

James M. Gibson research collection on Horace Howard Furness

Ms. Coll. 1331

Finding aid prepared by Rive Cadwallader.

Last updated on April 24, 2020.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2018 January 18

Table of Contents

Summary Information.....	3
Biography/History.....	4
Scope and Contents.....	5
Administrative Information.....	5
Related Materials	6
Controlled Access Headings.....	6
Collection Inventory.....	8
Series I. Correspondence and notes of James M. Gibson.....	8
Series II. Photocopied material arranged by institution housing originals.....	8
Series III. Photocopied material arranged chronologically.....	12
Series IV. Microfilm.....	16

Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Gibson, James M.
Title	James M. Gibson research collection on Horace Howard Furness
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1331
Date [bulk]	1975-1985
Date [inclusive]	1882-1985
Extent	5.2 linear feet (12 boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	<p>This collection contains research materials collected and compiled by James M. Gibson for a biography of Horace Howard Furness, <i>The Philadelphia Shakespeare Story: Horace Howard Furness and the Variorum Shakespeare</i>, published in 1990. The bulk of this collection consists of photocopies of original nineteenth and early twentieth century documents made between roughly 1975 and 1985. This collection gathers hundreds of letters and articles that relate to H. H. Furness, from over fifty libraries and repositories, and illuminates Gibson's research and writing process. Furness (1833-1912) was a leading Shakespeare scholar, and thus some of the material pertains to the study of Elizabethan theater.</p>

Cite as:

James M. Gibson research collection on Horace Howard Furness, 1882-1985 (bulk: 1975-1985), Ms. Coll. 1331, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

James M. Gibson (born 1948) has written numerous books including the biography *The Philadelphia Shakespeare Story: Horace Howard Furness and the Variorum Shakespeare*. Gibson earned his B.A. in 1970 from Houghton College in New York and his M.A. and Ph.D. in English in 1974 and 1976 from the University of Pennsylvania. As a graduate student assistant in the Furness Shakespeare Library at Penn, Gibson's interest in Furness and his "New Variorum" was sparked. After earning his Ph.D., Gibson was a professor of English at Houghton College before moving with his novelist wife, Elizabeth Gibson, to Kent in England in 1984. In 1987, he began working as archivist for the Rochester Bridge Trust. He also worked as an archivist for the Richard Watts and City of Rochester Almshouse Charities as well as for the New College of Cobham. As of 2012, he was Senior Research Fellow in the School of History at the University of Kent.

In a book review of *The Philadelphia Shakespeare Story: Horace Howard Furness and the Variorum Shakespeare* (at Penn), Richard Knowles states that "Professor Gibson, with industry, informed judgment, and good taste, has quarried from a great mass of documents, mainly letters, not only all the facts one could want for a full history of this giant of Shakespearean scholarship and of his times, but also a generous selection of telling details that bring alive a wholly admirable human being," (Knowles, page 99).

Horace Howard Furness (1833-1912), son of William Henry Furness, an abolitionist and a theological scholar, and brother to architect Frank Furness, was a lawyer and an American Shakespeare scholar of the nineteenth century. He graduated from Harvard in 1854 and was admitted to the bar in 1859. According to Knowles, "growing deafness caused him to retire from legal practice and ... he devoted himself mainly to promoting Shakespeare--through writing and subsidizing the Variorum volumes, through collecting his priceless library (now at the University of Pennsylvania), through teaching in and helping to reorganize the University of Pennsylvania English Department, and through his famous readings to overflow theater and university audiences up and down the East Coast," (Knowles, page 98). In his "New Variorum," "he collected in a single source 300 years of references, antecedent works, influences and commentaries [and] he devoted more than 40 years to the series, completing the annotation of 15 plays,"(Ferruzzi). The "New Variorum" was well received, and as of 1992, was "an indispensable synthesis of everything known and thought about individual plays up to the date of his edition," (Knowles, page 98). For more information on Horace Howard Furness, see *Horace Howard Furness: Book Collector and Library Builder*, by James M. Gibson.

Ferruzzi, Donna. " Founding of Furness Library as recalled by one of its founders, A. B. Geary." *History Notes: Online Newsletter of the Nether Providence Historical Society* (accessed 2018 January 24).

Knowles, Richard. Review of *The Philadelphia Shakespeare Story: Horace Howard Furness and the Variorum Shakespeare*, by James Gibson. *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Volume 43, No. 1 (Spring, 1992), pages 97-99.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains research materials collected and compiled by James M. Gibson for a biography of Horace Howard Furness, *The Philadelphia Shakespeare Story: Horace Howard Furness and the Variorum Shakespeare*, (at Penn), published in 1990. The bulk of this collection consists of photocopies of original nineteenth and early twentieth century documents made between roughly 1975 and 1985. This collection gathers hundreds of letters and articles that relate to H. H. Furness, from over fifty libraries and repositories, and illuminates Gibson's research and writing process.

