Burney Letter

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Edward Eliot: and Burney, Johnson, Reynolds

Port Eliot, the ancestral home of the Eliot family

Edward Eliot 1727–1804 was one of Samuel Johnson's circle. Fanny Burney herself did not visit Port Eliot but anybody following in her footsteps when she visited Devon with the royal party in 1789 may find much of interest at Port Eliot a few miles west of Plymouth.

By Richard Aylmer

On a Tuesday in March 1781 Fanny Burney spent a day with Miss Polly (Mary) Palmer, Sir Joshua Reynolds's niece and housekeeper. They were joined at Reynolds's house in Leicester Square by several other people including "… Mr. Eliot, the knight of the shire for Cornwall, a most agreeable, lively, and very clever man …"

Edward Eliot 1727–1804 had a career in politics. He was appointed to the Board of Trade in 1759 but according to the *Dictionary of National Biography* he was so "…disillusioned by the low status of his office that he seldom attended board meetings, and he was irregular in his parliamentary attendance …" Despite his apparent lack of enthusiasm he remained a Commissioner of the Board of Trade and Plantations until 1776. He controlled several Cornish parliamentary boroughs and his support for Shelburne, and later for Pitt, was sufficiently valued for him to receive a peerage in 1784 and he was created Lord Eliot. He was involved with the arts and literature and was a member of Samuel Johnson's Club and a patron of Joshua Reynolds from an early age.

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"Burney and the City": The Newberry Library Chicago, Oct. 2 and 3, 2008

By Paula Stepankowsky

The 15th annual general meeting of the Burney Society in North America will focus on Burney's life and works in the context of urban environments.

Helen Thompson of Northwestern University in Chicago will deliver the plenary talk on "Distinction and the City: Free Indirect Speech and Burney's Political Imaginary." Among the thirteen other presenters are Margaret Anne Doody, University of Notre Dame, who will speak on "Frances Burney and 'Mournful Ever-Weeping Paddington,'" Geoffrey Sill, Rutgers University, on "The Sentimental Heroine Visits Plymouth Dock," and Elles Smallegoor, University of Aberdeen, on "Fashioning England's Urban Lower Middle Class: Satire and Sound in Frances Burney's *Evelina*." In addition, Jill Gage of the Newberry Library will speak to the Society about the Library's18th-Century English collection. A complete program, including the list of speaker biographies, has been sent out to members.

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Port Eliot

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Shortly after Fanny Burney met Edward Eliot he visited Sir Joshua Reynolds's on Friday 30 March 1781. This time the party included Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, and Edward Eliot introduced them to *Mahogany*, a drink made from two parts of gin and one part of treacle. In 1784 Dr. Charles Burney was elected a member of Dr. Johnson's *Club* and it was Edward Eliot, in his capacity as Chairman of the Night for the next meeting, who signed the letter of 17 Feb. 1784 which informed Charles Burney that he had been elected.

A few months later James Boswell dined on 27 June 1784 at Sir Joshua Reynolds's with Edward Eliot, Samuel Johnson, and some others. On that evening, amongst other things, Boswell stated that Johnson expressed the hope that the contents of Sir Ashton Lever's Museum and Lord Orford's collection of pictures "…might be purchased by the public …" and would remain in England and it would be a loss "…if they were sold abroad…" Perhaps Boswell simplified what Johnson actually said because although the Lever collection was about to be sold the following year a substantial part of the Orford Collection had already been sold to Catherine the Great in 1779.

Some years later, in 1792, James Boswell visited the Eliot family at their home, Port Eliot, in St Germans in Cornwall. Port Eliot is under twenty miles from Saltram and less from Mount Edgcumbe and Devonport Docks which Fanny Burney visited as a member of the Royal Party in 1789. Today the tenth earl, Lord St. Germans, lives at Port Eliot. Unlike Saltram and Mount Edgcumbe, Port Eliot is a family home. The St. Germans family live in the rooms which are open to the public and the house is open only a hundred days a year. It is therefore necessary to check that the house is open if a visit is proposed.

A priory dedicated to St. Germanus was founded there in early times. After the dissolution of the monasteries during the reign of Henry VIII the priory came into the possession of the Eliot family. The house was extended and remodelled by Sir John Soane, and Humphry Repton was involved too, and alterations have continued over the years. The house, park, and gardens are all listed Grade 1.

Joshua Reynolds's pictures in the house depict a number of members of the Eliot family. The portraits have an additional interest because they were painted from the 1740s to the 1780s and show how Reynolds's style matured. There is also a rare landscape by Joshua Reynolds at Port Eliot. It is a long narrow panoramic view of Plymouth Sound. Although a minor work compared with Reynolds's portraits, it is of interest because it shows places which can be identified today: the spire of Charles's Church, now a memorial to civilians killed in the Second World War; the tower of St. Andrew's Church where Samuel Johnson heard Zachariah Mudge preach; the Citadel which is still a military base; the Narrows, which Fanny Burney crossed in a ferry with Margaret Planta; Mount Edgcumbe, where Fanny Burney visited the Edgcumbe family and found a copy of her novel *Cecilia*; the tower of Maker Church where young Joshua Reynolds drew a portrait of the preacher on his thumbnail; Drake's Island, a prison after the Civil War; and the distant coast towards Rame Head, classified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. An investigation to try to find the place from which Joshua Reynolds painted the picture might be a pleasant form of relaxation on a summer day but it is possible that he altered the foreground to make it fit.

After Joshua Reynolds's death in 1792 Polly (Mary) Palmer, married Murrough O'Brien who was born in 1723, the same year as Joshua Reynolds. He had several titles, Inchiquin and later Thomond so Polly (Mary) is mentioned in accounts of the times as Lady Inchiquin, Lady Thomond and the Marchioness of Thomond. Her mother was Joshua Reynolds's sister Molly (Mary) Palmer of Great Torrington. Polly had a younger sister Offy (Theophila) Palmer who lived with her Uncle Joshua in Leicester Square from after the death of her father in 1770 until she married Robert Lovell Gwatkin in the summer of 1781. Fanny Burney first mentions Polly and Offy Palmer in her *Journal* in September 1778 when she noted that Polly had the better understanding and Offy the most pleasing face. It was the occasion when they learned that Fanny was the author of *Evelina*. Fanny Burney met Robert Lovell Gwatkin at Sir Joshua Reynolds's in 1779 "…Next came a Mr Gwatkin, of whom I have nothing to say, but that he was very talkative with Miss Offy Palmer, and very silent with everybody else …"

Polly Palmer was not always at Leicester Square with Offy in the early 1770s, when Joshua Reynolds's sister Frances Reynolds was the housekeeper, but Polly took over as Joshua Reynolds's housekeeper in 1777 so from that date she was the hostess when people dined there. She remained with him until he died and was his main inheritor.

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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. In Great Britain, write David and Janet Tregear, 36 Henty Gardens, Chichester, West Sussex, England PO19 3DL or tregeardavid@hotmail.com

Chicago

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The winner of the Hemlow Prize will be announced during the conference. This prize, for the best graduate student essay in Burney studies, is given in honor of the memory of Dr. Joyce Hemlow, the founding editor of the Burney Project, which is housed in the Burney Centre at McGill University in Montreal.

The annual dinner on Thursday evening will feature a reading from one of Burney's works organised by Juliet McMaster of the University of Alberta. Those of you who saw Juliet's productions in Boston in 2000, Los Angeles in 2004, and Tucson in 2006 won't want to miss this!

The Newberry Library is located at 60 West Walton Street, directly across from Chicago's famed Washington Square Park and just a few blocks west of Michigan Avenue. The Library's exhibition *Artifacts of Childhood: 700 Years of Children's Books* opens Sept. 27 and runs through Jan. 17, 2009. It will include 65 items dating from the 15th century to the present. The first illustrated edition of Aesop's *Fables* (1485), the first edition of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), and examples of the alphabet from 1544 to 1992 are among its highlights.

