

ALFRED ORTON GERY

The photostat copies of the letters written by Alfred Gery whilst a boarder at Cowbridge Grammar School for Boys in the 1860s and 1870s, were sent to the School in 1967 by his daughter, Miss Dreda Orton Gery. She wrote:

"Dear Sir,

I am sending you the enclosed letters as I feel sure they are of historical interest to both you and other members of your community.

In turning out old letters I came across them and they caused me much amusement, though over 100 years old the schoolboy's letters home don't seem to have changed much. The usual request for stamps and pocket money. My father became a well known London solicitor, at some period was made a freeman of the City of London. He passed his Law finals before he was 21 which I gather was rather a feat. He later became High Sheriff of the County of Carmarthen where he had a large house and property. He died at the age of 62, had 4 children, 1 son and 3 daughters, of which I am the eldest and am in my 85 year. It seems a pity to throw these letters away, personally I find them most amusing, and the attitude of children to their parents is very different indeed isn't it?

If you would care to keep the letters please do, as I don't suppose I shall live much longer and the rest of the family have all passed on.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss) *Dreda Orton Gery*"

Cambridge  
Feb<sup>ry</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>

My dear Mama

I received your  
letter on Tuesday & was  
much pleased with the  
stamps; but to my horror  
& disgust this morning  
when we came down there was  
a notice that each boy was



to give half a crown to  
the subscription to the  
athletic sports which are  
to take place the Wednesday  
after Easter Sunday, & what  
do you think we will not  
come home until the Thursday  
after Good Friday at least  
so one of the South Term fellows  
told me, now don't you  
think that is too bad to  
be ~~here~~ here all Good Friday  
My cold is not a bit better & I  
have a nasty hacking

cough. I find that I have  
not enough stockings to have  
two changes a week write &  
tell me if I am to get some  
more if you send me any  
send the thickest wooden  
ones you can get as I think  
that is how I catch cold  
I have no more to say at  
present, give my love to  
all at home

I remain  
your affectionate Son  
Alfred

John Over

25 Cardiff Street.—  
to Verdare.—

June 6<sup>th</sup> 1866.

My dear Parents,

I hope you are very well  
and that you are expecting a letter from me.—

We are going to break up on the  
15<sup>th</sup> Inst<sup>ts</sup> for a month's holiday.—

I have been trying my best lately,  
and I hope you will be able to see

some improvement in me, as I wish to grow  
up, good, and useful. — — — —

M<sup>rs</sup> Jordan desires me to say  
that our school duties will be resum-  
-ed, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July. (D. V.). — — —

I am, — — — —

My dear Parents, — — —

Your dutiful & affectionate Son,

Alfred. Orton. Gery. — —



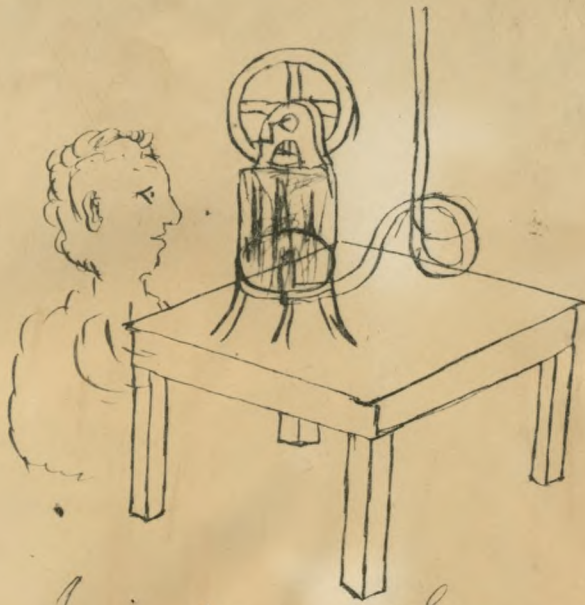
Cowbridge School

Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 1874

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Dear Mama

I suppose you are better now & I should have heard from you; We had great fun here on Thursday & Friday with the Cads who came down by <sup>the</sup> Cricket Field with a red flag & the whole of the School being Conservatives & set upon them



