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THE MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS AT THE
LEWIS WALPOLE LIBRARY

BY WARREN HUNTING SMITH

ASSISTED BY CATHERINE JESTIN AND KAREN V. PELTIER

The manuscripts at the Lewis Walpole Library in Farmington, Connecticut were accumulated during fifty years of active collecting by a scholar with ample means and international connections. The resulting collection goes beyond Horace Walpole and his circle, beyond the British Isles and even beyond the eighteenth century.

Wilmarth Lewis started to collect books and manuscripts several years before he began the *Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence* in 1933—in fact, it was the collection which inspired the edition. The purchase of Lady Louisa Stuart's MS notes to Jesse's *Selwyn* whetted Lewis's enthusiasm for the eighteenth century, while the acquisition of some original manuscripts of Walpole's letters convinced him that earlier editions of the letters were inadequate. From that point, the collection and the edition became mutually supporting components of a joint enterprise. In their wills Mr. and Mrs. Lewis entrusted the collection to Yale, with an endowment, to promote further research on the eighteenth century.

When Lewis planned his edition of Walpole's correspondence, he tried to buy all the original manuscripts of the letters that he could get. He intended from the start to include the many letters written to Walpole by friends, relatives, fellow antiquarians and casual correspondents; therefore their papers were possible sources for undiscovered letters and valuable explanatory information. Lewis, aided by dealers in London, Paris and the United States, set out to get them. He began during the financial depression of the 1930s when prices were low, and when the eighteenth century was not a field for competitive bidding at auctions. He bought great collections intact, even though he was aware that their direct Walpolian associations might be very limited.

Madame du Deffand, famous for her salon in Paris, corresponded with Walpole for nearly fifteen years, and left him all her manuscripts. These were sold at the Strawberry Hill sale of 1842, and after changing hands several times (losing the Voltaire correspondence and a few other items) ended in the possession of Maggs Bros., who

sold them to Lewis in 1933. Since Madame du Deffand was blind, her secretary regularly copied interesting pieces by her literary friends so that attendants could read them aloud to her, relieving her perpetual boredom. Copies of a few scattered letters to or from Voltaire still remain; there is a volume of the poems and jeux d'esprit of her witty friend the Chevalier de Boufflers; and her own brief journal for the last year of her life is here. Two bulky *Recueils* contain manuscript copies of miscellaneous letters and other pieces. There are runs of letters from her eldest brother, the Comte de Champrond, and the Chevalier d'Aydie, and a couple from her former companion, Mlle. de Lespinasse. A few of these pieces were printed in the *Yale Edition* as appendices, or by Lewis as Christmas gift-books, but most are unexplored. In 1950, three du Deffand letters which had been published in an edition of her correspondence by the Marquis de Sainte-Aulaire were acquired for the Lewis Walpole Library, and in 1971 more of the manuscripts printed by him were added.

The collection of French manuscripts at Farmington also includes Louis XVI's translation of Walpole's *Historic Doubts*, a letter by the Empress Josephine Bonaparte, and a small volume of sermons in French by Père Le Courayer, who according to Walpole was one of the earlier occupants of Strawberry Hill, and who vainly sought a rapprochement between the Anglican Church and the Gallican faction of the Roman Catholic Church. Some seventeenth-century letters will be mentioned later.

A much bulkier collection is the papers of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, in ninety-four volumes, acquired from the Phillipps Collection in 1949. Williams, a friend and correspondent of Walpole's, was a wit noted for his light verse. The latter part of his life was spent in diplomatic posts at Berlin, Dresden and St. Petersburg, with missions also to Vienna and Warsaw. In his manuscripts are his private correspondence (which has bits about art-collecting), his diplomatic letters, his poems and even a volume of the papers of his father-in-law, Lord Coningsby, a public figure during the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. Also at Farmington is a manuscript volume of Williams's verses, with annotations in Walpole's handwriting.

Walpole's cousin and closest friend, General Henry Seymour Conway, was secretary of state in the Rockingham and Grafton administrations. In 1966 Lewis bought nine volumes of secretarial copies of Conway's diplomatic correspondences (five volumes of Conway's other correspondences were acquired in 1933 and 1947).

