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THE CHINNERY FAMILY PAPERS
(1793-1843)

VOLUME TWO
(i) A liberal education

The path of George Chinnery’s career at Oxford may be followed continuously from its beginning to its end in the almost daily correspondence of Margaret Chinnery with her son held in fourteen bound volumes at Christ Church Library in Oxford (microfilm copies in Fisher Library, University of Sydney). The only breaks in the continuity of the correspondence occur in vacation time, and so do not detract in any way from the comprehensive picture that the letters give of George’s university studies. Although the Christ Church Chinnery collection has already been partly exploited by a biographer of a Christ Church luminary\(^1\) and by some scholars of eighteenth century education,\(^2\) no-one has interpreted the entire collection, nor linked it to other Chinnery correspondence. The following chapter, by doing that, attempts not only to shed light on daily life at Oxford University during this period, but also to continue the account of George Chinnery’s own education, and relate this period of his life to his subsequent career in the British Treasury and the Foreign Office.

This collection of Oxford letters is unique for two reasons. Firstly, nowhere else does there seem to be a daily correspondence between a parent and a son resident at an Oxford college over such a long period of time during the age before Reform.\(^3\) Secondly, as Margaret Chinnery herself had a very real and lively interest in education and was even contemplating writing a book on the subject,\(^4\) she desired that her son, faithful to the precepts of Madame de Genlis, write a daily account of his activities for her benefit, detailing every hour of his day.\(^5\) This George Chinnery did conscientiously for the duration of his residence at Christ Church. Margaret Chinnery also believed that

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\(^3\) Comprehensive educational reforms at Oxford began in the mid-nineteenth century.

\(^4\) M to G, 17 February 1809, Ch.Ch.

\(^5\) M to G, 22 January 1808, Ch.Ch. From Easter 1809 this account became a daily journal.
an implicit trust should exist between parent and child, and that her son should conceal nothing at all from her. Thus every facet of his Oxford education from the moment of matriculation to his taking of a Bachelor degree was described. These two characteristics of the correspondence – its continuity and its completeness – make it invaluable as a source of information not only on the formal study requirements at Oxford in those years, but also on the informal aspects of the daily life there.

Although George Chinnery was at Oxford in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the notions that governed the thinking on education were still very much those of the eighteenth century Georgians, encapsulated in the short treatise of the eighteenth century public school master and education theorist Vicesimus Knox, who held that the hallmark of gentility was a liberal education. According to Knox ‘polite learning is friendly to all that is amiable and laudatory in social intercourse,’ and taught men how to live harmoniously in civilised society according to a well-defined set of rules. His belief that religion, learning and virtue all went together was a commonly-held eighteenth century view, and one shared by Locke, who was a significant influence on both Madame de Genlis’s and Margaret Chinnery’s views on education. ‘Civilised’ conduct, or the exercising of control over oneself through the use of reason and judgement, indicated a liberal mind. ‘Liberal’ was an adjective that Margaret was fond of using to describe the generous-spirited, tolerant sort of behaviour that promoted harmonious social relations and at the same time denoted an elevated mind. Her warnings against ‘illiberal’ behaviour are to be found throughout her education journal and in her letters to Oxford, and are a sign that she staunchly supported the eighteenth century notions of civility.

The liberal education that Oxford and Cambridge offered in those days was the education of the ruling class. It was the ideal training ground for those wishing to enter politics and government, but it was available only to those with the means and leisure to pursue it. By definition, a liberal education was general, and discouraged specialisation. Few imagined that a university ought to be concerned with pure research or

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6 Vicesimus Knox, Liberal Education or a Practical Treatise on the Methods of Acquiring Useful and Polite Learning, Hallhead: Dublin, 1781, p. 5. See also S. Rothblatt, op. cit. for a discussion of the Georgian notions of civility, gentility and a liberal education.

7 Knox, op. cit., p. 8.

8 See Kerby, op. cit., for numerous examples of similarities between Locke’s views on education and those of Madame de Genlis.
disinterested scholarship,' wrote the historian G.V. Bennett. Until the end of the
eighteenth century a liberal education was based on an accepted, unquestioned
foundation of knowledge. And this knowledge was to be found in the writings of the
Ancients. Hence the importance of the study of classics.

Through the study of classical literature a broad range of subjects was opened
up: poetry, drama, history, geography, political theory, architecture, botany, logic, ethics
as well as that one which was particularly necessary to those intending to enter public
life – rhetoric. As E.G.W. Bill points out, 'in an age when parliamentary oratory was at
its height, rhetoric, or the art of public speaking was [...] an important acquisition'.
Bill also points out that 'classical literature abounded in precepts and examples for the
aspiring parliamentarian, from the speeches of Thucydides [...] to the great orations of
Cicero.' The classics also offered the young reader shining examples of virtuous and
courageous conduct, which they might emulate in their everyday life. An interesting
feature of this Oxford correspondence is the large number of quotations in Latin and Greek
which George takes from the classical texts which he is studying and applies to his own
life.

George had been introduced to the classics by his first Gillwell tutor, Reverend
John Mullens, and these studies had continued under the guidance of his German tutor
Herr Trumpf, with Margaret herself supervising all George’s translations of classical
authors into English. The pride Margaret Chinnery took in educating her children
herself, and her belief that without a solid early education any later learning process was
doomed to failure, comes through in many of the letters. For example, the first words
she writes to her son after his arrival at Oxford express the satisfaction she felt at being
the sower of the seeds of any future success George might enjoy:

You, for want of experience, cannot at present appreciate justly your early education,
that which you have received from your cradle to the present period! But as you
advance in years you will by reflection and observation feel the value of it, and
whatever may be your future excellence, you will then say, “the groundwork was well
laid, — the foundations were fixed and immovable before I left my mother, — time.

9 G.V. Bennett, ‘University, Society and Church 1668-1714’, in Sutherland and Mitchell (eds), The
359.
10 Bill, op. cit., p. 11.
11 Loc. cit.
and future study have only made those seeds to germinate which she had sown." This is true. I have put into your head more knowledge and more ideas than you are aware of, because you have never yet called them into action; — but you will find them at hand when occasion calls for them.

(M to G, 14 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

All the effort Margaret Chinnery had invested in her son’s early education had therefore been a premeditated and well planned preparation for his introduction to Oxford. This she reminds him of time and again in her letters. Her plan of education for her children had been formulated at their birth, and had been put into effect with single-minded purpose. She had ensured that every possible prerequisite for the liberal education which awaited George at Oxford was met, from the formal study of mathematics and classics to the cultivation of every grace, every accomplishment and every virtue then admired in Georgian society. In her education journal and in her letters she preached prudence, modesty, fortitude, temperance and manliness. Nor did she neglect to cultivate the habit of sociability and the art of conversation. And at the heart of the children’s character formation was an uncompromising adherence to the principles of the orthodox Anglican Church.

But while Margaret Chinnery, like her role model Madame de Genlis a generation before her, had herself taught all the subjects she deemed necessary to her children’s education, these were by no means restricted, in the case of her son, to those prescribed by Oxford. For example, she taught her children the modern languages, and had them read English, French and Italian works of literature. Modern languages were excluded from the Oxford curriculum, as testified by the Vice Chancellor’s remark reported by George in his letter of 28 February 1808, that ‘young men have enough to do without learning German’. Indeed, even Latin and Greek were not taught as languages in their own right, but merely as instruments by which to understand the writings of the Ancients. She diverged from the narrow Oxfordian views in other respects also. More broadminded than the Oxford educators, and much more open to new ideas, she was ahead of her time in many aspects of education, especially the

12 G to M, 28 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
education of women. Her daughter studied mathematics, astronomy and Latin — subjects which were at the time firmly entrenched in the male domain of learning.

Margaret Chinnery was not unaware of the risks associated with an Oxford education. She took care to avoid the dangers of affectation, pride and pedantry by insisting that George remain simple, humble and unpretentious. There are numerous instances of her citing these virtues, so strenuously advocated by Madame de Genlis in *Adèle et Théodore*, in her letters to George at Oxford, and she often followed a passage of particularly fulsome praise by a harsh warning against pride. She also worried about his heart becoming hardened by close contact with self-seeking men of the world. She frequently compared the purity and innocence of Gillwell with the dissipation and abandonment of Oxford mores. These fears derived from her deep-seated Christian beliefs. Hers was not a faith of convenience or conformity — she truly believed that the only proper conduct of life was one imbued with a habit of honest piety. ‘How little men of the world attend to these truths’, she once remarked to George.¹⁴

Most importantly, she taught her children to think for themselves and to exercise critical judgement both in private reading and in public living: ‘There is nothing which should be so much cultivated in children as the faculty of judgement’ she told George in 1808,¹⁵ and again in 1809: ‘Never do anything from timidity or any other low and base motive, but as Cicero says to Curio, take counsel of your own judgement.’¹⁶ Nor should they be slaves to public opinion, but trust their own judgement: ‘I think there is a degree of weakness ‘quite unpardonable, in suffering ones feelings and sentiments to be influenced by it [public opinion]. It is the cause, I verily believe, of nine tenths of the follies of men, for no principle is so powerful over a weak mind.’¹⁷ She cites her own decision to leave London in order to educate her children as an example: ‘When I left the gay circle of acquaintance in town, and came with you then quite infants of five years old, to settle altogether in the country, — I was universally condemned. My own family took the matter up more seriously still, and my Uncle Henry¹⁸ in a formal interview upon the subject, said that so extraordinary a resolution without adequate

¹³ See Part II, Chapter 4.
¹⁴ M to G, 16 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
¹⁵ M to G, 26 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
¹⁶ M to G, 15 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
¹⁷ M to G, 14 [recte 15] January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii, a. 42a, fo. 4.
¹⁸ Henry Holland, England’s leading architect of the day. (See Introduction, p. 21.)
motive, could not fail of injuring me in the public opinion.' 19 The move to Gillwell did not result in Margaret being ostracised by society – although according to the public evidence of her friend the author Sir John Carr, London society felt her loss 20 – and any social disadvantage she suffered was more than compensated by the reputation she gained as an educator.

There was a reason – apart from the fundamental one of raising her children as practising Christians – for Margaret’s strict attention to her children’s education. It was that this education was to be their passport into the world. In the case of her daughter, it was to be into the world of ‘first rank and fashion’ where she might find a desirable husband, and in the case of her son, into the powerful world of politics. In short, she desired her children to enter the ranks of the ruling class. Margaret Chinnery was keenly aware of the comparatively low rung of the social ladder which she occupied. Her husband, a chief clerk in the British Treasury, was an untitled civil servant possessing no inherited wealth. 21 The Chinnery family property Gillwell Park, which Margaret had received from her father on her marriage, was a very small one compared to the vast estates of the nobility which brought in lucrative rents. Margaret Chinnery therefore endeavoured to improve her children’s prospects through education. To her son she made this abundantly clear in a letter written at the end of his first year at university, telling him that his future success in life depended on his high reputation at Oxford, ‘which is to supply the want of high birth, and fortune.’ 22

That this was possible in a country of such fine class distinctions may be explained by Locke’s influence on the eighteenth century belief that gentility owed more to education than to birth. Margaret Chinnery was aware of this belief, and exploited it to the full. She knew that an Oxford education was the surest gateway to high public office for a young gentleman who was able to attract the notice of persons of influence – whether they be the college authorities, his noble peers, or government officials whose acquaintance could be made through the first two channels. She knew that it was possible for a commoner to penetrate the corridors of power in the British

19 M to G, 14 [recte 15] January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 42a, fo. 4.
21 William Chinnery’s legitimate salary was approximately £1,200 per annum (Sainty, op. cit., p. 34) plus £150 for each agency he held, which sum he topped up with substantial ‘loans’ from Treasury funds (see Introduction, p. 17, note 44).
22 M to G, 17 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
Government—many respected statesmen had done so—provided that he possessed the necessary attribute of gentility. A liberal education bestowed this gentility, and Christ Church College was the most prestigious (and expensive) institution in which to acquire it. It was on Christ Church, no less, that Margaret set her sights.

One of the attractions which Christ Church undoubtedly held out for her was the prestigious reputation of its head, Dean Cyril Jackson. It was well known that he had powerful government connections. For a young man aspiring to public office, as George Chinnery was, it was to his great advantage to find favour with Jackson. Cyril Jackson, as Margaret was aware, rewarded academic merit and favoured his chosen sons with introductions which would not fail to launch their public career. Aware of the need for George to excel if he were to attract the notice of the Dean, Margaret unremittingly drove her son to study hard, constantly reminding him of Madame de Genlis's injunction concerning the profitable use of time. Not a minute of the day had been wasted during his Gillwell studies, when she had taught him to 'economise even instants' and not a minute was to be wasted in Oxford ('I beseech you continue to count your minutes'). The leitmotif running through her entire correspondence with George was 'Time is the great instrument'. George's industry was matched only by her own. With the help of Herr Trumpf she kept constantly abreast of George's studies in 1808, correcting his themes, the rough copy of which he sent home the moment it was drafted to allow time for her corrections and comments to reach him before the due date less than a week later. She also presumed to correct his translations of the Greek authors in spite of her unfamiliarity with the classical languages. She advised, exhorted, encouraged, corrected, praised, admonished and consoled. From Gillwell she directed the entire course of George's career in Oxford, bowing to the counsel of others only when it could be shown to be superior to her own. Never once did she relinquish the reins.

23 Future prime ministers Spencer Perceval and George Canning were examples.
24 Cyril Jackson (1746-1819), B.A. 1768, D.D. 1781, was a Canon of Christ Church 1779, Dean of Christ Church 1783-1809, and a former sub-preceptor to the Prince of Wales. For a detailed portrait of Jackson, see Bill, op. cit., pp. 63-84.
25 G to M, 25 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
26 M to G, 23 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Themes were the forerunner of today's essay, but were never more than two pages long. Their subject was usually a maxim or proverb that had to be demonstrated by well thought-out and eloquent arguments.
Studies were continued throughout all the vacations, which were treated as periods of consolidation and self-improvement. Holidays were opportunities for reading works of literature in the modern languages not studied at Oxford – in English, French, German, Italian. But most importantly, vacation time was used to push ahead with the prescribed Oxford texts. At the end of each vacation George’s tutors were astonished at the amount of the following term’s work that he had already covered. Not an opportunity was missed for George to steal the march on his comrades. Margaret would have sent Herr Trumpf to Oxford to assist George had not Dean Jackson long ago put an end the practice of young men arriving in Oxford accompanied by personal tutors.

In her tenacity, her drive, her unrelenting perseverance and her insistence on George’s accounting to her for every moment of his day, Margaret Chinnery was extraordinarily similar to Madame de Genlis. Madame de Genlis’s princely pupil, Louis-Philippe, speaking of his education many years later, confided to Victor Hugo that Madame de Genlis had raised him ‘avec féroceité’. He was referring to her unremitting supervision of every waking minute of his day, in which one activity followed the next without respite. The same might be said of Margaret Chinnery. As Madame de Genlis did with her royal pupils, and as Margaret herself had done with her children’s Gillwell education, she insisted that George divide his day into sections, allotting a fixed amount of time for his different mental and physical exercises. The early morning, she argued, was the best time for study which required a high level of concentration, such as mathematics or working out the arguments for his themes (‘There is an elasticity a freshness in the mind of a morning, which you should regard as sacredly due to your most important studies’). Therefore he was to rise early and fit in a maximum amount of study before Chapel at eight. The morning was defined as the time span extending from seven (or earlier) in the morning until dinner at three. Each period of study was to follow the next in quick succession. No idle moments were to intervene. It was necessary to be precise to the minute, owing to the enormous number of interruptions caused by college activities in which the young men were expected to participate: daily Chapel services (sometimes twice a day), wine parties, suppers, dinners, even breakfasts, not to mention all the sports on offer such as riding, hunting, shooting, rowing, sailing, skating, tennis, fencing, and other less salubrious amusements.

31 M to G, 28 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
such as billiards and cards, both of which were played for money. Margaret was hard pressed to know how to juggle all these conflicting obligations, but her determination to do so never flagged. Nor did George’s obedience to her instructions. On the odd occasion when he broke out of his straitjacket regime and succumbed to a tempting invitation to ride out for the day, or spend a day on the river, he was severely admonished for wasting time.

But although Margaret’s relentless driving of her son appeared hard-hearted, it was fuelled – as was Madame de Genlis’s for her children – by a fierce and selfless love. Her first letter to George at Oxford, written the day after his heart-rending departure from Gillwell talks of it:

Ah dear George never did a mother attach herself so passionately to her children as I have done! I think maternal affection as felt and described by all, a cold feeling, compared to what I find in my heart for you and your sister. Be assured of one thing, that you never can love yourself, nor can any other human being ever love you, as I do.

(M to G, 14 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

The separation from her son, after sixteen years of closely supervising his upbringing, was painful. Although her ultimate ambition for George to fill a high public office in his adult life forced her to accept this separation, it did not necessarily reconcile her to it. She wrote of her torn feelings to Madame de Genlis, with whom she had been in close correspondence during most of 1807. Madame de Genlis, who approved of the way Margaret had raised her children at home, and who had even entrusted her adopted son, Casimir Baecker, to Margaret’s care at Gillwell, replied in her letter to Margaret dated 25 January 1808 ‘pourquoi donc cet aimable George vous quitte t il? où peut il être mieux?’

Madame de Genlis, in posing the question ‘Where could George be better off than at home?’ must have struck a nerve with Margaret Chinnery, for she would probably have agreed with Madame de Genlis that there was indeed nowhere where he could be better off. It was just that the sacrifice of separation had to be made in the interest of his future career. Familiar as Madame de Genlis was with the educational principles of Locke, she did not, it seems, understand the reality of acquiring a liberal

32 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 25 January 1808, Fisher.
education in Britain. A liberal education formed gentlemen. The British term 'gentleman' had no equivalent in any other European language. A liberal education was not something that could be got at home. It needed the imprimatur, the seal of authenticity, which came only from two universities – Cambridge and Oxford.
(ii) Christ Church College in the early nineteenth century

Christ Church College in the early nineteenth century was very much as it had been in the eighteenth century. It still attracted the sons of Britain’s richest and noblest, and it was still considered the most prestigious institution in which to be provided with a liberal education. Founded by Henry VIII in the sixteenth century, its unique triple character of ‘cathedral, college and the only direct royal foundation among the colleges of Oxford’ lent it a cachet that elevated it above all the others. Although its original function — the same as that of all the colleges — was the training of clerics, it was in the early nineteenth century primarily concerned with education of gentlemen, a large number of whom were destined to take over the reins of government. Still, this education, in accordance with Christ Church’s original charter, was administered with all the trappings of the Church that had been in operation for the previous three centuries. Thus the whole of the governing body of Christ Church (Dean, Sub-Dean and Chapter consisting of eight Canons) was in holy orders, as were most of the College lecturers and tutors.

The presence of the Church was felt everywhere in Oxford. There were compulsory lectures in divinity as part of the curriculum for the undergraduates, as well as occasional ones, such as the Bampton Lectures, described by George Chinnery in 1808 as being ‘... 8 Sermons on divinity which are every year composed by some clever man in the University’. At Christ Church there were daily chapel services — obligatory for junior members of College — which were held at seven in the morning in the summer terms and eight in winter, and which usually lasted less than half an hour. There were two services on Sunday and longer ‘Surplice prayers’ [services in which surplices were worn] were also held on special days to mark Saints’ Days, the anniversary of the accession of a monarch to the throne, or some other regal or religious event which required observance by the orthodox Church: ‘Tomorrow [...] is a S\(^6\) Day vid. the martyrdom of K\(^6\) Charles. We have to go two or three times to Surplice prayers and attend a Sermon at St Mary’s.’ There were even sermons preached when the judges of the courts of the Assizes visited Oxford. George Chinnery was so struck by the number

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34 Christ Church has produced thirteen prime ministers of England, nine of whom served during the nineteenth century.
35 G to M, 12 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
of these observances that he wrote to his mother: ‘We are here like the Roman Catholics, we keep all the Saints’ days.’ He often complained to his mother of the inordinate amount of time the Surplice prayers took out of the day – sometimes up to two hours.

One of the contributing factors to Christ Church’s pre-eminent status in Oxford was its cathedral. Consequently, the chapel services held there were much grander than most in Oxford. When in February 1808 George’s sister Caroline visited Oxford, she was most impressed by the spectacle and music of Christ Church Chapel, and wrote to her father that ‘we had a most delightful spectacle; the Chapel was beautifully illuminated, with wax lights; and all the young men of the college, dressed in the surplices, made the prettiest effect possible! And the Organ with the voices, gave the whole a magical and imposing air!’ After seeing the impressive wax candles of Christ Church, she found other colleges’ chapels inferior: ‘We went to New College Chapel which was lit with tallow candles which seemed very mean after Christ Church’s.’

Christ Church Cathedral, being the only one in Oxford, was used for the ceremony of conferring holy orders. On 12 June 1808 George wrote that Surplice prayers were short that morning because at ten o’clock forty or fifty men, including ‘Out-college men’ were to be ordained there.

With Christ Church College enjoying the prestige it did, its head was endowed with special status and commanded great respect. When George Chinnery entered Christ Church, the colourful larger-than-life Dean Cyril Jackson, one of the longest serving and most influential deans of Christ Church, was still firmly in control. He was widely respected for his strong and innovative views on education, for his encouragement of excellence, and for his enforcement of discipline without reference to class distinctions. He was also recognised for the part he played in orchestrating the early reforms in 1800, which, if they clung to the old Oxford teaching traditions in most respects, at least

36 G to M, 20 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
37 G to M, 26 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
38 The whole Chinnery family had been invited, along with other members of London’s high society, to spend the last week-end of January 1808 at Taplow House. William had returned to London on Monday with the Duke of Cambridge, while Margaret, Viotti, Spencer and Caroline had continued on to Oxford, where they stayed for a week.
39 C to W, February 1808, Ch.Ch.
40 Ibid.
41 G to M, 12 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
instituted a means of recognising merit by awarding different classes of academic honours.

As well as wielding influence in Oxford, Jackson trod the corridors of power in Windsor and Westminster. He was held in esteem by George III, whose two eldest sons had been his pupils, and enjoyed close relationships with many of the leading politicians of his time, particularly the third Duke of Portland, who, largely due to the efforts of Jackson, had been installed as Chancellor of the University in 1783. Holding the ear of the King and the country’s leaders, Cyril Jackson was particularly well placed to extend patronage to his favourites. Although by 1808, when George matriculated at Christ Church, Jackson was a rather eccentric, crotchety old man in the second last year of his reign, he was nevertheless in full possession of his faculties, and still commanded the art of establishing at once the ascendancy of his own mind over every other with which it came in contact. As head of the first college in Oxford he expected to be, and was, accorded near-regal status.

George Chinnery’s descriptions in his letters home support the foregoing perceptions of Cyril Jackson: ‘I have not yet given you a description of the Dean. He is a fine, stout old man: his look though stern, is now and then lighted up by a pleasant smile: his deportment is very majestic, and at every step he takes, I am sure he thinks himself the first man in Oxford.’ George was able to find an element of humour in the self-importance displayed by Jackson:

The Dean left Oxford to day. He has been sent for by the Archbishop of Canterbury to preach before the King; so that [you] will most likely see some account of his Deanship’s sermon in the papers. I am told that he was quite a remarkable figure upon setting off, having an enormous wig on, an old-fashioned black coat, and a pair of black half-boots which came up to his knees. He carried a folio under his arm; 1/2 a dozen octavos stuck out of each pocket, & as many duodecimos were placed inside his boots, which were sufficiently wide to hold them with great ease.

(G to M, 28 February 1808, Ch.Ch.)

According to George’s testimony, regal status was not something that was enjoyed by Jackson alone, but, on the contrary, went hand in hand with the deanship of

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42 William Henry Cavendish Bentinck (1738-1809), Prime Minister of England 1807-1809.
43 W.D. Conybeare, Elizabethan Schoolmaster, p. 129, in Bill, op. cit., p. 78.
Christ Church. In 1811 Jackson’s successor, Charles Hall\(^45\) enjoyed the same standing his predecessor had in 1808. George wrote to his mother that an invitation to dinner with the new dean was like a royal command: ‘The Dean has kindly though inconveniently invited me to dinner, & you know we are here upon the same kind of etiquette that society in general is with regard to princes: an invitation from the Dean is a command.’\(^46\) And to his father he explained that ‘a certain degree of monarchical dignity should rest with the name & person of the Dean’.\(^47\)

Although Jackson was generally highly regarded, and his education views and innovations were admired, his methods sometimes attracted criticism. His government of Christ Church was an absolute one, leading contemporaries to compare it with Napoleon’s despotic rule, even down to the similar use of an espionage system, by which he kept track of the doings of all members of college.\(^48\) The jealousy with which he guarded his power, his slavish adherence to favourite traditions, and his dictatorial ways with regard to petty college rules were well known, and drew criticism from Margaret (and others) on a number of occasions.

George first experienced Cyril Jackson’s nepotism when he was a new arrival at Christ Church. Unaware of Jackson’s fierce loyalty to Christ Church old boys, George called in his friend Dr Martin Wall\(^49\) when he fell ill. His innocent action incurred the Dean’s extreme displeasure. Wall was not a Christ Church man. Cyril Jackson insisted that members of his college use only the Christ Church medical graduate, Sir Christopher Pegge.\(^50\) His stubbornness on this issue appeared totally unnecessary to Margaret, who, ignorant of the Jacksons’s particular interest in the study of medicine at Oxford, did not think it very creditable to the Dean’s ‘liberality’.\(^51\)

Dean Jackson also displayed a prickly jealousy on the occasion of the Duke of Cambridge’s visit to Oxford in March 1808, when the latter made enquiries about

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\(^{44}\) G to M, 16 January 1808, Ch.Ch.

\(^{45}\) Charles Henry Hall (1763-1827), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1783, M.A. 1786, B.D. 1794, D.D. 1800. He was made Sub-Dean of Christ Church in 1805, Regius Professor of Divinity in 1807, and Dean of Christ Church in October 1809.

\(^{46}\) G to M, 18 October 1811, Ch.Ch.

\(^{47}\) G to W, 30 October 1811, Ch.Ch.

\(^{48}\) See Bill, op. cit., p. 77.

\(^{49}\) Martin Wall (1747-1824), B.A. (New College) 1767, D. Med. 1777, Clinical Professor 1785-1824.

\(^{50}\) Sir Christopher Pegge (1765-1822), D.Med. (Ch.Ch.) 1792, Regius Professor of Medicine 1801-1822.

\(^{51}\) M to G, 5 March 1808, Ch.Ch. A. Robb-Smith says (M. Brock and M. Curthoys, eds, The History of the University of Oxford, VI, Pt I: the Nineteenth Century, p. 567) that Jackson’s interest led to Christ Church’s producing the largest number of medical graduates in Oxford between 1801-1810.
George's progress. Given Cyril Jackson's close ties with the royal family his coolness was surprising. When the Duke of Cambridge asked what the Dean thought of George, the latter 'in his usual cool manner answered that he thought nothing at all about me, because I had not yet been with him long enough.' George had been at Christ Church long enough to have had four long interviews with Jackson, in the course of which the Dean had formed a very favourable opinion of him. Why conceal it from the Duke? The Dean told George that he did not like anyone to question him about the College men. This could only mean that he interpreted the Duke's interest in George as an attempt to bring powerful protection to bear, and Jackson, jealously guarding his own position of authority, resented any outside interference in College affairs. No-one, not even the King's son, had the right to encroach on his domain. In Jackson's favour, it might be argued that by rejecting any outside interest in his charges he was being scrupulously fair towards all College members, forcing them to earn his esteem by academic achievement, not buy it by powerful patronage.

Cyril Jackson rigorously enforced all College rules, particularly the one that prohibited staying out of College overnight. And he had a particular aversion to balls. But to all excursions and entertainments which did not involve staying out of College after the gates had closed the Dean made no objection. Moreover, he was surprisingly tolerant about the extension of vacations. Quite often young men would arrive back in Oxford one or two weeks after the start of term, having been abroad on the Continent, or even on a tour of Britain. George told his mother that the Dean was very generous about granting leave of absence as long as the men had not previously incurred his displeasure. George himself arrived back in College one week late after the Easter vacation of 1809, and paying the customary call of etiquette on the Dean, was greeted affably:

'I called with all possible expedition upon the dean who received me very kindly indeed, and did not ask me why I returned on the Monday instead of the Saturday, but assured me that he had been very gracious in writing to me himself, for that he generally answered letters of the description of mine by proxy.'

(G to M, 24 April 1809, Ch.Ch.)

52 G to M, 15 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
53 Ibid.
54 See the episode of the Taplow House ball, pp. 452-453.
The Dean had a reputation for being fond of travel and liked to discuss different manners and customs with those who had just returned from abroad. This is borne out by George's remark on the above occasion when a young nobleman from Yorkshire was present: The 'conversation turned upon the topography manners and way of living of the common people in that county; and the dean had coloured etchings and maps laid open before [him] by means of which he illustrated his remarks.' In spite of this interest, Jackson displayed an entrenched bigotry towards certain places for no apparent reason. In the course of one conversation with George about where he had passed the vacation, the Dean had been prepared to show interest until he learned that the place was Southend. He then ended all further conversation by announcing that it was the ugliest town on earth, and this, exclaimed George, without ever having visited it! George thought that the Dean's 'strong, unfounded and ridiculous prejudice' would be hard to remove.

Cyril Jackson was in complete control of educational matters at Christ Church. The curriculum in the first decade of the nineteenth century still consisted primarily of the study of classics and mathematics, with lectures in the natural sciences being occasionally recommended by the Dean. It was he who set the curriculum, formulated all academic exercises and assignments, and in consultation with the College tutors, decided which texts were to be studied by each College member. He carried this close supervision of college exercises (especially themes) to the point of cancelling them if outside duties called him away from Oxford. Most importantly, he kept a finger on the pulse of each College member's progress.

The *viva voce* examinations — or Collections — held at the end of every term at Christ Church, were conducted in the College Hall by Jackson himself. After examining each College member, he personally delivered an eulogium or a humiliation to the successful or unlucky candidate. What each young man 'took up' to Collections was a highly individual matter, and Collections were judged to be 'handsome' according to the number of Greek and Latin works studied and the number of mathematical texts mastered. As Dean Jackson's favourite subject was mathematics and his favourite Greek

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55 G to M, 3 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
56 G to M, 24 April 1809, Ch.Ch.
57 G to M, 16 October 1808, Ch.Ch.
58 G to M, 11 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
author Homer, these figured large in the Collection lists at Christ Church during his reign. Cyril Jackson was also particular about how the classical texts were to be studied. With regard to the two texts which George Chinnery proposed to take up as his first Collection, the *Iliad* and the *Georgics*, George remarked of the former that his tutor Lloyd made him attend to accents, while of the latter he wrote to his mother that the Dean was not content with a young man’s simply being able to translate the Latin: ‘You must know where each town is to be found which the poet mentions, and be acquainted with the pedigree of each hero or personage &c – besides Georgics are full of technical terms and difficult botanical names.’ George also informed his mother in his first term at College that they were not allowed to take up several different Latin and Greek authors, but must choose one each of Latin and Greek. Euripides was a favoured Greek author, he remarked, while Horace ‘would make a beautiful Latin collection’. Because of the large number of men presenting themselves, the examinations were necessarily superficial, sometimes with four candidates being examined per hour. Nor was the Dean very particular about formalities. The ‘Collection-paper’ was posted in Hall with the names of the men and the days on which they were to ‘go up’ by the ‘Clark of the Hall’ about three weeks before Collections began. The examination commenced as early as eight in the morning, with the young noblemen enjoying the privilege of being examined first, so that they could leave for the vacation all the earlier. Although each candidate was assigned a time for examination, the young men frequently swapped times, as did George himself, who, in a fever of impatience to be home again at Gillwell, took Robert Peel’s turn for his first Collections at Christ Church: ‘Peele told me that his turn was the 5th and as the Dean begins the examination at 8 or soon after I shall have done with him between 9 & 10’.

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59 The term came about from the fact that as proof of what an undergraduate had studied that term, a collection of texts was ‘shown up’ to the examiners, who tested his knowledge of them.

60 G to M, 28 February 1808, Ch.Ch.

61 G to M, 26 February 1808, Ch.Ch.

62 G to M, 17 March 1808, Ch.Ch.

63 G to M, 24 March 1808, Ch.Ch. Nevertheless, as Bill notes (op. cit., p. 222), Collections were far more rigorous under Jackson than they had been previously.

64 Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850), leader of the Tories 1832-1846, Prime Minister of England 1841-1846, graduated B.A. (Ch.Ch.) in 1808, the same year that George Chinnery matriculated. Bill (op. cit., p. 222) says that turns were not simply swapped, but sold.

65 G to M, 20 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
Each college in Oxford had its own system of scholarships. Some of these were considered more prestigious than others. Christ Church’s were known as Studentships, and were awarded by the Dean and Chapter. The recipients — known as Students — were expected to embark on a career in the church. Studentships eased the financial burden of attending Christ Church considerably, as they not only paid college fees, but also gave the recipient a share — albeit a small one — in the College’s revenue from its estates. Nominations for Studentships were made by the Dean and members of the College Chapter, with the Dean’s nomination taking precedence over all others. In Jackson’s time Studentships were frequently given as a reward to his more gifted and industrious members of College. Being a Student meant holding a (very minor) College office. Duties consisted of keeping track of Chapel attendances and of serving disciplinary notes when rules were infringed. Obligations of the Student included proceeding to a Master’s degree after obtaining a Bachelor degree, and ultimately the taking of holy orders. If a Student had no intention of taking holy orders, as was the case for George Chinnery, he could subsequently try to obtain a Faculty Studentship, which was tenable only by laymen and open only to graduate Students of Christ Church. There were only five Faculty Studentships, two each for legal and medical graduates and one for a humanities graduate. Because of the long periods of time these Studentships could be held, vacancies for Faculty Studentships hardly ever arose, and when they did, a hopeful candidate would have had to have been extremely lucky to fall within the right category. George Chinnery was deprived of an almost certain Faculty Studentship in 1817, which would have been his had it not been one designated to a medical Student. Dean Charles Henry Hall wrote to him:

When I first heard that there was a faculty Studentship vacant; I immediately thought of you, and I am happy to say that the Chaplin I think would have concurred with me in appointing you, but unfortunately it is a Medical Studentship, and as there is a Medical Student, Wilson, who offers himself for it, we cannot help ourselves, we are obliged to

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66 The most prestigious of all was a Fellowship from All Souls, which George described as ‘a home for life’ (G to M, 4 November 1808, Ch.Ch.). However, the latter tended to reflect the recipient’s social status, rather than his academic ability, as the examination was ‘a mere farce’. George told his mother that ‘it is first considered whether a man is pleasant or not, for All Souls prides itself on having the best society in the University’ (G to M, 8 November 1808, Ch.Ch.).

67 Because of ambiguity with today’s term, the word ‘student’, commencing with a lower case ‘s’, will not be used to refer to the Oxford undergraduates.

68 See George’s description of the duties, pp. 494-496.
give it to him. I only hope that before you [...?] there will be another vacancy, and there will be no doubt of your success.

(Charles Henry Hall to George Chinnery, 2 March 1817, Fisher)

Added as a note to the end of this letter is written, in George Chinnery’s hand: ‘but I never did succeed in getting a faculty Studentship for want of another vacancy, & am now too old for it - Nov 1821’. This note proves that there was an age limit imposed on Faculty Studentship applications, which, judging by the date, must have been thirty.

Unlike university scholarships of today, Studentships could be held long after the recipient had left college and university. They were terminated when he obtained a Church living or when he married. Holders of Studentships were very rarely stripped of their privilege. In February 1811 two Christ Church men, one of them a clever Student whom George nevertheless described as ‘notoriously riotous & wild’, were ‘rusticated’ [sent down for a limited period of time] for having incurred a spectacular loss (over £100) in a game of whist against two New College men. But even then, George’s friend Hooker did not lose his Studentship. In writing to his mother of the incident, George explained who determined the punishment:

You may not perhaps understand why I mention the Chapter, unless I add that we Students are exclusively under the care of the Dean & Chapter united; the Dean individually has no power of either rusticking or expelling a Student: to carry such a measure into execution he must have the concurrent votes of all the Canons, or at least of all the resident Canons. Hooker & Salter were both called to the Chapter-house this morning at 12 o’clock, & there received the sentence in full congress assembled.

(G to M, 26 February 1811, Ch.Ch.)

The young men who were at Christ Church at the same time as George Chinnery were from some of the wealthiest and most prestigious families in Britain - Richard

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69 Bill (op. cit., p. 139), notes that the average length of tenure between 1660 and 1800 was twelve years.
70 G to M, 18 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
71 Thomas Redman Hooker (1790-1830), Student of Christ Church, B.A. 1814, M.A. 1816.
72 The Alumni Oxonienses (The Members of the University of Oxford, 1715-1886, ed. J. Foster, Kraus Reprint: Nendeln, 1968) lists three Salters who were Students of Christ Church and matriculated between 1807 and 1810. The Salter in question here was most likely Edward Montague Salter (1790-1845), B.A. 1813, M.A. 1815, who matriculated in the same year as Hooker.
Wellesley, son of the Marquess Wellesley; Frederick Douglas, only son of Lord Glenbervie; the Duke of Leinster and his brother Lord William Fitzgerald from the cream of Irish nobility; and Lords Downshire, Plymouth, Sondes, Apsley and Clare, among others. In George Chinnery's time there was still a powerfully entrenched system of class distinction in operation. The classes were represented by three broad groups - noblemen (who had a title), gentleman commoners (who were often younger brothers of the noblemen), and commoners (like George Chinnery), who constituted the largest group. All classes were distinguished by their dress, the place they occupied in Hall or in chapel, and by the rights and privileges they enjoyed. One of the privileges enjoyed by noblemen and gentleman commoners that was denied to the commoners, was the use of the college library. This prohibition proved a disadvantage to George Chinnery when he was doing research for his prize poem in 1810. In the past, the members of the aristocracy had not been known for their diligence at Oxford - nor had the University required them to read in any regular way. Some of their degrees were nothing short of farcical. However, by the time George Chinnery came up to Oxford, there were more members of the upper classes who took their studies seriously and aimed at achieving distinction in their degree examination, as can be seen from the results of Robert Peel (first class honours in both classics and mathematics in 1808), Frederick Douglas (first class honours in classics and second class honours in mathematics in 1809), and William Coleridge (nephew of the poet, first class honours in classics and in mathematics in 1811).

73 Richard Wellesley (1787-1831), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1805. He was the elder of the two natural sons of Richard Colley Wellesley (1760-1842), second Earl of Mornington, created Marquess Wellesley in 1799, and Frenchwoman Hyacinthe Gabrielle (d. 1816), whom the Marquess married in 1794.
74 Frederick Sylvester North Douglas, (1791-1819), Student of Christ Church, B.A. 1809, M.A. 1813. The Alumni Ooxonienses gives his B.A. graduation date as 1813, but The Honours Register of the University of Oxford: a Record of University Honours and Distinctions completed to the end of Trinity Term 1883 (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1883, p. 454), gives 1809. The Chinnery letters corroborate this date. He was the only son of Baron Glenbervie, author of The Glenbervie Journals.
75 Augustus Frederick Fitzgerald (1791-1874), third Duke of Leinster, and William Charles O'Brien Fitzgerald (1793-1864), both matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1810.
76 Arthur Blundell Sandys Trumbull (1788-1845), third Marquess of Downshire, matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1807.
77 Other Archer Windsor Hickman, sixth Earl of Plymouth (1789-1833), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1807.
78 Lewis Richard Watson (1792-1836), third Baron Sondes, matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1810.
79 Henry George Bathurst (1790-1866), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1811, M.A. 1814, created D.C.L. 1820.
80 John FitzGibbon, second Earl of Clare (1792-1851), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1812, M.A. 1819, future Governor of Bombay.
81 See pp. 503-504.
82 William Hart Coleridge (1790-1849), Student of Christ Church, B.A. 1811, M.A. 1814, D.D. 1824.
Nevertheless, there were still a significant number of ‘idle fellows’, and the latter often came from the more privileged group of undergraduates, who were not dependent on a university reputation to make their way in life. This section of the College community sometimes had nothing better to do than assert their superiority over the more industrious lower classes by scratching abusive insults on a garden wall. George Chinnery found himself the target of their jealousy in June 1811, when he saw inscribed on the wall, ‘What d—d puppies the Students are, — Chinnery for instance, that son of a writing master.’ An indication of the amount of study done by some of the upper class members of College may be gained from comparing, as George Chinnery did, their Collections with those of more humble birth, namely his own. George was contemptuous of the Collection taken up by a gentleman commoner by the name of Johnson in first term 1808. These consisted simply of ‘one play of Terence and the History of Charles V in English!’ His friend Charles Grenfell’s was in his opinion not much better — six books of the *Iliad*, six books of the *Aeneid* and four books of Euclid’s *Elements*. George’s own Collection consisted of exactly double the amount of reading in Greek and Euclid that Charles had done, as well as additional study in mathematics. In these cases the brilliance of each Collection was in inverse proportion to the loftiness of its owner.

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83 G to M, 25 June 1811, Ch.Ch. It was in fact George’s great-grandfather, William Chinnery Senior, who was the writing master, not his father.
84 G to M, 26 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
(iii) George Chinnery’s introduction to Oxford

It was on the bitterly cold morning of Wednesday 13 January 1808, that George Chinnery at the age of sixteen years and four months, clad in heavy great coat and sturdy outdoor boots, tore himself from his mother’s arms to step into the coach which was waiting to take him to Oxford. He was accompanied by Viotti, standing in for William as a father figure, and William Spencer – who was always glad of an excuse to visit friends and family in and around Oxford – in the role of friend and counsellor. It was to be a two-day journey, with an overnight stop in London at his father’s abode at 3 Duke Street. Oxford was a ten-hour coach journey from London, and the trip from Gillwell to London could take up to three hours, depending on the state of the roads.

To assure entry at Christ Church on the desired date it was necessary for commoners such as George Chinnery, who were not preceded by a great name, to find some avenue of introduction. William Spencer, ex-gentleman commoner of Christ Church, carried out this service for the Chinnerys, and addressed a submission to his friend Christ Church Canon Dr William Howley. Howley and his wife were to show George much kindness and hospitality during his four years at Oxford. On 17 December 1807 Howley sent a letter to William Chinnery informing him of College dress and book requirements and of the date his son was expected in Oxford – 15 January 1808. In the letter he mentioned Spencer’s high opinion of George’s talents and character – an opinion he himself was soon to share.

On the way through London George called at St James Palace to bid farewell to the Duke of Cambridge, but not finding him at home, left a card. Arriving in Oxford on the night of the 14th, the travelling party was made welcome at the home of another

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85 Described in Part II, Chapter 1, pp. 332-333. See Margaret Chinnery’s Journal (op. cit., 13 January 1808) for details of his departure.
86 William Spencer’s father’s Wheatfield estate was very close to Oxford, as was Blenheim Palace, the seat of his uncle the Duke of Marlborough. Although much closer in age to Margaret than to the twins, Spencer enjoyed an easy relationship with both parents and children, and his obliging and cheerful counsel over the next few years to both George and Caroline was much appreciated by Margaret.
88 William Howley to William Chinnery, 17 December 1807, Fisher. Some years later, George was to use his own influence with Jackson’s successor to introduce two young family friends to Christ Church. The young protégés were inscribed on the Dean’s private list, and promised a place (letters from Charles Hall to George Chinnery, 2 March 1817 and October 1822, Fisher).
Spencer friend, Dr Martin Wall, in whose home George spent the night, while Viotti and Spencer proceeded on to Spencer's family home at nearby Wheatfield. The following morning George moved into his college rooms in the Peckwater wing. Margaret was to be particularly grateful to Dr Wall for his attentive care of George when the latter fell ill shortly after his arrival.

George's first duty on his arrival in Oxford was to call on the Dean. Dean Jackson made a point of personally assessing every young freshman who entered Christ Church by 'quizzing' each of them in a series of interviews. It may have been that he paid more particular attention to the commoners among his freshmen, as the latter were generally more serious about their studies than the noblemen, but whatever the reason, he sent for George four times. He was particularly interested to know the scope of his new arrival's learning, given that he had had a home education.

George gave an almost verbatim account of his first interview with Cyril Jackson in his letter to his mother of 15 January 1808. Margaret, who was an admirer of the letter-writing skills of Madame de Sévigné, had taught her children the importance of making themselves the focal point of their family letters, so that their correspondent (usually Margaret herself) was able to envisage clearly the role of the loved one in the situation being described. The interview went well. Jackson was impressed with George's knowledge of the modern languages, but showed particular interest in his progress in Greek. Having learned that George's study of Greek had begun with Sophocles and Aeschylus, authors who were not studied at Christ Church until an undergraduate's second or third year, the Dean was scathing of his tutor. Dismissive of teaching methods which did not concur with his own, Jackson stated bluntly that George's Gillwell tutor, John Mullens, was a fool, and immediately set him reading his favourite author Homer. The whole of George's letter of 15 January 1808 is devoted to this interview:

"After breakfast, Charles and I went to the Dean's together, punctually at nine. We were shown into a large room where we waited de pied ferme for a considerable time,"
probably till the dean had breakfasted. Another gentleman Mr [Samuel Pole] Shaw, came into the room, and we remained in awful silence expecting the big-whigs every moment. At last Charles was ordered by a servant to go into the Dean’s library; what became of him afterwards I know not; Mr Shaw was then called, and I went the last. The Dean desired me to sit down, and asked me where I had studied, at school or at home? to which I of course answered, at home, Sir — Now Sir, he said, let us see: no vanity, for I shall soon find you out: are you stout in Greek? “Not so much so Sir as I might have been had I not several modern languages to keep up. “Several? which are they?” French, Italian & German, Sir — Do you understand German? Can you read it pretty easily? I trust I can Sir — I wish I could; do you mean to say that if I gave you any passage to translate from the German you could do it? — I should endeavour to do it, Sir, certainly — Well, you seem to have studied modern languages; do not forget them, but keep them up by yourself; now you are here, though, you must study what we can teach you — After taking a pinch of snuff, he got up, and fetched Homer: I observed to him that I had [not] read Homer — Not read Homer he said? Why what have you read — “Two or three tragedies in Sophocles, one in Euripides, and I am now beginning to read one in Aeschylus — That’s odd enough to begin by Sophocles; who was your tutor?" The Rev. J Mullens, Sir, of Ex. College, and afterwards a German, for the last year. — Well your Rev. J. M. is a fool. What have you read in Sop. and Eurip? — Then I named the tragedies — You have begun by the most difficult — He took down Medea, and said Take this passage Sir, read, and construe it. This I did with no difficulty — “I am very well pleased he said; You’ll become a good greek scholar, but you must read Homer. Have you studied Mathematics — “I have been through Simpson’s Euclid, Sir — Have you studied all the Books” — I have, Sir — and well. — I hope I am pretty well master of them — “Leave that to us, we shall find it out. Then Mr Corne came in; the Dean then desired him to take me under his care; he then asked me whether I had studied Algebra; I said I had been through Butler’s Algebra; he said he did not know the book and desired to see it as soon as possible — The Dean then told Mr Corne my tutor that I should become a good greek scholar, he thought, but that I must be put to Homer. I then left him and went with Mr Corne to see the rooms which the Dean had

was only forty miles from Oxford, and George sometimes stayed there en route from Oxford to London at the beginning of vacations.

91 Robert Simpson's twelve-volume work the Elements of Euclid, Andrew Foulis: Glasgow, 1781. By 1804 it had gone through twelve editions.

92 William Corne (b. 1776), a former Christ Church Student, had taken his B.A. in 1797, his M.A. in 1800 and was currently studying for his Bachelor of Divinity which he took in 1809. He was to be made a proctor of the University in 1808 soon after George’s arrival, enabling him to increase substantially his income.

93 See Part II, Chapter 1, p. 307, note 217.
fixed upon, in which I now am; they are excellent; but the Dean told me; you'll soon be moved into a garrot.

(G to M, 15 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

Apart from taking charge of his young pupil's academic curriculum and giving him regular tuition in the subjects which the Dean fixed upon, it was the duty of the public tutor assigned by the Dean to each freshman to introduce him to College rules, and make himself available for counsel – although Corne saw George so rarely that he would have been of little help in this area, even had George required it. Corne showed George to his rooms and pointed out his own apartments. He also gave him a list of the trades-people whose services George would need and informed him of the £12/10 'deposit money' he must pay.

The public tutors, all in holy orders according to the Oxford statutes, were ever on the lookout for pupils from powerful families who might at a later date help further their interests. At the beginning of 1811, when the Regency was on the point of being established, George wrote to his mother that his tutor 'was evidently anxious that a new Ministry should come in, entertaining hopes of Church preferment from some of the persons who are likely to compose it.' On 1 May 1808, George marvelled at the small windfall that came Corne's way when he was made a proctor and university examiner. In his capacity as examiner he had the right to charge candidates one guinea each: 'All those members of the University of Oxford who intend to be examined this term pay him beforehand 1 guinea; he has received to-day between one and two hundred.' With a necessarily large number of undergraduates in his charge and a busy life outside his teaching commitments, he was unable to allocate a very large portion of his time to each pupil. Indeed, he never gave George more than half an hour's tuition at a time, and that only very rarely. In the second term of 1808 he did not see him at all. It was not until third term 1809, when George was on the eve of his first public examination, that Corne saw him on a regular basis. Margaret, as an exponent of the Madame de Genlis method of keeping one's pupils fully occupied, was critical of the scant attention the tutors paid

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94 The role of tutor as counsellor was instituted in earlier times when freshmen came up to Oxford as young as twelve or fourteen.
95 This caution was paid by most freshmen at the time of matriculation and was held by the College for the duration of their stay in case they defaulted in the payment of fees or incurred any other debts. It was refundable when they left Christ Church or if they won a Studentship after entering College.
96 G to M, 21 January 1811, Ch.Ch.
to their charges in the early stages of their career at Oxford. It was no wonder, she said, that some young men were idle and indulged in vice. For those without a solid foundation of moral principles and a firm focus on the future, Oxford was ‘a dangerous experiment’. In warning of ‘the danger of cultivating the mind, without attending to the principles of the heart’ she compared idle men to boats overburdened by too much sail. On the other hand, she wrote, ‘a well prepared and enlightened mind is like a noble ship which will come safely into harbour’. 98

George’s claim to being master of all twelve books of Euclid’s Elements (which was a first year mathematical text at Oxford) was tested by Corne, who sent for him on 16 January, and after examining him, declared himself perfectly satisfied with George’s knowledge of mathematics: ‘He dodged me in all of them [geometry, trigonometry and algebra], giving me problems out of his own head to solve by the propositions, he also gave me a quadratic Equation to solve; after which he expressed his satisfaction in the most flattering terms, adding “Sir, you know abundantly to omit all Mathematical lectures, and I shall immediately represent your progress to the Dean.” 99 Corne told Spencer that George was an excellent mathematician, and generously – and gratefully, as a considerable workload had been lifted from his shoulders – acknowledged Herr Trumpf’s significant contribution. 100 Having gained the (correct) impression that George was a willing worker, the Dean, in consultation with Corne, fixed upon his course of study for the first term. George’s first Collection was to consist of ten books of Homer’s Iliad, a play of Euripides (Hecuba), Virgil’s Georgics, eleven books of Euclid, and ‘plain trigonometry and Algebra up to quadratic equations’. 101

On 25 January George had his second interview with the Dean, caused by his being ousted from his rooms by a more senior claimant, a gentleman commoner. George had already written to his mother of the ‘one serious inconvenience at Oxford’ namely that ‘if a senior happens to like your rooms you must be gone’. 102 The Dean’s parting words to George at the time of his first interview had proved true. Before this interview the Dean had spoken to William Chinnery, whom Margaret had dispatched to Oxford in

97 G to M, 1 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
98 M to G, 25 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
99 G to M, 16 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
100 Ibid.
101 G to M, 26 March, 1808, Ch.Ch.
102 G to M, 16 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
all haste after receiving George's initial letters which were full of woe.\(^{103}\) William had informed Dean Jackson of George's 'inclinations [...] for public life', and this gave the Dean the opening to test George in mathematics.\(^ {104}\) George acquitted himself well and as a reward for his attitude as well as his ability the Dean accorded him the highest mark of trust – one which he said had never before been granted to an undergraduate – that of allowing him to reside outside College. The Dean had offered too many places to incoming freshmen and now found himself in the embarrassing situation of not having rooms for them all. Under normal circumstances Cyril Jackson was intransigent on the point of lodging in College. Undergraduates were not permitted to lodge out of college or even spend a night out of their rooms under any pretext. To secure the trust of the Dean on this particular issue was a mark of distinction. George wrote jubilantly to his mother:

> Of all the letters that you have as yet received, dearest Mama, this I think will give you the greatest pleasure. After having breakfasted with Mr Douglas and Charles Grenfell, I put on my academic s, and went to the Dean; for I mentioned in my letter yesterday to Amico that Mr Dawson\(^ {105}\) was going to take my rooms, being a gentleman-commoner. It was therefore necessary to enquire what garrot the supreme Potentate of Ch. Ch. intended I should have. I therefore went to the Dean, who made me sit down and said "Sir, this is one of the calamities of human life, you are going to be turned out of your rooms "Yes Sir, (I answered) and I am come to know which rooms you wish me to take. possession of" — That I cannot decide just yet but first I want to have a little more conversation with you than I had last time. Mr Corne tells me, Sir, you are out of the Mathematical lecture, but I want to know much you know of Algebra. Have you studied cubic-equations? "Yes, Sir, I have — Then he questioned me about decimal fractions and he saw that I understood them; he gave me a problem in dec. fractions. I asked leave to take a pen and ink, and offered to solve it immediately, "Aye, he said, I know you can do it with a pen and ink, but I want you to do it in your head. Now this is what I wish you to learn. Your father told me yesterday that he thought your inclinations were for public life. That's very well; but supposing you were to take up the branch of finance, there would be the situation where Algebra would be useful to you; but unless you could make all these calculations in your head &

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\(^{103}\) Not surprisingly, the ingenious George was shocked and upset by the behaviour of some of the school-educated members of College (see pp. 437-438). William's visit appears to have taken place c. 24-26 January 1808.

\(^{104}\) G to M, 25 January 1808, Ch.Ch.

\(^{105}\) George Robert Dawson (1790-1856), B.A (Ch.Ch.) 1811 (first class honours in classics), entered Parliament and became Secretary at the Treasury in 1828.
instantaneously, it would not be half so useful to you. Do you think for instance that if you were at the head of a board, and it were necessary for you to calculate what the sinking fund of Mr Pitt\textsuperscript{106} would produce in a certain time, do you think that the board would wait if you were obliged to be any considerable time in giving the answer? (Here he laughed) & I smiled, and said, certainly not Sir. He then asked me: what would be the decimal fraction of 7/8. I calculated it in my head and said, I think Sir it is 0,875 “Why so?” Because Sir by adding any number of cyphers to 7 and then dividing by 8 this will be the quotient” — Very well; now what you have to do is to work hard at these dec. fractions, so as to know without any calculation the decimal for all the common fractions” Sir, I shall endeavour to do so most certainly” — He then added “You see, I talk to you as to a man, and so I hope I always shall (Here, as in many other parts of the conversation I made a little inclination of the body) Now, he said, you must go, for there are two censors who wish to talk with me; come to me again in an hour’s time about the rooms. — During this hour I went into my rooms, packed up all my things in my trunks, and set all in readiness to move into other apartments. At the end of the hour I returned to the Dean’s and was shown into the parlour where I waited for him a good half hour. He then came in, and walking in a stately manner up and down the room, he said, Sir I am rather in a dilemma; I have over-entered myself, and for the soul of me, I can find no garrot to put you in. However Sir, as I know you are a man of honour, and are most zealous for study, I will venture to lodge you out of the College: if there is any man, Sir, with whom I would do this Sir, it is you. Go now to Mr Corne, and then look out for lodgings. [...] mind Sir, he said, you must equally attend the College hours “Sir I shall certainly attend them with no less exactitude” Tomorrow Sir, you will to me, and we shall have a little Greek together.

(G to M, 25 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

The third interview took place on 27 January. Jackson’s love of mathematics is evident in this conversation and it augured well for George’s career at Oxford that the great Dean condescended to spend two hours discussing his favourite subject with him. George’s knowledge of mathematics – elementary as it seems today – must have been rather above that of most freshmen at the time and Jackson appears to have found this a refreshing change. Certainly mathematics was not Westminster School’s strong suit, and this was where Christ Church drew a significant number of its members. As a result of this conversation Jackson invited George to converse with him whenever he liked, so that word got about that he was a favourite of the Dean. Margaret was surprised at the

\textsuperscript{106} Established in 1786 by William Pitt to reduce the national debt, this was revenue set aside periodically to accumulate at interest.
Dean's preoccupation with mathematics and expressed surprise that he did not quizz George in other subjects. In anticipation of this, and ever on the lookout for additional ways of earning the Dean's favour, she recommended to George that he look over Herr Trumpf's table on mineralogy 'of which the Dean is fond'. George wrote that he prepared himself for his third interview with the Dean in the following way:

I studied Dec. fractions from \( \frac{1}{2} \) past 8 (after prayers) till 9. This I found of use to me; for at \( \frac{1}{2} \) past 9 exactly I left Wall's rooms & went to the Dean's where I remained an hour and three quarters. We conversed on Algebra, and on the properties of figures, on the nature & scientifical meaning of numbers, on the origin, signification & modification of the unit, and the advantages of decimals, on the points of similarity & difference between vulgar and decimal fractions, on the practical uses of both & what deficiencies in calculation brought on the invention of the latter. He really gave me a lecture, & from the regularity in the reasoning; the clearness of his expressions, & his unimpeded flow of words you really would have supposed that he had prepared it beforehand; as he said himself we here & there entered into deep metaphysics; it was all reasoning. What he said was undoubtedly very abstruse; however I understood it. I paid the greatest attention, and also endeavoured to appear as if I did; this I think pleased him; for he every now & then favoured me with a gracious smile; my mind was on the utmost stretch for the best part of 2 hours . At the end of our conversation, I told him "Sir I shall reflect & meditate seriously on all that you have said — Very well Sir," he answered, I shall see whether you have meditated, by our next conversation, and also whether your mind is capable of receiving the impressions which I have endeavoured to imprint upon it. Now get you gone. This last phrase is the one he makes use of without discrimination to all persons. He gave me leave to come to him whenever I liked; this is considered as a great favour, & every body thinks I am in favour with the Dean.

(G to M, 27 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

The day after this last interview, a day of high wind and low temperatures, George was to be matriculated. Before being admitted as members of the University, matriculants had to pay a fee and take an oath of allegiance to the thirty-nine articles. These articles, originally drawn up in Elizabethan times to oblige all Anglican clergy to reaffirm their faith in the orthodox church, were considered by some critics to be an anachronism, and had in the past been the subject of much debate. George Chinnery, who probably would have agreed with the critics of subscription to the articles, gave his account of the matriculation ceremony — with which he was singularly unimpressed and
which he considered a great waste of time—in his letter to his mother of 28 January 1808:

[...] on this occasion the undergraduates were to meet in the great quadrangle & follow the procession of a grand compounder, that is of a young man of fortune who was going to take his degree. The Vice-Chancellor, Dean, Sub-Dean, Proctors, Batchelors &c were to attend in their robes of ceremony. But except the gaudy appearance of the dresses there was nothing to admire. We undergraduates met in the great quad. at ½ after 9, or a quarter before ten, where we waited a full hour, the wind being dreadfully high & cold & blowing our caps off about 5 times every 10 minutes; at last we set off, but with the pleasure of walking all along the quadrangles & streets bare-headed! At last we came into a hall, where 5 or 6 young men were to take their degrees; in the mean time we were sent into an outer hall to register our names and pay £2, for the honour of being matriculated; we waited an hour & a half without any possibility of hearing what was going on in the adjoining room; when the ceremony for taking degrees was over, the Vice-chancellor came out, and we expected then that he would have administered the oath to us; but to our great mortification he went to Oriel College first & kept us 3 quarters of an hour in expectation of his return; at last he administered the oath of allegiance to us, and we each returned with our little paper testifying that we had been matriculated. There never was such a loss of time. 

(G to M, 28 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

The fourth summons to Dean Jackson was occasioned by a discussion the latter had had with Corne concerning George’s readiness to apply himself to hard study. After less than a month at Oxford George’s diligence was making an impression on his tutor. Not only did he already possess an uncommon fund of knowledge, he was extremely eager to extend it.¹⁰⁷ That the Dean took a personal interest in freshmen who promised well is shown by this interview, in the course of which he proposed George’s studying under a private tutor. The Dean did not suggest such a step lightly. He put the proposal only to those who he considered would be sure to benefit from it. Hence the remark by George’s sister Caroline in a letter to their father at the time of her stay in Oxford at the beginning of February 1808: ‘The Dean thinks of giving George a private tutor; Mr Law, the cleverest man in College, which is reckoned as a great mark of favour &

¹⁰⁷ G to M, 10 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
Moreover, he had to make sure that the pupil's father could afford it. Private tutors offered many advantages to studious members of college. They did not have the large number of men under their care that the public tutors did, and so could devote more time and care to their charges. For this reason they were more expensive than public tutors. Of course Margaret did not hesitate to acquiesce on behalf of her husband. George relates the interview to his mother in the following terms:

 [...] a little before 11 o'clock, the Dean's servant came & desired that I would go to the Dean directly; of course, je pris les jambes a mon col, and went; after waiting a quarter of an hour the dean came to me and said: Sir, I have had a great many serious thoughts about you, and I never was more puzzled about any man to know how I should direct his studies. From all I have seen of you, I cannot but say that I like you; now mind, Sir, it depends upon yourself; I may change this opinion I have formed, in a week. Mr Corne & I have had much conversation about you: he says he is persuaded that you would do any thing that was desired of you, and that you would work indefatigably; but Sir, it depends very much upon the turn which is given to that assiduity. Mr Corne has not time to be with you sufficiently; you want a man who can be with you oftener, who can retravel over the ground which you have been over, and fill up every little chink: your mode of education, has put a vast quantity of matter into your head, of which (I have often said it & say so again) were you to lose the least part, you would deserve to be hung; you must keep it up besides your academical studies; there is time for all. Now Sir the man I want is Mr Law; had I created a man for the purpose, I could not have made a better one than he is. I will not say that you have studied superficially – far from it – but you have not gone deep enough; this is what you have to remedy with Mr Law. I told Dr Howley to ask your mother whether your father would go to the expense of this private tutor, to which she answered – certainly: this I was glad of. [...] Now then I, my magnanimous self, will see Mr Law and get you introduced to him by Mr Corne. He then sent me away saying, I know you are capable of bearing the two characters, of possessing a great deal of academical, and a great deal of useful knowledge —

(G to M, 10 February 1808, Ch.Ch.)

This last statement of Cyril Jackson may well be the closest he ever came to acknowledging that the traditional curriculum studied at Oxford (of which he was one of the staunchest advocates when changes were mooted) was not particularly useful in

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108 C to W, [9 February 1808]. Fisher. William John Law (1787-1869), a Student of Christ Church, won the Latin verse prize in 1807 and graduated B.A. in 1808 (first class honours in classics). 109 See p. 552 for the fees George Chinnery paid his private tutor at the end of his studies.
life. Nevertheless, he did show broadmindedness in his approval of George's maintaining his acquaintance with subjects outside the Oxford curriculum. During the interview, the Dean, having heard that George's mother was in Oxford, took the opportunity to make clear his dislike of casual parental visits: 'Give my compliments to your mother, and tell her that whenever any parents or friends come down here they only serve to disturb, and that I desire she will not come again without my permission'. For Margaret, the Dean's words contained both bitter and sweet. She certainly would not like to have heard that neither her presence in Oxford nor her influence over her son's studies was welcome. Jocular though these words were, the Dean's message could not have been more serious: he resented his influence over the college members being undermined by interfering parents. Margaret heeded the warning and was henceforth very careful to conceal her considerable input into George's studies. On the other hand, the Dean's tacit endorsement of her method of educating her son was flattering, and she took all the credit for his praise of George for herself. Margaret, like Madame de Genlis, never tired of impressing upon her pupils that they owed a debt of gratitude to their educator: 'As for me, you are now paying me back all you owe me, and if you go on so, I shall so find myself your debtor!'

The private tutor that George ended up with was not Law, but Charles Lloyd, a portly young man whose age George accurately estimated to be about twenty-five, and who lived, conveniently, next door to George's town lodgings, in which he was now settled, at Mrs Green's in High Street. A Student of Christ Church, as were all the Christ Church tutors, Lloyd had been awarded his Studentship by Jackson for his mathematical ability. It was just such an honour that Margaret coveted for George. Lloyd found George 'an odd little fellow' and, not surprisingly, was struck by the amount of knowledge that had been crammed into the head of one so young. Lloyd, who appears to have been considered somewhat odd himself was wont to treat George rather flippantly, much to George's mortification and Margaret's anger. It was not until George's final year at College that Lloyd stopped treating him like a child. But

110 After the week-end party at the home of the Grenfells at Taplow House.
111 G to M, 10 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
112 M to G, 26 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
114 No further details on the owners of these lodgings are given. George paid £10 for the term (January - March) he spent there.
in spite of his lack of respect, Lloyd discharged his responsibilities towards George fairly and assiduously, seeing George for one and a quarter hours a day initially, and much more when George’s public examinations approached.

In George’s letter to his mother of 15 February 1808, he described his first meeting with Lloyd:

We read Homer and he put a few questions to me out of Euclid, after which he said that he really thought I knew the Elements, or the 6 Books as well as himself, and he does not think it at all necessary for me to study them with him; I am to go over the 11th book with him and the first Prop. [proposition] of the 12th and then to enter (probably) upon Conic Sections116 which I have as yet studied but little.

(G to M, 15 February 1808, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret was undoubtedly gratified by Lloyd’s comment: ‘They have contrived to get a great deal of knowledge into your head: you now know more than half the men in College’,117 echoing her own remark to George in her first letter to him at Oxford: ‘I have put into your head more knowledge and more ideas than you are aware of [...]’118 It was quite probable that George did know more than most men in College. By the time he had completed his home education, George was fluent in French, German and Italian, had a vocabulary of 3,200 Greek words, was perfectly competent in reading Latin (less so in writing it), had worked through the twelve books of Euclid’s Elements, and had also studied algebra and trigonometry. The education of most of the young men coming from the public schools would have been restricted to the study of Greek and Latin, with only a very little mathematics.

Lloyd also paid George the compliment of comparing him to the famous Christ Church son Robert Peel, who was then on the point of taking his degree examination and was ‘now reckoned to be the cleverest man in Oxford’, saying that George knew as much Greek as Peel did when he first came to College. Margaret, however, was not a little anxious about Lloyd’s encouraging George to devote most of his time to Greek and mathematics. Knowing George to be inexpert in writing Latin prose and verses, she

115 V.H.H. Green, in Sutherland and Mitchell (eds.), op. cit., p. 625, calls him ‘the able, if eccentric scholar Charles Lloyd’.
117 G to M, 15 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
118 M to G, 14 January, 1808, Ch.Ch.
thought Lloyd should propose ‘some regular plan of study’ to cover all these subjects and was critical of his lack of pedagogical method: ‘What an odd thing for a private Tutor not to think of all these things himself.’ In her opinion, it was not sound educational practice to study one subject to the exclusion of others, and as an exponent of Madame de Genlis’s belief that every piece of knowledge once gained could only be retained by further reinforcement, she wrote: ‘Mr Lloyd is a young man, and little versed in education, or he would know with how much facility thing are forgotten, which have cost great labours in acquiring.’ In any case, she continued, ‘The modern languages will be ten times more useful to you than Greek’. Margaret was also dissatisfied with the way in which Lloyd went about helping George with his weekly themes. (While a public tutor was not allowed to help his pupils with these exercises, a private tutor was able to give them this advantage.) She again found fault with Lloyd’s method, saying that he neglected his duty by not pointing out George’s weaknesses in style, fluency and arguments. By 18 February Margaret had written to Lloyd suggesting a reading list for George to follow. Wary of incurring the censure of the Dean after his earlier remark about meddling mothers, she warned George: ‘You might of yourself suggest to him that he had better not mention to the Dean my having written to him, – as the Dean does not like any interference of parents, and more particularly of mothers.’ Feeling somewhat offended at the Dean’s earlier insinuation that George may have studied ‘superficially’ at home, she advised George: ‘If Mr Lloyd should ask you how I can tell whether you have studied “superficially” or not; there can be no harm in your replying, that you have never taken any lessons, or studied, or read with any one without my being present from the beginning of your education to the moment of your going to Oxford, – that you have in short scarcely been out of my sight since your birth, &c &c.’ It is doubtful that Lloyd would have heeded Margaret’s recommendations, probably sharing the Dean’s opinion of interfering mothers. But this did not deter Margaret from continuing to direct George’s education from afar. As well as drawing up specific reading lists of English, French, Italian and – with the help of Herr Trumpf – German works, she also drew George’s attention to any interesting novels, informative

\[119\] M to G, 17 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
\[120\] Ibid.
\[121\] M to G, 26 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
\[122\] M to G, 18 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
\[123\] Ibid.
essays, or useful books of parental advice that she happened to be reading herself, such as Madame de Staël’s *Corinne*,124 Addison’s *Spectator* and Lord Chatham’s *Letters*.125 Margaret judged the essays in Addison’s *Spectator* to be very useful to George for a number of reasons. One was for their content – she cited, among others, the 35th number in the first volume on wit126 – another was so that George might emulate their form and style in his themes.127 She also thought they gave a very good picture of their time.128 ‘Imagine to yourself’, she wrote to George,

Six or eight of the most distinguished men of that time, employed daily in watching the entertainments and manners of the people of so great a town as London, – establishing themselves into a sort of public censors, – lashing the follies of all ranks and stations, – admiring what was good, and condemning what was bad in the daily occurrences, – and rendering their criticisms not only palatable but delightful and attractive by the refined wit, and extensive learning with which they were reasoned!

(M to G, 19 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret selected several of the essays that she thought a good starting point for George’s introduction to Addison’s and Steele’s writings, listing them in the above letter. The only point on which she took issue with the authors was their taste in things Italian, finding Addison’s judgement on modern Italian authors and opera too harsh.129 In his reply to the above letter, George wrote that he was following his mother’s recommendations about keeping up his English and foreign language reading: ‘L[d] Chesterfield’s letters & Milton [*Paradise Lost*] shall be my english, Telemachus my french [Fénelon’s, *Les Aventures de Télémaque, fils d’Ulysse*] & the 4 vol Mr Trumpf gave me for my german course of reading.’130 To keep up his Italian he was reading Tasso’s *La Gerusalemme liberata*.

George went on to embed himself in the Dean’s esteem in his early weeks at Christ Church by earning the honour of reading his first theme in Hall. Themes were

126 *The Spectator*, vol. 1, no. 35, pp. 172-176.
127 M to G, 18 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
128 Margaret believed that *The Spectator* gave a better picture of life in London at the turn of the eighteenth century than the *Mémoires de Dangeau* gave of life at the court of Louis XIV in the seventeenth century (M to G, 19 February 1808, Ch.Ch.).
129 M to G, 19 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
obligatory weekly assignments to be handed in at Hall every Saturday at two o’clock, when a few of the previous week’s best were read aloud before the Dean and the assembled members of College. They were written alternately in English and Latin, the subject for the English themes being given out in Latin and the subject for the Latin ones in Greek. The fact that George called the subject of the theme a ‘thesis’ indicates that the aim of the exercise was to argue a point. Theme writing tested not only the reasoning powers of the writer, but also his fluency and style. George kept his mother informed of all the subjects of his themes, some examples of which are (in George’s translation) ‘Being a man he knew how to moderate his anger’, ‘While we suffer ourselves to be carried about in the pursuit of different objects, without fixing ourselves to any, time flies away, and never can be recovered’, ‘Unless that which you do be in itself useful, the glory to be derived from it is foolish’, ‘The bitterest of ends follows an unlawful pleasure’. In translating these subjects for his mother, George sometimes found that a French rendering captured the sense better, such as ‘Point de roses sans épines’, or ‘Les bienfaits mal placés sont presque des injures’.

The lecturer responsible for overseeing the writing of themes was traditionally the lecturer in rhetoric, but in George Chinnery’s time it was John Conybeare, Professor of Anglo-Saxon. On 11 February George wrote to his mother that he had shown his theme to Conybeare, who had given him much advice, and had made some minor criticisms of his style. After twice reworking his theme and contracting it ‘within the limits of 1 sheet which I have done by writing very close and small’ the theme met with Conybeare’s approbation. This was the only time that Conybeare helped George with his theme, and as it was not common practice for the lecturer to offer any assistance to the undergraduates, he probably did so on this occasion because it was George’s first attempt and he was to read it in Hall. Of the reading itself, which took place on Saturday 13 February, George wrote to his mother:

130 G to M, 19 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
131 G to M, 6 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
132 G to M, 8 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
133 G to M, 12 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
134 G to M, 27 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
135 G to M, 2 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
136 M to G, 19 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
137 John Josias Conybeare (b. 1779), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1801, M.A. 1804, Rawlinsonian Professor of Anglo-Saxon 1808-1812.
All the Commoners, Gentlemen Comm. & Students were there; the Dean, Mr Corne & Mr Conybeare; Mr Conybeare had but two themes which he approved of; Mr Fazakerley's & my own; he called out Fazakerley who read his at the desk in the middle of the hall; it was a very good one; I was then called out; I walked up to Mr Conybeare who gave me my theme; I read it & then returned it to Mr Conybeare; the only hustling thing during this declamation was that the young men about me were making their remarks on my theme in a sotto voce all the time; however I am glad to think that I neither felt nor appeared in the least dismayed upon the occasion. These were the only themes that were read, the Dean declaring that he could produce none that were good enough.

