

THE NEW RAMBLER



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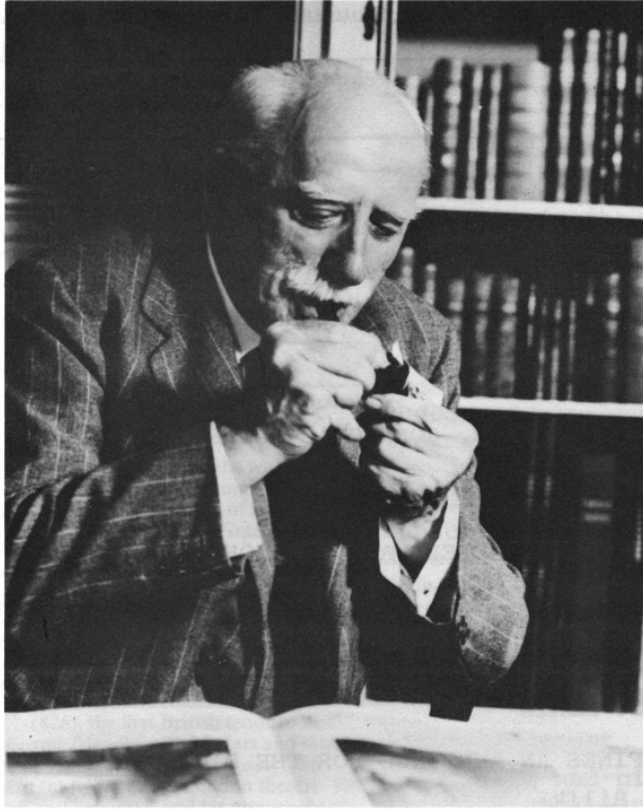
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LAWRENCE FITZROY POWELL, 1881-1975

From a photograph taken for Donald and Mary Hyde,
Four Oaks Farm, Somerville, N.J., 23 September 1959.

LAWRENCE FITZROY POWELL, 1881 - 1975

J.S.G. Simmons
All Souls College, Oxford

Lawrence Fitzroy Powell, whose magisterial edition of Boswell has placed him in the select company of the eponymous editors, was born at 235 Cowley Road, Oxford, on 9th August 1881, the youngest of the seven children of Harry Powell and of his wife, Anne, née Budd. Many years later it was a source of amusement to L.F. that he was sometimes taken for Sir Ernest Swinton, the holder of the Oxford Chair of Military History from 1925 to 1939. The confusion was understandable, for the resemblance was close and L.F.'s appearance and bearing were military. There was, interestingly enough, good family reason for this: his grandfather had served for thirty years in the dragoons and hussars in India, and his father's thirteen years in the Thirteenth Light Dragoons included the Crimean campaign. On the "ever-memorable 25th of October 1854" Harry Powell had ridden as a trumpeter in the Charge of the Light Brigade - and had survived (his charger, the "Balaclava mare", though wounded, carried him throughout the day and was later presented to Queen Victoria). From Harry Powell's reminiscences, which went through three editions between 1876 and 1881, we learn of his admiration for two of his commanding officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Lawrenson and Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzroy Maclean, and it was from these two heroes that L.F. derived his baptismal names "Lawrenson Fitzroy" - though he is not known to have used the "Lawrenson" form.

After leaving the army, Harry Powell came to Oxford where he was for some time trumpet-major of the Queen's Own Oxfordshire Yeomanry Cavalry. He died in 1886 and the difficult circumstances in which his widow found herself meant that L.F.'s schooling was curtailed. However, his interest in books may well have declared itself early; his first employment was in the Library of Brasenose College, whence he soon transferred to the Bodleian. The selection process favoured by Bodley's then Librarian, Nicholson, was - like many other aspects of that unusual man - idiosyncratic (L.F. recalled great stress being placed at the interview on the applicant's proficiency at swimming), but Nicholson had a remarkable eye for a promising lad - as the later careers of so many 'Bodley boys' of his choosing testify. The atmosphere which the Bodley boys absorbed was one of hard work and academic self-improvement (they received considerable tutoring from their seniors, including Bodley's Librarian himself); and in those unregenerate days their spare-time activities were participatory rather than spectatorial - L.F. became a noted pedestrian and cyclist.

L.F. must have made his mark among these young men, for in 1901 he was invited to join W.A. Craigie's team on what was then denominated the New English Dictionary, which shared accommodation with the Bodleian in the Old Ashmolean building. Lexicography became his main concern for the next twenty years, and to the familiarity with books that he had acquired on the Bodleian staff he was to add the clarity, concision, and the critical approach to sources which are the essential stock-in-trade of the well-found lexicographer - and annotator, one should add. It was while he was working on the Dictionary that he met and married (in 1909) a colleague, Ethelwyn Rebecca Steane. There was one child of the marriage, a boy, whose later success as headmaster of the School and Mayor of the town of Chard in Somerset was a great source of pride to L.F.

L.F.'s career at the Dictionary was interrupted by the First World War. He broke with family tradition by serving at the Admiralty where, he would recall with satisfaction, he was a colleague of one of the sons of the arch-lexicographer, Sir James Murray. After the War he returned to the Dictionary. By this time he had some published work to his credit: in particular, his edition of Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Lyf of Jesus Christ - a work presented to the Roxburghe Club in 1908 by the second Baron Aldenham on behalf of his father, the first Baron (Henry Hucks Gibbs, the banker), who had died while the book was in the press. Lexicography was doubtless responsible for L.F.'s involvement in the book, for the first Baron had been one of those who had planned the New English Dictionary and he was certainly the only banker of whom it could be said that he had read and annotated every proof of the Dictionary to within a few weeks before his death.² Apart from this edition (in which he acknowledges help received from his future wife), by 1919 L.F. had contributed substantially to three volumes of the Dictionary itself. It was probably time for him to make a move if he did not wish to devote the rest of his life to what Dr. Johnson termed "poenam pro poenis omnibus unam". The opportunity came in 1921.

Dr. Krebs, the Librarian of the Taylor Institution (the University's modern language and literature library) was due to retire at the end of September 1921. In May of that year a Sub-Committee was appointed to consider applications for the Librarianship and to submit a short-list to the Curators of the Institution. The Sub-Committee consisted of C.H. Firth (the Regius Professor of History), H.T. Gerrans of Worcester College, and the Secretary of the Taylor Institution, the formidable lexicographer, Joseph Wright. The names of

the other candidates and, indeed, of others on the short-list are not recorded, but surely at Joseph Wright's prompting, his fellow-lexicographer was appointed to the Librarianship on 16th July 1921.³

The retiring Librarian of the Taylorian had been something of an eccentric, and his departure offered the Curators possibilities of developing the Library which no sinecurist could have exploited: and, indeed, with the support of a small but dedicated staff, L.F. enormously improved and expanded the Taylorian Library during the twenty-eight years of his librarianship. But even so, in the relaxed atmosphere of the early 1920s it was expected that the change from full-time lexicographer to Librarian of the Taylorian would allow him to embark on a major scholarly undertaking. The earliest reports of a move in this direction neatly coincide with his new appointment.

Johnson and Boswell are unlikely to be strangers to any decent English lexicographer, but we have no evidence of L.F.'s explicit interest in the theme until 14 July 1921 (two days before his appointment as Taylorian Librarian), when he wrote to R.W. Chapman, the Secretary to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, pointing out an error in the Birkbeck Hill text of the Life. Chapman had joined the Press in 1906 and had succeeded to the Secretaryship in January 1920, after Charles Cannan's death. He was already Johnsonianus, and in the year of his appointment had published a collection of essays which included an elegant piece on Johnson in Scotland, written on active service in Macedonia in 1918. He became the acknowledged "prime mover" in L.F.'s Johnsonian studies; many years later, L.F. was to repay something of his debt with one of the best articles that he ever wrote - his notice of Chapman in the Dictionary of National Biography.

Not long after his appointment as Secretary, Chapman observed that the stocks of the 1887 Birkbeck Hill edition were nearly exhausted. The Press did not possess plates, but - ironically - Harpers in New York had the plates which had been used for editions printed without authority in the U.S.A. At first Chapman considered the possibility of a reprint from the Harper plates, but he was uneasy about the text and wished to have it checked against Birkbeck Hill. On 30 November he wrote to H.W. Fowler (the connection between lexicography and editing seems inescapable) enquiring whether he would be prepared to undertake the task. The single-minded Fowler evidently declined the invitation, for on 17 December 1921 Chapman wrote to L.F. telling him that he was seeking two people to read

the American text against Birkbeck Hill "of an evening". He had written to the right man: on the same day a postcard was sent off to him starting with the words "Dear Mr Chapman, Yes...". L.F.'s connection with the Press and the new Birkbeck Hill had begun. The reading made rapid progress, but an alternative possibility arose which promised to make the use of the Harper plates unnecessary: the Press became aware of the feasibility of reprinting the Oxford text "anastatically" after minor errors had been corrected. This alternative, too, was to be quickly discarded. Chapman felt that a critical edition of the Life was needed (he points out the lacuna in a letter to L.F. of 24 June 1922) and on 24 November he wrote to L.F. asking him to collate parts of the Birkbeck Hill text with the first and second editions of 1791 and 1793. The results of L.F.'s collation evidently convinced Chapman that the Birkbeck Hill text was itself imperfect, and on 23 January 1923 he informed L.F. that he had decided in favour of a re-set edition - retaining, of course, the original Birkbeck Hill pagination.⁴

The undertaking - as Chapman and L.F. conceived it - could not be a light task. It had to include in addition to the four volumes of the Life a volume containing the Tour to the Hebrides and the Journey into North Wales. It would also involve the compilation of a sixth, index volume - this inevitably an entirely new work. Texts would have to be collated (a virtually new text of the Journey had to be prepared), and the great accretions to Johnsonian and Boswellian learning of the post-Birkbeck Hill period had to be digested and fitted into the near-Procrustean bed of his pagination. (The astonishing manuscript discoveries of the later 1920s and the 1930s lay in the future - fortunately, perhaps, for their implications might have daunted even L.F. and the Press.)

L.F. was not the man to neglect his duties as Taylorian Librarian and during the next dozen years - until the publication of the four volumes of the Life in 1934 - work on the edition took up almost all the time that he could spare from his library duties. None the less, contributions to Notes and Queries continued to flow, and there were articles, reviews, and letters in, for instance, the Review of English Studies and the Times Literary Supplement; but for the most part these were parerga to the great edition - often foretastes of the results of his patient and determined tracking down of references and identifications of persons whom Boswell had failed to particularise.⁵ When the four volumes appeared they were immediately recognised as a masterly solution to an editorial problem of daunting complexity. Birkbeck Hill's commentary had been skilfully and respectfully

revised - and the revisions had been ingeniously inserted in such a way that they met Chapman's requirement that page-references to the Birkbeck Hill edition should be valid for its successor. The results of L.F.'s collation of the text were inserted between text and footnotes, and "that truth might not be sacrificed to typography" a total of some three hundred pages of supplementary notes **was** added in the form of seven Appendices at the ends of the four volumes.

The fifth volume - covering the tours - and the index volume remained to be done. L.F. knew the Welsh ground, but Scotland demanded an excursion in the footsteps of Dr. Johnson. By now he was known by his works on both sides of the Atlantic, and it was with one of the earliest of his American friends, the late Dr. James Osborn, that he made a memorable motor-car visit to the Scotland of Johnson and Boswell in the autumn of 1935. The tour lent a fresh dimension to his work on the volume, which was already agreeably complicated by the discovery (or rediscovery) of manuscript materials inaccessible to, and certainly unused by, Birkbeck Hill. L.F.'s capacity for correction and supplementation of the commentary had, moreover, vastly increased; there was much to be done on the index volume; and the Second World War brought additional responsibilities for L.F. and threw the plans of publishing houses into confusion. All these factors help to explain the delay in publishing the last two volumes. There were items on the credit side of the ledger, however. A grant from the Leverhulme Trust and the generous attitude of the Curators of the Taylor Institution allowed L.F. to devote the vacations of the academic year 1936/7 to full-time work on the edition; and retirement from the Librarianship in 1949 also provided a measure of relief. Even so, the fifth volume and the crowning index volume did not appear until 1950 - sixteen years after the appearance of the four volumes of the Life.