I and my Engine



Cambridge  
February 25<sup>th</sup> 1874

Dear Mama

I suppose you are quite well, but I have not been well at all I have a very bad cold on my chest & you know that thing on my eye, it has got much larger, I went to the Doctor with it on Tuesday & he said that the thing on my eye was nothing, but he ordered



me to take Port Wine at  
eleven o'clock every morning  
& Cod Liver Oil (I dont know  
if I have spelt Liver right) every  
evening. The Athletic Sports  
are to be on the Tuesday after  
Easter Sunday & I wish you  
would send me ~~your~~ my  
Subscription before Saturday  
I have \$no more to say at present  
give my love to all at home

I remain

Your affectionate Son  
Alfred



Cowbridge  
Sept 9 / 74

Dear Ma

I arrived here  
all safe to day, (Old  
Bung) that is Browne  
was at the station  
with the new master  
who was at the Charter  
House School

he is an old Frog  
I don't know his  
name, Hope you are  
better please forward  
my Desk (in the Lumber  
Room) & Thouse Love  
to every one please excuse  
bad writing as I am  
writing this with a  
pen I found on the  
floor I remain  
your affectionate Son  
Alfred





Dear Mama

Received your  
letter this morning  
and was glad of the  
stamps. I have just  
come back from St  
Mellans where we were  
confirmed. Coming  
home on Monday  
by the 8 o'clock Train  
Should like 10 bob

My love to all I  
cannot say more or  
I cannot catch post  
1000++ for you and  
dad

Remain

Your Affec Son

Alfred

---

P.S Write by return  
if you please



Cambridge  
Sept 17<sup>th</sup>

Dear Dad

I received your  
letter on Tuesday. I  
have not received my  
parcel yet, you did  
not say in your  
letter whether Aunt  
had gone or not



I am glad Ma  
continues better. You  
do not mention any  
news in your letters;  
it is not so dull  
now as it was. Tell  
Ma to tell Miss  
Pudham. (Superbus  
ahem) Jones that Price  
ma. is going mad  
after her. And young  
Martynne me

swear she will go to  
Aberdare and stop  
at the B.L. Hotel  
I have no more to say  
give my love to all  
answer this soon  
hope Ma continues  
the same 1000 x+x for  
you and her

I remain

Your affectionately

Alfred

Susan Edwards, BA, DAA  
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**Depositor:**  
Mrs Betty Alden  
Cowbridge History Society  
1 Mill Park  
Cowbridge  
CF71 7BG

**Intermediary:**  
None

Depositor Ref.: 11/2743

Intermediary Ref.: n/a

**The following records:**

Acc number: 2014/52      Reference: D1068

Title: Alfred Orton Gery, Cowbridge Grammar School, Papers

Description: Correspondence of Alfred Orton Gery and family

Covering dates: 1866-1980

Quantity: 1 bundle

Received as a: **Gift**

Access conditions: No restrictions.

Deposit date: 24 Mar 2014

Signed  ..... Glamorgan Archivist

I confirm that I am entitled to present the records described above to Glamorgan Archives. I have read the Glamorgan Archives *Terms of Deposit* and I agree to present the records under these terms.

Signed  ..... Date  .....

**Please sign a copy of this receipt and return it in the envelope provided.**

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## GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES/ARCHIFAU MORGANNWG

**Reference code:** GB 0214 D1068

**Title:** Alfred Orton Gery, Cowbridge Grammar School, Papers

**Dates :** 1866-1980

**Level of description:** Fonds

**Extent and medium:** 0.001 cubic metres (1 bundle)

**Name of creator(s):** Alfred Orton Gery

### **Administrative/biographical history**

Alfred Orton Gery was born in Teignmouth, Devon in 1859. While attending Cowbridge Grammar School his family lived at Cardiff Street, Aberdare where his father, Robert worked as a Solicitor's Managing Clerk. Alfred became an Articled Clerk by the age of 22 and subsequently worked as a London Solicitor. He was made a Freeman of the City of London in 1899 and served as the High Sheriff of Carmarthenshire during 1910. He married and had four children. Alfred Gery died 1920.

