



The Devonshire Collection Archives

GB 2495 DF13

Papers of Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington (1812-1840)

1820 - 1840

Administrative/Biographical History:

Born on 11 January 1812, Lady Blanche Georgiana Cavendish (née Howard), Countess of Burlington (1812-1840), was the 6th daughter of George Howard, 6th Earl of Carlisle, and his wife Lady Georgiana Dorothy Cavendish. Her grandparents were William Cavendish, 5th Duke of Devonshire, and Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire. She was the favourite niece of William Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire.

The 6th Duke promoted a marriage between Blanche and her second cousin (who was also the Duke's heir), William Cavendish, son of William Cavendish and Louisa O'Callaghan, and grandson of the 5th Duke of Devonshire. The couple had much in common, including their strong commitment to religion, and married on 6 August 1829, when Blanche was seventeen. She was styled as the Countess of Burlington after her husband succeeded to the title of Earl of Burlington (2nd creation) in 1834.

She had five children with William Cavendish, although their firstborn, a son, died aged two. Their three surviving sons became distinguished politicians: the eldest, Spencer Compton Cavendish, known after 1858 by the courtesy title Marquess of Hartington, led the Liberal Party; Lord Frederick Cavendish was Chief Secretary for Ireland and was assassinated in 1882; and Lord Edward Cavendish was MP for West Derbyshire. They also had a daughter, Lady Louisa Caroline Cavendish, who married Admiral the Honourable Francis Egerton.

The Countess died – possibly of tuberculosis – after a period of ill health in 1840, aged 29, and was mourned by her husband and uncle for the rest of their lives. After her death the 6th Duke of Devonshire commemorated the Countess with an inscription in the Painted Hall at Chatsworth House, stating that he completed his reconstruction of the house in the year of his bereavement, 1840; he also placed an urn in her memory at the top of the Broad Walk in Chatsworth's garden.

Custodial History:

The material in the collection was largely created or acquired by Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington, and remained within the family; its exact archival history is unknown.

Source of Acquisition:

The material was extant in The Devonshire Collection prior to 1 August 2011.

Scope and Content:

The collection contains correspondence and other papers of Blanche Cavendish, as well as some papers of other individuals closely associated with her.

There is a series of correspondence, containing letters both sent and received by Blanche; this includes letters from Blanche to her sister and her children, personal letters from Margaret Newburgh, wife of Thomas Eyre, 7th Earl of Newburgh, and letters of condolence on the death of Blanche's eldest son, William Cavendish, who died in 1834 aged two. There are also items kept by Blanche Cavendish in memory of her son William, including poems, journal entries, locks of her son's hair and a painted portrait.

The collection also contains sketches attributed to Blanche Cavendish – a talented amateur artist – as well as her embroidered pin cushion. There is a small number of journals and notebooks thought to be by Blanche Cavendish, including a book of religious writing and a notebook dating from before her marriage with the title 'Fables written by the Duchess of Devonshire'.

There are also further papers thought to be by Blanche Cavendish, among them a list of ladies in waiting which details the number of waits they had in 1840; this includes the number of waits for Blanche Cavendish. There is also some sheet music composed by William Cavendish, Earl of Burlington, and the Countess of Carlisle, as well as samples of the Countess of Burlington's handwriting kept by her husband after her death.

System of Arrangement:

The material has been arranged by the archivist into five series, as follows:

- DF13/1 Correspondence of Blanche Cavendish, 1829 - 1840
- DF13/2 Items relating to William Cavendish, son of Blanche and William Cavendish, 1833 - 1834
- DF13/3 Drawings and crafts attributed to Blanche Cavendish, c.1830
- DF13/4 Journals and notebooks of Blanche Cavendish, 1820; 1837
- DF13/5 Other papers of Blanche Cavendish, c.1829; 1840

Conditions Governing Access:

The collection is open for consultation. Access to the archive at Chatsworth is by appointment only. For more information please visit: <https://www.chatsworth.org/art-archives/access-the-collection/archives-and-works-of-art/>

Conditions Governing Reproduction:

Copies of material in the archive can be supplied for private study and personal research purposes only, depending on the condition of the documents.

