

Ternan Family Papers

(MS 915)

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Stefan Dickers
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Extent:

4 boxes: 2 outsize items

Name of Principal Creators:

Robinson, Ellen Lawless Wharton (1839-1914) actress,
known as Ellen Ternan

Trollope, Frances Eleanor (1835-1913) née Ternan,
actress and author

Taylor, Maria Susannah (1837-1904) nee Ternan,
actress and author

Reece, Gladys Eleanor Wharton (d 1973) nee Wharton
Robinson, daughter of George and Ellen Wharton
Robinson

Wickham, Helen Florence (1884-1982) painter and
potter

Administrative/Biographical History:

The Ternan Family Papers contain material created by many of the extended Ternan family, although only the biographies of the three Ternan sisters are given below.

Ellen Lawless [Nelly] Robinson (nee Ternan) (1839-1914), actress, was born on 3 March 1839 at 11 Upper Clarence Place, Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent, the third of four children of the actors Thomas Lawless Ternan (1790-1846) and his wife, Frances Eleanor, née Jarman (1802-1873). Ellen had two elder sisters, Frances Eleanor and Maria Susanna, and a younger brother who died in infancy. All three sisters entered the acting profession early. After the early death of their father in 1846 they were obliged to earn their living, touring the north of England, Ireland, and Scotland with their mother. Nelly's first adult engagement was in a burlesque at the Haymarket in 1857, and it was after this that she was engaged by Charles Dickens, with her mother and Maria, to perform with his amateur company in *The Frozen Deep* in Manchester. It was during this theatrical engagement that Ellen began a relationship with Dickens which was to continue until his death in 1870.

Dickens left Nelly £1000 in his will and set up a private trust fund which freed her from the necessity of working again after his death in 1870. She travelled abroad, then on 31 January 1876, in the parish church at Kensington, she married a clergyman twelve years her

junior, George Wharton Robinson (1850–1910). She helped her husband to run a boys' school in Margate, and gave birth to a son and a daughter. Her last years were spent at Southsea, where she was reunited with her sisters. She died from cancer at 18 Guion Road, Fulham, London, on 25 April 1914 and was buried in the Highland Road cemetery, Southsea, in her husband's grave.

Frances Eleanor Trollope (1835-1913), was born in August 1835 on a paddle-steamer in Delaware Bay during her parents' tour of America. After a successful career on the stage she went to Florence to study opera singing, and became governess to Bice (Beatrice), the daughter of the widowed Thomas Adolphus Trollope (1810-1892). On 29 October 1866 she married her employer. They lived in Italy for many years. She wrote a number of novels, several of which, including 'Aunt Margaret's Trouble' (1866) and 'Mabel's Progress' (1867), were serialized anonymously by Dickens in *All the Year Round*. After her husband's death in 1892 she wrote the life of her mother-in-law, Frances Trollope (1779-1863). During her last years her sister Ellen lived with her in Southsea, and she died there on 14 August 1913.

Maria Susanna Taylor (1837-1904) nee Ternan, sister of Ellen and Frances Eleanor, appeared with her sisters on the stage until her marriage, on 9 June 1863, to William Rowland Taylor, the son of a prosperous Oxford brewer. Shortly after her mother's death she left her husband, and at the age of forty enrolled at the Slade School of Fine Art to learn to paint. She made her home in Rome and travelled adventurously in north Africa; and she worked as an artist and journalist, writing for the *London Standard* for more than twelve years. She returned to England in 1898 and died in Southsea on 12 March 1904.

