

Burney Letter

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UK Burney Society visits Strawberry Hill

By Jill Webster



Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, seen from the southeast. Photo courtesy of Strawberry Hill Trust.

Saturday 16 July saw 37 members and guests of the Burney Society pay a visit to Horace Walpole's villa at Strawberry Hill, "the prettiest bauble you ever saw" as its excited new owner described it in June 1747. Walpole was delighted to be able to snap up a desirable piece of real estate on the river at Twickenham, a fashionable summer retreat just 200 yards from Alexander Pope's house and grotto. He was to spend the next fifty years developing

the original modest buildings into a "little gothic castle" and filling it with one of the most extensive and eclectic collections of objets d'art ever made.

The house has recently emerged from a long period of restoration and repair by the Strawberry Hill Trust, and now gleams lime-washed white as it did in Walpole's time, although sadly it no longer commands a riverside view. Unfortunate renovations made in the late nineteenth century and after the second world war by architects who thought they knew best have had to be painstakingly removed and returned to their original gothic glory, following Walpole's original designs. We were able to make the journey of "serendipity" through the house that Walpole intended, from monastic gloom to light and opulence.

Our excellent guide led us first through the monkish Little Cloister. Here stands the original large blue and white Chinese bowl in which Walpole's cat Selima was drowned, and we lingered to listen to Thomas Gray's mock-heroic ode on the subject. The Hall continues the atmosphere of shadowy melancholy, Walpole's "gloomth," with its restored *trompe l'oeil* wall traceries taken from the tomb of Prince Arthur in Gloucester Cathedral, and its glass lanthorn, which once illuminated the hall with a single candle. This was the setting for Walpole's dream in 1764 when he saw a giant mailed fist thrust itself through the wall at the top of the stairs, after which he awoke and wrote *The Castle of Otranto*, the first Gothic horror novel.

See Strawberry Hill on p. 2

North American Burney Society to meet in New York

By Elaine Bander

The 2012 Annual Meeting of The Burney Society (NA) will take place (just before the opening of the JASNA AGM) on Thursday 4 October 2012 in New York City, in the Evarts Room of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, at 42 West 44th Street. (Our heartfelt thanks to Conrad Harper, who arranged the lovely venue for us.)

The day begins with coffee, tea, juice and breads available during registration, 8:30 to 9 AM. Then our Keynote Speaker, Professor Nancy E. Johnson (SUNY-New Palz), will speak on "*Cecilia*; or, A Young Philosopher's Journey into the Smithean Marketplace." Professor Johnson, a member of the Burney Society Executive, has written a number of works on law and literature in the 1790s and is preparing an essay collection on the subject for Bucknell University Press; she is also currently editing the last volume of Frances Burney's *Court Journals and Letters* (vol. 6, 1790-91), to be published by Oxford in 2014.

Three panels will follow: (1) **Love and the Marketplace** (Lorna Clark, Caitlin Praetorius, Alicia Kerfoot and Hilary Havens); (2) **Money Management** (Sarah Skoronski, Catherine

Keohane, Alex Pitofsky); and (3) **The Wider Marketplace** (Leslie Aronson, Teri Doerksen, Steven J. Gores). Many thanks to Catherine Keohane for organizing the program, and to Cheryl Clark and Alicia Kerfoot for assisting Catherine with (blind) selections.

Between the first and second panel we will adjourn for lunch at the nearby Kellari Taverna for a three-course lunch (fish, chicken or vegetarian options). Back in the Evarts Room after lunch, we will have a very short Business Meeting and, if possible, announce the 2012 Hemlow Prize winner. The day ends at 5 PM, but at 6:30, twenty-two lucky members (to be selected by draw in advance) will be able to tour the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library with Dr. Isaac Gewirtz, Curator of the Berg Collection. The day will cost US\$75 (including lunch); for students, US\$65 (including lunch) or US\$35 (no lunch). To attend, please send cheque or money order (payable in US dollars to The Burney Society) to Alex Pitofsky, 3621 9th St. Drive, N.E., Hickory, NC, USA 28601 by September 10th.

Strawberry Hill

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We were then escorted through the wonderfully restored reception rooms, first the Great Parlour with its flamboyant gothic fireplace and its beautiful stained glass medallions (part of Walpole's collection of Renaissance glass from Flanders) set in the upper windows. Light flickering through coloured glass was Walpole's intention. One of the original pier glass mirrors is back in place by the windows; the Trust hopes to be able to acquire and reinstate many more of the original contents of the house. When the Great Sale of the contents took place in 1842 to pay the debts of the Waldegrave incumbent, a very detailed inventory was made for the catalogue, which will be of inestimable help as the Trust restocks the house. The house was also very well documented in contemporary paintings and in Walpole's own *Description of the Villa*, published in 1774. In the Library we were delighted to see that the pointed gothic bookcases, based on a side door of the choir at the old St Paul's Cathedral, were already starting to fill with the books that Walpole knew.



Members of the UK Burney Society enjoying an outing at Strawberry Hill. Photo courtesy of Hester Davenport.

The ecclesiastical theme continues in the subsequent rooms: the Holbein Room, the Gallery, the Great North Bedchamber, the Round Drawing Room and the Tribune, with architectural designs taken from English and French cathedrals. The Holbein Room ceiling, made of *papier-mâché*, was based on the Queen's dressing-room at Windsor, a room Fanny would have known only too well. In the Gallery, however, the golden fan-vaulting (also *papier-mâché*) and crimson wall coverings are far from monastic, and led Walpole to comment, "I begin to be ashamed of my own magnificence." His use of *papier-mâché*, combined with the *trompe l'oeil* wall trceries and the lath and plaster on some of the seemingly stone exterior walls, led him to remark ruefully, "My buildings, like my writings, are out of paper, and will blow away ten years after I am dead," a forecast which fortunately has proved untrue.

The cream of Walpole's collection was found in the Tribune, named after the room in the Uffizi Palace in Florence in which the most precious treasures were kept. (Walpole never undervalued his stock.) A contemporary illustration by John Carter in 1788 shows the walls and niches entirely covered with works of art like an Edwardian drawing room. A particularly fine collection of miniatures and enamels, many now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, was displayed in a Palladian style "Cabinet of Curiosities." Only Walpole's most favoured visitors were allowed into the Tribune, while less-favoured others had to peep through a grilled door. The Tribune was also known as "The Chapel," but never consecrated: Walpole's religious sense was wholly theatrical.

After a delicious lunch, Curator and Trustee Stephen Clarke gave us an excellent illustrated talk on the history of Strawberry Hill and the experience of visiting the house (see story on p. 4). Stephen helped to curate the 2010 exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum and at Yale, and is author of *The Strawberry Hill Press & Its Printing House*. The house quickly became famous and all the world wanted to visit it. Walpole grew tired of his endless visitors

and ended up admitting only four per day, who were shown round by his housekeeper Margaret (who profited handsomely from the tips). He himself only showed the house to friends, who included Fanny and Dr. Burney, of whom he thought highly. They paid a visit in 1785, which Fanny described in her *Memoirs of Dr Burney*. Walpole pressed them to return, but Fanny's Court appointment in 1786 made this impossible. He would have been a frail man in 1785, suffering greatly from gout. This would not have stopped him offering a warm welcome to the Burneys: he had always entertained lavishly. On 11 May 1769 he recorded meeting a party of French, Spanish and Portuguese guests clad in a cravat carved by Grinling Gibbons and a pair of James I's gloves.

Karin Fernald rounded off the day with a spirited reading of the passage from the *Memoirs*. With thanks to Jacqui Grainger for organising the day, we hoped that Horace Walpole would not have disapproved of us as visitors, not least because of our joint admiration of the Burneys.

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 £15 annually in the UK. 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 to pitofskyah@appstate.edu. In Great Britain, write Jacqui Grainger, c/o Chawton House Library, Chawton, Alton, Hampshire UK GU34 1SJ or at

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New light on Susan Burney in Paris

By Anna Lewton-Brain and Stefanie Cardarelli

In the years 1764-66, Susan Burney (1755-1800) lived in France with her father Charles and sister “Hetty” (Esther). Susan’s journal from these years is missing and very little of her early writing remains (see Philip Olleson, ed., *The Journals and Letters of Susan Burney* (London: Ashgate, 2012), 9). On 12 July 2012, while working as research assistants in the Burney Centre at McGill University, we discovered an original manuscript written by Susan Burney in the year 1770. Since the manuscript for the only earlier example of Susan’s writing (a character sketch of her sisters from 1767) is not extant, this newly discovered item is the earliest Susan Burney manuscript known today. The journal letter describes, in both French and English, some of the people Susan met on her formative travels in France.

We discovered the letter thanks to the recently revived project, *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney*. Alvaro Ribeiro published volume one of Dr. Burney’s letters in 1991; after a long hiatus, the edition will now be resumed at the Burney Centre, under the general editorship of Peter Sabor. Dr. Ribeiro has generously donated all of his copies of Charles Burney’s correspondence to the Burney Centre; we have been tasked with organizing Ribeiro’s files and matching them against our own Charles Burney holdings. Our goal is to have a photocopy or scan of every extant letter written by and to Charles Burney. Thanks to Ribeiro’s donation, the Burney Centre’s collection has now been considerably expanded. While checking our files against Ribeiro’s, we found the Susan Burney manuscript in a misfiled folder entitled “Susan’s Journal (Appendix) J. Hemlow papers” (Joyce Hemlow was Director of the Burney Centre from 1960-84 and editor of the Burney Centre’s first major project, the 12-volume edition of *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame d’Arblay) 1791-1840*). The letter had been hiding in a file in the heart of the Burney Centre for decades unnoticed!

The journal letter begins with Susan’s promise to conclude her descriptions of her various acquaintances in France: “In order to end as satisfactorily as possible about my Acquaintance In france in particular, I will give what I have since heard of some of them, which I omitted to give any account of in my Journals from the year -67.” Susan’s account of the Colman family reveals her complete cultural immersion during her travels in France. So fluent was her French that it seems she lost the ability to speak English! She recounts her “*Embarras*” at her struggle to introduce herself in English to the dramatist George Colman and his wife Sarah when she met them in Paris. Susan also provides updates on the lives of other personalities from her early journals and records the deaths of La Dauphine (Maria Josepha of Saxony) and the French Queen (Marie Leczinska).

Susan is of interest to music historians for her vivid accounts of musical performances; Philip Olleson recently published a selected edition of her correspondence, subtitled *Music and Society in Late Eighteenth-Century England*, which includes Susan’s later journal letters for the years 1779-99. Even at the age of twelve, however, Susan was already a keen observer and avid participant in the musical culture of her day. This new journal-letter includes two musical reviews from the *Mercure* of

1767. Susan describes hearing a Monsieur Vendeuil’s debut at the Concert Spirituel and gives an account of his musical development by recounting his various performances in *Le Cadi Dupé* (Gluck), *Le Bûcheron* (Philidor), and *Le Maréchal* (Philidor).

One of the more remarkable performers mentioned is Mlle Le Chautre, an organist who played “Several Times at the Concert Spirituel with very great Applause.” Not only did this woman pursue a public career on the stage, she also refused to wed. Susan relates that Mlle Le Chautre “was *bien malheureuse* to be obliged to marry a man she never could love – whom she had told so, & who had ever treated her as a Master, & would be thoroughly disagreeable to her in any other light.” Furthermore, Susan admits: “this interested us all for her & I am very happy to find that her resistance has not been fruitless – she is still M^{lle}. Le Chautre, & her father has given up his intention of her being Mad^e. Romain.” Susan’s charity towards women of independent spirit, however, only extends so far; following Mlle Le Chautre’s story, she writes of the scandalous behavior of a Mlle Lambert, in whom she is deeply disappointed.

Admirers of Susan’s more famous elder sister Frances will be pleased to read the end of this letter: Susan describes her journey to Chessington during which she hears a “ridiculous account of a passion” that a “whimsical, clever young Man,” Lieutenant Williams, conceived for her “sister fanny, whom he saw at the Inn.” Frances Burney’s earliest surviving journal is dated 27 March 1768. Thanks to this newly discovered letter by Susan, we now have a brief, revealing glimpse of Frances a year earlier, when, not yet fifteen, she had somehow attracted the attentions of a mysterious, would-be military lover – perhaps a younger version of the gallant French officer with whom, twenty-six years later, she would fall in love.



