

# Burney Letter

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## Burney Returns to Windsor: Conference a Success

By David and Janet Tregear



Flora Fraser unveiling the plaque, on the site of Mrs. Delany's house..

Early birds arrived at the Castle before or about lunchtime on Thursday. Security loomed large on arrival; armed policemen stopped everyone at the gate to check with St. George's House by phone, that each person was expected. Then a short walk past St. George's Chapel (under re-furbishment) and all arrived at St. George's House, a comfortable three-storey house with cosy, rather than imposing, rooms. There we were given security badges (incorporating photos) that would save time when entering or going out of the Castle. Several attendees then bought tickets for a tour of the State Apartments. A brief line of waiting tourists was joined; in everyone's hand was audio equipment, to guide around the public rooms. The tour took about two hours, because it was possible to amble, inspect closely and generally try to recall school history to match the multitude of exhibits.

A visit to the Chertsey Museum (pre-arranged by Hester Davenport) that evening brought us all more into focus, when the original costumes from the eighteenth century were seen in their undimmed colours. The Tailor of Gloucester could have stitched no better. The social life of the gathering got well under way at the evening meal at ASK restaurant in Chertsey, with return to Windsor just before midnight, passing the Magna Carta and Kennedy Memorials en route at Runnymede.

On Friday, after a welcome from Kate Chisholm (the genius responsible for organising the panoply of speakers) and the first paper, it was time to stray for a moment outside the Vicars' Hall, to admire the changing of the Guards, resplendent in their scarlet uniforms, after their march through the town to the Castle.

See Success at Windsor on p. 2

## Meeting in Vancouver October 2007

By Paula Stepankowsky

Frances Burney's relations with the women writers who were her "foremothers" will be the topic of a talk by Betty A. Schellenberg, Professor of English at Simon Fraser University, at the annual general meeting of The Burney Society in North America.

The brunch meeting will be held Friday, Oct. 5, at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, 900 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, B.C. The meeting will begin with registration at 9:30 a.m., followed by the brunch and meeting at 10 a.m.

Prof. Schellenberg is a specialist in eighteenth-century studies who received her training at the University of Winnipeg (BEd, BAHons) and the University of

Ottawa (MA, PhD). Some of her recent publications are *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, 2005), *Reconsidering the Bluestockings* (Huntington Library, 2003, co-edited with Nicole Pohl), and *Part Two: Reflections on the Sequel* (Toronto, 1998, with Paul Budra).

Her current research focuses on mid-eighteenth-century print culture, women's writing, Samuel Richardson, and travel writing. She teaches and supervise students in all aspects of eighteenth-century literary life.

The cost of the Burney Society brunch and meeting is \$45 (U.S.) per person. The price includes the talk, the meeting, the meal, tax and gratuities.

Paid-up Burney Society members have been sent a separate registration form for the meeting. If you did not receive the form and would like to register, please send \$45 in the form of a check payable to the Burney Society to: Dr. Alex Pitofsky, Treasurer, The Burney Society, 3621 - 9th St. Drive N.E., Hickory, NC, 28601

The Burney Society meeting will be held directly before the beginning of the Jane Austen Society of North America annual conference on Friday afternoon, which is also being held at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. For information about the JASNA conference, as well as booking hotel rooms, go to [www.JASNA.org](http://www.JASNA.org).

See Tucson Conference 2007 on p. 2

**INSIDE:** Windsor Conference, pp. 1-2  
Burney in Surrey, pp. 3-4  
Plaque Unveiling, p. 6  
Journey to Devon, pp. 6-9

Woman-Hater Premiere, p. 2  
UK AGM Minutes, p. 4  
Runaway Marriage, p. 6  
Bluestocking Archive, p. 10

Coin Discovery, p. 10  
First Impressions, p. 11  
Review of George III, p. 12  
Future Meetings, p. 9, p. 14

## Success at Windsor

### Continued from p. 1

Following another presentation, after lunch we all gathered in St Albans Street, just outside the Castle Walls, for the unveiling of the plaque to Mary Delany and FB, with happy words from Flora Fraser, our unveiler, author of the biography of George III's six daughters, *Princesses*. First, though, Hester Davenport welcomed the assembled crowd of Burneyites and Windsorians, and especially Ruth Hayden, collateral descendant of Mrs Delany. Hester talked briefly of the two women we were honouring and their friendship, helped by Karin Fernald who read extracts from their letters. Paula Stepankowsky, our President, then spoke about the Burney Society and introduced Flora. The wind gusting around, despite a fine afternoon, almost exposed the plaque beforehand, and hid it again afterwards. But all enjoyed the sparkling elderflower cordial, strawberries and home-made shortbread biscuits, stamped with the profile of George III, with which the ceremony was concluded.

Then, some went to St. George's Chapel for a sung Evensong—fine music even with no organ (under repair). More instrumental music, performed by the Café Mozart Trio from a range of eighteenth-century composers from Abel to Haydn accompanied the dinner. We also enjoyed well-dramatised excerpts from FB's letters to Samuel Crisp about temperamental Divas, brought to life by Karin Fernald. Last notes of musical offerings were given in the Chapel, including a trio by Charles Burney and a sonata by Charles Rousseau Burney played on his keyboard by Andrew Carter the Warden. Andrew Carter then led a tour around the Chapel, recounting many historical anecdotes.

The central business of the conference, presenting the work of the Court Editors took up most of Saturday. For those still on their feet, Hester led a most interesting walk around the town, culminating in a view of the Long Walk from the George IV gates. It was said that some of the more active attenders had jogged the entire 2 ½ miles of this "walk!" Following the reception for the *Cambridge Companion* to FB, a party of

30 found themselves at table in a hostelry (tried and tested by Hester) dated on its façade 1425, for supper.

Although that was the formal end of the Conference, sixteen enthusiasts joined a coach trip on Sunday around the parts of Surrey best known to FB, expertly guided by Barry Moughton (Lord of the Manor of Westhumble) (see Burney Locations p. 3 ).



*Mickleham Church in which FB was married.*

## The Woman-Hater Premieres at Orange Tree Theatre

Frances Burney's sparkling comedy, *The Woman-Hater* will have its world premiere in a professional theatre. The show runs from Wednesday 19 December 2007 through to Saturday 2 February 2008 at the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond, UK. The presentation will also feature post-show discussions after the matinee performances on the Thursdays, and also after the evening performance on Friday 25 January. Bookings opened on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

The Orange Tree Theatre opened in 1971 in the upstairs room above a pub near Richmond Station. It was part of the "alternative" theatre explosion that blossomed in London in the 60s and 70s. The theatre, founded by Sam Walters as Artistic Director, developed

over the next twenty years and moved to a new venue just across the road from the pub. In February 1991, it opened again in a building that had been a school. It was England's only full-time professional theatre in the round.