The official and private correspondences of Walpole's former tutor, Edward Weston, who at various times was undersecretary of state, were bought in 1958; they fill twenty-five volumes covering the years 1722 to 1769. Col. Percy Kirke's bound manuscript letter-book contains dispatches 1681-82, from Tangier, to officials in London. Admiral William Waldegrave's manuscript (formerly in Walpole's own library) describes an embassy to Tunis in 1796. The papers of George Grenville, who was prime minister from 1763 to 1765, are in five boxes, and are of importance to English political history in the mid-eighteenth century. Most of them have been published.

The various items from the collection of John Ives, a Suffolk herald and antiquary, are largely on historical and heraldic subjects, though they also include his own journal; a memoir of him; printed catalogues of his books, coins and medals; copies of his correspondence with James Granger; and his bound, handwritten index to manuscripts about Suffolk. There are several of George Vertue's manuscripts at Farmington, though the great mass of Vertue's papers, which Walpole bought in order to compile his *Anecdotes of Painting*, are elsewhere. Walpole, however, copied information from Vertue into his two MS "Books of Materials," which contain jottings from Walpole's own gleanings in books, visits to palaces and country houses, newspaper extracts and personal reminiscences. The "Books of Materials" and the similar "Miscellany" were acquired by exchange from the Folger Shakespeare Library in 1950.

Tyrwhitt's collection of manuscripts relating to the poet Thomas Chatterton is of some importance to literary history. Two volumes of letters to William Johnson Temple (Boswell's friend) from his wife and Norton Nicholls contain material of biographical interest; some of the letters were written to Temple when he was visiting Boswell in Edinburgh; two were written after visits to Walpole at Strawberry Hill.

The correspondences of Sir Edward Walpole's daughters and granddaughters with their maternal aunt and cousin, Jane and Anne Clement, were bought in 1959 from Miss E. Forster, who had inherited them. One of the writers, the Duchess of Gloucester, was George III's sister-in-law; although she was not received at Court, there is a link with the royal family. Horace Walpole, being Sir Edward's brother, was uncle and great-uncle to these letter-writers.

The Keppel Papers, 1704-86, are from the files of Joshua Sharpe, the London lawyer who handled the affairs of Walpole's sister-in-law, the Countess of Orford. These papers, though not concerned with

her, do contain references to Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter, who married Walpole's niece, and so Lewis bought them. The Bishop's father, Lord Albemarle, died deeply in debt, making financial problems important in this correspondence.

Annotated books of drawings and prints form another important part of the collection. The satiric prints have been discussed in John Riely's article in the *Yale Library Gazette* (April 1975), pp. 364-75, but many volumes in the library, often with Walpole's annotations, are largely devoted to non-satiric art or to architecture, and have not been fully described. The earliest original drawings appear to be those attributed to Callot, in a little volume which was formerly Walpole's. Copies of much earlier illustrations to works by Lydgate and Froissart in the Harleian MSS are in a bound volume at Farmington, and from George Vertue's collection came a bound portfolio and also a bound manuscript of his drawings of portraits, monuments and various antiquities. At the Cottrell Dormer sale, Walpole bought a little book of drawings after the Spintrian medals of the Emperor Tiberius; these too are at Farmington.

Architectural designs predominate in the volumes of sketches by J.H. Müntz, John Chute and Richard Bentley, who were all concerned in designing Walpole's "Gothick" house, Strawberry Hill. Walpole's extra-illustrated copies of his *Description of Strawberry Hill* are elephant folios crammed with prints, sketches and watercolor views of the building and its contents. Another elephant folio, entitled *Collection of Prints Engraved by Various Persons of Quality*, is filled with etchings and drawings by Walpole's friends who were amateur artists. The four huge volumes of Hogarth's own collection of his engravings are in the Print Room with a small manuscript volume of explanations of Hogarth's prints by Samuel Felton.

Art is represented not only by these volumes but by catalogues of prints and paintings, particularly the lists compiled by Vertue, such as his catalogue of Lady Oxford's miniatures and enamels. Kirgate's catalogue of the English portraits in the vellum volumes in the library at Strawberry Hill is at Farmington. Library catalogues are here too, such as John Ives's (1777), the fifth Earl of Chesterfield's (1778), Gen. John Fitzwilliam's (1789) and Dr. Charles Hutton's (1815).

