
Inventory of the Baldwin Family Papers, 1779-1886, bulk 1803-1865

The Huntington Library

San Marino, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Baldwin Family Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1779-1886,

Date (bulk): bulk 1803-1865

Creator: Baldwin Family

Extent: 475 pieces in 8 boxes in chronological order

Repository: The Huntington Library

San Marino, California 91108

Language: English

Provenance

For an account of these papers, see the Introduction to *Four New Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft and Helen M. Williams*, ed. Benjamin P. [UNK] and Carrie C. Autrey (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1937), pp. 8-10. Gift to the Library of Rear Admiral M. H. Simons, Mrs. Frank O. Branch, and Mrs. R. K. Van Mater, 1956.

Access

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Preferred Citation

Introduction

Family correspondence and a few miscellaneous papers of the children of Michael Baldwin (1719-1787) of New Haven, including Abraham Baldwin (1754-1807), American statesman and founder of the University of Georgia; Henry Baldwin (1780-1844), justice of the United States Supreme Court; Ruth (Baldwin) Barlow (1756-1818) and her husband, Joel Barlow (1754-1812), American poet and statesman; Clara (Baldwin) Bomford (1782-1856), wife of George Bomford (1782-1848), chief of ordnance of the army; and the descendants of George and Clara Bomford. About one-sixth of the letters are addressed to Joel and/or Ruth Barlow, 1779-1816; about one-half to Ruth's sister, Clara (Baldwin) Bomford, 1803-1855; about one-sixth to Clara's daughter, Ruth (Bomford) Paine, 1856-1891; and the remainder to others. Perhaps the collection as a whole is best described as the remnant of a family archive which has passed through a number of generations.

Scope and Content

Of particular interest are the letters of Elizabeth Whitman to Joel Barlow; the letters of Ruth Barlow; and the extensive series of letters from George William Erving (1769-1850), American diplomat, to Clara Bomford. Erving's letters are perhaps the most substantial part of the collection and the earlier ones are particularly interesting. He never married, occupied several diplomatic posts in Europe, travelled about a good deal, and lived for many years in Paris. The letters contain nothing about his diplomatic work as such, but are full of reflections and observations on a number of subjects and some of them run to a considerable length--there is one of twenty-nine pages.

In the earlier part of the collection there are references to Joel Barlow and a number of letters addressed to him, but only one document and several postscripts in his handwriting, and copies of his will and one poem. There are occasional references to political affairs, but the primary importance of the collection is for the picture it presents of the social and day-to-day life of the time, and for the information it contains about the individuals noted below.

- I. Biographical material for:
 - A. Abraham Baldwin
 - B. Ruth (Baldwin) Barlow and Joel Barlow
 - C. Clara (Baldwin) Bomford and George Bomford
 - D. George William Erving
 - E. Robert and Harriet Fulton
 - F. Other members of the Baldwin family and descendants of George & Clara Bomford
- II. Kalorama, purchased by the Barlows in 1807; sold to the Bomfords in 1818 and subsequently sold by them in 1846
- III. Society, Washington, D. C., 1803-1815
- IV. Social life in Paris of the Barlows, 1811-1812
- V. Europe--Description and Travel: letters of George W. Erving descriptive of Switzerland, Italy, and France

Baldwin, Abraham.

To Ruth Barlow. 1789, July 3. "These Politicians Keep Such A Talking Round My Ears, That I Cannot Write You Any More At Present."

Baldwin, Abraham.

To Joel Barlow. 1791, Mar. 13. "Many Of The Atlantic Settlers Wish The Western Country Not To Be Settled, And Take All Opportunities To Throw Blocks In The Way...."

Baldwin, Abraham.

Will. 1807, Mar. 1.

Barlow, Joel.

Will. 1797, Apr. 15. Certified Copy, Dated 1813.

Barlow, Ruth (Baldwin).

To Clara Bomford. 1810, Mar. 10 & 14. Re: Clara'S Change Of Name; Mrs. Madison; Mme. Bonaparte; Napoleon'S Divorce; Etc.

Barlow, Ruth (Baldwin).

To Clara Bomford. 1812, Sep. Letters Describing Her Visit To Mme. De Villette.

Barlow, Ruth (Baldwin).

Will. 1813, Aug. 24.

Barlow, Ruth (Baldwin).

To Clara Bomford. 1814, Mar. 13. "...Yet The World Suppose Him [Robert Fulton] Swimming In Wealth, Whilst In Reality He Is Oppressed With Debts Which He Can Hardly Find The Means Of Meeting. How Little My Dear Clara, We Know Of Peoples Real Situations & Feelings."

Bomford, Clara (Baldwin).

To Anna Maria (Brodeau) Thornton. 1811, Nov. 13. Re: Paris Opera, Joel Barlow'S Presentation To The Emperor, Etc.

Bomford, Clara (Baldwin).

To Anna Thornton. 1814, Dec. 11. Our [Connecticut] neighbors are mostly people of fortune or independant farmers, all delighted to see their friends & acquaintance, they call a visit from 2 in the afternoon till 9 in the evening--about 4 they have a table groaning with the weight of all the good things they can muster--chickens sausages, apple sauce, sweet meats, bread & butter cakes & pies & in the evening cider apples & nuts.

Erving, George William.

To Joseph Gales. 1814, Oct. 22. Re: the misinterpretation by the British press of American news.

Erving, George William.