Scope and Content:

Papers relating to the extended Ternan family and their friends, [c1800-1974], including; manuscript material received by Katherine Longley from Helen Florence Wickham as joint executrix and legatee of the personal property of Gladys Eleanor Wharton Reece (daughter of Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson), and later bequeathed to Senate House Library. Includes commonplace and address books for Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson, diaries kept by Gladys Wharton Reece and other documents, 1868-1913;

material received by Katherine Longley from Helen Florence Wickham and later bequeathed to Senate House Library, University of London. Includes diaries, correspondence and other material relating to the Wickham and Darby families, particularly, John Wickham, Thomas Elde Darby and Rosalind Wickham; letters to Helen Wickham from Mrs Wharton Robinson, Mrs F.E.Trollope and Rosalind Wickham, along with material relating to Helen Wickham's career as an artist, c1800-1929; photographs of and concerning the extended Ternan family, including photographs of Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson and their children, Geoffrey and Gladys Wharton Robinson, Helen Wickham, Maria Taylor and others, along with family group photographs, photographs of non-family members (including Charles Dickens and many actors and theatrical managers) and images of sites and buildings with family connections, c1859-1974; framed illustrations and portraits concerning the extended Ternan family, including miniatures painted by Helen Wickham and pencil portraits of Ellen Ternan and Rosalind Wickham, 1824-1913.

System of Arrangement:

The collection is arranged into the following sections:

MS915/1: Manuscripts

MS915/2: Other Manuscripts

MS915/3: Photographs

MS915/4: Framed Items

Archival History:

The material was gifted by Katherine Longley (and Michael Slater) to Senate House Library at various points between 1978 and 1992.

Access conditions:

Access to this collection is unrestricted for the purpose of private study and personal research within the supervised environment and restrictions of the Library's Palaeography Room.

Copying conditions:

Copies may be made, subject to the condition of the original. Copying must be undertaken by the Palaeography Room staff, who will need a minimum of 24 hours to process requests

MS915/1 Manuscripts 1868-1913

Manuscript material received by Katherine Longley from Helen Florence Wickham as joint executrix and legatee of the personal property of Gladys Eleanor Wharton Reece (daughter of Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson), and later bequeathed to Senate House Library. Includes commonplace and address books for Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson, diaries kept by Gladys Wharton Reece and other documents.

MS915/1/1 Commonplace Book kept by George Wharton Robinson 1870-1879

Large notebook containing handwritten notes and press cuttings kept by George Wharton Robinson and inscribed on the opening page, 'A commonplace book for thoughts and note-worthy events: the sayings and doings of wise men: fine passages from different authors and the entering of all fresh knowledge picked up by the way' (86pp) (17 January 1870 - 22 January 1879)

1 volume

MS915/1/2 Verses for Recitation 1868

Handwritten verses for recitation by Mrs Wharton Robinson (Ellen Ternan), including the following:

- 'The Maiden and the Weathercock' by Longfellow (in the hand of Ellen Ternan)
- 'The Irish Schoolmaster: A Lesson in History, Geography and Biography' (in the hand of Ellen Ternan, possibly of her own composition)
- 'He, and She' (in the hand of Ellen Ternan)
- 'The Faithful Lovers' (in the hand of Ellen Ternan)
- 'Two Cities of the Dead' by T.A.Trollope (?) (January 1868)
- List of recitations (perhaps in the hand of Mrs F.E.Trollope; endorsed with a list of three recitations in hand of Ellen Ternan)

1 envelope

- MS915/1/3 Commonplace Book kept by Ellen Ternan 1870-1913**
 Commonplace book kept by Ellen Ternan including handwritten verses by different authors, including Rudyard Kipling, and press cuttings, along with notes and verse by Ternan including a description of a visit to Windsor Park and an elegy on the death of Mamie Dickens' dog 'Tit' (includes many loose pages and notes) (c60pp) (1870-1913)
- 1 volume
- MS915/1/4 'The Shakespeare Birthday Book' 1891**
 Leather bound diary entitled 'The Shakespeare Birthday Book'(edited by M.F.P.Dunbar) containing printed quotes from Shakespeare's and handwritten entries by Gladys Wharton Robinson of friends and relatives' birthdays (1891).
- 1 volume
- MS915/1/5 'Unrejected Addresses' c1896-1905**
 Volume containing 43 envelopes (4 loose) mainly addressed to either Mrs Wharton Robinson (Ellen Ternan), Geoffrey Wharton Robinson, Mrs Trollope and others at the address 'The Filberts, Calcot, Near Reading' or variations of it (c1896-1905)
- 1 volume
- MS915/1/6 Diaries of Gladys Wharton Robinson 1907-1910**
 Four volumes of handwritten diaries kept by Gladys Wharton Robinson, including press cuttings, leave samples and various ephemera inserted between pages (1907-1910).
- 4 volumes
- MS915/1/7 Address Book of Mrs Wharton Robinson c1910-1913**
 Handwritten address book kept by Mrs Wharton Robinson (Ellen Ternan) (c1910-1913).
- 1 volume

