Burney Letter

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'Frances Burney's Ring' Bought at Auction

By Lorna J. Clark

On 9 March 2019, an interesting item came up to auction as Lot 193 at the March auction of Trevanion & Dean Auctioneers in Whitchurch Shropshire. Here is the description:

> An enamelled posy or posie ring, 18th century, by repute belonging to Frances Burney 'Fanny Burney' (English satirical novelist, diarist and playwright), designed as a central floral spray with tied bow and with white enamelled band 'sa douceur m'enchanté' (his sweetness enchanted me), with a piece of paper stating 'Ring belonging to Fanny Burney, Authoress 1752-1842' (at fault) CONDITION REPORT: Approximate ring size K. Inherited 40 years ago, through family. Sent to Fanny Burney museum who suggested that it was a gift from her husband who was of French extraction. Unknown how came into the family.

News of such a ring (as well as of a 'Fanny Burney museum') came as somewhat of a surprise. A wedding ring is actually mentioned and even described in one of the accounts of Burney's life, that of Kate Chisholm, *Fanny Burney: Her Life* (1998), who writes that after Burney's wedding on 28 July 1793 in the church at Mickleham, she "walked back down the aisle on the arm of her husband, wearing a ring engraved with the words, '*Ca douçeur m'enchent'* (Your sweetness enchants me)" (p. 172); here, a slightly different inscription and translation are given, but clearly, it is the same ring. The footnote attributes the information to Karin Fernald who in turn had the details, she believes, in a letter from Joyce Hemlow which has since disappeared. (Hemlow retired as Director of the Burney Centre in 1984, and died in 2001.)

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Behn and Burney Society Conference Report from Auburn November 2019

By Emily Friedman

Auburn University hosted the biennial conference of the Aphra Behn Society and Frances Burney Society on Nov. 6-9, 2019.

The conference welcomed over a hundred attendees, including several virtual participants. Breakfast, lunch, and most sessions occurred at the College of Liberal Arts' Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities, better known as Pebble Hill. The site includes the historic Scott-Yarbrough House, an 1847 antebellum cottage, and a state-of-the-art conference building with courtyard between.

As always, there was no lack of lively and well-attended sessions, on topics from authorship and authority, to form and print culture, women and science, power and politics, gender performance, and of course, much more. Burney and her circle had excellent representation, including Pichaya Damrongpiwat on Burney in the epistolary archive, Hilary Havens on "Public and Private Evelinas," Ashley Schoppe on dress in E.F. Burney's *Pamela* illustrations, Andrew Black on "gambling on sympathy" in *Cecilia*, Berna Artan on disability in *Camilla*.

The conference also featured a series of workshops, starting with an afternoon workshop on manuscript transcription led by Emily Friedman. Throughout the conference, more workshops were held in the Scott-Yarbrough House dining room. Around a large round table, participants learned about teaching with games from Lindsay Doukopoulos and Nicole Adams, brainstormed digital projects with Elizabeth Brissey of 18thConnect, workshopped public-facing writing with Jessica Richard and Laura Runge, examined rare books from the Auburn University Special Collections led by Megan Peiser with help from Greg Schmidt, discussed "fan outreach" with Alyssa Jackson of Dragon*Con's Alternate & Historical Fiction Track, and even experienced "skin care as self care" led by Elizabeth Zold. A special workshop on marbling was held in the afternoon in the kitchen of Auburn's Special Collections, led by Emily Friedman and Greg Schmidt, assisted by student volunteers Caitlin Johnson, Jordan Payne, and Hannah James.

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Frances Burney's Ring

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Joyce Hemlow, a pioneering scholar with a matchless knowledge of Burneiana, had visited family members (some fifty years ago) who still held many documents and artefacts. She would seem a likely person to have seen such a ring. She does not mention it, however (in print, at least), neither in her account of Burney's marriage in her biography, *Fanny Burney* (1958), nor in her twelve-volume edition of Burney's letters, which includes a Courtship Journal in vol. 2 of *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*, the last volume of which was completed in 1974 (*JL*). Nor does Burney mention it herself in letters written at the time in which she left only the briefest of descriptions of her wedding. This is hardly surprising, given the fact that her closest confidantes—her sister, Susanna, and dear friend, Frederica Locke—were with her, so there was no need to write up these events in detail (though that did not always stop her).

Does Burney ever mention this ring in her private papers? It must be said that Burney was not terribly interested in the details of dress, despite her five-year stint as Keeper of the Robes to the Queen; her inattention to her own costume, reflected in the absence of description in her letters, is quite striking. Although she also had responsibility for the Queen's jewels when the royal family travelled, she does not show much interest in jewellery either, and might therefore be unlikely to describe her own, which she does not mention very often.

There are some exceptions. In her harrowing account of a panic-stricken dash across war-torn Europe, Burney mentions her "Gold repeater watch" and "some trinkets" that she has with her but only in the light of assets that might help to fund her trip (*JL* vol. 8, 486). She does refer to the watch as "dear—& yet sacred," and also regrets that she had left behind in her flight from Paris her "Q[ueen]'s Watch" and "many trinkets," which she assumes have all been lost (*JL* 69). Fortunately, that was not the case, and the "Queen's watch" in particular, came down safely through the family, until it was sold at auction in 1960. A beautiful gold piece, with "the back enamelled in translucent dark blue with, in the centre, a roundel containing the hair of the Royal Princesses within a split pearl border," it also had an inscription, "A Vous" on the fob seal (Sotheby's Catalogue, 19 December 1960, item 291). It is now in the Lynn Museum in King's Lynn, Norfolk, Burney's birthplace, where it can be viewed in all its glory.

Few other pieces of jewellery are mentioned, let alone described. Yet Burney certainly did own a wedding "ring" (or "rings"), as she uses both the singular and plural in two separate entries in her Memorandum book for the year 1805 (*JL* vol. 5, 742 and 760), in which she notes that her husband had kindly taken her "wedding Ring . . . to have joined where it had split" and had brought home as well "a new wedding cadeau of a repeating Watch, with some lines far dearer than all the *bijoux* in the universe" (which explains why she considered it "dear" and "sacred").

Other mentions of rings in her journals and letters are less happy, mourning rings, which were often designated in a will to be given to friends and relatives as a sign of the testator's affection. Burney herself sends rings of mourning to relatives after the death of her husband, Alexandre d'Arblay, in May 1818—though curiously, in one letter, she mentions giving them old mourning rings of her own to be repurposed or exchanged for something newer (*JL* vol. 11, 928); perhaps an insufficient number had been assigned. She leaves no description of her own wedding ring, nor of any inscription thereupon. There is also no mention of rings in her will, nor of any jewellery at all except for one item (a 'timepiece" given by the Queen which is bequeathed to her son's fiancé: "I had hoarded it alas as a Wedding present for my Son!," a generous intention that was prevented by Alexander's untimely death (*JL* vol. 12, 979-80). It is worth pointing out, though, that wedding rings, which are so personal to the bearer, might well not be likely candidates to be bequeathed.

Burney does, however, make a list of personal items in a Memoranda (*JL* vol. 12, 975) left with her will (about which she may have given verbal or informal instructions), and these include several pieces of jewellery:

> gold Watch & Chain
> Time Sleeper & Dog
> Gold Necklace
> Florimond Ring
> Almanac Gold Watch
> Blue & Gold Clasp—Regina
> Green br<ooch> Regina
> Mrs. Thrale's Breast Garnet
> purple
> Mrs. Ring's Gold Pencil

The last line here reads oddly, as Burney has never once mentioned a "Mrs. Ring" who might have given her a 'Gold Pencil', although the Queen did give her a gold pen, which might be what is meant. Could "Mrs." perhaps be a misreading for another word or abbreviation? Possible alternatives occur: "Misc." for Miscellaneous Rings, "Mrn" for Mourning Rings (as we know she had several), or even "Mrg" (for Marriage Rings), which we know she also possessed?

