britain) -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Consuls -- Great Britain -- Correspondence.
Diplomats -- Great Britain -- Correspondence.
Geographers -- Great Britain -- Archives.
Hydrography -- Great Britain -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Napoleonic Wars, 1800-1815 -- Naval operations -- Sources.
Russo-Turkish War, 1877-1878 -- Civilian relief -- Personal narratives.
Travelers' writings, English.
Women philanthropists -- Great Britain -- Archives.
Women -- Great Britain -- Diaries.
Belgium -- History -- Insurrection, 1830 -- Sources.
Belgium -- History -- Revolution, 1830-1839 -- Sources.
Belgium -- Foreign relations -- 19th century.
Belgium -- Foreign relations -- Great Britain.
Bulgaria -- History -- Uprising, 1876 -- Civilian relief -- Personal narratives.
Egypt -- Description and travel.
Great Britain -- Foreign relations -- 1800-1837 -- Sources.
Great Britain -- Foreign relations -- Belgium.
Great Britain -- Foreign relations -- Netherlands.
Great Britain -- History, Naval -- 19th century -- Sources.
Great Britain -- History -- 18th century -- Sources.
Great Britain -- History -- 19th century -- Sources.
Ireland -- History -- 1760-1820 -- Sources.
Netherlands -- Foreign relations -- 1815-
Netherlands -- Foreign relations -- Great Britain.
Turkey -- Description and travel.
Mediterranean Coast (Egypt) -- Nautical charts.
Mediterranean Coast (Turkey) -- Nautical charts.

**Forms/Genres**
Account books -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- Great Britain.
Diaries -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Ephemera -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Family papers -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Manuscripts -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Personal papers -- Great Britain.
Professional papers -- Great Britain.
Travel literature -- Great Britain -- 19th century.

**Additional contributors**
Aleksandër I, Prince of Bulgaria, 1857-1893.
Beaufort, Daniel Augustus, 1739-1821.
Beaufort, Alicia Magdalena Wilson, -1834.
Edgeworth, Richard Lovell, 1744-1817.
Edgeworth, Maria, 1768-1849.
Eliot, George, 1819-1880.
James, Clarissa Larpent de Hochepied.
Larpent, Georgiana Frances Reeves de Hochepied.
Reeves, Catherine Elizabeth.
Lear, Edward, 1812-1888.
Sir Francis Beaufort (1774-1857) was the son of Daniel Augustus Beaufort (1739-1821), rector of Collon, Co. Louth, Ireland, and a geographer, and Mary Waller Beaufort. His grandfather, Daniel Cornelius de Beaufort, had been a Huguenot refugee from France who established a ministry in London, and his family's consciousness of its religious heritage was very strong.

He was first sent to sea in 1789 on the Vansittart, commanded by Lestock Wilson, to whose family he became very close, and whose daughter, Alicia Magdalena, became his first wife in 1813. Subsequently, he entered the British navy, and from 1790-1800 served successively on the Latona, the Aquilon, and the Phaeton; the latter's commander (Sir) Robert Stopford became a close professional acquaintance. During these years his closest confidant was his older brother, William Lewis Beaufort, who took orders and served under Thomas St. Lawrence, Dean of Cork (marrying the Dean's daughter in 1805).

Active in the sea war against France, in particular Cornwallis's retreat (1795), Beaufort became Lieutenant in 1796, and, following a near-fatal wounding in a battle with the Spanish, November, 1800, he was promoted Commander. He was not given a command, however, and, invalided home, he lived with his family. He became close to Richard Lovell Edge-worth, inventor and landowner, father of the novelist Maria Edgeworth, and husband (after 1798) of Francis's sister, Frances (Fanny). Beaufort and Edgeworth worked on projects including the Dublin-Galway semaphore telegraph (1803-04), until 1805, when he was named commander of the storeship H.M.S. Woolwich. Only in 1809, after much frustrations over his eventless command (although in 1807 he did his first major hydrographical work, surveying the Rio de la Plata), did he get an active command, that of the H.M.S. Blossom. Soon after his return on the Blossom from a mission to Quebec, in 1810, Beaufort was given post rank, and assigned command of the frigate, H.M.S. Frederiksteen. From his base on Malta, during 1810-1812 Beaufort conducted surveys geographical and hydrographical of the eastern Mediterranean, particularly Karamania (the south Turkish coast). He was again grievously wounded in June, 1812, and returned home, marrying Alicia, living quietly, and writing his widely acclaimed book Karamania, or a Brief Description of the South Coast of Asia Minor... (1817), based on his survey. His researches and book earned him membership in the Royal Society, in which he was active throughout his life, and access to the scientific circles of England, which included such luminaries as Sir Humphry Davy. He was much involved in plans for the establishment of mining and other industries in Ireland, and with his father's revisions of his map of Ireland and financial troubles, until Daniel's death in 1821.

