

SPALATIN, GEORG, 1484-1545. Georg Spalatin letters, 1528, 1536

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Spalatin, Georg, 1484-1545.
Title: Georg Spalatin letters, 1528, 1536
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 122
Extent: 0.1 cubic feet (3 items)
Abstract: Consists of three letters written by Georg Spalatin, the German humanist, theologian, and reformer.
Language: Materials entirely in German.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

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Additional Physical Form

The Georg Spalatin Letters are digitized and available on the [Pitts Theology Library website](#).

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Georg Spalatin Letters, Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection, Archives and Manuscripts Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by Jackie W. Ammerman, 1991; Aimee Morgan, 2006; and Brandon Wason, February 2018.

Processed from accession numbers 1991-026, 1992-066b, and 2018-009

Collection Description

Biographical Note

G. Spalatin (real name Burckhardt; Jan. 17, 1484-Jan. 16, 1545) German jurist and promoter of the Reformation. Born at Spalt near Nuremberg, studied at Erfurt and Wittenberg, terminated his study of law at Erfurt in 1505, and became a teacher in cloister Georgenthal. In 1507 he became pastor at Hohenkirchen and in 1508 he was consecrated as a priest, but the Erfurt humanist regard this merely as the basis of financial security. In 1509 he entered the service of Frederick the Wise of Saxony as tutor of Prince John Frederick. From 1511 to 1516 he taught Princes Otto and Ernst of Brunswick-Lueneburg at Wittenberg and in 1512 became librarian of the elector's castle library. From 1516 he was the most trusted counselor of Frederick the Wise (privy secretary, historiographer, father confessor, and court chaplain). He was particularly responsible for church and university affairs. It was this function that enabled him to give assistance to the cause of Luther whom he had learned to know in 1513. He gained the elector's good will for Luther, served as go-between, and always stood at Luther's side with his good counsel. The correspondence between him and Luther is very extensive. As pastor of Altenburg (where he had been a member of the monastery chapter since 1511) he reformed city and monastery in 1525. From 1526 he participated in visitations which led to the introduction of the Reformation in the electorate of Saxony. Later he also took part in the visitation held in the duchy of Saxony. After Frederick's death in 1525, he served his successors in solving church problems. He cooperated in drafting the Augsburg Confession. 'Annals of Saxony' is his most important literary work. His translations of the Latin works of Luther, Erasmus, and Melancthon became noteworthy

Biographical Source: *Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, vol. 3, page 224.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of three letters written by Georg Spalatin. The first letter, on paper measuring 22 x 33 cm., is written to the "Noble and Right worthy Heinrich von Einsiedel" in Gnansteyn. The matter being addressed is the refusal of Brosius Berger to take an oath, thus hindering Katharina Gockritz from getting married. Mention of consultation with Doctor Martin [Luther] is in the letter. With the exception of the upper right corner which is missing, the paper is in good condition. The date "1528" appears in the upper left corner in a different ink. The second letter is on paper and measures 22.1 x 21.8 cm. The letter is written to Heinrich von Einsiedel and was enclosed with a copy of a sermon by Philipp Melancthon. Within the body of the letter, Spalatin entreats Einsiedel to "exert your goodwill on the work's behalf". The letter is dated 1536. Also included are copies of translations and transcriptions of the first two letters, prepared by Andreas Baudler in December 2005.

The third letter is on paper and measures 23 x 19.9 cm. It is a cover letter, dated May 3, 1534, for a manuscript which Spalatin had promised to Duke Magnus III of Mecklenburg regarding the justification used by Henry VIII for his divorce from Catherine of Aragon, which was never recognized by Rome. Henry had married Anne Boleyn in January of 1533 and on May 23 1534, Pope Clement VII invalidated Henry's divorce and remarriage, which led to England's final break with Rome and the founding of the Anglican Church. The German reformers and Protestant princes took an active part in these events, and some of them still believed that they had found an ally in Henry, despite his earlier hostility to Luther.

Container List

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Georg Spalatin letter to Heinrich von Einsiedel (22 x 33 cm.), 1528 Oct 7 Note: Given by the Carl and Faye Lettow in memory of Carl Friedrich Eduard Max Lettow, 1991.
1	2	Georg Spalatin letter to Heinrich von Einsiedel (22.1 x 21.8 cm), 1536 Jan 9 Note: Gift from Clair and Gladys Strommen, 1992.
1	3	Georg Spalatin letter to Duke Magnus III of Mecklenburg (23 x 19.9 cm.), 1534 May 3