The collection is arranged in four series: I. Correspondence and notes of James M. Gibson, II. Photocopied material arranged by institution housing the originals, III. Photocopied material arranged chronologically, and IV. Microfilm. Gibson's organizational scheme of this collection has been preserved. The first series includes Gibson's correspondence and notes as he worked on his research. "Additions and corrections" contains reference materials, documentation on methods and sources, loosely structured notes, and some photocopied Furness correspondence. "Furness Genealogy" maps the structure of the family through family trees, letters, articles, short biographies and excerpts from other scholarly works. "Problems" contains some handwritten notes, correspondence and source material. The last file in the series consists of an annotated chapter draft, and a letter from William E. Miller with suggested edits. The second and third series are both largely composed of copies of Furness' correspondence. In Series II, the the material is organized alphabetically by the repositories in which the originals were housed. These papers are mostly photocopies (or occasional transcriptions) of letters. A few letters between Gibson and archive librarians are also included, as well as some reprographic copies of articles. Series III. is organized chronologically by the date of the original materials, ranging from 1833 to 1972. While the originals were generally created during the 19th and early 20th centuries, all the photocopies were made circa 1975-1985. These materials are somewhat more eclectic, though they also consist mainly of Furness' transcribed letters. Also featured are some of Gibson's research correspondence, typewritten and handwritten notes, and copies of excerpts from books and journals. A few files contain some original primary source material (clippings, for the most part). Seemingly all of the letters in Series II have been transcribed and included in Series III, alongside additional sources; in other words, the information in Series II can also be found in Series III.

The final series in the collection contains ten reels of microfilm from various repositories.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2018 January 18

Finding aid prepared by Rive Cadwallader.

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may exist. For most library holdings, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania do not hold copyright. It is the responsibility of the requester to seek permission from the holder of the copyright to reproduce material from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

At the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania:

The place of the Quem queritis in presepe trope in medieval liturgical drama : unbound dissertation, 1976, by James M. (Melvin) Gibson). Ms. Coll. 529

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Correspondence
- Microfilms
- Reprographic copies
- Research notes

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Furness, Horace Howard, 1833-1912

- Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616

SUBJECT(S)

- Authors
- Authors, American--20th century
- Criticism, textual--History--19th century
- English literature--Study and teaching
- Literature

Collection Inventory

SERIES I. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTES OF JAMES M. GIBSON, 1979-1883, UNDATED.

	Box	Folder
"Additions & corrections", circa 1980-1985.	1	1
"Furness Genealogy", 1979-1983, undated.	1	2-3
"Problems", 1982, 1983, undated.	1	4
Draft of Chapter 6, 1981.	1	5

SERIES II. PHOTOCOPIED MATERIAL ARRANGED BY INSTITUTION HOUSING ORIGINALS, 1976-1982, UNDATED (BULK 1977).

	Box	Folder
Academy of Fine Arts, circa 1975-1985.	1	6
American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, circa 1975-1985.	1	6
American Antiquarian Society, circa 1975-1985.	1	6
American Philosophical Society, circa 1975-1985.	1	7
Amherst College Library, 1977.	1	7
Bodleian Library, circa 1975-1985.	1	8

Boston Public Library, circa 1975-1985.	1	9
Boston University Library, 1977.	1	10
Bowdoin College Library, 1977.	1	10
Brigham Young University, circa 1975-1985.	1	10
Brown University Library, 1977.	1	11
Bryn Mawr College Library, 1977.	1	11
California - UCLA Library, 1977.	1	12
Colorado College Library, 1977.	1	12
Columbia University Library, 1977.	1	12
Cornell University Library, 1977.	1	12
Dartmouth College Library, 1977.	1	13
Dickinson College Library, circa 1975-1985.	1	13
Duke Medical School Library, 1976.	1	13
Duke University Library, 1977.	1	13
Edinburgh University Library, 1978.	1	14
The Folger Shakespeare Library, circa 1975-1985.	1	14
Georgetown University Library, 1977.	1	14
Harvard University Archives, circa 1975-1985.	1	15
Harvard University Library, 1977.	2	1-2

Haverford College Library, 1977.	2	3
Henry E. Huntington Library, 1977.	2	3
International Museum of Photography, 1977.	2	3
J. B. Lippincott Company, 1976-1981.	2	4
Johns Hopkins University Library, circa 1975-1985.	2	4
Library of Congress, 1977.	2	5
Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle-Wittenberg [add umlaut?], 1979.	2	5
Massachusetts Historical Society, circa 1975-1985.	2	5
Middlebury College Library, 1977.	2	5
Nationale Forschungs -und Gedenk- stätten der Klassischen deutschen Literatur in Weimar, circa 1975-1985.	2	6
New York Historical Society, 1977.	2	6
New York University Library, circa 1975-1985.	2	6
Notre Dame University Library, circa 1975-1985.	2	6
Penn State University Library, 1977.	2	7
Pierpont Morgan Library, circa 1975-1985.	2	7
Princeton University Library, 1977.	2	7
Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, circa 1975-1985.	2	8
Shakspeare Society of Philadelphia, circa 1975-1985.	2	8

