

Summary of Findings

Declaration Resources Project Research Trip to West Sussex Record Office, August 4, 2017

Danielle Allen and Emily Sneff
June 28, 2018



The West Sussex Record Office (WSRO) in Chichester, West Sussex, England, holds a parchment manuscript of the Declaration of Independence (Add Mss 8981, hereafter referred to as the Sussex Declaration). The only known contemporary manuscripts of the Declaration on parchment are the engrossed and signed parchment at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and the Sussex Declaration. Mr. Leslie Holden (1914-2009) of Chichester deposited the parchment at the Record Office in 1956, as part of a group of 79 items (Acc1396a and Acc1396b) whose dates range from 1621 to 1910; 32 of these items date to 1830 or later. The Sussex Declaration itself was stored in a folder of materials (Add Mss 8976-8982) dating from 1775 to 1828. The WSRO acquiring archivist, who worked directly with the depositor, dated the manuscript to the late 18th century.¹

In “The Sussex Declaration” (*Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, fall 2018), we (Allen and Sneff, Declaration Resources Project) date the parchment to the 1780s. “The Sussex Declaration: A Date Revealed” (in progress) reports on non-invasive testing conducted by the British Library and Library of Congress, which has confirmed a dating in the 1780s or 1790s. Finally, in “Golden Letters” (*Georgetown Law Review*, winter 2019), we describe and analyze contextual evidence for the parchment’s production, and on that basis identify the most likely commissioner of the parchment as James Wilson and the context of production for the parchment as the years leading up to the Constitutional Convention, 1785-87.

The depositor of the Sussex Declaration, Leslie Holden, worked for Rapers, the oldest solicitors firm in Chichester, which dates back to 1730 and now operates as Stone Milward Rapers, or SMR. The Dukes of Richmond, whose family seat, Goodwood Estate, is in West Sussex, were clients of the firm. Alison McCann, former archivist at the WSRO, remembers Holden recounting that the senior partner at Rapers told him to dispose of a large accumulation of documents from the Dukes of Richmond. When Holden protested, the senior partner told him to take any documents he wanted. In 1956, Holden donated to the WSRO a set of papers from the firm, many of which are related to the Richmond family, and the Sussex Declaration was

¹ The Holden deposit was catalogued chronologically. The Declaration manuscript was catalogued with a date of 1776 and was followed by a document that was dated “c. 1800, late 18th or early 19th century.” The acquiring archivist and depositor understood the Declaration manuscript to pre-date the document that followed it. Neither Leslie Holden nor the acquiring archivist is still alive, so we can no longer access their knowledge about the original context in which the manuscript was held at Rapers.

among these papers.² The Goodwood Papers, as the papers of the Dukes of Richmond are known, are also housed at the West Sussex Record Office.

In addition to the Holden accessions (Acc1396a and Acc1396b), the West Sussex Record Office also received another set of papers acquired by an employee at Rapers, Mr. Harold (Harry) Willshire. In 1956, his wife, Mrs. M.C. Willshire of Chichester, presented papers to the WSRO (Acc1397) that had been stored in the family's garden shed.³

On August 4th, 2017, we (Allen and Sneff, of the Declaration Resources Project) conducted research at the West Sussex Record Office, in an effort to gain clarity about the Holden and Willshire accessions, and to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis of the connection between the Dukes of Richmond and the Sussex Declaration.

To this end, we reviewed:

- The Holden diaries and related notebooks
- The Holden accession (Acc1396a and Acc1396b; 79 items)
- The Willshire accession (Acc1397; 146 items)
- *Goodwood Correspondence* manuscripts, for letters between the Fifth Duke of Richmond and Henriette Dorrien, illegitimate daughter of the Third Duke; and between the Fifth Duke and Henriette's son, Charles
- "The Letter Book of Robert Raper of Charleston, Carolina," for connections between Rapers and the American Revolution
- Correspondence between the Third Duke and his Chichester Lawyers, William Tutte, William Leeves, William Fowler, and William Johnson (of Rapers)
- Correspondence between the Third Duke and the Duchess, concerning the Third Duke's dismissal from the Ordnance
- *Goodwood Correspondence* manuscripts, for letters between the Third Duke and Pitt concerning the Third Duke's dismissal from the Ordnance

² Accession 1396a includes items 8915–8992. A number of the papers relate to the Richmond family, including correspondence, legal documents related to property and estates, documents related to the Second Duke's mayoralty of Chichester, and papers pertaining to the service of other members of the family in local government.

