**Survey of published editions of documents from the Georgian Papers**

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**1. List of published editions.**

From the Royal Archives:

John, Lord Hervey, *Some Materials towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, ed. Romney Sedgwick, (3 vols., London 1931)

Sir John Fortescue, ed., *The Correspondence of King George the Third from 1760 to December 1783: printed from the Original Papers in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle*, (6 vols., London, 1927-1928)

Lewis B. Namier, ed., *Additions and Corrections to Sir John Fortescue’s Edition ...*, (Manchester, 1937)

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *The Later Correspondence of George III*, (5 vols., London, 1962-1970)

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *The Letters of King George IV, 1812-1830*, (3 vols., Cambridge , 1938) [microfilmed 1981]

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *Letters of the Princess Charlotte, 1811-1817*, (London, 1949)

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *The Correspondence of George, Prince of Wales, 1770-1812*, (London, 1963-1971?)

Stanley Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765. Selected Documents from the Cumberland Papers in Windsor Castle*, (New York and London, 1936)

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *Letters of the Princess Charlotte 1811-1817* (London, 1949)

W. B. Hamilton, ed., 'Some letters of George III', *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, lxviii, 3 (1969) 411-424.

W. B. Donne, ed., *Correspondence of George III and Lord North*, (2 vols., London, 1867)

Grey, Henry George Grey, Earl, ed., *The Reform Act, 1832. The Correspondence of the late Earl Grey with His Majesty King William IV and with Sir H. Taylor from Nov. 1830 to June 1832*, (2 vols., London, 1867).

Michael Kassler, ed., *The Diary of Queen Charlotte, 1789 and 1794* (Memoirs of the Court of George III, Volume 4), (London, 2015)

From elsewhere:

These may contain lower concentrations or Royal papers, but may still be valuable for correlation. They may comprise papers from other collections, thus containing some copies or originals of papers in the Royal Archives.

William Stanhope Taylor and John Henry Pringle, eds.*, Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, (4 vols., London, 1838-1840)

William James Smith, ed., *The Grenville Papers*, (4 vols., London, 1852-1853)

*Report on the manuscripts of J.B. Fortesque, esq., [formerly] preserved at Dropmore* (HMC, London, 1892-4, 1899-1927) [presumably these are 'the Grenville papers' as it were]

Ernest Taylor, ed., *The Taylor Papers, being a records of certain reminiscences, letters and journals of Lieut-Gen Sir Herbert Taylor*, (London, 1913)

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *Mrs Jordan and her Family, being the unpublished letters of Mrs Jordan and the Duke of Clarence later William IV*, (London, 1951)

*Chatham Papers. Correspondence of William Pitt the Younger*, (Index and List Society)

J. Holland Rose, *Pitt and Napoleon: Essays and Letters* (1912)

Lord Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, (4 vols., 1861-2)

Bonamy Dobrée, ed., *The Letters of King George III*, (1935)

L.V. Harcourt, ed., *Diaries and Correspondence of … George Rose*, (2 vols., 1860)

Colin White, ed., *Nelson, the New Letters*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, NY, 2005)

**2. Notes about the editions**

John, Lord Hervey, *Some Materials towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, ed. Romney Sedgwick, (3 vols., London 1931)

Title page: "Printed from a copy of the original manuscript in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle; and from the original manuscript at Ickworth"

p.xi: Marquess of Bristol mutilated the original MS.

p.xii: but copy made previously for the King sat with Georgian papers in Apsely House.

p.xiii: Windsor copy is not complete.

Stanley Pargellis, ed., Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765. Selected Documents from the Cumberland Papers in Windsor Castle, (New York and London, 1936)

p.ix: a selection from private papers of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland.

p.xii: c.400 documents

p.xiii: 5 categories:

copies of letters and documents from public departments

copies of letters to public departments and individuals, passed to Cumberland for information

original letters from officers etc to Cumberland in regular correspondence

original unsolicited letters to Cumberland, eg petitioners

Cumberland's own private correspondence (very little)

Of the 400 documents,

<100 previously printed elsewhere

c.100 apparently unique

>100 unprinted letters and enclosures by Loudon, also available in Huntingdon Library and often TNA

Not a complete representation of a collection which is not systematic in any case.

p.xiv: focus most consistently upon the forming and carrying out of plans.

