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Nancy Johnson, SUNY New Paltz

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Burney at Work: The Court Years

NANCY JOHNSON

Frances Burney's protracted concern with subjectivity is evident in the originating moments of her diary writing when she addresses her first journal to "Nobody";[1] and it is perceptible at the end of her career, in the final editing of her now voluminous body of journals in which she exhibits a pervasive self-censoring by cutting, pasting, and obliterating text. In all of her diary writing and self-editing, Burney makes considerable and significant use of negation and absence, deftly countered by presence. The "Nobody" behind whom she seems to hide is infused with subjectivity.[2] The quiet and the reticence—that which is not said, that which has been removed—resonates within her written text. Burney's negation has also left its mark on posterity; it has captured the attention of her twentieth- and twenty-first-century editors, who have focused much attention on trying to discover what she has hidden behind her obliterated text. Burney's efforts to reconcile and shape her own subjectivity are fraught with this proclivity toward absence and a corresponding assertion of expression over which she exercises authoritative control.[3]

Burney's time as a Keeper of the Robes in Queen Charlotte's court, July 1786–June 1791, is a case in point. Just as her identity as a writer is beginning to solidify—by 1786, she had published *Evelina* (1778) and *Cecilia* (1782)—she becomes a servant, a salaried worker who earns £200 per annum.[4] This transformative event, I will argue in this essay, has a profound impact on Burney's developing sense of self and sends her into a crisis of subjectivity that is evident both in her frequent shifts between presence and absence at court and in her attempts to manage the crisis through narrative control and claims to civility.[5] An early indicator of what is to come occurs in 1785 when Burney learns that she is to become a royal servant; her initial response is to retreat. She steps back into her imagination and

into the safe confines of theatre where creative invention abounds and subjectivity is always in play. [6] Recounting her first meeting with the king and queen in an imagined theatrical scene, Burney anticipates her role in court as "a very solemn, sober & decent *mute*." [7] She promises silence as an act of both deference and resistance. Once in court, however, while she does, indeed, often stand on the sidelines waiting and observing, and she reminds us in her diaries how often she did *not* say what was on her mind, Burney records her viewpoints at length in her court journals and letters. The provocative counterpoint to her compulsion toward silencing and what Margaret Doody identifies as self-anaesthetizing and self-annihilation,[8] is her writing: her extensive correspondence with family, friends and acquaintances, and her monthly journal letters to her sister Susanna (Susan) Phillips[9] and their friend Frederica Lock.[10]

The contradictory impulses of excessive repression and expression unfold in Burney's first extant letter from court, dated 17 July 1786, to her sister Susan. There she claims for her writing an innocuous passivity.

> Once more I take up my Pen, to give my beloved Susan a Journal of my proceedings. I have <much> been advised against it, but I do not see why; a simple account of inoffensive actions can have no more to fear from the reader than from the listener; & while I never make the most distant allusion to politics, to the Royal family's private transactions or opinions, nor to any state affairs of any kind, I see not why I must be deprived of my long accustomed confidence in the Dearest & Sweetest of Sisters. (*CJL* 1: 1–2)

As Peter Sabor, explains, "[t]his claim is misleading; FB [Burney] would in fact go on to make detailed references to private royal affairs and current political events in her Court journals and letters" (*CJL* 1: 2 n. 4). Hence, the self-effacing modesty and assertions of inefficacy are disingenuous. As Sabor notes, Burney's journals are replete with descriptions of offensive actions as well as her censorious and sometimes angry responses. She expresses disapproval or sympathy, outrage or compassion,

about public issues such as the king's illness, the Regency Crisis, and the Warren Hastings trial, and private concerns such as her treatment by other royal servants, by public figures, and by romantic interests. She also repeatedly voices her discomfort with her life as a royal servant and its accompanying restrictions on her independence. The six volumes of Burney's correspondence at court are a testament to Burney's commitment to verbal expression at a time when her default position is allegedly silence.

Burney's aversion to servitude is complicated by her sense of obligation as a subject of the monarchy. When she describes her arrival at court in July of 1786, she represents it as a traumatic event because entering court means relinquishing her independence, her life with her family, and very likely her career as a writer; and yet as a loyal subject she must acknowledge the honor and duty attached to serving the king and queen. To address this difficulty, Burney once again turns to theatricality and engages with the fluidity of subjectivity. In this instance, she chooses the theatre of Catholicism for her platform and takes on the dramatic persona of a nun entering a convent and embarking on a marriage—not to God, but to the Royal family.[11] Burney characterizes the move as a life-altering change that is marked by sacrifice and loss; she is the heroic maiden who abandons a sanguine future, full of possibility, for the benefit of her family. To Susan she writes, "in what an *agony* of mind did I obey the summons! . . . I was now on the point of entering,—probably for-ever!—into an entire new way of life, & of fore-going by it all my best hopes—all my most favorite schemes—& every dear expectation my Fancy had ever indulged of happiness adapted to its taste,—as now, all was to be given up" (*CJL* 1: 5). Conjuring images of walking down the aisle of a church for deliverance, Burney writes "but my dear Father now, sweet soul, felt it all, as I held by his arm, without power to say one word, but that if he did not hurry along, I should drop by the way" (*CJL* 1: 6). Later, she more explicitly casts her commitment to court as akin to the fidelity of matrimony. "I am *married*," she writes to Susan, "I look upon it in that light,—I was averse to forming the union, & I endeavoured to escape it; but my friends interfered,—they

prevailed—& the knot is tied. . . . I am bound to it in Duty, & I will strain every Nerve to succeed" (*CJL* 1: 8). By the end of 1786, bitterness and further resignation are evident in Burney's description of her situation as "a settlement for life in a state of all others the most naturally repugnant to my Mind, that of compulsatory Attendance, & obligatory Dependance!—" (*CJL* 1: 324). She is also prescient in her promise to strain every nerve to succeed because she will do just that, to the point of debilitating illness.

By entering the royal court under the imaginative guise of a novitiate, Burney offers her readers some reconciliation to her fate because in the image that she constructs is embedded a servitude to God, consistent with an appropriate humility before the royal family. The dramatic element is that of tragedy, and the sacrifice is a worthy one. However, what Burney encounters once she enters court is far more pedestrian and certainly less romantic. This is not a marriage to God or anyone else; this is employment, and she must work. Her duties include helping the Queen to dress, attending her (and sometimes her visitors) throughout much of the day and night, and, with Mrs. Schwellenberg, hosting a tea table for the equerries in the evening. A typical day would begin at 6:00 a.m. and end at midnight.[12] Burney is familiar with work, yet hers has been the creative efforts of a novelist and the intellectual toil of an amanuensis to her father—not the kind of physical servitude required of her in court. Still, beyond the physical hardships Burney endured, what unsettles her and remains irreconcilable is the shift in status not only to that of a servant—Burney bristles at the bell that summons her to the queen[13]—but also, and more markedly, to that of a wage earner.

