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General d'Arblay's Mementoes of a Military Life

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Abstract:

Later in life, General Alexandre d'Arblay became acutely aware that his wife's literary fame might eclipse his own military honors in the eyes of posterity, and he became anxious that his son Alex should have some evidence of his achievements after his death. His trip to Paris in 1817 was made in part to have a portrait painted by Horace Vernet to commemorate his military status. This article examines the portrait, alongside a panoramic sketch of the field of Waterloo that d'Arblay made, to argue that the production and curation of these military mementoes were originally intended to fashion a legacy of his achievements, independent of his wife's literary fame, for the benefit of his son.

Following his marriage to Frances Burney d'Arblay (1752-1840) in 1793, the fortunes and misfortunes that attended the life of General Alexandre d'Arblay (1754-1818) became important parts of Burney family history. Aside from Janice Farrar Thaddeus's reading of his poem "Les Doigts," d'Arblay has generally been seen through his wife's eyes, via either her journals or letters (*JL*, Hemlow et al.). This essay attempts to draw d'Arblay's biography out from the prism of Frances' writing and offer a close reading of a few extant objects which give us different insights into d'Arblay's life as a husband, father, and military man. First, it examines the provenance and context of his portrait, alongside items of his uniform and medals, all of which are displayed today at Parham House in Sussex. Second, it discusses a drawing of the Waterloo battle site

(now attributed firmly to d'Arblay on the strength of this essay), currently held at the National Portrait Gallery in London, in the light of popular contemporary panoramic images of the conflict, suggesting that such a format was designed to engage the young Alex d'Arblay (1794-1837) in the drama of his father's military experiences. Overall, I argue that the production and curation of these artifacts were intended by d'Arblay to fashion a legacy of his achievements, independent of his wife's literary fame, for the benefit of his son – an act which, partly due to her dominance as the textual narrator of his wishes and legacies, was only partially successful. This act of self-creation is poignant and complex, and it rewards the attention of scholars interested in the Burney family, in art history, or in military masculinities.

I: The Portrait

On 18 June 1817, Frances Burney d'Arblay wrote to her husband Alexandre expressing shock that their son Alex had not gone to bid farewell to his father, who was leaving Dover bound for France: "Permit me to assert Alex - blamable, horribly blamable as he is in this business, - has NOT an *unfeeling* heart: he has simply no FORE thought: voilà le vrai" (qtd. in Sabor 508). Alex, conversely, was very much in his father's thoughts during this trip. D'Arblay was going to France for several reasons, including business; but one of them was personal. He intended to commission a commemorative portrait of himself, made so that his son would honor his memory and be proud of his military achievements.

That portrait – the only oil painting of d'Arblay currently known – is on display at Parham House in Sussex. The accompanying type-written description, probably made in

the 1960s when it was first put on view there, quotes his words to Frances, translated as: "All the world will tell Alex who his mother is, but so that he shall not forget who his father was, I have had this portrait painted which I shall dedicate to him." The quotation is taken from Frances's letter to her son dated 17 October 1818, in which she offers him her opinions and advice about his work, friendships and way of life (*JL* 11:14). Having first pointed out that the maternal side of his family "have All risen to the respectable place they hold in the community by the exertion, & remuneration, of Talents" (*JL* 11:14), she is reminded of his paternal ancestry, his "incomparable" father, by looking up at the portrait on the wall in the drawing room. She then remembers and recounts General d'Arblay's stated wishes for his son when contemplating his own portrait. Her quotation attempts, through an act of posthumous ventriloquism, not only to emphasize but also to balance out the maternal legacy of which she clearly perceived herself the embodiment.

This is just one of several acts of such ventriloquism. In her discussion of this quotation, Joyce Hemlow adds Frances' further mention of d'Arblay's words from her manuscript *Narrative of the Last Illness and Death of General d'Arblay* (*JL* 6: 355-70). "'Parle de moi!' He said afterwards. 'Parle et souvent. Surtout à Alexander; qu'il ne m'oublie pas!!'" (qtd. in Hemlow 409). This quotation reinforces Frances' sense of an imperative to respect her husband's wishes and preserve his memory for their son. But it also indicates, again, her own position as the mediator of his sentiments. Indeed, John Wiltshire's analysis of her *Narrative* notes that "[t]he scraps of paper on which she wrote during d'Arblay's fatal illness, […] suggest that even whilst nursing her husband, she was thinking of writing it up… What must strike any reader of the 'Narrative' is how much

the foreground is occupied by the narrator herself" (Wiltshire, "Pioneer of Pathography" 15). Elsewhere he describes it as "a piece of selfcreation, in which Burney represents herself as heroic nurse" (Wiltshire, "Love unto Death" 6).

