



**Cymorth chwilio | Finding Aid - Tristan de Vere Cole (Augustus John)  
manuscripts (GB 0210 MSTRISTDEVERE)**

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# Tristan de Vere Cole (Augustus John) manuscripts

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## Crynodeb o wybodaeth | Summary of information

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|---|---|
| <b>Lleoliad   Repository:</b>   | Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru = The National Library of Wales  |
| <b>Teitl   Title:</b>   | Tristan de Vere Cole (Augustus John) manuscripts  |
| <b>Cod cyfeirnod   Reference code:</b>  | GB 0210 MSTRISTDEVERE   |
| <b>Virtua system control number [alternative]:</b>                                | vtls006040768   |
| <b>Dyddiad   Date:</b>  | [?1912]-2017 (mostly [?1912]-1969) (dyddiad creu   date of creation)  |
| <b>Disgrifiad ffisegol   Physical description:</b>                                | 4 volumes.  |
| <b>Iaith   Language:</b>  | English   |
| <b>Iaith   Language:</b>  | French  |
| <b>Iaith   Language:</b>  | Romany  |
| <b>Dyddiadau creu, golygu a dileu   Dates of creation, revision and deletion:</b> | December 2010.  |
| <b>Nodyn   Note [sourcesDescription]:</b>   | The following sources were used in the compilation of this description: Michael Holroyd, Augustus John: The New Biography (London, 1997); Roderic Owen with Tristan de Vere Cole, Beautiful and Beloved: The Life of Mavis de Vere Cole (London, 1974); Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan, Augustus John Papers at the National Library of Wales (Aberystwyth, 1996); Michael Holroyd, 'John, Augustus Edwin (1878-1961)', in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford, May 2006 < <a href="http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34196">http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34196</a> > [accessed 9 December 2010]. |
| <b>Nodyn   Note [generalNote]:</b>  | Title based on contents of fonds.   |

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## **Hanes gweinyddol / Braslun bywgraffyddol | Administrative history | Biographical sketch**

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### **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.

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## **Hanes gweinyddol / Braslun bywgraffyddol | Administrative history | Biographical sketch**

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### **Nodyn | Note**

Mavis Wright (1908-1970) first met the artist Augustus John in 1928. She married his friend Horace de Vere Cole (1881-1936) in 1931 but continued to model for John and became his mistress. On 16 March 1935 she gave birth to Tristan de Vere Cole, who was most likely John's son. In 1939 Mavis married the archaeologist Mortimer Wheeler (1890-1976), divorcing in 1943. In July 1954 she was arrested, having apparently shot and seriously wounded her then lover Tony Vivian, 5th Baron Vivian. She served a six-month prison sentence for unlawful and malicious wounding. She died on 14 October 1970.

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## **Hanes gweinyddol / Braslun bywgraffyddol | Administrative history | Biographical sketch**

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### **Nodyn | Note**

Tristan de Vere Cole was born on 16 March 1935, the son of Mavis de Vere Cole (1908-1970) and, most likely, Augustus John. He was brought up partly by his mother and partly by Augustus and Dorelia McNeill at their home Fryern Court. After attending boarding school Tristan served in the Navy, 1951-1960, and later became a drama director for the BBC. He married Diana Crosby Cook in 1962.

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## **Hanes gweinyddol / Braslun bywgraffyddol | Administrative history | Biographical sketch**

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### **Nodyn | Note**

Augustus Edwin John (1878-1961), artist, was born in Tenby, Pembrokeshire, and became a leading British portrait painter. In 1901 he married Ida Nettleship (1877-1907) and they had five children, the last being Henry John (1907-1935). In 1902 he met Dorothy (Dorelia or Dodo) McNeill (1881-1969) who became his mistress and, following Ida's death, his common-law wife. They had a further four children, including Romilly (1906-1986) and Poppet (1912-1997), and settled at Alderney Manor, Dorset, and from 1927 at Fryern Court, Fordingbridge, Hampshire. Augustus died there on 31 October 1961 and Dorelia on 24 July 1969.

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## **Natur a chynnwys | Scope and content**

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Letters and related papers of Augustus John and Dorelia McNeill, [?1912]-2017 (mostly [?1912]-1969), sent to, or collected by, Tristan de Vere Cole. The collection includes letters of Augustus John to Mavis de Vere Cole, 1934-1959, and to her son Tristan de Vere Cole, [1947]-1961, together with letters of Dorelia McNeill to Mavis de Vere Cole, [?1949]-1961, and to Tristan de Vere Cole, 1951-1968. Also included are letters addressed to, or sent by, Augustus and Dorelia John and other members of their family, [?1912]-1969, including several from Michael Holroyd, 1966-1969, together with miscellaneous items, 1928-[?1961], in the hand of Augustus John.