The policy of staging new plays, re-discoveries and other experimental work has continued. The Orange Tree is now one of the most highly respected off-West-End theatres in London. It has been referred to as, "A pocket sized National Theatre" (by Michael Billington, writing in *The Guardian*.) Its staging of Burney's poignant comedy about misogyny and coming to terms with the past is sure to be worth seeing.

For online booking, visit the website of the orange theatre at [www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk](http://www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk) or tickets may be reserved by phone at 020 8940 3633.

### Burney Letter

The semi-annual newsletter of the Burney Society, which includes members in Canada, Great Britain, the United States and elsewhere.

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Membership in The Burney Society is available for \$30 (Students \$15) US annually in the United States and Canada, and £12 annually in Great Britain. To request membership information, or to notify the society of a change of address, write in the United States and Canada to: Alex Pitofsky, 3621 9th St. Drive N.E., Hickory NC 28601, USA or by email to [pitofskyah@appstate.edu](mailto:pitofskyah@appstate.edu). In Great Britain, write David and Janet Tregear, 36 Henty Gardens, Chichester, West Sussex, England PO19 3DL or [tregear david@hotmail.com](mailto:tregear david@hotmail.com)

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## *Burney locations – Mickleham, Westhumble and Bookham*

### **By Barry Moughton**

On the third day of the Windsor Conference, a small coach-load of Burney Society members visited the Burney locations in Surrey. The weather was kind and, apart from a twenty-minute traffic jam on the top of Box Hill, the day went well. The group visited Juniper Hall and Mickleham Church; peeked over the wall at the site of Susan Phillips' Cottage; saw the old bridge over the river Mole leading into Norbury Park; peered through the railings at Norbury Park House itself; admired the house at Burford Corner and the plaque to Fanny Burney on the (modern) entrance to Camilla Lacey; stood on the greensward at Camilla Lacey House and gazed at the space where Camilla Cottage had stood; explored the top of Box Hill, looking down on Westhumble from the supposed site of the picnic in Jane Austen's *Emma*; entered the Hermitage in Bookham and the room where Camilla was written; and visited Bookham Church where young Alexander was christened.

Nor did we neglect the body. An excellent lunch was taken in the sunshine outside the Running Horses Pub in Mickleham under the watchful eye of the church clock, and a delicious tea (including the most marvellous Davenport cakes) was served in the Bookham Parish Room.

All very breath-consuming, I hear you say. The breath was supplied by our Member Barry Moughton, who lives in the grounds of Camilla Lacey and was our tour guide for the Mickleham and Westhumble parts of the visit. The following is a summary of his patter, or at least what he meant to say.

**[At Juniper Hall]** Juniper Hall was built in the eighteenth century by David Jenkinson at the side of Stane Street, the Roman road which ran from London to Chichester. Having built the house, he decided that the valley in which it lay was damp and sunless, and he built a second home at Juniper Hill on a neighbouring, but better placed, site. He let the Hall to French émigrés on their escape from the Terror, the rent being guaranteed by William Locke of neighbouring Norbury Park. As we all know, Fanny Burney, visiting her sister in Mickleham Village, met her future husband in what is now the Templeton Room at Juniper Hall. This room has been restored, but is much as it was in the 1790s. Subsequently, the Hall was sold to Thomas Broadwood, the piano manufacturer who supplied a piano to Beethoven, and the folly which he built can be seen on the neighbouring hill.

**[At Mickleham Church]** The Church is very old, celebrating its millennium in 1970. It contains the Norbury Chapel with its memorial to the various members of the Locke family who lived at Norbury Park. The d'Arblays were married here in 1793 and there is a copy of the familiar portrait of Fanny on the right just inside the door. Two interesting features of the church are the Flemish eighteenth-century carvings on the pulpit and the hatchments on the walls. Hatchments are diamond-shaped paintings in the form of coats of arms which were hung above the entrance of a bereaved home to indicate which of the inhabitants had died. One of the hatchments records the death of David Jenkinson's wife.

**[In Norbury Park]** When William Locke bought the estate in 1777, the house was down by the river where Mickleham Priory now stands. He decided to build a new house at the top of the Park, with views in both directions, north and south. The House has been recently bought by a Russian and is not open to view, but you can see the house through the railing by the entrance gate. Juniper Hall, Susan Phillips' Cottage and Norbury Park House are in a straight line, the river Mole being crossed by an old bridge, too weak to bear the weight of our coach. We had to go round to Pressforward bridge, a name which smacks of Pilgrim's Progress. The whole atmosphere of the Park seems to me very eighteenth-century.

**[At the top of Box Hill]** It is these slopes which (it is believed) Jane Austen had in mind as the setting for the famous picnic in *Emma*. From here you can see Norbury Park with its skyline mansion and the whole of Westhumble, although Camilla Lacey is hidden behind the trees. As we descend the zig-zag road, you can see on the right Flint Cottage with its summerhouse in the garden. Here lived George Meredith who used the summer house as his writing studio.



*Burney Society Members at the top of Box Hill. .*

**[Driving through Westhumble]** At the bottom of Box Hill is the Burford Bridge Hotel at which Nelson is said to have finally said goodbye to Emma Hamilton and where John Keats wrote *Endymion*. As you turn into Westhumble Street, you see on your left Burford Corner, where another of the émigrés, Mme de Broglie, lived with her daughter. She was the daughter-in-law of the commanding Marshal of the Royalist Army. An earlier visitor was Daniel Defoe who is said to have hidden in the house from King George I's agents when he had displeased that King with his comments. It is said that he thought of the idea of writing *Robinson Crusoe* whilst in hiding.

**See Burney Locations, on p. 4**

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## Burney Locations

### Continued from p. 3

though it was not published until some years later. Just over the station bridge, affixed to the modern entrance to Camilla Drive, you can see the plaque recording the d'Arblays' residence in Westhumble. This entrance to Camilla Lacey was built in the 1920s, but from the 1930s it became the entrance to Camilla Drive, whose 21 houses are built in the grounds of Camilla Lacey.

[*Standing on the greensward at Camilla Lacey*] Here in front of you is where Camilla Cottage was built. The greensward is roughly the extent of the d'Arblays' garden, although the estate was subsequently expanded to about 80 acres. You can see the raised mound which the General constructed so as to be able to see Norbury Park House. Nowadays the trees and houses are in the way. The mound was made into an icehouse by a subsequent owner.