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Stefanie Cardarelli is an Honours undergraduate student in English Literature at McGill University. She is the recipient of an Arts Undergraduate Research Internship Award (ARIA) and is a Research Assistant at the Burney Centre.

A DAY AT STRAWBERRY HILL

By Stephen Clarke

On 16 June, the English Burney Society visited Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill. In the morning, they were given a guided tour of the house, which has recently been triumphantly restored by the Strawberry Hill Trust at a cost of some £8.8m., generously supported by £4.9m. from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The house had been sold to the Vincentian fathers in 1923, and from the training college for Catholic priests that they founded has evolved St. Mary's University College, whose buildings now spread southwards from Walpole's original compact Gothic castle. His always fragile building had become increasingly frail and faded, with rooms too small and interiors too delicate for meaningful College use.



The Gallery, Strawberry Hill. Photo courtesy of Strawberry Hill Trust.

The Trust has transformed the house and opened it to the public. The first phase of the restoration programme was completed in late 2010, and visitors can now wander through rooms that Walpole would have recognised. The Gallery – which with its ceiling copied from the aisles of Henry VII's chapel at Westminster Abbey has always been the showpiece of the house – has been re-gilded and re-hung with crimson damask. In the course of the restoration a chalk inscription made by craftsmen in 1857 was discovered, with the comment (after their names), “Weather

very cold, no fires allowed.” The wonderful Robert Adam scagliola chimney-piece in the Round Drawing-Room has been repaired and the original Gothic *trompe l'oeil* wallpaper in Walpole's hall and stairs has been uncovered and awaits restoration. The room that Walpole called the Beauty Room and hung with portraits of the beauties of the court of Charles II is presented as an archaeological display: the walls are lined with the early eighteenth-century panelling that pre-dates Walpole's purchase of the house. Items exhibited include *cartes de visite* from Walpole's friends that were discovered to have slipped down the back of the chimney-piece. Equally important, the welcoming space of the Great Cloister where Walpole initially sited the vase on which the pensive Selima reclined, the subject of Gray's *Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat*, has been restored and converted to a café, so visitors can relax and look out over the gardens after their tour. From the gardens, which are being re-planted according to Walpole's planting scheme, one can then look back at the house, now glistening in the sun under its new coat of limewash.

Walpole first leased the house in 1747 and spent thirty years converting and expanding it. It was transformed from a coachman's cottage to a Gothic castle, in Walpole's playful fantasy “the castle (I am building) of my ancestors.” With the help of the Committee of the accomplished amateur architect John Chute and the wayward but inventive designer Richard Bentley, an apparently random sequence of additional rooms were provided – a Great Refectory with a Library above it, a fantastical Gothic staircase, and ultimately a Gallery, a Round Tower, and as the emotional heart of the house, a Cabinet or Tribune, where Walpole kept the most precious treasures of his collection. For in a sense, for all the decoration and Gothic detail and varied and unexpected series of spaces, Strawberry Hill was itself a casket, designed to display Walpole's collection.

Visitors to the house today will only see limited evidence of what once was an extraordinary assemblage of objects – paintings, glass, antiquities, ceramics, books, prints, coins, furniture, and relics filling every room. The Trust has acquired a few objects and obtained some on loan, but the collection itself has gone. It was the subject of a spectacular sale in 1842, when the auctioneer George Robins disposed of “the Valuable Contents of Strawberry Hill, and it may fearlessly be proclaimed as the most distinguished gem that has ever adorned the Annals of Auctions” (which a contemporary parodist transcribed as “the most brilliant feather that has ever adorned the cap of an Auctioneer”). As Robins modestly noted in the sale Catalogue, he approached the herculean task of arranging the auction conscious that it was a collection “far exceeding in interest and importance all that has preceded it in the chronicles of auctions, and that no future sale can by possibility enter into rivalry with it.”

For all the auctioneer's puffery, the collection was indeed outstanding and original. A watercolour of the Cabinet or Tribune by the artist John Carter of about 1789 shows that complex space (a square room but with semi-circular recesses on each side, under a vaulted Gothic ceiling modelled on that of the Chapter House of York Minster) with the walls literally dripping with small and precious objects. Over one hundred pictures and bronzes, antiquities and ornaments, can be seen in the one view, not

including the mahogany cabinet visible in one of the recesses, containing Walpole's collection of miniatures and enamels, which he believed with some justice to be "the largest and finest in any country." Many items in his collection had or were believed to have associations that added to their interest and value, such as a missal attributed to Raphael, a dagger believed to have belonged to Henry VIII, a mourning ring of Charles I, and a silver bell attributed to Cellini. But the most famous item of association, which still survives, was the red Cardinal's hat of Cardinal Wolsey, "found in the great Wardrobe by Bishop Burnet when he was Clerk of the Closet. It was left by his son Judge Burnet to his housekeeper who gave it to the Countess of Albemarle's Butler, who gave it to his lady, and her ladyship to Mr. Horace Walpole in 1776," as Walpole recorded in the *Description* he wrote and had printed at Strawberry Hill.

In addition to this, there was an important collection of historical portraits, including early royal portraits (though not all quite what Walpole believed them to be), armour (including the magnificent Parade Armour of c.1600 that Walpole believed to have belonged to Francis I of France), historical letters and manuscripts, books of prints, sculptures, and curiosities. It was an antiquarian's collection, but extraordinary in its range and variety – and consequently, as a collection in a fantasy castle, it attracted visitors.

The modern custom of visiting British country houses has a long history. By the late eighteenth century, many of the greater houses made special arrangements for visitors and tourists curious to see them. Some houses were accessible on set days of the week; Chatsworth had two public days a week, while at Chiswick House, only a few miles from Strawberry Hill, access was by ticket, issued on application. This was the system that Walpole adopted; parties not to exceed four, no animals and no children, the visitors being shown round the house by Margaret the housekeeper, or occasionally his printer and amanuensis Thomas Kirgate. Walpole regularly complained of the number of visitors and the disruption they caused to his enjoyment of his house and collection – there were between sixty and one hundred parties a year – but his frustration was tinged with a little vanity of the curiosity his house and collection provoked, and the celebrity it brought him.

There was, however, a real distinction between the general run of visitors who would not see Mr. Walpole, and who would also not be allowed to see some of the more precious and delicate objects in the collection (the China Room, for example, containing about 670 items, was strictly out of bounds), and important dignitaries and friends, whom Walpole would entertain himself. And one such set of friends was Dr. Charles Burney and his daughter Frances, whose visit in 1785 was the inspiration for the Burney Society's visit in 2012.

Walpole knew Dr. Burney by 1784 at the latest. In April of that year they both attended two gatherings at the bluestocking Mrs. Vesey's within the same week, at both of which they are recorded as having talked familiarly. But Walpole was intrigued by celebrity, and was anxious to meet Frances, by then the acclaimed author of *Evelina* and *Cecilia*. He accordingly wrote to Dr. Burney on 6 September 1785, confirming his visit to Strawberry Hill the following Thursday, insisting that he stay the night, and adding "If

it is not too much to ask, Mr Walpole would be exceedingly flattered, if Dr Burney could bring Miss Burney with him," going on to refer to her as "Cecilia." They duly arrived and stayed the night, and Frances obligingly left two accounts of the experience. Writing to Queeney a month later on 10 October, she confided "I have been spending some time with my Father at Mr. Walpole's at Strawberry Hill, & much to my satisfaction. I don't know if you ever saw his extraordinary collection of *out of the way* things? The house & every thing in it is curious, interesting, or historical: and he is himself all three into the bargain. He abounds in anecdotes of old times & old people, & relates them with a quaint sort of humour & old-fashioned style of good breeding & pleasantry that entertained & pleased me very much."

Many years later, when writing the *Memoirs* of her father (published 1832), she provided a far more detailed and wordy account, which is perhaps the most extended account surviving of the experience of being entertained by Walpole at Strawberry Hill. She looked back at Walpole as "a witty, sarcastic, ingenious, deeply-thinking, highly-cultivated, quaint, though evermore gallant and romantic, though very mundane, old bachelor of other days," who took great trouble to point out "all that was peculiar, especially the most valuable of his pictures." She also noted the pleasure with which he showed them Gray's vase, and – as privileged guests – the room in which he kept his friend Lady Diana Beauclerk's drawings of his tragedy *The Mysterious Mother*, which was to cause Frances such distress when the following year she was to read it to the Queen at Court, as its theme of double incest unfolded. Frances records how "the evenings of this visit were spent delightfully – they were given up to literature, and to entertaining, critical, ludicrous, or anecdotal conversation." She adds that "In the evening, Mr. Walpole favoured them with producing several, and opening some of his numerous repositories of hoarded manuscripts," as well as picking out and reading some of the witty letters of his friend Mme du Deffand, in her youth mistress of the Regent the Duc d'Orleans, later correspondent of Voltaire and hostess of a famous Salon, and in her old age Walpole's friend and correspondent.

Burney clearly had much respect for Walpole, noting how much she liked him in her account of the reading of *The Mysterious Mother*. Walpole for his part returned that respect, describing both *Evelina* and *Cecilia* as "inimitable," and describing Burney herself to Hannah More as "that charming young woman." And so we are left with the image of the three of them, Dr. Burney, his daughter, and the elderly Walpole, one evening in September 1785 after dinner at Strawberry Hill, engaged in animated conversation, discussing literature and anecdotes of old times.

Stephen Clarke is a lawyer and independent scholar whose special research interests are Horace Walpole, William Beckford, and Samuel Johnson. He is the author of The Strawberry Hill Press & Its Printing House (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 2011). He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and a trustee of Johnson's House in Gough Square as well as of Strawberry Hill, and has recently been appointed an honorary research fellow at the University of Liverpool.

Acquisition of Burney Letters at McGill

By Lorna Clark

Recently, five Burney family items were acquired by the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the McGill Library system. Under the guidance of Dr. Richard Virr, Head Curator of the division, the Burney holdings have been steadily built up in recent years to form an important collection of Burneyana.

The latest additions were acquired thanks to the sharp eyes of Michael Kassler, a music historian who lives in Australia. Michael has published widely on the subject of eighteenth-century music, his latest book being *The Music Trade in Georgian England* (2011). A long-time Burney aficionado who is also an expert in robotics, Michael has often sent timely word to Burney editors when items come up for sale on the internet.

Each of the five items sold to McGill by John Wilson has its own interest. The first, advertised at £750, consists of diary entries (2 pp. 8vo) written by Charles Burney (1726-1814) and docketed by Frances. The four diary entries record various social events including a dinner with William Pitt, Henry Dundas and George Canning. The dinner took place in September 1799 in Dover where Burney had been invited to witness the preparations for an expedition against the Netherlands. His "lively and spirited, yet unaffected and unpretending account of this excursion" was later expanded in a letter of 15 September 1799 to his daughter Frances that was published in his *Memoirs*. Some of the details include Charles Burney's appreciation of Pitt's personal charm and his description of a letter sent to him by Herschel explaining how to operate a telescope.

The second item (also £750), was an autograph draft by Charles Burney written in reply to a "most flattering" letter sent to him on 3 September 1806 on behalf of Charlotte, Princess of Wales by her sub-governess Martha Udney (1 p. 8vo): "The very high honour of her R.H. the Princess Charlotte's condescension in forming a wish for anything in my limited power is a circumstance so gratifying to my vanity & zeal as I dare not attempt to describe..."

The draft was also marked by Frances Burney with one of her editorial symbols. She used these symbols when preparing a volume of her father's letters for the press (a project which was abandoned when she learned of the new copyright law that had come into effect). She followed up instead with an edition of his *Memoirs* (1832).