### **Archival history**

The letters were sent to Cowbridge Grammar School by a daughter of Alfred Orton Gery in 1976 and subsequently displayed at the School Museum. When the School moved to new premises the records were passed to the Cowbridge History Society.

### **Immediate source of acquisition**

Donated by Betty Alden of Cowbridge History Society, March 2014

### **Scope and content**

Correspondence of Alfred Orton Gery and family

### **Appraisal, destruction and scheduling information**

All records which meet the collection policy of Glamorgan Archives have been retained.

### **Accruals**

Accruals are possible

### **System of arrangement**

Chronological within record series.

### **Conditions governing access**

No restrictions.

### **Conditions governing reproduction**

Normal Glamorgan Archives conditions apply.

**Language/scripts of material**

English

**Physical characteristics and technical requirements**

Fair condition

**Finding aids**

A detailed catalogue is available online

**Existence and location of originals**

Not applicable

**Existence and location of copies**

Not applicable

**Related units of description**

Not applicable

**Publication note**

Not applicable

**Note**

Not applicable

**Archivist's note**

Compiled by H Thomas for Glamorgan Archives

**Rules or conventions**

This description follows Glamorgan Archives guidelines based on ISAD(G) compatible cataloguing guidelines for fonds level descriptions used by the Archives Network Wales.

**Date of description**

2 Apr 2014

D1068/1

Letters from Alfred Orton Gery to his  
parents

1866-1874

D1068/1/1

Letter to his parents sent from Cardiff Street,  
Aberdare  
[1 paper]  
25 Cardiff Street  
Aberdare  
June 6th 1866

6 Jun 1866

My dear Parents

I hope you are very well and that you are  
expecting a letter from me.

We are going to break up on the 15th Inst. for a  
month's holiday.

I have been trying my best lately, and I hope  
you will be able to see some improvement in  
me, as I wish to grow up, good and useful.

Mrs Jordan desires me to say that our school  
duties will be resumed on the 17th of  
July.(D.V.)

I am

My dear Parents

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,  
Alfred Orton Gery

D1068/1/2

Letter to his mother sent from Cowbridge  
School  
[1 paper]  
Cowbridge School  
Febry 16th 1874

16 Feb 1874

Dear Mama

I suppose you are better now or I should have  
heard from you. We had great fun here on  
Thursday and Friday with the Cads who came  
down by the Cricket Field with a red Flag and  
the whole of the School being Conservatives  
set upon them and took the Flag from them and  
trampled it in the mud, but another rabble  
joining them made them too strong for us so we



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were obliged to cut but only a little way, for more fellows joined us and we chased them all into the town, I should very much like 6d [pence] a week but should like some cash better as I am short now for I had to give two shillings for footing with all the rest of the new boys and then they bought something for tea and shared it all between us I have a bad cold lingering about me but I think it is going away now. I have no more to say at present so good by now my love to all at home

I remain

Your affectionate Son  
Alfred

D1068/1/3

Letter to his mother from Cowbridge  
[2 papers]  
Cowbridge  
Febry 20th

20 Feb [1874]

My dear Mama

I received your letter on Tuesday and was much pleased with the stamps, but to my horror and disgust this morning when we came down the [sic] was a notice that each boy was to give half a crown to the subscription to the athletic sports which are to take place the Wednesday after Easter Sunday, and what do you think we will not come home until the Tuesday [sic] after Good Friday at least and one of the Sixth Form fellows told me, now don't you think that is too bad to be here all Good Friday My cold is not a bit better and I have a nasty hacking cough. I find that I have not enough stockings to have two changes a week write and tell me if I am to get some more if you send me any send the thickest woolen ones you can get as I think that is how I catch cold I have no more to say at present, give my love to all at home