The Burney Society conference will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. Thursday morning and end at 12:30 p.m. on Friday. In addition to sessions all day Thursday and Friday morning, the conference will include a reception and dinner Thursday evening at Maggianos Little Italy, 516 N. Clark St., Chicago.

Pricing/Registration Information

Participants can register for the full conference, including the talks at the Newberry Library, two continental breakfasts, two coffee breaks, the dinner and reading for a fee of $145 U.S. Lunch will be on your own on Thursday. Those who cannot attend the sessions during the day may register for the dinner meeting and the reading alone for a price of $50 U.S. each. Those wish to attend the sessions only can pay a fee of $95 U.S.

For more information or registration, please contact Alex Pitofsky, Secretary/ Treasurer 3621 – 9th St. Drive, N.E., Hickory, NC, 28601, pitofskyah@appstate.edu, or Catherine Parisian at cmparisian@verizon.net, before September 15th.

Burney society members at the UK meeting

Burney Society UK Branch
Summer Meeting at Parham -- 15 June 2008
By David Tregear

On Sunday 15 June 22 members gathered at Parham for an exclusive tour of this historic house. The building shows its age through the Elizabethan coat of arms in the Great Hall dated 1597. Amongst splendid portraits of Philip Sidney, Robert Devereux, and of the then owners the Bisshop family, is a national treasure painting of 1611 of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, painted shortly before his premature death which led to the succession of Charles I. The size of this, and, indeed of all the rooms was ample without ostentation, a familiar factor reflected in the wall-hangings, furniture, and the careful restoration undertaken sympathetically since the House came into the hands of the Pearson family in 1922.

For our members the artistic focus was to be found in the Long Gallery on the second floor, a room of 160 feet in length used for walking exercise when rainy. The fine portrait of FB by Edward Francisco Burney and the companion piece of Alexander d'Arblay are fittingly complemented by a small case of the General's medals and epaulettes (including his 3 stars). Also shown is a sampler by FB's mother Esther Sleepe.

After the tour of the house and lunch in the Big Kitchen, members gathered in the Seed Room (just by the gate to the walled gardens). The talk on Bluestockingers was given by Markman Ellis, a Professor of Queen Mary College, London. His focus was on the extensive collection of letters both to and from Elizabeth Montagu, a wealthy socialite who became, through Mrs. Thrale on friendly terms with FB despite being 30 years older. This collection is held at the Huntington Library Pasadena, CA, and numbers 7000 items of which he had studied at least 1500. This study had enabled analysis by individual correspondent and by topics covered in the letters. From all this it was clear that much serious coterie-criticism took place between correspondents, both men and women. The breadth of topics became narrower the nearer the approach of the French Revolution. The bluestocking circle established a female network like minds outside male groups in coffee houses and clubs, into which FB and her circle could fit and grow.

Altogether members were stimulated by the speaker's remarks to resolve to study in more detail the fascinating period and FB's circle.

After the talk, the AGM of the UK Branch heard a heartening message from the President, Paula Stepankowsky, before a brief review of membership and accounts. Mention was made of plans for Chawton House on 14 June 2009 and Paris on 10 and 11 June 2010. Hester Davenport distributed samples of publicity leaflets, and more could be had if members could spread their words. Bill Fraser told members that a faculty to allow a stone, hand-carved plaque at St. Stephen's Walcot would shortly be issued when masons might be commissioned for the work at an estimated cost of £7000. Enquiries would be made of charities for possible contributions towards a cost at present beyond the resource of the UK Branch. The present Secretaries/Treasurers would continue until the earlier of the finding of replacements or the Paris conference.

E.F. Burney: A Note on his Middle Name

By Patricia Crown

Frances Burney's artist cousin Edward figured in her letters, diaries and journals from 1776 when he arrived in London as an art student until her last years when he regularly visited her to take tea or to do errands and other favors. He is often mentioned by Susan Burney Phillips, Sarah Harriet Burney and Dr. Charles Burney. He is usually called Edward, sometimes Inny, Ned and Edwardus. Nicknames were much used in the Burney family, notably "Fanny." Middle names however were rarely tampered with.

Nevertheless Edward F. Burney's middle name is recorded in a variety of ways when it is recorded at all; it is interesting to speculate on the reasons for the variations and to try to determine which should be used.

His few existing letters are signed E. or E. F. Burney. His will (1843) is signed Edward Burney. He rarely signed his drawings; when he did he used initials. Francisco or Francesco are inscribed by other hands occasionally on the mounts or frames of his works, but they are not signatures on the works themselves. The Register of Kensal Green Cemetery where he was buried in 1848 recorded his name as Edward Burney, with no middle name. The headstone (weathered and densely covered in ivy and brambles) is inscribed "To the memory of EFB Esq /Who died Dec the {illegible} /Aged 88 years …."

The *Worcester Memoranda*, a history of the branch of the family to which Edward belonged, was compiled from various papers in the 19th century, asserts that the artist was born "toward the end of September" 1760 and "christened Edward Francisco." In 1959 Mrs P.T. Underdown searched for baptismal records in the twelve Worcester parishes where he might possibly have been baptized, and found nothing, so the *Memoranda*'s claim has not been substantiated. Charlotte Burney Francis transcribed a poem by "Edward Francisco Burney" in her *Commonplace Book of Verses* (now in the Houghton Library).

The Royal Academy of Arts: A Complete Dictionary of Contributors and Their Works 1769-1904, which Algernon Graves compiled from his collection of exhibition catalogues, lists the artist's name as Edward Francis Burney. The Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, the Yale Center for British Art, the H.E. Huntington Library and other major repositories of his art also call him Edward Francis. In its various publications the National Portrait Gallery has called him Francis, Francisco and Francesco.

Joyce Hemlow and other Burney scholars have preferred the middle name Francesco. Substantial evidence for this Italian form comes from four sources. The Royal Academy of Arts Schools Register shows his birth date as 7 September (contradicting the *Worcester Memoranda*) and his name as Edward Francesco (contradicting its own exhibition catalogues from 1780 to 1803). The wills of Frances Burney d'Arblay and Esther Burney mention him as Edward Francesco. Joan Evans's letter to the London *Times* 16 January 1931 reported that her friend Mrs. Reginald Lane Poole (an Oxford historian) had a Royal Academy medal for excellence in drawing that had been awarded and inscribed to Edward Francesco Burney in 1780.

That Edward himself used Francesco only once, when he enrolled in art school in 1777, may suggest a possible origin for the name. He would have wished to associate himself with the great 16th- and 17th-century Italian painters who were continually held up to Royal Academy students for emulation: Albani, Primaticcio, Salviati, and Bassano, to name a few exemplary Francescos; in addition to these Renaissance artists the eminent engraver Francesco Bartolozzi was a friend of the Burney family. Early in Edward's career Bartolozzi made engravings after a number of the younger man's drawings. Edward was only sixteen years old when he began his studies; an assumed or modified name might have been an adolescent affectation; he might have wanted to show what his aspirations were. His uncle Charles, who was then generously promoting Edward's career had improved his own fortunes when young by changing his name from Macburney to Burney; he might well have suggested such a tactic to his nephew. Italianate nicknames for family members were common in Frances and Susan Burney's letters: Padre for their father, Carlo, Carlos, Carlucci, Carlino for brother and nephew; in 1778 the author signed herself Francesca Scriblerus. There were at least two first and middle name changes in the family: Hannah Maria became Marianne; Amelia Maria became Emily.

