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### Matthew Davenport Hill Family Correspondence, 1820s-1912: Finding Aid

#### Summary Information

<b>Call number:</b>	C1256
<b>Location:</b>	Princeton University Library. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Manuscripts Division. One Washington Road Princeton, New Jersey 08544 USA
<b>Size:</b>	0.25 linear ft. (1 half-size archival box)
<b>Language(s) of material:</b>	English.
<b>Abstract:</b>	Consists of a small collection of letters addressed to members of the family of English penal reformer Matthew Davenport Hill.

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## Biography of William Davenport Hill

William Davenport Hill was the eldest child of a successful English family. He began as a teacher, but, determined to read law, he became the first man from Birmingham to be called to the bar, where he was a close associate of Henry Brougham, and was appointed Recorder of Birmingham. Hill used this platform over many years to press for penal reform, concentrating particularly on juvenile crime and reform schools. His younger brothers included the inventor of the penny post, Sir Rowland Hill, and the prison inspector Frederic Hill; he also had several daughters who carried on his work of penal reform: Florence Davenport Hill, Rosamond Davenport Hill, and Joanna Margaret Hill.

## Description

The collection consists of a small collection of letters addressed to members of the family of English penal reformer Matthew Davenport Hill, with additional letters and other material, mostly addressed to the same recipients. Correspondents include Elihu Burritt, Richard Cobden, Dinah Maria Craik, Maria Edgeworth, James Anthony Froude, Alexander von Humboldt, Cardinal Newman, Sir Robert Peel, Anne Thackeray Ritchie, William Makepeace Thackeray, and Charlotte Mary Yonge.

### Series 1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912

## Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by correspondent in one series:

Series 1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912

## Access and Use

### Access Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

## Acquisition and Appraisal

### Provenance and Acquisition

Purchased in 2008.

## Processing and Other Information

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Matthew Davenport Hill Family Correspondence, Box and Folder Number; Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

### Processing Information

This collection was processed by John Delaney in May 2008. Finding aid written by John Delaney in May 2008 from notes provided by Christopher Edwards.

### Encoding

Machine-readable finding aid encoded in EAD 2002 created from MARC record via MarcEdit and XSL stylesheets in 2008.

### Descriptive Rules Used

Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.

## Subject Headings

These materials have been indexed in the [Princeton University Library online catalog](#) using the following terms. Those seeking related materials should search under these terms.

- Hill family.
- Social reformers -- England -- 19th century -- Correspondence.
- Correspondence -- 19th century.
- British literature

<b>Contents List</b>
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**1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912**


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<u>TITLE</u>	<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>
<p>Alice, Grand Duchess, consort of Ludwig IV, Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt (1843-1878), undated</p> <p>Presentation inscription "For Miss F. Hill."</p>	1	1
<p>Burrit, Elihu (1810-1879), December 3, 1879</p> <p>Autograph letter signed. New Britain, Conn, 3 December 1879, 1 p. A general letter of introduction from the philanthropist and reformer Elihu Burritt, recommending Alfred Hill (son of Matthew, 1821-1907) as "a nephew of Sir Rowland Hill, who is visiting this country to make acquaintance with its people and institutions." Burritt had reason to make the connexion with Rowland Hill, as he was an early proponent of a transatlantic postal system (the "Ocean Penny Post"), as well as a notable organizer of peace congresses (in Brussels in 1848, Paris in 1849, and subsequently elsewhere) which came to be seen as precursors of the League of Nations and United Nations in the 20th century.</p>	1	2
<p>Cambridge, George, Duke of (1819-1904), November 21, 1859</p> <p>Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. Horse Guards, 21 November 1859. 3 pp. An appreciative letter written by the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army (appointed in 1856) to Hill, thanking him for his letter about corporal punishment in the army: "I thank you for the friendly expressions contained in your observations, &amp; I can assure you, that these observations coming from one, who has studied the subject of crime &amp; punishment so much &amp; in so enlightened a spirit as you have, is indeed a great satisfaction to me." The Prince was in his early years as C-in-C a considerable proponent of reform; it was only in later life that he became the embodiment of reaction and opposition to change.</p>	1	3
<p>Cobden, Richard (1804-1865),</p> <p>Letter, November 17, 1853</p> <p>Autograph letter signed, to Rowland Hill. Midhurst, 17 November 1853, 3 pp. A letter about the Birmingham conference on reformatory schools held at Hill's instigation in 1853 (there had also been one on the same subject there in 1851). Cobden writes that although he takes "the utmost interest in the question of the treatment of criminal &amp; destitute children," he is doubtful whether he will be able to be at the conference. However, he assures Hill and his brother (evidently</p>	1	4

