William Westall and Richard Westall Collection of Papers and Correspondence: Finding Aid

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
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Overview of the Collection

Title: William Westall and Richard Westall Collection of Papers and Correspondence

Dates (inclusive): 1805-1836

Collection Number: mssHM 54281-54318, HM 63286

Creator: Westall, William, 1781-1850.

Extent: 39 letters + one manuscript volume and a folder of ephemera in 1 box

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Abstract: This collection contains 39 items of English artists and brothers William Westall (1781-1850), an illustrator of topographical works, and Richard Westall (1765-1836), a painter, book illustrator, and instructor of painting and drawing to the Princess Victoria.

Language: English.

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

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. William Westall and Richard Westall Collection of Papers and Correspondence, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Provenance
Correspondence and ephemera was purchased from Cesi Kellinger, February 1, 1984, and the manuscript volume was donated by Mr. Edwards H. Metcalf, June 15, 1992.

Cataloging Decisions
1. The cataloging of this collection was begun by Sara S. Hodson in 1984 and completed by Gayle M. Barkley in 2002. It was decided not to replace the blue colored folders in order to render the names in standard authorized form; however, the names have been rendered consistently in this finding aid according to current standard authorized forms.

Biographical Note on Richard Westall
Richard Westall (1765-1836) was born in Hertford, England, in 1765 and, while living in London, worked as an apprentice to an heraldic engraver; in the evenings he studied art and was able to exhibit a portrait-drawing at the Royal Academy in 1784. He continued to paint, both in watercolor and oils, but his main occupation was as a prolific illustrator of books. When his large historical oil paintings did not sell he abandoned the medium and concentrated on book illustrating and painting watercolors, which, according to the Dictionary of National Biography, was his best medium. Toward the end of his life he was an instructor of painting and drawing to the Princess Victoria. Richard Westall never married and lived most of his life in London; he died there on December 4, 1836.

Biographical Note on William Westall
William Westall (1781-1850) was born in Hertford, England, in 1781 and was the younger brother of Richard Westall (1765-1836). He was taught drawing by his brother and in 1801, at the age of eighteen, began a series of voyages throughout Australia, China, India, Madeira, and Jamaica. When he returned to England in 1807 he began to paint pictures from the drawings he made on his journeys. These paintings were only moderately successful and he eventually began to gain employment as an illustrator of topographical works for various publishers; though he continued to paint and exhibit at the Royal Academy, he became best known for his topographical illustrations. He married Ann Sedgwick in 1820 and moved to St. John’s Wood where he lived for most of the remainder of his life and where he died in 1850.

Bibliography
**Scope and Content**

This collection contains correspondence, documents, engravings, and ephemera of the Westall brothers assembled at the Huntington Library. The papers consist of 38 letters, one bound manuscript volume, and one folder of ephemera. Included are the correspondence of William and Richard Westall, a bound volume of Richard Westall's illustrations, and printed pieces and photograph reproductions of various and paintings and illustrations. The incoming correspondence of William Westall includes letters from Sir John Carr, William Bernard Cooke, and others. 18 letters are signed "W. Stevens, Sedbergh, Westmoreland, England." There are six letters by Richard Westall, written between 1811 and 1836, including two letters addressed to his brother. Also included is a statement of account for Richard Westall (1829). Also included is a letter by James William Inman to a "M. Parrington." (1811). The collection also contains a the bound manuscript volume titled *Westall’s Illustrations of Byron's Works, with Suitable Extras, and a Brief Memoir*, with 31 printed illustrative plates drawn by Richard Westall and engraved by various artists.

**Arrangement**

The collection is organized in one box and consists of correspondence arranged alphabetically by author, the manuscript volume, and the folder of ephemera.


**Indexing Terms**

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

**Subjects**

Byron, George Gordon Byron, Baron, 1788-1824. Works.
Westall, Richard, 1765-1836 -- Archives.
Westall, William, 1781-1850 -- Archives.
Artists -- Great Britain -- Correspondence.

**Forms/Genres**

Book illustrations -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Drawings -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Engravings -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
Ephemera.
Letters (correspondence) -- Great Britain -- 19th century.
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Manuscripts -- Great Britain -- 19th century.

Additional Contributors
Carr, John, Sir, 1772-1832.
Cooke, William Bernard, 1778-1855.
Inman, James, 1776-1859.
Westall, Richard, 1765-1836, correspondent.

Box 1  Manuscript Volume; Correspondence; Ephemera

Westall, Richard, 1765-1836. Westall's Illustrations of Byron's Works, with Suitable Extras, and a Brief Memoir. 1834 HM 63286

Bound volume, 31 pages (with 28 blank pages interleaved between the illustrative plates); the printed illustrative plates were drawn by Richard Westall and engraved by various artists. The “brief memoir” of Byron and the “suitable extras” (short extracts from various poems by Byron) are written in an unknown hand and signed with the initials “MM” and dated, 1834. The volume also has the bookplate of Henry Ecroyd Smith on the inside front cover.

Correspondence

Beaumont, Margaret Willes, fl. 1778. 2 letters (1820) to William Westall, 1781-1850. HM 54281-54282

Black, Susan. 1 letter (1810, Aug. 21) to William Westall, 1781-1850, A.L.S. (2 p.); 23 cm. HM 54283


Cooke, William Bernard, 1778-1855. 1 letter (1811, Dec. 30) to William Westall, 1781-1850, A.L.S. (3 p.); 23 cm. HM 54286

Note: with multiple paint trials on the fourth page.

Davies, William. 1 document (1826, July 5), [List of pictures returned to Richard Westall], D.S. (2 p.); 36 cm. HM 54287

Gordon, Webster. 1 letter (1805, Sep. 19) to [Richard?] Westall, 1765-1836, A.L. (2 p.); 25 cm. HM 54288

Note: half of second leaf torn away, with no loss of text.

Inman, James Williams, 1776-1859. 1 letter (1811, Aug. 9) to M---- Parrington, A.L.S. (2 p.); 20 cm. HM 54289

Lane, Charles. 1 letter (1812, June 21) to William Westall, 1781-1850, A.L.S. (4 p.); 23 cm., Arundel (Sussex, England). HM 54290

Page, R----. 1 letter (1806, Jan. 24) to [William?] Westall, 1781-1850, A.L.S. (1 p.); 25 cm. HM 54291

Stevens, W----. 18 letters (1812-1819) to William Westall, 1781-1850; Sedbergh (Westmoreland, England). HM 54293-54310

Note: HM 54305 has bottom of second sheet torn away, with loss of most of signature and of some text, with paint trials on the fourth page; HM 54306 has bottom of second leaf torn away, with loss of text and signature; HM 54308 has portions of both leaves torn away, with loss of text and of signature.


Also: account of prints received by M----Colnaghi.

Westall, Richard, 1765-1836. 2 letters (1820) to William Westall, 1781-1850, London (England). HM 54314-54315

Note: HM 54314 has part of second leaf torn away, with some loss of text.

Westall, Richard, 1765-1836. 1 letter (1811, Dec. 22) to “My Dear Sir,” A.L.S. (2 p.); 18 cm. HM 54316

[Westall, Richard, 1765-1836.] 1 letter ([ca. 1836?]) to -----, Df. (2 p.); 23 cm. HM 54317

Tilton?, Charles. 1 letter (1830, Mar. 24) to William Westall, 1781-1850, A.L.S. (3 p.); 23 cm. HM 54318

Ephemera

Printed pieces and photograph reproductions of various paintings and topographical illustrations by the Westalls; includes some catalog descriptions (18 pieces).