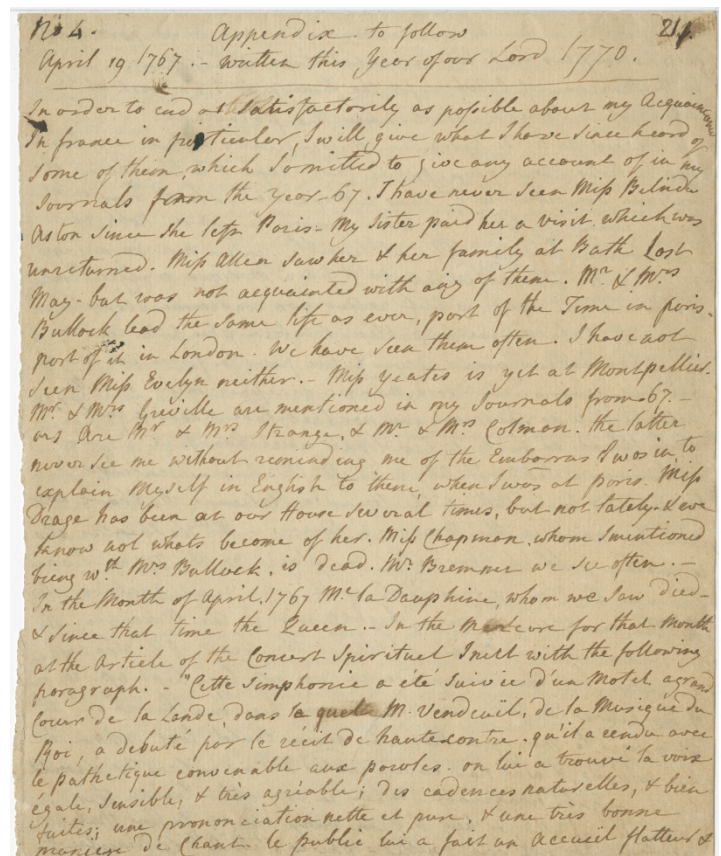
A third item by Charles Burney is an undated autograph draft description of an Indian painting on ivory in his collection (1 p. 8vo). The painting, made in Delhi, had been presented to Burney by the "lovely East Indian," Mrs Pleydell. She had inherited it from her father, Governor Holwell, the East India Company servant who had survived the Black Hole of Calcutta. The painting, thought by Holwell to be "a sort of treasure," is described in Burney's *Memoirs* (1:204) in terms similar to those in this draft: "... a music Gallery over a triumphal arch, through which the great Mogul passed at Agra or Delphi before his fall. The procession consisted of the Emperor mounted on an Elephant, his wives, concubines, Eunuchs, great officers of State etc all exquisitely painted." This "treasure," which hung over the fireplace in Burney's bedroom in

Chelsea, was again described by Burney in his will. It sold for £450.

The last two items relate to Charles Burney Jr (1757-1817), Classical scholar and book collector. A fourth acquisition is an autograph letter signed to [Joseph] Goodall (1760-1840), provost of Eton (2 pp. 4to) written from Crewe Hall, Nantwich, on 10 January 1810. In his letter, CB Jr announces his intention of using Goodall's letter to attack "our new Professor of Casuistry," and issues an invitation to join the Bishop of Carlisle and the Dean of Westminster at the next anniversary in December of that year. £350

The fifth item acquired is an autograph letter (1 p. 8vo) from Eva Garrick (1724-1822) (a Viennese dancer and widow of the famous actor David Garrick) to Charles Burney Jr. A social note written on 8 May [1817], she regrets that "something unavoidable" prevents her from visiting the Burneys the following week, and ends with her stating that "I remain in the ninty [*sic*] fourth year of age." This letter cost £425.

Another six Burney family letters were acquired by McGill in 2011, and will be the subject of a note in a future issue of the *Burney Letter*.



Autograph Letter of Susan Burney recently discovered at the Burney Centre (see story p. 3).

New Edition of *Court Journals*: Book Launch at McGill

By Elaine Bander and Lorna Clark

On 15 May 2012, in the Rare Books Room of McGill University's McLennan Library, the Burney Centre celebrated the recent publication of three volumes of Frances Burney's journals and letters with a *vin d'honneur*. Burney Centre Director Professor Peter Sabor welcomed about thirty guests, including local and visiting scholars, students, faculty and administrators from McGill University and Dawson College.

The volumes now "launched" are volume 5 (1782-83) of *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney* edited by Lars E. Troide and Stewart J. Cooke (McGill-Queen's) and the first two volumes of *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney* (Clarendon) under the general editorship of Peter Sabor. Volume 1 (1786) was edited by Peter Sabor and volume 2 (1787) by Stewart Cooke.

Richard Virr, Head and Curator of Manuscripts at the Rare Books and Special Collections Division, welcomed guests, congratulating the Burney Centre and calling attention to the Library's growing collection of Burneyana. Indeed, two of Frances Burney's newly-acquired letters were on display in the room where we were gathered. Alan Hepburn, Chair of the English Department also spoke, expressing appreciation for Peter Sabor's achievements and his spirit of collegiality.

A nice touch was having the student RAs from the Burney Centre introduce the speakers: Sarah Skoronski (a doctoral candidate working on representations of madness in the eighteenth-century novel); Hilary Havens who is just finishing up a dissertation on "reflection and revision in the novels of Frances Burney"; Anna Lewton-Brain, a PhD student who studies metaphysical poetry; and Stefanie Cardarelli, an undergraduate student who is doing her honours thesis on Frances Burney's French notebook, recently acquired by McGill.

Since Lars Troide could not attend, Stewart Cooke presented the long-anticipated final volume of the *Early Journals*, as well as his volume of *Court Journals* and thanked all those who helped along the way. Peter Sabor then spoke about the importance of the new edition of the *Court Journals* and the revelations contained in volume 1 (1786).

The books, both as scholarship and as physical objects, were much admired, as were two laudatory reviews by Claire Harman and John Wiltshire.



Peter Sabor, Director, and Stewart Cooke, Associate Director of the Burney Centre.



Ariel Buckley, Stefanie Cardarelli, Hilary Havens, Sarah Skoronski, Anna Lewton-Brain, McGill students and Research Assistants at the Burney Centre. Professor Peter Sabor seated.

Fundraising efforts for Bath Plaques

The UK Burney Society has ordered plaques to replace those for both Frances Burney d'Arblay and her half-sister, Sarah Harriet, which had disappeared from the gallery of St Swithin's Church in Bath; so far, the Society has raised only £5010 out of the £7000 needed for the two plaques. Some UK members are advancing the difference but would be most grateful for some North American contributions. Despite appeals, few have been forthcoming from our side of the Atlantic. To obviate any difficulties in converting and sending funds to the UK, our treasurer Alex Pitofsky has agreed to receive North American donations (in \$US cheques or money orders) to forward to the UK Burney Society.

Educating Sabrina

By Wendy Moore

Fanny Burney rarely failed to send a letter to her brother Charles without adding some kind words for “Mrs Bicknell.” In Burney’s collected *Journals and Letters*, the identity of Sabrina Bicknell is revealed in a short footnote.¹

But Sabrina Bicknell deserves more than a postscript or a footnote to Fanny’s letters. For the story of her life is more dramatic than anything Fanny could have conjured in her novels.

For 34 years, from 1791 to 1825, Sabrina Bicknell worked as housekeeper at the school for boys which Charles Burney Jr ran in Hammersmith and later Greenwich. Effectively school secretary and manager, Sabrina played a crucial role in helping Charles educate the youth of the nineteenth century – as well as propping up his difficult marriage. But in her earlier life Sabrina was herself at the centre of an extraordinary educational experiment. At the age of 12, she had been chosen as the unwitting subject in a Pygmalion-style attempt to mould a perfect wife.

Born in Clerkenwell, she had been abandoned as a baby at the gates of the Foundling Hospital in London in May 1757. Originally baptised Monimia Butler, she was probably illegitimate and almost certainly an orphan; the name “Monimia” – Greek for “the lonely girl” – was synonymous with orphanhood in eighteenth-century parlance. In accordance with Foundling Hospital custom, she was immediately renamed – Ann Kingston – and farmed out to wet-nurses in the countryside.

When she was nearly eight, Ann – as she had now become – was transferred to the Shrewsbury Orphanage, one of the Foundling Hospital’s country branches, built on a promontory overlooking the River Severn. There she was trained alongside hundreds of other orphans in readiness for an apprenticeship in the mills or as a servant in a well-to-do household.

Her fortunes changed, however, in the summer of 1769 when two well-spoken young men arrived at the orphanage doors and told officials that they were looking for a maid for a mutual friend. Without hesitation the men were invited to choose a likely candidate from a parade of girls dressed in their identical brown uniforms and white caps. One of the men was Thomas Day, an aspiring poet who had just inherited a large fortune at the age of 21. His friend, John Bicknell, a school chum training to become a lawyer, was two years older.

It was Bicknell who plucked pretty 12-year-old Ann, with her

auburn ringlets and expressive eyes, from the line-up. But it was Day who would shape her life.

Born in 1748, Thomas Day was the only child of a prosperous government official who died when he was one year old. Brought up by his mother, Day was sent to Charterhouse and then Oxford before enrolling at Middle Temple Inn in London to train in law. Tall with black hair and hazel eyes, he might have been considered handsome were it not for the smallpox scars that pitted his face and his insistence on wearing scruffy clothes and leaving his hair loose and tangled. Even his closest friend, the Irish inventor Richard Lovell Edgeworth, admitted that “he seldom combed his raven locks, though he was remarkably fond of washing in the stream.”²

Day’s disdain for fashion, loutish table manners and propensity for dogmatic monologues did little to endear him to the opposite sex. Yet before he was 21, Day had developed a fixed vision of his ideal wife – a pure, virginal, country maid who would live with him in a remote cottage completely subservient to his whims. After he was rejected by Edgeworth’s sister Margaret in early 1769, Day concluded that this perfect woman did not exist in Georgian society. He would therefore have to create her for himself.

Inspired by the educational ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Day resolved to acquire an orphan, who would be unsullied by society’s vices, and train her to suit his marital ideal. Having taken Ann from the Shrewsbury orphanage, he transported her to London and hid her in rooms near Chancery Lane. But a few days later he visited the Foundling Hospital’s London headquarters and chose a second orphan, named Dorcas Car – a blonde, blue-eyed girl of 11, by way of contrast – to be doubly sure

of success.

Both girls were apprenticed to his friend Edgeworth, since it was against Foundling Hospital rules to apprentice orphans to single men. Both were renamed by Day; he changed Ann’s name to Sabrina Sidney – after the Latin name for the Severn and his childhood hero, the Elizabethan courtier Sir Philip Sidney – while Dorcas was named Lucretia. Day even signed a secret contract undertaking to marry the girl of his choice or provide her with a dowry of £500 to marry someone else. Neither of the girls, of course, had any inkling of their planned destiny.

With his trusty copy of Rousseau’s treatise on education, *Emile*, in hand, Day whisked the girls away to France and spent the winter in Avignon away from prying eyes. Here their education began in



Sabrina Bicknell, engr. Richard Lane after original oil painting Stephen Poyntz Denning (disappeared). ©NPG

earnest. Yet while Sabrina proved a quick and obedient learner, Lucretia was declared “invincibly stupid” – or at least she was reluctant to bend to her teacher’s commands; she was, perhaps, not quite such a dumb blonde after all.³ Returning to England in early 1770, Day apprenticed Lucretia to a London milliner with a £400 farewell gift and concentrated his efforts on Sabrina.

That spring he moved with Sabrina into a lakeside villa, Stowe House, in Lichfield. Ignoring wagging tongues, Day introduced Sabrina into Lichfield high society. Both Day and Edgeworth had already been recruited into the Lunar Society, the Midlands-based dining club of inventors and radicals who included Erasmus Darwin, Josiah Wedgwood and James Watt. Sabrina was welcomed into Darwin’s house in Lichfield. Likewise Day became friendly with Anna Seward, the poet whose father was Canon Residentiary of Lichfield Cathedral. Sabrina was duly embraced by Seward’s intellectual circle at her home the Bishop’s Palace.

Behind closed doors Day dedicated himself to grooming Sabrina to become his ideal wife. Like Professor Higgins coaching Eliza Doolittle in George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*, Day taught Sabrina to dress, move and talk according to his specific ideas of womanly virtues; she must dress plainly, act demurely and parrot his views. Since he wanted her to be his helpmeet in a desolate hermitage, he trained her to become a domestic drudge. And to ensure she possessed sufficient strength and rigour for this marital idyll he subjected her to some bizarre trials. These included dropping hot sealing wax on her bare arms and shoulders, sticking pins into her flesh, dunking her in Stowe Pool and firing pistols at her skirts. Whether Day’s physical training went further than singeing her shoulders with burning wax would remain concealed forever behind the shutters of Stowe House. Although even if Day’s conduct was spotlessly honourable, by living alone with her, he placed Sabrina in a dubious position which would inevitably tarnish her reputation.