The papers of the artist James Barry are in two manuscript volumes, evidently assembled after his death, since they include Christie's sale catalogue of his effects, some correspondence with his

family about the administration of his estate, various receipts, etc., as well as Barry's own correspondence.

Music is not well represented in the Lewis Walpole Library, nor was it in the library of the unmusical Horace Walpole himself. However, at Farmington are the ten volumes collected by poet Thomas Gray, probably during his travels in Italy. They include works by Arrigoni, Bernasconi, Farinelli, Galuppi, Hasse, Lampugnani, Latilla, Leo, Mazzoni, Pergolesi, Rinaldo di Capua, Sarro and Vinci.

Diaries and journals of the eighteenth century (and after) are abundant: John Ives, Sr.'s of 1734-35; Bubb Dodington's, 1748-61; Maj.-Gen. Stringer Lawrence's, 1750-54; John Ives, Jr.'s, (?)1770-76; the diary of a lady of the Clayton family, 1776-85; Madame du Defand's (1780), Robert Nicholas's Parliamentary journal, 1786-89; the Ladies' Daily Companion, 1789; John Trusler's memoirs, ca. 1810 (in two volumes; the second has not been published); and Lady Dorothy (Walpole) Nevill's, 1840-45. Only ten pages of Mrs. Delany's diaries are in the collection, but they mention Swift, Walpole and Fanny Burney.

Sometimes the journals are of tours or travels, such as Mrs. Percivall's observations made when in London, 1713-14; Matthew Wise's itinerary of a journey to Italy, 1728-29; a journey through England, 1752; William Mathews's travels in France, Belgium and Holland, 1732-35; J. Decker's travels in France and Italy, 1770; Lord Orford's journal of "a voyage round the Fenns," 1774; Robert Jephson's tour to Celbridge, ca. 1785 (a spoof on Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*); Arthur Young's descriptions of noblemen's seats, ca. 1790; MS letters by a foreign visitor about life in England (with essays on France, too), bound and translated into French; and Mrs. Sarah Chattock's tour through a "part of Derby and Stafford Shires," 1797. Wilmarth Lewis himself wrote *Three Tours through London*, describing imaginary visits there in the eighteenth century, revealing his special interest in travelogues.

Historical materials are provided by a great array of manuscripts. A bound volume describes the powers of Parliament and King in the time of the Plantagenets. The rules, orders, declarations and resolutions of the House of Commons, 1604-1717, had been a gift from Wilmarth Lewis to Wallace Notestein, the great authority on the Parliaments of that period; after Notestein's death it was returned to Farmington. Welwood's manuscript memoirs "of the most material transactions in England for the last hundred years preceding . . .

1688" covers the same period. Stukeley's manuscript chronology, 1731, is in three volumes. The Duke of Newcastle had owned the manuscript accounts of the wars with Spain and France, 1739-48, and of the rebellion in Britain of 1745. An album of Parliamentary manuscripts and cuttings of (?)1785, and Nicholas's Parliamentary journal, 1786-89, are of a later period.

There are several bound historical manuscripts by Walpole's correspondent, the Rev. Mark Noble: his history of Wyatt's rebellion (1799, in one volume, with an additional volume of lives of the participants); his "memorandums of the metropolitans of all England" (1816, with short genealogical tables); his relation (1821) of "the ambassadors . . . who were in England during the reign of King James I," besides some more specialized treatises on family history and individual biographies. His history of the Boleyns is illustrated with engravings and with drawings (some of them by Noble's son).

English local histories abound, especially those dealing with Norfolk and Suffolk; while across the ocean the Farmington background is represented by some Revolutionary War manuscripts, as well as by the Day Museum of Indian Artifacts, adjacent to the Lewis Walpole Library.

