

## The Burney Society UK Newsletter Spring 2021



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Dear Burney members,

Welcome to this Spring Issue. We are sorry to announce that Dr Deborah Jones has decided to step down from her role as Treasurer and Membership Secretary, having generously donated her time to the committee since 2013. We wish to thank her for her sterling efforts over the years and we are delighted that she will remain a member of our Society.

We would be pleased to hear from any member who would be willing to put themselves forward to be co-opted onto the committee as Acting Treasurer.

Please note details of the Extraordinary General Meeting on 14 June 2021 and the lecture which follows by Professor Francesca Saggini to celebrate Frances Burney's birthday. Our Annual General Meeting will be held on the 4 September online via Zoom, followed this year by papers from two excellent speakers.

We have news of conferences which are coming up, particularly the online Burney conference in Montreal, and updates on our own 2022 conference and other events which relate to the Burneys.

Reading matter includes new research on the valuation of the manuscripts of Frances and Dr Charles Burney, and a report from the Unlocking the Mary Hamilton Papers project, including reference to Frances Burney. There are two book reviews and a review of an online production of 'The Woman Hater'. We also have a link to a discussion by previous bursary winner Madeleine Pelling about the new trend for AI animated portraits. Finally, we would like to remind you of the 30 April deadline for the 2021 Research Bursary. Outline applications are welcome from members and non-members, from the UK and abroad.

Miriam Al Jamil Burney Society UK Chair

**Burney Society UK Forthcoming Events**  
**Burney Society UK Extraordinary General Meeting**

**14 June 2021 at 17:30 (BST) via Zoom**

This short meeting has been necessitated by the need to make new banking arrangements following the resignation of our Treasurer. We would like to take this opportunity to make minor changes to the Constitution which will hopefully simplify these arrangements in the future. To do this we need to hold a General Meeting to allow members to vote on the proposed changes. We would be very grateful for your support. As you will see below this Meeting will be followed by a lecture by Prof Saggini.

**AGENDA**

1. Proposal to alter Point 4 of the Constitution (revised 2020) under 'Money and property' which presently states '4. Money must be held in the Society's bank account' to include a statement that Burney Society Bank account signatories should be the Society Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
  
2. Proposal to remove Dr Deborah Jones and any other legacy signatories, apart from the Chair, Miriam Al Jamil, from the Society Bank account.
  
3. Proposal to add current Secretary, Trudie Messent, as a signatory on the Burney Society UK bank account.
  
4. Proposal to add incoming Treasurer, or Acting Treasurer, as a signatory on the Burney Society UK bank account.
  
5. Proposal to use Society funds for a Burney Society UK Zoom account to facilitate online meetings.

**Burney Society UK Lecture by Prof Francesca Saggini**

**'Frances Burney: Building Air'**

**14 June 2021, 18:00 – 19:00 (BST) via Zoom**

We are pleased to celebrate Frances Burney's birthday with a lecture by committee member Prof Francesca Saggini. A Zoom invitation will be sent to all members on 13 June 2021. Any non-members who wish to attend this lecture should email [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

## 2021 Annual General Meeting

**Saturday 4 September 2021 via Zoom at 14:00 BST (GMT +1)**

Due to continued uncertainties and popular request, we have decided to hold the AGM online again this year. The waiting room will open at 13:30 with the AGM commencing at 14:00. Zoom invitations will be sent out to all members immediately prior to the event. We have arranged two excellent speakers. They are Professor Maurizio Ascari and Miriam Heard. Titles of papers to be confirmed.

Non – members are welcome at the AGM and following lectures however they will be unable to vote.

Please email to request a Zoom invitation [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

Agenda items members would like to raise should be emailed to [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com) by 27<sup>th</sup>

August. Further details, when available, will be provided on our website: <https://burneysociety.uk>

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## The 2022 Burney Society UK Conference & AGM

This is planned for 12 – 14 June 2022 in London, to correspond with the twentieth anniversary of the unveiling of the stained-glass window to commemorate Frances Burney in Westminster Abbey and the founding of the Burney Society UK. Delegates who arrive in London on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June may wish to join us for an informal dinner prior to the conference. The conference will include visits to Westminster Abbey and to the library of St Bride's Foundation, which houses the important catalogue listing which Simon Macdonald used to confirm Elizabeth Meeke as a Burney.

We also hope to arrange two visits in the week following the conference as optional extras which may be of interest to Burney members, such as to Chawton House, and to the Weymouth area to trace Frances Burney's 1789 journey as attendant to Queen Charlotte. Details will be made available closer to the date.

It would be extremely helpful for our planning process if people interested in this conference would email us with a no commitment statement of possible attendance, including whether you require London accommodation, via [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

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## Postponed visit to St Paul's Church, Deptford

We hope our outing to St. Paul's Church, Deptford where Charles Burney Jn (1757 – 1817) was rector and is buried, can be arranged for this autumn. This will be a free event and members and guests are welcome. Further details will be provided as soon as they are available.

## Forthcoming Conferences

### **The Burney Society (North America) Virtual Zoom Conference: Re-reading, Re-viewing, and Re-assessing the Burneys 5-7 July 2021**

Over three days, with between three and four hours each day of Zoom-time, the Burney Society will be offering an exciting program of talks on Frances Burney and the Burney Family. Francesca Saggini (Edinburgh) will present a talk, "'Tell all the truth but tell it slant': Reading Frances Burney Against the Grain," our Founder Paula Stepankowsky will review the history and accomplishments of our Society, and thirteen Burney scholars, both established and emerging, will share new insights on panels titled "Re-assessing Frances Burney and Burney Criticism," "Other Burneys," "Charles Burney and Music," and "Re-viewing Burneys through New Lenses."

