

Burney Letter

Vol. 27 No. 2

The Burney Society

Fall 2021

www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/burney-society

<https://burneysociety.uk>

ISSN 1703-9835

James Burney and the 'Severities' of a Marine Education

By Geoffrey Sill



Le Lieutenant Burney Decouvre les Restes de Malheureux Rowe et de ses Compagnons, by Adolphe Aze (Paris, 1841), depicting Burney's discovery of the remains of the unfortunate Rowe and his companions (at Grass Cove, New Zealand, in 1773). By permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

In the summer of 1789, Frances Burney travelled to the coastal city of Weymouth with members of the court of King George III and Queen Charlotte. The purpose of the tour was in part to allow the King to enjoy the benefits of the sea air, but also to show all of England and the world that he had recovered fully from the illness that had affected his reason from November 1788 till March 1789. One of the Royal Navy ships

guarding the harbor during the King's tour was HMS *Magnificent*, a warship of 74 guns. The captain of the *Magnificent*, Richard Onslow, had, twenty years earlier, commanded the ship on which Frances's older brother, James, had served for three years as a midshipman. Writing the day's events up later in her journal, Frances notes that Onslow had been "an old Captain of James's," but she keeps to herself the feelings that she harbors about Captain Onslow.¹

Later in the summer, when the Court party has moved on to Saltram House at Plymouth, Burney is surprised to hear Captain Onslow hailing her from outside her window. The *Magnificent* has followed the royal party to Plymouth, and Onslow, hearing that the famous novelist Frances Burney is the sister of his former midshipman, now Captain James Burney, has decided to pursue the connection. As Frances later confides to her journal, Onslow claims "he had brought up a Brother of mine for the Sea. I did not refresh his memory with the cruel severities he practiced in that marine Education!" (*CJL* v. 394) Frances had previously mentioned in her diaries the severities of Captain Onslow toward her brother when in 1773 she visited her cousins, the Rishtons, in Teignmouth. Also visiting were the Onslows, a clergyman and his wife. "This Mr. Onslow," writes Frances, "is Brother to the Captain who was formerly so obliging as to disgrace my Brother!"² In her mention of a "disgrace," we sense that James's marine education was not only cruel, but that it left a lasting stain on the honor of James Burney and his family.

See James Burney on p. 3

North American Burney Conference

July 2021

By Catherine Keohane

Delayed by a year and moved to a virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Biennial Conference of the Burney Society (North America)** was held via Zoom July 5-7, 2021.

"**Re-reading, Re-Viewing, and Re-assessing the Burneys**" virtually welcomed about 40 participants from across the world, including North America, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand, and featured lively sessions with talks that assessed Burney studies, proposed new approaches to studying the works of Frances Burney, examined Charles Burney's contributions to music scholarship, and delved into "other Burneys," including Charles Jr., James, Sarah Harriet, and Edward Francis.

The conference began with an engaging plenary from **Francesca Saggini**, Professor in English Literature at the Università degli Studi della Tuscia (Viterbo), Italy, entitled "**Tell all the truth but tell it slant': Reading Frances Burney Against the Grain**," in which she argued for the centrality of houses to

Frances Burney's construction of herself as an author, citing the Burney family's residence in Isaac Newton's former home with its observatory and the author's homes in Surrey, including Camilla Cottage.

Tara Ghoshal Wallace began the first panel, "**Re-assessing Frances Burney and Burney Criticism**," with a survey of Burney scholarship that identified important shifts in content and focus, tracing the ways in which criticism reflected the availability of accessible editions of Burney's novels. **Alex Pitofsky** invited us to rethink Burney's depiction of violence in *Evelina*, not just for how violent behavior works to characterize individuals like Captain Mirvan but also how response to violence defines others, including the eponymous heroine. **Jodi L. Wyatt** discussed her work on Burney's prayer book and proposed the value of not omitting Christianity in critical work on Burney.

See North American Conference on p. 2

North American Conference Continued from p. 1

The first day concluded with a delightful and informative plenary by **Founding President Paula Stepankowsky** entitled “**The History, Mission, and Accomplishments of The Burney Society.**” Reflecting on the Society’s 1994 origins in a desire to combat lack of knowledge about the author, Stepankowsky highlighted several key developments, including instituting the *Burney Journal* in 1998, successfully gaining Burney a memorial window in the Poets’ Corner of Westminster Abbey, and the spinning off of the Society into UK and North American divisions in 2010.

The second day of the conference began with a panel highlighting “**Other Burneys.**” **Sophie Coulombe** explored Charles Burney Jr.’s logomania and in particular his strategic use of *Evelina* to cultivate friends while in Aberdeen. **Geoffrey Sill** discussed James Burney’s demotion from midshipman to able seaman in the context of contemporary promotion practices and Frances Burney’s comments in her journals. **Teri Doerksen** examined Edward Francis Burney’s *Elegant Establishment for Young Ladies*, pointing out the ways in which the artist presents women as reticules, or empty sacks ready to be filled. **Danielle Grover** analyzed the ways in which Sarah Harriet Burney carves space in her novels for black people to make music, while refusing to link race with questions of inferiority.

After a short break, attendees were

treated to “**Charles Burney and Music,**” a panel featuring two papers that reassessed Charles Burney’s contributions to music history. **Devon Nelson** detailed that, while Burney’s travels on the continent allowed him to see artefacts, his tour guides allowed him to see their larger historical and cultural contexts. **Morton Wan** analyzed Burney’s doctoral composition and argued for its role in Burney’s critique of how music and music education were valued.