Burney Letter

The semi-annual newsletter of the North American Burney Society

Editor: Dr. Lorna J. Clark

Contributions (articles, reviews, suggestions, illustrations) are welcome. Please contact lorna.clark@carleton.ca

Membership in the NAm Burney Society is available for US $30 (Students $15). Membership in the UK Burney Society is £20 per year; £25 for two at the same address; £10 for students and £15 for those within five years of graduation.

For further information on membership, write either (in the US) to kirsetenahall@utexas.edu or to Kirsten Hall, 3915 Willbert Road, Austin, Texas, USA 78751, or (in the UK) to: Deborah Jones ukburneysociety@gmail.com or see the website at https://burneysociety.uk/membership

The "Florimond Ring" is also intriguing, as (at first glance) the name might seem evocative of the flowers on the auction ring (flora). It is not clear what this ring might be, though. The name "Florimond" does recur frequently in Burney's journals, but refers to a family friend: Just-Pons-Florimond de Fay de Latour-Maubourg (1781–1837), the nephew of her confidante, Mme de Maisonneuve. A friend of Burney's son, Alexandre, Florimond had died in 1837, the year before Alexandre's own death. It seems conceivable that the 'Florimond ring' might be a mourning ring sent to Alexander or even to Burney herself after Florimond's death (evidently not the floral auction ring then)? Or a ring connected to the family in some way? Or something else entirely?

These explanations somehow fail to convince; perhaps "Florimond" is another misreading. Other items on the list, such as "Breast garnet" and "purple" are equally puzzling—could "breast" be "bracelet," for example? (Burney's handwriting is often difficult to read.) A trip to New York (after the pandemic is over) to check the manuscripts would help to resolve these doubts, and could perhaps yield more information.

Other fruitful avenues to investigate are: was the auctioned ring of French or English manufacture? Can it be traced to a particular jeweller, era, or place? What about the inscription as well; etched in gold lettering on the outside of a white enamelled band, the true reading is "SA DOUCEUR M'ENCHANTE," which could be translated as "her softness enchants me" (rather than "his"); the imagined speaker would then be a male, which seems apt for a lover's gift. Or could the phrase be a quotation? This phrase does appear in novels, drama and poetry of the period, and curiously, the phrase is also used in a manual for Franciscan missionaries (where the enchantment of soul comes from the holy spirit). A final thought occurs: Burney had close friends whom she had to leave when she moved back to England. Might the ring be the affectionate farewell gift of a female friend who cherished their friendship, "sa douceur m'enchante"?

* * *

So many questions. Perhaps our investigation of this fascinating discovery should take another direction, starting with the ring itself, and what we know about its provenance. Unlike a manuscript or painting, a decorative object is somewhat inscrutable, yielding little information in and of itself. But fortunately, the ring has been bought by private collectors who have reached out to members of our society and who have kindly shared what information they have.

The ring, as the catalogue description has stated, was inherited forty years ago through the vendor's family, and it is unknown how it came into the family. With the ring came an old slip of paper (shown in the auction photograph). On one side was written "Ring belonging to Fanny Burney, Authoress 1752-1840" and on the other side, "Mrs. Hutchinson, Hampton Park." Apparently, a Mrs. Flora Hutchinson purchased a house known as Hampton House in March 1922, which interestingly was at one time Garrick's villa. It is not certain that this would be the same Mrs. Hutchinson who at one time owned the ring but it seems a distinct possibility.

The owners are wondering if any readers might know of any connection to a Mrs. Hutchinson who owned Garrick's house. They also wonder if anyone remembers an article about the ring, or a passage written by a friend or relative of Burney which describes her ring. If any of our readers have any information that might shed light on this ring or on the wording of the transcription, please contact the editor.

Behn/Burney Conference

Continued from p. 1

On November 7 at 4 p.m., Patricia Matthew gave the keynote "A Young Lady's Entrance into the Public Sphere: Gender and the Public Humanities" in the Jule Collins Smith Museum Auditorium. Matthew is the editor of Written/UnWritten: Diversity and the Hidden Truths of Tenure, and she is speaking about her current research in British Abolitionism and on being a public scholar. A reception in the museum's main gallery followed.

On November 8 at 4:30 p.m., Sarah Werner gave a plenary, "Teaching Like a Feminist Bibliographer" in the Mell Classroom Building. Werner is an independent book historian and a consulting librarian based in Washington, D.C. She is the author of *Studying Early Printed Books 1450-1800: A Practical Guide* and the accompanying site EarlyPrintedBooks.com, both of which are part of her ongoing work to open up the use of rare books and special collections libraries to wide audiences.

The conference also featured a pre-theatre banquet at Telfair Peet Theatre, and a special mainstage performance of Hannah Cowley's *The Belle's Stratagem* (first performed in 1780), directed by Chase Bringardner, Chair of Theatre. Cast and crew also provided a talkback for conference attendees.

The conference was co-sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts, Departments of English and Theatre, Library Special Collections and the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, and owed much to the assistance of CLA staff Maiben Beard, Wendy Bonner, Donna Kent, Rachel Naftel, Adriene Simon, Victoria Santos, Katie Shade, and Auburn English graduate students Tubah Mohaidat, Garrity Ward, and Elizabeth Brissey, and undergraduate Mary Grace Vinson.

Miss Burney presents her best Respects to Mrs. Delany, & is truly sorry it is out of her power to have the Honour of waiting upon her to-morrow: but she has an appointment with Mrs. Ord to accompany her to the last Rehearsal of a new opera, which begins at 12 o' clock, & will not be over till Four. Miss B: is extremely obliged to Miss Hamilton for her very kind use of secret influence, & both grieved & mortified not to be able to benefit from it. She hopes Mrs. Delany will have the indulgence to admit her some Day in next week, though she dare not hint at such a wish for the Vase, lest it should be impracticable.

St. Martin's Street, Jany. 15th 1784

Two New Burney Letters

By Peter Sabor

Since the completion last year in 25 volumes of the Oxford edition of Frances Burney's journals and letters (1972-2019), the manuscripts of two of her letters have been located: both in a private collection in Canada. Both letters had been published in the Oxford edition, but the whereabouts of the manuscripts was then unknown. One was written two years before Burney took up her position at court as Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte; the other four years after her wedding to Alexandre d'Arblay and three years after the birth of their son, Alexander.

The first of the two new letters was sent by Burney from her father's home on St. Martin's Street, London, on 15 January 1784. Addressed to Burney's elderly friend Mary Delany (1700-88), then living nearby on St. James's Place, it was published by Stewart Cooke in *The Additional Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, vol. 1 (Oxford University Press, 2015), 5-6. Since, at that time, the manuscript of the letter was unknown, Stewart printed it from a Victorian edition of Delany's letters: *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany*, ed. Lady Llanover, 6 vols. (1861-62). Nineteenth-century editors often silently revised and expurgated letters for publication, but happily, in this instance, no substantial alterations were made. There are some slight revisions—ampersands are expanded to 'and', for instance, and some capital letters are converted to lower case—but all of these changes are minor.