Burney recoils at the idea of receiving payment for her work.[14] What dignity she might retain from servitude to the Queen is lost in the exchange of labor for a wage. In her first year at court, she describes for her sister the moment she receives her pay from Mr. Mathias, Messenger to the Treasury.[15] "If you will not laugh at me too much," Burney writes,

> I will also acknowledge that I liked Mr. Mathias all the more for observing him as awkward &

> embarrassed how to present me my *Salary*, as I felt myself in receiving it.—There is something, after all, in *money, by itself money* that I can never take possession of without a secret feel of something like a degradation: money in its *effects*, & its *produce*, creates far different & more pleasant sensations.—But here,—it made me feel so like—what I *am*, in short,—Servant!—We are all Servants, to be sure, in the *Red Book*,[16]—but still—. (*CJL* 1: 306–07)

For someone who was raised in a socially ambitious family, as Burney was, to move down the social ladder by accepting a wage was certainly a significant alteration in status; for Burney, it was ultimately a debilitating step. In response, Burney frequently makes distinctions in the court journals and letters between herself and "real servants." She raises her own status by noting her parental obligation toward her own "Man" and "Maid," to whom, when she gives direction, she is "obliged to watch & instruct as if they were my Children, as I feel myself answerable for their good behavior" (*CJL* 1: 34). In addition, she reaffirms her own class difference when she comments authoritatively on two books by Sarah Trimmer: *The Servant's Friend* and *The Two Farmers* (1786). "They recommend," she writes, "morality to the lower class of the people in a style suited to their comprehension, & with such sort of entertainment mingled with their instruction as may soberly be enjoyed by them, while yet it lightens the gravity of the lessoning, & makes the counsel palatable & pleasing" (*CJL* 1: 258). This paternalistic relationship between servants and their masters/mistresses was the norm in the eighteenth century; however, it was a relationship that was beginning to change, according to Bridget Hill, and in its place emerged an arrangement between wage-earning servant and an employer.[17]

These class distinctions are important to Burney, but I would like to suggest as well that Burney's strong response to receiving a salary has to do with the materialization of her servitude.[18] Burney's visceral reaction to "*money, by itself money*," as opposed to "its *effects* & its *produce*," points to a discomfort

with the concretization of something that is more palatable in its absence.[19] Money, like language, is a symbolic system, and as Burney will often prefer the absence of language when in crisis, she also favors the absence of money even while she embraces its effects. The status of wage earner encumbers Burney's sense of self with a materiality, a presence, that she profoundly resists. Although the royal family was embedded in history, loyal subject-hood would have remained outside the limits of time for Burney; similarly, Burney's analogy of the court and the convent elucidates the correspondence between royal and divine servitude. Burney would consider her subject-hood a fundamental part of her identity inside or outside of the court. But the part of her servitude that was compensated with money, with a salary, locates and fixes Burney historically, politically, and economically. Her appointment at court entraps her physically, but just as important, it also ensnares her subjectivity. As Felicity Nussbaum explains, the autobiographical subject wants to believe in its "agency," in its ability to "express and know and regulate itself" without recognizing the restrictions imposed by "economic and political powers" (34). When Burney is paid for her work, in the form of money, the material reality of her existence is amplified and the limitations of her situation are undeniable.

The crisis of subjectivity that Burney experiences as a salaried servant is manifested in a piqued vacillation between presence and absence in her social interactions at court and in her reportage of court life. These maneuvers provide Burney with a semblance of the control that she has lost as a royal servant and offer her a means of addressing the materiality and limitations imposed on her by her status as a wage earner. As Burney advances and retreats, she turns to narrative authority to manage her movements, tell her own story, and direct her self-representation; as the primary subject, as the author, she can advance and retreat at will. Moreover, because she is a skilled novelist, Burney has the ability to maneuver effectively, and she can summon her identity as a writer to strengthen her position as author/subject. However, as poststructuralist theorists remind us, an author never has complete, conscious control of the narrative,

and often the most intriguing moments of a text are those moments of authorial destabilization or absence. When Burney feels the brunt of salaried servitude, and self-assertion might be read as hubris, she relinquishes her authorial voice and transfers it to another personage in her narrative. In doing so, Burney fragments narrative control and the subject/author to assert the self while simultaneously absenting the self. She does so to "hide," and yet when Burney tries hardest to absent herself from her authorial position, her narrative manipulations are most visible.

Another method of asserting subjectivity that Burney employs is to lay claim to "civility." Burney transforms civility into a form of currency, and when she is feeling particularly diminished by her status as a servant and wage earner, she appropriates civility as compensation for loss and a weapon against those who violate her honor. In her position as a royal servant, civility is a benign form of empowerment because it pertains only to citizens; the royals are exempt. It is based on conduct, protocol, and secular morality, areas in which Burney excels; her behavior (as she narrates it) is almost always above reproach, and when it is not, she atones for her mistakes. Civility resides somewhere in between the presence and absence that Burney is negotiating while at court. Like honor and virtue, it signifies in one's actions, but it remains otherwise intangible. Because it is an immaterial currency (as compared to money), and for Burney presumably beyond the scope of history, economics, and politics, civility becomes a corrective both to the material property that she lacks and to the forced materiality of her status as a wage earner.

While these efforts to counter her personal degradation persist through Burney's final years in court (1790–91), the role of wage earner is a part of her position at court that remains irresolvable. Remuneration in the form of patronage—favors for her family—is one of Burney's motivations for accepting this position, and when she resigns, she receives a pension of £100 from the court. But these forms of compensation—patronage and pension—carry with them a dignity that is lost when one accepts a wage for one's labor. It is this status of salaried worker that

continuously provokes her unrest, and it is one of the factors that propels her into the illness that drives her from court, that forces her to retreat—first out of a sense of self-protection while she endures as Keeper of the Robes—and finally when she resigns from her position. In the remainder of this essay, I will focus on three specific narratives from the court journals and letters that represent Burney's crisis of subjectivity precipitated by the shift in her status. The first is a narrative of Burney's journey with the royal family to Oxford, where she confronts a negation of her identity and stabilizes herself with claims to civility. The second is an account of Burney's ongoing struggle with Mrs. Schwellenberg, who not only treats Burney with cruelty but also serves as a mirror to Burney of what she has become: a salaried servant. The third is the story of Burney's relationship with Col. Stephen Digby, a man with whom she falls in love but who rejects her for a woman of superior status and wealth, sending Burney into a crisis of the heart, as well as subjectivity. In all three instances, Burney tries to come to terms with her altered identity as she transitions from a published author to a salaried servant.