I do not believe that the *Worcs. Mem.* is entirely reliable, useful though it is. Joyce Hemlow for instance corrected its spelling of the name of Edward's mother from Humphreys to Humphries. Why would Mr. Richard Burney and Elizabeth Humphries Burney give their son a Spanish name? The names of their eight children were generally conventional, except for Charles Rousseau whose middle name is said by the *Worcs. Mem.* to be that of a close friend (never mentioned elsewhere) of Richard Burney. I think this explanation can be questioned. Rousseau was the name of a musician prominent in the 1740s and 1750s, one whom Charles Burney met, and praised in his *History of Music*. It is perfectly possible that Richard the musician meant to honor Rousseau the musician and express his hopes that his first son would attain something like Rousseau's status. It was only later that J.J. Rousseau became notorious as a deist and anti-monarchist, a reputation which would have made him distasteful to the compiler(s) of the *Worcs. Mem.*, who, by the 19th century, were clergymen anxious to erase, as far as possible, their descent from music masters and to proclaim their Tory principles.

Lacking a specially revered Spanish musician or artist or monarch or intimate friend of the family in 1760 to explain "Francisco" I doubt that the artist was so christened. I suggest that the fashion for Spanish art around the middle of the 19th century – replacing or at least vying with the mid-18th-century reverence for Italian painting – might account for either an unconscious mistake in transcription or a conscious wish to identify their great-uncle with a then more highly esteemed school of art.

I am reluctant to differ with the distinguished scholars who prefer to use Francesco. Nevertheless, until new evidence emerges I am inclined to follow his own practice and refer to him as Edward or E.F Burney.

Patricia Crown is Professor Emerita of Art History at the University of Missouri. She has published numerous articles on British and French art 1750-1850, on 18th-century women artists, on book illustration, the culture of art consumption in the Georgian period, and on William Morris. She has curated exhibitions at the Huntington Library and Art Collections, among them "Images of Women by William Hogarth," and "Comic Art from the Yale Center for British Art." She is currently writing a biography and guide to the art of Edward Burney.

Fanny takes a short walk

By Hester Davenport

On a visit to Greenwich Observatory recently I was intrigued at the back of the building to come upon a dark stubby length of tube, mounted and pointing skywards. A plaque revealed that it is a section of William Herschel's once-famous 40-foot telescope, which Fanny and her father saw while it was still under construction in the garden of his house in Windsor Road, Slough, on 30 December 1786.

Herschel had discovered the planet Uranus (named Georgium Sidus by him in honour of the King) with a 7-foot telescope and then began successful use of a 20-foot one to map the heavens, so what worlds might be revealed by one double the size? Fanny records the high hopes for it, and the strange promenade she made that morning at Herschel's invitation "through his telescope!" To convey its size she says that "it held me quite upright, and without the least inconvenience: so it would have done had I been dressed in feathers and a bell hoop." Her excitement is understandable, but the fragment at Greenwich suggests that enthusiasm carried her away: she was small, but not a midget. The King, who gave Herschel £4000 for its construction, would certainly have had to stoop when he traversed it with the Archbishop of Canterbury, first cracking a good joke: "Come, my lord Bishop, and I will show you the way to Heaven."

Unfortunately the 40-footer did not live up to expectations. It proved unwieldy and the only significant discoveries made with it were of the 6th and 7th moons of Saturn. But for half a century its bulk on an immense scaffold was a feature of the landscape for travellers on the Bath Road nearby. Then in 1840 Herschel's son John dismantled the framework, leaving the huge tube lying on the grass. Another 30 years passed and a tree fell on it, crushing all but a small section. That remained until in 1959 Slough Council made the much-deplored decision to demolish Herschel's house in favour of office-building, presenting the relic to Greenwich Observatory.

Truncated as it is today, it is nevertheless a fascinating remnant for astronomers, and for Burney admirers, who can picture her on a morning's leave from court, perhaps using one hand on the curving sides for support, while the other clutched her long skirts to prevent tripping as she made her way through to the light at the end of the tunnel.

A section of William Herschel's telescope at Greenwich Observatory.

Burneys on BBC

Two recent programs on Radio 3 of the BBC have featured Charles Burney. In "Burney and Hawkins: Two Histories," which first aired on 31 May 2008 Peter Holman explored an 18th-century tale of personal rivalry, character assassination and ruthless social climbing, bringing to life the characters of musical historians Burney and Hawkins. The program focuses on what they thought about music of their time and earlier, and how Burney sabotaged his rival's work. With Simon Callow as Burney and John Fortune as Hawkins, the program also included contributions from historians Rosemary Sweet and William Weber, as well as Alvaro Ribeiro, editor of Charles Burney's letters, and Kate Chisholm, biographer of Frances Burney.

Another program heard twice was a repeat of broadcast first aired on11th November 2007(repeated on Saturday 28 June and Sunday 10 August). Lucie Skeaping talks to musicologist Ian Gammie about the life and extensive travels of the inimitable Charles Burney who met on his journeys some of the great musical luminaries of the day, including Padre Martini, Scarlatti and the young Mozart. The playlist includes works by Palestrina and Piccinni.

These programs could be enjoyed by listeners around the world via the BBC "Listen Again" service. Some programs are archived on the website www.bbc.co.uk/radio3; or for further info, try contacting the show at discovering.music@bbc.co.uk.

The Burneys in Paris, 10-11 June 2010: "Women and the Revolution"

Don't forget to book your ticket to Paris for the Burney Society Conference at the Institut Charles V of the Université-Paris Diderot in the Marais (nearest Métro stop, Saint-Paul). A day trip to Joigny is also planned, travelling by train from the Gare du Lyons (journey time: 1 hour 20 minutes). And a guided walk through the areas of Paris that Fanny and Alexandre would have known. There are plenty of small hotels locally; a recommended list will be printed in the next Newsletter, plus a program of talks.

Manoeuvring In A Minefield – A New Sarah Burney Attribution

By Sheila Graham-Smith

Just after Emma solves Mr. Elton's charade on courtship she explains it to Harriet by saying, "it is a sort of prologue to the play, a motto to the chapter; and will soon be followed by matter-of-fact prose."[1] Jane Austen never wrote a book matching Emma's description but an immediate contemporary of hers did – a novella titled *Julia, A Tale in Twelve Chapters*. Each of those chapters is headed by a word that appears from the dedication page to have been taken from a game of charades played by the anonymous author sometime before she copied out the text in 1803, and the "composition of the plot,"[2] as she points out in the final pages, was adapted to them. The dedication reads "To The Marchioness of Bath, who gave the words prefixed to each Chapter, this little Performance, composed for her amusement, is inscribed by her Faithful and Obliged Friend, The Author."[3]

Julia is the story, presented in two hundred and seventy-four handwritten pages, of a young heiress exposed, through the neglect of her parents, to unscrupulous fortune hunters.[4] The book opens with a lively girl bursting onto the scene to announce that the fine people who have hired the neighbouring house have arrived. Her mother is uninterested and her father is absent, so Julia takes matters into her own hands and arranges, through a mutual acquaintance, to meet the "gayest, pleasantest, charmingest creatures in the world."[5] The designs these lovely people have on her, the traps they lay for her, and Julia's ultimate fate drive the plot.