To Clara Bomford. 1819, Oct. 6-20. Re: his life in Paris; Mrs. Decatur (she is a charming woman; she was not absolutely a *flame*, but a little *flamelet* of mine many years ago, but all calculations duly made, I thought it most prudent to withdraw.); Lafayette (he is one of those in whom hope will never die, who will always see 'couleur de rose' tho affairs be as black as ink,--he thinks that good principles & a good heart is every thing,--tho a soldier he does not calculate well the power of bayonets...)

Erving, George William.

To the same. 1825, Nov. 20. I am glad that you like Mr Vaughan, but I neither presume or desire that you see much of him;--tho' he is a very estimable man, perhaps more respectable (morally speaking) than ministers are in general, yet I shoud not have given him a letter to you (for this is against my rules) but that he almost compelled me to do so:-- with all Vaughans apparent simplicity & frankness, put this well into your head, that he is as thourough an Englishman as any of them; nor coud they find in all England a more fit man to send to Washington; for his modesty, his want of all pretension,--his 'bonhommie' & his moderate calm manner, are the very qualities suited to our *gullibility*;...

Erving, George William.

To the same. 1826, June 8. Monroe... demands great 'swads' of our money without even the shadow of any right at all; thinking no doubt that as the mouth of the publick purse has opened for *poor* Lafayette, he may as well thrust his big fist into it; before the delicate paw of Madam Decatur shall have quite exhausted it, for the sake of her future husband....

[In Washington] You live precisely in the centre, the best position for observation--look about you,--probably you will not find one man excepting your good husband, who is devoid of this mania; look at their gray or bald foreheads--laden with care; see all the younger ones--rushing--& jostling & fighting & worrying each other, their hearts full of bitterness & envy; their nights sleepless; see what a proportion leave their families, neglect their business, impair their fortunes & ruin their constitutions, for the gratification of empty vanity--called 'ambition':--for do not mistake, not one in an hundred is there to 'serve his country' as a *duty*. Poor Rufus King!--he has been minister & Senator, & not being able to arrive at the Presidency for which he has been struggling all his life, must needs be minister again; well he dies in the effort! Poor Monroe! he arrived by dint of perseverance, he retires, health & fortune ruined, reputation in not much better condition,--he is to be consumed by mortification! Poor Crawford! the best years of his life sacrificed, his estate & profession neglected;--all his prospects defeated,--he vegitates!--so of the rest.

Erving, George William.

To the same. 1835, Mar. 18. You & I who knew so well must sympathize in the loss of that most excellent friend Mr Crawford; I have never seen in publick life anyone of such perfect & disinterested patriotism, or in private of more pure integrity.

Fulton, Robert.

To Joel Barlow. 1809, Mar. 1. Re: Explanation of his moving away from Kalorama; Barlow's interest in the steamboat (you had little faith in the success or profits of the boat); Barlow's financial affairs; and getting *The Columbiad* reviewed in London.

Gaines, Edmund Pendleton.

To Clara Bomford. 1812, Jan. 20. Re: death of his wife, Frances.

Lafayette, Marquis de.

Dinner invitation to Joel Barlow. 1789, Feb. 9.

Thornton, Anna Maria (Brodeau).

To Clara Bomford. 1812, Mar. 15. Re: Count Crillon.

Whitman, Elizabeth.

To Joel Barlow, 14 letters, 1779-1780; and one letter to Ruth Barlow, 1782.

The tragic life of Elizabeth Whitman served as the basis for the popular early American novel by Hannah Webster Foster, *The Coquette, or, the history of Eliza Wharton*, 1797. These letters were published (inaccurately) by Mrs. Caroline Dall in *The Romance of the Association...*, Cambridge, 1875.

Baldwin, Abraham

24 pieces, 1789-1807 (2)

Baldwin, Henry
8 pieces, 1813-1816

Baldwin, William D.
4 pieces, 1882

Barlow, Anica (Preble)
4 pieces, 1812-1855

Barlow, Joel
3 pieces, 1797-1812 (38)

Barlow, Ruth (Baldwin)
67 pieces, 1795-1816 (41)

Bishop, Victor
7 pieces, 1845-1852

Bomford, Clara (Baldwin)
21 pieces, 1811-1827 (236)

Bomford, George
7 pieces, 1844-1848 (10)

Bomford, James V.
6 pieces, 1883-1887

Bomford, Mattie
4 pieces, 1856-1883

Dall, Caroline Wells (Healey)
7 pieces, 1884-1892

Derby, Richard C.
5 pieces, 1882-1886

Erving, George William
116 pieces, 1812-1850 (1)

Eyre, Wilson
4 pieces, 1882

Gaines, Edmund Pendleton
10 pieces, 1812-1814

Lafayette, Marquis De
4 pieces, 1789-1827

Linwood, Mary
3 pieces, 1805-1812

Madison, Dolly (Payne) Todd
4 pieces, 1811-1842

Maguire, Bernard
3 pieces, 1844-1848

Marbois, Comte De
6 pieces, 1812-1814

Maulsby, A. M.
5 pieces, 1882

Moore, Margaret Jane (King), Countess Mountcashell
4 pieces, 1812

Olmstead, Lemuel G.
11 pieces, 1854-1855

Riddle, John S.
4 pieces, 844

Seymour, Louisa
5 pieces, 1886-1891

Smith, J. B. H.
5 pieces, 1851-1856

Thornton, Anna Maria (Brodeau)
17 pieces, 1812-1855 (18)

Whitman, Elizabeth
15 pieces, 1779-1782

Williams, Helen Maria
6 pieces, 1812-1815