As the teenage Sabrina eventually rebelled against this domestic slavery, so Day’s fancy turned elsewhere. At the end of a year, Day packed Sabrina off to a boarding school in nearby Sutton Coldfield while he became smitten in turn by Honora Sneyd, a spirited young woman who had grown up in the Seward family, and her younger sister Elizabeth. Wisely Honora turned down Day’s marriage proposal with a blunt refusal to subjugate her will to her husband’s – she would later marry Edgeworth – while Elizabeth packed Day off to France with instructions to smarten up his appearance and manners before applying to her again.

Just as Day had tried to mould Sabrina to fit his picture of the perfect woman, now he submitted to being groomed by Elizabeth Sneyd to suit fashionable ideas of the ideal man. When he returned from France a polished dandy in an embroidered waistcoat and wig, the ladies of Lichfield sniggered behind their handkerchiefs while Elizabeth was horrified.

Rejected once again, Day returned to Sabrina, now 17, and resumed her training. This time he professed himself so pleased with her progress that he was on the brink of marrying her when she suddenly disobeyed a trivial order – according to Edgeworth this concerned “certain long sleeves, or some handkerchief” which she wore contrary to his liking – and he then abandoned her for good. Day left Sabrina in a boarding house near Birmingham with

an annual pension of £50 and never saw her again.

Finally Day found his perfect woman. She was not the country maid of his imagination but a talented, well-educated heiress, called Esther Milnes, who gave up her privileged lifestyle to marry Day and live with him in a comfortless farmhouse enslaved to his demands. Esther was utterly devoted – yet it was not marital bliss. Friends agreed they were perfectly matched; prim, philanthropic and passionate about poetry, Esther was a mirror image of her husband. Yet Day continued to gripe and find fault in his quest for an unattainable ideal.

Esther was forced to give up her poems, her harpsichord and her friends while Day made a lasting name for himself in poetry, politics and children’s writing. He died in 1789 but is still revered today for his anti-slavery poem *The Dying Negro*, his support for American independence and his children’s book *Sandford and Merton*, which became a Victorian classic.

In the meantime Sabrina had not been entirely forgotten. Day’s friend John Bicknell suddenly recalled the orphan he had once selected as a perfect bride – or at least he remembered the £500 dowry promised by Day. In poor health and in debt due to his decadent lifestyle, he sought her out and proposed. At 27, with her reputation tainted by her connection with Day, Sabrina had little option but to consent.

Just three years later Bicknell died, leaving Sabrina alone again but now penniless – there was nothing left of the £500 – and with two sons, John, aged one, and Henry, three months old, to bring up. It was now that Charles Burney came to her aid.

A few weeks after her husband’s death, Sabrina received a letter from Charles offering a free place for her son John at his Hammersmith school. A gifted scholar, Charles had known Bicknell on the London literary scene. After being expelled from Cambridge for stealing books from the university library and banished to Scotland in disgrace, Charles had recently returned to London where he had taken a job as a school teacher, married the headmaster’s daughter and – on his father-in-law’s death – taken charge of the school.

Sabrina’s reply to Charles, on 16 May 1787, is one of only a handful of known letters by her.⁴ In it, she thanked him profusely for “your truly great & friendly offer to me & my dear little boy” and looked forward “with impatience” to the day when he could take up his place. When the day came, in 1791, it was not just five-year-old John but his younger brother Henry and Sabrina herself who moved into the Burney household in Hammersmith. Sabrina was immediately welcomed into the Burney fold.

Meeting Sabrina for the first time that October, Fanny was impressed with the new addition to her brother’s home. “His wife was here on Sunday, with Mrs. Bicknell, whom I had never seen before,” she wrote. “I was extremely pleased with her. She is gentle & obliging, & appears to be good & amiable.”⁵ From this point onwards, Fanny would rarely forget to mention Sabrina in letters to Charles, even during her ten-year exile in Napoleonic France. A typical letter ended, “never forget for us Mrs. Bicknell – as we shall never forget her ourselves.”⁶

Two years later, when Charles moved his school to Crooms Hill, Greenwich, Sabrina and her sons came too. As well as helping to manage the school for 100 boys, Sabrina provided vital support both to Charles and his wife Sarah. At times she nursed Charles through his various ailments; he frequently suffered gout

and headaches exacerbated by heavy drinking and rich food. When his half-sister, Sarah Harriet, visited Charles in Bath in 1793, she came as “a sort of assistant-nurse to Mrs Bicknel” who had been “confined to the closest attention to him,” she wrote.⁷

At other times, Sabrina was kept busy tending Charles’s wife, who was known in the Burney family as Rosette – or more commonly “poor Rosette.” Frequently ill with vague symptoms, probably due to manic depression (bipolar disorder), Rosette sometimes insisted on living apart from Charles while at other times her behaviour was evidently manic. In a sense, Sabrina became the pillar which propped up their difficult marriage. Or perhaps she played an even more intimate role.

Hester Piozzi, Fanny’s one-time friend, alleged in 1810 that Charles was “living all but openly with a woman in his own house.”⁸ The reference was understood to point to Sabrina. However, Piozzi had a grudge against the Burneys since she had argued with Fanny and believed, wrongly, that Charles had written malicious reports about her. According to Fanny, Sabrina was treated by Charles as “his equal, his friend, and a person whose virtues are honoured as much as her talents are useful.”⁹ It was, at least, a perfect partnership.

Sabrina worked for Charles until his retirement to Deptford in 1813 and continued working as school housekeeper for his son Charles Parr Burney until she finally retired, aged 68, in 1825. The only known portrait of Sabrina, by Stephen Poyntz Denning, was commissioned by Charles Parr as a memorial for the hundreds of pupils she had cared for. According to Fanny it was “so strong a likeness I should have recognized it on any part of the Globe.”¹⁰ Sabrina died, in Greenwich, on 8 September 1843.

Although Sabrina was always at pains to bury her early life with its taint of illegitimacy and unseemly connection with Day, her story surfaced in memoirs and novels including *Belinda* by Maria Edgeworth, *Orley Farm* by Anthony Trollope and *Watch and Ward* by Henry James. It may also have influenced Shaw in writing *Pygmalion*.

And, of course, Fanny Burney could not resist her own version. In a tiny notebook, now kept in the Berg Collection at New York Public Library, Fanny described Sabrina’s story as a French exercise written for her husband d’Arblay in 1802. Highly sentimentalised and heavily embroidered, Fanny tells the tale with a novelist’s cavalier approach to the truth. As always, however, fact is stranger than fiction.

***My huge thanks to the many people in the Burney Society who have helped and encouraged my research. *How to Create the Perfect Wife* by Wendy Moore will be published early in 2013 by Weidenfeld and Nicolson in the UK and by Basic Books in the US.**

Wendy Moore is a journalist and author based in London. Her first two books were The Knife Man: The Extraordinary Life and Times of John Hunter, Father of Modern Surgery (2005), Winner of the Medical Journalists' Open Book Award 2005 and Wedlock: How Georgian Britain's Worst Husband Met His Match (2009).

Notes

1 Fanny Burney, *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame d'Arblay), 1791-1840*, eds Joyce Hemlow et al (12 vols, Oxford, 1972-84), vol. 5, 6-7, n. 2.

2 Richard Lovell and Maria Edgeworth, *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Esq. begun by himself and concluded by his daughter* (2 vols, London, 1821), vol. 1, 175.

3 Edgeworth, 1: 212.

4 Sabrina Bicknell to Charles Burney, 16 May 1787, Burney Family Collection, The James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

5 FB to Charlotte Ann Francis (her sister; later Broome), 10 Oct 1791, in FB, *Journals and Letters*, 1: 70.

6 FB to CB Jr, 16 June 1803, in Burney, 6: 474.

7 Sarah Harriet Burney to Mary Young, 2-4 Aug 1793, in Sarah Harriet Burney, *The Letters of Sarah Harriet Burney*, ed. Lorna J Clark. (Athens, Ga: University of Delaware Press, 1997), 9-10.

8 Hester Lynch Piozzi (née Thrale) to John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury (her stepson), 27 July 1810 in *The Piozzi Letters: correspondence of Hester Lynch Piozzi 1784-1821 (formerly Mrs Thrale)*, eds. Edward A. and Lillian D. Bloom (Newark and London: University of Delaware Press, 1996), 4: 296.

9 Frances Burney, French Exercise Book, in The Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of the New York Public Library. There has been much confusion over the exact citation of this notebook. The notebook has ‘II, Themes of 1802’ written on the cover but it is now the first of four volumes kept together and the Berg Collection cites it as no. 1. It is cited as French Exercise Book I in FB’s *Journals and Letters*, 5: 66-7, n. 2 but the note gives the page numbers for the account of Sabrina’s life as 57-79. In fact, there are no page numbers but the correct pages are closer to 66-85.

10 FB to Charles Parr Burney, 3 May 1836, in FB, *Journals and Letters*, 12: 890.

Burney Society AGM 6 October 2012

The British Burney Society are holding their Annual General Meeting on Saturday 6 October at a new venue. This will be at the University of Notre Dame in London, which is at 1 Suffolk Street near the National Gallery (the street runs parallel to the Haymarket). It is not so very far from St Martin's Street where the Burneys lived, and in the midst of theatre-land, appropriate for our speaker, Dr. Gillian Skinner, who has a particular interest in eighteenth-century drama and the careers of actresses. Her talk will centre on the actress Jane Barsanti and Frances Burney's relationship with her, and is titled "An Unsullied Reputation in the Midst of Danger: Jane Barsanti, Performance and Propriety in Burney's *Early Journals and Letters*." The business part of the meeting begins at 2 PM, and after the speaker we shall relax with tea and cakes baked by (what is now a tradition) members of the committee.

Conference at Gonville and Caius College Cambridge 21-24 July 2013

By Hester Davenport

We look forward to seeing as many Burney enthusiasts as possible next July for our conference when the topic will be "Education in the Life and Works of Frances Burney and her Family." The date for the submission of proposals for papers is 30 September 2012 and we shall then draw up the full programme: we have already had some interesting submissions on topics relating to Burney's novels. We are very pleased that Professor Peter Sabor, Director of the Burney Centre, will be one of our key-note speakers, and Emeritus Professor Philip Olleson, recent editor of the journals and letters of Susan Burney, the other. We are delighted that the distinguished biographer Wendy Moore has agreed to speak about the subject of her next biography: Thomas Day and his attempt to educate Sabrina Bicknell as a potential wife. Inevitably he failed and instead Sabrina became housekeeper to Charles Burney Jr at his Greenwich School.

Long before he became a much-respected schoolmaster, Gonville and Caius was the scene of Charles Burney Jr's disgrace, when to the horror of his family he had to flee the college after it was discovered that he had been stealing books from the library and pasting Burney bookplates in them. The Librarian of Caius College hopes to create a display of some of the books taken together with some explanatory material (some books were ultimately returned although some had already been sold).

Charles Burney's nephew Alexander d'Arblay had his own troubles when at university, and Peter Sabor will be talking about him and his cousin Richard Burney at Christ's College (Peter's own alma mater). This is where we shall hold our conference dinner and hope to see something of the college.



Customs House on the quay in King's Lynn, Norfolk, Frances Burney's birthplace. Photos courtesy of Hester Davenport.

After two days of papers there will be an optional trip to King's Lynn, Burney's birthplace, on Wednesday 24 July. We plan to visit the Museum where the watch given by Queen Charlotte to her Keeper of the Robes can be seen, and have a guided tour round the town to places of Burney interest. Although King's Lynn was one of those towns mutilated by 60s planners the authorities are now very conscious of their inheritance and there is much of eighteenth-century interest. The quay is a fine place to stroll.

More details will appear on the web-site, but if you would like to receive them personally please e-mail me on hesterdavenport@gmail.com



The Upper Library at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. Photo courtesy of the Librarian.



The Snetzler organ in St. Margaret's Church that was bought when Charles Burney was organist there. Photo courtesy of Hester Davenport.

