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 NON-WALPOLEAN MANUSCRIPTS IN THE
LEWIS WALPOLE LIBRARY
BY JEREMY BLACK

Yale's Lewis Walpole Library at Farmington is renowned for its collection of Walpoleana, but its very fame has distracted attention from the material unrelated to Walpole collected by W. S. Lewis. It also ranks as a major archive for eighteenth-century British history, possibly the leading overlooked one. This article seeks to focus attention on the most important collection of such material, the papers of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams (1708–1759), but it is first necessary to draw attention to two holdings of related interest.

Farmington has the leading collection of the papers of Edward Weston bought by Lewis in 1952 and 1958. Weston was one of the often shadowy and too frequently ignored bureaucrats on whom the government of Hanoverian Britain depended. A long-serving under-secretary, he devoted much of his correspondence to diplomatic matters, and this correspondence is of value precisely because of its confidential and informal nature. The collection includes intercepted Jacobite correspondence and copies of treaties. A portion of it was printed by the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts in its report number 10, appendix 1 (1885), when the material belonged to Charles Fleetwood Weston Underwood. The Farmington collection is especially useful for the early 1740s and for 1761–1762 and is larger than the collection of Weston's papers held in the British Library and of that still in private hands, held by his descendant John Weston-Underwood of Mill St. House, Iden Green, Kent, England.¹

A second holding of importance is the Farmington collection of Grenville papers procured from Elkin Mathews in September 1932. This collection was substantially printed in the *Grenville Papers*,² but there are important differences. Farmington holds all the letters printed from 1742 to 23 December 1755, with the exception of two: one from Countess Temple to Earl Temple, 28 December 1754, and another from Potter to Grenville, September 1755. There are passages omitted in the printed text of the letters of Grenville-Temple to George Grenville of 3 October 1749, James Grenville to Viscount Cobham of 13 July 1752, and Pitt to Grenville of 29 January 1754. Although Farmington holds none of the letters for 1756 and 1757, it

has all the letters printed in Smith for 1758. Two letters are missing in the Farmington collection of 1759 (from the Rev. Mr Cotton to Grenville, 1 June and 27 August), and two for 1761 (from Pitt to Grenville, 18 October, and from Jenkinson to Grenville, November). Three letters and Grenville's "Political Narrative" are missing in the Farmington collection for 1761: Countess Temple to Earl Temple, 6 January; Pitt to Grenville, 2 July; and Pitt to Duke of Newcastle, 7 October. Missing for 1762 are three of Grenville's narratives: Bute to Grenville, 22 May, 30 May, and 1 June; Weston to Grenville, 9 July; Colonel Berkeley to Earl Temple, 7 October; Wilkes to Temple, 5 October; Rodney to Grenville, 4 December; and Countess Temple to Earl Temple, 17 December.

Conversely, the Farmington collection includes letters and other material acquired from Mathews in September 1932 that are not printed in Smith's edition: Hester Grenville to [? Lady Conway], [? April 1750]; Browne Willis to Lord Cobham, 7 August 1750; Lord Temple to Grenville, 10 January 1758; Temple to Pitt, 13 October 1759³; Pitt to [?], 5 May 1760; Lord Stratford to Earl of Holderness, 30 January 1761; Charles James Fox to Jack Lee, undated; Earl of Inchiquin to Holderness, 25 January 1765; undated manuscripts by Sir Philip Francis; Richard Lyttelton to Holderness, 3 February 1761; Macduff to [?], 11 February 1761; Chandos to Hardwicke, 14 February 1761; Warren Hastings to [?], 4 March [?]; Bute to Grenville, 22 July 1761; Wilkes to Holderness, 9 February 1762; Frederick the Great to [?], 25 March 1762; Earl of Pembroke to Lord Denbigh, 14 April 1762; "Copy of answer from Mr. Tucker" to Bute, 27 May [?]; "Copy of a Declaration made verbally by Mr. Secretary Grenville on the 5th of August 1762 by the King's order to Messrs. Knyphausen and Michell in answer to their repeated demands of communication"; George Townshend to [?], 22 August and 19 November 1762; Fra. Knollys to Pitt, 23 November 1762; Shelburne to Mansfield, 6 November 1762; Viscount Stormont to [?], 3 August 1762; John Murray to Lord Grenville, 13 August 1762; Shelburne to Lee, undated; Waldegrave to [?], 17 November 1762; Earl Waldegrave to [?], 17 November 1762; Lord Liverpool to Lord Mansfield [November 1762]; Hester Chatham to Thomas Cholmondeley, 6 February 1776, and to Mr Grenville, 3 May 1777; Earl Temple to James Grenville, 15 April 1777; Duke of Portland to "Sir Grey," 16 October 1787; and Duke of Newcastle to [? Henry Dundas], 24 December 1793.

