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Cymorth chwilio | Finding Aid - Twenty-eight holograph letters from Augustus John plus other items, (NLW MS 21570E.)

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Twenty-eight holograph letters from Augustus John plus other items,

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Crynodeb o wybodaeth | Summary of information

Lleoliad Repository:	Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru = The National Library of Wales
Teitl Title:	Twenty-eight holograph letters from Augustus John plus other items,
Cod cyfeirnod Reference code:	NLW MS 21570E.
Virtua system control number [alternative]:	vtls006853589
Dyddiad Date:	1913-1954 / (dyddiad creu date of creation)
Lleoliad ffisegol Physical location:	ARCH/MSS (GB0210)
Dyddiadau creu, golygu a dileu Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	
Nodyn Note [generalNote]:	Title based on contents.
Nodyn Note [generalNote]:	Preferred citation: NLW MS 21570E.

Hanes gweinyddol / Braslun bywgraffyddol | Administrative history | Biographical sketch

Nodyn | Note

Augustus Edwin John, artist, was born at Tenby, Pembrokeshire, on 4 January 1878. He studied at the Slade School in London between 1894 and 1899. A diving accident in 1897 caused severe head injuries, reputedly affecting his personality and painting style. He married Ida Nettleship in 1901 and they had five children. At about the same time, he was appointed to teach art at the University of Liverpool, where he was taught the Romani language. Periods of travelling throughout England and Wales in a gypsy caravan inspired much of his work before World War 1. In 1902, he met Dorothy MacNeill, giving her the Romani name Dorelia. She became his most important model and lifelong inspiration; she moved to Paris with Augustus's sister, the artist Gwen John, the following year. Augustus based himself mainly in Paris in 1906-1907. After Ida's death in 1907, Dorelia became John's partner (they never formally married). They had four children together, both before and after Ida's death. His early period of work was characterised by drawings from life, notably of contemporaries including Ida and Dorelia and his sisters, as well as portraits in oils influenced by the Old Masters and an experimental series of etchings. He was elected President of the National Portrait Gallery in 1914. During World War 1 he spent a brief time in

France, employed by the Canadian government as a war artist, and was official artist at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. After a period of painting landscapes and employing a more modern impressionistic idiom, he became increasingly successful as a portrait painter. His subjects included Thomas Hardy, T. E. Lawrence, George Bernard Shaw, and David Lloyd George. He was elected to the Royal Academy in 1928, resigned in 1938, and was re-elected in 1940. He was elected President of the Royal Cambrian Academy of Art in 1934 and President of the Gypsy Lore Society in 1938. In 1942 he was awarded the Order of Merit for services to art. He died at Fryern Court, Hampshire, his home since 1927, in 1961.

Natur a chynnwys | Scope and content

Twenty-eight holograph letters from Augustus John to the following addressees: 'Laura' (Dame Laura Knight, 2 letters, 1938, concerning John's resignation from the Royal Academy), 'Kassie' (3 letters, 1939, 1940 and May 11), Miss Stevenson (Frances Stevenson, later Countess Lloyd George of Dwyfor, 7 letters, 1919, Feb. 13 and n.d. [probably mostly, if not all, 1919], several of these letters contain interesting details concerning John's commission to paint the Paris Peace Conference in 1919) 'Haddon' (2 letters, 1927 and 12 July [?1927], concerning Jack Knewstubb), [Chaloner] Dowdall (1 letter, 1914), Miss Lion (1 letter, 1935, John's inability to contribute a work to the exhibition of disabled ex-servicemen's industries), Mr. Sadler (2 letters, 1913 and 1918), Mr. Russell (2 letters, 1947 and 1953, book reviewing), 'Castle' and Mrs. Castle (1 letter, 'Sunday' [c. Oct. 1915]), Mrs. Madden (2 letters, 1934 and June 23, this second letter has mounted on its dorse a press cutting containing a reproduction of a sketch of John by Ivan Opffer), Mr. Unwin (1 letter, 1941, the publication of 'The book' [John's autobiography]), Miss Phelps (1 letter, n.d.), 'Dear Sir' (2 letters, Nov. 7 and 1954) and Warner E. Colville (signed and dated card, 1939); together with other items, 1913-1954, in the hand of Augustus John: holograph manuscript and typescript of an article by John entitled 'Ecole de Paris'; holograph description by John, with diagrams, of what appears to be a sea creature; press cuttings and other items concerning the exhibition 'Augustus John in Liverpool', held at the Walker Art Gallery Liverpool, in 1954; proofs and typescripts of articles by John entitled 'Elephants with Beards' (concerning Wyndham Lewis), 'Dylan Thomas & Company', and 'Roy Campbell under the Caryatids' [all included in *Finishing Touches* (London, 1964)]; and various miscellaneous items.

Nodiadau | Notes

Nodiadau teitl | Title notes

Ffynhonnell | Immediate source of acquisition

Friends of The National Library of Wales; Donation (purchased at Sotheby's, 20 July 1976); July 1976

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Nodiadau eraill | Other notes

- **Dynodwr sefydliad | Institution identifier:** Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru = The National Library of Wales

Pwyntiau mynediad | Access points

- John, Augustus, 1878-1961 -- Correspondence (pwnc) | (subject)