

THE WOODHOUSES LETTERS

E.8.25

The person who inspired this collection of letters was William Davenport, a handloom weaver who lived in Woodhouses, near Ashton-under-Lyne, co Lancashire. William believed in his family's claim to be the heirs to Bramall Hall in Bramhall, north east Cheshire, and the letters concern attempts to prove the validity of this claim. William's older cousin, Edmund, first attempted to establish himself as the rightful heir, and commenced a lawsuit which ended in his imprisonment for the costs. During the mid to late 1830s, while Edmund was in prison, William tried to establish his claim. This involved him collecting correspondence concerning Edmund's case which now forms part of this collection. As well as letters, the collection contains undated notes and memoranda.

William Davenport gave the letters to his friend Robert Andrew, who stored them in his farmhouse in Woodhouses, which stood (and still stands?) in a little group of buildings once known as Andrew's Fold and now called Stansfield Fold. William appears to have dropped his claim in 1846. Andrew moved from the farmhouse around 1850, leaving the letters behind in an upstairs room. The farmhouse was then let to Robert Stansfield and remained in the Stansfield family for generations. When the third Robert Stansfield took over the house he decided to make one of the upstairs rooms, hitherto used for storage, into a bedroom, and the letters were discovered in there by Robert's wife during the clear out.

The collection was deposited in Chetham's Library by Eveline Barbara Dean, according to the wishes of the late Agnes Stansfield. It was Stansfield's mother who had discovered the letters in their family home.

Prior to its deposit in Chetham's Library the collection was stored for many years in unsuitable conditions, and as a result many of the items are damaged and some are partly illegible.

See Eveline Barbara Dean, *The Woodhouses Letters: What They Revealed and Where They Led: Studies of Nineteenth Century English Justice*, (Bolton, 1986). (Chetham's Library location reference 13.B.1.10).

[1829-1846]

Archivist's note: the spelling of Bramall Hall was standardised in 1935 when Hazel Grove & Bramhall Urban District Council acquired the Hall. In keeping with the entry in the Domesday book they decided to retain the original spelling of Bramall for the house. The correspondents in the Woodhouses Letters refer to Bramhall Hall. The spelling has been modernised (Bramall Hall) unless used in a quotation from the documents. Bramhall is used correctly for the location.

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The collection is arranged into two series as follows:

/1 Miscellaneous material concerning Edmund Davenport's claim to Bramall Hall, co Ches, [1830s-early 1840s] & 1966, (23 items) page 1.

/2 Letters concerning Edmund Davenport's claim to Bramall Hall, co Ches, 1829-1846, (64 items) page 4.

1 box (87 items)

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- E.8.25 (1-22) Miscellaneous material concerning Edmund Davenport's claim to Bramall Hall, co Cheshire*** ***[1830s-early 1840s]***
22 items ***& 1966***
- E.8.25 (1) Poem entitled The Meeting Time addressed to Mr Dyson, Inn Keeper, Hooley Hill, by Geo[rge] Webster. [1820s-early 1830s]
Some words indecipherable.
nd
- E.8.25 (2) Notes explaining the nature of "an inquisition or inquest". [?1830s]
nd
- E.8.25 (3) Copy of a writ taken after the death of Robert de Davenport (died Nov 1436). (1 Sep 1422)
[?In George Webster's hand].
- E.8.25 (4) Copy of Davenport inquisitions post mortem. [?1830s]
Statement at the end of notes headed "general observations" reads "I certify that the above is a copy of certain extracts from the Inquisitions Rept in the Exchequer room Chester Castle". [?In George Webster's hand].
- E.8.25 (5) Pedigree of the Davenport family. [?1830s]
[?In George Webster's hand].
Torn in half and affected by dirt which obscures some words.
nd
- E.8.25 (6) Copies of entries in the registers in Stockport Church relating to the Davenport family. (1584-1829)
Note at top of page reads "Ham and Knowles got out of Stockport Church 40 Registers and I find them as follows". John Ham and Hugh Knowles were representatives of Edmund Davenport.
nd