Negated: on the Oxford Expedition

Burney's mechanisms for adjusting to her new status as a salaried servant are apparent when in August of 1786, having been settled at court only a matter of weeks,[20] she accompanies the royal family on their journey to Oxford where they will stay at Nuneham Courtenay, the estate of Lord and Lady Harcourt.[21] This is Burney's first excursion in her new position as royal servant, and she will be visiting at the home of a couple with whom she had a prior acquaintance in her role as a novelist. In her diary letter to her sister Susan, dated 12–15 August 1786, Burney writes anxiously about appearing at Nuneham in "my *first appearance in my new Character*, upon attending the Queen on a visit" (*CJL* 1: 92). Of course, Burney means her first appearance as a royal servant, but, notably, she begins to execute precise narrative control and does not define her "*new Character*"; rather, she leaves a vacancy where she might supply a noun that

gives shape to her new character and, instead, slips into a verb phrase, "attending the Queen." In addition, "appearance" conjures thoughts, once more, of performance. Attending the queen is a dramatic role; it is temporary, and it hides and protects an authentic persona that is decidedly not that of a servant.

By leaving the substance of her *"new Character"* vacant, Burney allows the reader to fill in the blank, but she exercises her narrative authority by prefacing this expression of anxiety with an assertion of her former life and former status. Burney reminds Susan, and thus her readers, that she had previously had the opportunity to meet Lady Harcourt at the home of Elizabeth Vesey,[22] a literary hostess and bluestocking, but declined: "I now a little regretted that I had declined meeting Lady Harcourt, when invited to see her at Mrs. Vesey's about 3 years ago. I was not, just then, very happy,—& I was surfeited of new acquaintances. When the invitation, therefore, came, I sent an excuse" (*CJL* 1: 92). Three years earlier, 1783, was just a year after Burney's publication of *Cecilia*, which brought with it additional acclaim—and thus new acquaintances—and a further solidification of her position as a successful published author. Moreover, to be invited into the literary salon of Elizabeth Vesey was to be certain of literary and intellectual recognition.

Immediately after her expression of anxiety about visiting Nuneham Courtenay as a royal servant, Burney mentions that she had met Lord Harcourt[23] "some years ago" at the home of Sir Joshua Reynolds and had since met him "two or three times"; hence, Burney also reminds the reader of the elite intellectual circles in which she was ensconced before coming to court (*CJL* 1: 92–93). When she apprises Mrs. Schwellenberg of her prior acquaintance, and takes some comfort from the fact that she "knew a little of Lord Harcourt," the response is a very different one than Burney would expect from her readers. Mrs. Schwellenberg replies "that is nothing,—when you go with the Queen, it is enough; they might be civil to you for that sake . . . you might take no Gown but what you go in . . . you might have no servant,—for what?—you might keep on your riding Dress.—There is no need you might be seen. I shall do every thing what I can to assist

you to appear for nobody.—" (*CJL* 1: 93). Rather than negate herself, in the telling of this story, Burney transfers the act of annihilation to her nemesis Mrs. Schwellenberg, who, with a repetition of "no" statements, dismantles Burney's significance, culminating in invisibility and the familiar "nobody." The signifier of the dress is reduced from a "gown" to a "riding dress," thereby diminishing status, and the absence of a servant not only is an inconvenience for Burney but it also denies her the chance to oversee a servant and find security in her power over another. Because she is rendered a "nobody," Burney's identity in this setting will be gleaned from her association with the Queen, and because of the Queen, Burney will be treated with civility. Burney allows herself a salve in this encounter with Mrs. Schwellenberg by writing reassuringly that the royal family "condescended to speak to me as if I was not yet arrived at the happiness of appearing the Nobody I was so kindly to be assisted in becoming" (*CJL* 1: 93). But once again, Burney has transferred the responsibility of affirming her subjectivity to others. Where Burney does assert herself, without the ploys of excessive deference and invisibility, is in laying claim to civility—the civility that Mrs. Schwellenberg attributes only to Burney's connection to the Queen. The association of civility with citizenship and with secularity provides Burney with a sanctuary—and with a semblance of dignity—when she cannot find solace in divine servitude. Civility bolsters, and gives new form to, her subjectivity. We see Burney use the standard of civility when she assesses the behavior of others, and we see her use it as a means to repair her status.

When Burney arrives at the Harcourt's estate on the expedition to Oxford with the royal family, she observes that there is no one to greet them, no one to show them to their rooms.

> We stopt at the Portico—but not even a Porter was there; we were obliged to get out of the carriage by the help of one of the Postilions, & to enter the House by the help of wet Grass . . . I felt so strange in going in uninvited & unconducted, that I should have begged leave to stroll about till somebody

> appeared. I think I never remember to have felt so much shame from <my> situation as at that time; to arrive at a House where no Mistress nor Master of it cared about receiving me; to wander about, a Guest uninvited, a visitor unthought of; without even a Room to go to, a Person to enquire for, or even a Servant to speak to!—" (*CJL* 1: 94–95)

Burney's reaction to being "unthought of"—to being negated—was to investigate and find a culprit and in doing so to exhibit agency. The person she blames for this debacle is Lady Harcourt "whose affair it was," Burney argues, "to have given orders, previous to our arrival, that some of her people should shew us to whatever Apartment she destined for us . . . it was incumbent upon her to have taken care that we should not have been utterly neglected" (*CJL* 1: 195). In this extended description of their arrival, Burney is honest about her damaged pride. She is also assertive about her own civility, her superior sense of moral authority. *She* knows how to behave while Lady Harcourt clearly does not. Moreover, having shown that Lady Harcourt is lacking in civility, Burney is free to assess her worthiness as a woman endowed with great wealth. "Lady Harcourt," Burney writes

> has the Character of a vain, shewy, but obliging & good-natured woman; however, the high honour of receiving such Guests was too much for her equanimity, & she seemed to think she conferred a favour by half a sentence, & a quarter of a look. Where the understanding is not strong, how dangerous is prosperity! She had formerly desired to meet me,—she now, I believe, should have thought the Person out of his Wits who should have told her she had ever had so lowly a wish. (*CJL* 1: 198)

Couched between her rather haughty evaluation of Lady Harcourt and her own hurt pride, is Burney's judgment about money: "Where the understanding is not strong, how dangerous is prosperity!" The sentence echoes *Proverbs* 1: 32, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them," and with the weight of scripture behind her, Burney is able to condemn those who have enjoyed

wealth but are not capable of managing it. With civility on her side, Burney is empowered to critique the very person before whom she is so ashamed to appear as a servant and place herself on a higher moral ground. Later, in 1787, Burney will soften her assessment of Lady Harcourt. She concedes that Lady Harcourt has "good taste" in "society & amusements" but still finds her "Girlish & flippant." Redeeming Lady Harcourt, however, is her kindness toward the wife of an equerry, Mrs. Gwynn, whom she has invited to stay at St. Leonard's where her husband may visit her, and her generosity toward the actress Mrs. Siddons, whom she helped dress for her visit to the Queen's lodge.[24] Hence, even as Burney warms a bit toward Lady Harcourt, she does not relinquish her own superiority, nor does she shift away from using civility as a measure.