After the d'Arblays' departure, the site was sold to Thomas Hudson who built a substantial mansion around the Cottage, which became a Burney shrine and contained many manuscripts and memorabilia. By 1919, after a succession of owners had enlarged the Mansion, it was owned by Leverton Harris, a shipowner and MP who was responsible for the blockade of Germany during the First World War. In that year he was at the Versailles conference when the centre part of the mansion, the old Camilla Cottage, was badly damaged by fire, leaving only the two wings standing. He was so disheartened by the loss of

his Burney collection that he sold the house. The new owner built the new entrance archway and made each wing into a separate house, known as Camilla Lacey and Burney House respectively. In the 1930s the bulk of the estate was sold for development with access through the archway.

I should just like to explain how I think it was that the d'Arblays lost their land when William Locke's son inherited from his father. William Locke's original intention was that Fanny should receive a plot of land on the Norbury Park estate near what is now Mickleham Priory. That would have been freehold land. However, when young Alexander was born, it was felt that the family needed more space and so William Locke substituted the site in Westhumble. This, however, was not part of the Norbury estate, but was copyhold land of the Manor of Wistomble (of which, as it happens, I am the current Lord). Being copyhold land it was subject to the customs of the Manor and in some way (I am not clear precisely how) the tenure came to an end prematurely. It is interesting that the Lord of the Manor from 1809 to 1816 was Richard Brinsley Sheridan. It was during these years that Fanny returned to Westhumble. Could Sheridan have had a hand in the ending of the d'Arblays' copyhold title? Here's a research project for somebody.

*Barry Moughton is a retired lawyer who lives in the grounds of Camilla Lacey in Westhumble, close to the site of Camilla Cottage. He read law at Oxford and McGill and practised in the City of London. He has been a member of the Burney Society since 1998.*

## Minutes of the 2007 AGM

### The Burney Society (UK) Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at St. George's House, Windsor Castle, on 6 July 2007, at 6.20 p.m.

Present: - The President (Paula Stepankowsky), Chairman (Kate Chisholm), Committee members (Karin Fernald, Hester Davenport, Bill Fraser, David and Janet Tregear) and 14 members.

- (1) **Membership and Accounts.** David Tregear presented accounts for the period 7 June 2006 to 1 July 2007. These showed an increase in membership dues over the previous year, from which it may be taken that the UK Branch was steady in numbers. The major outstanding item of future expense would be the final account from St. George's House, but the outlook seemed satisfactory, at this stage.
- (2) **Officers and Committee**—were elected unopposed as before, and Helen Cooper present at the meeting was elected to serve on the Committee for the ensuing year. David and Janet Tregear

would not continue as Secretaries/ Treasurers after the 2008 AGM, and enquiries would be made for their successors.

- (3) **Future Plans**—it was hoped to hold a day's meeting (to include the AGM) at Parham in Sussex on a date to be fixed in the summer of 2008, at Juniper Hall in 2009, with a possible Conference in London in 2010.
- (4) **Plaque in St. Swithin's Church, Walcot, Bath**—Bill Fraser told of his search for a satisfactory price, which now seemed likely at about £1500. An appeal would be launched in due course.
- (5) Copies of the *Burney Letter* and of the *Burney Journal* would regularly be sent to the London Library, and to Chawton House.
- (6) The meeting adjourned at 7.00 p.m.

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## Plaque Unveiling

[*These words were spoken by Hester Davenport before unveiling the plaque placed on the site of Mrs. Delany's house in Windsor.*]

I should like to welcome everybody here today, members of the Burney Society and fellow Windsorians, and to offer particularly warm welcomes to Ruth Hayden, who has done so much to make us aware of the achievements of Mary Delany, her many time great-aunt, and to the biographer Flora Fraser, who will in due course unveil the plaque.

But before that happens I'd like to say a little about the two women who we are going to honour today and about the friendship that developed between them. As both were letter-writers Karin Fernald will help by reading their own words.

Mrs. Mary Delany was a talented artist, admired today for her beautiful and accurate botanical studies created out of coloured papers, many of which are in the British Museum. She moved in the top levels of society and King George III and Queen Charlotte were both fond of her. Fanny Burney was the author of two lively novels, *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, which were eagerly read by most of society, including Mrs. Delany. In 1783 Mrs. Delany sought a meeting with the author and despite an age gap of 50 years a warm friendship developed. Fanny wrote to a sister:

I called this morning on my dear Mrs Delany, whom I really love even more than I admire. The venerable and excellent old lady received me with open arms and we kissed one another as if she had been my beloved grandmother, whom she always reminds me of. It is sweet to me to be honoured with so much of her favour as to see her always eager to fix a time for our next and our next meeting. She showed me a most elegant and ingenious loom, which the Queen made her a present of last summer at Windsor, and a gold knitting needle given her by the King. The Queen has written her a letter, signed from her "affectionate Queen."

In turn, Mrs Delany wrote of Fanny that:

Her admirable understanding, tender affection, and sweetness of manners, make her valuable to all those who have the happiness to know her.

Mrs Delany lived for much of the year with her friend the Duchess of Portland at Gerrards Cross and when she died the King and Queen offered her a home here, in St Albans Street. Fanny stayed with her before the move, helping her to prepare for it. She had not been well but was recovering. Fanny wrote:

All our movements are at present uncertain. Her Windsor house will be fit for her reception by the beginning of next week, and I have the happiest reasons for hoping that she will then be fit for it herself. Her maid has been to inspect the house, and there she received commands, in the name of both King and Queen, to see that Mrs Delany brings with her nothing but herself and clothes, as they insist upon fitting up her habitation with everything themselves, including not only plate, china, glass, and linen, but even all sorts of stores – wine, sweetmeats, pickles, etc. Their earnestness to save her every care, and give her every gratification in their power, is truly benevolent. They seem to

know and feel her worth as if they had never worn crowns, or, wearing them, annexed no value to them.

The move was made, Fanny came to stay, and it was here in the St. Albans Street house that she first met the King and Queen herself, a meeting that was to lead to her own royal appointment. Nothing now is left of the house, which was demolished in 1822, but in creating the plaque the Burney Society commemorates two remarkable women. I should now like to ask our President, Paula Stepankowsky to say a few words.



*Mrs. Ruth Hayden, collateral descendant of Mrs. Delany, and Mrs. Flora Fraser, biographer and historian of the court years.*

### *Address by Paula Stepankowsky*

Thank you, Hester and Karin, for describing for us the warm friendship between these two women, whose merits made them love one another and which drew the appreciation of King George and Queen Charlotte, who by all accounts felt more comfortable in Mrs. Delany's drawing room than they did anywhere else outside their own private rooms.