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- E.8.25 (7) Note signed by Edward Pate, Proctor. [1830s]
It reads: "Search has been made for the wills of John Davenport his father and grandfather of Bramhall [Bramall] but not any found except an admon under seal of Wm Davenport Senr".
nd
- E.8.25 (8) Copy of the will of Warren Davenport of Bramhall (Bramall) extracted from the public Episcopal Registry at Chester. (3 Jul 1749)
[1830s]
- E.8.25 (9) Note headed "Extracted from Lower Withington Town" with the names of William Davenport and Samuel Davenport listed next to dates. 1801-1833
- E.8.25 (10) Extract from settlement on the marriage of Thomas Rhodes the younger and Elizabeth Stubbing. (6 Apr 1715)
Copied [1830s]
- E.8.25 (11) Note giving instructions to a person in London to visit the offices of the Court of Chancery to find information about Edmund Davenport's suit. [?1830s]
nd and unsigned. [?In George Webster's hand].
- E.8.25 (12) Letter addressed "Sir" concerning "our case". [1830s]
nd and unsigned
- E.8.25 (13) Notes discussing the implications to Edmund Davenport's case of the question "Was Warren Davenport seized in fee?". [1830s]
- E.8.25 (14) Letter addressed to "Sir" written to uphold Richard Davenport's case. [?1830s]
The author claims the "title of the Bramhall [Bramall] Estate is a Crown Entail on the Male Line", reversion being vested in the Crown barring "all fines and recoveries...thereby all Disputes about Barring the Entail is neutralized and absolutly [sic] out of the question". The author concludes that the late William Davenport "had only a Life Interest in the Estate", and Richard Davenport needs only to prove his descent through six generations.

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- nd and unsigned
- E.8.25 (15) Letter concerning documents. [1830s]
- The letter has been damaged by insects and dirt, part of it is torn away and parts are illegible.
- nd and signature illegible
- E.8.25 (16) Part of a letter concerning proving Richard Davenport is the heir [to Bramall Hall]. [1830s]
- nd and unsigned
- E.8.25 (17) The Bramhall (Bramall) pedigree from Sir William Davenport, kt, and the opening speech of Mr Temple the leading council for the plaintiff, Edmund Davenport. (1641-1804)
- Notes by George Webster taken from the Cottonian and Harleian MSS, and from “the Records of the College of Arms Collected with the Harleian MSS 2119 the Visitations and other Evidence”.
- E.8.25 (18) Letter wrtitten on behalf of Richard Davenport asking for legal help. [Late 1830s-early 1840s]
- In George Webster’s hand, “a long continued Bad Trade has Brought us to the last stage of Poverty”.
- E.8.25 (19) Pedigree of the Davenports from Thomas of Whitbrough to Richard now living. [Late 1830s-early 1840s]
- With notes defending Richard Davenport’s claim.
- The writing is indistinct, making the document hard to read in places.
- E.8.25 (20) Pedigree from Peter Davenport through Thomas to Richard, now living at Blackley, and Edmund, now living in London. (1603-1804)
- Probably written by George Webster, late 1830s-early 1840s.
- E.8.25 (21) Note apparently requesting certificates of members of the Davenport family. [Late 1830s-early 1840s]

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- E.8.25 (22) Cutting from the *Manchester Evening News and Chronicle*. 12 Mar 1966
- Article entitled “Little hells that made Britain Great”, about child labour during the Industrial Revolution. Found with the letters.
- E.8.25 (22*) Mounted photograph of Stansfield Fold. c 1920
- The Woodhouses Letters were found in the Stansfield’s family home at Woodhouses, which stood (and still stands?) in a little group of buildings once known as Andrew’s Fold and now called Stansfield Fold.
- E.8.25 (23-86) Letters concerning Edmund Davenport’s claim to Bramall Hall, co Cheshire 1829-1846***
- 64 items***
- Variant spellings of Humphreys (Humpheries) occur in the documents and have been made uniform in the list.
- E.8.25 (23) Copy notices served upon Capt Humphreys and the tenants of the Bramall Estate, with a list of the tenants. 7 May 1829
- 2 items
- Edmund Davenport claims his ownership of Bramall Hall as the “oldest male descendant of the surviving male branch of the family of Davenport”. Signed by Edmund Davenport.
- E.8.25 (24) Bill of costs of J. & A. Smith, Dorset Street, Salisbury Square, for work done for Mr Davenport, addressed to Messrs Kay, Barlow and Aston, Brown Street, Manchester. 16 May 1829
- Costs listed from 3 Jul 1828 to 22 Apr 1829. J. & A. Smith state that after payment of costs and after “receiving an authority” they will “hand over” all Mr Davenport’s papers and “will then be happy to communicate all the information in our power respecting his claim”.
- The item is dirty and faded and has been eaten away by insects in places.