I remain  
Your affectionate Son  
Alfred

Turn over

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Sketch on reverse entitled 'I and my Engine'

Envelope addressed

Mrs Gery  
26 Cardiff Street  
Aberdare

D1068/1/4

Letter to his mother from Cowbridge  
[1 paper]  
Cowbridge  
February 25th 1874

25 Feb 1874

Dear Mama

I suppose you are quite well, but I have not been well at all I have a very bad cold on my chest and you know that thing on my eye, it has got much larger, I went to the Doctor with it on Tuesday and he said that the thing on my eye was nothing, but he ordered me to take Port Wine at eleven o'clock every morning and Cod Liver Oil (I don't know if I have spelt Liver right) every evening. The Athletic Sports are to be on the Tuesday after Easter Sunday and I wish you would send me my subscription before Saturday I have no more to say at present give my love to all at home

I remain  
Your affectionate Son  
Alfred

D1068/1/5

Letter to his mother from Cowbridge School  
[1 paper]  
Cowbridge  
Sept 9/74

9 Sep 1874

Dear Ma

I arrived here all safe today, (Old Bung) that is Browne was at the station with the new master who was at the Charter House School he is an old dog I don't know his name. Hope you are better please forward my desk (in the Lumber Room) and Sponge Love to every one Please

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excuse bad writing as I am writing this with a pen I found on the floor

I remain  
Your affectionate Son  
Alfred

Letter written on 'Cowbridge School' headed paper

D1068/1/6

Letter to his father from Cowbridge School  
[1 paper]  
Cowbridge  
Sept 17th

17 Sep [1874]

Dear Dad

I received your letter on Tuesday I have not received my parcel yet, you did not say in your letter wether [sic] Aunt had gone or not I am glad Ma continues better. You do not mention any news in your letters, it is not so dull now as it was. Tell Ma to tell Mrs Pridham (Superbus ahem) Jones that Price Ma is going mad after her. And young Martynne mi [sic] swears he will go to Aberdare and stop at the BL Hotel I have no more to say give my love to all answer this soon hope Ma continues the same 1000 xxx for you and her

I remain  
Your affectionately  
Alfred

Letter written on 'Cowbridge School' headed paper

D1068/1/7

Letter to his mother from Cowbridge School  
[1 paper]  
Dear Mama

[1874]

Received you letter this morning and was glad of the stamps. I have just come back from St Mellans [sic] were [sic] we were confirmed. Coming home on Monday by the 8 o'clock Staff should like 10 bob My love to all I cannot say



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more or I can not catch post 1000 xxx for you  
and dad

I remain  
Your affec Son  
Alfred

P.S Write by return if you please

Letter written on 'Cowbridge School' headed  
paper

D1068/2

Other correspondence

1967 [1976]-  
1980

D1068/2/1

Dreda Orton Gery, Forester Road, Bath to  
unnamed recipient  
[1 paper]

11 July 1967  
[1976]

Dreda Orton Gery was the eldest child of  
Alfred. The letter is presumably written to  
Cowbridge School with the offer of letters  
written by her father while attending Cowbridge  
School [D1068/1/1-7]. The letter includes a  
brief outline of her father's career. It is likely this  
letter was written during 1976 rather than 1967  
as marked since Dreda gives her age as 85  
years which corresponds with her birth year of  
1891. In his letter to Dreda Mr James indicates  
the School received the letters in 1976  
[D1068/2/2]

D1068/2/2

G James, Headmaster, Cowbridge School, to D  
Gery, Forester Road, Bath  
[1 paper]

11 Feb 1980

G James states the letters sent by D Gery  
regarding her father's time at the School are to  
be placed in the School Museum.

D1068/2/3

M O Gery, Bath Road, Reading to Mr James  
[Cowbridge School]  
[1 paper]  
M O Gery thanks Mr James for his letter to her

27 Feb 1980

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sister [D1068/2] and informs him of her recent death