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THE CHINNERY FAMILY PAPERS
(1793-1843)

Thesis in two volumes submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Sydney
2000
© Indiana University Art Museum:
Portrait of Mrs Margaret Chinuny, c.1803, by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun
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Kevin Montague
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Portrait of Mrs Chinnery by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun  
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The Chinnery Family Papers (1793-1843): a Summary

The Chinnery Family Papers is a collection of manuscript material, most of which has received no scholarly attention to date, relating to an English family who had a wide circle of acquaintance in France. The husband, William Bassett Chinnery (1766-1827), was a Chief Clerk in the British Treasury, and achieved some notoriety in his time for his massive embezzlement of Treasury funds (some £80,000). His wife, Margaret Chinnery (1766?-1840), an intelligent and ambitious woman, educated her own children, twins George Robert Chinnery (1791-1825) and Caroline Chinnery (1791-1812), and a son who died young, Walter Chinnery (1793-1802). The collection also includes the papers of the famous eighteenth century Italian violinist Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755-1824), who lived as a member of the Chinnery household from c.1795 to the end of his life, and the papers of William Robert Spencer (1769-1834), minor poet, who stayed intermittently in the Chinnery home. Most of the original manuscripts, or microfilm copies of them, have now been reassembled in Sydney.

Although the family is little known today, the papers (mainly correspondence) are of significant interest to musicologists, education historians and general historians of Britain and France of the above period. The Chinnerys had some famous correspondents. Worthy of particular mention are the letters of Viotti (by far the largest number ever found), the hitherto unknown letters (about 35) of the French writer and educationalist Madame de Genlis (1746-1830), as well as some letters of the British statesman George Canning (1770-1827) and of other members of his family. There is also a significant number of letters from the son of George III, Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Cambridge. Of interest to art historians are three letters of the famous French portraitist Madame Vigée-Lebrun. Along with these is a large number of miscellaneous letters from British politicians, civil servants, antiquaries, musicians, writers, diplomats, and members of Oxford University; and from French musicians, aristocratic émigrés, members of Government and diplomats, as well as letters from or concerning many other Continental musicians and diplomats.

The thesis has aimed to situate all the letters in context, and to use them to compile a biography of the family within the time frame of the correspondence. It has been divided into three discrete parts which are intended to reflect the three most important areas of interest – music in England and France in the late eighteenth and
early nineteenth centuries (with particular reference to Viotti); educational practices in England in the early nineteenth century (home and university), with particular reference to madame de Genlis's influence; and early nineteenth century British (and to a lesser extent French) administrative and diplomatic affairs (as reflected in a description of a career in the British Treasury and Foreign Office, 1812-1825).
VOLUME ONE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The person to whom I am most indebted in this endeavour is my supervisor, Professor Angus Martin, Professor of French at the University of Sydney. I have greatly benefited from his invaluable advice, his guidance, patience, and computer hints, and have appreciated his cheerful countenance in the face of voluminous amounts of text he was given to read when he had many other more pressing Departmental duties to attend to. Not only did he help me in Sydney, but he found time while on study leave in France to consult some works for me that were unavailable in Australia. He also allowed me to borrow useful books he brought back from France. For his support, obligingness and enthusiasm over the five-year period I thank him sincerely.

Going back to 1992, I must thank Dr Peter Orlovich of the School of Information Management (Archives Administration), University of N.S.W. It was he who first drew my attention to the collection of Chinnery Papers at the Powerhouse Museum and invited me to catalogue the collection as part of my training for a Post-Graduate Diploma in Archives Management. The Powerhouse Archivist Ms Helen Yoxall agreed to this proposal, and offered every assistance. When I later returned as a researcher she was just as helpful, allocating me a desk in her very restricted office space, and fielding my many queries with great patience over a period of more than five years. Her Assistant Archivist, Ms Susan Davidson, has been equally obliging.

I would also like to acknowledge gratefully the kind reception I was given in Oxford in 1994 by the Christ Church Librarians Mr R.S.F. Hamer and Ms Judith Curthoys (to whom a copy of my Guide to the Papers of the Chinnery Family in the Powerhouse Museum had been sent), who not only put their Chinnery collection at my disposal, but made me feel part of their establishment by taking me upstairs for morning tea each day and presenting me with a most useful book on the history of Christ Church College on my departure. Mr Hamer and Ms Curthoys subsequently helped arrange the microfilming of the Christ Church collection of Chinnery letters for Fisher Library.

In 1996 I returned to the United Kingdom and discovered more Chinnery papers in the Old Bond Street premises of the Fine Art dealers Frost and Reed Ltd. The Managing Director Mr A.G. Nevill turned over the six boxes of material to me and allowed me to camp on their premises from nine to five daily for a period of four weeks. All members of staff were most tolerant of my noticeable presence in the gallery.
Also in London, I must thank Dr Peter Beal of Sotheby’s Department of Printed Books and Manuscript for patiently answering queries and sending photocopies of records of auctions; Mr Roger Clayton Pearce, Pastoral Secretary at London Diocesan House, for providing information regarding old churches of London; and Mr Duncan Mirylees of the Surrey Record Office for undertaking a genealogical search on my behalf. For similar searches I am also indebted to staff of the London Metropolitan Archives, of the Archives de Paris, and of the Conservation du cimetière du Père Lachaise, Paris.

In Australia I would like to thank Professor M. Scorgie of the School of Business, La Trobe University, Victoria, whom I informed of the existence of the Powerhouse collection of Chinnery papers, and who kindly sent me a copy of a paper he had presented at an Accounting Conference in Hobart in 1997, as well as a lot of other useful material. In 1998 the Powerhouse Assistant Archivist, Ms Susan Davidson, put me in touch with a historical writer Dr Ann-Marie Whitaker, who drew my attention to the existence of some Chinnery poetry in the Osborn Collection at the Beinecke Rare Book Library, Yale University.

The curator of the Osborn Collection, Dr Stephen Parks was prompt in answering my e-mails and in organising microfilming for me. The staff of the British Library in London were equally efficient in expediting the filming of George Chinnery’s Travel Journals for me, just prior to their moving premises at the end of 1998. The Fisher Library staff dealing with interlibrary loans have also been of invaluable help in procuring the many items I requested from within Australia and from overseas. Without this service my work would have been severely hampered.

For a welcome embellishment to the thesis I am indebted to a collateral descendant of the Chinnery family, Mr Randolph Vigne, who very generously sent me the colour photograph of a portrait of Mrs Chinnery by Madame Vigée-Lebrun which forms the frontispiece of this work.

Lastly, I would like to thank my husband for funding my study trips, for sharing many household duties, and for his constant support; my children (and husband) for the forbearance they showed towards my ‘obsession’ and my periodic computer crises; a family friend, Miss Alana Hayes, for her help in the final stages with computer formatting; and a close friend Mrs Sally Murray, for her inspiring enthusiasm, thought-provoking remarks, and moral support throughout the duration of my research.
INTRODUCTION

(i) The Chinnery Family Papers

This thesis is a study of the private papers of a late eighteenth/early nineteenth century English family, a large number of which have until now gone unnoticed by twentieth century scholars. They deserve to be noticed, as much for the new light they throw on different facets of French and English life of the time, as for the information they contain on the family itself. The corpus to be studied consists of over one and a half thousand letters, journals, legal documents, poetry, education material and other miscellaneous papers (some eight thousand pages of manuscript), with a date range in the main from 1793 to 1843. A lot of the material is in French, and reflects contemporary events in France. The papers tell a story which begins in the years of the Terror during the French Revolution (1793) and ends with the death of the main protagonist and family matriarch Margaret Chinnery (1840). Arguably, the two most important series of letters in the collection are the hitherto unknown and unpublished letters of the de facto Chinnery family member, the Italian violinist Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755-1824), and the unknown and unpublished letters of the French author Madame de Genlis (1746-1830) – most of which are to Margaret Chinnery.

The branch of the Chinnery family that this material issues from is that of William Bassett Chinnery (1766-1827), a chief clerk of the British Treasury. It also includes the papers of two men who were not members of the family: the violinist Viotti and the London society poet, William Robert Spencer (1769-1834). The Chinnery Family Papers may be defined as that corpus of letters and material that was received by the different members of the Chinnery family, as well as other material that originated with them, and that was kept together by Margaret Chinnery (William Bassett Chinnery’s wife) until her death. Although letters received by Viotti and poetry penned

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1 A small number of items of official correspondence (letters from William Bassett Chinnery in the British Library, London, and in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and from George Robert Chinnery in the British Library), belong to other archives, therefore will not be dealt with in this thesis.

2 Some of the legal papers that date from a lot earlier have not been included in the thesis.

3 These are the subject of an article by the present writer in the Australian Journal of French Studies, vol. 35, no. 3, 1998, pp. 308-332.

4 William Robert Spencer, minor poet, was the son of the politician Lord Charles Spencer (1740-1820), and grandson of the third Duke of Marlborough. He was educated at Harrow and Christ Church, Oxford, and was a Commissioner of Stamps, 1797-1826.
by Spencer cannot be described, according to strict archival definition, as being of Chinnery provenance, they will be treated as belonging to the Chinnery Family Papers for the purpose of this thesis, since they remained in the possession of Margaret Chinnery.

History of the Chinnery Family Papers

The original collection of Chinnery Family Papers first came to the attention of the musicologist and violin-lover Edward Heron-Allen (1861-1943) in 1885, when he was in contact with a Chinnery family descendant, Algernon Greene, who gave him a 1798 letter from Viotti to the Chinnerys’ daughter. Handwritten by Heron-Allen at the top of the letter is the note: 'Written to Miss Caroline Chinnery and given to me in February 1885 by her grand nephew Algernon Greene.' Heron-Allen added this letter to his small collection of Viotti autograph material (nine items), including the now well known Viotti manuscript autobiography and will, which he bequeathed, along with a handful of other Chinnery letters, to the Royal College of Music Library in London, where the collection is known as the 'Viotti Papers'. Clearly many items in the Viotti Papers at the Royal College of Music came from the Chinnery collection.

The history of the Chinnery Family Papers is far from clear. But an attempt will be made to trace it from what little is known. The family papers were originally kept in meticulous order by Margaret Chinnery and must have been treasured by the family’s descendants, as they appear to have survived intact, except for the few papers that Heron-Allen extracted in 1885, until the early 1960s. On 19 December 1962 there is a record of a Sotheby auction in London at which much of the Chinnery family poetry (149 items) was sold to ‘the late firm of Dobell’ and donated to Yale University. At another Sotheby auction two months later there was a listing entitled ‘The Property of the Estate of the late Richard Bentley’. This part of the collection (the largest) was sold

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6 Curiously, there are only four miscellaneous letters addressed to different members of the Chinnery family in the collection, yet Heron-Allen, in his Viotti entry in Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians (ed. J.A. Fuller Maitland, 2nd edn, Macmillan: New York, 1904-1910, vol. 5, p. 337) claims that Viotti wrote numerous letters ‘to Mrs Chinnery and her children, many of which are in the possession of the writer’.
7 Sotheby lot 845. It was deposited in the Osborn collection of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. The curator is not aware of any publication based on this material.
8 Richard Bentley II, (1880?-1961), of Upton Bucks. was the grandson of the famous London publisher of New Burlington Street, Richard Bentley I (1794-1871), who was a contemporary of the Chinnerys. Interestingly, one of Viotti’s letters to William Chinnery, written at the time of the auction of all the
in four lots on 19 February 1963 to Frost and Reed Ltd, Picture Experts and Fine Art Publishers, then of Bristol, who believed they were buying the papers of the artist George Chinnery. The first lot, containing correspondence of Margaret’s elder son George Robert Chinnery during his years at Oxford, was then offered by Frost and Reed to the Lambeth Palace Librarian, Dr E.G.W. Bill. The latter purchased the proffered letters on behalf of Christ Church Library, Oxford, where they can be found today. (This will henceforth be referred to as the Oxford collection).

Another part of the collection found its way to Australia. It is this part of the collection that contains the bulk of the Viotti papers (ninety-eight autograph letters from Viotti to different members of the Chinnery family, over thirty Chinnery letters addressed to Viotti, six letters from William Spencer to Viotti, twenty-odd miscellaneous letters to him, and other related documents, 1793-1823), and that was donated to the Powerhouse Museum on 22 June 1973 by E.A. and V.I. Crome, to complement the Museum’s violin collection. It is not known how the Cromes acquired the papers, as the accompanying documentation was lost, but a letter to the Museum’s director, dated 2 August 1973, intimated that Crome had had the papers in his possession for some years before donating them to the Museum. Perhaps he purchased these papers privately from Richard Bentley before the rest of the collection went to auction, as these Viotti papers do not figure in the 1962 or 1963 Sotheby auctions. This part of the collection also contains much material relating to a financial scandal involving William Bassett Chinnery, his life after fleeing England, and family legal papers. The Powerhouse collection (as this will henceforth be termed) also includes Margaret Chinnery’s education journals, manuscript poetry and letters of William Robert Spencer, the letters from George Robert Chinnery to his mother written from Madrid, and some Caroline Chinnery letters and verse. The 149 items of poetry –

Chinnery possessions in 1812, tells us that a Mr Bentley bought the Chinnery family clock: ‘La pendule a été acheté par Bentley pour 50 Guinées.’ See Viotti to William Chinnery, 3 September 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 14/12. There is an intriguing empty envelope in the CFP collection addressed to Richard Bentley at New Burlington Street from Leigh Hunt.

9 Ernest Alfred Crome (1902-1987), philanthropic collector whose interests included music, history, painting, aviation and philately, especially aerophilately. In 1939 he married Virtie Ivery Coffill. The Cremes were important donors of material on aviation, philately and music to both the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney and the National Library in Canberra.

10 For a complete listing of the Powerhouse Museum material, see Denise Yim’s Guide to the Papers of the Chinnery Family in the Powerhouse Museum (1994), copies of which may also be found at the Royal College of Music Library, London, and Christ Church Library, Oxford.
much of it Caroline Chinnery's – that constitute the holding in the Osborn collection have clearly been separated from the much larger Powerhouse collection.

In September 1996 I discovered what appears to be the remainder of the original collection in the possession of Frost and Reed in Old Bond Street, London, still labelled with the Sotheby lot numbers. It is in this part of the collection that are to be found the thirty-odd autograph letters from Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery and to other members of her family (1802-1814). Also contained in these boxes are twenty-five letters from King George III's youngest son Adolphus Frederick the Duke of Cambridge, mostly to Margaret Chinnery (1807-1826), some dozen letters and manuscript copies of letters and speeches of the statesman George Canning (1809-1825), many letters from George Robert Chinnery to his mother written from the Treasury and the Foreign Office, and miscellaneous letters to Margaret Chinnery from her cosmopolitan circle of friends.

Still more Chinnery material is to be found at the British Library. This consists of two travel journals (in three volumes) kept by George Robert Chinnery, dating from 1819 and 1820.

Thus the original collection of Chinnery Family Papers has been scattered world-wide. The Royal College of Music Library and the British Library in London; Christ Church Library in Oxford; the Beinecke Library at Yale University in the USA; and the Powerhouse Museum and the Fisher Library in Sydney, Australia are all holders of their own 'Chinnery collection'. Every endeavour is now being made to bring the original collection together in one location – both in original format and in microfilm copies. Fisher Library has already purchased the Frost and Reed collection discovered in London in 1996 (catalogue in preparation) and microfilm copies of the Oxford collection. It has now also acquired microfilm copies of the Yale collection and of the British Library material.

For the purpose of this thesis, the term 'Chinnery Family Papers' (henceforth 'CFP collection') will refer to those parts of the original collection that have been identified and (metaphorically speaking) brought together again, although of course there may be other parts as yet unlocated.

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11 Nine more, addressed to Viotti, are in the library of the Royal College of Music, London.
Themes

This thesis has three aims: first, to reconstitute the collection as it originally was, second, to analyse the correspondence in its entirety, and third, to describe the letters and situate them in their context (an explication of the text, as it were). What emerges from this exercise are three broad areas of interest, or themes – music, education, and British diplomacy in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Names that loom large in these areas are, respectively, the violinist Viotti, the writer and educationalist Madame de Genlis, and the British statesman George Canning (1770-1827). From their letters new information on these subjects will be brought to light, but it is principally their relationship with the Chinnery family that will be treated in the thesis. As space and time preclude it, it is not my intention to carry out general research into the topics identified. I will leave that task to future researchers. The themes correspond roughly to the different periods in the lives of the Chinnery family members, and from a discussion of the themes in relation to the Chinnery family a chronological outline – or biography – of the family will be constructed.

Part I of the thesis will treat Viotti’s life with the Chinnerys, and will also deal in a more general way with music and musicians in England and France (1793-1822), as far as they related to Viotti. The material discussed will provide the elements of a new biography of Viotti from the time he met the Chinnerys until the end of his life. A large part of this discussion will focus on the public and private performance of music at the time, as there is much information to be gleaned from the letters on this subject. Viotti correspondence (1793-1823) covers the last decade of the eighteenth century in London and Bath, when a rich depth of musical talent flowed into England from the Continent in the wake of the French Revolution, to the early 1820s in Paris where Viotti cast his final die in the role of impresario, as director of the Paris Opera. The constant round of private concerts which took place in the Chinnery home and in the homes of their friends will be described, as will the letters and journals concerning the early Royal Philharmonic Society concerts and an embryo plan for the formation of a Royal Academy of Music eight years before its official establishment in 1822.

Over seventy contemporary instrumentalists, vocalists, composers and instrument makers – mostly friends of Viotti – are mentioned in the correspondence,
including Luigi Cherubini and Joseph Haydn. From among these, there are letters from Cherubini’s wife Cécile, from singers Josephine Grassini and Giuseppe Naldi, violinist Pierre Rode, pianists Hélène de Montgeroult and Ludwig Berger, and cellist Jean-Louis Duport and his son.

Part II of the thesis – divided into four chapters – will discuss the CFP collection’s extensive range of education material, including Margaret Chinnery’s education journal (in the Powerhouse collection) and that of the children’s German tutor (in the Fisher collection). The journals, which show remarkable similarities to Madame de Genlis’s education journals in which she documented the education of the Duke of Orléans’s children, are evidence that the educational method employed by Margaret Chinnery was based directly on that of Madame de Genlis.

A self-contained section will deal separately with the correspondence between Margaret Chinnery and Madame de Genlis (1802-1825). These letters are a rich source of information on Madame de Genlis’s writings, her friends, her private ambitions and her intensely personal feelings. They will be a valuable addition to the existing corpus of Genlis correspondence.

Then will follow a discussion of George Robert Chinnery’s education at Oxford based on the daily correspondence between mother and son during the period 1808-1811. A description of Caroline Chinnery’s home education at the same age will be included, based on letters in the Oxford collection, on her correspondence with William Spencer in the Fisher collection, and on material in the Yale collection.

Part III will document George Chinnery’s career in the British Treasury and in the Foreign Office from the time he left Oxford until his death (1812-1825). This section touches on the conduct of the British civil service and British diplomacy, and also on British home and foreign affairs in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The Chinnery correspondence of the years 1823-1825, when Canning was Secretary of the Foreign Office, describes the events leading up to Canning’s rise to power. In particular, aspects of British relations with France, Spain and Portugal are revealed in the 1824-25 correspondence between George Chinnery and the British diplomat, Sir

\[12\] In the 19 December 1962 Sotheby sale of the property of the late Richard Bentley a 1794 autograph letter from Haydn to Viotti in Italian was apparently extracted from the Chinnery papers sold on the same date, and listed separately as lot 763. Purchased by a certain Leumas, it must have been seen by H.C. Robbins Landon, as the letter is translated and discussed on p. 277 of his work Haydn: Chronicle and Works (III): Haydn in England, Indiana University Press: London, 1976.
William A’Court. Letters and other documents in the Fisher collection, the long series of letters from George to his mother in the Powerhouse collection, and his Travel Journals in the British Library provide most of the material on which a discussion of these subjects is based.

As well as the major themes to which specific parts of the thesis have been devoted, a broad range of other subjects of interest will be treated. For example, there is a large amount of autograph material of William Robert Spencer in the CFP collection. Indeed the collection contains almost certainly the largest (and possibly the only) body of Spencer manuscript material to have survived. Spencer, the chronically impecunious *bon vivant, raconteur* and author of frothy *vers de société* was an intermittent lodger at the Chinnery home over a period of five years (1807-1811), during the last three in the capacity of tutor to Caroline, which explains the large number of his papers that are to be found intermingled with the Chinnerys’. He wrote much of the verse that is to be found in the 1811 edition of his *Poems* at the Chinnery country home Gillwell. A lot of the verse included in this work is to be found in manuscript form in the Powerhouse collection. A substantial correspondence with Margaret and Caroline Chinnery also exists in the Powerhouse and Fisher collections, and a small number of his poems are in the Yale collection. His relationship with the Chinnery family and his own writings will be treated in that part of the thesis that deals with Caroline Chinnery’s education (Part II, Chapter 4).

There is a significant amount of information in the CFP collection on contemporary nineteenth century writings. Since all members of the Chinnery family were avid bibliophiles, and much of the discussion in the family letters concerned the latest English and French publications, this constitutes another rich source to be exploited. This topic will be largely incorporated into those parts of the thesis that deal with education and in the section that deals with the Margaret Chinnery/Madame de Genlis correspondence.

Spencer’s poet friends Samuel Rogers and Thomas Moore were received in the Chinnery home, as was the poet and translator William Sotheby and his family, for a long time neighbours of the Chinnerys, and the female authors Mary Berry and Jane Porter. There are letters from Samuel Rogers, William Sotheby and Jane Porter in the CFP collection, as well as from the diarist Lord Glenbervie, the ‘tours’ writer Sir John Carr and other lesser known writers.
Among Margaret Chinnery's many English and French literary friends and acquaintances was Madame de Staël, who was introduced to her by William Spencer. Although there are no letters from Madame de Staël in the CFP collection, there is some discussion about her and her works.

The cosmopolitan nature of the Chinnery acquaintance in England, and the fact that William Chinnery was forced to live for twenty-four years of his life outside England (twenty-two of them in France), causing the remaining members of his family to spend an increasing number of months of the year in France, give the collection a truly cross-Channel interest. The fact that Margaret Chinnery was a Francophile also contributes to a substantial part of the education material being in French. There are letters from an assortment of French nobles, diplomats, revolutionaries and generals—the exquisitely-mannered Joseph-François de Paule de Rigaud, Comte de Vaudreuil, friend and confidant of Louis XVI's brother the Comte d'Artois; another friend of the Comte d'Artois and also of the Duchesse d'Orléans (wife of Louis-Philippe), Antoine de Montyon; the impoverished exilé the Marquis de Choiseul; Revolutionary reporter and diplomat Hugues-Bernard Maret (future Duc de Bassano); aide-de-camp of the Duc de Berry, Pierre de La Ferronnays; diplomats René-Eustache d'Osmond, the Baron de Ségurier, and Edouard Decazes, cousin of Elie Decazes the influential adviser to Louis XVIII; and Generals Antoine François Andréossi and Edme-Etienne Desfournaux. It was not just the French émigrés and diplomats who frequented the Chinnery home. Margaret Chinnery cultivated the foreign diplomats in London from all of Europe's capitals, and their letters are to be found scattered throughout the collection.

The Chinnerys also had connections with British politicians. The family had lived on the fringe of British politics since William Bassett Chinnery became one of the four chief clerks of the British Treasury in 1799. Since the Treasury was traditionally the preserve of the Premier, this office brought him into a position of intimacy with both the leading minister in the House of Commons and the royal family, as well as with many other government ministers. George Chinnery's closeness to Canning opened the

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13 For example, her education journal. There are also a few letters in Italian and in German, poetry in French, German, Italian and Latin, and some official documents in Spanish.
14 According to J.C. Sainty, ed. (Office-Holders in Modern Britain I): Treasury Officials 1660-1870, Macmillan: London, 1972, p. 34), there were four chief clerks in 1805, but George Chinnery's Treasury Memorandum book (Fisher collection) lists a fifth, who had charge of the 'Finance or Revenue Department' (a separate department from the other six divisions of Treasury). Until 1805 the
same doors for him. Famous British statesmen of the era, from Pitt and Sheridan at the turn of the century to Liverpool and Castlereagh at the beginning of the 1820s, form the focus of discussion of many of the letters. Letters from statesmen include those from Robert Stewart (Viscount Castlereagh), Thomas Grenville, John Charles Herries, William Huskisson, Charles Arbuthnot; from Canning’s friend Charles Ellis and family member William Henry Cavendish Scott-Bentinck (Marquess of Titchfield); and from many other members of parliament and diplomats, including Lord Castlereagh’s brother Charles William Stewart; William Richard Hamilton, Leveson-Gower (first Earl Granville), John Fane (better known as Lord Burghersh); and from copper magnate and Chinnery intimate Pascoe Grenfell.

The Chinnerys also knew many of the great artists of the day. The family artist George Chinnery painted different Chinnery family members, as did other famous portraitists – Madame Vigée-Lebrun (see frontispiece), Giovanni Trossarelli, Thomas Lawrence and Richard Cosway. There are three letters from Madame Vigée-Lebrun to Mrs Chinnery testifying to a friendship that lasted over thirty years. The French historical painter Hubert Robert visited the Chinnerys in Paris in 1802 and wrote a letter to them there in the same year. William Chinnery’s love of the fine arts led him into friendships with many respected antiquaries – Richard Payne Knight, whose priceless collection was bequeathed to the British Museum; Thomas Hope, whose vases were purchased from Sir William Hamilton’s collection; the politician-collector Charles Long; and Stacey Grimaldi, a London antiquary of ancient Genoese nobility. George [Robert] Chinnery visited St Peter’s Cathedral in Rome with Sir Thomas Lawrence in 1819, and there is a manuscript poem by the latter in the Yale collection.

Because of the periodic separations and reunions of the different family members throughout most of their lives, their correspondence understandably often discusses travel, both within England and on the Continent. The descriptions of the frequent Channel crossings by packet boat (later by steamer), and their attendant inconveniences of sea-sickness, crowded inn accommodation at Dover and Calais and

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15 See G to M, 15 July 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/30, and M to W, 18 July 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/11.
16 I have discovered a fourth letter (1814) from Madame Vigée-Lebrun to Margaret Chinnery among the items that were sold at the 19 February 1963 Sotheby auction of the property of the late Richard Bentley. Sold as lot 391, it had been separated from the other Chinnery papers offered for sale on the same date, and was purchased by a certain Myers. Its present whereabouts is unknown.
long uncomfortable coach journeys to the capitals of London and Paris, give an elucidating perspective on the discomforts of travel at the time. There is also a wealth of detail on the different posting systems\textsuperscript{17} in Europe, especially to be found in George Robert Chinnery's Travel Journals.

Because of the social milieu in which the Chinnerys moved, the correspondence affords a much greater insight into contemporaneous world affairs than might otherwise be the case. Discussion of home affairs turned on the madness of George III, the scandal of the Duke of York's trafficking in army commissions, the Regency debate, the trial of Queen Caroline, pensions for French émigrés, as well as much gossip concerning the private lives of the aristocracy.

\textsuperscript{17} In the original sense – the mode of travel in stages-between posting houses by means of horse-drawn carriage with a postilion [driver].
(ii) The Chinnery family

The Chinnery family, believed to be originally of French descent, was a large one, whose lineage has been traced back to 1623 by the genealogist W.H. Welply. In 1923 and 1927 Welply published a series of articles in *Notes and Queries*, the subject of which was the best-known member of the Chinnery family, the portrait painter George Chinnery (1774-1852). According to Welply, William Bassett Chinnery, brother of the artist, was the son of the ‘Madras merchant’ (queried by Conner, p. 17), William Chinnery Junior, and grandson of the noted London writing-master William Chinnery Senior. William Chinnery Junior married twice, first to Elizabeth Bassett by whom he had seven children, William Bassett Chinnery being the eldest surviving son. The second marriage produced a daughter Margaret, who was known as ‘little Margaret’ to distinguish her from William Bassett Chinnery’s wife Margaret.

William Bassett Chinnery married Margaret Tresilian in the church of St Luke, Chelsea on 21 October 1790. The children of William and Margaret Chinnery were the twins George and Caroline, born on 3 September 1791 and Walter, born 22 April 1793. William’s niece, Matilda Margretta Chinnery, daughter of William’s brother, the Madras civil servant John Terry Chinnery (1770-1817), lived with William Bassett Chinnery’s family as his own child until her marriage.

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20 International Genealogical Index (IGI) for London. See also M to G, 21 October 1825, Fisher.

Members of the Chinnery Family whose letters constitute the Chinnery Family Papers collection

William Bassett Chinnery, 3 March 1766 - 3 March 1827
Margaret Chinnery (née Tresilian), 16 October 1766? - November 1840
George Robert Chinnery, 3 September 1791 - October 1825
Caroline Chinnery, 3 September 1791 - 3 April 1812
Walter Grenfell Chinnery, 22 April 1793 - November 1802 (no letters)

Matilda Margretta Chinnery, 1797 - 1877
(niece of William Bassett Chinnery)
Margaret Chinnery Girardot (née Margaret Chinnery), c.1797 - 1878 (2 letters only)
(‘little Margaret’, stepsister of William Bassett Chinnery)

Although interest has been shown in the most famous Chinnery son, less scholarly attention has been paid to his more infamous brother, William Bassett Chinnery, to whose family these papers belong.22 The little that has been written on the latter has been written in ignorance of the existence of the present collection, which adds a vast amount of information to what is already known of him. The Oxford collection of Chinnery Papers has been partly exploited by scholars of eighteenth century education, who make mention of George Robert Chinnery23 but apart from a 1979 article by Dr Michael Kassler,24 the Powerhouse collection has been ignored from the time of its deposit there until the present work was commenced, and the Chinnery papers found in the basement of Frost and Reed are entirely unknown.


In spite of their slipping into insignificance in the twentieth century, the different members of the William Bassett Chinnery family enjoyed a high enough profile in their own time not to go unnoticed by contemporary diarists, whose writings were subsequently published. Not all that was written about William Chinnery was complimentary. The politician and social commentator Lord Glenbervie remarked superciliously on the low birth of William Chinnery, and made disparaging remarks about the quill lurking behind the ear of the smooth-mannered accountant, but praised his daughter in a gossipy appraisal of the Chinnerys and their circle of acquaintance in his Journals.25 These Journals also discussed Viotti and a number of other Chinnery acquaintances, as did a later edition of his diaries, which also mentioned a musical party hosted by Margaret Chinnery.26 The statesman George Rose laid bare the damning evidence of William Chinnery’s misappropriation of Treasury funds, when he recorded in his diaries his suspicions regarding Chinnery’s lavish life-style, suspicions which he transmitted to the British Prime Minister Spencer Perceval.27 Two more allusions to William Chinnery’s embezzlement have been noted in print. The first was by William Parke, longtime principal oboist to the Theatre Royal, Convent Garden, who adverted to it in his Musical Memoirs, and spoke scornfully of Chinnery’s meanness in remunerating musicians who played at his private concerts.28 The second was by the artist and social commentator Joseph Farington, who gave the sum of £70,000 as the total amount stolen.29

Offsetting the negative comments are the glowing tributes to Margaret Chinnery paid by the famous French writer and educationalist, Madame de Genlis, in a dedicatory letter at the beginning of her novel Madame de Maintenon30 and in her Mémoires.31 The travel writer Sir John Carr was another who dedicated a published work to Mrs

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27 L.V. Harcourt (ed.), The Diaries and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose, Richard Bentley: London, 1860. The subject is dealt with in three letters, one from Rose to Chinnery, and two from Perceval to Rose (vol. 2, pp. 486-493).
29 J. Farington, The Farington Diary (ed. J. Greig), Hutchinson: London, 1922-28, vol. 7, p. 78. The actual amount, according to the Treasury estimate, was £88,000 (see M to W, [c. February 1813], PM 94/143/1 – 17/7, and Scorgie and Wilkinson, op. cit., p. 26).
30 Madame de Maintenon pour servir de suite à l’histoire de Mlle de La Vallière, Maradan: Paris, 1806.
Chinnery (the 1807 edition of his *Stranger in France*). The poet Thomas Moore made mention in his *Journal* of a pleasant evening at Margaret Chinnery’s home in 1819, and William Spencer’s book of *Poems* is full of complimentary references to Gillwell and the Chinnery children. The ‘Biographical Memoir of the Hon. William Robert Spencer’ included in the 1835 edition of Spencer’s *Poems* also contains high praise of Margaret Chinnery’s musical skills as well as her popularity as an accomplished and fashionable hostess. The French portraitist Madame Vigée-Lebrun also wrote glowingly in her *Souvenirs* of her 1802 visit to Gillwell and of the talented Chinnery children. Other testimonies in print are to be found in the newspapers *The Morning Chronicle* (6 July 1810) and the *Globe* (5 July 1810), and the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, in which George Robert Chinnery’s prize-winning Oxford poem was published, along with flattering remarks on his abilities. In the *Journals and Correspondences of Miss Berry* we find George Robert Chinnery and William Spencer as dinner guests at Madame de Staël’s on Saturday, 26 January 1814. Glenbervie also mentions dining with Madame de Staël, William Spencer and George Chinnery on 5 July 1813.

**William Bassett Chinnery, 1766-1827**

William Bassett Chinnery was born on 3 March 1766. In 1783 he acquired his first post of Junior Clerk at the British Treasury through the good offices of Lord Thurlow, whose daughters had been instructed in the art of writing by William Bassett’s grandfather. Lord Thurlow had recommended the young William to George Rose, then Secretary of the Treasury, who had procured the post for him. William Chinnery advanced quickly in the Treasury to become Agent for the Colony of N.S.W. (1787), thanks also to the patronage of George Rose, who was Prime Minister William Pitt’s

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34 William Spencer, *Poems*, Cadell: London, 1811. This is the edition that will be cited hereafter, unless otherwise stated.
37 *Gentleman’s Magazine*, vol. 80, part 2, p. 71.
38 Theresa Lewis (ed.), *Extracts from the Journals and Correspondences of Miss Berry from 1783 to 1852*, Longmans: London, 1865, p. 5.
esteemed colleague and close friend. In January 1799 he was made Chief Clerk, a post which carried additional responsibility, salary, and most importantly, access to Treasury funds. William must have possessed some attributes that helped his rapid advancement, but they do not seem to have been accounting skills. His strengths consisted in his affable geniality, his polished manners and his ability to please. He was naturally kind-hearted and generous. He also possessed a gentlemanly love of music – he was an amateur cellist – and a genuine love of letters and of the fine arts. His passion was collecting antiquities. He was on good terms with the different members of the royal family with whom his work brought him into contact, including Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Cambridge, Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, and the Prince of Wales, future George IV. He also enjoyed friendly relations with various members of parliament and foreign diplomats, more than one of whom wrote of their esteem for him.

After William Chinnery married Margaret Tresilian (21 October 1790), they settled at 5 Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square in London. In 1796, when the rest of his family, including Viotti, moved to Gillwell House at Waltham Abbey, Essex, he remained in London, lodging with the wine merchant Charles Smith at 3 Duke Street in the Adelphi, and visiting his family on week-ends. With a socially ambitious wife and a young family to raise, William soon found that his needs exceeded his annual salary. He began taking ‘loans’ from the Treasury funds in his care. This was not particularly difficult to do, as the chief clerks were permitted to keep public monies in private bank

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40 Other agencies he held were for the Bahama Islands and Sierra Leone.
41 Although this view would appear to be contradicted by Parke’s remark (see p. 15), all other evidence in the CFP collection points to it being so.
42 The Spanish ambassador Anduaga wrote to William on the eve of his departure from Britain in 1804, inviting him to come to Portland Place, ‘bringing, as he always does, pleasure and consolation’ (Anduaga to William Chinnery, 1804, Fisher). The former Commissioner and Senior Secretary of the Treasury J.H. Addington, in writing to thank William in 1810 for a copy of his son’s prize-winning poem, spoke of ‘the sincere regard I have long felt for his father [William], (J.H. Addington to William Chinnery, 29 July 1810, Fisher).
43 See M to G, 14 [recte 15] January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 42a, fo. 4.
44 According to Treasury records William Chinnery’s salary as Chief Clerk was no more than £1,200 a year (see Sainty, p. 34), plus £150 for each of the three agencies he held. This would come to approximately £1,650, yet Parington (op. cit. p. 78), Welply (1927, op. cit., p. 75) and Conner (op. cit., p. 21) say Chinnery’s (legitimate) income was £4,000 a year. Scorgie (op. cit., p. 20) estimates that this was the amount per annum that he was embezzling.
45 This is as good as admitted by Margaret Chinnery’s statement that ‘in the early part of his life, having had no inheritance (to draw from), [...] he was guilty of some little indiscretion in spending rather more than his income for some years after his marriage’ (Margaret Chinnery’s Personal account, PM 94/143/1 – 8).
accounts, pending disbursements. Moreover, the auditing process was very lax and lent itself to such abuses, which were not uncommon. While some of this money was spent on his valuable collection of antiquities, some on the additions and improvements to the Gillwell estate, and some on his household establishment – the family kept a large number of servants – the largest amount was ‘borrowed’ for the family’s expensive three-month visit to Paris in 1802. William hoped to repay this money by making profits from various speculative investments with the government loan-contractors Benjamin and Abraham Goldsmid but the attempt was unsuccessful, and when his fraud was discovered in March 1812 he was dismissed from his post. He spent two weeks in hiding in London before boarding the packet ‘Auckland’ for Gothenburg in Sweden on 30 March 1812. Throughout 1812 and 1813 all William Chinnery’s effects and the real property he had acquired from his wife’s father were auctioned off to repay his debts to the Government.

From 1812 to 1814 William remained in Gothenburg, where he had some kind of business association with a Swedish merchant named Willerding. On the Restoration of the French monarchy he moved to France. He went first to Calais, where he set up in business with a certain Leveux (1814-1816), then to Le Havre (1816-1823), where his business partner was Joseph Cary. His Le Havre trading business in wine, spirits, sugar, tea and coffee prospered initially, but ultimately failed in 1823. In all these ventures William was encouraged and aided by Viotti, who remained a staunch friend and supporter throughout his life.

On the failure of his trading house at Le Havre in 1823 he rejoined his wife in Paris, where they lived together until his death on 3 March 1827.

Margaret Chinnery, 1766?-1840

Born on 16 October 1766?, Margaret was the eldest of three daughters of a Brompton gentleman of comfortable means, Leonard Tresilian, who owned property in

46 See M. Scorgie and D. Wilkinson, op. cit., for an explanation of how William carried out the fraud.
47 W to M, 19 December 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 7/3.
48 See Margaret Chinnery’s Personal account (PM 94/143/1 – 8) for the most succinct explanation of Chinnery’s failed investments. See also William Chinnery’s letters to Margaret of 20 September 1810, 22 February 1811, 9 August 1811 and 19 December 1811 (PM 94/143/1 – 7/1, 7/2, 7/3).
49 W to M, [30 March 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 7/9. He arrived in Gothenburg on 4 April.
50 The collection of Greek statuary, vases, bronzes and pictures were sold by Christie’s in June 1812, and Margaret mentions other auctions in her Diary, 1812-1813, PM 94/143/1 – 1-10. See also p. 27.
51 Registre des Actes de décès du 5ème arrondissement de Paris, année 1827.
London and Essex. Wife of William Bassett Chinnery, she was the matriarch of the family, and in her own words, 'the animating principle of the whole'. She it was who took in various relatives, administered advice, managed domestic affairs, employed the numerous servants and tutors that were in residence at Gillwell, and kept the farm running smoothly. She was an efficient, prudent and economical housekeeper.

Judging by existing portraits (see frontispiece) and by accounts of her contemporaries, Margaret Chinnery was a beautiful woman. She also possessed all the feminine charm and social graces that were then consistent with her status of gentlwoman. But she possessed much more than external niceties. She was a woman of superior intellect, of strong convictions, of unshakeable faith in her Protestant religion, and of a remarkable inner strength, which enabled her to survive the overwhelming adversities that plagued her life. In company she displayed her considerable intellect in intelligent and lively conversation, which as a trait more typical of the eighteenth century French salonnière than of the nineteenth century English woman, endeared her to her many Continental admirers. She was an accomplished hostess, putting her many foreign acquaintances at their ease with her fluency in French and Italian. She was also an accomplished pianist and musician.

Her mother having died young, Margaret seems to have been largely self-educated. It was probably this fact which caused her to yearn continually for self-improvement. She was an avid bibliophile, who, at the age of sixteen, became a devotee of the writings of the French educationalist Madame de Genlis, and for want of a

52 There is no doubt about the day and the month of Margaret’s birth. As for the year, the baptism register of All Saints, Fulham, shows an entry for Margaret, daughter of Leonard and Margaret Tresilian, on 13 November 1766. According to the Registre du cimetière du Père Lachaise in Paris, Margaret was buried on 9 November 1840, aged 76. This would put her year of birth at 1764. For yet another mention of her birthday, see M to W, 7 March 1815, PM 94/143/1 – 17/20.
53 Vine St; Sloane St; Charles St; Covent Garden; St Paul’s Churchyard; Princes St, Lambeth; Sewardstone, Essex. For ‘A State of the Rental of the Estate of the late Mr Leonard Tresilian’, see Margaret Chinnery, Legal Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 11/24.
54 Margaret Chinnery’s Diary, 12 March 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 10.
55 Her sister-in-law Mrs George Chinnery, née Marianne Vigne (1778–1862), the abandoned wife of William’s artist brother, who fled England heavily engulfed in debt, was given lodging in a cottage on the Gillwell estate, and formed part of the Chinnery family circle until 1812. Also part of the family circle at Gillwell were three young Chinnery relatives whom Margaret educated.
56 Margaret Chinnery was painted three times: by her brother-in-law George Chinnery in 1802; by Madame Vigée-Lebrun in c.1803, depicted reading the bound manuscript presented to her by Madame de Genlis on the occasion of her 1802 Paris visit (see Part II, p. 342); and by the miniaturist Giovanni Trossarelli in c.1802. A reproduction of Trossarelli’s miniature is in Conner, op. cit., p. 21.
57 Madame Vigée-Lebrun described her as ‘une très-bellemode’ (Vigée-Lebrun, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 138–139), and Viotti’s pet name for her was ‘belle Margaratina’ (V to M, 17 April 1793 [recte 1794], PM 94/143/1 – 2/1).
mother, took Madame de Genlis as her role model. On becoming a mother herself, she put Madame de Genlis's theories of education into practice on her own children, and it was at Margaret's instigation that in 1796 the whole family (except William) moved to Gillwell Park, the estate settled on her by her father on her marriage. Here she educated her own children and three other young family members.\textsuperscript{58} As a result, she became a respected educationalist among her contemporaries, and her opinion on matters of education was frequently sought by friends and relatives. Her methods were as rigorous as those of Madame de Genlis before her. Her ambition to write a book on education was thwarted by the crushing events of 1812.

After the departure of her husband and the death of her daughter in April 1812 she retired briefly from society, but while accepting few invitations, she soon resumed entertaining in her own home, mainly with the aim of securing contacts for her son, whose bright career prospects had been dimmed by the scandal of his father. On being turned out of Gillwell, she rented a house at 10 Charles Street, Manchester Square, where she lived with Viotti, George, Matilda Chinnery and 'little Margaret' Chinnery until 1817. In March 1817 she purchased her own house at 17 Montagu Street, Portman Square. Members of high society, including her special friend Adolphus Frederick, and foreign diplomats continued to flock to her home, attracted by the elegant accomplishments of their hostess and the high standard of music provided by Viotti.

William Chinnery never did succeed in repaying his debt to the Government and was forced to remain in exile for the rest of his life. Viotti, a loyal supporter and faithful friend of both husband and wife, remained with Margaret. Margaret and Viotti spent the summer of each year from 1814 with William in France. In 1819, after Viotti's business partnership with Charles Smith collapsed, Margaret accompanied him to Paris, where Viotti had been appointed Director of the Paris Opera. In 1820 Margaret bought a property at Châtillon-sous-Bagneux, then a tiny village about six miles south of Paris in the fertile horticultural area of Montrouge,\textsuperscript{59} where Margaret stayed in the summer months, returning either to Paris or England in the winter months. Here too she received

\textsuperscript{58} Matilda Chinnery, 'little Margaret' Chinnery and a certain 'Maria' (Staniforth?) who was a few years older than the twins (see Part II, Chapter 1, p. 279, and Part III, p. 764).

\textsuperscript{59} Châtillon is described by J.A. Dulaure (Histoire des environs de Paris (VI), 2\textsuperscript{nd} edn, Furne et Co: Paris, 1858, p. 63) as belonging to a commune rich in agricultural produce (grains, grapes and vegetables) and as having (in 1858) a population of 770. George also gives a description of the village and property in his 1820 Travel Journal (BL, MS ADD 64095, pp. 166-167. See Part III, pp. 688-689).
company, mostly from Paris musical or diplomatic circles, as well as many other members of the French aristocracy, family, and close personal friends.

After Viotti died in their rented Upper Berkeley Street, London home in March 1824, Margaret moved back to Paris to live with her husband, paying only occasional visits to England. The Châtillon property was sold in 1825. She survived her children and husband, dying in Paris in November 1840. She was buried with her husband in the vault she had purchased for him (in 1827) in the Père Lachaise Cemetery (see p.19 n52).

Margaret Chinnery’s father Leonard Tresilian (1727?-1792) married twice, his first wife being the young Margaret Holland (d. 1776), whom he wed when she was a minor on 29 October 1763. She was the sister of the famous British architect Henry Holland (1746?-1806). His second wife, whom he married in 1777, was Elizabeth Davie. The third Tresilian sister Laura may have been the issue of this union. She married Henry Rowles, a lieutenant colonel in the army, and possibly the son of the builder of the same name who carried Henry Holland’s designs into effect. They lived in Cadogan Place, part of the Chelsea housing development undertaken by Holland in 1780. Holland and Rowles Senior are thought to have been partners in the firm of builders Holland, Copland, and Rowles. Henry Holland’s wife, Margaret’s ‘Aunt Holland’ (née Bridget Brown), was the sister of Admiral William Brown (d. 1814) and relative of ‘Capability Brown’. Mrs Bridget Holland continued to live in the house Holland built in Hans Place after her husband’s death in 1806 and until her own death in September 1823 (G to M, 19 September 1823, Fisher).

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60 A record of Leonard Tresilian’s baptism is in the IGI for London. Those of his marriage and burial, as well as of his wife Margaret’s burial, are in the church records of St Paul, Covent Garden.
61 He designed the Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatres (both of which subsequently burned down), as well as the Prince of Wales’s (future George IV’s) Marine Pavilion at Brighton, and carried out the substantial alterations on his Carlton House. He also developed one hundred acres of land in Chelsea, building houses in Sloane Street, Cadogan Place and Hans Place, where many members of his family lived. Many of the latter are mentioned in the Chinnery correspondence.
62 See Margaret Chinnery’s Legal Papers (PM 94/143/1 – 11). Stubbings (op. cit., p. 10), says that Tresilian’s second wife’s name was Elizabeth Dovee Fawson.
63 Although clearly a close family member, she is never referred to by Margaret Chinnery as her sister, but always as ‘Mrs Rowles’, giving rise to the suspicion that she may have been a stepsister. According to the terms of Leonard Tresilian’s will Elizabeth Davie Tresilian was to receive a lifelong annuity, to which each of his three daughters was to contribute equally (£52/17/10 each). See Margaret Chinnery, Legal Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 11/24.
65 Lancelot Brown (1715-1783), landscape gardener, was a friend of Leonard Tresilian.
Margaret’s closest sister was Elizabeth, who on 14 September 1811 married William Marsh, of the banking house Marsh, Sibbald, and Co. of Berner’s Street, London, at Fulham Church. It is from this branch of the family that Algernon Greene was descended. It is suggested in this thesis that one of the Marsh daughters (Martha or Georgina) married a certain Greene, and that they had three children, William, Evan and Mary. Algernon was the son of either William or Evan.

George Robert Chinnery, 1791-1825

The eldest son of William and Margaret Chinnery, born 3 September 1791, George was the gentle and affectionate twin brother of Caroline. He was a serious and studious child, who strove to meet his mother’s high expectations, and succeeded in doing so. His devotion to his mother continued into adulthood. His education was conducted with unremitting perseverance by his mother and various private tutors at Gillwell up to the age of sixteen, when he departed for Oxford. There he spent four years at Christ Church College, distinguishing himself in 1810 in a spectacularly public way, with the double honour of winning the Newdigate prize for poetry, and opening the recitation of encaenia verses in the Sheldonian Theatre on the installation of the new Chancellor of Oxford. He also won a prestigious Christ Church Studentship for his mathematical ability in 1809. He graduated in 1811 with first class honours in mathematics, and third class honours in classics, a result which did not accurately reflect his genuine love of the classics, which continued long after leaving Oxford.

By the end of his career at Oxford, George had gained the esteem of his superiors as well as his peers. He maintained friendships with the Christ Church dean, Charles Henry Hall, and many of his Christ Church contemporaries right through his life. The strict code of conduct and genuine respect for Christian principles instilled in him by his mother since his earliest education remained with him for life.

Like his mother he was a bibliophile and a thinker, but was rather more fond of solitude and quiet contemplation than she — although he was never short of invitations into the highest circles of society. Like his father, he had a gift for drawing and an eye

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66 Now All Saints Church, Fulham. Elizabeth, daughter of Leonard and Margaret Tresilian, was baptised on 7 February 1769 (IGI for London), making her about 42 when she married. Church records describe William Marsh as a widower ‘of the Parish of Saint Margaret, Westminster in the County of Middlesex’, and give as two of the witnesses Laura Rowles and B[ridget] Holland. The Marsh daughters may have been issue of Marsh’s first marriage. See also M to G, 6 September 1811, Ch Ch.
for beauty. An accomplished linguist, George knew seven languages, five of them modern, in an era when Englishmen were not commonly conversant with foreign tongues. He had grown up in an environment where every intellectual pursuit was encouraged, where he heard foreign languages spoken daily, and where both intellectual and elegant company mingled with some of the top musicians in Europe. Viotti was like a second father to him, the attachment having been formed in infancy.

After his father’s downfall he obtained a post as Junior Clerk in the Treasury, where he fulfilled his tedious duties honestly and assiduously. After a brilliant sally into the limelight in 1814, when on the Restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, he accompanied Louis XVIII back to France, he languished in the Treasury Chambers before being made private secretary to the future statesman George Canning in 1816. He had been the protégé of Canning since 1814. George was fond of his patron and accompanied him to Portugal in 1815, to Paris in 1816, and on tours of the Continent in 1819 and in 1820. On becoming Foreign Secretary in 1823, Canning transferred George to the Foreign Office and sent him to Madrid as Commissioner of Claims (1824-1825). It is highly probable that Canning, on becoming Prime Minister in 1827, would have provided well for him. But George died suddenly of an unknown illness while still on his posting in Madrid in October 1825. He was unmarried.

Caroline Chinnery, 1791-1812

Caroline was the adoring twin sister of George, born 3 September 1791. Like George, Caroline grew up in a home full of music and languages. From her earliest memory, Viotti had been part of her family. It was on her in particular that his musical influence was most felt. Caroline also followed her mother’s ambitious course of education, sharing up to a point the same subjects and the same tutors at Gillwell, but where George’s education concentrated on the classics, hers concentrated on music. When George went to Oxford, Margaret continued Caroline’s education at Gillwell, employing the family friend William Spencer to introduce her to the study of classics and to teach her the elegant accomplishment of verse-writing. She was exceedingly fond of Spencer, who referred to her as his ‘niece’, and she to him as ‘il mio caro zio’ [my dear uncle].

From her earliest childhood she took piano lessons from her mother and later from Viotti, who wrote sonatas especially for her. She learned to play the harp
proficiently and her mother also gave her singing lessons and employed some of the best vocalists in England to finish her style. She learned musical composition from the Italian opera composer Francesco 'Maestro' Bianchi, and composed some of her own piano pieces, none of which unfortunately seem to have survived. In Brighton in November 1811 she impressed the Prince Regent with her singing and her playing, and he found her compositions delightful, and 'in the stile of Scarlatti'. For a few days she was his favourite at the Pavilion, but soon succumbed to ill-health and had to return to Gillwell.

Caroline was a warm and affectionate girl of lively intelligence, who was, from all accounts and from her portrait which exists in copy in the RCM collection, a younger replica of her mother. From the time her mother launched her into society in 1810, she was a drawcard for the fashionable set who found her talents astounding, and far superior to the level of polite accomplishments that was common in young ladies of the day. Her alert and gracious manner and her simple modesty were traits that Margaret had succeeded in instilling in her. In early 1811 she caught whooping cough from her young relative 'little Margaret', and never fully recovered, dying unmarried on 3 April 1812. She lies buried with her brother Walter in a vault in Waltham Abbey Church.

Walter Grenfell Chinnery, 1793-1802

Walter Chinnery, younger brother of George and Caroline, was born on 22 April 1793 and died nine years later in November 1802. Walter's brief life was documented in Margaret Chinnery's education journal. On 22 April 1802 she wrote 'Walter completes his 9th year to day', and in describing his 'character and disposition', noted that at the age of nine he was 'a most troublesome boy' who caused Margaret to worry that she might not succeed in his education because he was so difficult to govern. According to Margaret's Journal he was disobedient and obstinate, told lies, and took 'great pleasure in contriving something to frighten the little ones'. But he did possess a warm heart and an loving nature. In behaviour, he seems to have been a typical nine-year-old boy.

But in other respects he was far from a typical English nine-year-old. His linguistic achievements were remarkable, and he spoke French and Italian fluently. Like the other children, he followed Margaret's stringent programme of education, beginning

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his classical studies at the age of eight. He was fit and strong, was growing tall, and rode extremely well. In 1802 he accompanied his family to Paris to meet Madame de Genlis, but died of typhoid fever [?] in London soon after their return in November 1802.

Matilda Margretta Chinnery, 1797-1877

Eldest child of William Chinnery’s brother, John Terry Chinnery (1770-1817), Civil Servant in Madras, and Mary Paton, Matilda Margretta Chinnery was born in Madras on 29 December 1797.68 She was sent to England in 1801 as a four year-old, to be educated by Margaret Chinnery. Matilda was brought up by Margaret as her own child and lived with her for twenty years. She followed the same education programme as the other Chinnery children, and acquired almost the level of proficiency in music that Caroline Chinnery had. When Caroline died she became a substitute daughter to Margaret, calling the latter ‘mama’, sharing the duties of hostess with her, and taking over Caroline’s role of entertaining guests on the piano and harp.

When William fled England in 1812 Margaret had Matilda keep a journal of the family’s daily activities for him. Only part of it (March-April 1814) survives. Matilda sometimes also added postscripts to Margaret’s letters to William. She remained with Margaret until she left England for India in c.February 1821 (accompanied by a Mrs Elderton) to marry Captain Samuel Irton Hodgson.69 In 1819 Margaret had written to William that Matilda would ‘make a vast gap in my life whenever she leaves me.’70 Matilda’s first meeting with her future husband took place at the home of Mrs Sewell71 -- who was apparently responsible for making the match -- and the wedding took place in Madras on 28 September 1822.

Matilda’s sisters Elizabeth and Mary were also sent to England to be educated, but only Elizabeth appears to have lived with Margaret’s family for a short while. They appear to have gone to a boarding school.72 Elizabeth’s and Mary’s marriages are mentioned in the Chinnery letters.73

68 See Welply and Conner for more details of this branch of the family.
69 A full genealogy of the Irton family exists in the Powerhouse collection in Margaret Chinnery’s Legal Papers, PM 94/143/1 - 11/29. See also M to W, c.4 February 1821, PM 94/143/1 - 17/51.
70 M to W, 4 January 1819, PM 94/143/1 - 17/39.
71 Presumably the wife of the Sewell who was partner in the Madras firm of Chase, Sewell and Chinnery (see George Chinnery to Mrs Sewell (copy), 7 March 1823, PM 94/143/1 - 25/5).
72 See Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, PM 94/143/1 - 1-27.
73 Elizabeth Marianne Chinnery’s marriage to Lieutenant Colonel Charles Macleod ‘of the 21st Reg. of Native Infantry, holding a staff situation at Hyderabad’ (G to M, 10 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 - 12/22)
Margaret Chinnery Girardot, c. 1798-1878

‘Little Margaret’, as she was known in the family, was William Chinnery’s stepsister. Her birth (with no date) is noted in the Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society. From general remarks made in Margaret Chinnery’s education journal, she appears to have been a year or two younger than Matilda Chinnery. She lived at Gillwell from about 1804 to about 1811, was educated with the other Chinnery children, and like Caroline and Matilda, was taught by Margaret to play the piano and harp. In about 1811 she appears to have been sent to school.

Margaret’s cousin Richard Holland, took a particular interest in her welfare, and gave her £100 as a wedding gift, regretting that he could not do more for her. Before her marriage she obtained various positions as a governess teaching harp and piano to young ladies, and in 1822 began teaching harp in London. She remained in touch with Margaret, but was never as close to her as Matilda. She married Colonel Charles Andrew Girardot (1794-1864) in c. 1822. Of the two surviving letters from her to Margaret, one is dated 1815 and the other, undated, was clearly written just after her marriage.

‘Little Margaret’ was Margaret Chinnery’s god-daughter, and received a bequest of £200 from her will. She died at Dover in 1878, leaving three daughters.

Gillwell House

Gillwell House, or Gillwell Park, as the whole estate was known, at Waltham Abbey in the county of Essex, twelve miles from central London, had belonged to Margaret Chinnery’s father Leonard Tresilian, and was settled upon her on her marriage. It consisted of some forty-two acres. As the Married Woman’s Property Act did not then exist, the property passed to Margaret’s husband, William Chinnery. Situated on the edge of Epping Forest, the property included, apart from the gracious

took place on 25 December 1823. (See also Welply, 1927, op. cit., p. 76). Welply says that Mary Chinnery died unmarried. In G to M, 27 July 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/31, it is stated that Mary Chinnery was to be married to a Mr Fraser of ‘a big Indian house of Agency.’

75 Richard Holland was a signatory to some of the early legal papers in the Powerhouse collection, where he is described as a surveyor.
76 See Richard Holland to George Chinnery, 16 April 1822, Fisher.
77 See Caroline Chinnery to Margaret Chinnery, 30 January 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 4/2, and Welply, 1927, op. cit., p. 23.
78 Welply, 1927, op. cit., p. 23.
old house, a chapel, offices and several tracts of land. Another thirty acres of land was acquired by William Chinnery during the family’s residence there. Chinnery also carried out improvements on the property, introducing land draining and constructing hot-houses. Substantial improvements were made to the house in 1809 and Margaret beautified the gardens with plantations of trees, walks, flower beds and a kitchen garden. Each Chinnery child had his own own garden bed. There was even a small outdoor theatre, chapel and an archery lawn. The Chinnerys lived at Gillwell House from 1796 to 1812, a period which Margaret Chinnery described as their ‘golden age’.

After William’s defalcation was discovered the Gillwell property was sold at auction (8 April 1813) to help repay his debts to the public purse. It was described in the 1813 auction notice as “Gillwell House and Estate ... An Elegant Villa ...situate[d] in the Hamlet of Sewardstone, in the parish of Waltham-Holy-Cross, in the county of Essex”. The property was divided into four lots for the sale, the first two (comprising Gillwell House and Little Gillwell Farm) being purchased by Gilpin Gorst for £4,950, the third (comprising a cottage and garden) by a Mr Thomas for £800, and the fourth (comprising Mosey Mead) by a Mr Craven for £650, making the total purchase price £6,400. The property had been previously valued by a Government agent at £10,143/13, ‘exclusive of Timber, Pollards, Tellers and young Plantations’.

The property is now known as ‘Gillwell’ Park, and belongs to the Scout Association, having been purchased by Baden-Powell in 1919 as a training centre for scouts. It is still used for that purpose today. The spelling of ‘Gillwell’ with a double ‘l’ will be retained throughout the thesis, as it was the one consistently used by the Chinnerys themselves, and the one appearing in all the legal documents pertaining to the property. The use of the single ‘l’ may be attributed to the derivation of the name, which comes from the Old Norse word ‘gil’ meaning deep glen and the Old English ‘wella’, meaning spring, or pool fed by a spring.

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79 A precise calculation of the area of the estate settled on Margaret by her father on her marriage, as distinct from that acquired by William during their residence there, was made in 1812. See Margaret Chinnery, Legal Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 11/15.
80 M to G, 18 March 1808, Ch:Ch.
81 Margaret Chinnery, Legal Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 11/20.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid, PM 94/143/1 – 11/15.
84 The Powerhouse Chinnery collection contains abundant material on Gillwell House during the Chinnery era. See also Stubbing, op. cit.
'Les Archives de Gillwell'

There is ample evidence that Margaret Chinnery attached a great deal of importance to the letters and papers that make up the CFP collection. They were all tied in bundles, filed under the name of the sender, and allocated a drawer in her desk. For example on the back of one letter was marked 'taken from the French drawer'. Another wrapper was entitled 'from Amico [Viotti] in our early days'. A bundle of Oxford letters were marked 'from Apr 24th 1809, to 5th Term, or 2nd Term of his 2nd Year at Christ Church.' The back of each of Margaret Chinnery's letters to her husband is unfailingly inscribed by him with the dates they were received and his replies sent, and she, for her part, numbered his letters as she received them. Margaret and George Chinnery have both added names, titles and dates to letters where these were missing, with an occasional explanation, for example, 'from Uvedale Price, the famous landscape gardener'. William Chinnery was apt to fill the covers of his favourite letters with more verbose descriptions of the contents. Many of the letters bear evidence of subsequent loving perusal. An unsteady, elderly Margaret Chinnery hand has methodically reviewed the correspondence towards the end of her life, adding in pencil a name or a date on the cover of a letter, sometimes with a comment: 'a strange letter from Mme de Vaudreuil', or on a letter from a solicitor at the time of the family's dreadful upheaval, 'from Mr Wadeson, I think, but I really can't remember'.

Interesting also are the physical details, such as the paper, seals and postmarks. The good quality English writing paper used in much of this correspondence was made in the days before acids were introduced to paper-making techniques and is therefore robust and completely free of foxing. Mostly it consisted of a folded sheet taken from a quire (a set of 24 or 25 sheets of writing paper) which yielded four pages of writing. A typical page measured approximately 18.5cm x 22cm. If the letter was to be put into a cover (an additional sheet of stiff paper cut to the required size and folded around the letter), it was folded in half horizontally, then into thirds vertically, to end up as a stiff little parcel measuring about 11.5cm x 8cm, around which the cover fitted snugly. The cover was then sealed with wax at the back, and the address written on the front. If the letter did not have a cover, as was the case for most of the Chinnery correspondence, it

85 This system points up the large number of letters that are missing.
was folded horizontally from the top to the centre, and from the bottom to the centre, so that the edges just met, then folded vertically into approximate thirds, with the seal stamped on the overlapping edge. The letter was turned over and the address written on what was in effect the middle part of the back page (which had to be left blank). Sometimes the back page was torn when the seal was broken, making it unwise to write on the centre third of the third page. There was another smaller (less used) size of writing paper that measured approximately 11.5cm x 17.5cm, that was folded horizontally in thirds and usually put into a cover. British Government regulation paper was of a foolscap size (roughly 20 x 30 cm). Most of the English correspondence was written on stiff, good quality paper, whereas the French paper, such as that used by Madame de Genlis and Madame Vigée-Lebrun, was flimsy and of poor quality. Hence the condition of the French letters is poorer than that of the English. Another difference between the French and English letters was the shape of the envelope. The envelope (if one was used) that wrapped around the French letters was folded in a different way from the English, and the seal stamped over a triangular fold at the back, rather like today's envelopes.

The appearance of the covers varied, according to whether the letter was delivered by hand, sent by the general post, the twopenny post (in or near London), or the 'petite poste' (in or near Paris), carried in a diplomatic bag, or franked. On the covers there are also informative postmarks, indicating whether or not postage has been prepaid. The franking privilege belonged to members of parliament, but apparently also included Chief Clerks of the Treasury, as William Chinnery had the right to two free franks a day. This system consisted of having mail delivered at no cost to the sender, by franking, or signing the cover. All of Margaret Chinnery's mail to her son at Oxford was carried to Whitehall by a Gillwell servant, there to be franked by her husband and forwarded free of charge to Oxford. It was very common for friends to request this favour of their parliamentary acquaintances. The best examples of franked letters in this collection are those of the Duke of Cambridge. Across the top he wrote the date in longhand, underneath the address, and below, in the left hand corner his signature, between two parallel lines. The circular postmark is marked 'Freepost', bears the crown at the top, and the date can be clearly read within the circle.

86 See Part III, pp. 730-731 for a discussion of this.
The importance of the letters to the family members themselves cannot be overemphasised. They were of course primarily a medium of communication between absent loved ones, but they became also, for Margaret Chinnery especially, a symbol of family unity and a reassurance of life. In an era when long journeys were a hazardous affair, and when in the absence of modern medicines the slightest wound or illness could lead to death, the arrival of a letter was a sign of life. In the case of the Oxford letters, they were also a documentation of her son’s education, and she enjoined him to keep them carefully and bring them home at the end of each term. This he did unfailingly, acknowledging the importance of the letters for a true understanding of his mother’s character. He wrote to Viotti from Oxford in 1809 that in these letters her whole soul was revealed: ‘Dans ces lettres on trouve toute son âme dépeinte’. With unknowing prescience he added, ‘Elles [les lettres] formeront les archives de Gilliwell’.87

87 G to V, 10 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
(iii) Conventions followed

Abbreviations
For the purpose of references the following abbreviations will be used:

Christ Church College Library, Oxford                Ch.Ch.
Royal College of Music Library, London               RCM
Powerhouse Museum Archives, Sydney                   PM
Fisher Library, University of Sydney                 Fisher
Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book
and Manuscript Library, Yale University              Osborn
British Library, London                               BL

In citing correspondence between immediate members of the Chinnery family
(including Viotti) the following abbreviations of family members’ names will be used.
When they are writing to others, full names will be used.

William Bassett Chinnery                              W
Margaret Chinnery                                     M
George Robert Chinnery                                G
Caroline Chinnery                                     C
Giovanni Battista Viotti                              V

Citations
As the Fisher collection is as yet uncatalogued, it has not been possible to cite
the exact location of the different items quoted. When the arrangement of the material is
completed, using the same method as the Powerhouse collection, it is hoped that the
items will be easily found.

The Oxford collection of Chinnery letters has been arranged in chronological
order, bound in fourteen volumes, and each volume has been allocated a number, for
example MS xlviia a. 42a (vol. 1), MS xlviia a. 43 (vol. 2), and so on to MS xlviia a. 55
(vol. 14). The microfilm copy in Fisher Library is on three reels, and for the sake of
brevity, only the dates of the letters have been cited. In the case of undated material or letters that are out of order, the full numerical citation and folio number will be given.

**Transcriptions**

Original spellings – which may be quite idiosyncratic, especially in Viotti’s rendering of English words and the Chinnerys’ constant use of ‘it’s’ as a possessive adjective – have been kept in all transcriptions, and ‘[sic]’ will only be used in cases where ambiguity of meaning might arise. For the sake of clarity, and to make the reading of the long transcriptions easier, new paragraphs have occasionally been created where the sense of the text seemed to call for them, especially after dashes, which were sometimes used as paragraph markers to save paper, and which are a common feature of all the letters and journals. Sometimes, for example in Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, where dashes occur with most frequency, they have been omitted altogether for ease of reading.

**Index**

Only personal names of Chinnery contemporaries have been indexed. Contemporary authors and composers have been indexed only if there is related textual commentary.
PART I

VIOTTI AND THE CHINNERYS
(i) Giovanni Battista Viotti

Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755-1824) was an Italian violinist and composer, who is today considered by musicologists to have been one of the most significant forces in the history of violin playing. His style of violin concerto is said to have been admired by Mozart and to have influenced Beethoven.\(^1\) Held to be the instigator of the French violin playing method, which was influential throughout Europe during the nineteenth century, his playing inspired young violinists, who in turn passed his method down to the end of the century and beyond. In 1925 Bachmann wrote in his *Encyclopedia of the Violin* that Viotti was ‘the one true head of all the “schools” [of violin playing] at the present time.’\(^2\) By head of a school, Bachmann meant ‘those masters who have trained pupils who have become famous, and whose principles have been handed down to the present day.’\(^3\) Those principles were disseminated by Viotti’s disciples Baillot, Rode and Kreutzer in their *Méthode de violon* (Paris, 1803) and by Baillot’s *L’Art du violon, nouvelle méthode* (Paris, 1834).\(^4\) Viotti was a teacher as much as a performer or composer. Among his pupils were Alday, Vacher, Cartier, Libon, Robberechts, Pixis and Mori, the last of whom came to the Chinnery home at Gillwell for his lessons.\(^5\)

As a solo performer Viotti was widely hailed by his contemporaries as possessing superlative technical skills, allied with such a powerful strength of sentiment, that he commonly moved his listeners to tears. His technique, according to the Haydn biographer Robbins Landon, was revolutionary. It included ‘making the violin stronger, physically, reinforcing the bass-bar to be able to support the increased pressure of the raised bridge, the neck “thrown back” [...] and the bow made less curved (again to increase its strength).’\(^6\) This technique had an impact not only on solo violin

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playing but on orchestral techniques as well. Landon says that ‘the modern orchestra was born when Viotti came to London and joined forces with Salomon in 1793.’

At the end of the eighteenth century, Viotti was considered by music lovers from Moscow to London to be the best violinist in Europe. Yet this violin prodigy performed before the public for only about seven years, abandoned his musical career, by his own confession, before 1798, that is, at the age of forty-three, and devoted the rest of his life to the Chinnery family. By this is meant that every ensuing career decision of Viotti’s was taken with this family’s welfare in mind. To explain this extraordinary phenomenon, it is necessary to re-examine Viotti’s life.

Viotti’s biographers

Viotti has had many biographers. These can be roughly divided into three groups. Firstly, there were his contemporaries: musicologist Fétis, violinist friends Baillot and Miel and his ambassador friend Eymar. Eymar’s anecdotal evidence has sometimes been called into question, but his accounts of Viotti’s violin technique are valuable and his penetrating insights into Viotti’s temperament, especially his deeply sensitive nature, are corroborated by the latter’s own writings. His short biography speaks mostly of Viotti’s relationship with Hélène de Montgérault, who is the subject of many Chinnery letters.

Secondly, there was the early twentieth violin expert Edward Heron-Allen, who wrote the Viotti article for the second edition of Grove’s Dictionary of Music based on the information gleaned from his own valuable collection of manuscript Viotti.

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7 Ibid.
8 He did however continue to compose, and gave some later ensemble performances.
9 François-Joseph Fétis (1784-1871), French musicologist, critic, teacher and composer, and editor of the Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique, Leroux/Méline: Bruxelles, 1834-1844 (vol. 8, pp. 467-473 for the Viotti entry). The Biographie universelle des musiciens was the most comprehensive biographical dictionary of musicians of its time.
11 Comte Ange-Marie d’Eymar (c. 1740-1803), Deputy for the nobility at the Estates General (Basses-Alpes), but who adopted the principles of the ‘first revolution’ in 1789 and was made ambassador to Piedmont, Viotti’s birthplace. He was later prefect for the Department of Léman. Eymar was the author of ‘Anecdotes sur Viotti’, Extrait de la Décade philosophique, Luc Sestié: Genève, an VIII.
12 Hélène de Montgérault (1764-1836), French pianist and composer.
13 See Introduction, p. 4.
papers which were bequeathed to the London Royal College of Music Library at his death in 1943. Heron-Allen had been in touch with a descendant of the Chinnery family, Mr Algernon Greene and with the musicologist E. van der Straeten, who wrote another Viotti biography for the German music publication, Die Musik in 1902, based on these papers. The papers are all holograph documents and include Viotti’s autobiography Précis de la vie de J. B. Viotti, his Ranz des Vaches, his will, and miscellaneous letters, including nine from Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Cambridge. This material enabled biographers to give a more ‘factual’ account of Viotti’s life than had previously been possible.

In the third group are the mid-twentieth century scholars Remo Giazotto, Chappell White and Boris Schwarz. The longest and most ambitious (but not the most accurate) biography of Viotti was undertaken by Giazotto. This work, valuable though it is for its thematic catalogue of Viotti’s compositions (the first attempted) and its wide ranging search of Europe’s archives for relevant biographical material, nevertheless contains many errors (dates, citations, French and English spelling mistakes and even some rather fanciful inventions conveniently substituting for facts, when these are lacking). Chappell White and Boris Schwarz are the most reliable authorities on Viotti. Boris Schwarz’s article in the German music encyclopedia Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart is, according to White, ‘the most consistently satisfactory short account of


16 E. van der Straeten, ‘J.B. Viotti, wie er sich selbst geschildert’, in Die Musik, vol. 1, nos. 18 and 19, 1902, cols. 1635-1643 and 1736-1744. A copy of this is in the RCM collection.

17 Précis de la vie de J. B. Viotti depuis son entrée dans le monde jusqu’au 6 mars 1798 (‘Viotti Papers’, RCM) written in his own defence against the British Government’s accusation that he was a Jacobin activist. Henceforth cited in the abbreviated form Précis.

18 The Ranz des Vaches is a Swiss melody sung and played on the Alpenhorn to call cows for milking. Here it is a piece of writing describing the sensations Viotti experienced on hearing this melody in the Swiss Alps, which inspired his violin composition by the same name.

19 One of these is to Margaret Chinnery.

20 Even so, there are some errors in Heron-Allen’s account.


Viotti’s life and work. White himself has written an equally satisfactory, longer account in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*.

All of Viotti’s biographers have acknowledged the close ties of Viotti with the Chinnery family. But none have identified the exact nature of that relationship. The facts have remained hazy, partly because of the frequent confusion of the names of the various members of the Chinnery family, and partly because of a dearth of biographical data about this family. Giazotto was the greatest perpetrator of the name confusion, mistakenly identifying Mr William Chinnery as Mr George Chinnery, describing Walter Chinnery as the first born son (when he was in fact the last born) and identifying George Robert Chinnery as the last born son (when he was the first born, and twin brother to Caroline), and fancifully marrying off daughter Caroline to a certain ‘Artur Boyce’, when in fact she died unmarried at the age of twenty. The latest biography of Viotti, published in the 1993 *Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers and other Stage Personnel in London 1660 – 1800*, also contains some errors.

The second half of Viotti’s life was entirely devoted to the Chinnery family whom he appears to have met in London shortly after his arrival in England in July 1792. It is this part of Viotti’s life, which is so inextricably intertwined with the Chinnerys’ that it is impossible to separate them, that is elucidated by the information contained in the Chinnery Family Papers. The Chinnery Family Papers are the richest source of information on Viotti to have come to light since Heron-Allen’s small private collection was deposited in the Royal College of Music Library. They will form the basis of what follows.

Before elaborating on Viotti’s life after he met the Chinnerys, it would be useful to give a brief summary of what has been discovered of Viotti’s life by the above-mentioned biographers.

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26 Highfill, Burnim and Langhans (eds.), *op. cit.*, vol. 15, pp. 184-188. It perpetuates the mistaken belief that Viotti’s date of birth was 1753, states erroneously that Viotti went to Paris in 1793, and wrongly identifies Viotti’s friend and business partner as ‘George’ Smith.
Summary of Viotti’s life according to past biographers

Giovanni Battista Viotti was born in Fontanetto da Po, Piedmont on 12 May 1755, and died in London on 3 March 1824. The general periods of Viotti’s life may be fairly clearly delineated. Firstly, there are the early years in Italy where he was born and educated, including the two year period spent travelling with his mentor, Pugnani, when he gave private concerts in the homes of the aristocracy and royalty from Geneva to Moscow. Viotti himself gives details of this tour in his Précis.

Then came the ten-year residency in Paris, where, according to Chappell White, he spent ‘the most successful and influential period of his life’, composing half of his published works, including nineteen violin concertos. He took Paris by storm in 1782 at his first public performance at the Concert Spirituel. After playing before the public for only eighteen months he inexplicably withdrew from the public arena to perform only in the private residences of the nobility and at the court of Marie-Antoinette. Disenchanted with the manners of the nobility he soon withdrew from this arena also, to perform only in private concerts for friends. Various reasons have been put forward for this decision, all of them based on anecdotal evidence, and most citing Viotti’s pride and professionalism and his predilection for tranquillity.

It was at the court of Marie-Antoinette that Viotti met Léonard Autié, the Queen’s hairdresser, with whom he struck up an incongruous partnership to embark on his first entrepreneurial activities. Together they founded (on 26 January 1789) the Théâtre de Monsieur under the patronage of the King’s brother, the Comte de Provence (future Louis XVIII). (At the same time, Viotti made a rather clumsy attempt to gain control of the Paris Opera.) The Théâtre de Monsieur produced both French and Italian opera of a high standard. Forced to move twice, the theatre eventually settled in rue Feydeau in 1791. By then the Revolution was gaining momentum and it was

27 The erroneous belief that Viotti was born two years earlier was due to the fact that records show the birth of a Viotti son by the same name in that year. This older namesake died in July 1754. See MGG, vol. 13, col. 1792.
28 Gaetano Pugnani (1731-1798), Italian violinist and composer.
30 A concert series (always referred to in the singular) which ran from 1725 to 1790 in Paris, initially to perform instrumental music and sacred works. Non-operatic secular works were introduced later.
31 See Eymar, op. cit., pp. 30-32.
32 He sought to obtain a fifty-year concession, claiming that he could guarantee the King a saving of 250,000 livres in running costs annually. His application was rejected out of hand. See Giazotto, op. cit., pp. 246-258 for a full correspondence between Viotti and the authorities, and Lionel de La
considered prudent to rename the theatre Théâtre Feydeau. But the Revolution eventually put an end to this theatrical venture, as it did to many others, and both financial backers and artists fled France. The Comte de Provence himself fled in June 1791, and Viotti departed one year later, his connections with royalty having put his life in danger. He arrived in London, according to his Précis, on the 21 or 22 July 1792.

In England the next phase of Viotti’s life began. This period spanned the five years he performed before the public in London: for two seasons at Salomon’s Hanover Square concerts (1793 and 1794) and then at the Opera concerts at King’s Theatre from the 1794-95 season to the 1797-98 season. Some of these performances coincided with Haydn’s second visit to London (1794-95) and during these years Viotti frequently appeared at Haydn’s concerts, where he performed his own new violin concertos. In the 1794-95 season he did another short stint as a theatrical impresario when he was made acting manager of the King’s Theatre, where Italian Opera was performed. At the same time he was made musical director of the newly established Opera concerts at the same theatre.

In 1798 Viotti was accused by the British Government of being a Jacobin agitator (of which there is no evidence) and was ordered to leave the country. He spent three years in exile, residing in Schönfeld near Hamburg for about a year and a half of that time in the house of a friend, a certain Mr Smith, who was not the same person (Charles Smith) that Viotti formed a partnership with to embark on his venture into the wine trade. The extraordinary decision to abandon his musical career in favour of a career in the wine trade had been taken, according to Viotti’s own testimony in his Précis, in c. 1797. The short Précis of his life, written at the beginning of his exile in March 1798, gave as a reason his close relationship with the Chinnery family, with whom he said he could not live without being embarrassed in the practice of his musical career. ‘Vivant ainsi au sein de l'amitié, j'étois cependant contrarié par l'exercice de mon talent et la gêne qu’il m'imposoit me fit prendre le parti d’y renoncer et me donner un autre état’.

Laurencie’s article ‘Les Débuts de Viotti comme directeur de l’Opéra en 1819’ (Revue de Musicologie, vol. 5, 1924, p. 111), for a discussion of this attempt.

33 His name was inscribed on the livre rouge as having been in receipt of a pension from the Queen. This book, bound in red leather, was a register of the secret expenditure of the royal family during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI.

By 1801 Viotti was back in England, and there continued his wine trade activities — the fourth period of his life — which ended unsuccessfully, according to all reports, in 1818. Except for a few ensemble performances with the Philharmonic Society during this time, Viotti’s performing career was over. Most biographers have noted Viotti’s intermittent visits to Paris during these years.

In 1819 the fifth and final period of Viotti’s life began. Casting about for another means of livelihood, he decided upon yet another foray into the anxiety-fraught world of theatrical management, applying for and obtaining the directorship of the Paris Opera, which included both the French and Italian theatres. From 1819 to 1822 he struggled with changes of location, artistic jealousies and persistent criticism. In 1823 he returned to England a broken man, where he died at the Chinnery home in London on 3 March 1824. 36

These are the bald facts of Viotti’s life according to past biographers. What follows is an attempt to humanise that life in the light of substantial new information contained in the Chinnery Family Papers, and to situate it in the musical and social context of the day.

35 The Smith in Schönfeld appears to be the same Smith to whom Viotti recommended William Chinnery when the latter was looking for a safe haven in 1812 (see p. 116).

36 None of the biographers can agree on the place he died. Grove’s Dictionary of Music (2nd edn, vol. 5, p. 338) says it was at ‘Mrs Caroline Chinnery’s house, No. 5 Berkeley Street, Portman Square’; the New Grove (vol. 19, p. 865) says it was at Mr and Mrs William Chinnery’s home in Portland Square; the MGG (vol. 13, col. 1794) simply states that he died ‘bei seinen alten Freunden Chinnery’; Giazzotto, uncharacteristically, does not hazard a guess, except to agree that it was in London. Only the Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians (vol. 15, p. 186) is correct in stating that it was at Mrs Chinnery’s home at No 5, Upper Berkeley Street, Portman Square. The Upper Berkeley Street residence had been rented for the winter of 1823-24, while Margaret Chinnery’s own home at 17 Montagu Street was being prepared for sale (see p. 203).
(ii) Viotti’s relationship with the Chinnerys

Viotti’s first meeting with the Chinnerys took place in a climate propitious to the flowering of a musical friendship: London in the 1790s was immersed in music. In January 1791, the *Morning Chronicle*, which regularly reported on musical activities in its column ‘Mirror of Fashion’, stated ‘This is the age of music. John Bull’s taste, previously devoted only to materialistic pursuits, now seems settled on music.’ The German musicologist Pohl called these years ‘der Culminationspunkt im Musikleben Londons’. There was opera, ballet, oratorios, public and private concerts, musical clubs and societies and a corresponding number of opera houses, concert halls, theatres, inns, coffee houses, and private drawing rooms to accommodate them. There were so many musical societies (eleven in all), that it was possible to go to a concert on every night of the week, including Sunday, when – because of the ban on public entertainments on the Sabbath – permission would have had to be obtained from the Archbishop of Canterbury. Sunday was also the night of the Nobility Concerts.

The most frequented venues for musical entertainments in London were the King’s Theatre, Haymarket, where Italian opera was performed; Drury Lane and Covent Garden, where English opera was performed; the Vauxhall Gardens, an open-air venue for concerts and variety shows; and the most famous concert rooms of the decade, the Hanover Square Rooms, where the hugely popular concerts of the same name were held. The Hanover Square concerts were a series of twelve weekly subscription concerts which took place each year, beginning in February 1791. The man who instituted these concerts was the German immigrant to England Johann Peter Salomon. It was he who was responsible for bringing into England most of the Continental performing artists, including Viotti. It was he, also, who commissioned Haydn to compose new works for his Hanover Square concerts, and brought him to England in 1791-92 and in 1794-95 to perform in them, thereby goading the English love of music to fever-pitch. In the years that Haydn performed at them, these concerts were the rage of London.

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38 These were private subscription concerts named after their hosts (and guests) and could attract up to four hundred devotees, who were not only provided with fine music, but also with a sumptuous supper afterwards.
39 Johann Peter Salomon (1745-1815), German violinist, impresario and composer who came to reside in London in 1781.
When Viotti arrived in London in July 1792 Salomon had already been engaging musical artists from the Continent for the past two seasons and over the next three years, as the Revolution became bloodier, and more artists fled from France, he was responsible for bringing together at his concerts the most brilliant collection of virtuoso instrumentalists, vocalists and composers in Europe. ‘Nothing less than the demolition of one Monarchy, and the general derangement of all the rest, could have poured into England and settled such a mass of talents as we have now to boast. Music as well as misery has fled for shelter to England [...]’, wrote the London daily newspaper The Morning Chronicle on 15 February 1793. The Chinnerys would most certainly have been subscribers to Salomon’s Hanover Square concerts, being among the ‘Gentry’ – if not ‘Nobility’ – at whom Salomon’s advertisements in the London newspapers of the day were pitched.

Making music and listening to music were eminently fashionable pastimes, and among their most fashionable participants were the various members of the royal family, who were not only enthusiastic participators in the current vogue, but were generous patrons of many musicians and musical societies. The contribution of the royal family to the fostering of musical talent in this decade cannot be underestimated. King George III and his sons, especially the Prince of Wales, by keeping their own bands and giving their own Court Concerts, gave opportunities to English and Continental musicians alike. All the members of the royal family liked to participate in these concerts, which were held at Windsor House, at the Prince of Wales’s Carlton House (on Thursdays), and at the Duke of York’s London house and at his country estate, Oatlands. Haydn performed at the Carlton House concerts twenty-six times, and Salomon regularly led the band. The Queen and the Princesses enjoyed singing, and the Prince of Wales, who was a pupil of the cellist John Crosdill, frequently played the cello alongside his illustrious teacher in the royal orchestra, and also sang. The King’s youngest son Adophus Frederick was to become a keen pupil of Viotti, and one of his most ardent admirers. That these members of the royal family played and sang in the

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40 During the extensive renovations carried out on Carlton House in 1783, the Prince of Wales installed many music rooms.
41 Frederick Augustus, Duke of York (1763-1827), second son of George III.
42 Oatlands Park, Surrey, was a large castle built on the site of a palace of Henry VIII. It was converted into a hotel in the mid-nineteenth century.
company of Haydn, Viotti and the best professional musicians in the country says much about their musical ability – or perhaps more about the forbearance of the professionals – but even more about their genuine interest in music.

It is not clear from the letters how Viotti first came to meet the Chinnery family. Giazotto, without giving any supporting evidence, claims that he met them in March 1793, through the intermediary of Adolphus Frederick\(^4\), who, he says, was already a frequent visitor to the Chinnery home. Although the Duke of Cambridge may have already been acquainted with the Chinnerys at this time,\(^45\) it is unlikely that he introduced Viotti to the Chinnerys in 1793 – although he may have done so earlier – for at the time the young prince, then only nineteen years old, was serving in the Hanoverian army, and did not return to England until September of the same year.\(^46\) It is more likely that Viotti met the Chinnerys either shortly after his arrival in London in the second half of 1792, or at one of Salomon’s Hanover Square concerts in early 1793. The introduction may have been made by Adolphus Frederick, or even by Salomon himself, whom the Chinnerys appear to have known quite well. By the familiar tone of the first letter in the Powerhouse collection from Viotti to Margaret Chinnery on 30 May 1793, which begins ‘Je vous ai quitté hier avec chagrin ma chere bonne amica, j’avais le coeur gros, et l’âme s’est remplie de sa tristesse ordinaire’ and ends with fond sentiments for the three young Chinnery children: ‘Embrassés les trois petits marmots pour moi’,\(^47\) it would appear that he had known her and her family for longer than the two-month period that would have elapsed since Giazotto’s hypothetical date of meeting.

From the moment Viotti met the Chinnery family, his life became part of theirs. Their closeness is evident from the affectionate terms of address used in the letters. Viotti called William ‘mon cher Chin’, or simply ‘Chin’, and in more playful moments ‘Gastaldo’ or ‘Cinnerino’ (the last an affectionate allusion to William’s small stature). Margaret he called sometimes ‘Amica’, sometimes ‘la cara Padrona’. To all the

\(^{43}\) John Croxall (1755-1825), foremost cellist of his generation in Britain, had been principal cellist in four of the most prestigious London concert series of the day, including the Professional Concerts and the Concert of Ancient Music. He played at the coronation of his former pupil in 1821.

\(^{44}\) Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Cambridge (1774-1850), the tenth child and seventh son of George III and Queen Charlotte.

\(^{45}\) At the time of George Chinnery’s death, Adolphus Frederick said that he had known George since the latter was an infant (Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 17 March 1826, Fisher).


\(^{47}\) Viotti, 30 May 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/3.
Chinnery family members, and to many of their friends as well, Viotti was known simply as ‘Amico’. Viotti was a loyal friend and supporter of both Margaret and William, and to their children he was a second father.48

The relationship between the three adults can only be described as a truly successful ménage à trois. Both men idolized Margaret, but although one was her husband by law and the other her companion by choice, never was there any friction between the two. When Viotti was expelled from England under a cloud of suspicion in 1798, William Chinnery was his staunch defender, and when William Chinnery was in turn forced to flee England in 1812, Viotti was a pillar of support to his wife and a harsh critic of his detractors. Nor was there any subsequent jealousy on William’s part when Viotti remained with Margaret after his departure. Indeed he was grateful that his wife had a protector. Together Margaret and Viotti visited William on the Continent in subsequent years. They set up house together at Châtillon near Paris when Viotti returned to the Paris Opera in 1819, while William lived at Le Havre.

Was Viotti Margaret’s lover? It seems impossible to believe that he was not. He certainly declared his love for her in many of the early letters, especially the 1793 ones from the Continent, when he felt so tormented and lonely. Expressions addressed to Margaret such as ‘je vous aime tendrement’, 49 ‘Adieu Amica, amica que j’aime et j’honore tous les jours de plus’ 50 indicates his already deep attachment. Margaret reciprocated his feelings.51 There is no doubt that these expressions of love were genuine, but in an age of both libertine mores and of unembarrassed sentimentalism (as testified by the unrestrained outpourings of feeling in many of the present letters), it is hard to determine if this love was platonic or not. Besides, Viotti’s expressions of affection for William were just as strong: ‘dites à M. Chi qu’il est le seul aussi que j’aime de tout mon cœur dans ce beau pays’, 52 ‘recevés tous les deux mille choses

48 Glenbervie in his Journals (1910, op. cit., p. 145) refers to rumours that Caroline Chinnery may have been Viotti’s daughter, but this is impossible, since she was born in September 1791 and Viotti only arrived in England in July 1792.

49 V to M, 20 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/10.
50 V to M, 6 December 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/14.
51 Only three letters from Margaret to Viotti have been found in the CFP collection. The earliest dates from 1804, and was in reply to Viotti’s birthday greetings. Apparently written after a short period of separation (the Chinnerys appear to have gone on their annual holiday without Viotti), Margaret lamented: ‘Mon Dieu cher Amico n’y a-t-il pas des siècles depuis que nous nous sommes vu[s]? – C’est bien bien long …’ (M to V, 16 October 1804, Fisher).

52 V to M, 22 July 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/6.
tendres de la part de toute ma sensibilité." A harmonious threesome such as theirs may well have been tolerated in such an era. Margaret’s reputation does not appear to have suffered as a result of it, and on the whole, it went unremarked. Given that Margaret Chinnery set a very high moral standard for her children and made virtuous conduct the very cornerstone of her method of education, it does seem unlikely that she herself would have flouted those principles that she aimed to instil in them. In any case, there was never any jealousy on William’s side for the place Viotti occupied in his wife’s heart, and the two men continued the closest of friends until Viotti’s death. For Viotti’s part, he devoted his life to both William and Margaret. The affection in which he held the Chinnerys and his relationship with them may best be described in his own words of 1798:

Je fis connaissance avec Mr. et Mme Chinnery deux êtres qui possèdent au suprême degré les qualités les plus estimables. Bons, compatissants, amis fidèles, rien ne manque à leur âme excellente. Sitôt que je les ai connus je les ai aimés, et sitôt qu’ils me connurent ils me cherirent de même. Depuis cet heureux moment je leur ai dévoué ma vie. Le monde, la société, les amusements, rien de tout cela n’avait d’attrait sans eux, et leur maison ou je vivais comme un parent, comme un frère, est devenue la mienne propre, celle ou j’aurais voulu être sans cesse, celle d’ou je n’aurais jamais voulu sortir.

(Précis, March 1798, in ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

Viotti was not exaggerating when he wrote these words. He did devote his life to the Chinnerys, and except for a brief period in 1821 he never did leave Margaret’s side. A prophetic confession of Viotti’s constancy to the Chinnerys can also be found in an even earlier letter (1794) which he ends with the following words: ‘Tout se succède tout passe dans la vie, mais rien ne succédera à l’attachement que j’ai pour vous et toute votre famille, et il ne passera qu’avec ma vie.’

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53 V to M, 13 October 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/12.
54 The diarist Lord Glenbervie hinted at scandal in his Journals (1910, op. cit., p. 145) and in his Diaries (1928, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 319), and in early 1813 Margaret wrote to William that she had had anonymous letters blaming her for living happily and comfortably without her husband (M to W, c. February 1813, PM 94/132/1 – 1777). But these were apparently the views of an isolated few.
55 V to M, 17 April 1793 [recte 1794], PM 94/143/1 – 2/1.
The earliest series of letters in the CFP collection are twelve 1793 letters from Viotti to Margaret Chinnery (May - December 1793) in the Powerhouse Museum. They are some of the most interesting from a historical point of view, throwing light on a period of Viotti’s personal life unmentioned by any of Viotti’s biographers. The letters describe his voyage to Italy across the war-torn Continent in 1793, highlighting his second close encounter with the French Revolution. They were written before Viotti moved into the Chinnery home, but betray an intimacy of feeling which leaves us in no doubt that he was already on close terms with the Chinnery family. Unfortunately no letters from Margaret’s side of the correspondence survive.

Before examining the letters themselves, it would be useful to have a look at the political situation in France, as it bears so closely on them. The Revolution was approaching its bloodiest phase, and the instability of government in France was beginning to worry even the English supporters of revolutionary principles. As a lead article in the *Times* of 8 February 1793 asked, how could Great Britain trust a country where one government succeeded the next ‘with the rapidity of lightning’, and where men ‘who at the time they offer liberty to all mankind [...] are devoted to riot, confusion, murder and rapine’. From the time of the first meeting of the Estates General in May 1789, to July 1793, when Viotti’s Continental journey began, the French Revolution had been through four successive upheavals leading to as many changes of government. The original National Constituent Assembly, formed in July 1789 and among whose members Viotti counted several friends, was succeeded on 1 October 1791 by the much more left-wing Legislative Assembly. This in turn was replaced in September 1792 by the Convention, which was dominated by the Girondin section of the Jacobin club. In June 1793 the Montagnard section of the Jacobin club gained control of the Convention and instigated the draconian Committee of Public Safety, marking the beginning of the Terror.

In his *Précis*, Viotti says that he made friends with certain members of the first Assembly, because his fortune and his life depended upon it and that in those times of terrible confusion everybody sought protectors:
Chacun tachoit dans cette affreuse confusion d'avoir un appui dans quelque membre de
l'Assemblee; je l'ai taché de même, ma fortune et ma vie en dépendoient, et je dois
avouer, qu'il m'a paru en avoir connu d'honnets [sic] et de bons.

(Viotti's Précis, 'Viotti Papers', RCM)

He defends these friends as being good and decent men. The identity of the men
cannot be cited with certainty, but according to later evidence in the Reminiscences of
Michael Kelly,57 who was manager of the King’s Theatre in London from 1793 for
thirty years, three of them were Charles de Lameth,58 ‘Dupont’ [more likely Duport]59
and the Duc d’Aiguillon.60 Kelly, writing of the year 1796, reported that he had been
invited by Viotti to dine at the Crown and Anchor61 in the Strand with these men, who
had all been members of the first (National Constituent) Assembly. It is easy to see why
Viotti cultivated their friendship, as all were cultured men and at least one of them
shared Viotti’s passion for music:62

[...] the Duke D’Aiguillon, one of the twelve Peers of France, who, in former days, had
an immense fortune, was a great patron of the arts, and so theatrical, that he had a box
in every theatre in Paris. He was particularly fond of music, and had been a scholar of
Viotti. I passed a pleasant day with these émigrés, who were all men of high
endowments, and truly polished manners; nor did they seem at all depressed by change
of circumstances; all was vivacity and good humour.

(Kelly, op. cit., p. 222)

Although Kelly describes them as ‘three of the greatest revolutionists’, they
were certainly more moderate than the members of the ministries which were to come.63

56 Because of this, the historian A. Soboul preferred to call this period of history the French ‘Revolutions’
rather than ‘Revolution’ (A. Soboul, Dictionnaire de la Revolution Francaise, Presses universitaires
57 Michael Kelly (1762-1826), Irish tenor, composer, theatre manager and music publisher. His
Reminiscences were first published in 1826. (The edition used in this thesis is Reminiscences of
58 Charles-Malo-François de Lameth (1757-1832).
59 Adrien Duport (1759-1798). It was he who in July 1791, with Lameth and Barnave, founded the
Feuillant Club, a breakaway group from the Jacobins.
61 The Crown and Anchor Inn was home to the Society of Antient Music.
62 The Duc d’Aiguillon, being reduced to his last shilling in London, subsequently begged Kelly to
employ him as a music copyist, as none of the other French émigrés would come to his aid (Kelly, op.
cit., p. 223).
63 The three men all had high ideals and sought to rectify the many injustices that prevailed under the
ancien régime. They had all voted in favour of a constitution and against the privileges of the
Viotti claims not to have known personally a single member of ‘that second assembly’ (the Legislative Assembly), which he accuses of perpetrating new horrors:

En 1792 mes affaires prenant de plus en plus une mauvaise tournure prévoyant de nouveaux malheurs, de nouveaux horreurs de cette seconde assemblée qui venait remplacer la première, et dont j’ai eu le bonheur de n’en connaître un seul membre; je me décidai à vendre ce que je possédai, liquider les dettes de mon malheureux théâtre et abandonner un pays dans lequel un homme honnête ne pouvoit plus vivre en paix, ou j’avais essuyé tant de persécutions et ou j’avais presque tout perdu. Je le quittai en effet avant la douloureuse arrestation de ses souverains, et me rendis en Angleterre le 21 ou le 22 de juillet de la même année.

(Viotti’s Précis, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

What he fails to mention, however, is that although he may not have known any member of the Legislative Assembly, he did have a very good friend who was a representative of the body that succeeded it, the Convention. This was the respected diplomat Hugues-Bernard Maret, who will be the focus of the following chapter.

In July 1793 when Viotti set out on his voyage to Italy, Europe was in political turmoil. Louis XVI had been guillotined on 21 January, and on 1 February, six months after Viotti’s arrival in England, France, which was already at war with Austria and Prussia, declared war on England. The war was to be a long and protracted one, lasting from the beginning of 1793 until the final defeat of Napoleon in 1815, with only short interludes of peace in between. It was to have a particular effect on Viotti in 1793 and forms the backdrop to his letters of this period.

The very earliest Viotti letter in the collection at the Powerhouse Museum is dated 30 May 1793, and sets the mood for the deep melancholy which pervades all the Viotti letters of the years 1793-94. It begins:

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aristocracy. After the flight of Louis XVI and his family and their arrest at Varennes in June 1791, the three men modified their views and swung against the left-wing extremists who wished to pass judgement on the king. After the capture of the Tuileries palace in August 1792, Duport and the Lameth brothers were arrested and imprisoned, being freed only after the intervention of Danton. The Due d’Aiguillon had criticised the Legislative Assembly and was obliged to flee to England, as did the Lameth brothers after their release from prison.

Hugues-Bernard Maret (1763-1839), native of Dijon, began his Paris career as a journalist and then became a diplomat. He rose to prominence under the Napoleonic regime, becoming one of Napoleon’s closest henchmen. He was given the title of due de Bassano by Napoleon.
Je vous ai quitté hier avec chagrin ma chère bonne amica, j’avais le cœur gros, et l’âme s’est remplie de sa tristesse ordinaire. Je l’ai apportée ici, et la conserve toujours malgré la joie qui règne partout dans ce lieu qui est vraiment charmant, mais qu’est-ce qui peut plaire sur la terre à ce malheureux Amico tourmenté de tant de manières? Les plus beaux arbres, une vée extremement agréable, la verdure la plus fraiche, le chant des oiseaux, tout cela qui auroit pu dans d’autres temps toucher mon ame sensible, n’a fait que croître ma mélancolie; je crains bien que cette grande tranquillité ne laisse un champ trop vaste à mon imagination, et qu’au lieu d’éprouver un soulagement je n’éprouve qu’une augmentation de peines, je verrai cela et me conduirai en conséquence.

(V to M, 30 May 1793, PM 94/143/1 -2/3)

This passage certainly attests to the truth of all the accounts of Viotti’s contemporaries who describe his brooding nature, his extremely sensitive temperament and his profound love of nature. According to Eymar: ‘Jamais homme n’attacha plus de prix aux simples dons de nature; jamais enfant ne sut mieux en jouir [...]’

Viotti’s letter continues:

Devinès ma chère aimable amica à quelle heure je vous écrits [sic]? ... à 5. heures du matin. Je me suis eueillé avec l’aurore et un merle qui est dans la cuisine, dont le chant joyeux insulte à ma misere. Quand je vous aurai écrit, que je vous aurai dit bon jour peut être dormirai-je un peu. Il me semble que j’en ai besoin.

(Ibid.)

The above passage also points up the truth of Eymar’s observation that Viotti was a morning person, for whom the evening was a time of sadness: ‘Viotti s’éveille, comme les oiseaux, au moment où le soleil commence à poindre à l’horizon [...] alors sa physionomie se dévoile et se ranime avec la nature [...] Mais aussi, quand le soleil se couche, il devient triste et languissant [...]’ This statement is confirmed by Viotti’s own words in his letter two weeks later (12 June [1793]) when he refers to the evening as ‘l’heure triste’.

Exactly where in the country Viotti is writing from is not stated. There are three letters over a two-week period from the end of May to mid-June from this same place,

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65 Eymar, op. cit., p. 31.
66 Ibid., p. 34.
67 V to M, 12 June [1793], PM 94/143/1 -2/5.
and the letters are hand delivered by a Mr Smith.\textsuperscript{68} It is clearly not far from London, as Viotti has been invited to a Mrs Graham's\textsuperscript{69} house for dinner in London, and requests Margaret to make sure this lady receives his letter declining the invitation. It is apparent from this and the following two letters (dated 8 June 1793 and 12 June [1793] respectively) that he is staying with close friends—close enough for him to feel free to keep himself apart from company and to wander in the countryside according to his whim. It is most probable that the friends were musical colleagues, almost certainly the Hüllmandels, who were among Viotti's earliest and closest friends in England.\textsuperscript{70} Viotti had known Hüllmandel in Paris, where both were regular participators in the elegant salons held by the French portraitist, Madame Vigée-Lebrun.\textsuperscript{71} The Hüllmandels had a house at Brompton, which in 1793 was in the countryside just outside London. Madame Hüllmandel, referred to familiarly as 'l'Amica Hull —', is mentioned in the third letter as having accepted the same dinner invitation to Mrs Graham's that Viotti declined. Salomon's 1793 Hanover Square concert series—in which Viotti performed—having finished on 2 May, Viotti may well have been invited to spend a couple of weeks with his friends before his departure for the Continent in July of the same year.

Viotti's second letter to Margaret Chinnery from the same country residence, dated 8 June 1793, throws some light on the length of his acquaintance with the Chinneys. In it he mentions a dinner invitation from Margaret. This is an invitation which he will definitely accept, saying eagerly that he will come any day she cares to nominate: 'mercredi, jeudi, vendredi, tous me sont égaux [sic]'\textsuperscript{72}. It is interesting to note that in this context Viotti asks Margaret if his suit is ready, and if so, to send it to him 'par Mr Smith' so that he will be able to make himself handsome on the day he comes to dinner. The suit he has with him is still his old French one and it is now too small for him: '[...] ces maudits habits français sont si serrés qu'en les portant je n'ai

\textsuperscript{68} Probably Charles Smith, mutual friend of Viotti and the Chinneys.

\textsuperscript{69} Possibly the wife of James Graham, third Duke of Montrose (1755-1836).

\textsuperscript{70} Nicolas-Joseph Hüllmandel (1756-1823), Alsatian composer and performer on the harpsichord, piano and glass harmonica. Hüllmandel's wife was Camille Aurore Ducazan, niece of one of the ancien régime's receivers general, or tax collectors. Hüllmandel fled from the Revolution in France at about the same time as Viotti. He also settled in London, where he made a successful career in music.

\textsuperscript{71} Marie-Louise-Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun (1755-1842), prolific French portraitist who gave an account of her life in her \textit{Souvenirs}, first published in 1835-37. Her pre-Revolutionary salons were renowned for their \textit{tableaux vivants} and were popular meeting places for musicians and elegant society. Vigée-Lebrun writes of receiving Viotti and other musicians at these gatherings (Vigée-Lebrun, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. 1, p. 80).

\textsuperscript{72} V to M, 8 June 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/4.
pas du tout l'air [illegible] Rost Bef, et vous savés que c'est la ma marrotte.\textsuperscript{73} Most certainly these are not the words of a friend of short acquaintance. Nor are his words of thanks for the suit in the third letter, written four days later: 'Je le porterai avec bien du plaisir, et de penser que c'est ma bonne Amica qui l'a choisi, ce ne sera pas une petite raison pour qu'il me plaise tout à fait.'\textsuperscript{74}

It is in the last of these three letters (12 June [1793]) that Viotti mentions his first visit to the Chinnery 'ferme' Gillwell, which until 1796 appears to have been used by them as a summer residence only. Viotti says that he will go with the Chinnerys to their farm on 22 June, and remain there until his departure, regretting that he will be unable to stay for the entire summer. He reassures Margaret that he will like the farm in terms that make his attachment to her abundantly clear:

\begin{quote}
Comment pouvés vous croire que je ne trouverai pas votre ferme de mon gout?
Pourquoi ne pas croire tout simplement que l'endroit que j'habiterai avec vous sera l'endroit qui me plaira le plus en Angleterre, fût-ce le plus vilain trou, la plus mauvaise position possible!
\end{quote}

(V to M, 12 June [1793], PM 94/143/1 - 2/5)

Sentiments of affection and loyalty take up a large part of Viotti's letters to Margaret. Wherever she is, he is happy to be. Whenever he is absent from the Chinnerys he is miserable. Thus, in response apparently to an enquiry of Margaret's about whether he is enjoying himself at his friends' home, he gives her a mournful reply:

\begin{quote}
Vous croyez que je m'amuse ici, et bien mon amie vous vous trompez. Je passe ma vie à trouver tout beau et à ne jouir de rien. Le matin je me leve, je vais déjeuner, je dis quatre mots avec toute la peine possible, après on va promener, et moi je remonte dans ma chambre, ou je fais des efforts inutiles pour m'occuper, et faire quelque chose de bon. Le dinner arrive; je mange sans plaisir, je reve beaucoup en regardant des vues superbès. Nous faisons une petite promenade, l'heure triste arrive, je suis plus silencieux qu'à l'ordinaire; nous soupons et je vais me coucher dans les mêmes dispositions que le reste de la journée. Voila à peu près la vie journalière que je mène. Appelés vous cela s'amuser amica?
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} V to M, 12 June [1793], PM 94/143/1 - 2/5.
Although he is looking forward to his approaching visit to Gillwell, he worries that his melancholy disposition will clash with Margaret’s natural gaiety: ‘Je desire que ma société vous fasse autant de plaisir que la votre m’en fera. Je ne m’en flatte point, vous êtes heureuse, contente, satisfaitte; je suis un malheureux persecuté du Ciel, privé de tout, comment accorder deux êtes dans des dispositions si différentes?’