In 1829, after years of petitioning for reactivation in the Navy, Beaufort was named Hydrographe to the Navy. Until his retirement in 1854, this position was his constant concern. He expanded its staff and physical facilities, established surveys over the entire globe, and served on many naval commissions. Deeply affected by his wife's tragic death in 1834, he found support in closeness to his children: Daniel Augustus, Francis Lestock, William Morris, Emily Anne Sophia, and Rosalind Elizabeth. In 1839 he remarried, his new wife being Honora, daughter of Richard Lovell Edgeworth. In 1846 he was named Rear Admiral (ret.), and knighted in 1848. His retirement was accompanied by unfortunate and painful quarrels over the amount of his annuity.

Sir Francis had spent his early married life at Lestock Wilson's house at Epping, Surrey. As hydrographer, he lived on Manchester St., London; he passed his last days at Brighton. At his death on December 17, 1857, he was survived by all six of his children.

Scope and Content Note
This collection contains the papers of British admiral and hydrographer Sir Francis Beaufort and members of the Beaufort and Edgeworth families dating from 1710-1953 (bulk 1780-1890) and consisting of diaries, journals, account books and correspondence. Subject matter includes the Beaufort and Edgeworth families; British naval history of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, in particular the period of the Napoleonic Wars; geography and hydrography, particularly of the Eastern Mediterranean; Irish affair of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, particularly related to economic and commercial issues; and the Royal Society and scientific affairs in England in the early 19th century.

The bulk of the collection is comprised of the papers of Sir Francis and includes journals of his naval service (1791-1812); journals, notes, and working papers for his survey of Karamania (or Caramania), along the southern coast of Turkey (1813-1817); his professional diaries as hydrographer to the British Navy (1840-1857); and 854 letters by Sir Francis. Notable topics included in the correspondence of Sir Francis includes a letter-journal of his first sea-voyage, to Indonesia (1789, July 24); a description of the Battle of San Joseph, in which he was critically wounded (1800, Oct. 28); letters to Richard Lovell Edgeworth detailing the construction of the Dublin-Galway telegraph (1803) and later discussing various advice for his son-in-law's applications (1829); personal matters, including the death of his wife, letters to Richard Lovell Edgeworth, letters to other family members, letters to Maria Edgeworth (1817), letters to Jeanne Blennerhasset (1824), letters to William Parry (1805), letters to Sir John Barrow (1830), letters to Sir Joseph Banks (1834), letters to Sir John Franklin (1814), letters to Sir Humphry Davy, letters to Sir Roger Curtis (1838), letters to William Morris, Emily Anne Sophia, and Rosalind Elizabeth (1839), letters to William Lewis Beaufort, Frances Anne Beaufort Edgeworth (1840), letters to Sir Francis describing in detail the critical response of the Royal Society, in which he was active throughout his life, and access to the scientific circles of England, which included such luminaries as Sir Humphry Davy. He was much involved in plans for the establishment of mining and other industries in Ireland, and with his father's revisions of his map of Ireland and financial troubles, until Daniel's death in 1821.
Sir Francis Beaufort Papers: Diaries, journals, account books, etc.

Diaries, journals, account books, etc.

Beaufort, Alicia Magdalena (Wilson)
Box 1 (FB 1)
Journal of Family History. 1780-1804 FB 1

Beaufort, Daniel Augustus
Box 1 (FB 2-5)
Diaries (1780-1798)
- Diary. 1776 January 1-1781 August 13 FB 2
- Travel diary. 1779 October 5-1780 May 1 FB 3
- Travel diary in England. 1792 August 31-1795 April 8 FB 4
- Diary. 1796 March 22-1798 April 3 FB 5

Box 2
Diaries (1798-1821) and Calendar of Correspondence.
Diaries (1798-1821)
- Diary. 1798, 1801-1804 FB 6
- Diary. 1805 January 3-1805 November 14 FB 7
- Diary. 1812 September 21-1814 February 28 FB 8
- Diary. 1820 December 2-1821 May 6 FB 9
- Calendar of Correspondence. 1794-1797 FB 10

Beaufort, Sir Francis.
Box 3
Journals (1791-1812)
- Journal. 1791 October 5-1793 October 15 FB 11
  Written aboard HMS Aquilon.