In their divers ways these two volumes epitomize L.F.'s scholarly virtues. In the Scottish and the Welsh journeys of the fifth volume we recognize the insistence on the original texts and their careful handling, the grateful and judicious use of the accumulated learning of other scholars, and (in the 137-page Appendix) we see the innumerable additions to knowledge due to his own untiring researches and unrivalled command of the Johnsonian milieu. In the index volume we recognize his common sense, enviable accuracy and admirable judgement in the arrangement of tens of thousands of references, and a noble readiness to sacrifice years of his own time that others might save minutes of theirs. It is on these six

volumes (the two last in their much improved second editions of 1964) that L.F.'s claim to be numbered among the great editors must, and can safely, rest.

L.F. used to recall with amusement and some pride that he had not sat for an examination since he left school. In an Oxford context this left him at a disadvantage. However, the University complimented him with an Honorary M.A. in 1927 (he fortunately escaped the unseemly protest of the following year at the time when others who had been concerned with work on the Oxford English Dictionary received Honorary Doctorates).⁶ In 1933 he achieved academic respectability with an M.A. by decree through St. Catherine's Society - thereby, at the age of 52, at last becoming a member of the University. Two years later, in the year following that of the publication of the four volumes of the Life, Durham University (at the instigation, one imagines, of its Professor of English, Claude Collier Abbott, the cataloguer of the Fettercairn papers) showed perspicacity in awarding him its Honorary Doctorate of Letters. Henceforth he was happy to be referred to as "Dr. Powell" - the honorary title becoming as much part of him as it is intrinsic to Dr. Johnson himself.

L.F. was an eminently clubbable man, and was a member of the Johnson Club and of the Johnson Societies of Lichfield and London, presiding over them in 1963, 1950, and 1967 respectively. Honours and pleasures of other kinds showered on him in his late seventies and eighties. His transatlantic fame rivalled the honour which was paid to him in his own country. He was invited to join the Editorial Board of the Yale Johnson and, with Professor W.J. Bate, edited and annotated for it Johnson's Adventurer contributions in a volume which appeared in 1963. By then L.F. had two visits to the United States to look back on: one in 1959 when he addressed the Johnsonians at the 250th anniversary dinner in New York; and a second, in the Autumn of 1962, when he delighted his friends at Yale and elsewhere with his reflections on the editing of Boswell. He returned from these visits invigorated and full of a modestly surprised gratitude for the generosity and hospitality of his hosts, among whom the names of Donald and Mary Hyde deservedly received first mention.

In Oxford, too, the 1960s were a splendid decade for L.F. He was drawn into the teaching and examining activities of the English Faculty and a few fortunate graduate students were sent to him for supervision. His methods and the environment in which the supervision took place might be unconventional, but his example and counsel were decisive.⁸ His pupils, some of

whom hold distinguished appointments not only in England but in the United States and the Antipodes, bear witness to the effectiveness of his teaching. The Colleges also showed that they were conscious of L.F.'s distinction: St. Catherine's and Pembroke conferred Honorary Fellowships on him in 1966; and the membership of Common Room which Brasenose offered him was accepted with especial pleasure - coming, as it did, from the College which he had served in a humble capacity seventy years earlier. He received the final accolade, the Honorary Doctorate of Letters of his own University of Oxford on 7 June 1969. It was by no means too soon, for two months later he became seriously ill. An operation was successful but a relapse followed, and in February 1970 he was again in hospital. At the end of the month he was moved to the nursing home in Banbury where he was to remain until his death five years later.

L.F. in Banbury was unbowed by physical weakness. He continued to collect materials for yet another edition of the Life, to write letters to his many correspondents (and, of course, to The Times), and to entertain his visitors - including many loyal and generous American friends - with anecdotes whose capacity to amuse both their hearers (and their narrator) somehow lost nothing through repetition. His cheerfulness and sense of proportion seemed to be enhanced rather than impaired by their less ample context, and he retained these supreme qualities until, after gradually increasing weakness, he died within three weeks of his ninety-fourth birthday, on 17 July 1975.

To the end of his long life L.F. was always looking forward: he was interested in the news, in fresh developments, in his friends' plans. But had he been minded to look back he would have found much cause for satisfaction. He had risen by his own efforts from a simple home and had earned (and in the end had received) the highest academic honours. Admittedly he had not written a great work of literature or criticism (his temperament and his opportunities did not furnish the prerequisites for this), but he had been a contributor to the sum of human knowledge on a grand scale. For more than a quarter of a century he had directed an important library, he had participated in work on a dictionary which ranks among the noblest monuments of British scholarship, and he had added to the gaiety - and more - of nations by providing a vastly enriched commentary on the greatest biography in the English language. He had done all this while remaining a modest, kindly and humorous man (his ready laugh is unforgettable), who had a perfect natural dignity, who knew what was due to

himself - or to a peer of the realm - but who was ready to welcome and help the humblest genuine seeker after truth. His memory will live in the minds of those who attempt to follow in that path of true scholarship which, by his example, he made so plain.

Documentation

1. Recollections of a Young Soldier before and during the Crimean War. Copies of the first and third editions are in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.
2. Dictionary of National Biography, Second Supplement (Oxford, 1912), II, 103.
3. Information in this paragraph is based on the Minute Books of the Curators of the Taylor Institution, and was kindly supplied by Mr. Giles Barber, the Taylorian Librarian.
4. I am grateful to the Secretary to the Delegates of the Oxford University Press for permission to consult relevant correspondence.
5. For a bibliography see Johnson, Boswell and their Circle, ed. M.M. Lascelles et al. (Oxford, 1965), p.320 seqq.
6. See L.R. Farnell, An Oxonian Looks Back (London, 1934), pp. 321-3.
7. For his American visits see Mary Hyde in Our Friend L.F.: Recollections of Lawrence Fitzroy Powell (New York: privately printed for the Johnsonians, 1976).
8. See J.D. Fleeman's remarks in the pamphlet referred to in the preceding note.



'DEAR CUZ' : THE LETTERS OF THOMAS PERCY TO
WILLIAM CLEIVELAND*

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Bertrand Bronson expressed the view some years ago that Thomas Percy reveals little of himself in his published correspondence: the man is "enigmatic," wrote Bronson;

he does not come clear in one's mind. His letters seldom or never reveal his private thought; he never drops his guard; one never feels that one has seen into his deeper nature. It is clear that he is interested in worthwhile things, that his attitudes are laudable and sound, that he is neither furtive nor hypocritical...Nevertheless, we can never really love the man, for all his good qualities, because he always holds us at arm's length, and never confesses his human need of us.¹

Perhaps Bronson was a little severe. Certainly Percy's letters to good friends like Richard Farmer and William Shenstone provide occasional glimpses of an attractive inner self. Yet it is true that the great bulk of Percy's published correspondence concentrates upon literary matters, and often with a profusion of minute detail which, while it leaves one astonished at Percy's erudition, affords little insight into his character. We see the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry taking shape before our eyes; we see Percy stimulating the essential annotations for the second edition of Richard Farmer's Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare, or supplying Thomas Warton with materials for the History of English Poetry. But it is seldom that we can penetrate the wall of books and manuscripts with which Percy surrounded himself and contemplate the individual rather than the intellect.

*A paper read at the Johnson Society of London Meeting
on 21st February 1976
Chairman: Miss Jean Hickling

It was, of course, natural for Percy, in writing to other scholars and antiquaries, to focus upon his literary projects and theirs, just as it has been natural for latterday scholars to publish those letters which help to illuminate Percy's Reliques and the scholarly efforts of such Percy friends as Farmer, Warton, Edmond Malone, and Evan Evans. His letters are immensely valuable for that very reason: for we are privileged, through this vast correspondence, to witness the steady rising of the 18th-century scholarly tide, which engulfed literary Britain with the tomes and tracts, the dictionaries and dissertations, the editions, histories, and biographies which rank among the century's wonders.

But if Percy in his literary correspondence remains hidden behind his scholarship, one must search for him in that correspondence, largely unpublished, in which scholarship was not a preoccupation - his correspondence with a colleague in the church, perhaps, or with a member of his family, or with a non-scholarly friend whose temperament and his were congenial. Fortunately, one does not have to search very far: among the manuscripts purchased by the British Museum at Sotheby's April 29, 1884, Percy sale is a volume of Percy's correspondence with William Cleiveland which fits all three of these categories. For William Cleiveland started out in the church only a few years after Percy; he was a relation of the Percy's; and he remained a close friend of the Percy family for much of his life.

In contemplating Percy's correspondence with this obscure churchman, it may be useful to recall that, however consuming his literary passion, Thomas Percy was a scholar only by avocation - that he began as a country curate and vicar, became a King's Chaplain and dean of a cathedral, and ended a bishop - and that his career in the church spanned some 5½ decades, whereas his major work as a scholar was compressed into the single decade from 1761 to 1770, when he brought forth two editions of the Reliques and eight other works.² If he spoke the language of scholars, he was at the same time thoroughly at home with officials of the church, whose commitments, habits of mind, and tenors of life were very similar to his own.

But in addition to being cleric and scholar, Percy was an intensely family-minded man, with the same scholarly interest in the details of his own family connections that he had in the variant readings of a medieval ballad. He assisted John Nichols - a distant relation - with his History and Antiquities of Hinckley; and for Treadway Nash's History and Antiquities of Worcestershire he supplied detailed accounts and pedigrees of the Percy and related families. He revised the history of the Percy family for the fifth edition of Collins's Peerage of England, and to amuse the Duke of Northumberland he undertook still another history of the Percy's on a plan he considered superior to that of Collins's Peerage.³ He kept in touch with members of the various branches of his family - Percy, Wilson, Wingfield, and Cleiveland - and was the sole authority on all the intricate details of their connections.

It was almost inevitable, in these circumstances, that Percy and William Cleiveland should be drawn together. The mere fact of a family connection was always a recommendation in Percy's eyes. And William Cleiveland was a near contemporary with a similar Oxford background and a commitment to the same clerical life that Percy himself had determined upon. When to these attractions Will joined a love of family and a genuine human warmth and understanding, Percy was quite disarmed, and in the course of their correspondence he unburdened himself as he seldom did to his scholarly friends.

Percy and Cleiveland (Cuz Will, as Percy sometimes called him) were both great grandsons of the Reverend William Cleiveland, who was a brother of the seventeenth-century poet John Cleiveland. Percy was a native of Bridgnorth in Shropshire and Will Cleiveland of Worcester, which Percy's grandfather had left as an apprentice near the end of the Seventeenth Century.⁴ Their undergraduate careers at Oxford were contiguous rather than overlapping, since Percy finished at Christ Church College in 1750 just as his cousin (or, more precisely, second cousin) was starting out at Magdalen Hall; but Percy pursued his religious studies after he completed the baccalaureate, and probably sealed his friendship with his younger cousin during that period. Percy noted that he began writing to Will in July, 1754, not long after Percy's appointment as vicar of Easton Mauduit in Northamptonshire, and that his

first letter was a response to an invitation to attend the Music Meeting at Worcester.⁵ The first letter to be preserved was sent to Cuz Will on March 24, 1756, by which time Will was pursuing his own religious studies at Oxford.⁶ Will was not to become rector of All Saints in Worcester for another two years, following the death of his father, who had been rector since 1731, the year of Will's birth. And in March, 1756, Percy was just about to cease being an absentee vicar by taking up residence in Easton Mauduit, which for 2½ years had been attended by a curate.

