

Women's Paper Traces:  
Material Manuscripts, Print Culture, and  
the Eighteenth-Century Country House

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the writing lives of five women: Mary (1736-1800) and Charlotte (1737-1797) Winn, Elizabeth Egerton (c. 1681-1743), Cecilia Strickland (1741-1814), and Hannah Greg (1766-1828). Their respective homes – Nostell Priory, Tatton Park, Sizergh Castle, and Quarry Bank House – are now owned and cared for by the National Trust. I bring these individuals together, for the first time, to understand how Georgian women negotiated their print environments, illuminating how ink, pen, and paper were used to preserve their stories. This thesis cuts across the life cycles of women (unmarried sisters, wives, and widows) and explores how, in differing ways, their paper trails evidence an awareness of a broad print culture outside of the country house. Throughout, I draw upon a range of literature – novels, letter collections, didactic texts, periodicals, memoirs – the combination of which represents the vast and varied written environment that surrounded these women’s lives.

The Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg have each been marginalised in varying degrees from the historical record and, in consequence, this thesis counters their overwhelming archival erasure by placing these women’s stories at the fore of their own narrative. I value their remaining papers, moreover, for more than their textual worth. The thesis pays attention to the layout of handwritten script, the seals that were used to close these letters, the ways these pages were folded and saved, alongside other material traces in order to restore these women’s paper presence despite their archives being edited, dispersed, and partially destroyed. In joining the Winn sisters’, Egerton’s, Strickland’s, and Greg’s manuscripts with the material, cultural, and literary contexts that framed their epistolary endeavours, this thesis animates Georgian paper traces within the conditions and environments in which they were circulated, read, and preserved.

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## **Author's Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work, and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for a degree or other qualification at this University or elsewhere. A section of chapter one of this thesis is currently under review to be published in the journal *Women's History Review*. All sources are acknowledged as references. This work was supported by the Arts & Humanities Research Council (grant number AH/R012733/1).

## **Introduction**

This thesis examines the writing lives of five women, each of whom resided at a country house in the North of England: Mary (1736-1800) and Charlotte (1737-1797) Winn who lived at Nostell Priory, Elizabeth Egerton (c. 1681-1743) who settled at Tatton Park, Cecilia Strickland (1741-1814) who called Sizergh Castle her home, and Hannah Greg (1766-1828) who spent her married life at the house at Quarry Bank Mill. Each of these properties is now owned and cared for by the National Trust. My thesis counters the Winn sisters', Egerton's, Strickland's, and Greg's overwhelming archival erasure, and places these women, for the first time, at the fore of their own narrative. I question the hierarchies, gender boundaries, and prejudices that have led to their exclusion from the archives and histories of their homes. Moreover, I study these women's private writings as a lens through which to draw larger conclusions about the interconnected nature of the eighteenth-century print and manuscript worlds. To achieve this, I contextualise the written material and ephemera penned by the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg within the eighteenth century's culture of letters. In spite of their geographical isolation, these women's manuscripts were informed by, representative of, and generated within a vibrant culture of print. Print material was deeply connected to the private, personal, and physical practices of manuscript creation and these two mediums worked reciprocally – printed documents were also subject to manuscript engagement. The untold stories of the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg elucidate the paper accomplishments of women in the country house, and this thesis foregrounds their connection to and awareness of the print world that surrounded them.

My contribution to existing scholarship is threefold. First, and perhaps most importantly, the women I study in this thesis have in some way been marginalised from the historical record. The Winn sisters at Nostell Priory were banished from the estate following their brother's inheritance; at Tatton Park, Egerton's archival traces are limited to the years between her husband's death and her son's coming of age; Strickland at Sizergh Castle has received scant scholarly attention despite moving in the same circles as numerous eighteenth-century celebrities; and the private papers of Greg at Quarry Bank have been neglected in favour of her work at the family's cotton mill. In their heritage context too, the National Trust has predominantly favoured these women's writings for their factual material – exploiting their papers for descriptions of their roles as wives and mothers, insights into the male heir of the estate, or accounts of their built environment.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, this thesis reveals the lives and narratives of ignored, forgotten, or hidden women, addressing the complex and often precarious ways in which their voices survive in paper archives. In doing so, I read the Winns', Egerton's, Strickland's, and Greg's papers (sometimes for the first time) in order to add nuance and complexity to the existing accounts of Nostell, Tatton, Sizergh, and Quarry Bank.

Second, I address significant gaps in the textual histories of the eighteenth-century country house. The study of the country house as a literary phenomenon (in terms of its appearance in poetry, fiction, and didactic texts) has seldom been united with the vast number of archival records these buildings generated – the two areas of

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<sup>1</sup> Both Quarry Bank and Sizergh have held exhibitions on the letters of Greg and Strickland respectively. In 2014, Quarry Bank showcased the exhibition "Lady of Letters" to coincide with the release of David Sekers' *A Lady of Cotton, Hannah Greg, Mistress of Quarry Bank* (Stroud: The History Press, in association with National Trust, 2013). At Sizergh, the 2018 exhibition "Cecilia's Story: A Life in Letters" used Strickland's epistles to explore how Strickland modernised the estate and negotiated her responsibilities as a household manager following the death of her first husband. The Winn sisters have only received anecdotal attention at Nostell, whose interpretation has favoured their sister-in-law Sabine Winn (1734-1798), and the sparsity in Egerton's correspondence has resulted in little to no visitor interpretation at Tatton.

scholarship have tended to remain disconnected from each other.<sup>2</sup> In contextualising these documents alongside the wider culture of public letters, this thesis brings new insights to existing perceptions of women's private writing. In doing so, I grant agency to the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg: such literary contexts imbue their paper traces with a sense of self awareness that reaches beyond the physical confines of the country house. These women's manuscript practices occurred in print at the same time as they were being penned in private and, while in many case the bulk of their papers no longer exist, the persistence of such practices on the pages of fiction, conduct literature, and other forms of print attests to these women's awareness of the literal and imagined manuscript worlds around them. This methodology allows for a more complete understanding of women's writing, one which emphasises the reciprocal relationship between manuscript practices and print. In this respect, I build on the work of literary critics such as Ruth Perry whose use of private accounts alongside contemporary literature rectifies the efforts of those before her that "often claim to see evidence of cultural change in the texts they read – but they do not always compare what they see to the current state of historical knowledge."<sup>3</sup> In consequence, this thesis works interdisciplinarily to unite unpublished accounts with the printed work of

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<sup>2</sup> Emerging work by Jemima Hubberstey has begun to rectify this, see: Jemima Hubberstey, "“Quite & Clever Together”: Reassessing the Significance of Elite Women and the Literary Culture of the Country House," *Women's Writing* 30, no. 3 (2023): 276-294. Malcolm Kelsall in his 1993 monograph goes some way towards achieving this but, while combined in one text, the physical buildings remain distinct from his literary analysis. Likewise, his study does not make use of archival source material. Malcolm Kesall, *The Great Good Place: The Country House and English Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). For work on the eighteenth-century country house in literature see: Nicole Pohl, *Women, Space and Utopia 1600-1800* (London: Routledge, 2006), 53-94; Nicole Pohl, "“Sweet place, where virtue then did rest”: The Appropriation of the Country-house Ethos in Sarah Scott's Millenium Hall," *Utopian Studies* 7, no. 1 (1996): 49-56; M.-C Newbould, "Gothic Piles and Cynical Follies Revisited: A Quizzical Tour through Country House Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century," *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 17, no. 1 (2018): 85-119.

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations: The transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5.

contemporary authors, bringing together manuscript and print, discrete letters and bound books, fiction and non-fiction.

Finally, my interdisciplinary approach provides a new perspective to understandings of eighteenth-century manuscript material. Aileen Douglas' *Work in Hand* provides the basis for my understanding of the interconnectedness between manuscript and print: in her words, “[p]rint reproduced script; print generated script; and print shaped understandings of script.”<sup>4</sup> I also follow the prompts of scholars such as Abigail Williams, who urges us to “question the movement of text between print and manuscript,” and illuminates the myriad of ways in which this “exchange was wholly circular: pieces came out of manuscript, appeared in print, and then were copied back down again.”<sup>5</sup> As my thesis will show, when used in tandem, literary and printed accounts supplement and reframe the often-partial nature of extant archival records. Across my chapters I value archival gaps and view incomplete accounts as an opportunity rather than a hinderance; this thesis analyses these documents for more than the content of their written word, paying close attention to the materiality of paper, ink, and seals. In being attentive to the physicality of the page, partial narratives can be made more complete.

Importantly, the Winn sisters, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg, each provide different motivations for putting pen to paper. For that reason, this thesis spans a variety of written content: economic, familial, historic, religious, charitable, and educational. At Nostell, the lives of the unmarried sisters Mary and Charlotte Winn offer insights into how paper was used to negotiate sororal distance from the country estate. At Tatton, the accounting practices of Elizabeth Egerton demonstrate how paper

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<sup>4</sup> Aileen Douglas, *Work in Hand: Script, Print, and Writing, 1690-1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 5.

<sup>5</sup> Abigail Williams, *The Social Life of Books: Reading together in the Eighteenth-Century Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 276-277.

was employed for posterity, even as it was distrusted as a reliable medium. The documents penned at Sizergh Castle illuminate the historical endeavours of women such as Cecilia Strickland, whose textual negotiations reflect the rising professionalisation of history writing. Finally, the papers of Hannah Greg at Quarry Bank affirm how manuscript writing could be circulated, commented on, and approached critically in the same way as printed texts. Each of these women also differ in terms of wealth, time period, and marital status. None was explicitly a member of the aristocracy, and each provides a contrasting perspective on the financial burdens of the country house.<sup>6</sup> Suitably, the lives of the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg span the length of the long eighteenth century; Egerton's birth in 1681 and Greg's death in 1828 bookend the period. In uniting these women, this thesis also tackles varying degrees of singleness. Both Winn sisters never married, Egerton lived nineteen years as a widow without remarrying, Strickland outlived two husbands while still spending twenty-eight years alone, and Greg married at the age of twenty-three and her death preceded her husband's. Significantly, this thesis is the first study to bring these individuals together. When their lives are read alongside one another, it is possible to understand how Georgian women negotiated the written worlds of the eighteenth century, illuminating how ink, pen, and paper were used to preserve their stories and the commonalities as well as idiosyncrasies of these endeavours.

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<sup>6</sup> The Winn sisters relied throughout the entirety of their adult lives on an annuity of £200 per annum, left to them in their father's will – the payment of this was less than reliable. Their brother became the 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Nostell Priory in 1765, a title that was famously distinct from the peerage. The Egertons at Tatton were a lesser branch of the Earls of Bridgewater, multiple advantageous marriages by both John Egerton (1679-1724) and his son John Egerton (1710-1738) helped to keep the family afloat. The Stricklands at Sizergh were a historically Jacobite family, whose wealth was seemingly depleted at the Glorious Revolution; like Egerton at Tatton, Cecilia Strickland's marriage into the family helped them financially. The Gregs, however, were part of the new industrial elite, whose money came from industry and manufacturing alongside plantations in the West Indies, and experienced relatively financial stability in comparison to the other families covered in this thesis.

Fundamental to my analysis is the fact this was not done in isolation. The Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg lived and wrote within a thriving literary environment. Crucial for this period was an increase in the availability of reading material; relatively high literacy rates, improvements in transport networks between London and the provinces, and the moderately low cost of print all resulted in an expansion of the reading public.<sup>7</sup> The eighteenth century witnessed a proliferation in accessible text which invariably informed how women wrote, and written material was produced as much as it was consumed. Throughout this thesis, therefore, I read the Winns's, Egerton's, Strickland's, and Greg's unpublished papers alongside their print contexts. The fictional plots of authors such as Frances Burney, illuminate the importance of the written word in negotiations of inheritance, birth right, and bequests – a fact which is also evident in the Winns' papers. Daniel Defoe's fictional and didactic works illustrate how letters (and paper more generally) were used to negotiate and sustain trade, business, and economic relationships. Priorities similar to Defoe's are reflected in Egerton's household accounts. The autobiographical writing of authors such as Hester Thrale Piozzi and Frances Burney reveal contemporary ideals regarding women's faculty for storing, archiving, and maintaining personal papers for posterity. Strickland's own practices shared the priorities of these authors and suggest an awareness of the critical responses to their works. Finally, the printed letters of eighteenth-century writers such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu reveal how women copied, annotated, and revised their manuscript material to prioritise the preservation of certain documents over others. Greg similarly applied such practices to her own

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<sup>7</sup> Michael F. Suarez, S.J., "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Book in Britain: Volume 5, 1695-1830* ed. Michael F. Suarez and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1-36; Eve Tavor Bannet, *Eighteenth-Century Manners of Reading: Print Culture and Popular Instruction in the Anglophone Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 1-38; James Raven, "The Book Trades," in *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New Essays* ed. Isabel Rivers (London: Continuum, 2001), 1-34.

writing and these papers, when read in line with the epistles printed in Montagu's published works, reveal how manuscripts were circulated, dispersed and received publicly in spite of their handwritten form. The papers penned by these women, though produced in private, were connected to and representative of a vibrant culture of published material. Catriona Kennedy's exploration of wartime letters reaches a similar conclusion: "recognizing the generic conventions and literary templates that shape such writings ... allows us to explore how experiences are lived, constructed and interpreted through language."<sup>8</sup> Throughout the thesis I draw upon a range of literature – novels, letter collections, didactic texts, periodicals, memoirs – the combination of which goes some way towards representing the vast and varied written environment that surrounded these women's lives. In joining the Winn sisters', Egerton's, Strickland's, and Greg's manuscript material with the cultural and literary contexts that framed their epistolary endeavours, this thesis animates Georgian paper traces within the conditions and environments in which they were circulated, read, and preserved.

Importantly, this research has been undertaken in collaboration with the National Trust; their involvement has allowed me access to sites, archives, and materials that are not formally catalogued or publicly available. From the outset, the project aimed to explore the hidden histories of Georgian women in the North of England through a selection of properties now in the Trust's care. My choice to study Nostell, Tatton, Sizergh, and Quarry Bank, however, has been dictated to by the paper trails that remain. While Nostell and Quarry Bank have remained a constant, I had initially planned to pair these two properties with an exploration of Beningbrough Hall

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<sup>8</sup> Catriona Kennedy, *Narratives of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Military and Civilian Experience in Britain and Ireland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 32.



in York, and Dunham Massey in Greater Manchester. After spending time in the Dunham Massey archives at the John Rylands Library, the National Library of Wales, and the property itself, I was unable to find any papers in the hand of Mary Booth (c. 1682-1740), other than one signature. I reached the same end at the Borthwick Institute archive while searching for the papers of Margaret Earle (d. 1827) of Beningbrough Hall. Whether these women were illiterate, their writings since destroyed, or simply endure in another location, these searches are testament to the fact that not all paper traces can be recovered, even when using the research methods I have developed throughout this thesis. Such dead ends equally point to another frequently encountered difficulty in the study of country houses, and one that I have faced throughout this thesis: the extent of the documents that remain in private collections is largely unknown. An analysis of these papers is unavoidably dependent on the discretion of their current owners, but such collections may eventually hint at women such as Booth and Earle who inhabited these spaces during the eighteenth century.

In consequence of these blanks, I adapted the scope of the project to include Tatton Park and Sizergh Castle. At this point I also made the decision to shift my focus away from Sabine Winn at Nostell (as had been my original plan) to her single sisters-in-law, Mary and Charlotte Winn. This choice made sense on account of the different perspectives each of these women provide; the Winn sisters, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg each occupied a different social position and reveal distinct and personal motives for putting pen to paper. These papers, moreover, survive in vastly different states, in a variety of locations, and at contrasting levels of completeness. While not immediately obvious at the project's inception, these variations provided a throughline to the thesis. This investigative foundation shed light on the ways in which these women's stories correspond with the public interpretation of their houses and, as

became clear, the archival trail went far beyond the narrative told at each of their properties. Ultimately, the paper traces of the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg supplemented (and, through this collaborative research, continue to supplement) their built environments, connecting their manuscripts to the print world outside of these walls.

### Epistolary Literacy

All the women studied in this thesis were a part of the “epistolary literate” reading public. This phrase, coined by Susan Whyman, addresses “both material and intellectual aspects” of the letter – “from layout, spelling, and grammar to content, originality, and literary techniques.”<sup>9</sup> Whyman posits that every writing individual during this period displayed some degree of “epistolary literacy,” and it was such an education that “provided the glue that cemented connections between the pen, the post, and the people.”<sup>10</sup> Crucially for Whyman, letters were a tie to the outside world; the eighteenth-century letter can be seen to symbolise the growth of not only literacy, but also transportation, communication, industry, consumerism, social mobility, and education. On account of this facilitation, the rise in epistolary literacy simultaneously prompted larger discussions surrounding gender, politics, and sociability. It is in this respect that recent scholarship on eighteenth-century letter-writing and epistolary literacy has tackled the stereotype of the private, female letter-writer. Since writing was an introspective and often solitary activity that predominantly occurred in the home, the practice has long been associated with femininity. The “imagined privacy of letters,” to use Olivera Jokic’s phrase, has detrimentally tied women letter-writers

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<sup>9</sup> Susan Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1600-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 9.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

with “seclusion and domesticity.”<sup>11</sup> The image of “a woman writing a letter,” as Carolyn Steedman identifies, “has become a myth of origin in her own right.”<sup>12</sup> The prevailing assumption “that somehow letter writing is just natural to women, that they have always been better at it than men,” similarly bolstered the association between women and letters which was inherently inscribed onto these pages.<sup>13</sup> The study of women’s letters therefore, is shaped by larger debates surrounding eighteenth-century constructions of gender and epistolarity.

Importantly letters were at once public and private documents; in engaging with the contemporary culture of letters, women could both exert a degree of textual authority while remaining within the remit of gender propriety. Laura E. Thomason describes this paradox with the summation that: “[r]ead as ostensibly private documents, they [letters] protected women’s reputations by allowing them to communicate otherwise repressed emotions without transgressing their roles. Read as potentially public literary productions, they gave women access to power.”<sup>14</sup> As Thomas O. Beebee acknowledges, it is this contradiction that complicates women’s letters – “the instrument of correspondence lies at the crux of tensions” between “public and private.”<sup>15</sup> In resisting simple categorisation, letters could be exploited and manipulated to suit personal goals and preoccupations. Many women, for instance, relied on letters as a gateway to opportunities that were not immediately open to them. Susan Staves, for one, has established how the “letter form” was an accessible medium for women novelists, while Leonie Hannan uses women’s letters to

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<sup>11</sup> Olivera Jokic, “The Odds and the Ends: What to Do With Some Letters of Catharine Macaulay,” *The Eighteenth Century* 56, no. 2 (2015): 209.

<sup>12</sup> Carolyn Steedman, “A Woman Writing a Letter,” in *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945* ed. Rebecca Earle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 119.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>14</sup> Laura E. Thomason, *The Matrimonial Trap: Eighteenth-Century Women Writers Redefine Marriage* (Lanham, Maryland: Bucknell University Press, 2013), 13.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas O. Beebee, “Publicity, Privacy, and the Power of Fiction in the Gunning Letter,” *Eighteenth Century Fiction* 20, no. 1 (2007): 61-62.

“demonstrate the presence and process of a vibrant female intellectual life in a period before women had full access to the institutions of formal education.”<sup>16</sup> Paradoxically then, women letter-writers could at once use this medium to experiment with the boundaries imposed on their gender while also sitting comfortably within the ideals of femininity. As Rachael Scarborough King asserts: if “letter-writing norms did increasingly assume a feminine faculty for the genre, it remained the case that every-day letters constantly breached such boundaries.”<sup>17</sup> While the very act of letter-writing was characteristically tied to femininity, these objects were far from an unproblematic feminine pastime.

This thesis builds on such insights regarding the opportunities offered to women by the period’s culture of letters, while also remaining attuned to the structures and impositions that continued to compromise their writing lives. The publication of countless conduct manuals and advice literature prescribing the correct way to compose, write, and send a letter attests to the fact that debates surrounding these practices remained in flux.<sup>18</sup> The continued popularity of letter collections penned by

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<sup>16</sup> Leonie Hannan, “Women, Letter-Writing and the Life of the Mind in England, c. 1650-1750,” *Literature & History* 22, no. 2 (2013): 15. See also Leonie Hannan, *Women of Letters: Gender, Writing and the Life of the Mind in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016); Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women’s Writing in Britain, 1660-1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 235.

For work on letter-writing and education see: Rachel Bynoth, “A Mother Educating her Daughter Remotely through Familial Correspondence: The Letters as a Form of Female Distance Education in the Eighteenth Century,” *History* 106, no. 373 (2021): 727-750; Amy Harris, “This I Beg my Aunt may not Know: Young Letter-Writers in Eighteenth-Century England, Peer Correspondence in a Hierarchical World,” *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 2, no. 3 (2009): 333-360; Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> Rachael Scarborough King, “A “Female Accomplishment”? Femininity, Privacy, and Eighteenth-Century Letter-Writing Norms,” in *After Print: Eighteenth Century Manuscript Cultures*, ed. Rachael Scarborough King (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 89.

<sup>18</sup> See Linda C. Mitchell, “Letter-Writing Instruction Manuals in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England,” in *Letter-Writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present: Historical and Bibliographic Studies*, ed. Carole Poster and Linda C. Mitchell (Columbia, S.C.: University of Carolina Press, 2007), 178-199; Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820* (Cambridge University Press, 2005); Eve Tavor Bannet, “Printed Epistolary Manuals and the Transatlantic Rescripting of Manuscript Culture,” *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 36, no. 1 (2007): 13-32; Fátima Faya Cerqueiro, “Letter-

noteworthy individuals equally upheld polite standards of epistolarity, and shaped the understanding that letters were important documents that required preservation.<sup>19</sup> Conduct manuals by popular authors such as Samuel Richardson and Daniel Defoe provided the template (if not the very words) to compose a letter and, irrespective of the extent to which these texts were used, their presence attests to the influence of letter-norms and polite standards in structuring and supporting the everyday composition of these documents. These publications continued to tie epistolarity to eighteenth-century notions of politeness through their prescription of practical advice as well as principles to live by. Victoria Myers has demonstrated how in these manuals “epistolary advice is completely interwoven with moral modeling” and Linda C. Mitchell has argued how “[t]hrough epistolary conventions, the conventions of moral authority are both distributed and enlarged.”<sup>20</sup> Samuel Richardson established this very objective in the preface to his 1741 manual, *Letters Written to and for Particular Friends*:

He has endeavour'd then, in general, throughout the great Variety of his Subjects, to inculcate the Principles of *Virtue* and *Benevolence*; to describe *properly*, and recommend *strongly*, the social and RELATIVE DUTIES; and to place them in such *practical* Lights, that the Letters may serve for Rules to think AND act by, as well as Forms to WRITE AFTER.<sup>21</sup>

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Writing Manuals and the Evolution of Request Markers in the Eighteenth Century,” *Revista De Lenguas Para Fines Especificos* 17 (2011): 295-318.

<sup>19</sup> The published letters of the Marquis de Sévigné (1626-1696) particularly set the tone for the “letter writer as historian.” See Markman Ellis, “Letters, Organisation, and the Archive in Elizabeth Montagu’s Correspondence,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (2018): 608.

<sup>20</sup> Victoria Myers, “Model Letters, Moral Living: Letter-Writing Manuals by Daniel Defoe and Samuel Richardson,” *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 66, no. ¾ (2003): 376; Linda C. Mitchell, “Entertainment and Instruction: Women’s Roles in the English Epistolary Tradition,” *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (2016): 452.

<sup>21</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Letters Written to and for Particular Friends, on the Most Important Occasions* [...] (London, 1741), 3.

While letters continued to act as a vehicle for access into the public sphere, these documents were also exploited as a means to uphold societal norms and expectations. Letters were at the fore of many a contemporary debate and, as these manuals indicate, were often the very items doing the prescribing.

The proliferation of letters in the wider literary marketplace similarly worked to sustain and communicate polite codes of conduct. Eve Tavor Bannet has revealed how “embedded letters” in fiction, in a similar vein to conduct manuals, “permitted novelists to explore and debate contemporary epistemological, psychological, and historical questions about our reading and misreading of characters, texts, and events, and thus to make a popularly accessible vehicle for Enlightenment inquiries and concerns.”<sup>22</sup> The repeated association between women’s letters and women’s bodies was similarly exploited throughout epistolary fiction in order to make wider comments on gender roles and boundaries. Richardson’s *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) alongside its series of spinoffs, as Jennie Batchelor has highlighted, present “[t]he heroine’s body and her analogous body of letters ... as powerful signifiers of selfhood.”<sup>23</sup> Letters in fiction, therefore, could equally act as tools for instruction and social commentary. But the prominence of these documents within the contemporary print marketplace also came with redeeming qualities. Whyman has demonstrated how, in reading epistolary works, women from lower socio-economic backgrounds could gain “a higher form of literacy, in which letters are constructed in an imaginative, or literary, way” and such texts “reveal the practices of untrained readers,

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<sup>22</sup> Eve Tavor Bannet, *The Letters in the Story: Narrative-Epistolary Fiction from Aphra Behn to the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), viii.

<sup>23</sup> Jennie Batchelor, *Dress, Distress and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 19; see also Holly Luhnig, “Writing Bodies in Popular Culture: Eliza Haywood and *Love in Excess*,” in *Women, Popular Culture, and the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Tiffany Potter (London: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 150-167; Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

which are usually hidden from view.”<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Carol Houlihan Flynn in her study of Jane Austen’s literary letters asserts how the “familiar letter” in particular “allowed the powerless to criticize the powerful” despite also possessing the capacity to “maintain powerful systems of social control.”<sup>25</sup> The embedded nature of these documents within the fictional world enabled letters to be moulded, fashioned, and exhibited in line with their author’s wider attitudes. These missives were used to both educate readers on the skills surrounding letter-writing and guide the maintenance of wider social standards.

Alongside the overt social cues and societal rules that framed women’s letter-writing, a range of cultural rulebooks also informed the process of putting pen to paper. It is within this scholarly context that this thesis examines the letters and private writings of the Winn sisters, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg. Each of these women’s writing was a product of such contemporary debates, and I seek to exhibit the ways in which their paper traces reflect, contend with, or embody these ideals. Beyond letters, I am attentive to a constellation of manuscript material that extends these debates about women’s writing to the full range of documents they generated from within the country house. Importantly, my thesis grants agency to these women’s writing. In the face of an abundance of writing templates the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg all exhibit different methods of and motivations for putting pen to paper. Letter-writing was not a universal experience. These women wrote on a variety of subjects, for different purposes, and to a vast array of different people. Consequently, the type and extent of papers that survive varies greatly between individuals. My analysis, therefore, relies on letters in addition to the wider handwritten material they existed

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<sup>24</sup> Susan E. Whyman, “Letter Writing and the Rise of the Novel: The Epistolary Literacy of Jane Johnson and Samuel Richardson,” *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2007): 579.

<sup>25</sup> Carol Houlihan Flynn, “The Letters,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Edward Copeland and Juliet McMaster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 108.

(and continue to exist) alongside: memorandum books, diaries, accounts, receipts, household papers, legal documents, and formal ledgers. Each of these documents differ in their form, purpose, and content, but are united in the inscriptions they bear – that is, the handwritten material of their creator. The action of putting pen to paper is visibly imprinted on these pages which leaves us with a material expression of the writer, and her engagement with manuscript and print culture of the period.

### Materiality

Epistolary literacy encompassed more than the writing of a letter: eighteenth-century correspondents were also required to employ their knowledge of the material production of their missives when taking up pen and paper. From cutting pens and maintaining command of their quill, to setting the ink, folding their letters, and sealing their epistles closed with wax, eighteenth-century letter writing was a material process that demanded skill and dexterity. “The most proper way to fold a letter,” wrote John Dougall in his 1815 publication, *The Young Man’s Best Companion and Guide to Useful Knowledge*:

is to turn up two inches of the page, at top and bottom, and then turn over the inner margin which is double paper to within an inch and a half of the open outer margin, which, folded down will give sufficient hold and space for the application of the wax or wafer.<sup>26</sup>

As material objects, letters were, and continue to be, charged with meaning. Recent scholarship has been attentive to the physical composition of letters by probing how these material traces can illuminate the wider meanings and intentions of their

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<sup>26</sup> John Dougall, *The Young Man’s Best Companion and Guide to Useful Knowledge* (Bungay: T. Kinnersley, 1815), 64.



creators. My approach to women's manuscript traces is consequently shaped by Leonie Hannan's call to be perceptive of "the material"; only by doing so can we "move beyond the disembodied textual artefact and towards a vibrant network of meanings."<sup>27</sup> As Dougall's instruction attests, the very process of creating a letter was an exhibition of the author's mastery of a variety of material skillsets. "Seals, foldings, watermarks and ink," like James Daybell has shown, "all provide further clues central to the ways in which letters worked and the significant meaning they generated."<sup>28</sup> Surrounding this culture was a specialised and increasingly commodified world of paper and epistolary goods. Dena Goodman has drawn attention to the "regendering of letter writing" during this period, and the impact this had on consumable materials: "[b]y becoming part of the fashion system, letter writing was legitimized as a female activity and promoted for commercial gain."<sup>29</sup> The sheer number of extant materials highlighted in Rachel Church's study of writing equipment from the period 1500-1900 equally corroborates the expansion of a consumer market geared towards letter-writing in the eighteenth century.<sup>30</sup> Such objects not only speak to the skill employed by eighteenth-century letter-writers in their compositions, but also to the unavoidable tactility of these interactions.

The analysis of letters as objects has similarly led to a recognition of methods used by eighteenth-century writers to convey meaning beyond their written word. As

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<sup>27</sup> Leonie Hannan, "Women's Letters: Eighteenth-Century Letter-Writing and the Life of the Mind," in *Gender and Material Culture in Britain Since 1600*, ed. Hannah Greig, Jane Hamlett and Leonie Hannah (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 46.

<sup>28</sup> James Daybell, "Material Meanings and the Social Signs of Manuscript Letters in Early Modern England," *Literature Compass* 6, no. 3 (2009): 663.

<sup>29</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 10.

<sup>30</sup> Rachel Church, "Writing Equipment and Women in Europe 1500-1900," *Women's Writing* 21, no. 3 (2014): 385-404; see also Cheryl Nixon and Louise Penner, "Materials of the "Everyday" Woman Writer: Letter-Writing in Eighteenth-Century England and America," in *Women and Things, 1750-1950: Gendered Material Strategies* ed. Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Farnham" Ashgate, 2009), 157-188.

letters became an increasingly familiar part of everyday life, eighteenth-century writers challenged old-fashioned regulations that dictated the layout of their pages. This was “a new development from the previous centuries” and, as Anni Sairio and Minna Nevala make clear, by this time “letter-writing practices were becoming more informal.”<sup>31</sup> This informality provided the freedom for eighteenth-century writers to experiment with the form and layout of their letters by using the visual arrangement of their pages to convey meaning. Sue Walker, for instance, concludes that it is the very “employment of visually based conventions that makes correspondence a powerful carrier of meaning, beyond the content of a given message.”<sup>32</sup> And in this manner Daybell has shown how “[f]emale letter-writers demonstrated mastery of material forms ... they utilised paper in ways that carried social meaning and deployed in innovative or particular ways the social and gender codes of spacing.”<sup>33</sup> Samuel Johnson’s famous statement that “a letter has no peculiarity but its form” is particularly resonant here, and speaks to the variety of meanings and interpretations that letters offer when read for their material as well as handwritten content.<sup>34</sup>

Correspondingly, the visual appearance of handwriting can equally generate a range of material interpretations. Aileen Douglas, for example, has explored the gendering of different handwriting styles during this period which “played a part in

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<sup>31</sup> Anni Sairio and Minna Nevala, “Social Dimensions of Layout in Eighteenth-Century Letters and Letter-Writing Manuals,” *Studies in Variation, Contacts and Change in English* 14 (2013): 3, 4, accessed May 23, 2023, [https://varieng.helsinki.fi/series/volumes/14/sairio\\_nevala/](https://varieng.helsinki.fi/series/volumes/14/sairio_nevala/).

<sup>32</sup> Sue Walker, “The Manners of the Page: Prescription and Practice in the Visual Organization of Correspondence,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 66, no. 3/4 (2003): 328.

<sup>33</sup> James Daybell, “The Materiality of Early Modern Women’s Letters,” in *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450-1690*, ed. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2016), 72; see also James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

<sup>34</sup> Samuel Johnson, *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, ed. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss, Vol. 3, *The Rambler* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969), 45. This quotation is cited in Scarborough King, “A “Female Accomplishment”?,” 80.

the eighteenth-century performance of gender.”<sup>35</sup> Douglas plots how different styles, namely the Italian hand and the round hand, were respectively symbolic of femininity and masculinity: “[c]ontrasted with the tender and delicate character of the Italian hand, especially associated with women and reserved for non-commercial use, the round hand took on a notably male character” which “helped to elaborate a male identity that was explicitly commercial and English.”<sup>36</sup> This had specific consequences on the person writing – in Stacey Sloboda’s words, “by specifying the gender of a hand, the written word becomes a visual metonym of the writer.”<sup>37</sup> A person’s handwriting was intimately understood as a tangible imprint of their self. As Caroline Franklin explains, “[t]he bodily act of writing in particular, brings the mental and physical together, making the abstract visible in ink.”<sup>38</sup> The visual appearance of personalised script, especially when sustained over a period of time, can reveal insights into the individual’s disposition, age, health, and mobility – factors which inform the analysis throughout this thesis.

Finally, on account of the looming presence of letters within contemporary literature, it is unsurprising that eighteenth-century authors also exploited material conventions to convey meaning in their fictional narratives. References to physically distressed letters being symbolic of their writer’s suffering are common across many eighteenth-century texts: repetition of Pamela’s “trembling hand,” for example, is used consistently in Richardson’s *Pamela* to signify the heroine’s repeated ordeals.<sup>39</sup> Peter

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<sup>35</sup> Douglas, *Work in Hand*, 73.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Stacey Sloboda, “Between the Mind and the Hand: Gender, Art and Skill in Eighteenth-Century Copybooks,” *Women’s Writing* 21, no.3 (2014): 341.

<sup>38</sup> Caroline Franklin, “Introduction: The Material Culture of Eighteenth-Century Women’s Writing,” *Women’s Writing* 21, no. 3 (2014): 288; see also Diana G. Barnes, “Emotional Debris in Early Modern Letters,” in *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions Through History*, ed. Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway, and Sarah Randles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 114-132.

<sup>39</sup> Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Thomas Keymer and Alice Wakely (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 205.

Sabor's study of the letters in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) has shown how Austen used the short length of Lucy Steele's letters as a means of delineating her "false and hypocritical" character.<sup>40</sup> Lucy's letters are "written in a needlessly large hand" leaving "the extravagant margins" that Austen, ever the careful and frugal correspondent, "abhors."<sup>41</sup> Diedre Lynch has used such references to display how, to an eighteenth-century reader, "character can ... designate both the person described and the verbal portrait that does the describing" and in referencing Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*, Louise Curran regards how "the word 'character' ... meant both the 'hand or manner of writing' as well as a person's 'particular constitution of the mind'."<sup>42</sup> Both real and fictional letters were understood as embodied documents that promised insights into the owner's countenance, irrespective of the words they penned. Throughout this thesis I take this work on characters and letters and extend it to the range of manuscript materials created by the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg. Material conventions of writing (whether this be of letters, diaries, financial accounts, legal papers, memorandum books, journals) were deeply engrained in the minds of the literate public. The literary, material, and skill-based knowledge employed by writers can be equally as insightful as the words they penned. The chapters that follow are attuned to the material contours of the manuscripts I examine, and, in many cases, it is this attention that supplements the partial archives that remain today.

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<sup>40</sup> Peter Sabor, "Good, Bad, and Ugly Letters in *Sense and Sensibility*," *Persuasions On-Line* 32, no. 1 (2011): para. 14, accessed May 22, 2023, <https://jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol32no1/sabor.html>.

<sup>41</sup> Sabor, "Good, Bad, and Ugly Letters in *Sense and Sensibility*," para. 13.

<sup>42</sup> Deidre Shauna Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 40; Louise Curran, *Samuel Richardson and the Art of Letterwriting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 109.

## The Archive

The material and literary approach that grounds this thesis is predominantly a consequence of the fragmented nature of the Nostell, Tatton, Sizergh and Quarry Bank archives. The papers I study exist within a particularly complex repository – the family archive. Such sites in themselves pose many challenges and continue to remain largely underexplored. Issues surrounding inheritance, conservation, accessibility, and ownership, all shape the survival of personal documents, and the research that underpins this thesis has traversed private collections, county record offices, and national institutions in order to go some way towards rectifying the significant archival dispersal of my subjects' papers.<sup>43</sup> My interdisciplinary approach uses print culture to supplement many of the gaps within these collections, but I also make use of scholarship on archives and family history to frame my analysis of the papers that remain.

Several of the documents I draw on throughout this thesis are not formally catalogued and have, in many cases, slipped through the net of archival categorisation. This in itself, however, does not detract from their importance. As Imogen Peck posits: “the many different manuscript materials that families stored in their wooden boxes and drawers, from personal letters and poetry to drawings and diaries, might fruitfully be approached as archives.”<sup>44</sup> Correspondingly, my thesis sits within what Kate Peters, Alexandra Walsham and Liesbeth Corens have termed a “fresh recognition of records and archives as instruments of power and politics,” addressing “the extent to which record repositories are the emblems and projections of particular ideological

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<sup>43</sup> See Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Rita Sampaio da Nóvoa, Alice Borges Gago, and Maria João da Câmara, “Introduction,” in *Recovered Voices, Newfound Questions: Family Archives and Historical Research*, ed. Maria de Lurdes Rosa, Rita Sampaio da Nóvoa, Alice Borges Gago, and Maria João da Câmara (Coimbra: Coimbra University Press, 2019), 13-20.

<sup>44</sup> Imogen Peck, ““Of no sort of use”?: Manuscripts, Memory, and the Family Archive in Eighteenth-Century England,” *Cultural and Social History* 20, no. 2 (2022): 3.

positions.”<sup>45</sup> On this basis, as Walsham has reiterated, we should “consider why records were created, preserved, amended and falsified, as well as how and by whom they were referred to, read, arranged and used.”<sup>46</sup> Across the documents that frame this thesis, the traces of these decisions are often materially visible on the pages themselves. In paying attention to the textual remnants of the choices that have saved these manuscripts (their labels, additions, or inserts), I read past and attempt to restore the various hierarchies of archival creation. This approach allows me to question the priorities that informed the establishment of these archives while also revealing the very voices they attempted to conceal.

To this end, my analysis acknowledges and accommodates for incomplete archives. I follow Andrew O. Winckles’ call that “we need to create new methods for understanding ... [the] gaps” that are inherently a burden for those studying women’s history.<sup>47</sup> In contrast to his “affective archival practice,” I read the literary and material contexts surrounding the creation of these documents in order to, echoing Winckles’ call, “begin to imagine a new means of biographical enquiry, one that aims not only to uncover traces of obscure women, but also the conditions of their obscurity: the social, cultural, historical, and archival practices that have rendered so many of their stories illegible.”<sup>48</sup> My analysis leans into the spaces in these women’s archival traces

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<sup>45</sup> Kate Peters, Alexandra Walsham, and Liesbeth Corens, “Introduction: Archives and Information in the Early Modern World,” in *Archives and Information in the Early Modern World*, ed. Kate Peters, Alexandra Walsham, and Liesbeth Corens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 10. On the role of the archive in Black Studies see: Jennifer L. Morgan, “Accounting for ‘the Most Excruciating Torment’: Gender, Slavery, and Trans-Atlantic Passages,” *History of the Present* 6, no. 2 (2016): 184-207; Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Jessica Marie Johnson, *Wicked Flesh: Black Women, Intimacy, and Freedom in the Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020). And for a state of the field see: Britt Rusert, “From Black Lite to Black Print: The Return to the Archive in African American Literary Studies,” *American Quarterly* 68, no. 4 (2016): 993-1005.

<sup>46</sup> Alexandra Walsham, “The Social History of the Archive: Record-Keeping in Early Modern Europe,” *Past & Present* 230, no. 11 (2016): 46.

<sup>47</sup> Andrew O. Winckles, “The Space in Between: Affect, the Archive, and Writing,” *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 52 (2023): 314.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 316.

by supplementing their narratives with the literary, material, and cultural environments of their creation. Like Kaitlin Tonti, who uses an incomplete archive to construct a two-way narrative in the correspondence between Esther Edwards Burr and Sarah Prince, I see these gaps as a potential rather than a hinderance.<sup>49</sup> As well as questioning the partial nature of what remains, this thesis is aware of what has been lost or destroyed. In this it builds on Michelle Levy's contention that "[t]urning to the archive of women's writing compels us to confront what has been preserved, and, perhaps more importantly, what has not; in other words, we must invoke forgetting, in both its active and passive forms."<sup>50</sup> Informed by these interpretations, my thesis addresses the contours and complexities of the archival traces of the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg in spite of (and in part because of) an overwhelming lack of manuscript material. This thesis uncovers a comprehensive picture of the complex ways that writing, reading, and archival organisation operated within the Georgian country house. By examining a range of interactions between paper, pen, and the material world, I bring together archives, objects, and manuscript ephemera to understand the rich and varied ways these women set their lives to paper.

### Thesis Outline

To begin this thesis, I consider the extent to which women's place in the country house was dependent upon their relationship to the male heir. In this first chapter, I analyse the letters of Mary and Charlotte Winn, who resided at Nostell Priory

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<sup>49</sup> Kaitlin Tonti, "Reading Between the Silences in the Correspondence of Esther Edwards Burr and Sarah Price," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 52 (2023): 317-323; see also the introduction to this special issue Elizabeth Neiman and Yael Shapira, "Introduction: Biography and the Woman Writer Revisited," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 51 (2023): 291-197.

<sup>50</sup> Michelle Levy, "A New Republic of Women's Letters," *Studies in Romanticism* 59, no. 4 (2020): 521.

in Wakefield from their births up until their brother's inheritance in 1765. By opening this thesis with a study on sibling relationships, I establish the many levels of precarity women faced within country house families and reveal the variable and contesting degrees of power within these spaces. Using Ruth Perry's concept of the "great disinheritance" and the "dispossession of daughters" as a repeated plot premise in eighteenth-century literature, this chapter charts how such displacement was a harsh reality for many daughters.<sup>51</sup> In the transition from the 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet to the 5<sup>th</sup>, Mary and Charlotte Winn moved from being the daughters of a Baronet to sisters and accordingly, from a place of familial authority to the periphery. It is this transition that defines their manuscript traces and exposes the wider precariousities of women's place in the country house. In paying attention to the material qualities of the papers in the Winn archive, this chapter uncovers how Mary and Charlotte negotiated their increasing distance from their family home through the spaces they occupied on the page. Frances Burney's 1796 novel, *Camilla; or A Picture of Youth*, in its consideration of documentary evidence and disinheritance, provides the contextual backdrop for the sisters' use of paper. The repeated disinheritances in the plot of Burney's *Camilla* highlight how women's legacies were precarious, fragile, and often down to chance and, in consequence, frame the actual experience of women such as Mary and Charlotte Winn.

Chapter two similarly addresses the extent to which women's voices come and go depending on their relationship to the heir of the estate. Elizabeth Egerton assumed the management of Tatton Park in 1724 upon the death of her husband. No single record of Egerton's life remains; there is no diary, complete set of papers, or ongoing correspondence. The fragments that are left, moreover, exist scattered across different

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<sup>51</sup> Perry, *Novel Relations*, 76.



archival sites and locations. An incomplete account book and loose collection of trade cards and receipts are all that comprise Egerton's remaining papers. Within this assemblage of trade cards, bills, promissory notes, and receipts, however, it is possible to recover not only the self-conscious and first-person narratives that formed this collection, but also the extent to which eighteenth-century accounting practices were upheld by the movement of information between document, form, and text. Egerton's remaining papers speak, in compelling ways, to depictions of accounting in Daniel Defoe's 1724 novel *Roxana; or The Fortunate Mistress*. Defoe's narrative examines the contours of an economy that increasingly relied on paper and his repeated inclusion of Roxana's accounts establishes the role of financial documents in telling the stories, histories, and lives of individuals. This text, alongside Egerton's archival miscellany, affirm how paper was both a symbol of reliability and distrust in the financial world of the eighteenth century.

Continuing with the theme of textual organisation, chapter three illustrates the risks associated with women managing and ordering family papers. With a particular emphasis on contemporary debates surrounding women's ability to conduct historical research, this chapter tracks Cecilia Strickland's various approaches to preserving and narrating her family history. The chapter begins by analysing the critical responses to Frances Burney's publication of her father memoirs – the *Memoirs of Dr Charles Burney* (1832). These reviews epitomise eighteenth-century concerns regarding women's (mis)management of family papers and provide an insight into popular attitudes towards historical research. The chapter then identifies how these critiques were negotiated in unpublished and informal written histories such as that by Hester Thrale Piozzi, and eventually Strickland herself. In the face of contemporary views on women writing public and family histories, Strickland constructed a historical identity

that traversed both the increasingly professionalised techniques of historiographical research and the critical responses to women doing so. In each of her historical endeavours, Strickland displays clear and concise knowhow of male-dominated environments demonstrating how, in employing a variety of textual and material methods, women found creative ways of engaging with history.

The thesis concludes with an exploration of the extent to which Hannah Greg's writings were typical of a culture that valued manuscript material on par with printed documents. Greg, like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu approached her manuscript papers critically, and her documents were circulated, dispersed, and received publicly in spite of their handwritten form. This chapter investigates both the circulation of manuscript writing and the process behind such exchanges, paying particular attention to editorial techniques such as copying, redrafting, and rereading. The second half of the chapter then turns to the extent to which Greg's papers were shared following her death; I focus on her instructions on the bequeathment of her manuscripts and consider the survival of a compiled letter book. In many ways Greg was the most active of the women examined across this thesis in attempting to preserve her manuscripts. Her papers, however, were still subjected to the prejudices of male descendants following her death – prejudices which were centred around the family's lineage, their ancestral history, and the house at Quarry Bank itself. Greg's papers are representative of many a woman's plight within the country house; such buildings were simultaneously a repository for their voices and the very mechanism of their exclusion.

Ultimately, my thesis seeks to demonstrate the extent to which these women used paper and manuscript endeavours to negotiate their place within, proximity to, and distance from the country houses in which they lived. The paper traces of the Winns at Nostell, Egerton at Tatton, Strickland at Sizergh, and Greg at Quarry Bank

all point towards the promise even fragmented archives hold in recording women's voices. By employing creative methods of reading and reassembling their manuscripts and archives (by which I mean my literary and material approach), this thesis reveals how fractured stories and archival gaps have the potential to uncover the traces of those marginalised from the historical record. Likewise, in using eighteenth-century literature as a tool for contextualisation, it is possible to place these traces within their wider print and manuscript culture and thereby supplement the often-broken narratives that remain. In doing so, such a method offers the opportunity to recognise the women that lived, worked, and, most importantly, wrote, within the confines of these spaces. The chapters that follow, therefore, explore women's more implicit engagements with the eighteenth-century print marketplace – acts that were facilitated and preserved, yet also challenged, by the spaces in which they lived. Though the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg rarely participated in literary production, their writings illustrate the close correlation between privately produced manuscripts and the texts that emerged in print. The first chapter picks up this story by turning to Mary and Charlotte Winn, the unmarried sisters of the 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Nostell Priory. Pairing the Winns' manuscripts with the documents of disinheritance presented in Burney's *Camilla*, I begin by foregrounding the precarity of women's ties to landed estates.

**Dispossession and Disinheritance: Mary and Charlotte Winn, and  
the Paper Trail of Familial Displacement**

Girls who have been weakly educated, are often cruelly left by their parents without any provision; and, of course, are dependent on, not only the reason, but the bounty of their brothers ... In this equivocal humiliating situation, a docile female may remain some time, with a tolerable degree of comfort. But, when the brother marries, a probable circumstance, from being considered as the mistress of the family, she is viewed with averted looks as an intruder, an unnecessary burden on the benevolence of the master of the house, and his new partner.<sup>1</sup>

Mary Wollstonecraft's remarks on the abandonment of single women in her 1792 *A Vindication on the Rights of Woman*, while evocatively exaggerated here, were an undeniable truth for many women who never married. Single women in the eighteenth century held an uncertain place in their family network and, due to the provisioning of annuities, were often forced to rely on brothers or male relations for financial aid. According to Ruth Perry, these circumstances gave rise to one of the most repeated themes in eighteenth-century literature – “the dispossession of daughters.”<sup>2</sup> “[T]his compulsively repeated plot premise,” Perry writes, “is a mythic recording of a banal and literal truth: shifts in the social and economic purposes of kinship over the

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men: with A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, and Hints*, ed. Sylvana Tomaselli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 141. Quoted in Bridget Hill, *Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1989), 228.

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations: The transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 42.

previous half-century resulted in a reconception of the daughter's place in the family as temporary, partial, and burdensome."<sup>3</sup> The "great disinheritance" as Perry names it, was a product of a shift in inheritance from a "cognatic kin system to a lineage system" that "gathered momentum in the seventeenth century" and "had the consequence of disinheriting daughters."<sup>4</sup> In short, "the family you were born into, lost ground to the family that was created by marriage."<sup>5</sup> Such a "cutting loose" resulted in an overwhelming number of eighteenth-century fictional plots that followed a young woman's entrance in society with the guide of only her adoptive family – Frances Burney's *Evelina* (1778) and *Cecilia* (1782), and Eliza Haywood's *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) are typical examples, while works such as Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1747-48) or Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801) effectively "orphan" their female heroines by placing them at such a distance from their family that any kin support is futile.<sup>6</sup> Such a plot premise provided the framework for many storylines surrounding family reunion; long-lost siblings are reunited after an extended estrangement, separated children become the heirs to unknown estates, and a rise in "familiarization" meant that family relationships could be explored as much through friendships as they could direct kin.<sup>7</sup> These negotiations of distance increasingly provided the setting for narratives surrounding incest. As Ellen Pollak has demonstrated, "the historical realignment of the categories of class, kinship, and representation that took place" during this period, "marked a transformative moment

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 38, 40; see also Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship, and Patronage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Naomi Tadmor, "The Concept of Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England," *Past & Present* no. 151 (1996): 111-140.

<sup>5</sup> Ruth Perry, "Brotherly Love in Eighteenth-Century Literature," *Persuasions On-line* 30, no. 1 (2009), <https://jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol30no1/perry.html?>

<sup>6</sup> Perry, *Novel Relations*, 76.

<sup>7</sup> Julie Shaffer, "Familial Love, Incest, and Female Desire in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century British Women's Novels," *Criticism (Detroit)* 41, no. 1 (1999): 67-99.

in the cultural construction of incest.”<sup>8</sup> The dispersal of family networks then, provided the foundation for many an eighteenth-century plotline.

Persistent across all these narratives is the extent to which marriage, in one way or another, resulted in the separation or “dispossession” of siblings. Jane Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) famously opens with a description of how the Dashwood women “were degraded to the condition of visitor” in their own home in favour of their brother and his wife.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the marriage of the heroine and her subsequent acceptance into her husband’s family was the common resolution to many storylines – as Beth Cortese writes, eighteenth-century “[f]iction showed how daughters ... had to create their own comfortable marital home following the loss of their family home and its connection to their identity.”<sup>10</sup> But if these novels are a “mythic recording of a banal and literal truth” as Perry declares they are, then questions persist regarding the fate of real-life dispossessed daughters. Even more pressing still, what was the experience of such women who did not have a courtship plot to fall back on? If women were valued as wives and mothers, and their place in the family home was “temporary, partial and burdensome,” then single women were effectively homeless. It is in this context that this chapter frames the paper traces of Mary (1736-1800) and Charlotte (1737-1797) Winn – real-life examples of Perry’s literary “dispossessed daughters” and for whom Wollstonecraft’s “averted looks” were a sad but steady truth for much of their adult lives. As this chapter will demonstrate, these women’s “negotiation for an establishment” lay not in finding a spouse, but in maintaining ties to their

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<sup>8</sup> Ellen Pollak, *Incest and the English Novel, 1684-1814* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 17.

<sup>9</sup> Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*, ed. John Mullan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 6.

<sup>10</sup> Beth Cortese, “Home Economics: Female Estate Managers in Long Eighteenth-Century Fiction and Society,” in *At Home in the Eighteenth Century: Interrogating Domestic Space*, ed. Stephen G. Hague and Karen Lipsedge (Milton: Taylor and Francis, 2021), 140.

consanguineal home.<sup>11</sup> The Winn sisters traversed their geographical, emotional, and financial distance from their family home through the space they occupied on the page. In beginning this thesis with a study on sibling relationships, this chapter establishes the precarity of many country house families, revealing how women especially could be easily marginalised, even after holding a position of power. In exploring these sisters' textual negotiations, this chapter illuminates how the paper traces of siblings articulated the pressures of wider familial politics, outside of their immediate family.

Mary and Charlotte Winn were the daughters of the 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Nostell Priory. Upon their brother's inheritance of their family estate in 1765, the sisters were banished from their childhood home to make room for the new Baronet and his family. Both sisters remained single throughout the entirety of their adult life, meaning that, unlike the heroines that lined the pages of eighteenth-century fiction, neither Mary nor Charlotte ever replaced their parental home with a marital home. The status of single women in this period was precarious: "women became less important as daughters and as sisters and became more important, socially and culturally speaking, as mothers and wives."<sup>12</sup> Such precariousities were heightened by the threat sibling relations posed to idealised gender roles. Amy Harris has discussed in detail how "[o]lder sisters' power as elder siblings sometimes conflicted with gendered expectations of women's passivity or docility" and how "sibling power [was] constantly shifting based on gender, birth order, and marital status."<sup>13</sup> Such a disruption did allow certain women a degree of freedom: in wealthier families, as Ruth Larsen has shown, remaining single "did not mean women led secluded lives, but enabled, and encouraged, them to be

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<sup>11</sup> Perry asserts that the "courtship plots of this period" were more "about homelessness and negotiation for an establishment rather than about disinterested love." Perry, *Novel Relations*, 50.

<sup>12</sup> Cortese, "Home Economics," 140; see also, Perry, *Novel Relations*, 34.