- Journal. 1794 January-May 31 FB 12
  Written aboard HMS Aquilon.

- Journal. 1795 July 17-1796 March 11 FB 13
  Written aboard HMS Phaeton, off Spain.

- Journal. 1805 June 5-1806 May 31 FB 14
  Written aboard HMS Woolwich.

- Journal. 1811 July 14-1812 March 21 FB 15
  Written aboard the HMS Frederickstein in the Mediterranean; the basis for his Karamania.

Box 4
Journals (1812; 1821-1822)
- Journal. 1812 April-June FB 16
  Written aboard the HMS Frederickstein in the Mediterranean.

- Journal. 1812 June FB 17
  Written aboard the HMS Frederickstein in the Mediterranean.

- Journal. 1821-1822 FB 18

Box 5
Pocket diaries (1835-1850)
- Pocket diary. 1835 FB 19
- Pocket diary. 1836 FB 20
- Pocket diary. 1837 FB 21
- Pocket diary. 1838 FB 22
- Pocket diary. 1839 FB 23
- Pocket diary. 1840 FB 24
- Pocket diary. 1841 FB 25
- Pocket diary. 1842 FB 26
- Pocket diary. 1843 FB 27
- Pocket diary. 1844 FB 28
Pocket diary. 1845 FB 29
Pocket diary. 1846 FB 30
Pocket diary. 1847 FB 31
Pocket diary. 1848 FB 32
Pocket diary. 1849 FB 33
Pocket diary. 1850 FB 34

Box 6
Pocket diaries (1851-1857); hydrographic diaries; sketchbooks and notebooks
Pocket diary. 1851 FB 35
Pocket diary. 1852 FB 36
Pocket diary. 1853 FB 37
Pocket diary. 1854 FB 38
Pocket diary. 1855 FB 39
Pocket diary. 1856 FB 40
Pocket diary. 1857 FB 41
Hydrographic diary. 1847 FB 42
Hydrographic diary. 1848 FB 43
Hydrographic diary. 1849 FB 44
Hydrographic diary. 1850 FB 45
Hydrographic diary. 1851 FB 46
Hydrographic diary. 1852 FB 47
Hydrographic diary. 1853 FB 48
Hydrographic diary. 1854 FB 49
Hydrographic diary. 1855 FB 50

[Watercolor Topographical sketches of Mediterranean sites with commentary]. [1810-1812] FB 51
[Notebook on Karamania]. [before 1817] FB 52
Originals of Karamania. FB 52a
Volume with 14 engravings used as illustrations Beaufort’s book, Karamania, or a Brief Description of the South Coast of Asia Minor... (1817).

[Sketchbook]. 1828-1832 FB 53
Commonplace book. 1806-1825 FB 54

Box 7
Account books
Account book. 1812-1824 FB 55
Account book. 1825-1830 FB 56
Account book. 1831-1841 FB 57

Beaufort, Louisa Catherine

Box 7
Diary. 1842-1843 FB 58

Papers

Box 8
Papers. 1710; 1764-1790
Box 9
Papers. 1791-1795
Box 10
Papers. 1796-1799
Box 11
Papers. 1800-1803
Box 12
Papers. 1804-1805 September
Box 13
Papers. 1805 October-1806
Box 14
Papers. 1807-1808 April
Box 15
Papers. 1808 May-1809
Box 16
Papers. 1810-1811 October
Box 17
Papers. 1811 November-1813 June
Box 18
Papers. 1813 July-1814
Box 19
Papers. 1815
Box 20
Papers. 1816, and undated before 1817
Box 21
Papers. 1817
Box 22
Papers. 1818-1820
Box 23
Papers. 1821-1822, and undated before 1821
### Papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Papers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>33</td>
<td>1876-1884</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>1885-1947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Miscellaneous materials

**Edgeworth, Frances Anne (Beaufort). Drawings of flowers [colored botanical illustrations]. 1798-1807.** FB 59  
Physical Description: 1 volume

**Photographs, drawings and illustrations of churches and buildings at Navan and Collon, Ireland.**  
Physical Description: 10 pieces

**Articles by and about Sir Francis Beaufort (including obituaries).**  
Physical Description: Approximately 30 pieces  
Includes a small printed envelope with a folded chart for "Cryptography. A System of Secret Writing, by the late Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort."

