

JOHN, ELECTOR OF SAXONY, 1468-1532.

John, Elector of Saxony letter, 1501

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: John, Elector of Saxony, 1468-1532.
Title: John, Elector of Saxony letter, 1501
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 113
Extent: 0.01 cubic ft. (1 leaf)
Abstract: Contains a signed, handwritten letter by John, Elector of Saxony.
Language: Materials entirely in German.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

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Additional Physical Form

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Citation

[after identification of item(s)], John, Elector of Saxony, 1468-1532, Letter, Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection, Archives and Manuscripts Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by Jim Cooper, October 1993.

Processed from accession number 92-066a.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

John (1468-1532), called the Steadfast, elector of Saxony, fourth son of the elector Ernest, was born on the 30th June 1468. In 1486, when his eldest brother became elector as Frederick III., John received a part of the paternal inheritance and afterwards assisted his kinsman, the German king Maximilian I, in several campaigns. He was an early adherent of Luther, and becoming elector of Saxony by his brother's death in May 1525, was soon prominent among the Reformers. Having assisted to suppress the rising led by Thomas Munzer in 1525, he helped Philip, landgrave of Hesse, to found the league of Gotha, formed in 1526 for the protection of the Reformers. He was active at the diet of Spire in 1526, and the 'recess' of this diet gave him an opportunity to reform the church in Saxony, where a plan for divine service was drawn up by Luther. The assertions of Otto von Pack that a league had been formed against the elector and his friends induced John to ally himself again with Philip of Hesse in March 1528, but he restrained Philip from making an immediate attack upon their opponents. He signed the protest against the 'recess' of the diet of Spire in 1529, being thus one of the original Protestants, and was actively hostile to Charles V at the diet of Augsburg in 1530. Having signed the confession of Augsburg, he was alone among the electors in objecting to the election of Ferdinand, afterwards the emperor Ferdinand I, as king of the Romans. He was among the first members of the league of Schmalkalden, assented to the religious peace of Nuremberg in 1532, and died at Schweidnitz on the 16th of August 1532. John was twice married and left two sons and two daughters. His elder son, John Frederick, succeeded him as elector, and his younger son was John Ernest (d. 1553). He rendered great services to the Protestant cause in its infancy, but as a Lutheran resolutely refused to come to any understanding with other opponents of the older faith.

Biographical Source: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition; vol. 12, page 446.

Scope and Content Note

A signed (letter contains notation in his own hand), handwritten letter, in German, on paper. The letter addresses John's unwillingness to provide aid in a dispute against his relative, Duke Albrecht of Bavaria. Letter is dated Easter eve, 1501. Letter was added to MsC. 001 Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection.

