

*The Yale Editions of
the Private Papers of James Boswell*

RESEARCH EDITION

CATALOGUE
OF THE PAPERS
OF
JAMES BOSWELL
AT
YALE UNIVERSITY

By Marion S. Pottle, Claude Colleer Abbott
and Frederick A. Pottle



Volume 1

Catalogue of the Papers of James Boswell at Yale University

For the Greater Part Formerly the Collection
of Lieut.-Colonel Ralph Heyward Isham

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VOLUME I



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THE YALE EDITIONS OF
The Private Papers
of James Boswell



RESEARCH EDITION

The Correspondence of James Boswell and John Johnston of Grange,
EDITED BY RALPH S. WALKER, 1966

*The Correspondence and Other Papers of James Boswell Relating to the
Making of 'Life of Johnson',* EDITED BY MARSHALL WAINGROW, 1969

The Correspondence of James Boswell with Certain Members of The Club,
EDITED BY CHARLES N. FIFER, 1976

*The Correspondence of James Boswell with David Garrick, Edmund Burke,
and Edmond Malone,* EDITED BY PETER S. BAKER, THOMAS W. COPELAND,
GEORGE M. KAHRL, RACHEL MCCLELLAN, AND JAMES M. OSBORN, 1986

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General Editorial Note

The Yale Editions of the Private Papers of James Boswell consist of two independent and to some extent parallel series. One, the 'research' edition, gives a complete text of Boswell's journals, notes, and memoranda, of his correspondence, and of the *Life of Johnson* from the original manuscript. It preserves the spelling and capitalization of the original documents, and is provided with extensive scholarly annotation. A large group of editors is engaged in this comprehensive undertaking, which will be completed in thirty or more volumes. Four of these volumes, all correspondence, have appeared (1966, 1969, 1976, and 1986). The other series, the reading or 'trade' edition, which is now completed, selects from the total mass of papers those portions that appear likely to be of general interest and presents them in modern spelling and with appropriate annotation. The publishers have also issued limited de luxe printings of some of the trade volumes, with extra illustrations and special editorial matter, but none of the trade volumes include material from Boswell's archives that will not appear in the research edition.

F. A. Pottle's *Pride and Negligence*, a history of the Boswell Papers from Boswell's death in 1795 to their acquisition by Yale University in 1949, was published in 1981. Originally planned for publication with the *Catalogue*, to which it would have served as an introduction, it may now, though separate from it, serve that purpose no less well.

Preface

In the autumn of 1949 I began work on the project which occupied me for thirty years and which has at last achieved its purpose with the publication of this *Catalogue of the Papers of James Boswell at Yale University*.

Two printed catalogues of portions of the present collection have previously appeared: *The Private Papers of James Boswell from Malahide Castle in the Collection of Lt.-Colonel Ralph Heyward Isham: A Catalogue*, by Frederick A. Pottle and Marion S. Pottle, Oxford University Press, 1931; and *A Catalogue of Papers Relating to Boswell, Johnson, and Sir William Forbes, Found at Fettercairn House ...* by Claude Colleer Abbott, Clarendon Press, 1936. The present *Catalogue* was produced by conflating the entries from these books with a much larger number of entries representing papers, principally from Malahide Castle, that came into the collection after 1930. The many various additions made to Colonel Isham's original purchase of 1927 are reported in Professor Pottle's *Pride and Negligence: The History of the Boswell Papers*. It is estimated that the collection now contains upwards of 10,000 items.

The Boswell papers acquired by Yale University in the summer of 1949 were placed behind a beautiful iron grille in the far end of the Rare Book Room in Sterling Memorial Library, where the Gutenberg Bible had been exhibited. The space was in fact designed as a shrine, the Bible standing beneath a splendid chandelier hung from the vaulted ceiling. The shrine proved not to be practical because it was difficult to locate, and those pilgrims who found it distracted the scholars using the Rare Book Room. Accordingly in 1949 it became the sanctuary of the Boswell Papers: R. W. Chapman on visits to the collection was fond of referring to it as the 'Chapter House'.