## 1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912 ... (Continued)

Matthew Davenport Hill) that his co-operation "may be relied on in or out of Parliament for the promotion of an efficient scheme for meeting the crying evil which we all acknowledge & deplore." He asks Hill to forward the letter to his brother as the original letter from him was dated from Bristol but he is unsure if this is correct (very probably it should have been Birmingham). The recipient was of course Rowland Hill (1795-1879), postal reformer, knighted in 1860.

Letter, March 1, 1864

1

4

Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. Midhurst, 1 March 1864, 4 pp. Explaining that he is kept to his house in the country by the weather and by his own illness, but saying that he will not fail to give attention the progress of the Bill to about which Hill has written, "if it should have escaped the ordeal of the Commons, before I take my seat there for the session." He confesses, however, that he "has not much faith in any evidence of amendment in the character of a prisoner which can be acquired whilst he is under the discipline of the prison or of penal servitude." He adds that he has been most confident in asking for the release of any prisoner "if I could offer some proof or guarantee that there would be employment found for them at the same time," and he proposes some kind of arrangement by which employment might be found for discharged prisoners: "that would be the best security for Society; — for, after all, the real difficulty & danger in this Country is owing to the almost impossibility of a man of tainted character finding the means of earning an honest livelihood."

Craik, Dinah Maria Mulock (1826-1887), undated

1

5

Autograph letter signed, to Miss Hill. Beckenham, 31 July, [no year but between 1865 and 1871], 1 p. Thanking her correspondent for her note and her father's kind message, "but will you send on the Petition at once to me, without waiting for any more signatures? — Only very few are needed . . . I have promised to place the petition in Mr Forster's hands, at the earliest possible day.". Undated, but written between her marriage to G. L. Craik in April 1865 and Matthew Davenport Hill's death in June 1872

Dwarris, Fortunatus, Sir (1786-1860), undated

1

6

Fragment of an autograph letter to Matthew Davenport Hill, 1 p.

Edgeworth, Maria (1768-1849), 1820s

1

7

Fragmentary autograph manuscript. [Ireland, 1820s]. Two pages, about a third of a quarto sheet (128 x 200mm), written on spare paper from an unfinished letter (beginning "Dear Lovell"), endorsed on second page "Autograph of Maria Edgeworth obtained from Capt'n Beaufort," in a sheet of paper (watermarked 1829) with similar endorsement, addressed to Mrs Hill at 44 Chancery Lane. A good fragment of an attested autograph MS by Maria Edgeworth, obtained from "her Brother in law Capt'n Beaufort." Her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, married in 1797 (for the fourth time) Frances Anne Beaufort and had six further children. The donor is very probably Sir Francis Beaufort (1774-1857), the famous hydrographer and inventor of the Beaufort Scale, who was in fact the fourth Mrs Edgeworth's brother and thus —

**1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912 ... (Continued)**

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although six years younger than her — Maria's step-uncle rather than brother-in-law. ODNB records that even in her eighties Maria addressed her stepmother — who was actually a year or two younger than her — as "mother." The manuscript appears to consist of notes taken from a reading Holinshed's Chronicles, notably that section now (and indeed here) attributed to William Harrison, concentrating on the recent changes in domestic luxury England in the late 16th century.

