



Guide to the Devonshire Collection Archives

Part 2 Estate Papers and Related Collections

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Summary of the Devonshire Collection Archive Estate Papers and Related Collections

Introduction

Founded in the 1540s by Sir William Cavendish, and reaching a peak of c.180,000 acres in the late 19th century, for the last four centuries the Devonshire estates have required considerable oversight and administration. These processes of management have generated a considerable amount of archival material which can be used to support research into a variety of topics that can be of personal, regional or national importance - such as the genealogy of a rural Derbyshire family, or the development of the relatively small village of Buxton into a Georgian Spa town, or the industrialisation of Barrow and Furness in the Victorian period.

As with Part 1: Guide to the Family Papers, the purpose here is to set out what archival material has been catalogued and is available for research, but not to provide detailed listings of the material itself. If you wish to see the catalogues of any collections mentioned in this guide please contact us by email at archives@chatsworth.org. Catalogues are not currently available online.

For the purposes of this guide, the estate material has been broadly grouped into four categories:

- 1) Discrete collections originating from estate offices
- 2) Other collections that are predominately estate related
- 3) Derbyshire mining record
- 4) Maps and plans.

There is also a fifth section to this guide, listing collections that are neither family papers nor estate material.

Please note access restrictions may apply. All staff records are closed to researchers for a minimum of 100 years from their date of creation.

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Summary of the Devonshire Collection Archive Estate Papers and Related Collections

1. Archival Catalogues

1.1. Collections originating from estate offices

These collections comprise material that was moved to Chatsworth when the relevant estate office shut down most typically, but not exclusively, in the 1950s. The Chatsworth estate retains an office, but historic material was progressively moved to the archive across the latter half of the 20th century. The Duke of Devonshire's North Yorkshire, Sussex and Irish estates retain their own offices.

The estate offices' primary functions - buildings, land and tenancy management for a given geographical area - are reflected in their records that generally contain: estate surveys and terriers; rentals; financial documentation (from receipts through to annual accounts); correspondence of the agent and subordinates; staff records; building plans; tithes plans and enclosure awards.

DE/BX Records of the Buxton Estate Office

Dates of material: 1851-1959

DE/CD Records of the Chesterfield Estate Office

Dates of material: 1824-1891

DE/CH Records of the Chatsworth Estate Office

Dates of material: 1703-1955

DE/CU Records of the Cumberland Estate Office

Dates of material: 1892-1956

DE/CW Records of the Chiswick Estate

Dates of material: 1847-1954



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- DE/DO** Records of the Dore Estate Office
Dates of material: 1892-1925
- DE/HSC** Record of the Hardwick, Staveley and Chesterfield Estate Office
Dates of material: 1842-1950
- DE/HW** Records of the Hardwick Estate Office
Dates of material: 1836-1955
- DE/KE** Records of the Keighley Estate Office
Dates of material: 1834-1956
- DE/PF** Records of the Peak Forest and High Peak Estate Office
Dates of material: 1865-1955
- DE/SC** Records of the Staveley and Chesterfield Estate Office
Dates of material: 1822-1953
- DE/SH** Records of the Shottle and Pentrich Estate Office
Dates of material: 1782-1955



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1.2 Other Estate Collections

As well as the estate office collections there is a considerable amount of other material that has made its way to Chatsworth during the 19th and 20th centuries. Much of this relates to the management of the estates before the 19th century, but largely the original provenance and administrative structure of the records have been lost.

AS Additional Series

This a wide-ranging group, both geographically and in time span, established in the late 1990s to list papers that had not been included in the other major collections of records, such as the Chatsworth (C) and Hardwick Manuscripts series (HM). The AS collection has not been arranged systematically and can be difficult to search.

The series includes: rentals, including several complete rental books of all Devonshire estates (e.g. for the years 1683 and 1754) and substantial runs of rentals for individual estates; indentures, leases, conveyances, grants, vouchers, manorial court minutes and verdicts (e.g. for Ashford, 1750-1827); accounts (including Chatsworth household accounts, 1750s), mining and mineral rights (e.g. proposals relating to Chatsworth coal mines, 1760s); correspondence relating to estate business including with the Derwent water-board, various railway companies, and relating to the development of Barrow in Furness, and one letter from an estate manager describing the Great Fire of London (7 September 1666); with other miscellaneous papers including a series of Parliamentary summonses to represent Knaresborough (sixteenth to nineteenth century) and pardons granted to members of the Cavendish family; estates include Chesterfield, Staveley, Shottle and Pentrich, Knaresborough, Wetherby, and other Derbyshire estates, Barrow in Furness (Cumbria), Wetton (Staffordshire), Yorkshire estates, London properties, and Lismore (County Waterford); 16th to 20th century, with the greatest proportion being 18th century.