Mrs Thrale and the Gordon Riots

By Hilary Newman

Both Hester Lynch Thrale (1741-1821) and Fanny Burney (1752-1840) lived through a turbulent political period. Much stress has been laid upon Burney's account of the French Revolution; more circumscribed but equally interesting are the Gordon Riots of 1780. Thrale and Burney were close friends at the time and, indeed, were together during the riots. Fanny Burney's experience of this period are fully dealt with in volume 4 of *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*. This article, therefore, will concentrate on the Gordon Riots from the point of view of Mrs. Thrale.

Lord George Gordon (1751-93) devoted his life to religion and politics. In 1698 the Popery Act had inflicted a number of disabilities on Catholics in England. In 1778, the first Catholic Relief Act restored some rights to Catholics. As the recent *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)* entry for Lord George Gordon states: "It is likely that many who later protested against the measure did not properly appreciate its circumscribed nature." Gordon may well have been one of these, for he became obsessed with getting the Act repealed. He became President of the Protestant Association and helped organize a petition of some 44,000 names against the Act. Gordon was to present the petition to Parliament on 2 June 1780, on which occasion a crowd of some 60,000 people converged outside the building. The crowd carried banners reading "No Popery" and wore blue cockades in their hats – a symbol of their cause and allegiance.

Later that day, the capital broke out in riots in which the crowds attacked Roman Catholic chapels and households, which they looted and burnt. As Thrale and Burney make clear, it was a terrifying period, especially for Londoners. Although Thrale and Burney were together in Bath when the riots erupted, both had family members and property in London. Burney's account of events and her terror find expression through her syntax and use of erratic punctuation; Thrale's is more controlled and less emotional. It is also briefer and less repetitive than Burney's. This may be partly accounted for by the fact that Burney was writing during the riots, whereas Thrale presented a retrospective account. That the two women existed in a different emotional climate may be suggested by the fact that where Fanny's main concern was for her family, Thrale forgot to mention that her two youngest children were also rescued from the Streatham property! However, it is also possible that Mrs. Thrale was simply stunned by events into a state of unreality: "Good Heavens what Times are these! and the Cry of *no Popery* resounding through the Streets in the Year 1780. One would not have believed it."¹

Thrale's retrospective account of the Gordon Riots in her *Thraliana* began on 20 June 1780. She records how the Thrales' brewery in Southwark was threatened as it had been rumoured that Mr Thrale was a Catholic and therefore a possible target for the rioters. Disaster was averted by the quick wits of their brewery manager Perkins. The editor of *Thraliana* quotes from the obituary notice of Perkins in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:

the mob came direct from the delivery of the Newgate prisoners, dragging the chains as spoils. Perkins mildly protested, 'it were a shame that men should be degraded by so heavy a load; and he would furnish them with a

horse for that purpose'. The bait succeeded. He gave them some porter, and they departed with loud Hourahs! (*Thraliana*, 437).

Mrs. Thrale viewed this as an "interposition of Providence" and rewarded its agent, Perkins, with two hundred guineas (twice what she had agreed with her husband).

The other agent of Providence appears to have been Sir Philip Jennings-Clerke (1722-88) a politician and friend of the Thrales and their circle. Sir Philip summoned the troops and arranged the removal of the furniture and bills and bonds from Streatham to Chelsea College. Mrs. Thrale exclaimed about Sir Philip, "Good Creature how kind he is! and how much I *ought* to love him! God knows I am not in *this* Case wanting to my Duty" (*Thraliana*, 437). However, on June 28 1780, she was more critical of him: she was not pleased at "the parts my Bishop and Baronet have taken in the Fray, but they think themselves wiser than I; - & Hinchliffe is wiser, but Sir Philip should have been contented to be taught" (*Thraliana*, 440). Thrale's disapproval of the baronet may relate to the fact that, as the *ODNB* states, he had "an inveterate loathing" for the Catholic religion and his behaviour suggested that he sympathised with Gordon. He also testified at the latter's trial and argued that the Protestant Association leader had attempted to restore calm among his followers. Further Jennings-Clerke also spoke in favour of a petition opposing the Catholic Relief Act.

"[My] Bishop" also mentioned by Mrs. Thrale was John Hinchliffe (1731-94), the bishop of Peterborough, who combined interests in religion and politics. Thrale might have thought him "wiser" in that in the 1778 Bill for the Security of the Protestant Religion he had supported the relief of Catholics on the basis of "reason, justice and Christian benevolence." However, later he felt some anxiety about this, and won the approval of the rioters by his "moderated anti-Catholicism" (*ODNB*).

Both Thrale and Burney considered the wider political dimensions of the Gordon Riots. This is particularly commendable when we consider that neither women had the vote. Mrs. Thrale believed that the "World is rushing on to its own Ruin!... the English Constitution is I think at last fairly finished, & my Lady Britannia has cut her own Throat" (*Thraliana*, 440). Thrale also quoted from Shakespeare's political Roman play *Julius Caesar*: "There is a Tide in the Affairs of Men." Thrale astutely saw that the riots had led to an increase in the popularity of George III:

anything say we now but a Mob to rule over us: in short any Government that will protect our Property is the present Cry, and if the Tories would but take advantage of the Spirit de ce moment, they might fasten what Rulers & what Rules they would on us (*Thraliana*, 450).

Mrs. Thrale also perceived that if Lord George Gordon was not hanged he would cause more disorder: "they only Imprisoned *him*, who like imprisoned Fire will burst out some time with redoubled Fury on their foolish heads - if mine can judge at all" (*Thraliana*, 451). Thrale believed she had her finger on the pulse of the time, writing that she thought that releasing the lord on bail was "contrary to the general disposition of the people, who appear to wish his punishment."² She was right: Lord George continued to meddle in religious and political affairs and finally died in

Newgate prison in his early forties.

As noted in the *ODNB*: "Opinions of Gordon varied greatly in his own age." Although he was undeniably a charismatic figure, many of his contemporaries - including Mrs. Thrale - considered that he was a lunatic. The *ONDB* article concludes: "Certainly Gordon was unbalanced, irresponsible, and dangerous," a view with which Mrs. Thrale would certainly have concurred.

Having said this, it is of interest that Mrs. Thrale's view of history was not altogether different to that of Lord George Gordon. Both combined a somewhat eccentric view of religion with the political situation. During his last years Gordon converted to Judaism. The *ODNB* opines that

Gordon's philosemitism may well have developed out of ideas, current in certain dissenting circles, of an eschatological kind, and, in particular, from the belief that the return of the Jews to Israel would herald the millennium.

Mrs. Thrale also became more involved with a different religion when she married an Italian Roman Catholic and spent some time living in a Catholic country. Her views were later expressed in her two-volume *Retrospection: or a Review of the most striking and important Events, Characters, Situations, and their Consequences which the last eighteen hundred years have presented to the Views of Mankind*. This work was a culmination of Mrs. Thrale's views as they had been developing over the past couple of decades. Like Gordon, Thrale believed they were living

in Apocalyptic times which would end the world as recounted in the New Testament. Though this was predominantly prompted by the French Revolution, Mrs. Thrale also related it to the Gordon Riots, when she wrote that the Government had taken precautionary measures "remembering our Unprovided State in the Year 1780 when Lord George's Insurrection fired the Town."³

In conclusion, Mrs. Thrale's account of the Gordon Riots is of interest for several reasons. Firstly it contributes to our knowledge of Fanny Burney; secondly because it came from a disenfranchised woman who nevertheless showed political acumen; and finally because she shared with Gordon an apocalyptic view of history which is an interesting reflection of English life in the late eighteenth century.

Notes

¹ *Thraliana The Diary of Mrs Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs Piozzi) 1776-1809 Volume I 1776-1784*, ed. Katharine C. Balderston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), 440.

² *The Letters of Mrs Thrale*, ed. R. Brimley Johnson (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1926), 57.

³ *Thraliana The Diary of Mrs Hester Lynch Thrale (Later Mrs Piozzi) 1776-1809 Volume II 1784-1809*, ed. Katharine C. Balderston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), 85.

DEVON AND CORNWALL CELEBRATIONS IN SEPTEMBER

Celebrations are planned for the weekend 14-16 September 2012, celebrating both the 250th anniversary of the visit made to Devon and Cornwall by Samuel Johnson and Joshua Reynolds in 1762, and the visit by Fanny Burney in 1789. There are two main events.

On Saturday 15.Sep.2012 there is a celebration in Plympton St. Maurice Church where the Reynolds family worshipped: an organ recital at 5:40 PM followed by speakers Richard Aylmer (Reynolds Group), Nicholas Cambridge (Chairman of the Johnson Society of London), Mark Cardale (Mudge Family), and Hester Davenport (Chair Burney Society UK). Tickets are £5 per head for supper in Plympton Guildhall afterwards. The speakers have strong connections with Cornwall and Devon. Richard Aylmer was born in Devonport and lived in South Devon as a small boy. Forebears came from both Devon and Cornwall. Nicholas Cambridge lived in Plymouth from the age of four. He started an engineering apprenticeship at Devonport Naval Dockyard, went to London University, switched to medicine and qualified as a doctor. Mark Cardale's forebears came from Devon and Cornwall and four generations served in the Royal Navy. Hester Davenport, née Wilson, lived in Hartley and was educated at Plymouth High School, but began her schooling in North Cornwall.

On Sunday there is a talk at Mount Edgcumbe at 2.30 PM given by Hester Davenport and Karin Fernald about Burney's visit with the Royal Party. There may be an opportunity to join small informal groups on Friday retracing Johnson's and Reynolds' visit to Yealmpton, and on the Saturday morning a visit to Devonport. If you are intending to come please contact Richard Aylmer now.

richard.aylmer@appleinter.net



John Mudge, Plymouth, host to Johnson and Reynolds.

Sarah Harriet Burney, Maria Edgeworth and the Inordinate Desire to Be Loved

By Carmen María Fernández Rodríguez

Maria Edgeworth (1768-1849) occupied a privileged place among the many British novelists admired by Sarah Harriet Burney. Dr. Burney's youngest daughter considered Edgeworth "the pride of English female writers" and "the most useful author, whether male or female, now existing."¹ Encouraged by her father, the Anglo-Irish landlord Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Maria became a successful authoress who travelled a lot and had a wide knowledge of British and continental literature, economy and politics. What interests me here is the number of coincidences that emerge if we examine how family relationships are characterized by coldness and engender isolation in Burney's and Edgeworth's *oeuvres*. This is a first attempt to explore how the (un)existing relationship with the father – called by Lorna Clark "the quest for paternal approval"² – in Burney's fiction corresponds with the centrality of mothers in Edgeworth's works. On the other hand, neither in Burney nor in Edgeworth do mothers appear as nurturing presences which sets these writers apart from the literary mainstream depicting mothers as angelic figures. I would like to study mothers in Edgeworth's feminocentric fiction by focusing on her first and last novels of manners, *Belinda* (1801) and *Helen* (1834), which are not so well-known as Edgeworth's Irish tales. Thematically related to *Letters for Literary Ladies* (1798) and *Leonora* (1805),³¹ these productions are important in Edgeworth's canon for a number of reasons since the private and the public spheres are directly linked and the focus is on women's education and women's extramarital affairs. Of course, it is difficult to systematise and encapsulate such powerful characters in a space like this. However, these mature women transform the protagonists in their confidantes by unveiling to them their personal "histories" in brilliant first-person accounts.

Belinda is a sophisticated comedy of manners much indebted to eighteenth-century English feminism (Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft) and to Jean François Marmontel's *contes moraux*. It ran several editions and, by 1802, there was even a French translation *Belinde, Conte Moral de Maria Edgeworth* by M. de Ségur.⁴ Due to its success, Mrs. Barbauld decided to include *Belinda* together with *The Modern Griselda* (1805) in her British Novelists series nine years after its publication. Apparently, *Belinda* follows Frances Burney's pattern in *Cecilia* (1782), and deals with an *ingénue* entering high life. Belinda Portman travels to London and meets her aunt, Mrs. Stanhope, and her much more attractive London chaperone Lady Delacour, a woman of fashion celebrated in London and praised by everyone. Behind her façade, Lady Delacour hides an image of despair marked by traumatic experiences. Belinda is also introduced to the Percivals, a typical Edgeworthian family anticipating the Percys in *Patronage*, and two suitors: Clarence Hervey, Lady Delacour's beau – whom Belinda finally marries – and the West Indian Mr. Vincent.