³ In the WSRO catalogue, this accession is titled "Willshere Family." But, "Willshire" is the correct spelling, based on the diaries of Leslie Holden and genealogical records for the Willshire family.

The Holden Diaries and Related Notebooks

We examined the diaries and memoirs of Leslie Holden at the West Sussex Record Office, on temporary loan from Holden's daughter, Noeline Buitenhuis. One binder, Accession 15577, was deposited at the Record Office during Holden's lifetime. The following books and papers were thoroughly reviewed:

- Personal Diaries, 1944-1957⁴
 - 1942 pocket diary
 - 1945 pocket diary
 - 1945 large diary for 1933 (relabelled)
 - 1946 two-day diary for 1936 (relabelled, missing binding)
 - 1956 two-day diary
 - 1957 two-day diary
- Binder (Acc15577), "Extracts from my diaries relating to events of local interest", 1950-1962
- Notebook, "Life Memories up to 1990's not as yet typed up"
- The Memoirs of Leslie Holden, Citizen of Chichester 1915 (written up by Elaine Keeler née Rainbird, ex-Assistant Secretary, Chichester Community Health Council)

The diaries were written on a near-daily basis, while the memoirs were written in 2006 or 2008, when Holden was aged 91 or 93. In the longer diary entries, Holden described the activities of his day, both personal and professional. He mentioned small details and menial tasks, such as which television program he watched, or when he cleaned his bedroom.

The diaries, combined with the extracts in the binder and notebook, give the broad strokes of Holden's tasks at Rapers, his collection habits, his interest in local history, and his connection to the documents "rescued" from the paper salvage program and from his colleague's garden shed. However, apart from a mention of the county archivist collecting items directly from the shed, Holden did not clearly describe when or how the papers in his possession were deposited at the West Sussex Record Office.

⁴ We also examined a box of office diaries, but there was no book for 1956.

Holden at Rapers

On July 2, 1942, Charles Taylor interviewed Holden for a position at Rapers. He was already familiar with the firm, having worked in the same building (55 West Street in Chichester, on the south side of the street between the Cathedral and the Prebendal School) during his time with the Chichester Assessment Committee in the 1930s. Holden began work at Rapers on July 27th. His typical working schedule, especially during the war years, included Saturday mornings, and he would often come back to the office in the evenings. During World War II, a pre-existing lung condition prevented Holden from serving, though he did volunteer at Royal West Sussex Hospital (abbreviated RWSH throughout the diaries); he noted that Taylor knew of this lung condition when hiring him and refused to pay his salary during any extended absences due to illness.

Holden described Charles Taylor, the senior partner at Rapers, in less than glowing terms. He was hard of hearing, sometimes difficult and short-tempered, and his diabetes kept him in less-than-ideal health. Holden also described other Rapers staff members: cashier Edward Jack Symonds, probate managing clerk Harold (Harry) Willshire, Harold (Harry) Luck, Mrs. Keys, war-time clerk Bill Early and his wife and part-time secretary Mrs. Early, “scribe” Charles Hayden, and solicitor Charles New, who joined the firm after his own office in Hastings was badly damaged during a raid. Holden also gives details about the layout of 55 West Street, both during the war and in 2006/2008 when he was recording his memoirs.

Holden began at Rapers as a clerk/shorthand typist. Initially, Holden worked for both Charles Taylor and Joe Hubbard, until Hubbard was called back to service in the RAF. When Charles Hayden was fired after an exchange with Taylor, Holden became the office cartographer, tasked with reproducing plans from old deeds by tracing on blue linen. Holden mentioned that, from his early days at Rapers, he was involved with two important estates: West Broyle House, home of the late Mrs. Eleanor Weller-Poley, and “Deer Leap,” Rowlands Castle, home of Admiral O’Callaghan. In his diaries, Holden also mentioned indexing deeds and wills as part of his work.