It is striking that d'Arblay's wishes are recorded and mediated through Frances' words, and important to acknowledge that she regularly engaged in self-promotion. This is most often discussed in the context of her editing of her father's *Memoirs* which Peter Sabor describes as "a thoroughly self-centered and ill-written narrative of her own" (Sabor, "Rummaging" 56-7; see also Ulph) and also applies to her descriptions of the reception of her early novels (Coulombeau, 4, 57). Nevertheless, it seems that both parents cared deeply about Alex and invested thought and emotional energy in their hopes for his future, and though she may have paraphrased or embellished her husband's words, there is no concrete reason to suppose them fabricated. D'Arblay's determination to provide a poignant visual memento for his son conforms with contemporary popular perceptions of such an object. For example, in pastor and writer John Evans' description, the portrait functions as a reminder of the parent and preserver of their legacy:

> A Portrait is the best mean devised by the ingenuity of art, to substantiate the fleeting form – you perpetuate the momentary existence. It is thine, O Painting! To preserve the form, which lies mouldering in the tomb…Portrait-painting subserves. It teaches beneficial lessons. It calls to mind the example of great men, when they are fled beyond the reach of observation. (Evans 71)

Alexandre d'Arblay himself was always destined for a military career. At the age of fourteen he joined the elite l'Ecole

d'Artillerie de Strasbourg, where Napoleon subsequently trained. His early career saw him rise through the ranks of the Toul Artillery Regiment (renamed Seventh Foot Artillery Regiment during the Revolution), to become Captain in 1782 (Six 316). He was then posted to the Lorraine region and employed at Maubeuge, one of the five royal arms factories, which suggests his practical and organizational skills were highly valued. In 1789 he served under La Fayette as major in the second division of the Paris National Guard and two years later he was appointed colonel of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, which formed a large part of the National Guard (Broughton n.p.). By 22 July 1792, he was appointed field marshal of the Central Army. However, he did not receive his patent because a month later he left Paris and subsequently resigned when La Fayette deserted during the turbulent rule of Robespierre. Details of participation in military engagements during his early career are elusive. Though described as "a successful French military officer," Kevin Jordan adds that he frequently seems "an unlikely soldier" (78), especially when characterized by Frances "as a figure removed from his military past," something with which she was far more comfortable (Jordan 79), having always regretted his "profession of blood" (Hemlow 243).

By 1814, d'Arblay's career revived when he was appointed to the restored Bourbon King Louis XVIII's bodyguard. He was stationed with an artillery company in Senlis, forty kilometers north of Paris, expecting military engagement after Napoleon returned from exile, but he was eventually placed in charge of recruiting deserters from Napoleon's army at Trier (or Treves) in 1815. His revived military career had not led him to the battlefield. Hemlow describes it as "ten years of office work in place of the military appointments that he could have had

under the Emperor" (Hemlow 374). It ended with a violent kick from a horse, a stay at a military hospital near Treves, and his return, with Frances, to Britain at the end of the year 1815 (Summers 7). His death in Bath in 1818 was largely a result of his injuries.

In between the summer of Waterloo (and the injury) and his death, d'Arblay chose to make the aforementioned trip to Paris. It is striking that he commissioned a portrait from the studio of a French artist, rather than commissioning a British portraitist such as Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), who was working on post-Waterloo portraits on the Continent at this time (Crow 107-08).[1] Horace Vernet (1789-1863) was a prolific producer of fashion designs, caricatures, portraits, and horses in the manner of his father Carle (1758-1836) who is credited with contributing to d'Arblay's portrait in Parham's gallery caption and in Hemlow (facing 234), and landscapes in the manner of his grandfather Joseph (1714-1789). In 1817, his studio was at 11 de la rue des Martyrs in the historic Pigalle quarter, a popular location for artists' studios, in a year when he showed many drawings of military subjects at the Salon. Vernet became renowned for his speed, ease, and ability to capture a likeness in one sitting with a few sweeps of his brush, qualities likely to have appealed to the cashstrapped d'Arblay who would also have had little time or ability to undergo lengthy sittings due to his delicate health. During the early years of the Restoration, Vernet's studio became the meeting place for artists and veterans openly hostile to the Bourbon government (Athanassoglou-Kallmyer), and he remained a lifelong supporter of Napoleon, finding a patron in Louis-Philippe, duc d'Orléans (1773-1850) who was leader of the rebellious cadet branch of the Bourbon dynasty. One must wonder whether d'Arblay