Undoubtedly, the rational Belinda does not monopolise the reader's attention and cannot vie with Lady Delacour in wit, eloquence and energy. One of the prevailing features in Edgeworth's tales and novels is that the woman of the world is usually marked by her need for affection and by her neglect of the domestic sphere, so after attending a masquerade where Lady Delacour is disguised as the Tragic Muse, Belinda's confidante acknowledges that she has sacrificed herself to glitter in the world.⁵

A coquette in her youth, Lady Delacour fell in love with Mr. Percival, who preferred Lady Anne as a wife. To vent her resentment, Lady Delacour married a man she did not love and still has a wound on her breast as a consequence of a duel with Mrs. Lutridge epitomising the punishment for surpassing the feminine sphere: "my mind is eaten away like my body, by incurable disease – inveterate remorse – remorse for a life of folly – of folly which has brought on me all the punishments of guilt" (30). The literary cliché of the heart as the repository of feelings and passion is here altered, and the breast, commonly associated with the feminine, the womb and maternity, is not positively enhanced. A handicapped mother, Lady Delacour cannot hug Helena since her breast aches and Belinda comforts the girl (173).

Belinda's friend relieves her pain with laudanum and methodistical readings. After having undergone a process of self-destruction, she insists that she has embittered herself because she hates hypocrisy, and she laughs at "La femme comme il y en peu" – the title of one of Jean-François Marmontel's moral tales. This is the kind of mother envisioned by Clarence Hervey as a woman who put an end to social life to educate her children. Lady Delacour has the impression that it is simply too late to be a heroine (176). After the death of two infants, – one of them because Lady Delacour had unsuccessfully wanted to breastfeed her – she gave birth to a daughter called Helena, who was rejected by her father and sent to the countryside. In the narrative, Helena is always associated with the natural world and affections. Lady Delacour is conscious of her daughter's beauty and eloquence though she never reads the girl's letters and rejects her ideas. With practically no time to spend with Helena, Lady Delacour does not acknowledge her maternal instinct. As in the works of Sarah Harriet Burney, the daughter is marginalized, and the "little gipsy" (119, 175) finds Lady Anne Percival more affectionate than her mother. Nevertheless, in *Belinda*, the daughter redeems the monstrous mother. By giving to Lady Delacour a vivid account of how she almost entered her horrid boudoir and obtained the key to this room, Helena becomes worthy of her mother's esteem (297), which allows Lady Delacour the opportunity to teach Helena how to use her talent: "You have all your mother's strength of mind; may you never have any of her faults, or any of her misfortunes! [...] but do not throw away your life as I have thrown away mine, to win the praise of fools" (298). After her operation, Lady Delacour promises she will change her life, and everybody witnesses her recovery and reconciliation with domestic life:

She was no longer in continual anxiety to conceal the state of her health from the world. She had no secret to keep —no part to act; her reconciliation with her husband and with his friends restored her mind to ease and self-complacency. Her little Helena was a source of daily pleasure; and no longer conscious of neglecting her daughter, she no longer feared that the affections of her child should be alienated (299).

Regarding *Helen*, it was Edgeworth's first work without Richard Lovell's support. There was a change in Edgeworth's writing which British reviewers perceived very soon, and even the French review *La caricature* praised this long-awaited novel in the following terms: "un livre plein de choses vraiment fortes et belles [...]. Il y a dans cet ouvrage une foi si profonde a tout cequi est bien, qu'on se sent grandir en le lisant."⁶ The impression pervades in

more recent Edgeworth scholars,⁷ so, for Marilyn Butler – Edgeworth’s biographer and best critic – the Anglo-Irish writer achieves something uncommon in *Helen*. The work is sociologically much more specific than the earlier *Tales of Fashionable Life* (1809-12), but at the same time its theme is more universal: “Maria gives a generous allowance of humanity and goodwill to all her major characters, so that their problems become the general problems of sensitive people who have to live in close proximity with one another.”⁸

The plot of *Helen* seems quite simple. After her uncle’s death, Helen Stanley visits an old friend, Cecilia Davenant Clarendon, and helps her to conceal an unfortunate romance from her husband. Helen, whom Lady Davenant has always praised for her sincerity and integrity, becomes involved in scandal as the letters between Cecilia and the deceased Colonel D’Aubigny are brought to light. At the end, Cecilia confesses the truth and she reconciles with her husband when her mother, Lady Davenant, is dying. As the story begins, there is a sprightly dialogue between the Collingwoods, who introduce the main characters and point out Lady Davenant’s great problem: “female politicians, with their heads full of the affairs of Europe, cannot have time to think of the affairs of their families.”⁹ Modelled on Mme de Staël, Lady Davenant is an erudite and an acute woman. The history of her life has some resemblance with Emma Courtney’s in Mary Hay’s homonymous work, and it is unveiled to Helen because the girl has always been kind to her and “The human heart, of whatever age, opens only to the heart that opens in return” (57). Lady Davenant is aware that her early neglect of Cecilia’s education, can never be completely repaired (79) and retrospectively blames herself for having turned her into a castle-builder after being cast out by a man. Then Lady Davenant had a nervous breakdown, and her family opposed her marriage to Lord Davenant because he had no title or money. The daughter has to witness how her first love marries her rival and leaves her son, Granville Beauclerc, to her care. On the other hand, as the narrative progresses, the reader notices that Lady Davenant has distanced herself from her mother and this constitutes another source of emotional conflict.

At the end of *Helen*, Lady Davenant still feels repentant. Cecilia has no confidence in her and the mother is shocked when she sees Cecilia in love since, for her, her daughter had no capacity to love: “I thought the desire of pleasing has been her ruling passion – the ruling passion of a little mind and a cold heart; but I did wrong” (19). Not only are they strangers to each other, but Lady Davenant even thinks she cannot get on well with her daughter: “Nature and art forbid – no spectacles you can furnish will remedy certain defects of vision. Cecilia sees as much as she can ever see of my character, and I see, in the best light, the whole of hers” (79). Cecilia’s fault is that she desperately needs to satisfy her mother and Cecilia’s secret is discovered when the daughter gives birth to a son. Before the reconciliation with General Clarendon, we are offered one of the best moments in the novel by means of an internal focalisation portraying Cecilia’s loneliness and regret after causing so much pain to her mother:

Wretched she was, but still in her wretchedness there was within her a relieving conscience and the sustaining power of truth; and she had now the support of her mother’s

affection, and the consolation of feeling that she had at last done Helen justice! To her really generous, affectionate disposition, there was in the return of her feelings to their natural course an indescribable sense of relief. Broken, crushed, as were all her own hopes, her sympathy, even in the depths of her misery, now went pure, free from any windings of deceit, direct to Helen’s happy prospects, in which she shared with all the eagerness of her warm heart (430).

To my mind, Edgeworth reflected much of herself in Lady Delacour and Lady Davenant. The Anglo-Irish authoress was marked by the death of her mother, Anna Maria, and, instead of becoming a mother, she functioned as such for her numerous brothers and sisters. As her father once said, and as Lady Davenant comments about Cecilia in *Helen*, hers was “an inordinate desire to be loved, this impatience of not being loved” (31), and Edgeworth confessed her own weakness in a letter to Mrs. O’Beirne: “even my father who says the defect of my character is an inordinate desire to be loved allows me to exult in the hope of possessing a little portion of Mrs. O’Beirne’s love.” Lady Delacour and Lady Davenant are just another version of a topic which haunts her fiction, absentism applied to the domestic sphere which Sarah Harriet Burney frequently features in her *oeuvre*. Like her, Edgeworth refused to perpetuate complacent visions of women and preferred to focus on the disruption or absentism of affective ties in the family unit and the unhappiness that this engenders.

Carmen María Fernández Rodríguez teaches at the School of Languages, Santiago de Compostela. After obtaining her PhD in 2007 with a dissertation on Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth, she has turned her attention to Sarah Harriet Burney’s oeuvre from the perspective of gender studies and to the reception of Edgeworth’s works in European literatures. Dr. Fernández Rodríguez has published reviews and articles in international publications, such as Atlantis, Irish Studies, Sendebarr and Pegasus.

Notes

- 1 *The Letters of Sarah Harriet Burney*, ed. Lorna J. Clark (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 179.
- 2 *Letters*, lix.
- 3 The relationship between mothers and daughters is a prevailing subject in works such as *Émilie de Coulanges*, *Tales of Fashionable Life* (1812) and the tales “Mademoiselle Panache,” “Angelina” and “The Good French Governess” in *Moral Tales* (1801).
- 4 Christina Colvin, ed. *Maria Edgeworth in France and Switzerland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 25.
- 5 Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda* [1801], ed. Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick (Oxford: and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 142. All further references appear in the text.
- 6 Review of *Hélène* in *La caricature morale, politique et littéraire* (15 mai): 1470.
- 7 Abigail Burnham thinks that with *Helen*, Edgeworth inaugurates a kind of fiction later cultivated by the Brontës, Elizabeth Gaskell and Charles Dickens. See Abigail Burnham Bloom, ed. *Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers* (London: Aldwych Press, 2000), 158.
- 8 Marilyn Butler, *Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 457-9.
- 9 Maggie Gee, Introduction to Maria Edgeworth, *Helen* [1834] (London: Pandora, 1987), 1. All further references to this edition appear in the text.
- 10 Quoted in Butler, 477.

The Burney Journal, Volume 11 In Press

Volume 11 of The Burney Journal is in the press and should be ready by October 2012. The essays included in the forthcoming volume are as follows:

- **Lorna J. Clark**, “A Study in Dialogue: Frances Burney Attends Warren Hastings’ Trial”
- **Andrew Dicus**, “*Evelina*, The Wanderer, and Gothic Spatiality: Frances Burney and a Problem of Imagined Community”
- **Kate Hamilton**, “London and the Female Bildungsroman, Frances Burney’s *Evelina*, *Cecilia* and *The Wiltings*”
- **Alicia Kerfoot**, “Declining Buckles and Movable Shoes in Frances Burney’s *Cecilia*”
- **Stephanie Russo**, ““Would it be pleasing to me?” Surveillance and Sexuality in Frances Burney’s *Camilla*”

The editor welcomes submissions to *The Burney Journal*. Essays (of between 5000 and 7500 words) should be sent electronically in Microsoft Word and follow MLA format. As befitting peer review, the author's name and affiliation should appear only on the cover page. Correspondence should be sent to the editor, Dr. Marilyn Francus, Dept. of English, West Virginia University, 100 Colson Hall, P.O. Box 6296, Morgantown, WV 26506.

Hemlow Prize in Burney Studies

The Burney Society invites submissions for the Hemlow Prize in Burney Studies, named in honour of the late Joyce Hemlow, Greenshields Professor of English at McGill University, whose biography of Frances Burney and edition of her journals and letters are among the foundational works of eighteenth-century literary scholarship.

The Hemlow Prize will be awarded to the best essay written by a graduate student (registered within the last year) on any aspect of the life or writings of Frances Burney or members of the Burney Family. The essay, which can be up to 6,000 words, should make a substantial contribution to Burney scholarship. The judges will take into consideration the essay's originality, coherence, use of source material, awareness of other work in the field, and documentation. The winning essay will be published in the *Burney Journal* and the recipient will receive an award of US \$250, as well as a year's membership in the Burney Society.

The contest for 2012 is closed (submissions were due by 1 September). However, the Hemlow Prize for 2013 is open; the deadline for submissions will be 1 September 2013. Two copies of the essay (one appropriate for blind submission) should be sent, by email attachment, to the Chair of the Prize Committee, Dr. Laura Engel, engell784@duq.edu or by mail to Dr. Laura Engel, English Department, Duquesne University, 600 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15282. Submissions must be received by 1 September 2012.

INTRIGUING ANCESTORS: A PREVIEW

By Bill Fraser

Editor's Note: UK Burney Society President Bill Fraser has an illustrious ancestry which not only includes the Burney family but can be dated back to the time of William the Conqueror. Although it takes time to muster such a roll, Bill has kindly promised to undertake this task and report back in the Spring 2013 issue of the Burney Letter. Here is a brief preview:

First, The Burneys: A little more on the “Delightful and Excellent” partnership of Esther and Charles Rousseau.