The third and final day returned attention to Frances Burney and in particular new avenues of exploring her works. **Alicia Kerfoot** considered Burney’s references to needlework in her *Court Journals and Letters* and noted the ways in which they document and preserve material objects that have been lost to time as well as the ways in which needlework patterns and objects helped to form friendship networks. **Trudie Messent** examined the Court’s 1789 summer vacation using maps and prints, drawing inferences about sites Burney may have visited during this trip. **Svetlana Kochkina** shared her findings using digital humanities tools to study Burney’s *Court Journal* of 1788. Through network analysis and text mining of both Burney’s interactions with and her thoughts about other people, Kochkina documented and visualized the extent of Burney’s grave isolation at Court.

The afternoon and conference concluded with the Annual Business Meeting. Although it was disappointing not to be able to gather in person, meeting

virtually allowed us to celebrate our shared interest in the Burneys. Thank you to the speakers and attendees for their willingness to participate in the online format, which also allowed us to make session recordings available for a month for those registrants who were unable to attend or who wished to review a talk.

Catherine Keohane has a Ph.D. in literature from Rutgers University and teaches at Baruch College, City University of New York (CUNY). She organized the panels for this conference as well as for the 2012 and 2016 conferences, and she was recently elected Conference Convenor for the Burney Society (NA).

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@avemaria.edu or to Kirsten Hall, 5175 Beckton Rd, Avemaria, Florida, USA 34142, or (in the UK) to: Trudie Messent ukburneysociety@gmail.com or see the website at <https://burneysociety.uk/membership>

President’s Message

A year after the Covid-cancellation of our July 2020 Montreal conference, we were able to hold a successful online version thanks to the work of convener Catherine Keohane and all of our wonderful speakers. (See Catherine’s account elsewhere in *The Burney Letter*.) While we were sorry not have been able to welcome you all to Montreal, McGill University’s Burney Centre, and the McGill Library’s growing Burney manuscript collection (not to mention Infusion Baroque’s planned Burney-inflected concert, and of course, bagels), it was wonderful to greet so many Burney Society friends in cyberspace, to hear stimulating talks, and to hold lively

discussions.

Zoom also permitted us to conduct an Annual Business Meeting with record attendance, during which we voted for a new slate of Board officers and members, ratified the appointment of Kirsten Hall as Treasurer, approved the addition of a Conference Coordinator (Catherine Keohane, who has been doing this job unofficially on our behalf for years now) to the Board, created a standing committee on membership, and approved revised ByLaws to conform to the U.S.A. Internal Revenue regulations for 501(C)(3) (i.e. non profit) tax status. Our application, I am happy to say, has finally been filed. We hope to have regained our tax-free status

by early 2022.

Our new Board consists of:

Elaine Bander, President
Paula Stepankowsky, Past President
Teri Doerksen, Vice President
Kirsten Hall, Treasurer
Catherine Keohane, Conference Coordinator
Alicia Kerfoot, Secretary
Hilary Havens, *Burney Journal* Editor
Lorna Clark, *Burney Letter* Editor
Nancy Johnson, At Large
Stewart Cooke, At Large
Jessica Richard, At Large

The Society expressed its warmest gratitude for long service to Stewart Cooke,

stepping down from the position of Managing Editor of *The Burney Journal* but agreeing to stay on the Board, and to *Burney Journal* General Editor Marilyn Francus, who has been steering the *BJ*'s ship since Volume Nine (2007). Volume Seventeen (2020), her last, co-edited with Hilary Havens, was published in May 2021.

Thanks to Hilary's efforts, Volume Seventeen was also posted online as downloadable pdf, a first for us; see <https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/burne>

James Burney

Continued from p. 1

The "cruel severities" that resulted in the "disgrace" of James Burney have never been identified. Burney had enlisted in February 1766 as a midshipman on HMS *Aquilon*, Captain Richard Onslow, for a voyage in the Mediterranean station that was to last three years.² On 6 January 1769, Burney's rating was changed to Able Seaman, which would normally be considered a demotion.³ Burney's biographer, G. E. Manwaring, states that Burney was rated an AB. "in order to enable him to qualify for a Lieutenant's certificate" (7). There were no requirements that an applicant for a lieutenant's certificate must have served as an Able Seaman, but the applicant must show that he can "splice, knot, and trim a sail" and perform other skills required of an Able Seaman.⁴ Perhaps Captain Onslow believed that there was no better way of proving that young Burney, whom he was grooming for promotion to lieutenantcy, possessed these skills than to rate him as an Able Seaman for the last six months of the voyage. The same was done in other cases, notably that of Burney's contemporary William Bligh, who was rated Able Seaman on H.M.S. *Hunter* while waiting for a lieutenantcy to open up.⁵ If that were the reason for Burney's change in rank, it would probably not be considered a "disgrace," but rather part of his "marine education."

It is also possible that Burney was disciplined, either for an infraction of the Royal Navy's *Regulations and Instructions Relating to his Majesty's Service at Sea* or as part of a seaboard ritual known as "starting" an officer. Both senses of the word "discipline," either as "punishment or correction" or as a "formative exercise," were in use by the second half of the eighteenth century (Cavell 74). The practice of flogging an aspirant for a lieutenantcy in order to toughen him up, known in naval parlance as being "started,"⁶ was endorsed by Samuel Pepys, Secretary of the Admiralty under Charles II, who believed "that the only way to become a good officer was for aspirants to 'make themselves masters of [seamanship] by learning and doing and suffering all things'" (Cavell 94). Richard Onslow, a captain of the old school, would have considered such a flogging part of Burney's "marine education," certainly not a "cruel severity."

Burney was discharged from the *Aquilon* in July of 1769, but he did not contact the Burney family in Lyme Regis until the end of November (Manwaring 14). In her Journal for July 1769, Frances writes that the Burneys are "extremely uneasy" at not having heard from James after having read in the newspapers that the crew of the *Aquilon* had been paid off in the previous week (*EJL* i. 83).⁷ In

[y-society/burneyjournal/current-issue](#).

Back issues should be available for open-access by next year.