The wealth of material in Farmington is indicated by the amount of correspondence of Grenville held in other collections. For ex-

ample, among the Weston papers for 1762 are letters from George Grenville to Weston of 9 July, 1, 3, 14, 22, and 24 September, and 13 and 20 October, as well as a letter to Grenville from a Mr Luders of 13 August. Other Grenville correspondence includes that of Lady Bolingbroke to George Grenville, 3 and 8 December 1746; George Grenville to Lady Conway, 24 December 1730, 19 June 1731, *ca.* 1733, 6 January 1735, and 13 August 1737; Richard to Lady Conway, 24 January 1704, 6 February 1712, and 19 February 1724; and Richard to Mrs Eleanor Temple Grenville, 26 September 1711, 12 and 17 February, and 1 April 1712, and 30 December 1714. The Miscellaneous Manuscripts include such notable items as a letter from William Pitt the Elder written when he was a student at Oxford⁴ (a period from which few of his letters survive) and a fascinating letter sent by Henry Fox on 28 October 1756 detailing the current political crisis.

The items in the Hanbury Williams collection, which number more than six thousand, are more important. Hanbury Williams (1708–1759) was not only a leading diplomat but a Member of Parliament and a literary figure connected with many of the leaders of London society, with whom he kept in contact by letter while he was absent on diplomatic missions. The collection of Hanbury Williams's papers in Farmington is larger than the Holland House collection in the British Library, the collection of the Newport Public Library, South Wales, or any other.⁵ It derives from the archive sold to Sir Thomas Phillipps in 1841 by Hanbury Williams's great nephew, Ferdinand Hanbury-Williams. This was purchased by Lewis in June 1949 from the London dealer William Robinson for £750 (then \$3,150). Lewis bought ninety-three volumes and a manuscript catalogue. In 1981 another volume, number 26, was purchased from Kraus for \$250.

The varied collection includes material from the Coningsby papers of the Elizabethan period and the seventeenth century, and much of the correspondence of one of Hanbury Williams's predecessors as the envoy at Dresden, George Woodward, but most of it consists of correspondence to Hanbury Williams (and to a lesser extent, from him) as well as his other papers. This collection is obviously of interest for scholars of British foreign policy and international relations in this crucial period on the eve of the so-called Diplomatic Revolution, but a number of other aspects are worthy of note. Light is thrown on British political history, on the Grand Tour, and on the language used in a society that clearly was only superficially polite. The information on British politics owes much to the wish of such influential acquaintances of Hanbury Williams as Fox to keep him informed. They

sent him accounts of ministerial negotiations, political gossip, and details of parliamentary debate (these are of particular value in view of how scarce they are in other sources, where the focus is moreover on that most prominent politician, the Duke of Newcastle). A letter from Sir William Yonge of 24 January 1752 describes the debate in the House of Commons over the Saxon subsidy treaty:

It was opened and the motion for the subsidy moved by Mr. Pelham: who spoke extremely well, and urged the advantage of a King of the Romans very strongly, but I thought rather coolly of Subsidiary Treaties in general, but pressed the compliance with this as a consequential measure of the Treaty with Bavaria, which had received the approbation and sanction of Parliament. He was answered by our old friend Horatio Walpole who spoke $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour against the treaty and exhausted all that could be said on the subject. But I was sorry for his indiscretion, when he spoke against subsidiary treaties in too extensive a manner, and put every man in mind of the *preventive* measures of his brother, which included many such. But the weakest part of his speech, in my opinion, was his examining seriatim the articles of the Treaty, and desiring to know, for *which of them* we were to pay £32,000. However he ended with declaring he should vote for the question, which naturally produced a great laugh in the House, especially from the Tory corner, though I, and many others knew beforehand, that was his intention. His reasons were that as the Treaty *was* made he would not subject the King to any disgrace from his Parliament, nor lessen that influence which he *actually* had, and always ought to have with the powers of Europe.