Then – their son Richard Allen and his links with the Plantagenets and prominent Somerset and Dorset families especially the Hoares of Stourhead – and their daughter Maria who married “Bood” Alexandre Bourdois, close emigré friend of General d'Arblay and who was rescued by him from penury in Paris. And Richard's granddaughter Clara who married into the Lethbridge Stone family, establishing a bend sinister link to the Grafton family (a further bend sinister link to the Stuarts!). Clara's mother-in-law Ada was the first woman to be divorced in her own right in 1859 – on grounds of her own adultery.

Clara's daughter, Evelyn Stone, -my grandmother, married into the Fraser family (of Scottish horse thieves extraction). One of the two branches had connections with the Lovat estates, the other with Aberdeen. They achieved prominence through the rice trade and through the development of banks in the Far East and Singapore. The family connection with India and Burma continued in the next generations through army careers. My father spent much of his service on the North West Frontier dealing with tribal stability. I was born in Quetta and learnt to swim in the Dal Lake Srinagar.

And finally my mother's links with the Irish Salmond family. A Royal yacht, the first German submarine to be sunk, and the prominent academic theologian and Dean at Trinity College Dublin who confronted the Pope with “An Infallible Fallacy.”

More to come and possibly intrigue?

Burney Society of Great Britain: 5th International Conference 21 – 24 July 2013

“Education in the Life and Works of Frances Burney and her Family”

Venue: Gonville and Caius College Cambridge

Keynotes: Professor Peter Sabor, Director of the Burney Centre, McGill University and Philip Olleson, Professor Emeritus, University of Nottingham.

Commenting on Mrs Streatfeild and her daughter, “the fair ‘S.S.’,” in October 1779, Frances Burney observed wryly, “how infinitely preferable are parts without education, to education without parts.” As the letters, diaries and memoirs of Burney and her relatives show, education was a highly valued, keenly debated issue in the family, a means of professional advancement, or a source of personal endeavour. It was also of key thematic significance in the novels and plays of Frances Burney and her half-sister Sarah Harriet.

The Burney Society conference invites a broad interpretation of education, and welcomes contributions on any aspect of this rich area of interest in the works, as well as the life, of Frances Burney and her family. Please send abstracts of 250 words to Helen Cooper at hcooper@bournemouth.ac.uk by 30 September 2012. Papers should last no longer than 20 minutes and be suitable for a mixed audience of academics and people with a general interest in Burney. Please mention any audio visual requirements. Participants will be notified by the end of December 2012. It is not necessary to be a member of the Burney Society to submit a proposal, but presenters at the conference must be members. For more information about the Burney Society and membership please visit the Burney Society website at <http://theburneysociety-uk.net/>

Call for Papers ASECS 2013

Two sessions on Frances Burney will be held at the ASECS conference in Cleveland, Ohio, April 4-7 2013. Deadline for submission of proposals is 15 September 2012.

The Long Career of Frances Burney: Enlightenment, Romantic, and Victorian Writer

This session will focus on aspects of Burney’s extraordinarily long writing life, including her representation of cultural changes, her relations with her contemporaries, and her reactions to or experiments with developments in literary form. Papers might address the arc of Burney’s literary reputation (including the reception of her work by other writers), her engagement with emerging ideologies or ways of life, and her role as a historian/critic of her times.

Please send abstracts of 250 words to Chair: Linda Zionkowski, Department of English, Ohio University, 369 Ellis Hall, Athens, Ohio 45701 Email: zionkows@ohio.edu Tel: (740) 593-2838; Fax: (740) 593-2832

Frances Burney at Court

Frances Burney worked as the Keeper of the Robes for Queen Charlotte from 1786 to 1791, and her journals from this period of her life provide a wealth of information about the royal family, national politics, and court manners. They

also reveal the crucible from which her tragedies and later novels would emerge. In celebration of the publication of the first two volumes of Frances Burney’s court journals—the first time that these journals have been published in a complete modern edition—this panel welcomes papers on any aspect of Frances Burney’s life during her court years, or any exploration of how her court experience shaped her writing. Paper topics may include Burney’s relationships with the royal family, Mme Schwellenberg, and other members of the royal household; Burney’s analysis of the politics of court and nation; Burney’s methods of narrating the court experience; the ways that Burney’s court position recalibrates her relationships with family and friends, and reconfigures her work as a writer; or the ways that this edition of the court journals revises our perceptions of Burney and her time.

Please send abstracts of 250 words to Marilyn Francus, Department of English, 100 Colson Hall, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506 Email: Marilyn.Francus@mail.wvu.edu; Tel: (412) 956-3205 Fax: (304) 293-5380.

Errata

In the Spring 2012 issues of the Burney Letter, a Portrait of Omai was reproduced on p. 9 which attributed the painting to Francesco Bartolozzi and the engraving by Nathaniel Dance. Quick to spot the error was Dr. Patricia Crown, Emerita Professor of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Art and Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of Missouri-Columbia who pointed out that the reverse is the truth: Dance is the artist and Bartolozzi the engraver. The editor apologises for the mistake.

Patricia Crown is a specialist in the works of E. F. Burney, Frances Burney’s cousin who was a talented artist. She is working on a book on his career which will include a biographical introduction and historical evaluation, as well as a list of his works.

**The Burney Family
and the
British Empire, 1750-1850:
London, Madras, and the South Seas**



**Thursday, September 20, 2012
Arts Building, Room 160
McGill University**

This colloquium is sponsored by the Burney Centre at McGill University, supported by funds from the Canada Research Chairs programme.

Introduction 1:00 P.M.
Peter Sabor, McGill University

1. Stephen Clarke, Independent Scholar

“The Veteran of Strawberry Hill, Dr. Burney and ‘that charming young woman’; The Burneys’ visit to Horace Walpole in 1785”
Chair: Peter Sabor, McGill University

This paper gives an analysis of Dr. Charles and Frances Burney’s visit to Horace Walpole’s Strawberry Hill in September 1785. It considers Walpole’s relationship with Burney father and daughter, the social ease and assurance of Dr. Burney, how Walpole displayed his collection and how they responded to it, the nature of the social exchange between them, Walpole’s personality as described by Frances Burney, and the element of Walpole’s social dependence that the account reveals. It also considers the other records we have of their meetings and exchanges from their correspondence, from the débâcle of Frances Burney reading *The Mysterious Mother* at Court to Dr. Burney’s response to Walpole’s assessment of *Camilla*, so as to attempt to provide a rounded account of a memorable encounter.

2. Laurence Williams, McGill University 1:45 P.M.

“James Burney and Omai”
Chair: Hilary Havens, McGill University

Compared to his more famous father and sister, the sea captain James Burney, the eldest son of Charles Burney, has received little scholarly attention. The first section of this paper explores James’s life and literary achievements. The second section turns to one of the most interesting of his works: a journal of his experiences on Captain Cook’s second voyage around the world from 1772 to 1774. During this voyage, he became friends with the Society Islander Omai, learning his language, and acting as interpreter when Omai was taken back to London and lionised as an embodiment of the “noble savage.” The journal provides a fascinating insight into the formation of a 22 year-old member of the Burney family, as he struggles to develop a new mode of travel writing on the South Pacific.

Coffee Break 2:30 P.M.

3. Lorna Clark, Carleton University 3:00 P.M.

“A Rebellious Heroine: The Life and Fiction of Sarah Harriet Burney”
Chair: Stewart Cooke, Dawson College

The literary oeuvre of Sarah Harriet Burney, younger half-sister to Frances Burney, deserves a reappraisal. Influenced by current literary trends and drawing on her own experience and observations, she adapted conventional genres, while introducing innovations of her own. Although her fiction is patterned on the courtship novel with the central action culminating in a marriage, the love interest is never as compelling as the heroine’s quest for economic survival. Burney’s works focus on heroines who reflect her own strong-willed and rebellious character. This paper introduces Burney’s life and fiction to a wider audience, to highlight themes and motifs that characterise her work, and to raise intriguing questions about her legacy.

4. Kate Chisholm, Independent Scholar 3:45 P.M.

“Burney in the World: Cobras, chits and curry powder in the letters of Julia Maitland”
Chair: Nancy Johnson, SUNY, New Paltz

In *Letters from Madras* (1843), Frances Burney’s great-niece Julia Maitland vividly illustrates her experiences as the wife of a Senior Merchant in the Indian civil service. She is writing home to her family in England so the letters are full of details about her travels by night through the Indian countryside carried in a palanquin by a team of servants, the birth of her children, her husband’s work, the schools and library they set up to encourage the Indians to read. But before publication she edits what she has written to create a series of carefully constructed set-pieces. This paper will explore the extent to which she was influenced by her famous great-aunt and the ways in which she in turn influenced the writings of those English wives, daughters and sisters who followed her to India.

Roundtable 4:30 P.M.

A special offer for Burney Society members
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The Journals and Letters of Susan Burney

Music and Society in Late Eighteenth-Century England

Philip Olleson, University of Nottingham, UK

'Susan Burney's wonderfully vivid picture of social and musical life in London and the Home Counties during the 1780s comes in a hitherto unpublished series of letter-journals. The jewel in the crown for music historians is her amazing record of a year in the life of the Italian opera company at the King's Theatre. We are transported back into its world of gossip and adulation as leading castrati mingled with their aristocratic backers. Her extended set-piece descriptions are full of richly perceptive observations about music and the way it was performed.'

Ian Woodfield, Queen's University Belfast, UK

Susan Burney (1755-1800) was the third daughter of the music historian Charles Burney and the younger sister of the novelist Frances (Fanny) Burney. She grew up in London, where she was able to observe at close quarters the musical life of the capital and to meet the many musicians, men of letters, and artists who visited the family home. After her marriage in 1782 to Molesworth Phillips, a Royal Marines officer who served with Captain Cook on his last voyage, she lived in Surrey and later in rural Ireland.

Burney was a knowledgeable enthusiast for music, and particularly for opera, with discriminating tastes and the ability to capture vividly musical life and the personalities involved in it. Her extensive journals and letters, a selection from which is presented here, provide a striking portrait of social, domestic and cultural life in London, the Home Counties and in Ireland in the late eighteenth century. They are of the greatest importance and interest to music and theatre historians, and also contain much that will be of significance and interest for Burney scholars, social historians of England and Ireland, women's historians and historians of the family.

Contents:

General introduction; Biographical introduction; Textual introduction. The Journals and Letters of Susan Burney, 1779-1799: Streatham and Chessington, September 1779; London, October 1779-June 1780; Chessington, October 1780; Chessington, April 1783; Norbury Park, June 1784; Boulogne, February 1785; Mickleham, June 1786-March 1787; Windsor, April 1787; Mickleham and London, May 1787-July 1794; London, November 1795-September 1796; The journey to Ireland, October 1796; Dublin and Belcotton, October 1796-December 1799; Parkgate, December 1799; Bibliography; Index.

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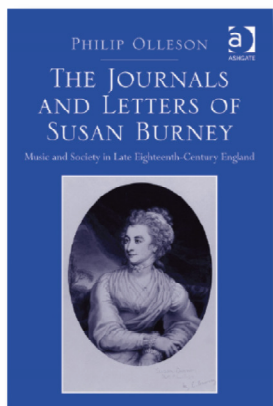
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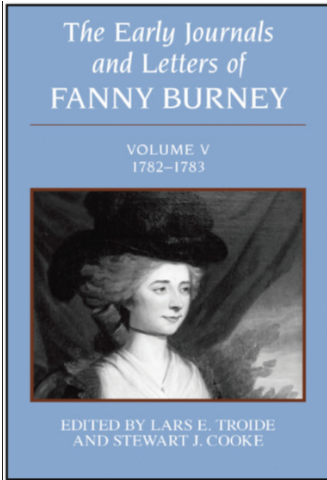
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Volume V of *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney* covers a period of significant gains and losses for the young writer. Professionally, Burney consolidated her reputation as England's premier novelist with the publication of *Cecilia*. Through a mutual friendship she gained an appointment as Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, a position that provided both financial security and an insider's view to life at Court.