Percy's March 24, 1756, letter to Will Cleiveland is the introductory letter in British Museum Additional Manuscript 32,333. A one-sided volume, it contains 79 letters from Percy to Cleiveland and not a single letter from Cleiveland to Percy, although much of what Cleiveland wrote can be inferred from Percy's replies. Presumably Percy's letters were preserved by Will Cleiveland and found by Percy after his cousin's death in 1794; and, as Percy notes at the beginning of the volume, they comprise "A Correspondence... with my Friend & Relation... containing nearly a History of My Life."

This series of letters is indeed unique in comprising a history of Percy's life - of his preferments, his marriage, the births and deaths of his children - but it differs from Percy's published correspondence in other vital respects. Surprisingly (in one for whom literature was sun and air) it contains almost no literary discussion: no name-dropper, Percy does not so much as mention his good friends Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith; nor does he allude to the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. And the history these letters unfold, though not literary, is at times intensely personal. In the first surviving letter Percy writes to Will at Oxford just as he himself is settling in at Easton Mauduit, and the 27-year-old Percy looks back on his recent college days with all the wistfulness of the incurable old grad: "I have never since experienced such pure & undisturbed Happiness, as I enjoy'd within the Walls of a College; -and whether I ever shall in any Future Scene, I greatly question."⁸ Perhaps such a dreary view of the future was inevitable as Percy surveyed his prospects in a tiny Northamptonshire village. He knew that he would miss "that small select Collection of friends, of my own Age, of my own Turn, of my own Employment & Persuits, and of my own Leisure" which had helped to make Oxford such a delight, and he was

understandably doubtful that Easton Mauduit could make up the deficiency. In the absence of Lord Sussex from Easton Mauduit, as he confided to Will a year later, there was not "a Conversable Soul in the Parish."⁹ But Percy was the kind of man who manages to find happiness wherever he is. His complaints during his years at Easton Mauduit are few; he is not even disturbed at having to be a boarder, temporarily, in his own vicarage. At worst he snarls now and then about the slowness of the bureaucracy, or the expenses imposed by what he called "Ecclesiastical Leeches" when one is seeking official registration and licensing of a clerical appointment.¹⁰ The young Lord Sussex warmed to Percy immediately after Percy's arrival at Easton Mauduit, as Percy did to Lord Sussex. Within four months he had arranged to give Percy the rectorship of Wilby rather than the curacy he had promised, and had kindly thrown in a chaplaincy with the coveted scarf that went with it.¹¹ With two livings and a chaplaincy at age 27, Percy had reason to be happy. As he wrote to Will on June 25, 1757, "My income inables me to keep a tollerable good Horse, & a little boy in a Livery: it affords me money to buy books with & to enjoy now & then an elegant Party of Pleasure."¹² He might have added that it afforded him ample time for his enjoyments.

Percy's official duties at Easton Mauduit and Wilby could hardly be called irksome. His diary for this period¹³ seldom records any clerical activity during the usual week beyond a Sunday morning service at Easton Mauduit and a Sunday evening service at Wilby. The rest of the week there was time for gardening, riding, hunting, dancing, reading, browsing in Lord Sussex's library, and writing letters and verses. "I still continue a boarder only," Percy wrote to Will on March 24, 1757,

& have no thoughts of taking Possession of my Vicarage House yet: but have notwithstanding taken the Garden belonging to it under my Care, & have for some weeks past amused myself in planning & executing a New disposal of it: - This I undertake with the more pleasure as Nature has been very favorable to me in point of situation: My Garden-Ground lies very conveniently, I might add beautifully about my House...; having terraces y. terminate in a pretty little Meadow...along the bottom of which runs a pretty Canal...: around the banks of it, it will be a favourite Imployment with me to select & plant every little & unregarded field flower: Such as the disdainful florist would over-look.¹⁴

As for attachments of the heart, the eligible Percy showed himself in no hurry to give up his essentially carefree life. "I am going to tast this Afternoon," he wrote to Will on October 14, 1756,

some of the Sweets which a Batchelor's Life affords beyond that of a married Man:- This Evening there is to be a grand Ball & Assembly at Newport Pagnel...: & I am already engaged to dance with a New-married Lady of some distinction:...my deliberate Choice: - for as yet I have seen very few of the females of this Neighbourhood... and have therefore kept myself clear of any of the younger Lasses, that I may be more at liberty to chuse another Time when I have taken a more general Survey:- I am given to expect a fine Collection of Belles this Evening, and how my Heart will escape among them, heaven knows.¹⁵

Even the task of hay-making could be lightened for a young and single parish priest: "Last Week," wrote Percy on June 25, 1757,

I mow'd my little Vicarage-Close, & some Ladies were so good as to come & help me to make Hay: - When tir'd with y^e Heat & Toil of the day, upon no other velvet Couch than a soft & fragrant Hay-Cock, with the Canopy of a spreading Ash, we sat down to drink Tea, and spent the afternoon in the most lively & chatty manner: - You will conclude without further Information, that as they were very pretty
- from their Lips
Not words alone pleas'd me: -
And that I could not help
- chiding
The hasty-footed Hours for parting us.¹⁶

No wonder Percy could write to his cousin that "the Life I lead at present is so very agreeable, & so suited to my Tast; that I am not quite convinc'd, it will receive any Improvem^t. from Matrimony."¹⁷ My time, he went on,

is pretty equally divided between Books & Pleasure: I enjoy as much of the company of the fair Sex, as serves to brighten up & throw a Gaiety upon Life: without being pester'd with too much Care. I am near enough to London to go up at any Time in a Day & yet so far from it as not to feel the Inconvenience of its' Neighbourhood:

- When I am in a studious fit, I can bury myself in books without fear of Interruption: When in a gay Mood, I can gallant it among the Ladies - Whose friendship & confidence I enjoy as much of as can serve to soften & harmonize the Mind: and by not being too closely nail'd down to them, they are all careful to hide from me the dark side of their Characters: Whenever I visit them their Minds are clothed in their best and gayest Dress: And every blemishing Passion, Habit, or Foible is hid behind the Curtain: - Such is the bright side of a Batchelor's life. Do you in your Next tell me what Accession of Happiness c. be gain'd by Matrimony.

It would be interesting to have Will's candid reactions to these unabashed revelations of the coxcomb in his cousin, but the best we can learn from Percy's letters¹⁸ is that Will did not "altogether disapprove" of his comments. Percy thought it desirable, nonetheless, to make clear now and then that he had "the most respectful Notions of the married State." But "this I know," he added on June 25, 1757, "that unless it is much for the better, I had much rather remain as I am. - I am affraid I sh. not be content to be but moderately happy in my Choice, and therefore, I am the more cautious in making it."¹⁹

Eleven months later Percy was sending Will a copy of his love poem entitled "Verses Occasion'd by Leaving W** in a Very Tempestuous Night," which he introduced with no comment beyond a friendly rebuke: "You never communicate any of your Compositions to me," he chided; "and yet often solicit me to expose my foolish Rhymes to you: - Is this just? - In hopes you will reform, I will make one other trial..."²⁰ And in less than another year (on April 24, 1759 - his thirtieth birthday) Percy was married to Anne Gutteridge, the subject of the poem he had sent to Will.

More than moderately happy in his choice, Percy remained more than moderately happy throughout his married life, though his first announcement to Will made the marriage seem an affair more of the bargaining table than of the heart: "It is about a Month since I was happily united to a young Lady in this neighbourhood, whose fortune will first, & last be £2,000: the greatest Part of which I rec. down."²¹ But Percy was satisfied with much more than the financial arrangements; indeed, he took to marriage immediately. "Nothing I find can spoil Correspondence like Matrimony," he wrote to Will after a lapse of 4½ months: "Time has been when I thought myself extremely obliged to any one that would but receive my

Letters: but since I have worn the silken yoke my itch of scribbling is a good deal abated."²²

It is not that his pen has become inactive, he assures Will; it is merely employed on new subjects. "Instead of Sonnets to Amarilles, it travels in the more humble track of domestic Memorandums: and is so worn to the Stump with Items of Bakers & Butchers Bills &c that I question if it could fabricate a rebus or an Acrostic." After confessing that he begins "to hear whispers about baby-cloaths," he concludes by renewing a longstanding invitation to Will to visit Easton Mauduit: "I wish I could persuade you to take a ride, if it were only to see your own Lectures, in favour of matrimonial bliss reduced to practice."²³

After marriage, of course, there were for Percy no more teas in the haycock, no more balls where he might continue his "general Survey" of the neighborhood's young ladies. The responsibility of supporting a wife and the six children born to them between 1760 and 1772 could only have encouraged Percy (if such an ambitious person needed encouragement) to seek a larger fortune than had already been his lot. He failed, to be sure, to act upon a suggestion of Dr. James Stonhouse that he rewrite a 17th-century pamphlet entitled The Comforts of Having Many Children,²⁴ perhaps on the assumption that the two children he had at the time did not qualify him for the task. But in the early sixties he concluded a series of agreements with the publishers Jacob Tonson and Robert and James Dodsley which helped to augment his income, while at the same time they placed a severe tax on his leisure hours. In 1764 he made the acquaintance of the Duchess of Northumberland, to whom he dedicated the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry; on June 28, 1765, he was appointed tutor to the young Algernon Percy; and not long afterwards he became chaplain to Algernon's father, the Duke of Northumberland, with whom he was to spend much of his time until he became Bishop of Dromore in 1782. On November 24, 1769, he was appointed a King's Chaplain. And once or twice he asked Will to let him know promptly of any vacancies among the prebendaries at Worcester Cathedral, since he saw at Worcester the prospect of reward in a congenial place.²⁵

Will too was not without his ambitions, although at best they appear frail next to the robust aggression of his older cousin. Through his expanding connections, Percy was steadily acquiring the ability to assist others, and he kept an eye open for anything that he could send Will's way.

He would be happy, he wrote on February 16, 1767, to help Will secure a scarf (that symbol of a noble, and in this case honorary, chaplaincy) but unfortunately in the Northumberland family "all those things are engaged; and indeed I am too much obliged to them upon my own account, to venture to ask them for my friends also." However, he adds, I have some other Connections, with whom I am less reserved and I will do my utmost to procure you a favour, which I wish was of more consequence."²⁶

Somewhat over a year and a half later (on October 22, 1768) he is able to convey good news: "I give you Joy of your new Scarf, and wish it may only be a prelude to higher & greater honours: The inclosed Qualification gives you a full power to wear as good a one, as the best right reverend of them all." Walking in the park the day before, as Percy explained, he accidentally met Lord Home, whom he had seen last summer at Alnwick. When his Lordship renewed the acquaintance in a very obliging manner, Percy asked for the favour and Lord Home granted it immediately. "In return for which," wrote Percy, with obvious delight, "I desire you will purchase a very fine silk Scarf against next Sunday and pray for his Lordship in the face of all your Congregation."²⁷

Pleased though he must have been, an honorary chaplaincy was not the culmination of Will's hopes, particularly since Percy was not averse to stimulating them. After informing Will of his own appointment as King's Chaplain, Percy asked on November 25, 1769, if Will would like him "to apply for a real actual Chaplainship" for him. He believes he can obtain one from the Scottish peer Lord Eglinton; or would Will be "contented to wait the Death of Lord Sandys, and so accept a Scarf from his Successor, which he has already promised for you?"²⁸ Although Will preferred not to wait for such an unpredictable event, Percy was finally compelled by circumstances - the trial of the tenth Earl of Eglinton's murderer - to approach the Sandys family.²⁹ On the death of the 75-year-old first Baron Sandys in April, 1770, Percy sought out his successor, and how well he fared is evident from his October 13, 1771, reply to a question put to him by his cousin: in bidding prayers should Will pray for both his patrons?