Under Marilyn's long editorship, our *Journal* has become a significant mentor of young Burney scholars. Her tireless advocacy for *The Burney Journal* over these years has transformed it into a peer-reviewed academic journal indexed by EBSCO and the *MLA Bibliography*. Further indexation will follow our reinstatement as a non-profit under US tax law next year. The Burney Society

extended its heartfelt gratitude to Marilyn for her devoted service.

Our new General Editor Hilary Havens is presently completing work on Volume Eighteen, but unfortunately, due to pressing family priorities, she will not be able to continue as editor. We are hoping to find a new General Editor soon to work with Hilary on Volume Eighteen and to begin planning for Volume Nineteen.

And of course, we long for the time when we can once again meet together in person, on both sides of the Atlantic.

September, she writes in her journal that she hopes her brother's silence means he has embarked on another voyage, at the end of which he "will fly to his friends with all that ardour which nothing I am convinced but his shame & apprehension have hitherto repelled & which will then of course give way to his joy of every thing being forgot & forgiven" (*EJL* i. 89). James did not return to the Burney home until November, leading Lars Troide, the editor of *Early Journals and Letters* i, to suppose that "it is likely that an irate CB, angered by his son's disgrace and his thoughtlessness, temporarily forbade him from coming home" (*EJL* i. 83 n. 10).

When James did finally reconcile with his family, Dr. Charles Burney arranged for his son to dine with Captain James Cook, just returned from his first voyage round the world, at the country seat of Lord Sandwich, then First Lord of the Admiralty. James's interview with Captain Cook was "of an extremely cordial nature," and Lord Sandwich promised that James should "stand first in the list of promotion" (Manwaring 12). In the course of qualifying for this appointment, he obtained a certificate from Captain Onslow testifying to his "diligence" and his mastery of all the skills of a Midshipman and an Able Seaman. The invitation to dinner and the accolades that Burney received seem inconsistent with the disgrace and shame recorded by his sister.

In his note to the passage in Frances Burney's journal quoted above, Lars Troide suggests that "JB had evidently been guilty of some insubordination or other offence which may have led to his being detained" (*EJL* i. 83 n. 10). In his entry on James Burney in the *ODNB*, Troide repeats his suggestion, this time without equivocation, saying bluntly that James "had been disciplined for insubordination, which was to be a continuing problem."⁸ It would have been painful and awkward for James to admit to his family that he had been flogged for insubordination, but it seems unlikely that such a punishment would have brought "shame" and "disgrace" on the Burney family.

At this point the evidence from Frances Burney's journal runs dry, Frances having prudently cut away several half-pages that might have detailed the story of James's return home and his reconciliation with his father (*EJL* i. 92-94). She does, later in the same volume, characterize her brother as "honest, generous, sensible, unpolished; always unwilling to take offence; yet always eager to resent it," perhaps her way of praising James for his liberal spirit while conceding that he may have inappropriately shown his resentment of an order or reprimand. Burney's character was described by his sister Frances as "very careless, but possessed of an *uncommon* share of good nature; full of humour, mirth, and

jollity; ever delighted at mirth in others, and happy in a peculiar talent of propagating it himself" (*EJL* i. 94). His careless good humour was not always an advantage, as we see from an incident in Frances's diary. James accompanied his sister on the second day of her attendance at the trial of Warren Hastings in Westminster Hall on 16 February 1788. James wanted to hear, "for once," the opening address of Edmund Burke, one of the managers for the prosecution (the address was to last five days). When they were seated, one of the managers for the prosecution approached their box and addressed James in a familiar way. "Captain Burney!—I am very glad to see you,—" "How do you do, Sir?" answered James; here I am; come to see the fine shew!" The gentleman "turned short upon his heel, & abruptly walked away," evidently offended at James's mockery of the cause in which the man was engaged. To Frances's question, James replied that it was General Burgoyne. "A Manager!" cried Frances, "& one of the Chargers! & you treat the business of the Hall with such contempt to his face!" (*CJL* i. 138).⁹

James's thoughtless remark was hardly insubordinate, though a rather flippant way to reply to the greeting of an MP and a veteran, like James, of the American war. In response to his sister's rebuke, he acknowledged that his "slight and slighting speech" was offensive to Burgoyne, but he did not repent it. We do not know what words he may have spoken to Captain Onslow on the *Aquilon*, or to another superior officer, but, as this incident shows, he did have a proclivity to reply with "humour, mirth, and jollity" to those in authority over him, which may have been mistaken for insubordination. The mockery of a post-captain in the Navy to order, rank, and discipline was not to be tolerated.

The "continuing problem" to which Troide alludes in his *ODNB* article implies that Burney was guilty of, and was disciplined for, a second act of insubordination. This act is assumed to be his conduct in 1782 when, as Captain of HMS *Bristol*, a man-of-war of 50 guns, he was assigned to convoy a fleet of ten East-Indiamen to Madras, on the eastern coast of India. The company's ships usually passed through the channel between the mainland and the island of Ceylon, but Burney ordered the convoy to keep well east of Ceylon, citing concerns about the monsoon season. In doing so, he acted without orders from his superior officer, Sir Edward Hughes, but, as his biographer says, "his decision to avoid Ceylon and the Coromandel was both fortunate and wise" (Manwaring 172) because a French fleet under Admiral Suffren was waiting for them there. Burney was not court-martialed or reprimanded in connection with his command of the *Bristol*.

It is tempting to assume, as Lars Troide did, that Burney was disciplined for an insolent remark not worth a court-martial, or that his discipline was part of his marine education. But if that were the case, why would he have stayed away from the Burney home for six months, and why would his sister have described his conduct as "shameful" and her father as "rancorous" toward his son? There is something more to be learned here, which will have to be the subject of future research when travel and access restrictions to collections have eased.

