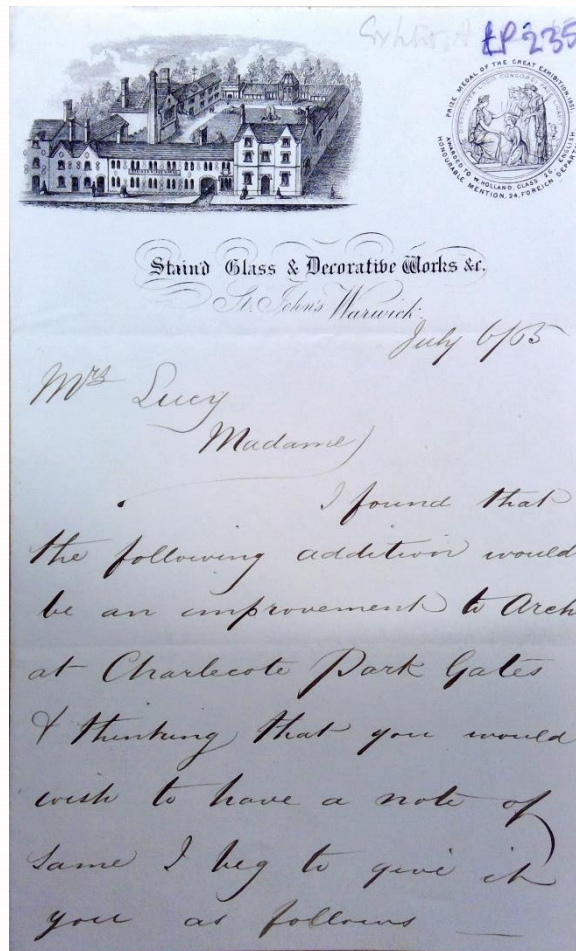


A letter from W. Holland, Glass Stainer, to Mrs Lucy of Charlecote

L06/1685/f235

April's Document of the Month is a letter from the Lucy Family of Charlecote collection. The letter is written from W. Holland, Glass Stainer, to Mrs Lucy regarding a proposed archway to be erected in celebration of her son's marriage¹.



A letter written from William Holland to Mrs Lucy of Charlecote, 6th July 1865,
L06/1685/f235

At the time of the letter, 1865, there were two 'Mrs Lucy' living at Charlecote Park. The first and elder 'Mrs Lucy' was Mary Elizabeth, who held the title of the Mistress of Charlecote from 1823 until her death in 1890. The second, was Christina (Tina) Lucy who married Mary Elizabeth's eldest son, Henry Spencer, in 1865.

¹ Document courtesy of Warwickshire County Record Office, L06/1685/f235

Mary Elizabeth became the Mistress of Charlecote in 1823 when she married George Hammond Lucy. The couple brought eight children into the world during their marriage, but sadly two died during childhood, Herbert Almeric and Edmund Davenport, and two more did not survive to their twenty fifth birthdays².

Henry Spencer, born 1830, was not destined to be the head of Charlecote at birth, being the fourth born child (second born male), but after the tragic death of his father in 1845 and then his older brother in 1848, he succeeded to the role at aged eighteen. Henry Spencer met Christina Campbell of Monzie, Perthshire in February 1865 at a dinner hosted at Charlecote. Little did everyone know that just a few months later, the pair would be married at St George's Church³.

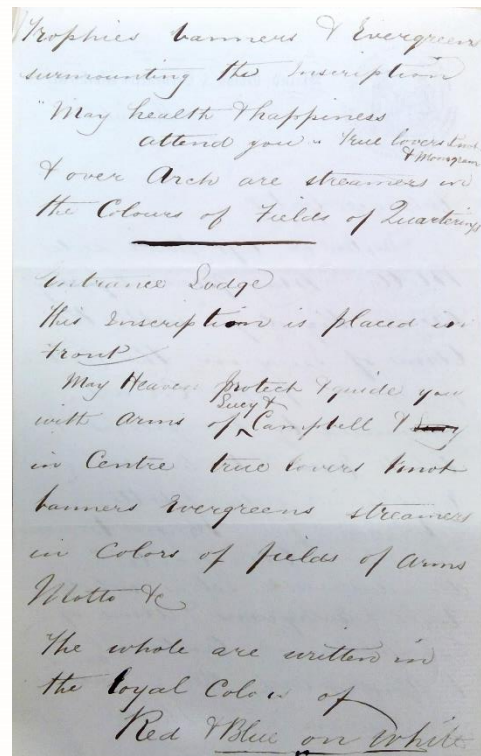
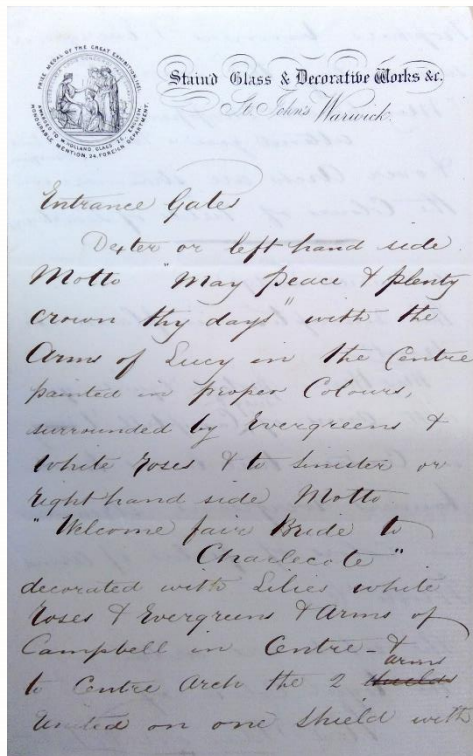
Henry Spencer and Christina had four daughters, meaning they left Charlecote with no male heir to the estate, and when Henry Spencer died in 1890, his eldest daughter had still not married. With no male heir to take on the upkeep of Charlecote, drastic measures had to be taken. During the later stages of her life, Mary Elizabeth had refused to leave Charlecote, and as a way of paying for the upkeep of the estate, her son began to sell his father's collection of paintings and artworks⁴. In 1890, Mary Elizabeth and Henry Spencer died within six months of one another. Christina, left in charge of the management of the estate, let go of most of the staff and servants at Charlecote and moved herself and her daughters into a rented property. Charlecote was rented out to strangers for eight years. Ada, Henry Spencer and Christina's eldest daughter, married in 1892 and Charlecote became hers by inheritance. Her husband was Henry Fairfax, and he took on a great burden with the marriage as he became responsible for turning Charlecote around and attempting to undo the financial damage left behind.