was aware of Vernet's politics at this time and the possible risks posed by attending the studio. However, the artist's subsequent discreet conciliatory gestures to the government paid off and he was appointed director of the French Academy in Rome in 1829. When Louis-Philippe became king Louis Philippe I in 1830 Vernet's success was assured.

Figure 1. General Alexandre D'Arblay. Horace and Carle Vernet, 1817, Oil on canvas, 52 x 44.5 cm. Author's own photograph. Image provided by kind permission of Parham House, Sussex.

The painting (Figure 1) is a modest size, 52cm x 44.5cm, and there is no record of its original cost. The pose is a half-length (an international term for a portrait to below the waist

and usually to the knees).[2] Account books show that the British artist Sir William Beechey (1753-1839) charged between £52 and £126 for half-length portraits in 1817, but he had royal patronage at that time and we cannot be sure of equivalent costs in France (Roberts 243-245). D'Arblay's portrait is smaller than the half-length portrait of Frances that faces it at Parham, a pairing that is discussed further below. D'Arblay has perhaps a slightly younger face than that of a sixty-eightyear-old, with thinning and greying hair combed over his receding hairline. The high forehead, hooded eyes, somewhat prominent chin and genial expression match a print of a drawing of his younger self which may be a more familiar likeness to Burney scholars (Walker).[3] He wears the dark full-dress uniform of a General under Louis XVIII (most uniforms at the time differed from those under Napoleon only in details such as insignia and badges). His embroidered collar, cuffs, epaulettes and silk sash, the gold-tasseled sword which he clutches in one hand and gloves in the other, along with a blue cloak which drapes the chair, suggest that he has paused in his duties as General while contemplating a scene off to the right of the frame. The background, which d'Arblay probably chose in consultation with the artist, is the most curious aspect of the portrait. Despite his apparently comfortable seated position, it seems that he also wished to be represented as a man of action in the heat of battle. Amid the sulfurous smoke, a terrified horse looms over his left shoulder (possibly Carle Vernet's contribution to the work, as a specialist horse painter), and an artillery officer is ready to light the fuse of a cannon on the battlefield to his right.

The combination of seated studio portrait with a scene of intense action is unusual in Vernet's oeuvre, as it also was with other popular French military portraitists such as Louis-

Léopold Boilly (1761-1845) who favored half-length portraits with plain backgrounds. Generally, Vernet painted full length portraits to accompany background battle scenes, such as in his heroic depiction of *César-René-Marie-François-Rodolphe de Vachon, Marquis de Belmont-Briançon*, or of *Colonel Clary, commandant le 1e Régiment de Hussards*, which are both shown with magnificent horses, eager and active on the battlefield (Vernet). It is likely that he would have charged extra for the additional background details and time involved, although it is rare to find such itemized facts in artists' records.[4] Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807) kept detailed records about her charges based on the extent of work necessary although she mainly used a standard scheme based on canvas sizes.[5] In another example, the Anglo-American artist, John Singleton Copley (1738-1815) charged forty guineas for half-lengths with additional costs for extra features such as "hands" (Copley and Pelham 112). It is therefore notable that d'Arblay did not want to settle for a domestic, pastoral or blank background, and probable that the chosen scene suggests pride in his military experience. The background connects his likeness with notions of bravery, dedication and a long history of military action. The memory he wanted to preserve for Alex is not one of exile and penury but of masculine, aristocratic tradition and combative engagement with the world.

