

MS56 Lewis Correspondence

About the collection:

A collection of 11 letters from C.S. Lewis to Captain Bernard Acworth. In the series of letters, written between 1944 and 1960, Lewis explains, in response to Acworth's views on the incompatibility of evolution and Christianity, his own views on the question of origins. The letters also contain references to some aspects of Lewis's private life, including his marriage and visits to Donegal.

These letters were donated to Queen's University Belfast by the Captain Bernard Acworth's son, the Rev. Dr. Richard Acworth in August 2012. Captain Acworth was founder of the Evolution Protest Movement in the 1930s and was dedicated to opposing the teaching of the theory of evolution as scientific fact. The letters were presented to Queen's on Monday 20th August in the C.S. Lewis Reading Room, in the University's McClay Library.

See also [Letter from C.S. Lewis to Anne Waller \(MS1/247\)](#) (in Miscellaneous Manuscripts, MS1). The letter contains an explanation of the "Narnia" series of children's novels.



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MS 56/1 Letter dated 23rd September 1944

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Lewis's answer to the question, "Do I agree that the theory of evolution, its truth or falsehood, is of fundamental importance to the Xtian faith?"

Manuscript. 3pp

MS 56/2 Letter dated 9th December 1944

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Thanks Acworth for his letter and restates that he neither defends nor attacks Evolution.

Typescript. 1p

MS56/3 Letter dated 26th February 1946

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Thanking Acworth for his letter.

Typescript. 1p

MS56/4 Letter dated 14th June 1950

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Lewis states he is too old to become a good enough Biologist to be able to argue against Darwinism.

Typescript. 1p

MS 56/5 Letter dated 13th September 1951

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Having read "Evolution" [Possibly Acworth's unpublished "The Lie of Evolution"], Lewis says his belief that the question of evolution is unimportant has been shaken. Also mentions a recent trip to Ireland.

Manuscript. 1p

MS 56/6 Letter dated 4th October 1951

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Lewis declines Acworth's request for him to write a preface, worried that it may discredit him.

Manuscript card. 1p

MS 56/7 Letter dated 11th September 1952

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Recommends that Acworth read "The hierarchy of Heaven and Hell" and speaks of a recent trip to Donegal.

Manuscript. 1p

MS 56/8 **Letter dated 16th December 1953**

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Refers (with some glee) to the discovery that the Piltdown Man has been revealed as a fake.

Manuscript. 2pp

MS 56/9 **Letter dated 20th December 1954**

Magdalen College, Oxford.

Lewis writes about his acceptance of the newly founded chair of Mediaeval and Renaissance

Literature; and news that an American girl has been expelled from her school for having a copy of "The Screwtape letters" in her possession.

Manuscript. 2pp

MS 56/10 **Letter dated 18th September 1959**

The Kilns, Headington Quarry, Oxford.

Expresses interest in Acworth's "young biologist". Also speaks of marrying his wife at her bedside.

Manuscript. 2pp

MS 56/11 **Letter dated 5th March 1960**

The Kilns, Headington Quarry, Oxford.

Lewis finds similarity between a theory of Acworth's and Milton's "Paradise Lost Book X" Also speaks of his wife's illness.

Manuscript. 2pp

Appendix 1

Index of Place Names

<u>Place Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Description</u>	
Donegal	MS56/7	Mentions recent trip to Donegal	p.3
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Oxford	MS56/1	Letterhead: Magdalen [College, Oxford]	p. 3
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