- MS915/2 Other Manuscripts** **c1800-1929**
- Items received by Katherine Longley from Helen Florence Wickham and later bequeathed to Senate House Library, University of London. Includes diaries, correspondence and other material relating to the Wickham and Darby families, particularly, John Wickham, Thomas Elde Darby and Rosalind Wickham; letters to Helen Wickham from Mrs Wharton Robinson, Mrs F.E.Trollope and Rosalind Wickham, along with material relating to Helen Wickham's career as an artist (c1800-1929)
- MS915/2/1 Armorial Bookplate of John Wickham** **c1800**
- Three paper copies of the armorial bookplate of John Wickham, Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford (grandfather of Miss H.Wickham) (c1800)
- 3 items
- MS915/2/2 Commission for Deputy Lieutenant of the County of Somerset** **1827**
- Commission from Lord John Thynne, Vice-Lieutenant of the County of Somerset, appointing John Wickham as one of the Deputy Lieutenants of the county, as possessed of an estate in the parishes of Babcary and Rimpleton of the yearly value of £200 and upwards (1 January 1827)
- 1 item
- MS915/2/3 Sketch of Batcombe Church** **n.d.**
- Small sketch of Batcombe Church, Somerset, by 'R.D.' (Rosalind Darby), on the reverse of an invitation card to a 'soiree desante' given by Mrs Robert Haig (n.d.)
- 1 item
- MS915/2/4 Ball Invitation** **1881**
- Invitation from the Marquis and Marchioness of Bath to Mr and Mrs Henry Wickham to attend a ball at Longleat in the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales, with dance engagement card (9 December 1881).
- 1 item

- MS915/2/5 Copy Diary of Thomas Elde Darby** **1852; n.d.**
 Small volume containing handwritten diary entries by Thomas Elde Darby, including description of a visit to Milan, and other material relating to Darby, copied by Helen Wickham, with loose press cutting concerning Queen Anne's Gate, London (c75pp) (c1852; n.d.)
 1 item
- MS915/2/6 Letters from Thomas Elde Darby to Rosalind Darby** **1850-1854**
 Twenty-three letters from Thomas Elde Darby to his daughter Rosalind at school in Paris (in French and English) (1850-1854)
 23 items in envelope
- MS915/2/7 Letter from Thomas Elde Darby to Rosalind Darby** **1859-1881**
 - Letter from Thomas Elde Darby to his elder sister Rosalind Darby regarding general and personal matters (2pp) (14 August 1859).
 - Envelope addressed to Henry Wickham (13 October 1881)
 2 items in envelope
- MS915/2/8 Letters to Helen Wickham regarding her Pottery Figurines** **1922-1929**
 Thirty letters to Helen Wickham regarding the exhibition and sale of her pottery figurines, including correspondence with the British Institute of Industrial Art, The Royal Society of Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Gravers, the British Empire Exhibition (1924) Incorporated, H.C.Dickins, the Fine Art Society, Ernest Brown and Phillips and others (1922-1929)
 1 envelope
- MS915/2/9 Catalogue of The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society** **1928**
 Catalogue (under revision) for the 14th exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, held at the galleries of the Royal Academy and featuring listings for three artworks by Helen Wickham (1928).
 1 item