Dates of material: 16th century-20th century



Summary of the Devonshire Collection Archive Estate Papers and Related Collections

L

Currey Papers

The London series is the largest grouping of papers in the Devonshire Collection, consisting of papers that were held by the Cavendish family solicitors, Currey and Co, in London, until their transfer to Chatsworth in the mid-twentieth century.

Being an aggregate of estate, financial and legal records of all the ancestral families of the Cavendish line, the L series covers a diverse array of persons and land throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland.

There are land documents (mortgages, quitclaims, articles of agreement, letters of attorney, grants, marriage settlements, leases, conveyances, rentals, vouchers, agents' letters, mineral and fishing rights, etc.) for all of the major family estates (such as Chatsworth and Hardwick in Derbyshire, Bolton Abbey in Yorkshire, Devonshire House, Chiswick and Burlington House in London, and Lismore and other Irish estates that derived from the Boyle family).

Also present are distinct groups of papers relating to the management of estates, for example: manorial documents for various Yorkshire manors (16th-17th century); papers on the building of Lismore Bridge (1771-1773); railway papers; building work at Lismore; the appointment of agents, keepers, etc.; the iron ore mines in Lancashire (1688-1789); the sale or lease of premises on Holy Island, Northumberland (1671); the management of the Chatsworth estate (19th-20th century); household accounts, bills, and inventories (including two inventories of furniture at Burlington House, 1770-1812).

In addition to the above, there are substantial groups of miscellaneous non-estate papers, including: Irish electoral, franchise and other political papers (turn of the 19th century); commissions and grants of offices (e.g. grant of position of Postmaster General to Henry, Lord Arlington, 1667, and army commissions in the West Indies, 1803-1804); pardons; Court of Wards cases (1591-1673); custom duties (on produce from Barbados, on beer, etc.); memorial addresses on the 5th Duke of Devonshire; petitions and letters from tenants and electors; and Cavendish family papers including marriage



Summary of the Devonshire Collection Archive Estate Papers and Related Collections

settlements (chiefly early 17th century to early 19th century), grants of annuities and probate documents, and personal correspondence of Lord Edward Cavendish (1850s-1910s).

Although there has been minimal arrangement of the papers, there is both a name index and location name index to this collection.

Dates of material: 12th century-20th century

C

Chatsworth Series

Papers formerly held at the Chatsworth Estate Office, Edensor until their transfer to the archive in 1957. The C series comprises surveys, valuations, rentals, tenancy agreements, cash books, ledgers, receipts, building accounts, household accounts, wages books, etc., for the Devonshire's Derbyshire Estates from the 17th until the 20th century. Estates covered include Hardwick, Ashford, Bakewell, Baslow, Buxton, Chatsworth, Edensor, Pentrich, Shottle, Stoney Middleton and Tideswell, among others.

The C series also includes nine volumes of building accounts for Buxton Crescent (1788), and a significant series of household, farm and stable accounts, cash books and rentals for Chatsworth (1639-1858).

Dates of material: 17th century-20th century

H

Hardwick Drawers

These papers were originally housed in a series of numbered drawers in the Evidence Room at Hardwick and largely comprise bundles of estate papers, such as leases (including two counterpart leases signed by Thomas Hobbes, "domesticall seruant and secretary to the said [3rd] Earle" for property in the manor of Cleasby for his long service to the Earl, 1627-1639), licences and charters (with Great Seals of Henry VIII (fragments) and Elizabeth I), indentures, assignments, conveyances, rentals, estate accounts, and wood books, for a wide range of estates in counties including Derbyshire (e.g. Staveley, Stainsby, Pentrich, Shottle, and Peak Forest), Staffordshire (e.g. Wetton), Yorkshire (e.g. Wetherby, Keighley), Nottinghamshire, and



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Leicestershire. They also include some scattered correspondence, and literary and political papers.

Dates of material: 15th century-18th century

HC

Hardwick Charters

Assumed to have been sorted with the HM series in 1905, the Hardwick charters comprise a group of early charters, many with wax seal impressions attached, which have been removed from the main group of Hardwick estate papers. The series includes many items from the 12th and 13th centuries, but also later charters, including those signed by Arabella Stuart and Bess of Hardwick. The charters are mainly conveyances and other property-related documents, mostly relating to Derbyshire properties, together with some in Yorkshire, c.1245-c.1569.

Dates of material: 12th century-17th century

HM

Hardwick Manuscripts

This collection was transferred from the Evidence Room at Hardwick to Chatsworth c.1936 by Francis Thompson, Librarian.

