

Archer Family correspondence

Accession number OM80-10

Date 1825-1855

Author / Creator

[Archer family](#)

Abstract Correspondence of the Archer family.

Scope and content The Archer Family correspondence comprises 153 letters written by the Archer brothers. The majority of the letters are written by the brothers to family members in Larvig (today Larvik), Norway, while others are written between the brothers. Includes letters written from Wallerowang, Durundur, Emu Creek and Cooyar, and Eidsvold between 1834 and 1855. There is also additional information about the letters themselves included.

System of arrangement Arranged into 10 series

Description 153 letters in 1 box

Additional format Digital copies available for selected items.

Administrative / Biographical history Charles (1813-1862), John (1814-1857), David (1816-1900), William (1818-1896), Archibald (1820-1902), Thomas (1823-1905), Alexander (1828-1890) and Colin Archer (1832-1921) were eight sons of William Archer, a Scottish timber merchant in Larvik, Norway, and his wife Julia, nee Walker. The Archer brothers successively came to Australia and became pastoralists in the Moreton and Burnett Districts and on the Fitzroy River near present-day Rockhampton.

Access restrictions Unrestricted access.

Copyright status Out of copyright.

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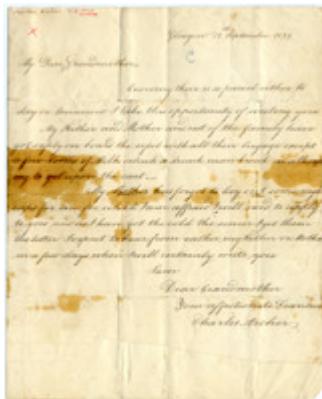
Preferred citation

OM80-10, Archer Family correspondence, John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland.

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Series 1: Correspondence (1825-1837)



Series number 1

Series title Correspondence

Date 1825-1837

Scope and content

This series contains letters written by brothers David, John, Charles, William and Thomas Archer to family in London and Norway. Also included are notes appended to the brothers letters from their [great uncle] James Walker, their mother's uncle. These letters reveal the motivations, experiences and emotions of the brothers, who emigrated to Australia and other parts of the world seeking a new life.

Selected events and highlights

- David Archer arrived in Sydney in 1834 and went to work on his [great] uncle James Walker's properties in New South Wales: Lue (variously spelt), Biamble, Warrumbungle, Goondea and Wallerowang. David became joint superintendent with Andrew Brown during James Walker's absence, between 1831 and 1838.
- John (Jack) Archer obtained a position on one of his [great] uncle William Walker's whaling ships the 'Earl Stanhope', and describes several voyages made to Sydney, Japan, and New Zealand.
- Charles Archer wrote from the West Indies, where he had found employment as rum maker at an estate on the island of Tobago.
- Thomas Archer age 14 and William Archer age 19 left Norway for England together, before migrating to Australia in 1837, where they joined their brother David at James Walker's property 'Wallerawang' (also Wallerowang) on the traditional lands of the Waradjuri people. Here they were trained in bush and station work and William, a carpenter, constructed many of the huts and sheds.

Many of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive

postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is also available. [Items OM80-10/1 - OM80-10/10]

Author / Creator

Archer, Charles, 1813-1862

Archer, John, 1814-1857 ;

Archer, David, 1816-1900 ;

Archer, William, 1818-1896 ;

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905

Description

Description 10 letters

Additional format Digital copies available

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Access

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Other guides Transcripts available

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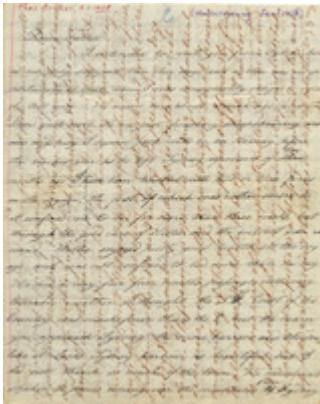
Other

Notes

Transcripts are available for selected items

(1 digital)

Series 2: Correspondence (1838-1839)



Series number 2

Series title Correspondence

Date 1838-1839

Scope and content

This series contains letters from brothers Thomas, William, John (Jack) and Charles Archer to family in London and Norway. Also included are notes appended to the brothers letters from their uncle, James Walker, their mother's brother.