I answer No: It will be sufficient if you name Lord Sandys: You are legally and properly his Chaplain only: And it will be fully sufficient if you remember good Lord Home in your private Devotions.³⁰

If, as the years progressed, Percy acquired some of the stiffness of office, he always retained a warmth of affection for his cousin and a genuine concern for his welfare and happiness. "As next to my Brother," he wrote to Will on October 4, 1779, "you are my nearest Relation by my Father; I have every motive that ties of blood can give to wish to serve & assist you, whenever it lies in my power: and this wish is much heightened by the personal Regard & Friendship, which you have so kindly & repeatedly shown us."³¹ But perhaps Percy was motivated also by a desire to balance a debt he was steadily incurring to his cousin. As early as 1756 he had asked Will to examine parish registers in Worcester³² for information about the Percy and related families, and from that time almost until Will's death in 1794 Percy's requests for information - from registers, deeds, inscriptions - were incessant; in fact, as he wrote to Will on October 12, 1768, Mrs. Percy had "scolded" him for putting Will to so much trouble.³³ For Will's interest in his family, unlike his cousin's, was not attended by an insatiable appetite for researches genealogical, so that reminders of Percy's requests are a commonplace of the letters, particularly in the late 1770 s when Percy was rushing to complete his account of Lindridge Parish for Treadway Nash's History and Antiquities of Worcestershire. It would be a pity (he wrote on October 11, 1777, jogging Will for information about Will's great great great grandfather Packington) "if D. Nash's Book sh^d. come out without all y^e Information of this sort y^e. can be procured; for y^e honour of your Family." Nash, he added, "will insert whatever I will draw up for him."³⁴

Of Will's interest in Percy's immediate family there could be no question, and he was kept informed of the births, illnesses, travels and education of the six Percy children, as well as of the deaths of four of them and of Percy's younger brother Arthur. The eldest Percy daughter, Anne, died in 1770 at the age of ten, a victim of the ulcerated sore throat - a loss, wrote Percy, that "has almost broke both our hearts." Shortly afterwards 3-year-old Charlotte died of the same illness; and in 1774 the youngest Percy child, Hester, died³⁵ of the "chincough," or whooping cough in her second year.

No doubt, however, the most grievous loss for the Percy's was that of their son, Henry, who was born in 1763. As the only boy - and one whose progress at school promised a bright if not a brilliant future - Henry was a favourite not

only of his parents but also of Will, who entertained him at Worcester when Henry was only seven and now and then sent cakes to him when Henry was a student at Westminster School. Henry caught cold while a student at Emanuel College, Cambridge, where Percy's friend Richard Farmer was Master, and in time he developed a consumption which required that he be sent to Italy for his health. He died in Marseilles on April 2, 1783. "You will I am sure sympathize with us in our Affliction," Percy wrote to Will on April 21,

when I inform you that the last Post brought us the fatal News...of the Death of my poor Son...The proper Sentiments of Devotion, w.^{ch} the Clergyman, who was with him, tells us he expressed in his last illness, afford us the only Consolation, we can receive under this bitter Stroke, which is most severely felt by his poor Mother & Sisters,³⁶ nor shall I attempt to describe my own Feelings.

But the most poignant losses recorded in Percy's correspondence are those which affected Will Cleiveland more keenly than they affected the Percy's. Although he had warmly supported the idea of marriage in his letters to Percy from 1756-1759, Will lived unmarried with his mother and sister until 1767, when he married Mary Jones of Stadhampton in Oxfordshire. On January 18, 1777, Percy wrote to Will to express his happiness in the news, received the night before, that Will's wife had given birth to a daughter.³⁷ Three days later he was writing again to say that he had just received Will's January 15th letter containing "the melancholy news" of the death of Will's daughter, "which, as it trod so close on the heels of your former joyful account, made it the more affecting." But Will's wife having escaped, he went on, "has been a most happy providence, & will tend to console you for your disappointment."³⁸

Once again, however, their letters crossed in the mail. The very next day Percy acknowledged receipt of Will's "short but afflicting" letter of January 19th containing the news of his wife's death. "The Account it contained," he wrote, "was read by my Wife with many tears, & the shock of such unexpected News, has made her quite ill. - How shall we be able to give you comfort under a Distress, which no Misfortune in this Life can equal? When I reflect what my own feelings would be under such a Calamity, I cannot even attempt to console you."

In the hope that a change of scenery would be beneficial to their cousin, Percy and his wife urged him to join them at Easton Mauduit for the month at Percy's disposal before his patron the Duke of Northumberland returned to London from a visit to Bath: "Books," Percy argued to Will, "rural Solitude & the soothing quiet converse of a Family attached to you by every tie of Blood & Friendship, must suit best the present drooping State of your mind."³⁹

Not easily moved from his lifelong home in Worcester, Will did not come. He did, however, express an intention of paying a visit during the year, an intention he acted upon some four months later, when the Percy's had removed to London for the spring. Thereafter, with few apparent breaks, he remained with his sister at Worcester, where the Percy's visited them for the Music Meeting in September, 1779, and where Percy read prayers for Will at All Saints on successive Sundays and preached an evening sermon for him on Sunday, September 19. On September 18, according to Percy's diary, Will showed the Percy's all his "curiosities"⁴⁰ - among them, perhaps, some shells and old coins which Percy had brought back from Northumberland for Will's collections a decade earlier.⁴¹

Obviously Will's was a quiet life. Except for his report of his sister's death in 1786,⁴² most of the news of interest emanated from the Percy branch of the family - news, for example, of Percy's appointment as Dean of Carlisle Cathedral on November 16, 1778, and of his pleasure in his new situation at Carlisle;⁴³ news of his appointment as Bishop of Dromore on April 17, 1782, and of his pleasure in his new situation in Northern Ireland.⁴⁴ For Percy continued throughout his life to find enjoyment wherever he was. He continued also to look for ways to assist his cousin Will. On May 12, 1788, he wrote from Ireland to offer him a vacant living only four miles from Dromore, the attractions of which included "one of the prettiest Villages I ever saw," a good parsonage house, a very pretty garden, more than thirty acres of "rich Glebe Land," and light duties. He trusts that his cousin will not be afraid of the sea voyage, which from Portpatrick in Scotland to Donaghadee in Ireland is only 18 miles - about the distance from Bridgnorth, Percy's birthplace to Worcester.⁴⁵

Perhaps in raising the spectre of a sea voyage Percy was merely providing his cousin with an easy way out. In any event, Will took it, although doubtless he had more compelling reasons for remaining at All Saints than the fear of a stormy

channel passage. By 1788 he had not only spent thirty years as rector of All Saints: he had spent his whole life in the rectory. A succession of 57 years could only have been broken by someone either more venturesome than Will or less content with the lot of the parish priest than he appears to have been.

In his last years Will seems to have joined the Percy's briefly at Bath, which they visited in 1791 and 1792 for Mrs. Percy's health, and he sweetened one of their dinners at Bath by sending a shad to their table in April, 1792.⁴⁶ In August, 1793, when the Percy's were on their way back to Ireland, he entertained them at his "Villa to the Lowe," which he had inherited from his mother and aunt in 1769.⁴⁷ And some months later he was engaged in his familiar occupation of sending Percy an extract from a Worcester parish register. On May 29, 1794, Percy, going slowly blind, asked for Will's prescription for the eye salve and, ever alert to Will's interests also, reported that he had been glad of the chance to drop a word to Will's bishop about their great great uncle the poet John Cleiveland.

Will never found an opportunity to reply to the May 29 letter, for, as Percy wrote on the last leaf of their correspondence, "This was the last Letter I ever wrote to M^r. Cleiveland, & to which I never rec^d. any answer. He died after a lingering illness Sep^r. 28. 1794 - having destroyed every Will in order that I might succeed to all his real & personal Estates."⁴⁸

Perhaps this untypical correspondence will not answer all the questions raised in Bertrand Bronson's characterisation of the Percy who emerges from the published letters. For Percy - particularly as he advances in dignity through the several offices of the church - is simply not suited to everyone's taste. He remains something of a paradox: easy to please and easy to displease; good-natured and companionable much of the time, yet frequently combative and irascible. Even the affable Will Cleiveland, whose fondness for his cousin is evident though not a word of his survives in this correspondence, must have wished now and then that Percy would ask a little less of him. But throughout his life Will remained a warm and sympathetic friend who, while not unintellectual, was interested primarily in Percy's family and his clerical progress. Perhaps best of all, Will was prepared to accept Percy as he was, with the result that Percy felt no need to be on his guard when he faced his cousin across their correspondence.

So in these 79 letters Percy reveals himself as he seldom does elsewhere. He takes us into the heart of his country parish and shows us a young clergyman "gallanting" it among the ladies. He lets us feel the anxieties of parents trying desperately to save their sick children with only the very inadequate remedies of the time. He opens the curtain on the devious inner workings of the 18th-century system of clerical preferment. These were such things as Will Cleiveland cared about. And because Percy could write candidly and easily to his cousin, he manages to make us care about them also.

Documentation

1. Bertrand H. Bronson, "A Sense of the Past," Sewanee Review, Vol. 67 (Jan.-March, 1959), pp.154-55.
2. Hau Kiou Choaan (1761); Miscellaneous Pieces from the Chinese (1762); The Matrons (1762); Five Pieces of Runic Poetry (1763); The Song of Solomon (1764); Reliques of Ancient English Poetry (1765; 2nd ed. 1767); A Key to the New Testament (1766); The regulations and Establishment of the Household of Henry Algernon Percy (1770); Northern Antiquities (1770).
3. Brit. Mus. Add. Ms. 32,329, ff.101v-102.
4. Brit. Mus. Add. Ms. 32,326, f.13. Significant dates of Percy's career cited elsewhere in this paper are taken from the same manuscript, in which Percy recorded numerous facts about his family and himself.
5. Brit. Mus. Add. Ms. 32,333, f.3v. Subsequent references to this manuscript contain only the dates of the letters and the folio numbers. Some parts of the manuscript have been quoted in Alice C.C. Gaussen, Percy: Prelate and Poet, London 1908, *passim*.
6. March 24, 1756, ff.2-3
7. Brit. Mus. Add. Ms. 32,326, f.26.
8. March 24, 1756, f.2v.
9. March 24, 1757, f.12v.
10. Aug. 25, 1756, f.6v.
11. July 29, 1756, ff.4v-5.
12. June 25, 1757, f.16v.
13. Brit. Mus. Add. Ms. 32,336. The registers of the two parishes indicate that in 1757, for example, Percy officiated at a combined total of 3 baptisms, 2 marriages, and 12 burials.
14. March 24, 1757, f.13.
15. Oct. 14, 1756, f.8v.

16. June 25, 1757, f.16v.
17. Aug. 25, 1756, ff.7-7v.
18. Oct. 14, 1756, f.8v.
19. June 25, 1757, f.15v.
20. May 18, 1758, f.19v.
21. June 4, 1759, f.21.
22. Oct. 20, 1759, f.23.
23. Ibid., ff. 23v-24.
24. Brit.Mus. Add. Ms.32,329,f.9. Stonhouse was the author of Friendly Advice to a Patient, to the 9th edition of which (1762) Percy contributed a laudatory poem.
25. Dec.1, 1766, f.35v; Nove. 7, 1775, f.89.
26. Feb. 16, 1767, f.40v.
27. Oct. 22, 1768, ff.44-44v.
28. Nov. 25, 1769, ff.52v-53.
29. Jan. 31, 1770, f.55v.
30. Oct. 13, 1771, f.69.
31. Oct. 4, 1779, f.145v.
32. Oct. 14, 1756, f.9v.
33. Oct. 12, 1768, f.43.
34. Oct. 11, 1777, f.122v.
35. Arthur's death is reported in the letter of Nov. 30, 1756; Anne's in the letter of Nov. 22, 1770; Charlotte's in the letter of March 25, 1771; and Hester's in Henry Percy's letter of Aug. 30, 1774. The births and deaths of the three Percy daughters are recorded in the Easton Mauduit parish register.
36. April 21, 1783, f.168.
37. Jan. 18, 1777, f.108.
38. Jan. 21, 1777, f.110.
39. Jan. 22, 1777, ff. 112-13.
40. Brit. Mus. Add. Ms. 32,336.
41. Undated letter, probably 1769, f.47v.
42. Nov. 23, 1786, f.174.
43. Nov. 9, 1778, f.133; Dec. 22, 1778, ff.135v-136v.
44. April 12, 1782, f.157; Oct. 27, 1783, ff.172-72v.
45. May 12, 1788, ff.176-76v.
46. April 20, 1792, f.183.
47. Aug. 21, 1793; John Nichols, Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century, vi, 58ln.
48. May 29, 1794, ff. 187-88.