The Hardwick manuscripts include an important series of 16th and 17th century Cavendish family household accounts, with 12 volumes from the lifetime of Bess of Hardwick. These include a disbursement book that details daily expenses during a residence of Bess and William Cavendish in London, from foodstuffs to works of art (“...for one tale clothe with the storye of Abraham at xiis the yard-lxxiis”). Also included are building accounts of Hardwick Hall, and other account books providing much detail about aristocratic life in the period, ranging from the employment details of servants to the annual cost of a New Year’s gift to Queen Elizabeth I. Many of these volumes are extensively annotated by Bess of Hardwick, 1550s-1600s. Later household accounts include the privy purse accounts of William 3rd Earl of Devonshire, which record, among other things, payments to Thomas Hobbes. The remainder of the series principally consists of seventeenth century literary and political scribal manuscripts, including important texts by Francis Bacon.



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Dates of material: 14th century-17th century

KN

Knarborough Papers

Estate and parliamentary papers relating to Knarborough. Comprising muniments of title (late 17th to mid-19th century); estate correspondence, accounts, enclosure acts, burgage rentals, etc.; correspondence and papers relating to election expenses (such as drink and hospitality allowances) incurred between 1780 and 1831 as monitored by the Dukes of Devonshire's agents such as James Collins (1780-1804) and John Carr (1804-1806); and poll books, petitions, copies of parliamentary returns and papers relating to the establishment of the 5th Duke's rights in the borough of Knarborough, 1805-1806.

Dates of material: 1553-1831

LP

Londesborough Manuscripts

Londesborough, Craven and Westmorland estate papers, medieval-17th century; Carlisle Socage Manor papers, 17th century; inventories, including Skipton Castle and Londesborough, 17th and 18th centuries; 1st-3rd Earls of Burlington estate and legal papers and letters; rental accounts, 17th-18th centuries.

Dates of material: medieval-18th century

T

Estate accounts and rentals, Chatsworth Vouchers

A series of additional estate papers, comprising rentals, accounts and vouchers kept by various agents such as Micah Hall (1768-1780), P. Heacock (1805-1824) and J. Gould (1793-1804), for estates mainly in Derbyshire, Yorkshire and Cumberland. The series includes the few household vouchers that exist for Chatsworth during the 6th Duke's tenure-17 groups of accounts for cellars and provisions, furniture, glass, plate, linen, liveries, plants and gardens, gifts and charities, subscriptions, game, deer, fisheries, roads, schools, pensions and annuities (1825-1828 and 1855-1858)



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Dates of material: c. 1750-1840

U Title deeds, mainly relating to Appletreewick (Yorkshire) and for the Kent estates

Dates of material: 16th century-19th century

W Correspondence of James Whildon, auditor and receiver for the Hardwick estate of William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Devonshire (1641-1707)

i) Letters to James Whildon, chiefly concerning Chatsworth, Hardwick and other Devonshire estates, written by various correspondents

ii) The Devonshire collection, including: 20 letters by Roger Jackson, steward in London, July 1678 to May 1682; and c.200 newsletters by unidentified correspondents, reporting news from London and abroad, 1678-1683.

Dates of material: 1676-1820

WC Newsletters, correspondence and estate papers of William Cavendish, 3rd Earl of Devonshire (1617-1684) and for the Hardwick estate of William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Devonshire (1641-1707)

Dates of material: 1676-1820



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1.3. Derbyshire Mining Records

DM

Derbyshire lead mining papers

Maps, plans and documentation relating to the lead industry in Derbyshire, 17th-20th centuries.

Dates of material: 1701-1937



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1.4. Maps and Plans

ARC

Architectural Drawings

A miscellaneous selection of architectural plans covering a diverse array of buildings. There are plans of Chatsworth and buildings in its grounds, ranging from the 17th to 20th century and by a variety of architects (including James Paine, Jeffrey Wyattville and Decimus Burton). Bolton Abbey Hall, Londesborough Hall, Lismore Castle and Chiswick House are also represented, as well as the villages of Baslow, Beeley and Edensor.

Dates of material: 17th century-20th century

BP

Buxton Plans

The Devonshire Estates played a large role in the development of Buxton, notably in the 18th century with the building of the Crescent, but through until the early 20th century the estate continued to build, or sell land with restrictions on what could be built. This collection comprises sales maps and plans from the 19th and 20th centuries.

Dates of material: 19th century-20th century

CH34

William Senior's surveys of the estates of the Earls of Devonshire

The Chatsworth Atlas, its accompanying survey and 6 loose maps made by William Senior, surveyor of the estates of the Earls of Devonshire.