<sup>13</sup> Amy Harris, ed., *Family Life in England and America, 1690-1820*, Vol. 3, *Managing Families* (London: Routledge, 2016), 168; Amy Harris, "That Fierce Edge: Sibling Conflict and Politics in Georgian England," *Journal of Family History* 37, no. 2 (2012): 157.

active and powerful forces within the elite family and the wider world.”<sup>14</sup> For Mary and Charlotte Winn, their brother’s predisposition for overspending meant that such a luxury was never possible. The Winn sisters are testament to Bridget Hill’s acknowledgment that, for such women, “[t]heir life in the family home lasted as long as their parents’ life.”<sup>15</sup> The overwhelming displacement of eighteenth-century daughters, moreover, has resulted in a noticeable sparseness of writing by single women: Amy Froide has drawn attention to the “lack of personal writings by most singlewomen [that] makes it difficult to assess emotional intimacy.”<sup>16</sup> But, as this chapter will address, when such writings are valued for their material as well as textual composition, it is possible to uncover how sibling intimacy and emotional proximity was enacted in more subliminal ways. In contextualizing the Winn sisters within the literary context of Perry’s “great disinheritance,” this chapter will demonstrate how the material composition of the Mary’s and Charlotte’s letters embodied their physical and emotional displacement from their family and home.

Mary and Charlotte Winn resided at their West Yorkshire home, Nostell Priory, from their births in 1736 and 1737 respectively, up until their father’s death in 1765. The fifth and sixth of nine children born to the 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet and his wife Susannah Henshaw, Mary and Charlotte were both older than their two brothers. Perhaps on account of their mother’s death in 1742, the sisters spent their early adolescence very much involved in the management of the Nostell estate. From overseeing workmen to monitoring the house’s post, both sisters enjoyed considerable authority and

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<sup>14</sup> Ruth Larsen, “For Want of a Good Fortune: elite single women’s experiences in Yorkshire, 1730-1860,” *Women’s History Review* 16, no. 3 (2007): 397.

<sup>15</sup> Bridget Hill, *Women Alone: Spinsters in England, 1660-1850* (London: Yale University Press, c. 2001), 70.

<sup>16</sup> Amy M. Froide, *Never Married: Singlewomen in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 54.



independence while their father was alive.<sup>17</sup> The sisters were trusted with more personal matters too; the 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet, for instance, sought his daughters' advice on their brother's proposed marriage to the Swiss heiress Sabine d'Hervart in November 1761, to which they replied with trepidation about being "greatly at a loss to keep up a conversation with her," and concern that her presence would threaten to "interrupt our present Felicity, which too frequently happens when two families are united in one."<sup>18</sup> Incidentally, Rowland ignored the concerned expressions of his father and sisters and the couple were married in 1761, a fact which perhaps accounts for the hostility between the in-laws when Rowland and Sabine moved into Nostell four years later.

It is this moment that provides a particular focal point for this chapter; following the death of the 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet in 1765, Mary and Charlotte were dismissed from the Nostell estate to allow room for the 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet and his wife, Sabine. Neither sister formed a particularly close relationship with their brother's wife, and they rarely corresponded with Sabine throughout the thirty years she lived at Nostell. It is within this transition from the 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet to the 5<sup>th</sup>, that Mary and Charlotte moved from a place of familial authority to the periphery. Increasing the strain on this transition was the fact that both Mary and Charlotte remained unmarried and, while their father

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<sup>17</sup> Letters to their father while he was away from Nostell are telling about the authority they held within the house, see for example: Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 23 May 1765, Nostell Priory Family and Estate Records, WYW1352/1/1/4/18, West Yorkshire Archive Service (hereafter cited by catalogue finding number); Mary Winn to Rowland Winn, 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 12 June 1765, WYW1352/1/4/35/8; Susannah Winn, Ann Winn, Mary Winn, Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 28 November 1761, WYW1352/1/1/4/15.

<sup>18</sup> Susannah Winn, Ann Winn, Mary Winn, Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 28 November 1761, WYW1352/1/1/4/15. For work on Sabine Winn see Kerry Bristol, "Between the Exotic and the Everyday: Sabine Winn at Home 1765-1798," in *A Taste for Luxury in Early Modern Europe: Display, Acquisition and Boundaries*, ed. Johanna Ilmakunnas and Jon Stobart (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 161-178; Serena Dyer, *Material Lives: Women Makers and Consumer Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2020), 123-160.

provided an adequate annuity in his will, this legacy was in the hands of his son.<sup>19</sup> It is clear, too, that with geographical distance from their family, came emotional distance. The sisters wrote constant pleas in pursuit of unreceived letters, expressed regret at being denied time with their niece and nephew, and most commonly chased the payment of their allowance. These letters are just a small component of the mass of material in the Nostell archive: Mary's and Charlotte's voices appear sporadically between 1760 and the 1790s; a lack of letter book or extensive correspondence means that Rowland's replies are largely lost aside from the odd answer copied onto the back of an original letter; and any indication of the sisters' epistolary circles beyond the Nostell family no longer remains (if one ever existed at all). This archive, like many, is largely organised around the male members of the family – Mary's and Charlotte's letters can be found scattered within and amongst the papers of their father, brother, and nephew.<sup>20</sup> The sisters' unmarried status, conversely, does not appear to have impacted their archival presence and more of their papers remain in the archive today than those of any other sibling. Peculiar for the Winns is the fact that Mary and Charlotte never lived together after leaving Nostell, as was often customary for families with more than one unmarried relation.<sup>21</sup> Instead, they each resided across a number of (presumably rented) London addresses: Charlotte at Nassau Street from 1766, Half Moon Street from 1772, and Wigmore Street from 1783, and Mary at New Norfolk Street from 1766, Bolton Street from 1768, and Great George Street from 1770. Mary appears to have spent a number of years living with their younger brother,

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<sup>19</sup> Will of Sir Rowland Winn, 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 10 March 1762, WYW1352/3/5/4/47; Kerry Bristol, "Families are 'sometimes ... the best at a distance': Sisters and Sisters-in-Law at Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire," in *Women and the Country House in Ireland and Britain*, ed. Terence Dooley, Maeve O'Riordan and Christopher Ridgeway (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2018), 44.

<sup>20</sup> An exception to this is the papers of the 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet's wife, Sabine, who takes up a vast amount of catalogue space.

<sup>21</sup> Froide, *Never Married*, 55-56.

Edmund, prior to his death in 1782, and it is evident that she also spent prolonged periods of time in Bath, presumably for the season. In her old age, Mary settled in Exmouth, Devon. On account of these factors, the paper traces of Mary and Charlotte Winn remain in a fragmented state with little cohesion and numerous gaps, providing a patchy narrative of the sisters' lives.

To counter such gaps, this chapter looks beyond the content of the sisters' letters. I supplement their written word with an analysis of the form, composition, and materiality of these pages. By reading these fragments in the context of eighteenth-century fiction too, the chapter considers the significance of these excerpts within their wider cultural setting. This chapter therefore begins with an exploration of disinheritance in Frances Burney's third novel, *Camilla; or A Picture of Youth* (1796). While not explicitly a narrative centred on unmarried sisters, Burney's *Camilla* is particularly insightful for its attention to women's inheritance. In exploring the multiple instances in which inheritance and disinheritance occur within this plot, I demonstrate the fragility, precarity, and "mystification," to use James Thompson's term, of women's ties to landed estates.<sup>22</sup> I have chosen this text as a means of exploring the ways in which disinheritance was traversed on the eighteenth-century page. The Winn sisters' written negations, when contextualised within this literary context, become enlivened with the wider print circumstances of their creation. This analysis provides the contextual backdrop for the more detailed consideration of the Winn sisters' dispossession from their family home, and the novel establishes the importance of a paper trail in granting accountability to these acts of renunciation.

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<sup>22</sup> James Thompson, *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 182.

Like the fictional characters that form Perry's "great disinheritance," the Winn sisters were never legally disinherited. Rather, their brother's marriage resulted in an emotional and psychological "cutting loose." Thus, this chapter displays how the material composition of sibling correspondences can be indicative of wider familial, ancestral, and household displacement. Mary's and Charlotte's extant papers illustrate how the sisters negotiated their distance from the family home through the spaces they occupied on the page. While in many cases, to use Froide's acknowledgement, "[f]inancial and residential dependence on a brother ... translated into a loss of autonomy for the sister," the letters of Mary and Charlotte Winn are testament to the ways single women could regain a certain level of independence by creating, modifying, and transforming their papers into a powerful tie to their ancestral home.<sup>23</sup> Paradoxically, moreover, it is the sisters' distance from Nostell that has ensured the survival of their voices. Consequently, this chapter concludes with a consideration of the epistolary afterlives of these papers. I address how ensuing textual additions to Mary's and Charlotte's letters have afforded the sisters a place in their family's history. The letters of the unmarried Winn sisters provide an example of how distance from, as opposed to proximity to, the parental home could result in the survival of women's manuscript traces.

### The Game of Inheritance in Burney's *Camilla*

Perry's acknowledgement that the "great disinheritance" was a "compulsively repeated plot premise" within eighteenth-century fiction rests on the broader impact of the "changing legal, political, and economic systems" of the period.<sup>24</sup> Novelistic

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<sup>23</sup> Froide, *Never Married*, 62.

<sup>24</sup> Perry, *Novel Relations*, 42, 76.

plots thus drew on the many stories of actual disinheritance – that is, being removed from a person’s will. Neglected in Perry’s study, Frances Burney’s 1796 novel, *Camilla; or A Picture of Youth*, is perhaps the most fitting narrative for an exploration of eighteenth-century disinheritance, purely on account of the sheer number of times this occurs throughout the narrative. My opening discussion foregrounds how women’s ties to landed estates were fragile, precarious, and governed by chance – tensions that Burney mines in her third novel. More than an emotional and psychological “cutting loose,” Burney’s *Camilla* presents the profound threat of legal disinheritance. The multiple instances of disinheritance in the first book of Burney’s *Camilla* reflect wider instabilities surrounding women’s legacies and their uneven ties to the family and home.

Importantly, the novel negotiates its multiple disinheritances through a variety of documentary sources. Jolene Zigarovich has determined that, while eighteenth-century “law certainly privileges documentation and written proof,” “in both legal and literary sources ... reputation, character witnesses, belief in female virtue (and so on), are [also] accepted forms of evidence” in disputes over inheritance.<sup>25</sup> Eighteenth-century orphan plots, as Cheryl Nixon has established, “chart an orphan’s progress towards his or her property” by “dramatiz[ing] ... the lost, missing, stolen, misunderstood, or suppressed documents that prove the orphan’s family origins and inheritance claims.”<sup>26</sup> Lisa Zunshine, in the context of Eliza Haywood’s *The Fortunate Foundlings* (1744), has similarly remarked that the “more morally astute authors of ... eighteenth-century foundling fictions, such as Frances Burney, Charlotte Smith, and Agnes Maria Bennett” have a tendency to “obsess” over formal “piece[s] of paper –

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<sup>25</sup> Jolene Zigarovich, “The Problem of Female Birthright in Chancery and the Eighteenth-Century Novel,” *Law & Literature* 31, no. 3 (2019): 505.

<sup>26</sup> Cheryl Nixon, *The Orphan in Eighteenth-Century Law and Literature: Estate, Blood, and Body* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 74.

[such as] the parents' marriage certificate or its equivalent."<sup>27</sup> The various instances of disinheritance in *Camilla* are no exception to this, and Burney traverses each with a sceptical eye to the documentary evidence accepted as testimony. Each occurrence of disinheritance reveals the relative informality of documentary evidence deemed acceptable when confirming, contending, or altering an individual's will. The lack of textual accountability in many of these instances of disinheritance has the effect of producing a certain ambiguity surrounding women's entitlement to legacies and bequests. So, while Katie Barclay has suggested that "[t]he use of contract reinforced the authority of the patriarch," Burney's *Camilla* displays how this "authority" also required no contract at all.<sup>28</sup>

Burney's *Camilla* is famously a novel governed by chance. The numerous lottery scenes within the plot have been used to explore the appeal of risk-taking in the eighteenth-century money market and, more recently, women's roles in these exchanges.<sup>29</sup> As Jessica Richard has acknowledged: "long odds and lucky breaks [were] the engine of fiscal development."<sup>30</sup> But economic gambles are also prominent outside of these scenes. The first book of volume one of this novel, for example, sees

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<sup>27</sup> Lisa Zunshine, *Bastards and Foundlings: Illegitimacy in Eighteenth-Century England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2005), 137.

<sup>28</sup> Katie Barclay, "Natural Affection, the Patriarchal Family and the "Strict Settlement" Debate: A Response from the History of Emotions," *The Eighteenth Century* 58, no. 3 (2017): 317.

<sup>29</sup> See for example: Katherine Binhammer, *Downward Mobility: The Form of Capital and the Sentimental Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020), 139-160; Andrea Henderson, "Commerce and Masochistic Desire in the 1790s: Frances Burney's *Camilla*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31, no. 1 (1997): 69-84; Kyung Eun Lo, "Regulating Female Consumption in Burney's *Camilla*," *British and American Fiction* 21-22, no. 8 (2014): 119-135; Jessica Richard, *The Romance of Gambling in the Eighteenth-Century British Novel* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 111-126; Deidre Shauna Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 164-206.

<sup>30</sup> Jessica Richard, "'Putting to Hazard a Certainty': Lotteries and the Romance of Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 40 (2011): 197; For scholarship on the role of the gambling economy and eighteenth-century fiction more generally see: Jesse Molesworth, *Chance and the Eighteenth-Century Novel: Realism, Probability, Magic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Bob Harris, "Fantasy, Speculation, and the British State Lottery in the Eighteenth Century," in *Revisiting the Polite and Commercial People: Essays in Georgian Politics, Society, and Culture in Honour of Professor Paul Langford*, ed. Elaine Chalus and Perry Gauci (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 119-135.

Sir Hugh Tyrold – the uncle of the titular heroine Camilla Tyrold and the “wholly uncultivated, and singularly self-formed” man upon whose whims the early plot depends – modify three different versions of his will, with each rewrite naming a new heiress to inherit his fortune.<sup>31</sup> It is this first book of volume one that my analysis centres on; occurring seven years prior to the beginning of book two, and contemporaneously dismissed as one of the “detached stories” within the plot, the first book of Burney’s *Camilla* sets the precedence for economic gambles and unstable legacies.<sup>32</sup> The game of chance in Burney’s *Camilla* begins prior to the lottery scenes. So, while Elaine Bander contends that “Camilla’s troubles begin” much later in the novel “when she is wrong-footed by Indiana’s nasty governess in her innocent love for Edgar,” if we view the plot as one of economy rather than romance (as Katherine Binhammer invites us to), Camilla’s troubles actually begin much earlier – with Sir Hugh’s decision “to make choice of another heiress” (31).<sup>33</sup> In light of Cortese’s observation that “there are surprising similarities between the portrayal of gambling and inheritance” in many eighteenth-century works, this chapter begins by exploring the extent to which the introductory plot of Burney’s *Camilla* brings to the fore discussions of women’s economic precarity.<sup>34</sup> That is: women’s inheritances, beyond being subjected to systemic inequalities, were also, and fundamentally, at the disposal of the individual. This precarity, moreover, can be read from and discerned through

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<sup>31</sup> Frances Burney, *Camilla; or A Picture of Youth*, ed. Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 10. Hereafter cited by page number in the text.

<sup>32</sup> Burney’s sister related their father’s criticism of an early draft of *Camilla* that stated “My d<sup>r</sup> Father charged me to urge you to weave into one story of interest & length what you had yet to write – he think y<sup>r</sup> book consists of *detached stories*.” Frances Burney, *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame d’Arblay)*, ed. Joyce Hemlow, Vol. 3, *Great Bookham 1793-1797* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, 2014), 129. This quotation is cited in Katherine Binhammer, “The Economics of Plot in Burney’s *Camilla*,” *Studies in the Novel* 43, no. 1 (2011): 3-4.

<sup>33</sup> Elaine Bander, “Family Matters in Burney’s *Camilla*,” *The Age of Johnson* 22 (2012): 282; Binhammer, *Downward Mobility*, 144.

<sup>34</sup> Beth Cortese, “Gambling with Women, Estates and Status in Long Eighteenth-Century Comedy,” *Etudes Epistémè* 39, no. 39 (2021).

the documentary evidence Burney presents with each rewrite of Sir Hugh's will. In this episode, the "great disinheritance" is at once a risk factor built into the game of chance that was the eighteenth-century money market, and a means of commenting on and critiquing the increasing informality of eighteenth-century bequests.

The story's first major plotline begins with the eponymous heroine, Camilla Tyrold, being made the heiress to her uncle's estate. Immediately, Burney establishes the characters' flippant attitudes towards women's legacies given that Sir Hugh Tyrold bases this decision on his enchantment with his niece. Camilla "exhilarated" her uncle: "she supplied him with ideas, and from the morning's first dawn to the evening's latest close, his eyes followed her light-springing figure, or his ear vibrated with her sportive sounds" (15). Blinded by these impressions, Sir Hugh "in less than a month after the residence of Camilla at Cleves ... took the resolution of making her his heiress" (15). That this decision occurs "less than a month" after Camilla's residence demonstrates the impulsiveness of Sir Hugh's actions. In these first pages, Burney establishes a precedent for Sir Hugh altering his will and highlights the speed at which such a decision could be made. Mere pages into this substantial text sees Sir Hugh disinheriting one heiress (his ward Indiana) in favour of another. The first major plotline of the novel, therefore, is founded on one character's whimsical attitude towards his legacy and the relative unimportance of this decision on his heiress. Immediately, Burney grounds the opening of her novel on the extent to which women's economic stability depended on men and their impulsive behaviour.

Conspicuous in this action is Sir Hugh's prominent lack of a written or traceable declaration to mark his change of heiress. He opts, rather, for verbal testimony. This occurs after an unspecified period of time, on Camilla's "ensuing birthday," in which the celebrations are combined "to announce to the adjoining



country her uncle's splendid plan in her favour" (16). This celebration, however, marks a striking lack of accountability to Sir Hugh's modification of his will; Camilla's parents and the house's governess were "declined" from being asked to join the "festivity" and in consequence the only witnesses present are children (16-17). It is unlikely, moreover, that this act was ever committed to writing. Sir Hugh exhibits a clear incapacity for formal penmanship; writing to his sister-in-law shortly after the celebrations, the Baronet is required to "dine at the farmhouse, in order to give him time to compose his epistle" given that "he was so little in the habit of writing" (25). Indeed, he himself acknowledges that "I am no remarkable good writer, in comparison with my brother, which you will excuse from my deficiencies" (25). That this first instance of an amendment to Sir Hugh's will occurs without any corroboration from adult characters or, it is unlikely, in written form, adds a certain impermanence to his decision. His actions are treated as temporary and, even prior to the plot's developments, the lack of a textual trail and adult testimonies allude to Sir Hugh's childlike impulses and lack of regard for formalities. Here, Burney highlights the serious and real ambiguities surrounding what was considered acceptable evidence for a bequest. The conspicuous lack of paper trail or formal documentation emphasises the precarity of women's inheritance and alludes not only to the informality with which they were treated, but also to the precariousness of these acts. This first instance of disinheritance then, while of enormous importance to the heroine of the novel, materialises as a hollow action – untraceable and easily denied.

This statement is only made more pronounced when Sir Hugh rewrites his will for a second time, in favour of a third heiress. As the story progresses, Camilla's younger sister, Eugenia, suffers a series of misfortunes while in her uncle's care. At the realisation of the lasting impact these accidents will have on his niece, Sir Hugh

falls into “the deepest despondence” (29). While in this state of emotional turmoil, he entreats his brother and sister-in-law for a solution to ease the brunt of his recklessness:

‘O brother! O sister! why don't you both kill me in return? And what amends can I make her? what amends, except a poor little trifle of money? — And as to that, she shall have it, God knows, every penny I am worth, the moment I am gone; ay, that she shall, to a single shilling, if I die tomorrow!’ Starting up with revived courage from this idea, he ventured again to turn his head towards Eugenia, exclaiming: ‘O, if she does but get well! does but ease my poor conscience by making me out not to be a murderer, a guinea for every pit in that poor face will I settle on her out of hand; yes, before I so much as breathe again, for fear of dying in the mean time!’ (29-30)

This extravagant declaration is followed by a hasty retreat to the “family chapel” where, to “atone ... for the ill he had done,” Sir Hugh “made a solemn vow” “bequeathing to her every thing he possessed in the world, in estate, cash, and property, without the deduction of a sixpence” (30). Even more so than his first rewrite, the speed at which Sir Hugh makes this decision is striking, unfolding in the space of a single page. The sentences in this episode are short and broken, recounting the Baronet’s actions in a list-like series of events, and alluding to the sporadic and haphazard nature of this act. In affording little narrative space to this second rewrite, Burney matches the pace these events occur with the time it takes for them to be read. The speed and abandon in which Sir Hugh makes and enacts this decision is highlighted through the swiftness with which it occurs to the reader – this event is quick to happen and quick to read.

Indeed, this is made even more noticeable given the length of the rest of the novel. Later in the narrative, Camilla’s debts, as Thompson identifies, are “told in

remarkable detail; no expenditure is forgotten, and periodically we are treated to elaborate accounts.”<sup>35</sup> Camilla’s “great disinheritance,” however, aside from Mr Tyrold’s shock at this being “so sudden and partial a measure,” is quickly accepted – Mrs Tyrold, for one, “scarce noticed this declaration” (30). Deidre Shauna Lynch has proposed that in “[c]ramming this flurry of sudden transformation into the first of the ten books of *Camilla*, Burney inaugurates a narrative that is preoccupied with speculation and credit.”<sup>36</sup> Beyond “speculation” however, this “cramming ... of sudden information” also provides little accountability to the textual traces that would normally confirm legal decisions. That both Sir Hugh’s decisions to rewrite his will happen not only in quick succession but also as hurried decisions, serve to highlight the precarity of women’s ties to landed estates and the swiftness with which they could be cut. Equally, the comparatively little amount of space this encompasses on the pages of the novel acts as a reminder of the importance (or rather lack thereof) of documentation. Unlike the other financial transcripts in the novel, Burney’s heroine is transformed from a “happy young heiress” to “the disinherited Camilla” in a matter of pages (16, 33). These disinheritances are measured in both the real-time of the novel, and the space they occupy within the text. In affording little textual space to the legal contours of women’s inheritance, Burney indicates that these decisions are not as considered as other financial acts. This distinct lack of a paper trail (in both the documents Sir Hugh employs and the pages of the narrative itself) highlights what Thompson has referred to as the “process of mystifying the relations between gender and property.”<sup>37</sup> Each of these decisions, moreover, transpire at the impressionable whims of one individual, who himself confesses were “a point of mere conscience”

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<sup>35</sup> Thompson, *Models of Value*, 164.

<sup>36</sup> Lynch, *The Economy of Character*, 170.

<sup>37</sup> Thompson, *Models of Value*, 182.

(31). In shaping the novel around not one, but two, hurried disinheritances, Burney constructs a narrative that is sympathetic to the financial precarity of many eighteenth-century women, placing questions regarding the dependability of inheritance (and those who command it) at the fore of her novel.

In spite of this hurried series of events, Eugenia's inheritance is given much more permanence than that of her sister. Not only is this decision permitted the verbal confirmation that Camilla's inheritance evaded ("He told all present to remember and witness this, in case of an apoplexy before his new will could be written down" [30]), but Sir Hugh also commits this alteration to writing. Once returned from the chapel, he "sent for the attorney of a neighbouring town":

... who took the direction of Sir Hugh, and drew up, for his immediate satisfaction, a short deed, making over, according to his vow, all he should die possessed of, without any let or qualification whatsoever to his niece Eugenia. This was properly signed and sealed, and Sir Hugh hastened up stairs with a copy of it to Mr. Tyrold. (30, 32)

In committing this act to textual and verbal accountability, Eugenia's inheritance is treated with much more longevity than her sister's. This amendment is written down as well as being correctly "signed and sealed," the combination of which prevents any further rash modifications. Equally, Sir Hugh uses both manuscript and speech to grant testimony to his action – declaring it to "all present" and ensuring "a copy" of his will is shared with his brother (30, 32). These instances of documentation provide accountability to his actions – a later revision to this rewrite would be much more difficult than his previous one, requiring a formal negotiation of text and its associated material practices. In doing so, Burney indicates that this is the last change to the Baronet's will. Over these modifications, Burney shines a careful eye on the various

rewrites of Sir Hugh's legacy through the documentary evidence they are afforded. These episodes at once highlight the various ambiguities surrounding women's entitlement to and ability to claim inheritance, while also commenting on their precarity and mutability at the hands of one individual.

A consideration of more minor female characters in the novel similarly reinforces these uneven and uneasy positions of daughters. Indiana Lynmere, herself an orphan, faces not one disinheritance like Camilla, but two. The financial details of Sir Hugh's first legacy are never provided, but given that Indiana was her uncle's "first idol" who subsequently "lost her power to please him," it is likely that she was originally set to inherit her uncle's fortune prior to Camilla's residence at Cleves (15). That Indiana was her uncle's first heiress is implied by the "jealousy" with which "her mind was soon empoisoned with" on discovering that "Sir Hugh took the resolution of making [Camilla] ... his heiress" (15). This, alongside Mr and Mrs Tyrold's responses to Camilla's first inheritance (they were "sensibly shocked" at "a partiality so injurious" and "a blight so unmerited to the hopes cherished by Indiana" [15-16]) allude to Indiana being Sir Hugh's original heiress. That it remains unclear whether she was her uncle's sole beneficiary once again points to the lack of documentation surrounding these clauses. With each change in heiress, Sir Hugh documents his actions in increasingly formal ways – toying not only with the dependent women in the plot, but also the relative informality of permissible evidence. In his first rewrite the Baronet does offer some detail regarding Indiana's legacy, stipulating he will provide "handsomely" for her and her brother "by settling a thousand pounds a year between them" (16). These details, however, were removed from later editions of the novel – an act which only increases the ambiguity surrounding Indiana's inheritance

and again “mystifies” the relationship between women and property.<sup>38</sup> What is more, Indiana loses even this sum when Eugenia is made sole heiress. In facing disinheritance not once but twice, Indiana serves as a reminder of how lesser family members could be thoughtlessly cut loose in fast and careless succession. The various changes to Sir Hugh’s will serve to highlight how easily legacies could be altered when afforded little documentary evidence, with characters both at the centre and the periphery of the narrative sharing experiences of disinheritance.

That Burney’s *Camilla* focusses so prominently on the precarities surrounding women’s inheritance is perhaps a product of her own uncertain financial situation while writing and publishing her novel. Many scholars have acknowledged the ways in which the plot can be seen as a reflection of the unhappy context in which it was composed; to counter the solitary environment of the royal household where Burney drafted the story, *Camilla*, unlike *Evelina* or *Cecilia*, “is a family book.”<sup>39</sup> That the economic plot is also reflective of Burney’s personal situation is similarly plausible. By the time the novel was ready to be published Burney had married the French émigré Alexandre d’Arblay in 1793, and their son had been born in the following year. In Janice Thaddeus’s words: “Burney returned to write her third novel a decade after her second with a renewed sense of the stifling atmosphere most women inhabit.”<sup>40</sup> This is particularly evident in how Burney negotiated the publishing of *Camilla*. Her new status as a married woman allowed her the freedom to procure a more profitable deal than had been possible for *Evelina* or *Cecilia* and, in consequence, Burney chose to

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<sup>38</sup> Hilary Havens has drawn attention to the extent of these changes between eighteenth-century editions of the novel: Hilary Havens, “Revising the “Prose Epic” in Frances Burney’s *Camilla*,” *The Age of Johnson* 22 (2012): 307.

<sup>39</sup> Janice Farrar Thaddeus, *Frances Burney, A Literary Life* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 118; see also Bander, “Family Matters in Burney’s *Camilla*,” 283; Margaret Anne Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 158. Anna Paluchowska-Messing, *Frances Burney and her Readers. The Negotiated Image* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften 2020), 82.

<sup>40</sup> Thaddeus, *Frances Burney, A Literary Life*, 122.

publish her third novel by subscription.<sup>41</sup> While, ordinarily, publishing by subscription was a risky choice on account of the fact it relied on the patronage of subscribers, the success of Burney's previous two novels meant that, as Clare Byers has acknowledged, "her popularity alone would sell the new work."<sup>42</sup> Subscription also came with risks to the author's reputation; James Raven has deemed such a method an act of "great public charity," wherein "[s]ycophantic dedications [were written] to aristocratic patrons by impoverished writing masters or destitute widows and gentlewomen."<sup>43</sup> More so in this case than her previous two novels, Burney approached the publishing of *Camilla* with monetary profits in mind.<sup>44</sup> As Thaddeus has made clear, she was well "aware that in the cases of *Evelina* and *Cecilia* she had enriched the booksellers far beyond her intentions or their dreams."<sup>45</sup> Particularly significant in this decision though, as scholars such as Sarah K. Austin have illustrated, is the fact that Burney warranted such a means of financing her work on account of her new identity as a wife and mother.<sup>46</sup> Peter Sabor has drawn attention to Burney's determination that *Camilla* "would enrich her family, rather than her publishers" and, in quoting a letter from her brother, Burney affirmed "[w]hat *Evelina* ... does now for the Son of Lowndes, & what *Cecilia* does for the Son of Payne, let your third work do for the Son of its Author."<sup>47</sup> Concerns over inheritance evidently permeated Burney's personal life as

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<sup>41</sup> Emma E. Pink, "Frances Burney's *Camilla*: "To Print my Grand Work ... by Subscription," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40, no. 1 (2006): 51.

<sup>42</sup> Clare Byers, "An Uncommonly Difficult Business: Reviewing Women's Writing in Eighteenth-Century London's Subscription Publishing, 1749-1774," *Mémoires du Livre/Studies in Book Culture* 12, no. 1 (2021): 18.

<sup>43</sup> James Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450-1850* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2007), 275.

<sup>44</sup> Sara K. Austin, "'All Wove into One': *Camilla*, the Prose Epic, and Family Values," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 29 (2000): 274-275.

<sup>45</sup> Thaddeus, *Frances Burney, A Literary Life*, 109.

<sup>46</sup> Austin, "'All Wove into One,'" 290.

<sup>47</sup> Peter Sabor, "'A kind of Tax on the Public': The Subscription List to Frances Burney's *Camilla*," in *New Windows on a Woman's World: Essays for Jocelyn Harris*, ed. Colin Gibson and Lisa Marr (Dunedin, New Zealand: Department of English, University of Otago, 2005), 1:305.

well as the characters in her novel. In referring to the publisher's sons, Burney draws attention to the male line of descent within these families and, by placing herself within this comparison, displays how women too could manipulate the game of inheritance. As Emma E. Pink has demonstrated, in her decision to publish *Camilla* by subscription, "Burney creates a narrative of her writing life, in which she justifies her authorial activities in terms of her role as a wife and mother."<sup>48</sup> It comes as no surprise, then, that Burney's *Camilla* focusses so prominently on the perils of financial security. In publishing *Camilla* by subscription, and ensuring the profits benefitted her own family, Burney went some way towards rectifying the perils her female characters faced at the whims of inheritance while also pointedly commenting on the precarious nature of relying on family members for a financial legacy.

As the repeated disinheritances in Burney's *Camilla* make clear, women's financial and domestic security was never a dependable certainty. The experiences of Camilla Tyrold and her cousin Indiana Lynmere reveal the fragile nature of women's ties to landed estates, and the pace at which these characters could be written into or out of a bequest was just as much a game of chance as the "long odds and lucky breaks" that drove the rest of the economy. The rest of this chapter now considers the experiences of two real-life dispossessed daughters, Mary and Charlotte Winn. The Winn sisters' disinheritance was twofold – they experienced both the psychological disinheritance that plagued eighteenth-century fiction, as well as the financial insecurity that came with relying on relations for the payment of an annuity. Like Burney's heroines, who are in Claudia L. Johnson's words "severally scuttled from Etherington to Beech Park and back again" depending on the preferences of their uncle, Mary and Charlotte Winn were removed from their home upon the inheritance

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<sup>48</sup> Pink, "Frances Burney's *Camilla*," 64.



of their brother.<sup>49</sup> The discussion that follows explores the various ways in which the Winn sisters negotiated their physical as well as social, financial, and emotional distance from their family and home through the spaces they occupied on paper. As Burney's *Camilla* makes clear, the documentary evidence of these bequests was just as precarious as the whims and caprices of the men that fashioned them. The Winn sisters' paper traces, therefore, articulate a careful understanding of these ambiguities and the survival of their pages is testament to an ongoing attempt to mitigate their distance. What this analysis reveals, is the paradox that these "great disinheritances" in actual fact left countless women almost entirely dependent upon the very family from which they had been severed.

#### Charlotte Winn (1737-1797)

In the context of these varying degrees of textual formality throughout the many instances of disinheritance in Burney's *Camilla*, Mary's and Charlotte Winn's creation of a paper trail to mitigate their distance from Nostell Priory is especially pertinent. Charlotte Winn was the sixth child (and sixth daughter) of nine siblings born to the 4<sup>th</sup> Baronet and his wife Susannah Henshaw, and was her brother Rowland's senior by two years.<sup>50</sup> The letters to her brother remain polite and respectful despite his continued disregard and, while the majority of her extant pages are spent chasing the payment of her annuity, Charlotte continually peppers her accounts with well-wishes and genuine concern for Rowland and his family. Charlotte suffered throughout her life with ill-health, which affected her ability to converse with her brother, and

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<sup>49</sup> Claudia L. Johnson, *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s: Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 151; see also Lynch, *The Economy of Character*, 172.

<sup>50</sup> The Winn family tree can be found in: Bristol, "Families are 'sometimes ... the best at a distance,'" 35.

created financial challenges that added to her precarious living situation.<sup>51</sup> Thirty-eight letters penned by Charlotte are extant in the Nostell archive today; they are well-mannered and endearing but seldom elucidate how she spent her time, the circles that she moved in, or any details of her life outside of the immediate family. Charlotte's negotiation of the appearance of her writing on the page, however, reveals insights that the content of these letters only points to in muted ways. Just as Burney's *Camilla* highlights how inconsistent documentation could obscure women's claims to inheritance, Charlotte Winn used paper to traverse the contours of her "great disinheritance." Charlotte's letters reveal how she negotiated visual and aesthetic understandings of her writing within the composition of her missives, an act which elucidates the wider complexities of her relationship with her brother.

Consistently neat in their form, Charlotte's correspondence mostly adheres to the polite conventions of eighteenth-century letter-writing: they open with well-wishes, seldom extend to more than a page in length, and close by sending love to Rowland, Sabine, and their children. Such formulaic conventions were crucial to maintaining epistolary relationships, as Anni Sairio and Minna Nevala have commented: "writing in the right order [was] ... a sign of politeness towards the recipient."<sup>52</sup> Charlotte's hand remains uniformly tidy despite her ongoing ill health, and it scarcely varies across the thirty-year correspondence she maintained with her brother. Despite this fact, Charlotte repeatedly refers to her penmanship in a negative light. Writing to her sister-in-law on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 1786, for example, Charlotte apologised: "I have little News to Entertain You with so beg you will Excuse the

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>52</sup> Anni Sairio and Minna Nevala, "Social Dimensions of Layout in Eighteenth-Century Letters and Letter-Writing Manuals," *Studies in Variation and Change in English* 14, (2013), [https://varieng.helsinki.fi/series/volumes/14/sairio\\_nevala/](https://varieng.helsinki.fi/series/volumes/14/sairio_nevala/).

Stupidity of this Scraul ... I am scarce able to write.”<sup>53</sup> Likewise, addressing her brother in November 1777 Charlotte penned: “haveing no particular news to entertain you with, I shall not trouble you any longer with my scrawl,” and in June 1783 she reiterated “I have at present no particular News to inform you with, therefore hope you’ll excuse this Stupid Scraul from a poor Invalid who does her best to subscribe herself Dr Bror.”<sup>54</sup> Charlotte’s repeated use of the word “scrawl” is conspicuous here. Reference to the writer’s “scrawl” is likely to appear across any extended eighteenth-century correspondence; given the informality of the term, its use often denotes intimacy between writers, and such phrases can be seen as part of what Diana G. Barnes has termed “an epistolary vocabulary.”<sup>55</sup> Frances Burney, for instance, often employed the word to indicate her being pressed for time (“I instantly scrawled a hasty letter to town,” “I ... find so little opportunity for scrawling letters”) while Elizabeth Montagu evidently understood her “scrawl” to contain a visual element (“I find my bad scrawl led you to an error about y<sup>e</sup> Person to whom y<sup>e</sup> packet was address I made a letter like a U whereas I ought to have made a round O”).<sup>56</sup> That Charlotte’s writing remains consistent despite these assertions of her “scrawl” and inability to write, however, suggests a correlation between her understanding of the appearance of her writing and her motivation for putting pen to paper. In repeatedly critiquing the appearance of her handwriting, Charlotte enacts a sort of epistolary censorship, a

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<sup>53</sup> Charlotte Winn to Sabine Winn, 7 January 1786, WYW1352/1/4/11/1.

<sup>54</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 16 November 1777, WYW1352/1/1/5/6/4; Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 23 June 1783, WYW1352/1/4/37/4.

<sup>55</sup> Diana G. Barnes, “Emotional Debris in Early Modern Letters,” in *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions Through History*, ed. Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway, and Sarah Randles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 115.

<sup>56</sup> Frances Burney, *Diary and Letters of Madame D’Arblay*, ed. Charlotte Ann Burney Frances Broome, Vol. 1, 1778-1780 (London: H. Colburn, 1842), 59, 258; Elizabeth Montagu to Hester Thrale Piozzi, 16 May [1780], Letters from Elizabeth Montagu, Thrale-Piozzi Manuscripts, GB 133 Eng MS 551/7, University of Manchester Library.

variation on Bruce Retford's term "epistolary performance."<sup>57</sup> Even if they did not appear as such, in dubbing her letters as "scrawled" missives Charlotte reduced their worth.

Significantly, Charlotte's declarations of her "scrawled" hand are frequently paired with reference to her inability to command the pen; on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1782 she closed a letter to her brother by apologising "finding my Eye with Writeing still very weak beg you'll excuse this sad Scraul."<sup>58</sup> In pairing her scrawled hand with an incapacity to write, Charlotte's interpretation of her "Scraul" evidently contained, like Montagu's, a visual component – she apologises for her letters' appearance. Rachel Bynoth has exhibited how "admitting faults with the composition of letters," was one of the ways in which these documents "reinforced patriarchal hierarchies within family groups."<sup>59</sup> And Kathryn Shevelow's study of women's letters in the *Spectator* has similarly recognised that these publications "created moral lessons out of types of correspondence stereotypically identified with women" in which a "scrawl" was derogatively female.<sup>60</sup> Shevelow highlights a passage from No. 16 of the periodical:

I have a whole Bundle of Letters in Womens Hands that are full of Blots and Calumnies, insomuch that when I see the Name *Celia, Phillis, Pastora*, or the like, at the Bottom of a Scrawl, I conclude on course that it brings me some Account of a fallen Virgin, a faithless Wife, or an amorous Widow.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Bruce Redford, *The Converse of the Pen: Acts of Intimacy in the Eighteenth-Century Familiar Letter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 2.

<sup>58</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 16 November 1782, WYW1352/1/4/3/13.

<sup>59</sup> Rachel Bynoth, "A Mother Educating her Daughter Remotely through Familia Correspondence: The Letter as a Form of Female Distance Education in the Eighteenth Century," *History* 106, no. 373 (2021): 739.

<sup>60</sup> Kathryn Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture: The Construction of Femininity in the Early Periodical* (London: Routledge, 1989), 113.

<sup>61</sup> "Letter," *The Spectator*, no. 16 (1711): 31. Originally cited in Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture*, 113.

Evidencing these “patriarchal hierarchies,” “scrawl[ed]” handwriting in the *Spectator* viciously refers to the “blots and Calumnies” penned by women. Charlotte’s “scrawls,” therefore, while largely used as a superficial adjective, illustrate the gendered power imbalance between brother and sister.

Scholars have touched upon how eighteenth-century authors might obscure their handwriting in order to disguise their correspondence – Burney famously used a “feigned hand” to communicate with her publisher, and Abigail Williams has shown how Johnathan Swift’s *Journal to Stella* was “made deliberately hard to read in order to create a complicity and closeness.”<sup>62</sup> According to Stacey Sloboda, eighteenth-century copybooks proclaimed that “[n]eat penmanship was considered an especially useful accomplishment for young women” and, as Deborah Heller has noted, “handwriting was regarded as a form of self-presentation.”<sup>63</sup> The attitudes of eighteenth-century writers validate these assertions, and authors regularly described the appearance of handwriting within their missives. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1765, for example, Elizabeth Montagu wrote to Elizabeth Carter commending the handwriting of their fellow bluestocking Elizabeth Vesey (“our Sylph”):

I saw a letter our Sylph wrote the other day to Lord Lyttelton that was full of spirit. I did not know the hand she had so closely masterd her scatterd alphabit, it was really written in join hand. I admired the style, a certain superiority in the manner & askd his Lordship what Lady wrote so admirably well?<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> George Justice, “Burney and the Literary Marketplace,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, ed. Peter Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 149-150; Abigail Williams, ““I Hope to Write as Bad as Ever”: Swift’s *Journal to Stella* and the Intimacy of Correspondence,” *Eighteenth Century Life* 35, no. 1 (2011): 112. See also Abigail Williams, “The Difficulties of Swift’s *Journal to Stella*,” *The Review of English Studies* 62, no. 257 (2011): 758-776.

<sup>63</sup> Stacey Sloboda, “Between the Mind and the Hand: Gender, Art and Skill in Eighteenth-Century Copybooks,” *Women’s Writing* 21, no. 3 (2014): 341; Deborah Heller, “Elizabeth Vesey’s Alien Pen: Autobiography and Handwriting,” *Women’s Writing* 21, no. 3 (2014): 364.

<sup>64</sup> Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Carter, 5 August [1765], Elizabeth Robinson Montagu Papers, mssMO 3149, The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens.

That a discussion of an outsider's handwriting could make its way into a closed correspondence is testament to the importance of the appearance of the written word within these circles and displays the careful attention paid by writers to the layout of script on the page. Distinct in Charlotte's case, however, is the fact that her script does conform to the polite conventions, yet she refuses to credit it as such. In this respect, her remarks on the appearance of her hand can be read as a signifier of wider insecurities surrounding her epistolary relationship with her brother. The way Charlotte refers to her scrawl for instance is often weighted with negative emotion; she condemns "the Stupidity of this Scraul," her "Stupid Scraul," and "sad Scraul." While Charlotte's comments are largely superficial, her repeated use of the term scrawl is indicative of how language associated with the appearance of letters can shed light on wider epistolary relationships.<sup>65</sup> If handwriting was a form of "self-presentation," then Charlotte's perfect "scrawl" is indicative of her uneasy and self-conscious attitude towards conversing with Rowland.

Crucially, Charlotte's references to untidy script only appear when her letters do not relate any noteworthy information. Each of her apologies are paired with regrets at not reporting any news; the "Stupidity" of her "Scraul" is a product of having "little News to Entertain ... with." As such, it appears that Charlotte and Rowland's epistolary relationship was one centred around necessity. Charlotte only deemed her writing neat if it detailed important information, regardless of the physical appearance of her hand. As Lindsay O'Neill has identified, the distribution of news within eighteenth-century letters was a key element of their purpose: "[c]orrespondents

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<sup>65</sup> In a similar vein Amanda Vickery's study of the vocabulary surrounding descriptions of wallpaper, concludes that individuals "were adept in applying their everyday language of aesthetic discrimination in very precise ways to ... particular visual characteristics." Amanda Vickery, "'Neat and Not Too Showey': Words and Wallpaper in Regency England," in *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830*, ed. John Styles and Amanda Vickery (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2007), 219.

usually placed news at the end of a letter, as though it was an expected component, but one divorced from the letter's initial purpose."<sup>66</sup> Charlotte apologises, then, because her letters stray from the norm. If, as Susan Whyman writes, "the epistolary balance between self-expression and controlled use of norms tipped towards more freedom" in the eighteenth century, then Charlotte's lack of news should not be a problem.<sup>67</sup> That it is, though, and to such an extent as to alter the aesthetic understanding of her writing, demonstrates how Charlotte and Rowland's correspondence was impersonal, detached and anonymous – it reserves no room for individualism and represents the lack of intimacy between the pair.

Conversely, on the occasion when Charlotte's handwriting does appear to change, she makes no reference to this. During the October-November of 1783, Charlotte sent Rowland a set of four letters detailing their aunt's poor state of health.<sup>68</sup> Two of the letters in this collection, however, were most likely penned by a scribe; they pay little resemblance to the usual appearance of Charlotte's hand. Figure 1.1, for instance, is typical of Charlotte's missives. This letter, dated the 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1783, was written just three days prior to the letter depicted in Figure 1.2, which displays a different script entirely. Both letters are nonetheless signed "Ever Affectionate Sister Char<sup>tt</sup> Winn."<sup>69</sup> Beyond obvious changes in handwriting, there are also several stylistic changes between this scribal hand and Charlotte's normal papers. Flourishes on the letter "d," dashes at the end of shorter lines, and the use of the older style letter "e," all point toward this second missive being written by someone other than Charlotte

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<sup>66</sup> Lindsay O'Neill, *The Opened Letter: Networking in the Early Modern British World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 171.

<sup>67</sup> Susan Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 21.

<sup>68</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 17 October 1783, WYW1352/1/1/5/6/6; Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 2 November 1783, WYW1352/1/1/5/6/7; Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 4 November 1783, WYW1352/1/4/1/48; Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 10 November 1783, WYW1352/1/4/1/47.

<sup>69</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 17 October 1783, WYW1352/1/1/5/6/6.

herself – a scribe with a much more traditional epistolary education, or someone much older.<sup>70</sup> Contrary to her previous “scrawls,” in this instance when Charlotte’s writing is clearly different, and especially so to a family member, she makes no mention of its appearance – or indeed that the letter was written by anyone else at all. What these two letters do convey, however, is important news: Charlotte discusses her dismay at her aunt’s not acquainting “family ... first” in regard to her illness, and writes to Rowland that “I dont think it right you should be kept in the Dark.”<sup>71</sup> When read in line with her repeated apologies for untidy script as a consequence of her lack of news, it seems Charlotte does not reference the appearance of her handwriting in these letters because she does not need to excuse her correspondence; these letters are necessary and, incidentally, newsworthy. Likewise, the more traditional script and the fact that the scribe was most likely male, adds a certain level of authority to Charlotte’s writing here, one that her own hand does not ordinarily convey. These factors, alongside Charlotte’s references to her “scrawl” in letters that present no difference in neatness but do consist of more trivial content, display how she employed aesthetic understandings on the composition of her letters as a sort of epistolary censorship – a means of traversing the unpredictability of her brother’s communication.

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<sup>70</sup> WYW1352/1/4/1/48 is appended with a letter written in the same hand signed by a James Coxeter, suggesting he was the one acting as Charlotte’s scribe. Coxeter is also mentioned in Charlotte’s will indicating a close relationship between the two and worked for the Bank of England, which would attest to his more traditional style of handwriting. See: Will of Charlotte Winn, Spinster of Saint Marylebone, Middlesex, 28 April 1797, PROB Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/1290/22, The National Archives, Kew; *Declaration of the Merchants, Bankers, Traders, and Other Inhabitants of London, made at Grocers’ Hall, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1795* [...] (London: Philanthropic Reform, 1795), 35; Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 4 November 1783, WYW1352/1/4/1/48.

<sup>71</sup> Charlotte to Rowland, 14 October 1783, WYW1352/1/4/37/5.



W2101352/1/4/31/5

Wigmore. 14<sup>th</sup> Oct: 1783

Ans: 4:19<sup>th</sup> 1783

Many thanks to my D<sup>r</sup> D<sup>r</sup> Brother for his last kind & Friendly Letter of the 29<sup>th</sup> of Sept: w<sup>ch</sup> I am now happy in acknowledging with the greatest Gratitude, particularly for your great goodness & attentiveness to me, in having the kindness in Paying M<sup>r</sup>: Burford the Draught for my Money immediately upon its being Due, w<sup>ch</sup> indeed at this time is very acceptable, but did not receive the Draught from M<sup>r</sup>: Burford till Friday last or certainly sh<sup>d</sup>: not have omitted acquainting you with the Reception sooner, but was sorry to find I had omitted Drawing my Draught now according to a late Act of Parliament, w<sup>ch</sup> took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Sep<sup>r</sup>: but believe me D<sup>r</sup> Bro<sup>r</sup>: it was not from forgetfulness, for I mention'd that Circumstance before it was wrote I was told that Act was not much attended too, & that a many people objected to it, so far as to make many other Bills and Receipts pass on other papers without being Stamp'd, & that there can't be a second Demand, without the receiver forswears themselves but for future security, another time I will certainly remember, and have now bought a Set of Stamp'd papers for that Use. I got into my new Habitation about a Fortnight agoe & it appears to me as if

Figure 1.1. Letter from Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 14<sup>th</sup> October 1783, written in her usual hand.



A. 5. 6. 6  
and = 20<sup>th</sup> Oct = 1783

Dear Brother,

Having wrote you last week  
you will be surprized at hearing from me so soon,  
but am desirous of communicating to you a  
piece of intelligence received yesterday —  
I believe my last mentioned my Aunt's Indis-  
-position — since which, on my being informed  
that she was dangerously ill, & that two  
Expreses had been sent to Sir George, —  
my fears were greatly alarmed — I sent my  
compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> Huxter (who I under-  
-stand is with my Aunt every day) and  
requested the favor of her to call on me.  
She was so Obliging as to call this Day,  
and inform me that my Aunt was suddenly  
disorder'd in her head and continues in a  
state of Inanity, throwing away her Money,  
having taken it into her head that the

Figure 1.2. Letter from Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 17<sup>th</sup> October 1783,  
written in a different hand.

The aftermath of Charlotte’s “great disinheritance” is visually and textually imprinted on her pages, and these papers document both her “cutting loose” from the family and her attempt to mitigate this. While Charlotte’s voice remains sporadic in the Nostell archive and with little in the way of a comprehensive record, an exploration of the form of these papers illuminates a more complex narrative surrounding the Winn siblings’ relationship and the extent of Charlotte’s distance from the family. The relatively small scale of Charlotte’s paper trail does not deter from its existence, and these papers can be understood as material footprints of the years following her exit from the Nostell estate. The sensitivity Charlotte paid to her script communicates her awareness of the precarious status she held.

#### Mary Winn (1736-1800)

Mary Winn was one year Charlotte’s senior, and three years older than her brother Rowland, the 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet.<sup>72</sup> Much more headstrong and independent than her sister, Mary never had any qualms about reproaching her brother for his ineptitudes; her feisty personality appears to have cost her a relationship with many of her siblings and she went a number of years without speaking to Charlotte despite the solidarity offered by their shared situation. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Mary’s papers display a much more explicit use of their materiality as a means of negotiating a relationship with her brother and it is in explicitly occupying these textual spaces that Mary elected to counter her “great disinheritance.”

Whereas Charlotte consistently adheres to letter-writing conventions, Mary dramatically alters the layout of her page to accentuate her reasons for writing. In the

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<sup>72</sup> Bristol, “Families are ‘sometimes ... the best at a distance,’” 44.

cases where she reproaches Rowland for the ever-late payment of her annuity, for example, Mary alters the form of her letters to ensure her requests are not overlooked. In one instance, dated the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1766, merely a year after the death of their father and Rowland's subsequent inheritance of the estate, Mary uses the second sheet of her letter to provide a detailed breakdown of the money she is owed (see Figure 1.3). "According to your desire" she writes, "I have sent on the other side of this Letter an exact account [of] how our affairs stand between us."<sup>73</sup> That this missive was specifically requested by Rowland instantly indicates a level of distrust between the pair. But more than this, in providing a breakdown of costs Mary uses the form and layout of her letter to interrupt and displace the social and informal nature of how siblings were expected to correspond. Letters were fundamental to maintaining familial ties and, as Amy Harris has noted, "[I]ove or fondness was meaningless without ... affectionate expressions in deed and in spoken and written word."<sup>74</sup> Far from a relaxed or respectful conversation between brother and sister, Mary's epistolary accounts display formality, organisation, and an awareness of her brother's (poor) financial management. As James Daybell asserts, such manipulations "are fundamental to the material rhetorics of the manuscript page."<sup>75</sup> In providing a clear and organised breakdown of finances, Mary uses the "material rhetorics" of her page to accentuate what she is owed, thereby ensuring these sums are not buried within the polite formula of a conventional letter. In granting distinct textual space to the specifics of her entitlement, Mary evokes some of the anxieties highlighted in the plot of *Camilla*, wherein a lack of documentary clarity perpetuated ambiguities surrounding

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<sup>73</sup> Mary Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 30 August c. 1766, WYW1352/1/4/2/60.

<sup>74</sup> Amy Harris, *Siblinghood and Social Relations in Georgian England: Share and Share Alike* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 67.

<sup>75</sup> James Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practice of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 2.

women's inheritance. In ensuring these sums are at the fore of her missive, Mary takes ownership of the paper trail of her entitlement and clarifies these intricacies in material form. Just as Charlotte's adherence to polite epistolary standards is symptomatic of her and Rowland's lack of intimacy, Mary's fiscal missives allude to a business-like exchange in the place of sibling affection.

Whud is due to me		£	s <sup>d</sup>
My Original Fortune	-----	3714	5, 8 ½
August 23 <sup>rd</sup> 1765 to Dec: 1766 a years Interest	-----	148	11, 5
The Bond	-----	500	0, 0
From Sept: 1765 to June the 16 <sup>th</sup> 1766 3 quarters Interest	-----	15	0, 0
Sept: 1765 to June the 16 <sup>th</sup> 1766 3 quarters Interest	-----	37	10, 0
My Uncles Legacy	-----		

Received of my Brother		£	s <sup>d</sup>
April the 14 <sup>th</sup> 1766 the Sum of	-----	20	0, 0
May 1766 my Brother had Received for me	-----	20	0, 0
		40	0, 0

Figure 1.3. Letter from Mary Winn to Rowland Winn providing a breakdown of the money she is owed, 30<sup>th</sup> August c. 1766.