Rescuing from Paper Salvage Program

Holden's "rescuing" of old papers occurred in 1945, not 1942 as recorded in his "Life Memories" notebook. According to his diary, on February 6, 1945, Holden "cleaned out some old papers at office." He "rescued + brought home a lot of 16th + 17th papers + documents + seals of Hy:VIII + Elizabeth. All vy: interesting." Holden's pocket diary for 1945 records three meetings with Dr. Hilda Johnstone to go through these papers: February 16th at 8:30, March 10th at 2:15, and May 18th at 8:45 (this last entry is slashed through, and not referenced in the larger diary). During their February 16th meeting, Holden recorded finding "Letter Patent from Eliz: bearing The Great Seal, + many other interesting things." On March 10th, Holden reviewed more of the papers with Dr. Johnstone, and noted, "The 1614/5 Penance concerning Pagham was the most interesting, I think." Holden's "Life Memories" indicate that he met with both Dr. Johnstone and local antiquarian Walter Peckham, but we did not see any obvious mention of Peckham (may have missed it, or there may have been mentions in diaries for other years). The diaries also make no mention of the paper salvage program as the impetus for this "cleaning out." It is unclear whether Holden is conflating two events (though no clear record of such an event can be found in his 1942 diary), or revealing more information than what was recorded in his 1945 diary.

Willshire's Garden Shed

On May 31, 1956, Holden's diary notes that the local general practitioner, Dr. Dick, had visited Harry Willshire the day before, and "found a polypus in rectum." Willshire went into the hospital, and Holden brought new wills for him and his wife to execute. From May 31st through June 23rd, Holden regularly visited Willshire at the hospital. After an operation on June 19th revealed that the cancer was too extensive, Willshire's health deteriorated quickly, and he died on the morning of June 24th. His funeral was on June 27th.

On July 10th, Holden's diary says that he spent the several hours at the Willshire's house: "when I sorted some of Mr. Willshire's papers + also looked in his garden shed. That will present a tremendous problem as it is full to capacity + the rats have added to the confusion." The

following evening, Holden returned to the Willshire's, and described "turning out shed with help of Miss Tulit. Found some C18 correspondence + 5r interesting documents." Miss Tulit was likely an Alice Tullett; it is unclear why she became involved. Holden continued to work in the garden shed on July 12th, and first mentioned bringing home papers to sort through on July 13th. On July 14th, he said: "2.45-8 pm at Mrs: Willshires + worked hard with Miss Tulit turning out shed. Disposed of masses of rubbish + tidied as far as possible. The evidence of rats very marked + yet to be cleaned out. Found Georgian Silver coins." After this week of work, Holden continued to visit Mrs. Willshire every few days, and continued to mention sorting through Mr. Willshire's papers at home. On August 18th and September 1st, Holden returned to the shed to continue sorting. On September Fifth, the county archivist Mr. Steer came to the Willshire's house: "He took away various historical papers + documents which Mr: Willshire had collected + which I do not require! Also pd 30/- to Mrs: W. for certain books. She gave me 10/- + an old silver watch. She signed codicil to her will in our presence." That night, however, Holden continued to sort some of Mr. Willshire's papers at home. On October 4th, Holden visited Mrs. Willshire, who was in bed with a bad cold at the house of "Miss Tullett," at 30 Oving Road; perhaps this means that Alice Tullett and Mrs. Willshire were related, or very close friends. After this, Holden continued to visit Mrs. Willshire fairly regularly, but apart from a mention of assisting her with clearing out a desk drawer on December 1st, he made no further mention of Mr. Willshire's papers at his home.

Holden as an Intermediary/Collector

The 1945 event was not the only time where Holden described bringing home papers and items to sort through. Additionally, Holden was not the only person at Rapers who retained things from clients; Harry Willshire obviously had a garden shed full of papers, and one of Holden's anecdotes about Charles Taylor mentions a sword that had belonged to a client.

Holden's connection to Dr. Hilda Johnstone and Walter Peckham remains unclear. Johnstone was a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and the last position she held before retiring in 1942 was Professor of History, Royal Holloway College, University of London. More of the

diaries would need to be examined to determine exactly when they became acquainted; the same for Holden and Peckham.

In general, Holden tended to seek out the best homes or experts for documents and objects that fell into his hands. For example, when he helped to empty the garages of a Mr. Lobley in 1956, he had certain items valued, and sold several things to interested friends of friends, and to the Portsmouth College of Technology.