Portraiture has received scholarly attention more recently in relation to its relevance within biographical, social, political and historical frameworks. From Richard Brilliant's idea of "masks of convention" (110) to Peter Burke's "social illusions" and "special performances" (33) and Marcia Pointon's "open-ended texts for consumption" (9), a close reading of a portrait now demands not only broader context but attention to

detail. Ludmilla Jordanova reminds us of the core elements of portraiture:

> The following list illustrates some of the issues that should always be raised in relation to any portrait (in addition to the obvious ones involving the identity of sitter, patron and artist, date and provenance): size, medium, proportion of the body represented, presence or absence of accoutrements, the palette, the pose, the proportion of the canvas taken up by the sitter, dress, hair, background, frame, intended location. We also need to ask about how the image came into being and about the existence of related images. (36)

At least one of Jordanova's points is difficult to ascertain in this case. We do not know exactly where d'Arblay's portrait spent its early years, but assume it remained for most of its life within the Burney family. It was purchased by Hon. Clive and Alicia Pearson at auction from Sotheby's on 19 December 1960, Lot 297, along with the portrait of Frances by Edward Francesco Burney, Lot 294, and other items relating to the Burney family. These included letters, which were formerly the property of Miss Ann Julia Wauchope, the great-granddaughter of Frances Burney's niece Charlotte Barrett. The House and Gardens at Parham were opened to the public in 1948. It is therefore likely that this group was acquired to appeal to visitors and was placed on display very shortly after it was purchased. Alicia Pearson was a great admirer of Frances Burney's writing, so this may also have been a serendipitous acquisition.[6] The house is now owned by a Charitable Trust and descendants of the Pearsons live there.

II: Display at Parham

Figure 2. Display format at Parham. Author's own photograph. Image provided by kind permission of Parham House, Sussex.

Measuring forty-eight meters, the Long Gallery in Parham is the third-longest gallery in a private house in England. The portrait of Alexandre d'Arblay, and his uniform items, are displayed opposite Frances Burney's portrait and a framed needlework sampler by her mother Esther Sleepe, in an alcove off the main gallery (Figure 2). Other items on show in the gallery reflect the collecting interests of the owners, such as historical paintings, portraits, tapestries, furniture and sculpture. The physical context of d'Arblay's painting at Parham, alongside other items, raises interesting questions about the

mediation of display in a country house setting, as well as how biography is visualized and the values underpinning the display design. This is of current interest to art historians and curators, and it is explored, for example, in a 2015-2020 research project *Art and the Country House*, which aims "to explore the conditions, facilities and habits of display in the country house, investigating such issues as the shifting modes of the picture hang, [and] the introduction of dedicated gallery spaces in the country house" (Postle, n.p.). The project's focus on the motivations and circumstances of collection display are relevant and informative when considering the development of Parham's display, while this essay contributes its own discussion to the broader topic.

Captions accompanying the d'Arblay portrait are the originals made in the 1960s, derived from saleroom information and research by the owners (such as the quotation from Frances's letter referenced at the beginning of this article). There could not be a greater contrast for d'Arblay's portrait than with the larger, well-known 1782 portrait of Frances by Edward Francisco Burney on the opposite wall (Saggini 28-51), juxtaposed with the framed needlework sampler by her mother Esther Sleepe. Margaret Anne Doody reproduces this work in her book with the caption "Sampler of My own dearest Mother. Given to me by her precious Self, when I was 8 years of age" (Doody 98; see also Parker 132). In addition to invoking female gift-giving, inheritance and gendered expectations within the Burney family, the inclusion of Sleepe's sampler connects the Burney display with a spectacular, mainly seventeenthcentury embroidery collection on show nearby in the house. Such an abundance of traditional feminine work focuses the visitor's attention on the material culture of female creativity represented

by both Frances and her mother. In this context, d'Arblay's tokens of military prowess strike a discordant note.

Indeed, such tokens include not only the portrait, but also items of General d'Arblay's uniform. The skilled embroidery of French uniform makers is evident on close inspection and serves to complement Esther Sleepe's needlework, albeit with a different origin and purpose. The carefully preserved collar, cuffs and epaulettes with their beautiful goldwork embroidery,[7] along with the original container were made by Poupard de Launay, famous hat makers to Napoleon and the military elite. The shop with the sign "Temple du goût," or "Temple of Taste," was situated in the arcades of the Palais-Royal, next to Rue de la Loi, at number 32.[8] The name on the box dates d'Arblay's purchase to after 1811, when the firm was renamed and d'Arblay's career had taken a different turn. The uniform items are shown in a display case, possibly contemporary with the original installation. The labels are, like the wall description, faded and hard to read. We therefore view these objects through two historical points of time: an early nineteenth-century collection, mediated through the exhibiting conditions of museums and galleries of the 1960s.

