‘Select Bibliography: The Manuscript Letter in Early Modern England’

James Daybell and Andrew Gordon

The following bibliography maps resources available for study of the early modern correspondence concentrating on the manuscript letter. Although substantial it is not comprehensive and should be used in conjunction with the further bibliographies listed under 5a.

1. General Studies

2. Material Features and Technologies of the Letter
   a. Material and Physical Characteristics
   b. Tools, Technologies and Stuff of Letter Writing
   c. Handwriting and Palaeography
   d. Postal Conditions

3. Letter Writing Genres and Practices
   a. Composition and Authorship
   b. Secretaries and Scribes
   c. Epistolary Manuals and Model Letters
   d. Secret Letters
   e. Newsletters
   f. Anonymous Letters and Libels
   g. Linguistic Approaches to the Letter

4. Afterlives of the Letter
   a. Letter Books
   b. Copies, Circulation and the Re-Reading of Letters
   c. Archives

5. Further Resources
   a. Other Bibliographies
   b. Unpublished Theses
   c. Select Editions
   d. Online Resources
      i. Digital Editions, Letter Projects and Research Initiatives
      ii. Library catalogues
      iii. Other Archival Gateways
      iv. Online Finding Aids and Publications
      v. Digital Collections
1. GENERAL STUDIES

Altman, Janet Gurkin, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1982).


Classen, Albrecht, ‘Female Epistolary Literature From Antiquity to the Present: An Introduction’, *Studia Neophilologica* 60 (1988), 3-13


__________, and Peter Hinds (eds), *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture, 1580-1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010).


Howe, James, Epistolary Spaces: English Letter Writing from the Foundation of the Post Office to Richardson’s ‘Clarissa’ (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).


de Landtsheer, Jeanine, and Henk Nellen (eds), Between Scylla and Charybdis: Learned Letter Writers Navigating The Reefs of Religious and Political Controversy in Early Modern Europe (Leiden: Brill, 2011).


__________, ‘The Voices of Anne Cooke, Lady Anne and Lady Bacon’ in Danielle Clarke and Elizabeth Clarke (eds), This Double Voice: Gendered Writing in Early Modern England (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), 88-102.


2. MATERIAL FEATURES AND TECHNOLOGIES OF THE LETTER

a. Materiality and physical characteristics


b. Tools, technologies and the stuff of letter-writing


SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY: THE MANUSCRIPT LETTER IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND


Finlay, Michael, Western Writing Implements in the Age of the Quill Pen (Carlisle: Plains, 1990).


__________, ‘Paper as Bibliographical Evidence’, *The Library* 17 (1962), 197-212.

__________, ‘Shakespearian Dated Watermarks’, *Studies in Bibliography* 4 (1951-52), 159-64.

__________, ‘Tudor Roses from John Tate’, *Studies in Bibliography* 20 (1967), 15-34.

__________, ‘Watermarks are Twins’, *Studies in Bibliography* 4 (1951), 57-91.


c. Handwriting and palaeography


__________, ‘The Practice of Handwriting Identification’, *The Library* 8:3 (2007), 251-76


__________, The Later Court Hands in England From the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century, 2 volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927).

__________, Palaeography and the Practical Study of Court Hand (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915).


d. Postal conditions

Akkerman, Nadine, ‘The Postmistress, the Diplomat, and a Black Chamber?: Alexadrine of Taxis, Sir Balthazar Gerbier and the Power of Postal Control’, in Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox (eds), Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), 172-88.


SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY: THE MANUSCRIPT LETTER IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND


Gerhold, Dorian, Carriers and Coachmasters: Trade and Travel Before to Tumpikes (Chichester: Phillimore, 2005).


Hyde, J.W., The Early History of the Post in Grant and Farm (London: 1894).


Tombs, R.C., The King’s Post: Being a volume of historical facts relating to the Posts, Mail Coaches, Coach Roads, and Railway Mail Services of and connected with the Ancient City of Bristol from 1580 to the present time (Bristol: Hemmons, 1905).