Yoked: to Mrs. Schwellenberg

Conflict with Mrs. Schwellenberg, the senior Keeper of the Robes who had been in Queen Charlotte's court in England since 1761,[25] was a chronic problem for Burney, and trouble began early in Burney's tenure at court. In August of 1786, Burney writes about the prospect of making tea and presiding at the tea table for the royal equerries, one of the duties of the Keeper of the Robes: "I had always kept back from that office, as well as presiding at the Table, that I might keep the more quiet, & be permitted to sit silent." She does so, she explains, to stave off her "depressed state" and to "keep off the foul fiends of Jealousy & Rivality in my Colleague [Mrs. Schwellenberg]" (*CJL* 1: 81). In the routine of evenings overseen by Mrs. Schwellenberg, Burney notes that she sits "dumb & unnoticed," thereby staying true to her vow before coming to court to be a "solemn, sober & decent Mute." "To me," Burney continues, "this was no hardship; but to Mrs. Delany, when she joined the party, it was quite afflicting." By turning the spotlight on to Mrs. Delany, and thus deflecting it from herself, Burney begins a play of transference. She observes that this dear friend

> accustomed to place me herself so high, & to

> know me honoured almost universally by some distinguished notice in every party in which I mixed, to see me, now . . . studiously shunned, had an effect upon her tender mind . . . & indeed, she told me it was so painful a scene to her, that she would positively come no more, unless I would exert, & assert myself into a little more consequence. (*CJL* 1: 161)

Transferring the responsibility of self-assertion to another is Burney's means of avoiding self-importance, and it is one of her methods for dealing with a slight, especially when she regards herself as superior to someone else—Mrs. Schwellenberg in particular. Despite this effort, however, as well as Burney's reminder to her readers of her status prior to court, via Mrs. Delany, Burney swings back toward retreat. "I have promised to do what I can," she writes, "to comfort her [Mrs. Delany] for the apprehensions she conceives of my depression—but in truth I like the present state of things better than, at present, I should any reform in them" (*CJL* 1: 161). Still, when Mrs. Schwellenberg is not present, Burney happily becomes "Presidentress" of the tea table (*CJL* 1: 200). The movements between presence and absence and this mode of transference are useful to Burney because they allow her to keep her identity in flux and in hiding when she deems it necessary. She develops for herself what Nussbaum refers to as a "split subject" who "speaks" and who is also "spoken about," who "writes," and who is "written about" (31).[26] It is a fragmented, multifaceted subject that in its apparent instability offers Burney strength and protection when her identity is compromised or threatened. However, these are the very passages that stand out when reading her narrative and call attention to the maneuverings of the author. Burney is most visible as a narrator when she tries to vanish.

In a diary letter from November 1787, the drama between Burney and Mrs. Schwellenberg shifts from the tea table to the carriage, when Burney describes a painful journey with her from Windsor to London. The latter insists on leaving the carriage window down, "whence there blew in a sharp wind," Burney writes, "which so painfully attacked my Eyes, that they were

inflamed even before we arrived in Town." Burney transfers her outrage, in this instance, to her father, who gives her the following advice: "to draw up my Glass in defiance of all opposition, & to abide by all consequences, since my place was wholly immaterial when put in competition with my Health." She is cheered by "this *permission to rebel*" against the limitations imposed by her "place" and adds that her father's sanction has given her "an *internal hardiness* in all similar assaults" (*CJL* 2: 290). The drama of the carriage ride intensifies when Burney hears a frightening tale from Miller, the "old head Housemaid" at St. James's, who provides her with a remedy of milk and butter to soothe her inflamed eyes. Miller tells Burney that her predecessor as Keeper of the Robes, Mrs. Hagedorn,[27] suffered greatly at the hand of Mrs. Schwellenberg and "grew nearly blind" from journeys during which she was forced to suffer "the Glass down at her side, in all Weathers . . . & frequently the Glasses *behind* her also!" (*CJL* 2: 290–91). When Burney's maid Goter reports to her "that all the servants in the House had remarked I *was going just the same way*" (*CJL* 2: 291), Burney is thoroughly alarmed by her situation.

On the return journey to Windsor, Mrs. Schwellenberg, with all her "horrible ill humour, violence, & rudeness" (292), again reigns supreme in the carriage and again makes everyone suffer by insisting that they travel with the glass down. Fellow passengers Miss Planta[28] and Mr. Deluc[29] try to intervene, but both are dismissed in a rage. In the heat of the battle, Burney considers her father's advice, but despite the reinforcements she gathered together in London, she steps back from the brink of rebellion. She puts her muff in front of her eyes and withdraws into silence. She retreated, she explains, because she wished to avoid a quarrel. She feared disappointing her father, prompting reproach from her stepmother, and irreparably damaging her relationship with Mrs. Schwellenberg, someone with whom she has been "coupled" (*CJL* 2: 292). Having decided to forego rebellion, when Mrs. Schwellenberg offers her a piece of cake, Burney accepts it as a peace offering. The carriage scene, as Burney draws it, is a showdown—then a reckoning with her confinement, and a settlement with the sacrifice she has made

by agreeing to serve the queen and the circumscription that accompanies her commitment. The carriage, and the captivity it enables, functions as it often does in Burney's novels, as a site that is both private and public (like the court itself) and a space where young women often face danger when coupled with someone whose behavior is uncivil. The incident of her inflamed eyes, at the hands of Mrs. Schwellenberg, initiates thoughts of a grand retreat. To Susan she writes of a "momentous decision:—That—in total disregard to All that belongs to myself, I must cherish no *thought of retreat*, unless—*called* hence, by willing kindness, to the Paternal Home—or *driven* hence, by weakness & illness, from the fatigues of my office" (*CJL* 2: 293). Thus, while Burney steps back from the brink of resignation, renews her vows to the queen, and decides to stay at court, she is also establishing for herself an exit strategy; she lays down the conditions for a final withdrawal.