Burney's letter to Mary Delany was sold at auction by Dominic Winter on 14 December 2016. It was, as the auction catalogue notes, written on a single page, which had later been tipped into volume one of the seven-volume *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, edited by Charlotte Barrett, 1842-46. The seven volumes all bear the bookplate of the distinguished English ballet critic Arnold Haskell (1903-80). The catalogue correctly states that the letter was written by Burney in the third person (it begins with the words "Miss Burney presents her best Respects"), but wrongly identifies the recipient as Burney's acquaintance and near contemporary Mary Hamilton (1756-1816), who had held a position at the court of George III as governess to the Princesses from 1777 to 1782. In the letter, however, Burney present her respects, and regrets, not to Mary Hamilton but to Mary Delany. Delany had invited Burney to a viewing on the following day of the celebrated Barberini Vase, then owned by the Duchess of Portland. (In 1786 it was sold to her son, the third Duke of Portland, for over £1,000, and since 1810 it has been at the British Museum, renamed as the Portland Vase.) Burney, as she tells Delany, was unable to attend this private viewing, arranged by Mary Hamilton, as she had a prior engagement: on the same afternoon, 16 January 1784, she would be attending, with her friend Anna Ord, the "last rehearsal of a new opera": Pasquale Anfossi's *Il Trionfo d'Arianna*, starring the famous mezzo-soprano castrato Gasparo Pacchierotti, much beloved by the Burney family.

On receiving the letter, Delany turned the page over and used the blank verso to write a short note to Mary Hamilton, who would thus have been able to read first Burney's letter to Delany and then Delany's accompanying note: "Mrs. Delany depends upon Miss Hamilton notwithstanding." The sense is clear: Delany wants the viewing to go ahead without Burney. Burney had hinted, at the end of her letter, that the visit to the Duchess of Portland could perhaps be postponed; Delany, however, "depends upon Miss Hamilton" to bring her to the Duchess as planned. Delany's very brief but telling message is included in Lady Llanover's edition of her letters, which notes that it was dictated to Delany's housekeeper and waiting woman, Anne Astley. When Lady Llanover published Burney's letter and Delany's note in 1862, the manuscript was housed together with Mary Hamilton's diary: a further indication that Delany had forwarded Burney's message to her friend—much in the way that we would forward an email with an accompanying note today.

To

Miss Hamilton

The second letter was sent by Burney from Camilla Cottage on 26 September 1797. Also a single sheet, but lacking the name or address of the recipient, it was sold on eBay in July 2007 as a letter from Burney to an unknown male correspondent and bought by an American collector. Then, in November 2018, it was bought by its present owners in Canada.

In *The Additional Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, vol. 2 (Oxford University Press, 2018), 47-48, I published the letter from a scan provided by the eBay seller. The subject enabled me to identify the recipient as Benjamin Waddington (1749-1828), the husband of Burney's young friend Georgiana Mary Ann Waddington, née Port (1771-1850), who was a great niece of Mary Delany. In a missing letter, written on the same day, Benjamin Waddington had told Burney that his wife had given birth to a daughter, Matilda. Burney tells him of her "extreme surprise & infinite pleasure": surprise because she had had "no intimation of the little Matilda's intended journey." In a postscript, Burney asks Benjamin to "make my most affectionate congratulations to Mrs. W." (the W. evidently standing for "Waddington") and concludes: "What a charming little family will be rising & blooming around you!" Matilda had two elder siblings and the Waddingtons would have other children, but Matilda, alas, would die before the end of the year.

New letters by Frances Burney are appearing with decreasing frequency. These two letters were sold, respectively, in 2016 and 2018; no subsequent sales of Burney letters are known to me. The British Library holds photocopies of four of her letters, of which the originals are probably in private hands: to Sarah Rose Burney (September-20 October 1798); to an unidentified female correspondent (17 October 1798); to Charlotte Broome (19 July 1800); and to Charles Burney, Jr. (30 May 1814). Should any readers of the *Burney Letter* be in possession of these or other hitherto untraced letters by Frances Burney, or by her father, Dr. Charles Burney, I would be delighted to hear from them.

"Hand in Hand": Johnson and Burney, Pope, and Swift, Dryden and du Fresnoy

By Anthony W. Lee

In 1780, Frances Burney wrote a letter to her father in which she describes a recent exchange that she had with Samuel Johnson:

> Dr. Johnson is very gay & sociable & comfortable, & quite as kind to me as ever, — & he says the Bodlein [*sic*] Librarian has *but done his Duty*, — & that When he goes to Oxford, he will write *my* Name in the Books [the 3 vol. edition of *Evelina*], & my Age when I writ them; & sign it with his *own*, "& then, he says, the World may know that we
> So mix'd our studies, & so join'd to Fame —
> For we shall go down Hand in Hand to posterity! —"[1]

Burney refers to Johnson's promise to sign with his glowing imprimatur for the Bodleian a copy of her first novel. It appears that he actually neglected to do so (or perhaps the book has been lost);[2] however, whether he was jesting or simply forgot, this in no way blunts the sincerity of his compliment at the moment of its utterance. It is part and parcel with the extravagant praise he continually showered upon her during their few years together — much to the younger writer's mortified delight.

In a gesture typical of Johnson, he punctuates his observation with an allusion:[3] "So mix'd our studies, and so join'd to fame." That this is an allusion is signalled in Burney's letter by an indentation from the left-justified primary text, as well as the em dashes that enwrap it.[4] It is taken from a poem by a poet whose biography Johnson was currently composing: Alexander Pope.[5] The poem, the 1716 "Epistle to Mr. Jervas, With *Dryden's* Translation of *Fresnoy's Art* of *Painting*," contains the following passage:

> Read these instructive leaves, in which conspire
> *Fresnoy's* close art, and *Dryden's* native fire:

1. 27 November 1780; *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney,* vol. 3: *The Streatham Years, Part One, 1778-1779*, ed. Lars E. Troide and Stewart J. Cooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 444-45. In a letter to Johnson himself (26 April 1780), Burney repeats a variant of the line, "So mix our studies, & so join our Names," remarking, "Do you not, Sir, recollect how often in sport you have repeated this Line to me?" *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney,* vol. 4, *The Streatham Years, Part Two, 1780-1781*, ed. Betty Rizzo (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), 112.
2. See ibid., 445 n.13, and *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, ed. G.B. Hill and rev. L.F. Powell, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934-64), 4:223 n.4.
3. For other examples of this habit, see Anthony W. Lee, "Samuel Johnson and Milton's 'Mighty Bone,'" *Notes and Queries* 65.2 (June 2018): 250-52; Lee, *Dead Masters: Mentoring and Intertextuality in Samuel Johnson* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011), passim. In *Rambler* 143, Johnson remarks "As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention" (*The Annotated Rambler*; *Yale Works*, 4:401).
4. See *Boswell's Life*, 4:223 n.4, where the same portion of the letter is recorded, with the line in italics, a common way of denoting a quotation in the eighteenth century.
5. See Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets*, ed. Roger Lonsdale, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 4:234; J. D. Fleeman, *A Bibliography of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, 2 vols., prepared for press by James McLaverty (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 2:1366

> And reading wish, like theirs, our fate and fame,
> So mix'd our studies, and so join'd our name,
> Like them to shine thro' long succeeding age,
> So just thy skill, so regular my rage.[6]

Here Pope alludes to the painter and art theorist Charles-Alphronse du Fresnoy's Latin composition, *De arte graphica* ("The Art of Painting"), which Dryden translated into English and published in 1695. Playing off Horace's conceit that *ut pictura poesis*, du Fresnoy's treatise was an important work for painters throughout the century—influencing, for example, Johnson's close friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Pope's poem reimagines a relationship between himself and Jervas, who both painted portraits of Pope and gave him painting lessons, while Pope reciprocated with this brief but compelling poem to Jervas, while also remarking the relationship between an earlier poet and painter, Dryden and du Fresnoy. Clearly the analogue directly explored in this poem between du Fresnoy and Dryden was intended to compliment Jervas and Pope, respectively.