Figure 3. The case containing the medals. Author's own photograph. Image provided by kind permission of Parham House, Sussex.

The uniform items mimic the positioning of their painted counterparts above, while a separate exhibit of medals with faded ribbons takes center stage. The first of the three medals is the *Légion d'Honneur*, the highest French distinction, which is still awarded to all who distinguish themselves through civilian or military valor. It was instituted by Napoleon in 1802 and continued at the Restoration, with the fleurs-de-lis substituted for the eagle on the reverse and the head of Henri IV for that of Napoleon (Jones, 3). The second medal is the *Fidelity Decoration*, created by order of Louis XVIII to replace the *Décoration du Lys*; six hundred National Guards serving in Paris in 1815 received this medal, of whom d'Arblay was one. The third medal is the *Order of St Louis*, revived in the same

year to reward officials who had professed the Catholic faith and rendered distinguished service. The three medals together situate d'Arblay as an honored servant of the restored Bourbon monarchy. Although he was on the winning side at Waterloo, his French uniform also associates him with relics of a traumatic national defeat.

In most traditional country house displays, husband and wife pendant portraits highlight "the gendered virtues of their sitters" within the "socially approved ideals" of separate spheres for men and women (Retford 19, 37). Kate Retford, for example, points out the virtues frequently paired with such portraits, when she cites a contemporary assessment of John Hoppner's portrait of Frederick, Duke of York (1792) as "manly, military and commanding" and of his wife Frederica, Duchess of York (1792) as "gentle, graceful and affecting" (20). Parham is no exception to the country house tradition, with many dynastic portraits on its walls, usually positioned side by side, in "conversation" with each other. The Burney alcove imagines d'Arblay and his wife within this conventional format, but the gendered experiences they underwent alone seem to be underlined by the physical space that separates their portraits. Although displayed in conjunction with each other, the paintings have little to connect them, either in style or any circumstances of their original construction. The couple are isolated from each other in a poignant reminder of their differences rather than with any visual signs of union which characterize the paired portraits in Retford's study. The youthful Frances at the beginning of her literary career contrasts with her aging, sick and disappointed husband at the twilight of his active life (Hemlow 380). This contrast was unlikely to have been the intention of the paintings' twentieth-century owners.

III: Sketching Waterloo

Another memento of d'Arblay's military life which was intended for his family on his return from France after 1815, and which I suggest might have been drawn particularly to appeal to Alex, was a sketch of the Waterloo campaign battle ground, showing the terrain and its main features in the form of a panoramic map. Currently held in the National Portrait Gallery, this sketch is drawn using black ink on a roughly cut length of thin tissue paper (217mm x 1160mm) glued to join three sections (d'Arblay 'Plan'). It is preserved in an envelope among other Waterloo-related prints, portraits and drawings in the extra-illustrated albums compiled by Frederick Leverton Harris.[9] It was first attributed to d'Arblay when it was reproduced by Joyce Hemlow and her team as an illustration to volume eight of *The Journals and Letters of Frances Burney* in 1980 (map facing 224). However, the sketch has no date, signature or attribution and so remained anonymous in NPG records until now. There are some similarities between the style of the illustrations and that of the simple line drawings of d'Arblay's cottage and land that we associate with him during his time in West Humble (Hill 230). In addition, there are paleographic similarities between some of the text on the map and extant examples of d'Arblay's handwriting, such as the manuscript *Recueil de lettres*, held in the Osborn Collection at the Beinecke Library (Arblay). Comparison of his capital letter "B" from these documents is particularly firm evidence of his authorship of the map. Much of the text is identifiably in his hand. However, there is also evidence of other hands at work – possibly even Frances' – though further research in this area is required.