#### **Registration for Burney Society UK Members: Conference registration \$10 via PayPal.**

They are asking all interested members to register in advance before June 30th by paying \$10 USD. As usual, all attendees must be members of either the Burney Society of North American or the Burney Society UK. Please use the North American Society Membership link below, although Burney Society UK members only need to complete their personal details and pay the \$10 Conference fee, as their UK membership is valid for this conference. For the membership form which includes Conference registration please use the link below:

[burney\\_membership\\_form\\_3-21\\_fillable\\_2.pdf \(mcgill.ca\)](https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/burney-society/membership)

**The Zoom invitation will be sent to the webmail address that you use.**

Non- Burney Society members who wish to attend this conference may join either Burney Society Burney Society (North America) <https://www.mcgill.ca/burneycentre/burney-society/membership>  
Or Burney Society (UK) <https://burneysociety.uk/membership>

Please address any questions about the conference to [burneysocietynorthamerica@gmail.com](mailto:burneysocietynorthamerica@gmail.com)

### **Conference Schedule**

#### **Monday, 5 July 2021 (4 hours, with breaks)**

##### **11:00 am- 12:00 pm EDT Welcome and Opening**

**Plenary:** Francesca Saggini, Edinburgh, "Of Spectacles, Balloons, and a Mulberry Tree: Reading Frances Burney Against the Grain"

##### **12:00 pm -12:30 pm EDT Informal meet-and-greet**

##### **12:30-2:00 pm EDT 1. Re-assessing Frances Burney and Burney Criticism**

1. Tara G. Wallace, George Washington University (Emeritus), "Collusion!: 50 years of Editorial and Critical Collaboration"
2. Alex Pitofsky, Appalachian State University, "The Violent Episodes in Evelina: A Reconsideration"
3. Jodi Wyett, Xavier University, "Ecumenical Burney?: Frances Burney, Feminism, and Catholic Tolerance"

**2:00 pm-2:15 pm EDT** Informal meet-and-greet

**2:15- pm-3:00 pm EDT** Plenary: Founding President Paula Stepankowsky: “The History, Mission, and Accomplishments of The Burney Society”

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**Tuesday, 6 July 2021 (3.5 hours, with breaks)**

**11:30 am-1:15 pm EDT 2. Other Burneys**

1. Sophie Coulombeau, University of York, “‘Evelina is in Aberdeen’: Charles Burney Jr. in Scotland, 1778-1781”
2. Geoffrey Sill, Rutgers University-Camden (Emeritus), “Midshipman Burney and the ‘Severities’ of a Sea Education”
3. Teri Doerksen, “Man Traps and Marriage Marts: Humanizing the Material and Objectifying the Human in Edward Francis Burney’s Satirical Regency Watercolors”
4. Danielle Grover, Independent Scholar, “Black and White Singing: The Relationship Between Music, Social Class and the ‘Other’ in Sarah Harriet Burney’s novels”

**Off-line Break: 1:15-2:00 PM EDT**

**2:00-3:00 pm EDT 3. Charles Burney and Music**

1. Devon Nelson, “The Role of Burney’s Antiquarian Tour Guides in the Creation of his General History of Music”
2. Morton Wan, “‘To Satisfy the University of My Abilities to Write in Many Parts’: Charles Burney’s Doctoral Exercise as Institutional Critique”

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**Wednesday, 7 July 2021 (3 hours)**

**1:00-2:30 pm EDT 4. Re-viewing Burneys Through New lenses Lenses**

1. Alicia Kerfoot, SUNY-Brockport, “Stitching with Burney: Needlework, Material Culture Studies, and The Court Journals and Letters”
2. Trudie Messent, Independent Researcher, “Court Vacation Summer 1789: The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney Explored Through Maps and Prints”
3. Kirsten Hall, The University of Texas at Austin, “Mock-Heroic Manqué in the Novels of Frances Burney”
4. Svetlana Kochkina, McGill University Library, “Exploring Burney’s Court Years with Network Analysis Methods and DH Tools”

**2:45-3:30 pm EDT 7. Annual Business Meeting for all members (including those not attending the conference, who should request a Zoom invitation if they wish to attend)**

**3:30 pm-4:00 pm EDT Please linger with your refreshment of choice to socialize.**

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North American Conference Papers from Burney Society UK Committee members include the Featured Plenary by Prof. Francesca Saggini, and papers by Dr Sophie Coulombeau and Trudie Messent.

**29<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Online Talk by Dr Cassie Ulph: ‘Remembering Hester Thrale Piozzi, 200 years’.** Organised by the Streatham Society.