It seems also clear that Johnson's compound allusion aims to unite him and Burney within the pages of a book, *Evelina*. If we use a spatial metaphor, horizontally, du Fresnoy and Dryden are timelessly equated, as are Pope and Swift; vertically, just as Pope's poem aligns with his greatest symbolic mentor, Dryden, so too does Johnson's vertical invocation align him with one of his own key symbolic mentors, Pope,[7] as well as horizontally with young protégé, Burney. The cross-level relationships eventually cohere, like a solved crossword puzzle, into a satisfying snapshot of the six authors/painter integrated into a classical Buffonian grid.

What Burney apparently didn't notice and—Burney's later scholars have also missed, perhaps because of the lack of indentation, quotation marks, or italics—is that the final sentence of the paragraph also offers an allusion. Johnson refers again to Pope, as we see from a letter to Jonathan Swift dated 8 March 1727:

> Our Miscellany is now quite printed. I am prodigiously pleas'd with this joint-volume, in which, methinks we look like friends, side by side, serious and merry by turns, conversing interchangeably, and *walking down, hand in hand, to posterity* not in the stiff forms of learned Authors, flattering each other, and setting the rest of mankind at nought: but in a free, un-important, natural, easy manner; diverting others just as we diverted ourselves.[8]

This passage intimately records the joint efforts of Swift and Pope in their *Miscellanies* (3 vols., 1727-32), uniting the two writers through a significant public text.[9] This parallels Johnson's unification with Burney through the text of her first novel. These overdetermined poetical genealogies not only serve to elevate Burney's status to a level commensurate with that of Johnson, but to establish that she is, in Johnson's mind, worthy to be compared to Swift and Pope, as well as to Dryden and the two painters, Jervas and du Fresnoy.

In the Burney letter, Johnson fuses two disparate lines into a hybrid that at once honours the sources from which they are taken while simultaneously creating something new and original. The two lines, one from a poem and the other from a letter, poetry and prose, in Johnson's hands cohere into an intertextual dyad, an aesthetic artefact that places Johnson and Burney on the same playing field as Dryden and du Fresnoy, Pope and Swift. The lines work to join the fame and literary identities of Johnson and Burney, just as the four earlier figures have assumed enduring significance in British cultural history. Johnson, at this point in his life sure of a lasting legacy, generously embraces Burney's into his — and perhaps also expands his own legacy through his connection with his "hero" (see below), the "wonderful" "little Burney." This fusion of models and influences traverses the entire long eighteenth century: du Fresnoy, Dryden, Pope, Jervas, Johnson, Burney. We have, in fact, in this little artefact a précis of British literature. Johnson's intertextual practice here exemplifies at once the complexity and cogency of which it was adroitly capable.

Furthermore, the intertextual dyad places Burney at the head of the current and future generation of writers. Earlier, Burney records a conversation between Johnson and Sir Philip Jennings, directly comparing *Evelina* with *Windsor Forest*, both published at the authors' young ages of twenty-five:

> *Windsor Forest, repeated Dr.* J*ohnson*, though so delightful a Poem, by no means required the knowledge of Life & manners, nor the accuracy of observation, nor the skill of penetration necessary for composing such a Work as Evelina: He who could *ever* write Windsor Forest, might as well write it Young as Old. Poetical abilities require not *age* to mature them; but Evelina seems a work that should result from long Experience & deep & intimate knowledge of the World; yet it has been written without either. Miss Burney is a real Wonder."[10]

She not only equals but surpasses the earlier masters in the long-eighteenth-century literary tradition, given their respective ages. Johnson would have read the Pope-Swift

6. "Epistle to Mr. Jervas, With *Dryden's* Translation of *Fresnoy's Art* of *Painting*," *The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope*, ed. John Butt et al., 11 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939-69), 6:156; ll.7-12.

7. See Anthony W. Lee, "Johnson's Symbolic Mentors: Addison, Dryden, and *Rambler* 86," *Age of Johnson* 16 (2005). 59-79.

8. *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 2:426. My italics.

9. See Lee, "Johnson's Symbolic Mentors," *Age of Johnson* 16 (2005),59-79.

10. [*Post* 26 June 1779]; *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney,* 3:329.

correspondence—the first edition appeared in 1740[11]—especially given his concurrent work on the *Lives of the Poets*.[12] In sum then, we can say that so great was Johnson's admiration for his young friend—whom he at some point compared directly and positively to Goldsmith, that he was willing to render his new "hero" equivalent to himself, as well as his literary forebears, Dryden, Pope, and Swift: "I [Johnson] think *I* have had no Hero a good while; Dr. Goldsmith was my last; but I have had none since his Time.— —till my little Burney came!"[13]

Johnson's generosity toward Burney is extraordinary. He rarely praised other authors, especially those already showered with praise like Lyttleton or Milton. He was suspicious of "wonders" and typically attacked them.[14] And yet, Frances Burney—praised excessively by all who read *Evelina*—escaped from the danger of his criticism. Why did he spare Burney while eviscerating most others — indeed calling her at one point, as we have seen, a "wonder"?

Johnson knew that he was near his end in the late 1770s and early 1780s, and so his veneration of Burney may be chalked up to his ruminations upon his earthly legacy. This is a serviceable explanation, but lacking in certain respects. Perhaps he found in Frances Burney the daughter he never had—just as he found in Hester Thrale the mother he had long lost.[15] Yet at some point, speculation must cease. We are left with the awareness that Johnson quietly invested his love and appreciation in a triple allusion—one which he perhaps surmised, because of its elusiveness, would only be found by later generations, but yet one that symbolically ties the knot between their similar minds and talents—in the same way that the married Alban Berg coded his secret love affair with Hanna Fuchs-Robettin in his musical notes.[16]

The third allusion I just hinted at is found in the opening of the passage and creates a Johnsonian triplet that crowns the two already noticed: that "the world may know that we." These few words evoke Biblical passages, such as John 14:31 ("But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do") and John 17:23 ("I in them, and thou in me, that they be made perfect in one in us: that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and has loved them, as thou hast loved me"). Close to death himself, Johnson mixes his reflections on the past (his own life) with a future that is closing in upon him rapidly. Paternal Johnson thus leaves his blessing and his peace upon Frances Burney, the nearest he came to a daughter. He passes the torch of literary eminence unto his new "hero" and last protégé. Dutiful Christian that he was, he did not fail to check his worldly personal advice, with that of a higher, more important, and lasting order.[17] His triple allusion may be seen as Johnson's tip of the hat to Burney's past and present, as well as his coded yet urgent advice toward Burney's future.

Anthony W. Lee's research interests center upon Samuel Johnson and his circle, mentoring, and intertextuality. He has published more than forty essays on Johnson and eighteenth-century literature and culture, and has had three books recently published: New Essays on Samuel Johnson: Revaluation *(University of Delaware Press, 2018),* Community and Solitude: New Essays on Johnson's Circle *(Bucknell University Press, 2019), and* "Modernity Johnson": Samuel Johnson Among the Modernists *(Clemson University Press, 2019). He is presently finalizing the draft of* A "Clubbable Man": Essays on Eighteenth-Century Literature in Honor of Greg Clingham*, while also working on the* Selected Johnsonian Papers of J. D. Fleeman (1961-1994) *(Oak Knoll Press) and, with Melvyn New,* Scholarly Annotation and Eighteenth-Century Texts *(University of Virginia Press) Anthony has taught at a number of colleges and universities, including the University of Arkansas, Kentucky Wesleyan College, the University of the District of Columbia, and the University of Maryland University College, where he also served as Director of the English and Humanities Program. He is currently Visiting Lecturer at Arkansas Tech University.*

11. See *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, 1:xxiv.
12. See "Epistle to Arbuthnot":

Proud, as *Apollo* on his forked hill,
Sat full-blown *Bufo*, puff'd by every quill;
Fed with soft Dedication all day long,
Horace and he went hand in hand in song.
(*Twickenham*, 4:112; ll.231-34.)