3. LETTER WRITING GENRES AND PRACTICES

a. Composition and Authorship

b. Secretaries and Scribes

Burlinson, Christopher, and Andrew Zurcher, ""Secretary to the Lord Grey Lord Deputie here": Edmund Spenser’s Irish Papers, The Library 6:1 (2005), 30-75.


c. Epistolary Manuals and Model Letters


Maurer, Margaret, and Carol Poster (eds), Letter-Writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present: Historical and Bibliographic Studies (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007).


d. Secret Letters


Stewart, Alan, ‘Francis Bacon’s Bi-literal Cipher and the Materiality of Early Modern Diplomatic Writing’ in Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox (eds), Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), 120-37.


e. Newsletters


___________, ‘Women, News and Intelligence Networks in Elizabethan England’, in Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox (eds), Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), 101-19.


SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY: THE MANUSCRIPT LETTER IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND


Randall, David, ‘Epistolary Rhetoric, the Newspaper, and the Public Sphere’, Past and Present 198 (2008), 3-32.


f. Anonymous Letters and Libels


Starner, Janet and Barbara Traister (eds), *Anonymity in Early Modern England: What's In A Name?* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).


**g. Linguistic Approaches to the Letter**

Evans, Mel, ‘Pronouns of Majesty: A Study of Royal We and Other Self-Reference Pronouns During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I’, *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 12:2 (2013).


4. AFTERLIVES OF THE LETTER

a. Letter Books


b. Copies, Circulation and the Re-Reading of Letters


__________, ‘Copycopia, or the Place of Copied Correspondence in Manuscript Culture: A Case Study’ in James Daybell and Peter Hinds (eds), Material Readings of Early Modern Culture, 1580-1730: Texts and Social Practices (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010), 65-82.


SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY: THE MANUSCRIPT LETTER IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND


c. Archives


5. FURTHER RESOURCES

a. Other Bibliographies


b. Unpublished Theses

Adams, Robyn, “‘Both Diligent and Secret’: the Intelligence Work of William Herle’ (PhD, Queen Mary, University of London, 2004).


Coast, David, ‘The Politics of Information in the Correspondence of William Trumbull and Sir Dudley Carleton, 1616-25’ (PhD, University of Sheffield, 2010).


Cooper, Ian, ‘Networks, News and Communication: Political Elites and Community Relations in Elizabethan Devon, 1588-1603’ (PhD, University of Plymouth, 2012).

Daybell, James, ‘Women’s Letters and Letter-writing in England, 1540-1603’ (PhD, University of Reading, 2000).
______, ‘The Political Role of Upper-Class Women in Early Tudor England as Evidenced by Their Correspondence’ (MA dissertation, University of Reading, 1996)

Evans, Mel, ‘Aspects of the Idiolect of Queen Elizabeth I: A Diachronic Study on Sociolinguistic Principles’ (PhD, University of Sheffield, 2011).


Freedman, Joyce, ‘Anthony Bacon and His World, 1558-1601’ (PhD, Temple University, 1979).

Gibson, Jonathan, ‘Sir Arthur Gorges (1557-1625) and the Patronage System’ (PhD, University of London, 1998).


Mair, Katy, ‘Anne, Lady Bacon: A Life in Letters’ (PhD, Queen Mary, University of London, 2009).

Margetts, Michelle, ‘Stella Britanna: The Early Life (1563-1592) of Lady Penelope Devereux, Lady Rich (d. 1607)’, (PhD, Yale University, 1992).


Ross, Emily, ‘The Current of Events: Gossip about the Controversial Marriages of Lady Arbella Stuart and Frances Coke in Jacobean England, 1610-1620’ (PhD, University of Otago, 2009).


Swann, Joel, ‘A study of the copying, dissemination and collection of manuscript texts in the early seventeenth century, with special reference to Chetham’s Library MS A.4.15’, (PhD, Keele University, 2011).