(G to M, 14 February 1808, Ch.Ch.)

A fortnight later, George happened to meet the Dean on his walk in Christ Church Meadow and the latter complimented him on his theme, saying it wanted only a little pruning. Margaret was of course keen to repeat this initial success, but try as she might, filling many pages of her letters with detailed line by line criticism of George's arguments and style, George was never again to repeat this honour.

138 William Fazakerley (b.1789), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1810 (first class honours classics). The *Alumni Oxonienses* gives his graduation date as 1811, but the *Honours Register (op. cit.)* and the Chinnery correspondence give 1810.

139 G to M, [14 February 1808], Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 42a, fo.147. This folio has been wrongly placed at the end of George's letter to Margaret of 26 February 1808.
(iv) Unhappy early times

But George's early days at Christ Church were not all happy. His introduction to Oxford was bound to cause him a shock. Educated totally at home, it was the first time he had been separated from his family circle. He found himself among other young freshmen, who were all at least a full year older than him, and who, having boarded at public schools, were used to rowdy communal living and had a far greater experience of life. He was desperately homesick. He especially missed the convivial family dinners at Gillwell and felt alienated by the cold separation of the classes in hall:

I was taken to dine in the common Hall. The Hall itself is magnificent, but the dinner is the most unsociable thing you can conceive. The Commoners dine at one table, the Gentlemen-commoners at another, the Students at another, the Batchelors [sic] at another, the Masters of arts at another: these tables have not the least communication with one another: there was a leg of mutton roasted, a neck of veal with an onion sauce, and beef-stakes with a brown sauce, potatoes, Cabbage & turnips; every person helps himself, so that the dishes walk up and down the table in the most ridiculous manner possible. There were pies also and cheese; I eat of nothing but mutton and vegetables; the dishes themselves were as you may see very good; but there was no conversation; not a word was said to any body, except to the waiters. Oh! how I then thought with regret of our comfortable, friendly & social dinners at Gillwell!!

(G to M, 16 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

But worse than the stiff formality of dinners in hall was the rowdy, drunken behaviour of his young peers. George had been protected from the world at Gillwell and was miserable on finding that the young men in Oxford seemed to indulge in all the vices that he had been taught to abhor. Particularly worrying to George, since he was under strict instructions from his mother and his London doctor to avoid it, was the custom of drinking wine. Wine was thought to inflame the chest, and as it was a chest infection which had nearly killed George the previous spring, it was no mere pretext to virtue which caused him to eschew it. Invitations to 'wines', to suppers, to breakfasts were showered upon the freshman, leaving him little or no time for study. It was this last constraint which particularly tormented George, prompting him to write home:

What a place of idleness and dissipation this is! It is become a rule that no young man just come to Oxford (generally styled a Freshman) should refuse any invitation: he is
asked to breakfast where he remains till 1/2 past 10 or 11; he scarcely ever allows himself less than 2 hours walking, scating &c; this takes him till 1 o'clock, and at 3 he dines; after dinner he dresses, and is asked to 5 or 6 wine parties; supposing therefore that he should return in time at night to study the wine & dissipation in which he had indulged would have rendered his head totally unfit for it.

(G to M, 18 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

He ends this long litany of complaints with a morose reflection which effectively signals the end of his innocence: ‘I see a veil which till now has hidden from me the vices of mankind tearing itself, and disclosing a scene to me which fills me with melancholy.’\(^{140}\) George’s subsequent descriptions of instances of drunkenness among the college men shocked his parents, causing his father to write (in poor French) to his mother: ‘Quel conduite ont ces jeunes gens! Et quelle honte pour les Superieurs du College!!!’\(^{141}\) and causing Margaret to admit that she may have sent George to Oxford too young, thereby making her first error in the planning of George’s education:

It is an establishment that seems calculated only for men of twenty or more, who go there merely to take their degrees, and to live in society. I regret excessively that you should be there so much too soon [...] because your progress in your various studies will I fear be retarded [...] This is perhaps the only great fault I have made in planning and conducting your education.

(M to G, 25 January 1808, Ch.Ch.)

Much as she regretted the loss of study time caused by these incessant interruptions, her prime concern remained George’s health and his principles: he must not allow himself to be affected by practices which she considered to be unsound for body and mind.\(^{142}\) She reiterated her opinion on the need for young men to possess good judgement: ‘all the evils of life [...] are the fruits of wrong judgement’\(^{143}\) and, like Madame de Genlis, believed that the weakness of character displayed by such behaviour was due to a poor early education.\(^{144}\) Because of her faith in the success of George’s early education she held no real fears that he might be contaminated by such a display

\(^{140}\) G to M, 18 January 1808, Ch.Ch.

\(^{141}\) W to M, c.19 January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 42a, fo. 25.

\(^{142}\) M to G, 19 January 1808, Ch.Ch.

\(^{143}\) M to G, 21 January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 43, fo. 164.

\(^{144}\) M to G, 27 January 1808, Ch.Ch. This was also the view of most eighteenth century educationalists.
of vice, provided he ‘be not guided by any other hand than mine’ and that he ‘never [...] be enduced to conceal one thought of your heart from me [...] You have seen vice unmasked, – the sight has confirmed you in the practice of virtue I doubt not.’

Of all the encroachments on George’s study time in his early weeks at Christ Church, it was the numerous after-dinner wine parties which were the most worrying. It was imperative in an institution like Christ Church for a young man to frequent the society of his peers, and moreover, to be seen to be enjoying their society. If George were to shun these gatherings to go to his books he not only ran the risk of appearing anti-social, but he would be ignoring one of the main reasons for coming to the prestigious Christ Church College, which was to make useful contacts which might serve him in later life. This benefit went hand in hand with the acquisition of a liberal education.

Margaret was fully aware of the danger of George’s appearing to be a pedant, but at the same time she wanted him to be ‘crowned with success’ at his first examination: ‘Devote yourself therefore to this great object, but without letting it appear to your companions that you make any extraordinary exertions.’ This face-saving advice was intended to protect George from the taunts of his peers. George had already been ridiculed for his early preparation of a Latin theme that was subsequently cancelled. According to George, most of the young men did not begin to think about writing their theme until the Saturday on which it was due.

However, his problems really began when he accepted an invitation to join an Oxford debating society in mid-February 1808. At first George was filled with delight at the honour of being elected to this society. It would be an ideal opportunity to practise his oratory skills in preparation for his parliamentary career. Margaret was also in favour of joining the club, as long as George took care never to speak without understanding the subject ‘most perfectly’. Unlike the themes, which treated universal truths, the subjects of the debates were always on topical issues, for example, ‘the union of England and Scotland’, ‘whether we ought to make peace or continue the war’, ‘whether England had acted wisely in supporting the King of Sweden’, ‘Catholic Emancipation’, ‘the local militia’. The debates took place each Saturday at one o’clock.

145 M to G, 21 January 1808, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 43, fo. 165.
146 M to G, 29 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
147 Owing to the Dean’s departure from Oxford to preach a sermon to the King.
hence the society was known as ‘the one o’clocks’. All young men in Oxford belonged to some such society or ‘set’ which formed the nucleus of their social life and assured friendships which lasted well beyond their Oxford days. George’s father, pleased with the elevated friendships George seemed poised to make, commented that it was an honour to have been approached personally by the likes of Francis Hare and Richard Wellesley (nephew of the future Duke of Wellington). As well as Hare and Wellesley, the club’s members included Frederick Douglas, William Fazakerley, Stewart, William Mount (of Oriel College), Legge, Hartopp, Cumming, East and Worsley, all sons of solid fortunes. Although initially the subjects of the debates indicated a serious intellectual intention, over a period of time, as the number of members declined, the main purpose of the group shifted to a purely social one and in the end became merely an excuse for holding wine parties. From worrying about how George was to acquit himself in a debate on a subject of which he knew nothing, such as ‘an examination into the conduct of the late Ministers concerning the 3 expeditions to Alexandria the Dardanelles & Buenos Ayres’, Margaret’s concern shifted to how George was to extricate himself honourably from the sacred duty of hosting an increasing number of wine parties, which began to threaten his health, his study regime and his mental well-being. As Collections drew near at the end of term she suggested excuses for him to use when he left wine parties early to avoid the charge of unsociability.

After the Easter vacation the number of social gatherings of this set became even more burdensome, both on time and on finances. Not only did the members of the set take it in turns to give wine parties after dinner, they also began the summer practice of giving tea later in the evening, also by turns. George was informed he would need to purchase knives and forks from London and order in tea, coffee, bread and butter, cakes

148 M to G, 31 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
149 Postscript from William in M to G, 17 February 1808, Ch.Ch. Francis George Hare (1786-1842), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1806, of Lincoln’s Inn 1804, was five years older than George.
150 Michael Shaw Stewart (1789-1836), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1807.
151 William Mount (1787-1869), matriculated (Oriel College) 1805.
152 Heneage Legge (1788-1844), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1805, Fellow of All Souls College 1812-1828, B.C.L. 1812.
153 Edmund Hartopp (1788-1849), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1811, M.A. 1814.
154 Charles Cumming (1790-1875), matriculated (Corpus Christi College) 1808, created M.A. 1810.
155 James Buller East (1789-1878), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1810, M.A. 1824.
156 Leonard Thomas Worsley-Holmes (1787-1825), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1805.
157 G to M, 22 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
and ices. For his ‘maiden party’, to which fifty men were invited, George had already ordered wine from the respected London wine merchant Charles Smith (his father’s fellow lodger and Viotti’s wine partner), and this had been transported to Oxford by waggon in time to settle. After sampling the poor quality of the local tea and coffee, George felt obliged to procure the last items also from London. All this fare was not cheap. In George’s letter to his mother of 19 October 1808 is a very precise list of expenses incurred the previous term, where it may be seen that the most expensive items from a list of seventeen were, respectively, wine (£19/0/0), confectionery (£15/0/0) and desserts (£9/15/0). Nor were tea and coffee cheap. They were included in another list of expenses sent by George to his mother in his letter of 23 June 1808, totalling £20.

This last list of items obviously exceeded Margaret’s budget, as George was obliged to ask for £5 more to make up the sum. His mother responded angrily, saying that he had not followed her orders to pay bills as they arose, and that she did not want him to owe money ‘for a biscuit or a china orange in the town’. Reprimanding him severely for incurring debt, she exclaimed in exasperation: ‘The fashion of running in debt may do very well for the heirs of Lord Glenbervie and Dartmouth, but it will not suit persons who have to provide for their children out of a yearly stipend.’ As it turned out, these accusations were unjust, as many of the expenses could not be paid daily, necessarily accruing till the end of term. Protesting that he had spent only four shillings of this sum on his own pleasure, George defended the need for such lavish spending on the grounds that the one o’clocks were an expensive set:

I mean that it is an expensive sett. When you consider that no man here, whether Commoner, Gentleman-commoner or Nobleman gives wine above twice a term, perhaps three times, and that the 1 o’clocks on the other hand give it in turn, besides the term-party as it is called to which you ask all the men you know, it is evident that we must spend a great deal more than other men.

(G to M, 23 June 1808, Ch.Ch.)

As the numbers in this set had dwindled to only seven, George had given wine about eight times in second term. In addition, tea and coffee were given by turns and it

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158 M to G, 12 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
159 M to G, 19 June 1808, Ch.Ch. George Legge, 3rd Earl of Dartmouth, was the father of Heneage Legge.
was customary for members of the set to give one breakfast and one supper every term. None of this was done by other men, George pointed out. All this expense, once satisfactorily explained, was accepted by Margaret who did not want her son to stint on entertaining expenses if it meant bringing on himself a reputation for meanness. However, what she did not accept was the lack of respect shown her son.

The teasing or 'quizzing' as it was called, began only in George's second term at college, probably as his set gradually became aware of his studious habits and the protectiveness of his mother, in spite of the efforts he made to conceal this. George, however, related his unpleasant experience as the butt of the one o'clock's jokes in a remarkably tolerant and mature way:

For instance they tell me that I have less strength than any men in College; sometimes they laugh at me because I do not ride hacks as they do and say "he waits till his Mama sends him a hobby-horse." They repeatedly call me Miss Chinnery or simply Missy [...]. Their other jokes, such as breaking glasses, windows, locking up my room stealing my things &c are expensive but still can only be considered as inoffensive mirth.

(G to M, 4 June 1808, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret, outraged that George had become the 'plastron' of his set, sought immediate counsel from Spencer, and hastily dispatched to Oxford the Chinnery servant Thomas (whom she took the precaution of sending unlivieried), bearing a bundle of letters containing advice for George. Aware of the need to shield George from further taunts, she advised him not to 'let it be known he is come, or that you have received letters, not even to Charles [Grenfell].' The advice from both Margaret and Spencer was not to tolerate such behaviour, and to snuff it immediately by speaking his mind clearly and firmly to a responsible member of the set. Meanwhile, reports had reached London via other members of College that George was well-liked and respected at Christ Church and moreover, was a great favourite of the Dean. Both Spencer and Margaret opined that the malice was born of envy, prompting Margaret to remark: 'Remember dear George, that every kind of merit brings with it a proportion of inconvenience arising from the malevolence of the world.'

160 Used in the French sense, the butt of jokes.
161 M to G, 5 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
162 M to G, 7 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
Considering his youth and innocence – he was three to five years younger than half the members of the debating set – George seems to have displayed admirable strength of character in dealing with this trial. As the number of debates decreased in direct proportion as the number of wine parties increased, George saw little benefit in remaining in the group. After all, his primary aim was to excel in his studies. But he was subjected to enormous pressure from members of the set to conform to the college tradition of socialising. From two of the members he received the following lecture, the first sentence of which reveals the true reason most ambitious young men went to Oxford:

Men come here to form connections as much as for reading; the cleverest men in the University devote part of their time to society. The cleverest never devote more than eight hours to study; whereas you shut yourself up all day long in your rooms; the time that you ought to give up to your friends, you employ prosing over books, and thereby deprive yourself of the stimulus which you find in a proper interchange of society and study. All other sets in College spend the whole of the evening together; whereas we only wish you to come to wine from 4 till 6, and then return to us at 8 till 9.

(G to M, 25 October 1808, Ch.Ch.)

George agreed with the need to balance socialising and study. But the number of hours they wished him to devote to wines was not truthfully stated. There were inevitably more than admitted here, and George was not prepared to throw away his entire evening. He first tried reasoning with his critics, suggesting holding more debates and fewer wine parties. He was unsuccessful. Risking even greater public censure, he therefore took the unprecedented step of withdrawing from the set. Surprisingly, his initiative was praised by other members of College, who had secretly shared his low opinion of the set. Instead of being ostracised by the rest of College, as his tormenters had expected, he gained widespread support for his strong stand.

The trials of George Chinnery’s early months at Oxford are discussed in a chapter of Sheldon Rothblatt’s work on liberal education in Britain, Tradition and Change: an Essay in History and Culture in English Liberal Education. Rothblatt states that the chief goal of a liberal education was character formation. It taught civility, sociability, gentility, and all the virtues inherent in these qualities. However, he argues, as the real motive behind men’s behaviour was personal advantage, the result was a
conflict in aims, giving rise to hypocritical conduct, or what the Georgians themselves called ‘affectation’. The chapter of his book entitled ‘A liberal education in practice: George Robert Chinnery’ is devoted entirely to the early unhappy experiences of George at Oxford. Rothblatt uses the correspondence between George Chinnery and his mother to support his argument that, because of its conflicting aims of both sociability and personal advantage, the Georgian theory of a liberal education was doomed to failure. Rothblatt asserts that the advice that George’s mother gave him was hypocritical, contradictory and served only to confuse him. He claims that the reason George Chinnery never achieved a place in history was that the liberal education which he had been given failed him. Unaware of George’s education before Oxford, and of his career path afterwards, Rothblatt writes in his concluding paragraph: ‘George Chinnery disappeared from view and from history after leaving Oxford.’ A series of letters in the Powerhouse collection, as well as a significant number of letters in the Fisher collection of Chinnery Papers give a detailed picture of George’s subsequent career, which was far from inglorious, and if he failed to cut a figure in published history books, it is perhaps owing more to political circumstances and to his early death than to his education, which Rothblatt portrays as a handicap rather than an advantage.

Apart from a few careless errors in the chapter (George started his career at Oxford in 1808, not 1806, spent four years there, not three, and his ‘younger’ sister was in fact a twin sister), there is the oversight of attributing a speech which Margaret Chinnery prepared for George to ‘recite to the great Dean Jackson of Christ Church’ in 1811 to the wrong recipient. By 1811 Dean Cyril Jackson had retired (in 1809) and been replaced by Dean Charles Henry Hall. It was to the latter that George was to recite his speech. There are some more fundamental errors in Rothblatt’s thesis caused partly by a shallow reading of the material, partly by quoting out of context, and partly by juxtaposing quotes in a misleading manner so as to make them suit his argument, but most importantly by a lack of knowledge of the other collections of Chinnery letters which have now been brought to light.

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164 Ibid., p. 115.
165 See Part III.
166 Rothblatt, op. cit., p. 105. Rothblatt quotes M to G, 10 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
167 However, Margaret did pen a similar recitation for George to make to Cyril Jackson in 1808 to defend himself against Jackson’s unjust charges regarding the Taplow House ball (see p. 455).
Rothblatt describes Margaret Chinnery as a ‘neurotic’, ‘voluble, over-educated’ mother who asserted her love for her son ‘in the most alarming oedipal terms’, claiming that ‘Chinnery used his letters to confess himself, to purge away his guilt, and cleanse his trivial sins.’\(^{168}\) The quotation which he uses to support these statements comes from Margaret’s letter of 19 January 1808, written when George had been in Oxford for only four days: ‘What I have therefore to request is that you would regard your person as mine, and as something inestimably dear to me, and take care of it as such.’\(^{169}\) Lifted out of context, with no explanation of what preceded or followed, these words assume a meaning they are not intended to have. Margaret ends all her letters to George with a recommendation that he take care of his health. In this one she has a special request to make of him: ‘You do not care one half so much about your person as I do; you take some care of your health, it is true, because your mind cannot do without it. What I have therefore to request […]’\(^{170}\) These words are followed by a recommendation to George to watch his posture – a point which she had emphasised to both her children throughout their childhood. As for her expressions of love which precede the whole of the above quotation (‘You can form no idea how I love you! — nor can you ever, for even a father’s is not equal to a mother’s love’), although they may sound exaggerated to today’s reader uncomfortable with eighteenth century sentimentality,\(^{171}\) they must be interpreted in the context of the day, and should not be labelled with a slick twentieth century psychoanalytical tag. Margaret admits in her letter of 14 January 1808, that her love for her children is far more passionate than that of most mothers. But then she was not a typical well-to-do Georgian parent. Most genteel eighteenth century mothers had not attended their children since birth as she had done. Nor had they removed themselves from society to devote themselves single-mindedly to their children’s education. Living at close quarters with her children from their birth to adolescence necessarily forged a close emotional relationship with them. Margaret was naturally distraught when she experienced her first separation from her son.

It was not only for his mental welfare that she feared. His physical well-being was also a prime concern. George had had a serious chest ‘inflammation’ at the end of

\(^{168}\) Rothblatt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 108.
\(^{169}\) \textit{M to G}, 19 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
\(^{170}\) \textit{Ibid.}
\(^{171}\) There are numerous examples of what today would be labelled sentimentality in many other letters in the CFP collection besides Margaret’s.
the previous winter (there are letters from Margaret to the Duke of Cambridge, from the Reverend John Mullens, and from various family members, as well as entries in Margaret's own journal, all testifying to his close brush with death), and having already lost one son six years previously, Margaret was justifiably anxious. The severity of the weather at the time of his departure added to her already agitated state, and undoubtedly contributed to the high degree of nervous tension detectable in the profuse outpourings of protective love in her first letter.

She was also afraid that the great distance which separated her from her son at Oxford would compromise the open communication she had enjoyed with him all his life. Her consolation, however, was in 'an uninterrupted and intimate correspondence, in which we will communicate our every thought and idea to each other'. This was an additional reason for her insistence on daily letters and an account of the way George spent every hour of his day. In this way, she could picture to herself what George was doing at any given moment. Nevertheless, Rothblatt is not wrong in stressing Margaret's driving ambition. Having expended so much energy on her children's education, she was not prepared to countenance failure. What Rothblatt fails to recognise is the purity of her motives. Margaret understood that the impressions one made on people were important, yet she was sincere in the application of her educational principles. The face-saving advice - which Rothblatt calls hypocrisy - offered to George during the period of his early sufferings at Oxford was intended to protect him from the taunts of his peers, and far from being typically Georgian, was no different from that which would be offered by any parent of today. Although ambitious of attaining her ends, Margaret was not a hypocrite.

But Rothblatt's selective quotations imply just that. His deliberate juxtaposition of quotations from two of Margaret's letters (each treating a different subject) change her meaning entirely. For example, in his desire to show the hypocrisy of Margaret's instructions to her son on role-playing after having always advocated honesty and openness, he says of her:

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172 Margaret Chinnery to Adolphus Frederick (copy), [1807], Fisher; John Mullens to Margaret Chinnery, 16 June 1807, Fisher; M to G, 7 March 1808, Ch.Ch.; Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, 11 March 1807 and 25 December 1807.  
173 M to G, 14 January 1808, Ch.Ch.  
174 M to G, 11 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
She lectured him on the importance of role-playing, told him how one man must learn to play many parts, or “vary his character as the cameleon,” for this was the “fiery ordeal [he] must encounter on the great theatre of the world.” She mentioned Garrick, confusing the theatre with real life (which in fact was Garrick’s purpose), and she used acting as a model for the kind of public conduct she could no longer avoid telling him about.

(Rothblatt, op. cit., p.112)

The first quotation comes from a letter from Margaret to George of 26 January 1809. In it Margaret does not recommend that George ‘vary his character as the cameleon’. What she says is just the reverse. In warning George against trying to please a minority, she says he should not be afraid to be different, to stand alone, thereby earning the respect of the majority. Only the weak-minded, she says, cling to the nearest support and these are the people who are likely to change their colours like a chameleon:

Every man (to use a very vulgar expression) should stand upon his own bottom in the world; — if he has not bottom enough, or, in other words, if he be deficient in strength and energy of mind, he is a poor weak creature that must cling for support to every object around him. Such a one will vary his character as the cameleon does it’s [sic] colours, — he will be every thing, & therefore nothing. Of these men common societies are in a great measure formed. They are such convenient beings, — always ready to do what others do.

(M to G, 26 January 1809, Ch.Ch.)

The second quotation, which Rothblatt uses in the same breath as the first, is taken from a letter written eight months earlier in which Margaret is expressing her pleasure on hearing of George’s success in speaking at his first debate. She recommends to him to ‘never speak but according to your principles’ and to ensure that those principles are both just and honourable. She goes on to say:

I cannot too often repeat to you, that a good moral character will create a prejudice in your favour, highly advantageous to you as a speaker. The debating club will become an excellent moral gymnasium for you; you will there try the truth & strength of your opinions, and fit them for the fiery ordeal they must encounter in the great theatre of the world.

(M to G, 31 May 1808, Ch.Ch.)
By lifting these two quotes out of context and marrying them so that they assume the meaning which reinforces his own argument, Rothblatt has changed Margaret's meaning completely.

Nor is Rothblatt's interpretation of the letter in which Margaret mentions the actor Garrick correct. He misses the point that she is making. Margaret Chinnery did not advocate using acting as 'a model for public conduct', but recommended that George emulate Garrick's use of body language and facial expressions to add poise and conviction to his debating technique. The art of the orator, she maintained, was in the successful combination of words and gestures. Far from recommending that George use acting to dissimulate his true feelings, she advised him to take a leaf out of Garrick's book and allow his thoughts to be painted on his face: 'You have received from nature an expressive countenance, let your thoughts be painted on it, and try to make it give point and force to your words'.

Thus, without an understanding of the nature of the Chinnery children's early education and the resultant rapport between Margaret and her children, which can be obtained only from a close reading of the other Chinnery material, Rothblatt's assessment of the nature of the relationship between Margaret Chinnery and her son is bound to be flawed. Moreover, he bases his argument on evidence that is for the most part contained in the early letters of the Oxford correspondence (the first year of George's four-year residence there) when George was a young, innocent, and homesick freshman who had never before lived away from home and was a vulnerable target for college bullies. There is no mention of the happier side of George's Oxford experiences. Except for a passing admission in his closing paragraph that George 'excelled in his studies', there is no discussion of any of George's many academic triumphs. Nor is there any mention of the esteem in which he was held both by Dean Jackson and his successor, Dean Charles Henry Hall, which ultimately led to his being awarded a Studentship. These omissions are questionable, given Rothblatt's argument that a Georgian liberal education disappointed those who believed that merit would be rewarded.

175 M to G, 22 February 1808, Ch.Ch.
176 Especially Margaret Chinnery's Journal (op. cit.) discussed in Part II, Chapter 1.
When George returned to College after the Easter vacation of 1808 he was instructed by the Dean to undertake, in addition to his classical and mathematical studies with his tutors, a course of natural philosophy lectures. Known also as 'Experimental Philosophy', probably because of the way the lecturer demonstrated various physical phenomena by means of experiments, the course consisted of daily one-hour lectures over a one month period (9 May to 9 June 1808), with the exception of Sundays. It took place in the Ashmolean Museum at a cost of two guineas per subscriber. Margaret was somewhat cynical of the Dean's motives in promoting this course, saying that he probably did so 'more with a view to put money into the pockets of the Lecturers than with any hope of benefit to the students.' It was true that the lecturer in question, Stephen Rigaud, stood to make a tidy sum from this course, as one of his stipulated conditions was that he would not lecture to fewer than one hundred subscribers, and indeed twice postponed the commencement of the course until that number had been reached. But until 1810, when he became Professor of Experimental Philosophy, Rigaud did not have a fixed yearly stipend, and so was reliant on the lectures to supplement his income.

The natural philosophy taught at Oxford was really a form of elementary physics. The first thirteen lectures, George informed his mother, were to be on mechanics. George gave summaries of the lectures in his daily letters to his mother, who encouraged these 'extracts' as a type of memory exercise — the same one that the Chinnery children had practised when young and that Madame de Genlis had made her pupils do. George wrote that the lectures treated variously of magnetism; of electricity (consisting entirely of experiments and held at the Observatory, an hour's walk away); of galvanism (not one of the most interesting to George); of 'the 5 Mechanical powers' (the lever, the balance, the pulley, the wedge, and the wheel and axis); and of microscopes and telescopes (not very popular with 'the young litterati of Oxford'). Other topics covered in the lectures were 'an explanation of compound machines', 'the

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177 Lectures were in the domain of university teaching, not the colleges. Attendance was optional, and the young men usually followed the recommendation of their college heads.
178 M to G, 2 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
179 Stephen Peter Rigaud (1775-1839), B.A. (Exeter College) 1797, M.A. 1799, Savilian Professor of Geometry 1810-1827, Professor of Experimental Philosophy 1810-1839.
180 G to M, 4 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
centrifugal force and of the law of gravity as applied to planets and comets’, ‘a summary view of the Solar System’, ‘the spheroidal figure of the Earth’, ‘Projectiles’, ‘Hydrostatics’, ‘Pneumatics’, ‘lights and colours’ and the study of ‘Opticks’ which was divided into two parts, ‘Catoptricks and Dioptricks’ (the optics of the mirror and of lenses, respectively). On 24 May Rigaud proved by demonstration ‘the first great principle in Opticks, that the angle of Incidence formed by a ray from a luminous body upon another is equal to the angle of reflection.’

Rigaud’s technique, George explained, was to show his pupils ‘immensely large figures drawn upon Elephant paper: he holds a copy of them in his own hands, and while he is proving the propositions mathematically we follow him (at least those only who know something about the matter’).

In third term George was to have taken the course of lectures on Anatomy, beginning on 4 November, for a fee of three guineas, but decided against it, as it went from twelve to two o’clock and would have taken too much time from his private study. Another third term course of lectures to begin in December, this time on oratory, was mentioned by George, who with Stewart and six other Christ Church men attended the first (free) lecture, but did not continue.

As for his 1808 examinations, all had gone off very well. George’s first term Collections had earned him the praise of the Dean, who the following term moved him back into College – to ground floor rooms facing the main quadrangle with its Mercury fountain, and next door to Corne. (‘Corne told me that the Dean had given me these rooms because I was a reading man and would not disturb him (Corne) or Tarpley who is above me.’) Although there is no specific account of his first term Collections, the letters are clear on their contents. They included, for mathematics, eleven of the twelve books of the Elements of Euclid, John Keill’s Elements of Plain and Spherical Trigonometry, James Wood’s Elements of Algebra (up to quadratic equations), and

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181 G to M, 24 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
182 A size of drawing paper measuring 28 x 23 inches.
183 G to M, 24 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
184 G to M, 1 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
185 Elements of Plain and Spherical Trigonometry. Also a Short Treatise of the Nature and Arithmetick of Logarithms, Dublin 1726.
for classics, Virgil’s *Georgics*, and ten books (exactly half) of Homer’s *Iliad*. Margaret had earlier remarked that she was pleased that George was taking up the *Georgics*, and also pleased that the Dean would be asking his candidates to explain the botanical references contained in this text, as botany was a subject that had been well covered during their Gillwell studies.\(^{187}\)

George was examined on his second term Collections on Monday 27 June 1808. The Dean had not forgotten the initial impression he had gained of George’s mathematical abilities, and one week before Collections said to him that he looked forward to seeing ‘how you can logarithmise.’\(^{188}\) In the event, the Dean did not have time to examine George in logarithms, and decided to make up some questions of his own in trigonometry. George was flummoxed by these impromptu mathematical problems, but this did not seem to adversely affect the Dean’s high opinion of him, as the latter knew from George’s tutors that he was well prepared in classics, although there had been no time to examine him in all that he had prepared for this subject either! It is obvious from George’s account of this examination to his mother that Collections were a rushed affair, and that the Dean relied heavily on the opinion of the tutors in judging the academic abilities of his College members:

> I went up to Collections this morning at 8 o’clock where I remained till 1, for I had to wait in hall as usual for about an hour. The Dean said that he had not time to examine me in Logarithms or Conic Sections or Horace, but that Lloyd had told him I knew them very well. He told me I was improved in Greek, & said that he knew no man worked harder than I do. Instead of examining me in Trigonometry according to the book he made corollaries & deductions of his own in which he questioned me & which of course puzzled me; at least I could not answer them all. He told me to bring up next Collections what he had not examined me in this term, in addition to something else. He told me that Lloyd thought I was very quick at calculating, & that he had purposely put those difficult questions to me.

(G to M, 27 June 1808, Ch.Ch.)

George’s third term Collections were marred by one very unpleasant incident, which occurred on the eve of his examination. It was a result of George and his friend

\(^{187}\) M to G, 27 February 1808, Ch.Ch.

\(^{187}\) Wood, vol. 4, pt. 2, *The Principles of Astronomy*, by S. Vince) were also studied by George for his degree.
Charles Grenfell attending a ball at Taplow House, hosted by Charles’s parents. George was shocked by the force of the Dean’s anger, especially since he had been granted permission to attend. The Dean’s dislike of balls was legendary, and when asking for leave to attend such an event the young men took care to call it a dinner invitation. George was initially refused leave by Corne, on account of Surplice prayers the following day, while Charles was granted leave by Webber, a College censor. The other university invitees had all received leave to attend. The arbitrariness of the permission process aroused Margaret’s anger. She particularly wanted George to attend, as the rest of the Chinnery family and Viotti had been invited, and the Duke of Cambridge was to be a guest. It was an occasion for George to be seen in the top echelon of society. ‘Certainly the introduction of a young man into the best society, is one of the first advantages to him’, Margaret wrote. Lloyd eventually intervened on George’s behalf and persuaded Corne to change his mind, and as a result, George set off for the ball in a chaise that he shared with two others. It was a six-hour journey, and so the young men did not arrive at Taplow until ten in the evening and did not get back to Oxford until midday the following day, having danced till six in the morning.

When the Dean discovered the event his anger knew no bounds. Claiming to have been deceived, he vented the full force of his ire on the Grenfell family. He wrote a heated letter to Mrs Georgina Grenfell saying that Charles would never again be granted leave to go out of College, and another to Pascoe Grenfell whom he accused of a breach of common civility in sending for five or six men from Christ Church ‘without my leave’. The Dean told George that ‘when my anger abates I will send him [Grenfell] a letter he will by no means like.’ His violent tirade had such an effect on the Grenfells that Charles’s father withdrew his son from College and university at the end of term, placing him in the family business.

As for George, he received his blow when he called on the Dean to enquire about the time he was to be examined for Collections. Unaware that he had done any wrong, George was taken aback by the Dean’s accusation that not only was he guilty of

189 G to M, 20 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
189 James Webber (1772-1847), tutor and censor, B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1793, M.A. 1796, B.D. 1807, D.D. 1829. There were two College censors, and their role was to enforce discipline.
190 M to G, 23 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
191 G to M, 2 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
192 G to M, 8 December 1808; See also pp. 455-456 for Pascoe Grenfell’s response.
attending the Taplow ball, but also of attending a dinner at Lord Charles Spencer’s at Wheatfield just after it (for which George had also obtained formal permission):

After putting on the most solemn & angry countenance he desired me to sit down, and said “Well Sir, I hear you were so impudent, bare-faced & shameless as to ask leave of the Censor to go out to Lord Charles Spencer’s the other day, after having offended me so grievously by going to the ball at Mr Grenfell’s! Do you think, Sir, that young men come to Ch.Ch. to go to any footy little ridiculous ball thirty or forty miles off, which some family or other chooses to give.

(G to M, 8 December 1808, Ch.Ch.)

News of the Dean’s opinion of balls must have spread around the country, for the following February, when the Duchess of Marlborough was holding a grand ball at Blenheim Palace, she took care not to send an invitation to any Christ Church men. Dr Wall’s daughter Sophie informed George of the projected ball, ‘but she added that the Dutchess would not venture to send a card to her Ch.Ch. friends.’

The timing of this incident could not have been worse. Shortly before his third term Collections, Lloyd, impressed by George’s mastery of all four books of Robertson’s *Conic Sections*, and confident that he would make a favourable impression on the Dean, had raised the prospect of a Studentship for the first time. George wrote to his mother:

He says, that if ever the dean gives me a Studentship, it will be for mathematics; the last four or five that he has given have always been as rewards for taking up great Collections in mathematics. When Lloyd himself was a Commoner, he one term took up Mechanics, the 2\(^{\text{nd}}\) part of Algebra, fluxions, and three Sections of Newton ; and the dean then gave him his Studentship. He did the same for a man by the name of Montroe. I am therefore determined to know the Conic Sections quite perfect […]

(G to M, 27 November 1808, Ch.Ch.)

A few days later George wrote that there was not ‘one single property of the cone with which I am unacquainted’ and that Trumpf would be astonished at his ability to ‘recollect the demonstrations of 105 propositions, Scholia & Corollaries’. He

193 G to M, 22 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
continued, ‘If I succeed, I know the Dean will be uncommonly pleased.’ Margaret, whose ambition had always rested on just such an honour — accompanied to be sure by its financial rewards — began to be impatient for some sign of the Dean’s pleasure: ‘As to the Studentship, if the Dean defers it much longer it will be acceptable to you merely for the honour; as you will not have much time to benefit by the privileges of it; however honour is a great deal to a young man just setting out in life.’

As a result of this psychological battering George’s high hopes for the coming Collections sank: ‘how unkind & unpleasant the dean will make himself in examining me!’ Since George had told her of the dissolute behaviour that prevailed at College, Margaret’s opinion of the old Dean had not been high, but she nevertheless wanted his approval for her son:

I have not the smallest esteem for the Dean, for many solid and weighty reasons, — but while you are in his college it would give me real pleasure to hear that he had been forced by truth and justice to growl out his good opinion of you. I hope you will even conquer his esteem, and compel him to commendation of you.

(M to G, 22 November 1808, Ch.Ch.)

One of the ‘solid and weighty reasons’ which contributed to her unfavourable opinion of the Dean was that by allowing drunken carousing to go unchecked, he was tacitly endorsing it, allowing it to become entrenched in the college ethos. When George told her that the young men commended such behaviour, she exclaimed ‘but the fault lies at the Dean’s door! [...] In cases of this sort, the superiors only are to blame.’ The Taplow affair only strengthened her low opinion: ‘It was the most spiteful thing that ever was done, to send for you & try to frighten you before your examination.’ She decried the Dean’s injustice, calling him ‘that abominable wicked old Dean’ and advised George to plead his innocence and attempt to retrieve his reputation by writing the following appraisal of his situation:

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194 G to M, 5 December 1808, Ch.Ch.
195 M to G, 29 November 1808, Ch.Ch. Unlike Westminster Studentships, which were awarded only to Westminster School graduates at the beginning of their residence at Christ Church, Canonier Studentships only became available when one of the latter fell vacant, and as a result, were awarded a year or so into the candidate’s stay at Christ Church.
196 M to G, 21 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
197 M to G, 9 December 1808, Ch.Ch.
I have no high birth, no distinguished wealth to rely upon, — my hopes of success in life depend entirely upon my own personal efforts, and the fair and unspotted character, which I had hoped would have resulted from my conduct both here and elsewhere. Judge then Sir, how deep has been the wound you have inflicted!

(M to G, 10 December 1808, Ch.Ch.)

This step proved to be unnecessary. Far from displaying any animosity towards George in his Collections the following day, the Dean was full of praise for George’s excellent translations of Homer and Juvenal, and for his ‘uncommonly clear and correct’ answers to the questions on the Conic Sections. George was so astonished by this complete volteface that he thought it could only be attributed to the Dean having drunk too much wine the previous night, for ‘no man could seem more inclined to praise me than he did to-day.’ To the cry of ‘The Victory is gained!’ George informed his mother that ‘My end was gained by obtaining a public eulogium from the dean.’

Cyril Jackson’s behaviour certainly was fickle, and no-one found it more so than Charles Grenfell, who, when he came back to College after the Christmas break to collect his belongings and take his leave, found the old Dean most affectionate and friendly, reminding George of a Latin proverb about not trusting a man who blows hot and cold out of the same mouth. Those who knew him better, such as George’s tutor Lloyd, made light of the affair, having anticipated that Jackson’s anger would soon evaporate. After George’s Collections, Lloyd had told George not to trouble himself about the Dean’s anger of the previous day: ‘[...] he said it was only a cloud lowering in a corner which some wind or other would disperse, and that that wind was my collections.’

Dean Jackson, in giving such a public display of his autocratic ways, no doubt reinforced the reputation he already had among his critics for being a jealous despot. But the errant host of the ball that caused the volcano to erupt could only joke about the Dean’s reaction. He wrote to William Chinnery at the Treasury: “By the bye there has

198 This 1808 speech (never delivered) is similar to the one Margaret prepared for George to recite to Dean Charles Hall three years later.

199 George’s Collections for third term 1808 consisted of all four books of Robertson’s Conic Sections (op. cit.); five Satires of Juvenal; Homer’s Odyssey; and Euripides’s play Hecuba, read in conjunction with a study of Greek prosody and metres by Seale (J. B. Seale, An Analysis of the Greek Metres; for the Use of Students at the Universities, Cambridge, 1784).

200 G to M, 9 December 1808, Ch.Ch.

201 Ibid.
been the d—I to pay at Xchurch in consequence of the Ball. I am expecting a letter from his Holiness the Dean upon the subject & when it does come, I shall answer it, with a due acknowledgement of his Infallibility.\footnote{Pascoe Grenfell to William Chinnery, [December 1808], Fisher.}

The College Collections had been introduced by Jackson to prepare his charges for the University degree examination, known as ‘the Schools’.\footnote{The term also applied to the venue where the examinations were held.} Like College Collections, this was a \textit{viva voce} examination, but unlike the latter, it was was a rigorous one, conducted by a panel of four examiners, with the interrogation of one candidate taking hours, not minutes. Until George Chinnery’s entry to Oxford, candidates were examined at the Schools once only – at the end of their university career. Being a public examination, the Schools was open for all to attend as observers – and attendance was obligatory for all Christ Church freshmen. Depending on the reputation of the candidate, the Schools were able to draw a full house, as on the occasion when Robert Peel was examined for his degree. (‘Tomorrow Peele is examined. All Ch.Ch. will be in the Schools.’)\footnote{G to M, 18 November 1808, Ch.Ch.} As well as desiring to gain an insight into the type of questions asked, in anticipation of their own examinations, young undergraduates went along to show support for their fellow college men. On 9 May George went to the Schools from midday till three o’clock to hear two or three Christ Church candidates examined, and on 16 May he stayed there all day, remarking to his mother that the experience had been very informative:

\begin{quote}
To day I went to the Schools at 1/2 past 9 and staid till 3. By going early I got a place on the first bench & was within a yard from the table where the examination was going on, and really had I been to a lecture for which I had paid and went purposely for the sake of instruction, I could not have obtained more information.

\textit{(G to M, 16 May 1808, Ch.Ch.)}
\end{quote}

On 11 May George had heard ‘a most excellent examination of a Mr Farrer of Brazen-nose’,\footnote{G to M, 18 November 1808, Ch.Ch.} who had shone in mathematics, having taken up ‘Mechanics, Conic Sections & Hydrostatics’. From this examination he had learned exactly what the examiners required:
In classics the examining masters [usually?] make you construe some passages; in Mathematics they require that you should be able to demonstrate them all, and understand the connection between them. — In Ethics they are more severe, and the examination is certainly strict; that part is perhaps the most difficult, at least in my opinion because it is all in the abstract; you are required to know the rules by heart & to prove them with the assistance of your head only without figures or writing. When the examination is over you are made to sit down at a table & translate English into Latin. — I have not yet heard an examination in divinity.

(G to M, 11 May 1808, Ch.Ch.)

Judging from some of George’s remarks, there was a fairly lively rivalry between the colleges to gain distinction in examinations: ‘How glorious it is for for Ch.Ch. that of all the men who have been examined for their degree this term none but Ch.Ch. men (Mr Gilbert of Brazen-nose excepted) should have got into the first class.’ When in 1809 no Christ Church man got into the first class, George complained of bias in the examiners (all the examining masters were ‘out College men’) claiming that although one of the Christ Church men performed even better in mathematics than Peel had the previous year, he only got into the second class.

In 1801 a new statute had come into effect (one of the reforms for which Jackson was largely credited), introducing for the first time an honours system. On 5 June 1808 George wrote of another new statute just published by the Vice Chancellor ‘in which it is decided that men are to undergo an examination in the Schools at the end of 5 terms previous to that for taking their degree, in which they are to take Classics, Logic, & Mathematics, not the Sciences or Divinity.’ Judging by a remark of Corne that ‘this exam is not meant for a reading man like you, but only for your idle people,’ this statute seems to have constituted an attempt on the part of the University to force the less diligent members of the undergraduate body to undertake some kind of regulated study prior to their final examination. The requisite material for study certainly was not very demanding: logic and six books of Euclid, although according to

205 Thomas Farrer (1788-1833), B.A. (Brasenose College) 1809, M.A. 1812.
206 G to M, 25 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
207 Records show that the examiners for 1808 and 1809 were identical, and included one Christ Church man, Robert P. Goodenough. This is perplexing, as it seems impossible that George would not have recognised him.
208 G to M, 5 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
209 G to M, 13 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
the statute, Corne explained to George, ‘only one of those two is absolutely required’.210

George told his mother that many in Oxford regarded this preliminary examination as a waste of time, but that he disagreed, considering it a useful practice run for the final examination (‘as a preparation to them, as to the manner of undergoing a public examination’), and an ideal opportunity to earn an early brilliant reputation.211 Moreover, he believed – wrongly as it turned out – that the first examination would ease the workload of the final degree examination by obliging men to study at a more measured pace, instead of being ‘pressed to death for time during the last year’.212 The new statute, which had come into effect by the time George took his preliminary examination in October 1809, also added another class of honours – the second division of the second class, or third class.

On 20 November 1808, George described Robert Peel’s success in his degree examination as ‘the most splendid thing ever heard. He was equally perfect in Divinity, Ethics, Politics, Logic, Classics and Mathematics’ and was ‘the first example of a man who ever got into the first class, both in Classics & Mathematics’.213 His success surprised everyone, as according to his school friends, he had never studied much at Harrow, indeed had even had a reputation for being a bully, and had only applied himself to study during his last three terms at Oxford. Margaret’s response to this news was: ‘I think, my dear George, that had I been Peele’s mother I should have died with joy [...]’ She went on to remark that since Peel was born to ‘an overgrown fortune’ she thought it all the more to his credit that he should have applied himself to study, ‘proof of his having a sound mind, and an upright heart.’214

By the time 1808 drew to a close George had attained a fair measure of esteem at Christ Church, both from his peers and from his superiors. His reputation as a scholar was growing, and once his seniority in College was established (he was no longer considered a freshman after the arrival of more newcomers at the end of the long summer vacation), he was allowed to proceed with his studious habits unmolested. In addition to the prescribed Oxford texts he continued to read from the additional works that Margaret recommended to him – on history and British law, as well as many

210 G to M, 26 January 1809, Ch.Ch.
211 G to M, 23 October 1809, Ch.Ch.
212 Ibid.
213 G to M, 24 November 1808, Ch.Ch. Peel’s examination is described in full detail in this letter.
214 M to G, 22 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
foreign works of literature for pleasure. Above all, he did not want to neglect the modern languages, 'for I am looked up to by everybody for those'.

Proof of respect from his peers came in different ways. In November George was invited to join another debating society, this time composed of men who took their studies seriously (all went on to take their degree and half held Christ Church Studentships). He was also invited to a lavish dinner by one of the young nobles, Lord Downshire, to celebrate 'one of our Ch.Ch. men having just passed his examination for his degree.' The bullying that George received was therefore nothing more than one of the normal rites of passage to be endured by any naive young freshman on his first contact with the world. It was not, as Rothblatt maintains, symptomatic of the failure of the liberal education system.

215 G to M, 9 December 1808, Ch.Ch.
216 Members listed by George include George Dawson (1790-1856), William Brigstock (b. 1788), Robert Henley Eden (1789-1841), Onesiphorous Tyndall-Bruce (1790-1869).
217 G to M, 13 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
(vi) First Term 1809

It was at the beginning of first term 1809 that George’s old tutor Herr Trumpf left Gillwell to take up a position in another family. He had spent four years at Gillwell, and Margaret felt a pang of regret at letting him go, as it seemed to her that the last thread of George’s education at Gillwell was now broken. In George’s first year at Oxford Herr Trumpf had helped him with all sorts of tasks – explicating long passages of the *Iliad*, translating excerpts of Greek plays, explaining Greek word derivations, making mineralogy charts – all of which were useful in preparing George for his first Collections. He had once even drawn up a complete reference list of the principal subjects mentioned in the four books of the *Georgics* (astronomy, geography, topography and botany) alongside the verses in which they appeared. He had also been useful to Margaret in explaining the Greek subjects of George’s themes and translating his Latin themes for her so that she could correct his style and his line of reasoning.

George returned to Oxford at the beginning of 1809 determined to build on his nascent reputation as a scholar. His first public examination was to take place at the end of the following term and he wanted to shine. However, he was still plagued by the ongoing dilemma about how to appear sociable while at the same time fitting in all his study. First term was, by George’s account, a term traditionally devoted to amusements. The young men sometimes hired horses – these were the ‘hacks’ which Margaret so detested – and rode out to the neighbouring sights – to the Duke of Marlborough’s Blenheim Palace, or to Woburn, the seat of the Duke of Bedford. The latter, forty miles from Oxford, was a particularly tiring and expensive excursion for which George was obliged to ask his father for £5 to cover the shared cost of the hire of a chaise. Sometimes, too, they attended the Abingdon races. One of the more unusual pastimes was watching a gruesome ‘bull-bate’, which George described with distaste as ‘a fight between a bull and bull-dogs’. Another favourite entertainment of the young gownsmen was to attend the courts of the Assizes when they were in session at Oxford. But if death sentences were handed down, the executions did not take place until Oxford was emptied of its youthful population:

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218 M to G, 12 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
The assizes here are over, and, dreadful to relate, no less than six criminals, have been condemned to death. The execution is to take place in the old Castle of this place, but will, I believe be put off until we have left Oxford for the vacation. One of the criminals fully deserves the most severe chastisement; no sooner was he returned from Botany Bay whither he had been sent for some former offence, than he attempted to break into a house, and having failed in his attempt, he secretly laid a train of gunpowder to blow it up! — Can more consummate villainy be conceived?

(G to M, 12 March 1809, Ch.Ch.)

In spite of Jackson’s prohibition on balls, young men seemed able to obtain permission to go out to dinners at Wheatfield and Blenheim Palace, and once, two members of George’s debating set even managed to go to the opera in London (perhaps without Jackson’s permission), returning to Oxford after Chapel the following morning and demanding some breakfast of George, who gave them ‘some cold meat, chocolate, tea, eggs, bread & butter, with which they appeared well satisfied.’ Breakfast, like supper, was a private meal and not one provided by the College.

A very popular entertainment in Oxford, which attracted the wealthy estate owners of the surrounding area as well as the gownsman, was the regular musical evening in the Holywell Music Room. Often the best London musicians performed here. Haydn was one such celebrity who accepted an invitation to come to Oxford during his 1791 stay in England, and had been awarded a doctorate in the honorary degree ceremony of that year. On 28 June 1808 George wrote to his mother that the tenor John Braham was to perform in Oxford, ‘which of course will attract the whole town to the public music-room to night’, and the following day he reported, ‘I went to the Music room to hear Braham and the Miss Lyons; every man said that the crowd exceeded any they had ever witnessed; luckily I was sitting on a bench, or I might have got hurt. Mrs Grenfell & 2 other ladies fainted & were carried out of the room.’

One of the more energetic amusements was rowing. The young men usually went to Abingdon, but sometimes they rowed as far as Reading, a distance of fifty miles. Although George could not row, he occasionally went as a sitter in an eight-man boat, but did not enjoy the drunken frolicking, which was an inevitable part of the return journey. Of one such excursion George remarked: ‘[...] they said it was the jolliest

219 G to M, 1 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
party they had ever been in; whereas in my humble opinion it was as much the reverse as it possibly could be. Only think of being in an open boat at 11 o’clock at night, rowing for 3 hours tipsy, and perishing with cold! There were also regular fund-raising dinners for old boys of Harrow and Eton, which always ended, Charles Grenfell informed George Chinnery, in the inebriated participants having to be put to bed by their scouts [servants]. On such occasions George was thankful that he had not been sent to one of these schools. Worse still were the celebratory dinners at local taverns, which sometimes resulted in drunken skirmishes with the townspeople. Once, reported George, ‘A chemist, who lost a window, was not satisfied with apologies and threatens to bring the 4 of them [the University culprits] before the Chancellor’s court.’

George’s only regular amusement (or rather exercise) at Oxford to date had been walking and fencing. He had begun fencing—which Margaret described as ‘a manly exercise’ in the last term of 1808. He took daily lessons from the fencing master Roland, whose lessons, at £4/16/0 the term, were very cheap, according to George. Although Margaret considered riding an equally wholesome and manly form of exercise, she did not allow him to ride the ‘hacks’ that were available for hire to those who did not keep their own mounts at Oxford. She wanted riding to be reserved for vacation time at Gillwell, where George could mount his own trusted horse.

When he complained in one of his first letters of 1809, that he did not know how to play at any of the popular games at Oxford, Margaret’s response was impatient. She said that card-playing was unworthy of him, tennis he could not afford, and skating was too risky. In Margaret’s opinion the young men devoted far too much time to the pursuit of pleasure at the expense of their studies. In 1808 she had already remarked that Charles Grenfell was wasting his time and his father’s money at Oxford, since all he did was play tennis. Now in an angry nine-page letter of admonishment, she accused George himself of ingratitude. It was thanks to her efforts that George had acquired ‘an early and brilliant reputation’. No other young man in the country (not even Peel) had enjoyed such advantages in his early education. The last page of this heated letter she reserved for yet another attack on Lloyd, accusing him of making George study twice as

220 G to M, 29 June 1808, Ch.Ch. The Miss Lyons do not appear in any dictionary of music that I have consulted.
221 G to M, 11 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
222 G to M, 28 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
223 G to M, 24 January 1809, Ch.Ch.
much as was needed for Collections. What bothered Margaret was that George, in attempting too much, might not know ‘perfectly’ what he was to be examined in.\textsuperscript{224}

These outbursts occurred at intermittent intervals over the first two years of the correspondence. While they were outrageously accusatory, striking George like a thunderbolt out of the blue, and cutting him to the quick (‘your most gentle remonstrance is equivalent to the sting of the most poignant reproach’),\textsuperscript{225} they were without fail followed swiftly by more than one conciliatory, almost contrite letter. On one such occasion Margaret apologised for ‘the strong thrust’ of her previous letter, hoping that George would not think of her ‘as the fiery dragon’, but ‘recollect that I am guarding the golden fleece!’\textsuperscript{226} While most of Margaret’s specific accusations were unjust, there was always an underlying truth in the generality of her comments and her logic could not be faulted, so that her following softer letters never quite extended as far as an admission of fault. George received these onslaughts patiently and with great forbearance. He countered her accusations, but always agreed with her reasoning, even at times thanking her for her inimitable advice. As soon as George had acquired some tangible marks of distinction, such as public commendation for his performance at his first University examination and his election to a Studentship at the end of 1809, these ‘letters of admonition’ as he called them, ceased, except for one last one in 1811. The cause of Margaret’s outbursts is easy to detect in every instance. She was frustrated at seeing her designs for George thwarted, for example by Oxford not living up to her expectations (‘It is a poor & miserable place for the promotion of learning!’)\textsuperscript{227} or by George’s inadequate response to the bullying he suffered in his early months at the hands of his friends (‘whom you have through your own folly made your tyrants’)\textsuperscript{228}, but mostly by her misapprehension that George was wasting time. The high value that Margaret placed on the profitable use of time comes out in her later statement:

\begin{quote}
Your time is your wealth and your nobility. – which means, that it depends upon the use you make of your time now, whether you shall hereafter enjoy wealth, or possess only a bare means of existence; – whether you shall be an obscure individual unknown and
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{224} M to G, 26 January 1809, Ch.Ch.
\item \textsuperscript{225} G to M, 20 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
\item \textsuperscript{226} M to G, 2 March 1809, Ch.Ch. This seems to be a reference to Margaret’s intention to use her powerful friends to procure a prestigious post for George at the end of his studies.
\item \textsuperscript{227} M to G, 7 May 1808, Ch.Ch.
\item \textsuperscript{228} M to G, 19 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
\end{itemize}
unmarked, or shine in the first circles, an ornament to society and a valuable citizen of the state! These two important results depend upon the use you make of your hours and minutes now.

(M to G, 9 March 1809, Ch.Ch.)

These heated letters may be seen as outlets through which all the frustrations of a perfectionist flowed, for perfection was what she sought: ‘you know how my heart pants after perfection in you!’

At eleven thirty on the night of Friday 3 March 1809 George’s study for his first term Collections was interrupted by his neighbour’s loud hammering on his door, alerting him to a fire in College. The blaze, which had been started by some items of clothing catching alight by an open hearth in a certain Brown’s room, was engulfing the opposite side of the main quadrangle, and spreading rapidly towards the Hall. As luck would have it, Viotti was in Oxford for the week-end, and was about to retire for the night when cries of ‘Fire, fire, Christ Church’ reached him at the Star Inn. In a state of undress, he rushed straight away to the College, arriving in time to help George move his effects out of his room. George wrote to his mother:

Scarcely had I entered the Quadrangle, when I saw one whole side of it in an universal blaze. The cries of fire fire, buckets, buckets, engines, engines where [sic] echoed on every side. I went to fill a pail with water and was in time with a dozen more to follow the Dean into the rooms where the fire began: but when we opened the door, we were almost thrown back with terror at the prodigious volume of flames which forced their way immediately into the passage. We emptied our pails upon the flaming walls and precipitately left that staircase. Engines were then brought into the Quadrangle, and we all exerted ourselves to the utmost of our power in filling buckets with water and replenishing the engines. [...] Amico appeared full of affectionate anxiety, & proposed removing as many of my things out of my room as I possibly could. With the assistance of two other men, we carried all the books away, silver spoons &c &c; [...] I then returned to my office of filling buckets, until being quite tired I came & slept for a few hours at the Star. It was then 4 o’clock, but my room appeared to be in no danger [...] 

(G to M, 4 March 1809, Ch.Ch.)

229 M to G, 20 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
In a letter to his friend Charles Grenfell a few days later George gives additional details:

I forgot to mention that during the fire on Friday night, the soldiers were of infinite use in watching over the property of those who had thrown it through their windows into the quadrangle. Few things were lost notwithstanding the general confusion, and it is wonderful that no men were hurt excepting Mr Smyth of Oriel who put out his knee by kicking violently against a door. [...] All those persons (gownsmen excepted) who were particularly active during the fire, have been taken notice of; their names have been written down at Corne’s, and it is expected that some sort of remuneration will be made to them for the labour they underwent. The dean & chapter have also issued printed bills throughout the town, publicly acknowledging their deep sense of gratitude for the important services they experienced from the townspeople [...] The dean has written to the parents of those freshmen who were to have come next term, to say that he can receive none.

(George Chinnery to Charles Grenfell (copy), 8 March 1809) 230

Although Margaret was proud that George had conducted himself in such a calm and manly fashion and had been one of the first to assist the Dean (‘You will remember with pleasure all your life that you carried the first bucket of water, or one of the first, to extinguish the flames that were devouring Christ Church’), she was not pleased that the fire threatened to disrupt the normal train of life in College. 231 As a result of the fire, the holding of Collections was in some doubt: ‘A chapter of the dean and canons has been held this morning to decide whether we should be dismissed immediately or suffered to stay till the end of term; the latter measure has been adopted, though it does not appear certain whether there are to be any Collections or not.’ 232

Margaret announced that if she were the Dean Collections would take place as normal and she would not suffer the College life to be disturbed for more than twenty-four hours. When Viotti arrived back at Gillwell two days later with the news that Lloyd had already departed Oxford, leaving his young charges to fend for themselves, Margaret’s scorn knew no bounds, and her suspicion that Oxford was not a place of serious learning was confirmed:

230 This letter gives a comprehensive nine-page account of the fire and its aftermath.
231 M to G, 5 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
This circumstance is quite curious; but it confirms me in my former opinion, that a young man had better be sent anywhere than to Oxford; there is no such thing as useful discipline there, — the Dean puts himself into a passion if the men go one night to a Ball, but they may be idle a whole term with impunity! In short my dear George without "that strong divinity of soul" that decided and irresistible vocation to glory, which in spite of all obstructions, calls out, perhaps once or twice in a century, a bold and original genius from the head of scholars and academical literati, — there is no chance of a young man’s doing any good at Oxford!

(M to G, 7 March 1809, Ch.Ch.)

Lloyd did return to College in time to prepare George for his Collections, which took place as scheduled.

Since the end of 1808 George had been following his mother’s instructions to practise his speaking skills for half an hour daily. This exercise she had devised for him at Gillwell during the long summer vacation of 1808, and was one she held in great importance, for eloquence was a much needed skill at Oxford, and one which was also prized in the drawing rooms of polite society and in the halls of government at Westminster. After finishing reading whatever it was that he was studying at the time – Greek plays, Latin verse, English history, French, German or Italian plays and novels or even the newspaper – he was to lay aside the piece in question, spend a few moments collecting his thoughts, then deliver a clear and succinct precis of what he had just read, paying particular attention to diction, expression and clarity. An adjunct to this exercise was one that Margaret had borrowed from Madame de Genlis, and consisted of learning Greek, Latin, English, French or Italian verses by heart and reciting them aloud when alone in his room – a soliloquy from Shakespeare’s Henry VIII, an ode of Anacreon or some verse by Pope. Margaret constantly reminded him not to neglect these two exercises, especially as his examinations approached: ‘[...] the one will sharpen your mind, and give you a habit of recollection, and the other will furnish you with a choice and a flow of words.’ George’s omission of these exercises gave rise to one of Margaret’s sharpest chastisements, contained in her letter of 17 February 1809:

I told you that you should never rise from the study of any author, or from the mere reading of any book, without giving yourself a clear account of what you had read,

232 G to M, 6 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
following as nearly as you can the arrangement of the author, and expressing yourself out loud in clear round full sentences. I told you that by so doing you would gain 2 important points,—you would assure yourself in the first place that you have clearly understood what you have read,—and you would imprint on your memory, besides the additional immense advantage of contracting a habit of expressing yourself clearly upon all kinds of subjects [...] In a great number of respects you have not derived a hundredth part of the advantages you might have derived from the education you have received;—this is one.

(M to G, 17 February 1809, Ch.Ch.)

The other article on which she focused her attention in this letter was that of keeping ‘a common-place book’. This was an idea she had borrowed from the sixteenth century essayist Francis Bacon, one of her favourite authors (‘You have not written down daily one or two common places upon the plan of Bacon’), but it was also an eighteenth century phenomenon. Most aspiring scholars, literati and men of taste of the time kept commonplace books, following the example of that supreme arbiter of taste, Joseph Addison. A commonplace book contained a medley of various writings and useful information based on the needs and tastes of the owner. No Chinnery commonplace book survives except Caroline’s, which contains a stock of historical dates, quotations, sayings, proverbs, noteworthy or instructive anecdotes, examples of valour and piety, as well as some original thoughts. In George’s case, the contents of a commonplace book might be employed with effect in the writing of themes, in debates, or simply in dazzling a drawing room audience. At the beginning of 1810 Margaret again reminded George to bring his mind into play when studying and if some original thought, comparison or remark occurred to him, to put it in his commonplace book.

But it is the formulation of Margaret’s burning ambition for George and for his sister Caroline (‘All I say, do, write and think, is for you and your other half, dear Caroline! I have long ceased to exist for myself.’) which is revealed in this letter as in no other. She concentrates her attention on George:

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233 M to G, 15 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
234 M to G, 17 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
236 Caroline Chinnery’s commonplace book is in the Powerhouse collection (PM 94/143/1 – 19). It is a small, alphabetically demarcated exercise book labelled ‘Souvenirs’, and is in French.
237 M to G, 28 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
You ought to be the cleverest man of your time; neither Peele nor Smyth\textsuperscript{239} should be comparable to you, — they have only had common care; you have been watched with very uncommon care! [...] Take care, my dear George, — it will be a misfortune to you, to have been educated by me, if you are not the first man of the age in which you live!

(M to G, 17 February 1809, Ch.Ch.)

Her expectations for Caroline are no less ambitious. Praising the rapid progress of her mind, Margaret opines that Caroline will become ‘the first female character of the age […] if it pleases God to grant her health and strength.’\textsuperscript{240} To urge George to even greater emulation, she reminds him that Caroline’s education was made secondary to his own (‘remember that I neglected your sister’s education from the moment Mr Mullens left you, to attend to your’s [sic]’). The reason for her high expectations of her children is revealed in the next section of her letter, in which she explains that she intends writing a book on education.

I have resolved upon publishing the whole plan and course of your education. […] You must therefore my dear George be prepared to see people look up to you for very superior abilities and information, — you must justify the general expectation of my book, you will be the hero […] [It will take two years to write] ‘and in the course of that time you must labour to realise my fondest hopes, and give lustre and efficacy to my precepts.

(Ibid.)

George responds to these demands exactly as Margaret would have wished — with a lively desire to please and with extreme gratitude:

Who ever with more assiduity and zeal than yourself could possibly cherish the sparks which you have kindled within me? Who could more wisely with a continual mixture of encouragement and affectionate reproach keep every energy on the stretch! […] Oh! what a blessing it is to have such a mother as you! Thank heaven for it, and may I be worthy of it.

(G to M, 19 February 1809, Ch.Ch.)

\textsuperscript{238} M to G, 2 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{239} Possibly Henry Smith (Ch.Ch.), who was awarded first class honours in classics in 1808.
\textsuperscript{240} M to G, 17 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
Margaret's letter of 17 February prompted George to write to Viotti — who had impressed upon him the need to keep his mother's letters carefully and bring them all home to Gillwell for re-reading — reiterating his appreciation of his mother's ministrations. In a telling appraisal of Margaret's character, he speaks of her aggressive male streak tempered by her female piety. Her letters, he tells Viotti, lay bare her soul. In them one finds "des rayons d'une ambition mâle adoucis par ceux d'une piété pure."²⁴¹

However, the last of these letters of reproof carried such venomous threats ('I do declare to you upon my word and honour that if you do not make a brilliant figure at Examinations, as it will be entirely through idleness and your own culpable weakness, so I shall from that moment alter my plan, — and giving up all splendid views with regard to you, I shall seek only an honourable but obscure post for you'),²⁴² that for the first time George showed signs of impatience and was stung to reply with equal heat:

I must confess that I was thunderstruck to read your positive declaration that the remissness of a short number of hours occasioned by unforeseen and inevitable circumstances, after a diligent employment of every minute since the vacation, and after your written and repeated approbation of that disposal of time, should alone, and it appears, irrevocably leave you no hopes of my ever doing any thing.

(G to M, 20 May 1809, Ch.Ch.)

After graciously acknowledging, nevertheless, that it was maternal affection that gave rise to her criticism, he pointed out that he was saddened by the general tone of reproach and asked her to have faith in him: 'Trust to me -- I am responsible myself for myself, and you may take my word of honour that these Collections and the examinations shall fully answer your wishes.'²⁴³

The main object of Margaret's concern was George's first public examination. As the new statute stipulated that it must be taken after a minimum of five terms at Oxford, but before the ninth, it allowed the prospective candidates a certain amount of flexibility. Corne decided that George would take the examination at the earliest time allowed by the new regulations -- June 1809. On 21 February George informed his

²⁴¹ G to V, 10 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
²⁴² M to G, 18 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
²⁴³ G to V, 10 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
mother that he would study the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* or both, all the plays of Euripides read that term, and that Juvenal, not Virgil, would be his Latin author, as Virgil was a 'school-book' that everyone was expected to know already, and therefore Juvenal would impress more. Moreover, he explained, the metre of Juvenal was 'simple hexameter', so there was less likelihood of his making elementary errors in scanning. Nor would he risk taking up Horace, as the metre of Horace was more complicated and making a mistake in it would be most 'unscholarlike'. Lloyd suggested that George take up to College Collections what he would be studying for his University examination, which meant reading four plays by Euripides instead of two, paying particular attention to the study of Greek metres, which George enjoyed ('No novel, no compte [sic] de Fée penned by a Madame de Genlis could have afforded me more real interest and delight than the study of the Greek metres to which I devoted the whole of the morning till 2 o'clock'), and revising 'the rules of prosody in the Greek grammar'. It was indicative of the low esteem in which Corne held the concept of a preliminary public examination that, in fixing George's for the earliest opportunity, he intended that George should simply put it behind him as soon as possible, passing it without necessarily distinguishing himself. This would not do for Margaret at all. George must either cut a brilliant figure in the public arena, or not appear there at all. Moreover, she was dissatisfied that the new statute allowed no opportunity for candidates to excel in mathematics, since nothing beyond Euclid's *Elements* was to be allowed: 'It is impossible for me to understand why you may not take up more than Euclid to your first examination; – the V.C. has perhaps required Euclid, but has he positively prohibited every thing else in addition? Why damp the emulation and ardour of those who wish to overstep their comrades?'

As first term passed without George having begun the study of logic, a requisite subject for the coming public examination, Margaret grew more and more agitated, saying that she and George must come up with 'a certain and infallible means of being prepared for the public examination' in the coming vacation. At the beginning of second term, when Lloyd had only just begun to introduce this subject to George, Margaret renewed her attacks on his teaching method. She expressed amazement that he

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244 G to M, 31 January 1809, Ch.Ch.
245 G to M, 30 January 1809, Ch.Ch.
246 M to G, 17 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
should have left it until four weeks before the examination to inform George exactly of
what was expected of him. With the examination date set for the last day of May,
George himself had doubts about his ability to perfect his understanding of the whole of
the Odyssey, Virgil’s Aeneid, Euclid’s Elements and the required amount of logic in less
than a month. The prospect which most daunted him, however, was that the new statute
stipulated that there would be ‘plucking’ (failures)\textsuperscript{248} in the examination. This would
constitute the greatest of public disgraces. Margaret would not even countenance the
prospect. George was to defer his first examination until the following term. At no stage
in his Oxford career (or on any other occasion in his life) would she suffer him to
appear unprepared before the public gaze. The principle which she recommended he
followed throughout his life was ‘never to risk anything in public’ – whether it be an
examination, or a declaration of your sentiments, or an act of much less importance than
either’ until it had been sufficiently weighed, examined and prepared. He must be ‘ferré
à glace’ (perfectly sure of his ground) before appearing before any public tribunal.\textsuperscript{249}

Two of George’s contemporaries at Christ Church did take this first public examination
at the end of May 1809. They were T.W. Blomefield\textsuperscript{250} and G.R. Dawson, both of
whom went on to excel in their degree examination in 1811, the same year that George
graduated. George reported that both passed well. He gave the following details of
Dawson’s examination:

The examining master began by questioning him in Logic, and then in Euclid; the next
thing he did was to construe Greek & Latin in the course of which he was often asked
what the derivation, tense, mood, or dialect of a word was. The whole concluded by his
translating a page of English into Latin.

(G to M, 2 June 1809, Ch.Ch.)

George told his mother that he was glad that he had deferred his examination, as
he would not have been adequately prepared. The study of logic had turned out to be far
more demanding than he had anticipated. It involved taking a course of lectures

\textsuperscript{247} M to G, 13 March 1809, Ch.Ch.

\textsuperscript{248} A failure meant that the candidate would not be permitted to proceed to his degree examination.

\textsuperscript{249} M to G, 27 April 1809, Ch.Ch. The underlined part of Margaret’s counsel was another quotation lifted
misleadingly out of context by Rothblatt in an attempt to prove that Margaret offered the hypocritical
advice to George ‘to hide the truth about himself to his peers’ (Rothblatt, op. cit., p.112).

\textsuperscript{250} Thomas William Blomefield (1791-1858), second Baronet, B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1811 (first class honours in
classics and second class in mathematics), M.A. (Merton College) 1814.
(delivered by Christ Church’s Edmund Goodenough),251 in which a principal text in Latin was studied (Aldrich’s Artis Logicae Compendium),252 with corresponding readings from two English treatises on the subject by Watts253 and Duncan.254 ‘Logic, as it is learned here, is more difficult than Euclid,’ George complained.255 It was the Latin text which was difficult. Watt’s explanation took only one paragraph, whereas the Latin took a whole page, and consisted of ‘long argumentative demonstrations which we are required to know like a mathematical theorem.’256 Another text George mentioned for the study of logic was Harris’s Hermes, ‘a logical grammatical treatise’.257 The lectures on logic, which Corne had told George were to be replaced under the new statute by tutorials, had not yet been suppressed, and George was obliged to attend them three times a week (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday). Lloyd gave George much-needed help in his preparation for them. The lectures themselves had an unimaginative and rigid format. Goodenough first read the passage in Latin out loud, then translated it ‘and explained it in his own words by examples’, then read the corresponding paragraphs out of the Duncan and Watts texts. The memorising of all the demonstrations contained in the Latin text caused George so much labour, and he so frequently complained of the ‘abstruseness of our system’, that Margaret thought that ‘the established method [of teaching logic] must be defective’ and that ‘some evil genii in the shape of ill-made books and systems’ must be impeding his progress.258 She again gave vent to her low opinion of the pedagogical methods employed at Oxford. In her view, the rote memorising of Latin syllogisms in learning logic was a waste of time, ‘because if you make yourself master of the art in such a degree as will enable you to write and speak correctly and give you the rules for a clear and lucid arrangement of your thoughts, and the terms in which you express them, —I cannot conceive what more is wanted to be

252 Henry Aldrich was a former Dean of Christ Church (1689-1711). His Artis Logicae Compendium, first published in 1691, went through many editions.
253 Isaac Watts, Logick: or the right use of reason in the enquiry after truth, London, 1725. There are numerous editions of this text extending into the second half of the nineteenth century.
255 G to M, 25 April 1809, Ch.Ch.
256 G to M, 9 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
257 James Harris, Hermes or a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Language and Universal Grammar, Nourse and Vaillant: London, 1751.
258 M to G, 24 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
obtained by studying Logic! What grammar is to language, — logic is to reasoning, — and no more.  

Mechanics, a branch of applied mathematics which George found easy compared to the study of logic (‘Mechanics recreate the mind after logic!’), was another new subject begun with Lloyd this term. Studying mechanics consisted of working through a text [James Wood’s *The Principles of Mechanics*] which was divided into approximately ten sections, each containing mathematical problems of a practical kind to be solved. Although not as difficult as logic, the workload was equally onerous. George spent the whole of one evening and the following morning (approximately nine hours) writing a summary of the ‘seventh Section of Mechanics & making a sort of pocket book of reference for the hard formula’s [sic] and equations which must be at one’s finger’s ends.’ The mathematical propositions increased in difficulty towards the end of the text book, with George telling his mother that the last section of the *Mechanics* was the hardest mathematics he had ever studied, but that it had ‘practical utility […] in the art of Gunnery.’ As practice for his June Collections, Lloyd gave him ‘a list of questions to solve by means of the rules which I have been learning in Mechanics.’ Logic and mechanics, George remarked to his mother, were the only two subjects he had yet studied at Oxford which he could not have studied at home.

