



Public Record Office
of Northern Ireland

INTRODUCTION

MONTGOMERY HYDE PAPERS

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Montgomery Hyde Papers (D3084)

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Summary

The H. Montgomery Hyde papers comprise c.6,000 documents (correspondence, photographs, postcards, scrapbooks, press cuttings, typescript and manuscript notes, genealogical papers, articles, etc), 1795-1991, covering the career and interests of Harford Montgomery Hyde, D. Litt. (1907-1989).



The Papers

The archive has been listed in considerable detail and can be roughly divided into three main areas of interest. These are: autobiographical and Hyde family papers; material relating to the Londonderry family; and papers from various aspects of Hyde's varied and colourful career as author, private secretary to the 7th Marquess of Londonderry, barrister, historian, intelligence officer, and Ulster Unionist MP (for North Belfast 1950-1959). The archive came to PRONI in two parts, the first in 1991 after his death, and the remainder in 1995 after the death of his widow. It is unusually wide-ranging and diverse covering a vast array of personalities and subjects.

Sections A and B comprise autobiographical and family papers including Hyde's unpublished autobiography and some correspondence with Oliver St John Gogarty. These sections also provide a comprehensive range of genealogical papers relating to the Hyde, Montgomery, Johnstone and Higinbotham families from which he descended, including the will of John Montgomery of Tanderagee, Co. Armagh, 1795; and the will of Robert Atkinson of Drumcree, Co. Armagh, 1811.

As already mentioned, Hyde served as private secretary to the 7th Marquess of Londonderry and the archive contains not only a significant amount of papers relating to him but also material pertaining to the 3rd Marquess and his wife, Frances Anne, Theresa, Lady Londonderry, wife of the 6th Marquess, and Edith, Lady Londonderry, wife of the 7th Marquess. All these papers can be found in section C of the archive. The highlights include: a significant run of correspondence between Lord Stewart, later 3rd Marquess of Londonderry, and his half-brother, Lord Castlereagh, later 2nd Marquess, 1809-1822, among other things discussing developments during the final stages of the Napoleonic wars; and reminiscences and memoirs of Theresa, Lady Londonderry. Hyde published several works on the Londonderrys and, in addition to this original material which properly belongs in the Londonderry archive (PRONI, D654, D2846, D3030 and D3099, his archive contains workings papers relating to *The Rise of Lord Castlereagh*, *Letters from Sir Charles Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, 1808-1812*, *The Strange Death of Lord Castlereagh*, and *The Londonderrys: A Family Portrait*. Also of importance is the considerable number of photographs of the Londonderry family which Hyde gathered together, some of which were used in the above books. They are a fascinating mix of formal family portraits and informal group snaps.

During World War II Hyde worked as an Intelligence Officer which provided the basis for an autobiographical account of his activities entitled *Secret Intelligence Agent*. He also struck up a friendship with Sir William Stephenson and wrote a biography of him entitled *The Quiet Canadian: The Secret Service Story of Sir William Stephenson*. Stephenson headed up British intelligence activities in North America during WWII and the collection contains material relating to his career. There is also related correspondence about their attempts to clear the name of colleagues who had later been branded as double agents.

There is relatively little in the archive pertaining to Hyde's service as MP for North Belfast from 1950-1959. The material mainly consists of correspondence about his potential re-nomination for the seat and his eventual rejection by the local association. There are also some miscellaneous pamphlets and reports relating to Northern Ireland in the 1950s and 1960 [see sections I and J]. During the 1950s and 1960s, Hyde was involved in the campaign to abolish the death sentence in the United Kingdom. The archive contains letters, pamphlets, and press cuttings relating to his activities in support of this campaign [see section K].

The remainder of the archive covers the wide scope of Hyde's literary endeavours and interests. The sections usually take the form of working papers, correspondence, reviews, agreements with publishers and draft manuscripts. The subjects include: Princess Lieven; Mexican Empire: The Story of Maximilian and Carlotta; John Law, Carson: The Life of Lord Carson of Duncairn; Strong For Service: The life of Lord Nathan of Churt; Lord Alfred Douglas; Lord Reading; Solitary in the Ranks: Lawrence of Arabia as Airman and Private Soldier; Neville Chamberlain; British Air Policy Between the Wars, 1918-1939; The Trial of Sir Roger Casement; etc, etc. There are also numerous commissioned articles and reviews for various magazines and newspapers, and material [see section L] relating to pornography and Hyde's role as an expert witness in court cases over the publication of pornographic works.