What occasioned this severe melancholy? Almost certainly the thought of his forthcoming journey to Italy to settle his family’s affairs after the death of his mother contributed to it. But it was not only this. Viotti had apparently received bad news from France regarding his musical soul-mate in Paris, Hélène de Montgeroult.

Giazotto makes much of the friendship between Viotti and Hélène de Montgeroult, hinting at a possible intimate relationship (although the nineteenth century writer Eugène Gautier, in his *Musicien en vacances*, calls their friendship ‘pure’). Certainly there are anecdotal reports of Viotti’s contemporaries which testify to an almost spiritual closeness between the two. Eymar, who frequently accompanied Viotti to Hélène de Montgeroult’s country house at Montmorency, where he observed at close hand Viotti’s love of nature, named them Apollo and Euterpe, Hélène representing Euterpe, musical muse to the god of music, Viotti. Another contemporary biographer, E. F. Miel, says that both were able to improvise with facility. He notes that Madame de Montgeroult, in her *Cours complet pour l’enseignement du forte-piano*, devotes a chapter to improvisation. Miel describes the extraordinary understanding which existed between them when the pair improvised together:

L’histoire de l’art conservera le souvenir des improvisations qui avaient lieu quelquefois entre lui [Viotti] et cette illustre Euterpe française, sous les doigts de qui le piano a pris une âme nouvelle, et qui a su joindre à la plus profonde expression toutes les richesses de l’harmonie. Il était curieux de voir ces deux génies, luttant de verve, se deviner ou se répondre, se dominer ou se réunir tour à tour, et dans un soudain échange d’intentions exprimées aussitôt que senties, tantôt éblouir par des éclairs de talent, tantôt attendrir par la douce voix du sentiment, ou inspirer l’enthousiasme par des accents sublimes.

(in Michaud, ed., vol. 43, p. 590)

75 Ibid.
77 In Michaud (ed.), *op. cit.*, vol. 43, p. 590, note 1.
In 1789 Hélène de Montgeroult was, according to Giazotto, a beautiful twenty-five year-old. She had come to Paris from Versailles to study piano under Hüllmandel, who may have been responsible for introducing her to Viotti. She also took lessons from the well-regarded pianist Dussek\(^79\) when he visited Paris in 1786, and by the 1790s was a very popular French pianist. Gautier writes: ‘Madame de Montgeroult [...] fut, au dire de ses contemporains, un talent de premier ordre [...] elle charma, selon l’expression du temps, la cour et la ville. Liée d’une amitié pure et durable avec le grand violoniste Viotti, ils se faisaient souvent entendre ensemble, et accomplissaient en public de merveilles d’improvisation à deux que nous avons peine à comprendre.’\(^80\) Both Madame Vigée-Lebrun and Madame de Genlis pay homage to her in their respective memoirs. Madame Vigée-Lebrun, in noting in her *Souvenirs* that Viotti, Hüllmandel and Madame de Montgeroult all played at her salon, singles out Madame de Montgeroult’s expressive playing for special mention:

> Pour la musique instrumentale, j’avais comme violoniste Viotti, dont le jeu, plein de grâce, de force et d’expression, était si ravissant [...] Salentin jouait du hautbois, Hüllmandel et Cramer\(^81\) du piano, madame de Montgeron [sic] vint aussi une fois, peu de temps après son mariage. Quoiqu’elle fût très-jeune alors, elle n’en étonna pas moins toute ma société, qui vraiment était fort difficile, par son admirable exécution et surtout par son expression; elle faisait parler les touches. Depuis, et déjà placée au premier rang comme pianiste, vous savez combien madame de Montgeron s’est distinguée comme compositeur.

(Vigée-Lebrun, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 80)

Madame de Genlis, in arguing for the continuation of instruction for young girls in the elegant accomplishments, holds Montgeroult up as an example. Would it not be a shame, she asks in her *Mémoires*, if ‘madame de Mongerout n’eût jamais joué du piano [...]’?\(^82\)

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\(^{79}\) Jan Ladislav Dussek (1760–1812), Bohemian pianist and composer who lived in Paris and London.

\(^{80}\) Gautier, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

\(^{81}\) Johann Baptist Cramer (1771–1858), composer and pianist. Salentin has not been identified.

\(^{82}\) Caroline-Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis, *Mémoires inédits sur le XVIIIe siècle et la révolution française*, Ladvocat: Paris, 1825, vol. 6, p. 20. In the same breath she pays a similar compliment to Vigée-Lebrun in the domain of art.
According to Eugène Gautier, Hélène de Montgérault was arrested and incarcerated in the Conciergerie for several days (not nine months, as stated by Giazotto\(^{83}\)) in February 1793.\(^{84}\) Apparently her good friend Bernard Sarrette\(^{85}\) was able to plead for her release on the grounds that France could not afford to lose such an important pianist. According to the account of Gautier, Sarrette hit on an ingenious way of softening her captors by showing off her improvisational skills in a stirring rendition of *La Marseillaise*. This imaginative display of her talents supposedly resulted in a standing ovation and her subsequent release. She then set about planning her flight from France with her elderly husband. This flight, in which Viotti took a close interest, forms the substance of the 1793 letters written by Viotti to the Chinnerys from the Continent.

The first and only reference in the CFP collection to Viotti’s forthcoming departure is in the third letter Viotti writes to Margaret from the country in June 1793, and is only an oblique one: ‘Soyes donc sure d’avance que votre ferme me plaira, que j’y serai aussi heureux que je puis l’être, et que mon plaisir ne sera troublé que par l’idée qu’il ne peut pas durer tout l’été’.\(^{86}\) The only explanation that he gives for this journey is in his own *Précis*, where he states that he was obliged to return to Italy to set the family affairs in order after the death of his mother. Viotti’s *Précis* reads:

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\begin{quote}
Je fus cependant obligé de m’en absenter encore. La mort de ma mère m’y força. J’en partis donc le 21 juillet 1793, je traversai l’Allemagne, le Tirol, et me rendis par Venise dans ma Patrie. Je mis ordre à mes affaires, à celles de mes frères encore enfants, et me remis en route par la Suisse, l’Allemagne, le Flandre alors appartenant à l’Empereur, et me retrouvai vers la fin de décembre à Londre résolú de m’y établir de manière de n’en plus sortir.
\end{quote}
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(Viotti’s *Précis*, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

This seems a perfectly truthful account, corroborated by Viotti’s own letters from the Continent. What he omits, however, is that there was a second reason for making the trip, and that was to keep a rendez-vous (probably to be in Venice) with his French friend Madame de Montgérault and her travelling party. As the *Précis* was

\(^{83}\) Giazotto, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

\(^{84}\) Gautier, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-56.

\(^{85}\) Bernard Sarrette (1765-1858), captain in charge of music of a company of the National Guard prior to its dissolution, and subsequently founder of the first free school of music in France, which became in 1794 the Paris Conservatoire.

\(^{86}\) V to M, 12 June [1793], PM 94/143/1 - 2/5.
written in 1798 to convince the British Government of his innocence of any Jacobin activities, this omission is understandable. The account of this trip given by Viotti’s contemporary, E.F. Miel, is therefore also accurate when he says that Viotti made the journey partly to help friends in distress. As for his assertion that Viotti travelled incognito, this was certainly true, as Viotti took care that none but his closest friends in England should know about this aspect of his difficult journey. About this journey to Italy Miel writes:

Viotti ne vit que fort tard l’Italie, où il se rendit par la Suisse. Le dévouement de l’amitié entra pour beaucoup dans cette détermination; il crut pouvoir servir des amis dans la peine, et il se mit en route; mais il garda l’incognito.

(in Michaud, ed., vol. 43, p. 588)

About one month before Viotti’s departure from England for the Continent Hélène de Mongéroult and her husband had left Paris, having arranged for the latter to be given a fictitious diplomatic mission in Naples. As a sea passage to this port was out of the question, owing to the siege of Toulon by the British navy and her Allies, the only possible way was through Switzerland. This route took them through the Swiss Confederate State of the Grisons, and south through the small adjoining region of Valtellina, a dependency of the latter. Valtellina, one of the largest valleys in the Alps, stretching along the Adda River from the gorges of la Serra to Lake Como, was ninety kilometres long and in no place more than four kilometres wide. In those days it was the main route linking the Tyrol to the Duchy of Milan, which was then under Austrian rule. Situated as it was, Valtellina was a region over which both the French and the Austrian governments wanted influence. At some point while the Montgéroult party was proceeding through Valtellina, they were arrested by Austrian soldiers and taken to Mantua, where they were thrown into the dungeons of the former ducal palace. This much emerges from the ensuing Viotti letters.

By an apparently strange coincidence, the real French ambassador to Naples, Hugues-Bernard Maret, is known to have been also arrested, along with his party of twelve, in this same valley at the same time and were taken to apparently the same

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87 These were the Hüllmandels and the Chinnerys.
88 See p.62.
It was on 25 July 1793 that he was ambushed in the village of Novate by a group of men dressed as bandits, but who were really, according to Maret’s own later evidence, Austrian soldiers acting on orders from Vienna. Their imprisonment, the first part of which was very harsh, lasted thirty months. It was not until December 1795 that Maret and his companion diplomat, Sémonville, were exchanged, along with some French prisoners of war, for Marie-Thérèse, daughter of Louis XVI.

Could it be that Hélène de Montgérout and her husband were part of the French diplomatic party that was arrested? Could the Montgérouts have known Maret in Paris? Viotti certainly did, as a letter written by him to Maret’s sister-in-law from Baden in 1793 and the present correspondence proves. It is very likely that Maret, an urbane and cultured gentleman with a love of music, had met Hélène de Montgérout and Viotti at one of the many private concerts where they performed. According to Rufer, the German historian who documented the whole Novate adventure in 1941, not only did Hélène de Montgérout know Maret, but she was his ‘beloved’! It was, according to Rufer, she who had persuaded her husband to join Maret’s diplomatic party in order to flee France. Maret’s own evidence, as well as that contained in the Chinnery Papers, clearly suggest that the two parties were the same.

Meanwhile, after spending a month with the Chinnerys at Gillwell, Viotti departed for Dover on 21 July 1793 (the date given by him in his Précis, and confirmed by the Chinnery correspondence). In Dover he was met by a friend of the Chinnerys who helped him obtain good horses and a carriage, a berth on the packet and an inn to rest at until the departure time. Still in a despondent mood, he sat down to write to the

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90 The story of Maret’s capture and imprisonment is related by his grandson’s friend, A.A. Ernouf, in his biography Maret, duc de Bassano, 2nd edn, Perrin: Paris, 1884, and also by a German, Alfred Rufer, in his Novate: Eine Episode aus dem Revolutionsjahr 1793, Büchergilde Gutenberg: Zurich, 1941. Both accounts appear to have been based on a journal that Maret himself kept of these events (mentioned in Michaud (ed.), vol. 26, p. 529), which was never published by Maret himself, but which may have been incorporated into Madame Charlotte de Sor’s work Le Duc de Bassano; souvenirs intimes de la révolution et de l’empire (L. de Potter: Paris, 1843), published after Maret’s death. The journal is quoted extensively in Michaud (ed.), vol. 26, pp. 529-533.
91 Soboul, op. cit., p. 717, gives the date of Maret’s imprisonment in Mantua as May 1794. It was in fact July 1793.
92 Charles-Louis Huguet, marquis de Sémonville (1759-1839), French diplomat.
93 See V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1-29; Maret to Margaret Chinnery, 30 March 1824, Fisher (see p. 230); and Viotti to Madame J.-P. Maret, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 266 (see p. 74).
94 Rufer, op. cit., p. 29.
95 Quoted in Michaud (ed.), vol. 26, p. 530.
Chinnery saying that he felt that he was headed for ‘une Jeremiade de peinnes’. On 22 July 1793 at 9 pm he set sail from Dover on a packet bound for Ostende, where he arrived at 8 am the following morning, having had a smooth crossing. More optimistic now, he wrote to Margaret: ‘Cela me presage un bon voyage ma chere bonne amica pour le reste de ma route’.

The next letter, written from Ghent, informs Margaret that he has been given a warm welcome by a merchant friend and his family, with whom he has been staying for a few days:

Je suis arrivé à Gand, ou j'ai reçu avec toute la tendresse possible par un brave et digne homme Negociant dans cette ville, qui m'aime comme son fils qu'il a eu le malheur de perdre à l'âge de 18. ans, et à qui j'avais par amitié donné des leçons.

(V to M, 25 July 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/7)

It is obvious from these words that Viotti has been to Ghent before, as he is known and loved by this family, whose late son received free violin lessons from him. It seems that he stayed in this town long enough to make an impression on the inhabitants, who, on hearing of his arrival, flocked to stare at him. Viotti gives an amusing account of the way they made him feel – like a freakish animal brought to the village fair to be gawked at:

Sitot qu'on a scû dans cette cité que j'étois arrivé, ces bons Flammens accoururent en foule pour voir ma Figure. Il semblait justement que j'étois comme ces gros Animaux extraordinaires qu'on mène à la foire pour faire voir.

(Ibid.)

Viotti does not mention coming to Ghent in his Précis, when he speaks of his 1780-81 performing tour through Europe. However, Grove and Féris claim Viotti made a trip to England accompanied by Pugnani just prior to settling in Paris in 1782. He may have passed through Ghent on this occasion. This 1781 or 1782 trip to England would also explain the opening words of his letter from Ghent in which he says that it

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96 V to M, 22 July 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/6.
97 V to M, 25 July 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/7.
has been a long time since he has had such a smooth crossing of the Channel: ‘Depuis longtemps on n’avoit fait une traversée aussi prompte et aussi agréable. La lune m’a tenu compagnie constamment, et je n’ai point été incommodé du tout.’ Clearly not a reference to his 1792 crossing, this statement would lend credence to the statement made by Fétis, who also claims that in London his (private) appearances were so successful that certain lords tried to persuade him to stay in England.

At the home of his friends – whose name we learn from a later letter is Smed – Viotti plays his violin for the first and last time during his five-month absence from England. These must have been dear friends, for Viotti says that no-one else on the Continent could induce him to play, as the high notes of the violin wreaked havoc on his nerves – which were already agitated, as shown in the following lines of this same letter:

> Après dîné j’ai regalé ce bon Papa sa femme, et ses deux filles, dont une mariée, d’un morceau de musique; appeiné étois-je à la moitié de la première partie que, soit par un dououreux souvenir, soit par sensation musicale, de grosses larmes tombent des yeux de la fille mariée, un moment après la cadette l’imite, la mere fait de même, et le pere et moi sans pouvoir nous empecher nous faisons comme elles; je ne voyois plus clair je quitte le violon pour faire un concert de larmes très attendrissant. Je l’aimois ce bon homme, et outre cela je connois trop la douleur que cause de pareilles pertes pour que je ne fusse que spectateur.

*(V to M, 25 July 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/7)*

Viotti’s playing – as it so often did – produced tears in his listeners. The family was already grieving for a dead eighteen-year-old son, and Viotti’s own tears soon flowed in sympathy for a grief which he says he understands only too well – in his case probably, for the loss of his mother. The above passage certainly bears witness to the powerful sensations that his playing was able to inspire. In the words of his disciple Baillot, ‘C’est un archet de coton dirigé par le bras d’Hercule’.

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98 G. Grove (ed.), *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1st edn, vol. 4, pt. 3, p. 301; and Fétis (ed.), *op. cit.*, vol. 8, p. 469. I have been unable to find any reference to this visit in contemporary newspapers, but if there were no scheduled performances in any public concerts, this is understandable.


100 Fétis (ed.), *op. cit.*, vol. 8, p. 469.

101 Quoted in Michaud (ed.), vol. 43, p. 588.
nature contributed in no small way to the effect he was able to produce on his instrument.

The second letter from Viotti on the Continent is dated ‘Francfurt ce 3. aoult 1793’. Viotti had left Ghent, accompanied by the Smed family, for Brussels on 26 July. He did not spend long in Brussels, setting out almost immediately for Frankfurt, and arriving a fortnight after leaving England:

Il y aura 15. jours que je suis parti de Londre, par la date de ma lettre vous verrés ma chere bonne amica que je n’ai pas marché rapidement; vous n’avez pas d’idée la peine qu’on a à voyager par ces maudites routes! Enfin me voila un peu plus qu’à moitié chemin en bonne santé [...] (V to M, 3 August 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/8)

The going was slow because of the poor condition of the roads, and undoubtedly also because they were clogged with regiments of soldiers. Most of this letter is taken up with expressions of friendship, feelings of regret at being obliged to travel in a direction which takes him away from his friends, rather than towards them, and assurances that Margaret is his only ‘amica’ in England. He ends his letter, as always, with fond regards to the Chinnery children (the twins, George and Caroline, who are not quite two years old, and baby Walter, just three months old) and a recommendation to Margaret not to let them forget how to pronounce his name — ‘Amico’. He also sends his regards to ‘Monsieur Grenfile’ [Grenfell] who is a close family friend of the Chinnerys.

The third letter to Margaret, from Baden in Switzerland, dated 4 September 1793, is not sent through the post as the previous two were. A whole month has elapsed since the last letter. Perhaps any intervening letters went astray, or perhaps Viotti did not like to entrust their sensitive contents to the postal system. In this long letter from

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102 Pascoe Grenfell (1761-1838), wealthy copper merchant and member of parliament for Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire, 1802-1820. Walter (Grenfell) Chinnery was named after him. Grenfell married firstly his cousin, Charlotte Granville (d. 1790), by whom he had two sons, George and Charles, and a daughter Charlotte. Charles was the same age as George Chinnery and was at Oxford at the same time as him. Pascoe Grenfell married secondly Georgina St Leger (d. 1818), youngest daughter of the first Viscount Doneraile, by whom he had another two sons and ten daughters. Although Burke’s Peerage (B. Burke, ed., Burke’s Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage, 96th edn, Shaw: London, 1938, p. 795) gives his second wife’s name as ‘Georgiana’, she signs her letters (in the Fisher collection) ‘Georgina’. The Grenfells resided at Taplow House, where
Baden Viotti does mention a letter he has written Margaret from Venice on 13 August, but it is not in the CFP collection, and it is not clear if Margaret ever received it. Viotti may have asked Margaret to suppress it. There is no other letter from anywhere in Italy.

It is a pity that Viotti’s letter from Venice is missing, because it may have contained details of his plans to meet up with the French ambassadorial party. The opening words of his letter from Baden make it clear that he was by then aware of his friends’ plight, and had tried to visit them in prison, but being unsuccessful, had pursued Madame de Montgeroult until he finally caught up with her in Baden:

> Après avoir fait le possible et l’impossible pour voir mes pauvres amis, et le tout sans succès, je me suis décidé à courir [sic] après cette malheureuse femme, cette infortunée Madame de Montgeroult, que j’ai trouvée enfin à Baden en Suisse;

(V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/9)

But how did Viotti know what the Montgeroults’ plans were? From a letter from Hélène de Montgeroult herself, perhaps? Although it was extremely risky to send letters between France and England at this time, it seems that Viotti took the risk (and paid the price, if these letters were the cause of his expulsion from Britain in 1798), and it is just possible that one of his letters to France that he mentions in his Precis – the fourth – was an answer to one of Hélène de Montgeroult’s. (Viotti’s words were: ‘La 4ème et la dernière a encore été écrite pour obliger une personne que j’aime et que j’estime, désirant des informations de France pour une affaire qui la regardoit personnellement’). 103 It was not possible for Maret to communicate with England by diplomatic dispatch, given the state of war between the two countries, but messages might have been passed by mutual musical friends fleeing France for England. If Viotti did have plans to meet his friends on the Continent, it was most likely to have been in the neutral Republic of Venice, as there seems no other reason for his going there. However, at the time of his departure from England on 22 July, he could not have known of their arrest, as it took place only on 25 July.

Maret, after his two unofficial and unsuccessful peace-brokering missions to Britain to meet the Prime Minister William Pitt (at the end of 1792 and beginning of

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103 Viotti’s Precis, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM.
(1793) had returned to a dangerous situation in France. By the end of May 1793 the Girondins had been deposed, to be replaced by the Jacobin extremists who constituted the majority of the notorious Comité de Salut Public, which assumed executive power, taking over the role of decision-making from the Government ministers. Maret’s friend Lebrun, the moderate Girondin minister for Foreign Affairs, was under house arrest, but was able to save Maret from almost certainly the same fate by sending him on a diplomatic mission to Naples. Maret’s biographers, Ernouf and Rufer both state that the Montgérout couple was in this party. Ernouf lists all the members of the diplomatic caravan on the day of their ambush:

La petite troupe qui partait le 24 juillet avant l’aube pour Chiavenna se composait, outre Maret et Séémonville, des secrétaires de légation Merget et Delamarre; de Montgérout, ex-officier général, chargé d’une mission particulière pour Naples, d’un ingénieur nommé Casistro, de madame de Séémonville avec ses enfants, de madame de Montgérout, d’un très-jeune attaché d’ambassade nommé Montholon (celui-là même qui devint général et a suivi Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène); enfin de six courriers ou domestiques.

(Ernouf, op. cit., p. 167)

The accounts which Ernouf and Rufer give of this little-known piece of revolutionary history generally tally, except for the name of the Swiss village where the attack took place, and some minor spelling differences in the names of the members of the diplomatic party. The engineer Casistro of the above quote is in Rufer’s book a mathematics tutor to the Séémonville children named ‘Tasistro’. From Rufer we learn that there were seven members of the diplomatic mission, two wives, six servants and some children in the caravan.

The Marquis de Montgérout, who, according to Maret’s account quoted in Michaud, was supposedly going to Naples to fill a diplomatic post vacated by a certain Marquis de Salis-Marchline, in fact (according to Rufer) had a fictitious diplomatic post created for him by Maret. Rufer asserts that in 1795, when the French Directory paid Séémonville 192,000 and Maret 134,000 francs in compensation for their

104 Pierre-Henri-Marie Tondu, dit Lebrun-Tondu (1754-1794), printer and journalist, had been made Minister for Foreign Affairs in August 1792. He was denounced by the Montagnards and guillotined in 1794.

105 See note 90.
loss in income as a result of their imprisonment, Madame de Montgérault received 3,000 francs for the personal effects purloined from her husband, but nothing by way of compensation for income, as her husband had held no appointment. Viotti’s letter dated 4 September 1793 from Baden corroborates Rufer’s assertion, as he says in it that the Montgéraults used ‘le pretexte de l’ambassade de Naples’ in order to obtain a passport with which to escape from France. The following statement leaves no doubt that Viotti knew that the Montgéraults were travelling with the official French diplomatic party of which his friend Maret was a member:

[Les Montgérault] ont saisi le pretexte de l’ambassade de Naples que notre ami [Maret] devoit aller remplir, seule et unique occasion pour obtenir un passeport, et fuire cette france, ce pays plein de carnage, et d’horreur, cette terre ou la mort plane toujours sur votre tête, et d’ou l’on ne peut sortir que par un miracle!

(V to M, 4 September, PM 94/143/1 -- 2/9)

The journey from Paris, via Lyon in revolt, and on through Switzerland, had not been easy for this group. Maret was to meet up in Geneva with Sémonville, whose destination was Constantinople. Sémonville came laden with extravagant gifts from the French Republic with which to impress the Sultan. The lumbering line of carriages had difficulty negotiating the narrow alpine tracks. According to Rufer, their caravan consisted of two enormous English berliners and two enormous diligences (painted green and gold, and yellow and brown respectively), the berliners being drawn by six and the diligences by four horses. There was also a cabriolet drawn by two horses. Their progress was both conspicuous and slow.

Owing to the suddenness of his departure, Maret’s diplomatic brief had to be dispatched by courrier, who, being delayed by the insurrection in Lyon, caught up with him only in Switzerland just a few days before his capture. According to Emouf, Maret’s instructions were to travel to Naples via Venice and Florence, in order to ascertain these states’ sentiments towards France. Having arrived in Naples, he was to try to persuade that court to remain neutral in the war between France and Austria, and to pass on the secret message (from the Girondin Ministry which by now was deposed)

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108 Ibid., p. 23.
that remaining friendly to France would ensure the safety of Marie-Antoinette and her children.\textsuperscript{109} 

After Geneva, the French party's route took them through Berne, then on to the small Swiss town of Baden, where the French ambassador to the Swiss Confederate States, François Barthélémì,\textsuperscript{110} warned them of the presence of Austrian spies in Switzerland. He advised them not travel on the Austrian side of the Alps, but to go via Chur. Two months previously, he said, the French ambassador to the Republic of Venice, François Noël (who had been a member of the French legation in London in 1792), had got through safely, using that route. He also told them that they were travelling far too conspicuously and that they should split up into smaller groups and abandon their coaches, which advice they ignored.\textsuperscript{111}

By the time the French party arrived in Chur, the Austrian plot had already been hatched and they were being followed everywhere. The French themselves did not help matters by staying in Chur for a week, making their presence very conspicuous by accepting invitations from prominent members of local society. They finally left Chur on 12 July, having paid 10,000 gulden for an escort. Thus they passed through the Confederate State of Grisons, descending by one of the saddles of the Rhaetian Alps into the Chiavenna Valley in Valtellina, described above. By now Barthélémì had received a written warning of the Austrian ambush, but it was too late to get word to the French party. The latter persevered with their determination to take the route via Chiavenna and Lake Como, despite warnings that they had received in Vicosoprano that large numbers of bandits had been seen in the vicinity of the lake just a few days before. Because of a refusal on the part of the Swiss authorities to guarantee their safety in the neutral state of Valtellina, they had secured a second escort, for which they paid another 10,000 gulden, and pressed on. Receiving conflicting reports from all quarters, they became increasingly anxious, not knowing whom they could trust. In the event, they were betrayed by the very men who were paid to protect them.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{109} Ernouf, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 148. Maret himself went as far as suggesting that the attack of the Austrians on the French diplomats sealed Marie-Antoinette's fate (in Soboul, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 717).

\textsuperscript{110} François-Marie Barthélémì (1747-1830), French diplomat. After filling the post of French chargé d'affaires in London, 1784-1791, he was appointed ambassador to the Swiss Confederate States in December 1791.

\textsuperscript{111} Rufer, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 30-31.

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 68, 73, 92-99.
On 25 July 1793, Rufer writes, the French diplomatic party walked right into the trap set for them by the Austrians and their Swiss collaborators in the small village of Novate on the northern-most shores of Lake Como in the neutral territory of Valtellina.  

The lake was less than one league across at that spot, and there was a clear view of the opposite shore in Austrian territory. Having called a halt, the accompanying guards left the French travellers to go ahead to arrange the escort for the next stretch of the journey. While waiting for them to return, the travellers all repaired to the local osteria, with the exception of Madame de Montgérout, who entered the village church, where she sat down at the organ and began to improvise. This attracted the attention of the curate and a few locals, who approached her wanting to know if she were a member of the French party who had just arrived. Upon her answer in the affirmative, the curate supposedly exclaimed: ‘Ah, Madame, ils sont perdus s’ils ne se hâtent de fuir!’ His warning came too late. Hélène de Montgérout had no sooner informed her group of the danger, than they were surrounded by a large number of men dressed as bandits, who had appeared from the direction of the lake. All the French men, with the exception of the very young Montholon, were arrested and thrown shackled into a sloop, which carried them across the lake to Gravedona. Their baggage was seized and all their effects confiscated. The women, their female servants and the children were left destitute on the shore. They were allowed to return to Chiavenna, where they were to await orders from the Milan authorities.

According to Rufer, Madame de Montgérout reacted hysterically (‘Die Bürgerin Montgerout schien den Kopf verloren zu haben’), rushing from the scene of the ambush in indecent haste, leaving Madame de Sémonville and her children to catch up later. Rufer gives far more information about Madame de Montgérout than Ernouf does. Although no sources are cited to back his assertions, it does seem that he must have read certain letters written by Hélène de Montgérout, as many of his assertions tally with Viotti’s account. Viotti also testifies to Hélène’s hysterical state, describing the piteous condition he found her in in Baden in the following terms:

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113 Novate is situated on the north eastern tip of Lake Mezzola, the northern arm of Lake Como.
114 Rufer, op. cit., pp. 100-118
115 Ibid., p. 118.
Oh mes chers amis, si vous la voyois elle vous feroit pitié, elle en feroit à un Rocher. Je l’ai trouvée livrée au plus grand désespoir, seule sans appuis, sans ressource, pas même un domestique, abandonnée à elle, elle seule pour tout soulagement.

(V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/9)

Viotti’s account is sympathetic whereas Rufer’s is not. Clearly Viotti, of similar sensitive temperament, shared his friend’s emotional upheaval. Rufer also reports that the Archduke Ferdinand of Milan sent the two ladies one hundred *louis d’or* each, by way of a small compensation. He says that Madame de Sémonville proudly refused the enemy’s money, but that he cannot be sure of being able to say the same for Madame de Montgérault.\(^{116}\) Viotti reports that she also indignantly refused any help from the Archduke:

> L’Archiduc de Milan a envoyé cent louis à Madame de Montgérault; Elle les a refusés avec cette dignité, cette fierté qui est propre à une ame honnête. Elle a parfaitement bien fait, ou il faut savoir tout son bien, ou il faut les laisser jouir du vol tout en entier puisqu’ils n’ont été guidés que par l’injustice et la barbarie.

(V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/9)

Rufer even hints that Madame de Montgérault was a lady of easy virtue, claiming that she shared rooms with ‘some private person’ in Baden. This ‘private person’ was probably none other than Viotti! It was he who kept her company and consoled her for the duration of her stay in Baden. ‘[Hélène] est malade et dans un état à faire pitié’, he wrote to Margaret. ‘On ne lui a encore rendu aucun de ses effets, ni de ses papiers qui sont tous les titres de sa fortune, Elle ne sait que devenir, que faire, ni ou donner la tête; quelle affreuse position!’\(^{117}\)

It is not inconceivable that Viotti heard of the ambush of the French diplomatic party as he passed through the Tyrol in August en route to Italy. News of their capture had spread fast through the Swiss Confederate States, where sentiments were reportedly sympathetic to the French. But it seems more likely that Viotti learned of his friends’ arrest from the French ambassador in the Republic of Venice, François Noël, whom he may have met in London in 1792. From Venice, Viotti seems to have rushed straight on

\(^{116}\) *Ibid.*, p. 120.

\(^{117}\) V to M, 20 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/10.
to Mantua, where he tried unsuccessfully to visit his friends in prison (as described at the beginning of the letter of 4 September). This sequence of events would seem plausible in view of the fact that it was from Venice (on 13 August) that he asked the Chinnerys to send a bank draft for £200 which was intended for his friends in distress:  

C'est ici [Baden] que j'attends votre reponse, de même que la lettre de change de deux cent livres je vous ai demandé dans une lettre de Venise le 13. du mois dernier [...] je vous prie donc de me la faire faire sur un Banquier de Zurich, et adressés la moi à Zurich poste restante ou à Baden chës M' Barthélémy Ambassadeur de france.

(V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/9)

According to Ernouf, it was not until 20 August that the prisoners were transferred to the Mantuan prison, having left Gravedona (where they were initially imprisoned) on 1 August. Presumably then, Viotti would have reached Mantua shortly after his friends.

In Mantua the French were held in the dungeons of the decaying old castle. It was then the height of summer and burning hot days were succeeded by cold nights. The air was thick and humid, the climate most insalubrious. Malaria was a risk. Rufer describes the swamps surrounding the castle as being ‘ausserordentlich gefährlich für die Gesundheit.’ Viotti’s description of the unhealthy climate as ‘pestilencieux’, the separation of the prisoners from each other, and the lack of reading and writing material, is borne out by Maret’s own account. Conditions were so harsh that all the prisoners except Maret came down with swamp fever, most dying within six months of their imprisonment. Among the dead was Monsieur de Montgeroult.

After his unsuccessful attempts to see his friends in prison, Viotti set off in pursuit of Hélène de Montgeroult, arriving in Baden in early September. His letter of 4 September makes clear that he used the same route on his return journey as the French party had used on their descent through the Swiss States. He tells Margaret that he knew his friends were arrested in neutral territory because he took that route himself on his return journey: ‘[...] car la Valtelline est un pays bien neutre, j’y ai passé pour venir ici

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118 V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/9.
119 The letter in question is lost.
120 This does not tally with Maret’s account in Michaud (ed.), vol. 26, p.530.
121 Rufer, op. cit., p. 200.
et je sçai qu'il est tel que l'Empereur\textsuperscript{123} n'y a pas plus de droits qu'il en a en Angleterre.\textsuperscript{124} On his arrival in Baden, according to Rufer, he testified publicly, along with Madame de Sémonville\textsuperscript{125} and another Swiss dignitary, that he had seen the whole of Valtellina ready to rise up in revolt at the crime which had been perpetrated against the French diplomats. In Rufer's words: 'Letzterer [Viotti], der eben von Venedig kam,\textsuperscript{126} behauptete, er habe auf seiner Durchreise das ganze Bündner Volk und auch das Veltlin bereit gesehen, sich zu erheben.'\textsuperscript{127} Viotti does not mention this fact in his letters, but it tallies with both his character and with his itinerary. Although he calls him by name, Rufer does not seem to recognise the famous violinist, referring to him as Madame de Sémonville's compatriot ('Landsmann'). Viotti's own narration of the ambush continues:

\begin{center}
\begin{quote}
\textit{c'est la [la Valtelline] qu'il [l'Empereur] s'est permis le plus infame de tous les enlevements, c'est la qu'on a privé mon pauvre ami [Maret], et M'. de Montgéroult de leur liberté, leur ontant, leur volant tout, jusqu'aux boucles de leurs jaretieres, pour les traduire à Mantoue dans un chateau fort, environné d'un air pestilencieux, mis au secret, sans un livre, sans une feuille de papier pour écrire, séparés l'un de l'autre, et sans aucune communication quelconque. Oh mes amis pouvés vous imaginer quel est la situation d'un homme de 60. ans malade infirme les jambes enfilée par la goute ...}
\end{quote}
\end{center}

(V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/9)

Viotti's outrage at this treatment of a sixty-year-old man who has no political allegiances continues: 'Il est affreux que deux êtres étrangers à tout interest politique [M. et Mme de Montgéroult] se trouvent par l'attentat le plus inique victimes de la plus noire trahison.'\textsuperscript{128} In the same letter there is evidence that Madame de Montgéroult also knew the Chinnerys. Viotti reports that in the initial shock of her situation, after having travelled twenty leagues on foot and on horseback over mountainous terrain that he

\textsuperscript{123} Francis II (1768-1835), last emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, 1792-1806.
\textsuperscript{124} V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/9.
\textsuperscript{125} According to Rufer (\textit{op. cit.}, pp. 118-119), Madame de Sémonville had already filed reports to the Swiss authorities, to the French ambassadors Barthélemy in Baden and Noël in Venice, and to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Paris.
\textsuperscript{126} Viotti does appear to have come almost straight from Venice (having first attempted to see his friends in prison in Mantua), but if this is the case, it is difficult to imagine when he had time to fit in a trip to his hometown of Fontanetto da Po in Piedmont on the other side of Italy.
\textsuperscript{127} Rufer, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 123.
\textsuperscript{128} V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/9.
himself would find extremely difficult, Hélène de Montgérault wrote to William Chinnery, care of a mutual banker friend in London:

Madame de Montgérault a écrit à M.r Chin ___ dans le premier moment de sa douleur, après avoir fait à pied, et à cheval vingt lieues, seule par des chemins affreux, des chemins que je n’ai pu moi même faire sans une peine extreme. Je ne sçais si la lettre vous est parvenue, ne sachant point votre adresse, elle l’a envoyée à un Banquier pour vous la faire parvenir. Si le sort a voulu que vous la receviez, vous saurés déjà en partie quelle est sa douleur.

(Ibid.)

Viotti’s report that she travelled this great distance alone gives credence to Rufer’s statement that Madame de Montgérault left the scene of the ambush without waiting for her travelling companion, Madame de Sémonville. He goes on to say that there is an enclosure from Hélène in his present letter, which he asks William to pass on to Prime Minister Pitt, informing him of the outrage that has been committed. William Chinnery clearly knew Pitt well enough to deliver the note in person. He undoubtedly also knew of the meetings which had taken place in London between Maret and Pitt in 1792 and 1793, and of the high regard in which Pitt held Maret. Madame de Montgérault’s appeal to Pitt must have been on the basis that Pitt might be able to influence the Austrians in their favour, but with the Terror gaining momentum and Marie-Antoinette’s head about to fall, it was a vain one.

Viotti urges William Chinnery to put the letter into the hands of Pitt personally and to have him read it carefully, saying that it contains nothing which could compromise himself, and is written in a way which does credit to its author. He tells William that the letter contains an exact account of ‘cet affreux attentat contre le droit des gens, contre le droit des actions.’ Viotti, confident that Pitt will act on the letter, writes: ‘Mr Pitt est un brave homme, et sans doute après avoir lu cette lettre il sera bien aise de l’avoir reçue.’ In a later letter from Baden (24 September 1793), Viotti writes to William to advise him of the best course of action, should Pitt wish to reply to the letter from Hélène de Montgérault. The latter, who is obliged to return to France, having

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129 As one of the chief clerks of Treasury, William acted in an advisory capacity to the Board, of which the prime minister was the first lord.
130 V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/9.
131 Ibid.
nowhere else to go, has warned Viotti that any letter from England addressed to her in Paris, would spell a certain death sentence for her, even if politics were not mentioned. Therefore, he advises Chinnery to pocket any letter that Pitt should write, until such time as it can be safely transmitted by hand to their unfortunate friend. Viotti reiterates his instructions to William: ‘mon cher bon amico [...] je vous prie pour l’interet de sa vie, 1° de ne plus ecrire une Ligne, 2° si M’d Pitt veut repondre, de vous assurer d’avance que la lettre vous sera confiee, qu’elle ne trainera point dans les bureaux [...]’132, cautioning him that if he is not certain of being able to do this, then to dissuade Pitt from replying at all. He goes on to assure William of Hélène’s attachment to them, saying that she will owe them a lifelong debt of gratitude:133

Elle me charge de vous témoigner ainsi qu’à M’dame Chinnery un attachement inalterable, votre Sensibilité à vous deux pour ses peines l’a penetree de reconnaissance; elle me repete souvent qu’ell ne l’oubliera jamais.

(V to W, 24 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 14/1)

By then Hélène had learned of the death of her husband, which is described by Viotti in his second letter to Margaret Chinnery from Baden, on 20 September 1793. Ernouf notes that the Parisian newspaper Le Moniteur reported on 8 October 1793 that Montgeroult was found dead in his cell about the end of September, and intimated that he had committed suicide. Viotti’s account is different. According to Viotti, Madame de Montgeroult had been pressing the Austrian authorities for the previous five weeks for permission to join her husband in prison, without receiving a reply, when she learned of his death. On this detail Rufer gives an identical account, adding, however, that once her husband was dead Hélène transferred all her attentions to Maret, to whom she began writing hysterical love letters, which, Rufer says, he fortunately never received, as they were intercepted by the Austrian guards. How Rufer knows these details is a mystery, the only clue given being a passing mention of the Vienna State Archives, where he says all the official papers carried by the French diplomats at the time of their capture are now (1941) held. Viotti gives no hint of any such letters, simply expressing his

132 V to W, 24 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 14/1.
133 The friendship between Hélène de Montgeroult and the Chinnerys does endure, and twenty-six years later we find Hélène in Margaret Chinnery’s drawing room, participating in one of the latter’s musical parties (see p. 189).
indignation at the treatment of Hélène’s elderly, gout-stricken husband, whose only reason for leaving France was, he says, his health and peace of mind:

Quelle barbarie d’enfermer dans une prison mal saine un homme de 60. ans. Infirme, malade il ne pouvait pas marcher, et on le met sous des verrous! Quelle barbarie de l’envoyer dans les marais pestilencieux de Mantoue; quelle barbarie plus grande encore de ne l’en avoir pas fait sortir lors de son premier accès de fièvre! Combien il est inhumain d’avoir refusé à sa Femme d’aller consoler un homme sur le quel on n’avait pas même un soupçon fondé car enfin on a bien vu qu’il n’était sorti de France que pour sa santé, et pour chercher un pays tranquille!

(V to M, 20 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/10)

Rufer also expresses surprise that this frail old gentleman should be subjected to such harsh treatment by the Austrians, but gives a different reason for his departure from France. According to Rufer, he was doubly unfortunate, for in his delicate state of health he wanted only to remain peacefully at home, but being persuaded to follow his headstrong young wife and her lover, he ended up dying an ignominious death in a foreign gaol. Which version is the correct one is difficult to say. It can hardly have been peaceful for a former office-bearer in the ancien régime to live in France during the Revolution, especially since, if we are to believe Gautier, his wife had already been arrested once. On the other hand, it may have been true that it was his wife who determined him to leave, and that she was indeed Maret’s mistress.

Viotti goes on to say that after three weeks of languishing in prison, Montgeroult had on 28 August asked to see his wife. According to Viotti the old man’s words were: ‘Je passe mon temps à pleurer et à transpirer.’ Viotti reports that it was the first time in his marriage that he had been separated from his wife for so long, and the stifling humidity, pain and suffering all combined to bring on a fatal asthma attack which killed him on 2 September 1793. Hélène de Montgeroult was left destitute, having lost all her belongings and her private papers, including the title deeds to the Montgeroult estate, and according to Viotti, did not know where to turn for help.

Viotti seemed just as affected as his friend. His sensitive nature and his sense of the injustice of the world combined to plunge him into black pessimism: ‘Oh! Mes amis

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135 Ibid.
qu'on est mal à son aise dans ce monde! Pour moi je suis plus que jamais convaincu que le bonheur est un chimère! Montgeroult's death caused him to fear that the same fate would overtake Maret. In his fourth letter from the Continent Viotti mentions Maret by name for the first time: ‘Cet evenement doit redoubler la zele de tous les honnetes gens pour sauver la santé, et même la vie de ce pauvre maret; nous n'avons pas de ses nouvelles depuis ce fatal moment.’

Viotti's health was severely affected by these trials. In the same letter he says he has been suffering for the past fortnight from a raging fever which he describes in colourful musical language as being ‘double-tièrce’. The rest of this letter and the letter of 24 September, addressed to William Chinnery, is taken up with discussion of the bank draft, intended as a gift to his unfortunate friends. As soon as he has received it, he says, not being of any further use to his friends, he will set out on his return journey to England:

Si tôt que je l'aurai reçue, ne pouvant être plus utile à mes pauvres amis je me remettrai en route pour revenir en Angleterre, revenir auprès de vous, de votre aimable moitié, verser dans votre sein la tristesse dont je suis accablé, et remettre un peu une santé qui depuis long tems à [a] souffert de si rudes atteintes, je suis si maigre, si pâle que vous ne me reconnoîtriez plus.

(V to W, 24 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 14/1)

Although the banker in Zurich received notification of the draft, the draft itself did not arrive. Viotti asked Margaret to beg William, who had organised the draft through his banker friend 'Mr Amerslay' to take all the necessary precautions to avoid the loss of the money, and in a clear reference to his financial losses during the French Revolution, wrote: ‘ce n'est pas que j'aye besoin d'argent dans ce moment cy, mais j'ai tant été persecuté par la Fortune dans ma vie, que je dois ménager le plus possible affin que si les coups me frappent encore, ils ne portent pas du moins sur

136 Ibid.
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
139 Possibly William Hammersley (b. 1759), B.A. (St Mary Hall, Oxford) 1780. Hammersley belonged to the banking house of Messrs Ransom, Morland and Hammersley of Pall Mall, who were listed in the Times (2 February 1795) as one of the outlets where subscriptions to the 1795 Opera concerts could be purchased.
l’absolû nécessaire.' On 8 October, Viotti’s sixth letter from the Continent (this time from Zurich), testifies to his frayed nerves. He chastises Margaret bitterly for not writing, saying that by this omission she is adding to his woes. After almost a full page of reproaches, he informs her that he will wait another fortnight to see if the bank draft arrives, then leave for Ghent.

Having waited in vain until 20 October, Viotti finally gave the draft up for lost, asked William to cancel it, and informed the Chinnerys that he would be making his way back to England in two weeks. In this and the following letter from Zurich he stressed how dire his need was for consolation: ‘En vérité j’ai besoin de cette consolation, car depuis que je vous ai quittée je ne me suis nourri que de douleur et d’amertume.’ Having at last received a letter from Margaret (the first since Frankfurt) he is relieved but still mournful, writing: ‘Jamais je n’en aurai eu tant besoin, que votre attachement, que votre tendre amitié m’aide à supporter ma malheureuse vie.’ His friend Hélène de Montgéroult had departed Zurich (only a few kilometres from Baden), ‘le coeur déchiré l’âme navrée’ to return to ‘ses tristes foyers’ on 21 October. For his part, he found life unbearable: ‘jamais je n’ai si bien senti combien la vie est insupportable [sic] dans certains moments.’

In two of his letters Viotti asks to be remembered to Hüllmandel. In the second he writes: ‘Faites dire au plutôt à Hullmandel de ne plus écrire non plus à notre amie infortunée, et dites lui en le motif en ... [illegible]. Vous lui dirés aussi bien des choses amicales de ma part.’ These words would suggest that Hüllmandel also had been following the fortunes of his former piano student, and knew all the facts surrounding Viotti’s journey to the Continent, thus supporting the hypothesis that it was indeed from Hüllmandel’s house that Viotti’s last letters in England to the Chinnerys had been written, a month or so prior to his departure. This was not the case for Salomon, who was not the close friend that Hüllmandel was, for although Viotti tells Margaret that he has written to Salomon, he says that he did not tell him either where he was or what he was doing on the Continent: ‘J’ai écrit à Salomon, mais je ne lui dis ni ou je suis, ni ce

140 V to M, 13 October 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/12.
141 V to M, 8 October 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/11.
142 V to M, 13 October 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/12.
143 V to M, 8 October 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/11.
144 V to M, 20 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/10, and V to W, 24 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 14/1.
que je fais. Seulement, je l'assure que je le reverrai bientôt en Angleterre, et cela est vrai.\footnote{V to M, 4 September 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/9.}

Presumably, Salomon would have been wondering if his second star performer was going to be back in time for the next season's Hanover Square concerts, as he was already anxious about Haydn's return from the Esterhazy court in Vienna, given that Prince Anton Esterhazy was not in favour of Haydn's journey at all, because of the latter's advanced age and the dangers attending his voyage across Europe in time of war.

In Viotti's seventh letter, again from Zurich, he advises the Chinnerys not to write to Switzerland any more, as he expects to be in Ghent in ten or twelve days' time. He finishes the letter by saying that he will not give them any more news of their unfortunate friend, as she will write herself, and it will be her last letter for a long time, not being able henceforth to write any letters from France: 'Je ne vous dis rien de notre amica, elle veut vous écrire elle même, ce sera pour longtems la dernière lettre, car vous savez qu'une fois rentrée dans sa Patrie toutes correspondences lui deviendraient funestes.'\footnote{V to M, 13 October 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/12.}

In his eighth letter, dated 29 October, 1793, Viotti is about to set off for Ghent on his return trip, and mentions the war in Belgium for the first time. He asks Margaret not to send the second bank draft (if William Chinnery has been able to procure one) to Ghent in Austrian Flanders, as it is too close to the war zone, and risks being lost like the first one.\footnote{The Belgian provinces north of the meridian separating Austrian Flanders from French Flanders, previously under Austrian rule, had revolted in 1789 in sympathy with the French. But in December 1790 the Austrians retook the provinces, including the towns of Ghent, Van der Noot, Mons and Brussels. The French Legislative Assembly declared war, and there was fighting from November 1792 right through 1793.}

The next letter written by Viotti from Switzerland does not form part of the Viotti correspondence in the Powerhouse collection, but appears in Appendix F\footnote{Giazotto's book. Unfortunately, no source for this letter is cited. As it relates to Viotti's 1793 Continental trip, it deserves to be quoted in full:} of Giazotto's book. Unfortunately, no source for this letter is cited. As it relates to Viotti's 1793 Continental trip, it deserves to be quoted in full:
C'est aujourd'hui jour des Courriers de France et de Mentone [recte Mantoue]. J'espère que l'un m'apportera des lettres de votre frère et mon ami [Hugues-Bernard Maret], mais j'espère aussi que l'autre m'apportera de vos nouvelles et celles de notre malheureuse amie. Il y a juste onze jours que nous nous sommes quittés, et il y en a onze que je n'ai pas entendu parler d'elle, je vous laisse juger combien mon cœur a été à la gêne. Les âmes sensibles souffrent toujours quand la tendre amitié se tait [sic]. Au nom de Dieu écrives moi un mot l'une ou l'autre, et adressés moi vos lettres toujours chés M.Ile Gaspard Schultes et Comp. à Zuric. Je vous en prie Citoyenne ne trouvez point extraordinaire que je m'adresse à vous si librement, sans compter l'attachement le plus vif qui m'unit à votre Hugues, les bons Republicains doivent toujours s'entendre quand même ils ne se connaissent pas personnellement, ainsi je veux croire pour ma tranquillité que vous trouverez ma manière d'agir toute simple. Dites à notre amie qu'elle a oublié deux cuillères d'argent ici, tristes restes de ce que les scélérats de l'Autriche lui ont laissé, assurez la que j'en aurai bien soin et que je les mettrai avec les affaires de notre pauvre Prisonier, ces habits ne sont cependant pas encore arrivés à Zuric, mais je les attens de jours en jours [sic]. Adieu Citoyenne. Si je puis vous être utile mandez moi vos volontés et soyés sure je me ferai plaisir de les satisfaire.

Viotti

Que le courrier m'apporte donc une lettre de Dijon aujourd'hui. Si non je serai bien triste. Oh! bien triste et malheureux.

Curiously, the place from which the letter is sent is Baden, and not Zurich, where both his previous (20 October) and following (8 November) letters originate. Perhaps it was a simple oversight on Viotti’s part. With regard to the town of Baden [in the canton of Zurich], Giazotto assumed it was the German spa town of Baden Baden, where he supposed Viotti to have stayed a few days to take a thermal cure.149

The letter is addressed, in a correct Republican manner, to ‘Citizen Maret, Wife of the District President’, and dated ‘l’an 2d de la Republique’. Giazotto believed ‘Citoyenne Maret’ to be the wife of Hugues Maret, the famous doctor of medicine and

148 Giazotto, op. cit., p. 266.
erudite chemist who was also interested in music. This description fits Hugues Maret Senior, father of Hugues-Bernard Maret. But the latter’s father died combatting a typhoid epidemic in 1785, and his wife had died seventeen years earlier. Perhaps Giazotto was confusing the father with the son, but Hugues-Bernard was not yet married in 1793. The latter, however, had an older brother who held the post of District President in the département of the Côte d’Or in that year.\(^{150}\) It was to the brother’s wife that Viotti addressed his letter, which, as Giazotto rightly supposes, concerned Viotti’s friend, Hélène de Montgémery. But he was not right in supposing that Hélène was at the time undergoing her ‘trial’ in Paris.\(^{151}\) Hélène de Montgémery, as is evident from Viotti’s letter of 20 October, left Zurich on 21 October to return to France (‘Helas, c’est demain que notre amie Infortunée se met en route pour retourner dans sa malheureuse Patrie’),\(^{152}\) and it would appear that it was in Maret’s brother’s house in Dijon that she sought refuge.

Viotti’s opening words in the above letter are as usual concerned with receiving mail from friends. This time he is awaiting news from two places – from France and from Mantua. ‘Mantoue’ in the above letter has been wrongly transcribed as ‘Mentone’. With Viotti’s handwriting, this is an understandable error. But in this case the wrong transcription causes the reader to miss the whole point of the letter. Viotti hopes that one of those mails – the one from Mantua – will bring him news of ‘votre frère et mon ami’ (Hugues-Bernard Maret), and the other, from France, news of ‘notre malheureuse amie’, (Hélène de Montgémery). Viotti says in the letter that it was just eleven days since he parted company with Hélène. That would tally exactly with the date given by Viotti in his letter to Margaret of 20 October. Not having had any news of her in this time, Viotti is understandably anxious, and begs that one of the ladies (either Madame Maret or Madame de Montgémery) might write to him in Zurich. As always, Viotti cites his sensitive nature as the cause of his suffering when news of friends is not forthcoming.

It is clear from the tone of the letter that Viotti does not know Maret’s brother’s wife personally. He makes the pointed remark that all good Republicans must be comrades. The last remark was obviously intended as a ‘politically correct’ way of

\(^{149}\) *Ibid.*, p. 133. The Baden in question was the Swiss town of Baden im Aargau, about 20 km northwest of Zurich.

\(^{150}\) Jean-Phillibert Maret (1758-1827), elder brother of Hugues-Bernard Maret.

\(^{151}\) Giazotto, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

\(^{152}\) *V to M*, 20 October 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/13.
addressing a fellow Republican in one of the bloodiest years of the Revolution, in the event that the letter was intercepted by French authorities. But if they were politically correct in revolutionary France, these terms were quite the opposite in Britain, and it was ironic that this letter, if known to the British Government, may have been used in evidence against Viotti at the time of his expulsion from Britain five years later under suspicion of being a Jacobin.

The last letter from Zurich is written on 8 November 1793, and is addressed to William Chinnery. Viotti expresses great relief that he has at last received a letter from him: ‘Oh! que votre Souvenir m’a fait du bien! On m’aurait annoncé un ange descendu du Ciel que je ne l’aurais pas mieux reçu que le messager qui m’a remis cette lettre que j’attendois avec tant d’impatience.’ He feels soothed by the knowledge that his dear friends are well, and love him still and think of him. He says that in spite of his recent traumatic experiences his health is surprisingly good, ‘car au milieu de tant de crues bourasques, un Colosse y succombait.’ He reiterates that it is three weeks since Hélène left Zurich (which again tallies with the dates in the letter to Madame Maret) and he still has had no news of her.

Viotti goes on to compliment William on his French, which Viotti had been teaching him. The fact that William Chinnery does not know French well would explain the preponderance of letters to Margaret Chinnery, compared to the relatively few written to William. Viotti repeats his previous instructions to William regarding the missing bank draft, and informs him that he will be leaving Zurich on 15 November to return to London via Ghent, where he will again stay at the home of ‘Mr de Smed’. He begs William to send all letters henceforth to Ghent.

Then follows a telling paragraph regarding Viotti’s violin playing. Viotti assures William — who must have reproached Viotti for not having played at all during his journey — that he was quite incapable of tolerating the high notes of his instrument in his present unhappy frame of mind. He says he will take up playing again when he feels able to act in accordance with his reason rather than his uncontrolled feelings. But he has supreme confidence in his ability to take up his instrument again, and within a week be able to play as well as he did the previous year:

\[153\] V to W, 8 November 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 14/2.
\[154\] Ibid.
Depuis que je vous ai quitté je n'ai pas touché mon Violon. Ne me grondez pas, ma situation est telle que les sons éous de cet instrument sont incompatibles avec mes sensations douloureuses. Je m'y remettrai lorsque la raison aura pris plus d'empire sur moi. Vous saviez que grace aux dons que la nature m'a faits, il ne me faut pas longtemps pour me remettre en train et que huit jours suffiront pour que je sois tout aussi digne d'être entendu que l'année passée; ainsi ne m'en voulez pas et soyez tranquille sur mes succès.

(V to W, 8 November 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 14/2)

This special gift that Viotti possessed of being able to regain quickly his superlative playing skills after a long period away from his instrument has been remarked upon with admiration by his contemporaries. The implication in the above passage that William heard him play a year ago lends support to the hypothesis that Viotti already knew the Chinnerys at the end of 1792.

Viotti arrived in Ghent on or about the 6 December 1793, on which date he writes to Margaret of his delight on finding three of her letters waiting for him. Again he says that the Chinnery letters are like balm to his woes:

J'ai trouvé en arrivant ici trois de vos lettres; mon premier soin avant de les lire a été de remercier le Ciel de ce que mes amis mes bons amis que j'ai sans cesse gardés dans mon cœur m'aiment toujours. Après ce remerciement je les ai ouvertes ces lettres. oh ma bonne amica qu'elles ont fait du bien à ce malheureux qui souffre depuis si long temps!... merci merci.

(V to M, 6 December 1793, PM 94/143/1 - 2/14)

In reply to a remark of Margaret's which must have implied that he was losing his reason, Viotti admits this to be the case, claiming that it was his religious faith that was his salvation:

Je l'aurois perdue bien plus encore si la confiance que j'ai toujours conservée dans une Providence Divine ne m'eut soutenu mais ma chere amica je n'en suis pas moins brouillé avec cet infernal monde où je ne suis placé que pour essuyer des déchirements d'ame mille fois pire que la mort.

(Ibid.)

155 William's French improved a lot, and within a few years he was able to read and write it (and also Italian) with ease, if not with perfect accuracy.
However, he rejoices that he is now much closer to the Chinnerys and London, where he will take comfort in their sympathy: ‘Me voila bien rapproché de vous, bientôt je vous verrai, je vous parlerai, je resterai des journées entières avec vous’. 156

Viotti stayed in Ghent for ten or twelve days to rest before the final stage of his journey. There is no other mention of his friends in Ghent apart from a remark that they were ‘bons et honnêtes gens’. But it was on the Chinnerys that his hopes devolved to relieve him of his present misery. He thanks William for the second bank draft which he has now received, begs forgiveness for all the trouble it has caused and shows his generous nature by the remark that money counts for little except when it can help friends in need.

Viotti had earlier begged the Chinnerys to find him an apartment and a servant in London, close to their own home. He now reiterates his request, emphasising the importance of the accommodation being close to the Chinnerys: ‘je veux seulement qu’il soit près de votre petite maison. Le reste m’est égal’. 157 He also encloses a letter to Hüllmandel, asking somewhat embarrassedly if his friend can accommodate him for two or three days until he moves into his own apartment: ‘Cela me fache de lui devoir ce petit plaisir à cause de sa femme, mais je me trouverois dans l’embarras sans cela, et d’ailleurs il est bon lui il m’aime sincèrement’. 158 He says with regard to his playing, that he is counting on Margaret to revive his interest in music. If his present antipathy for music continues, he may never play again:

N’est-ce pas amica que vous me ferez reprendre la musique quand je serai auprès de vous? Depuis cinq mois je l’ai totalement abandonné, partout on j’ai passé on a voulu m’arrêter on a fait l’impossible pour m’entendre on m’a fait des ponts d’or pour venir à bout, j’ai fermé l’oreille à tout, et mon étui a été constamment fermé. L’harmonie me contrarie depuis que les evenemens de ma vie ont effacé celle qui existoit dans mon etre. Si cette antipathie continue je continuerai probablement de faire à Londre ce que j’ai fait dans mon voyage.

(Ibid)

It is evident from these words that Viotti played from the heart. No amount of persuasion or financial temptation could induce him to play while he was overwrought.

156 V to M, 6 December 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 2/14.
157 Ibid.
158 Ibid.
As usual he sends his love to Margaret’s ‘jolis petits Enfans’ and also his regards to Salomon, hoping that the latter will not bear him a grudge for not writing. He assures Margaret that it is not out of laziness that he has not written to Salomon. He is so eager for mail from Margaret that he asks her to write again to Dover, so that he will have a letter from her waiting for him on his arrival in England.

From the above it is possible to form an idea of the route that Viotti followed on his journey to Italy and back again. In his Précis he says that he reached his homeland (Piedmont) via Germany, the Tyrol and Venice. Understandably wishing to give the Revolution a wide berth, he did not choose to cross into France at any point. The route he took after leaving Frankfurt was presumably the most direct one for reaching Venice—through Stuttgart, Munich and Innsbruck. His movements after Venice remain hazy. On learning of his friends’ arrest, he presumably went straight to Mantua, where he says he attempted to visit them in prison. Unsuccessful, he followed Madame de Montgeroult to Baden, where the letters take up again. But when did he fit in the visit to his hometown of Fontanetto (near Turin) to attend to his family affairs? There is no indication in his letters that he went to Piedmont at all, although there was conceivably time for him to have done so between leaving Venice and arriving in Baden. He could just as easily have retraced Madame de Montgeroult’s steps by entering Switzerland from the north west of Italy. The following is a hypothetical outline of his itinerary, based on the evidence in his Précis and in the present letters. The dates in brackets are either the dates of letters written from the place in question or dates which are adduced from information given in other letters:

- Dover (22 July)
- Ostende (23 July)
- Ghent (25 July)
- Brussels (26 July)
- Frankfurt (3 August)
- Tyrol [n.d.]
- Venice (13 August)
- Mantua [n.d.]
- Fontanetto da Po [n.d.]
- Valtellina [n.d.]
- Baden (4, 20, 24 September)
Zurich (8, 13, 20 October, 4, 18 November)
Ghent (6, 17 December)

As can be seen, it was a five-month journey, and not a one and a half-month one, as claimed by Giazotto. Nor did Viotti pass through Vienna and Leipzig, as stated by Giazotto.¹⁵⁹

The very last of these twelve letters from the Continent is again from Ghent, this time addressed to William Chinnery. He again compliments William on his astounding progress in the French language and wishes he could say the same of his own progress in English:

Que ne sui-je [sic] dans le cas que vous me fassiez le même compliment dans la langue Anglaise? hélas j’ai oublie le peu que je savois, mais que n’ai-je point oublié dans les cruelles [sic] situations ou je me suis trouvè. C’est encore beaucoup que j’existe.

(V to W, 17 December 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 14/3)

He has forgotten the little English he knew, as well as everything else except his painful experiences. Pessimistic, but considering himself lucky to be alive, he remarks: ‘La Providence a voulu me conserver pour mes amis, peut être pour des malheurs encore plus grands.’ But, he says fatalistically, he must submit to the ineluctable order of things. Finally, he tells William that he has received news of Hélène, whose health is poor. He bemoans the fact that she was forced to return to France: ‘Hélas pourquoi tant de raisons, que je vous dirai à mon arrivée, l’ont elles forçée de retourner dans cet enfer?’ In one last misanthropic outburst he wails that when one is born as he is with a sensitive nature, one is doomed to suffer incessantly, finding peace only in the grave: ‘Lorsqu’on est né comme moi mon cher ami avec une sensibilité extreme il faut prendre son parti et se vouer à des souffrances qui se renouvellent sans cesse, et n’attendre le repos que lorsqu’un bon morceau de terre nous aura couvert et séparé du reste des humains.’¹⁶⁰

That Viotti tested the Chinnerys’ friendship to the limit during these months of unalleviated despair is certain. But his own loyalty to his friends was tested and found unshakeable when, nineteen years later, the Chinnerys’ own problems began.

¹⁵⁹ Giazotto, op. cit., p. 134.
¹⁶⁰ V to W, 17 December 1793, PM 94/143/1 – 14/3.
(iv) The 1794 Hanover Square concerts

Viotti returned from the Continent just in time for the start of Salomon’s 1794 Hanover Square concerts. These were awaited with high expectation in London because of Haydn’s much publicised appearance in them. Haydn was well-loved by London audiences, who had enjoyed his compositions and performances on his previous visit to England for the 1791-92 season. Other popular vocalists and instrumentalists – among whom was Viotti – added to the attraction. It was not surprising, then, that Salomon was anxious to know the date of Viotti’s return. Haydn, too, was to keep Salomon in suspense. When he did not arrive in time for the first concert that had been announced for 3 February 1794, Salomon was obliged to postpone the commencement of the subscription series to 10 February:

MR. SALOMON’S CONCERT, HANOVER SQUARE.

MR. SALOMON most respectfully acquaints the Nobility and Gentry, that Dr. HAYDN’S and Mr. [Johann] FISCHER’S arrival in this country having been unexpectedly retarded, he has by the advice of many respectable friends been induced to postpone the opening of his Concerts from Monday next to Monday se’nnight the 10th of February, when the first performance positively will take place [...]

(The Times, 3 February 1794)

When Viotti returned to London from the Continent in December 1793, he took lodgings, as his December 1793 letters show, close to the Chinnerys’ residence in Mortimer Street. His address was in all probability the one listed in Doane’s Musical Directory for 1794, ‘No. 34, Wells Street, Oxford Street’,161 just around the corner from Mortimer Street. William Chinnery also hired a manservant for him, ‘Hennery’. At this time Viotti was almost certainly in daily contact with the Chinnerys, which would explain the lack of letters during this period. However, there is a small bundle of five hand-delivered notes to the Chinnerys which seem to be of this period, although only one is dated. On the outside of the letter dated ‘13. f. 94’ is written, in Viotti’s hand, ‘Plusieurs lettres de l’Amico à l’Amica dans nos premiers temps’.162 Three of the five

161 Cited in Highfill, Burnim and Langhans, op. cit., vol. 15, p. 185. Viotti’s address prior to his departure for the Continent was the one published in The Times on 13 April 1793 for the purchase of tickets to his 26 April benefit concert – 47 Curzon Street, Mayfair.
162 V to M, 13 February 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/16.
letters seem to have been written in January or very early February 1794. The other two appear to date from 1795. In the fourth letter Viotti passes on the offer of Madame Hüllmandel to lend her house at Brompton to the Chinnerys, perhaps for a summer holiday: 'M. dame Hüllmandel passera chés vous ce matin pour vous offrir sa maison de Brompton. Elle est toute meublée. Il me semble que cela pourroit peut être vous arranger'. One of the letters in this bundle mentioned Haydn’s arrival.

The first letter is a short half-page note to Margaret enquiring after her cold. In it Viotti mentions a foot problem of his own, which is probably gout, a recurrent ailment, and one often mentioned in his correspondence with the Chinnerys. Therefore, he says, he will not accept an invitation from the Grays. As he has done before, Viotti asks Margaret to make some domestic purchases for him: ‘les deux porte feuilles et la moffiniere’. The first items are perhaps for carrying sheets of music, the second, ‘la moffiniere’ is Viotti’s ‘franglais’ for muffin-maker. If Viotti had just moved into his lodgings, the purchase of this item would be understandable. In the same letter Viotti says that he will call on the Chinnerys ‘avant le dinner et avant que l’Espagnol arrive’ at five o’clock. ‘L’Espagnol’ was almost certainly Viotti’s Spanish pupil Libon. The letter ends with assurances of Viotti’s everlasting faithfulness: ‘Adieu ma bonne Amica n’oublies jamais que toute ma vie je serai le meilleur de tous les Amici’.

The next letter contains further enquiries after Margaret’s cold, and the news that his foot is now better. He wishes, uncharitably, that Margaret’s hoarseness had afflicted Marianne [Chinnery], Margaret’s sister-in-law, rather than her, as Margaret’s singing voice is so much sweeter than Marianne’s. Although the letter is undated, it can be fixed with certainty in late January or on one of the first three days of February 1794, as Viotti says he received false news of Haydn’s arrival in London: ‘Haydn n’est point arrivé. On m’a attrapé en me disant qu’il l’était’. Viotti, like Salomon, was awaiting the start of the Hanover Square concerts. In the same letter Viotti mentions an invitation from Madame Hüllmandel to Margaret, attesting to the close friendship between the three.

163 V to M, [c. 1795], PM 94/143/1 – 2/23.
164 Unidentified.
165 Philippe Libon (1775-1838), Spanish violinist and composer. From 1792-98 he studied in London with Viotti, and appeared in concerts with him during this period.
168 V to M, [c.3 February 1794], PM 94/143/1 – 2/15.
The third letter is the one dated 13 February 1794, and in it Viotti says he is sending Margaret a new concerto he has just written:

Je vous envoie amica un autre de mes nouveaux Enfans je desire que vous le recevies avec l'indulgence de l'amite et que jamais vous ne vous fachiés contre lui. Vous sentez bien que c'est d'un concerto dont je veux parler, car comment pourrai-je parler d'autre chose moi pauvre etre isolé de tout, l'ame si ardente et si vide de ce qui pourroit la rendre satisfaite!

(V to M, 13 February 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/16)

The mention of the new concerto – which he calls another of his new children – implies that he has been working on more than one new concerto. Under the terms of his contract with Salomon for the 1794 Hanover Square Rooms concert series, Viotti, like Haydn, was required to produce new compositions. In the first concert on Monday 10 February a new concerto was performed by Viotti, but as none of the concert announcements ever gave the key or any other identifying feature of the piece in question, it is impossible to ascertain which one it was.

The London newspaper reviews of the 1794 Hanover Square Rooms concerts are extensively quoted by Robbins Landon in his coverage of Haydn's career. All were enthusiastic. Of the opening night the Morning Chronicle wrote:

This superb Concert was last night opened for the season, and with such an assemblage of talents as make it a rich treat to the amateur. The incomparable HAYDN, produced an Overture of which it is impossible to speak in common terms [...] VIOTTI produced a new Concerto, in which his own execution was most delicate and touching; nothing could be more exquisite than his tones in the second movement. We have no doubt but both these pieces will be called for again; for they are to be ranked among the finest productions of which music has to boast.

(Morning Chronicle, 11 February 1794, in Landon, op. cit., p. 234)


170 Landon, op. cit., p. 234, names three of Viotti's concertos that he says were performed by him at the 1793 Hanover Square Rooms concerts, but suggests none that may have been performed in 1794.
The *Oracle* wrote that ‘Viotti gave a Concerto, *simple* and *affecting*, like his genius.’\(^{171}\) The writer in the *Morning Post* called it an ‘admirable concert’, with full credit going to Salomon for sparing no expense ‘to render it deserving of the patronage it has received’. He wrote that Viotti ‘greatly surprised the Amateurs by his Concerto on the Violin’.\(^{172}\) The *Sun* joined in the general praise:

> The Concerts under the management of HAYDN and SALOMON commenced for the season last night, and we were glad to see the taste of the Public manifested in a large and elegant Audience. Indeed, it would be wonderful if a Concert, which can boast the united powers of HAYDN, VIOTTI, SALOMON, and MARA,\(^{173}\) with an ample and admirable Band, did not excite a very liberal patronage. The grand instrumental trial of last night was a New Overture by HAYDN, a composition of the most exquisite kind, rich, fanciful, bold, and impressive. VIOTTI displayed all his fine taste and astonishing execution in a Violin Concerto, which, though deeply scientific, was no less pleasing [...]’

*(The Sun, 11 February 1794, in Landon, p. 235)*

Of the twelve concerts of Salomon’s 1794 series Viotti played in all but the third, sixth and tenth. In no other concert announcement is there mention of a new concerto, so perhaps the one mentioned in the letter to Margaret Chinnery of 13 February was indeed the one performed at Salomon’s first concert of 1794. Both Haydn and Viotti repeated their concertos of the first night in the second concert on 17 February. The audiences of these years tolerated repeated performances of a favourite composition, and even demanded it. The reviewer for the *Sun* on 18 February 1794 wrote:

> The wonderful new Overture of HAYDN, performed on the first night, was repeated last night, amidst the wondering plaudits of the Audience. The first movement was encored. [...] VIOTTI also repeated his fine Concerto of the former night, which was, if possible, more charming than before.\(^{174}\)

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173 Gertrude-Elisabeth Mara, née Schmaeling (1749-1833), one of the finest singers of the nineteenth century. She married – against the advice of friends – the cellist Mara, who was dissipated and debauched, and according to Fétis (ed.) (vol. 6, p. 257), spent all her earnings. She came to London in 1784.
The Viotti reviews continued to call him a 'masterly performer' and emphasised his ability to affect his audience. After the third concert the *Morning Chronicle* of the 5 March wrote: ‘Viotti we have never heard with greater pleasure; the sweetness and perfections of his tones were enchanting, as were the feelings they inspired.’\(^{175}\)

Again in the fifth and seventh concerts Viotti was praised for giving soul to his music. The review is yet another testimony to Viotti’s ability to put his feelings into his playing:

> The masterly performance of VIOTTI exceeded all former samples; his power over the instrument seems unlimited. The grand mistake of Musicians has been a continued effort to excite amazement. VIOTTI, it is true, without making that his object, astonishes the hearer; but he does something infinitely better — he awakens emotion, gives a soul to sound, and leads the passions captive.

*(Morning Chronicle, 12 March, 1794, in Landon, p. 242)*

After the seventh, the reviewer gives a little advice to musicians aspiring after excellence. Holding up Viotti as an example, he says that nothing can compensate for a lack of passion in their playing:

> Viotti again produced the rapturous sensations; he indeed possesses not only sweetness, vigour, and every variety that the bow and the finger seem capable of affording, but he adds the grand ingredient, soul, without which music is either insipidity, trick, or noise.

*(Morning Chronicle, 26 March, 1794, in Landon, p. 245)*

In the twelfth and final concert, Viotti and Salomon played a duet, which delighted the audience and was played ‘in a very bold and finished style’.\(^{176}\) Violin duets performed by Viotti and Salomon had been a popular attraction in the 1793 Hanover-Square Rooms concerts, and were continued in the 1794 season: ‘Duetti, so much admired between SALOMON and himself [Viotti], will of course be pursued’.\(^{177}\)

Therefore, not only did Viotti not lose his musical skills during the five months of 1793 that he did not touch the violin, but his playing clearly gained in passion and soul, which were, according to all the reviewers, the very hallmarks of his musical

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\(^{177}\) In Landon, *op. cit.*, p. 233.
genius. The power and emotion present in his playing on his return from the Continent gives credence to his friend Eymar’s statement that for a musician to be able to put life into his playing and his compositions, he must possess ‘un cœur qui, tantôt tourmenté par les affections les plus tendres, et tantôt dévoré par les plus foudroyantes passions, ne connaisse jamais de repos.’

Viotti’s brooding misanthropic humour continued for months after his return from the Continent. In February 1794, wishing to send gifts to his friends in Ghent, he wrote to William, who apparently was going to frank the packages at the Treasury: ‘j’imagine qu’on ne vous a pas encore porté les petits cadeaux que je veux envoyer à Gant. Attendons les avec patience, il en faut dans ce miserable univers et je sens bien combien il faut de la resignation!’
(v) The 1794 Bath Easter concerts

1794 was also the year Viotti performed in the Passion Week concerts at Bath. An account of these is given in the series of seven letters (16-25 April 1794) from Viotti to Margaret Chinnery in the Powerhouse collection. Noted by Kenneth James in his 'Concert Life in Eighteenth Century Bath', these Viotti concerts have gone unnoticed by all Viotti's biographers.

Two letters in the series bear the date 1793, which is initially confusing, until further investigation reveals the date to be erroneous. The letter from Bath which seems to be the earliest is dated 'Bath ce 17. avril jeudi Santo 1793'. But several anomalies become immediately obvious. Firstly, the 17 April was not a Thursday in 1793. It was not even Easter, since the newspapers of that year report that Easter fell between Thursday, 21 March and Thursday, 4 April in 1793. Secondly, Viotti was at this time performing in Salomon's Hanover Square concerts, which began on Thursday, 7 February and continued weekly until Thursday, 2 May 1793, with the exception of Passion and Easter weeks. As final proof that Viotti was not in Bath for the Easter concerts of 1793 there are the Bath newspaper announcements for the Passion and Easter week concerts of that year, which make no mention of Viotti. The Bath Herald and General Advertiser of Saturday, 23 March 1793 announces Janiewicz as the featured violinist.

Viotti appears to have wrongly dated these two letters. The substitution of 1794 for 1793 makes the day of the week correspond to the date, and proves that the 17 April was indeed 'jeudi Santo'. Moreover, when the two '1793' letters are slotted in chronological sequence into the 1794 letters from Bath, immediate sense is made of Viotti's first remark in the opening sentence of the 17 April letter regarding some tickets that Margaret has sent him ('Je revois à l'instant ma chere, ma bonne amica les billets et votre lettre'). These are the tickets mentioned by Viotti in the letter of 16 April 1794 that Salomon was about to send to Viotti to sell in Bath. They are presumably tickets to

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181 Feliks Janiewicz (1762-1848), Polish composer and violinist. Like Viotti, he also had fled from the Revolution, arriving in London six months before him, in time to perform in the 1792 series of Salomon's Hanover Square concerts.
182 V to M, 17 April 1794[4], PM94/143/1 - 2/1.
Salomon's benefit concert, which was to take place on Wednesday 28 May.\textsuperscript{183} Viotti, however, is not optimistic about his chances of success:

Je pense qu'il est inutile que Salomon m'envoye les billets. À vie de Pays, il me semble que personne ne m'en demandera, et il me seroit de toute impossibilité d'en offrir le quart d'un à qui ce soit; laissé le faire cependant si son intention est de me les expedier, j'aurai assez de place pour les rapporter.

\textit{(V to M, 16 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 - 2/17)}

The letter dated '17 April 1793' begins with a tender acknowledgement of Margaret's letter, indicating the depth of his affection for Margaret. It is clear that he eagerly awaits the arrival of her letters which usually come between eleven thirty and twelve noon, which is therefore his favourite time of day. His use of the word 'toujours' would indicate that he has been in Bath for some time already:

\begin{quote}
Je reçois à l'instant ma chere, ma bonne amica les billets et votre lettre, c'est toujours entre onze heures et midi que je reçois ce que vous avez la bonté de m'envoyer, aussi c'est ma plus belle heure de la journée, toutes les autres belles choses qui m'arrive [sic] sont toutes insipides.

\textit{(V to M, 17 April 1793 [recte 1794], PM 94/143/1 - 2/1)}
\end{quote}

As Viotti was one of the featured performers in the twelve Hanover Square concerts in 1794, his visit to Bath had to be fitted in between the ninth concert (on 31 March) and the tenth (on 28 April). Easter and Passion Week fell in the intervening period, which was long enough to give Viotti time to travel to Bath, spend nearly two weeks in that city, and travel home again in time for his benefit concert on 26 April in London. As can be ascertained from Viotti's Bath letters, the first of which now becomes the one dated 'Bath ce 16. avril 1794', this is indeed the case. The 16 April letter begins:

\begin{quote}
Je ne peux pas me persuader Amica qu'il n'y ait que quatre jours que je vous ai vûe, il me semble qu'il y a un mois au moins; cependant il est bien vrai que le quatrième n'est pas même passé encore! Ah que le tems est décrépit, et qu'il cache soigneusement ses ailes quand de veritables et bons amis se separent!

\textit{(V to M, 16 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 - 2/1)}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{183} \textit{The Times}, 28 May 1794.
Thus the date he arrived in Bath is established as 12 April. Early on the morning of Friday 25 April he was back in London writing Margaret a hurried note announcing his return. Bath was a twelve-hour coach journey from London. The Bath Journal of 7 April 1794 tells us that there were two post coach services to London daily, one departing each morning at six o’clock, and one in the afternoon at five o’clock, both ‘with Four Horses all the Way’, and both departing from the White Hart Inn and Tavern, Bath and arriving at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross. Viotti took the Thursday overnight coach, not having enough time to complete his travel preparations early enough to catch the morning coach. In his letter of the previous day he had written eagerly to Margaret: ‘Demain ce sera moi qui accompagnerai sur la route les lettres de tout le monde’ and hoped for a letter from her before the coach left at five. The brief letter of the 25th betrays his burning impatience to see Margaret again. In fact he is so eager to see her that he is bathed, coiffed and dressed, ready to fly to the Chinnery home long before she has even woken:

Vendredi ce 25 avril 94

Ce n’est plus de Bath c’est de Londre que je vous écris ma chere bonne Amica, pour vous dire que grace au Ciel, une bonne voiture et de bons chevaux je ne suis plus loin de vous; Je suis coiffé habillé et pret à voler chés mes amis, je n’attens pour cela que votre reveil, car surement vous dormés encore; faite moi dire cette heure fortunée, mais surtout ne me faites pas aller chés vous sans que vous soyés prête tout à fait dans ce petit salon. Si j’y venois avant je m’impatienterois trop à vous attendre; mon Dieu quel bonheur!

(V to M, 25 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 - 2/21)

Once the letters are in correct sequence, they give a colourful vignette of the 1794 Bath Passion Week concerts and their attendant social activities. Once again, it is unfortunate that no letters from Margaret’s side of this correspondence have been preserved. Clearly Viotti did not keep his letters as carefully as Margaret did.

Viotti was in Bath at the invitation of Venanzio Rauzzini, the Italian castrato who had come to London in 1774 to perform in the Italian opera at the King’s Theatre. Three years later he had retired to Bath where he instigated the highly successful Bath

184 V to M, 23 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 - 2/20.
185 Venanzio Rauzzini (1746-1810), Italian male soprano, composer and harpsichordist.
concerts at the New Assembly Rooms which had been completed in 1771. Rauzzini organised biannual concert series – one at Easter and one during the popular autumn season. The music presented at these concerts was of a consistently high standard, and Rauzzini was able to attract world class musicians. The fashionable spa that Bath was in the eighteenth century made it a favourite spot of the London performing artists. A perusal of the Bath Herald and General Advertiser’s column listing the visitors who came to Bath in those years in search of health and pleasure, reveals names of some of the leading lights in fashion, not only of Britain, but also of Europe. In 1791 Bath was a convenient place of refuge for Madame de Genlis and her young female charges, including the daughter of Philippe-Egalité, Adélaïde d’Orléans. It was the favourite haunt of politicians, military officers, clerics, actors and musical artists alike. In the last decade of the eighteenth century it was largely music that made it so.

Rauzzini had been a very successful singer on the Continent and in London, as well as a highly respected teacher of singing, counting among his pupils the English singers Michael Kelly, Nancy Storace\textsuperscript{186} and John Braham\textsuperscript{187}. According to the testimony of more than one of his contemporaries, Rauzzini was ‘proverbially handsome’ and extremely personable. Michael Kelly, who in his Reminiscences makes much of his good looks and good humour, says that Rauzzini was ‘beloved and respected’\textsuperscript{188} by the inhabitants of Bath, and that he was so well-liked by his musical colleagues, that they willingly gave their services to him gratis. Kelly writes:

\begin{quote}
I have known Mrs Billington [the most popular female singer on the London stage at that time]\textsuperscript{189} renounce many profitable engagements in London, when Rauzzini has required the aid of her talents, and at her own expense, travel to Bath, and back to London, as fast as four horses could carry her, without accepting the most trifling remuneration. The singers engaged at the King’s Theatre were always allowed by the proprietors to give him their gratuitous assistance.

(Kelly, op. cit., p. 234)
\end{quote}

This is not to say that Rauzzini took advantage of his colleagues. He did not make much money from the Bath concerts, the subscription tickets being very

\textsuperscript{186} Nancy Storace (1765-1817), English soprano.  
\textsuperscript{187} John Braham (1774-1856), English tenor and composer.  
\textsuperscript{188} Kelly, op. cit., p. 233.  
\textsuperscript{189} Elizabeth Billington, née Weichsell (c. 1765-1818), English soprano.
moderately priced, and supplemented his income by giving singing lessons. He was always extremely generous with his hospitality to visiting musicians. To counter criticism levelled at Rauzzini for his over-fondness of company, causing him severe financial difficulties, the oboist and diarist William Parke, 190 who describes Rauzzini as having ‘a mild and cheerful disposition’ and being ‘an attractive and agreeable companion’, 191 has this to say:

Rauzzini was compelled by circumstances to entertain a number of popular singers and musicians, who came to Bath to serve him, and for which they received little, or perhaps no other remuneration. Indeed no man less respected than Rauzzini was, could have carried on these concerts, and have produced them as he did, a succession of singers of the first eminence, at a subscription amounting to no more than about two shillings and ninepence per night! being less than a third of those at the concerts in London. About the year 1800, Rauzzini, finding that he had long been playing a losing game, made an effort to get a small increase on the subscription; but the subscribers being averse to innovations of that kind, opposed him with such determination that he was forced to abandon his enterprise altogether.

(Parke, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 54)

One of the eminent musicians who was entertained by Rauzzini in Bath was Haydn, who went there four months after Viotti in August 1794, accompanied by the flautist Andrew Ashe 192 – who had himself performed in Rauzzini’s concerts – and the composer Giambattista Cimador. 193 Haydn recorded the visit in his Notebook:

On 2nd August 1794, I left at 5 o’clock in the morning for Bath, with Mr Ashe and Mr Cimador, and arrived there at 8 o’clock in the evening... I lived at the house of Herr Rauzzini, a Musicus who is very famous, and who in his time was one of the greatest singers. He has lived there 19 years [recte 17 years], supports himself by the Subscription Concerts which are given in the Winter, and by giving lessons. He is a very nice and hospitable man. His summer house, where I stayed, is situated on a rise in the middle of a most beautiful neighbourhood, from which you can see the whole city.

(in Landon, op. cit., pp. 266-267)

190 William Thomas Parke (1762-1847), English oboist.
192 Andrew Ashe, (c. 1759-1838) Irish flautist.
193 Giambattista Cimador (1761-1805), Italian composer, singer, violinist and music publisher.
Viotti also was shown hospitality by Rauzzini, and like countless musicians before him, was affected by his charm, agreeing to go beyond his stipulated contract, and give four concerts instead of two. In his letter of 17 April, he tells Margaret: ‘Pour ce qui regarde Rauzzini je l’ai trouvé si bon homme si honnête que je lui ai promis de jouer quatre fois au lieu de deux comme nous en étions convenus’.

Because of his busy schedule of rehearsals and recitals it was not until Viotti had been in Bath almost a week that he was free to explore the city. On Good Friday he was invited by Rauzzini to Perrymead, to the same country house where Haydn was to stay. Viotti’s description of the elevation of the location matches Haydn’s, although it is expressed in rather more lyrical terms:

J’ai passé hier tout mon temps à la campagne dans une maisonnette, ou plutôt dans le jardin qui en dépend appartenant à M. Rauzzini. Je suis sorti de la ville à une heure tout seul, j’ai passé par un chemin champêtre bordé d’arbres de toutes especes et chargés de fleurs. Ce chemin va en montant et conduit à une espece de forêt qui couronne une montagne de la quelle on domine sur toute la ville. C’est là ou je me suis arrêté pour contempler cette belle nature et son inconcevable auteur.

(V to M, 19 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/19)

The dates of Rauzzini’s Easter concerts in which Viotti performed were the 15, 16, 17 and 19 April, as may be ascertained from his letters. These dates are corroborated by the following Bath Herald and Register announcement of Saturday, 5 April 1794:

NEW ASSEMBLY-ROOMS, April 2, 1794
Mr. Rauzzini respectfully informs the Public, that there will be FOUR EVENING CONCERTS, at the NEW ROOMS, in PASSION WEEK, viz.

On Tuesday Evening the 15th instant,
A GRAND CONCERTO SPIRITUALE of Vocal and Instrumental Music.

On Wednesday Evening the 16th,
A GRAND SELECTION from the ORATORIO of SAMSON;- The FUNERAL ANTHEM;- and other SACRED MUSIC, from the most favourite Works of HANDEL.

194 V to M, 17 April 1794[4], PM 94/143/1 - 2/1.
195 Woodbine Cottage, Perrymead, just outside the city boundary at Widcombe, was situated at the top of a steep hill looking down on the city.
On Thursday Evening the 17th,
Will be performed the DETTINGEN TE DEUM,
And a Choice SELECTION from the SACRED ORATORIO of the MESSIAH.

On Saturday Evening the 19th,
A Grand SELECTION from the ORATORIO of JUDAS MACCABEUS.

Then are listed the principal vocal performers and the principal instrumental performers, with a reminder at the end that ‘The Performers of the Band and Chorus are requested to attend the Rehearsals every day at twelve o’clock precisely.’ Following the list of ‘Principal Instrumental Performers’ is the advertisement for Viotti: ‘The much celebrated Mr. VIOTTI, who will play a CONCERTO on the VIOLIN every evening.’ According to Kenneth James, Rauzzini was taken to task by the Bath Chronicle of 20 November 1794 for referring to Viotti by the over-used epithet of ‘much celebrated’, saying that his description was ‘rather more suited to a fair-ground artist or a Punch and Judy performer’, and asserting that Viotti’s merits were too great for such ‘trite encomiums’. 196

No reviews of the concerts exist in any of the Bath newspapers, but Viotti’s own impressions are given in his letters to Margaret. On the day after the first concert he wrote, in typical understatement: ‘J’ai joué hier au soir un concerto, je m’en suis tiré passablement, et il m’a paru que la compagnie qui étoit tres nombreuse, a été satisfaite’. 197 But by the end of the third concert he is disenchanted with the English lack of emotion and gives Margaret the following account of the frigid response to a supposedly successful concert, a response which he describes in withering terms:

J’ai joué hier pour la 3me fois, j’ai été passablement content de moi: on dit que j’ai beaucoup de succès, je vous assure Amica que je ne m’en apperçois pas du tout. Ils ont une singulière manière de le témoiner il faut en convenir! Je vous avoue ma chère Margaritina que je ne saurois m’accoutumer à cette mauvaise froideur, en vérité je suis plus porté à croire vos chers compatriotes des buches, des ignorans, que de leur accorder comme ils le pretendent une sensibilité concentrée. Il est bien heureux que

196 Quoted by James, op. cit., p. 1015. I have been unable to locate this in the newspaper cited.
197 V to M, 16 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/17.
j'aye une passion décidée pour la musique, que je l'aime pour elle même et pour moi, sans cela je sens que le gout m'en passeroit bien vite.

(V to M, 18 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 - 2/18)

Viotti’s aversion to the public is well documented by his contemporaries. There exist several well known anecdotes concerning his disenchantment with ungrateful or fickle audiences. Fétis claims that Viotti always distanced himself from the audience, knowing the power of the fashionable set to make or break a performer’s reputation:

Ce qu’on appelle exactement le public, la masse, lui inspira toujours une sorte d’éloignement, on pourrait presque dire d’effroi. Cette disposition d’esprit [...] avait sa source dans la puissance du monde élégant qui, à cette époque, faisait les succès et les réputations.

(Fétis, op. cit., vol. 8, p. 470)

Margaret wants to know all the details of Viotti’s stay in Bath, and he gives them to her, providing some interesting descriptions of Bath customs, such as that of taking tea after a concert. But he is homesick for the company of the Chinnerys, and is therefore in no mood to enjoy himself:

J’ai fait beaucoup de connoissances après le premier concert. L’usage est ici de se rassembler après la musique dans une grande salle pour causer et prendre du Tea. cela est fort agréable pour quelqu’un qui sait en jouir, mais moi qui suis un peu ours je suis toujours pressé de m’en aller. J’ai non obstant le peu de minutes que j’y ai passé connu beaucoup de monde surtout du monde Femme dont je ne me suis pas donné la peine de demander le nom, qui m’ont invité et chés qui je n’ai pas encore été. J’irai cependant quand j’aurai fini ma lettre chés une nommée Miss Browne grande protectrice de Yannievriz [Janiewicz] et une des élégantes de ce pays ci. Elle et sa mere m’on[t] comblé d’honnctetés; elles m’ont prié dès la première repetition de leur envoyer quatre douzaines de billets de mon benefice. Cet Empressement aimable vaut bien la peine que je les leur apporte moi même n’est-ce pas.

(V to M, 17 April 1793 [recte 1794], PM 94/143/1 - 2/1)

198 The most famous one being the occasion when Viotti walked out of a recital before Marie-Antoinette because of the rude interruption to his playing caused by the King’s brother’s late entry (see Michaud, ed., op. cit., vol. 43, p. 588, and Parke, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 256). Parke even stated that Viotti lost his court appointment because of ‘the violence of his ungovernable temper’.
The Miss Browne mentioned in the above letter seems to have been the daughter of Abraham Browne, of Burlington Street, Bath. The latter, an eminent violinist in the 1750s, had been 'leader of the King's Band and later music director of Ranelagh Gardens.' Miss Browne and her mother appear to have been leading lights in the fashionable society of Bath and particularly great patrons of music. Haydn also met Miss Browne on his visit to Bath later the same year, and describes her in his Notebook as 'a charming person of the best conduit; a good pianoforte player, her mother a most beautiful woman.' Miss Browne must have taken a particular interest in the career of Janiewicz for Viotti to have called her his great protectress. Indeed she seems to have taken a great interest in all the professors who visited Bath. Viotti was clearly very grateful for her order of four dozen tickets to his benefit concert.

In his following letter Viotti gives an account of his visit to Miss Browne's. He is agreeably surprised to find that she is not like a typical Englishwoman, but warmer and more forthcoming. However, he persists in his damning judgement of the majority of the Bath set, and compares them unfavourably with his friends who live in Mortimer Street, saying that they are all foolish and insipid compared to the Chinnerys:

J'ai fait ma visite hier matin, j'ai trouvé cette Miss Browne beaucoup plus parlante qu'une Anglaise. Elle m'a paru très flattée d'avoir le racleur chèz elle. Il est bien heureux qu'il se trouve parci par la quelques ames charitables, quelques etres avéc le sens commun, sans cela il faudroit aller se pendre. Peut être sui-je gatti, sui-je trop difficile, mais est-ce ma faute si j'ai trouvé des gens si aimables dans Mortimer Street, des etres qui meritent si bien toutes mes affections, et qui font trouver tout le reste si stupide si insipide?

(V to M, 18 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 - 2/18)

Viotti, in his typically self-deprecating style, refers to himself as 'le racleur'. When he says that he is 'passablement content de moi' after the third concert he is undoubtedly being over-modest. This modesty would have appealed to the English, who, according to Parke, did not like pomposity in their performing artists. A decade earlier, Viotti had apparently impressed the organiser of the Paris Concert Spirituel, Joseph Legros, with this same trait. After hearing him perform for the first time in a

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private concert just before Viotti’s public debut in Paris in March 1782, Legros had supposedly remarked that Viotti made himself known ‘avec une modestie rare’,

stunning all the professional violinists who heard him. Fétis, too, claimed that Viotti never sought ‘l’éclat de la vogue’.202

In spite of his earlier harsh criticism of the Bath women, by the end of his stay Viotti is obliged to revise his opinion of them, and in his last letter he writes:

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\begin{align*}
J’\text{ai déjà connu beaucoup de monde, et du monde beaucoup plus aimable que je n’avais cru d’abord, bien entendu du monde femme, car hommes, oh ceux la je ne sais pas ce qu’ils font. Mais pourquoi ces maudites femmes ne se montrent-elles pas tout de suite ce qu’elles sont, au lieu de se présenter avec un visage de marbre au premier abord?}
\end{align*}
\]

(V to M, 23 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/20)

Being a self-confessed warm-blooded Latin, whose feelings of friendship are in his own words ‘brullante, à l’Italienne’, Viotti dismisses the men out of hand. It is only the women who interest him, but these marble-faced English women who take so long to warm to a new acquaintance make him impatient. He would prefer them to be warm and charming from the start like his favourite, Margaret Chinnery, and jokingly recommends their taking lessons from her in order to acquire her delicious and charming manners.203

Viotti’s benefit concert was announced in the Bath Herald and Register on Saturday, 19 April 1794:

NEW ASSEMBLY-ROOMS
Mr. VIOTTI most respectfully informs the Public, that his BENEFIT CONCERT will be on Wednesday next, April 23, 1794.

Tickets 5s. each, to be had at his lodgings, No. 1, Princes-street, Queen-square, Libraries, Pump-room, Lintern’s Music shop, and New Rooms.
To begin at half past seven o’clock.

200 In Landon, op. cit., p. 267.
201 In Giacotto, op. cit., p. 52.
203 V to M, 23 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/20.
On the day of his benefit Viotti writes to Margaret that although he thinks it will be well attended, he does not expect to take big profits, as there are not as many people in Bath at Easter as there are in autumn. (Nor were the tickets priced to yield handsome profits, judging from the above notice.) Viotti’s observation tallies with Haydn’s, who writes in his Notebook in August of the same year:

The city is not thickly populated, and in Summer one sees very few people; for the people taking the baths don’t come till the beginning of October, and stay through half of February. But then a great many people come, so that in the year 1791, 250,000 persons were there.

(in Landon, *op. cit.*, p. 266)

In his letter of 23 April Viotti mentions an invitation to what must have been a very grand supper at the home of a Mr Alexander and his two daughters, whom he had known in Paris. There were one hundred guests invited, and after the French fashion, card games were played. Viotti enjoyed this evening, as it reminded him of France and French customs, which were apparently more to his liking than British ones:

Comme les maîtres de la maison ont conservé un peu les manières françaises cela n’a pas été trop ennuyeux. Tout ce monde vient ce soir, malgré cela je ne crois pas que je m’enrichirai beaucoup. La saison est trop avancée pour Bath, il n’y a pas la 10eme partie du monde qu’il y a en Automne. Ce ne fait rien pourvu que cela passe vite.

(V to M, 23 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/20)

In an earlier letter of the 17 April, Viotti had asked Margaret to thank Philippe Libon for his ‘offers’. Libon had apparently offered to come to Bath to help out – probably in the capacity of leader of the band – on the occasion of his teacher’s benefit. It says much for the standard of the Bath band – whose 150 performers, as can be seen from the number of rehearsal reminders inserted in the newspapers, put in a lot of practice for these concerts – that Viotti was able to decline the offer of his famous pupil, who in 1795 was to appear in London concerts with his master and with Haydn. Viotti writes to Margaret: ‘Si vous voyés Libon remerciés le de son attention et de ses offres,

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204 Perhaps the same Alexander who is mentioned elsewhere as an official of the East India Company.
si l’Orchestre avait été bien mauvais, je les avois acceptées, mais non seulement il est passable mais il est presque bon.\[^{205}\]

It was considered a mark of friendship among the musical fraternity to perform at each other’s benefit concerts. It was an occasion to put personal jealousies aside to enable the concert-giver to gain maximum financial profit. The favour was understood to be mutual. Salomon performed at Viotti’s benefit in London in 1793, and Viotti performed at both of Haydn’s benefit concerts on his second visit to London in 1794 and 1795. Professional musicians could be prickly about their musical reputation. James quotes the *Bath Journal*’s comment to the effect that Viotti and Janiewicz were the only two violinists of merit in England at that time who were not rivals, their styles being each so different that they did not bear comparison.\[^{206}\] Be that as it may, it is clear from these letters that there was no doubt in Viotti’s mind as to who possessed the superior talent.

Among other invitations which Viotti received in Bath, was one from a ‘Mr Tate’, who may be William Tate, the portrait painter, who exhibited at the Royal Academy in London, but who lived in Bath during the last years of his life, about this time. Viotti says in his letter of 17 April that he has accepted an invitation from that gentleman and his daughter to go to dinner and supper at their home on Good Friday. On Easter Sunday he has accepted an invitation from a lady whose name he can’t remember.

In his letter of the 18 April Viotti makes a cryptic remark about Haydn, who had by then been in London for two months. He says that Margaret was right to demand some sonatas from him, and that Haydn was always handing out manuscripts indiscriminately and that he should have offered them to Margaret first:

> Vous avez bien fait d’exiger des Sonates de ce Papa Haydn, c’est une chose que j’ai toujours eût sur le cœur, de le voir donner au tiers et au quart des manuscrits qu’il aurait dû offrir à vous la première. C’est un reproche que je comptois bien lui faire.

*(V to M, 18 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/18)*

Why should Haydn have given his manuscripts to Margaret before any other? Did he know her particularly well? Did he owe her any favours? Was Haydn one of the

\[^{205}\] V to M, 17 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/1.

\[^{206}\]
eminent musicians who played at the Chinnery concerts? In this case it is especially regrettable that Margaret’s letters to Viotti are lost, as they might have thrown some light on the subject. Margaret Chinnery must certainly have been on good terms with Haydn to have been in a position to demand manuscript music from him. Viotti attributes the unthinking behaviour of this kindly old man not to any malice, but to the fact that he is German (!): ‘Il me semble qu’avéc un très grand Genie ce bon Vieillard a très peu de tact et de discernement; que voulés vous il agit à l’Almande, par bond et par saut, celui qui se rencontre sur son chemin attrape.’ However, he bears Haydn no real ill will, as at the end of the same letter he sends his regards to ‘Papino’, using his own Italianised version of the popular sobriquet ‘papa Haydn’.

In the same letter Viotti speaks of Salomon. As with his comments on Haydn, his remarks are in answer to something Margaret has said in her letter and are rather flippant. It appears that Salomon has been discussing Viotti with Margaret. Viotti suspects him of jealousy:

Pourquoi Salomon vous parle-t-il tant de moi? Est-ce qu’il est amoureux de moi? ... que je suis bête de vous en demander la raison, est-ce que je ne le saisis pas? Si son tourment étoit réel il seroit bien à plaire. Moi à sa place, au lieu de me livrer à la jalousie je travaillerois tant jusqu’à ce que j’eusse autant de mérite qu’un autre.

(V to M, 18 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 - 2/18)

These five long letters from Bath open a window to musical life in Bath in 1794, and give an insight into Viotti’s temperament, lending force to Viotti’s contemporaries’ assertions about his sensitive nature, his distrust of the general public, his love of nature and his faithfulness in friendship. But more than anything else, it is the last characteristic that emerges as the most striking feature of the letters. Viotti’s overriding devotion to the Chinnersys is what really dominates the topics discussed. In every letter he desires to know what the activities of his friends are, how their health is, whether the children speak of him, and unfailingly extends these enquiries to Margaret’s two sisters, who appear to be frequently with them. His affection for George, now aged three, is particularly strong, and it is evident that it is in these early years that the quasi-paternal bond that is to last for life is forged between them. In his letter of 16 April 1794 he

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206 James, op. cit., p. 1016.
regrets that in two earlier letters from Bath (which seem to be lost) he disappointed George by not mentioning him at greater length, but says by way of reparation: ‘embrassés le mille fois ce bon petit Enfant, j’ai une impatience extreme de le voir bientot en etat de sentir que je serai toujours son meilleur ami.’

Viotti’s whole week at Bath is spent in burning anticipation of being reunited with the Chinnerys. That he was far happier performing in the intimacy of the Chinnery foyer among friends than in the public arena is evident from all his letters of this period, and especially in his playful blasphemy of a letter appropriately dated ‘Vendredi Le S’ in which he writes: ‘Ce ne sera pas une semaine sainte que j’aurai passé mais une semaine diabolique. Le Grand Etre me pardonnera bien mon impiété [...] lui qui sait qu’il m’a donné un cœur sensible qui ne se nourrit que de l’Amitié, qui est mal à l’aise loin de ses Amis.’

According to Bath newspaper announcements, Viotti was also the featured violinist for Rauzzini’s 1794 Autumn concerts, but surprisingly, there are no letters of this period to be found in the CFP collection. The Bath Herald and Register of Saturday, 8 November 1794 bears an advertisement placed by Rauzzini on 29 October 1794 announcing eight subscription concerts to begin Wednesday, 12 November in which ‘the much celebrated Mr. VIOTTI is engaged for the greatest number of the Concerts.’ However Viotti’s name does not appear on a program until the third concert, when it was announced that he would play a concerto. His name is also on the program of the fourth concert. The Bath Chronicle of Thursday, 18 December 1794 announced that he would not play again until Wednesday 24 December, the date of Rauzzini’s benefit concert at which was to be performed a ‘Grand Selection of Sacred Music’. Viotti was to play a concerto in the second act of the program. A review of ‘Mr Rauzzini’s Sacred Concert on Christmas Eve’ was inserted in the Bath Herald and Register on Saturday, 27 December 1794. Each of the vocalists were named and appraised, but not the instrumentalists, who were included in the general encomium at the end of the article as having ‘met the approbation of those critical Amateurs who abound in this city.’

207 V to M, 18 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/18.
208 V to M, 16 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/17.
209 V to M, 18 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/18.
210 Bath Herald and Register, Saturday, 22 November 1794.
211 Bath Journal, Monday, 1 December 1794.
At the end of 1794 Viotti was appointed Acting Manager of the King's Theatre in London. It would be difficult to believe that he could fulfil his obligations in both places were it not for an announcement that appeared in the *Bath Chronicle* of 18 December 1794 stating that 'when VIOTTI signed his articles as Manager of the London Italian Opera, he had a clause inserted which enables him to fulfil his engagements at Rauzzini’s Concerts.' There seems no doubt that Viotti did perform in the 1794 Bath Autumn concerts, but his performances were sufficiently far apart to enable him to travel to Bath for an overnight stay only, which may explain the lack of correspondence to Margaret Chinnery.

212 Bath Herald and Register, Saturday, 20 December 1794.
(vi) Concerts at the Chinnery home in London, 1794-1795

1794 was the busiest year in Viotti’s musical career in England. Not only did he perform in Salomon’s Hanover Square concerts and in the Bath Easter and Autumn concerts, but at the end of the year he was made acting manager of King’s Theatre and also musical director of the newly formed Opera concerts\(^{213}\) which were to be performed in the Great Room of the same theatre. This was the season that the Opera concerts took over from the Hanover Square Rooms concerts as London’s premier concert series, following Salomon’s temporary retirement as a theatre entrepreneur owing to alleged financial difficulties. Like Salomon’s concerts previously, these were a mixture of vocal and instrumental music, and Viotti was responsible for the selection of performers and music.

On 2 February 1795, the *Times* announced that ‘nine concerts by subscription’ (February – May ) were ‘to be held every Monday fortnight’, ‘the whole to be under the Direction of Mr. Viotti, who will also occasionally furnish new Pieces of Music.’ The aim of the proprietor, it was stated, was ‘to combine the most eminent talents, Vocal and Instrumental, now in England.’ The announcement included a list of composers, vocal performers and solo performers, including Haydn, who would remain in England until June of that year. According to the comment in the *Morning Chronicle* of 15 April 1795 after the sixth concert, Viotti performed his duties to the satisfaction of both critics and concert-goers: ‘The selection for last Monday evening, was made with that happy discrimination which the director, Viotti, has shewn through the whole course of these Concerts.’

Viotti performed in five of the nine Opera concerts, as well as at Haydn’s benefit\(^{214}\) (and also at Ashe’s, where Haydn made his last appearance in England). Viotti’s playing was praised, as usual, for its passion and power. After the first concert, the *Morning Chronicle* wrote: ‘The new Concerto of Viotti both in composition, execution, and taste, was a capital performance: each movement gave great pleasure, but especially the adagio, which, for sweetness of harmony, we have scarcely heard surpassed.’\(^{215}\) After the seventh concert the same newspaper wrote of ‘a new Violin

\(^{213}\) So called because they took place at the ‘Opera House’ [King’s Theatre].

\(^{214}\) Haydn made four thousand gulden from his benefit concert, remarking in his Notebook that such a thing was possible only in England (see Landon, *op. cit.*, p. 309).

Concerto by Viotti, who played with a degree of power and energy, unexpected even from him (in his hands this little instrument is itself an Orchestra) [...] 216

In the fourth concert, on 2 March 1795, Viotti and his scholar Philippe Libon performed a concertante for two violins, composed by Viotti. The reviews the following day were again favourable, the Sun calling the performance ‘one of the most charming treats of the evening’ and praising Libon for cutting a very respectable figure ‘even on so near a comparison with his master.’ 217 The Morning Chronicle predicted a promising future for Libon:

Viotti and his scholar, Mr. Libon played a Concertante for two Violins, which gave great satisfaction. The talents of Viotti are well known; and the youth, his scholar, discovers an ear uncommonly chaste and delicate. His body of tone is not yet sufficient; but it will become more powerful when he gains greater confidence; it scarcely can be more sweet. The Concertante, as a composition, has great merit, and does honour to its author, Viotti.  