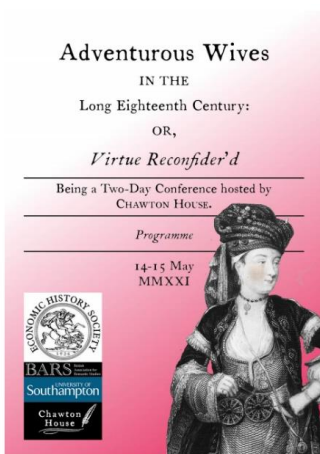
Burney Society committee member Cassie Ulph is giving an online talk on Hester Piozzi for the Streatham Society on 29<sup>th</sup> April at 19.30, to mark 200 years since her death. You can book through Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/remembering-hester-thrale-piozzi-200-years-on-by-cassie-ulph-tickets-136360918177>

'The death of Hester Piozzi on 2 May 1821 marked the end of an era, with the loss of an intellectual and social force associated with some of the most famous names in literary London. During her years as Mrs Thrale, mistress of Streatham Park, she had hosted some of the most feted writers of her day, including Samuel Johnson and Frances Burney. As Mrs Piozzi, she embraced a new career as a writer of travel memoirs, biography, history, and more. This talk marks the bicentenary of her death by exploring the fascinating life of the woman known to many as ‘Dr Johnson’s Mrs Thrale’. As Mrs Piozzi, she often looked back on her Streatham years which represented both a period of great intellectual activity but also the restrictions of her first marriage to the brewer Henry Thrale. This talk will focus particularly on how the ‘Mrs Thrale’ we remember today was shaped by those crucial years at Streatham, and how Hester Piozzi herself would remember and retell her Streatham years in her later writing. It will also briefly touch on some of the projects taking place in Piozzi studies today, as renewed interest in her literary work sees her finally stepping out of the shadow of her illustrious guests.'

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**Adventurous Wives  
Conference Online 14-15  
May 2021**



Members may be interested in this free two-day online Conference. Burney Society UK Committee member involvement includes Alison Daniell as co-organiser, Sophie Coulombeau as a member of the round-table discussion and a paper by Trudie Messent.

Registration is now open and can be accessed here: <https://chawton-house.arttickets.org.uk/chawton-house/2021-05-14-adventurous-wives-or-virtue-reconsidered>

It will only allow you to book for Friday 14th when selecting, but the ticket is for the whole conference.

To download the most up-to-date programme, please visit:

<https://chawtonhouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Adventurous-Wives-Final-Programme.pdf>

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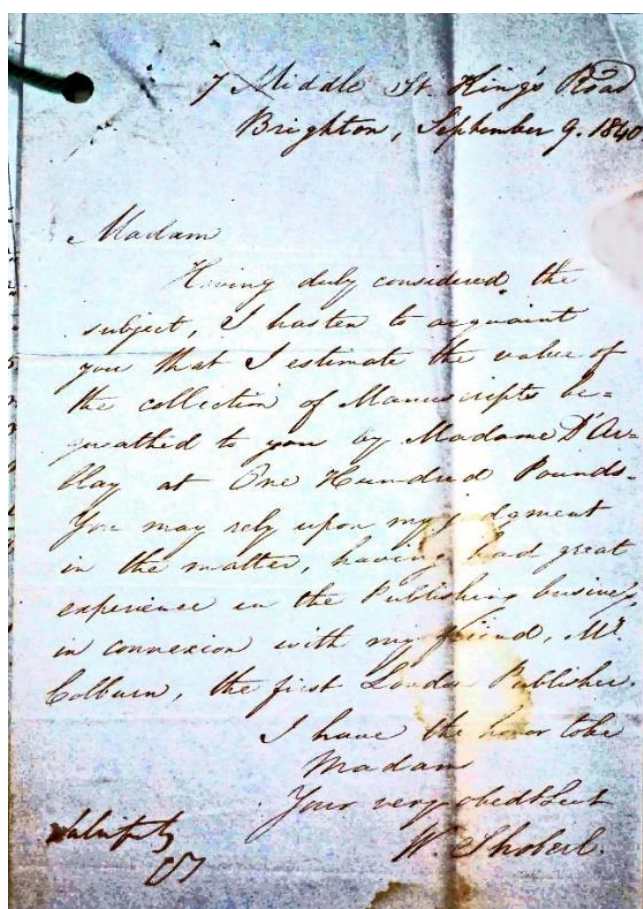
## Burney Scholarship

### John Avery Jones: The Valuation of Frances and Charles Burney's Manuscripts in 1840: An Unexplored Source

The papers relating to the payment of legacy duty on Frances Burney's estate in the National Archives<sup>1</sup> contain two valuations that have not hitherto been seen by scholars of either Frances or Charles Burney. Legacy duty was then charged on the receipt of legacies at rates between 1% and 10% varying on the beneficiary's relationship to the deceased; in this case for nephews and nieces the rate was 3%.