Beneath the chandelier stood the cataloguer's desk with two large tables adjacent on right and left. Bookshelves held the familiar black boxes filled with the folders and morocco cases by Rivière containing the original Isham purchase, already catalogued in the *Isham Catalogue* of 1931. On the table at the right of my desk sat a large steamer trunk filled to overflowing with Colonel Isham's later purchases from Malahide Castle. On the floor against the wall were the metal boxes which contained the manuscripts from Fettercairn House, enclosed in envelopes or tied in bundles, carefully labelled by Professor Abbott in accordance with the system of his *Catalogue*.

The first several months I spent in sorting the contents of the steamer trunk, drawing up lists of correspondences for the use of the Editorial Committee, holding interviews with the press, and selecting items for exhibition. I showed documents to scholars and other visitors eager to see and know more about the papers, and assisted graduate students come to seek out materials for theses. It was necessary to furnish the scholars and students with photostats before routine photostating of the Fettercairn papers and the contents of the steamer trunk could begin. This stage of the work was completed by November 1952.

The task of identifying all the papers and developing a scheme for classifying them took several years. The deciphering of difficult handwriting was sometimes complicated by crowded passages or censorship in impenetrable ink. Damaged documents had to be mended, and crumbled fragments of script had to be mounted on gauze and pieced together like jigsaw puzzles before they could be identified. I began writing the catalogue entries by 1951 and finished in 1954, but numbers were not assigned to the entries until the autumn of 1955. Decimal numbers were given to items that had to be inserted after serial numbers had been assigned. (The use of decimals is further explained on p. xix.) It soon became evident from the thousands of entry summaries and from the sectional scheme of the *Catalogue* that an index would be necessary. Robert F. Metzdorf, then Secretary to the Editorial Committee, undertook the preparation of the slips, Joseph W. Reed continued the work, and I made slips for later acquisitions as part of the cataloguing process.

By early 1958 it seemed that the *Catalogue* would be ready for the printer as soon as Professor Pottle's history of the Boswell Papers was completed. Shelved in black boxes in the Boswell editorial office in Sterling Library, the manuscript was used increasingly by the editors and inquiring scholars. Publication plans were suspended in 1961 for reasons explained in *Pride and Negligence*, pp. 2-3. In the summer of that year the collection was extended by a large purchase from Lady Talbot de Malahide. This acquisition, containing among other important papers Boswell's collection of newspapers and newspaper cuttings, necessitated many changes in the section of Printed Matter in the *Catalogue*, including the renumbering of the entire section.

During this period the Yale collections of rare books and manuscripts were moved to the new Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. On 10 October 1963 the Boswell Papers were taken from their quarters in Sterling Library, and on 14 October I rejoined them in Room 23 on the court level of the new building.

Professor Pottle, who wrote all the journal entries in the *Isham Catalogue*, revised my reworking of that section and gave advice concerning the entire copy. I kept continuously at work, checking and correcting. New items, which were constantly being added, often furnished more detailed information and sometimes made corrections necessary. As I had become perforce a sort of 'editor general' of the whole collection, I was glad to have the benefit of the more specialized work of the several editors of the Boswell Editions as the volumes (notably those in the research series) appeared.

When Irma S. Lustig joined the Yale Boswell Editions as Managing Editor in 1975, the *Catalogue* was given priority, and a grant from the Editing Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities made it possible to put the work to press.

Some statement should be made about material in the collection which does

not appear in the *Catalogue*. In 1961–63 and 1967 two extremely large groups of papers were acquired. The earlier of these came from Auchinleck House and concerned the management of the estate (c. 1722–1836). Since they have to do with rentals, tenants, taxes, stipends, and the day-to-day work on the farms, they were the sort of papers which might have accumulated in the office of the overseers. The 1967 accession, from Malahide Castle, was contained in five large suitcases and one carton. The contents included charters to the lands which made up the estate of Auchinleck and many other family papers from the fifteenth century down to the time of Sir James Boswell, Bt., grandson of James Boswell the biographer.