(Morning Chronicle, 3 March 1795, in Landon, op. cit., p. 295)

It was during 1794 that the Chinnerys appear to have commenced their regular musical parties in London. Their home at 5 Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square, where they lived for the first six years of their marriage before moving to Waltham Abbey in Essex, was a drawcard to professional musicians and to fashionable London society alike. Margaret’s Uncle [Henry] Holland’s opposition to their move to the country – Waltham Abbey was twelve miles and a two and a half hour carriage ride from London – on the grounds that his niece’s position in society would be jeopardised 218 indicates just how popular the Chinnerys were in London. There is no doubt that Viotti was the magnet that drew the fashionable world to their doorstep, but Margaret was nevertheless a competent musician in her own right. Not only was she a lover of fine music, she was also an accomplished pianist, who was encouraged by Viotti to perfect her talent 219. William Chinnery also made his contribution to these evenings playing the cello. Margaret was a practised hostess of some considerable finesse, whose skill consisted in

216 Morning Chronicle, 29 April 1795, in Landon, op. cit., p. 305.
217 Sun, 3 March 1795, in Landon, op. cit., p. 296.
218 M to G, 14 [recte 15] January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii, a. 42a, fo. 4.
219 In April 1794 Viotti wrote from Bath: ‘Travaillés avec constance à votre Piano’ (V to M, 18 April 1794, PM 94/143/1 – 2/18).
 assorting like personalities at her parties, and her fluency in French and Italian put all her foreign guests at their ease. The eagerness with which famous musicians, both from England and from the Continent, sought invitations to her parties is remarked on by James Cochrane in his biography of William Spencer at the beginning of the 1835 edition of the latter's Poems:220

At the house of his friend Mrs C________, whom he frequently visited in London, and at Gilwell, Mr. Spencer's taste for music was amply gratified. This lady's repute as a first-rate performer on the piano-forte was very high; and her house was the resort of all those most distinguished for their skill in music. Her daughter, in whom she cultivated this and every other talent, seems to have united in a singular degree, beauty, learning, and accomplishments [...]. Every foreigner of eminence in the musical profession was anxious, on his arrival in London, to be introduced to Mrs C________; so that those who were really fond of music were sure to find it in perfection in her house. There Mr. Spencer met Viotti, the first violin player of his day, a very fine composer, and a man of abilities independently of his particular art.


The writer goes on to list the bass singer Naldi,221 the contralto Madame Grassini222 and the harpist Casimir Baecker223 as eminent musical performers who were to be met at the home of Mrs Chinnery.224 There were in fact many more, as the Chinnery letters of these years show.

There is evidence in the Viotti letters that these concerts took place weekly, on a Wednesday. In one of Viotti's letters from Bath, dated [Wednesday]16 April 1794, the regularity of these concerts is made clear, as is the fact that it was Viotti who helped Margaret organise them and Viotti who was the star performer. His own absence on this

221 Giuseppe Naldi (1770-1820), Italian bass, was best-known as a buffo artist. He performed in thirty-five different operas at the King's Theatre during his twelve seasons there. Only a few months before his death he made his debut in Mozart’s Cosi fan tutte in Paris at the Théâtre-Italien. He was an accomplished actor, being described by the Journal de Paris of Thursday 21 September 1820 as ‘plus comédien que chanteur’. The author of the article went on to say that ‘loin de se livrer aux charges que l'on reproche justement aux bouffes italiens, c'est par des moyens avancés par le bon goût qu'il excite la gaité’. Naldi could also play the cello and piano, and composed music and wrote verse. There are several of his letters (in Italian) in the Powerhouse and Fisher collections.
223 Casimir Baecker (b. c. 1790), adopted son of Madame de Genlis, had a short career as a concert harpist. See Part II, Chapter 2.
occasion, Viotti intimated, would enable other violinists to enjoy the limelight. Serenely
certain of his own superiority, Viotti wrote:

Vous faites bien bonne Amica d'avoir votre musique d'aujourd'hui en huit, une trop
longue interruption pourroit peut-être déranger l'ensemble de nos petites parties, et
d'ailleurs il n'est pas mal qu'il y ait une sans l'Amico. Le soleil Salomon, et le soleil
Yaniewicz brilleront mieux.

(V to M, 16 April 1794, PM, 94/143/1 - 2/17)

Neither Salomon nor Janiewicz were insignificant performers. Salomon was the
lead violin in his own Hanover Square concerts, and Janiewicz had also recently
featured in the Paris Concert Spirituel. But in Viotti's presence even good violinists
were eclipsed. It is obvious from the letter that Salomon and Janiewicz were regular
players at the Chinnery concerts.

The desire to be seen and heard at Margaret Chinnery's musical parties
apparently induced would-be guests to abandon other prior engagements in favour of
hers. Judging by a confession in one of Viotti's early undated letters to Margaret that he
had taken the liberty of issuing two invitations to one of these parties, this would appear
to be the case:

J'ai peur mes chers amis d'avoir commis une indiscretion. J'ai rencontré hier
Bartolozzi225 et Cimadoro, et leur ai dit que vous comptiez les inviter pour mercredi. Ils
m'ont dit qu'ils étoient engagés mais que s'ils recevoient cette invitation par vous ils
enverroient au Diable leur premier engagement.

(V to M, [c. 1795], PM 94/143/1 - 2/24)

Cimador was an Italian musician of noble birth who had moved to London in
1791. He was a particular friend of Haydn in England, as was the Italian engraver and

224 All the above came to the Chinnery home at Gillwell, not to their London address. There are letters
from all three in the CFP collection.

225 Gaetano-Stefano Bartolozzi, son of Francesco Bartolozzi (1757-1821), the Italian engraver who had
executed Haydn's portrait in 1791, was also an engraver. He printed tickets for musicians' benefit
concerts, as an announcement appearing in the Times (26 March 1795) for the soprano Madame
Banti's benefit, shows. He was also an amateur musician, and according to Landon (op. cit., p. 441), a
competent player of both the violin and viola. He was a highly successful picture dealer, who wound
up his affairs when he left England for the Continent in 1797 with an important sale of his prints,
drawings and copper plates at Christie's (see W. Roberts, Memorials of Christie's: a Record of Art
Sales from 1766 to 1896, George Bell: London, 1897, vol. 1, p. 50).
amateur musician Gaetano Bartolozzi, who had arrived in England in early 1795 and married English pianist Therese Jansen in May the same year. Bartolozzi, Viotti says in his letter, was then lodging with Cimador at ‘No.207 Piccadilly’. This means that he was still single at the time Viotti wrote the letter, which may therefore be dated early 1795.

As musical director of the Opera concerts Viotti established and renewed contact with many musical colleagues from the Continent, and it was from among the latter that Margaret drew much of the musical talent for her parties. Musicians who featured in the Opera concerts in 1795 and who also performed in the Chinnery home were the composers Bianchi and Clementi, who along with Haydn pledged new compositions for each concert. Clementi showed his appreciation of the Chinnery hospitality by dedicating three sonatas to Mrs Chinnery. Another who dedicated a sonata to Mrs Chinnery (op. 24) was the pianist Dussek, and as he was also a close friend of Clementi, it is very probable that he too was invited by Viotti to play at the Chinnery home. Other performers at the Chinnery concerts were the cellist Schram, who received a favourable review from the Morning Chronicle the day after his performance of 16 March; the vocalist Madame Morichelli, who had performed at Viotti’s Théâtre de Monsieur (later Feydeau) in Paris until 1792, when she too had fled the Revolution; and Salomon, who continued to perform as a soloist, having abandoned his...
role of impresario for one season. With Viotti on such a close footing with Haydn, it is highly probable that the latter also joined his colleagues in the Chinnery drawing room.

By mid-1795 Margaret’s musical parties seem to have been moved to a Sunday. A letter from Margaret Chinnery to her husband in Bristol, which can be dated 13 July 1795 from the postmark, informs him that:

Friday & Saturday passed as usual, yesterday we had the Sunday Party, the Morichelli’s came, Cimador & Bianchi were absent on account of Colds & Sir Peter Burrell233 & Mr Bigge234 were the only People who came in the Evening, Clementi played three or four Sonata’s, & certainly I never heard him play so well - they performed the Overture to the Frascatana,235 twice, & Morichelli sung the two best Airs in the Opera - I do not much think you will see these Morichelli’s again, as they propose leaving London on Saturday or very early on Sunday.

(M to W, [13 July 1795], Fisher)

Hired at great cost by Viotti to perform in the 1794-95 season of the Italian opera at the King’s Theatre,236 Morichelli received favourable reviews. The season ended on 11 July 1795, and according to the above letter, she and her husband left England shortly afterwards. She had also performed with Viotti in Haydn’s benefit concert on 4 May 1795. Clementi, Cimador, and Bianchi were all popular composers in London, and in the 1795 Opera concerts Bianchi presided at the harpsichord for the first three performances of his new works. Muzio Clementi also shared the honour of presiding at the keyboard during this season, but his place at the forefront of London harpsichordists was now usurped by Haydn, and his performing career was jeopardised ‘in a losing competition with the world famous visitor.’237 After this, he turned increasingly to teaching and later to music publishing.

Like the professional musicians, members of London’s fashionable society were eager to be invited to Margaret’s home. Viotti, whom they were always certain of finding there, was just as accomplished a host as he was musician. On this occasion,

233 Sir Peter Burrell, second Baronet of Langley Park, was created Baron Gwydyr in 1796.
234 Possibly Charles William Bigge (1773-1849) of Linden and Ovingham, Northumberland.
235 La Frascatana, an opera by Paisiello, had premiered at the King’s Theatre on 5 June 1794.
236 According to W.C. Smith (The Italian Opera and Contemporary Ballet in London, 1789-1820, Headley Bros: London, 1955, p. 36), she received for the 1794-95 season a remuneration of £1,400 plus the takings of one or two benefit concerts.
with William Chinnery away in Bristol, Viotti not only regaled the guests with his playing, but helped with the domestic arrangements for the evening and kept the guests provided with conversation:

Amico was all Attention the whole Day, that he took every possible care that I should not have the least Trouble or Difficulty, & was so obliging as to find Conversation at Supper for Sir Peter Burrell until 2 oClock in the Morning when Sir Peter & Mr Bigge took their leave. The Dutchess of Hamilton & Miss Muir sent me their cards last Friday, of course I imagine they mean to be invited for next Sunday, which I shall not fail to do this Evening.

The format of Margaret Chinnery’s musical parties was similar to that of the Nobility Concerts, but on a much smaller scale, that is, dinner for a select few, followed by music beginning about ten, followed by a substantial supper at midnight. The cost of hosting such concerts cannot have been cheap, and William Chinnery was conspicuous in his lavish spending. It is not clear from the letters whether the performing musicians were paid for their services, as they were for the Court Concerts and the Nobility Concerts. There is certainly no mention of payment in any of the letters, nor does one get the impression of money changing hands from Cochrane’s account. It may well have been a case of ‘bread-and-butter concerts’, as they were termed by the profession. ‘Bread-and-butter parties’ are described by William Parke, principal oboist at the Court Concerts and at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, in his *Musical Memoirs* as ‘those to which professors of talent are invited to dinner, or to a supper, where a little music is given in a friendly way in the evening. These parties gave birth to benefit concerts; for as the professors so invited could not satisfy their own butchers and bakers by such engagements, they hit on the expedient of taking annual benefits, to afford their exalted friends an opportunity of returning the favour by taking tickets.’

In other words, prominent professional musicians (or ‘professors’, as they were then called), were prepared to perform free or for very little at these concerts in order to secure the patronage of what Parke calls the ‘*haut ton*’ at their paying concerts. Unless they were a

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238 Elizabeth Anne (d. 1837), daughter of Peter Burrell (of Beckenham, Kent) and wife of the eighth Duke of Hamilton (1756-1799).
239 Possibly the daughter of William Muir, merchant, of Glasgow. He married Catherine Scott in 1773, and their eldest son was born in 1774.
240 Parke, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 16-17.
Haydn or a Catalani\textsuperscript{241} these professors were generally not very highly paid. Their benefit concert was the one opportunity of the season they had of taking clear profits, so that it was in their interest to establish a wide support base of friends and supporters.

Parke makes the comment that Salomon's connections were extensive and that he devoted a great portion of his time to bread-and-butter concerts. The latter must have thought that the Chinnery society was worth cultivating, but Parke did not, as shown by the following anecdote recounted in his \textit{Musical Memoirs}:

When I played the principal oboe and concertos at Salomon's popular concerts at Hanover Square, in the year 1796, Salomon, on one of the nights said to me, "Mr Chinnery has requested me to say, that he will be glad if you will perform at his concert on Sunday evening next. You will meet your old friend Crosdill there, Viotti, and myself; and he begged me to add that as it will be on a Sunday night, when there is nothing to do, he will pay you one guinea". Feeling indignant at the proposition, I replied, — "What would you think of me if I were to play for a person so situated in life as Mr. Chinnery is, for one guinea, when you, a brother professor, pay me three?"

(Parke, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, pp. 303-304)

Parke makes it clear that he felt insulted by the meagre payment offered by someone as wealthy as William Chinnery. That he was offered money at all is interesting, probably indicating that he was only a slight-acquaintance of the Chinnerys, as they did not appear to pay Salomon, and perhaps not even Crosdill, who appears to have been William's cello teacher, and was happy to spend an evening among friends.

There certainly were some members of the \textit{haut ton} who took advantage of the professors by inviting them home to supper merely to show them off before their friends. Parke relates the story of the oboist Fischer, who, nettled at being invited to supper and told to bring his oboe, retorted 'My Lord, my oboe never sups!'\textsuperscript{242} Perhaps that is the category in which Parke placed the Chinnerys, but there were certainly many others who did not, as shown by Cochrane's account of Margaret Chinnery's popularity with eminent musicians,\textsuperscript{243} and by a wide range of correspondents in the CFP collection.

\textsuperscript{241} Haydn liked coming to England for the huge sums he earned there. From his 1791-92 visit he made 12,000 gulden (in Landon, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 231). The Italian soprano Angelica Catalani (1780-1849), who first appeared in London in 1806, became so popular that in the 1808 season she was engaged to sing twice a week at the King's Theatre for £5,250 plus two clear benefit performances.

\textsuperscript{242} Parke, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{243} See p.104.
(vii) The final years of Viotti's solo performing career, 1795 - 1801

Concerning this period of Viotti's life, there are six letters from Margaret to William Chinnery and one from Viotti to Margaret Chinnery (c. 1795-1799) in the Fisher collection of Chinnery Papers. There is also one from Viotti to Caroline Chinnery (1798) in the RCM collection, and another to Walter Chinnery (1798) transcribed by Giazotto. These, together with two 1801 letters (one from Viotti in the Powerhouse collection and one from Margaret in the Fisher collection), help elucidate Viotti's movements up till the time he was expelled from England in March 1798, and indicate the date of the beginning of his permanent residence with the Chinnerys.

In the Fisher collection an undated letter from Margaret to William, who is at an unspecified place in the country, seems to date from the winter of 1794-95 when Viotti was both Acting Manager and musical director of the Opera concerts at King's Theatre. The time of year may be adduced from Margaret's comments about incessant rain and thick fogs, and the musical season from her remark: 'Amico is forever at the Opera House, & I am convinced from the specimen I had on Saturday night that he has a great deal to do - he desires however to add a word or two for you —'. Viotti takes up, in the impatient tone noticeable in his voice whenever he speaks of the theatres in which he has worked in the capacity of impresario: 'j'arrive dans la minute sortant de ma grande Diable de maison, je suis bien aise d'être arrivé à temps pour vous dire qu'il ne faut pas oublier l'Amico'. It is clear that Viotti has come straight from the Opera house to the Chinnery home in Mortimer Street. From this, and from the evidence in the other 1795 letters, it would appear that Viotti was already living with the Chinnerys at this time. The 'specimen' which still needed a great deal of work was clearly one of Viotti's new concertos, which were to be 'occasionally furnished' by him during the 1795 Opera concert series. Two new Viotti concertos are mentioned in the newspapers - one performed in February and one in April.

In the autumn of 1796 the Chinnerys moved out of London to Gillwell House in Essex, for the sake of the education of their children. The time of their move is given by Margaret in her second letter to George in Oxford in January 1808. She says it was

244 Giazotto, op. cit., p. 145. No source for the letter is given by Giazotto. See Part II, Chapter 1, pp. 263-264 for a discussion of these letters.
245 M to W, c. 1795, Fisher.
246 See pp. 102-103, notes 215 and 216.
when the twins were just five years old, that is, September 1796.247 Viotti moved with them, and from that time on divided his time between London on week-days and Gillwell on week-ends, as William himself did. A letter written from Margaret at Gillwell to William at 39 Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square [late 1796 or early 1797] proves this to be so: ‘As I was sitting here in the little Music Room last night expecting you, I was much surprised to see Amico come in alone, he gave me your Pacquet & told me his coming had been very doubtful, I am glad he did come, for as I fully expected you I should have thought something extraordinary indeed must have occurred to have prevented either of you from coming down’. Moreover, a comment of Margaret’s in the same letter would suggest that Viotti and William were living together at the above address.248 William had been sequestered at the Treasury office working on the Budget when Margaret wrote: ‘Amico is complaining bitterly of your confinement, & I doubt whether we should not both, at this moment, vote against Mr. P[itt]-if we were in the House of Commons.’249 Another letter of the same period – from Margaret at Gillwell to William at the Treasury Chambers – may be dated from the postmark 1 March 1797. In it Margaret asks him to ensure that ‘the children’s apartments, except the room where Amico slept’ are well aired before their projected arrival in town. This shows that they all shared the same accommodation when in London.

In the third letter of this period (winter 1797) Margaret writes to William from Gillwell about his arrival time. Viotti and a fellow musician[?] are already with her (‘Amico & Diago send you a great many good wishes & are, they say, impatient for tomorrow Even8 that you may be here again’)) and there are plans to receive more company, including Margaret’s sister ‘Betsey’ [Elizabeth] and William’s sister-in-law Marianne. One of the intended house-guests is the musician Cramer.250

The letter from Viotti to William and Margaret, dated ‘Samedi 7, 97’ and addressed in playful Italian to ‘Mr & Mrs Chinnery all famoso Gillwello’, announces that he will be joining them at Gillwell on the morrow: ‘Addio Cara Padrona, addio Caro Gastaldo. Demain grâce a Dieu qui a etabli le Dimanche, je jouirai aussi de l’air de

247 M to G, 14 [recte 15] January, 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii, a.42a, fo. 4.
248 They do not appear to have lived here for long.
249 M to W, c. February 1797, Fisher
250 The Cramers were a famous German family of musicians who settled in England. Wilhelm Cramer (1746-1799) was a violinist, his first son Johann Baptist (1771-1858) a composer, pianist and publisher, and his second son Franz (1772-1848) a violinist. Margaret does not specify which member
la Campagne.' Later in this letter is a clue that would seem to indicate that the abode that Viotti and William are sharing in London is very large – so large that Viotti complains of William's absence turning the house into a vast deserted palace:

Depuis que mon Gastaldo n'est plus à la maison elle me paroit deux fois plus grande, c'est un palais désert et triste. La soirée de hier m'a paru longue à ne plus finir, je l'ai passée seul depuis 6 heures près du feu à ne rien faire de bon – voilà ce que c'est d'avoir été trop bien accoutumé!

(V to M, c. January 1797, Fisher)

These words leave no doubt that Viotti’s intimacy with the Chinnerys was by then firmly established. Margaret continued to contribute to Viotti’s sartorial elegance (‘Je vous remercie Amica mille fois pour le velour, j'ai choisi un habit verd et je ne sais si le colet noir ira maintenant’) and William continued to tease him about his libertine life in London. In mock exasperated tones Viotti chides William for his insinuations: ‘Ou Diable le Gastaldo a-t-il pri [sic] que je m’amuse tant en dinnant parci par la en fête? excepté le jour chés Mrs Kingsmann à qui je voulois parler de mes bouteilles, le reste a été dans des Cabarets noirs comme la cheminée que j’ai mangé ma soupe après des répétitions très fatiguantes.’

The above letter suggests that at the same time that he was toiling at the Opera house, he was also conducting a wine business. In his Précis, written about one year later, Viotti stated that he sank all that he possessed into a partnership with Mr Charles Smith (a fact corroborated by later Chinnery correspondence) with whom he lived for a fourteen-month period:

C’est encore à cet ami mnr, à ce bon Mr. Chinnery que je dois de m’être appuyé à un des plus parfaits honnêtes hommes qu’il y ait au monde, à un caractère excellent, à Mr.

of the family she is referring to, but it is probably Wilhelm Cramer the violinist, who was leader of the Opera orchestra at King’s Theatre in the 1794-95 and the 1795-96 seasons.

251 V to M, c. January 1797, Fisher
252 V to M, c. February 1797, Fisher.
253 Ibid. Possibly the wife of Thomas Kingsman (d. c. 1791), Receiver of Fees, 1789-1791 (T 29/61 p. 293, in Sainty, p. 135), who had been employed as a clerk at the Treasury in the same year as William. She was clearly one of Viotti’s wine customers.
254 The articles of association of the business are mentioned in M to W, 1 February 1820, PM 94/143/1-17/48.
Charles Smith enfin avec qui j'ai confondu tout ce que je possède et avec qui j'ai vécu paisiblement quatorze mois qui sont écoulés comme un jour.

(Viotti’s Précis, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

The address of Smith’s premises where Viotti joined him in business was 3 Duke Street in the Adelphi. The fourteen months that Viotti refers to in the above statement seems to correspond to the period between January 1797 and March 1798, when Viotti was obliged to leave England. The above 1797 Viotti letter would appear, then, to have been written from Smith’s. That William continued to live here with Smith during the working week until the time he fled England in disgrace in 1812 is proved by the Oxford Chinnery correspondence. If the testimony of the French tenor Garat is to be believed, this residence had a wine shop on the ground level and spacious and elegant living apartments above. Garat, according to the brothers Escudier, paid Viotti a visit in London in January 1810, and was astounded to find him in the guise of a merchant, busy directing operations amidst a confusion of bottles, casks and pitchers. Viotti, he said, managed quite successfully to combine the life of a merchant by day with the life of a gentleman performing artist by night. ‘Le commerçant de la Cité était toujours un grand artiste’, Garat had supposedly pronounced in great amazement, after attending a dinner at Duke Street in company with leading British politicians and literary figures, at which Viotti had played one of his own concertos.

Viotti was not an advertised soloist in the 1796 Opera concert series – renamed for this season only ‘Academy of Music’ – but resumed his centre-stage role in the 1797 and 1798 Opera concerts, as shown by London newspaper advertisements for those years. At the end of 1796 he replaced Wilhelm Cramer as leader of the band and director of the Opera orchestra, which position he held only until February 1798, when

255 Giazotto (op. cit., p. 157) claims that Viotti lived at the above address from 1806, but this can be disproved by referring to Margaret Chinnery’s Journal (PM 94/143/1 – 3), which makes it quite clear that Viotti was living permanently at Gillwell by then.

256 Pierre-Jean Garat (1762-1823), French tenor and baritone, had performed at the court of Marie-Antoinette and had left France during the Terror. Like Viotti, he was a great friend of the violinist Pierre Rode. Along with Viotti, Hülmandel and Madame de Montgéreroult, he performed at the salons of Madame Vigée-Lebrun (Vigée-Lebrun, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 79-80).


258 Ibid., p. 67. There is no mention of this evening in the CFP collection.

259 The term ‘leader of the band’ referred to the position of what would today be called the first violin. This person led the orchestra, there being no conductor in the modern sense.
he was ordered by the British Government to leave the country, under suspicion of harbouring Jacobin sympathies. Viotti protested his innocence vehemently, publishing an affidavit in the *Times* of 5 March 1798 and in other London newspapers. The declaration, which the newspaper says had been translated from French, bears the unmistakable stamp of Margaret Chinnery's turn of phrase. There can be little doubt that the Chinnerys encouraged Viotti to take this course of action and actively aided him to carry it out. The attestation also appeared in Paris newspapers. The accusation has never been proved, and it has been commonly attributed to the machinations of resentful fellow musicians. This resentment, according to the oboist William Parke, may have been caused by the manner in which Madame Banti, the popular Italian singer who had featured in the 1795 Opera concerts with Haydn, Viotti and Madame Morichelli, allegedly manoeuvred to have the lead violin of the Opera orchestra Cramer replaced by Viotti for the 1796-97 season.

It is impossible to know who was responsible for sowing the seeds of doubt in the Government's mind. At a time when the Irish plot for a French invasion of Britain had just been foiled, and every public meeting in a coffee house or tavern was regarded with suspicion, when it was imagined that London was crawling with revolutionaries, it cannot have been hard for someone who knew of Viotti's friendship with former revolutionaries and a Jacobin Government representative (Maret) to initiate malicious gossip. The extent of Government nervousness is evident from the proceedings of the House of Commons published in the *Times* of 23 February 1798, under the heading 'French Emigrants', in which it is reported that 'Mr. Dundas' said, that a motion had been made last session concerning Emigrants, founded on an idea that there were more of them in the country than was consistent with its security'. Although it was conceded that 'it was a subject on which it was impossible for Ministers to obtain more than a general knowledge', any Minister who 'was acquainted with with any facts upon which an investigation could be set on foot' had a 'duty to communicate them to the Executive Government.' Somebody did communicate his doubts about Viotti, and although it may be impossible to ascertain who the initiator of the rumour was, it was stated by William

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260 Brigitta Georgi Banti (1759-1806), sang at theatres throughout Italy, at the Paris Opera and for nine years in London. In 1794 she made her debut at the King's Theatre in Bianchi's *Semiramide*, singing an air with a violin *obbligato*, originally played by Salomon and afterwards by Viotti.

261 Parke, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 254.

262 Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville (1742-1811), Secretary of War.
Chinnery in a letter to Margaret in 1812\textsuperscript{263} that one person who was antagonistic towards Viotti was George Rose, former Senior Secretary of the British Treasury.\textsuperscript{264}

In the letter William intimates that Rose had raised doubts about Viotti’s allegiances in the House of Commons. On the other hand, he praises the conduct of the Government Paymaster-General Charles Long\textsuperscript{265} for supporting William’s objection to the accusations against Viotti:

He never failed shewing me the sincerest kindness, \& on a particular Moment in the Affair of Amico, when old Rose did everything in his power to exasperate Mr Pitt \& Government against me for the part I “presumed to take against the “Order of the Day”.
M. Long – without my being aware of it, did in the most generous Manner – take my part on the occasion with Mr Pitt, which thwarted my Enemy completely \& he never once afterwards said another word about Amico.

(W to M, 16 May 1812, PM 94/143/1 - 7/12)

The specific fact that was responsible for confirming Viotti’s guilt in the Government’s eyes may have been the one suggested in a King’s Theatre announcement published in the *Times* of 5 March 1798: ‘Cramer led the Band for the first time these two years, in the place of Viotti, who has been sent out of the country, under the authority of the *Alien Bill*. […] Viotti is said to have been in the Republican armies.’ Viotti was certainly never in the Republican armies, but the mistake may have arisen because of the precaution that he took, when the Revolution began to gain momentum, of donning the uniform of the National Guard (see Viotti’s *Précis*). Viotti did have a younger brother André, who was a military officer in France and who was decorated for military service by Napoleon, and apparently was a colonel by 1818,\textsuperscript{266} but he would have been too young to have been in the army in 1792, the year Viotti left France.

\textsuperscript{263} W to M, 16 May 1812, PM 94/143/1 - 7/12.
\textsuperscript{264} George Rose (1744-1818), British statesman who was Senior Secretary of the Treasury, 1783-1801 (T 29/54 p. 209, in Sainty, *op. cit.*, p. 147), was William Chinnery’s erstwhile benefactor, who, according to Rose’s *Diaries* (Harcourt, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 29), procured for him his clerkship at the Treasury in 1783. According to *The Farlington Diary* (vol. 7, p. 78), Rose also procured his appointment to his various lucrative agencies. In 1810 Rose drew Perceval’s attention to the fact that Chinnery appeared to be living beyond his means, thereby initiating the enquiry which eventually brought William undone in March 1812.
\textsuperscript{265} Charles Long (1761-1838), British politician who was Commissioner of the Treasury, 1804-06, and Joint Paymaster-General in 1810.
\textsuperscript{266} André Viotti, ‘Grenadier des Gardes de Paris’ was created Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur in January 1813 or 1814. See M to W, [January 1813 or 1814], PM 94/143/1 - 17/4. See also Douglas (1928), vol. 2, p.319.
In exile, Viotti lived at the home of a certain Mr Smith at Schönfeld, a short distance from Hamburg. It was while he was in Schönfeld that Viotti composed his Six duets for two violins (op.5), that he dedicated to ‘Mr. and Mme. Chinnery’, writing on the title page that the work was ‘le fruit du loisir, que le malheur me procure’, and that some pieces had been ‘dicté par la peine, d’autres par l’espoir.’ Viotti’s friend Smith in Schönfeld cannot be identified with certainty. A letter Viotti wrote to William Chinnery in 1812 makes it is clear that the London friend, Charles Smith, was not the same person who lived in Schönfeld. No letters from Viotti in exile to Margaret or William Chinnery have been found, the only surviving Viotti letters of this period being the above-mentioned 1798 letters to their children Walter and Caroline. Both letters discuss the children’s education, and the letter to Caroline deals specifically with her musical education. From the time of their earliest childhood Viotti assisted in the Chinnery children’s education. He composed piano pieces for Caroline, and accompanied her on the violin. These two letters are but the first of many in the CFP collection that show the special relationship that Viotti had with the Chinnery children, which was to last to the end of his life.

There is only one other Chinnery letter dated 1798, but it makes no mention of Viotti. It is a congratulatory note from Margaret on William’s recent promotion to Chief Clerk. Margaret writes: ‘We shall be merrier than I thought this Christmas [...]'). There is no adequate account of Viotti’s activities between the time he left Schönfeld in August 1799 and 1801, the time that most scholars seem to agree that he reappeared in England.

A letter that Viotti wrote to Margaret Chinnery proves that he was back in England under the Chinnery roof in May 1801, and Margaret’s education journal (1801-1808) shows that he was re-established at Gillwell even earlier – in early April

267 See Chappell White’s Giovanni Battista Viotti: a Thematic Catalogue of his Works, Pendragon Press: New York, 1985, p. 89. Other compositions, or arrangements, dedicated to members of the Chinnery family are listed in White’s catalogue (pp. 26, 37, 44, 131. See also p. 36 for a mention of Caroline.)
268 In the letter, written on the day of William’s departure from England in search of asylum, Viotti advises him to choose either Stockholm or Jutland, where he might live with ‘mon bon Ami M’ Smith’ (V to W, 30 March 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 14/4). At the time, Charles Smith was still in London, and called on Margaret and Viotti regularly.
269 M to W, [December 1798], Fisher.
270 According to the MGG, vol. 13, col. 1793.
271 V to M, 20 May 1801, PM 94/143/1 – 2/25.
1801.\(^{272}\) Viotti’s letter was written from Gillwell to Margaret in London, where she had gone for medical treatment. After reporting on Caroline’s music lesson, Viotti wanted to know if Margaret had been to a concert given by the German violinist Fraenzel,\(^{273}\) whom, he said, the *Morning Chronicle* described as ‘incomparable’. The concert in question was advertised in the *Times* of Monday 18 May 1801 as ‘Mr. Fraenzel’s last performance in England’ and was in the Great Room at King’s Theatre. The letter is written in a vein which suggests that Viotti is soaking up the pleasures of the countryside. He has been for a very pleasant eight-mile ride (without wind, which he hates) and describes the arrival on the farm of the new cow, which is now surrounded ‘de nos deux genisses, du petit poul[a]in et de toute la famille des moutons’. This idyllic farmyard scene he says is far more to his liking than the mud and smog of London. He begs Margaret not to stay away too long, but to return soon ‘dans nos champs’\(^{274}\).


\(^{273}\) Ferdinand Fraenzel (1770-1833), German violinist, who at the age of twelve was appointed violinist at the court of the Palatinate Elector at Mannheim. He had also played in Paris when Viotti was there, but was overshadowed by the latter, and therefore had no success in that city.

\(^{274}\) V to M, 20 May 1801, PM 94/143/1 – 2/25.
As the above letter attests, by 1801 Viotti was living at Gillwell as contentedly as the cows that were being steadily introduced there to stock the farm. Relieved of the constant rehearsals and the deadlines that had dogged his performing life in London, he took pleasure in the simple delights of the country. He also happily assumed the role of Margaret’s offside in the educational program she established for her children, having earlier – as his 1798 letter to Walter attests – begun violin lessons with the young Chinnery boys. During these years he was a formative influence on Caroline’s growing musical talent, and also took on a pupil of his own. His predilection for and success with these pedagogic activities demonstrate that in his role of tutor he must have possessed a certain amount of patience, and certainly great dedication.

In August 1802 Viotti accompanied the Chinnery family for a three-month holiday to Paris. Margaret’s primary aim was to meet her mentor in education methods, Madame de Genlis. Viotti’s was to revisit the city of his mixed fortunes and revive old musical friendships. It was exactly ten years since Viotti had left behind his friends Cherubini, Baillot, Rode and Kreutzer in that strife-torn city. Music in France had not suffered at the hands of the Revolution. Indeed it had flourished, the band of the National Guard forming the nucleus of the Institut national de musique, which in turn gave birth in 1795 to the Conservatoire de musique, where all his old friends had taught.

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275 Nicolas Mori.
276 See Part II, Chapter 2, for a full account of this visit.
277 Luigi Cherubini (1760-1842), Italian composer, theorist, teacher and administrator, who was a dominant figure in French musical life for half a century. Viotti had helped his compatriot establish himself in Paris in 1786 and the two shared lodgings together for a number of years. In 1794 Cherubini became an inspector of instruction at the newly founded Institut national de musique, later the Conservatoire. Viotti introduced the Cherubinis to the Chinnerys in 1802 and Cécile Cherubini and Margaret Chinnery became lifelong friends.
278 Pierre Baillot (see p. 34) had been an ardent admirer of Viotti since the age of ten, and a close friend since his inclusion in the orchestra of Viotti’s Théâtre Feydeau in 1791. He was later appointed professor at the newly opened Conservatoire, where he worked closely with Cherubini. In July 1802, just before the Chinnerys’ arrival in Paris, he was appointed leader of the second violins in Napoleon’s private orchestra. Viotti sought out his company on each successive trip to Paris.
279 Pierre Rode (see p.34), born in Bordeaux, was taken to Paris in 1787 where he attracted the attention of Viotti, and according to the New Grove (vol. 16, p. 87), became his favourite pupil. Rode frequently performed Viotti’s concertos at the Théâtre Feydeau in the intervals between opera acts. In 1795 he was made a violin professor at the Conservatoire de musique. Like Baillot, Rode was also part of the First Consul’s private orchestra, as solo violinist.
280 Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), a violinist and composer of Polish extraction, was born at Versailles. Kreutzer performed at the Concert Spirituel in Paris in 1780, and in 1782 and 1783 heard Viotti perform there. Like Rode and Baillot, he was deeply affected by Viotti’s style of playing. He too was
friends were now employed. According to Grove and to Fétis, Viotti performed for his friends at one of the rooms of the Conservatoire, and that all who heard him play during this visit were astonished that he had lost none of his old brilliance. 281 Fétis wrote of Viotti’s 1802 private performances: ‘C’était encore le même feu, le même brillant, le même goût, le même grandiose qu’on avait admiré autrefois.’ 282 There is corroborating evidence in the Fisher collection of Chinnery letters that Viotti not only re-established contact with all his old musical colleagues, but also met up with Bianchi, who was travelling constantly between London and Paris at this time.

In Paris for Margaret’s birthday on 16 October, the family celebrated the occasion with a musical party – organised by Viotti – consisting of some of the top musical talent in Paris. Original compositions – which were suitable for the young Chinnery children to sing or recite – were penned for the occasion by Cherubini and Baillot. Some of these compositions are to be found in the Powerhouse collection. 283 That the Paris musicians were very fond of the Chinnerys’ company, and had been told much about the charms of Gillwell, where they had all apparently been invited, is shown by a letter written by Rode to Margaret at the end of their holiday. Addressed to ‘Madame Chinnery, Gillwell’, Rode, who is afflicted with some kind of arm injury, preventing him from playing, writes somewhat glumly:

_Paris le 17 brumaire an 11 [8 novembre 1802]

Voila plus de trois semaines que l’aimable & bonne Madame Chinnery est partie. Cette privation de la vie que je menais rue Cerutti 284 m’aurait encore parue plus sensible sans l’arrivée de ma famille qui est à Paris depuis quinze jours. Ma pauvre petite sœur a été malade au point que mon inquiétude étoit sans bornes. enfin graces aux soins de M. Sûr, 285 elle est maintenant beaucoup mieux. mes bras sont toujours dans un état pitoyable. en vérité il faut avoir la patience d’un saint pour tenir à la Vie triste & monotone que je suis obligé de mener, ne pouvant me servir de mes bras pour quoi-que ce soit. pardon, Madame, de vous entretenir de détails aussi peu aimables, mais je suis vraiment de mauvaise humeur toutes les fois que je songe à l’ennui de ma position._

-appointed professor of violin at the Conservatoire de musique in 1795. His main compositions were operas and ballets.


283 They are transcribed and discussed in Part II, Chapter 1, pp. 324-327.

284 The address of the Chinnerys and Viotti in Paris was Hotel de l’Empire, rue Cerutti (now the rue d’Artois), situated between the boulevard des Italiens and the rue de Provence.

285 French doctor who also looked after Margaret and Walter Chinnery in Paris.
j'ai appris par Cherubini que vous êtes arrivée à Calais sans aucun accident & j'espère qu'il en aura été de même pendant le reste du voyage. — Vous voilà maintenant reinaîtrée à Gillwell comme si rien n'était.

Chacun a repris le cours de ses occupations, & je suis sur qu'il n'en est plus question de ces pauvres habitants de Paris, que du grand turc auquel on ne songe guère: nous ne sommes pas de même ici, & tous ceux qui ont été assez heureux pour vous être introduits à l'hôtel de l'empire lorsque vous l'habitez, Madame, conservent un souvenir bien affectueux pour la chère pa[d]rona; en parlent sans cesse, & ont depuis, conçu une idée bien avantageuse des anglaises de Gillwell. à propos de Gillwell, je voudrais bien savoir si vous vous préparez à le faire agrandir pour recevoir tous ceux que vous avez invités à vous y venir voir? cette faveur que vous comptez accorder à tant de monde, me rend presque jaloux. heureusement que je m'y prendrai à l'avance & que j'irai retenir ma chambre dans quelque temps, mais je veux auparavant faire une petite tournée & je n'attends pour cela que le rétablissement de ma santé.

adieu Madame, agréez l'assurance de mon devouement sans bornes & de l'affection inaltérable de mes sentiments pour vous

P. Rode
rue St george
n° 35 derrière la rue de provence.

Mille & mille choses au bon Monsieur Chinnery, au caro amico, & aux aimables enfants.

Veuillez bien recevoir aussi Madame, avec quelque intérêt les salutations respectueuses de Maman & de ma sœur.

Mr. Bianchi que j'ai vu avant-hier est un peu malade. il a je crois naturellement une mauvaise santé, que l'inquiétude où il était relativement à sa femme dont il ne recevait aucune Nouvelle, n'a fait qu'accompagner de [ne] peux malheureusement le voir aussi tôt que je désirerais étre moi-même obligé de me soigner & de rester chez moi, mais j'enverrai savoir de ses nouvelles.

(Pierre Rode to Margaret Chinnery, [8 November 1802], Fisher)

It seems unlikely that Rode ever came to Gillwell. There is no mention of such a visit in the Chinnery letters, and in 1803 he went to Russia, where Czar Alexander made him first violin at his court. The continued and prolonged state of war between France and England was undoubtedly the reason for Rode's and others' plans to visit Gillwell being thwarted. Had they done so they would have contributed to the already high level
of musicianship to be found there, that was so famous among London's fashionable set.286

Music was an integral part of the daily life at Gillwell. There were music lessons for the children by day, and concerts en famille or for company by night. The many guests, both English and foreign, who visited Gillwell all testified to the enjoyable conviviality, the warm family atmosphere, and expressed astonishment at the musical competence of the Chinnery children. The evening concerts, which featured Viotti and whichever of his musical colleagues happened to be house guests at the time, as well as the Chinnery children when appropriate, were an attraction which drew not only many eminent musicians, but also foreign diplomats, and British lords and ladies to the Chinnery home in Waltham Abbey, just as they had done in earlier years to their home in London. The earliest proof of Viotti’s close involvement in the Chinnery children’s musical education at Gillwell is to be found in Viotti’s 1798 letter from Schönfeld to Caroline Chinnery, then aged seven, chastising her for neglecting her piano practice, as he has just composed some pretty piano sonatas for her.287

The earliest house guest to have kept a record of her visit to Gillwell (in April 1802) and of her impressions of the standard of musicianship to be found there, was the pretty and ebullient portrait painter Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun.288 This appears to be her first meeting with Margaret Chinnery, with whom she was to maintain a lifelong friendship. Like the Chinneries, she took advantage of the Peace of Amiens to cross the Channel (in the opposite direction) in the spring of 1802 — before the Chinnerys’ trip to Paris — intending to stay for three months, but remaining for three years. Among the chatty anecdotes recounted in her Souvenirs she wrote of a delightful two-week visit to Gillwell shortly after her arrival in England, and was warm in her praise of the Chinnerys’ elegant home and of their domestic musical entertainments:

286 However, both Rode and Baillot visited Margaret at least once much later at her home at Châtillon just out of Paris – Baillot in 1823, and Rode in 1825. (See Viotti to Pierre Baillot, 29 June 1823, in Boris Schwarz, op. cit., p. 444, in which Viotti issued an invitation to Baillot to come and spend a Sunday at Châtillon: ‘Mon cher bon Baillot. Je sens un besoin très grand de faire un Duo avec vous, et un plus grand besoin de vous embrasser. Seriez-vous capable de nous sacrifier un de vos Dimanches? Et venir ce Dimanche prochain diner avec nous?’ See also G to M, 28 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/63.)

287 V to C, 8 October 1798, in ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM.

288 Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun (see p.50, note 71) left Paris at the start of the Revolution in 1789 and travelled extensively on the Continent, painting the portraits of many of the royal families of Europe. She was in England from 1802 to 1805, and several times visited Gillwell. It is certain that her portrait of Margaret Chinnery was executed after the family’s return from Paris (see p.342 and note 44) — most probably after the requisite period of mourning for Walter Chinnery’s death in November 1802.
Très-peu de temps après mon arrivée je débutai par aller passer quinze jours chez madame Chinnery à Gillwell, où se trouvait le célèbre Viotti. La maison était de la plus grande élégance, et l’on m’y fit une réception charmante. Lorsque j’arrivai, je vis la porte d’entrée ornée de guirlandes de fleurs enlacées dans les colonnes. Sur l’escalier, qui était garni de même, de petits Amours en marbre, placés de distance en distance, portaient des vases remplis de roses; enfin c’était une féeerie printanière. Sitôt que je fus entrée dans le salon, deux petits anges, le fils et la fille de madame Chinnery, me chantèrent un morceau de musique charmant, que cet aimable Viotti avait composé pour moi. Je fus vraiment touchée de cet accueil affectueux; aussi les quinze jours que j’ai passés à Gillwell ont-ils été pour moi des jours de joie et de bonheur. Madame de [sic] Chinnery était une très-belle femme, dont l’esprit avait beaucoup de finesse et de charme. Sa fille, âgée alors de quatorze ans [recte 10 ans], était surprenante par son talent de piano, en sorte que tous les soirs cette jeune personne, Viotti, et madame Chinnery, qui était très-bonne musicienne, nous donnèrent des concerts charmants.

(Vigée-Lebrun, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 138-139)

Madame Vigée-Lebrun had last heard Viotti perform in Paris in the days of the ancien régime when he played at her salons, as did many other Continental musicians who subsequently came to England and were introduced to the Chinnerys. In 1803 Madame Vigée-Lebrun returned at least three more times to Gillwell, for two weeks in September, a week in November, and a few days in December, bringing with her on these last two occasions the Russian Prince [Ivan] Baratinski\(^{289}\) and the Frenchman Pincère.\(^{290}\) A letter from young George Chinnery to his mother shows that Margaret, Viotti and William attended a concert at ‘Madame le Brun’s’ in London, also.\(^{291}\)

In September 1803 Madame Vigée-Lebrun wrote a letter to Margaret Chinnery, in which her attachment to Margaret, whom she affectionately names ‘Belle et Bonne’, is evident. Soon to leave London for the fashionable health resort of Tunbridge Wells, Vigée-Lebrun asks Margaret, also about to set out with her family for their yearly autumn vacation in Brighton, for her address in order that she may pay her a visit. She gives her own address in Tunbridge as ‘Sussex Arms, Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells’.\(^{292}\)

\(^{289}\) This prince is also mentioned in Vigée-Lebrun’s Souvenirs (vol. 2, p. 140).

\(^{290}\) Unidentified. It was probably during these stays at Gillwell that she painted Margaret’s portrait.

\(^{291}\) G to M, c. 1803, Fisher.

Assuring Margaret that she is always in her thoughts, she signs off 'adieu Belle et Bonne, je vous aime de tout mon cœur ainsi tous les vôtres, et Amico aussi. Le Brun.'

Many family friends – most of whom were also keen amateur musicians – participated in the Chinnery family concerts. Among them was the newly-wed Scottish couple the Count and Countess Dunmore, who were also intimates of William Spencer. Lady Susan clearly enjoyed playing duets with Viotti, who dedicated one of his sonatas for harp to her. She wrote from Tunbridge Wells after her 1806 Gillwell visit, ‘Tell Amico that the Harp has quite forgot how to play a Solo ✦ longs much for the accompaniment to which it has lately been accustomed.’ Sophia Johnstone, the Chinnery friend who was admitted by Lord Glenbervie to play and sing well, but whose person he described unflatteringly as being ‘very like a stumpy barrell’, was another harp enthusiast, who helped Caroline to prepare for special concerts at Gillwell, writing on one occasion that she was sending her ‘the Harp part of Davidde to study for Sunday next.’ The antiquarian Richard Payne Knight of Soho Square was always happy to accept a Chinnery invitation, writing in the spring season of 1810: ‘Be assured

that the term is also ‘erroneously applied to flat Dutch or Flemish paving tiles, and so to the Parade at Tunbridge Wells paved with these.’

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293 Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun to Margaret Chinnery, [19 September 1803], Fisher.
294 George Murray, fifth Earl of Dunmore (1762-1836) was born at Glen Finart, Scotland, and was styled Viscount Fincastle until 1809. In August 1803 he married Susan (1774-1846), third daughter of Archibald, ninth Duke of Hamilton. There are several letters from both in the Chinnery collection.
297 Susan Fincastle to Margaret Chinnery, 14 September 1806, Fisher.
298 From the Chinnery letters it may be ascertained that Sophia Johnstone was the sister of George Johnstone (d. c. January 1814) and future wife of the Count St Antonio (later Duke of Canizaro) whom she married in c. 1816. The latter was a lessee of the King’s Theatre in 1822. The family cannot be found in any dictionary of biography, and the most comprehensive details are furnished by Glenbervie (Douglas, 1910, op. cit., pp. 143-144), who described the brother and sister as being ‘the natural children of the late Governor Johnstone’ (d. by 1811), and George Johnstone as being ‘no rank, no situation in life, but that of a Nabob or Indian parvenu.’ Johnstone, he said, had acquired great wealth ‘by contracts and cards’. Lumping him with William Chinnery, whose wealth, he said, was also of unknown origin, he claimed that both had contrived ‘to purchase the society, or at least the presence, almost whenever they please, of all that is most distinguished for rank, beauty, youth, talents, and wealth in the highest or most fashionable walks of life.’
299 Sylvester Douglas, Baron Glenbervie (1743-1823), married Catherine Anne North (d. 1817), eldest daughter of Lord North. He practised law briefly, then entered political life, advancing rapidly because of his wife’s connections. Lord Glenbervie’s Journals give much information on his contemporaries, including many of the Chinnery acquaintances, and the Chinnerys themselves.
300 Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 144.
301 Sophia Johnstone to Caroline Chinnery, c. 1809, Fisher. Perhaps a harp piece from Mozart’s cantata Davide Penitente (composed 1785).
my dear Madam, that this busy crowded Month of May can afford no Engagement more grateful to me than with my friends of Gillwell; whose Musical Attractions are not wanting [...]

Then there was the poet William Sotheby—whom the wag Thomas Moore termed in his Journal ‘William Botherby’ on account of his flustered, blustering nature—and his family, the Chinnerys’ Epping Forest neighbours and lifelong friends. Although they did not pretend to a great knowledge of music themselves, the Sothebys were always ready to bring their children to listen to the Chinnerys play. In May 1805, Margaret wrote in her journal that ‘Mr, Mrs and Miss Sotheby’ spent the week-end at Gillwell, and Caroline ‘endeavoured to entertain them as well as she could on the Harp & Pianoforte’. The jovial poet preferred popular dancing music, and Viotti obliged him on one occasion by providing music for their dancing party at Fair Mead Lodge. Thomas Moore, noting Viotti’s forbearance and good nature, recorded the event in his Journal. His entry for 3 September 1818 reads:

Sotheby, the Poet, (poor Botherby!) once invited the Channings [Chinnerys] & Viotti to his house at Epping Forest, and begged of Viotti (whose little solos are the most

302 Richard Payne Knight to Margaret Chinnery, May [1810], Fisher. Richard Payne Knight (1750-1824), numismatist, author, and doyen of the London antiquaries, owned a valuable collection of bronzes and coins, which he displayed at his Soho Square home, and later donated to the British Museum. He published several scholarly works, including his notorious Account of the Worship of Priapus (see Part III, p. 670, note 297); and was a much respected authority on ancient art. John Brewer (The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century, HarperCollins: London, 1997, p. 266) describes him as ‘the most powerful gentleman connoisseur of his day’.

303 William Sotheby (1757-1833), English poet, who earned his reputation more for his excellent translations of Latin and German verse than for original poetry. Sotheby, who had inherited the estate of Sewardstone in Epping Forest, as well as owning a home in London, alternated his abode between London and Fair Mead Lodge. He and his wealthy wife Mary and their various children – among whom Hans and Maria appear to have been the closest in age to the Chinnery twins – were more than just neighbours to the Chinnerys. Visits were exchanged regularly between Fair Mead Lodge and Gillwell and there is correspondence attesting to a long-term friendship as late as 1833. There are four letters from different members of the Sotheby family to the Chinnery family in the Fisher collection – two from Mary Sotheby to Margaret Chinnery, 1826 and 1827; one from Isabella Sotheby, wife of Hans, 1827; and one from Maria Sotheby to Caroline Chinnery, 1811. There is also a printed poem by William Sotheby (‘On the Death of Sir Walter Scott’, 7 November 1832) sent to Margaret on 26 March 1833, with a handwritten note ‘For Mrs Chinnery with M Sotheby’s kind Remembrance’.

304 Thomas Moore (1779-1852), Irish poet, was born in Dublin. He went to London in 1799 to arrange for the publication of his metrical translation of the Odes of Anacreon, for which he is best known. In England he became a very popular figure of society, as much for his singing and playing as for his poetry. He kept a lively and witty journal of his life in England, first published by his friend Lord John Russell: Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore (ed. J. Russell), Little, Brown: Boston, 1852-56, 8 vols. Russell deleted many passages of the Journal, which he feared would offend contemporaries. The work has been republished as The Journal of Thomas Moore (W. Dowden, ed., op. cit.), 6 vols., and this last edition will be cited henceforth.
touching & romantic things possible) to bring his Violin — The latter good-naturedly promised he would & on his arrival, Botherby, the barbarian, exclaimed "I am glad you are come — you've brought your fiddle, I hope — now, girls — where are your partners? — stand up — here's Mr. Viotti — what dance will you have?" — Viotti, to the immortal credit of his good-nature, played country-dances for them the whole night.

(Moore, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 34-35)

Foreign diplomats — who were invariably of noble lineage and tastes — figured prominently on Margaret’s guest lists at Gillwell. The French ambassador to England during the fragile Peace of Amiens, Comte Antoine-François Andréossi, a French general whose difficult and short-lived mission it was to maintain goodwill between two nervous adversaries who seemed insincere in their desire for peace,306 was one of the earliest visitors. Andréossi appears to have first made the acquaintance of William Chinnery through the latter’s good offices towards some French émigrés.307 He also shared with William a common love of the arts, having purchased in London the fine collection of drawings that had belonged to the former French Finance Minister Calonne, also a Chinnery friend.308 He was invited to Gillwell, where he spent many pleasant hours enjoying the surrounding countryside by day and being entertained, as Madame Vigée-Lebrun had been, with music by night. But by March the peace was already on the brink of collapse, and in mid-May he was recalled to France. On 15 May, three days before his departure for France, Andréossi wrote a letter of sincere regret to Margaret Chinnery saying that he would miss the happy days he had spent at Gillwell, and wishing he could still hear Caroline’s piano playing in the evenings. Margaret’s

307 See letter from Antoine-François Andréossi to William Chinnery, 2 April 1803, Fisher.
308 Charles-Alexandre Calonne (1734-1802), contrôleur général des Finances, 1783-89. At the beginning of the Revolution (1789) Calonne had emigrated with Louis XVI’s brother the Comte d’Artois. His financial advice to Louis XVI has been blamed for accelerating the downfall of the French monarchy. The Chinnerys had probably first met him during one of his trips to England, when Calonne may have even been a guest in their home (or else in Paris in 1802). Judging by a comment in an 1812 letter from William to Margaret, in which he speaks of Calonne’s being an inspiration to him in his present troubles, they were on close terms with him: ‘Well now do I appreciate the soundness of Mons’ de Calonne’s Expression to us at breakfast many Years ago — of never allowing himself to have looked at the dark side of the Medal in all his Misfortunes, which bore him through them to a certain point [...]’ (W to M, [March 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 7/6).
reply was equally heartfelt in her regret at the resumption of war between the two countries.309

Another diplomatic visitor to Gillwell was the Spanish ambassador d’Anduaga, who came with his family in 1804. They too undoubtedly heard the playing of Viotti and Caroline, especially since they had young daughters about the same age. It fell to the eldest of these daughters, Josephine, to write to Margaret Chinnery at the time of their departure from England, since her mother could not write French (or presumably, English). In her letter, dated 16 August 1804, she thanked Margaret for her kindness towards the whole family during the days they spent at Gillwell with Margaret’s ‘intressante famille’. She also begged that ‘M. Viotti’ would remember his promise to call and see them before their departure, as well as ‘M. Bianchi’.310

The Bianchis were among the many musicians who were introduced to the Chinnerys by Viotti, and who, like the harpist Dizi,311 and the dancer Boisgérard,312 were subsequently employed as the Chinnery children’s tutors.313 The popular composer Maestro Francesco Bianchi, who was Caroline Chinnery’s music composition tutor, was at Gillwell when the Anduagas visited. His wife, also a musician, assisted with Caroline’s singing instruction.314 In December 1804 the cellist Schram was an overnight guest and probably stayed longer. It was he who was to participate in the trialling of some new string quartets by Viotti in 1812.315

Another gifted musician brought to Gillwell by Viotti – and one who remained very close to the Chinnerys – was the Italian bass Giuseppe Naldi, described by the

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309 Antoine-François Andréossi to Margaret Chinnery, 15 May 1803, Fisher; and Margaret Chinnery (copy) to Andréossi, c. 15 May 1803, Fisher.
310 Josephine d’Anduaga to Margaret Chinnery, 16 August 1804, Fisher.
311 François Joseph Dizi (1780- c. 1840) was a harpist and composer from the South Netherlands who had come to England at the age of sixteen to take lessons to improve his technique. He achieved prominence, and maintained his reputation as the best harpist in London for the next thirty years. According to the New Grove (vol. 5, p. 513) he contributed to the enormous popularity of the harp in England during the first quarter of the nineteenth century and was equally highly regarded as a teacher and as a composer.
312 Boisgérard was a member of the King’s Theatre ballet corps, 1804-1807.
313 In 1801 Bianchi, with his wife, had spent six weeks at Gillwell House as a resident music tutor to Caroline Chinnery. See Part II, Chapter 1 for a full account of the Bianchis’ role at Gillwell.
314 Madame Bianchi, née Jackson (1776-1858), singer, married Francesco Bianchi in 1800. She made her debut on the London stage in Guglielmi’s Sidaguro on 20 June 1809. After Bianchi’s suicide in 1810 she married (1812) the singer John Lacy, and sang as Mrs Bianchi Lacy (1812-1815). There is a letter from her to Viotti written to offer her support to the Chinnery family on the occasion of the discovery of William’s fraud at the Treasury in March 1812. It is signed ‘J. Lacy’ (J. Bianchi-Lacy to Viotti, c. March 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 28/12).
315 See p. 150.
contemporary opera enthusiast Richard Mount Edgcumbe as ‘an excellent buffo.’ Naldi, an educated gentleman, who was generous, gregarious and debonair, had arrived in England with his family in April 1806, and became the leading buffo caricato at the King’s Theatre over the next twelve years. He was later asked by Margaret Chinnery to ‘finish’ Caroline’s style of singing. His friendship with the Chinnerys and Viotti went beyond the obligatory appearance in the Gillwell music room, and extended right to his freakish death in Paris in 1820, when a newly invented pressure cooker exploded in his face.

On 14 January 1804 the popular Continental contralto Giuseppina Grassini, mistress successively to Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington, made her London debut at the King’s Theatre. Mount Edgcumbe, who had reservations about the manner by which Grassini reached the pinnacle of her career, noted in his Musical Reminiscences that Grassini was not only ‘rapturously applauded in public, but she was taken up by the first society, fêteé, caressed, and introduced as a regular guest in most of the fashionable assemblies.’ One of these fashionable assemblies was Margaret Chinnery’s. On the week-end of 5 and 6 February 1804 she was a guest at Gillwell, where she offended her hosts with a derogatory remark about English countrywomen’s dancing. Nevertheless, she was invited back to Gillwell on at least two subsequent occasions. The next was in May 1804 (or 1805), when she sent word to William Chinnery by the Portuguese ambassador ‘da Souza’ that she would prefer not to have to sing ‘au concert de M. Viotti’ at Gillwell, as she was tired from her previous night’s performance. Sousa, who calls Grassini ‘la bella Signa Peppina’, writes: ‘Je luy ai dit que vous lui epargneries le chagrin de refuser, en priant d’avance les personnes presentes de l’excuser.’ This would have been a severe disappointment to Margaret Chinnery, who liked to add brilliance to her musical evenings with such famous names. On 2 May 1805 Margaret and Caroline attended Grassini’s benefit concert, at which she had taken the

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317 He had been a barrister in Bologna, his native city.
318 Edgcumbe, op. cit., p. 96.
319 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 7 February 1804.
320 Possibly Fernando Sousa-Coutinho de Castello Branco y Menezes (1776-1834), listed in the Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana (Espasa-Calpe: Madrid, 1908-1966, vol. 57, p.707) as a Portuguese politician who was President of the Portuguese Exchequer in 1810. In an 1808 letter to Margaret (Sousa-Coutinho to Margaret Chinnery, 19 February 1808, Fisher) Sousa gives as his address South Audley Street, and signs himself ‘Le Chevalier de Sousa Coutinho’.
321 Sousa-Coutinho to William Chinnery, 23 May [1804 or 1805], Fisher.
lead role in the ‘Grand Serious Opera’ *Gli Orazi ed i Curiazi*, composed in Italy by Cimarosa especially for her. On the eve of her departure from England in November 1806, Grassini sent Margaret Chinnery a letter in which she, like all the other Gillwell guests, expressed her admiration for the talented children, her esteem for the charming hostess, and her appreciation of the idyllic surrounds of Gillwell. She appears to have left England on excellent terms with her hosts. She writes:

Ma chère Madame Chinnery,
Je parts [sic] demain, et je parts le cœur noirci de douleur, et de regrets, que je ne puis que sentir, et point exprimer – Je ne puis vous dire, combien j’ai été sensible à la nouvelle marque d’attachement, et d’amitié que je viens de recevoir, de votre part; Je ne l’oublierais point, comme je n’oublierai non plus les bontés dont vous m’avez comblée durant mon séjour en Angleterre, et le deliciex Gillwell, et l’adorable famille qui l’embellit, ne sortiront jamais de mon souvenir – Veuillez bien me rappeller [sic] quelque fois au votre, et me conserver de même dans celui de vos deux anges, le cher George, et Caroline, qui [suscient] forte [sic] mon admiration, depuis que j’eus le bonheur et le plaisir de faire leur connoissance – Qu’ils puissent être toujours aussi heureux qu’un merite est grand, ils n’auront plus rien à se souhaiter, et vous seriez à jamais la plus heureuse des mères, comme vous l’avez été jusque a ce moment – adieux donc chere et adorable madame Chinnery, permettez moi que je vous salue de tout mon cœur et que je dise de même, avec les sentiments, de haute estime, de consideration, et de la plus affectueuse amitié toute votre devouee, et bien attachée

Josephine Grassini

P.S. Faites de ma part, je vous prie, chere dame, a l’Amico amabile [Viotti], mille compliments et priez le qu’il me rappelle quelque fois a son souvenir.

Saville Row
Ce samedi, 9 novembre 1806

Margaret was to renew contact with her in 1821 during Viotti’s term as director of the Paris Opéra.

In December 1806 the recently arrived celebrated compatriot of Grassini, soprano Angelica Catalani, who would soon eclipse her rival in fame and fortune, was a member of the Chinnery family Christmas party. Catalani’s astoundingly powerful and

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322 *The Times*, 2 May 1805.
323 On her return to Paris in 1806 she became the leading court singer to Napoleon, ‘la chanteuse de l’Empereur’, earning a salary of 36,000 francs and a gratuity of 15,000.
324 Josephine Grassini to Margaret Chinnery, 9 November 1806, Fisher.
flexible voice was to hold the English music public in thrall for the next seven years. According to the nineteenth century music historian Félix Clément, ‘Sa voix dominait les ensembles et l’orchestre même; elle était d’un charme extrême, pleine de douceur et d’énergie, suave et flexible, pure et mordante à la fois.’ Catalani quickly became the talk of London and the stuff of much newspaper commentary, owing to the high fees she commanded. She was accompanied to Gillwell by her husband Paul Valabrégué, whom she had married in Lisbon the previous year. Valabrégué, who subsequently became Catalani’s manager, was not a well-liked or well-respected figure among Catalani’s friends, possibly on account of his grasping profit-seeking negotiations with theatre managers on his wife’s behalf. After her London debut in the opera *Semiramide* by Portogallo on 13 December 1806, the laudatory newspaper reports, all agog with ‘the volume and compass of her voice’, her ‘neatness and rapidity of execution’ and her first-rate acting, were soon succeeded by sarcastic criticism of her elevated fees: ‘Madame Catalani, it is said, has demanded no less than seven thousand pounds, two clear Benefits, and the privilege to sing where she pleases, for an engagement next season at the Opera House. She is equally moderate, it seems, with respect to private Concerts, requiring but two hundred pounds for her performance each night. If these terms should be complied with, we may fairly say, “How we are ruined!”’ Catalani, whose conduct in private life, was according to Edgcumbe, irreproachable, was a good friend to the Chinnerys, and was to consent to sing at George’s celebratory party in Oxford on the occasion of his winning the Newdigate prize for poetry in 1810.

Ten days after Catalani’s debut at the King’s Theatre, another Italian operatic singer, Giuseppe Siboni, who had been engaged to sing with Catalani in the 1806-1807 opera season, made his first appearance in London. Shortly after his arrival he too

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326 Catalani had frequent fallings out with King’s Theatre managers, notably with Kelly in 1809 and with Taylor in 1813. In one letter to his mother George refers to Valabrégué as Catalani’s ‘orrido sposo’ (G to M, 13 June 1808, Ch.Ch.).
327 *The Sun*, 4 February 1807, in W.C. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 84. In the end she renewed her contract for the following season at five thousand guineas and two benefits, one of which was insured to produce a thousand (W.C. Smith, p. 84). According to Clément (*op. cit.*, p. 480), Valabrégué gambled away much of her earnings.
329 See Part II, Chapter 3, p. 521. It is unlikely that she charged the Chinnerys the stipulated private concert fee for this performance.
beat a path to Gillwell. Siboni, whom Edgcumbe classed with Madame Bianchi in the lower order of merit of singers, possessed ‘a thick and tremulous voice’, but it was strong enough not to be drowned by Catalani’s. The week-end that he spent with the Chinnerys was noted in Margaret’s Journal entry of February 3, in which she praises her daughter’s piano accompaniment to these singers: ‘Caroline accompanied both evenings extremely well.’ Siboni had come down to Gillwell with the Chinnerys’ good friend the ‘chevalier’ La Cainea, who was also an accomplished singer.

It was in 1807 also that the young harpist Casimir Baecker came to Gillwell, staying for four months. The same age as George Chinnery, Casimir was the adopted son of Madame de Genlis, whom she sent to England in the hope that he would make his fortune as a concert harpist. His education and music practice were for a short period entrusted to the supervision of Margaret and Viotti. There is one very interesting letter from Casimir Baecker to Margaret that dates from just before the beginning of his stay at Gillwell, which shows that Casimir was already mixing with the Chinnery circle of acquaintance in London, including William Spencer, Lady Ann Hamilton, and the musicians Bianchi, Rovedino, and Naldi. The undiplomatic Casimir even informed Margaret that Madame Bianchi was offended not to have been invited to Margaret’s next musical party, which she knew that Naldi was attending.

The most brilliant of all the Gillwell visitors, and one of Viotti’s most devoted pupils and Margaret Chinnery’s staunchest friends, was the youngest son of the royal family Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Cambridge. The Duke of Cambridge was an amateur violinist, who owned five Stradivari violins at one time or another, and loved

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330 Giuseppe Siboni (1780-1839), Italian tenor and singing teacher.
331 Edgcumbe, op. cit., p. 104.
332 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 3 February 1807.
333 La Cainea, who was close to the Chinnerys during the Gillwell years, has not been identified. His name crops up in other contemporary writings, and he appears to have moved in the same fashionable music-loving circles as the Chinnerys. There are three letters (in Italian) from La Cainea to Margaret (c. 1807), in the Fisher collection, in which he appears in the guise of a concert organiser.
334 See Part II, Chapter 2.
335 Lady Ann Hamilton (1766-1846), lady-in-waiting to Caroline, Princess of Wales, was the eldest daughter of Archibald, ninth duke of Hamilton. She was a close friend of William Spencer, and he dedicated verses to her. There is a teasing letter from her to Caroline Chinnery (and a copy of Caroline’s response) in the Fisher collection, in which she signs herself ‘Ann’ [not Anne] Hamilton.
336 Carlo Rovedino (d. c.1823), singer and actor, made his first appearance at the King’s Theatre in 1793, and had a long singing career there that lasted until 1814.
337 Casimir Baecker to Margaret Chinnery, c. 22 August 1807, Fisher.
to play duets with Viotti, who dedicated some of his music to him.\(^{339}\) He accepted with alacrity every invitation to make music with Viotti at the Chinnerys' private concerts, and took equally great pleasure in singing on these occasions. The letters he addressed to Margaret Chinnery throughout his life are testimony to the Duke's high regard for her. Possibly the most cultured of George III's sons, and certainly the most principled, Adolphus Frederick was also a lover of the belles lettres and enjoyed long tête-à-tête conversations with Margaret on literature. His fifteen letters addressed to Margaret Chinnery at Gillwell (in the Fisher collection) all contain proof of his eagerness to come to Gillwell and his enjoyment of the time spent there: 'I look forward with the greatest pleasure to friday next. Should the hour suit you I will be at Gillwell by twelve O'clock, and I take the liberty of requesting you to desire l'Amico to write me word what Music I am to bring with me';\(^{340}\) 'I cannot leave Town without endeavouring to express by these lines the gratitude I feel for the very happy & pleasant hours I have passed at Gillwell',\(^{341}\) 'I cannot conclude without expressing my gratitude for your kindness to me at Gillwell, & I do assure you without flattery that I never passed two pleasanter days in my life';\(^{342}\) 'I shall be delighted to wait upon you at Gillwell on Saturday the 7th of next month. Nothing can give me more pleasure than the prospect of seeing you there'.\(^{343}\) That these were not merely expressions of polite formality is shown by the disappointment he expressed when prevented from coming to Gillwell by a prior engagement, and the lengths he went to to provide Margaret with alternative dates that he was free. He also made his fondness of Gillwell society known to others. William Spencer wrote to Caroline Chinnery in 1811 that 'the Duke of Cambridge asked in great detail about Arnica [Margaret Chinnery] - he is certainly very seriously attached to Gillwell.'\(^{344}\)

The Duke participated with enthusiasm in any musical endeavour Gillwell had to offer. He played in string quartets or quintets with Viotti, William Chinnery, and any

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\(^{340}\) Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 14 December 1807, Fisher.

\(^{341}\) Ibid., c. December 1807, Fisher.

\(^{342}\) Ibid., 23 May 1807, Fisher.

\(^{343}\) Ibid., 15 December 1808, Fisher.

\(^{344}\) William Spencer to Caroline Chinnery, 26 February 1811, Fisher.
other amateur or professional musicians who happened to be there at the time. He enjoyed singing with Caroline Chinnery (‘I shall be ready to sing with your Daughter as much as she chooses on the 9th Inst.’). He also accompanied her on the violin when she sang. On the occasion of the Duke’s 7 January 1808 visit the young harpist Casimir Baeccker was also present, as testified by Margaret in her letter to Madame de Genlis of 1 July 1825. Sometimes the Duke came to Gillwell exhausted after sitting for long nights in the House of Lords. Once he even dozed off during the music. In a note from Caroline to Spencer who was staying at Gillwell at the time, discussing the selection of music for the evening’s concert at which the Duke was to be present, she wrote of the necessity of choosing pieces that were not too long or tedious: ‘I think ‘Caro ogetto’ will do for an Aria – it has a little of every thing in it, and monotony would make him snore, as he did when the Chevalier [La Cainea] sang his Scena called Saul.’

The episode of the Duke’s falling asleep occurred during Margaret’s week-end party of 28-29 May 1808. Margaret gave George an account of the three days he spent at Gillwell in her letter of 30 May 1808. The Duke, she said, arrived at half past twelve on Saturday to breakfast, after which they took a stroll around the grounds. Then they adjourned to the drawing room where ‘several trios & duos were played’. During the evening Caroline sang some solfeggios for the Duke, who had desired to hear them sung ‘in proper Italian style’. The Duke expressed his admiration for Caroline’s voice and her manner, and ‘the evening went off lightly & swiftly between singing & playing’. Margaret did not allude directly to the Duke’s falling asleep, simply saying that as he had been up all the previous night at the House of Lords, he was tired, and so retired soon after twelve. On Sunday they breakfasted at eleven, and Viotti’s friend Asioli having arrived unexpectedly, the next two hours were devoted to singing. ‘The Chevalier [La Cainea] sang the new Scenas of Asioli admirably’. At two thirty the Duke, William Chinnery, William Spencer and another guest went out for a ride on horseback. Dinner was much more animated than the previous day, owing to the

345 Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 22 August 1810, Fisher.
346 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher, in which Margaret, disenchanted with Casimir’s rude behaviour, claims that the only reason Casimir returned to Gillwell was to see the Duke of Caenbridge. See Part II, Chapter 2, p. 388.
347 Caroline Chinnery to William Spencer, [May 1808], Fisher. A scena was an elaborate concert aria for violin and orchestra in several sections. This one may have come from Handel’s oratorio King Saul.
348 Luigi Asioli (1778-1815), tenor, pianist and composer, brother of the more famous opera composer Bonifazio Asioli (1769-1832). Luigi worked from 1804 in London where he became a fashionable singing teacher.
addition of Spencer, who had been upstairs ill on the previous evening, and music began at nine. When they tired of singing and playing, the Duke waltzed with Miss Johnstone, and they passed an hour doing ‘a plain english country dance’. Supper was served, after which several of the guests departed for town after midnight. The party was smaller on the following day, and the Duke played with Viotti and William for three hours, both before and after breakfast. He left Gillwell at noon. 349

Adolphus Frederick came to Gillwell again in October 1808 for another weekend party. Caroline wrote to George that as the Duke had a bad cold he at first declined to practise with Viotti, and conversed for a long time with Margaret, wrote some letters, then came downstairs to sing: ‘The Duke, Mrs Bianchi the Chevalier & Asioli sang the most delightful Quartettes, and Amico joined with great success in the Quintetto; now & then Mina Bianchi and the Chevalier sang a Duett; in short we had really good music!’ Later the Duke ‘practiced for a couple of hours with Amico and Papa.’ Again William Spencer was a member of the party, and was, as usual, ‘drole, entertaining, full of wit and pleasantry.’ 350

Margaret had great respect for the Duke of Cambridge. His good nature, unassuming manner and integrity were qualities she endeavoured to instil in her own children. After the May weekend party described above she wrote to George that although she was tired, she had no regrets about exerting herself to entertain ‘a Prince who is so exquisitely good-humoured and amiable as is our good Duke […] His moral character is excellent, his principles perfect, and to this, and this only can we attribute his being so highly esteemed, and so very popular.’ 351

As well as the indoor musical activities, the Duke undoubtedly enjoyed the outdoor pleasures of Gillwell such as the barouche rides to the ‘fairlop oak’, 352 under the huge boughs of which they picnicked. Margaret’s description of one such visit, with the ‘picturesque wavyness of the high grass in all the fields where the future crops are very promising’ and the narrow lane through which they passed that ‘looked more like a shady walk in a gentleman’s Park than like a public road’ gives an idea of the beauty of

349 M to G, 30 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
350 C to G, 18 October 1808, Ch.Ch.
351 Ibid.
352 The huge old oak in Epping Forest was a famous natural beauty spot, where a yearly fair was held. It inspired William Spencer’s poem ‘Fair Lop Oak’ which is in the Powerhouse collection (PM 94/143/1 – 30/1). It also inspired commentary from Lord Glenbervie (Douglas, 1928, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 384-
the countryside surrounding Gillwell in spring. Even the music in nature was remarked upon: ‘we heard nightingales singing very close to the carriage, and a blackbird made a sort of tenor accompaniment to them, which was not thrown away or lost upon such a party of musicians.’

There are letters proving that Adolphus Frederick made at least ten visits to Gillwell – probably many more – and several more to Stratford Place, where the Chinnerys took a house for the spring season in London in 1810. He did not cease visiting or writing to Margaret after the scandal of 1812. Nor did he cease taking an active interest in George’s career. Intercourse between Margaret and the Duke consisted of an exchange of solicitous enquiries after the health of different family members, an exchange of ‘pictures’ [prints], and on Margaret’s side, letters and verses of birthday congratulations, of concerned enquiry on the deterioration of the health of the King at the end of 1810, and on the fire at St James Palace on 20 January 1809. This last was reported in a long article in the *Times*, which described the apartments of the palace that were destroyed, including those of the Duke of Cambridge. The reporter remarked that little was saved from the wings that were incinerated. However, in the Duke’s reply to Margaret’s letter he stated that he had had ‘the singular good fortune to save all my things’, including his violins: ‘Pray tell Amico with my best compliments that I took down my Violins under my arm into my dining room […] & that I have saved all my Instruments, Music, & even the Music [lists?]. In the same letter he thanked Caroline for ‘her kind letter’ and assured her that he would be ‘delighted to accompany her whenever I have the pleasure of seeing her.’

The Duke of Cambridge’s close relationship with Viotti is well documented in the Chinnery collection. The are nine letters from Adolphus Frederick to Viotti (eight at the Royal College of Music and one at Fisher Library). All are written in good French, and signed ‘Votre très devoué Adolphus Frederick’. In one, Viotti is addressed as ‘mon cher Oncle’, giving an indication of the closeness that existed between them. It was a

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353 M to G, 31 May 1809, Ch.Ch. Of the tree itself she wrote that it was much lovelier when there was no fair there ‘as it then seems to be the sole object of nature in forming that spot, – the space in which it stands alone looks like a theatre contrived on purpose to exhibit it, – and the forest that surrounds this theatre on all [sides] seems to be doing hommage to its venerable monarch!’

354 The *Times*, Monday, 23 January 1809.

355 Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 26 January 1809, Fisher.

356 Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, 25 July 1811, Fisher.
common convention of the time to address persons who were particularly dear in this manner. (Caroline Chinnery and William Spencer addressed each other in similar terms.) Viotti often went to London to dine or to play music with the Duke or with his brother the Duke of Cumberland.\textsuperscript{357} Margaret wrote to George on one such occasion: ‘Amico’s dinner [...] at the Duke of Cumberland’s was magnificent beyond description, both in point of company, and splendid entertainment.’\textsuperscript{358} When the Chinnerys took the Stratford Place house in London in 1810 George remarked to his mother on the Duke of Cambridge’s happiness at having Viotti nearby: ‘as to the Duke I am sure that [...] the satisfaction of having Amico so near at hand must to him be exquisite.’\textsuperscript{359} It was to the Duke of Cambridge that Viotti appealed to use his influence with the Prince of Wales in his application for British denizenship, formally granted on 14 September 1811.\textsuperscript{360} One of the most welcome letters ever received at Gillwell must surely have been that of the Duke of Cambridge informing Viotti of the success of his application, saying that he considered himself honoured to have been the bearer of Viotti’s ‘memoire’ to the Prince: ‘[...] votre requête a été accordée. Connaissant les sentiments bienveillants du Prince à votre sujet je suis sur qu’il a donné l’ordre pour votre Denization avec bien du plaisir, et je me rejouis beaucoup d’avoir été chargé de la communication de lui présenter votre Memoire.’\textsuperscript{361} After Viotti’s ignominious expulsion from England in 1798, British citizenship must have constituted a happy and just compensation.\textsuperscript{362}

Sunday at Gillwell was the day of music \textit{en famille}. Margaret’s letters to George in Oxford between 1808 and 1811 describing their Sunday evenings painted an idyllic picture in which typical family activites such as card games, needlework and reading were interspersed with musical interludes involving most members of the family. On Sunday 12 March 1809 Margaret wrote from ‘my study during Coffee’ that the family was waiting for her ‘to go into the parlour for music’,\textsuperscript{363} and on Sunday 7 May of the

\textsuperscript{357} Ernest Augustus (1771-1851), fifth son of George III.
\textsuperscript{358} M to G, 10 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{359} G to M, 6 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{360} A record of which exists in the Public Records Office, London (PRO HO C97).
\textsuperscript{361} Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, 25 July 1811, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{362} Viotti received a witty letter of congratulations from William Spencer on this occasion. (William Spencer to Viotti, 15 October 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 29/5). There is also mention of it in a letter from Lady Dunmore enquiring after Caroline Chinnery’s illness (Susan Pincastle to Viotti, 28 February [1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/5).
\textsuperscript{363} M to G, 12 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
same year, that after dining and taking their evening walk, they were ‘about to hear music, as is our custom on Sunday’.

During these years Viotti’s young pupil Nicolas Mori who in 1808 was the same age as Matilda Chinnery – just eleven years old – appears to have come to stay at Gillwell every week-end to take his lessons. (‘Little Mori has just brought down with him your letter of yesterday’.) He sometimes travelled down to Gillwell from London with William, who came home from town on a Saturday afternoon, and returned on Monday morning. When he was not asleep over a book in the drawing room, William was either participating in or listening to the playing of Viotti and the children. ‘Aunt Marianne’, William’s sister-in-law, who lived in the cottage in Gillwell Park, regularly dined with the family on a Sunday. (‘Aunt Marianne has dined here, and they are now all in the parlour playing concertos, trios &c.’) When the weather was fine Caroline took her harp outside and played, while Margaret, William and Viotti strolled in the garden. (‘I walked out a long while this morning with your father and Amico, while Caroline played upon her little Harp seated before the house.’) On the evening of Sunday 7 May 1808 Margaret wrote to George at half past eight from her study:

I am just returned from the dining parlour to which we retreated after Coffee, to hear a little music; and I assure you I have been very well entertained. First Matilda played a Sonata, and succeeded to the satisfaction of us all; — then Caroline gave us a beautiful Trio of Amico’s, which she played extremely well indeed; — and lastly Mori exhibited his talents to great advantage in a concerto[...]. Mori improves rapidly; and Matilda is the only person who at all benefits from your absence, dear George, but she has then a greater portion of my attention to her musical studies.

(M to G, 7 May 1808, Ch.Ch.)

364 M to G, 7 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
365 Nicolas Mori (1797-1839), child prodigy violinist, who, when he was a little older, was to perform regularly in the Philharmonic concerts – several times in the early ones with Viotti (see pp. 153, 176). He became from 1816 one of the leaders of its orchestra. He was also leader of the ballet orchestra (1814-1817) at the King’s Theatre where his sister was a member of the ballet troupe, and in 1822 became a professor of violin at the Royal Academy of Music. He is listed in Goodkind’s Violin Iconography as being an owner of a Stradivarius violin.
366 M to G, [20 March 1808], Ch.Ch., MS xlvi. a. 43, fo. 160. In those days for a promising young musician to forge a career it was necessary to be apprenticed to a professional musician to whom he paid a fee and was bound for a term of years, during which time a percentage of all his performance earnings were paid to that teacher. Mori remained under Viotti’s tuition for six years (1808-1814).
367 M to G, 1 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
368 Ibid.
As a postscript, Margaret added: 'I forgot to say in speaking of the music that your father distinguished himself very much upon the Violoncello to night.'

On the week-end of 5 and 6 November 1808, the Gillwell family circle was enlarged by Matilda’s mother, Mrs John Chinnery and her two young daughters Elizabeth and Mary. In Margaret’s letter to George of Sunday 7 November 1808 she depicted the evening scene of the family in the Gillwell drawing room from her writing desk: Mrs J. Chinnery, Marianne, [little] Margaret and Matilda were doing needlework round the table. William on her right was fast asleep, the other two little girls were gone to bed, and Caroline & Amico were in the parlour ‘doing something in the musical way together’. Later that month Margaret wrote that little Mori (now twelve years old) was to make his debut at Mrs Bianchi’s benefit concert: ‘Mori makes his Debut next monday Evening [22 May] at Mrs Bianchi’s concert, in the great rooms Hanover Square!!!’ It was not uncommon for young children to perform in public. There is frequent mention of such child prodigies in the newspapers. According to Margaret Chinnery he performed creditably:

Little Mori played extremely well, and was much applauded and admired. He was not in the least frightened or agitated, though the audience was very large; I was delighted to see how profitable and evening it must have been to Mrs Bianchi. As to the music, I will say nothing about it, for music is at a very low ebb in London; perhaps as times go, it was a good concert; most certainly it was a very long one. I never saw Maestro [Bianchi] look so young and handsome.

(M to G, 23 May 1809, Ch.Ch.)

The Bianchis, who had assisted with musical studies at Gillwell since 1801, had grown close to the Chinnerys and were also often included in the Sunday family

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369 M to G, 7 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
370 John Terry Chinnery (1770-1817) was William’s next brother. He married Mary Paton in India in January 1797. Matilda’s two sisters were Elizabeth Marianne (1801-1871) and Mary Henrietta (1802-1837). She also had a brother William Charles (1805-1839), who was born in England. John Chinnery was first a writer in the service of the East India Company, then a partner in the Agency house of Chase Sewell and Chinnery. But by 1815 he was certified insane and confined to the Lunatic Hospital in Madras, where he died in 1817 (see Conner, op. cit.). Mrs Mary Chinnery returned to England on his death. She did not attend either of her daughters’ weddings in India. Matilda departed England in February 1821 (see p. 23) and Elizabeth in June 1821 (see G to M, 4 May 1821, Fisher). There are further references to the John Chinnery family scattered throughout the CFP collection.
371 M to G, 7 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
gatherings. Hence Margaret's interest in Mrs Bianchi's takings on the night of her benefit concert. But Bianchi's wholesome looks on the night of his wife's benefit belied his state of mind. Eighteen months later he was to take his life at his Hammersmith home. Margaret wrote to George that he had been found alone in his bed, and that Madame Bianchi had been performing in the Bath Autumn concerts at the time. On Sunday 18 June 1809 William Spencer, affectionately known by the Chinnerys and his intimates as 'Guglielmo' was part of the family circle, and for the first time Viotti was absent from the Sunday gathering:

Caroline & Matilda are playing a Duett, [little] Margaret is looking on; Guglielmo is in an arm chair by a bright wood fire, listening to the music; Papa on the sofa opposite and (wonderful to tell) not asleep. But where is Amico? You will say. He went to dine with the Duke of Cambridge yesterday, slept in town, and went to day with the Duke of Cambridge to dine with the Duke of Cumberland. So that we are quite alone with Guglielmo, for the first time without Amico.

(M to G, 18 June 1809, Ch.Ch.)

Spencer also was employed as tutor to Caroline Chinnery. He spent varying periods of time under the Chinnery roof between 1807 and 1811 – three months in the winter of 1809-10 – and during that time became close to Viotti. In the Powerhouse collection there are six letters in French from Spencer to Viotti (1808-1811), all written in a bantering tone, and full of witticisms, puns and poems. The intention of most of the letters was to lure Viotti into town with the temptation of female company, lordly dinners and musical entertainment afterwards, such as Spencer himself regularly indulged in. In the first, dated 21 December 1808, Spencer's ribald teasing on the subject of Viotti's gout indicates the level of intimacy between the two men: 'Au reste Madame La Goutte n'est pas je crois Ia seule Madame qui ne soit attachée a vos belles jambes! Dieu vous pardonne, mais je vous crois un tres grand Pecheur! Cependant retablissez vous, et [esperons?] que je ne vous trouve pas allité; Trumpf trouve tres

372 The Times of 2 April 1793 carried an advertisement for a Hanover Square fund-raising concert for French émigrés at which 'Master Julian Baux, a child under five Years of Age' was to perform on the violin.
373 M to G, 4 December 1810, Ch.Ch.
374 See Part II, Chapter 4.
375 The Chinnery children's resident tutor since 1804 was a German, C.L. Trumpf, who was a graduate of Göttingen University.
souvent la pie au nid, mais moi, je n’aimerai pas du tout trouver l’im-pie au nid!!!!!!! The letter is accompanied by an equally irreverent but cleverly constructed poem full of musical allusions (subsequently published in Spencer’s Poems), also on the subject of Viotti’s gout.

In the next three letters, all of which are written during the spring season of 1811, Spencer tries unsuccessfully to bring Viotti to London to meet Lord Bolingbroke, who is anxious to have both Viotti and his pupil Mori at a dinner. After the dinner, Spencer writes, they would go to the Opera ‘ou vous avez des devoirs à remplir aussi bien que moi, nous ferons notre tour ensemble à la Princesse, a Lady Charlemont, a votre Lady Henriette &c &c &c &c’. Spencer does not want Viotti to object that he cannot leave Margaret alone at Gillwell:

N’allez pas m’objecter la solitude de la chère Padrona, George [..] est tres capable d’animer Gillwell pendant votre courte absence – et réellement vous devés quelques petits sacrifices de tems en tems a cette société qui vous veut tant de bien. Tous les bras sont ouverts pour vous, mais ils ne sont pas assés longs pour vous atteindre a Gillwell! Et puis tout cela fait du bien a votre hierarchie c.a.d. a cette petite republique d’Anges a laquelle nous avons, vous et moi, consacré nos ames et nos services en tout genre, – entendez vous?

(William Spencer to Viotti, 6 April [1811], PM 94/143/1 – 29/2)

These last words imply a deeper complicity in amorous adventures, but whether they are founded on fact or are mere expressions of male bravoure, is difficult to tell. Spencer knew Viotti well enough to judge of his reaction, and wrote in mock self-pitying tones: ‘Je vous entendis d’ici, (après quelques douzaines de sacre bleu &c &c &c) “parce que ce coquin est banni de Gillwell, il voudroit que je fusse aussi malheureux que lui!”’ Nevertheless he concluded optimistically: “Mais venez toujours, et en

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376 Some private joke at the expense of Trumpf’s thoroughness.
377 William Spencer to Viotti, 21 December 1808, PM 94/143/1 – 29/1.
379 George Richard, third Viscount Bolingbroke (1761-1824), was Spencer’s cousin.
380 ‘La Princesse’ was the Princess of Wales. Lady Anne Charlemont (d. 1876), the wife of Francis William Caulfield, second Earl of Charlemont (1775-1863), was described in all the Chinnery letters as a beauty. Viotti’s ‘Lady Henriette’ is unidentified.
381 George had come home from Oxford for the Easter break.
382 Spencer’s philandering is fairly certain, judging from some clear indications in the Chinnery letters. But if Viotti had any relationships outside Gillwell there is no evidence of it in the letters of the CFP collection.
attendant ecrives une ligne a Mori. Bolingbroke est tres impatient de le voir. The next letter announces Bolingbroke’s intention of postponing the dinner for Viotti’s sake. Spencer apologises for having forgotten that it was Holy Week (‘J’en demande pardon a l’Eglise, mais j’avais entierement oublie la semaine sainte’) – the reason Viotti must have given as an excuse for not coming into town. His last letter of this period speaks of Lord Bolingbroke’s disappointment in not securing Viotti for his dinner, and of Spencer’s attendance at a concert of the Italian singer Ferrari at the Duchess of Devonshire’s. Another undated letter from Spencer conveys an invitation from the Countess of Dunmore to Viotti and speaks of other spring season invitations.

The last letter from Spencer to Viotti is a congratulatory one, written on the occasion of Viotti’s becoming a British citizen. It is dated 15 October 1811, and was sent to Viotti at 46 West Cliff Brighton, where the Chinnerys were spending the end of the autumn holiday period. Behind his usual flippancy is a sincere happiness for his friend:

Vive la boîte rouge! il y a longtemps que je me felicite de vous avoir pour ami, et maintenant je me rejouis de vous avoir pour compatriote – Je dis rejouis, comme phrase moins energique, que l’autre, attendu que je prefere un ami a vingt millions de compatriotes – Malgre John Bull Jerry Bull et toute la famille bovine. Mais mon ami, a present que vous etes recu [sic] dans le sein de notre bonne mere Mme La Grande Bretagne, n’alllez pas y faire le polisson, c’est une chaste Nature dont il faut respecter le bicher &c &c &c &c Si elle vous offre a teter, ne vous avisez pas de “preferer le vase au breuvage.” Ce sont

“Des ...daines[?] [illegible]
Ultramontaines
Que dans le Nord
Nous blamos fort

(William Spencer to Viotti, 15 October 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 29/5)

383 William Spencer to Viotti, 6 April 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 29/2.
384 Giacomo Gotifredo Ferrari (1763-1842), Italian singer and composer, who played various instruments. He had been an accompanist at Viotti’s Théâtre Feydeau in Paris in 1791. He went to London at the time of the Revolution (1792) and remained for thirty-one years, as a singing teacher.
385 William Spencer to Viotti, 16 May 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 29/4. This Duchess of Devonshire was Elizabeth Foster (1757-1824), second wife of William Cavendish, fifth Duke of Devonshire (d. 1811), whom he married in 1809. The Duke’s first wife, Georgiana Spencer (d. 1806), had been William Spencer’s cousin.
386 William Spencer to Viotti, c. 1810, PM 94/143/1 – 29/6.
No letters from Viotti to Spencer have been preserved in this collection, but clearly Viotti accepted Spencer’s teasing in good part and cherished his friendship as much as the Chinnerys did.

The Sunday family music continued in 1810 and 1811, when the Chinnery family spent an increasing amount of time in London, owing to the ill-health of both Margaret and Caroline. Margaret wrote to George in December 1810 that she wished George could be at Gillwell the following week-end 'as the new Signora Bertinotti and her sposo are coming down which would have amused you.' Her visit could not be postponed until George returned home from Oxford, as the opera in which she was to take the lead role began on 18 December. On 5 March 1811 Margaret took Caroline to hear Bertinotti 'in the first performance of the new opera', but according to Caroline's report to George, she failed to measure up to Catalani's high standards. George wrote that he gathered from his sister's letter 'that Bertinotti has egregiously failed in her attempt "de donner sur le nez à Catalani."'

In the autumn of 1811 Margaret took Caroline for a four month 'restorative' vacation to Eastbourne, Tunbridge Wells and Brighton, following her long and debilitating bout of whooping cough. It was in Brighton that the Chinnerys found such public favour with the Prince Regent, who frequently desired Viotti and Caroline to perform at the Pavilion. A letter from Colonel Bloomfield, aide-de-camp to the Prince of Wales, requesting Caroline to bring her music, and Viotti his violin, exists in the Powerhouse collection:

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387 A box (covered with red leather) used by ministers of state for holding official documents.
388 M to G, 4 December 1810, Ch.Ch. Teresa Bertinotti-Radicati (1776-1854), Italian soprano and teacher, who sang in Mozart's operas at the King's theatre from 1810-1812. She had married the violinist and composer Felice Radicati (1775-1820) in 1801.
389 Phaedra by Bertinotti's husband Felice Radicati. It was not a highly acclaimed work.
390 G to C, 7 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
391 This period is described in detail in Part II, Chapter 4, pp. 590-598.
392 Benjamin Bloomfield, first Baron Bloomfield (1768-1846), lieutenant-general and colonel-commandant of the royal horse artillery, was noticed by the Prince of Wales for his social and musical attainments. He was the Prince's aide-de-camp from 1811 to 1814, and and enjoyed the confidence of the latter during his regency.
Lt Col. Bloomfields compliments to M. Viotti & is commanded by the Prince to say that if Miss Chinnery would have the goodness to bring some Musick & M. Viotti his Violin His Royal Highness would be much gratified –

Pavila [sic] Nov. 4. [1811]

(Benjamin Bloomfield to Viotti, 4 November [1811], PM 94/143/1 – 28/2)

This 1811 autumn vacation during which the Chinnerys were the toast of fashionable society was to be the last truly happy period in their lives.
1812, the Chinnerys’ *annus horribilis*, is well documented in the CFP collection, as is Viotti’s unstinting support of William and consolation of Margaret throughout the whole dreadful period. On the family’s return to Gillwell from Brighton in November 1811 Caroline’s condition deteriorated markedly, and by March, the time that William’s fraud at the Treasury was discovered, she was close to death. Of the twenty-five miscellaneous letters received by Viotti that exist in the Powerhouse collection, fourteen date from 1812 and concern the impending death of Caroline Chinnery and the scandal attached to William’s financial and professional ruin. Most are in French.

The letters of concern for Caroline’s state of health and of support for Margaret Chinnery are all sent to Viotti at William Spencer’s house at 36 Curzon Street, where Margaret took Caroline for treatment in London, and where she ultimately died. The letters come from the Countess of Dunmore at Glen Finart in Scotland, who wanted news of Caroline whom she calls affectionately ‘la chère Allegra’; from a certain ‘Madame Kingsman’, offering a rocking chair for Caroline’s use; from Sophia Johnstone, who has heard of the Chinnerys’ ‘accumulated sorrows […] through the good Duke of Cambridge, in whom you have a most warm and steady friend’; from Madame de Vaudreuil, who accepts the reasons Viotti has given her for William’s undoing – carelessness and oversight in his financial affairs – and believes that Margaret has no need to reproach herself, being an exemplary housekeeper (‘la bonne méthode en tout s’étendait sur son ménage où regnait le plus grand ordre’); and from Madame Bianchi-Lacy who is so affected by the Chinnerys’ woes that she is ‘vraiment malade à force de pleurer’, and wishes to be of service to William in whatever way she can, offering herself as ‘une personne fidele et pas suspecte’, to carry messages to the...
place where he is in hiding, and even professing that there was nothing that she would not do for him.\textsuperscript{398} Two letters from A.B. St Leger\textsuperscript{399} written just before and just after Caroline’s death assure Viotti that he and the Chinnerys can always count on his friendship.\textsuperscript{400} There is also a letter to Viotti from James Perry, editor of the \textit{Morning Chronicle}, promising to keep the Chinnery scandal out of his paper during his brief absence from London, but regretting that it cannot be hushed up indefinitely;\textsuperscript{401} and an undated letter in good French from William himself, written before Caroline’s death, in which he states that ‘cette horrible chute’ derives solely from ‘mes insouciances et mon inattention’, and of which he begs Viotti and the rest of his family to keep Caroline in ignorance.\textsuperscript{402} William warns his family to put no address on their letters, to entrust their communications only to the messengers he sends, and for legal advice to consult only ‘l’opinion sage’ of his friend Wadeson of Austin Friars.\textsuperscript{403} (Two months later, Viotti was to send a letter to the latter on Margaret’s behalf complaining about contradictions in the advice of the solicitor Holroyd concerning Margaret’s claim on the Gillwell Estate, and informing him that Margaret intended to petition the Crown in an attempt to maintain possession of the property.)\textsuperscript{404} The last letter of this period is from Charles Smith (who signs himself ‘C.S.’), asking after ‘poor Mrs Chinnery’, and praising the sensitivity with which Caroline’s funeral service was conducted (‘the mournful ceremony was conducted with the greatest possible respectability & propriety’). Relative to William’s affairs, he informed Viotti that ‘everything has been appraised & a Jury is to sit on Saturday at Gillwell.’\textsuperscript{405}

The sixty-four letters from Viotti to William Chinnery (1793-1823) – of which nine date from 1812 – are proof of Viotti’s heartfelt attachment to his English protector.

\textsuperscript{397} V. de Vaudreuil to Viotti, [March 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/11. Madame de Vaudreuil is also a wine customer of Viotti’s.
\textsuperscript{398} Madame Bianchi-Lacy to Viotti, [March 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/12.
\textsuperscript{399} St Leger (d. 1821), had property in Yorkshire and a house in Montagu Square. He had a son Anthony and a daughter Louisa. He was a close friend of the Chinnerys, possibly a relative of the Grenfell family through Mrs Georgina Grenfell, who was the daughter of St Leger Aldworth, first Viscount Doneraile.
\textsuperscript{400} A.B. St Leger to Viotti, [March 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/13; and A.B. St Leger to Viotti, [April 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/14.
\textsuperscript{401} James Perry to Viotti, [March 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/6.
\textsuperscript{402} W to V, [March 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/8.
\textsuperscript{403} \textit{Ibid.} There is a lengthy correspondence between S.W. Wadeson and Margaret Chinnery (who did not share her husband’s high opinion of this solicitor) in the Powerhouse collection (PM 94/143/1 – 11) regarding her petition to the Crown to try to retain Gillwell.
\textsuperscript{404} Viotti to S. Wadeson (copy), 19 June [1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/17.
\textsuperscript{405} Charles Smith to Viotti, [April 1812], PM 94/143/1 – 28/15.
Unfortunately no letters from William’s side of the correspondence have been preserved, but Viotti’s replies are specific enough to be able to guess at their contents. Viotti’s expressions of friendship and support that are to be found in every one of these letters – especially those of 1812 – are not empty assurances. He carries his words into deeds and puts the welfare of the Chinnerys above all else in his daily life. He treats with kindness every friend that William sends from Sweden, purchases and dispatches every item that William requests from England, and most importantly, assumes the role of protector and companion to William’s wife and family, who were now living in London in a rented house at 10 Charles Street, Manchester Square.

It was the former Gillwell tutor Herr Trumpf who helped Margaret and Viotti – at the latter’s request – to find accommodation in London after their eviction from Gillwell. In a letter dated 5 August 1812 he writes to Viotti that immediately he received Viotti’s request for help he spent the whole morning inspecting properties on their behalf. The house at 10 Charles Street that was eventually selected, and where they remained until 1817, was small – too small for all the bulky furniture that was retrieved from the auction of the Chinnery effects, and Viotti was constantly complaining of ‘ce vilain trou, empifré de meubles’ where there was not enough room for his ‘Quartett, or a Grand Piano-forte supposing we had one.’

Viotti’s 1812 letters to William Chinnery in Gothenburg are mostly concerned with the death of Caroline Chinnery, the choice of a safe haven for William, the actions of the British Government to recover some of William’s debt, and the efforts of Margaret to petition the Crown for the right to retain Gillwell House. But music is always there, both on William’s and on Viotti’s side of the correspondence. The very first letter, dated 30 March 1812, written on the day William left England, begins: ‘Vous êtes hors des griffes du lion, cher bon Ami.’ But while William has escaped his fate, his daughter has not. It has fallen to Viotti to inform William of the impending death of Caroline: ‘Mais helas nos autres inquietudes deviennent de jour en jour,

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406 Margaret was still guardian to Matilda Chinnery and little Margaret Chinnery, so that the Chinnery ménage in London consisted of Margaret, Viotti, George, Matilda and little Margaret.
407 The house at Charles Street which Margaret and Viotti rented after losing Gillwell was not owned by Viotti, as stated by Giazotto (op. cit., p. 155), nor by Margaret’s sister, as stated by Stubbings (op. cit., p. 14). It was owned by a certain Mr Treble, whom Margaret found a most difficult landlord (See M to W, 29 May 1817, PM 94/143/1 – 17/31).
408 M to W, 10 October 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/16.
d’heure en heure plus déchirantes, plus effroyables! Oui, mon Ami, ce n’est que trop vrai qu’il n’y a presque plus d’espoir pour notre chère Caroline.\(^\text{409}\)

In spite of the pressing need to sort out his affairs and find some kind of employment – after all, Gothenburg had been chosen as an initial place of refuge as much for its ample commercial opportunities as for its distance from the Napoleonic wars – William seems to have had the leisure to pursue his interest in music. It is obvious from the letters that he was not short of invitations into Gothenburg society, where he continued to make the acquaintance of musicians, and where, moreover, he desired to continue his cello playing. From Viotti’s letter of 23 June 1812 it is clear that William has asked for his cello to be sent to him. Viotti tells William that the export of the cello is causing him headaches. There are all sorts of imposts to pay and documents to be procured. In the box of provisions (including wigs, pomade, cheese and macaroni) that Viotti is preparing to send to William he says he will find some music, but no instrument on which to play it: ‘Vous y trouverez aussi de la Musique, mais quant à ce qu’il vous faut pour l’exécuter, j’aurai bien de la difficulté à vous le faire parvenir, quoique depuis long temps je l’aye envoyé à M’ Billingsley qui me mande qu’il faut une permission tout exprès pour la sortie, des preuves qu’on a payé les droits et tout plein d’autres formalités qui causent des embarras sans fin.’\(^\text{410}\)

William met two musicians in Gothenburg. The first was the German pianist Ludwig Berger, who had been in St Petersburg in 1812 when it was threatened by Napoleon’s advancing army, and had fled to England via Gothenburg. The second was Viotti’s compatriot, Madame Gerbini, who, having initially tried to establish a career as a singer, discovered a much stronger talent for the violin, much to the surprise of all who heard her. In 1790 the *Mercure de France* had commented: ‘Elle a bien mieux réussi sur le violon. On l’a fort applaudie dans un charmant concerto de M. Viotti, qu’elle a joué avec une précision singulière, avec une habileté d’exécution fort extraordinaire dans une femme, et qui la place au rang des meilleurs professeurs.’\(^\text{411}\)

William must have asked about this lady’s past, as Viotti replies that she was a pupil of Pugnani (as he had been), and that he was impressed with the sound she had been able

\(^{409}\) V to W, 30 March 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 14/4.
\(^{410}\) V to W, 23 June 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 14/7.
\(^{411}\) *Mercure de France*, 27 novembre 1790, pp. 152, 153, cited by La Laurencie, *op. cit.*, p. 111. La Laurencie also notes that the concerto in question was Viotti’s 3rd in A.
to produce on her Stradivarius when he heard her play in Paris (although he did not mention that she played one of his own concertos):

Madame Gerbini est élève de Pugnani, je l’ai entendue à Paris pour la première fois, j’ai trouvé qu’elle jouait très bien, qu’elle avait un nerf masculin et tirait un très bon son d’un excellent Stradivarius. J’ignore si elle a toujours conservé cet instrument. Nous l’avons revue à Londres depuis, autant que je m’en rappelle elle ne frappe personne, surtout y étant venue comme chanteuse et chantant alors couci couci...

(V to W, 14 August 1812, PM 94/143/1 - 14/9)

William appears to have been much struck by her beauty as well as her music. Viotti, in his flippantly irreverent style remarks:

Vous me paroissez assez content de sa personne! Est-ce qu’elle serait devenue passable? Je l’ai toujours trouvée laide comme le pecM. Elle voyageait alors avec son Pere, maintenant vous dites que ce Pere est devenu un Frère; à la bonne heure mais je ne l’ai jamais connu. Que le Ciel benisse ma compatriote, et qu’elle puisse gagner beaucoup de [Prix-Daler]?

(Ibid.)

In another (undated) letter Gerbini’s name appears again. William has told Viotti of a private concert at which he played with Gerbini. Viotti, full of regrets for their enforced separation, replies with hearty congratulations on the way William made the fourth string vibrate: il faut que je vous complimente sur la maniere dont vous avez exécuté la seconde Basse au concert de la Gerbini! Parmfois c’était superbe, comme vous faisiez ronfler la quatrieme! Cher et bon Cinnerino comme j’aurois voulu vous entendre!...

(V to W, c. August 1812, PM 94/143/1 - 14/10.

In Viotti’s letter of 5 August 1812, he describes a magnificent fête at the home of Sophia Johnstone and her brother at which all of fashionable London society was present, including her great friend the Prince Regent. The wealthy Johnstones were as close to the Chinnerys as Lord Glenbervie had portrayed them in his Journals. Their bond of friendship was cemented by a common love of music. Sophia Johnstone, dubbed ‘la Signorina’ by Viotti, was famous in London for her lavish parties at which

412 V to W, c. August 1812, PM 94/143/1 - 14/10.
413 Douglas (1910), op. cit., pp. 143-144.
the number of musicians rivalled the large contingent to be found at the Chinnerys’ home only a couple of years earlier. On this occasion singers from the opera company at King’s theatre were present. Margaret, a recluse from society in the first year of her sorrow, was not present on this night, but George Chinnery and Viotti were. The high point of the evening, which Viotti described for William in his letter, was the flattering number of enquiries that the Prince made of the Chinnery family. Woven through Viotti’s highly entertaining narrative, like a recurring melody in a piece of music, is his description of the events taking place in the music room. The Prince enters, catches sight of Viotti, bids him good evening, and passes into the music room, where he sits down on the sofa next to the piano. ‘On commence le chant, on execute une piece, deux pieces, puis la troisieme pendant les quelles George et moi nous restions dans cette premiere piece.’ The music is interrupted abruptly by the arrival of a bundle of dispatches from Spain from the Duke of Wellington, whose victories are read aloud to the gathering. During the reading Viotti and George slip into the music room and take up a position close to the Prince. ‘On chante God Save the King (détéstablement par parenthese, par Bertinotti, Tramezzani414 &c) après quoi la Signorina vient à moi et me dit que le P[rin]ce seroit bien aise de m’entendre, ajoutant vous imaginez bien tous les compliments qu’elle sait faire. Je laisse mon compagnon, je traverse le petit cabinet ou étoit mon Violon.’ Coming back into the music room Viotti is stopped by the Prince who enquires solicitously after Mrs Chinnery, sympathises with her, remembers Caroline’s playing at Brighton in the previous autumn, wants to know where William Chinnery is, and remarks on Perceval’s kindness in finding George a situation in the Treasury.415 ‘Mon tour arrivoit en attendant – je prends le Violon. Le meilleur des Princes s’asseoit sur une chaise prés du Canapé [...] De là il me fait tout plein de questions avéc une bonté inexprimable pendant que j’accordois avéc Vacari416 et que je

414 Diomiro Tramezzani (b. c. 1776), Italian tenor. He performed at the King’s Theatre from 1809 to 1814, then returned to Italy.
415 Spencer Perceval (1762-1812), was prime minister and first lord of the Treasury from 1809 to 1812. Having dismissed William from his post at the Treasury in March 1812, he placed his son in the same department just two weeks later (see Part III, pp. 606-607).
416 Francesco Vaccari (b. 1773), Italian violinist, had, like Viotti, been noticed as a child by Pugnani. Having toured Italy and lived several years in Milan, he was taken in 1804 into the service of the King of Spain. Fétis, ed. (vol. 8, pp. 420-421) says that he lost this position during the Peninsula Wars, and went to Paris, Germany and in 1815 to Lisbon. The Chinnery letters, concert announcements in the Times, and Philharmonic Society programmes all prove that he was in England from 1812 to 1815, in which year (according to Fétis) he returned to Madrid and entered again into the service of the King of Spain. The Franco-Spanish war of 1823 led to his dismissal, after which Fétis claims that he went to
preparois la musique [...] Je joue, et il m’a paru que j’avais le bonheur de le satisfaire. Mon Duo fini, il m’a fait l’honneur de me rappeler à lui, pour s’informer de vous avec un interet et une bonté qui m’ont fait venir des larmes aux yeux." Another page of narrative follows, in which the Prince also offers sympathy to William, who, Viotti has informed him, left England with only £80, saying that he was a victim of his own confiding nature and his generosity towards others – an opinion with which the Prince professes to concur. After holding the Prince in conversation as long as possible, Viotti finishes by reminding the Prince very pointedly of George’s talents being wasted in the Treasury and of his suitability to a diplomatic career. Viotti withdraws. ‘Un Duo, mia Sorella, allait commencer, je me retirai. Il ne me perdit cependant pas de vue cet aimable et magnanime Prince, me faisant des signes sûr la bonté de la Musique &c…’

In his letter of 14 August, Viotti comes back to the vexed question of the export of the cello. William must have owned two cellos, one of which was a highly prized Amati, for Viotti says that the Amati has been returned and that he will attempt to send the ‘mediocre’ cello only, in case of accident. The music he is sending William is his own composition, and he is disappointed to learn that part of it was missing on arrival, because Smith had slipped a business letter inside one of the sheets of music – ‘dans le 1er Violon des Quatuors dedié à Phillipe C[ipriani].’ He apologises for not...
being able to send him his quartets that had been engraved in Paris, as he does not have them in England.