The reason we know so much about Mrs. Delany's later days – and life at Court during the five extraordinary years from 1786 to 1791 that Fanny Burney was dresser to the Queen, is that the pen describing these times was in the hand of one of the most accomplished writers in the English language.

Just how accomplished is now only being appreciated in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries as many of Fanny Burney's writings, including her plays and the entire text of her extraordinary journal/diaries, are being published for the first time in the past few years. Indeed, only four of the 12 volumes of her complete diaries dating from 1778 until the time she left court have been published, leaving eight more to be enjoyed, including six describing the Court years. Who needs Tina Brown when we have Fanny Burney! Once everything is done, we admittedly biased friends of FB think she will leave Pepys and Boswell in the shade.

But it has taken some time for FB's reputation and recognition to catch up with her accomplishments . . . Many of you were in Bath at Walcot Church two years ago, when we unveiled the restored monument to FB and her son that had fallen into disrepair. And many of us also gathered in Westminster Abbey a little over five years ago when we had the honour of dedicating the memorial window to Frances Burney d'Arblay in Poet's Corner

That, too, was a long-sought highlight – not only for the society but for literature in general and for women writers in particular as Frances Burney d'Arblay became the only woman writer who published in the eighteenth century to be so honoured.

She was not only a pioneering playwright, diarist and novelist, the author of *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, *Camilla* and *The Wanderer*, but also but a brave, smart, funny and observant woman, a loyal friend and sister, and a devoted daughter, wife and mother – in short, someone we'd very much like to get to know.

It is to come full circle to note that in the pages of her diaries, FB herself wrote of seeing, hearing of or knowing all the subjects of the biographies written by our next speaker, Flora Fraser.

Flora Fraser comes from family distinguished for its writing. In her three books, *Caroline*, *The Unhappy Queen*, about Caroline of Brunswick, *Beloved Emma*, about Emma Hamilton, and *Princesses*, about the six daughters of Queen Charlotte and King George, Flora Fraser has brilliantly examined the lives of women, who lived a "gilded" life in the public eye but who struggled to find personal happiness.

In her last book, which brought to life the Court of Queen Charlotte and the six Princesses, the milieu in which Fanny Burney found herself for five years hasn't been so well described since Fanny did it herself 220 years ago.

[Flora Fraser spoke next and very appropriately, but her remarks were *ex tempore* and hence unavailable.]

### EVIDENCE OF A RUNAWAY MARRIAGE

By Janet Tregear

*Greatney Green*

*28<sup>th</sup> day of October 1778*

*These are to certify all person or persons, that may it concern, That George Burrish Chandler of the County of Gloucester Batchelor and Mary Sadler of the same county Spinster who came before me declaring to me to be both single persons were lawfully married by me by the way of the Church of England and agreeable to the other laws of the Kirk of Scotland. Given under my Hand this said Twenty-eighth Day of October in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and seventy eight.*

*Jas. Josh. Gibb(?)*

*Thomas Brown*

*George B. Chandler*

*Mary Sadler*

This is a copy (original too difficult to photo) of a document about a direct ancestor of my mother who married in Gretna Green in 1778. According to family tradition, she was 17 years old and her parents thought she was too young to marry, but being a spirited girl,

one night she prepared a sheet and climbed down out of her window, and rode to Scotland with her beau through the night and the next day, all the way from Gloucester. By law, they had to stay in Scotland for 3 weeks before they could marry, but they did marry, according

to the Certificate in my possession. Again, according to family tradition, George did well in farming; they had many children, and were happy. The elopement was quite daring in those days, but luckily, on their return to Gloucester they seem to have been forgiven.

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# A Sentimental Journey from Windsor to Devon

**By Geoffrey Sill**

What could be more perfect than a conference on the Burneys in Windsor, held in the precincts of Windsor Castle and followed by a tour of Mickleham and environs? Nothing, except a trip to Devon, the destination of the royal tour of 1789 and the setting for some of the most evocative writing in all of Frances Burney's court journals.

Prior to the conference at Windsor, the intrepid Richard Aylmer, a Burney Society member as well as the editor of the Reynolds Society newsletter, offered to conduct a tour of the sites in Devon that Burney would have seen as part of the Royal entourage in 1789. Though many Burney Society members were interested in the tour, only Lorna Clark and I were able to accept Richard's offer, since the itinerary would require three days to complete. As the editors respectively of Burney's letters and journals for 1788 and 1789, Lorna and I had an interest in seeing, among others, the sites in Devon where Burney's hopes for an alliance with Col. Stephen Digby were dashed when Digby, despite his repeated inquiries about Miss Burney's health, finally decided upon a much more advantageous match with Miss Charlotte Gunning.

Burney spent the summer of 1789 in Dorset and Devon as part of the royal entourage which, to her great satisfaction, did not include Mrs. Schwellenberg. The royal party left Windsor in late June and stayed six weeks at Weymouth, where the King bathed in the sea to the strains of "God Save the King." In mid-August the royals progressed to Plymouth, where they resided at Saltram House while visiting Mount Edgcumbe, Sherborne Castle, and other country seats, as well as sailing up and down the river Tamer and engaging in mock sea battles in Plymouth harbor.

If the purpose of the royal expedition was to show that the King was again as sound as a drum, the loyal multitudes seem to have played their part with effusive joy. At every stop of the royal progress, the mobs lined the streets, singing "God Save the King." Burney faithfully records these demonstrations in her journals, but there are shadows as well: apprehensions that the King's madness might return; fears that the "demolition . . . perhaps annihilation" of France will result from its having "rise[n] up, all against itself, for its own ruin"; and, above all, a sense that some dread revolution has taken place in Digby's life or mind that will cost her the friendship of the only person at court in whom she took any delight.



Our tour began on Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, with an early-morning breakfast at St. George's House, considerably enhanced by the company of Conrad Harper, who rose to see us off. After a four-hour drive, we arrived at Saltram House, in the vicinity of Plymouth. Saltram, now a National Trust property open to visitors, is no doubt familiar to many readers as the house of which the Dashwood family is dispossessed in the opening scenes of the 1995 film *Sense and Sensibility*, although it is far too grand a house for the modest Dashwoods. Though the royal party's arrival at Saltram on August 15 was made "very disagreeable" by the "crowd of starers," Burney considered the house to be "one of the most magnificent in the Kingdom." The death of the owner, John Parker, Baron Boringdon (1735-1788), in the year before the King's visit had made his 15-year-old son, also John Parker, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Boringdon, later 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Morley (1772-1840), the master of the estate. The elder Parker poses with his hunting rifle in a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds that hangs in the morning room. His son sits with a protective arm extended before his sister Theresa in another Reynolds painting in the same room. (It was unfortunately necessary for Richard to correct the docent, who had confused the two Parkers).