Following the torturous carriage ride, once safely back at Windsor, Burney tries to take control of a situation in which she is not just reminded of her servitude but is forced to be servile to another servant. Mrs. Schwellenberg, a wage-earner herself, is a mirror for Burney, an image of what she has become. When she is with Mrs. Schwellenberg, she is not the published author of acclaim, nor the woman who moved in the highest literary and intellectual circles of London; she is decidedly a servant. And because Mrs. Schwellenberg is so demanding and established her superiority over Burney so quickly, Burney finds herself subjected to the authoritative desires of another servant. The incident in the carriage, witnessed by Miss Planta and Mr. Deluc, and evidenced by her inflamed eyes, pushes Burney into action, and she responds as she does to other crises of subjectivity: she begins to maneuver her physical presence and absence. Typically, Burney spends evenings in the company of Mrs. Schwellenberg, presiding over the tea table, drinking coffee, sometimes playing the card game piquet. But she now promises to absent herself from these evenings with Mrs. Schwellenberg until the "Coadjudtrix" (one of Burney's nicknames for Mrs. Schwellenberg) (*CJL* 2: 295),[30] begins to behave. Once her plan is in operation, Burney notices that her "*absence had been lamented!*" (297). Yet Burney wants

also to call attention to, and manage, just how her "*presence* is accepted!" (297). As long as Mrs. Schwellenberg "*behaves thus* intolerably" (297), Burney declares that she will continue to absent herself and when present, retreat into silence. The measure Burney uses to gauge Mrs. Schwellenberg's behavior is "civility," the quality by which Burney defines herself, and a quality that she is always assessing in others.

In Mrs. Schwellenberg, civility is rare—and this provides Burney with some fortitude. Despite her forced servility in Mrs. Schwellenberg's presence, Burney may lay claim to moral superiority. Arguably, this strength allows Burney to forego the rebellion that she considered at her father's suggestion and choose acquiescence in a situation that she abhors but to which she is bound. To explain her predicament, Burney returns to the metaphor of marriage that she uses when she narrates her entry into court in July of 1786.

> I had no way to compose my own spirit to an endurance of this, but by considering myself as *married to her* [Mrs. Schwellenberg], & therefore that all rebellion could but end in disturbance, & that concession was my sole chance for peace! O what reluctant nuptials!—how often did I say to myself Were these chains voluntary, how could I bear them! how forgive myself that I put them on! (*CJL* 2: 302)

The difficult marriage of which Burney writes in this passage is not of course assuaged by the love for God or the royal family as is the marriage she describes upon her entry to court; Burney is not here a young novitiate. This is domestic servitude in a forced secular marriage with all the material trouble and turmoil that involves.

By the end of November, 1787, Burney writes in a conciliatory way about her relationship with Mrs. Schwellenberg. Her manipulations of absence and presence seem to have resulted in a slightly kinder Mrs. Schwellenberg. And in the years that follow, Burney will continue to report—often with a sense of disbelief—stories of tyranny and abuse at the hands of her fellow servant. But this is a watershed moment for Burney, who

acknowledges that she is "yoked" to Mrs. Schwellenberg. This yoke is "hard to bear," Burney admits, but, she continues, it "is so annexed to my place that I must take one with the other, & endure them as I can" (*CJL* 2: 304). The final image of oxen yoked together is a compelling one for Burney's struggle with servitude and the materiality that attaches to it. The acceptance of servitude that she implies should indicate a reconciliation with her fate, but its materiality and brutality resonate in the portrait of two oxen yoked together in servitude.

Jilted: by Col. Digby

In many ways, Burney's relationship with Col. Digby is an antidote to her relationship with Mrs. Schwellenberg. Digby treats her with kindness and consideration; he acknowledges her intellect and literary accomplishments; and he offers the potential for a respectable way out of servitude: a companionate marriage that would replace the one of sacrifice she has made to the royal family and the one forced on her with Mrs. Schwellenberg. Burney's narrative of her relationship with Digby in the summer of 1788 stands out in the discourse of the court journals for its expression of joy and excitement. As Lorna Clark, the editor of Volumes III and IV of *The Court Journals and Letters*, notes, we watch Burney falling in love.[31] However, we also see in 1788 the seeds of discord when we learn of Digby's correspondence with Charlotte Gunning,[32] a Maid of Honor to the Queen, and we hear rumors of a courtship between Digby and Gunning. Burney dismisses these rumors, but when we see her narrative change, when we begin to see her retreat and transfer the authority of interpretation onto others, we know that she is in trouble. When she finally hears news of Digby's marriage to Charlotte Gunning in January of 1790, Burney reinforces herself with the knowledge and expression of her own civility.

Digby's marriage to Gunning, rather than Burney, is certainly a crisis of the heart for Burney, but it is also a crisis of subjectivity because at its core is the agency attached to one's personal (and familial) material worth: one's property and rank.

Although both women are royal servants and receive a salary, Gunning is a Maid of Honor, a position at court given to women from families of wealth and prestige. Burney's position, Keeper of the Robes, was most often held by a commoner (*CJL* 4: 388 n. 84). Burney assumes—and she is very likely correct—that Digby offers marriage to Gunning and not to her precisely because of her lack of property and status. Digby married a woman whose familial position in the world was appropriate to his own and who, it was rumored in 1789, brought £10,000 to the marriage.[33] Burney's only experience of romantic love while at court, and her one potential opportunity to leave court in an honorable fashion (marriage), is shattered by the force of her material circumstances—the very economic, political, and social materiality that is embedded in her servitude. This stark example of the business of marriage, and the tangible consequences of money in matters of the heart, unnerves Burney, who is already vulnerable because of her status as a wage earner.

When Burney first meets Col. Stephen Digby,[34] Vice-Chamberlain to the Queen, in August of 1786, he is married to Lady Lucy Fox-Strangways.[35] In her first reportage of Col. Digby, Burney describes him as "a Man of the most scrupulous good-breeding," who is "diffident, gentle & sentimental in his conversation, & assiduously attentive in his manners" (*CJL* 1: 88). Burney had known his wife in the early 1760s, when they were classmates at Anne Elizabeth Sheele's boarding school, and Burney has fond reminiscences of her kindness (*CJL* 1: 88 n. 324). Burney mentions Digby's considerate attentions very briefly in 1786, on the Oxford expedition;[36] however, her relationship with him does not progress until 1788, after his wife has died, and they become further acquainted at court. By July of 1788, while attending the royal family at Cheltenham, where the king was taking the waters for his health, Burney develops a serious romantic attachment to Digby, and early in 1789, Burney still refers to Digby as her "constant visitor" (*CJL* 5: 10). But she grows increasingly confused by his intentions, which he fails to clarify until he marries another woman in January of 1790.