In the same letter is a long description of a new quartet that he has just finished composing and which he intends dedicating to ‘le bon Duc’ [Cambridge]. Viotti, who is modestly happy with his composition, says he will copy it out for his friend Grant as a present to his nephews. The copying will take some time, after which he will prepare it for sale, have it engraved, and dedicated to the Duke who has not yet heard it. Which quartet Viotti is referring to is unclear. It does not appear to figure in White’s Thematic Catalogue. So as not to disturb Margaret, the four musicians removed themselves to the London home of Lord Dunmore, who had generously offered it to Viotti for this purpose while he was at his seat at Glen Finart in Scotland:

J’ai essayé l’autre jour les Quatuors nouveaux avec Vacari et les deux Shram. Si je n’en étois pas l’auteur je dirais qu’ils sont réellement charmants, plus que ça même, mais la modestie de votre Jean Baptiste doit lui imposer silence. Vous n’avez pas d’idée comme ces messieurs en étoient contents. Je vais en faire une copie pour Grand [Grant] – c’est un présent que je veux faire à ses neveux, et vous sentez quel temps doit me prendre cette copiade. Quand tout sera prêt, je m’occuperai de les vendre ici pour être gravés et dédiés au bon Duc qui ne les a pas encore entendu. – J’ai voulu avoir cette séance à porte close, et pour que le tapage musical n’affectat pas la Padrona, nous avons été tous quatre faire notre essay chez Lord Durunore qui étant en Ecosse m’a dit de faire usage de sa maison quand bon me semble.

(V to W, 14 August 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 14/9)

It is also obvious from these letters that William is still doing favours for friends, as far as is in his power to do so. In Gothenburg he has offered the services of Viotti to two fellow countrymen, to obtain an advantageous deal from Viotti’s good friend the pianoforte maker, John Broadwood. Viotti is ever ready to oblige, but foresees

of the Chinnerys. The Cipriani quartets were composed more than six years earlier, according to Chappell White’s Thematic Catalogue (p. 57).

422 Charles Grant (1746-1823), statesman and philanthropist, chairman of the East India Company.

423 Of the nine entries in Chappell White’s Thematic Catalogue, three are dedicated to different persons, five are published outside London, and the remaining possibility, Chappell White’s Ila: 6-11 (first published by Clementi, Banger, Hyde, Collard and Davis), consists of six serenades for flute, violin, viola, and cello. But by 1812 that publishing house was known as Clementi, Banger, Collard, Davis and Collard. It is not known what instrument the second Schram brother played.

424 John Broadwood (1732-1812), founder (with Burkat Shudi) of the English piano-making firm of the same name. His instruments impressed Haydn during a 1794 visit to his workshop, and he bought one
difficulties. The thirty-three per cent discount that they are seeking is not even given to dealers or professors like himself. The other obstacle is that old Mr Broadwood having just died, Viotti will be obliged to treat with his sons, whom he does not know so well.

and had it sent home to Vienna. His pianos were used by leading musicians of the last decade of the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century.
During 1812 and 1813 Margaret maintained her reclusive life-style, refusing all invitations, and receiving guests in her own home only in the second half of 1813. After the heart-wrenching events of the previous eighteen months during which she had seen all her possessions sold at auction, her only consolation was the steadfast support of Viotti, who brought with him the consolation of music. On 4 September 1813 she wrote the following words in her Journal:

Oh who shall tell, who could describe what I have suffered in those eighteen months!...when my spirit was oppressed and fearful,—then, our unimpeachable friend,—he who in friendship has no equal,—he supported me,—reopened me,—talked of my courage, tried to persuade me that my fortitude was equal to the firm encounter,—and I returned to the charge.

(Margaret Chinnery's Diary (1812–1813), PM 94/143/1–10)

Margaret had always been of the opinion that 'music is salutory, both to body and mind', and living with Viotti meant that music was part of her daily life. But it was not until sixteen months after her husband's flight and her daughter's death that Margaret was able to admit an outsider into their domestic circle for an evening of music. Appropriately, their first visitor came from Sweden, sent to them by William. Mr Peterson, an amateur violinist who had clearly shared some musical evenings with William in Gothenburg, came bearing first-hand news of William, and so was warmly received at Charles Street. Catching sight of Caroline's harp in the drawing room, he wished to hear it played. In what must have been a cathartic experience for Margaret, she heard the sounds of her daughter's harp — played by little Margaret — for the first time since Caroline's death. Viotti organised a small family concert:

Amico made [little] Margaret play a sonata Caroline had taught her,—and he accompanied it. M. Peterson, asked for something else, and heard the variations of the folies d'Espagne. Then Amico proposed playing a Duet with him,—which after some compliments & excuses, was done, and very well done for an Amateur. They played two of those dedicated to us. I then proposed Amico's letting M. Peterson hear him alone,—he complied, and played the famous Minuet of Pugnani, and afterwards a

425 M to G, 14 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
Polacca. To conclude, Matilda played the new concerto just arranged by J. Cramer, accompanied by Amico & M. Peterson.

(M to W, 18 July 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/11)

The establishment of the Philharmonic Society, of which Viotti was a founding member, also provided an important distraction for Margaret from her mourning. From the time of its inception she took a personal interest its structure and development, and followed with eager anticipation the reappearance in public of her favourite violinist. As there was at the time no permanent body which performed orchestral or chamber music in London, the Society filled a gap in the performing sphere. According to M. B. Foster, author of the *History of the Philharmonic Society*,\(^\text{426}\) the inspiration for the Society came from Salomon’s famous Haydn concerts. Music in London in 1813 was a far cry from the high level it had attained in the last decade of the eighteenth century. In 1809 Margaret had already remarked on its low standard.\(^\text{427}\) The aim of the Society was therefore to ‘rekindle in the public mind that taste for excellence in instrumental music which has so long remained in a latent state.’\(^\text{428}\) Because the stated object of the Society was to foster instrumental ensemble music, the performance of vocal music without a full orchestral accompaniment was banned, as were solos, duets and concertos, all of which, it was claimed, emphasised virtuoso performances to the detriment of the orchestral whole. To promote ‘the best and most approved instrumental music’, only ‘Full Pieces, Concertantes for not less than three principal instruments, Sestets, Quintets and Trios’\(^\text{429}\) were allowed. These restrictive rules were soon found to be unworkable, and all of the proscriptions were broken within a few years.

Many of the professional musicians who constituted the thirty founding members of the Society had at one time or another graced the Chinnery drawing room: flautist Andrew Ashe, pianists Ludwig Berger and Muzio Clementi, violinists Johann Salomon, Felix Janiewicz and of course Viotti. Among the Society’s associates (again consisting entirely of musicians) were four more Viotti/Chinnery friends, including Nicolas Mori, who performed in a string quartet in the second performance of the Society on 15 March 1813. The other three were Giuseppe Naldi, violinist Paolo

\(^{427}\) See p. 137.
\(^{428}\) Preliminary announcement from the original committee of founders, quoted in M. B. Foster (*op. cit.*), p. 4.
\(^{429}\) *Ibid.*
Spagnoletti and Viotti’s friend and collaborator in quartet composition, the violinist Francesco Vaccari. Vaccari and Spagnoletti shared the lead of the orchestra with Salomon, Franz Cramer and Viotti for the first three years of the Philharmonic’s existence. Two of the founders of the Society, Henry Dance (Secretary) and William Ayrton (Treasurer), were also friends of Viotti and Margaret Chinnery. The patron of the Philharmonic Society was the music loving Prince of Wales.

One of the founding members and regular performers in the Philharmonic concerts was also one of the harshest critics of its proscriptive rules. This was the German pianist Ludwig Berger, whom William had recommended to Viotti when the former went to London in 1812. Berger gave his first performance in London on 26 April 1813, when he played a concerto at the New Rooms, Hanover Square. Berger had been expected to dinner at Margaret’s on the evening of 16 July 1813 with William’s other Gothenburg friend Mr Peterson, but had disappointed his hosts. About that time Berger himself wrote William a rather jaunty letter – proving that he knew William well enough to jest with him -- telling him that he had met William’s wife, whom he calls ‘l’emblème de la bonté et de la douceur’. His mock-serious criticism of the English public is redolent of Viotti’s criticism of English concert-goers in his 1794 Bath letters, and he complains of a lack of musical appreciation in England (‘Il me paraît qu’ici personne aime la musique’). His criticism becomes harsher when he speaks of the [Philharmonic] ‘société’:

Une des lois de cette société défend d’y jouer de Solo et Duo et les Concerto. Mais les Concertantes sont admis. A l’occasion donc que Clementi proposoit que je devois y jouer une Fantaisie de Beethoven (la louange de la musique) une pièce qui en vérité est très peu avantageux au Pianoforte, mais où les chœurs et les Soloparties de l’orchestre font la principale partie -- Cramer donc s’opposoit de tout son mieux, disant que c’était un Concerto, et qu’il étoit composé exprès pour les delices de Fortepiano, que lui,

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420 Paolo Spagnoletti (1768-1834), Italian violinist who resided in England. Spagnoletti achieved recognition as an orchestral leader rather than as a virtuoso performer. In 1804-05 he had also acted as a regular leader of the King’s Theatre orchestra.

421 Brother of William Dance (1755-1840), the English violinist who was one of the thirty original members of the Society. Henry Dance was a lawyer, and it was he who acted for Viotti in his wine partnership with Charles Smith (‘mon Lawyer H. Dance’, V to W, 31 May 1816, PM 94/143/1 - 14/33).

422 William Ayrton (1777-1858), English composer, writer and impresario.

423 The Times, 24 April 1813.

424 M to W, 13 July 1813, PM 94/143/1 - 17/11.

Judging by the last few words, Berger’s criticism was not only aimed at the prohibitive rules of the Society, but also at the petty professional jealousies which existed among the members of the music fraternity. The pianist Johann Baptist Cramer, the most gifted member of the Cramer family of musicians, was also a founding member of the Philharmonic Society and was one of its principal pianoforte ‘conductors’ in its first season. Berger attributed his rigorous adherence to the Society’s rule prohibiting the performance of concertos to a fear of being upstaged by him (Berger), even though Cramer’s own performance was not to take place until three weeks later.

The programmes for the Philharmonic concerts of 1813 featured many Viotti and Chinnery friends: Naldi, Spagnoletti, Vaccari, Mori, Janiewicz, Clementi, Berger and Mrs Bianchi-Lacy and her new singer husband John Lacy. Viotti’s old friend from the 1780s, the composer Luigi Cherubini, with whom he had lodged in Paris before coming to England, was the most popular composer of the concerts, supplying thirty different compositions for them. His well-loved overture the ‘Anacreon’ was repeatedly given. On 17 May 1813, at the fifth concert of the Philharmonic Society, Viotti returned to the public stage after sixteen years’ absence. Although the Philharmonic Society discouraged stardom, Viotti was undoubtedly the drawcard for the concert-goers on this evening. He was both leader of the orchestra and composer of a new string quartet that he was to perform that night with Vaccari, Spagnoletti and Crouch. Although Margaret did not attend, she was sufficiently excited about Viotti’s return to the public arena to keep her letter to William open until his return from the concert hall:

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436 The lead of the orchestra was shared between the principal violin and the pianist (who had the full score in front of him). This arrangement was well-nigh unworkable, with the lead violinist frequently coming into conflict with ‘the gentleman at the Piano’ (M.B. Foster, op. cit., p. 6). It was not until 1820, when Louis Spohr produced a baton and began conducting from a ‘separate music-desk’ (M.B. Foster, p. 42), that the modern conductor was born.


438 John Lacy (d. c. 1865), English bass. He had been a pupil of Rauzzini at Bath.

439 Frederick William Crouch (c. 1783-1844), cellist.
I have kept my Packet open till now, 10 minutes past midnight, — and Amico is not yet returned, — I therefore conclude that a great deal has been encored! You must wait till the next Post-day for particulars.

½ past 12 — Here he is! Nothing can be imagined more brilliant! Amico was caressed, & complimented by almost every individual, — the concert went off to admiration, & it was with difficulty that every one of the pieces was not encored. The Duke sent for Amico between the acts, & said that the Regent fully intended to come, & that if he did, Amico must repeat his Quartett. However he was prevented from coming, which I regret, for as he has never yet heard these it would have been a pretty compliment to Amico —

All the Boxes were filled and every subscriber there before the premier coup d'archet, — the professors are all enchanted, — in short his success was so compleat as we could wish!

(M to W, [17 May 1813], PM 94/143/1 – 17/55)

This new quartet by Viotti may well have been the one he had composed the previous year at Lord Dunmore's house and had dedicated to 'le bon Duc'[Cambridge]. It was natural that the Duke of Cambridge, one of Viotti's most ardent admirers, should have been in attendance at Viotti's first public reappearance and (if the work in question were the one Viotti dedicated to him) eager to hear the piece performed in public. In the Royal College of Music there is an undated letter from the Duke of Cambridge to Viotti which lends support to this hypothesis. He writes:

Mon cher Viotti,

Je m'empresse de Vous accuser le reçu de Votre Billet, et de vous dire qu'ayant oublié la répétition de ce matin j'ai envoyé chès Vous pour Vous proposer une petite Musique, et pour avoir le plaisir de Vous voir, et de Vous demander des nouvelles de Madame Chinnery.

Je ne manquerai pas demain de me rendre au Concert pour entendre le premier coup d'archet.

Adieu, faites bien des compliments à Madame Chinnery et à George, et soyez assuré de mon estime.

Votre très dévoué

Adolphus Frederick

(Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, c. 1813, 'Viotti Papers', RCM)

From the Duke's assurance that he will not fail to be seated by the beginning of the following day's concert, the letter might be dated 16 May 1813, the day before Viotti's
first Philharmonic concert. It is unlikely that the Duke was referring to any of Viotti’s later performances at the Philharmonic, as he was in Hanover for most of the next twenty-three years. Nor were his remarks likely to have been written the last time Viotti had performed in public sixteen years previously, as George was then a mere child of six, and William Chinnery would have been included in his salutations. Moreover, what could be more natural than Viotti’s inviting him to the rehearsal of a piece of music that was dedicated to him.

The Duke of Cambridge was one of the original subscribers to the Philharmonic concerts, as a letter addressed to Viotti at 10 Charles Street, Manchester Square, shows:

Je m’empresse de Vous accuser le reçu de Votre billet et de Vous prier de me mettre sur la liste des souscripteurs à la société Philharmonique. C’est avec un plaisir que j’assisterai à ces Concerts, et je me flatte que cette Société réussisse à rétablir le goût pour la Musique Instrumentale qui malheureusement est tombée en décadence dans ce pays ci.

(Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, c. March 1813, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

On the top of the letter is a handwritten note, presumably by Heron-Allen, the original owner of the ‘Viotti Papers’, which states: ‘Letter in which HRH consents to become a subscriber to the Philharmonic Concerts. Viotti took an active interest in their arrangement, which gives to this letter the date of 1813.’ Both the above letters are sent from Cambridge House, and appear to be close in date.

The success of the Philharmonic Society in the year of its inception meant that every one wanted tickets in its second year. In 1814 and possibly 1815 Viotti was a director of the Society (appointed from among the thirty members to administer the concerts), and was therefore inundated with requests for tickets. Among the rich and famous who came knocking at his door for favours was the eccentric French extrovert, irresistible magnet to English high society and author of the recently published work on Germany that was the talk of London, Madame de Staël. She had arrived in England

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440 The *DNB* (vol. 1, p. 140) notes that in 1814 the Duke of Cambridge ‘took command in the electorate of Hanover on the recovery of its independence after its sometime annexation to the kingdom of Westphalia’, and in November 1816 was appointed to the viceroyalty. He continued in this office until 1837, paying intermittent visits to England.

441 *De l’Allemagne* (Nicolle: Paris, 1810), was published in England simultaneously in French and English in November 1813. Madame de Staël had sold the rights to the British publisher Murray for 1,500 guineas.
in June 1813 accompanied by her son Auguste, her daughter Albertine — who kept a journal of their stay in England — and the twenty-five-year-old ex-hussar husband whom she had secretly wedded in May 1811, John Rocca. The diarist Glenbervie, ignorant of the marriage — as was everyone in England — identified the latter as her ‘young, handsome, and sickly’ secretary-lover ‘Mr Raucart or Rocarte’.

Soon after Madame de Staël’s arrival in England Viotti left a card at her door asking if she remembered him from Paris, and got the following reply, sent to him two hours after his visit:

Comment Monsieur Viotti peut-il supposer que Mme de Staël n’ait pas conservé un profond souvenir de son admirable talent. Elle desire extrêmement le revoir, et personne ne le recevra avec plus d’empressement qu’elle.

Ce Lundi 28. Juin 1813

(V to W, 28 June 1813, PM 94/143/1-14/14)

Having copied out her words for William, Viotti adds: ‘N’est-ce pas très aimable? Demain j’irai voir le Phenix, et j’espère que son esprit ne me rendra pas trop bête.’

Madame de Staël’s formidable reputation for possessing a quick and merciless tongue was a worry to all who met her. Even Margaret Chinnery was alarmed when the grand lady announced her intention of coming to visit.

For the summer of 1813 Margaret and Viotti had rented a cottage in rural North Fulham. The same summer Madame de Staël had taken a house in the pretty country town of Richmond. On the afternoon of Sunday 25 August, just as Margaret was about to step into the Johnstones’ carriage with George and Amico for a private visit to their friends’ house, William Spencer arrived unannounced, accompanied by Madame de Staël, who had herself proposed the visit. In spite of Margaret’s trepidation before the meeting, her fine sense of diplomacy and her quick intelligence — qualities which had in  

442 This journal constitutes the basis of Norman King’s article on Madame de Staël ‘Le Séjour en Angleterre (1813–1814)’, in Simone Balayé’s Les Carnets de voyage de Madame de Staël: Contribution à la genèse de ses œuvres, Librairie Droz: Geneva, 1971.

443 John Rocca (1788–1818), had fought with the hussars in Spain and received several bullet wounds which permanently incapacitated him. Tall, thin and handsome, he had fallen in love with Madame de Staël when she showed him kindness. He had pursued her with passion and succeeded in gaining her affection in spite of the twenty-two-year age gap and their very different interests. She exchanged secret marriage vows with him before a priest and a witness on 1 May 1811. Although she had a son by him, it was only at the reading of her will in 1817 that the marriage became known.

444 Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 221.

445 V to W, 28 June 1813, PM 94/143/1–14/14.
happier days made her the darling of London society — enabled her both to please Madame de Staël and to guess at her motives. Madame de Staël expressed her profound regret that Margaret and Viotti had not fixed upon Richmond for their summer retreat, and Margaret was alert to her true meaning:

This [regret] was addressed chiefly to Amico, who seems to be a great favourite, and upon whom she reckoned much I believe for the advantage of the daughter. I took the opportunity of telling her how much the Duke of Cambridge admired Madamé de Staël, and that he had talked to me a long time about her in a visit he made me a few days ago. This is true. I proposed Amico’s going to see her at Richmond with his violin, telling her that I regretted she had not yet, since her arrival in England, enjoyed the pleasure of hearing him. This was agreeable to her, — and Tuesday next is fixed, for Amico and George to dine & sleep there, — [...] But she also proposed coming to dine here in my hermitage!

(M to W, 25 August 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/14)

It was true that the Duke of Cambridge had paid Margaret a visit a few days earlier and that Madame de Staël had been one of the topics of their conversation, the Duke having told Margaret that Madame de Staël was impressed by the fluency of George’s French. Madame de Staël had already met Viotti and George on a number of occasions in the course of her furious round of visits, but had not had an opportunity of hearing Viotti play. George’s popularity in London society, far from wilting under the effects of his father’s disgrace, had on the contrary burgeoned, and he had been invited by Madame de Staël on at least three other occasions, one of which was with the writer Mary Berry, who noted in her journal of Saturday 26 [February] 1814 that she had dined at Madame de Staël’s in company with ‘William Spencer, and the young Chinnery’. 446

George had also been part of the company at a dinner for Madame de Staël hosted by William Spencer at his Curzon Street house, as was Lord Glenbervie, who named all the guests — including ‘Viotti with young Chinnery’. 447

446 Extracts from the Journals and Correspondences of Miss Berry from 1783 to 1852, (ed. Theresa Lewis), Longmans: London, 1865, p. 5. Mary Berry (1763-1852), friend of Horace Walpole, was a fashionable writer, whose best remembered work was her Journals and Correspondence. She kept company with Madame de Staël during the latter’s 1813-14 visit to England, and Madame de Staël held her in great esteem, calling her ‘by far the cleverest woman in England’ (in S. Kunitz, ed., British Authors of the Nineteenth Century, Wilson: New York, 1936, p. 49).

447 Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 175.
The dinner for Madame de Staël at Margaret Chinnery’s Fulham cottage took place on Tuesday 14 September 1813, slightly bruising Margaret’s inclination for seclusion. But there was no gainsaying Madame de Staël. Spencer, one of her intimates during her stay in England, was dragged around with her like a puppy, and Viotti, who was just beginning his social intercourse with her, was soon to find her imperious commands irksome. On 13 September 1813 Margaret wrote to William:

It is now half past 12 oclock and Guglielmo is gone (much against his inclination) to the Stamp Office, and to remain in town till tomorrow. He is to bring me a variety of articles from his house for our dinner, and I have sent Sophy to see after Soup &c &c for I must try what can be done in order to receive this great person as well as I can. It is surely a great compliment to me for her & her daughter to come all the way from Richmond and return there late at night. I dare say she does it partly to oblige Amico, — but it is certainly a very great compliment from her.

(M to W, 13 September [1813], PM 94/143/1 – 17/15)

Madame de Staël had arrived in England too late for the 1813 season of the Philharmonic concerts, and strenuously desired to have tickets to the 1814 season. These Viotti furnished her with—one each for her and her daughter. Matilda Chinnery’s Journal\(^{448}\) — undertaken with the purpose of keeping William informed of the minutiae of the Chinnerys’ everyday life — provides some interesting personal details of the 1814 season, especially around the time of Viotti’s own appearance in the fourth concert on Monday 28 March, at which he was once again to play one of his own compositions and lead the orchestra. In the month of March Matilda’s Journal is full of accounts of the various applications made to Viotti for tickets. On 9 March it was Colonel C. W. Thornton,\(^{449}\) the Duke of Cumberland’s aide-de-camp who called ‘upon a pretext that he wanted to speak to Amico about the Duke of Cumberland’s subscription at the Philharmonic’. On 17 March: ‘Amico has obtained an admission to the Philharmonic Concerts for the Duke of Devonshire, on the plea that having several times lent his Apartments in Burlington House for the repetitions this was due to him’. On 21 March:

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\(^{448}\) Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 27.

[Amico] called upon Miss Porter to give her a ticket for the Philharmonic Concert at which he leads himself.' On 24 March: 'Just before dinner, Lady Spencer sent her Steward to ask Amico to give a ticket to Miss Chattham for Monday, but Amico told him that his tickets were disposed of - however he promised to do all he could to try and obtain one for her.' On 25 March, three days before Viotti's concert, she notes: 'Amico is just going to play over some of the pieces down stairs with five people whom he has appointed - This is only a private repetition.' On 26 March is noted Madame de Staël's 'selfish' request:

At 11 o'clock George and him [William Spencer] went together to Madame de Staël's, — it was a fine assembly & the Duchess of York was there. — Only conceive Mad'm de Staël's requesting M. Spencer to give up to her his philharmonic ticket for Monday [the day of Viotti's concert]! This is very selfish of her, for Amico has given her a ticket, and also M. Ayrton's so that her daughter and herself have both got a ticket. — It is therefore evident that she wants to give one to a man, & this man is certainly Mon. de Rockaur [Rocca] for she has been trying de toutes les manières to obtain a ticket for him, — but her attempts are without success. We hope M. S. will not give up his ticket to her.

(Matilda Chinnery's Journal, 26 March [1814], PM 94/143/1 - 27)

Although the exact spelling of the name is illegible, Matilda, whose journal is largely her own ingenuous rendering of Margaret's opinions, must mean the 'M. Raucart' of Lord Glenbervie's Journals. That Madame de Staël's summonses to Viotti were becoming a burden to him is evident in Matilda's entry for the 28 March, the day of his concert:

Amico was not of our little dinner party yesterday. For the last week he was engaged to Mad'm de Staël's to dinner. He first tried to get off this invitation under the pretext that he must leave her at desert [sic] on account of his repetition at night. But still she would have him & he went. By ten o'clock however he returned home leaving them at Coffee. Fifteen were at table. Madame Catalani, Mr Valabrey, Baron Jacobi, M. Spencer, M.

450 Jane Porter (1776-1850), English novelist, who knew Margaret Chinnery, and whose 1810 novel Scottish Chiefs was enjoyed by her.
451 Presumably Elizabeth, wife of William Spencer's elder brother John, who was a patron of the Philharmonic Society and one of Viotti's principal wine customers.
452 Possibly a member of the Pitt family.
453 Baron Jacobi-Kloest, Prussian minister plenipotentiary in London until 1817.
Greville, Lady Mackintosh &c&c. George went to her Evening-party just before Amico came in.

(Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, 28 March [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 27)

Matilda continues her Journal for that day in the evening, when she describes the domestic accommodations to Viotti’s concert:

We dined at ½ past 5 o’clock, that Amico might not eat his dinner in a hurry. — At 7 o’clock he took a cup of coffee, and at a ¼ past 7 o’clock he left us. It has just struck 8 o’clock so I suppose he is beginning. George dined with Mr J[ohn] Spencer, and he was to go with them & Mr W. Spencer to the Concert.

(Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, 31 [recte 30] March [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 27)

Evidently William Spencer did not give up his ticket to Madame de Staël.

Matilda’s Journal of the following Wednesday [30 March 1814] contains an account of the Monday night concert:

Towards 10 o’clock on Monday night just as Mama [Margaret Chinnery] had begun her letter to you we were surprised by Mr Spencer’s arrival. The quartetto was over, & had been divinely played, — he would have staid to hear some more of the music had he not been very much annoyed, — first by being in a box with five ladies who would chatter about Mr Kean while the quartetto was going on, & secondly by finding himself afterwards by the side of petty professors, who instead of admiring the divine music, & Amico’s incomparable talents, said that he was weak on the 4th string, and that the applause given to him was unmerited. All this provoked M. Spencer so much that he determined to get away from them; — he then thought of Mama, that she was alone, anxious to hear Amico’s success, and asked for a Coach & came here. — We made him some tea, & he related to us Amico’s Triumph, & his own little adventure! — George dined tête à tête with Mr S[pen] in Curzon St, for Lord Shaftesbury dined at Mr J. S[pen]'s & Mr S[pen] did not like it.

454 It is unclear which member of the Greville family Matilda is referring to. It is most probably Col. Henry Francis Greville (1760-1816), who was also a Chinnery friend (see p. 584, note 132).
455 Wife of Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832), who was a doctor of medicine, judge, literary critic, historian and philosopher, and Madame de Staël’s greatest friend in England. He wrote glowing reviews of her Réflexions sur le suicide and De l’Allemagne in the Edinburgh Review in 1813.
456 Edmund Kean (1787-1833), great Shakespearean actor, who took the limelight after Kemble’s retirement in 1817.
457 The sixth Earl of Shaftesbury (1768-1851) was married to William Spencer’s aunt.
They were there in time to hear le premier coup d'archet. All was over at 11 o'clock & then they returned home & found Mr S[pencher] here.


The professors' criticisms mentioned by Matilda may have been attributable merely to petty jealousy or may have been warranted, given Viotti's long absence from the performing stage. In any case, he was loudly applauded by the public, and Matilda remarked on the following day that 'Amico excited much more admiration at his concert last Monday than he ever did before.'

458 Matilda Chinnery's Journal, 28 March [1814], PM 94/143/1 - 27.
In an undated letter to William, which was almost certainly written in 1814, Viotti speaks of William’s friend Mr Peterson wanting a subscription to the Philharmonic concerts. Viotti remarks that in his capacity as director he is well able to oblige his friend, but in the same breath vents his dissatisfaction with his directorship. It is a lot of trouble for no [personal] benefit, he says. This may be a reference to the fact that directors received no remuneration, either for managing the Society, or for giving performances, and moreover were obliged to pay, along with all the other members and associates, a yearly subscription. He then makes a cryptic remark to the effect that if the ‘Academy’ does not eventuate next year he will bid adieu to the Philharmonic, being tired of his onerous duties as director:

[...] en tout cas, comme je suis cette année un des Directeurs, je pourrai par ci par là lui donner un de mes deux billets d’admission [sic], bien entendu quand notre George n’en voudra pas. J’aurais cependant bien voulu me dispenser de ce Directorat, mais on n’a jamais voulu accorder [sic] à mes désirs — c’est dommage, car c’est beaucoup de peine pour la satisfaction de je ne sais qui — J’espère bien que l’année prochaine, ou ce sera une Académie, ou je dirai adieu aux Philharmoniques.

(V to W, [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 14/18)

Which academy does Viotti mean? The Royal Academy of Music was not founded until 1822, through the efforts of John Fane, Lord Burghersh, although there were some attempts to found a national school of music before then. The music historian Cazalet says that around the time of establishment of the 1822 Academy of Music, there were some alternative plans put forward, one of which was proposed by a T.F. Walmisley, who aimed to establish an Academy of Music modelled on the Royal Academy for Painting, along the same lines as the Philharmonic Society. The subject of a Royal Academy of Music had already been raised by the Duke of Cambridge during a long conversation he had with Margaret at the time of his visit to her holiday cottage at

459 John Fane, eleventh Earl of Westmorland (1784-1859), general and diplomat, was known as Lord Burghersh from the time of his birth until 1841, when he succeeded his father as the Earl of Westmorland. He was a noted amateur musician.

460 The first Royal Academy of Music, founded in 1720 to introduce Italian Opera into England, was not an educational establishment. In 1774 Dr Burney had tried to establish an Academy of Music in conjunction with the Foundling Hospital, but was unsuccessful.

Fulham in 1813. Margaret wrote of their conversation to William on 14 August 1813: ‘then he [the Duke] asked after Amico & the Royal Academy of Music, respecting which [...] he observed that with such talents as Viotti’s at the head of it, an establishment of that sort must be highly advantageous.’462 This would seem to imply that the establishment of an Academy of Music was already being mooted in 1813, and that there was talk of making Viotti head of it. Viotti had already had three unhappy experiences in theatre management, and was to have another in 1819. Was this a fifth attempt to head a musical institution? If so, it is a pity it was unsuccessful, as administering a school would have been better suited to Viotti’s talents than his other entrepreneurial activities were. Margaret’s rejoinder to the Duke’s remark was that there was as much talent in music in England as in any of the arts, but that it was not ‘embodied’, and that a Royal Academy would do just this, ‘and then I pointed out to him that as his Royal father (George III) had founded the Academy of Painting, it seemed a natural, and almost necessary consequence that the Prince Regent should found the Academy of Music.’463

A document in the Fisher collection of Chinnery Papers helps explain the Duke’s statement in the above letter. It is an undated twelve-page document penned by Margaret Chinnery, entitled ‘Observations upon Mr A’s Plan’.464 This is a point by point critical analysis of a certain ‘Mr A’s’ proposals for the establishment of an Academy of Music. In Cazalet’s History of the Royal Academy of Music there is no mention of a plan proposed by anyone resembling this name. Who is ‘Mr A’? The most likely possibility would seem to be William Ayrton, who was one of the founders of the Royal Philharmonic Society, and who was also a frequent caller on the Chinnerys in 1814.465 The plan for the new Academy is based on a remodelling of the Philharmonic Society, and the final two pages of the document – devoted to a discussion of the fate of the Philharmonic Society, which Margaret has labelled ‘Philharmonic’ – begin: ‘In remodelling the society, many difficulties will occur with regard to the present body of Associates, – if it is found expedient to abolish this body entirely [...]’466 It seems that a decision had to be made as to whether to meld the Philharmonic into the new Academy,

462 M to W, 14 August 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/12.
463 Ibid. The Prince Regent (as George IV) did in fact become the patron of the Academy of Music that was founded by Lord Burghersh in 1822.
464 Draft plan for the establishment of a Royal Academy of Music [R.A.M.], c. 1814, Fisher.
465 See Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, 6 April [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 27.
or whether to abolish it entirely. This would explain Viotti’s statement: ‘J’espère bien que l’année prochaine, ou ce sera une Accademie, ou je dirai adieu aux Philharmoniques.’

From Margaret’s detailed observations, Mr A’s plan can be fairly accurately deduced. ‘The object to be attained’, wrote Margaret, is the establishment of a national school [of music]. That this plan was essentially different from the Royal Academy of Music that was ultimately established by Lord Burghersh can be seen from the various points discussed. Most importantly, the Academy proposed by Mr A was to be administered, like the Philharmonic, by professional musicians, not by managers drawn from members of the music-loving public as Lord Burghersh’s was. It was to be funded, like the Philharmonic, by the subscriptions of thirty members, to be renamed ‘Academicians’, and administered by a council chosen from among them. Margaret rejected the idea of outside subscriptions, saying: ‘It does not seem that this establishment will require a subscription. The funds of the Philharmonic Society will supply present wants.’ With regard to the students, Mr A’s plan appears to have been that students of all ages would attend daily, whereas Lord Burghersh’s Academy was a boarding school for children aged from ten to fifteen, who were given a general education as well as musical instruction. One of Mr A’s proposals that was employed by Lord Burghersh was that the students be chosen by ballot. Margaret’s proposal that some of the former associates of the Philharmonic Society might become students of the new academy testifies to the fact that in her plan there was no age limit. Those associates who were too experienced to be placed as students in the new Academy, she suggested might become honorary members, as would ‘all the first rate composers of other countries, Cherubini, Beethoven, Mehul, Paisiello…’, and also ‘Princes & Noblemen of other countries’. She also wondered (clearly with the Duke of Cambridge in mind) ‘whether this compliment should be paid to the brothers of the Prince Regent’.

Evidently one of the aims of the new Academy was to address the problem of the proscriptive regulations of the Philharmonic Society. Margaret wrote: ‘Surely, it was an error in the plan of the Philharmonic Society to exclude from their concerts the grand Scene et Arie of Jomelli, Piccini, Sachini, Hope, &c&c. The exclusion of Solo

466 Ibid., p. 11.
467 V to W, [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 14/18.
468 Draft plan for the R.A.M., p. 3.
instrumental Pieces, is also an error. 470 But while admitting that the reasons for the proscriptions were sound – firstly ‘the vanity of the performers’, who will always promote their own compositions, and secondly the preference of the public for popular vocal pieces which are not necessarily of high standard – she nevertheless admits that the solution to these problems is difficult to find: ‘It seems then that the only protection the Academy can provide for itself by its laws against the encroachment of vanity or bad taste would be by a restriction as to the number of solo performances upon the different instruments. 471

The document is undated, but judging by the common link to Margaret’s conversation with the Duke of Cambridge and Viotti’s letter to William, it would appear to have been written in about 1814. As there is frequent mention of ‘the Prince Regent’, and as the latter became King George IV in 1820, it may be dated with certainty before 1820. This, then, would appear to be the earliest proposal for an Academy of Music in the nineteenth century, and much earlier than the ones noted by Cazalet.

How does Margaret Chinnery come to be involved in such a plan? Her reputation as both a musician and an educationalist must have been the reason for her opinions being sought. The stamp of her educational principles are evident throughout the document. Her questioning mind, her clear reasoning, her insistence on the definition of terms, her emphasis on the need for strict enforcement of rules governing the students, and her belief in the importance of foreign influences are all in evidence. Although Margaret’s observations begin patriotically, by suggesting that Mr A omit the first paragraph of his introduction ‘which gives a French origin to this excellent plan’, 472 – he seems to have suggested the Academy be modelled on the French Conservatoire de musique – all her other comments testify to her conviction that foreign influences are necessary for the improvement of English taste. For example she criticises the small percentage of foreigners proposed to be admitted to the Academy as members: ‘Does not the English taste in its French state require to be enlightened and improved by the taste & genius of other countries?’ 473 Regarding rewards for successful students, she advocates ‘the Premiums & Prizes to be presented to the Students publicly at the public

469 Ibid., p. 8.
470 Ibid., p. 9. Margaret is using the plural of the Italian terms here. A gran scena in Italian opera was an episode of particularly dramatic proportions, in which (usually) one character dominated the scene.
471 Ibid., p. 10.
472 Ibid., p. 1.
concerts’, saying that ‘this will be the beginning of reputation in their Profession and will lead to great results.'

The idea of pupils benefiting from public recognition of their talents is one that recurred constantly in her correspondence with her son while he was at Oxford.

The other point which she dwells on in the document are the benefits that both students and members will enjoy through their contact with other musicians and a permanent orchestra to work with. On this point she quotes Haydn, proving that he was indeed more than just a casual acquaintance: ‘I remember the great Haydn say, that he was more indebted to the circumstance of having the Prince Esterhazy’s Band always at his command, for the new & striking effects that were admired in his Symphonies, than to any genius he might possess, as at any hour he could try an experiment in music, & reject or adapt as the result might induce him.’

She goes on to compare the advantages in ‘friendships & connections’ that a student of the proposed Academy would enjoy compared to the then prevailing system whereby a pupil studied in solitude, attached to one professor for a fixed term: ‘Compare the solitary & melancholy situation of a young professor about to make his Debut in London at the present time; with the enviable advantages I have just been enumerating – and then some idea may be formed of the good that will arise to the Profession from an Institution of this nature.’

Mr A’s plan never got off the ground – probably because of a lack of funds. Lord Burghersh’s 1822 Academy did not escape the same problem: it was plagued by financial worries for its first forty years.

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473 Ibid.
474 Ibid., p. 5.
475 See Part II, Chapter 3 for a discussion of this.
477 Ibid., p. 7.
478 In another history of the Royal Academy of Music, by Frederick Corder (A History of the Royal Academy of Music from 1822–1922, F. Corder: London, 1922, p. 1), it is stated that the efforts of ‘a few able and resolute members of the Philharmonic Society’ to form an Academy of Music were foiled by Lord Burghersh’s Academy being launched on the very day their scheme was to be discussed at a public meeting. However this date seems too late to have applied to Mr A’s plan.
In 1814 Margaret was still reluctant to go into society, as it went against her sense of propriety, which dictated that she remain out of public view until William had cleared his name. One of Matilda Chinnery’s Journal entries for this year describes Margaret’s quandary when she discovered that other guests were to be present at what she had been assured would be an intimate family dinner. However, she was happy to entertain in the privacy of her home, and by early 1814 appears to have emerged from seclusion to become once more the elegant hostess that she had been before 1812. In the Fisher collection there is a letter from the Comte de Vaudreuil (sent from no. 6, Park Lane) to Margaret, dated 7 March 1814, accepting a dinner invitation at Charles Street issued to him, his wife and son Alfred. Another French nobleman who, like Vaudreuil, had been attached to the Comte d’Artois and who had fled France to come to England in the early days of the Revolution was the philanthropist Baron de Montyon. He had been received by Margaret, and by William Spencer in 1811, and in 1814 wrote to Margaret that he hoped she would give him a soirée. From this time onwards, Margaret appears to have held small select dinners – numbers being limited owing to the size of her dining room – to which she invited more company later in the evening for music, according to the custom of the day.

From Matilda’s 1814 Journal it is obvious that family musical evenings continued apace in Charles Street. Margaret’s adoring friend Mrs Francis Smyth, whom she had met while on vacation at Eastbourne in 1811, counted almost as family. Private visits were exchanged almost daily by the two women. Mrs Smyth (whose first name is never revealed) was also an enthusiastic amateur pianist, as was her daughter Harriet. Matilda’s Journal describes an evening of declaiming and music at Mrs Smyth’s on 29 March, when Harriet Smyth ‘played uncommonly well (in Cramer’s Stile) some Variations of Beethoven’ and ‘Amico’s Concerto finished the whole’.

479 Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, 9 March [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 27. It was at the home of Mrs Francis Smyth.

480 Joseph-François de Vaudreuil to Margaret Chinnery, 7 March 1814, Fisher. Vaudreuil had two sons by his second wife, Charles-Philippe-Alfred (1796-1880) and Victor-Louis-Alfred (1798-1834).

481 Antoine-Jean-Baptiste-Robert Auget, baron de Montyon, (1733-1820), a wealthy philanthropist, held various offices at the French court before fleeing to England at the time of the Revolution. He followed the Bourbons back to France in 1814. There are three letters from Montyon to Margaret sent from 38 Grosvenor Street, Golden Square (c. 1811-1814) and one to William Spencer (9 December 1811), all in the Fisher collection.

describes a dinner Margaret gave on Monday 4 April, after which '[little] Margaret & myself' played Dussek's Duet, - the Anacreon, - Mrs Smyth played a sonata of Mozart’s, & Amico played two little pieces accompanied by me - there was waltzing afterwards. Another dinner given by Margaret one week later is described in the same entry. On this occasion 'The Anacreon opened the concert, - Margaret’s March' followed, & Mrs Smyth played a sonata of Amico’s. After which Miss Smyth began dancing – she danced the Guararca to us with the veil & the Castagnets, and then a Russian Dance composed by Favier on purpose for her. She accomplished them extremely well & afterwards she waltzed with George. Mrs Smyth played the waltzes.

Catalani’s 1814 series of concerts, which opened on 31 March, is also mentioned in the Journal. Having performed at the King’s Theatre for the previous four seasons, Catalani now went over to the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. Matilda thought her fees too high:

Mad Catalani will have nothing to do with the Opera this year. She is giving concerts (but they are very bad) — The subscription is nine guineas, an exorbitant sum, and the concerts will be twelve in number. A proof that the subscription does not fill is, that there are constant advertisements about them in the Newspaper.

(Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, 31 March [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 27)

Viotti continued to accept (albeit reluctantly) invitations to perform at private concerts. But in one of his 1814 letters to William, he wrote that he had held out against the persistent overtures of William’s friend Mr Peterson the dandy, who wanted to show him off before his friends:

Vous rappelez vous de M’ Peterson, le Viotti des Amateurs, le beau, le miriflore Mr Peterson? Vous trouverez ici joint un billet de lui qui vous dira comment il aime à passer son temps. Dans le fond il me parait bon diable, et je voudrois bien l’aider dans

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483 Ibid, 6 April [1814].
484 An unidentified piece played by little Margaret.
485 Traditional Caribbean dance.
486 Favier is listed in W.C. Smith (op. cit., p. 181) as a ballet master who was employed at the King’s Theatre in 1818. He choreographed the popular eighteenth century ballet Acis et Galathée.
487 Matilda Chinnery’s Journal of 6 April [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 27.
488 She took the leading role in operas by Pucitta, Piccinni, Paër and Mozart, including that of Susanna in the first London performance of Le Nozze di Figaro on 18 June 1812.
ses parties Racleuses, mais il me semble qu’il voudroit faire de moi une espèce
d’exibition, et de verité nous ne sommes pas assez liés pour lui faire un tel sacrifice.

(V to W, [1814], PM 94/143/1 – 14/18)

Nevertheless, Viotti was on the whole remarkably tolerant of the efforts of
amateur violinists, as can be seen from his willingness to play with the Chinnery
children, and with the Duke of Cambridge and from the number of private musical
soirées (‘racleries’ as he termed them) that he agreed to play at. An invitation to one of
the latter was issued by the son of Sir William Curtis, and Viotti was agreeably
surprised by the standard of music in his home. The old Sir William, who was an avid
Stradivarius collector, had enjoyed the Chinnery hospitality at Gillwell.

On 27 January 1814 Viotti wrote to William (Chinnery) that it was the first time
he had been to the Curtis house ‘et c’était pour une partie d’amateurs, ou efféctivement
ils arriverent à la lulu après le dinér pour commencer le premier coup d’archet à 8.
heures. Le vieux Pere Sir William y etoit, et quoique peu musicien il a paru jouer très
bien.’ Viotti found himself invited by Sir William for a repeat performance in a
fortnight’s time, when George was also included in the dinner invitation ‘de hier en
quinze, jour ou nous devons repeter notre raclerie. En verité j’ai été très content de tous
ces Amateurs, ils ont fort bien fait chacun leur partie et le maitre de la maison s’en est
fort bien tiré sur son Violoncello.’ Viotti supposes that William will ask why he took it
into his head to go and play there. Viotti admits that he had an ulterior motive – to drum
up business for his wine commerce!

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489 Sir William Curtis (1752-1829), was lord mayor of London (1794-95), and M.P. for that city (1790-
1818). He was created baronet in 1802. He was one of the original directors of the Royal Academy of
Music in 1822. His eldest son was William Curtis (1782-1847), who inherited the baronetcy on his
father’s death.

490 Sir William Curtis (either the father or the son) is one of the four names listed in Goodkind’s Violin
Iconography as possessing a quartet of Stradivari instruments.

491 V to W, 27 January 1814, PM 94/143/1 – 14/16.

492 ibid.
On the Restoration of Louis XVIII to the French throne William moved from Gothenburg to Calais. Margaret and Viotti went to join him for three months at the nearby town of St Omer. It was their first reunion since William had left England in 1812. William’s move to Calais was at the urging of Viotti, who pressed his friend to hasten to take advantage of the commercial opportunities now opening up in France, and to abandon the land of polar bears to come and live-closer to his family. In the straight-talking tones Viotti so often used with William, especially when the latter was slow to take the initiative, he wrote to goad William into action:

Que diable faites vous à cet endroit où la nature semble avoir banie tous les charmes? Je ne sais pas que votre séjour dans ce lieu habité par les ours puisse en aucune manière vous être utile, et pourtant, vous y restez! Est-ce que la glace a gelé vos talons de vos souliers? Que ne vous approchez-vous pas de nous, que ne venez-vous pas en Hollande ou nous comptons aller vous embrasser?...

(V to W, 31 March 1814, PM 94/143/1 -14/19)

The first letter from Viotti to William in Calais is dated 14 August 1814, and announces their imminent departure from England. It was during this trip to the Continent that Viotti took the opportunity of revisiting Paris for a few days in September, staying with the Cherubinis, as a letter of thanks from Viotti to Cécile Cherubini shows.⁴⁹³ Viotti’s stay in Paris was an opportunity to renew contact with his close friend and disciple Pierre Baillot, and another old colleague the cellist Jean-Louis Duport⁴⁹⁴ to whom Viotti dedicated various solo pieces for cello and for violin.⁴⁹⁵ He met up with other musical colleagues whom he had not seen since 1802⁴⁹⁶ at a big party on 24 September 1814 (“la belle Fête de samedi 24 de ce mois”) which Cherubini organised for his friend.⁴⁹⁷ An undated letter from Duport to Viotti in the Powerhouse

⁴⁹³ Viotti to Cécile Cherubini, 29 September 1814, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 269 (no source given).
⁴⁹⁴ Jean-Louis Duport (1749-1819), French cellist and composer. *New Grove* (vol. 5, p. 732) notes that Duport’s ‘manner of playing was often compared with that of Viotti and, that according to the contemporary writer on music La Borde (J. B. de La Borde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne*, Paris, 1780) Duport was able to achieve “effects that were previously unknown” by applying Viotti’s “manièr large et brillante” to the cello’.
⁴⁹⁵ Listed in Chappell White’s *Thematic Catalogue*, pp. 122, 125.
⁴⁹⁷ Viotti to Cécile Cherubini, 29 September 1814, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 269.
collection concerning some music that Viotti has misplaced, and thanking Viotti for ‘la
ejolie musique que vous m’avez fait entendre avant hier soir’, may be of this period. It is
addressed to Viotti at ‘Rue Montabord [Rue du Mont Thabor], Hotel de Londre’, not at
Cherubini’s address.\footnote{Jean-Louis Duport to Viotti, [c. 1814], PM 94/143/1 – 28/1.}

Duport writes:

Mon cher ami
Ce n’est pas moi qui ai votre duo en Sol mineur. J’ai mis ma musique dans l’Étuit de
ma basse, ainsi je vous envoie la clé de l’étui, voyez derrière ma basse. Je vous
remercie bien de la jolie musique que vous m’avez fait entendre avant hier soir.
tout a vous Duport
ci vendredi matin

(Jean-Louis Duport to Viotti, [c. 1814], PM 94/143/1 – 28/1)

In a letter to William of 1 December 1814 Viotti says he has heard from
Cherubini, who will send his music as soon as possible (‘J’ai reçu des nouvelles de
Cherubini; il va m’expédier au plutot ma musique’). This appears to be some music that
he left behind – perhaps the same music he was asking Duport about.

Viotti’s letter to William Chinnery of 1 December 1814 is long and entertaining.
The first letter sent to William after the family’s return to England, it gives an account
of Margaret’s health (she is again plagued by painful kidney stones) and contains a
hilarious account of the transportation to England of all the food and game birds that
William sent to them after their departure from France. The following paragraph
displays – as do many of his letters to William – Viotti’s playful sense of humour and
his determined optimism in the face of any minor domestic crisis:

Très certainemment cher Ami, vous ne nous laisserez pas mourir de faim. Nous avons
reçu hier 4. Perdrix, 5 Becassines, 2 Sarcelles, et deux Poulets. Plus – un panier de
chataignes bien emberlifcotes, mais excellentes. Imaginez vous que l’on les a placés
dans le Stage en société avec un pot de couleur bleue à l’huile — Apparament qu’ils
ont querellé, et ma fois les chataignes ont cassé le pot; celui-ci pour se venger leur a
craché au visage toute sa matiere bleue, de sorte qu’elles sont arrivées toutes peintes.
Matilda les a lavé une à une, moi j'en ai fait cuire huit tout de suite, et j'ai décidé qu'elles avaient un gout exquis, à cause de quoi je dis que vous avez eu une excellente idée.

(V to W, 1 December 1814, PM 94/143/1 -- 14/23)

In the above letter Viotti speaks of sending a reciprocal food parcel to William for diplomat friends in France. On the 1814 and each successive yearly visit to the Continent Margaret and Viotti renewed old friendships and made new ones, especially among the diplomats, whose society Margaret preferred almost above all other. One of these was the secretary of the French legation Rayneval. The Raynevals, whom Margaret and Viotti had recently met in London, remained friends of the Chimneyrs and of Viotti for the rest of their lives, and were to be useful to them in facilitating the delivery of cross-Channel mail in diplomatic bags. For the expeditious dispatch of his music, Viotti begs William to efface all other names from his parcel and substitute that of ‘M de Rayneval Premier Secrétaire d’Ambassade de France’.500

It was in 1814 also that Viotti was reunited with his younger brother André, whom he had not seen since the latter’s infancy in Fontanetto. André, a member of the Grenadiers des Gardes de Paris, had just been decorated with the Légion d’Honneur. In a letter from Margaret to William of which the first page, and therefore the date, has been lost, she writes:

‘Amico received a letter from his brother who is you know in the Grenadiers des Gardes de Paris, — he has been distinguished, why he does not say, — but he was, at the beginning of this month decorated with the Legion of Honour, — in french he says “quand à moi personnellement je suis au comble de mes vœux, — sa Majesté vient de m’accorder pour mes Étrennes, la Décoration de la Légion d’honneur, — avec le titre de Chevalier de l’Empire. Son Excellence M. de Lacepede Grand Chancelier m’a honoré et décoré de sa main, en me disant qu’il était charmé de remettre personnellement cette marque honorable au frère du célèbre __ Amico is very glad to hear he is doing so well, — for in all situations it is right for a young man to do his duty & distinguish himself if he can.

(M to W, [January 1813 or 1814], PM 94/143/1 -- 17/57)

499 François-Maximilien Gérard de Rayneval (1778-1836) was a French diplomat, who was to become Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the French Ministry of 1820. He was probably the son of Joseph-Matthias de Rayneval (1746-1812), publicist and diplomat, who had been the French minister plenipotentiary in London in 1786.

500 V to W, 1 December 1814, PM 94/143/1 — 14/23.
The fact that André was named Chevalier de l’Empire shows that the decoration was awarded by Napoleon, who was styled ‘sa Majesté’ during his years as Emperor. Comte Bernard de Lacépède had been appointed grand chancelier de la Légion d’honneur by Napoleon in 1803, but was stripped of this title in 1814 by Louis XVIII, only to be reinstated when Napoleon returned to France during the Cent Jours. It is clear that the decoration took place in January, as André jokes that the decoration was a New Year gift (‘pour mes Étrennes’). As Margaret’s letter was to William, who only left England in March 1812, the date of the letter can be narrowed down to January 1813 or January 1814. (Louis XVIII only returned to the throne in May 1814, and Napoleon’s Cent Jours did not begin until March 1815.) It is clear from André’s last words that ‘le célèbre [violoniste Viotti]’ was well known to Lacépède. On the Janet et Cotelle edition of the three quartets that Viotti dedicates to his brother, André is described as ‘Chef de Battallion d’Etat-Major et Rapporteur du 2e Conseil de Guerre de Paris’.

That André Viotti almost certainly gained distinction in Napoleon’s army doing battle against Britain or her Allies, is overlooked by Margaret, who allows that ‘in all situations it is right for a young man to do his duty & distinguish himself if he can.’

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501 Bernard-Germain-Etienne de la Ville, comte de Lacépède (1756-1823), natural historian who earned the favour of Napoleon.
502 An obituary of the comte de Lacépède (‘Member of the Academy of Sciences and Ancient Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honour’) published in the Harmonicon, no. 16, April 1824, notes his death on 7 October 1823, and mentions the fact that in 1785 he had published a work entitled La Poétique de la musique (Impr. de Monsieur: Paris, 1785). The Harmonicon was an English monthly journal dealing with musical matters, that existed for ten years only (1823-1833). Lacépède’s musical reputation must have been high for him to have been noted in such a publication.
503 Chappell White’s Thematic Catalogue, p. 54.
504 M to W, [January 1813 or January 1814], PM 94/143/1 – 17/57.
In 1815 the Philharmonic Society was honoured by a visit from its favourite composer Cherubini, who had been paid £200 to compose a symphony, an overture and a cantata for the Society, and to preside at the performances of his works. According to the diary of Madame Tourette, Cherubini’s mother-in-law, he departed for England on 25 February and returned to Paris on 8 June 1815, so that he was away for most of the period of the Cent Jours. Foster writes of the visit in the following terms:

The great event of the season occurred at the 3rd concert (March 13) when “Mr Cherubini, who is just arrived in England”, presided at a performance of his “Anacreon” Overture, and at the next concert at a first rendering of the Symphony, Overture and Vocal Trio, “Et incarnatus est”, which he had written for the Society. On June 12 he was elected Associate, and on June 19 Member of the Philharmonic, and he had a wonderful reception at both the concerts at which he assisted. This was his second visit to England, having resided in London during 1784-5 as Composer to the King’s Majesty.

(M.B Foster, op. cit., p. 17)

Viotti shared the stage with his acclaimed friend for the fourth concert (3 April) when he performed his own concertante for two violins and cello with his pupil Mori and the cellist Robert Lindley, and again for the sixth concert (1 May) when he performed another of his own concertantes with Mori. Viotti led the orchestra on both these nights.

During this visit Cherubini stayed with Margaret and Viotti at the Charles Street house. From here he went twice to John Spencer’s at Petersham, the first time in March, when he spent a few days there in company with Margaret, Viotti, Matilda and

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506 Robert Lindley (1776-1855), English cellist.
507 John Spencer (1767-1831), elder brother of William Robert Spencer, married his cousin Elizabeth (daughter of George, fourth Duke of Marlborough) in 1790. He was a great lover of music and his name features in contemporary newspaper notices as a patron of various fund-raising concerts. In his ‘Biographical Memoir’ in the 1835 edition of William Spencer’s Poems (pp. 60-61), Cochrane states that William Spencer vacated his Curzon Street residence in 1818 to move to ‘the house of his friend, Sir Harry Englefield, at Petersham, well known not only as a man of the world, but as a scholar, a mathematician and an antiquarian.’ The DNB entry for Sir Henry Charles Englefield (vol. 6, pp. 792) does not mention his owning a property at Petersham, but interestingly, does mention Sir Henry’s ‘choice cabinet of vases […] formed from the Coghill, Cawdor, and Chinnery sales.’ The Chinnery correspondence would indicate that it was John Spencer, not Englefield, who was living at Petersham in 1815.
little Margaret one week before his first performance at the Philharmonic concert, and
the second on 16 April 1815, travelling down from London with the Bavarian chargé
d'affaires, Baron de Pfeffel, Jenison [William Spencer's brother-in-law] and Naldi. On 8 March Margaret wrote to William that she was grateful for the poultry, cheese and
chestnuts he had sent across from France, which she offered as a 'contribution to Mr Spencer's larder, as we came in a large body & have remained here several days.' She
continued: 'The girls & Cherubini are gone, - they return a day before us that every
thing may be ready for our arrival, & in order that the girls may practise for tomorrow
evening.' The following evening Margaret was to receive 'Naldi, Mr [John] Spencer,
the Baron [de Pfeffel], & the Count [La Cainea] to dinner, with music afterwards.

It was only natural that Cherubini should have stayed with Viotti and Margaret
during his 1815 visit to England, as George Chinnery had lodged with the Cherubini
family at the Conservatoire de musique during his stay in Paris in May the previous
year. In May (1815) Cherubini was still with Margaret and Viotti at their Charles
Street house, which Margaret continued to criticise for its smallness. On 14 May she
wrote to William of a dinner followed by music: 'We had Kalkbrenner, the two
Bohrsrs, & Ramorino to dinner, in the evening Sir C[harles] & Lady Flint & their
sister, the St Legers, Mary Cipriani, M. Lock[le]y & his daughter, my two

508 Francis Jenison, Count Jenison-Walworth (1764-1824), diplomat.
509 M to W, 8 March 1815, PM 94/143/1 – 17/20.
510 Ibid.
511 As shown by the address ('hôtel des menus plaisirs du Roi, faubourg Poissonniere, n° 23') on a letter
from Vaudreuil to George Chinnery at this time (Joseph-François de Vaudreuil to George Chinnery, 5
Chinnery (13 May 1814, Fisher) confirms that George stayed with the Cherubinis. Another undated
letter from Viotti to Cécile Cherubini (quoted but with no source given by Giazotto, p. 266), which
appears to be a postscript to a letter from Margaret Chinnery to the same person, also shows this to be
so, and the letter may therefore be dated c. May 1814.
512 Friedrich Wilhelm Michael Kalkbrenner (1785-1849), French pianist, teacher and composer of
German extraction. He lived in England from 1814-1824.
513 The Bavarian brothers Anton Bohrer (1783-1852) violinist and composer, and Maximilian Bohrer
(1785-1867) cellist and composer, had toured Europe in 1810 with great success. Their
unaccompanied fantasies for violin and cello were especially admired. They visited England twice, in
1815 and again in 1818.
514 Ramorino was described by Viotti in his Précis as a ship's captain. In the present letter, Margaret
describes him as a Swiss gentleman. A friend of the diplomat Pozzo di Borgo (see Part III, p. 645),
Ramorino appears to have been introduced to Viotti by the latter. Returning from England to the
Continent during the Cent Jours, Ramorino carried mail for William from Margaret (see M to W, 14
May 1815, PM 94/143/1 – 17/24). Sir Charles Flint was George Chinnery's godfather.
515 Mary Cipriani was the sister of William Chinnery's former Treasury colleague Philip Cipriani. George
Frederick Lockley was an eminent London physician noted in William Spencer's Poems (1811 edn, p.
125) as 'apothecary to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales'. He was also the Chinnery family doctor, who
looked after Caroline Chinnery during her long illness and right up to her death. After 1812 he
neighbours, - Guglielmo, Mr Langersdorff,\textsuperscript{516} and Naldi, - these with Cherubini & ourselves made our little room look & feel very full.\textsuperscript{517} This is the last reference to Cherubini in the Chinnery letters.

The Bohrer brothers, Anton (another Stradivarius owner) and Maximilian, had been recommended to Viotti by the Duke of Cambridge, who heard them play in Hanover in the autumn of 1814. The Duke had written to Viotti from Hanover on 15 October 1814:

Je Vous adresse quelques mots pour Vous recommander les frères Borer, deux jeunes Gens de beaucoup de mérite, qui souhaitent beaucoup de faire Votre connaissance. Ils ont passé quelques jours à Hannovre, et j’ai eu bien du plaisir à les entendre jouer. Celui qui joue le violoncelle a beaucoup joué avec Romberg, et je crois que leurs Duos sont dans le Genre des frères Romberg.\textsuperscript{518}

(Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, 15 October 1814, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

Friedrich Kalkbrenner had moved to England in 1814, and was a regular performer of his own compositions at the Philharmonic concerts over the following three years. Margaret gives her opinion of these musicians in her letter to William of 14 May 1815. The last remark testifies to the fact that her musical evenings had lost none of their appeal, in spite of her small drawing room and straitened circumstances:

Kalkbrenner is a very distinguished artist indeed, and far above what I had previously heard of him. One of the Bohrers is extremely clever on the violoncello, and the two brothers play well together. All this, with Naldi’s cheering singing, Amico, & the two girls, made plenty of amusement for them. As usual, they staid it all out, — they were all here by nine o’Clock, & not gone till half past one!

(M to W, 14 May 1815, PM 94/143/1 – 17/24)

In July 1815 Margaret and Viotti were again making plans to spend autumn on the Continent. Not yet having heard of Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo they hesitated to venture very far from the coast in case they needed to beat a quick retreat to England.

\textsuperscript{516} Philipp von Langsdorff (1782-1866), Hessian ambassador to London.
\textsuperscript{517} M to W, 14 May 1815, PM 94/143/1 – 17/24.
As William was by then established at Calais, Viotti suggested as a meeting place-cum-holiday retreat a choice of the three nearby towns of Lille, Dunkirk or Anvers, from where, in an emergency, William might just as easily hasten across the border to Holland. They appear in the end to have gone first to Lille, then, with the threat of Napoleon extinguished, to have continued on to Paris, as a letter from the French engraver Jissy in England, addressed to Viotti in Paris, shows.\(^{519}\)

William was ever on the lookout for new commercial opportunities. His good friend ‘H____’ [Herries]\(^{520}\) looked after his interests on the British side of the Channel and informed Viotti – who passed the intelligence on to William – of any opportunities arising. One very intriguing, but unclear suggestion that was put forward in July 1815 had to do with Betts (the famous violin maker John, or his violinist son Arthur),\(^{521}\) referred to by Viotti in his letter to William as ‘Betz l’estropieur des Stradivarius’, obviously a reference to the fact that he owned a quartet of Stradivarius instruments, which he perhaps could not play very well.\(^{522}\) From Viotti’s words it would seem more likely that he was referring to Arthur, as the person in question was a composer who had produced, Viotti reported, some ‘astonishing’ airs and variations, which, with William’s musical contacts in Paris (who were all old friends of Viotti) he could have made enormous profits from. (‘Dans la position ou vous étiez, possédant des Amis de la bonne espèce, tels que ceux que je vous connois et qui étoient mes compagnons de jeunesse, très certainement, il y aurait eu moyen d’en tirer un parti immense.’\(^{523}\))

But like so many of Viotti’s and William’s schemes, it did not come off. Another 1815 letter to Viotti in Paris came from the Duke of Cambridge. Dated

\(^{518}\) Andreas Jakob Romberg (1767-1821), violinist and composer, and Bernhard Heinrich Romberg (1767-1841), cellist, were in fact cousins, who sometimes made themselves out to be brothers.

\(^{519}\) Jissy to Viotti, 20 October 1815, Fisher. Jissy, also spelt Gissey, Gessé or Jessé, was the name of an old French family of engravers. The letter concerns a debt he is owed for the engraving of a seal for a M. Broga, son-in-law of the Bavarian minister in Paris. Jissy says he would like the debt paid in kind – six pairs of silk stockings which he asks Viotti to bring back to England with him.

\(^{520}\) John Charles Herries (1778-1855), statesman, had been Assistant Clerk of Revenue in the Treasury (1805-1811), then commissary-in-chief from 1811 to 1816, during which period he had put into effect a plan for the collection of French specie for the use of Wellington’s army. It was he who in 1814 had put George in charge of King Louis XVIII’s travelling expenses on his journey from England to France on his restoration to the French throne. (See Part III, pp. 617-618)

\(^{521}\) John Betts (1755-1823), British violin maker and dealer. Arthur Betts (1774-1847), violinist and composer, son of the latter.

\(^{522}\) Goodkind (op. cit., p. 762) lists ‘John and Arthur Betts’ as owners or custodians of a quartet of Stradivarius instruments (two violins, a viola and a cello), and R. Vannes’ Dictionnaire des luthiers (3rd edn, Les Amis de la musique: Brussels, 1975, p. 30) states that Arthur was ‘possesseur d’une jolie collection de violons.’

\(^{523}\) V to W, 16 July 1815, PM 94/143/1 – 14/25.
Hanover, 6 October 1815, the letter concerns a commission he has given Viotti to buy some bows for him. The Duke expresses his pleasure that Viotti's friends in Paris have persuaded him to recommence composing and awaits with impatience the new concerto which Viotti has dedicated to him: "Je suis sur que Vos amis à Paris auront eu bien du plaisir à Vous revoir et je me réjouis beaucoup de ce qu'ils Vous ont engagé à Vous remettre à la Composition. J'attends le Concerto que Vous voulés bien me dedier avec beaucoup d'impatience." In the meantime, he says, he has been studying Viotti's quartets 'qui sont de toute beauté' and has played one of them with Romberg, who has just spent a week in Hanover and who thinks it most beautiful.

A third letter, dated 7 July 1817, from the Duke of Cambridge concerns yet another purchase that Viotti has made for him, this time it seems to be a new violin, undoubtedly another Stradivarius, for which he sends Viotti a bank draft for fifty guineas. In this letter he complains that 'La Musique va bien mal' and of having so little free time that he has been unable to play more than eight or ten times in the last three years. But he has managed to sing a little with the Italian vocalist Balassi, who had been a member of the King's Theatre opera company from 1810 to 1814.

Through Viotti's association with the Philharmonic, the musicians who performed at the Society's concerts all appeared at one time or another in the Charles Street drawing room. In July 1816 it was the 'Demoiselles de Lihu' sisters, who were to make their debut as vocalists at the Philharmonic concerts in 1817, and who were to become good friends of Margaret, George, Matilda and Viotti. Giuseppe Naldi and his daughters were also guests on this occasion. Naldi had been performing with the Philharmonic Society, along with Viotti's other great friend the violinist Vaccari, since its inception. Margaret wrote to William of the success of their little concert:

Amico played some Duetts with Vaccari in his very best stile of finish, tone, & execution! Nothing can be more perfect! The company consisted of Lord & Lady

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524 The concerto in question appears to be the concerto for violin and orchestra No. 27 in C major, given the title of the "'G" Concerto pour le violon" by the publishers Janet et Cotelle (see Chappell White's Thematic Catalogue, p. 34).
525 Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, 6 October 1815, 'Viotti Papers', RCM.
526 Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, 7 July 1817, 'Viotti Papers', RCM.
527 The Delihu sisters, or Demoiselles De Lihu, as they were known at the time, were singers of (apparently) Flemish extraction. They performed in the Philharmonic concerts of 1817 and 1818, when they 'made quite a sensation by their graceful and sympathetic singing' (M.B. Foster, op. cit., p. 33), and at other London venues. They are mentioned in Thomas Moore's Journal (op. cit., vol. 1, p. 185), as being at Margaret Chinnery's on 8 June 1819, when he was also a guest.
Dunmore, Lady Say & Sele, Miss Twistleton, Mrs Cunliffe (formerly Miss Crewe, an accomplished singer), Count & Countess St Antonio, Sir H. Lambert, Baron [de Pfeffel], Count [La Cainea], the Sardinian minister, M. de Memarin, Count Bombelles, Professor Young of Edinburgh &c &c. They were all pleased, and indeed excepting the intolerable heat of the room, every thing else was as well as it could be in this small habitation. I gave them tea, lemonade, cakes & ices.

(M to W, 4 July 1816, PM 94/143/1 - 17/25)

In spring 1816 Viotti’s violinist friend Pierre Baillot made his first visit to London for the 1816 season of Philharmonic concerts. Described by Foster as a ‘violinist in Napoleon’s private band’, he appears to have been one of the main attractions in the 1816 series. He performed in three of the eight concerts, and led in two of them. Viotti and Margaret Chinnery were both outraged that a popular French flautist visiting London at the time, Louis Drouet, attempted to capitalise on his ability to draw crowds by charging Baillot twenty guineas — against the unwritten code of conduct which existed among the professional musicians — to appear at the latter’s benefit concert. Viotti advised Baillot to expose the greed of Drouet, by stating publicly why Drouet was being dropped from his already printed programme:

Elle [Mrs Chinnery], moi et son fils [George] nous avons tous décidé que vous ne devez point vous soumettre à une telle infamie, et que vous devez mettre sur les cartes que vous distribuez au concert, que vous aviez annoncé Mr. Drouet dans la persuasion qu’il agirait dans cette circonstance comme font tous les Professeurs entre eux, sans intérêt; mais que voyant qu’il exige absolument 20 guinées pour vous rendre service, vous vous voyez forcé de donner autre chose à sa place &c &c, [ou] quelque chose de semblable.

(Viotti to Baillot, 26 May 1816, in M. Pincherle, op. cit., p. 107)
Now an astute judge of the English character, and able to appreciate the very British sense of fair play, Viotti had come a long way since his damning criticism of the Bath audiences of 1793. Viotti assured his friend that he would have nothing to fear from disappointed concert-goers. On the contrary, he claimed, the British public would share his indignation and give their full support to the change of programme: ‘Tout ce qui sera là prendra votre parti, pas un vous blâmera, au contraire, les Anglais sont comme ça, ils partageront notre indignation, et vous donnerez le soufflet à ce monsieur qu’il aura mérité.”

An intriguing comment made by Matilda Chinnery (who accompanied Margaret and Viotti on their yearly jaunts to the Continent) in a postscript attached to the bottom of one of Viotti’s letters to William in 1816 gives the only clue that Viotti may have had an attachment to any other person but Margaret Chinnery in England. Matilda writes — quite frankly — that ‘Amico is quite disconcerted, — he has lost all chance with Miss Keating — reports say she is married to an English Officer at Paris. It is said her mother is dead. I can hardly believe this to be true.” 538 Mentioned in Matilda’s Journal as frequent callers at the Charles Street house in 1814, Mrs and Miss Keating are nowhere else mentioned in the Chinnery letters. It is not clear who they were. Perhaps they were the wife and daughter of a George Keating (1762-1842), ‘engraver, bookseller, and publisher’, who had a shop in Piccadilly, and later in Golden Square, and who took over the business of a leading Catholic bookseller to become Keating, Brown and Keating.

In autumn 1816 Margaret and Viotti again went to the Continent (from August to November), meeting up with George — who had spent August in Paris with the British statesman George Canning — and with William in Brussels. Margaret’s planned visit to Louveciennes to stay with Madame Vigée-Lebrun did not eventuate, and the latter wrote Margaret a long letter of regret, in which she said how long it was since she had had news of Viotti and how much she missed his lively conversation and the sweet sound of his violin: ‘En voila bien long ou je n’ai pas entendu parler d’Amico. Mon dieu que vous étiez avec moi aussi je l’entendrais parler [sic] avec tant de phisionomie

538 Matilda Chinnery to William Chinnery, postscript to the letter of V to W, 12 February [1816], PM 94/143/1 – 14/27.
540 See Part III for George’s relationship with Canning and for details of this visit.
et ses doux sons que j'écoutais si bien. pourquoi ne les entendre plus! Ils sont encore
dans mon cœur, mais je dis toujours Bis-Bis..."\(^{541}\)

In her letter to William of 24 May 1817, Margaret reports that they have had fewer visitors this winter. It is no wonder, she says, "there is little attraction, no dinners, no fêtes -- a very small dirty house, now become extremely shabby."\(^{542}\) The Charles Street house had cramped Margaret's style. By the time the last letter was written she had bought a larger house at 17 Montagu Street, Portman Square, in Marylebone, the quartier of the French émigrés, who gave it a distinctive French flavour. The Duke of Cambridge alludes to this purchase in his letter to Viotti of 7 July 1817, saying that he intends to call on the family there when he visits England the following year:\(^{543}\)

J'ai appris avec bien du plaisir que Madame Chinnery et George se portent bien. Ayez
la bonté de me rappeler à leur Souvenir et de leur dire que je me réjouis beaucoup
d'apprendre qu'ils ont actuellement une maison qui leur convient. L'année prochaine
j'espère avoir le plaisir de les y voir, car je compte aller en Angleterre si les Affaires me
le permettront.

(Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, 7 July 1817, 'Viotti Papers', RCM)

In 1817 Margaret and Viotti left for their annual four months on the Continent in
June, this time accompanied by George. Their destination was Lille, where William’s
sister-in-law, Mrs John Chinnery, now returned to England from India after the death of
her husband, had gone for a holiday with her children. They were also to visit Paris. On
each successive Continental visit since 1814, Margaret and Viotti spent an increasing
amount of time in Paris, where Margaret enlarged her circle of acquaintance, and Viotti
re-established himself in the Paris musical community. There are also indications – in
the letters published by Giazotto\(^{544}\) and in some of the Fisher letters – that while in Paris
Margaret Chinnery took up her habit of giving private musical parties, using all the
contacts that Viotti was able to provide her with.

William, still at Calais, was soon to move to Le Havre in search of new trading
opportunities. In Calais he appears to have led a quiet existence acting as an agent for

\(^{541}\) Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun to Margaret Chinnery, 7 July 1816, Fisher. Madame Vigée-Lebrun had last
heard Viotti play at Gillwell in 1803. Vigée-Lebrun’s handwriting and spelling are both poor.

\(^{542}\) M to W, 24 May 1817, PM 94/143/1 – 17/30.

\(^{543}\) Adolphus Frederick to Viotti, 7 July 1817, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM. He did visit Margaret in 1818. See p.
650.

\(^{544}\) Appendix F (‘Lettere Varie’), in Giazotto, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 265-273.
Viotti’s and Smith’s wine importing firm, with a certain Jacques Leveux as his assistant. There is a note underneath the address on the cover of Margaret’s first letter to William at Le Havre (26 May 1818) indicating that the letter has been forwarded by Leveux: ‘Par votre dévoué Serviteur Jacq. Leveux, Calais le 1er Juin 1818’. William’s inactivity in Calais frustrated Viotti, who condemned his lack of initiative. Writing of a recent conversation with William’s friend Herries regarding William’s future, Viotti reported: ‘Je lui dis combien il étoit facheux que nous ne puissions vous trouver quelque occupation! Quelque chose enfin quand même ce ne seroit pas lucratif, pour vous tenir en exercice! Car, lui disai-je, l’esprit se rouille tout aussi bien que le corps si on ne le remue pas!’ Viotti reported that Herries expressed surprise that William was still in Calais: ‘Mais que diable fait-il à Calais, me répondit-il, dans une ville borgne ou il n’y a pas l’ombre de commerce et ou l’on ne voit que des allans et venants?’ and suggested that Rouen or Bordeaux would offer more promising commercial opportunities. Viotti agreed with him, and just as he had chastised William for tarrying too long in Gothenburg, he now told him bluntly that it was time to move on. If he went to Bordeaux, he said, he could set himself up as a wine merchant and his English friends could be persuaded to do business with him, but it was up to him to take the first step:

Les Amis, quoique bien intentionnés, ne font rien, s’endorment en attendant l’occasion, si celui auquel ils s’intéressent ne se met pas en position à ce qu’on puisse l’aider, et s’il ne se met pas en mouvement lui même!!! [...] C’est à vous à ne jamais perdre de vue qu’il faut que vous fassiez quelque chose, à guetter et saisir tout ce qui peut se présenter, et enfin à clouer dans votre tête que de rire ou de raf, vous ne voulez point vivre oisif. Voila cher caro Cinnerino ce que j’avois à vous dire —

(V to W, 7 March 1816, PM, 94/143/1 – 14/30)

So far, William had not succeeded in establishing any viable business, and was still receiving funding from Margaret.

In a larger house Margaret could now move right back up to the very top echelon of London society and circulate with comfort. The feeling of shame that had

543 See V to W, 12 February [1816], PM 94/143/1 – 14/27.
544 M to W, 26 May 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 17/33.
545 V to W, 12 February [1816], PM 94/143/1 – 14/27.
546 Ibid.
547 Ibid.
548 Viotti writes in his letter to William of 31 May 1816: ‘Vous trouverez ci joint un billet de £10. C’est une avance que Madame vous fait.’ (V to W, 31 May 1816, PM 94/143/1 – 14/33.)
held her in check for the first few years after William's disgrace had all but evaporated, and although she complained privately of some 'slights and buffetings', and never ceased urging William to make every effort to repay his debt as soon as possible, she did not hold back from appearing in public again. With a more spacious house, Margaret's social connections expanded. And with the ever-popular Viotti by her side it was impossible to stand in the shadows for long. The English nobility did not care about what had taken place six years previously, and the aristocratic foreigners did not know. On 25 May 1818 Margaret held a large glittering party, to which the most select of London society were lured by the multiple attractions of fine music, a fine home and fine company to rub shoulders with. The following day Margaret wrote to William, 'Our party last night went off as well as possible dear Chinnery! — a very good assortment of company came, notwithstanding all there was, going on in the town. Our rooms looked well, the music was good, refreshments plentiful [...]' As Glenbervie had once said, the art of good entertaining consisted in knowing who wanted to be with whom. Margaret possessed this skill. She named seventy-eight of her carefully chosen guests in her letter to William. Among them were many titled diplomats. Not included in the list were the 'ten professional persons' (musicians) and themselves, bringing the number to nearly one hundred. Considering that her party clashed with a very popular Delihu concert, this represented a resounding triumph. An astute judge of character, Margaret assessed the excuses of those who declined her invitation. She wrote to William:

The Saltouns went to the De Lihus, — their concert of course kept away some of my company, — for I had invited above an hundred — Lady Ousley was detained with dinner company at home, Sir Gore said, — but I suspect that she is very fine & very absurd, — I have seen her three times, & like her less each time. The people began coming in about ten, — & continued coming & going all the evening, — some went away & came back again. About two they were all gone but the professors. We began with a Symphony of Haydn's, — then a vocal Quintett from Rossini's Barberie di Seviglia, — then Amico & Robberechts played them a vocal Duett by Miss [Caroline]

550 M to W, 26 May 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 17/33.
551 Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 144
552 Alexander George Fraser, sixteenth Baron Saltoun (1785-1853), British general.
553 Sir Gore Ousley (1770-1844), diplomat.
554 André Robberechts (b. Brussels 1797), Flemish violinist. According to Fétis (ed.) (vol. 7, p. 441) Robberechts had taken lessons from Viotti's friend Pierre Baillot in Paris in 1814 and subsequently
Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia* had premiered in London that year (10 March 1818) with Naldi in the role of Figaro. Anton and Maximilian Bohrer were on the point of leaving for the court of Berlin, where Anton was to be appointed concertmeister to Friedrich Wilhelm III, and Maximilian first chamber violoncellist. They appear to have encountered a problem with the British authorities over the export of their instruments. It was clearly the same obstacle that Viotti came up against in his attempt to export William's cello in 1812. In the Fisher collection of Chinnery Papers there is a letter from a member of the French diplomatic corps in London, the Comte de Caraman, to George Chinnery, who was then working in the British Treasury (which was responsible for the Department of Customs and Excise), thanking him for his 'obligeance' in the matter of the Bohrer brothers' violins, and adding that he would hasten to let them know of 'this decision which gets them out of a serious predicament.' The Delihu sisters, having performed in the Philharmonic concerts of 1817 and 1818 remained in London until mid-November, then left for Ireland, George informed his mother, who was by then in Lille with Viotti, Matilda and William. The popular sisters returned for the 1819 Philharmonic season.

With an acute awareness of social rank, acquired over many years of keeping company with aristocracy and royalty, and also possessing — both naturally, and through association with Europe's best musicians — a most exquisite taste in music, Margaret was critical of any music and company that did not measure up to her high standards. In the same letter to William she wrote in condescending tones of an evening of music at Mrs Curtis's (Sir William Curtis's daughter-in-law):

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555 After this the Bohrer's [sic] played (which they never shall do again here). Then a Duett by Naldi & Goricas, — after that a Duett by Lady Flint & Miss Naldi which terminated the whole.

556 Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia* had premiered in London that year (10 March 1818) with Naldi in the role of Figaro. The meeting in Brussels was presumably in 1816, the year Viotti was in Brussels with Margaret visiting William.

557 See p. 146.


559 Georges de Caraman to George Chinnery, 15 May 1818, Fisher.
We all went to Mrs Curtis's last night — there was music in their way, — instrumental quartets & symphonies, with English Glees. I did not know a creature there, excepting Sir Gore & Lady Ousley, — in number there might be forty persons, or thereabouts. A fine house, an agreeable good-natured mistress, a worthy master, a parcel of fine children, plenty of fresh delightful flowers, and awkward unfamiliar servants, who seemed to belong to the last century. The general effect to me was ponderous. I shall stay at home for the rest of the week to refresh myself!

(M to W, 26 May 1818, PM 94/143/1 - 17/33)

The subtle snobbery that pervades those words may be likened to Glenbervie's regarding the Chinnerys themselves seven years earlier. But as Glenbervie himself was to become two years later one of Margaret's most admiring correspondents, it is clear that private thoughts were not allowed to impinge on public enjoyments. Still in the same letter to William Margaret mentions yet another 'grand Dinner' that she will give to 'the foreigners', and another she had given to Lord Limerick previously. Now comfortably established on the top rung of society, Margaret was impatient with anything but the best: 'I took Mad de Mongeroult [in London on a visit] to Lady Flints last night, — There was an enormous crowd, & who composed it I cannot tell you, — very second-rate company I believe. Music so-so.'

The Duke of Cambridge, back in London for the celebration of his marriage to Princess Augusta Wilhelmina Louisa, third daughter of Friedrich, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassell, was eager to see Viotti again and make music. On 11 June Margaret wrote that 'Tomorrow there is a probability of his [Viotti's] having a Quintetto at Cambridge House.' To the same letter George added a postscript for his father, saying 'Amico dines again at Cambridge H[ouse] to-day & I am asked to join the party which is to take place in the Ev. Had I been a [foreigner?] I suppose I should have been a guest.' Margaret gives an account of this dinner in her letter of 15 June 1818: 'Amico dined again with the Duke of Cambridge, — he went in the morning by appointment to play Duets, & the Duke desired he would dine there, saying "I have only one place, so that I cannot ask

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560 There are six letters from Glenbervie to Margaret Chinnery in the Fisher collection, and two in the Yale collection (c. 1820 and most in Italian). One of Margaret's 1811 letters to George at Oxford makes it clear that it was Glenbervie who sought out the Chinnerys' company at Brighton, rather than vice versa (see M to G, 11 October 1911, Ch.Ch.).

561 M to W, 11 June 1818, PM 94/143/1 - 17/34. Edmund Henry Pery, first Earl of Limerick (1758-1844).

562 He married her in Cassel on 7 May, and in London 1 June 1818.

563 M to W, 26 May 1818, PM 94/143/1 - 17/33.

564 Ibid.
George to dinner, but tell him to come at 10 oClock.’ Amico dined with the Duke and Dutchess of Glocester [sic], Princess Sophia of Glocester, the Landgrave of Hesse, and their ladies & suites making up a full table.”

Later the same month the Duke of Cambridge paid Margaret the promised visit, during which he ‘told me the whole long story of his marriage in detail’, asked after William, wished for the latter’s success in his commercial ventures, and ‘concluded with “I am sure I shall never forget the happy days I passed at Gillwell.”’ Having announced his intention of calling on her the following Sunday evening, Margaret felt obliged to arrange a party. She tried unsuccessfully to get Crosdill, who, despite Viotti’s dire predictions of 1812, had regularly called to enquire after William, but did manage to secure at short notice Schram and the Naldis, who agreed to come and play for an hour before singing in the opera: ‘We have therefore got Schramm, — & the Naldis will come for an hour before they go to their evening’s engagement. Madme de Mongeroult will play also.’ For company I have secured Lady & Miss Dashwood, & Lady Augusta Leith, & — about a dozen men chiefly from the Diplomatic corps.

On Monday morning she gave William an account of the evening:

It is all over, and barring the heat, well over I think! [...] the Duke of Cambridge came in at half past nine Oclock. He was very amiable, spoke to every body, desired the ladies to sit down & while this was going on the venerable Landgrave of Hesse Cassel entered, and without any ceremony, entered into conversation with me, & sat down on the Sofa by me — I then desired they would sing a Quintetto, of Rossini’s — this went off well & tea having been handed round, the Duke took the second violin part in a Quintetto of Boccherini’s — I never heard him play better, — but the heat was so overpowering, that he declined playing any more. As the singers were obliged to leave us at 10 oClock in order to attend a prior engagement I proposed before they went away a Duett between Caroline Naldi & Garcia, which went off well also. Ices were then

565 M to W, 15 June 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 17/35.
566 M to W, 27 June 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 17/37.
567 The opera was Mozart’s Così fan tutte.
568 Margaret’s letters of this time show that Hélène de Montgérault’s visit to England lasted from c. June 1818 to February 1819.
570 Perhaps a member of the Alexander Leith (first baronet) family of Newcastle-on-Tyne.
571 M to W, 27 June 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 17/37.
572 Manuel Garcia (1775-1832), Spanish tenor and composer, left Spain in 1807 and made his debut in Paris in 1808. He was the main exponent of Rossini’s music outside Italy. He sang in London and Paris from 1816-1825, producing his own operas at the Théâtre-Italien in Paris.
handed round. But the Duke began to grow fidgety,—he is desperately in love with his wife, and it was the greatest sacrifice he could possibly make to me, to stay so long from her. He waited however to hear Amico and Robberecht play a Duett, & then vanished [...] I forgot to say that Madame de Mongeroult played a Solo,—but alas!—her execution & her taste are much fallen off!

(M to W, 27 June 1818, PM 94/14311 - 17/37)

Manuel Garcia, a popular interpreter of Rossini’s music, had sung with Naldi in the premiere of Paisiello’s *Barbier de Seville*, the role of Almaviva having been written especially for him. Another tenor who assisted on this night was the Frenchman Pierre Begrez. He had made his London debut at the King’s Theatre in 1816 and also sang with Naldi in that season’s Philharmonic concerts, and in subsequent Philharmonic concerts with Naldi, Mrs [Bianchi] Lacy, the Demoiselles Delihu and Braham. A long letter written by Hélène de Montgeroult to Margaret, dated 30 March 1819 from Paris, shows that she had remained in London until February 1819. She thanks Margaret for her kind reception in London and for making various domestic purchases for her. She also says that she misses the musical evenings, and gives a subtle indication of her former feelings for Viotti: ‘j’ai regretté cette soirée musicale du 15 février, et toutes celles qui l’auront suivie; je me trouvois si bien dans ce salon aimé écoutant, admirant ce bon amico!’ She has given some private concerts of her own, since her return: ‘quand à moi, ma chere dame j’ai eu deux reunions musicales. Samedi le 24 février l’autre le 25 de ce mois; mon excelent p[iano] a fait son effet.’ It is clear from her letter that she bought a piano from Broadwood while in London: ‘broadwood m’a fort bien traité si ce n’est qu’il a oublie de m’envoyer une housse pour ce bel instrument, une [disporue?], une clef, et un assortiment de cordes; mais cela peut se reparer.’

The highlight of 1818 on Margaret’s social calendar was the assembly at the residence of the Spanish ambassador the Duke of San Carlos. Having forbidden William to appear in Paris high society until he had cleared his name, she must have felt

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573 Pierre Begrez (1787-1863), French tenor, spent much of his musical career in England, where his name often appeared on programmes as ‘Begri’. *New Grove* (vol. 2, p. 415) says of him: ‘In an age famous for its fine tenors he had neither the remarkable voice nor the virtuoso technique of a Davide or a Garcia, but his musicality and his dependability made him a valuable member of the Italian opera company in London [...]’

574 Hélène de Montgeroult to Margaret Chinnery, 30 March 1819, Fisher.


576 The Duke of San Carlos (1771-1828), Spanish ambassador to London, 1817-1820, was a close friend of Margaret Chinnery. There are letters from San Carlos in the Fisher collection. See Part III, p. 695.
obliged to justify to him her acceptance of this glamorous invitation where she would cut such a prominent figure: ‘Yesterday evening I went, with George only, to the Dutchess of San Carlos assembly. I thought it right to go, dearest Chinnery, as it was the first invitation I had received from her, and as an idea partly prevails that I will not go at all into society.’

At a reception as grand as this one Margaret seems to have felt keenly her low station:

These noble Spaniards opened their house for the first time about a fortnight ago, to the Regent, inviting only the persons of the court, & the foreign ministers. Last night, they received their acquaintance generally. There was no royalty present excepting the Grand Duke Michael, whom I did not see, — but there was the first company of London, mixed in with a few like the Flints, Staniforths & myself. Upon stopping at the Door, a blaze of light seemed to stream from all the windows [...] Two porters in splendid state liveries attended, & called our names to five or six of the most magnificent personages I ever beheld! They were ranged at the bottom of the stairs and their uniforms, for I must not call them liveries, were exactly like the field marshalls dress uniforms at Paris, covered with embroidery in silver from top to bottom. I should have liked to have stopped to examine them, — one man seemed to be all over silver, but I passed them without curtseying as they gave the humble name of Chinnery to [an]other fine gentleman in the ground stair-case, & till the extreme of the Drawing rooms.

(M to W, 15 June 1818, PM94/143/1 – 17/35)

The crowd was so thick and the din of conversation so loud, Margaret wrote, that: ‘I am sorry to say that poor Naldi, his daughter, Goricas, his wife & Begrez sang in chorus without being able to surmount the incessant talking.’

One week later Margaret’s mood has changed. For the first and only time in the whole correspondence Margaret complains about Viotti. Her letter of 22 June 1818 begins: ‘It is not always an easy thing to bear with Amico’s temper, at all times, — I have always regretted that among the many fine qualities he possesses there should be an over-bearingness that at times renders both his actions & expressions harsh.’ What upsets her most is Viotti’s turning his back on music: ‘For a long time past Amico hates

577 Margaret herself had put about that notion by swearing to the Duke of Cambridge in 1813 that she never would go into society again (M to W, 14 August 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/12).
578 M to W, 15 June 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 17/35.
music, — he never composes, — would never touch a violin if he could avoid it, — his delight is in reading novels!'\textsuperscript{579}

A March 1818 letter from Viotti to William at Calais gives a clue to his bad mood. William Spencer’s brother, John Spencer, one of Charles Smith’s and Viotti’s biggest wine customers, has amassed such enormous debts that he has been stripped of his Government office as Receiver General, and the Government has issued him with an ‘Extent’ thereby freezing his assets and preventing his creditors from being paid, complains Viotti. Viotti writes: ‘Nous perdons presque tout ce que ce malheureux John Spencer doit à la boutique!’\textsuperscript{580} It was John Spencer’s debt, then, that precipitated the bankruptcy of Viotti’s and Smith’s business.

Not wanting to dwell on this unpleasant subject, Viotti passes on quickly to describe for William the surprise party for Naldi’s Saint’s Day, which the Chinnerys helped Naldi’s wife plan. While his wife made preparations for receiving the one hundred-odd guests, and transformed the drawing room into a theatre for a French musical comedy and an Italian opera — both specially written for the occasion — which awaited him at home, Viotti, Margaret, George and Matilda kept him in ignorance of the arrangements by making him believe that after dining at Margaret’s, he was to go to a performance of the popular London puppets, the \textit{fantoccini}, at the Strand.\textsuperscript{581} Viotti described the surprise party in the following way:

\begin{quote}
Nous avons eû hier au soir une fête charmante chez Naldi. C’était le jour de sa fête, et Madame sa femme, pour lui faire une surprise, m’a prié de l’inviter à dîner chez la Padrona [Margaret Chinnery] et de le lui ramener vers les 9. Heures du soir. J’exécutai à pontino ce qu’elle désirait, et à l’heure convenue, M. de Pfeffel [now Bavarian minister plenipotentiary] Jenison Matilda George et moi nous le conduisimes tout simplement chez lui, lui faisant croire que nous le menions voir les Fantoccini dans le Strand. Il donna complètement dans le pan[n]eau, et ce n’est qu’en arrivant à son porte qu’il vit tout éclairé, beaucoup de remi menage qu’il s’apperçut de l’attrappe, mais l’attrappe étoit faite pour toucher son cœur. Nous y trouvames le salon changé en Theatre; une centaine de personnes attendre que la piece commençat, et un orchestre
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{579} M to W, 22 June 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 17/36.
\textsuperscript{580} V to W, [22 March 1818], PM 94/143/1 – 14/31.
\textsuperscript{581} The \textit{fantoccini}, or ‘puppets’ in Italian, was a popular form of entertainment which began as simple Punch and Judy show, but which gradually increased its scope to become a musical variety show. It even included performances of Shakespearean plays and opera.
compose de Vacari, Spagnoletti, Sor et Cranton. 582 On commença par une petite comédie française charmante où sa femme et sa fille jouaient les rôles principaux, et en finit par un petit opéra italien, paroles et musique fait exprès pour l'occasion, où les bouquets ont été présentés harmonieusement et où les larmes d'attendrissement sont venues offusquer les yeux de beaucoup de personnes, particulièrement ceux de l'heureux Papa. — On valsa un petit peu après, on mangea un Elephant — bien entendu en biscuit, et on alla se coucher.

(V to W, 22 March 1818, PM 94/143/1 – 14/31) 583

By the end of June 1818 Margaret and Viotti were already making preparations for their next trip to the Continent, Margaret speaking of going this time via Southampton, from where the packets went direct to Le Havre. It is not clear from the letters which way they went, but at any event they seem to have again ended up in Paris.

Margaret seems to have given fewer parties in London in 1819, but when she did the majority of her guests were as usual members of the foreign diplomatic circle. For her party of 8 January 1819, she invited the Neapolitan, the French, the Swedish, the Bavarian and the Saxon ambassadors and their wives. As she said in her letter to William of 10 January, all her entertaining was very expensive and her motive for keeping it up was solely to further William and George’s interests: ‘I might as well live in a village and enjoy the country air, if I do not try to make friends & connections for you & George.’ 584 On 8 January Margaret gave a ‘12th Day’ party, complete with a ‘12th Day’ cake, to which she invited twenty-three guests. As usual there was music, although not many ‘professors’. Margaret reported that Lady Flint ‘sang her own compositions’ accompanied by Begrez, and Matilda played the piano accompanied by Robberechts. The last page of a letter from Margaret to William in which she speaks of another musical party at which ‘Amico played beautifully’, may also be dated from this period. Margaret says that Viotti ‘was accompanied by his pupil, Guinemer, Col. West, and Ashley’, 585 and that he was ‘quite delightful, & in high good humour all the evening.’ 586

582 Fernando Sor (1778-1839), Spanish composer and guitarist. Cranton is unidentified.
583 At the end of the letter is a note of thanks from Naldi himself, in Italian.
584 M to W, 10 January 1819, PM 94/143/1 – 17/39.
585 Guinemer, unmentioned by either Fétis or Grove, played in a string quartet at the Philharmonic Society’s concerts of 25 February and 11 March 1822, his name on the programme being spelt ‘Guynemer’. No biographer of Viotti has mentioned this pupil. Colonel West might be the younger brother of John Richard West, fourth Earl Delawarr (1758-1795). Either Charles Jane Ashley (1772-1843) cellist, who was an original member of the Philharmonic Society, or his brother Richard Ashley (1775-1836), viola player, who performed in two of the Philharmonic concerts of 1819. The brothers came from a famous English family of musicians.
Another party she gave in 1819 included ten diplomats, among them Séguier, the French consul general who was to render an important service to Margaret in 1827, at the time of one of her Paris court cases. Bar. Armand-Louis-Maurice de Séguier (1770-1831), French consul general in London from 1816, knew Margaret Chinnery well. His brother, also a baron, was a judge in Paris (see pp. 236-237).

This party, Margaret wrote in an undated letter to William, was also ‘rich in poets’: Samuel Rogers, ‘Anacreon’ [Thomas] Moore, Henry Luttrell and William Spencer. The music, Margaret wrote, ‘which was to be instrumental by agreement, was very fine, — some Quintets of Bocherini’s, — a Duett between Amico & Robberecht, — a Trio by Amico.’ Thomas Moore’s Journal corroborates the date and testifies to the excellence of the music. His Journal entry for Tuesday, 8 June 1819 reads: ‘we went in the evening to Mrs Chinnery’s, where I heard Viotti, Ashley &c play a beautiful Quintett of Boccherini’s, full of sweet melody. The Demoiselles Liker [Lihu] sung too.’

One of the members of the foreign diplomatic community who was on close terms with Margaret, George and Viotti was the Baron Edouard Decazes, who worked at the French embassy in London in the Bureau des passeports. Elie Decazes had risen to power in the French Government at the end of 1818, following the resignation of the Duc de Richelieu and the entire French cabinet in December 1818. On the first day of 1819 Margaret had written to William of the news of the demise of extreme right wing, royalist element of the French government. The Ultras, she proclaimed, ‘are all beaten, & the Cousin of a man who sat with me for an hour & a half yesterday, is now the most powerful minister in Europe! — I must write directly to complement young E[douard] de Calze’.
members of the French diplomatic corps in London, Margaret was well-informed about affairs of State in France, and on 4 January wrote to William: 'I really believe that [Elie] De Calze is precisely the man that can best serve the nation, at this juncture, — he has great talents'. The young cousin of the statesman Elie Decazes said his farewells to the Chinnerys and left for France on Wednesday 13 January 1819.

To her connections with the new French government Margaret was able to add an old friend of Viotti’s: 'M. Dessully [Dessolle?] is an old friend of Amico’s you know, — so that upon the whole I do not think we shall have lost ground at headquarters.' As Margaret had said before, she was always on the lookout — as she needed to be — for connections who might further her family’s and Viotti’s interests. With her unerring nose for scenting out men at the pinnacle of power, Margaret unashamedly cultivated those who were likely to be best able to do so. Her reference to their knowing the key players at ‘headquarters’ in France undoubtedly had some bearing on what was to become Viotti’s next career move. With his wine business bankrupt, Viotti needed a new direction to his life. Knowing powerful men in the new French government, Viotti was able to ask for favours. He decided to apply for the directorship of the Paris Opera.

596 M to W, 4 January 1819, PM 94/143/1 – 17/39.
597 Jean-Joseph Dessolle (1767-1828) was Minister for Foreign Affairs and nominally President in the new 1819 government, but resigned in November 1819 following Decazes’s changes to the electoral law.
598 M to W, 4 January 1819, PM 94/143/1 – 17/39.
(xv) Viotti’s years as director of the Paris Opera, 1819 – 1821

The article by French musicologist Lionel de La Laurencie entitled ‘Les Débuts de Viotti comme directeur de l’Opéra en 1819’, which deals with Viotti’s directorship of the Paris Opera, paints a very unflattering portrait of Viotti as a grasping entrepreneur, an authoritarian director and a disloyal friend. The Chinnery correspondence during this period of Viotti’s life – from Viotti to William Chinnery, 1819-1823; from Margaret Chinnery to William Chinnery, 1819-1824; one from Viotti to Margaret Chinnery, December 1821 (all in the Powerhouse collection); from George Chinnery to Margaret Chinnery, March-July 1821 (in the Fisher collection); and several 1820-1821 letters in Viotti’s ‘Miscellaneous Correspondence’ in the Powerhouse collection – redress the unfavourable bias against Viotti that is present in the article and give a more complete picture of Viotti’s motives and aspirations. Although the letters that Viotti writes to the Chinnerys during his tenure of the directorship do not speak a lot about the Opera owing to his reluctance to burden his friends with his professional problems, those written after this two-year period do throw some light on the matter.

There is no doubt that the reason Viotti applied for the position of director of the Paris Opera was the failure of his wine business in 1818. Margaret had earlier injected a sum of £2,600 into his partnership with Charles Smith, and the desire to repay this debt was his top priority, and clearly one of the principal reasons for his turning his sights towards the Paris post. He also needed a regular income to be able to contribute to household expenses, which he shared with Margaret, as shown by Margaret’s letter to William of 19 January 1819, in which she voices concern about her financial situation, writing that ‘Amico’s quarter’ would carry her on ‘hobblingly some how or other’. At the advanced age of sixty-four it is inconceivable that he would have taken on such a stressful administrative post if it were not for his straitened circumstances. But having decided upon this course of action, he set about achieving his goal with his characteristic determination and energy.

600 See M to W, c.4 February 1821, PM 94/143/1 – 17/51.
601 M to W, 19 January 1819, PM 94/143/1 – 17/38.
The person to whom Viotti made his application was the Comte de Pradel (Jules-Jean-Baptiste-François de Chardebeuf), who was known to George Chinnery and undoubtedly also to Viotti, from his yearly stays in Paris. La Laurencie cites the letter that the Comte de Pradel, ‘directeur général du ministère de la Maison du roi’, sent to Viotti on 2 November acknowledging receipt of Viotti’s own letter in which he offered himself as a candidate to take the place of Persuis, the previous incumbent, who had retired due to ill-health. Pradel approved Viotti’s appointment, and wrote of his decision to the Baron de La Ferté, ‘intendant des Menus Plaisirs’. Viotti was officially appointed to the position of director of the Paris Opera on 30 October 1819, to take up his duties on 1 January 1820. The appointment gave him an income of 12,000 francs per annum and an accommodation allowance of 3,000. Viotti’s good friend Luigi Cherubini was a rival candidate for the same position and there is evidence that Viotti, in a letter to Cherubini denying knowledge of how he came to get the position, was less than honest with his friend. Embarrassed though Viotti may have been at this triumph over his colleague, it seems insufficient grounds for implying, as La Laurencie does, that Viotti was a faithless friend. It was only natural, in an era when position depended on patronage, that Viotti should make use of the extensive network of contacts that Margaret had so carefully established over a number of years with French diplomats and aristocrats, and that he himself had conserved from his early years in Paris.

In speaking of Viotti’s entrepreneurial endeavours, La Laurencie criticises him for his ill-will, his acerbic pen, and his general bad humour. It is true that Viotti was intolerant of fools, could be tenacious and obdurate in confrontations, was single-

602 See letter from the Comte de Pradel to George Chinnery, 6 November 1816, regarding George’s application on behalf of British statesman George Canning for entry tickets to Parisian palaces of interest.
603 Louis-Luc Loiseau de Persuis (1769-1819), director of the Paris Opera, 1817-1819.
604 La Ferté appears to be the younger relative – possibly the son – of another old friend of Viotti, Denis-Pierre-Jean de La Ferté (1725-1794), who had held the same position in the reign of Louis XVI and who had been guillotined in 1794.
605 His correct title was ‘directeur de l’Académie royale de musique, Division du Personnel des Artistes’. The modern Paris Opera had undergone many name changes in its brief history. Beginning as the Théâtre national in 1793, it became Théâtre de la République et des Arts in 1797, then Théâtre de l’Opéra in 1802, Académie impériale de musique in 1804, and Académie royale de musique from 1814-1848.
606 This was a provisional appointment to enable the previous incumbent, Louis-Luc Persuis, to introduce Viotti gradually to his duties. As it transpired, Persuis died on 21 December, and Viotti took over from that date.
607 La Laurencie, op. cit., p. 113.
mindedly determined in all his initiatives, and was short-tempered when under duress. But to single out Viotti’s ‘caractère agressif et autoritaire’ while ignoring his praiseworthy qualities is not to do him justice. His sense of humour was sparkling, and his good nature and obligingness were remarked upon by many different witnesses, including Madame de Genlis, Madame Vigée-Lebrun, Thomas Moore and Sylvester Douglas (Lord Glenbervie) whose comments have been recorded publicly in published works as well as privately in the Chinnery correspondence. The private tributes paid to Viotti by his friends Adolphus Frederick, William Spencer and Margaret and William themselves are too numerous to list. He was cultured, well-educated, and urbane, and above all, warm-hearted, making him equally popular with royalty and with his fellow musicians and pupils. In Viotti’s obituary, published in the Harmonicon, Fayolle, who contributed most of the material for the article, wrote that Viotti’s conduct was regulated by the strictest notions of honour, that his opinions were liberal, and his manners those of a perfect gentleman. He was also an extremely sensitive man, whose mind was finely attuned to the beauties of nature. And if the number of his pupils and the success of their subsequent careers is any indication, then he must also have been a gifted and dedicated teacher. His most outstanding quality – and the very one that La Laurencie implies he lacks – is evident in nearly every one of his letters in the CFP collection. It was his absolute loyalty and unstinting generosity towards his close friends.