Here, however, the tone is satiric and the intention is not to elevate but to degrade. Clearly the Swift letter is the true source of Johnson's allusion.
13. 26 September 1778; *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney,* 3:168 168. See Lee, "Johnson's Symbolic Mentors," *Age of Johnson* 16 (2005), 59-79. We find here in this new age of "celebrity" a new battle of the books—this time, not between the classical others and the European moderns, but that between the English classics (Dryden, Pope, and Swift). See also Marilyn Francus, "'Down with her Burney!': Johnson, Burney, and the Politics of Celebrity," in *Community and Solitude: New Essays on Johnson's Circle*, ed. Anthony W. Lee (Lewisburg: Bucknell, 2018), 108-51.
14. For Johnson's aversion to wonders, see Lonsdale, *The Lives of the English Poets*, 1:310-11
15. See Lee, "Johnson's Symbolic Mentors," *Age of Johnson* 16 (2005), 59-79.
16. See Thomas Kotcheff, "The Secret Love Affair Hidden Alban Berg's 'Lyric Suite,'" KUSC.
<https://www.kusc.org/culture/arts-alive-blog/berg-lyric-suite/ >
17. For another example of Johnson transforming a secular text into a Christian one, see Lee, "Two New Allusions: Samuel Johnson and the *Book of Common Prayer*, Boswell and Apollonius of Rhodes." *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* (8 Oct. 2018) <10.1080/0895769X.2018.1527203>; for more on the Burney/Johnson relationship, see Lee, "Allegories of Mentoring: Frances Burney's *Cecilia* and Samuel Johnson," *The Eighteenth-Century Novel* 5 (2006): 249-76.

Burney Society UK 2020 AGM: Saturday 3 October 2020, 14:00 GMT

North American Society members who wish to join this Zoom meeting should send their email address to me, Trudie Messent, Secretary Burney Society UK, at ukburneysociety@gmail.com and I will send you a Zoom invitation the day before the event.

Additional information including the Agenda and Reports will be made available on our website https://burneysociety.uk/ in advance.

We are extremely pleased to announce that the AGM will be followed by a paper from Sian Ejiwunmi-Le Berre on her BBC Radio 4 play 'When Fanny met Germaine'. If you would like to hear Sian's play in advance of the AGM talk it is still available via this link https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0009yxj

The Burney Society UK is reducing membership subscriptions for student members to £10 and for members within five years of graduation to £15. We also plan to introduce subscription payments by PayPal. Please see our website https://burneysociety.uk/ or email Dr Deborah Jones, our Membership Secretary at ukburneysociety@gmail.com for details.

We are also pleased to announce that UK Burney Society Committee Member, Prof Francesca Saggini has obtained funding for a new project, 'Opening Romanticism to New Audiences', which will include the plays of Frances Burney. Information is available at https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/892230

The 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 or recent graduate (up to two years since graduation) 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 not yet be published or submitted elsewhere, and 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 considered for publication 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 Hemlow Prize deadline for 2021 is 31 January. Two copies of the essay (one appropriate for blind submission) should be sent, by email attachment, to the Chair of the Prize Committee, Dr. Ann Campbell, anncampbell@boisestate.edu, or by mail to Dr. Ann Campbell, English Department, Boise State University, 1910 University Drive, Boise ID, 83725-1525.

NA President's Report for Fall 2020 Burney Letter

By Elaine Bander

At the end of the summer of 2020 we are all, like Juliet Granville, Frances Burney's heroine in *The Wanderer*, experiencing lives turned upside down by cataclysmic world events beyond our control, and like Juliet, we have each had to discover new resources and adaptations within ourselves and our communities in order to survive. The Burney Society (NA) is also changing and adapting. Let us hope our stories end as happily as Juliet's does.

We have an energetic new editor of *The Burney Journal*, Prof. Hilary Havens (University of Tennessee at Knoxville), taking over from Marilyn Francus who, as we told you last issue, has done so much to put our journal on the academic map. Hilary has promising plans of her own to continue that mission.

We have an enthusiastic new Treasurer, Kirsten Hall (University of Texas at Austin), taking over from Prof. Bobby Brody (CCNY-Queens College) who has done so much to improve management of our membership and to implement innovations like multiple-year memberships and PayPal (almost here, but not yet). The Burney Society owes Bobby a huge debt of gratitude, and extends a warm welcome to Kirsten, who will continue to develop and implement improvements in our membership service.

What we do not have as yet are plans for a conference to replace the July 2020 conference in Montreal that COVID-19 cancelled. It is by no means certain that we can reschedule this conference in 2021, but I am hoping. The plenaries, the panels, the concert, even the food (it's Montreal) were going to be wonderful.

So watch out for notices about a possible virtual AGM (business meeting) and conference plans, real or virtual. Meanwhile, let us all keep reading and writing all things Burney. And please don't forget to renew your membership!

The North American Burney Society has endorsed a statement by the American Society of Eighteenth Century Studies on COVID-19 and the Key Role of the Humanities and Social Sciences in the United States. See https://www.wearehumanistic.org/

On Frances Burney and the Birth of 'Chick Lit'
A Groundbreaking Storytelling Formula Since the 18th Century

By Gina Fattore

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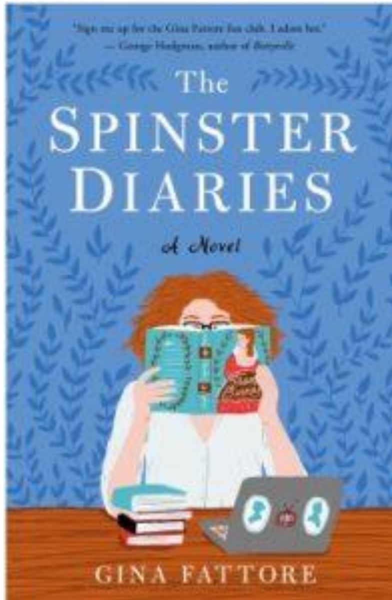
https://lithub.com/on-frances-burney-and-the-birth-of-chick-lit/]



April 27, 2020

In May of 1775, the English novelist and diarist Frances Burney was having tea at her older sister's house when she met—or more accurately *was set up with*—a short, sensible, 24-year-old man named Thomas Barlow. Burney herself was 22 at the time, and here's how she described Barlow in her diary—a diary she kept in various ways, shapes, and forms from the time she was 16 to her death at the ripe old age of 87.

> He has Read more than he has Conversed, & seems to know but little of the World; his Language is stiff & uncommon, he has a great desire to please, but no elegance of manners; neither, though he may be very worthy, is he at all agreeable.

Or, as we might say in the 21st century… thumbs-down emoji.

Four days later, Burney received a letter from Barlow—a really bad letter. That's not my 21st century spin on its stilted prose and funky capitalization; it's Burney's contemporaneous judgment of the letter, which she found to be "high flown." She already fancied herself a writer, and what's true today was probably doubly true in 1775: *god help anyone attempting to communicate via the written word with an aspiring-writer type.*

The second Burney read Barlow's "passionate Declaration of Attachment, hinting at hopes of a *return*, & so forth," she knew exactly where her heart stood. It was out, "totally insensible." But how to respond? Unmarried women were required to go directly to their dads with their dating dilemmas back then, and Burney's advised her to write back something along the lines *of you can't possibly admire and adore me this much. We've only just met*. Burney objected to this type of response on the grounds that it would be misinterpreted as an invitation to get to know her better. There's a fine line there, right? One that women are still walking more than two centuries later, always with a bit of fear in their hearts about the consequences if they respond "incorrectly" to any sort of romance-related overture.