Dates of material: 1609-1628

M

Maps and Plans

These maps originated with the management of the estates but have been separated from their respective estate office collections. There are c.2500 maps, among which are some plans. The majority of the maps relate to Derbyshire, but most estates are represented by at



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least a small number.

Dates of material: 17th century-20th centuries

WY

Wyatville's Plans

Architectural plans by Sir Jeffry Wyattville for additions and alterations to Chatsworth in the early 19th Century.

Dates of material: 1820-1839



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1.5. Related Collections

These are collections that broadly escape the groupings of 'Family' or 'Estate Papers', though they are intrinsically linked to the history of Chatsworth, the Cavendish family or their estates.

CH4 Penrhos College at Chatsworth

During World War II Chatsworth was home to Penrhos College, a girls' boarding school from Wales. From 1939-1946 three hundred girls and teachers lived and studied at Chatsworth. Passages and state rooms were converted to dormitories and lessons took place in the dining-room, drawing rooms, and other downstairs sitting rooms.

This collection includes contemporary administrative papers, college magazines and records of school life, as well as reminiscences written by alumni later in life.

Dates of material: 1931 -1996

CH10 Chatsworth Royal Naval Convalescent Hospital papers

During the final years of the First World War, the Chatsworth estate office at Edensor was utilised as a Royal Naval Convalescent Hospital. This small collection includes correspondence, financial records, and a treatment book.

Dates of material: 1916-1918

CH11 The Grafton Papers

The Grafton papers were bequeathed to Devonshire Collection in the 1990s by Tom Grafton who had collated much material himself, but also been gifted much of the collection by the Longden family, who had resided at Calton Lees. The collection principally consists of cuttings and extracts from local and national newspapers and magazines relating to the Devonshire estates and the Cavendish family. It also includes several albums of postcards and photographs and some early manuscript material.

Dates of material: 1692-1995



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- CH12** Papers of Francis Thompson, Keeper of the Devonshire Collections
- Francis Thompson was Keeper of the Devonshire Collections from 1921-1953 and remained heavily involved after his retirement until his death in 1964. This collection of working papers includes much important material on the management of the Devonshire Collections for the first half of the 20th century.
- Dates of material: 20th century*
- CH14** Documents concerning Chatsworth Gardens
- A miscellaneous selection of material relating to Chatsworth gardens, evidently drawn together from other collections at some point in time. The collection includes material on purchasing of plants, the organisation of expeditions to collect plants (such as the failed Wallace and Banks expedition to North America), staff records, and later reports and theses on the gardens.
- Dates of material: 1777-20th century*
- CH18** Papers of the Cavendish Golf Club, Buxton
- The collection consists of the incomplete administrative records of Chatsworth Golf Club to 1951. It also includes some material which appears to have originated with the Duke of Devonshire's Buxton Estate Office.
- Dates of material: 1905-1951*
- CH21** Chatsworth Visitor Books
- Books with the signatures (and later, comments) of visitors to Chatsworth. Earlier books are predominately house guests of the Devonshire family; later books include comments by the general public visiting Chatsworth as tourists.
- Dates of material: 1833-20th century*
- CH35** Papers relating to Buxton Baths



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Account books which detail the usage of Buxton Public and Private Baths from 1779-1790. The books record the names of people using the baths, their usual place of residence (town, city or county), accommodation while bathing, number and dates of visits to the baths and the cost of the bathing sessions.

There are also a number of plans from 1915 which detail the proposed reconstruction of the Baths and several copies of an apparently unrelated plan for estates in Wardlow, Highlow and Longstone.

Dates of material: 1779-1915



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2. A note on the accumulation of the Devonshire Estates

When Sir William Cavendish and his wife Elizabeth (commonly known as Bess of Hardwick) bought the manors of Chatsworth and Cromford in 1549, included in the purchase were lands and properties throughout Derbyshire. William and Bess continued to add to these holdings throughout their respective lives. Their children and grandchildren, either by purchase or marriage, added further lands in Derbyshire and beyond, and by the time William Senior's surveys of the Cavendish lands were largely complete in the late 1620s, the Earls of Devonshire held some 43,000 acres in Derbyshire, with a further 60,000 acres spread across several other counties including Yorkshire, Huntingdonshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Somerset, and Buckinghamshire.