The role of theatre impresario inevitably involved stress, caused by the pressure of meeting deadlines and by daily encounters with difficult artistic temperaments. It was not a task for a weakening sixty-four year-old. There is no doubt that Viotti was headed for what he would have called ‘une jérémiade de peines’ on taking over the directorship of the Académie royale de musique, which was financed by the French Government,

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608 Ibid., p. 114.
609 In her Mémoires (vol. 1, p. 144) Madame de Genlis wrote of Viotti that he was an ‘artiste fait pour servir de modèle à ceux qui se consacrent aux arts, par son prodigieux talent, la culture de son esprit, ses mœurs, sa conduite noble et pure dans tous les temps, et les qualités de son cœur.’ Glenbervie wrote that in addition to his professional merits Viotti was ‘a very agreeable well-bred and well-informed person in all matters which it becomes a man of the world and of good company to know’ (Douglas, 1910, op. cit., p. 145). For Madame Vigée-Lebrun’s comments see pp. 182-183 of this thesis, and for Moore’s see pp. 124-125.
610 The Harmonicon, no. 16, 1824, pp. 55-58. François Fayolle (1774-1852), was a French writer on music and co-editor of the Dictionnaire historique des musiciens, first published in Paris in 1810.
611 The Harmonicon, no. 16, 1824, pp. 56-57. Even allowing for the laudatory nature of such tributes, this appraisal of Viotti’s character was not exaggerated.
and which since 1817 was responsible for administering two theatres at two different venues, the Théâtre-Italien in the rue Favart, and the Grand Opéra Français, where opera seria was performed, in the rue de Richelieu. As Viotti had been warned in 1789, ‘c’est une bien grande machine que l’Opéra’ In 1831 there were more than 80 musicians, 70 members of the chorus, 80 walk-ons, about 100 dancers, and 60-odd stage-hands. There do not appear to have been many fewer in 1819. It was not an easy job to balance finances – the Opera was the most expensive to run of all the Paris theatres – fulfil the wishes of the King’s minister, appease difficult prima donnas and at the same time please the public. It was rare to find, either in England or in France, a successful and popular theatre impresario, and none seems to have found the task easy, or escaped criticism. It was as a result of Madame Catalani’s incompetent directorship of the Théâtre-Italien that this theatre had passed to the control of the Académie royale de musique in 1817. Louis-Luc Loiseau de Persuis, Viotti’s predecessor at the Opera, was criticised by Van der Straeten, in his History of the Violin, for possessing ‘a haughty and quarrelsome nature’.

When Viotti decided to apply for the position of director of the Paris Opera, Margaret had little reason to remain in England, and decided to make France her principal abode. As early as January 1819 there were signs that Margaret and Viotti were intending to establish a home in France. In her letter to William of 21 January 1819 Margaret wrote that she had asked her old friend Langsdorff the diplomat to deliver to Madame de Rayneval in Paris all her effects that had been sent from Dover: ‘[...] I have given him another troublesome commission, which is to get all my things that have been sent from Dover to Calais, of the person to whom they were sent, which

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612 The Théâtre-Italien at the Salle Favart was the theatre where Italian opera was performed. Founded by order of Napoleon in 1806, it consisted of a company of Italian singers chosen by him, including Madame Grassini, his mistress.


614 The former King’s Theatre manager, Michael Kelly, was an exception.

615 Catalani, who had been the scourge of theatre managers in London with her exorbitant fees, found herself with the boot on the other foot, in her role of manager of the Théâtre-Italien, which she took on in 1814 at the time of the Bourbon Restoration. Her stewardship of this theatre has been described as particularly ‘malheureuse’. In spite of the huge subsidies given to the theatre by Louis XVIII, she was unable to balance the books and was asked to resign in 1817.

616 Van der Straeten, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 275.
is Le Veux [William's erstwhile business partner], and deliver them safely at Paris to Mad'me de Rayneval.\footnote{M to W, 21 January 1819, PM 94/143/1 - 17/44.}

The other indication that they intended to settle in France was Margaret's purchase of a property at Châtillon, then a small village six miles south of Paris. The date of purchase of this elegant domain with substantial orchards is unclear, but a letter from Margaret (still in London) to William reveals that in April 1819, just prior to her departure for France, she had set aside a sum of money for the purchase of a property—originally intended to be at Louveciennes, near the home of her friend Madame Vigée-Lebrun: '2300 I have remitted to be ready in case of purchase, — it was all I could spare of the Swedish affair, $200 went to make the pot boil till now, & the remaining 270 repaid C[harles] S[mith] for the carriage & something else he had paid during our absence. But we shall see what her [Madame Vigée-Lebrun's?] reply to me tells me, — I wish it may be favourable to our views, — Lucienne is a lovely spot.'\footnote{Presumably some investments in Sweden.} They ended up settling at Châtillon, but Margaret 'did not purchase the property there until 1820,\footnote{M to W, 19 April 1819, PM 94/143/1 - 17/47. Lucienne is a variant spelling for Louveciennes.} in spite of a remark of Viotti that would suggest it was a year earlier.\footnote{George Chinnery's letter to Viotti of 1 September 1820 (PM 94/143/1 - 28/23), and his Travel Journal entry for 2 October 1820 (British Library MS ADD 64095, vol. 3, p. 166) both make clear that the purchase was of a recent date.}

From 1820 the pattern of Margaret's and Viotti's movements between England and France changed. Margaret spent spring, summer and autumn at Châtillon, and winter in London, as the Châtillon house was practically uninhabitable in winter owing to heating and water problems. But with its fresh country air, its fruit trees, grape vines and copious crops that were sent to market for extra income ("Aujourd'hui il [le jardinier Bernard] mettra tous les fruits dans les paniers, excepté le meilleur raisin, et demain le tout ira au marché"), Châtillon was for the Chinnerys a second Gillwell—albeit on a more modest scale—and it was now Viotti who commuted each week-end from Paris, just as William used to do to Gillwell from London, and Margaret went periodically to Paris, just as she had gone to London in the old days, to hear an opera or attend a play. William's visits, on the other hand, were now restricted to a short summer
vacation and to assisting with those periods of great upheaval, the bi-annual moves. Margaret was well supplied with servants (a manservant, a gardener, a female servant, a personal waiting maid), and carried on her entertaining at Châtillon, receiving a cosmopolitan mix of diplomats, musicians and personal friends and family for dinners and music – including Viotti’s brother André – just as she used to do at Gillwell.

One of Margaret’s English friends who visited the Paris Opera in September 1819, before Viotti took over the reins, was Lady Dashwood King. The latter wrote on her return to London to Margaret (still in Paris) giving her an account of a performance she had seen in which Madame Fodor had been poorly received by the French audience. When Madame Fodor first sang in London in 1816, her voice was described by the *Morning Post* as ‘rich, harmonious, and, without possessing extraordinary power, of a considerable compass. Her taste is chaste, her execution correct, easy and elegant, and her science evidently profound.’ † Madame Fodor was also the epithet given to her singing style by Lady Dashwood King. Regretting that Madame Fodor was no longer in England where she was appreciated, she commented to Margaret: ‘She sings too chaste to please the French. Never shall I forget the screams of the three first female Singers at the French Opera […] squalling away in the most disgusting manner — I would have liked to go to the opera with Mr Viotti one night to see the effect it would have produced upon him.’ Perhaps these screams were the reason for Viotti’s dismissal of Madame Bonini, described by La Laurencie in his article. In any case, Viotti decided to re-employ Joséphine Fodor in 1820. La Laurencie quotes Viotti’s letter to the Baron de La Ferté describing his negotiations with Madame Fodor and her husband as an example of Viotti’s ‘intelligente et souple diplomatie’: ‘Je m’y suis présenté d’abord comme ancienne connaissance, ensuite la conversation prenant insensiblement la tournure que je désirais, j’ai agi comme Directeur. Après de longues discussions, j’ai amené M. et Mme Fodor à consentir à un nouvel engagement de 25.000fr. pour l’année

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623 Joséphine Fodor-Mainvielle (1789-1870) was the daughter of the Dutch violinist and colleague of Viotti in Paris in the 1780s, Josephus Andreas Fodor. She married the French actor Mainvielle in 1812. In August 1814 she made her debut at the Opéra-Comique in Paris. She performed at the King’s Theatre, London from 1816 to 1818 and starred with Naldi on 10 March 1818 in the first London performance of Rossini’s *II Barbiere di Siviglia*. She was a mutual friend of Viotti and Naldi.

624 Cited by the *New Grove*, vol. 6, p. 682.

625 N. Dashwood King to Margaret Chinnery, 24 September 1819, Fisher. This letter was addressed to Margaret at [38] ‘Rue du basse Rampart a Paris’, which was Viotti’s and Margaret’s residence before Viotti moved to apartments in the Tuileries Palace.

626 La Laurencie, *op. cit.*, p. 115.
prochaine, avec promesse d’un bénéfice sur le grand opéra, garanti à 15.000 francs nets. 627 After the piteous humiliation that Madame Fodor endured in 1819, he must indeed have been persuasive. Lady Dashwood King tells Margaret that after her performance, when she went to shake hands with her, ‘she seemed ready to cry’. 628 That Viotti remained on good terms with the Fodor-Mainvielle couple, is shown by the fact that in October 1820 Mainvielle carried a personal letter across to England for Viotti on behalf of William. 629

Another Chinnery friend who arrived in Paris in September 1819 was the melomaniac poet Thomas Moore. 630 Moore, who had almost certainly first met Viotti at Gillwell, and who had been struck by his good nature, wrote again of his pleasure in meeting Viotti in 1820, when he noted in his journal on 23 April 1820: ‘Viotti, too, was there, whom I always like to meet.’ 631 According to his journal, he went to the opera five times in ten days soon after his arrival in France. On 17 September he heard Spontini’s La Vestale, noting that he was ‘delighted with it’ and that ‘few things set my imagination on the wing so much as these spectacles at the Opera’. 632

When Viotti took over the directorship of the Opera, rehearsals for Spontini’s new opera Olympie were already in progress. Viotti’s altercation with this difficult composer marked the beginning of what was to be a continuous stream of problems that lasted throughout his tenure of the post. La Laurencie describes the bitter exchange of letters between Viotti and Spontini over the latter’s opera, which was not ready for the date it was due to open at the Paris Opera on 15 December 1819. If the correspondence cited by La Laurencie proves that Viotti possessed an aggressive and dictatorial nature, as La Laurencie claims it does, then it must also prove Spontini’s equally belligerent and obstinate character. Spontini has been variously described as having a ‘proud and truculent personality’, 633 as ‘the quarrelsome, haughty Spontini’ 634, and Clément cites

628 N. Dashwood King to Margaret Chinnery, 24 September 1819, Fisher.
629 W to V. 19 October [1820], PM 94/143/1 – 14/35.
630 Moore, in debt for the £6,000 defalcation of his deputy at Bermuda (in the post of admiralty registrar), had, like William Chinnery, fled to France to escape his creditors.
631 Moore, op. cit., vol. 1, 23 April 1820, p. 313. Moore’s ballad ‘Love thee dearest’ was set to music by Viotti. Based on the second movement of Viotti’s Violin Concerto 5, Chappell White thinks it was probably arranged from his keyboard solo ‘Air montagnard’ (White’s Thematic Catalogue, p. 146).
633 New Grove (vol. 18, p. 17), cites this as the reason he was dismissed from his post as director of the Théâtre-Italien in 1812.
his expensive habit of continually reworking scores.\textsuperscript{635} Even La Laurencie admits Spontini's character was 'violent et autoritaire', and that he generated enormous copying costs, yet still seems to lay the blame for the argument with Viotti.\textsuperscript{636}

The problems recognised today as being inherent in Spontini's opera \textit{Olympie}\textsuperscript{637} tally with Thomas Moore's opinion of the opera, which he saw in rehearsal on 18 December 1819, four days before its premiere. In his journal of that date he writes: 'Went to seek for Viotti in order to get permission to attend the rehearsal of Spontini's new opera, "Olympie", this evening. Met him; and he promised to admit Lord G myself, and Fitzgerald [...] The rehearsal very singular; the stage lighted up, and all the scenery in form, and the artists in their every day clothes: the music too, full of notes and overloaded harmonies; and the way it was squalled and mewled out by Madames [sic] Branchia and Albert detestable.'\textsuperscript{638} With this last criticism Moore echoes the opinion of his compatriot Lady Dashwood King on the French operatic style, although when he heard the finished opera performed on 23 December 1819 he made no mention of the squalling and mewling of the singers, commenting favourably that 'nothing can be more poetically imagined than the scenery and ballet of this opera.'\textsuperscript{639}

Various illnesses and other impediments caused many of the female members of the cast of Spontini's \textit{Olympie} to offer excuses as to why they were unable to perform, 'mettant le directeur [Viotti] dans une situation critique' by putting the opera out of production for a total of two months.\textsuperscript{640} Barbier, in his \textit{Vie quotidienne à l'Opéra}, quotes the different reasons given by the singers – Mme Albert, Mlle Grassari, Mlle Armand and Mlle Paulin – which have been noted in writing by the director. One asked for more time to learn her part, one was too tired to rehearse, one refused to perform in

\textsuperscript{634} Van der Straeten (\textit{History of the Violin}, vol. 1, p. 388), deplores his altercation with the Bohrer brothers.

\textsuperscript{635} Clément, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 558. Copying costs of musical scores were borne by the Opera administration and could cause an enormous budget blow-out if the score was reworked too often. For example, the perfecting of the score of Spontini's opera \textit{La Vestale} lasted a year and cost 10,000 francs in copyists' fees.

\textsuperscript{636} La Laurencie, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 117-118.

\textsuperscript{637} \textit{Olympie}, a 'tragédie lyrique en trois actes' (libretto by Dieulafoy and Brifaut), was based on the 1765 tragedy by Voltaire of the same name. The \textit{New Grove} (vol. 18, p. 22) criticises the opera for being 'overloaded', saying it has been crammed with as much spectacle as possible, 'including almost every device that had been in vogue in the French opera at the time - a triumphal procession, a bacchanal, a battle, a final apotheosis.'

\textsuperscript{638} Louise-Marie-Augustine Albert, née Himm (b.1791), French soprano. Moore, \textit{op. cit.}, vol 1, p. 268.

\textsuperscript{639} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 270.

more than the first act...\textsuperscript{641} It was no wonder that Viotti complained of them and that Margaret Chinnery’s friend, the ex-French ambassador to London, Osmond de Boigne,\textsuperscript{642} remarked after Viotti’s retirement that he seemed happy to have escaped the whims and caprices of ‘ces demoiselles de l’opéra.’\textsuperscript{643} Albert Soubies, in his Théâtre-Italien de 1801 à 1913, cited a letter of Viotti’s in which he said he was ‘las, obsédé et dégoûté des tracasseries que j’éprouve de la part de ces dames.’\textsuperscript{644}

Margaret and Matilda returned to London at the end of November 1819, leaving Viotti behind for the first time. Alone in his empty apartments in the Tuileries Palace, Viotti was disconsolate.\textsuperscript{645} He wrote to William, now back in Le Havre having accompanied the ladies to Dover, and informed Viotti of their safe arrival there, ‘Mon Dieu quel abandon, quel desert que tout ceci! Ne disons rien cependant, si une fois j’attaque ce chapitre, je n’en finirai plus.’\textsuperscript{646} His anxieties were compounded by the knowledge that a variety of problems awaited Margaret in London. It was the first time that she had been separated from both William and Viotti at the same time, she was short of ready cash, and she had to organise alone the sale of her Montagu Street house (which did not eventuate until 1823).

The winding-up of Viotti’s affairs with his former business partner Charles Smith called him back to London in early 1820. Margaret wrote to William on 1 February 1820 that ‘Amico […] is gone to have his first conversation with C.S. this morning, upon the arrangement of their affairs. By their articles of association it is stipulated that payment is to be made at the periods of six, twelve & eighteen months, – so as to be completed by that period.’\textsuperscript{647} In the same letter she complained that the time restraints of such a short stay made arranging parties difficult: ‘However we have now

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{641} \textit{Ibid.}
  \item \textsuperscript{642} René-Eustache, marquis d’Osmond de Boigne (1751-1838) was the father of the famous comtesse d’Osmond de Boigne who held an influential Paris salon and whose \textit{Memoirs} were published in 1907. After filling a diplomatic post in Turin, he was named ambassador to London in 1815, but after December 1818 resigned his post and returned to France to sit in the Chambre des pairs.
  \item \textsuperscript{643} Osmond de Boigne to Margaret Chinnery, 13 December 1821, Fisher.
  \item \textsuperscript{644} \textit{La Laurencie, op. cit.}, p. 121.
  \item \textsuperscript{645} These apartments were provided by the administration of the Opera. Viotti took them over at the end of October 1819 (Archives nationales, O\textsuperscript{9} 1650, in \textit{La Laurencie} p. 113).
  \item \textsuperscript{646} V to W, 21 November [1819], PM 94/143/1 – 14/34. Viotti appears to be complaining of loneliness, as he had done in 1797, when William left him alone in the Duke Street residence (see p. 112).
  \item \textsuperscript{647} M to W, 1 February 1820, PM 94/143/1 – 17/48. A copy of a letter from Viotti to his lawyer and power of attorney Henry Dance (who held the articles of association of Viotti’s partnership with Smith), explains that the partnership was dissolved in the winter of 1819, that Smith was to repay the capital that Viotti had contributed to the firm in three instalments, and that a promissory note for the
\end{itemize}
fixed a dinner for next Saturday, & another for the Wednesday following. I shall also try
to give two or three music parties; but really time flies so fast when a period is fixed,
that one can hardly do any thing." 648

Viotti had only been away for four weeks when the assassination of the Duc de
Berry occurred outside the Paris Opera. The nephew of Louis XVIII had accompanied
his pregnant wife to her carriage during the performance, and was stabbed by Louis­
Pierre Louvel on re-entering the Opera house, where he died of his wounds at dawn. As
son of the future Charles X, and an heir to the throne of France, his assassination had
serious ramifications for the French Government, and created immense upheaval for the
administration of the Opera. This dramatic turn of events certainly compounded Viotti's
problems. It can only be imagined that Viotti rushed back to Paris on learning of the
event, and that his absence on the occasion placed him in a severely embarrassing
position vis-à-vis the King's minister.

By April 1820 Margaret had returned to France and soon after was established at
Châtillon. In her letter to William of Sunday 24 September she wrote of Caroline
Naldi's Paris debut at Viotti's Théâtre-Italien. 649 Young Caroline Naldi had sung
frequently with her father at Margaret Chinnery's music parties, and it may have been
on account of Viotti's friendship with her father, rather than for her talent, that he had
employed her. Although the musicologist Clément counts her among the 'brillante
pléiade de cantatrices' who sang at the Théâtre-Italien in the post-Restoration years, 650
the anonymous author of a document entitled 'Observations désintéressées sur
l'administration du Théâtre Royal Italien, adressées à M. Viotti' was scathing in his
criticism: 'Mademoiselle Naldi qui vient, dit-on, d'être engagée [...] pour 18,000 fr., n'a
point assez de voix pour remplir la très petite enceinte du Théâtre-Italien; ses
intonations ne sont pas sûres; sa prononciation est tout anglaise, et son jeu nul.' 651
Another witness of Caroline Naldi's debut in France was the writer Jane Porter, who
wrote to Viotti thanking him for the generous packet of tickets he had sent her. 652

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648 M to W, 1 February 1820, PM 94/143/1- 17/48.
649 M to W, 24 September 1820, PM 94/143/1-17/49.
650 Clément, op. cit., p. 486.
651 'Observations [...] adressées à M. Viotti', 6 February 1821, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 282. This was a ten­
page document offering advice to Viotti on how to improve his administration of the Théâtre-Italien.
652 Jane Porter to Viotti, c. September 1820, Fisher.
Margaret, who noted the review of the performance in the *Drapeau blanc* of 21 September 1820, objected to the choice of opera:

Caroline Naldi’s debut was very successful, in spite of their having fixed upon the most disagreeable opera I ever heard in my life, — the poem detestable, all the characters odious, and the music heavy. In the first act she was completely overcome by fear, — her voice was without power, and would not obey her efforts, — I trembled, thought she would be judged unfairly, — and certainly the audience seemed disappointed during the Entr’acte. However in the second act, from having had ice put round the outside of her throat, and having swallowed a great deal of iced water, the extreme hoarseness subsided sufficiently to enable her to sing her air most beautifully; then the plaudits began, and were loud & universal. They saw she was mistress of her profession, which she really is, — they thought her pretty, graceful in her actions, natural, a good actress; in short they were delighted with her [...] She was over-fatigued by constant rehearsals, & has not been able to sing again, — but on Tuesday she will make her second appearance in that frightful opera, which I would like to see committed to the flames.

(M to W, 24 September 1820, PM 94/143/1 - 17/49)

The ‘frightful’ opera in question was Mozart’s *Cosi fan tutte*. The libretto, by Lorenzo da Ponte, was much criticised in the nineteenth century for its supposed immorality.653 It is understandable that Margaret, with her strict principles of morality, would have disapproved of women being portrayed as weak things whose fickle nature made them unable to resist men’s amorous overtures. But the anonymous author of the ‘Observations [...] adressées à M. Viotti’ laid the blame for the failure of this Mozart opera squarely on the shoulders of Caroline Naldi. ‘*Cosi fan tutte* est tombé par la faiblesse de la voix de Mile Naldi’, he wrote categorically.654 The music critic writing in the *Journal de Paris* of 21 September 1820, however, attributed Caroline Naldi’s weak beginning to nerves, and like Margaret, thought her performance improved in the second act: ‘La débutante est jeune, jolie; sa voix nous a paru un peu faible, mais cette jeune personne était fort émue [...]’. Mademoiselle Naldi a fort bien chanté, au second acte [...]’.

653 Charles Ford, in his *Cosi? Sexual politics in Mozart’s operas* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1991, p. 1), wrote that Mozart, who had collaborated with da Ponte on two other works as well (*Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*), ‘responded to the libretti’s increasingly single-minded concerns with female moral frailty by using the full force of his compositional virtuosity to represent women rendered helpless by their own desire.’
Viotti's problems with the administration of the two theatres only increased as time went on. The frustrating conditions under which he toiled in the aftermath of the assassination of the Duc de Berry -- when the rue de Richelieu premises were closed and the grand opera had to be moved to the much smaller Théâtre-Italien in rue Favart until the new opera theatre was completed -- were particularly stressful. This, combined with the constant juggling of his private and public life, must surely have contributed to his declining health. In November of 1820, immediately after Margaret's departure for England, Viotti scrawled a desperately unhappy note to William: 'Comme je suis fâché cher Ami, que vous m'ayez quitté! Comme je suis seul! Je puis bien dire que je passe ma vie dans des peines qui se renouvellent tous les jours.' The new theatre -- in the rue Le Peltier only a few hundred yards from the original site -- was finished in August 1821. Viotti wrote in exasperated tones to William on 6 July 1821, that he expected the keys to the new venue to be finally handed over on the 25th of the same month: 'La salle avance à grands pas, je pense que le 25 de ce mois en remettra les clefs. Tant mieux car cette maudite besogne nous donne terriblement d'embarras.'

In the Powerhouse collection there is a piece of rollicking rhyme laced with sharp-edged wit and intended to be set to a popular tune, which dates from about this time, and which has clearly been penned by a Viotti satiriser with a sense of humour:

Air la Bonne aventure o gué

1er Couplait [sic]
Nous sommes bien convaincus
que l'opera tombe
et que le Sort des intrus
qui Creusent sa tombe
mes en sortant de favard [Favart]
sont mis a l'écart
la Bonne aventure o gué &c

654 'Observations [...] adressées a M. Viotti', in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 277.
655 V to W, 25 November 1820, PM 94/143/1 − 14/36. William, as was his wont, had come from Le Havre to spend the autumn with his wife and Viotti, had accompanied Margaret to Calais, then returned to Le Havre. By the end of 1820 it had also become clear that Smith was unable to fulfil the terms of his promissory note.
This parody on the ill-fortunes of the Opera and the incompetence of its administrators is addressed to ‘Monsieur Viotti, hotel choiseul, rue Grange Batelliere, paris’ and the post mark seems to read ‘mars 19, 18[21?] The victims of the anonymous author’s scorn are Courtin, the administrateur du matériel, and Grandsire, the secrétaire général who had charge of the finances of the Opera. The first two lines of the third verse are clearly addressed to Viotti himself, as it was the director who presided over

656 V to W, 6 July 1821, PM 94/143/1 – 14/38.
the committee that selected the operas to be performed. In this two-pronged attack on Viotti, not only is his judgement called into question, but he is accused of not speaking French.

The rue de la Grange-Batelière crossed the rue de Richelieu at its extremity, and was therefore close to the new site of the Opera. The Hôtel Choiseul contained apartments provided by the State for opera administrators, and a letter from George to his mother proves that Viotti moved into these apartments in June 1821. The letter (dated 'Paris le 27 Juin 1821') that Viotti addressed to the Baron de La Ferté, from whom he sought furniture for his new abode, confirms this date. In attaching a letter from 'Mr. l'Intendant du garde meuble de la Couronne [Courtin]', Viotti asks for the Baron's ratification of his request, saying that 'Tout ce qui va habiter l'administration a des meubles, moi seul revenu après 29 ans d'absence je n'en ai point et n'ai pas le moyen de m'en procurer'

The series of 1821 letters to the intendant des Menus-plaisirs, Baron de La Ferté transcribed by Giazotto all testify to Viotti's harried life as director of the Opera. Viotti's humble tone in the letters make clear his subordinate relationship to La Ferté, who in turn was answerable to the King's minister. According to Barbier, the strict hierarchical nature of the administration of the Opera during the Restoration meant that 'son directeur n'est guère qu'une marionnette savamment manipulée par le ministre ou le souverain lui-même.' The Easter concerts of April 1821 appear to have been a source of much tension to Viotti, as he tried to balance the directives of the intendant with the desires of the performers, making the whole conform to the imposed budget. In his letter of 8 April to the Baron de La Ferté Viotti admits to having, in a moment of impetuosity, made the rash offer to pay the members of the Bohrer orchestra out of his own pocket. It may be surmised from the apologetic tone of this letter that the sum that Viotti promised his friends Anton and Maximilian Bohrer exceeded the Opera budget, but that because his original request for funds had been denied by the minister, he was induced to take this unprecedented step out of sheer frustration. Having thus committed

657 It was the libretto that was considered in the first instance, the music being only a secondary consideration.
659 Viotti to La Ferté, 27 June 1821, 'Viotti Papers', RCM. Giazotto (op. cit., p. 273) has wrongly transcribed this date as 'le 27 Janv 1821'.
660 Ibid.
himself, he was then obliged to beg for leniency at the next Opera management meeting.\textsuperscript{663} Coincidentally, it was apparently in March the same year that Viotti received a letter from the Chinnery friend Georges de Caraman – the same diplomat who had three years earlier asked George Chinnery to smooth the export of the Bohrer brothers’ instruments from England – asking for Viotti’s protection of the nine-year-old pianist son of his Bavarian friend Madame de Schauroth, who wanted her son to take lessons at the Paris conservatoire.\textsuperscript{664} Another letter of the same period came from the Chinnerys’ and Viotti’s friend Lord Dunmore, who wrote to George expressing the hope that ‘my old Friend Viotti enjoys appearing again on the broad Theatre of Life. It rarely happens that a person in full possession of those powers which command public applause can completely withdraw from such [avenues?] without casting a long look behind.’ Half suspecting the truth, he added that he hoped Viotti had not been ‘dragged there against his will.’\textsuperscript{665}

One sweetener to Viotti’s life in 1821 was his decoration by Louis XVIII in early May. In George’s letter to his mother of 9 May 1821 he says that he ‘wrote yesterday to congratulate Amico on his decoration’.\textsuperscript{666} One month later George mentioned in his letter the fact that ‘Amico gained public eulogium in Paris at a ceremony’.\textsuperscript{667} Another letter, in very idiosyncratic French, apparently from Viotti’s old Portuguese friend Lourenço da Lima\textsuperscript{668} (later to become his untractable debtor) confirms that Viotti was made a Chevalier de la Legion d’honneur. Addressed to ‘Monsieur le chevalier Viotti, directeur general de l’opera, paris’, the letter begins: ‘J’ai appris avec un grand plaisir cher amico, que vous etes nommé chevalier d’honneur: je veux vous en far mon [mes] compliments aussi bien, et mieux que d’autres: car des vrais amis partages [sic] nos peines et nos plaisirs plus veritablemens.’\textsuperscript{669} According to La Laurencie (p. 122) there is no record of Viotti’s decoration in the archives of the

\textsuperscript{662} Barbier, op. cit., p. 53.
\textsuperscript{663} Viotti to La Forté, 8 April 1821, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 274.
\textsuperscript{664} Georges de Caraman to Viotti, 2 March [1821], Fisher. The letter is from Stuttgart, is dated simply ‘ce 2 Mars’, and is addressed to ‘Monsieur Viotti, Directeur du Conservatoire royal de Musique, Rue Taitbout N° 9 à Paris’. If the year is in fact 1821 it gives a clue to Viotti’s Paris residence immediately before moving to the rue de la Grange-Batelière.
\textsuperscript{665} George Murray to George Chinnery, 28 March 1821, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{666} G to M, 9 May 1821, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{667} G to M, 11 June 1821, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{668} A member of the distinguished old Portuguese family of statesmen and diplomats, probably an older relative of the Count Luis-Antoine d’Abreu e Lima, conde de Carreira (1785-1871), Portuguese ambassador in London in 1803. The latter was a guest at Gillwell in the same year.
Musée de la Légion d’honneur, but the fire of 1871, which destroyed many of the records, may explain the omission. An engraving by H. Meyer from a portrait of Viotti by Trossarelli bears the inscription ‘Knight of the Legion of Honour’, and a lithograph by Antoine Maurin (reproduced at the front of White’s Thematic Catalogue) shows him wearing the cross. The above letters offer conclusive proof that he was decorated, the George Chinnery letters giving an additional clue to the date of his decoration.

In March 1821 some of the members of the Paris Opera performed in London in Rossini’s opera La Gazza ladra. The advertisement placed in the Times on 19 March 1821 for the above opera and ballet alludes to the appearance of various members of foreign opera and ballet companies, including some from the Royal Academy of Music in Paris:

BY COMMAND OF HIS MAJESTY
KING’S THEATRE

TO-MORROW EVENING, Tuesday March 20, will be performed, for the third time in this country, an Opera, composed by Rossini, entitled LA GAZZA LADRA, in which Madame Camporese will make her third appearance. After the Opera (3rd time), composed by Monsieur Deshayes, Ballet Master, a grand Divertissement allegorique, with new music, dresses, decorations, &c. entitled L’OFFRANDE A TERPSICHERE in which Madame Noblet and Mademoiselle De Varennes (from the Royal Academy of Music at Paris), and Monsieur Lacombe (from the Opera at Lisbon) will make their third appearance in this country. The free list on this occasion must necessarily be suspended. The doors will be opened precisely at 6.

The Times advertisement of Saturday 17 March had named all the performers borrowed from other companies, including those from Paris:

For the Opera, Mme Ronzi prima donna, and Signor di Begni, primo buffo, comic cantate at the Italian Theatre Royal, Paris; and Signor Curioni primo tenore at the Italian Theatre San Carlos, Naples. For the ballet, Monsieur Albert, Mons. Coulon,

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666 Lourenço da Lima to Viotti, [c. May 1821], PM 94/143/1 – 28/22.
670 The ‘free list’ refers to the practice, common in both London and Paris, of members of the upper classes applying to their friends in theatre management for free tickets to performances, as George did to William Ayrton (musical director of King’s Theatre) for this very performance. (See G to M, 21 March 1821, Fisher). It was a practice which was in part responsible for the many failures in theatre management, and was not entirely eradicated at the Paris Opera until the reign of Louis-Philippe.
671 François Decombe Albert (1787-1865), French dancer and choreographer, married Louise-Marie Himm in 1811. He was a Viotti and Chinnery friend (see p. 692).
fils, Mademoiselle Fanny Bias, Monsieur Montesse [?], and Monsieur Ragaine, first
dancers at the Royal Academy of Music at Paris.

(The Times, 17 March 1821)

Seventeen letters from George (in London) to his mother (at Châtillon) written
during the London spring season of 1821 (from the beginning of March to the beginning
of July 1821, in the Fisher collection) are a rich source of information on the musical
performances given in London at the beginning of the reign of George IV, and on the
practice of ‘lending’ singers and dancers from the Paris Opera to the King’s Theatre,
Haymarket. George’s letter of 21 March 1821 confirms that the singers and dancers
from the Paris Opera were ‘on loan’ to the King’s Theatre in London, and that they
would return to Paris at Viotti’s bidding:

Madame Noble is very much admired for face figure, plumb & general style of
dancing, but she is thought to move rather heavily, & certainly her feet do not twinkle
like those of Melanie. The public will however be very unwilling to part with her
whenever Amico sends his summons over.

(G to M, 21 March 1821, Fisher)

Another letter from George, written at the beginning of May 1821, informed his
mother that he had written to Amico to give him an account of the Parisian singers and
dancers whom he had sent over to London. He reported that they were all liked except
Madame Albert, and that ‘Amico had better send for her back’. In yet another letter,
George tells his mother that he regretted being too late to go to the opera to give Amico
a report on the singers he sent across, but to ‘tell Amico that not everyone likes Ronzi,
but De Begni is popular’.

672 The coronation took place on 19 July 1821.
673 Lise Noble was a French dancer, whose dramatic skills were praised by the Times of 5 May 1821
following her benefit night at King’s Theatre.
674 G to M, 9 May 1821, Fisher. Madame Albert made her first appearance on the London stage in the role
of Vitellia in Mozart’s La Clemenza di Tito. The Times’s account of her in this opera confirms
George’s statement. In an unfavourable comparison of Madame Albert with previous protagonists of
this part, the writer says: ‘In the part of Vitellia, sustained by Mad. Albert, and which was also a first
appearance on these boards, the substitution has not been so happy. The regal sceptre, swayed by the
Catalinis, the Billingtons, and the Fodors, has descended to hands too weak for its grasp.’ (The Times,
2 May 1821.)
675 G to M, 21 May 1821, Fisher. George is referring to the bass singer Giuseppe de Begnis, who married
the Italian singer Giuseppina Ronzi (1800-1853) in 1816. New Grove in its notice of Giuseppina
Ronzi de Begnis (vol. 16, p. 181), says that ‘from 1819 to 1822 she appeared with her husband at the
Théâtre-Italien, where she sang Rosina in the first Paris performance of Il Barbiere di Siviglia (26
During Viotti's tenure of the directorship of the Paris Opera George was able to be of service to him in London in a variety of ways. He delivered mail for him, made purchases of small personal items, was prepared to help visiting French dignitaries from the Paris Opera find accommodation, and acted as Viotti's legal signatory to copies of his music, then being published by Clementi & Co. During this period Viotti was in constant touch with his musician friends in London, including Naldi. In a postscript of one of George's letters to his mother he says: 'Tell Amico that I have forwarded his note to Clementi by the 2 penny post and shall leave the other for the Naldis at their home [8 Mount Street] myself presently.'676 The note to Clementi (of Clementi, Collard, Davis and Collard, music publishers)677 concerned the publication of Viotti's concerto in G. Another letter from George proves that he was Viotti's legal signatory to each copy of the concerto that was printed, enabling Viotti to obtain royalties on it: 'Cher Amico – Je viens de signer et d’expédier chez Collard678 cent exemplaires de l’immortel Concerto in G.'679 George continued to act in this capacity on behalf of Viotti until he left London for Spain at the beginning of 1824. As late as 19 September 1823 he wrote to Margaret to ask her to reassure Viotti that he was still more than happy to carry out this task for him: 'What could possess Collard to fancy that I was not in the way to sign more Titles of the Concerto in G?'680 He asked his mother to tell Amico that he went immediately to Cheapside, got a packet of one hundred title pages, and signed them the same evening, so that by now they would be ready for sale.681 When Viotti died, and Margaret moved to France, there was no-one to whom she could turn to perform this
task, so that George (then in Spain) wrote to advise her to accept a lump sum as payment for the copyright:

You were of course much too agitated & oppressed with grief in London to make any application to Clementi Collard & Co before you came away; but you should bear the point in mind, &, if necessary, send them a certified copy of the will. Having no friend whom you can conveniently ask to sign Title Sheets of the Concerto in G you had better perhaps accept a given sum for the Copyright.

(G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23)

At the beginning of May 1821 a specially commissioned work was performed by the Paris Opera as part of the celebrations which took place for the baptism of the late Duc de Berry’s seven-month-old son, the Duc de Bordeaux.682 It was the three-act opera Blanche de Provence, on which Viotti’s colleagues Berton, Boëldieu, Cherubini, Paër and Kreutzer collaborated.683 The celebrations for this event, which was much publicised both in Paris and London, continued over three days, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd May. Thomas Moore, who was still in Paris, witnessed the festivities, writing in his journal on 3 May 1821 that he ‘Dined […] at the Café Français, and went to the French Opera in the evening. Saw a new allegorical opera, got up in honour of the occasion, called “Blanche de Provence”; the music (by Cherubini, Paër, and two others) very pretty, and the dancing delightful.’684 The full programme of the three-day fête was published in the Times of 4 May 1821:

A programme is everywhere circulated of the ceremonies to be observed on the approaching fête, which is to last three days. On the first day […] the royal infant will, at 11 o’clock in the morning, be baptised at Notre-dame: the King is expected to be present.

On the second day there will be a grand ball at the Hotel de Ville, at which all the Royal Family, with the exception of the King, will be present.

On the 3rd day balls will be given at the public expense to the different trading bodies of the metropolis. Illuminations, fireworks, and distributions of wine and victuals will

682 Henri de Bourbon, duc de Bordeaux, comte de Chambord (1820-1883), was the legitimate pretender to the throne after the death of Charles X.
683 Henri-Montan Berton, (1767-1844), French composer, writer and teacher; Adrien Boëldieu, (1775-1834), leading opera composer in France during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, who specialised in opéra comique; Ferdinando Paër (1771-1839), Italian composer. Kreutzer, Viotti’s old friend and disciple from the 1780s, was now conductor of the Opera orchestra.
pie, and a two-pound loaf.

the heads of the principal deponents were each to receive a bottle of wine, a meal each with a dowry of £200 francs. In addition, the 27,495 Indian families inscribed on the protestation, retaining the balance of those two tails in the city were to be married.

Times of 2 May 1821 reported that sixteen female opera (Fountain Calhoun and two Queen) as George said, of some opera girls at the expense of the city. The idea of a George said, to many of some opera girls at the expense of the city. The idea was performed to worthy causes. In the case of the above baptism, the opportunity was seized also fulfilled a beneficent role in society, involving proceeds from certain occasions such as royal weddings or baptisms, or on the visit of foreign dignitaries, and occasions open to operas to be given by royal command for special

(G to V, 4 May 1821, Pardry)

at the expense of the city.

of a certain number of opera girls on that occasion proscribed [by whom] ordered after having been performed the ceremony of which [it] provided that the spirit is [by whom]...nemonic price notes in many instances. As far as we can judge from newspaper accounts By this time newspaper subscriptions are over, and the fix for the baptism of the London

Vivifying conditions. But George wrote to his mother that according to the London was performed at the small Theater-Hallen in the rue Perrier – probably under extraordinary conditions. Heretofore that was the object of Vittois, la plus extraordinaire, was to be followed by a concert. An interlude and a grand ball. An interlude was a May, which describes the "Great" face to be given at the Hotel de Ville. A royal banquet.

The second day’s festivities were given in more detail in the newspaper of 2

difficult from the great body of their fellow-citizens. exclusive of the Grand Theatre, ready to do what those who wished happened to have a taste. Their besides bringing innumerable love of pleasure there are 20,000 houses, accidental and political discrimination of not only of this question, which is considered
At the end of George’s letter dated 21 May 1821 is a cryptic message for Viotti: ‘Tell Amico that Collins the Chandelier man has not sent measures yet.’686 Two weeks later he writes that Amico will by now have received his letter enclosing ‘one of the identical tubes of the Haymarket Gas Chandelier’.687 What does this mean? It would appear that Viotti wanted to have a replica of the King’s Theatre chandelier in the new Opera theatre in Paris.688 Another letter written ten days later confirms this to be so. In this letter George is replying to Viotti’s question regarding payment to a certain Collins, who is presumably the maker of the Haymarket chandelier, and who has provided the French administrators with a set of specifications and a sketch of the chandelier:

I see no necessity for communicating further with Collins the Chandelier Manufacturer unless he should of his own accord make a demand for what trouble he has had. If Mons’ Delaferté should as a point of honour wish to remunerate the man, it will at any time be easy to ask him to set a value on his services. The only object for which M. Delaferté appears to me specifically indebted to Collins, is a certain finished drawing of the Haymarket chandelier.

(G to M, 11 June 1821, Fisher)

It was almost certainly La Ferté’s plan to acquire a replica of the King’s Theatre chandelier that brought him to London at the end of June 1821. George even offered to help him find accommodation: ‘I will have pleasure in seeing M. De la Ferté here & will immediately put myself on the look out for an apartment for him.’689 In the end George’s offer of assistance was not needed, as Viotti sent word that La Ferté would not need to rent: he would stay at Deshayes’s apartment (which George would have ‘inspected’, he said, if Amico had sent him an address).690 André Deshayes691 was a choreographer at the Paris Opera. In George’s letter a few days later, he reported that

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686 G to M, 21 May 1821, Fisher.
687 G to M, 1 June 1821, Fisher.
688 The King’s Theatre at Haymarket was one of the best illuminated theatres in Europe at the time. In George’s Travel Journals of 1819 and 1820 (see Part III) he repeatedly complains of dark theatres on the Continent – especially La Scala at Milan.
689 G to M, 20 June 1821, Fisher.
690 G to M, 29 June 1821, Fisher.
691 André Jean-Jacques Deshayes (1777-1846), dancer and choreographer, was the son of Viotti’s old colleague the composer Prosper-Didier Deshayes (d. 1815), whose works were performed so frequently at the Concert Spirituel in the 1780s.
Deshayes, ‘lately arrived from Paris’, had been to visit him and that it had been agreed that Deshayes would make all the arrangements concerning La Ferté’s stay. 692

A riot which took place in the Paris Opera theatre in 1821 probably came as the final straw for Viotti’s sorely-tested patience. It was described by Hector Berlioz in his Memoirs. 693 The disturbance that occurred during the ballet Nina had its origins in the then common practice of featuring a favourite virtuoso member of the Opera orchestra in a solo performance. On this night the advertised artist was Viotti’s good friend Pierre Baillot, but owing to his indisposition or some other reason, the promised solo piece was cancelled, causing an uproar in the parterre. The players fled as angry members of the audience spilled into the orchestra and began to damage and destroy instruments.

As the end of 1821 approached, Viotti was increasingly overwhelmed by problems of a personal nature. His old complaint of gout resurfaced, Margaret’s health was frail – although he continued to give William reassuring reports – and his attempts to recover some of his debts from his former partner Charles Smith had failed, depriving him of the means to repay his debt to Margaret. After her consultation with Henry Dance at the beginning of the year Margaret had written to William informing him of the lawyer’s opinion, which was that ‘nothing can be done in Amico’s unfortunate case. He says that if Amico refuses to release Charles Smith from his promissory note, the great creditors will agree to make a bankrupt of C.S. and exclude Amico from the benefit of the bankruptcy, retaining his liability to all unpaid debts.’ Margaret was to stake her claim as a creditor for the £2,500 (the amount she was still owed) to try to recover what percentage she could on that sum. 694

Before Margaret returned to England at the end of October 1821 Viotti, broken by his troubles, had decided to resign his directorship of the Opera, but not without a determined attempt to obtain some financial security for the coming years. With the help of his ‘Patron’, he was able to retain the directorship of the Théâtre-Italien, but owing to the uncertain state of French Government affairs at the time, the arrangement as to the salary he was to receive was not concluded, according to a letter to Viotti from

692 G to M, 3 July 1821, Fisher.
694 M to W, c. 4 February 1821, PM 94/143/1 – 17/51. £100 of the original £2,600 had been repaid in 1820.
his friend Cailleux, until August 1822. It may be fairly safely assumed that this 'Patron' was the new ministre de la Maison du Roi, General Lauriston, to whom Viotti dedicated a violin concerto. Cailleux, a great friend of Viotti, had been the General's aide-de-camp, and when Lauriston was appointed the new King's minister in 1820, following the Ultras' rise to power after the assassination of the Duc de Berry, he made Cailleux directeur général des musées.

Three letters from Viotti to Margaret (in the Fisher collection) written at the end of 1821 shed light on his relations with the minister, and also underscore Viotti's undying attachment to Margaret. On 1 November 1821, the date of his official resignation as director of the grand opera (he retained the directorship of the Théâtre-Italien), he wrote to Margaret: 'Nous touchons au moment où mon sort sera décidé, j'ai vu le ministre hier, je le vois beaucoup et toujours je le trouve bon et aimable me jurant que je serai content, libre et tranquille [...] Mon affaire va être entièrement décidé sous peu de jours, et j'espère bien que bientôt je serai à même de vous envoyer de bonnes nouvelles.' Viotti's 'affaire', which was definitely not decided in the following days, appears to have been a promise of a stipend of 6,000 francs a year, which, he specified to William in a later letter, constituted a salary for services to be rendered (as continuing director of the Théâtre-Italien) and not a pension. In his letter of 1 November 1821 Viotti went on to say that he did not envisage that he would be allowed to keep the apartment (at the Hôtel Choiseul), as it would be needed for incoming members of the Opera 'galley', but that it hardly mattered, as he had never liked living there except when Margaret was also in residence:

Je prévois que je ne pourrai garder l'appartement, il est bien naturel que ceux qui viennent dans cette galère aient au moins de quoi loger. Mais qu'est-ce que cela fait. Je ne l'ai jamais aimé que dernièrement qu'il a été embelli par une tendre Amie; ainsi après tout nous aurions l'occasion de mettre notre plan à exécution, nous chercherons

695 Viotti to Cailleux, 16 August 1822, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 275. Achille-Alexandre-Alphonse de Cailleux (1788-1876), former staff officer to General Lauriston, now (after 1820) secrétaire général des musées.
697 V to M, 1 November 1821, Fisher.
698 V to W, 14 November 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/63.
It was clear that Viotti was looking forward to some calmer years ahead, which he hoped to spend peacefully with Margaret. The forthcoming four-month separation from Margaret, who was to spend the winter of 1821-22 in London without him would be a torture. The following poignant words make clear the effect that the tribulations of the past two years have had on his nerves, his morale, and above all highlight his love for his companion of twenty years:

Helas pour quatre mois, les plus noirs de l'année, il faut vous savoir seule! ... Ce sera bien pour la dernière fois je vous en répons, nous vivrons et nous mourrons ensemble sans presque nous quitter; tous les jours j'en acquiers de plus en plus la certitude [...] Que je n'aurai à faire tout au plus que quelques voyages en Italie ... Qui sait que nous ne fissions pas cette petite excursion ensemble!!!

He signed this letter 'Votre tendre Amico'. Sadly, Viotti's hopes for a last visit to his native land were not realised, but his prediction that he and Margaret would be parted only by death proved accurate.

One week later he wrote again, frantic at having not yet heard from her, unwilling to believe that the mail packets from England had been delayed by unfavourable winds for such a long period of time: 'C'est incroyable! Voilà quinze jours que vous êtes partie ma bonne chère Amica, en voilà plus de neuf que vous devez etre à Londre, et pas un mot encore de Montagu Street!!! Il me parroit [sic] impossible que le vent contraire dure si longtemps et je ne sais que penser. Oh Mondieu préservez moi de mauvaises nouvelles.' He prays for a letter to 'soulager le cœur de l'Amico', and this time signing himself 'Votre Amico à tout jamais', closes with an embrace for Margaret and George 'avec toute la force de mon Ame'.

During Margaret’s absence Viotti kept an eye on the house at Châtillon. He went each week-end to check on the servant caretakers, assuring Margaret that he now had plenty of time to do so, and that he was optimistic regarding the granting of his stipend:

699 V to M, 1 November 1821, Fisher.
Ne craignez pas que je fasse du tort à mes affaires par ces petites excursions – Tout
marche, et nous touchons à la conclusion – Hier au soir à 8. heures et demies je
descendois l'escalier de l'opéra pour me retirer, M' de Sorconnes secrétaire Général à la
place de M' de la Boulaye m'arresta pour me repeter encore de la part du Ministre, et
avec une douceur, un interêt et une grace infini, qu'il me prioit d'être parfaitement
tranquille, de ne point m'impatienter, qu'on ne perdoit pas une minute dans
l'organisation de leur plan, que tout cela alloit être terminé, et que je serois parfaitement
content.

(V to M, 8 November 1821, Fisher)

Since Viotti took over the reins of the Opera there had been some changes in the
administrative staff. Grandsire was no longer the secrétaire général, and the Vicomte
Sorconnes, the new secretary, apparently got on well with Viotti, and almost certainly
had been a guest at Châtillon. After Viotti's death in 1824 George was to write to his
mother: 'Among your Parisian acquaintances the name of Sorconnes naturally occurs to
me; & I am sorry to hear that he should have ceased to be Secrétaire général du Ministre de
la Maison du Roi, — unless indeed he has got a better situation.'

Viotti's fate, which was supposed to have been decided within a few days, was still not decided on 12 December
1821. In a letter of reassurance to Margaret he wrote:

Votre dernière lettre m'a encore fait de la peine. — Comme vous êtes prompte à vous
tourmenter, c'est moi cette fois ci qui cause votre tendre inquiétude. — Par toutes celles
que sans doute vous avez reçues maintenant vous verrez qu'il n'y a pas la moindre
raison de vous mettre en peine pour mon sort — Que tel changement de ministère, si tant
est qu'il en aye, mon Patron fait bande à part, n'a rien à faire aux arrangements de
[paris?] — Ainsi de ce coté là nous sommes en sûreté. Supposons même que par son bon
plaisir, ou accident, il quitte sa place; M' Seguier a raison, il ne la quittera pas sans
terminer mon affaire d'autant plus qu'elle avance fort vers la conclusion — D'ailleurs la
chose est trop connue, comme il dit fort bien, trop juste pour que des entraves s'y
mettent. Ainsi soyons calme et ayons encore un peu de patience, comme le Patron m'a
encore fait écrire avant hier par son secrétaire privé.

(V to M, 12 December 1821, Fisher)

700 V to M, 8 November 1821, Fisher.
701 G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23.
702 Baron Antoine-Jean-Mathieu de Ségui (1768-1848), brother of the Chinnery friend Armand-Louis
de Ségui, was a French magistrate.
If Viotti was anxious about the outcome of his 'affaire' he certainly hid the fact from Margaret, whom he tried to protect at all times from any upsetting news. In this case he seemed to have confidence that his protector would honour his word, even if the mooted administrative changes eventuated, and put him out of office.
March 1822 saw Viotti back in England with Margaret, still without his promised stipend. In May he wrote to William that he intended to continue to harrass the minister until he obtained it: 'Quant à moi, ne croyez pas que je veuille laisser tranquille le ministre. Commençons par laisser terminer toutes les ceremonies des bureaux concernant la pension de 6 000F. – Après je dresserai toutes les batties [sic] réclamantes qui sont en mon pouvoir.'703 In the same letter Viotti asked William for some financial aid for Margaret. Viotti had always contributed his share to the couple’s cost of living, but without an income from the French Government, and with no hope of recovering any money from Smith, he was in embarrassed financial straits. He revealed that he owed ‘l’Ami C’ [William’s business partner in Le Havre, Joseph Cary] two thousand five hundred [francs] – a fact that he wanted kept secret from Margaret to spare her anxiety.704 His intention was to repay this debt with the proceeds from the sale of his Feydeau Theatre box, which he had retained since the period of his ownership of the Feydeau Theatre. But his ownership of the box had been contested, causing him additional stress: ‘Peu ou beaucoup, il est certain que je tirerai quelque chose de la Loge. J’ai gagné mon procès, mais un demon un canaille a mis sans en avoir le droit opposition, et il faut du temps pour la faire oter, et se delivrer des embarras suscités par des gens sans foix [sic] ni loi ni honneur.’705 His postscript shows a delicate feeling of protection towards Margaret, whose health was then weak: ‘J’imagine que vous repondrez directement à la Padrona au sujet de l’argent, – si par hasard vous m’écrivez quelques mots ne faites pas mention de mes affaires – nous les savons, des détails seraient inutiles.’706

The time spent waiting for Margaret’s recuperation from her long illness before they could both return to France for the summer was all the more painful for Viotti, as he needed to be in Paris not only to defend his court case, but to continue to agitate for his pension. En route to France Viotti and Margaret spent a restful few days in the country at Sittingbourne. Viotti wrote to George in London that his mother was bearing

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703 V to W, 7 May 1822, PM 94/143/1 – 14/42. This figure represented half of his salary for the management of both theatres. Viotti’s use of the term ‘pension’ is ambiguous (see his 1823 letter to William, p. 223).
704 Ibid.
705 Ibid.
706 Ibid.
the travelling well and that ‘il ne lui manque que son incomparable fils pour soutenir le long voyage qu’il lui reste à faire.”

Viotti, who had always loved the beauty and tranquillity of the country, wrote in a lyrical vein reminiscent of his earlier missives from Bath: ‘Le temps est superbe, l’air est embaumé par les plus délicieuses exhaléons possibles, les fèves en fleurs, le Tréfeu [trefle] dans sa perfection, les roses en guirlandes dans les hayes.’

Margaret added a note for George at the end in which she expressed her gratitude for Viotti’s kind attentions: ‘God bless you dearest George — nothing can be good without you, as Amico says, but he is all kindness and attention to my wants and wishes, and is never tired of doing everything he can to make me comfortable.’

By the end of June 1822 Margaret and Viotti were back in France, and judging by the lack of correspondence with William over the next four or five months, spent all or most of that time with him at Chatillon. On 16 August 1822 comes the first indication that Viotti’s ‘pension’ has been granted. In his letter addressed to ‘Monsieur de Cailleux, au musée du Roi’, Viotti writes:

Cher ami
Si mon affaire est vraiment décidée et terminée, non seulement vous êtes le premier à me l’apprendre, mais l’unique car je n’ai reçu un mot de personne sur cet intéressant sujet. Au reste je reconnais bien la sollicitude de votre cœur à consoler le mien. Vous devinez sans doute combien j’y suis sensible; je le serois encore plus s’il est possible, si, comme vous me l’avez promis, vous étiez venu nous l’apprendre vous même.
Patience, j’irai vous voir incessamment à Paris, et nous arrangerons le jour que nous devrons vous posséder ici. La pauvre patiente va mieux et elle est tout espoir de vous revoir bientôt, son mari aussi desire vous connaître!
Si par hasard vous savez ou je puis me présenter pour toucher, faites le moi savoir.
Adieu cher ami bon et aimable, je vous embrasse avec les sentiments tendres que vous me connaissez.

Votre Amico J.B. Viotti

(Viotti to Cailleux, 16 August 1822, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

Cailleux was clearly another intimate of the Chatillon circle, judging from the familiar way that Viotti speaks of Margaret Chinnery as ‘la pauvre patiente’. But he did

707 Vi to G, 2 June 1822, PM 94/143/1 – 25/4.
708 Ibid.
709 Ibid.
nôt meet William Chinnery until the end of 1823, when it appears that William, without stopping to consider the consequences of his action, informed him that Viotti was in London. Clearly it was assumed that as continuing director of the Théâtre-Italien, Viotti would reside in Paris. In writing to William, Viotti can only guess at what he said to Cailleux, but the tone of the letter is one of ill-concealed exasperation with William’s gaffe:

Je me tuois, mon cher Chin, à deviner quelle étoit la demarche que vous avez fait auprès de Cailleux, et dont vous me demander si je l’approuverois! Aujourd’hui vous nous l’apprenez, et je me hâte d’y répondre.

Je l’approuve si peu, mon Ami, que je pense serieusement à quitter Londre pour me rendre à Paris, et remedier au mal qu’il en pourroit résulter, celui de perdre 3 000fr de rente, qui me sont indispensables. Je n’aime pas du tout les dires de M. de Sorconnes, que je peux vivre à Londre au lieu de Paris. — Je me flattois qu’on me regarde comme pouvant leur etre utile encore, s’ils pensent autrement, adieu les 3 000. que je reçois de l’administration, car cette somme est en appointement et non en pension. Quel domage!

J’avoue si bien arrangé le tout avant mon départ!!! Maintenant cher Chin, vous sentez sans doute toute l’inconvenance et le danger même de votre demarche — Enfin reste à y remedier maintenant, et c’est ce que je tachera de faire —

Adieu

Votre amî Amico

P.S. Il faut que je vous prie de ne plus en dire un mot de plus à qui que ce soit — Je connais Cailleux mieux que vous, et je vais réfléchir si par lettre je ne pourrai pas redonner la même face à cette malheureuse affaire...

(V to W, 14 November 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/63)

The matter is not mentioned again in the Chinnery letters. Therefore it is impossible to know the consequences of William’s faux pas. There is a possibility that if Viotti’s stipend was cut off, he may have initiated proceedings to have it reinstated, and that this may have been the subject of one of the lawsuits that Margaret Chinnery inherited after Viotti’s death.

Winter of 1822-23 found Margaret and Viotti back in Paris in an apartment in the rue d’Artois, although in December 1822, as a letter from Viotti to the Chinnery

710 It seems that when Viotti retired from full-time directorship of the Théâtre-Italien owing to ill-health, he negotiated for himself a half pension, perhaps on condition that he fulfill some part-time duties.
family (in Paris) shows, he was temporarily living alone at Châtillon recovering from an unspecified illness: ‘[…] je me porte mieux, beaucoup mieux. Mais quoi qu’en état déjà de courir par le jardin, dans les grainiers et les cours, je ne crois pas que je doive quitter ces lieux si vite’. Perhaps Viotti was feeling worse than he revealed, as it was in this month that he penned his will. Tormented by his failure to repay Margaret’s loan, he wrote: ‘Non seulement je meurs sans fortune mais de plus je meurs avec une dette qui me déchire l’Ame.’

Thirteen of the twenty 1823 letters from Viotti to William were written during this winter in Paris. Of the remaining seven, four were written from Châtillon (in summer and autumn), one from Paris (in September) and (the last two) from London (in November), and speak mainly of Margaret’s investments in the French funds, William’s business affairs, and Viotti’s debt to William’s partner in Le Havre, Joseph Cary.

One of the consequences of Margaret’s not having sold her London property in Montagu Street in 1819 nor let it in the summer of 1821 was that she was short of money, and not wanting to touch her investments, she decided to sell one of her cachemire shawls. The vogue for cachemire shawls and revealing diaphanous gowns à l’antique had begun in Revolutionary Paris, when the neoclassical French painter David had depicted women in a state of ‘Grecian undress’. According to Margaret’s travel writer friend Sir John Carr, the wife of a fournisseur would have paid £300-£400 for a cachemire shawl in 1802. Viotti asked William for the name of a buyer in Paris, and wrote: ‘Je lui portera celui de notre Arnica (sans lui dire a qu’il appartient) et je tacherai qu’il me le fasse vendre. La saison s’avance, et si nous voulons nous en defaire, il n’y a pas de temps à perdre.’ The price fetched by Margaret’s shawl — if it was sold — is not mentioned.

Once again the Chinnerys had entered into the risky business of financial speculation. Viotti spent the winter of 1823 in frantic buying and selling at the Stock Exchange on behalf of Margaret with money William sent from Le Havre. ‘Je suis tout froissez [sic] par les hurtons [heurts] qu’on m’a donné à cette infernale bourse’, he complained on 22 January [1823]. Margaret was still suffering from the effects of her

711 V to W, 7 December 1822, PM 94/143/1 – 14/44.
712 Viotti’s ‘Testament’, 13 December 1822, ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM. 80,000 francs is the sum mentioned.
714 V to W, 12 February, 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/50.
715 V to W, 22 January [1823], PM 94/143/1 – 14/45.
former illness, and in addition, was worried by a constant toothache and servant problems. By the end of January it was the impending war between France and Spain that was on everyone’s mind. William feared that his trading business would be adversely affected. Margaret wrote to him that ‘People are all in suspense here too, – many of the English are hurrying home, – but no creature seems to know any thing really or clearly about the matter.’716 Occasionally, some of these English compatriots in Paris still snubbed Margaret over the 1812 affair. Stung by their slights, which came on top of her many other worries, Margaret wrote in the same letter: ‘I often think it rather a consolation that we have not to look forward to many years more of life!’717 These sorts of pronouncements cut Viotti to the quick, and he did his utmost to take her burdens upon his own shoulders. When it was time to move back to Châtillon, he was beside himself with anxiety that the move might further deplete Margaret’s strength. He wanted William to come and help. With Margaret’s well-being always uppermost in his mind, Viotti suggested to William that she might benefit from a short rest before the move at their favourite hotel in Paris, the Hôtel des Îles Britanniques: ‘Il m’est venu l’idée que peut être ce ne seroit mal que Mme passa un couple de jours, après le mois fini ici, aux Îles Britanniques, pour donner le temps de tout préparer confortablement à Châtillon, mais d’un autre côté ce seroit un double déplacement, qui lui seroit peut être plus nuisible qu’autrement! Enfin, nous verrons et agirons selon le temps et pour le mieux.’718 In the event, the move did not take place until May owing to William’s anxious vigil at his bureau awaiting the announcement of war.

The prospect of war threw William into turmoil, and Viotti found himself obliged to comfort him as well as Margaret. He writes, philosophically: ‘Personne dans Paris ne témoigne l’inquiétude qui parroit [sic] vous obséder. Je ne dis pas ce qui doit, ou peut arriver, il faudroit être plus que sorcier pour celà, mais en attendant les évolutions du sort, nous nous tenons tranquilles et nous ne prévoyons rien de très noir. Tranquillisez votre esprit aussi mon bon Ami, votre jugement sera plus parfait.’719 In his letter of 31 March, Viotti feels the need to cheer and chastise William once again on account of the latter’s pessimism: ‘Le commerce de votre Maison va bien à ce qu’il paroit par vos lettres, le vent se soutient en poupe, la santé de la chère Padrona va mieux

716 In V to W, 30 January 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/46. See Part III for a discussion of these events.
717 Ibid.
718 V to W, 5 February 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/49.
grace au Ciel, ainsi à quoi bon tant de jérémiades, tant de tristesse? Allons, allons mon cher Chin – reveillez votre Spirit.

In 1823, unburdened of his Opera concerns, Viotti had time to return to composing. In February he sent two new concertos to Joseph Cary. Viotti's debt of 2,500 livres to Cary was mentioned in three of his letters to William – those of 7 May 1822, 25 February 1823, and 5 March 1823, but exactly when this loan was given is not stated. In his letter of 25 February 1823 Viotti says that he is writing to Cary to tell him that he will send him two new concertos and to discuss his debt:

J'écris deux mots à Cary par ce courrier, rien que pour lui annoncer que je lui enverrai deux concertos nouveaux, et de lui parler de ma dette. Mais en répondant à celle ci ne parlez de rien de tout cela. Vous savez que l'Amica n'en doit rien savoir. Pas meme des pauvres concertos.

(V to W, 25 February 1823, PM 94/143/1 - 14/53)

The fact that the two reasons for writing were mentioned in the same breath might imply a connection. Was Viotti sending Cary his concertos as an appeasing gesture, until he was able to repay his debt? In that case the loan must have been quite recent. But Giazotto claims that Cary (whom he calls John) gave Viotti a loan to prop up his wine business in 1810. Chappell-White, in his Thematic Catalogue, dates three duets for violins, “'Hommage à l'amitié”, dedicated to Mr Cary’ at ‘c1803 -1810.’ This is puzzling – unless 'Mr Cary' was a different person altogether – given that neither William nor [almost certainly] Viotti even knew Joseph Cary before the middle of 1818, when William moved to Le Havre to enter into partnership with him, a fact that is established by Margaret's letter to William of 2 October 1823, when it was discovered that Cary had been taking money from the firm. It is not clear if the two

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719 V to W, 13 February 1823, PM 94/143/1 - 14/14/51.
720 V to W, 31 March 1823, PM 94/143/1 - 14/57.
721 Giazotto, op. cit., p. 155.
722 Chappell White, Thematic Catalogue, p. 95.
723 His name is first mentioned in a letter from Margaret to William of 4 January 1819 (PM 94/143/1 - 17/39), which is addressed to 'Messrs Joseph Cary et C', rue d'Edreville [nº 59] au Havre'.
724 Margaret writes: 'Do not however forget that our opinion of C____ was not lightly taken up, – it was the result of all possible enquiry in the City, – and your own opinion after a pretty long trial went even beyond any thing we had imagined, – you know you thought him perfect as a merchant, and living with him under the same roof it seemed impossible you should be mistaken.' (M to W, 2 October 1823, PM 94/143/1 - 17/52.)
new concertos sent to Cary were publicly dedicated to him, or if they were even published.

On 22 April 1823, George wrote to his mother of a new composition of Viotti, that had been sent to him in manuscript form via a friend in a foreign legation in London: ‘[Baron de] Sterneld[?] has sent me the two packets of music & the £6.3 [probably reimbursement for purchases made for him by either Margaret or Viotti]. I enclose his note. Amico’s titre is indeed as S. says a titre de gloire for me, of which I feel unworthy. Thank him a thousand times for this token of affection, & for having immortalised me.’ And as a postscript: ‘Pray send me Amico’s instructions as to what I am to do with the music. Is it for Collard?’ There is no mention of the title of the piece of music in question, but it is clear that Viotti has dedicated it to George. George’s next letter confirms this: ‘The Presentation Copy of Amico’s new publication, since I am to consider it as such, shall be bound & deposited in my library. Pray tell him so with renewed and additional thanks.’ It is difficult to know of which piece of music George was speaking, as there is no dedication to him on any of Viotti’s music published by the above firm.

In August William’s letters were full of self-pitying laments about having been forced into the merchant’s life against his will. Once more Viotti takes him to task for so upsetting Margaret with his complaints: ‘[... ] je ne vois pas pourquoi vous avez tant deteste votre etat [...] Après tout le Commerce n’est pas assurément si désagreable que vous le faites [...] Tenons nous ferme cher Chin. Surmontons et bravons les sujets d’affliction.’ By October the reason for William’s low spirits became clear. Joseph Cary, on his own admission, had been taking money from the firm for his own use, bringing the business to the point of bankruptcy. For the second time in his life, William’s reputation was under threat, but this time the tables were turned, and William was the victim of another’s misdeeds. Margaret hoped that her husband’s honour would not be at stake a second time, and that news of the bankruptcy would be confined to business circles: ‘I hope care will be taken that you are in no way mixed up in the misdeeds of theft, &c [...] is it likely that the act will be known generally here or in London? Will it not be confined to mercantile connections? C— told Amico that no

725 G to M, 22 April 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/13.
726 G to M, 6 May [1823], PM 94/143/1 – 12/16.
727 V to W, 9 August 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/58.
The profits of the House of Cary and Co must have been substantial, judging by the sums that William had been sending to Viotti to invest in the French funds. On 18 February 1823 Viotti had written to William to upbraid him for not heeding Margaret’s instructions regarding either the date or the amount of money that she wanted sent to Paris for the purchase of investments: ‘Elle ne vouloit l’avoir que le 27. ou le 28. et encore, rien que 39 mille francs qu’il faut pour les 2 500 de rente achetée fin courant et laisser les 12m continuer entre les mains de M de la R[ocque].’

In October, at the time of Cary’s confession of theft, Viotti wrote: ‘N’est-il pas vrai que les cent mille Livres de Capital que vous avez apportés dans la maison de Cary & Co: étoit de l’argent que je vous ai avancé, que George avoit preté?...N’étoit-il pas clair dans le temps que vous n’aviez pas un sou à vous appartenant?’

One last time Viotti chastises William for his unrestrained laments that cause Margaret pain, and this time he is more severe: ‘Madame lit une lettre de vous qui lui arrache l’ame, est-il possible, que vous vouliez revenir sans cesse sur des expressions répétées mille fois, et sur les quelles je vous ai déjà tant blâmé? Au nom de Dieu reflechissez mieux, et occupez vous un peu plus de la situation!!!’

The continuing anxiety over Margaret’s indifferent health, the suspense of risky speculation at the Bourse, and the burden of the supportive role he was obliged to assume for William as well as for Margaret, capped by his own financial worries, finally took its toll. In November 1823 he wrote to William from London, where he and Margaret had returned for winter, informing him that Margaret’s health was holding out, but that his own was not as good as he would have liked: ‘Moi, malheureusement je ne suis pas aussi bien que je le voudrois, point de goute, mais une toux, un rhume, un diable que sais-je, qui me rend si peu agissant qu’une vieille rosse.’

Viotti’s correspondence with William ceases at this point, and the next undated letter from Margaret announces his approaching death:

You will have understood that I have little hope of saving Amico — in fact he breathes, and that is all! But he says he is perfectly comfortable, has no pain any where, sleeps a

728 M to W, 2 October 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 17/52.
729 V to W, 18 February 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/52. La Rocque was presumably a banker.
730 V to W, 27 October 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 14/62.
731 Ibid.
great deal, indeed almost always, but his strength diminishes daily, & his countenance is dreadful to behold! [...] I am collecting all the fortitude I can muster for this [...] great trial, and I feel that I shall go through it if God continues the support & inward strength now granted to me. I dare not complain, or bewail, or think of any past days or things that would soften me, — we must say but little about it, for it will not bear dwelling upon. Your reflections upon the evils of our lives would kill me, were I to do more than hurry through them, as one would walk upon hot cinders!

(M to W, c. March 1824, PM 94/143/1 - 17/53)

The news of his death comes in a letter dated 4 March 1824 and shows just how important Viotti was to Margaret as a companion and sharer of her fortunes, and as a buffer to William’s pessimism:

My dearest Chinnery
For your sake, and for George’s I am exerting myself to the utmost to bear up against this afflicting dispensation of Providence: Amico died yesterday morning at 7 o’Clock, — I wish I could say he had died easily or comfortably, but quite the reverse of that was the case. However it is all over now, — the deep impression the horrid sounds have left, can only wear off by degrees, and by my endeavours & prayers to Heaven. Remember that I have now no companion nor present comfort but yourself; — Therefore if you give way to grief, all will soon be over with us both! Keep up your courage for my sake and for George’s. I have long been aware that the sad event was inevitable, — or at least very probable.

(M to W, 4 March 1824, PM 94/143/1 - 17/54)

732 V to W, 17 November 1823, PM 94/143/1 - 14/64.
After Viotti's death Margaret sold her Montagu Street home, auctioned the large items of furniture, and sent the rest of her effects to her cousin Fanny Long of Hans Place for safe-keeping. She moved back to Châtillon on 25 May 1824, having spent the intervening weeks in mourning at Orpington with her sister Elizabeth (Mrs William Marsh). George was in Spain at the time of Viotti's death, and the subject takes up much space in his letters to his mother of this time (in the Powerhouse collection).

Margaret received many condolences on the death of Viotti. One which particularly touched her heart was a voice from the past. It was from Hugues-Bernard Maret, now the Duc de Bassano, who was so closely implicated in Viotti's hazardous voyage on the Continent thirty years before. He wrote to Margaret:

Il me semblait impossible d’être condamné à ne plus revoir un ami de 34 ans [...] Après avoir pleuré cet ami si aimable, si bon, si vrai, si cher, toutes mes tristes pensées se sont tournées vers vous, Votre douleur est pour ma femme et pour moi le sujet d’une préoccupation bien pénible. Nous qui partagerons, nous avons besoin de savoir comment vous la supportez. Votre santé résiste-t-elle à ses atteintes? Reviendrez vous Madam de Chinnery? bientôt en France? Quand pouvons nous tenter de vous consoler en nous affligeant avec vous? Mon fils aura toutes ces questions à [poser à] notre cher Georges. Avec quel empressement nous l’interrogérons à son retour!

Recevez, Madame, l’hommage aussi sincère et plus empresse que jamais, de mes sentiments et de mon respect.

Le Duc de Bassano
Paris 30 mars, 1824
(H.-B. Maret to Margaret Chinnery, 30 March 1824, Fisher)

The Duke, who did not know of George’s posting to Spain, enclosed the above in a letter for the latter, to be delivered in person by his eldest son Napoleon. To George he wrote:

Je recommande à Napoleon de vous chercher, ne pouvant lui donner votre adresse.
Accueillez le avec cette sincère Amitié que j’ai conçu pour vous depuis votre enfance.

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733 See G to M, 6 August 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/33 for mention of the auction.
734 See Part III on George Chinnery’s career.
735 Napoléon-Joseph-Hugues Maret was to become a senator in 1852 and chamberlain to Napoleon III.
Vous répondrez par la à mes anciens Sentiments dont je suis charmé que quelqu’un qui m’est cher vous porte un témoignage.

Je joins ici une Lettre que je vous prie de remettre si vous ne craignez pas qu’elle rende plus douloureuse une blessure si récente. Faites du moins que j’apprenne par le retour de mon fils les nouvelles de votre excellente mère. Adieu, croyez à mon bien sincère attachement,

Le Duc de Bassano
Paris le 30 mars 1824

(H.-B. Maret to George Chinnery, 30 March 1824, Fisher)

By the Duke’s own words, we learn that he first met Viotti in 1790, and that he had known the young George in 1802, when the Chinnery family and Viotti made their trip to Paris during the Peace of Amiens (described in Part II, Chapter 2). 736

Other mourners of Viotti’s death were his friends Cailleux and the comte de St Sauveur – one of Margaret’s friends in the French military who owned a property in the environs of Châtillon, and who kept Margaret supplied with coaches, horses and footmen. George wrote to his mother from Spain: ‘The Cte de St Sauveur knew the full extent of the grief which you had suffered on the occasion of poor Amico’s death; for he had received, he said, a long letter from you at the time on that heart rending subject.’ 737 Of Cailleux he wrote: ‘Cailleux’s first visit [after Viotti’s death] must in truth have been a painful one, – & so will my first meeting with him be, at any distance of time: there are certain fountains of grief, as I have often heard you say, which never can be dried up;’ 738 In the same letter George mentions another name connected with the Paris Opera, Baron de La Ferté, who had suffered a ‘reverse of fortune’ as a result of having been ‘engaged in some manufacturing speculation’ which had failed. 739

Margaret was the sole beneficiary of Viotti’s small estate, as his will attests. His unpaid debt to Margaret that was mentioned in the will was all the more painful, since he was unable to call in money owed to him by his own creditors. Not only did Charles Smith’s promissory note go unpaid at the time of the wine business bankruptcy, but another so-called ‘friend’, the Portuguese Dom Lourenço da Lima owed Viotti a longstanding debt of £930. George had written at least three letters to Portugal concerning

736 See W to M, 16 May 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 7/12. See also Part III, pp. 664-665 for further details on the Duc de Bassano.
737 G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23.
739 Ibid.
the debt. The first, in 1823, to Augusto West a member of Britain's diplomatic mission in Lisbon, had produced no result, so when George was posted to Spain in 1824, he wrote again on Viotti's behalf, this time to the former Portuguese ambassador in London the Duc de Palmella now a minister in the Portuguese Government, to seek his help. Although unaware of Viotti's death at the time of writing, George did know of Viotti's frail condition, writing 'Je suis absolument en possession de l'affaire dont elle traite, et je tiens le billet que D. Lourenço de Lima avait placé comme garantie de payement entre les mains de Mons' Viotti, et que M. Viotti a rendu payable à moi même en y apposant sa signature selon la forme accoutumée. L'âge et l'état de santé de M. Viotti rendaient cette-mesure de précaution sage si ce n'est indispensable.' As Palmella had been the intermediary through which the first instalment of the debt had been paid to Viotti in Paris in 1821, George considered that he might have more chance of recovering the debt by this means than by appealing directly to Dom Lourenço. When this letter had no more success than his first, he made one last attempt with the help of another embassy official in Lisbon, Francis Forbes. Forbes had passed on George's letter to Lima, but knowing the latter's gambling habit, was not optimistic: 'I transmitted it by my own Servant to Dom Lourenço, who, I know received it, but who, I equally know, will never pay you a Real. He does not even look up at Cards, and lives upon his Connections [...].' The debt was almost certainly never paid.

Among the items Viotti bequeathed to Margaret was the famous Stradivarius which George referred to in his letters as the 'Buttero' (perhaps after the Sicilian prince from whom Viotti may have purchased it). The identity of this violin, according to Goodkind's *Violin Iconography*, would appear to be the 1712 'Viotti'. 'Buttero' may have been a nomenclature known only to Viotti's contemporaries, or perhaps one used privately by Viotti and the Chinnerys. The violin was well known among Viotti's string-instrument colleagues, and soon after Viotti's death Margaret received a request to buy the violin from G. Duport, son of Viotti's Paris friend and disciple the cellist Jean-Louis Duport, who had performed at the court of Marie-Antoinette with Viotti, and also at the

740 See Augusto West to George Chinnery, 13 September 1823, Fisher.
741 Pedro de Souza-Holstein, Marquis (later Duc) de Palmella (1786-1850), Portuguese diplomat and statesman, and friend of the Chinnerys. He was minister plenipotentiary in Spain, 1810, and in London from 1815 to 1820, when he went to Brazil. In 1821 he accompanied John VI back to Portugal. He was made Minister for Foreign Affairs in June 1823.
742 George Chinnery to Pedro da Palmella (copy), 11 March 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 25/6.
743 Francis Forbes to George Chinnery, 15 September 1824, Fisher.
Concert Spirituel. G. Duport, also a cellist, wished to preserve the violin in company with the Stradivarius cello that had belonged to his father, as a precious reminder of both men. He wrote from Paris eleven days after Viotti’s death:

Madame Chinnery
17. Montagu Street
Portman Square, London

Paris le 14 mars 1824

Madame,

L’irréparable Perte que les Arts ont fait dans la Personne de Monsieur Viotti a consterné tous ceux qui se font honneur de les professer, et plus particulièrement encore par ceux qui avaient le Bonheur de le connaître.

C’est avec une profonde affliction et sans autre titre que celui d’un de ses grands admirateurs et comme fils de son plus ancien et meilleur Ami que j’ose m’adresser à vous, Madame, pour avoir de ce grand homme, un souvenir bien précieux; [illegible] de dispenser, si toutefois la chose est possible acheter son Violon. M’Roberechts pense qu’il est à votre disposition. Je vous serais obligé, Madame, de me faire savoir si vous consentiriez à me le céder, et à quel Prix?

Il me serait bien agréable de réunir son Instrument à la Basse de mon Père pour les conserver précieusement.

J’ose espérer une réponse de vos Bontés.

Agréez, Madame, l’Assurance de mon respect et de mon entier dévouement.

Votre sombre Serviteur

G. Duport

Professeur de Violoncelle

Rue Veuve S’Médéric 12°... n° 3

This application appears to have been refused, as the 1712 violin, according to Herbert Goodkind’s *Violin Iconography*, was sold in 1824 by the auction house Hôtel Bouilleron for £152.745 The sale may be dated c. August 1824, according to a letter from George to his mother (‘Poor dear Amico’s best violin appears from your statement to have sold tolerably well’).746 Among the owners that Goodkind lists for that violin is the name Hill (of the London violin dealers William E. Hill & Sons). A letter from

744 See Part II, Chapter 3, p. 513.
745 It was subsequently sold in 1853 for £240 by Puttick and Simpson (now Phillips), and again in 1860 for £220 by the Hôtel Bouilleron.
746 G to M, 23 August 1824, FM 94/143/1 – 12/36
'William E. Hill & Sons, 140 New Bond Street, London W' to Edward Heron-Allen, dated 26 March 1901, written after they had learned of the latter's acquisition of the Viotti papers, states that they had 'acquired one of the finest Stradivarius violins that exists' and attached to it was a statement that it was in the possession of Viotti at his death. The letter also seeks information regarding prices that violins fetched in Viotti's day, to be used 'for our book on Stradivari.'

The other item that Margaret needed to sell to realise some ready cash was the grand piano at Châtillon. George wrote to her on 26 October 1824 that he was 'quite miserable' at the thought that Margaret had now 'ceased to benefit by contribution from my Father & poor Amico', and that although the sale of Viotti's property would cover 'his part of the deficit' in the present year, they would have to make provision for the coming one. The piano, one of Broadwood's best, should fetch a good price, George thought ('[...] the instrument happens to be so perfect of it's [sic] kind that it must needs bring a good price.') George's advice to his mother on making use of Viotti's name to sell the piano, even though he had not been its owner, was astute, and the venues he suggested for its advertisement were likely to have attracted the desired buyers:

I have a hint to give you with regard to the Pianoforte, if you like it. People will certainly not take the trouble of going out to Chatillon on a venture for that purpose, & it is not easy to find a safe person to whom you could entrust it at Paris; — but why not cause it to be known at Galignani's, and at Imbault's (if I spell the name right, meaning a great publisher of music & some of poor Amico's compositions) or at several of the great Magazins de Musique & Lutiers; describing the Pianoforte as having been imported direct from England by the late celebrated J.B.V. & allowed to be one of the finest instruments which had ever come out of M. Broadwood's atelier, &

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747 William Hill to Edward Heron-Allen, 26 March 1901, 'Viotti Papers', RCM.
748 William Henry Hill's, Antonio Stradivari, his Life and Work, 1644-1737, published in 1902.
749 G to M, 26 October 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/43.
750 G to M, 13 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/26.
751 John Galignani (1796-1873) and Anthony Galignani (1798-1882), publishers in Paris. They were the sons of Giovanni Galignani and Englishwoman Anne Parsons, who established an English bookshop and circulating library in Paris, which became a flourishing business. In 1814 the father founded 'Galignani's Messenger', which subsequently became a daily newspaper, circulating among English residents all over Europe.
752 Jean-Jerome Imbault (1753-1832) was a French violinist and music publisher. As well as Viotti's, he published the music of Haydn, Clementi, Mozart and Boccherini. In his first year of operation he joined with the already established firm of Jean-Georges Sieber, another Viotti publisher. (There are
finished in all respects proportionably to the excellence of it's tone. Might not Cailleux be very useful in mentioning it, & ought not the professors who so often came to make up a trio or quartet, to bestir themselves, if applied to by Cailleux or some other person, to find a purchaser. And why not Mad. De Vaudreuil & Mad. De Boigne among their friends?

(G to M, 6 August 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/33)

Galignani’s newspaper headquarters served as a club where English residents and visitors in Paris met, and as such was an ideal location to attract prospective English buyers. Imbault’s music-publishing shop was located in the precincts of the Théâtre-Italien, where recent memories of Viotti still lingered. Both seem good choices as advertising avenues. The above letter leaves no doubt that musical evenings at Châtillon had been regular occurrences while Viotti was still alive, and that they had been popular among members of Paris society.

Part of Viotti’s legacy to Margaret were three lawsuits, which George mentions in his letter of 27 June 1824: ‘I thought poor Amico had only left one law suit, but you talk of three. If there is to be a priority of decision I hope it may be in favour of the Feydeau one.’ Viotti had been unable to realise any money in his life-time from the sale of his Feydeau Theatre box, still being contested in the French courts. A letter from George to his mother dated 20 October 1824 seems to indicate that Margaret was close to winning the case: ‘Though so ancient a date, I fear that you will not even now be able to tell me that poor Amico’s contested box-property is made over to you, and that from the prospect held out, the present year may almost close before you actually touch the possible 3,000 francs.’ On 6 January 1824 [recte 1825] George writes: ‘My father’s usual supplement on this last occasion was of peculiar importance, & I weighed all that he is so good as to explain to me on the Feydeau question with the attention it deserves. [...] I have only sincerely to trust & hope that the benefits [of selling rather than keeping the box?] to be hereafter derived may prove that you have decided the point judiciously: I really think you have!’ At the beginning of the following year there is news of a successful sale:

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752 Probably the wife of René-Eustache, marquis d’Osmond de Boigne.
753 G to M, 27 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/27.
754 G to M, 20 October 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/42.
755 G to M, 6 January [1825], PM 94/143/1 – 12/21.
756 G to M, 27 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/27.
757 Two Viotti compositions published by Sieber in the Powerhouse Museum.) In 1812 Imbault sold the firm to P.H. Janet and Alexandre Cotelle, who also continued to publish Viotti’s music.
The greater part of your letter is devoted to the subject of the Feydeau box. Many many thanks for putting me so completely in possession of the merits of the case & especially for the gratifying result with which you wind up the whole disquisition. Situated as we are the possession of the 6 000fr. is preferable to any ulterior benefits, — & besides when my father, in the preceding letter, argued the opposite course, there was no prospect held out of the sale producing such a sum. It really is a capital result and I am willing to hope, since it is part of the same property, that what you are entitled to on the score of the other 8th, may not fall short of the additional 2 000: you have, alas, an abundance of losses to set off against this little gain.

(G to M, 20 January 1825, PM 94/143/1-12/50)

Margaret’s side of this prolific correspondence with George in Spain (53 letters from George to Margaret between January 1824 and October 1825 in the Powerhouse collection) has been lost, and with it much information concerning the aftermath of Viotti’s death. But from the above it may be ascertained that Margaret was successful in her contest for the box, and that she received twice as much as she had expected for it. ‘The opposite course’ suggested by William, may have been simply to retain the box for their present use, holding out for a larger sum from a sale at a later date. The other expected sum of money which George says is to come from ‘part of the same property’ is clearly a share of some other entitlement from the Feydeau Theatre that was Viotti’s due.

It is not clear what the subjects of the other two lawsuits were. There are many possibilities – Da Lima’s debt to Viotti, Smith’s debt to Viotti, or Viotti’s debt to Cary. There is a slim chance that if Viotti’s pension from the French Opera had indeed been cut off after William’s conversation with Cailleux, that Viotti might have sued for its resumption. At least one of these cases was conducted in Paris, as a letter from the Baron Armand de Ségúier to Margaret, dated 1827, shows. The Baron was the French consul general in London, and a frequent guest at Margaret’s musical parties at Montagu Street. From the letter, it is clear that Margaret has solicited from him a character reference to show to his brother, the ‘Baron Ségúier pair de France, Pr[emier] President de la Cour Royale’, as she was about to come before his court. At the time, Margaret was still in mourning after the death of George in Spain only six months.

757 Armand de Ségúier to Margaret Chinnery, 30 May 1827, Fisher.
previously, and received a gentle and sympathetic letter in reply, in which Ségui er wrote that he could understand that she was ‘inconsolable’, and that ‘il n’y a qu’une resurrection qui pourrait consoler une mere.’ He enclosed a letter for Margaret to give to his brother in Paris, as well as a copy for Margaret. This letter is a testimony to the esteem in which Margaret was held by the diplomatic community in London:

Mon cher frere,

Madame Chinnery qui te remettra cette lettre est une dame angloise fort considérée ici et qui de plus etoit fort heureuse il y a quelques années, mais depuis elle a éprouvé les chagrins les plus cruels, entre autres la perte d’un fils unique jeune homme de la plus belle espérance; a ses chagrins se joint aujourd’hui un procès un appel [sic] qui l’amène devant ta cour. Sa partie adverse emploie contre elle les moyens les plus odieux et cherche a la calomnier - dans l’existence qu’elle avoit en Angleterre, Mme Chinnery vivoit sans avoir besoin a faire attester la consideration dont elle jouissoit a Londres et dont j’ai été témoin; je me fais en conséquence un plaisir de declarer, devant la cour royale s’il est necessaire, que jusqu’au moment où Mme Chinnery a quitte Londres pour aller s’établir en France, j’ai vu, durant plusieurs années, les familles les plus distinguées s’honorer d’etre recues chez elle, et que particulierement la plupart des membres du corps diplomatique frequentoient, habituellement sa maison.

ton dévoué frère

(Armand de Ségui er to Margaret Chinnery, 30 May 1827, Fisher)

Among the ‘chagrins’ that Margaret had experienced in recent years Ségui er included the death of Viotti in 1824. It may have been Margaret’s ambiguous relationship with Viotti that was the cause of the malicious gossip mentioned in the letter. There is no further reference to this court case in the Chinnery Papers. However, if letters of recommendation counted for anything, it is highly likely that she was successful, as she had been with the Feydeau box. In the case of the last lawsuit, it is interesting to note that Margaret may also have enjoyed the influence of other highly placed friends. During the running of that case George had written from Madrid that the Comte de St Sauveur, who was a member of Margaret’s closest circle of Parisian friends, had just arrived in Spain to take up his duties in the French army of occupation there. The latter recommended that Margaret have recourse to his friend Mr de

758 Ibid.
759 See G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23.
Bourguignon ("Juge à la Cour royale, Rue St Dominique no. 22")\textsuperscript{760} to whom he wrote a 'recommendatory note' for George to enclose in his own letter 'in case you should wish to avail youself of it.'\textsuperscript{761} There is evidence in an 1819 letter from Margaret to William that she already knew M. Bourguignon: 'I have received a letter from one of our Paris friends giving us a very favorable account of the disposition of the country in general towards the new government; it is from a very clever man Monsieur de Bourguignon.'\textsuperscript{762}

There is no further mention of Viotti's affairs after 1827. When William’s Le Havre business foundered he joined Margaret in Paris, where they lived as a couple for the first time since 1812. The huge hole created in their lives by Viotti’s death must have affected them severely. If in his private life Viotti was a powerful personality, in his professional capacity he was even more so. His influence was felt not only in contemporary musical circles, but in generations of violinists and composers to come. He was, as Bachmann says, 'after Tartini, the true founder of the whole art of violin playing.'\textsuperscript{763}

\textsuperscript{760} Claude-Sébastien Bourguignon-Dumolard (1760-1829), French judge.
\textsuperscript{761} G to M, 13 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/26.
\textsuperscript{762} M to W, 15 January 1819, PM 94/143/1 – 17/42.
\textsuperscript{763} Bachmann, op. cit., p. 159.
PART II

THE CHINNERY CHILDREN'S EDUCATION
Chapter 1
Elementary and Secondary Education at Gillwell

(i) Margaret Chinnery the educationalist

At the time of her marriage in 1790 Margaret Chinnery had already made up her mind that she would undertake the education of her children. This undertaking is comprehensively documented in the Chinnery Family Papers (Powerhouse collection), where a detailed account of Margaret’s educational method is to be found in her education journal (1801-1808),¹ which describes the lessons and activities of the Chinnery children up to the age of sixteen, and gives yearly accounts of their progress in learning, their physical development and their behaviour. The Journal, contained in one exercise book, was divided into two volumes (vol. 1, 1803-1805, vol. 2, 1805-1808). At the end of volume two are to be found the ‘plans de journée’ and the yearly progress reports (1801-1804), which appear to have been copied into the Journal by Margaret at a later date. In addition to Margaret’s own Journal there is in the Fisher collection the education journal of the Chinnery children’s principal tutor, Herr Trumpf.

At the age of sixteen George Chinnery was sent to Oxford, and Caroline Chinnery and other female Chinnery relatives continued their education at home. A four-year correspondence between George and Margaret (1808-1811) in Christ Church Library, Oxford,² continues the documentation of George’s university education and gives a good picture of Caroline’s education at home. Other correspondence, between William Spencer and Caroline Chinnery (in the Powerhouse and Fisher collections), gives additional details of Caroline’s home education over the same period. In addition, there are a few letters from Margaret to William Chinnery in the Fisher collection, and from Viotti to the Chinnery children,³ all dating from the 1790s, which give an idea of the very early education of the children.

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, only a woman of independent will and determination, and moreover, one who was confident of her own ability, would have contemplated taking sole responsibility for her children’s education. Margaret

¹ Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, PM 94/143/1 – 3.
² There is a microfilm copy of this in the Fisher Library, University of Sydney.
³
possessed that determination and confidence. Not only did she undertake the education of her own children, she assumed responsibility for that of other family members' children as well. In an age when ‘blue stockings’ were sneered at, and learned women spurned by the male population, Margaret Chinnery succeeded not only in carrying out her intention, but also in retaining the respect of all the men who knew her. Because she hid her iron will behind a veil of grace, tact, and gentle reason, and adhered rigorously to the outward precepts of polite society while never losing sight of her strict religious and educational principles, she succeeded also in earning their admiration, and was even held up as a model of motherhood.

Her most ardent admirers were her husband and Viotti. But they were by no means alone in their recognition of her educational endeavours. William Spencer also recognised her intellectual and pedagogical strength, as did his fellow poets William Sotheby and Samuel Rogers, the author Sir John Carr, the copper magnate member of parliament Pascoe Grenfell, and the Duke of Cambridge – all family friends. On the eve of George Chinnery’s departure for Oxford in 1808, Margaret received letters from two of these friends, each expressing confidence in the solid educational foundation that Margaret had given George. The first was from Sir John Carr, who wrote that Margaret’s plan of education was ‘as new as it is noble’, and that it had produced good, and would continue to produce good. He praised Margaret as ‘a Mother of no ordinary rank [...] who in the discharge of her most sacred duties, has united Genius to Affection, & enriched the mind with all the charms & graces of culture, yet preserved to it the purity of Infancy.’ The second was from the Duke of Cambridge, who addressed his words to William Chinnery, who in turn reported them to his wife, saying ‘HRH did not fail to express over & over again his Sense of the singular Advantages which George and Caroline have had the good fortune to derive from your invaluable Attention to their Hearts & Minds.’ Near the completion of George’s Oxford education in 1811, William Sotheby wrote to Margaret: ‘Tell George, I long to see more of him;

3 In the RCM collection and cited in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 145. See below (p. 279).
4 The education of her relatives’ children is not as well documented as that of her own children.
5 Sir John Carr (1772-1832), travel writer. There are seven letters from him to Margaret Chinnery in the Fisher collection.
6 John Carr to Margaret Chinnery, 5 January 1808, Fisher.
7 W to M, c. 26 January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlvii a. 42a, fo. 167.
for the more I see him, the more I like him', continuing, 'Your labors of love are delightfully repay'd – & you are now reaping the golden harvest –."

As early as 1797 Sir John Carr had sought Margaret's advice on placing a female child in the care of a reliable married woman. The reasons Margaret gave for her choice give a good indication of her educational principles. She recommended that the child be placed in the home of a certain Mrs Taylor because 'their society is composed of the very best people', while Viotti's friend Mrs Hullmandel (wife of the pianist), was not recommended because she had 'a capricious character', her effusions seemed 'very perishable' and because she had 'a mind but feebly acquainted with any moral or religious bias.' Firm moral and religious principles were the cornerstone of Margaret's method of education. But she also emphasised that a child's education had to correspond to his birth. A gentle birth required a liberal education, and Margaret prided herself on her liberal principles.

In June 1807 Sir John Carr informed Margaret that the latest edition of his *Stranger in France* was dedicated to her. He hoped that the dedication 'may be considered as a little tribute paid to your eminent merits & accomplishments, & also as humble proof of my high regard for you & Mr Chinnery.' In December the same year he sought Margaret's opinion of a draft of his latest book. He cherished her honest opinion, he said, and was sure that if she did not like it she would tell him so with her 'generous frankness that is amongst the distinguishing qualities of your Character.'

The wealthy merchant of Taplow House Pascoe Grenfell and his family (second wife Georgina and children by his first marriage George, Charles, and Charlotte) were probably the Chinnerys' best friends. The Grenfells and the Chinnerys had been close since their children's infancy, and Pascoe Grenfell had had many opportunities of seeing Margaret's educational principles put into practice. He admired her methods, and also respected her opinions and valued her esteem. His son Charles, who was almost the

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8 William Sotheby to Margaret Chinnery, 20 April 1811, Fisher. This metaphor was one that was commonly applied to education in the eighteenth century. For example, in Addison's *Spectator* the writer, in speaking of the advantages of education, compares men to plants, regretting 'how very seldom [...] these moral seeds produce the noble fruits which might be expected of them.' (J. Addison and R. Steele, *The Spectator* (ed. A. Chalmers), F.C. and J. Rivington: London, 1822, vol. 5, no. 455, p. 235. This edition of the *Spectator* will be cited henceforth).

9 John Carr to Margaret Chinnery, 25 September 1797, Fisher.


11 John Carr to Margaret Chinnery, 17 June 1807, Fisher.

12 *Caledonian Sketches or a Tour through Scotland in 1807*, Mathews and Leigh: London, 1809.

13 John Carr to Margaret Chinnery, 10 December 1807, Fisher.
same age as George Chinnery, was being educated at Harrow. In writing to thank Margaret for having his fourteen-year-old Charles to stay for a few days at Gillwell, he said, 'I hope Charles will continue to deserve your good opinion – for to be praised by you, has a Value in my estimation far beyond the praise of almost any other person with whom I am acquainted.'

That both these men should seek Margaret’s good opinion shows that they considered her to be not only intelligent, but more importantly, to possess good judgement. Pascoe Grenfell even stood in awe of her, as far as educational matters were concerned, telling her that he trembled at entering into an argument with her ‘upon a subject, which so happily for your Children, you have so long made your Study, & upon which, as well as upon any other Subjects to which you might direct your attention, your superior good Sense must enable you to form a Correct and unprejudiced Judgement.’

Margaret Chinnery had indeed made a study of education, and, as can be seen from the above comments, had become an acknowledged expert on the subject. Deprived of a mother from an early age, Margaret was keenly aware of the deficiencies in her own education, and was determined to devote all her maternal energy to ensuring her own children were provided with a complete, copy-book education, according to the prescriptions of the day. She possessed a vast general knowledge as a result of her wide reading, and her continual striving for self-improvement was an example to her children. Her extensive reading covered British and European history and literature, the Latin and Greek classics in translation, orthodox Church of England religion, geography, biography, botany, music and the fine arts. In 1809 she was even to begin to teach herself Greek. She was also an accomplished pianist, and her knowledge of music theory was thorough. She spoke and wrote French and Italian with ease. She kept up to date with new publications of English and French works – novels, plays, poetry, essays. Her favourite authors were essayists – Bacon and Addison. She read several daily London newspapers, received literary journals, followed closely proceedings in the British House of Commons, and managed to lay her hands on many foreign and British political pamphlets. Some of her interests were even more specialised. For example, she read books on landscape gardening in order to lay out the grounds of Gillwell Park. She even studied farming techniques from a book sent to her by her friend and fellow farmer

14 Pascoe Grenfell to Margaret Chinnery, 16 January 1805, Fisher.
15 Pascoe Grenfell to Margaret Chinnery, 19 November 1811, Fisher.
Pascoe Grenfell, and oversaw the management of the Gillwell farm, which judging by Grenfell’s letter, was comprised mainly of grazing animals. She kept all the account books of the estate, going through the farm accounts with her bailiff (farm manager) at regular meetings, as well as running an efficient and economic domestic household. Among the Chinnerys’ circle of acquaintance at the turn of the century and in the first decade of the nineteenth century were not only the musicians introduced by Viotti, and the government officials brought home by William, but diplomats, collectors of antiquities, politicians, artists, writers and poets, all of whom contributed to the stimulating intellectual atmosphere that pervaded Gillwell.

Two contemporary British writers on education whom Margaret admired were both female. They were Elizabeth Hamilton, whose *Letters on Education* (first published in May 1801 and revised in January 1802) emphasised the maternal role in education, and Maria Edgeworth, whose *Letters to Literary Ladies* (published 1795) was a plea for education for women. She was also familiar with Lord Chesterfield’s popular *Letters to my Son*, which she criticised for its superficial advice to adolescent boys, and with the writings of Locke and Addison on education. In addition, Margaret kept abreast of contemporary opinion on educational issues. She followed with interest the ongoing debate in the first decade of the nineteenth century on the relevance of a traditional British liberal education, such as that offered at Oxford and Cambridge, and on Oxford educational reforms. In a letter to her son she critically

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16 Pascoe Grenfell to William Chinnery, 8 January 1804, Fisher. The letter, enclosing the above-mentioned book (which is missing), discusses ‘the techniques to be employed by a Gentleman Farmer’. Grenfell noted that although Taplow was given over to ‘arable farming’ and Gillwell to ‘grass farming’, the same general principles could be applied to both. His letter also includes hints and warnings, as well as details on the salary and working conditions of his bailiff.

17 Elizabeth Hamilton (1758-1816), Scottish poet, novelist and writer on education, was born in Belfast, but of Scottish origins. The work for which she was perhaps best known was *The Cottagers of Glenburnie*, published in 1808, by which she hoped to draw attention to the lot of the Scottish peasants.

18 Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849), Irish novelist and writer on education. She co-authored *Practical Education* (published in London in 1798) with her father, who was a disciple of Rousseau.

19 Philip Dormer Stanhope’s *Letters written by the Earl Chesterfield to his Son*, *Philip Stanhope* was first published in London in 1774.

20 M to G, 14 March 1809, Ch.Ch.

21 Addison’s *Spectator* contained many articles on the benefits of a good education, and how this was to be obtained. One of these, discussing Locke’s treatise on education, weighed up the advantages of a home education against a school education, and may conceivably have contributed to Margaret’s determination to educate her children at home (*The Spectator*, vol. 4, no. 313, pp. 55-60).
evaluated Copplestone's pamphlet, published in 1810, defending the existing Oxford system against an attack from the *Edinburgh Review*.22

But none of the British writers on education made the same impression on her as the eighteenth century French writer and educationalist *extraordinaire*, Madame de Genlis. This independent-minded French woman, in defence of the educational methods she employed in the education of the children of the Duc d’Orléans (Philippe-Egalité), stood her ground against powerful and jealous male critics, and defended her strong Christian principles against the mocking assaults of the French philosophers. Her resilience, her beliefs and her educational methods were Margaret Chinnery’s inspiration.

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(ii) Madame de Genlis the educationalist

The irrepressible writer and educationalist Caroline-Stéphanie Félicité Ducrest de Saint-Aubin, comtesse de Genlis, marquise de Sillery was born in 1746. Her long life (eighty-four years) spanned the end of the ancien régime, the Revolution and the Restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, and endured just long enough for her to see her most famous pupil Louis-Philippe ascend the throne of France. Madame de Genlis's eventful life was dominated by two passions. The first was her Catholic faith. The second was her need to instruct others. These two passions combined to produce an astonishingly prolific literary output that only ceased with her death. Even her works that did not specifically deal with education were written with some sort of didactic purpose. Madame de Genlis was not only one of the most prolific writers on education of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but also one of the most popular. Her works, which went into many editions and were translated into a number of different languages, reached an extensive readership, and her pedagogical method may well have been put into practice by more than one devotee. Although her ideas on education were not always original, she gained widespread recognition for them, and even Napoleon sought her expertise in this field, appointing her in 1805 dame d'inspection des écoles primaires à Paris, in which role she wrote for him a report on the state of public education in France. But the role for which she is perhaps most famous was that of 'gouverneur' to the young Louis-Philippe, last king of France.

As a young girl, Madame de Genlis's passion for learning and for teaching others was already evident. As a five-year-old she liked to give lessons to the local peasant children who came to listen to her beneath the window of her family chateau at Saint-Aubin in Burgundy. At Saint-Aubin too, she took pleasure in putting on short enactments of proverbs for the enjoyment and edification of the neighbouring families. Another interest which began in childhood was music. At eight she composed a short musical poem ('une romance'), consisting of rhyming couplets which she sang to her

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23 As far as is known for certain, the only other person to have put Madame de Genlis's precepts into practice on her own children was Madame Pauline Brady (see Gabriel de Broglie, Madame de Genlis, Perrin: Paris, 1985, p. 334), but she does not appear to have documented this education, as Margaret Chinnery did. Madame de Genlis dedicated her Siège de La Rochelle to this French admirer.

24 Mémoire de Madame de Genlis à Napoléon, 8 February 1805 (see de Broglie, op. cit., p. 500).
father. This was the first of many such ‘romances’ that she wrote throughout her life on the occasion of family birthdays. At thirteen she was a confident singer, a competent harpist, and also played the harpsichord and the guitar, skills which she later taught her pupils. The ability to play a musical instrument was a talent that she considered important for all well-bred young ladies to acquire, and was an integral component of her education programme.

Once married and introduced into Paris society, she continued to write and act in short dramatic proverbs, which became the rage of fashionable society in the 1760s. But it was when she became a mother that she attempted her first didactic writings, a series of short plays, each containing a moral lesson, composed especially for children to perform. These were to constitute her first published work. Collected into four volumes entitled Théâtre à l’usage des jeunes personnes (also known as Théâtre d’éducation), they were immensely popular in France, Germany, Russia and England.

On her entry to the Palais Royal in 1772, as dame de compagnie to the Duchesse de Chartres, Madame de Genlis entertained the court with her singing, acting and harp-playing, writing her own ‘society’ plays, all of which had a didactic purpose, and preached moral behaviour to an adult audience. These were later published in an anthology, the Théâtre de societe (Paris, 1781). She became a close friend of the Duchesse, and took on the latter’s education, teaching her history by means of a series of pictures painted for the purpose, on the back of which she wrote explanatory notes. She took this teaching method with her to the convent of Bellechasse, when she was made governess to the Duc de Chartres’s daughters in 1776.

Madame de Genlis made a deliberate choice to retire from court and society to educate her royal charges, believing that the city, with its dubious attractions, was not an ideal environment for the raising of children. Six years later she was also given charge of the education of the sons of the Duc de Chartres (now the Duc d’Orléans). It was during her years at Bellechasse, where she inhabited a specially constructed pavilion alone with her charges and staff, that she formulated her solidly Christian and

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25 Le Trésor de la langue française (CNRS: Paris, 1971-1994, vol. 14, p. 1218) says that a romance may be either a piece of verse set to music or a piece of vocal music in a rather elevated style ‘généralement devisée en couplets et refrains, et portant sur des sujets tendres, mélancoliques.’ The romances composed to be sung in the domestic society of the Genlis and Chinnery families -- typically on the occasion of birthdays -- were a combination of both these definitions.

26 Vol. 1 was published by Panckoucke in Paris in 1779, and vols 2, 3 and 4 by Lambert et Baudoin in 1780.
moralistic principles of education. She put these principles into practice on the royal children, as well as on her own two daughters, Caroline and Pulchérie, and on her niece, her nephew, and on the pretty six-year old English girl, who had arrived at Bellechasse in 1780 and who was to become her adopted daughter, Pamela. Another English girl, Hermine, who arrived at Bellechasse in 1783 was to be the ‘practice pupil’, or a sort of surrogate daughter, of her daughter Pulchérie. At this time Madame de Genlis had charge of the education of up to ten pupils.

Her appointment in 1782 as ‘gouverneur’ to the sons of the Duc d’Orléans (cousin of Louis XVI) – of whom she was also the mistress – was plagued by controversy. It was the first time that a woman had held the post of chief educator of royal princes of France, and the attacks from the male aspirers to this post were vitriolic. To defend herself against charges that she was unfit for the position, and to counter criticism of her unconventional educational methods, she published in 1791 her Leçons d‘une gouvernante à ses élèves, a two-volume collection of excerpts from the education journal that she kept as a record of her daily lessons and activities with the royal children. The work also contained excerpts from the journal of the royal children’s sub-governor, who was required by Madame de Genlis to keep his own journal. It was, she announced to the world, ‘un tableau exact & fidèle de ma conduite depuis douze ans.’

At Bellechasse Madame de Genlis wrote several educational works. Les Annales de la vertu ou cours d’histoire à l’usage des jeunes personnes (Paris, 1781) was an unwieldy amalgam of facts and dates mixed in with a collection of noteworthy historical episodes – most of which demonstrated feats of bravery or virtuous conduct – all arranged in long chronological lists. As was the case for her first production, this work was intended as a teaching aid. Another work to come out of Bellechasse, Les Veillées du château (Paris, 1782) was a collection of moral tales, again intended for a young readership. The most important work to emanate from Bellechasse, and one

27 Paméla Fitzgerald (1773?-1831), came to France as Nancy Sims, the six-year-old English girl brought into the Bellechasse household by Madame de Genlis to enable her pupils to learn English. Widely believed to be the natural daughter of Madame de Genlis and the Duc d’Orléans (Philippe-Egalité), Madame de Genlis always maintained that she was her adopted daughter. The mystery surrounding her birth has never been satisfactorily resolved, the latest contribution to the debate coming from Stella Tillyard in her recent publication Citizen Lord. Edward Fitzgerald 1763-1798, London, Chatto and Windus, 1997. Although Tillyard adds no new evidence to the debate, a good résumé of the two opposing views is given on p. 305.

which was a milestone in Madame de Genlis’s writing career, was *Adèle et Théodore ou lettres sur l'éducation* (Paris, 1782). This was an epistolary novel, in which was expounded Madame de Genlis’s system of education, based on the pedagogical methods she employed at Bellechasse.