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259 M to G, 12 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
260 G to M, 9 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
261 This was part of a larger work, *The Principles of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy*. (See p. 450, note 187.)
262 G to M, 9 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
263 G to M, 19 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
264 G to M, 20 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
Margaret was keen for George to make up for lost time after the fire of the previous term. Her letters were full of exhortations to seize every opportunity to impress his tutors and lecturers. Some of Lloyd’s tutorials George shared with Douglas, whom Margaret believed to be a weaker scholar than George. In these situations she therefore ordered him to take care that he always exercised his ascendancy:

Never forget that you are now daily and hourly forming that reputation upon which you must depend wholly for your success in life; — you should aim at surprizing Lloyd, and surpassing his expectations of you, that you may subjugate his opinion, and be quite sure of his mentioning you always in such terms as will advance your views.

(M to G, 10 May 1809, Ch.Ch.)

By these last words Margaret meant the Studentship that was always in her sights for George. She warned him that if he were not noticed soon it would be ruinous to his hopes: ‘It is time now my dear George that you were in love with Glory’,265 and told him that if she were a young man of seventeen ‘every thing would be insipid to me but glory’.266 Glory, that Homeric mantle that every Greek warrior strove to don as his reward for feats of valour on the battle field, was one that could also be attained on the field of academic endeavour, and Margaret longed to cloak her son in it. George responded — and his reply does not appear to be facetious — that henceforth his cry would be ‘My mother and glory’. He had already taken a step likely to increase his chances of public recognition by composing some English verses for the Newdigate prize, a much-coveted award presented each year from a bequest of Sir Roger Newdigate, one-time burgess of the University.

Like the Chancellor’s prizes (for Latin Verse, English Essay and Latin Essay), the English Verse prize was a stiffly contested one, and of the four it brought the greatest honour. The winning verses and essays were read aloud by their authors in the Sheldonian Theatre at the Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors held in the last week of June or the first week of July each year. Margaret had encouraged George to participate in this competition for two reasons — as an intellectual exercise and as part of

265 M to G, 10 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
266 M to G, 12 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
his quest for public glory. The subject of the 1809 poem ("John the Baptist") having been announced in March, just before the Easter vacation, the whole of the holiday period at Gillwell had been devoted to this enterprise. A copy of George Chinnery’s submission is in the Powerhouse collection.267

On hand to assist George’s poetic muse was William Spencer, who was already a part-time resident of Gillwell in his capacity as Caroline’s Latin tutor.268 It would not be doing justice to George – whose own literary skills were not negligible, as seen by his command of metaphor in some of his letters – to suggest that his poem was in a large measure the work of William Spencer, but it is undeniable that Spencer made a significant contribution to it. George and Caroline had both begun writing verse long before George started at Oxford. William Spencer with his vast knowledge of the classics, his effortless ability to turn the tritest domestic situation into a witty epigram, and plenty of spare time on his hands, had been and still was a willing teacher. When Margaret had shown Spencer George’s first piece of poetry at the age of fifteen – a translation of a Latin ode into English verse – Spencer had acknowledged that it was good, ‘so good, and so correct in cadence and metre, that he can hardly believe it is his first attempt.’269 Spencer’s input into George’s 1809 poem consisted of corrections and ‘minor improvements’.270 He undoubtedly also advised George on the conventions of verse writing and on the rules governing rhyme and metre. Spencer good-naturedly went out of his way to help, even accompanying George back to Oxford at the end of the vacation. He interspersed visits to his parental home at Wheatfield and to acquaintances in Oxford with regular poetry sessions with George right up to the submission date of the poem ten days later.

In spite of the lengths she had gone to to help George with his verses, Margaret was realistic about his chances of winning the prize on his first attempt, and therefore wanted his efforts kept secret in accordance with her principle of never risking anything in public unless certain of success. However, George did confide in his public tutor Corne, who was genuinely surprised by George’s resourcefulness, and thought the verses good even though he professed himself to be no connoisseur of poetry. Convinced of George’s serious intentions, Corne henceforth gave George much more of

267 George Chinnery, Miscellaneous Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 26/13.
268 See Part II, Chapter 4.
269 Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 18 April 1807.
his time than he had done in the previous term and began to see him daily. In his capacity of university proctor the previous year Corne had been one of the judges of the poetry competition, and explained to George the rules of the competition. The poem, he advised, should be less than three hundred lines in length, should be provided with ‘explanatory notes’, should be legibly written, leaving ‘a blank side of paper’ on each page, and should have a motto taken either from some sacred English poem referring to the subject of the verse, or from the Prophets.

The motto was appended to the poem as a means of identifying the author, who retained his anonymity until the winner was announced. In consultation with Corne, George chose as his motto the eighteenth verse of the first book of Milton’s *Paradise Regained*:

So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembl’d, and this Answer smooth return’d.

The winner of the English verse prize in 1809 was Charles Henry Johnson of Brasenose College. When on 23 May 1809 all the prize winners were announced, George’s suspicions were aroused. Men from Brasenose had won not only the English verse prize, but also the Latin verse prize, as well as taking out all the first class honours in classics in that year’s public degree examination. No Christ Church man had been awarded a prize. Again the honour of Christ Church had been dented, and owing to the winner’s reluctance to have his poem printed, as was customary, George was not the only member of Christ Church who suspected that the winning poem was not of a very high standard:

I hear that the verses which have won the prize are bad; if that be the case, it appears somewhat suspicious that both the prizes and the first classes in Classics and

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270 G to M, 24 April 1809, Ch.Ch.
271 From 1810 the stipulated length was fifty lines.
272 G to M, 24 April 1809, Ch.Ch.
273 According to the *Honours Register* (op. cit., p.163), each writer was required ‘to send in his Composition under a sealed cover, and to conceal his name, distinguishing his Composition by what motto he pleases, and sending at the same time his name under another sealed cover with the same motto written on the outside.’
274 Charles Henry Johnson (b. 1787), B.A. 1809, M.A. 1812.
Mathematics should all have been granted to Brasenose only — I confess I am anxious to see the verses.

(G to M, 26 May 1809, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret was angry that Jackson took no steps to defend his College:

As to the Dean he seems to be a mere Cypher, — not of the smallest benefit to the society. If justice has not been done in the distribution of the prizes, or if such a thing is only suspected, should he not call upon the men of his college to let him see any productions they may have sent up, — and then if it should so turn out, take care to publish them at the expense of the foundation, — or something or other, in short, in order to prevent the effects of cabal or party spirit against Ch.Ch.

(M to G, 26 May 1809, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret’s proposal to publish the entries submitted by Christ Church men so that they could be compared with the winners, was, as both George and Spencer pointed out, neither practical nor diplomatic, as such a publication would appear to be in contempt of the judges’ decision ‘from which the laws of the University allow us no appeal’,275 and might harm George’s chances of gaining the prize the following year or even adversely affect the results of his coming examination. In any case there seems little reason to suspect the five judges – the Vice Chancellor, the two university proctors, the Professor of Poetry, and the Public Orator – of bias since none of them were Brasenose men, and only one of the four examiners for the Easter degree examinations, of which George also complained, was a Brasenose graduate. But when George did finally hear Johnson recite his poem at the winners’ recitation rehearsal in the Theatre, his suspicion that the poem was poor was confirmed. He wrote to his mother on 11 June 1809 that he did not think the poem superior to his own except in one point, ‘the close linking of the different parts so as to form one connected plan without those great breaks of which I have one or two specimens.’ He also criticised the poem for containing many ‘common-place ideas’ such as ‘the morning breeze and the evening dews’, but conceded that the verses were well polished.276 Corne also thought the winning poem of a low standard. On returning George’s poem, Corne had assured him that he stood a good chance of winning the following year: ‘I’ll tell you seriously and

275 G to M, 28 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
276 G to M, 11 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
truly that if you give yourself a little trouble next year, you will most likely win the prize. When Margaret received a copy of the winning verses she was highly critical of them, saying that Johnson's verses were well polished because he had had long practice in writing poetry, but that the verses were mechanical: 'He has shown no comprehension of mind, no invention, no reading of any kind.' Part of the merit of a good composition (in the university judges' opinion) lay in a display of the author's scholarship. Another equally important part, in Margaret's and Spencer's opinion, was the beauty of the language and the originality of ideas. Their opinion did not concur with the University's in the matter of breaks in a poem. The University considered such breaks to be a flaw, an interruption to the flow of the poem. Margaret, with her love of music and her fine appreciation of the subtleties of sound and harmony, considered them to be an embellishment. She compared them to interrupted cadences in music which serve to surprise and delight the listener:

As to breaks in poems, they are often beauties of the highest kind, — they are like suspensions, or interrupted cadences in music, which often serve to surprize the ear by a harmony that seemed far distant, and which it would have been tedious and tiresome to introduce in the regular way. Nothing in music is more delightful than a sudden transition of harmony, provided it be not harsh! And in Poetry the same kind of beauty is always regarded as a mark of genius.

(M to G, 13 June 1809, Ch.Ch.)

On the other hand, George was generous in his praise of Burney, the winner of the English essay prize commonly known as 'the Batchelor's prize'. He wrote that it was 'beautifully worded, full of strong sense, and shews a great deal of reading'.

Just before the 1809 Commemoration took place, university officials held deliberations to consider abolishing the custom of reciting the prize poems and essays in the Sheldonian Theatre. ('The big-wigs of this University are on the point of branding themselves with everlasting disgrace; they are seriously discussing whether they shall abolish the custom of having Prizes recited in the Theatre, or not!!')

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277 G to M, 31 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
278 M to G, 16 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
280 G to M, 11 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
281 G to M, 6 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
discussions to his mother, George assumed they were triggered by the low standard of the 1809 entries, and called the cessation of such a time-honoured custom a disgrace. The news drew Margaret's most trenchant criticism of Oxford to date. Not only was it foolish, she claimed, to remove the only strong incentive the University offered to its competitive members, it was also unfair to deprive the most deserving men of their right to public recognition. Not allowing the winners their moment of glory ran counter to her whole philosophy of putting merit on public display and permitting high achievers to derive the resultant benefits to their reputation and thus their career:

The heads of the university seem to be a little deranged in their intellects! What! take away the strongest and indeed only stimulus the university presents to excite the ardour of the students! How then is a young man to distinguish himself at College? Nothing there, most certainly; but for subsequent advantages, which are half gained by a brilliant reputation at College. Instead of this prelude, this predisposal of the public opinion in his favour, which he has hitherto found so elevating, so invigorating, and in every way so advantageous, — he must in future labour silently and in the dark, as it were, to acquire what may be useful to him in the world [...]  

(M to G, 8 June 1809, Ch.Ch.)

In her opinion there were far more pressing needs for reform in other aspects of university tradition, such as the curriculum, which she said was hopelessly anachronistic. If 'college emulation, and college honours' were destroyed, she went on, then why not reform the whole university while they were at it? Here Margaret's forward thinking is evident. She pre-empts the great reforms which were to take place at Oxford later in the century, and indeed defines the purpose of university education in a remarkably modern way:

For what real use is it to men in the world to be able to make Latin verses, or to be so profoundly conversant with every Greek idiom, and the etymology of every Greek word? — If there be no use for these things at College, it must be granted that a more reasonable quantity of Greek and Latin would enable men to read and enjoy the best authors in those languages, and to form their taste upon these fine models; while a portion of the students' time might be devoted to the acquirement of such knowledge as he will most certainly want in the world. Young men might then bring away from college, a knowledge of the laws of their country; and a general acquaintance with
political economy; besides other information of which they are sure to stand woefully in
need, as soon as they set their foot in the world, and begin their career of life.

(Ibid.)

The ideas that Margaret expressed in this letter above were not just theoretical
ones. At the end of George’s career at Oxford she planned to set him on a course of
reading which covered law, political economy, the history of England and Europe, and
all those works of European literature which he had not had time to read at Oxford. The
whole would be capped by a year-long tour of the Continent, but no mere dilettante
tour, of the sort that finished every young graduate’s education. George’s travels were
to be a continued learning experience – what Madame de Genlis called ‘voyager avec
fruit’.282 This polishing of George’s education bears a remarkable resemblance to the
system Madame de Genlis recommended at the end of her educational novel Adèle et
Théodore. For the final rounding off of a young man’s education she advocated the
study of history, including ‘plusieurs Ouvrages sur les Loix & la Politique’,283 and many
of the same works of French, Italian and English literature that Margaret encouraged
George to read.284

The Vice Chancellor’s deliberations in the end came to nothing, and on 15 June
George wrote that ‘though it had been thought expedient by the V.C. &c &c at one time,
to shut up the theatre; still, the measure was at last rejected, and the commemoration
took place yesterday.’285

Meanwhile, George’s urgent preparations for his first public examination
continued. Spencer, who was now back at Gillwell for a few days, after spending two
weeks at his father’s home at Wheatfield, reported to Margaret that George had a ‘rising
reputation as a scholar and a gentleman’, but that he would need to devote the next
eighteen months to ‘close application’286 – no less than ten or eleven hours daily – to
prepare himself for his degree examination. A look at George’s journal at this time
gives a fair idea of the amount of study he was already doing. In the summer term he

282 George’s surviving travel journals (see Part III) bear witness to the educational approach George took
to his travel experiences.
283 Adèle et Théodore, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 446.
284 Metastasio’s plays in Italian, Molière’s plays in French, Addison’s Spectator, Fénélon’s Aventures de
Telémaque.
285 G to M, 15 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
286 M to G, 16 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
always rose at five-thirty or six in the morning. The journal, written out in discursive form in George’s letter of 16 May 1809, may be summed up in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 - 7</td>
<td>Logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 8</td>
<td>Chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - 10</td>
<td>Mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 11</td>
<td>With Lloyd [who examined him on the Mechanics lecture]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 11</td>
<td>Read German work [Letters on Switzerland]287 and summarised contents in a speaking exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 12</td>
<td>Finished 10th Satire of Juvenal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 2</td>
<td>Mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 3</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.30 - 4.30</td>
<td>Began 11th Satire of Juvenal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.30 - 6</td>
<td>Dressed , went to 2 wine parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 8.30</td>
<td>Riding [with Blomefield]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30 - 10</td>
<td>Conic Sections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>To bed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These journals, or ‘plans of day’ were now included in all George’s letters and drew approbation or criticism from Margaret in her replies. One of Margaret’s comments on a plan of day which George sent her just before his third term Collections is particularly revealing in regard to her philosophy of life. Her espousal of Madame de Genlis’s principle of rising early and employing every moment of the day profitably was not just for the short-term acquisition of knowledge. It was for her, as it was for Madame de Genlis, a means of enriching and enlarging one’s life. In praising George’s journal of 7 November 1809, she remarked: ‘if every day of a man’s life could be thus usefully employed how much he would have lived before the age of thirty!’ She continued: ‘Every body complains of the shortness of human life, but few make any attempt to lengthen it; this is however very possible and may be done in many ways. A

287 The work in question appears to be C.C. von Berkheim’s Briefe über den politischen, bürgerlichen und natürlichen Zustand der Schweiz, published in 1797.
good education alone, adds twenty years to it! [...] By a good education you know what I mean; by others I should fear being misunderstood.°

Three days before George's June Collections, Lloyd, as usual tardy in issuing instructions about university requirements, sprang the surprise on George that he 'was expected to take up to Collections an English extract of the course of lectures on Logic which we had heard this term, which extract would be kept by the Dean or Goodenough.° The task of writing an abstract to take up to Collections also applied to his other courses of lectures, and was onerous and time-consuming. The logic lectures took George a full three days to summarise. George gave no account of his Collections at the end of second term 1809,° but Margaret was was in no doubt that he would be 'handsomely' complimented by the Dean for them, and this proved to be so. In reminding him of the need to remain calm on the morning of his examination, she advocated saying a short prayer: 'one ray from him can lift up our minds above human weakness'.° Margaret was feeling particularly pleased with her offspring this summer, and when she was pleased she was just as unstinting in her praise as she was severe in her remonstrances when she was displeased. When George reiterated that Corne had faith in his winning the prize for English verse the following year and that Lloyd had expressed every confidence of his success in the coming Collections, she was ecstatic:

Need I tell my beloved boy how much all this elevates me? — I cannot either read or hear of your having met with approbation in points of importance without feeling the strongest emotion! [...] Thank you dear George, thank you a thousand million of times, — all my true and genuine joys must come from you and Caroline!

(M to G, 1 June 1809, Ch.Ch.)

By the end of second term 1809 George had earned himself not only a strong academic reputation, but also one of upright character and gentle manners. There is more than one testimony to this fact. Edmond Goodenough, George's logic lecturer, who spoke Italian and enjoyed fine music, told Viotti on the week-end of the fire that George's good nature, his morals and his willingness to be instructed were

° M to G, 9 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
° G to M, 21 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
° From George's letters it may be ascertained that his Collections consisted of abstracts of his courses of lectures on Logic and Mechanics; Euripides's, Andromache, The Supplicants, Iphigenie in Aulis, Iphigenie in Tauris, and Rhesus; Juvenal's, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th Satires.
commendable.\textsuperscript{292} And Richard Jenkyns, one of George's examining masters for his first public examination, praised his bearing and conduct during that examination, saying that 'not only was he clever, but there was a gentlemanlike manner about him [...] with which I was very much struck.'\textsuperscript{293}

That George was liked by his superiors at Oxford is shown by the large number of private dinner invitations that he received from them. He was a frequent guest of Dr John Cole (Rector of Exeter College), Dr Wall (Lichfield Professor of Clinical Medicine), of Dr Hall (the Sub-Dean and imminent Dean of Christ Church with whom he was to strike up a long-lasting friendship extending well beyond his Oxford years), Dr Marlow\textsuperscript{294} (President of St John's College), Dr Howley (a Canon of Christ Church and future Archbishop of Canterbury), Dr Burton\textsuperscript{295} (a Canon of Christ Church, whose eccentric daughter was the talk of the gownsmen) and of his tutor Lloyd (future bishop of Oxford), who occasionally gave a supper for his brighter pupils to celebrate special academic achievements. Some, but by no means all of these invitations owed their origin to Spencer's connections in Oxford.

Spencer and Viotti had both spoken of George's abilities during their 1808 visit to Blenheim. Viotti, mentor and father figure to George since the latter's infancy, was one of George’s staunchest advocates. He and Spencer had described in detail to the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough the mode of George's education at Gillwell, and Margaret had written to George that 'the Duchess [of Marlborough] knows that I quitted London to devote myself to the education of my children, – that you have been entirely and totally brought up by me, – in short she is pretty well acquainted with our history.'\textsuperscript{296} As a result, invitations from Spencer's relatives at Wheatfield and Blenheim continued to arrive at regular intervals throughout the four years George spent at Oxford.

Margaret felt that her methods of education had been vindicated whenever George received marks of favour from members of the aristocracy: 'it is a flattering mark of attention from persons of the highest rank to a young man, whose sole

\textsuperscript{291} M to G, 22 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{292} M to G, 10 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{293} G to M, 19 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{294} Michael Marlow (1759-1828), Fellow of St John's College, B.A. 1780, D.D. 1795, President of St John's 1795-1828.
\textsuperscript{295} James Burton (1745-1825), B.A. (Magdalen College) 1765, D.D. 1789, Chaplain in ordinary to George III.
dependence is, his personal merit.' At the beginning of George’s stay in Oxford she
had made it clear that personal merit was based on the two main principles which she
had inculcated in her children since their childhood, that of goodness of heart and
strength of intellect. ‘Goodness added to distinguished talents will never fail to acquire
the most extensive and solid empire over men; -- with such arms, and with these alone,
the world may be conquered!’, adding that by ‘goodness’ she meant ‘the perfection of
our moral character’. As far as intellectual ability went, she wrote that there was ‘no
real superiority in the world but that of intellect, and that that is irresistible.’ Much as
she respected persons of high social standing, she held that in society all should be
equal, ‘and where this is not allowed to be so, society becomes cold and dull.’
Gentlemen, she maintained, should all be on an equal footing, giving way only to age
and intellectual standing and ‘yielding to nobility [only] when nobility are silly enough
to avail themselves of so poor an advantage.’

Nonetheless, Margaret placed great stress on social niceties, and gave George
advice on all forms of social etiquette. She told him how to address his letters to the
Duke of Cambridge, when to leave a calling card, and to how to address the Duke and
Duchess of Marlborough. She also advised George which of the frequent visitors who
passed through Oxford he should allocate most time to, according to their social
prominence. These were usually family friends, colleagues of his father or of Viotti, or
relatives. In 1809 George received visits from ‘old’ Mr Hammersley the banker and his
wife and four daughters, on their way to Windsor; Margaret’s relative Richard Holland
and his two nieces; the Chinnery friend Mr Langsdorff the Hessian ambassador; and
from Lord and Lady Dunmore, whose society the Chinnerys had been keeping in
London.

Visitors were known in university jargon as ‘lions’, and showing them the sights
was termed ‘lionising’. Most of the visitors to Oxford followed the same routine. They
typically stayed at the Star Inn, spent a day visiting Blenheim, a day or so visiting the
various colleges, and always offered their undergraduate hosts a meal at the Star at the
end of a day’s sight-seeing. When Margaret was instructing George on some of the

296 M to G, 23 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
297 M to G, 3 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
298 M to G, 15 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
299 M to G, 30 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
300 M to G, 25 June 1808, Ch.Ch.
niceties of hospitality, she recommended that he ‘send Lady Dunmore a few ices at the Star, as she is fond of them, and when you are shewing her the Lions [sights] offer to conduct her to the best Ice shop once in the course of the morning.’ \footnote{M to G, 20 June 1809, Ch.Ch.} She also told him to organise the Dunmores’ accommodation at the Star Inn, book their coach seats for their onward journey north to their Scottish summer seat, and introduce them to the heads of any colleges they visited.

Although the Dean discouraged purposeful visits from the families of the young men, he did not object to transitory disinterested visitors who posed no threat to his authority and who had no desire to meddle in College affairs. Indeed, he was pleased to play host to the more illustrious of these. As instructed by Margaret, George introduced the Dunmores to Jackson, who gave them ‘a gracious reception at the Hall-gate, and made Lord and Lady Dunmore walk up and down the hall with him while Collections were going on.’ \footnote{G to M, 22 June 1809, Ch.Ch.}
(viii) Third term 1809

On 27 October, five days after returning to Oxford from his summer vacation, George took his first public examination. The vacation period at Gillwell had been devoted to unremitting study and practice in clear diction and concise English expression in preparation for the gruelling *viva voce* ordeal. Margaret had also stressed the importance of self-possession. This invaluable talent, she wrote, was ‘one you have hitherto possessed admirably, and one I cultivated in you with particular care, as being essential to the effect of all your efforts in public life.’

George’s childhood lessons stood him in good stead: he answered his examiners confidently and convincingly. William Chinnery happened to be in Oxford on the day. He wrote to Margaret: ‘You will be delighted beyond measure my dear Peg by hearing from dear George’s Letter (which he is now writing by my Side) of his perfect Success at his public Examination this Morning!’ William assured her that he had been ‘perfectly cool & possessed himself entirely which was of the utmost use to him,’ and that George was ‘the only man of whom the examining Masters made any Eulogium at all,—but they both stood up one after the other & before all the young men present & expressed their particular approbation of his abilities both in the Sciences & in the Classics.’

George’s own letter, written from the Star Inn where his father was staying, gives the full details:

How shall I begin, or how shall I express my inexpressable joy! I have obtained all that I could wish. Some men at their examination are plucked, and some are just decent enough to pass; others do well, yet not well enough to deserve absolute commendation; but some, a chosen few there are who are publickly praised in the schools. This was the object of my ambition, and I have reached the goal. To take things in their order, I must begin by saying that at 10 o’clock Eden and I went to the Schools, where we waited in the School-yard for half an hour before we were admitted. Upon being admitted, Hartopp Eden and I together with the Out-college men who were to be examined at the same time with us, took our place round a table, where we saw two examining masters facing us with a few scores of books of all descriptions. Behind us sat about 30 men on benches, who were sitting by constraint as a University form [tradition], and on the left hand side rose like an amphitheatre an assemblage of gownsman who came from

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303 M to G, 27 October 1809, Ch.Ch.
304 W to M, [27 October 1809], Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 48, fo. 91.
305 Robert Henley Eden (1789-1841), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1811, M.A. 1814.
their own choice to listen — I was the first on the list, so that as soon as the names were called over, I stood up for my examination. Now the great advantage which attended me throughout the whole of the morning was that I felt perfectly quiet, composed and sure of the ground I was treading upon.

The first thing I was examined in, was Euclid; and here I took the field nobly by making a very fluent explanatory answer; it happened most fortunately that I had foreseen the question in my own room and had prepared a copious answer to it. To every question I answered instantly without a moment’s hesitation both in mathematics & in logic going through a great many demonstrations: the examining master then got up and said “You have done yourself infinite credit, Mr Chinnery, by the manner in which you have answered the questions that have been put to you, and we hope that this will serve as an encouragement to you to proceed in your studies, and to make a distinguished figure at your degree” — This speech was made by Jenkins; it occasioned a thrill of pleasure within me, and the first idea that glanced across my mind was that of the satisfaction which this news would give you, my dear mother. The other examining master, Ingram, then opened the Odyssey and made me construe a page of it which I did with no difficulty, answering all his questions about derivations, elisions, verbs &c; in like manner he made me construe a page of Virgil, and then closed that part of my examination by saying “You have acquitted yourself very well in every part of your examination” — I then changed my place, and seated myself at the table to translate three quarters of a page of the Spectator into Latin, and I suppose it cannot have been very bad, since some were called to alter their translation and I was not. This being done, a list of Logical questions to solve, & Syllogisms to reduce, were laid before me, which I accordingly did.

I certainly cut out all the other men who were examined with me. We did not leave the Schools till near 4. I then went home, and in the street and in Chapel I have been congratulated by several fellows; Eden told me in the Schools, when my examination was over, “You ought to have brought your lions to hear you”. These lions were my father & Mr Niel with whom I have just been dining.

Ever affectionately G.R. Chinnery

(G to M, 27 October 1809, Ch.Ch.)

Needless to say, the letter did please Margaret immensely, across the top of which she wrote ‘A most happy letter, — Oct 27th 1809’. As a token of her satisfaction she sent

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306 Undergraduates in their third year were required to sit for two full days in the Schools, as a prerequisite to taking a degree (see G to M, 12 November 1810, Ch.Ch.).
308 James Ingram (1775-1850), Fellow of Trinity College, B.A. 1796, M.A. 1800, D.D. 1824, Rawlinsonian Professor of Anglo Saxon 1803-1808.
George £20 to spend as he liked — on books, seals, a pair of plated candlesticks, more silver spoons and forks, or even on a supper for his friends.309

Two days later George wrote that he was still receiving congratulations from all the young men. One of George’s friends told him that his ‘mathematical reputation is now raised very high, and that [...] the expectation that is had of me is as great as it was of Peel.’310 To celebrate his victory George gave wine to twenty friends, and a few days later a supper party, the first he had ever given. Margaret encouraged him to be liberal to his friends. It was immaterial now, whether George drank wine or not (but she advised him not to because he had a cold), as he stood ‘on such high ground’ that he no longer had to worry about foolish taunts. Margaret wrote that Amico, whom she described as the friend and companion of George’s infancy and youth, shed tears of joy. Her letter also reminded George that greatness and religious faith went hand in hand.311

George had now set himself a precedent for his degree examination, and as soon as the celebrations were over, he got straight back to work. George’s ability in mathematics now matched Lloyd’s own at the same age. Foreseeing the probability of a Studentship, Lloyd drove him hard, sending for him even at nights: ‘he pushes me on and makes me bear against the collar exceedingly, leaving me really only time enough for the hours of meals and a little exercise; I have not been able to go to wine for the last three days.’312 When Margaret asked him if his studies ‘enlarge your stable of ideas, and expand your whole soul’, George was doubtful:

I am much inclined to think that in this learned University, we, reading men, get crammed rather than nourished, and crammed we must nolentes volentes be, from the ideas that dominate here of the variety of books which must be read to make a meritorious figure at a degree, and I am convinced beyond a doubt that every first Class man must ruminate for a whole year after he has left College — or the books which he has read will remain an undigested food upon his mind; I say after he has left College, because he cannot find time to go through a proper course of this mental bank during the course of his academical life [...]  

(G to M, 5 December 1809, Ch.Ch.)

309 M to G, 30 October 1809, Ch.Ch., MS xliviii a. 51, fo.48.
310 G to M, 29 October 1809, Ch.Ch.
311 M to G, 1 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
312 G to M, 24 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
The methods of learning forced upon its brighter students by the unrealistic curriculum requirements of Oxford University could not have been more diametrically opposed to Margaret’s philosophy of education, or more distasteful to George’s own inclination for reflection. Margaret believed that all learning should take place gradually, with each segment of the curriculum being thoroughly absorbed before progressing to the next. Only in this way could a pupil derive any benefit from his education. George went on to cite Frederick Douglas, who had taken up for his degree examination such a number of books as Margaret doubted George would be able to get through before he was forty. And yet Douglas ‘got into the first Class for Classics and the first part of the second for Mathematics.’

It was in third term 1809 that George began another course of lectures given by Edmund Goodenough, on rhetoric. The study of rhetoric, compulsory for the degree examination, was based on Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, and was studied in Greek. This lecture, like the previous one on logic, took place three times a week, and followed the same dry format – working through the text chapter by chapter, translating, and explaining. Goodenough would call at random on anyone present to give a translation of the passage being studied. George described the ‘plan of the lecture’ thus: ‘Goodenough begins by questioning any of those who belong to the lecture, concerning that part of the rhetorick which was construed in the last, and then calls out several of the men successively who construe out loud before the whole of the lecture, the ensuing chapter, or section.’ Since this was another public forum in which he had the opportunity to excel, George took pains with his preparation. The effort he put into it paid off, as Goodenough frequently praised him for his translating. On 2 November George told Margaret that he earned ‘another tiny kudos this morning’ when Goodenough told him in front of the whole class that he had construed well. Again on 4 December he wrote that not only could he give an answer to Goodenough’s question, but that he was able to give it in Aristotle’s own words: ‘This I confess I was very glad of, as any success, how small so ever, in a public lecture room, is worth ten times more than any similar success tête à tête with a tutor. 

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313 G to M, 5 December 1809, Ch.Ch.
314 G to M, 7 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
315 G to M, 2 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
316 G to M, 4 December 1809, Ch.Ch.
It was during the last term of 1809 (30 October) that the Chancellor of the University and Prime Minister of England, the Duke of Portland, died. It may not have been coincidental that the death of his close friend occurred at the same time as Jackson's retirement. The Sub-Dean, Charles Henry Hall, was appointed to his position, and was officially installed as Dean on Friday 10 November 1809. Hall desired that the Tutors ‘inform their pupils that he begged we should not call upon him [as was customary at the beginning of each term], on account of the confusion into which his removal from his own house has thrown him.’\footnote{G to M, 23 October 1809, Ch.Ch.} The retirement of Jackson caused a great reshuffling of offices and abodes. Not only was Hall obliged to move into ‘deanery-house’, but Howley, having accepted the Divinity professorship, was obliged – much against his will, according to George – to move into Hall’s old house.

The election of a new Chancellor was a highly contested matter. The widely-touted incumbent to this post was Lord William Wyndham Grenville,\footnote{William Wyndham Grenville (1759-1834), old Christ Church man, prominent statesman and former head of the Ministry ‘All the Talents’, 1806-07.} who was the favourite of the Church. But according to George’s reports, he was not a popular choice in the Christ Church community.\footnote{G to M, 12 November 1809, Ch.Ch.} George claimed that ‘Ch.Ch. the college itself to which he belonged, rises en masse against him with the exception only of two votes! and these two votes are those of Corne and Burton the Canon. Ch. Ch. patronises the Duke of Beaufort,’\footnote{Henry Charles Somerset, sixth Duke of Beaufort (1766-1835).} and the general opinion which obtains here at the fountain head of knowledge, concerning the election, is that His Grace will overcome his rival.\footnote{G to M, 12 November 1809, Ch.Ch.}

Margaret warned George against venturing an opinion on a matter he knew little about, but George insisted that his previous statement was ‘perfectly exact’ and would ‘bear the test of being examined by Mr Perry’s [editor of the Morning Chronicle] correspondent’.\footnote{G to M, 19 November 1809, Ch.Ch.} Judging by his next statement, George was no ingénue when it came to grasping the reality of political manoeuvring. The canvassing that went on could hardly have escaped his notice, with Miss Burton, daughter of the Canon, ‘more active, and more constantly upon her legs, running from one college to another, more than any gownsman’, promoting Lord Grenville.\footnote{G to M, 5 November 1809, Ch.Ch.} George wrote of the voters being swayed by
'family connection, by self-interest, or the solicitations of others'. William Chinnery, always more interested in poetry and the arts than in account books, wanted to have an exact copy of the epigram that was circulating in Oxford, which highlighted the affiliations of the two rival candidates, using the names of two Oxford inns. Entitled 'On an Enquiry into the principal Inns likely to receive the Friends of the Candidates for the Election for the Chancellorship', a copy of the verses was sent by George to his sister:

Would you judge of each Candidate's motives & Ends?
You cannot be long at a loss.
The King's Arms will receive the 1st Chancellor's friends,
Lord Grenville's the sign of the X.

In spite of Christ Church's opposition, Lord Grenville was elected after a close count on 14 December. The election of a new Chancellor caused the third term to be shortened. 'The reason that is given for it is', George wrote, 'that so many Masters of Arts are coming to take possession of their rooms till the election is over, that we who are their tenants must of course leave the premises: and this is the case with almost all the Colleges; some indeed break up even sooner than Ch. Ch.'

Another ripple in the Christ Church routine in third term 1809 was caused by the arrival in Oxford in November 1809 of the hereditary Prince of Orange who, George reported, had taken a house near Dr Wall's [at St Giles]. The Prince was the intended husband of Princess Charlotte, daughter of the Prince of Wales. On Dean Jackson's recommendation, an illustrious Christ Church Student, Henry Allen Johnson, who

324 G to M, 19 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
325 There are two extremely witty poems by him in the Osborn collection (fd. 11, items 33 and 75), and other shorter poems sometimes included in letters.
326 G to C, 3 December 1809, Ch.Ch.
327 G to M, 22 November 1809, Ch.Ch. The system of 'thirding' or letting College rooms is discussed in G to M, 20 June 1808 and 20 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
328 Willem Frederik George Lodewijk (1792-1849), future King William II of the Netherlands and Grand Duke of Luxembourg (1840-1849). When the French annexed the Netherlands in 1795, William and his family were exiled for 18 years. After studying for about eighteen months at Oxford the Prince of Orange entered the British army and served as aide-de-camp to General Arthur Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington). He commanded the Dutch and Belgian forces at Waterloo in 1815.
329 G to M, 14 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
330 They were betrothed in 1813, but the Princess broke off the engagement the following year.
331 Henry Allen Johnson (1785-1860), eldest son of Sir Henry Johnson, graduated B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1807, M.A. 1810. He had an army career.
had won the English verse prize in 1806, was invited to be the Prince’s ‘friend and companion’ (not his tutor, George specified). That Johnson had refused any remuneration for this position Margaret thought was indicative of a ‘noble nature’, but George was under no illusion that Johnson’s refusal of a salary was based on nothing but a hope of getting ‘something better than a mere salary, hereafter.’332 Rumours going about in the capital, Margaret told George, had it that this Johnson was a man of very superior talents.333 George informed his mother that Johnson was by no means extraordinarily clever, but might rather be described as ‘a man elegantly informed and accomplished’.334 Of course Margaret’s dearest wish was that George might be introduced to the Prince, who she believed would be King of England one day. On 24 November George did receive an invitation from Johnson to breakfast, and was briefly introduced to the Prince. George described him as ‘very good natured’, and ‘far from having any symptom of haughtiness, he has perhaps not sufficient dignity in his manners.’335 But as etiquette demanded that the Prince could not be a guest at anyone else’s party, only host his own, he was not able to breakfast with them. Margaret was eager to know more about the rules of etiquette regarding the Prince, wondering if George should call and leave his card, and instructed him to find out from Corne or Johnson what these rules were.

The year 1809 ended on a high note. On 6 December George received the much desired invitation to dinner from the Prince of Orange,336 on 9 December he reported having taken up ‘the best Collections yet’,337 and on the same day he obtained the first formal recognition of his academic achievements — the long-awaited Studentship awarded by Dean Charles Hall. Unfortunately the letter from George giving his mother this news is missing, but Margaret’s reply is not. Her most ardent ambition had been realised and her joy knew no bounds. What she said was part of the same theme reiterated in many letters — that public esteem was an invaluable asset for advancement in life, and was

332 G to M, 16 November 1809, Ch.Ch. Johnson did in fact later become aide-de-camp to the Prince of Orange.
333 M to G, 13 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
334 G to M, 14 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
335 G to M, 24 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
336 G to M, 6 December 1809, Ch.Ch.
337 They consisted of Sophocles’s tragedies Oedipus Tyrannus, Oedipus Coloneus, Antigone, Philoctetes; Euripides’s tragedies The Phoenissae and Medea from Euripidis tragoidiae, tom. 1 (R. Porson, ed.), Lipsiae, 1802; Aristotle’s Rhetoric (8 chapters); Lucretius’s De Natura rerum; Newton’s Optics (5 sections); abstracts of the Aristotle and Newton lectures.
something that took some men half a lifetime to achieve: 'Your reputation is now fixed on a firm basis, — the greatest difficulties are overcome, — you have gained a title to general esteem, and you have in this respect done the work of half a life already!' The satisfaction that Margaret felt in seeing her efforts vindicated is evident in the closing words of the same letter: 'Did you think of me while the Dean was giving you the Studentship? — Do not presume to think that even your feelings are at all equal to mine upon this occasion! — Oh no, no, no! Your devoted & supremely happy Mother'.

George Chinnery's election to a Canoneer Studentship occurred just after Cyril Jackson had retired as Dean. Winning a Studentship involved two stages, nomination and election. It is unclear who nominated George. It was probably either the Sub-Dean Charles Henry Hall, with whom he enjoyed a good relationship, or Jackson himself, who was clearly impressed by George's mathematical talent. George's outstanding performance in his first public examination, as well as in the College Collections, clinched his Studentship. His election by the new Dean, Charles Henry Hall, was then only a matter of course.

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338 M to G, 10 December 1809, Ch.Ch.
339 A candidate for a Canoneer Studentship was nominated by the Dean, Sub-Dean, or any member of the College Chapter, and his name inscribed, alongside that of the nominator, in a book known as the electoral roll, while waiting for a vacancy to occur. As the vacancies occurred, the candidates were elected to a Studentship in order of seniority of their nominator, so that it was of great advantage to have been nominated by the Dean or the Sub-Dean, the two most senior College officers. Jackson was the first Dean of Christ Church to make residence compulsory in Christ Church prior to nomination for a Canoneer Studentship. In this way he could better judge of an undergraduate's academic merit, and it was for academic ability, especially in mathematics, that Jackson awarded most of his Studentships. (See Bill, op. cit., pp. 107-131) As Bill points out, this time of residence in College prior to nomination was a sort of probationary period, and once the nominee had distinguished himself in a public examination or in College Collections, his election was a mere formality.
George was keenly aware of the need to live up to the honour that had been bestowed on him, and determined to work harder than ever on his Collections and future degree examination, in order to safeguard Hall’s high opinion of him. He was horrified to learn that Gregg, who had also been awarded a Studentship in 1809, was ‘plucked’ in his first public examination. George described the disgrace as ‘particularly mortifying’, since Gregg was still struggling to recover his tattered reputation which Jackson had effectively demolished before his retirement. Gregg had allegedly had a dispute with another Christ Church man over some money, and was generally thought to be in the wrong. According to George, Jackson had so disliked him, that to be a friend of Gregg’s was considered a disgrace by association. ‘But the influence of Jackson ceased with his authority,’ wrote George, ‘& since the installation of our present dean, men have begun to consider the case & to generally admit that Gregg had been unfairly treated.’ George felt pity for Gregg, who was plucked at the very moment when people were revising their opinion of him, and he commented that the new Dean must have been bitterly disappointed.

The title of Student moved George up the ladder of seniority in College, and bestowed on him certain marks of distinction, such as a more sumptuous (and warmer) academic gown, a special seat in Hall and a longer, private tête-à-tête with the Dean (separate from ‘the undistinguished throng of the College’) at the commencement of each term. But not all of these entitlements were beneficial. From his special seat in Hall George could no longer hear the themes which were read out on a Saturday, and in reply to his sister’s question about whether he ate well at the Students’ table, he replied that he could get enough plain food to eat, but it was usually cold. Being a Student also entailed some irksome duties, namely those that came with the office of ‘prick-bill’. Initially George carried out these duties with pride, describing them in the letter to his mother of 28 January:

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340 John Gregg (b. 1790) B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1812. The Alumni Oxonienses records the date of Gregg’s Studentship as 1808, but George states that Gregg received his Studentship at the same time as his own – Christmas 1809. (G to M, 26 February 1810, Ch.Ch.)
341 G to M, 26 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
342 G to M, 22 January 1810, Ch.Ch.
343 G to M, 28 January 1810, Ch.Ch.
Perhaps you may ask why I was obliged to stay in Hall till near 4; the reason is, that the Dean's prick-bill (and that is my present office) is obliged to wait till the Masters have dined, and then to say grace at the desk which stands in the centre of the hall. There are always two prickbills, the Censor's and the Dean's, which offices are taken alternately: the dean's looks out the lessons at Surplice prayers in chapel, and calls out the batchelor & master to read them, besides which he has to prick [mark off] the names of the Noblemen, Batchelors & gentlemen-commoners. All this I did to-night for the first time, and wished at the moment that you had been there to see me move about the chapel & fulfilling the duties of my office. The Censor's prickbill pricks the names of the Students & Commoners.

(G to M, 28 January 1810, Ch.Ch.)

George went on to explain that he would remain as the Dean's prick-bill for a fortnight, at the end of which period he would take over the duties of the censor's prick-bill. As the censor was in charge of discipline in the College, a large part of the duties of the censor's prick-bill related to disciplinary matters, such as the writing of punishment notes which confined wrongdoers to Chapel – a punishment of which Margaret was particularly critical. In the plan of day included in his letter of 13 February 1810 George wrote that he 'went to Webber [James Webber, Senior Censor] & wrote 16 confining notes'. As term progressed, and George's study load increased, he found these duties particularly time-consuming. When he was the censor's prick-bill, he told his mother, his duties generally took him thirty or forty minutes after breakfast, in addition to the morning and evening chapel sessions. Nevertheless, George took this office seriously – more seriously than some of the other Students, for whom he often stood in, either for legitimate reasons (such as when Eden was in mourning for his cousin who had committed suicide) or because of the laziness of another Student (who preferred 'lounging in the Music-room' to his prick-bill duties). George's tutor Corne was now a censor, and sometimes asked George for additional help: 'I helped a freshman prick the bills in Chapel, as Corne, who is a Censor, doesn't like to have the bills pricked wrong'. In May 1810 there seems to have been rather a dearth of efficient prick-bills, as George complained of being over-burdened with duties associated with this office, which prevented him from staying overnight at Wheatfield where he had been invited

344 G to M, 13 February 1810, Ch.ch.
345 G to M, 26 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
by Lord Charles Spencer for dinner: 'Only conceive my having been obliged to write, fold up and direct 53 notes this morning for releasing, imposing and confining: this is an additional reason for not being able to sleep at Wheatfield tomorrow; Eden and I are the only two efficient prickbills just now, so that we mean to return after dinner.'

Now that George was a Student, Margaret, who had never wanted George to hand in a theme unseen by her, became even more alarmed about his submitting work of an inferior nature. For the sake of his reputation, it was paramount that he maintain a high standard. In early 1809 Margaret had written that she was 'much mortified that you should have been under the necessity of risking a composition unseen by me', and she often wrote of his themes that they were written in a style that was too 'décoisu', that his thoughts were lacking in 'closeness and precision' and that although he possessed a great deal of knowledge, he had 'a deficiency in stile and arrangement'. George therefore toiled laboriously over his themes, and unfailingly sent reworked versions to Gillwell for his mother's approval. He was very disappointed, then, when he had spent hours rewriting a theme, to find it suddenly cancelled. Margaret was no less angered. This happened with frustrating regularity, such as when Jackson was away from Oxford, or when the feast day of a saint fell on a Saturday, or when the Collection paper was posted up in Hall, and as a result, there were rarely more than four themes written in any one term (only three in the first term of 1810). The Dean's reason for the cancellation of theme writing once the date of Collections had been posted, was that men would be assumed to be studying too hard to give enough thought to the exercise. George felt particularly aggrieved that the last themes of term were not taken seriously, and wrote to his mother:

You did not understand what the collection paper had to do with our themes: the thing is this, that the collection paper is put up three weeks or nearly a month before collections, and that as it is supposed men then set to work more seriously, they can not find time to write themes, and that is invariably the case every term. The english themes which we shewed up last Saturday were the last, and to prove to you how little those last are attended to, five or six men did not shew up any at all, and yet Conybeare took

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346 G to M, 19 February 1810, Ch.Ch. The freshman in question was a Westminster Student, that is one from Westminster School, who was elected to his Studentship on his entry to Christ Church.
347 G to M, 29 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
348 M to G, 12 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
349 M to G, 15 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
no notice of it, whereas the usual punishment is being confined to Chapel or crossed at
denied access to] the buttery perhaps for the whole term.

(G to M, 20 November 1808, Ch.Ch.)

The custom of not submitting any further themes once the Collection paper was
posted George thought a 'horrid system', especially when it affected a theme that he
considered good enough to be read in Hall. In frustration, Margaret replied on 1 March
1809 that it was a pity that he had not taken the same trouble with his first English
theme as he had with the last (which was cancelled) or he might have read it in Hall and
acquired some much needed 'Panache'. Disillusioned, she remarked that Conybeare had
probably not even looked at the last theme, and might even have 'thrown [it] by for
waste paper'.

At the beginning of 1810 George was still trying to have another of his themes
selected for reading aloud in Hall. When nothing he or Margaret did to improve his
work was to any avail, George looked for a reason. He concluded that Conybeare was
prejudiced, for ever since George's arrival in College only the same seven men –
'except [for] a freshman every now and then who is allowed to read his first production,
& never a second' as was his own case – were selected to read their theme in Hall.
Thoroughly disenchanted, George announced that as the current theme was the last for
the term, he did not intend to put any effort into it at all.

One of the deficiencies in George's themes that Margaret kept coming back to
was his English prose style. It was a weakness, Margaret claimed, that was caused by
his reading and writing so little English. She often noticed 'the strangest phraseology'
both in his themes and in his letters, which she attributed to 'an exclusive study of
foreign languages'. This was the reason she so actively encouraged him to continue to
read elegant English prose, especially Addison's. She advised reading a few short
treatises from the Spectator as a prelude to writing any composition in English, so that
George might 'find out what constitutes the careless ease, the elegant negligé of
Addison's stile'. Margaret also admired Samuel Johnson's style, saying it was 'more
elevated and more perfect than any other in our language.' In her opinion, the college

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350 M to G, 1 March 1809, Ch.Ch.
351 G to M, 1 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
352 M to G, 17 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
353 Ibid.
system of education did not place nearly enough importance on the practice of English composition:

The college system of study is very defective on this head [English composition]; you exercise only one or two faculties; you spend your whole time in finding out what the Greeks and Romans said and did, without even trying what you can say yourselves! Now I must own I think it would be better to be able to speak and write a little common sense oneself in plain and elegant terms, than to possess a perfect knowledge of all the fine things the ancients have written.

(M to G, 15 February 1810, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret returned to this subject towards the end of the year. Having made George practise English composition in the long vacation, she urged him to keep it up after his return to College. This was done by translating huge slabs of Thucydides’s *History of the Peloponnesian War*, which George was studying for Collections in third term, and sending it home to Gillwell for correction. Not that Margaret understood Greek. It was more a question of rendering the Greek into clear and comprehensible English. Important as all his knowledge acquired at Oxford was, the skill of being able to compose and converse fluently in English was even more so:

[...] it is of still greater importance to bring your learning into use by the constant & daily practice of composition & conversation, — there is no other way of rendering intellectual ore pure & malleable. But this is hardly possible even in any degree at College, and I must be allowed (to think at least) that it is an enormous defect in the system of education there.

(M to G, 17 October 1810, Ch.Ch.)

However, Margaret was confident that George had such a good ear that it would not be hard for him to acquire greater clearness and simplicity in his English prose when he had time to do more English reading. On the other hand, she assured him, he did write good poetry. She compared the writing of prose with the composition of poetry, saying that for the first one needed a clear and lucid arrangement of ideas, and for the second “cultivation & imagination”.

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354 Ibid.
Margaret’s own reading was vast, especially in literature, and particularly poetry, since her extensive network of friends included many poets. Those whom Spencer introduced to the Chinnery home included Samuel Rogers, Thomas Moore and George Crabbe. Margaret also knew Thomas James Mathias, translator of Italian poetry, and the minor poetess Mary Tighe (author of a book of poems entitled *Psyche, or the Legend of Love*). Then there was the Chinnerys’ Epping Forest neighbour William Sotheby, whose poetry Margaret read, even if she did not have a high opinion of it. Indeed she kept abreast of most new literary publications, poetry and prose. On 12 February 1810 she wrote to George that Walter Scott had sold his new poem *The Lady of the Lake* for 2,000 guineas, and remarked enviously that ‘Johnnes’ had done a translation of Froissart from old French ‘that any of us might have done’, and also translated some memoirs of which he had already sold four volumes for 4,000 guineas, which she considered an enormous sum ‘for mere journeyman’s work, – no invention nor production of his own!’

Through William Chinnery Margaret heard first-hand reports of affairs of state, and she took a lively interest in the latest happenings in Parliament. She followed the newspaper reports of debates in the House of Commons, commented on noteworthy speeches and encouraged George to do likewise. She often discussed events of the House of Commons with George in her letters. In early February 1810 it was the predicament of Perceval as new Prime Minister facing criticism from the Opposition, and a few days later, Sheridan’s speech on the freedom of the press. (‘Did you read Sheridan’s speech the other day? It was extremely eloquent, and in general well argued

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355 See Part II, Chapter 1, p. 243.
356 Samuel Rogers (1763-1855), poet, best known for his *Pleasures of Memory* (1792) and *Of Human Life* (1819). He was not a great poet, and all his works bar one were printed at his own expense.
357 George Crabbe (1778-1851).
358 Mrs Mary Tighe (1772-1810) was best known for this poem, which was inspired by the story of Cupid and Psyche. It was privately printed in 1805. She was a much admired figure of society, who was a member of the fashionable set at Tunbridge in autumn 1811.
359 In a letter to George, Margaret wrote good-humouredly that ‘the forest Poet gave birth to a sonnet yesterday morning’, adding that she did not think he had ‘the smallest degree of poetical taste or feeling’, but that he had a very high opinion of George and that she loved the whole Sotheby family for their good hearts (M to G, 26 November 1810, Ch.Ch.). There are two letters from William Sotheby to Margaret Chinnery enclosing verse (1811 and 1832) and one to William Spencer (1830), all in the Fisher collection.
360 The work in question was Thomas Johnes’s, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Froissart*, J. Henderson: Haford, 1810.
361 Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816), brilliant statesman and orator and popular dramatist, was a colourful figure in London society. His quick wit was legendary, as was his reputation for drunkenness and debt avoidance. He was a great friend of Thomas Moore, who wrote his biography.
I think. The basis of it is consistent with Blackstone’s principle with regard to the liberty of the press.”362 In January and February 1809 it was the enquiry in the House of Commons into the alleged trafficking in commissions by the Duke of York when he was commander-in-chief of the British army. Margaret’s two-month running commentary on the affair contained for George not only lessons in British law, but also a moral perspective, evident in her typically succinct appraisal of the enquiry:

I suppose the enquiry now going on in the House of Commons is the chief topic of conversation in your wine parties; it is almost the only thing talked of in London I believe. How severely it must afflict the poor old King & Queen! I cannot help thinking that it was most unwise to bring forward such a discussion at this moment, when we want all the energies of the country to be directed against our vigilant and active enemy [...] .

It was not worth while to throw every thing into confusion in order to prove to Europe and the whole world, that the Duke of York is an immoral man, very irregular in his private conduct; — this was well known before; — and I cannot see that they stand the least chance of proving any other single point!

(M to G, 24 February 1809, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret also discussed with George England’s war against Napoleon, writing patriotically of ‘the glorious bravery of our troops’,363 and gloating over French defeats in Portugal in June 1809. Margaret’s patriotism is also evident in her letter celebrating the fiftieth jubilee of George III on 25 October 1809. Her metaphor of the King as a capable pilot, bringing the good ship England safely into port in the midst of the revolutionary storm demonstrates a genuine respect for the British monarch and a keen appreciation of the British constitution:

It is not because he has reigned 50 years that my heart applauds the Jubilee in honour of our Sovereign, — no, it is because he has weathered a storm that has shipwrecked the rest of Europe. He has been a good Pilot to his people, — and it must ever be acknowledged that we owe our immutability, amidst universal destruction, to the invariableness of his principles, to his good judgement, and firmness of character. We are not yet in Port, it may be said, — but we have withstood the tempest nobly; and here

363 M to G, 3 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
evidence, which must have been aided, she thought, by his keeping a commonplace book of the kind she had so often recommended to George. Her much-repeated views on what constituted good English prose come through in her following remark: ‘Mr Copplestone certainly has a head, – and whenever he acquires a clear, plain, unaffected, elegant stile, through which he can communicate his thoughts to others, I have no doubt but he will be esteemed a good writer. But he must first weed his diction, and lop off the superfluous and overgrown branches.’

On 7 March Margaret asked George if he had read Copleston’s second, smaller pamphlet entitled ‘Advice to a young reviewer’ – again directed at the Edinburgh Review – which she thought an admirable piece of satire, and much better written than the first. A year later, George recommended to Margaret the Edinburgh Review’s favourable review of a book on the Greek grammarian Hephaestion by the learned professor and future Dean of Christ Church, Thomas Gaisford. This, he thought, compensated for ‘the abuse vented against Copplestone.’ The Hephaestion was a work on Greek metres, and George described its author as ‘one of our first greek scholars’.

Margaret herself sometimes found fault with the Edinburgh Review. The journal’s policy of presenting eight or nine lengthy book reviews in each issue, written by gentleman writers encouraged to develop their own views and style, meant that the articles were often controversial. In March 1810 she took particular exception to a review based on a third-hand reading (an English translation of a French translation of the Italian) of the autobiography of one of her favourite Italian authors, Alfieri. Disagreeing vehemently with the reviewer’s low opinion of Alfieri (‘an arrogant, fastidious, and somewhat narrow system of taste and opinions, were the great leading features in the mind of Alfieri’), Margaret wished that ‘Mr Copplestone would lash the Edinburgh Review again’ and remarked scathingly to George ‘Then only think how ludicrous it is to hear Scotchmen pronouncing sentence upon the divine favella Toscana

370 M to G, 1 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
371 M to G, 7 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
373 G to M, 17 March 1811, Ch.Ch. Thomas Gaisford (1780-1835), Student of Christ Church, B.A. 1801, M.A. 1804, Regius Professor of Greek 1811-35, D.D. 1831, Dean of Ch.Ch. 1831-55.
375 Ibid., p. 274.
[Tuscan dialect]1376 She was undoubtedly right. Margaret’s knowledge of the modern languages gave her a perspective on foreign publications which readers of these same works in translation did not have. George’s skill in foreign languages—kept up not only by reading foreign works of literature in their original tongue, but also by writing to his sister in French, Herr Trumpf in German, and Viotti in French or Italian—was a rare one in Oxford. Since modern language study did not form part of the liberal education tradition, falling rather into the category of an elegant female accomplishment,377 few young gentlemen took the trouble to learn one. That hardly any of George’s contemporaries in Oxford understood French,378 is borne out by the habit that Margaret contracted of writing to George in French if she wished to keep secret the contents of any of her letters—such as the ones containing tips on poetry writing—which George might inadvertently have left lying about in his room during the period when he was composing his verses for the Newdigate prize.

In 1810 the Newdigate prize for English verse was the object of George’s most ardent desire. Spurred on by Corne’s predictions of success, he spared himself no effort. Nor did the different members of his family, who helped in a variety of ways. At the beginning of first term, following Spencer’s advice that ‘a little learning well brought in will go a great way’,378 George began systematic research into the subject of the 1810 verses The Statue of the Dying Gladiato. This was only the second time since 1806 (the year the Newdigate prize was instigated), that the subject of the prize poem was in accordance with the bequest stipulation that the prize be given for a ‘study of the ancient Greek and Roman remains of Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting’.379 He began by asking his young relative at Gillwell, little Margaret, to copy out the entry on the statue from the French Encyclopédie. Then he went to the Christ Church library, not realising that the use of the library was the exclusive privilege of the noblemen and gentleman-commoners, the most idle of all college men, according to George.380 Although Bull the Sub-Librarian was sympathetic, and thought that the rule would

376 M to G, 10 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
377 Eighteenth and early nineteenth century London newspapers were full of advertisements for teaching French to young ladies. One such advertisement was placed by a certain Mr Salomon, whose ‘principles, grounded on the rules of the French Academy […] are so plain, […] as to enable his pupils soon to converse in that fashionable language’ (The Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser, 18 December 1781).
378 G to M, 1 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
379 Honours Register, op. cit., p.172.
380 G to M, 26 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
probably be changed by the end of the year, he could not allow George to use the
library's copy of Montfaucon's dissertation on the *Gladiator*, and George told his
mother that he would have to borrow a copy from an Oxford bookseller. Thus,
ironically, it was an obliging Oxford bookseller by the name of Parker who came to
George's assistance, allowing him to borrow the same Montfaucon work—as well as a
volume of the British Encyclopedia that contained an article on the *Gladiator*—that
his own College library had refused him. Knowing that the poem should contain a
description of the statue, George sought out a cast of the *Gladiator*, which he found in a
shop in Oxford. The owner of this shop also showed him a French book containing two
pages on the *Gladiator*, but refused to lend him the book, not because he thought it an
unreasonable request, but because others trying for the prize might wish to buy it. George intended 'to look at the work slyly in the shop'. George's knowledge of
French was an asset to his research, and as much of the useful material was in French,
this may have given him the edge over his competitors. A second useful French work
was the painter C. P. Landon's four-volume 'collection of works of art which have won
prizes in French competitions'. Another was a dissertation read by Mongez at the
Institut National in Paris. Here George enlisted the help of Viotti, whom he asked to
search it out at A. B. Dulau and Co., the London bookseller who imported foreign
books. The Landon work, George told his mother, contained the view of certain
antiquarians that the statue may not have been of a gladiator at all, but of a Gaul, a
German, or even a slave, and George thought that this doubt 'may be brought with great
effect in the verses, & prove something more than a superficial knowledge on the
subject.' But this must have proved too difficult to incorporate into the verses, as they
do not contain any allusion to the subject. Thus armed with all the fruits of his research,
George went home for the Easter holidays to Gillwell, where, as in the previous year, Spencer was waiting to assist him.

George had little time to devote to the composition of his verses in term time, owing to the demands of his Collections which were 'more bulky' than the last. His first term (1810) Collections included three plays of Sophocles (Electra, Ajax and The Trachiniae), Lucretius's De Natura rerum (the second book) and three of the nine books of Herodotus's History of the Persian Wars (in Greek), which he found harder than any other classical work he had so far studied because it was written in the Ionic dialect, and entailed a vast knowledge of geography. George therefore had recourse to a lexicon by Portus 'which serves as a key to the idioms and difficult phrases', and two geography reference books containing maps -- D’Anville’s and Rennell’s, of which the latter was more useful for locating place names. In addition to these classical works, George also took up three sections of Newton’s Principia and the obligatory abstracts of his Aristotle and Newton lectures.

George had enjoyed his two lecture courses in first term. One was the continuation of Goodenough’s lecture on Aristotle’s Rhetoric, which he liked because of the novel exercise Goodenough had devised -- one of the few useful tasks imposed by College, in George’s opinion. It involved ‘finding examples applicable to the rules of the rhetoric’ in different classical works and ‘obliges me to consult Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Lucretius, Herodotus & all my classical friends, and bring my store of reading into practical use’. Although George, who was genuinely fond of his ‘classical friends’, found the exercise stimulating, this was not the case for the majority of young men, who generally omitted to do the exercise altogether because it was too time-consuming. George did the exercises conscientiously, not only because it was important to get ‘kudos’ in the Aristotle lecture, but also because it was obligatory to take up two or three treatises of Aristotle to the degree examination, and these were even more difficult than mathematics ‘because in the latter you can foresee all the questions & almost number of their being put; in the former this is impracticable, and it is requisite

389 Ibid.
390 G to M, 30 January 1810, Ch.Ch. Aemilius Portus, Dictionarium Ionicum Graecolatinum, quod indicem in omnes Herodoti libros continet [...], Frankfurt, 1603.
392 G to M, 5 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
to be grounded in the cardinal points of the treatise & the general march of it, besides being acquainted with all the particular expressions in Greek; a good examination in these treatises, which are called the Sciences, is supposed to evince as much head as a good examination in the mathematics. 393

The other lecture was a mathematical one given by Abraham Robertson on Newton’s Principia. Different from Goodenough’s, which was a College lecture, Robertson’s was a public lecture, open to the whole university:

Robertson’s 4th lecture took place to-day; there is one difficulty attending them, from their being public, that if in a demonstration (which he does upon a slate before us) there should be any point not immediately clear, one cannot stop him & beg that he will begin over again; this however signifies but little; it obliges to unremitting attention during the hour & a half which is the time allotted to the lecture, and complete really undivided attention will prevent any part of his demonstration being unintelligible; he is a delightful beautifully slow, beautifully clear lecturer, 1000000000 times better than Lloyd. I like him much.

(G to M, 22 February 1810, Ch.Ch.)

George still followed his mother’s instructions regarding efficient study methods, and having spent four hours writing out and elaborating on the previous day’s mathematics lecture, wrote that his study technique was ‘quite upon your plan, which lays down that a thing has not been thoroughly understood till the hand can write down or the mouth can explain what the mind has received.’ 395 Similarly, George was advised to heed Madame de Genlis’s principle, which held that a book had not been properly digested until read twice. George read all his classical texts and everything Margaret recommended to him twice, as did his sister Caroline who was pursuing her education at Gillwell. 396

392 G to M, 22 March 1810, Ch.Ch., vol. 8, fo. 148.
393 Abraham Robertson (1753-1826), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1779, D.D. 1807, Savilian Professor of Geometry 1797-1810, and of Astronomy 1810, was the author of the prescribed Oxford text Conic Sections (see p. 432, note 117).
394 G to M, 23 February 1810, Ch.Ch.
395 The Chinnery children took great pleasure in re-reading their books, and recognised the benefits of doing so. George even remembered Madame de Genlis’s own words when he wrote to tell his mother how much he had enjoyed his second reading of Tasso’s La Gerusalemme liberata: ‘When Madame de Genlis said, Il y a beaucoup de gens qui lisent, mais il y en a peu qui relisent, I hope she made a few observations on the disadvantages which those persons must incur who do not read a second time.’ (G to M, 3 February 1809, Ch.Ch.)
(x) Second Term 1810

When second term of 1810 began after the Easter break George had more than one set of verses on his mind. At the end of 1809 Spencer had encouraged George to submit some ‘encænia verses’, or laudatory verses which were traditionally recited in the Sheldonian Theatre at the time of the installation of a new university Chancellor. As only a few of the very best poems were selected, the reading of Encænia verses was deemed a great honour for which there was keen rivalry among the colleges. The Encænia (the annual Oxford University Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors) was a glittering social event, and its fame extended way beyond the confines of the University. Spencer told Margaret that ‘all England will be there, and that it [the honour of reciting verses at the Encænia] is of much greater importance than a College prize.’

However the honour of composing and reciting congratulatory verses for the Encænia was one which had to be bestowed by the Dean, and the content and composition of the poem were dictated by him. Corne and Lloyd, both impressed by the lines that George had already shown them, probably influenced Hall in his choice, and George was among those from Christ Church who were invited to contribute verses. On 13 May Hall sent for George and told him that the late university chancellor, the Duke of Portland, was to be the subject of the Installation verses and that they were to be a celebration of his life. George set about researching these verses with the same assiduity as he had the Gladiator. To acquaint himself with the Duke’s life, he told his mother, he would read Adolphus’s History of George III, Russell’s Modern History and Gifford’s Life of Pitt. To form an idea of the type of verses preferred, Spencer advised George to look at some previous Installation poems – in his opinion, George Canning’s written for the Installation of the Duke of Portland in 1792 were excellent. As there existed

397 M to G, [c. May 1810], Ch.Ch., MS xlvi a. 50, fo. 6. There is a four-page account of the 1810 Encænia in the Gentleman’s Magazine (vol. 80, part 2, July 1810, pp. 69-72), and daily accounts in the Morning Chronicle from Monday 2 to Friday 6 July 1810, under the heading ‘Installation of Lord Grenville’, or simply ‘Installation’, showing that the Encænia at Oxford was an event of national interest.


399 M to G, 12 May 1810, Ch. Ch.
no publication of all the past Installation poems, as there was for the Prize poems.400
George was again obliged to the considerate bookseller Parker: ‘Parker, who is a very
gentlemanlike man and who knew that I am writing for the Encænia, sent me of his own
accord a manuscript copy of the principal poems spoken in commemoration of the Duke
of Portland’s Installation’.401

No wonder, then, that George had little time for study. But Margaret, for once,
was unperturbed, and wrote in pragmatic tones ‘if you can gain the [Newdigate poetry]
prize, and write some verses good enough to be read at the Installation, you will have
done more for the advancement of your literary fame than all your latin and greek can
ever do.’402 She therefore advised him to devote all his attention to poetry and to let his
academic study take second place: ‘let lectures, greek, mathematics &c be quite
subordinate objects at the moment.’403 Lloyd agreed with her, and although the divinity
lecture, for which George had just enrolled, required a great amount of work, he advised
George to expend all his energies on the Installation poem.

Then began George’s frantic correspondence with Margaret and Spencer, who
was staying with the Chinnerys in the London house they had rented for the spring
season.404 As usual, Margaret would not tolerate George’s submitting work unseen by
her. As soon as they were written, George committed his lines to the post, accompanied
by the latest instructions from the Dean regarding the compliments to be paid the Duke
of Portland. On 25 May George informed Spencer that the Dean had told him to ‘make
general remarks upon his career [...] ; that something should be said of his firm &
resolute conduct during the revolution, and that his amiability of manners &c should
have their share of praise; also that I should not exceed 60 lines’,405 all of which, George
exulted, coincided with Spencer’s own ideas. George continued: ‘Tomorrow I shall
examine the whole of my verses, prune, lop, trim & polish; tonight I send you the
conclusion’.406 Finally, George wrote: ‘Tomorrow I shall try to make a few verses

400 The fourth edition of Oxford Prize Poems: being a collection of such English poems as have [...] obtained prizes in the University of Oxford was published in 1810.
401 G to M, 15 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
402 M to G, 12 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
403 Ibid.
404 At 15 Stratford Place, London.
405 George Chinnery to William Spencer, 25 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
406 Ibid. The last twelve lines of the poem (which were subsequently altered by the University authorities) are included in this letter. A copy of the final version of the whole poem is in the Powerhouse collection (George Chinnery, Miscellaneous Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 26/5).
relative to the Duke’s conduct in 94, french revolution &c &c, from the hints which you gave me in this morn’s letter.¹⁴⁰⁷

Meanwhile the judging of the prize poem was going on. On 27 May George wrote: ‘Of the 48 Gladiators, 44 have been rejected already; the contest is between 4; I wonder whether mine is one of them.’ He included information on the other prizes: ‘two only for the latin verse dispute the prize; the latin essay is a hollow thing, but the fortunate conqueror is not known; of the english essays I know nothing excepting that Dr Cole says some of them are beautiful.’¹⁴⁰⁸ Margaret was on tenterhooks, her mood swinging between confidence and despair. On hearing how close the contest was, she wrote:

I had not thought of its being so hard run a thing. I pray night and morning for your success, — and when I recollect how admirably you have been advised, and criticised &c &c I can hardly believe it possible that you should fail.

(M to G, [5 June 1810], Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a.50, fo. 111)

If he did not win, she said dejectedly, it would be a term lost, as his other studies had been so reduced that his Collections for this term would have to be small and insignificant.

On 12 June Margaret received George’s letter announcing that he had won the prize. George had himself received the news from the lively Miss Burton, as he had been out of his rooms when the Vice Chancellor’s mace called to inform him officially of the win:

The first report of my success was communicated to me as I was walking out of hall wth Shawe, by Miss Burton who with a wide-extending grin, visible for the last twenty yards of her approach, addressed me in these terms “I am happy, Mr Chinnery, in being able to congratulate you upon having retrieved the honour of Ch. Ch. by gaining one of the University prizes; I have just seen one of the Proctors who informs me that the prize for the english [verse] is yours; I am not less happy in being the first harbinger of the news, for I perceive that you were as yet unacquainted with it.” A few minutes afterwards I met Conybeare who ratified the intelligence; then I began to run over the college like a mad-man, rushing from one room to another and amongst

¹⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.
¹⁴⁰⁸ G to M, 27 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
others of course to Corne and Webber who both expressed their satisfaction in the strongest terms; none more so than the Dean, whom I saw last of all, because he came home late. The Vice-Chancellor’s Mace had been sent to my rooms immediately, but I did not see the man; I therefore called upon the V.C. this morning at 10 o’clock when he congratulated me upon my success, returned my poem to me, and told me that I was with the assistance of my tutors to correct a few passages, some of which Copplestone had underlined with a pencil. The V.C.’s servant upon my leaving the house dunned me for half a guinea, which I then learned was a customary tribute of gratitude & joy paid by a successful candidate. — I came home, and spent an amazing time first w/ Conybeare & then w/ the dean [...] (G to M, 12 June 1810, Ch.Ch.)

Before sending the above letter, George had first informed his father, whom he asked to tell Spencer, so that Spencer, who had been George’s mainstay throughout the whole exercise, might have the satisfaction of being the first to impart the news to Margaret. Spencer in turn devised his own way of rendering Margaret’s delight more exquisite: he had George’s twin sister Caroline relay the good tidings. Margaret’s response is contained in her letter of 12 June, which also contained congratulatory lines from Spencer in Latin, Viotti in French and Caroline in English. She wrote:

God for ever bless you, and prosper you as he does at this present time! I cannot write with any order or method, my mind is in a chaotic state, — and my heart so full that I can utter nothing. Guglielmo has not quitted me since the blessing was communicated to me by your dear Sister, — what a delicate thought of his to make her pronounce the heavenly sounds!

(M to G, 12 June 1810, Ch.Ch.)

Her uncontained delight spilled over into her letter of the following day: ‘The first distinct idea that presented itself to my mind this morning was that my son, my only son, my pupil, my joy, had nobly distinguished himself!’ Although neither George nor Margaret was happy about the alteration of some of George’s lines, the university judges’ decision brooked no argument. The consequences of not obeying

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409 As Professor of Poetry, Copleston was one of the judges.
410 M to G, 13 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
were dire. In December that year George’s friend James\textsuperscript{411} was to be refused a Studentship because he would not allow his verses, which won a College prize, to be altered. George wrote: ‘it is rather hard upon a man who won the last College-prize; and yet it is this very prize which has proved his ruin; for he refused to let Conybeare & the Censors alter his verses.’\textsuperscript{412}

Similarly, the Christ Church censors assaulted George’s Installation verses when they were submitted. The changes they made took no account of George’s poetic sensitivities. Although the subject of the verses was the Duke of Portland, the Dean and Conybeare decided that it would be politic to add some lines in praise of the incoming Chancellor, Lord Grenville: ‘The dean was amazingly pleased indeed this morning with my verses, & said that they certainly would be one of the most excellent copies; he suggested one or two alterations, & has given me a few lines to add at the end in praise of Lord Grenville.’\textsuperscript{413} Three days later, when the statesman William Windham\textsuperscript{414} died, the Dean and Conybeare wanted tribute paid to him also in the poem. George did not think this addition relevant, but again had no say in the matter. Affronted by the liberties which were being taken with his poem, he complained to his mother of ‘the careless & scandalous way in which Conybeare has corrected my verses’, saying he hated the word ‘chief’ to denote the head of Oxford.\textsuperscript{415} Margaret agreed with him and thought his verses had been ‘cruelly Deanified!’\textsuperscript{416} But George’s feelings must surely have been mollified by the news that he was to have the honour – traditionally accorded to a nobleman – of reading his verses first at the Encænia:

\begin{quote}
The complimentary verses have all been examined by Copplestone, Crowe,\textsuperscript{417} the V.C., Proctors &c &c, and mine have been deemed the best of any shewn up by the university, and that in consequence of this, mine are to be recited the first of any and that though it is customary for a Nobleman always to open the recitations by speaking the first copy, that on this occasion I am to have that honour; — the dean told me he
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnoteref{Edward James (b. 1790), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1813, M.A. 1815, took holy orders, becoming prebendary of Winchester and holding the perpetual curacy of Sheen. He maintained his friendship with George, sending him a letter of friendship and support in 1812 (in Fisher collection). George visited him at Mortlake in May 1821, as another letter in the Fisher collection (G to M, 28 May 1821) shows.}
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415 G to M, 20 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
416 M to G, 21 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
was delighted, and that nobody could be more so at the thought that I was to make so conspicuous a figure! I am to have rehearsals every morning with him, and get all my verses by heart tomorrow.