There is an ironical ending to this story, one that mitigates the seeming injustice suffered by James Burney. Burney's half-pay retirement after 1784 meant that he had time, and need, to pursue other engagements. One of these engagements was the preparation for the press of the narrative written by William Bligh of his

journey back to England after the mutiny on the *Bounty* in April 1789. Bligh had begun the narrative almost immediately upon being set adrift in the *Bounty*'s launch with 18 loyal members of its crew, knowing that his reputation depended upon publishing his own history of the event. When he reached England in March of 1790, he laid his journal at the feet of the King and was accordingly proclaimed a national hero in the press.¹⁰ Bligh (or perhaps Sir Joseph Banks), sensing that the journal was not quite ready for publication, sought the assistance of Bligh's friend James Burney for the task of modulating Bligh's "distinctly rugged and involved" language (Manwaring, 197-8). In the months of April and May 1790, Burney re-worked the manuscript, softening Bligh's attacks on particular persons and adding some touches of grace that would not have occurred to Bligh.¹¹ On May 31, the central portion of the journal was published as *A Narrative of the Mutiny, on His Majesty's Ship Bounty, and the Subsequent Voyage of Part of the Crew, in the Ship's Boat, from Tofoa, . . . to Timor*. Shortly after the *Narrative* was published, Burney set about editing and expanding the entire journal, including some paragraphs of his own composition, into a volume titled *A Voyage to the South Sea*, which was published in May 1792 to widespread applause. Burney received no credit for his labor, but he did discover in himself a talent for writing naval history. In the last two decades of his life, he published what would become the standard history of voyages of discovery in the Pacific prior to Cook, the five-volume *Chronological History of the Discoveries in the South Seas* (1803-17), and a history of the quest for a northwest passage, *A Chronological History of North-Eastern Voyages of Discovery* (1819). His success in writing these volumes, composed with great discipline and little levity, brought him the honor and the rank of Admiral that he had sought in vain as a sailor.

Notes

¹ Frances Burney, *Court Journals and Letters* vol. 5, 1789. ed. Geoffrey Sill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2016), 319 and n. 774.

² Frances Burney, *The Early Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, vol. 1 (1768-1773), ed. Lars Troide (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1988), 310.

³ G. E. Manwaring, *My Friend the Admiral* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1931), 7.

⁴ Elin Jones, PhD., to Geoffrey Sill, 3 June 2021. The National Archives at Kew, ADM 36/7574. I am deeply indebted to Professor Jones for her assistance in the research for this article.

⁵ The National Archives, ADM 107/3, "Lieutenant's Passing Certificate for John Clarke, April 14, 1740," f. 372, quoted in Samantha Cavell, "A Social History of Midshipmen and Quarterdeck Boys in the Royal Navy, 1761-1831." PhD. Thesis in History, University of Exeter (2010), 74.

⁶ George Mackaness, *The Life of Vice-Admiral William Bligh* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1931), 8-10.

⁷ Elin Jones to Geoffrey Sill, August 4, 2020.

⁸ The *London Chronicle* for June 27-29, 1769, reports that "[t]he Aquilon man of war arrived at Spithead from Gibraltar is ordered into dock at Portsmouth, and to be paid off. A large sum of money has been brought home in this ship on account of the Merchants."

⁹ Lars Troide, "James Burney," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online), 11/14/17.

¹⁰ Caroline Alexander, *The Bounty: The True Story of the Mutiny on the Bounty* (New York: Viking Books, 2003), 164.

¹¹ For a calendar of the drafts of Bligh's manuscript versions of the journal before it came to publication, see Rolf E. Du Rietz, *The Bias of Bligh: An Investigation into the credibility of William Bligh's version of the Bounty mutiny*, 2nd ed rev. (Uppsala: Dahlia Books, 2009), 17-23.

A New Letter by Charles Burney, Jr.

By Peter Sabor

In February this year, the Australian musicologist Michael Kassler, who has a keen eye for the market in Burney manuscripts, kindly let me know that a letter by Charles Burney, Jr., dated 30 November 1813, was for sale on ABE Books from the Scottish bookseller Spike Hughes. Although the autograph letter had never been published and was hitherto unknown to Burney scholars, the asking price of £25 was astonishingly low. I conveyed the news to Christopher Lyons, Head Librarian of McGill University's Rare Books and Special Collections, who snapped it up for McGill's extensive holdings in Burney family manuscripts; several other letters by and to Charles Burney, Jr. had previously been acquired by Chris's predecessor at Rare Books, Richard Virr.

My transcription of the letter is below, accompanied by photographs (on the back page). It consists of a single page, folded in two, with the text on the first two sides; the third side is blank and the fourth contains the address. The postmark shows that it was sent by the twopenny post on 30 November 1813, the same day on which the letter was written. It was sealed with a wafer, of which traces remain.

Although Spike Hughes listed the letter as one sent to J. Rose, the recipient is in fact William Farr Rose. Born on 29 May 1792, he was a young man of 21 in November 1813; Burney (1757-1817), 35 years his senior, was about to turn 56. William was the eldest of four sons; the second son Cowper, whose godfather was the poet William Cowper, and the two younger sons are mentioned in Charles's letter. His father, Samuel Rose (1767-1804), a distinguished lawyer and man of letters, was a close friend and correspondent of Cowper, and also the attorney who successfully defended William Blake from a charge of high treason; he has an entry of several paragraphs in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. William's mother, Sarah (Farr) Rose, was a frequent correspondent of the novelist Charlotte Smith; in her excellent edition of Smith's letters, Judith Phillips Stanton contends that Smith wrote to Sarah Rose "with more wit and acerbity than to anyone else."¹ Two of William's brothers were minor authors: Cowper Rose published *Four Years in Southern Africa* (1829), while George Edward Rose, the youngest son, became a professor of English in Poland and translated works from Polish into English. William and his brothers were known to Charles Burney, Jr. because his wife, Charlotte (Rose) Burney, known as "Rosette", was one of the sisters of Samuel Rose; he would thus have taken an avuncular interest in their progress. Only one other letter, however, from Charles to William (or to any of the Rose brothers) is known to be extant: dated 11 April 1811, it is at the Beinecke Library, Yale University, which has by far the world's largest collection of Charles Burney, Jr.'s correspondence.