It was obvious that it would not be feasible to insert in the *Catalogue* these two groups, and three others totalling 270 items of similar nature: they would overwhelm its principal subject, James Boswell the biographer, would at best cause a long delay in publication, and indeed might so increase the size of the work and the expense of its preparation and printing as to make publication impossible. It seemed necessary, however, to make their presence known and to make them readily accessible. The very few personal papers of Boswell contained in them, together with other papers closely connected with items already catalogued, were removed and entered in the *Catalogue*.

The large mass from Auchinleck House, acquired in 1961–63, was divided into three groups. 'Auchinleck I' consisted of the earlier papers up to the year of Boswell's death (1795). These had been listed by Robert Metzdorf at the time of purchase, but not arranged in any particular order, and they were still tied up in seven bundles when they came to Yale. They were indexed chronologically, and a dictionary catalogue on slips was made for each bundle, under names of persons, names of farms and other place-names, and subjects. The contents of 'Auchinleck II' (lairdships of Sir Alexander Boswell and his son Sir James, 1795–1857) were arranged chronologically and so listed. 'Auchinleck III' consisted of papers relating to estate management, business and family letters of Sir Alexander Boswell, manuscript copies and several printed texts of Sir Alexander Boswell's poems, and items relating to his death. A list made at the time of purchase and a chronological list compiled from it provided access to this group of papers.

In 1967 Yale acquired from the late Milo, 7th Lord Talbot de Malahide, an unlisted and wholly unsorted mass of Boswell family papers. For convenience this collection, which represents a final clearing of Boswell papers from Malahide Castle, came at Yale to be called the 'Talbot Papers'. 'Boswell Family Archive' would be more precisely descriptive. The papers include charters and other writings having reference to lands bought by the lairds of Auchinleck, genealogical studies, writs concerning the patronage of the church, marriage contracts, wills, and family letters. Separate inventories were made of the contents of each of the five suitcases and the carton in which the papers arrived at Yale, and the documents were arranged chronologically in the order of the various Boswells, lairds of Auchinleck, from Thomas (d. 1513) to Sir James (d. 1857). In the arrangement some documents which antedate this period were listed at the beginning of the inventories. I acquired experience in reading script of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries as I went along, but Lord Auchinleck had made my task much easier by carefully docketing many of the

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documents and sorting related ones into bundles.

Three smaller groups (totalling 270 items) were all represented by lists. Of these one group known as the 'McHarg Papers', from the name of a member of the law firm of David Shaw and Co., Ayr, in whose office they rested till Joyce, Lady Talbot de Malahide, sold them to Yale in 1961, contained notably the legal documents by which Lord Auchinleck created certain fictitious votes for the Ayrshire election of 1774, and a great many relating to Sir James's suit to break the Auchinleck entail. The papers of the two remaining groups, one the gift of H. W. Liebert, the other a purchase, consisted of charters from the chartulary of Auchinleck. They appear to be a selection from the office papers of Robert Boswell, W. S., the biographer's cousin and legal agent, via Alexander Boswell, W. S., Robert's second son and successor in business. Boswell no doubt had transmitted at least some of them to Robert Boswell in 1784 and later, when Robert was assisting him in 'making up' his titles.

All these groups of uncatalogued papers also receive some mention in the first Epilogue of Professor Pottle's *Pride and Negligence*.*

M.S.P.

*[Since Mrs. Pottle wrote her Preface in 1982 changes have taken place, the most notable being the cataloguing of the groups of Boswell family papers that Yale acquired between 1949 and 1973. These are the papers that Mrs. Pottle describes as residing in suitcases in her Beinecke office, the papers that she had sorted, listed, and indexed loosely, but which she never catalogued. In 1987 Diane J. Ducharme, archives assistant at the Beinecke Library, was given the responsibility of making this Boswell family archive available to researchers as Part II of the Boswell Collection and she has completed the register of these papers. She has written an interesting and informative article about the material and her experiences as its processor in the *Yale University Library Gazette*, October 1987, lxii. 43-55.]

Use of the Catalogue

SECTIONS. The *Catalogue* is divided into seven sections denoted by letters: J (Journals of James Boswell); M (Manuscripts, other than letters and journal, written by Boswell); L (Letters written by Boswell); C (Correspondence: letters received by Boswell and other manuscripts not written by him); P (Printed and non-manuscript matter); A (Accounts); and Lg (Legal papers). Sections A and Lg contain some papers written by Boswell. Each section is prefaced by directions which apply specifically to it.