(G to M, 17 June 1810, Ch.Ch.)

**Encænia Week**

Immediately Margaret received the news of George’s winning the English verse prize she asked George to make arrangements for the family’s accommodation in Oxford for the Encænia week – from Tuesday 3 July to Friday 6 July. Viotti and Spencer would be accompanying William, Margaret and Caroline – Spencer was to be awarded a doctorate in Civil Law at the honorary degree ceremony on Friday 6 July – and at the last minute the Chinnerys’ friend the chevalier La Cainea wanted to be a member of their party. Accommodation in Oxford for that week was to prove both scarce and expensive, and beds for servants were not easy to find.

George first sought private accommodation for his family next door to the Star Inn: For the exorbitant price of thirty guineas he could have had on the first floor two adjoining bedrooms with four-poster beds and a sitting room, and, for a hefty thirty-five guineas, an additional bedroom on the floor above. He finally settled upon cheaper rooms in Broad Street for fifteen guineas, which were right opposite the Sheldonian Theatre, and within ten yards of the King’s Arms ‘one of our great inns’.418 They belonged to a certain Roberts, postmaster of Oxford, and George assured his mother that they were not ‘common lodgings’, as ‘Mr Roberts [...] has never let any part of his house before’.419 There was a good sitting room on the ground floor, with a room each for his parents and Caroline upstairs, but none for Sophy [Margaret’s maid], who could sleep on a small ‘tout-bed’420 in Caroline’s room. Regarding meals, George’s advice was that ‘on the days that you dine at your lodgings [...] it will be necessary to have your dinner sent from some of the adjoining Coffee-houses; in no lodgings do they give you the use of a kitchen’.421 Amico and Guglielmo were to sleep in George’s rooms in College, and the two coachmen – for Margaret was to come in her own carriage – would have to share a bed in some public house. George also promised to ‘look out for coach-

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417 William Crowe (1745-1829), poet, of New College was Public Orator from 1784-1829.
418 G to M, 15 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
419 G to M, 17 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
420 Presumably a stretcher bed such as ‘touts’, or watchguards used.
421 G to M, 17 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
house room'. As horses at each stage post would be in short supply, he advised his mother to be sure to 'order your horses at the post-towns by letters to the postmasters' for the return journey well in advance.\textsuperscript{422}

As on all important Oxford occasions, music, both lay and liturgical, was an integral part of the 1810 celebrations. The best London vocalists were hired to give concerts which took place daily over the four-day period of sermons, honorary degree ceremonies, poetry recitals and charity functions. Among them was the Chinnery friend Madame Catalani – who had been preferred to Mrs Billington for the Installation\textsuperscript{423} – and the Chinnery children’s old music teacher Madame Bianchi. George reported to Viotti that he had inspected the singers’ accommodation, and that the rooms were clean, attractive and near the Theatre.\textsuperscript{424}

Although Viotti was not an official performer at the Encænia, the Oxford music connoisseurs eagerly awaited his arrival. As on the occasion of his previous visit in 1809, invitations would be showered on him. George wrote that ‘Amico is not forgotten; every body asks whether Monsieur Viotti is to be of the party’, adding ‘As for opportunities of playing, I suppose those will not be wanting, for I trust our heads of houses & Canons &c &c will be galant’.\textsuperscript{425} Nor had the young men forgotten the singing of George’s attractive sister who had earned herself a modest reputation on her first visit to Oxford in February 1808. George asked his mother not to forget Caroline’s music: ‘Elfrida, Superba Roma or Pandolfo or any others’,\textsuperscript{426} and again reminded Viotti to bring his newly purchased Stradivarius, ‘the Buttero’.\textsuperscript{427}

\textsuperscript{422} G to M, 28 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{423} G to M, 29 March 1810, Ch.Ch. Catalani had since 1807 superseded Mrs Billington in popularity with London audiences. Catalani was a Gillwell habituee and had also visited Margaret recently at Stratford Place.
\textsuperscript{424} G to V, 16 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{425} G to M, 24 June 1810, Ch.Ch.

Elfrida is undoubtedly music from Paisiello’s popular opera of the same name. The others are presumably songs from other popular Italian operas. Contemporary newspapers regularly advertised for sale, under the heading ‘New Music’, favourite pieces (overtures, songs, duets, trios and airs) from currently performing operas.

\textsuperscript{426} G to M, 29 June 1810, Ch.Ch. In her letter of 9 February (M to G, 9 February 1810, Ch.Ch.), Margaret had told George of Viotti’s purchase of a new violin from Prince ‘Butera’. Coincidentally, one of George’s Oxford friends (Robert Herbert, future 12\textsuperscript{th} Earl of Pembroke, 1791-1862), married the widow of the Sicilian Prince ‘Butera de Rubari’ (Burke, op. cit., p. 1947). In the Enciclopedia italiana (Instituto Giovanni Treccani: Milan, 1927-1937, vol. 8, pp. 177-178) a brief history of the title Prince of ‘Butera’ is given. Conferred originally on the Branciforte family in the sixteenth century, the title continued until 1805, when, there being no male heirs, the Princess of Butera married Giuseppe Lanza Branciforte, son of Pietro Lanza, Prince of Trabia. It may have been the Princess’s husband from whom Viotti purchased his Stradivarius.
The university made sure that the recitations went off smoothly in the Encaenia week by holding rehearsals. The first public rehearsal in the Sheldonian Theatre was on 27 June at seven in the evening. The Theatre was full. George wrote that it was ‘a good ordeal to pass before the more awful audience at the Encaenia.’ He also thought that ‘the Gladiator will please more generally than the other prizes, not from intrinsic merit, but because it must be more easily understood than the Latin poem or Latin essay, and in the second place because it is less tedious than the English essay’. On 28 June he wrote of another public rehearsal: ‘The public rehearsal of the Complimentary verses is just over; there were 15 to-night, which took up the best part of two hours & a half: mine was first.’

George advised his family not to arrive in Oxford any earlier than the night before the commencement of the Encaenia week ‘for the inconveniences attending lodgings at such a time of bustle & hurry, are certainly to be avoided as much as possible.’ On the question of dress, which Margaret was unsure about, George assured her that ‘full dress’ would be required, even in the mornings:

Neither of you two ladies can possibly think of leaving the best part of your wardrobe behind you; whether it be at the recitation in the morning, or dinners, or music, or balls, depend upon it full dress will be required — I also rather think that you will not be exempted from this display in the morning; but this will be ascertained easily & soon enough.

(G to M, 22 June 1810, Ch.Ch.)

Proud of her status as mother of the most prominent undergraduate performer, Margaret was desperate that she and Caroline obtain good seats in the Theatre. George had informed her that ‘the women must all sit by themselves in the tiers of benches round the theatre, and the men will have to stand in the area.’ Being as determined in this endeavour as she was in everything else that she undertook, Margaret decided to appeal for seats to the highest authority — Lord Grenville himself. By making use of their university and government contacts she aimed to persuade Lady Grenville to take

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428 G to M, 27 [recte 26] June 1810, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 50, fo. 93.
429 G to M, 27 June 1810, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a. 50, fo. 90.
430 G to M, 28 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
431 G to M, 22 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
432 G to M, 24 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
them into the Theatre in her own party. Unsuccessful applications were made to Dr Marlow by George, to Pascoe Grenfell by Margaret and to John King (a former Treasury official and friend of Lord Grenville),\textsuperscript{433} by William. Pascoe Grenfell had replied that he did not think it would be discreet to ask Lady Grenville to admit his `own three females', much less ask the favour for the Chinnerys.\textsuperscript{434} George wrote to Margaret on 22 June: `I most sincerely hope you may succeed in getting Lady G. to take you in to the theatre; for this would ensure your being comfortably situated. Ladies of rank sit upon a tier separate from untitled ladies; but still I conceive that this will be no obstacle to Lady G's taking you in'.\textsuperscript{435} Finally, Spencer approached Lord Grenville's brother Thomas, Speaker in the House of Commons, apparently with success.\textsuperscript{436} A separate letter to Spencer from Sir Codrington Carrington, another Grenville friend, confirms that Margaret got her wish. He wrote: `I can have no doubt of being [...] enabled to communicate to you Lady Grenville's acquiescence.'\textsuperscript{437}

In a letter to George on 25 June, Margaret remarked that 1810 was the best year of her life. Not only had George achieved every goal she had set him in Oxford – and winning the poetry prize was `more than equivalent to the studentship' he told her\textsuperscript{438} – but Caroline had made her debut in London society with equal éclat. Margaret's cultivation of the socially elite went hand in hand with her academic aspirations for George. Her web of influential contacts was spreading ever wider, and in the early months of the year her family had been honoured by some particularly prestigious invitations from royalty and from other elevated personages. On the evening of the Wednesday 7 March, she remarked with satisfaction, George was to dine with the Prince of Orange, William with the Duke of Devonshire, and Amico with the King's son the Duke of Cumberland.\textsuperscript{439}

\textsuperscript{433} John King, Junior Secretary at the Treasury, Feb.-Sept. 1806 (T 29/86 p. 113, in Sainty, p. 135). See William Chinnery to John King, 26 June 1810 (copy), Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{434} Pascoe Grenfell to Margaret Chinnery, 22 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{435} G to M, 22 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{436} Thomas Grenville (1755-1846), statesman and book collector, was a graduate of Christ Church. He did not take much part in politics after 1807. See Thomas Grenville to William Spencer, 28 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{437} Codrington Carrington to William Spencer, 27 June 1810, Fisher. Sir Codrington Edmund Carrington (d. 1849), barrister-at-law, was created D.C.L. at the Oxford Encænia the same week as William Spencer.
\textsuperscript{438} G to M, 24 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{439} M to G, 7 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
When George won the English verse prize at Oxford he thought it perfectly natural that Margaret should take full credit for his success, and wrote to her that he was pleased to hear of all the congratulations she had been receiving in London, saying ‘I have no right to a greater share than yourself.’ Margaret wrote that Lady Leitrim had ‘been talking to me or rather having me talk upon education for two whole hours! — With how much confidence I may now talk upon that subject!’ adding on the outside of the letter ‘The Duke of Cambridge came to congratulate me on the very day, he dines here tomorrow, when we shall drink your health. He told the Princess of Wales of it, who also sent me a very kind message —’. Word of Margaret’s name as an educator spread throughout fashionable London, and reached the royal family. At the Princess of Wales’s party of 24 June she was quizzed by the Duke of Gloucester about her education method:

We spent last night at the Princess of Wales’s, — your sister’s success was most compleat and brilliant, and I came in for much commendation. HRH the Duke of Gloucester desired to be presented to me, and talked a great deal to me about you and Caroline. — enquired [of] every particular of your education, and when his Sister the Princess Sophie of Gloucester came to compliment me upon Caroline’s accomplishments, he said, “Yes and what is most extraordinary is, that Mrs Chinnery has herself educated her daughter, and her twin brother, who has just obtained a Prize at Oxford” &c and much more he added. The whole evening was one continued sense of success.

(M to G, 25 June 1810, Ch.Ch.)

From the Chinnerys’ close family friend Pascoe Grenfell, who knew perhaps better than most the effort that Margaret had put into her children’s education, came a generous letter in which he graciously acknowledged her skill and her dedication, saying that she had every reason to be proud of her son

& of yourself, for he is “all your own” and though you have fortunately had excellent materials to work upon, I am sure that whatever he might have been without your Labours & Judgements, he would have fallen far short of where he will be now, coming as he does out of your own hands. You are among the few mothers who will submit to

440 G to M, 17 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
441 Mary Bermingham (d. 1840), married Nathaniel Clements, second Earl of Leitrim (1768-1854).
the privations (as they are called & perhaps justly called) which attend the Education of Children, & amongst the still fewer who possess the Qualifications necessary for such an undertaking.

(Pascoe Grenfell to Margaret Chinnery, 22 June 1810, Ch.Ch.)

The travel writer Sir John Carr paid similar tribute to Margaret’s efforts: ‘You have lived to see the plants which you have cherished, which you have even secluded yourself from the world to cultivate, attain a strength & display of luxuriance of production which is rarely the lot of maternal fondness to contemplate.’ Sir John had already publicly acknowledged Margaret’s self-abnegation and pedagogical prowess in his dedication to her of the 1807 edition of his Stranger in France. In writing of Margaret’s decision to leave London in the interest of her children’s education, he referred to Madame de Genlis’s public tribute to her the year before his own. He spoke of the loss society incurred ‘when the bias of maternal duty, so worthy of the eulogy it has received from the commemorative pen of a Genlis, very early in life withdrew you to Gillwell; a sacrifice which you have had the felicity of seeing compensated by the success which has crowned your anxious and affectionate labours.’

In the midst of all this adulation, Margaret insisted that her children retain their humility and purity of mind. She was just as well pleased by the comments contained in Dr Howley’s congratulatory letter praising her son’s ‘general conduct and deportment’ as she was by his praise of George’s intellectual merits: ‘I am more than ever confirmed in the opinion, that a good heart and a religious mind will go much further in success in all possible ways than the finest talents and the most splendid genius without them.’

Just before the Encænia George had asked his mother whether she thought he should have his poem printed for private distribution. It is not clear whether the printing
took place, but certainly a very large number of copies appear to have been distributed in manuscript form. William Chinnery took on the task with gusto, judging it an excellent way of imprinting his son’s fame on the minds of friends and influential connections. During the Encænia week George distributed fifty copies of his poem – including fifteen of the unexpurgated original version – to specially selected recipients such as the Princess of Wales and the Duchess of Marlborough (who both sent letters of thanks), as well as to all the eminent guests of Charles Henry Hall at the deanery during the Encænia week. On [5] July William wrote to Margaret from London ‘It seems to me that 15 is a very small number of Copies for the Dean’s distribution’ and asked whether he ought not send ‘another 15 to-day, for the Dean has half that number of Persons in his House, every one of whom will ask for a Copy [...] so that I would make up the number to 35 instead of 25, which with the 15 before sent unaltered would be 50.’ Later in the year George’s poem was sent to notable personages such as the Prince of Orange, whose aide-de-camp expressed great satisfaction on receiving his copy; to William’s government friend the ex-Treasury Commissioner John Hiley Addington, who wrote of ‘the gratification which I experienced yesterday Evening on the perusal of a Composition, so strongly characterised by Genius, good Taste, and the genuine Spirit of Poetry’, and who requested a second copy for his brother, and to the fourth Duke of Portland, whose Officer of Woods, John Adams, wrote from Welbeck, promising to pass the verses on to the Duke when the latter returned from Scotland.

In William Chinnery’s enthusiasm to distribute as many copies of his son’s poem as possible in Encænia week, he managed to upset the head of Christ Church. It was the custom of Christ Church not to allow the newspapers to publish prize poems. Therefore the Dean was not a little annoyed when The Statue of the Dying Gladiator appeared in the Globe on 5 July and in the Morning Chronicle on 6 July. George was obliged to

447 M to G, 27 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
448 The Princess’s lady-in-waiting Lady Campbell wrote from Kensington that she was commanded by Her Royal Highness ‘to return Mr George Chinnery a thousand thanks for his prize Poem, which H.R.H. admires excessively’ (Charlotte Campbell to George Chinnery, 24 July 1810, Fisher). See also Duchess of Marlborough to George Chinnery, 26 July 1810, Fisher. The Duke of Devonshire also wrote to William Chinnery (7 July [1810], Fisher), congratulating him on ‘the fame acquir’d by your son at Oxford’, and saying that he had read the verses ‘as they were inserted in the Newspaper’.
450 Baron de Constant to George Chinnery, 22 October 1810, Fisher.
453 John Adams to William Chinnery, 9 October 1810, Fisher.
write and refuse a third request for publication which came from the editor of the *Times*. The Dean reportedly told Lloyd: ‘I told [George] Chinnery it would be so, and that he gave about too many manuscript copies.’

Joining William Spencer on the long lists of published names of those who were to receive honorary doctorates in Civil Law during the Encænia were several British statesmen, including the famous Sheridan, (who ‘declined the proffered honour’) and national hero Sir Sidney Smith (whose victory over Napoleon on the Nile was alluded to in William Coleridge’s Latin prize poem). The *Morning Chronicle* of 5 July, in its coverage of the Oxford events of Tuesday 3 July, showered George in compliments:

> The last composition recited from the rostrum was the English verses on the Statue of the Dying Gladiator, by Mr Chinnery, a young Gentleman of Christ’s Church: short as this poem is (the candidate being restricted to the number of 50 lines), the youthful favourite of the Muses, who now reaped his first chaplet, has contrived to crowd many beauties into his production, and in its delivery he did as much credit to the oratorical, as he had before done to the poetical portion of his labour; if labour it might be called, which appeared to be the unsolicited emanation of genius. Of this, all were judges, and the universal suffrage in favour of the poet, must have been most gratifying to so young a votary of the Muses. Between each of these recitations the orchestra interposed the charms & relaxation of delightful music. When the applause bestowed on Mr Chinnery had ceased, the celebration of the Commemoration Ode [composed by Oxford’s famous Professor of Music, Dr William Crotch] commenced with a Recitative and Aria from Mr Bartleman; Madame B[janchi] took the next part; and Mr Braham concluded the vocal part. The accompaniments were grand or beautiful as the subject required, and the whole, but particularly the vocal parts, was rapturously applauded.

*(Morning Chronicle, 5 July 1810)*

The importance that music played in the Encænia is evident in the above report. Musical interludes occurred throughout the honorary degree ceremonies on all three days as well

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454 C to W, 6 July 1810, Fisher.
455 *Morning Chronicle*, Thursday 5 July 1810.
456 William Sidney Smith, known as Sir Sidney Smith (1764-1840), British admiral.
457 William Crotch (1775-1847), one of the most distinguished English musicians of the time, was a composer, organist and theorist. He became Professor of Music at Oxford in 1797, his only duties consisting of awarding degrees and composing odes at chancellors’ installations.
458 James Bartleman (1769-1821), English bass singer who appeared for the first time in London as a bass chorister at the Concerts of Ancient Music. In 1791 he became the first solo bass at the newly established Vocal Concerts. He was to be one of the original members of the Philharmonic Society in 1813 (M.B. Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 5).
as throughout the recitation of the prize compositions. Concerts – the programmes of which were printed in the newspapers – were organised by Oxford’s Music department and featured Oxford’s own Holywell band. They took place each afternoon at five in the Theatre for the duration of the Encænia. On Monday 9 July the Morning Chronicle, reporting on the final day’s events at Oxford, pointedly reminded its readers of the disproportionately large sums paid to the vocalists:

The concerts are crowded every night, and hundreds cannot get admission. The first Concert night produced the moderate receipt of thirteen hundred guineas. Mme Catalani has one hundred guineas a day and Mr Braham fifty; so that they are better paid than the D.D.’s, M.D.’s, L.L.D.’s, and Mus. D.’s per diem, for having a voice in the Convention!!!

(Morning Chronicle, 9 July 1810)

Liturgical music was performed at the many church services held during Encænia week, including the service in St Mary’s Church at which Dr Howley preached a sermon for the benefit of the Radcliffe Infirmary on Wednesday 4 July. The Morning Chronicle of 6 July 1810 reported that ‘The Te Deum and Benedictus, by Orlando Gibbons, were most exquisitely performed by a full choir, consisting not only of those attached to the Cathedral service, usually performed in this church, but of the chorus singers, &c. now in Oxford, for the purpose of celebrating the grand musical festival.’ These church services were just as well attended as the events in the Theatre, judging by the same report:

Long before eleven o’clock, the hour appointed for the commencement of the service, the galleries, which were solely appropriated for the use of the ladies, were crowded to an overflow, and a number of fine females occupied seats in the body of the church. The other parts were thronged with genteel company to the very aisles and passages.

(Morning Chronicle, 6 July 1810)

William had been obliged to return to the Treasury on the day of George’s second public appearance, when he opened the recitations of Installation verses in the Sheldonian Theatre. Viotti included a note in Margaret’s letter to her husband praising George’s performance, saying ‘George a été comme un charme, tout le monde en est plus enchanté que jamais.’ He also confirmed that Margaret and Caroline had excellent
seats in the Theatre. On this evening, George gave a private supper and musical party for about forty in his college rooms, to which he invited Sir Sidney and Lady Smith and their daughter, many of his Christ Church friends, the Grenfells, some foreign ambassador friends of the Chinnerys, and some of his Oxford lecturers, including the old Dean’s brother, William Jackson, and the music-loving Goodenough. The vocalists Catalani and Bianchi were present as private guests, and Caroline wrote to her father the following day that ‘Catalani and Bianchi were most kind, and sung as much as George chose’. Viotti, who had the previous day been distraught at the possibility of not being able to get a piano to George’s party (‘Croyriez vous qu’on ne peut pas trouver de porteur pour transporter le Piano dix yardes? Si nous ne pouvions pas l’avoir ce seroit par trop diabolique pour le pauvre George. Je m’en vais m’évertuer, je ferai le diable pour en venir à bout’), had clearly been successful. Having been instructed not to forget his Stradivarius, Viotti was undoubtedly himself an important contributor to the entertainment. George’s friends, according to Caroline, were impressed: ‘Nothing could be more magnificent than the supper, better ordered, better arranged, and better served! Everybody was gay animated talkative, and ready to contribute his share to the general amusement – they all said, that such a College supper had never been seen!!’ For her part, Margaret was happy with the attention the many eligible young gentlemen paid her daughter. Caroline wrote that ‘all the young men were as gallant as possible, and Mama was particularly pleased with Lord Clare, and Lord Sondes’. As for Caroline, she preferred a Mr Maurice Townsend, who was ‘on ne peut pas plus aimable et gallant!’ In her letter Caroline also alluded to the many balls that were held during the week, saying that they had been unable to get tickets to the (public) All Souls’ ball. She also reported that the respected Whig politician George Tierney had said of George ‘If Mr Chinnery thinks as he speaks he will become anything he pleases’ – a remark which would have raised Margaret’s hopes for George in the

460 William Jackson (1751-1815), B.A. 1772, D.D. 1799, younger brother of Cyril. He was a Canon of Christ Church 1799-1815, and Regius Professor of Greek 1783-1811.
461 C to W, 6 July 1810, Fisher.
463 C to W, 6 July 1810, Fisher.
464 Ibid.
465 Maurice Fitzgerald Townsend (1790-1872), Student of Christ Church, B.A. 1812, M.A. 1815, pursued a career in the Church.
466 George Tierney (1761-1830), was an able debater in the House of Commons. Treasurer of the Navy in Addington’s administration, 1802-1804, he quitted office with Addington in 1804.
House of Commons. She concluded her letter with a summary of their remaining Friday activities, giving an indication of the frenetic pace of the social engagements: ‘We dine at half past two, at St Johns – from thence we go to the Theatre, and then to the Ball! Adieu I must go and dress – Catalani at this moment is singing “God save the King!!!” The singing of the national anthem concluded the Encaenia week. 468

The Chinnery party, minus William, spent its final evening in Oxford at ‘Mr Maddon’s’ 469 party. Margaret had intended to leave early, but had changed her mind on being introduced to her childhood idol Sheridan, whose reputation for drunkenness had not tarnished her appreciation of his brilliant mind. Having admired Sheridan since her youth, Margaret could not pass up the opportunity of making a deeper acquaintance with such a public figure. She wrote to William in London:

Mr Sheridan sat down by me, and entered into conversation with me, — Amico played & Mrs Sheridan 470 sang a little between whiles; presently supper was announced and Mr Sheridan chose to hand me down & sit by me, — of course I thought I could not come away, and that I might never have such another opportunity of seeing & hearing Sheridan. He was perfectly sober, and every body said they had not for years seen him in such good order as to night. He talked confidentially to me during the supper of all that passed here between L 4 Grenville & himself and shewed me L 4 Grenville’s letter to him, — the submissive tone of which surprised me. Sheridan called me his new friend during supper, and hoped I would cultivate an acquaintance with his wife. He told me to keep up George’s ambitions as much as possible and then says he, “he may do what he likes in this country” — there was a striking agreement in thought & sentiment between Sheridan & me. He asked after you. Mrs Sheridan seems equally desirous of forming an acquaintance but I do not like her quite so well. There was a great deal of her singing and other singing after supper [...]”

(M to W, [8 July 1810], Fisher)

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467 C to W, 6 July 1810, Fisher.
468 Catalani was famous for her rendition of the anthem, which she was fond of embellishing with extravagant excesses. The music amateur Lord Edgcumbe complained in his Musical Reminiscences that Catalani’s love of ornament spoiled every simple air. He claimed that ‘her greatest delight (indeed her chief merit)’ was ‘in songs of a bold and spirited character, where much is left to her discretion (or indiscretion)’, (Edgcumbe, op. cit., pp.100-101).
469 Spencer Madan (1792-1851), Student of Christ Church, B.A. 1814, M.A. 1816, was to become Chaplain to the King in 1830.
470 This was Sheridan’s second wife, Esther Jane Ogle (eldest daughter of Newton Ogle, dean of Winchester), whom he married in 1795. In 1773 Sheridan had eloped with the beautiful and talented daughter of the Bath musician Thomas Linley, soprano Elizabeth Ann Linley (1754-1792), who was said to resemble greatly Madame de Genlis’s adopted daughter Paméla.
(xi) Third Term 1810

With two high-ranking politicians having predicted a brilliant future for him, Margaret’s ambitions for George soared. She expected him to profit from the very public praise that he had received during the Encænia to consolidate his status and be at once ‘one of the most fashionable and one of the cleverest men in College’. He could, she told him on his return to College after the summer vacation, without departing from his gay, modest and natural manner, now rightfully consider himself the equal of any duke, as ‘Talents are by far a more splendid illustration than high birth.’ George had told her that there were now more ‘tufts’ [noblemen] than ever in College, and Margaret wanted him to cultivate them, as well as the clever men. It would be most ‘impolitic’, she warned, not to do so. Always a firm believer in not just letting events take their course, but actively wooing fortune, she told George that a great deal of energy must be put into getting one’s way in life,

For you are not to imagine that Fortune will ever come to you in any shape, — neither as society, or fame, or any thing else, — no, you must not only go to her but you must pursue her closely & vigorously until you can grasp her firmly, and even then not let go your hold till she has done what you ask of her.

(M to G, 21 October 1810, Ch.Ch.)

She wanted him therefore to give a brilliant wine party and ‘mind to ask all the Tufts you know to it, and all the clever men you know to supply their deficiencies, I mean mental deficiencies’(!) She was worried by George’s penchant for solitude and alarmed that he might be locking himself away in his new first floor rooms and not mixing enough with ‘all the brilliant youth of the empire’. George, who was quite confident of his high standing in College, had no such qualms. He quoted Lloyd’s opinion. With final examinations approaching, Lloyd thought that the last year of residency in College should be devoted exclusively to study, not socialising. Moreover, George asserted firmly, ‘there is not in me that unsociable disposition, ill-placed

471 M to G, 18 October 1810, Ch.Ch.
472 Ibid.
473 Ibid.
diffidence and effeminate timidity which you seem to fear’, and assured her that he was leading a perfectly well-balanced life.\textsuperscript{474}

The new course of lectures for third term was divinity, a compulsory subject for those in their third year, and a prerequisite for the taking of a degree. It was given by the College Censor James Webber, and like the logic and rhetoric lectures, was based on the study of a text in Greek, in this case the \textit{Diatessaron}, described by George as ‘l’enchainement of the history of the New Testament, using extracts from the four disciples’ by Christ Church Canon Dr White.\textsuperscript{475} The second work used for the study of this subject was Dr Prettyman’s ‘Theology’.\textsuperscript{476} The lecture was conducted along the same lines as the rhetoric one. Passages of the Greek text were prepared privately in advance, to be translated together in class. But to derive any benefit from the lectures, George remarked, one had to have read Parkhurst’s lexicon and Doddridge’s annotated paraphrase of the New Testament beforehand.\textsuperscript{477} There were often discussions in class on the (linguistic) meaning of the most difficult passages. Margaret misconstrued George’s words, and thinking that Webber was leading his pupils into theological debates that were way beyond their comprehension, roundly criticised his method, saying that these sorts of discussions should be left to a divine, or a very high member of the Church.

A topic of much discussion in the correspondence of the months between October and December 1810 was the situation in Portugal. George wrote to his father on 22 October saying that one of his Christ Church friends, Thomas Hooker, had just returned from the Peninsula with General Simon on board the ‘Apollo’, and according to the general ‘there was not the smallest doubt that the French intended to attack Lord Wellington in the strong position he had taken near Lisbon’.\textsuperscript{478} Hooker had asked George to ask his father for Lord Glenbervie’s address, as he had news of his son

\textsuperscript{474} G to M, 23 October 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{475} G to M, 18 October 1810, Ch.Ch. Joseph White (1746-1814), B.A. (Wadham College) 1769, M.A. 1773, B.D. 1779, D.D. 1787, Laudian Professor of Arabic 1774-1814, Canon of Christ Church 1802-1814. The work was a history of Jesus Christ from the compounded texts of the four Gospels, \textit{Actuum Apostolorum et Epistolarum tam Catholicarum quam Paulinarum [...]} cum interpretatione et annotationibus Josephi White, Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1799, 1803.
\textsuperscript{478} G to W, 22 October 1810, Ch.Ch.
Frederick who was in Portugal, recovering from ‘a broken blood vessel’ On 23 October Margaret wrote to George:

London is in a state of anxious & almost fearful expectation respecting news from Portugal that can hardly be described, — and as people are disposed to be sanguine in their expectation of a happy result, so would they be proportionately dismayed by an event of a contrary nature. The accounts from our army are all most delightful and encouraging, — the troops in high spirits and well provided with every thing, — they have huts also to protect them from the heavy rains, and shipping in case of disaster, — while the french on the contrary are ill supplied with provisions, indeed they say, are nearly without, — and are exposed to the wet season without shelter or resource of any kind.

(M to G, 23 October 1810, Ch.Ch.)

Margaret went on to say that she pitied the French soldiers, as ‘they, poor wretches have not been guilty of the crimes of their emperor!’ On 17 November Margaret wrote that ‘we seem sure of excellent accounts from Portugal’, although the dispatches that Wellington had sent back were feared lost, even though he had taken the precaution of sending the originals and duplicates by two different vessels, since both ships had sunk in the recent storms. Finally, on 4 December came ‘glorious news from Portugal’. Masséna, ‘the most experienced and best of the french Generals’ and the one who ‘excited the jealousy of Bonaparte’ was defeated by Wellington.

Another subject that was of much interest to the newspapers and to the English people was what was generally referred to as ‘the King’s illness’. George wrote to his father on 1 November, that the newspapers, hinting at the real state of the King’s health, reported that the King was ‘distressed in his mind’. George III was a popular king, loyally supported not only by the Tory University of Oxford, but also by the population at large. When his youngest daughter Amelia died, and his own health deteriorated as a result, the whole country went into mourning as a mark of respect. In George’s next letter to his father on 11 November, he commented: ‘The loyalty of Oxford is very

479 Ibid.
480 M to G, 4 December 1810, Ch.Ch.
481 G to W, 1 November 1810, Ch.Ch. George III first showed signs of mental illness in 1765, and had suffered from subsequent bouts of madness in 1788 and 1789. The November 1810 attack, said to have been caused by Princess Amelia’s illness and subsequent death (2 November 1810), was the last before the establishment of the regency. After 1811 he became permanently deranged.
general; and the dress which many of the respectable tradesmen as well as the
gownsmen assumed this morning did honour to their feelings, but has clothed this place
in one universal gloom. In London the effect must be the same but on a larger scale.

In early November the state of health of the King even distracted the public from events
in Portugal: ‘The King’s illness now absorbs the attention of the public, and has in a
great measure diverted it from the anxious expectation of news from Portugal! The
moment is indeed awful and critical […]’. By mid-November Margaret felt obliged to
write to their friend the Duke of Cambridge expressing her sympathy:

It struck me the other day that the kindness of the Duke of Cambridge towards us all,
called upon me to write to him at this trying moment, — but it was a delicate, difficult,
painful letter to write, — however I did my best in trying to express the sincere part we
take in his distress, and the deep interest we feel on the King’s account. I believe he was
not displeased that I did so, for he answered my letter the very instant he received it,
and never wrote more kindly and affectionately to me. You shall see his answer when
you come home.

(M to G, 17 November 1810, Ch.Ch.)

The Duke’s answer to Margaret’s letter is in the Fisher collection. Under a
misconception that his father’s health was improving, he wrote:

Berkeley Square Nov 16, 1810

My dear Madame

I hasten to return you my warmest thanks for your very kind and amiable letter
which I have just received and to assure you that I feel your goodness much deeper than
I can express. We certainly have passed a most melancholy time for these last six
weeks, but thank God our beloved King is better and I trust we shall have the happiness
of seeing him soon restored to that good health which he has enjoyed for so many years.
— I am very fortunate of being detained in Town to day as it has enabled me to answer
your kind letter immediately and I trust that at some future period I may have the good
fortune of returning you my thanks in person at Gillwell.

482 G to W, 11 November 1810, Ch.Ch., MS xlviii a.55, fo. 99.
483 M to G, 2 November 1810, Ch.Ch.
To morrow I return to Windsor where I shall remain with my family till I can leave them with comfort. Pray remember me, my dear Madam, to your daughter & to Viotti and believe me

Your ever devoted Ser'
Adolphus Frederick
(Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 16 November 1810, Fisher)

During the King’s periods of illness members of the royal family abstained from appearing in public. But when it became apparent that this time his condition was not improving, the Government began to consider a regency. George, now taking an active interest in the debates of the House of Commons, availed himself of every opportunity to attend. At the end of term, after staying at Taplow en route to London, he accepted Pascoe Grenfell’s offer to spend a night in their London house at Spring Gardens to hear the debates on the regency question. From Taplow he wrote:

It was my positive intention to have been at Gillwell by Thursday, but the expected interest & importance of the debates tempted me to accept Mr Grenfell’s proposal — I am sure you will approve of my compliance with it. The debates at such a period, and on the decision such great events now pending, have great attractions for a young man just entering into life.

(G to M, 12 December 1810, Ch.Ch.)

When a regency became inevitable, Margaret saw promising possibilities unfold for George. It was well known that Sheridan, whom Margaret and George had so recently met, was one of the Prince of Wales’s most trusted friends and his confidential adviser. Sheridan had liked George’s poem, praised his rendition of it in the Theatre, and had asked for a copy of it to present to the Prince. Another friend who had been a guest at Chinnery parties and who was close to the Prince was the ex-Lord Chancellor (now a member of the Whig minority in Parliament) Lord Erskine.484 On the eve of the regency, with two of the closest friends of the Prince of Wales known to the Chinnerys, Margaret calculated that George’s chances of acquiring influential patronage were good.

484 Thomas Erskine, first baron Erskine (1750-1823).
Both Sheridan and Erskine were key players in the debates on the restrictions of the regency, Lord Erskine strenuously opposing any restrictions on the Regent’s powers.\footnote{In the event, the Prince changed colours, and switched his support from the Whigs to the Tories. For his part, Sheridan became one of the most vocal arguers for restrictions on the regency.}

In third term 1810 George consolidated his already solid reputation with copious and well-received Collections. He was examined in classics on the ninth book of Herodotus’s \textit{History}, four books of Thucydides, and the fourth, fifth and sixth chants of Lucretius’s \textit{De Natura rerum}, and in mathematics on Rowe’s \textit{Fluxions}.\footnote{John Rowe, \textit{An Introduction to the Doctrine of Fluxions}, London, 1751.} He also prepared the usual abstract of the lecture that he had attended that term – on divinity. On 10 December he wrote to his mother that his Collections had gone off ‘excessively well’.

\begin{quote}
I answered every question in the history [Herodotus], readily & accurately, and had only to observe upon the examination which they gave me, that it was not strict enough. Both the dean publickly, & the masters individually praised me for the manner in which I read the immortal Thucydides. […] I am fully compensated for the labour I had bestowed upon that great work.
\end{quote}

(G to M, 10 December 1810, Ch.Ch.)

Public mention was made of George in the traditional end of year censor’s speech in Latin (which summed up the year’s events at Christ Church), given by Webber. Spencer had told Margaret that it was the custom for all prize winners to be mentioned in this speech, not by name, but by some indirect reference which would enable the identity of the laureate to be guessed, usually by some recognisable characteristic or by the school he attended. As George had not been to a public school, Margaret wondered how his education would be described, and hoped there might be some reference to Gillwell. However, George warned his mother that as the speech was in Latin, it was not realistic to expect any but those who were forewarned to follow the tortuous circumlocution.\footnote{No further details of the speech are given in the letters.}

In July, at the height of her children’s respective successes, Margaret had written that, apart from the year of the twins’ birth, 1810 was the happiest year of her life. But it was not to last. For many years William had been making free use of the Treasury funds that were in his charge, a practice that was fairly common among officials who had
access to government funds. As the chief clerks of Treasury, along with many other
government officials though whose hands large sums of money passed, were permitted
to keep the funds entrusted to their care in private bank accounts earning interest until
such time as they were needed – which in William’s case might be more than a year,
owing to the vast distances which separated London from Botany Bay – it is no
wonder that some were tempted to dip into them for their own use. William’s largesse
with Treasury funds had in the past extended to Viotti, to his brothers George and John
Chinnery, to Sébastien Erard the harp dealer, and, it would appear, to any friend who
came to him in need. As late as September 1810 he regretted not being able to help a
friend from Jamaica in financial difficulties because his own financial affairs were
under investigation and his misconduct, he feared, about to become public
knowledge.

Until George received his Studentship in December 1809, William gave him a
very generous allowance of £300 a year. It is probable that after that date he was able
to reduce his expenditure on his son’s Oxford education. But apart from board and
commons, there were always extra items to be paid for, such as travel to and from
Oxford and excursions to neighbouring districts, text books, classical works in
translation, academic gowns and other garments, wine, tea, coffee and sundry food
items, silver cutlery, scout’s and washerwoman’s wages, candles, candlesticks and
alarm clock, all of which William paid for without a qualm. For his part, George took
care to stick to the budget his mother imposed on him, and accounted to her for every
penny he spent. His father, however, was not so punctilious with his shillings. When
George told William that he needed a prism for the study of optics, but was content to
use the one they already had at Gillwell, his father insisted on buying him a new and

488 As agent for the colony of N.S.W., William was entrusted with significant funds with which to pay the
salaries of the British office holders in the colony. Since the delay in communication between Botany
Bay and England was so lengthy, William had ample time to stall with his payments and put some of
the money to personal use. See Scorgie and Wilkinson, op. cit. See also official government correspondence held in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, in the King Papers (MS C 189) and the Piper Papers (MS A 254).
490 See W to M, 20 September 1810, PM 94/143/1 - 7/1.
491 This sum is calculated by multiplying by three a typical term’s expenses (as listed in G to M, 19
October 1808, Ch.Ch.). It is also mentioned by Margaret in an 1809 letter (M to G, 26 January 1809,
Ch.Ch.).
492 In October 1811 he even sent two whole venisons to Oxford – one for the Dean, and one for George to
give a dinner to his friends.
very expensive one.\footnote{\textsuperscript{493}} On the other hand, William did not want George to spend money on writing paper and pens, which he could help himself to from the Treasury stock.\footnote{\textsuperscript{494}} Nor did William spend any money on postage. In forwarding letters on to Oxford from Gillwell, William availed himself of the franking system, which gave free postage to all members of parliament, and a limited number also (two a day) to chief clerks of the Treasury.\footnote{\textsuperscript{495}} Letters from Oxford that William received at the Treasury were presumably also paid for out of Government funds.\footnote{\textsuperscript{496}}

Margaret was aware of the precarious state of William's affairs. Her own account of the circumstances causing his financial ruin is in the Powerhouse collection.\footnote{\textsuperscript{497}} She knew of William's 'some little indiscretion in spending rather more than his income' in the early years of their marriage to meet various household needs and to fund their three-month stay in Paris in 1802, and from 1806 she cut back the household spending in an attempt to contain their overall expenditure. She also knew of his attempts to make up the shortfall in his Treasury accounts with the help of his friends the bill-brokers and loan-contractors Benjamin and Abraham\footnote{\textsuperscript{498}} - a gamble that was not to pay off. The wealthy but ill-fated Goldsmid brothers were respected Jewish financiers, who were in the business of underwriting loans to the British Government.\footnote{\textsuperscript{499}} According to Margaret, Abraham Goldsmid offered to advance William money to participate in three government loans,\footnote{\textsuperscript{500}} the first of which was in 1802. They all proved disadvantageous.\footnote{\textsuperscript{501}} September 1810 was a watershed in William's affairs. Not only did

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{493}} See William's postscript in M to G, 9 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{494}} G to W, 14 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{495}} See William's postscript in M to G, 4 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{496}} Between London and Gillwell the letters were carried by servants or by the twopenny post.
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{497}} Margaret Chinnery's 'Personal account', PM 94/143/1 - 8.
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{498}} Benjamin Goldsmid (1753?–1808), and Abraham Goldsmid (1756?–1810) were London's most successful bill-brokers, whose dealings with the British Government were the cause of their immense fortune, and also of their eventual downfall. Oppressed by massive debt, Benjamin committed suicide in April 1808 and Abraham in September 1810. Abraham's death had a major impact on the London Stock Exchange and made headline news. On their arrival for a holiday in Brighton in 1803, the Chinnery family was received by Benjamin Goldsmid and his family. On 12 November 1809 Abraham Goldsmid and his son [?] Edward dined at Gillwell (M to G, 13 November 1809, Ch.Ch.).
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{499}} J. Picciotto, in his \textit{Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History} (Trubner: London, 1875, pp. 249-254), depicts the Goldsmid brothers as likeable philanthropists, who were generous with their vast wealth.
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{500}} It is not inconceivable that this was a truthful statement, as many contemporary reports attested to the 'extended philanthropy' and 'ready munificence' of Abraham Goldsmid, who sometimes allotted needy friends a share in a loan, sending them afterwards a cheque for the profits realised (see Picciotto, op. cit. p. 252, and Thornbury, \textit{op. cit.} vol. 1, p. 485).
\item \footnote{\textsuperscript{501}} The 1802 loan caused William and his fellow participants a loss of £12,000 (W to M, 19 December 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 7/3) In spite of this, William continued to entrust funds to the Goldsmid brothers, confessing in a letter to Margaret that he considered Abraham a 'second Croesus', 'whose
the executors of Benjamin Goldsmid's estate call in the sum advanced to William—and their solicitors were pressing for payment—but within a week of receiving their letter of demand, Abraham Goldsmid also had taken his life. At the same time, as a result of George Rose's suspicions, William's Treasury accounts were investigated by Perceval.502

There are signs of Margaret's apprehensions throughout her correspondence with George at Oxford and earlier. Many of her comments uttered in a sober or reflective mood dwelt on the theme that happiness was a transitory state, not to be enjoyed without a presentiment of some impending catastrophe. It had been her experience, she said, that disappointment always followed after 'exquisite happiness'. Even in 1808, in writing of the extreme pleasure she took in having George back at home for the first time since starting at Oxford, she had wondered 'with what countervailing evil it will please God to temper so great, so exquisite, a happiness!... With none, I will hope; though I have generally seen some little disappointment must come to check expectation when raised so high. But this is the cautious reasoning of my advanced age'.503 At the end of 1810 both George and Caroline were made aware of the impending crisis. Caroline's 1810 birthday poem to her mother begins with ominous gloom: 'My Mother! though fortunes raven bird/ Still o'er our heads with threat'ning wing be heard, [...]',504 and in George's letter to Margaret of 15 October 1810, written in French, he alluded to Margaret's worries, and to the possibility that he might end up being Margaret's sole means of support.505 Seen in the light of the whole correspondence, Margaret's knowledge of William's substantial debts, coupled with the financial events of 1810, may explain her obsession with the need for her children to excel. Certainly it explains her otherwise unwarranted panic in third term 1810 at the thought that George might be slipping in his efforts to establish influential social contacts. Fortunately for William, Perceval pronounced himself satisfied with William's constant generosity [and] expressed Sentiments towards me, supported me through all my Anxieties for Years past' (W to M, 20 September 1810, PM 94/143/1 − 7/1). Margaret's account gives a loss of £5,000 for the second loan, and a still greater one for the third, for which the whole amount had been entered in William's name, not the small share that he had supposed (Margaret Chinnery's 'Personal account', op. cit.).

502 See Introduction, p. 15, and Part I, p. 115, note 264. See also W to M, 20 September 1810, PM 94/143/1 − 7/1. The correspondence pertaining to this matter was published in Harcourt, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 487-492.

503 M to G, 18 March 1808, Ch.Ch.

504 Osborn, ed. 11, item 86.

505 G to M, 15 October 1810, Ch.Ch.
accounts on this occasion, but William knew he would not be able to hide the true state of his affairs for long. With no longer any hope of making up the deficit in his Treasury accounts, he knew it was only a matter of time before he was found out. All that he and Margaret could pray for was that it would not be before George finished his degree.\footnote{W to M, 20 September 1810, PM 94/143/1 - 71.}
1811 was the last year of George’s formal education. In November he was to take his degree examination. Margaret was pleased with her work. There remained, she said, only a few finishing touches to be put on her product before it was perfect. The blemishes to be eradicated consisted of slovenly habits acquired at an all-male college, where, she said, a lack of the civilising influence of women caused a degradation of personal graces and a general roughness in manner, or as Margaret called it, the ‘College rust’. At the end of each term this ‘college rust’ had to be polished off. She much regretted the need to correct faults of this nature during each vacation, only to have to begin again at the end of the following term. She claimed that ‘the absolutely unrestrained liberty’ enjoyed by the young men at Oxford, and the lack of ‘fixed moral & religious principles’ caused behavioural problems, which inevitably influenced their external manner and bearing: ‘The want of due control in youth, occasions want of order, method, and regularity in the interior [sic]; and the exterior becomes less polished, less graceful, and consequently less pleasing.’ For example, George’s voice was too loud. In a lesson reminiscent of Lord Chesterfield’s letters to his son, or of Madame de Genlis’s compositions on appropriate princely behaviour delivered to her royal pupils some thirty years before, Margaret gave him instructions on voice modulation: A ‘low & subdued’ tone for women, ‘not much louder, but somewhat firmer for Princes, persons of acknowledged great abilities & talents or of advanced age’ and ‘another full of variety and agreeableness [...] for common purposes’, and ‘among the various shades, there is one admirably adapted to conversation.’ Six months later Margaret had found the perfect role model for George. It was a certain Mr Walker, a ‘profound’ and well-travelled scholar, who visited Gillwell on 22 June 1811 with Lord Elgin, and whom Margaret found ‘almost the most delightful man I ever met with!’ She would not be sorry, she said, if George could ‘catch the softness & enthusiasm of his manner, which is [...] expressed by the modulation of his voice

507 M to G, 20 January 1811, Ch.Ch.
508 Ibid.
509 Some of these are reproduced in her Mémoires, vol. 3, pp. 272-287.
510 M to G, 20 January 1811, Ch.Ch.
511 Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin (1766-1841), was a diplomat who took a great interest in the ancient Greek ruins to be found in the Turkish dominions. In summer 1801 he was given permission from the Ottoman Porte to remove ancient marbles from the Parthenon in Athens. The collection that he took back to England to the British Museum is now known as the ‘Elgin Marbles’.
(always rather an under voice), and the choice of his expressions. But all these 'externals' were easily corrected and Margaret had no doubt that George would soon attain the high standard that she demanded.

En route to Oxford at the beginning of first term 1811, George and several other Christ Church friends passed two days with the Grenfells at Taplow to attend a party. Margaret hoped that George's bearing was graceful, and his behaviour amicable and sensible. She also took the opportunity, on receiving George's letter describing the dinner, the breakfast at the nearby estate of Lord Riversdale, and the various amusements, to give him a lesson on the art of letter-writing. His style, she complained, was too general. What gave spice to any narration was the detail, and more specifically, details about himself. The secret was, she said, to make himself the centre of the narration, in order to enable the correspondent to picture 'what one's own thoughts and feelings were, - what dispositions were excited in ourselves, - who or what most influenced these'. This, she said, would have given 'a spark of Promethean fire to your narration'. As far as letter-writing was concerned, he could do no worse than to take Madame de Sévigné as a role model. 'The great art of Madame de Sévigné is certainly to represent herself as saying, acting, and doing all she relates, or as being present actively in feeling and attention during all her narration, - which makes the reader even at this distance of time fancy himself present also'.

Margaret brought in further commentary on George's writing style as the need arose. In her letter of 8 March 1811 it was a lesson on the importance of the definition of terms. George's description of the seventh book of Thucydides as 'a complete novel' was too loose. He should have written, Margaret argued, 'as interesting as a novel'. On this subject she referred him to Locke's treatise, and wondered if any of his lecturers had put it into his hands, supposing that it would be required reading for his degree. 'He [Locke] attaches the highest importance to the definition of terms, and so do I.' She reminded him of the exercise that she had been doing with him and Caroline since they were five years old,
that of defining and explaining terms. This George had neglected since becoming so preoccupied with his Oxford studies, but Caroline was continuing with it at Gillwell and she advised him to do the same when he had time.519

When Margaret was pleased with George’s epistolary style she said so. For example, she liked his amusing account of the unfortunate Oxford auctioneer Mr Trash, who, ignorant of Latin, gave the title ‘Daniel the second’ to a second edition publication of Daniel, thereby bringing the house down, and the auction to a temporary halt.520 Margaret’s constant commentary and criticism of George’s letters was intended to be positive. She wanted him to acquire a style which was ‘simple, natural, easy & unaffected without being common’, which she admitted was not an easy point to attain.521 A few months later she noticed an improvement: ‘I rejoice to tell you that your stile, I mean your natural, unstudied stile, the only proper one for letter-writing, improves wonderfully’.522

Throughout his Oxford career, even during his most intensive periods of study, George made time to listen to music, a pastime of which Margaret fully approved. On 12 March 1811 there was a private ‘musical party’ given in Ricketts’s rooms. Three professional players from Oxford’s Holywell band, Reinagle, Marshall and Ester, took part.523 Before supper the music consisted entirely of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven symphonies, and after supper the ‘excessively pleasant’ Duke of Leinster, whom George also described as a promising cellist, sang with Johnson, and Reinagle played ‘Variations upon a Scotch’. Supper afterwards was held in George’s room.525

The events taking place outside the University at this time were being followed with interest by the University community. The beginning of 1811 saw the the Prince of Wales finally installed as Regent, and one of the Christ Church Canons, Dr Burton,

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519 Ibid.
520 G to M, 10 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
521 M to G, 26 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
522 M to G, 14 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
523 George William Ricketts (1791-1831), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1809, pursued a career in law and was knighted in 1825.
524 Joseph Reinagle, cellist, composer and author, was the son of a German musician living in England. He was principal cello at Salomon’s concerts in London during Haydn’s visits to England, and later moved to Oxford. There is a William Marshall, music-seller of Oxford, listed in the first edition of Grove’s Dictionary of Music. Ester has not been identified.
525 G to M, 13 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
went to his first levee on 26 February. William Spencer was also presented. Both described being ‘squeezed’ by the throng of people present. Burton’s description of the press appealed to George’s sense of humour. He told George ‘by way of giving me an idea of the numbers that were present at the levee and of the squeeze that naturally ensued’ that ‘he felt like a lemon!’ ‘Considering that he is a foot shorter than the generality of men, & yellow in the face’, George wrote, ‘the simile, though an ignoble one is certainly an apt one.’

George’s Collections at the end of first term consisted of the last four books of Thucydides, the fifth and sixth books of Lucretius’s *De Natura rerum*, five books of Livy and the usual abstracts of his lectures (divinity and mathematics). They went ‘most exquisitely well’. He wrote to Margaret that ‘after Webber had examined me for about half an hour, he shut the books, & said “Well upon my honour it is of no use keeping you any longer, for you have got your Collections more than perfect, you’ve got them quite by heart” – &c and other shorter commendations, to the same effect.’

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526 Levees were assemblies held by the sovereign or his representative in the early afternoon and were an all-male affair. William Spencer went regularly to court levees.
527 A description of the levee is given by Spencer in his letter to Caroline of 26 February 1811 (William Spencer to Caroline Chinnery, 26 February 1811, Fisher).
528 G to M, 14 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
529 G to M, 31 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
(xiii) Second Term 1811

Just before the Easter break of 1811 George's sister Caroline had contracted whooping cough. As a result, the usual vacation routine had been disrupted, as George had to be separated from her at all costs. At the end of the holidays he stayed with the Grenfells at Spring Gardens in London to hear the debates in the House of Commons on the restrictions of the Regency, then travelled to Oxford in the stage with James Webber, now the Christ Church librarian. On his return, George paid his customary courtesy visits to the Dean, the Walls, Dr Cole (now Vice Chancellor of the University), the Marlows and the Prince of Orange, then settled down to study. About this time an unusual letter arrived from William — unusual because it touched on educational matters, a subject he usually left in Margaret's capable hands. William reminded him of his debt of gratitude to his 'dear Mentor' and asked him to remember that 'my success in life is the only return, which I ever can make for the manifold advantages I have enjoyed, & that my failure in success will, I am well aware, be wholly ascribed to my own insufficiency adequately to benefit by those advantages.' George had certainly not been allowed to forget this debt and assured his father that he daily reminded himself that 'thou art Son to the most estimable of Mothers'. The intervention of William at this crucial point in George's career would indicate that his affairs at the Treasury were weighing heavily upon his mind. A private memorandum, composed at the Treasury and dated 22 February 1811, shows this to be so. William had written: 'my sufferings lately have been cruel, & must be worse, as I see nothing short of a Miracle to save me from Ruin! God's will be done! He will protect my dearest Peg & Children!!' These sufferings he managed successfully to keep from George and Caroline, the only indication of his torment over his future fate coming in the form of brief intermittent exhortations addressed to George such as the one cited above.

Second term was a time of sustained study for George. His tutors took care he was well groomed in divinity — a subject that had to be passed before a degree could be obtained — and extra hours were devoted to this discipline. On 16 May George wrote that he was going twice a week to Corne and three times a week to Lloyd, 'but in

530 G to W, 3 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
531 Ibid.
532 This is a later note written on the envelope of William's September 1810 Memorandum (op. cit.).
addition to this Stables\textsuperscript{533} a pupil of Corne's & myself, are to go to Corne every Sunday Ev\textsuperscript{b} & read the Greek Testament \textit{w}\textsuperscript{th} him for an hour: no less than 5 men have already been plucked in the Examinations of this term for divinity!\textsuperscript{534} Margaret, suffering greatly from gall stones at this time, was obliged to hand over the business of letter-writing to Viotti. But she still expected George to keep up his daily flow, not omitting his plan of day, 'as I much wish to know at what hour you rise, and how the whole of your day is filled up.'\textsuperscript{535} On the 23 May Margaret was able to write 'I always read your diary with the avidity a fashionable lady would devour the pages of a new novel!'\textsuperscript{536} She would have been well pleased, then, with several of George's journals in which he noted that he rose at 4.30 am to study.

It was in this term that George began his study of ethics, another compulsory degree examination subject. The text was Cicero's \textit{Tusculan Disputations}, which he described to his father as an uninteresting treatise, 'a refutation of the Epicurean philosophy'.\textsuperscript{537} Many of the works comprising the Collections that George took up at the end of this term were the same as those he would take to his degree examination. They consisted of five books of the \textit{Tusculan Disputations}, the second book of Aristotle's \textit{Rhetoric}, Pindar's \textit{Odes} (the sixth Olympian), and for mathematics Newton's \textit{Principia} and Rowe's \textit{Introduction to the Doctrine of Fluxions}.

By the end of the term George's impending degree examination gave his already strict study regime an increased urgency. The introduction and publication of class (honours) lists in 1807 led to a greater competitive spirit among the brighter of the undergraduates, and probably encouraged more members of the nobility to take their degree seriously. Several of George's Christ Church contemporaries achieved honours in their degree examination in 1811, and not all of them were commoners. However, a line had to be drawn, as George pointed out to his mother, between those who were and those who were not aiming at honours. It was not an easy matter to earn distinction in the degree examination. The amount of work expected of the promising candidates was crushing, even by George's high standards. Those who were aiming for double honours had an almost impossible workload placed on their shoulders. Before leaving Oxford for

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\textsuperscript{533} Frederick Stables (b. 1790), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1812, M.A. 1814.
\textsuperscript{534} G to M, 16 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{535} M to G, 16 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{536} M to G, 23 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{537} G to W, 19 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
the long summer vacation, George had been warned by his tutors that he would need to spend most of this period studying. Webber even advised him to stay in Oxford for the duration of the vacation to be totally free of distractions.

Therefore, when the Chinnery household packed its trunks, boxes, servants and various family members into several carriages and lumbered off to Eastbourne for the summer to give Caroline the rest she needed to recuperate from her whooping cough, George remained with them only a month. He returned to London with his father on 4 August, paid a visit to Spencer at 34 Curzon Street, and then spent the night with his father and Charles Smith at the Adelphi. Smith, having 'raked too long on the preceding night to be material', was not in a fit state to farewell George the next morning when he departed for Oxford on the stage.539

538 Charles Smith, in partnership with Viotti, provided the wine for all George's parties at Oxford, and for the Chinnerys' dinners and suppers at Gillwell and at their rented London and holiday houses.

539 G to M, 5 August 1811, Ch.Ch. By this George presumably meant that Smith did not rise from his bed.
Oxford was sleepy in summer. It provided a quiet ambience in which to concentrate on study for the demanding examination ahead. John Bull (who was to achieve a double first class honours degree)\textsuperscript{540} was the only other Christ Church member to have returned as early as George. The undergraduates did not return until the beginning of October, which gave George two full months free of interruptions. Although this examination had always been the focus of George’s ambitions, not even he had anticipated the level of difficulty he encountered in reading for it. ‘It is impossible for any one who has not himself read for a degree to conceive the labour & anxiety of it’, he wrote on the eve of his examination.\textsuperscript{541} ‘A common rate kind of degree’ he explained, was easily enough obtained, but those wishing for a ‘superior kind’ had to expect ‘nothing short of gigantic labour’.\textsuperscript{542} More than anything else, the degree examination was a test of sheer memory. The ability to regurgitate mathematical propositions and abstruse systems of ethics, and sprout with confidence slabs of Latin and Greek quotations and translations was the key to success. The cramming of undigested, unrelated, and for the most part useless facts into the heads of the undergraduates had always been a bone of contention with Margaret. The compulsory subjects logic, rhetoric, divinity and classics, coupled with the optional ethics or mathematics (for a double honours degree) called for the memorisation – for it could not be called true understanding – of such a wide-ranging diversity of subject matter that on the eve of the examination George was close to despair. Having spent the whole of the term trying to absorb all this material, on 22 October 1811 he gave vent to his frustration in a letter to his mother which draws attention to the unreasonable demands of the system:

\begin{quote}
I do not at all approve of the system of the School Examinations here: they force us to take up a much greater body of books than can be done well: the attention is divided between too great a variety of objects, so that before it can thoroughly attend to one, it is called aside to another. This is what I find most fatiguing, & it is quite overpowering at times: my mind has to apply successively to branches of study perfectly
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{540} John Bull (b. 1790). According to the the \textit{Alumni Oxonienses} Bull graduated B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1812, but the \textit{Honours Register} gives the correct date of 1811 (first class honours in classics and mathematics).

\textsuperscript{541} G to M, 20 October 1811, Ch.Ch.

\textsuperscript{542} G to M, 22 October 1811, Ch.Ch.
Considering that the classical works alone were voluminous—Thucydides's *History* comprising eight books, each of Cicero's four treatises on ethics (*De Finibus*, *De Officiis*, *De Natura Deorum*, *Tusculanae Disputationes*) comprising several books, likewise Pindar's *Odes* (*Olympian*, *Pythean*, *Nemean*, *Isthmian*), and Lucretius's *De Natura rerum* (six books), not to mention sixteen of Juvenal's *Satires*, and at least seven of Sophocles plays—it is hardly comprehensible that an equally onerous load of mathematics could be added to this list. But it was, and it constituted George's main difficulty. The process of learning the profusion of mathematical formulae and propositions by heart was as boring as it was demoralising. Moreover, he resented the time lost to classics, by far his favourite study:

[...] the Mathematics call for such an inordinate portion of time that none is left for the Classics, which I regret, for I prefer the Classics a hundred thousand times over to the Mathematics. I am out of all patience with these just now because they nearly engross the whole of my time & attention, & the working at them is such a slow process: as I have gone so far with them, I am determined upon getting myself into the first class by them: but had I to begin over again I confess I should altogether reject them as a book for the Schools, much as I should delight in them at any other time & in any other way.

I was with Webber for an hour this morning; we went over the first book of the *De Finibus*, and I was glad to hear him say that I should do my ethics excessively well, & I trust I shall: but consider: men who take up Ethics think & are reckoned to do wonders: how great therefore is the labour of uniting them to Mathematics!! Coleridge one of our crack men is quite disgusted with the labour of it, & fairly told Lloyd this morn* that he hated Mathematics — Blomefield is the only man who means to stick to the two as well as myself: but then he is undoubtedly the most superior man we have had at Ch.Ch. since my entering. We are told that the Examination this term will be stricter than ever: if they keep adding to difficulties, I know not where they will find candidates for the honours they hold forward — The standard has been rising during these last 4 years from term to term, but it really cannot go much farther.

Your affect Son

GR Chinnery
As can be seen from the above footnote, George did not look up from his books from daybreak till bedtime. When his mother, contrary to her usual advice, tried to persuade him to cut down the number of hours he studied, he held firm: a minimum of twelve hours was needed. He tried to reassure her. Mrs Hall, the wife of the Dean, had remarked that while most men reading for a degree looked haggard and run-down, George appeared to her to be in the bloom of good health. But Margaret was not convinced, saying that his success at the coming examination depended on his having 'strong nerves', and that 'two thirds of the learning will go further with strong nerves and the blood in a cool and healthy state, than the full complement of learning with a debilitated body.'

Of all the Christ Church degree candidates for 1811, only George and Blomefield were reading both ethics and mathematics. From the very beginning, George resented studying ethics and was cynical of the authorities' motives for including it in the course. He complained to Margaret on 6 August, that as a Christian ‘I never yet could see the advantage of making yourself deeply acquainted with the wretchedly imperfect, obscure & contradictory opinions of an Epicurus or a Zeno on Morality’, unless it were to expose the falsity of such systems: ‘but this is a very vague kind of apology for forcing the young student to gorge himself nolens volens with nonsense & error. Besides it is an idea which, I fully believe, never entered the minds of our bigwhigs: they merely enforce the study of these Ethics to keep up the old scholastic form of examination; and a most insufferable form it is too!’ Margaret agreed that it was useless study and suggested hopefully (but to no avail) that George might hint as much to the Dean. Comparison of the pagan and the Christian systems of religion made an impression on George’s mind, and he remarked in his letter of 26 August: ‘There can be little doubt that the principle if not the only advantage essentially resulting to the mind from the study of the ancient systems of philosophy, is that the comparison of them with our system of revealed religion tends to heighten the value of the latter in our

543 G to M, 24 October 1811, Ch.Ch.
544 M to G, 21 September 1811, Ch.Ch.
545 G to M, 6 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
estimation.\footnote{G to M, 26 August 1811, Ch.Ch.} George and Bull made a point of testing each other’s knowledge of this subject on their daily afternoon walks, which George began to call his ‘ethical walks’.

Margaret was not happy to see George cramming himself with knowledge in such a haphazard manner. As always she wanted his learning to be meaningful and afford some practical benefit. With George’s intake of facts reaching almost saturation point, Margaret reminded him of one of her first principles of education, the need to commit one’s thoughts to paper, either by letter-writing or by entering them in a commonplace book, ‘for you must know that till a thought is either spoken or written, we cannot be sure that it is either good or compleat’.\footnote{M to G, 7 August 1811, Ch.Ch.} She encouraged George therefore, to let his thoughts flow through his pen, to let them flow naturally and freely, without any forced or laboured style. How pleased she must have been with the opening paragraph of his letter of 22 September, in which he described the pleasure he took in discovering Pindar: ‘a few days ago we were upon terms of formality. I thought him pedantic, & he thought me illiterate, but now we manage matters vastly well, & I shall be proud to call myself, as I hope soon to do, a chrony of his.’\footnote{G to M, 22 September 1811, Ch.Ch.}

When George’s letter-writing flagged owing to the sheer pressure of study, Margaret castigated him severely and unreasonably, wanting a far more detailed account of his days. He responded in stronger tones than he had ever before used with her, while still conveying his Genlisian sense of gratitude: ‘I think I may say, my dear mother, that my time is pretty equally divided into two parts, the one in endeavouring to distinguish myself, the other in endeavouring to please you and to make some kind of remuneration, however imperfect it must always be, for the advantages I owe you.’\footnote{G to M, 20 August 1811, Ch.Ch.} The tenet that Margaret held to, that of communicating ‘by writing as well as by conversation any observation or difficulties which may arise in a course of study,’ George granted was a good one, but feared he would bore her with snippets of the ‘unargumentative arguments’ of the ‘Epicureans, Stoics, Peripatetics & Academics’.\footnote{Ibid.} Nevertheless, he did include one of these in his next letter, accompanied by the wry remark that he hoped she had had breakfast, as: ‘It would not at all suit an empty stomach: it is only

\footnote{One third of Pindar’s Odes had been translated by Gilbert West in 1751, with a new edition, much admired by Margaret, appearing in 1807. George became such a devotee of Pindar that he toyed with the idea of completing West’s translation.}
admissible as a kind of chasse-thé’. By now used to the pattern of Margaret’s nervous eruptions, he ended his letter in the hope that having ‘drank [sic] such a cup of bitters’, she would send ‘a cup of sweets’ in her following letter.

The cup of sweets duly arrived, with the excuse, reminiscent of Madame de Genlis’s to her younger daughter Pulchérie whom she drove equally mercilessly, that her remonstration derived ‘solely from excess of love’. In assuring George that as far as he and his sister were concerned, her aim had always been their best interests, she wrote: ‘I can with the most perfect certitude and sincerity aver, that with regard to you and your sister, my plans, my advice, my hopes and wishes, are all free from the least tinge of personal interest in any other way than, as my happiness is dependent on yours.’ As proof of her selflessness, she told George that she had in recent years surrendered her education of Caroline to William Spencer, in the full knowledge that credit would thereafter be given to him for any superior accomplishments she might acquire. She admitted that she was unable to give Caroline the additional skills of Latin and verse-making (for which Caroline did acquire a small reputation among her contemporaries) and went against the advice of William and Viotti, neither of whom had wanted to see Margaret’s role as ‘mentor’ usurped, even by a friend.

Another person staying at Oxford that summer was the old Dean of Christ Church, Cyril Jackson. The cause of his coming down, George wrote, was his brother’s illness. William Jackson, Christ Church Canon and Regius Professor of Greek, had been dangerously ill. Therefore Cyril Jackson would be likely to be detained in Oxford at least a fortnight. George felt it his duty to pay the old Dean a courtesy visit, but was unable to gain admittance. He wrote to his mother: ‘The late Dean is here still, but never to be found at home; or rather he is always at home & and always desires the Servant to say that he is not […] he is an unsociable old Whig.’ A few days later, when Jackson found himself locked out of the College at the Meadow gate, he had cause to regret ignoring George, for he was dependent on the latter’s help to extricate him from his

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551 G to M, 21 August 1811, Ch.Ch.  
552 G to M, 20 August 1811, Ch.Ch.  
553 M to G, 22 August 1811, Ch.Ch.  
554 Ibid.  
555 Ibid.  
556 G to M, 10 August 1811, Ch.Ch.  
557 G to M, 18 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
predicament. As George was returning from one of his ethical walks with Bull, he heard a gruff voice call out from the Meadow, and recognised it as Jackson’s:

[...] he had come to what we call the Cloister-gate in hopes of finding it open; but he was too late; now when once this gate is shut it is not opened till next morning, none but Tom-gate [the front gate below the bell tower] remains open for egress & ingress: it would have [been] almost a mile’s walk for the old gentleman to have gone round to Tom-gate, so calling out to me from the Meadow, he begged I would see whether he had still influence enough with the College porters to get him admitted at the Cloister-gate: this I accordingly did, & whereby had an opportunity of shaking him by the hand. He was good & affable, regretted not being able to receive as many of the visits of his friends as he could wish, & mentioned have [having] shaken my father by the hand at the Treasury.

(G to M, 23 August 1811, Ch.Ch.)

The old Dean caused another minor inconvenience. He dislocated the rhythm of George’s daily ‘conversazione-walks’ with his friend by calling sporadically for Bull, ‘who has always been a protégé of Dr C. Jackson’s’, and making him walk with him.558 This was regrettable because Bull and George both found the study of Cicero’s treatises on ethics ‘matters of great exertion both to understanding and memory’ and their walks were beneficial.559 George’s letter of 22 August makes it clear just how challenging the memorisation of Cicero’s system of ethics was. Of De Finibus George wrote: ‘we both of us seem to agree that nothing can be a greater trial to the memory, (mathematics excepted), because the subject is not treated like the Aristotelean systems, by definition, division & subdivision, where one point serves to bring the succeeding one to your recollection: here you have a string of unconnected tenets, interspersed with still more unconnected observations & quotations’560 By now Dawson also had returned to Oxford for his second attempt at the degree examination. He said his viscera turned at the thought of it. On his first attempt he had distinguished himself in all subjects except divinity, which he had failed. George could sympathise with Dawson’s disenchantment: ‘I know it has discouraged many who have been convinced that the examinations are as

558 G to M, 22 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
559 G to M, 15 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
560 G to M, 22 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
much a lottery as anything else; & so they are in great measure: but I am determined I will not be discouraged. 561

Two other Christ Church men William Fazakerley and Henry Wickam, 562 members of George’s old debating set who had graduated the previous year, were also at Oxford for the summer, ‘reading the law’. Both were entered at Lincoln’s Inn, London’s legal training ground, and had taken advantage of the privilege Students enjoyed of using vacated College rooms in the holiday months to study at the Christ Church library: ‘Our law-library here is one of the best in the Country, & naturally attracts many a Student to the retirement of this place at this time of the year. If I enter at Lincoln’s Inn next year, I think I may very possibly avail myself of the advantage of a set of rooms as Student, & profit by the excellency of our Ch.Ch. library in the law-department.’ 563 In spite of there being so very few men in College at this time of year, the College tradition of social and academic differentiation were rigorously upheld. As Student undergraduates George and Bull sat at one table, and the three Masters of Arts together at another, but Wickham, being the only Bachelor after Fazakerley had departed, dined at a table all alone.

The graduates had all departed by the beginning of October. Since the beginning of September men had been trickling in, some to read for their first examination, others for the final examination. The tutors began to arrive at different times in September to embark on an intensive period of preparation for their charges, but the Dean did not arrive that year until 28 September. On 2 October George’s quiet retirement was brought to an abrupt end by the bustle and din that heralded the real start of term:

I begin now to be pretty well aware that the term is at hand: tutors begin to take possession of their rooms; nothing is now to be heard but the incessant din of upholsterers nailing down carpets, smiths brushing up grates, bedmakers scouring the staircases &c&c. Barbers have been assiduously employed during the last week in powdering & pomatuming [applying a pomade to] the wigs, & have still much work upon their hands: washerwomen seem to think it no inconsiderable task to wash up all

561 G to M, 23 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
562 Henry Lewis Wickham (1790-1864), Student of Christ Church, B.A. 1810, M.A. 1813. The Alumni Oxonienses gives his graduation date as 1811, but the Honours Register (op. cit.) and the Chinnery correspondence give 1810.
563 G to M, 29 August 1811, Ch.Ch. George’s name was entered at Lincoln’s Inn in 1812, but he does not appear to have studied there, nor does he appear to have ever intended to pursue a legal career.
the surplices: the townspeople begin to be anxious that the gentlemen should flow in again, in short all is on the tip-toe of alacrity & expectation.

(G to M, 2 October 1811, Ch.Ch.)

Ten days later the ambience had changed yet again:

All is now really bustle: seven & twenty freshmen entered, arrived, & buzzing about our ears; my friend Corne & all the Dean's assistant officers are reduced to a non plus for means of lodging them in College, & my staircase has for the first time since the beginning of this vacation been a continued scene of confusion & riot [...]  

(G to M, 11 October 1811, Ch.Ch.)

George was looking forward to having Lloyd back ‘for of course he will make it a point to tutorise me every day’. Lloyd did see George daily, sometimes taking George and Blomefield together, and often keeping them well beyond the allotted one hour (once for two and a quarter hours). For the first time in George’s career at Oxford, Corne also saw him daily. For the first time, too, George’s tutors assumed specialised tuition duties. Lloyd covered mathematics, Corne classics, and Webber (who lectured on Cicero) ethics, although this division of subjects was not always strictly adhered to. In the month leading up to the examination, Webber sent for George daily to test him on Cicero’s four treatises, beginning with De Officiis, which George said he knew ‘to perfection’. Webber was pleased with George’s knowledge and ‘bestowed the highest encomiums on the way in which I answered his questions’. All the tutors were impressed by the amount of work George had covered in the vacation, Lloyd expressing astonishment that George had already finished three treatises of Cicero and five books of Thucydidies, and even warning him ‘not to overdo the thing, & that very few people can stand reading for a degree.’

