Leonard Woolf Letters: Finding Aid

Processed by The Huntington Library staff in 1976; supplementary encoding and revision supplied by Brooke Dykman Dockter and Diann Benti.
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Overview of the Collection
Title: Leonard Woolf Letters
Dates (inclusive): 1900-1918
Collection Number: mssHM 42119-42183
Extent: 67 pieces in 1 box
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: The collection consists primarily of letters from English writer Leonard Woolf (1880-1969) to college roommate and friend Saxon Sydney-Turner, including thirty-eight letters date from Woolf's college days at the University Cambridge, twenty-two are from the period when Woolf served as a civil servant in Sri Lanka, and four letters date from the period after his return to England in 1911. One letter was written from Spain during his honeymoon with his wife, Virginia Woolf. Although most of the letters do not concern literary matters, there are two poems by Woolf in the collection: "2:30 A.M." and "To Ponamma."
Language: English.
Access
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Preferred Citation
Provenance
Purchased from Sotheby's, December 13, 1975.
Biographical Note
Leonard Sidney Woolf (1880-1969) was an English author, political essayist, and social reformer. He was a member of the Bloomsbury group--a group of friends, writers, artists, and intellectuals. He was married to author and fellow Bloomsbury member Virginia Woolf.
Scope and Content
Letters from English writer Leonard Woolf to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner, a college roommate and friend and one of the group of "Apostles" at Cambridge. The letters tell of Woolf's activities and projects while on vacation from Cambridge, of his life as a Civil Servant in Sri Lanka, and a few treat the period after his return to England.
Thirty-eight letters date from Woolf's college days at Cambridge and they treat a variety of scholastic subjects (his reading of Plato, Byron etc.) on which he was working during his vacations. Lytton Strachey is mentioned frequently in the letters as some incident concerning him or a fragment of a letter from him is reported.
Twenty-two letters date from the period when Woolf served as a Civil Servant in Sri Lanka and they are written from a number of cities and remote outposts throughout the country (Jaffna, Kandy, Hanbantota, Marichchukkadi etc.). Woolf describes with humor his life in Sri Lanka, especially the change in the state of his mind brought on by the long hours of work, the heat, and the isolation from the kind of society he had been used to. Among other things, he describes a public hanging, a meeting of a local Shakespeare society, and his experience of becoming ill in a remote village on one of his circuits of the territory.
Four letters date from the period after his return to England in 1911. One letter was written from Spain during his honeymoon there, describing his and Virginia's efforts to communicate with the locals and the omnipresent smell of "stale urine"
Most of the letters do not concern literary matters.
There are two poems by Woolf contained in the letters:
1) “2:30 AM” in a letter dated Apr. 17, 1901 (HM 42126)
2) “To Ponamma” in a letter dated June 12, 1910 (HM 42179)

A "chronological list of mystics", written during Woolf's school days groups various "mystics" by time and nationality. (HM 42119)

- Leonard Woolf letters to Clive and Julian Bell, 1906-1963 (mssHM 57680-57697)

Arrangement
Items are arranged in chronological order.

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

Subjects
Woolf, Virginia, 1882-1941.
University of Cambridge -- Students -- Correspondence.
Sri Lanka -- Description and travel.
Sri Lanka -- Social life and customs -- 19th century.

Forms/Genres
Letters (correspondence) -- Great Britain -- 20th century.
Letters (correspondence) -- Sri Lanka -- 20th century.
Poems -- Great Britain -- 20th century.
Poems -- Sri Lanka -- 20th century.

Contributors
Sydney-Turner, Saxon, correspondent.

Box 1

Correspondence and documents

HM 42119. Chronological List of Mystics for the Use of Contributors. 1901 December 15
   A.Ms.S. 3p. Was enclosed with note to Sydney-Turner (HM 42132)

HM 42120. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1900 March 1
   Cambridge, England

HM 42121. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1900 March 12
   Cambridge, England

HM 42122. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1900 March 29
   London, England

HM 42123. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1900 July 11
   London, England

HM 42124. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1900 December 15]
   London, England
HM 42125. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1900 December 27
London, England

HM 42126. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1901 April 17
[London, England?]. With poem "2:30 am" in the body of the letter.

HM 42127. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1901 June 23
London, England

HM 42128. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1901 July
London, England

HM 42129. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1901 August 10
London, England

HM 42130. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1901 September 10
London, England

HM 42131. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1901 December 12
London, England

HM 42132. Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1901 December 15]
London, England

HM 42133. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1901?]
London, England

HM 42134. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1902 January 1
London, England

HM 42135. Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [approximately 1902 January 29]
London, England

HM 42136. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1902 June]
London, England

HM 42137. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1902 July 28
London, England

HM 42138. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1902 August 29
London, England

HM 42139. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1902 September 22
Dinan, France.
HM 42140. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1902 September 26]**

HM 42141. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1902 December 14**
London, England

HM 42142. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1902 December 26**
London, England

HM 42143. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [approximately 1902]**
London, England

HM 42144. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1903 March 30**
London, England

HM 42145. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1903 June 20**
London, England

HM 42146. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1903 August 4**
Cambridge, England

HM 42147. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1903 September 20**
London, England

HM 42148. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1903 September 30]**
London, England

HM 42149. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1904 July 16**
London, England

HM 42150. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1904 July 23]**
London, England

HM 42151. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1904 August 20]**
London, England

HM 42152. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1904 August 22**
London, England

HM 42153. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1904 October 3**
London, England

HM 42154. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1904 October 9**
London, England
HM 42155. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1904 October 27**
London, England

HM 42156. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1904 November 1]**
London, England

HM 42157. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [approximately 1904 November 10]**
London, England

HM 42158. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 January 8**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42159. **Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1905 January 30]**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42160. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 February 19**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42161. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 April 2**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42162. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 May 7**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42163. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 June 11**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42164. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 July 16**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42165. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 September 3**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42166. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1905 October 30**
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42167. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1906 January 16**
Bandarawela, Sri Lanka

HM 42168. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1906 March 26**
Marichchukkadi, Sri Lanka

HM 42169. **Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1906 May 13**
Kankesantorai, Sri Lanka

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**Leonard Woolf Letters: Finding Aid**

mssHM 42119-42183 6
HM 42170. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1906 June 24  
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42171. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1906 August 27  
Kaddukkarankudiyiruppu, Sri Lanka

HM 42172. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1906 December 17  
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42173. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1907 January 20  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

HM 42174. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1907 March 10  
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42175. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1907 May 5  
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

HM 42176. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1908 February 2  
Kandy, Sri Lanka

HM 42177. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1908 October 28  
Kiram, Sri Lanka

HM 42178. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1909 May 1  
Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka

HM 42179. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1910 June 12  
Hanbantota, Sri Lanka. With poem "To Ponamma" in body of letter.

HM 42180. Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1911 October 3  
London, England

HM 42181. Leonard Sidney Woolf note to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. [1911 October 6]  

HM 42182. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1912 September 1  
Tarragona, Spain

HM 42183. Leonard Sidney Woolf letter to Saxon Arnold Sydney-Turner. 1918 February 19  
Richmond, Surrey, England

HM Miscellaneous Folder 1. Printed material: order form for The Future of Constantinople by Leonard Sidney Woolf [1917]  
With envelope to Sydney-Turner.
HM Miscellaneous Folder 2. Miscellaneous envelopes from Woolf to Sydney-Turner. 1901-1902