So who wrote *Julia*? The question is a problematic one. Peter Garside notes, in his paper on Mrs. Ross and Elizabeth Lester, that "the fiction of the early nineteenth century is well known as a minefield for author attributions,"[6] and *Julia* is no exception. The recent controversy, played out in the pages of the *TLS* and *The Chronicle Of Higher Education* over the attribution of an anonymous translation of Goethe's *Faust* to Coleridge highlights some of the difficulties, but as Jennifer Howard says in "A Question of Evidence, or a Leap of Faith," they come down to a "question that, in the absence of a smoking gun – a manuscript of *Faustus* in Coleridge's hand, for instance – may not be answerable: How much evidence is enough?"[7]

In the case of *Julia* we have a manuscript but it doesn't exactly clarify matters. In the course of a swindle concerning the purchase of a "black swan" the heroine's mother is presented with a forged note from one of her neighbours. She declares the handwriting "exactly like,"[8] and gives "implicit credit to the authenticity of the paper" [9] but the manuscript itself is a copy intended for presentation and therefore not "exactly like" any ordinary writing sample. Albert Osborn long ago made the point, in *Questioned Documents*, that "the writings most to be depended upon as standards are always those bearing dates nearest to the date of the disputed writing and that are of the same general class. This is true for the reason that writing of different individuals varies in differing degrees as written at different times and for different purposes ..."[10] The manuscript is, for the most part, written in Round Hand with a few upper case letters based on, but diverging fairly significantly from the Italian Hand. A case in point are the capital Bs and Rs.[11] The limited examples I have of Sarah Burney's letters[12] show the same essential round hand mixed with capitals in or derived from the Italian, the same Bs and Rs, but with several upper cases – the A, the M and the W for example – in the opposite hand from the manuscript. Osborn stresses the fact that "many writers have more than one form of certain letters under command and make any one of two or even three normal styles under different circumstances and conditions, and divergences of this kind will not, of course, differentiate two writings. The presence, however, of this variety of forms by the same writer ... is highly significant evidence of identity. It is important also to understand that an entirely different design of letter often does not so conclusively point to a different writer as a persistent but slight modification of a minor part of the same general type of letter."[13] Other more subtle points of comparison in the handwriting show striking similarities, the angle of slant in the manuscript, for instance, falls well within the parameters set by the letters, and in points of arrangement – spacing between lines, paragraphing, parallelism, and placement of letters above and below an imaginary line – the manuscript matches the letters. Also of interest are the shared habit of underlining words and phrases for emphasis and the match in the method of crossing out errors – (a distinctive slanted hatching, as opposed, for instance, to Jane Austen's line through the offending word) and the compression of words toward the end of a line (rather than Austen's habit of running the remainder of the word in a slant down the margin).[14] Both the manuscript and Sarah Burney's letters often neatly compress the lines toward the bottom of the page. Given variations in dating and the fact that Sarah Burney's hand, like the hand of most people who write constantly, varied considerably with time, health and occasion – Dr Burney, for instance, comments on her "very good hand," in reference to her work transcribing his articles and letter[15] – the handwriting comparisons cannot, at this point in my research, be considered conclusive but certainly seem consistent with a common authorship.

My conviction that Sarah Burney was the author of *Julia* was not, however, initially founded on a handwriting examination but on the striking stylistic parallels between the manuscript and her published work, including her letters. By using the 281 volumes by 79 authors in the British prose of the romantic era 1780-1837 section of *Literature Online* and the 10,515 documents by 120 or so contemporary writers in the *British and Irish Women's Letters and Diaries* database it was possible to compare the anonymous author's language with that of a significant cross section of her contemporaries, and by using on-line texts of Sarah Burney's work,[16] to add her language use to the data pool. In many cases matches were of words too generally used to be significant as comparison tools but a list of 41 manuscript words,[17] chosen from comparisons of hundreds, that were not so common as to be useless, showed a 100% match to Sarah Burney's work, as well as (not unexpectedly, considering the "family likeness" between their works remarked on by reviewers and commented on by Lorna Clark)[18] a 92.7% match to Frances Burney's work and a dramatically declining match rate with all other contemporary writers. A comparison of the same 41 words to women's letters of the same period produced an 83% match with Frances Burney, and a steadily declining match rate thereafter.

An examination of less common words and constructions provides further support for Sarah Burney as author. To begin with, there is the phrase "faithful and obliged" in the dedication, a combination Sarah Harriet used in a letter to Henry Crabb Robinson – "your obliged and faithful SH Burney"[19] – and used by only four other women in the BWLD database in the period.

A few further examples for consideration – In response to a warning that a tale she is hearing is a melancholy one Julia says "then for pity's sake cut it as short as possible for I detest the dismals,"[20] Neither the *OED* nor *Literature Online* records the word "dismals," but Sarah Burney used a phrase that explains it perfectly – "for I cannot bear to be gradually worked up into an agony by those dismal stories."[21]

Julia's mother, Lady Fitzclare, who has "a decided predilection for dogs" apparently shared by Sarah Burney,[22] has two, Badin and Marphise, whose names provide a further link to the work of Sarah Burney. Badin's name comes from the French "badin," or joker, while Marphise is the sister of Orlando in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, a work Sarah Burney mentions reading twice,[23] and alludes to in *Geraldine Fauconberg*. Pompey, an "enormous" Newfoundland dog whose name is likely an ironic allusion to the hero of *Pompey the Little, The Life and Adventures of a Lap Dog*,[24] makes an appearance in *Geraldine Fauconberg*, as does Furie, a snarling little French dog whose Italian name is related to furioso. "Le cher petit Fanfan," who seems to be named for Fanfan la Tulipe, a popular soldier character in French songs of the period, appears in *The Renunciation*, and a cat called "the fair Selima" after Gray's favourite, appears in *Traits of Nature*, adding up to a fairly distinctive tendency in the naming of animals.

In the aforementioned scene involving the sale of the alleged black swan to Lady Fitzclare the villain of the piece disguises his voice in an accent strikingly like that spoken by Bertrand in *Clarentine*. Compare "de proice of de Rara Avis be von troifle, vivty gunees. Dat be all ..."[25] to "I do not comprend von vord dat you say! .... I know vat you say ver vell now!"[26] There are only four contemporary British prose authors in *Literature Online* who use such a transcription of language, one of them Frances Burney.[27] Lady Fitzclare's discussion of the likely appearance of the offspring of the swan points to another interest of Sarah Burney's. She wonders whether they will be black like their rare parent, or a pied combination of the black swan and its white mate, evincing an awareness of and interest in the question of the heritability of various traits that engaged Sarah Burney in her novel *Traits of Nature*, or as she would have preferred, *Traits of Temper*.[28] The word "traits" and its baggage of pangenesis, made explicit in *Julia* by a reference to the work of Buffon[29] and latent throughout *Traits of Nature* and the letters of Sarah Burney, appears twice in the manuscript in just the way Burney used it – "a distinguishing trait in your character"[30] and "a few traits I have heard of his rage."[31]

There are innumerable instances of unusual words and phrases including foreign language phrases, mainly French and Italian, that *Julia* shares with the work of Sarah Burney, and few others – "a fig," for example, or "cecisbeo," "laconic answers," "red noses" (one of which Sarah Burney possessed),[32] "gay Lotharios" or "matrimonial projects," "soi-disant," or "old tabbies," (a perhaps affectionate term for ageing spinsters she shared only with Susan Ferrier), but perhaps our final consideration should be the odd comment that ends the manuscript "... an attempt so feebly executed ... as is exemplified in this performance, may have demonstrated that its Author has the best claim to the appellation of The Ass."[33] Perhaps not surprisingly, referring to oneself as an ass turns out to be a rare thing. Frances Burney suggests the possibility once, in a letter quoting Samuel Whyte,[34] begging the recipient to "set me down an ass,"[35] and two other prose authors between 1775 and 1803 do themselves the honour, but Sarah Burney claims the title twice in her letters.[36]

In the end it seems a modification of Albert Osburn's advice on handwriting attribution could be used to weigh the stylistic evidence for and against attribution: "It also needs to be emphasized that two writings are identified as being by the same writer by the absence of fundamental divergences as well as by a combination of a sufficient number of similarities. The process is always a double operation, positive and negative – there must not be present significant and unexplained divergences. These divergences (and, we could add, these similarities) must, however, be something more than mere trivial variations that can be found in almost any handwriting."[37] I believe that a judicious balancing of these variations and similarities does indeed constitute "enough evidence" to declare Sarah Harriet Burney the author of *Julia*.

Sheila Graham-Smith is an independent scholar researching anonymous women writers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. She is a graduate of Acadia University.