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- E.8.25 (25) Letter from S. J. Roberts, Chester, to Messrs Kay, Barlow and Aston, solicitors, Manchester. 23 Jun 1829
Concerning the will of Davenport. He asks “how far from 1765” they wish the will to be searched.
- E.8.25 (26) Letter from S. J. Roberts, Chester, to Messrs Kay, Barlow and Aston, solicitors, Manchester. 2 Jul 1829
Concerning the will of Davenport decd; will give the solicitors a copy as soon as he obtains it.
- E.8.25 (27) Letter from R. Dighton, Horse Guards, to Messrs Kay, Barlow and Aston. 2 Jul 1829
Acknowledges receipt of letter of 14th instant; information relative to William Davenport cannot be provided, “the Brigade of Guards not having any document to produce previous to 1760”.
- E.8.25 (28) Letter from Isaac Eaton, Macclesfield, to Mr J. Reynolds, 4 Church St, Manchester. 14 Jul 1829
He has searched the register at “the Old Church Macclesfield from 1638 to 1642 for the marriage of Peter Davenport”, but has been unable to locate it. He has located the marriage of Thomas Davenport and Anna Finney of Peover in 1641. The details of another Davenport are present, the Christian name “is almost obliterated” but he thinks it is William.
- E.8.25 (29) Letter from S. J. Roberts, Chester, to Messrs Kay, Barlow and Aston, solicitors. 15 Jul 1829
The will of “Davenport dec’d...is not yet come in - if you know who is the surrogate before whom it was proved you had better write him to send it in without delay”.
- E.8.25 (30) Letter from Will Ward jun, Further Northgate Street, Chester, to Alexander Kaye, esq, solicitor. 6 Aug 1829
Concerning an unsuccessful search for the marriage of Peter Davenport and Ann Leigh, decd, in the parishes of Stockport, Cheadle and Prestbury. With a note of costs at the end of the letter.
Damaged (torn, dirt and insect damage) and faded, which makes it hard to read.

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- E.8.25 (31) List of certificates wanting to verify the claimants pedigree compiled by Kay, Barlow and Aston, solicitors. 19 Aug 1829
- 5 certificates are listed, the last 2 have been crossed out. The certificates required are for the marriage of Peter Davenport and Anne Leigh between 1630 and 1643, the death of Thomas Davenport of Wheltrough, co Ches, and the baptism of William Davenport, eldest son of said Thomas Davenport.
- E.8.25 (32) Letter from Edmund Davenport, London, to his uncle James Davenport, [?Blackley], sent care of the landlord of the [?Gasping Goose], Shudehill, Manchester. 23 Jan 1832
- He says the trial will be soon.
- E.8.25 (33) Letter from Edmund Davenport, 8 Spencer Street, Northampton Square, London, to his uncle James Davenport. 6 Apr 1832
- He says his friends urged him to leave Manchester quickly because they had information that “certain parties had made arrangements for putting me into a private mad-house”. He has a friend who will provide money to stop the case being brought under the Paupers Act. Says his relations and friends will all share in his good fortune if he is successful.
- Not in Edmund’s hand, possibly written by Peter Morrison.
- E.8.25 (34) Copy of a letter from Edmund Davenport, 8 Spencer Street, Northampton Square, London, addressed “Dear friend”. 13 Aug 1832
- Humphreys has purchased the correspondent’s farm. The correspondent is told to never give Humphreys possession of the common. He asks for a report of what Humphreys has been doing, particularly “if he has felled any timber”. “I shall eat my Roast Beef and Plumb Pudding yet in the Hall on Christmas and we shall make the walls Eco with mirth & joy at its being once again in the Possession of its lawful Lord & Master”.
- Ink faded making it difficult to read.