Throughout this period of concentrated study George’s mind was not closed to events going on around him. The war against Napoleon was too close to home to forget for long. Margaret had written in April of ‘the horrors now acting in Portugal’ that were described in the daily newspapers, and thought like Milton that ‘the physical evils of
this world are all the consequences of moral evil'. On 21 August the battle-worn remains (sixty out of eight hundred) of the British Forty-Eighth Regiment passed through Oxford on its return from the engagement at Albuera, 'their scars yet fresh, their dress bearing evident marks of toil & long service, & the spirit of the warrior beaming on their countenances'. George, moved by patriotic sentiments, felt 'a kind of affectionate admiration' for these 'heroes'. At the beginning of September Dr Wall's son Sandys made up his mind to go abroad as chaplain on a man-of-war, the 'Centaur', which was headed for the Bay of Biscay, then round the Straits of Gibraltar to Tarragona on the Mediterranean coast of Spain. The Walls, wrote George, 'appear in much trouble at parting with him', as the 'cruize' was to be a long one. Lord Glenbervie's son Douglas (one of George's old debating set members) had fought in Portugal and had nearly died there. George asserted that 'his recovery was quite miraculous'. Other College men had also gone to take up commissions in Portugal. At the start of the previous long vacation Margaret had told George that he could invite some friends home, but George could name only two who were available, 'Leinster, Fitzgerald, Clare and those sort of people are going to Portugal immediately'. One of George's visitors to Oxford in 1811 was the Hessian ambassador and Gillwell habitué Philipp von Langsdorff, who recounted to George his recent journey to Darmstadt, where he found his countrymen enduring 'wretchedness and thraldom' under the French.

Meanwhile, George's difficulty in assimilating so many diverse subjects only increased as time went on. The enormity of the task struck home to him at the end of October, when he again expressed his regret at not having enough time for his 'classical friends'. The obvious solution to this dilemma — and one which was suggested privately by Margaret in one of her letters to George — to spread the examinations over a longer period, was not even contemplated by the University. 'Oh no', George replied, 'this would indeed render the thing considerably easier but would at the same time

567 M to G, 25 April 1811, Ch.Ch.
568 G to M, 21 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
569 G to M, 4 September 1811, Ch.Ch.
570 G to M, 15 September 1811, Ch.Ch.
571 G to M, 26 June 1811, Ch.Ch.
572 G to M, 28 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
573 In G to M, 20 October 1811, Ch.Ch., the onerous workload is emphasised.
detract as considerably from the merit. Examinations were conducted all on the one day, and if a candidate was last on the list for the first day, then they extended over two days. The quantity of material that George Chinnery was presenting for his degree was so voluminous that his examinations were to take three full days! The University was in desperate need of sensible reform. From a time in the not-so-distant past when a degree could be had almost for the asking, the University lurched to the other extreme in its early nineteenth century attempts at reform, when, in offering candidates the chance to gain honours, they almost extinguished — as George put it — that flame of emulation that they were striving so hard to fan. If requirements were tightened any further they would find no-one willing to even attempt a double honours degree, George opined. Of those trying for first class honours, most opted to concentrate on either mathematics or classics, the study of both proving too burdensome: ‘& this is the case with the generality of those who are ambitious of taking a first Class degree, that they either keep to the Classics solely, or to the Mathematics solely. They all find that the attention when split in two ways so diametrically opposite to each other, can bestow upon neither the full portion of time which each requires.’ In the 1811 Michaelmas degree examinations only seven of the thirty-six honours graduates had studied both.

George complained most about mathematics, and in particular ‘that odious & abominably tedious book called the Conic Sections, which from an unaccountable degree of foolish infatuation is forced upon us merely because the author of the treatise [Abraham Robertson, Professor of Astronomy] is alive, & resident in the University: they all agree that at his death it will fall to the ground.’ The way logic was studied was also tedious to him: ‘I am this moment come from Corne, where we have been going over that uninteresting branch of scholastic literature called Logic, by which you are aware, I believe, that not the sensible rational application of the science to argument is meant, but the mere dry twisting about of letters and forms. Here again I think the Schools might substitute something more substantially useful.’

One month before the examination, with George’s remark that he would never get over it if he did not do well imprinted on her mind, Margaret did an about-turn and took a different tack. In a valiant effort to be realistic about the pressures George was

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574 G to M, 29 October 1811, Ch.Ch.
575 G to M, 31 October 1811, Ch.Ch.
576 G to M, 24 October 1811, Ch.Ch.
facing, she told him that his mental and physical well-being was not worth sacrificing to
the whim of the examiners. However, it is hard to believe, after four years of pushing
and urging, that she could be sincere in her remark ‘it matters little what may be the
decision of those who have given so many proofs of caprice’. She tried to make her
reasoning practical: if he were one day to become ‘a public character’ he must expect to
meet with checks now and then. Besides, ‘a wise man should never, and seldom is,
taken by surprise.’ And seizing the opportunity to turn her advice into a comprehensive
lesson in pragmatism, she continued: ‘It is a most useful habit throughout life to
calculate chances and possibilities as well as the probabilities, with regard to events.
Many evils are avoided, and a great deal of what is called good luck, or success is
produced by this practice of anticipation.’\footnote{578}

Ten days later Margaret had not retracted these opinions. Indeed, she reiterated
the need to make his health top priority, and if necessary ‘contract your views for your
examination [...] to the limits of the powers of your mind’.\footnote{579} As she had always said, in
order to give himself the best chance of success he needed to go to his examination with
composure and self-command: ‘To go up as some have done with an impudent air of
insouciance, that would only indispose your judges, and give an unfavourable opinion
of your sense.’\footnote{580} George agreed, opining that ‘a just degree of Confidence, united to
Modesty & Self-possession are at once requisites for the person examined & sure means
of captivating the good disposition of the examiner.’\footnote{581} In Margaret’s view, the surest
way of exuding confidence and self-possession was to have a good command of public
speaking. The degree examination took place before a large audience, and it was not
only Margaret who recognised the need for clear-headedness in replying to examiners’
questions. At least one of George’s tutors took steps to give him just the sort of practice
that Margaret advocated. The way Webber drilled him in ethics, George said, was useful
as a speaking exercise: ‘He makes me sit down & give him an account of the arguments
pro & con of the whole book [...] It is really not merely useful for the immediate
purpose of School Ethics, but useful as speaking.’\footnote{582}

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\footnote{577 G to M, 29 October 1811, Ch.Ch.}
\footnote{578 M to G, 16 October 1811, Ch.Ch.}
\footnote{579 M to G, 27 October 1811, Ch.Ch.}
\footnote{580 Ibid.}
\footnote{581 G to M, 31 October 1811, Ch.Ch.}
\footnote{582 G to M, 1 November 1811, Ch.Ch.}
One week before examinations commenced names had been posted up, but ‘the day is never certain, as the time that the men before me take up must necessarily depend on the number of books they are examined in’. William had already written one short note of encouragement to his son, and on 14 November, in a bid to calm his wife’s anxieties, wrote to her that her ‘early education of body as well as mind’ would stand George in good stead. Differing from Margaret in his belief in the powers of ‘Providence’, as well as in his exclamation-punctuated style of writing, he gave free rein to his typically hopeful exuberance, writing to his wife: ‘With such Powers of Body & Habit of Exertion of Mind what may he not accomplish hereafter with the Assistance of Providence & your mundane guidance!!!’ These were brave words, coming from a man on the brink of ruin. William’s letters to Margaret during 1811 had been getting increasingly desperate, and his anxious forebodings were reflected in Margaret’s own letter to George of 21 October, written on her wedding anniversary.

George’s examinations began on Thursday 14 November and lasted till Saturday 16th. According to George’s next comment, these Michaelmas 1811 examinations set a new precedent in the way they were conducted:

I was three successive & entire days in the Schools, which gives you an idea of the additional labour & difficulties with which these examinations are attended: this indeed is a completely new System, & will in my opinion try the courage of the weak-hearted. The first day was devoted to the solving of Logical questions & to translations from English into Latin & from Latin & Greek into English: the second day in examination viva voce in Ethics Rhetoric & the Classics: the third day in mathematical examination.

(G to M, 17 November 1811, Ch.Ch.)

George felt confident that he had excelled in mathematics, and his feeling was reinforced by hearing several people say that Newton and the Fluxions had never before been so well done, and when ‘I went up to Mr Dixon the head [examining] Master to ask him whether I should return to the Schools on Monday for the purpose of working

583 G to M, 10 November 1811, Ch.Ch.
584 W to M, 14 November 1811, Ch.Ch.
585 See W to M, 22 February 1811, PM 94/143/1 - 7/1; W to M, 9 August 1811, PM 94/143/1 - 7/2; W to M, 19 December 1811, PM 94/143/1 - 7/3.
586 Margaret wrote: ‘some dark shades have arisen of late years to cloud my sunshine’. She went on: ‘With all the little stumbling blocks the past five years have thrown in my way, I often think my lot is
out Newton’s Corollaries, he said “No we will not trouble you any further Mr Chinnery, for we are perfectly aware that you are completely master of the Newton.” Dixon also praised George for ‘the accuracy with which I answered the questions in Ethics & Rhetoric.’ In spite of the enormous pressure he was under, George apologised to his mother for not having written for three days, saying that on the Friday night it was impossible to write because Lloyd came to his rooms at four in the afternoon and ‘we did not stir’ till half past one the next morning (!)\(^587\)

George’s results in mathematics vindicated all the hard work that he had put into the subject. He was awarded first class honours. However, the same was not true for classics, for which he was awarded a third class. Given George’s genuine love of the classics he must have been rather disappointed with the result. The additional study of ethics may have been detrimental to his (and Blomefield’s) results, and may have even robbed them of a double first. (Blomefield achieved a first class in mathematics and a second in classics.) The *Honours Registry* shows that two Christ Church candidates (Coleridge and Bull) achieved a first class in classics (not including Cicero’s ethics) and mathematics.\(^588\) Dawson was the only other Christ Church examinee who gained a first class in classics in the same examination, but this was his second attempt.

George’s four years in College were completed with the payment of fees to Corne and Lloyd (£10 and £126 respectively),\(^589\) with the writing of Latin Epistles and visits to Canons preparatory to taking his degree, and afterwards the reading of a lesson in Chapel as ‘Student Bachelor in Chapel’. To Lloyd he was particularly grateful. In spite of his earlier complaints, he now acknowledged that it was Lloyd who had done the most for him: ‘I intend presenting Lloyd with a souvenir in the way of books, & shall take the opportunity of sending the cash in the parcel. No souvenir of this kind is at all necessary for Corne; for he has done mighty little for me since I have been in College: the tutorage has devolved almost entirely on Lloyd.’\(^590\)

The degree ceremony itself, preceded, in true Oxford style, by innumerable rehearsals, took place on 21 November. George complained that he, Dawson and

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\(^{587}\) G to M, 17 November 1811, Ch.Ch.

\(^{588}\) *Honours Registry, op. cit.*, pp. 197-198.

\(^{589}\) G to M, 21 November 1811, Ch.Ch. In an earlier letter (G to M, 7 February 1809, Ch.Ch.), George said that Lloyd’s salary was £25 per year.

\(^{590}\) G to M, 21 November 1811, Ch.Ch.
Blomefield had spent three boring hours one morning in the Schools going through the hoops of Oxford tradition 'The process of putting on our Batchelor's gown: the number of oaths we swore to, all in dog latin, the number of times we knelt down before the Vice Chancellor rendered the ceremony much more ludicrous than impressive.' George summed it up as humbug. He also thought excessive the fees of eight or nine pounds that they were required to pay 'without any apparent reason'.

In spite of his complaints, George was content. Justly proud of his achievements, he gave a celebratory dinner for sixteen friends before departing Oxford, and on the way home to Gillwell attended a ball at Sir John Dashwood's at West Wycombe, followed by a night at Taplow with the Grenfells, who had been duly informed of his examination results. His four years at Oxford had fulfilled Margaret's most ardent wishes. Her congratulatory letter speaks of his just rewards: the happiness he has given to his loved ones, the reputation he has acquired at College, and above all, the 'universal esteem you have obtained, and which I hear of from all quarters, will follow you through life, and like a protecting angel, will shield you from a thousand evils!' Confident that this reputation, coupled with his good character, his perseverance, his industry, and his stock of learning would assure his future success, she writes with a final optimistic flourish 'What can stop you dear George?'

During 1811 George had had another public success, which no doubt contributed to Margaret's complacency regarding his future. It was the publication of his 1810 prize poem in an anthology of poetry, Poetical Selections Consisting of the Most Approved Pieces of our Best British Poets, Excellent Specimens of Fugitive Poetry, and some Original Pieces, printed and published by Thomson and Wrightson in Birmingham, 1811. The anthology was divided into categories, with The Dying Gladiator listed under 'Popular New Poems'. One can only imagine Margaret's delight.

591 Ibid.
592 M to G, 18 November 1811, Ch.Ch.
593 This information was found on the website http://www.muchio.edu/~update/birmg.htm. I am indebted to Dr Michael Kassler for drawing my attention to it.
Chapter 4
Caroline Chinnery’s Education, 1807 – 1811

(i) William Spencer – tutor to Caroline Chinnery

When George went to Oxford, Caroline’s learning continued at home in the way that Madame de Genlis recommended for young ladies who had completed the essential basics of their education. She cultivated her elegant accomplishments to a higher degree, broadened her reading, and, like Adèle d’Almane, read classical works in translation. But unlike Adèle, she also studied Latin texts in the original and was taught Euclid’s principles of geometry. Margaret pursued every facet of Caroline’s education with a view to achieving the same fame for her daughter as she desired for her son. Like the Baronne d’Almane, who opined that there would be few women in the world who were as knowledgeable as Adèle, Margaret Chinnery wanted Caroline to be ‘the first female character of the age’.¹

Even before George went to Oxford, Caroline had studied with Herr Trumpf subjects that were not traditionally taught to females, such as astronomy and mathematics. At the beginning of 1807 Caroline had surprised her mother by announcing that she had, of her own initiative, been studying geometry. Margaret recorded her pleasure and surprise at learning of Caroline’s mastery of the first book of Euclid in her Journal entry of 12 January 1807, in which she transcribed Caroline’s own words: “Mama, before I would indulge my inclination I consulted Mr Trumpf, and asked him whether he thought you had an objection to my learning geometry; Mr Trumpf said that so far from it he had heard you say, that the elements of that science should form part of a solid female education”.² Caroline, in her desire to learn, and Herr Trumpf in his willingness to guide, encourage and reward, had pre-empted Margaret’s wish, and the lessons continued.

Herr Trumpf’s continued residence at Gillwell after George left for Oxford was beneficial to Caroline and the two little girls Matilda and Margaret, even though the help he could give George from afar was necessarily limited. Caroline’s days continued

² M to G, 17 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
with no resident tutor at Gillwell, she would be obliged to go back to her old occupations of teaching history and geography to Matilda and little Margaret\(^\text{13}\) – a prospect she may not have relished, having already complained that the little girls were troublesome and spoilt. Caroline, she said, would be henceforth responsible for her own educational advancement: ‘Caroline is refreshing her memory with regard to her knowledge of the Globes, and also in Arithmetic, after which she must bid Adieu to masters, and rely on her own exertions for further improvement.’\(^\text{14}\) But she did not continue to study alone for long, as it was about this time that Margaret made the decision to employ William Spencer for the furtherance of her daughter’s education, especially for the instruction of Latin, the classics, and to promote Caroline’s already considerable skill of verse writing.

Soon after Herr Trumpf’s departure, Margaret sent George her plan de journée which shows that the days at Gillwell continued to be just as regulated as they were before George left for Oxford. George himself commented that he was pleased to see that ‘the inhabitants of Gillwell, always have and always will [...] move by clockwork’.\(^\text{15}\) The following is a summary of what Margaret wrote in her letter:

Breakfast in her study, finished by 9.30 am.
9.30 – 11: Reads, writes to George, or settles [household and farm] accounts.
11 – 12: Hears Margaret and Matilda read Sethos.\(^\text{16}\)
12 – 1.30: Makes household arrangements with Mrs M* Keone [the cook] and Parish [the farm manager]. Walks.
1.30 – 2.30: Gives Caroline her singing lesson.
2.30 – 3.30: Corrects George’s theme or attends to some other Oxford work of his.
Twice a week gives Matilda her piano lessons.
3.30: Dinner
After dinner spends one and a half hours correcting Matilda’s and little Margaret’s translations and hearing their lessons. Reads alone if Spencer is not at Gillwell.

\(^{13}\) M to G, 30 January 1809, Ch.Ch.
\(^{14}\) M to G, 9 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
\(^{15}\) G to M, 26 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
\(^{16}\) See Part II, Chapter 1, p. 297.
Since 1807, Spencer had become increasingly closer to the Chinnery family and had spent correspondingly longer periods of time at Gillwell, days sometimes extending to weeks and weeks to months (for example in the first half of 1811). It was during the five-year period from 1807 to the end of 1811 that his assistance with Caroline’s (and to a lesser extent George’s) education was greatest. In the papers of William Robert Spencer in the Powerhouse collection, in the Fisher collection, in the Osborn collection, and in Margaret’s own letters to George in the Christ Church collection there is a large body of evidence attesting to the closeness of Spencer to the Chinneyrs, and to his considerable input in the twins’ education. In fact, in a melancholy letter addressed to Margaret some time after the death of Caroline, in which he complained of the pain his own children were causing him, he claimed that ‘Had I attended for these last seven years as much to my children as I have done to yours, some of this mischief might probably have been prevented’.19

Spencer was well-loved by all the Chinnerys, especially Caroline, and got on well with Viotti, who often accompanied him to dinners and other entertainments in London. Margaret, who treated him as ‘family’,20 considered her dinner parties dull without the addition of his wit and light-hearted banter. He frequently lent his Curzon Street residence to the Chinnerys when they were in London to attend theatre or opera, or to consult London physicians. (It was here that George spent the long period of his life-threatening illness in 1807, and it was here also that Caroline Chinnery died.) In spite of his having a large family of his own to provide for (a wife and six children), he seemed unwilling or unable to pursue a serious career, and lived mainly off the generosity of friends and relatives. He did hold a post at the Stamp Office

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18 The work in question, mentioned in other letters, is Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux’s, Satires du Sieur D..., Paris: Barbin, 1666.
19 William Spencer to Margaret Chinnery, c. 1813, Fisher.
20 In May 1811, on Caroline’s homecoming after many weeks in London being treated for whooping cough, Margaret organised a festive dinner and celebrations in which nobody was to be included but their own family ‘in which you know’, she wrote to George, ‘I include Guglielmo always’ (M to G, [25 May 1811], Ch.Ch., MS xlviii, a.54, fo. 68).
(Commissioner of Stamps), but he attended only sporadically, and resisted other offers of employment that were not to his liking. His erratic and undisciplined life-style led him frequently into debt. He regularly appeared in the debtors' court, and his house was once seized while the French noble de Malcor was in residence, much to his embarrassment. His 'constitutional indolence' was well known, as testified by many of his contemporaries, including Lord Glenbervie, who describes him in his Journals as 'all high spirits, great good humour, coaxing civility, and irresistible drollery and pleasantry. But never solid, never steady'. (Thomas Moore in his Journal also makes mention of his unreliability, but finds him always 'very amusing'). A letter from Susan Fincastle (later Countess of Dunmore) to Spencer, in which she quotes her husband as saying that Spencer 'has family enough, but not money enough' and that he 'should endeavour to bring these 2 to a greater equality' confirms the foregoing perceptions. But owing to his blue blood, his irresistible wit and his facility with words, he was an extremely popular figure of society, especially among the ladies. His free-flowing 'society verses', liberally littered with classical allusions, were pithy and fashionable, and Byron pronounced them 'perfectly aristocratic'. That Spencer enjoyed a fair measure of fame as a poet in his time is borne out by Margaret's comment that when she placed Caroline in the tutelage of such a prominent person, who 'possessed of much reputation as an author', she risked having Caroline's superior accomplishments attributed to his teaching rather than hers.

Thus in 1809 William Spencer, already Caroline's sparring partner in witty epigrams, her 'caro Zio' and her general favourite, became in addition, her Latin tutor and general mentor. Margaret was of the opinion that her daughter's abilities were above average, and that they 'deserved to be nourished with a knowledge of the Latin.

21 M. de Malcor was the companion-in-exile of the Duc d'Angoulême, son of the Comte d'Artois. He was a good friend of Spencer and of the Chinnerys.
22 DNB, vol. 18, p. 788.
23 Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 146.
24 Moore, op. cit., (entry of 20 May 1819), vol.1, p. 175.
25 Susan Fincastle to William Spencer, 21 October [1808], Fisher.
26 There are three teasing letters from female friends in the Fisher collection that bear witness to this.
27 DNB, vol. 18, p. 788.
28 M to G, 22 August 1811, Ch.Ch. See also Part II, Chapter 3, p. 544.
29 Caroline Chinnery defined the term epigram in her 1809 Journal, beginning with its original meaning in Latin. She went on to say: 'Maintenant nous attachons en generale à l'idée d'une épigramme, celle d'une satir, mais les anciens comme on le voit par leurs écrits, ne connaissaient point ce genre d'épigramme. Une chose pourtant lui est toujours nécessaire, c'est qu'elle ait une pointe, et que cette pointe soit renfermée dans la derniere ligne.' (Caroline Chinnery's Journal (op. cit.), 5 April 1809.)
language'. 30 This decision involved Spencer spending an even larger portion of his time under the Chinnery roof. When Spencer was obliged to leave Gillwell – to attend his post at the Stamp Office; to preside over literary dinners at his various London clubs; to go hunting at his uncle's [Robert Spencer's] 31 estate at Woolbeding at Midhurst in Sussex or at his father's seat at Wheatfield; to keep his uncle the (fourth) Duke of Marlborough company at Blenheim; to visit friends and mistresses 32 at Oxford; to eat suppers at Chiswick, the seat of his cousin the Duke of Devonshire – he kept up a regular, almost daily correspondence with Caroline, the aim of which, in theory at least, was to keep her furnished with instructions on her Latin reading. In practice, his letters did not always contain these instructions, which were often haphazard, and he frequently forgot which Latin ode he had instructed Caroline to read. But Caroline, like George, was a diligent pupil, and kept herself busy. Spencer, to his credit, did give her enough instruction in Latin to enable her to read in the original such authors as Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Juvenal and Tibullus.

In early 1811 Caroline caught whooping cough from little Margaret, who had just returned to Gillwell from school in London, where the disease was raging. Caroline was severely affected by the illness and it was not until June that she resumed her studies, but when she did so it was with her usual conscientiousness. In July Caroline wrote to Spencer, telling him that she had been working hard at Horace, 'and [I] have read the whole of that Ode which you said was so difficult'. She also informed him that she was attempting to turn into English verse the Horace ode 'Equam memento', which she was finding a difficult task, 'for the Latin is very concise; & equivalent expressions in English are sometimes difficult to find.'33 In August the same year Margaret wrote triumphantly to George that Caroline had finished reading by herself the tenth Satire of Juvenal.34 Spencer was also an acknowledged expert in classical history and mythology – as even Lord Glenbervie admitted ('he is a perfectly good scholar in ancient

30 M to G, 22 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
31 Robert Spencer, third son of the third Duke of Marlborough, died without issue in 1831.
32 In the Fisher collection of Chinnery papers there is a thick lock of hair belonging to the pretty daughter of Dr Martin Wall of Oxford, Sophie Wall, who was rumoured to be one of Spencer’s mistresses (see G to M, 28 February 1808, Ch.Ch.). There is a poem entitled 'To Miss Wall', published in Spencer’s Poems (op. cit., 1811, pp. 185-186). In the National Library of Australia copy of the Poems the title of the poem is followed by three exclamation marks, obviously inserted by the original owner of the book, a certain Louisa Wykham of Hereford Street, Park Lane.
33 Caroline Chinnery to William Spencer, 2 July 1811, Fisher.
34 M to G, 8 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
literature'\textsuperscript{35}) — the knowledge of which was a necessary prerequisite for the composing of verses in the most favoured style of the day.

That a classical education in young women was considered unusual, and even eccentric, is shown by a letter from the seventy-year-old Sir William Pepys,\textsuperscript{36} who exhorted Spencer to advise Caroline to keep secret her great classical knowledge, claiming it would incite great prejudice against her in the minds of prospective husbands. But this commonly-held view was beginning to be challenged. Just a few months earlier, a contributor to the \textit{Edinburgh Review} had reviewed a book entitled \textit{Advice to Young Ladies on the Improvement of the Mind}, by Thomas Broadhurst, whose aim ('a very laudable one' according to the reviewer), was 'to recommend a better system of female education than at present prevails in this country — to turn the attention of women from the trifling pursuits to which they are now condemned — and to cultivate faculties which, under the actual system of management, might almost as well not exist.'\textsuperscript{37} The reviewer ridiculed the accepted notion that to give a woman some learning would cause her to 'step out of the natural modesty of her sex',\textsuperscript{38} the same notion that Sir William Pepys feared would repel Caroline's potential suitors.

Spencer had written to Sir William, offering to introduce him to his two remarkable friends, Margaret Chinnery and her talented daughter Caroline. Caroline had already addressed some Latin verse to this gentleman in August.\textsuperscript{39} Sir William replied to Spencer that he had no doubt that Caroline was 'a very extraordinary Young Person',

But I am sure you will agree with me, that all things considered, your Knowledge of the World can not be better employ'd in Her Service, than in conjuring her to keep as secret as possible whatever Proficiency She may make in the learned Languages: I have heard the Generality of Men express themselves so strongly upon the Subject of a learned Wife, that how much soever I may delight in the Conversation of Women whose Minds have been early enrich'd by an Acquaintance with the Classics, the Experience of a long Life has convinc'd me, that it is very likely to create the greatest Prejudice against any young Woman; and as I cannot help feeling already a strong Interest in the future

\textsuperscript{35} Douglas (1910), \textit{op. cit.}, p. 146. Spencer’s obituary (published in \textit{The Times}, 30 October 1834) also acknowledges his ‘elegant and profound classical attainments’.

\textsuperscript{36} Sir William Weller Pepys (1740-1825), barrister-at-law, B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1763, M.A. 1766. He was a master in Chancery from 1775-1807, and was created a baronet in 1801.

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Edinburgh Review}, vol. 15, no. 30, January 1810, p. 299.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{ibid.}, p. 301.

\textsuperscript{39} Poem in Latin by Caroline Chinnery addressed to ‘Vilhelmo V. Pepys’, 2 August 1810, Osborn \textit{fd. II}, item 45.
Welfare of your Friend, I must earnestly exhort you to use your Influence in prevailing upon Her to keep her Progress in Latin & Greek as great a Secret as possible: for, to hear men talk on that Subject, you would think,

That Learning among Womankind
Was deadliest Poison to the Mind;
A Crime, which venial if conceal’d,
(Like Theft at Sparta) when reveal’d
The Guilty stamps with such Disgrace
No Culprit dares to shew her Face.

(William Pepys to William Spencer, 21 December 1810, Fisher)

Unfortunately it is impossible to tell whether Sir William’s prophesies contained any truth, as Caroline did not live long enough for the effect of her intellectual accomplishments on her marriage prospects to be judged. Up to the age of twenty she was certainly admired and feted in society, and her naturally modest nature prevented her from flaunting her learning.

The second field in which Spencer’s expertise was put to use was in improving and polishing Caroline’s verse writing. Margaret, like Madame de Genlis, considered this accomplishment to be ‘une chose nécessaire à toute bonne éducation’. The ability to write verse, like the other elegant accomplishments of playing a musical instrument, singing and drawing, was considered in polite society to be an adornment for both men and women. But even putting aside the dictates of polite society one suspects that Margaret Chinnery would have considered this skill one of the finishing touches to her plan of education, as her own love of poetry and the recitation of verses was warm and genuine.

As part of their early education, Caroline and George had both learned from Spencer the rules of versification, and practised them in their poetic missives to family members on their birthdays. Helped by Spencer, whose prolifically witty verses were inspired by everyday domestic occurrences, and accompanied almost every letter he wrote, Caroline’s talent blossomed and she became adept at penning pithy poetic repartees and amusing epigrams. But she also wrote pretty lyrical verse inspired by the all-pervasive classical influences of the day, poetic inscriptions for garden pedestals and became especially adept at dedicatory verses. She addressed birthday verses to her

40 Mémoires, vol. 6, p. 143.
mother, her father, her brother, Viotti, Spencer, and to Princess Mary, daughter of George III and sister of the Chinnery friend the Duke of Cambridge. She wrote verse in five different languages and in all the different metres. There are over forty different poems by Caroline Chinnery in the Osborn collection and ten in the Powerhouse collection. In the Osborn collection also are poems by George [Robert] Chinnery, Matilda Chinnery, young George Chinnery’s classics tutor John Mullens, by Spencer’s son Aubrey, by Lord Glenburnie in Italian, copies of verses by William Sotheby and John Carr, and even one by the artist Thomas Lawrence. Many of the covers of the poems in the Osborn collection bear numbers in Margaret Chinnery’s hand, and clearly represent a chronological sorting of her daughter’s poetry, perhaps carried out during Caroline’s lifetime with a view to one day publishing them, or perhaps after her death.

There are several Caroline Chinnery poems in the Osborn collection that show very clearly the influence of Spencer’s tuition. One is described as an ‘Exercise on double rhymes’ and is dated 26 December 1808. It begins:

Lovely nymph, poetic fiction,
Daughter of imagination [sic],
Come to me in my affliction,
Hear my pray'r and lamentation!

and ends:

Come to me, on wings poetic,
Such as those a Spencer uses,

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41 Including one written on Caroline’s death.
42 Aubrey George Spencer (1795-1872), eldest son of William Robert Spencer, matriculated (Magdalen Hall, Oxford) in 1817 but did not take a degree, and made a career in the Church. After he was ordained he went out to the Bermudas (see Aubrey Spencer to Margaret Chinnery, 8 November 1822, Fisher.) In 1824 he was made archdeacon of the Bermudas, and in 1839 first bishop of Newfoundland, thus making more a success of his life than his father had anticipated. He sent two poems to Margaret Chinnery, one dated 8 February 1814 and one dated 5 November 1814, the latter written on the eve of his departure ‘to distant lands’ (Osborn fd. 11, item 91).
43 Some of the poems in the Powerhouse collection are rough drafts of those in the Osborn collection, and vice versa (see Introduction, pp. 5-6).
44 A few of the numbers are missing. Poem no. 2 is dated 12 May 1807 and no. 36, August 1810. Others appear not to have been numbered because they are variations of the same poems, or because they are
When with Scintillations attic,
He affects us, or amuses!

(Osborn fd. 11, item 32)

Two others, in Latin, dated November 1810, are exercises in ‘Iambics and Sapphics’. Each consists of two four-lined stanzas in Latin, the second being an imitation of Horace’s *Ode to Cæneus* (Book 1, Ode 30). There is also some verse that Caroline sent to Spencer by way of excuse for having written no Latin verse for her tutor because of a tooth-ache:

Alas! I fear you think me idle grown,
And much in want of the Magister’s frown!
But tax me not with undeserved blame,
Nor tarnish thus your injur’d Scholar’s fame!

If e’er I tried to sketch th’unfinished verse
Returning pains, required a gentler nurse
While half-writ Sapphics, lame Pentametres,
Dactyls, & embryo Hexametres,
(Stopp’d their progress by this odious tooth,.)...

(January 1811, Osborn fd. 11, item 93)

Most of Caroline’s verse was inspired by Spencer’s, and the poetic exchanges between the two were prolific, making up the bulk of the Osborn collection. One of Caroline’s earlier efforts Margaret thought was very good. It was her ‘Promise of the year 1807’, written in reply to Spencer’s own ‘Epitaph upon the year 1806’. Margaret made the following entry in her Journal of 11 March 1807: ‘When Mr Spencer was here, he repeated to us a very pretty epitaph he had written on the year 1806. The idea is novel, and the putting into verse the date 1806 was a difficulty which he has most happily conquered. Yesterday the thought occurred to Caroline of sending him the promise of the year 1807, with an early tribute of violet & primroses; this gave birth to

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simply snatches of verse accompanying a letter. It was in Margaret’s letter to George of 17 February 1809 (Ch.Ch.) that she mentioned that Caroline was hoping to publish some of her poetry.

Osborn fd. 11, item 57.

two very pretty stanzas executed with some imagination and elegance.'\textsuperscript{47} Caroline’s ‘Promise of the year 1807’, in the same rhyme and metre as Spencer’s poem, begins:

\begin{quote}
The old year eighteen hundred and six,  
Was so pleas’d, by thy elegant lay,  
That her heir, seeks “thy hommage to fix”,  
And her earliest tribute to pay!  
\end{quote}

(William Spencer, Miscellaneous Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 31/1)

Although Spencer’s comments on these particular lines are unknown, Margaret wrote in her Journal on 5 March 1807, that she had already shown him some of Caroline’s poetry, and that ‘he was really surprised to find her capable of doing so well. He read over and over again each of the little productions, and at the same time that he expressed his satisfaction, he pointed out the defect of all her Alexandrines; and suggested the alteration of two or three words; but as a matter of taste only.’\textsuperscript{48}

Spencer had the advantage of being conversant with four modern languages as well as the classical ones, and composed verse with facility in English, French, Italian, German, Latin, and even in Old French.\textsuperscript{49} Caroline too composed much poetry in French and Italian, and to a lesser extent, in German and Latin. In 1807 Caroline addressed some birthday verses in French to her father, which were accompanied by the leaves of an evergreen, a symbol of Caroline’s enduring filial love. The verses begin, appropriately: ‘Ce cœur qui vous aime toujours [...]’\textsuperscript{50} In 1808 Margaret mentioned more birthday verses in French that Caroline composed for Viotti. These were so good that Viotti thought she had been aided by Spencer.\textsuperscript{51} There is another birthday poem to Viotti in French\textsuperscript{52} and one in English,\textsuperscript{53} as well as one addressed to her mother in Italian, which she set to music.\textsuperscript{54}

Some of her dedicatory verses to the Duke of Cambridge contained five four-lined stanzas, one each in Latin, French, Italian, German and English. The verses for

\textsuperscript{47} Margaret Chinnery’s Journal, vol. 2, 11 March 1807.  
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 5 March 1807.  
\textsuperscript{49} See Poems (1811), p. 216, p. 222.  
\textsuperscript{50} Caroline Chinnery, Poems and Verses, PM, 94/143/1 – 21/15.  
\textsuperscript{51} M to G, 12 May 1808, Ch.Ch.  
\textsuperscript{52} C to V, 12 May 1809, Osborn fd. 11, item 39.  
\textsuperscript{53} C to V, 12 May [1810], Osborn fd. 11, item 73.  
\textsuperscript{54} C to M, 16 October 1809, Osborn fd. 11, item 81.
Adolphus Frederick dated 8 September 1810 were written under an engraving of the subject, which Margaret sent him as a gift. In a style true to the genre, Caroline’s verses were brimming with fulsome praise for their object, the last stanza cleverly linking the form to the sense of the poem:

Adolphus, in thy polished frankness meet  
Each foreign grace, each British worth combin’d  
Exotic flow’rets seem more fair, more sweet,  
When round our Native Oak, their blooms are twin’d!

(OSBORN Fd. 11, Item 103)

There are lines of verse included in much of the correspondence of Spencer and Caroline — many in French and Italian — and these reflect their daily lives. In a postscript of a letter from Margaret to George dated 13 February 1809, when Caroline had been ill, and had taken morphine, she includes some lines of verse that she wrote to Spencer:

To mount my Pegasus I meant to day  
If Morpheus had not treacherously spell’d me;

followed by Spencer’s reply:

No Courser once used to the hand of the fair,  
Man’s rough-rider management ever can bear,  
And shall I trust my neck to that Thessaly Hack  
With Caroline’s side-saddle still on his back?

(M to G, 13 February 1809, Ch.Ch.)

A few months later Caroline enclosed for George an epigram from Spencer in Latin. But Spencer’s rhyme and metre were not always perfectly correct, according to the rules then so stringently applied to verse-making. Margaret told George that the subject of one of their evening discussions had been ‘Italian versification’, and that Guglielmo had proved to be ‘very rusty’. The verses that Caroline had written under the

55 Pegasus, the winged horse fabled to have sprung from the blood of Medusa when slain by Perseus, was represented by eighteenth century poets as the favourite steed of the Muses, and was a commonly used metaphor for flights of poetic genius.

56 The full poem is in Osborn Fd. 11, Item 116.

57 The original manuscript is in PM 94/143/1 – 20/34.
guidance of Spencer and presented to her mother on her birthday had proved on closer inspection to be in the wrong metre. In spite of Spencer's reputation as an accomplished 'society poet', his verses were often the subject of criticism for infringing the rules of versification. Lord Glenbervie criticised some of his verse in his Journals ('they have no very transcendent merit, and [...] abound with several inelegant and unclassical neologisms of language'), as did Thomas Moore, who, being 'anxious to introduce in one of my prefaces some anecdotes about my old friend William Spencer', wanted to use the latter's translation into Italian of his own song 'The wreath you wove', but found that he could not, as Spencer's translation was too full of errors. Similarly, certain Oxford dons took exception to parts of Spencer's verse published in his Poems. Spencer's attention to these details seems to have been the same as his general approach to life - somewhat flippant.

Nevertheless, Caroline's verses improved considerably under Spencer's tutelage, and impressed all who read them, including the grand old French nobleman the Comte de Vaudreuil, who spent some days at Gillwell in 1809. Spencer also showed the Duke of Marlborough some of Caroline's 'pretty mythological verses', reporting that he was 'more astonished & delighted with them than I ever saw him express for anything - he thinks the English particularly happy.' But he did not show Caroline's German verse to his uncle, who would not, Spencer said, have understood them anyway.

58 In M to G, 18 June 1809, Ch.Ch.
59 M to G, 10 November 1809, Ch.Ch.
60 Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 146.
61 Moore, op. cit. Journals, (entry of 27 October 1818), vol. 1, p. 75. See also William Spencer to Caroline Chinnery, PM 94/143/1 - 20/21.
62 See G to M, 13 August 1811, Ch.Ch., in which he tells his mother that Dr Howley could not understand the last stanza of a poem in which Lockley, the Prince of Wales's (and also the Chinnery's) physician, was mentioned.
63 Joseph-François de Paule de Vaudreuil, companion-in-exile in England to the Comte d'Artois over a period of twenty-five years, returned to France with him at the time of the Restoration. He was introduced to Gillwell by Spencer in February 1809. From that time on he became a firm friend of Margaret, who took great pleasure in his exquisite manners, his fascinating first-hand accounts of life at the court of Louis XVI, and in his considerable talent for reciting poetry. Before the Revolution he had participated in the fashionable pastime of acting in society plays with Madame de Genlis, Madame de Montesson and her husband the Duke of Orleans (father of Philippe-Egalité), and was generally held up as one of the finest models of ancien régime manners. Madame Vigée-Lebrun remarked at length on these in her Souvenirs (op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 315-318), as did Madame de Genlis in her Mémoires (vol. 1, pp. 514-515). In the Powerhouse and Fisher collections there are several letters from Vaudreuil to Margaret Chinnery, one of which encloses verses of Lebrun (Joseph-François de Vaudreuil to Margaret Chinnery, 10 September 1811, 94/143/1 - 4/5, PM) copied out in his hand.
64 See M to G, 7 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
65 William Spencer to Caroline Chinnery, 3 March 1812, Fisher.
The evenings at Gillwell were spent, as they had been since the twins’ earliest education, in reciting poetry (excerpts of Shakespeare, of French, Italian or German verse), reading novels or in discussing what had been read. On 17 March 1808 Margaret wrote to George that she had been reading Shakespeare and Greek plays to their small family circle, which Caroline and Amico enjoyed immensely. A week later it was Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and Racine’s *Iphigénie*. Spencer loved taking part in these readings when he was at Gillwell. During the few weeks he spent there in June 1808, recuperating from the unspecified recurrent illness that plagued him throughout his life, and that is mentioned in almost every letter, he read to the family from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *As You Like It*. In January 1809, when he was with them again, *Les Contes d’Hamilton* was the subject of their reading. Any other house guests who happened to be with the family also participated in these entertainments. At the end of 1809 Margaret wrote in a letter to George that she, Caroline, ‘Guglielmo, Maestro [Bianchi] and Amico’ had been reading the recently published ‘translation of Sapho & some other poems of Masons, into beautiful italian’, which the author had sent her. More Italian readings are mentioned in Margaret’s letter to George of 19 November – Cesarotti’s Italian translations of Homer and James Macpherson’s free adaptation of the supposed writings of the ancient legendary Celtic bard Ossian.

The Comte de Vaudreuil was a keen participator in these poetry readings whenever he came down to Gillwell, and on these occasions it was to the French poets that they paid tribute. Margaret remarked of Vaudreuil’s poetry reading: ‘In my life, I never heard any one repeat french verses with any thing approaching to the grace and expression of M. de Vaudreuil’. The latter’s rendering of verse by Racine, Lebrun, and

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66 *M to G*, 17 March 1808, Ch.Ch.
67 Margaret’s letter to George of 11 June 1809 is the only one that names any specific malady: ‘they talk of fluctuations of the fluids which means a tendency to dropsy’. These bouts of illness were not helped by Spencer’s dissipated life in London, and he himself admitted on this occasion that he was tired of ‘the tourbillon of the gay world’ (*M to G*, 11 June 1809, Ch.Ch.).
69 *M to G*, 10 November 1809, Ch.Ch. Thomas James Mathias, *Saffo, dramma lirico... tradutto dall’Inglese di G. Mason*, 1809.
70 L’Iliade d’Omero, recata poeticamente in verso sciolto italiano dall’Abate M. Cesarotti, Padua, 1786-94.
the tragic dramatist Crébillon gave rise to her comment the ‘the pleasures of the heart & mind, are the only durable pleasures!’

Many of the works of literature that Caroline read for enjoyment in these years were the same as those read by Adèle d’Almane after the age of sixteen. From among the works listed by Madame de Genlis in the ‘Cours de lectures suivi par Adèle’ at the end of Adèle et Théodore, the following are the same as those read by Caroline at the same age: *Les Lettres de Madame de Sévigné*, Fénelon’s immensely popular *Aventures de Télémaque*, dramatic works of Racine, Corneille, Voltaire, Molière, works of Boileau, Crébillon (the father Prosper, not the son Claude), Tasso’s *La Gerusalemme liberata*, and in English unspecified works of Shakespeare, Locke, Pope, Thomson, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, David Hume’s *History of Great Britain* and *The Spectator*. Like Adèle, Caroline read translations of Plato, Terence, Virgil and Homer.

It was during Spencer’s many prolonged stays at Gillwell that he conceived the idea of publishing a book of verse. Gillwell and its inhabitants inspired much of his poetry, and his *Poems*, published by Cadell in July 1811, was largely a product of his time at Gillwell, where he collated the material with the help of Caroline Chinnery. Much of Spencer’s life is detailed in this work, in which there are numerous references to family and friends, many of whom were also friends of the Chinnerys. A large number of the poems that make up this collection are to be found in manuscript form in the Powerhouse and Fisher collections of Chinnery papers, including his most famous ones ‘Beth Gelert’ and ‘Too late I stay’d’. The poems in which Gillwell or its inhabitants are mentioned include ‘To Mrs Chinnery of Gillwell House’ (p. 97), in which he pays tribute to the Gillwell roses; ‘The Muse to Miss Chinnery’ (p. 123), in which he playfully teases Caroline about abandoning poetry in favour of music; and an epitaph for his own tombstone in Old French, which begins ‘C’y gist un povre menestrel’, and in which he asks the reader not to pity him overmuch, as his soul remains in Elysian Gillwell. His ‘Remerciment à J. B. Viotti’ (p. 231) is a poem of thanks for a bunch of flowering laurel, probably offered on his birthday; and ‘A J. B.
Viotti souffrant d’un accès de goutte’, is a teasing rhyme full of classical allusions to Viotti’s musical past. Another clear allusion to the Chinnery ladies and their love of gardening is in his poem ‘A Deux Amies’ (p. 230), which begins:

Relâchez vos doux soins, aimables jardinières,
Ne mêlez plus de fleurs aux ronces de mon sort!

‘La Belle Voleuse’ (p. 235) was sent to Caroline Chinnery during one of Spencer’s stays at Gillwell, and exists in manuscript form in the Osborn collection, along with Caroline’s response: ‘I dream’d of you and your beautiful verses all night Caro Amico Guglielmo, and woke this morning with the intention of answering them.’

But most interesting in the context of the Chinnery children’s education, are the unmistakable references to the part Spencer played in it, such as in the poem ‘To a Young Poet’ (p. 138) which is clearly a tribute to George Chinnery’s winning the Newdigate prize for poetry at Oxford in 1810, and contains a reference to Spencer’s teaching George to write poetry:

I will be proud that I first taught
Thy wit with purer light to shine.

‘To my Grammatical Niece’ (p. 146) is equally clear in its reference to Caroline Chinnery, and consists of four stanzas of clever punning on the various grammatical parts of speech, which were so much a part of the Chinnery children’s language education. The last four lines, in referring to ‘Prosodia’, or the rules of versification, contain flattering compliments to Margaret and Caroline Chinnery:

But vain are all metrical rules when applied
To charms which both Mother and Daughter display!
For who could e’er learn, with all labour and leisure,
To scan what are quite without number and measure! (p. 147)

75 William Spencer, Poems and Verses, PM 94/143/1 – 30/17, 30/22.
76 The manuscript of this poem is in the Powerhouse collection, and originally accompanied a teasing letter to Viotti (Spencer to Viotti, 21 December 1808, PM 94/143/1 – 29/1).
77 Osborn fd. 11, items 111 and 112.
Showing that her punning was just as clever as Spencer’s, Caroline replied: ‘What Guglielmo studies in grammar is the Nominative case A. Niece – but

What I in grammatical studies prefer  
Is the Verb which begins “ego amo”, I love”!
In my heart, Oh! to thee it must ever refer  
Indicative only of thee I adore!

([n.d.], Osborn fd. 11, item 95)

‘To a Young Poetess’ (p. 148) is yet another tribute to Caroline’s verse, and ‘On the sounds produced by the wind passing over the strings of a Pedal Harp in a Garden’ (p. 190), is a sweet and somewhat mournful tribute to Caroline Chinnery’s harp playing in the garden at Gillwell.78 The ‘young lady’ in Spencer’s poem ‘On reading Milton with a Young Lady’ (p. 195) is Caroline Chinnery79 and Spencer writes of the pleasure he takes in these sessions:

Ah no, when we study our Poet divine,  
Believe me, dear girl, all the profit is mine.

The blank after ‘Mademoiselle’ in Spencer’s poem ‘A Mademoiselle ______ avec un parasol’ (p. 218) may be filled in with ‘Chinnery’, as the poem is to be found in manuscript form in the Osborn collection entitled ‘A Mademoiselle Chinnery avec un Parasol’.80 Beginning ‘Un parasol à Caroline!’, it is a self-mocking lament that his gift of a parasol to Caroline will hide his beloved ‘niece’s’ beautiful face, but in a reference to his role as Caroline’s tutor, he consoles himself with the thought that

Ne pouvant chauffer son visage,  
J’ai tant éclairé son esprit!

While the poem ‘To George R. Chinnery, Esq. Translated from the French of M.C.[Margaret Chinnery]’(p. 128), does not directly allude to the part Spencer played in

78 The original manuscript is in the Powerhouse collection (PM 94/143/1 – 30/7)  
79 See M to G, 31 November 1808, Ch.Ch., in which Margaret refers to Caroline reading Milton with Spencer.  
80 Osborn, fd. 11, item 42.
helping George win the Newdigate prize for poetry at Oxford in 1810, it does pay tribute to his win by translating Margaret’s own poem addressed to George on this occasion. (The poem is also interesting for the amount it betrays about Margaret’s childhood.) A poem by William Chinnery, which he recited as a prologue to the unveiling of the ‘Colonna Carolina’, erected in the gardens of Gillwell in celebration of Caroline’s recovering from whooping cough, attributes Caroline’s cure to:

William Spencer’s Med’cine of the Mind
With Lockley’s Care & Heberdens combin’d.83

In August 1811 Spencer decided (or rather, Margaret decided him) to send a copy of his Poems to Madame de Genlis, with whom Margaret had been keeping up a desultory correspondence since the former’s adopted son Casimir Baecker had come to Gillwell in 1807. Margaret was instrumental in persuading him to expand on the simple inscription he had addressed to the great lady on the cover of his book to include some lines of verse in the form of a homage. In her letter to George of 14 August 1811 Margaret wrote:

Yesterday I wrote again to Mad. de Genlis and the chief object of this letter was to send her Guglielmo’s Poems; — while I was writing, I sent down to tell him [Spencer] that the simply writing on the book “To Mad. de Genlis from the Author” was hardly a compliment to her, and that I begged he would directly [for Margaret was only too familiar with Guglielmo’s habit of procrastination] write four lines in English by way of envoi; he replied that he would try, but was sure he could not; — however, in less than a quarter of an hour he sent me the following

To Madame de Genlis
A Servant of those Arts which you command
Dares e’vn to you address one votive line,
The poorest Swain who toil’d on Attic land
Bow’d not unfavour’d at Minerva’s shrine!

(M to G, 14 August 1811, Ch.Ch.)

81 It emphasises her own early emotional and educational deprivations, compared to George’s happy childhood.
82 See p. 586.
83 Osborn, fd. 11, item 75. Caroline was not in fact cured, although her family thought at the time that she was. Lockley was the Chinnery family doctor (see Part I, p. 177). William Heberden (1767-1845), son
Margaret found the verses ‘just and pretty’, but was anxious about a possible French misinterpretation of the word ‘servant’. Unfortunately there is no indication in the Chinnery letters if Madame de Genlis ever received it or what her reaction was if she did. This was the last reference to Spencer’s and Caroline’s poetry in the collection.

of the eminent English physician William Heberden the elder (1710-1801), was a physician and scholar. He was one of the doctors most frequently consulted by George III during his last illness.
(ii) The education of little Margaret and Matilda Chinnery

During the years 1808 – 1811, Margaret continued the education of the two little girls, albeit, in the case of little Margaret, in a desultory fashion, as the latter was not living continuously at Gillwell. Although Margaret claimed in 1808 that she would ‘find it a hard matter [...] to make anything of them’, she was successful in giving them a well rounded education. Matilda lived continuously at Gillwell during these years and benefited greatly from Margaret’s attentions – especially in the domain of music. Indeed both girls eventually became accomplished musicians, as did [the unidentified] Maria (Margaret’s fifth pupil until 1806), who in 1814 was earning two guineas a week teaching music to Margaret’s nieces the Miss Marshes. There is a letter from Margaret’s relative Richard Holland to George Chinnery showing that ‘little’ Margaret also gave music lessons in London:

I expect you will see Margaret soon. She writes to me that she intends being in town about the middle or end of this month, and her plan seems to be to settle there to teach the harp & Pianoforte. When she comes I conclude she will want advice & help in settling herself as well as in recommendations & I have no doubt your mother & her other friends will be ready to assist her. The services of M. Dizi may be most valuable to her – and circumstanced as he is there will be no danger of jealousy.

(Richard Holland to George Chinnery, 16 April 1822, Fisher)

After Caroline died Matilda became a second daughter to Margaret, calling her ‘mama’ (as did little Margaret) and assuming the role that Caroline would have filled for her mother – accompanying her on outings, helping run the household, receiving guests and entertaining them with music. On Caroline’s death Matilda wrote a moving eulogy which she sent to Margaret accompanied by the wish that it might find her ‘more composed and settled’. The poem shows that Matilda too could write pretty verse:

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84 M to G, 25 January 1808, Ch.Ch.
85 On 12 January 1807 Margaret wrote in her Journal (op. cit., vol. 2) that Maria had been ‘taken from me since June last’.
86 Matilda Chinnery’s Journal, op. cit., 31 March [1814]. The Miss Marshes (Georgina and Martha) were the two daughters of Margaret’s sister Elizabeth and her husband William Marsh.
Brief was thy day of life – but it hath pass’d
Cloudless, serene & lovely to the last
Soothe then, kind heav’n, oh soothe the parents’ fate
With frequent visions of her blissful state
And let the Guardian Angel of their Child
Bid them in Christian faith be reconcil’d.

(c.April 1812, Osborn fd. 11, item 80)

Matilda’s journal of 1814 gives ample evidence of the closeness that existed between them, and testifies to her gratitude to Margaret for continuing her piano lessons: ‘Mama was so good as to give a Music lesson to Margaret & myself upon a duet of Dussek’s which we prepared to play at Mrs Smyth’s’. Matilda’s younger sisters Elizabeth and Mary were also sent from India to be raised in England, but did not stay at Gillwell. They were being educated at school in London.

Matilda grew into the graceful and accomplished person that Caroline had been, and the many references to her in Margaret’s correspondence (in the Fisher collection) in the years before her marriage to Captain Samuel Hodgson in 1822 prove that she was well-regarded among Margaret’s circle of friends. Margaret was extremely sad to lose her when she went to India to marry.

In accordance with Madame de Genlis’s principle that every young gentlewoman’s education should give her the skills to raise and educate her own children, Margaret encouraged Caroline to contribute to the lessons of her two younger relatives Margaret and Matilda. As early as 1808 Caroline ‘explained the catechism to the little girls’. In 1811 Caroline was nineteen and perfectly competent to fill Margaret’s role as educator when the latter was in London. During such periods she continued Matilda’s history, German and music lessons, and each day when little Margaret came over from the cottage (where she was living with Marianne Chinnery) to dine at Gillwell, Caroline used the dinner hour to have educational conversations with her:
[...] j'ai taché de mettre ses dinés a profit, en lui donnant des petites leçons de français, tout en causant avec elle. Elle sait le nom de beaucoup de choses déjà – et tous les mots de deux syllabes; elle a appris [sic] a épeiller [sic] aussi – Comme la pluie l’a empêché de venir hier, Matilda et moi nous avons causé sur l’histoire Romaine – j’ai taché de lui remettre les points principaux dans la tête – elle m’a répété sa leçon tous les jours – et hier nous avons lu de l’Allemand ensemble et je lui ai fait jouer ses variations par cœur, après le dîner!

(C to M, 30 January 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 4/2)

In March 1811 Margaret wrote to George that little Margaret had just returned from school in London, and that she had ‘grown awkward and vulgar looking, and [had] lost the greatest part of her former accomplishments.’ Margaret was at a loss to know what to do with her, writing that ‘it is sad up-hill work to begin all over again’, and concluding that if they returned to town for the spring season that she would have to return to school.92 But little Margaret, like Matilda, grew into an accomplished lady, and in about 1822 married Captain Charles Andrew Girardot.93

92 M to G, 4 March 1811, Ch.Ch.
93 There are two letters from little Margaret in the Fisher collection. Neither is dated, but the first is postmarked 28 June 1815, addressed to Margaret at 10 Charles Street, and is signed ‘Margaret Chinnery’. She has just been staying with the Spencers in the country, and is about to return to London. From the second letter to Margaret signed ‘Margaret Girardot’, it is evident that she has just married. She writes, ‘We arrived here on the 14th inst. off the Steam Packet after a roughish passage’, confirming that the wedding date was later than 1821, when steam packets first began to cross the Channel. (George had written to Margaret on 13 March 1821 (Fisher collection) that ‘Lord Chichester the Postmaster General is about to launch two Steam Vessels between Dover and Calais which will not only expedite the passage but will relieve passengers almost entirely from the miseries of sea sickness [...]’ At the time of Viotti’s death Margaret wrote to William that the Girardots were very good to her: ‘he takes all remaining duties upon himself as to directions and management. She sits beside me [...]’ (M to W, 4 March 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 17/54).
(iii) Caroline's music education, 1807-1811

From Caroline's earliest childhood Margaret had emphasised the study of music. It is clear from Margaret's education journal and from the majority of her letters to George at Oxford that she considered musical skills to be top on the list of elegant accomplishments. Armed with such skills — especially at the high level at which Caroline possessed them — a young lady was able to woo and win society's approval. One journal entry in particular proves that all Margaret's care in cultivating learning, manners and polite accomplishments in her daughter had been leading up to the time when she could be shown off in society. It is the entry of 11 March 1807, in which Margaret wrote of Caroline's first visits to the homes of fashionable élégants and élégantes in 1807, when the family had been staying at Spencer's house in Curzon Street during George's long illness. Caroline was taken to dine at the home of the collector Richard Payne Knight; at the Berkeley Street residence of Lady Susan Dunmore, also an intimate of Spencer and the subject of some of his published poetry; and had spent an evening at Lady Ann Hamilton's, another close friend of Spencer. Margaret wrote:

Caroline did credit to the careful education I have endeavoured to give her upon all these occasions. She conducted herself with propriety, modesty and good sense, — and she had her reward in the esteem and attention she obtained. This may convince her that what I have ever told her is true — a right conduct united to pleasing manners, must succeed in society. Her talents are of course as yet very unfinished, but on account of her youth and unassuming modesty, they gave the greatest pleasure. her playing on the Pianoforte was universally admired [...] 

(Margaret's Journal, op. cit., 11 March 1807)

Not only was Caroline a competent harp and piano player by the age of fifteen, but she had also made sufficient progress in her study of music theory to attempt to compose some of her own music. On 3 February 1807 Margaret wrote that 'Caroline has attempted to set some italian words to music, and has succeeded very well. The air is pretty, and Amico thinks the attempt a very good one.'95 Caroline took delight in

94 The letter from Ann Hamilton to Caroline Chinnery issuing this invitation (or another) is in the Fisher collection (Ann Hamilton to Caroline Chinnery, 6 July 1807, Fisher).
95 Margaret Chinnery's Journal, vol. 2, 3 February 1807.
exercising her creative skills, and did not need pushing from Margaret to keep producing her little pieces. Keen to please, she wrote proudly to George at the end of 1808 of her latest attempt to court ‘the Muses’: ‘I courted Euterpe lately, who received me graciously enough, and I implored her assistance in the composition of the Romances, which have met with approbation; the words are written by Mr Spencer, they are in the old french style, & some of them are really beautiful!’ Her mother confirmed that her composition was a success when it was performed at home before a party of guests, which included Spencer and Samuel Rogers:

The evening was rendered delightful by Caroline singing three beautiful things she has composed very lately; they are properly Lays in the romance stile, the words in old french by Guglielmo, and set by your sister with admirable truth taste & beauty. Amico and every one feels surprised at her great success, — for really there is nothing of the imperfection of a first attempt in these pieces.

(M to G, 28 November 1808, Ch.Ch.)

In 1809 there are two more mentions of Caroline’s setting verse to music. The first was in February, during the Comte de Vaudreuil’s stay at Gillwell, when she wrote music for some of his verses, and the second on 12 May, Viotti’s birthday, when she composed verses and music to mark the event. On both occasions her attempts met with general approval.

Margaret was also pleased with her daughter’s singing voice, and Caroline herself took pleasure in performing for the many guests that came to Gillwell. However, there is evidence, contained in Caroline’s own journal that dates from March 1809, that these occasions caused her great anxiety, and even brought her close to despair. The reason was Margaret’s uncompromising demand for perfection in her children, already stated in many of her letters to George. To the moral and intellectual perfection that she constantly emphasised she added, in Caroline’s case, a physical perfection that was impossible for her daughter to attain.

Caroline’s journal, written in French, begins with an apologetic confession. She should be the happiest of seventeen year-olds, and has much to be thankful for. She has

96 Note from Caroline at end of M to G, 26 November 1808, Ch.Ch.
97 M to G, 9 February 1809, Ch.Ch.
98 M to G, 12 May 1809, Ch.Ch.
99 Caroline Chinnery’s Journal (March-May 1809), PM 94/143/1 – 22.
a brother whom she adores, 'une mère incomparable, et qui sera toujours unique en zèle, en amour maternel, en désinteressement, en piété, en vertus, en connaissances, en talents', and has been given 'une éducation, comme jamais personne n’en a eu'. But inspite of all this she is tormented by one persistent and irremediable worry — her short-sightedness. It is a problem she has endured for the past three or four years and one which impinges on her ability to sight read her music when she is performing before company. She cites a painful memory of her mother stopping her in mid-lesson one day in early 1806 when she was incapable of reading the music of a song she was learning. Although Caroline explained that she could not read the music because she could not see it, her mother refused to believe that her excuse was not an affectation, and punished her severely: 'elle me disoit a chaque instant combien elle détestoit et haïssoit même une vue basse, qu’elle aimeroit mieux que j’eus tout autre déformité de personne, que ce défaut là &c — mais ce qui m’a frappé et effrayé le plus, étoit, que Maman me disoit qu’elle m’en aimeroit moins.'

The last was a threat commonly used by Margaret to bring her children into submission, either unaware or unmindful of the trauma it caused them. It was a technique described by Madame de Genlis in Adèle et Théodore, and one of her many methods that gave rise to the charge of cruelty, especially with regard to her younger daughter Pulchérie, who rebelled with such vigour at her mother’s methods that Madame de Genlis was subsequently forced to admit her error. But Margaret’s demand for physical perfection in Caroline is enigmatic. George, Caroline’s twin, also had defective eye-sight. Yet Margaret recognised George’s short-sightedness and procured for him some spectacles with which he was to exercise his eyes daily in his room at Oxford. Why refuse to recognise this handicap in her daughter? Perhaps she saw it as a blight on her daughter’s beauty. A more likely explanation is that she thought Caroline was inventing her disorder. Margaret’s stubbornness over this issue caused Caroline to suffer torment on each occasion that she was expected to sing with company: ‘quand je chanterai avec le Chevalier [La Cainea] comment dois-je faire? Maman s’attendra a me voir chanter tout presque a livre-ouvert; mais si je ne suis pas au Piano, je ne le peus pas! J’en suis extremement peinée.’

100 Ibid., 21 March 1809.
101 De Broglie, op. cit., p. 143.
102 Caroline Chinnery’s Journal, 21 March 1809.
embarrassed, but disappointed by her inability to do what she loved best: 'je regretterois toujours mon incapabilité pour faire des choses que j’aime pardessus tout!'\textsuperscript{103} A little further on in the journal she writes that the Chevalier is at Gillwell again and expecting to sing with her: ‘Ceci est un sujet de mortification continuel [sic] pour moi!’ Her only source of consolation, she writes, is to take communion at church.\textsuperscript{104}

On 24 April 1809 she notes that she is having nightmares about her shortsightedness, and on 28 April that her mother begins to taunt her that even Matilda, who is six years her junior, can read music better. On 4 May 1809 she writes that she fears that ‘j’ai fait une bien meschine [sic] figure deux ou trois fois quand on m’a proposé de chanter; mais vraiment je n’osois le risquer, prévoyant l’impossibilité de me placer assez près pour voir!’ Even when a young friend asked her outright if she were shortsighted she was too ashamed to admit it.\textsuperscript{105} There is no hint of Caroline’s problem in Margaret’s letters to George of the same period.

That Caroline continued to sing to great acclaim at home and in the drawing rooms of friends would indicate that Margaret eventually acknowledged the problem and took measures to overcome it. By 1810 her voice was so good, according to Margaret, that performers like Giuseppe Naldi and Madame Bianchi were a little afraid to presume to teach her anything, as they feared she knew more than they did. In early 1810 Margaret had asked Naldi to teach Caroline ‘the buffo style’, which she told George must be learned from an Italian.\textsuperscript{106} But Margaret did not want Caroline to be Naldi’s pupil for long because ‘she certainly sings better than he can, as to stile and professional merit, and then her complete knowledge of music obliges them all [the professional musicians] to be on their guard.’\textsuperscript{107}

Caroline soon began composing her own pieces for piano, usually adagios, modelled on the style of Viotti. On 6 June Margaret wrote that Caroline was busy composing an adagio for Lady Dunmore, which she hoped to play for her the following Friday at her London home.\textsuperscript{108} At the end of 1809 Francesco Bianchi, who had for eight years been Caroline’s composition tutor, spent another few weeks at Gillwell to complete her study of composition. Margaret wrote to George: ‘Our three guests are still

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 4 May 1809.
\textsuperscript{106} M to G, 3 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
here, — Maestro will probably remain some time, as he means to leave your sister a complete Doctor of Music, a Miss Doc as you would say; he says that in a very short time she will know all that ever was known of music as a science. Caroline’s musical compositions, under the guidance of Bianchi and Viotti, were just as elegant as her verse compositions. By the time Caroline reached the age of eighteen, the talents that Margaret sought to instil in her daughter had been not only acquired, but polished to a high degree. Her singing, according to Margaret, was better than that of the latest London challenger to Catalani, Madame Bertinotti. Margaret was pleased with her work in educating her daughter. She was now ready to be properly launched in society.
(iv) The result of a good education – Caroline’s success in society

The first time that Caroline sang in society was in the Dunmore’s drawing room in Berkeley Street, London. It was before a small but ‘brilliant’ gathering, where she was applauded for both her singing and her playing. Margaret was gratified to see her ‘work’ so amply rewarded:

She played, accompanied Amico, played a Duett with Lady Susan [Dunmore] and for the first time, sang! [...] There were at least twenty persons of the first rank and fashion in the room [...] Her success surpassed my expectations; and among her admirers, one of the warmest was Lord Glenbervie, with whom I had a little conversation. Lord Douglas [son of Glenbervie] too, is amazingly struck, and delighted with her talents; but the ladies were no less so [...] On that evening I was fully repaid for all my care and vigilance in teaching her [...] Indeed I often think that I am blessed far beyond any thing I could deserve in both my children! When this thought comes into my head, the tears always come into my eyes, — tears of gratitude towards heaven, and love towards both of you! But this feeling, so far from blinding me with regard to you; makes me redouble in vigilant attention; in scrupulous watchfulness, that my work may be as perfect as human nature will allow.

(M to G, 21 June 1809, Ch.Ch.)

There is no clearer proof of Margaret’s preoccupation with perfection than this last assertion, which shows that her insistence on high standards was driven – as was Madame de Genlis’s – by love and ambition.

But it was in 1810 that Caroline really made her mark in society. In early February Margaret’s recurrent gallstone attacks obliged her to move to London to be closer to her physician. The whole family accompanied her to a rented house at 28 Half Moon Street, where they remained until Easter. While Margaret was still too ill to go out, Caroline sometimes went with her father, Viotti and Spencer to visit friends. She went twice to the Dunmores’, where she performed ‘en famille’ and where her playing ‘was amazingly admired’. ¹¹¹ She also went to Samuel Rogers’s mansion overlooking Green Park ¹¹² where she ‘accompanied the Chevalier [La Cainea] & Naldi, and played

¹¹¹ M to G, 23 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
¹¹² Samuel Rogers’s new home at 24 St. James Place, Westminster, built in 1803, was tastefully furnished and contained an exquisite collection of works of art, antiquities and books. His refined hospitality
an Adagio herself, and to the home of the London banker Hammersley, whose friendship with the Chinnerys probably originated with a Treasury connection. He knew that Margaret had taught Caroline music herself, and therefore invited two persons with a practical interest in education—Dr Fisher, the Bishop of Salisbury, who was governor to the Prince of Wales’s daughter, Princess Charlotte, and Dr ‘Knott’, her sub-governor. Margaret wrote to George that the Hammersleys’ object in inviting these eminent educationalists had been ‘to shew your sister to these persons’. Caroline was asked to play the piano and the harp and was astonished ‘to see them so much delighted with the little she could do without her music, and upon two wretched instruments.’

After the Easter vacation, spent at Gillwell, Margaret decided to return to London to launch Caroline properly, and so took a house at Stratford Place for the 1810 spring season. Viotti enjoyed being back in the capital, close to the musical fraternity and to his royal friend the Duke of Cambridge. Spencer decided to move in with them and accompanied the family to the many dinners and parties to which they were invited. The 27 May was the date of Caroline’s formal debut, at a party Margaret gave for fifty guests. An enthusiastic account of this party is given by William Chinnery in one of his rare letters to George at Oxford. William wrote that this was the first time that Caroline had sung ‘outside the Etruscan Room at Gillwell’, and certainly the first time that she had performed before such a large gathering of people of ‘the first rank and fashion’, yet, he continued, ‘the difficulty of the situation seemed to give her additional courage’, and she was admired for her personal attributes as well as her musical ability. Margaret always drew up her guest lists with care, making sure she included

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113 M to G, 27 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
114 John Fisher (1748-1825), D.D. (Cambridge) 1789, was a gifted teacher and a favourite of George III, who in 1805 had appointed him to superintend the education of the Princess Charlotte of Wales. He became bishop of Salisbury in 1807.
115 Margaret clearly means Dr Nott, mentioned also by Glenbervie in his Diaries (1928, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 20). The former was a Christ Church graduate, George Frederick Nott (1767-1841), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1788, Fellow of All Souls’ College until 1814, M.A. 1792, B.D. 1802, D.D. 1807, and prebendary of Winchester in 1810.
116 M to G, 17 March 1810, Ch.Ch.
117 Letters from William to his son in this period were generally confined to a few lines scribbled on the outside of one of Margaret’s letters, dealing with coach arrival times in London at the end of term, or dates he or his colleagues were passing through Oxford. This was not because William was a reluctant correspondent. Letters elsewhere in the CFP collection show that he was a prolific letter-writer—effervescent and verbose. One reason was that he was overworked at the Treasury, but even so he preferred to leave family letter-writing in Margaret’s capable hands.
118 W to G, 28 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
persons who were both ‘select’ and compatible with each other, and making it a point to invite those in a position of influence. She also liked to include at least one lively wit such as Spencer, so that her parties were never dull. Her guests on 27 May included the Duke of Cambridge; Spencer’s relatives the Duchess of Devonshire and Lady Bessborough; Lady Shaftesbury; Lord Erskine; Lord Crewe; Lord and Lady Morpeth; Sir Sidney and Lady Smith; the diplomat Lord Granville Leveson-Gower and his wife; Lord and Lady Leitrim, politician and writer George Lamb, Lord and Lady Dunmore, the Chinnerys’ good friends Mr and Miss Johnstone, brother and sister of whom Lord Glenbervie spoke so scathingly in his Journals, and who were on close terms with the Prince of Wales; and many other leading lights of fashion. William, acknowledging the contribution of his wife to his daughter’s success, wrote that George would hear all the particulars of the evening from his ‘dear Mentor, who was rewarded on the occasion as she deserved – by the most distinguished admiration of your Sister’s Talents & Manners, by one of the most brilliant Circles that could be seen anywhere.’ Like Margaret, William had high hopes for his son. He exhorted George to follow his sister’s example: ‘For a young Female to sing before such a Circle for the first Time was more than equal to the Situation of a young Man first addressing the House of Commons! When it comes to your Turn to debuter there, recollect what your dear Sister did last night!!!’ George was proud of his twin sister, just as she was proud of him whenever he distinguished himself at Oxford. Since their earliest education Margaret had encouraged the twins to share in each other’s triumphs and tribulations:

119 Margaret’s skill in bringing off successful parties was acknowledged by Glenbervie in his Journals (Douglas, 1910, op. cit., p. 144).
120 Lady Henrietta Spencer (d. 1821), second daughter of John, first Earl Spencer, was the wife of Frederick Ponsonby, third Earl of Bessborough (1758-1844).
121 Anne (d. 1865), daughter of the third Duke of Marlborough, was the wife of Cropley Ashley Cooper, sixth Earl of Shaftesbury.
122 John Crewe, second Baron Crewe (1772-1835), lieutenant-general, was the brother of Miss Emma Crewe (see Part I, p. 181).
123 George Howard, sixth Earl of Carlisle (1773-1848), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1790, created M.A. 1801, married Georgiana, eldest daughter of William Cavendish, fifth Duke of Devonshire.
124 Granville Leveson-Gower, first Earl Granville (1773-1846), youngest son of Granville, first Marquess of Stafford, was an ex-Christ Church man (D.C.L. 1799), an inveterate gambler, and a one-time Commissioner of the Treasury (1800-1801).
125 George Lamb (1784-1834), youngest son of first Viscount Melbourne, frequented Byron, Moore and Miss Mary Berry. He was one of the earlier contributors to the Edinburgh Review.
127 W to G, 28 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
128 Ibid.
‘Your Sister is a part of yourself, – you must both ever feel for each other as you do for yourselves!’

The spring season in London was a social whirlwind. Apologising to George for being a bad correspondent, Margaret wrote of all their ‘hurry and confusion’, ‘dressing and visiting’, and ‘learning and rehearsing’ for Caroline’s recitals. Margaret hosted two other big parties, each of them preceded by a dinner for a select number of guests. The last was given on 27 June, and among the fashionable guests was Lord Glenbervie, whose son had just graduated from Oxford. Caroline was now, Margaret wrote, ‘quite the fashion!’