The map apparently provides a view of the aftermath of the Battle of Waterloo, providing sketched outlines of the terrain and features of the landscape. As mentioned near the beginning of this article, d'Arblay was posted at Treves, over a hundred and sixty miles south of Waterloo and there is no evidence that he participated directly on the campaign battlefields. Frances joyfully confirms this in her letter to him, dated Saturday 24 June 1815, "to know you at Treves during these scenes of desolation & slaughter, not merely for your so loved existence–though surely for me that were enough! – but to know you have not been killed *mentally* with witnessing–or aiding!– the dreadful carnage" (*JL* 8: 248). Hemlow describes him as "a forgotten warrior [who] stayed doggedly on at his post" (Hemlow 372). It was left to Frances to recount vivid descriptions of the battle's aftermath, such as the casualties returning to Brussels, to her husband.

By the time they returned to England in October 1815, then, there is no evidence that either Frances or her husband had directly visited the scenes of the battle of Waterloo. If he is indeed the author of the sketch, we cannot be sure from which source d'Arblay was able to draw his intelligence. It may have been constructed from available reports and descriptions, from access to military resources, or maps and later visualizations of the scenes by others. With no date, the sketch was likely to have been made some time between 1815 and 1818 and its added text passages demonstrate collaboration with others to provide as accurate and vivid a picture as possible.

The terrain and perspective of the panorama has many similarities to printed souvenir guides, such as those devised by Henry Aston Barker in 1816 and later by Robert Burford (Barker; see also Beckett 72, 77). These may also have informed

d'Arblay's panorama format. The farm of La Haye Sainte, a key Allied position referenced in many contemporary accounts of the battle (Hibbert 71) is shown with a damaged roof. One striking aspect of the sketch is the absence of human figures. Although approximately fifty thousand men and ten thousand horses were killed or wounded on a single afternoon at Waterloo, and professional on-site artists often produced etchings to visualize the height of battle or the grim aftermath (Stoney, n.p.)[10] there is no sign of such carnage here. The landscape is quiet, desolate and detached.

The map is annotated by detailed descriptive passages of the associated military action. One example mentions the energy and involvement of the Duke of Wellington: "To say where le duc de W. was afterwards impossible. – it would be more difficult to say where he was not! Where his presence was most requisite, he was to be found. He seemed to be every where present" (D'Arblay 'Plan'). This may be a direct paraphrase of Frances' letter from Brussels in which she quotes an as yet unidentified eyewitness to the battle, Mr. Saumarez, as saying of Wellington that "He was everywhere […] the eye could turn in no direction that it did not perceive him" (*JL* 8: 442). However, Wellington's energy was also noted in many other accounts of the battle. Walter Scott, for example, described him as "constantly exposing himself to enemy fire and visiting almost every square in the front line" (Muir 469). Other passages from d'Arblay's map read from an English point of view rather than from a French one. For example, the description of an attack on Hougoumont, includes: "The French came on with their usual shouts and their usual impetuosity" (D'Arblay 'Plan'). This does not read as a comment from a French General expressing empathy for his nation's troops,

albeit serving on the opposing side at that time. It may, however, reflect his previous experiences in command.

As military historians have noted, maps were essential tools during not only the planning and implementation of the military campaign, but also as souvenirs and objects of commemoration. During and after Waterloo, survivors and witnesses compiled dozens of known maps as well as diaries, which enabled them to recount and explain their experience and claim recognition for their own part in a national victory. Lieutenant John Hildebrand, for example, based his memoir on his personal campaigning map, "which I always carried in my breast pocket and marked carefully daily, unless some unavoidable impediment intervened" (Glover 172). These maps, of course, were not always accurate; Kenton White's study of Waterloo maps detailing troop placements cross-checks different examples to show wide discrepancies, "the problems inherent in trying to freeze what is essentially a dynamic event" (2).

D'Arblay was a survivor of the overall military campaign of which Waterloo was a part, but he was not a witness to the battle itself. The map, if it is indeed his production, commemorates his vicarious participation in the Allied victory but relies on the contributions of others. He seems to have felt compelled and entitled to produce a necessarily multi-authored account with both French and English annotation which remained in the family and was not intended for publication. He may have regretted his distance from the action but have seen the value of recounting a version of the story as it unfolded, and he took time and trouble to produce the sketch which he carefully constructed. He lists thirty-eight points of reference in French in a table to correspond with numbered features on the map. Though Frances could offer aspects that