Contains a lit of documents included.

Sir John Fortescue, ed., The Correspondence of King George the Third from 1760 to December 1783: printed from the Original Papers in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle, (6 vols., London, 1927-1928)

p. vii: "a portion of them [G III's papers], his letters to Lord North, seems to have been kept separate from the rest, for they had long been in the custody of the Librarian at Windsor Castle and were printed many years ago, under the editorship of Mr Donne." Mainly GIII's letters to North, so most likely North's papers, given to the King or his successors after North's death.

p.vii: "Many other letters to and from the King have been printed in other collections, such as the *Chatham Correspondence*, the *Grenville Papers* and the like"

p. vii-viii: re this edition: using GIII's own papers, come to light in 1912. "Every endeavour has been made to render it as complete as possible by including all letters, written by or to George III. during his long reign, that can be gathered together from any source. These last, however, amount only to a very small fraction of the whole; and the great bulk of his papers are entirely new matter."

pp.viii-ix: "I have made it my guiding rule that the object of publishing such a collection of papers as this is to throw light above all upon the King's personality. The fact that he preserved copies of certain documents, among the huge numbers that came before him, is proof that he took particular interest in certain subjects, or in certain phases of imperial affairs; and it would therefore be wrong, in most cases, to omit to print these documents. Again, a couple of lines to a Minister, asking him to call in the evening at such an hour, may seem trivial and unimportant. But long experience has shewed me that the most trifling docuemtn may serve a weighty purpose in fixing some date or in proving that a man did or did not do a certain thing upon a certain day, which in its turn may clear up some obscure transactions that have hitherto been misunderstood, or indeed ignored."

p.ix: earliest papers burned with Lord Bute's stuff at Luton. Main stream of documents begins in 1765.

Lewis B. Namier, ed., *Additions and Corrections to Sir John Fortescue’s Edition ...*, (Manchester, 1937)

Namier focuses on vol.1 (used for teaching purposes).

p.1: "Unfortunately, a great many of the documents are misdated, misplaced, or misquoted, and practically no attempt has been made at correlating them with documents in other collections."

p.1: mistakes in transcription

p.1-2: mistakes with persons' names: use of misleading original spelling without use of reference material to identify them positively.

pp.2-3: mis-dating: of 558 documents,many are not dated by either writer or recipient: Namier reckons that 151 could have been dated to tolerable accuracy by use of internal evidence or reference to other documents (some published, some in other collections).

p.3: five cases where writer/addressee are incorrect; three further cases where they are not given, though they could be ascertained.

p.3-4:lack of correlation is important: some letters in Fortescue are drafts of letters in other collections: e.g.

Duke of Grafton (Grafton MSS),

H. S. Conway (Egerton MSS),

Newcastle (Newcastle papers @British Museum [now BL?]),

Lord Shelburne (Bowood),

Pitt/Chatham (Chatham papers @ TNA, also published Chatham Correspondence).

p.5: rubbishes Fortescue's declared aim of pulling together all papers from all sources: knows of "several hundred" letters in private collections not included in vol.1 alone; conversely only 2 in the volume from outside Windsor (and those badly copied from the *Chatham Correspondence*).

p.5: editor should help readers: identifying people and (obscure) events referred to in the papers.

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *The Later Correspondence of George III*, (5 vols., London, 1962-1970)

p.v.:

Has made some use of Fortescue's typescript prepared for subsequent, unrealised volumes; despite their imperfections they offer some cover for letters which have since been mislaid!