The Chinnerys also received many invitations to balls – at Miss Johnstone’s and at Lady Shaftesbury’s; dinners – three at Devonshire House, one at Colonel Greville’s; and after-dinner parties – two from the art connoisseur and collector Thomas Hope at his Cavendish Square mansion in London, and two from the Princess of Wales at Kensington Palace. At all these Caroline was the centre of attention. The first invitation from the Princess of Wales was procured for the Chinnerys by William Spencer:

The Princess of Wales gave Guglielmo, who called on her last Saturday morning a card of invitation for your father, your sister & myself for last night, — we went and were most graciously received. The party was very small, not consisting of more than 15 or so persons, — your sister was asked by her to play two or three times, and the Princess seemed charmed with her, — indeed she was listened to by all with apparent admiration. The Princess asked and pressed her to sing, but she has a cold, and having rehearsed yesterday morning for our party this evening, she begged to be excused for last night only, which was granted with much good humour [...] To-day Ld & Lady Morpeth, Lord Granville & Lady Harriet Levison, Lord Rivers.[dale], and Mr [Payne]

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129 M to G, 30 May 1810, Ch.Ch.
130 M to G, 25 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
131 M to G, 27 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
132 Henry Francis Greville (1760-1816), fourth son of Fulke Greville of Wilbury, Wiltshire, by his marriage with Lady Charlotte Bentinck, eldest daughter of William Henry Cavendish Bentinck, third Duke of Portland. He was a lieutenant colonel in the army.
133 Thomas Hope (1770? -1831), was born in Amsterdam, son of a rich merchant. He came to England in about 1796, after the French occupation of Holland. He used his substantial fortune to build up a valuable collection of ancient sculptures and vases, Italian pictures, and other works of art. His marbles were particularly famous. He owned two houses, one in Duchess Street, near Cavendish Square, and one at Deepdene in Surrey, both of which the Chinnerys visited. In her letter to George Margaret described the London house as ‘a most splendid mansion’, but added that she could not ‘much admire the mistress of it’ (M to G, 27 March 1810, Ch.Ch.). The previous year Hope had published a lavish quarto volume with colour plates entitled *Costume of the Ancients* (Miller: London,
Knight dine here, — and in the evening I expect about 70 of the élégantes & fashionables of this town.

(M to G, 11 June 1810, Ch.Ch.)

Before the second of the Princess of Wales’s parties, Margaret took care to groom Caroline well, and after much rehearsing, she sang at Kensington Palace on 24 June. It was not only Caroline who basked in the limelight at this glittering soirée. Margaret took full credit for her daughter’s talent, and accepted graciously all accolades as her rightful due. In her letter to George describing Caroline’s royal success she wrote proudly of her pedagogical reputation.134

Margaret’s aim in throwing herself into society in this way was not only to promote Caroline’s interests. She told George that his own interests would be served equally well ‘by my living a little in society’ because ‘I frequently talk of you, and frequently answer enquiries that are made about you &c &c &c – besides making connections, which will all serve as introductions to you, even were I not to return next Spring.’135 Margaret availed herself of these opportunities to discuss her method of education, for everyone – including the twins themselves – attributed Caroline’s and George’s successes to Margaret’s expertise as an educationalist.

It was just before the Easter vacation of 1811 that Caroline caught whooping cough. The treatment for this disease was very much a matter of trial and error. One of the popular views of the time rested on the theory that patients would benefit from frequent ‘changes of air’. For the next three months, therefore, in a complex shuffling of living arrangements, Caroline – having been moved from Gillwell to London – was shifted at regular intervals between two abodes in an unremitting quest for clean air. The first was the home of the kind-hearted but fastidious poet Samuel Rogers, who offered her the use of part of his mansion overlooking Green Park, where Caroline could rest in his drawing room or go down to sit in his sun-bathed garden.136

1809). Margaret thought that its plates were beautiful, but the text insubstantial (see M to G, 13 June 1809, Ch.Ch.).
134 M to G, 25 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
135 M to G, 9 June 1810, Ch.Ch.
136 There are letters from Rogers to the Chinnery family that date from this period in the Fisher collection. Correspondence between various members of the Chinnery family and Spencer (also of this period) testify to the finicky temperament of the poet, who was criticised by their mutual friend Thomas Moore in his Journal for the same trait. However, two letters from William to Margaret written during this time leave no doubt about his goodness of heart: ‘Rogers has been so kind as to give up his own Bed Room to dear Cary & to go up Stairs himself – this sounds odd, but he built this upper Room on
was her father’s lodgings at 3 Duke Street, in the Adelphi by the river where she could be carried by sedan chair down to the terrace on the edge of the water. Spencer watched devotedly over her, only leaving her side to go to the dinners which marked the beginning of the London season. As Caroline regained strength he resumed poetry readings with her and danced with her in Rogers’s drawing room. George remarked that apart from her mother, Caroline would prefer to have Guglielmo by her side to anyone else.

It was not until May that the doctors declared Caroline to be out of danger, and allowed her to return home. Margaret planned an elaborate welcome home party to celebrate the event, and George even quit Oxford for a couple of days in mid-term to participate. His arrival, timed to coincide with the ringing of the Gillwell bell to mark the commencement of the festivities, was to be a surprise for Caroline. Margaret also ordered a small column, which the family named the ‘Colonna Carolina’, to be erected in the Gillwell gardens as a memorial of her recovery. George composed some Latin verses in the appropriate ‘lapidary stile’ to be inscribed upon it, and much planning went into the landscaping around the monument. The column and its inscription became a topic which engrossed the whole family, including William, who mulled over the verses he was to pronounce at the opening of the ceremony, as he trotted along the road on his homeward journey to London after a week-end at Gillwell.

While Caroline convalesced, Spencer gave the family accounts of the ‘dazzling’ dinners he had attended, including one at the London home of their mutual friends and neighbours in Epping Forest, the Sothebys. These accounts made Margaret regret that they were missing the London season. She was afraid that by not appearing in London

[especially?] for his own apartments & it is most nice certainly, but still it is most kind indeed’ (W to M, 7 April 1811, Fisher). He wrote again, soon after: ‘She [Caroline] is most comfortable at Rogers’ indeed. I am glad you have written again to him, for with all his whims, oddities & sarcasms, he must be really good & kind to act so about dear Cary’ (W to M, [April 1811, Fisher).

In a letter to Caroline addressed to ‘Cara, Carissima’, Rogers writes that when he returns home from a luncheon he hopes to find her, singing a bravura or waltzing with Spencer, adding in a postscript ‘Pray tell Spencer not to double down my books’ (Samuel Rogers to Caroline Chinnery, c. April 1811).

Descriptions of the celebrations are to be found in correspondence in the Christ Church and Fisher collections.

The verses, labeled ‘Prologue to “The Colonna Carolina” as represented for the first time in the Gardens at Gillwell on Tuesday May 28th 1811’, are a humorous poke at ‘Physicians, Surgeons, Quacks & all’ and make fun of the multifarious treatments that Caroline was subjected to — draughts and pills, bleedings, antispasmodics, embrocations, sedatives (‘Hemlock Pills’), ‘Squills Antiperpusis, Ipecacuanha, wine antimonial, Tartar Emetic’. William even jokes about ‘Mama, taking a weekly lodging here & there, t’ensure the benefit of change of air’ (Osborn fd. 11, item 75).
drawing rooms in 1811, after having made a successful debut there in 1810, they might be forgotten: ‘To be sure it is very unfortunate that we should lose the Spring in town, as I fear that all our incipient acquaintance with the gay & great world will die away, and ourselves be forgotten long before the end of another year.’\(^{141}\) Margaret’s own health during this period had not been good. Her rhumatism worsened, her nerves were badly affected by the worry over the severity of Caroline’s illness, causing evening headaches, and her gallstone attacks had recommenced.\(^{142}\)

In spite of Margaret’s concern about missing the spring season, there was one last social event on the London calendar that the Chinnerys did not miss. This was the Prince Regent’s ball on 19 June 1811,\(^{143}\) for which they were to have the Sotheby mansion in town.\(^{144}\) Caroline was well enough to accompany her parents and Viotti. The occasion was the first of many in 1811 when the Prince extended public marks of favour to the Chinnery family. Margaret wrote of the benefits of this to George:

> You have heard I suppose that the Prince came up and spoke to your father as soon as he saw him; he really seems to distinguish him upon all occasions, and this is a happy as well as gratifying circumstance. He held his council on Saturday at the Treasury, instead of Carlton House, on account of the confusion occasioned there by the Fête; and he spoke most kindly to your father, who, with the Cabinet ministers received him at the door, and conducted him out again; he even had the condescension to enquire after little Cary & me! — I hope all these marks of favour may be of use to you bye and bye.

(M to G, 24 June 1811, Ch.Ch.)

The ball at Carlton House, falling as it did on the eve of the autumn holiday season, preluded a period of intense social activity for all the Chinnery family except George, who was in Oxford reading for his degree examination. When in August the Chinnerys removed to Eastbourne to complete Caroline’s rehabilitation, none of them imagined the frantic whirl of parties that they were about to get caught up in. Margaret’s reason for allowing themselves to be drawn into this ‘foolish round of parties’ was somewhat contradictory to her stated aim in coming to the seaside. Since Caroline’s debut into London society had been interrupted by her long illness, this was a chance to

\(^{141}\) M to C, 11 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
\(^{142}\) M to G, 23 May 1811, Ch.Ch.
\(^{143}\) See M to G, 21 June 1811, and 24 June 1811, Ch.Ch. for detailed accounts of the ball.
\(^{144}\) In the event, they took lodgings at Upper Seymour Street.
make her known in circles likely to remember her in the following season that was not to be missed. It was hard work for a family such as the Chinnerys to launch a daughter into society, and Margaret did not hesitate to call it just that. The education which she had given to her children, was, as she had so often repeated to George, to compensate for their lack of high birth. It was the only way they would be noticed. And noticed they were. The four months that the Chinnerys spent at the various fashionable watering resorts in the autumn of 1811 launched Caroline into society in a way more spectacular than even Margaret could have hoped for. Margaret’s grand plan of education for her children was nearing completion, and as she had said on many occasions, she was well satisfied with her work:

There are not two, nor even one, such good children as mine in the whole world, — you are both so very very near being every thing that my most fastidious wished could desire! All the solid, all the most valuable parts are there, perfect & entire, — and the small additions I want, merely in externals, are so easy of attainment!

(M to G, 8 August 1811, Ch.Ch.)

Although these words were intended for George, they applied equally well to Caroline. By ‘externals’ Margaret meant the outward graces. Since Caroline’s early education Margaret had stressed the need for her daughter to pay attention to her posture. The impression made in society by intellectual fortitude and pleasant manners was scarred by an inelegant bearing. Now that Caroline was of an age to enjoy the benefits of the careful education she had received she acquiesced in Margaret’s efforts to improve her carriage. In January 1811 Caroline was regularly wearing a back brace to aid her deportment: ‘Dites à Maman que depuis qu’elle m’en a parlé Samedi passé j’ai porté mes brasses tous les jours, matins et soirs, sans jamais les ôter!’ Caroline had instructed Viotti, in her letter of 31 January, during a period of temporary separation.145

But as far as Caroline’s and George’s character was concerned, Margaret could not have been better pleased. Both were unaffected, modest, and in spite of their considerable achievements, exhibited not the slightest trace of vanity. This fact was corroborated by Lord Glenbervie, who was at Tunbridge Wells in September 1811 at the same time as the Chinnerys. He described Caroline Chinnery in his Journals as ‘a

145 C to V, 31 January 1811, PM 94/143/1 – 28/3. Viotti had accompanied Margaret on a visit to London.
very pretty, lively, alert girl still under twenty, with good features, black eyes, eyebrows and hair, a clear complexion of natural red and white, a neat person, obliging manners, frank and easy conversation, without being forward or obtrusive, and talents as well as taste, and skill in music in a superior degree. She is also said to write very pretty verses and I believe draws.146 William Spencer’s book of poems, which Caroline had helped him compile, had just been published, and Caroline’s part in this endeavour appears to have been common knowledge.

The Chinnerys were at Eastbourne before the arrival of the beau monde of London and had the place almost to themselves. Their days were filled with walks, tepid sea-bathing, letter-writing, and as soon as Caroline was strong enough, sailing and riding, and excursions to the surrounding places of interest. Spencer, who was with them, continued Caroline’s Latin instruction. Their days assumed a quiet, steady rhythm, with few interruptions. It was here that Margaret made the acquaintance of her dear friend Mrs Smyth,147 but there was not much other company. Caroline practised piano, singing and harp-playing, read Latin by day, and works of literature for pleasure in the evenings. Margaret enjoyed the company of her three ‘beaux’ – William, Viotti and Spencer, and missed them when one or other had to make brief visits to London.

At the end of August the Chinnerys moved on to Tunbridge Wells. Their travelling party consisted of Margaret, William, Caroline, Spencer, Viotti, the young relatives, little Margaret and Matilda, and various servants. At Tunbridge Wells their tranquillity came to an abrupt end: ‘Here is all bustle and visiting’, Margaret complained. ‘They tell me that when I have received and returned the first visits, I shall be much more to myself.’148 Two obligatory calls had to be paid straight away to Margaret’s Aunt Holland, who had a house not far away, and also to the beautiful Lady Charlemont, who ‘has engaged us for the evening to her. So here I am at a late hour come home to settle dresses &c &c, get a little rest and dinner, and then go to work again, for to me (entre nous) all this is work.’149 Drawing a comparison between their frivolous life in Tunbridge and the studious one George was leading in Oxford, she went on: ‘How ridiculous such a waste of time must appear to you who are making such

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146 Douglas (1910), op. cit., pp. 144-145.
147 Wife of Francis G. Smyth, major general in the 11th Regiment of Foot, 1779 (List of the Officers of the Army and Royal Marines, 1786).
148 M to G, 30 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
149 Ibid.
a noble and sensible use of your's! Our Drawing room is full of Vaudreuils, Lady Lambert &c but I am writing in my bed-chamber, Caroline is laying down in her's, and Guglielmo & Amico are receiving the company. This is a beautiful place, if there were no people in it and one could enjoy it!\textsuperscript{151}

In Tunbridge Wells the Chinnerys were surrounded by all that was elegant and fashionable in English society, including, once again, Lord Glenbervie, whose wife was in the Princess of Wales's retinue and whose son Frederick Douglas, had been at Oxford with George. Lord Glenbervie accepted hospitality of the Chinnerys in Tunbridge on 12 September, but repaid them with sneering allusions to William Chinnery's low birth and with a passing allusion to slanderous innuendo regarding Caroline's birth.\textsuperscript{152} The Chinnerys kept regular company with such luminaries as Lord and Lady Charlemont, described by Glenbervie as 'that beautiful blueish stocking';\textsuperscript{153} Mr and Mrs Tighe,\textsuperscript{154} 'the learned, silent, and saturnine' Lord Aberdeen;\textsuperscript{155} the self-important novelist and politician Mr Ward, whom Margaret and Lord Glenbervie both considered a pretentious pedant;\textsuperscript{156} the writer Miss Mary Berry, Madame de Staël's most esteemed woman friend in England, and Mary's sister Agnes; and many others.

In spite of Caroline's weakened state of health, she was exhibited everywhere as a talented musician. Always paired with Viotti, she was shown off to maximum advantage. At the beginning of September Margaret's Aunt Holland called a large party, for which she procured a harp and a pianoforte especially for Caroline. Margaret reported that her aunt was well-satisfied with the playing of Viotti and Caroline, and that 'Mr Brown, Mrs Holland's brother was among the company, and every body

\textsuperscript{150} The Comte de Vaudreuil, his wife and perhaps one or both sons; and the wife of Sir Henry Lambert.
\textsuperscript{151} M to G, 30 August 1811, Ch.Ch.
\textsuperscript{152} See Part I, p. 44, note 48. It is to the Chinnery's party of 12 September in Tunbridge that he refers in his seven-page journal entry of 13 September 1811, which is a mixture of sneers and praise for the various Chinnery family members, followed by a lengthy commentary on their friends. Glenbervie later became a firm friend and admirer of Margaret, corresponded in Italian with her, and sought her opinion of his Italian verse attempts, of which there are some specimens in the Osborn collection, including a letter in Italian accompanying part of his translation of Forteguerri's 1738 Ricciardetto (in Osborn fd. 11, item 64.). (Glenbervie's Translation from the Italian of Forteguerri of the first canto of Ricciardetto; with an introduction concerning the principal romantic, burlesque, and mock heroic poets was published in London in 1821).
\textsuperscript{153} Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 143.
\textsuperscript{154} Mary Tighe, author of a book of poems \textit{Psyche}, published in 1805.
\textsuperscript{156} Douglas (1910), op. cit., p. 148. Robert Plumer Ward (1765-1846), was discussed by Margaret in her letter to George of 21 September 1811, Ch.Ch. (see p. 593).
seemed gratified'. In spite of the glamorous society they were keeping, Margaret regretted Eastbourne: ‘All this is very fatiguing dear George, -- and we have both of us lost a great part of the good effects of East Bourne in this dissipated place! I cannot tell you how much I would give to be at East Bourne again! It is very fine air, and certainly did us all great good.' Perhaps it was the rest rather than the air that did them good. There was little time for rest at Tunbridge Wells.

On 3 September, the twins’ birthday, Margaret wrote that they had been to visit Penshurst in Lady Charlemont’s barouche and four, and that they had given a dinner for M. de Vaudreuil (who was taken ill and had to leave), Miss Berry, Lady Mary and Mr Shepherd, Lord Charlemont and Miss [Lydia] White. Caroline and Amico had pleased everybody with their playing. But Caroline’s health was weakening. After being forced by fatigue to miss one evening at Lady Charlemont’s, she resumed her playing and singing the following day, and sent her instruments over to this lady’s house, where ‘the most brilliant party assembled’ (the Dowager Lady Pembroke, Lord and Lady Pembroke, their son Lord Robert, a Christ Church College colleague of George, and daughter Lady Di, Lord and Lady Dungannon, Lady [Ann?] Hamilton, Lord Aberdeen), in all ‘thirty persons of the first rank and fashion’.

Once more Margaret found herself in a dilemma. Torn between the desire to socialise and her natural yen for tranquillity, she in the end opted for sociability. In her letter of 8 September she described a ‘small, but brilliant’ party at Mr and Mrs Jackson’s. Jackson was a diplomat, just returned from his post as ambassador to the United States. His wife, Margaret believed, was ‘a sort of German Princess [...], a Prussian by birth [... who] appears to be a very well bred woman, – her manners are pleasing and dignified, and she speaks english very well but with a strong german

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157 M to G, 7 September 1811, Ch.Ch. Rear-Admiral William Brown (d. 1814) and his sister (Margaret’s aunt), were of an old Leicestershire family.
158 M to G, 6 September 1811, Ch.Ch.
159 George Augustus Herbert, eleventh Earl of Pembroke (1759-1827), married Elizabeth, second daughter of Topham Beauclerck and granddaughter of Charles Spencer, third Duke of Marlborough. Their eldest (surviving) son was George’s Oxford friend, Robert Henry Herbert (1791-1862), matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1810, and their eldest daughter was Lady Diana (d. 1841). The Dowager Lady Pembroke was the mother of George Augustus Herbert, Elizabeth Spencer (d. 1831), second daughter of the third Duke of Marlborough.
161 M to G, 3 September 1811, Ch.Ch.
162 Francis James Jackson (1770-1814).
Lord Glenbervie described her less flatteringly as a ‘German has-been demi-rep of a wife’. Margaret’s letter drew for George a warts-and-all picture of Tunbridge society which she jokingly called her ‘Tunbridge Gazette’. Lady Dungannon and Mrs Gordon ‘sang a great deal [...] but neither of them knew the least in the world how to sing’; Lord Charlemont was ‘delightful’, but Margaret could not say the same of his wife: ‘Lady Charlemont does not improve upon acquaintance, but she is [...] very pretty’ (Spencer and Viotti also found her so), and of Lord and Lady Dungannon, she could find nothing more to say than that Lady Dungannon was very beautiful and that they were ‘both very good-natured’. For the forty-year-old Miss Lydia White, who ‘had been very gay & a great horse woman in her youth’, but was now ‘a femme d’esprit, and is by some envious persons out of pure malice called a blue stocking’, Margaret had genuine respect: ‘She is a very sensible lively woman, reads a good deal, and is very ready at conversation, & well furnished for it.’

A week later Margaret, worn out by the incessant round of visits, complained bitterly to George: ‘I never will come to Tunbridge again!’ George wrote in bewilderment from his Oxford summer retreat: ‘It does appear wonderfully absurd that people should retire to a place with the intention of recovering or adding to health, & should then convert that place into one of dissipation.’ He jokingly suggested that if the twelfth century Premonstratensian abbey that his family had just visited came back to life, Margaret might retire to their secluded cloisters to avoid some ‘supernumerary routs’, while still enjoying the benefits of Tunbridge. He also teased her about Lord Charlemont constantly finding the Chinnerys at study when he called, comparing his ‘philanthropy’ with their ‘misanthropy’.

The merry-go-round of dinners, parties, musical suppers and daytime visits and outings continued at a dizzying rhythm, with Margaret alternately hosting and being hosted, Caroline singing and Amico playing, or Amico playing and Caroline accompanying. In between her violent headaches and general malaise, Caroline kept up her spirits and managed to please, and even to become the favourite of lords and ladies.
alike, especially of the Marchioness of Landsdowne who was only a little older than Caroline herself. But the waters from the well did not agree with her, and so the principal benefits of Tunbridge as a health spa were rendered superfluous.

The better Margaret got to know these highly reputed members of fashionable society, the more disillusioned she became with their behaviour, realising how few people possessed the qualities which she endeavoured to foster in her own children:

[...] your dear Sister is so much liked and admired here for qualities that are still less common than her talents, — for her extreme unaffectedness, and simplicity of manner, which grow out of her native modesty! The more people see and know you two, the more they must esteem and love you, because every thing in you both is real, — not put on for outward shew, but solid and in grain.

(M to G, 21 September 1811, Ch.Ch.)

Mr Ward, for example, she found extremely pretentious. 'Vanity and egotism are the main springs of his actions', she wrote. She described him as 'a very little man' who was supposedly intelligent, but had no original thoughts, 'nothing but extensive book knowledge' crammed into his head. She allocated four pages of the above letter to criticism of this publicly esteemed politician, whose 'total want of dignity both in mind and manner' she thought could be attributed to 'his mind [having] no fixt principle on which to rest!'. Margaret’s views of his affectation were shared by Glenbervie, who wrote in his Journals that he took issue with Ward’s opinion that the writings of ‘the Ancients’ were inferior to those of ‘the Moderns’: ‘His opinion, however absurd, did not so much surprize me, as it came from a man who dislikes and despises, or (which is in worst taste still) affects to dislike and despise the writings of Shakespeare.'

Margaret’s status as a lady of fashion was sealed in Tunbridge, when on 27 September she was asked to be the patron of a play, the benefits of which were to go to an impoverished actor, a Mr Girton. Spencer wrote the epilogue. Patronising a play at a fashionable watering resort was a privilege belonging to ladies of a high profile. The Dowager Marchioness of Donegall lent her name to several plays during the same Tunbridge season, and she also applied to Spencer to write an ‘Epilogue, Prologue,

169 Lady Louisa Emma Fox-Strangways (d. 1851), fifth daughter of Henry Thomas, second Earl of Ilchester, married (1808) Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, third Marquess of Landsdowne (1780-1863).
170 M to G, 21 September 1811, Ch.Ch.
Song, ballad or Madrigal...[which] shall be most thankfully received, and shall be most correctly recited or most sweetly sung'.

Although George asked for a play bill and a copy of the epilogue Spencer wrote for his mother’s play, these are not to be found anywhere in the Chinnery Papers.

By 1 October Margaret had had enough of ‘leading a life of fatigue and dissipation’, and while candidly admitting to having achieved her aim in coming to such a public place: ‘we shall derive some advantages for next Spring [the social season] I trust in point of encreased agreeable acquaintance [...] we have certainly secured the Dungannons, the Tighes &c [...] who have good houses & pleasant parties in London’, was making plans to leave, not for home, but to Brighton, where she hoped to find some peace. George was more realistic, saying if they were looking for a quiet place of retirement, Brighton was the very worst they could have chosen.

After much searching Margaret found a house at 46 West Cliff, where she intended to stay for no more than three weeks. Caroline was in sore need of rest. All the Tunbridge adulation, although gratifying, Margaret wrote, was very fatiguing to Caroline. But it was not long before the whole of the Tunbridge society descended on Brighton. First came the Charlemonts, then the Glenbervies, although Margaret thought ‘they would not have found us out if it had not been for the Charlemonts,’ soon to be followed by the Gordons, the Tighes, Mr Ward, the Miss Berrys and Lady Say and Sele. Margaret compared her feelings of apprehension about this influx to Brighton to George’s when all the College men returned at the beginning of term. In addition, she had reservations about contravening her own finely-tuned sense of delicacy: “We were so very public at Tunbridge, that consistently [according to] my notions of strict propriety, we could not begin the same thing over again immediately at another place.’ ‘Besides’, she continued, ‘I have the heim-weh strong upon me and nothing but my dear Caroline’s health could prevent my setting off tomorrow.’

Ironically, the ill-effects of yet another frantic whirl of social activities in Brighton would far out-
weigh any benefits Caroline derived from the sea bathing and ‘delicious’ early morning donkey drives on the Downs in ‘superior’ donkey gigs.

Caroline was growing noticeably weaker, was unable to play or sing at Lady Charlemont’s party, and invitations from Lady Delawarr179 and Lady Ossulton180 had to be refused on her account. She could no longer bathe in the sea, the very reason Margaret gave for prolonging their stay. By 29 October Margaret, alarmed by Caroline’s worsening state of health, decided to shorten their stay by a week and started packing for their departure. On the same day the Prince Regent arrived at his Marine Pavilion. On this occasion there was no avoiding the rules of protocol. William, who had so recently received the Prince at the Treasury, was obliged to call and pay his respects, as was Viotti, who had just been granted his ‘Patent of denization’ [British citizenship] by the Prince Regent. As a result of William’s visit to the Pavilion, he was invited to dine there with the Prince the same day, and Margaret, Caroline and Viotti were invited in the evening. This evening is described in detail in Margaret’s letter to George of 31 October 1811. After the Prince had discussed with William ‘some trifling alteration he wished to be made the next time he went to the Treasury’,181 he turned his attention to music and invited Margaret to try his pianoforte, but Margaret passed on the honour to her daughter. Caroline greatly pleased everyone playing her own variations, which the Prince considered were ‘in the stile of Scarlatti’.182

Caroline was so popular with the Prince that he desired that her family stay another week. It was a royal command which Margaret was both happy (for the glory it would bring) and unhappy (for the fatigue it would occasion) to obey for Caroline’s sake. By 2 November they had been four times to the Pavilion, and Margaret wrote that both Amico and Caroline were in high favour with the Prince. ‘If Caroline were well, it would be the first opportunity that any body ever had of seeing the Prince’s favour and general admiration! But she is at present quite unequal to the fatigue. I really fear she will not be able to hold out to the end! He has offered her his Band of a morning and

179 Catherine Lyell (d. 1826) married John Richard West, fourth Earl Delawarr (1758-1795).
180 Emma Colebrooke, younger daughter of Sir James Colebrooke, married Charles Bennet, fifth Earl of Tankerville (1743-1822), styled Lord Ossulton.
181 M to G, 31 October 1811, Ch.Ch. This presumably related to some piece of protocol to be observed at the Treasury, perhaps regarding Sign Manual Warrants, or payments to the royal household.
182 Ibid.
most genuinely assured me that no one shall be present but the Band and himself if she will like to try either vocal or instrumental music!"\(^{183}\)

On 4 November Margaret wrote that the Prince continued to heap favours upon them. In their drawing room at that very moment were seven or eight wind instrument players and the composer Ferrari\(^{184}\) at the pianoforte, trying an air which Caroline was to sing to the Prince the next day. Moreover, the Duke of Cumberland, the Prince's brother, called in to hear the rehearsal, and remained for an hour and a half. These reports only deepened George's fears for Caroline's health. He had received a worrying note from his father saying that 'nothing remains to be wished but that health and strength may last out the week'.\(^{185}\) But the pace kept up. On 4 November Viotti was brought a note from Colonel Bloomfield, aide-de-camp to the Prince, summoning Viotti and Caroline to the Pavilion to play that evening.\(^{186}\) Margaret's letter to George the following day expressed her gratification at seeing her loftiest ambitions for Caroline realised. Bursting with pride, she wrote:

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\text{[...]} \text{I cannot give you an idea of the Prince's surprise and delight at your sister's playing!... His expressions, his gestures, his "tearful eye", every thing was far beyond any thing that any person has ever said or done before, — he was enchanted with Amico, oh yes quite enchanted, — but to your sister he was... really I cannot find words to tell you all he said and did, — his attentions, — standing by her the whole time, handing her to her chair, — telling her "I shall stay by you", — and after the first piece he declared out loud that "she was the first player he had ever heard on that instrument [piano] and had produced an effect, by a trick peculiar to herself, which he had never thought possible and which he had no idea of". As to Cramer\(^{187}\) added the Prince, "he must hide his face before her"!}
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\((\text{M to G, 5 November 1811, Ch.Ch.})\)

It was not only the honour of the Prince's favour that pleased Margaret, but the very public way in which he bestowed it. She told George that his Christ Church friends

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\(^{183}\) M to G, 2 November 1811, Ch.Ch.
\(^{184}\) Ferrari (see Part I, p. 140, note 384), was singing teacher to the Princess of Wales.
\(^{185}\) G to M, 3 November 1811, Ch.Ch.
\(^{186}\) Benjamin Bloomfield to Viotti, 4 November [1811], in Viotti's Miscellaneous Correspondence, PM 94/143/1 - 28/2. See Part I, p. 142 for a full transcription of the letter.
\(^{187}\) The famous pianist J.B. Cramer, one of the outstanding pianoforte performers of his day (see Part I, p. 111 and note 250).
Lord Worcester\textsuperscript{188} and [Richard] Wellesley were witnesses to Caroline’s success, and that ‘both complimented me in the kindest possible manner upon it.’\textsuperscript{189} As for climbing the social ladder, Caroline could go no higher. The last party at the Pavilion represented Caroline’s absolute triumph in society and the culmination of Margaret’s educational endeavours. Unfortunately it also marked the end of her fragile health.\textsuperscript{190}

\textsuperscript{188} Henry Somerset, Marquess of Worcester (1792-1853), son of the sixth Duke of Beaufort, matriculated (Ch.Ch.) 1809.

\textsuperscript{189} M to G, 5 November 1811, Ch.Ch.

\textsuperscript{190} The Farington report (in his \textit{Diary} entry of 18 July 1812 – not to be found in the 1922-28 edition) that attributed Caroline’s death to ‘an incipient [sic] consumption’ (in Conner, p. 21) precipitated by late nights at the Prince Regent’s Pavilion was close to the truth (see p. 598). However, it is likely that she had contracted tuberculosis a long time before this.
(v) Caroline Chinnery’s death

On her return to Gillwell on 17 November Caroline’s fever recommenced, and her condition steadily worsened. Margaret did not even let her write to congratulate George on his brilliant performance in his degree examination for fear of overexciting her. On 26 November Caroline was back in Spencer’s house in Curzon Street with her mother, seeking fresh medical advice. From then on it was all downhill. Her decline, interspersed with periods of false hopes of recovery, continued until her death on 3 April 1812, which according to a modern medical interpretation of the autopsy, was caused not by what was generally assumed to be whooping cough, but by the then unheard of disease, miliary tuberculosis, which she must have been suffering from for a long while before her death. It was a tragic end for such an intelligent and gifted young lady on the brink of womanhood.

The diary that Margaret kept of this, the blackest period of her life, is indescribably moving. While she kept vigil over Caroline, aided and supported by Viotti, George and Spencer, who had just arrived home from Blenheim, shocked to discover the seriousness of his beloved pupil’s condition, William was bracing himself for exposure at the Treasury. On 12 March 1812, the day William confessed the true state of his affairs to Perceval, Margaret wrote:

Chinnery is now shut up in his own room at the Treasury, trying to put his wretched situation in the best possible point of view for M. Percival’s consideration; — and I am sitting by my beloved Caroline’s bed-side, grieving in my poor distressed heart that she is not so well to-day as she has been for some days past! — Oh my God, my God help me!... Love the life of this dear child, and all the rest will be light and easy to bear!...

During her long illness I have contracted a habit of almost continual prayer.

(Margaret Chinnery, Diary, 12 March 1812, PM 94/143/1 - 10)

191 The doctors’ report on the cause of death was transcribed by George for his father in Margaret’s letter to William of 6 April 1812: ‘Upon examination, adhesions were found closely joining every part of the abdominal viscera, but more especially all the folds of the bowels to each other — These adhesions were the consequence of Inflammation of the Peritoneum which had extended over every part of that membrane — In some parts there were found masses of curdly matter, and in two places a considerable abscess — These appearances correspond to the symptoms & to the opinion which has been often given with respect to the nature of the complaint, but they were more extensive than could have been imagined beforehand or could have been believed compatible with the continuance of life for so long a time—’ (M to W, 6 April 1812, PM 94/143/1 - 17/2).

192 Margaret Chinnery, Diary, March 1812-September 1813, PM 94/143/1 - 10.
Margaret’s stoic courage throughout this ordeal was braced by her strong faith. The diary itself is almost continuous prayer. She was not ungrateful for the blessings that she had enjoyed, she wrote, and considered herself to have been ‘singularly favoured’ since she could count twenty years of happiness. Her educational endeavours had been crowned with the most spectacularly public success ‘my children exceeding my most extravagant hopes, — the world receiving them with open arms’, but more important than her pride in ‘all this worldly glory and honour’ was the knowledge that ‘their piety and virtuous conduct were far beyond the opinion, high as that is, that the world formed of them’. 193 Margaret felt severely her powerlessness to avert what she now knew was inevitable:

I am become useless in my own family, — I who till now have seemed the animating principle of the whole, — I can do nothing, — I cannot discover any means of alleviating the sorrows and misfortunes of these dear objects of my tender affection, than by sharing it with them! [...] 

(Margaret Chinnery, Diary, op. cit., 14 March 1812)

On 16 March the first blow fell and William was informed by Perceval that he was to be dismissed from his post. 194 ‘So here we are in the very dust!’ Margaret wrote in despair. ‘My heart aches much for Chinnery, – he is gone [...] Heaven knows where, with his load of sorrow in his bosom, – and I, – I am as if I were a widow, – left here in a house that is not my own, with my two children, – one dangerously ill!’ 195

Looking back a year later, she wrote of her agony at that time:

She was an entire week dying! My God how did I support it? [...] Her health, and her brother’s seemed to be the staff of my life, – without them, I could conceive no joy, no happiness [...] What an anxious careful mother I have ever been, – when I recall to mind my watchfulness and my unceasing attention to every circumstance that could affect my children, my joy in them, my ardent hopes for them, [...] What! — see one of my darlings suffer all that can be suffered from bodily pain,... see her languish, and droop, and perish by slow degrees, see her reduced to a mere skeleton,

193 Ibid., 14 March, 1812.
194 Treasury records show that William was dismissed the following day, 17 March 1812 (Γ 29/116 pp. 221-222, in Sainty, p. 118).
195 Margaret Chinnery, Diary, op. cit., 16 March 1812.
— and finally see her die by little and little during a whole week!... Oh horrible horrible, to human nature most horrible!... And then to see her, she who but a few weeks before was the pride and joy of my life, she who had made me the envy of all mothers, when she excited the admiration of the Prince and his court, and was the chief ornament of his circle, — to see her lifeless form! — and kiss it, — and call upon her, and find no motion, no answer, no sensibility there, where the most ardent affection had ever been manifested by the softest accents, the most affectionate & tender caresses, and love-bearing looks!... Oh, how did I bear this? How did I bid her lifeless form Adieu? — How did I live, and say to myself, I shall see that form no more on this earth?... My God, — not by my own strength could I do this great thing, — Thou wast with me...

(Margaret Chinnery, Diary, op. cit., 4 September 1813)

Spencer was equally devastated by the death of his favourite ‘niece’, and Viotti, who wrote to William of his efforts to console Margaret ‘dans cette affreuse catastrophe’, added ‘Le pauvre Guglielmo en est plus mort que vif’. Trumpf, too, who was more attached to the Chinnerys than they perhaps realised, was deeply affected by the death of his former pupil, writing to Viotti: ‘Dieu seul saura la part que je prends à Vos afflictions; cet ange ramméné aprés aux cieux a eu plus d’influence sur mon bonheur, que Vous ne savez’. For her part, Margaret had no desire to continue living, but struggled, for the sake of her husband and son, to pull herself together: ‘When I would have laid me down and died, — when I longed to shut my eyes upon this world forever, — I recollected my George, — and my poor dear husband, — and started up to renew my struggles and my prayers! It was Viotti who was her mainstay in this struggle. He wrote to William: ‘songeons surtout à conserver notre chere Padrona; c’est à quoi nous nous occupons sans cesse George et moi’. He also bravely stressed the need for courage and closeness between the remaining four family members (of whom he counted himself as one): ‘notre raison, notre courage doivent égaler nos malheurs. Ne perdons pas de vue que nous sommes encore quatre qui avons besoin les uns des autres’.

196 Viotti’s letter to William comes at the end of Margaret’s of the same date (M to W, 6 April 1812, PM 94/143/1 — 17/2).
197 C.L. Trumpf to Viotti, 5 August 1812, PM 94/143/1 — 28/18.
198 Margaret Chinnery, Diary, op. cit., 4 September 1813.
199 At the end of M to W, 6 April 1812, PM 94/143/1 — 17/2).
Now it was George on whom the combined energies of Margaret and Viotti used. It was imperative (to keep his small income) that he fulfill the requirements of Studentship and get his M.A. degree, and above all, find a situation.
PART III

THE CAREER OF GEORGE ROBERT CHINNERY, 1812 – 1825
As a distinguished graduate of Christ Church College and an esteemed friend of its dean, Charles Henry Hall, George possessed the two ingredients that were critical to achieving his ambition of a parliamentary career – a liberal education and patronage. And it was not only to Oxford that George could look for protection. His father’s connections with members of parliament and of the royal family were powerful ones, not to be broken by a misdemeanour that the Prince Regent did not consider a felony,¹ and that his brother the Duke of Cambridge did not think serious enough to break off a longstanding friendship with the miscreant’s wife. The Duke of Cambridge’s attachment to Margaret Chinnery not only survived the scandal, but was strengthened by it. Clearly sympathetic to Margaret’s plight, and desirous of helping her one remaining child, he declared his support for the family by asserting univocally that he would ‘never [...] miss an opportunity of assisting George’.² All the letters that Adolphus Frederick wrote to Margaret Chinnery after 1812 show the continuing interest he took in George’s career. Buoyed by this royal interest, the remaining members of the Chinnery family continued to move in the highest circles of London society. Moreover, George took measures to widen and strengthen his already influential circle of acquaintance by joining two new gentlemen’s clubs in London, whose members were drawn from the elite body of Christ Church graduates.

Before leaving Oxford George had already been invited by Henry Joy³ to join as a founding member the new Albion Club, a non-gambling club which, he was told, was to be modelled on the Alfred.⁴ On 5 June 1812 he received a similar invitation from another Christ Church contemporary, Richard Wellesley, to join ‘a Society which we have determined to institute’. George was informed that there would be a room made available in a coffee house, which would be ‘provided with Newspapers, Reviews, Magazines &c’, and that there would be a weekly dinner ‘for those, who may chuse to

¹ See Part I, p. 149, note 417.
² Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, c. 1813, Fisher.
³ Henry Hall Joy (1786-1840), B.A. (Ch.Ch.), 1808, M.A. 1811, barrister-at-law.
⁴ Henry Joy to George Chinnery, 1 March 1811, Ch.Ch. George wrote to his mother that the advantage in being invited to join as an original member lay in the doing away with ‘the bore of balloting & it’s attendant canvassing’. (G to M, 1 March 1811, Ch.Ch.) The Alfred, founded in 1808, was situated in Albemarle Street and had 500 members (of whom Byron was one), who subscribed five guineas a year. Byron is quoted as having said that ‘it was pleasant, a little too sober and literary, and bored [sic] with [William] Sotheby” (see Farington, *op. cit.*, vol. 7, p. 88).
dine there'— the typical format of an eighteenth-century gentleman's club. Most of the names of members, Wellesley said, would be already known to George from Oxford. He appended ten names to his letter (including that of George's future patron George Canning), adding 'none will be more gratified than myself by your acceptance of this offer'.

But even with all these necessary qualifications and precautions, the getting of the situation of one's choice was difficult. Sometimes fathers already in Parliament had trouble finding it for their son. And sometimes the quid pro quo method of rendering a service to a friend prevented a second favour being asked. Members of the nobility, however well-connected, could not always have their way where patronage was concerned, and their request frequently had to give way to someone even higher in the pecking-order. This was the case for Spencer himself, when his father Lord Charles Spencer, former Cabinet minister, and member of parliament during the Duke of Portland's term as prime minister, was directed by the latter to give a situation he desired for his son to another applicant.

As far as securing a seat in the House of Commons went— a goal that George had cherished right through his undergraduate years— enormous wealth was needed to contest an election. One of Christ Church's most famous sons, Robert Peel, had his seat of Cashel in Tipperary bought for him by his father at great cost the year after he graduated from Christ Church; Robert Stewart's (Lord Castlereagh's) father expended £60,000 securing his election, leaving him poor for the rest of his life; and Lord Glenbervie complained of the enormous outlay he had to make to get his son Frederick a seat in Parliament. In 1812 George Canning's Liverpool supporters paid up to twenty and thirty guineas a vote to secure his representation in Parliament.

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5 Richard Wellesley to George Chinnery, 5 June 1812, Fisher.
7 See Caroline Marlborough to William Spencer, 15 April 1808, Fisher. In this case it was a question of a situation for Mrs William Spencer as a lady-in-waiting to the Duchess of Devonshire, but the same principle applied.
8 William Spencer to Margaret Chinnery, 15 June 1808, Fisher.
10 *DNB*, vol. 15, p. 656.
11 *DNB*, vol. 18, p. 1233.
12 He was member for the hereditary borough of the North family (Douglas, 1910, *op. cit.*, p. 163).
March 1812 William Spencer over-optimistically hinted to George of the possibility of obtaining for him a family borough seat where the influence of the Duke of Marlborough was very strong, but not surprisingly, nothing came of it.\textsuperscript{14} For less wealthy, but talented hopefuls the alternative way of entering Parliament was first to demonstrate their ability at the Bar, and then enter Parliament under the protection of a political patron, speaking and voting as their patron directed them. This explains George Chinnery’s enrolment at Lincoln’s Inn in 1812\textsuperscript{15} when he had no intention of practising law.

But in spite of George’s brilliant degree and powerful connections, his prospects of a parliamentary career looked to be irredeemably damaged by his father’s demise. It was the diminished wealth of the Chinnery family, more than the disgrace itself, that blocked this career path. Public reaction to the news of William’s defalcation was mixed. True, many former acquaintances snubbed Margaret – even some who had benefited from William’s munificence in the past – but not everybody condemned him for his actions. After all, the Treasury banking system lent itself to, and almost begged abuse, and there were certainly others who had benefited from the system and had still managed to balance their books. As Halévy points out, the Treasury was one of the offices that held the richest prizes: ‘Between the time when a government official received money from the Treasury and the time when he paid it out to subordinates [...] he could make whatever use of this money that he pleased;’\textsuperscript{16} Other government departments that offered rich pickings to their members were the Army and Navy, especially in time of war, when the highest officials were allowed to take a percentage of the enormous sums of money that passed through their hands. Some, for example the Tellers of the Exchequer, ended up with salaries of £25,000 per annum.\textsuperscript{17} The huge sums of public money that went into private hands from these departments far outweighed the sums that small fish like William Chinnery managed to siphon off for their own use, as Lord Byron’s statement in the House of Lords attests.\textsuperscript{18} Many of these

\textsuperscript{14} In a letter to Caroline Chinnery, written from his uncle’s seat of Blenheim (William Spencer to Caroline Chinnery, 3 March 1812, Fisher), Spencer said: ‘George is a great favourite here, I dare say, if he is a good Boy, we shall contrive sometime or other to get him into one of the family boroughs.’

\textsuperscript{15} Foster (ed.), \textit{Alumni Oxonienses, op. cit.}, vol. 1, p. 248.

\textsuperscript{16} Halévy, \textit{A History of the English People (I)}, op. cit., p. 10.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, p. 10, note 2.

\textsuperscript{18} On 21 April 1812 Lord Byron in a speech in the House of Lords referred to William Chinnery and another miscreant Hunt, as ‘the insect defaulters of the Treasury’ (see \textit{Notes and Queries}, 1927, vol.
'borrowers' intended to, and sometimes did, manage to pay back what they had taken. Hunt, the other defaulter who was dismissed at the same time as William Chinnery, managed to pay back his debt within three years, according to Margaret Chinnery. 19

As well as Adolphus Frederick, there were many other Chinnery friends who remained loyal, including some members of the Government. Among those who supported William and expressed sympathy to his family, were the Government Paymaster General Charles Long, who was a fellow collector of antiquities, and who may have purchased some of William's prize pieces and arranged for the British Museum to purchase others; 20 the Commissary General John Herries; 21 the Postmaster General Francis Freeling 22; and another of the Treasury chief clerks Philip Cipriani.23 Even Perceval himself felt pity for the Chinnery family's plight, and while he was obliged to dismiss the father, did everything he could to benefit the son, 24 offering George a post as a junior clerk in the Treasury. William, although mortified at the thought of his son's working at the place where he was disgraced, appreciated Perceval's kindness to George, and also the sensitive manner in which Perceval had dealt with his own case. He wrote to Margaret acknowledging Perceval's generous offer, saying 'I will answer for it he meant kindness from the bottom of his Heart'. Nevertheless, he begged her to decline:

I am sure that however gratefully you will have desired your Thanks to be expressed to M. Perceval, you will have declined placing George in the Treasury; -- it would be

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152, p. 75), meaning that the sums misappropriated by these men were paltry compared to other massive losses the Government suffered.

19 M to W, 7 March 1815, PM 94/143/1 – 17/20. Hunt remains unidentified. He was not a Treasury official.

20 In William's letter to Margaret of 16 May 1812, (PM 94/143/1 – 7/12), he said that he would send Long a catalogue raisonné of the most valuable items in his collection which were to be disposed of at the Christie's auction of the Gillwell House effects, and would 'endeavour to secure many of them being through M. Long's means purchased for the British Museum, & shall induce him if possible to secure other Things for his own beautiful Place at Bromley [...]'.

21 See Part I, p 179, note 520.

22 Sir Francis Freeling (1764-1836), postal reformer and book collector, was given a baronetcy in 1828 for his excellent management of the British Post Office. Freeling obligingly franked all Margaret's letters to William in Gothenburg.


24 In a letter to Margaret (c. 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 7/4), William wrote that he was grateful to Perceval, who 'at the Time that he as a Matter of Duty crushes the Father with one hand, should stretch out the other as far as it was in his Power to Mother & Son!!'. In the diary that Margaret kept of this period she cites Perceval as saying that 'however sorry he might be for him [Chinnery] as an individual, he could not but act with severity in his official capacity, that the thing could not be justified!' (Margaret Chinnery's Diary, PM 94/143/1 – 10).
highly distressing to me that that should be so, & it would be wholly misplacing him from his real Acquirements — it would make me wretched to know that he was to be in the place where all my Misfortunes have occurred [...]

(W to M, c. March 1812, PM 94/1 – 7/8)

Needless to say, George was in no position to decline, and accepted the proffered post, which was effective from 3 April 1812, the day Caroline died.

By ‘his real Acquirements’ William meant George’s linguistic skills, which were far superior to those any of his fellow graduates possessed – and certainly to those of any young men then employed in foreign legations – and which, now that his hopes for a parliamentary career were dashed, would stand him in good stead (or so his family hoped) for a diplomatic career. Margaret therefore redoubled her efforts in this direction, and William advised her to make all her communications with parliamentarians through his friend John Berries: ‘my friend Berries will be an efficient Ambassador with your Communications [...] & will do us all the Kindness now & for Time to come that may be in his Power rest assured – he may be religiously confided in as our Friend’.25 On the advice of her solicitor, S. W. Wadeson, another friend of William, Margaret decided to seek for George the situation of sub-private secretary to Lord Castlereagh, the British Foreign Secretary. The idea proposed was that George would hold the post simultaneously with his Treasury situation, which he would not attend, thereby enabling him to learn the business of the Foreign Office as a stepping-stone into the diplomatic corps.26

It was the Duke of Cambridge who actually approached Lord Castlereagh on behalf of the Chinnerys, as a letter to George announcing the failure of his overture to Castlereagh shows. The Duke wrote to George ‘I am sorry to be obliged to inform you that I have received an answer from Lord Castlereagh in which he says he is provided with a Secretary’.27 In fact, Castlereagh already had three personal secretaries, all of them old Etonians, and all appointed on the strength of old school ties rather than on individual merit. In William’s next letter to Margaret28 he speculated at length on all the

26 Ibid., PM 94/1 – 7/4.
27 Adolphus Frederick to George Chinnery, c. April 1812, Fisher.
28 W to M, 16 May 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 7/12.
possible (and mostly preposterous) reasons for this point blank refusal except the real one, which was probably simply that the holding of two positions in the manner that was proposed was slightly irregular, and would have involved some quiet manoeuvring — a bother that Castlereagh was not prepared to go to for a member of a disgraced family with whom he had no family, school or social connections. Although it was customary for junior clerks at Treasury to be used as private secretaries to Government officials within their own department, it was not customary to use them in other Government departments. It took a favourable patron to arrange it, as Canning did for George in 1816 and 1823. Castlereagh was not favourable, and strongly resisted any overtures made on George’s behalf.

On 11 May 1812 Spencer Perceval was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons by a crazed bankrupt. William did not receive the news until 25 May, when he immediately wrote to Margaret of the consequences that the resultant administrative changes might have for George’s career: ‘[...] the earnest Manner in which it seems that George was pressed upon Ld C. will induce the Persons who did so, to repeat those exertions with whosoever may be named his Successor, should there be Changes in the Cabinet.’ The new prime minister, Lord Liverpool, did offer the foreign secretoryship to another — to George Canning, George’s future benefactor. Not even William in his highest flights of optimism could have guessed how close George’s career came to taking off at that moment. But unfortunately for George, Canning refused the offer, holding out for the additional prize of leader of the House, a position not granted him, and he resigned, leaving Castlereagh as Foreign Secretary, and George at his tedious post at the Treasury. Canning’s refusal, according to most historians, was based on inexperience, pride and youthful impatience, and cost him dearly. It left him shut out of office during some of the most important years of British foreign policymaking — the period of the Bourbon Restoration and the reconstruction of Europe after the Napoleonic wars.

29 One of these was Castlereagh’s supposed objection to the Chinnerys’ close contact with a diplomatic representative of the French Revolutionary Government, Hugues Maret, during their 1802 visit to Paris: ‘Can he suppose because he may have heard that we saw & lived a great deal with Maret at Paris, that such an acquaintance under any Circumstances would render it unsafe to have any near Connexion of mine in the French Office?’ (W to M, 16 May 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 7/12).
30 W to M, 25 May 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 7/14
31 Robert Banks Jenkinson, second Earl of Liverpool (1770-1828), Prime Minister of England, 1812-1827, had been at Christ Church with Lord Granville Leveson and George Canning, in whose society he spent much time.
Nobody knew better than William the long hours of repetitious copying and the observation of petty procedures and formalities that the post of junior clerk in the Treasury entailed. Nevertheless, he resigned himself to accepting his son’s ‘present situation of mean official drudgery’, knowing that George would be conscientious and uncomplaining in his duties, and in the hope that his talents would soon be rewarded by the offer of a better situation. In the Fisher collection is a soft leather covered memorandum book of the size that was then common (11.5cm x 18cm) containing a forty-page comprehensive description of the administration of the Treasury Department. The book is unlined and only half filled. It contains definitions of Treasury protocol and posts, gives minutely detailed rules and regulations to be observed, and ends with a succinct list of the six divisions of Treasury, the officers who filled them and their areas of responsibility. Some of the procedures described fall under headings such as: ‘The mode of granting the Salary to a Lord or Groom of the Bedchamber’; ‘The forms of issuing a Sum of Money out of the Civil List’; ‘The Sign Manual-Warrant’; ‘Pensions’; the annual sum allocated for ‘His Majesty’s Privy Purse’; ‘Management of the French emigrant Office’. The document is closely written in the hand of George Chinnery, and was clearly copied out by him as one of his first labours on entering the Treasury Department, with the end of using it as a reference handbook.

Margaret did not resign herself to accepting this initial setback in her ambitions for George. Both she and Viotti actively sought out every possible avenue of improving George’s prospects. An opportunity came on 4 August at a fashionable party at the home of Sophia Johnstone, who remained closely attached to the Chinnerys throughout their trials. Her good friend the Prince Regent attended, and George and Viotti were both invited, with Viotti participating in the evening’s musical entertainment. Far from being shunned by society for his father’s misdemeanours, George was at the time much in demand among members of London’s fashionable set on account of his family’s double misfortune, and received numerous invitations. The Prince spoke to both George and Viotti with much sympathy, and remembered with nostalgia their happier days at Brighton, when Caroline had played for him at the Pavilion, five months before her death. He also enquired most solicitously about William’s present situation and whereabouts, without the slightest hint of criticism at the way in which he had fled the

32 W to M, 16 May 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 7/12
33 See Part I, pp. 147-149.
country to avoid being called to account. Indeed, the Prince — who was himself not renowned for his economy with public money — pitied his lot, saying to Viotti: ‘Oh je le plains de tout mon cœur, c’est un brave homme!’

Viotti, taking advantage of this opportune encounter, tried with all his might to advance George’s interests. He boldly asserted to the Prince (with Lady Castlereagh seated within earshot) ‘that he thought George was wasting his time in a situation so very inferior to his talents, and that he thought it was a pity he had not been rather placed in the Foreign Office, where his knowledge of the four modern languages would have put him forward.’ The Prince agreed with him in principle, but made no move to help. Nothing advantageous to George came of this conversation, or indeed to William, who, the amoral Prince hinted, might be offered some secret employment on behalf of the Government ‘but zitto! zitto, — it must be all done quietly’. He subsequently either conveniently forgot his promises, or his more honest Government members snuffed his attempts. A written appeal apparently made to him by Viotti (on behalf of Margaret) through the Duke of Cumberland seems to have gone unanswered.

In November 1812, prompted by Napoleon’s successive losses on the Peninsula and in Russia, William was again encouraged to speculate optimistically on George’s prospects. He reasoned that trade between England and the Continent would soon be reopened, and consequently British embassies also, and that Margaret should endeavour to broach ‘this interesting Subject to our amiable Duke [of Cambridge] [...] so as to ensure our dear George’s being attached to an European Mission of Consequence [...] for which he would be so peculiarly calculated’. William hoped by this means to be reunited with his family on the Continent. There is no indication in the Chinnery letters if any further request for help was put to the Duke of Cambridge. In any case, there was no positive outcome.

On the last day of 1812 William penned a New Year’s Eve poem to Margaret, lamenting the woes of the past year:

Farewell last Moments of the departing Year!
Chequer’d with Joy, Grief, Absence, Hope & Fear!

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34 M to W, 5 August 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 17/5
35 Ibid.
36 See the Duke of Cumberland’s aide’s response to Viotti’s overture (C.W. Thornton to Viotti [c. 1812], in Viotti’s Miscellaneous Correspondence, PM 94/143/1 – 28/16).
Farewel! it's Months which knew an Angel Child
On whom Perfection from her Cradle smil'd!
Farewell! Be this my Pray'r — "Oh! may I yet,
"In Health & Peace, rejoin my Margaret
"Our only George — & that exotic Friend [Viotti],
"Whose un-warp'd Friendship but with his Life will end!"

Ever optimistic, he appended to it a poem of hope for the coming year, based on
William Spencer's poem '1806':

"It is gone with its Thoms & its Rose!!! [thrice underlined] 38
Eighteen hundred & twelve — ever dear!
Tho' nine months were embitter'd with Woes
Render'd poignant by Absence & Fear!

Adieu those 3 Months when that Flower,
Tho' blighted & drooping, display'd
A refulgent reflection of power
With which it in health was array'd!

Eighteen hundred & twelve, then Adieu!
Year of Sorrow, the saddest e'er seen!
But, re-union at least let us view,
In one thousand, eight hundred thirteen!!

(W to M, 31 December 1812, PM 94/143/1 — 7/21)

As it transpired, William's first reunion with his family was not to occur until
1814. Meanwhile George was given small moves within the Treasury, writing as a note
at the end of a letter from his mother to his father on 25 February 1813: 'Tomorrow I
change my Dept in the Treasury leaving Mitford's & going to Brummell's'. 39 George
had begun work at the Treasury in the division of a friend of his father, William Speer. 40

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37 W to M, 8 November 1812, PM 94/143/1 — 7/20.
38 The reason for William's bitter dislike of George Rose was the latter's uncompromising condemnation
of his behaviour. He was cited in The Gentleman's Magazine (vol. 82, pt. 1, May 1812, p. 469), as
saying that 'he thought the conduct of Mr. C. scandalous in the extreme, and admitting of no
exculpation.'
39 M to W, 25 February 1813, PM 94/143/1 — 17/8. Robert Mitford was a Senior Clerk in Treasury, 1812-
1816 (T29/116 p. 455, in Sainty, p. 140). Benjamin Brummell was also a Senior Clerk in Treasury,
1783-1816 (T29/54 p. 496, in Sainty p. 116).
While he continued the monotonous grind of the civil servant by day, George worked to keep up his German by night. He sought out every avenue of practising the written and spoken language, but opportunities of doing so were rare. He was therefore glad to be able to correspond in German with the Swedish merchant Willerding, his father’s business associate in Gothenburg, who sent him books in German and also in Swedish, including a Swedish translation of *Macbeth*. George also sought to improve his reputation as a linguist by doing German translations. In an undated letter written shortly after his arrival in Gothenburg, William spoke of Spencer’s suggestion of ‘a literary project that will be both honourable & profitable to dear George!’ It was a translation from the German pamphlet by the publicist Friedrich von Gentz, defending the Orders in Council that were then being discussed in Parliament. It was common practice among liberally educated statesmen to raise their public standing by earning themselves the reputation of ‘a literary man’ with translations of Greek or Latin poetry, or – if they possessed that rare skill, a knowledge of a modern European language – with translations of contemporary European political pamphlets. This is illustrated by William’s comment that he hoped George would undertake the translation suggested by Spencer, ‘for it will give him a prodigious deal of the most essential Reputation as a public Man & a Statesman which I look to in all anxiety.’ William also hoped that George would ‘cultivate speaking & educate his excellent Voice – his Manner cannot be bettered’. This was an aspect of George’s education that Margaret had always emphasised. The Chinnery friend John Herries had himself translated a pamphlet of

41 George’s postscript in M to W, 9 December 1813, PM, 94/143/1 – 17/18. George had by now added Swedish to his already impressively long list of foreign languages mastered.

42 W to M, [1812], PM 143/1 – 7/19.

43 Friedrich von Gentz (1764-1832), Prussian journalist and publicist. He worked closely with Metternich expounding Austrian foreign policy, but also on occasion during the Napoleonic wars as a British propagandist (1810-1812), during which time he penned the above pamphlet. He was also called upon to draft compositions in French for Castlereagh at the Congresses of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818) and Troppau (1820). The proposed translation cannot be found in the CFP collection.

44 *The Gentleman’s Magazine* reported in its April 1812 issue (vol. 82, pt. 1, pp. 372-373) a discussion which took place in the House of Commons on 3 March 1812 concerning the Orders in Council, including Brougham’s motion for their revocation. The Orders in Council, originally instituted by Canning when he was Foreign Secretary in 1807, at a time when Napoleon had imposed a Continental trading blockade on British ships, forced all ships that were to visit a port from which British ships were excluded to first visit a British port to pay duty. This measure antagonised neutral states, especially the United States. Being detrimental to the interests of the British commercial classes, the Orders were withdrawn by Castlereagh in June 1812. (See C. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1812-1815*, Bell: London, 1963, pp. 106-107.)

45 W to M, [1812], PM 94/143/1 – 7/19. These comments would indicate that William had not abandoned his hopes of a parliamentary career for George.
Gentz, entitled *On the State of Europe before and after the French Revolution* (Hatchard: London, 1802). Berries helped George to choose suitable works for translation. One of these is in the Fisher collection. It is George’s translation from German into English of an anonymous pamphlet thirty-four pages long on the retreat of the French army from Russia. Originally entitled *Rückzug der Franzosen* (St Petersburg, 1813), George’s translation, *The Retreat of the French* was ‘printed for E. Budd, London, No. 100, Pall Mall, 1813’. On the front of the present copy is written in George’s hand: ‘This pamphlet which was put into my hands by M. Berries Commissary Gen’, I translated by his advice & at his request in the month of March 1813: my translation was at first printed only for [private] distribution but ended by being published – G.R. Chinnery’.

Meanwhile, George went about fulfilling the requirements for his M.A. degree, which involved periodic trips to Oxford, where he continued his friendship with his old friend and ally, the Dean of Christ Church, Charles Henry Hall. The latter had always had a sincere regard for George’s many qualities, as testified by the Christ Church correspondence. There are seven letters (including one copy) from Charles Hall to George Chinnery in the Fisher collection, and another in the Powerhouse collection (a copy), attesting to Hall’s esteem for George. Like his predecessor Cyril Jackson, Hall maintained close links with old Christ Church men, many of whom occupied high positions in Parliament and were in a position to offer patronage to those younger Christ Church graduates whom the powerful Dean thought deserved it. George was one of these. He asked Hall for assistance, and the latter responded promptly, offering to write to Perceval’s successor, an old Christ Church graduate: ‘I will write to Lord Liverpool without delay and tell him what I sincerely feel, think, & wish about you: it will give me sincere pleasure if my letter should produce any consequences advantageous to you.’ The consequences of Hall’s letter to Lord Liverpool are not immediately clear, since the letter, curiously, post-dates an offer that was made to

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46 See M to W, 25 February 1813, and M to W, 6 March 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/8, 17/9, which both mention his being in Oxford. George gained his M.A. degree in 1814.
47 Enclosed in M to W, 5 May 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/10.
48 Trevor-Roper, op. cit., in the Notes at the end of his booklet *Christ Church Oxford* lists seven Christ Church prime ministers of England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.
49 Charles Henry Hall to George Chinnery (copy), 3 May 1813, Fisher.
50 Mentioned in William’s letter to Margaret of 14 June 1813 (PM 94/143/1 – 7/22).
George to accompany Charles William Stewart (Castlereagh’s half brother) in the capacity of secretary of legation to the British embassy at Berlin. In fact, Stewart was a soldier-diplomat whose duties were defined as ‘the military superintendence, so far as Great Britain is concerned, of the Prussian and Swedish armies’. This aspect of the mission may not have appealed to George, who refused the offer. William, ignorant of the reason for George’s refusal, wrote that he presumed ‘it was Ld C’s [Castlereagh’s] personal Objection from some Cause or other that prevented our dear Boy going with his Brother to Berlin’, but in the end was glad that he did not go, as ‘the political Atmosphere has changed it’s appearance greatly since C. Stewart left England, & I know that he & his Secretary or Secretaries have not had “Beds of Roses” to lay on at all, – on the contrary they have been shuffled about from Post to Pillar & Pillar to Post, laying upon Straw here & there at Times’. Moreover, he said, the climate ‘might have been detrimental to our dear Boy’s Health at this hot season of the Year on the Continent.’ It may well have been the knowledge that Stewart’s function was to be more that of a soldier than a diplomat – as he was actively engaged in action during these months – that deterred George from joining his suite.

William’s letter goes on to discuss alternative ways of George’s entering the diplomatic service. The argument (apparently put forward by certain persons close to the Foreign Office), that even by way of the Foreign Office it would be difficult for George to attain a secretaryship at a British embassy abroad, did not convince William: ‘but that is wholly nonsense – utter stuff & puerile nonsense! Half a dozen young Men who have been on the Establishment of it have got on in the Line of soi-disant Ministers at Foreign Courts, [...] all the world knows that our Diplomacy has been trusted to Children or to Persons whose Education had not been fitted to such a Line of Life. [...] – there is nothing of routine in Diplomacy that he could not learn in a week at any Time,

51 Charles William Stewart (afterwards Vane), third Marquess of Londonderry (1778-1854) served with distinction in the Peninsula Wars in 1808, 1809, and as adjutant-general in the campaigns of 1810 and 1811. By 9 April 1813 he had been appointed British minister to the court of Berlin, and by 26 April he had reached the headquarters of the Allies at Dresden and signed the formal treaty of alliance between Great Britain, Russia, and Prussia. The offer to George must have been made at least a month prior to Hall’s letter.
52 DNB, vol. 18, p. 1166.
53 W to M, 14 June 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 7/22.
& C.B. [the diplomat Charles Bagot?54] or persons about him would put dear George in the way of knowing that at any Time when he may be called upon again'.55

William was justified in his complaints about the staffing of foreign embassies. The secretaries at these legations were usually the rich sons of peers, nominated by the Foreign Office, and who were in no way qualified for their posts. According to George Rose most of them knew neither German or French 'the one the key to the North, the other the key to the South of Europe.'56 The historian Harold Temperley wrote about the 'lack of system' in the British diplomatic chancelleries abroad in his work *The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822–1827*, stating: 'Each diplomat took out his staff of young men,37 personal friends whom he treated as family, who were frequently unpaid, who often remained a short time and showed little interest in their official duties.'58 He cited Canning's complaint that the staff of British embassies were made up of 'a couple of dozen young men scattered over Europe; owing no allegiance and taking diplomacy only as a subsidiary to amusement. [...] It is a bad system, but there is no getting rid of it in my time.'59 Temperley also noted that it was even the custom for young men to be attached during their summer vacations to embassies.60 There were considerable personal costs to be borne by the incumbent of such a post, which was an important consideration for George, and which may have been the decisive factor, rather than Castlereagh's antagonism as William surmised, in his refusal of the offer of the Berlin diplomatic mission. When George Chinnery did finally obtain a posting abroad he found ample evidence of all of the above flaws in the system of diplomatic arrangements.61

In William's letter to Margaret of 14 June 1813 another means of advancement for George was mooted – this one via the military. It was apparently suggested by the Chinnery friend Colonel Sheldon – but strongly objected to by Spencer – that George take command of a company of local Militia. William opined that 'if the accepting of a

54 Charles Bagot (1770-1838), of Chicheley, Buckinghamshire, eldest son of Charles Chester, brother of William, first Baron Bagot. He died unmarried.
55 Ibid.
56 Cited in Charles Webster's *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1812-1815*, p. 48. The Foreign Office was then divided into two sections, under two Under-Secretaries of State, one responsible for dealing with matters pertaining to Northern, the other to Southern Europe.
57 After 1815 ambassadors and ministers selected their own staff.
59 Granville MSS, Canning to Granville, May 9/26, in Temperley, op. cit., p. 265.
60 Temperley, op. cit., p. 256.
61 See pp. 738-740.
Company in it should not at all interfere with our dear Boy’s Civil Interests; it would be a good idea, since ‘the advantage upon the Continent of wearing a Military Dress is great indeed, — independant of the vast saving of Expense that such a dress ensures.’ John Herries and George’s Oxford friend Frederick Douglas, who had himself served in the British army in Portugal in 1809, were inclined to agree. It is difficult to imagine that George, whose natural bent was for the more refined pursuits of literature, music and art, and who preferred reading and quiet reflection to strenuous physical exertion, would have been eager to pursue this kind of career. William himself, while full of enthusiasm for the advantages of a military rank, was not so eager for its attendant disadvantages: ‘The acceptance of this military Coat however must not lead him into any irksome Duty that will be inconsistent with his present unavoidable & essential Calling!’\(^{62}\) Spencer’s objection must have prevailed. The subject was not mentioned again.

Undaunted, William continued to trust in ‘Providence who sees & directs all’, to take care of George’s career interests. He also believed that George’s numerous introductions into society would be useful to him: ‘I read all these accounts of Dinners at his Club, or Breakfasts à la fourchette, & waltzing Parties with great delight.’\(^{63}\) Margaret, who was never as comfortable as William with leaving matters in the hands of Providence, took more active steps to help George. Later in June 1813 she sent to John Herries what appears to have been a portrait of Alexander I, Czar of Russia. In his letter thanking her for her ‘elegant presents’, he writes that he is ‘happy to possess a good resemblance of the man whose talents have been the most conspicuous in the context of the Russian Armies’\(^{64}\). It is clear from his letter that he followed closely William’s fortunes, and as William predicted, remained attached to the Chinnerys and was prepared to do all in his power to serve both father and son. It was he who was responsible for giving George his first foreign mission – as bursar to Louis XVIII at the time of the Restoration.

\(^{62}\) W to M, 14 June 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 7/22.
\(^{63}\) Ibid.
\(^{64}\) John Herries to Margaret Chinnery, 23 June 1813, Fisher.
A week after Louis XVIII was declared King of France as a result of Napoleon’s abdication on 6 April 1814, Viotti wrote to William of the tantalising wait to see who would be appointed British ambassador to France, and of their hopes that the moment might be propitious to launching George’s diplomatic career. If he could discover the identity of the lucky mortal who was named ambassador to France, Viotti declared with his usual fervent loyalty, he would pay him a call and impress George’s merits upon him. He was indignant that George’s talents had been so far ignored: ‘Est-il croyable qu’un jeune homme qu’on devroit chercher avec la lanterne, l’ame la plus droite et la plus pure, reste négligé de cette maniere malgre ses talents precieux et utiles?’ A single word from ‘un certain personnage qui nous a temoigné tant de bonté dans les autres temps’ [almost certainly a reference to the Prince Regent], Viotti believed, would suffice to launch him. Viotti went on to wax lyrical on the glorious restoration of the rightful heirs to the French throne, and on the ways that a young man might benefit from this great moment in history:

Quel moment pour un jeune homme! Les quarts grands souverains de l’Europe rassemblés dans cette immense Capitale remplie de guerriers de tous les Pays et attendant le Legitime descendant de S’ Louis qui va arriever pour prendre sa place!... Ce Tableau, que l’imagination peut percer de loin, doit être ravissant et je regrette presque que la chere Padrona ne le voye pas de prés, et qu’elle ne soye pas temoin de tant de milliers de mains de tous les quartiers de la terre qui se croiseront pour se jurer Amitié!

(V to W, 14 April 1814, PM 94/143/1 – 14/21)

In the event, it was not the Prince Regent who was to give George the so wished-for opportunity, but the Chinnerys’ unswerving friend John Herries who obtained for him not the coveted secretaryship in a diplomatic mission, but an appointment that was far more luminous, although short-term. George was to

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65 It was to be the Duke of Wellington, but owing to his ongoing commitments to the army, Castlereagh himself was obliged to undertake most of the ambassadorial duties.
66 V to W, 14 April 1814, PM 94/143/1 – 14/21.
67 Czar Alexander I of Russia, Francis I of Austria, and Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia. Viotti may have meant the King of Saxony as the fourth, although the King of Saxony was not a member of the victorious camp. Saxony, which had become a kingdom in 1806, was allied to France, and was defeated with her at Leipzig.
accompany the King of France, Louis XVIII on his historic voyage from England to France. He was to be responsible for carrying the boxes of specie with which to provide for the needs of 'His Most Christian Majesty' en route. Herries, as commissary general, wrote to George:

Great George St
22 April 1814

Sir,

The Lords Commissaries of His Majesty's Treasury having been pleased to direct me to give into your charge a Sum of Money for the use of His Most Christian Majesty, and to furnish you with the necessary instructions for the execution of that trust I have now to desire that you will consider yourself responsible for the safe Custody & conveyance of the Boxes of specie herewith delivered to you marked & numbered GR 1 to 4 containing as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Ounces</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Old French Crowns</td>
<td>1500</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Old French Crowns</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Old French Crowns</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Old French Crowns</td>
<td>1214.6</td>
</tr>
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Total weight 5714.6 ozs

(John Herries to George Chinnery, 22 April 1814, Fisher)

George was also to take charge of a small bag containing '406 Napoleon's d'or and 38 Louis' d'or' with which he was to 'proceed in the suite of His Most Christian Majesty until the Count de Blacas shall desire you to deliver them over to such person as he may appoint to receive them'. There were also 'Circular Notes of Exchange' for the use of the French King in the following lots: 30 of £300, 30 of £200 and 25 of £100, making a total of £17,500.

The letters that Margaret and Matilda wrote to William on this occasion are lost, but one from Viotti remains. It is written just after George's departure, and uses the familiar and slightly irreverent tone that is the hallmark of all his letters to William:

68 Louis-Stanislas-Xavier, Louis XVI's younger brother, hitherto known as the comte de Provence, was proclaimed King of France with the style of Louis XVIII. He had spent the latter half of his exile in England.
69 Pierre-Louis-Jean-Casimir, Comte de Blacas d'Aulps (1771-1839) remained faithful to the Bourbons in exile, and on his return to France in 1814 was the closest adviser of Louis XVIII until after the Cent Jours in 1815. In 1824 Louis made him a duke.
70 John Herries to George Chinnery, 22 April 1814, Fisher.
Je suis sûr que ces mains féminines vous ont tout dit... N'importe je reporterai que notre cher George est parti brillamment à la suite de sa Majesté Louis XVIII. laquelle sera voiturée, nourrie &c&c&c rien que par les mandats de notre cher Enfant, ce qui veut dire que le Magot est sous sa garde et que c'est lui qui est chargé de transiger avec les Banquiers de Londre à Paris. Manière charmante de voyager et de voir commodément tout ce qu'il y a d'intéressant et curieux.