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- E.8.25 (35) Letter from Edmund Davenport, London, to an unnamed correspondent. 14 Oct 1833
- Waiting for the case hearing; his leading counsel believes he will succeed in his case. He asks the correspondent to give his compliments to his uncle. With scribbled notes on the size of [?the Bramall Estate] and the date of William Davenport's will.
- The letter is not in Edmund's hand.
- E.8.25 (36) Letter from Edmund Davenport, London, to Mr Knowles, Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy, nr Stockport, co Ches. 6 Mar 1834
- Having notices prepared for tenants telling them not to pay rent to Humphreys, and will bring them within 10 days.
- Appears to be written by Peter Morrison. A note at the foot of the letter instructs "address to me care of P. Morrison, 1 Bartholomew [Lane], London".
- E.8.25 (37) Letter from P[eter] Morrison, 1 Bartholomew Lane, London, to Mr Knowles, Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy, nr Stockport, co Ches. 4 Apr 1834
- Mr Davenport left "a piece of linen" at Knowles's house which he would like returned. Morrison will probably visit again soon.
- E.8.25 (38) Letter from P[eter] Morrison, 1 Bartholomew Lane, London, to Mr Lomas, Woods Moor, Bramall (Bramhall). 4 Apr 1834
- Will have a visit from himself or another representative of Mr Davenport soon. The "legal profession" in London believe "Davenport has only to follow up the matter to drive the usurper from his unjust hold". Few of the tenants have assisted Davenport.
- E.8.25 (39) Letter from Peter Morrison, London, to Mr Knowles, Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy. 12 Apr 1834
- Sends a letter for Mr Lucas. Probable that he or Mr Sharpe will be in Bramhall (Bramall) at rent day and asks to be given notice when it is fixed.

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- E.8.25 (40) Letter from Thomas Sharpe, Swadlincote nr Ashby de la Zouch, to Mr Lomas, Stockport Moor, Stockport, Bullock Smithy. 4 Jun 1834
- Writing on behalf of Mr Davenport to ask how “matters relative to his interest have been lately progressing”. Mr Morrison was prevented from being in Bramhall (Bramall) on 17 May due to illness. “The Squire’s case is now proceeding with every probability of speedy success”.
- E.8.25 (41) Letter from P[eter] Morrison, 1 Bartholomew Lane, London, to Mr Knowles, Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy. 10 Oct 1834
- He says the bearers of the letter are on Mr Davenport’s business, and asks Mr Knowles to assist them. He says “the steps we are now about take [sic] will speedily set this long protracted business to rest in a way favourable to poor Davenport”.
- E.8.25 (42) Letter from John Ham, Anchor Inn, to Hugh Knowles, Bullock Smithy. 13 Nov 1834
- Concerning Mr Morrison’s employment of Messrs Johnson and Wetherall [his solicitors in London], and other business concerning Edmund Davenport’s claim.
- The ink is faded in places, making the letter difficult to read.
- E.8.25 (43) Letter from John Ham to Hugh Knowles, nr Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy, Stockport. 25 Nov 1834
- Discusses Mr Chase. Describes Mr Sharpe as “a Gent[leman] of large property & his potteries are like a little town”. Asks to know “what balance is due to Swindell”. With an account ordering money to be paid to Mr Knowles for earthenware, from Tho[mas] Sharpe to Ja[me]s Hulme, 25 Nov 1834.
- Part of the letter is missing.

