Edmund Downey Manuscripts of Charles Lever's Writings, circa 1890-1910.: Finding Aid

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Edmund Downey, an Irish novelist, publisher, and newspaper editor, was born in Waterford in July 1856. After his education at the Catholic University he began writing and enjoyed literary success with his publication of *Through Green Glasses* in 1887. He established two publishing businesses in London, Ward & Downey and Downey & Company, and became a central publishing figure of the early literary revival, publishing works by those such as Standish O'Grady and Joseph Sheridan le Fanu. His fifteen novels and story collections, written under the pseudonym F.M. Allen, include some re-tellings of Christian fable, Irish legend and English history. In 1906, Downey took over the editorship of the *Waterford News*. He died in Waterford in 1937.

Downey was a strong supporter of Irish novelist Charles Lever (1806-1872), publishing his life and letters in 1906.

This collection consists of manuscripts for two unrealized publications of Charles Lever's miscellaneous writings, "Books, Men, & Affairs; Views and Reviews" and "Harry Lorrequer's Log" or "Harry Lorrequer's Log-Book," both edited by Edmund Downey. The publications Downey envisaged are of pieces which date from early in Lever’s career. They are notable for Lever’s reflections on his contemporaries and the Irish scene in general; included is a macabre ghost story, "The Black Mask."

Manuscripts for the two projected publications include loose leaves extracted from reviews, with autograph commentary, notes, prefaces and title pages by Downey (approximately 300 pages in total).

Also included in the collection is an early draft of part of Downey's book, *Charles Lever: His Life in His Letters* (1906); and some related bibliographical notes of Lever's writings by John(?) Geary.

The collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Use and Copyright Information

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish material from the collection must be requested from the Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections.

Provenance and Acquisition
Appraisal
No material was separated during 2015 processing.

Preferred Citation
Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Edmund Downey Manuscripts on Charles Lever's Writings, Box and Folder Number; Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Processing Information
This collection was processed by Faith Charlton in June 2015. Finding aid written by Faith Charlton in June 2015.

Encoding
This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit 2015-06-24T12:27-0400

Descriptive Rules Used
Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

Subject Headings

- Lever, Charles James, 1806-1872 -- Writings.
- English fiction -- 19th century -- Sources.
- Novelists, Irish -- 19th century -- Sources.
- Ireland--History--19th century--Sources.
- European history
- Literature
## Contents List

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<tr>
<td>&quot;Books, Men, &amp; Affairs; Views and Reviews&quot;, undated</td>
<td>The nominal reviews were anonymous pieces which appeared in the <em>Dublin University Magazine</em> from 1836 to 1845. Among the works reviewed were Wilde's <em>Narrative of a Voyage to Madeira</em>; Marryat's <em>Diary in America</em>; and Thackeray’s <em>The Irish Sketch-book</em>. As part of the editing process, Downey cut and amended the text in various ways. In his preface, Downey writes that Lever &quot;was in the habit of reviewing books in a manner peculiar to himself, using them as pegs on which he might hang his personal opinions, anecdotes of his experiences, &amp; shreds of wit and humour...&quot;</td>
<td>B-000004 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Harry Lorrequer’s Log&quot; or &quot;Harry Lorrequer’s Log-Book&quot;, undated</td>
<td>In his preface, Downey writes that Lever planned in 1839 a volume of tales and essays to be called &quot;Harry Lorrequer’s Log,&quot; building on the success of <em>The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer</em> (1839) but James McGlashan, his publisher, was not keen, preferring to keep Lever at work on what would be <em>Charles O’Malley</em> (1841). Downey continues, &quot;The stories and sketches in this volume were written between the years 1830 and 1847. They appeared as unsigned contributions to Irish periodicals, and they exhibit Lever in most of his early, and wayward, phases.&quot; The contents list has 14 entries, but only six pieces are present. The titles are: The Black Mask, A Day in Town, The Place des Terreaux, The Emigrant's Tale, William Hamilton Maxwell, and The Vice Provost of Trinity. In addition there is, &quot;On the State of Parties in Dublin.&quot; (It would be party political factionalism that drove Lever to leave Ireland in 1845 for the United States.)</td>
<td>B-000004 2</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Charles Lever: His Life in His Letters</em> Draft, undated</td>
<td>A very early draft, with numerous amendments and additional material; two notebooks, approximately 75 pages.</td>
<td>B-000004 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bibliographical Notes, circa 1910</td>
<td>A notebook with extensive bibliographical notes on different editions of Lever's works by John(?) Geary.</td>
<td>B-000004 4</td>
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