Notes

1. Jane Austen, *Emma*, Vol. 1, Ch. 9, p. 79, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen
2. Anonymous, *Julia*, p. 273
3. Ibid., Title page. I have so far been unable to find evidence of a connection, on whatever level, between Isabella Elizabeth Byng, the 2nd Marchioness of Bath, and Sarah Burney, although I'm pursuing some leads. Frances Burney knew and visited the 1st Marchioness of Bath but no relevant personal papers survive for the 2nd Marchioness. My thanks to the Marquis of Bath and Dr. Kate Harris, archivist at Longleat for that information. There is also no evidence that *Julia* was ever in the archive at Longleat. The manuscript is in the Princeton University Library, which has no information on its provenance beyond that it was acquired from an antiquarian bookseller in the 1970s.
4. Julia shares with Camilla a concern for the perils lying in wait for young girls of inadequate education.
5. Ibid., p. 1
6. Peter Garside, "Mrs. Ross and Elizabeth B. Lester: New Attributions," Cardiff Corvey: Reading the Romantic Text 2 (June 1998) *<http://www.cf.ac.uk/encap/romtext/articles/cc02_n02.html>*.
7. Jennifer Howard, "A Question of Evidence, or a Leap of Faith?" *The Chronicle of Higher Educatio*n, March 28, 2008.
8. *Julia*, p 118.
9. Ibid., p. 119.
10. Albert Osborn, *Questioned Documents*, Boyd Printing Co., 1929, p. 28.
11. Except in the case of the dedication, where the upper case B is copy book Italian hand
12. To Henry Colburn, 1816-20, Pierpont Morgan Library, Department of Literary and Historical Manuscripts (Number 83 in Clark) and the manuscript facsimile of the letter to

Charles Burney Jr. February 1808, on p. 89 of *The Letters of Sarah Harriet Burney*, ed. Lorna J. Clark (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1997).
13. Osborn, p. 265. Jane Austen provides a striking example of this tendency, sometimes using two different forms of the upper case A within a few lines. See below for examples.
14. Jane Austen; *Jane Austen's Manuscript Letters in Facsimile: reproductions of every known extant letter, fragment and autograph copy*, ed. Jo Modert (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989).
15. Clark, p. xliii.
16. Early American imprints, Series II, Shaw Shoemaker 1801-1819.
17. Insipid, lounging, buck, vivacity, animation, cecisbeo, chit, vile, soporific, engagements, quiz, turban, infernal, scheme, nasty, unsettled, giddy, red nose, averse, glee, odious, impertinent, sneer, alas, implacable, blab, capricious, partiality, lament, asperity, conjure, apprehend, shudder, solace, scarcely, stuff, ass, grin, laconic, starved, snug.
18. Clark, p. lvii. Julia has a particularly strong relationship to *Cecilia*, with a 75.6% match rate in word use, and several passages that appear to be ironic comments on it.
19. Clark, p. 433. Sarah Burney used both "obliged" and "faithful" several times in her complimentary closings. See p. 453, "your faithful and grateful"; p. 27 "your affectionate niece and obliged servant"; p. 29 "your ever obliged and affectionate niece"; p. 102 "your obliged and most truly grateful"; p. 180 "your much obliged and humble servant."
20. Ibid, p. 87.
21. Clark, p. 141.
22. Sarah Burney seems, from the evidence of her letters, to have paid considerable attention to pets and once refers to her family members as dogs and dog-esses – "Bless the dull dogs and dog-esses," p. 201; "And my friend Napoleon & his family? – Oh – Mrs Trannick's darling Spot has been very ill ... and she was in tears for two or three days, but is now charming well again," p. 246; "a damsel holding a pretty little good-natured white lap dog," p 338; "[she] takes her lap dog upon her knee and reads a chapter or two in her Italian bible and spends the remainder of her time till we all retire for the night, in nursing said dog, and lounging upon a sofa ..." p 350; "I have not forgotten your enquiry concerning Smalt and Ultramarine" (her cousin Edward's unspecified pets, possibly Irish Blue Terriers , given their names, but not Russian Blues as they seem to have been introduced to England in the 1860's), p. 46.
23. Ibid, pp. 66, and 395.
24. Francis Coventry, *The History of Pompey the Little, or The life and Adventures of a Lap Dog* (London, Printed for. M. Cooper, 1751). Julia's father alludes to "one year in the life and adventures of Julia Fitzclare," on p. 206 of the manuscript.
25. *Julia*, p. 118.
26. *Clarentine* (London: Printed for G. G. and J. Robinson, 1796) vol. 1, p. 132.
27. Frances Burney, *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth*, London, 1796, Ch. 8, "Vhat conjuration, and vhat mighty magic I von his dar'er vith ..."
28. Clark, pp. 149 and 157.
29. *Julia*, p. 117.
30. Ibid., p. 133.
31. Ibid., p. 84.
32. Clark, p. 17.
33. *Julia*, p. 274.
34. *British and Irish Women's Letters and Diaries*, D'Arblay, Frances Burney, Letter to Susan Burney, July 05, 1778
35. Samuel Whyte, "The Theatre," from *A Collection of Poems on Various Subjects*, 1792.
36. Clark, p. 58: "I am ass enough"; p. 84 "I was such an old ass."
37. Albert Osborn, p. 262.

First-ever Reprint of a Sarah Harriet Burney Novel

Sarah Harriet Burney, Frances's novel-writing sister, is sharing some of the limelight. The first-ever reprint of one of her novels has recently been published in July 2008, edited by Lorna J. Clark.

The Romance of Private Life (1839) is Burney's last novel and arguably her best. Initially published in three volumes, it consists of two striking tales. Based on her travels on the continent, *The Renunciation* presents a colourful picture of life abroad. An English girl travels to Italy in search of kin and supports herself as an artist, offering an early feminist heroine. *The Hermitage* is a gripping psychological thriller involving an unsolved murder. With shades of the Gothic, it offers a case-study of the after-effects of trauma, anticipating the genre of the detective novel and challenging prevailing critical assumptions of the patriarchal origins of the genre.

Like *The Wanderer* of Frances Burney, this novel was published when the author was in her sixties and shows the maturing of her literary powers. Sarah Harriet Burney came of age in the Romantic period. A pivotal figure, she builds on the conventions of the 18th-century novel and carries them forward into the next century; with echoes of Austen, her work points towards Hardy, Dickens and Eliot.

The edition is part of the Chawton House Library Series of Pickering and Chatto, which draws on its unparalleled collection of women's writing. Located in the Elizabethan manor house once owned by Jane Austen's brother in Hampshire, the library aims to promote and facilitate the study of early English women's writing. The series, under the general editorship of Stephen Bending and Stephen Bygrave of the University of Southampton, is divided into three strands: *Women's Memoirs, Women's Travel-writings* and *Women's Novels*. The texts have been carefully selected to illustrate various themes in women's history. The *Novels* are reset editions of rare and important novels by women authors, with extensive introductory matter and endnotes. Most have never before been republished.

The series will be of interest to scholars of 18th-century studies, women's history, women's writing, literature, travel writing and biography.

Selling for $85 or £45, *The Romance of Private Life* (2008) can be purchased from Pickering and Chatto through sales@pickeringchatto.co.uk. In the US, it is distributed by Ashgate Publishing, PO Box 2225, Williston, VT 05495-2225 USA, or (800) 535 9544. Elsewhere, it is available from Turpin Distribution, Stratton Business Park, Pegasus Drive, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire SG18 8TQ UK 44 (0) 1767 604 951.