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- E.8.25 (44) Letter from Edmund Davenport, London, to Mr Knowles. 26 Nov 1834
- He has not seen or heard anything from Mr Ham and Mr Chase for some time. His solicitor has told him he can make a seizure every rent day if he requires.
- Part of the letter has been torn away.
- E.8.25 (45) Letter from E[dmund] Davenport, London, to Mr Knowles, Bullock Smithy. 30 Nov 1834
- Asks him to ask Mrs Thorpe [a Bramall tenant] whether Mr Chase has had any money, how much and if he has had money from other tenants. He thanks Knowles for the information he has given him about Mr Chase, and his “goings on so contrary to orders”.
- Note at foot of letter “Repleyd to this Tuesday Decr 2nd”.
- E.8.25 (46) Letter from John Ham, London, to Hugh Knowles, Bullock Smithy. 30 Nov 1834
- Says his efforts have been to encourage the tenantry of Bramall to withhold rents, but he never took money from them. He has two letters from James Hulme Senior and has made extracts from them. He claims the “meaning of all this must be obvious to shake Mr Davenport’s confidence in my integrity”. He was the appointed agent of Mr Davenport’s “to receive any or all monies from the Tenants”, and never asked Mr Chase to act for him.
- With extract from a letter from James Hulme, 27 & 28 Nov 1834. Hulme claims that Mr Ham is “on intimate terms with Cooke”, Sir Salusbury Price Humphreys’s steward.

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- E.8.25 (47) Letter from John Ham, London, to Hugh Knowles. 11 Dec 1834
- He has received a letter from Mr Swindell for the payment of £3 10s. Hopes money will be recovered from Mr Chase to repay tenants. Informs him that Edmund Davenport has been “captured by Humphreys for the expences attending the Vice Chancellor’s Court”, and is in prison in Whitecross Street gaol. Mr Chase due to return home, and when he does “a sheriffs officer is ready”.
- E.8.25 (48) Letter from John Ham, London, to Hugh Knowles, Bullock Smithy. 16 Jan 1835
- Mr Morrison has given instructions to the solicitors Johnson and Wetherall concerning Mr Chase’s “illegal conduct”. He asks about the “3 persons” Knowles said accompanied Chase. Chase was acting without Edmund Davenport’s knowledge or consent. Discusses his alleged meeting with Humphreys’s steward. Encloses a letter from Sir Francis [Keeling] [not present].
- E.8.25 (49) Letter from Edmund Davenport, London, to James Davenport, Middleton, nr Manchester. 16 Jan 1835
- Tells him he is confined in the Fleet prison. The trial of ejectment will not happen until March. He is as well as can be expected. Ends the letter “Remember me to Ric[har]d Davenport”.
- Part of the letter is torn away. It is fragile and needs careful handling.
- E.8.25 (50) Letter from John Ham, London, to Hugh Knowles. 30 Jan 1835
- Thanks Knowles for the information which led to Mr Chase and George Watts alias White being “arrested in their infamous career”. Before Mr Sharpe left London he had Edmund Davenport moved from Whitecross Street prison [to the Fleet].

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- E.8.25 (51) Letter from John Ham, London, to Hugh Knowles. 16 Feb 1835
- Says the “report of Humphrey’s Minions are only calculated to mislead”, and asks to be told “all & every correct information you can possibly learn”.
Relates a conversation between Rev Matthew Dunn, for many years resident curate of Cheadle, co Ches, and Sir Salusbury Pryce Humphreys, in which Rev Dunn said Edmund Davenport was heir to the Bramall Estate.
- E.8.25 (52) Letter from John Ham, London, to Hugh Knowles, Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy, Stockport, co Ches. 2 Apr 1835
- Refers to a letter from [Peter] Morrison sent from Chester “wherein he states S[alusbury] P[ryce] H[umphreys] has lost the Trial altho he had 3 Councillors to defend him one with a silk gown”. Edmund Davenport is in Chester at the trial.
- E.8.25 (53) Letter from Peter Morrison, London, to Hugh Knowles, Bullock Smithy. 23 Apr 1835
- Mr Lomas must be told to retain possession of his land. Edmund Davenport has appointed Morrison and Sharpe as his agents to receive rents from Bramall tenants. Notices for the tenants have been sent to James Hulme for distribution. Reply written on same sheet of paper.
- E.8.25 (54) Letter from John Ham, London, to Hugh Knowles, Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy, Stockport, co Ches. 28 Apr 1835
- He will be accompanying Mr Sharpe to Bramhall (Bramall) to see Mr Lomas. He encloses a letter for Mr Lomas which should be sent to him “as soon as received”.
- E.8.25 (55) Letter from John Ham, London, to [Hugh Knowles]. 30 Apr 1835
- Peveril of the Peak is full inside for the day, so will leave tomorrow morning on the Bee Hive coach. Asks [Knowles] to see Mr Lomas and rearrange the meeting time, “impress on his mind to do nothing until he sees us”.