*Lorna Clark and Richard Aylmer in front of Fanny's Bower at Saltram House (shown at bottom of left column).*

Burney enjoyed walking in the garden at Saltram, and a neo-classical structure in a secluded spot has been designated, without much authority, as "Fanny's Bower." Her "parlour," as she called her ground-floor sitting room, adjoined a small chamber that was used as a breakfast room by the King's equerries. At the rear of this chamber, a staircase led to the royal bedrooms above. By dint of persistent questioning of the docents, Richard was able to identify this chamber, whose staircase is now absent, and thus the location of Fanny's parlour. His detective work gave new vitality to a passage in her journal in which she opens the door to this chamber on her way to attend the Queen, only to find Digby lurking outside her parlour, quite forlorn, unable either to knock on her door or to go away. Burney construes his sadness as grief for his wife Lucy, who

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**See Journey to Devon, on p 8**

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## Journey to Devon

### Continued from p. 7

had died two years before, but in truth it was probably his impending betrayal of Burney's affections that made him so melancholy.

While at Saltram, Fanny Burney made day-long excursions to Plymouth Dock and Mount Edgumbe. The town of Dock, a few miles upriver from the harbor, is (and was then) one of the principal bases of the Royal Navy. Like much of the rest of Plymouth, Dock was heavily bombed in World War II, so little that she would have seen now remains. Our tour guide, Bob Cook, did however show us the two surviving Terraces, or officers' quarters, that Burney mentions in her journal, as well as the Ropery, a building 1100 feet in length where hempen cables long enough to anchor British men-of-war in 40 fathoms of water were made. Burney, for her tour, was guided around Dock by a Captain Duckworth, who had an "undisguised curiosity" to know the "portrait painter of Captain Mirvan." Captain Duckworth, who claimed to know "Burney of the Bristol," monopolized Fanny's attention, and "attended me unremittingly, shewing me whatever was to be seen, – & handing me about, up & down, in & out, of all sorts of places, with a zeal for some intercourse quite comic."

From a lookout point over Dock, constructed shortly after the royal visit as a memorial to George III, one can see Mount Edgumbe across Plymouth harbor. Fanny, accompanied by Miss Planta and Colonel Heywoods, was invited to visit the house on August 24, a day after the Royals' visit. The building that she saw was bombed almost to the ground in WWII, but the central portion, with its four octagonal turrets at the corners, has been rebuilt and is a close reproduction of the original. She entered one of these octagonal rooms, which she describes as "a very pretty circular parlour," and discovered a copy of *Cecilia*. To satisfy a bet with herself, she let the first volume fall open on a table, and, as expected, it opened to the chapter "An Opera Rehearsal," which features a performance by Pacchierotti. Once again it was the persistent Richard Aylmer, following various clues, who identified the room in which this wager was laid and won. On this visit to the Dock and Mount Edgumbe we were joined by Richard's wife Mara and his cousin-in-law Ursula Aylmer, who had arrived in Plymouth the night before.



Mount Edgumbe, which FB visited on 24 August 1789.

On the third day, after seeing Ursula off on her way back to

Oxford, we drove two hours through the Devon and Dorset countryside to reach Sherborne Castle, the Digby family seat. The Royals had stopped here twice on their tour, but Fanny, already sensing Digby's ambivalence toward her, did not accompany them on either visit. The Castle, built in 1594 by Sir Walter Raleigh and acquired by Sir John Digby in 1617, is an elegant but rather ponderous house; its four wings on either side, added by the Digbys in 1620, seem rather to enclose the house than to give it any lift. Among the many portraits hanging in the galleries and stairwells is one of Col. Stephen Digby by Reynolds. Digby seems rather drained and colorless, which as Richard explained is a common consequence of cleaning portraits by Reynolds, who painted his subjects first in gray and then added a top coat of color. We could not help thinking, however, that Digby's melancholia was showing through. By prior arrangement, the Sherborne Castle archivist, Ann Smith, was prepared to show us the "game books," or daily shooting diaries, written in 1789 in Stephen Digby's hand that describe the two royal visits. The second visit was little more than a rest stop on the journey back to Windsor; it was, writes Digby, a "very wet morning & afternoon notwithstanding which there were many thousands assembled in Sherborne Park to see his Majesty take leave of the Country."

On the return trip from Sherborne, we stopped at Kitley, the seat of a prominent family of Devon named Bastard. The house has no Burney connection, but the King and Queen visited it on August 26, 1789, as Samuel Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds had done previously. It is built of a grey granite that is unusual for the area, which, with its gothic architecture, gives it a somber appearance even on a sunny day. Mara, Richard, Lorna and I paused long enough for tea, crumpets, and Devon clotted cream, served in the croquet court beside the garden.

On the following day, after saying goodbye to Mara and Richard over breakfast in Plymouth, Lorna and I returned to Windsor, changing trains twice with all our luggage in tow, which had been considerably augmented by the purchase of many guidebooks and Burney memorabilia. We managed to fit a tour of the precincts and state apartments of Windsor Castle, plus a stroll through nearby Eton, into the remains of the day.

On Friday, we visited the Royal Archives in Windsor Castle, where, by prior arrangement, we were permitted to read the two volumes of Queen Charlotte's diaries that have survived from 1789. The Queen is very particular as to the time of her movements, visits, and meetings, but not very introspective, at least in what she commits to paper. She mentions that, after the Drawing Room on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December, one of her maids of honour, Miss Gunning, "asked leave to marry Mr. Digby." She makes no comment in her diary about this request, concluding the entry by noting that the weather was "Very cold in a violent Fog all Day."

Unfortunately, the catalogue to the Royal Archives is not accessible to the public, so scholars must inform the archivists in advance of their research interests and then depend upon them to select the appropriate materials. On the other hand, the National Archives at Kew provides access to scores of local record offices and historical collections throughout Britain. The

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See Journey to Devon, on p 9



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## **Journey to Devon**

### **Continued from p. 8**

electronic gateway of the National Archives is [www.hmc.gov.uk](http://www.hmc.gov.uk). Burney scholars who visit Kew will also want to see Kew Palace, where the Court resorted early in 1789 to escape inquiries concerning the King's madness, and where Burney received many of her visits from Stephen Digby.