Port Eliot

Continued from p. 2

Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote to his newly married niece Offy Gwatkin on 3 June1781 and stated that he had been prevented from writing until he had "…disengaged myself from Mrs Elliots where Polly is gone …" [Elliots *sic*, but there is no evidence in this letter that she was Mrs Eliot of Port Eliot, but read on …]

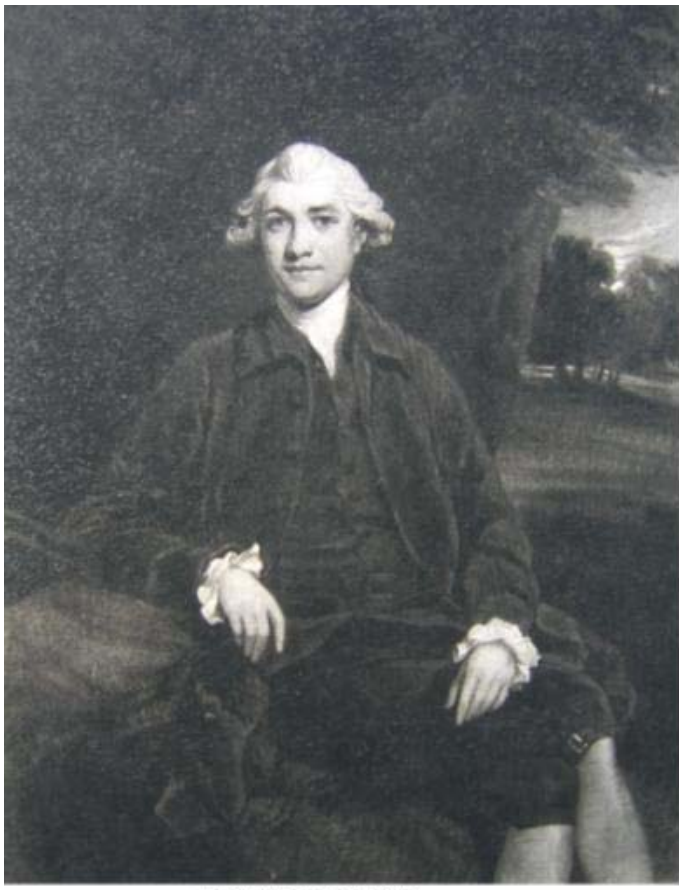
On 18 Sept. 1783 Reynolds wrote to Offy Gwatkin: "…I am very much mortified that I could not stay at Port-Elliot till your arrival … This letter will probably find you at Port Elliot …" [JR kept on misspelling *Eliot*, and even used *Elliott* which is tiresome because he also painted unrelated people called *Eliott* and *Elliot*]

On 28 Nov. 1783 Reynolds wrote to his nephew Joseph Palmer, eldest brother of Polly and Offy: "…Miss Palmer is at Roscrow but I believe intends to leave soon and go to Port Elliot, it will be some time before she will be in Town …"

Polly Palmer would have been visiting Mrs Gwatkin, her sister Offy's mother-in-law, at Roscrow. Incidentally at one time Roscrow was the home of Mrs. Delany, the flower painter and embroiderer, who knew Fanny Burney. Polly may well have met Edward Eliot's son Edward James Eliot on numerous occasions but to give a specific example: when Joshua Reynolds painted his portrait in 1778. Polly Palmer sang and played the piano, and presumably performed on earlier keyboard instruments, and was talented enough to be praised by Dr Charles Burney. Her musical ability would probably have made her a welcome house-guest at Port Eliot although she was some eight years older than Edward James Eliot. William Pitt, the statesman, was a friend of Robert Lovell Gwatkin when they were both up at Cambridge. They shared an interest in Maths. Edward James Eliot was up at Cambridge too and became a friend of William Pitt and married Pitt's sister Harriot in 1785 so it is highly likely that Eliot knew Gwatkin and invited him to Port Eliot with his wife Offy, although there are no known records to confirm this. Sadly, Edward James Eliot died in 1797, before his father.

James Boswell had a friend in Cornwall, the Rev. William Temple of St. Gluvias. Accompanied by his teenage daughters Veronica and Euphemia, James Boswell stayed at St. Gluvias in 1792 and they visited a number of people, including Offy and Robert Lovell Gwatkin at their home at Killiow. Boswell also visited Port Eliot. Here Boswell met again Edward Eliot, by then Lord Eliot, and his wife Catherine. Their son John Eliot 1761–1823 was there with his wife. John Eliot was to become the first Earl of St Germans. Also present was Miss Eliot, a sister of Lord Eliot, who was presumably Catherine Eliot. She appears as a little girl in the group portrait at Port Eliot painted by Joshua Reynolds in *c.* 1746. In 1792, Boswell described her as "…having had a violent universal rheumatism a great many years ago, so as to be quite lame and almost blind…yet she talked some and eat (*sic*) and drank pretty well …" She was "fat … almost smothered in clothes so that almost no part of her face is seen …" She made Boswell feel uneasy but he enjoyed the rest of the company and Lord Eliot referred to him as a Scottish Baron and himself as a Cornish Baron. This flattered Boswell because Boswell's father, Lord Auchinleck, had been a senior Scottish judge and a member of the Scottish Court of Session. Members of the Court of Session were allowed to style themselves as Lords although they were not entitled to sit in the House of Lords, nor were their titles hereditary.

At Sir Joshua Reynolds's funeral in 1792 Lord Eliot was one of the ten lords who were pallbearers.



EDWARD ELIOT,
after Sir Joshua Reynolds 1784

See Edwin Jaggard, *James Boswell's Tour Through Cornwall August – September 1792* (Journal of the Royal Institute of Cornwall, 2004); also Frances Burney's *Journal*; Boswell's *Life of Johnson*; *The Letters of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, edited by Ingamells and Edgcumbe (Yale, 2000); Roger Lonsdale, *Dr. Charles Burney* (Oxford UP, 1965; paperback, 1986); William Hague. *William Pitt the Younger* (HarperCollins, 2004; paperback, 2005). Related articles are to be found in the *Reynolds Newsletter*.

Leaflets Available

The UK Burney Society has produced a leaflet giving information and pictures of Fanny Burney, together with a cut-off form to apply for membership. They have been placed at likely venues such as Chawton House Library and Juniper Hall, Mickleham, Surrey; any other suggestions for placement or distribution would be welcomed. Contact the UK Secretaries/Treasurers David and Janet Tregear.

Putting a Face to the Burney Centre

Research into the life and works of Frances Burney has skyrocketed in recent years. Behind the work of the scholars who are breaking new ground is a generation of students being introduced to Burney's work through courses, research projects or assistantships. The Burney Centre at McGill University under the direction of Professor Peter Sabor serves as a training-ground for scholars in the 18th-century. Currently, three PhD and one MA student and three postdocs are working there which makes it a vibrant and exciting place to visit.

For the last four years, the Burney Centre has benefited from the hard work and efficiency of Laura Kopp. Editors of the Court Journals*, in particular, have appreciated Laura's work in getting the manuscript into shape, helping to place fragments, and answering any queries. Her calm presence and ready willingness to help will certainly be missed. Laura is now leaving for New York but wrote this piece upon request about her experience at the centre. We wish her all the best.*

By Laura Kopp

From the very start until my last day, I had a wonderful time working at the Burney Centre. I arrived at an exciting transition moment: Peter Sabor had just become its new director and was not only in the midst of overseeing its transformation into a modern research centre, but also of planning the new edition of Frances Burney's *Court Journals* and, to top it off, he was organizing a conference on Burney which would conclude with a performance of her play, *The Woman-Hater*, staged by the McGill theatre department. It felt as though we were preparing for a very big party.

After the applause had died down and the conference was over, work on the *Court Journals* began in earnest. The first step was to help Peter establish the text for the volume he was editing: 1786. Hemlow's legacy was invaluable here: although she had left the *Court Journals* aside for her own edition of Burney's *Journals and Letters*, her team had prepared a transcript, a work in progress neatly typed and tidily organized in a dozen ring binders.

Peter Sabor's editorial philosophy is never to take anything on trust, however: we needed to double-check and triple-check every scrap of Burney's writing. This turned out to be thrilling work, because the manuscript was anything but straightforward: pieces were missing or out of place, and a big pile of undated fragments – some of them pages long – had to be fitted in somewhere. It soon became apparent that in order to establish the text for 1786, the whole of the manuscript for 1786-91 needed vetting.