Mary's use of the form of her letters in this way was evidently efficacious, and such a statement appears to have noticeably irritated Rowland. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 1773, following a lengthy account of the difficulty she faced in receiving her annuity, Mary wrote:

...in your last Letter I received from you, you told me you never hear from me, but when y~~ou~~ want Money, I do confess it it is very true, but the reason of my <sup>not</sup> troubling you <sup>with</sup> any of my Scrawls was because I use to write both to yourself & my Sister and they were never answer'd so thought they were not acceptable.<sup>76</sup>

It is evident, therefore, that Mary consciously altered the form of her letters because those of a social nature seldom received a reply. In the same way that Charlotte's understanding of her handwriting alludes to an epistolary relationship centred around necessity, Mary's manipulation of the form of her letters can be read as a means of distinguishing between those that required an answer and those of a mere "social nature." Moreover, Mary's use of the term "scrawl" alludes to a similar aesthetic understanding of her writing as her sister; that it is specifically the "scrawls" that do not receive a reply substantiates Charlotte's distinction between writing that provides information and that which does not. Thus, Mary's letters likewise reveal the one-sided and strained epistolary relationship she and Rowland shared, wherein the idealised affability of a sibling correspondence made way for necessity and transaction.

Ever the more headstrong and confrontational of the pair, Mary also used the materiality of her letters in more explicit ways – to bolster or reinforce their contents. Rowland's ongoing hostility had lasting consequences on the Winn sisters, and they remained unwelcome at Nostell even once their nephew (another Rowland) inherited the estate in 1785. During the latter years of her life, Mary rekindled a relationship with her niece, Esther Sabina, who had also been banished from the estate on account

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<sup>76</sup> Mary Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 23 January 1773, WYW1352/1/4/3/30.

of her elopement with the family baker.<sup>77</sup> This renewed friendship materialises in the form of a small cache of seventeen letters, spanning the years 1797-1799. These letters are penned by Mary and addressed to her niece, and plot the pair's disputes with the 6<sup>th</sup> Baronet and his widowed mother. This correspondence not only displays how Mary's resentment, and indeed dispossession, endured long after her brother's death, but it also reveals how "the Malice ... of the family," to use Mary's phrase, was experienced by generations to follow.<sup>78</sup>

Particularly evident in this set of letters is Mary's manipulation of the material qualities of her paper. Writing on the death of her sister-in-law Sabine in 1798, Mary acknowledged her choice to disregard using black wax to seal her letter:

You will be surprised to see I have Not Cealed this Letter with Black Wax, but Sir Rowland has not thought [it] proper to acknowledge any of us as his Relations by not ordering his Steward to write to acquaint us of his Mother's death, which is always done to the most distant Relation when such an Event takes place in a family.<sup>79</sup>

The sealing of letters with black wax or a black wafer, alongside black gilding, was a common and expected process of mourning and appears in letter-writing manuals well into the nineteenth century.<sup>80</sup> This material action was both a mark of respect and a physical signifier used to delineate the contents of the letter – such signs spoke to the receiver prior to their opening the post, and in many ways communicated the brunt of the missive more so than the words on the page. Elizabeth Montagu protested angrily

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<sup>77</sup> Bristol, "Families are 'sometimes ... the best at a distance,'" 63.

<sup>78</sup> Mary Winn to Esther Sabina Williamson, 3 December c. 1797, WYW1352/1/4/36/6.

<sup>79</sup> Mary Winn to Esther Sabina Williamson, [1798], WYW1352/1/4/36/4.

<sup>80</sup> Sue Walker, "The Manners of the Page: Prescription and Practice in the Visual Organization of Correspondence," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 66, no. 3-4 (2003): 327. See also Joe Nickell, *Pen, Ink, & Evidence: A Study of Writing and Writing Materials for the Penman, Collector, and Document Detective* (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2000), 89-91.



at the sight of black wax on a letter from Elizabeth Carter in 1765, speaking to the emotional weight that such material markers carried:

I grow very uneasy about you before I had y<sup>r</sup> letter, & y<sup>r</sup> black wax frightend me sadly. Pray never seal with black wax for any distant relation till you have told me to prepare for it. I guesd y<sup>r</sup> Uncle, but I could hardly open y<sup>r</sup> letter for fear of some nearer relation to you being y<sup>e</sup> occasion of y<sup>e</sup> frightfull black.<sup>81</sup>

Mary's choice to disregard using the "frightfull black" then, only serves to bolster her contempt for the 6<sup>th</sup> Baronet. Indeed, when read in line with the rest of her correspondence, it is clear that this was an incisive action. Mary does use a black seal, for instance, in other letters informing her niece of Charlotte's death and the passing of her great aunt.<sup>82</sup> On the death of her sister-in-law however, Mary is explicit in renouncing these conventions: "not knowing by any other means than a paragraph in the News paper which mention[ed] such a day died at Nostell Lady Winn ... that was all we have of it, so in course ... none of us put on Mourning."<sup>83</sup> Conscious of her decision, Mary used the materiality of her letter to reaffirm her bitterness about being marginalised in family news and affairs and communicates to her niece's "material literacy" as well as the written word.<sup>84</sup> This action adds a certain finality to the decades-long animosity between Mary and the Nostell family. This statement, occurring almost thirty years after her initial banishment from the estate and over ten

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<sup>81</sup> Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Carter, 23 [June 1765], Elizabeth Robinson Montagu Papers, mssMO 3145, The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens.

<sup>82</sup> See for example Mary Winn to Esther Sabine Williamson, 3 May 1797, WYW1352/1/4/36/14; Mary Winn to Esther Sabine Williamson, 15 September [1797], WYW1352/1/4/38/19.

<sup>83</sup> Mary Winn to Esther Sabina Williamson, [1798], WYW1352/1/4/36/4.

<sup>84</sup> My understanding of this phrase stems from the work of Serena Dyer and Chloe Wigston Smith see: Serena Dyer, "Barbara Johnson's Album: Material Literacy and Consumer Practice, 1746-1823," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42, no. 3 (2019): 263-282; Serena Dyer and Chloe Wigston Smith, "Introduction," in *Material Literacy in Eighteenth-Century Britain: A Nation of Makers*, ed. Serena Dyer and Chloe Wigston Smith (New York: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2020), 1-16; Daybell also alludes to a similar understanding writing of "the range of literacies (written, visual and oral) associated with letter-writing," Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England*, 16.



years since her brother's death, was a deliberate manipulation of the material culture surrounding mourning, an irreversible statement closing the affair. Much more poignant than the instances discussed above, Mary's refusal to respectfully acknowledge the death of her sister-in-law confirms just how soured relations had turned, marking her agonising years of torment through the space she occupied on paper.

An exploration of the broader paratexts of this set of letters is equally as revealing about Mary's lasting dispossession from her family. Her use of postscripts, for example, reveals the ongoing consequences of her banishment from Nostell on her ability to settle in the years to follow. Postscripts hold an ambiguous place in the body of the letter; appearing after the signature they are inherently distinct from the missive itself, on par instead with "the dating formula" that begins the document.<sup>85</sup> But as Fay Bound notes, these appendages could also be seen as intimate salutations giving "an impression of unwillingness to part with a lover, or of emotional expression being unable to be contained by the parameters of the text."<sup>86</sup> Susan Whyman has also discussed how such additions can indicate the writer belonging to a certain social or religious group; Quaker postscripts for example largely display "spiritual love instead of [the more common] 'humble services.'"<sup>87</sup> Postscripts, therefore, while detached from the letter and often sparse in their content, have the potential to reveal hidden information about their author.

Mary's postscripts in the cache of letters addressed to her niece expose how she endured a permanent state of homelessness after her departure from Nostell. These additions play a purely functional role and mainly consist of directions and instructions

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<sup>85</sup> Daybell, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England*, 12.

<sup>86</sup> Fay Bound, "Writing the Self? Love and the Letter in England, c. 1660-c. 1760," *Literature and History* 11, no. 1 (2002): 9.

<sup>87</sup> Whyman, *The Pen and the People*, 151.

for where (and to who) Esther Sabina should direct her replies. Across the total of seventeen letters, Mary added a postscript detailing her location to fourteen and out of these fourteen postscripts, which span a mere two years, she provides six different addresses. These can be particularly lengthy inserts such as the postscript added to a letter from the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1798 in which Mary wrote “Direct your Letter for me at Mrs Fetherstones on the Cliff Scarbrough Yorkshire,” or to the one dated the 30<sup>th</sup> of August the same year: “If you answer this in the Course of a Fortnight, your Letter will find me at Sr George Stricklands Bar<sup>t</sup> at Boynton, near Malton, Yorkshire.”<sup>88</sup> Where more brief postscripts exist, such as that added to a letter dated May the 23<sup>rd</sup> c. 1797 which simply notes “Maddox Street,” they are paired with supplementary instructions for postage in the body of the missive itself: “do give me a line under Cover to Sir George Allenson Winn Road Lower Brook Street London.”<sup>89</sup> Across this set of letters, Mary’s repeated use of her postscript to provide address instructions alludes to a nomadic lifestyle and lack of a fixed and permanent home. These additions corroborate Perry’s dispossessed daughters as occupying a “temporary, partial and burdensome” place in their family home, and speak to the enduring impact of disinheritance on the lives of dependent women.

For Mary, these multiple addresses are especially poignant given the fact that, by this point in her life, she had been banished from Nostell for longer than she had lived there. Many scholars have written on the importance of a fixed address to constructions of identity; beyond providing a “myriad [of] social privileges” it was also the site of self-expression.<sup>90</sup> To return to Beth Cortese’s acknowledgement of the

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<sup>88</sup> Mary Winn to Esther Sabina Williamson, 19 September 1798, WYW1352/1/4/36/3; Mary Winn to Esther Sabina Williamson, 30 August [1798], WYW1352/1/4/36/7.

<sup>89</sup> Mary Winn to Esther Sabine Williamson, 23 May [1797], WYW1352/1/4/36/2.

<sup>90</sup> Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 6.

moral uses of disinherited daughters in eighteenth-century fiction, in which “daughters ... [were taught] to create their own comfortable marital home following the loss of their family home and its connection to their identity,” it is evident that kinship identity was replaced with spousal identity through the move from one home to another.<sup>91</sup> In never marrying, however, Mary was not afforded such privileges – her identity remained tied to Nostell Priory, her “family home.” Consequently, Mary’s use of her postscripts to provide frequent updates regarding her address symbolises not only her displacement from the Nostell family and its epistolary network, but also alludes to the restraints this placed on her sense of identity.

Richard Terry has demonstrated how postscripts were “inevitably bound up with an author’s self-consciousness about concluding or failing to conclude.”<sup>92</sup> In this respect, it is possible to read Mary’s additions as symptomatic of her broader melancholy at not having a permanent home. As she lamented on June the 23<sup>rd</sup> c. 1799, less than a year before her death:

I went to Bath in the Spring, and passed five Weeks there, and was only Just returned to this place when I received your Letter, since that time I have been in a very unsettled state, wishing very much to settle in Yorkshire, and nothing can I hear of, that is likely to suit me so am obliged to continue in a ready furnished House in Exmouth, without many comforts about me, which I have been accustom’d to, there is nothing like a place of ones own, and there is a pleasure in having every thing neat.<sup>93</sup>

Mary’s regular provisioning of directions in her postscripts, then, not only serves as a reminder of her distance and exclusion from the family but also exposes the impact

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<sup>91</sup> Cortese, “Home Economics,” 140.

<sup>92</sup> Richard Terry, “‘P.S.’: The Dangerous Logic of the Postscript in Eighteenth-Century Literature,” *The Modern Language Review* 109, no. 1 (2014): 41.

<sup>93</sup> Mary Winn to Sabina Williamson, 23 June 1799, WYW1352/1/4/36/17.

this had on her emotional state. With geographical distance came emotional distance, and Mary died before fulfilling her wish to “settle in Yorkshire.” Despite stating in her will that “I should prefer being interred in the family vault in Wragby church,” Mary’s displacement from her family was permanently established when, in June 1800, she was buried in Exmouth, Devon.<sup>94</sup> That even formal declarations such as this could be disregarded when it came to women’s last wishes resonates with the precarious methods of documentation in Burney’s *Camilla*; even when written in testament, these wishes were never guaranteed. While Mary’s postscripts are brief and detached from the body of the letter, these small inserts provide the emotional context and substantiation to her final request to be “interred in the family vault in Wragby church,” going some way towards plotting how she spent the final years of her life.

### Epistolary Afterlives

Thus far, this chapter has shown how the physical form and material vocabulary of the Winn sisters’ letters yield numerous insights into the strains and tensions of their relationship with their brother, alluding to the methods the sisters used to manoeuvre their disinheritance from the Nostell estate. These readings reveal how both Mary and Charlotte relied on the exchange of paper to maintain and negotiate their emotional, social and financial proximity to their parental home. But in spite of their ongoing and lasting exclusion from the family, the fact remains that the sisters’ papers are extant within the Nostell archive today; Mary and Charlotte are very much a part of the manuscript legacy of their family, even if their lived experience was far from this. In contrast, therefore, to the numerous undocumented alterations to Sir

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<sup>94</sup> Will of Mary Winn, Spinster of Littleham, Devon, 10 June 1800, PROB Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/1344/53, The National Archives, Kew.

Hugh's will throughout the plot of Burney's *Camilla*, the Winn sisters' letters are themselves written evidence of their disinheritance. The survival of these papers permits accountability to their original position in the family and are in effect a lasting memorialisation of their writing lives. With this in mind, my analysis now turns to the afterlives of these texts, exploring the journey such pages took after they were posted. Here, I address superscriptions and additions outside of the body of the letter: hallmarks such as postal stamps, added labels, and catalogue markings all expose the enduring legacy of these papers. Through these additions, it is possible to piece together the wider contours of Mary's and Charlotte's status in the family – their letters received the home at Nostell that the sisters were long denied.

As has been established, Rowland's epistolary relationship with his sisters was irregular and often far from cordial: the state in which Mary's and Charlotte's letters remain in the Nostell archive only serves to reinforce this. Across approximately a third of the sisters' letters is an annotation in Rowland's hand, appearing on the envelope or on the header of their pages. These are marginal notes at best and take the form of reminders, such as "Miss M- Winns Letter from London Aug<sup>st</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> 1766" or "Answer'd this Letter y<sup>e</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>br</sup> 1770."<sup>95</sup> The most common of these labels is Rowland's note as to whether he replied to his sisters or not. This inscription, though brief, holds numerous insights. More consistent with his dates than his sisters, Rowland often provides information otherwise unknown. Likewise, in cases where Mary and Charlotte do recall the date of their writing, Rowland's inscription, alongside the postmark, reveal the length of time it took for their letters to arrive and be replied to. Markman Ellis has made use of such "metadata" to analyse Elizabeth Montagu's

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<sup>95</sup> Mary Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 30 August 1766, WYW1352/1/4/2/60; Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 10 October 1770, WYW1352/1/4/2/27.

letter collection, shedding light on how such marks can plot a letter's journey.<sup>96</sup> In a similar vein, such additions on the Winn sisters' letters provide a real-time perspective to their correspondence. Rowland's longest absence, for example, occurred in 1783. Charlotte wrote to her brother on "July 15<sup>th</sup>," but Rowland's memorandum indicates that he left her unanswered for almost six weeks: "Ans<sup>d</sup> [on the] 25<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>st</sup> 1783."<sup>97</sup> While the postmark is not clear (see Figure 1.4), it does indicate that this letter was in transit on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, or 18<sup>th</sup> of July, meaning Rowland postponed answering his sister for a period of almost forty days. Even for Rowland, this was an exceptionally long time; his labels suggest on average it took him a week to reply. Once such markers are contextualised with the sisters' constant pleas for a regular correspondence, Rowland's labelling serves to exhibit his less than reliable epistolary practices and his emotional distance from his siblings – replying to their letters was not a priority.



Figure 1.4. Postmark on a letter from Charlotte Winn, 15<sup>th</sup> July 1783.

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<sup>96</sup> Markman Ellis, "Letters, Organization, and the Archive in Elizabeth Montagu's Correspondence," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (2018): 624.

<sup>97</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 15 July 1783, WYW1352/1/4/37/3.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet's labelling can also be read as a signifier of his detached relationship with his sisters – an “unnecessary burden,” as Wollstonecraft put it. The label on a letter from Charlotte dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1782 for example, while answered just five days after it was written, was marked “Ans<sup>d</sup> by T: Taylor 28<sup>th</sup> March 1782.”<sup>98</sup> The “T: Taylor” referred to here was the Baronet's steward, hired to monitor the administrative running of the estate such as tenancies and leases. In this instance, Charlotte's letter laments her brother's lack of reply to at least four of her previous missives: “I hope you rec:<sup>d</sup> within these last 6 Months the 4 Letters I have wrote to you ... none of which you have been so kind in favouring me with an Answer.”<sup>99</sup> That this one was answered by Rowland's agent can only have increased the distance between the siblings, and in her next reply Charlotte makes this very point:

Dr Bro<sup>r</sup>[,] By a Letter I received from your Steward Mr Tho<sup>s</sup> Taylor dated the 28<sup>th</sup> of March last past he inform'd me by your Orders, that you had been in so poor a state of Health & so much Afflicted with the Gout all the Winter that you had seldom been able to make use of a Pen or do any Business w<sup>ch</sup> he said was the Case at the time that he wrote.<sup>100</sup>

That Charlotte notes Rowland's reply was written directly from Taylor (“he inform'd me by your Orders”) and not just in his hand, demonstrates that Rowland was not simply using his steward as a scribe, but rather to read and reply to his sister's correspondence. In this case it was Rowland's ill-health that prevented him replying but, when read in line with the overwhelming lack of a regular correspondence, these replies signal the sisters' emotional as well as geographical distance from the estate. Given that stewards were hired to deal with the business-like aspects of running the

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<sup>98</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 23 March 1782, WYW1352/1/1/5/6/5.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 23 April 1782, WYW1352/1/4/2/75.

country house, Taylor's replies suggests that Rowland treated his sisters' letters as a duty and obligation, rather than with the intimacy of a familial correspondence. As Diana G. Barnes has made clear, "the autograph letter was viewed as more intimate and familiar than one produced with the assistance of a secretary."<sup>101</sup> Mary's and Charlotte's missives were directed and responded to on account of their economic rather than emotional worth. This exchange also evidences how distance between siblings could stem from wider inequalities surrounding gender and property – Rowland's position as the household patriarch evidently outweighed his more informal, familial relationship with his sisters. Taylor's replies are an inevitable by-product of the patriarchal structure of the country house. As noted above, it is not necessarily the act of using a scribe that was the problem here; when Charlotte used a scribe it is purely to dictate her script and, unlike her brother, she regularly continues to write through periods of ill-health. Rowland though, with the estate and its staff at his disposal, was afforded the luxury of domestic service. In this respect, unavoidable inequalities surrounding gender and property could invariably increase the distance, and hostility, between brother and sister.

That his sisters' letters were treated as business transactions rather than domestic correspondence is also evident in cases where Rowland's labels are more detailed. On a letter dated the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1766, Rowland added a note on the envelope that reads "My Sister Mary Winns Letter from London of the 30<sup>th</sup> dec<sup>r</sup> 1766. With My Answer from Nostell Jan<sup>ry</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 1767, and Ned's Rec<sup>d</sup> for One Hundred Pounds w<sup>ch</sup> I have delivered to My Sister Mary Winn."<sup>102</sup> In this case, Rowland's extra-detailed label implies that this letter contributes to his account keeping; he uses

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<sup>101</sup> Barnes, "Emotional Debris in Early Modern Letters," 123.

<sup>102</sup> Mary Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 30 December 1766, WYW1352/1/4/2/40.



the page to briefly log the comings and goings of his money. Likewise, a label added to a letter from Charlotte on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 1775 recalls similar information: Rowland adds “Nov<sup>r</sup> y<sup>e</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> 1775 Answer’d & at same time sent a Draft for Value of £48 5<sup>d</sup>.”<sup>103</sup> Through these additions, Mary’s and Charlotte’s letters come to resemble the more transactional papers in the Nostell archive rather than the familial ones – none of Rowland’s letters from Sabine contain any kind of label, while those relating to purchases for the house and estate do. In reading these labels it is clear Rowland framed his epistolary relationship with his sisters as an administrative exchange; his ordering and annotations indicate that Mary and Charlotte were legally and transactionally tied to the house but detached from its emotional core. While documentary ambiguity plagued the disinheritances in *Camilla*, it is the formality of the additions to the Winn sisters’ paper traces that reveal their psychological “cutting loose” from their family home. Still dependent from their brother financially, Rowland disinherited Mary and Charlotte from the emotional and familial structure of the Nostell estate.

While the sisters’ letters affirm their permanent removal from Nostell Priory, the fact these papers remain part of its archive indicate the longevity of such documents – indeed, that the letters are labelled at all attests to some interaction with these pages beyond the point they were received. Nostell Priory’s archive is vast and in 1776 Rowland commissioned Robert Adam to create a “room for keeping the family writings”; the product of this commission is the muniments room, which is extant in the house today (albeit empty).<sup>104</sup> Such alterations, alongside the fact Mary and

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<sup>103</sup> Charlotte Winn to Rowland Winn, 5<sup>th</sup> Baronet, 17 October 1775, WYW1352/1/4/3/21.

<sup>104</sup> Memorandum for Mr Adam, listing work to be completed at Nostell Priory, August 1776, WYW1352/3/3/1/5/2/20. See also: “The Nostell Priory Muniment Bookcases – circa 1776,” NT 959803, National Trust Collections, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed October 4, 2022, <http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/959803>; “The Nostell Priory Muniment Bookcases

Charlotte were accustomed to receiving letters written by their brother's steward (who it is likely would have worked in the muniments room), suggests the sisters' letters were stored in this space. As Dena Goodman has shown, changes in the use of eighteenth-century furniture sought to distance men's and women's writing, not to merge them. Gentlemen enjoyed larger writing spaces "when engaged not in the leisure of writing familiar letters but in the work of the pen," in contrast to women's "small writing desk[s]."<sup>105</sup> At Nostell though, it seems that women's papers could be found within and amongst the much more masculine estate papers that made up the rest of the muniments room: extant labels on the bookcases include "steward annual accounts and papers relative to the same." Pigeonhole labels such as "Lettres et Papiers d'Affaires dans la Suisse" also suggest that the papers of Sabine (Rowland's Swiss wife) were similarly preserved in this room.<sup>106</sup> Nostell's muniments room was used for storing the family papers up until their removal to the county archives in the 1980s, a fact which perhaps accounts for the survival of the eighteenth-century labels. And, while the discovery of papers in much more unconventional locations (under floorboards, library fractures) suggests that archival preservation was not the family's utmost priority, the residual paint traces of the pink, white, and green Robert Adam decorative scheme alongside gilt lettering on the inside of the extant bookcases suggest this room was significantly esteemed in the eighteenth century. That Mary's and Charlotte's letters may have appeared together with those relating directly to estate management, in a location that was evidently of important value, demonstrates how

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– circa 1776," NT 959804, National Trust Collections, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed October 4, 2022, <http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/959804>.

<sup>105</sup> Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 229.

<sup>106</sup> Megan Wheeler, "The Nostell Priory Muniment Bookcases – circa 1776," National Trust Collections, last updated 2017, accessed October 7, 2022, <https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/959803>.

women's papers could coexist alongside those of a more formal and masculine nature, within the prized walls of the house itself. Susan Whyman, in the context of the Verneys at Clayton House, has revealed how letters, when retained for prolonged periods of time in the family home, continued "functioning as a legacy, shaping, not just reflecting, a family ethos," "[l]ong after their genesis."<sup>107</sup> The longevity of the sisters' letters at the site from which they were long excluded from, therefore, affords them a retrospective legacy within the family through the paper mementos they left behind.

In objectively logging his sister's correspondence, the Baronet elevated the status of Mary's and Charlotte's papers above that of a letter; their writings were instead kept, stored, and inherited as important, account-like documents and, though emotionally and geographically removed, the sisters remained present textually in the muniments room. As James Daybell has noted, such letters "were "monumentalized," considered worthy of preservation, and assumed a particular status within the household."<sup>108</sup> In this context, Mary's and Charlotte's paper traces exist not only within the masculine realm of estate management, but also within the patrilineal ancestry of the family name. The Adam bookcases and the fashionably-decorated muniments room provided an architectural spotlight for these papers – celebrating their existence for future generations at the same time as their preservation. Paradoxically then, it is through their brother's impersonal archiving that the sisters have gained a place in their family's history, despite their ongoing emotional and familial displacement. Like the lack of documentation in Burney's *Camilla* which

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<sup>107</sup> Susan Whyman, "Paper Visits': The Post-Restoration Letter as Seen through the Verney Family Archive," in *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1699-1945*, ed. Rebecca Earle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 25.

<sup>108</sup> James Daybell, "Gendered Archival Practices," in *Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain*, ed. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2016), 214.

effectively removed the details of Camilla's and Indiana's inheritance, the existence of a methodised system of sorting and housing Mary's and Charlotte's papers affords them a paper legacy in spite of the dispossession they experienced during their own lifetimes.

That Mary's and Charlotte's papers remain within the Nostell collection despite the displacement they experienced during their lifetime is testament to the importance of understanding the material page. As Leonie Hannan asserts, letters "linked women to ... 'spaces' or networks of exchange," even those from which they were excluded.<sup>109</sup> The papers discussed in this chapter, while illustrating the Winn sisters' persistent exclusion from their home, were also the very sites of their attachment to it. These pages provided Mary and Charlotte with a space to negotiate their proximity to the country house while also exposing the wider privileges and precarities surrounding the survival of such documents. Indeed, these patchy narratives embody the ambiguous and often-strained nature of single women's experiences of the country house. When valued for their material as well as textual insights, such narratives are not necessarily as sparse as they may first appear, and fragmented archives such as those of Mary and Charlotte Winn, can be equally as revealing as comprehensive records. While Wollstonecraft may have been correct in her statement that unmarried sisters were "an unnecessary burden on the benevolence of the master of the house," Mary's and Charlotte's letters remain embedded within those of the rest of their family – in today's setting they are difficult to view with "averted looks."

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<sup>109</sup> Leonie Hannan, "Making Space: English Women, Letter-Writing, and the Life of the Mind, c. 1650-1750," *Women's History Review* 21, no. 4 (2012): 601.

To return to Perry's description of the "compulsively repeated plot premise" that is the "the dispossession of daughters," the lives of Mary and Charlotte Winn reveal that this was indeed "a mythic recording of a banal and literal truth." Taking Perry's thesis further, however, this chapter has revealed the ways in which single women went about negotiating their disinheritance from the family home. In reading the material composition of Mary's and Charlotte's letters, it is possible to plot the wider complexities of their familial relationships and the emotional strains that maintained the sisters' disconnect from Nostell Priory. Akin to the characters in the plot of Burney's *Camilla*, whose financial fates were at the hands of an impulsive patriarch, Mary and Charlotte relied on the whims and decisions of their brother. But while eighteenth-century fiction warned of the effaceable nature of women's inheritance, the Winn sisters display how paper could be utilised to manoeuvre this distance. The endurance of these pages (for many years at least) in the space of the house itself demonstrates how paper ties to landed estates, though fragile, remain exactly that – ties. In navigating their relationship with their brother through the space they occupied on the page, Mary and Charlotte Winn display how maintaining a connection to an ancestral home could be achieved through the material and spatial composition of the written word. These themes are carried forward into the next chapter, wherein I explore paper forms of accounting. Akin to the degrees of textual formality traversed in this chapter, chapter two tackles the variety of manuscript material that underpinned eighteenth-century financial management. Similar to the Winn sisters, Elizabeth Egerton navigated the demands of her role in the country house through an organisation of paper materials.

## **Paper Money, Paper Accounts: Elizabeth Egerton and Material Forms of Financial Management**

Joseph Addison, in the third issue of *The Spectator* published the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1711, described an allegorical dream set after a visit to “the great Hall where the Bank is kept.”<sup>1</sup> This vision details an encounter with the personified, female, “*Publick Credit*” who, when attacked by “half a dozen of the most hideous Phantoms,” “fainted and dyed away at the Sight.”<sup>2</sup> At this point, the “prodigious Heap of Bags of Mony” she guarded, dissipates:

There was a great Change in the Hill of Mony Bags, and the Heaps of Mony, the former shrinking, and falling into so many empty Bags, that I now found not above a tenth Part of them had been filled with Mony ... The great Heaps of Gold, on either side of the Throne, now appeared to be only Heaps of Paper, or little Piles of notched Sticks, bound up together in Bundles.<sup>3</sup>

While this, in Ian Haywood’s words, is a “characteristically ambivalent” episode for Addison, it does draw attention to a persistent discourse in the first half of the eighteenth century – debates about the rise of paper money.<sup>4</sup> The Recoinage Act of 1696 was a particular turning point; the Act prompted a hitherto unexperienced separation between tangible currency and the material value of gold.<sup>5</sup> As James Thompson has demonstrated, the recoinage debate “is the most extensive discussion

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<sup>1</sup> “Untitled Item,” *The Spectator*, no. 3 (Mar 03, 1711): 5. Originally cited in Ian Haywood, *Romanticism and Caricature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, c. 2013), 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Haywood, *Romanticism and Caricature*, 45.

<sup>5</sup> See the chapter on “Coinage” in Brad Pasanek, *Metaphors of Mind: An Eighteenth-Century Dictionary* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 50-68.

of the nature of money and representation across the entire period.”<sup>6</sup> Beyond the Recoinage Act, paper increasingly found its way into the contemporary market; Catherine Ingrassia names “lottery tickets, stocks, bills of exchange, and letters of credit ... among the numerous forms of “credit”-able paper in circulation.”<sup>7</sup> And Deidre Shauna Lynch has acknowledged, in this period “there was ... little agreement ... about what might and might not count as money.”<sup>8</sup> This sudden and widespread influx of paper into the market economy, however, was not welcomed without speculation. Margot Finn, for example, asserts that “[a]version to paper money ... was both widespread and deeply rooted in Georgian England” for “[i]mmersion in the world of goods clearly coexisted with limited familiarity with coinage, paper money and monetary calculation in English market culture.”<sup>9</sup> Alongside this, “paper credit” was also seen as responsible for large-scale economic disasters such as the collapse of the South Sea Bubble, due to its “powerful and potentially dangerous illusion.”<sup>10</sup> The distrust surrounding paper money persisted throughout the century; the Romantic period witnessed an overflow of satire that criticised the introduction of bank notes and the subsequent forgery crisis in the wake of economic legislations introduced by individuals such as William Pitt.<sup>11</sup> Essentially, the eighteenth century saw an alteration

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<sup>6</sup> James Thompson, *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 47.

<sup>7</sup> Catherine Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 5. See also Natasha Glaisyer, *The Culture of Commerce in England, 1660-1720* (Woodbridge: Royal Historical Society/Boydell Press, 2006), 1-8.

<sup>8</sup> Deidre Shauna Lynch, “Money and Character in Defoe’s Fiction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, ed. John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 86.

<sup>9</sup> Margot Finn, *The Character of Credit: Personal Debt in English Culture, 1740-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 80.

<sup>10</sup> Haywood, *Romanticism and Caricature*, 44.

<sup>11</sup> For scholarship of the prevailing debate surrounding paper in eighteenth-century accounting see the work of Amanda Lahikainen: Amanda Lahikainen, ““British Assignats”: Debt, Caricature and Romantic Subjectivity in 1797,” *Studies in Romanticism* 53, no. 4 (2014): 509-540; Amanda Lahikainen, *Money and Materiality in the Golden Age of Graphic Satire* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2022); Amanda Lahikainen, “Currency from Opinion: Imitation Banknotes and the Materiality of Paper Currency in Britain, 1782-1847,” *Art History* 40, no. 1 (2017): 104-131. See also

in the physical, tangible, and material ways people interacted with money. To use Joseph Monteyne's summation: "as valuable metals were being transmuted into paper, all that was solid was being replaced by entities that were insubstantial, and given paper's origins in cast-off scraps of clothing and textiles, these entities were suspect and abject."<sup>12</sup> Paper was the fragile, distrusting, and potentially tampered-with counterpart to the hardy metals that operated as a familiar security for economic transactions.

Conversely, it is against this background of increasing distrust that a culture of recording, accounting, and notetaking flourished. At the same time as paper was viewed with suspicion, it was also progressively championed as a means of accountability. Countless conduct books informed readers of the structure, appearance, and form of financial accounts, with many including template exemplars.<sup>13</sup> The "social character" of these pages also meant that they assumed a certain publicity.<sup>14</sup> Anne L. Murphy, in her study of the Bank of England, ascertains how it was this outward appearance that maintained the Bank's reputation: "[l]edgers were carefully kept and show very few errors or crossings-out, and they could be called upon by customers who wished to observe their account."<sup>15</sup> These economic spaces (that is the account book, the ledger, the journal) moreover, were as Adam Smyth has shown, some "of the most common genres of writing in early modern England."<sup>16</sup> These pages were the precursors to the writing world of the later

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Mary Poovey, *Genres of the Credit Economy: Mediating Value in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 153-218.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Monteyne, *Media Critique in the Age of Gillray: Scratches, Scraps and Spectres* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022), 12.

<sup>13</sup> James Raven, *Publishing Business in Eighteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), 185.

<sup>14</sup> Anne L. Murphy, "Performing Public Credit at the Eighteenth-Century Bank of England," *Journal of British Studies* 58, no. 1 (2019): 59.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>16</sup> Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 3.



eighteenth century; as Finn indicates, “diaries and autobiographies trace their genealogy to the account book, and share that genre’s preoccupation with calculations of the individual’s fluctuating balance of personal debts and credits.”<sup>17</sup> At the same time as paper was increasingly viewed as volatile, it was also becoming a conduit for posterity. It is this paradox that frames the following chapter. In exploring the textual traces of Elizabeth Egerton’s financial management, I plot the various methods, technologies, and scribal practices that sustained her economic, and paper, worlds.

Elizabeth Egerton (née Barbour, c. 1681-1743) married John Egerton of Tatton Hall in 1707, having spent her childhood at the nearby estate of Prees in Shropshire. This was a financially beneficial marriage for the Egertons; it united the family with the Hills, a wealthy but untitled household from which Egerton’s mother was descended.<sup>18</sup> It was following their marriage and the subsequent influx of money, that John began to rebuild the mansion at Tatton, although the house that stands today is largely the product of later generations.<sup>19</sup> The couple had five children who survived into adulthood: three boys (John, Samuel, and Thomas) and two girls (Hester and Elizabeth).<sup>20</sup> Following John’s death in 1724, Egerton assumed the management of the Tatton estate until her eldest son, another John, came of age in 1731. As we saw in the circumstances of the Winn sisters, such life events often act as a catalyst for the discovery of women’s voices – little of Egerton’s manuscript material remains from the period prior to her husband’s death. The most complete insight into Egerton’s life

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<sup>17</sup> Finn, *The Character of Credit*, 64.

<sup>18</sup> For a brief biography of the family see: “Egerton family, Barons Egerton of Tatton, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, 1391-1886,” Archives Hub, Jisc, accessed March 12, 2023, <http://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb133-egt>; Randolph Vigne, “Hill, Richard (1655/6–1727), diplomat and public servant,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> “The History of the Mansion,” Tatton Park, accessed March 10, 2023, [https://www.tattonpark.org.uk/what\\_to\\_see\\_and\\_do/mansion/history\\_of\\_the\\_mansion/history\\_of\\_the\\_mansion.aspx](https://www.tattonpark.org.uk/what_to_see_and_do/mansion/history_of_the_mansion/history_of_the_mansion.aspx).

<sup>20</sup> The birth order of these children remains unknown; the line of inheritance saw John, followed by Samuel, and then Thomas implying eldest to youngest, but where the girls fall into this it is impossible to say.

appears during the years of her management of the estate and the period following her oldest son's inheritance (it is clear she continued to manage the household even after her son inherited). John Egerton Jnr's death seven years later, however, largely terminates this paper trail. The only signs of Egerton's hand that remain once Tatton was inherited by Samuel, Egerton's second son, are records of her jointure payment.

Taking into account the fragmented state of these archives, this chapter makes use of extant papers while also considering the gaps of those effaced. This approach allows for a more nuanced and comprehensive reading of Egerton's manuscripts which questions the strictures, hierarchies, and parameters that have shaped the survival of her voice. In chapter one, I considered how the Winn sisters altered the material form of their papers to negotiate their distance from the Nostell estate. In the next chapter, we will see how Cecilia Strickland employed historiographical research techniques to transform her writing into documentary evidence. In each case, these women applied techniques acquired from published material to their private writing; these acts blur the distinction between manuscript and print. Egerton's paper traces are no exception and, in navigating the contours of her dispersed fragments, this chapter explores how Egerton filed, systematised, selected, ordered, and compiled her papers in line with contemporary advice on financial management. This chapter moves beyond a simple narrative of describing what Egerton shopped for or where she made these purchases, and rather addresses the paper processes by which these decisions were completed and upheld. Just as the pocketbook compilers of the latter half of the century brought together finances, personal schedules, social networks, and everyday engagements, Egerton's remaining archive can be seen as a textual miscellany of her active years.

To appreciate the extent of Egerton's paper traces, it is first necessary to outline the current state in which they remain. The largest repository of Egerton's hand exists

within the Tatton papers at the John Rylands Library in Manchester. This collection holds over ninety loose documents relating to purchases, rents, taxes, and outgoings from the Tatton estate between the years 1725-1738. This grouping of bills and receipts cover the years in which Egerton appears to have been most vocal; 1725 being the year following her husband's death, and 1738 the year of her son's. Egerton's hand does sporadically appear in the papers of her brother, Samuel Hill, her husband, and her sons, but these instances are mostly cursory notes at best. Smaller archives in Chester and Hull also house fragments of Egerton's papers, which will be drawn on throughout this chapter. Across all these sites, only four complete letters in Egerton's hand remain, coupled with just seven others where she is the recipient. Where Egerton's voice appears elsewhere, it is largely limited to notes, labels, and documentary entries. In light of these gaps, I analyse the various receipts, trade cards, ephemera, and in one case account book, that do contain evidence of Egerton's hand. Like the previous chapter, and indeed those to follow, the recovery of Egerton's voice is only possible by looking beyond and outside of the traditional scope of source material.

Consistent with the aims of my thesis, this chapter begins by situating Egerton's financial management within its literary and cultural context. To do this, I explore Daniel Defoe's 1724 novel, *Roxana; or the Fortunate Mistress*. Defoe was a prominent voice in discussions of the contemporary economy; both his political writings and works of fiction tackle debates about paper and credit. As Sandra Sherman has acknowledged, "Defoe's ability to instantiate cultural anxiety; to contribute to epistemological uncertainty which is its cause; and to use such uncertainty to evade interrogation, creates a complex persona "trapped" in culture but

exploiting the trap.”<sup>21</sup> Defoe’s position as social commentator, novelist, and tradesman provides a unique background for understanding the complex links between paper and accounting. Indeed, John O’Brien encourages the study of such authors for insights into eighteenth-century finances on account of the fact that “[b]efore economics emerged as a discipline ... it was a branch of state craft, one that many writers whom we now think of as philosophers, essayists, and even poets understood to be under their purview.”<sup>22</sup> My analysis of *Roxana* examines the cultural contours of an economy that newly relied on paper money and considers how this material was fundamental to the management of finances through textual methods of record-keeping. I do not intend to suggest that Egerton read or took direction from Defoe’s *Roxana* (although copies of his other works such as *Robinson Crusoe* do remain in the Tatton library).<sup>23</sup> Rather my analysis of this text illuminates a wider cultural understanding of the role paper played in financial management. By reading Egerton’s manuscript practices alongside fictional representations of the same, I grant agency to the ways in which she used her pen and paper; this contextual analysis situates Egerton’s accounting practices beyond the confines of the Tatton estate and connects her written material to the broader culture in which it was composed.

Following this analysis, the chapter turns to Egerton’s methods of financial management. Firstly, I explore the looseleaf and untethered scraps pertaining to the various purchases Egerton made between the years 1725-1738. While dismissed today as a bulk of ephemera, these papers offer insights into the haptic, cognitive, and

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<sup>21</sup> Sandra Sherman, *Finance and Fictionality in the Early Eighteenth Century: Accounting for Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 8.

<sup>22</sup> John O’Brien, *Literature Incorporated: The Cultural Unconscious of the Business Corporation, 1650-1850* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 10.

<sup>23</sup> “Discover, Tatton Park,” Library Hub, Jisc, accessed September 3, 2023, <https://discover.libraryhub.jisc.ac.uk/search?q=library%3A%20%22nr%3Antr%3ATatton%20Park%22%20defoe&rn=2>. On Tatton’s library see: Ed Potton, “‘Bound in Vellum and Lettered’: The Tatton Park Library,” in *National Trust Historic Houses and Collections Annals 2013*, ed. David Adshead (Swindon: National Trust in association with Apollo, 2013), 4-11.

methodical means by which Egerton organised her spending. Secondly, I turn to more formal evidence of Egerton's financial management, namely an extant account book. This document provides a linear counterpart to her loose papers and reveals the fluid and intertextual nature of her economic organisation. In keeping with my consideration of the epistolary afterlives of the Winn sisters, I close this chapter by questioning the reasons for and implications of Egerton's sweeping removal from the Tatton archive. The piecemeal qualities of Egerton's records sit uneasily within a culture that increasingly valued financial management as a prerequisite for posterity. The sporadic and seemingly random disposal of Egerton's papers exemplifies the cultural and gendered tensions surrounding paper money (and paper and money). Ultimately, against a background of increasing distrust towards paper as a conduit for currency, the medium was, paradoxically, also viewed as essential to the management of financial affairs. At the same time as paper was criticised for its insubstantiality and ephemerality was it praised for its hardiness and permanence. Egerton, through her financial management of the Tatton estate, actively participated in these opposing discourses.

### Defoe's *Roxana* and Negotiations of Material Wealth

Defoe's *Roxana* powerfully places a woman at the centre of a financial narrative. It is no new statement that the economic trajectory of Roxana's life is mirrored by the plot of the novel, but Roxana's ability to oversee her finances remains open to interpretation. Bram Dijkstra has suggested that "things work out for Roxana in very close accordance with the directives Defoe gave his tradesman-reader concerning the proper management of his commercial career in *The Complete English Tradesman*," while D. Christopher Gabbard posits that it is Roxana's inability to

manage her accounts that prevents a redemption at close of the novel: “like a bookkeeper who can neither balance her books nor produce a bottom line, she proves incapable of revealing an outcome.”<sup>24</sup> On a similar note, Sharon Smith, acknowledges that it is “the heroine’s excessive reflection on her past life [that] disrupts her ability to manage her affairs.”<sup>25</sup> What cannot be debated are Roxana’s repeated self-promotions and declarations of financial prowess and, as Julia Hoydis surmises, “[e]ven if Roxana is a morally indecisive – or even questionable – character, she is shrewd and self-assured in financial matters.”<sup>26</sup> Prevailing throughout the narrative is Roxana’s (and, as Lynch proposes, Defoe’s) “excessive enthusiasm for the materially measurable.”<sup>27</sup> It is in this context – Roxana’s thirst for the “materially measurable” – that I begin this chapter. The increasingly abstract nature of the eighteenth-century financial world can be summarised in Roxana’s repeated unwillingness to accept paper money. That is not to say that credit-based and paper transactions do not exist within the plot, rather I aim to build on Gabbard’s thesis that Roxana’s “pretension to being expert in financial matters ... signifies nothing so much as the donning of another mask.”<sup>28</sup> I propose that Roxana’s interactions with paper money, or rather her distrust of the medium, highlight the cracks within this “mask”; her understanding of these exchanges is merely surface level. Roxana’s financial management is a performance – one of the multiple theatrical roles she assumes throughout the novel on account of

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<sup>24</sup> Bram Dijkstra, *Defoe and Economics: The Fortunes of Roxana in the History of Interpretation* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), 67; D. Christopher Gabbard, “The Dutch Wives’ Good Husbandry: Defoe’s “Roxana” and Financial Literacy,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37, no. 2 (2004): 248.

<sup>25</sup> Sharon Smith, “Defoe’s *The Complete English Tradesman* and the Prostitute Narrative: Minding the Shop in *Mrs. Elizabeth Wisebourn, Sally Salisbury, Roxana*,” *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 15, no. 2 (2015): 32.

<sup>26</sup> Julia Hoydis, *Risk and the English Novel, From Defoe to McEwan* (Germany: De Gruyter, 2019), 133.

<sup>27</sup> Lynch, “Money and Character in Defoe’s Fiction,” 86.

<sup>28</sup> Gabbard, “The Dutch Wives’ Good Husbandry,” 247.

her “chameleonesque ability,” to use Elizabeth Napier’s phrase.<sup>29</sup> This brief exploration is informed by Sandra Sherman’s assertion that eighteenth-century “readers were disorientated by texts whose veracity could not be computed based on “face-value”.”<sup>30</sup> While the novel is significant in its usage of a female character to traverse the eighteenth-century financial landscape, Roxana ultimately fails to grasp (literally and metaphorically) the increasingly immaterial and newly textual world of the eighteenth-century economy. Her understanding of money does not go further than the papers she can interact with, see or hold.

From the outset, Defoe begins *Roxana* by establishing the importance of paper accounts. The ruin of Roxana’s first husband is, in part, down to his refusal to acknowledge formal bookkeeping, and an inability to practice it. Roxana herself recognises that “he had no Genius to Business; he had no Knowledge of his Accounts; he bustled a little about it indeed, at first, and put on a Face of Business, but he soon grew slack.”<sup>31</sup> Evidently Roxana is aware that paper banking is a component of financial management but, as becomes clear, this is the extent of her understanding. A few pages on, while she debates marrying the jeweller, Roxana’s usual clear-headed determination is rattled by the vast number of papers he produces to settle their nuptials. After voicing her apprehensions about marriage, the jeweller provides “a Contract in Writing” (42). Roxana has no difficulty understanding the first few items:

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<sup>29</sup> Elizabeth R. Napier, *Defoe’s Major Fiction: Accounting for the Self* (Blue Ridge Summit: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2016), 44. On the role of performance in *Roxana* see: Jakub Lipski, *Painting the Novel: Pictorial Discourse in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 25-41; Laura Linker, *Dangerous Women, Libertine Epicures, and the Rise of Sensibility, 1670-1730* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 115-139; Karin Kukkonen, “The Minds Behind the Mask: Reading for Character in the Masquerade,” *Neophilologus* 98 (2014): 161-176; Susanne Scholz, “English Women in Oriental Dress: Playing the Turk in Lady Mary Worley Montagu’s *Turkish Embassy Letters* and Daniel Defoe’s *Roxana*,” in *Early Modern Encounters with the Islamic East: Performing Cultures*, ed. Sabine Schülting, Sabine Lucia Müller, and Ralf Hertel (London: Routledge, 2016), 85-98.

<sup>30</sup> Sherman, *Finance and Fictionality in the Early Eighteenth Century*, 4.

<sup>31</sup> Daniel Defoe, *Roxana; or The Fortunate Mistress*, ed. John Mullan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 9. Hereafter cited by page number in the text.

“to cohabit constantly with me; to provide for me in all Respects as a Wife” (42). As the contract goes on and the terms become more complicated, however, her interest wanes: “repeating in the Preamble a long Account of the Nature and Reason of our living together, and an Obligation in the Penalty of 7000 l. never to abandon me; and at last, shew’d me a Bond for 500 l. to be paid to me ... after his death” (42). That the “Nature and Reason” of their living together is reduced to a “long account” in Roxana’s recollection, suggests her lack of understanding of the finer details of this contract. The components she considers important, namely the measurable wealth and her future security, are the elements she can recall articulately. Roxana’s uncertainty about accepting this proposal not only owes to her fear of destitution, but also her inability to comprehend the very terms the jeweller proposes. This conclusion is substantiated when Roxana agrees to the marriage. This occurs only once the jeweller has simplified and explained his offer: “he *said* ... he took me not as a Mistress, but as his Wife; and protested, it was clear to him he might lawfully do it” (42-43).

Throughout all of his fiction, as Lynch has noted, Defoe “is willing to put the recounting of a sequence of events on hold, so as to make time for counting.”<sup>32</sup> Through this habit, of having his protagonists “tally up and take stock,” it is possible to track key narrative events by paying attention to the point at which his characters review their wealth.<sup>33</sup> Despite agreeing to the jeweller’s marriage contract, Roxana spends a further two years agonising over this decision before she is able to “tally up” the assets she has gained. “But to return to our Story,” she pronounces, “two Year[s] after we were ... Marry’d, he made his Will, and gave me a Thousand Pound more, and all my Household-Stuff, Plate, &c. which was considerable too” (44-45). This

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<sup>32</sup> Lynch, “Money and Character in Defoe’s Fiction,” 84.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*



stock-take signals the end of her moral dilemma and marks the beginning of her narrative as the jeweller's wife. Importantly, Roxana only considers the marriage negotiations complete once she can measure the material wealth she has procured. Despite being wed for two years and amassing considerable invested wealth (she records the jeweller had already "gave me my Writings, and the Bond for my Maintenance during his Life, and for 500 l. after his Death") it is only once Roxana receives her physical assets – the "Household-Stuff, Plate, &c." – that she can move to the next section of her "story" (44). Roxana's ignorance towards paper accounts halts and inhibits in the narrative flow. The story can only be resumed after Roxana is able to tangibly measure the products of her labour.

This incapacity and refusal to deal with written accounts and paper money typifies the whole first half of the novel. On the death of her jeweller husband Roxana defaults to "an eminent Lawyer" in Paris to handle her immaterial capital, while she arranges the "seven Hundred Pistoles in Gold," "about 12000 Livres" in "Foreign-Bills" that had incidentally already been "accepted," the "Plate, Linnen, and other things of Value," and, importantly, the "Casket of Jewels" herself (57, 55). Her relationship with the prince proves equally as fruitful in material wealth – that is, objects for "wearing, or using, or eating, or drinking" (75). In this relationship, Roxana acquires so much that she commands "a great Iron Chest, so large, that it was as much as six lusty fellows could get up the Steps, into the House" (100). Into this, Roxana reflects, "I put, indeed, all my Wealth" (100). Throughout this episode, she takes great pleasure in recalling her materially measurable assets. Conversely, one of the only instances when Roxana employs paper to manage her finances is when she makes provisions in case she should die in childbirth. She recounts that, following "a strange Apprehension that I should die with that Child," "I pull'd a Paper out of my Bosom,

folded up, but not seal'd ... Wherein I had left Order, that all the Plate and Jewels, and fine Furniture ... should be restor'd to him [the prince]" (78). As this list makes clear, even on the occasion when Roxana does acknowledge the importance of pen and paper, this is employed exclusively to list her physical assets and the wealth that she can tangibly command – she makes no provisions for the rest of her capital.

This episode, moreover, is significant in more ways than one. Particularly noteworthy in this passage is the fact that this contract is stored and saved on her person. By doing so, Roxana is able to physically interact with the contract and, by extension, the material wealth it details. Although her materials have been rendered textual through their transcription onto "Paper," she substitutes the physicality of her assets for a haptic interaction with the page that delineates them. The same conclusion can be drawn earlier in the novel too. When Roxana first encounters the papers of the jeweller, these documents are grounded in their physical surroundings: "he took me up into his Chamber, where *Amy* had made a good Fire, and there he pull'd out a great many Papers, and spread them upon a little Table" (41). In this instance, Roxana quantifies the jeweller's impalpable assets not through physical interaction, but by situating them within their material surroundings – objects she can measure. When "a great many papers" are "spread ... upon a little table" their size, extent, and enormity is not only more comprehensible but also more concrete. As Amanda Lahikainen has illustrated, "[s]eeing, hearing, smelling, and touching played a role in valuation."<sup>34</sup> Particularly in the first half of the novel, Roxana's understanding of finance is limited to that which she can feel, touch, or hold. On the occasions where she is forced to interact with more abstract and immaterial finances, these are rendered palpable by

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<sup>34</sup> Lahikainen, *Money and Materiality in the Golden Age of Graphic Satire*, 3.

either their physical environment or by being attached to her person. In each case, Roxana imposes a means of tangibly interacting with these abstract quantities.

A turning point arises, however, at the novel's midpoint, when Roxana is forced to reconceptualise her material wealth as paper money. Following a narrow escape after the jewels owned by her second husband are recognised, Roxana, with the help of the Dutch merchant, exchanges them for money. As Laura J. Rosenthal confirms "[t]his conversion of jewels to money marks the heroine's entrance into the marketplace and sets in motion her transformation from a privately kept "Lady of Pleasure" to a full-blown "Woman of Business".<sup>35</sup> Fundamental to this transformation is Roxana's exchange of material wealth into conceptual wealth. This is largely down to, in James Thompson's words, the "social amnesia made possible by paper [which] allows traces of origin to be effaced."<sup>36</sup> "Banknotes, bills of exchange, and other forms of commercial paper," Thompson goes on, "allow value to be transported with relative security over large distances ... a function [that is] especially important to Defoe's criminals whose narratives aim at eventual respectability."<sup>37</sup> For Roxana, this transformation took "near half a Year, and by managing my Business thus myself, and having large Sums to do with, I became as expert in it, as any She-Merchant of them all; I had Credit in the Bank for a large Sum of Money, and Bills and Notes for much more" (131). From this point on, Roxana's stocktakes and tallies begin to list paper money alongside her material wealth. Indeed, it is not only Roxana who dubs herself competent in this newfound talent; after accounting under his tutelage, she is "applauded ... [in her] Way of managing ... Money" by the eminent

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<sup>35</sup> Laura J. Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce: Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century British Literature* (London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 71.

<sup>36</sup> Thompson, *Models of Value*, 88.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

banker and politician Sir Robert Clayton (171).<sup>38</sup> Seemingly converted, Roxana soon amasses “five and thirty Thousand Pounds Estate” alongside finding “Ways to live without wasting either Principal or Interest” (182).

During the third quarter of the novel at least, Roxana does appear to use and benefit from conceptual wealth – bills of exchange, financial bonds, systems of credit. As John F. O’Brien has identified, “the scandal of her career as a mistress is not simply that she is exchanging sex for money, but that she is able through her expertise with finance to make that money appear to come from respectable sources.”<sup>39</sup> This expertise, however, is short-lived and, as the novel draws to a close, it becomes clear that Roxana only amasses such wealth because of the help of those around her. As Gabbard concludes: “it simply would not be accurate to assert that Roxana’s turning to him [Clayton] to manage her finances somehow signifies that she herself has mastered finance.”<sup>40</sup> In recounting her assets on the eve of marriage to the Dutch merchant, it is evident that Roxana’s intangible wealth was never a product of her own mastery:

*Firstly*, I pull’d out the Mortgage which good Sir *Robert* had procur’d for me, the annual Rent 700 l. *per Annum*; the principal Money, 14000 l.

*Secondly*, I pull’d out another Mortgage upon Land, procur’d by the same faithful Friend, which at three times, had advanc’d 12000 l.