The royal excursion to Cheltenham in July of 1788

was an idyllic escape from the repetitious burdens of life at Windsor, Kew, and St. James. Only the King, Queen, and three eldest princesses traveled to Cheltenham and thus the coterie of servants was small (*CJL* 3: 21). Less preoccupied by the usual fulsome activities at court, Burney was in a more leisurely position to enjoy the company of Digby, who asks to join her each evening at tea and each morning at breakfast (*CJL* 3: 53). The setting, then, of escape and intimacy is a fertile one for the blossoming of a romance, and, indeed, Burney's narratives become increasingly romantic and sentimental while at Cheltenham. Burney describes one evening in particular as a charming domestic scene in which Digby is reading William Falconer's poem *The Shipwreck* aloud to Burney while she works. When he reaches an exceptionally poignant line, "'*He felt the Chastity of Silent woe*" he pauses in silence and then like a sentimental hero "sighed so deeply" that Burney was "quite infected" by his sadness (*CJL* 3: 265).[37] When Digby leaves at the end of the evening to return to his lodgings in town, and she returns to her "little Cell," he encloses the book, from which he had been reading, in his pocket. In this modest gesture, Burney finds intimacy and the promise of love. She writes that she was "very much flattered he could put any notion of what might interest him, & of *me*, into the same sentence: & not a little internally *simpering* to see a *trait* so like what so often I have done myself,—carrying off a favourite Book, when I have begun it with my Susanna, that we might finish it together, without leaving her the temptation to *peep* before-hand!—" (*CJL* 3: 266). She relishes in this moment the sympathy she feels between them, the image of two like-minded souls inhabiting the same sentence, and finding with a man the depth of companionate love she shares with her sister.

A similar sense of joy derived from sympathy appears in a subsequent scene when Burney and Digby step outside after sharing a meal with Miss Planta. The weather "was so very fine" and "all without was so beautiful," Burney writes, that Digby, who had been ill with gout, "risked the fatigue of standing . . . to losing the lovely prospect for his Eyes, or sweet air for his breathing" (*CJL* 3: 319). She continues,

> The sweetness of the surrounding Scenery, & perhaps the harmony of our feelings in our recent reading, seemed to affect the mind of Mr. Digby with correspondent sensations; his Countenance spoke inward peace; his voice, universal benevolence; his manners, always pleasing & well bred, acquired a softness that seemed the result of a newly awakened & internal interest in every thing about him:—to judge him by his looks, & by his voice, his whole soul, or mind for this chosen little period, was in a state of gentlest repose. (*CJL* 3: 320)

Digby, the sentimental hero, here becomes a man of sensibility. Burney portrays him with depth and complexity, a mingling of emotion and intellect, and as an aesthetic object on which she enjoys gazing. "I cannot give you our conversation," she explains to her sister Susan,

> it was desultory & local: the Birds that chirped, the Meadows that bloomed, the Hills that rose before us, the purity of the air we breathed, the clearness of the fine blue Canopy that covered us, the stillness from turbulence, yet animation from insipidity, in all around us,—these were topics that, rising at the moment, made a union of our faculties with our senses, that kept our words & our ideas in the same simple & single direction. (*CJL* 3: 320)

Burney's repetition of "us" and "our" reinforces the intimacy she celebrates in this passage, and like the confluence she discovers in a single sentence above, she savors here the union of their ideas that move in "the same simple & single direction." In this scene, she again references Norbury Park, which has become for Burney the site of ideal domestic love, and this is the direction toward which she sees them moving. When Burney accounts for her own state, she describes it as a novelty—a "Novelty indeed!" Burney exclaims "—to *me*!—to be undisturbed by black tyranny,[38]—refreshed by rural scenery,—& brought to a sort of renovated state, by participating in the reflexions of one of the most contemplative & refined of human minds" (*CJL* 3: 320).

The romanticism captured in the passages above soon gives way to doubt and uncertainty once Digby leaves Cheltenham in August of 1788 and does not resume regular visits until 1789. Having no tangible evidence of Digby's intentions—such as a correspondence or a marriage proposal—Burney searches for clarity in forms of representation. She sifts through language, gestures, signs of any kind, to discover just what Digby means by his attentions. At times when Burney feels most certain of his affection and maintains hope of a future with him and release from court, her narrative is most straightforward, with a strong, uniform authorial voice (as in the passages above). However, when her confidence waivers—by 1789 she is less able to dismiss rumors of an alliance between Gunning and Digby—and when confusion sets in, Burney's narrative begins to unravel, and interpretations become more and more unstable. Her univocal narrative position gives way to a multivocal one, and her journal entries become more fragmented; she moves from contemplating a proposal of marriage from Digby and worrying about her suitability as a wife for him to declarations of "only friendship" and, finally, to anger at his deceit. Burney again engages a split subject and shifts interpretive authority abruptly from person to person as she tries to navigate an increasingly confusing array of signs. Burney uses Mrs. Schwellenberg both to express her uncertainties and self-doubt and to counter them. Mrs. Schwellenberg dismisses the significance of Digby's constant visits: "'So he might so well go to you,—when he could not go no where,—others, to Miss Somebody,—or Miss Any Body,—or what you call Miss Nobody,—'tis the same'" (*CJL* 5: 37–38). In response, Burney critiques Mrs. Schwellenberg's outburst and attributes it to mere "contempt" (*CJL* 5: 38). For reassurance, Burney uses far more reliable figures such as Mr. Smelt to read romantic intentions into Digby's attentions. On 11 January 1789, when Mr. Smelt comes to visit Burney, he wishes her "Joy!" at the return of Digby to court and the resumption of Digby's evening visits (*CJL* 5: 17). On numerous occasions Smelt and others interrupt a tête-à-tête between Digby and Burney and scurry off with apologies at interrupting an intimacy. As Burney hands over

interpretive responsibility to others, she stays safely tucked away in the position of primary observer, and she watches others watch her. Her interpretive remove, in an apparent position of passivity and retreat, is Burney's attempt to dominate the text; however, these are the moments where she reveals most clearly her crisis of subjectivity.

In her relationship with Digby, Burney is made painfully aware of the role money plays in marriage and of her lack of financial resources. To make matters worse, her status as a wage-earning servant locates her limitations materially. Situated in an historical moment, defined by economic, political, and legal status, Burney is deprived of the flights of fiction, the fanciful hopes that romantic love will liberate her from confinement. When a proposal is not forthcoming after the emotional intimacies of Cheltenham, Burney concludes that behind his failure to propose is his family, which would no doubt discourage a companionate marriage to a woman with neither property nor rank. "I now believe," Burney writes,

> that during his Three Weeks in the West, he had seriously examined *himself*, & his situation: I cannot but think he found himself rather dangerously eager in the pursuit of a friendship somewhat too assiduous for the fashions of the World, & that, whatever his own noble Mind might inspire of disinterested generosity in his regard & its consequences, he could not, in the very Heart of his high Family, & of his Lady Lucy's still higher connections, sustain the idea of braving a torrent of censure from them, & all Mankind.—I fancy, therefore, he came back with a resolution to forego all that was romantic in his regard, yet to maintain the more rational part. (*CJL* 5: 45–46)

The coherent expression of understanding in this passage is a departure from the fragmented, equivocal passages that dominate much of Burney's writing on Digby in 1789, as does her assertion that "*His Heart was surely Mine*" (*CJL* 5: 232), in a March 1789 entry.[39] When she makes these conciliatory comments about

Digby, she assumes he will remain single. However, once she learns of their marriage plans in November of 1789 and of their marriage ceremony in January of 1790, Burney's understanding turns to anger and accusations of duplicity and betrayal. No longer confused and no longer in need of a split subject and a fragmenting interpretation to navigate the confusion, Burney reclaims her interpretive authority and regains a narrative presence.