A BALLIOL RIVAL TO DR. JOHNSON'S TUTOR

CORNELIUS CRAWFURD

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An entry in Thomas Hearne's Diaries for March 16, 1729, contains an interesting reference to Samuel Johnson's tutor at Pembroke College, Oxford, William Jorden:

March 16 (Sun). Yesterday in Convocation, at 2 Clock [sic] in the afternoon, Mr. Wm. Jorden of Pembroke Coll. was elected by the Univ. of Oxford rector of Odstocke in com. Wilts (w^{ch}. belongs to a Roman Catholick Family, the Webbs) in¹ opposition to Mr. Crawford of Balliol Col....¹

While some information about Jorden has been available for many years,² our knowledge of his rival, Cornelius Crawford or Crawford of Balliol College, has been slight. A listing in Alumni Oxonienses, 1715-1886, I.314, reads as follows:

Crawford, Cornelius, s. Laurence, of co. Renfrew, gent. BALLIOL COLL., matric. 22 May 1717 aged 14; B.A. 16 Jan., 1720-1, M.A. 1723, father of Laurence named below. Laurence, s. Cornelius of Hinton Wilts., cler. BALLIOL COLLEGE, matric. 27 March 1751 aged 17 .

In 1729, Crawford was 26, and Jorden 43. At first sight, the contest between them for the Odstock living would appear unequal. Jorden had been tutor and Viceregent at Pembroke for some time, a post which required him to act as deputy to the Master of the College and to maintain discipline. Besides the usual qualifications of B.A. and M.A. he had received the degree of B.D. in 1728. Whatever his merits as a tutor and disciplinarian (it will be remembered that Johnson did not rate his literary qualities very high), he clearly had seniority over Crawford, who was still in statu pupillari as late as 1728.

From a manuscript register at Balliol, which the Librarian kindly allowed me to consult³, it appears that Crawford was appointed a Snell Exhibitioner on May 16, 1717, and remained so until circa September, 1728. According

to the rules governing the Snell awards from the date of the inception of the Exhibition in 1699, candidates were nominated by Glasgow University. If, however, that University did not nominate to a vacancy at any time, the appointment devolved on the College (*jure devoluto*), and the Snell Trustees added their approval six months from the first appointment. In Crawford's case, it seems that he was appointed by Balliol by default, as one William Noble, who had been nominated by Glasgow University on March 4, 1717, was rejected by Balliol on May 13, and Crawford was appointed in his place three days later, but not on the nomination of Glasgow University.

Another manuscript register at Balliol⁴ lists Crawford as "Snell and Warner Exhibitioner." The Warner bequest, named after John Warner, Bishop of Rochester (1637-1666), allowed for "the perpetual payment" of £80 per annum to four students from Scotland to be trained at Oxford for the ministry of the Episcopal Church in their native country. In practice, the Balliol authorities very often applied it as a supplement of approximately £20 to the Snell Exhibition, which was worth about £40 per annum.

⁵While the Warner bequest was couched in rather vague language, the will of John Snell made it quite clear that an Exhibitioner was required to return to Scotland on completion of his course at Oxford, which was not to exceed "the space of ten years or eleven at the most," and, if he accepted "any spiritual promotion, benefice or other preferment whatsoever, within the kingdom of England or dominion of Wales," he would have to pay a penalty of £500 to the college or hall to which he had been admitted. Now it appears that Cornelius Crawford, though an unsuccessful candidate for the living of Odstock, did become incumbent at nearby Hinton in Wiltshire, and hence broke the terms of the two Exhibitions which he had held for a total period of eleven years. Whether he paid the forfeit which would have almost equalled the combined income from the two Exhibitions, we do not know; and whether he had qualms of conscience over transgressing the contracts governing his awards, we can only guess. We do know that he sent his son, Laurence, to Balliol in 1751, perhaps as an earnest of better intentions.⁶

As Thomas Hearne noted, William Jorden, Dr. Johnson's tutor, was elected by Convocation to the Odstock living. Unfortunately, it turned out that Convocation had exceeded its prerogative, for the living was not in its gift. Jorden may not have been greatly disappointed, as the parish, then under the patronage of Sir John Webb, was a very small one, consisting of 149 souls. The rectory was valued in the King's books at £11.17.11, and the net income at £282.⁸

Jorden stayed on at Pembroke until December 12, 1729 when he was presented to the living of Standon, in Staffordshire, under a rather unusual arrangement by which he agreed to return the Rectory to its incumbent, one of his own pupils, William Vyse (the student who reputedly placed a pair of shoes outside Johnson's door), whenever the latter should claim it. Incidentally, Samuel Johnson's departure from Pembroke, for very different reasons, took place at about the same time. Jorden remained at Standon until 1731, when he became Vicar of Seighford, also in Staffordshire.¹⁰

The respective merits of the two candidates for what proved to be the unavailable living at Odstock must have been difficult to weigh. Jorden, for all his alleged incompetence as a tutor, appears to have been a kindly and capable Viceregent. Crawford, for his part, must have been something of a prodigy even for his time, as he had matriculated at the University of Glasgow on March 9, 1714, at the age of eleven, and at Balliol College only three years later, receiving his B.A. on January 16, 1721 and his M.A. in 1723. A more celebrated Snell Exhibitioner, Adam Smith, who matriculated at Glasgow in 1737 at the age of 14, was 17 years old when Balliol admitted him.

Interestingly enough, it was during Adam Smith's tenure as Snell Exhibitioner that the final attempt to impose the Episcopal Church condition was made. In 1744 the Vice-Chancellor and the head of the Oxford colleges raised a process in the Court of Chancery with the intention of forcing the Snell Exhibitioners "to submit and conform to the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, and to enter into holy orders when capable thereof by the canons of the Church of England." As Adam Smith's biographer, John Rae, notes, "the Court of Chancery refused to interfere, and the exhibitioners were left entirely free to choose their sect, their profession, and their country, as seemed best to themselves". This refusal must have pleased some spirits at Balliol, which had interpreted Snell's will somewhat liberally, for many years¹¹ - perhaps,

indeed, since the beginning, for the Revolution settlement had "made 'the Church in Scotland' Presbyterian, and left scarce any Episcopal remnant to serve."¹²

William Jorden died in 1739, much to the sorrow of his former pupil, Samuel Johnson, who loved and respected him in spite of his lack of intellectual distinction.¹³ Cornelius Crawford, as had been mentioned, lived on at Hinton in Wiltshire, and the family tradition was continued by his son Laurence, who matriculated at Balliol on March 27, 1751, at the age of 17.¹⁴

DOCUMENTATION

1. Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne, suum cuique. Ed. C.E. Doble et al. 11 vols. Oxford: Printed for the Oxford Historical Society at the Clarendon Press. 1885-1921. X.108.
2. See, e.g., A.L. Reade, Johnsonian Gleanings, X.81-2, et passim.
3. Tables of Balliol College, Oxford, 1520-1857, Vol. 1, compiled from the College records by Andrew Clark, Great Leigh Rectory, Chelmsford, in 1910.
4. Balliol College, Oxford. Yearly Lists, 1720-1738. Vol. vii, also compiled by Andrew Clark
5. See Edward Lee Warner, The Life of John Warner, Bishop of Rochester, 1637-1666. London: Mitchell and Hughes. 1901, pp.56-7. The purpose of the Exhibition was to ensure "that there would never be wanting in Scotland some who shall support the ecclesiastical establishment in England." See also H.W.C. Davis, A History of Balliol College, rev. R.H.C. Davis and Richard Hunt. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1963, pp.137-42 and 139n.
6. W.Innes Addison, The Snell Exhibitions. From the University of Glasgow to Balliol College, Oxford. Glasgow: James MacLehose. 1901, p.37. H.W.C. Davis, op.cit., pp.139-40, contends that surety conditions of the kind applied to the Warner Exhibitions were never written into the Snell scheme.
7. A.L. Reade, Johnsonian Gleanings, Part X, p.81.
8. S. Lewis, A Topographical Dictionary of England, 5th ed. London: S. Lewis. 1842, under "ODSTOCK".
9. A.L. Reade, loc.cit., p.81.
10. W. Innes Addison, op.cit., p.37.
11. See An Appeal from the High Court of Chancery, between the Principal, Professors, Regents, & Chief Officers of Glasgow College and Her Majesty's Attorney-General, etc. London: J.B. Nichols & Son 1738.
12. John Rae, Life of Adam Smith. London & New York: MacMillan & Co. 1895, pp.16-17.
13. James Boswell, Life of Samuel Johnson (Hill-Powell ed.), I.61 & 272
14. W. Innes Addison, op.cit., p.37.

PATRIOTISM AND SCOUNDRELS AND DR. JOHNSON:

THE LAST REFUGE*

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To begin with definitions...In Dr. Johnson's Dictionary we find the following under Patriot: 1. "One whose ruling passion is the love of his country." 2. "It is sometimes used for a factious disturber of the government." Patriotism is defined as "Love of one's country; zeal for one's country." And Scoundrel is "A mean rascal; a low petty villain. A word rather ludicrous."¹ By way of shedding some light on Dr. Johnson's linking of the first word in the series with "a factious disturber of the government," The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, Third Edition Revised, has this comment on Patriot: "Assumed at various times by persons or parties whose claim to it has been denied or ridiculed by others. Hence, in 18th c. used for 'a factious disturber of the government' (J.)."²

From which we leap to Dr. Johnson's famous and often misapplied remark. On Friday, April 7, 1775, Boswell dined with his aged mentor "at a Tavern, with a numerous company." By some process of random association the topic of patriotism came up, and Dr. Johnson provided the fellowship with one of his typically forceful pronouncements: "'Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.'" Boswell, his constant defender, quickly added this clarification: "...he did not mean a real and generous love of our country, but that pretended patriotism which so many, in all ages and countries, have made a cloak for self interest." Naturally, Boswell must also take issue with his guide's reasoning and so he argued that all patriots are not scoundrels...but that particular discussion quickly wound down.

Some backward glancing is necessary here...while we keep in mind the Latin and Greek connotations of fellow-countryman and fatherland, in connection with the word under consideration. Writing of certain impressions made on him by the inhabitants of the Western Islands of Scotland, during his visit in 1773, he used as a frame of reference what we might call a politically "centripetal" point of view: the substance of the nation should

*This paper is an expanded version of a paper read at the Johnson Society of London Meeting on April 24, 1976.