Fortescue confined himself to documents from the George III Calendar (and only a selection thereof); Aspinall has used both private papers and papers of Queen Charlotte and other royal family members.

Aspinall has also used letters in private hands and public archives.

George III did not keep copies of outletters; they can only be found in other people's collections, especially after 1788 (illness).

George III's letters to Pitt:

Many in TNA

Others taken away by Pitt's secretaries; often sold privately

Many printed (or excepted) in Stanhope's *Life of Pitt* and Rose's *Pitt and Napoleon* (not always accurately.

p.vi:

edition is a selection, "but the editor believes that nothing of real importance has been omitted. Many official papers, enclosed inministerial and other letters to the King, are left out, as copies doubtless exist in the Public Record office. Many trifling letters from Ministers, such as requests for an audience for themselves or for foreign diplomats, are also omitted."

It is clear that many letters are issing/destroyed. No secretary until 1805. Executors were empowered to destroy.

p.655-6: list of archives/MS collections used to provide both documents for the edition, and for reference in the footnotes.

Aspinall, *The Letters of King George IV*, (3 vols., London, 1938)

p.lx: this edition cover the unrestricted regency and the reign [i.e. date range is: 5 February 1812-June 1830].

pp.lvii-lix: G4's papers fall into 5 categories [though the Privy purse effectively constitutes a 6th!]:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Main body, previously kept at Apsley House (home of his last surviving executor, D. of Wellington)
 | Includes correspondence with family, various European princely persons, and Sir William Knighton (Private Secretary 1822-30). *"Much of this private correspondence is of no historical importance, and I have only selected from it such letters as throw light on public events or on the characters of the writers."* (p.lviii) |
| 1. A volume of 89 letters to/from his ministers c.1822-7 (never handed over to Wellington).
 |  |
| 1. Papers relating to Queen Caroline (Delicate investigation, Milan Commission, Queen's trial) transferred from the PRO.
 |  |
| 1. Queen Caroline's papers (from her solicitors).
 | Her relations with George IV are *"already sufficiently familiar, and it behoves the editor of the King's papers to select for publication only such documents as are of especial interest and importance."* (p.lix) |
| 1. Letters by George IV and other family members, acquired by the Royal Archives by gift or purchase.
 |  |
| 1. Privy Purse
 | … "*selected items which illustrate George IV's patronage of the arts, and also his generosity.*" (p.lix) |

p.lxiii: George IV wrote relatively little, preferring conversation.

"The whole system of correspondence was obviously a loose one". Papers not clearly arranged, many others lost.

Confident that many more were written by him and his private secretaries than appear in his papers; some survive elsewhere.

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *Letters of the Princess Charlotte 1811-1817* (London, 1949)

Introduction contains little background to the edition, being rather a short biography.

A brief glance through the work reveals that many letters either begin or end with ellipses, implying that they may not be quoted in full.

Ernest Taylor, ed., *The Taylor Papers, being a records of certain reminiscences, letters and journals of Lieut-Gen Sir Herbert Taylor*, (London, 1913)

A classic 'documentary biography'; mainly extended quotations with a narrative woven inbetween.

Was Private Secretary to George III, Queen Charlotte and William IV.

p.vi: many Official Memoranda were burned in accordance with instructions in the will.

No note here of where the papers actually were/are.

W. B. Hamilton, ed., 'Some letters of George III', *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, lxviii, 3 (1969) 411-424.

18 further letters, which are presented as additions to Aspinall's edition. The focus is on Henry Dundas. Letters are from the Dundas Papers at Duke University. He thanks the Queen, but was that for permission to publish letters by the King, rather than for permission to publish RA documents.

Arthur Aspinall, ed., *Mrs Jordan and her Family, being the unpublished letters of Mrs Jordan and the Duke of Clarence later William IV*, (London, 1951)

These papers are from those in the Huntingdon Library, and those held by the Earl of Munster. (though the rights to some letters elsewhere reside with the monarch)