Williams, Graham, ‘Pragmatic Readings in the Letters of Joan and Maria Thynne, 1575-1611, with Diplomatic Transcriptions of their Correspondence’ (PhD, University of Glasgow, 2009).
Williamson, Elizabeth, ‘Before ‘diplomacy’: Travel, Embassy and the Production of Political Information in the Later Sixteenth Century’ (PhD, Queen Mary, University of London, 2012).

Winchester, Barbara, ‘The Johnson Letters, 1542-1552’ (PhD, Birkbeck College, University of London, 1953), 4 volumes.

c. Select Editions


d. Online Resources

Resources listed below are open access unless otherwise indicated.

i) Digital Editions, Letter Projects and Research Initiatives

[http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/herle/index.html](http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/herle/index.html)

Centre of Editing Lives and Letters, [http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/](http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/)

Corpora of Early English Correspondence,  


‘Diplomatic Correspondence of Thomas Bodley, 1585–1597’,  
[http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/bodley/bodley.html](http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/bodley/bodley.html)

Early Modern Letters Online, [http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/](http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/)
The Electronic Enlightenment (subscription necessary), http://www.e-enlightenment.com/info/about/letters/.


‘Francis Bacon Correspondence Project: An Inventory of his Correspondence’, http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/bacon/baconindex.html.

The Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence (access by application), http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~lang22/PCEEC-manual/corpus_description/contents.htm

Scriptorium: Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts Online, http://scriptorium.english.cam.ac.uk/


ii) Library Catalogues

Beinecke Library, Yale, Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, http://brbl-net.library.yale.edu/pre1600ms/

Bodleian Library Western Manuscripts, http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/online/online.htm


Cambridge University Library, http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/


Harry Ransom Centre, The University of Texas at Austin, http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/

Houghton Library, Harvard University, http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/

Huntington Library, San Marino, California, http://www.huntington.org/

The Inner Temple Library, http://www.innertemplelibrary.org.uk/


National Library of Wales, http://cat.llgc.org.uk/cgi-bin/gw/chameleon?&skin=full&lng=en


Trinity College, Dublin, http://www.tcd.ie/Library/


Dr Williams Library, http://www.dwlib.co.uk/dwlib/

**iii) Other Archival Gateways**


AIM25 http://www.aim25.ac.uk/

Archives Hub http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/


**iv) Online Finding Aids and Publications**

British History Online, Guides and Calendars (large amount of free content but premium subscription options)
http://www.british-history.ac.uk/catalogue.aspx?type=3

Guide to Record Societies and their Publications (Mullins, Texts and Calendars)
http://www.royalhistoricalsociety.org/textandcalendars.php

The Historical Manuscripts Commission,
http://www.royalhistoricalsociety.org/histmanscommission.pdf


**v) Digital Collections**

Cecil Papers Online (subscription required), http://cecilpapers.chadwyck.com/marketing.do

University of Hull State Papers Project, http://www.sp12.hull.ac.uk/

State Papers Online (subscription required), http://gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714.aspx
English Handwriting 1500-1700: Bibliography and Research Resources. In this section you will find a select bibliography of printed sources, a quick-access collection of palaeography- and manuscript-related links, and an annotated guide to manuscript research. Most of the books represented in the bibliography include further, more detailed lists of sources. (i) Bibliography of Printed Works (ii) Palaeography and Manuscript Research Links (iii) Routes Toward Early Modern Manuscripts: A Guide for Research Note that this document is a distinct page; to return to the bibliography, follow the links provided or use your browser's 'Back' button. Bibliography of printed works. Finally, early modern historical writing found in personal accounts, commonplace books, and remembrance books could be fluid and dynamic, and it appropriated forms of writing that were highly accessible in the day-to-day lives of the writers that compiled them. The decision to use particular forms of writing was intrinsically associated with the utility and meaning of these forms. The bibliography lists ethnohistorical works not commonly included in bibliographies of historiography. This essay looks at the scribal circulation of letters in early modern England.