Somerset Record Office, 1977.	2	8
St. Andrews University Library, circa 1975-1985.	2	9
Swarthmore College Library, 1977.	2	9
Trinity College, Cambridge, 1977.	2	9
Trinity College, Hartford, 1977.	2	9
Tulane University Library, 1977.	3	1
University of Kansas Library, circa 1975-1985.	3	1
University of Leeds, 1977.	3	1
University of Michigan Library, 1977.	3	2
University of Nebraska Library, 1977.	3	2
University of Pennsylvania, circa 1975-1985.	3	3
University of Pennsylvania Archives, circa 1975-1985.	3	4
University of Pennsylvania - PUF, circa 1975-1985.	3	4
University of Rochester Library, 1977.	3	5
University of Texas, Austin, 1977.	3	5
University of Virginia Library, 1977.	3	5
Vassar College Library, 1977.	3	6
Walter Hampden-Edwin Booth Memorial Theatre Library, 1977.	3	6
Yale University Library, circa 1975-1985.	3	6

Unfiled, circa 1975-1985.	3	7
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SERIES III. PHOTOCOPIED MATERIAL ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY, 1882, 1889, 1894; CIRCA 1975-1985.

	Box	Folder
1833-1850, circa 1975-1985.	3	8
1833-1850, circa 1975-1985.	4	1
1851, circa 1975-1985.	4	2
1852, circa 1975-1985.	4	2
1853, circa 1975-1985.	4	2
1854, circa 1975-1985.	4	3
1855, circa 1975-1985.	4	4
1856, circa 1975-1985.	4	5
1857, circa 1975-1985.	4	5
1858, circa 1975-1985.	4	5
1859, circa 1975-1985.	4	5
1860, circa 1975-1985.	4	6
1861, circa 1975-1985.	4	6

1862, circa 1975-1985.	4	6
1863, circa 1975-1985.	4	7
1864, circa 1975-1985.	4	7
1865, circa 1975-1985.	4	7
1866, circa 1975-1985.	4	7
1867, circa 1975-1985.	5	1
1868, circa 1975-1985.	5	2
1869, circa 1975-1985.	5	2
1870, circa 1975-1985.	5	3
1871, circa 1975-1985.	5	4
1872, circa 1975-1985.	5	4
1873, circa 1975-1985.	5	5
1874, circa 1975-1985.	5	6
1875, circa 1975-1985.	6	1
1876, circa 1975-1985.	6	2
1877, circa 1975-1985.	6	3
1878, circa 1975-1985.	6	4
1879, circa 1975-1985.	6	5
1880, circa 1975-1985.	6	6

1881, circa 1975-1985.	6	7
1882, 1882, circa 1975-1985.	7	1
1883, circa 1975-1985.	7	1
1884, circa 1975-1985.	7	2
1885, circa 1975-1985.	7	3
1886, circa 1975-1985.	7	4
1887, circa 1975-1985.	7	5
1888, circa 1975-1985.	7	6
1889, 1889, circa 1975-1985.	7	7
1890, circa 1975-1985.	8	1
1891, circa 1975-1985.	8	2
1892, circa 1975-1985.	8	3
1893, circa 1975-1985.	8	4
1894, 1894, circa 1975-1985.	8	5
1895, circa 1975-1985.	8	6
1896, circa 1975-1985.	8	7
1897, circa 1975-1985.	8	7
1898, circa 1975-1985.	9	1
1899, circa 1975-1985.	9	2

1900, circa 1975-1985.	9	3
1901, circa 1975-1985.	9	4
1902, circa 1975-1985.	9	5
1903, circa 1975-1985.	9	6
1904, circa 1975-1985.	9	7
1905, circa 1975-1985.	9	8
1906, circa 1975-1985.	10	1
1907, circa 1975-1985.	10	2
1908, circa 1975-1985.	10	3
1909, circa 1975-1985.	10	4
1910, circa 1975-1985.	10	5
1911, circa 1975-1985.	10	6
1912, circa 1975-1985.	10	7
1913, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1914, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1915, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1916, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1917, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1918, circa 1975-1985.	11	1

1919, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1920, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1921, circa 1975-1985.	11	1
1922, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1923, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1924, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1925, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1926, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1927, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1928, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1929, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1930, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1931, circa 1975-1985.	11	2
1932-1972, circa 1975-1985.	11	3

SERIES IV. MICROFILM, 1976-1980, UNDATED.

	Box	Folder
From Cornell University: "Horace Howard Furness, 1833-1912. Letters to	12	

and from Bayard Taylor; to John S. Hart, James Morgan Hart, and Hiram Corsow. 1869-1909.", undated.

From The British Library: "PS.7715228; ADD 44464; ADD 43798; ADD 42860", undated. 12

From the Edinburgh University Library, 1977. 12

From the Folger Shakespeare Library, 1977. 12

From the Folger Shakespeare Library, 1980. 12

From the Folger Shakespeare Library: "Folger - Leo Letters", undated. 12

From the Folger Shakespeare Library: "Folger V.a.354", undated. 12

From the Library of Congress: "00100", undated. 12

From the New York Public Library, 1976. 12

From the Pennsylvania Historical Society, undated. 12