He was answered by the Solicitor General⁶ who spoke well to the point, and what pleased me, treated our old friend with great respect, and without the least hint of ridicule or of retaliation. The rest of the debate in opposition was trifling, however I got an opportunity of speaking, as I had been desired by the Duke of Newcastle who had enabled me to do so, and in answer to another gentleman who examined the value of the articles of the Treaty I said, that if we obtained nothing by it, but what was in the Treaty I would not have given my vote for one farthing; but in consequence we had the word of a king for what was of the greatest consequence to this nation,⁷ explicitly and free from all objections, it was worth double the sum, and the word of a Sovereign Prince so solemnly given, was as satisfactory to me, as any treaty, for that one, was as easily broken as the other. And that I had confidence and reason for that confidence, that such assurances were given. This I had foundation for saying, the Duke of Newcastle having put into my hands very kindly all the letters and documents relating to this treaty, from beginning to end both in and out of cypher. And I had a hint, that it was proper to come from one who was not a minister than from one who was. The debate was concluded by Mr. Legge, who spoke short, but with great weight, who told us from his own knowledge, that all had been done that could be done to conciliate the King of Prussia, and particularly the obtaining the guarantee of the Empire for his possessions in Silesia, in hopes it might have

produced a harmony between him and the House of Austria, without which it could not have been obtained; and which would not have been obtained, but from the influence of our king on *that court* and on other princes of the Empire. that as this was not brought about, we were left to our option, which was easy to make, between a very great and permanent power, and a great power indeed but very precarious, depending on the life of one able man, with the support of another great power of an opposite interest, and subject to be *reduced* by any one or two shocks which time or accidents might produce. I have but one other incident of the day to mention, which is, that Lord Cobham spoke against us, and well: but here was as odd a phenomenon as that of Horace. One voted with us, and the other withdrew before the question . . . Upon the whole, the opposition was trifling. Potter spoke for us. Nugent was cocked and primed, but did not fire till next day. N.B. Lord Egmont⁸ was absent.⁹

This valuable account, from a speaker in the debate, is unlike that sent to Hanbury Williams on the same day Edward Digby,¹⁰ and the differences between the two accounts emphasize the value of the one at Farmington. Although no volume is specifically designated as containing parliamentary records, a considerable number of references to debates or accounts of them may be found in Hanbury Williams's private correspondence.¹¹

That the correspondence of prominent diplomats is an important source on the Grand Tour is already clear.¹² This is especially true for material on tourists to central and eastern Europe, where tourism centered on capital cities and royal courts, and where the general absence of facilities for tourists and the role of entrées placed a stress on the role of diplomats. The correspondence in the British Library of Sir Robert Murray Keith, the long-serving envoy in Vienna of George III, is a crucial source on British tourism east of the Rhine in the 1770s and 1780s, but no comparable source exists for the interwar period of 1748–56. Keith's father, Robert, then at Vienna, was not as active a correspondent as his son later became, and British representation at Berlin was interrupted owing to poor relations. Hanbury Williams's papers are therefore of particular importance: from them can be reconstructed itineraries of such tourists as the Earl of Essex,¹³ who later married one of Hanbury Williams's daughters, and they shed light on the activities and views of many others. The interesting perspective of a female traveller is provided by the letters to Hanbury Williams's wife from his sister-in-law Margaret Countess of Coningsby, who in 1737–38 made a tour with her husband Sir Michael Newton to Spa, Liège, and Paris. Having taken the waters at Spa she travelled to Paris via Liège, and Chantilly: "the forest which is by

much the finest thing (I believe) that can be seen, its all cut into the most beautiful walks some of them wide enough for six coaches with large high trees on each side, and sometimes fine lawns."¹⁴

Lady Coningsby reassured her sister about the water in Paris: "I beg you'll be in no frights about the Seine water for we have it all passed through a sand fountain which takes off the violent effects of it. However Riagett has felt a little of its operation but I believe it has rather been of service to her than otherwise; I seldom drink it without wine and if it should disagree with me I would drink Spa water." Like many British tourists Lady Coningsby sought the company of compatriots: "I begin to like Paris something better than I have hitherto done, for we are every day either with Lady Ferrers, (who says she's very well acquainted with my brother) Lady Lambert or Mrs Hays who all of them see a good deal of company and are perfectly free and easy . . . we dine and sometimes sup together but I am not yet arrived either to play at quadrille or drink champagne . . . as to the French I know but very few as yet for most of them are in the country and then theres nothing more difficult than to get into French company."¹⁵

A more vivid account of tourism was provided by Thomas Steavens. In November 1748 he wrote to Hanbury Williams from Prague, having finished a very disagreeable journey from Dresden:

