

UNIV ONLINE CATALOGUES

UC:S8 Papers of Ezreel (or Israel) Tonge (Fellow 1648-c. 1652)

Ezreel (or Israel) Tonge is now best known as one of the leading players in the notorious “Popish Plot” of the late 1670s. He came from Holtby, Yorks., and matriculated at University College in 1639 aged 17. During the Civil War, he went to Chipping Norton, Oxon., to be a schoolmaster there, but returned to the College in 1648, as one of the new intake of Puritan Fellows thought acceptable to the Parliamentary Visitors.

Tonge was Bursar of the College in 1649/50-1650/1, and almost all the papers concerning him in the College archives concern this episode, as he found himself in very considerable financial difficulties at the end of his year. Not only were there considerable debts owing to the College, but there were even rumours of his selling off College furniture (see **UC:S8/C1/3** below). His vacation of his Fellowship in 1651 may be linked to this affair. Despite this, it seems that he campaigned fairly vigorously, to the dismay of the Fellows, to replace Joshua Hoyle as Master in 1654, but in the end was unsuccessful (see Robin Darwall-Smith, *A History of University College, Oxford* (Oxford, 2008), pp.174–6). From 1657-1660 he was a Fellow of the short-lived Durham College, and was then Chaplain at Dunkirk and Vicar of Leintwardine, Hereford. In 1666, he was Rector of St. Mary Stayning, London, but after his church was lost in the Great Fire, he went off to become chaplain to the garrison at Tangier for two years. On his return, he became Rector of Aston, Hereford in 1672-1677).

By now, Tonge had become fanatically anti-Catholic, to the point of near-insanity, and in the late 1670s he joined forces with Titus Oates to become a prime mover in the Popish Plot. John Kenyon’s *The Popish Plot* (London 1972) gives a good account of Tonge’s role in it. Tonge died in December 1680

The papers concerning Tonge in the College Archives, however, contain nothing on this last, and most notorious phase in his career, but mostly, as said above, concern the financial irregularities of his Bursarship almost thirty years before. There are also some letters from Tonge to Richard Clayton and Obadiah Walker.

Catalogued in October 1996.

UC:S8/F1 - TONGE'S FINANCIAL PAPERS

UC:S8/F1/1

1651

Exoneratio of Ezrell Tonge as Bursar for Thomas Jennings; rough notes of arrears and revenues, with note of its being exhibited on 1 Sep 1651 to Edmund Staunton and Gerard Langbaine.

UC:S8/F1/2

n.d. (c.1651?)

Note by Tonge of stipends to be paid to the Fellows of University College.

UC:S8/F1/3

1651

List of money as “ought to have been payd by Mr Tonge on his Bursarshipp wch he left undischargd by reason of ye sequestration of 280 li 09s 00 de ob wch was putt over to Mr Geninges”.

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UC:S8 Papers of Ezreel (or Israel) Tonge (Fellow 1648-c. 1652)**UC:S8/F1/4****22 Mar 1651/2**

List of "Exceptions agst Mr Ezrell Tongs accompts of his bursarship for ye yeare last past.."; i.e. a list of things found wrong with his account.

UC:S8/F1/5**21 Jul 1652**

"A note of ye Arrears due to Dr. Hoyle from Ezreell Tonge bursar of universitie Coll; Oxon in ye year 1650 And of all due to him in dyett & wages from Thom: Gennings bursar of ye sd Colledge for ye first hald of ye yeare 1651", with notes of what has since been paid him, and what remains unpaid.

UC:S8/MS1 - NOTES CONCERNING TONGE'S FINANCES**UC:S8/MS1/1****1 Sep 1651**

Minutes of a meeting of the Pro-Vicechancellor and Proproctors of the University, at which arrangements are made for the repayment of the debts of Ezreel Tonge and Mr. Norton (in their capacity as Bursars).

UC:S8/MS1/2**1 Sep 1651**

A second copy of the above document.

UC:S8/L1 - BONDS CONCERNING TONGE**UC:S8/L1/1****19 Sep 1651***Bond**Parties:*

1. Ezreel Tonge of University College, Oxford, M.A.
2. The Master and Fellows of University College, Oxford.

Comments: 1 is bound to 2 to pay them the moneys mentioned in his accounts, and which he has not yet paid to them.

UC:S8/L1/2**19 Sep 1651**

Parties: Both as in L1/1 above.

Comments: This appears to be another version of L1/1, slightly differently worded.

UC:S8/C1 - LETTERS FROM TONGE CONCERNING HIS FINANCES**UC:S8/C1/1****26 Oct 1652**

Letter from Ezreel Tonge to the Master and Fellows of University College, concerning money which he thinks is owed to him by the College, or which he no longer owes them.

UC:S8/C1/2**17 Dec 1652**

Letter from Ezreel Tonge to Thomas Thorneton, Fellow of University College, about his money problems. Smith says of it: "Ezrell Tonge letter full of reflections upon ye Colleges dealings with him particularly upon Mr. Jennings & [illegible]".

UC:S8/C1/3**n.d. (c.1652/3?)**

Letter from Ezreel Tonge to Messrs Terry, Eyton and Thorneton, Fellows of

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University College (n.d.), defending himself against various charges made against him, including selling off College furniture.

UC:S8/C1/4**n.d. (c.1652/3?)**

Letter from Ezreel Tonge to Mr. Terry; Smith says of it: "Ezreel Tonge answers to Mr Terry inveying [= inveighing] agst ye Colleges hard dealing to him, and giving an account of journeys undertook on yr behalfe & charges ye with a reflection on Mr Tho Thorntons Queries".

UC:S8/C1/5**13 Oct 1653**

Letter from Ezreel Tonge to the Bursar of University College, writing from London, concerning money owed by a Mr. Clarke, which Tonge may find himself liable to pay.

UC:S8/C1/6**24 Oct 1653**

Memorandum signed by Tonge (and witnessed by Joshua Hoyle), that a claim on some money owed him for the Dean's stipend is to be referred to higher authority.

UC:S8/C1/7 19 Jun 1657

Paper which on one side has Tonge appoint William Squire as attorney to receive £6 from the Master and Fellows of University College, and on the other has a declaration on where a sum of £18 was to be spent.

UC:S8/C2 - LATER LETTERS FROM TONGE**UC:S8/C2/1 27 Jun 1668(?)**

Letter from Ezreel Tonge to Obadiah Walker from Sissinghurst (the year is obscured; Smith suggested 1668), enclosing two volumes of a Chronology by a Dr. Simson, and completed by Tonge, with discussions on how to print them. Tonge also asks Walker to use his influence with the Archbishop of Canterbury to find him a parish nearer Oxford.

UC:S8/C2/2 22 Aug 1670

Letter from Ezreel Tonge to Richard Clayton (then Master of University College), concerning a gift of money made by Tonge to the College, and asking that Tonge may help Clayton in work on his chronology.