In her January 1790 journal letter to her sister Susan and friend Frederica Lock, Burney dissects Digby's inconsistent and hypocritical behavior and ridicules the details of the wedding ceremony, which took place at the home of the bride's father, Sir Robert Gunning. Having gathered her information from Dr. Fisher, who officiated at the ceremony, she reports that the couple was married in a drawing room with a worktable transformed into an altar and a minimal number of guests. The inference is that the wedding was a hasty, irreligious, and decidedly unromantic event that could not have meant much to Col. Digby. But rather than dwell on his probable insincerity, Burney turns the focus to her own proper behavior and her recognition of incivility. Just as she was dismissive of Lady Harcourt's hospitality at Nuneham Courtenay on the Oxford expedition, Burney is dismissive of the marriage. However, she is determined to conduct herself properly; thus, when just a week after the ceremony, Mrs. Digby comes to visit, Burney welcomes her into her rooms and proves herself a gracious hostess. And when Col. Digby persists in trying to visit her after his marriage, Burney discourages him. While, like Lady Harcourt, Digby may boast familial status, Burney asserts herself as the one who knows how to behave. Once again, she turns her civility into a currency to compensate for what she lacks, to bolster her identity, and to use as a weapon against those who cause her profound pain. It is a currency that transcends the material boundaries of money and, therefore, is not circumscribed by her status as a servant and a wage earner.

Conclusion

The narratives I have discussed above sit in stark contrast with much of Burney's writing in her court journals. It is not until 1790, when Burney is frequently ill and planning her resignation, that the fragmentation and authorial maneuvering set in with a vengeance. Through many of her journals and letters, Burney's narratives are comprised of long, engaging passages of novel-like description, dialogue, and drama that are truly entertaining.[40] In 1787, she is plagued by the antics of Mr. Guiffardière, a reader to the Queen and tutor to the princesses.[41] Yet while she finds his company agitating, he poses no threat to her subjectivity because he recognizes her as an author, a person of importance, and an attractive woman. In 1788, she is troubled by the prosecution of Warren Hastings; however, when she attends the trial, she delights in conversing with (and thoroughly charming) William Windham, one of the prosecutors, and in giving Edmund Burke, another of the prosecutors, the cold shoulder to show her disapproval of his attacks on Hastings. In these moments, Burney is once again the London intellectual, respected by others in her coterie. She is out in the public sphere where she sees friends and acquaintances, and where she is also seen and often admired.

Working as a royal servant was without question a disturbing and transformative experience for Burney. When Burney writes about her situation, the most humiliating and distressing moments are the seemingly modest reminders of her status as a wage-earning servant: when she is summoned by a bell or when Mr. Mathias delivers her wages. Ironically, her status as a wage earner, which fixes her politically and economically—and, arguably, is a counter-offensive to the status of "nobody"—offers Burney a way out of her confinement; whereas the status as royal servant, which requires an ahistorical devotion, does not. In addition to the anxiety attached to disappointing her father, Burney's hesitation about leaving court is a fear of being disloyal to the royal family. When Burney does resign, she does so for reasons of ill health; by 1790 and 1791, she is physically and emotionally debilitated. The physicality of the work was

more than Burney could handle; what she describes is without question exhausting. Julia Epstein has likened the requirements of servitude at court to a kind of "violence."[42] But it was also the trauma to her sense of self, her subjectivity, which Burney is never able to reconcile and that ultimately drives her from Windsor.

NOTES

[1] In 1768, FB wrote in her journal "To Nobody, then will I write my Journal! since To Nobody can I be wholly unreserved—to Nobody can I reveal every thought, every wish of my Heart . . . No secret *can* I conceal from No—body, & to No—body can I be *ever* unreserved . . . The love, the esteem I entertain for Nobody, No-body's self has not power to destroy. From Nobody I have nothing to fear, <the> secrets sacred to friendship, Nobody will not reveal, when the affair is doubtful, Nobody will not look towards the side least favourable—" (*The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*, 1: 2)

[2] For an extensive discussion of Burney's "Nobody," see Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace* 1670–1820. Gallagher finds "social satire" at the core of FB's passage on "Nobody" (203).

[3] Julia Epstein remarks on "Burney's lifelong attempts to construct a 'self'" which "were all conducted in and through writing" (17).

[4] *Queen's Household Index*. Royal Archives, Windsor Castle.

[5] Epstein regards Burney's letters from court as "literary productions" from "a writer whose skill at manipulating language is impressive indeed, and who channels her intense and volatile emotions into narrative control" (31).

[6] Margaret Doody notes the theatricality of the court and FB's awareness of the role-playing of all those in court (168).

[7] Frances Burney to Susanna Burney Phillips, 16 December 1785 (*The Additional Journals and Letters of Frances*

Burney, 1: 328). Burney uses this phrase again when she describes one of her duties, holding the train of the queen's gown. "I knew, for me, it was a great honour,—yet it made me feel, once more, so like a mute upon the stage, that I could scarce believe myself only *performing my own real character*" (*The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, 2: 28–29). All further references to this volume will be given parenthetically as *CJL* followed by volume and page number within the text.

[8] Doody 179. At Court, Burney claims to feel "annihilated" in Mrs. Schwellenberg's presence (*The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, 1: 184). All further references to this volume will be given parenthetically as *CJL* followed by volume and page number within the text.

[9] Susanna (Susan) Burney Phillips (1755–1800), Frances Burney's sister, who married (1782) Molesworth Phillips. In 1786, she resided with her family in Mickleham, Surrey.

[10] Frederica Augusta Schaub (1750–1832), who married (1767) William Lock of Norbury Park, Surrey. "Fredy" Lock was a neighbor to Burney's sister Susan Phillips and a friend to Burney since 1784.

[11] Burney continues to use this religious metaphor. In 1787, she refers to Windsor as "my monastery," a haven of quiet and solitude where she might recover from "two disappointments" (the loss of George Owen Cambridge as a romantic interest and Hester Lynch Piozzi as a friend), and where she will be able "to study for the approbation of my Lady Abbess . . . & to associate more chearily with my surrounding Nuns & Monks" (*CJL* 2: 25). In 1788, when Edmund Burke remarks on how long it has been since he has seen her, she replies that she "live⌈s⌋ in a monastary now!" (*The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, 3: 156). All further references to this volume will be given parenthetically as *CJL* followed by volume and page number within the text.