When Burney explained these anxieties to her father, he moved on to Plan B. *Don't write back at all*. But ghosting seemed unnecessarily harsh to Burney, and her older sister Hetty quite agreed. He seemed nice and sensible, this Thomas Barlow. A little stiff perhaps, but why not give it another try? Other family members and friends hopped on board this same train, reminding Burney to factor in her sell-by date and fully "consider the situation of an unprotected, unprovided Woman." Against all arguments, she held firm to her original assertion that she "had rather a thousand Times die an old maid, than be married, except from affection." Yet somehow a week later who should just happen to be invited to tea again?

At this next meeting, Burney avoided eye contact with Thomas Barlow and tried to be as forbidding as possible. Although she'd never answered his original letter, soon a second one arrived, and before Burney could figure out how to answer *that* letter, he paid a call. "Lord! How provoking!" Burney exclaimed when he was announced. Her father muttered something about not being hasty. Thomas Barlow waited alone in the front parlor. Tick tock, tick tock.

It's easy to picture this moment in a costume drama, is it not? Even easier because this section of Burney's diary—which I've been quoting from here in the unabridged, scholarly edition produced by the Burney Centre at McGill University—is written almost entirely in dialogue. Writing a diary in dialogue might seem unusual except that as biographer Claire Harman has pointed out, Burney "wasn't simply using her diary to record or comment on events but as a testing ground for different styles." As I mentioned earlier, in her early 20s Burney was already an aspiring writer.

At 15, she completed her first novel and then ceremoniously *burned* it in the backyard, most likely because her stepmother didn't think writing was an appropriate pastime for young women. Shortly after that bonfire, she started keeping her now-famous diary, which includes firsthand descriptions of the Battle of Waterloo, a walk around Kew Gardens with George III at the height of his madness, and a mastectomy she endured in 1811—without anesthesia.

Like so many diaries written by teenage girls, Burney's begins with a pledge to confess "my *every* thought" and "open my whole Heart!" Note that 252-year-old exclamation point, which conveys exactly the sort of earnest, unbridled enthusiasm teenage girls are so often pilloried for, whatever it is they're crushing on. Five years later, Burney's journal had morphed into something less

girlish and also much less private: "journal-letters" written to an elderly family friend, living in the country, who encouraged Burney to write to him informally about her everyday life in London, to "dash away, whatever comes uppermost."

Although she also had a time-consuming day job as her father's copyist and amanuensis, Burney embraced this task with enthusiasm, documenting her beloved London life in all its glory: trips to the opera, visitors from abroad, and musical evening parties that featured—in Virginia Woolf's description—"Fanny herself slipping eagerly and lightly in and out of all this company, with her rather prominent gnat-like eyes, and her shy, awkward manners." A shy, awkward young woman writing to an older man about her life in the big city suggests something, doesn't it? It suggests an epistolary novel about a shy, awkward young woman writing to an older man about her life in the big city.

At some point in her 20s, Burney began writing such a novel, one about a young woman having "accidents and adventures" as she finds her way in the world, and by December of 1776, she was far enough along that she queried publisher Thomas Lowndes about a new kind of novel "that has not before been executed." Burney got a favorable response and quickly sent Lowndes her first two volumes, in which a beautiful young woman comes to London for the first time, gets her hair dressed, buys some new clothes, goes out to a lot of parties and plays, and meets potential love interests, both true and faux. Almost instantly after it was published, *Evelina, or The History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* became both a critical and a popular success, and once 26-year-old Frances Burney was outed as the anonymous author of this "sprightly, entertaining, & agreeable" work, it launched her on a long and varied writing career.

Today, of course, it's easy to think of comp titles for this kind of novel. Most likely we would call it chick lit—or perhaps even more disparagingly, a "shopping and f***king novel." From *Pride and Prejudice* to *Bridget Jones' Diary*, such stories about youngish people trying to work out their love lives tend to sell well, but routinely come in for derision for their formulaic plots and laughably low stakes: who cares if yet another ridiculously good-looking white girl finds Mr. Right? But in the late 18th century, women—no matter how privileged—didn't have the same legal or economic rights as men, and divorces were difficult to come by. Marrying someone who treated you badly had enormous consequences, while choosing wisely could secure your future happiness. Indeed, many people still believe that whom you marry profoundly affects your whole life's happiness, and this likely accounts for the enduring popularity of the storytelling formula Burney created with her first novel.

"I have not pretended to show the World what it actually *is*," she later wrote about *Evelina*, "but what it *appears* to a girl of 17." In 1778 this point of view was resoundingly new. Today it's something we hear and see all the time, yet still struggle to see as valid and important. Somehow exclamation points, new clothes, and endless dissections of dating dilemmas always seem to get in the way.

Gina Fattore is an executive producer of the television series, Dear Me*; she has also written for* Parenthood, Gilmore Girl*s, and* Dawson's Creek. *Her essays and reviews have appeared in the* Chicago Reader, The Millions *and* Salon. *Born and raised in Valparaiso, Indiana, she graduated from Columbia University with a degree in English. She had been working on a passion-project, a mini-series based on the life of Frances Burney (which she described in the Burney Letter 20.1 (Spring 2014), 14-15. Arising from this project, her first novel,* The Spinster Diaries, recently published by *Prospect Park Books, brilliantly intertwines the fictional journals of a scriptwriter with key episodes in Burney's life and career.*

CFP: The Burney Journal

The Burney Journal is now accepting submissions for volume 17, to be published in late 2020 /early 2021, and for subsequent issues which are published annually. A peer-reviewed publication of the Burney Society, *The Burney Journal* is available in print and indexed online by EBSCO Host.

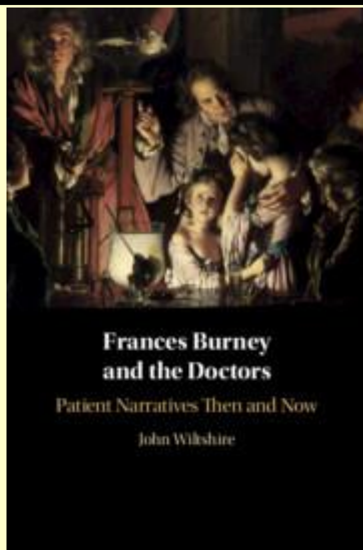
The Burney Journal is dedicated to the study of the works of the Burney family, especially Frances Burney d'Arblay, her life, her contemporaries, and her times. This annual, interdisciplinary publication invites submissions on all aspects of the Burneys' lives and careers, in a variety of disciplines including literature, history, art, music, and politics. The aims of the journal center on supporting and advocating for eighteenth-century studies broadly, and particularly author studies, women's studies, and cultural studies.

Submissions for volume 17 are due **September 15, 2020**, and manuscripts must be submitted electronically directly to the editors (Marilyn Francus [marilyn.francus@mail.wvu.edu] and Hilary Havens [hhavens1@utk.edu]). We accept submissions that vary in length from 5,000 to 7,500 words; for shorter or longer submissions, please contact the editors. Submissions must follow MLA guidelines and the journal style sheet:

https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/files/burneycentre/the_burney_journal_stylesheet.pdf

New scholars, and authors whose work is in the "idea" stage, are welcomed to contact the editors if they would like guidance prior to submission.

Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter!