The Rose brothers appear as young children on several occasions in Charlotte Smith's letters to their mother, including one congratulating her on William's birth, but vexingly little is known about his later life. It is, however, evident from Charles's letter that by the age of 21 William was employed at the Navy Pay Office in London, which he used as his postal address. It is unclear why Charles had sent him a package containing newspapers published on the Greek island of Zante, but it was presumably in response to a request for material in modern Greek. William's youngest brother, George Edward, was then aged fourteen, and

presumably studying Latin and ancient Greek at school; might William have had the idea that reading modern Greek would help bring the subject alive for a student of the classics? This would explain Charles's remark that the newspapers he has sent "seem dull enough; – and if Homer and Thucydides will not allure youngsters to study the language, in which they wrote, these Ephemerick attempts will not greatly increase the Number of Greek scholars." He seems, that is, to have gone along with William's plan without believing in its efficacy; a student, in his view, who is not enthralled by Homer and Thucydides is hardly likely to respond to mundane newspaper articles. Another question remains, however; were the Zante newspapers acquired by Charles part of a larger collection?

The remainder of Charles's letter is straightforward. From it we learn that his wife, William's aunt Sarah, is in good health, but that he himself is suffering from one of his frequent attacks of gout, doubtless brought on by his over-indulgence in good food and good wine. The compliments that he sends to Mrs. Rose are presumably to William's widowed mother, Sarah Farr Rose (c. 1759-1848). The letter was sent from Deptford Rectory in Kent; Charles had been appointed as Rector of St. Paul's Church, Deptford, two years previously, in 1811.

Despite the importance of Charles Burney, Jr. as a major classical scholar and as a collector who amassed an extraordinary horde of newspapers, books, manuscripts, theatrical material, prints and portraits, there has as yet been neither a substantial study of his life and works nor an edition of his letters. Sophie Coulombeau, who is currently planning the first such biography and edition, estimates that his correspondence extends to some 2000 items. His collection of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British newspapers, bound in over 700 volumes, is available online from Gale Cengage. It contains a few items from British colonies in the Americas and Asia, but none from Greece. Sophie's researches will perhaps reveal whether, towards the end of his life, Charles Burney, Jr. was also engaged in adding a selection of Greek newspapers to his already stupendous newspaper holdings, and how he was obtaining such material from Zante.

¹*The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, ed. Judith Phillips Stanton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), p. 775.

Charles Burney Jr. to William Farr Rose, 30 November 1813

Addressed: PP. 3^d / W.F. Rose Esq. / Navy Pay Office / London

Postmark: 7 o'Clock Night / No. 30 / Two Penny

My dear Rose,

Many thanks for your attention to my paquet. – It contained *modern Greek News papers*, printed at Zante. They seem dull enough; – and if Homer and Thucydides will not allure youngsters to study the language, in which they wrote, these Ephemerick attempts will not greatly increase the Number of Greek scholars. M^{rs} B is very well. – I have been sorely troubled with the Gout. It is long since we saw you or Cowper. – Your Younger Brothers we shall be glad to see, when you can persuade them to accompany you to Deptford Rectory –