Chairman: Professor Bertram H. Davis.

be kept close to home, not flung away into the outermost reaches of the globe so that it will surely become separated from its very source. "The great business of insular policy is now to keep the people in their own country. As the world has been let in upon them, they have heard of happier climates, and less arbitrary governments; and if they are disgusted, have emissaries among them ready to offer them land and houses, as a reward for deserting their chief and clan." A sizable number have left the Scottish mainland and the islands; all of these "may be considered as subjects lost to the British crown; for a nation scattered in the boundless regions of America resembles rays diverging from a focus. All the rays remain, but the heat is gone. Their power consisted in their concentration when they are dispersed, they have no effect." Does this change make them happier? Now "they are not happy as a nation, for they are a nation no longer. As they contribute not to the prosperity of any community, they must want that security, that dignity, that happiness whatever it be, which a prosperous community throws back upon individuals."⁴

In 1774 Johnson, responding to the dissolving of Parliament and the efforts of the notorious anti-Tory pamphleteer John Wilkes to re-enter Parliament, wrote his own manifesto to the people, The Patriot. It was designed, according to his early biographer Sir John Hawkins, "to guard them from imposition, and teach them to distinguish that which of itself seems sufficiently obvious, the difference between true and false patriotism; but the madness of the people was then at its height, and they needed to be told how often in their lucid intervals they had lamented the deceits practiced on them by artful and designing men."⁵ In The Patriot Johnson showed clearly how patriotism reveals two different facades, depending on one's angle of observation. Duly constituted authority, his source of security and hope in a melancholy, uncertain world, was the point of departure for his argument. Thus, "Patriotism is not necessarily included in rebellion. A man may hate his king, yet not love his country.... [was Johnson thinking here of John Wilkes, who had levelled bitter attacks on George III?] He that wishes to see his country robbed of its rights cannot be a patriot." Which leads, naturally, to the North American colonists: "That man, therefore, is no patriot, who justifies the ridiculous claims of American usurpation; who endeavours to deprive the nation of its natural and lawful authority over its own colonies; those colonies, which were settled under English protection; were constituted by an English Charter; and have been defended by English arms." Johnson pointed out

the "accumulation of absurdity," which "nothing but the show of patriotism could palliate," in supposing "that by sending out a colony, the nation established an independent power," that when emigrants become rich "by indulgence and favour," they shall contribute to their own defence only "at their own pleasure," and "that they shall not be included like millions of their fellow-subjects, in the general system of representation." The acceptance of protection necessitates obedience: since we English have always protected them the Americans, we are entitled to subject them to our rule.⁶

True enough, but there was the problem of effective two-way communication with the home authority, and the assurance of having one's grievances heard and acted upon (not that there was lacking in Parliament a certain measure of support for the colonists' demands). This vexing matter Johnson did not appear to consider. But in all fairness, the "no taxation without representation" proponents did not adequately consider how very limited the colonial franchise was. Race, sex, religion and property qualifications, in the various colonies, made voting a matter of rare and generally accidental privilege.⁷ And the fair-minded, conciliatory observer on either side of the Atlantic must consider the implications of this peculiar lack of enlightenment in the later eighteenth century. What would be unthinkable to most adult Americans and Englishmen in the 1770s - the ultra-exclusiveness of the electorate - was not at all a viable issue, as far as either Johnson himself or the American "independence" faction was concerned.

But Johnson's elaborately reasoned essay, "Taxation No Tyranny: An Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress" (1775), examines more closely the colonies' rights, duties, claims and complaints. His position, predictably, in what Boswell regarded as a pamphlet "written at the desire of those who were then in power," is that government is absolute, privileges and benefits trickle downward. Thus the "no taxation without representation" argument and its attendant demands are seen by Johnson as "antipatriotick prejudices which are the abortions of folly impregnated by faction, which, being produced against the standing order of nature, have not strength sufficient for long life." The American colonies are faulted for qualifying the duty of paying for the costs of their own safety, and determining for themselves the limits and mode of performance of that duty.

Johnson's absolutist position led him to regard this colonial "claim" as one supposing "dominion without authority, and subjects without subordination." As he saw it, "All government is ultimately and essentially absolute," but, depending on how the government is run, "subordinate societies may have more immunities, or individuals greater liberty... An Englishman in the common course of life and action feels no restraint. An English colony has very liberal powers of regulating its own manners, and adjusting its own affairs." But that supreme authority, for its own good and sufficient reasons, may deprive an Englishman of liberty and divest a colony of its powers. This supreme power is not infallible, "but it is irresistible, for it can be resisted only by rebellion, by an act which makes it questionable, what shall be thenceforward the supreme power."

Taking up the matter of royal charters and the grantor-grantee relationship, Johnson pointed out that members of a chartered colony (in America) make their own laws as a corporation, but continue to be subject to the control of the authority which gave them their original grant, and are, therefore, "chargeable by English taxation." This enabled him to spring a logical trap on the rebel colonists who insisted (1) that they were entitled to "life, liberty, and property," their rights to which, they have never yielded to any sovereign power; and (2) that their ancestors, the original colonists, were at the time they left England entitled to all the rights and privileges of free, natural-born English subjects. They cannot have it both ways (he felt): original rights (deriving from a state of nature) and the privileges but not the duties of Englishmen, colonists governed by royal charter. And, still sidestepping the "taxation without representation" issue (despite the suffrage restrictions in the colonies and England herself), Johnson struck two resounding blows. If the colonists had been "freed" before the French and Indian War, "how many millions might have been saved." And, in answer to the argument that the subjection of the American colonists diminished the liberties of Englishmen at home: "If slavery be thus fatally contagious, how is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?"⁸

Feeling all too keenly the dangers inherent in the American patriots' disturbing the government, Johnson repeatedly inveighed against "these lords of themselves,

these kings of ME," to Boswell's irritation. Two examples of his intemperance will suffice. Boswell reported that he had been told, in 1769, by Dr. John Campbell that Dr. Johnson had said of them: "'Sir, they are a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging.'" Which pained Boswell, who resented the "taxation without representation" liability, and deplored the weaknesses in his great and good friend that could elicit such vitriolic feelings.

In 1778, Johnson declared himself "'willing to love all mankind, except an American,'" and branded them Rascals - Robbers - Pirates, 'yelling that he would "burn and destroy them.'" To this there happened to be an effective riposte. A Miss Seward, according to Boswell, objected to this vehement outburst: "'Sir, this is an instance that we are always most violent against those whom we have injured.'" Which of course only made Johnson rage the more.¹⁰

A focussing now of the basic issue. What gave Johnson's opposition to the American colonists, notably the "independence" faction, the "patriots," its special edge? Why did he regard them as scoundrels (not the only scoundrels, to be sure) seeking refuge under the cover of a talismanic term like patriotism? Why did they threaten him so fearfully?

Certainly there was a conflict of value systems: the so-called "patriots" following one basic scheme (the outrageously incorrect and improper one, in his view)... and Johnson following another (i.e., the right one). Boswell, who neither shared nor willingly endured Johnson's extremely hostile views of the American colonists in the aggregate, however much he might continue to revere and flatter his mentor, provides us with a useful summation of the latter's character. With those brief remarks we may begin to look for an answer to the above question. "He was," according to Boswell, "steady and inflexible in maintaining the obligations of religion and morality; both from a regard for the order of society, and from a veneration for the GREAT SOURCE of all order; correct, nay stern in his taste; hard to please, and easily offended..."¹¹

The first reason why the American colonists appeared to Johnson to subvert all existing order and social orders was, apparently, because they countenanced slavery or were somehow engaged in the slave traffic. They were identified in Johnson's mind with the practice of slavery. To the earlier hints, given above, as to Johnson's abhorrence of that "peculiar institution" and, by extension, of the American

colonists among whom the institution was preserved, the following may be added. On August 13, 1766 Johnson wrote William Drummond in Edinburgh, on the subject of the propagation of Christian knowledge, Christianity being "the highest perfection of humanity." Referring, apparently, to the American slaveowners' not wishing to allow their slaves access to the Bible, Johnson stated that "To omit for a year, or for a day, the most efficacious method of advancing Christianity, in compliance with any purposes that terminate on this side of the grave, is a crime of which I know not that the world has yet had an example, except in the practice of the planters of America, a race of mortals whom, I suppose, no other man wishes to resemble."¹² M.J.C. Hodgart, in his study of Johnson and his age, points out that one of Johnson's reasons for opposing the American Revolution was that it was "a revolt of 'colons'" (and Hodgart draws an analogy with the revolt which led to De Gaulle's 1958 rise to power). Thus, "the settlers wanted to enjoy the profits of African slave labour without any possible interference from a metropolitan government...He had a life-long detestation of slavery, affirming in 1740 'the natural right of the negroes to liberty and independence'. He sincerely believed that the Americans, because they were slave-owners, deserved no sympathy at all..."¹³

Donald Greene, in his book on Johnson's politics, has a good deal to say about Johnson's opposition to slavery, and its American manifestation; and Johnson's mingling of a whole range of motives aside from the religious — the moral, political, economic — becomes even more obvious to the observer. The emotional motive, in fact, cuts across all the rest. "He felt intense indignation," Greene says, "at the sufferings of Negro slaves, American Indians, and Hebridean crofters..." His "living up to the ideal of racial equality" was shown by his "virtually adopting the young Negro Frank Barber, educating him as a son (or trying to), and making him his heir." Since Johnson had many non-English friends, why was it that the idea "of admitting American colonists or Scotch adventurers to full and equal community with 'true-born Englishmen' seems to have repelled him"? Greene suggests this reason: "the Americans and Lowland Scotch were obviously destined to be successful in the world, and the Negroes and Indians were not."¹⁴ Johnson's "sympathy for the underdog," according to Greene, "especially for aboriginal peoples exploited by 'civilising' white men, persisted from the time of A Voyage to Abyssinia throughout his life, and explains a great deal of his distrust of the Americans, as he made clear in his essays of 1756."¹⁵

But, Greene points out, in a passage illustrating the complexity of the whole matter as Johnson responded to it, "Johnson's deepest rancor against exploiters of native populations seems to have been directed against the English sugar-planters of the West Indies..." These merchants "were a powerful force in English politics" in Johnson's day. "Their policy was always to press for greater expansion of British opportunities for trade; and the intercourse between New England and the West Indies was an important economic factor in the movement for American independence."¹⁶

The second reason for Johnson's hostility toward the subversive(?) Americans, or "patriots," whom he considered such scoundrels, relates to the effect of the American Revolution itself. It was, as Hodgart (cited earlier) points out, "a true liberal revolution, an attempt to change the old social structure, which has made the United States, in one sense, a classless society. To this Johnson, in so far as he understood it, was opposed, as much as to Rousseau or any kind of radicalism based on an optimistic view of human nature. To that extent he was an enemy of liberty."¹⁷

The third reason for Johnson's rancor concerns his ultraconservative outlook on the political geography of Britain: the "centripetal" point of view referred to near the beginning of this paper. He found uncongenial the forthright Whig leader, William Pitt the Elder (described in the Fifth Edition (1971) of R.G. Albion's A History of England and the Empire-Commonwealth as having "a burning patriotism" and as desiring "to make England foremost among the powers"). Thus Pitt's key role in his nation's effective prosecution of the French and Indian War (1756-63) was not appreciated by Johnson. He was, according to Greene's study of the politics of Johnson, "consistently opposed to the Pittites and expansionism." And Greene cites a number of Johnson's acts and beliefs - including "his opposition in 1756 to the Seven Years' War" and perhaps even his antagonism to America, for the America of 1776 was the creation of Pitt twenty years before" - to illustrate how consistent was Johnson's pattern of thought: "the defense of the older, self-sufficient Little England against the grandiose imperial conception of England as mistress of the world's commerce, maintaining her markets by military force in every part of the world."¹⁸

Finally, there was a personal reason - not merely an emotional response but a larger reaction to the dangers of political rebellion and the spread of civil conflict and societal disorganisation that might result from it. Johnson's declaration, "Rebellions and civil wars are the greatest evils that can happen to a people," Greene says, "comes from the heart. International wars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries caused little distress to most Englishmen, whereas memorials of the miseries of the Civil War lay around everyone who grew up in Lichfield. Since recent history had" illustrated "the tenuousness of the bonds of society" and "how easily a social organisation can dissolve into anarchy and hence inevitably be transformed into despotism," we can understand "Johnson's concern that everything within reason be done to preserve 'subordination' - social organisation..."¹⁹

To conclude with an application and a question. We may take, from Johnson's standpoint, the act of seeking refuge - whether as an English colonist in America or as a self-styled patriot making a nationalistic speech - as a "centrifugal" act; it involves (again, from Johnson's standpoint) flinging oneself away from home centre. Since Johnson's viewpoint was essentially a "centripetal" one - inward bound, rather than outward bound - is it any wonder that he would react so strongly and negatively to any kind of movement away from his dearest and most reliable source of security in a disorderly and melancholy world? A movement, as an example, as intimately bound up with the practice of slavery as was the settlement of the English in North America?