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- E.8.25 (56) Letter from John Ham, Red Lion Inn, to Hugh Knowles, Anchor Inn. 2 May 1835
- Invites Knowles to take breakfast with himself and Mr Sharpe.
- E.8.25 (57) Letter from John Ham, London, to [Hugh] Knowles. 20 May 1835
- Waiting for a letter from Mr Sharpe “in respect to our future proceedings”. Salusbury Pryce Humphreys holds Bramall “by what we Londoners term Mob Law”.
- E.8.25 (58) Letter from John Ham, London, to [Hugh] Knowles. 25 May 1835
- Have a case before Council “respecting the affair at William Gavners”. Mr Morrison does not think Sir Salusbury Pryce Humphreys will take any “unpleasant steps” against Bramall tenants who have supported Edmund Davenport. Mr Davenport’s supporters will be “amply rewarded when he becomes possessed of his property”.
- E.8.25 (59) Letter from Tho[ma]s Sharpe, Swadlincote, to Hugh Knowles, Bullock Smithy, Stockport. 5 Jun 1835
- Knowles had informed Sharpe by letter of the “unpleasant proceedings” taken by Humphreys against some of the Bramall tenants. It is not Davenport’s intention to pursue “matters of dispute between the parties” in Bramall (Bramhall). He says “progress in discoveries made lately” are beneficial to Davenport’s case. The ejectment case is the “straightforward way of proceeding”. Davenport’s case is not being served by the tenants not paying any rents at all.
- E.8.25 (60) Letter from Edmund Davenport [from Fleet Prison, London], to his uncle James Davenport, Middleton, nr Manchester. 22 Jun 1835
- Sorry to hear James is unwell and his health is declining. Mr Morrison informs him everything is going well for the “Right of Ejectment”. He would write more often but letters are expensive. He will write to Richard [Davenport] tomorrow, and would be grateful of any assistance he can give.

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- E.8.25 (61) Letter from Bernard John Wake, Great Hotel, Buxton, to Joshua Oldfield, Duckinfield, Hyde. 4 Aug 1835
- “I learn that you and Mr Davenport wish to see me”.
- E.8.25 (62) Letter from Edmund Davenport, Fleet Prison, London, to his uncle James Davenport, Middleton, nr Manchester. [1835]
- Informs his uncle any trial of the writ of ejectment will be held at Chester. Asks James if he knows anyone who can give evidence in his favour at the trial. Tells him to “collect yourself in my favour” in preparation for the trial. Asks him to see Richard Davenport and see “if he knows anything of my ancestors” to prove his claim. Says this will be “the last trial”. Does he have a family bible with names in it?
- E.8.25 (63) Letter from Ed[mund] Davenport, Fleet Prison, No 21 in the fair, to Robert Whittam, No 25 [?Thor] Street, Portwood, Stockport, co Ches. [?27 Oct 1835]
- Asks about “A Mr Bruce at Manchester” who said he would [?provide] money for a new trial. He has spoken to a solicitor “in here” about the document produced by Humphreys at the trial. He is surprised he has not heard from anyone since the trial, and would like to know the general opinion of people about the deed. Says he is “very badly off”.
- E.8.25 (64) Letter from Edmund Davenport, Fleet Prison, London, to George Wardel, Cheetham Hill, nr Manchester. 6 Nov 1835
- Distressed that his friends did not make more effort at the trial at Chester. He is confused about the deed produced by Humphreys’s solicitor at the trial. He only has the prison allowance to survive on.
- E.8.25 (65) Letter from Tho[ma]s Sharpe, Swadlincote, co Derbys, to Hugh Knowles, Bullock Smithy, Stockport. 22 Jun [?1836]
- Concerning payment for a gate. Asks Knowles to call on Mr Allworth. Enquires after Hulme, “does he hold possession of the land yet?”.