**Obituaries of Daniel Augustus Beaufort. 1821**  
Physical Description: 9 pieces

**Obituaries of William Morris Beaufort. 1908-1909**  
Physical Description: 3 pieces

**Miscellaneous obituaries including Frances Beaufort Edgeworth and John Beaufort.**  
Physical Description: 3 pieces

**Miscellaneous printed material.**  
Physical Description: 6 pieces  
Includes two pamphlets about the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1865) and a pamphlet Barony and Viscountcy of De L'Isle.

**Unidentified manuscript fragments.**  
Physical Description: 21 pieces

### Maps

**Maps between 1828 and 1843**  
Physical Description: 5 pieces in 1 folder  
13 printed maps with Francis Beaufort’s annotations intended for publication by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK). The Society formed the Map Committee in November 1828, and Beaufort undertook the editing and annotation of the series for the next 15 years. Maps depict various areas of Great Britain, Europe, India and the Caribbean. 8 maps are missing as of April 2016. Available maps are identified below.

**The Punjab with part of Afghanistan, Kashimeer, Sinde, etc. (No. 5)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Switzerland (No. 7)</th>
<th>Bertainty (III) Baden, Wuntenberg, Bavaria, Tyrol; Switzerland (No. 8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gallica Cisalpina (No. 13)</td>
<td>Bokhara, Cabool, Beloochistan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emily Smythe, Viscountess Strangford papers. 1836-1888

Physical Description: 78 pieces in 1 boxes

Biographical Note of Emily Smythe

Emily Anne Beaufort Smythe, Viscountess of Strangford: philanthropist, youngest daughter of Sir Francis Beaufort (1774-1857) and wife of Percy Ellen Frederick William Smythe, the 8th Viscount Strangford and 3rd Baron of Penshurst (1826-1869). Upon her husband's death, she went through four years of training in a hospital, and devoted herself to nursing, founding the National Society for Providing Trained Nurses for the Poor. In 1876, following the suppression of the April Uprising in Bulgaria, she organized the Bulgarian Peasant Relief and traveled to Bulgaria to oversee the relief works. She also established temporary hospitals and helped political prisoners. During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 she organized hospitals in Adrianople and Sophia. She died in 1887, on her way to Port Said where she was to open a hospital for British seamen.

Scope and Content Note

Consists of correspondence, documents, and various legal papers of Lady Strangford and her husband, Percy Ellen Frederick William Smythe, the 8th Viscount Strangford, as well as three travel journals kept by Lady Strangford from October 1876 to March 1877 documenting her life and travels in Bulgaria during the Turko-Bulgarian war, and her efforts in establishing military hospitals. Some items in the collection are in French and Arabic.

Correspondence includes two letters from Mary Ann Evans Cross (George Eliot), dated 1874; a letter from Edward Lear, discussing his literary activities in Italy, etc. in June 1886; a June 9, 1867, letter from Harriet Martineau containing long discussion and analysis of Maria Edgeworth and her edition of Richard Lovell Edgeworth's autobiography; and an April 28, 1871, letter from Anna Eliot Ticknor discussing her life with George Ticknor. Alexander I, King of Bulgaria (1 letter); Frederick Temple Blackwood, 1st Marquis of Dufferin (6 letters); Sir Stafford Northcote (1 letter); and William Henry Smith (2 letters). There is also a November 17, 1886, letter from Alexander of Battenberg, Prince of Bulgaria, and an invitation to the May 8, 1838, coronation of Queen Victoria.

Box 35

Papers 1836-1888

John James Larpent, Baron de Hochepied papers. 1814-1859

Physical Description: 98 pieces in 3 boxes

Biographical Note of John James Larpent

John James Larpent (1783-1860) was the son of John Larpent (1741-1824) and Anna Margaretta Porter (1758-1832). In 1819, he and his brother George Gerard Larpent (1785-1855) added the name de Hochepied to their names, and in 1828 John James succeeded his mother’s brother as seventh Baron de Hochepied. From 1825 to 1837 he served as British council in Antwerp.

Scope and Content Note

Includes 52 letters by John James Larpent, chiefly consisting of diplomatic correspondence accumulated by Larpent during his term as British consul in Belgium. The letters cover diplomatic relations between Great Britain, Netherlands, and Belgium, particularly at the time of the Insurrection of 1830 that brought Belgium its independence. Among the documents are letters between Larpent and Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston, from the 1830s.

There are also letters from Larpent’s sister-in-law Catherine Elizabeth Reeves, the diary (1853-1859) of his daughter Clarissa de Hochepied Larpent James, and the journal (1860-1876) of his wife Georgiana Frances Reeves Larpent.

Box 36 Papers. 1814-1832

Box 37 Papers. 1833-1853