

Archival echoes: too weak to survive or too far to travel?

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Lady Victoria Welby

1970-010/002

Lady Victoria Welby

1970-010/006

**Did we do more harm than good
purchasing those records back in 1969?**

Context and Provenance On Equal Ground with Content

(I am not a semiotician, philosopher or literary theorist)

Lady Victoria Welby (1837-1912)



Portrait of
Victoria Stuart-
Wortley as a
child. [before
1850?]
Reproduction by
P.J. Gates
(Photography)
Ltd.
ID: 18010
Purchased by Dr.
H. Walter
Schmitz and
donated in 5
February 1984.



Portrait of Victoria Stuart-
Wortley.

[ca. 1863?]

Reproduction by P.J. Gates
(Photography) Ltd.

ID: 18012

Purchased by Dr. H. Walter
Schmitz and donated in
February 1984.



“The
Housebuilders”
Sir Frank Dicksee
1880
Photographic
negative donated
to archives by Dr.
H. Walter
Schmitz 5
November 1985.
[features Victoria
and her husband
William]

Archival Limbo

Nina Cust (1867-1955)

It is an effort to do anything, and you know how all my energy has to run at present in this one channel of my message to the world.

For my own child, more than ever it is clear that a Message there is, which you must help in delivering.

For again and again I repeat that it is nothing in me or of me, the last and unfittest of messengers, that makes the power or the value of the thoughts on which I live, but just the living truth itself, which is now becoming accessible to us in a way never before possible.

Letter from VW to Nina Cust, 1890

Sir Oliver Welby (1902-1977)

25th August, 1969

Dear Harris,

Many thanks for your letter of 18th August and for the inventory.

I was very interested to hear how you are getting on with the question of what to do with the Victoria letters and papers and I hope that one of the institutions you mention will be able to take them.

We are going to be able to take them

elb
pa

elby

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H.S. Harris (1926-2007)

MEMORANDUM

To: Acquisitions Department, York Library System

Date October 30, 1969

From: H.S. Harris, Chairman, Philosophy Department

Subject: Proposal for Purchase of the Letters and Papers of Victoria, Lady Welby
(1837-1912)

I have been asked by Sir Oliver C.E. Welby of Denton Manor, Grantham, Lincolnshire, England to do what I can to see that a suitable repository is found for the papers of his grandmother Victoria. He wishes to sell the papers if possible - and some of the files of correspondence are certainly saleable - but in any case to ensure that the papers are kept together and made available for use in scholarly research. He feels that the collection should come to this side of the Atlantic since all the interest expressed in Lady Welby in recent years has come from this side of the Atlantic.

Promoting Use and Scholarship

Digitization as Tool for Promotion and Access

(not the first step towards technological utopianism)

Motivations and Methodologies

Confusion
Irritation
Curiosity

.....and g-g-ghosts!!

PILOT STUDY

**Short list of 85 women identified for digitization
Aim for correspondence of 50 women digitized
and mapped**

Clear and explicit bias Constraints and self-imposed limits

With the kind, efficient and knowledgeable assistance of ...

Catherine Falls, Contract Metadata Assistant

Zeineb Yousif, Contract Metadata Assistant

Nick Ruest, Digital Assets Librarian

Tuan Nguyen, Manager, Library Information Systems

Mandatory screenshot of data set (to avoid perils of live demo)

The screenshot shows the ATOM digital archive interface. The top navigation bar includes the 'atom' logo, a 'Browse' dropdown, and a search bar containing 'Search York University Archives & Special Collections'. The main content area displays the 'Series S00713 - Correspondence (Draft)' for 'Lady Victoria Alexandrina Maria Louisa'. The interface is divided into several sections: 'Title and statement of responsibility area', 'Dates of creation area', 'Physical description area', 'Archival description area', and 'Notes area'. The 'Archival description area' provides a biographical history of Lady Victoria Welby (1837-1912), identifying her as the daughter of Charles Stuart Wortley Mackenzie and James Stuart Wortley, 1st Baron Wharfedale. The 'Notes area' states that the correspondence files are arranged roughly chronologically and contain multiple carbon copies of typed letters.