From her period of exile (1792-1800),\(^2\) when she joined the aristocratic exodus from France during the Revolution, came more children’s books with a didactic purpose. Having lost her pension from the Orléans family, her writing became almost her sole means of survival. *Les Petits Émigrés, ou correspondance de quelques enfants pour servir à l'éducation de la jeunesse* was written and published in Hamburg in 1798 for her grandchildren. In 1799 two more educational works were published in Hamburg, her *Herbier moral*, an imitation of La Fontaine’s *Fables*, in which plants were substituted for animals, and *Le Petit La Bruyère ou caractères et mœurs de ce siècle à l’usage des enfants*, which was inspired by one of her favourite authors. A third, with a religious intent, was also published anonymously in Hamburg the same year. This was a collection of prayers for children, *Heures à l’usage des enfants*. All these works had immediate success in Germany, and later abroad.

Madame de Genlis’s abode alternated between Hamburg and Prussia for a number of years, the last two years of her exile being spent in the fashionable society of Berlin, where her passion for educating others continued to manifest itself. It was here that she met the eight-year-old Casimir Baecker, who was the son of her landlady. Struck by the boy’s beauty and his quick mind, she began giving him lessons in French, asked his mother for permission to adopt him, and took him back to France with her. Casimir Baecker, whom Madame de Genlis loved blindly and obsessively, was to be the cause of many future disappointments, especially on the occasion of his visit to England in 1807.\(^3\) Of all the children whom Madame de Genlis educated, Casimir was her favourite.

In 1800, having succeeded in having her name erased from the list of *émigrés*, Madame de Genlis returned to a vastly different France, where she once more had to struggle for a living. Having re-established her reputation as a writer, she was recognised by Napoleon, who gave her a pension equivalent to the one she had received

\(^2\) Madame de Genlis spent 1791-92 in England, returned briefly to Paris, and left almost immediately again in December 1792.

\(^3\) See Part II, Chapter 2.
from the Orléans household, and accommodation in apartments adjoining the Arsenal library. In return, he demanded regular letters from her. In these she gave him her thoughts on a variety of subjects, including education. On the downfall of Napoleon she lost her pension and was once again obliged to rely on her pen to survive. Historical novels, treatises on education, religion and morality, and contributions to periodicals continued to pour from her pen right into her old age.

The most sensational of all her works was still to come. At the age of seventy-nine she published her Mémoires,\(^{31}\) which consisted of a mixture of personal memories, repetitious commentary on a variety of subjects, most of which had already appeared in previous writings, and above all, of numerous unflattering portraits of friends which ruffled feathers\(^{32}\) and caused many rifts. The furore that the publication of her Mémoires caused in 1825 led to the famous comment cited in Michaud’s Biographie universelle that in the Mémoires she confessed the sins of everyone except her own.\(^{33}\) As far as her educational precepts were concerned, the Mémoires contained many revisions of previously-held views.\(^{34}\)

Madame de Genlis died in 1830, never having ceased instructing and moralising her whole life through. In the words of her biographer, Gabriel de Broglie, ‘Enfant, elle apprenait le catéchisme à ses camarades de jeu; fillette, la harpe à de jeunes paysannes; mère, le bon ton à ses filles; gouvernante, toutes les disciplines sauf le latin à ses élèves; gouverneur, la sagesse à un futur roi; devenue âgée, les premiers rudiments à des enfants recueillis; écrivain, la morale à la nation entière.’\(^{35}\)

\(^{31}\) Mémoires inédits sur le XVIIe siècle et la révolution française, Ladvocat: Paris, 1825. This edition will be cited henceforth.

\(^{32}\) Including Margaret Chinnery’s (see Part II, Chapter 2).

\(^{33}\) ‘Rien n’égale le scandale de ces mémoires, dans lesquels on a dit que l’auteur, à l’exemple des mauvaises dévotes, avait confessé les péchés de tout le monde sauf les siens’ (in Michaud, op. cit., vol. 16, p. 175).

\(^{34}\) Such as the one that stipulated that all girls should learn to play several musical instruments. A notable failure that Madame de Genlis experienced was with her own daughter, Pulchérie.

\(^{35}\) De Broglie, op. cit., p.136.
(iii) Madame de Genlis's educational principles as expounded in *Adèle et Théodore* and *Leçons d'une gouvernante à ses élèves*.\(^3^6\)

It is in *Adèle et Théodore*, inspired by her years at Bellechasse, that a detailed explanation of Madame de Genlis's system of education may be found. *Adèle et Théodore* is the story of the virtuous parents the Baron and Baronne d'Almane who, shunning the vices of city life, retire with their children (*Adèle* and *Théodore*), two tutors and their servants to distant Languedoc, in order to give the children an exemplary upbringing. The letters from the baron and baroness to their friends in Paris, the Vicomte and Vicomtesse de Limours, describe how they put into practice their principles of education, give advice on thorny moral issues, and constantly boast of the superiority of their methods over those of their friends.

The characters of the book were the thinly veiled real-life inhabitants of Bellechasse and also included some well known Paris society figures. The wise and supremely competent mother-educator the Baronne d'Almane, who dispensed infallible educational advice to her obedient friend the Vicomtesse de Limours, was of course Madame de Genlis. The beautiful and virtuous Madame d'Ostalis was her grown-up eldest daughter Caroline. *Adèle* was Adélaïde, daughter of the Duc d'Orléans, and *Théodore* was his eldest son, Louis-Philippe. At the time of publication many other Parisian personalities were recognised in the characters, including Madame de Genlis's aunt, Madame de Montesson\(^3^7\) who was not portrayed flatteringly.

At the beginning of the work, in the *Approbation* (approval from the public censor) is a claim that the work was 'd'un genre absolument neuf'. Although epistolary novels were not new, the way in which Madame de Genlis used the genre as a teaching tool was. To reach a wider readership, she conceived the idea of presenting her educational method in letter form - a sort of correspondence course in education - and of weaving other stories throughout the work, to hold the reader's attention captive. The

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\(^3^6\) The editions that will be cited henceforth are *Adèle et Théodore ou lettres sur l'éducation*, Libraires associés: Paris, 1782, 3 vols; and *Leçons d'une gouvernante à ses élèves ou fragments d'un journal qui a été fait pour l'éducation des enfans de monsieur d'Orléans*, Onfroy: Paris 1791, 2 vols.

\(^3^7\) Charlotte-Jeanne Beraud de la Haie de Riou, marquise de Montesson (1737-1806) became the morganatic wife of the Duc d'Orléans (father of Philippe-Egalité) in 1773. She was the author of a number of plays in verse, performed privately by her intimate circle of friends, all to be found in what is considered almost certainly to be her work, *Œuvres anonymes*, published in Paris in 1782, the same year that her niece's best-selling *Adèle et Théodore* appeared. She also wrote a novel, *Pauline*, and did a translation of Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*. 
letters full of educational advice were in themselves by no means dull, being full of moral dilemmas that had to be solved, some of which were quite frank in their discussion of marital relations. Interspersed as they were with intriguing tales of adventure and misfortune – written in a light and lively style that rendered the didactic message more palatable – they met immediate success with the public. When the work was published in January 1782 thousands of copies were sold – the first edition was sold out in a week, according to Madame de Genlis – and it went into numerous editions.

Madame de Genlis’s education system rested firmly on religion and morality. Like most eighteenth century European educators she believed that childhood education had a powerful influence on adult conduct, and that the happiness of society depended on the proper education of its youngest members. (‘Une mauvaise éducation gâte l’esprit ainsi qu’elle corrompt le cœur.’) A good education gave young people a clear and unambiguous moral code of conduct to carry with them throughout their life. Structured education should begin very young and extend at least to the age of sixteen. In planning this education, the educator should take into account the pupil’s sex, character, aptitudes and social rank. Thus in Adèle et Théodore Madame de Genlis gives three education models – for princes, for young ladies, and for young men.

Madame de Genlis wrote through the mouthpiece of the Baronne d’Almane that her method of education had three aims – ‘de cultiver l’esprit de mon élève, de former son cœur; et en même temps de lui donner tous les talens agréables.’ The first duty of a good educator was to introduce the young child to basic Christian principles. From a very early age the child was to be taught the catechism, read passages from the Bible, shown examples of virtuous conduct and be taught to do good deeds, which he should learn both by example and from books. Formal instruction should begin when the child reached the age of six years but should proceed only at the same rate as the child’s comprehension of the subject being taught. Brilliant but meaningless feats of memory (then popular with proud parents desirous of showing off their children’s skills) were to

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40 Adèle et Théodore, vol. 3, p. 22.
41 Ibid, vol. 1, p. 61.
42 Angus Martin in his article ‘From Marmontel to Berquin: the Dynamic Concept of Morality in Eighteenth-Century French Fiction’ (Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture, vol. 6, pp. 285-302) calls the belief of late eighteenth century juvenile writers that a good example must produce virtuous conduct an ‘almost deterministic’ concept of morality (p. 292).
be discouraged. Subjects to be studied up to the age of twelve included history, geography, arithmetic, classical mythology, foreign languages, music, and natural history, including mineralogy and botany. Only carefully selected children’s books were to be read at this age, famous works of literature being reserved for when the children had acquired enough maturity and breadth of reading to enable them to discriminate between ‘moral’ and ‘immoral’ works, and to appreciate true beauty of style. It was important that children also be taught drawing and dancing, and that girls learn to play several musical instruments and take singing lessons. Girls should also acquire the useful domestic time filler skills of needlework, and boys some simple handcrafts. At the age of twelve boys should begin to study Latin and geometry. Chemistry, physics, Greek, architecture, the mechanical arts and law could be added to the young man’s curriculum later.

The Baronne d’Almane had some original ideas for teaching history and geography. She covered the walls of their chateau, as Madame de Genlis had done at Bellechasse, with instructive historical pictures, with portraits of Roman emperors, with frescoes representing Ovid’s Metamorphoses, with tapestries depicting famous Greek heroes and philosophers, and with maps which lined the wall from the bottom to the top of the staircase. She also made use of a magic lantern to show the children painted slides of scenes from the Bible and from ancient history. Classical mythology was learned from picture books provided with explanations, from the Baronne’s copious personal notes made into an educational text which text figured on Adèle’s reading list when she was twelve, and from visits to art collections.

The young children were taught to speak foreign languages in a very simple and novel way: by providing them with foreign language speaking tutors, and by speaking a different language at each meal. The d’Almanes took with them to Languedoc an English governess and an Italian drawing master. The Saxon gardener, who helped the children plant their own flower beds, and explained botanical terms, spoke only German to them. As the children grew older they were taught grammar, then learned to write in foreign languages by means of copying out their mother’s ‘exemples’ (selected short passages), gradually progressing to writing their own ‘extraits’ (summaries of what they had read). This method was also used for teaching them to write fluently in their own

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language. In the Baronne's opinion, the three most important modern languages were French, English and Italian. German and Spanish might also be studied after these three had been mastered.

In order to make learning as pleasurable as possible, the Baronne d'Almane appealed to her young children's natural dramatic instincts. Having her children perform in specially selected plays — ones with a moral lesson — was one of the most important features of the Baronne's educational method. It was an effective way of teaching virtuous conduct, while at the same time giving the pupil 'des talens agréables'. Being obliged to learn a part, act in front of an audience and to sing, dance or play a musical instrument during the performance, gave children practice in many important skills. It exercised their memory, developed their diction, helped them move gracefully, and gave them confidence: 'De cette manière, un enfant, en s'amusant, exercerait sa mémoire, formerait sa prononciation; il acquérirait de la grâce, et perdroit l'embarras [...]'. She recommended her own work, Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes, which, she said, contained 'des tableaux, des images vives et naturelles qui puissent frapper leur imagination, toucher leur cœur.' According to the Baronne d'Almane, 'après avoir joué un rôle rempli de bonté, de délicatesse, de générosité, [l'enfant] rougirait d'être indocile ou insensible. '

The Baronne d'Almane's method of teaching music was also unusual and controversial. The method described in Adèle et Théodore for teaching harp and harpsichord consisted of having the very young pupil exercise each hand separately for a full year (six months for an older student) before attempting to play a piece. The pupil was also required to exercise each hand in the playing of scales, difficult passages and ornaments for the same length of time.

Physical education was an important component of Madame de Genlis's education programme. The reader of Adèle et Théodore is told that the d'Almane children went for walks twice a day, played various outdoor games, and tended their own garden beds. Théodore learned to swim, to ride, to fence, to practise archery, to play billiards and to use firearms. But it was her Leçons d'une gouvernante that gave the most detailed description of the extraordinary variety of physical exercises that Madame

44 Adèle et Théodore, vol. 1, p. 204.
46 Ibid., p. 204.
de Genlis devised for her pupils. Her charges at Bellechasse underwent a rigorous gymnastic programme each morning before breakfast, using all sorts of ingenious devices invented by their educator. She attached to the ceiling pulleys and ropes, by means of which the children were made to lift weights. She clad them in lead-weighted shoes in which they were obliged to walk or run long distances, and strapped to their backs baskets filled with weights or heavy pitchers of water which had to be carried up and down stairs. She was a precursor of modern-day children’s athletics in that she also had them run sprints and do long jumps and high jumps.

Madame de Genlis was a tireless teacher, who exacted a corresponding effort from her pupils. She took all the collective lessons of her younger pupils herself, but did have a substantial back-up staff of répétiteurs who undoubtedly eased the burden of managing to cater to the needs of varying age groups. When the children reached the age of twelve she employed individual tutors for subjects she could not teach herself such as Latin, Greek, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and later law.

The unorthodox pedagogical ideas put into practice at Bellechasse contained some striking similarities with those expounded in Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s influential novel *Emile ou de l’éducation* (The Hague, 1762), and according to Kerby, author of *The Educational Ideas and Activities of Madame la Comtesse de Genlis,* almost every chapter of *Adèle et Théodore* was indebted to him. Madame de Genlis’s educational principles were also influenced to varying degrees by the writings of Montaigne, the English philosopher Locke, French educationalists Fénélon and Madame de Maintenion, and the French Catholic author Nicole. Kerby, whose 1926 doctoral thesis examined all these influences on Madame de Genlis’s method of education, concluded that although she took her ideas from many sources, her originality consisted in giving her education a practical bent, and in this respect, she was ahead of her time and a forerunner of modern educational practices. Gabriel de Broglie maintains that the success of her educational programme, which he describes as a plan, rather than a method proper, relied principally on her own individual dynamic input.

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47 Ibid., p. 69. For Margaret’s opinion of this proscription, see pp. 318-319.
49 See de Broglie, *op. cit.,* p. 117.
50 Ibid., p. 138.
How was an educator desirous of using Madame de Genlis’s method to set about the task? Firstly, by using as teaching aids the books that Madame de Genlis wrote specially for that purpose, and which she was not hesitant to recommend. To teach religious principles, the most suitable book for young children was her own *Livre d’heures*. To inspire a child with a love of good works, he should be read ‘true’ stories of virtuous conduct, such as those contained in her *Veillées du château*. These were written, she claimed, to fill a void, because no suitable children’s stories existed at the time. She disapproved of fairy tales and of the then popular *Tales of the Arabian Nights*, saying in her *Mémoires* (vol. 6, p. 156) that they were based on fantasy, not on reason, and that ‘le véritable merveilleux, puisé dans les œuvres du Créateur, surpasser infiniment tout ce qu’une imagination déréglée peut inventer de ce genre.’ For the teaching of history her own *Annales de la vertu* – which she ambitiously described as containing ‘le détail des belles actions et des traits singuliers et mémorables tirés de l’histoire générale et particulières de tous-les peuples de la terre, depuis la création du monde jusqu’à nos jours inclusivement’ – was the only one suitable for young children. No existing work of history was ‘moral’ enough for the purpose, since feats of bravery frequently praised by historians did not always show virtuous conduct.

It was of utmost importance that a mother knew her child’s character so that she could correct his faults. To do this she had to employ constant vigilance, and note all her observations on his conduct in a journal. The way to draw the attention of the child to his failings, as well as his achievements, was to require him to read the journal at the beginning of each day. To secure the complete and unquestioning obedience of her pupil, rewards were to be held out for good behaviour and punishments inflicted for bad. So that none of the child’s actions went undetected, the mother-educator should insist that in her absence, the tutor or governess also keep his or her own written record.

The ambitious plan of education outlined in *Adèle et Théodore* must have appeared rather daunting to the eighteenth century mother. She had to be a woman of sense and perseverance, be thoroughly versed in the rules and protocol of high society (‘toute personne qui n’aura pas une connaissance approfondie du monde, ne pourra

51 *Adèle et Théodore*, vol. 2, p. 97.
52 *Adèle et Théodore*, vol. 1, p. 81.
donner à ses enfants qu’une éducation imparfaite’),54 and be capable of overseeing her tutors and of directing the whole programme. Even if she were well provided with servants, tutors and funds — all of which were prerequisites to Madame de Genlis’s system — the sheer amount of work to be covered was overwhelming. Madame de Genlis never ceased reiterating throughout Adèle et Théodore that her method was within reach of every (upper-class) family, provided that the mother-educator — for it was the duty of a mother to educate her own children — followed a rigorous schedule. Of overriding importance was the wise use of time. Not a moment of the day could be wasted. Every minute was to be gainfully employed. This was a rule that Madame de Genlis had since her youth unfailingly followed, and which she stressed was the key to the successful implementation of her method.

A child educated in this way would recognise an immense debt of gratitude to his educators. He would have received a well-rounded general knowledge, his morals would be safe, he would be fluent in several modern languages, and he would possess all the necessary polite accomplishments and social skills to be at ease in the world. Confident and sure of his worth, he or she would nevertheless retain an unassuming and modest manner, thereby commanding the respect and admiration of all. The rewards of such an education for a young man would be entry into the highest ranks of society, and a brilliant career. A young woman would also be much admired by her peers in the top echelon of society, and, most importantly, she would be eminently qualified to undertake the education of her own children. For the mother-educator the rewards were equally gratifying. Having successfully completed the education of her children, she would have the exquisite personal satisfaction of enjoying the fruits of her success.

Still, it would take a determined, indefatigable, and extremely ambitious mother to embark on such an undertaking. Margaret Chinnery was just such a mother.

54 Adèle et Théodore, vol. 1, p. 84.
(iv) Madame de Genlis’s influence on Margaret Chinnery

Margaret Chinnery read *Adèle et Théodore* in French in the first year of its publication. She was sixteen at the time, and immediately became an admirer of its author. In an 1802 letter to Madame de Genlis she described it as her favourite book, and the one in which Madame de Genlis spoke to her for the first time: ‘C’est là que ma chère et charmante amie m’a parlé pour la première fois!... J’avais seize ans, j’étais sans mère et sans guide, ignorante, mal élevée, – on m’a prêté ce livre, je l’ai devoré.’ She clearly took note of Madame de Genlis’s statement in the book that her target readers were young mothers desirous of furnishing their sons and daughters with a proper upbringing, and that her basic plan of education could be adapted to suit many different needs.

*Adèle et Théodore* enjoyed a wide readership in England. Four editions of translations into English had been published by Thomas Cadell of London by 1796 (the first in 1783), and there was another 1796 edition in French. Even William Chinnery, who knew that the work was the source of his wife’s educational principles, had wanted to read it – albeit at the end of his children’s education in 1812 when a copy in English was hard to come by – asking Margaret to send him a copy to Gothenburg that year.

It is clear from the Chinnery correspondence that Margaret Chinnery kept abreast of Madame de Genlis’s works as they were published. There is no doubt that both *Adèle et Théodore* and *Leçons d’une gouvernante* – published in 1791, the same year that Margaret Chinnery’s twins were born – had an enormous impact on the plan of education that she adopted for her children. Her own education journal was modelled closely on Madame de Genlis’s, which had been described in *Adèle et Théodore* and reproduced in part in *Leçons d’une gouvernante*. The yearly summary of her children’s achievements (‘connaissances acquises’) and the reading lists (‘cours de lectures’) could have come straight out of the last few pages of *Adèle et Théodore* (vol. 3, pp. 435-446) in which those of Adèle are detailed. Margaret’s order that her principal tutor was to keep a record of his daily lessons was clearly inspired by Madame de Genlis’s example, as was her insistence that anyone who had care of the children in her absence – such as the French governess and the eldest female pupil – was also to keep one.

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55 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis, (f), (copy), [c. September 1802], Fisher. As *Adèle et Théodore* was published in Jan 1782, that would put Margaret’s birth date at 1765 or 1766.
The fact that some of the above journals were in French is also significant. Margaret Chinnery was an unashamed Francophile. She was fluent in spoken and written French, and admired the French literary heritage. She also admired the quintessentially French art of conversation and encouraged her children to emulate French manners and grace. When she wanted George to be less stiff and more relaxed in company, she said that he should try to acquire what the French called ‘le naturel’, a term for which she could find no equivalent in English. Her role model for the equally important art of letter-writing was the French past-master of this genre, Madame de Sévigné.

Born in 1766, Margaret Chinnery was almost twenty years younger than Madame de Genlis, young enough to be her daughter. In spite of the age difference, the two had a lot in common. Both were beautiful, articulate women, whose company was much sought after and whose opinions were respected. Both were unshakeable in their religious convictions, Margaret Chinnery in the Protestant, and Madame de Genlis in the Catholic faith. Both were self-educated and, probably because of this, held education to be of the utmost importance. The yearning for continual self-improvement as well as the improvement of those around them, was a characteristic they both shared. Some of the adversities in Margaret Chinnery's life bore an uncanny resemblance to those suffered by Madame de Genlis. Both women lost husbands in sensational circumstances. Both had daughters named Caroline, who died at the age of twenty. Both women also lost a son in childhood and both experienced severe financial setbacks in their lives.

However, the two women resembled each other in more than just outward similarities. As well as a highly developed intellect, Margaret Chinnery shared Madame de Genlis’s driving ambition, her tenacity, and her perseverance: whereas Madame de Genlis’s education of the Orléans children took twelve years to complete, Margaret Chinnery’s close supervision of the education of her children lasted for fifteen. The

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58 Madame de Genlis's husband, comte Charles-Alexis Brulart de Genlis, marquis de Sillery (b. 1737), died by the guillotine in 1793. Margaret Chinnery's husband, while not dead, was obliged to flee England and live separately from her from 1812, owing to the scandal in which he was involved at the British Treasury.
59 This calculation is based on Margaret Chinnery’s first mention of the use of structured play exercises in 1796 up to the end of George’s career at Oxford in 1811, during which time she supervised from afar every waking moment of his day.
children's rigorously timetabled days began at six in the morning and went to eight­­thirty at night (when they were ten); her pupils were allowed only thirty minutes for breakfast (which included the reading of the previous day's journal), fifteen minutes for lunch, and only two minutes to dress to go horse-riding. That this regime continued every day of the year – with the exception of Christmas and periods of illness – was proof of her tenacity. In certain respects, the strict regimen of hard prolonged work that she imposed on her children was no less unsparing than the one that Madame de Genlis had imposed on her Bellechasse charges. Caroline Chinnery's journal bears witness to this, as do the numerous letters of admonition addressed to her son in Oxford. ⁶⁰

Margaret's own self-discipline was just as strong as Madame de Genlis's, and her preparations for lessons just as conscientious. In an 1809 letter to George at Oxford she refers to her habit of rising early both as a young girl and as a young mother. Like Madame de Genlis she used this part of the day to prepare her lessons: 'When I was young I could always rise at the hour I chose without depending upon the vigilance of any servant to call me. Indeed till within the last ten years, I constantly got up of a morning two hours before my maid, and sat down quietly in my room to write the extracts and make all the necessary preparations for the education then going on; – at 7 I dressed, and at 8 we all breakfasted if you remember.' ⁶¹ Another childhood memory that she evokes for her son at Oxford is that of her first geography lessons at school, which, she says, were taught in the heedless manner of the teachers of the day – a pedagogical practice strongly criticised by Madame de Genlis in much of her writing – that consisted of making the pupil learn long lists of meaningless facts by heart. Margaret's childhood experience of her geography master making her 'learn the names of all the towns rivers and mountains of each country before I had even seen a globe or a map of the world' ⁶² was typical of this method, and one that she was determined that her children would not endure. The words that Madame de Genlis gives to the Baronne d'Almane in Adèle et Théodore: 'Le resume de tout ce que j'ai dit, est donc: que le grand point dans l'Education, est de ne point se presser, de n'apprendre aux enfans que ce qu'ils peuvent comprendre; en même temps, de ne négliger aucune occasion de leur

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⁶⁰ Caroline Chinnery's Journal (c. 1803 and 1809), PM 94/143/1 – 22. See also Part II, Chapter 3.
⁶¹ M to G, 4 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
⁶² M to G, 9 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
enseigner tout ce qui est à leur portée"\textsuperscript{63} were ones that left a deep impression on Margaret Chinnery, and which she put into practice on her own children from their earliest childhood.

\textsuperscript{63} Adèle et Théodore, vol. 1, p. 72.
The earliest reference to the activities of the three young Chinnerys – twins George and Caroline, born 3 September 1791, and Walter, born 22 April 1793 – is in a letter from Margaret to William Chinnery, postmarked 13 July 1795. The Chinnerys were then still living in Mortimer Street, London. William was away in Bath with his friend Pascoe Grenfell, and Margaret had invited the two young Grenfell boys, George and Charles (six and five years old respectively) one Saturday afternoon. She wrote: ‘The five children together made as you may imagine a glorious Riot, but you know I always partake in Children’s Amusements therefore I was as much pleased as any of them.’ These words immediately set Margaret apart from her contemporaries. Participating in the play of a six-year-old, a five-year-old, two four-year-olds, and a two-year old was not a typical upper-class eighteenth century mother’s idea of ‘amusement’. Children of this age were usually left with a nursemaid so that the mother could continue unhampered her round of social activities. It shows Margaret’s interest in the development of her children, even at this young age.

Another letter from Margaret to William, written in the winter of 1796 or 1797, shortly after the move to Gillwell, proves that Margaret was already organising structured activities for the children, and that their day was well regulated. She wrote that the snow and the wind prevented them from going outdoors, but that ‘we do not mind all this, our various Occupations of a Morning, & our Music & Conversation of an Evening makes the time pass with incredible Swiftness’. The influence of Madame de Genlis can already be seen in the useful employment of daytime hours, the music, and the evening conversations, such as were recommended in Adèle et Théodore. She continued: ‘The children are quite well & very good, we invented a new Play for them last night, which obliges them to go into a dark room by themselves; this will accustom them to the Dark, without their having any of those foolish Fears; nothing is immaterial in Education, or to be neglected – they played at it very well for more than an Hour.’

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64 M to W, 13 July 1795, Fisher.
65 In pre-Revolutionary France, it was customary for aristocratic mothers to farm out their children to wet nurses at birth, and the children were often not readmitted into the family until the age of five or six, being considered an impediment to their mother’s social life. Madame de Genlis herself followed this practice on the birth of her eldest daughter, but not with her subsequent children. It was one of the practices she strongly criticised in her writings.
66 M to W, 1796 or 1797, Fisher.
67 Ibid.
Night games are specifically mentioned by Madame de Genlis— who acknowledges that the idea came from Rousseau— to rid children of their irrational fear of the dark. The final words of Margaret's letter— 'the Theatre Gymnastique is much wanted in this weather'— leaves us in no doubt as to the source of her inspiration. As will be seen from Margaret's education journal, the 'gymnasium' at Gillwell was equipped in exactly the same way as the Baronne d'Almane's.

The only other letters to shed light on the children's education, and which were written before Margaret Chinnery's Journal commenced in 1801, were two from Viotti in Schönfeld (near Hamburg), where he spent about three years in exile after his expulsion from England. The first was dated 18 June 1798, and was addressed to the youngest Chinnery child, Walter, at Gillwell:

Schönfeldz, ce 18 juin 1798.

A Master Walter Chinnery

Je suppose, mon cher Walter, que vous vous conduisez comme un grand garçon, que vous lisez maintenant dans de grands livres, que vous comptés bien, vous sautez bien et que vous faites bien toutes vos affairs avec maman et mamselle.

Comme je crois tout cela, il est juste que je vous donne aussi une preuve de mon estime, et c'est pourquoi je vous écris cette lettre. J'espère qu'elle vous fera plaisir, et quand maman m'écrira que vous continuez à être bien bon je vous en écrirai une autre. Il faut mon cher Walter que vous ayez bien soin de votre jardin, que vous y plantiez des fleurs pour avoir de quoi me donner un joli bouquet à mon retour.

Avés vous soin de votre violon? Il faut le bien conserver, votre frère George aussi, afin que votre amico puisse vous montrer. Dites à mamselle que je me rappelle bien d'elle, embrassés papa et maman pour moi, et aïnés moi toujours de tout votre cœur.

Votre amico: Viotti

(Viotti to Walter Chinnery, 18 June 1798, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 145)

The whole letter revolves around Walter's education. Walter was just five years old at the time. The influence of Madame de Genlis's ideas are in evidence in the first sentence, where Viotti asks Walter about his reading and arithmetic lessons, and about his physical exercises. The 'mamselle' referred to in this letter is Mademoiselle Virginie Lorraine, the French governess who lived with the Chinnerys at Gillwell House and who helped Margaret carry out her educational regime. She figures regularly in

68 Adèle et Théodore, vol. 1, p. 65.
Margaret Chinnery's Journal, and keeps an education journal of her own. The influence of Adèle et Théodore can also be seen in the reference to Walter's tending his own small garden bed. The Chinnery children, like Adèle and Théodore, had a gardener to help them and to give them some simple instruction in botany. It is also evident from the letter that both Walter and George were taking violin lessons from Viotti.

Later the same year, Viotti writes again from Schönfeld to Walter's sister Caroline, then seven years old. Again the focus of the letter is on education, this time Caroline's musical education:

Schönfeld, ce 8 Octobre 1798

Ma chère Caroline
J’étais justement occupé à composer de très jolies petites sonates de Pianoforte pour vous, avec un accompagnement de Violon, lorsqu’une lettre de votre chère Maman m’a appris que vous négligez beaucoup la Musique. Cette nouvelle m’a d’autant plus mis au désespoir, que Maman ajoute que c’est votre humeur qui vous empêche de faire des progrès!
Comme je suis sur que tout cela ne peut durer que quelques moments, que vous redeviendrez promptement aussi douce, aussi aimable que vous l’avez été, je continuerai à composer pour vous, et je finirai les sonates afin qu’à mon retour vous me les jouiez très bien et que je puisse avoir le plaisir de vous les accompagner. je vous les enverrai aussitôt que j’apprendrai de votre chère et si bonne Maman, que vous avez repris votre gout pour la Musique, pour ce bel art si agréable, et qui fait tant de plaisir à tout le monde.
Adieu ma chère Caroline, embrassez votre petit Walter de ma part, rappellez moi au souvenir de Mamselle, et parlez de moi souvent avec votre excellente Maman et votre bon Papa. J’espère que bientôt j’apprendrai que vous meritez toujours toute l’estime et toute l’amitié de l’Amico.

J. B. Viotti
Votre lettre me fait bien plaisir, et je vous en remercie.
(Vo C, 8 October 1798, in ‘Viotti Papers’, RCM)

The two main points to emerge from this letter are the importance of music in Caroline’s education, and Margaret’s insistence on Caroline’s obedience. It is evident that the rigorous methods that Margaret Chinnery applied to her daughter’s later musical

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69 Not to be found in the CFP collection.
70 These appear to have been discontinued when the boys were older. No mention is made of them in Margaret’s Journal.
education were also applied from the age of seven, and that Viotti, even then, was helping Margaret to enforce discipline, by applying Madame de Genlis’s method of giving rewards for good behaviour. Viotti has been composing some short piano sonatas especially for Caroline, but will not send them until he has heard from her mother that her behaviour has improved.

Viotti’s input into the Chinnery children’s musical education – especially Caroline’s – was considerable. But equally important was his contribution to their general education. Margaret’s dependence on his help in this domain was so great that he might fairly be termed her assistant. His influence is detectable from the time of the children’s earliest childhood to their adolescent years. Viotti’s qualifications for the role of educator were not inconsiderable. His own education had been taken care of by Prince Alfonso dal Pozzo della Cisterna who presumably had him taught all that a young musician who was to live in the company of kings and princes was required to know. Not only was he made conversant with social etiquette, but he was apparently given the then mandatory grounding in classical studies, as attested by the frequent allusions to classical mythology in his letters.

(vi) The influence of Madame de Genlis's method on the education of the Chinnery children as seen from Margaret Chinnery's Journal

Margaret Chinnery's education journal gives a comprehensive account of her children's lessons and activities at Gillwell from April 1801 to January 1808. Written sometimes in French, sometimes in English, the Journal is kept fairly regularly, but there are some gaps of a few months' duration, usually caused by illness. One particularly long one, from May 1805 to January 1807, was due to Margaret's ill health; another, from November 1802 to April 1803, to the death of Walter Chinnery and the subsequent period of mourning. A third, from August to December 1807, was clearly caused by the disruption that Casimir Baecker inflicted on the normally peaceful Chinnery household, when he stayed at Gillwell during that period. On the birthday of each of her children Margaret draws up, following the example of the Baronne d'Almane in *Adèle et Théodore*, a list of books that have been read and pieces of music studied, writes a report on each child's individual character, and records their physical development.

Margaret Chinnery's Journal fulfils the same purpose as the one kept by Madame de Genlis for the education of the Orléans children. Madame de Genlis states that the aim of keeping a journal is to enable the educator to 'faire connoître le caractère, l'esprit, les défauts, les vertus, et les inclinations naturelles' of her pupils. She includes in it 'de petits détails minutieux et des leçons sur la politesse, les usages du monde'. In Margaret Chinnery's Journal we find all the above elements, including criticism of bad behaviour and praise of good; correction of the children's manners, speech, deportment and treatment of servants; lessons on morals, manners and social etiquette, as well as on a variety of other subjects. Madame de Genlis undertook to record with 'exacte vérité' her pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Margaret Chinnery did the same: 'I have engaged to write down the merits and demerits of both, and shall be faithful to my engagement.' Much of Madame de Genlis's terminology is also borrowed by Margaret Chinnery - 'cours de lectures', 'connaissances acquises', 'caractères et dispositions naturelles', and 'la force physique'.

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72 See Part II, Chapter 2.
Margaret Chinnery's Journal proper — that is, her continuous record of the children's behaviour — begins in 1803, on the twins' twelfth birthday. At twelve — the age at which children were generally deemed to have attained the age of reason (usually after their first Communion) — Madame de Genlis and Margaret Chinnery both believed that children should begin to reflect on their lives and be accountable for their actions. The first entry in Margaret Chinnery's Journal is addressed to her children and takes the form of an explanation of her intention. It contains a long description of her hopes and aspirations for them. The entry covers four closely written pages. She begins:

My dear children!
You have completed your 12th year, — the thoughtless happy period of your infancy is past! — and you now enter upon the most important portion of your existence. All the happiness and success of your future lives will depend on the use you make of a few ensuing years. Would you be pious, wise and good? — Begin to reflect, examine the secret springs of your routines and actions, regulate them by the rule and precept of the Gospel, call yourselves to a strict daily account, and keep your own hearts in diligence and truth. Would you acquire knowledge, and adorn your minds with solid, useful, valuable information, and instruction? Waste not a moment. The next six or seven years well employed, will put you in possession of these advantages, but if illness or neglect should intrude, the mischief never can be repaired by after assiduity. In order to assist you in forming your mind and manners, I will write my daily observations on your conduct, or at least whenever any thing sufficiently remarkable shall occur and the account shall be read aloud by me of you the following morning at breakfast. This book shall be carefully preserved as long as I live; should it prove, as I trust it will, a monument of your worth and merit, at my death I shall bequeath it to your children if either of you should be blest with any.

There follows a fond look into an optimistic future — all too tragically denied her — in which is envisaged her grandchildren's delight in reading the journal, and of her own pleasure in perusing it in her old age. She continues:

To you it belongs my children to realize this lovely vision. — Be studious, be careful, labour more, that we may all reap hereafter. But let me again repeat, that there is no time to lose — every moment is however precious. You well know upon what authority I assert that for every one, you will be accountable[...]

The Chinnery children – fresh from their trip to Paris and their frequent visits to Madame de Genlis’s abode at the Arsenal – are only too aware of whom Margaret is speaking when she reminds them of her mentor’s most famous precept concerning the gainful employment of time. Margaret’s object in keeping the Journal is now stated:

This book is meant to convey to you my remarks on your daily conduct; your progress in piety, learning benevolence, and general politeness, will be noticed, as well as your deficiency in any of these particulars. Where you have omitted a duty, an attention towards anyone, an opportunity of showing goodness of heart, you will here be reminded of it the following morning. Where you have performed these duties imperfectly, I shall endeavour as far as I am able to shew you how you might have done better. Every instance of idleness and neglect will be criticised; every proof of attention, and consequent improvement will here receive its due share of applause. My object in this undertaking is to form your heart, mind, and manners, by obliging you to keep an attentive eye, on your own conduct, from the persuasion that you will be vigilantly observed during every instant of your existence, whether alone or in company, at work or at play, at home or abroad. Time is now before us, and my hopes and affection will almost always get the start of my reason when I venture to look forward; — through the veil of future years.

I see George the pride of his parents, distinguished for his excellent qualities, uniting gentleness to manly firmness, universal and profound learning to modesty; — religious, without display or ostentation, amiable, animated, and eloquently polite, without affectation; beloved by his friends, adored by his family, and obtaining the esteem and applause of his country for his useful and valuable services.

On the other hand I see Caroline, under the safe and grateful shelter of the parental roof, equal in temper, pious, gentle, unoffending, and pleasing in manner, well informed — having a taste for useful and elegant pursuits, and dispensing good of every kind to all around her.

You, my children, have it in your power to realise these fairy projects; the future is all your own; and God grant that you may so employ it, as to obtain real, and solid happiness in this life, and an eternal crown of glory in that which is to ensue.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 3 September 1803)

The influence of Madame de Genlis on this piece of writing is evident at every turn. There is the same preoccupation with the wise use of time, and the same emphasis on piety and on the future benefits to be gained from a solid education. Margaret Chinnery’s words ‘my object in this undertaking is to form your heart, mind, and manners’ resound with the echo of her mentor’s voice — heard only ten months earlier —
proclaiming that a good educator should aim to ‘former le cœur et l'esprit’76 The Chinnery children are also told, as were the d’Almane children, that they would be constantly and vigilantly observed, that none of their actions would go unnoticed. Margaret’s warning ‘where you have omitted a duty, an attention towards anyone, an opportunity of showing goodness of heart, you will here be reminded of it the following morning’ could have been lifted straight out of the Comte de Roseville’s letter to the Baron d’Almane, in which he says that he keeps a detailed journal where he notes any bad behaviour of his pupil: ‘je compte dans ce nombre toutes les occasions perdues ou négligées de faire une bonne action, ou de dire une chose obligeante.’77

Of the three months Viotti and the Chinnerys had spent in Paris in the autumn of the previous year, a large part was spent with Madame de Genlis, forging a bond that was to last for the next twenty-three years.78 While Margaret had been until 1802 an admirer of Madame de Genlis from afar, she was now a close personal friend, and had returned from Paris laden with gifts of her mentor’s books and manuscripts. Naturally, Madame de Genlis’s influence over the Chinnery children’s education was now further strengthened.

The regulation of every hour and minute of the day was enforced by Margaret Chinnery at Gillwell just as strictly as it had been by Madame de Genlis at Bellechasse. There are numerous instances in Margaret’s Journal of reprimanding of the children for wasting time:

Since Caroline finished her carpet work, I observe that many leisure moments are lost; and that five or ten minutes are frequently passed in total idleness; this is a pity [..]

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. I, 17 October 1803)

How is it possible that with such good dispositions George should have wasted 18 minutes this morning!.. He was 20 minutes putting on his boots and spencer to go out on horseback and certainly two would have been sufficient.

(Ibid, 18 November 1804)

To-day George and Caroline were half an hour at lunch. This is longer by half than they need have been.

(Ibid, 23 September 1804)

76 Leçons d’une gouvernante, vol. 2, p. 484.
77 Adèle et Théodore, vol. 1, p. 271.
78 See Part II, Chapter 2 for an account of the Chinnerys’ activities in Paris in 1802 and the ongoing correspondence between the two women.
Even on holidays, the children were required to keep to this rule. After a long journey to Brighton in 1804, Margaret wrote:

I am surprised that two persons who know the value of time as well as George and Caroline should have passed their whole evening in perfect idleness! When people come in from a long and fatiguing journey, they may perhaps not feel disposed to do any thing; but what fatigue have they undergone to day? From dinner till bed time they neither of them employed a single minute of time! Now what advantage has Caroline derived from reading Madame de Genlis's calculations upon the loss and gain of time? Certainly none, and in that case she had better return me the book. I could not have thought such a circumstance possible with either of them.

(Ibid., 20 September 1804)

In her journal entry of 7 September 1804, Margaret had written of one of Madame de Genlis's books that she had given to Caroline to read:

I have put into her hands a most valuable book written by our beloved and highly esteemed friend! Such a book must of course be read with profit and delight by those who have not had the good fortune to know the author personally, who are neither honoured by her affection or friendship as we are. What then must be the effects on you my dear Caroline? You who in each line will recall her look and voice, and think she is addressing herself directly to you, and you alone in sweet familiar conversation.

(Ibid., 7 September 1804)

The work in question dealt – as did so many of Madame de Genlis’s children’s books – with the useful employment of time. Since this was one of Madame de Genlis’s pet precepts, and one that ran like a leitmotif through her works, it is difficult to tell which one Margaret was referring to. Madame de Genlis did publish a book entitled De l’Emploi du temps, but not until 1824, and it was, in any case, largely a reiteration of educational precepts already elaborated in previous works. Of her works published before 1804, the one most likely to fit the above description is the Herbier moral, which was republished by Moutardier in Paris in 1801, and which Madame de Genlis had made the Chinnery children a present of in 1802.

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80 See below (p. 343).
Further examples of Madame de Genlis's precepts are to be found throughout Margaret Chinnery's Journal. As far as the first principle of education was concerned (that of 'forming the heart'), numerous similarities between Madame de Genlis's writings and entries in Margaret's Journal can be observed. Madame de Genlis wanted children to be demonstrative in their affection for friends, and most importantly, family. In her *Leçons d'une gouvernante* she reproached the young Orléans princes for not enquiring after her health when she was ill ('Ce matin vous m'avez dit bonjour; mais vous m'avez laissée hier malade, & vous auriez dû me demander si j'avais un peu dormi, si j'avais encore mal à la tête'). Margaret Chinnery upbraided her daughter Caroline for the same fault at the time of Madame Vigée-Lebrun’s visit:

She [Caroline] enquired after my health this morning with much absence of mind, and since has not made any enquiry, tho' I was very ill in the night, and passed it without getting any rest. When Madame Lebrun saw me this morning she made a variety of enquiries, thought I looked unwell &c&c. Politeness alone would dictate these attentions. What then should not filial affection have dictated to Caroline? — My maid has asked after my health every time she has seen me. Neglect of this kind is odious and disgusting.

(Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. I, 8 September 1803)

Like Madame de Genlis, Margaret also wanted Caroline to show sisterly affection for her brother. She was unhappy with Caroline’s response to her brother’s asking her pardon for a small misdeemour during their lesson:

But upon his asking Caroline to pardon him after the lesson was over, I wondered she was not inclined in reply to throw her arms round his neck. How could one answer a brother soliciting for pardon in any other manner? [...] The demonstration of tenderness and affection give a charm to life, with which you are but little acquainted.

(Ibid., 3 October 1803)

On other occasions she praised Caroline for her demonstration of affection: 'I was pleased to see her share her brother’s mortification this evening with so much feeling
She was delighted with George's consideration for his sister when he made her a gift of a small table on which he laid out all her prayer books:

This attention my dear George towards your sister has caused me some of the most delightful sensations I ever experienced! —Yes! my ardent prayer for your welfare will be granted. You will love another most tenderly, — you will mutually encourage each other in every thing that is good, and virtuous, and noble!

(Ibid., 12 November 1803)

As well as showing tender affection for siblings and parents, children should, according to Madame de Genlis, open their hearts to their parents on all matters, holding nothing back. The Baron d'Almane writes of his son Théodore:

Théodore n’aura plus de confiance en un autre qu’en moi. Accoutumé dès l’enfance à ne me rien cacher, à me tout dire, ce sentiment est devenu pour lui un besoin véritable; élevé par moi dès le berceau, il n’a que les opinions & les principes que je lui ai donnés; par conséquent nous aurons toujours une grande conformité de caractère, & une manière à-peu-près semblables d’envisager & de juger des choses.

(Adèle et Théodore, vol. 2, p. 376)

Margaret Chinnery also wanted her children’s complete confidence. She criticised them for speaking with frankness to their friends, but with reserve to her. Like Madame de Genlis, she speaks of ‘forming’ her children:

Just the reverse should be the case. They are always in safety with me, their hearts should then be on their lips, they might then indulge in the delightful liberty of speaking every thought just as it arrives; what could they have to fear in letting me read in their hearts without disguise, or preparation? I have formed them [twice underlined]. I already know every thought, its principle, its [composition?] [...] Nothing can be so delightful as this security, no intercourse can have charms equal to such an intercourse.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, op. cit., vol. 1, 16 March 1805)

It was not always an easy matter to shape her children in the way she desired. One of Madame de Genlis’s main concerns was that the child should submit completely
and unquestioningly to the will of his educator. She even went so far as to threaten to deny the child her love if he did not obey. For example, the Baronne d'Almane threatened to withdraw her affection from Adèle when she behaved badly towards her governess, saying ‘Si vous n'étiez point un enfant, vous auriez perdu aujourd'hui pour jamais sa tendresse et la mienne.’

At the age of thirteen Caroline displayed what would today be seen as normal early-adolescent behaviour. She was stubborn. She had two ingrained habits that Margaret wanted corrected. The first was her lazy posture, the second the incorrect way she held her hands while playing the piano. In exasperation, Margaret ended up denying her daughter her love until she had obeyed her orders:

She evidently takes not the least pains about it; this is so undutiful and so unamiable in every sense of the word, that I do not think her entitled to any demonstration of affection from me while it lasts. Thus does she destroy the sweetness and happiness of her own life and mine, rather than devote her constant and unremitting attention to a point upon which I do and shall insist! [...] I know it is difficult to conquer an old habit but I require it, and she should submit.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, op. cit., vol. 1, 4 December 1804)

Margaret was all the more frustrated by Caroline’s lack of co-operation in these matters, since she believed, like Madame de Genlis, that stubborn behaviour indicated a lack of self-discipline. Madame de Genlis claimed that teaching one’s charges to practise self-control (‘donner à son élève de l’empire sur lui-même’) was one of the most important principles that an educator could instil in a pupil, and that it could be learned by habit. Margaret wrote of Caroline: ‘Is she dispensed from the duty of keeping watch over herself? – She forgets that she must be her own keeper, and is now of an age to be accountable for her conduct.’ A little later in the same year, on the occasion of a piano practice during which Caroline had not succeeded in correcting a stiff thumb:

Virtuous conduct is not an affair of theory, but of daily practice, and requires that we should watch ourselves [...] The worst part of this story is, that Caroline has not self-

83 Adèle et Théodore, vol. 1, p. 255.
84 Ibid., p. 99.
85 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, op. cit., vol. 1, 5 October 1803.
command & perseverance sufficient to do honour to her master on this condition! She has ability and courage, and every natural quality that can be requisite, but the will to exert them constantly, here, here, brings the difficulty.  

(Ibid., 6 December 1803)

The Baronne d’Almane advised her friend the Vicomtesse that giving rewards and punishments helped to teach one’s charges the habit of self-control, but warned that it was still a difficult thing to obtain: ‘C’est un grand art que celui de promettre aux enfants des récompenses qui puissent les engager à s’observer avec ce soin & cette attention continuelle; c’est leur donner à la fois de l’empire sur eux-mêmes & de la persévérance [...]’ The reward offered to Caroline for compliance with her mother’s wishes on this point was her mother’s love. Madame de Genlis would have approved. As far as punishments went, Margaret Chinnery followed the advice of Madame d’Almane to the letter – for small misdemeanours the children were denied an outing in the carriage with their mother, for serious misbehaviour, such as rudeness or a falsehood, they were confined to their room for dinner and supper. Even the most severe punishment was to be accepted with docile obedience.

When Margaret believed that Caroline was being deliberately intransigent, she forbade her even to come into her study. The effect that such a separation had on Caroline may be seen in her outpouring of grief, written in French, apparently at the age of twelve or thirteen, when Margaret’s Journal indicates that she was most dissatisfied with her behaviour. The single sheet containing these pleas for forgiveness appears to be a letter addressed to her mother, and is enclosed in her 1809 Journal, which also records Caroline’s unhappiness. The letter begins ‘Ah ma chère Maman que je suis malheureux [sic]. Vous ne me permettez pas de vous voir [...]’ Caroline admits her fault, and will try to make amends, saying that without her mother’s love it is impossible for her to be happy. She ends with a plea to be at least allowed to say good night: ‘J’espère en votre bonté – tendre Maman – Vous daignerez me permettre de vous dire un bon soir!!!’ But such quarrels were quickly patched up, and did not seem to have any lasting ill-effect.

Madame de Genlis did not suffer her royal pupils to complain of minor health ailments. This constituted a weakness of character, especially in boys: ‘Le Duc de

87 Letter (c.1803) in Caroline Chinnery’s Journal (1809), PM 94/143/1 – 22.
88 Ibid.
Chartres est enrhumé [...] mais il a passé toute la journée dans une totale inaction. [...] Cette apathie pour une incommodité très-légère, est réellement honteuse, sur-tout pour un homme. Margaret Chinnery was of the same opinion: ‘She [Caroline] behaved well about her indisposition at Church, and discovered no childish weakness by talking of it unnecessarily, but took her lesson as usual.’

This same sentiment is to be found in *Adèle et Théodore*, when the Baron d’Almane undertakes to toughen up his children by having them endure uncomfortable travelling conditions, hard beds and even sea-sickness without complaint. He declares that their trip to Italy ‘achevera entièrement d’aguerrir nos enfants sur [...] les mauvaises gîtes.’ On the subject of uncomfortable beds, Margaret is just as rigorous: ‘George rode from London to Brighton excepting the last stage. He did not like his bed at Ryegate; I am sorry he should have thought it worth his while to attend to such a trifle; a man must be contemptibly effeminate who could not sleep as well upon clean straw with his clothes on, as upon the best bed in the world.’

Shyness was another weakness to be overcome, especially in men. Madame de Genlis wrote of her eldest pupil, Louis-Philippe: ‘M. le Duc de Chartres m’a fait les promesses les plus formelles de vaincre sa timidité.’ Margaret took George to task for his hesitancy to give her a satisfactory explanation for his not following her instructions at dinner the previous evening, when she was absent: ‘[...] but his not explaining the cause of it, or being able to give any answer, arose I fear from timidity and embarrassment, of all failings the most unfortunate and disadvantageous for a man.’

The teaching of good manners was naturally an important part of Madame de Genlis’s and Margaret Chinnery’s education scheme. One of the strictest habits that an educator had to enforce in his pupils was that of showing respect for his teachers, and sincere gratitude to any person who was involved in their education: ‘Il est essentiel d’accoutumer les enfants à traiter tous leurs Maîtres, non-seulement avec politesse, mais avec respect, car il faut leur persuader qu’ils doivent de la reconnaissance à toute personne qui leur donne une connaissance utile ou un talent agréable.’

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89 *Leçons d’une gouvernante*, vol. 1, p. 69.
90 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 4 September 1803.
92 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 2 October 1803.
93 *Leçons d’une gouvernante*, vol. 1, p. 32.
94 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 9 October 1803.
95 *Adèle et Théodore*, vol. 1, p. 200.
Chinnery, in accordance with this precept, reproached George for showing a lack of respect for his tutor, Herr Trumpf: ‘It would be impolite towards anyone, but towards Mr Trumpf, it is much more as George must never forget that independant of his personal merit, his situation here entitles him to his peculiar respect.’

Religion was every bit as much a part of daily life at Gillwell as it was at the d’Almanes. Margaret Chinnery did not want her children merely to observe formally the precepts of the Christian religion, but to act them out in their everyday lives: ‘Remember that religion is not meant to be kept apart from the events of life, and separated from all our daily occurrences, but that on the contrary it should be blended with them all.’ Good deeds were considered in the Chinnery family, as they were in the d’Almane family, as proof of a kind heart. Margaret encouraged Caroline, as the Baronne d’Almane did Adèle, to take an interest in those who were less fortunate than themselves, and praised her when she did so: ‘Caroline interested herself very much to day in the fate of the poor women whose husbands were lately drowned. She was active and persevering in endeavouring to find them out, and her whole conduct upon this subject all the day has evinced the goodness of her heart.’

In giving Adèle pocket money, Madame d’Almane always asked her to keep some aside to give to the poor. Margaret Chinnery did the same. She was pleased when Caroline (then aged sixteen), of her own initiative, managed to save enough of her pocket money to procure some small items for an unfortunate local widow who had lost her children:

In losing her children she has also lost the assistance they afforded her and as the selling of lemons in Waltham Abbey is not a very profitable trade, this poor old woman was in a melancholy situation. Caroline, whose income is not very splendid, who has never yet had more than a guinea a month to supply herself with shoes, gloves ribbons, threads &c &c contrived to economise enough of her allowance to purchase a little stock of threads, cottons, pins, needles and other articles of a similar sort. This was very estimable on her part, because it discovers not only a heart inclined to good actions, but a head also capable of directing them.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, op. cit., vol. 2, 12 January 1807)

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96 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, op. cit., vol. 1, 30 November 1804.
97 Ibid., 4 September 1803.
98 Ibid., 23 October 1803.
The d'Almane family looked after a poor peasant woman named Nicole. The Chinnery family helped provide for an elderly widow named Mrs Fuller. When the latter died Margaret took her daughter Sukey into her home for a short while. Sukey became Caroline's pupil: 'I was pleased to see Caroline's attention to Sukey Fuller this afternoon in teaching her to write. In devoting a few of her leisure moments to the procuring of some valuable advantages to this little girl, she is doing that which is pleasing to the Almighty'.  

Adèle d'Almane also had a young pupil whom she taught to write.

As the children grew older, lessons on how to behave in society figured more prominently in Margaret's Journal. Just as Madame de Genlis reproached the Duc de Chartres for his stiffness in the company of people he did not know well ('vous êtes trop taciturne & trop froid avec les gens que vous connoissez peu'), so Margaret Chinnery reprimanded George for his silence in company: 'silence in him, that is dull and inactive silence, is a fault of very considerable magnitude. In a young woman it may be mistaken for modesty; in a young man it will inevitably be deemed stupidity. Modesty was a virtue that Margaret, like Madame de Genlis, continued to emphasise from the beginning to the end of her children's education. She believed that 'no information or instruction can compensate want of modesty, submission, diffidence, and gentleness' and reproached George for adopting a superior tone with the servants: 'I must again remind him of speaking harshly to the servants. Nothing can be more unbecoming his age.' At the end of six years of structured study George and Caroline were likely to have been much better-informed than their contemporaries, but Margaret was insistent that she did not want her children to display any foolish pedantry. Like Adèle and Théodore, they were to remain unaffected in their manners, and not allow their superior learning to turn their heads. On this point, Margaret was in agreement with the Baron d'Almane, who told his friend the Vicomte de Limours that he wanted to instil in Théodore 'un véritable dégoût pour la Pédanterie', and that 'plus une éducation est soignée, plus cette attention est nécessaire.'

99 Ibid., 24 January 1804.
100 Leçons d'une gouvernante, vol. 1, p. 2.
102 Ibid., vol. 1, 24 December 1803.
103 Ibid., 30 January, 1804.
In *Adèle et Théodore* the culmination of the children’s religious education is their first Communion at the age of twelve. This was the age at which the Baronne deemed them to be old enough to take responsibility for their own actions, and to be her friend and confidant. Margaret Chinnery, while sharing the Baronne’s opinion on the children’s supposed maturity at the age of twelve, waited four more years before letting George and Caroline take their first Communion. Nevertheless, the sentiments that Margaret expresses in her journal on this important milestone in the children’s education are almost the same as those of the Baronne d’Almane. The Baronne writes: ‘Car enfin, aussi-tôt que vous aurez fait votre première Communion, vous prendrez votre rang dans la société, je commencerai à vous regarder réellement comme mon amie [...]’,\(^\text{105}\) and ‘Vous allez devenir pour moi une société charmante, & la plus tendre de mes amies.’\(^\text{106}\) Margaret Chinnery’s words written on the day George and Caroline took their first Communion (Christmas Day 1807) are almost identical:

> They now really take their rank in society; become responsible for their own actions and conduct, and will I trust be the most delightful society to me [...] We shall I flatter myself forever be the tenderest and dearest of friends; [...] Have I not been labouring many years, in order to form two human beings according to my own ideas and principles, that I might possess two friends whom I would love and esteem with all the energy of my natural disposition?

*(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 25 December 1807)*

Thus in form, content, language and purpose Margaret Chinnery’s Journal was closely modelled on Madame de Genlis’s.

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(vii) Margaret Chinnery’s pedagogical method according to her ‘plans de journée’ and her yearly progress reports, 1801 – 1804

Included in Margaret’s Journal are her plans de journée and her yearly reports on the children’s progress in intellectual, physical and character development. Unfortunately, these cover only a four-year period (1801-1804), but make up in detail what they lack in scope. In the plans de journée the daily study programme is elaborated at length (two to four pages) in fluent, if not always perfect French. The notion of drawing up a daily study programme was one that was recommended in Adèle et Théodore. ‘Je prépare le matin ses études & l’instruction particulière du jour’, wrote the Comte de Roseville about his noble pupil. Margaret’s plans de journée are but few – one for 1801 (4 April), two for 1802 (30 January and 29 December), none for 1803, and one for 1804 (21 September), the last written specifically for the holiday period at Brighton. There is also a plan de journée for the second French governess Mademoiselle St Evay (c. 1804). Variations in the planned programme caused by the visits of the different masters are also given in careful detail.

Like Madame de Genlis, Margaret Chinnery took on the additional responsibility of educating several relatives’ children. At the beginning of 1802 she had six children in her charge: her own three; the children’s cousin Matilda Chinnery (daughter of William Chinnery’s brother John Terry, then living in India), who had arrived by ship from India the previous year, aged three;108 ’little Margaret’ Chinnery (William’s very young step-sister by his father’s second marriage, who appears to be about the same age or a little younger than Matilda); and a surname-less relative[?] named Maria, who was about two years older than the Chinnery twins.109

The subjects that the Chinnery children studied up to the age of twelve are enumerated in the plans de journée. The earliest is dated 4 April 1801, when the twins are ten years old, Walter eight, Matilda – newly arrived in England – three, and too young to be included in any of the educational activities described, and Maria about

107 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 271.
108 Welply (op. cit., 1927, p. 77), says that the London Chronicle announced her arrival ‘in the last fleet from India’ in March 1801. An undated letter from Margaret to her daughter Caroline (M to C, c. March 1801, Fisher), in which she says ‘Matilda is quite well and sends you her love’, seems to date from this time.
109 The only Maria whose name frequently recurs in the Chinnery letters is Maria Staniforth. In the above letter to Caroline Margaret also sends her love to Maria, ‘who is very dear to me, when she conducts herself according to her age’ (M to C, c. March 1801, Fisher).
twelve. In this account of the day's activities can be seen all the elements of an *Adèle et Théodore*-style day.

Plan de journée donné ce 4 Avril 1801

Avant le déjeuner, les enfants se leveront à six heures. Si tôt le temps le permettra, les exercices du corps seront faits dans le jardin, où les enfants répéteront aussi leur Chronologie, et compteront en se promenant; après quoi quand le temps est assez beau ils travailleront à leurs jardins, jusqu'à l'heure du déjeuner. Quand il fera humide ou mauvais ils rentrèrent, et depuis 7 & demi jusqu'à 8 ils s'occuperont une demi heure; Caroline à étudier des traits au piano, George, Walter & Maria à faire des calculs, mais tous séparément. — Dejeuner à 8 heures —


Depuis le diner jusqu'à l'heure de se coucher.

Je veux que nous ayons diné à 4 heures. Récréation jusqu'à 5. Quand le temps permettra de le passer dans les jardins, le jardinier les accompagnera trois fois par
semaine, pendant une demie heure; ils apprendront de lui les noms des arbres, des plantes, & des fleurs; ils écriront ensuite les noms qu’ils ont appris sur un livre, & le soir je m’engage à leur lire quelques détails sur ces arbres ou plantes d’un livre d’histoire naturelle. Depuis 5 jusqu’à 6 leçon de Piano, & de chant pour Caroline; en attendant George et Walter mettront au net leurs exercices du matin; mais comme souvent cela ne remplira pas l’heure, ils s’occuperont des calculs, ou des estampes historiques, ou de la Mythologie jusqu’à 6 heures. Alors, jusqu’à 6 heures et demie je leur donnerai une leçon tous ensemble, ou d’histoire Romaine, ou de Mythologie, ou d’instruction religieuse alternativement. La course nous conduira à 7 heures. — Depuis 7 heures jusqu’à 8 heures, lecture agréable, de contes, ou de traités d’histoire, & la conversation. A 8 heures le souper, et à 8 1/2 ils iront se coucher.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 4 April 1801)

All the hallmarks of Madame de Genlis’s method are there: from the early morning start, to the subjects studied in the morning, the afternoon and the evening, right down to the hour of bed-time. There is the same attention to punctuality, the same economy of even minutes. Obvious similarities with Adèle and Théodore’s daily programme include rising at six, physical exercises, walk and tending the garden before breakfast; the study of history, arithmetic, music, grammar, foreign languages and geography. There is the same use of pictures to teach history (les estampes historiques) and of maps (which are prepared in advance for the lesson) to teach geography. Like the d’Almane children, the young Chinnerys have religious instruction, learn classical history and mythology, study natural history and take drawing lessons. The Chinnery gardener, like the d’Almane gardener, gives simple instruction in botany. Like Théodore d’Almane, the Chinnery boys go horse-riding and play billiards. All the children do physical exercises and play recreational games, as recommended by Madame de Genlis. The less formal evening activities of reading stories and conversing are the same as in the d’Almane household.

Immediately following the plan de journée for 4 April 1801 is a timetable for Saturdays and another for Sundays, showing Margaret’s determination not to allow her strict daily routine to be disrupted by the lessons of visiting tutors. The Saturday

\[\text{\textsuperscript{111} See p. 310.}\]
programme is headed ‘Variations pour le samedi à cause de M. Celli [the drawing master]’\textsuperscript{112} et la leçon de Dessin’, and is as follows:

Jusqu’à 9 heures et demie les Études à l’ordinaire. À 9\(\frac{1}{2}\) ils feront cette demie heure d’étude avec Mamselle, ou d’histoire, ou de géographie. Depuis 10 heures jusqu’à 11 lecture avec moi; Walter apprenant sa leçon et lisant avec l’Amico. Récréation jusqu’à Midi.

À midi un quart, la composition et prélude pour Caroline, et la Récitation pour mes fils avec moi. — jusqu’à 1 heure et un quart; alors l’exercice des hottes qui nous conduira à l’arrivée de M. Celli.

Comme nous ne pouvons diner le samedi qu’à 3\(\frac{1}{2}\), la récréation ne finira qu’a cinq & demie. Alors je donnerai leçon de Piano comme à l’ordinaire au cas que M. Bianchi ne vient pas; s’il vient Caroline prendra leçon de composition; mes fils faisaient [sic] comme les autres jours. La course à 7 heures ces jours là. Quand nous pourrons, nous ferons aussi notre lecture d’amusement le samedi soir, mais cela sera souvent dérangée; par exemple quand M. Bianchi viendra ce sera impossible.

À l’égard du Dimanche, il est impossible de suivre le même plan, à cause de l’incertitude des leçons de M. Bianchi, et des jours où nous pourrions aller à l’église. Lorsque M. Bianchi sera ici, et que nous puissions aller à l’église, la journée sera parfaitement remplie avec les exercices du corps & une instruction religieuse l’après diner; pendant la leçon de M. Bianchi (thorough bass, & Composition) Papa fait calculer ses fils & Maria tous les Dimanches. Quand M. Bianchi ne vienne pas, Caroline calculera aussi avec son père, & je donnerai leçon de Piano, et de chant. (Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, ‘Plan de journée’, 4 April 1801)

From these Journal entries can be formed a list of Margaret Chinnery’s support staff. The children appear to have had two French governesses, Mademoiselle St Evay for the younger pupils, and Mademoiselle Virginie Lorraine for the older ones. One of the latter’s many functions was to speak French (and Italian) to the children, just as the d’Almanes’ governess, Miss Bridget, spoke English to her charges. The Chinnerys, like the d’Almanes, employed various tutors, among whom were the Italian drawing master M. Celli, (the d’Almane’s drawing master Dainville was also Italian) and Caroline’s

\textsuperscript{112} There is an A. Celli who is described in the \textit{Dictionnaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs} (E. Bénézet, ed., Librairie Grund: Paris, 1976, vol. 2, p. 617) simply as ‘peintre à Londres où il exposa entre 1808 et 1812 à la British Institution. (Ec. Ang.’) There is a letter in Italian from A. Celli to Margaret in the Fisher collection in which he hopes that their ‘little dispute’ will be of no consequence. On the reverse are lists of figures – presumably sums owing to him for tuition.
music theory teacher, Viotti’s friend and King’s Theatre composer Francesco Bianchi. Other tutors who were drawn from Viotti’s musical circle of acquaintance at the King’s Theatre were the dancing masters Joubert, Giroux and Boisgérard, all members of the King’s Theatre ballet corps (in 1801-1802, 1802-1804 and 1804-1807 respectively). The renowned harpist Dizi taught Caroline to play the harp, one of Madame de Genlis’s favourite instruments. In addition, George and Walter, like Madame de Genlis’s royal princes, had an instructor in military exercises, a certain Mr Daniels. These exercises included fencing, sabre handling and rifle shooting.

Viotti himself was indispensable to Margaret’s education programme. From the plan de journée of 4 April 1801, for example, we learn that while Caroline was doing her piano practice from 8.30 am to 9.30 am ‘Amico’ read with Walter. Viotti regularly assisted with Walter’s lessons, and whenever Margaret went to London (usually for medical appointments) Viotti took charge of the lessons and reported to her by letter. His letter of 20 May 1801 began with a report on the children’s conduct, according to the journal kept by the children’s governess. Viotti had clearly been given instructions to read it at breakfast in Margaret’s absence: ‘Tout s’est très bien passé hier, chère Amica, le journal que j’ai lu en toutes les formes et regles à déjeuner étoit bon et satisfaisant; je me flatte que celui d’aujourd’hui ne sera pas moins bon.’ When Margaret was seriously ill from mid-February to mid-April 1802, Viotti took charge of all the lessons: ‘While my life was in danger or my sufferings very great, education was little thought of – but when there was a promise of recovery, our good Amico began to attend to the children’s studies occasionally as time permitted; and during the last three or four weeks he presided regularly, and they pursued in some sort, their usual plan of studies. They read to him of a morning, but the evening lecture [in the French sense of ‘reading’] was omitted.’ Viotti, like Mademoiselle Lorraine, also shared in the responsibility of disciplining the children.

On Sundays, Margaret put her husband’s accounting skills to work, and William gave arithmetic lessons to Maria and the boys while Caroline took her lesson with M. Bianchi. Sunday was also the day for religious instruction, the pivotal part of Madame

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113 See W.C. Smith, op. cit., passim.
114 V to M, 20 May 1801, PM 94/143/1 – 2/25.
115 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 4 May [1802].
de Genlis's and Margaret Chinnery's programme. The 'exercice de la hotte' mentioned in Saturday's programme is exactly the same exercise we find in *Adèle et Théodore*.116

The plans de journée of 30 January 1802 and 29 December 1802 contain the same lessons and activities as the ones enumerated in 1801, with the addition of several more of Madame de Genlis's ideas, such as the children's writing of 'extraits'. Margareta adopts the French word used by Madame de Genlis, translating it into English as 'extracts'. These were summaries that the Chinnery children, like the d'Almane children, were required to make of their readings. At the age of eleven the twins were capable of doing this. Walter, at nine, was too young, and instead of writing down his extracts, dictated them to Viotti. In the plan de journée of 30 January 1802 Margaret writes that 'Walter lira une demie heure avec l'Amico, et l'autre demie heure il dictera son extrait'.117 By April of the same year he was writing his extracts himself. Being able to write concise and fluent 'extracts' was a skill that Margaret Chinnery never stopped emphasising, even right through George's years at Oxford.

It is clear from these two plans de journée, as well as from the others, that Margaret had to do a lot of juggling to manage to adapt her programme to the different levels of aptitude of her various charges. While Margaret, like Madame de Genlis, taught most of the subjects herself, she had to rely on other trustworthy persons (such as Viotti and Mademoiselle Lorraine) to teach or supervise the lessons of the young ones if she was occupied with the older ones. Madame de Genlis in her writings on education seems to have skirted this very obvious difficulty of educating simultaneously many children of different ages, offering no advice on the matter except to say that no child was ever to be left in the care of a servant. It was because Walter was left so often in the care of Viotti, who did not speak English well, that he developed superior foreign language skills, even to the detriment of his English, as noted by Margaret on 22 April 1802 in her summary of Walter's achievements for the previous year:

Walter speaks both French & Italian more correctly than English. In speaking English he always uses foreign idioms. He writes French uncommonly well. Certainly no French boy of his age could write better. He is to begin from to-day to write his extracts in English, that he may learn to write his own language with the same facility. It was not from choice that I have hitherto suffered him to make a greater progress in the foreign

116 Discussed later in this chapter.
languages than in his own, but from necessity. Amico could correct his exercises in French, which assistance left me more time to bestow on the older children. The difference in age, occasions great additional trouble, and requires separate, and different lessons.

(Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, 22 April 1802)

In the plan de journée of 30 January 1802 we read of George's and Walter's recently commenced Latin lessons. George was then eleven, Walter nine. In Adèle et Théodore Madame de Genlis recommended the teaching of Latin to boys, but not before the age of twelve or thirteen. The reason Margaret Chinnery differed in this matter from her mentor was that her boys were destined for an Oxford education, for which a thorough knowledge of the classical languages was prerequisite. Margaret employed the local parish curate John Mullens, a recent Oxford graduate, to teach George and Walter Latin. On the day of the boys' first Latin lesson she wrote in her journal: 'Mr Mullens who has succeeded from Mr Colnett as Curate of Waltham Abbey, has this day given them their first Latin lesson. This is the best substitute I can find for a Tutor in the house, till one can be found. Mr Mullens engages to attend them twice a week.' A letter from John Mullens to Margaret Chinnery dated 16 June 1807, in which he says that he found George a very diligent and conscientious pupil, tallies with the opinion Madame Vigée-Lebrun gave of him in her Souvenirs: 'Je me souviens que le fils de madame Chinnery, quoiqu'il ne fût encore qu'un enfant, avait une véritable passion pour l'étude. On ne pouvait lui faire quitter ses livres. Quand, aux heures de récréation, je lui disais: "Allez donc jouer avec votre sœur, — Je joue", me répondit-il, et il continuait sa lecture.' Margaret herself wrote of George in 1801 that 'Il aime l'étude, et s'y applique avec régularité, autant je crois par gout que par raison.'

As in the 1801 plan de journée, Margaret in 1802 outlines the physical exercises to be done before breakfast, stressing that the children are to be out of doors as long as the weather permits. In inclement weather they are to use the gymnastic equipment in "le grand vestibule", play shuttlecock, do skipping or play billiards, all activities

119 John Mullens (1773-1834), B.A. (Exeter College) 1800, M.A. 1802. In addition to the letter cited below, there are various poems by him in the Yale collection.
120 Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, 18 January 1802.
121 John Mullens to Margaret Chinnery, 16 June 1807, Fisher.
recommended by Madame de Genlis in *Adèle et Théodore*. Even the technique of drawing ‘[d’]après la Bosse’\textsuperscript{124} that M. Celli uses with the Chinnery children is mentioned in *Adèle et Théodore*. Madame de Genlis writes: ‘un bon maître fait toujours dessiner ses élèves d’après la bosse et d’après la nature.’\textsuperscript{125}

In the 29 December 1802 plan de journée Margaret outlines an activity – not a lesson, she specifies – that the French governess is to do with the young ones: ‘Il faudrait tacher de leur faire entendre ce que c’est qu’une carte, leur faire faire des cartes des différentes chambres de la place, en regardant par la fenêtre &c &c.’\textsuperscript{126} With this exercise Margaret is clearly following the advice of Madame de Genlis who writes of accustoming children to calculating distances, quantities and proportions.\textsuperscript{127} Here, also, we find a complete outline of Maria’s day, which included slightly more advanced activities such as translating, and writing a journal. But like the younger pupils, she also learned poems by heart, listened to the gardener’s botany lessons and filled in her spare moments with needlework. In 1802 all the children began lessons in astronomy.

Margaret sets out a very specific plan de journée for Mademoiselle St Evay, which appears to date from 1804. The French governess was kept to the same strict regimen as the children, being woken by the maid at five thirty in order to be ready to supervise Caroline’s dressing at six:

*Plan de journée pour Mme St Evay*

A 5 heures et demie la bonne appelle Mad‘me afin qu’elle puisse avoir le temps d’être habillée à six heures pour être présente à la toilette de Caroline. Ensuite Mamselle entend dire les prières à chaque enfant séparément. L’exercice du corps, travailler au jardin, ou promener, selon le temps et l’inclination des enfants, jusqu’à 8 heures, l’heure de déjeuner. Mamselle reste avec Caroline pendant qu’elle étudie le Piano depuis 8 heures et demie, jusqu’à 9 ¾. Alors les deux aînés viennent dans ma chambre, et Mamselle s’occupe des deux petites jusqu’à 11 heures. L’exercice de la hotte, qui dure dix minutes; après quoi les deux aînés reviennent, et je garde tous les quatre avec moi jusqu’à midi. Le Gouter et la Promenade conduisent à 1 heure et un quart, mais à cette heure là just il faut être prêt pour l’étude de dessin. A 2 heures la géographie, ensuite la toilette pour le dîner.

\textsuperscript{123} Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, ‘Caractères et dispositions naturelles’, 1801.

\textsuperscript{124} Drawing ‘in the round’ is a technique that displays a given subject from all aspects.

\textsuperscript{125} *Adèle et Théodore*, vol. 1, p. 71.

\textsuperscript{126} Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 29 December 1802.

\textsuperscript{127} *Adèle et Théodore*, vol. 1, p. 65. Madame de Genlis acknowledges that the idea comes from Rousseau.
A 5 heures l'explication des estampes historiques, ou la Mythologie avec moi, pendant une demie heure. Ensuite je donne leçon de musique à ma fille jusqu'à six heures et demie, et pendant cette heure Mademoiselle fait lire le français à Maria, et fait travailler un peu les petites à l'aiguille. Les petites doivent chaque jour travailler à l'aiguille, compter, expliquer les estampes, de l'histoire saint, jouer la géographie et étudier le Piano. À six heures et demie la course. À sept heures la lecture dans ma chambre jusqu'à 8 heures. Alors les aînés soupent avec Mademoiselle. À neuf heures les enfants se couchent. Les prières du soir, ainsi que celles du matin sont dites en présence de Mamselle.

(Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, c. 1804)

In the above programme Madame de Genlis's pedagogical methods are again evident. Whereas Matilda was too young to partake of any of the activities outlined in 1801, she is now, at the age of seven, clearly included, as is 'little Margaret', the two being referred to as 'les petites'. They follow the same programme that the twins did at the same age. Mademoiselle St Evay's duties consisted of occupying the young ones when Margaret was busy with the older pupils, helping Maria with her reading in French, supervising the little girls’ needlework and saying the morning and evening prayers. The senior governess, Mademoiselle Virginie Lorraine, was required by Margaret to keep a journal (which has not been preserved) of the daily activities in which she was to record any action worthy of note:

Je prierai Mamselle Virginie de me faire tous les soirs avant de se coucher, une petite note sur son cahier que je lui donnerai, pour me dire si elle a vu ou entendu quelque chose digne de remarque; quelque idée ou opinion fausse, quelque dureté ou impolitesse envers l'un ou l'autre; ou quelque attention aimable, une bonne action &c&c. Il est entendu que je punirai ou applaudirai selon ce petit journal que je lirai tous les jours pendant mon déjeuner [my italics]. Les manques de devoir, l'inexactitude pour les heures, l'inattention pour les maîtres, les négligences, tout cela doit s'y trouver.

(Ibid, 27 June 1804)

The above words are almost identical to those that Madame de Genlis wrote in her Mémoires – which in turn were taken from her Leçons d'une gouvernante – concerning the duties of M. Lebrun, the tutor of the Orléans children:

Je priaï M. Lebrun de faire un journal détaillé de la matinée des princes, jusqu'à onze heures [...]. Lebrun m'apportait tous les matins ce journal, je le lisais sur-le-champ; je
grandois ou je louois, je punissois ou je recompensois les princes, en conséquence de cette lecture. [my italics]

(Memoires, vol. 3, pp. 148-149)

Margaret’s guidelines to Mademoiselle Lorraine are enumerated in point form in her Journal under the heading ‘Quelques observations à l’égard de l’éducation’, and follow the same principles that are to be found in Adèle et Théodore: ‘ne jamais laisser aucun enfant avec une servante’; ‘ne jamais souffrir la plus légère critique de personne’; ‘[ne jamais] parler de la beauté ou laideur des gens’; ‘faire préparer les cartes de géographie, ou ce qu’il faut pour dessiner &c avant l’heure destinée à ces études, afin que les enfants ne perdent pas un moment’; ‘ne permettre à aucun enfant de laisser traîner leurs gants, leur ouvrage[...]’

Margaret, like the Baronne d’Almane, condemned any criticism of foreign manners and customs, and any derogatory comment of a personal nature. When Madame Grassini came to Gillwell in 1804 Margaret found her mockery of English countrywomen’s dancing in bad taste, and was pleased that her children made (in private) the same observation:

In Maria’s journal I am pleased to see that Caroline’s indignation was excited as it ought to be by Madame Grassini’s vulgar and awkward mockery of our countrywomen’s dancing. Without prejudice, it must be allowed that English women in general have a dignity of mind and manners, that amply compensate some of the French graces, and which must by sensible people, be deemed more estimable than that levity so prevalent in the manners of Italian females. With regard to Mme Grassini it would be needless for me to remark on the indelicacy and impropriety of this action in her. Caroline felt it and George too I dare say; and that is enough for me. I should at the same time remark that any observations on her profession or on her conduct as arising from her profession are illiberal.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 7 February 1804)

Although Margaret approved of her children’s private criticism of Grassini’s mockery, she was careful not to allow them any criticism of her private life.

Margaret Chinnery, like Madame de Genlis, prepared her lessons from her own notes on each subject. ‘Je leur ai lu aussi presqu’un volume de mes extraits de l’histoire
romaine’, she writes in her Journal in 1801, under the heading ‘Connaissances acquises’. Other techniques of Madame de Genlis borrowed by Margaret included using abridged texts to enable the children access to important, but lengthy works in a form more suited to their age; re-reading texts – especially works of literature – two or three times to derive maximum benefit from them (‘il est impossible d’en retirer le moindre fruit en ne les faisant chacun qu’une fois’); having the children make ‘extracts’ of their reading, which she kept for future perusal with the children (‘I correct all the extracts myself, and preserve them. As the books are filled I put them by.’); and the reading of Italian works of literature in the evening.

Instilling in her children polite accomplishments (‘des talens agréables’) was also high on her list of priorities in education. One such ‘talent’ was reciting aloud (‘déclamer’). To teach this skill she had the children practise reciting poems or passages learned by heart in order to perfect their diction – a similar concept to today’s elocution lessons. It was an exercise recommended by Madame de Genlis for both boys and girls (‘Apprendre aux enfants à déclamer, c’est leur donner un talent sans lequel la prononciation n’est jamais parfaite’). Margaret desired that Caroline ‘would read aloud in her room every morning for a few moments, in order to conquer her inclination to stutter in reading’. She also considered reciting aloud a very important exercise for George in preparation for his education at Oxford, where oratorical skills were cultivated and encouraged. Margaret noted in her 1801 report on the twins’ achievements that George had made progress in recitation (‘Il n’est pas du tout embarrassé. Sa voix est renforcée, et sa gesticulation est simple, naturelle, & pleine de grace’), and that he had learned by heart ‘plusieurs discours & Morceaux de Poésie’.

Allied to the practice of reciting aloud was that of performing educational plays, considered important by Madame de Genlis for reasons already enumerated. In 1801
three plays from Madame de Genlis’s *Théâtre à l’usage des jeunes personnes* were performed by the Chinnery children, *La Colombe* and two other unspecified ones, almost certainly from the first two volumes of the *Théâtre*, which contained plays most suitable for children of this age group. *Agar dans le désert, Les Flacons, L’Enfant gâté, L’Aveugle de Spa*, and *La Colombe* were all performed by the d’Almane children at the same age. In 1802 Walter learned a small role from *La Colombe*, which deals with sibling jealousy. At the age of nine Walter was, according to Margaret ‘a most difficult boy to manage’ and it is significant that Margaret gave him a piece from this play to learn.\(^{136}\) It is probable that all five plays performed by the d’Almane children were also performed by the Chinnery children at some stage in their education.

Another female ‘talent agréable’ mentioned by Madame de Genlis and practised by Caroline Chinnery was that of making herbals (‘herbiers’). In her Journal entry of 1 May 1805 Margaret writes that Caroline ‘had obtained a promise from Mr Trumpff that he would procure fresh flowers and work with her at her herbal’.\(^{137}\) Allied to this work, were two botanical lists that Caroline made, one for her mother and one for her brother, the last of which she sent to Oxford in 1808.\(^{138}\) Some of the ‘talens agréables’ recommended by Madame de Genlis could be better developed as the children grew older. At sixteen Caroline and George had learned the rules of versification – which knowledge was considered by Madame de Genlis as ‘une chose nécessaire à toute bonne éducation’\(^{139}\) – and both were able to write passable verse. At eleven Caroline’s musical skills were far superior to those of her contemporaries, and became even better as she grew older. Before she was sixteen she had begun to make some modest attempts at music composition. Of all the female talents, or ‘ornaments’ as Margaret called them, musical skills were by far the most important in the Chinnery home.

Finally, Margaret Chinnery followed Madame de Genlis’s advice of taking her children on educational excursions. During the family’s three-month stay Paris in 1802 they went daily to the Louvre. In England they made visits to important private London collections of paintings, statues and bronzes – for example those of the Chinnery

\(^{137}\) *Ibid.*, 1 May 1805.
\(^{138}\) Both of these are in the Powerhouse collection. The first is a sort of botanical calendar, in which instructions for plantings in all seasons is given, the second a comprehensive classification of plants, complete with their properties and uses.
\(^{139}\) * Mémoires*, vol. 6, p. 143.
connoisseur friends Richard Payne Knight,140 'Elwin of Sloane Street' and Thomas Hope – where they were accompanied in November 1803 by their artist friend Madame Vigée-Lebrun. They also visited the fledgling British Museum in 1805, when Margaret praised her children for their attentive interest: 'they listened with great attention [...] and questioned with intelligence.'141 Margaret’s words are reminiscent of the Baronne d’Almane’s: ‘nous allons voir des cabinets de tableaux, ou de pierres gravées, de médailles, ou des monumens intéressans, ou enfin des manufactures’142 and: ‘Aux manufactures, ils ont montré beaucoup d’intelligence’143 On short trips and long journeys Margaret demanded of her children a similar intelligent curiosity, which would enable them to profit from their travel. Madame de Genlis called this ‘voyager avec fruit’, and required her pupils to note everything of interest in a travel journal.144 On their return from holidaying in Brighton in 1804, Margaret reprimanded George and Caroline for not having kept a journal, and as a result, not having learned anything from their journey: ‘this is the way ignorant people travel, without deriving any more benefit from their travels than the trunks behind the carriage’.145

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140 According to Brewer, op. cit., p. 265, Payne Knight’s collection consisted of ‘coins, intaglios and gems, a magnificent group of bronzes, more than 1,000 Old Master drawings, and paintings by Claude, Rembrandt and Mantegna.’ G. Thornbury and E. Walford in their Old and New London: a Narrative of its History, its People, and its Places (Cassell, Petter and Galpin: London, 1872-78, vol. 4, p. 500) claim that Knight’s ‘matchless collection of drawings, bronzes, and medals’ that were bequeathed to the Museum, was at the time ‘worth at least £30,000’.

141 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 4 May 1805. The Museum was first opened to the public in 1759, but until 1803 the process of admission was laborious. Thornbury (op. cit., vol. 4, p. 496) described how ‘studious and curious persons’ who desired to see the Museum had to obtain ‘printed tickets, to be delivered by the porter, upon their application in writing, which writing shall contain their names, condition, and places of abode, also the day and hour at which they desire to be admitted.’ Before 1808, when the first ‘Synopsis’, or printed guide, was issued, visitors were offered no information on the exhibits. This does not appear to be the case for the Chinnery party, who no doubt were conducted through the Museum by one of its directors.


143 Leçons d’une gouvernante, vol. 1, p. 77.


145 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 14 November 1804. George later made amends for this childhood omission, keeping two very comprehensive travel journals of his Continental tours (1819 and 1820) with his patron George Canning (see Part III).
(viii) Study texts used by the Chinnery children

The books to be studied by the Chinnery children over the four-year period from 1801 to 1804 (listed under the heading ‘Connaissances acquises’ at the end of volume two of Margaret’s Journal) were carefully selected by Margaret, and systematically recorded in her Journal on the children’s birthdays each year. The influence of Madame de Genlis on her choice is indisputable. A young child’s very first lessons were to be in religion, decreed Madame de Genlis. Since Margaret’s own religious convictions were very strong, she took pains to nurture a religious sentiment in her children and to instil in them Christian principles from their infancy. The children were taken to church at Waltham Abbey each Sunday, where the Chinnery family had its own pew, and Gillwell also had its own chapel. On the twins’ tenth birthday Margaret noted that Caroline and George had ‘learned to say by heart the Church Catechism and will now say it on Sundays, instead of [the local curate] Dr Watts.’

On the list of texts studied by Walter that Margaret drew up on his ninth birthday are a few religious works read during Holy Week of 1802, including ‘Les prières & méditations de Mad’mme de Genlis written for that week’. These were taken from Madame de Genlis’s recently published book of hours Nouvelles Heures à l’usage des enfans, which she had originally written for her pupils of Bellechasse, and which contained the mass, the psalms, and a collection of prayers for every occasion, some of which were written by Madame de Genlis herself. It targeted young readers aged from five to twelve. Other religious texts included on Margaret’s 1802 list were Blair’s Sermons and the New Testament, the latter being read by all the children each Sunday.

All the lists feature works by Madame de Genlis, but the 1801 list is the most striking for the large number of her works that figure on it. Four out of five of the latter (Théâtre d’éducation, Les Annales de la vertu, Les Veillées du château and Les Heures à l’usage des enfans) are books that were recommended for children of that age by the

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146 Stubbings, op. cit., p. 11, cites the Waltham Abbey Church Monthly, 1900 as his source for this information.
147 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, [3 September 1801].
148 Hugh Blair, Sermons, Strahan and Cadell: London, 5 vols, 1777-1801. Nineteen editions of this enormously popular work were published by 1794. One of the sermons, Blair’s Sermon on the Duties of the Young, published alone in 1786, was likely to have been among those that were read by Margaret to her recalcitrant younger son.
149 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, [3 September 1801].
Baronne d'Almane in *Adèle et Théodore*. The fifth, *L'Herbier moral*, was also intended as an educational work, but was written after Madame de Genlis had left Bellechasse and so did not feature in the novel. The same was true of Madame de Genlis's *Petits Emigrés*, which the Chinnery children read at the age of eleven.

The children were also taught Greek and Roman mythology from a fine volume of classical prints belonging to Margaret, and from Margaret's own notes. From the age of eleven they almost certainly used Madame de Genlis's manuscript notes on the subject, which were copied out, bound, and presented as a gift to Margaret on her departure from Paris in October 1802 (mentioned in three of Madame de Genlis’s letters to Margaret Chinnery). The work fits the description of the one cited in *Adèle et Théodore* (vol. 3, p. 440) as 'l'Ouvrage sur la Mythologie, par Mme d’Almane'.

If we compare the books read by the Chinnery children up to the age of eleven with the 'Cours de lectures suivi par Adèle' up to the same age, we find, in addition to the works by Madame de Genlis already mentioned, two almost identical lists. Neither Madame de Genlis nor Margaret Chinnery specifies which edition of the texts were studied – only noting the number of volumes and (mostly) their format. These are the texts taken from Margaret Chinnery’s Journal entries of 3 September 1801 and 22 April 1802. (The full name of author and correct title of the work have been added):

- Marie-Elisabeth de La Fite, *Entretiens, drames et contes moraux à l’usage des enfants*

Madame de Genlis lists as one of the works Adèle read ‘Drames et Dialogues pour les Enfans, par Mme de la Fite, 2 vols’, and Margaret Chinnery says that Caroline

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150 Randolph Vigne has drawn my attention to Margaret Chinnery’s scrapbook of Italian Renaissance drawings in Sir John Soane’s Museum, London. This also may have been shown to her children.

151 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, letters (f), (n), (o), [c. October 1802], Fisher.

152 Madame de Genlis says through her mouthpiece the Baronne d’Almane (vol. 2, p. 388) that she has written a new educational text on mythology, which she called ‘une Histoire Poétique’, to enable her pupils to understand something of the art treasures of Rome, maintaining that a knowledge of mythology was just as important as a knowledge of Roman history to gain an understanding of classical art. In the novel she says that she gave the work to Adèle in Genoa. The work in question was not published while she was at Bellechasse. Gabriel de Broglie (op. cit., p. 362) mentions a small *Dictionnaire de la mythologie à l’usage de la jeunesse* that she composed in Germany during her exile, and says that it was the basis for her *Arabesques mythologiques*, published in Paris in 1810. The *Dictionnaire* does not appear in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque nationale, and may not have ever been published. It is probable that both the *Dictionnaire* and the *Arabesques* were composed from her manuscript notes (or from her memory of them) originally compiled at Bellechasse.


read ‘Madame de la Fite’s works for the 2d time in 2 vols 8o.’ They are both clearly referring to the above extremely popular pedagogical work. A collection of stories, fables, historical sketches and plays, it went into many editions after being first published in the Hague in 1778. Madame de Genlis recommended it in glowing terms as an ‘ouvrage en deux volumes, également estimable & intéressant, par l’utilité dont il peut être à l’enfance, & par l’esprit & les graces qu’on y trouve,’ which observation undoubtedly influenced Margaret Chinnery’s including it on her children’s reading list.

- Joachim Campe, *Le Nouveau Robinson*¹⁵⁷

In Madame de Genlis’s list there is a ‘Robinson Crusoe’¹⁵⁸ but it is not clear whether she is referring to Defoe’s work, originally published in 1719, or to Campe’s (originally published as *Robinson der Jüngere*, Hamburg, 1779).¹⁵⁹

- Edme Mentelle, *La Géographie comparée*¹⁶⁰

Margaret Chinnery describes the above as ‘6 vol et demi de l’ouvrage de M. Mentelle avec les cartes.’ It is clear that she is referring to the same work as Madame de Genlis, since although Mentelle wrote many works on geography, this was the only one with more than six volumes.

- Claude Le Ragois, *Instruction sur l’histoire de France*¹⁶¹

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¹⁵⁵ It was published in expanded editions in 1783, 1801, 1809 and 1820.

¹⁵⁶ *Adèle et Théodore*, vol. 3, p. 438.

¹⁵⁷ The full title of this work was *Le Nouveau Robinson pour servir à l’amusement et à l’instruction des enfants*, and was, according to Martin, Mylne and Frautschi (op. cit., p. 224), ‘un remaniement radical du roman de Defoe’, written for pedagogical purposes. The first French translation to appear in Paris (by A-S d’Arnex) was in 1783.


¹⁵⁹ Although Madame de Genlis’s opinion of Campe’s children’s works was high (see Part II, Chapter 2, p. 342), it is more likely that she was referring here to the very successful translation of Defoe’s novel by Thémisuel de Saint-Hyacinthe and Juste Van Effen (Paris, 1720-21), as the Parisian translation of Campe’s work did not appear until 1783, too late for inclusion in *Adèle et Théodore*. Earlier French translations published in Hamburg (see Martin, Mylne and Frautschi, op. cit., p. 224) were unlikely to have been read in Paris.

¹⁶⁰ Its full title, as it appears in the Bibliothèque nationale catalogue, is ‘La Géographie comparée, ou Analyse de la géographie ancienne et moderne des peuples de tous les pays et de tous les âges; accompagnée de tableaux analytiques et d’un grand nombre de cartes...’ Paris: l’auteur, 1778-1784, 8 tomes en 7 vol.’

¹⁶¹ Abbé Claude Le Ragois, *Instruction sur l’histoire de France et romaine...avec une explication succincte des Métamorphoses d’Ovide...*, was first published by A. Pralard in Paris, 1687. Madame de Genlis specified that she used ‘l’Abrégé de l’Histoire Poétique & l’Instruction sur les Métamorphoses d’Ovide’, clearly a later edition of the former, to which had been added ‘un Abrégé des Métamorphoses d’Ovide, de l’histoire poétique, de la géographie, et une chronique de nos rois, en vers, le tout en faveur de la jeunesse, J. Barbou: Paris, 1778.'
The abridged edition of the above was clearly the one used by Margaret, as in her Journal she writes ‘ils ont écrit cette année l’instruction sur les trois premiers livres des Métamorphoses d’Ovid [sic]... Cette instruction serait celle de l’histoire poetique; le tout est dans ce bon et utile ouvrage de M. le Ragois.’

- J-B-Claude Joannet, *Eléments de poésie française*

The Bibliothèque nationale catalogue describes the above as being in ‘3 tomes en 2 vol -12’. The edition that Madame de Genlis used comprised ‘3 petits vols. in 12’, Margaret Chinnery’s was ‘en 4 vol 12mo’.

- Jean-François de la Harpe, *Abrégé de l’Histoire générale des voyages*

The preceding two works were not, according to Madame de Genlis, ‘absolument indispensable de connaître’. The second, being in English, would not have been comprehensible to all her readers. La Harpe’s work, voluminous in spite of its title, would presumably have been too daunting for any but the most intrepid educators. Margaret Chinnery chose to study three and a half volumes only.

- Pietro Metastasio, *Opere*

The collected works of Metastasio were listed by Madame de Genlis as ‘les Oeuvres de Métastase, en Italien’. They comprised twelve volumes. Adèle read this work at the age of fifteen. Margaret Chinnery read it with her children from the age of twelve, finishing the last eight volumes, ‘8 vols 8vo’ when they were thirteen.

- Jean-Baptiste Gresset, *Œuvres*

- Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, *Odes*
Although Madame d'Almane did not advise reading the poets Gresset and Rousseau before the age of seventeen or eighteen — both employed satirical wit, which Madame de Genlis deemed above the comprehension of younger children — Margaret Chinnery chose a selection of poems from the Œuvres of the Jesuit priest Gresset and from the ‘sacred’ Odes of J.-B. Rousseau which she considered suitable for her young pupils to learn by heart. She also read to them from these works. Apart from the religious texts, the only works on Margaret Chinnery’s list which are not on Adèle’s is an English history book, John Blair’s Chronology, an unidentified French dramatic proverb, L’Enragé, by a ‘Mme Thomas’ and ‘deux vol des Ouvrages de Mengs en 2 vol grand 8vo’.

As the lists drawn up by Margaret Chinnery are written sometimes in French, and sometimes in English, and as her French is not always perfectly correct, the exact title of some of the works is unclear, as for example ‘les Ouvrages de Mengs’. Mengs was a Saxon painter well known in his day for his portraits and paintings of historical and religious subjects, and was also famous for his treatises on the theory of art. The work in question here is presumably the Œuvres de M. le chevalier Antoine Raphaël Mengs, a French translation of the original German. This was a collection of Mengs’s writings in two volumes, of which the most famous was an essay entitled ‘Reflexions sur la beauté et sur le goût de la peinture’, the latter being almost certainly ‘l’ouvrage célèbre de Mengs’ that Margaret Chinnery mentions in her journal entry of 3 September 1802. This work was read by the Chinnery children in French with their French master during their stay in Paris in 1802, the morning reading being followed by afternoon visits to the Louvre to view paintings and other works of art. Echoing the words of Madame de Genlis, Margaret Chinnery wrote that these visits would reinforce their reading, and the children would thereby derive added benefit from them (‘en retiraient plus de fruit’).

In 1803 the Chinnery children re-read Les Veillées du château, Les Conversations d’Emilie, and continued A Father’s Instructions to his Children and the

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170 Anton Raphaël Mengs, (1728-1779), born in Bohemia, was a painter and writer who spent most of his life in Italy, but was a good representative of German art in the eighteenth century.
171 The original German edition was published in Zurich in 1762 and the above work (translated by Hendrik Jansen) in Paris in 1781.
172 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 3 September 1802.
‘Introduction to mythology’ by Le Ragois. They also learned by heart a few lines of Cowper’s Poems. George read all four volumes of the instructive work Evenings at Home, the first volume of an unidentified work that Margaret Chinnery calls ‘Scientific Dialogues’, and began Kennet’s Roman Antiquities. Caroline learned to recite some of Mrs Radcliffe’s poetry ‘in the romance of the forest’ Margaret continued her Bible reading with them ‘from the book of Judges to the end of Isaiah’, using the children’s study aid ‘Grey’s Key’.

At the age of thirteen the twins studied with their mother nine volumes of ‘Rollin’s Ancient history’, which was read by Adèle at the age of eleven. They continued to study Le Ragois’s Instruction sur l’histoire de France and Cowper’s Poems. They read the last eight volumes of Metastasio’s collected works (Opere), and made summaries (‘extraits’) of all of this author’s plays. They also read the enormously popular The Pleasures of Memory, best known work of the Chinnery family friend and poet Samuel Rogers. Caroline et George both read twice the two volumes of Terrasson’s Life of Sethos.

By the time George reached the age of thirteen, his Latin tutor, John Mullens, was more than satisfied with his progress in this subject, and predicted great future success in it. Margaret wrote on 3 September 1803 that ‘George takes great delight in this study and consequently devotes himself to it with the utmost good will and alacrity.’ During 1804, George translated all the works of Ovid that were suitable for

173 The same work as the one cited above.
174 William Cowper, Poems, J. Johnson: London, 1786. By 1803 there were thirteen editions of this popular work.
175 John Aikin and Anna Barbauld, Evenings at Home or the Juvenile Budget Opened. It is described in the British Library catalogue as ‘consisting of a variety of miscellaneous pieces, for the instruction and amusement of young persons’, 6 vol., London, 1792-96.
176 The British Library catalogue lists many such ‘Dialogues’ on a variety of subjects written for the instruction of children.
177 Basil Kennet, Rome Antiqua Notitia, or the Antiquities of Rome, London, 1696.
178 Ann Radcliffe, The Romance of the Forest, Interspersed with some Pieces of Poetry, 1791. There were seven editions of this work by 1801.
179 Robert Gray (Bishop of Bristol), A Key to the Old Testament and Apocrypha, London, 1790.
180 Charles Rollin, Histoire ancienne des Egyptiens, des Carthaginois, des Assyriens, des Babyloniens, des Médes et des Perses, des Macédoniens, des Grecs, Paris: Veuve Etienne, 1731-1738. There were several subsequent editions, some abridged.
181 Published anonymously in 1792, it went through fifteen editions by 1806, of which two thirds sold between one and two thousand copies each.
182 Jean Terrasson’s popular Sethos, histoire, ou vie tirée des monumens anecdotes de l’ancienne Egypte, traduite d’un manuscrit grec, Guérin: Paris, 1731 (3 vols). It was translated into English (2 vols) in 1732.
183 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, op. cit., vol. 2, 3 September 1803.
his age, some of Cicero, and was up to the fourth book of Virgil.\footnote{184} Mr Mullens reported to Margaret that he was surprised at his young pupil’s mature appreciation of the beauties of Latin poetry.\footnote{185} Three years later George was studying Sophocles’s \textit{Electra}. Margaret wrote that he also did ‘quelques extraits de logique’ (undoubtedly in preparation for Oxford), but no text is specified. In 1804 Caroline and George both read with their French governess ‘une partie de la traduction de l’Abbé de Lisle du Poème de Virgile’.\footnote{186} The work in question is most likely to be Abbé Jacques Delille’s translation into French of Virgil’s \textit{Georgics} (Paris, 1770), considered by Madame de Genlis to be his best work. It is less likely that Margaret was referring to Delille’s translation of the \textit{Aeneiad}, which, according to Madame de Genlis, ‘contient de beaux morceaux, mais il y a quelque chose de froid et de pénible dans l’ensemble.’\footnote{187} However, ‘l’Enéide’ and ‘Les Georgiques de Virgile, traduction de M. l’Abbé de L’Isle’ were both read by Adèle at the age of sixteen (\textit{Adèle et Théodore}, vol. 3, p. 442).

At thirteen the twins read the following religious works:

- \textit{L’Imitation de Jésus Christ}\footnote{188}
  
  This was read by Adèle at the age of eleven.

- Claude Fleury, \textit{Les Mœurs des chrétiens}\footnote{189}

- ‘Dr Napleton’s Sermons’\footnote{190}

A striking feature of both Madame de Genlis’s and Margaret Chinnery’s reading lists was the number of times each text was read by the pupils. This was in accordance with Madame de Genlis’s principle that nothing was learned until it had been reinforced by multiple readings. In \textit{Adèle et Théodore}, Madame de Genlis has the Baronne say ‘nous recommencerons l’hiver prochain ces trois mêmes Cours; c’est la seule manière dont ils puissent être profitables [...]’\footnote{191}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[184] Probably the \textit{Georgics}.
\item[185] Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 3 September 1804.
\item[186] \textit{Ibid}.
\item[187] \textit{Mémoires}, vol. 5, p. 333.
\item[188] The original Latin version, \textit{De l’Imitatione Christi}, attributed to the fourteenth century monk Thomas a Kempis, was translated into French as \textit{L’Esprit des IV livres de l’Imitation de Jesus-Christ pour servir de conduite à la vie spirituelle}, Alliot: Paris, 1673.
\item[189] Abbé Claude Fleury (1640-1723), educationalist, was the confessor of the young Louis XV, and prepared him for his first communion. His immensely popular \textit{Mœurs des chrétiens}, published in 1682, went into many editions.
\item[190] John Napleton, \textit{Sermons for the Use of Colleges, Schools, and Families}, Gloucester, 1805. Many of his individual sermons had been published before that date.
\item[191] \textit{Adèle et Théodore}, vol. 3, p. 223.
\end{footnotes}
Margaret continued her reading of the Bible with the children on Sundays, and from the age of twelve George wrote extracts of the sermons they had heard at Church. Before taking their first Communion George and Caroline read the same preparatory text as Adèle, *Traité sur les quatre dernières fins de l'homme*, taken from the fourth volume of Pierre Nicole’s *Essais de morale* (Paris: G. Despres, 1678). They also read an English prayer book, *Companion to the Altar*, having previously read, like Adèle, *L'Imitation de Jésus Christ* and Madame de Genlis’s *Livre d'heures*.

Although Margaret’s formal yearly reports ceased in 1804, her Journal entries do occasionally mention texts that the twins read with her at later dates. In 1807 when the twins were sixteen, their evening Italian poetry reading sessions were supplemented by readings of Molière (*Les Femmes savantes*), and when there were house guests at Gillwell, the latter also participated in the readings. In January 1807 the Chinnerys’ Italian friend the chevalier La Caièa read aloud from the *Panegirico di Plinio a Traiano*, by the Italian tragic dramatist Vittorio Alfieri. On 3 February 1807 Margaret noted in her Journal that he again read to them, this time from Alfieri’s tragedy *Merope*: ‘Monday evening the Chevalier read Alfieri’s beautiful tragedy of Merope to us, all but the last act. Caroline read some Italian prose extremely well, – and George read some critical remarks by Alfieri in Italian after supper, better than I have heard him read for a long time, and in a way that pleased us all because it discovered intelligence.’

There were only two other texts mentioned by Margaret in her Journal. The first was a history book, Millot’s *Abrégé de l’histoire de France.* When George went to Oxford in 1808 he took with him ‘Millot’s *Éléments d’histoire générale*, in 9 vols 8°’, which, he said, would ‘refresh my memory concerning everything I have read of history both ancient & modern.’ The other was Antoine Ferrand’s *Esprit de l’histoire*, which pleased Napoleon when it was published in Paris in 1802, and was subsequently adopted by the French collèges as a school prize, indicating its suitability to secondary level pupils.

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192 *A Companion to the Altar: shewing the nature and necessity of a sacramental preparation... 6th edn, 1707.* This was a much used text by Church of England communicants, judging by the many editions which continued to be published right into the nineteenth century.

193 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 3 February 1807.

194 Abbé Claude-François-Xavier Millot’s *Abrégé de l’histoire de France, depuis Henri IV jusqu’en 1748* (Nyon: Paris, 1777) was used by the pupils of the Ecole royale militaire.

195 Published in Paris by Prault, 1772-1773, 9 vol. in –12.

196 *G to M, 23 November 1808, Ch.Ch.*
Many more texts read at home by Caroline and recommended to George at Oxford, are to be found in Margaret’s letters to George in Oxford.197

197 See Part II, Chapter 3.
Margaret Chinnery’s belief in the importance of learning foreign languages, both modern and ancient, was the same as Madame de Genlis’s. Having been exposed to French and Italian since their infancy, it was natural that the Chinnery children learned these languages effortlessly. Their three-month stay in Paris in 1802, when they had regular sessions with a French master, cemented their comprehension of spoken French, and honed their speaking and writing skills in that language. Even before their visit to Paris, Walter was more fluent in French than in English, preferring to dictate his extracts to Viotti in French rather than in his native tongue. Of the children’s French study in Paris Margaret wrote:


(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 3 September 1802)

Ten months after the family’s return from Paris, she wrote of George and Caroline:

Ils parlent les trois langues avec negligence dans ce moment-ci, confondant toujours les idiomes. Surtout en anglais, ils se servent très souvent d’idiomes etrangers. Ils écrivent le français et l’anglais plus correctement, et composent mieux dans ces trois langues. Ils lisent maintenant l’italien. Nous avons commencé Metastasio, et nous le lisons tous les soirs pendant une heure. They had an Italian Master during two months in town [during the period after Walter’s death], and read with him twice a week for two hours.

(Ibid., 3 September 1803)

Margaret took care that all the skills necessary to foreign language learning were covered in lessons. To improve the children’s reading comprehension she read French and Italian books with them and had them do dictations, which also improved their spelling. To perfect their pronunciation she had them recite poetry, monologues and perform plays. On 3 September 1804 she noted that Caroline could read Italian as well as she read English and French, and that although she learned to recite verse in English
and French with facility, she still made a number of spelling and grammatical mistakes in her writing. Because Caroline had devoted so much of her time to music, she said, ‘this essential part of her education’ had unfortunately been neglected.

‘This essential part’ of her children’s education was, in Margaret’s opinion, the study of grammar, which she taught from her own notes, including her ‘dialogues on grammar.’ She gave the boys grammar lessons in preparation for their Latin lessons, but regretted that because of the two-year age difference between George and Walter, the latter’s preparation was not as good as George’s: ‘The only grammatical preparation he [Walter] underwent with me previous to his Latin studies, with Mr Mullens, was in reading through my little dialogues on grammar; this accounts for his progress being much less rapid, than his brother’s’.