This grand exercise in puzzle solving was the most enjoyable work I have ever done. Perched up by the Burney Centre's windows overlooking the McGill campus and Mount Royal, I spent months immersed in Burney's life at Windsor and at Kew, reading the transcript forwards and backwards to find the right place in which to insert one fragment or another, and making sure that all the material from the Berg Collection, the British Library, and Yale fit together. I couldn't have done it without the help of Lars Troide and Stewart Cooke, who had been editing Burney for years and were always willing to answer my questions.

But there was more to life at the Burney Centre than solving manuscript mysteries. The Centre was always a busy hive: Peter, Lars, Stewart, the occasional visiting scholar, and the other research assistants made the place cheerful and convivial. Although we might all be working on different projects, from Burney's *Early Journals and Letters*, to Richardson, to *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, it felt like a collaboration.

I'm looking forward to returning to New York. I only wish I could take the Centre home with me. In a sense, though, I will take it with me: to begin with, there are the happy memories, of course; then there's my current work, a translation from the Italian of Francesca Saggini's book on Burney; and, last but not least, there's my desk. I rescued it from the Centre when the modern furniture came in, and I'm sure Joyce Hemlow sat at that very same wooden table when she was working on her edition.

Laura Kopp has a BA from Hunter College, City University of New York, and an MA from Rutgers University, where her research focused on the American historian Henry Adams. She was Research Co-ordinator at the Burney Centre from 2003 to 2007 and will now be returning to New York to work as a freelance editor and translator.

New to Fanny Burney

By Lindsay Brown

I am very excited about "discovering" Fanny Burney. I have always been a voracious reader and had read most of the English classics by the age of 10 or 11 and many of the more famous European and Russian writers by 13 or 14. Over the years I have tried to appreciate modern novels but have usually been disappointed by English fiction after about 1970. Now in my fifties, I have started to reread some of the novels I first read as a teenager, like Thomas Hardy and Mrs Gaskell. This has been very rewarding but I was beginning to get the rather depressing feeling that the wonderful stock of English literature had run dry for me.

So, confined to the house by illness last month I was delighted to find *Evelina* on my bookshelves and was immediately hooked. I ordered *Cecilia* and *Camilla* from Amazon the next day.

I was surprised by the strength and clarity of the self-assured female voice coming to us from the 18th century, delighted by the moral struggles of her heroines and completely hooked by her fast-paced story-telling.

I found in *Cecilia* a surprise of a different sort – one which I have never come across before. I got to page 624 (at the point where she is due to be married in secret the following day) and was horrified to find the next fifty pages missing from my copy. I rang up Oxford World Classics and the kind lady promised to send me a replacement. I couldn't help but carry on reading, although it was difficult to piece together what happened in the missing narrative.

Apparently I was the second person in two days to phone her with this complaint but no-one else seems to have noticed since this edition was published ten years ago. This made me feel part of a very small but select band of Fanny Burney readers in the UK.

I was not surprised to find out about your society and can readily see how finding out about all things Fanny Burney could become addictive.

Camilla remains unread on my bedside table by way of stretching out the pleasure as long as possible.

Lindsay Brown lives in Hampshire with her husband and teenage son. She works as an auditor of the National Health Service in London, England.

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 in.

Sevenoaks Literary Festival

By Lorna Clark

Two Burney Society members will be performing at the Sevenoaks Literary Festival in Kent. The seventh annual festival offers a full and varied program with a wide range of literary events, including talks by best-selling novelists Victoria Hislop, Penelope Lively and Salley Vickers, a tea for local book groups and the annual Weald Literary Walk.

On 2 October at 7:30 p.m., Hester Davenport will be presenting "Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III" with readings from the diaries by Karin Fernald.

For this performance, Hester writes the text and acts as narrator; Karin reads FB's words. Readers of Burney's journal-letters will recognise some of the striking passages: the interview with the King and Queen at Mrs. Delany's house, the assassination attempt, the "madness," the monstrous Schwellenberg, etc. – as well as a running story of the Digby relationship. "The main problem of writing the script is that there is so much that is lively and quotable, but I've tried to strike a balance between witty, tragic, informative, indignant, descriptive," Hester writes.

Hester Davenport's work as a lecturer and biographer is highly acclaimed; a popular speaker at the gatherings of literary societies, she delivers lively and entertaining talks, often without recourse to her notes. She has given papers to the Burney Society at the Westminster Conference (2002), at Bath (2005) and at Windsor (2007); in 2006, she spoke to the Sevenoaks Literary Celebration on 18th-century bathing practices, "Fanny & Jane at the Seaside." Her account of the court years of Frances Burney, *Faithful Handmaid: Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III* (2000) was later published in paperback. More recently, she has written about the scandalous Mary Robinson in *The Prince's Mistress* (2004). Her interest in both women writers may have arisen from their connection to Windsor where Hester lives; she has also published a book on local writers and gives guided tours of the literary and historical sites in Windsor.

Karin Fernald is well-known to Burney Society members who have been fortunate enough to see her performances. At the Westminster (2002), she held the audience spell-bound as she enacted scenes from Burney's plays, powerfully conveying the passion of her tragic heroines and the playful wit of her comic characters. Similarly, at Windsor (2007), she helped bring her journals to life. Her solo show, "The Famous Miss Burney," has been performed worldwide to great acclaim, most recently at the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond. Karin has a distinguished theatrical background, having worked with Ralph Richardson and Robert Morley, and has played leading roles from Isabella in *Measure for Measure* to Sally Bowles and Elizabeth Bennet. She has been a NADFAS speaker for 20 years, and also appears regularly at the National Portrait Gallery, Dr Johnson's House, the Foundling Museum and other literary festivals.

This and other information on the 2008 Program, with venues, dates, times and ticket prices, can be found at the festival website www.sevenoaksliterarycelebration.com.

Betty Rizzo (1926-2008)

By Lorna Clark

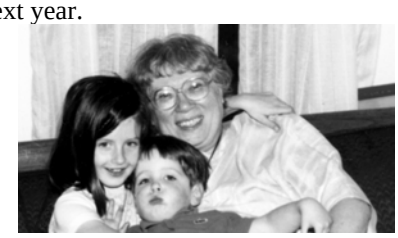
Members of the Burney Society will be deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Burney scholar and patron, Betty Rizzo on 5 August 2008 in New Rochelle, N.Y. Betty is remembered by her colleagues and students as a brilliant and generous scholar, who gave unselfishly of her time and expertise. As word spread among the 18th-century community, many paid tribute to the kindness and support showed by Betty to scholars and students alike, to the sense of community that she fostered and to the values that she upheld.

The author of seven books, including two popular textbooks on composition, she published numerous articles and reviews on a wide variety of 18th-century topics. Betty Rizzo was best known for her work on Frances Burney and Christopher Smart. Her *Companions without Vows* (1994) included a chapter on the friendship of Burney with Mrs. Thrale that is often cited; her edition of vol. 4 of *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney* (Oxford UP, 2003) has been praised as a model of rigorous scholarship. She has been the keynote speaker at Burney Society dinners and had recently published articles in *The Burney Journal* and *A Celebration of Frances Burney* (2007). When the Burney Society was formed in 1994, Betty instantly agreed to become a patron and remained a staunch supporter thereafter, writes Paula Stepankowsky, Burney Society president.

She was equally supportive of other women scholars and writers. She contributed enthusiastically to the *Dictionary of British and American Women Writers 1660-1800*, a ground-breaking work by Janet Todd who dedicated it to her out of gratitude. Todd writes that "hers was a love of learning for its own sake, a desire to see women writers and scholars take their rightful place in our sense of past culture. Her work means that we all know a lot more about 18th-century women writers than we would otherwise do ... [we] will automatically think of her whenever we open a page of Sarah Scott, of Catherine Macaulay, Frances Burney, Elizabeth Carter and all the many women she taught us to value."