The diaries often record close connections with clients of Rapers, perhaps because they were also friends, or perhaps because, as Holden wrote, he had “always been more interested in people than pieces of paper.” When the firm began taking on divorce and matrimonial cases, Holden worked of a number of them, occasionally to the financial detriment of the firm as he listened to individuals essentially talk themselves out of divorce. Holden frequently visited Mr. Willshire in his illness, and Holden and his mother visited Mrs. Willshire after her husband passed; they even exchanged Christmas presents, and Mrs. Willshire made a codicil to her will in Holden’s favor. This seemed to be more than just camaraderie between coworkers, and Holden’s binder of extracts reveals that Mr. Willshire went to school with Holden’s mother, which perhaps better explains their connection.

The Holden and Willshire Accessions

As noted above, the Holden Accession includes 79 items, and the Willshire Accession includes 146 items; both were deposited at the WSRO in 1956. The two accessions, both consisting largely or exclusively of papers from Rapers, have similarities and differences.

The papers in both accessions are nearly exclusively legal working documents. The Willshire accession consists exclusively of working, legal papers; it contains the greater diversity in the type of legal papers: property documents, a law office memorandum book, account books, wills and transcripts of wills, and legal correspondence. It does not include political papers. The Holden accession consists almost exclusively of legal working papers related to property or politics. There are also cheques and a few odds and ends: a handwritten list of the kings and queens of England;

an advertisement for Atwater dyer; a list of Christmas gifts; six personal photos. The Willshire archive has the look and feel of a section of an office archive, whereas the Holden accession feels more like an archive where a collector has cherry-picked archival items of special interest.

The Holden accession contains a higher percentage of major parchment documents. The parchments in the Holden collection are dated: 1621 (conveyance), 1689 (mortgage), 1713 (surrender of manor), 1743 (Bishop of Chichester leases), 1789 or 90 (Selsey conveyance), 1814 (an Aldingbourne parchment), 1825 (Declaration in the Court of Record), 1835 (License to Charles Bruckner to perform the office of curate of the perpetual curacy of Mid Lavant, on nomination of Henriette Anne Dorrien), 1845 (Declaration in the Court of the Queen's Bench), and the Sussex Declaration. The Willshire accession contains two parchments pertaining to the Second Duke of Richmond dated 1741 and 1749, and one pertaining to the Third Duke, dated to 1751; six Willshire family parchments dating between 1734 and 1828; and an 1852 parchment (with transfer in 1881) pertaining to the Boniface Family. Unlike the Holden accession, the parchments in the Willshire accession bear contextual relations to one another. This suggests that Holden was actively collecting parchments, whereas Willshire seems to have been drawn to documents with direct pertinence to his own family and/or work.

The Willshire accession contains more materials still folded in sixteenths, and bundled by property, as with the Aldingbourne manor and the Selsey manor. The Holden accession has more materials that have been unfolded and treated archivally. The Sussex Declaration was briefly folded into sixteenths like the rest of the working documents, though it seems to have spent most of its time stored in an octavo fold. Leaving aside the Sussex Declaration, neither accession includes a single item that might originally have been purchased as a collectible.

The physical state of the materials in both accessions is quite good. Only the Sussex Declaration shows damage on the edges. In the Holden accession, two documents display damage to the body in the form of small circular holes, none more than an inch in diameter. Those holes have smooth, not ragged edges, and appear to be insect holes; one seemed to have spider web or cocoon material connected with it. A third document has holes along its folds. The two parchments with the circular holes date to 1713 and 1743. The parchment with holes along the

folds dates to 1749. The Willshire accession includes only one document with damage: an 1883 surveyor's plan with extensive and non-symmetrical damage. This further discounts the theory that the losses on the edges of the Sussex Declaration are the result of rodent damage. Three of the documents in the Holden parchment have stains on their backs that, to the naked eye, look as though they might be related to the organic fluorescent stain on the back of the Sussex Declaration.