In the Fisher collection of Chinnery papers is preserved one of the teaching aids that Margaret used for the instruction of grammar. It is a large-format chart (41 cm x 32 cm) on which are set out, in diagrammatic form, all the different parts of speech with definitions for each. It is in French, and on the reverse side is written in Margaret’s hand: ‘Je crois que l’Abbé Gaultier est l’auteur de ce Papier’. Aloisius Gaultier was a Jesuit priest who devoted his life to education. He spent the Revolutionary years in London, where he founded a benevolent school for the children of French émigrés. Margaret would undoubtedly have been familiar with his *Leçons de grammaire proprement dite, de syntaxe et d’orthographe* published in 1787.

Another interesting education document that exists in the Powerhouse collection also relates to language. It is one page of an apparently longer document (in what looks to be Matilda Chinnery’s hand) in French, described as the ‘Recueil des Définitions et réponses de Massieu et Clerc, Élèves sourds-muets de M. l’Abbé Sicard. Par M. Laffon de Ladébat avec une traduction par I. H. Sièvrac’. The Abbé Sicard was an educator of deaf-mutes who was famous throughout Europe for his public

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198 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 22 April 1802.
199 Aloisius-Edouard-Camille Gaultier (1746-1818), Jesuit priest and educator. He was a prolific and popular author of works on education, and conceived many innovative pedagogical methods. His *Cours complet d’études élémentaires pour les enfants*, revised and corrected by his former pupils in 1829, comprised 27 volumes.
200 The rest of the document is missing.
201 Roch-Ambroise Cucurron Sicard (1742-1822) was director of a school for the deaf-mutes in Bordeaux, and later of a similar school in Paris. He wrote several works on the teaching of deaf-mutes, and a work on French grammar *Elems de grammaire générale appliquée à la langue française* (1799) that Margaret Chinnery evidently knew.
demonstrations of his method, for which he used his three favourite pupils, Massieu, Clerc and Berthier. Laffon de Ladébat\textsuperscript{202} administered the school in Paris of which the Abbé Sicard was head. The catalogue of the Bibliothèque nationale lists under his name a ‘Lettre ... à l’abbé Sicard. Recueil des définitions et réponses les plus remarquables de Massieu et Clerc, sourds-muets, aux diverses questions qui leur ont été faites dans les séances publiques de M. l’abbé Sicard à Londres ... London 1815, Cox & Baylis’. Margaret’s possession of this document would appear to date from well before 1815, as she clearly used it in the education of her children at Gillwell. It is probable that she took her children to one of the Abbé’s monthly public demonstrations in Paris in 1802, as a visit to the Institut des sourd-muets in rue St Jacques was a top attraction for foreigners visiting Paris during the Peace of Amiens.\textsuperscript{203} The succinct definition of terms contained in the document answered Margaret’s needs admirably for a teaching tool with which to demonstrate to her children the fine nuances of language. An example from the document shows the sorts of distinctions that Margaret expected her children to be able to make:

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Simplicité et Ingénuité
Quelle différence y a-t-il entre la Simplicité et l’Ingénuité?
Réponse d’un Elève (Massieu)
La Simplicité est la non-malignité, l’innocence, l’enfance spirituelle.
L’Ingénuité est l’ouverture du cœur, sans déguisement, le cœur sans fard, le banissement de l’hypocrisie.
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(In Miscellaneous Verse, PM 94/143/1 – 32/5)

Margaret stressed the language learning aspect of her children’s education to such an extent that the majority of the texts studied by the Chinnery children – even those for history and geography – were in a foreign language. Not content with her children knowing two foreign languages, she decided to add a third, German. From one of the best universities in Europe she procured a German tutor, Herr Trumpf, who was to be George’s principal tutor up to the time he commenced his tertiary education.

\textsuperscript{202} André-Daniel Laffon de Ladébat (1746-1829), was a businessman, statesman and philanthropist.
\textsuperscript{203} Maria Edgeworth mentions it in a letter of this period to a family member in Ireland, along with other places of interest to English tourists – the Hôpital des Invalides, the new Louvre museum, the new Ecole Polytechnique, Versailles, the Bibliothèque nationale, the Mint and the Gobelins (C. Colvin, ed., Maria Edgeworth in France and Switzerland: Selections from the Edgeworth Family letters, Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1979, pp. 42, 83).
Until they reached the age of thirteen Margaret Chinnery herself taught most of the subjects she deemed necessary to her children's education, believing, as Madame de Genlis did, that the mother was more competent to teach both girls and boys up to that age than "le meilleur père ou le plus habile instituteur". Once George reached the age of thirteen, Margaret decided to employ a tutor who would be better qualified to prepare her son for his future Oxford education. He would live at Gillwell, giving George private instruction in German, mathematics, Greek and Latin, and instructing all five children in German and some of the sciences (mineralogy, natural history, astronomy), none of which Margaret was qualified to teach. Margaret noted the arrival of the new tutor in her Journal of 6 November 1804:

Mr Trumpf of the University of Göttingen arrived at Gillwell, to live with us in the quality of Tutor to George. He had been some days at Mr Smith's waiting our return from Brighthelmstone [Brighton]. Our object in having such a person is, that George may have constantly when out of my study, a male companion; who can instruct him in the German language, and in the elements of scientific knowledge, walk with him, and be at all times an instructive companion. Herr Trumpf is also engaged to teach the other children every thing proper for them to learn of natural history, Astronomy, German &c&c.

(Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, 6 November 1804)

Herr Trumpf was a graduate of the prestigious University of Göttingen, where his studies had consisted of mathematics and classics, not unlike an Oxford education of the day. He was also a Lutheran clergyman, and a description of a sermon that he preached, was given by William Spencer in a letter to Caroline Chinnery. Margaret required Herr Trumpf to keep a journal, and since Herr Trumpf's English was poor, and

204 *Adèle et Théodore*, vol. 2, p. 190.
205 George, Caroline, Matilda, little Margaret and Maria.
206 At 3 Duke Street, the Adelphi, the abode of Charles Smith, Viotti's wine partner.
207 Spencer, in typically irreverent style, described the Lutheran clerical raiments in the following terms: 'The Lutheran clergy affect still to wear the habits of the Old Reformers, and that quantity of neck-cambric is called a ruff, in French une fraine, and was worn in the time of [?] and Elizabeth — why they have super-added a wig, God knows, certainly Martin Luther never heard of such a decoration.' (William Spencer to Caroline Chinnery, 1 January 1811, Fisher.) Herr Trumpf was often the butt of gentle jokes in Spencer's punning epigrams, but although he was an earnest and humourless person, Herr Trumpf was kind-natured and was generally held to be 'a worthy fellow'.
Margaret had no knowledge of German, he kept it in French. This journal (or part of it, since it is only just over two months long) has been preserved in the Fisher collection of Chinnery Papers, and covers the period from 30 December 1804 to 4 March 1805. The journal is a daily report of lessons given and progress made by the various children. The only days that Herr Trumpf has omitted are Sundays (his day off) and three days he spent in London (24-26 February) making purchases necessary to his pupils’ studies. On the last two pages of the journal is a list of twenty-one substances he purchased for the children’s mineralogy lessons, and some German books and a natural history text for George. All the prices are given.

The journal at times takes the form of a written dialogue between Margaret and Herr Trumpf, who often makes suggestions for new texts, asks permission to make changes in the timetable and the configuration of classes, and once, to set up a reward system for the younger pupils. Margaret answered all these queries in writing in the journal. Because Herr Trumpf did not speak English well, stuttered, was very deaf and very shy, and on his own admission, did not feel confident enough initially to discuss all these issues with Margaret face to face in French, he preferred to write them down. However, he did request a weekly meeting with either Margaret or Viotti (showing again that Viotti’s involvement in educational matters was not insignificant) every Saturday to discuss lesson arrangements, and this meeting probably also enabled Margaret to judge how well he was performing his duties, as she had employed him only on a two-month trial basis. One cannot help feeling sorry for this unfortunate man, whose livelihood depended on such a position, and who wrote at the beginning of the journal that he hoped to be useful to this respectable family, and to earn the esteem of his pupils, which would be ‘la récompense la plus douce qu’à mes yeux il y peut avoir pour un homme sensible dans une condition pareille à la mienne.’ (In the event, Margaret judged him fairly and accurately, retaining him for a total of four years — one of which was after George had left home for Oxford.)

208 Salomon Gessner’s *Idyllen*, described p. 308, note 221.
209 William Fordyce Mavor, *The Elements of Natural History, for the Use of Schools*, R. Phillips: London, 1800. The work was illustrated by copperplates. Mavor was a prolific writer of educational texts.
210 Except for five items, the chemicals were all purchased for less than a shilling. The three volumes of Gessner’s *Idyllen* cost eight shillings, and Mavor’s *Natural History* five shillings.
212 Ibid., 31 December 1804.
Margaret’s instructions to Herr Trumpf were strict. He was to follow rigorously the plan de journée that she drew up for him, utilizing every minute of the day. The day was to be divided between private lessons for George and common lessons with all five children present. In addition, some German classes were to be given to George and Caroline together. After a time, Herr Trumpf requested permission to give Caroline some private lessons in German, to enable her to catch up to George. In her constant quest for knowledge, Margaret herself sometimes joined Caroline’s lessons. Margaret insisted that for all subjects Herr Trumpf had a plan of study. She wrote in his journal ‘mon expérience en éducation m’a prouvé, que sans méthode et clarté, on ne peut jamais captiver l’attention des enfants.’

He was to rise with George at 6 am in summer, and 7 am in winter. He was to supervise George’s early morning physical exercises, note the weights he could lift, and enter all this in his journal. If George was prevented for any reason from doing the exercises in the morning, he had to make them up at lunch time. He had also to supervise the children’s recreational games in the evening.

Although Margaret approved of the reward system Herr Trumpf suggested for the little girls – that of making them a present of some ‘petites planches [gravées] représentant des objets d’histoire naturelle’ once a month in return for diligent study – she definitely did not allow him to deal out punishments. The attempt of Herr Trumpf to discipline George for unruly behaviour during the children’s recreation hour was met with severe censure from Margaret, who reserved this right to herself alone. If Herr Trumpf had any grievances, she wrote, he was to communicate them to her in writing in the journal, in accordance with her principles of education, and not take matters into his own hands. Nor did she tolerate any justificatory arguments on Herr Trumpf’s part. This episode constituted the subject of an unpleasant quarrel between them, which, if Herr Trumpf had not eventually capitulated, would have led almost certainly to his dismissal, as Margaret would not be gainsaid. Viotti was quick to intervene, advising Herr Trumpf to submit humbly to Margaret’s will, which he did, writing in chastened tones that he stood corrected and begged forgiveness.

George’s private lessons with Herr Trumpf took place in the morning, the best time of day for hard study, according to Margaret. After his physical exercises George

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did private study in preparation for his Latin and Greek lessons with Mr Mullens. As far as the study of Latin and Greek were concerned, Margaret did not consider Herr Trumpf's English adequate for the explanation and translation of the classics, and kept on George's old tutor for these subjects. In 1805 Mr Mullens came every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday to study Virgil and Horace with George. Herr Trumpf's role as a classics teacher was restricted to supervising George's private study of the Greek and Latin authors, explaining points of grammar, or teaching prosody. When Mr Mullens left Waltham Abbey in January 1807 Herr Trumpf took over the teaching of Greek and Latin, with Margaret keeping a sharp eye on George's English translations: 'He [Herr Trumpf] continues the lessons on the days and hours on which they used to be conducted by Mr Mullens. Mr Trumpf then corrects the Greek and Latin, and I am attentive to the English, taking care that he construes into good English, makes a proper choice of words &c &c.'

The subjects that in Margaret's view required less concentrated study were reserved for the afternoons. Mineralogy, astronomy (taught with the help of a magic lantern) and natural history were all assigned to the afternoon or evening, along with physics experiments, and geography problems (using a globe), simple German instruction for the young girls, and some additional arithmetic classes. Margaret denied permission to Herr Trumpf to move to morning slots some of his mineralogy experiments that needed sunlight, not wishing to compromise the more rigorous morning studies. All Herr Trumpf's classes had to be rearranged when the weekly dancing and drawing lessons took place.

Herr Trumpf requested six hours a week for the teaching of mathematics. Margaret required him to teach George elementary geometry, trigonometry, algebra, and the theory of applied mathematics. Herr Trumpf admitted early to Margaret that he had no experience in applied mathematics, which he called 'Architecture' or 'Fortification', but opined that the theory of mathematics should be thoroughly mastered before embarking on a course of applied mathematics. He considered that algebra should be taught in conjunction with elementary geometry, although the text that Margaret already had was in his opinion too elementary. Herr Trumpf expressed his intention of consulting with the composer Francesco Bianchi on the teaching of

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geometry, as (surprisingly) the latter had written a short work on the subject. Margaret also wanted George taught Euclid in preparation for his tertiary studies.

It is from Herr Trumpf's explanation of the method he used to teach German that we learn more than we do on any other subject. His descriptions afford valuable insight into the teaching of foreign languages in the early nineteenth century. The foundation stone on which the study of all languages rested was grammar, and Herr Trumpf's grammar instruction was meticulous. At the same time as teaching German grammatical rules, syntax and the Gothic script, he prepared for George lists of vocabulary and idiomatic phrases to learn, gave him dictations, and made him do translations from German into both English and French, at which skill George became so adept that he could, after only two months of German lessons, translate extemporaneously into German from Herr Trumpf's dictation in French. The speed at which George mastered German astounded even Margaret. After two months of German tuition (of five and a half hours a week) Herr Trumpf deemed that George had needed no more grammar lessons, and could progress straight on to 'les tresors de la literature [sic] allemande'. The first of these was Salomon Gessner's Idyllen. The twins then progressed to studying fables by Christian Gellert and Gotthold Lessing, Caroline having almost caught up to George in her study of German.

While Herr Trumpf probably did not differ from any of his contemporaries in his belief that a thorough groundwork in grammar was necessary for the study of any language, there are elements of his programme that betray Madame de Genlis's influence. For example, Gessner and Gellert were both writers that were recommended in Adèle et Théodore (vol. 1, p. 104). Like Madame de Genlis, Herr Trumpf always tried to derive multiple benefits from any one activity, so that when he gave Matilda and little Margaret their monthly rewards of engravings of plants and animals, he turned the natural history lesson into a German lesson, by using the German language to explain

218 Margaret's Journal entry of 3 September 1804 states: 'Il [George] a lu de temps en temps le manuscrit de M. Bianchi sur la Geometrie, afin de ne rien oublier.'
219 Ibid.
220 It is not stated whether this work was Idyllen von dem Verfasser des Daphnis (Leipzig, 1760), in prose, or S. Gessners ausserlesene Idyllen, put into verse by K.W. Ramler (Berlin, 1787). It is more likely to have been the latter, given the popularity that Gessner's verse later attained.
221 Gellert's Fabeln und Erzählungen, Leipzig, 1748-1751; and G.E. Lessings Fabeln, C.F.Voss: Berlin, 1757. The last was bought from 'the German bookshop of Mr Griffith at Pall Mall' (Herr Trumpf's Journal, 28 January 1805).
the subjects of the pictures. When he walked with the children twice a day he only spoke German. These ideas, even if originating with Herr Trumpf, were probably indirectly attributable to Margaret’s explanation to him of her philosophy of education, which began with her belief in the economical use of time.

Herr Trumpf left Gillwell in February 1809, at the beginning of George’s second year at Oxford. He had spent 1808 giving George all the assistance he could from Gillwell, and continued his lessons with Caroline, Matilda and little Margaret.²²³ When it became obvious that his help with George’s university studies was no longer needed,²²⁴ Margaret found him a position with a London family, and let him go. The whole family had become very attached to him, and he to them, and he continued to pay visits to Gillwell, hiking from London with a haversack on his back and a piece of green baize over his head.²²⁵ He remained a faithful friend to the Chinnerys right through their 1812 troubles.

²²³ Maria had been ‘taken from’ Margaret’s care in June 1806 (Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 12 January 1807).
²²⁴ See Part II, Chapter 3, p. 460.
²²⁵ G to M, 12 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
Margaret Chinnery's method of teaching physical education, based on Madame de Genlis's

Margaret took great care of her children's health. She ensured that they had a good diet, adequate rest, and plenty of outdoor exercise. She believed, like Madame de Genlis, that building up her children's constitution would help ward off the many unpredictable and untreatable illnesses that were then prevalent. The section in Madame de Genlis's *Leçons d'une gouvernante* that deals with physical education begins: 'L'objet de la Gymnastique, considérée relativement à l'éducation, est de fortifier la constitution, d'affermer la santé, d'endurcir à la fatigue, de donner de l'agilité, de l'adresse, de la souplesse, de la force [...] enfin de munir contre tous les accidens de la vie.' Margaret Chinnery took heed of these words and made physical exercise an important part of her educational programme. In summing up Walter's previous year's achievements on his birthday in April 1802, she wrote, under the heading 'Body Exercises':

No illness this year. Walter is much grown, is thinner but more active, and not less strong in proportion than before. He rides extremely well, continues his military exercises, wears shoes that weigh 7 ounces each, his halters weigh each 3 lb, in his hotte he carries 28 lb, and he draws 20 lb in the Pully. He runs 24 minutes.

(Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, 22 April 1802)

A reader coming across this description in a nineteenth century English lady's journal would be very much surprised if he were not familiar with Madame de Genlis's methods. Margaret Chinnery's Journal describes a whole range of bizarre physical exercises that her children were subjected to, in order to build up their bodily strength. They were obliged to walk with lead weights in their shoes, the weight being increased gradually over a period of time, as their strength increased. They did weight lifting ('halters'), following the same procedure of increasing the weight in proportion to their strength. They had to go up and down stairs with a weighted basket ('hotte') strapped to their back, again carrying a heavier basket as they grew older and stronger. In the Gillwell 'gymnasium' was a system of ropes and pulleys attached to the ceiling, which were also weighted according to each child's strength. The techniques employed by
Madame de Genlis in her education of the Orléans children are immediately recognisable here. Margaret Chinnery’s methods seem to be taken straight out of Madame de Genlis’s *Leçons d’une gouvernante*, where, at the end of the second volume under the heading ‘Gymnastique’ a whole section is devoted to the physical exercises her pupils did at Bellechasse. Madame de Genlis’s techniques are listed, with explanatory notes, in the following point form:

- des souliers à semelles de plomb (only to be removed for dancing)
- l’exercice des haltères (for ten or twelve minutes)
- l’exercice de la poulie (for straightening backs)
- l’exercice des hottes (to be carried up and down stairs)
- l’exercice de la corde (climbing up a rope attached to the ceiling – only for young men)
- l’exercice des poids aux pieds (hanging from a rope with weights attached to the feet – two or three feet above the ground)
- les sauts (long jump and high jump)
- les courses (sprints and long distance running)
- marcher, courir & sauter sur la corde (rope dancing)
- l’équitation (restricted to boys)
- la natation
- tirer de l’arc au blanc (archery to be practised merely for bodily grace)
- tirer au fusil
- tirer au pistolet
- faire des armes
- l’exercice militaire (the last four for boys only)
- le billard (a game for boys only, and to be reserved for wet weather)
- le volant
- la danse

Just how revolutionary this exercise regime was in 1782 is shown by the number of critics who claimed that Madame de Genlis would kill her charges with such

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methods. All of the above, with the exception of some of the rope exercises, were practised at Gillwell. However, swimming is not mentioned in Margaret’s Journal, and her children do not appear to have been made to wear weighted shoes all day. But Margaret did have an archery lawn at Gillwell, agreeing with Madame de Genlis that archery was ‘a graceful manly exercise’. She also noted in her Journal that ‘George a appris à faire des armes pendant notre séjour à Londres,’ and the boys practised other military skills. George and Walter were permitted to play billiards only when bad weather prevented them from playing out of doors.

Each year Margaret noted in her progress reports the increases in all the different weights the children carried, and the times they ran. For example in 1803 George’s shoes weighed ten ounces each, in 1804 thirteen ounces. In September 1804 George’s basket weighed thirty pounds, Caroline’s sixteen. In January 1805 Herr Trumpf had asked permission of Margaret to increase the weight George carried in his basket by two pounds, but Margaret had replied — heeding the advice of Madame de Genlis to proceed gradually (‘tous les exercices du corps ne peuvent être salutaires que lorsqu’on les fait sans un effort pénible’) — that she wanted the increase be at the rate of only one pound at a time, and that he was to keep a record of all increases in his journal. In 1804 George did a twenty-seven-minute run, and Caroline a twenty-minute one, and Margaret substituted the ‘exercise des poids aux pieds’ for one with hand-held weights. Walter and George learned to ride on horseback before Caroline, but Margaret did not prevent her daughter from riding, as she herself rode (as did Madame de Genlis and her daughters, in spite of her written prohibition). All children played shuttlecock and other games for recreation, went for long walks, and spent the maximum time possible out of doors.

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228 Ibid., p. 531.
229 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 7 September 1804.
230 Ibid., vol. 2, 3 September 1803.
Margaret Chinnery’s natural love of music was as ingrained in her as it was in Madame de Genlis, and it is certain that even without the latter’s influence, she would have instituted a rigorous music programme for her children. As a January 1782 English newspaper advertisement for flute instruction shows, the acquisition of practical musical skills was considered an essential part of an English liberal education: ‘Music being considered as one of the most polite of all the liberal sciences, and one of the chief ornaments of a finished education, it ought to claim the attention of all those who have it in their power to acquire a knowledge therein’. And it was not only educationalists who advocated furnishing young people with musical skills. The benefits of a good childhood musical education were agreed upon by most music specialists of the day, among them William Parke, the prominent English court oboist. But while Madame de Genlis relegated the acquisition of musical skills to the realm of polite accomplishments for young ladies and gentlemen of good birth, William Parke emphasised the benefits that flowed on to society from teaching music to the young. With regard to girls, he cited the following benefits: ‘it engages their attention, and delights their minds by its fascinations, till the judgement is sufficiently matured to enable them to fix their destinies in life with a fair prospect of happiness.’ The advantages for boys, he claimed, were no less important: ‘by mixing in polite assemblies, and listening to the charms of music, which soothes pain, and keeps vice at a distance, young men may be estranged from the gaming-table and other demoralising scenes, which seldom fail to entail fatal consequences on their votaries.’ The nineteenth century music historian George Hogarth shared these views, and called the widespread taste for music at the beginning of the nineteenth century ‘a national blessing’. He echoed the sentiments of Parke, adding that an appreciation of music was beneficial to both the upper and lower classes: ‘The tendency of music is to soften and purify the mind. The cultivation of a musical taste furnishes to the rich a refined and intellectual pursuit, which excludes the indulgence of frivolous and vicious amusements, and to the poor, [...] a relaxation from toil more attractive than the haunts.

233 The same date that Adèle et Théodore was published.
234 Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser, 19 January 1782.
235 The moral benefits were of course implied in every aspect of her education plan.
236 Parke, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 102-103.
of intemperance." It is not surprising, then, that Margaret Chinnery, who had herself received a thorough grounding in music, should share these commonly held views. Music, as has been seen, was an integral part of life at Gillwell. It was, for example a feature of special occasions such as birthdays. The twins' tenth birthday on 3 September 1801 was celebrated, as it had been the previous year, in the following manner:

In the morning we were serenaded by a clarinet, bassoon & kettle drum. Fifty three poor children dined with us on the lawn; they assembled at the lodge & were there met by our own little ones, some of our servants, the three musicians &c &c and they were conducted to the house, the music playing. All the time they dined, the music played. In the evening our children, our friends, & most of the servants danced country dances, for an hour before the fire works; and when they were over the dance was renewed. After the children retired we went to a distant room to supper, & the servants with their visitors kept it up till two o'clock in the morning.

(Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, 3 September 1801)

With the most renowned violinist in Europe living under their roof, the Chinnery children's musical education was second to none. Viotti was of course integral to the children's musical education programme, but as Margaret was a competent musician in her own right, she herself took most of her daughter's piano lessons, and stipulated at what age she was to be allowed to commence serious singing lessons (ten years) and to play the harp (thirteen years). Both the Chinnery boys had violins when they were young, and there is a remark in Margaret's Journal in 1803, when the Bianchis spent their second long residency at Gillwell, that George 'learned his notes and time in music of Mrs Bianchi, and received some instruction in singing.' Except for this one instance, all of what is written in Margaret's Journal on music lessons concerns Caroline, and to a much lesser extent, other female relatives.

The descriptions that Margaret gives of her daughter's musical education are very detailed and extremely informative. In the plan de journée of 4 April 1801, for example, it is stated that Caroline did one hour's practice in the morning from 8.30 am to 9.30 am. On Tuesdays and Thursdays she spent one hour – from 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

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237 Ibid., p. 103.
239 See p. 264.
— ‘composing and preluding’ with Viotti. She had daily piano and singing lessons from either her mother or Viotti between 5 pm and 6 pm, and on Saturdays, if M. Bianchi came, she had a lesson on music theory from him. On Sundays, if M. Bianchi came, she had another music composition lesson, if not she took her usual piano and singing lesson from her mother.

In Viotti’s letter to Margaret dated 20 May 1801, he explains that Caroline was unable to follow her normal regime of piano study that afternoon because of some medicine which Margaret had bade her take that morning. Viotti is confident that with a little patience he will be able to give her her piano lesson after dinner at five in the evening:

Caroline n’a guère pu étudier du Piano à cause de ce que vous lui avez ordonné de prendre ce matin; il est une heure et demie, cela va mieux, ne pince plus tant, et nous serons en état j’espère d’avoir une bonne séance cette après dîner [sic] à cinq heures.

(V to M, 20 May 1801, PM 94/143/1 – 2/25)

From the beginning of September until mid-October 1801, Bianchi and his wife stayed at Gillwell, where they were resident music tutors to the Chinnery children, Madame Bianchi also teaching drawing and M. Bianchi geometry. They came again for a seven-week period in 1803. On 14 October 1801, Margaret writes in her Journal:

M. and Mrs Bianchi have been here six weeks. Their visit has been very beneficial to Caroline and Maria. Caroline has regularly had every day of M. Bianchi in the morning, an hour’s lesson of counterpoint, and in the afternoon another hour’s lesson of accompaniment & singing. She begins to accompany from the score, & finds all the advantages arising from the scientific knowledge [music theory] she has acquired; so much so, that with very few instructions she will accompany with ease & certainty. Her voice promises to be a fine & extensive one, but not so pliable (perhaps there is a better word) as Mafia’s. She has sung several airs and Duets. Maria has greatly advanced in music under Mrs Bianchi. She sings very prettily with taste and feeling, and her voice though neither clear nor powerful, is extremely capable of agility.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 14 October 1801)
Margaret went on to say that Mrs Bianchi had also taught Maria to draw and to paint flowers, and had given her one-hour singing lessons daily.

The amount of music tuition that Caroline underwent seems astonishing for a child of ten years of age. What is even more astonishing is the progress that she made under Francesco Bianchi’s tutelage. According to her mother’s yearly report on her educational progress, written on her tenth birthday in September 1801, Caroline had learned all the rules of composition and accompaniment, could write musical scores for two, three or four instruments, had mastered the rudiments of sonata composition, and during the year had learned to play thirteen sonatas, most composed by Viotti’s colleagues — Clementi, Steibelt and Dussek (‘5 sonates de Clementi, Op. 4. 237, de Steibelt 3 sonates, Op. 35. Un duo de Pianoforte de Bach, 2 sonates de Dussek, Op. 14, et presque deux sonates de Schubert’).\(^{241}\) As far as singing was concerned, her mother reported that her voice promised well, and that now that Caroline was ten she would allow her to sing more ‘without fear of damaging her health’. As Margaret did not like Madame Bianchi’s singing style, (which nonetheless found favour with London audiences from 1809 to 1814 in the Italian Opera at the King’s Theatre and in numerous other London concerts), she had been obliged to find a pretext for transferring Caroline to Maestro Bianchi’s tutelage for this subject.\(^{242}\)

Margaret’s report on Caroline’s progress in her musical studies for the year 1802 continued to be favourable. She made great progress on the piano, and was able to prelude creditably for one so young and inexperienced. She played the piano sensitively and with a fine touch, her two hands were well balanced, and she executed her pedal points, variations and ornaments all from memory, like a professional pianist. She did a lot of sight reading practice. She learned perfectly a concerto in A minor by Viotti, a concerto in B flat by Dussek, a sonata in A major by J.B. Cramer, and studied eight books of partitas by Bianchi and some partitas and fugues by Fenaroli.\(^{243}\) She learned to play from scores and now accompanied very well. The only aspect of music in which she had not progressed was in theory, as Maestro Bianchi did not come to stay at Gillwell in 1802.

On 3 September 1803 Margaret’s report was as follows:

\(^{241}\) *Ibid.*, [3 September 1801].  
\(^{242}\) *Ibid.*
Caroline is improved in music since our return from Town. She plays much better, reads new music with greater facility, and has learned to play from scores uncommonly well for her age. She accompanies very well, either playing the several parts, or, the harmony. Mr Bianchi assures me that the manner in which she plays from score, frequently singing a part, is highly meritorious. I now allow her to sing solfeggios, and to sing more and oftener. Her voice and ear improve.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 3 September 1803)

After 1804 Margaret’s Journal contains commentary on Caroline’s behaviour during music lessons and practice periods, and praise and criticism of Caroline’s playing, but no more lists of pieces learned. Caroline Chinnery and those of her female relatives who were old enough to participate, were expected to help Margaret entertain house guests at Gillwell. In this way they were putting to good use the elegant accomplishments that had been so carefully cultivated in them. Margaret stated very clearly her views on this matter in her Journal at the beginning of 1807, when Caroline was sixteen:

It is evident therefore, that when so much pains [sic] is taken to ornament the mind of a female, and to give her elegant accomplishments the intent must be that of improving domestic society. I am not here talking of those absurd young persons, and of still more absurd parents who like to exhibit their children like public performers for the amusement of large assemblies. This practice I have ever regarded as a most indesirous folly. But the friends of the family, who occasionally join the domestic circle, should partake of its enjoyments whatever they may be, and a young person with every regard to the strictest modesty and the purest delicacy, may assist her mother in the entertainment of her friends [...]

(Ibid., 16 January 1807)

On these occasions Caroline usually played the piano or sang, and from 1804, she also played the harp. Margaret’s insistence that when her daughter performed for friends she was to observe a strictly modest behaviour was in keeping with Madame de Genlis’s views expressed in *Adèle et Théodore*. Throughout Margaret’s Journal there are comments on Caroline’s playing in front of company. On 6 February 1804 Margaret

245 Fedele Fenaroli (1730-1818), Italian music educator and composer. He was a well regarded teacher, who composed mostly Church music.
noted that Viotti was pleased with Caroline’s piano performance on one such evening, when she herself was unable to be present, being indisposed:

I was so unwell yesterday, as not to be able to leave my room before nine o'clock, in the evening. This was particularly unfortunate as there was company to dine and spend the day. But I had the pleasure of hearing from every one that my children had behaved extremely well. [...] Caroline acquitted herself very well at the piano forte. L’Amico says she never played Dussek’s sonata so well. All this was very satisfactory.

(Ibid, vol. 1, 6 February 1804)

Margaret’s reputation as an educator, especially in music, was by now well established, and in 1806 she had a request from her cousin ‘B’, Mrs [Carl?] Crawfurd244 to explain the method she used for the benefit of a friend who wished to teach her own children. In her reply to this request, Margaret wrote a long letter which constituted a detailed exposé on her piano teaching method – by far the most explicit outline of her method of music instruction to be found anywhere in the Chinnery Papers – which she copied out at the end of her Journal under the heading ‘Copy of a letter written by Mrs Chinnery to Mrs Crawfurd on the method used in teaching Caroline Music’. This is the letter:

Gilwell House Feb 6th 1806

Indeed my dear Mrs Crawfurd I do feel very much flattered by the enquiries of your correspondent, whose maternal anxiety is interesting to me beyond measure. It would be difficult to give you an idea of the method I follow in teaching my children Music within the compass of one letter or indeed without writing a little volume which would most probably not be worth your reading, when I had accomplished it. I have adopted Mdm de Genlis’s excellent idea of exercising the two hands separately; and of making my scholars practise, a great variety of passages for each hand before they attempt to put together the treble and bass of the simplest tune. And I have taken care that they never should play any of their tunes or first lessons with both hands, until they were able to play each part separately with me perfectly in time. By playing with me I mean

244 Mrs [Carl?] Crawfurd was Margaret’s cousin (daughter of Henry Holland). Her sister, Mrs R. Crawfurd (mentioned along with Carl Crawfurd at the end of the letter) appears to have been the wife of the famous general Robert ‘Crawfurd’ (1764-1812), whom the DNB (vol. 4, p. 41) describes as ‘unquestionably the finest commander of light troops who served in the Peninsula.’ He died in action in 1812. In her letter to William of 2 June 1817 (PM 94/143/1 – 17/32), Margaret writes of her mortification at not being informed of Mrs R Crawfurd’s remarriage.
that I play alternately the treble to their bass, and the bass to their treble, keeping the
time very rigidly.

So far I have copied from [my] admirable friend [Madame de Genlis]; but on every
other point I have differed from her. I cannot think that so large a portion of time should
be devoted to a study rendered merely mechanical by their being left in ignorance of the
cause and meaning of what they are required to execute. This reminds me of the
drudgery to which it is said Milton compelled his daughters, by obliging them to read
many hours daily aloud to him in languages they did not understand, and without
condescending to render the task less irksome by instructive explanations. 245 Madme de
Genlis has, I believe, altered her opinion upon the point in question. I rather think from
the tenor of a conversation I had with her on the subject that she would no longer say “Il
est absurde d’enseigner à un enfant de dix ans les regles de l’accompagnement
&c&c&c...” Perhaps at the time she wrote Adele and Theodore she was not so good a
musician as she became afterwards. But how can I enter sufficiently into details by
letter, my dear B. to enable you to judge of the plan I have followed for Caroline?

One of the general principles that have governed my conduct, in every part of the
education of my children is, that they should never be required to say, or to do any thing
that cannot be brought down to the level of their capacities, and satisfactorily explained
to them. Faith can only be asked of them, as an article of religion, on every other point
they should I think, have their reason and judgement exercised; they should as far as it
may be possible, be encouraged to find out for themselves what they want, with very
little assistance.

In obedience to this principle I never put even a gamut before a child, till she
thoroughly understands the succession of tones, and semi-tones, by which means they
know at once, why there is a sharp in the key of G, and a flat in the key of F. They then
find out and mark down on paper themselves the gamuts of all the different keys, upon
the model of the only one I ever give them that in G: this furnishes them with a perfect
knowledge of the accidents in all the keys both major, and minor. They are then
exercised in pronouncing at once what key any piece of Music may be in, according to
the indication of the clef.

The next step is the knowledge of the intervals of 2d, 3d, 4th, & & major and minor & &,
on the instrument, in the book and by the ear; for one of the evils of the usual method of
teaching is, that the ear is left out of the question. All this time they exercise their
fingers in playing the gamuts they have written in all the different keys, and also
passages written for each hand separately. When we begin to learn a tune, we observe

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245 According to the Oxford Companion to English Literature, (M. Drabble, ed., 5th edn, OUP: Oxford, 1985, p. 654) Milton had the reputation of a domestic tyrant who bullied his three daughters. By 1651 Milton was totally blind, and his daughters would have been old enough to read to him, so perhaps there was some truth in Margaret’s story.
the key, the time, upon which note of the key the first part begins and ends, the cadence, the conclusion, &c.

And the first modulation, we meet with creates great delight and surprise, and affords occasion for a new and amusing lesson. Thus I endeavour to lead them on step by step, keeping the mind always engaged, as well as the fingers. For instance as soon as they can put a few notes together, I propose their trying to play them in different keys; which from their previous knowledge of all the keys, is quite easy to them, and the first time they learn, they transpose into other keys with the greatest ease. I acknowledge they do not shine so early in a Sonata, but they are the less exposed to impressions of vanity, and when at a later period, they are commended, it is for having acquired a true knowledge of music.

It may first appear to you that this method is difficult; and would subject a child to much close application, but the reverse of this is the case. All my pupils have considered music as an amusement; and the only part of it they ever regard as a lesson, is precisely that which is usually deemed the easiest - the practising to execute sonatas and difficult pieces of music.

In the last two paragraphs of the letter Margaret issues an invitation to her cousin to come to Gillwell, gives family news and makes the usual polite enquiries.

Ever your affectionate
Margaret Chinnery

(Margaret Chinnery to B. Crawfurd, 6 February 1806 (copy), in Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, between the end of the Journal and the beginning of the Plans de journée)

Margaret acknowledges that she has borrowed her method of teaching music from her friend Madame de Genlis. Madame de Genlis's method of teaching an instrument that has two parts (harp and harpsichord) may be found in Adèle et Théodore, and stresses, as Margaret says, the need to exercise each hand separately for an inordinately long period of time before playing a piece of music with both hands. Margaret agrees with this point in principle, but not in the way Madame de Genlis puts it into practice. Her main objection is Madame de Genlis's stipulation that young pupils must practise nothing but mechanical exercises, one hand at a time, ("il faudroit exécuter à chaque main, tour-à-tour, tous les agréments, les roulades & les passages les

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plus difficiles qui peuvent se rencontrer dans une pièce")\textsuperscript{247} for a full year before playing any piece.

Margaret also disagrees with Madame de Genlis's prohibition of teaching the rules of accompaniment to a young piano student. The exact quotation from Adèle et Théodore that Margaret cites is: "Rien n'est plus absurde aussi que d'enseigner les règles de l'accompagnement à un enfant de 10 ans; cette étude est par elle-même très abstraite, & ne peut convenir qu'à 15 ou 16 ans."\textsuperscript{248} Margaret disputes the tenet that children of ten are incapable of understanding the rules of accompaniment, having had success in this domain with her own daughter. This subject was obviously debated during the many conversations the two women had in Paris in 1802, and Madame de Genlis changed her mind on this topic, as she did on many other points of education, subsequent to the publication of Adèle et Théodore.

Margaret Chinnery bought her daughter a harp in January 1804, and she began taking lessons in October the same year, just after her thirteenth birthday. Her teacher was the acclaimed Dutch harpist François Joseph Dizi, the most popular harpist in London, both as a performer and a teacher. That Viotti was instrumental in arranging these lessons (as he probably was also for arranging the children's dancing lessons with his former colleagues from the King’s Theatre) there can be no doubt, as a letter written by him to Dizi in 1806 attests:

A F.J. Dizi
Waltham Abbey

Gilwell House 5 octobre 1806

C'est à moi maintenant à vous faire des excuses, mon cher Monsieur Dizi; mais en vérité ayant presque toujours été en course depuis votre lettre, il ne m'a guère été possible de prendre la plume.

Il n'est pas possible à Miss Chinnery de se rappeler exactement le nombre des fois que vous avez bien voulu lui donner vos instructions sur la Harpe; ni quelle est la musique que vous lui avez procuré. Mme Virginie sa Gouvernante, pourrait bien, en parcourant son journal mettre ensemble tout cela, mais la pauvre fille est à Londres depuis quatre mois où elle tâche de se faire guérir d'une maladie mortelle dont elle a été attaqué.

Ainsi, donc, il faudra encore avoir recours à votre livre de souvenir, et trouver là le nombre des leçons.

\textsuperscript{247} Ibid., p. 68.
\textsuperscript{248} Ibid., p. 69.
Miss Chinnery, à son grand regret, n’a pas pu du tout s’occuper de la harpe depuis qu’elle a quitté la ville; sa santé en est la cause. Dr. Vaughan qui la soigne, a jugé à propos de lui défendre positivement la harpe et le chant; et ce n’est que par grâce spécial qu’il lui permet de temps en temps le piano. C’est avec bien de chagrin, je vous assure, qu’elle se soumet à une rigueur absolument indispensable.
Elle, et son aimable Maman, vous prient, si vous avez quelque moment à perdre, de venir les voir. Je vous fais le même prière, d’autant plus, qu’ainsi nous aurons le loisir et les moyens d’arranger le petit compte en question. Venez donc et croyez moi toujours

votre aff. née G.B. Viotti

(Viotti to F. Dizi, 5 October 1806, in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 268)

The letter concerns Dizi’s account for Caroline’s harp lessons. The Chinnerys cannot remember the exact number of lessons that must be paid for, as this information is kept in the journal of Caroline’s governess, Mademoiselle Virginie Lorraine, who is ill (although not mortally so) in London. It has fallen to Viotti to write and explain matters, and to request that Dizi call at Gillwell House to be paid.

As Caroline grew up her musical talent continued to improve, so that when she was of an age to go into society her playing and singing were in high demand and much praised, and her mother savoured every moment of the sweet success that Madame de Genlis had in Adèle et Théodore predicted.
(xiii) Home performances of plays (fêtes domestiques) by the Chinnery children

A birthday or some other special domestic event was often celebrated in eighteenth century upper class families by the performance of a short play, dramatic proverb or 'romance' (rhyming couplets set to music) composed especially for the occasion, and in which young family members took the leading roles. Madame de Genlis was particularly fond of these fêtes - which were often both celebratory and educational - composing many such dedicated plays and 'romances' in her youth. The practice continued into the nineteenth century, and was a favourite form of amusement in the Chinnery family. In families where practical musical skills were of a high level, or where the influence of music was very strong, these fêtes took on ambitious proportions, such as the one organised by members of Giuseppe Naldi's family for his Saint's Day.250

There are some writings (verses, 'romances', and others that look like stage directions) in the Powerhouse and the Fisher collections that appear to be manifestations of such fêtes domestiques. The earliest are in 1802, when the Chinnerys and Viotti were in Paris. The family was in Paris for the twins' birthday on 3 September, and all except William were still there for Margaret's on 16 October. There is no mention of what took place on the twins' birthday, but as can be seen from Margaret's description of the twins' birthday celebrations in 1801,251 it was not at all similar to the celebration of a parent's birthday. On these last occasions the performances tended to be a form of homage paid by the younger to the older members of the family.

The 1802 celebration for Margaret's birthday took place at the Chinnerys' abode in Paris, the Hotel de l'Empire, rue Cerutti. For Viotti, it was an opportunity to invite his closest musical friends, among whom were his disciples Pierre Baillot and Pierre Rode, and the composer Cherubini and his wife and family. The Chinnerys' friendship with the Cherubinis appears to date from around this time. By October the Chinnerys were also on close terms with Madame de Genlis, who had received her own invitation, but had to decline owing to work pressures.252

The fête, consisting apparently of three 'romances', was organised by Viotti, with the help of the Chinnery children's French master, Maître Batailliard. Viotti's

251 See p. 314.
friends Cherubini and Baillot contributed original compositions, as did Madame de Genlis herself. These three items are in the Powerhouse collection, the first and last being numbered one and three in Viotti’s hand. The first was a ‘romance’ sung by Caroline Chinnery to her mother – with the other two children joining in at each refrain – and set to music by Cherubini. It had all the hallmarks of a Madame de Genlis creation, filled as it was with sentiments of filial love, duty and gratitude (‘repos, vertus, gloire, talens, nous devons tout à nos parens’) and the hypothesis that it was indeed penned by her is proved by a copy of a letter sent to Madame de Genlis by Margaret Chinnery in 1825 in which she says that she still has the pretty basket containing the verses that Madame de Genlis sent her for her birthday: ‘J’ai encore la corbeille fond bleu avec les ornements en blanc que vous avez daigné m’envoyer le jour de ma fête l’année 1802, dans laquelle se trouvent vos charmants vœux faits pour ce jour.’ The words are as follows:

Tendresse si vive et si pure,
  doux sentiment de la nature
  vous estes le premier bonheur
  et le premier culte du cœur.
  de la naissance d’une mère ... refrain que répéteront les trois enfants

Le jour solennel et touchant
  est pour l’enfant reconnaissant
  l’époque la plus chère.

2d couplet

Oui, l’on est heureux dès qu’on aime
  cette félicité suprême
  pour nous dans nos plus jeunes ans
  est un bienfait de nos parens.
  de la naissance d’une mère &c ... bis par les enfants

3.

l’amour filial dès l’enfance

252 See Part II, Chapter 3.
253 No music is to be found with any of the verses.
254 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher. That Madame de Genlis was still composing such ‘romances’ right into her old age is shown by her comment in her Mémoires (vol. 6,
sait embellir notre existence,
l'amitié veut de la raison
et l'amour n'a qu'une saison.
de la naissance ..........&c. bis

4.
est-il des dangers dans la vie
quand notre mère est notre amie?
repos, vertus, gloire, talens,
nous devons tout à nos parens.
de la naissance ..........&c. bis
fin.

('Romance faite pour le jour de naissance de Mme Chinnery', 16 October [1802], PM 94/143/1 – 1/3)

The second item was another 'romance' written for the occasion by Maître Batailliard, to be sung by one of the children to their mother. He enclosed it in a note to George on Saturday 16 October 1802, saying 'Je vous envoye quelques couplets. Vous verrez avec Mademoiselle Caroline l'usage que vous pourrez faire.' He also enclosed birthday greetings for Margaret. The following is his composition, which he suggested be sung to the tune of 'Lise chantoit dans la prairie':

Reçois, Maman, dans ce beau jour,
de ta jeune et chère famille les vœux,
le Respect et l'Amour.
chacun autour de toi s'empresse,
pour payer d'un juste Retour
les doux Bienfaits que la tendresse
sur nous tous (Bis) verse avec largesse

Ce Bouquet, fragile Parure,
voit bientôt perdre ses couleurs,
mais, en revanche, la Nature
nous a donné d'excellents cœurs;
Pour tribut la Reconnaissance
te les présente ornés de fleurs.
Jamais le temps ni l'inconstance

p.140) in which she mentions one which she composed and sang, accompanying herself on the harp,
sur le Bien (Bis) n’auront de Puissance.

En l’absence et loin d’un bon Père,
Daigne sourire à tes Enfants:
comble nos Desirs, ô ma Mère!
Ouvre nous tes bras caressants:
Pour cette faveur souhaitée,
puisse le Ciel encore longtemps
offrir à ton âme charmée
le Plaisir (Bis) de cette journée.

Batailllard

(Batailllard to George Chinnery, 16 October 1802, PM 94/143/1 – 25/1)

Proof that this was specially written for the occasion is in the opening line of the last stanza, which begins ‘En l’absence et loin d’un bon Père’. William Chinnery had just returned to England (presumably his leave of absence from the British Treasury was up), leaving Margaret (whose extended stay had been caused by illness) and the children to follow shortly after, so that the celebrations were taking place without him.

The third item was Madame Cherubini’s tribute to Margaret, expressed, as were the first two, in rhyme, and containing similar sentiments of love, friendship and esteem. At the top of the paper is written in Viotti’s idiosyncratic mixture of French, English and Italian: ‘Mrs La Padrona Cara. No. 3. Parole de M. Baillot’. The music of the ‘Couplets chantés par M’die Cherubini à Madame Chinnery’ is of an unknown composer, but the words, by Pierre Baillot, are as follows:

1.
Pour fêter mon amie
Je veux aussi chanter:
J’invoque l’harmonie
Qui fait tout Animé.
l’Amitié qui m’enflamme
a des Accords touchans,
elle remplit mon Ame
e lle a dicté mon chant.

for her great-grandson Cyrus Gérard.
Aimable autant qu’aimée
Vous que chacun chérît,
[...?] autant qu’estimée
pour le cœur et l’esprit,
ah revenés en France
rendés vous à nos vœux!
sans vous, plus d’espérance
d’être jamais heureuse.

('Couplets chantés par Mde Cherubini à Madame Chinnery', 16 October [1802], PM 94/143/1 - 1/4)

Again there are personal references in the poem. Margaret is ‘estimée pour le cœur et l’esprit’ and beseeched to return to France.

Two more such fêtes are recorded in the Chinnery Papers, both of which celebrated the birthday of William Chinnery on 3 March. As soon as the children were old enough to make the attempt, they began, like Adèle and Théodore d’Almane, to compose and mount their own plays to celebrate birthdays. Having already performed plays by Madame de Genlis and others, they were familiar with the genre and well­practised in the appropriate expressions of affection and filial gratitude. Margaret noted with satisfaction in her Journal entry of 24 February 1804 that, unknown to her, Caroline and George had conceived the idea of writing a short play for their father’s birthday:

They have both been very much taken up during the last fortnight in making preparations for a little Fête they intend giving their Papa on Saturday next, the third of March. Unknown to me they each wrote a Drama, their plan was first to invent the fable, then write upon it separately, and afterwards compare the two, and by selecting the best parts of each, blend the two productions into one little work. [...] Their production which I like the better for being a joint production, does equal honour to their heads and hearts. [...] No assistance whatever has been afforded beyond advice, criticism, and in some places a few words to connect the parts.

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 1, 24 February 1804)

Margaret made a second mention of this play in her yearly progress report of the twins’ achievements: ‘Ils ont composé, appris, et joué une petite pièce pour la fête de
leur Père qui était veritablement une production étonnante pour deux enfants de douze ans. Tous les spectateurs par leurs larmes et leur surprise, m’ont appris avec quelle vérité et bon sens, ils jouent la comédie. Margaret’s comments are reminiscent of the words of the Baronne d’Almane who, in boasting of her children’s theatrical endeavours to her friend the Vicomtesse, speaks of ‘des Pantomimes exécutées par nos enfants’ and of ‘des spectacles, des fêtes, des surprises charmantes’ planned by them.

The following year a belated birthday ‘proverb’ was staged by the children in honour of their father on 6 or 7 April 1805, according to Margaret’s Journal. On 22 April 1805 she noted: ‘Our spectacle on the 7th (papa’s birthday) went off admirably; all were deservedly applauded.’ One week later she wrote of a repeat performance of the same dramatic proverb before some house guests: ‘Our little company of comedians performed better by far on Saturday evening than they did on the 6th. They all played with more care and spirit. The Proverb and the dance went off with equal éclat. The greatest part of the company remained with us yesterday, and left Gillwell this morning.’ The rehearsals for this event were noted in Margaret’s Journal entry of 1 April 1805: ‘[...] the remainder of this week, must be chiefly passed in preparation for our little fête on Sat. in honour of Papa’s birthday. Margaret’s ongoing bone of contention concerning her children’s posture was again mentioned. One of the aims of performing such plays was to teach the children to move gracefully, and Margaret, like the Baronne d’Almane, made the children attend to the way they held themselves: ‘I must however admonish both of them that they hold their chins as bad as ever, -- perhaps worse, -- and this affords but a bad prospect for the gracefulness of person and action that will be required in acting and dancing.’ From these words it is clear that the performance was a musical one, and included dancing.

In the Fisher collection there is an undated short piece of writing that seems as though it might have been composed for such an occasion. Written in Margaret’s hand, and entitled ‘Le Berger suisse éloigné de sa patrie’, it begins in a sentimental vein.

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255 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 3 September 1804.
256 Adèle et Théodore, vol. 3, p. 121.
257 William Chinnery’s birthday was on 3 March. Margaret was clearly referring to the day it was celebrated, not the actual birth date.
258 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 22 April 1805.
259 Ibid., 29 April 1805.
260 Ibid., vol. 1, 1 April 1805.
261 Ibid.
similar to that found in the juvenile dramas of a Berquin, a Madame de La Fite or a Madame de Genlis: ‘Helas! Berger infortuné, éloigné de ta patrie, tu te rappelle les doux moments où jadis au pied d’un vieux chêne, accompagné de ta nymphe adorée tu voyais bondir le jeune agneau, tu écoutais le mugissement des troupeaux & le doux ramage des oiseaux […]’ The themes of exile and idyllic pastoral life could conceivably be a reference to William’s living in London, away from the country tranquillity of Gillwell – an unwittingly accurate prediction of his later real exile.

In the warmer seasons these plays were performed out of doors, in the small theatre in the Gillwell gardens, often before company, just as Madame de Genlis had performed in the château gardens of her youth. A note addressed to William Chinnery at the Treasury from the poet Samuel Rogers (who was at Tunbridge Wells with William Spencer), regrets that they were unexpectedly prevented from setting out for Gillwell to attend one such play performance, adding: ‘Pray remember us very particularly to one & all of the Comedians. We shall be with you in imagination & invoke the Sun to shine without a Cloud.’

Among Caroline Chinnery’s papers in the Powerhouse collection is a page of undated writing in Viotti’s hand entitled ‘Palais de l’Esperance’, which may have been the opening stage directions for one of these plays. If it was not the proverb of 1805, it was certainly one of the spectacles that the Chinnery children presented at some stage during their education. The play in question was a kind of musical allegory. The palace of hope ‘est bâti par l’imagination – On y est introduit par le désir. – On y attend tous les jours l’Affection et l’affidélité pour les marier ensemble.’ The description of the young fairy of the palace, seated on her throne and surrounded by children ‘d’une beauté céleste’, who hold in their hands ‘des phioles de diamant, pleines d’une liqueur souveraine pour tous les maux’ is idealised to such a degree that it betrays its juvenile authorship. At the bottom of the sheet is Viotti’s trademark signature (two treble clefs), that he affixes to any words meant to be accompanied by music, proving his involvement in this production.


263 Remnant of a juvenile play or proverb ‘Le Berger suisse éloigné de sa patrie’, Fisher.

264 Samuel Rogers to William Chinnery, 31 August [1805?], Fisher.
All these productions, as well as many further examples of the Chinnery children's talents, 266 are testimony to the success that Margaret enjoyed in her implementation of Madame de Genlis's educational principles.

265 The title bears a certain similarity to that of a conte by Madame de Genlis, Le Palais de la Vérité, which originally appeared in volume four of the first edition of her Veillées du château.

266 Discussed in Part II, Chapters 3 and 4.
By the end of 1807 Caroline and George’s secondary education had come to a close, and they were both fully cognisant of the benefits that had been bestowed on them. Their piety, their desire for self-improvement and their gratitude to their educator are expressed in two pieces of writing of which Madame de Genlis would have fully approved. The first, ‘Reflections on New Year’s Day’, was penned by George on 1 January 1805. In words that mimicked Margaret’s own, George wrote of the need to possess ‘self command enough to overcome our passions’, to correct ‘gross blemishes in our Character’ by means of ‘deep meditation’, and ‘through the mediation of Jesus Christ amend our Lives according to the will of God’. William was so taken with these words that he made a copy of them, above which he wrote that his son’s reflections were an ‘honorable [...] testimony of the conciseness of his Thoughts, – the goodness of his Heart & of the result [...] of his dear Mother’s unexampled Care & Abilities in thus instilling into him the only true Principles of right Conduct in this Life’. 

In the second piece of writing both twins paid tribute to the care Margaret had taken with their education in a birthday letter to their mother. With its reference to the end of their childhood, the letter seems to date from 16 October 1807:

Dear Mama,
Again we behold the anniversary of your Birth-Day with equal delight & heart-felt joy. And again all the thoughts which this day annually recalls are presented to our minds. This day we look back on past childhood & contemplate with gratitude and pleasure greater than words can express the tender cares of an affectionate Mother, who has watched continually in our infancy both on our education & health. Oh, how good is that Mother, and what do we not owe to her. Ah! surely we have enjoyed advantages, greater than any children were blessed with in their education [...] 

(George and Caroline to Margaret, [16 October 1807], Fisher)

The letter ended with a pledge to endeavour always to profit from the ‘good education and excellent precepts’ that they had been given.

That the twins were now at the end of their childhood education is made clear by the words Margaret entered in her Journal on the day they took their first Communion. ‘From this day’, she wrote, ‘they will I hope require no other government than that of
their own reason.  

She had already given Caroline proof of her new station as an adult on her sixteenth birthday (as had the Baronne d’Almane to her daughter Adèle) by refurbishing her room, giving her her own personal servant and a quantity of jewellery, and granting her an allowance of twenty-five guineas a year, out of which she was to provide for her small personal needs. Margaret explained that had they been living in town, she would have been given fifty guineas a year, and made responsible for the purchase of her own clothing, but since they were living in the country, this was not possible. George was given the same allowance until his departure for Oxford, when he was to receive, as can be seen from the Oxford correspondence, a very generous yearly allowance of three hundred pounds.

George’s departure for Oxford took place on 13 January 1808. On this date Margaret made her last entry in her education journal. It was a moving account of George’s preparations for a momentous rite of passage – the leave-taking of his childhood. Leaving nothing undone in the ritual of departure, he lingered over the desk in Margaret’s room where he had taken his first lessons, took his leave of every object that has served to his daily use, rode out to farewell all the neighbours, left money with the servants to drink his health, and presented Herr Trumpf with a gold watch. When the moment came to depart, Margaret, George and Caroline were all in tears and Viotti, who was to accompany George to Oxford, extremely distressed:

At half past five we left the dining room. When I came into this room, seeing the moment at hand, my agitation became so great that I rather hurried their going, for I feared not to have courage enough to go through, if the trial lasted much longer. Amico was cruelly agitated — indeed he looked quite ill from his pain of mind upon this occasion. Amico put on his great coat and hat, — I had just before given way to a flood of tears which had relieved me. I summoned strength enough to say “put on your great coat my love”. He did so and then wept most bitterly. During the whole of the last dreadful half hour, he had been in tears and hung over me, holding my hand in his with the fondest affection. I now for his sake and for his sister’s said “Go now my love while I yet can say so. He embraced his sister who sobbed aloud in his arms, then kissed each of the little girls, and threw himself in mine. God only knows how I had fortitude.

267 George Chinnery’s ‘Reflections on New Year’s Day’ (copy), 1 January 1805, Osborn fd. 11, item 3.
270 Ibid., 2 August 1807.
271 M to G, 26 January 1809, Ch.Ch. This was to cover all expenses except board and commons.
enough to let him go. Why I did not hold him fast there till this time!... But Amico now embraced me and hurried my beloved boy out of the room, — they got out of [into] the chaise. I sank on my knees. I heard the chaise draw off with them. I then committed my child most fervently to the care of Heaven — and as soon as I could, I rose to support and comfort my poor Caroline, who wept a long time on my neck before I could appease her sufferings by words of consolation!

(Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 13 January 1808)

On leaving home George was every bit as naive as was to be expected of a young boy who had never lived outside the parental roof. But to compensate for and far outweigh this disadvantage (as the author of the *Spectator* essay on the home versus school education debate would have agreed),\(^\text{272}\) he had had instilled in him all the virtues that came with the sort of education that Madame de Genlis advocated, and that Margaret Chinnery so successfully put into effect.

Just how successful the Chinnery children’s education at Gillwell was may be best summed up by Margaret herself, who, writing in 1811 when the twins were twenty, and when George had distinguished himself at Oxford and Caroline had won the hearts and admiration of all of fashionable London, she told George:

Do you know that the more I see of the world, the more I am confirmed in all the principles I have been so many years endeavouring to instil into your mind and your sister’s, — how usefully, how nobly we spent our time during ten years, ten lovely years of perfect enchantment at Gillwell! I could weep to think that they are forever gone, and that all the rest of my existence must comparatively be a blank!... But then I have the consolation of observing and feeling every hour of my life that those years were well employed, and that I am repaid an hundred fold for what was then a pleasure, since in the whole world there are not two such children as mine!

(M to G, 21 September 1811, Ch.Ch.)

\(^{272}\) Vol. 4, no. 313, p. 56, in which the writer opts for a home education because ‘although he [the child] might be more innocent if educated at home, he will not be contaminated by vice’, and because ‘virtue is harder to obtain than knowledge of the world, and [...] vice [...] a much more dangerous fault than sheepishness’.
Chapter 2

The Correspondence of Madame de Genlis with Margaret Chinnery, 1802 – 1825

The thirty-eight letters from Madame de Genlis (mostly to Margaret Chinnery) in the Fisher collection are among the most interesting in the CFP collection. In addition to the Madame de Genlis – Margaret Chinnery correspondence, the collection contains rare examples of Casimir Baecker’s letters, (apparently) the only known letter from Madame de Genlis to her adopted daughter Paméla, and the only known letter from Madame de Genlis to Viotti. These items (in the Fisher collection) may be summed up succinctly as follows:

- 30 letters from Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery
- 1 letter from Madame de Genlis to William Chinnery
- 5 letters from Madame de Genlis to her adopted son Casimir
- 1 letter from Madame de Genlis to her adopted daughter Paméla
- 1 letter from Madame de Genlis to Viotti
- 5 letters (copies) from Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis
- 5 letters from Casimir to Margaret Chinnery
- 1 letter (copy) from Margaret Chinnery to Casimir
- About a dozen miscellaneous letters from various people in England who had an interest in Casimir's visit to England in 1807

The date span of the correspondence is 1802 – 1825. The bulk of Madame de Genlis’s letters to Margaret Chinnery are contained in two main series, that of 1802 (sixteen letters) and 1807 – 1808 (twelve letters). The latter are much longer and more detailed than the former, and relate to Casimir’s visit to England, which took place between June 1807 and February 1808. Two other letters are dated 1803 and 1814. There is a long gap in the correspondence before the last letter, which was written by Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis in 1825, when, like so many others, Margaret found herself maligned in the latest volume of her friend’s Mémoires.

Gabriel de Broglie (op. cit., p. 359) regrets that they have all been lost.
The letters that Madame de Genlis wrote to her adopted children were mostly under the cover of letters sent to Margaret, and remained in her possession because she was unable to forward them to the intended recipients. They date from the 1807 period.

The survival of this valuable collection owes much to the meticulous care with which Margaret Chinnery preserved all her correspondence. While some of Madame de Genlis’s letters that reached Margaret Chinnery have since been lost, as well as some to Caroline and to Viotti, others either went astray in the post (for example a letter that Madame de Genlis said she sent to Margaret on 30 November 1802 on the death of Walter Chinnery, and three more to Viotti on the same occasion), or were intercepted during the Napoleonic wars and never reached her. Further letters that Madame de Genlis says she sent to Viotti are likewise unable to be found, although much of his personal correspondence remains among the Chinnery papers.

The letters touch on a variety of subjects and personalities then occupying Madame de Genlis’s thoughts. They betray the ceaseless activity of her mind, forever fired with new projects, new occupations, and above all, new writings. They are fresh, spontaneous and above all, frank in their free expression of her present feelings and past afflictions. In her 1802 letters she dispenses from on high much advice to her younger admirer on subjects ranging from education to medicine, but behind the pedagogue and advice-giver one finds a woman almost piteous in her craving for affection. In her 1807 letters, which all revolve around her grand design to launch Casimir as a concert harpist in London, the advice continues, but here the grand lady is on many occasions reduced to a supplicant, so enslaving is her love for her wayward protégé.

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2 Two were sent under cover to Casimir’s guardian in England Colonel Macleod (see below), who forwarded them to Casimir at Gillwell.
3 Margaret makes mention of one that she received on 16 May 1809, which is not in the CFP collection (M to G, 16 May 1809, Ch.Ch.).
4 See Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher.
5 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (s), 12 frimaire (3 December) [1802], Fisher.
6 G to M, 18 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
7 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 16 April 1803, and 23 October 1807, Fisher.
(i) The 1802 correspondence during the Chinnerys’ visit to Paris

Of the seventeen 1802 letters, only four are dated8 (most simply bearing the day of the week, proving the close daily contact between the two women), and as all those written while Margaret Chinnery was in Paris were delivered by hand, there are no postmarks to help. However, the period that the Chinnerys and Viotti spent in Paris can be easily deduced from Margaret’s Journal. In writing up her children’s achievements for the year ending 3 September 1802, Margaret notes: ‘C’est aujourd’hui le 4 Novembre, mais comme j’étais le jour de la Naissance des enfans à Paris, j’écris aujourd’hui à mon retour ce que j’aurais dû écrire alors.’ Later in the same entry she says: ‘Notre voyage à Paris a interrompu les exercices du corps depuis le mois d’Aout dernier’,9 demonstrating that the family was in France in August and was back at Gillwell by 4 November. A letter from the violinist Pierre Rode to Margaret Chinnery, dated ‘le 17 brumaire an 11’ (8 November 1802)10 narrows down the date of their departure from France even further: ‘Voila déjà plus de trois semaines que l’aimable & bonne Madame Chinnery est partie.’11 The period that the Chinnerys spent in Paris therefore extended from August to late October 1802.

Margaret Chinnery had been an admirer of Madame de Genlis since she was a girl of fifteen. At sixteen she had, in her own words, devoured the latter’s first novel on education, Adèle et Théodore, and not content with simply admiring Madame de Genlis’s educational principles in theory, had applied them directly to the education of her own children, as has been seen in the previous chapter. No wonder, then, that she was keen to make the acquaintance of a mentor whom she had hitherto been able to admire only from afar. She had the opportunity of doing so during the Peace of Amiens, that brief cessation of hostilities between France and England that extended from March 1802 to May 1803. The Chinnerys, like the ten thousand other English tourists who flocked to Paris during this period,12 were curious to view at first hand the effects on the French capital of the recent historic events and perhaps catch a glimpse of the little man who had made such a big impact on Europe. Although they undoubtedly partook of the

8 For this reason I have allocated to all the 1802 letters a letter of the alphabet, corresponding to what is perceived to be their chronological order, to facilitate identification.
9 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, 3 September 1802, PM 94/143/1 – 3.
10 Transcribed in full in Part I, pp. 119-120.
11 Pierre Rode to Margaret Chinnery, 8 November 1802, Fisher.
general sightseeing, and enjoyed the opera and other spectacles, their visit was far more educational than that of the majority of English sightseers, who were bent on enjoying the pleasures of a city whose attractions had been for so long denied them. Their party consisted of Margaret, William, Caroline and George (aged eleven), Walter (aged nine), and their de facto family member Viotti, who was making his first visit to Paris since his flight from that city in 1792.

It is unclear whether Margaret had a formal channel of introduction to Madame de Genlis, or whether she simply wrote her a letter, as did so many others, asking for a meeting. Madame de Genlis’s keen interest in music would certainly have reminded her of the name Viotti – she probably attended his Paris performances at the Concert Spirituel in the 1780s and may even have met him at the Palais Royal. He was doubtless the main facilitator of the two women’s first meeting.

The early correspondence between Madame de Genlis and Margaret Chinnery is a very warm one, in which both women open their hearts to each other without reserve. Madame de Genlis sets the tone, beginning very formally in the third person. She writes to arrange their first meeting: ‘quel que fut le jour que voulu fixer Madame Chinnery il conviendroit à Mme de Genlis mais puisqu’elle lui prescrit d’en choisir un elle lui propose mardi prochain entre midi et une heure’. She progresses very quickly to more affectionate terms, ending her second letter to Margaret with ‘un tendre embrassement donné du fond de l’ame’. Finally the bond between the two women reaches the intimacy of a mother/daughter relationship and Madame de Genlis signs off: ‘adieu mon cher ange, ma chère fille je vous embrasse maternellement’.

There is no doubt that the empathy which these women felt for each other was immediate and deep. Understandably, Madame de Genlis felt just as gratified by the younger woman’s unstinted admiration and unquestioning approval as Margaret Chinnery felt honoured by her mentor’s favour. Bruised as she was by the unrelenting slander, gossip and criticism that had pursued her throughout her eight-year exile, and still continued on her return to Paris in 1800, Madame de Genlis must have been warmed by Margaret’s confession that after reading Adèle et Théodore she gave thanks

13 In the Viotti entry in G. Grove’s Dictionary of Music (1st edn., vol. 4, p. 301), it is stated that Viotti had had ‘some personal dealings with the Duc d’Orléans (Philippe-Egalité)’.
14 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (a), 24 fructidor 1802, Fisher. Madame de Genlis adds ‘aout 1802’, which does not correspond to the Revolutionary calendar date given (11 September).
15 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (b), [c. September 1802], Fisher.
to God for having been introduced to such a venerable writer: ‘j’ai rendu grace à Dieu toute ma vie de cette preuve de sa bonté. Depuis ce temps j’écoute sa voix avec une extreme veneration, et je sens avec delice que je lui dois une reconnoissance sans bornes.’ The two exchanged visits, Margaret calling on Madame de Genlis at her apartments within the Arsenal Library where Napoleon had given her lodging four months earlier, and the latter visiting the Hotel de l’Empire, Chaussée d’Antin, rue Cerutti, where the Chinnery party was staying. They also met at least once at the home of Madame de Genlis’s son-in-law, the Comte Cyrus de Valence.

It is evident from the 1802 letters that Madame de Genlis still liked to surround herself with children and still enjoyed the role of pedagogue. With her at the Arsenal lived her young protégés Alfred Lemaire, a five-year-old orphan whom she took in on her return to Paris; Stéphanie Alyon, the twelve-year-old daughter of the old Bellechasse chemistry tutor; and eleven-year-old Casimir Baeker, the gifted young boy whom she had adopted in Berlin in 1799. Casimir was already the object of her obsessive love, and her outright favourite. Madame de Genlis taught all her protégés to play the harp, and in one of her letters to Margaret she apologises for her hasty writing on account of one of these lessons: ‘pardonnes ce griffonnage. j’ai une harpe dans l’oreille qu’il faut écouter et reprendre.’ Margaret Chinnery’s children were of course of intense interest to Madame de Genlis, being brought up as they were according to her own educational method, and she mentions them favourably and

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16 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (s), 12 December [1802], Fisher.
17 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), (f), [c. September 1802], Fisher.
18 The granting of this lodging caused friction, with Madame de Genlis making an enemy of the librarian whom she displaced. On her return to Paris in 1800, Madame de Genlis had been obliged to re-establish herself in a city where she no longer had a pension from the Duc d’Orléans and no longer enjoyed the use of royal apartments. Out of necessity she quickly rebuilt her reputation as an author, as a result of which Napoleon, who was pleased to encourage the arts, provided her with lodging and granted her a pension on the condition that she would write to him regularly on a variety of subjects (see de Broglie, pp. 335-341).
19 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (c), [c. September 1802], Fisher. Comte Cyrus de Valence (1757-1820), French general, married Madame de Genlis’s younger daughter Pulchérie in 1784. He had been close to the Duc d’Orléans (Philippe-Egalité), and like him, was sympathetic to the Revolution. He went into exile during the Revolution, and was reunited with his wife, who had remained in Paris, on his return to France. He later commanded Napoleon’s armies in Spain, Germany and Russia. At the time of the Restoration he was made a peer by Louis XVIII.
20 Since her own childhood Madame de Genlis had had a passion for surrounding herself with young pupils, and in adulthood she indulged this passion by adopting children and educating them. The first and most famous of these was Pamela, whose mysterious origins are still the subject of much speculation. Charles Ferrier (see pp. 340-341), who is not mentioned in any other secondary source on Madame de Genlis, seems to have been another such pupil (or rather disciple), although he did not actually live with her.
lovingly in almost every letter. After the ‘douce impression’ that Margaret made on her after their first meeting, Madame de Genlis looked forward to seeing her again ‘avec tout ce qui est digné de l’entourer’.22 Margaret was invited to bring the whole family with her on her visits to the Arsenal (‘venés My dear Madam, nous vous attendrons vendredi et toute la chère et charmante famille, et vous serez rçue avec le plus tendre sentiment de reconnaissance, de joie et d’amitié’),23 and Madame de Genlis, for her part, usually arrived at the Chinnerys’ hotel accompanied by Casimir and his tutor. Madame de Genlis was impressed by the family picture that the Chinnerys presented:

je suis sortie hier de chés vous charmée et touchée au delà de toute expression. vous offris au milieu de votre famille un tableau unique pour le cœur et l’esprit, et il suffit de le contempler pour devenir bon. cela vaut mieux que tous les livres du monde mais on peut se former une grande bibliothèque d’excelens livres et malheureusement on ne se formera jamais une grande collection de semblables tableaux.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (e), [c. September 1802])

Madame de Genlis’s attachment to young children at this stage in her life, when her own daughter, Pulchérie, was a married woman of thirty-five, was partly emotional. The innocence of childhood appealed to her after a long exile of painful experiences,24 and her desire to die surrounded by children, confessed in a letter to Margaret, would appear to stem from a deep sense of disenchantment with the world: ‘Afin de penser jusqu’à mon dernier moment que l’amitié sublime, la reconnaissance passionnée, la générosité sans faste ne sont point des illusions je veux mourir entouré d’enfants.’25 By the time the Chinnerys’ projected departure was imminent, Madame de Genlis had become attached to the whole family, and wanted them all reunited in her home for one last time, including ‘monsieur chinnery [...] et l’amico et les charmans enfans! que je serai heureuse de voir réunis sous mon toit cette famille intéressante qui m’est devenue si chère!’.26

21 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (c), [c. September 1802], Fisher.
22 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (a), 24 fructidor, ‘aout 1802’, Fisher.
23 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (b), [c. September 1802], Fisher.
24 Through her connection with the name Orleans, she was hunted from almost every spot where she sought refuge.
25 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (g), [c. October 1802], Fisher.
26 Ibid.
As it transpired, Margaret’s ill health detained her in Paris for two weeks longer,\textsuperscript{27} giving her the opportunity to meet many more times with her friend. On receiving Margaret’s letter advising her of the new plans, Madame de Genlis was pleased that there were to be no adieux on their next meeting: ‘ce jour sera d’autant plus charmant qu’il n’y aura point d’adieux.’\textsuperscript{28} Clearly referring to her painful separation ten years earlier from her husband the Marquis de Sillery and from her lover Philippe-Egalité, who were both guillotined in 1793, she continues: ‘combien les adieux me font de peine! quels douleureux souvenirs ils me rappellent!’\textsuperscript{29}

At the time of the Chinnerys’ stay in Paris, Madame de Genlis had not yet begun her Saturday salons at the Arsenal, but she nevertheless seems to have introduced Margaret to certain of her friends, one of whom was the genre and water colour painter Hubert Robert,\textsuperscript{30} who had executed an allegory of the death of the Marquis de Sillery at the hands of the Revolution (\textit{Allégorie sur le tombeau de Sillery}). In the Fisher collection there is a letter from Hubert Robert to William Chinnery, written from the Louvre, and dated 13 November 1802.\textsuperscript{31}

On the occasion of Madame de Genlis’s first visit to the Hotel de l’Empire, she asked permission to bring her ‘disciple’, Charles Ferrier – whom she described as ‘un jeune homme parfait par les mœurs, l’esprit et les agréments’ – to hear Viotti play. This young man was the son of her old friend General Ferrier who, she says, was at the time living on his property eighty leagues from Paris. He had sent his son to live in Paris in a quarter not far from the Arsenal, in order to further his education under her watchful eye.\textsuperscript{32} In his biography of Madame de Genlis, de Broglie mentions a ‘général Ferrière’\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{27} Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), (m), November [recte October] 1802, Fisher. Viotti and the children remained with her, and William returned to England alone.

\textsuperscript{28} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (k), [October 1802], Fisher.

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid.} During Madame de Genlis’s exile there were other emotional separations – from Pamela in 1792, from Louis-Philippe in 1792 and from Adélaïde d’Orléans in 1794, among others.

\textsuperscript{30} Hubert Robert (1733-1808), Parisian artist who went to study in Rome. On his return to France, he obtained lodging at the Louvre (1770) and a comfortable sinecure with the title of dessinateur des jardins du Roi. During the Revolution he was arrested and imprisoned, saved from the guillotine by the 9 thermidor. According to de Broglie (op. cit., p. 339), Robert was one of the many writers and artists to have been recommended by Madame de Genlis to Napoleon, from whom he obtained a pension of 1,250 francs and lodgings at the Louvre. This was where he was living at the time the Chinnerys met him.

\textsuperscript{31} Hubert Robert to William Chinnery, 13 November 1802, Fisher, in which he asks if Viotti has been able to find a buyer in London for the Duc de Rohan’s portrait of Madame du Barry by Madame Vigée-Lebrun. The Duke had paid 6,000 francs for the painting, but would be happy to accept 3,000.

\textsuperscript{32} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (c), [c. September 1802], Fisher. Pierre-Joseph de Ferrier (1739-1828) was a field-marshal in the army of the Duc d’Orléans and a supporter of the reforms of the early days of the Revolution. He distinguished himself in combat in the Revolutionary Army from
who was supposedly sent by Louis-Philippe, Madame de Genlis’s former pupil, to solicit her help in a petition to the Napoleonic government to retrieve some family property. It is possible that de Broglie’s General ‘Ferrière’ and the above General Ferrier were the same person, since the General Pierre-Joseph de Ferrier noted in Michaud is described as having enjoyed the favour of the House of Orléans.

‘Mr Viotti’ soon became ‘l’Amico’ to Madame de Genlis, much to his delight.34 At the end of the letter concerning Ferrier, Madame de Genlis had added the following postscript in praise of Viotti, testifying to the pleasure she took in not only listening to his playing, but also to his conversation: ‘oserois je vous prier madame de dire à M’ Viotti quel plaisir j’aurai à le revoir et à l’entendre de toutes manières. on peut l’écouter avec tant d’intérêt meme quand il ne fait pas de musique!’35 A closeness developed between them, enabling Madame de Genlis to suggest that in return for her teaching him ‘mon admirable talent pour imiter les pierres précieuses’ (a skill which Madame de Genlis prided herself on and which she describes in detail in her Mémoires),36 he might teach her ‘l’art d’enchanter tous ceux qui m’écouteront.’37 Madame de Genlis seems here to be referring to her harp playing, as in another letter she admits that she is indebted to him for reviving her interest in the harp, an occupation she had neglected for the past two years: ‘je vous prie de dire à l’Amico que depuis que j’ai l’espoir d’avoir un rondeau de lui je me suis remis à jouer de la harpe depuis deux jours p’ la 1ère fois depuis deux ans et contre mon attente je crois que je retrouverai des doigts.’38 Viotti did give Madame de Genlis some of his music, inscribed with a few words of tribute, for which she thanked him in a letter to Margaret just before the latter’s departure: ‘je [le] remercie mille fois de la précieuse ligne tracée de sa main sur la belle musique qu’il m’a donnée [sic].’39

As both women were passionate about education, music and Madame de Genlis’s books, it is certain that these subjects – especially the latter – provided the

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33 De Broglie, op. cit., p. 352.  
34 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), (d), [c. September 1802], Fisher.  
35 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (c), [c. September 1802], Fisher.  
37 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (c), [c. September 1802]. See below for a discussion of Madame de Genlis’s skill in handicrafts.  
38 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (l), [October 1802].  
39 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (o), [c. October 1802], Fisher.
main topics of conversation during their meetings. In one of her letters, Margaret tells Madame de Genlis that she does not agree with a criticism which the English educationalist Miss Hamilton made of the novel *Adele et Théodore* in her recent book. Madame de Genlis replied in that seemingly ingenuous manner which she employs so frequently to her own advantage in her *Mémoires*, and which consists of magnanimously acknowledging the merits of her detractors while at the same time adding a deft stroke of malice cleverly couched in an innocent remark: ‘je n’ai pu lire encore que la moitié du 1er volume de l’ouvrage de miss Hamilton et j’en suis charmée [...] l’ouvrage de miss Hamilton n’est ici ni traduit ni connu, je vais en publier un extrait dans lequel je la louerai du fond de l’ame’. Besides, she continued, she was used to having her writings on education criticised by her contemporaries. The only writers who supported her were, she said, ‘deux étrangers justement célèbres feu Mme Macaulay et Mr Campe.’

But if humility was not one of Madame de Genlis’s chief virtues, generosity certainly was. On Margaret Chinnery’s departure from Paris she presented her with a bound manuscript copy (done in the superb handwriting of her copyist, ‘Mf Oudart’) of a book of mythology compiled from her own notes expressly for the Chinnery children: ‘il faut vous confier que sur mes extraits non imprimés je vous compose un livre de mythologie pour les charmans enfans, [...] que je ferai relier et qui sera tout prêt dans trois semaines.’ The manuscript was described by Margaret in her 1825 letter as ‘rélié en marocain rouge avec vos chiffres entremêlées.’ She also generously offered to put together for her new friend a small collection of her manuscript works (also

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41 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (g), [c. September, 1802]. The Englishwoman Mrs Catharine Macaulay (1731-1791) and the German Joachim Heinrich Campe (1746-1818) were both writers on education. Catharine Macaulay was the author of *Letters on Education, with observations on religious and metaphysical subjects*, published in London in 1790. Campe enjoyed great renown in France as a children’s writer. He had held many educational posts in Germany, including that of tutor to the Prussian crown princes in 1773, but mainly devoted himself to the writing of children’s books. His 16-volume *Allgemeine Revision des gesammten Schul- und Erziehungswesens*, published in Hamburg, 1785-1792, was the first attempt to create a handbook of pedagogical knowledge. It included a translation of Locke’s thoughts on education, as well as the first complete edition of Rousseau’s *Emile* in German.

42 No information on Oudart can be found in any dictionary of biography or of music that I have consulted. His wife was apparently a musician (see p. 371).

43 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (j), [c. October 1802], Fisher.

44 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher. It is this manuscript that appears to be represented in Vigée-Lebrun’s portrait of Margaret Chinnery (see frontispiece).
copied by Oudart) of Margaret’s choice. Indeed, she even offered to have copied for
Margaret as much as she would like of her thirty volumes of unpublished ‘extraits
instructifs’. Her only stipulation was that Margaret not give or lend the works to anyone
else. 45 Madame de Genlis preferred the true appreciation of a friend to the acclaim of an
anonymous public: ‘j’éprouve qu’il est bien plus doux d’offrir un livre de soi à l’amitié
qu’au public. toutes les louanges des inconnus ou des indifférens [sic] valent elles un
sourire d’une amie?’ 46 Of her published works she made Margaret a present of the latest
edition of her Herbier moral, saying that the first edition of this work ‘imprimée à cent
lieues de moi’ was full of errors. The present edition has been augmented by L’Hymne à
l’adversité. 47

As well as her writings, Madame de Genlis made Margaret gifts of her
handcrafts. During the enforced leisure of her exile, she had had time to perfect her
artistic skills, and Madame de Génlis continued to create handworked objects of
practical use. Her first presents were a fruit basket for Margaret and a work basket for
Caroline: ‘perméttés moi de vous offrir deux niaiseries de mon ouvrage auxquelles
l’amitié seule peut donner quelque prix, une corbeille pour mettre du fruit et un petit
panier pour la charmante Caroline que j’ai fait à son intention.’ 48 Madame de Genlis
also possessed what she would have called ‘un joli talent’ for fabricating purely
decorative items, such as jewellery and creative monograms worked with all sorts of
original materials, including tiny coloured beads, imitation gem stones and even melon
seeds. A full list of all the gifts that Margaret received from Madame de Genlis in 1802,
including ‘la corbeille fond bleu avec les ornements en blanc que vous avez daigné
m’envoyer le jour de ma fête l’année 1802, dans laquelle se trouvent vos charmants
voeux faits pour ce jour’ is given in Margaret’s 1825 letter to Madame de Genlis, of
which she kept a copy:

[…] J’ai aussi une imitation d’agathe en forme de cœur, que j’ai fait monter et que je
porte, — j’ai une corbeille faite de vos mains de graines de Melon et de petites perles de
couleur rouge, un dessus de boîte de fleurs sous verre, — un ménagere pour coudre et

45 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (j), [c. October 1802], Fisher.
46 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (n), [October 1802], Fisher.
47 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (p), [October, 1802]. The first edition of her Herbier moral ou
recueil de fables nouvelles et autres pièces fugitives was published in Hamburg by Pierre Chateauneuf
in 1799.
48 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (c), [c. September 1802], Fisher.
un autre ouvrage que vous faisiez alors, c’est fait sur canevas avec un petit ruban bleu,
— et il y en a pour faire un petit sac.

(Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher)

Gifts of handcrafts were to continue in 1807 at the time of Casimir’s visit.49

Madame de Genlis, in her favourite role of pedagogue, included long paragraphs of advice in her letters, which Margaret, as Madame de Genlis’s devoted disciple, accepted gratefully. Madame de Genlis was happy to dispense all manner of counsel, including medical. In her early letters to Margaret Chinnery we see her suggesting remedies for ailments ranging from sea-sickness (‘si vous estes malade sur mer prenez sur un morceau de sucre 20 goutes d’Ether’)50 to pulmonary problems (‘j’ai la coutume de faire porter à mes enfants dans le froid des petites pièces de flanelle sur la poitrine seulemen’ quand ils sortent et je les ôte aussitôt qu’ils rentrent’),51 even covering the contingency of falling into a bog, in which case she advises the taking of a little ‘vin pur’ and ‘des frictions sèches’.52 Having learned of Walter Chinnery’s illness (a pulmonary one) after Margaret’s return to London, Madame de Genlis advised: ‘il faudra tout l’hiver soigner sa poitrine. faites lui prendre à déjeuner du syrop de gomme pendant deux mois’. The last was a remedy which she acknowledged came from the great Tronchin53, who was renowned for curing chest ailments. Madame de Genlis could sympathise with Margaret’s anxiety, being at the time herself tormented with worry over the illness of ‘une Elève chérie, une amie absente’ of whom she was very fond.54 Ten years of misfortune have made her extremely fearful for the well-being of those whom she loves, she confides to Margaret (‘dix ans d’affreux malheurs m’ont rendue si craintive pour tout ce que j’aime.’).55

Among the Chinnery/Genlis correspondence in the Fisher collection there is a small scrap of writing in Madame de Genlis’s hand, in which she recommends three botanical books and two herbal remedies. These appear to have been offered for the benefit of the Chinnery children. The ‘Livres de Botanique indiqués par Mad’m de

49 See p. 374.
50 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (j), [October 1802].
51 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 7 November 1802, Fisher.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid. Théodore Tronchin (1709-1781) was born in Geneva and educated in England. He was one of the most famous doctors of the eighteenth century, being the first to practise inoculation against smallpox in France. He inoculated the old Duc d’Orléans’ children in 1756.
54 Ibid. No clue to the identity of this person is given.
Genlis' included one by Tournefort (who wrote several popular books on botany, one of which treated the medicinal uses of plants), another by Linery and a third ‘La flore française par la marque’. The herbal cures (one a mixture of a fumitory, dandelion and chervil, and the other a concoction called ‘Jus de Réfort [raifort]’) were accompanied by instructions on dosage.

Madame de Genlis’s advice did not save Walter, who died in London in November 1802 after several weeks of an unspecified illness. In her letter of sympathy Madame de Genlis is still proffering advice: ‘dans ma lettre du 30 la funeste expérience du malheur m’engageoit à vous offrir quelques conseils, si cette lettre est perdue je vous les répéterai. mais je vous engagerai encore ici à vous faire l’effort de reprendre tout de suite vos leçons, ce sera pour vous la seule distraction.’ The advice to Margaret to take up her lessons again as soon as possible was offered from her own experience. After the death of her daughter Caroline in 1786 Madame de Genlis had within three days resumed her lessons at Bellechasse.

But this was one piece of advice which Margaret Chinnery was not, understandably, capable of following. She managed to resume her remaining children’s lessons only after a period of five months’ mourning. Madame de Genlis’s sympathy, however, was deep and genuine:

ah! mon amie j’ai pleuré et je pleure avec vous du fond de mon âme! [...] écrivés moi mon amie, débarrassés [sic] vous de cette lettre douloureuse. ô personne au monde ne comprendra vos douleurs comme moi et tous les détails qui l’accompagnent, et tous les déchirements de cœur causés par mille petites choses qui se renouvelleront si souvent et si longtemps!...

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (s), 12 frimaire [3 December 1802], Fisher)

55 Ibid.
56 Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, Histoire des plantes qui naissent aux environs de Paris, avec leur usage dans la médecine, Paris, 1698. He also wrote Elémens de botanique, ou méthode pour connaître les plantes (Paris, 1694), and a botanical work in Latin that was translated into English as The Compleat Herbal (John Nutt: Savoy, 1716).
57 J-B de Monet de Lamarck, Flore française, ou description succincte de toutes les plantes qui croissent naturellement en France, Paris, 1778. I have been unable to find any botanical work by ‘Linery’.
58 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (s), 12 frimaire (3 December) [1802].
59 At the time, she had been publicly condemned for heartlessness, but she had preferred to keep her grief private, expressing it in moving terms in a small treasured notebook. See p. 389.
Madame de Genlis was only too familiar with grief, having by then lost her husband, her lover, two of her own children and two grandchildren. Her letter contains many more recommendations and thoughts on how to deal with grief, which, she says, she has not the space to further elaborate on in her letter. If the letter of 30 November to Margaret was lost, one of the same date reached William Chinnery. In this she paid tribute to Margaret’s courage: ‘j’ose compter sur le courage de cette femme et de cette mère incomparable’. The letter is a polite one, containing all the necessary expressions of sympathy, but none of the warmth and effusion which characterises the women’s correspondence.60

In 1802, Madame de Genlis’s adopted son Casimir had been in her care for only three years. Casimir and George Chinnery, aged twelve and eleven respectively, began a childhood correspondence, setting the stage for their future intercourse in England in 1807 and 1808. Margaret finds Casimir’s style of writing way beyond his years and warns her friend that George’s reply: will not be nearly as polished and sophisticated (especially since she follows Madame de Genlis’s advice of not correcting her child’s composition). But then, she says, what can be more natural – Casimir has been raised by ‘la meilleure institutrice qui fut jamais!’61 Madame de Genlis did not hold back when it came to praising her own favourite’s efforts. Claiming not to have helped him compose the letter he addressed to George she draws Margaret’s attention to Casimir’s naturally sophisticated and elegant style.62

voilà Madame une lettre de mon casimir et certainement si je l’avois aidé je ne lui aurois jamais dicté cette phrase si peu enfantine par les souvenirs qu’elle me retrace. Jamais on ne lui dit un mot pour ses compositions mais il a une grande prétention à l’élégance en écrivant et voilà son style. Je ne puis madame que piller sa lettre pour vous dire les mêmes vérités.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (e), [c. September 1802])

60 Madame de Genlis to William Chinnery (r), 30 November 1802, Fisher.

61 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), (f), [c. September 1802]. Ironically, the situation is reversed when the boys reach adulthood. Casimir’s letters written at the age of seventeen are so disjointed and childish that they do not bear comparison with George’s fluent and informative compositions written at the same age.

62 The letter is not to be found in the present collection. But it is hardly believable that Casimir at the age of eleven wrote in an elegant style, when five years later his letters were no more than childish nonsense.
The phrase ‘par les souvenirs qu’elle me retrace’, that Madame de Genlis singles out for special commendation, is very reminiscent of a turn of phrase that she herself repeatedly uses.63

One of Madame de Genlis’s 1802 letters to Margaret confirms that she was indeed invited to Margaret’s birthday celebrations on 16 October. The letter indicates that she was obliged to decline the invitation owing to the pressure of deadlines she had to meet with the coming publication of her latest work: ‘Si je n’avais pas été forçée de travailler père une chose qu’on attend [...] j’aurais volé mon cœur m’appelait’.64 But she then confided to Margaret that such emotional occasions usually had the effect of making her weep uncontrollably:

il faut que vous sachiez que rien ne m’embarasse comme un vif attendrissement. c’est une manie que je ne puis vaincre, je n’en sais pas la raison. au vrai il est étrange de voir une grande personne pleurer à chaudes larmes et c’est ainsi que je pleure quand je m’y mets.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (h), [16 October 1802]

However, her copyist M. Oudart attended, and brought back a touching account of the evening, which took the form of a fête domestique.65

The two women parted in October 1802 the closest of friends. They had even exchanged locks of hair. (Madame de Genlis intended wearing Margaret’s hair in a locket, and Margaret was to have Madame de Genlis’s made into a bracelet.)66 On the eve of Margaret’s departure from Paris, Madame de Genlis wrote a heartfelt letter expressing her affection for her new friend and her regret at not having met Margaret sooner. Her words testify to her shattered nerves and a heart starved of love after ten years of struggle and persecution:

chère amie mon cœur est à vous et vous suivra ... je crois avoir fait un rêve ! est il possible que j’aie connu si tard la plus intéressante personne qui existe: je voudrais vous aimer depuis votre enfance. vous m’avés fait verser bien des larmes depuis que je

63 De Broglie, op. cit., p. 290 cites one instance. Others are to be found scattered throughout her Mémoires.
64 Madame de Genlis to Viotti (i), [c.16 October 1802]. The work in question appears to be her Nouveaux contes moraux et nouvelles historiques, published in Paris by Maradan at the end of 1802.
65 Described in Part II, Chapter 1, pp. 323-327.
vous connais. que de pensées que de sentiments vous avez ranimé dans ce pauvre cœur balotté, tourmenté, et qui fut si souvent déçu! Grand dieu quand j’ai tant souffert vous existés avec votre cœur et votre raison, vous auriez pu me plaindre. et vous partés, et quand je pense au bonheur inexprimable que j’aurais à vous revoir j’ose à peine l’espérer. Depuis 15 mortelles années je n’ai pas éprouvé un moment de véritable bonheur, excepté celui de vous connoître. Tous les autres ont été si cruellement mélangés de peine amères ou déchirantes! De quoi vais je vous parler, ce n’est pas mon esprit qui vous écrit.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (p), [October 1802], Fisher)

Thus it was natural that the two women should make plans to see each other again soon. Margaret invited Madame de Genlis to Gillwell the following summer and was delighted that the latter accepted her invitation, ‘Au mois de Juin de l’année prochain[e] je serai parfaitement heureuse! – vous serez sous notre toit […]’67 Madame de Genlis was also looking forward to coming to that halcyon retreat of peace and contentment about which she had been told so much, ‘puisse je faire l’année prochaine la route que vous allés parcourir. avec quel transport je vous reverai’…68

66 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (h) and (p), [16 October 1802]; and Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher.
67 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), (m), November [recte October] 1802.
68 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery (p), [October, 1802].
(ii) Madame de Genlis at the Arsenal in 1803

The 1802 correspondence is followed by a single long letter from Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery in April 1803, then nothing for four years. The 1803 letter was written at a time when Madame de Genlis was overburdened with pecuniary worries and does not mention the proposed visit to England, which does not appear to have taken place. Perhaps this was because of the resumption of hostilities between France and England, or perhaps because of Madame de Genlis's financial situation, which forced her into an unremitting labour of the pen. Madame de Genlis was contributing a substantial amount of the material published by Maradan's *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des romans*, while at the same time embarking on a major new work, a historic novel, *La Duchesse de La Vallière* (Paris, Maradan, 1804), considered by many of her contemporaries to be her *chef-d'œuvre*.\(^69\) In the letter Madame de Genlis pours out a long litany of complaints concerning her frantic pace of living and her many pressing duties: 'j'ai été exécutée d'affaires, et puis les dévotions du carême et de la semaine sainte, et puis toujours un travail forcé' (including her court case by which she is attempting to recover some of her fortune lost during the Revolution—'mon procès n’est pas encore jugé').\(^70\)

It was at this time that the English novelist and education writer Maria Edgeworth met Madame de Genlis. Her evening visit to the Arsenal in company with her father is described in a very evocative letter to her aunt Mary Sneyd.\(^71\) There could not have been a sharper contrast between the impression Madame de Genlis made on her and the one she had made on Margaret Chinnery five months earlier. Having just enjoyed a performance of Madame de Genlis's *Rosière de Salency*,\(^72\) Maria Edgeworth came to the meeting favourably disposed towards the famous author, who was still a favourite subject of gossip in Paris society. However, she did not like her: 'There was something of malignity in her countenance and conversation that repelled love, and of

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\(^69\) *The Mercure de France* of 17 March 1804 gives a *compte rendu* of this novel which is most favourable. In it the critic praises Madame de Genlis's description of the court of Louis XIV, her portrayal of the principal characters of the work, and her ability to capture some of the traits of Louis XIV which historians had supposedly missed.

\(^70\) Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 16 April 1803, Fisher.

\(^71\) Maria Edgeworth to Mary Sneyd, 19 March 1803, in Colvin (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 96-102.

\(^72\) A play from Madame de Genlis's *Théâtre d'éducation* (vol. 4) aimed at older adolescent girls and suitable for an adult audience. The Edgeworth party saw the play performed by Madame de Campan's pupils at a small theatre in Saint-Germain on 17 February 1803 (Colvin, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 93).
hypocrisy which annihilated esteem.' Nor was she impressed by her visage which she described as 'very thin and melancholy [...] - dark eyes - bony - sallow - compressed thin lips - two or three ugly black ringlets on a high forehead - a cap that Mrs Grier might wear - altogether an appearance of fallen fortunes, worn out health, and excessive, but guarded irritability.' She also claimed that Madame de Genlis's extreme sensitivity to criticism rendered her aggressive and quick to attack: 'Mme de Genlis seems to have been so much used to be attacked that she has defences and apologies ready prepared as some have books of prayer suited to all possible occasions [...]'. However, she was sympathetic to her impoverished and lonely situation:

I never met any one, of any party, who was her friend. This strikes one with real melancholy —
To see a woman of the first talents in Europe, who has shone in the gay court of the gayest nation in the world, now deserted and forlorn, living in wretched lodgings, with some of the pictures and finery, the wreck of her fortune before her eyes, without society, without a single friend! She is at war with half the literary world, admired and despised, she lives literally in spite and not in pity.

(Maria Edgeworth to Mary Sneyd, 19 March 1803, in Colvin, ed., op. cit., p. 102)

These words are not completely accurate, as Madame de Genlis was certainly not without her supporters. But they do help explain the gratification that Madame de Genlis felt for Margaret's unconditional affection and approval, and her display of emotion at the time of the Chinnerys' departure. Madame de Genlis had written to Margaret in her last letter before the separation: 'chère amie je ne suis pas démonstrative, mais je sais aimer. — bien des personnes se moquent de l'impression que me laisse votre départ. peut on aimer en si peu de temps ... voilà toute la consolation que je recevrai.' Madame de Genlis's undisguised pleasure that Margaret had judged her by her books and not by her reputation, which had been irrevocably damaged by constant and ongoing gossip, was evident in her parting words: 'mais votre cœur qui s'étoit attaché à moi sans m'avoir vue concevra ma vive et tendre reconnaissance, vous
m'avez jugée sur mes ouvrages. ô mon amie vous ne vous estes point trompée. c'est là qu'est mon cœur tout entier et tel vous le retrouverés toujours.\textsuperscript{77}

Maria Edgeworth's father, who had defended Madame de Genlis's adopted daughter Paméla in the Irish House of Commons at the time of her husband's implication in the failed Irish rebellion of 1798,\textsuperscript{78} was more tolerant of Madame de Genlis's prickly nature than his daughter. The latter wrote of her father's impression:

He thinks her a woman of violent passions — unbridled imagination — ill tempered but not malevolent — one who has been so torn in pieces that she now turns upon her enemies and longs to tear in her turn. He says that she has certainly great powers of pleasing tho' I neither saw nor felt them.

\textit{(Ibid., p. 101)}

Maria Edgeworth made the perspicacious comment that Madame de Genlis's pupils would be better able to give a more truthful account of her than her books or her enemies: 'If we could see and converse with one of her pupils and hear what they think of her we should be able to form a better judgement than from all that her books and her [enemies] say for and against her.'\textsuperscript{79} From Edgeworth's own testimony it is clear that Stéphanie Alyon had a genuine affection for Madame de Genlis ('The manner in which this girl spoke to Mme de Genlis and looked at her appeared to me more in her favour than anything else. She certainly spoke with freedom and fondness and without any affectation'),\textsuperscript{80} and from the Chinnery correspondence it is equally clear that Madame de Genlis felt a similar attachment to her pupils, as well as to the Chinnery children. In 1807 Madame de Genlis was to write of Stéphanie that she was back with her again, and that she was 'une très aimable personne qui a des talens fort agréables et beaucoup d'instruction'.\textsuperscript{81} Interestingly, the work that twelve-year-old Stéphanie was engaged in at the time of the Edgeworth visit was a translation of Erasmus Darwin's \textit{Zoonomia} (1794-96), a translation which Maria Edgeworth commended.

Maria Edgeworth's letter also describes the difficulty of finding the second-floor Arsenal apartment at night, the shabby building and staircase, and the untidiness of the

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{78} Colvin, ed., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 100.

\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 101-102.

\textsuperscript{81} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July 1807, Fisher.
dwelling, a fact remarked on by other visitors. She writes: ‘we made our way towards her as well as we could through a confusion of tables and chairs and work baskets and china and writing desks and ink-stands, and bird cage and harp’ [83] Madame de Genlis’s letter to Margaret of 16 April 1803, which speaks of her many pressing affairs, her financial problems and her preoccupation with her new novel was written barely one month after Maria Edgeworth’s visit. It confirms that her life was in disorder at the time, and offers this as an excuse for not being a good correspondent: ‘plaignez moi tendre amie quand je ne suis pas exacte, soyes bien sure que ce n’est pas negligence [...]’ [84] In her April 1803 letter Madame de Genlis confides to Margaret her aspirations for La Duchesse de La Valliere: ‘je veux que cet ouvrage soit le plus moral de tous les romans’, and praises her work as unself-consciously as if she were not the author of it: ‘le sujet est admirable, et il est beau d’avoir à peindre cette cour brillante qui rappelle un siecle qui fait époque non seulement parmi nous mais chés toutes les nations policiées’. She also recommends to Margaret her Réunions de famille, a work recently published by the Nouvelle Bibliothèque des romans. She tells Margaret that it has enjoyed enormous success in France, adding – clearly with young Caroline Chinnery in mind – that it is ‘un conte que les jeunes personnes peuvent lire avec fruit.’ [86]

She goes on to denigrate a poem by ‘m’ de lille’ (‘de la pitié’): ‘il est certain que cet ouvrage est ennuyeux, sans plan sans imagination, contenant un grand nombre de vers négligés, beaucoup de ridicules, et que le sujet trop vague ne pouvoit fournir un poème intéressant’. By contrast, she praises a work glorifying religion (‘de la législation primitive’) by ‘m’ de Bonald’ that corresponds exactly to her own

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82 De Broglie (op. cit., pp. 376-377), cites Joseph Fléville, Frédéric Barrière, and Charles Brifaut, who all wrote of the dirt, dust, darkness and disorder that reigned in her apartment. With regard to Brifaut, it would appear that Margaret met him during one of her visits to France, as in a letter from Madame Vigée-Lebrun to Margaret he asks to be remembered to her (Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun to Margaret Chinnery, 7 July 1816, Fisher).
84 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 16 April 1803, Fisher.
86 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 16 April 1803, Fisher.
87 Abbé Jacques Delille (1738-1813) was a French poet and translator. One of his most famous works was a translation of Virgil’s Georgics, which earned him election to the Académie française. At the time of the Revolution he emigrated to Germany, then England, returning to Paris in 1802. In 1803 he published La Pitié (Paris, Giguet et Michaud, an XI-1803). Although his works enjoyed popularity during his lifetime, his fame died with the advent of the Romantic movement.
88 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 16 April 1803, Fisher.
89 The vicomte Louis-Gabriel-Ambroise de Bonald (1754-1840) was a prolific French writer. As an apologist for the Church and an enemy of the philosophers, his writings were bound to find favour
sentiments on religion and on ‘la fausse philosophie’: ‘[...] c’est un chef d’œuvre. la
vérité de la révélation y est démontrée géométriquement. c’est l’ouvrage le plus savant
le plus fort et le plus parfait qu’aucun homme ait fait.’ The most pleasing feature of the
work for Madame de Genlis is that ‘il pulvérise la philosophie’ and she gives thanks to
God that ‘un tel talent soit éclairé par la véritable lumière.’ She then enters into her own
long personal apology for religion, predicting that there will be a strong religious revival
in a hundred years’ time: ‘elle [la religion] deviendra la base de toutes les lois, de toutes
les éductions, on reconnoitra que sans elle on ne peut rien faire de bon et de stable’,
ending with a typically romantic flourish: ‘la céleste Religion s’élèvera triomphante sur
les ruines de l’impiété.’

Religion and literature are to be two of her favourite topics in
her letters to Napoleon, begun in 1805. De Bonald and Delille are two of the many
French writers she recommends to Napoleon, although both here and in her Mémoires
she criticises Delille harshly.

She ends the letter by saying that she is putting together another volume of
mythology for Margaret: ‘je m’occupe à vous composer un nouveau volume
mithologique des divinités champêtres et allégoriques &c. cela est plus long parce que
mes matériaux sont épars, mais ce volume sera curieux.’ It is not clear if Margaret
ever received this second mythology work, which may have been – along with her first
‘Ouvrage sur la mythologie’ composed at Bellechasse – the genesis of her Arabesques
mythologiques ou attributs de toutes les divinités de la fable, which was created at the
Arsenal and published in Paris in 1810, but which Madame de Genlis wrote to Pulchérie
about as early as October 1808.
(iii) Casimir Baecker in England, 1807-1808

There is a long gap in the correspondence between the two friends until 1807, no doubt caused by the state of war existing between France and England. Not to be beaten, Madame de Genlis hit on an ingenious way of getting a letter to her friend. She wrote an open letter in the form of a dedication to ‘Madame Chinnery’ at the front of volume one of her next historic novel, *Madame de Maintenon*, published in Paris and London in 1806 to an enthusiastic public. Just how popular Madame de Genlis’s works had become since her return from exile is demonstrated by the words of the reviewer writing in the *Mercure de France* on 12 April 1806: ‘nous savons qu’ils [les ouvrages de Madame de Genlis] sont ordinairement attendus avec impatience, qu’on les annonce trois mois avant qu’ils soient finis, quelquefois même avant qu’ils soient commencés, et qu’il n’est pas rare que l’édition en soit épuisée le jour même où ils ont paru.’ Madame de Genlis’s letter to Margaret of 7 April 1807 confirms that the work was a sell-out: ‘je suis heureuse que vous aimiez Madame de Maintenon. cet ouvrage a eu ici un grand succès, au bout de trois mois il etoit à sa 3ème édition.’

Madame de Genlis’s flattering dedication to Margaret Chinnery, inserted adroitly in such a well-received work, would certainly have had the effect of favourably disposing her English admirer to her own ambitious designs for her favourite pupil Casimir Baecker. The letter, under the heading ‘Epitre dedicatoire à Madame Chinnery’ pays tribute to Margaret as an educator:

Mon amie,

Je sais que depuis deux ans vous n’avez reçu aucune de mes lettres, du moins celle-ci vous parviendra. Vous y verrez que mes sentiments pour vous sont invariables comme l’estime et l’admiration qui les ont formés. J’ai toujours pensé que les romans moraux ne sont bons que pour les jeunes personnes mariées, et non pour celles dont l’éducation n’est point encore achevée, et qui ne sont point dans le monde: aussi, jusqu’à ce moment, je n’avais fait, pour ces dernières, que les Petits Emigrés. Aujourd’hui, je crois que je pourrais leur offrir encore Madame de Maintenon, et je

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95 *Mercure de France*, 12 April 1806, p. 8. The reviewer, however, begged to differ from popular opinion, and denigrated the novel both on the grounds of its being an inappropriate sequel to *La Duchesse de La Vallière*, and also because, coming from someone who purported to be an educationalist, its ‘historical’ content was seriously misleading for children.
96 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 7 April 1807, Fisher.
serai certaine qu'elles pourront en effet retirer quelque fruit de cet Ouvrage, si vous en permettez la lecture à l'aimable Caroline; mais elle a sous les yeux un modèle de vertu aussi parfait et plus touchant pour elle. La meilleure de toutes les leçons sera toujours l'exemple d'une telle mère.

Recevez, mon amie, avec l'indulgence de l'amitié, cet hommage du plus tendre attachement; et puisse-je n'être pas oubliée à Gillwell-House!...

('Épître dédicatoire à Madame Chinnery' in Madame de Maintenon, vol. 1, 1806.)