(V to W, 25 April 1814, PM 94/143/1 – 14/21)

Viotti predicts a brilliant future for George as a result of this mission, and optimistically expects that his career will take flight from this moment. He imagines George overtaking all his lesser competitors who have powerful family connections, and rising to dizzying heights by merit alone:

Quel délice si avant de graisser mes bottes pour l'autre monde, je peux le voir planer majestueusement, laissant derrière lui tant de mouchoirs protégés par la parenté, et n'ayant d'autre merite qu'un nom, que la plus part, portent indignement... Cela arrivera, et je l'espere car la Providence est juste.

(Ibid.)

But even Viotti, who, like William believes in the justice of Providence, is not so optimistic to believe that merit will really hold sway over family connections, and concedes that it would be madness to even hope that George might be named private secretary to the not-yet-appointed British ambassador in Paris: ‘Il y aura tant de parents, tant de sots qui sollicitent! Comment le merite peut-il se faire jour au milieu de tous ces brouillards?’ In the same letter Viotti says he has called on Herries to thank him for what he did for George, but not finding him at home was obliged to leave a note expressing Margaret’s eternal gratitude. Herries also travelled to France at the same time as George in order to help negotiate the complicated financial treaties with the Allies (Russia, Austria and Prussia) in their discussions preceding the signing of the Treaty of Paris. Herries had been conscientious and relatively successful in his post (since 1811) of commissary-in-chief, and is credited with having ‘successfully formed and carried out a plan for the collection of French specie for the use of Wellington’s

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71 Ibid.
72 The letter, which is in the Fisher collection, begins: ‘How good, how attentive, how considerate you are towards us my dear Sir! May Heaven reward you [...]’ (Margaret Chinnery to J. Atkins, 26 April 1814, Fisher). Atkins was probably John Herries’s private secretary.
army. Herries's dispatch to George dated 11 May 1814 (in the Fisher collection) acknowledges receipt of George's letter enclosing the receipts of the Comte de Blacas, and proves that his mission was successfully concluded. It is ironic that the son of such a spectacularly public defaulter as was William should have been entrusted with such large sums of money and such an important mission. If George's probity had ever been in question (which it probably never was) he successfully quashed all such doubts on the completion of this undertaking.

It was during this visit to Paris that George stayed with Cherubini and his family at the 'Hôtel des menus plaisirs du Roi, faubourg Poissonniere, n° 23', where the latter lodged in his capacity as a musician in the employment of the King. At the Restoration Cherubini had been made surintendant de la musique du roi and a Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur. Madame de Genlis mentioned with regret the fact that George stayed with the Cherubinis rather than with her in her 1814 letter to Margaret. In the Fisher collection is a letter to George from the old Chinnery friend the Comte de Vaudreuil, who had returned to France with Louis XVIII. The letter was sent to the above address. Although dated 'ce 5 avril 1814', the month is clearly May, since Louis did not enter Paris until 3 May. Vaudreuil was rewarded for his fidelity to the Bourbons by a peerage and the governorship of the Louvre. In the latter capacity, he lived at the Tuileries Palace in the Pavillon Flore. Now an old man of seventy-four, the count wrote that he was exhausted from having to attend to a room full of people all day, all of whom were paying him lavish compliments, much to his embarrassment. Just two days after the King's entry to Paris, it is not hard to imagine the bustle and confusion that surrounded this high-ranking court official. Notwithstanding his fatigue, Vaudreuil wrote that he would like to see George: 'Venez donc me voir un jour, pavillon de flore, no. 4, afin que je vous prie de vive-voix de saluer de ma part toute l'Angleterre, et vous en particulier dont la société me plairoit infiniment.'

George does not appear to have remained in Paris for long after completion of his mission. Castlereagh had appointed all the staff he needed for his difficult negotiations on the drafting of the Treaty of Paris, but George was not among them, and so was bound to return to his menial duties at the Treasury. Two and a half months later,

73 DNB, vol. 9, p. 707.
74 Madame de Genlis to Margaret Chinnery, 13 May 1814, Fisher. See Part II, Chapter 2, p. 394.
75 Joseph-François de Vaudreuil to George Chinnery, 5 April [May] 1814, Fisher.
what looked to be a very promising overture was made by Charles Stewart to George regarding a diplomatic appointment at his embassy in Vienna. Although the letter in which the offer was made is missing, another, retracting the offer exists in the Fisher collection. On 3 August 1814 Stewart wrote to George informing him that he had received letters from Paris and had also been in communication with his brother Lord Castlereagh, as a result of which the present secretary of mission at Vienna, John Bidwell, was permitted to remain at his post. He went on to assure 'Mr Chinnery that had there been a change or if one at any future moment should occur & Mr Chinnery should be at liberty, Lord Stewart would be happy to avail himself of his Services & he much regrets the trouble he has had on his account'. 77 The Chinnerys' disappointment on receipt of this letter was severe. They had clearly entertained hopes, like many others, of being present in Vienna when the historic Congress, at which the reconstruction of Europe was to be discussed, took place in October. The news dashed their hopes and ruined their plans. Viotti, in spite of his frustration at this second disappointment from Stewart ('c'est bien malheureux que ce diable d'homme ait manqué pour la seconde fois!') 78 nevertheless put the best face on the situation when he wrote to William:

Qui sçait après tout, si la providence n’a pas réglé cet événement pour le mieux?... Et si ce n’est pas pour nous éviter des chagrins et des douleurs qu’elle veut nous mener par un autre chemin... Sans doute le moment et le lieu nous paroîssoit tout ce que nous pouvions désirer de mieux pour notre cher George, mais enfin la chose même annonce une vacillation dans cet homme [Lord Stewart], une légèreté qui nous prouvent, que ce cher enfant auroit été peut être malheureux avec un être semblable.

(V to W, 4 August 1814, PM 94/143/1 - 14/22)

Viotti told William that on receiving Lord Stewart’s letter George had replied with one that was ‘pleine de noblesse, de mesure et de fermeté’. 79 The letter in question is missing. George must have indeed written a strongly worded letter, as it received an

76 Ibid.
77 Charles Stewart to George Chinnery, 3 August 1814, Fisher.
78 V to W, 4 August 1814, PM 94/143/1 - 14/22.
79 Ibid.
indignant response from Stewart, denying that he had 'either foiled your Expectations or caused you a publick disappointment'.\[^{80}\] He went on to say:

> I feel much regret that you should have been in any manner disappointed through my means. But you must do me the justice to admit I distinctly stated to you, I could enter into no Engagement until I ascertained the practicability of my old Secretary’s remaining with me. Justice to him required that I should not give him up if it were in my power to serve him. I never mentioned publicly my having made any Engagement with you. I was anxious to make your Acquaintance in the event of a Contingency arising.

(Charles Stewart to George Chinnery, 11 August 1814, Fisher)

However, Stewart may not have been totally truthful in his statement that he did not tell anyone of having made an offer to George, as a letter from Windsor from the Duke of Cambridge to Margaret, dated 24 July 1814, indicates. In it Adolphus Frederick writes: 'Be assured that I felt great satisfaction at hearing from L’d Stewart that he wished to take George with him, and I do sincerely hope that this new Situation in life may be of use to him, & render him & you my dear Madam, happy and comfortable.'\[^{81}\]

Stewart’s next statement shows that George had also asked to be attached to Lord Castlereagh’s mission to the Congress of Vienna, due to begin on October 1. A staff posting in Vienna that autumn was a much coveted thing, as the occasion was unique, and the contiguous sideshow of glamorous social activities very appealing to the young dandy hopefuls. But there was disappointment in that domain also for George, with Stewart writing that there were already young men who had been promised something waiting in line for the next available appointment: 'I have reason to know that my brother’s arrangements are made with regard to those Individuals whom he takes with him as belonging to his mission to Congress, & I also understand there is no vacancy in his office, & some young men on his list.'\[^{82}\]

Whether it was George’s old Christ Church head, Charles Hall, who had recommended George to Lord Stewart through Lord Liverpool, or whether it was once again Herries who intervened on George’s behalf, is unclear. But when the attempt was unsuccessful George had immediate recourse to Hall’s influence, informing him that he

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\[^{80}\] Charles Stewart to George Chinnery, 11 August 1814, Fisher.

\[^{81}\] Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 24 July 1814, Fisher.

\[^{82}\] Charles Stewart to George Chinnery, 11 August 1814, Fisher.
was at liberty, and requesting him to write to the strong spirited ex-Foreign Secretary\textsuperscript{83} George Canning, another old Christ Church luminary, who was to leave for Lisbon as ambassador extraordinaire in November. Although Margaret was against a Lisbon posting for George, probably because Canning was then out of office and therefore out of the sphere of influence in politics, and was undertaking the trip to Lisbon primarily for reasons of his son's delicate health, Viotti was for it, firmly believing (rightly) that it was Canning's intention to come back into the Cabinet and that with his powerful support George could go far. With Canning George had better luck than with the Stewart brothers. The Dean of Christ Church wrote the desired letter, Canning requested a meeting with George, gained a favourable impression of him,\textsuperscript{84} and George's fortunes were reversed.

\textsuperscript{83} George Canning had been Foreign Secretary in the Duke of Portland's administration from 1807 to 1809, during the Peninsula Wars.

\textsuperscript{84} There are no documents in the present collection describing their first meeting, but from the ensuing correspondence it is clear that Canning thought highly of George.
(iii) George Canning, 1770-1827

A letter from Charles Hall to George at Treasury Chambers, dated 3 October 1814, on which George has written ‘The Dean of Ch.Ch. introducing me to Mr Canning’, marks the turning point in George’s career. It testifies to Hall’s high regard for George and to the interest he took in his advancement. It also underscores the uncertainty – only too familiar to George – that always attended such introductions. Having received a reply from Canning to his overture on George’s behalf, Hall wrote to George:

Mr Canning wishes to see you. He is to be at Gloucester Lodge [Canning’s London residence] to day, and I have written to prepare him for your calling some day this week – Wednesday or Thursday. – do not however form any expectations at present from this. He wishes to know you, and I am very anxious that you should be introduced to him, because some good may eventually arise from it. I shall stay here [Reading] all this week, and shall be very glad to hear from you when you have seen Mr C.

(Charles Hall to George Chinnery, 3 October 1814, Fisher)

George Canning, son of an actress and brought up by a rich uncle, was not of the nobility and had no pretensions to be so, but he was extremely ambitious. His uncle saw to it that he received the best education at Eton and at Christ Church, but apart from that help, he had succeeded by his own gifts – his native wit, a sharp mind and tongue, and an indefatigable capacity for hard work. At school and at university he had gained ascendancy over his peers, made a name for himself as a wit, a formidable debater, a Latin scholar and a literary luminary, having founded a schoolboys’ magazine at Eton and won the Chancellor’s prize for Latin verse at Oxford. At school he had begun his lifelong friendship with Charles Ellis, with whom he founded the Quarterly Review, and at Christ Church with Robert Jenkinson, future Lord Liverpool, without whose support he would not have advanced so far in his finally brilliant career, culminating in his brief prime ministership in 1827. His friendship with Lord Granville Leveson-

85 The DNB (vol. 3, p. 866) describes it as ‘an Italian villa, at one time the property of the Duchess of Gloucester, situated in what was then an almost rural tract between Brompton and Kensington.’
86 Charles Rose Ellis, first Baron of Seaford (1771-1845), member of parliament for Seaford, and close friend and supporter of Canning. It was Canning who nominated him for his peerage in 1826.
87 A Tory political and literary journal, The Quarterly Review was originally established (1808) as a competitor to the Whig Edinburgh Review. Many of its early political articles were penned by George Ellis, George Canning and John Wilson Croker, all parliamentarians.
Gower (who was also a Chinnery friend from their Gillwell days), to whom he was to give important ambassadorships, also went back to their university days. Having begun his early career in Parliament as a Whig, Canning, along with many others, was converted to toryism by what he saw as the excesses of the French revolution.

Without wealth, it would have been hard for Canning to advance in his parliamentary career, but in 1800 he married a lady of fortune, Joan Scott,88 whose sister Henrietta had previously married William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck,89 who became the fourth Duke of Portland in 1809. The latter was a useful family connection. Throughout his career Canning espoused the unpopular Roman Catholic cause, which did not help his political advancement. He was Treasurer of the Navy from 1804 to 1806, and Secretary of the Foreign Office from 1807 to 1809. In 1812 he was returned, after a hard-fought contest, for the seat of Liverpool, where the powerful merchant class looked to him for support. His principal sponsor for election costs (and the man who persuaded him to run) was Sir John Gladstone90 who became a lifelong friend. Canning spent two brief interludes out of office, including the one from 1814 to 1816 during which period George was introduced to him. He came back into office as President of the Board of Control91 in 1816 (until 1820). The second was in 1820 when he resigned from the Ministry to distance himself from the prosecution of Queen Caroline. In 1822, when he was rumoured to have exhausted his wife’s fortune, he accepted the lucrative governor-generalship of India, but did not take up the post owing to the suicide of Castlereagh and the resultant opportunity to come back into the Ministry. He then began his second term as Foreign Secretary (1822-1827), and proved himself an able and astute politician and negotiator. Having overcome a seemingly impossible obstacle in the form of a cabal against him initiated by George IV,92 he went from being the first

88 Joan Scott (1776-1837) and her sister Henrietta (b. 1774) were the daughters and only heirs of General Scott of Balcomie, county Fife. (A third daughter had died in 1798.) It was said that Joan received £100,000 on her marriage.

89 William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck (1768-1854), fourth Duke of Portland, married Henrietta Scott in 1795.

90 Sir John Gladstone (1764-1851), a Liverpool merchant of great fortune whose business was mainly with the East Indies. He later also established a successful West Indian trade. He was himself a member of parliament, and a staunch supporter of toryism and Canning. There is a letter from him in the Fisher collection.

91 The Board of Control was responsible for the administration of India.

92 Known as the 'Cottage conspiracy', after the Royal Lodge at Windsor, termed the 'Cottage', where the members of the coterie (the Count and Countess von Lieven, Prince Esterhazy and other royal intimates) met.
man in England to the first man in Europe in 1825, the year he recognised the independence of the Spanish American states of Buenos Aires, Mexico and Colombia. His brief seven month prime ministership in 1827 ended with his death in August of that year.

Canning’s frequent tongue lashings and ridicule of his colleagues in the House of Commons made him an unpopular figure in Parliament, but he was loved and revered by his personal friends and followers (including George Chinnery), who were unswervingly loyal to him throughout his life. Uneasy in unfamiliar company, he earned the unwarranted reputation of coldness, especially among women. (On her first meeting with him in 1820, Margaret Chinnery found him excessively cool and aloof.) Within his own circle of friends he was, however, relaxed and witty, sometimes even outrageous, as the Chinnery letters show.

In the CFP collection there is a wealth of material detailing Canning’s public and private life. Most of it is in the Fisher collection, but there are various writings of his and references to him in the Powerhouse, the Royal College of Music, and the Osborn collections. In Fisher there is correspondence between George Canning and George Chinnery, copies of some of Canning’s early nineteenth century letters, copies of official documents and of certain of Canning’s Lisbon speeches, miscellaneous letters addressed to Canning, and letters from Harriet Canning to George Chinnery. As well as these, there are miscellaneous official and private letters addressed to George concerning Canning’s public and private life, and an important series of letters (1824-1825) to George from Canning’s trusted and highly skilled ambassador Sir William A’Court.

It was nicely appropriate that where George met with failure in obtaining the support of the high Stewart lords, he found success with their nemesis, a commoner who

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93 Temperley (op. cit., p. 229), claimed that Canning’s full power was not felt abroad until he had dragged the wavering King and his reluctant colleagues with him by his influence over Parliament, the press and the people.

94 See pp. 692-693.

95 Harriet Canning (1804-1876), was the only daughter and third of Canning’s four children. She married Ulick John, first Marquess of Clanricarde, of old Irish nobility, in 1825.

96 William A’Court, Baron Heytesbury (1779-1860), diplomat. Educated at Eton, A’Court received his first posting as Secretary of Legation at Naples in 1801. He subsequently went to Vienna (1807), Malta (1812), Barbary States (1813) and returned to Naples in 1814, where George met him in 1819. From 1822-1824 he was Envoy Extraordinaire to Spain, and was at the Court of Madrid at the same time as George. In September 1824 he left Madrid for Portugal, where Canning had appointed him Ambassador. He remained in Lisbon until 1828.
was not ashamed of his origins, and who met the sneers of such lords with proud
disdain. During Canning's first tenure of the foreign secretar yship he had fought the
now legendary duel with Castlereagh, who had considered himself slighted by
Canning's aspersions on his competence as War Minister. A copy of Canning's reply to
Castlereagh's challenge, dated 20 September 1809, came into George Chinnery's hands.
The 1809 letter is a shining example of Canning's sense of humour. As all his
biographers point out, Canning was an inveterate wag and liked to make fun of any
situation, no matter how serious. In this case, he targeted Castlereagh's self-importance,
as his exaggerated humility and deference to Castlereagh's title shows:

Gloucester Lodge
Sep 20 1809
½ p 10. am

My Lord,
The Tone and the Purport of your Lordship's Letter (which I have this moment
received) of course precludes any other answer on my part, to the Misapprehensions
and Misrepresentations with which it abounds, — than that I will cheerfully give your
Lordship the Satisfaction which you require.

I have the honour to be

My Lord,
Your Lordship's
Most obedient humble Servant
(signed) George Canning
Viscount Castlereagh
&c &c &c
(Canning to Castlereagh (copy), 20 September 1809, Fisher)

Another earlier letter (a copy) from Canning to Lord Auckland, dated 18 July
1800,97 ten days after his marriage, and sent from Pitt's home at Hollwood, also
somehow got into George's hands. Both these letters pre-date George Chinnery's
meeting with Canning.

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97 George Canning to William Eden (first Baron Auckland), copy, 18 July 1800, Fisher. Canning, who at
the time was Paymaster General, regretted that duty called him back to London to discuss the subsidy
debate, and that he was therefore unable to pay his respects in person.
(iv) Private secretary to Canning in Lisbon, 1815

Disappointingly, there are only two brief letters written during George’s stay in Lisbon in the Chinnery collection. The copious correspondence that he would have carried on with his mother during this period is missing, as is any kind of record of his sojourn in Portugal in a travel journal, which he also certainly would have kept. The only reference to George’s going to Lisbon in the family correspondence (apart from Viotti’s mention of the possibility cited above), is in an undated letter from Margaret to William, in which she says that Lord Liverpool was unfavourable to the idea of granting George leave from his post at Treasury to enable him to join Canning in Lisbon, ‘observing that it was a bad custom, detrimental to the business of the [Treasury] Office’, but that he had finally ‘given way to the opinion of others’.\(^98\) A letter from George’s Christ Church friend, Richard Wellesley, written on 18 February 1815 to recommend George to a young count in Portugal, to pass on his congratulations to Canning on his ‘safe arrival & his good lodging at the Palace of Necessidades’,\(^99\) and to wish George bon voyage, also helps date his time of departure. George therefore departed shortly after 18 February, as in his 1819 Travel Journal\(^100\) he gives the date of his arrival in Lisbon as March 1815. Canning had been in Portugal since November 1814.

George’s holding of the position of private secretary to Canning, while still in possession of his post in the Treasury is an example of those not infrequent irregularities of tenure in the British civil service, which powerful ministers (or in this case, powerful friends) were able to orchestrate. Lord Liverpool, judging by the remark reported in Margaret’s letter, was not in favour of it. The only direct reference to George’s official position is in a letter from the Duke of Cambridge written from Monbrillant in Germany in reply to one of Margaret’s, and dated 5 June 1815. On the cover George has written: ‘Montbrillant [sic] – near Hanover, June 5\(^{th}\) – 1815, HRH. The D. of Cambridge, Rec’d at Lisbon July 7\(^{th}\), where Margaret had sent it (the Chinnerys frequently forwarded letters of interest to absent members of the family) for George’s perusal. It is clear from this letter that Adolphus Frederick had followed with interest George’s career vagaries,

\(^98\) M to W, [9 February 1815], PM 94/143/1 – 17/20.
\(^99\) The Palace of Necessidades was in Sintra, a town in the hills of the Serrade Sintra, 20k from Lisbon.
\(^100\) BL, ADD 64093 and ADD64094. A microfilm copy is in Fisher Library.
took a continuing interest in his future prospects, and was prepared to offer him whatever assistance was in his power. It is also clear that he thought highly of Canning:

I hasten to return you my dear Mrs Chinnery my best thanks for your very obliging letter by which I was delighted to find that George was appointed private secretary to Mr Canning. I think you were very right to send him to Lisbon, and I have not the least doubt that Mr Canning will never forsake him. It is very natural for you, after the very severe Trials you have had, and the disappointments you have met with concerning George, not to feel very sanguine about his diplomatic career, but I trust that this time he will be more fortunate, and I am fully persuaded that if he has an opportunity he will distinguish himself. Pray say everything kind from me to him whenever you write, and tell him that he may reckon upon me whenever I can be of use to him.

(Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 5 June 1815, Fisher)

As for clues to exactly what George’s duties were in Portugal, there is only one, in the form of a letter to George from Lady Williams-Wynn of ‘Rua de Prior’ in Lisbon, requesting information on where she might procure a guide to the sights of Lisbon in French or English, and asking George to prepare her passport, and arrange a Portuguese one also if necessary, as she was about to embark on a sea voyage by packet boat (presumably for a coastal Portuguese destination).

The length of time that George was to remain in Portugal was not made clear to him at the outset, but can be deduced from different letters. A letter from Viotti to William, dated 28 July 1815, stating that a vessel had just arrived in Falmouth and that they were expecting it to bring news of George and his intentions, indicates that the Chinnerys did not know how long he would stay: ‘Nous dira-t-il qu’il vient, qu’il reste? Dieu le sait.’ Another letter from Canning’s eleven-year-old daughter Harriet, written to George on 4 October 1815, establishes his date of departure for England as October. She wrote from the coastal holiday town of Colares to say that as George had expressed a wish to get ‘the Patriotic Hymn’ in addition to his other music, she was

101 Charlotte, daughter of the Rt Hon. George Grenville, and sister of the Marquess of Buckingham, was the second wife of Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn, fourth baronet, MP for Denbigh. He died in 1789, she in 1832.
102 V to W, 28 July 1815, PM 94/143/1–14/26.
103 Harriet Canning to George Chinnery, 4 October 1815, Fisher.
104 The hymn of the fledgling patriotic movement in Portugal. This movement became a full-scale revolt in 1820, ending British occupation of the country. George also took an interest in the Portuguese modinhas, which were airs for the violin or piano.
having it copied for him and would send it 'together with the purse' that she had purchased on George's behalf. The music was clearly intended as a gift for Viotti and the purse for Margaret. These gifts, along with the Canning family's message wishing him 'a quick & pleasant voyage' would indicate that he was on the verge of departure for England. By 6 December 1815 (as a letter written by him to Canning shows) George was back in the Treasury Chambers, having been absent for a total of eight months.

An important official document dated November 1815 confirms the eight-month period of absence. It is, in George's own words, a 'Rough draft of the Appt. of Mr Commissary General [James] Drummond who was sent to Paris to act as the Commissioner on the part of Grt Britain for the purpose of superintending the paym't of & receiving, the quotient due to this Country out of the 700 millions of Francs to be refunded by France to Europe under the Treaty signed at Paris the 20th Nov. 1815' and was written in the hand of 'Sec'y Harrison'. At the second Treaty of Paris, the terms imposed on France by the Allies, hardened by Napoleon's escape from Elba and the ensuing humiliation of the Cent Jours, were much harsher than at the first Treaty of 1814. France lost territory, was forced to accept an army of occupation, and had a huge indemnity to pay to those nations that had incurred losses waging war against 'the French Dictator'. The document is of standard Government foolscap paper, folded lengthwise, and written on one side of the fold only – leaving the other side blank for comments, corrections or additions.

The letter (a copy) that George wrote to Canning on 6 December also concerns official business. Although back at his Treasury desk, George was clearly still acting as Canning's private secretary, keeping him informed of news regarding Portugal, getting his letters to other parts of Britain franked, and carrying out the sundry other menial duties of a personal nature that private secretaries were then expected to undertake – such as forwarding parcels, passing on the messages and requests of friends, shopping on behalf of wives and paying the latters' hatter's bills. Another junior clerk at

105 George Harrison, Assistant Secretary at Treasury, 1805-1826. (T 29/85 p. 351, in Sainty, op. cit., p. 131). He attended the 1815 Paris negotiations in the same capacity as Herries had in 1814.

106 The name the British commonly used to describe Napoleon. See Colvin (ed.), op. cit., p. 44.

107 George Chinnery to George Canning (copy), 6 December 1815, Fisher.
Treasury, Thomas Harrison,\textsuperscript{108} had just weighed anchor for Lisbon to fill an undisclosed post in that city, possibly the vacancy that George’s departure left at the embassy.

George’s letter makes reference to the British military establishment in Portugal commanded by Viscount Beresford,\textsuperscript{109} and to Beresford’s offside, Colonel Arbuthnot.\textsuperscript{110} As a result of the disarray of the Portuguese troops after Napoleon’s first two invasions in 1807 and 1808, the Portuguese Regency had asked for a British general to carry out a reform of its army. Lord Beresford was chosen for the task, which had begun in February 1809, but his undertaking was plagued with difficulties – mainly the procuring of money and food for the men. The British Government found the provisioning of this army a burden, as testified by George’s letter:

I have seen Col. Arbuthnot who is now in town & has no thoughts of returning to Lisbon. He expects to hear from Lord Beresford towards the end of this month, & his conviction is (from reports which he seems to have collected upon pretty good authority) that our military Establishment in Portugal will be broken up & that Lord Beresford may very possibly end by returning straight to England from the Rio de Janeiro —

Since I saw Col. Arbuthnot a Treasury minute has been drawn relating to the Claims of the Portuguese Army of which I enclose a copy: it does not indicate a very friendly disposition. Lord Beresford urged the claim strongly & the denial will therefore I suppose be grumbled at by the [Portuguese] Regency.

(George Chinnery (copy) to George Canning, 6 December 1815, Fisher)

George’s letter shows that Beresford was at the time (December 1815) in Rio de Janeiro. The object of his visit (generally thought to be in 1817)\textsuperscript{111} was to persuade the Portuguese Regent to return to Europe. The interim Regency council in Portugal, of which Beresford was a member, was unpopular with the Portuguese people, who were fast becoming disenchanted with the distant royal family and with British occupation.

\textsuperscript{108} Thomas Charles Harrison, Junior Clerk at Treasury, 1811-1820 (T29/111 p. 753, in Sainty, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 132).

\textsuperscript{109} Viscount William Carr Beresford (1768-1854), general, was created a baron by the Duke of Wellington for distinguished service in the Peninsula Wars. He was given command of the Portuguese army when it was threatened to be taken over by Napoleon at the time of the Portuguese Regent’s flight to Brazil, and headed the British military authority which governed Portugal at the end of the Peninsula Wars. Beresford was a talented commander and his local knowledge of the Portuguese country and language was thorough.

\textsuperscript{110} Sir Robert Arbuthnot (1773-1853), lieutenant-general, was Beresford’s aide-de-camp and later military secretary throughout most of the Peninsula Wars. He received many military honours.

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{DNB}, vol. 2, p. 334.
Beresford realised that the return of the Regent from Rio de Janeiro\textsuperscript{112} was imperative to maintaining the country’s allegiance to the monarchy. A push for democracy had already begun, as can be seen from the title of George’s ‘Patriotic Hymn’.

The first letter from Canning to George in the Chinnery collection is dated 30 December 1815, and concerns an invitation he has received from a John Bernard Trotter, ‘late Private Secretary to the late Rt Hon. Charles James Fox’, to subscribe to a long epic poem he has written. In twenty books it celebrates, the author says, ‘the glories of the successful stand against French Tyranny’, covering the period 1814 to 1815, and ending with the victory at Waterloo. Clearly aiming to flatter, the author writes ‘The Duke of Wellington is my Hero & Spain, where he first shone conspicuously & where Mr Canning’s decision effectually aided his heroic efforts, – Spain cannot be forgotten!’. He ends his letter with an ingratiating flourish: ‘You sir, understand what an attempt mine must be!’\textsuperscript{113} Canning, who views with humorous contempt the poet’s earnest patriotism and emphasis on his gigantic labours, encloses the letter for George to read, saying ‘Here is a foolish man has written an Epick Poem, or Two – & claims my subscription – which I fear I must have promised.’ Canning refuses, unlike ‘his [Trotter’s] wealthy subscribers in Office to multiply my copies’, but promises to take two (at £3 each) of which George is to have one, on the condition, he stipulates with a chuckle, that George promise to read it!\textsuperscript{114} (The list of subscribers is enclosed, and includes the Prince Regent (100 copies), the Duke of Wellington (20 copies), Lord Castlereagh (5 copies), the Dukes of York and Kent (3 copies each), and numerous other lords and members of parliament.)

On 30 December Canning was about to leave his abode at the Palace of Necessidades in the hilly region of Sintra and set off on a three-month tour of Portugal, first heading south to Arabida and Setubalas, then north (on 1 February) to Oporto, returning via Alcobaça and Batalha, and taking one of the British ships of the line to Masra, from where he was to return briefly to Lisbon to make his farewells before embarking for England via France.\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{112} The Regent, who became King John VI on the death of his mother Maria I in 1816, had left Portugal to seek a safe haven in Brazil at Canning’s suggestion in 1807, when Napoleon’s army threatened.

\textsuperscript{113} John Bertrand Trotter to George Canning, 5 October 1815, Fisher.

\textsuperscript{114} George Canning to George Chinnery, 30 December 1815, Fisher.

\textsuperscript{115} George Chinnery to George Canning (copy), 31 January 1816, Fisher; and George Canning to George Chinnery, 8 March 1816, Fisher.
(v) Some correspondence between George Chinnery and Canning, 1816-1817

On 1 March 1816 George entered the Minute Department of the Treasury,\(^{116}\) which, according to his memorandum book, consisted of one senior clerk, two assistant clerks and two junior clerks.\(^{117}\) It is not clear whether George remained as a junior clerk or received a promotion, but his conscientious approach to his work was certainly appreciated by the Assistant Secretary at Treasury, George Harrison, who had supported Charles Hall’s original recommendation of George to Canning and had also warmly praised him to ‘old Mr Rose’, as Matilda told William in her letter of 29 February.\(^{118}\)

On 28 February George sent one last letter to Canning before the latter’s departure from Portugal, thanking him for his ‘conscientious account of the earthquake’.\(^{119}\) Most of the letter confirms errands, messages and enquiries that he has carried out on Canning’s behalf, for example the handing over of a watch for Mrs Canning sent to him by the Duchess of Portland (Canning’s sister-in-law) to Lieutenant White, first lieutenant of the ‘Granicus’, the frigate now en route to Portugal to bring Canning home; and the search for information (in the Customs Department of the Treasury) on the quantity of [duty-free] wine allowed to be sent unaccompanied into the country. George could find nothing more specific than ‘the general Letter of respect neither specifying the restriction of two Pipes [of wine]\(^{120}\) nor specifically allowing a greater quantity.’ He also enclosed a ‘receipted Bill’, just to maintain his reputation for ‘accuracy, of which you [Canning] so strongly inculcate the importance’. The letter is signed in a way that shows George’s complete devotion to and respect for his patron –

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\(^{116}\) See V to W, 29 February [1816], PM 94/143/1 – 14/29, to which Matilda Chinnery has also contributed a page of news, saying: ‘George enters the Minute Department tomorrow. Mr Nicolay shook hands with him to-day, and told him he was very sorry to lose him.’ (Frederick Nicolay was appointed Chief Clerk at the Treasury 3 April 1812 (Sainty, p. 35), probably to fill William’s vacancy.)

\(^{117}\) Treasury memorandum book, p. 34, Fisher.

\(^{118}\) Matilda Chinnery to William Chinnery, 29 February [1816], in Viotti’s letter to William of the same date, PM 94/143/1 – 14/29.

\(^{119}\) Canning’s letter is not in the Chinnery collection.

\(^{120}\) The Oxford Companion to Wine (ed. J. Robinson, OUP: Oxford, 1994, p. 738) gives the definition of pipe as a ‘wine trade term, adapted from the Portuguese pipa meaning barrel, [...], the traditional measure of Port as well as of Madeira, Marsala, and other Portuguese wines’. The measure varies according to the wine type, but is usually set at 105 imperial gallons. The enormous quantity of wine that Canning intended to bring back to England with him – four or five more pipes, in addition to the 700 bottles remaining from those he had originally brought out to Portugal – testifies to the huge consumption of wine by the British at that time.
Believe me to be My Dear Sir, Your Faithfully devoted and affectioned Servant, G R Chinnery."  

Canning’s letter to George of 8 March 1816, written from Torres Vedras, en route to Masra, was penned on the same date and from the same place as his letter to Lord Liverpool accepting to come back into office as President of the Board of Control of India. Canning’s letter to George makes no reference to this new situation, but that is probably because he knew that George had already learned of it from a letter Canning had written to his daughter (now back in England), which she allowed George to read. Canning’s letter is written in a friendly egalitarian vein – never in his dispatches to George does Canning ever treat him as a subordinate – and describes in detail the Canning party’s stay at Alcobáça, where they spent five days at a monastery as guests of the ‘Pere Don Prior’. Their reception was ‘magnificently hospitable’. Canning told George that the number of dishes on the table for the fifteen diners ‘varied from forty to fifty’, and the second course, consisting chiefly of pastry and sweetmeats, ‘above thirty’. He also gave a good description of their host’s humble attitude towards his foreign guests, and even confessed to George his embarrassment at the subservient role that the holy man displayed towards him.

On the day of our departure the Don Prior insisted upon carrying me in his Sage the first league of the way (he had come to meet me in it on our arrival) — & on parting he further insisted, to my great annoyance & surprize on holding my stirrup while I mounted — a thing that I knew Emperors had done for Popes, but which I should hardly have expected from any high Priest to an external Ambassador. We had offered to leave Howard [Ellis’s eldest son] and George [Canning’s eldest son] behind us as Novices — which established a joke that was of great use to us in the paucity of common language.

(George Canning to George Chinnery, 8 March 1816, Fisher)

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121 George Chinnery to George Canning (copy), 28 February 1816, Fisher.
122 The Canning party (all male) consisted of Canning and his two sons, Charles Ellis and his two sons, General Buchan (Sir William Buchan, 1776-1813, English general), a certain Dr Thuker and Francis Croft [a member of the British legation in Lisbon].
123 Obsolete term for sedan chair.
124 A reference to Napoleon and Pope Pius VII perhaps.
125 Charles Augustus Ellis, second Baron Seaford (1799-1868), succeeded his maternal great-grandfather in the ancient barony of Howard de Walden in 1803, the year his mother died. He became the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1824-28.
126 George Charles Canning (1801-1820) was a sickly child and died young.
The rest of the letter discusses duties to be paid on a pipe of wine sent to Liverpool and letters he has received, including one from the Audit Office, whose officials are bothersome: ‘Those people are a nuisance: it ought – among other retrenchments – to be done away.’

On the eve of his departure for England, Canning gave two speeches in Lisbon. Copies of both were sent to George, one enclosed in a letter from Jeffery, dated 12 April 1816 (of which George took a copy and which is in the Fisher collection), and one enclosed in a letter from Francis Croft, dated 14 April 1816 (also in the Fisher collection). The two speeches were to different audiences. The first, addressed to ‘Mr Consul General & Gentlemen’ was delivered at a dinner given by the British merchants in honour of Canning, and was attended only by British subjects. The topics touched on in this speech were all of interest to the merchants. The second, which is a masterpiece of rhetoric and diplomacy, clearly had a mixed Portuguese and British audience, and dealt with past and present British policy towards Portugal.

   In the first paragraph of the first speech Canning alludes to the short term of his residence in Portugal, and the even shorter term of his official duties there. He also asserts, presumably in reply to their regret that he did not prolong his stay, that he was bound to return to England that spring, since he had promised his Liverpool constituents that he would resume his parliamentary duties at that time. If that were the case, it was indeed fortunate that the Earl of Buckinghamshire died when he did, enabling Lord Liverpool to offer him the presidency of the Board of Control. This speech would therefore indicate that it was not just Liverpool’s offer that brought Canning back to England: he had always intended to return in the spring of 1816. The next remark in Canning’s speech shows his genuine concern for British commercial interests, a concern that earned him great popularity among the commercial classes in Britain, especially among his own constituents, and a concern that he was to show again in 1823 for the

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127 George Canning to George Chinnery, 8 March 1816, Fisher.
128 Unidentified member of the Lisbon legation.
129 Canning resigned his ambassadorship in April 1815, as soon as the Portuguese Regent made it clear he did not intend (for the moment, anyway) to return to Europe. The notice in the DNB gives the length of Canning’s stay in Portugal as only nine months, at the end of which he supposedly spent a year in France, before returning to England in summer 1816. The Chinnery letters support the assertion of the nineteenth century Canning biographer, Robert Bell, that Canning remained in Portugal until the end of April 1816, and only touched briefly at Bordeaux before continuing on to England, where he arrived in May 1816. (R. Bell, The Life of the Rt. Hon. George Canning, Chapman and Hall: London, 1846, p. 297.)
130 The Earl of Buckinghamshire had been President of the Board of Control. He died in February 1816.
British South American traders, whose ships had been plundered by pirates off the coast of Cuba. In his speech Canning stated: 'But if I feel any concern that my official existence here was not prolonged by the return of the P. Regent of Portugal, it is mainly for the sake of your interests.'

Canning's ambassadorship to Portugal was a matter of controversy among some of his parliamentary colleagues, who objected to his holding a post which was seemingly created by Liverpool to enable him to undertake a journey with a principally private aim in an official capacity. The reason given for creating the ambassadorship was that it was necessary for a British representative to be on hand to receive the Portuguese Regent on his return to his homeland, given the circumstances of his departure. Although the Regent had indicated his intention of returning from Brazil, he did not in the end do so (at least during Canning's stay in the country). Canning had hoped that on the return of the Regent he would have been able to negotiate some satisfactory arrangements for the British merchants, who were coming under increasing attack from jealous Portuguese rivals. In 1810 Britain had negotiated a treaty that had opened Portugal up to British commerce, but six years later the Portuguese were less tolerant of the British merchants' gains from their country. Canning told his audience: 'Had that opportunity [of meeting with the Regent] arisen [...] I would have made your Rights & Privileges the object of my most serious consideration.' Canning had already made 'remonstrances & representations' on behalf of the merchants to the local Government, but to no avail.

Canning went on to point out that in 1816 circumstances were different from those of 1810 when the present treaty governing British commerce in Portugal had been framed, and that consideration had to be given to the different needs of the past and the future. However, he remained optimistic that 'after the return of the P. Regent all disputed points may be set at rest' and an arrangement made which would be 'consistent with the honour of the Portuguese Government, with the protection of its fair commerce, & even with the improvement of its legitimate Revenue.' The frustrations of the British in dealing with the members of the local Portuguese Regency council are mentioned by Webster.131 A remark by George in his letter to Canning of 31 January 1816 concerning Forjas, the principal minister in the Portuguese Government, would

131 *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1812-1815*, op. cit., p. 73.
suggest that he was a difficult person to treat with: ‘Forjaz’s political game is I suppose now a bad one, for if the report of Lord Beresford’s brilliant success be true, he can hardly have any honours left in his hand.’\textsuperscript{132} The report of Lord Beresford’s success [in persuading the Regent to return from Brazil to Europe] must have been a false one, or else the Prince subsequently reneged on his pledge. The latter did not return to Lisbon (as King John VI) until 1821.

The second speech was much longer and clearly much more carefully constructed. It gives a foretaste of the brilliant Foreign Affairs Minister that Canning was to become. In its style it resembles an Oxford theme, and is full of expressions of the Aristotelian virtues of justice, pride, fairness, and moderation—hallmarks of a liberal education. Describing himself as a disciple of Pitt, Canning harked back to his first term as Secretary of the Foreign Office and his foreign policy during the Peninsula Wars, emphasised British support for Portugal in its hour of need, lauded the valour of the Portuguese people, and ended with an appeal for the cessation of commercial and political bickering between the two countries, and for fairness and generosity of spirit to prevail.

George sent copies of the speeches to William Huskisson\textsuperscript{133} and to Lord Binning\textsuperscript{134} (both close friends and supporters of Canning). Both sent notes of thanks to George expressing their impatience to hear once more Canning’s eloquence in the House of Commons. Canning, described by Byron as ‘Our last, our best, our only orator,’\textsuperscript{135} was certainly the most able debater in the House of Commons. As Huskisson’s and Binning’s letters show, no-one could match him, and his presence in the House had been sorely missed during his term in Portugal. Huskisson wrote:

\textsuperscript{132} George Chinnery to George Canning (copy), 31 January 1816, Fisher. The remark was a reference to Forjaz’s love of whist, at which he regularly beat Canning, according to Peter Dixon (Canning: Politician and Statesman, Weidenfeld and Nicolson: London, 1976, p. 179.)

\textsuperscript{133} William Huskisson (1770-1830), statesman, had been a friend of Canning since the 1790s. As Secretary of the Treasury, 1804-1806, and 1807-1809, he was also a friend of William Chinnery. He resigned from office with Canning in 1809 and from 1812 held various ministries, but might have advanced faster in his political career had he not been such a faithful adherent of Canning.

\textsuperscript{134} Thomas Hamilton, Lord Binning (courtesy title only), ninth Earl of Haddington (1780-1858), B.A. (Ch.Ch.), 1801, M.A. 1815. A member of parliament from 1802 to 1827, he held various important positions: Lord of the Privy Seal, Secretary of the Admiralty and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, among others.

\textsuperscript{135} From The Age of Bronze, XIII, line 552.
Dear Sir,

I return you Mr Canning’s speeches at Lisbon, with many thanks for the communication of them.

Independently of the immediate pleasure derived from the perusal of them, they leave upon my mind the encouraging hope that we shall soon witness at home the return of that flowing eloquence, at once spirited and correct, which has been very much missed in the House of Commons since Mr Canning’s absence.

Yours faithfully,
W. Huskisson

(William Huskisson to George Chinnery, 6 May 1816, Fisher)

Binning wrote from the India Board (‘Monday, May 1816’): ‘It is a style of eloquence to which we have not of late been much accustomed. I cannot tell you with what pleasure I look forward to hearing it again. Yours very sincerely, Binning.’ It was not only Canning’s close friends who admired his eloquence. The Duke of Wellington, who did not particularly like Canning, was forced to admit: ‘I never in my life knew so great a master of his pen’. Byron even went so far as to call Canning an almost universal genius, combining the skills of ‘an orator, a wit, a poet, a statesman’.

Canning returned to England via France, the ship touching at Bordeaux long enough for Canning to establish his wife in that city with the help of Charles Ellis, whose plans, after settling ‘Georgey & Willey’ [Canning’s sons George and William, then aged fifteen and fourteen] at Bareges, were to spend summer in Switzerland and then to proceed to Italy for the winter. Canning’s daughter Harriet was already back in England. Canning’s brief stopover in Bordeaux was marked by a lavish civic reception given in his honour by the French authorities and the British merchants residing in that city. According to the nineteenth century Canning biographer Robert

136 Lord Binning to George Chinnery, May 1816, Fisher.
137 Cited by Rolo, op. cit., p. 25.
139 William Pitt Canning (1802-1828), Canning’s second son, was a trial to his father on account of his gambling. He also died young.
140 Situated on the Bastan, between two parallel chains of mountains, this small village of the Hautes Pyrénées was famous for its thermal springs. It had been made fashionable by a visit in 1675 by Madame de Maintenon.
141 Charles Ellis to George Chinnery, 20 May 1816, Fisher.
Bell, it was 'a public entertainment on a scale of unusual magnificence'. From the merchants of Bordeaux he was paid the same tribute as he had been by the merchants of Lisbon. A letter dated Friday 20 May 1816 to George from Charles Ellis, who had just received a letter from Canning (dated ‘Tuesday at noon off the Cordovan Light House’) from on board the ‘Granicus’, enclosed Canning’s speech delivered at Bordeaux. Canning desired Ellis to send it on to George. The letter confirms Bell’s description of the reception. He writes:

It [the speech] tells its own Story. But I cannot refrain from adding that the admiration & delight with which it was received equalled, I might almost say surpassed, the effect of any of the like exhibitions to which I have been witness. The French part of his audience were not to be satisfied without a Report — to be translated & circulated; and the task of translating was performed by the Maire & the Secretaire de la Ville.

(Charles Ellis to George Chinnery, 20 May 1816, Fisher)

All this public attention, wrote Ellis, would make Mrs Canning’s stay in Bordeaux very pleasant:

Being separated from Canning she could not have fixed on any town in France comparable to Bordeaux for her residence during his absence. The impression which has been made by his Visit will secure her all possible attention & protection or Authority in the Place. The Civilities of the French “Authorities”, as they call themselves, to Canning on his arrival & during his stay, could not be exceeded.

(Ibid.)

On Canning’s return to England he went straight to Bath to visit his mother (c. 30 May-1 June), and then to Liverpool to contest his re-election (c. 3-5 June), which he supposed would ‘pass without any opposition’, arriving in London on 7 or 8 June, as his letter to George from Saltram informed George. The letter, written in answer to two of George’s, deals with George’s queries in punctilious point by point order, and betrays a love of precision that George commented on in one of his other letters. Canning’s letter informs George of his intended date of arrival in London, gives orders

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142 Bell, op. cit., p. 297.
143 George Canning to George Chinnery, 28 May 1816, Fisher.
144 Residence of Lord Amherst.
145 George Chinnery to George Canning (copy), 28 February 1816, Fisher.
for the liveries of the footman and coachman, requests the collection from the docks of a crate sent from Portugal, and gives instructions for the delivery of various items of mail.

It was at Liverpool during this 1816 visit that Canning appointed another private secretary, John Backhouse. A letter from the Dean of Christ Church written the day after Canning's, tells George that he must not be too discouraged by the news, as 'the appointment of Mr Backhouse was the inevitable consequence of Liverpool connexions', meaning that Canning had been obliged to offer patronage to Backhouse as a favour to one of his important merchant backers (most likely Gladstone). The historian Temperley writes that Canning 'brought Backhouse from an office stool in Liverpool'. Hall nevertheless still believed that Canning was 'sincerely attached' to George, and that he would be pleased, when an opportunity occurred, 'to have you in some situation more immediately connected with himself'.

Although George was replaced by Backhouse who continued Canning's private secretary, 1816-1823, it was he, not Backhouse, who accompanied the Cannings to the Continent in the autumn of 1816, and for longer periods in 1819 and 1820. It may have been the Duke of Cambridge who again intervened on George's behalf. A letter dated 7 August 1816 from Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery shows that his interest in George's advancement had not flagged. He writes: 'You will easily believe the delight I had to see George, and I sincerely hope that after the knowledge Mr Canning has, of his character and abilities [presumably a reference to the time they spent together in Portugal], he will soon think of doing something for him.' One month later Canning wrote to George, arranging to meet him in Calais before proceeding together to Paris. George, then in Brussels for his yearly reunion with his father, along with his mother, Matilda and Viotti, was informed that Canning was leaving London on the 28th, landing at Calais on the 30th, and expected to be met on the beach or on the pier at his landing. It was convenient for George to await Canning's arrival in Calais, as this was

146 George Canning to George Chinnery, 28 May 1816, Fisher.
147 Charles Hall to George Chinnery, 29 May 1816, Fisher.
149 Charles Hall to George Chinnery, 29 May 1816, Fisher.
150 Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 7 August 1816, RCM.
151 George Canning to George Chinnery, 20 September 1816, Fisher.
now where William’s business was established.\textsuperscript{152} Canning’s instructions again testify to the multifarious duties of a minister’s private secretary. George was to seek out the best inn at Calais for an overnight stay, have a shaft prepared for Canning’s barouche,\textsuperscript{153} collect some letters for him from the poste restante at Calais, and pass on a message to Lord Binning at Brussels regarding their meeting at Calais. The letter ended with Canning’s hope that ‘wind & weather will permit my landing in such reasonable time, as to sit down with you & Binning to a late dinner.’\textsuperscript{154}

On 6 November begins a series of five letters from George to his mother and to his father, describing the activities of the Cannings\textsuperscript{155} in Paris in the month of November, including his own visits to the most brilliant entertainments and salons of the day. France was then still occupied by Allied troops, and this autumn visit came hard on the heels of the French elections held on 25 September and 4 October, following the dissolution of the so-called Chambre introuvable,\textsuperscript{156} which the extreme right-wing royalists (the ‘Ultras’) had made unworkable. Although Canning’s visit to Paris was purely one of pleasure, he did take the opportunity of meeting with at least one of the King’s ministers – Elie Decazes, whose cousin Edouard he had frequented in Portugal.\textsuperscript{157} On 7 November Canning went without his entourage to a dinner at the former’s home, where he doubtless discussed the recent elections and the future prospects of a liberal Assemblée. Elie Decazes, Minister for Police since 1815 when he had displaced the notorious Joseph Fouché, was Louis XVIII’s favourite. Decazes hoped to bring in a more liberal House. One of the highlights of the month for George was attending the opening of the session of this new Chambre des députés. George told his father that it was ‘an event to look back to as long as I live.’\textsuperscript{158} In his next letter he wrote that he was expecting to gain admission to a debate in the same Chambre.\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{152}William, in Calais since 1814, had become a wine merchant, working with a M. Leveux. The address of the business was rue de la Comédie, Calais.
\textsuperscript{153}English carriages used a pole, or single shaft fitted to the front of the carriage to which were attached the yokes of the horses. The system of attaching horses to a carriage was different in France, necessitating an adaptation to all English carriages travelling in France.
\textsuperscript{154}George Canning to George Chinnery, 20 September 1816, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{155}Making up Canning’s party were his wife and daughter, Charles Ellis and his sons, and George Chinnery.
\textsuperscript{156}Name of the Ultraroyalist Chambre des députés formed in Oct 1815 and dissolved in Sept 1816.
\textsuperscript{157}George Canning to George Chinnery, 30 December 1815, Fisher. The same cousin who, as a member of the French legation in London in 1819, was a friend of Margaret Chinnery (see Part I, p. 193).
\textsuperscript{158}G to W, 6 November 1816, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{159}G to W, 8 November 1816, Fisher.
In the autumn of 1816 there were many other English visitors in Paris: the Duke of Cambridge and his Hanoverian minister Count Münster,160 Castlereagh’s brother, Charles Stewart, whose favour George no longer needed to seek; the Prince Regent’s intimate Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt,161 Lady Aldborough,162 Charles Drummond the banker; Lord and Lady Mansfield163 (whom George was to meet again in Switzerland in 1819); the Hammonds;164 the Carringtons; and the Misses Hancock.165 George received invitations from all these people, sometimes as a member of Canning’s suite, and sometimes in his own right, as well as from numerous French and foreign dignitaries.

The most prestigious invitation came from one of Louis XVIII’s favourite courtiers, the ‘Duc de La Chatre,’166 to ‘a petit spectacle at the Tuileries given by the D. de la Chatre to the royal family’,167 which the Duke of Cambridge also attended. Another high-ranking courtier, the Duc de Duras, whom George describes as ‘one of the Premier Gentilshommes de la Chambre du Roi’168, lent Canning and his party his box at the opera and at the Comédie Française to see performances by the acclaimed French actors Talma,169 Mademoiselle Mars170 and Mademoiselle Duchesnois171. (Of the three, George preferred Mademoiselle Mars, not finding French tragedians to his taste.172)

160 Ernst, Count Münster, Baron von Grothaus, Hanover (1766-1839), minister and diplomat. He had been the Hanover minister in London, 1814-1815, and one of the prominent members of the Vienna Congress in 1814.
161 Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt (1763-1833), B.A. (Ch.Ch.) 1784, M.A. 1787, created D.C.L. 1810, was private secretary to the Prince of Wales (1798), knighted (1812), and gentleman usher of the black rod, and ranger of the Home Park, Windsor, 1812-1832.
163 David William Murray, third Earl of Mansfield and eighth Viscount Stormont (1777-1840), married in 1797 Frederica, daughter of Dr William Markham, archbishop of York.
164 George Hammond (1763-1833), diplomat, was the first British minister accredited in the United States. He left America in 1795, and in 1796 was permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, when Canning was parliamentary Under-Secretary. They struck up a lasting friendship. Hammond’s duties as a member of the committee of arbitration for procuring for British subjects indemnity for loss of property during the French Revolution (1815-1828) took him frequently to Paris.
165 Robert, 1st Baron Carrington (1752-1838) and his wife. The Misses Hancock are unidentified.
166 Claude-Louis, duc de La Chatre, (1745-1824), lieutenant general. He formed a regiment called the Loyal Emigrant in England in 1793. In 1814 he was named minister plenipotentiary in London, and in 1815 a peer.
167 G to W, 6 November 1816, Fisher.
168 G to W, 8 November 1816, Fisher. Amédée-Bretagne-Malo de Duras (1771-1838), member of the military nobility and politician, followed Louis XVIII to Gand during the Cent Jours, and on his return to Paris was made a peer and resumed the above-mentioned post.
169 François-Joseph Talma (1763-1826), famous French tragic actor. He had been Napoleon’s favourite actor.
170 Anne Boutet, popularly known as Mademoiselle Mars, (1779-1847), French comedienne.
171 Catherine-Josephine Rufuin Duchesnois (1777-1835), French actress who enjoyed the patronage of Josephine Bonaparte and reigned supreme at the Comédie Française from 1808 to 1833. She had two illegitimate children, both with links to Madame de Genlis. The first, Henri-Achille (1810-1839) was
Among the members of the French nobility who extended hospitality to the Canning party was the Duchesse d'Orléans\(^{173}\), wife of Louis-Philippe, Madame de Genlis's former pupil. According to the Chinnery friend and former London resident the Baron de Montyon\(^{174}\) – from whom there is a letter discussing this visit in the Fisher collection – the Duchesse was charmed by the wit of her English visitors. The Baron regretted that he had not been invited to the soirée and that George and the Canning party were about to leave Paris without his having had the opportunity of seeing them. He wrote: ‘Vous avez tous trois [George Chinnery, Charles Ellis and George Canning] eu le plus grand succès chez mme la duchesse d'orleans. Vos plaisanteries, votre ton, votre conversation ont eu le plus grand succès et ont charmé toutes les dames.'\(^{175}\)

Another former Chinnery habitué in London, the Comte de Vaudreuil, whom George had visited at the Louvre in 1814 straight after his installation there as governor, invited the Canning party to a ‘fête’ at the Louvre given in honour of Monsieur, of the latter's younger son the Duc de Berry and of the Duke of Cambridge. Reminiscent of the Count’s pre-Revolution theatrical activities at his country estate Gennevilliers, which according to Madame Vigée-Lebrun\(^{176}\) was a favourite haunt of the Comte d’Artois, and which had its own theatre, the fête consisted of ‘a concert & two comedies performed by the actors of the Vaudeville on a little theatre erected for the purpose.’\(^{177}\)

An invitation from the Duchesse de Duras to her ‘coterie’ enabled George to realise a long-held ambition to meet the scheming ex-bishop Talleyrand, whose smooth slide from Napoleon’s to Louis XVIII’s side did not continue beyond 1815.

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172 G to W, 8 November, 1816, Fisher.
173 Louis-Philippe, duc d'Orléans, Madame de Genlis’s former pupil, had married Marie-Amélie de Bourbon of Naples in 1809.
174 Antoine-Jean-Baptiste-Robert Augst, baron de Montyon (1733-1820), had had a career in law at the court of Louis XVI where he was conseiller d'État (1755) and chancellor to the Comte d'Artois (1780). Faithful to the Bourbons, he left France at the time of the Revolution and lived in London until 1814, when he returned to France with Louis XVIII. Although extremely wealthy – his estate was valued at four or five million francs – he lived very frugally and donated most of his money to charities and other worthwhile causes. He was a devout Christian, and much concerned with public morals. He was also the author of several pamphlets.
175 Antoine de Montyon to George Chinnery, 22 November 1816, Fisher. There are four other letters from Montyon in the Fisher collection (1811-1814), all sent from his house at 38 Grosvenor Street, Golden Square in London. An ambiguous remark in one of his letters written during Passion Week, saying that he is looking forward to 'cette conversion', implies that he may have been about to convert to Protestantism. (Antoine de Montyon to Margaret Chinnery, 27 March [1814], Fisher).
177 G to W, 12 November 1816, Fisher.
The Cannings wanted to visit all the tourist spots of interest, as they had done in Portugal, and would do again on the Continent in 1819 with George, and had therefore applied for permission to visit the Invalides. There is a letter from Louis XVIII’s Ministre de la Maison du Roi, the Comte de Pradel (with whom Viotti was to renew friendship in 1819) to George Chinnery, dated 6 November 1816, granting to Canning ‘les autorisations que vous me demandez et pour le jour où M’ et Madame Canning voudront s’en servir.’ It is not stated what these authorisations were for, but in the case of the Invalides, the Comte informed George, the Cannings had only to present themselves at the door and ask for the Duc de Coigny, who was its governor. George also wrote to obtain permission to visit ‘l’Elysée Bourbon’ and received from the Duc de Berry’s aide-de-camp La Ferronnays a very informal letter enclosing the requested entry ticket and informing him of the many love affairs of Madame Murat that had taken place within the palace walls. He wrote, very evocatively, that ‘tout cela a pris une teinte un peu sérieux depuis que l’hymen s’est établi; tous les amours qu’on y rencontre ont l’air de bailler.’ In his opinion there were more interesting houses in Paris to visit, but most tourists wanted to come here. There was a good collection of pictures for lovers of the fine arts.

George received invitations from the many foreign ministers who were in Paris at the time, including some from the Danish and Hanoverian Governments’ representatives. He renewed acquaintance with Madame de Staël, who invited the

178 Comte de Pradel to George Chinnery, 6 November 1816, Fisher.
179 Marie-François-Henri Franquetot de Coigny (1737-1821), French marshal, had been a député at the Estates General, and had fought in the counter-revolutionary army of Louis-Joseph, prince de Condé. His status as a veteran of this royalist army undoubtedly led to his appointment as governor of the Invalides.
180 Now the Elysée Palace, it was known by this name during the Restoration. Originally built in 1718, it was later bought by the Duchesse de Bourbon, who emigrated at the time of the Revolution, when it passed into the domaine national. Murat bought it, but donated it to the domaine impérial when he left Paris for his kingdom of Naples.
181 Pierre-Louis-Auguste Ferron, comte de La Ferronnays (1777-1842) had emigrated at the time of the Revolution, and had fought in the royalist armies. He returned to France at the Restoration as the Duc de Berry’s aide-de-camp, and was created maréchal de camp and pair de France. In 1817 he began a distinguished diplomatic career.
182 Caroline Bonaparte (1782-1839), sister of Napoleon, married in 1800 Joachim Murat (1767-1815), one of Napoleon’s marshals whom he had made King of Naples, 1808-1815. Caroline Murat was known to have had simultaneous affairs in 1808 with the Austrian ambassador Metternich, and with the governor of Paris, Andoche Junot, duc d’Abrantès.
183 Pierre-Louis La Ferronnays to George Chinnery, 18 November 1816, Fisher.
Cannings and George to meet Talma, and was included in an invitation issued to the Canning party from Pozzo di Borgo, the capable and astute Russian minister in Paris.  

But the event that made the trip a truly memorable one for George was a gift presented to him by Louis XVIII in recognition of George's services in 1814. It was a diamond-encrusted box, inscribed with the King's monogram. In his letter to Margaret of 14 November George wrote proudly that the letter of thanks that he had written to Pradel, as the King's minister, was approved both by Canning for its content and by the Chinnery friend Malcor for its French:

I have this morning received a box from the K. of France with his Cypher set in diamonds in consideration of my having accompanied him on his first return to France in 1814. The box is not I fancy of any great value, but it is a handsome one & the letter accompanying it from the Comte de Pradel (as Ministre de la Maison du Roi) not less so. The whole is a very gratifying thing to possess. My trip to Paris this time has not been a fruitless one. In my letter to Pradel I have been guided by M. Canning as to the sentiments, and by our friend Malcor as to the language, — or rather (which I have great pleasure in adding) my letter has been approved of by both, — M. Canning suggested only one or two slight alterations & Malcor none. So that I feel quite sure of being right. This is so pleasant an event to communicate that I will touch on no other subject in this letter.

(G to M, 14 November 1816, Fisher)

The Canning party left Paris in the second last week of November for Boulognesur-Mer, where Canning had ordered his private packet to be ready to take them back to England by the 30th. There is only one more letter from Canning (17 December 1816, Fisher), which appears to be sent to 'Brown Reid and Co'. It is an official dispatch concerning the payment of a sum of money to a Colonel Sewell in Portugal.

In 1817 there are two items of correspondence regarding Canning’s particularly brilliant speech given in the House of Commons in reply to a censure motion to the

184 Count Carlo Andrea Pozzo di Borgo (1764-1842), diplomat of Corsican origin. He began his diplomatic career for the Allies in London, then fought with Alexander I of Russia in the 1814 campaign against France, entering Paris with him on 31 March 1814. As envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, he accompanied Louis XVIII (in the same suite as George Chinnery) from London to Paris. In Paris he was the Czar's representative for twenty years.

185 Monsieur de Malcor was a frequent visitor to Charles Street before leaving for France to accompany the Duc to Bordeaux in 1814 to raise an army to fight Napoleon alongside the Allies. Matilda Chinnery wrote in her Journal on 31 March [1814] (PM 94/143/1 -27) that Malcor had been 'invited
effect that Canning’s ambassadorship in Portugal had been nothing more than a ‘job’, the Portuguese Regent having never intended to return to Portugal from Brazil. George was present in the House when Canning made his speech, and wrote a report of it to two Canning friends – John Scott-Waring and Charles Ellis. Scott-Waring writes that he ‘read with infinite Pleasure the Report of Mr Canning’s eloquent, & admirable speech, & lament that I had not the advantage which you enjoyed, by hearing it’. In Margaret’s letter to William of 24 May there is a reference to George’s writing an account of ‘M. Canning’s defence in the House of Commons’, to Ellis, who, after replying with ‘the kindest letter imaginable’ to George, showed George’s letter to Canning. Canning, Margaret wrote, ‘was much pleased with it’, and clearly appreciated both George’s loyalty and his powers of expression. Canning’s reply to the accusation of jobbery has gone down in the annals of parliamentary speeches as one of the finest examples of his logic and eloquence. He systematically quashed every single point raised by his accuser, and ‘made mincemeat of his assailant’.

In the middle of 1817 George received two letters from different sources, but about the same subject – Canning’s aspiration to be elected to the seat of Oxford. The first, dated 30 May was from Canning’s new private secretary John Backhouse, complaining of George’s indiscretion in repeating to Lord Binning a comment made by him [Backhouse] on Binning’s own supposed assertion “that he was endeavouring to persuade Mr C. to relinquish Liverpool”. Although Backhouse admitted that he was ‘undoubtedly wrong in presuming to state any opinion as to Lord B’s view of the question’ he nevertheless felt that ‘too strong a meaning was [was given] to the opinion which I really gave’. Backhouse’s real concern was that the impression given to Canning would be of his ‘general communicativeness’. Apart from the consideration that private secretaries were supposed to be more discreet, the conclusion to be drawn from Backhouse’s strong reaction to George’s indiscretion was that Canning desired his

to accompany the son of Monsieur to Bordeaux in a few days’ time, but that he was reluctant to leave England.

185 John Scott, afterwards Scott-Waring (1747-1819), entered the service of the East India Company in about 1766, and went to India where he met Warren Hastings, who sent him to London as his political agent. According to the DNB (vol. 17, p. 984) he was an ineffectual and inefficient agent. He died in 1819 in Half Moon Street from where the present letter was sent.

186 John Scott-Waring to George Chinnery, 9 May 1817, Fisher.

187 M to W, 24 May 1817, PM 94/143/1 – 17/30.


189 John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 30 May 1817, Fisher.

190 Ibid.
intentions kept secret. The second letter was from the Dean of Christ Church, Charles Hall written on the same day (2 June 1817) as a third letter treating the same subject — Margaret’s letter to William, written from Calais.

Norman Gash, in his work on the statesman Robert Peel, devotes a section of his book to this election. According to Gash, Canning had long harboured the desire to represent Oxford, and since 1811 had made four separate approaches to then holder of the seat, Charles Abbot, Speaker of the House of Commons. As the latter had been ill in the spring of 1817, his retirement was considered imminent. Of the two seats of Oxford, one was traditionally held by a Christ Church man, and it was therefore imperative that the candidate had the support of the Common Room and Chapter of that college. Canning was a friend of the old dean, Cyril Jackson, and in the new dean, Charles Hall, he had a staunch supporter. He fully expected to win the seat. As Gash points out, representing Oxford would have been far less irksome to a busy minister than representing the large city of Liverpool with its time-consuming mercantile interests. This was undoubtedly also the view of Canning’s friend Binning, giving rise to his comment that Canning should ‘relinquish Liverpool’.

But events conspired against Canning. Although as late as mid-May 1817 he was generally considered to be the most likely successor of Abbot, the recent debates in the House of Commons on Catholic emancipation had seen Peel emerge in the national consciousness as a champion of Protestant Ascendancy, while Canning remained inflexible in his (unpopular) support of the Catholic cause. Abbot resigned on 28 May. On 30 May, after the news reached Oxford, Hall summoned the College officers to a conference, only to find that most, as High Churchmen, wanted Peel as their representative. The Dean was obliged to bow to the majority’s wishes, and on 31 May George’s old tutor Charles Lloyd was sent to London to approach Peel personally, by which time Canning’s cause was lost. Ironically, it was George’s old tutors, Corne and Lloyd, who were the most ardent supporters of Peel and the most bitter opponents of Canning. The Dean, the Sub-Dean, and George’s old lecturer Goodenough were the only Canning supporters. The Dean was bitterly disappointed by the loss, and wrote of his private feelings to George:

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193 Charles Lloyd had also been Robert Peel’s tutor, and had remained a close friend.
I have suffered so much for the last three days from disappointment and mortification at the failure of my hopes and expectations of Mr Canning’s success here, that I really have not been able to take up my pen and I should have written to you before. The Speaker’s unexpected retreat has ruined everything, and yet I doubt whether at any time it would have been possible to resist the concerto of Peel’s popularity here. I doubt it from what I have seen within these [corridors?] The moment was certainly most propitious to him, and unpropitious to Mr Canning. There is no opposition. I fear Mr Canning will be sadly grieved, but he cannot be more so than I am.

(Charles Hall to George Chinnery, 2 June 1817, Fisher)

Canning himself gave as the reason for his defeat in the Oxford elections his championing of the cause of Catholic emancipation. Margaret’s letter also mentions the Catholic cause as being a bad one for Canning’s parliamentary prospects, and like Hall, mentions the Speaker’s sudden resignation. She writes to William:

Peel has played M. Canning a fine trick — he has secured his election at Oxford in the room of the late speaker! There is a great stir here about the present novelties; — the speaker resigned & retired from parliament altogether quite suddenly, — but Peel must have been aware of it, as a deputation came up immediately from Oxford offering him to be their representative. Ld L____I remonstrated, — but I believe the point is settled & lost to M Canning. As I hear nothing from George, I can only tell you the common report, and my own opinion, which is, that I much regret M. Canning’s having espoused so bad a cause as that of Catholic emancipation, — but he seems married to it, as well as Ld Castlereagh and this looks a little cloudy at present with regard to your bright hopes for George, — but we must go with the tide of human events! — not half of the things stated in the newspapers are true.

(M to W, 2 June 1817, PM 94/143/1-17/32)

The fact that both Hall and Margaret emphasised the unexpectedness of Abbot’s resignation would seem to indicate that had he retired later, Canning’s prospects might have been better. However, this seems doubtful in the light of certain comments made by Cyril Jackson. Although Hall put it differently, the real reason for Peel’s success had less to do with Peel’s popularity than with Canning’s unpopularity, much to Margaret’s chagrin, as her son’s fate was now inextricably linked to Canning’s. But

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194 See Rolo, op. cit., p. 171, note 1.
195 According to Jackson, Canning was thoroughly disliked at Oxford. (See Gash, op. cit., p. 216.)
Margaret's attitude remained philosophical. She knew as well as anyone that in administrative matters the tide could turn at any moment.
It is the 1818 correspondence which best gives an idea of the sort of work George was doing in his Treasury post. Some of the letters addressed to him at the Treasury were official, some private, the latter invariably coming from the foreign diplomatic community who knew the Chinnerys, or from others who made up the very elevated Chinnery circle of acquaintance. In 1818 Margaret entertained at her new Portman Square house on a lavish scale. She hosted six functions, two of which the Duke of Cambridge attended, one with his new German bride. Letters from Margaret to William describe some of these in detail, and give guest lists. At Margaret’s party of 25 May one quarter of the ninety-odd guests were foreign diplomats, including the French sous-ambassadeur Comte Georges de Caraman and the Prussian minister Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, both of whom are represented in correspondence in the Fisher collection. Many of these diplomats took advantage of their personal friendship with George to avail themselves of his help in a professional capacity, and George did likewise when he needed their assistance with passports.

Among the official dispatches that George received bearing a chronological filing number in red ink in the left hand corner, three – from Lord Exmouth of the Admiralty Office, from the Duke of Montrose and from Sir Robert Townsend Farquhar – date from October 1818. Other dispatches, dealing with official business but written in a private capacity, were those of ‘Ed. Decazes’, cousin of the statesman Elie Decazes (the same person who was in Portugal in 1815), who was a member of the French legation in London, in the Bureau des passeports. On two occasions Decazes asked George to expedite petitions from citizens of Toulon to the British Treasury.

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197 Wilhelm, Baron von Humboldt (1767-1835), was a statesman, a diplomat and also a respected scholar, who founded the Berlin University named after him. Of Baron von Humboldt the Castlereagh historian Charles Webster says: ‘The distinguished Prussian Minister, Humboldt, replaced Baron Jacobi-Kloest in 1817 [in London], but neither he nor his successors, Bülow and Werther, played much part in these years, though their comments on British politics are often shrewd and well-informed.’ (The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1815-1822, p. 45) There is a letter from Humboldt to Margaret in the Fisher collection.
198 Edward Pellew, first Viscount Exmouth (1757-1833), distinguished British admiral. From 1817-1821 Exmouth was commander-in-chief at Plymouth, after which he retired from public service.
199 James Graham, third Duke of Montrose (1755-1836), held the office of Master of the Horse, 1807-1830.
200 Sir Robert Townsend Farquhar (1776-1830), politician, second son of Sir Walter Farquhar, was appointed governor and commander-in-chief of the island of Mauritius in 1812.
department responsible for the payment of pensions of French citizens.201 The 'Bureau des Toulonnais', of which a ‘Mr Howard’202 was head, was a British office which dealt with compensation to those Frenchmen who had lost assets as a result of the Allied siege of Toulon in 1793.203 The inhabitants of Toulon were a special class of émigrés—different from those who received pensions from the Alien Office204—whose pensions had been paid since the capture of Toulon, and continued to be paid in 1819, as Decazes explained to George in his letter.205 Caraman was another habitué of the Chinnery Portman Square house who asked George to intervene in a matter relating to Customs and Excise, over which the Treasury had jurisdiction.206

In January 1823, just before George moved to the Foreign Office, he received a plea for help from another Chinnery friend the Marquis d’Osmond, former French ambassador to London, now retired from affairs of state and living in Paris, rue des Bourbons.207 The letter was written in a private capacity, and begged assistance from George, who was now Assistant Clerk of Revenue in the Treasury,208 in ‘l’affaire des Ladébat’. Laffon de Ladébat209 was a wealthy land owner in the Gironde who, at the beginning of the French Revolution had deposited a large sum in the Bank of England. When peace was restored between France and England the money should have been restored to him in full according to the Paris Treaty of 1814. But he had received only a

201 Edouard Decazes to George Chinnery, 7 November 1818, and 5 March 1819, Fisher. There are two more letters from Decazes to Margaret, dated February and March 1821 in the Fisher collection.
202 Possibly George Howard, sixth Earl of Carlisle (1773-1848), styled Lord Morpeth from 1773-1825, Whig politician, or his brother William Howard (1782-1843), also a member of parliament.
203 Toulon was laid to siege by the British fleet—aided by Spanish and Neapolitan ships—from July-December 1793. 15,000 inhabitants of Toulon were evacuated on British ships.
204 A division of the Treasury (the sixth) dealt with French emigrant claims. In George’s Treasury memorandum book (pp. 23-24, Fisher collection), it is stated ‘Management of the French emigrant Office belongs to the 6th Division […] Two persons are appointed by Govt. […] to examine into the claims of French Emigrants praying for an allowance. […] In making their report [to the Board of Treasury] the Commissioners are assisted by two French Noblemen of respectability appointed by the Govt to supply them with information respecting the lower Classes of the French Emigrants.’
205 Edouard Decazes to George Chinnery, 5 March 1819, Fisher.
206 Georges de Caraman to George Chinnery, 15 May 1818, Fisher. The matter had to do with the export of the Bohrer brothers’ violins. (See Part I, p. 189)
207 René-Eustache, Marquis d’Osmond (1751-1838) represented France during the first Richelieu Ministry. He was sent by Louis XVIII in 1814 first to the court of Turin, then to London, 1815-1819, resigning when the Duc de Richelieu retired. He took no further part in affairs of state except to sit in the Chambre des pairs. According to Webster (The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822, p. 44) he was a great favourite with the diplomatic community. He attended Margaret’s parties, and there are several letters from him in the Fisher collection.
208 See p. 658.
209 André-Daniel Laffon de Ladébat (see Part II, Chapter 1, p. 303), was the son of a wealthy Bordeaux arms dealer. He was a député in the Legislative Assembly in 1791, but was arrested several times
small part of the total sum, being obliged at the time it was offered to accept it in order to pay off pressing debts. The British Treasury had considered the matter terminated, prompting Osmond to object that: ‘les traités sont formels; ils ont été religieusement observés en France’ and that he would have thought that ‘la dignité nationale devait répugner à l'idée de profiter des embarras d’un particulier pour en obtenir des sacrifices qui entraînent sa ruine’. Osmond hoped that George would be able to help, and impatiently awaited his reply. A few days after receiving the request George wrote to ask his mother to beg that Viotti would write ‘one of his admirable notes’ to Osmond, excusing him from following up the matter, owing firstly to lack of time and secondly to the fact that ‘my temporary removal from the Treasury disabled me from undertaking the business’. He went on to explain that such matters could only be resolved at Treasury and that Canning, as Foreign Secretary, could only refer them to that Department. It was not only the foreign community who took advantage of their friendship with the Chinneyrs to solicit favours of George at the Treasury. The Countess of Mansfield wrote to George petitioning a retirement allowance for the Queen’s equerries – of which her husband must have been one – who had been refused it, she believed, by being mistakenly classified as State Officers.