Documentation

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4. Samuel Johnson, A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, ed. by Mary Lascelles (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), pp.131-32.
5. John Hawkins, The Life of Samuel Johnson LLD., ed. by Bertram H. Davis (London: Jonathan Cape, 1962), pp. 217-18*

*A useful note on John Wilkes M.P. (1727-97) is to be found on pp. 36-37 of the catalogue compiled by Kenneth Pearson and Patricia Connor of the American Bicentennial Exhibition, 1776: The British Story of the American Revolution (London: Times Books, 1976).

6. Excerpted in The American Revolution Through British Eyes ed. by Martin Kallich and Andrew MacLeish (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Company, 1962), pp.44-45.
7. TIME Magazine, Special 1776 Issue, "A Vote for Every Man?" p. 4.
8. Excerpted in The American Revolution Through British Eyes pp. 60-64.
9. Boswell, Life, I, 526.
10. Boswell, Life, II, 209. Yet Johnson could write, on 4 March 1773, to Phineas Bond: "You are not mistaken in supposing that I set a high value on my American friends..." The Letters of Samuel Johnson with Mrs. Thrale's Genuine Letters to Him, ed. by R.W. Chapman (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1952), I, 305.
11. Boswell, Life, II, 615.
12. The Letters of Samuel Johnson, I, 188
13. Samuel Johnson and his Times (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1962), p.76.
14. The Politics of Samuel Johnson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), p.237.
15. Ibid., p.242.
16. Ibid., p.270.
17. Hodgart, Samuel Johnson and his Times, pp. 75-76.
18. Greene, The Politics of Samuel Johnson, p.239.
19. Ibid., pp. 241-42



BURNEY CORRESPONDENCE

We are preparing a critical edition of the correspondence of Dr. Charles Burney, musicologist and friend of Dr. Johnson. If any reader knows of the existence of a letter or letters written by or to or concerning Dr. Burney that are not included in Joyce Hemlow's Catalogue of the Burney Family Correspondence 1748-1878 (1971), we would greatly appreciate it if he or she would let us know.

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SAMUEL JOHNSON'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE NOVEL

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The eighteenth century is the formative period for the English novel, with writers like Defoe, Richardson, Fielding and Sterne experimenting and contributing to the genre. One writer, Samuel Johnson, is generally ignored in any discussion of the history of the novel, but he too had theories about what constitutes a novel, theories which he put into practice with Rasselas (1759).

One of Johnson's main criticisms of his contemporaries' novels seems to be that the subject matter is trifling. In his Dictionary he defines a novel as: "A small tale, generally of love. (e.g.) Nothing of a foreign nature; like the trifling novels which Ariosto inserted in his poems.¹" Again, "It is not... because they [modern novels] treat... about love, but because they treat of nothing, that they are despicable: we must not ridicule a passion which he who never felt never was happy..."² So one criticism is the lack of a substantive subject matter.

Another criticism, equally important to Johnson, was directed against the plots of the contemporary novel. After disparaging the lack of originality, Johnson states:

...but to strike out the first hints of a new fable; hence to introduce a set of characters so diversified in their several passions and interests, that from the clashing of this variety may result many necessary incidents; to make these incidents surprising, and yet natural, so as to delight the imagination without shocking the judgement of a reader; and finally to wind up the whole in a pleasing catastrophe, produced by those very means which seem most likely to oppose and prevent it, is the utmost effort of the human mind ...³

Johnson, then, criticises a lack of "invention" in the plot of the novel, with a set of undiversified characters

and unsurprising and unnatural circumstances. With a significant subject, morality or virtue being the most significant⁴, it might seem that the possibilities for originality are limited. Not so, says Johnson. "Although right and wrong are immutable," a moralist has many opportunities for originality in his treatment of a subject."⁵

On these criteria Johnson rated the various novelists of his period. Defoe he praises highly, especially for Robinson Crusoe.⁶ Here is a moral subject told in an interesting and imaginative manner. Henry Fielding "was a blockhead," or as Johnson explained, a "barren rascal."⁷ Boswell dared to ask: "Will you not allow, Sir, that he Fielding draws very natural pictures of human life?" Johnson replied: "Why, Sir, it is of a very low life. Richardson used to say, that had he not known who Fielding was, he should have believed he was an ostler. Sir, there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's, than in all Tom Jones."⁸ Erskine replied: "Surely, Sir, Richardson is very tedious." To which Johnson said: "Why Sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment i.e., thought; opinion], and consider the story as only giving occasion to the sentiment."⁹

Johnson, then, believes that the novel must first of all teach a moral lesson. In doing so, the novel must set forth a believable, interesting and surprising plot, with a realistic and diversified set of characters. These ideas Johnson attempts to put into practice in Rasselas.

Most critics classify Rasselas as an "oriental tale," or a "romance." Johnson understood a difference between the novel and the romance, and in his Dictionary, he defined romance as "a military fable of the middle ages; a tale of wild adventures in war and love."¹⁰ And in his Rambler, he wrote: "Romances have little influence on conduct, because of their unreality."¹¹ Johnson, at any rate, did not think he was writing a romance or tale.

What principles then does Johnson follow in writing Rasselas? Johnson first had to fill two requirements of plot. His novel had to be realistic or, in other words, believable. And at the same time, it had to be original;

the plot had to delight and surprise the reader. This accounts for the background and foreign setting, in many ways much like Defoe's setting in the admired Robinson Crusoe, a realistic background (based on the actual experiences of Alexander Selkirk) in a non-English setting.

It might be objected that a "happy valley" is not very realistic, but rather an allegory of the innocence of youth or simply an obviously impossible situation. Johnson, as Donald J. Greene points out, was scrupulous about using background material that was "quite concrete and authentic."¹² The princes of the royal family in Ethiopia were indeed sent to a place quite similar to the happy valley. Even the names are authentic in Ethiopian history. Johnson took the name Rasselas ("Ras Selah" or "Ras Selach") from an actual surviving list of members of the royal family of Ethiopia, and even the apparently Old Testament name of Imlac also appears in Ethiopian history.¹³

In addition, there are not "absurd" or improbable events, as were in other "oriental" tales, such as Addison's vision of Mirzah (Spectator 159). In fact, Johnson seems determined to avoid any unrealistic plot devices or supernatural happenings. For example, he was presented with the problem of the Prince's escape from the happy valley. He could have easily made the mechanical wings Rasselas' means of escape, but certainly such a possibility was not realistic to Johnson. Instead, he has the prince tunnel his way out, needing in fact four days merely to locate a suitable place to begin the tunnel.

Johnson is even more successful in his realistic presentation of the psychology of his characters, certainly the central concern of Rasselas. Kathleen M. Grange, in "Dr. Samuel Johnson's account of a Schizophrenic Illness in Rasselas," published in Medical History, points out that Johnson presents a detailed account of a person suffering from schizophrenia, the "mad" astronomer, absolutely accurate in every detail. Imlac, even, defines the madness, without using modern terms of course, but accurate in basic theory,¹⁴ so much so that a quotation from Freud merely seems to echo the philosopher-poet.¹⁵

Each of the other characters, too, is quite believable psychologically. Even the fact that Rasselas is a story about a prince and a princess does not detract from its reality; they both are believable, and in fact must act like "common" people in their search. Imlac, the knowing philosopher-poet, has been suggested by some

critics to be the author inserted within the work. But this criticism is beside the point. What is important is that Imlac's knowledge can be accounted for by his experience; in other words, at no time does he appear superhuman or authorial in his guiding the royal pair.

Realism and interest, then, are the determining considerations for plot, background and character. The plot must also have surprising and yet natural circumstances. Furthermore, Johnson criticises most novels for their actual narration of events. "Yet we hourly find such an endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digression and confusion."¹⁶ Each incident, Johnson emphasises, needs to contribute to the central purpose, the moral.

Rasselas does not have the tight, progressive structure that Tom Jones has. But the episodes are progressive, and each is designed to entertain and instruct. For example, the shepherds, living an ideal pastoral life, are not happy since they are discontented, malevolent, and ignorant. Each of the prince's eleven learning encounters functions to educate him about a common misconception of life, all designed to illustrate the central theme, the uncertainty of happiness in this world. And within this structure, Johnson is careful not to be anticipated.

Johnson is criticised for his lack of character development in plot. But he develops only as much as is necessary, never over-developing (which he also criticised as digression). Johnson, to Boswell, criticised historians and their analysis of motives. "He felt only an author who knew a character could portray the true (believable) motives. The most fully developed characters are Imlac and the astronomer, with Rasselas, perhaps, a distant third. Johnson developed those characters he felt he understood, either through close observation or self-analysis.

We see, then, Johnson's theory behind plot and characterisation in Rasselas. Some further understanding of character is important. Johnson described the ideal character thus: "The Character of an Author must be allowed to imply in itself something amiable and great; it conveys at once the Idea of Ability and Good-nature, of Knowledge, and a disposition to communicate it. To instruct Ignorance, reclaim Error, and reform Vice are

Designs highly worthy of Applause and Imitation."¹⁸
Imlac, then, is Johnson's central character, while
Rasselas functions as the ideal reader; Imlac's main
purpose is to instruct Rasselas, much as he must instruct
the reader.

The conclusion, "in which nothing is concluded"
(XLIX), is the "surprise" ending which Johnson would have
felt was led up to, and yet not expected. The conclusion
is the climax of the plot, where Rasselas has been learning
only that he cannot obtain the proper choice in life.
Nothing can be concluded because life does not allow neat
conclusions. Lionel Stevenson says about the conclusion:"...
his philosophical outlook was more uncompromisingly
realistic than that of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett,
since they subscribed to the principle of 'poetic justice'
with a happy ending in which virtue triumphs and evil is
punished."¹⁹ Imlac, in looking at the Pyramids, declares:
"Whoever thou art that, not content with a moderate condition,
imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and drestest that
command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with
perpetual gratifications, survey the Pyramids, and confess
thy folly!" (p.114) Man must be moderate, in his actions,
in his emotions, in his hopes. He cannot hope to
constantly feed his appetite new novelties, because novelty
quickly wears away.

Thus Johnson is instructing, in a realistic manner,
and fulfilling his theory of the novel. Fielding fails
because of lack of morality, and Richardson fails because
of tediousness of plot. Johnson has attempted to combine his
moral philosophy with a realistic plot and set of characters.
The plot was carefully conceived to include a total picture
of various types of mankind, to allow Rasselas and the reader
to understand that happiness, either physical or mental,
is not to be found on earth. The characters are diversified;
each is different, yet each contributes to our total
understanding of Johnson's picture of reality. Rasselas
is, perhaps, the first attempt to write a philosophical novel.

Documentation

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2. Ibid
3. Ibid., pp.138-139

4. Ibid., p.231: "The writer of modern fiction should select events and characters with moral end in view."
5. Ibid., p.178; see also, p.254.
6. Ibid., p.325.
7. Ibid., p.347.
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9. Ibid., pp. 453-454.
10. Ibid., pp. 218-219.
11. Ibid., p.218.
12. Donald J. Green, Samuel Johnson (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1970), p.133. The facts following are taken from Green, pp. 133-134. See also: Donald M. Lockhart, "'The Fourth Son of the Mighty Emperor': The Ethiopian Background of Johnson's Rasselas," PMLA, 78 (1963), 516-528.
13. Johnson's first published book was his translation of Father Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia.
14. Samuel Johnson, Rasselas, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1931), pp. 139-140. All subsequent references in Rasselas are to this edition.
15. Kathleen M. Grange, "Dr. Samuel Johnson's Account of a Schizophrenic Illness in Rasselas (1759)," Medical History, 6 (1962), 162-168.
16. Brown, p.160.
17. Ibid., p.128.
18. Ibid., p.1.
19. Lionel Stevenson, The English Novel: A Panorama (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), p.124.