Fawcett, Henry (1833-1884), 1880s

1 8

Letter signed (but entirely in the hand of an amanuensis) to Miss Hill. 18 Brookside, Cambridge, 20 October, no year (1880s?), 3 pp. A letter from the political economist and campaigner Henry Fawcett (1833-84), who had been blind since a shooting accident in 1854, referring to his pamphlet "The Post Office and Aids to Thrift" (1881), which had outlined the projected savings bank run through the post office, which he established as Postmaster General in Gladstone's second administration. Naturally, as a niece of Sir Rowland Hill, the recipient would have been interested in any scheme relating to the Post Office, but especially one which seemed to promise an aid to self-help by the poor. He also promises to enquire about her suggestion of fixing "a private letter box to your door," presumably at the Hill sisters' house in Belsize Park, where they lived from 1879 to 1897.

Froude, James Anthony (1818-1894),

Letter, August 12, 1862

1 9

Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. Bembridge, Isle of Wight, 12 August 1862, 4 pp. Writing as the editor of Fraser's Magazine (a post to which he had been fairly recently appointed), Froude tells Hill that he cannot return the manuscript of his article: "We uniformly destroy the MSS. where we have not been previously informed that the Authors wish to have them again," and says that he cannot promise to have 100 copies of the article struck off, as "this part of the business Mr Parker keeps in his own hands" — he goes on to say that it is unlikely that Parker (J. W. Parker, the publisher) will agree, as the sale of the magazine is injured by such a practice.

Letter, undated

1 9

Autograph letter signed, probably to Alfred Hill. 5 Onslow Gardens, 31 October, no year, 2 pp. Remembering the pleasure with which he made his father's acquaintance, and (less clearly) his meeting with his correspondent; he says he will be glad to see him again when he goes to Birmingham to lecture: "March however is still far off and at present I can only thank you for your kind invitation to your house."

Garibaldi, Giuseppe (1807-1882), undated

1 10

Last two lines of a letter (in Italian) and signature.

## 1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912 ... (Continued)

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|--|---|----|
| Hill, Octavia, February 3, 1894  | 1 | 11 |
| Autograph letter signed, to Mr Hill. 190 Marylebone Rd, 3 February 1894, 1 p. A brief letter from the reformer Octavia Hill (1838-1912), who was no relation of the Davenport Hills but who joined them, especially Florence and Rosamond, in urging social reform, especially in housing and prisons. This letter, perhaps to their brother Alfred (1821-1907), was written to thank him for a "welcome donation," but also to hope that "you have had good news of Rose & Florence."   |   |    |
| Hone, William (1780-1842),   |   |    |
| Letter, November 11, 1823  | 1 | 12 |
| Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. 45 Ludgate Hill, 11 November 1823, 1 p. A letter about a complaint made by Hone against the <i>Edinburgh Review</i> as edited by Francis Jeffrey — it seems that Hill advised Hone to write directly to Jeffrey, and that he has received a reply. "You know the writer of the Article and how much his charge annoys me — Now I want no controversy, and it strikes me that your friendly interference will procure justice to me from your friend, and with that I shall be satisfied. I am really being nibbled to death by minnows and a fish of the great deep should rather swim off than assist in such an internal worry." He finishes by apologising for his 'stiff scrawl' because "my fingers are frostbitten." |   |    |
| Letter, December 10, 1823  | 1 | 12 |
| Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. 45 Ludgate Hill, 10 December 1823, 2 pp. Recording that he received "a capital letter from Mr Jeffrey yesterday — kind, liberal, and everything that one looks at with a feeling of its being 'right honorable'." He explains that he has written back to Jeffrey a letter of thanks, but with a large blot which he did not have the heart to ask forgiveness for. This was clearly the end of the Jeffrey affair, but not the end of Hone's troubles, for his brother seems to be in difficulties, and he has an urgent need for money to support his family: "The young ravens cry 'Give! Give! Give'" and so I go on — soaring and sinking."   |   |    |
| Humboldt, Alexander von (1769-1859), undated   | 1 | 13 |
| Autograph letter (third person), in French, to Monsieur Jullien. 'A Lundi' [no date, no place], 1 p. A brief note presumably from the great naturalist and explorer, graciously refusing an invitation for Tuesday, but saying that he would be pleased to receive "Mr Bradish[?]" on Thursday. The letter is presumably to the celebrated conductor and showman Louis Jullien (1812-60), and the pencil endorsement seems to suggest that it was passed on as an autograph to the Hill family.  |   |    |
| Jopling, Louise Goode (1843-1933), October 23, 1890  | 1 | 14 |
| Autograph letter signed, to an unnamed lady, 8 Cranley Place, London, 23 October 1890, 3 pp. Accepting an invitation to stay with her correspondent when she is at Birmingham, and thus possibly addressed to the wife of Alfred Hill. Louise Jopling  |   |    |