she had gleaned from individuals she encountered in Brussels, the origins of some elements are more difficult to explain and may remain enigmatic. Some descriptive passages are uniquely individual and clearly rely on the personal experience of contributors. For example, the description of the progress of Prussian troops includes the following: "But there was not a moment to be lost; & the G[ene]ral resolved immediately to begin the attack. Their way was through the Forest of Soignies. By good fortune the peasant who guided them was a man of more than common sagacity [….] Then said he we shall take them all! Had he been less disposed to serve the allies, or less intelligent, he might have led them into a hollow way where their [illegible] could not have past" (D'Arblay, 'Plan'). Local guides aiding troop movements are not generally mentioned or celebrated in Waterloo accounts and this example is clearly a personal observation, maybe by one of d'Arblay's military colleagues or even by one of the deserters he interrogated at Treves. By including it, d'Arblay was claiming the importance of eyewitness accounts, though not his own, and of the variety of experiences that contributed to a complex picture of the campaign. The map remains a mystery in many ways.

When the sketch was reproduced as an illustration to volume eight of *The Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, as mentioned above, it was split into two halves for ease of reproduction. However, this distorts our understanding of how it was originally intended to be read and used. It is constructed in the manner of a panorama, albeit necessarily an inverted one; that is, with the images designed to be read on the outside face as a more practical alternative to the inner side of the paper when the left and right edges are aligned to form a circular image or drum. Careful manipulation of the paper

was needed to match the continuous lines of the landscape; in fact, a set of written instructions explain how to "read" it as a 360-degree image: "Each Plate forms a semi circle, comprising the whole view which the eye can take in at once. The 2 plates join together at each end in A or B, forming a complete circle or panoramic view of the field of Both." As such, it is intended as a panorama. However, d'Arblay chose to reference the large-scale panorama spectacles, rather than the ostensibly more likely hand-held scrolls, also called panoramas, produced to commemorate public processional events which were beginning to become popular at the end of the eighteenth century. These were often elaborate, hand-colored and not intended to join up to form a circular image. From March 1816 to May 1818, Henry Aston Barker's (1739-1806) panorama of Waterloo was displayed at Leicester Square, and was likely to have influenced d'Arblay's sketch (Beckett 70).

Panoramas had developed in the last half of the eighteenth century when a paying public could view large canvases in specially built rotunda buildings for a multisensory experience of a landscape or city scene. The best-known examples were at London's Leicester Square and at the Lyceum, where Robert Ker Porter (1777-1842) showed the first military panorama (Altick 134-36; Beckett 66-67; Looser 63-67). Following Waterloo, promoters lost no time in constructing battle scenes which exploited the drama of contemporary warfare, incorporating painted backdrops and foreground props for an immersive experience. The popularity of such shows continued throughout the nineteenth century (Reynolds 61; Kingstone 27-31). The Passage des Panoramas is the location of the first panorama buildings opened in Paris in 1802 by Robert Fulton, so d'Arblay would have been aware of this form

of entertainment in Paris, as well as in London (Neumann 48). Not all visitors were impressed with the experience. Hester Lynch Piozzi (1741-1821) described panoramas as "a mere deception" to ensnare the "vulgar" (163). Frances Burney's great niece Fanny Anne Burney (1812-1860), unlike the older Piozzi, thought that the Panorama of Versailles which she saw displayed in 1840 was "well painted". She reports a conversation with the exhibitor in which he tells her that the panorama with greatest public appeal in living memory was Aston Barker's 1816 Waterloo Panorama: it was "a *national* subject, and was sure to interest all ranks and [he said] 'there was plenty of fighting and bustle in it, which the lower classes always like'" (qtd. in Rolt 307-08).

The panorama format was, then, a fashionable, multi-sensory way to invite dynamic public engagement with a battle that changed the course of European history. The interest shown by Fanny Anne Burney was likely to have been shared by other young visitors. The essayist Felix McDonogh described a variety of visitors in 1818, including youthful dandies and loungers, and "a covey of beauties, surrounded by fashionables" (163). If youth generally favors novelty and the novelty of the panorama spectacle can be characterized as "the paradigmatic point of origin for the rise in mass entertainment […] that inform[s] the emergence of the new visual media in the nineteenth century" (Ellis 133-34), it is likely that d'Arblay showed his awareness of the innovations at this time by constructing his own panorama, designed to appeal to Alex, who was twenty-one years old in 1815.