## Nodiadau | Notes

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### Nodiadau teitl | Title notes

### Ffynhonnell | Immediate source of acquisition

Tristan de Vere Cole; Newbury; Purchase; September 2010; 006040768.

NLW MS 24010D, f. 88: Ms Lucilla van den Bogaerde (per Tristan de Vere Cole); Winchester; Donation; December 2017; 9937427502419.

### Trefniant | Arrangement

Arranged according to NLW MSS reference numbers: NLW MSS 24007-10.

### Cyfngiadau ar fynediad | Restrictions on access

Readers consulting modern papers in the National Library of Wales are required to abide by the conditions noted on the 'Modern papers - data protection' form issued with their Readers' Tickets.

### Amodau rheoli defnydd | Conditions governing use

Usual copyright laws apply. Information regarding the ownership of Augustus John copyright can be found at <http://tyler.hrc.utexas.edu/> (viewed December 2010).

### Disgrifiadau deunydd | Related material

For other papers relating to Augustus John at NLW see also NLW, Augustus John Papers; NLW, Michael Holroyd (Augustus John) Research Papers; NLW MSS 23851-6; and NLW ex 1237, 2293-7.

### Nodiadau eraill | Other notes

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

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## Pwyntiau mynediad | Access points

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- John, Augustus, 1878-1961 -- Correspondence (pwnc) | (subject)
- De Vere Cole, Tristan, 1935- -- Correspondence (pwnc) | (subject)
- McNeill, Dorelia, 1881-1969 -- Correspondence. (pwnc) | (subject)
- Wheeler, Mavis, 1908-1970 -- Correspondence (pwnc) | (subject)

## Llyfryddiaeth | Bibliography

Roderic Owen with Tristan de Vere Cole, Beautiful and Beloved: The Life of Mavis de Vere Cole (London, 1974)

## Disgrifiad cyfres | Series descriptions

| Cod cyfeirnod   Reference code  | Teitl   Title   | Dyddiadau   Dates | Disgrifiad ffisegol   Physical description                  |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| NLW MS 24007E.<br>vtls006050999 | <b>File - Augustus John letters to Mavis de Vere Cole</b><br><br><i>Natur a chynnwys / Scope and content:</i><br><p>One hundred and thirteen letters, cards and telegrams, 1934-1959, from Augustus John to Mavis de Vere Cole (later Mavis Wheeler). They contain personal and family news, including news of their son Tristan, letters of a more intimate nature, instructions regarding paintings and a few letters to Mavis in prison in 1954. The letters are sent from various locations including his home, Fryern Court, various studios in London and from Provence and Jamaica. Also included are letters from John to A. P. Herbert, 10 September 1954 (f. 132), and to Tony Vivian, September-October 1954 (ff. 133-135), all relating to Mavis' trial. There are sketches by John on ff. 91 verso, 92, and 116 verso, and poems by him on ff. 4, 95-98.</p> <i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i><br><p>Title based on contents.</p> <i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i><br><p>A Pathé film about John, also featuring Mavis and Tristan, which is referred to by him in a contemporaneous letter (f. 90), may be viewed online at <a href="http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=47240">http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=47240</a>.</p> <i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i><br><p>Preferred citation: NLW MS 24007E.</p> <i>Lleoliad ffisegol / Physical location:</i><br><p>ARCH/MSS (GB0210)</p> | 1934-1959         | 135 ff. Placed in melinex sleeves within ringed box at NLW. |
| NLW MS 24008D.<br>vtls006054111 | <b>File - Augustus John letters to Tristan de Vere Cole</b><br><br><i>Natur a chynnwys / Scope and content:</i><br><p>Forty-five letters and cards, [1947]-1961, from Augustus John to Tristan de Vere Cole containing personal and family news, career advice and news of his mother Mavis. Also included is a leaflet for an anti-nuclear rally, 1961 (f. 46). A single letter (f. 31 recto-verso) contains comments in the hand of Mavis Wheeler.</p> <i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i><br><p>Title based on contents.</p> <i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i><br><p>Folio 7a was donated to NLW by Tristan de Vere Cole in January 2012 and added to the manuscript.</p> <i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i>   | [1947]-1961       | 49 ff. Placed in melinex sleeves within ringed box at NLW.  |