Burney's professional success during these years was balanced by countless personal setbacks. Deprived of the companionship of her favourite sister following her sister's marriage, she also lost the friendship of Hester Lynch Thrale who grew increasingly distant during her romantic attachment to Gabriel Piozzi (whom she married in 1784). The death of her dear friend and mentor Samuel Crisp causes Burney deep sadness, and her emotional turmoil is further exacerbated by her introduction to George Owen Cambridge, a young clergyman to whom she is clearly attracted but who refuses to either declare himself to her, or leave her in peace.

Throughout these trials and triumphs, Burney — an artist with an acute sense of the complexities and vagaries of human nature — never ceases to fix her lens on the fashions and follies of English society as they emerge in the manners of her time.

Lars E. Troide is a retired professor of English, McGill University, and general editor of *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*.

Stewart J. Cooke teaches English at Dawson College and is the co-editor of the third volume of *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Andrew Swift and Kirsten Elliott, *Literary Walks in Bath: Eleven Excursions in the Company of Eminent Authors*. Bath: Akeman Press, 2012. Pp. xii + 320. Paper. ISBN 978-0-9560989-3-1.

By Maggie Lane

Few people can have such extensive knowledge of Bath, its history and topography, as Andrew Swift and Kirsten Elliott, who have been leading walks through the city for twenty years, besides publishing articles and books on the subject. So we know we are in safe hands when we set off on one of their routes or, more likely, when we settle into an armchair to read about them. For the present volume, while presented as a book of walks, is actually a hefty production of over 300 pages, more suitable for home reading, perhaps, than for slipping in a pocket or bag. Which is not to say that it cannot work as an on-the-spot guide, only that it is at least equally valuable as a book to be enjoyed in a leisurely fashion before, after or even instead of a visit to Bath itself.

The work is divided into eleven chronological chapters which, if read in order, amount to a vivid history of the city. We accompany rather more than eleven authors, however, as some chapters group writers together under titles such as “Rebels and Romantics,” which focuses on a quartet of colourful lives: the Shelleys, *mari et femme*, Coleridge and Catherine Macaulay – the fêted bluestocking historian who sacrificed her reputation when she dared to marry a man less than half her age. Big names with a substantial connection to Bath, either in their lives or their writings, warrant a chapter to themselves: Jane Austen, of course; Tobias Smollett and Charles Dickens are other examples. A refreshing aspect of the book is that it extends into the twentieth century with chapters on two authors who could hardly present a greater contrast: Georgette Heyer, who set five of her Regency romances in Bath, relying on maps rather than personal knowledge; and John Betjeman, who knew every stone of it, and strove in the post-war decades to save the old city from what he called the “plansters.” (“Goodbye to old Bath, we who loved you are sorry / They’re carting you off by developer’s lorry.”)

Chapter Five begins on a note of mild surprise with the statement, “Fanny Burney is still remembered today – there is even a Burney Society.” Everyone who writes about Charles Burney’s second daughter has to decide whether to refer to her as Fanny, Frances or Burney (nobody picks Madame d’Arblay any more); Swift and Elliott choose what they call the English way, which will please some people but not others. The chapter is entitled “Pleasure, Pain and Grief: Fanny Burney in Bath.” The first three words of this title come from Burney’s remark on the 1817 visit of Queen Charlotte to Bath, which was so distressingly interrupted by the death of Princess Charlotte in childbirth, but the authors of this book have adopted the phrase as emblematic of Burney’s own long life.

One of the difficulties of writing a book of this kind is how to organise the material: whether to have a long prologue about the author’s life, followed by directions for the walk, or whether to

weave biographical material into the walking instructions. Sometimes Swift and Elliott choose one way, sometimes the other. When the life is interesting but the references to Bath are few, the former works best. In the case of Burney, because she is connected with so many addresses in the city, they have opted mainly for the latter, after an introductory three pages about her background and childhood. Their difficulty thereafter (as anyone leading a walk relating to an historic person knows) is that topography does not conveniently follow chronology! So as we take a logical walk through the city we are forced to dart about in the life. Burney’s two long visits of 1780 and 1791, and her period of residence 1815-18, are of necessity jumbled up, which for someone not well versed in the biography, may be confusing. There is a worse trap, but one which can hardly be avoided. On p.115, the walk having reached the Pump Room where Burney introduced her husband to the Queen, we read, “Six months later, in May 1818, Alexandre D’Arblay [*sic*] was dead,” but on p. 116, pausing now in front of the Royal Crescent, the text tells us that “below the park there are still allotments, and it was here that Alexandre found a more satisfactory plot for growing vegetables.” This is more disconcerting to the reader, perhaps, than to the walker, for whom ten or fifteen minutes, rather than three paragraphs, separate the two statements.

When the walk reaches 4 Sydney Place, home of Jane Austen from 1801 to 1804, the authors try to solve the mystery as to why Austen’s novels, published between 1811 and 1818, warrant not the slightest remark amid Burney’s voluminous writings, despite there being a link through the Cookes of Great Bookham, and Sarah Harriet Burney’s documented admiration. The ultra-sensitive older woman, they assert, would have realised that Austen is often “sending up” her own novels; and “Fanny must also have been aware that Jane was the greater writer, and she would have been jealous of her success.”

As well as this highly contentious theory – there was no success to be jealous of during Austen’s or even Burney’s lifetime – and questionable use of Christian names, the chapter contains two or three errors. It is not true to say of the d’Arblays that “Eventually, they were reunited in England in 1815 and lived in Bath...” implying a long separation caused by war: Fanny was on the Continent with Alexandre until the defeat of France, and they chose to move together to Bath. There is reference to “Professor Joyce Hembury, the Burney scholar,” which should have been easy to check, and the authors have taken it into their heads always to refer to “Hetty” Thrale and “Hetty” Piozzi, which is downright perverse of them. The sorry tale of the lost St Swithin’s memorials is well told, except that Swift and Elliott say the Society’s commemorative plaque is “near the spot” where Burney is buried, whereas it is

actually in the churchyard adjoining the east wall of the church, not in the mortuary garden across the road, where the bodies lie in unmarked graves. The authors' confusion is understandable, as it is such a convoluted subject, yet it is still rather a shame, since followers on this pilgrimage may be led – as many of us in the Society have been – on a wild goose chase.

Taken as a whole, however, the chapter offers a full exposition of Burney's experiences in Bath, and the varied characters she knew there, together with a good walking itinerary for those who want to see the places that meant so much to her. We may even hope that the liveliness of Burney's descriptions of the city quoted here may bring new readers to her wider work, or even to the Society. Unlike Austen (and Dickens), Burney did actually love Bath, which is why she chose it for retirement; and her first-hand experiences of the place extended over a much longer period than

Austen's, from 1780 to 1818, during which time the changes to the city, both physically and socially, were tremendous. Under her very eyes, it went from being a flamboyant place where the fashionable consorted, to a painfully respectable retreat for aged and impoverished gentry – keeping exact pace with her own ageing process in fact.

After her death the city continued to decline – Dickens hated it for its shabby gentility, and Betjeman loved it for its faded glory. Tracing the story of Bath and its famous chroniclers, the present authors are unstinting in their information, a mixture of quirky anecdote and thorough research. Bath's streets and buildings are well worth exploring for their literary connections as well as for the beauty of their architecture, and whether this is done on the ground or in the imagination, this book, well provided with maps and illustrations, makes an excellent guide.

Peter Sabor (ed.). *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney, Volume I: 1786*. Pp. xlix + 343. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011. Cloth, £100. ISBN 978-0-19-926160-4

Stewart Cooke (ed.). *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney, Volume II: 1787*. Pp. xxiii + 334. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011. Cloth, £100. ISBN 978-0-19-926280-9

By John Wiltshire

These two extraordinary volumes are the first in a projected series of six, which will cover the period of Frances Burney's residence at the court of George III from her reluctant entry in July 1787 to her final escape in July 1791. They are extraordinary for many reasons. Although Burney's journals from 1791 were edited by Joyce Hemlow and published in 12 volumes between 1972 and 1984, she left the whole of Burney's earlier autobiographical writings to later editors. Oxford has been bringing out the *Early Journals and Letters*, in a series not yet complete, but it is probably a wise decision to publish these *Court Journals* as a separate series, not only because they belong to a distinct chapter in their author's life, but because of the fascinating nature of their content, as it is now revealed.

Burney's journals were first published by her niece Charlotte Barratt between 1842 and 1846. Censored by the elderly Madame d'Arblay herself, and subject to further editorial interference after her death, much material of personal and historical interest was obliterated, pasted over or cut. Austin Dobson's edition of 1905–06 added nothing to Barrett's but illustrations and a few notes. The new edition is thus itself the result of an extraordinary scholarly project of recovery. Cancelled passages have been deciphered as far as possible (not an easy task) and material from different sources (a page here, another there) has been collated and brought together to constitute as near as possible the narrative that Burney herself originally wrote. It is presented "in unamended form," as the General Editor of the series Peter Sabor writes, "lacunae and all." Gaps in the manuscripts are sometimes supplied by material from Dobson, however.

The first half of December 1786, for example, begins with a fragment from the British Library, then continues with manuscript material from the Berg Collection in the New York Public Library, then supplies two missing pages from Dobson's edition, returns to Berg, supplies December 12 from Dobson, before returning to Berg for more pages and "fragments from the Berg collection." Then

follows a letter from the Beinecke Library at Yale. An illustration from the MS for 16 December shows how extensive were Burney's obliterations of sensitive material.

In all these volumes add about a third as much again to the previously published journals, and each includes over 800 informative footnotes. The extraordinary detail and vividness of Burney's accounts of court life have long been recognized. The new text reveals even more clearly than before that beneath the comedy, the brilliant mimicry of speech habits and the recreation of banter with which Burney entertains her readers runs a dark undertow of something like despair. "All that was decently cheerful was effort, – & semblance, – all that was Nature was misery & Anarchy!" She succeeds in giving her sister Susanna a vivid feeling of her life at court. She writes dutiful and loving letters to her father, who expected so much from her elevation, never allowing him to suspect how depressed she really is. But to Susanna she does not conceal her bitterness at her entry into servitude, she compares her bullying companion Mrs Schwellenberg to their hated step-mother, and lapses into paragraphs of lament for the loss of her erstwhile friend Hester Piozzi, and her erstwhile suitor, George Owen Cambridge. Then she pulls herself up, makes stoical resolutions to forge the best deal she can, and turns her contempt for her new companions into comedy.

One of her correspondents writes kindly to her of "the intricate mazes of a Court." These mazes were sometimes literal, as when she is left, a disregarded "Nobody," to find her own way round the rambling old mansion of Nuneham Courtney, or at St. James's Palace, "separated by many Courts, avenues, passages & alleys from the Queen's or my own apartments," she finds herself at the mercy of two chairmen who have had too much to drink. (Burney describes her terror and panic with an eye to the amusing side of the situation). Other labyrinths were even more difficult to negotiate. The etiquette of her place took some learning. No one briefed her about the niceties of court protocol, and failures or delays in her

attendance on the queen were prone to make her “nervous and ill.” The court was a place of idleness and boredom, gossip, teasing and intrigue; other ladies and gentlemen, and especially the pestiferous Frenchwoman Madame La Fite, took it for granted that Burney would welcome their company. She was desperate to secure time for herself (even if only for writing up her journal), but to achieve this goal meant she had to be continually on her guard. Burney had to risk rudeness and consequent enmity just to get herself an hour or two alone; it is no wonder that the address and diplomacy she was forced to practice left her exhausted. And then there is the complex web of quasi-flirtation, aggression and flattery that she is entangled in for months by the more or less manic-depressive Rev. de Guiffardière (disguised in earlier editions as “Mr Turbulent”) who read French to the queen. The woman depicted in these journals is continually harassed and often embarrassed, but there is an extraordinary tenacity and intellectual stamina in the writer's detailed recounting of her own predicaments.

A footnote in Volume II cites a remark by Horace Walpole: “familiar letters, written by eyewitnesses, and that without design, disclose circumstances that let us more intimately into important events, are genuine history.” Not long after Burney enters the court, there is an assassination attempt on the king, but otherwise these volumes do not feature striking political events (the impeachment of Warren Hastings is just beginning in 1787). But Walpole's sentiment will be echoed by all readers of these impeccably edited volumes, and Lorna Clark's Volume III–IV, covering the crucial year of 1788, with the Hastings trial and the onset of the king's illness, is eagerly awaited.

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