Selected events and highlights

- Thomas and William Archer write from Wallerowang in New South Wales, where they had joined their brother David. They describe their voyage to Australia, activities on the property such as sheep sheering, horse mustering, and labouring.
- John (Jack) Archer, who was one of the crew aboard the *Earl Stanhope*, writes from Rio de Janeiro and describes the bad weather and conditions experienced at sea, and where they waited for the ship to be repaired before continuing their voyage.
- Charles Archer, writes of his arrival back in England and the prospects of obtaining a position in 'business' in Sydney, assisted by his uncle James Walker.

Some of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is available. [Items OM80-10/11 - OM80-10/26]

Author / Creator

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905

Archer, William, 1818-1896 ;

Archer, John, 1814-1857 ;

Archer, Charles, 1813-1862 ;

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905

Walker, James, 1785 - 1856

Description

Description 16 letters

Additional format Digital copies available

System of arrangement Chronological

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Notes

Transcripts are available for selected items

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Series 3: Correspondence (1840-1841)



Series number 3

Series title Correspondence

Date 1840-1841

Scope and content

This series contains letters written by brothers Thomas, William, John and Charles Archer to family in Australia and Norway.

Selected events and highlights

- William writes of his departure to Wallerowang to assist with the shearing of stock that had been depastured from their holding at Lue (Loowie).
- Thomas describes the disease 'scab' that has affected his and David's stock, upward of 5000 sheep, delaying their departure for Queensland.
- Jack (John) writes of his hopes of being able to make a living in this new life, away from his usual occupation as a sailor.
- Charles writes from Sydney where he has recently arrived and will take up a position in his [great] uncle William Walker's office.

Late in 1841 David and Thomas, joined by their brother John, travelled to the upper reaches of the Stanley River, an eastern tributary of the Brisbane River. There, near present-day Woodford, they established Durundur (Durandur) Station a holding of 200 square miles (520 km²), which is equal to 128,000 acres (51,800 ha) which they occupied for almost four years. *Some of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is available. [Items OM80-10/27 - OM80-10/51]*

Author / Creator

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905

Archer, William, 1818-1896 ;

Archer, John, 1814-1857 ;

Archer, Charles, 1813-1862

Description

Description 25 letters

Additional format Digital copies available

System of arrangement Chronological

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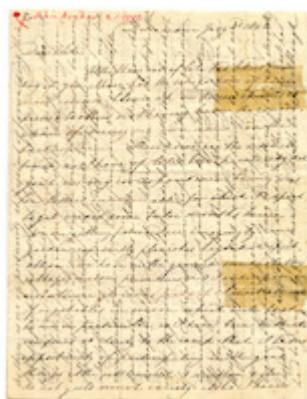
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Notes

Transcripts are available for selected items

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Series 4: Correspondence (1842-1843)



Series number 4

Series title Correspondence

Date 1842-1843

Scope and content

This series contains letters written by brothers Thomas, Charles, John and William Archer to family in Australia and Norway.

Selected events and highlights

John writes from Durandur of their efforts to produce food from their garden, and describes their hut, a table cut from slabs of timber resting on posts sunk into the ground. He later writes of an expedition to the Wide Bay region, where two 'runaways' were located.

- Thomas writes of the shearing season at Durandur, which promises to be more fruitful than the previous years, and they now have a shorter distance to market. He later writes of the stay of Ludwig Leichhardt in 1843 for several months.
- Charles writes of his move from Sydney to join his brothers David, and Thomas at Durandur, and his surprise at having met with David and Jack (John) at the German Mission Station where Jack had sought medical help.
- William writes from James Walker's property at Lue (Louie) of the low price of stock and wool, the high price and speculative nature of obtaining land and the shortage of available labour.