- MS915/2/10 Letters from Mrs Wharton Robinson to Helen Wickham 1912**
 Two letters from Mrs Wharton Robinson (Ellen Ternan) to Helen Wickham regarding family and personal matters (1912, n.d.)
 2 items in envelope
- MS915/2/11 Letter from F.E.Trollope to Helen Wickham 1912**
 Letter from F.E.Trollope to Helen Wickham regarding the latter's artwork (2pp) (16 February 1912)
 1 item in envelope
- MS915/2/12 Letter from 'Mammy' to Helen Wickham n.d.**
 Letter from 'Mammy' to Helen Wickham regarding received flowers and general matters (3pp) (n.d.)
 1 item in envelope
- MS915/2/13 'My First Night in the Old Rectory' 1914**
 - Handwritten ghost story, 'My First Night in the Old Rectory' by Rosalind Wickham (8pp) (n.d.)
 - Handwritten ghost story, 'A True Experience of Rosalind E.Wickham', dictated by Rosalind Wickham and written by Helen Wickham for possible submission to the Society for Psychological Research (6pp) (11 October 1914)
 - Handwritten notes entitled 'Clergy List, 1859' listing sources of research on the clergy in Batcombe, Somerset, possibly by Katherine Longley (1p) (n.d.)
 1 envelope
- MS915/2/14 Silver Spoon n.d.**
 Small silver spoon, inscribed 'NWR' (Nelly Wharton Robinson) on top, with typescript note the spoon's provenance and history by Katherine Longley (n.d.)
 1 item

MS915/2/15 Handwritten Copy of Obituary of Thomas Elde Darby 1926

- Handwritten copy of obituary of Thomas Elde Darby from the Illustrated London News (originally published 12 August 1854) in unidentified hand (2pp) (n.d.)

- Press cutting, "'Royal' Squire Dies' from the Daily Express (17 December 1926)

2 items in envelope

MS915/2/16 Photocopy of Wickham Family Tree n.d.

Photocopy of handwritten pedigree/family tree of Helen Wickham (1p) (n.d.)

1 item in envelope

MS915/3 Photographs

c1859-1974

Photographs of and concerning the extended Ternan family, including photographs of Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson and their children, Geoffrey and Gladys Wharton Robinson, Helen Wickham, Maria Taylor and others, along with family group photographs, photographs of non-family members (including Charles Dickens and many actors and theatrical managers) and images of sites and buildings with family connections (c1859-1974).

MS915/3/1 Ellen Ternan

c1859-1896

1. Full length photograph of Ellen Ternan (c1859) (The Revolving Studio, Bayswater)
2. Head and shoulders photograph of Ellen Ternan (c1865-1876)
3. Upper body photograph of Ellen Ternan (c1867) (Montabone, Firenze)
4. Head and shoulders photograph of Mrs Wharton Robinson (Ellen Ternan) (c1876)
5. Head and shoulders photograph of Mrs Whartin Robinson (Ellen Ternan) (c1896)

5 items in envelope

MS915/3/2 George Wharton Robinson

c1860-1895

1. Full length photograph of George Wharton Robinson (c1860) (W.Elliott, Dover Street, Penrith)
2. Head and shoulders photograph of George Wharton Robinson (c1873) (Wheeler and Day, Oxford)
3. Full length photograph of George Wharton Robinson (c1895) (Hollis and Son, London)

3 items in envelope

MS915/3/3 Geoffrey Wharton Robinson

1880-1903

1. Full length photograph of Geoffrey Wharton Robinson, aged 18 months (August 1880) (L.R.Goodman, Margate) (Received from Mrs Gem Kirklington, September 1981)
2. Full length photograph of Geoffrey Wharton Robinson, aged 2 years and 4 months (June 1881) (L.R.Goodman, Margate)
3. Full length photograph of Geoffrey Wharton Robinson (c1881) (L.R.Goodman, Margate)