NUMBERING. Items are entered in serial numerical order under each of the sections.

ASTERISKS. Asterisks before numbers denote documents acquired by purchase or gift from sources other than Malahide, Auchinleck, or Fettercairn, e.g. *L 509 (Boswell to Andrew Erskine, 8 Dec. 1761), purchased by the Boswell Papers Editing Fund in 1955 from Sir Ralph Anstruther of Balcaskie, Bt. The asterisks have been omitted from the index.

DECIMALS. Decimal numbers are employed to place in proper order items which turned up after the integers had been assigned: e.g. L 1236.9 (Boswell to W. J. Temple, 6 July 1784), which had to be placed between letters from Boswell to W. J. Temple, 3 May 1769 (L 1236) and 20 July 1784 (L 1237). In assigning decimals, allowance was made for possible future insertions, that is, gaps were deliberately left in the series .1 to .9, and .1 was usually assigned to drafts or copies of items already numbered with integers. In a few cases it became necessary to use double decimals, as in the series C 271.5, C 271.55, C 271.6.

Z NUMBERS. A 'z' following a catalogue number indicates that the minute for that item is to be found in the Addendum.

COLONS. Cross-references and the index sometimes employ colons, e.g. 'See also M 245:5'. This means that M 245 consists of several numbered items and that reference is being made to the fifth item. Within the minutes to the catalogue entries, these items are distinguished by parentheses: M 245(1), M 245(2), etc.

ENTRIES. Entries within the sections consist of three parts: a heading which determines the catalogue number; a bibliographical description; and a minute of contents and/or notes (other non-bibliographical information concerning the item). This third part of the entry is separated from the first two by spacing and is in a smaller type. Loosely, the whole upper portion is sometimes referred to as 'the heading', the lower part (minute of contents and/or explanatory matter) as 'the note'.

HEADINGS. The heading consists of a name or title and a date-line. A name used as a heading is normally that of the author of the document, except in Section L, where the name is that of the recipient of a letter from Boswell; titles, if not given in the document, are supplied by the cataloguer. All elements of the heading are subject to normalization. Peers are entered under their titles, not under their family names. Except for Lord Auchinleck, whose heading is *Boswell, Alexander*, Scottish judges are entered under their judicial styles, with cross-references from family names. Bishops are entered under their family names. Peers are given the titles appropriate for May 1795 (the date of Boswell's death), or for the date on which they last appear in documents listed in this Catalogue, e.g. Hugh Montgomerie was known to Boswell only as 'Major Montgomerie', but he succeeded as twelfth Earl of Eglinton in 1796 and the *Catalogue* lists certain communications between him and Sir Alexander Boswell which were written after 1800. One or two exceptions to this rule have occurred through late identification or recent acquisition; in these cases appropriate cross-references are supplied. A few persons who are decidedly better known by their earlier names are so entered: *Walpole, Horace; Burney, Frances*.

Spellings of family names follow the *Dictionary of National Biography* when the persons in question are included there. Margaret Stuart's *Scottish Family History* has been useful for fixing the preferences of family spellings within a clan (Montgomery, Montgomerie; Elliot, Eliott, Eliot). For peers and baronets the authorities are Sir James Balfour Paul's *Scots Peerage* and G. E. Cokayne's *Complete Peerage* and *Complete Baronetage*. For foreign names the *Biographie universelle* (1811–62) and the *Enciclopedia italiana* (1929–39) have been consulted. Place-names are given in their modern spellings. J. G. Bartholomew's *Survey Gazetteer of the British Isles* is authority for the spelling of place-names in Great Britain and Ireland. *Ayrshire at the Time of Burns* (Collections of the Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, vol. 5, 1959) has supplied modern spellings of many Ayrshire estates and farms. Continental place-names are given in their English spellings.

It will be noted that in this *Catalogue* the heading for The Club appears as *Literary Club*, a denomination taken over from the *Isham Catalogue* (1931) and the *Index* (1937). 'The Club', however, is the term used elsewhere in the *Catalogue*.

