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Catalogue of William J. Gaffney Papers

Date range of material: 1909-1985

Durham University Library
December 2020

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Preface

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Introduction

Collection title: William J. Gaffney Papers

Reference code: GB-0033-CSU/D22

Dates of creation: 1909-1985

Extent: 2 boxes (0.3 metres)

Repository: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections

Creator: William J. Gaffney (1909-1985)

Language of material: English

Contents

Papers of Fr William J. Gaffney, including: papers relating to his role as an army chaplain during the Second World War; draft manuscripts for his book *Elizabethan Students*; correspondence; personal papers including photographs and other items; and printed material.

Biography

William J. Gaffney was born in Eton, Buckinghamshire, in 1909. He undertook seminary training at the English College of Valladolid, Spain, in the early 1930s, becoming the parish priest of St Peter's Catholic Church in Marlow following his ordination. During the Second World War, he served as a chaplain for the British army in Africa, ministering to the local indigenous tribes of Basutoland (now Lesotho) and other places. Gaffney retained a close connection with the English College of Valladolid throughout his life, undertaking research into its history and publishing (privately) a monograph entitled *Elizabethan Students : the story of the founding of the English College of St Alban, Valladolid, Spain* in 1979. He also helped to set up a book agency in England for the college. He died in 1985.

Accession details

Donated by Charles Smith, 10 November 2020, Acc No Misc.2020/21:15.

Previous custodial history

Previously stored in the house of Mary Gaffney, William's sister

Conditions of access

Open for consultation.

Copyright and copying

Permission to make any published use of material from the collection must be sought in advance from the Head of Collections (e-mail PG.Library@durham.ac.uk) and, where appropriate, from the copyright owner. The Library will assist where possible with identifying copyright owners, but responsibility for ensuring copyright clearance rests with the user of the material.

Appraisal

Clean duplicates removed.

Accruals

No further accruals expected.

Form of citation

The form of citation should use the code GB-0033-CSU/D22, or the collection name William J. Gaffney Papers, followed by the *reference number*

To order items in the searchroom, use the collection reference code(s), derived by removing the repository code (GB-0033-), followed by the reference number. Citing the section of the finding aid is useful.

D22/A1-4 11 January - 17 April 1942

Papers relating to Fr William Gaffney's time as army chaplain in Africa during the Second World War

1 file

D22/A1 11 - 17 January 1942

"Notes on my visit to the Holy Land, 11th-17th January, 1942"

Includes descriptions and observations of various places and religious sites, including the Sinai Desert, Beersheba, Hebron, Bethlehem and Jerusalem

50 pages

D22/A2/1-12 1942

Photographs and postcards, mostly of Fr Gaffney's visit to the Holy Land, as well as other photographs taken during his time as an army chaplain:

12 BW prints

D22/A2/1 13 January 1942

Commercial postcard: "Nr. 307 Bethlehem Grotto of the Nativity". Copyright: Dormitio Jerusalem

Caption: "The cave at Bethlehem. I said Mass here on Tuesday Jan 13th 1942 at the altar on the right of the pillar"

BW print

D22/A2/2 [?13 January 1942]

Caption: "Bethlehem - the Church of the Nativity"

Ink stamp: Velox

BW print

D22/A2/3 [?14 January 1942]

Caption: "The well where the Holy Family must have drawn water"

Ink stamp: Nazareth: Virgin's Fountain

Ink stamp: Velox

BW print

D22/A2/4 [?14 January 1942]

Caption: "A Moslem building on the site of the Ascension"

Ink stamp: Velox

BW print

D22/A2/5 [?14 January 1942

Caption: "The entrance to the cave where the Incarnation took place is between the steps, under the high Altar"

Ink stamp: Nazareth: Church of Annunciation

Ink stamp: Velox

BW print

D22/A2/6 15 [January] 1942

Commercial postcard: "Nr. 2044 Jerusalem - Calvary XIII. Station". Copyright: Dormitio Jerusalem