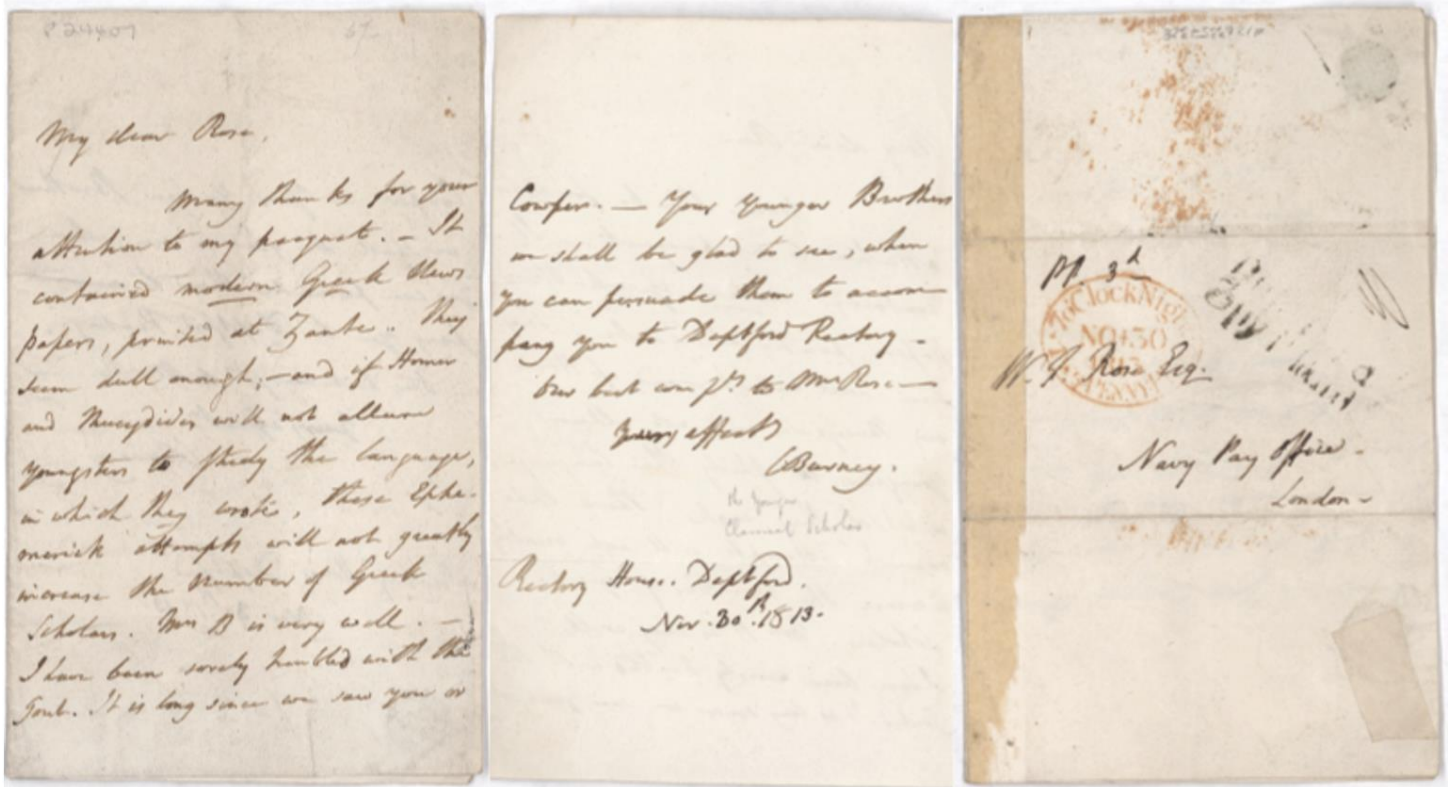
Our best comp^{ts}. to M^{rs} Rose –

Yours affect^y

C Burney

Rectory House, Deptford

Nov. 30th. 1813.



Burney Family Manuscript Collection MSG 1306, Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library, Montreal

Burney Society UK June 2022 AGM & Conference

Trudie Messent, Conference Organiser

The 2022 Burney Society UK AGM will be held on Saturday 11th June at the Foundling Museum, London, from 14:00 – 17:00 BST (GMT +1), to include at least one lecture and access to the Foundling Museum exhibition rooms. Attendance at this AGM, including refreshments is free of charge and all are welcome.

The Burney Society UK 2022 Conference will be held on Sunday 12th June at the Foundling Museum, and Monday 13th June at St Bride Foundation, London, prior to Evensong and wreath laying in Westminster Abbey to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the unveiling of the stained-glass window to commemorate Frances Burney.

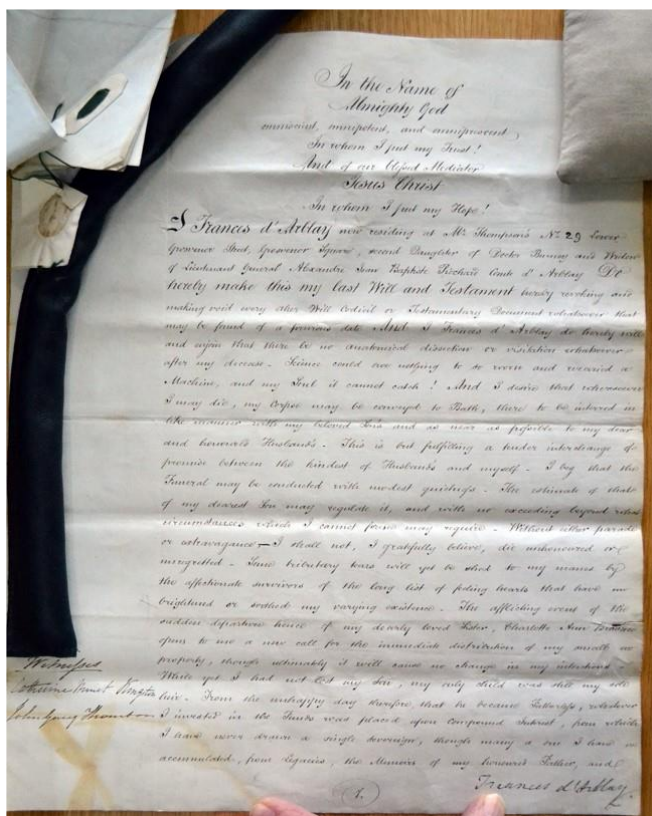
The Foundling Museum, at 40 Brunswick Square, is the site of the Foundling Hospital, established in 1739 and includes historic rooms and interesting exhibits.

St Bride Foundation, 14 Bride Lane, Fleet Street, was established in 1891 to serve the print and publishing trade. It houses St Bride Library which contains many books and periodicals, including the important catalogue listing which Simon Macdonald used to confirm Mrs Elizabeth Meeke as a Burney.

We hope the cost of the two-day conference, to include lunch and refreshments, will be in the region of £140, although this will be confirmed closer to the date. Whilst present conditions make it impossible for us to reliably predict attendance, we do not intend to profit financially from this conference and any surplus will be utilised to provide partial reimbursements, particularly for students.

We hope to arrange additional visits in the week after the conference as optional extras which may be of interest to Burney members. These include the Burney Bench at Chawton House, and Hammerwood Park, designed by architect Benjamin Latrobe of White House and Capitol fame. We also hope to visit Dorchester and Weymouth, in relation to the Royal visit of 1789, which included Frances Burney. Further details will be made available closer to the date.

Frances Burney's Original Will



The original will of Frances (Burney) d'Arblay.

The probate copy. Both in the National Archives.

By John Avery Jones

The terms of Frances Burney's will are well known from Hemlow.¹ A copy prepared for the probate records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury is readily available for download from the UK National Archives under reference PROB 11/1922/332 normally for a fee of £3.50 although this is waived during the pandemic. This is the version used by Hemlow for her transcript as stated in vol. 12, p. 976, although she gives a slightly inaccurate reference.² The National Archives also contain the original of Burney's will with her seal and signature. This is not indexed under her name and one can find it only by personal searching under the month probate was granted by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in a file catalogued as PROB 10/5905 'Wills proved during February 1840, surnames B-D'.³ This is not calculated to make it easy to find and I would not be surprised if its existence is not known to Burney scholars. Although there is a series of wills of famous persons, PROB 1, which is catalogued under the deceased's name, I am afraid Burney's will is not included. Strangely her Legacy Duty Account is included in a series of those of famous people. I expect that the person who chose the wills to include in PROB 1 was unfamiliar with the name d'Arblay.