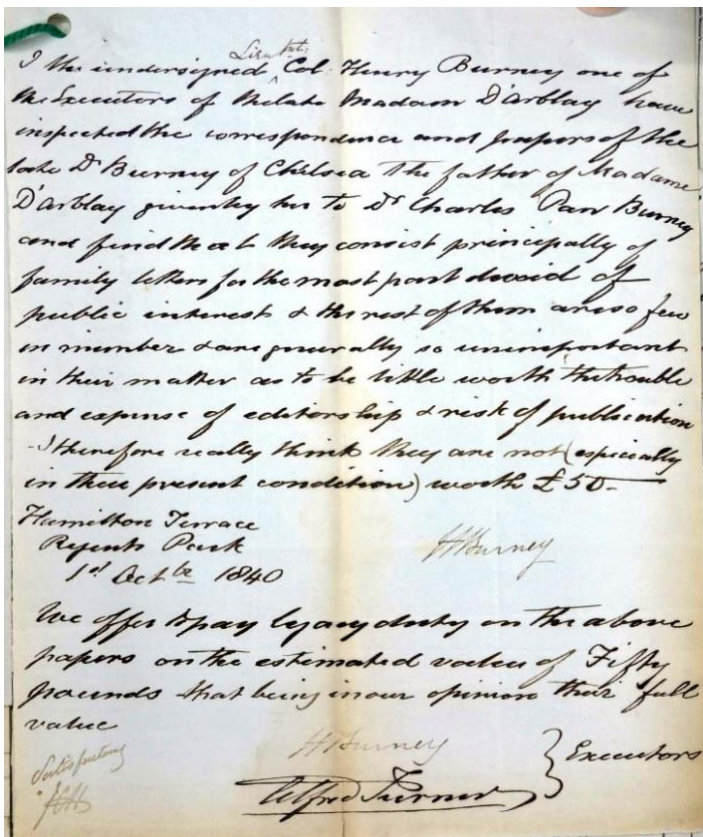
The first is a valuation of (to quote Burney's will<sup>2</sup>) 'my own immense Mass of manuscripts collected from my fifteenth year whether personal or collateral consisting of Letters Diaries Journals Dramas Compositions in prose and in rhyme' made by W Shoberl at £100. Shoberl says in his valuation letter addressed to the beneficiary of them, Burney's niece Charlotte Barrett, '[y]ou may rely upon my judgment in the matter, having had great experience in the Publishing business, in connexion with my friend, Mr Colburn, the first London Publisher.'

Madame D' Arblay Manuscript valuation,  
National Archives, Kew  
Photograph © John Avery Jones



William Shoberl was the son of Frederic Shoberl the founder of *New Monthly Magazine* and editor of Rudolph Ackermann's *Repository of Arts*. William was first assistant and then partner of H Colburn, publishers at 20 Great Marlborough Street. Charlotte Barrett would no doubt have approached William Shoberl as a prominent publisher to make a valuation that the tax authority was likely to accept. The valuation letter is endorsed 'Satisfactory' with the initials of the tax official in the Board of Stamps and Taxes.<sup>3</sup>

The second valuation is for the legacy to her nephew Dr Charles Parr Burney of (to quote Burney's will again) 'the entire arrangement of the correspondence of my dear Father excepting my own Letters which I give to my Niece Charlotte Barrett, I had already in the last year made it over to my beloved son [Alexander, who died in 1837] who was preparing it for the press. I now commit it to Doctor Charles Parr Burney either for a small select publication or for the flames. I leave to him likewise indiscriminately and without reserve or direction whatever composition may remain in the handwriting of my dear Father whether in prose or in verse well assured that I cannot do more honor to his memory.'



Lt Col Henry Burney (1792-1843), her nephew, the son of Richard Thomas Burney, and one of her three executors (together with Charlotte Barrett and Alfred Turner), states in his valuation that 'I...find that they consist principally of family letters for the most part devoid of public interest and the rest of them are so few in number & are generally so unimportant in their manner as to be little worth the trouble and expense of editorship & risk of publication. I therefore really think that they are not (especially in their present condition) worth £50.' The executors added '[w]e offer to pay legacy duty on the above papers on the estimated value of Fifty Pounds that being in our opinion their full value.'

Charles Burney Manuscript valuation, National Archives, Kew  
 Photograph © John Avery Jones

Again the tax official endorsed the letter 'Satisfactory' and added his initials. Even allowing for the practice of low valuations for tax on death that continues to this day readers may feel that this is an excessive denigration of the importance of Charles Burney's letters; and surely if they were that devoid of public interest why would they be worth that sum? The difference between the two valuations is striking. Perhaps they are equivalent to £10,000 and £5,000 today which seems low but their value must be very uncertain and at a tax rate of 3% it would not be worth the revenue spending much time arguing about them.



The reason I happened to look at Burney's Legacy Duty Account in the National Archives was that I was researching legacy duty on Jane Austen's estate and I found it odd that, although the Account was completed by her sister Cassandra on 10 November 1817, and although assets are valued at the date of the Account rather than the date of death, no value was placed on *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* which were published just before the end of that year in spite of being dated 1818 on the title page. I thought I would investigate whether giving no value to unpublished works was the normal practice with authors. I therefore searched the National Archives for the Legacy Duty Accounts of all the contemporary authors I could think of including Ann Radcliffe, David Ricardo, Byron, Coleridge, Charles Lamb, James Mill and Burney, plus another 15 authors for 8 whom there was no record, and for the remainder (including Shelley) no legacy duty record. (I am afraid Charles Burney was not on my list but there is no legacy duty entry for him in the catalogue.) Of these the only author with any valuation placed on unpublished works was Burney. The reason may possibly be that by 1840 the tax authority had become more sophisticated in looking for such values, or

it could be that her will's, perhaps unwise, reference to her 'immense Mass of manuscripts' drew their attention to the possibility that they might have had some value, or it could be merely because it was a large estate (the net residuary estate was £12,187). It did not occur to me that these valuations were not known to Burney scholars until Peter Sabor, who read my note about Jane Austen,<sup>4</sup> pointed this out and suggested that I write this piece.

**PLEASE NOTE** that the images and content of this article are strictly copyright.

**Postscript from John Avery Jones:**

There is an interesting point on image of the second valuation. Henry Burney using the same thin nib as his signature added 'lieutenant' at the beginning. This suggests that the letter was written for him by Turner using the same thick nib he uses for his signature at the bottom.