IV: Conclusion

Alexandre d'Arblay was a tender father who often thought about his son's future and hoped to exert influence over his conduct. Other items written in his hand within the Burney archive, such as his *Recueil de lettres* (a series of thirteen instructional advice letters, mainly by Frances, which he copied and bound for his son's information and instruction) offer ample evidence of his anxieties in this respect. This article has provided readings of three little-known objects that can significantly enhance this picture, particularly regarding d'Arblay's military career and how he wished it to be perceived and remembered. The three sorts of military memento outlined in this article - the portrait, the items of uniform, and the panoramic map of Waterloo - suggest that he wished to convey to his son an impression that he had played a significant part in the theatre of war during a crucial time in European history.

If d'Arblay was consciously attempting to establish a legacy for Alex, unique and separate from his wife's literary fame, it is poignant that in many ways the artifacts that he left behind remain intertwined with her own, more famous, words and image. Here I have argued that his portrait incorporated imagined elements of the drama at Waterloo, and it is an artistic rendition reflecting the nature of his career rather than depicting an identifiable military campaign. The display of his portrait and uniform at Parham, however, is overshadowed by Frances' iconic portrait which is widely known and reproduced. Moreover, the panoramic map of Waterloo that has been attributed to him was most likely based on others' eyewitness reports. Marooned in an outpost of military clerical

work at Treves, d'Arblay's experiences could not add directly to the drama of Waterloo that unfolded without him. We currently have no access to military records of his work there, which would provide interesting background to the volatile movement of troops during the campaign, although such research in future could uncover valuable evidence of d'Arblay's contributions.

However, none of this detracts from the probability that d'Arblay cared deeply about his legacy for his son. We could say that he utilized the energy and pace of Frances' narratives, mined the details about Waterloo which she and others could provide to give meaning and "truth" to his sketch of the scene, and succeeded in picturing himself as a military hero unbound from a specific time and place. His legacy was intended to outlast the confines of his career and provide inspiration for his son in the future. In this, we can acknowledge his intentions and respect his struggles and achievements to conclude that he fashioned himself as a worthy father and model of fortitude and loyalty of whom Alex could be proud.

NOTES

[1] See details in "Lawrence at Work."

[2] D'Arblay's portrait canvas does not conform to the usual measurements, being much smaller. See notes on portrait canvas sizes in "Threequarters, kit-cats and half-lengths."

[3] Frances Burney identifies the portrait among d'Arblay's possessions which arrived back from France in 1819, noting, "I shall except only His Portrait – dear to my Soul! Drawn by William Locke just at the period of our Marriage!" (*JL* 11:55). Drawing reproduced in (*JL*: 2, plate 1).

[4] Information confirmed in emails to the author from Martin Myrone, Convenor of British Art Networks, 7 Feb. 2025; Annette Wickham, Curator of Works on Paper, Royal Academy of Arts, and Mark Pomeroy, Archivist, Royal Academy of Arts, 10 Feb. 2025.

[5] See *Memoria delle pitture fatte d'Angelica Kauffman 1781-1795*. Royal Academy of Arts Archive, KAU/1, https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/artartists/archive/memoria-delle-pittura-fatte-dangelica-kauffman. Accessed 14 Feb. 2025.

[6] Information on provenance confirmed in email to the author from David Wise at Parham Archives, archives@parhaminsussex.co.uk, 6 Feb. 2024.

[7] See discussion of goldwork on military uniforms: https://handembroidery.com/blogs/threads/historic-goldworkuniforms?srsltid=AfmBOopevQBLtR82NzttBo_yPGXRCUg9mqsWXn6H5RUBFdYpN7MK70H1. Accessed 9 Apr. 2024.

[8] See discussion, "Napoleon's Hat." *Napoleon.org*. https://www.napoleon.org/en/history-of-the-two-empires/objects/napoleons-hat/ Accessed 20 Oct. 2024. In the 21st century, the

company has been revived.

[9] See the map reproduced: D'Arblay, Alexandre-Jean-Baptiste Piochard, "Plan of Waterloo June 18 1815." National Portrait Gallery, NPG D23296, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw139514/Plan-of-Waterloo-June-18-1815?search=sp&sText=NPG+D23296&firstRun=true&rNo=0 Accessed 9 Apr. 2025.

[10] Examples include Basire; later elaborate examples include Sams; Gordon and Sala.

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