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<sup>38</sup> Frank Melton, “Clayton, Sir Robert (1629-1707), banker and politician,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 9 March 2023. On Clayton’s role in the novel see: Lynch, “Money and Character in Defoe’s Fiction,” 84-101; Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce*, 89; Mona Scheuermann, *Her Bread to Earn: Women, Money, and Society from Defoe to Austen* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 50-54; Rebecca E. Connor, *Women, Accounting and Narrative: Keeping Books in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge, 2004), 124-126; Katherine Binhammer, *Downward Mobility: The Form of Capital and the Sentimental Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020), 112-113.

<sup>39</sup> John F. O’Brien, “The Character of Credit: Defoe’s “Lady Credit,” *The Fortunate Mistress*, and the Resources of Inconsistency in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *ELH* 63, no. 3 (1996): 609.

<sup>40</sup> Gabbard, “The Dutch Wives’ Good Husbandry,” 245.

*Thirdly*, I pull'd him out a Parcel; of little Securities, procur'd by several Hands (258).

In each of these instances Roxana's paper money and contractual wealth were obtained by someone other than herself. The first "Mortgage" was established by "good Sir Robert," the second "by the same faithful Friend," and the "Parcel" "of little Securities" was amassed by "several Hands." Roxana merely looks after these bonds, performing the role of a businesswoman rather than becoming one herself. What is more, in what seems to be a nod towards her earlier encounter with her jeweller husband's accounts, Roxana again lays these papers "upon the Table, and bade him [her merchant husband] take them, that he might be able to give me an Answer to the *second Question, viz. What Fortune he had with his Wife?*" (258-259). Not only therefore does Roxana once again ground her accounts in their material surroundings, but she also requires an explanation of what she possesses. Despite her assertion that she had "been so particular in the Account of my vast acquir'd Stock," Roxana remains uncertain of its significance (259). Her "Account" is merely a list of assets. When questioned on its contents or required to provide information beyond a title, Roxana obfuscates. For Roxana, the extent of her wealth (the "Mortgage[s]," the "Parcel" "of little Securities") is the very paper that it is listed upon.

It is through this performance of financial acumen, moreover, that the reader realises Roxana's inability to reform; in a similar vein to her assuming the appearance of a Quaker woman, in merely performing the vocabulary of a merchant Roxana displays an unwillingness to amend.<sup>41</sup> As Gabbard has demonstrated, it is Roxana's incapacity towards accounting that exemplifies her immorality, since "accounting

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<sup>41</sup> See Malinda Snow, "Arguments to the Self in Defoe's *Roxana*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 34, no. 3 (1994): 532; Chloe Wigston Smith, *Women, Work, and Clothes in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 106-109.

assumed a salvational dimension.”<sup>42</sup> And, more frankly, David Wallace Spielman concludes that “money functions to raise Roxana to an incredible height from which to fall.”<sup>43</sup> Even her attempts to reproduce her wealth as paper credit prove futile: as Sandra Sherman writes “[h]istory can be retrieved, even where it is submerged or written over.”<sup>44</sup> Roxana’s interactions with paper money only go as far as to create the façade of a businesswoman – just like her first husband, she “put[s] on a Face of Business” but nothing more (9).<sup>45</sup> Her incessant desire for material wealth in the face of less tangible assets means she remains irrevocably a “Lady of Pleasure” as opposed to a “Woman of Business.” Ultimately, *Roxana* exemplifies Defoe’s reliance on financial management as a moral, virtuous, and honest practice while also presenting an insight into how the eighteenth-century economy increasingly relied on abstract forms of wealth. Fundamental here is an appreciation for, and mastery of, the paper technologies that sustained financial management. Throughout the novel, Roxana is entrenched within and intimately a part of a wide range of economic transactions. Defoe repeatedly places Roxana in close proximity to a range of financial systems and exchanges, irrespective of her gender; including contractual agreements, financial bonds, systems of insurance, means of accruing interest, rates of conversion, not to mention the variety of material wealth she handles. While for Roxana the novel’s moral redemption inhibits her full understanding of this array of financial exchanges, the fact remains that Defoe does place a woman at the fore of a largely economic narrative.<sup>46</sup> Far from ignorantly removed, therefore, women could be equally

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<sup>42</sup> Gabbard, “The Dutch Wives’ Good Husbandry,” 240.

<sup>43</sup> David Wallace Spielman, “The Value of Money in Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders, and Roxana,” *The Modern Language Review* 107, no. 1 (2012): 85.

<sup>44</sup> Sherman, *Finance and Fictionality in the Early Eighteenth Century*, 169.

<sup>45</sup> Sharon Smith has likewise suggested that the “primary purpose of Defoe’s account of the failed brewer is to foreshadow Roxana’s own tragic ending.” Smith, “Defoe’s *The Complete English Tradesman* and the Prostitute Narrative,” 45.

<sup>46</sup> On feminism in the novel see: Scheuermann, *Her Bread to Earn*, 12-59; Anne Emmanuelle Berger and Catherine Porter, *The Queer Turn in Feminism: Identities, Sexualities, and the Theatre of Gender*

embedded within the physical papers of money management. It is with this literary context in mind that I frame the accounting practices of Elizabeth Egerton. The following sections draw upon the textual fragments remaining from Egerton's management of the Tatton Park finances in order to reaffirm the importance of paper manoeuvres in an environment that increasingly distrusted the medium.

### Looseleaf Accounting: Receipts, Trade Cards, and Ephemera

The largest set of papers in Egerton's archive is a collection of ninety-three loose documents relating to purchases, rents, taxes, and outgoings of the Tatton estate between the years 1725-1738. This period covers the six years Egerton oversaw the estate alone (on account of her eldest son's age), and the seven years following his inheritance. The presence of Egerton's name as the addressee on many of these receipts, alongside the fact that her purchases continued well into the 1730s, suggests that even once John had inherited, his mother still had a considerable degree of influence in the household spending. At the most basic level, these papers reveal the variety of items Egerton shopped for – from smalltown purchases of foodstuffs to largescale renovations carried out on the mansion.<sup>47</sup> Egerton commands sums of multiple hundred pounds and shows herself to be a reliable and trustworthy shopper; the bills are always paid in a timely manner, and her continued custom with vendors over a long period of time suggests that she maintained an honest relationship with those she purchased from. The sheer number of transactions, however, coupled with

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(New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 126-166; William E. Hummel, "The Gift of My Father's Bounty": Patriarchal Patronization in "Moll Flanders" and "Roxana," *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 48, no. 2 (1994): 119-141.

<sup>47</sup> See for example: Accounts and Receipts 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/2, University of Manchester Library; GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/11; GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/14; GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/21; GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/44.

the fact that such proofs of purchase often contain only her signature at best, means that Egerton's voice remains buried within the eclectic chatter of tradesman, business owners, workmen, and manufacturers. The analysis to follow, therefore, looks beyond the purchases these bills detail. Rather, I pay attention to the inscriptions, notes, and fragmentary manuscript traces that sporadically appear on and alongside these papers. In being attentive to these stray comments, it is possible to not only tease out Egerton's voice, but also chart the scribal, cognitive, and material practices that sustained and grounded her financial management.

The most prevalent indicator of Egerton's interaction with these papers occurs across approximately a third of this ephemera. On select pages, Egerton has provided a label marking the nature of the bill. These revisions are predominantly informative, acting as reminders and signifiers for the items she shopped for: "Mrs Wench's Bill 1727," "Bills P<sup>d</sup> Mrs Peake," "Mr Skellons Bill for Cloaths 1727," "Receipt 1728 Repairs."<sup>48</sup> To label one's bills and receipts was a relatively common practice; Briony McDonagh and Amanda Vickery have both drawn attention to women who similarly inscribed their bills, whether this be a means of monitoring their stewards, or a process of recording.<sup>49</sup> Such inscriptions, moreover, could also act as markers of authenticity. When paper banknotes were introduced later in the century, as Lahikainen has established, the practice of endorsing the reverse of the page with a signature continued: an "[e]ndorsement might have helped recover loss in cases of forgery or

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<sup>48</sup> Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/22, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/24, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/35, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/39.

<sup>49</sup> Briony McDonagh, "On Being 'fully and completely mistress of the whole business': Gender, Land and Estate Accounting in Georgian England," in *Women and the Land 1500-1900*, ed. Amanda L. Capern, Briony McDonagh, and Jennifer Aston (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2019), 166; Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (London: Yale University Press, 1998), 153.



misplaced notes, but it also offered peace of mind to the users.”<sup>50</sup> In contrast, Egerton’s labels, though brief and often fragmentary, allude to a wider system of filing, sorting, and organising. Each of these descriptions appear on the reverse of the document, often in the centre of the page and surrounded by (now-faint) lines where the paper was once folded to frame her endorsement. In observing these seemingly insignificant marks on the material composition of these papers, it is possible to gain an insight into how such documents were used and interacted with – beyond their written material. As Matthew Daniel Eddy has illustrated, “it is important to identify the graphic patterns” of such papers as it is onto these spaces that “values and meanings were mapped by a given culture.”<sup>51</sup> The similarity between the creases that encase the inscriptions for “Mr Skellons Bill” and that paid to “Mrs Wrench,” for example, suggest that these bills were folded to the same size (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2). This likeness implies that such papers were gathered and stored alongside one another, perhaps to fit into a separate repository – a book, drawer, or cabinet. Such mechanisms of filing allude to a methodical process, one that exposes the careful thought behind Egerton’s accounting; receiving the bill, paying the debt, and filing away the receipt once the purchase was complete. An emphasis on accuracy and revision within early eighteenth-century accounting perhaps explains why these bills were saved (they could be easily recalled in the event of a discrepancy), and Egerton’s labels allow for a quick and easy retrieval.<sup>52</sup> That these papers were folded, moreover, indicates a haptic nature to this practice. In passing these bills from one location to another, adding a different scribal

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<sup>50</sup> Lahikainen, ““British *Asignats*”: Debts, Caricature and Romantic Subjectivity in 1797,” 535; Deidre Shauna Lynch draws attention to how these labels provided bills with “personalized histories,” Lynch, *The Economy of Character*, 97.

<sup>51</sup> Matthew Daniel Eddy, “The Shape of Knowledge: Children and the Visual Culture of Literacy and Numeracy,” *Science in Context* 26, no. 2 (2013): 218.

<sup>52</sup> Christine Wiskin, “Businesswoman and Financial Management: Three Eighteenth-Century Case Studies,” *Accounting, Business & Financial History* 16, no. 2 (2006): 144.

insertion on each interaction and thereby materially altering the fragment itself, Egerton used the physical quality of these papers to provide a tangible and concrete extension of the purchasing act.

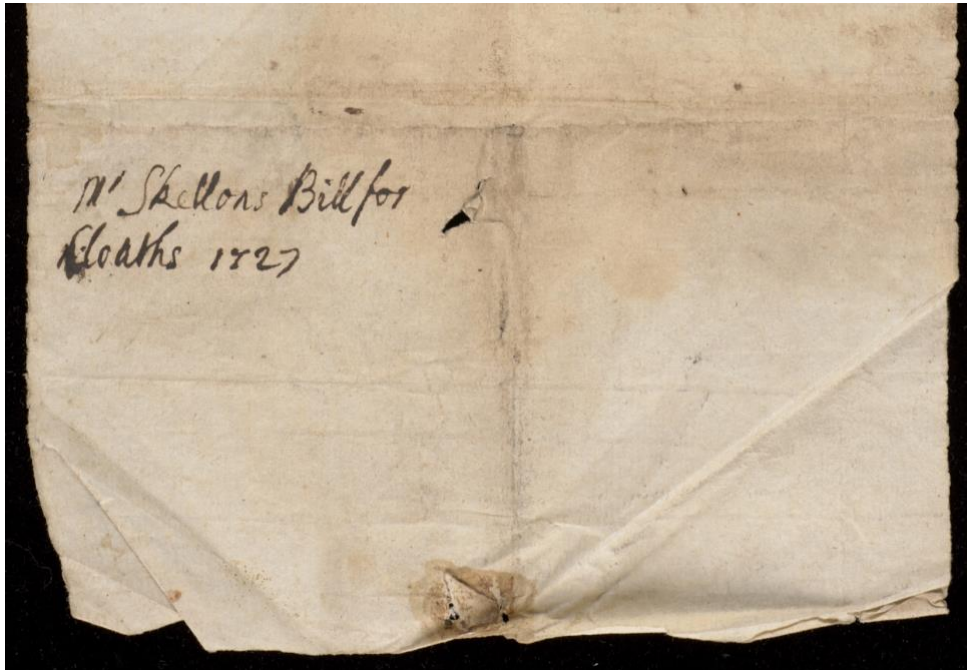


Figure 2.1. Fold crease and label on “Mr Skellons Bill,” c. May 1727.

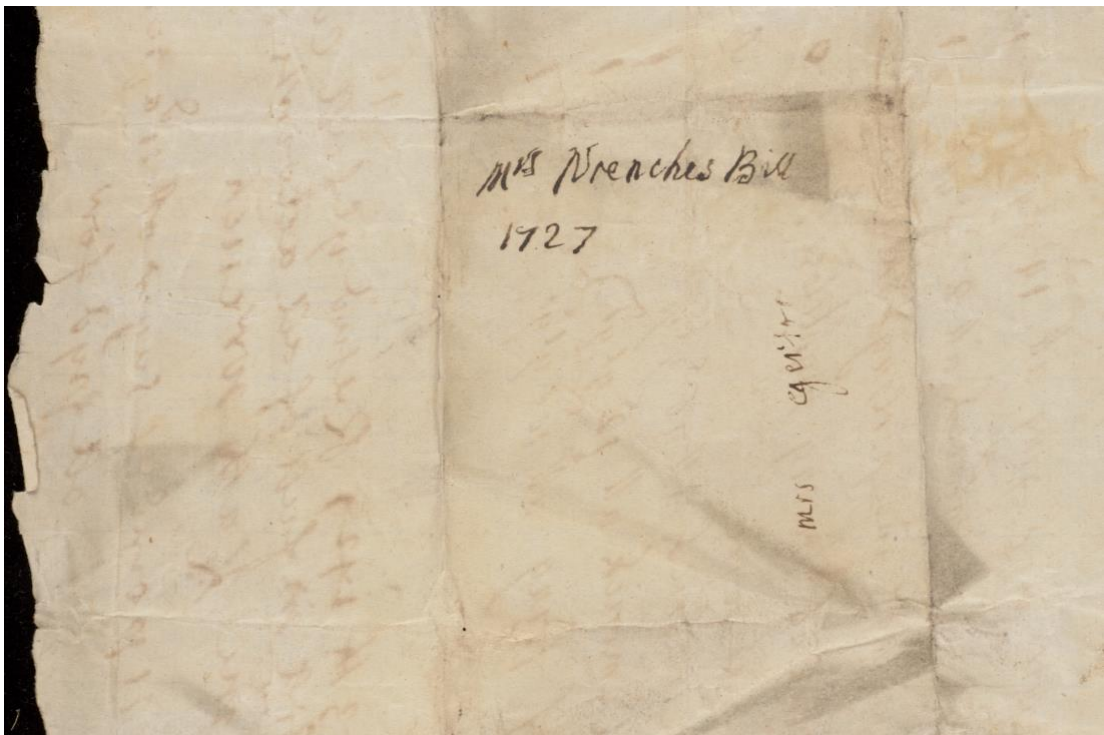


Figure 2.2. Fold crease and label on “Mrs Wenches Bill,” c. May 1727.

Another layer of Egerton's organisation is discernible when these inscriptions are contextualised with the contents of the bill they designate. That "Mrs Wrench's Bill" and the bill paid to "Mr Skellon" were folded to fit the same repository is corroborated by the fact they detail similar purchases. Both bills record textile goods and sartorial purchases: Mr Skellon's bill lists orders such as "26 y<sup>ds</sup> of flowr'd Satin" and the "making a p<sup>r</sup> of Shoos and Cloggs" and correspondingly Mrs Wrench's bill recounts charges for "15 y<sup>ds</sup> qu<sup>tr</sup> of Edging," and "2 y<sup>ds</sup> of Cambrick."<sup>53</sup> The similarity between these purchases equally supports the idea that they were filed, and subsequently stored, together. Egerton, it appears, sorted and organised these bills dependent on the category of spending they fell into, prior to filing them away. Consequently, while these documents remain today in a miscellany catalogued by twentieth-century archival standards, the residual traces of Egerton's accounting reveal a systematic organisation that valued the specifics of the items she shopped for and astutely categorised these purchases with such information in mind.

Egerton's accounting was evidently a coordinated practice, and her labels reveal how these actions were tracked, monitored, and catalogued. In continuing to explore Egerton's scribal insertions, it is possible to plot not only the movement of these papers, but also the locations they were subsequently moved to. Alongside nominal labels, Egerton's commentary also exhibits a more formal and comprehensive system of accounting, one that alternated between textual location – from scrap paper to bound notebook. Evidence of this exists on a remaining piece of paper within this miscellany. This otherwise blank page contains a single line of writing at its head, reading as the beginning of a log: Egerton records having paid a "Richard Falconer"

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<sup>53</sup> Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/35, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/22.

three shillings for “himself & two men” on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1725.<sup>54</sup> The layout of this information on the page (the date, entry, and amount paid) mimics the more formal arrangement of pages in an account book or ledger – qualities of the “codified *mise-en-page*” as Angus Edmund Vine terms it.<sup>55</sup> Alongside tracking her expenditure on the bills themselves, Egerton clearly also used other sites to log her spending. This conclusion is especially plausible when read alongside the inscription on the reverse of this page. In a similar tone to her labelled receipts, Egerton identifies this incomplete list as “Bills and Acquittances I have paid for Anno Dominy 1727/8,” and then subscribes underneath the memorandum: “Note They are all entred in my Book.”<sup>56</sup> The use of the phrase “Anno Dominy” adds a level of formality that is previously unaccounted for in her papers. This, alongside her reference to a separate “Book,” proves that Egerton’s accounting was not limited to fragmentary labels, but also extended to formal records and bound volumes. In this note, Egerton records the expenditure while also memorialising the process behind it. By citing an external location alongside an existing record, Egerton alludes to the multiple layers of textual movement that sustained early eighteenth-century accounting practices. This variety of locations exemplifies what Helmut Zedelmaier understands as the role played by excerpting, or commonplacing, in facilitating information retention; Egerton’s labels are “intermediate forms of storage” which briefly “relieve the memory,” before being brought “together as a whole” in the form of a bound book.<sup>57</sup> Thus, Egerton evidently used loose papers alongside more regulated textual spaces; this miscellany is simply

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<sup>54</sup> Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/46.

<sup>55</sup> Angus Edmund Vine, *Miscellaneous Order: Manuscript Culture and the Early Modern Organization of Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 156.

<sup>56</sup> Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/46.

<sup>57</sup> Helmut Zedelmaier, “Excerpting/Commonplacing,” in *Information: A Historical Companion*, ed. Ann Blair, Paul Duguid, Anja-Silva Goeing, and Anthony Grafton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 445.

an extract or cross-section of a larger process. Unlike Roxana, Egerton displays veritable ease with the proliferation of paper around her. The folds indicate that she was comfortable with filing and storing paper and she had no need to keep these fragments on her person. In Egerton's financial management, paper was both a conduit for the movement of information and the item that stored it.

The movement of information from one textual space to another was, according to Matthew Daniel Eddy, an integral part of knowledge acquisition. In his study of Scottish students' notebooks, Eddy determines how "[t]he use of rough notes to write recopied notes was effectively a mode of information transfer" where "[l]ike a pile of index cards ... paper-books functioned collectively as a paper machine because they allowed schoolchildren to shuffle information into an ordered thinking device."<sup>58</sup> Eddy draws on the various "papertools" that facilitated this transfer of knowledge, such as the use of subheadings that worked as "crossreferential reading aids."<sup>59</sup> These apparatus can also be found within Egerton's accounting practices. In labelling her receipts, recording their movement from one space to another, and then expanding this information within the external book itself, Egerton employs her own series of "papertools" to manage data. This was not a passive act. With each textual interaction, Egerton utilises and acquires a new level of understanding pertaining to the purchase. While it is impossible to trace how Egerton acquired these methods, as Eddy's study does, fragmentary manuscript evidence within the archive of her husband does verify that she had been using these methods for several years. John Egerton's collection of accounts and receipts, for example, includes a fragment dated

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<sup>58</sup> Matthew Daniel Eddy, "The Interactive Notebook: How Students Learned to Keep Notes during the Scottish Enlightenment," *Book History* 19 (2016): 101; Matthew Daniel Eddy, "The Nature of Notebooks: How Enlightenment Schoolchildren Transformed the *Tabula Rasa*," *Journal of British Studies* 57 (2018): 287.

<sup>59</sup> Eddy, "The Interactive Notebook," 110.

“June 14, 1715.” This piece of paper contains the brief inscription: “I John Egerton do own my Self indebted unto my Wife Mrs Eliz: Egerton the full Sume of Twenty Pound. Do oblige my self to pay her Intrest for the Same and Principull the 14 of June in the year 1717.”<sup>60</sup> On the reverse, in Egerton’s hand, is the memorandum “A Note of Mr Egertons & I have paid my Self & entred in my Book.”<sup>61</sup> Even prior to the years she oversaw the Tatton estate, Egerton was accustomed to using multiple paper locations. While this transaction was recorded over ten years before the “Bills and Acquittances” listed in her other book, Egerton evidently carried the skills she had learnt as a wife to approach her management of the estate as a widow.<sup>62</sup> An overlap in these practices is testament not only to the importance of “papertools” in managing finances, but also to the sophisticated nature of women’s accounting habits regardless of whether they were employing them as wives, widows, or single women.

The presence of Egerton’s hand within the collection of documents and receipts of her husband also presents questions regarding the gendered overlap between their methods of organisation. Defoe’s *Roxana* made it clear that women could be embedded within predominantly masculine financial environments, and the text repeatedly draws attention to the ways in which husband and wife could manage their affairs collectively. Correspondingly, in a similar manner to Egerton’s labels on the bills of various textile merchants, John likewise titles his receipts with a summary of the purchase. His notes are principally generic, providing a two- or three-word indication of the bill for easy reference: “Joseph George Bill,” “Milners Bill,” or “Mr

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<sup>60</sup> Papers of John Egerton (1679-1724), Receipts and Accounts, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/5/1/12.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> Briony McDonagh has demonstrated how this was a common occurrence in genteel households: McDonagh, “On Being ‘fully and completely mistress of the whole business’,” 149-175.

Tho: Moreton's Charge & Discharge for y<sup>e</sup> year Ended at Ladyday 1716.”<sup>63</sup> It appears then, at face value, that Egerton's accounting practices were analogous to that of her husband's. If we broaden the scope of Egerton's papers, however, there are more noticeable differences between how her and her husband identify their documents. This is especially discernible in the titles denoting purchases Egerton makes for her son. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1725, for example, Egerton paid “Kath Wrench” the total of £2 6p for, amongst other goods, “2 yds of Cambrick” and “4 handkershefs.”<sup>64</sup> The reverse of this bill contains an inscription in Egerton's hand that reads “An acquittance for Handkerchiefs & Rufks for my Son John.”<sup>65</sup> In contrast to the brief and informative labels of her husband, this identification also contains a personal insight into the purchase. Egerton's use of the possessive adjective in “*my* son John,” suggests a much more intimate approach to her accounting than that of her husband. Imogen Peck, in her exploration of family archiving, has alluded to the ways that first-person labelling was more “personal,” in comparison to the “forward looking” inscriptions that were written in the third person and had the benefit of “furnish[ing] future readers with the requisite contextual information.”<sup>66</sup> In a context where impartiality was imperative, Egerton's accounts betray a sense of subjectivity. Where there is a degree of overlap between Egerton's labels and her husband's, variations in the linguistic framework of their inscriptions suggest that Egerton did not entirely mimic the standard he established.

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<sup>63</sup> Papers of John Egerton (1679-1724), Receipts and Accounts, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/5/1/38, GB 133 EGT/3/5/1/25, GB 133 EGT/3/5/1/14.

<sup>64</sup> Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/7.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Imogen Peck, ““Of no sort of use”?: Manuscripts, Memory, and the Family Archive in Eighteenth Century England,” *Cultural and Social History* 20, no. 2 (2022): 6, 9; Christine Wiskin has also noted how the third person “produces a sense of authorial detachment.” Christine Wiskin, “Accounting for Business: Financial Management in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Women and their Money 1700-1950, Essays on Women and Finance*, ed. Anne Laurence, Josephine Maltby, and Janette Rutterford (London: Routledge, 2009), 80.

Undoubtedly gender differences may have been responsible for these variations. By limiting the analysis to loose papers these differences are more striking. In Beverly Lemire's words: "constraining and summarizing interactions into a tabulate form invariably removed many other dimensions of social interplay."<sup>67</sup> In repeatedly employing the first person, however, Egerton consciously inserted herself into the archive. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1727, Egerton paid "Martha Seddon" £2 8s and 7p for "13 y<sup>ds</sup> ... [of] holand."<sup>68</sup> Much like the previous purchase, Egerton similarly labelled this with the note "an acquittance for Holland bought for my son Jack."<sup>69</sup> These examples, alongside the fact that Egerton repeatedly refers to the wider documents of her bookkeeping with possessive pronouns ("I have paid *my Self*" and "entred in *my Book*"), suggest a comparatively active approach to her management of the estate. Egerton could have easily labelled her purchases without the use of these adjectives, and indeed, such a statement as "An acquittance for Handkerchiefs & Rufks for ... John" reads much more in line with contemporary conduct manuals whose advice advocated objectivity. Matthew Quin's 1776 *Quin's Rudiments of Bookkeeping*, for example, stated that financial records should be written "in a *stile* free from ambiguity."<sup>70</sup> But in frequently employing the first person, Egerton enacts a level of possession over these purchases, a means of inserting herself into these records – a process that echoes to Roxana's stocktakes and tallies wherein narrative depends on financial reckoning. Serena Dyer has similarly drawn attention to the ways in which Barbara Johnson's album not only exhibited "financial self-regulation," but was also

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<sup>67</sup> Beverly Lemire, *The Business of Everyday Life: Gender, Practice and Social Politics in England, c. 1600-1900* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 195.

<sup>68</sup> Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/27.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Matthew Quin, *Quin's Rudiments of Book-keeping; Comprised in Six Plain Cases, and Attainable in as Many Days, Without the Help of a Teacher; Calculated for Persons of Either Sex, Grown to Maturity [...]* (London, 1776).



an exercise in “[s]elf-memorialization – the desire to be remembered.”<sup>71</sup> By writing notes such as “an acquittance for Holland bought for my son Jack,” Egerton acknowledges who the purchase was for while also providing a brief excerpt of autobiographical information. This label delineates her familial lineage, documenting (and in some sense memorialising) her relationship to the future heir of the estate. In a process that evokes Defoe’s financial narratives, these labels insert personal details within the systems of accounting. Egerton’s descriptions assert that these purchases are for her son, that she has paid, and recorded in her books – leaving a paper trail of her involvement in the affairs of the Tatton household.

In memorialising her role as compiler of these accounts, Egerton transforms these disparate papers into a more coherent narrative. These fragments detail more than the household spending and instead become a serial miscellany of selected material, with some entries pointing to Egerton’s personal connections and autobiography. Egerton’s textual assemblage of bills and receipts is, to use Katherine Harris’s phrase, “generated by others but motivated by its owner.”<sup>72</sup> Like the female creators of scrapbooks that Harris explores, women such as Egerton are the “dominant owners of these blank spaces.”<sup>73</sup> In subscribing an active voice onto the “blank spaces” of these documents, Egerton presents herself as a compiler, a scrapbooker of sorts, who selects purchases she wished to preserve, label, or file away. It is through the fragments of these labels that we are able to glimpse an insight into Egerton herself; as Christine Wiskin asserts, “it was in their records of domestic spending that women could revisit in positive ways relationships and life experience alongside listing

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<sup>71</sup> Serena Dyer, *Material Lives: Women Makers and Consumer Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2020), 38.

<sup>72</sup> Katherine Harris, “Borrowing, Altering and Perfecting the Literary Annual Form – or What it is Not: Emblems, Almanacs, Pocket-Books, Albums, Scrapbooks and Gift Books,” *Poetess Archive Journal* 1, no. 1 (2007): 17.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

pounds, shillings and pence to produce narratives that combined the objective with the highly subjective.”<sup>74</sup> In taking ownership of both the point of purchase and the act of recording, Egerton positions herself as a varied and eclectic creator of a paper miscellany. This collection reflects more than objective accounting and rather exposes her numerous responsibilities across the variety of textual spaces this endeavour encompassed.

### Account Books and Formal Methods of Recording

It is clear, in reading the various notes on Egerton’s collection of bills and receipts, that she maintained this miscellany alongside more formal methods of financial management. Multiple references to “my Book” suggest that Egerton’s accounting traversed both loose scraps and bound documents. No such record, however, exists within the Tatton Papers at the John Rylands Library – the site of this collection of loose papers. A broader search across the Pennines, however, yielded one “personal account book of John Egerton” at Cheshire Archives.<sup>75</sup> True to its title, the entries in this document begin on the flyleaf: an inscription in John Egerton’s hand reads “I began these Acc<sup>ts</sup> June 18. 1709” and is signed “J<sup>o</sup>n Egerton.”<sup>76</sup> The subsequent pages list various outgoings such as “mending glass windows,” “postage of Letters” and payment for a “Coach from London,” alongside records of servants’ wages and the receipt of rents.<sup>77</sup> The layout of John’s pages, with a list of purchases and their corresponding references in the left-hand column, suggests this document

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<sup>74</sup> Wiskin, “Accounting for Business,” 79.

<sup>75</sup> The reason for the dispersal of the Tatton papers across the Pennines is largely unknown, but it is perhaps in part due to the fact that the last heir of the estate died intestate.

<sup>76</sup> Personal Account Book of John Egerton, 1709-1738, Egerton of Tatton, DET/3229/1/15, Cheshire Archives and Local Studies.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 2; 4.

was used as a journal with the references signifying a ledger.<sup>78</sup> These pages, however, record a mere eighteen months; John's entries end abruptly in December 1710. The reason for this sudden conclusion remains unknown but, though brief, these pages do provide some insight into the extent of Egerton's own involvement within the estate, prior to her husband's death.

It is evident, for example, that Egerton did have some experience managing finances in the years before she was widowed. The early pages of this account book detail regular payments made by John to his wife for a variety of reasons: on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1709 Egerton was paid a sum of £6 12s "to pay servants wages &c;" on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1710 Egerton received £8 12s from her husband for "clothes;" and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June the same year, after Egerton had already accepted £3 15s 3p, John "gave her more as a Gift" increasing the total to £6 19s 9p.<sup>79</sup> In this period of just eighteenth months, Egerton received a total of thirty-six payments from her husband, all of which were over a pound. These sums are often larger and more substantial when she is tasked with paying the servant's wages or receiving a lump sum for "housekeeping": on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1709, Egerton received £6 12s to "pay servants wages," while in April 1710 she was given £7 16s as an additional payment.<sup>80</sup> Even while her husband was alive then, Egerton clearly commanded considerable amounts of money and possessed the knowhow and skills to control these regular disbursements. This in itself is not unusual; Ingrid Tague has drawn attention to

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<sup>78</sup> See Quin, *Quin's Rudiments of Book-keeping*, 25.

<sup>79</sup> Personal Account Book of John Egerton, 1709-1738, Egerton of Tatton, DET/3229/1/15, 3, 9, 7. It is unclear whether this is contractual pin money on account of the absence of a marriage settlement, but these payments are not consistent in amount or regularity which suggests it is a more informal allowance. On definitions of pin money see: Susan Staves, "Pin Money," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 14 (1985): 47-77.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 6. Payments to servants appear in almost every month, suggesting they were paid monthly. There is no breakdown of how many servants worked in the house, or what each were paid, but the relatively small sums suggest few household staff. On eighteenth-century servants and their wages see Bridget Hill, *Servants: English Domesticity in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

instances of women managing large-scale transactions during this period, even as wives. Mary Delany for instance “had a budget of £600 a year for her household expenses” on top of extra money for “men’s wages, the liveries, the stables, wine cellar and garden, furniture and all repairs,” and at the higher end of the scale “Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s annual household expenditure in the mid-1720s ranged from £849 to £1140.”<sup>81</sup> In comparison to these sums, Egerton’s payments are much lower. Nevertheless, John Egerton’s account does confirm that Egerton’s economic involvement in the estate precedes the period in which she was widowed. The fragmentary evidence of Egerton’s financial management on the reverse of her husband’s loose accounts, alongside these brief references indicate that, even prior to her husband’s death, Egerton possessed the knowledge and ability to manage money. These pages provide a snapshot into the collaborative accounts of husband and wife and, most importantly, a partial insight into the years in which Egerton is most elusive.

While John Egerton’s entries last a mere eight pages, this is not the end of the account book, and an equally fractional insight into the years following his death also remains. The pages following John’s final entry in 1710, however, have since been removed, leaving only the inscriptions along the bound edge of the page. Interestingly, the handwriting on these marginal entries is that of Egerton herself. These inscriptions span a period of six years, from August 1724 (a month after she was widowed) to August 1730 (a year before her eldest son came of age). Despite a lapse of fourteen years since John’s final entry, Egerton clearly returned to her husband’s account book

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<sup>81</sup> Ingrid Tague, *Women of Quality: Accepting and Contesting Ideals of Femininity in England, 1690-1760* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), 99; Mary Delany, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Grenville, Mrs. Delany: With Interesting Reminiscences of King George the Third and Queen Charlotte* (London: Bentley, 1861-2), 3: 530 cited in Tague, *Women of Quality*, 99. For more work on women’s management of money while married see: Vickery, *The Gentleman’s Daughter*; Amanda Vickery, “His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Household Accounting in Eighteenth-Century England,” *Past & Present* 1, no. suppl-1 (2006): 12-38; Josephine Maltby and Janette Rutterford, “Editorial: Women, Accounting and Investment,” *Accounting, Business & Financial History* 16, no. 2 (2006): 133-142.

upon his death to log her own management of the estate. The removal of the content of these pages prevents any kind of reading of the items she shopped for or amounts she managed, but the very presence of Egerton's hand does reveal the possibility of reading this document to plot emotional ties and losses. Mary Poovey first posited the concept that such texts could represent more than quantifiable assets on account of the level of inwardness that methods of bookkeeping invariably prompted from their author.<sup>82</sup> Since then, Margot Finn and Adam Smyth have most notably emphasised the interconnectedness between autobiographical writing and early-modern accounting, and the more recent work of individuals such as Alice Dolan only confirms this potential.<sup>83</sup> To take these findings further, John Egerton's account book not only alludes to various events within the lifecycle of its owners, but also materially mirrors them. The physical fabric of this book – the change in handwriting, the removal of certain pages, the incomplete nature of its entries – reflects John Egerton's death, the point at which the estate passed to his wife, and their eldest son's coming of age through each respective alteration. That these events are all discernible without reading the content of the page, demonstrates the importance of understanding this document as more than a simple list of expenses and rather a filed series of events, emotions, and interactions with the material page.

Egerton's entries are not exclusively limited to marginal data, however, and later in this text more complete records do appear. Aside from a note dated the 27<sup>th</sup> of

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<sup>82</sup> Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 29-91; see also Sean Silver, *The Mind is a Collection: Case Studies in Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 233.

<sup>83</sup> Finn, *The Character of Credit*, 64-105; Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England*; Alice Dolan, "The Fabric of Life: Time and Textiles in an Eighteenth-Century Plebian Home," *Home Cultures* 11, no. 3 (2014): 353-374. Jason Scott-Warren, however, warns against reading into narratives that do not exist: "we ought not to let the search for selfhood distort sources that have a distinctly narrow interest in the individual." Jason Scott-Warren, "Early Modern Bookkeeping and Life-Writing Revisited: Accounting for Richard Stonley," *Past and Present* 230, suppl. 11 (2016): 151-170.

March 1738 which details Egerton's gift of £50 to her granddaughter, the rest of the account book remains largely blank.<sup>84</sup> That is until the document is upturned and read back-to-front. These upside-down pages at the end of the document reveal another set of accounts in Egerton's hand. The entries here date from the mid-1720s and, while many have also been subject to removal, some accounts do remain. On these pages it is possible to gain a more comprehensive insight into the transactions Egerton oversaw. These pages, for example, only appear to detail income. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 1726, Egerton received £1 70s from a "Peter Newton" for "the years Rent for y<sup>e</sup> Smithy at Tatton."<sup>85</sup> In July 1724, she received a total of £3 18s 8p for the sale of "a Bull," and on March the 7<sup>th</sup> 1727 Egerton recorded that she "Receiv'd Interest Money for a Hundred Pound of Jacks."<sup>86</sup> Immediately evident on Egerton's pages is the extent to which her use of the document differed to that of her husband. Whereas the entries in John's hand list only outgoings, Egerton clearly reserved the back pages exclusively for the recording of income. More than mere imitation, Egerton distinctly made this account book her own.

Many eighteenth-century advice manuals encouraged their readers to be transparent in their systems of accounting to ensure that, in the event of an early death, their books could be inherited and continued by their widows.<sup>87</sup> Daniel Defoe in his 1726 *The Complete English Tradesman* wrote: "I would have every tradesman make his wife so much acquainted with his trade, and so much mistress of the managing part of it, that she might be able to carry it on if she pleased, in case of his death."<sup>88</sup> On the death of her husband, "the only relief" a widow would have "is her husband's books,

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<sup>84</sup> Personal Account Book of John Egerton, DET/3229/1/15, 30.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 47; 45.

<sup>87</sup> See Connor, *Women, Accounting and Narrative*, 57-59.

<sup>88</sup> Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman, in Familiar Letters; Directing him in all the Several Parts and Progressions of Trade [...]* (London, 1726).

and she is happy in that, but just in proportion to the care he took in keeping them.”<sup>89</sup> It was not uncommon for women to assume the management of their husband’s accounts in widowhood and, as Amy Louise Erickson’s study of female entrepreneurs has shown, in some cases “the business management of the[se] widows ... [often] lasted longer than their husbands’ proprietorship.”<sup>90</sup> In Egerton’s case, rather, it is the process by which she assumed the financial management of the estate that is intriguing. In the same way that printed manuals included blank pages for readers to practice and apply their methods, the half-finished and incomplete nature of John Egerton’s entries can be seen to have prompted a similar custom – these pages provide the framework for Egerton’s later use.<sup>91</sup> But more than resuming these accounts, Egerton creates a physical distinction between these entries and her own. In turning the document upside-down, Egerton reconceptualises these pages; the document, depending on which way it is opened, is two separate objects. Egerton “visually package[s]” her accounts as both materially and systematically distinct from those of her husband.<sup>92</sup> Not only then does this document physically resemble life events experienced by the family, but it also reveals the variety of visual and material systems of administration employed in a single textual space. This volume itself was a self-contained tool of organisation.

Consistent with her use of loose papers, Egerton’s entries also reveal how this account book was situated within a wider corpus of textual locations. Certain overlaps exist, for example, between the information logged on Egerton’s pages of this book and the notational fragments on her collection of bills and receipts. The repetition of

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>90</sup> Amy Louise Erickson, “Wealthy Businesswomen, Marriage and Succession in Eighteenth-Century London,” *Business History* ahead-of-print, no. ahead-of-print (2022): 25.

<sup>91</sup> For work on such advice literature see: Raven, *Publishing Business in Eighteenth-Century England*, 180-205.

<sup>92</sup> This phrase is taken from Eddy, “The Shape of Knowledge,” 215.

various names points to a network of staff that were involved in the financial management of the estate.<sup>93</sup> A “Samuel Harrison” is particularly prominent; he is mentioned across ten of the unfiled papers and named on three separate pages in the account book. Harrison’s intermediary role is made clear on a bill dated the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 1728 that Egerton labelled “for Repairs [at] Millfield.” The bill, charged to Egerton for various metalwork, was paid on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July the same year with the memorandum: “Rec<sup>d</sup> from M<sup>rs</sup> Egerton by Sam<sup>l</sup> Harrison the Sume Nine Shillings in full of all Acc<sup>ts</sup>.”<sup>94</sup> Throughout the account book, Egerton frequently receives rent from Harrison’s hands: in July 1724, Egerton recorded that she “Received of Mr Samuel Harrison Rent for y<sup>e</sup> whole year.”<sup>95</sup> On the line below she goes on to add “his deductions for Land Tax &c: I place w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> rest of y<sup>e</sup> aquitances.”<sup>96</sup> That Egerton’s financial management encompasses both an organisation of textual bodies and personnel, displays how the administrative skills that underpinned the management of her papers could also extend to the management of people. Eighteenth-century accounting practices were, at their core, a social endeavour, in Natalie Roxburgh’s words: “[c]orrect accounting required a physical process of co-ordinating multiple human beings and multiple pieces of paper.”<sup>97</sup> Just as these textual records provided a tangible extension of the money that passed through the estate, so too could they reflect the personnel dealings behind such transactions. More than providing an insight into Egerton’s network of staff and employees, the repetition of various names across

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<sup>93</sup> The repetition of one Edmond Harrison is also prominent throughout these papers, who was Tatton’s steward. In a letter to her son dated the 7<sup>th</sup> of August c. 1729, Egerton wrote “I have not yet got another Steward I’m afraid of taking one. I nor you I fear will ever meet w<sup>th</sup> another Edmond.” Elizabeth Egerton to John Egerton Jr. August 1728, Letters and Papers of John Egerton and Magdalene College, Cambridge, c. 1729, Egerton of Tatton, DET/4674/5, Cheshire Archives and Local Studies.

<sup>94</sup> Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/6/1/39.

<sup>95</sup> Personal Account Book of John Egerton, DET/3229/1/15, 47.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Natalie Roxburgh, “Rethinking Gender and Virtue through Richardson’s Domestic Accounting,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 24, no. 3 (2012): 407.



distinct textual locations displays how loose papers worked in tandem with both bound materials, and the people whose hands they passed through.

Egerton's combination of loose and bound papers to record, file, and organise her financial management of the Tatton estate corroborates Adam Smyth's conceptualisation of the eighteenth-century account book "as a space through which a tremendous amount of textual traffic passed ... [that] was not separated but intimately connected to many other kinds of record."<sup>98</sup> The repetition of names between Egerton's loose papers and her account book attests to the interconnected nature of these materials, but such "textual traffic" also remains tangibly preserved within the document itself. Following Egerton's record of income at the reverse of this book, is a four-page list of accounts that detail the payment of Egerton's jointure. These span the years 1732-1738 – the period in which her eldest son managed the estate. The entries here are written in different handwritings but are all signed by Egerton herself, likely as a means of verifying the receipt of the payment. The entry dated the 21<sup>st</sup> of July 1735, for example, reads "Rec[eiv]ed from my son John Egerton the Summ of one hundred pounds in part of my Joynture for the year 1734 by me E Egerton."<sup>99</sup> In the first instance, the year 1734 signifies that Egerton continued to use this document during the years her eldest son managed the estate, once again demonstrating how the visual and textual organisation of these pages denote changes in the Tatton family dynamic. The use of the first person, moreover, means that although written by a third party, they read from Egerton's point of view (much like her labels on the earlier documents).<sup>100</sup> Akin to Roxana's capitalisation of the financial management of the

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<sup>98</sup> Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England*, 82.

<sup>99</sup> Personal Account Book of John Egerton, DET/3229/1/15, 34.

<sup>100</sup> The lack of written material and the deterioration in her handwriting in other instances during these years suggest that Egerton was perhaps incapable of writing for extended amounts of time due to ill health. See for example: Accounts and Receipts, 1725-1738, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133

men around her, it appears that Egerton too monopolised the economic environment of the household.

Also preserved within this list is a fragment of what was once a letter – the seal on the reverse and the remanence of a “Knotsford” postal stamp corroborate this. This fragment possesses a passage identical to those entered in the book; it is consistent in the placing of formula such as the date, amount, and signature, as well as the content of the entry itself (see Figures 2.3 and 2.4). The similarities between this loose paper and the entries written onto the pages of the book display how these records were not limited to a single location, even when the same information is concerned. That this fragment remains tucked into the pages of a bound document also preserves the motions that underpinned this process; information was written, moved, and organised in an asynchronous manner. Moreover, the fact this paper still exists alongside its transcribed counterparts alludes to a culture that valued loose material as equally important to that which was bound. This scrap was not a temporary memorandum to be copied out at a late date, but rather an entry equal to those on the bound page. All of this goes to say that Egerton’s financial management was a complex process that involved the coordination of several discrete components. Her accounting, much like the practices of the men who bewildered Defoe’s Roxana, was not limited to one document or location. Instead, it traversed a variety of paper sites – sites in which loose paper figured just as valuable as the bound pages of a book.

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EGT/3/7/1/2/1; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/4; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/8; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/9; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/13; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/19.

March 27<sup>th</sup> 1738.

Rec<sup>d</sup>. of my Son Egerton the Sum of Seventy  
 Five Pounds being for a 2<sup>d</sup>. Jointure & in full of all  
 Demands due to me the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 1738

£ 75:00:0 E Egerton

Figure 2.3. Receipt of Egerton's jointure payment recorded on a loose piece of paper, 27<sup>th</sup> March 1738.

Aug<sup>th</sup> the 8<sup>th</sup> 1734

Rec<sup>d</sup> the Summ of fifty pounds in part of <sup>£ 10</sup>  
 my Jointure for the Year 1733 by me <sup>50:0:0</sup>  
 E Egerton

December 4<sup>th</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> 1734

Rec<sup>d</sup> the Summ of one hundred thirty seven pounds  
 Ten Shillings being the remainder of my Jointure <sup>137:10</sup>  
 due to me for the Year 1733. I say rec<sup>d</sup> by me  
 E Egerton

July 21<sup>st</sup> 1735.

Rec<sup>d</sup> from my Son John Egerton the Summ  
 of one hundred pounds in part of my Jointure  
 for the Year 1734 by me E Egerton

£ 100:0:0

Figure 2.4. Receipts of Egerton's jointure payment recorded in the account book, 1734-1735.

Such “textual traffic,” moreover, was not exclusively limited to the movement of information between loose and bound papers. Fundamental to successful accounting was also the maintenance of more than one book. Quin’s *Rudiments of Book-keeping* advised that “[f]or the regular order of keeping *accounts by double entry*, in *mercantile*, or other extensive *negotiations*, it is absolutely necessary to have the three following books: *A Day-Book, Journal, and Ledger*.”<sup>101</sup> While on a much smaller scale to the instructions set out by Quin, Egerton too appears to have maintained more than one book. On the marginal entries that immediately follow her husband’s accounts, for example, Egerton recorded a memorandum that reads: “note y<sup>e</sup> Survey is wrote in a Parchment Book.”<sup>102</sup> Similarly, later in the record when entering the income received from rents, Egerton penned “[r]eceived for Herriots y<sup>e</sup> particulars will appear in a Book I keepe for that purpose.”<sup>103</sup> Not only did Egerton use this account book within an environment of detached papers, but it was evidently also part of a network of bound material. This scheme was systematic; that Egerton differentiates one of these books solely for the recording of heriot payments alludes to a web of distinct texts, each with their own specific purpose. Here, Egerton validates the authority of her role. This was not a passive exercise of repetition, but rather a careful and selective contribution that required intimate knowledge of the transactions she recorded and their place within her wider financial domain. As Angus Edmund Vine has established, such a system of “miscellaneity operated as an organizational principle” – a “process of refinement and transcription,” one that was “both conceptual

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<sup>101</sup> Quin, *Quin’s Rudiments of Book-keeping*, 16; for an outline of various required books and their uses see Jacob Soll, “Accounting,” in *Information: A Historical Companion*, ed. Ann Blair, Paul Duguid, Anja-Silva Goeing, and Anthony Grafton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 287-293.

<sup>102</sup> Personal Account Book of John Egerton, DET/3229/1/15, 17.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

and fully realized in material form.”<sup>104</sup> While these additional books no longer remain, Egerton’s references to her methods of recording imaginatively reproduces her network of documents. That it is the process that Egerton has documented is significant for, as Sean Silver indicates, the multiple books kept by accountants are an example “of an extended cognitive system, a set of instruments that disperse a cognitive process across disparate media.”<sup>105</sup> While distinct in form, these books are brought together through the “cognitive system[s]” they designate. In reading Egerton’s citational practice, therefore, it is possible to go some way towards mapping the diverse locations of her accounts, irrespective of their archival status today. These references delineate a system of accounting in which information passed between document, form, and location in a lively and empirical manner – all of which Egerton administratively oversaw.

### Accounting and Preservation

Throughout this chapter, the material discussed has been haunted by the paradox that, in Lisa Gitelman’s words, “paper is a figure both for all that is sturdy and stable (as in, “Let’s get that on paper!”), and for all that is insubstantial and ephemeral (including the paper tiger and the house of cards).”<sup>106</sup> As I have illustrated, the eighteenth-century financial world repeatedly contended with this contradiction; at the same time as writers such as Defoe were encouraging paper records as fundamental to fiscal management and business acumen, there was an increasing distrust surrounding an economy that relied on paper money and credit. With these

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<sup>104</sup> Vine, *Miscellaneous Order*, 133.

<sup>105</sup> Silver, *The Mind is a Collection*, 234.

<sup>106</sup> Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 3.

debates in mind, the chapter concludes with an exploration of how Egerton's archive reflects this paradox – how does the partial, fragmented, and modified nature of Egerton's archive appear within a culture that overtly proclaimed the careful preservation of such documents?

Uncovering the efforts of women in what were typically masculine realms such as estate accounting is in itself a challenging feat; while, as Briony McDonagh asserts, “many married women would have had responsibility for at least some aspects of household accounting,” “female-authored estate accounts and ledgers are ... difficult to identify.”<sup>107</sup> McDonagh identifies that this is in part due to a lack of clarity in archival catalogues: “the ledgers kept by landowning women have sometimes been miscatalogued as their steward's account books, while those kept by women on behalf of absent husbands or sons do not always clearly identify their author.”<sup>108</sup> While this is partially true for Tatton's archives (the “Account Book of John Egerton” contains no reference to the fact it was used by anyone other than himself), Egerton's accounts also allude to a more overt removal. As I have mentioned, Egerton's pages throughout her husband's account book are frequently missing (see Figure 2.5). Significantly, the pages that do remain are exclusively those recording estate income, suggesting that an attempt was made to eliminate evidence of Egerton's expenditure. Egerton's pages were cherrypicked; this was not a bulk deletion of all her entries and rather the document was sifted through with specific pages chosen to be preserved. Consequently, the document that remains today tells a specific, curated narrative.

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<sup>107</sup> McDonagh, “On Being ‘fully and completely mistress of the whole business’,” 154.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*



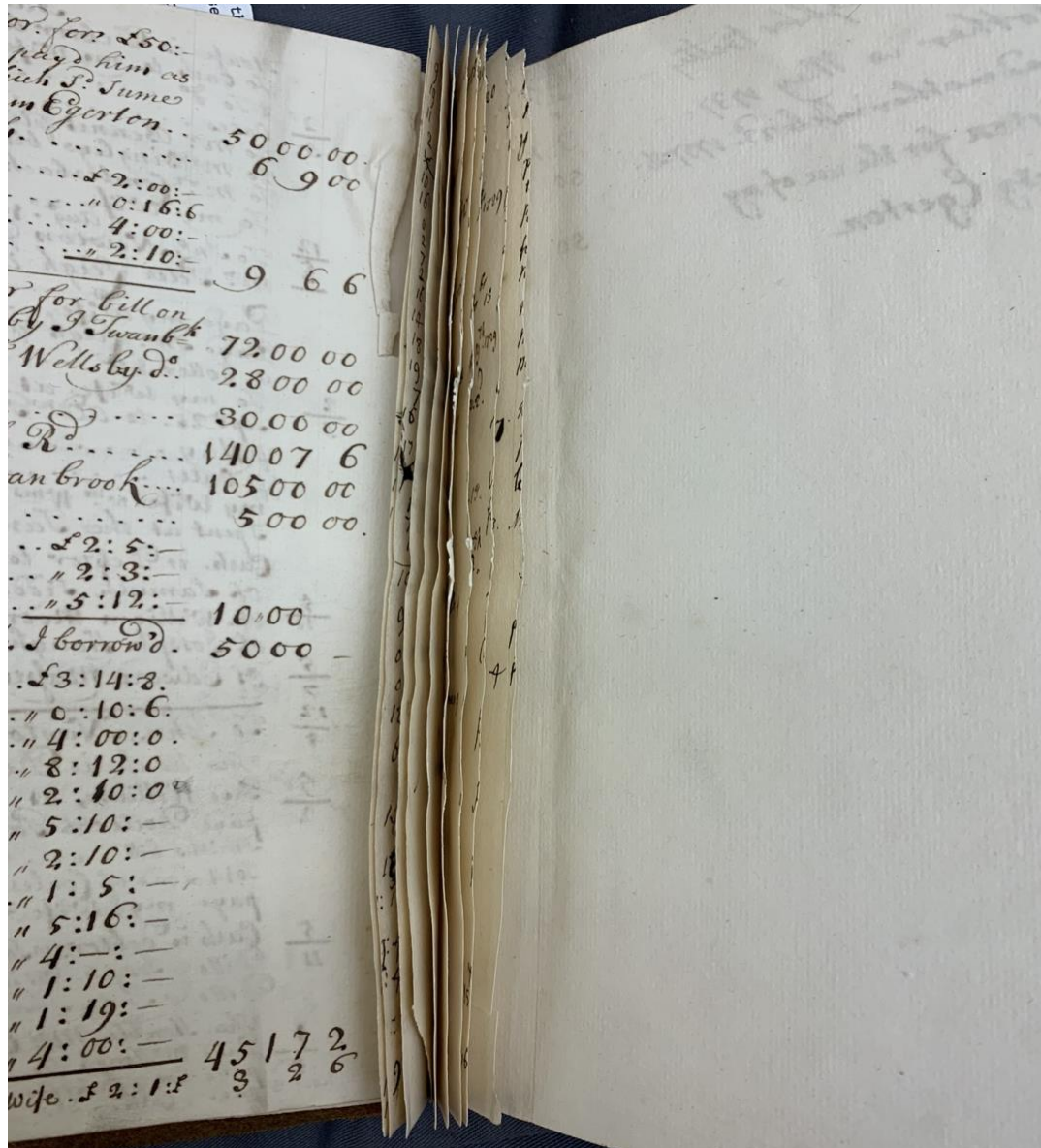


Figure 2.5. Instances in the account book where the pages in Egerton’s hand have been removed.