## 1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912 ... (Continued)

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was a successful portrait painter, mainly of women; although after her husband's death (1884) she had remarried in 1887 a lawyer George William Rowe, she seems to have continued to use her earlier married name.

Lilford, Lord, May 13, 1907 1 15

Autograph letter signed, to "Mr. Hill," Lilford Hall, 13 May 1907, 1 p.

Macaulay, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Baron (1800-1859), May 13, 1842 1 16

Autograph letter signed, to an unnamed man (possibly Matthew Davenport Hill). Albany, London, 13 May 1842, 2 pp. Stating that he has received no letter from his correspondent, but supposing that it might have been sent to George St, "where I have not resided for some time."

Montalba, Carla (1842-1929), April 5, 1888 1 17

Autograph letter signed, to Florence Davenport Hill. 20 Stanley Crescent, 5 April 1888, 4 pp. Inviting her correspondent to their studio any Saturday, when they are "in a way 'At Home' to our friends," and asking about mutual friends; she also gives the full address of their studio in Campden House Road Mews. The painter Clara Montalba was one of a talented group of artist siblings — four sisters and a brother, including the sculptor Henrietta Skerrett Montalba — whose father was the Swedish painter Anthony Rubens Montalba and his English wife Emmeline. The children were born in England but left for the continent permanently in the late 1880s, so this dates from the very end of Clara's career in London.

Newman, John Henry (1801-1890), September 3, 1881 1 18

Autograph letter signed, to an unnamed man, possibly Alfred Hill, The Oratory [Birmingham], 3 September 1881, 1 p. Asking his correspondent to forward "four copies of the Phormio and an illustration in English" to Mr Earle. Newman published school editions of Terence's play Phormio in 1883 and 1889, but this must refer to an earlier edition. The letter is very probably to Matthew's son Alfred Hill, who was a registrar in the Birmingham court of bankruptcy and who would have had many opportunities to meet Newman.

O'Rell, Max (1848-1903), undated 1 19

Autograph letter signed, to "Mr. Hill," November 27, [no year], Birmingham, 1 p. Signed "Paul Blouët."

Peel, Robert, Sir (1788-1850), November 9, 1853 1 20

Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. Drayton Manor, Tamworth, 9 November 1853, 2 pp., endorsed, possibly by the recipient. Thanking Hill for "the copy of your powerful address of 20th October," adding that he had "read it at the time with so much Interest, that I am glad to have the opp. of laying my hand upon it readily." This is clearly Hill's address to the Birmingham grand jury, made on that date in 1853, published as a separate pamphlet: there was also a collected edition of these

## 1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912 ... (Continued)

addresses published in 1857 under the title 'Suggestions for the repression of crime'.

Ritchie, Anne Thackeray (1837-1919), 1857-1860s

Letter, November 22, 1857

1 21

Autograph letter signed, to Florence Davenport Hill. [No place], 22 November 1912, 1 p., on mourning paper. Probably written in reply to a note of condolence on the death of her husband Sir Richmond Ritchie, who had died on 12 October: "My dear Florence, Thank you from all past times to now," and adding that even at this time she is "feeling troubled at the postponing of the Spedial Childrens Bill — Can you do anything to help."