The Richmond family is the best-represented client of Rapers in the Holden accession. The Second, Third, and Fifth Duke are all represented in the Holden accession (Add Mss 8920, 8936, 8950, 8983, and 8993); there is no material connected to the Fourth Duke. In addition the family is represented as "Lennox" in Add Mss 8947, 8948, 8949, 8951, and 8986 (dates 1844-1857, during the Fifth Dukedom). Also, the Earl of March appears in Add Mss 8987 (dating to 1855, again the Fifth Dukedom). The envelope (Add Mss 8989) containing odds and ends, including the photos and newspaper cuttings, also includes an undated letter about a march to be played at the funeral of J.B. Freeland, the Secretary to the Fifth Duke. Several cheques in the accession also bear a connection to Freeland and references to the Fifth Duke, including Add Mss 8922 and 8944. The other major clients to appear in the Holden accession are the Bishops of Chichester. No other family or politically involved client is represented so prominently in this accession.

In addition, three documents may be connected to Henriette Dorrien (née LeClerc), the illegitimate daughter of the Third Duke:

- Add Mss 8991 (12 June 1835): Licence granted By Edward Maltby, Bishop of Chichester, to Charles Buckner, to perform the office of curate of the perpetual curacy of Mid Lavant, vacant by the cession of George Baker Garrow, on the nomination of Henriette Anne Dorrien, widow.
- Add Mss 8984 (3 July 1828): Printed Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons, On that part of the poor laws relating to the employment or relief of able bodied persons from the Poor Rate. The report includes marginaila in handwriting that may be Henriette's. From her letters, we know that she read reports from the House of Commons of this kind. (See Henriette's 1845 letters to the Fifth Duke, especially vol.1672 F699 and vol.1672 F727: "as I daily read the railway committee reports.")

- Add Mss 8988 (post 1836): List of Kings and Queens of England. This handwritten list of the Kings and Queens and England concludes with Victoria. All the names of French-origin queens are checked: MATILDA OF FLANDERS; MATILDA OF BOULOGNE; CLEARNOR OF GUIRENNE; BERENGARIA OF NAVARRAE; ISABELLA OF ANGOULIERNE; ELEANOR F PROVENCE; MARGARET OF FRANCE; ISABELLA OF FRANCE; ISABELLA OF FRANCE; ISABELLA OF NAVARRE; CATHERINE OF FRANCE; MARGARET OF ANJOU; HENRIETTA MARIA OF FRANCE.

Based on the 1845 letters from Henriette Dorrien to the Fifth Duke of Richmond (vol.1672 F711 and vol.1672 F759), Henriette does not herself seem to have been a client of Rapers. The Fifth Duke dispatched R. Raper to visit Henriette to try to get her decision on something pertaining to the railway. She was quite critical of Raper and did not speak about him as if she too were a client. This suggests that the parchment about Bruckner and the other two documents (if they are also associated with Henriette) would have entered the Rapers' files in some other way.

Goodwood Correspondence

When the Duke of Richmond died in 1806, he otherwise left his political and intellectual papers to his illegitimate daughter, Henriette LeClerc (later Dorrien), instructing his executors to “look[] at them no more than may be necessary to make . . . Selection and not suffering any other person to examine or peruse them” before turning them over to Henriette. As for Henriette, he instructed her to return all letters to their original writers.⁵ Of all the Dukes of

⁵ The finding aid for the papers of the Goodwood estate records (<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/fbba1ba4-6c87-41e3-a346-b54e7ce6a50c>): “It was long thought that the Third Duke's papers had perished in the fire at Richmond House, London, in 1791, but a contemporary account of the fire which appeared in the Public Advertiser (see Goodwood / 172) specifically mentions that they were all saved. The answer may, however, lie in the Duke's will (see Goodwood / 261) in which he bequeaths to his natural daughter Henrietta Ann Le Clerc 'all such Letters, Copies of Letters Correspondence Manuscript Books and written papers of every kind belonging to me at my death whether relating to public or private Affairs . . . and whether found at my House at Goodwood or my House at Whitehall or elsewhere as bear date or have been written since the decease of my Father and do not concern the Titles to any of my Estates and property But I desire her to offer to any persons living at my decease to return to them all letters that such persons may have written to me”. He further desires that his executors deliver all such papers' over to her as soon as they conveniently can they themselves

Richmond, the Third Duke suffers from the least complete archive of correspondence. The Fifth Duke appears to have made some effort to find materials that had been bequeathed to Henriette.