4. Full length photograph of Geoffrey Wharton Robinson as 'The Infant Bacchus', aged 3 years (2 copies) (February 1882) (L.R.Goodman, Margate)
5. Full length photograph of Geoffrey Wharton Robinson as Captain in the Lancashire Fusiliers (2 copies) (February 1903)

7 items in envelope

MS915/3/4 Gladys Wharton Robinson c1886-1909

1. Full length photograph of Gladys Wharton Robinson (c1886) (George Goodman, Margate)
2. Full length photograph of Gladys Wharton Robinson (c1895) (William Whiteley, London)
3. Upper body photograph of Gladys Wharton Robinson, seated and reclining (c1909)

3 items in envelope

MS915/3/5 Maria Taylor c1872-1901

1. Full length photograph of Maria Taylor, seated (c1872) (Henry W.Taunt, Oxford)
2. Head and shoulders photograph of Maria Taylor (c1901)
3. Head and shoulders photograph of Maria Taylor (c1901)
4. Head and shoulders photograph of Maria Taylor (c1901)

4 items in envelope

MS915/3/6 Helen Florence Wickham c1927

Upper body photograph of Helen Florence Wickham, seated (c1927) (Received from Mrs M Ayres)

1 item in envelope

MS915/3/7 Other Family Members c1859-1901

1. Head and shoulders photograph of James Ternan, brother of Thomas Lawless Ternan (n.d.)
2. Head and shoulders photograph of Elizabeth Anna Ternan, daughter of James Ternan (n.d.)
3. Head and shoulders photograph of Frances (Fannie) Ternan, daughter of James Ternan, who later married Frederick Roberts of Cork (n.d.) (Alex Ayton, Londonderry)
4. Upper body photograph of Celia Darby, aunt of Helen Florence Wickham (c1860) (Elliot and Fry, London)

5. Upper body photograph of Edith Skaife, nee Robinson, sister of George Wharton Robinson and first wife of Dr Skaife of Chichester (n.d.) (Arthur Debenham, Isle of Wight)
6. Head and shoulders photograph of Thomas Adolphus Trollope (n.d.)
7. Head and shoulders photograph of Anthony Trollope (n.d.) (Elliot and Fry, London)
8. Full body photograph of Frances Eleanor Ternan, senior (Fanny Jarman) (c1859) (The Revolving Studio, Bayswater)
9. Head and shoulders photograph of Frances Eleanor Trollope (24 February 1901)

9 items in envelope

MS915/3/8 Family Groups

1870-1909

1. Photograph of a seated and standing Ternan Family, taken at Oxford, including Mrs F.E.Trollope, Mrs Ternan, Ellen Ternan and Maria Taylor (July 1870)
2. Upper body photograph of Dr W.G.Ternan with his sister Mrs Roberts (n.d.) (Alex Ayton, Londonderry)
3. Long view photograph of George Wharton Robinson with unidentified woman, perhaps his mother (c1871) (Smelt, Penrith)
- 4 Full body photograph of Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson (c1877) (H.Goodman, Margate)
5. Upper body photograph of Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson with their son, Geoffrey (December 1879) (H.Goodman, Margate)
6. Full body photograph of Geoffrey and Gladys Wharton Robinson (August 1885) (George Goodman, Margate)
7. Head and shoulders photograph of Geoffrey and Gladys Wharton Robinson (c1887) (John Hawke, Plymouth)
8. Full body photograph of Geoffrey and Gladys Wharton Robinson with pet dog (2 copies) (February 1889) (William Whiteley, London)
9. Full body photograph of Helen Wickham and Gladys Wharton Robinson dressed as bridesmaids (1889) (William Whiteley, London)
10. Full body photograph of Helen Wickham and Gladys Wharton Robinson dressed as bridesmaids (Different shot from above) (1889) (William Whiteley, London)
11. Photograph taken to celebrate the engagement of Gladys Wharton Robinson to Edward Turberville Bernard Reece (showing also Mrs Wharton

Robinson, Mrs F.E.Trollope, Helen Wickham, etc),
taken in the garden of 27 Victoria Grove, Southsea
(7 August 1909)

12. Full body photograph of Dr Obadiah Ternan of
Enniskillen, son of James Ternan, with his youngest
brother Dr William George Ternan, of Harrington
Street, Dublin (n.d.)