Although lands did leave the estate (non-entailed estates were sometimes settled on younger sons, or on daughters as part of their dowry) land was generally added to the Cavendish estates until the 19th century. A number of notable marriages extended the Devonshire estates. The Cavendish's greatest dynastic marriage came in 1748 when William Cavendish, later the 4th Duke of Devonshire, married Charlotte Boyle, only surviving heir of the 3rd Earl of Burlington. This marriage eventually brought large estates in East and North Yorkshire, but most notably in Ireland where the tens of thousands of acres acquired by the 1st Earl of Cork in the 17th century were now added to the Devonshire inheritance.

In 1858 the 6th duke died unmarried and the dukedom went to William Cavendish, the grandson of the 6th duke's uncle, George Augustus Henry Cavendish. George had been created the Earl of Burlington, second creation, and had acquired (both by marriage and business acumen) notable estates in Sussex, Somerset, Lancashire and Westmoreland. The unification of these senior and junior lines of the Cavendish family was a twist of fate that returned lands that had been settled on George Augustus by his father the 4th Duke, but also brought new estates into the senior line.

In 1883, perhaps at their greatest extent, the Devonshire estates comprised 198,572 acres which were worth £180,750 a year.

From this apex, and with the introduction of death duties, lands were begun to be sold, firstly in Ireland and then latterly in England. In 1926 the Chatsworth Estate Company was established with the Devonshire's Chief Agent, UR Burke as Director, and the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Hartington as majority shareholders. This helped avoid major death duties on the death of the 9th Duke in 1938, but a change in the law necessitated the creation of the Chatsworth Settlement in 1946, a discretionary trust. In November 1950 the 10th Duke died shortly before the 5 year quarantine imposed on such trusts expired and the Devonshire estates were subject to 80% death duties. This entailed the sale of much land, with many of the periphery estates sold completely.



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Substantial estates remain in Derbyshire, North Yorkshire, Sussex and Ireland.



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3. A note on the management of the Devonshire Estates

The administration of the estates has changed considerably over four centuries, reflecting an ever increasing professionalisation and specialisation of jobs and skills. In the 17th century there were two receivers, one in London and one in Derbyshire, based at Hardwick. Neither of these receivers had primacy, both reported to an auditor in London. The receiver at Hardwick acted as the administrative hub for the Cavendish estates in the north, receiving rents and other incomes from the bailiffs (who were based locally) and making the more major disbursements necessary for the functioning and maintenance of the estate.

In 1700 the Derbyshire receiver, James Whildon, retired (perhaps forcibly), was not replaced and the administrative system was altered. The bailiffs now reported directly to London, and as such had more responsibility and leeway for their respective estates. The system thus evolved in to one where through the 18th century the estates were managed as a series of 'collections', with the money remaining after expenditure returned to the auditor in London.¹

In the 19th century the rise of the land agent saw an increased professionalisation in estate management. A series of estate offices were established. Larger estates had their own office; smaller estates were sometimes handled by agents doubling up on their responsibilities (for example Drewry, the agent for Buxton, also handled the Holker Estate). In Derbyshire the main offices were at Chatsworth, Buxton, Shottle and Pentrich, Hardwick, Staveley and Chesterfield, and from 1919, in the High Peak. These offices and estates were not set and there were several changes through the 19th century. The agents were overseen by the auditors in London. By 1827 these were professional solicitors, the firm of Currey and Co.

In 1919 Ulick Rolande Burke, the Devonshires' agent in Sussex, was elevated to Chief Agent and had overall responsibility for every estate until his retirement in 1939. The solicitors, still Curreys, remained to provide a legal and account auditing service, as well as providing strategic advice to the Duke. In 1926 the Chatsworth and Lismore Estate Companies were established but the management of the estates remained much as it had been with Burke's appointment in 1919. With the sale of lands following the 10th Duke's death in 1950, holdings of the Devonshire family were severely curtailed and several estate offices were shut. Some (but not all) of the archival records of these offices were then moved to Chatsworth.

¹ See Fowkes, Dudley and Riden, Philip; *Hardwick: A Great House and Its Estates* (2009)



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Arrangement of Estates in 1862	
Taken from Summary account book for Devonshire Estates, 1862	
Derbyshire Estates	Estates Outside Derbyshire
Chatsworth	Cartmel
Hardwick	Slate quarries
Buxton	Sussex
South Derbyshire	Somersetshire
Woodlands	Cumberland
Minerals	Lancashire
	London
	Chiswick

Arrangement of Estates on the formation of the Chatsworth Estate Company, 1926	
Taken from a memo on the foundation of the Chatsworth Estate Company, 1926	
Derbyshire Estates	Estates outside Derbyshire
Chatsworth	Bolton
Hardwick and Staveley	Keighley
Buxton	Somersetshire
High Peak	Sussex
Shottle and Pentrich	Cumberland