The screenshot shows the 'Victoria Welby fonds' page on the York University Archives website. The page features a search bar with a 'Log in' button and a grid of document thumbnails. The thumbnails are arranged in two rows. The first row includes: 'Advertisement for Lucifer: a monthly magazine of theosophy and the occult sciences', 'Christo-Theosophical Society syllabus', 'Clipping from The Times newspaper 12 October 1891', and 'Clipping of news column featuring Annie Besant 19 November 1891'. The second row includes: 'Envelope addressed to WW from Harris Benson' and 'Envelope addressed to WW from Miss Benson'. The page also includes a navigation bar with 'Collections', 'Browse by', 'Documentation', 'Galleries', and 'My bookmarks'.

<http://bit.ly/22LNgop> and bit.ly/1SugVFE

Blanche Airlie
Ada Ellen Bayly
Dorothea Beale
Adeline Bedford
Mary Benson
Annie Besant
Marie Bonnet
Mary Everest Boole
A. Booth
Sophie Bryant
Alice M. Buckton
Anne Deane-Butcher
Eleanor Calhoun
Louise Carnegie
Lucy Cavendish

Lucy Clifford
Mary Emily Conybeare
Nina Cust
Mrs. William Henry Dallinger
Mrs. Fredrick van Eeden
Caroline Davids
Mary Denbigh
Mary Emily Dowson
Mary Drew
Lady Elizabeth Drummond
Lady Mary Fielding
Jane Levett
Jane A. Findlater
Anna Geddes
Lizzie Grenfell

Emelia Gurney
Louisa Kathleen Haldane
Mary St. Leger Harrison
Janet Hogarth
Evelyn Hone
D. Hollins
Elice Hopkins
Margaret Lindsay Huggins
Gertrude Jekyll
E.E. Constance Jones
Princess Karadja
Florence Kingdom
Frances Eliza Kinglsey
Irma Kovalevsky

Bertha Lathbury
Nina Layard
Jennette Lee
Eliza Lynn Linton
Mrs. Alexander Macmillan
Mary Ellen Martineau
Duchess of Northumberland
Alice Oliphant
Rosamund Oliphant
Margaret Oliphant
Violet Paget
Mrs. Charles Sanders Peirce
Mrs. S. Phillips
Blanche Pigott
Mary Ponsonby

Miss Elizabeth Robins
Christina G. Rossetti
Olive Schreiner
Sarah Shorthouse
Eleanor Mildred Sidgwick
Mary [May?] Sinclair
Felicia M.F. Skene
Lady Augusta Elizabeth
Frederica Stanley
Miss Caroline Emelia Stephen
Lady Barbara Stephen
Sarah W. Stephen
Isabella Stout
Mrs. George S. Street
Mrs. Mount-Temple

Mrs. J. Arthur Thomson
Miss Lilly K. Trotter
Louisa C. Tyndall
Mrs. Augustus Waller
Miss Julia F. Wedgwood
Mrs. Humphrey Ward
Margaret L. Woods
Mrs. Frances Dallas
Yorke

Lesson Learned:
Ignore Ghosts At Your Peril!

Secretarial Spectres

Wait, are they talking about actual ghosts?

Name	Period of Correspondence with VW	Period of President of SPR
Henry Sidgwick	1891-1896, 1903, 1906	1882-1884, 1888-1892
Arthur Balfour	1889-1891, 1893	1893
William James	1905, 1908	1894-1895
F. W. H. Myers	1888-1892, 1898	1900
Oliver Lodge	1889-1911	1901-1903
Eleanor Mildred Sidgwick	1891-1896, 1903, 1906	1908-1909
Andrew Lang	1889-1904	1911
Henri Bergson	1905-1911	1913
F.C.S. Schiller	1900-1911	1914
John William Strutt (Lord Rayleigh)	1884, 1890, 1898, 1903	1919

1906
1907
March 11, 1907

Epitaph on the Archival Monument.