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Extent:

1 box

Language of Material:

English

Preferred Citation:

Devonshire MSS, Chatsworth, DF13/1 (etc).

Related Material:



DF13: Papers of Lady Blanche Howard, Countess of Burlington (1812-1840)
1820-1840

Other collections held at Chatsworth which contain papers of or relating to Blanche Cavendish include: GB 2495 (the 6th Duke's Correspondence Group), GB 2495 DF4 (Papers of the 6th Duke of Devonshire), GB 2495 DF5 (Papers of the 7th Duke of Devonshire) and GB 2495 DF25 (Papers of Lady Louisa Egerton, née Cavendish).

DF13/1 **Letters of Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington** **1829 - 1840** **Section**

This series includes letters both received and sent by Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington. It includes letters from the Countess to her sister and her children, personal letters from [Margaret] Newburgh and letters of condolence [on the death of the Countess's son, William Cavendish].

57 letters

DF13/1/1 Letters from [Margaret] Newburgh to Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington [1833] Item

Letters from [Margaret] Newburgh to Blanche Cavendish. The letters are not dated by year. The possible date of 1833 has been given as the sender speaks about her anguish after the death of a loved one, possibly her husband, Thomas Eyre, self-styled as the 7th Earl of Newburgh, who died in 1833.

4 letters

DF13/1/2 Letters from Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington to her sister, Lady Elizabeth Howard 1829 - 1839 Item

9 letters

DF13/1/3 Letters from Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington and William Cavendish, Earl of Burlington to their children [1838 - 1840] Item

Four letters addressed to "Cavendish" and one letter addressed to "dearest children". Internal evidence shows that Cavendish refers to Spencer Compton Cavendish, with letters referring to brothers [Frederick Charles Cavendish and Edward Cavendish] and a sister [Louisa Caroline Cavendish]. The letters are undated, but the birth dates of the children would indicate dates of somewhere between 1838 and 1840.

5 letters

DF13/1/4 Letters of condolence sent to Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington [on the death of her son, William Cavendish] [1834] Item

8 letters

DF13/1/5 Letters sent by Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington to Mrs Stanford 1825; [1838 - 1840] Item

Letters sent by Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington to Mrs Stanford [possibly nanny to the children of Blanche and William Cavendish]. Letters concern the Burlington's children. Also includes one letter sent to Mrs Stanford by Georgiana Carlisle (Blanche's mother) and two letters sent to Mrs Riddle, one from William Cavendish (later 7th Duke of Devonshire), sent in 1825 and one from Spencer Compton Cavendish (later 8th Duke of Devonshire), sent in 1840.

20 letters

DF13/1/6	Incomplete letter sent to Blanche Cavendish by an unidentified correspondent	c.1830	Item
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1 letter

DF13/1/7	Family letters sent and received by Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington	19th century	Item
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Contains letters sent and received by Blanche Cavendish and includes letters to and/or from her uncle, William Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire, her husband William Cavendish, Earl of Burlington and her sister Harriet [Leveson Gower], Duchess of Sutherland.

11 letters

<u>DF13/2</u>	<u>Items relating to William Cavendish, the son of Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington and William Cavendish, Earl of Burlington</u>	<u>1833 - 1834</u>	<u>Section</u>
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This series includes items kept by Blanche Cavendish in memory of her son, William, who died in 1834, aged two. These items include poems and journal entries thought to have been written by the Countess, locks of [William Cavendish's] hair and a painting [of William Cavendish].

9 items

DF13/2/1	A poem written by [Blanche Cavendish] in memory of her son, William Cavendish	[1834]	Item
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Lament for William Cavendish. Thought to be written by Blanche Cavendish. The document is undated.

1 item

DF13/2/2	Locks of hair of [William Cavendish], son of Blanche Cavendish	August 1833	Item
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1820-1840

Originally within an envelope marked "Can's hair. August 1833".

1 item

DF13/2/3 Locks of hair [of William Cavendish], son of Blanche Cavendish February 1834 Item

Originally stored in an envelope marked "Cav's hair. February 1834".