After Henriette's death, her son, Charles Dorrien, sought to transfer papers pertaining to the Third Duke from her effects to the Fifth Duke. The evidence of this effort is to be found in two letters dating to 1853, where Charles Dorrien discusses an effort to find correspondence between Pitt and the Third Duke, which did eventually make it into the *Goodwood Correspondence* files. Charles also describes himself as more generally looking for political papers. The relevant Dorrien letters are in *Goodwood Correspondence*, vol. 1770 F349 and F352.

F349: "My Dear Duke, I send the papers I have been able to find but they were mixed up with many other papers of no public importance. Perhaps I may find one or two more in a few days but I believe these are all on the subject.

I have just learnt Mr. Bramwell [?] now my tenant at Funtington late yours has failed and is off to London and does not return. I find all his corn has been sent off the farm and must go and see about it. In haste, your grace's very truly, Charles Dorrien. Sennicots Saturday 18 March."

F352: "Sennicots, Wednesday before Easter, 1853 [March 23], My Dear Duke, I have a note today from Mr. Balmer about Bramwell and his farm which is explicit enough. I understand he has been farming with the capital of some relations (an aunt I am told) who will not now let him have any more money. He Mr. Bramwell has been trying a good deal of expensive new invented machinery 'to keep pace with the times' I suppose as the cant is, but this has taken up all the capital his friend advanced, and he has not it seems practical prudence and knowledge enough to make the farm pay.

I felt sure I had more papers somewhere about the defence of the country, and yesterday found them, also the miscellaneous volume containing the account

looking at them no more than may be necessary to make . . . Selection and not suffering any other person to examine or peruse them'. From this it may be assumed that Henrietta dispersed or destroyed many of the papers either in too faithful compliance with her father's injunction that no-one except the original authors should have the papers, or merely through a lack of respect for documents themselves. It is therefore probable that thus were lost not only the majority of such papers and correspondence as related to his private and family concerns but also many possibly invaluable items concerning either his military, political and diplomatic careers or his two terms of office as Master-General of the Ordnance. Little also remains to record the active and influential part he played in local and county affairs and politics (he was for example Lieutenant Colonel of Sussex for forty-four years) or of his academic interests (he was a member or founder-member of various national learned societies). Therefore, although the relatively small number of papers that have survived in respect of the Duke's public affairs do afford a few tantalising glimpses into this part of his life, no balanced assessment can really be made from them of the full range of his activities or of the rectitude, foresight and perseverance he manifested in their execution."

of Jersey. I am not sure if the sheets sent to Mr. Pitt have been printed as a pamphlet but have some idea they have.

I am very busy moving my furniture over. Believe me, Your Grace, very sincerely, Chas Dorrien.”

This correspondence suggests an effort on the part of the Fifth Duke, who worked closely with Rapers, to reacquire important political papers belonging to his family.

Importantly, the papers of the Third Duke are the least well archived of any of the Dukes. In 1791, a fire in the Third Duke of Richmond’s London house jeopardized his papers. However, according to newspapers reports, many were saved by being thrown out of windows in chests and bookcases. The documents from Rapers that were salvaged during the war years and that ended up in the West Sussex Record Office include a handful of state papers. Not only did a parchment manuscript of the Declaration end up in the firm’s possession. So too did the document recording the Duke’s 1751 appointment as High Steward of the City of Chichester, signed by King George II and printed oaths to be taken by militia men prescribed by the Acts 42, 43, and 51 of King George III. In other words, the Third Duke of Richmond does appear to have transferred a handful of documents of state to Rapers. The 1791 fire might have been a moment, Goodwood curator James Peill suggests, when the Duke would have given important papers to his solicitors for safe-keeping.

An interpretation of the Holden accession as representing materials drawn from Rapers files and, in particular, from materials pertaining to the Dukes of Richmond appears to be well-founded. We are on solid ground in interpreting the Sussex Declaration as having a strong likelihood of having been associated with the Dukes of Richmond and their family.