Caption: "On Mount Calvary. Tradition says that this altar marks the spot where Our Lord was taken down from the Cross. I said Mass here on Thursday 15th 1942"

BW print

D22/A2/7 16 January 1942

Caption: "The Altar of the Agony. Just in front of the Altar is a square of bare rock where tradition says that Our Lord's Agony took place. I said Mass here on Friday Jan 16th. 1942"

Ink stamp: Church of Gethsemany, Jerusalem

Ink stamp: Velox

BW print

D22/A2/8 April 1942

Group of newly-baptised indigenous troops from Basutoland

BW print

D22/A2/9 [?1942]

Group photograph

Front row: Kathleen, Joan, Mary

2nd row: Kathleen's mother, Joan's grandmother, Mary's mother, Mary's sister Kath

Back row: Joan's grandfather, Mary's brother William, Mary's sister Olive, Kath's father, John (then engaged to Kath)

Note by Gaffney: "Joan was a school friend"

BW print

D22/A2/10 [?1942]

Caption: "Making mud breaks at country house for local cottages"

BW print

D22/A2/11 [?1942]

Fr William Gaffney in a rowing boat

Caption: "The Punt"

Ink stamp: Velox

BW print

D22/A2/12 [?1942]

Fr William Gaffney in army uniform

BW print

D22/A3 17 April 1942

Cutting from *The Universe* entitled "Five army chaplains baptise 300 native troops"
Newspaper cutting

D22/A4 [?1942]

Typescript newsletter with a report by Fr William Gaffney on his chaplaincy work
Newsletter

D22/B [?1970 x 1979]

Draft typescripts of William Gaffney's book, *Elizabethan Students: the story of the founding of the English College of St Alban, Valladolid, Spain* (1979)

9 files

D22/C1-15 [5 April] 1931 - 16 September 1980

Correspondence, including:

1 file

D22/C1-5 [5 April] 1931 - 15 September 1935

Letters from Gaffney to his mother, written during his time as a seminarian at the English College in Valladolid, including a description of a Good Friday passion play on the streets of Valladolid (D22/C1); news that his class will skip a year's seminary training (D22/C2); receiving the tonsure from Bishop McNulty and description of an ordination ceremony, news of the start of his classes, a retreat, and two seminarians deciding to leave (D22/C3); detailed description of his ordination as subdeacon (D22/C4); and description of his ordination as deacon at Zamora (D22/C5)

5 letters

D22/C6-12 12 July - 14 October 1976

Correspondence between Gaffney, W.H. Smith, the Publishers Association, and Truslove and Hanson, on setting up a book agency for the English College of Valladolid

7 letters

D22/C13 9 November 1979

Letter from [?John] to [John]: commenting on Gaffney's book (*Elizabethan Students*) and arrangements for celebrating the third centenary of the Vulnerata chapel

1 letter

D22/C14 26 December 1980

Letter from [?] (Prinknash Abbey) to Gaffney: thanking him for a copy of his book and hoping that it can be read in the refectory, Gaffney's ill health, the weather in Canada, and criticism of Father Abbot's choice of officials and his possible replacement

1 letter

D22/C15 16 September 1980

Letter from Rev Michael E. Williams to Gaffney: praising his book, and Perry and Shepherd's restoration of the college

1 letter

D22/D1-10 [?1909 x 1985]

Personal papers:

1 file

D22/D1 6 May 1909

Birth certificate for Gaffney

1 certificate

D22/D2-8 [?1935 x 1980]

Photographs, including photographs of Gaffney, interior and exterior photographs of St Peter's Catholic Church (Marlow), and prints of Valladolid paintings

D22/D6: Copyright Alan Holmes, Marlow

3 coloured/5 BW prints

D22/D9 [mid 20th century?]

Notes on Gaffney ancestry

2 items

D22/D10 [mid 20th century?]

Copies of articles on Benedictine history

9 pages

D22/D11 1985

Draft prayer card for Gaffney

Includes incorrect life dates

1 item

D22/E

Printed publications in the William J. Gaffney Papers will be added to the Durham University Library catalogue in due course and have the prefix D22/E.