The reason for this removal, or indeed when the act occurred, is unknown. One plausible explanation, given the fact it is her expenditure that no longer remains, could be that Egerton’s financial management was not successful – whether removed by herself or a descendent, evidence is destroyed to safeguard the estate’s future. At the death of her eldest son, John Egerton Jnr, in 1738, the estate passed to Egerton’s second heir, Samuel. It is also at this point that Egerton’s voice disappears; while she continued to hold some influence over the Tatton finances during John’s management,

the only remaining documents in her hand following Samuel's inheritance are notes concerning the payment of her jointure.<sup>109</sup> Samuel's management of the estate, in comparison to that of his mother and brother, was ruthless. A lengthy dispute regarding the portion paid to John's surviving daughter, paints Samuel as a cold and frugal patriarch, yet one that was clearly attuned to the costs of running an estate such as Tatton.<sup>110</sup> In the years following Samuel's inheritance but prior to Egerton's death in 1743, moreover, Tatton was leased to a George Leigh – an act which Egerton had staunchly objected to twenty years previously.<sup>111</sup> These financial concerns were outlined in a letter to Samuel penned by his younger brother Thomas, in 1739:

I see you have sett Tatton to Mr George Leigh for 5 Years & intend selling all y<sup>e</sup> Goods w<sup>ch</sup> I think you judge right in, I own y<sup>e</sup> heavy Charges upon y<sup>e</sup> Estate make your Circumstance & Case much to be pitied & y<sup>t</sup> 'tis a great mortification to have only a Nominal Estate, however as the enlarging of yourself depends very much upon Casualties, nothing but real necessity were I in y<sup>r</sup> Circumstances should engage me to sell so pritty & pleasant a Seat, but of y<sup>t</sup> you are y<sup>e</sup> best judge; would not your Inclination lead you to marry 'tis possible you might retrieve y<sup>r</sup> Circumstances very agreeably that way.<sup>112</sup>

In line with a reading of Egerton's economic management as less than exemplary, alongside Samuel's severe approach to rectify the estate's finances, it is plausible that

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<sup>109</sup> See for example: Receipts and Accounts [Samuel Egerton], 1739-1779, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/1; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/4; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/8; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/9; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/13; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2/19.

<sup>110</sup> Papers Relating to the Settlement of John Egerton's Estate, 1739-1744, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/1; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/2; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/3; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/4; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/5; GB 133 EGT/3/7/1/6.

<sup>111</sup> In an undated letter to her brother she wrote: "With great submission to your better Judgement I desire Tatton may not be sould it is as desirable an Estate and has as much Royalty becoming it and is as entire as any I ever heard of that Value w<sup>ch</sup> will make it a heart breaking to me to have it parted with since it has pleased God to continue to me two Son's and I trust neither of 'em spendthrifts." Elizabeth Egerton to Samuel Hill, undated, Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/2/6/1/7/3.

<sup>112</sup> Thomas Egerton to Samuel Egerton, [8<sup>th</sup> December 1739], Letters from Family Members [Samuel Egerton], Egerton of Tatton Muniments, GB 133 EGT/3/7/6/1/3/1.



it was Samuel who removed his mother's pages from the account book. His dispute with his niece and his widowed sister-in-law highlight his lack of concern for family ties, and his willingness to lease Tatton implies an evident lack of sentimentality.

Irrespective of who removed these pages, however, the significance of such an act is especially noticeable when read in line with contemporary understandings of the permanence of financial records. The very purpose of keeping an account book supported a certain level of memorialisation; these documents were, fundamentally, there to be checked and referred back to in the event of unexplained costs. In the act of writing material onto the pages of an account book, the author acknowledged a certain permanence to their words. As Roxburgh has indicated, "extreme care was taken regarding the preservation of the account book."<sup>113</sup> More than their immediate use too, these documents were passed down through generations; they were used as the basis for posthumously written memoirs, as sites for genealogical inquiry, or to trace the provenance of household stuffs.<sup>114</sup> For such a record to reveal missing pages then, inherently contradicts its intended purpose. Through the removal of her pages, Egerton herself has been removed her from the history of the estate. Beverly Lemire's statement that "subsumed within this system of accounts were the ingrained social and gender inequities excluded from the bookkeeper's systematic reckoning," is especially compelling here.<sup>115</sup> Even in an environment that explicitly proclaimed posterity, women's voices could fall victim to archival removal. All of this speaks to a culture in which paper was mutable; the paradox of being at once "sturdy and stable" while also "insubstantial and ephemeral." The destruction of Egerton's pages implies that even supposedly fixed and permanent documents could be tampered with by future

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<sup>113</sup> Roxburgh, "Rethinking Gender and Virtue through Richardson's Domestic Accounting," 406.

<sup>114</sup> McDonagh, "Gender, Land and Estate Accounting in Georgian England," 167; Peck, "Manuscripts, Memory, and the Family Archive in Eighteenth Century England," 7.

<sup>115</sup> Lemire, *The Business of Everyday Life*, 195.

generations. In Imogen Peck's words: "[t]he value of these papers was not fixed, but was reshaped and reinterpreted as time went by."<sup>116</sup> While eighteenth-century financial management increasingly relied on the material stability of paper in order to conceptualise, narrate, and preserve these transactions, such documents were never finite. Even when contained on the pages of a single record could various hierarchies, preoccupations, and motivations materialise at the expense of their authors.

To conclude, this chapter has highlighted the miscellany of paper documents that underpinned early eighteenth-century accounting practices. Defoe's *Roxana* foregrounds the importance of these paper networks; this novel toys with the contemporary shift between material wealth and paper money, and Defoe uses Roxana's inability to comprehend the benefits of this new economy to ultimately hinder her redemption. In a world that increasingly valued the immaterially measurable, Roxana's attraction to tangible wealth aligns her more closely to a "Lady of Pleasure" than a "Woman of Business." Defoe's penchant for including his character's accounts establishes the role of financial documents in telling the stories, histories, and lives of individuals. It is within such paper economies that it is possible to uncover women such as Elizabeth Egerton. In the absence of a diary, complete set of papers, or ongoing correspondence, Egerton's active years remain hidden within her assemblage of trade cards, bills, promissory notes, receipts, and a single remaining account book. Nevertheless, we have seen how Egerton wrote, stored, filed, and organised these papers, alongside the cognitive systems that upheld these methods. Egerton clearly both acquired these skills from her education as a wife, yet also consciously constructed her own practices once a widow. The survival of Egerton's

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<sup>116</sup> Peck, "Manuscripts, Memory, and the Family Archive in Eighteenth Century England," 8.

handwriting in the account book of her husband likewise reveals how she exerted a level of independence. The book itself (that is its physical pages, the writing that adorns them, and its extant state) equally presents various emotional ties and losses experienced by the family. Its pages illustrate how reading such documents as objects can reveal social interactions as well as economic ones. This sociability similarly extends to the movements underpinning Egerton's finances. Here, information passed between document, form, and person in an animated yet pragmatic manner – the skeleton of this network remains imaginatively imprinted on the pages of its discrete components, even while the complete network does not exist. Consistent throughout this chapter, however, has been the lingering fragility of these papers. The survival of Egerton's voice is constantly dictated by her relationship to the person who headed the household. This occasional preservation, moreover, is paradoxical; financial documents were intended to be saved. In the face of these gaps, this chapter has aimed at returning Egerton's discrete fragments to the intertextual, intermaterial, and cross-referenced state in which they were once conceived to be. Not only did this complex web of papers underpin eighteenth-century accounting practices but such notational sources can also be used to illuminate the lives of women who have since fallen victim to historical erasure.

This chapter has reconceptualised Egerton's discrete and static papers as a lively and interdependent collection, wherein items were valued for both their individual and collective worth. These intertextual and citational practices are carried into the next chapter, wherein I explore the historical endeavours of Cecilia Strickland at Sizergh Castle. Just as Egerton's accounting relied on the citational uses of source material, Strickland's utilisation of the scientific and increasingly professionalised methods of historiography established a writing persona founded on the management

and presentation of paper. Like Egerton, these techniques provided access into male-dominated environments, and were learned and upheld through the print contexts of their creation.

## History Through Her Hands: Cecilia Strickland and Women's Practices of Historiography

In their commentary on the first volume of Catharine Macaulay's *History of England from the Accession of James I* (1763), the *Monthly Review* reflected that "the work before us has unquestionable merit; though perhaps some rigid critics may dispute the propriety of calling it a History."<sup>1</sup> This anonymous reviewer resolves to disregard their question of genre "in spite of hypercritics," yet repeatedly circles back to query the credibility of the text: though "we must heartily concur with the Lady in her sentiments" the *Review* continues, "it is the business of an Historian first to state facts, and then to make such observations, and deduce such inferences as those facts will warrant."<sup>2</sup> The *Monthly Review's* self-contradictory reflections on what constituted history writing confirm Ben Dew and Fiona Price's statement that "[h]istory occupied a paradoxical position within eighteenth-century culture."<sup>3</sup> This paradox, as Lisa Kasmer has noted, appeared largely on account of competing uses of the genre. At the same time as "rationalistic historiography ... tethered historical facts to broad social, philosophical, and humanitarian frame[s] of reference" did such writing also begin "to incorporate components of the private sphere into the public sphere of history writing through the use of letters, opinions ... gossip, innuendo, and private papers."<sup>4</sup> As Mark

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<sup>1</sup> R., "The History of England from the Accession of James the First to that of the Brunswick Line," *Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825* 29 (1763): 372. A different extract from this review is cited in Kate Davies, *Catharine Macaulay and Mercy Otis Warren: The Revolutionary Atlantic and the Politics of Gender* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 73.

<sup>2</sup> R., "The History of England from the Accession of James the First to that of the Brunswick Line," 376.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Dew and Fiona Price, "Introduction: Visions of History," in *Historical Writing in Britain, 1688-1830: Visions of History*, ed. Ben Dew and Fiona Price (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Lisa Kasmer, *Novel Histories: British Women Writing History, 1760-1830* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), 9.

Salber Phillips summarises: “[e]ighteenth-century historiography encompassed a wide and diverse body of writing.”<sup>5</sup> The *Monthly Review*’s stance on Macaulay’s *History of England* encapsulates the increasing ambiguity that surrounded eighteenth-century definitions of history as a genre.

Significant in the *Monthly Review*’s commentary, moreover, is the fact that this *History of England* was written by a “female pen.”<sup>6</sup> Jane Rendall and Isobel Grundy have each drawn attention to how classifications of history writing have often obscured women’s contributions to the subject, while Betty A. Schellenberg has demonstrated how writers such as Sarah Scott “used this contested space, with its debates about the relative uses of scholarly fact and coherent narrative, entertainment and instruction, and public versus private lives ... as a fertile field for the development of her own theory and methodology of history-writing.”<sup>7</sup> Crucially, as Daniel Woolf has shown, “the making of modern genres [of history] is ... intimately bound up with the making of modern gender.”<sup>8</sup> “This gendering of genre” Woolf continues, “is itself one episode in a longer-standing ... contest between reality and imagination, fact and fiction.”<sup>9</sup> Persistent throughout the period therefore, was the debate that history was a masculine form of literature, in contrast to the feminine and domestic novel. While

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<sup>5</sup> Mark Salber Phillips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 24. See also Abigail Williams, *The Social Life of Books: Reading Together in the Eighteenth-Century Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 250-258.

<sup>6</sup> R., “The History of England from the Accession of James the First to that of the Brunswick Line,” 375.

<sup>7</sup> Jane Rendall, “Writing History for British Women: Elizabeth Hamilton and the *Memoirs of Agrippina*,” in *Wollstonecraft’s Daughters: Womanhood in England and France, 1780-1920*, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 81-82; Isobel Grundy, “Women’s History? Writing by English Nuns,” in *Women Writing History 1640-1740*, ed. Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (London: Batsford, 1992), 116-138; Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 81.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel R. Woolf, “A Feminine Past? Gender, Genre, and Historical Knowledge in England, 1500-1800,” *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 3 (1997): 647.

<sup>9</sup> Woolf, “A Feminine Past?,” 648.

such lines were blurred as much as they were upheld, it is these divisions that form an important basis for this chapter.

Devoney Looser has recognised that “[o]ne way” women were “distance[d] women from history was [through the] increased professionalizing and scientizing” of the subject.<sup>10</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century, as Kasmer has reiterated, history writing had become a scientific endeavour that “demanded new techniques such as archival and original sources[,] and university training that would be out of the reach of most women.”<sup>11</sup> Hester Thrale Piozzi’s history *Retrospection* (1801), for instance, was criticised largely for its lack of grounding evidence, including dates and primary source material.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, David Hume’s *History of England*, the first volume of which appeared in 1754, notably “stood outside the masculinist modes of Whig historiography” in Mary Spongberg’s words, because of his belief that “[f]irst-hand accounts ... were impartial and unintelligible.”<sup>13</sup> Hume’s “desire to promote interest and sympathy in his readers” tailored his work specifically towards women.<sup>14</sup> Mainstream histories, Looser continues, were increasingly valued as formal publications that included “an index, a table of contents, [and] marginal dates.”<sup>15</sup> Fundamental to history writing and its attempted exclusion of women, was the management and presentation of source material – a scientific and pragmatic approach to counter the invented narratives of fiction.

Despite these ongoing contestations, eighteenth-century women did engage with history. Madeleine Pelling has highlighted how women were “not just ... readers,

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<sup>10</sup> Devoney Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History, 1670-1820* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 8-9.

<sup>11</sup> Kasmer, *Novel Histories*, 7.

<sup>12</sup> Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History*, 133 and 172.

<sup>13</sup> Mary Spongberg, *Women Writers and the Nation's Past, 1790-1860: Empathetic Histories* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 31.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>15</sup> Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History*, 169.

or indeed writers of historical commentary” but they were also “creators of historiographical and imaginative productions manifest across a range of manuscript platforms.”<sup>16</sup> Beyond the formal writings and published accounts of Macaulay, Thrale, and Scott, women also engaged with history in private, personal, and intimate ways. As Crystal B. Lake has illustrated, the very fact that they were “discouraged from writing [history] ... engendered unique opportunities for women to intervene creatively in historiography.”<sup>17</sup> With these debates in mind, this chapter contextualises the quotidian writing and historical endeavours of Cecilia Strickland (1741-1814). While Strickland did not publish or indeed write a specific work of history, this chapter will explore how the historiographical emphasis of the period’s print culture did inform her approach to epistolary negotiations, presentations of family history, and the preservation and organisation of estate papers. In Woolf’s words, “it is a mistake to base a rethinking of their [women’s] role exclusively on the relatively small number of actual histories that were female-authored before 1800.”<sup>18</sup> Strickland’s papers highlight the intersection between public writing about public figures, and the private management of personal family histories.

Cecilia Strickland was born into the prosperous Townley family in 1741.<sup>19</sup> A devout Roman Catholic, Strickland was educated at a convent in France, and married Charles Strickland (from a neighbouring Catholic family) of Sizergh Hall in 1762.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Madeleine Pelling, “Reimagining Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots: Women’s Historiography and Domestic Identities, c. 1750-1800,” *Women’s History Review* 29, no. 7 (2020): 1108.

<sup>17</sup> Crystal B. Lake, “History Writing and Antiquarianism,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Women’s Writing in the Romantic Period*, ed. Devoney Looser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 90.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Woolf, “‘A Most Indefatigable Love of History’: Carter, Montagu, and Female Discussions of History, 1740-1790,” *Women’s History Review* 20, no. 5 (2011): 709.

<sup>19</sup> The common spelling of the family name is now “Towneley.” I am choosing to use “Townley” in keeping with how the eighteenth-century family signed their names.

<sup>20</sup> Tonya Moutray McArthur, “Peregrinations to the Convent: Hester Thrale Piozzi and Ann Radcliffe,” in *British-French Exchanges in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Kathleen Hardest Doig and Dorothy Medlin (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 126.



The Stricklands were a Jacobite family who, at the accession of William and Mary in 1688, were forced into exile.<sup>21</sup> Material reminders commemorating the Stricklands' return to Sizergh remain in the house today and attest to the family's proximity to the Stuart line.<sup>22</sup> These items, moreover, would have been present during the family's occupancy in the eighteenth century. Strickland and Charles had four children together before his death in 1770 and, perhaps unsurprisingly given the context of the previous two chapters, none of Strickland's papers survive from the period before Charles' death. Strickland remarried in April 1779 to a cousin of her first husband, Jarrard Strickland; they had three children throughout the 1780s, before Strickland was widowed for a second time in 1795. Strickland's remaining papers paint a picture of an independent woman who, as a single mother for most of her adult life, was left in charge of the management, organisation, and continuation of the Sizergh estate. In chapter one, I established how distance from as opposed to proximity to the country house resulted in the survival of the Winn sisters' papers, in spite of their dispossession from Nostell Priory. In chapter two we saw how Egerton wrote, stored, filed, and organised her own documents, alongside the cognitive systems that upheld their management – systems which, although intended for posterity, nonetheless failed to safeguard their survival. More so than the Winns or Egerton, however, Strickland was active in the creation Sizergh's archive. Akin to the financial methods employed by Egerton, this chapter considers the extent to which Strickland's interest in historiography and her engagement with the increasingly scientific emphasis of the

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<sup>21</sup> Gabriel Glickman, *The English Catholic Community, 1699-1745: Politics, Culture and Ideology* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2009), 61-62.

<sup>22</sup> See for example the "Table Top" made for the Stricklands following their exile. "Table Top," NT 998135, National Trust Collections, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed February 23, 2022, <https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/998135>.

discipline, shaped her perception of letters and manuscripts as evidential documents worthy of preservation.

Consistent with Egerton and the Winns, Strickland's letters are sparse. Like the women studied thus far, Strickland does not have a repository of papers dedicated to herself; instead, they chiefly remain in the archives of her brothers Edward Townley Standish and Charles Townley, and her son Thomas Strickland.<sup>23</sup> These papers contain predominantly household and financial matters and are largely one-sided, with the majority being on account of Strickland requiring money. Also hampering the survival of Strickland's voice is the miscategorisation of a number of her letters within these collections; a small cache of papers exists between Strickland and her sister-in-law Anne Standish, yet these are misidentified in the current catalogue as belonging to other family members.<sup>24</sup> On top of these familial repositories, six letters also remain between Strickland and Hester Thrale Piozzi.<sup>25</sup> Thrale and Strickland were childhood friends whose relationship waned in their later years, but Strickland does appear sporadically within Thrale's circles.<sup>26</sup> She travelled, for example, with Thrale and Samuel Johnson on their 1775 tour of France and assumed the role of guide on their various convent visits.<sup>27</sup> "Stricky" makes multiple appearances in both Thrale's and Johnson's journals.<sup>28</sup> There is evidence that Thrale and Strickland maintained contact

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<sup>23</sup> Edward Townley Standish's papers remain alongside his nephew's Thomas Strickland's at Wigan and Leigh Archives; Charles Townley's papers exist between two locations with predominantly family material at Lancashire Archives and his professional and work material extant in the British Museum.

<sup>24</sup> See the papers between Anastasia Standish Strickland from her sister Catherine Strickland, Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC10/44, Wigan Archives.

<sup>25</sup> Four epistles remain in a compiled letter-book in the Thrale-Piozzi Manuscripts at the John Rylands Library, and two in one of Samuel Johnson's letter-books at Harvard Library.

<sup>26</sup> On Strickland and Thrale's friendship see for example: Michael Franklin, *Hester Lynch Thrale Piozzi* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020), 71-92; Caroline Franklin, "'A Land of Slavery and Superstition'?: Hester Thrale and Elizabeth Montagu in France," *The Modern Language Review* 114, no. 2 (2019): 212-229; Tonya Moutray, *Refugee Nuns, the French Revolution, and British Literature and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2016), 36-59.

<sup>27</sup> See Hester Lynch Piozzi, "Journal: Travels in France, 15 September 1775-11 November 1775," Thrale-Piozzi Manuscripts, GB 133 ENG MS 617, University of Manchester Library.

<sup>28</sup> Hester Lynch Piozzi and Samuel Johnson, *The French Journals of Mrs. Thrale and Doctor Johnson*, ed. Henry Guppy and Moses Tyson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1932), 82,

even after the former's retirement to Brynbella, and Thrale's eleventh child (Strickland's namesake, Cecilia) visited Strickland at Sizergh following her elopement in 1795.<sup>29</sup> This friendship forms an important basis for the context of this chapter: Thrale, who wrote copiously both publicly and privately throughout her life, provides a detailed manuscript environment for Strickland's private writings. Ultimately, this chapter seeks to display how Strickland's endeavours with pen and paper utilised the scientific and increasingly professionalised processes of historical research that underpinned contemporary printed works. Strickland's paper traces are indicative of a wider cultural appreciation for writing and reading histories, whether these be personal, familial or national. Her papers exemplify the various textual negotiations that sustained and upheld these writings.

This chapter is divided into three sections: first I build on the historiographical context already outlined, highlighting the perceived pitfalls of women's management of family papers, both in a private setting and for publication. Here, I explore the negative reviews Frances Burney received following the publication of her 1832 *Memoirs of Dr Charles Burney*. While not published until the early nineteenth century, the reviews surrounding Burney's *Memoirs* encapsulate eighteenth-century debates on women's ability to write history – namely the desire for an objective and scientific management of source material. The persistence of these critiques into the next century is only testament to their prevalence; that Strickland's quotidian writings

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143; Samuel Johnson, *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, ed. E. L. McAdam, with Donald Hyde and Mary Hyde, Vol. 1, *Diaries, Prayers, and Annals* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), 228-229, 249.

<sup>29</sup> Letters in Strickland's hand in the John Rylands Library and in Samuel Johnson's archive at Harvard addressed to Piozzi at Brynbella attest to this. See for example: Cecilia Strickland to Hester Piozzi, 11 June 1795, 22 March 1796, 1 March 1797, 2 July 1797, Letters to Hester Lynch Piozzi from Various Correspondents, Vol. 4, Thrale-Piozzi Manuscripts, GB 133 Eng MSS 557/207, 208, 209, 210, University of Manchester Library; Cecilia Strickland to Hester Piozzi, 22 August 1798, 19 September 1800, Letters of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. MS Hyde 77 (Case 10), Vol. 5. 401, 402, Houghton Library, Harvard Library.

mirror the priorities outlined by Burney's reviewers demonstrates her ongoing awareness of the print marketplace that surrounded her domestic confines. I then elaborate on this analysis by considering the more informal and domestic historical pursuits of Hester Thrale; her *Family Book* provides the middle-ground between publications like Burney's *Memoirs* and the private undertakings of Cecilia Strickland. Strickland and Thrale's friendship provides a particularly compelling reason for studying their writing alongside each other and offers the more personal contexts to Burney's *Memoirs*. The works of these two women authors provide an insight into the textual environment of Strickland's historical work, prompting discussions on how women compiled, organised, and wrote personal histories within a culture that increasingly restricted their abilities to do so. This chapter explores degrees of historical engagement, from private epistolary ventures and inherited domestic manuscripts, to published documents and commissioned research. This variety of material displays the diverse techniques women used to engage with history and is testament to the creativity and innovation that drove their interests. While limited to the domestic, Strickland's papers reveal both a scientific and pragmatic understanding of the components of historical research, and exhibit her proficiency in traversing this increasingly complex genre. In negotiating the demands of the discipline, Strickland managed her own papers and the textual legacy of her forbearers all while sitting comfortably within this purportedly masculine environment. Presiding over the history of her family, and the Sizergh estate more generally, was Strickland herself.

Frances Burney's *Memoirs of Dr Charles Burney* and the Management of Family Papers

The rising professionalisation of historical research meant that works penned by women were particularly susceptible to criticism, as the review of Macaulay's *History of England* that opened this chapter made clear. The ability to manage source material, draw impartial conclusions, and formally organise information was largely considered unattainable for women writers. Felicity Nussbaum has convincingly argued that most of this criticism was founded on the notion that women were thought to be more prone to sentimental narratives; James Boswell, for example, distinguished his 1791 biography of Johnson from Thrale's work of the same because it provided fact to the "mere compilation of anecdotes" that Thrale published.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Isaac D'Israeli's 1796 essay "Some Observations on Diaries, Self-Biography, and Self-Characters" insisted that "trivial" detail did not belong in personal histories which, as Justine Crump has noted, "tended to exclude from autobiographical writing much of women's experience."<sup>31</sup> Karen Harvey has also drawn attention to the fact that family histories written by those in the middling sort were distinctly male; that such accounts excluded women was a deliberate component of their character.<sup>32</sup> These biases, alongside the fact that the prevailing body of women's published autobiographies included "scandalous memoirs," produced a widespread disfavour for historical narratives written by women.<sup>33</sup> In consequence, this section uses the critiques

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<sup>30</sup> Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 122.

<sup>31</sup> Frances Burney and Justine Crump, *A Known Scribbler: Frances Burney on Literary Life*, ed. Justine Crump (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2002), 37.

<sup>32</sup> Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 174; see also Joanne Begiato, *Manliness in Britain, 1760-1900: Bodies, Emotion, and Material Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 108.

<sup>33</sup> Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, 178-200. See also Caroline Breashears, "Scandalous Categories: Classifying the Memoirs of Unconventional Women," *Philological Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (2003): 187-212.

Burney's *Memoirs* received in order to establish the parameters of women's ability to manage family papers, and the perceived pitfalls of such historiographical pursuits.

The reception of Frances Burney's *Memoirs of Dr Charles Burney* was less than complimentary and the criticism she received upon its publication summarises the debates highlighted thus far. Despite being published in 1832, the reviews of Burney's *Memoirs* echo those of Boswell and D'Israeli from the previous century. Burney's *Memoirs* arrived at the very end of her literary career; she had published her first novel *Evelina* in 1778 and continued her literary fame with *Cecilia* (1782), *Camilla* (1796) and *The Wanderer* (1814) alongside various theatrical works, well into the nineteenth century. This, alongside her maintenance of a copious journal throughout her life, meant that by the time she published her father's *Memoirs* Burney was an established literary figure. Since its publication in 1832, however, the *Memoirs* has been the subject of vociferous criticism, largely on account of Burney's management of her father's papers. Indeed, Burney wrote openly about her decision to cull the majority of her father's manuscripts and, despite Charles Burney having begun his autobiography prior to his death, she rewrote large sections of his material.<sup>34</sup>

Significant also, and echoing the dubiety exhibited in the *Monthly Review* the previous century, was Burney's decision to alter the genre of her father's history, from an edited autobiography to a memoir. Unlike the biography and autobiography, which were assumed to have a creative and familiar approach to chronicling, the memoir, as Anna Paluchowska-Messing illustrates, provided a "passive recording of family

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<sup>34</sup> Janice F. Thaddeus, *Frances Burney: A Literary Life (Literary Lives)* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 180-202; George Justice, "Burney and the Literary Marketplace," in *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, ed. Peter Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 161.

histories.”<sup>35</sup> Unconventionally, however, as Burney acknowledged in the preface to her *Memoirs*, she sought to “diversify the plain recital of facts by ... occasional anecdotes as have been hoarded from childhood in her memory.”<sup>36</sup> Cassandra Ulph has shown how, in doing so, Burney “exploit[ed] the instability of the genre ... in order to accommodate ... the distinct private and public personae she had maintained throughout her career.”<sup>37</sup> The interspersal of these “hoarded” memories, untethered by empirical source material and existing only in Burney’s consciousness, generated much of the criticism she received. Her inclusion of anecdotal supplements has meant that *Memoirs* continued to be received as “Fanny’s last novel” by critics such as Roger Lonsdale well into the twentieth century because of the extent to which it was considered a fictional work.<sup>38</sup> Burney’s “infamous,” as Looser terms it, lack of inclusion of “primary material from her father’s life” was also used as an argument for her exploiting the text to write her own autobiography.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, it is on this basis that Marilyn Francus has suggested that the *Memoirs* was Burney’s “legacy;” her “task of “fixing” Burney family history, of correcting as well as setting it down” where she “juggled the truth against her sense of propriety and decorum.”<sup>40</sup> Ultimately, Burney’s *Memoirs* could not be both the “plain recital of facts” and the presentation of “occasional anecdotes” that she intended it to be.<sup>41</sup> The supposedly feminine tendency

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<sup>35</sup> Anna Paluchowska-Messing, *Frances Burney and Her Readers: The Negotiated Image* (Frankfurt a.M: Peter Land GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2021), 120; see also Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, 131-146.

<sup>36</sup> Frances d’Arblay (née Burney), *Memoirs of Doctor Burney, Arranged from his Own Manuscripts, From family Papers, and From Personal Recollections, by his Daughter, Madame D’Arblay* (London, 1832), 1:vii.

<sup>37</sup> Cassandra Ulph, “Authoring the “Author of my Being” in *Memoirs of Doctor Burney*,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 42, no. 2 (2018): 167.

<sup>38</sup> Roger Lonsdale, *Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), 447. Cited in Marilyn Francus, *Monstrous Motherhood: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Ideology of Domesticity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 162.

<sup>39</sup> Devoney Looser, ““Her Later Works Happily Forgotten”: Rewriting Frances Burney and Old Age,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 37, no. 3 (2013): 6.

<sup>40</sup> Francus, *Monstrous Motherhood*, 162.

<sup>41</sup> Ulph, “Authoring the “Author of my Being” in *Memoirs of Doctor Burney*,” 115.

to narrate history in the form of anecdotes, therefore, was seen as a departure from the purpose of these texts – that is, to inform.

The most outspoken commentary on Burney's *Memoirs* was published in the *Quarterly Review* in April 1833 by John Croker. Croker's review of the *Memoirs* was notoriously scathing; he employed, in Susan Civale's words, "the caustic and authoritative style for which he was famous," perhaps bolstered by what Paluchowska-Messing has termed his "literary axe to grind with Burney."<sup>42</sup> Mark Salber Phillips has equally highlighted Croker's personal distaste for "biographical memoirs" which summarised "a deterioration in the public taste" wherein "historical truth is sacrificed to personal feeling."<sup>43</sup> Nonetheless, this review is useful for the outline it provides of attitudes towards women's management of family papers. Croker's stance, for example, encapsulates the conflict surrounding what Karen O'Brien has termed the newfound "affective possibilities of history."<sup>44</sup> Burney's style of writing, Croker contends, was too sentimental: an "over-anxious piety" that "too elaborate[ly] care[d]" for her subject.<sup>45</sup> This is attributed to her success as an author of fiction, a skill that could not be transferred to her biographical writings: "it is, we surmise, by confounding these distinctions, that a charming novelist (for such we shall always consider the authoress of 'Cecilia') has become the most ridiculous of historians."<sup>46</sup> The downfall of Burney's *Memoirs* lies not in its content, but in its genre – namely in

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<sup>42</sup> Susan Civale, "The Literary Afterlife of Frances Burney and the Victorian Periodical Press," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 44, no. 3 (2011): 241; Paluchowska-Messing, *Frances Burney and Her Readers*, 117. On Croker see Johnathan Cutmore, ed. *Conservatism and the Quarterly Review: A Critical Analysis* (London: Routledge, 2016); William Thomas, *The Quarrel of Macaulay and Croker: Politics and History in the Age of Reform* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>43</sup> Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, 297, 299.

<sup>44</sup> Karen O'Brien, *Women and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 211.

<sup>45</sup> [John Croker] "ART. V.- Memoirs of Dr. Burney, Arranged from his own Manuscripts, from Family Papers, and From Personal Recollections," *The Quarterly Review* 49, no. 97 (1833): 99.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.



its fictional stylings. For an author adept in fiction, historical writing was a “ridiculous” alternative.

Burney’s lack of transferrable skills is doubtful on account of the existence of what Dew and Price have referred to as the “increasingly unstable fault line between literature and history” that appeared towards the end of the eighteenth century. Croker, however, singles out the lack of one particularly fundamental component to make his case: Burney’s “suppression of dates.”<sup>47</sup> In the previous century, a lack of dates in Thrale’s 1801 *Retrospection* and Macaulay’s 1778 *History in Letters* were significant factors for their limited successes.<sup>48</sup> Criticisms surrounding the lack of dates in these texts, as Nussbaum has made clear, fed the notion that women’s history writing did not contain the “masculine narrative authority over the minute particulars,” and rather exhibited a series of ungrounded stories.<sup>49</sup> While Croker does not explicitly gender this distinction (in that Burney’s *Memoirs* has a lack of dates because it was written by a woman), he does repeatedly draw comparisons between Burney’s *Memoirs* and the contemporary biographical writings of leading male figures, such as James Boswell. In describing a particularly lengthy passage from the *Memoirs*, consisting of fourteen pages, Croker asserts that in only “two or three” pages “Boswell would have given all the pith and character of” the same subject.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, on account of overlaps in Burney’s and Boswell’s subject matter, there are unavoidable inconsistencies between the two. Rather than a difference in opinion, Croker attributes this to Burney’s age: “Madame d’Arblay’s reminiscences – after a lapse of above fifty

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<sup>47</sup> Dew and Price, “Introduction: Visions of History,” 10; [Croker] “ART. V.- Memoirs of Dr. Burney,” 125 and 100.

<sup>48</sup> Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History*, 138 and 169.

<sup>49</sup> Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, 122.

<sup>50</sup> [Croker], “ART. V.- Memoirs of Dr. Burney,” 117

years – are not always to be ... relied on.”<sup>51</sup> Once again, Burney’s distinct lack of primary materials does not aid her standing with the critiques, especially as her “reminiscences” are “above fifty years” old. In dissecting the lacking components of Burney’s *Memoirs*, Croker establishes the fundamentals of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century histories: empirical evidence, the inclusion of data, and impartial prose. In this review, moreover, Croker constructs a hierarchy of the genre, one that reflects the contemporary debates surrounding women’s engagement in personal histories. Burney’s *Memoirs*, written with a “female tendency” to be more descriptive and anecdotal than the fact-orientated accounts by male writers, is, because of this, inferior.

Equally significant is Croker’s critique of Burney’s management of her father’s papers. The scientific emphasis on historical pursuits that emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century equally contributed to emerging prejudices about the extent to which women could perform these tasks.<sup>52</sup> Burney herself, writing to her sister in November 1820, complained of the intense nature of compiling her father’s *Memoirs*: “This is the General History of the Memoirs, 12 Volumes in number, through which I have been Wading, painfully, laboriously wading; - for the hand is small sometime to illegibility, & the Abbreviations are continual, & sometimes very obscure.”<sup>53</sup> In order to combat this, Burney “compiled a twenty-nine page inventory of the various manuscripts in her possession.”<sup>54</sup> To Croker, these efforts were futile and Burney’s

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 115. Devoney Looser has discussed at length impact of Burney’s age on her later publications: Looser, “Rewriting Frances Burney and Old Age,” 1-28.

<sup>52</sup> See Kasmer, *Novel Histories*, 7.

<sup>53</sup> Frances Burney, *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame d'Arblay)*, ed. Joyce Hemlow, Vol. 11, *Mayfair 1818-1824* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, 2014), 190-191; see also Jennie Batchelor, “Women’s Work: Labour, Gender and Authorship in the Novels of Sarah Scott,” in *British Women’s Writing in the Long Eighteenth Century: Authorship, Politics and History*, ed. Jennie Batchelor and Cora Kaplan (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 20.

<sup>54</sup> Slava Klima, Garry Bowers and Kerry S. Grant ed., *Memoirs of Dr. Charles Burney, 1726-1769* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, c. 1988), xxx.

ordering, filing and presentation of her father's manuscripts was equally scrutinised. The *Memoirs*, Croker writes, display "a want of arrangement which is exceedingly perplexing" and thus "instead of being called 'Memoirs of Dr. Burney,' might better be described as 'Scattered Recollections of Miss Fanny Burney and her Acquaintance.'"<sup>55</sup> In a marketplace that valued order, fact, and indexing, Burney's "scattered recollections" were pointedly far removed. While she evidently sustained the practices that formed more esteemed historical publications such as the production of an inventory and the consultation of first-hand source material, Burney's gender meant that the *Memoirs* failed to be received as such.

Croker's review of Burney's *Memoirs* is a particularly extreme case; Lee Erickson has suggested how such pieces reflect the *Quarterly Review*'s trend for contentious subject matter during the first half of the nineteenth century, and Susan Civale has agreed that these admonitions were composed purely to generate an audience reaction.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, Croker's condemnations about Burney's fictional inclinations, management of source material, and dedication to objectivity, do highlight contemporary attitudes towards women writing, ordering, and publishing histories, whether on a public or private subject. Burney's *Memoirs* was an inevitably public text – both author and subject were celebrated individuals at the time of its publication. With the reviews of this history in mind, this chapter now turns to less formal family histories penned by women: Hester Thrale's *Family Book*.

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<sup>55</sup> [Croker] "ART. V.- Memoirs of Dr. Burney," 106.

<sup>56</sup> Lee Erickson, *The Economy of Literary Form: English Literature and the Industrialization of Publishing, 1800-1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 180; Civale, "The Literary Afterlife of Frances Burney," 241.

### Recording Personal Histories in Hester Thrale's *Family Book*

Hester Lynch Thrale Piozzi is most famously remembered for her anecdotal biographical and autobiographical accounts. Her *Thraliana* amalgamates diary writing with the recording of anecdotes, and her 1786 *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson* compiled such memoranda relating to her close friend and literary companion. I have already stated that Thrale's more overt attempt to write history in her 1801 publication *Retrospection* was largely considered a failure, but in line with the themes of this chapter, I am more interested in Thrale's writing of family history. One of Thrale's lesser-known works is her *Family Book* or, as titled by Thrale herself, *The Children's Book or rather Family Book begun 17: Sept' 1766*. Thrale's *Family Book* was a private record which was not formally printed until 1976.<sup>57</sup> In choosing not to publish this work, Thrale avoided the criticisms that Burney was subjected to. It is on account of this that Thrale's writing acts as a middle ground to situate the wider content of Strickland's practices; Thrale's *Family Book* provides a bridge between the published histories of the likes of Burney and Macaulay, and the private engagements of Strickland. While the *Family Book* displays a bound order and cohesion that Strickland's loose papers lack, it was, like her friend's, limited to the domestic. In this document, Thrale's management and ordering of the textual space exhibits a conscious piecing together of facts, events, and source material. The *Family Book* was, in effect, a private family history; to use Nussbaum's apt description, in this work "Thrale becomes a diligent historian of the private."<sup>58</sup> Sitting precariously between a private diary and a published biography, Thrale's recording in the *Family Book* can be seen as an exercise in historiographical management.

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<sup>57</sup> Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, 213.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

The *Family Book* begins with a retrospective entry recounting the birth of Thrale's first child, Hester Maria (or Queeney as she was known), two years earlier and sets out to record the "Corporeal & Mental Powers" of her children.<sup>59</sup> Rather than a description of the passing of days or certain events, Thrale's *Family Book* presents a sort of scrapbook of accounts, specific to the progress of her children. This document, for example, is filtered; Thrale makes clear that she uses this text alongside other forms of private writing. Reminiscent of Egerton's accounting, each of Thrale's passages are categorised, compiled, and specifically chosen to appear in this location. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 1767, for example, Thrale recorded beginning another book solely intended for Queeney's progress: "A little blue Cover Book will now best shew the further Acquisitions of Hester M: Thrale who has this Day completed the second [i.e., third] and begun the third [i.e., fourth] Year of Her Life."<sup>60</sup> In citing this "little blue" book, Thrale acknowledged that any subsequent passages relating to Queeney have been specifically selected for this textual location. Indeed, on more than one occasion, Thrale notes her accidental repetition of information: in describing Queeney's impressive mental capacity, Thrale notes that "[t]his happened some Time ago, & I fancy I have written it down before."<sup>61</sup> Beyond highlighting the fact the *Family Book* was part of a number of written records, Thrale also draws attention to how this document was constructed. In stating "this happened some Time ago," she reveals this record was not a reflection of real-time events. Here, Thrale's authorial persona is founded on the management and preservation of these anecdotes, rather than their particulars. Unlike *Thraliana* that became "a never ending flow" of consciousness, the

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<sup>59</sup> Hester Thrale, "The Family Book, 1764-1772," in *The Thrales of Streatham Park*, ed. Mary Hyde (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), 21.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

*Family Book* exhibits regulation.<sup>62</sup> Thrale sorted her source material and selected her inserts correspondingly, exhibiting the restraint that Croker so craved in Burney's *Memoirs*.

References to this process of compilation occur at multiple instances throughout the *Family Book*. In recounting tales of Queeney's intelligence, for example, Thrale notes: "[t]hese three Bons Mots of Queeney's were written down on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1776."<sup>63</sup> In this statement, Thrale grounds the diary entry and the anecdote at separate points in time – the lines about Queeney happened in "April or May 1776" while this was not "written down" for another four months.<sup>64</sup> Akin to Thrale's previous admission that "I fancy I have written it down before," moreover, these "three Bons Mots" were also recorded in her *Thraliana* eight months later in the June of 1777.<sup>65</sup> Here, the anecdote, the *Family Book's* entry, and the passage in *Thraliana* all exist at different moments in time. In acknowledging these discrepancies and providing each with a distinct temporal location, Thrale constructs an authorial identity centred on the management and selection of material, rather than the content of the record itself. The impressiveness of Queeney's skill, when recorded across multiple times and locations, is weakened. Significant here, moreover, is the fact that Henry Thrale did not gift his wife the books in which to compose *Thraliana* until the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 1776. Given that Thrale penned her account in the *Family Book* two weeks prior to receiving *Thraliana*, before then recording it again eight months later, these records were evidently returned to after their point of creation. Beyond

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<sup>62</sup> Marianna D'Ezio, *Hester Lynch Thrale Piozzi: A Taste for Eccentricity* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021), 116.

<sup>63</sup> Thrale, "The Family Book," 164.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> There are, ironically, also inconsistencies in Hyde's edited commentary as she states these anecdotes were recorded in May 1777, while Balderston's *Thraliana* dates these as June; Hester Lynch Piozzi, *Thraliana: The Diary of Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs. Piozzi) 1776-1809*, ed. Katharine Candy Balderston, Vol. 1, 1776-1784 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, 2015), 49-50.

reflection, this also communicates an editorial management of her writings, one that ranked certain reflections worthy of different spaces – such methods echo Egerton’s financial practices. These documents were not stagnant entities; they were revisited and reread in light of other methods of recording. This is not in itself surprising as Thrale was a known annotator, but what these methods do indicate is the fact this document was compiled and pieced together from and alongside a range of source material, demonstrating Thrale’s historiographical skill.<sup>66</sup> Far from the “scattered recollections” of Burney’s *Memoirs*, Thrale’s entries in the *Family Book* were assembled and tethered by multiple authenticating devices – the dates of both the entry and the act of recording itself. While Thrale’s *Retrospection* was deemed “the work [that] is not worth an index,” her *Family Book* exhibits order, reflection and knowledge.<sup>67</sup> This was a mindful arrangement of her family’s history.

Thrale’s compilatory narrative in her *Family Book* is also evidenced by the unchronological order of her entries. Hyde, in her edition of the *Family Book*, restructures Thrale’s original entries so that the text reads sequentially – the anecdotes are placed in the order they occurred rather than the order they were written.<sup>68</sup> Hyde’s footnote to the entry dated the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1772, for instance, acknowledges that “[t]he passage following this in the *Family Book* is dated “15: Feb: 1773.” It is printed in its proper chronological place, following the entry for “9. Dec<sup>r</sup>. 1772.””<sup>69</sup> This is not the only instance where Hyde rectifies Thrale’s scrapbook-style of recording: she brings an entry recounting the death of a wetnurse forward by three weeks, and the

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<sup>66</sup> On Thrale’s annotating see Kathleen Lubey, “Marginalia as Feminist Use of the Book: Hester Piozzi’s *Spectator* Annotations,” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* 41, no. 1 (2022): 11-44; Marnie Hughes-Warrington, “Writing on the Margins of the World: Hester Lynch Piozzi’s *Retrospection* (1801) as Middlebrow Art?,” *Journal of World History* 23, no. 4 (2012): 883-906.

<sup>67</sup> “Review of *Retrospection*, by Hester Lynch Piozzi,” *Anti-Jacobin Review* 8 (1801): 245-46. Cited in Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History*, 172.

<sup>68</sup> Such ‘errors’ are also corrected in the recent edited editions of Burney’s *Memoirs* see Burney, Klima, Bowers and Grant, *Memoirs of Dr. Charles Burney*, xxxv.

<sup>69</sup> Hyde and Thrale, “The Family Book,” 57.

record of Thrale's son Harry's birthday on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 1773 is "printed in its proper chronological place" having been originally penned "between the one headed "18: Oct<sup>r</sup> 1772" and "9. Dec<sup>r</sup> 1772.""<sup>70</sup> That Thrale continues to date these passages despite their interrupting the chronological flow, suggests that she did not intend this document to be read as a series of sequential accounts. Thrale made no attempt to place these belated passages in their correct place and instead, by including multiple dates, highlights their irregularity. The same can be said for the previously discussed passage on Queeney's "Bons Mots"; Thrale provided a specific indication of when the passage was documented, as opposed to the actual event (it is simply referred to as "April or May 1776").<sup>71</sup> That the *Family Book's* entries do not appear in chronological order suggests that this record is a compilation – a catalogue of selected events rather than a linear account. This process, as Nussbaum has noted, allows the passages to be read as if "they held equal power" placing the "important" next to the "unimportant" without assigning relative value."<sup>72</sup> Through this method, Thrale again positions the practice of recording above the account itself; the preservation, cataloguing, and archiving of these events is more important than what they tell. Thrale's *Family Book* was an exercise in documentation, of recording the particulars of her family and home – historicising and arranging daily life.

The scrapbook-like and selective nature of this record is also apparent materially. In the previous chapter, we saw how loose and bound papers were used collaboratively as forms of documentation – it is evident that Thrale too deployed such techniques. While her loose materials no longer survive, there are references her using this book to store and preserve other writings. In a passage dated the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1775,

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, 146, 59.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 164.

<sup>72</sup> Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, 222.



for example, Thrale recalls her daughter Susan's achievements following a period away at school:

I fetched Susan home & once more examin'd & found her Improvements truly surprizing; her Knowledge of Geography is amazing, & Baretti praises her pronounciation of the French. M<sup>rs</sup> Cumyns's Letter which I keep in this Book does not exaggerate, but rather falls short.<sup>73</sup>

Alongside the scrapbooking of her entries, Thrale also used this book to store and preserve the relevant documents themselves. In this case, the inclusion of "M<sup>rs</sup> Cumyns's Letter" constitutes her use of first-hand or primary materials – her recorded entry is validated with the evidence it is drawn from. This, alongside Thrale's more consistent use of dating in this account compared to her anecdotal reflections, displays how she was aware of the formal methods of historiography and simply selected when to employ them. Thrale's reordering and selection of source material, inclusion of first-hand evidence, and addition of dates aligns this personal record with the published family histories and biographies that were appearing contemporaneously. Not only were "[t]hese texts ... locations of power," to use Nussbaum's words, "transgressing medical, legal, and educational codes of the female," but they also challenged what was defined as history.<sup>74</sup> While Thrale's *Family Book* remained unpublished and thereby did not face the same risks as Burney's *Memoirs*, it does reveal how formal historical methodologies could be employed in a private setting. In compiling her *Family Book*, Thrale displays how these personal histories were as much an exercise in the presentation of data as they were an exercise in the management of this information. Thrale's *Family Book* provides a middle ground between formal works

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<sup>73</sup> Thrale, "The Family Book," 120.

<sup>74</sup> Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject*, 223.

of history (such those by Burney and Macaulay) and the informal engagements of individuals such as Cecilia Strickland. It is with this contextual framing in mind that I now explore Strickland's various approaches to writing history. Like Thrale, and indeed Burney, Strickland implemented the increasingly professionalised methods of historical research: data management, first-hand source material, and the orderly presentation of information. Tangible fragments of Strickland's research processes remain evident on the papers that passed through her hands.

#### Between Private Record and Commissioned Work: Strickland's Degrees of Historical Narrative

“It is somewhat extraordinary” wrote Joseph Nicholson and Richard Burn of the Stricklands in their 1777 publication *The History and Antiquities of the Counties of Westmorland and Cumberland*, “that amongst the pedigrees of almost all the other ancient families in this country, we have met with no satisfactory account of this family.”<sup>75</sup> Nicholson and Burn proceed to share that it was the work of the “late worthy owner of Sizergh-hall” Charles Strickland that enabled them to “make out a regular and authentic deduction of this family from the clearest and most undeniable evidence, namely, the family writings.”<sup>76</sup> The correspondence between Charles Strickland and Richard Burn, however, suggests otherwise. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1769, Burn wrote to Charles summarising “the account of your family, so far as my materials extend.”<sup>77</sup> This letter closes with Burn's request to Charles for access to wider materials, with the promise to “endeavour to do honour to the family (as they deserve) for 15 generations

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<sup>75</sup> Joseph Nicholson and Richard Burn, *The History and Antiquities of the Counties of Westmorland and Cumberland* (London: Printed for W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777), 1:87-88.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Richard Burn to Charles Strickland, 2 September 1769, Catholic – Roman Catholic Parish Collections, RCHY/3/7/4, Lancashire Archives.

backward. Which I hope will be more acceptable, as it was never done before.”<sup>78</sup> Nicholson and Burn’s attribution to the “late worthy owner of Sizergh-hall,” therefore, appears to have been mere flattery on account of the access Charles provided to the Strickland muniments. Sizergh proves to be a popular subject in similar histories throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and, more compellingly than Nicholson and Burn’s account, it is Cecilia Strickland who is most often acknowledged as the source of information for these publications. Daniel Scott’s 1908 publication *The Stricklands of Sizergh Castle; The Record of Twenty-Five Generations of a Westmorland Family*, for example, acknowledges in the preface that on account of Sizergh’s “family muniments [being] ... removed from Sizergh Castle to the Manuscript Department of the British Museum” this publication was instead founded on a work commissioned by Cecilia Strickland:

Fortunately in the year 1778 the Rev. Thomas West, author of *The Antiquities of Furness*, at the request of Mrs. Cecilia Strickland, prepared a manuscript volume, “An Abstract of the Ancient Writings belonging to Thomas Strickland, Esq.,” in which he gave translations of the older muniments, and copies or summaries of those of more recent date. The parchments and papers numbered at that time 550; many of them chiefly concerned family affairs, but others were of importance for their bearing on north-country and national history.<sup>79</sup>

These muniments or the 550 “parchments and papers” outlined by Scott are notably absent today; the British Museum holds only papers addressed to Strickland’s brother, the antiquarian and collector Charles Townley, and the extent of those remaining at

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Daniel Scott, *The Stricklands of Sizergh Castle: The Records of Twenty-Five Generations of a Westmorland Family* (Kendal: Titus Wilson, 1908), iii-iv.

the house itself is, on account of restricted accessibility, uncertain.<sup>80</sup> Despite this considerable lack of evidence, Strickland's interest in history has endured.

Noticeable in Scott's acknowledgment, is the fact that West began work on the Sizergh muniments in 1778, eight years following the death of Strickland's first husband Charles.<sup>81</sup> This, alongside the fact that many of the papers in West's archive are dated from 1770 onwards, confirm that Strickland ardently continued the historical research her husband had reluctantly agreed to a decade earlier. The fruits of Strickland and West's collaborative project exist as a series of "unsorted notes and transcripts" in Lancashire archives; namely the "Abstract of the Ancient Writings belonging to Thomas Strickland" and the "Abstract of the Genealogie of Charles Strickland of Sizergh ... Westmorland frome the Family Writings and Public Records."<sup>82</sup> These accounts detail the 550 "parchments and papers" housed at Sizergh during the eighteenth century, along with a lineal account of the family's pedigree. Beyond commissioning this work moreover, Strickland, unlike her husband, appears to have been actively involved in the historiographical investigation. An inventory compiled by Strickland remains within the papers in West's archive. This account documents and catalogues a series of important papers relating to the family and Sizergh. The

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<sup>80</sup> George Washington, in his 1942 *The Early History of the Stricklands of Sizergh* draws attention to "the rich collections of charters in the muniment room at Sizergh" alongside "public records" suggesting that the Sizergh archive was by this time returned to the house. George Washington, *The Early History of the Stricklands of Sizergh, Together with Some Account of the Allied Families of d'Eyncourt, Fleming, Greystoke, and Dunbar* (Boston, MA: The Rumford Press, 1942), 10.

<sup>81</sup> Thomas West appears to have been a close acquaintance of the Stricklands; he maintained a correspondence with Strickland's brother-in-law, the Rev. William Strickland, who had renounced his claim to the Castle on account of his devotion to the Church, and extant letters between West and Cecilia Townley (Strickland's mother) suggest that he was also familiar with Strickland's childhood family. John Burke's *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland* states that West was the "domestic chaplain of the Strickland family." By the time that West took up residence at Sizergh, he had already received relative literary fame from his publications such as *A Guide to the Lakes*, which did much to popularise the area as a tourist destination. See Robert Inglesfield, "West [formerly Daniel], Thomas (1720?-1779), antiquary and writer," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004; John Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland* [...] (London, 1836), 2:64.

<sup>82</sup> "Various unsorted notes and transcripts of deeds including drafts of a history of the Strickland family," [1775], Strickland Abstracts, RCHY/3/9/2, Lancashire Archives.

cover is titled with the inscription: “This is a list of the papers endorsed by Mr West & found together in this a Box marked[,] they appear to Cecilia Strickland on looking them over this 28<sup>th</sup> July 1781 to be relative to Sizergh transactions.”<sup>83</sup> In titling this document as such, Strickland memorialised her role in archiving and ordering the family papers. Like Thrale’s use of dates to register the act of recording her passages, Strickland’s title commemorates both her role as historical researcher and her hand in the record’s creation. Through this statement, Strickland takes ownership of the papers in Sizergh’s archive, establishing herself as caretaker of these documents. But more than providing credibility to her labours, the year 1781 is significant in itself. West died at Sizergh in 1779, two years prior to this document’s creation, and by 1781 Strickland been a widow for over ten years.<sup>84</sup> While it is largely West and Charles who have since received credit for this work, it is clear that Strickland continued the history of her family long after her husband’s death. Despite being “endorsed by Mr West,” this inventory reinterprets and recategorizes the papers housed at Sizergh, specific to how “they appear to Cecilia Strickland.”