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- E.8.25 (66) Letter from [R. Barber], Southwark, to W[illia]m Harrop, Hatter, Hooley Hill, Manchester. 6 Oct 1836
- “I have carefully examined the Books alluded to for the years 1657 - 8 & 9 & the name of Peter Davenport does not occur”.
- E.8.25 (67) Letter from R. Barber, Southwark to Mr Dyson. 14 Oct 1836
- Concerning the search for the name of Peter Davenport at the Prerogative Court. Includes list of dates beside the names of different Davenports, 1655-1657.
- E.8.25 (68) Letter from R. Barber, Southwark to John Dyson, Hatter, Hooley Hill, nr Manchester. 1 Nov 1836
- Could not find the administration of Ann Davenport, but found that of Peter Davenport of Bramhall (Bramall) made Sep 1658.
- E.8.25 (69) Letter from P[eter] B[arber], Macclesfield, to Messrs Webster Watton, Ollerenshire Buildings, Duckinfield, nr Ashton-under-Lyne. 10 May 1838
- He has found the register “that you was speaking of whin in town”.
- E.8.25 (70) Letter from Ed[mund] Davenport, Fleet Prison, to Hugh Knowles, Anchor Inn, Bullock Smithy. 7 Jul 1838
- Knowles had asked Edmund for documentary proof of the birth, marriage and death of Thomas Davenport, third son of Peter Davenport, to “deduce a wager”. Edmund does have proof, but sees no cause to supply it to settle a wager. Mrs Davenport suffering with cancer.
- Not in Edmund Davenport’s handwriting.
- E.8.25 (71) Letter from John Swindells, Brickmakers Arms, Rochdale Road, Manchester, to Geo[rge] Webster, Furness Hill, Duckinfield, Chester. 9 Sep 1839
- He has been to the solicitors Clay and Hampson today with Will Davenport, and seen the documents concerning the case. Clay and Hampson served the writ of ejectment on Bramall Hall. Asks Webster to get £1 off Rob Andrew.

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- E.8.25 (72) Letter from Ed[mund] Davenport, Fleet Prison, London, to his uncle James Davenport, Middleton, nr Manchester. 27 Oct 1839
- Will not give up his claim to Bramall Hall, and will not be “bought off by him that has wronged me in so infamous a manner”.
- Not in Edmund’s handwriting.
- E.8.25 (73) Letter (correspondents unknown). Jan 1840
- He has been to various places where information might be found relating to the descent of Edmund Davenport from Deborah Warburton. He examined the register at Blakeley (Blackley) and found Edmund’s claim to be false. Discusses other places he has been to search records. He also investigates Richard Davenport’s claim “as far as concerns the Marriage of Sam[ue]l Daven[por]t with Ann Thorpe”.
- The letter is torn and dirty. The signature of the author is unclear, as is part of the text.
- E.8.25 (74) Letter from John Ham, London, to Rob[er]t Andrew, Mr Swindells, Brewer, Rochdale Road nr Manchester. 18 Feb 1840
- Apologizes for delay in replying to Andrew’s letter. His time has been occupied by “the unlooked for occurrence of the sheriffs of London & sheriff of Middlesex having incurred the displeasure of the House of Commons”.
- E.8.25 (75) Letter from Edmund Davenport, Fleet Prison, to an unknown correspondent. 8 Aug 1840
- Says there is a reward offered of £200 for the capture of [John Kenyon] Winterbottom [Salisbury Pryce Humphreys’s solicitor]. He asks for information about Humphreys.
- Not in Edmund’s handwriting.