Some of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is available. [Items OM80-10/52 - OM80-10/69, Items OM80-10/150 - OM80-10/151]

Author / Creator

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905

Archer, William, 1818-1896 ;

Archer, John, 1814-1857 ;

Archer, Charles, 1813-1862

Description

Description 18 letters

Additional format Digital copies available

System of arrangement Chronological

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Series 5: Correspondence (1844-1845)



Series number 5

Series title Correspondence

Date 1844-1845

Scope and content

This series contains letters written by brothers Thomas, Archibald, John, William and Charles Archer to family in Australia and Norway.

Selected events and highlights

- Thomas writes of the prospect of higher wool prices in 1844 and of the purchase of cattle for the property the following year.
- Archibald now in Morea, writes of his attempts to set up a commercial coconut oil business at Palmerston Island and his voyage to Tahiti.
- Jack (John) has returned to the sea and is in command of a cattle trading vessel between Twofold Bay and Hobart.
- Charles wrote an account in the form of a journal of the area in which Durandur is located,

the surrounding mountain ranges, water courses and vegetation.

- William writes of his brother John's unannounced wedding to Eliza Cork of Port Stephens and encloses via James Walker a photograph and watch, for his sister Julia to treasure.

During this period, due to the lack of rain and permanent water, David, Charles, Thomas and John Archer moved their holdings from Durunder (Durandur) to what appeared to be a more favourable area in the valley of Emu Creek, establishing a head station at Waroongundi. William remained as superintendent of James Walker's property at Wallerowang in NSW. *Some of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is available. [Items OM80-10/70 - OM80-10/97]*

Author / Creator

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905

Archer, Archibald, 1820-1902 ;

Archer, John, 1814-1857 ;

Archer, William, 1818-1896 ;

Archer, Charles, 1813-1862

Description

Description 28 letter

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Notes

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Series 6: Correspondence (1846-1847)



Series number 6

Series title Correspondence

Date 1846-1847

Scope and content

This series contains letters written by brothers John, Archibald, Thomas, Charles, and William Archer to family in Australia and Norway.

Selected events and highlights

- John Archer now based in Gippsland, has taken up a position managing Lucknow Station.
- Archibald Archer writes from Morea where his attempts at cattle trading have failed due to a blockade during the French-Tahitian War.
- Charles Archer writes from Durandur where he remains to supervise the final move from Durundur to Emu Creek; and later from Cooyar to his brother Colin, and includes two sketches of sheep shearing and baling fleece.
- Thomas Archer writes from Waroongundi where their lamb season has been the best so far. He is hopeful for the arrival of William and David as they prepare to look at another run at Cooyar.

During this period William Archer left the employ of James Walker and joined his brothers David, Thomas and Charles in Queensland where they re-established their holdings from Durundur, firstly at Emu Creek and Waroongundi (32,000 acres), and later Cooyar (64,000 acres). Located

north of Toowoomba, Cooyar was close to a permanent spring, and fine stands of timber. *Some of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is available.* [Items OM80-10/98 - OM80-10/122, OM80-10/152 - OM80-10/153]

Author / Creator

Archer, John, 1814-1857
Archer, Archibald, 1820-1902
Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905
Archer, Charles, 1813-1862
Archer, William, 1818-1896

Description

Description 25 letters

Additional format Digital copies available

System of arrangement Chronological

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Copyright status Out of copyright

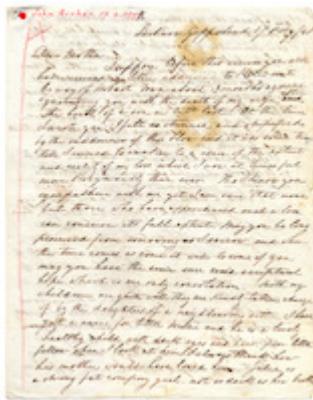
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Series 7: Correspondence (1848-1849)



Series number 7

Series title Correspondence

Date 1848-1849

Scope and content

This series contains letters written by brothers John, Thomas, William, and Charles Archer to family in Australia and Norway.

Selected events and highlights

- John Archer writes from Lucknow, east Gippsland of his grief following the death of his wife, after giving birth to their son William.
- Thomas Archer explored the upper Burnett region and later left Queensland for California where he sought his fortune in the gold rush. There he happened upon his brother Jack who was captain of a vessel in the port.
- Charles Archer writes from Coonumbula in the Burnett region where he and his brother Thomas had moved their flock to a holding on St John's Creek
- William writes from Eton Vale where he is managing the station while Arthur Hodgson is away in England.