Our tour of Devon and Windsor concluded that evening with a kind invitation to supper at the home of Hester Davenport and her husband Tony, in Old Windsor. Hester regaled us with her experiences in the Royal Archives while researching her book, *Faithful Handmaid: Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III*. It seems as if the compulsive secrecy that nearly stifled Burney as a writer while at Court is still observed there. Despite the light shone on the Court in recent books by such authors as Hester Davenport, Kate Chisholm, and Flora Fraser, or the essays in the recent collection edited by Jonathan Marsden, *The Wisdom of George III*, there is much still to be learned about Burney's years at Windsor. We humble editors are grateful for the many kindnesses that were shown to us in our efforts to follow Burney's travels from Windsor to Devon and back.

*Geoffrey M. Sill has the good fortune to be the editor of the volume for 1789 of the forthcoming edition of Frances Burney's Court Journals and Letters. He previously contributed to the Complete Plays of Frances Burney, edited by Peter Sabor and Stewart Cooke, and he included a chapter on Burney in his book, The Cure of the Passions and the Origins of the English Novel*

*(Cambridge, 2001). Prior to that, he worked primarily on Defoe, and is still looking for the common ground between Defoe and Burney. He teaches eighteenth-century literature at Rutgers University in Camden, New Jersey.*



*The newly re-opened Kew Palace, to which the court retired during the King's illness in 1788-89.*

## ***Burney Society Panel at ASECS 2008***

Marilyn Francus will be chairing the Burney Society Panel for ASECS to be held on March 27-30, 2008 in Portland, Oregon. The topic sounds interesting: "Agony Aunts and Confidantes in Burney and her Circle."

The panel will examine female support networks that extend beyond the immediate biological family. Papers may focus on literary characters or historical relationships; on those who

advise, or those who seek advice; on agony aunts, confidantes, chaperones and mentors (and the success or failure of those roles); on the female communities that develop (or not) from these relationships; on revisions of the family narrative in light of these female networks; on the intersections of age and gender; on conduct manual codes; and so on. Papers featuring Burney and late eighteenth-century writers through

Austen are welcome.

Any enquiries about the panel should be directed to: Marilyn Francus, Dept. of English, West Virginia U., 230 Stansbury Hall P.O. Box 6296, Morgantown, WV 26506; Tel: (412) 521-3686; Fax: (304) 293-5380; or electronically by e-mail at: [mfrancus@mix.wvu.edu](mailto:mfrancus@mix.wvu.edu).

**The UK Society will hold its AGM in 2008 at Parham, Sussex ([www.parhaminsussex.co.uk](http://www.parhaminsussex.co.uk)) on 15 June. Preliminary thoughts are that arrivals at 11 a.m. will have an exclusive tour, to include a sight of the portraits of Fanny Burney and General d'Arbly, followed by lunch, and then a talk (speaker to be announced) and the business meeting and tea. Parham in Elizabethan Manor House, has many delights to be seen, and during the 1939-45 War provided a home for a number of Canadian children, some of whose parents were in England on active service. Accommodation at Parham will be limited to a total of 30, so please let David and Janet Tregar know if you are planning to come. Further details will be forthcoming in the 2008 Spring issue of the *Burney Letter*.**

## ***French Coin Found in Great Bookham***

**By Margaret Tarplee**

I found this coin on 17 April 1995 while clearing dead leaves from a flowerbed in our garden. In the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, this land formed part of the garden of “The Hermitage” in Lower Road, Great Bookham.



The Hermitage was the cottage, since much enlarged, where Fanny Burney and her husband General d'Arblay lived from November 1793 until October 1797, before moving to their own property at Camilla Cottage, West Humble.

On 11 May 1995, I took the coin to the British Museum in London. Their experts identified it as a copper sol, Louis XV, dated 1771 and minted at Troyes in North East France: a common coin, I was told

I moved with my husband and three children to this house in December 1967. At the time, the flowerbed where I found the coin was part of the lawn, which, we understood, had once been a tennis court. Sometime in the early 1990s we dug out a strip of lawn and planted this flowerbed.

As I learned more about Fanny Burney over the years, I began to wonder if the coin had any relevance to her time in Great Bookham. In the early twentieth century, the Hermitage garden and orchard extended along East Street as far as a public footpath dividing it from the Fair Field, which reached to the main Leatherhead to Guildford Road. During the Twentieth century, plots of this Hermitage land on its Western edge were gradually sold and houses built with gardens of approximately one-fifth of an acre.

Our house was built in 1962, five years before we bought it. I believe that our Southern boundary coincides with the boundary between the garden and the orchard of the Hermitage in Fanny Burney's time, making our plot just within their garden.

*Margaret Tarplee is a retired occupational therapist with interests in gardening and archaeology.*

## **Library acquires major bluestocking archive**

***The John Rylands University Library at The University of Manchester has rescued for the nation the papers of Mary Hamilton (1756-1816), courtier, diarist and bluestocking.***

This nationally important archive offers wonderful insights into royal, aristocratic and literary circles during the reign of George III. Saved from being exported, the archive now resides in the splendid surroundings of the newly restored John Rylands Library, Deansgate, Manchester.

Mary Hamilton held a post in the household of George III's daughters. She was regarded with great affection by the princesses and her fellow courtiers and for several months she had to negotiate the tricky business of the adolescent Prince of Wales's infatuation with her. Her wide circle of friends included some of the leading literary and intellectual women of her day — Elizabeth Carter, Elizabeth Montague, Hannah More and Fanny Burney — the so-called bluestockings, as well as Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, Horace Walpole and Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The archive provides a remarkably complete picture of the daily life of the royal household and of the cultural elite of the period. There are 1,200 pages of intimate diaries, 3,000 pages of letters sent to Mary Hamilton by her relatives and friends, and six manuscript volumes containing copies of verses, letters, sermons and other prose pieces. The diaries crackle with the highly charged atmosphere of the literary circles in which Hamilton moved. The papers are largely unpublished and offer vast scope for research in many fields.

When an American library successfully bid for the archive at auction in July 2006, it seemed inevitable that the papers would go abroad. However, Culture Minister David Lammy placed a temporary export embargo on the archive, giving institutions a last chance to raise the money to keep the archive in the United Kingdom. After frantic fund-raising efforts, the John Rylands University Library has now secured the purchase of the archive and researchers have already booked to consult the collection.

Bill Simpson, University Librarian and Director of the John Rylands Library, said: “The export of important literary archives, such as the papers of Mary Hamilton, impoverishes the nation's heritage. When the Culture Secretary halted the export of the Mary Hamilton archive, we gladly accepted the challenge of raising the funds to purchase it. We are grateful to our funders, without whose support this major acquisition would not have been possible.”

The purchase of the archive has been made possible by generous grants from the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Pilgrim Trust, the Friends of the National Libraries, the Society of Dilettanti Charitable Trust, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and the Friends of the John Rylands. For further information please contact: Dawn Yates, Head of Visitor Services, The John Rylands University Library, tel. 0161-275 8749, dawn.yates@manchester.ac.uk.