13 items in envelope

MS915/3/9 Others

n.d.

1. Upper body photograph of Charles Dickens,
seated (n.d.) (Mason and Co., London)
2. Full body photograph of E.P.Adonson as 'Old
Trusty' (n.d.) (Caldesi, Blanford and Co., London)
3. Head and shoulders photograph of Charles Kean
(n.d.) (Maul and Co., London)
4. Head and shoulders photograph of J.L.Toole (n.d.)
(London Stereoscope and Photographic Company)
5. Head and shoulders photograph of Mrs (later
Lady) Dickinson, wife of Sir John Dickinson,
stipendiary magistrate (n.d.) (W.Goshhawk, Harrow)
6. Head and shoulders photograph of Charles
Fechter (n.d.) (London Stereoscope and
Photographic Company)
7. Upper body photograph of Sims Reeves (n.d.)
(H.J.Whitlock, Birmingham)

7 items in envelope

MS915/3/10 Miscellaneous

1974

1. Picture postcard from the Dickens Birthplace
Museum, Portsmouth, showing the couch on which
Charles Dickens died (n.d.)
2. Photograph of the grave of Henry Thomas
Wickham (father of Helen Wickham) at Batcombe
Church, Somerset (n.d.)
3. Four photographs showing different views of
'Greyfriars' (formerly Paradise House, Paradise
Square) Oxford (home of Maria Taylor, 1863-1867),
taken by Katherine Longley (19 September 1974)

6 items in envelope

MS915/3/11 Oversize Photographs and Illustrations

1886

1. Watercolour portrait of Thomas Lawless Ternan
(on paper) (n.d.) (Received from Mrs Lillah
M.Fields, stepdaughter of Geoffrey Wharton
Robinson, March 1980)

2. Head and shoulders lithograph of Charles Dickens (Found at the home of Gladys Wharton Reece by Katherine Longley, after the former's death in 1973, in a trunk belonging to Mrs F.E.Trollope) (n.d.)
3. Full body photograph of Mr and Mrs George Wharton Robinson with their children Geoffrey and Gladys, pictured outside the High School, Margate (August 1886)
4. Three head and shoulders photographs of Gladys Reece (2 poses) (1931) (Hugo N. van Wadenoyen, Cardiff)

6 items

- MS915/4 Framed Items** **1824-1913**
 Framed illustrations and portraits concerning the extended Ternan family, including miniatures painted by Helen Wickham and pencil portraits of Ellen Ternan and Rosalind Wickham.
- MS915/4/1 Framed Miniature of Mrs F.E.Trollope** **n.d.**
 Framed miniature portrait of Mrs F.E.Trollope by Helen Wickham (n.d.)
 1 item
- MS915/4/2 Framed Miniature of Sir John Martin-Harvey** **n.d.**
 Framed miniature portrait of Sir John Martin-Harvey as Sydney Carton in 'The Only Way' by Helen Wickham (n.d.)
 1 item
- MS915/4/3 Framed Miniature of Frances Eleanor Jarman** **1824**
 Framed miniature portrait of Frances Eleanor Ternan (nee Jarman) by George Brown (1824).
 1 item
- MS915/4/4 Framed Miniature of Unknown Gentleman** **c1830**
 Framed miniature portrait of an unknown gentleman (c1830).
 1 item
- MS915/4/5 Pencil Portrait of Rosalind Wickham** **1913**
 Framed pencil portrait of Rosalind Wickham (nee Darly) drawn by Helen Wickham (property of Katherine Longley) (1913).
 1 item
- MS915/4/6 Portrait of Ellen Ternan** **c1871**
 Framed pencil and gouache portrait of Ellen Ternan by unknown artist (c1871).
 1 item