Here lies the dame who thought she saw a truth
She buried was without or reck or ruth;
But life is that which bursts the stoniest shroud
And (whisper this) she yet may cry aloud.

March 20, 1907

I cannot too often repeat that at best I am only a John Baptist: I must decrease, be
come merely a clearer of the Way, a mere Voice in a wilderness foreseeing its coming
reclamation, feeling the first ripple of the mighty Breath of Life....

Epitaph on the Archival Monument.

Here lies the dame who thought she saw a truth
She buried was without or reck or ruth;
But life is that which bursts the stoniest shroud
And (whisper this) she yet may cry aloud

What She Was: by Herself

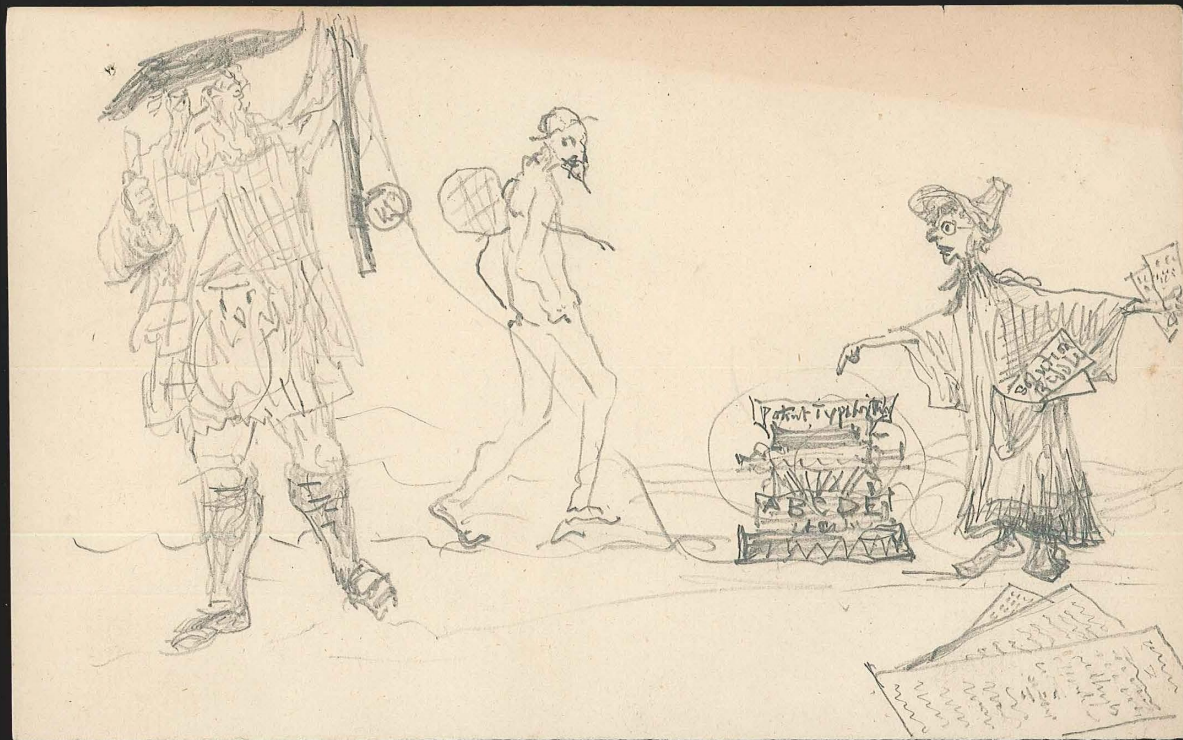
She was an awful Scourge!

*A type-writer she prowled around,
And ever in her hand was found
A Link she meant to forge.*

She was a fearsome Fact,

*You tried your best to get away,
You strove to fish or tennis play,
While she type-wrote a tract.*

...



VW sketch of herself (presumably) at her typewriter 1970-010 / 037 (02)

Thank you



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@deantiquate

Slide deck will be available for download at: <http://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/handle/10315/940>