Some of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is available. [Items OM80-10/123 - OM80-10/140]

Author / Creator

Archer, John, 1814-1857

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905 ;

Archer, William, 1818-1896 ;

Archer, Charles, 1813-1862

Description

Description 18 letters

Additional format Digital copies available

System of arrangement Chronological

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Series 8: Correspondence (1850-1855)



Series number 8

Series title Correspondence

Date 1850-1855

Scope and content

This series contains letters written by brothers Charles, John, Thomas, William and Alexander Archer to family in Australia and Norway.

Selected events and highlights

Charles Archer writes from 'Coonumbula', his brother David's run, located about 12 miles from Mundowran, and later from Thomas and Charles' run which they named 'Eidsvold', 15 miles further north; as the brothers moved their stock onto holdings that held better hope of profitable farming. John Archer writes from Hobart Town of the sadness of losing his second wife to scarlett fever, days after giving birth to their first child, a son, who only lived a few hours; they had only been married 11 months. He has left his two children Willie and Julie in the care of his late wife's mother and has returned to the sea on trading vessels. Thomas Archer writes from San Francisco, where he has returned from the mines of Oregon and has been successful in meeting up with his brother Colin who has also taken up business in the mines. Alexander (Sandy) Archer writes from the ship "Emily" - at anchor at Port Phillip Heads having emigrated from Norway to try his luck at gold-digging and gold buying. He later joined the Bank of New South Wales and was appointed inspector of Queensland branches, December 1867. He perished with his wife Mary (Minnie) MacKenzie in the "Quetta" shipwreck February 1890. *Some of the letters are 'cross-written' a technique used in these times to save on expensive postage charges and paper; and as such are difficult to read. A bound volume of transcripts provided by the family is available.* [Items OM80-10/141 - OM80-10/148]

Author / Creator

Archer, Charles, 1813-1862

Archer, John, 1814-1857

Archer, Thomas, 1823-1905

Archer, William, 1818-1896

Archibald, Alexander, 1828-1890

Description

Description 12 letters

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Series 9: Manuscripts (undated; 1865)



Series number 9

Series title Manuscripts

Date undated; 1865

Scope and content

This series contains two humorous manuscripts retained or written by members of the Archer family:

- Handwritten humorous play titled 'Toby Versus Don' or 'A Family Quarrel', by 'William Heasay Salmon'. Teague and Archer Printers, Rockhampton, Repairs neatly executed. It consists of a 24 page, hand sewn booklet.
- A handwritten description of a hurdle race and picnic given by Dr Callaghan, dated 1 September 1865. It consists of 1 sheet, 4 pages.

[Items OM80-10/154 - OM80-10/155]

Description

Description 2 manuscripts

Additional format Digital copies available

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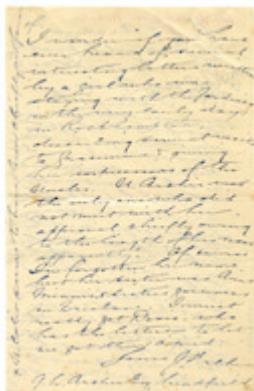
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Series 10: Papers (1939; undated)



Series number 10

Series title Papers

Date 1939; undated

Scope and content

This series contains miscellaneous papers and correspondence relating to the acquisition of the Archer Family collection

- James Archer of London to George L Archer of Lindfield, regarding a list of family letters to be handed over to the Mitchell Library.
- A Customs Declaration for the import of the Archer letters to Australia
- List relating to Archer letters
- List of letters sent to G.H. Archer of Lindfield, NSW from the Archer children between 1839 to 1855
- Record of the Archer letters providing name of author and date in which letter was written

A list of children of William Archer and Julia Walker, including Catherine, Charles, John, David, William, Archibald, Thomas, Julia, Mary, Alexander, Jane Ann, Colin, and James.
[Items OM80-10/149, OM80-10/156 - OM80-10/161]

Description

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