

# WILBERFORCE, SAMUEL, 1805-1873.

## Samuel Wilberforce letter, 1853

Emory University  
Pitts Theology Library  
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### Descriptive Summary

**Creator:** Wilberforce, Samuel, 1805-1873.  
**Title:** Samuel Wilberforce letter, 1853  
**Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 099  
**Extent:** 0.01 cubic ft. (1 letter)  
**Abstract:** Contains one letter written by Samuel Wilberforce.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

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### Administrative Information

#### Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

#### Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

#### Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Samuel Wilberforce Letter, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

#### Processing

Processed by John N. Wright, March 1989.

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### Collection Description

#### Biographical Note

Samuel Wilberforce was born at Clapham Common near London, England, on September 7, 1805. He was the son of William Wilberforce, a prominent member of Parliament and a leader of the anti-slavery movement. Wilberforce was privately educated until 1823, when he enrolled in Oriel College, Oxford. Wilberforce graduated in 1826, then spent the summer and autumn of 1827 touring the continent. He married Emily Sargent on June 11, 1828. In December of the same year, he was ordained as an Anglican Clergyman, and assigned as curate at Checkenden.

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In 1830, he was appointed rector of Brightstone in the Isle of Wight. While at Brightstone he was active as a writer, publishing several tracts and hymns; a volume of short stories, *Note Book of a Country Clergyman*; and a sermon; *The Apostolical Ministry*. In 1836, he was appointed as a rural dean. Late in 1837, Wilberforce published *Letters and Journals of Henry Martyn*. In 1838, with his older brother Robert, he published *Life of William Wilberforce*, and, in 1840, *Correspondence of William Wilberforce*. In 1839, he published *Eucharistica, Agathos and other Sunday Stories*, and a volume of *University Sermons*. Wilberforce published his *Rocky Island and other Parables* in 1840, and, in 1844, his *History of the American Church*.

Though a supporter of the High Church party, Wilberforce separated himself from the Oxford movement and often disagreed with the tractarians. By 1838, their differences had reached the point that John Henry Newman refused to accept his contributions to the *British Critic*. In August 1840, he was named canon of Winchester, and in October he became rector of Alverstoke. In 1841, he was chosen as Bampton lecturer at Oxford and later named chaplain to the prince consort. In October 1843, he was appointed sub-almoner to the queen. In March 1845, he was named dean of Westminster, and in October, Bishop of Oxford.

As a leader of the Church of England, Wilberforce was involved in the major religious controversies of the era, including: the Renn Dickson Hampden Case (1848) and the George Cornelius Gorham Case (1851). The Papal Bull of 1850, which restored the Catholic hierarchy in England, dealt a blow to the Bishop and all High Church adherents. The 1851 conversion of his brother-in-law, Henry Edward Manning (Manuscript Collection No. 2), and his two brothers, Robert and Henry, to the Roman Catholic Church caused further misgivings about his own loyalty to the Anglican Church.

In 1852, the Bishop played a key role in the revival of the powers of Convocation. In 1854, he established the Theological College at Cuddesdon. He took a stand against *Essays and Reviews* in 1861, and wrote an article in the *Quarterly* that won him favor among many Low Church supporters. He was involved in another controversy in 1861, concerning the Bishop of Natal, South Africa, John William Colenso, and his *Commentary on Romans*. In 1867 and 1868, he served on the Ritualistic Commission, drafting its first report and later to moderate the harsh measures against ritualism included in the second report. In 1869, he was named Bishop of Winchester. Samuel Wilberforce was killed by a fall from his horse on July 19, 1873.

### **Scope and Content Note**

This small collection consists of a single signed letter from Samuel Wilberforce to the Reverend Thomas Sanctuary. The letter, written in 1853, concerns admission of Holy Orders to the Reverend Sanctuary's brother.