You were too moderate in your wit when you gave me a week for my journey from Dresden to Vienna . . . but, had you known the roads through which I was to pass, the dangers I was to risk, and the fatigue I was to suffer, you would have given me two months at least, and I believe in my conscience I shall take one . . . I reached Aussig . . . seven miles in fourteen hours. Though I was shook to a jelly, and half dead I called for horses at Aussig, and determined to go on directly, but the postmaster could not answer for any accident. Upon this I stayed at Aussig till next morning, and before I had been half a mile out of the town, was fully convinced of the postmaster's veracity. I travelled all this post upon a ridge of high mountains that goes down perpendicular to the Elbe, and where there was often hardly room for the chaise to pass,¹⁶ one wheel sometimes would slip into a great hole and almost overturn the chaise, which made me funk my soul out and curse my evil genius for having left the plain even roads of England, for the rocky roads, and horrible precipices of Bohemia . . . the next night I came to a place called Wellbern, where I was obliged again, by the badness of the roads, to stay all night . . . I found the roads grow worse and worse every post, and nothing but a chaise like mine could have brought me through them: I mean a chaise of such a length and that has so great a distance between the a'fore, and 'hind wheels, and, if you came to Prague in your coach, you will be overturned ten, if in your vis a vis twenty time . . . with whatever force of reason Mr. Evans may argue

against six horses, four of the best in Europe would not have drawn me out of the bogs, and up the hills I passed, and about a mile from Aussig a chaise run back with the horses upon the steepest and narrowest hill imaginable.

Fortunately Prague brought a comfortable hotel, a very good dinner, and a fine production of the opera *Artaxerxes*. Having "ordered two geese and a ham to be dressed for me to carry away,"¹⁷ Steavens set off for Vienna. He found the roads much better and Viennese food very good ("admirable sower groat") and was delighted by Austrian hospitality. There was also much to do: "at night there is a German comedy with an intermezzo between the acts, and an Italian opera, one night serious, another buffa."¹⁸ Early 1749 brought very different adventures, half an hour with Rosa in a beastly ale-house," and a visit to the Esterhazy palace near Sopron: "Nothing can exceed the pleasure and happyness of this place, every man does exactly the thing he likes best, and nothing but that. There is an ease and a profusion that are enough to make a cynic turn admirer of the good things of this world. People eat, drink, and sleep, as they please, and when they please . . . servants without number."¹⁹

It is generally difficult to obtain information of the sexual life of tourists. Journals and correspondence have sometimes been tampered with by descendants, and the most reliable correspondents were scholars, well-behaved young prigs, and others who sought to demonstrate their virtue. George Yonge learned German and studied history at Leipzig in 1750–51, sending Hanbury Williams an "Essai sur les Traités de la Couronne de l'Angleterre avec l'Empire."²⁰ Essex studied geography, history, law, and mathematics in Berne. He assured Hanbury Williams that he was careful "not to frequent coffee-houses" and that the place was "very proper for study as our pleasures are very moderate, and no public entertainments are allowed of in the night, which agrees entirely with my present purpose as they do not break in upon my mornings, which is the only time in the day for such reading as requires application."²¹

Other travellers were less studious. Chesterfield's illegitimate son Philip Stanhope travelled widely with his tutor, the historian Harte. In 1749 he was taken dangerously ill in Carniola, a province of Austria rarely visited by tourists. He "lay eleven days at a wretched ale-house hardly with necessaries," but his experience led to a rare account of the province. Harte found "the picturesque prospects and natural curiosities of this country . . . very amazing."

Having toured Italy Stanhope pressed on to Paris. His father

wrote: "This academical exercises will I hope remove that awkwardness which you and many others have informed me of . . . He has seen things as he should do in Italy, has learned that language in perfection, and without neglecting at the same time his classical . . . The Princess Borghese was so kind as to put him a little upon his haunches, by putting him frequently upon her own. Nothing dresses a young fellow more than having been between such pillars, with an experienced mistress of that kind of manège."²²

The Princess, Agnese Colonna (1702–1780), was indeed popular with British tourists. In December 1740 Horace Walpole wrote to Henry Fiennes-Clinton, 9th Earl of Lincoln (1720–1794), then recently arrived in Rome: "I did not give you so strong an idea of the Princess Borhese, as you seem to have contracted. I did not imagine *she would even surpass what you could have the assurance to hope for*. I knew your merit, and thought on some occasions you would not want assurance; and her benevolence and penetration have been known. I only hope that the presence of the Prince did not confine her good nature to under the pharoah table."²³

Other tourists had more painful experiences as a result of contracting venereal disease: Charles Howard, Viscount Morpeth, died as a consequence in 1741. In 1749 Harris wrote to Richard Evans: "brag, as your please, you must have got, at Dresden, more poxes than languages." Fox's nephew Henry Digby (1731–1793), later 7th Lord Digby, acquired a persistent affliction that was difficult to cure. In late 1750 his uncle wrote to Hanbury Williams about Hanover, which George II was then visiting: "Digby's venereal affairs should call him there not prevent his going; Calcraft having, in a box which he will find in Mr. Stone's hands, sent him an injection which he swears will cure his present disorder, and condoms, which if he pleases I am sure may prevent future ones."