The letter from W. Holland came just days after the wedding of Henry Spencer and Christina Campbell, with the suggestion of 'improvements' to the entrance archway at Charlecote to celebrate the union. Holland details the archway, including monograms to be included and the types of flowers to be created surrounding them.

² Information gathered from The Memoirs of Mary Elizabeth Lucy, Mistress of Charlecote, introduced by Alice Lady Fairfax-Lucy

³ Information gathered from The Memoirs of Mary Elizabeth Lucy, Mistress of Charlecote, introduced by Alice Lady Fairfax-Lucy

⁴ Information gathered from <https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/533857> [Accessed on 30/03/2022]



W. Holland worked as a Glass Stainer in Warwick from 1832 until his retirement in 1873. He first established himself as a painter and plumber in 1830 and by 1847 he had built his business in a property on Old Mill Lane, better known now as Priory Road⁵.

By 1841, Holland's work was exhibited in the Court House in Warwick, and his work kept expanding. In 1847, the Warwickshire Advertiser printed "We cannot be surprised that his fame in this branch of the Arts is widely and daily extending"⁶ and true to the quote, Holland was creating Stained Glass for Halls, Churches and Houses all over the country. In 1851, the census shows that he has twenty six employees working for his business⁷.

In 1851, Holland displayed his stained glass in the Great Exhibition and his name can be found on page 705/706 of the programme⁸. After displaying at the Great Exhibition, Holland added 'Glass Stainer by Appointment to the Queen', and the

⁵ Information drawn from Warwickshire County Record Office, Reference Number: B.War.Boo (p)

⁶ Information from Warwickshire Advertiser 1847

⁷ Information gathered from Ancestry, 1851 Census [Accessed on 30/03/2022]

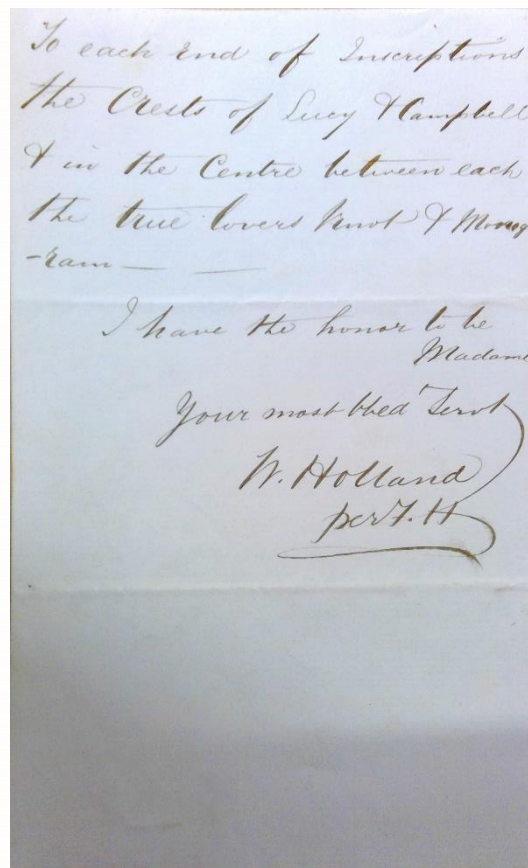
⁸ Information gathered from

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=kj6fz7beMrwC&pg=PA1004&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
[Accessed on 30/03/2022]

stamp of 'Prize Medal of the Great Exhibition' was printed on his business letter heading from then onwards.

William Holland retired in 1873 when the business was taken over by his son Thomas in association with his nephew Frank Holt. Holland sadly died in 1883⁹

The Entrance Gate that William Holland suggested was never taken on, with the entrance gates to Charlecote being erected by John Gibson in 1861¹⁰. These gates are now Grade II listed and stand at the end of the long drive towards the Charlecote Park.



⁹ Information gathered from Warwickshire County Record Office, Reference Number: B.War.Boo (p)

¹⁰ Information gathered from <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1381801?section=official-list-entry> [Accessed on 30/03/2022]