The list itself is equally insightful. Strickland organises these papers alongside a corresponding title, shelf mark, and date. The entries outline documents from as early as 1466 and Strickland exhibits a clear understanding of the intricacies of the papers she handled: labels range from formal documents such as “Rental of Walter Strickland Esqr,” “Sir Middletons Marriage Articles” and “the will of Antony Langhorn 1584” to missives such as “Thomas Strickland of Nynsergh binds his son Thomas apprentice” and “1568 Tho<sup>s</sup> Normanvill to Lanc<sup>t</sup> Aleford.”<sup>85</sup> That Strickland assumed

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<sup>83</sup> List by Cecilia Strickland of some of the family muniments endorsed by West in his researches, 28<sup>th</sup> July 1781, Strickland Abstracts, RCHY/3/9/3, Lancashire Archives.

<sup>84</sup> Inglesfield, “West [formerly Daniel], Thomas (1720?–1779), antiquary and writer.”

<sup>85</sup> List by Cecilia Strickland of some of the family muniments endorsed by West in his researches, RCHY/3/9/3.

this specialised role of reading, cataloguing, titling, and interpreting such archival records reveals how her managerial, analytical, and scholarly influence drove the research behind West's text. As we saw in the previous chapter, Egerton employed similar skills to manage her finances, wherein information was consumed, condensed, and summarised depending on the textual location. Such methods, as Jennie Batchelor has noted, were encouraged in publications like *The Ladies Magazine* and *The Ladies Monthly Museum*; the serialised and referential nature of these periodicals encouraged filing, categorising, and cross-referencing various forms of print.<sup>86</sup> Where *The Ladies Magazine* and *The Ladies Monthly Museum* promoted typically feminine pursuits, Strickland employed such skills in a more professionalised and, as we have seen from the criticism of Burney's *Memoirs*, masculine context. Archival research and document management were essential in eighteenth-century histories, and it was these components that gave the genre its more masculine status.<sup>87</sup> Strickland's inventory, however, displays clear archival competence when categorising these documents. A far cry from Croker's spiteful words on Burney's "scattered recollections," Strickland's inventory exhibits the skills women were supposedly incapable of achieving. Irrespective of how these histories came about, she was at the heart of their production and the preservation of the Sizergh papers. Strickland was clearly conversant in historiographical practices and positioned herself in the increasing professionalisation of the subject.

This is not the only instance of Strickland's proficiency in historical research. She similarly engaged with these methods during her marriage to her second husband Jarrard. Through Jarrard, the Stricklands acquired management of the Willitoft

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<sup>86</sup> Jennie Batchelor, "[T]o Cherish *Female* Ingenuity and to Conduce to *Female* Improvement: The Birth of the Woman's Magazine," in *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1690-1820s*, ed. Jennie Batchelor and Manushag N. Powell (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 380.

<sup>87</sup> Kasmer, *Novel Histories*, 7.

property in Yorkshire. References to Willitoft are scattered throughout Strickland's correspondence to her brother and son, and it is clear that she oversaw the finances in relation to this estate after Jarrard's death.<sup>88</sup> But this property was important to Strickland beyond its financial yields. Perhaps as an extension of her research from the previous decade, in the early 1790s Strickland set about uniting the history of the Willitoft estate with that of the Stricklands at Sizergh. Her efforts in this endeavour transpire briefly in a correspondence between Strickland and her brother, Edward Townley Standish. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of March c. 1792 Strickland penned:

When you was here I mention'd to you that we thought of showing a distinction of our line from the Stock of Sizergh by means of using the Vavasour of Willitoft, arms quarterly & giving the Crest – which I thought cou'd not be done with propriety unless exemplified at the Heralds office which you was so good to say you woud do for us if we cou'd show Matarials – With this I put up such as we [could] find about the Vasasours of Willitoft & Strickland of Sizergh far enough to show how we are decended as a younger branch of Sizergh & we have explaind at [the] bottom what it is we want to have effected at the Herald Office.<sup>89</sup>

This affair is interesting on two accounts; Strickland at once displays a clear affinity to her marital family and the lineage of Strickland ancestors, while also enacting an active role as researcher and narrator of this past. Here, Strickland performs the role of archivist and researcher: it was she alone who gathered the “Matarials” relevant to the case and subsequently proved the family “are decended as a younger branch of Sizergh.” As her catalogue of materials in West's archive exhibited, Strickland was

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<sup>88</sup> See for example: Cecilia Strickland to Thomas Strickland, 31 May 1813, Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC17/2/6, Wigan Archives.

<sup>89</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Edward Townley Standish, 5 March [1792], Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC11/3/6, Wigan Archives.

accustomed to dealing with old and potentially fragile manuscripts. Her work for the Herald's Office reveals that this was more than a surface-level understanding; Strickland read these documents for their documentary worth and used such texts for her own historical research. Beyond a simple interest in the history of her family, therefore, Strickland took an active role in researching and investigating this past. Her motivations for doing so, such as the family's Jacobite connections and her own religious identity, will be explored below, but this affair also adds an interesting dimension to women's relationship to property. Under the law of coverture, Strickland's marriage to Jarrard will likely have resulted in her forfeiting legal control of the Willitof and Sizergh estates.<sup>90</sup> In line with Rita J. Dashwood and Karen Lipsedge's acknowledgement that "[w]omen ... had been establishing powerful relationships towards property long before the change in law [in 1882]," Strickland's venture to unite the ancestry of these two estates exemplifies some of the creative ways in which women enacted ownership over property outside of what they were entitled to by law.<sup>91</sup> In implementing this through the increasingly professionalised methods of historical research, moreover, Strickland evidences a powerful competency within what were largely masculine realms.

Through this variety of historical undertakings, Strickland emerges as an active and self-motivated historian. But in addition to showcasing an adeptness in research, Strickland also displays an awareness of the essential components of historical publications. Her epistolary communications, for instance, are peppered with

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<sup>90</sup> Tim Stretton and Krista J. Kesselring, "Introduction: Coverture and Continuity," in *Married Women and the Law: Coverture in England and the Common Law World*, ed. Tim Stretton and Krista J. Kesselring (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 7-8.

<sup>91</sup> Rita J. Dashwood and Karen Lipsedge, "Women and Property in the Long Eighteenth Century," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, no. 4 (2021): 335. See also Joanne Bailey, "Favoured or Oppressed? Married Women, Property and 'Coverture' in England, 1660-1800," *Continuity and Change* 17, no. 3 (2002): 351-372.



comments and critiques on emerging works. In a letter to Thrale (now Piozzi) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1800, Strickland lamented the absence of an “authentic” publication on the recently-deceased Pope Pius XI: “I wish I could say anything more Satisfactory to your wish for some Acct of our Holy Pius sextu’s last years of life – but nothing Authentic has yet been published.”<sup>92</sup> Strickland goes on to detail her own research into the Pope’s life, including an encounter with “a Letter in his own hand writing” that was “full of the most exalted ideas.”<sup>93</sup> In stating that “nothing Authentic has yet been published” on this subject, Strickland declares her knowledge of both the state of the field and the necessary components of an “Authentic” record – embedding herself within the contemporary print marketplace. That Strickland takes satisfaction in consulting “a Letter” in the Pope’s “own hand writing,” points to her awareness that the utilisation of first-hand accounts was fundamental to “Authentic” scholarly narratives. Aileen Douglas has highlighted how, during this period, the “handwriting of eminent individuals assumes significance as a kind of relic” which, alongside the replacement of signatures over seals as markers of authenticity, alludes to a newfound penchant for the study of primary materials.<sup>94</sup> Indeed, Thrale herself received criticism for her 1801 history, *Retrospection* because of her failure to use credible (if any) source material.<sup>95</sup> Strickland, in contrast, was reading, writing, and researching within the professionalised culture of historiography. Informed, by the distinct lack of reliable material surrounding the Pope, Strickland concludes this passage by warning Thrale that “if I had to advise on the subject to you, I should say it is Wiser not to publish any thing till you know the truth from the Church, from whome alone anything will be

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<sup>92</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Hester Lynch Piozzi, 19 September 1798, Letters of Samuel Johnson, LL.D., MS Hyde 77 (Case 10), Vol. 5 402, 2, Houghton Library, Harvard Library.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Aileen Douglas, *Work in Hand: Script, Print, and Writing, 1690-1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 35.

<sup>95</sup> Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History*, 176.

attended to.”<sup>96</sup> At the time Strickland penned this letter, Thrale’s *Retrospection* was only six months from being published – although the lack of any references to Pope Pius XI within the text suggests it is unlikely this was the publication being referred to. Nonetheless, Strickland was evidently aware of Thrale’s preference for anecdotal source material, and in warning “not to publish any thing till you know the truth,” she pre-empted the nature of the criticism *Retrospection* was to receive. In addition to operating within the ideals of this scholarly culture, therefore, Strickland also aligned her judgements to the critical opinions of the male reviewers of these works.

Strickland’s professional research was, at the same time, supplemented with personal flair. Like her collaboration with West, this element is also alluded to in Scott’s 1908 *The Stricklands of Sizergh*:

While the later pages of this volume were passing through the press Lady Edeline Strickland found some interesting notes written within the covers of a *Missale Romanum* in the library at Sizergh, The volume is dated 1670. The notes, which are in several handwritings, are chiefly of interest as supplying details on family matters, while there is also a touch of pathos in some of the later paragraphs. The record ... covers a period of 135 years.<sup>97</sup>

This Roman Missal remains in the library at Sizergh and, upon closer inspection of the document, one of the “several handwritings” is that of Cecilia Strickland. Strickland’s writing appears relatively early in the document; only one hand precedes hers which is likely that of her husband, suggesting that this tradition was conceived during Strickland’s early residence at Sizergh. Strickland’s entries begin by recounting the “Children of Thomas Strickland & Mary (Scope of Danby) his Wife,” who

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<sup>96</sup> Strickland to Piozzi, 19 September 1798, MS Hyde 77 (Case 10), Vol. 5 402, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Scott, *The Stricklands of Sizergh Castle*, 262.

“Married June y<sup>e</sup> 2<sup>d</sup> 1728” – her first husband’s siblings.<sup>98</sup> These entries are detailed: in each case Strickland provides particulars of the individual’s birth, death, and the time of day these events occurred. Like her inventory of Sizergh’s muniments, the information Strickland provides in this record predates her own residence in the house – this material is likely to have been a product of her research. It is not until the next page that Strickland’s own marriage is recorded (in another hand): “Charles Francis Strickland Married 20<sup>th</sup> April to Cecilia Towneley of Towneley in Lancashire.” Strickland was an impartial compiler of family history as well as the subject. In retrospectively recounting the pedigree of her marital family while also allowing herself to be documented, Strickland both contributed to such a record and preserved her place within it.

The significance of this history occurring on the pages of a religious text should not be overlooked. That this information is preserved on the pages of a Roman Missal suggests an act of generational bonding that was deeply interwoven with religious piety. In the first instance, the inclination for Jacobite families to record their history was likely a precaution in the event a Jacobite resurgence; as Gabriel Glickman has noted, “the notion of recovering a lost birthright appeared far from inconceivable.”<sup>99</sup> Here, pen and paper facilitated the building of a familial and religious network. Many scholars have noted the importance of manuscript circulation in strengthening the Catholic community during the latter half of the eighteenth century, by which point, as Anna Battigelli and Laura M. Stevens have acknowledged, “large-scale [Catholic] persecution had ended.”<sup>100</sup> Lucy Parker and Rosie Maxton

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<sup>98</sup> This Roman Missal exists in the house at Sizergh today; it does not contain a public catalogue reference and is not listed on any online databases.

<sup>99</sup> Glickman, *The English Catholic Community*, 70.

<sup>100</sup> Anna Battigelli and Laura M. Stevens, “Eighteenth-Century Women and English Catholicism,” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* 31, no. ½ (2022): 15.

have illustrated how the “[p]ractices associated with manuscripts and archiving contributed to community cohesion, offering a form of piety in which a wide range of believers could participate.”<sup>101</sup> Significant in this context, however, is the fact that this was evidently a feminine as well as masculine practice – Strickland’s hand appears alongside other, likely male, annotations. This is significant given that, as Battigelli and Stevens have commented, “[w]omen featured prominently in the recusant cult of the family” which was “now central to English Catholic identity”: “[t]hey entered into marriages designed to build alliances, manage family estates, and strengthen the Catholic community.”<sup>102</sup> Moreover, Mary Spongberg has emphasised “the ways in which women were appropriating Jacobitism, the Stuart legacy and England’s Catholic past as spaces where they could articulate ... female dispossession.”<sup>103</sup> Strickland’s appearance in this record as both subject and compiler permanently establishes her position in the family’s history. These entries operate within multiple methods of self-fashioning; by combining manuscript culture, printed religious texts, and a communal scribal practice, Strickland memorialised her role in the family lineage through ancestral recognition and handwritten evidence. Her inserts in the Roman Missal were simultaneously an exercise in historical research, a religious act of intergenerational community formation, and a recognition of individual self-fashioning. This document attests to both the importance of family history within the Sizergh household and the variety of forms such records could take. As well as commissioning and instructing the writing of a formal family history, Strickland also

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<sup>101</sup> Lucy Parker and Rosie Maxton, “Archiving Faith: Record-Keeping and Catholic Community Formation in Eighteenth-Century Mesopotamia,” *Past & Present* 257, no. 1 (2022): 124; Gabriel Glickman has also noted that “confining research to the printed word fails to take account of the persistent usage of manuscript circulation as a forum to convey news and shape opinions,” “[t]he more recondite handwritten sources, including monastic records, commonplace books, and autobiographical reflections, shed light on the formation of a self-conscious English Catholic community.” See Glickman, *The English Catholic Community*, 9.

<sup>102</sup> Battigelli and Stevens, “Eighteenth-Century Women and English Catholicism,” 15-16.

<sup>103</sup> Spongberg, *Women Writers and the Nation’s Past, 1790-1860*, 74.

ensured the continuation of such traditions within her household. This historical identity traversed epistolary culture, commissioned publications, and private bibliographic records – all of which were produced in the face of debates about women carrying out such work. Beyond the realms of these explicitly historiographical engagements, this chapters now turns to Strickland’s more commonplace uses of these techniques.

### Historiographical Techniques and Epistolary Practice

The documents discussed thus far have demonstrated how Strickland’s historical narratives, irrespective of their published status, were informed by and representative of the professionalised culture of historiographical research. These private historical endeavours, whether amateur research, literature reviews, or religious documentation, incorporated the skilled practices akin to those behind the works that filled the contemporary marketplace. A more complete review of Strickland’s epistolary communications reveals how she also employed these skillsets in her daily interactions with pen and paper. Strickland’s letters display an application of historiographical techniques to ensure her writings were dependable, authoritative, and worthy of preservation.

Strickland’s correspondences are principally limited to domestic matters, financial requests, and the sharing of household news. Outside of the few remaining epistles to Thomas West and Hester Thrale, the scope of Strickland’s writings extends only to her immediate family; letters remain to her brothers Charles Townley and Edward Townley Standish, her sister-in-law Anne Standish, and her eldest son Thomas Strickland. Underpinning these missives is Strickland’s use of historiographical research techniques. For example, in a similar way that printed histories required a

strict and methodical adherence to dates, Strickland's letters employ these paratextual markers to authorise her writing. This is especially evident in letters that divulge important life events. During the winter of 1785, Strickland's daughter received a proposal from Edward Stephenson, a London banker and amateur musician.<sup>104</sup> This proposal was naturally an important familial matter, and Strickland's brother (who was joint custodian of Mary on account of her father's death), was also required to consent to the match. On this account, Strickland produced a factual report of the proposal, to allow her brother to make an objective and informed decision. In doing so, Strickland carefully organised the letters pertaining this affair:

The purport of my writing to day will be best understood if you peruse the Enclosed. ---- Mr Stephenson's Letters having no date, it may be necessary to say that he left Kendal on y<sup>e</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> Inst. His letter to Mary came here on y<sup>e</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> and that to me on the 22<sup>d</sup>, both from Mr Ed Stephensons fathers house Queen Square London.<sup>105</sup>

Like Strickland's advice to Thrale, this exchange necessitated a management of source material. By including Stephenson's original letters for her brother to "peruse" before forming his own decision, Strickland emerges as an impartial presenter of facts – a breakaway from the "discursive" and "conjectural history," to use April London's words, that typified expectations of women's research.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, the inclusion of epistolary evidence within written histories was a point of contention. Oliver Goldsmith's biography of the fashionable celebrity Beau Nash was criticised for including only extracts of letters rather than their complete text. As Eve Tavor Bannet

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<sup>104</sup> Philip Olleson, *The Letters of Samuel Wesley: Professional and Social Correspondence, 1797-1837* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 79.

<sup>105</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Charles Townley, 23 November 1785, Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC10/1, Wigan Archives.

<sup>106</sup> April London, *Women and Property in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 60.

has explained, such a narrative rested on “the unchallenged experience and judgement of the storytelling historian himself who arrogantly presented his own partial version of the past as historical truth.”<sup>107</sup> Strickland’s inclusion of complete data within this epistolary exchange, therefore, distanced her practices from the “storytelling historian” and aligned her work more closely to the histories by individuals such as Catharine Macaulay, who remarked “[l]abour, to attain truth, integrity to set it in its full light, are indispensable duties in an historian.”<sup>108</sup> Moreover, Strickland does more than simply present these sources and instead supplements them with additional prefatory material – their dates. Even in a private environment, Strickland utilised the professionalised practices that grounded historical research. Her missives, like her archival research, were informed by an authentic presentation of material and a factual timeline of events.

This is not the only instance of Strickland relying on historiographical techniques to sustain her private correspondence, and she continues to draw on these methods throughout other important life events. In December 1777, for example, Strickland wrote to her brother mourning the passing of numerous family members, each of which occurred within a short space of time: “nothing, not even your kindness can make up the loss of a husband, son and mother all which I have been so shortly deprived of.”<sup>109</sup> Throughout this letter, Strickland communicates an accurate account and timeline of these events. Proceeding to narrate the epistolary interactions that framed her mother’s death, Strickland wrote:

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<sup>107</sup> Eve Tavor Bannet, *The Letters in the Story: Narrative-Epistolary Fiction from Aphra Behn to the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 102.

<sup>108</sup> Catharine Macaulay, *The History of England, from the Accession of James I to that of the Brunswick Line* (London, 1763), 1: x.

<sup>109</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Charles Townley, 22 December 1777, Towneley of Towneley – 1202-1857, DDT0 Box J, Lancashire Archives.

On Saturday evening I received a letter at Sizergh from Miss Halliwell wrote on Friday telling me my poor mother was much as she had been, and likely to get over the winter provided no sudden illness happened. At four o'clock Sunday morning an express reach'd me dated first Saturday noon, to say she was thought in danger, had been informed of it, and did desire to see her children and a note dated four o'clock Saturday evening saying she had fallen into a sort of fitt they did not expect she could survive.<sup>110</sup>

Like her management of the source material relating to her daughter's proposal, Strickland also assumed an authoritative role in narrating the account of her mother's death. The minute information regarding the exact time and date these letters were sent and received reveals how Strickland measured the deterioration of her mother's health on paper. Noticeable here is how her conceptualisation of these documents changes in line with the deterioration of events; as the narrative becomes more pressing, Strickland modifies the noun used to describe her post. In the first instance the post is referred to conventionally – a "letter." The second, as the situation worsens, is deemed an "express" – a testament to how the document was posted. Finally, as her mother's condition becomes more pressing still, the last post is termed a "note." These naming devices point to a hierarchical construction of letters – ranging from the most formal a "letter" to the most ephemeral a "note." Here, the role of letters as evidence becomes more complex. Olivera Jokic's study of John Bruce, a historiographer for the East India Company, has shown that "the letter [w]as historiography's most desirable accomplice."<sup>111</sup> Bruce's documents, Jokic asserts, "tell a story about the way genre conventions organized practices of documentation and the categories around which

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<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> Olivera Jokic, "Commanding Correspondence: Letters and the "Evidence of Experience" in the Letterbook of John Bruce, the East India Company Historiographer," *The Eighteenth Century* 52, no. 2 (2011): 128.



the archive structures its power.”<sup>112</sup> The “genre” of the letter (“biographical notes, dispatches, minutes”) was fundamental to its content and its afterlife.<sup>113</sup> Strickland’s adjustment of the noun used for her evidence, therefore, attests to an awareness of these varying “genres” of textual evidence, with the most reliable (and permanent) source occurring at the beginning. In reading these events through the lens of Strickland’s historiographical use of source material, it is possible to track degrees of reliability as well as the events they detail. Strickland displays a comprehension of the debates surrounding letters as evidence. These variations also allude to Strickland’s emotional response to the news of her mother’s illness. The noun adjusts depending on the news it carries. As Fay Bound has noted regarding love letters: “letter writing provided a record of emotional experience that lasted long after the emotion had passed.”<sup>114</sup> Strickland’s meticulous narration of the epistolary events leading up to her mother’s death can be seen as an authoritative and practical means of compartmentalising the situation, as well as revealing an insight into the reliability of source material.

Strickland’s awareness of epistolary evidence not only allowed her to assume an air of authority within largely patriarchal circles, but it also materially altered the afterlife of the letters themselves. Strickland’s epistolary practices were built on a hierarchical understanding of correspondence – one that managed, compiled and ordered both her own writings and those of her wider epistolary circle. This managerial duty extended beyond complete letters, moreover, and it is evident that Strickland also supervised the very creation of her circle’s missives. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 1793, for instance, Strickland acknowledged the fact she was forced to assume the role of

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<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Fay Bound, “Writing the Self? Love and the Letter in England,” *Literature and History* 11, no. 1 (2002): 8.

correspondent over her husband. Writing to Charles Townley in consequence of their son's ill health, Strickland opens her letter with the statement: "[y]ours of the 14<sup>th</sup> received tonight allarm'd poor Mr Jar<sup>d</sup> S- so much that he fairly says he cannot hold a pen to write."<sup>115</sup> In adopting this pragmatic "epistolary persona," to use Cassandra Ulph's phrase, Strickland assumes the authority to negotiate these important life events with an impartiality unincumbered by emotion.<sup>116</sup> This act, alongside her previous epistolary narrative of traumatic events, effectively transforms Strickland's letters into components of history in themselves. By employing the professionalised methods of historiographical research to this epistolary terrain, these papers are reinforced and interwoven with the trustworthy and commendable elements of historical research. In adding dates to others' letters and meticulously recounting the timings of those sent to her, alongside deputising for her husband, Strickland's letters come to embody the source material she, and printed historical narratives, relied upon.

By adopting historiographical techniques within and throughout her everyday engagements with pen and paper, Strickland emerges as a competent and reliable narrator – managing information, events, and people with the skills and techniques of a historical researcher. Evidence of the intersection between historical research and personal epistolary practice is also apparent in Strickland's archival catalogue. A particularly pertinent feature of her descriptions on the "list of the peapers endorsed by Mr West" is the seals these papers bear. One paper, for example, "has a beautifull Strickland seal to it." Another "has a Royal seal" and one "tis sealed with the Popes seal."<sup>117</sup> Not only does Strickland manage and compile these documents with an eye

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<sup>115</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Charles Townley, 16 January 1793, Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC11/3/4, Wigan Archives.

<sup>116</sup> Cassandra Ulph, "Frances Burney's Private Professionalism," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 3 (2015): 391.

<sup>117</sup> List by Cecilia Strickland of some of the family muniments endorsed by West in his researches, RCHY/3/9/3.

to their preservation, but she is also aware of material markers that may bolster their importance. Traditionally, seals “were used for authentication purposes ... a guarantee that a letter was genuine.”<sup>118</sup> “Letters not bearing the correct seal,” James Daybell has acknowledged, “were suspect, with no assurance that their contents had been read and sanctioned before sending.”<sup>119</sup> Strickland’s commentary, therefore, once again exhibits her awareness of exemplary source material. That she is particularly taken by the “beautiful Strickland seal,” moreover, evidences a certain family pride which echoes her Jacobite inclinations – such seals often combined several coats of arms, detonating the pedigree of the family.<sup>120</sup> Her active role in the preservation of the family history, alongside a personal affection for the material traces of ancestors, draws attention to how, despite holding obligations to two families, women could assume the familial pride of their marital home.<sup>121</sup> These supplementary notes go beyond the researching and cataloguing of history, and determine how this was also a personal project driven by her own ambition. Strickland positions her pen and her hands as crucial to such narratives of family history.

In documenting the Sizergh family papers, Strickland displayed an affinity to the family while also exerting an authorial and organisational presence that recalls her epistolary practices; sealing was an unconscious part of writing a letter. The majority of Strickland’s seals are a simple inscription of her initials – a C and S neatly intertwined together, a format that was common for women in the eighteenth century.<sup>122</sup> This

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<sup>118</sup> James Daybell, “Material Meanings and the Social Signs of Manuscript Letters in Early Modern England,” *Literature Compass* 6, no. 3 (2009): 661.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> Rachel Church, “Writing Equipment and Women in Europe 1550-1900,” *Women’s Writing* 21, no. 3 (2014): 399-400.

<sup>121</sup> Ruth Larsen has noted how such obligations, while often a source of tension, also produced lasting friendships. See Ruth Larsen, “Sisterly Guidance: Elite Women, Sorority and the Life Cycle, 1770-1860,” in *Women and the Country House in Ireland and Britain*, ed. Terence Dooley, Maeve O’Riordan and Christopher Ridgway (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2018), 165.

<sup>122</sup> Dena Goodman, for example, has drawn attention to the rise in novelty seals that no longer denoted the writer’s station but rather provided “gallant symbols for love, friendship, gratitude.” Dena

appears relatively simple until compared with the seal of Strickland's only daughter, Mary. Mary's seal is similarly personalised with her initials and the letters are arranged in a style that mirrors and mimics her mother's.<sup>123</sup> This similarity suggests a purposeful production of a feminine-specific seal. In closing their letters with corresponding wax imprints, Strickland and Mary memorialised the generational relationship between mother and daughter in an intimate and quotidian practice. As Dena Goodman has argued, "the seal was the materialization of the owner's self."<sup>124</sup> The similarity between Strickland's and Mary's seals, therefore, displays how the material fashioning of their respective "selves" was intimately united with one another. The Strickland seals commemorate mother and daughter's familial bond in material ways. In these acts, Strickland materialises her own feminine lineage. This is especially plausible when contextualised alongside Strickland's other seals – in later letters, she uses a variation of the Strickland family crest, one joined with the arms of Townley (see Figure 3.1).<sup>125</sup> Like the similarity between her and Mary's seals, this crest distinctly commemorates Strickland's personal ancestry. Daybell has noted how "[f]amily seals were passed down the generations and used by numerous family members," illuminating how material extensions of these letters could be part of the family lineage.<sup>126</sup> Rather than commemorating one throughline of descent, however, Strickland pays tribute to the unification between her parental family and her marital

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Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 170-171.

<sup>123</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Anne Standish, 7 April 1801, Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC13/7, Wigan Archives (this set of papers has been incorrectly catalogued as letters to Anastasia Standish Strickland from her sister Catherine Strickland); Mary C. Stephenson to Thomas Strickland Standish, 25 September 1809, Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC10/44, Wigan Archives.

<sup>124</sup> Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, 241.

<sup>125</sup> The seal can be found on the letter Cecilia Strickland to Charles Townley, 26 January 1773, Towneley of Towneley – 1202-1857, DDTo Box J, Lancashire Archives. For information on the family's quarterings see: Henry Hornyold-Strickland, *Genealogical Memoirs of the Family of Strickland of Sizergb etc* (Kendal: T. Wilson & Son, 1928), 216-219.

<sup>126</sup> Daybell, "Material Meanings and the Social Signs of Manuscript Letters," 660.

family, joining patrilineal succession to female agency. The papers that passed through Strickland's hands are marked, distinguished, and authenticated with her ownership – a material ownership that was markedly feminine and individual to herself.



Figure 3.1. Strickland's seal on a letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1773. The Strickland arms appear top left, and the Townley arms encompass the whole righthand side.

Over her correspondence and archival cataloguing, Strickland displays her attention to detail and historiographical practices; her use of seals also links these methods with other forms of print culture in the period, namely how seals were imaginatively used in fiction. For instance, Burney's 1782 novel *Cecilia; or Memoirs of an Heiress* famously exhibits the process of marking one's items with a personal seal, when the titular heroine is forced to vacate her house.<sup>127</sup> Burney, however, illustrates how seals were also a form of cataloguing: Cecilia "next put her own seal

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<sup>127</sup> Beth Cortese, "Home Economics: Female Estate Managers in Long Eighteenth-century Fiction and Society," in *At Home in the Eighteenth Century: Interrogating Domestic Space*, ed. Stephen G. Hague and Karen Lipsedge (Milton: Taylor and Francis, 2021), 129.

upon her cabinets, draws, and many other things, and employed almost all her servants at once, in making complete inventories of what every room contained.”<sup>128</sup> Sealing one’s possessions then, had manifold uses. As a result, Strickland’s reliance on a distinctly feminine seal can be seen as a pre-emptive means of cataloguing and identifying her (and by extension her daughter’s) papers for posterity. This is especially likely given Strickland’s brother’s occupation. Charles Townley was an antiquarian and collector, most renowned for his museum-like house in Park Street, Westminster.<sup>129</sup> His famous likeness, Johan Zoffany’s *Charles Townley and Friends in His Library at Park Street*, depicts Townley alongside Charles Greville, Thomas Astle and the so-called Baron d’Hancarville in their London sculpture gallery.<sup>130</sup> Townley hired the Baron d’Hancarville to catalogue his collection, and he is depicted in the process of doing so seated in the centre of Zoffany’s painting.<sup>131</sup> In capturing this moment on canvas, Zoffany confirms the importance of such forms of documentation within this circle; that Strickland shared her brother’s affinity for collecting and cataloguing can only be assumed, but it is clear she was at least involved with his circle. Her son, Thomas, for example, acknowledged in a draft reply to his mother her acquaintance with the antiquarian and collector Joseph Banks: “you know Sir Jos Banks And many in London.”<sup>132</sup> In April 1790, moreover, Strickland borrowed d’Hancarville’s book on Etruscan vases from her brother, before requesting “to have

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<sup>128</sup> Frances Burney, *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress*, ed. Peter Sabor and Margaret Anne Doody (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 869.

<sup>129</sup> B. F. Cook, “Townley, Charles (1737–1805), collector of antiquities,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004. For scholarship on Townley see: Nicole Chochrane, “Ancient Art and the Eighteenth-Century Auction: Collecting Catalogues and Competition,” *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, no. 3 (2021): 277-292; John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), 252-287.

<sup>130</sup> For work on this painting see: Mary Webster, “Zoffany’s Painting of Charles Townley’s Library in Park Street,” *The Burlington Magazine* 106, no. 736 (1964): 316-323; Gerard Vaughan, “The Townley Zoffany: Reflections on Charles Townley and his Friends,” *Apollo (Archive: 1925-2005)* 144, no. 417 (1996): 32-35.

<sup>131</sup> Cook, “Townley, Charles (1737–1805), collector of antiquities.”

<sup>132</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Thomas Strickland, 31 May 1813, D/D St./BundleC17/2/6.

his [d'Hancarville's] explanations" on specific items within the text.<sup>133</sup> Having likely developed her historiographical techniques of categorisation from her brother, Strickland's seals also reflect a dedication to ensuring her own posterity. In marking ownership onto these papers, Strickland imbued her quotidian epistolary practices with the conventions of historical research.

The compiling and ordering of family papers was evidently interconnected with wider notions of lineage and heraldry. These notions, for women such as Strickland, were personal; she centred her historical management and preservation on both her marital and parental family, an obligation that was specific to herself. The management of such papers provided a space for women to exert a level of authority in what were ordinarily masculine and patriarchal spheres. Strickland's engagement with the scientific methods of historiography within her letters provided (and continue to provide) her with an authoritative and authorial presence within the Strickland family history – one that was founded on paper. Having explored the textual means of recounting history, this chapter now questions how such narratives could be constructed beyond the page.

### Building a Historical Legacy

Strickland's paper traces were contemporaneous with the culture of history writing in which she lived: a culture in which narrating and transcribing family histories thrived. As Karen Harvey has established, this practice was adopted by the middling sorts "who lacked traditional markers of status."<sup>134</sup> Male heads of

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<sup>133</sup> Jarrard Strickland to Charles Townley, 26 April 1790, Towneley of Towneley – 1202-1857, DDTo Box J, Lancashire Archives; "The Numbers of the plates Copied by C:S: from Mons' D'Hancarville's Etruscan Vases of which she desire to have his Explanations," undated, Towneley of Towneley – 1202-1857, DDTo Box J, Lancashire Archives.

<sup>134</sup> Harvey, *The Little Republic*, 173.

households, Harvey posits, turned to asserting family lineage through documents such as diaries and commonplace books.<sup>135</sup> But for Strickland, residing at Sizergh provided access to more traditional and aristocratic markers of status and family lineage, manifested through the building itself. As Jon Stobart and Mark Rothery have acknowledged, “[w]hat distinguished the elite was the character, quantity and quality of ‘family’ objects: they had architecture and picture galleries rather than commonplace books.”<sup>136</sup> In line with her written histories Strickland, like her male counterparts, used the Sizergh estate as a material recognition of family history. Akin to her letter-writing, moreover, she used this space to commemorate both the Stricklands and the Townleys; in exploring the heraldic alterations she made to the house, it is possible to see how Strickland wrote her own family history both physically and metaphorically onto the building itself. Strickland’s use of the building as a form of historical narration makes Madeleine Pelling and Lilian Tabois’s claim that women were “makers of history across a range of media” especially pertinent.<sup>137</sup> This, alongside Crystal B. Lake’s acknowledgement of “Romantic historiography’s impulse to discover, curate, and explicate the material cultures of the past” meant that women such as Strickland could “claim new forms of authority over the significance of historical objects.”<sup>138</sup> Turning now to such material expressions of history, the chapter concludes with an exploration of how Strickland used the growing popular culture of written family histories alongside those traditional, aristocratic practices already available to her.

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<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 172-174.

<sup>136</sup> Jon Stobart and Mark Rothery, “Fashion, Heritage and Family,” *Cultural and Social History* 11, no. 3 (2014): 392-393.

<sup>137</sup> Madeleine Pelling and Lilian Tabois, “Women and the Making of History: Introduction,” *History: The Journal of the Historical Association* 106, no. 372 (2021): 519.

<sup>138</sup> Lake, “History Writing and Antiquarianism,” 97.



Scott's 1908 *The Stricklands of Sizergh* repeatedly recognises the material relics of Strickland's family history on the walls of the house. The description of the "Banqueting Hall," for example, comments on an "illuminated parchment pedigree prepared in 1776, showing ascending lines from Charles Strickland and Cecilia Towneley."<sup>139</sup> Scott proceeds to emphasise the "extremely interesting Towneley pedigree," which, being mounted on the walls of the Banqueting Hall, attests to the fact that Strickland understood the importance of heraldic display and actively sought to represent her maternal line in the pedigree of her marital family.<sup>140</sup> That this parchment was prepared in 1776, moreover, six years after the death of Strickland's first husband and three years prior to her marriage to her second, suggests that such a work was commissioned by Strickland herself. Indeed, it was during these years that West was living and working at Sizergh under her patronage on the commissioned family history. Such material markers suggest that Strickland assiduously wrote her family history through both the papers she kept and organised, and material interactions with the house itself. As Serena Dyer has noted regarding women's dress histories, the writing of history did not just come from pen and paper: "eighteenth-century women exercised historical insight and wrote ... histories using thoughtful visual and material vocabularies."<sup>141</sup> For Strickland, this was a distinct history, reflective of the family she married into and the pedigree of the one to which she was born. Just as Stobart has reflected how "family histories ... forged links between generations and created a sense of continuity," and that such "ends could also be met

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<sup>139</sup> Scott, *The Stricklands of Sizergh Castle*, 251.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 252; "Hatchment of Charles Strickland (1734-70)," NT 998505, National Trust Collections, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed March 14, 2022, <https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/998505>.

<sup>141</sup> Serena Dyer, "I Have Been a Collector of Costumes': Women, Dress Histories and the Temporalities of Eighteenth-Century Fashion," *History: The Journal of the Historical Association* 106, no. 372 (2021): 580.

through material culture,” Strickland’s commissioning and exhibition of the Townley pedigree celebrated her own history and commemorated its importance in the “continuity” of the Stricklands.<sup>142</sup> These histories were materially displayed onto the very fabric of Sizergh itself.

These are not the only material reminders Strickland employed to commemorate the Townley family genealogy throughout the house. Her interest in the heraldry of her families was striking enough to have been mentioned in Scott’s history:

Cecilia Towneley and her husband took a keen interest in heraldry, and in many other ways were concerned in preserving for later generations evidences bearing on the families from whom they had their origin. Along one side of the ancient dining room, in the tower of Sizergh, is a large heraldic record on vellum, some 22 feet long by 3 feet deep, showing, as the inscription says, *The Hundred and Twenty Eight Quarters of the Issue of CHARLES STRICKLAND, of Sizergh, in the County of Westmorland, Esquire, and CÆCILIA TOWNELEY, his Wife: Faithfully Collected from authentick Evidences; by Sir Charles Townley, Kn<sup>t</sup>. Clarenceaux King of Arms, Anno Domini, 1764.*<sup>143</sup>

This is a “very beautiful piece of work, each coat ... being given in its correct form and colour.”<sup>144</sup> The significance of this work being undertaken in 1764 suggests that this “large heraldic record on vellum” was commissioned to commemorate Strickland’s marriage to Charles in 1762 and the subsequent unification of their two families. The inscription transcribed in Scott’s *The Stricklands of Sizergh* observes that it was a relation of Strickland that “faithfully collected” the information for the “heraldic record” in the dining room. “Sir Charles Townley,” was appointed Garter

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<sup>142</sup> Jon Stobart, “Status, Gender and the Life Cycle in the Consumption Practices of the English Elite. The Case of Mary Leigh, 1736-1806,” *Social History* 40, no. 1 (2015): 102.

<sup>143</sup> Scott, *The Stricklands of Sizergh Castle*, 200.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 201

principal king-of-arms in 1772 and was descended from a lower branch of the Townley family, to which Strickland was also born.<sup>145</sup> While Townley would have been a distant relation at best, much like how Strickland's cataloguing connected her to her brother's professional collecting, this relationship affirms her associations and familiarity within such scholarly environments. This, alongside her archival work at the Herald's Office, suggests that Strickland took an active role in the presentation, display, and research behind these material markers of family history. As Amanda Vickery has demonstrated, "the country seat was a badge of ancestry that women were proud to burnish."<sup>146</sup> Lady Irwin at Temple Newsam, for example, similarly used the walls of her marital home as a means of commemorating her role in the family's lineage; Irwin engraved her name on to the south wall of the house during its remodelling, a symbol that, unlike Strickland's pedigrees, still stands today.<sup>147</sup> As well as burnishing this badge contemporaneously, Strickland made sure that Sizergh continued to display her ancestry for generations to come and, while the material genealogies no longer remain in situ, they are textually commemorated in works such as Scott's.

Alongside these overt symbols of family pedigree, Strickland also amassed a collection of material goods to reflect her family's dynasty. Such material assemblages were used by elite and aristocratic families to communicate what Stobart and Rothery refer to as "patina" –material culture that "communicated the importance of family as lineage."<sup>148</sup> This could be "inherited goods, but also the inscription of pedigree onto material objects in the form of crests and arms."<sup>149</sup> In 1778 Strickland commissioned

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<sup>145</sup> Thompson Cooper and J. A. Marchand, "Townley, Sir Charles (1713–1774), herald," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

<sup>146</sup> Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 135.

<sup>147</sup> Judith Lewis, "When a House Is Not a Home: Elite English Women and the Eighteenth-Century Country House," *Journal of British Studies* 48 (2009): 354.

<sup>148</sup> Stobart and Rothery, "Fashion, Heritage and Family," 387.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

“a piece of furniture to hold writings,” which was “to have the family arms in the upper panel – inlaid & blazoned with some ancient ornaments surrounding.”<sup>150</sup> Strickland’s commissioning of furniture to include the family arms, exemplifies her use of what Judith Lewis has called an “ecology of signs” – material objects “that both reflect and shape the owner’s self.”<sup>151</sup> Strickland’s commissioning of this cabinet not only upholds her responsibility for keeping and organising the family papers (it includes multiple pigeonholes and drawers), but it also sustains her use of material signifiers of dynasty throughout the house. Such material and visual reminders created an environment in which Strickland, and her role in the family lineage, was constantly performed. Through these items, the two components of her historical legacy are united: the paper and the material. Strickland repeatedly combines the material with the ephemeral, the print world with the domestic sphere, and the masculine with the feminine, throughout her variety of forms of historical narration.

Like her more overt symbols of familial lineage, Strickland’s assemblage of material artefacts reflected both the Townleys and the Stricklands. A collection of silverware marked with the letter “T” exists in the current Sizergh inventory, and was brought to the estate through the Townley inheritance – the “T” perhaps being a nod to the Townley name.<sup>152</sup> That this collection came into the household through the Townley inheritance suggests that these material mementoes were bequeathed by Strickland’s mother – a common occurrence between women.<sup>153</sup> Maxine Berg has

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<sup>150</sup> Source quoted in Susan E. Stuart, *Gillows of Lancaster and London, 1730-1840: Cabinetmakers and International Merchants: A Furniture and Business History* (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors’ Club, [2008]), 2:22.

<sup>151</sup> Lewis, “When a House Is Not a Home,” 341.

<sup>152</sup> “One of a Set of Six Silver Teaspoons,” National Trust Images, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed August 1, 2023, <https://www.nationaltrustimages.org.uk/image/705190>.

<sup>153</sup> Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 242; Cecilia Townley’s will does not explicitly state the bequeathment of silverware, although such items may have been present in the “small Tortoise Shell Trunk and all the things contained in it as likewise all other Trinkets such as Rings Ear Rings Artificial flowers and other trifles” that she left to her daughter. See Will of Cecilia Townley, Widow of Standish, Lancashire, 13

established how commodities such as silverware “though bought were transformed from the anonymity of the market place to signifiers of family and memory” and it is through such acts, as Crystal B. Lake makes clear, that “the objects’ meanings became detached from the objects themselves.”<sup>154</sup> In engraving a variety of materials throughout Sizergh with visual reminders of her marital family and the family she was born into, Strickland created a material narrative of personal history and succession through the objects in her home. Akin to Hannah Greig’s consideration of the use of material goods within London’s beau monde to “create and consolidate an exclusive group identity,” Strickland’s “self-conscious display of social networks” through items such as silverware and furniture, served as a constant reminder of her indubitable place within the family.<sup>155</sup> These items are distinct to Strickland herself – materially commemorating her family’s succession and her role within it.

Like the Roman Missal, such narratives of family lineage are also reflective of Strickland’s religious identity. Material reminders of the Jacobite cause exist throughout Sizergh today, including a piece of cloth allegedly stained with “King James[’s] Blood” and locks of hair from similar members of the Stuart household.<sup>156</sup> These items attest to the family’s proximity to the Stuart line, and would have been present during the Strickland’s occupancy in the eighteenth century. Such materials united the family with their ancestors and, as Neil Guthrie has noted, “Jacobite

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May April 1778, PROB Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/1042/108, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>154</sup> Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, 242; Crystal B. Lake, *Artifacts: How We Think and Write about Found Objects* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020), 10.

<sup>155</sup> Hannah Greig, *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 47.

<sup>156</sup> “Cloth,” NT 998671, National Trust Collections, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed March 14, 2022, <https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/998671>; “Hair [of Prince James],” NT 998383, National Trust Collections, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed March 14, 2022, <https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/998383>; “Hair [of Queen Mary d’Este],” NT 998378, National Trust Collections, National Trust and Robert Thrift, accessed March 14, 2022, <https://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/998378>.

adherence was a question of family history ... political and dynastic allegiances were more often than not hereditary.”<sup>157</sup> These political and religious identities were communicated through the objects in the house and provided a throughline to family histories which created a narrative of shared suffering and endurance. At the centre of these narratives, moreover, was the household. Gabriel Glickman has drawn attention to the importance of buildings in facilitating a private Catholic identity in the early eighteenth century in which the “re-fashioning of Catholic households in England ran as one with the refiguring of an active spirituality.”<sup>158</sup> Within these spaces “the emphasis placed upon kinship networks, family history and material wealth ... create[d] an alternative vision of the national order outside the confines of the post-Revolution state.”<sup>159</sup> For families like the Stricklands, the house was at once a materialisation of their religious legacy and the very symbol of what could have been. This context instils Strickland’s historical endeavours with her religious identity, a fact which was made especially pertinent in the summer of 1780, when Sizergh was attacked during the Gordon Riots. This unrest was provoked by anti-Catholic sentiment following the Catholic Relief Bill in 1778 and, while the majority of the disruption was limited to London, the Stricklands and Sizergh were also targeted.<sup>160</sup> On the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 1780, Strickland returned to Sizergh with her husband after a period in Liège to find the estate “more like a little Garrison’d fort than a Gentlemans house.”<sup>161</sup> The arson attempts at Sizergh were unsuccessful on account of their gardener’s defence, but this episode does provide an insight into the importance of the

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<sup>157</sup> Neil Guthrie, *The Material Culture of the Jacobites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 5.

<sup>158</sup> Glickman, *The English Catholic Community*, 70.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> Dick White, ““Sizergh to be burnt within two days”: Sizergh Castle and the Gordon Riots,” *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society* 3, no. 6 (2006): 103.

<sup>161</sup> Jarrard Strickland to Charles Towneley, 15 July 1780, Towneley of Towneley – 1202-1857, DDTTo Box J, Towneley of Towneley – 1202-1857, DDTTo Box J, Lancashire Archives.

home to the family. In a letter to Charles Townley on the night of their return to Sizergh Jarrard Strickland wrote “my wife is vastly well & in good spirits & says she will have arms in her room at night for her own use being determined not to loose [*sic*] the premises without a stout resistance.”<sup>162</sup> Strickland’s “stout resistance” to the attacks on Sizergh adds credence to the material relics of family history she subscribed onto its walls. This house was a part of the family’s lineage and an ancestor in its own right. The narrating of family history on the walls of these buildings exemplifies how women could assume the patriarchal notions of ancestry and pride, and Strickland’s staunch defence of the space reveals how this was more than a passive act.

Important to these constructions of a shared religious history was the continued residence of the family at one location. Cornelius Nicholson’s *The Annals of Kendal* (1832) commends the fact that Sizergh “is one of those [houses] which, having continued to be the residence of one family for a series of years, has never fallen into decay.”<sup>163</sup> A consistent house, with a consistent family was a key component of elite (and wider religious) understandings of family history. In keeping with her variety of historical engagements, Strickland was also evidently aware of the role she played in maintaining this stability. As she approached old age, her declining health and lack of financial support meant that she was forced to consider selling Sizergh. This was not a decision she took lightly. Writing to her son Thomas on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 1810 Strickland penned “I should never have thought of Quitting Sizergh ... after Near the length of a Jubilee existance in it.”<sup>164</sup> Strickland was evidently tormented with the thought of being forced to leave her home and alludes to her wider, dynastic,

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<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Cornelius Nicholson, *The Annals of Kendal: Being a Historical and Descriptive Account of Kendal and Its Environs. [...] With Biographical Sketches of Many Eminent Personages Connected with the Town* (London: Hudson and Nicholson, 1832), 84.

<sup>164</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Thomas Strickland Standish, 29 March 1810, Standish Family Papers, D/D St./BundleC17/2/1, Wigan Archives.

understanding of her residence at Sizergh. Her use of the word “jubilee” to describe her time living in the Castle evokes notions of lineage and pedigree, but also of achievement and commemoration. In honouring her time at Sizergh as worthy of a “jubilee,” Strickland emphasises her importance to the stability and longevity of the estate. In Judith Lewis’ words, “[d]ynasty is what makes the life of the individual important.”<sup>165</sup> This letter, written less than six months after the nation-wide festivities for the King’s golden jubilee, affirms Strickland’s awareness of how her habitation at Sizergh was part of a wider narrative of familial lineage and religious history, and indeed something worthy of celebration.<sup>166</sup> This she commemorated through paper and ink as well as the materials within her home.

Kate Retford, in her study of family portraiture at Kedleston Hall, has exhibited how the depiction of female sitters highlights a wider “intermingling of issues of power and dynasty with the later eighteenth-century vogue for the sentimental family.”<sup>167</sup> Retford identifies how women were shown as virtuous and tender mothers while also powerfully presented as carriers of the future heir. Such portraits were charged with “messages of continuity, the unbroken succession of eldest sons, and the importance of women in securing that succession.”<sup>168</sup> Elite women took great pride in their role as mothers to the next generation. Strickland’s maintenance of the Sizergh estate, as well as commending her own residence, was similarly instilled with futurity. Writing to her brother on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 1770, after only eight years’ residence, she reflected: “the more I look into my sons affairs, the more I see y<sup>e</sup>, necessity of my living at Sizergh & that by so doing I may be very usefull to him w<sup>h</sup> shall be reason

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<sup>165</sup> Lewis, “When a House Is Not a Home,” 355.

<sup>166</sup> See for example Stuart Semmel, “Radicals, Loyalists, and the Royal Jubilee of 1809,” *Journal of British Studies* 46 (2007): 543-569.

<sup>167</sup> Kate Retford, “Sensibility and Genealogy in the Eighteenth-Century Family Portrait: The Collection at Kedleston Hall,” *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 3 (2003): 560.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 549.



sufficient for keeping me here, tho another place might be more Amusing to me.”<sup>169</sup> Strickland’s conceptualisation of the space in which she lived was clearly informed by dynastic motivations. Conscious that these walls would house her son, Strickland draws a clear line between her own past and the future of her family. This space was in itself a narrative of continuous lineage and succession. In the face of cultures (both written and material) that were charged with debates surrounding women’s ability to conduct history, Strickland established herself as both a landowning female and a capable and authoritative historian.

To conclude, this chapter has demonstrated that, informed by growing debates about women writing and conducting history, Cecilia Strickland tailored historiographical methods to form her own story. The culture of print in which Strickland generated these narratives was fraught with debates about women’s proficiency in historiographical science – as Croker’s review of Burney’s *Memoirs* made clear. Their ability to impartially manage family papers and write a narrative devoid of emotion was considered unachievable, and the reviews of Burney’s *Memoirs* encapsulated these sentiments. Individuals such as Hester Thrale found ways to negotiate such criticisms through informal and unpublished ventures into family history. Thrale and Strickland’s friendship, and travels together touring historic buildings in France, suggests that women in the same circles mutually found ways to intervene in the writing and shaping of personal histories – and may have even discussed their strategies together. Thrale’s *Family Book* shows how the act of recording was often more important than the record itself, alluding to the value of

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<sup>169</sup> Cecilia Strickland to Charles Townley, 17 November 1770, Towneley of Towneley – 1202-1857, DDT0 Box J, Lancashire Archives.

information management within these circles. These values are evident within Strickland's explicit ventures into family history; her archival notes in West's archive memorialise her role as historian and researcher, and Strickland repeatedly displays an awareness of the importance of source material when reading and writing historical narratives. In her private writings, Strickland's epistolary practices were similarly informed by emerging debates on women's management of family papers. In employing the scientific methods of historiographical research to her more quotidian correspondence, Strickland created an "epistolary persona" based on empirical fact and first-hand evidence. Like the male historians that filled the contemporary marketplace, Strickland assumed a trustworthy and reliable narration while also transforming her own letters into the very material upon which these histories were based. Strickland's utilisation of her brother's cataloguing expertise, and her creation of a seal that was distinct to the female branch of the family, display how she methodically organised the family archive and marked ownership onto the papers that passed through her hands. Finally, alongside these textual manoeuvres, Strickland drew on more masculine constructions of historical preservation within her built environment; she established Sizergh Castle as an ancestor attached to both the Stricklands and the Townleys. Strickland assembled a historical identity that spanned commissioned publications, private bibliographic records, epistolary culture, and her built environment. In each of these manuscript and material endeavours, Strickland displays clear and concise knowhow of male-dominated environments exhibiting how, in employing a variety of textual and material methods, women turned to creative and intimate ways of engaging with history.

Strickland's historiography never made it into the eighteenth-century print marketplace, but it was informed by and clearly aligned to the published texts that did.

In my final chapter, I explore this print/manuscript distinction more closely. The papers of Hannah Greg, who published her writings and dispersed them in manuscript form, reveal how these two fields were not distinct. Like Strickland's handwritten appreciation of the formal technologies that underpinned printed histories, Greg approached her private writing with processes analogous to publication; these papers were circulated, edited, and critically received in spite of their manuscript form.

**Methods of Manuscript Circulation and the Hierarchies of  
Preservation: Hannah Greg and her Literary Contemporaries**

In her 1799 publication *A Collection of Maxims, Observations &c.* Hannah Greg acknowledged in the “Compiler’s Preface” that:

The Compiler of the following maxims, when confined by long sickness, meditated an useful legacy to her children, gleaned from her own reading and reflection. That the legacy is converted into a gift, she believes is as pleasing to them as to herself. It is contained in the following pages, which though printed, are not intended for the public; and which would not indeed have been committed to the press, but for the difficulty of writing, or procuring to be written, a sufficient number of copies for the convenient perusal of a large family of young readers.<sup>1</sup>

Within this passage, Greg draws attention to a crucial component of the relationship between manuscript and print in the long eighteenth century; though printed and published, this collection of maxims was “not intended for the public.” Alongside emphasising her modesty, Greg alludes to the understanding that printed documents were not definitively public and, conversely, manuscript documents were not explicitly private. For an eighteenth-century reader, as Betty A. Schellenberg has identified, “the media of script and print, with their distinctive practices and priorities, were ... in close conversation, sometimes interdependent.”<sup>2</sup> The final chapter of this thesis explores the extent to which the writings of the above author, Hannah Greg

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<sup>1</sup> Hannah Greg, *A Collection of Maxims, Observation &c.* (Liverpool, 1799), i-ii.

<sup>2</sup> Betty A. Schellenberg, *Literary Coteries and the Making of Modern Print Culture 1740-1790* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 2.

(1766-1828), were typical of a culture that valued manuscript material on par with printed documents. In the previous chapter, we saw how Strickland instilled her private historical writings with the techniques that underpinned published works. This chapter considers the overlap and permeation between printed word and handwritten text, which appear much more fluidly in Greg's archive. Greg, like her contemporaries, approached her manuscript papers critically and such documents were circulated, dispersed, and received publicly despite their scribal form.