AUCHINLECK BOSWELL SOCIETY

Gordon P. Hoyle's article, "The Making of a Boswellian Museum" (The New Rambler 1975 issue), described the founding of the Boswell Society in 1970 and the subsequent years of dedicated voluntary work to restore the Boswell Mausoleum and Parish Church. The good news now from Auchinleck is that £24,000 is being made available under the Jobs Creation Scheme of the Manpower Services Commission so that the project can be completed in 1977.

The 1977 Annual Dinner of the Auchinleck Boswell Society will be held on Friday, 19th August, at 7 p.m. at the Royal Hotel, Cumnock, Ayrshire. Visitors from overseas are particularly welcome. Details from: The Hon. Secretary, Gordon P. Hoyle, 131 Main Street, Auchinleck, Ayrshire, Scotland, KA18 2AF.

JOHNSON DEFINES AN AUDIENCE FOR THE DICTIONARY

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The rhetorical strategy of Samuel Johnson's Preface to the English Dictionary consists, in part, of Johnson's assumption and rejection of various masks. He begins as a humble drudge who, despite his "humility," sets out to clear the primordial chaos of English lexicography. He emerges, after a number of metamorphoses, into the Promethean dictionary maker. Changes in the speaker are accompanied by concomitant changes in tone, from realistic bitterness at the probable reception of the Dictionary to honest joy in the completion of a gigantic task, from serious to comic to sombre. Johnson's rhetoric also includes the creation of an elitist reader, sensitive and sentient, who can appreciate the enormity of Johnson's accomplishment. Johnson's "ideal reader" is the primary concern of this note. Many of Johnson's rhetorical problems and some of his solutions are exemplified in the first sentence of the Preface.

A curiously unstable parallel sentence begins the Preface:

It is the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life to be rather driven by the fear of evil, than attracted by the prospect of good; to be exposed to censure without hope of praise; to be disgraced by miscarriage, or punished for neglect, where success would have been without applause, and diligence without reward.¹ (301)

Only in the first clause of this opening sentence is there a completed contrast between a negative ("driven by fear of evil") and a positive ("attracted by the prospect of good"). In the next clause the positive "praise" is negated by "without hope." In the final and longest clause, the nominal positives, "success" and "diligence," are so weakened that they do not even structurally contrast with the negatives "miscarriage" and "neglect". The effect of this clause is to deprive success and diligence of their felicitous aspects by modifying them negatively and by using the subjunctive mood. The last clause and, consequently, the whole sentence, is not parallel because the prodigious effort that went into making the dictionary will never be proportionally recompensed by applause or reward.

It is the intention of the implied author to convince his reader of the justice of this claim. Thus the concept of insufficient reward is introduced from the beginning, yet the sombre and lofty tone of the sentence, the use of the passive voice, the collective and general subject ("those who toil at the lower² employments of life") help avoid the whine of self-pity.

Johnson must establish his scholarly rigour and authority and he does so by concrete example and illustration from the fields of orthography and etymology. So convincing is he that his claim, in the matter of compound words, to have made "reparation for the universal negligence of my predecessors" appears sober and justified. But matters of spelling, etymology and inclusion are not the most crucial aspects of the Dictionary. It is in the definitions that he expects to arouse the "malignity" of "those who are not inclined to be pleased" (309). These malign critics are anticipated for Johnson admits that he has not been able to please himself.

The reader is painstakingly invited to feel the difficulty of defining, the impossibility of consistently attaining the goal or reciprocity of word and explanation. Johnson moulds his ideal reader by appealing to the elitist in all of us:

These complaints of difficulty will, by those that have never considered words beyond their popular use, be thought only the jargon of a man willing to magnify his labours, and procure veneration to his studies by involution and obscurity. But every art is obscure to those who have not learned it; this uncertainty of terms, and commixture of ideas, is well known to those who have joined philosophy with grammar; and if I have not expressed them very clearly, it must be remembered that I am speaking of that which words are insufficient to explain. (312)

The implied author wants the reader to grasp the enormity of the Johnsonian task. The persona accomplishes this, in part, by making his readers want to identify with those "who have joined philosophy and grammar" and thus with the implied author. Yet the author modifies the intellectual snobbery of the statement with the personal admission of the last clause. By admitting to inadequacy of expression,

Johnson demonstrates how difficult it is to define what one means, his point in the first place.

In the section on definitions, the persona is neither humble lexicographer nor Promethean Dictionary maker but something that partakes of both. He is engaged in eliminating distance between himself and the reader, in exploiting reader sympathy and identification. He admits that all of his word interpretations are not equally successful, but he attributes this, in part, to the hugeness of the work. He admits that his monumental work contains a number of small errors that will be found by a little "mind utterly unequal to the whole performance" (312). This is not only a squelch for the picayune, but also another way of inviting the audience to be large minded, like the persona.

Once Johnson has created his intelligent reader he continues to address and delineate him. In anticipating the charge of employing too many quotations he separates the "careless or unskilled perusers" from the "more accurate examiner" (315). Johnson has enjoyed this aspect of his labour because it has given him the opportunity for the kind of creative effort that was not involved in the orthographical or the etymological. Here he could exhibit a "genealogy of sentiments" and thus "gratify the mind, by offering a kind of intellectual history" (315). The "more accurate examiner" is thus invited by Johnson to enrich his mind along with Johnson. The ideal reader is addressed further: "Many of the distinctions which to common readers appear useless and idle, will be found real and important by men versed in the school philosophy" (317). Obviously a wide audience is not Johnson's intention.

Yet paradoxically he is defensive about the projected popularity of his work and anxious to anticipate the laughter that its unavoidable blunders may evoke:

That it [the Dictionary] will immediately become popular I have not promised to myself: a few wild blunders, and risible absurdities, from which no work of such multiplicity was ever free, may for a time furnish folly with laughter, and harden ignorance in contempt; but useful diligence will at last prevail, and there never can be wanting some who distinguish desert: who consider that no dictionary of a living tongue ever can be perfect, since while it is hastening to publication, some words are budding, and some falling away...

The emphasis is mine and the sentence is a long one. It begins in the above contrast between the ignorant and the discerning and ends in an identification of Dictionary maker and discerning reader who knows what it is to be a Dictionary maker and hence understands "that what is obvious is not always known, and what is know is not always present;... and casual eclipses will darken learning; and that the writer shall often trace his memory at the moment of need, for that which yesterday he knew with intuitive readiness, and which will come uncalled for into his thoughts tomorrow " (323).

Johnson prepares for the identification not only by creating a reader somewhat in his own image but also by calling upon his readers to join him as patriotic Englishmen. "We have long preserved our constitution, let us make some struggle for our language" (322). Note that Johnson uncharacteristically uses first person plural.

Throughout the Preface the persona has been scholar and poet, drudge and demigod. At the end of the Preface he emerges as a man who has suffered poverty, disease, hardship and grievous loss, and he does not hesitate to solicit his reader's sympathy on these accounts. He anticipates what he envisions as possible criticism in order to forestall criticism. He admits to small errors but other criticism is described by him, even in the final paragraph, as malignant. The ideal reader that he has created will understand that small errors, like the spelling errors of the poets, come from a mind "intent upon greater things" (304). Since he has been magnanimous, he wants the same from his critics but his experience of the world will not allow him to expect such magnanimity.

Johnson has attempted to reconcile himself to the world's ingratitude by writing an appreciation in advance, by being his own critic and by creating his own reader. From the beginning he involves the reader's emotions in his prodigious efforts and in anticipating the monumental ingratitude which his efforts will engender. He disarms by candour and flatters by identification. He paradoxically succeeds in capturing reader empathy for the injustice of his situation while not sacrificing reader awe for the magnitude of his accomplishment. His final gloomy sentences seem to evoke the praise and success to which he wants to appear indifferent.

I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds: I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquility, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise. (323)

Such praise is forthcoming from Johnson's defined reader.

Documentation

1. All reference to the Preface are from "Preface to the English Dictionary," Johnson Poetry and Prose, ed. Mona Wilson (Cambridge, Mass., 1967) pp. 301-323. All citations will be by page number in parenthesis in the body of the paper.
2. The terms "implied author," "ideal reader" and the useful attendant distinctions are from the invaluable The Rhetoric of Fiction by Wayne Booth (Chicago, 1961).



ANNUAL COMMEMORATION 1975

The customary ceremony of laying a wreath on the tomb of Dr. Johnson in Westminster Abbey was carried out this year by the Chairman of the Johnson Society of London, Mr. J.R.G. Comyn, on 20th December.

In the Commemorative Address, Mr. Comyn opened by recalling Johnson's own words: "A man, Sir, should keep his friendship in constant repair", and affirmed that the sentiment was as apposite today — as members renewed their acquaintance with Johnson year by year in the wreath-laying ceremony — as when it was first expressed.

Mr. Comyn continued by pointing out how grateful he and the members of the Society should be to those who had secured a resting place for Johnson in Poets' Corner, when at first sight this might not have seemed the most obvious place; but if poetry was "the best words in the best order" then, surely, the great lexicographer had a place there almost as of right.

Meditating on the death of Johnson, Mr. Comyn reminded members of the sad loss sustained by the Society in the death of Dr. L.F. Powell who for many years had been a Vice-President and, since 1967, President of the Johnson Society of London. Mr. Comyn related how the Memorial Service in Oxford had been attended by many students and lovers of Johnson's Works, and said that in a year that was dedicated to women, and was also the bicentenary of the birth of Jane Austen, it was most fitting that one of the Readings had been given by Mrs. Mary Hyde, whose collection of Johnsoniana was unparalleled.

In conclusion, Mr. Comyn returned to his opening quotation, stressing the truth that it contained, and expressed the hope that the Johnson Society of London and all admirers of Samuel Johnson would abide by it, and that they would continue to gather, as on that day, to pay homage and ensure that their friendships were kept "in constant repair".



ARTHUR GRANT DOWDESWELL

A shadow was cast over the April Meeting of the Society when news was announced of Mr. Dowdeswell's death just a few days before. Members present stood in silence to honour the memory of one who had given so much in service to the Society. Their sadness will be widely shared by the many visitors from overseas who recall his genial hospitality and that of Mrs. Dowdeswell.

Mr. Dowdeswell's Secretaryship of the Society from 1958 to 1970 was exemplified by the quiet efficiency and administrative ability which he brought to the office. The presentation, year by year, of varied and stimulating programmes, the smooth conduct of the Society's affairs, concealed the sustained and devoted efforts on our behalf which made it all possible.

His election to the Vice-Presidency was a recognition of his loyal and valued service: the warmth of the response to the 1971 Presentation made in his honour was indicative of the esteem and affection in which he was held. We give thanks for all he gave in service to the Society and our thoughts go out to Marguerite who shared with him in the giving so abundantly.

J.H.L.

S A M U E L J O H N S O N

Myrtles are insufficient for your story,
And laurels lack the tenderness to show
Beneath the granite-grandeur of your glory
The frailest rose of love was safe to grow.
Fanfares, indeed, are fitting for your fame,
But trumpets, rich and regal though they be,
Have not the gentleness that can proclaim
Compassion with each earthly misery.
Oh, great, good, man, England will never find
Another genius she would rather show,
For intellect and virtue thus combined
Exceeds the utmost excellence we know,
And proves that at his highest man might be
The greatest triumph of eternity.

Helen Forsyth



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