<sup>1</sup> IR 59/27.

<sup>2</sup> The will is dated 6 March 1839, *Journals and Letters* ed J Hemlow, OUP, 1984, vol 12 p 980.

<sup>3</sup> Renamed as the Inland Revenue in 1839.

<sup>4</sup> The Jane Austen Society *Report for 2019* p 44.

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## Dr Sophie Coulombeau: recent release from the Mary Hamilton project, which features Frances Burney

Dr Sophie Coulombeau's blog from the 'Unlocking the Mary Hamilton Papers' research project reveals new aspects of the correspondence between Mary Hamilton and George IV.

Sophie writes:

[...] four years after Hamilton escaped from Court, Burney entered it as Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte. Like Hamilton, she had no interest in a career as a courtier, and largely took the post to please her family. Like Hamilton, she quickly found her duties exhausting, dull, and stifling to creativity. Like Hamilton, she made her escape after five years or so, pleading ill health. But before she did so, she reported the following "very long & confidential discourse" with the Queen: "the subject, Mrs. Dickenson, formerly Miss Hamilton, & an attendant upon the Elder Princesses".

'I gave her a narration of the beginning & the progress of our acquaintance, & she opened with the utmost frankness in giving her opinions & thoughts. When they are upon Characters, living, I will never commit them to paper, except where so closely blended with my own affairs as to be of deeper interest to myself than to her; or except, also, where they are mentioned with praise unmixt; which is rarely the case where a judge so discerning speaks with entire openness.'<sup>1</sup>

Sophie continues:

'I do wish that Burney, on this one occasion, had suspended her discretion. I'd like very much to know what the Queen had to say, so frankly and in such "mixed" terms, about Hamilton.

It's possible, of course, that the Queen simply resented being abandoned by the young lady whom she thought she'd honoured with her favour and confidences. We know that she didn't want Hamilton to leave court, and refused to accept her first resignation, just as she later refused to accept Burney's.<sup>2</sup> But this doesn't entirely explain her coldness. Indeed, the contrast between the Queen's treatments of Hamilton and Burney after they left court is illustrative. After resigning in 1791 for very similar reasons to Hamilton, Burney received a pension for life from the Queen of half her salary, and she was frequently invited back to Court to visit the Royal Family.<sup>3</sup> To the best of my knowledge, Hamilton was just frozen out.

<sup>1</sup> Frances Burney, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1786, in the Journal-Letter for 1-30 November 1786, in *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, Volume I, 1786, ed. Peter Sabor (Clarendon Press, 2011), pp.251-252.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Ansons, Hamilton attempted to resign on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1781. The Queen dismissed her letter of resignation as "the effect of *low Spirits*" (See Anson & Anson, pp.100-101; original italics). She resigned again on 27<sup>th</sup> November 1782, and this time the resignation was accepted (See Anson & Anson, p.123 and p.129).

<sup>3</sup> See Hester Davenport, *Faithful Handmaid: Fanny Burney at the Court of King George III* (Sutton Publishing, 2000, pp.146-147).

<https://www.projects.alc.manchester.ac.uk/maryhamiltonpapers/this-is-not-a-love-story-mary-hamilton-and-george-iv/>

## Pierre Dubois: *Dr. Charles Burney and the Organ*, February 2021

Review by Miriam Al Jamil

Some members will remember the inspiring recital of Charles Burney's organ compositions which took place in St. Margaret's Church, King's Lynn where he was organist from 1752 to 1760, as part of our Cambridge conference in 2013.

Organ, St Margaret's Church, King's Lynn,  
By John Salmon, CC BY-SA 2.0,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=14253979>



As part of the Cambridge University Press Elements series, *Elements in Music and Musicians 1750-1850*, Pierre Dubois has just published his *Dr. Charles Burney and the Organ*, February 2021. This is available online and will appear in printed form later.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/elements/dr-charles-burney-and-the-organ/75521B5B1F8424D4F24D693AB86D7E63>

The study looks at Burney's lifelong interest in organ music and the cultural value and significance of the instrument. It traces the importance of the organ in Burney's career, his writing and his aesthetic understanding and looks at his work in the context of eighteenth-century theories of taste, manners and politeness which informed Burney's judgements and discussions of music history and composition. Dubois draws on Burney's publications *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period* (London: 1776-89) and on his travel writing *Music, Men and Manners in France and Italy...* (1770), as well as an impressive list of primary and secondary sources.

'The underlying assumption of our approach is that musical instruments help construct an *imaginaire*, or imagined representation of the world, that is ripe with aesthetic, social and ethical meanings that go well beyond their purely musical functions or roles. By tracing the evolution of the English organ back to the Restoration and setting Burney's remarks on the instrument in their historical context, it is possible to see how the instrument and its repertoire reflected the social and philosophical ideals of Georgian England.' (p.3).

Burney's commitment to the necessity of moderation in the quality of composition had wider implications than we might at first realise. Dubois notes:

'Travelling abroad was for Burney a way of asserting the superiority of Britain in matters aesthetic, as well as the quality of English craftsmen.' (p.55).

Dubois' thorough musicological background and practical understanding of the organ as an instrument is clear in this study, but there is also fascinating reading for anyone interested in the Burney family, aesthetic theory and its importance in the cultural life of the eighteenth century. The study contributes to our ongoing appreciation of Burney family talent and its significance in eighteenth-century cultural history.