A sample extract from the probate copy, which is difficult to read for those unfamiliar with the probate clerk's script, and of the

original will, in beautiful script, accompanies this note and makes an interesting comparison. The script is likely to be that of a law-writer engaged by a law stationer that her solicitor used for engrossing legal documents.⁴ This can be compared to Burney's handwriting in some manuscript additions including the date and contemporary codicil at the end of the will. There are some differences between Hemlow's transcript and the two versions. An article about the will by Professor Peter Sabor and myself is appearing in the next issue of the *Burney Journal*.

¹ *Journals and Letters* ed Joyce Hemlow et al, vol. 12 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 976-81.

² The reference is given by Hemlow as PROB 11/1922/88 which relates to a different person.

³ It was naturally under *D*.

⁴ Chapter 10 of *Bleak House* contains a description of the use by solicitors of law stationers and law-writers. The reason I suggest that it was out-sourced is that the '29' in her address in the first line is written in afterwards by her; this would have been known to her solicitor and included if the will had been engrossed in the solicitor's office.

Dr John Avery Jones CBE is a retired UK tax judge and retired Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics.

“My mind was a stranger to rest:” The Burney-d’Arblays’ Adventures in Exile

By Kelly Summers

I am something of an interloper in Burney studies. A scholar of the French Revolution, my interest in the great writer was spurred by the plight of her husband, the émigré soldier Alexandre d’Arblay. Of course I had heard of Frances Burney. Years ago, she featured briefly in my M.Phil dissertation on British women’s responses to Rousseauian pedagogy, and over the course of my doctoral research on emigration during the French Revolution, I became aware of her connections to the liberal émigré colony at Juniper Hall in Surrey; her aborted friendship with the community’s brilliant founder, Germaine de Staël; and her unconventional bi-national, cross-class marriage to one of its residents. The union of the middle-aged author and the polished but penniless nobleman certainly raised eyebrows in 1793—her father refused to attend the wedding, and an acquaintance sniffed that she’d expected better from “the author of *Cecilia*.” But the Burney-d’Arblay match proved a famously happy one, despite the fact that for most of its duration one or the other was stuck in exilic limbo. Their domestic contentment and intellectual partnership spurred the most prolific and creative period in Burney’s career. By the turn of the century, however, dramatic change was again afoot in Paris, this time engineered by First Consul Bonaparte, who vowed to “complete” the Revolution and reconcile France’s divided populace. D’Arblay (who, like all émigrés, was barred from returning on pain of death) began to weigh the risks of a trip home against the prospects of resurrecting his career, regaining seized assets, and introducing his wife and young son to his long-lost family. His scheme required not only securing removal from the General List of Émigrés—a notoriously corrupt process that was finagled by well-placed friends back home—but a cessation in hostilities between his countries of birth and refuge. Anxious about the geo-political situation but ever supportive, Burney prepared for her first trip abroad by convincing herself that her little family would be peacefully and permanently ensconced back in Camilla cottage within the year.

In 2019, I set out to explain why this plan ended up backfiring so spectacularly. I presented my findings at the Huntington Library’s conference on cultural exchange during the Peace of Amiens, the long-awaited but short-lived truce that permitted thousands of émigrés to return from England in 1802-3. (British visitors flocked to Paris as well, including Charles James Fox, Jeremy Bentham, the Edgeworths, William Wordsworth, J.M.W. Turner, and William Hazlitt.) This research coalesced in an article, “A Cross-Channel Marriage in Limbo: Alexandre d’Arblay, Frances Burney, and the Risks of Revolutionary Migration,” which was published in the 2020 *Proceedings of the Consortium on the Revolutionary Era* (<http://mars.gmu.edu/handle/1920/11896>). My evidence was derived largely from the fourth and fifth volumes of Joyce Hemlow’s *Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*, which provided ample details about d’Arblay’s time in England and the fraught conditions of his return to France, which I expected to segue seamlessly back into my primary research interest: the intricacies of French emigration policy. But if my brief foray into Hemlow’s carefully annotated collection—especially Gary Bowers’s indispensable 25-item appendix on d’Arblay’s military

career (vol. V, 450-67)—had satisfactorily answered my preliminary questions, it had also whetted my appetite to learn more.

What draws me to Burney and her husband? For one, her endearing insecurities about her grasp of the French language. If Frances Burney of all people felt inadequate during her time in Paris, there is hope for the rest of us. On a more serious note, the family’s recurrent separations and uncertain residency status in some ways paralleled my husband’s and my experiences as an academic couple, working, navigating ever-changing immigration rules, and raising our children in different countries (a situation that was fortunately resolved before the pandemic closed international borders). Burney and d’Arblay were not so lucky, and the stakes were incomparably higher: the collapse of the Peace of Amiens in 1803 marooned the couple in Napoleonic France until 1812 (in her case) and 1815 (in his). Indeed, they were only free to return to England together after Burney extracted her injured husband from a military hospital in the wake of the Battle of Waterloo, where he had served in the campaign against Napoleon. Another thing that piqued my interest was the fact that many of Burney’s correspondents and the subjects of their astute observations—Staël, Narbonne, Lally-Tolendal, Burke, Talleyrand, Lafayette, and even Bonaparte and the future Louis XVIII—feature prominently in the book I am writing on emigration and re-migration during the revolutionary era, which grew out of the dissertation I completed at Stanford University in 2015. What began as a minor side project on the couple’s migratory woes will thus feature as one of my book’s central case studies.