[12] Peter Sabor, *CJL* I: xvii. See also, Hester Davenport 34–39. Davenport describes in detail what it meant to dress the queen and notes that dressing the hair could take two hours (39).

[13] Davenport 35.

[14] Margaret Doody notes that early on Burney chafed at

the idea of working for a salary. In a letter to her sister Esther, dated 17 December 1785, Burney writes that when contemplating "preferments" her thoughts turned to "a handsome pension for nothing at all," which would "be as well as working night and day for a salary" (qtd. in Doody 170). Doody observes that female authors had few options for financial support and that there was no precedent for the granting of a pension for no work to a female author (170–71).

[15] George Augustus Vincent Mathias (*c.*1763–1848), Messenger to the Treasury. Burney received her salary in quarterly payments of £50 (*CJL* 2: 23 and n. 103).

[16] The Red Book is the *Royal Kalendar, or Complete and Correct Annual Register*, an annual directory published from 1767–1893.

[17] Hill, *Servants: English Domestics in the Eighteenth Century*, 17.

[18] In what might be seen as an act of forgiveness toward the Royal Family for placing her in this predicament, Burney writes that the Queen, too, is uncomfortable with Burney's servitude. "To Night," she writes, "like the rest of my attendance, I was merely treated as if an accidental visitor. Sweet Queen!—She seems as fearful of employing me as I am myself of being employed" (*CJL* 1: 22).

[19] In July 1787, Burney again reports her discomfort at receiving a salary. She writes to Susan, "Mr. Mathias is my *pay master*,—you cannot imagine how awkward it was to me at first to receive money!—a strange embarrassment, you will say, yet I assure you he evidently partook of it" (*CJL* 2: 212). Burney would be made uncomfortable by financial transactions throughout her time at court. When asked to protect money for her servant Columb, Burney writes "all money transactions have some portion of distaste to me" (Frances Burney to Susanna Burney Phillips, August 1790, Berg Collection, New York Public Library).

[20] Burney arrived at court on 17 July 1786 (*CJL* 1: xvii).

[21] George Simon Harcourt (1736–1809), 2nd Earl Harcourt, 1777, and Elizabeth Venables-Vernon (1746–1826). Lady Harcourt was a Lady of the Bedchamber in Queen

Charlotte's court from 1784–1818. Nuneham Courtenay, situated just south of Oxford, was the seat of the Harcourt family. See *CJL* 1: 91–92 n. 331.

[22] Elizabeth Vesey (*c.*1715–91) was raised in an important Anglo-Irish family and was married (1) to William Handcock and (2) to Agmondesham Vesey. While she did not leave behind a literary *oeuvre*, she hosted numerous gatherings of the intellectual women known as the bluestockings (*ODNB*).

[23] Peter Sabor notes that Burney had seen Reynolds's portrait of Lord Harcourt in December of 1778 and that she records meeting him at the home of Mary Cholmondeley in January of 1779 (*CJL* 1: 92 n. 335).

[24] See *CJL* 2: 230–31.

[25] See Mascha Gemmeke, "Burney's Cerbera: Elizabeth Juliana Schwellenberg (1728–1797)" *Burney Journal* 9 (2007): 20–61. According to Gemmeke, Mrs. Schwellenberg was with the royal family in Mirow, duchy of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, birthplace of Queen Charlotte, and then later when they moved, in 1752, to the castle of Neustrelitz, capital of the duchy of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

[26] Nussbaum discusses Émile Benveniste's theory about the "'I' who speaks and the 'I' who is spoken"; in this theory, "language constructs subjectivity, and in turn subjectivity writes language."

[27] Johanna Louisa Hagedorn (d. 1789), Keeper of the Robes from 1761–86. See *CJL* 1: 6 n. 27.

[28] Margaret Planta (1754–1834), English Teacher to the Royal Nursery from 1778 to 1812. See *CJL* 1: 17 n. 82.

[29] Jean-André Deluc (1727–1817), Reader to Queen Charlotte. See *CJL* 1: 56 n. 246.

[30] See *CJL* 2: 295. The reference to "Coadjutrix," a female assistant to an abbess, augments Burney's metaphor of the court as a convent. Burney had several nicknames for Mrs. Schwellenberg including "Cerberus," "La Presidente" and "Mrs. Hiccumbbottom."

[31] *CJL* 3: xxv.

[32] The Hon. Charlotte Margaret Gunning (1759–94),

daughter of diplomat Sir Robert Gunning and Anne Sutton; Maid of Honor (1779–90).

[33] *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, 5: 464. Geoffrey Sill, the editor of this volume, estimates the value of the property Charlotte Gunning brought to the marriage to be approximately £9,000. All further references to this volume will be given parenthetically as *CJL* followed by volume and page number within the text.

[34] The Hon. Stephen Digby (1742–1800). Digby had served at court since 1780 when he was Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales and, later, Groom of the Bedchamber to the King from 1781–82. In 1786, he was serving as Vice Chamberlain to the Queen (1783–92). Digby entered the army in 1759 and retired with the rank of lieutenant-colonel in 1778 (*CJL* 1: 88 and n. 323).

[35] Lady Lucy Fox-Strangways (1748–87), daughter of Stephen Fox-Strangways, 1st Earl of Ilchester, and Elizabeth Horner. Lady Lucy and Col. Digby were first cousins; Digby's mother, Charlotte Fox Digby, was sister to Lady Lucy's father. Lady Lucy soon fell ill and died in August of 1787 (*CJL* 1: 88 and n. 324).

[36] Burney records Digby's notice of her wellbeing on the expedition to Oxford. At an arduous moment attending the royal family, he offers her bread and apricots to give her strength. See C*JL* 1: 127.

[37] Lorna Clark notes the sentimental tone of the same passage (*CJL 3*: xxv).

[38] A reference to Mrs. Schwellenberg.

[39] Geoffrey Sill observes that the paragraph in which this quotation appears follows the 19 March entry; however, it appears to have been added at a later date, which is undetermined.

[40] For further discussion of the novel-like quality of Burney's narratives in the court journals, see Lorna J. Clark, "Frances Burney's Methods of Narrating the Court Experience, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* (Wiley Online Library, 2016), doi: 10.1111/1754-0208.12411.

[41] The Revd. Charles de Guiffardière (*c.*1740–1810),

French Reader to Queen Charlotte and French History Teacher to the Princesses (*CJL* 1: 23 n. 105).

[42] Epstein 29–32.

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