The Letter Book of Robert Raper of Charleston, Carolina

This letter book of 233 pages (MP 3786) records material concerning Robert Raper of Charleston, SC, an agent for plantations of John Colleton of Hanover Square London. Colleton’s plantations were at Watboo and Mepshaw. Rapers’ correspondents included Thomas

Boone, Governor of the Jerseys, the Hon. James Prevost, Brigadier General of his Majesty's Forces in America. He was also in correspondence with Messrs Greenwood and Higginson of London about Stamp Act in 1765. Newcomers to the Colony were sometimes recommended to Raper, whose political position seems to have been Loyalist. Neither Raper nor Colleton was particularly involved in the politics of the American Revolution.

When Raper died in Charleston, he left his property to the grandson of his brother William, in the United Kingdom. Although the letter book describes his death as occurring ca. 1774, a reference in *Founders Online* suggests that he was still alive in 1778.⁶ He appointed William Ancrum of Charlestown his Merchant Executor and signed and sealed his will in the presence of Charles Shephard, Timothy Greenwood, and John Walker. None of these names connects Raper to central figures in the American Revolution.

In 1788, Raper's grandson, Robert Raper, was declared a lunatic. Robert's brother William took over the management of his estates and went to Carolina, sometime between 1788 and 1800, to obtain the administration of the property left to his brother.

While this document contains interesting information about plantation management and slavery in South Carolina, it contains no evidence that might explain the provenance of the Sussex Declaration.

Correspondence between the Third Duke and his Chichester Lawyers

The *Goodwood Correspondence* (Vol 4,f2236) includes seven dated letters and one undated letter from the Third Duke to his Chichester lawyers, William Tutté, William Leeves, William Fowler, and William Johnson (of Rapers). Leeves and Johnson (or a son) also appear once each in documents in the Holden accession in documents not otherwise identified above as connected to the Richmond family. Similarly, the three letters to Tutté (dated Nov 15, 1774; Friday 27th

⁶ See "Notes to Benjamin Franklin from David Hartley, 8 November 1782," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified June 29, 2017, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-38-02-0222>. [Original source: *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 38, *August 16, 1782, through January 20, 1783*, ed. Ellen R. Cohn. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006, pp. 290–291.]

Jan. 1775; Feb. 9, 1775) concern the Chitty property, which is also the subject of a document connected to the Third Duke in the Holden accession (Add Mss 8920, dated to 1771). Four additional letters concern property transactions (dating to Feb. 11, 1776; 12 March 1776; March 25, 1790; and an undated dictated letter). Finally, there is a letter dated, September 16, 1806, roughly three months before Richmond's own death, addressed to William Johnson, Esq., at Chichester, in which Richmond seeks the will of his brother or a copy of the will of General Charles Jones. This letter is folded conventionally like other legal documents, and is labelled on the top exterior; it has a circular hole of damage.

These fragments from the Third Duke's correspondence intersect with material in the Holden accession, further strengthening the assessment that the Holden accession did draw heavily from the files of the Richmond family. Moreover, they confirm that some papers of the Third Duke's from the years between 1771 and 1790, prior to his London fire, do survive. Indeed, both these papers and the Holden accession contain a documents related to work on the Chitty property, which date in combination from 1771-1775. Not only did some of the Third Duke's papers from this period survive; some made their way into the Rapers files.

Conclusion

Based on our review of these holdings, we consider the papers of the Dukes of Richmond to be the most likely source of the Sussex Declaration's inclusion in Rapers' files. The Third and Fifth Dukes are the two members of the household most prominently represented in the relevant accessions and related files. Moreover, the Fifth Duke, working with the son of Henriette Dorrien, the Third Duke's illegitimate daughter, sought to recover the missing political papers of the Third Duke during years in which the Fifth Duke was also working closely with Rapers' lawyers on matters of public policy in which he had an interest, such as railroads being built through Sussex.

The archival record thus reveals at least two possible pathways by which 18th century political papers might have made their way into Rapers' files: the Third Duke might himself have

deposited some of his papers with Rapers; or the Fifth Duke might have deposited papers that he acquired as part of his own effort to rebuild the archival record. The archives provide no evidence whatsoever of the use of Rapers by the Richmond family to hold fine art collectibles or other sorts of high-end collectible. Rather, Rapers supported an archival collection of the Dukes' working legal and political papers. Based on the details provided in Leslie Holden's diaries and the characteristics of the Holden and Willshire accessions, we also feel confident that the Sussex Declaration transferred from Rapers to the West Sussex Record Office through Holden.