I am also developing a stand-alone article on the impact of Burney’s involuntary stint in France on her later work. What she called her “ten years of seclusion,” cut off from her emotional and literary support systems by border closures and Napoleonic censors, had a profound effect on her personal and professional lives. Two doomed peace agreements bookended the family’s time in France. For Burney, the Peace of Amiens raised the terrifying prospect that Napoleon would send her re-commissioned husband to Saint-Domingue to qualify for a full pension; it then induced her reluctant relocation to a foreign country that was sliding toward military dictatorship; and its collapse trapped her indefinitely in conditions that were hardly conducive to literary output. In 1814, another much-vaunted peace arrived, this time with the Bourbon Restoration, but it too proved illusory. Napoleon’s dramatic return from exile forced d’Arblay back into uniform and Burney to seek refuge in Brussels, where she penned an engrossing firsthand account of the Hundred Days. The threat of political upheaval, financial precarity, loneliness, and war constantly impeded her work at what should have been the peak of her career.

Thus far, I have only scratched the surface of the rich scholarship that Burney has inspired. The intellectual generosity of established scholars has proven indispensable as I attempt to get up to speed. At the Peace of Amiens conference, Dena Goodman and Susan Lanser pushed me to consider the marked shift from *Evelina*’s pervasive Francophobia to *The Wanderer*’s sympathetic Francophilia. Her interactions with the Juniper Hall coterie and her time in Paris not only softened her chauvinism and nuanced her

politics, but indelibly shaped her meandering final novel. If *The Wanderer* is about exile, it is itself an artefact of the twenty cumulative years that Burney and her husband spent on the English and then French sides of the Channel during the revolutionary era. As Burney notes in the preface, the work had “twice traversed the ocean in manuscript” form, barely evading impoundment by a zealous customs official at Dunkirk. Peter Sabor pointed me to a goldmine of French materials in his 2018 volume, *Additional Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, and even sent a scan of Katie Gemmill’s article on Burney’s French archive when ILL services were disrupted by the pandemic. Simon MacDonald shared an archival gem: Burney’s French passport, which allowed her to return home to care for her ailing father in 1812, not long after a serious health scare of her own. (On a related note, however indifferent my students seem to the development of the novel or the intricacies of Georgian society, they never fail to find Burney’s harrowing account of her un-anesthetised mastectomy singularly gripping). Lorna Clark kindly alerted me to recent articles by Geoffrey Sill and Tara Ghoshal Wallace on the revolutionary and imperial dimensions of Burney’s writing, respectively, as well as to Gillian Dow’s work on cross-Channel translations. I’ve supplemented all these suggestions with items from Deborah Barnum’s exhaustive “Year in Burney Studies” compilations.

Thus far, I have approached the Burney-d’Arblays’ travels from a largely French perspective, and a rather dry legal one at that. Indeed, part of the appeal of expanding upon my Amiens article is

that the legislative and administrative dimensions of France’s labyrinthine emigration policy, while both consequential and understudied, are nowhere near as compelling as Burney’s account of how such policies played out in practice. I would be most grateful to learn of any errors or oversights in my research thus far, as well as suggestions to build a more interdisciplinary bibliography. And if anyone is interested in collaborating on a Burney-in-France or d’Arblay-themed panel at an upcoming conference, please do reach out.

Dr. Kelly Summers is an assistant professor at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta, where she coordinates the Department of Humanities’ history program. She is currently completing a book entitled [The Great Return: Émigrés, Refugees, and Revolution in France, 1789-1815](#). Based on archival research in Paris and London, it will for the first time chart the complete life cycle of emigration, refuge, and re-migration during the French Revolutionary era.

Please note that the article referenced above in the [Proceedings of the CRE](#) was co-published on the [Age of Revolutions](#) website. Its blog format features conveniently hyperlinked citations and permits reader comments, which Kelly welcomes:

<https://ageofrevolutions.com/2021/01/25/a-cross-channel-marriage-in-limbo-alexandre-darblay-frances-burney-and-the-risks-of-revolutionary-migration/>. Alternately, she can be reached at summersk5@macewan.ca.



Camilla Cottage, Westhumble. (from an old sketch in the possession of F. Leverton Harris, Esq., M.P.). Source: Hill, Constance. [Juniper Hall, A Rendezvous of Certain Illustrious Personages during the French Revolution, including Alexandre d'Arblay and Fanny Burney](#). Illustrations by Ellen G. Hill and reproductions of photogravure, etc. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1904, p. 230. As photographed by Jacqueline Banerjee for Victorian Web. Accessed 24 August 2021. <https://victorianweb.org/previctorian/burney/gallery/8.html>.

Burney Journal: Vol 17 Now Open Access

The editors of the *Burney Journal* are delighted to announce the publication of Volume 17 of *The Burney Journal*! In order to increase readership of the excellent scholarship the journal produces, we have shifted to a hybrid print subscription /electronic open-access model. Members receive print copies of the journal, but everyone can access (and share) the contents here.

<https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/burney-society/burney-journal/current-issue>

We hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we have enjoyed producing it!

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 2022 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.

The Burney Society

Annual Membership Renewal 13 June 2021—13 June 2022

Membership in the Burney Society includes subscriptions to the *Burney Letter*, the semi-annual newsletter of the society, and *The Burney Journal*, the society's annual literary journal. Members may also attend Burney Society meetings in North America and the UK.

Membership in the North American Burney Society, Annual dues: \$30 USD (\$15 USD full-time student rate)

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

The North American Burney Society Membership Renewal Form can be found on the website at

<https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/burney-society/membership>

The UK Burney Society Membership Renewal Form can be found on the website at

<https://burneysociety.uk/membership>

Return addresses:

IN NORTH AMERICA;

kirsten.hall@avemaria.edu

Kirsten Hall
5175 Beckton Rd
Ave Maria, FL
USA 34142

IN GREAT BRITAIN:

ukburneysociety@gmail.com