The jarring contrast between the polite discourse of the time that has received so much scholarly attention and the frank language of these writers recalls that between the public professions of sobriety and the prevalence of drinking. Similarly the language of order in Restoration England, as represented for example in the works of Dryden, was in part a reaction against a strong sense of recent and current disorder. Perhaps the politeness of the mid-eighteenth century was imposed quite consciously as a means of cultural artefact, a socio-ideological aspiration designed to foster furthering moral improvement, Christian purpose, and social order.

As can be seen from the wide range of material to be found in this

collection, the Hanbury Williams papers richly repay examination. Along with the Weston papers, the Grenville papers, and the correspondence of the Clement and Keppel families (not discussed in this article), they constitute a treasure of under-used archival material. There can be few libraries in which it is also more agreeable to work than the Lewis Walpole. Bequeathed to Yale in 1980, the Lewis Walpole Library it is a library and a museum rich in material for the study of the British eighteenth century. Not the least of its many resources is its manuscript collections.

1. National Registry of Archives report 22339. Weston papers in the British Library (hereafter BL) may be found in Egerton MSS 2683-94 and in Additional MSS 6808-9, 6823, 6831, 38201-5, 57305-8, 58213, 57927-8. I would like to thank John Weston-Underwood for giving me permission to consult his papers. They are listed in K. W. Schweizer, "A Handlist to the Additional Weston Papers," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 51 (1978): 99-102.
2. W. J. Smith, ed. *The Grenville Papers* (London, 1852-53).
3. This is printed in *Correspondence of William Pitt Earl of Chatham*, 1: 438.
4. Pitt to Mrs Harriet Villiers, 19 March 1727.
5. The best guide to the history of the papers is Earl of Ilchester and Mrs Langford-Brooke, *The Life of Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams* (London, 1929), 12-15.
6. William Murray.
7. A reference to the promise of support from Augustus III, elector of Saxony and king of Poland.
8. Prominent opposition Whig who had played a major role as Prince Frederick's advisor.
9. Yonge to Hanbury Williams, 24 January 1752, Farmington, Lewis Walpole Library, Hanbury Williams papers (hereafter HW), vol. 54, ff. 252-53.
10. Digby to Hanbury Williams, 24 January 1752, HW 54, ff. 244-47. For other accounts of the debate, see BL, Additional MSS 32724, ff. 129-34; W. Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England from . . . 1066 to . . . 1803* (London, 1806-20), 14: 930-70; Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of King George II*, ed. J. Brooke (New Haven, 1985) 1: 33-34.
11. Examples include Henry Fox to Hanbury Williams, 19 December 1739, HW 48, f. 7; and John Calcraft to Hanbury Williams, 26 November 1754, HW 66, f. 146.
12. J. Black, *The British and the Grand Tour* (London, 1985).
13. HW 78, pp. 199-261.
14. Lady Coningsby to Lady Williams, 20 September 1737, HW 75, f. 25.
15. Coningsby to Williams, 15 and 29 October 1737, HW 75, f. 19; 71, f. 3.
16. The Elbe goes in a gorge through the Bohemian mountains. On the problems of this passage see William Bentinck to Countess of Portland, 18 January 1727, BL, Egerton MSS 1711; Thomas Robinson to Weston, 29 August 1744. London, Public Record Office, State Papers 80/164. The scene is illustrated in J. A. Thiele's painting *Die Elbe bei Sörnnewitz in Reif und Nebel*.
17. Steavens to Hanbury Williams, 22 November 1748, HW 51, ff. 189-91.
18. Steavens to Hanbury Williams, 9 December 1748, HW 51, ff. 193-99.
19. Steavens to Hanbury Williams, 19 March and 2 April 1749, HW 51, ff. 207, 215-18.
20. Yonge to Hanbury Williams, 19 September and 12 December 1750, HW 52, ff. 214-28.

21. Essex to Hanbury Williams, 2–12 December and 26 December 1750, 5 February and 30 August 1751; Arthur Villetes, envoy in Berne, to Hanbury Williams, 11 November 1750, 30 January 1751, HW 51, ff. 152–58; 54, ff. 19–20; 12, ff. 158, 257.
22. Harte to Hanbury Williams, 23 May and 7 August 1749, 19 June 1750; Chesterfield to Hanbury Williams, 2 November 1750, HW 51 ff. 39, 44–48, 51–53; 52, f. 115.
23. Walpole to Lincoln, 27 December 1740, *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 30 (New Haven, 1961): 6.