A large number of papers testify to Wilmarth Lewis's interest in social history—an interest he shared with Walpole. There are even some cookbooks, starting with Walpole's grandmother's book of recipes and home remedies. Numerous account books, such as those of Walpole's deputy, Grosvenor Bedford, shed light on bureaucratic and financial transactions. The gross and net produce 1771-78 of the Customs is in a bound manuscript volume. Francis Maseres's bound manuscript of his Exchequer accounts is here; there are housekeepers' and butlers' accounts, and a "precedent book" about leases, mortgages, bankruptcies, etc. at Bristol and Gloucester. A couple of ships' invoices show how Walpole's newly purchased objets d'art traveled from Leghorn to London. There are scrapbooks, notebooks, autograph albums, and an illustrated bound manuscript, "Sigilla Antiqua," depicting heraldic seals. One curiosity, described as "extremely rare" in the Strawberry Hill sale catalogue of 1842, is a pair of volumes illustrating swans' marks. Also from Walpole's own collection came the three-volume bound set of the letter-books of the Levant Company, containing copies of their letters, 1632-61, to their agents, chiefly in Constantinople, an invaluable record of international trade in the mid-seventeenth century.

Walpole's great interest in heraldry and genealogy is reflected in many of the manuscripts, and some of them (such as Bedford's heraldry, 1576, and Sir Gilbert Dethick's arms of the Knights of the Garter, 1573, with Charles I's cipher on the back) are hand-colored. The two volumes of Tilston's manuscript pedigrees, and two of the volumes of Norfolk visitations are from the seventeenth century, and so is the "Book of Aydes grand Sergeanties & Baronyes in the time of Edward I," which is in medieval Latin. The royal descents of the Earl and Countess of Pomfret are illustrated in color. Mark Noble wrote manuscript genealogies of the Boleyn and Wykeham families, and Arthur Collins of the Walpole family. Walpole himself made charts of his ancestry and connections, and of those of the Cromwell family.

Eighteenth-century royalty is represented by letters from all four Georges, kings of England, (and one by Peter III of Russia), by a volume of manuscript poems owned by the Princess Amelia, and by Louis XVI's translation of Walpole's *Historic Doubts*. There are scattered letters from many of the literary and historical figures of the time, such as William Cowper, Thomas Gray, C.J. Fox, the elder and the younger Pitt, William Beckford and Edmund Burke.

Photostats and microfilms from other collections supplement the original manuscripts at Farmington: the unpublished journals of Lady Mary Coke, the Selwyn correspondence from the Society of Antiquaries, the correspondences of Richard Gough from the Bodleian, some of the William Cole MSS from the British Library (and also Grenville and Dropmore MSS) and the memoirs 1754-55 of the second Earl Waldegrave. The library at Farmington contains all of Walpole's own library to the extent that Wilmarth Lewis was able to reassemble it, and these books are often full of Walpole's handwritten annotations; he likewise annotated his collections of tracts, plays and poems and his catalogues of art exhibitions.

Although the collections at Farmington are centered upon the eighteenth century, they reach far beyond that period, in both directions. The seventeenth-century historical and genealogical materials have already been mentioned. The second Earl of Chesterfield's instructions to his daughter, 1686, were partly printed by Lewis as a gift book. Two original letters by Madame de Sévigné and a manuscript copy of her letters to Pomponne are at Farmington (the latter is from Walpole's library). Madame du Deffand's *Recueil de lettres* includes a series of letters from the Princesse des Ursins to Madame

de Maintenon, describing the court of Louis XIV between 1706 and 1709. Lord Coningsby's papers begin with what appears to be a list of proceedings of the Polish Diet, starting in 1697.

In the other direction, the Lewis Walpole Library's holdings extend into the nineteenth century, beginning with the papers of Walpole's survivors, such as the Berry sisters, Mrs. Damer, the third Lord Holland, etc., and going on to Macaulay's draft of his famous essay on Walpole, Sir Walter Scott's manuscript of his review of Walpole's Montagu correspondence, Leslie Stephens's essay on Walpole (printed in *Hours in a Library*) and Austin Dobson's notes for his life of Walpole.

The manuscript collection at Farmington, therefore, presents a wide range of materials, mostly unpublished, concentrated on the eighteenth century in England and France, containing both private and official correspondences, diaries, *vers de société*, business papers, account books, cookbooks, notebooks, sketchbooks, heraldry, genealogy and history. It is highly miscellaneous because associations with Walpole and his circle often prompted the acquisition of vast collections of other papers besides the voluminous letters and papers of Horace Walpole himself.