1 item

DF13/2/4 A poem written by [Blanche Cavendish] in memory of her son, William Cavendish [1834] Item

Lament for William Cavendish. Thought to be written by Blanche Cavendish. The document is undated.

1 item

DF13/2/5 A Painting [of William Cavendish], son of Blanche Cavendish c.1834 Item

Small painting with "Can" annotated on the reverse. The image is inside an envelope addressed to Lady Cavendish. Thought to have been painted by Blanche Cavendish. The document is undated.

1 item

DF13/2/6 Journal kept [by Blanche Cavendish] concerning her son's life 12 March 1832 - 5 July 1834 Item

Journal thought to be written by Blanche Cavendish, concerning her son's life.

1 item

DF13/3 **Drawings and crafts attributed to Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington** **c.1830** **Section**

This series includes sketches attributed to Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington, and an embroidered pin cushion.

7 items

DF13/3/1 Sketches [by Blanche Cavendish] c.1830 Item



DF13: Papers of Lady Blanche Howard, Countess of Burlington (1812-1840)
1820-1840

Drawings by an unidentified artist, thought to be Blanche Cavendish. The drawings are mainly of wildlife, but there are also sketches of William Cavendish, perhaps preparatory sketches for painting referenced DF13/2/6. The items are undated.

6 items

DF13/3/2	Embroidered Pincushion	3 May 1838	Item
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An embroidered pincushion which belonged to Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington.

1 item

<u>DF13/4</u>	<u>Journals and notebooks of Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington</u>	<u>1820 - 1837</u>	<u>Section</u>
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This series contains a book of religious writing thought to have been compiled by Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington and a notebook written before her marriage with the title 'Fables written by the Duchess of Devonshire'.

2 volumes

DF13/4/1	Book of religious writing thought to have been written by Blanche Cavendish	April 1837 - May 1837	Item
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1 volume

DF13/4/2	Notebook containing 'Fables by the Duchess of Devonshire', belonging to Blanche Howard	1820	Item
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1 volume

DF13/4/3	Journal entry of Blanche Cavendish, concerning the death of her brother-in-law, George Agar Ellis, 1st Baron Dover	9 July 1833 - 14 July 1833	Item
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Journal entries for 9 July 1833 - 14 July 1833. The heading reads 'the most painful time I have yet passed'

3 pages

DF13/4/4	Journal of Lady Blanche Cavendish	1833 - 1838	Item
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A journal kept by Blanche Cavendish which includes entries relating to: the death of her child (William Cavendish, d.1834); her husband William Cavendish, 2nd Earl of Burlington (later 7th Duke of Devonshire); and religious interests.

DF13: Papers of Lady Blanche Howard, Countess of Burlington (1812-1840)
1820-1840

1 volume

DF13/4/5 Loose leaves of paper containing religious writing, thought to have been written by Blanche Cavendish c.1830 Item

2 bundles

DF13/5 **Other papers of Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington** **c.1829 -1840** **Section**

This series includes a list of ladies in waiting, detailing the number of waits they had in 1840. The list includes the number of waits for Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington, with 1840 being the year that she died. It also includes sheet music composed by William Cavendish, Earl of Burlington, and the Countess of Carlisle, and samples of the Countess of Burlington's handwriting kept by her husband after her death.

21 items

DF13/5/1 List of waits for 1840 1840 Item

List of waits for eight ladies in waiting, including Blanche, Countess of Burlington.

1 item

DF13/5/2 Sheet music composed by William Cavendish, Lord Burlington, and the Countess of Carlisle, belonging to Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington c.1830 Item

2 items

DF13/5/3 Samples of Blanche Cavendish's handwriting kept by her husband, William Cavendish, Earl Burlington c.1829 Item

A note written by William Cavendish attached to the letters reads "Little scraps in Blanche's writing - before our marriage". The items are undated.

4 items

DF13/5/4 Botanical Notes made by Blanche Cavendish 19th century Item

Loose leaves of writing paper containing botanical notes by Blanche Cavendish, Countess of Burlington.