*[Press release sent by John Hodgson, Keeper of Manuscripts and Archives, [john.hodgson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:john.hodgson@manchester.ac.uk)]*

# “How does a Dutch girl end up doing a PhD on Burney?”

## By Elles Smallegoor

This question, posed to me at the conference in Windsor, surprised me somewhat. Was it really that unusual for someone from Holland to do research on Burney? Ever since I started studying English literature at the University of Groningen in the late '90s I was familiar with her name, so “ending up” with her seemed a normal option. Having been asked to write something for this newsletter as a new member of the Burney Society (UK), I planned a piece in which I would explain that Burney wasn't at all an unfamiliar author at my Dutch university, that her writings were included in reading lists, that her work was actually very accessible there. However, I soon realised that that would not be answering the question of HOW this all came about.

It was an English lecturer in Groningen who got me interested in the eighteenth century during my undergrad years, and who, because of all the efforts of Burney scholars and Burney enthusiasts, put *Evelina* on the curriculum and ordered the relevant books for the library. It was in a Master's course in Glasgow that I got to know thoroughly Burney's journals and other novels, and where I met my current supervisor; it was, back in Holland, an English professor who gave me Helen Dunmore's “Esther to Fanny” and encouraged me to pursue my plans for a PhD; and now, it is a generous scholarship from the University of Aberdeen that enables me to actually realise them. Dutch girls would never have ended up doing their PhDs on Burney if they hadn't met people from outside Holland actively promoting (research on) her work. It illustrates once more that the steps that are taken to celebrate Burney's life and work are bearing fruit!

For the past two years I have been examining Burney's four novels within the context of class, feeling that this approach was needed to complement the primarily gender-centred studies that have been published so far. I am basically arguing that it is only when we analyse Burney's novels within the conceptual framework of the lower middle class that we can truly appreciate a distinctive feature of her fiction. By no means was she the only eighteenth-century author to acknowledge this social stratum in her writings (Samuel Johnson's essays, for instance, are full of shopkeepers, grocers and sugar-bakers) but she was the only major *novelist* of her time to focus on it in considerable detail. James Edward Austen-Leigh said about his aunt that “she has nothing resembling the Branghtons, or Mr. Dubster and his friend Tom Hicks, with whom Madame D'Arblay used to season her stories.” But, as far as I can tell at this stage, nor does any other

major novelist of the period. Exploring this singularity will bring us new insights into Burney's contribution to the development of the novel (for instance, she developed particular literary conventions for describing the lower middle class long before Dickens did), and help us expand existing knowledge about the relationship between the author's life and her writings.

Having met the kind, supportive and vivacious “Burney bunch” in Windsor, I am glad to have become a member of the Society. The conference was intellectually inspiring and also made me realise how important it is to continue the work that has been started in the previous century. This is especially true for my hometown. The people who knew and taught Burney in Groningen no longer work there. When I gave a guest lecture on Austen there not so long ago, and mentioned Burney, the class frowned and told me they had never even heard of her name! When I have finished my PhD in Aberdeen, I wish to settle in Holland and hope to become a lecturer at one of the universities there. I sometimes fantasise about this future — what about a Dutch branch of the Burney Society.....?

P.S.: *The Centre for the Novel* at the University of Aberdeen is hosting a conference called “The Novel and its Borders” from 8-10 July 2008. Plenary speakers are Terry Castle, Ian Duncan and Jonathan Lamb. Submission deadline is 31 December 2007. As I said in Windsor, it would be great to have a Burney panel. If you are interested, then please visit our website: <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/novelconference/> or contact me: [e.smallegoor@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:e.smallegoor@abdn.ac.uk).

*Elles Smallegoor, is currently living in Aberdeen, Scotland, but is often at home with her partner Rob in Groningen, the Netherlands. She has a Dutch MA in English Language and Literature (University of Groningen, 2001), an M.Phil. in English literature (University of Glasgow, 2003), and has worked at the University of Groningen as a language teacher for two years (2004-2006). She is now doing a PhD on Frances Burney's four novels at the University of Aberdeen and hopes to finish in 2008. Elles enjoys reading, cycling, jogging, and oil painting.*

***Do you remember your first encounter with Frances Burney? When did you read her, how did you come to discover her, what were your “First Impressions”? If you would like to share your story (in 1000 words or less) please send it to the Editor.***

# BOOK REVIEW

By John Wiltshire

**Jeremy Black.** *George III.* Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2006. 475 pp. ISBN 0-300-11732-9.

Frances Burney's name appears only once in this extensive biography of George III, though perhaps not surprisingly. During and following her time at court, the royal family was naturally more important to Burney than she was to them, and her relations were strongest with the Queen and the princesses, not the King. But Burney readers will miss her presence in this book. This is an exhaustive, almost one might say an official, history of the monarch and his reign, a work of reference rather than – one has to say – of readability.

Jeremy Black seeks to rehabilitate George III. He gathers together, meticulously, evidence from George's contemporaries that contradicts the still generally received view that the king was a dull, retrograde and unpopular monarch. George, who succeeded his grandfather on the throne at the age of twenty-two in 1760, determined to be a moral as well as patriotic leader of his country. "He brought a potent mix of determination, commitment and sense of self-righteousness, and a difficult mix, for himself and others, of self-confidence and self-doubt."

George inherited a system in which the constitutional foundations for an effective parliamentary monarchy were in place, but which was not matched by an appropriate political environment. Essentially, who was responsible for what and what were the limitations and boundaries of royal power were unclear, and therefore dependent on personalities – the character and style of the king and the ambitions of his ministers. George had been brought up on Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King*, and imagined, perhaps naively, that the king could be above political party, whilst serving his country rather than his own ends. In the first years of his reign, his attempts to avoid aligning himself with either the Whigs or the Tories, and to gather round himself a group of "King's Friends" who shared his beliefs, led the Whigs to see him as a threat to the constitution. More likely is Samuel Johnson's comment on the king's youthful lack of political savvy: "Perhaps, he scarcely knows whom he has distinguished, or whom he has disgusted."

After the rocky first years in which the king was perceived to be under the thumb of Lord Bute, things settled down under Lord North in the seventies. Black argues, in fact, that the shift from opposition to the king towards tolerance and, on the part of the general middle-class public, even affection, began in these years, earlier than has generally been acknowledged. The first chapters of the book trace the political history of the sixties and early seventies in detail, drawing on many archival sources, and for readers unfamiliar with the intricacies, the controversies, rivalries, disputes and political stances of the various parties, may be hard going. More interesting are the central chapters on the king's "Character and Behaviour," and his "Family" "Culture" and

"Religion." The detailed historical chronicle then resumes with the beginnings of trouble with the American colonists in the mid-seventies.