Letter, 1860s

1 21

Autograph letter signed, to Miss Hill. 16 Onslow Gardens, Brompton, 20 May [no year, but probably late 1860s], 3 pp. A substantive letter from Thackeray's elder daughter, probably to Florence or Rosamond Davenport Hill. She writes in support of a project and enclosing a note (no longer present) from "Mr Knox the Marlbro' Street Police Magistrate who greatly & entirely sympathises with your scheme and I will get a little story or two together." She adds in a revealing addendum: "Ones heart doesn't come to hand at the thirties as it did at twenty — I mean its more difficult to write just because one has written — but certainly this is a subject to care about & I should be very glad if anything I could say could be of any use." Anne Thackeray (who did not marry until 1877) lived at Onslow Gardens from 1867, when her sister Minnie (d. 1875) married Leslie Stephen.

Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of (1801-1885), November 16, 1857

1 22

Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. [Wimborne St. Giles, Dorset?], 16 November 1857, 2 pp., endorsed presumably by the recipient. Promising to read the documents he has sent "with the attention your recommendation demands," and confessing that he is "not a little proud" of Hill's praise of his Indian speech, presumably on the occasion of the Mutiny (1857), although Shaftesbury's biographer in ODNB says that some his pronouncements on this subject "appeared extreme and ill-considered."

Thackeray, William Makepeace (1811-1863), undated

1 23

Fragmentary autograph note. London, no date, 1 p., endorsed on verso with signature of Thackeray. Giving his address (13 Young St, Kensington Square), apparently as a dinner invitation, as below it is written "dinner tomorrow Sunday Mr. Hill Q.C. 6 o'clock." Probably to Matthew Davenport Hill, who was a barrister, but it is not clear if he ever took silk. Thackeray and his family moved to the house in Young St. in June 1846 and they lived there until May 1854.

Truro, Thomas Wilde, Baron (1782-1855), February 15, 1838

1 24

Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill. [No place], 15 February 1838, 2 pp. Asking Hill if he will go to Nottingham: Wilde, later Lord Chancellor, was MP for

**1: Correspondence, 1820s-1912 ... (Continued)**

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Newark-on-Trent and the request is probably connected with politics rather than the law, as they were both prominent supporters of the whigs. (Hill, however, had left Parliament in 1835 and was never to stand again.)

Watts, Thomas (1811-1869),

1

25

Autograph letter signed, to Florence Davenport Hill. British Museum, 11 December 1860, 3 pp. Thomas Watts was a close friend and colleague of Panizzi at the British Museum and one of the group who made the British Library what it is today: for many years he was responsible for the buying of books in modern foreign languages, and in the decade 1851-60 he estimated that he had personally ordered some 80,000 books in these fields. In 1857 he was appointed first superintendent of the new Reading Room. Here he thanks Florence Hill for her father's book *Our Exemplars*, comparing it favourably with Craik's *Pursuit of Knowledge* and Smiles's *Self-Help*. Hill's *Our Exemplars*, poor and rich, or biographical sketches of men and women was published with an imprint dated 1861, but this letter shows that it must have been available towards the end of 1860, when Watts was given a copy by the Hill family.

Wrottesley, John Wrottesley, Baron (1798-1867), December 7, 1859

1

26

Autograph letter signed, to Matthew Davenport Hill, 7 December 1859, 3 pp. Thanks Hill for "your book which I will keep as a memorial of our former companionship."

Yonge, Charlotte Mary (1823-1901), undated

1

27

Autograph letter signed, to an unnamed woman (probably one of the Hill sisters). Eldefield, Otterbourne, Winchester, 7 February, [no year], 2 pp. Confessing that she has "no experience of boarding out to write from, but our Parish belongs to an exceptionally small Union where there are no children to board out." She does however "have here a widow who would gladly take a little child"; but cannot write about the subject without more knowledge.

Miscellaneous,

1

28

Includes some envelopes, lists, and a handwritten copy of a 2 November 1814 letter by Mary Lamb to "Miss Barbara Betham."