Margaret Ezell has established that, since the seventeenth century, manuscript writing circulated widely; this circulation provided the opportunity for women in particular to share their work without the need for formal publication. These texts, "although not universally available to any purchasing reader, nevertheless ... [exhibit] a "social" function."<sup>3</sup> Such "scribal publications" have traditionally been viewed as a more accessible means for women to share their works on the assumption that they evaded the prejudices that accompanied publication.<sup>4</sup> As Markman Ellis has illustrated, "[w]hile many women saw writing as a legitimate creative medium, they also expressed doubts that print publication offered them the dignity and propriety appropriate to their gender."<sup>5</sup> But such an understanding is too simplistic; in M. Bigold's words, "feminist literary history has celebrated those women who actively eschewed the distinction [between script and print]."<sup>6</sup> Bigold's study questions why

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<sup>3</sup> Margaret Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 38-39. See also Margaret Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, c. 1987).

<sup>4</sup> This phrase was coined in Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> Markman Ellis, "'An Author in Form': Women Writers, Print Publication, and Elizabeth Montagu's *Dialogues of the Dead*," *ELH* 79, no. 2 (2012): 418.

<sup>6</sup> M. Bigold, *Women of Letters, Manuscript Circulation, and Print Afterlives in the Eighteenth Century: Elizabeth Rowe, Catherine Cockburn and Elizabeth Carter* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 8. On the recovery of the professional woman writer see: E.J. Clery, "Revising the Professional Woman Writer: Mary Wollstonecraft and Precarious Income," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 27-38; Kate Ozment, "Women's Labor in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century English Literary Economy," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 87-98.

the “‘stigma of print’ [has] been given such prominence in discussions about women writers” and discusses how women “never disown[ed] their print ambitions” by suggesting that the choice to limit their prose to manuscript was not a direct response to fear of publication.<sup>7</sup> Emily C. Freidman, Pam Perkins, and Peter Sabor have equally warned that the eighteenth century was “a world of still-modest print runs” and that “valorizing print ... does a disservice to the realities of literary circulation.”<sup>8</sup> Indeed, even women who did not write works of fiction, poetry, or prose, still encouraged a degree of circulation to their personal papers. As Clare Brant has acknowledged “[m]any women writers in eighteenth-century Britain were not novelists, poets, or dramatists,” “[t]hey were writers of letters, diaries, memoirs, essays” and these “so-called ‘private’ genres like letters are often highly social.”<sup>9</sup> Likewise, Lindsay O’Neill has recognised that “[l]etters were communal possessions of certain circles ... and a letter to one was seen as a letter to all.”<sup>10</sup> Women’s diaries, too, were shared between close friends and relations, and it was common for them to be written with an eye to posthumous publication; as Schellenberg and Michelle Levy have put it, “a widely circulated manuscript could become “public” in its own right.”<sup>11</sup> Many an eighteenth-century Bluestocking, as Deborah Heller concludes, used typically private correspondence as a means of experimenting with a more “ambitiously ‘literary’ epistolary style” on account of their “aware[ness] of the opportunities that the

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<sup>7</sup> Bigold, *Women of Letters, Manuscript Circulation, and Print Afterlives*, 9 and 11.

<sup>8</sup> Emily C. Freidman, Pam Perkins, and Peter Sabor, “Authorial Choice and Modes of Circulation,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 86.

<sup>9</sup> Clare Brant, “Varieties of Women’s Writing,” in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1700-1800*, ed. Vivien Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 285.

<sup>10</sup> Lindsay O’Neill, *The Opened Letter: Networking in the Early Modern British World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 42.

<sup>11</sup> Michelle Levy and Betty A. Schellenberg, *How and Why to do Things with Eighteenth-Century Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 4.

indeterminate status of the letter offered.”<sup>12</sup> The circulation of women’s writing, was not solely reliant on a printed publication of their work, and vice versa – through methods such as extra-illustration, even “commercially produced printed book[s] could ... be restored to the realm of private circulation.”<sup>13</sup> The boundary between print and manuscript was thin, interchangeable, and regularly traversed – the papers of Hannah Greg provide a fruitful example of this precarious margin.

Hannah Greg (née Lightbody) was born to a Liverpoolian family of dissenters in 1766. Contrary to the women studied in the thesis thus far, Greg did not have an inherited tie to landed fortune; her father was part of a milieu of mercantile gentlemen in Liverpool, and his success in the city’s cotton trade provided Greg with a childhood home in the increasingly bourgeois Paradise Street at the centre of the city’s commercial trade.<sup>14</sup> The Lightbodies’ involvement in Liverpoolian mercantile circles, moreover, fostered an engagement with prominent thinkers – from a young age Greg was regularly in the company of families such as the Rathbones and Roscoes. Owing to this, a large part of Greg’s childhood was centred around literary and philosophical debate. In 1789 Hannah Lightbody married Samuel Greg, an Irish merchant who, like her father, was in the cotton trade. Both Greg’s father’s and her husband’s estates were enmeshed within the transatlantic slave trade, the particulars of which will be outlined below. At the time of their marriage, Samuel was experiencing increasing commercial success, and the couple’s early years together were spent in the close confines of his business. Their first home on King Street in Manchester, for example, housed the business’s “warehouse and offices” and Samuel arranged for their honeymoon to “be

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<sup>12</sup> Deborah Heller, “Subjectivity Unbound: Elizabeth Vesey as the Sylph in Bluestocking Correspondence,” in *Reconsidering the Bluestockings*, ed. Nicole Pohl and Betty A. Schellenberg (San Marino, CA.: Huntington Library, 2003), 226.

<sup>13</sup> Levy and Schellenberg, *How and Why to do Things with Eighteenth-Century Manuscripts*, 59.

<sup>14</sup> David Sekers, *A Lady of Cotton: Hannah Greg, Mistress of Quarry Bank Mill* (Stroud: The History Press, in association with National Trust, 2013), 29.

spent at Styal within sight and sounds of his ‘beloved’ Mill.”<sup>15</sup> Greg found the move from Liverpool to Manchester difficult, and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 1789, she recorded her upset at leaving home: “left Liverpool – my heart sinking within me ... the extreme fatigue I had undergone in ... finally leaving my dear home ... mortified, disappointed, and terrified ... me.”<sup>16</sup>

In 1797, Samuel embarked on building a house at the site of his mill – the construction of Quarry Bank and the promise of a life outside of Manchester excited Greg’s hopes for a happier existence. Writing to her close friend William Rathbone IV in July 1798, Greg discussed the planned improvements to their home: “I look forward to living less in the town (which of late has become almost insupportable to me) – as M<sup>r</sup> G seems to intend seriously building 3 or 4 rooms in the Country this Year – which will enable me to keep my family together about me.”<sup>17</sup> Quarry Bank house soon became a site “so secluded as to know, see, and scarcely to remember anything of the ‘spites and turmoils’ of the world,” and Greg quickly felt at home:

... a spring evening ... here [Quarry Bank] ... is truly a renovation of life, natural and moral – to change the long confinement among brick houses for such a scene – to deliver the oppressed frame and the immured mind – to transport the heart itself where it can recover room to breathe and expand, after being so imprisoned, and sinking under the weight of fetters fastened by care and labour.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Sekers, *A Lady of Cotton*, 86; Peter Spencer, *A Portrait of Hannah Greg* (Styal: Quarry Bank Mill Trust Ltd., 1982), 5.

<sup>16</sup> Hannah Greg, *Diary of Hannah Lightbody*, 23 November 1789, Quarry Bank Archive, Quarry Bank Mill, Cheshire, 2:131-32. These two volumes are on long-term loan to Quarry Bank from a private collection, and therefore do not bear a formal catalogue reference. It is this manuscript version I have used throughout this chapter, for a printed record of the document see: Hannah Greg (née Lightbody) and David Sekers, “The Diary of Hannah Lightbody 1786/1770,” *Enlightenment and Dissent*, no. 24 (2008): 1-177.

<sup>17</sup> Hannah Greg to William Rathbone IV, July 1789, Rathbone Papers, RP II 1.64, University of Liverpool Library.

<sup>18</sup> Spencer, *A Portrait of Hannah Greg*, 28 and 9.



Greg speaks much more openly about her house than the women studied in the thesis so far and her difference in wealth and economic status also provide many new points of comparison. Nonetheless, the fact remains that, like the Winns at Nostell, Egerton at Tatton, and Strickland at Sizergh, Greg's paper traces endure because of their attachments to the site at which she lived.

Greg was also part of a global eighteenth century in a way that has not yet been covered in this thesis – her family had numerous links to the transatlantic slave trade. For one, the farming of cotton as a raw material was reliant on the labour of enslaved people and on her mother's and father's side of the family Greg had numerous relations that traded with African merchants, such as her brother-in-law, uncle, and cousins.<sup>19</sup> In addition to this, Greg's husband, Samuel, inherited plantations in the West Indies in 1795 upon the death of his uncle; these legacies were left to Samuel and his brother, Thomas, but Samuel acquired the latter's shares in exchange for a large annuity.<sup>20</sup> These plantations relied on the labour of enslaved people and in 1836 Thomas Greg, the son of Hannah and Samuel, received over £5000 following the Slavery Compensation Act for the loss of enslaved labour on his estates in St Vincent and Dominica.<sup>21</sup> The St Vincent estate, Cane Gardens, was sold in 1870 and the Greg

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<sup>19</sup> Sekers, *A Lady of Cotton*, 71.

<sup>20</sup> "Samuel Greg," Legacies of British Slavery Database, UCL Department of History, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146644249>. See also the various references to the Gregs and Quarry Bank in the National Trust's report on slavery: Sally-Anne Huxtable, Corinne Fowlers, Christo Kefalas, Emma Slocombe ed. *Interim Report on the Connections between Colonialism and Properties now in the Care of the National Trust, Including Links with Historic Slavery* (Swindon: National Trust, 2020), <https://nt.global.ssl.fastly.net/binaries/content/assets/website/national/pdf/colonialism-and-historic-slavery-report.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> "Dominica 319 ([Hillsborough])," Legacies of British Slavery Database, UCL Department of History, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/claim/view/10275>; "St Vincent 547 (Cane Garden)," Legacies of British Slavery Database, UCL Department of History, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/claim/view/27332>; Elizabeth Green, Christo Kefalas, Emma Slocombe, "Compensation for Slave-Ownership," in *Interim Report on the Connections between Colonialism and Properties now in the Care of the National Trust*, 36-37.

family continued to benefit from the Dominican estate, Hillsborough, until 1928.<sup>22</sup> Greg herself was never openly explicit about her opinion on the slave trade, but her engagement with abolitionist literature, attendance at anti-slavery lectures, and strict unitarian world views suggest that she was in favour of abolition, even as her household was partially funded by profits from enslaved labour.<sup>23</sup> On the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 1788, for instance, Greg attended a sermon by the unitarian abolitionist Rev. John Yates. A day later she recollected having “had a great deal of Conversation [on the] African trade,” and on the 30<sup>th</sup> she “Lay awake endeavouring to recollect the Negro’s Complaint.”<sup>24</sup> Greg also addressed the question of the slave trade in her private Duodecimo Society; an excerpt from Thomas Clarkson’s 1808 publication *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade* remains within her Duodecimo papers, which alludes to a want to engage with the abolitionist debate.<sup>25</sup> Her cursory notes on reading this text encapsulate her moral dilemma: “some things one cannot resolve to utter from fear.”<sup>26</sup> Greg’s potential abolitionist sympathies, therefore, are inconsistent with the material benefits she enjoyed throughout her life on account of the slave trade – benefits which continued to support her children after her and Samuel’s death.

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<sup>22</sup> Green, Kefalas, Slocombe, “Compensation for Slave-Ownership,” 37; “Thomas Greg,” Legacies of British Slavery Database, UCL Department of History, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/10314>.

<sup>23</sup> See Jon Mee, *Networks of Improvement: Literature, Bodies, and Machines in the Industrial Revolution* (London: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming 2023), 127-148; David Sekers has drawn attention to Greg’s engagement with abolitionist literature such as William Roscoe’s poems “The African” and “The Wrongs of Africa.” Sekers, *A Lady of Cotton*, 72.

<sup>24</sup> Greg, Diary, 28 January 1788, 1:51-53.

<sup>25</sup> Hannah Greg, Notes for the Duodecimo Society, undated, QBA765.1/9/6/41, Quarry Bank Archive, Quarry Bank Mill, Cheshire. Unlike most other Mancunian cotton merchants, the Gregs do not appear on the list of signatures in favour of Sir Robert Peel’s “Petition from Manufacturers and Merchants of Manchester against the Foreign Slave Trade Bill.” See Petition from Manufacturers and Merchants of Manchester against the Foreign Slave Trade Bill, 1806, House of Lords: Journal Office: Main Papers (1800-1862), HL/PO/JO/10/8/106, Parliamentary Archives.

<sup>26</sup> Greg, Notes for the Duodecimo Society, QBA765.1/9/6/41.

Perhaps on account of the larger collection of surviving manuscript material, Greg has received more scholarly attention than the other women studied in this thesis. This narrative, however, remains patchy; her life beyond her educational ventures, religious engagements, or role in the turn of the century's network of manufactures, is yet to be documented.<sup>27</sup> Greg's manuscripts predominantly remain in two caches: one at her home at Quarry Bank, and another in the University of Liverpool's special collections. That Greg's papers remain across these two archives is reflective of her social networks; the University of Liverpool houses the papers of the Rathbone family. The Rathbones and Gregs were close family friends, and Greg's eldest daughter's marriage to William Rathbone V in 1812 cemented this association. The state of Greg's archive is likewise very much representative of the precarities that have typified chapters one, two and three: her papers at Quarry Bank display little order or cohesion with no formal catalogue and inconsistent categorisation. They appear in many different forms, from rough drafts jotted on a seemingly unrelated page, to carefully ordered manuscript poetry and detailed essays on a range of intellectual topics. It appears too, that a large portion of Greg's writing was mislaid during the twentieth century. Peter Spencer's *A Portrait of Hannah Greg*, first published in 1982, makes multiple references to the "collected letters of Hannah Greg, edited by herself."<sup>28</sup> A memorandum Greg produced prior to her death corroborates that she did "transcribe ... fair into other Books ... "passages from my own letters before they were

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<sup>27</sup> Even these references are sparse; Mary B. Rose's *The Gregs of Quarry Bank Mill* mentions Hannah Greg just a handful of times, and she is most noticeable by her absence. Mary B. Rose, *The Gregs of Quarry Bank Mill: The Rise and Decline of a Family Firm, 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); for work on Greg's involvement in literary and philosophical circles see Jon Mee, "'Some mode less revolting to their delicacy': Women's Institutional Space in the Transpennine Enlightenment, 1781-1822," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42, no. 4 (2019): 541-556; Mee, *Networks of Improvement*, 127-148; for Greg's promotion of education see J. A. V. Chapple, *Elizabeth Gaskell: The Early Years* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 139-144; on her interpretation of Unitarian education see Ruth Watts, *Gender, Power and the Unitarians in England 1760-1860* (London: Longman, 1998), 44, 88, 72.

<sup>28</sup> Spencer, *A Portrait of Hannah Greg*, 31.

sent &c,”” but no such documents survive today.<sup>29</sup> Greg’s archive also contains numerous pieces of religious material, alongside detailed minutes from the various meetings of her “Duodecimo Society.” Moreover, unlike the Winns, Egerton, or Strickland, Greg’s differing social status allowed her a more proactive engagement in the print market. Greg published numerous educational tracts throughout her life – in 1799, 1800, 1804, and again in 1807 – and one work occurred posthumously.<sup>30</sup> The content of these publications sits largely in the realm of Greg’s current scholarly attention – her religious identity, her charitable and educational work with the mill’s apprentices, and her didactic writings.

Greg’s earlier texts were published at a local print house, the Liverpudlian John McCreey, whose move to London in 1805 perhaps accounts for Greg’s later texts being published in the capital. That Greg published these tracts with an established printer is testament to the professionalisation behind these works; as George Justice has indicated, “by the end of the eighteenth century, private printing ... became vanity publishing.”<sup>31</sup> Greg’s female status would have likely forbidden her negotiations with the commercial trade of printers, but her involvement in the various literary and philosophical circles may have granted her access to and contacts with these businesses.<sup>32</sup> That Greg’s writing was informed by notions of textual circulation and dissemination then is not surprising, rather this chapter is concerned with the methods

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<sup>29</sup> Hannah Greg, Memoranda, 13 May 1817, Quarry Bank Archive, QBA765.1/9/6/55, Quarry Bank, Manchester.

<sup>30</sup> See for example: Greg, *A Collection of Maxims*; Hannah Greg, *Virtue Made Easy; or, A Tablet of Morality: Being a Collection of Maxims and Moral Sayings* ([London?], 1799); Hannah Greg, *The Moralist; or, a Collection of Maxims, Observations, &c* (Liverpool, 1800); Hannah Greg, *The Monitor; or A Collection of Precepts, Observations, &c.* (Liverpool, 1804); Hannah Greg, *The Juvenile Guide, in a Series of Letters, on Various Subjects, Addressed to Young Ladies. By the Author of ‘The Monitor’ [i.e. Mrs. H. Gregg].* (London, 1807); Hannah Greg, *Practical Suggestions Towards Alleviating the Sufferings of the Sick* (London, 1828).

<sup>31</sup> George Justice, *The Manufacturers of Literature: Writing and the Literary Marketplace in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Associated University Presses, 2002), 206.

<sup>32</sup> In the context of Burney’s publications, Justice observes “[a]s a woman, Burney could not deal directly with tradesmen like printers.” Justice, *The Manufacturers of Literature*, 206.

she employed to reach these ends: copying, editing, and the provisioning of instructions for the care of her papers after her death.

Accordingly, this chapter explores the circulation of manuscripts and the process behind such exchange, paying particular attention to editorial techniques such as the duplication of written material, redrafting, and rereading. To begin, the chapter opens with an analysis of the methods employed by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to reproduce her manuscript material in order to reach additional readers. Here, I use the preface (written by her granddaughter, Lady Louisa Stuart) to an 1837 edition of Montagu's correspondence to illustrate how copied letters could assume a precarious reputation as hybrid manuscript-print documents. I have chosen this text because of what it offers in layers of revision; Montagu's manuscripts, penned at the beginning of the eighteenth century, underwent many modifications and appeared in multiple different formats before reaching this 1837 edition. This piece, on account of Stuart's preface, not only recasts Montagu's writings as a collaborative project but also provides an insight into the editorial alterations these writings were subjected to, by Montagu herself and her descendants. These practices of writing and rewriting are also present in Greg's remaining manuscripts. While the two authors are disconnected by time period, wealth, and reasons for writing, their papers each share the hallmarks of a culture that valued the revision, preservation, and dispersal of handwritten material.

Informed by this analysis, the chapter then turns to Greg's use of copying; I consider the variety of reasons why Greg duplicated her manuscripts which both reflect and contend the methods employed by Montagu. In spite of the fact these women were separated by many factors, including literary status, the handwritten reproduction of their manuscript works was founded on corresponding principles. Next, the chapter explores the editorial methods Greg applied to her diary. In reading

the content of Greg's diaries alongside the additions that line the margins, page breaks, and gaps in this volume, it is possible to infer the degrees of publicity (and privacy) Greg intended for her paper records. The second half of the chapter then considers the extent to which Greg's papers were shared following her death, studying how she bequeathed her manuscripts and the survival of a compiled letter book. Finally, as a means of tying together the threads of this thesis, the archival history of Greg's papers will be considered in line with the patriarchal inclinations of her descendants. In many ways Greg is the most active of the women studied here in attempting to preserve her manuscripts, but even when such precautions are taken, women's paper traces remain subject to the prejudices of following generations. Greg's papers are telling of many a woman's experience with the country house; such buildings were simultaneously a repository for their voices and the very mechanism of their exclusion.

### Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Epistolary Copying

Eighteenth-century letters were copied for a number of reasons: as keepsakes, as part of published collections, or to share with others. Making a duplicate of a letter was a widespread and universal practice, and this act was a key contributor to letters becoming public and circulated documents. The act of copying, as Markman Ellis has noted, had its roots in mercantile systems of organisation. As we saw in chapter two, early modern accounting practices favoured the "double-entry method" whereby fiscal information was recorded more than once and across multiple documents in order to provide a complete and traceable financial record: "[t]he mutually supporting quality of these books attested to their accuracy."<sup>33</sup> By the eighteenth century, copying had

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<sup>33</sup> Markman Ellis, "Letters, Organization, and the Archive in Elizabeth Montagu's Correspondence," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (2018): 618 and 620.

become much more quotidian, and was fundamental to the process of letter writing and its circulation. The eponymous heroine of Samuel Richardson's 1740 novel, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, famously makes several copies of her epistolary exchange to recount her struggles to her parents, and it is often these duplicates that succeed in proving her innocence.<sup>34</sup> Social circles such as the Bluestockings were likewise advocates of copying epistolary exchanges. Elizabeth Montagu commissioned a third party to copy her letters to facilitate their circulation within her chosen literary circles and, in a much more companionate sense, Mary Hamilton copied the letters of her close friend Mary Delany as an exercise in admiration and intimacy.<sup>35</sup> Fundamental to the social and communal understanding of eighteenth-century letter writing, was the fact that the handwritten missive was not a finite object. Multiple versions of the same letter likely existed at a single point in time; a draft may have been penned prior to final composition, a copy may have been taken by the author before postage, and dependant on the discretion of the recipient, the letter may have been reproduced after it was received. At the most basic level, letters were copied to increase their audience.

Within this culture of copying, and perhaps because of it, there remained an overwhelming appreciation for "fair" script. Elizabeth Montagu, for example, when having difficulty writing on "slick-finished French paper" wrote to her fellow Bluestocking Elizabeth Vesey apologising "if you cannot decipher it, make my Porter

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<sup>34</sup> Her letters to her parents are scattered with references like "I took a Copy of this for your Perusal" and "This is a Copy of it." At Mr B's first proposal Pamela goes about proving her innocence with a parcel containing "A Copy of his Proposals to me ... [and] A Copy of my Answer, refusing all with just Abhorrence." Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Thomas Keymer and Alice Wakely (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 193; 379; 236.

<sup>35</sup> Ellis, "Letters, Organization, and the Archive in Elizabeth Montagu's Correspondence," 614-615; on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> July 1784, Hamilton reflected in her diary that "I continued in my employment, w<sup>ch</sup> was writing Extracts from M<sup>rs</sup>. Delanys letters till ½ past 12." Mary Hamilton, *Diary*, 29 July 1784, Mary Hamilton Papers, GB 133 HAM/2/12, University of Manchester Library.

in Hillstreet copy it for you, he understands mes chiffres.”<sup>36</sup> An appreciation for neat and legible handwriting was especially important to women; penmanship was a feminine skill, as Deborah Heller notes, “on a par with dancing, music or needlework.”<sup>37</sup> Indeed, “fair” script was in itself a mechanism for preservation – writings were neatly transcribed if composed for posterity, and the word “scroll” could also be used to refer to writing in draft.<sup>38</sup> Surrounding letter-writing customs, therefore, was a lively and engrained culture of copying in which the circulation of these missives stood at the centre. To frame the following discussion on Greg’s methods of copying, this chapter begins with an exploration of the publication, circulation and namely duplication of the letters of one of the most renowned female literary figures of the eighteenth century: Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. My discussion draws on the “Introductory Anecdotes” to Montagu’s nephew’s *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, first published in 1837. This foreword retrospectively recounts Montagu’s methods for duplicating her manuscript material as essential to expanding their circulation and memorialises the act itself alongside the copies she produced. The “Introductory Anecdotes” to this edition was written by Montagu’s granddaughter, Lady Louisa Stuart, and was finished in late 1834, three years prior to the text’s publication. By this point, Stuart had already written memoirs of other members of her family and friends but, notably, forbade their publication.<sup>39</sup> Jill Rubenstein has suggested that Stuart’s choice to publish the “Anecdotes” was “motivated by a genuine desire to correct ... misunderstood or misinterpreted” information that already existed on Montagu, which drove her efforts to reprimand

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<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Vesey, 15 July 1776 cited in Deborah Heller, “Elizabeth Vesey’s Alien Pen: Autobiography and Handwriting,” *Women’s Writing* 21 no. 3 (2014): 362.

<sup>37</sup> Heller, “Elizabeth Vesey’s Alien Pen,” 365.

<sup>38</sup> “scroll, n.,” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, 2022.

<sup>39</sup> Jill Rubenstein, “Women’s Biography as a Family Affair,” *Prose Studies* 9, no. 1 (1986): 10.



“those few people to whom she circulated her manuscripts.”<sup>40</sup> Consequently, at the heart of Stuart’s “Introductory Anecdotes” is her indignation towards the unavoidable copies of Montagu’s writings that already existed within the marketplace. Her introduction to the text provides a valuable insight into not only Montagu’s approach to manuscript dissemination, but also the lasting impact of her decision to copy her records.

Many eighteenth-century writers used some form of copying as an apparatus in the composition of their published works; James Boswell famously wrote down events as they occurred and Frances Burney recorded brief memorandum notes on scraps of paper, both with the intention to formally transcribe them at a later point.<sup>41</sup> Like Burney and Boswell, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu also used memoranda as the foundation for more lengthy accounts. To this process Stuart ascribes particular attention: “[i]t seemed her custom was to note everything down without a moment’s delay; and then, when she wrote a letter, to transcribe from the journal the passages she thought fittest to be communicated to her friends, or, one may say, to the world.”<sup>42</sup> Montagu evidently ranked her writing in terms of its intended audience. She employed a transcription process that filtered the entries of her diary prior to the composition of her letters – pre-emptively selecting the segments to be made public. Stuart’s concluding sentiment may appear dramatic, but it does encapsulate the fact that, once copied, a letter or manuscript entry was immediately more available to public regard.

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 and 4.

<sup>41</sup> Many editions of Boswell’s *London Journal* pair his revised narrative with his memoranda accounts from the same days. See for example: James Boswell, Frederick Pottle and Peter Ackroyd, *Boswell’s London Journal, 1792-1763*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004); On Burney’s “scribblings” see: Peter Sabor, “Journal Letters and Scribblings: Frances Burney’s Life Writing in Paris,” in *Women’s Life Writing, 1700-1850: Gender, Genre and Authorship*, ed. Daniel Cook and Amy Culley (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012), 71-85; Magdalena Ozarska, *Lacework or Mirror? Diary Poetics of Frances Burney, Dorothy Wordsworth and Mary Shelley* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2013), 56-121.

<sup>42</sup> Lady Louisa Stuart, “Introductory Anecdotes,” in *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, ed. Lord Wharncliffe and Thomas W. Moy, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1861), 83.

Her allusion to a “world” viewing of Montagu’s selected material aligns to an understanding that copying was part of the publishing process. Stuart continues:

For, although she did not design the correspondence for publication while she was living, she had it copied, and allowed many people to read it. The diary, of course, contained further details; but the cream having been skimmed for the letters, the rest was not very interesting or important.<sup>43</sup>

Sitting between private record and publication, therefore, was the copied letter. Through the duplication of her manuscript material, Montagu “allowed many people to read” her letters during her lifetime without them ever appearing in print. Unlike Boswell and Burney, who wrote their diaries with an eye to publication, it was Montagu’s letters that were circulated. Her diary was the unfiltered informant to her correspondence, the encyclopaedic inspiration that provided the basis for her composed missives. The element that distinguished Montagu’s private records from her public letters was the fact that the latter “she had ... copied.”

Montagu’s copying, as Stuart alludes, was reinforced by a level of professionalism. The fact that she “had [her correspondence] ... copied” by someone other than herself, suggests that this was more than a mere domestic routine and rather involved a third-party (and most likely paid) scribe. As we saw in chapter one, a letter penned by a scribe was immediately less personal on account of its removal of the visual imprint of the author. In this regard, by employing a third-party to copy her writing, Montagu’s manuscripts challenged the private and domestic qualities of eighteenth-century letters. Tamara Plakins Thornton’s study of American epistolary practices, reveals how “handwriting was accorded its particular meanings and

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

functions in contrast to the medium of print.”<sup>44</sup> “Where print was impersonal,” Thornton continues, “script emanated from the person in as intimate a manner as possible ... handwriting functioned as a medium of the self.”<sup>45</sup> The distinction between handwritten and printed text, then, lay in the extent to which the page visually embodied its author. The copied manuscript, especially that transcribed by someone other than the original author, thus inhabited a precarious middle-ground between printed word and handwritten text. These copies were divorced from their author in a similar way that print was detached from the scribe, yet they still bore the hallmarks of human interaction. Not only was Montagu’s copying process aligned to professionalised circulation on account of it involving the commissioning of an outsider, but the removal of her own script also instilled these copies with a more mass-produced, mechanical feel. These duplicate documents bridged the gap between personal missives and printed documents and displayed the “impersonal” aspect of print despite being penned by an individual.

This indeterminate nature of the copied letter is also evidenced in how Montagu’s missives were circulated following her death. Stuart’s “Anecdotes” proceeds to describe the state of Montagu’s papers once they were inherited by her mother, Lady Bute. “[I]t was her [Montagu’s] wish that they should eventually be published,” Stuart surmises:

...but Lady Bute, hearing only that a number of her mother’s letters were in a stranger’s hands, and having no certainty what they might be, to whom addressed, or how little of a private nature, could not but earnestly desire to

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<sup>44</sup> Tamara Plakins Thornton, *Handwriting in America: A Cultural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 41.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

obtain them, and readily paid the price demanded – five hundred pounds. In a few months she saw them appear in print.<sup>46</sup>

On account of the letter's susceptibility to being copied, Bute's attempt to keep her mother's letters private was impossible. These papers were not isolated documents and their appearance in print in spite of Bute's efforts to repurchase them, exposes just how important the act of copying was to the circulation and preservation of these manuscripts – whether this was intended or not. That Bute's fears lay in the fact that she had “no certainty” about what the letters “might be, to whom addressed, or how little of a private nature” is indicative of Montagu's papers having an overwhelming reputation for defamatory content. Harriet Guest has illustrated how the distribution of letters in circles such as Montagu's was a form of “social currency”; “[l]etters circulated in selected extracts and through gossip are the basis for reputation, and whet polite culture's taste for learned women ... grant[ing] wide but oblique access to lives whose modest privacy they also serve to confirm.”<sup>47</sup> Beyond the professionalised exchange of ideas, therefore, letters were also copied and circulated as a means of community formation – of solidifying or expunging social ties.<sup>48</sup> Bute's “earnest desire to obtain” her mother's missives is testament to the endurance of these acts and such social connections persisted long after the death of the author. That, as Guest makes clear, this circulation nonetheless “serve[d] to confirm” women's reputation is equally representative of the fact that these duplicates existed between publication and private record; they survived on “social currency” as opposed to monetary exchange.

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<sup>46</sup> Stuart, “Introductory Anecdotes,” 83-84.

<sup>47</sup> Harriet Guest, *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 109.

<sup>48</sup> On communal identity and the circulation of manuscript material see Jason Scott-Warren, “Reconstructing Manuscript Networks: The Textual Transitions of Sir Stephen Powle,” in *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric*, ed. Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 18-37.

The circulation of particularly gossipy material also required additional layers of editing. This is evident in a surviving collection of letters between Montagu and her sister, Lady Mar. These letters exist today alongside their duplicate counterparts and Isobel Grundy has drawn attention to the ways in which these copied missives are representative of an attempt to mediate any potentially damning material; they contain “cyphers [to] replace names in the bodies of letters.”<sup>49</sup> Consistent with her professionalised process, the copied pages are not in Montagu’s hand. Grundy surmises, however, that the additional cyphers appended to these duplicates “might be either [Montagu’s] ... or Lady Mar’s.”<sup>50</sup> This cypher system is “imperfect” and “not mere indexing,” but it does provide an insight into the copying process.<sup>51</sup> While the copied letters were transcribed by an outsider, they were catalogued and censored by someone within the correspondence (either Montagu or her sister). The coded accounts display an awareness of the extent to which copies, unlike their originals, contained a greater degree of publicity and circulation – some editorial attempt was made to obscure their content. Evidenced by both Bute’s repurchasing endeavours and the rewriting (or encrypting) of Montagu’s gossipy material, copied letters held an intermediary place between private manuscript and print. These duplicates contained the filtered anecdotes of Montagu’s broader assemblage of life writing, and the additional layers of editorial method distinguished them as publicly received pieces. The removal of her personal script likewise meant that Montagu’s copies contained an element of impersonality akin to printed type. Fundamentally, in having her letters copied, Montagu predetermined the pages she wished to appear in the wider literary marketplace.

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<sup>49</sup> Isobel Grundy, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: Comet of the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 223.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

## Hannah Greg's Copied Letters

Given her literary fame, wealth, and the masses of material she produced throughout her life, Montagu provides a unique illustration of the custom of copying manuscript material. Greg, however, had a somewhat different relationship to print and publication. On account of her non-elite status, Greg did not share the same risks that Montagu faced when writing for profit, her epistolary circle was much more closed, and Montagu's celebrity status perhaps afforded her more critique than the average writer. Nonetheless, there are many overlaps between these two women's processes and approaches to duplicating their manuscript material. Across her numerous extant letters, Greg both acknowledges her inclination for copying and indicates her motivations for doing so, positioning herself within more well-known contemporary models like Montagu. These references provide an insight into the epistles she deemed worthy of being reproduced, her methods of transcription, and her motivations for doing so.

Unlike Montagu's papers, the two archives where Greg's manuscripts predominantly survive do not contain any duplicates of the same missive.<sup>52</sup> Across her letters, however, Greg makes numerous references to creating copies of her writing. In an undated letter to her daughter, for example, Greg wrote: "I have been copying my old letter to Tom into the beautiful book you were so good as to send me."<sup>53</sup> Reflecting on the copying process, she continued: "I am disposed to think that by doing so [copying] the interest of the simple, earnest, address coming from an aching heart (as in truth it did) may be ~~thus~~ lessened."<sup>54</sup> Greg's understanding of these

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<sup>52</sup> That is not to say that there are no remaining copies at all, and this fact is perhaps testament to the circulation of Greg's writing.

<sup>53</sup> This "beautiful book" has since been lost. Hannah Greg to Elizabeth Rathbone (née Greg), undated, Rathbone Papers, RP VI 1.117, University of Liverpool Library.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

transcriptions was founded on their indeterminate status; her copies existed between print and manuscript, emotionally detached from the author. Just as the “impersonal” printed word was thought to lack the emotion displayed in manuscript compositions, Greg’s copies of her letters soften the “simple, earnest, address ... from an aching heart.” In transcribing and reproducing her writing, Greg blunts the initial feeling that the first text expressed. Accordingly, Greg makes a clear distinction between her act of copying and the initial writing of the letter: she “altogether lost what little power of composition” that produced the first missive. In acknowledging this, Greg distinguishes copying as an entirely different task to the writing of the original piece. The act of transcription is objective, independent from the thoughts and countenance of the author. While in this case Greg did not employ a scribe, as Montagu did, she does effectively remove herself from these duplicates by curtailing her emotional involvement. In adopting these contrasting responsibilities as a writer, Greg differentiates between herself as an author and herself as a copier.

Reflecting again to her daughter on the same act on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 1818, Greg wrote: “I have at last got to your pretty Book and copying being merely a mechanical employment (tho’ I can never copy my own writing quite exact – or without trying to amend it) suits me for amusement \_ and when I can do nothing else.”<sup>55</sup> The term “mechanical” here is again suggestive of the removal of individuality, evoking how the practice of copying resembles a robotic performance. Unlike the “sincere, steady and liberal” script that adorned her letters to her friends, these copies are formulaic and standardised works of “mechanical employment.”<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Hannah Greg to Elizabeth Rathbone (née Greg), 6 January 1818, Rathbone Papers, RP VI 1.120, University of Liverpool Library.

<sup>56</sup> In a letter to William Rathbone IV on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July 1794, Greg wrote: “[b]esure that both the uneasiness expressed in my last letter and the pleasure in this flows from a sincere, steady, and liberal expression.” Hannah Greg to William Rathbone IV, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1784, Rathbone Papers, RP II 1.62, University of Liverpool Library.

Once again, such a “disembodiment” equates these reproductions to printed text; in isolating the written word from the feeling and sentiment that created it, Greg’s duplicates display what Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook has termed the “decorporealization” of “printed text.”<sup>57</sup> If, as Ruth Larsen puts it, in writing a letter “the letter writer was, figuratively, sending themselves through the post,” then the “decorporealization” of a copied missive removed the author from the page.<sup>58</sup> In stripping these letters of their character, Greg’s reproductions, like Montagu’s, exist precariously between handwritten material and printed text. In this acknowledgement, moreover, Greg alludes to a wider use of copying – one that is educational. Jon Mee has demonstrated how Greg promoted “mechanical” principles of education in her children’s schooling.<sup>59</sup> Writing to her eldest child Bessy on the eve of her first day at school Greg hoped “at a school alone you could be supplied with the constant excitement ... where you merely worked with others, mechanically as it were ... where emulation, and an honest hope & desire of excellence would inspire energy.”<sup>60</sup> Copying was a common educational tool in the eighteenth century, and items such as copybooks encouraged students to reproduce the content of these pages as a means of acquiring knowledge, as Matthew Daniel Eddy and Rachel Bynoth have noted.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, Greg’s own collection of maxims was used to this end in Lant Carpenter’s

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<sup>57</sup> Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 12.

<sup>58</sup> Ruth Larsen, “An Archaeology of Letter Writing: The Correspondence of Aristocratic Women in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century England,” in *Pen, Print and Communication in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Caroline Archer-Parré and Malcolm Dick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 76.

<sup>59</sup> Mee, *Networks of Improvement*, 143.

<sup>60</sup> Elizabeth Rathbone (née Greg) was known to the family as Bessy; Greg refers to her as Bessy throughout her manuscripts and in consequence I have elected to use this name also. Hannah Greg to Elizabeth Rathbone (née Greg), [1805], Rathbone Papers, RP XXV.10.2 (2), University of Liverpool Library.

<sup>61</sup> See Matthew Daniel Eddy, “The Child Writer: Graphic Literacy and the Scottish Educational System, 1700-1820,” *History of Education* 45, no. 6 (2016): 695-718; Rachel Bynoth, “A Mother Educating her Daughter Remotely through Familiar Correspondence: The Letter as a Form of Female Distance Education in the Eighteenth Century,” *History* 106, no. 373 (2021): 727-750.



School in Bristol.<sup>62</sup> Greg’s “mechanical employment,” therefore, though detached from emotion and feeling, was not a passive exercise. This very sentiment is referred to in the passage above; Greg juxtaposes her objective detachment from the text with the reflection that “I can never copy my own writing quite exact – or without trying to amend it.” In this statement, Greg’s copying emerges as a part of a wider editorial process – beyond the simple duplication of material this is an action to be learned from. In revisiting her writing, Greg also redrafted it.

Greg repeatedly contends with her inability to “mechanically” reproduce her manuscript material throughout her reflections on the process, and this evidently plagued her writing. Contemplating her copy of the same “old letter to Tom,” Greg lamented to her eldest daughter:

I never can copy my own writing exactly I always make more or less alteration – (not always improvements) – and feel much disposed to change every thing – & to enlarge some ... I am become, from <sup>so</sup> often reading & writing it, utterly incompetent to form any judgement of it – besides having altogether lost what little power of composition I ever had – I am confused – incapable of arrangement – my head always in a cloud – and nothing left to speak, or write but my heart[.]<sup>63</sup>

As this passage elucidates, Greg’s writing (or rather copying) was informed by an editorial process. Her attempt to “form any judgement” of the page is suggestive of a critical approach, and her will to “change every thing” is reminiscent of revising, correcting, and improving her writing as if preparing it for a wider audience. Frances Burney famously employed such copying, redrafting, and editing throughout her

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<sup>62</sup> Mee, *Networks of Improvement*, 144.

<sup>63</sup> Greg to Rathbone, undated, RP VI 1.117.

manuscripts in preparation for their posthumous publication, and Peter Sabor has drawn attention to the difficulties these “layers of revision” pose when publishing such collections today.<sup>64</sup> Greg’s “layers of revision” are visually discernible in her passage; she underlines her editorial methods (“alteration” and “change every thing” are the only words in the passage that are given such emphasis) and thereby adds extra fervour to her remarks, implying frustration at veering from the purpose of her transcriptions. She deems herself “utterly incompetent” at producing an identical copy by having “nothing left to speak, or write but my heart.” Greg also distinguishes between copying as a detached scribe and duplicating her own writing (“I can never copy *my own* writing exactly”). In separating the practice as such, Greg signals the disparity between copying and editing, one parallel to her distinction between composing and copying. Throughout these various reflections on her process of duplication, therefore, Greg reveals the multiple layers and personas to her writing self – the author, the copier, the editor. While in these instances she does not employ a third party, as Montagu did, Greg’s various epistolary identities fulfil the different requirements of the circulation process. Her duplications are imbued with editorial labour and, while “mechanical,” they are also distinctive.

Greg’s use of copying as an editorial process is much more complex than Montagu’s simple disguising of the names of individuals who appear in particularly gossipy material. In a similar vein to her editorial and educational methods, Greg also reproduces her manuscript to receive feedback. Writing again to her daughter Bessy, Greg shared:

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<sup>64</sup> Lorna J. Clark, “The Diarist as Novelist: Narrative Strategies in the Journals and Letters of Frances Burney,” *ESC: English Studies in Canada* 27, no. 3 (2001): 283-302; Peter Sabor, ““The Job I Have Perhaps Rashly Undertaken”: Publishing the Complete Correspondence of Samuel Richardson,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 35, no. 1 (2011): 12.

Mrs R's approbation and your's ... have excited much ambition in me to attempt mending it – Several old thoughts occurred to me while copying it into your pretty book which, however, I only ventured to enter as notes – in a copy I have since made however to keep by me <sup>the other is to go to Tom by Robt</sup> (for my rough copy is now so scratched over as to be illegible) I have brought all into the body of the letter – and I want you to look it over ... and tell me if you ~~like~~ at all approve any alterations, especially if you approve them enough to let me have your copy to add them to – or whether you like it better as it is.<sup>65</sup>

Here, Greg introduces the sheer number of copies that could be associated with a single missive: she produced one version in a “pretty book” to be supplemented with “notes” rather than altering the body of the text; another “to keep by” herself; one to send to her son; a “rough copy ... so scratched over as to be illegible”; and a copy already owned by Bessy. Each of these reproductions, though copies of an original letter, are distinct in their content. In one Greg has rewritten the notes to bring them “into the body of the letter,” and in another she refers to re-editing even once the copy has been shared – she requests of Bessy to “let me have your copy to add ... to.” Within this process of copying and circulation, therefore, Greg modifies the temporality of her letters. In addressing the fact that she intends to add edits to already shared pieces, Greg reveals an interchangeability or fluidity between a master copy and its duplicate, highlighting the extent to which such epistles were rarely finite documents. Whereas Lindsay O’Neill has argued that “autograph letters sing in a way their copied siblings cannot,” the circulation of Greg’s manuscripts displays, by contrast, the mutability of original letters and their copies.<sup>66</sup> Such documents were

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<sup>65</sup> Greg to Rathbone, undated, RP VI 1.117.

<sup>66</sup> O’Neill, *The Opened Letter*, 16.

unstable, often undergoing numerous layers of changes and revisions and, on account of this, promise many insights.

That Greg's use of copying, when intended for circulation, was editorial and educational rather than a linear system of identical duplication is suggestive of a wider process of improvement. Greg produced copies of her letters to alter, expand, and add to her original text. Such an exercise implies a level of professionalism reminiscent of preparing papers for publication. Greg's reflections on her "pretty book," for instance, mimic the style of printed extract books, and Greg clearly shared manuscript drafts of work that would later be published with members of her epistolary circle. In an undated letter to James Currie, Greg apologised for sending "such a mutilated impracticable copy" of a piece she was working on, entreating him to "run it over – and then finally encourage or discourage my farther attempt at printing it."<sup>67</sup> As Richard Wendorf illustrates, "much of the texture of eighteenth-century culture, whether scribal or printed, comes to us filtered through the conventions that writers and publishers employed in their texts and printed editions."<sup>68</sup> While it is not explicit whether, like Montagu or Burney, Greg intended her letters to be published following her death, she did leave instructions on the preservation of her missives. In some "memoranda" Greg wrote on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 1817, she outlined directions for the care of her papers – namely those she wished to be saved and those to be thrown "into the fire."<sup>69</sup> Common throughout this memorandum is Greg's inclination to "transcribe fair" the letters she aimed to preserve:

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<sup>67</sup> Hannah Greg to Dr James Currie, undated, Quarry Bank Archive, QBA765.1/9/6/6, Quarry Bank, Manchester.

<sup>68</sup> Richard Wendorf, *Printing History and Cultural Change: Fashioning the Modern English Text in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 200.

<sup>69</sup> Greg, Memoranda, 13 May 1817, QBA765.1/9/6/55.

My numerous Extract Books have the cream of much good reading, and may be worth looking over – tho’ intermixed – and often disfigured by some original writing – some of the latter passages that I have fancied worth it I have transcribed <sup>fair</sup> into other Books with “passages from my own letters before they were sent &c.”<sup>70</sup>

Here, Greg employed copying for posterity. Only her pages with “fancied worth” merit being duplicated, while her “original writing” threatens to “disfigure” other content. In these instructions, Greg hints that solely her copied documents should be saved; transcription will ensure preservation.

On a similar note, Greg continues: “[a]s far as I can recollect, the following are all I wished to preserve and <sup>some of</sup> those requiring also to be almost <sup>wholly</sup> re-written.”<sup>71</sup> Copying in this context appears more formalised than in her earlier recollections. In this case, Greg did employ the aid of a third-party scribe to assist in her duplications: “[i]f any of my Children like a Copy of my letter to Tom – most of which may perhaps be equally salutary advice to any of my boys they will find it most correct I believe in Mr T. Hodgson’s <sup>hand</sup> writing.”<sup>72</sup> Greg was fifty one at the time of writing this memoranda and she continued to write throughout the 1820s, which suggests that Hodgson’s position as a scribe was employed as an act of preservation rather than physical aid. That the “most correct version” of this “letter to Tom” is not in her own hand, is indicative of Greg’s distinction between copying for posterity and copying for improvement. Here, she removed herself from the process. While addressed to Tom, this letter included advice that applied to all her sons and, by

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*; The practice of writing educational letters as an autobiographical bequeathment for children was well established in the eighteenth century, done by men such as Lord Chesterfield and Benjamin Franklin. See for example: Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 305-307.

implication, universally to other boys.<sup>73</sup> This adds another level of posterity to the missive that perhaps required the text to be transcribed exactly. Indeed, on top of the copy in Hodgson's hand referred to here, an extended version of what was likely this letter remains in the Quarry Bank archive in the form of a manuscript book, transcribed by Greg's daughter-in-law.<sup>74</sup> Through these layers of transcription and duplication, Greg's initial letter to Tom comes to exist as a reference piece – it is referred to, read, used, and transcribed across generations and families as if it was a printed document. Across her various uses of copying, therefore, Greg's handwritten material is reflective of the process, as well as qualities, of printed text.

Paratextual components within the papers Greg prepared for posterity additionally result in their bearing a close resemblance to printed works. To “a fair copy of every thing I had ever attempted to write,” for example, Greg added a foreword in the form of “a letter to my dear Husband by way of preface.”<sup>75</sup> That these manuscript copies are not only written in a different hand, but also contain the paratexts of published documents (such as a foreword), displays how Greg employed more formal methods of copying to the material she wished to be saved. This mimicking of print in script was not a new phenomenon, and numerous early eighteenth-century scribal publications contain many of the same visual markers as their printed counterparts – in Kathryn James's summation, “poems are given titles; the pages are numbered; the stanzas are demarcated by spacing or flourishing (or both); each scribe also adopts some form of catchword.”<sup>76</sup> Indeed, as Giles Bergel has

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<sup>73</sup> Jon Mee has surmised that Greg was encouraged by her friend Jane Roscoe to copy, and thereby circulate, this letter on account of the esteemed advice it gave. Mee, *Networks of Improvement*, 144.

<sup>74</sup> See Hannah Greg, *The Art of Happy Living*, in *A Letter from A Mother to her Son*, Quarry Bank Archive, QBA765.1/9/6/47, Quarry Bank, Manchester.

<sup>75</sup> Greg, *Memoranda*, 13 May 1817, QBA765.1/9/6/55.

<sup>76</sup> Kathryn James, *English Palaeography and Manuscript Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 178. For work on early eighteenth-century scribal publications see Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England*; J. Paul Hunter, “Political, Satirical, Didactic and Lyric Poetry (I): From the Restoration to the Death of Pope,” in *The Cambridge History of English Literature, 1660-*

suggested, during this period “script itself began to resemble print.”<sup>77</sup> These intersections were also exploited by eighteenth-century writers, who utilised various print techniques within their manuscript texts as a means of bolstering (or not) their chances of survival. Grundy has drawn attention to authors’ removal of elements such as a title and year as a means of ensuring their work remained “ephemeral.”<sup>78</sup> Writers such as the Earl of Rochester, moreover, circulated his poems in a manuscript form that mimicked printed publications even prior to their being received as such and, according to Betty Schellenberg, scribal texts that mimicked printed works were more likely to be saved.<sup>79</sup> It appears, therefore, that Greg applied the visual and paratextual components of printed material to her manuscript as a means of directly altering the afterlife of these papers. The documents Greg reproduced for posterity were acts of labour rather than creativity – these duplicates contain more of the “mechanical” aspects of printed text than the copies she prepared for circulation, which likely varied between each reproduction. The papers that Greg prepared for posterity are textually distinct from those she did not; acts of archival preservation generated the potential for textual change. Greg’s methods of copying were distinctive to herself; she reproduced her letters for various reasons (circulation, education, critical review, preservation), and assumed a different method of approach for each selected letter. Notably Greg’s editorial techniques echo those of writers preparing their works for

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1780, ed. John J. Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 160-208; Thomas Keymer, “Manuscript in the House of Print: Richardson and Media Shift after 1700,” in *Textual Transformations: Purposing and Repurposing Books from Richardson Baxter to Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Thomas Keymer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 57-75.

<sup>77</sup> Giles Bergel, “Authorship in Script and Print: The Example of Engraved Handwriting Manuals of the Eighteenth Century,” in *Pen, Print and Communication in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Caroline Archer-Parré and Malcome Dick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 41.

<sup>78</sup> Grundy writes that “titles and labels smacked of print; but lacking them helped to make copies ephemeral,” Grundy, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, 196.

<sup>79</sup> On Rochester see Paul Davis, “From Script to Print: Marketing Rochester,” in *Lord Rochester in the Restoration World*, ed. Matthew C. Augustine and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 40-57; Schellenberg, *Literary Coteries*, 11.

print. Though her epistolary writing was only ever limited to manuscript form, Greg's papers display a distinct alignment to printed word.

### Editorial Method and Diary Writing

Over a lifetime of writing, Greg came back to, revised, and redrafted her epistolary material for circulation, improvement, and posterity. Such a process reflected the practices of many an eighteenth-century published writer, but Greg also adapted this technique to suit her own preoccupations – employing different methods of copying depending on her motivations for reproducing the material. With these editorial techniques in mind, this chapter now turns to Greg's revisions of other manuscript material, namely her diary. Greg's diary remains in two manuscript volumes in the Quarry Bank archive. These are relatively small books, only containing around sixty pages each, but much larger in size than the pocket diaries that typified much of women's life writing in the period.<sup>80</sup> The pages are blank and unprinted unlike published pocketbooks, and the manuscript is exclusively in Greg's hand. The diary covers Greg's early adolescent years; it begins on New Year's Eve 1786, at which point she was twenty-one and unmarried, and finishes on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1790, with the birth of her eldest child, Bessy. The two volumes detail particularly formative years in Greg's life, including her first meeting with Samuel, their marriage, leaving her family home in Liverpool, and the pregnancy and birth of her first child. Greg's passages are brief, namely a line documenting the day's activities and people she

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<sup>80</sup> Volume one measures 24cm x 18cm, while volume two is 29cm x 17cm; Amanda Vickery has noted that "the pocket-diary is by far the commonest form of personal writing ... [she has] encountered." Amanda Vickery, "A Self off the Shelf: The Rise of the Pocket Diary in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 54, no. 3 (2021): 669; see also Jennie Batchelor, "Fashion and Frugality: Eighteenth-Century Pocket Books for Women," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 32, no. 1 (2003): 1-18.



encountered. Aside from the exceptional account where she appears to have been particularly inspired by a conversation, lecture, or sermon, these reflections predominantly consist of one line per day. The diaries cover a range of content, from family affairs and religious inclinations to the literary world in which she grew up but, for the purpose of this chapter, my study is limited to Greg's extra additions that line the margins, page breaks, and gaps in these records.

The first volume of Greg's diary contains various edits and supplementary material that appear to have been added years after the initial pages were penned. These edits are in Greg's hand and written in pencil; they take the form of index-like additions providing objective and biographical information about various individuals mentioned across the daily records. These inserts were likely made in the mid-1790s, a near decade after she wrote the first entry in 1786, as much of the detail Greg provides to supplement her account did not occur until these later years. One such example of these edits appears alongside the entry for the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1787. The passage simply records that "Mr Wallis came to School & embraced his lovely daughter after a separation of 2 years[,] a meeting that almost overpowered both. They are both very interesting and their mysterious situation renders them more so."<sup>81</sup> Although this entry suggests only a partial relationship with this pair, Greg adds "Miss Wallis the Actress now Mrs Campbell."<sup>82</sup> The "Miss Wallis" referred to here is Tryphosa Jane Wallis, who began acting in 1789 – two years after this meeting took place. Wallis did not marry James Campbell, moreover, until the summer of 1797.<sup>83</sup> That Greg supplements her entry with information on Wallis' married name, confirms

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<sup>81</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 11 November 1787, 1:40.

<sup>82</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 11 November 1787, 1:40.

<sup>83</sup> K. A. Crouch, "Wallis [married name Campbell], Tryphosa Jane (1774–1848), actress," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

that this annotation was made after the year 1797 – at least ten years after she penned the initial passage.