It is in these chapters that Frances makes her brief appearance, as a "critic of court life" who focused on its formality and grandeur. The chapter on the royal family underlines Queen Charlotte's shared "commitment to duty, propriety, piety and philanthropy," notes, of course, the conflicting values of the Prince of Wales and other sons – and the unhappy consequences of the royal couples' strict upbringing of the girls. Both Augusta and Sophia apparently contracted secret marriages with equerries. Perhaps the full Oxford editions of Burney's journals for her court years will throw more light on sexual intrigues amid the courtiers – there are hints enough in the expurgated editions we have already.

The king's cultural interests in painting, music, architecture and science are fully documented. Especially convincing is the portrait of a man genuinely interested in reading and in encouraging the artists and scholars of his country, as the founding of the Royal Academy in 1768, and his interviews with Samuel Johnson and Charles Burney attest. Black refutes the notion that George III was a philistine, and shows how the king instigated that stress on what is now called "family values" which was henceforth to be a hallmark of British royalty. The deadly prose style in which much of this information is delivered, though, in which "appropriate taste was" is followed by "Italy was" and "This was" and "there was" and "this again was" (p.164) (and many more repetitions of the same verb) considerably lessens its impact. In the chapter on "Religion" we read that "Personal piety was...linked to acceptable cultural preferences in George's favour for Handel's oratorios" (189). Should "favour" be "fervour"? "Oratorios" should certainly be "oratorios." Charles Burney, for one, found the king's lack of interest in any other music than Handel's distinctly philistine.

This is a book in an American series with the subtitle "America's Last King." George was temperamentally incapable of accepting any form of compromise with the "rebels" in the American colonies in 1775 and his rejection of the petitions of moderates greatly undermined their position. American hostility had focused on ministers and parliament, but now it turned on the king. Much of the Declaration of Independence of 1776 is aimed at George personally: a draft reads "Future ages will scarcely believe that the hardiness of one man adventured, within the short compass of twelve years only, to lay a foundation so broad and so undisguised for tyranny over a people fostered and fixed in principles of freedom." Black does his best to exonerate the king, but it is plain that George's stubbornness, his rigid adherence to constitutional proprieties, combined with lack of political insight and dexterity, were largely responsible for turning a crisis into a rebellion, a rebellion into a war, and a war into a defeat.

The failure in America led to revenge politics at home. Among measures taken against George, there were cuts to the royal household in 1782 (Black notes that more work needs to be done

on the court) and soon the king was forced to accept ministers he disliked and mistrusted. The story continues of repeated political crises and struggles between George and his ministers, the Gordon riots of June 1780, and the onset of the king's illness, distressingly here called "madness," in the autumn of 1788. Black's focus is on the constitutional and political consequences of George's inability to carry out his usual duties. The Prince of Wales, who seemed likely to become Regent, favoured Fox, leader of the Whigs, whilst George preferred his minister Pitt. Eager for power, the Whigs were hopeful of the king's death or continued incapacity. This was widely seen as a recipe for instability. When the king recovered from this bout of illness in February 1789, Black emphasises its political significance in consolidating the king's popularity, routing the Whigs, and affirming the existing system of government, especially in the face of events across the Channel.

These were the months in which Burney's journal reports on the distress in the royal household. She records the king's dignity in the midst of his attacks. "My dear Effy", he said to Lady Effingham, "you see me, all at once, an old man." On October 20<sup>th</sup>, Frances meets him in a passage; he stops her and "conversed upon his health near half-an-hour...with that extreme quickness of speech and manner that belongs to fever." The impact of the constitutional crisis is obliquely registered, as in this instance when Burney is with the Queen on November 5<sup>th</sup>:

Soon after, suddenly arrived the Prince of Wales. He

came into the room. He had just quitted Brighthelmstone. Something passing within seemed to render this meeting awfully distant on both sides. She asked if he should not return to Brighthelmstone. He answered yes, the next day. He desired to speak with her; they retired together.

Reading this biography, I was reminded of Samuel Johnson's famous remarks in *Rambler* 60. Biographers, he says, "so little regard the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral." Of course, Burney was not concerned with politics as this genre of historiography construes them, but more use of her accounts would certainly have enlivened these pages.

Jeremy Black's detailed and exhaustive examination of George's constitutional importance will no doubt be consulted as a standard work in the future, and it certainly has bearings on present debates about the British royal family. He successfully modifies the image of the Hanoverian king long perpetuated by "Whig" historians. His stress on George as a "conscientious," "responsible," "industrious," "pious" and "moral" leader reminds us incidentally that, long before the Evangelicals took charge of British culture, "Victorianism" had begun.

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## FRANCES BURNEY: A CELEBRATION

BY LORNA J. CLARK

On the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of the writer Frances Burney (1752-1840), a window to her memory was placed in the arched recess of stained glass that graces Poets' Corner. Novelist, playwright and diarist, Frances Burney is one of the few women accorded such an honour. She joins the likes of Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot who might in some ways be seen as her literary heirs. Burney's journey to recognition on the stage of the world has been a long one, crowned finally with triumph.

The service marked the mid-point of a two-day conference in which various aspects of Burney's life and achievement were canvassed. Her journals and letters, her novels and plays (both comedies and tragedies), her life, family and context were all given serious scholarly treatment.

This volume includes the papers presented that day, which cover the many facets of a remarkable career and represent the broad spectrum of scholarly approaches to the entire opus of Frances Burney. It shows how far Burney has come from being dismissed as a minor precursor to Jane Austen to being recognized in her own right as a powerful, complex and influential writer, whose works had considerable impact on her own and subsequent generations.

**Lorna J. Clark** is Research Adjunct Professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. Editor of *The Letters of Sarah Harriet Burney* (1997), she has contributed to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Encyclopedia of British Women Writers* (Rutgers) and has published on eighteenth- and nineteenth- century writers such as Jane Austen, Frances Burney, Mary Shelley and Richard Cumberland. Editor of the *Burney Letter* since 1999, she is currently working on an edition of *The Romance of Private Life* by Sarah Harriet Burney for Pickering and Chatto as well as two volumes of *The Court Journals of Frances Burney*.

Order from your bookstore or supplier; write to CSP, 15 Angerton Gdns, Newcastle upon Tyne NE5 2JA, UK, or order online.  
www.c-s-p.org

Mark your calendars for the next Burney Society conference in North America, which will be held in Chicago on Oct. 9 and Oct. 10, 2008. More details will be published in the Spring 2008 issue of the Burney Letter.

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