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### ***The Woman Hater* by Frances Burney, Red Bull Theater online production, 26 January 2021**

Review by Miriam Al Jamil based on a review by Miriam previously published in BSECS Criticks.

Despite at least fifty years of serious scholarly engagement and published work on eighteenth-century women writers, we still find newspaper reviewers and television documentary makers expressing self-important surprise when they feature work by a 'newly discovered' or 'forgotten' woman writer. For those outside the Burney Society, Frances Burney has a measure of recognition for her novels, albeit as Austen's literary foremother. The manuscripts of her less well-known plays entered the Berg Collection of New York Public Library in 1941 and by 1995, following important studies by Joyce Hemlow, Ellen Moers and others, *The Complete Plays of Frances Burney* were published.

The first performance of any of her plays, apart from a one night's staging of her history play *Edwy and Elgiva* at the Drury Lane Theatre in 1795, dates from the 1990's. They are usually arranged by specialist theatre companies or university groups and are still rare productions which reach small audiences. A notable success was in 2008 when The Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond, Surrey, premiered Burney's 1796-1801 play *The Woman Hater*, which The Guardian described as 'a lost treat' while Burney was the 'missing link between Sheridan and Wilde'.

While we are all missing live performances, the value of which we hadn't appreciated when they were accessible, theatre companies have been offering online initiatives as a matter of survival. Paradoxically, this has enabled far greater reach and participation and arguably encouraged some risk-taking with niche texts and creative techniques. One such production has been Red Bull Theater's *The Woman Hater* for one night only, watched by 2,000 people in different time zones. Based in New York, the group describes itself as an 'Off-Broadway theater company specializing in plays of heightened language, with a unique focus on the Jacobean plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries'. The current programme extends to eighteenth-century plays, with Hannah Cowley's *The Belle's Stratagem* was performed in March. During a YouTube discussion session following the play, one member of the cast expressed intense misgivings about virtual performances. Predictably, she could not wait to return to treading the boards. The discussion highlighted the individual labour-intensive and complex preparations necessary for an actor in an online play, an isolated experience with at least as many stresses as an old-fashioned theatrical run would entail. The actor is performer and prompt, set arranger, make-up artist and dresser. The professionalism of the cast ensured that any problems were not apparent, and the difficult timing of costume and set changes intrinsic to an

untested play draft which had never been submitted to amendments by the practicalities of performance were smoothly handled.

Zoom-style separate screens for each actor meant that the focus was always on language rather than movement. Appealing backdrops in the style of tinted prints served as scene changes, and interaction had to be forward-facing by each performer. Attempts to manipulate scripted gestures such as the handing over of a letter or book from one actor to another were strategically if clumsily made, basic actions which had clearly necessitated careful rehearsal. Cuts to a few self-standing comic scenes and characters distilled the play into two and a half hours. The cast was well chosen, acted their doubled up roles effectively and took advantage of the format to concentrate on facial expression and comic exaggeration in the intimate 'asides' achieved by leaning into close focus with the camera. Some elements of burlesque comic acting style combined with the actors' American accents added a lively, international dimension to a plot for which Burney had already drawn on the French traditions of Molière's drama, Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Winter's Tale* and Beaumont and Fletcher's 1607 *The Woman Hater*.

For those familiar with Burney's oeuvre, characters and plot lines from her first play *The Witlings* and her first novel *Evelina* can be identified. Lady Smatter, the caricatured bluestocking of *The Witlings* reappears, still unable to assure us that her bookish learning has any substance and now refusing to nurture a young woman's education, and the wronged supposedly illegitimate daughter *Evelina* is reworked in the convoluted plot of *The Woman Hater* as the character Sophia. Significant action has already taken place before the play opens so attention is required of the audience to make sense of the relationships. Sophia's mother has already been wrongly judged as adulterous by her husband Wilmot, and Sir Roderick's abiding misogyny guides his attitude to women. Burney moves her characters between the West Indies and London, between houses and streets in a sentimental plot which moves towards the expected reveal and resolution of all misunderstandings. Burney's interest in the nature/nurture debate is reflected in her character Joyce, the daughter of her supposed nurse and a cobbler, who had been secretly substituted for Sophia. Burney presents her lack of interest in books and her high-spirited frolics as determined by her low birth, and the Red Bull production exaggerates her modern, rebellious nature to good effect.

Burney's perseverance in her dramatic writing is testimony to her versatility as an author and her interest in exploring character development through different genres. Hopefully, there will be more attempts made to perform her work on real stages so that her plays will be given life beyond the page and beyond a literary exercise. The Red Bull company has contributed a worthy version, against the odds, a cause to celebrate in these difficult times for the arts.

<sup>1</sup>Peter Sabor, ed., contributing editors Stewart Cooke and Geoffrey Still, *The Complete Plays of Frances Burney* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1995); Peter Sabor, 'The Rediscovery of Frances Burney's Plays', *Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol.13, 1994; Peter Sabor and Geoffrey Sill, eds., *The Witlings and The Woman-Hater: Frances Burney* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2005).

<sup>2</sup>Michael Billington, review of 'The Woman Hater', *The Guardian*, 8 January 2008  
<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2008/jan/08/theatre> [accessed 30 January 2021].