|                                 |  |                                     |  |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
|                                 | <p>Preferred citation: NLW MS 24008D.</p> <p><i>Lleoliad ffisegol / Physical location:</i></p> <p>ARCH/MSS (GB0210)</p>  |                                     |  |
| NLW MS 24009D.<br>vtls006056238 | <p><b>File - Dorelia McNeill letters to Tristan de Vere Cole</b></p> <p><i>Crëwr / Creator:</i></p> <p>McNeill, Dorelia, 1881-1969</p> <p><i>Natur a chynnwys / Scope and content:</i></p> <p>Sixty-eight letters and postcards, [1947]-1968, from Dorelia McNeill, mainly addressed to Tristan de Vere Cole, and mostly containing personal and family news. They include six letters to Mavis de Vere Cole, [1949]-1961 (ff. 1-6), and fifty-seven to Tristan, 1951-1968 (ff. 8-76), eight of the later ones being addressed jointly to Tristan and his wife, Diana (ff. 55, 58, 61-62, 65, 67, 70-71). There are also three addressed to Diana alone, 1965-1968 (ff. 59, 72, 74) and one postcard, [1966], to their daughter (f. 66). Also included is a single letter from Tristan to Dorelia, [1947] (f. 7).</p> <p><i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i></p> <p>Title based on contents.</p> <p><i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i></p> <p>Preferred citation: NLW MS 24009D.</p> <p><i>Lleoliad ffisegol / Physical location:</i></p> <p>ARCH/MSS (GB0210)</p>  | [1947]-1968                         | 76 ff. Placed in melinex sleeves within ringed box at NLW. |
| NLW MS 24010D.<br>vtls006056309 | <p><b>File - Miscellaneous letters</b></p> <p><i>Natur a chynnwys / Scope and content:</i></p> <p>Miscellaneous letters, [1912]-2017 (mostly [1912]-1969), collected by Tristan de Vere Cole, relating mostly to the John family. They include letters from Augustus John to Horace de Vere Cole, November 1927 (ff. 1-3), and Poppet John, [29 November 1928] (f. 4, beginning lost, sent from Boston, Massachusetts); letters to Augustus John from Arthur Symons, [1912] (ff. 6-7), Francis Macnamara, [1915] (ff. 8-23, incomplete), the Duke of Alba, 3 January 1945 (f. 30, partly in Caló), Jan [Sliwinski], 12 June 1945 (f. 31), and Genevieve [Banchet], [1940s] (f. 33, French); letters to Dorelia McNeill from Lytton Strachey, 12 March [1912x1916], 10 May 1918 (ff. 41-42), Michael Holroyd, 1966-1969 (ff. 43, 45-63), and Juliette [de Bairaclí Levy], 19 December 1967 (f. 44); letters from Henry John to Poppet John, [1927] (ff. 64-71), Romilly John to Dr [Aubrey Thomas] Westlake, 31 January 1964 (f. 73), Michael Holroyd to Tristan de Vere Cole (ff. 74-75, 77), Mavis de Vere Cole (f. 76), and Romilly John (f. 78), 1968-1969, and Meg O'Malley to [Oskar] Kokoschka, 2 February 1939 (f. 72). Also included are miscellaneous items, 1928-[1961], in the hand of Augustus John (ff. 34-40), including poetry in English, 1928, and French, [1940s] (ff. 34-35); a photocopy of the Nettleship family tree (ff. 79-80); a photocopy, [2000s], of a photograph published in Nova, February 1970, pp. 36-37, showing members of the John family and others (c. 1928) (ff. 81-84); cuttings, [1992], 2008, relating to Oskar Kokoschka (ff. 85-87, see also f. 72; and an anecdote regarding Augustus John, written by Lucilla van den Bogaerde, dated 12 December 2017 (f. 88).</p> <p><i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i></p> <p>Title based on contents.</p> <p><i>Nodyn / Note [generalNote]:</i></p> <p>Preferred citation: NLW MS 24010D.</p> <p><i>Lleoliad ffisegol / Physical location:</i></p> | [1912]-2017<br>(mostly [1912]-1969) | 88 ff. Placed in melinex sleeves within ringed box at NLW. |



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|--|-------------------|
|  | ARCH/MSS (GB0210) |
|--|-------------------|