DATES. Whatever the style employed in the documents, dates are given in this order: day, month, year (1 Jan. 1775). Dates and place-names supplied by the cataloguer are enclosed in square brackets. Postmarks are not given unless they are necessary for dating the documents.

ADDRESSES. Addresses follow the text as given in the MSS., the punctuation being normalized only when expedient, by the insertion of commas and periods or by alteration of certain other arbitrary marks such as colons (e.g. Esq.:). The location of addresses on documents is noted only if oddly placed.

ABBREVIATIONS. The following abbreviations have been employed: B. (Baron), Bt. (Baronet), D. (Duke), E. (Earl), M. (Marquess), V. (Viscount), JB (James Boswell, the biographer), and SJ (Samuel Johnson). For abbreviations used in the index to the Catalogue, see p. xxv.

REFERENCES TO THE PRINTED *Life of Johnson* and *Tour to the Hebrides*. Unless otherwise stated, all references are to the Hill-Powell edition, 6 vols., 1934-64.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTIONS. The documents of the collection frequently (in the case of letters more often than not) consist of two conjugate leaves made by folding a half-sheet of paper once. No attempt has been made to report which leaves are detached and which are conjugate unless it is necessary to do so to explain other bibliographical features. Folio leaves are usually reported as such, as are other sizes that differ markedly from the more common quarto or octavo. 'Signed', for other than peers and bishops, means that the signature corresponds in full with the name as given in the heading (Temple, William Johnson); for peers and bishops, it means that the signature is the style proper for their rank (Eglinton; John Sarum). All other styles are specifically reported, e.g. Signed: W. J. Temple. Unless otherwise noted, endorsements on letters are understood to be in the handwriting of the recipient; on other documents, in the handwriting of the writer of the document.

MINUTE OF CONTENTS. In this part of the entry the cataloguer has attempted to report matter of biographical interest, including, so far as was feasible, the titles of books and other writings mentioned. The aim has been to report fact rather than to engage in literary judgement. These minutes are usually referred to as 'notes' in the *Catalogue*.

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Our foremost obligation must be to the Clarendon Press, Oxford, and the Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, for kind permission to make free use of the *Isham Catalogue* of 1931, by Frederick A. and Marion S. Pottle, and the *Fettercairn Catalogue* of 1936 by Claude Colleer Abbott. About a third of the entries of the present work have been adopted, with some revision, from Professor Abbott's *Catalogue*. He himself made or approved much of the revision before his death in 1971.

The compiling of the *Catalogue* may be said to be the joint effort of the entire Boswell Editorial Committee and its staff, past and present. I feel deeply grateful for their help, both scholarly and technical, which has brought the volumes to the point of publication. Principal among them are H. W. Liebert, who has from the beginning encouraged and made smooth the way for a project involving unusual relations between the University Library and the publisher in the matter of the handling of the collection itself; Marshall Waingrow, who helped in formulating a scheme for the mass of papers relating to the *Life of Johnson* as well as aiding in cataloguing certain letters and papers concerning Johnson; and Frank Brady, who offered many suggestions and corrections and was consulted in matters of James Boswell's political life and on Scottish politics in general. These three, with Alan S. Bell of the Rhodes House Library, Oxford, also read galley proof in 1978-79. I was fortunate indeed in having been able to consult F. W. Hilles on the Reynolds papers and Sir James Fergusson of Kilkerran, Bt., on the entries in Section Lg. To Irma S. Lustig, I am indebted in a very special way. It was through her activity that the funds were raised to keep the project alive and the staff assembled to expedite the publication schedule; she also aided me in the course of her own editorial work with helpful suggestions and in reading or interpreting difficult passages in the journal. Harriet Chidester, for many years the invaluable assistant to the editors and at some periods the sole mainstay of the Boswell editorial office, was intimately associated with the *Catalogue* from 1955 until she left the staff in 1977. Maker and custodian of the typescript, she had charge of checking the entries and making the corrections, a process which we carried on in innumerable written queries and answers. When publication at last seemed likely she devoted herself to preparing the typescript for the printer, and to a thorough and rigorous examination of the whole to eliminate inconsistencies of style and to clarify statements in