## Jessica A Volz: *Visuality in the Novels of Austen, Radcliffe, Edgeworth and Burney*

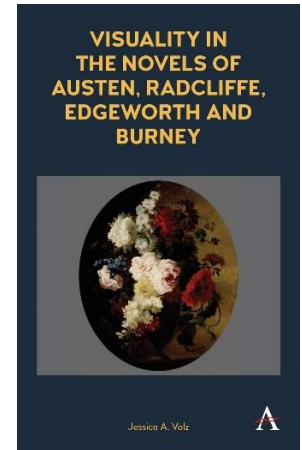
Jessica Volz describes herself as an independent literary scholar who concentrates on visuality in women's novels between 1778 and 1815. Volz justifies this date range on the basis that the period between the start of the Anglo-French War in 1778 and the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, was a time when the genre of the novel was accessible to women as both readers and writers. She explores the tension for women writers of this period between how they saw and had to be seen, particularly given their need to preserve their reputation as respectable women. She links their ability to utilise visuality to navigate these tensions at the intersection between literature and art to the empowerment of women writers. Volz argues that novelists paint with words and therefore, although her text references 'the influence of visual culture, such as portraiture, the looking glass, architecture, and landscape painting' (Volz, p,3), she deliberately excludes illustrations to reinforce this point.

Visuality is defined by Volz as 'a methodology involving the use of visual cues, analogues and references to the gaze' (ibid), a continuum linking visual and verbal communication. Volz argues that visuality provided these four authors with a methodology by which they could subvert the cultural restrictions inherent in language. In successive chapters Volz explores the differing literary strategies employed by Austen, Radcliffe, Edgeworth, and Burney in utilising visuality as a literary methodology.

This book includes multiple references to prior scholars in this field, such as Fraser MacDonald, Peter de Bolla and Sophie Thomas, discussing how their arguments relate to ideas of visuality. In relation to prior scholarship on Frances Burney, Volz debates the contributions of Joyce Hemlow, Lilian and Edward Bloom and Kate Chisholm, amongst others. In Chapter 4 'Optical Allusions in Frances Burney's *Evelina* and *The Wanderer*', Volz compares the epistolary narrative of *Evelina: or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778), to the third person narrative of *The Wanderer; or, FEMALE DIFFICULTIES* (1814), observing these 'demonstrate that her visual technique remained largely consistent throughout her lifetime. Burney's distinct reliance on typology underscores the need for women to deflect the gaze in order to preserve their appearances from the irreparable consequences of misinterpretation' (Volz, p. 173). Volz suggests that *Evelina* illustrates scopic dialogue, in which 'the language of the eye speaks more truly than verbal speech and other features of visible appearances' (Volz, p. 187). Whilst recognising the presence of scopic dialogue in *The Wanderer* she argues that Burney also used colour codes, and that by her implicit sanction of cosmetics to disguise emotion, Burney 'shows that motifs of 'self-sacrifice' ironically empower the heroine through colour-coded connotations'. (Volz, p.200)

This is a scholarly book, as would be expected, given the subject of her doctorate, and adds many interesting perspectives to visuality as a literary methodology, which are only touched upon here.

Review by Trudie Messent



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References: Jessica A Volz, *Visuality in the Novels of Austen, Radcliffe, Edgeworth and Burney*, Anthem Press digital edn.

## Burney Family 'Christmas Quotes' Quiz ANSWERS

by Trudie Messent

Susan Burney Phillips, Decr 30, 1799.  
Philip Ollerson, *The Journals and Letters of Susan Burney: Music and Society in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (London & New York: Routledge, 2016) p. 308.

*[...] – I was hurried on board the packet in less than 2 hours time, with out having time allowed me to dry or arrange my things or even to get refreshments, as it was expected the ship would sail directly – but ere I had been on board ½ an hour a storm which had lasted several days and had but subsided returned with re-doubled violence [...] XMAS EVE, to my great joy got home to my family and affairs [...]*

*[...] – My own Fanny – My other beloved sister Fredy must from none but myself hear of my safe landing in beloved old England – nor my dear Brother, my reserved & cherished M<sup>r</sup> Locke – we arrived between 3 & 4 this afternoon. I am greatly fatigued & ready to drop asleep so do not wonder <at> the vile writing – for all else you shall not be kept long in ignorance – but now God bless you all best beloveds [...]*

Charles Burney, *Music Men, and Manners in France and Italy 1770*, Edited H.E. Poole (London: The Folio Society, 1969, p. 226)

*The Ship before any thing of the kind was suspected, drove so near the Rocks that we were obliged to make Sail with the Anchor on the Ground and 50 fathoms of Cable out. By setting all our Head Sails, we luckily dragged the Anchor out into deeper Water, which had it not followed easily, must have been cut away; having not more than room enough to clear the South point of the Harbour. found one palm broke off; as we had Rode with scarce any Strain all Night, [...]*

James Burney, Wednesday 25 Dec 1776, Vol.1 p.9. 'James Burney - Journey on HMS Discovery, 10 Feb. 1776 - 24 Aug. 1779' Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW  
[http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/\\_transcript/2011/D02340/a2281.pdf](http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/_transcript/2011/D02340/a2281.pdf) accessed 19 dec 2020

*[...] Thank Barrett for his friendly Sweep-chimney intentions on my behalf. A blacker proof of friendship was never offered: but I take the fair side of the question, and, as it is not a set of features, or complexion alone that I admire, shall love and revere him in soot & ashes for the warmth of his intentions. [...]*

Sarah Harriet Burney to Charlotte (Francis) Barrett, 29 December 1809. *The Letters of Sarah Harriet Burney*, Edited by Lorna J. Clark (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1997) p. 108.