This is not the only instance of a temporal lag between Greg’s diary entries and her annotations; on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 1787 Greg’s passage names a “Mr Marsden,” paired with an annotation that clarifies Marsden was “secretary to the admiralty.”<sup>84</sup> Similar to the previous example, Marsden did not hold this position until 1795.<sup>85</sup> Such patterns appear throughout Greg’s diary, wherein her entries are embellished with objective biographical information about the individuals they detail: she describes the literary fame of a “John Bowles” named in the entry for the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 1787 despite Bowles not receiving such acclaim until the mid 1790s, and the entry for the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1788 mentions a “Mr Hartopp” with the inscription clarifying this was “Sir Ed Hartopp.”<sup>86</sup> In line with the previous examples, Edmund Bunney did not receive the Craddock-Hartopp baronetcy (thereby making him a sir), until 1796.<sup>87</sup> Throughout her diary, therefore, Greg supplied biographical information for individuals who went on to attain important social and political roles. These additions, pragmatic and more objective than the entries they aid, provide purely factual information to Greg’s personal, opinionated, and reflective recollections. Their presence suggests that Greg returned to her diary a number of years after it was written with the intension of making her entries comprehensible to readers other than herself. This practice appears in tandem with many eighteenth-century published diaries. James Boswell and Benjamin Franklin were equally keen editors of their manuscripts

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<sup>84</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 3 December 1787, 1:45.

<sup>85</sup> Andrew S. Cook, “Marsden, William (1754–1836), orientalist and numismatist,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

<sup>86</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 10 December 1787, 1:46; Emma Vincent Macleod, “Bowles, John (1751–1819), barrister and author,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004; Greg, *Diary*, 19 September 1788, 2:1.

<sup>87</sup> R. G. Thorne, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1790-1820* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1986), 3:520.

before their publication.<sup>88</sup> J. Paul Hunter suggests that it was this editorial practice and “private circulation,” that “played a significant role in the rise of autobiography long before autobiographies were published in any significant number.”<sup>89</sup> Similarly, in exploring such “paratextual apparatus” in eighteenth-century Irish women’s diaries, Amy Prendergast has shown that although these papers may not have reached an audience during these women’s lifetimes, such practices of fact-checking and indexing provided “the means to work towards the acquisition of some degree of agency and authority, in ... [a] quest to contribute to and shape [their] ... family’s recorded history.”<sup>90</sup> Greg’s retrospective annotations transform these pages into a trusted source, complete with supplementary material to aid readers other than herself.

It was not uncommon for women such as Hannah Greg to share their diaries and manuscript writing within a familiar circle of friends and family. As we have seen, Greg was keen to share transcriptions of her epistolary communications and such a practice, as Cynthia Lowenthal and Clare Brant have addressed, afforded many women’s private writing a certain degree of publicity.<sup>91</sup> The courtier and Bluestocking Mary Hamilton, for example, kept a diary throughout her life, producing numerous volumes in much more detail and frequency than Greg; during her engagement, Hamilton regularly posted her diary to her betrothed as a means of both maintaining regular contact and intimately sharing the details and specifics of her days.<sup>92</sup> Despite

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<sup>88</sup> J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (London: Norton, 1990), 320.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 319.

<sup>90</sup> Amy Prendergast, “Glossing the Diary: Women Writing for Posterity, the Case of Elizabeth Edgeworth (1781–1800),” *Life Writing* 19, no. 2 (2022): 290; Gillian Wright has also demonstrated that only in reading manuscripts alongside their “prefatory, marginal or appended paratexts” is it possible to understand the process of “bring[ing] such texts into existence.” Gillian Wright, *Producing Women’s Poetry, 1600-1730: Text and Paratext, Manuscript and Print* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 9-10.

<sup>91</sup> Cynthia Lowenthal, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and the Eighteenth-Century Familiar Letter* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 3; Brant, “Varieties of Women’s Writing,” 285.

<sup>92</sup> This was a common practice in the eighteenth century, see for example: Clare Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 25.

differences in the circulation and regularity of their scripts, Greg's and Hamilton's writings are comparable in the editorial methods they exhibit. Hamilton, too, evidently set time aside to return to her compositions following their point of creation. Throughout the twenty-year diary collection, there are numerous visual markers that indicate where Hamilton returned to her entries. Like Greg, Hamilton recorded her entries on blank (unprinted) pages and thus the organisational format (i.e., page breaks and structural deciphers) is dictated by her own hand. Consequently, when a diary passage displays tightly written script deliberately condensed to fit into a particular entry, it is likely these sentences were added after the original passage (and page break) was penned. On the page depicted in Figure 4.1, for example, Hamilton inserted additional markers in order to separate the writing from two different days; that the line "Mrs. Garrick had call'd this Eveg when I was out & left me a very fine Nosegay. Mr W. Sandford also call'd" is grouped in a box distinct from the next entry, suggests that this information was added after Hamilton had begun the entry for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July.<sup>93</sup> This is an example of the diary acting as a proponent for what Michelle Levy has termed "multimodality," wherein "[t]he blank book ... allows for a double archival function, facilitating the incorporation of both textuality and graphicality via its blank spaces."<sup>94</sup> Hamilton's approach echoes how other women experimented with printed pages; as Jennie Batchelor has discussed, women manipulated and exploited "daily ruled memorandum table[s]" that were printed on the pages of pocketbooks in order

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<sup>93</sup> Mary Hamilton, Diary, 1 July 1784, Mary Hamilton Papers, GB 133 HAM/2/11, University of Manchester Library.

<sup>94</sup> Michelle Levy, "Bookmaking and Archiving in Dorothy Wordsworth's Notebooks," in *After Print: Eighteenth-Century Manuscript Culture*, ed. Rachael Scarborough King (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 97; see also Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 21-52.

to “tailor it to [their] own concerns.”<sup>95</sup> Hamilton, motivated by editorial foresight, creatively engaged with the organisational structure of her pages.

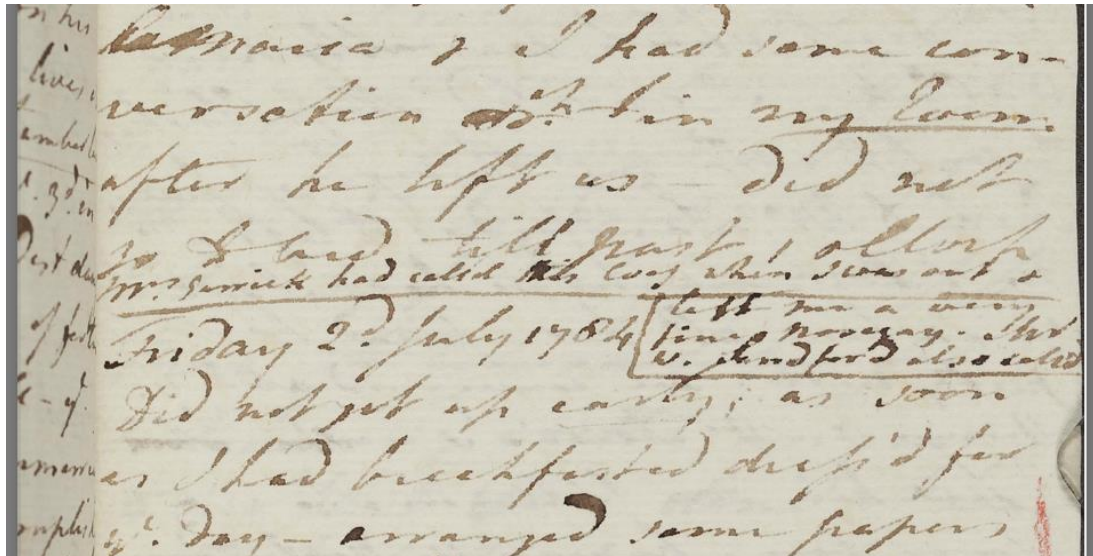


Figure 4.1. Hamilton’s diary entry from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1784-2<sup>nd</sup> July 1784.

Further markers throughout Hamilton’s diary similarly allude to the fact that she revisited this document to insert additional material. Her entry for the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1784, for example, details a typical afternoon with her close friend and fellow Bluestocking Mary Delany. Hamilton notes that she spent “near an hour” listening to Delany talk with an unnamed friend.<sup>96</sup> That Hamilton does not provide a name for this acquaintance is peculiar; she regularly reflects on her uncanny ability to remember the specifics of conversation, and habitually takes care to name and explain her meetings with new people throughout the years she maintained her diary. Discernible in Figure 4.2 below, however, is the suggestion that Hamilton did not intend to leave this acquaintance nameless. The gap following “Mrs” implies that this space was left blank with the purpose of adding the surname at a later date. A certain degree of publicity to

<sup>95</sup> Batchelor, “Fashion and Frugality,” 5, 14.

<sup>96</sup> Mary Hamilton, Diary, 15 August 1784, Mary Hamilton Papers, GB 133 HAM/2/13.

these women's accounts prompted editorial practices that transformed their pages into trusted sources. Madeleine Pelling's study of Hamilton's Bluestocking contributions reaches a similar conclusion: "Hamilton took on a key role in recording and disseminating conversations and narratives cultivated within [Bluestocking] collections, reporting on ... ideas about historiography, literacy and artistic creativity."<sup>97</sup> Such diaries as Hamilton's and Greg's, when read in line with their index-like additions and formulaic organisation, reflect a culture in which diaristic documents were circulated, returned to, and read by others.

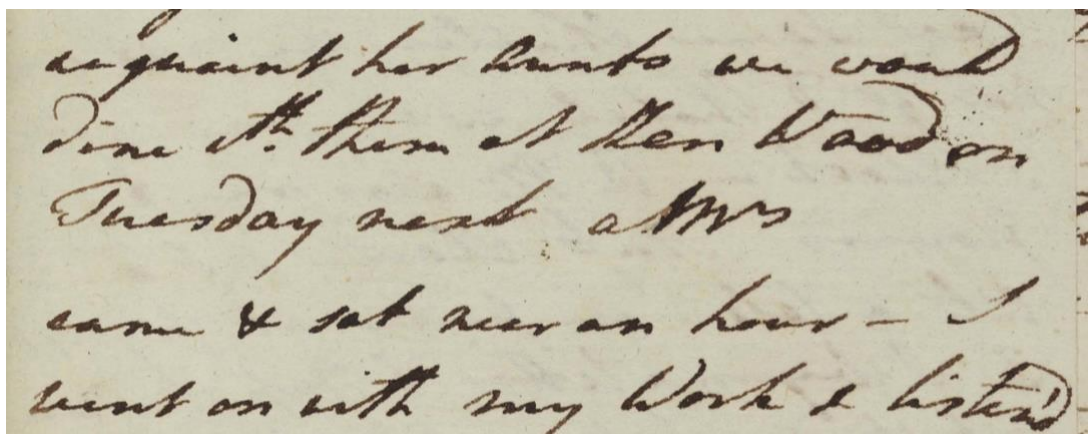


Figure 4.2. Hamilton's diary entry illustrating a missed editorial intervention, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August 1784.

While many women did circulate their diaries, the paradox remained that these documents overwhelmingly facilitated private expression: as Patricia Meyer Spacks has noted, "the idea of privacy as authenticity, as a space for self-discovery, proves intensely relevant to the meditation of ... diarists of this ... period."<sup>98</sup> Judy Simons has highlighted the "almost indecent aspect to the publication of a private diary," drawing attention to the clichéd openings that begin the journals of the likes of Hester

<sup>97</sup> Madeleine Pelling, "I Made Memorandums' Mary Hamilton, Sociability, and Antiquarianism in the Eighteenth-Century Collection," in *Women and the Art and Science of Collecting in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Arlene Leis and Kacie L. Wills (New York, N.Y: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 140.

<sup>98</sup> Patricia Mayer Spacks, *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 8.

Thrale and Frances Burney.<sup>99</sup> “Only let it *Never* be printed! Oh never, never, never,” wrote Thrale in her *Thraliana*, while Burney composed her entries to “Nobody” as “to Nobody can I be wholly unreserved – to Nobody can I reveal every thought, every wish of my heart, with the most unlimited confidence.”<sup>100</sup> Likewise, as Cynthia Lowenthal has discussed, “even taking into account the possibility of future publication, the diarist writes ostensibly for the self” and Carolyn Steedman has similarly recognised that “readers of fictional and real women’s letters ... wanted the unforced, the natural, the artless.”<sup>101</sup> Like Thrale’s and Burney’s opening remarks, Greg’s early passages insist that her record is for herself and herself alone. For instance, in her first entry dated the 31st of December 1786, Greg writes:

...the world would laugh at the absurdity of writing so insignificant a life as mine but it is for my own eye only, and in the hope of being useful only to myself – indeed were the possibility admitted of its ever being seen by others it would throw such a restraint over it as would render it totally useless and insipid.<sup>102</sup>

While the editorial hallmarks of Greg’s diary allude to some intention of circulation, it is evident that the primary purpose of her record was self-motivated – although, as we have seen, such statements did not prevent the eventual publication of Burney’s or Thrale’s diaries, and Burney left explicit instructions for hers to be printed. As Mary Poovey has shown, by evocatively proclaiming the privacy of these texts, and limiting

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<sup>99</sup> Judy Simons, *Diaries and Journals of Literary Women from Fanny Burney to Virginia Woolf* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), 2.

<sup>100</sup> Hester Lynch Piozzi, *Thraliana: The Diary of Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs. Piozzi) 1776-1809*, ed. Katharine Candy Balderston, Vol. 1, 1776-1784 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, 2015), xvii; Frances Burney, *Diary and Letters of Madame D’Arblay*, ed. Charlotte Ann Burney Frances Broome, Vol. 1, 1778-1780 (London: H. Colburn, 1842), 28. These quotes were originally cited in Simons, *Diaries and Journals of Literary Women*, 2.

<sup>101</sup> Lowenthal, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and the Eighteenth-Century Familiar Letter*, 19; Carolyn Steedman, “A Woman Writing a Letter,” in *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945*, ed. Rebecca Earle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 121.

<sup>102</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 31 December 1786, 1:3.

their publication until after death, women “disguised [their] entrance into the competitive arena of literary creation” and thereby curtailed the threat of immodesty that accompanied print.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, Paul K. Lyons has reminded us that even “by the early nineteenth century published diaries of any quality were still a relative rarity,” and the paradox that these texts were simultaneously private documents of self-reflection while also written with the intention of publication typified women’s journals well into this period.<sup>104</sup> At the same time, texts that were not published did not prevent their circulation.

Turning now to the second volume of Greg’s diary, I want to take a closer look at the changes to her editorial and narrative techniques. Greg’s paratextual edits predominantly appear in the first volume of her diary, which spans from the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1786 to the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 1788. On these pages Greg detailed various social engagements, lectures she attended, sermons she enjoyed, and time spent with friends and family. This first volume is very much an adolescent narrative as it was not until the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 1788, two months after she filled the first book, that she met Samuel Greg. In contrast to the annotated pages of her first, only two pencil edits remain in Greg’s second volume. These occur in first few pages; the rest of the accounts in this second volume, it seems, were not edited. Discernible alongside this lack of additions is also a stark contrast in the content between the two volumes. Unlike her first, Greg’s second volume, beginning the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 1788 and concluding on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1790, recounts several significant life events. This namely includes her meeting and marriage to Samuel Greg, and the pregnancy and

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<sup>103</sup> Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 36.

<sup>104</sup> Paul K. Lyons, “The Role of Diaries in the Development of Literary Biography,” in *A Companion to Literary Biography*, ed. Richard Bradford (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2018), 179; Simons, *Diaries and Journals of Literary Women*, 2.



birth of her first child. These events did not come with ease, and the passages of her second volume attest to this. While Greg does not record the intricate details of her marriage arrangement, the formulaic structure of her diary alludes to trepidation. In the days leading up to her wedding, for instance, there is a visual change in how the diary is organised. The passages recounting her final days as Hannah Lightbody are much more detailed than the months prior. Her entries change from brief accounts of the day, such as “17: Walked about,” “18: Company at tea,” “19: Sad stormy weather confined us,” to an erratic collection of passages retelling meaningful conversations, such as “the objects of Charity” and “the propriety of young people beginning life with moderation and economy,” interspersed with the more mundane “20: Went to Everton.”<sup>105</sup> Here, disruptions and changes in Greg’s life are made evident by the stylistic changes to her diary. To counter the unknown aspects of her future married life, moreover, Greg provides detailed accounts of the days she is certain of. This is particularly evident in her entry for the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1789, five days before the marriage: “Mr G sat with me all morning – thought on the entrance of this month of the event that was to take place in its course and prayed that it might make both S.G. and myself both happier and better.”<sup>106</sup> Evident here, is Greg’s conceptualisation of the change in calendar month as reflective of the change taking place in her life. This passage, alongside the erratic nature of her recording in the weeks prior, confirms how Greg used the pages of her diary to negotiate these milestones – her second volume was used as a reflective tool rather than informative account.

Greg’s reliance on this volume as an emotional outlet is also evidenced in the fact that the document culminates with the birth of her first child Bessy, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of

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<sup>105</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 17, 18, 19 September 1789, 2:23; Greg, *Diary*, 29 October 1789, 2:27; Greg, *Diary*, 21, 20 October 1789, 2:25.

<sup>106</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 1 November 1789, 2:28.

August 1790. In the months following her marriage and the early days of her pregnancy, Greg alters how she records the days of the week: these begin as numerical accounts representing the date (1, 2, 3, 4 etc) and end as verbal records of the days of the week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday), a detail that reduces the specificity of her account. Helen Williams's study of family planning in eighteenth-century women's pocketbooks has demonstrated how such publications "assisted women planning families by providing potential ... repositories for the data which they could later use to measure gestation and accurately predict and prepare for childbirth."<sup>107</sup> But in Greg's case, we see how these pages could be used to "measure" the emotional as well as physical tolls of her lifecycle. In the weeks leading up to Bessy's birth, all temporal structure is lost. The final pages of Greg's diary simply consist of a list of passages with no indication of the day, date, or calendar month; here the diary reads more like a narrative than a series of entries. The only exceptions to this are two penultimate entries. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1790, Greg recorded that "My Mother and Sister Hodgson came" and on the 30<sup>th</sup> she wrote "My little Girl born – very ill after ... Happy to see Mr G so delighted more than with my own share of it."<sup>108</sup> These final passages stand in poignant contrast to the chipper descriptions that began the diary, and solemnly close Greg's pages with a sobering realisation of the pressures and demands of motherhood, both physical and emotional. In reading this penultimate entry in conjunction with the layout of the diary, we see how Greg negotiated her transition from girl, to wife, to mother through a range of interactions with the page. These pages, akin to the truncated account book of Elizabeth Egerton in chapter two, visually reflect the various upheavals that Greg experienced.

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<sup>107</sup> Helen Williams, "Family Planning and the Long Eighteenth-Century Pocketbook," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 46, no. 1 (2023): 123.

<sup>108</sup> Greg, *Diary*, 20, 30 August 1790, 2:43.

Greg's final entry, recorded on a new page and in a steadier hand, is especially poignant given the earlier exploration of her editorial practices. This page remains unfinished. It reads: "suffered much from nursing my own treasure. How easy to recount our sufferings – and how deep the impression they make compared to the sunny hours of our existence and how ungrate."<sup>109</sup> That Greg concludes her diary mid-sentence, and even mid-word, is particularly striking given her proclivity for editing the first volume and her efforts to arrange and review her correspondence; she most likely returned to this document after its initial composition. Upon closer examination of this final passage, it is noticeable that Greg does not even cross the letter "t" in (what should have been) "ungrateful," an act that is made even more conspicuous given the detail of her previous additions. That Greg returned to these pages without altering or amending the unfinished final entry, suggests a distinction between this and her earlier record. The unfinished nature of Greg's final passage, when read alongside the biographical edits of her first volume, noticeably stands out as a manifestation of her emotional strain and signals that the content was simply too painful to revisit.

Greg's choice to leave her diary unfinished correspondingly suggests this second volume was less likely to have been shared. Beyond a disparity in editorial additions between the two volumes, there are also differences in signs of wear and tear. The first volume, noticeably, is much more damaged than the second: the binding has fallen apart meaning the front and back pages are completely loose; the edges are frayed and ripped in places; and multiple tears suggest that this first volume was handled much more than the second. Likewise, a comparison of the first and final pages of Greg's diary reveals a perceptible difference in the neatness and legibility of her hand. This inconsistency suggests more time and care was taken in the composition

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<sup>109</sup> Greg, Diary, undated, 2:44.

of her first volume than the second. Larger and more scattered font on the final pages of the second volume implies that the hand is rushed rather than composed, in contrast to the neat and carefully ordered script that began the record. These material indicators, alongside her editorial additions and unfinished final entry, suggest that the first volume was more likely to have been read, circulated, or prepared for publication, than the second. Eleanora Chiavetta's study of Mary Delany's reflective autobiographical material displays a similar pattern. Chiavetta concludes that content that focussed on inward reflections and less "unnecessary" "details" was more likely to be found in Delany's meditative autobiographical writing, whereas the "letters that would have been read by other people" are simply concerned with anecdotal facts and objective information; these were not "appropriate site[s] for intimacy."<sup>110</sup> Likewise, Magdalena Ozarska has noted a similar distinction between Burney's memoranda notes and their retrospective entries: the memoranda "tend to carry considerably less emotional load than their expanded version."<sup>111</sup> This, alongside the fact that the loss of dates in Greg's later pages force the document to be read more succinctly without the interruption of page breaks, suggests that her second volume became much more of a reflective autobiographical piece than the first. Indeed, that the document concludes with her marriage and the birth of her daughter mirrors fictional narratives of the same, whereby such events are, in Pam Perkins' words, "the appropriate literary conclusion to a young woman's entry into the world."<sup>112</sup> Greg's second volume, peppered with more reflective accounts and devoid of the edits that supplement the first, emerges as a noticeably personal record in contrast to the informative and fact-orientated first

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<sup>110</sup> Eleanora Chiavetta, "Angles of Refraction: The Letters of Mary Delany," *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 3 (2014): 215, 211.

<sup>111</sup> Ozarska, *Lacework or Mirror?*, 111.

<sup>112</sup> Pam Perkins, "Eliza Fletcher's Private Authorship," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 72.

volume. Even for Greg, who was highly attentive to the collation and assemblage of her paper archive, certain writing material resisted organisation.

### Intergenerational Circulation and Women's Manuscript Material

Over her lifetime, Greg penned a range of manuscript materials, arranging, structuring and editing them in line with contemporary attitudes surrounding the circulation, publication, and distribution of women's manuscript material. Significantly, this work did not end with her death. Margaret Ezell's exploration of women's "posthumous publications" from the beginning of the eighteenth century has revealed how such works "could be seen as an attempt to continue the "living" voice of the author's manuscript writings rather than as an indication of any lack of "self-worth" by the writer" who did not publish during their lifetime.<sup>113</sup> Ezell foregrounds women who editorially prepared their manuscripts for print without ever intending to circulate them as such. If these works only appeared in print following the death of their author, this was not necessarily representative of a fear or inability to publish during their lifetimes.<sup>114</sup> On this note, Pam Perkins's work on Eliza Fletcher's "private authorship" has illustrated how women's epistolary circles often generated criticism that was as harsh as that given to print.<sup>115</sup> The assumption that women did not publish for fear of critical response is far too simplistic. The publication of diaries following the author's death, rather, appears to be part of a cultural understanding that these were texts to be "handed down by families, or recommended between friends," before

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<sup>113</sup> Margaret Ezell, "The Posthumous Publication of Women's Manuscripts and the History of Authorship," in *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas: Manuscript Publication in England, 1550-1880*, ed. George Justice and Nathan Tinker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 128-129.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>115</sup> Perkins, "Eliza Fletcher's Private Authorship," 73; Greg's circle was equally as thorough – she shared her work widely within the literary and philosophical circles of the North.

appearing in print.<sup>116</sup> As Lyons has noted, “[i]t is only historically that we know how many historical and literary figures were keeping diaries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries” because “it wasn’t until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that the vast majority of them would be published.”<sup>117</sup> The early nineteenth century “was a boom period for diarists, and if the subjects themselves never got round to editing their daily jottings, then friends, family, or fans soon found them an excellent resource from which to produce a quick and easy biography.”<sup>118</sup> Editorial preparation, informed by the possibility of future publication, was not an uncommon habit for women writing during Greg’s lifetime, and many personal records were produced with an eye to posterity.

The notion of what Linda H. Peterson has termed “collaborative life writing,” wherein works (especially those written by women) were the product of multiple generations of labour, offers a crucial framework for understanding writing and editorial practices within families.<sup>119</sup> Frances Burney, for example, bequeathed her private writings to her niece, Charlotte Barrett.<sup>120</sup> Just as Greg produced some memoranda to aid the organisation of her papers prior to her death, Burney “arranged these Journals and Papers with the most scrupulous care; affixing to them such explanations as would make them intelligible to her successors.”<sup>121</sup> Burney, as

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<sup>116</sup> Lyons, “The Role of Diaries in the Development of Literary Biography,” 179.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>119</sup> See Linda H. Peterson, “Collaborative Life Writing as Ideology: The Auto/Biographies of Mary Howitt and Her Family,” *Prose Studies* 26, no. 1-2 (2003): 176-195; see also Linda H. Peterson, *Traditions of Victorian Women’s Autobiography: The Poetics and Politics of Life Writing* (London: Virginia University Press, 2001).

<sup>120</sup> In her 1839 will Burney wrote: “...the whole of my own immense Mass of Manuscripts, collected from my fifteenth year, whether personal or collateral, consisting of Letters, Diaries, Journals, Dramas, Compositions in prose and in rhyme I bequeath to the care and sole and immediate possession of my Niece Charlotte Barrett, with full and free permission, according to her unbiassed taste and judgement, to keep or destroy them.” Peter Sabor and John Avery Jones, “Frances Burney’s Original Will (1839),” *The Burney Journal* 18, no. 2 (2021): 15.

<sup>121</sup> Burney, *Diary and Letters of Madame D’Arblay*, 20.

Ozarska notes, was particular in her organisation – she largely rewrote her journal “to remain in total control of the image which is to be projected to her readers, whether they be contemporary or future generations.”<sup>122</sup> Barrett’s editorial notes make this fact clear:

...finally, in her last hours, consigning them to the editor, with full permission to publish whatever might be judged desirable for that purpose, and with no negative injunction, except ONE, which has been scrupulously obeyed, viz: that whatever might be effaced or omitted, NOTHING should in anywise be altered or added to her records.<sup>123</sup>

While Burney entrusted her papers to her niece, she restricted all additions and alterations: Barrett’s role was exclusively to oversee the transition from manuscript to print. Despite declaring this in her editorial preface to the collection, remaining manuscript material exposes that Barrett did edit and alter her aunt’s writing. A selection of Burney’s manuscript journal in the New York Public Library, for example, is distorted by edits in Barrett’s hand and, in a more extreme act outlined by Peter Sabor, “Barrett cut up letters with scissors and pasted fragments onto other letters ... in order to fabricate documents.”<sup>124</sup> Ignoring the wishes of her aunt, Barrett modified the papers with which she had been entrusted.<sup>125</sup> Through her additions, as Catherine

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<sup>122</sup> Ozarska, *Lacework or Mirror?*, 121.

<sup>123</sup> Burney & Broom, *Diary and Letters of Madame D’Arblay*, 20-21.

<sup>124</sup> The archival description for these papers lists them as containing “emendations by Charlotte Barrett.” Frances Burney, *Diary and Letters of Madame d’Arblay*, edited by her niece. London, 1842-46. Incomplete ms. Consists of Madame d’Arblay’s Diary ... arranged and with emendations by Charlotte Barrett, Berg Coll MSS Arblay, The Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, The New York Public Library. These papers are highlighted in Catherine Delafield, “Barrett Writing Burney: A Life Among the Footnotes,” in *Women’s Life Writing, 1700-1850: Gender, Genre and Authorship*, ed. Daniel Cook and Amy Culley (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012), 26-38; Peter Sabor, “History of the Manuscripts and Earlier Editions,” in *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, ed. Peter Sabor, Vol. 1, 1786 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, 2014), xxviii.

<sup>125</sup> Many scholars have acknowledged, and in some cases begun to rectify, Barrett’s editing. See Gillian Skinner, ““A Tattling Town like Windsor”: Negotiating Proper Relations in Frances Burney’s Early *Court Journals and Letters* (1786-87),” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 38, no. 1 (2014): 1-17; Peter

Delafield surmises, Barrett “acted as both participant and editor,” the “shaper of [Burney’s] ... published life.”<sup>126</sup> Even in cases where women were explicit about their instructions regarding the posterity of their manuscript material, these papers (and their print afterlives) were precarious and remained subject to the practices of their guardians. When Burney’s journals appeared in print, therefore, they were a product of the priorities of their guardian as well as those of their author – a project of “collaborative life writing.”

Other contemporary examples, including Lady Louisa Stuart’s “Introductory Anecdotes” to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s letters, help to contextualise Greg’s manuscript bequests and how women’s paper traces were circulated and amended across generations. Montagu’s manuscript material fell to the care of her daughter, and later granddaughter, Lady Louisa, indicating how lines of feminine inheritance supported the maintenance of women’s writing. Such “matriarchives,” to use Jacques Derrida’s term, are fundamental to both “transgenerational memory” and, as will become clear, public memory.<sup>127</sup> Bute handled her role as custodian with extreme caution and, though she supposedly “knew nothing of ... [Montagu’s diary] till it came into her possession a few days before her mother’s death, always kept it under lock and key.”<sup>128</sup> Stuart recalls however, that Bute “often looked over” the pages of her mother’s diaries and “would sometimes read passages from it aloud to her daughters and friends.”<sup>129</sup> But “she never trusted any part out of her own hands, excepting the five or six first copy-books, which, at a late period, she permitted one of her family to

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Sabor, ““Rummaging, Sorting, Selecting, Preserving or Destroying: Frances Burney d’Arblay as Editor,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 55-64.

<sup>126</sup> Delafield, “Barrett Writing Burney,” 31.

<sup>127</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 35-36.

<sup>128</sup> Stuart, “Introductory Anecdotes,” 63.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*



peruse alone, upon the condition that nothing should be transcribed.”<sup>130</sup> Bute maintained a strict and regulated control over the circulation of her mother’s manuscript – one that was restricted to verbal dissemination. In commanding that “nothing should be transcribed,” Bute’s methods of preservation were antithetical to her mother’s, who relied on copied missives. As J. Paul Hunter has indicated, the increasing popularity of record-keeping in the eighteenth century meant that there was a prevailing “distrust” of “an oral tradition” which “was associated with primitive, country, and pagan ways” – although Schellenberg has acknowledged that such verbal discussions were important in Bluestocking circles.<sup>131</sup> In forbidding the transcription, and thereby circulation, of her mother’s material, Bute effectively (re)privatised Montagu’s writings and ensured they remained in the domestic sphere.

Notions of publicity and circulation remained at the fore of Bute’s management of her mother’s papers. Reiterating her propensity for oral dissemination, Stuart goes on to recall:

Lady Bute so admired her mother’s writings, and took such pleasure in reading her letters to persons whom she thought endowed with taste enough to relish them, that it might have been held sufficiently certain she had the most cogent reasons for making what clearly appeared a sacrifice.<sup>132</sup>

This “sacrifice” was Bute’s decision to burn the remainder of Montagu’s papers. This she undertook “as a sacred duty owing to the deceased, whose having forgotten or neglected to leave express order for the purpose, made it only the more incumbent upon her survivors.”<sup>133</sup> While many scholars have mourned Bute’s destruction of

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<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Hunter, *Before Novels*, 306; Betty A. Schellenberg, “Bluestocking Women and the Negotiation of Oral, Manuscript, and Print Cultures,” in *The History of British Women’s Writing*, ed. Jacqueline M. Labbe, Vol. 5, 1750-1830 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 63-83.

<sup>132</sup> Stuart, “Introductory Anecdotes,” 64.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

Montagu's manuscripts, this act profoundly cemented her mother's legacy.<sup>134</sup> As James Daybell has noted, "[t]he gendered politics of archival survival ... is mutable," such manuscripts "acquired new meanings as they moved between archives, from those of the sender or recipient to new custodians."<sup>135</sup> That the archival trail of Montagu's journal ended with her daughter, forbade any further alterations to her public image. Montagu's paper legacy lay solely in the memory of those in Bute's trusted circle and, importantly, her own female line. Stuart's "Anecdotes" conveys the power and finality of women's responsibility for their family papers – a preoccupation that, as we saw in Strickland's endeavours, was shared by many. But more than this, the "Anecdotes" illustrates how, even after death, women's manuscripts (their status, their value, their composition, and their survival) were informed by, and dependent upon, how such papers may appear in the public eye. Even entirely private papers were eventually shared with their posthumous guardian and, as Stuart recalls her mother stating, "[i]n this age ... everything got into print sooner or later."<sup>136</sup>

Montagu, Bute, and Stuart's "matriarchive" is a famous case of female "collaborative life writing," but it does display parallels to the circulation of Greg's manuscripts after her death. As discussed in regards to her methods of copying, Greg had a clear determination to organise her papers for posterity. Though she never overtly subscribed much worth to any of her manuscripts, often referring to them self-depreciatively, she did provide instruction for their preservation – entrusting them to two of her daughters:

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<sup>134</sup> Rubenstein, "Women's Biography as a Family Affair," 6.

<sup>135</sup> James Daybell, "Gendered Archival Practices," in *Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain*, ed. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2016), 235.

<sup>136</sup> Stuart, "Introductory Anecdotes," 64.

To begin with trifles indeed – tho’ perhaps a value may now be affixed to them they are far from deserving – I leave all my papers to Bessy and Agnes – as they are accustomed to like looking over old letters &c they will select any that may seem worth of perusal – throwing the rest into the fire. Some of this task I hope to save them – If I have time allowed I shall bring them into smaller compass – by burning all obsolete or worthless.<sup>137</sup>

It is no surprise to see Greg’s trust in her eldest child Bessy for caring for her writing. Agnes, however, was the fifth oldest of Greg’s twelve surviving children, and appears to have earned her responsibility to care for her mother’s papers because of her being “accustomed to like looking over old letters.” The entrusting of this manuscript material to the care of female descendants appears to have provided mothers, like Greg, with the authority to determine the survival of their papers. Such a process created a distinctly feminine notion of paper lineage. These “transgenerational memor[ies],” to use Daybell’s term, increasingly privileged women’s letters as the “raw materials or historical sources for family histories.”<sup>138</sup> In explicitly bequeathing her papers to the care of two of her daughters, Greg both acknowledged and promoted women’s labour in the creation of her family history. As discussed in the previous chapter, such actions were often vital to the longevity and preservation of the family archive.

Greg’s decision to entrust her papers to Bessy and Agnes is indicative of a long-established, female-centric tradition regarding women as guardians of the textual legacies of their forerunners. Montagu’s (and to some extent Burney’s) public image was determined, and greatly altered, by the female custodians of her letters; this was

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<sup>137</sup> Greg, Memoranda, 13 May 1817, QBA765.1/9/6/55.

<sup>138</sup> Daybell, “Gendered Archival Practices,” 211 and 235.

a powerful and influential responsibility. Greg, unlike Montagu, left her daughters somewhat less “incumbered” with this responsibility; she provided partial instructions on the care of her papers, and bestowed a much smaller collection of documents. Through items such as her memoranda, which detailed the pages she “wished to preserve,” and her editorial compilations, which housed “the cream of much good reading,” Greg both acknowledged and dictated the remits of survival for her papers. In addition to these insurances, evidence of Bessy’s and Agnes’s labour remain imprinted across a variety of Greg’s extant papers; scattered throughout the collection of writings at the University of Liverpool, for instance, are various labels in Bessy’s hand. These inserts are catalogue-like descriptions, marking her mother’s letters with a title, date, and brief summary of their contents. As a result, the archival catalogue for the correspondence between Greg and her daughter is appended with unusually thorough prefatory detail. As Imogen Peck has described more broadly about family archives:

To read these items without due attention to these processes [of survival] is, at best, to offer an incomplete account of their multi-layered meanings, privileging the priorities of a manuscript’s original author; at worst, it strips the ... women who ensured their survival of their historical and archival agency.<sup>139</sup>

There are instances across these labels, moreover, where Bessy’s “archival agency” is much more explicit. Her methods of filing, filtering, and prioritising her mother’s manuscripts is apparent through notes such as the “to keep” which Bessy added to a

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<sup>139</sup> Imogen Peck, ““Of no sort of use”?: Manuscripts, Memory, and the Family Archive in Eighteenth-Century England,” *Cultural and Social History* 20, no. 2 (2022): 4. Significant in this discussion, moreover, is Peck’s attention to scholarship surrounding dissenting communities as promoters for familial archival presentation.

letter of Greg's dated January 1815.<sup>140</sup> Similar to how the administrative labels on the Winn sisters' letters afforded them a place in their family history, Bessy's labels not only shaped Greg's memory but also actively commemorated her own role in this heritage. Women were both the creators and caretakers of these paper legacies. On a similar note, a formal epistolary work in the Quarry Bank archive titled *The Art of Happy Living* bears the inscription that, although authored by Greg, it was transcribed by her daughter-in-law – a fact which again privileges the female line in archival preservation.<sup>141</sup> Greg's existing paper trail is a product of a contemporary custom that favoured women as narrators and editors of a female-centric family history. Not only were these papers shared contemporaneously but, in bequeathing her writings to her daughters, Greg continued to circulate these manuscripts within a distinctly feminine network even after her death. These acts are powerful indicators of a past that was written, shaped, and preserved by generations of women.

### Archival Afterlives

Through the circulation of her papers between generations of female guardianship, Greg's manuscript legacy continued well after she had ceased writing. And just as Strickland's historical efforts received recognition and acclaim in publications following her death, Greg's epistolary labours also extended into nineteenth- and twentieth-century print culture. Unlike many of her contemporaries, Greg's letters were never published. She did, however, receive acclaim in the 1877 text *A Layman's Legacy*, which makes some allusions to the extent of her papers. *A*

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<sup>140</sup> Hannah Greg to Elizabeth Rathbone (née Greg), January 1815, Rathbone Papers, RP VI 1.111, University of Liverpool Library.

<sup>141</sup> Jon Mee has proposed that this document is likely the final iteration of Greg's repeatedly copied "letter to Tom." Mee, *Networks of Improvement*, 236-237n74.

*Layman's Legacy* is a compilation of the sermons of Greg's fourth son, Samuel; the memoir that prefaces this text pays particular attention to his upbringing, testifying that his mother was "a woman of unusual mental power and cultivation, and of a purity and elevation of character still more remarkable."<sup>142</sup> It continues: "she seems to have taken great pains to win and to keep the confidences and affection of her sons, many of her letters to whom are still preserved."<sup>143</sup> In this acknowledgement, *A Layman's Legacy* provides a print memorial for Greg's manuscript work. In life and in death, Greg's manuscript writing teetered on the periphery of both the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century print worlds. Indeed, the composition and layout of *The Layman's Legacy* mimics the bound manuscript volumes of Samuel's collected sermons preserved at Quarry Bank, evoking the fluidity between Greg's manuscript and print legacies.

Extant in the Quarry Bank archive remains an enormous collection assembled by Greg's grandson, Robert Philips Greg, between the years 1876 and 1888. This compilation is titled *Old or Original Register [of] Letters & Documents, Concerning the Family of Greg and of its allied branches in Scotland, Ireland & England 1650-1875* and, within it, several of Greg's letters survive.<sup>144</sup> The volume itself is made up of documents relating to all branches of the Greg family; legal papers are presented alongside notes and memoranda, and courtship correspondences appear among bequests of land and other assets. These papers are filed predominantly in chronological order, although this is not consistent, and there is some attempt at

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<sup>142</sup> Samuel Greg, *A Layman's Legacy, in prose and verse. Selections from the papers of S. G. With a prefatory letter by A. P. Stanley Dean of Westminster and A Brief Memoir* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1877), 5.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> Robert Philips Greg, *Old or Original Register [of] Letters & Documents, Concerning the Family of Greg and of its allied branches in Scotland, Ireland & England 1650-1875*, Collected and arranged by Robert Phillips Greg 1876-1888, c. 1876-1888, Quarry Bank Archive, GLB.1.1, Quarry Bank, Manchester.

structuring via subsections and chapters but with little cohesion or success. It appears the motive behind this work was to establish the Gregs as an ancestral family with a firm history (and future) in industry and the cotton trade. The extent of Greg's inclusion, for example, is centred around her role in the family's lineage and the building of Quarry Bank itself; the Lightbody family tree appears relatively early on, alongside a series of mementos displaying the "Arms of Lightbody," and a selection of Greg's mother's papers are also included. In these early pages, Greg's textual legacy is linked to her marriage into the Greg family, the wealth and status she brought with her, and the fact that she was present at the time their house was built.

Following a run of miscellaneous documents (including a description of Greg's assets, and her and Samuel's marriage settlement), are three of Greg's letters (there is space set aside for a fourth, but this is either missing or no longer in its allotted place). Each of these letters contains a seal and postal stamp, suggesting they are not the formal copies that Greg prepared prior to her death, although, as Markman Ellis has demonstrated, copied letters were occasionally circulated in the postal network.<sup>145</sup> Akin to Bessy's practices, these letters are labelled by Philips Greg with a brief description of their date and context. These three missives are addressed to Greg's sons – two to the eldest Thomas Greg, and one to the second eldest, Robert Hyde Greg. The content of these letters is comparatively mundane; they provide references to the location of various family members, local news from Quarry Bank, and several friendly anecdotes. Prominent in this choice of letters, however, is Greg's tributes to her two sons. In each of the three documents, Greg addresses her sons' employment, details of their education, and expresses her strong pride about their success, and its implications for their family. To Robert, she muses: "you have given us great pleasure

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<sup>145</sup> Ellis, "Letters, Organization, and the Archive in Elizabeth Montagu's Correspondence," 628.

every way – your search after improvement in every form your cousinly attention, assiduity & intelligence in business &c much more indeed have we to acknowledge than I can now do.”<sup>146</sup> In contrast, Thomas receives advanced praise for his business acumen: “[h]ow happy and proud shall I be to have my dear Thomas at hand, the judicious friend, the assistant to his Father in many little difficulties.”<sup>147</sup> Rather than commemorating her manuscript legacy, Greg’s letters are exploited for their gushing admiration of her sons; Phillips Greg does not include comparable praise for her daughters.

Greg’s hand does not make another appearance until the end of the volume (although she is often the recipient of other letters). In the flyleaf, various papers have been tucked into the back pages, evidently awaiting (or devoid of) a formal space in the work. In contrast to the letters with a designated place, the pages tucked in the flyleaf are predominantly domestic in their nature. Those in Greg’s hand are from a much earlier period in her life while her children were still young and, unlike her catalogued letters, are written to female members of the family – namely her daughters and her mother. The epistles are decidedly more informal, often co-written by Greg and one of her young children, and supplemented with creative material such as poetry. These unfiled letters are also paired with miscellaneous ephemera such as a silhouette of Greg prior to her marriage and a trade card and receipt from a London jeweller, addressed to Greg herself.<sup>148</sup> That these pages appear tucked in the flyleaf of the volume and not systematically ordered like those to her sons, exhibits the ongoing precarity of women’s voices in the archive of large houses such as Quarry Bank. Greg

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<sup>146</sup> Philips Greg, Old or Original Register [of] Letters & Documents, 48. Hannah Greg to Robert Hyde Greg, 28 May 1815, Quarry Bank Archive, GLB.1.63.

<sup>147</sup> Greg, Old or Original Register [of] Letters & Documents, 46. Hannah Greg to Thomas Greg, 15 April 1800, Quarry Bank Archive, GLB.1.61.

<sup>148</sup> See the various unorganised pages at the end of Philips Greg, Old or Original Register [of] Letters & Documents, GLB:1.487; GLB:1.496.



only receives a formal place in her son's record because of her association with the patriarchal line of the family. Despite Greg's proactive approach to the survival of her papers (one far more energetic than the other women explored in this thesis), her voice ultimately remained dependent on her male descendants. This endures today; several of these loose papers bear no formal archival categorisation. Common amongst the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg herself, is the paradox by which the country house acted simultaneously as both a repository for women's voices and the means of their exclusion. In this context, Greg only appears in her grandson's history volume because of her role in the longevity of their estate; family history is the history of the patriarchal home.

The sheer range of Greg's material tucked into this flyleaf, however, is valuable in the unaltered image it paints of Greg herself. Contrary to the material selected earlier in the volume, these detached pieces present a less coherent narrative. The combination of ephemera at the back of the volume exhibits Greg as a mother, a consumer, and a friend. The inclusion of a likeness adds a visual dimension to her legacy, and one that is not available elsewhere in the archive. This miscellany of ephemera in effect becomes a volume in itself, one that illustrates Greg's life. As Luisa Calè has displayed in her study of eighteenth-century extra-illustrations, through the combination of both image and text such a "codex turns from a repository of loose papers into a paper gallery in which the role of the "fugitive," "loose," "detached pieces" changes."<sup>149</sup> Rather than disparate fragments, this collection becomes a single narrative, told through a variety of documents. In consequence, this seemingly random collection of ephemera inserted into the flyleaf of such a systematic record, provides

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<sup>149</sup> Luisa Calè, "Extra-Illustration and Ephemera: Altered Books and the Alternative Forms of the Fugitive Page," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 44, no. 2 (2020): 131.

a more comprehensive insight into Greg's life than the material selected earlier in the volume. In reading such assemblages, it is possible to find women's voices outside of and beyond the formal records to which they are attached (or even removed).

This chapter has studied the degree to which women's manuscript writing was forged in line with eighteenth-century attitudes towards circulation, critical approach, and preservation. Hannah Greg's remaining papers highlight the mutability of women's script and draw attention to the ways in which what Schellenberg has termed the "print-manuscript interface," was far from static.<sup>150</sup> Contemporary celebrity writers such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu used techniques like copying in order to distinguish between the materials she wished to remain private and those she intended to share. These copies assumed a precarious status – too much like print to be classed as script and too much like script to be classed as print. They displayed the authorial removal of printed type but lacked its mechanically produced appearance. Greg similarly enacted formal methods of copying to the papers she hoped would be preserved after her death, commissioning some letters to be transcribed verbatim in a hand other than her own. Beyond this, Greg also employed various editorial methods to the reproduction of her manuscript material. She altered and amended her papers for circulation during her own lifetime, and enacted a clear distinction between copying for distribution and copying for posterity. Like Montagu's handling of her letters and diaries, these diverse techniques distinguished her copied missives from their autographed predecessors, and such duplicate texts occupied an ambiguous middle-ground between manuscript and print. Greg's diary, with its editorial additions

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<sup>150</sup> Betty A. Schellenberg, "Eighteenth-Century Manuscript Verse Miscellanies and the Print-Manuscript Interface," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 151-164.

and index-like hallmarks, similarly alludes to the varying degrees of privacy surrounding women's domestic writing. Attention to the form, layout, and marginalia that supplement her record not only reveals that these texts were circulated, but also provides an insight into the type of subjects that women such as Greg were comfortable with sharing. Greg's editorial additions distinguish these degrees of privacy. The circulation of women's manuscripts between generations of female decedents was also a widely endorsed practice. Montagu, Bute, and Stuart's "matriarchive" exposes the toils, risks, and responsibilities of shouldering these roles, as well as the power and authority women could amass when entrusted with determining the afterlives of family papers. These acts of inheritance, moreover, endure today. Greg's choice to bequeath her manuscripts to her daughters has resulted in a more informative and orderly record than those remaining elsewhere, and the layers of archival labour these texts bear supplement the contemporary documentation of her writings. Consistent with the wider themes of this thesis is the fact that the survival of Greg's epistolary voice, in print and manuscript alike, is not only a product of her first bequest but also many others following. While Phillips Greg's record memorialises his grandmother on account of her maternal role in the house, the ephemeral remains that close the document provide a less firmly constructed, more accidental, insight. In these loose papers, Greg's life outside of the patrilineal ancestry of the family is evident. A reading of these materials attests to the importance of looking beyond formal documentation and applying creative interpretations to the documents that do survive.

This chapter has drawn attention to the fluid and interchangeable relationship between eighteenth-century manuscript and print. In isolating the multiple layers of creation behind copied missives, compiled extract books, handwritten diaries, and

archival miscellanies, it is possible to contextualise the creative agency of women such as Greg within the wider hierarchies of the print marketplace. These layers illustrate how Greg's writing was not static. Her papers were rewritten, reread, and transformed through different stages of her life, and Greg's various selves are each imprinted onto the pages that passed through her hands – from adolescence, to motherhood, and old age. Greg's letter collection remains the product of a variety of paper processes; this variety attests to the possibilities of tracing and recognising the eclectic methods of paper (and personal) survival. Each method affirms Greg's efforts to ensure the continued existence of her papers after her own time.

## **Afterword**

This thesis has examined the writing lives of five women: Mary and Charlotte Winn, Elizabeth Egerton, Cecilia Strickland, and Hannah Greg. I have demonstrated how their country houses – Nostell Priory, Tatton Park, Sizergh Castle, and Quarry Bank House – were sites of, and stimulus for, vibrant manuscript cultures. At Nostell, the Winn sisters negotiated their distance from their family home through the space they occupied on the page; at Tatton, Elizabeth Egerton enacted a web of paper technologies to manage her estate finances; at Sizergh, Cecilia Strickland produced a historical legacy that traversed complex source material, handwritten text, and the walls of the house itself; and at Quarry Bank, Hannah Greg created a paper trail of manuscript material that could be circulated, edited, revised, and preserved into futurity. These individuals, little studied elsewhere and collected together here for the first time, illuminate how eighteenth-century women traversed an assortment of written worlds. The Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg wrote in diverse ways and to different ends but shared methods and practices – they used paper, pen, and ink to preserve their stories and mark their participation in broader manuscript and print customs.

Throughout my thesis, I have worked to reinsert the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg into the spaces from which they were written out of, namely their homes and the associated archives of these properties. I have sought to skirt the obstacles, deletions, scattered archives, and disassemblages that mark their remaining papers to consider what these remnants illustrate about the survival of women's voices. On this note, I want to close this thesis by drawing attention to a document in the

Quarry Bank archive, titled *Family Album (Mrs. S. Greg's) Quarry Bank and Ireland 1800 to 1815*.<sup>1</sup> This album was acquired by the National Trust in 2013, from a New York bookseller. The album itself is made up of collected poetry, watercolour sketches, pencil drawings, whimsical verses, and musical scores, all presumably added by members of the Greg family and their close friends who visited Quarry Bank. The book spans a period of fifteen years, from 1800-1815, and is more elaborate in appearance than the other manuscript volumes in the Quarry Bank archive. Its cover is embellished with gold etching, and the pages are all gilded. It remains in relatively pristine condition, with few markers of wear and tear: the pages, and their inserts (including loose pressed flowers and dried plants), are all intact. Given its title, it is likely this album was taken on family on trips to Ireland, where Samuel Greg spent his childhood – a fact that makes the record's pristine condition all the more striking and attests to the book's sentimental value. Even so, the album must have at some point been sold by the family in order to be repurchased by the National Trust in 2013.

The album was found by Andrew Greg, a great, great-grandson of Samuel and Hannah, for sale at James Cummins Bookseller, New York. Two bequests from the charity, alongside a collection of visitor donations, meant that the *Family Album* could be returned to Quarry Bank for a total of \$3200.<sup>2</sup> Inscriptions on the first page provide some indication of the journey the album took after leaving Quarry Bank, but the reasons for its arrival in America (and departure in the first place) remain unknown. Edward Hyde Greg (a grandson of Hannah Greg) sold a large collection of books,

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<sup>1</sup> Family Album. (Mrs. S. Greg's.) Quarry Bank and Ireland 1800-1815, Quarry Bank Archive, 248352, Quarry Bank, Manchester.

<sup>2</sup> The story of the returned album was reported in both local and national news outlets. See "Family Album Returned to Historic Quarry Bank Mill," BBC News, The BBC, updated April 14, 2015, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-32293392>; "Centuries-Old Family Album's Trans-Atlantic Journey Ends at Quarry Bank," Manchester Evening News, updated 14 April, 2015, <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/centuries-old-family-albums-trans-atlantic-journey-9041318>.

medals, and furniture towards the end of the nineteenth century, but not any personal items – the family papers, letters, diaries were all kept. The removal of this text from Quarry Bank reveals how such documents – more domestic, family orientated, and creative – could easily slip through the net of preservation. The album includes no information about family lineage, genealogy, or biography and, when disconnected from Quarry Bank, loses much of its meaning and contexts. While the immaculate physical status of the record indicates the sentimental value it held within Greg’s immediate family, this was evidently not shared by all her descendants. Persistent here, therefore, is the extent to which archival preservation favours facts. As we have seen throughout these chapters, the familial, domestic, creative, and feminine were all less likely to endure. The provenance of this album, and indeed the haphazard nature of the survival of all of the papers explored in this thesis, also begs the question as to how many other such documents were dispersed in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but still remain lost.

The reacquisition of Greg’s *Family Album* encapsulates many of the themes explored throughout this thesis; the fragmented traces of the Winns at Nostell, Egerton at Tatton, Strickland at Sizergh, and Greg at Quarry Bank all signify the precarity of women’s voices in male-dominated environments, such as the country house. Their papers survive in varying degrees of completeness and across numerous archives of male relations and, despite their gaps, they still preserve the paper trails of their creators. It is a fitting conclusion to the thesis that a large selection of Greg’s papers remains at Quarry Bank today – made all the more significant by the trajectory of returned items such as the *Family Book*. That the building continues to house Greg’s manuscripts is in itself a powerful material testament to her voice. The same cannot be said for the Winns, Egerton, or Strickland. While these women’s relationships to

such spaces was fraught with fragility and prejudices, it is their ties to such built environments that have ultimately ensured the survival of their voices. These ties were negotiated through pen and paper. Paradoxically then, the country house can be seen as both a repository for women's papers, and the reason for their dispersal. Nostell, Tatton, Sizergh, and Quarry Bank at once housed the documents of the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg while simultaneously symbolising the grounds for their exclusion. My understanding of recovery, in consequence, extends beyond a simple recognition of the fact there are more papers to be studied, more women remaining unknown. Rather, throughout this thesis I have demonstrated how, by studying the processes of survival and the hierarchies of preservation, it is possible to reinsert these women's lives within the complex environments in which they lived and wrote. In viewing the Winns, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg as agents of endurance as opposed to victims of erasure, I have reconceptualised these women as producers, creators, and authors of their own narratives. This has been made possible by placing their writings within wider literary and print contexts. As we have seen, the interconnected nature of eighteenth-century manuscript and print provides a more accurate picture of the circumstances in which these documents were penned, bringing what might be viewed as fragmented and altered archives into dynamic dialogues with the manuscript and print worlds in which they were produced. The papers of the Winn sisters, Egerton, Strickland, and Greg have, up until now, survived on account of these women's proximity to the male heads of their households – existing in the archives of their brothers, husbands, fathers. In bringing their voices together and uniting them with a contextual analysis of the period's print culture, this thesis has reinterpreted these fragments as sites of female agency.



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