Review of *Frances Burney and the Doctors: Patient Narratives Then and Now*. By John Wiltshire. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp x + 212. ISBN 9781108476362 Cdn $114.95

By Michelle Faubert

"If Burney is the unconscious pioneer of a radically new genre of writing, and a pioneer principally because she describes negotiations, [and] confrontations . . . between doctors and the patient, it is the same dramatic feature that is at the core of the modern pathography, and its bearer of the emotional, ethical, and political issues that lie at the heart of the genre's importance." (174-5)

With these words from the last chapter of John Wiltshire's monograph *Frances Burney and the Doctors: Patient Narratives Then and Now*, the author summarizes well the main concerns and major contributions of his book. Wiltshire presents pathography — which he defines as "works that are wholly devoted to the course of a medical experience" and distinguishes from "illness narrative," in which "the boundary between memory and reflection, a specific case and general concerns, can be unclear" (4), — as a new genre, a major claim that may help us to reread familiar works in novel ways, and not only Burney's accounts of her own experiences with medical crises, the main focus of this study. Wiltshire's framing of pathography can help us approach, with fresh eyes, such well-known works as Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1641), which, the author argues, "is clearly prompted by its author's own propensity to depressive illness . . . [and] might also be considered as an ur-illness narrative, especially as it is offered as a resource to fellow sufferers"; the same may be said of George Cheyne's chapter on overcoming his obesity in *The English Malady* (1733) and Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1822) (5-6).

But what are the narrative commonalities between these works of the new genre of pathology? What are their aims and formal consistencies, and what tools for interpretation might readers apply to them? In the course of this book, Wiltshire points out that pathographies share some common dramatic elements, such as an "ethical dilemma" (171) that must be faced, as well as stock figures, such as the cruel and heartless doctor who refuses to recognize the humanity of the patient and, by contrast, the good doctor or other health professional, an immensely kind person from the medical setting who makes the traumatic experience of a health emergency more bearable. As Wiltshire puts it, in this book he stages "each illness experience as an interplay, sometimes a confrontation, between two agencies — patienthood and medicine, the patient and the doctors" (10), and this narrative pattern might be understood as aspects of the genre upon which readers may structure future study of it.

With regard to tools for interpretation, the author makes frequent reference, especially in the final chapter, to the bioethical demand for a balance "between 'hope, trust, and the truth'," as presented in Robert A. Aronowitz's *Unnatural History*: *Breast Cancer and American Society* (2007), a "precarious balance that a consultant of a serious or mortally ill person must somehow maintain" (9). Through these means, Wiltshire makes a case for pathography as a new genre not only for consideration by literary scholars, but also for medical students; the author claims that the latter readership is important because pathographies emphasize the human and emotional response to medical crises, a perspective that is sometimes forgotten, since medicine in the past few centuries has "depersonalized illness" (2), erased the individual sufferer from the health-care experience in the interest of providing objectively handled and scientific — sometimes insensitive — treatment. As such, this book will be of great interest to those in the Health Humanities, an emerging field around which centres have formed at universities across Canada, such as the new Interdisciplinary Centre for Health & Society at the University of Toronto Scarborough.

Yet, of more immediate interest to readers of the *Burney Letter* is the contribution this monograph makes to Burney studies. The monograph provides what is of interest to all scholars — a full bibliography, detailed notes, and a helpful index — but it also frames, in a useful and fascinating way, some of the best-known episodes in Burney's life as pertinent to a new field of study, treats her journals and diaries as rich sites of interpretation, and compares some of these episodes to similar experiences by Burney's contemporaries, thereby situating them historically. As will become clear from a description of the individual chapters, this book has great appeal to Burney experts and dabblers alike.

In Chapter 1, "Frances Burney's Long and Extraordinary Life: 1752-1840," Wiltshire provides an overview of the incredible biography of this writer in order to contextualize the episodes of medical crises from her life that he describes in the chapters that follow. Much of what appears in the first chapter will be familiar to readers of the *Burney Letter*, but, surely, one can never tire of contemplating her truly fascinating life experiences. This chapter reminds us that, after establishing herself as one of British society's leading authors, she married happily and well to the aristocratic Frenchman, General Alexandre d'Arblay, but she did so somewhat late in life, having first suffered a few major romantic disappointments. She then became a mother at age 42, which would have been a considerably advanced age for an early nineteenth-century woman to give birth. (That she and baby Alexander both fared well must have felt like a medical triumph to

the family, but Wiltshire does not touch on this topic.)

Chapter 2, "The King, the Court, and 'Madness': 1788-1789," presents Burney's journal accounts of King George III's medical condition during her time as Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte and compares these accounts with those of Robert Fulke Greville, who was "one of the king's equerries, a reliable and devoted attendant," and, thankfully for scholars of the period, a detailed diarist (10). Here, Wiltshire's focus is not solely the King's condition, which was called "madness" at the time, but retrospectively diagnosed as porphyria by Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter, and re-retrospectively diagnosed as "bipolar disorder" or "manic depressive psychosis" by psychiatrist Timothy J. Peters and his peers (67). Wiltshire discusses these matters in illuminating detail, but with an eye, too, to how the King's medical condition affected his family and those at court, like Burney, who were essentially kept in isolated lockdown at the palace, then Kew, for almost the entirety of the illness. (One can't help but notice echoes of our current experience of the pandemic in these and several other circumstances that Wiltshire describes!)

This focus leads naturally into the subsequent chapter, "Aftermath: 1789-1791," in which Wiltshire delineates the effects of these strange circumstances on Burney's health. The challenges included: prolonged isolation; constant standing attendance in cool, drafty hallways for Queen Charlotte; enforced nightly games of cards with another royal attendant, the churlish Mrs. Schwellenberg; and an unfulfilled intimate friendship (and, Burney hoped, romantic attachment) that formed between her and Colonel Stephen Digby, the Queen's vice-chancellor (43). The last instance appeared to be the silver lining of the whole stressful situation, but Digby ended up marrying a woman of his own social standing, leaving Burney devastated and humiliated, all while being expected to continue her trying royal duties. It all led, Wiltshire notes, to "her tragic and almost fatal physical and psychological collapse" (11), which she documented in letters to her family at the time. Happily, Burney finally succeeded, after many delays, in submitting her request to leave the court to Queen Charlotte, and she was dismissed.

Not long thereafter, Burney met and married General d'Arblay, and they had a child, Alexander, whom Burney insisted on getting inoculated against the smallpox for fear that he could otherwise die of the virulent and too-common disease. This incident is the focus of Chapter 4 "An Inoculation for Smallpox: 1797." The procedure was no small medical intervention at this time, only months before Edward Jenner introduced his ground-breaking method of vaccination, in which patients were injected with cowpox material to help them build immunity against smallpox. Inoculation, by contrast, involved the injection of smallpox itself, and was often fatal: to be sure, Queen Charlotte and King George III's own boy, Octavius, died from smallpox inoculation in 1790, and, as Wiltshire notes, Burney was doubtlessly aware of this terrible event (92). By describing such events, and with respect to the period's treatment and effects of smallpox more generally, Wiltshire invites the reader to appreciate that Alexander's inoculation was, indeed, a medical crisis that may well have resulted in his death. Particularly striking is Wiltshire's wise recourse to passages about smallpox from Burney's novel *Camilla* (1796), which demonstrates not only her knowledge about the disease, but also prepares the readers of this monograph to sympathize with Burney's dangerous undertaking to prevent her darling son from contracting it, so moving are the passages from the novel.

Chapter 5 recounts the most famous medical incident from Burney's life: entitled "A Mastectomy: 1811," it details Burney's ordeal of undergoing a mastectomy for breast cancer without anaesthesia — and nothing but a wine cordial to dull the pain — in light of a recently discovered parallel account from "the same decade as Burney's, but in the strikingly different circumstances of a Quaker family in New Jersey and with doctors well known to the patient," as opposed to Burney's "lonely experience [of being] surrounded by French doctors [to whom she refers famously as "7 men in black"] in enemy Paris" (11). Burney, almost 60 years old at the time, comes off as nothing short of heroic in this episode.