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- E.8.25 (76) Letter from Richard Perkins, 3 Top Gallery, Fleet Prison, to Samuel Davenport. 20 Aug 1840
- 2 items
- He says if Samuel is the heir at law of [?] Davenport, he should participate in joint proceedings with Edmund Davenport for the recovery of Bramall Estate.
- With piece of folded paper used as an envelope.
- E.8.25 (77) Letter from Geo[rge] Webster to [?Will Davenport]. 9 Nov 1842
- Gives “an account of the origins of the Davenports of Bramhall” (Bramall).
- E.8.25 (78) Letter from George Webster, Dukinfield, to an unknown correspondent. 10 Dec 1842
- Concerning John Davenport and the lands he held from Hugh De Toft in the barony of Nantwich.
- The text has faded in places making the letter hard to read.
- E.8.25 (79) Letter from Edmund Davenport, Queens Prison, to his cousin Will[ia]m Davenport, Woodhouses, nr Hollinwood, co Lancs. 5 Nov 1844
- He has in his possession “the Registers of the Family of Davenport as connected with Bramhall [Bramall] Estates” and copies of wills. “Captain Humphries’s solicitor has offered to discharge me - upon condition that I give up my claim”. This he cannot do. He is being forced through the “Insolvent Court” by his opponents, “that they might obtain possession of all my papers & important documents”. He says the deed Humphreys produced in court at Chester assizes in 1835 is invalid.
- Not in Edmund’s handwriting.

THE WOODHOUSES LETTERS

E.8.25

- E.8.25 (80) Letter from E[dmund] Davenport, Queens Prison, to his cousin William Davenport, Woodhouses, Hollinwood, co Lancs. 17 May 1845
- Surprised to hear of Captain Humphreys's death. He has not heard about it from anyone else and asks William to check he is correct. William has written to the Heir-at-Law Society, and they asked Edmund for his papers which he refused to let out of his care. He has spoken to the "best of Counsel" who believe that he could gain possession of Bramall Hall if he were a free man.
- Not in Edmund's handwriting.
- E.8.25 (81) Letter from W[illiam] Davenport, Free Trade Coffee House, 58 Friar St, Blackfriars Road, [London], to his wife, Woodhouses, Hollinwood, co Lancs. 29 Ju[n] 1845
- Arrived safely. Has been to see his cousin Edmund, who "is willing for us to go into the case jointly".
- Dated by post mark.
- E.8.25 (82) Letter from William Davenport, Queens Prison, to his wife Elizabeth Davenport, Woodhouses, nr Hollinwood, nr Manchester. 1 Jul 1845
- Has been with Edmund since his arrival. Has seen all Edmund's documents and papers. Edmund must be freed from prison because "he is an old man and if he dies there the property will never be recovered". He has spent all the money he brought with him and asks his wife to send him more.
- Not in William's handwriting.
- E.8.25 (83) Letter from William Davenport to his father, William Davenport, Coffee House, 58 Friars St, Blackfriars Road, London. 2 Jul 1845
- Sends him a pound "to come home with and not to expend it in going about after the case any longer". Mrs Davenport is ill.

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E.8.25

E.8.25 (84) Letter from Edm[un]d Davenport, 10 Arundel Street, Strand, London, to his cousin. 2 Oct 1845

The name of the correspondent is not known, but it is not his cousin William Davenport. Thanks him for the money he has sent. Has had a letter stating William Davenport is the next heir, "I hope he will give up his foolish notions". He has a rule to remove the vesting order.

Not in Edmund's handwriting.

E.8.25 (85) Letter from E[dmund] Davenport to his cousin, John Wild, Witt St, Middleton, nr Manchester. 3 Nov 1845

Has finally had the vesting order removed, "I am now thank God quite free from them".

Not in Edmund's handwriting.

E.8.25 (86) Letter from E[dmund] Davenport, 10 Arundel St, Strand, London, to his son and daughter. 8 Jul 1846

Mr Powell continuing with his searches in the British Museum "amongst the old papers and records there", and he will search records in the Tower soon. He says he is "very badly off indeed". He has no lodging and is staying in a friend's lodging.

Not in Edmund's handwriting.