Frances Burney, Journal Dec<sup>r</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney, Volume I 1768-1773*, Edited by Lars E. Troide (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, 2014) pp. 95-96.

*[...] been conscious of, & that in indulging myself freely in an impertinent knack at raillery would be some merit were I owning [?it to] somebody, but at present I am meerly t[aking] myself to task, which, for the future, I intend more <sufficiently> to do than I hithe[rto] have, & that it may make this Journal sin[gularly] useful to me. & this will be a very strong reason why I shall guard [sic] [it] from all human Eyes – for it would not [be] very flattering or agreeable to sit down [to] write my <past> [?follies for all to see.]*

## Frances Burney lives and breathes!

You may have seen the new trend for animating the faces in historic portraits using AI, which have been mainly circulating via twitter. Below is a link to the example of Frances Burney's NPG portrait which is also posted on our Facebook page.



<https://twitter.com/i/status/1365724337806970880>

What do you think about this development? Is it useful, misleading or just a bit of fun? Do you feel you can imagine Burney more easily? What, if any, issues are at stake? Madeleine Pelling, a past Burney bursary winner, has written her thoughts on the subject. These can be found at this link:

<https://theconversation.com/deepnostalgia-how-animating-portraits-with-ai-is-both-bolstering-and-undoing-historic-painted-lies-156537>

Do let us know what you think!

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## Burney Society UK Research Bursary 2021- 2022 Deadline 30 April 2021

The Burney Society UK is very pleased to invite applications for our 2021-2022 Research Bursary. The Bursary is open to post-graduate students, recent students (within 5 years of graduation) and independent scholars (those who are not currently employed by a university on a permanent/open-ended contract) for research into members of the Burney family and/or their wider circle. The research should be based on, but not necessarily restricted to, UK archives, records, and other research sources.

An award of £300 will be made towards any justifiable research expenses, including access to resources, the cost of photocopying, scanning, childcare, travel, and accommodation. £100 will be paid in advance to the successful candidate, with the remaining £200 paid on receipt of invoices. The Bursary also includes complimentary membership of the Burney Society UK for June 2021 – 2022. The successful candidate will be expected to deliver a paper on their research at the Burney Society UK AGM in late September 2022.

Their research paper will also be considered for inclusion in our Newsletter and website.

To apply, please send a CV and a completed application form (which includes a statement of research of no more than 1000 words that makes clear its relation to the Burney family and/or their wider circle) by email to [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

The Deadline for applications is **30<sup>th</sup> April 2021**. The winner will be announced in June 2021 and the successful applicant will generally be expected to complete their research paper by mid-September 2022.

Application forms are on the Society's website <https://burneysociety.uk/research-bursary>

For information, please email Dr Gillian Skinner at [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

## Burney Society UK Membership

We are pleased to announce that at the 2020 AGM members agreed to a reduction in our annual membership fees for students (reduced to £10) and a new recent graduate subscription of £15.

It is now possible to pay your subscription online via PayPal. Subscriptions become due on 13 June each year, any Memberships taken out or renewed from now will be valid until June 2022.

The updated 2021 – 2022 membership form can be found below and on the website.

If any member would prefer to pay for three years in advance, please email us at [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com) stating your membership type and we will invoice you via PayPal for the relevant amount.

Further information and our 2021-2022 Membership form are available on our website <https://burneysociety.uk>

For Membership enquiries please email [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

### Burney Society UK Social media sites

We would like to make members aware that information on the Burney Society UK can be found on:

- **our website** <https://burneysociety.uk>
- **our Facebook page** <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=frances%20burney%20-%20the%20burney%20society%20uk>
- **our Twitter account** <https://twitter.com/burneysocietyuk?lang=en>

**Please** send in items for our Spring Newsletter, any comments or questions, & your answers to our 'Seasonal Quote Quiz' to [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

**We would be delighted to hear from you,**

Miriam Al Jamil & Trudie Messent (Co-Editors)

## Burney Society UK Membership 2021 – 2022

Title(s).....Name(s).....

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....Telephone.....

Email.....

MEMBERSHIP TYPE Please highlight selected option:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| <input type="radio"/> Individual membership of £20                              | yes |
| <input type="radio"/> Joint membership of £25 (for couples at the same address) | yes |
| <input type="radio"/> Student membership of £10                                 | yes |
| <input type="radio"/> 5 year post graduate membership of £15                    | yes |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> By PayPal (Business account) <a href="mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com">ukburneysociety@gmail.com</a> | yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bank transfer to NatWest a/c 83156410, sort code 600113   | yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheque made payable to the Burney Society UK *  | yes |

I understand that by my membership I agree to receiving correspondence and materials in relation to the Society and accept that my data is kept in password controlled, safe keeping and is not made available to any other organisation.

SIGNATURE .....

**Please email this form** (with any change of details) to [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com)

\*If you wish to pay by cheque, email us at [ukburneysociety@gmail.com](mailto:ukburneysociety@gmail.com) and we will provide postal details.

Acknowledgement will be by email unless you state you would like a posted confirmation.

We would be interested to know why new members have joined, if you are willing to share this with us.

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..... Thank you and welcome to the Burney Society (UK)