Margaret Chinnery’s letter to Madame de Genlis of 1 July 1825 confirms that she felt honoured by the epistolary dedication: ‘Le beau cadeau de ce bel ouvrage [...] & sa Lettre que vous avez eu la bonté de m'adresser & qui précède les Memoires [Madame de Maintenon] me causa un enchantement que je n'éprouverai plus jamais dans ce Monde parce qu'en me rendant ainsi un témoignage public de votre approbation et de votre amitié, il me sembloit que vous aviez trouvé le seul moyen d'augmenter le zèle de mes enfants dans leurs études en ajoutant à leur dévouement pour leur mère!’

It was Madame de Genlis’s intention to launch Casimir as a concert harpist in England, before bringing him back to France to a brilliant marriage. Her idea of sending Casimir to Gillwell where he would be under the capable care of Margaret, who would attend to his education, and Viotti, who would supervise his musical preparation for the projected concerts, was yet another example of one of her failed schemes for her adored protégé, which resulted only in importuning her friends and causing her yet another disappointment. The full story of Casimir’s stay in England can be pieced together from a number of different sources. Most importantly, there are Madame de Genlis’s own letters to Margaret and to Casimir. Then there is the short correspondence between Colonel John Macleod (Casimir’s guardian in England) and the Chinnerys,

97 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher.
98 De Broglie (op. cit., p. 359) lists a whole string of failed enterprises that Madame de Genlis undertook on Casimir’s behalf.
99 Five letters of this period (none of which are from the Chinnery collection) have been transcribed by Henri Lapauze in his Lettres inédites de Madame de Genlis à son fils adoptif Casimir Baecker, 1802-1830, Plon: Paris, 1902, pp. 19-30. Only three are dated (no. XXI wrongly – 7 novembre 1808 [recte 1807]). All discuss the same topics that are treated in the Chinnery correspondence.
100 No documentation on this enigmatic person can be found. Several John Macleods appear in the British army lists between 1794 and 1800. A likely possibility is a John Macleod listed as a Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Artillery (A List of the Officers of the Army and Royal Marines, 1785-1835, War Office: London, list for 1797, p. 360). The impression gained from Margaret Chinnery’s letters is that he was a rude and objectionable man, and moreover, a hypocrite, who fawned upon Madame de Genlis in her presence and in his letters to her, but who slandered her behind her back.
and a related letter from William Chinnery to Margaret. There is also the correspondence between Casimir and Margaret, which gives a good insight into the relationship between the two, culminating in the final rift. In a few letters from various members of the upper echelons of London society Casimir’s private concerts are discussed. Finally, there is a brief exchange of letters between Margaret Chinnery and the Portuguese diplomat da Sousa, which sheds light on the manner of Casimir’s abrupt departure. These, together with the two extraordinarily detailed copies of letters which Margaret penned to Madame de Genlis in August 1807 and in July 1825, complete the picture.

In her Mémoires, Madame de Genlis, writing in glowing terms of her favourite, states: ‘Casimir fit un voyage en Angleterre, où il eut, de toutes les manières, les plus éclatans succès.’ She is referring to this 1807 visit. As in so many other instances in the Mémoires, the truth has been stretched and the facts masked. Casimir’s visit to England in 1807 was not a brilliant success. Nor was his conduct ‘parfaite’, as Madame de Genlis declares in the same breath. Casimir’s unreliability, his irresponsible behaviour, and his flighty character thwarted Margaret’s and Viotti’s combined attempts to bring Madame de Genlis’s plans to fruition: Casimir’s much-vaunted London concerts did not ever take place.

Madame de Genlis’s 1807 letters to Margaret overflow with enthusiasm for her project, broached in her letter of 7 April 1807. The letter was written only a week after Casimir’s two successful public concerts in Paris (on 29 March at the Théâtre Louvois and 3 April at the Théâtre Favart). The reviews had been mixed. Le Journal de Paris of 31 March 1807 had written: ‘Les succès du jeune Casimir, l’affluence d’auditeurs qui se trouvoient avant hier au théâtre Louvois, le vif empressement que chacun témoigne d’entendre ce jeune virtuose, tout cela fait croire qu’il donnera un dernier concert avant le voyage qu’il se propose, dit-on, de faire très-incessamment.’ The same newspaper on Friday 5 April 1807 carried an article on Casimir’s second concert at the Théâtre Favart. Under the heading ‘Nouvelles des Sciences des Lettres et des Arts’, it began:
‘Tandis que les journalistes crient merveille au sujet du harpiste Casimir, élève de Mme de Genlis, ce jeune virtuose se trouve en butte aux censures les plus sévères; et quelques critiques vont jusqu’à lui refuser les premières notions de son art.’ It went on to quote the criticisms of ‘un amateur difficile’, who claimed that the audience did not appreciate or understand Casimir’s own compositions – a rondeau and an adagio.104

Madame de Genlis, ignoring the unfavourable criticism, boasts to Margaret of Casimir’s youth and virtuosity, describes the enthusiasm of his audiences and the resultant jealousies and enmities, defends his character, and finally tosses in the idea of sending him to England to make his fortune. Her thoughts tumble forth in a jumble of facts and opinions at a speed at which only her active mind could formulate them:

Casimir vient de donner à 16 ans et 15 jours deux concerts, il a eu un succès éclatant, il fait des choses sur la harpe dont on n’a jamais eu l’idée, et dans une perfection rare, après ce début tous les journaux ennemis et amis entraînés par l’entousiasme qu’il a excité l’ont élevé aux nues. tout cela lui fait bien des envieux et des ennemis comme s’il avait 30 ans. c’est d’ailleurs un excellent sujet, il a de la religion, des mœurs parfaites et une reconnaissance extrême pour moi. je crois que je vais l’envoyer passer 3 mois en Angleterre. je voudrois qu’il y donnât des concerts et qu’il y commençât sa fortune.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 7 April 1807, Fisher)

Then she comes to the most important subject of her letter – her request for protection and lodging for Casimir while he is in England: ‘je vous conjure et l’amico de le protéger et de le guider. vous m’ôteriez toute inquiétude si vous aviez l’extrême bonté de le loger pendant ce temps, je ne puis supporter [sic] l’idée qu’à cet âge il serait dans une auberge.’105

In Margaret and Viotti Madame de Genlis knew she would have reliable and useful protectors. Having heard so much about Gillwell during the Chinnerys’ 1802 visit to Paris, she knew that Margaret was the mistress of a well-ordered household, where the children were educated in a loving environment with the help of the famous musician, according to the principles laid down in Madame de Genlis’s own educational novel Adèle et Théodore. Her last statement, expressing anxiety about Casimir’s lodging at an inn, is rather a disingenuous one, as there was never any question of this. Madame

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104 *Le Journal de Paris*, vendredi 5 avril 1807.
105 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 7 April 1807, Fisher.
de Genlis had already sought the protection of another English friend, Colonel John Macleod, whom she had appointed Casimir’s guardian while he was in England.

The collection contains two letters (copies) from Madame de Genlis to John Macleod – one in French (14 June 1807) and one in English, (12 June 1807). There are also two letters from Macleod to Margaret Chinnery, one from Macleod to William Chinnery, two from Margaret to Macleod (copies), and one from Macleod to Casimir. All reveal his character in explicit colours, but give no clear information on exactly who he was. Madame de Genlis says to Margaret that he was a good friend whom she had known in Paris and who was indebted to her for certain unspecified services which she had rendered him.106 In Colonel Macleod’s first letter to Margaret Chinnery on his arrival in England with Casimir, he tells her that he has just spent twenty days in Paris (presumably from the beginning of May until his departure with Casimir on 25 May) in Madame de Genlis’s home ‘as a member of her family in the Arsenal.’107 Madame de Genlis’s letters confirm this and ‘add the information that Macleod attended Casimir’s Paris concerts. But in Madame de Genlis’s letters to Casimir she refers to the Colonel as ‘ton papa’ and even reminds Casimir of his obligations to him: ‘n’oublies jamais que v‘ lui avés donné le titre de père et qu’il v‘ a chéri et v‘ a été très utile.’108 This gives rise to the suspicion of a closer relationship to Casimir. It is possible that at the time Madame de Genlis made adoption arrangements with Casimir’s mother in Berlin, she might have made enquiries regarding his paternity, and having learned the name of the father, put him in touch with his son. Although Madame de Genlis (in her letter to Margaret of 7 April 1807) gives Casimir’s age at the time of his Paris concerts as ‘16 ans et 15 jours’,109 in all her other 1807 letters she refers to him as a seventeen-year-old, and even remarks that ‘il n’aura 18 ans qu’au mois de mars prochain.’110 While it is out of the question that Madame de Genlis was Casimir’s mother,111 as has sometimes been speculated, it is just possible that Colonel Macleod may have been his father.112

While Madame de Genlis was prepared to be well-disposed towards the Colonel, possibly on account of his relationship to Casimir, and definitely on account of his

106 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 27 October 1807, Fisher.
107 John Macleod to Margaret Chinnery, 24 June 1807, Fisher.
108 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baeker, 28 October 1807, Fisher.
109 This appears to have been a slip of the pen. It is more likely that he was born in March 1790.
110 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 December 1807, Fisher.
111 In 1790 Madame de Genlis did not leave Bellechasse in March, making it impossible for her to have given birth unnoticed.
usefulness in helping to further her plans for her adopted son, she did have reservations about his suitability for the latter task, fearing that he understood very little about playing a musical instrument: ‘les gens qui n’ont pas cultivé les arts croyoient qu’un talent est comme une somme d’argent que l’on peut conserver tout entier, (dès qu’on le possède), sans y penser, et sans s’en occuper’.\textsuperscript{113} Moreover, it is doubtful that she ever knew the true nature of the man. A very long and detailed letter from Margaret Chinnery describing his fawning behaviour, his rudeness, his hypocrisy and his dangerous lack of judgement apparently never reached her.\textsuperscript{114} It is unclear why she chose him for Casimir’s guardian over the Chinnerys, unless he was indeed Casimir’s natural father. She laments in a letter to Margaret on 5 August 1807 that she could not send Casimir straight to Gillwell because she did not get Margaret’s reply to her initial request in April soon enough: ‘je ne pouvois le envoyer je n’ai reçu votre réponse qu’après son départ, et il falloit l’arracher de paris’.\textsuperscript{115}

Her ambitions for Casimir are spelled out to Colonel Macleod in her letter to him of 14 June 1807, written just after his departure from France with Casimir. They are also clearly stated in the 7 April letter to Margaret Chinnery, and reiterated in every subsequent letter to Margaret throughout 1807. These were, in brief, that Casimir was to give two or three public concerts in London which were to be an outstanding success (‘Il ne s’agit pas seulement d’avoir de grands succès, il faut en avoir d’inouïs’)\textsuperscript{116} and from which he would reap a small fortune. This goal would be easily attained if he did as she requested, and devoted himself to serious practice daily for a few months. She could then guarantee a successful future for him and he would be able to leave his career of performing artist for a more prestigious situation:

\begin{quote}
Dites lui que s’il fait une véritable étude, bien constant pendant trois mois, cela décidera son existence, et j’arrangerai les choses de manière que s’il revient ici avec une gloire éclatante, trois mille Louis bien net sans nulle dette, il n’aura plus besoin d’être artiste; il prendra un autre rang […]
\end{quote}

(Madame de Genlis to John Macleod (copy), 14 June 1807, Fisher)

\textsuperscript{112} Based on the slim likelihood that Colonel Macleod’s regiment was in Prussia in 1789.
\textsuperscript{113} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 August 1807, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{114} Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 25 August 1807, Fisher. See also pp. 379-381.
\textsuperscript{115} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 August 1807, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{116} Madame de Genlis to John Macleod, 14 June 1807, Fisher.
He would return to great acclaim in Paris where, as a result of the reputation he had acquired in England, he would be able to make an advantageous marriage:

chère amie s'il a des succès marquans en angl. je suis sure de lui faire faire ici un mariage qui fera réellement sa fortune mais il faut rapporter [sic] une reputation bonne et brillante, et une bonne somme d'argent, non pour l'argent mais comme preuve de bonne conduite.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July 1807, Fisher)

As well as containing innumerable details regarding Casimir's concerts, Madame de Genlis's letter of 14 July is the one in which she speaks most about her own life in Paris. She leads a sedentary life, writing tirelessly, playing the harp, painting, and giving Alfred his lessons. She goes out only to attend mass and to take her evening carriage ride. She opens her house to friends between the hours of three and five in the afternoon. The only dinner invitations she accepts are those of the Queen of Naples, which she cannot refuse. This tranquil life, she says, is completely free of malicious gossip and intrigues, much to her relief.

Although by 1807 Madame de Genlis's financial worries had been alleviated by a pension from Napoleon equivalent to the amount that she had been in receipt of from the Duc d'Orléans for her duties at the Palais Royal (6,000 francs), she was by no means in a comfortable position: 'quant à ma situation les bienfaits de l'Empereur l'a rendue infiniment meilleure, si je n'avais pas fait des dépenses énormes que je ne regrette pas du tout, pour Casimir, je serais tout à mon aise.' From her letters to Margaret in which her constant preoccupation is the financial gain that Casimir might make from the projected concerts which are to be used as a stepping stone to a brilliant future career and marriage, it is evident that she did not possess sufficient funds to secure his future herself. In spite of the huge popularity of her recent best-sellers La Duchesse de La Vallière and Madame de Maintenon, Madame de Genlis did not benefit as she should have, having entered into unfavourable contracts with her publisher Maradan for both

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117 Julie Clary (1771-1845), who married Joseph Bonaparte in 1794, became the Queen of Naples in 1806. She was introduced to Madame de Genlis's salon at the Arsenal by M. Sabatier de Cabre. In 1806 this imperial princess invited Madame de Genlis to accompany her to Naples as governess to her children, but Napoleon vetoed the proposal. In order to maintain her tranquil life style Madame de Genlis was happy to bow to the wishes of Napoleon and of all members of the imperial family.

118 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July 1807, Fisher. These expenses were for Casimir's Paris concerts, and for debts incurred by Casimir before he left for England (see p. 373).
novels. One of her many confessions to Margaret regarding her own character was that while she was too trusting in matters concerning her own affairs, she was just the opposite where her loved ones were concerned: 'je crains tout pour [ceux que j'aime], je ne suis que trop confiante p' moi-même.' 119 These confessions all appear to be truthful. There are many examples of her generosity to friends and loved ones recounted in her Mémoires, and her admission to Margaret that if she had not outlayed enormous sums for Casimir's two Paris concerts, only one of which had a paying audience, she would have been in more comfortable circumstances, is yet another.

Casimir's individual method of playing the harp - different from the accepted technique of the day - was one that Madame de Genlis herself had taught him. The characteristic feature of this method was the use of the little finger. Madame de Genlis's own small work on learning to play the harp Nouvelle Méthode pour apprendre à jouer de la harpe en moins de six mois de leçons, in which this method is explained, had been first published in Paris in 1802. It was enlarged in a new edition published by Duhan in October 1807, 120 undoubtedly to capitalise on Casimir's successful Paris concerts earlier in the same year. Madame de Genlis wrote to Margaret in September: 'La nouvelle édition [de ma méthode de harpe] avec de grandes augmentations, et beaucoup de fautes d'impression corrigées va paraître dans 15 jours ou 3 semaines.' 121 This 1807 edition contained a very laudatory dedication to Casimir. Appearing as it did during Casimir's visit to England, the dedication was clearly intended to prod Casimir's sense of obligation towards his adoptive mother: 'Vous savez comment vous pouvez honorer mes soins et j'attends de vous cette récompense.' 122 A recurrent theme in Madame de Genlis's letters to Casimir at the time was the obligation and gratitude that he owed his adoptive mother and educator.

To Madame de Genlis's technique Casimir had added several innovations of his own, such as the use of both little fingers, the playing of a whole piece in harmonics, the use of an elevated seat and the transcription to the harp of piano sonatas. All these startling innovations, together with the performance of his own compositions, had captured the attention of the musical fraternity in Paris, both professors and amateurs,

119 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 25 August 1807, Fisher.
120 De Broglie (op. cit., p. 361) says that there was also an 1805 edition.
121 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 September 1807, Fisher.
and had, according to Madame de Genlis, astounded his audiences. Concerning his Paris concerts, Madame de Genlis wrote: 'il est certain qu'il est bien surprenant d'entendre jouer de cette vitesse et de cette netteté des sonates de piano avec un seul doigt de chaque main. c'est une chose sans exemple surtout avec des mains renversées et l'obligation de saisir la corde d'un seul point.'

Viotti's friend Kreutzer, Casimir's accompanist for the performance of Boccherini's sonata in B during the first concert, was so impressed by the young harpist's virtuosity that he stopped accompanying in mid-performance to applaud him: 'à la 1ère reprise de son 1er morceau en sons harmoniques Kreutzer qui n'avoit pas répeté avec lui, s'interompt [sic] pour l'applaudir avec des transports inouis, et au lieu de reprendre l'accompagnement continua d'écouter et d'applaudir.'

The violinist and composer Rodolphe Kreutzer was one of many of Madame de Genlis's musician friends. Other composers mentioned in the letters were Monsigny, for whom she successfully petitioned the Emperor for a pension, and who frequently attended her salon to applaud Casimir's harp playing; Désargus, who dedicated a piece of music to Casimir; and the pianist Steibelt, whose letters to France carried news of Casimir’s popularity in London. Viotti's friend Cherubini was the closest of all. He had been very ill for many months, Madame de Genlis told Margaret, but unfortunately the various remedies she tried on him had been to no avail.

It is perhaps not a coincidence that all Madame de Genlis’s musical friends were composers of music for the theatre, given her own preoccupation with this genre in her

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123 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 25 August 1807, Fisher.
124 Ibid.
125 Pierre-Alexandre Monsigny (1729-1817) was a French composer of comic opera. In 1768 he entered the service of the old Duc d'Orléans, but lost this post in the Revolution. He had a pension from the Opéra-Comique in 1798, and succeeded Piccilli as Inspector of Musical Education, but when this position was abolished he found himself in financial straits. It must have been at this point that Madame de Genlis came to his aid.
126 Xavier Désargues (c.1768-1832), French harpist and composer, was one of Paris’s most popular harp teachers, and in 1809 published his Traité général sur l’art de jouer [de] la harpe (Nadermann: Paris). His 70-odd compositions included sonatas and potpourris. It was one of the latter that Madame de Genlis said was dedicated to Casimir (Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 December 1807, Fisher).
127 Daniel Steibelt (1765-1823), German composer of opera and ballet, and pianist. He was born in Berlin and came to Paris in 1790. In 1796 he left for England where he married an Englishwoman. He returned to Paris in 1800, and the next eight years were divided equally between London and Paris. He died in poverty in St Petersburg in 1823.
128 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 7 April 1807 and 5 September 1807, Fisher.
youth. As a child, as a young newly-married, and at the Orléans court she loved to stage theatrical productions in which she could show off her acting, musical and dancing skills. At Bellechasse she continued this habit, incorporating drama into her educational method. Her very first efforts at writing were devoted to supplying suitable plays for her young daughters to perform.\textsuperscript{129}

Other people who play a part in the life of Madame de Genlis at this time, and whose names crop up in the course of her correspondence with Margaret are those of M. Perrégaux,\textsuperscript{130} the Paris banker who facilitates the correspondence between the two women; Madame Fitzgerald, wife of the diplomat Robert Fitzgerald;\textsuperscript{131} the portrait collector Craufurd,\textsuperscript{132} who has given Madame de Genlis his life-size painting of Madame de Maintenon following the outstanding success of her novel by the same name; the portraitist Madame Vigée-Lebrun, who is to paint her portrait to send to Margaret; the young Prince of Starhemberg,\textsuperscript{133} who knows Casimir and Pamela in London, and who sends back to Madame de Genlis reports of Casimir's glittering social life; a Monsieur Dillon\textsuperscript{134} who sometimes carries Madame de Genlis's books to England; the Abbé Sabatier de Cabre,\textsuperscript{135} an old friend from her Palais Royal and

\textsuperscript{129} Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes, Paris, 1779-1780.
\textsuperscript{130} Jean-Frédéric Perrégaux (1744-1808), born in Neuchâtel, he arrived in Paris in 1765, where he founded the bank which later became Laffitte's. He came under suspicion during the Revolution for helping émigrés. He was made a senator in 1799, and awarded the Légion d'honneur in 1803. On his death he left an estate of three and a half million francs.
\textsuperscript{131} Robert Stephen Fitzgerald (1765-1833), diplomat, was the younger brother of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who married Madame de Genlis's adopted daughter Pamela. Robert Fitzgerald married (1792) Sophia Charlotte, daughter of Captain Fielding, of the Royal Navy.
\textsuperscript{132} Quintin Craufurd (1743-1819), born in Scotland, was an author and collector who made his fortune in the service of the East India Company, and settled in Paris in 1780. On close terms with Marie-Antoinette, he assisted in the unsuccessful flight of the royal couple to Varennes in 1791, then left France, returning finally in 1802. On his return he set about forming a second collection of paintings, prints and manuscripts, the first having been seized as émigré property.
\textsuperscript{133} Prince Georg Adam von Starhemberg (1785-1860), eldest son of Prince Ludwig Joseph Max von Starhemberg, Austrian ambassador in London. Prevented by illness from following in his father's and grandfather's footsteps into a diplomatic career, the young Prince Georg Adam became an amateur musician whose love of classical music continued right through his life. In 1842 he married Princess Aloysia von Auersperg, but died childless.
\textsuperscript{134} Probably Comte Edouard Dillon (1750-1839), general and diplomat. As Madame de Genlis gives no other clue but the surname, it is impossible to identify with certainty which Dillon she may be referring to. There was a large family of Dillons, sons of Robert Dillon of Kilcoman, Ireland who came to France as pages of Louis XV. Edouard was one of these. He emigrated to England in 1794, where he remained for a number of years, but was back in Paris by 1802. He may conceivably have made frequent trips across the Channel. A Colonel Dillon is mentioned in Matilda Chinnery's 1814 Journal, as being one of Margaret's regular visitors at Charles Street. This may be the same person.
\textsuperscript{135} Abbé Honoré-Auguste Sabatier de Cabre (d.1816), had been an office-holder at the Orléans court, and a frequent visitor to Bellechasse, was included in the exile order against the Duke (Philippe-Egalité). He renewed his friendship with Madame de Genlis on his return to France, and was responsible for introducing many of the leading lights of the Empire to her salon. He is described by de Broglie (pp.
Bellechasse days, a man of letters who now frequents all the most important salons of the Empire; and the writer of weighty fine arts tomes, and other diverse works, Comte Alexandre de Laborde, who is also close to Napoleon.

Laborde had taken a particular interest in Casimir’s harp playing career. It was he who, having heard Casimir play in 1806, addressed his Lettre à madame de Genlis sur les sons harmoniques de la harpe (Paris, Maradan, 1806) discussing the characteristic playing technique of Madame de Genlis and Casimir. In four different letters Casimir is reminded to write to M. de Laborde, on one occasion being urged not to forget ‘m r de la borde et berlin’. Madame de Genlis for her part continued to take an interest in Caroline Chinnery’s musical talent, and on a number of occasions asked Margaret for copies of the compositions she was just beginning to attempt.

Madame de Genlis’s planning of the London concerts was pursued with single-minded determination. Exerting an unremitting pressure reminiscent of that which she had applied thirty years earlier to her Bellechasse pupils, Madame de Genlis in every letter reminded Margaret and Viotti more urgently of the need for Casimir to practise regularly and consistently: ‘je vous supplie encore de le faire travailler de suite […] ne le retenés jamais, mais poussés le’; ‘il est essentiel de ne jamais passer un jour, un seul jour sans jouer’; ‘faites le donc travailler chère amie et surtout de suite’; ‘qu’il travaille constament] [sic] sa harpe sans un jour d’intervale [sic] jusqu’à ses concerts’.

To Casimir she wrote that he was to to stick to his purpose and to capitalise on the public adulation before it waned:

331-332) in the following terms: ‘n’ayant jamais reçu les ordres et s’adonnant à des mœurs particulières […] M. de Cabre menait une existence de dilettante lettré et recherché dans la société du Consulat’.

Louis-Joseph-Alexandre de Laborde (1773-1842), a statesman and writer who began his career in the army of the Austrian Emperor Joseph II, was a man of eclectic interests. Subjects he wrote on included travel, antiquities and fine arts, politics, history, town planning, music and education. In 1809 he accompanied Napoleon to Spain and Austria, and in the same year was made a count of the Empire. According to Michaud (ed.), op. cit., (vol. 22, p. 296), while in Vienna in 1809 Laborde made drawings of the comte de Lamberg’s collection of Greek vases to include in his future publication, Collection des vases grecs de M. le comte de Lamberg, Paris, Didot, 1813-1824, 2 vols. In March 1811 we find Laborde in the Chinnery’s drawing room at Gillwell House, making drawings of the most important vase in William Chinnery’s collection. In 1830 he became aide-de-camp to Louis-Philippe, Madame de Genlis’s former pupil. He died in Paris in 1842.

A possible reference to arrangements for future concerts in Berlin, or perhaps a reminder to write to his mother, who lived in Berlin.

Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July and 23 October 1807, and 25 January 1808, Fisher.

Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 7 April 1807, Fisher.

Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July 1807, Fisher.

Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 September 1807, Fisher.

Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 October 1807, Fisher.
Still an advocate of the useful employment of every moment of the day, Madame de Genlis did not allow for any straying from the tight rehearsal programme she had outlined for her charge. Casimir was to begin practising the day after his arrival in London and Madame de Genlis exhorted the Colonel to make sure that Casimir continued to exercise his fingers, even while travelling, by making use of his small pocket harp: ‘il faut exiger que tout de suite en arrivant à Londres, dès le lendemain il se mette à l’étude, et qu’en voiture il porte sa harpe de poche, et en faire un usage continu. – ces petites Harpes en fer deviennent ici une fureur, elles produisent des miracles.’

Her firmness of purpose in seeing any enterprise once embarked on successfully completed is evident in her words to Margaret: ‘casimir est entré dans la carrière des arts, je ne veux pas l’y fixer mais je veux qu’il ne la quitte qu’après les plus éclatans succès’. She expresses the same sentiment to Casimir in far blunter terms: ‘tout homme inconscient n’est qu’au fond qu’un sot et qu’étant entré dans une carrière il faut n’en sortir qu’après avoir eu tout l’éclat possible [...]’

However, not even Madame de Genlis could control the one factor which was vital to her scheme’s success—Casimir’s co-operation. It was probably true—and Madame de Genlis herself assures her correspondents that not only was it possible but that it was certain—that Casimir could have carried off her ambitious scheme if he had been prepared to practise for the stipulated five or six hours a day during the months preceding his concerts. But Casimir, unlike George Chinnery, who, had he possessed the same talent and the same opportunity, would have willingly obliged his mother’s desires, was neither steady nor reliable. He worked in fits and starts, never in a well-

143 Madame de Genlis to John Macleod, 14 June 1807, Fisher. In her Mémoires Madame de Genlis claims that she invented this useful practice tool, and that her pupil Alfred Lemaire made her one on which to exercise her fingers at a time when she did not have the use of a full-sized harp (Mémoires, vol. 6, p.144).
144 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 August 1807, Fisher.
ordered rhythm (‘en general il ne travaille que par caprice ou à l’excès ou point du tout’). He was headstrong, prone to childish outbursts and self-centred, and although he had the talent he lacked the will. As Henry Lapauze so succinctly puts it, in speaking of Madame de Genlis’s failed attempts to make her recalcitrant pupil toe the line: ‘Il lui suffira de vouloir pour réussir. Le malheur est pour lui [...] et surtout pour madame de Genlis et pour sa bourse, qu’il ne voudra pas souvent.’

Madame de Genlis herself, in spite of her ardent desire for the success of her venture, seemed in fact only half-convinced that Casimir possessed the necessary resolve to carry it off. In her letters she continually assured him that it was only a few months of his life that she was asking him to sacrifice, assuring him that if he could sustain the effort the rewards would be well worth it. Apart from the promise of a brilliant situation and marriage, she offered him many other rewards: two portraits in oil of herself, one of her in her youth, one in old age; a gift of one of her art works that was still in production (‘je fais pour toi un beau travail. il ne sera fini que dans un an mais cela sera charmant à l’œil, instructif, et digne d’orner un beau cabinet’), Christmas gifts and many more. But, she stipulates, as if to a child, he has to earn all this: ‘il faut le mériter, ainsi que bien d’autres surprises que je te ménage.’

One particular reward, more than all the others, was likely to influence Casimir to obey her instructions. It was the promise of legally bestowing on him her name, something which Casimir ardently desired: ‘accordés moi ce que j’exige et vous aurez en bonne forme le nom que vous désirés, et vous l’honorerez en le portant et c’est ce que je veux.’ This last offer was not just a lure to Casimir. Madame de Genlis herself wanted Casimir to bear her name as much as he did. He was her favourite (‘c’est l’être de l’univers que j’aime le mieux’). Casimir, whom she named after her own dead son, she explains to Margaret, must perpetuate her name which will otherwise be extinguished (‘c’est lui que mon cœur a destiné pour le perpétuer’). But he must do so

145 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 28 October 1807, Fisher.
146 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 7 April 1807, Fisher.
148 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 13 December 1807, Fisher.
149 The work in question is very probably one of her many herbiers created at the Arsenal.
150 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 28 October 1807, Fisher.
151 Ibid.
152 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 August 1807, Fisher.
153 Ibid.
with honour and distinction. This is why he must establish for himself a brilliant reputation as a musician, and why his behaviour must be irreproachable:

que mon casimir ait d'éclatans succès, et la conduite sage et irréprochable que j'attends de lui et je ferai pour lui audelà de ce qu'on peut imaginer. l'enfant que j'ai perdu avoir ce nom de casimir. il faut qu'il me le rende tout à fait, il faut qu'il perpétue un nom qui va s'éteindre, tout est préparé pour cela.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 25 August 1807, Fisher)

In his first letter to Margaret Chinnery upon his arrival in England Casimir did sign himself 'Casimir Genlis', but this was a rather premature gesture, as Casimir, in spite of his two formal requests, never was legally accorded the name Genlis. 154 The two applications for the name Genlis that Casimir made in 1813 and again in 1817 apparently came to nothing. 155

Not only did Madame de Genlis proffer tangible rewards to Casimir. She also tried appealing to his conscience, representing to him that it was his duty to give proof of his respect and gratitude: 'c'est ainsi que tu t'acquitteras avec moi et que tu me prouveras ta tendresse et ta reconnaissance.' 156 It is clear that the doubt about Casimir's steadfastness played on her mind. This was another reason why she so urgently desired that Casimir be under Margaret Chinnery's care. At Gillwell in the country he would be away from all the pernicious influences of London high society. Madame de Genlis's attitude towards the court and fashionable society was rather ambivalent. On the one hand she desired all the glory that attended this association, but on the other hand she abhorred the loss of time entailed by the continual round of parties, and feared the dangerous influences of gambling and wine ('il y a des Lords de si mauvaise compagnie'). 157

In all Madame de Genlis's letters to Margaret Chinnery extolling Casimir's virtues ('il est bon, et pur, et naturel, sincère, sans envie, sans rancune et spirituel') 158

154 H. Lapauze ('Madame de Genlis et son fils adoptif Casimir Baecker', p. 600) cites an 1812 manuscript document showing that Madame de Genlis sold the rights of all her works to Casimir, and at the same time gave him her name: 'Prix de la vente 30 000 francs, que la vendresse reconnaît avoir reçu de M. B. en or en argent dont elle donne quittance. Donation de son nom à M. B. qui est avec la donatrice depuis 1799 et pour reconnaître ses soins et pour suite de la vente acceptation de M. Baecker.'

155 H. Lapauze, 'Madame de Genlis et son fils adoptif Casimir Baecker', p. 602.

156 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 24 October 1807, Fisher.

157 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 13 December 1807, Fisher.

158 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 December 1807, Fisher.
there runs the cautionary refrain, reiterated in almost every letter, ‘mais il est encore enfant’. Casimir’s failings are mentioned in Madame de Genlis’s very first letter to Margaret regarding her plans for the English concerts, and are listed again with disarming frankness in her third letter of 1807:

*il a ses défauts, il est brusque, sa franchise incomparable dégénère souvent en imprudence, son courage va jusqu’à la témérité la plus folle. il est trop enfant p’ son age et p’ son esprit. il ne montre assés ni son amitié ni ses excellens sentiments, il est étourdi et distrait, et quelquefois contrariant, il a de l’inégalité en toutes choses, dans son talent, dans son caractère, dans son humeur, il ne connoit pas assés le prix de l’argent, il est dispensier, et généreux jusqu’à la prodigalité.*

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 August 1807, Fisher)

Admitting that she has been so harried by her own concerns since her return to Paris that she has not had time to supervise properly his education, Madame de Genlis feels no compunction in asking Margaret to attend to it:

*helas accablée d’affaires et d’occupations je n’ai pu profiter de toutes ses heureuses dispositions. des mains plus heureuses il eut été un prodige. il vous devra chère amie ce que je n’ai pu faire. il a des défauts, et surtout pas assés de suite parce qu’il n’a jamais été assés suivi assés surveillé [...]*

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 August 1807, Fisher)

That Margaret managed to ‘tame’ Casimir in the four months (August – c. November) that she had to work on his education says as much about her strength of character as her ability as an educator. The correspondence between Margaret and Casimir at the time of the Chinnery family’s November 1807 visit to their friends the Grenfells at Taplow House, where Casimir accompanied them, gives an insight into the battle of wills between the two, with Margaret the clear victor. William Spencer paid tribute to Margaret’s success in a letter to her written near the end of Casimir’s stay at Gillwell: ‘You have made him [Casimir] the most governable creature possible. My

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159 One of the defining features of Madame de Genlis’s and Margaret Chinnery’s method of education was the complete submission of the child to the will of the parent or educator. It is interesting to note that there is not one single mention of Casimir in Margaret’s education journal of 1807.

160 See Margaret Chinnery to Casimir Baecker, 5 November 1807 and Casimir Baecker to Margaret Chinnery, [November 1807], Fisher.
father is delighted with him. You, cara Padrona, can do more in six months than your friend Mme de Genlis in ten years."\textsuperscript{161} Spencer's last statement is a telling indication of the general opinion of Casimir in England. At the beginning of his stay Casimir's manners had not been admired in English society. Lady Dalling\textsuperscript{162} had felt the need to upbraid him politely for neglecting certain basic courtesies towards the lady-in-waiting of the Princess of Wales: 'I regret very much that you did not make it a point to call upon her Ladyship [Lady Campbell]\textsuperscript{163} yesterday to give her some little account of your reception &c at the Princess of Wales; [sic] the evening before; – she merited this mark of attention from you, however you will no doubt see the propriety of waiting upon her tomorrow Evening [...]'.\textsuperscript{164}

It is hard to know whether to feel indignation at the nerve with which Madame de Genlis asks Margaret to attend to Casimir's educational, dietary and spiritual needs, or to feel pity for a naturally independent woman whose love renders her so totally and humiliatingly dependent on the good offices of others. She beseeches Margaret and Viotti to give Casimir protection and guidance: 'ah! daignez le protéger, le guider, le faire travailler avec suite'.\textsuperscript{165} She desires that Casimir should study under George's tutors. That he learn English and German. That he not go horseback riding in case of an accident which might jeopardise his career. That he be watched lest he fall into one of Gillwell's ponds and drown. She desires that Margaret take in hand his moral and religious education, and worries how he will be able to hear mass at Gillwell. She asks Margaret to correct his behaviour, scold him, advise him, mother him, be his guardian angel — in short, 'tenés ma place'.\textsuperscript{166}

From her letters it is obvious that a topic of great interest to Madame de Genlis is diet. In her letter to Margaret Chinnery of 14 July 1807 she describes in detail a diet of her invention which she has followed for the last year and a half and which has

\textsuperscript{161} William Spencer to Margaret Chinnery, 16 December [1807], Fisher. The exact period that Casimir spent at Gillwell is uncertain. It was not as long as six months. Margaret wrote to the Portuguese diplomat da Sousa that it was four or five months (Margaret Chinnery to Sousa-Coutinho (copy), 21 February 1808, Fisher).

\textsuperscript{162} Elizabeth Barbara, widow (as of 7 July 1807) of General William Earle Bulwer of Wood Dalling, Norfolk, and daughter of Richard Warburton Lytton, is described by the DNB (vol. 3, p. 263) as a woman of rare accomplishments. She seems to have been another member of the Princess of Wales's entourage — perhaps her secretary.

\textsuperscript{163} Lady Charlotte Campbell, lady-in-waiting to Caroline, Princess of Wales.

\textsuperscript{164} Elizabeth Dalling to Casimir Baecker (copy), 20 August 1807, Fisher. See also pp. 377-378.

\textsuperscript{165} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 August 1807, Fisher.

\textsuperscript{166} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 6 November 1807, Fisher.
completely restored her to health. It is essentially a low-fat, vegetarian diet which has also been successful in treating her young protégée, Stéphanie Alyon. It involves boiling all foods and eating pureed vegetables. Her instructions to Margaret on the needs of Casimir also include the close supervision of his diet: no wine, coffee, liqueurs, pepper, tea or salted foods. Dairy products are vetoed; acidic foods are recommended, especially lemonade and oranges.\(^\text{167}\) In particular she is worried about Casimir's indulging in too much wine ("j'ai peur qu'avec vous anglais il ne boive trop de vin, cela me tourmente").\(^\text{168}\)

But the most repeated and emphatic of all her instructions to Margaret concerns the need to keep Casimir to his harp practice ("insistez la dessus je vous supplie chère amie").\(^\text{169}\) It is in this last endeavour that Madame de Genlis requires the assistance of Viotti. Because Casimir is rusty and has not touched the harp since his last Paris concert at the beginning of April, after which, according to Madame de Genlis, he was distracted from his practice by the insistent attentions of beautiful Parisian ladies who vied for his presence at their salons – another reason for his urgent departure from Paris\(^\text{170}\) – she is anxious that his practice be closely supervised: "je vous supplie chère amie d’engager il nostro caro Amico à prêcher, casimir pour l’Etude [...]"\(^\text{171}\) Viotti must also groom Casimir to appear in public, plan his concerts, advise him on all the necessary arrangements such as selection of venue, financial outlay, and public likes and dislikes. She includes a well-planned schedule which involves Casimir giving two or three preliminary concerts in summer, in order, firstly, to give him public performance practice, and secondly to prepare the English public for his grand concerts in March or April of the following year. These early concerts would also have the advantage of bringing in some money. Margaret is requested to ensure that his first introduction to the English public meets with favourable newspaper reviews ("je vous prie chere amie de veiller à ce que les papiers parlent bien de lui") which, she explains, is important for his reputation in Paris, where all the journalists are her enemies.\(^\text{172}\)

Regarding the pieces of music he is to play, and the way he is to play them, her instructions are equally clear. These are repeated in several of the letters. When he is

\(^{167}\) Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 September 1807, Fisher.
\(^{168}\) Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 October 1807, Fisher.
\(^{169}\) Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 August 1807, Fisher.
\(^{170}\) Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 August 1807, Fisher.
\(^{171}\) Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July 1807, Fisher.
giving a recital ‘en société’ he is to play his ‘variations’. One of the features of Casimir’s Paris concerts was the playing of his own compositions, none of which have survived today. The only piece Madame de Genlis mentions by name is his Battle March, which was played with great success by Madame Oudart in 1802, and which is also a popular piece at harp concerts in Paris in 1807: ‘on joue avec un grand succès dans tous les concerts en symphonie avec une harpe, la marche de casimir.’ (More details of this piece are given in Madame de Genlis’s letter to Casimir of 24 October 1807. She writes: ‘Mme Oudart joue avec un grand succès ta marche avec deux variations. l’une en sons harmoniques, l’autre en basse à sons étouffés imitant le tambour et puis 12 instrumens, cela est admirable.’) For the grand concerts he must study in depth the sonata by Boccherini in D major and a second piece by Boccherini in B, to be played entirely in harmonics, as it was in his Paris concerts. The latter piece, with the very soft accompaniment of a cello and a violin, requires a great deal of practice on the part of the accompanists because of its innovative nature. In later letters she adds further suggestions: the sonatas of his own composition and his polonaise; Rameau’s Les Sauvages, with a choral accompaniment of two voices; and Desargus’s ‘pot pourri’, which is dedicated to him. For the latter he must enlist Amico’s help in the musical interpretation of the storm that this piece seeks to convey. Again she emphasises the need for a good accompanist.

Having tasted the success of innovation with Paris audiences, Madame de Genlis wanted Casimir to surprise the London public with even more unusual inventions, never before tried in public, such as playing the harp with one or even two bows on an instrument especially manufactured for the purpose. She suggests that this surprise be reserved for the last concert for better effect. In her letter to Margaret of 25 August she gives lengthy instructions on the type of instrument needed for such a playing
technique, the style of composition needed, the precautions to be taken by the accompanists to give the player time to change bows, and other advice regarding the accompaniment:

"il n'a jamais joué en public avec l'archet, cependant un jour chès moi devant monsigny, et plusieurs artistes il joua ainsi un adagio avec la basse en sons filés, et il fit un plaisir extrême. on pourroit [sic] réserver cela pour son dernier concert je crois que cette invention deviendroit admirable avec des harpes faites exprès pour jouer ainsi des adagios, et dont les cordes de basse seroient plus écartées. on feroit alors des adagios exprès, et cela mélangé de sons harmoniques, et quelquefois de deux archets l'un de la main gauche, l'autre de la droite, produiroit sur un seul instrument des effets inconcevables. dans ces adagios faits exprès on mettroit des accompagnemens qui joueroient à propos quelques mesures sans harpe afin de donner au joueur de harpe le temps de prendre et de quitter les archets. quand la harpe feroit des sons filés il ne faudroit pour accompagnement qu'un piano, et non d'autres sons filés, tout cela bien combiné iroit aux nues et seroit une étonnante et belle création [...]"

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 25 August 1807, Fisher)

The three-page list of instructions regarding the concert arrangements ends simply with 'il faut soumettre tout cela à l'amico'!

Here again Madame de Genlis's monetary concerns come to the fore. In asking Viotti to organise the manufacture of this special purpose harp ('diriger cette invention'), which she optimistically predicts will set a trend in harp playing, she indicates that Casimir is to share in any profits arising from its sale: 'il faudra en donnant l'idée de cette harpe convenir que si cela réussit, casimir au moins aura un intérêt dans la vente de ces harpes, cela peut par la suite devenir lucratif.' It is clear from a comment Margaret made in a much later letter regarding the trouble that Vietti had been put to on Casimir's account, that Viotti did his best to accommodate all Madame de Genlis's wishes. But much to Madame de Genlis's chagrin, he did not reply to her two letters to him concerning these matters. This is by far the most impractical

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178 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 13 December 1807, and 1 January 1808, Fisher.
179 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 25 August 1807, Fisher.
180 Ibid.
181 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher.
182 Madame de Genlis's two letters to Viotti are not to be found in the present collection. Perhaps Viotti was unwilling to risk letters to France during the Napoleonic wars owing to his 1798 experience,
of Madame de Genlis’ schemes for making money to help fund Casimir’s visit to England. A more reliable source of income was the sale of her books. Among her recently completed works that she sent Casimir to sell in London were her ‘Souvenirs’ and her Siège de La Rochelle. She made every effort to dispatch the first printed copy of the latter ten days before its publication in Paris, so that Casimir could be the first to sell it in England and reap the benefits: ‘mon ouvrage [...] parait dans 8 ou 10 f° je ferai tout p’ t’en envoyer le 1er exemp. avant la vente. vens le, tu dois en avoir s’il arrive le 1er au moins 60 guinées.’ The work was eventually translated by R.C. Dallas, and published by Dulau in London in May 1808. Whether or not this transaction was concluded by Casimir is impossible to say.

Madame de Genlis’s frequent mention of money matters would indicate that her mind was constantly employed in devising fresh financial schemes to supply Casimir’s wants, which were extravagant, judging by her comment to Margaret in the letter of 5 August 1807 that Casimir was a spendthrift. That he made no effort to economise his adoptive mother’s hard-earned money is shown by Madame de Genlis’s reminder to Casimir not to amass debts. When he departed for England he left behind considerable debts that Madame de Genlis was hard pressed to pay (‘J’ai tout payé jusqu’au dernier sou, mais avec quelle peine... quel travail!...’). Lapauze claims that Casimir made constant demands for money on his adoptive mother, all of which she acceded to: ‘il n’est pas une lettre où elle ne lui annonce un envoi d’argent. [...] elle ne se plaint presque pas. Elle est folle de faiblesse pour cet ‘enfant’, qui en abuse.’ Casimir was given precise instructions on the handling of financial matters. If he was certain of filling a subscription for her Souvenirs and of clearing about 13,000 francs, then he needed to give only one summer concert.

Madame de Genlis was generous in her gifts of her works to Margaret. From the time of the 1806 publication of Madame de Maintenon which contained the epistolary dedication to Margaret, she sent to Gillwell a steady flow of her books which continued

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184 Le Siège de La Rochelle ou le malheur et la conscience, Nicolle: Paris, 1808.
185 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 13 December 1807, Fisher.
186 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 7 November 1808 [recte 1807], in Lapauze, Lettres inédites de Madame de Genlis à son fils adoptif Casimir Baecker, p. 26.
188 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 2 August 1807, Fisher.
until 1808. In September 1807 it was ‘2 vol. italiens de mes contes’,\textsuperscript{189} possibly a two-volume translation into Italian of her \textit{Nouveaux contes moraux et nouvelles historiques}, originally published by Maradan as part of his \textit{Nouvelle Bibliothèque des romans} in 1802.\textsuperscript{190} Not only does she send Margaret her first editions, but also any subsequent corrected editions, such as the new 1807 edition of her \textit{Méthode de la harpe}, an earlier edition of which Margaret had enjoyed, and the third edition of \textit{Madame de Maintenon}, published in 1807. As well as all the above-mentioned works, Margaret received copies of those works which were sent to Casimir to sell. Attached to the first page of one of the latter, her \textit{Siège de La Rochelle}, was the following precautionary note to Casimir: ‘voilà mon ouvrage. il va aux nues, il est déclaré un chef d’œuvre, vens le, tu peux en tirer un bon parti. que notre amie incomparable ne le lise qu’après ton marché fait.’\textsuperscript{191}

Gifts of handcrafts continued to be offered in 1807, as in 1802. Madame de Genlis was proud of her skill, saying in her \textit{Mémoires} that these works were sought after by dealers in Altona and in Berlin during her exile.\textsuperscript{192} They consisted of pretty coloured stones or glass made to resemble precious stones, and fashioned into the initials of the name of a loved one. There were also framed pictures in wax, bunches of sculpted wax flowers which stood upright and garlands enclosing her own monogram. Several of these works she sent in unfinished form, telling Margaret that Casimir would finish them, and at the same time teach Caroline Chinnery this art. In her letters to Casimir she included detailed instructions on how to make these handcrafts, and recommended that he offer them as gifts, not only to people who had shown him kindness, such as his ‘papa’ and the Chinnerys, but also to those members of the royal family who were in a position to help him raise a subscription for his concerts, such as the Duke of Cumberland, the Duchess of York and the Princess of Wales.\textsuperscript{193}

From the moment Madame de Genlis received Margaret’s letter accepting to have Casimir at Gillwell, her sole concern was to get Casimir out of London and into the country. She wrote letter after letter requesting the move to take place. On 5 August

\textsuperscript{189} Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 September, 1807, Fisher.

\textsuperscript{190} No Italian translation of this work has been noted in M.E Plagnol-Diéval’s \textit{Madame de Genlis (Bibliographie des écrivains français)}, Memini: Paris, 1996, in the British Library or BN catalogues.

\textsuperscript{191} Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 1 January 1808, Fisher.

\textsuperscript{192} \textit{Mémoires}, vol. 5, pp. 54, 58, 69. Madame de Genlis claims that the prices offered for her handcrafts on these occasions were generous enough to have supported her, had she so desired.

\textsuperscript{193} Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 13 December 1807, Fisher. For the Duchess of York or the Princess of Wales Madame de Genlis recommended a framed garland of white roses containing a monogram in small beads. It is doubtful that Casimir ever carried these suggestions into effect.
she wrote to Margaret: 'j'ai écrit à m' macleod qui sera forcé de le laisser aller à Gillwell'; on 23 October: 'est il avec vous?'; on 27 October: 'je lui ordonne de donner de grands concerts en mars avril et mai [1808], d'aller s'y préparer à Gillwell'; on 28 October: 'je lui ordonne d'aller se préparer à Gillwell'; on 6 November: 'au nom de tout ce qui vous est cher, attirés le à Gillwell [...]'; on 13 December: 'ô daignés chère amie le rapeler [sic] et qu'il reste avec vous jusqu'à ses concerts'; on 25 January: 'je desire que casimir ne loge jamais chés le colonel, et qu'il revienne à Gillwell et qu'il y reste tant que vous serés assés bonne p' le permettre'. To Casimir she made the same requests. By 23 October she said she had written thirty letters on this subject (to Margaret, to the Colonel, to Casimir), and received not a single reply from Margaret ('depuis trois mortels mois pas un mot de ce cher Gillwell, où ma pensée et mon cœur sont si souvent!' Although her letters were reaching their destination, none of Margaret's letters were reaching France. Her torment was prolonged: she did not find out that Casimir was in fact at Gillwell until the end of October, after he had been there for a period of three months. Added to this worry was her suspicion that the Colonel had been ignoring her pleas to send Casimir to Gillwell and had been withholding her letters and Casimir's from Margaret. Her extreme anxiety on this count is palpable in all her letters.

A fairly accurate idea of the sort of person that Colonel Macleod was — officious, petty-minded and self-important — may be gained from the tone of his letters, which appear to imitate his long-winded manner of speaking. His letter to William Chinnery of 4 July 1807, signed 'Colonel Macleod of Colbeck', is excruciatingly verbose and tortuous, with each sentence stretched to a ridiculous length by commas, dashes and intercalations, so that the sense of the whole is almost impossible to decipher. The repeated use of the phrase 'repugnant to my feelings', and the frequency of important-sounding words such as 'engagements' and 'covenants' give the reader the impression that his sensibilities have been, or are about to be, outraged by some preposterous demand that will contravene a promise made to his 'most dear friend Madame de Genlis'. In fact the Chinnerys had simply requested that Casimir be allowed

194 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baeccker, 28 October 1807, Fisher. Also, in three of the five [1807] letters of Madame de Genlis to Casimir transcribed by Lapauze in his Lettres inédites de Madame de Genlis (pp. 21, 23, 24), she tells Casimir to go to Gillwell to prepare for his concerts.

195 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 October 1807, Fisher.

196 Madame de Genlis mentioned in her letter to Margaret of 23 August 1807 (Fisher) that letters from England sent via 'm' Craford' in Rotterdam reached her much faster (ten to twelve days) than those sent via 'm' Péréaux' in Paris (thirty to forty days).
to visit Gillwell. The Colonel told William that he would not allow an extended stay at Gillwell until after Casimir’s concert, owing to the ‘sacred and solemn promise’ he had made to Madame de Genlis. In the same letter, in requesting the presence of Mr and Mrs Chinnery and Viotti at his London house on 10 July to celebrate Madame de Genlis’s Saint’s Day, he makes the acceptance of this invitation a condition upon which he grants Casimir his ‘Liberty’. In her letter of 14 June to Colonel Macleod Madame de Genlis had specifically asked that she be remembered on her Saint’s Day. She instructed Casimir to honour this special day, firstly by doing a good deed, secondly by doing a long practice session on the harp, and thirdly by sending her a few lines of greeting containing a pressed flower.

Casimir had arrived in England with the Colonel at the end of May or beginning of June 1807, at the height of the London season. English society was understandably curious to hear this Parisian child prodigy, whose name was inextricably linked with one who enjoyed such wide popularity in Britain as an author, but who had earned herself such an infamous reputation as a political intriguer during the Revolution, and who was now reputed to have the ear of Napoleon. The first invitation to perform in a private drawing room came from Lady Buckinghamshire who desired Casimir to play before a select society at the Marchioness of Stafford’s house on 26 July. On 23 July the Colonel wrote to Margaret informing her of this invitation, an invitation that, if Colonel Macleod’s boast is to be believed, he himself managed to orchestrate. In familiar, and undoubtedly to Margaret’s ear, vulgar tones, he congratulated himself on the way he manipulated ‘those high personages’ by keeping them ‘in good Humour, with themselves, and serviceable to our course [sic].

There are two accounts of Casimir’s first private concert in London. One is by Colonel Macleod and one is by Casimir himself. Both report that the concert was a success. In Casimir’s first letter to Margaret Chinnery (30 July 1807) he gives a brief account of his activities since his arrival in England, as Margaret has apparently asked

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197 John Macleod to William Chinnery, 4 July 1807, Fisher.
198 Madame de Genlis to John Macleod, 14 June 1807, Fisher.
199 Eleanor Agnes (d. 1851) daughter of William Eden, first Lord Auckland and second wife of Robert Hobart, fourth Earl of Buckinghamshire (1760-1816).
200 Susannah, daughter of Alexander Stewart, sixth Earl of Galloway and third wife of Granville Leveson-Gower, first Marquess of Stafford. The latter was the father of the Chinnery friend Lord Granville Leveson-Gower.
201 John Macleod to Margaret Chinnery, 23 July 1807, Fisher.
202 The letter is missing, but is mentioned by Margaret in her to the Colonel of 14 August 1807, Fisher.
him to, beginning with this first concert. The letter, rendered almost incomprehensible by its childish style and all but indecipherable handwriting, is full of grammatical errors. It contains the flattering, wheedling tones that characterise all his letters to Margaret. He begins:

Madam,

C’est mon premier [moment?] [de]puis que j’ai le malheur d’être séparé d’elle de vous instruire de ce qui m’arrive d’heureux. je n’aurais jamais en aucune personne la confiance que j’ai en elle mais vous seule madam avoit [su?] m’en inspirer et m’avoit permis de vous donner des marques. vous [voulés?] sans condamner à lire mes griffonnages a chaque chose d’heureux qui m’arrive. commençons donc par le Dimanche.

(Casimir Baecker to Margaret Chinnery, 30 July [1807], Fisher)

He was surprised, he says, by the amount of enthusiasm his ‘faibles talens’ gave rise to, as Margaret had warned him to expect English audiences to be less demonstrative than Continental audiences.

The second invitation to perform (on 15 or 16 August) came from the Princess of Wales’s lady-in-waiting Lady Campbell. According to Colonel Macleod, Casimir did not play well. William reported to Margaret what the Colonel had told him: ‘il me disoit que l’Enfant n’étoit pas bien dispose du tout, qu’il a joué très mal – que tout le monde etoit desappointé et qu’il s’est trouvé dans la nécessité de faire ses Excuses en disant qu’il venoit de la Campagne de chez nous très fatigué, et qu’il avoit un grand mal de tête &c &c.’ 203 Casimir, who had just spent twelve days at Gillwell, was already finding excuses for his poor form other than the real one – lack of practice. Margaret had confirmed the fact that Casimir was out of practice in previous letters to Madame de Genlis, who had in turn written to Casimir: ‘cher enfant, je receois de mme chinnery et de viotti, des lettres qui me prouvent que tu es rouillé sur la harpe, quoique le talent soit tout entier.’ 204

The third invitation came from the Princess of Wales, who heard him play on 18 August. It was Casimir’s omission to call on Lady Campell and pay his respects the day

203 W to M, [17 August 1807], Fisher.
204 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 2 August 1807, Fisher. Since, as Margaret says in her 1825 letter, Viotti did not write letters to anyone any more, Madame de Genlis may be referring to notes that Viotti added to the bottom of Margaret’s letters – a common practice with the Chinnerys.
after this invitation that gave rise to Lady Dalling’s rebuke.\textsuperscript{205} No information on this performance is given in any of the letters, except the fact that the Princess of Wales gave Casimir a gold repeating alarm watch,\textsuperscript{206} one of the ‘magnifiques présens’ that Madame de Genlis mentions with such pride in her \textit{Mémoires}.\textsuperscript{207} Another unspecified gift was given to Casimir by the Duchess of York, following his performance at Oatlands, where the Duchess had begged her brother-in-law the Duke of Cumberland to bring Casimir (also in August). An undated copy of the letter of thanks that Margaret had Casimir send to the Duchess’s lady-in-waiting is in the Fisher collection. It is in French, in Viotti’s hand. On the outside Margaret has written ‘Copy we made for Casimir of a letter to Lady R.C. Smith, to offer thanks to the Dutchess of York for a present, & to her for forwarding it.’\textsuperscript{208}

The fourth invitation is in the Chinnery collection, and was posted to Casimir at Gillwell, enabling Margaret to make a copy of it, along with Lady Dalling’s two notes that accompanied it. It was an invitation for ‘Friday Evening 21\textsuperscript{st} [August] at nine o’Clock to hear the Duke of Cumberland’s band.’\textsuperscript{209} Lady Dalling explained to Casimir that ‘you are not invited with a view that you should play unless you yourself should incline to it, in that Case you will delight her [Lady Campbell] and every one else. her invitation for tomorrow Evening is in the hope of amusing and making it pleasant to you.’\textsuperscript{210} At this concert, Lady Dalling told Casimir, a date would be set for him to play before the Queen and the royal princesses.

There were many other invitations, especially after Casimir left Gillwell at the end of November or December. William Spencer, in particular, was responsible for introducing Casimir into a wide circle of elevated acquaintance in London, most of whom were also Chinnery acquaintances: Pascoe and Georgina Grenfell, Sophia

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{205} See p. 369.
\item \textsuperscript{206} In Margaret’s letter to Madame de Genlis of 25 August 1807 (copy, Fisher), she speaks of the gift: ‘La Princesse de Galles l’a reçu avec distinction, s’en est occupée toute la soirée, fut ravie de son beau talent, et lui présenta une montre d’or à répétition, en lui priant de “la garder comme un souvenir de son admiration”.
\item \textsuperscript{207} \textit{Mémoires}, vol. 5, p. 275.
\item \textsuperscript{208} Casimir Baecker to Lady R.C. Smith, [August 1807], Fisher.
\item \textsuperscript{209} Charlotte Campbell to Casimir Baecker, 20 August 1807, Fisher.
\item \textsuperscript{210} Elizabeth Dalling to Casimir Baecker, 20 August 1807, Fisher.
\end{itemize}
Johnstone and her brother George, Lady Ann Hamilton, and Lady Crofton.\textsuperscript{211} Spencer wrote to Margaret that he had also taken Casimir to hear Susan Beckford.\textsuperscript{212}

Madame de Genlis in her \textit{Mémoires} translated all the attention lavished on Casimir in London into a success story: ‘son admirable talent, son amabilité personnelle, et sa conduite, qui fut parfaite, le firent rechercher avec un empressement universel par les princes et princesses, et tout ce qu’il y avoit de plus distingué en Angleterre. Il ne reçut d’argent de personne, mais on lui fit de magnifiques présens’.\textsuperscript{213} What she omitted to mention was that her most ardent expectations of Casimir had not been met. ‘Remplis mon attente et je mourrai satisfaite. sans quoi mes dernières années seroient pleines d’amertume’, she had written to Casimir on 28 October 1807. Nor did she make any mention of the Colonel, who must in the end have proved to be somewhat of an embarrassment to her.

It is Margaret’s long and detailed letter to Madame de Genlis of 25 August 1807 that explains fully the reasons for the rift that occurred between Casimir and his guardian, and between the Colonel and the Chinnerys.\textsuperscript{214} Colonel Macleod paid two visits to Gillwell, the first on 2 August, when he made slanderous allegations regarding Casimir’s parentage, and the second on 20 August, when he gave his true opinion of Madame de Genlis and Casimir and exposed himself for the hypocrite that he was. During the visit of 2 August the Colonel shocked Margaret with his assertion that both Pamelà and Casimir were the natural children of Madame de Genlis and a mystery father whom he intimated was the Duc d’Orléans (Philippe-Egalité). He also poured out a stream of ‘secrets’ concerning Madame de Genlis’s financial affairs, her supposed hoard of jewels, her over-generous donations to the poor – proof of her secret wealth – ending with the claim that although Madame de Genlis maintained that her income was only seven or eight hundred livres a year, he knew for a fact that she spent more than two thousand annually. Moreover, Casimir’s concerts, he stated, were but a pretext to

\begin{footnotes}
\item[211] Charlotte, fifth daughter of John Stewart, seventh Earl of Galloway, and wife of Sir Edward Crofton, third Baronet (1778-1816).
\item[212] William Spencer to Margaret Chinnery, 16 December [1807], Fisher. Susan Euphemia, second daughter of William Beckford (1759-1844) of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire, who was the author of the Gothic novel \textit{Vathek}. She married Alexander, tenth Duke of Hamilton, in 1810. She sang and played in society, as did Caroline Chinnery.
\item[213] \textit{Mémoires}, vol. 5, p. 275.
\item[214] The reason there is so much detail in the copy of this letter, Margaret noted at the end of it, was that she had by mistake sent the copy to Madame de Genlis and kept the original.
\end{footnotes}
facilitate much more important designs. Margaret was incredulous that Madame de Genlis could have entrusted her charge to such a man:

Ah! mon Dieu chère Amie, si vous aviez pu deviner la peine et l'embarras que vous nous causeriez en nous présentant ce Colonel MacLeod, assurément pour rien du monde vous ne l'auriez fait!... Que vous dirai-je? ... Par où commencerai-je? ... C'est l'homme le plus faux, le plus méchant que j'aie encore rencontré. Il a porté la douleur et la crainte dans cet Asyle de paix et de tranquillité. [...] Comment est-il possible que vous ayiez donné une semblable preuve de confiance à un tel homme?

(Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 25 August 1807, Fisher)

Unfortunately it was not only William, Margaret and Viotti who were privy to these ‘secrets’. When Casimir came to stay at Gillwell he was accompanied by a manservant, who spread the same gossip among Margaret’s own servants, so that soon the whole of Waltham Abbey, including the boy himself, heard it reported that Casimir was the son of the Due d’Orléans. Casimir refused to stay with the Colonel, who, for his part, had already complained of Casimir’s behaviour to the Chinnerys, and had threatened to send him back to France. When the Colonel announced that he was taking his family, including Casimir, to Lancashire for seven months (as it transpired, to flee from debt collectors), Casimir resisted. He resolved to sell his harp to the Princess of Wales on the night he was invited to play at Kensington Palace, and to use the money to return to France. According to Margaret, he did in fact leave his harp behind after his performance on this night, but the Chinnerys were successful in dissuading him from his plan to return to France, which they knew would have been a severe blow for Madame de Genlis, and impractical in the present state of war between the two countries.

The Macleod household effects were seized from the Colonel’s London abode on 19 August during the family’s absence. Casimir hurriedly gathered his own belongings together, ordered a post-chaise, and decamped to Gillwell. It was the day after this debacle that the Colonel paid his second visit to Gillwell. He arrived with his wife and niece, bristling with righteous indignation, to confront Margaret and Viotti. According to Margaret, his diatribe lasted three and a half hours, and was sprinkled with insinuations, accusations and menaces. On more than one occasion, Margaret reports, she had to restrain Viotti from losing his temper. William was accused of having ‘seduced’ Casimir, and Margaret of giving him bad advice. Viotti was accused of
having aided and abetted William in sending letters from Casimir to France without knowing their contents. Casimir was supposedly a spy. The Colonel swore that he cursed the day he had first met Casimir, and that Margaret would end up doing the same (in this he was not mistaken). His threats were veiled and mysterious. He had undertaken a very important affair, an affair which involved the destiny of two empires, and he would go to any lengths to bring it off. He would even take his claims to a criminal court of law if need be. Then he gave his ultimatum – deliver Casimir back into his care the following day by four o’clock or suffer the consequences (what these were he deliberately left unexplained), after which, in Margaret’s own words, ‘il me délivra de son odieuse presence’.

It was the day after this visit that the Colonel addressed a letter to Casimir ‘chez Madame Chinery et Monsr Viotti’ at Gillwell, in which he finally admitted having received Madame de Genlis’s instructions to send Casimir to Gillwell:

I enclose to you, Two Letters from your best and inimitable friend – which with two for myself from her, I found here on, my return yesterday – from Gellwell [sic]. The one letter from Madame de Genlis – to me, Desires, I would send you – to Mrs Chinery and Mr Viottis – and the other continues to enforce the same desire – in a very strong manner – and you now are, under the protection of those good and respectable friends.

(John Macleod to Casimir Baecker, 21 August 1807, Fisher)

His assurances to Casimir of ‘my unexampled Friendship’ and ‘my Affection […] for you’, coming as they did straight after his violent diatribe against both Casimir and Madame de Genlis, can only be construed as the most blatant hypocrisy.

The accusation that Casimir was a spy undoubtedly had its origins in the fact that Madame de Genlis had since 1805 been writing letters to Napoleon, a fact well known in Paris, and doubtless also in certain circles in London. According to Madame de Genlis, at the time Napoleon had granted her a pension he had stipulated that she should write to him once a fortnight giving her thoughts on any subject she liked. Madame de Genlis says that she never did write once a fortnight, only once a month. She also denies ever mentioning either politics or finance. She claims that the only

215 In his letter to Casimir the following day, he swore that ‘my Affection – and my Friendship for you, feels no abatement’ (John Macleod to Casimir Baecker, 21 August 1807, Fisher).
216 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 25 August 1807, Fisher.
subjects she ever touched on in her letters to him were literature, religion, ethics and the philosophers of the seventeenth century. Nor, she says, did she ever mention her enemies in these letters. These defensive statements were obviously inserted in her Mémoires to counter charges made against her by some of her contemporaries that she used her correspondence with the Emperor to denounce her enemies, and that she was his spy. De Broglie puts forward several hypotheses regarding the nature of this correspondence — which was not a true correspondence, since Napoleon never answered Madame de Genlis’s letters — and concludes that the most plausible was that Napoleon, like all autocrats, had a widespread information network, and simply made Madame de Genlis part of it.

Be that as it may, it is inconceivable that Madame de Genlis’s reason for sending Casimir to London was any other than the one so consistently stated in her letters to the Colonel, to Casimir and to Margaret. In none of the letters that were in Margaret’s possession is there any hint of such a scheme. Her preoccupation with the concerts, and persistent entreaties urging Casimir to practise are clearly sincere, and are obsessive to the point of banishing any other consideration from her mind. Furthermore, it seems highly unlikely that a delicate mission of espionage would be entrusted to someone, who was, by Madame de Genlis’s own confession, an immature child. The only veiled utterances in the letters are reminders to Casimir to remember his promise to her regarding ‘Rotterdam ou Londres’ which appears to be a reference to future concerts. Madame de Genlis had also originally entertained the thought of Casimir’s remaining in Britain for a year to give a concerts ‘entre édimbourg et Londres’, so the idea of a wider concert tour was obviously already in her mind. Given the many representations Madame de Genlis made all over Europe to persons who might have been in a position to help her advance the cause of her favourite child, there is no reason to doubt that this English project was not just another such example. Therefore, it would appear that the extravagant charge of espionage was no more than malicious gossip.

The only other important concern of Madame de Genlis in these letters was her fear of Casimir’s desire to see some war action. This fear is spelt out very clearly in two

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217 Not received by Casimir at Gillwell until a few days later.
218 Mémoires vol. 5, pp. 145-147.
220 Madame de Genlis to John Macleod, 14 June 1807, Fisher.
221 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 28 October 1807, Fisher.
of her letters to Margaret Chinnery. She told Margaret that she had even had to use force and ruse during the eight months prior to his departure for England to prevent him from indulging this adolescent folly. In September 1806 Prussia, Casimir’s native country, had entered the war against France and in October its armies suffered defeats at Jena and Auerstaedt. Casimir’s aim must have been to come to Prussia’s defence against France, since she makes it plain that she considers this ‘jolie folie de 17 ans’ a betrayal of her love and generosity towards him. In her letter to Margaret of 5 September 1807 she exhorts Margaret to banish any such thoughts from his mind: ‘chère amie, si dans ces mouvemens de guerre il avoit la fantaisie de guerrover representés lui bien qu’il seroit de la plus absurde folie et de la plus odieuse ingratitude, d’oublier que la france est sa seconde patrie que je suis sa mère adoptive, et qu’il me seroit de toute impossibilité de lui donner jamais mon nom légalement, s’il perdoit un instant ce souvenir.’ This was a worry which tormented her right through 1807, and which she even mentioned in her Mémoires eighteen years later.

After the Colonel’s threat of 20 August the Chinnerys were placed in a delicate situation. To avoid a public scandal they decided to seek, through the intervention of the ladies in the service of the Princess of Wales, protection from the Duke of Cumberland. There is a letter in the Fisher collection from the Duke’s aide-de-camp, Major Charles Wade Thornton to William Chinnery, acknowledging receipt of letters from Casimir and William regarding this matter. There is also an undated letter from Casimir to Margaret written from St James Palace, where he stayed for four days before the Duke sent him back to Gillwell. In the letter he informed Margaret that he had been kindly treated, and that he had not been asked to play for anyone. It is clear from the letter that he had received several invitations into society.

Having learned of Casimir’s powerful protection, the Colonel renounced all responsibility for him, and even went so far as to demand that the Chinnerys reimburse him for Casimir’s expenses and pay for future ones, a proposition which Margaret refused with indignation. Judging from this demand, the resources with which

222 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July 1807 and 5 September 1807, Fisher.
223 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 14 July 1807, Fisher.
224 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 September 1807, Fisher.
225 Mémoires, vol. 6, p. 55.
226 C.W. Thornton to William Chinnery, [21 August 1807], Fisher.
227 Casimir Baecker to Margaret Chinnery, [August 1807], Fisher.
228 Margaret Chinnery to John Macleod (copy), c. 24 August 1807, Fisher.
Madame de Genlis had provided the Colonel had by then dried up. Just how successful Madame de Genlis’s schemes to raise the money to fund Casimir’s stay in England were, is difficult to tell. Her lengthy instructions to Casimir on the various ways he might earn some money prove that this was a constant source of worry to her. To Margaret Chinnery she wrote ‘a t il besoin d’argent je trouverai le moyen de lui en faire passer’. Madame de Genlis’s continuous preoccupation with money certainly gives the lie to the Colonel’s claim that she had secret wealth.

News of Casimir’s success in English high society finally filtered through to Madame de Genlis at the end of October via letters from her adopted daughter Pamela, then living in London; from the composer Steibelt, who was at this time travelling constantly between Paris and London; from an unnamed lady attached to the Queen of Naples at Mortefontaine, who read aloud to an audience of friends at her salon a letter she had received from London regarding Casimir’s popularity; and also from Madame de Genlis’s ardent young admirer Anatole de Montesquiou in Warsaw, who had received letters from friends in England giving the same news. Even the Colonel, just two days before his rift with Casimir, had sent a hypocritical letter containing glowing praise of Casimir’s conduct. It was from these letters also that Madame de Genlis learned of Casimir’s separation from the Colonel and his move to St James Palace. But far from rejoicing at this royal patronage, as she does in her Mémoires, Madame de Genlis was consumed by anxiety. ‘Seul à 17 ans sans mentor! et dans une maison de prince!’, she cried to Margaret in her letter of 28 October 1807.

From 27 October Madame de Genlis’s letters become more and more frantic, as she throws herself on the mercy of her Gillwell friends. Revealing the full extent of her love for Casimir and its debilitating effect on her, she begs Margaret to take pity on her:

229 Madame de Genlis, 13 December 1807, Fisher.
230 The Château de Mortefontaine, 30 kilometres north of Paris, was the country estate of Joseph Bonaparte. Described by Evangeline Bruce (op. cit., p. 230) as comprising ‘hundreds of acres, lakes and forests’, it was a four-hour carriage ride from Paris.
231 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 23 October 1807, Fisher. Anatole de Montesquiou, grandson of General Elisabeth-Pierre de Montesquiou-Fézensac (1764-1834), conceived a passion for Madame de Genlis when he was seventeen and she sixty (see de Broglie, pp. 335, 454). Their correspondence, which began in 1806 and lasted for over twenty years, is the most voluminous of all of Madame de Genlis’s that survives.
232 Madame de Genlis told Margaret in her letter of 13 December 1807 (Fisher) that the Colonel had written that Casimir ‘était le jeune homme de l’Europe le plus accompli par l’ame, l’esprit le caractère et la conduite’.
‘écrites moi, instruises moi, consolés moi. qu’il est affreux d’aimer ainsi!’

to reassure her: ‘écrites moi, rassurés moi rassurés ma pauvre ame bouleversée. si vous me promettés de l’aimer toujours je serai rassurée. ces inquiétudes me rendent malade, j’ai bien mal aux nerfs. adieu chère amie. quel malheur que d’avoir un cœur trop sensible!...’;

and finally, not to abandon Casimir: ‘au nom de ciel ne l’abandonnes pas’.

She wrote a flurry of letters, both to Casimir and to Margaret, revealing her worst fears – firstly that Casimir may have been in the wrong in his quarrel with the Colonel, and secondly that he should fall into a life of dissipation in London, jeopardising his health, his career and his morals. Her letter to Casimir of 28 October was a complete lesson on how to behave at court. Reminiscent of her essays composed long ago for the adolescent Louis-Philippe, it contained advice learned from her own hard experience, including warnings of the fragility of princely protection: ‘songés bien mon enfant que la faveur des meilleurs princes, est la chose du monde la plus fragile’; of the dangers and pitfalls of court life: ‘méfiés vous de ceux qui l’entourent, soyés sur qu’on v’ envie, et qu’on vous tendra des pièges’; of the foolishness of allowing his head be turned by a situation at court: ‘n’ayés point d’airs. ne faites pas l’important. ne promettés pas votre protection, ne vous mêlés de rien’; but most of all of not allowing his morals to be compromised: ‘montrés des principes, si même on n’en avoit pas on vous estimeroit davantage. ne devenés ni joueur ni ivrogne, conservés de bonnes mœurs.’ Spelling out the necessity of being financially independent, she gave him three clear directives. Firstly, he should continue preparations for his grand concerts in the spring of the following year. Secondly, he must realise that true independence comes only with a solid fortune (‘on n’est réellement indépendant qu’avec un fonds’) and that a situation at court would bring only illusory glory and no firm income (‘des places ne sont rien, parceque d’un moment à l’autre on peut les perdre, et passer de l’opulence à la misère, ce qui est affreux’). From three public concerts he would earn at least 100,000 francs, which could soon be doubled if invested in public funds. If he toured Britain giving concerts for a further year, he would be able to make 500 or 600,000 francs.

233 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 27 October 1807, Fisher.
234 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 6 November 1807, Fisher.
235 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 December 1807, Fisher.
236 Examples of these were published in her Leçons d’une gouvernante and also in her Mémoires, vol. 3, pp. 272-287.
Thirdly, she impressed upon him one of her oldest principles – the need to finish, and to finish well, whatever had been begun. The only way of doing this was to go to Gillwell: ‘allés à Gillwell. c’est là où je v‘ saurai avec délices! c’est là où v‘ brulïés d‘aller, c’est là ou [sic] en moins de trois mois vous deviendrës l’artiste le plus parfait qui ait jamais existé. je vous ordonne maternellement celà, mon enfant. toutes mes bénédictions sont à ce prix et Dieu soyés sur les ratifiera.’ The only advice he was to take was Margaret’s: ‘en toutes choses prens les conseils de notre amie. si tu l‘as négligée recours à elle, et elle te recevra en mère.’ In the same letter she warned him that a violin-maker in France, ‘Saulnières’, had constructed a harp for playing with a bow. Casimir must at all costs be the first to show this novelty to the public: ‘il seroit adieux qu’un autre jouoit ainsi publiquement avant toi’. Her brother Ducrest, himself an inventor, knew and admired Casimir’s invention.

In October Madame de Genlis enclosed a letter for her adopted daughter in one of Margaret’s. Paméla had married the Irish revolutionary Lord Edward Fitzgerald shortly after emigrating with Madame de Genlis in 1792, and had not returned to France since. According to de Broglie, Madame de Genlis affected to keep her distance from Paméla in the first decade of the new century, owing to her desire to remain on good terms with Napoleon, to whom she had made assurances in writing that she was no longer in contact with any members of the Orléans family. It had even been said in Paris and London that she no longer cared for Paméla. In her letter to Paméla of 24 October 1807 Madame de Genlis feels obliged to contradict this gossip (‘chère enfant j’en appelle à ton cœur et à ta mémoire pour démentir ceux qui disent que je ne t’aime pas beaucoup’). In the same letter she asks after Paméla’s children. Pamy, about whom she makes detailed enquiries, appears to be her favourite, as the other two are not even called by name, but simply referred to as ‘ton fils et l’autre petite’. Madame de Genlis’s apparent lack of interest in these last two may perhaps be explained by the fact that they

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237 He may have been the son of the luthier Edmond Saunier (c.1730-1783).
238 Madame de Genlis to Casimir Baecker, 28 October 1807, Fisher. Much the same advice is given in another letter published by Lapauze (Lettres inédites de Madame de Genlis, pp. 19-21).
239 Lord Edward Fitzgerald (1763-1798), third son of James Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, and Lady Emily Lennox, later Duke and Duchess of Leinster. He was an enthusiastic supporter of Catholic emancipation and of the French Revolution, and visited Paris in 1792 with Thomas Paine, marrying Paméla in December of the same year. In 1796 he joined the United Irishmen, and later that year in Hamburg attempted to plot a French invasion of Ireland. In 1798 when the Irish scheme of co-operation with the French became known to the English authorities, Lord Edward was arrested. During the arrest he was shot in the arm and died the same year as a result of this wound. (On Edward Fitzgerald see Tillyard, op. cit.)
are no longer in Paméla’s care. Before leaving England for Hamburg just after Lord Edward’s death in 1798, Paméla had entrusted the baby Lucy to the care of her late husband’s unmarried sister, Lady Sophia Fitzgerald. Her son had already been given to Lord Edward’s mother, the Duchess of Leinster. Madame de Genlis is particularly anxious to hear that Paméla is being a good mother to Pamy and educating her properly (‘je n’appelle pas bonnes mères, celles qui ne savent que caresser leurs enfants, et les mener dans le monde, et qui ne s’occupent pas de leur éducation’). 240

Anxious that all the members of her family should get along well, Madame de Genlis is unhappy to learn from Paméla that members of the family of Lord Edward Fitzgerald have been unkind to her. She wants to know the reason, and orders her to avoid a rupture (‘évite de te brouiller, tâche de racomoder [sic] les choses’). But Madame de Genlis’s wish for harmonious family relations was a vain one. As Tillyard points out, the Duchess was probably determined to keep her distance from a person who, being connected to the name of Orléans and republicanism, reminded her only too keenly of the reason for her son’s death, and also threatened her guardianship of little Edward. Moreover, Paméla had by then entered and ended another marriage. 241 In the same letter, Madame de Genlis asks how Paméla is managing to live, and if she has had her annuity restored to her. 242 She also urges Paméla to be kind to Casimir, who has been the subject of much criticism from her own family (‘cet enfant depuis longtemps a des envieux des jaloux et dans ma famille’), which pains her and which she would like to gainsay by having Margaret send back to France some favourable reports of Casimir’s behaviour in London which she can show to his critics. 243

As far as Paméla’s own behaviour in London was concerned, it was apparently far from decorous, as testified by Margaret in a letter to George at Oxford. 244 Her financial ruin was as complete as that of her personal reputation – undoubtedly another reason for the Duchess of Leinster’s snub. The string of recommendations fired at her by Madame de Genlis in the letter of 24 October 1807 (‘ne fais point de dettes, conduis tois sagement avec une parfaite convenance. fais toi des gouts et des occupations

240 Madame de Genlis to Paméla, 24 October 1807. Paméla’s three children were Edward Fox (1794-1863), born in Ireland, Pamy (1796-1869), born in Hamburg at the time of Paméla’s and Lord Edward’s visit to Madame de Genlis there during her exile, and Lucy Louisa (1798-1826).
241 In early 1800 she married Mr Pitcairn, the American consul in Hamburg.
242 This was the small annuity that Paméla lost when Lord Edward was posthumously condemned for high treason as a result of the part he played in the Irish rebellion.
243 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 December 1807, Fisher.
sédentaires, occupe toi de l'éducation de ta fille, acquiers de la considération personelle') went unheeded. Having engulfed herself in debts, she fled to Dover to escape her creditors and it was in this port that Casimir found her in February 1808, at the time of his departure from England.

It was not until 13 December that Madame de Genlis received Margaret's letter containing news of Casimir, written four months previously. This letter did not allay her fears, as it revealed that Casimir had undertaken to earn some money by taking in students of the harp, which enterprise did not accord at all with her plans. By this date Casimir appears to have left Gillwell, having spent four to five of his eight months in England under the Chinnery roof. An unpleasant incident at Taplow House, where Casimir had been blatantly impertinent to Margaret and to Viotti, undoubtedly contributed to his separation from the Chinnerys. In Margaret's letter of admonishment of 5 November, she informed Casimir that he could henceforth make his own way in the world, that she would 'importune' him no longer, as he had made it plain that he resented her guidance. His abject excuses and his grovelling ('si vous saviez comme cela me rend malheureux. non madame vous ne serez assés cruelle pour ne pas me pardonner') were met with scorn by Margaret, who assured him that in spite of their separation she would still honour her promise to Madame de Genlis and that she and Viotti would continue promote his interests as far as they were able. Casimir remained in London for the rest of his stay in England. A letter from him to Margaret dated 16 December 1807 appears to have been sent from St James Palace, as Casimir speaks of Major Thornton interrupting his writing to ask him to pass on his compliments to the Chinnerys. Like Casimir's other letters, it is full of fawning niceties ('promis que vous m'ecr ire... ah! que cela m'a fait de la peine de savoir que vous avies été en ville et que je ne vous aves [sic] pas vu! – Je crois que je me suis assés bien conduit dans mon sejour à London'). He even professed to miss his rehearsals with Viotti ('Comment se porte mon Maître? je serais bien heur eux quand je pouvais encore profiter de ses soins.') Casimir clearly enjoyed the society of princes and dukes, returning only once to Gillwell in January 1808 with the express purpose, according to Margaret, of meeting the Duke of Cambridge there. Ironically, it was William Spencer

244 M to G, 11 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
245 Casimir Baecker to Margaret Chinnery, [November 1807], Fisher.
246 Margaret Chinnery to Casimir Baecker (copy), 5 November 1807, Fisher.
who introduced Casimir to Lady Crofton, whose society Casimir seemed particularly to enjoy, and who may have been implicated both in Casimir’s sudden decision to quit the country at the beginning of February, and in the loss of Madame de Genlis’s precious manuscript, which the latter publicly attributed to Margaret’s negligence in her Mémoires. The manuscript in question was a small notebook containing her reflections on grief, occasioned by the death of her daughter Caroline. It was of inestimable sentimental value to her. Casimir, who was very fond of this little book, had begged to be allowed to take it with him to England.

In Margaret’s 1825 letter to Madame de Genlis defending herself of the above accusation, she describes the abrupt and deceitful manner in which Casimir left England, and calls the way in which he left Gillwell ‘peu convenable’. Taking pains to distance herself from Casimir’s decision to return to France, she says his departure was based on an ill-considered decision taken without consultation with his true friends, implying that he may have been encouraged in his rash decision by his new society friends. The rather terse correspondence between da Sousa and Margaret would indicate that da Sousa, ignorant of Madame de Genlis’s plans for Casimir, had a hand in the departure arrangements, possibly by an introduction to fellow diplomat Prince Esterhazy, on whose packet Casimir eventually sailed. Margaret accused Casimir of planning his departure to coincide with her absence from London, at a time when she was on a visit to her son at Oxford. Margaret’s and Viotti’s feeling of betrayal was all the greater, since both had devoted themselves tirelessly to furthering Casimir’s interests. Margaret even described Viotti’s long-suffering patience with Casimir as a ‘patience de cœur’, since Viotti was not a naturally patient person.

Margaret’s agreement to take responsibility for Casimir during his stay in England caused her inconvenience and humiliation. Soon after Casimir’s arrival she had had her orders to Casimir not to hand over certain of Paméla’s possessions to the Prince

247 See p. 396.
248 Margaret Chinnery to Sousa-Coutinho (copy), 21 February 1808, and Sousa-Coutinho to Margaret Chinnery, 22 February 1808, Fisher.
249 Prince Paul Anton Esterhazy (1786-1866), diplomat, began his diplomatic career in 1806 in London as secretary at the Austrian legation. In 1808 he was appointed Austrian minister in Paris under Metternich. Casimir, determined to leave England, but having no passport, was accepted as a member of the Prince’s diplomatic suite at the time of the latter’s departure from England to take up his French post.
de Starhemberg countermanded by Colonel Macleod. On his departure, Casimir left all his belongings behind at Gillwell, including the gold watch that was a gift from the Princess of Wales. After much searching, Margaret found a reliable carrier for this item in M. de Clermont. The task of packing up Casimir’s other effects and sending them to France fell to Viotti. He entrusted them to his friend Erard, the harp maker, whose firm had workshops in Paris and London. Displaying the same careless insouciance for facts and feelings that she does in her Mémoires, which offended so many people, Madame de Genlis subsequently accused Erard of losing many of the items. There was another unfortunate consequence of Casimir’s abrupt departure. The search for a safe messenger to carry her letter informing Madame de Genlis of Casimir’s departure led to Margaret’s spat with the chevalier da Sousa, who desired to be assured that nothing detrimental was said about Casimir in her letter, before passing it on to the carrier, Baron Jacobi. Margaret took offence, sensing that her honour had been attacked. Just how seriously she honoured her promises to Madame de Genlis is evident in her avowal to her friend: ‘j’agis avec lui [Casimir], et pour lui constamment, comme si j’avais le bonheur de vous rendre compte de ma conduite tous les soirs’. Why did Casimir suddenly decamp, ruining his chances for winning fame, fortune and a brilliant marriage? His deep-seated desire to see some war action, which Madame de Genlis did not in the end succeed in quelling, was the principal reason. Other factors contributed – Casimir’s flighty nature, his immaturity, his strong-willed...

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250 See letters from Georg Adam von Starhemberg to Casimir Baecker (copy), c.15 July 1807, and Casimir Baecker to Georg Adam von Starhemberg (copy), [July 1807], Fisher. Madame de Genlis had entrusted these articles to Casimir to deliver personally to Pamela.

251 Margaret’s predicament in finding herself left with many of Casimir’s possessions, including personal correspondence, is highlighted by a scrap of writing in the Fisher collection. It is a list drawn up by William Chinnery, in which he notes all the enclosures in Madame de Genlis’s letters received and still held by Margaret, as well as the two explanatory letters that she wrote to Madame de Genlis after the departure of Casimir. It was clearly kept by Margaret to exonerate herself, in case of any future recriminations.

252 Possibly Gaspard-Paulin, duc de Clermont-Tonnerre (1755-1841).

253 Sébastien Erard (1752-1831) and his brother Jean-Baptiste (d. 1826) were piano and harp makers, starting their firm in Paris, but moving to London on the outbreak of the Revolution. They had patrons on both side of the Channel, including Marie-Antoinette, Napoleon and George IV. It is understandable that Madame de Genlis, with her interest in innovative harp techniques, would have known them well. Margaret Chinnery also undoubtedly knew them through Viotti, and through her own interest in the piano. It is impossible to say which brother had the responsibility of carrying Casimir’s effects to France. In 1810 Sébastien Erard imported from France to England ‘a wonderful collection of fine pictures, worth great sums’, the jewel of which was a Rembrandt for which he paid £4,500 (see M to G, 17 February 1810, Ch.Ch.).

254 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 May 1814, Fisher.

255 Prussian minister plenipotentiary in London.
obstinacy. His public concerts were planned for March, April and May 1808. He left at the beginning of February. He had come so close to fulfilling his adopted mother’s cherished ambitions – Viotti by then having brought his playing up to an acceptable concert performance standard – that it seems incredible that he could throw away his chance of achieving it at the eleventh hour. But, as Madame de Genlis herself was forced to admit eighteen years later, Casimir simply did not have any ambition to be a concert harpist: ‘Il avoit dix-sept ans, et ayant dês lors un grand éloignement pour l’état d’artiste, il n’y voulut point être en cette qualité’.\(^{257}\)

The offer of a berth on Prince Esterhazy’s private packet bound for France suited his purpose, which was to join the army of Madame de Genlis’s son-in-law, General de Valence, to fight in Spain. His ambition was never realised. It was at an inn in Dover that he found Paméla. He hid her on the Esterhazy packet and took her back to France with him (which episode is described by Madame de Genlis in her *Mémoires*).\(^{258}\) This would put the date of Pamela’s return to France at 1808, not 1806 as suggested by de Broglie.\(^{259}\)

The only person in England who was capable of feeling the extent of Madame de Genlis’s dismay was Margaret Chinnery. The words she writes to her son at Oxford on learning of Casimir’s departure say it all:

> [...] Casimir has sailed, without his things, — and where he found the money we cannot imagine. I pity him sincerely, but I pity poor Madame de Genlis from the bottom of my heart, — what misery is in store for her. He has not apprised either the Duke of Cumberland or Cambridge of his intention, — to some few people he had revealed his intention of going to France in a fortnight, but to no one had he revealed his real plan. He is gone in company with Pamela, Prince Esterhazy, Count Potocki\(^{260}\) &c, probably as one of their suite, for he has no Passport. Pamela, too has I hear entirely ruined her reputation by an imprudent and indecorous connection with M de_____. I will not write the name. Again I must say poor Madame de Genlis!

(M to G, 11 February 1808, Ch.Ch.)

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\(^{256}\) Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 25 August 1825, Fisher.

\(^{257}\) *Mémoires*, vol. 5, p. 275.

\(^{258}\) *Mémoires*, vol. 6, pp. 276-277. In her *Mémoires* Madame de Genlis tells how Casimir came across a distraught Paméla hiding from her creditors in Dover, secreted her on board the packet, and on their arrival at Calais galloped straight to Paris to inform Madame de Genlis of her return.

\(^{259}\) De Broglie, *op. cit.* p. 341.

\(^{260}\) Possibly the Polish Count Stanislas-Kotska Potocki (1757-1821).
(iv) The loss of a manuscript of Madame de Genlis and the resultant passage in her
*Mémoires* that offended Margaret Chinnery

After the 1807-1808 series of letters, there are no further letters from Madame de Genlis until May 1814, although Margaret wrote of one she had received in May 1809, the first since Casimir's departure: ‘I have this morning received a few lines from Mad'me de Genlis, in which she expresses her sense of her obligation to me on Casimir’s account; – there are only half a dozen lines; she says she has written three preceding letters. Casimir has added at the bottom “Je vous baise les deux mains, et suis a vos pieds pour le reste de ma vie – Casimir”.261 Margaret refrained from commenting on the sincerity of the last words. George, too, mentioned one he had received from Casimir at Oxford in January 1808 – but could not read because of the ‘hieroglyphic’ handwriting.262

By 1814, Margaret Chinnery’s circumstances had changed dramatically. After the tragic events of 1812 Margaret had written two letters to Madame de Genlis describing her misfortunes.263 Madame de Genlis says she received only one, and replied immediately via an intermediary who promised to deliver her letter directly into Margaret’s hands. She sent a second via her grand-daughter’s husband in Amsterdam, the Comte de Celles, ‘préfet d’amsterdam’.264 Neither of the 1812 letters are to be found in the Chinnery collection. Madame de Genlis’s letter of 13 May 1814 containing her belated condolences on the death of Caroline Chinnery, must have been written after she realised that Margaret had not received her previous two. In Madame de Genlis’s long outpouring of sympathy she lists all the emotions she knew Margaret to be experiencing – the ongoing pain, the sense of void in her life, her disappointed ambitions, the bitterness of hearing praised other less talented young persons – all of which she had herself felt on the death of her own Caroline: ‘j’ai senti toutes vos douleurs il y a 26 [recte 28] ans! ... comme je les comprens, comme je les partage! quel ineffaçable et douloureux tableau est pour jamais gravé dans votre imagination! quel vuide affreux dans votre vie! quels regrets déchirants! quelle douce ambition et la seule heureuse vous

261 M to G, 16 May 1809, Ch.Ch. Madame de Genlis’s letter is not to be found in the CFP collection.
262 G to M, 23 January 1809, Ch.Ch. Casimir’s letter is not to be found in the CFP collection.
263 See M to W, 5 August 1812, Fm 94/143/1 – 17/5, in which she says her first letter was sent by Sir John Carr and the second carried by ‘Mani[?] of the opera’.
264 Comte de Vischer de Celles, Dutch gentleman whom Napoleon had made a préfet of the Zuyderzee, married Pulchérie’s daughter, Félicie de Valence, in 1810.
est ravie!’ Knowing the effort that Margaret had put into her daughter’s education, she continues: ‘que de soins perdus! que de projets anéantis! que d’espérances ravissantes détruites! et cette gloire de mère cette gloire si pure et si chère enlevée à jamais! [...] que de supplices!...’

The six-page 1814 letter was written right at the beginning of the Bourbon Restoration, and is full of frank detail regarding her own impoverished situation and the measures she is taking to improve her lot. On the fall of Napoleon Madame de Genlis had lost her pension (in October 1813) and was reduced once more to straitened circumstances. She had left the Arsenal in 1811, and was now living at 14 rue Sainte Anne in an apartment that she describes as ‘un très beau et grand logement dans le beau quartier’. Madame de Genlis claims she is owed a lot of money, the payment of which has been delayed by the recent upheavals of war, and is also expecting a considerable sum for her next work, a history of Henry IV, which she is expecting to see published in November 1814:

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The letter also contained news of Casimir, who was then supporting her on the pension of his wife. Six months previously Casimir had married Adèle Carret, ‘une personne charmante qui n’a pas 17 ans’. She was the daughter of a doctor who had been the administrator of hospitals in Lyon, but who had since been made maître des comptes at court. It was not the brilliant marriage that Madame de Genlis had envisaged in 1807, but although his wife came to the marriage with only ‘un magnifique trousseau et mil eucus de pension’, she was assured of a future income of ‘10 mille livres de rentes’. Moreover, Madame de Genlis had just secured for Casimir the promise of a brilliant

\[265\] Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 May 1814, Fisher.

\[266\] Her Histoire de Henri le Grand (Maradan: Paris, 1815), had been begun under Napoleonic rule but had been banned by him. It was completed under Bourbon rule, but was not published until the beginning of the Cent Jours in October 1815, when, as de Broglie (op. cit., p. 398) puts it, ‘le hasard
post: ‘j’ai la promesse positive d’une place honorable et lucrative pour Casimir mais il ne l’aura que dans six mois.’

Ever biased-towards her favourite, Madame de Genlis continued to boast of the achievements of Casimir. Margaret must have felt galled to hear the fulsome praise that flowed from her pen:

du reste, Casimir me rend bien heureuse, son talent pour la harpe est vraiment incompréhensible, il en a acquis d’autres, il est très studieux. Il apprend le latin depuis un an, il lit beaucoup, il a infiniment d’esprit et d’imagination, il sera auteur et avec beaucoup de succès, et sa conduite d’ailleurs est parfaite. Il est sage, il est bon, sensible, rempli de piété. J’ose dire que c’est un sujet parfait.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 May 1814, Fisher)

Although not mentioned in the above letter, it was in April 1814 that Casimir finally saw some war action, but not as a combattant. Madame de Genlis recounts in her Mémoires how he carried the wounded from the field of battle as the Allied troops prepared to take Paris.

In the same letter Madame de Genlis mentions having just seen the twenty-three-year-old George Chinnery in Paris, where he had come in the capacity of bursar in the suite of Louis XVIII on the latter’s triumphant journey from England to France. Not having seen George since he was a child, Madame de Genlis says in her letter that she is impressed with the charming young man that he has become, and that she is jealous of the Cherubinis with whom he stayed during his visit:

que nous avons été heureux de revoir George, mais en colère qu’il n’ait pas débarqué chés moi. J’ai un très beau et grand logement dans le beau quartier. Je lui ai donné une jolie chambre. J’ai été bien jalouse de mmé Cherubini. George est joli et parfaitement aimable c’est un jeune homme accompli.

(Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 May 1814, Fisher)

malheureux ou malicieux’ caused it to appear on the very day that Napoleon returned from Elba - moved back into the Tuileries Palace.

267 The promise had come from Talleyrand, reinstalled at the Tuileries in 1814 at Louis XVIII’s side.
268 No work by Casimir Baecker has been found.
269 Mémoires, vol. 6, p. 55.
270 See Part III, pp. 617-620.
She had in previous letters suggested that Margaret should send George to her in Paris, but Margaret, having experienced at first hand the wild and erratic behaviour of Casimir, obviously did not see fit to introduce George into a ménage likely to be far from stable.

Seeking ways to secure some much needed income, Madame de Genlis gave George the commission to try to sell in London two of her more valuable manuscripts. The first was the complete set of her Bellchasse journals (part of which had been published in 1791 as *Leçons d'une gouvernante à ses élèves*), detailing the education of the Orléans children, ‘faits pendant 13 ans jour par jour, avec tous les détails relatifs aux étiquettes de ce tems, beaucoup d’anecdotes [sic] [...] et tous les commencemens de la revolution les années 89, 90 et la moitié de 91.’ All the entries in the journal are signed by her pupils. ‘Ce monument d’éducation’, she claims, is ‘certainement une chose unique’, adding that the method outlined in the journals ‘a formé dans m. le d. d’orléans [Louis-Philippe, duc d’Orléans] un homme d’une instruction peu comune [sic].’ She claims that these journals, if printed, would fill about thirty octavo volumes, and gives her word that no copies have been made. She is so desperate for money that she will sell them for 15,000 francs, any interested English purchaser having to come to Paris to view them. The second, which she describes as ‘un autre manuscrit entièrement de mon ouvrage, qui je l’ose dire est une des plus singulières et des plus jolies choses qui existe’, and which she says took her four years to complete, cannot be positively identified, owing to the loss of the loose leaf on which she says she has given a full description. It appears to be a collection of paintings, undertaken, she says, for her own amusement, possibly to illustrate one of the many herbiers which occupied so much of her time at the Arsenal. One year ago an unidentified princess had offered her 16,000 francs and a superb box of paints on completion of the work. Now she is prepared to

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271 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 5 August 1807, and 25 January 1808, Fisher.

272 One of these was a collection of herbiers which de Broglie notes (op. cit., p. 362) took her eight years to complete, being finished on the day the Allies marched into Paris (31 March 1814). This ended up in the private library of Charles X, but was destroyed in the fire at the Tuileries in 1871. As Madame de Genlis says that the work mentioned in the present letter took her four years to complete, it is uncertain if this is the same work. De Broglie mentions two other manuscript works of Madame de Genlis that were sold by her in c.1815. One he describes simply as ‘une caisse de manuscrits’ (op. cit., p. 400) which Talleyrand bought for 20,000 francs and presented to Princess Hélène de Beaufrument, who wanted it. Could this be the princess mentioned by Madame de Genlis in the present letter? Louis XVIII was another purchaser who helped her out of financial difficulties at this time. According to de Broglie, he bought ‘un très bel herbier peint à la miniature’ (op. cit., p. 400). There is no further mention of these manuscripts in subsequent Chinnery correspondence.
accept 16,000 francs without the paints. She is willing to make these ‘sacrifices’, she says, because there is an opportunity at the present time to buy a country house cheaply: ‘j’en aurois une de 40 ou 50 mille francs p’ 18 ou 20’. Apparently not in the least embarrassed by the Casimir affair in England seven years previously, she once again does not hesitate to ask for favours, and requests that Margaret help her sell both manuscripts, writing of the first: ‘vous me rendries un éminent service chère amie en me vendant ce manuscrit. mes amis ici me disent que je dois le vendre en angleterre mille louis si cela peut – vous jugés que j’en serois charmée’, and of the second: ‘comme il faut compter sur votre amitié chère amie pour entrer dans tous ces détails et vous donner de telles commissions! ’

The main thrust of the 1814 letter, however, appears to be Madame de Genlis’s enquiry about a box of Casimir’s belongings, lost, she claims, by M. Erard, to whom Viotti had entrusted them in 1808. Madame de Genlis claims that Casimir is entitled to ask for compensation equal to the value of the items lost, but will accept a reduced sum of fifty louis, provided he recovers the one item that is invaluable to him – the small red notebook containing her writings on the death of her daughter. Casimir had taken it to England and had shown it to Margaret while he was at Gillwell. Madame de Genlis coolly asks that Margaret take care of the matter immediately: ‘mais je vous supplie mon amie que cette petite somme soit envoyée tout de suite parceque dans ce moment elle nous feroit grand plaisir. vous me rendrez un vrai service en veillant à cela.’

There is no correspondence showing Margaret’s reaction to this demand. One can only assume that she was almost as offended by this as she was by Madame de Genlis’s public accusation in her Mémoires eleven years later. The offending passage was in the third volume of the Mémoires, published in 1825:

J’avois emporté ce petit livre dans les pays étrangers, et je le rapportai en France. Casimir, à qui je l’avois fait lire, et qui l’aimoit passionnement, me demanda en grâce de le lui prêter lorsqu’il alla en Angleterre, il le confia à madame Chinnery, qui le perdit, et qui, par conséquent, n’a pu le lui rendre. Je l’ai regretté, parce que les sentimens en étoient touchans.

(Mémoires, vol. 3, p. 198)

273 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 May 1814, Fisher.
274 Ibid.
George Chinnery was on a Government posting in Spain at the time Madame de Genlis’s Mémoires appeared, and was just as indignant as his mother over the ‘wicked falsehood’ that was being widely circulated about Margaret’s supposed carelessness. All Margaret’s friends had read about the accusation in the Mémoires, the first few volumes of which George said had already ‘found their way into the Spanish libraries’. George wrote to his mother that he could never think of Madame de Genlis again ‘without the strongest feeling of dislike’, adding that ‘she never ought to have printed such a statement of an occurrence on Casimir’s simple asseration without an enquiry into the circumstances & an appeal to you.’ Of Casimir himself he declared in disgust: ‘What you add of the difficulty of getting letters to reach Mad. de G. proves that Casimir is as mischievously artful as ever, & that his pretended retirement to a troisieme Etage apparently en grande dévotion (which poor Amico once told me of) is mere hypocrisy.’

Knowing Casimir as well as they did, the Chinnerys and Viotti were all the more outraged that such a misrepresentation of facts should be based on the word of one so notoriously unreliable. Margaret’s version of the events surrounding the loss of this precious document was as follows. When Casimir was living at Gillwell, Margaret had asked permission to read the manuscript and to copy out some of the beautiful thoughts it contained. It was with great reluctance that Casimir agreed to part with the little book for a short time, but having done so, he surprised and angered Margaret by snatching it away during the copying, and carrying it off. Margaret never saw the book again. It was certainly never brought back to Gillwell. Margaret knew that Casimir had shown it to many of his friends in London, among them Lady Crofton.

Some of the sentiments expressed in the nine-page letter, which Margaret wrote to Madame de Genlis in 1825 following the publication of the offending passage in the Mémoires, are very moving. The letter expresses Margaret’s bitter sense of betrayal by a person whom she considered a friend and to whom she had been unswervingly loyal all her life. Viotti, the truest and dearest of all Margaret’s friends, had died one year

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275 See Part III.
276 G to M, 4 July 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/69. Madame de Genlis had written to Margaret of Casimir’s supposed piety (see p. 394), and she boasted of it repeatedly in her Mémoires (vol. 6, pp. 55-56, 67-68, 73-75, 144.)
277 Margaret Chinnery to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher. The small notebook in question appears to have resurfaced at the Hôtel Drouot sale of manuscripts on 15 February 1976. See de Broglie, op. cit., p. 148.
previously. Knowing that Margaret had never received a reply from Madame de Genlis to the many letters she had written on this subject, he took it upon himself in the months leading up to his death while he was still in France, to put Madame de Genlis in possession of the facts. The few poignant words which he wrote to Margaret from Paris give an insight into the full extent of his disenchantment with Casimir, and are a moving testimony to Viotti's undying loyalty to the Chinnerys: ‘J'enverrai ce détail à Madame de Genlis, écrit de ma main et signé, afin qu'elle soit bien pleinement instruite de la vérité; et j'en garderai copie; car je ne veux pas que tous les ennuis que ce jeune homme m'a causé, retombent sur vous, ou sur mon ami M' Chinnery, dans le cas ou je ne serois plus là pour affirmer la vérité.’

Having left France to return to the home of Margaret Chinnery in London with still no word from the great lady, he was tormented on his death-bed by the thought that this letter also had gone unanswered.

To do justice to Madame de Genlis, it must be stated that she responded in a fair and just manner to Margaret's letter, finally conveyed to her in person by William Chinnery, who delivered it to 10 Grande Rue de Chaillot à l'Etablissement des Eaux Minérales in Paris, on 15 July 1825. William wrote to his wife the following note: ‘Elle m'a reçu très aimablement & m'a prié de dire à M.C. qu'elle desire beaucoup la voir avant son retour à Mantes, & qu'elle ajoutera une note à un des volumes de ses Mémoires qui est à la Presse, pour dire qu'en [causant avec nous?], elle a trouvé que l'affaire de la perte petit manuscrit étoit un malentendu & que la perte n'a pas eu lieu par M'H C.’

Madame de Genlis was apparently no more embarrassed by this confrontation than she had been by Casimir's behaviour in England. But she did publish the promised notice, which appeared in the eighth volume of her Mémoires:

Mon ancienne amie anglaise, madame Chinnery, est venue me faire deux visites; j'ai retrouvé en elle les mêmes agréments et la même amitié; j'ai dit, dans ces Mémoires, qu'elle avoit perdu un petit manuscrit de moi, qui lui avoit été confié; je l'ai cru sur un malentendu qui n'est la faute de personne, et qui fut causé par plusieurs lettres perdues.

Madame Chinnery a eu le malheur affreux de perdre une fille charmante à tous les égards, et un autre enfant qui n'avoir point encore atteint l'adolescence; elle trouve ses

278 Quoted in Margaret’s letter to Madame de Genlis (copy), 1 July 1825, Fisher.
279 Madame de Genlis, whose abode at this time alternated between Paris and Mantes, where Casimir and his wife lived, had moved into this maison de santé belonging to Casimir’s father-in-law, in March 1825.
280 William Chinnery to Margaret Chinnery, 15 July 1825, Fisher.
consolations dans un mari digne d’elle et dans les vertus d’un fils qui reste. Elle a éprouvé d’ailleurs de grands désastres de fortune: mais que sont de semblables revers auprès des peines du cœur? Aussi les supporte-t-elle avec autant de courage que de résignation. J’admire en elle combien la force d’âme ajoute d’intérêt au malheur.

(Mémoires, vol. 8, p. 6)

Thus was the reparation made and the two friends reconciled just five years before Madame de Genlis’s death.

The above letters, interesting for the story they contain, are even more interesting for the insight they give into Madame de Genlis’s much-discussed character. The most striking thing about Madame de Genlis to emerge from the letters is her sincerity, already remarked upon by both de Broglie and Lapauze. There is absolutely no doubt that she speaks the truth in her private letters. There is none of the evasion, skirting and masking that one finds in the Mémoires. It is hard to reconcile the reputedly sophisticated court schemer and manipulator with the vulnerable woman who emerges from these letters. Even her boastfulness, her nerve and her tactlessness have an ingenuous tinge. Margaret Chinnery, whose feelings for Madame de Genlis swung from passionate admiration and affection to violent antipathy and back again, would probably have agreed.

281 De Broglie, op. cit., p. 474.