"Heroic" is a word that, perhaps, Burney would have applied to herself as she dealt with her beloved husband General d'Arblay's final illness, but Wiltshire trains our eye to the ways in which she may have hindered, rather than helped, d'Arblay come to terms with his own death. Wiltshire reveals in Chapter 6, "Fighting for Life: The Last Illness and Death of General d'Arblay: 1818," that Madame d'Arblay — as we, with Wiltshire, may call Burney here — steadfastly refuses to admit to the possibility of her husband's impending death from an illness that may have been a result of his war service against Napoleon. Wiltshire compares this event, as narrated by Madame d'Arblay, with an account written by another woman, Magdalene De Lancey, about the final illness of her husband. As recounted in "A Week at Waterloo in 1815," De Lancey is considerably more accepting of her husband's impending demise than is Madame d'Arblay, who appears a little selfish and bullheaded in the comparison, however courageous she intended to be.

The final two chapters of the book switch from a focus on Burney's life to a summary of the works that Wiltshire judges to be the best illness narratives from more recent times. In Chapter 7, "Between Hope, Trust, and Truth: 1965-2015," the author breaks these narratives into categories, including those by "carers," such as Simone de Beauvoir's *A Very Easy Death* (1965) and David Rieff's *Swimming in a Sea of Death* (2008), to name only a few of the fascinating works he describes. He also introduces the reader to narratives by physicians, such as Oliver Sacks' *A Leg to Stand On* (1984) and Paul Kalanithi's *When Breath Becomes Air* (2016) (a personal favourite of yours truly), amongst others. As Wiltshire claims, these works "constitute what might be called a premonitory fusion of medical expertise with personal illness experience, both realms contributing their knowledge in a mode that challenges the long-standing bifurcation of patient and doctor" (12).

The latter point is also part of the discussion in Chapter 8, "Patienthood across Two Centuries," which "seeks to bring the moral issues or quandaries faced by carers into relation with the discipline of bioethics" (12). Here, the reader may feel some discomfort that we are invited to judge the ethical response of real people in dealing with what must have been some of the most painful and stressful episodes of their lives, but Wiltshire clarifies that such is not his aim. For example, he notes that, by comparing the stories of Burney and De Lancey, one might, "if one were a medical ethicist," extract "a useful contrast" to teach us how to deal with dying loved ones; "But," Wiltshire adds, "to view these

narratives merely through this ethical lens would be to simplify egregiously" (151). Here, then, is a final point to carry away from this book: it demonstrates the uses of the new genre of pathography and, in the form of bioethics, it offers the reader some critical approaches to this biographical field (as, indeed, Wiltshire carefully chooses only non-fictionalized examples to study), but we must be ever mindful that the study of biography requires careful negotiation, lest literary criticism become *ad hominem* attack.

Michelle Faubert is a Professor at the University of Manitoba and Visiting Fellow at Northumbria University, UK, where she is also a Project Associate for "Writing Doctors: Representation and Medical Personality ca. 1660-1832" (Leverhulme Grant, 2018-21). Her monographs are Granville Sharp's Uncovered Letter and the *Zong* Massacre *and* Rhyming Reason: The Poetry of Romantic-Era Psychologists. *She has also edited two editions for Broadview Press and multiple volumes and journal issues. She is the Principal Investigator of "Romanticism and Revolutionary Suicide," an Insight Grant funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2015-20).*

Review of *Still Blundering Into Sense. Maria Edgeworth, her Context, her Legacy*. Ed. Fiorenzo Fantaccini and Raffaella Leproni. Biblioteca di studi di filologia moderna. University of Firenze, 2019. 179-204. ISSN 2420-8361.

By Carmen María Fernández Rodríguez

One of the latest works which have come to light to celebrate Maria Edgeworth's 250th anniversary is the volume "Still Blundering Into Sense" (SBIS) published by the University of Firenze and edited by Fiorenzo Fantaccini, a professor from that university, and Raffaella Leproni, who teaches at Roma Tre University. These scholars have done outstanding research on the reception of W. B. Yeats, Jane Austen and Edgeworth in Italy, and they present this volume with the clear idea of representing Edgeworth as an educationalist concerned about one of the most urgent issues in our contemporary educational context. For Fantaccini and Leproni, Edgeworth's scope "reached a vast and diversified reading public" and was "meant to contribute to the formation of a critical spirit, both individual and collective, fostering the knowledge of one's own role in the world" (XIII).

Under this premise, the "Introduction" emphasizes the current interest in Edgeworth as a pedagogue and social thinker, and offers a summary of the articles included in three sections of the book, which deals with Edgeworth's context, her contemporaries' legacy in the nineteenth and twentieth century. and Edgeworth's importance as an educator ("Maria Edgeworth in Context"; "Women, Contemporaries Legacy"; and "Education and Heritage"). Within this structural framework, editors make an exception of Carla de Petris's article "Maria Edgeworth: "Portrait of a Lady" which describes Edgeworth's familiar setting and social milieu and is appropriately placed apart.

One of the strengths of the volume is that contributors accurately position Edgeworth as a participant in the intellectual debate about Irish identity in the years that led to the Act of Union. But most importantly, the volume surpasses the readers' expectations of finding research on familiar topics in the Edgeworth studies—this is the case with two contributions by Milena Gammaitoni and Violeta Popova on the connection between Edgeworth and Wollstonecraft, for instance. Instead of this single perspective, readers find ground-breaking articles by Maria Anita Stefanelli, relating Edgeworth to Margaret Fuller's "Woman in the Nineteenth Century," or by Fabbio Luppi, whose interest lies in Edgeworth's dramatic works as being linked to the Celtic revival and later Irish theatre. Also, as in previous articles, Carmen María Fernández Rodríguez analyzes the relationship between Edgeworth and Jane Austen and considers Lady Dashfort in *The Absentee* as a possible source of inspiration for Austen's *Lady Susan*. Another noteworthy article is Amelia Mori's tackling the subject of how Edgeworth's texts have been used to teach English as a second language in Italian Primary Schools for the last ten years. Mori insists on Edgeworth's modern appeal because, as an educationalist, the Anglo-Irish author believed in the idea of experience and peer-tutoring, together with "the need for an education shared between child and adult, the learning based largely on example and experience, the importance of narration as a privileged means of knowledge, the vision of an education aimed at building one's own, strong and solid individual identity" (240).

Still Blundering into Sense would not be complete without the appendix "Edgeworthstown: The Landscape From Where Maria Edgeworth Drew Her Inspiration" signed by The Edgeworth Society. It features lots of photos from Edgeworthstown and succinctly traces the history of the Edgeworth family and the Society today, together with a description of their objectives and the collections that they hold currently.

This is a remarkable volume which there are many reasons to welcome. The most important one is that, instead of a book produced in the English-speaking context, *Still Blundering into Sense* comes from the periphery and combines research by reputed scholars, like Susan Manly or Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin—who are continuing the legacy of that extraordinary Edgeworth scholar, Marilyn Butler—with the high quality of current research on Edgeworth in Italy and other territories, which makes a valuable contribution to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century studies.

*Carmen María Fernández Rodríguez is currently making research on the Burneys and Maria Edgeworth. She has just published "Cannot an Irishman be a good man?": Maria Edgeworth's "*The Limerick Gloves*" (1804) as a Tale of Irish Identity".* Estudios Irlandeses *15 (2020): 26-38. ISSN: 1619-311X and "Frances Burney in Spain: An Analysis of Two Modern Translations of Evelina".* Op.Cit: A Journal of Anglo-American Studies*, Second Series, 8 (2019): 47-68. ISSN: 0897-1409. Her translation of Burney's* The Witlings and A Busy Day *into Galician will see the light in 2020.*

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