Betty travelled to the Burney Society conference in Westminster Abbey in 2002 with her husband of many years, Professor Raymond Rizzo, of John Jay College, CUNY. She was devoted to him, as well as to her five children; her eminence as a scholar is all the more remarkable when one considers that she earned her PhD as a mature student while carrying many other responsibilities.

At the time of her death, she had two books in press which will be published next year.



Her eldest daughter, Erica Kenney sent us the following details of her mother's life.

Betty Rizzo was always brilliant. She attended Barnard College at the age of 16 and graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1947. Her burning interest was in writing fiction. She spent years working on novels, murder mysteries and children's stories.

Between 1948 and 1964, she had five children, four girls and a boy. She returned to graduate school in 1966 when her first child, Erica, went off to college and her youngest was just three years old. In her studies, she had the unqualified support of her husband, also a professor, who took over the household and cooking duties. Still, even with his help, it was a daunting task to pursue her doctorate (from CUNY) with so many young children in the house. She taught at CUNY and at the Graduate Centre from 1971 until her retirement in 1998.

Ray and Betty Rizzo also ran the Spa Music Theater together in Saratoga Springs from 1962-69, a summer stock theatre, where Ray was producer and sometimes director and Betty was Business Manager. In 1970, they switched to films and had a successful Film Festival for many years. They bought a farm in the area of Argyle, New York, which they loved. The place, ten acres, absorbed much of their time and attention as they put in a pond, a swimming pool and filled the place with antique furniture.

Betty was devoted to her scholarship, but she was equally devoted to her ten grandchildren: Alexandra and Ned Kenney, Matthew, William and Clarke Magnani, Jacob and Emily Miller, Halley Aycock, and Ernest and Xiao Han Brunton (at the time of her death, Alexandra is 26 and Xiao Han just 2). She also spent many years taking care of her elderly parents in their home in Massachusetts; after Ray had a stroke in 1993 and was paralyzed permanently, she continued to care for him at home as well. Nevertheless, when Ray was well enough, and Betty was strong enough to push him around, they did travel together to visit children in Texas and California, and also to meetings as far away as England.

Betty had a life-long love of cats and had a particularly beloved cat named Scout at the time of her own stroke in February of 2008. After Ray's death, Scout became extremely important to Betty, and while she did not like to spend money on herself, she would not hesitate to buy Scout an expensive carrying case or some imported catnip. Scout now lives in Vermont with Betty's only son, Peter Rizzo, and is kept good company by Peter's other cat, Moon.

At the very end of her life, although Betty could not type any longer or read too well, she was still doing crossword puzzles, and in fact, next to her bed the day she died, was a puzzle book with a pen marking her place. Words were important to Betty to the very end (she had taught herself to read when she was just three).

Clearly, Betty Rizzo's gifts were more than just academic; her life and service have touched and inspired many in her field and beyond.

In an effort to honour all the facets of her rich and varied contributions, a round table is being organised at this year's East-Central ASECS conference at Georgetown to reflect her varied roles as scholar, teacher, colleague, and editor (contact Nora Nachumi, Associate Professor and Acting Chair, Department of English, Stern College/Yeshiva University, 215 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016; nachumi@yu.edu).

Expressions of condolence to the family can be sent to her eldest daughter, Erica Kenney (10 The Byway, Bronxville, N.Y. 10708 or EMKenney10@aol.com).

REVIEW

By Geoffrey Sill

Fanny Burney's first comic drama, *The Witlings*, made its "off-off Broadway" premiere on May 16, 2008, when the Magis Theatre Co. presented it as part of a series of "lost" plays by women playwrights. The performances, at the West End Theatre on 86th Street in Manhattan, ran until June 1.

Because the play has long since closed, this retrospective review will focus on some of the more successful elements of director Deborah Philips's production, which emphasized the farcical qualities of Burney's most Molièresque comedy. Played as farce, the comedy loses some of its satirical edge, but Burney's eye for the ridiculous still resonated with a modern audience.

Lady Smatter, played by Margi Sharp, appeared in a red mini-skirt with pumped-up posteriors and a high white wig. A ridiculous figure from the start, there was little room to cut her down to size at the end of the play, and her pretensions to learning were never a serious object of satire, but her pratfalls were amusing. Mr. Dabbler, a rap poet with wrap-around sunglasses, NY Yankees jacket, and a belt buckle shaped like a dollar sign, declaimed his lines with triumphal finger-pointing gestures and hip-hop dance steps. In the "talk-back" session with the cast after the play, George Drance, who played Dabbler, explained that he had based his portrait of Dabbler on Kevin Federline, whose character needed little development to achieve farce. Mrs. Sapient (Rachel Benbow Murdy), in mourning for her late lapdog, punctuated almost every line with a bark, which made her character even more annoying than the playwright probably intended. Mr. Codger (Frank Mihelich) dressed formally in black tie and tails, but his white socks gave him away. His deliberative pace of thought and speech contrasted with that of his son Jack (Gabe Portuondo), a wannabe superhero who wore a warmup jacket, backpack, and knee-high running shoes.

The star, of course, was Cecilia Stanley, played by Erica Iverson. She began the play wearing a red dress with a single strand of pearls, topped off with a blond wig. When the news arrives that her fortune has been lost, and Lady Smatter withdraws her approval of the nuptials of Cecilia and her nephew Beaufort, Cecilia removes her wig to reveal her natural dark-brown hair, in which she finishes out the play. The change of coiffure effectively signals her transition from a repressed society girl to a romantic leading lady. Those who know Burney's later (1802) play, *The Woman-Hater*, will recognize in Cecilia's transformation the genesis of the unfortunate Eleanora, one of Burney's great sentimental heroines. Evelina Anville, angel that she is, never quite moves us to tears; it was in *The Witlings* that Burney first found her pathetic strain. After some initial sobs, Ms. Iverson's Cecilia displayed her spirit by rejecting the conventional recourses of a wronged woman in her day, such as going into the country or into service, and joining with the conspiracy led by Mr. Censor (Casey Groves) to recover her fortune and marry Beaufort. Her performance brought out the Romantic who lurks behind the pathos in Burney's fictions.

Beaufort presents the opposite problem. A brash young man, Beaufort acts out a code of sensibility that he does not really feel. He casts aside prudence as easily as he does "Books, and Authors," Burney's shorthand for the conduct manuals and venerable codes of polite society that inhibit creativity while they also establish the conditions for sociability. His kind of romanticism is useless to Cecilia, and to Burney, without some countervailing elements of constancy, courage, and foresight, which are lacking not only in Beaufort but in Mortimer Delvile, Edgar Mandlebert, Albert Harleigh, and such "real" men in Burney's life as George Cambridge and Stephen Digby. At the end of *The Witlings*, Cecilia takes Beaufort back, perhaps because the error through which he appeared to be insensible to her suffering is shown to have proceeded from Censor's advice, rather than his own feelings, much as Mandlebert's insensibility to Camilla is the product of Dr. Marchmont's excessive cautions. Graham Skipper's performance as Beaufort conveyed the dashing but undependable, and ultimately disappointing, masculine conduct that is typical among Burney's leading men.

This production joins the very short list of performances that have been attempted since the play appeared in several editions in the 1990s, which until that time had existed only as a unique manuscript copy in the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg collection in the New York Public Library. The first production, at the College of Staten Island in November 1994, coincided with the publication of *The Complete Plays of Frances Burney*, ed. Peter Sabor *et al.*; the second, at the Main Street Theatre in Houston on 15 February 1998, was billed as the "World Premiere." It will take a few more attempts for directors and performers to find the right balance between farce and satire, and between sentimental and romantic elements, for the play to reach its full potential, but the Magis Theatre Co. production showed what can be done to extract the full measure of comedy from the script, while also connecting it to some of the deepest themes in Burney's fictions.

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