In 1822 George received another request from a member of a foreign diplomatic corps, this time an official letter from the French ambassador in London the Viscomte Louis de Marcellus petitioning the British Government on behalf of a citizen of Corsica. The latter, a certain Comte de Pétriconi, was described by Marcellus as ‘chef d’une des premières familles de l’île de Corse’, and was in receipt of a pension from the British Government to the amount of £100 per annum on condition that he live in Italy. Now that he was old and in poor health, wrote Marcellus, he would like to return to his family in Corsica. George’s reply, bearing an official number in red on the top left hand corner, stated that he had spoken to Mr Howard ‘Superintendent of the List of during the Revolution. He stayed out of politics during the Empire. His relative [son?], the Chevalier Ladébat, was in Madrid in 1824 and carried mail to Margaret from George on his return to France. 210 René-Eustache d’Osmond to George Chinnery, 31 January 1823, Fisher. 211 G to M, 10 February 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/3. By early 1823 Canning had arranged for George’s (unofficial) transfer to the Foreign Office. 212 Ibid. 213 Frederica Mansfield to George Chinnery, 13 March 1819, Fisher. 214 Marie-Louis-Jean-André-Charles Demartin du Tyrac, comte de Marcellus (1795-1865), a cultured bibliophile, began his diplomatic career after the Cent Jours. He had been posted to Constantinople, was now in London, and was later to go to Madrid. 215 Louis de Marcellus to George Chinnery, 19 July 1822, Fisher.
Corsican Pensioners’, who, while he was unable to grant the request having refused two others, graciously suggested a means by which the petitioner could both comply with the stipulated conditions of the pension and live in Corsica until the end of his days while retaining his pension.\textsuperscript{216}

The old and impoverished French noble the Marquis de Choiseul,\textsuperscript{217} living in Titchfield Street, London, also made some undisclosed claim through George. Although the claim was unsuccessful, the Marquis, impressed by George’s kindness, considered that all was not lost as he had gained a friend in the process: ‘mais je n’ai pas tout perdu en perdant l’espoirance que je fondois sur une demande que je croyois juste; j’ai le plaisir d’avoir acquis un ami pour qui j’ai senti de l’attrait la premiere fois que je [l’ai vu.’\textsuperscript{218}

\textsuperscript{216} George Chinnery to Marcellus (copy), [July 1822], Fisher.
\textsuperscript{217} Unidentified member of the French family of ancient nobility who took their name from the estate of Choiseul in Bassigny (Haute Marne).
\textsuperscript{218} Marquis de Choiseul to George Chinnery, 7 November 1823, Fisher.
As a civil servant George's vacations were limited, and he was sometimes unable to join Margaret and Viotti and Matilda for their yearly reunions with his father on the Continent. This was the case in the summer of 1818, when George went to Glen Finart, Lord Dunmore's seat in Scotland, for his vacation. The Dunmores were doubtless pleased to have a visitor, as according to Lord Dunmore: 'Now that the Continent is open, Scotland and its Wilds are left to their former occupants—a few miserable Sheep, a wandering Grouse and a half clad Highlander.'

By 9 October George was back in London, had called at Canning's office, and had received an invitation to dine at Gloucester House the same night with Lord Bathurst, Lord Sidmouth, 'Humboldt the Minister & his brother the Savant', Croker and Barrow, 'Hamilton of the F.O.', and Charles Ellis and his two sons.

On 14 November 1817 George had been made private secretary to Stephen Rumbold Lushington, Junior Secretary at Treasury. According to George's Treasury memorandum book, it was the established practice for Secretaries of the Treasury to select junior Treasury clerks as their private secretaries ("among the Junior or Assistant Clerks, three are generally chosen to be private Secretaries to the two Joint Secretaries and Assistant Secretary"), the additional salary of such a private secretary being £150 per annum. Once again George had Herries to thank for the recommendation. In the Fisher collection there are two letters regarding his appointment, both of which show...
Herries’s involvement. The first, dated 13 November 1817, was from Herries to George, and the second, dated 15 January [1818], from Lushington to Herries. Herries wrote that he hoped that Lushington had already spoken to George regarding his private secretaryship, saying that he had advised Lushington that ‘he could not do a wiser thing for his own interest & comfort than to secure your assistance.’

Lushington replied to Herries that as his private secretary was soon to get ‘a better office’, Herries might ‘make the offer of succession, conditionally, to young Chinnery, & as you originally recommended him to me, the offer may be most acceptable through you.’ George held this office until January 1820, by which time his relationship with Lushington had become intolerably strained. Lushington appears to have been a difficult master. His letters of instructions to George are cold and imperious, and draw a clear line of demarcation between superior and inferior. There is none of the warmth, camaraderie, or consideration that characterises Canning’s letters to George. When George extended his annual leave in 1819 by six days owing to illness, Lushington peremptorily dismissed him. It was a crisis in George’s career that led to a flurry of correspondence. Margaret threw herself into the dispute with her characteristic hot determination, and Canning was called to the rescue. Lushington’s haughty pride took a hard fall, and George, although not reinstated, emerged the victor.

The alteration with Lushington had its origin in August 1819, when George was invited by Canning to join his family on a three-month tour of the Continent. It was clearly Canning who had used his influence as a Cabinet minister to obtain the unusually long leave for George, and Lushington did not hide the fact that he was unhappy at losing his secretary for such an extended period. George wrote his last letter in the capacity of Lushington’s secretary on 14 August 1819 before setting sail for the Continent with the Cannings on the same day. When in early November 1819 it became evident that Canning would not be back in England before late November, and that George would exceed the three months leave of absence he had been granted, he wrote to Lushington to request additional leave. But on returning to London he fell ill and was

\[230\] John Herries to George Chinnery, 13 November 1817, Fisher.
\[231\] Stephen Lushington to John Herries, 15 January [1818], Fisher. (George’s appointment was backdated to 14 November 1817.)
\[232\] The letter, addressed to Edmund Bartard concerned the warehousing of rock salt in Exeter (see Edmund Bartard to Stephen Lushington, 8 August 1819, Fisher). Another letter to George, dated 15 July 1819, was from the powerful Liverpool merchant John Gladstone, and concerned certain unspecified superannuations.
forced to request still another week's leave. As the ensuing correspondence (26 November 1819 - 9 January 1820, in the Fisher collection) shows, Lushington responded harshly.

Margaret sprang to her son's defence, and her outrage at the injustice of George's punishment may easily be imagined from the tone of Lushington's letter addressed to her (in response to one from her to him) on 28 November 1819. Lushington had dismissed George, he told Margaret, because the prolonging of his leave into the fourth month 'left me no option but to conclude that he regarded his office under me as of secondary importance'. Cleverly turning Margaret's intelligent argument of the case against her, Lushington wrote with haughty condescension:

I need not I am sure endeavour to impress upon a Mind, capable of writing such a Letter as that I have received from you, that such an Extent of Absence (during the only Period of the Year in which I myself hope for any relaxation) & the conclusion which I draw from it, are equally incompatible with the nature of the confidential office he has held under me.

(Stephen Lushington to Margaret Chinnery, 28 November 1818, Fisher)

It was to Canning (via his secretary Backhouse) that Margaret had originally appealed for help, and it was Backhouse who, underestimating Lushington's rancour, had suggested to her that she write to Lushington herself using the arguments he proposed, thereby giving Lushington the opportunity 'of retracing his steps in a matter which can hardly fail of leading to disagreeable results if he should determine to persevere in it.' These words give a clear signal of Canning's determination to win George's battle for him. When Lushington stubbornly persisted in his intention after being offered an honourable exit, Canning resorted to a novel tactic -- one that he was to employ to his great advantage in his later career -- which was to make public all the correspondence relating to the matter, thereby embarrassing his opponent into submission. Canning was at the time stricken with gout, and deputised all the correspondence to Backhouse. The latter's following three letters to George reveal the full extent of Canning's plan, which was not only to take George's case to the highest

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233 Stephen Lushington to Margaret Chinnery, 28 November 1818, Fisher.
234 John Backhouse to Margaret Chinnery, 26 November 1819, Fisher.
235 See John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 30 November 1819, Fisher, in which Backhouse asks George to send him copies of all the correspondence relating to the matter.
authorities, but to stage-manage the timing of George’s return to the Treasury in a manner calculated to most embarrass Lushington.

On 5 December Backhouse wrote to George that the whole of the correspondence had been shown to Arbuthnot236 (Joint Secretary of the Treasury) and Huskisson (then a member of the Government’s finance committee), and was about to be put into the hands of Lord Liverpool, and that he trusted that ‘in a few days time some step will be taken by which your return to the Treasury may be freed from all that is disagreeable to you.’237 George was instructed to wait to hear from Canning concerning the date he should make his appearance. Backhouse’s letter of 10 December gave him that date, along with such information as leaves no doubt in the reader’s mind that Canning, rather in the manner of a cat playing with a mouse, was greatly enjoying his manipulation of Lushington:

I am glad to be enabled to say that you should not delay your return to the Treasury beyond Monday next and that, when there, you should at once set about carrying Mr L’s sentence into effect, and rather display than conceal your distribution of office. Mr L., I believe, shows symptoms of disquiet as to the issue of the step he has taken: especially since he has known (what he he surely ought to have anticipated) that the correspondence had been pretty generally circulated. Lord Liverpool has, of course, seen it.

(John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 10 December 1819, Fisher)

The following letter from Canning to the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury George Harrison,238 is an example of Canning’s scathing satire that made him so disliked by those on the receiving end of it:

India Board
Dec 14 1819

My dear Sir,

I learn from Chinnery that he expects to be this day posted in the ranks of the Treasury having been dismissed from his staff situation with Mr S.R. Lushington for a week’s exceeding his leave of absence.

236 Charles Arbuthnot (1767-1850), diplomat and politician, was one of the Joint Secretaries of the Treasury, 1809-1823.
237 John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 5 December 1819, Fisher.
238 Copied by George Chinnery.
It is impossible to say how high an opinion of the discipline of the Treasury this just & salutary degradation of a young man of singular merit and abilities has created - But as, now that the example has been given, it will be but common humanity to render the punishment as little painful as possible, I have earnestly to entreat your kindness & protection for Chinnery - and if it were possible that in appointing his duties you could in any way mark a sense of his general desert & a conviction that the excess of six days beyond a leave of three months, which is his only crime, is not one of an unpardonable nature, I should be infinitely obliged to you.

Believe me my dear Sir

Very sincerely yours

[Geo: Canning]

(George Canning to George Harrison, copy, 14 December 1819, Fisher)

The effect that this letter had on George Harrison was to bring him running to the India Board with an assurance to do all in his power to assist George. Canning, who had intended to write to George himself with 'the line of comfort', was prevented from doing so by other pressing business, but it says much of his genuine concern for his protégé that, busy as he was, he gave so much of his time to extricating George from his predicament (although it must be granted, as Charles Hall pointed out in his letter to George of 16 December 1821, that Canning must have felt it was his fault that George lost his job in the first place). Backhouse wrote on Canning’s behalf that he hoped 'that it [his letter] may have the effect of mitigating those apprehensions which you have indulged to an excess so very far beyond what the occasion called for.'

The conditions of George’s removal from his staff office were favourable. He was to receive the salary of Lushington’s private secretary for another year, without having to carry out any of the duties of that office, and he was to be promoted to Assistant Clerk for as long as Lushington’s new secretary remained with him after that date, giving him an additional salary of £180 per annum, £30 more than he had received as Lushington’s secretary. Lushington, no match for the might of the Cabinet minister, must have regretted his hasty action, and was made to eat humble pie. But he did so with good grace, as his final letter to George attests: ‘Although the length

239 Charles Hall to George Chinnery, 16 December 1821, Fisher.
240 John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 15 December 1819, Fisher.
241 The Treasury records show that George was appointed Assistant Clerk of Revenue on 2 January 1821 (T 29/193 p. 77, Sainty, p. 118).
242 Stephen Lushington to George Chinnery, 9 January 1820, Fisher.
& period of your absence accorded very ill with my convenience & wishes I cannot be insensible to your attainments & qualifications; & having every reason to be satisfied with your zeal & diligence while in the actual performance of your duties with me, I shall always be happy to hear of any good that may happen to you.243 Thus was the whole affair brought to a conclusion.

243 Ibid.
George Chinnery's 1819 Tour of the Continent with Canning

1. Helvoetsluys
2. Rotterdam
3. Amsterdam
4. Nijmegen
5. Cologne
6. Bonn
7. Koblenz
8. Frankfurt
9. Darmstadt
10. Heidelberg
11. Heilbronn
12. Stuttgart
13. Tübingen
14. Schaffhausen
15. Berne
16. Lausanne
17. Geneva
18. Conso
19. Milan
20. Genoa
21. Naples
22. Salerno
23. Gaeta
24. Fondi
25. Tivoli
26. Rome
27. Florence
28. Turin
29. Mount Cenis
30. Lyon
31. Paris
George’s function as a member of the 1819 Canning party tour of the Continent was that of secretary, but for the most part it was a tour of pleasure and George was always treated by the Cannings as a family member. George’s duties consisted primarily of writing letters – to facilitate the Canning party’s passage through the various customs houses of Europe; to obtain escorts where necessary; to smooth over bureaucratic hitches; to make accommodation arrangements when it was possible to do so ahead; to make contact with British ministers in all the places were legations were established; to reply to dinner invitations; to arrange for inspections of private art collections and artists’ ateliers; and to take charge of private correspondence.

From early August George began making preparations for the journey on Canning’s behalf. He first wrote to his friend the Marquis d’Osmond, the French ambassador in London, who was eager to be of service to the Canning party. Osmond offered letters of introduction to the French ministers in Paris, invited George to dinner to discuss the arrangements, and proffered his ‘hommages respectueux à Madame votre mère’. George also wrote to the Baron Neumann, the sous-chef of the Austrian legation in London, and to Baron Fagel, the Dutch ambassador, concerning passports and passage through the various customs houses. Neumann replied that he had informed the sovereign of the Kingdom of Lombardy of Canning’s visit, so that the customs officials might treat him ‘avec tous les égards qui lui sont dus.’ Fagel also responded with deference, stating that he was ‘always happy to attend to any of Mr Canning’s wishes’, and like Neumann, assured George that he would ensure that the relevant authorities were informed. Fagel also being a Chinnery intimate, he felt he could safely ask the favour of George to deliver a parcel to Brussels.

The journal that George kept of this tour has been preserved in the British Library. Part I gives a detailed account of the Cannings’ journey through Holland,
through some of the smaller German states along the edge of the Rhine, and through parts of Switzerland and Italy. Beginning in Helvoetsluys on the Dutch coast, and ending in Naples, the first Part is dated 14 August – 7 October 1819 inclusive. Part II, dated 8 – 24 October 1819, is mostly concerned with their stay in Naples and describes visits to surrounding places of interest, including Pompeii, Herculaneum, Mount Vesuvius, and Paestum. The tour rounded back up to Rome where it was effectively snuffed by a summons to Canning from Liverpool to return to England for an urgent meeting of Parliament.\[249\] The last entry in the Journal is in Rome, but it is evident from later remarks of George,\[250\] as well as from letters addressed to him, that the route that he and Canning took to return to England was via Florence, Turin, Mount Cenis, Lyon and Paris. There is a letter in the Fisher collection dated 27 October 1819 addressed to George from the Princess Czartoryiska in Rome giving George charge of some of her private correspondence and announcing her intention of calling on Mrs Canning that day.\[251\] A dinner invitation from Lord Burghersh to George Canning confirms Canning’s arrival in Florence in November 1819,\[252\] and Osmond’s earlier letter to George confirms that they intended visiting Paris.

The Canning travelling party consisted of Canning, his wife, daughter and youngest son Charles, a governess, Canning’s niece ‘Lady H[arriet] B[entinck]’,\[253\] and George himself. They had the use of the Admiralty yacht for those parts of the voyage that included a sea passage, including the initial one. George writes of their departure from the India Board landing steps on the Thames:

pagination will be kept, except where otherwise noted. A brief three-paragraph account of the tour, based on Canning’s own diary, is given by Dixon, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 193-194.

\[249\] In the Travel Journal, vol. 2, p. 126 (new numbering) George noted briefly the ‘mortification attending the same’. Thomas Moore, who was in Rome at the time with Lord John Russell, noted the November convocation of Parliament in his journal entry of 28 October 1819, saying that on his arrival in Rome, Canning ‘found a messenger waiting for him from England & he has but twenty days given him to return’ (Moore, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. 1, p. 240).


\[251\] Anna Czartoryiska to George Chinnery, 27 October 1819, Fisher. Princess Anna Sapieha, married (1817) Polish Prince Adam Czartoryski-Sanguszko (b. 1770). The latter had completed his education in Edinburgh and London, and entered Paris with the Allies in 1814 in the suite of Alexander I of Russia.

\[252\] John Fane to George Canning, November 1819, Fisher. Fane had been British minister at Florence since 1814.

\[253\] Daughter of the 4th Duke of Portland, William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, husband of Canning’s wife’s sister. There is another reference to Lady Harriet Bentinck later in the Journal, and George refers to the latter as his ‘quondam travelling companion’ in a letter to his mother two years later (G to M, 15 May 1821, Fisher).
The Admiralty barge being in readiness at the India Board Stair to receive us, we were taken down the river by the early tide to a point a little below Deptford, where we embarked on board the Admiralty yacht at once, the carriages & the heavy part of the baggage having been shipped on the preceding day.

(Travel Journal, vol. 1, 16 August 1819, p. 1)

The journal gives much information about travelling conditions in those days. A sea passage was the most uncomfortable mode of travel, and was eschewed wherever possible. But it was a necessary evil for British travellers going abroad, and did not prevent them from visiting the Continent in large numbers. Apart from the inevitable ills of sea-sickness, there were the vagaries of wind and weather to contend with, as the Cannings found on their Mediterranean voyage from Genoa to Naples, when, after being blown by a storm in the opposite direction of their destination, they were then becalmed for two days, so that after a period of five days of 'misery' at sea they had made no headway whatsoever. It was not only the whims of the weather that they had to confront, but also those of disrespectful or incompetent ship captains. George remarked in his first entry that their captain was unhappy at being put out of his cabin, even though he had 'the counterbalancing honour of having a Cabinet Minister on board.'

Moreover, this same captain, to avoid prolonging his voyage, tried to persuade them to put ashore on the Flemish, rather than the Dutch coast, obliging Canning to insist on his preferred destination. Only the week before, George reports, this same yacht with Robert Peel and J.W. Croker on board, had failed to find the mouth of the Scheldt, and had been obliged to return to the Thames.

Travelling conditions on land were hardly more comfortable, as reaching the desired post house or inn where the much needed dinner and bed were waiting often meant rising at five in the morning and travelling fifteen hours in one day. The standard of the different posting services varied enormously, with some drivers helpful, others taciturn, some horses fresh and speedy, others tired and slow. The standard of accommodation also varied, and in spite of British travellers' efforts to keep each other informed of the names of the best inns they often found themselves obliged to accept wretched rooms and exorbitant charges. Sometimes they slept on nothing better than

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255 George's old Christ Church contemporary, Robert Peel, had risen fast in the ranks of Parliament. Croker was a close parliamentary associate.
troughs filled with musty straw', and sometimes Canning and George were obliged to sleep in their carriage, gallantly giving the best beds to the ladies. This closeness inevitably contributed to a stronger friendship, and it became a habit with the two men to take a stroll around the town they were in after the ladies had retired for the night.

With a habit of meticulousness instilled in him from earliest childhood, George records every aspect of their tour. He studies national character traits and foreign customs, conscientiously describes every place of interest in each city or village, on each river or mountain, and makes constant (sometimes patronising) comparisons with their British counterparts. He lists works of art to be found in most churches, castles, galleries and museums that they visited. Nor are any historical events (ancient or modern) connected with these places omitted. Only the personalities of the different members of the travelling party, and their daily intercourse — details that would be of interest to to-day’s reader — are lacking. But since these did not fall within the circumscribed bounds of what then constituted a travel journal, they were not noted.

Having passed through Holland via Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Nijmegen, they crossed into Prussian territory and followed the Rhine via Cologne, Bonn and Koblenz as far as Cassel — in the territory of the Prince of Nassau and on the border of Prussia and Austria. They then entered the Free State of Frankfurt-am-Main, a wealthy commercial centre — and according to George the only state that had managed to avoid dominance by its powerful neighbours — and continued on through Darmstadt, following the Neckar from Heidelberg to Heilbronn, in the territory of the King of Württemberg. The latter, George remarked, imposed a heavy toll on travellers, but in return, provided an efficient posting service. On 2 September they reached Stuttgart, where the Dowager Queen of Württemberg held court. She invited the Canning party to dine at her castle, along with the Duke of Cambridge, who was there on a visit; Brook Taylor, the British minister at Stuttgart; his two secretaries of legation, Barnard and Liddell; and Canning’s cousin Stratford Canning, who was then minister

256 Travel Journal, vol. 1, p. 34.
257 Ibid., p. 54.
258 The old German state of Württemberg had originally been a duchy. Friedrich I had been crowned King by Napoleon in 1805. He was succeeded by his son Wilhelm I, who reigned from 1816-1864.
259 Possibly George Barnard (b. 1790), B.A. (Brasenose College, Oxford) 1812, M.A. 1815. Thomas Liddell has not been identified.
plenipotentiary in Switzerland. At Stuttgart they dined with Brook Taylor, from whom there is a letter in the Fisher collection, asking whether Lady Harriet Bentinck was to accompany them to dinner, and also arranging a suitable time to view a collection of pictures. The guests at this dinner included the Duke of Cambridge, General Benkendorff ('brother to the Countess de Lieven the Russian ambassadress in London & distinguished as the Commander of a Corps of Cossacks in the late war') and the local Minister of Justice, Baron Moclerc, whom George described as the ablest minister of the Cabinet who was then working on a new constitution for his kingdom.

From Stuttgart the Cannings continued south, passing through Tübingen, Hechingen and Donaueschingen, entering Switzerland near Schaffhausen, and on through Brugg, Berne, Lausanne, then skirting Lake Geneva to arrive at Sécheron near Geneva on 12 September. On the way to Sécheron George went alone to pay a visit to Viotti’s old comrade-in-adventure Hugues-Bernard Maret. Created Duc de Bassano by Napoleon in 1809, Maret was now fallen from fame and living in exile with his wife and children just outside Sécheron. At the time of George’s visit he was awaiting permission to return to France. In 1802 when the Chinnerys were in Paris, and George was a boy of eleven, they had passed much time in this ex-revolutionary’s company, and Maret received George with kindness and affection. Since 1793, when Viotti had attempted to keep a rendez-vous with the former French ambassador in Italy, Maret’s career had been eventful. Having suffered a two-and-a-half-year imprisonment at the hands of the Austrians (1793-1795), he had returned to France a hero, and at the time of the 18 brumaire coup d’état, was plucked by Napoleon from semi-retirement and projected into prominence. He was made successively Secretary General of the Consuls in 1799, Secretary of State in 1800, Minister-Secretary of State in 1804,
Minister of State (and a count) in 1807, a duke in 1809, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1811-1813. His only rivals for Napoleon's favour were Fouché and Talleyrand, and he displaced the latter when Talleyrand fell from grace in 1807. At the Restoration Maret came under attack from all sides, and retreated to the country. During the Cent Jours he rallied again to Napoleon's side, accompanying him to Waterloo. From 1815 he had been in exile in Switzerland, imprisoned in Austria, given his freedom in Italy, finally moving to Sécheron near Geneva, where George found him. George wrote of Maret's career during the years since he had last seen him:

During this interval he had risen to the highest favour, and once during an interval of Talleyrand's disgrace had been next in power to Napoleon. To see such a man in his fallen state, stripped of his honours, and begging on the frontier an admission into the country which he had not long since governed was at once interesting as a singular instance of the vicissitudes of fortune, and useful as a lesson of morality.

(The Travel Journal, vol. 1, 14 September 1819, p. 104)

George, whose family, like most Britons, were vehemently anti-Napoleon, was torn between loyalty to friendship, and loyalty to country, and declined to comment on the Duke's political principles, or the 'wisdom of his public measures' or 'the reputation with which he came out of the administration of Consular & Imperial France', saying that they may attract more censure than praise. But he did comment favourably on the Duke's 'suave manner for which he was always famous', and said that they talked without restraint on a number of topics, including literature. Maret was disappointed in the apparent lack of respect of the Genevans for Rousseau, citing the recent sale of the manuscript of Emile to a foreigner. There is a letter from Maret to George in the Fisher collection, dated 'Geneve, mardi ce 14 7bre 1819', the same date as George's

Chinnery says in his Travel Journal (vol. 1, p. 106) that in Sécheron Maret was living in the home of a former secretary [Betto] to Paul Barras 'who was responsible for Maret's rise to fame'.

Travel Journal, vol. 1, p. 105. Of the six manuscripts identified in the Notices bibliographiques of the Pléiade edition of Rousseau's collected works (Éuvres complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau (IV): Emile, Gallimard: Paris, 1969, pp.1853-1856) none fits the description of the present one. Most appear to have remained in the hands of the descendants of the persons to whom they were given in Rousseau's lifetime (including Rousseau's French publisher Duchesne), until they were donated at a much later date either to the Bibliothèque de Genève or to the Société Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Peter Jimack, in Chapter 1 of his 'Genèse de la rédaction de l'Émile de Jean-Jacques Rousseau' (Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, vol. 13, p. 22), notes a suggestion that Manuscript B (manuscrit du Palais-Bourbon), which is now in the library of the French Chambre des députés, may have been 'à une époque ou à une autre' [...] 'acquis par elle en vente publique'.
Journal entry. It enclosed a guide book on Italy for George and asked George to give his regards to friends in Milan, the Comte and Comtesse de Barbua.

After leaving Geneva the party crossed from the Canton of Geneva to that of Savoy, territory of the King of Sardinia. Although critical of Napoleon’s politics, George had to concede that the Emperor’s road-building efforts were marvels of modern engineering, and he gave credit to ‘le génie des ponts et chaussées’ for the road across the Simplon. With eight horses attached to their berline and six to the other carriage, the Canning party’s crossing took thirteen hours, a journey that would have taken six days a few years ago, George noted.

At Sesto Calende on the border of Lombardy they passed without delay through the Austrian custom house, as Prince Esterhazy, the Austrian ambassador in London, had promised they would. At Lake Como they saw the Villa d’Este, the Princess of Wales’s former residence on the Continent, afterwards passing the Villa of Monte Etto, where she was currently residing. The Princess, hearing of Canning’s presence in the area, wished to see her old friend, and sent Bergami, her Italian consort, to Milan to try to find him. George wrote than Canning did not reciprocate the desire, and that ‘we should reckon ourselves fortunate if Her Royal Highness should not succeed in forcing M’ Canning to an interview with her before he leaves the north of Italy’ as ‘such an interview would not only be unpleasant to M’ Canning but could lead to no satisfactory explanation [to the British Parliament].’ They therefore sped on, hoping to reach Genoa ‘too speedily to be overtaken by Bergamo [sic]’ and succeeded in avoiding the unwanted meeting.

266 Jacob Frédéric Lullin de Châteauvieux, Lettres écrites d’Italie en 1812 et 1813 à C. Pictet, Paris, 1816, 2 vols. George mentions two other ‘guide books’ that he used during the first part of this journey. The first was A Series of Letters between Mrs Elizabeth Carter and Miss Catherine Talbot from the Year 1741-1770 (Rivington: London, 1808) which recorded Elizabeth Carter’s journey to France, Germany and Holland in 1763. The second was by George’s Oxford contemporary, John Hughes of Oriel College, An Itinerary of Provence and the Rhone, Made during the Year 1819, published in London in 1822.


268 Ibid., p. 133.

269 Shunned by her husband, denied access to her daughter and excluded from the British court, Caroline Amelia Elizabeth of Brunswick (1768-1821), wife of the Prince of Wales, went abroad to live in 1813. She resided mainly in Italy. In England she had been a close friend of Canning.

270 Bartolomeo Bergami was engaged as the Princess’s handsome courier in Milan, but soon became her favourite. She bestowed on him many honours and took his relatives into her service.

271 According to the DNB (vol. 3, p. 1061), the Princess behaved with such impropriety that ‘secret commissioners were sent from England to investigate her conduct’. Canning, although a friend of Princess Caroline, clearly did not wish to become embroiled in the affair.

Passing through Lombardy, which George described as a land of plenty, with bread, chestnuts, milk, cheese and fruit in abundance, they discovered evidence of hatred of the Austrian regime by local merchants – dissatisfaction that was to lead to a revolution the following year in Naples. They then descended to Genoa, where they were to make the sea passage to Naples on board the British sloop the ‘Spey’, already in the port awaiting their arrival. But the ship had been quarantined, having touched at Malta where plague was suspected. The group therefore had some additional days of sight-seeing in Genoa, while awaiting clearance from local health officials. Here they saw still more signs of local resentment against the Austrian authorities, with George noting that the officials of the Board of Health were particularly unhelpful to them for, ‘as the Genoese secretly detest the English for having subjected them to the Govt of Piedmont, every opportunity is taken by these Officers to render the detention of a British ship as vexatious as possible.’\textsuperscript{273} Canning had resort to the British minister in Genoa, William Hill,\textsuperscript{274} whom Webster describes as ‘a recluse and a hypochondriac’,\textsuperscript{275} but who on this occasion offered genial hospitality to the Canning party. He helped them obtain lodging, invited them to dinner with some local officials, and passed a pleasant morning with them in a temple in his garden, where George and Canning composed numerous dispatches to the Board of Health in an effort to free their ship. He also provided George with one of his secretaries to escort him on a tour of the city’s ramparts.

Before embarking on their ship the ‘Spey’, finally allowed to sail on 1 October, the tourists made a tour of the Deaf and Dumb Institute, founded in 1801 by the Abbé Octavius Assarotti,\textsuperscript{276} and run along the same lines as Abbé Sicard’s in Paris.\textsuperscript{277} In 1819 the interest of British tourists in benevolent institutions was as alive as it had been in 1802, when the English descended on Paris during the Peace of Amiens and flocked to Abbé Sicard’s school to see the deaf mutes give public displays of their teacher’s method. Here too, the pupils’ exercises were designed to reflect credit on the director of the institution, and George wrote that they displayed extensive knowledge ‘in ancient &

\textsuperscript{273} Ibid., p. 183.
\textsuperscript{274} William Noel-Hill (1773-1842), third Baron Berwick, British envoy to Turin, 1807-1824, and to Naples, 1824-1830.
\textsuperscript{275} The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{276} Ottavio Assarotti (1753-1829), was born and died in Genoa. Ordained in 1772, he became a grammar and logic teacher, but from 1804 dedicated himself to the teaching of deaf mutes. He established his own institute in 1811 using the method of the Abbé Sicard.
modern history & in mythology, besides a wonderful facility in practical calculation & great expertness in several of the mechanical arts.\textsuperscript{278}

The last entry in Part I of George’s Travel Journal was written from on board the ‘Spey’ in the Bay of Naples on 7 October 1819. Part II takes up on 8 October with a general description of the city of Naples, capital of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies to which the Bourbon King Ferdinand\textsuperscript{279} had been recently restored after Murat was forced to flee in 1815. This kingdom was then also under the military governorship of Austria. In describing ‘a noble military road’ that Murat had built, George commented that ‘drilling a Regiment was what he understood much better than governing a State’.\textsuperscript{280}

Among the inhabitants of Naples that the Canning party frequented were the British minister Sir William A’Court, and his secretary of legation Douglas;\textsuperscript{281} the English consul general Sir Henry Lushington; General Nugent ‘the Captain General of this Country’\textsuperscript{282}, various English lords and ladies including the Duke and Duchess of Leeds,\textsuperscript{283} Lord George and Lady Georgina Irvine, Lady Alvanley, Lord Cholmondeley,\textsuperscript{284} Keppel Craven, Captain and Mrs Pellew\textsuperscript{285} and the scholar Sir William Gell,\textsuperscript{286} author of a book cited by George in his research of classical sites, the \textit{Pompeiana}.\textsuperscript{287} At ‘a very brilliant party’\textsuperscript{288} hosted by the Polish Prince Jablonowski\textsuperscript{289} George met nearly all the members of the King’s Cabinet, and most of the foreign

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{277} See Part II, Chapter 1, pp. 302-303.
\item \textsuperscript{278} Travel Journal, vol. 1, pp. 185-186.
\item \textsuperscript{279} Ferdinand I de Bourbon (1751-1825). Stripped of his kingdom of Naples by Napoleon in 1806, he was reinstated in 1815, and combined his two states into one, calling it the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. It was in 1816 that he took the title of Ferdinand I.
\item \textsuperscript{280} Travel Journal, vol. 2, p. 6.
\item \textsuperscript{281} George Sholto Douglas, afterwards Earl of Morton (1789-1858), M.A. (Trinity College, Cambridge) 1810, secretary of legation at Stockholm 1812, at Florence 1814, and at Naples 1819.
\item \textsuperscript{282} Travel Journal, vol.2, p. 55. Count Laval Nugent (1777-1862), Roman prince, field-marshal, Knight of the Golden Fleece, Commander of the Order of Maria Theresa, was born in Ballynacor, Ireland, son of Michael, Count Nugent. In 1812 he went into the service of the Austrian emperor, and from 1817 to 1820 was commander general of the Austrian forces in Naples.
\item \textsuperscript{283} George William Frederick Osborne, sixth Duke of Leeds (1775-1838), married in 1797 Charlotte (d. 1856), daughter of the first Marquess Townshend.
\item \textsuperscript{284} George Horatio, second Marquess of Cholmondeley (1792-1870).
\item \textsuperscript{285} Fleetwood Broughton Pellew (b. 1789), son of Edward Pellew, first Viscount Exmouth. He later became an admiral. He had married Harriet in 1816. The others have not been identified.
\item \textsuperscript{286} Sir William Gell (1777-1836), classical archaeologist and traveller. He accompanied Princess Caroline when she left England in 1814 as one of her chamberlains. From 1820 till his death he resided in Italy. He had a house in Rome and another in Naples, where he received a constant stream of distinguished visitors.
\item \textsuperscript{287} William Gell and John Gandy, \textit{Pompeiana: the Topography, Edifices, and Ornaments of Pompeii}, London, 1817-1819.
\item \textsuperscript{288} Travel Journal, vol. 2, p. 155.
\end{itemize}
ministers at the Court of Naples, including the Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Prussian. George remarked that of all the foreign ministers the Russian Count Stackelberg ‘is reckoned to be the ablest diplomatist’. One of the Italians whom they frequently met in society was Prince Cariati, who had been Murat’s favourite officer and who had helped Caroline Murat escape from Naples when the Allies retook the kingdom for the Bourbons in 1815. Although not admitted to court circles, George noted, Cariati was a favourite with ‘private society’. It is clear from the Journal that the Canning party also met the King, whose countenance George described as ‘not handsome, but simple frank & jovial.

In Italy George’s love of the classics and his appreciation of history, art and beauty came to the fore, and in Naples there was ample material to stimulate his interest. George was a serious traveller, applying to his Journal the same intellectual rigour that had characterised all his studies since childhood. Nearly every page of his Journal describing ancient sites contains extensive footnoting citing classical works which refer to the different spots visited. These footnotes were the result of diligent research carried out beforehand. At the end of each day George conscientiously wrote up his Journal, and when time did not permit him to enter all the detail he would have wished, he reminded himself to ‘give an account later’. He paid several visits to the Museum at Naples, known as the ‘Studio’, which contained the antiquities found at Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabia, and compiled a lengthy ‘catalogue’ divided into two parts – the first describing the Museum’s collection of statues, and the other its vases. These were more than mere listings. Not only was the physical appearance of each item described, but its origins were fully researched. Different scholarly interpretations of the subjects were noted, his own observations and judgements added, and finally, comparisons with similar works in other European museums made.

Of the forty-one pieces in the Studio’s gallery of statues that George described ‘in his Journal assisted by M. Finati’s [catalogue]’, several bore evidence of the

289 The Jablonowski family produced many generals and statesmen in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The above appears to be a descendant of Prince Joseph Alexander (1711-1777).
291 Prince Gennaro Spinelli Cariati (1780-1851), Italian statesman who had fought alongside Joachim Murat in the Battle of Moscow, and later acted as his diplomatic representative.
292 Travel Journal, vol. 2, p. 152
293 Ibid., p. 156.
294 Ibid., pp. 59-85, which constituted 34 closely written pages of description and notes.
influence on the Ancients of the Egyptian Priapian mysteries. Several sepulchral works of art were decorated with sexual symbols such as the triple phallus, which George describes as 'a type of the multiplying power which results from the generative faculty'. Such works were of course at odds with George's Christian morality, and while he did not refuse to include them in his listing, he did decline to describe them in detail, saying that to do so would constitute 'the grossest breach of common decency'. He therefore objected to modern-day commentators such as an 'eminent antiquarian of our our own country' dwelling on the subject in detail, and appearing to take pleasure in the subject for its own sake, 'instead of briefly expounding it as an integral & therefore inseparable part of ancient mythology.'

For his description of the 'Painted Vases', wrongly termed, he says, 'Etruscan Vases', George drew on several reference works, including Sir William Gell's *Pompeiana*, and the German archaeologist Winkelmann's *Histoire de l'art du dessin*. He also cites the four-volume work on Etruscan vases by the former British ambassador to Naples Sir William Hamilton, and also that of Millin's *Monumens antiques inédits*, but says that the last two are 'too diffuse for a general & unscientific observer, & definitely too bulky to be used as books of reference in travelling.' He prefers 'the more compendious treatise' (40 to 50 pages) of the 'Canonic Andrea de Jorio', entitled 'Sul metodo degli antichi nel dissingere i vasi, e sulle rappresentanze de’ piu interessanti del R. Museo', which, he says, was not published, but printed by

295 Giovanni Battista Finati, *Il Regal Museo Borbonico descritto da G. Finati*, (2nd edn), Naples, 1819-23. Most of the galleries and museums of Europe that the Cannings visited in 1819 and 1820 could give their visitors only a very cursory list of their holdings or none at all.

296 Travel Journal, vol. 2, p. 79

297 This is clearly a reference to the antiquarian scholar and Chinnery friend Richard Payne Knight, whose work *An Account of the Worship of Priapus* caused a scandal in England when it was printed by the Dilettanti Society (1786) and circulated to other societies and libraries. See Brewer, *op. cit.*, pp. 265-273 for a discussion of Payne Knight’s interest in the subject of the Priapian cult. Payne Knight's lascivious interests do not seem to have deterred the Chinnerys from cultivating his friendship. There are many references to their friendship in the CFP collection, including two short notes from Payne Knight to Margaret Chinnery (one in Italian) in answer to dinner invitations. Both are addressed from Soho Square and both date from c.1810 (in Fisher collection).


299 This appears to be Johann Joachim Winckelmann’s *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (Walther: Dresden, 1764), translated into French by Gottfried Sellins as *Histoire de l’art des anciens* (Saillant: Paris, 1766).

300 William Hamilton, *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases...discovered in Sepulchres in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies...during...the years 1789 and 1790...with remarks on each vase*, W. Tischbein: Naples, 1791-95

authority of the directors of the Museum for private distribution. According to George, Andrea de Jorio also wrote a general guide to Italy, *Itinerario Italiano*. This George frequently cites, sometimes disputing de Jorio’s explanations and interpretations, and offering hypotheses of his own regarding the nature of ancient ruins or the origin of works of art. George’s listing of the vases was prefaced by a short treatise on the way the vases were made, their colours, style and uses, and an interpretation of the figures or ornaments on them. He divided his catalogue into ‘chambers’ and divisions within each chamber, describing a selection of the most interesting items. His catalogue finished at the twenty-second division of the third chamber.

The Canning party was in Naples from 8 – 21 October inclusive. They visited Naples in the same systematic and thorough way that they visited all cities on their itinerary. Not only did they spend many hours in museums, churches, private galleries, and other places of interest inside and outside the capital, but they also made arduous day excursions to the surrounding archaeological sites such as Pompeii and Herculaneum. Pompeii was a two-hour drive from Naples, and after a thorough inspection of that site aided by Sir William Gell’s ‘truly classical work on Pompeii’, they proceeded to Herculaneum, the ruins of which were under the village of Resina where General Nugent had a country house. George admitted that the ladies were exhausted after these two visits in one day, and that although there was enough light remaining to visit the museum at Portici, they did not do so. Even George had to admit that this was for the best ‘for we certainly returned to Naples with our memories almost overcharged with information.’

The ladies of the party displayed as much endurance as the men when it came to climbing Mount Vesuvius, a feat undertaken by every British traveller to the city of Naples. Provided with a train of mules and donkeys, and with several guides, the party left Naples at one o’clock in the afternoon so that their ascent was timed to coincide with nightfall, when the spectacle of the intermittent eruptions of the volcano could be

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303 This work does not appear in the British Library or the Bibliothèque nationale catalogue. However, Jorio did write a general guide to Naples and its environs: *Indicazione del piu rimarcabile in Napoli e contorni*, Naples, 1819.
305 *Ibid.*, p. 36. George devotes some 29 pages to Pompeii (pp. 31-51).
viewed to maximum effect. Of the three ways of ascending the volcano, they chose the shortest, which began at Resina. Their chief guide was Salvador, son of 'old Salvador' who had been Sir William Hamilton's personal guide on his frequent ascents of the mountain during his residence in Naples as British minister. When most of the party found the ground underfoot near the summit too hot to bear and refused to continue, Canning, his wife and George, accompanied by Salvador, continued alone to the closest point from which the crater could be safely viewed. George's imagination was roused, as it was so often in Italy, by his remembrance of classical writings (in this case by Pindar's poetic description of a volcanic eruption in the first *Pythian ode.*)

One excursion that the Canning party did not make, but which George decided to venture on alone, was the overnight trip to the ancient ruins of Paestum. The King had warned them of the risk of malaria in the wild plains of Calabria, a risk that was greatest in the hot summer months. But George wrote that he would never forgive himself if he had been so near 'so classical a spot' and not made an effort to see it. So Sir Henry Lushington provided him with 'a strong little german barouche' for the journey, and General Nugent arranged for horses ' & every necessary facility on the road', which included an armed escort on those stretches of road that were infested with banditti. There is a letter from General Nugent to George discussing these arrangements in the Fisher collection. George made the journey alone with his 'courier' Giuseppe, who was obliged to wait while his master called at the museum at Portici - the visit George had had to forgo five days before - and made yet another catalogue. Briefer than the others, this lists the fresco paintings in the museum and where they originated. At Salerno, where George passed the night of 16 October, he was warmly received by 'Major de la Rocca principal aid de Camp to the Military Governor of this Division, who had been prepared by General Nugent to expect Mr C's arrival.'

More texts mentioned by George in his research for this excursion include two scientific works on what were then considered the causes of malaria. In Lullin de Châteauvieux's *Lettres écrites d'Italie* (vol.1, p. 140) the author ascribes malaria to a

308 General Nugent to George Chinnery, 14 October 1819, Fisher.
309 Travel Journal, vol. 2, pp. 127-131. The items are designated 'P', 'H' or 'S' according to whether they were found at Pompeii, Herculaneum or Stabia.
supposed chemical process that takes place in the soil, caused by the volcanic nature of the western region of Italy. The naturalist theologian Dr Joseph Priestley in his work *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air* advised the growing of vegetables in these regions to purify the air. A third work cited by George is by the ‘Abate Lanzi’ who described the various antiquities found at Paestum, since removed to the Museum at Naples.

While in Naples the Cannings took the opportunity of visiting the private art studio of the collector and opera librettist Francesco Berio, who owned works by the contemporary sculptor Antonio Canova and a fine collection of paintings. They also made several visits to the two theatres in Naples, the San Carlo and the Teatro del Fondo, the latter ‘a kind of second theatre for Italian Operas on the nights that S' Carlo is not open.’ George’s comparisons of the various opera houses that he visited in the course of his Continental travels is interesting, coming from one with an eye for beauty nurtured by an artistic family heritage, and an ear for music developed from a long association with Viotti. He judged architectural proportions and musical performances with equal discernment. The San Carlo was described as having a lot of gilding, which in general George disliked, but which he opined was not out of place in a theatre of such spacious proportions. He compared it favourably to La Scala at Milan. The singer they heard at the San Carlo, a certain Signora Pesarone, he described as an excellent contralto.

One of the last visits in Naples was to the ‘Royal Establishment for the education of a hundred & forty gentlewomen’, founded by Caroline Murat. George considered that there was nothing here worthy of notice, that it was a ‘tolerably good average system of education’, and that it would not have figured on their list of places to visit but for the fact that tickets of admission were pressed upon them by the patroness, the Duchess of Sangro.

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311 Published in three volumes in London, 1774-77.
313 Francesco Maria Berio, Marquis of Salza (1765-1820), Neapolitan gentleman and man of letters. Having inherited his father’s valuable art collection, he continued to collect, and possessed several Canovas, including the famous *Adonis Crowned by Venus*. He also wrote opera libretti for the San Carlo and Fondo theatres in Naples.
314 Antonio Canova (1757-1822), Italian sculptor.
Setting off on their voyage north on 22 October, Canning asked Count Nugent to provide a military escort to protect them from bandits on the road to Rome. George wrote that although some of these bandits may have been, according to some reports, peasants who tended their vineyards for half the year and topped up their income by plundering travellers during the other half, there were also certainly bands of well-organised ‘banditti of the line’, that is, ‘a highly organised corps commanded by an acknowledged chief’. Since ‘the Tour of Italy’ had become so popular with travellers over the last few years, George wrote, ‘instances of spoliation with aggravating circumstances of cruelty have been very frequent.’ As well as the dragoons that were assigned to each side of their carriages, General Nugent had provided infantrymen for them – some at the front and some at the rear – for which they were particularly grateful when a wheel of one of their carriages broke in the most notorious stretch of road, between Itri and Fondi.

The party took two days to travel to Rome, staying at Mola di Gaeta on the first night near the Palace of Caserta – one of the King of Naples’s country residences famous for its hunting – and at Terracina on the second. At Terracina they exchanged their well-trained Neapolitan guard for a most ‘unmilitary’ one belonging to the papal army, whose comical, unkempt dress reminded George of ‘the mock cavalry of a theatrical procession.’ Terracina was well worth visiting, according to George, and books describing it included ‘Mr Eustace’s costly quarto down to the commonest duodecimo guide book.’ Another general text extensively cited by George at this time was John Blunt’s *Vestiges of the Ancient Manners and Customs Discoverable in Modern Italy and Sicily.* From 21 – 29 October George made only sketchy notes in his Journal, intending to fill them out later. He managed to do this for the first four days, the remaining days getting brief mentions only. However, of interest among his abbreviated notes is one dated Rome, 25 October, in which he mentions a visit to St Peter’s with the Duchess of Devonshire – described as ‘the patroness of the artists of

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319 *Ibid.,* p. 211. The book in question is John Chetwode Eustace’s *Tour through Italy, Exhibiting a View of its Scenery, its Antiquities, and its Monuments, particularly as they are objects of classical interest...with an account of the present state of its cities and towns and occasional observations on the recent spoliations of the French*, J. Mawman: London, 1813-19, 3 vols.
320 The only edition listed in the British Library catalogue was published in 1823 by Murray, London. An earlier edition must have existed.
this City’ – and the famous English painter Sir Thomas Lawrence.321 Of one of the most celebrated pictures in the church, the Angel Michael by Guido, ‘Sir Thomas observed that there was too much gaudiness of color & flutter of drapery’, and considered that the two mitred bishops facing the entrance to St. Peter’s were ornamented ‘with inconceivable audacity of bad taste.’322

At the bottom of the last page George has written ‘For notes for the progress of this Journal through Florence, Turin, the Mount Cenis & Lyons &c vid. p. 229.’ On page 229 is a brief paragraph on Florence, but nothing further. After seven days in Rome – Canning was clearly not going to be deprived of spending at least a few days in the city that was the highlight of the tour – Canning left his wife and family, and with George journeyed non-stop for thirty-eight hours to Florence, passed through Turin and entered France by the Mount Cenis pass. On 15 November he and George dined with the British ambassador in Paris, Sir Charles Stuart,323 and on 19 November crossed the Channel to England.324.

321 Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), had painted Caroline Chinnery’s portrait in 1813 and possibly also George Chinnery’s (see M to W, 18 July 1813, PM 94/143/1 – 17/11; and William Spencer to Margaret Chinnery, c. July 1813, Fisher). According to the diary of Lawrence’s friend Joseph Farington (op. cit., vol. 8, p. 224), Sir Thomas had gone to Rome to execute commissions given him by the Prince Regent. By December the same year he was in Vienna, where, according to Farington, his work was admired more than it had been in Rome (ibid, p. 236).


323 Sir Charles Stuart, first Baron Stuart de Rothesay (1779-1845), was British ambassador at Paris, 1815-1824, then was sent by Canning to Brazil.

324 The last details are supplied by Dixon, op. cit., p. 194.
Canning's voyage on the Continent in the summer of 1820 was more an escape from his troubles at home than a tour of pleasure. The death of his eldest son in March 1820 deeply affected him and contributed to his desire to seek tranquillity away from the stresses of politics in England. King George III had also died in January 1820, and George IV's wife Caroline, whom Canning had narrowly avoided in Milan in November 1819, and whose libertarian lifestyle had long been watched and noted by the Prince of Wales's spies, became more than ever a thorn in the new King's side. When she refused to accept a payment of £50,000 to remain abroad, preferring instead to return to England to assume her royal place beside the King, George IV instituted proceedings against her in an attempt to deprive her of all privileges and to dissolve the marriage. In so doing, he set in train a very public national debate that divided Parliament and attracted a surge of popular support for the Queen. On 1 February Margaret devoted a whole page of a letter to William to the question of Queen Caroline. Canning, an erstwhile confidant of the Queen, and one whom the King suspected of having had an affair with his wife, refused to participate in the prosecution of a former friend while the bill, known as the Bill of Pains and Penalties, was being debated in Parliament. He went abroad in August, returning only after the bill had been abandoned, and resigned from the Cabinet at the end of the year as the debate on the Queen's allowance and other matters pertaining to her case continued to rage.

Accompanied by George, Canning left England on 9 August. Their three-month tour of the Continent took them through Flanders, France, Switzerland, the Venetian States, Austria, Bavaria, back into France via Strasbourg, and thence to Paris. George's 1820 Travel Journal (8 August – 16 November 1820) documents the journey, but unlike his 1819 Journal, does not list the members of the party. Mrs Canning did not

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325 He wrote a moving epitaph on the death of George Charles Cannings, of which George Chinnery kept a copy (in the Osborn collection, Box fd. 11, item 147).

326 The conduct of the Princess of Wales had been watched since the time of her separation from the Prince shortly after their marriage to the end of her residence abroad, and all the intelligence brought together into the Milan Commission, which was the final report drawn up and used as evidence against her in her trial.

327 M to W, 1 February 1820, PM 94/143/1 – 17/48. She also hoped – as William had hoped when the Prince of Wales had become Regent (see W to M, 17 July 1812, PM 94/143/1 – 7/16) – that on the accession to the throne of the new monarch William might benefit from an act of grace, but this did not happen.

328 BL, ADD 64095. There is a microfilm copy in Fisher Library.
depart with her husband, meeting up with him in Brescia, Italy on 22 August. It is not stated whether any of their children were with her, but it is probable that they were. George notes in his first entry of 8 August 1820, that Canning had been prevented from leaving earlier by his duties as President of the India Board:

M.C. intended leaving London the 1st of this month but conferences with M. Elout a Commiss. sent over by the K. of Holland to settle certain points of difference in regard to the Dutch & English Settlements in the Indian Seas, arising out of one of the treaties which followed the termination of the late war have unavoidably occasioned a week's delay in our departure.

(Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 3)

He added that the negotiations would not be concluded until Canning's return, but that the matter would be taken to the court at the Hague and that it was to be hoped that 'a proper spirit of concession will be manifested by that Gov't considering that it was the prevailing influence of Eng which converted the exiled & pensioned P. of Orange into an independent Sovereign'.

The method of embarkation differed from the previous year. The Admiralty yacht was instructed to wait for them at a point on the southern banks of the Thames just below Woolwich, 'where we effected our embarkation much more quickly than would have been possible at either of the Royal Dock Yards with all the tiresome ceremonial of being received by a King's Commissioner.' Intending originally to spend the night of the 8th on board the yacht in the Nore owing to the difficulty of navigating the mouth of the Thames in darkness, they in the end succeeded in sailing out of the Thames the same night, arriving at the mouth of the Scheldt in Flanders the following afternoon. As in the 1819 Journal, George's pride in his country is often in evidence. He describes the view of the Thames at the Nore as magnificent, with its 'forest of Vessels which are here brought together of every class & flag' and its 'variety of manufactures' that cover both banks of the river. Imagining himself a foreigner approaching London for the first time, he proudly asserts that 'such an approach must of

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329 Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 3.
330 Ibid. William I, father of the Prince of Orange whom George had known at Oxford, had been King of the Netherlands and Belgium since 1815.
331 A sandbank in the middle of the Thames where the British fleet anchored.
itself proclaim the Capital to which it leads as the most commercial the wealthiest & the most powerful in the world.

The first night on land was spent in Antwerp, where they visited the cathedral and went to the theatre, proceeding to Brussels the following day. As usual, their first priority as tourists was to seek out the most beautiful works of art— at the public gallery and at a private collection owned by a Madame Baeckman. In the 1820 Journal far more space is devoted to commentary on contemporaneous historical events and less on long listings and learned discussions of works of art than in the 1819 one—probably because in 1820 few classical sites were visited. The road from Brussels to their next destination, Diran, passed through Waterloo, and George noted some changes since the last time he had seen the spot: ‘The tree near which the D. of Wellington had for some time taken up a position with his staff & thence directed the movements of the army no longer stands in it’s place: it has been cut down, & is being turned into snuff boxes & pipe heads all over Europe’. It was, George remarked drily, ‘likely to be as prolific in wood as Shakespeare’s mulberry tree or our Saviour’s cross.’

They crossed from Flemish to French territory at Givet, experiencing no difficulty at the customs house as they were ‘furnished with sufficient documents from Baron Fagel & the Duke de Cazes’, as they had been the previous year. George noted ‘great broad cloth manufactories’, now operated by steam, at Sedan and at Mouzon, and could not help feeling indignant at the sight of Verdun, where hundreds of Englishmen had been imprisoned by Napoleon. Their next stop was Dijon where George’s notion of civic beauty was offended by the sight of a ‘wretched triumphal car’ over the gate. From Dijon they passed to Salins, named after the salt works there. The salt works, George remarked, were operated by the Government and yielded a good revenue ‘as such works do in all countries’.

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333 George Chinnery’s Travel Journals, describing as they do the many museums, private collections and artists’ studios that the Canning party visited, as well as the frequent opera performances that they attended, contradicts Rolo’s assertion (op. cit., p. 25) that Canning ‘had no time at all for music or for art.’ Canning himself may well have professed an ignorance of music, but he certainly enjoyed opera and art as a spectator.
334 Probably with his parents and Viotti in 1816, when they were in Brussels for the autumn.
336 Ibid., p. 12. Elie Decazes was at the time the French ambassador in London.
339 Ibid., p. 17.
At the pretty mountain village of Orbe they crossed from France into Switzerland and during his after dinner stroll with Canning George was struck by the sound of a group of voices singing ‘some national air’ to the accompaniment of a murmuring stream in the background. Here again George’s love of music comes to the fore. The Travel Journals are a receptacle for all the sounds of the journey as well as the sights – the rumblings of Vesuvius, the jangling of the bells on the Neapolitan cabriolets, the garrulousness of the Neapolitan tongue – all is noted.

In 1820 as in 1819 George recorded for the benefit of future travellers his impressions of the inns where they stayed and sometimes their cost; the alternative routes that could be chosen; the state of the roads and posting services; the different modes of transport within a town or city; the availability of clean water; and warned against or recommended the various local guides available for hire. They met many other English tourists en route, and in 1820 George wrote of a common twentieth century problem – discovering a simple, quiet abode that would only too soon be spoilt by a future influx of tourists. For example at Orbe he remarked that as the road they were on had only just been ‘opened for posting’ he could not imagine that the inn would retain its simplicity for long once it had been inundated with English travellers.

‘Arriving next in Lausanne they met the retired English actor Kemble, who, nearing the end of his life, was residing abroad for health reasons. Although ‘very much broken by infirmity’, Kemble’s conviviality remained unaffected. Canning’s own links to the stage were strong, his love of oratory and theatricality undoubtedly inherited from his mother. He invited the actor to dinner, and clearly revelled in his company. George found the experience of the two men’s intercourse ‘both instructive & entertaining, the conversation being partly dramatic & partly philological’, and was surprised as much by Kemble’s knowledge of the niceties of the English language as by Canning’s powers of memory. Kemble drew their attention to the ‘selfish & illiberal’ policies of the Sardinian Government in Savoy, saying there was now no commerce at all between the Confederation of Swiss States and Savoy and no boats were ever seen to cross Lake

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340 Ibid., p. 21.
341 Ibid.
342 John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), English actor who ruled supreme at Covent Garden for many years. He played Hamlet when it was produced for the first time in Drury Lane in 1783, and was a friend of Sheridan. According to the DNB (vol. 10, p. 1261) he was ‘a scholar and a man of breeding’. Kemble made his final stage appearance in June 1817 and retired to Toulouse, then to Lausanne, where he died in 1823.
Geneva, which divided the two states. This observation led to an anecdote concerning the swimming prowess of Lord Byron, who had been living on the Continent since 1816. After dining at Madame de Staël’s on the opposite side of the lake, he had swum home afterwards, and this exploit had become the talk of the town.

In an Englishman’s tour of the Continent in those years it was as impossible for him to avoid coming in contact with the name of Byron as it was of avoiding any reference to the Princess of Wales, now Queen of England. Both identities were embedded in the English imagination, making them the subjects of much gossip. In Italy at Treviglio (near Caravaggio) they were to see several signs of inns representing “La Regina d’Inghilterra” – most likely put up, George opined, by Bergami ‘the queen’s favourite for whom she purchased an Estate in this part of the Country.’

In the case of Byron, the fascination he exerted on the English aristocracy at this time was due as much to his exotic lifestyle as to the popularity of his long autobiographical poem *Childe Harold*. Byron, who, according to his biographer Marchand, liked his swimming feats to be talked of, was the subject of more anecdotes recounted to them in Venice, where they were to hear of his swimming from a distant point of the port across the lagoon, and up the Grand Canal into the centre of town – a distance of eight miles.

In Lausanne they also paid a visit to Lady Caroline Capel at her country residence before continuing their route towards Italy. At St Maurice, the frontier town between Switzerland and Savoy, they rejoined the road that most travellers used to cross the Simplon and the one they had taken the previous year, and sped on towards the rendez-vous with Mrs Canning at Brescia. George doubted that any travellers ever went faster: they got into their carriage on the border of Lake Geneva and did not leave it until they reached the shores of Lake Maggiore, being very careful to avoid Milan through which ‘under existing political circumstances it was very desireable [sic] that Mr Canning should not pass.’

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343 *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23. Canning’s feats of memory were remarked on by many of his contemporaries.


345 Published in March 1812 by John Murray.


349 Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 29. Because of the Princess of Wales’s connections with the place.
At Brescia the only thing worth seeing according to George was the Opera house, which he considered second in beauty only to the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, and not unlike the English Haymarket theatre (although without the central chandelier). Here they heard Crivelli sing.\textsuperscript{350} George’s nice sense of proportion is as much in evidence in his descriptions of the interior of civic buildings as it is in his descriptions of the exterior – for instance, in his Journal entry of 23 August, where he describes not only the appearance of the external building, but the layout of the inside of the theatre. He gave his approval to the ‘particularly comfortable arrangement of the camaretti attached to all the boxes’, praised the coffee room and the additional lounge (which doubled as a ball and concert room on other nights), and thought that all were admirably suited to an opera house.\textsuperscript{351} Given George’s close contact with Viotti during the latter’s role as director of the Paris Opera, his appreciation of the amenities needed in an opera house was probably keener than most theatre-goers’, and his critical comparisons of opera theatres throughout Europe are interesting for this reason.

Verona was the only spot in the 1820 tour where they found ancient ruins. Here their first visit was to the amphitheatre, which George compared in detail to the one at Pompeii. He praised the beauty of its form and criticised the inappropriate present-day use of its outer arched corridors for blacksmiths’, carpenters’, wheelwrights’ and stone masons’ shops.\textsuperscript{352} They visited all the usual tourist spots – the cathedral, churches, and the tomb of Juliet in the garden of a private house, and went to ‘a foolish Italian comedy’ only because it was staged in a quaint little wooden theatre within the ruins of the amphitheatre.\textsuperscript{353}

Although the inns were good – at Padua the inn even had ‘an establishment of baths’\textsuperscript{354} – there was not much else that George praised in contemporary Italy. He was disappointed by the examples of Palladian architecture he saw in Brescia and Verona;\textsuperscript{355} the drinking water had to be filtered at Padua; the fruit was of poor quality; the women were ugly; the Italian cabriolets were ‘ridiculous’;\textsuperscript{356} and the Italian guides (‘lacquais de

\textsuperscript{350}Gaetano Crivelli (1774-1836), Italian tenor. His singing career took him to Paris, 1811-1817, and then to London. In 1819 and 1820 he was singing at La Scala and at other theatres in Italy.

\textsuperscript{351}Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{352}Ibid., p. 42.

\textsuperscript{353}Ibid., p. 45.

\textsuperscript{354}Ibid., p. 46.

\textsuperscript{355}But liked the examples he saw of it in Padua.

\textsuperscript{356}The horse-drawn vehicle consisted of an elevated single seat where the passenger perched precariously, with the driver standing behind on a board swinging on straps. His hands rested on the
place') wearied the traveller with showing him unnecessary sights and were wont to withhold information until a larger tip was forthcoming.

The highlight of the 1820 tour was a week-long stay in Venice, which they reached on 27 August, having left their carriages at Mestre and entered the city by water along the Brenta canal. As well as lengthy descriptions and histories of the most popular sights of Venice – the Rialto bridge, San Marco Square, the Palace of the Doges, the Isola del Lido, and various churches – George gave some interesting accounts of contemporary Venice, until five years ago subjugated by Napoleon, now under tyrannical Austrian rule. Just as he had written of the magnificent approach to London that indicated the wealth and prosperity of England, he now noted the impoverished condition of this once-powerful city-state, first noticeable, he wrote, from the lack of traffic on the canal leading to Venice.357 The successive humiliations that the Venetians had suffered in recent years reminded George of Byron’s lines: ‘An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt &c’. 358

Although the general aspect of the city from a distance remained an imposing spectacle, George wrote, the decay of the buildings was evident on closer inspection.359 So was the poverty of the once-prosperous inhabitants. The hotel on the Grand Canal where they were staying belonged to the Venetian noble Fasetti, ‘now reduced to great indigence & living at Petersburgh’, who let it for 4,000 francs a year. George suspected that their guide to the city, the elegantly-mannered Giovanni Massimiliano, had also seen better days. The latter had lived for two years with Byron (who was in Venice from 1818 to 1819), and also with Canning’s friends Lord and Lady Mansfield and with his in-laws the Duke and Duchess of Portland, by whom he was recommended to them. The patriotic Massimiliano cited numerous examples of Austrian tyranny: taxes were higher now than they had been during the recent wars; vendors on the Square of San Giacomo were brutally persecuted; and just recently, all guards in the city had been doubled, provoked by the recent revolution at Naples. Only the previous day a proclamation had

back of the seat and he did not hold the reins. In Naples the horses drawing the vehicles were festooned with brightly coloured ribbons and bells, so that the vehicle announced its approach with flying streamers and loud jangling.

358 Ibid., p. 57. From Childe Harold, Canto the Fourth, line 101.
been read out, George reported, decrying the revolutionary designs of the Carbonari\textsuperscript{360} and ‘calling upon every body to give information of any member of that society’\textsuperscript{361} under pain of imprisonment. Another Venetian who disliked the Austrian Government was ‘M. Gamba\textsuperscript{362} one of the censors of the Press’, who had been recommended to Mrs Canning by her sister. He cited as one of the effects of the present regime a decline in the population of the city (from 150,000 to the present 105,000). Gamba also pointed to the crippling effects on the city’s commerce caused by the Austrian policy of making Genoa rather than Venice the chief entry point for goods imported from the East, and condemned the Austrians for suppressing Venice’s thriving commercial navy – one of the benefits of Napoleonic rule. Now all the seamen were drafted into the army. George went alone with Canning to visit Venice’s marine and land arsenal, a huge derelict establishment that now employed only 100 of its previous 5,000 workers.

The British consul in Venice, Richard Hoppner\textsuperscript{363} – a former intimate of Byron – with whom they dined on 31 August, corroborated the above reports, calling the Austrian prohibition of both the export and consumption of local goods tyrannical, and condemning the banning in Venice of books and merchandise that were freely available in Vienna. The same evening the Cannings were introduced to the ‘Cav[alier] Treves, a ‘great contractor’ and the wealthiest man in Venice, a profiteer who, anticipating the needs of the Austrian army now marching on Venice to curb the spread of revolution in Italy, had purchased an enormous quantity of forage.\textsuperscript{364}

The Canning party ‘left Venice for Vienna on 2 September. On 1 September George had written to Viotti\textsuperscript{365} in Paris (who had been living there since November 1819 as Director of the Paris Opera) to ask him to make accommodation arrangements for the Cannings prior to their arrival. He indicated that their route to Paris would take them through Vienna, Munich and Strasbourg. But this plan had to be changed because of disruptions caused by the civil unrest. The following day their progress from Resciuta

\textsuperscript{360} Members of the antiroyalist secret society, the carboneria, responsible for the uprising in Naples in 1820.
\textsuperscript{361} Ibid., p. 71.
\textsuperscript{362} Bartelemeo Gamba (1780-1841), erudite Italian bibliographer, who devoted himself to the study of literary history. He is described by Michaud (op. cit., vol. 15, p. 493) as ‘le bibliothécaire de St-Marc.’
\textsuperscript{363} Richard Belgrave Hoppner (1786-1872), son of John Hoppner, R.A., the portrait painter, had been British consul in Venice since 1814.
\textsuperscript{364} Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 83.
\textsuperscript{365} G to V, 1 September 1820, PM 94/143/1 – 28/23. This is the only letter in the CFP collection that makes reference to the 1820 tour.
to Villach on the border of Austria was hampered by the large number of Austrian troops marching from Germany into Italy to 'protect the Austrian Italian provinces from the reaction of the late Neapolitan revolution'. At Villach the congestion of Austrian troops on the road and the resultant shortage of beds in inns caused them to abandon their original idea of going to Vienna, and they headed instead for Munich via Salzburg. As they approached the part of the Alps that divided Germany from Italy, George, reflecting on the constantly changing political divisions of Europe, was prompted to remark on the immutability of the great natural division of Europe into North and South, that is, 'the continent of Europe on one part & Turkey Italy Spain & Portugal with the various Islands of the Mediterranean on the other.'

In Germany once more, George adverted to the twin frustrations experienced by travellers in this country - its poor cuisine and its slow posting: 'there is as little spirit in their cooking as in their driving, as little refinement in their sauces as in their manners'. Fortunately they had provided themselves with their own tea, sugar, silver teapot, cups and spoons, and George advised all English travellers to do the same, if they wanted to enjoy an English breakfast. Another aspect of German life that George disliked was the Southern German practice of worshipping sacred images on the side of the road (much more common than in France or Italy). Although George professed tolerance of all religions, calling himself 'a true protestant of the English church, yet without a particle of polemical asperity towards other creeds', he found the practice 'irreverent & offensive'.

The crossing of the twin peaks of the Katschberg and Tauernberg mountains was much more arduous than that of the Simplon had been. Obliged to hire oxen for the steep ascent, they paid a florin for every pair and a penalty for each additional horse, as well as a toll of eight or nine florins for their two carriages. At the base of the descent on the other side was the town of Hallein, where they visited the salt works on 7 September. A long description of their inspection of the works gives details of the dress that men and women alike were made to don (white jacket, trousers pulled in at the waist and a worsted cap); of their extraordinary 1,320 foot descent into the mine by

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367 Ibid.
368 Ibid., p. 95.
369 Ibid., p. 99.
370 Ibid., p. 97.
slithering down a pole, around which the left leg was hooked, while a guide-ropes were grasped in the right hand; and of the ingenious vehicle by means of which they exited the mine. This consisted of a long narrow plank on wheels on which they sat astride, and which was propelled at surprising speed by two workmen. For the benefit of future travellers, George recommended a German guide book for this part of the country, a 'little German work on the Environs of Salzburg,' and gave an itemised list of inn charges at Villach and Hallein.

They arrived in Salzburg on 8 September. Most of their activities here consisted of walks. They climbed, in ascending order of difficulty, the Nonnberg, the Schlossberg and the Mönchberg, and hiked for four hours to see the gardens of Aigen. Leaving Salzburg on the 11th they crossed the Saale [Salzach?] River into Bavaria, and once again encountered the frustrations of the German posting service. In fine weather George liked to sit on the carriage box, but, he cautioned, it was dangerous to sit close to German postilions, who drove four in hand with a long whip, and whose first consideration was smoking a pipe, not driving. George had already received cuts to the face and expected to be 'well scarred' by the time he reached the French border.

On 12 September they reached Munich, where they remained for a week. Here they met the British minister Brook Taylor who had been in Stuttgart the previous year. At the British legation they were able to read their first English newspapers since the start of the tour, and not surprisingly found them full of the proceedings in the House of Lords against the Queen. But George believed that to introduce such matters into a travel journal 'would be irrelevant frivolous & absurd' and gave no further commentary. However a few days later, when the Cannings were guests of the King of Bavaria at his newly purchased hunting lodge at Tegernsee, the King raised the subject of the trial, condemning 'in the most unqualified terms' the proceedings against the Queen 'for their impolicy'.

There is a seven-page account of the Cannings' overnight stay with the royal family at Tegernsee, thirty miles from Munich. The King received them without

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371 Ibid., p. 107.
372 Ibid., p. 92 and p. 108. Prices ranged from ½ florin for breakfast to 6 florins for lodging.
373 Ibid., p. 121.
374 Ibid., p. 127.
375 Maximilian I (1756-1825), King of Bavaria 1806-1825, had been King since 1 January 1806, when Napoleon made Bavaria a kingdom. He had abandoned Napoleon in 1813.
ceremony, but George, who was a stickler for tradition, found the lack of formalities a little disconcerting and criticised the King’s demeanour for not being regal enough. He thought the King’s ‘bonhomie’ lacked dignity, and that he would do well to assume some of the reserve of his wife, sister of the Empress of Russia. Some of the royal domestic customs George found eccentric, including the serving of tea on their arrival ‘with large vases of custard’, partaken of as freely ‘as if they had not dined at 2 & were not to sup at 9.’ Being very hungry by nine (having refused the custard), he was disappointed that the large covered dishes on the supper table were for show only. These empty silver dishes reappeared at dinner the following day, when the meal was served from side tables. In matters of table etiquette George preferred the French custom, ‘where every dish is put on the table and handed round’, and concluded that the German way ‘wanted method & arrangement’.

Munich was the abode of Napoleon’s stepson Eugène de Beauharnais, now styled Duke of Leichenberg. The latter was in the throes of building ‘a superb mansion’ near the royal palace, in which to house his equally superb art collection. George remarked that they were privileged to be allowed to visit the collection, which contained several chefs d’œuvre – among them statues by the sculptor Canova – masterpieces from every school of painting, ‘and not one inferior work’. One of Canova’s statues was the Three Graces, of which George recollected seeing the model in the artist’s own atelier in Rome the previous year. They also visited Beauharnais’s private apartments and saw portraits of several members of the late imperial family, including Napoleon, Josephine and Eugène’s sister Hortense.

George’s account of Munich contains more descriptions of art collections than anywhere else in his 1820 Journal. As well as the Beauharnais collection they visited the public picture gallery, the large Schleisheim collection housed in a castle of the same name (of which George made a catalogue that is included in the Journal), and the Prince Royal’s statue gallery, the ‘Glyptothecia’, which was expected to be finished in

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377 Ibid., pp. 136-143. The six daughters were present but not the two sons. There was also ‘little Prince Maximilian’ the King’s nephew.
379 Eugène de Beauharnais (1781-1824), son of Alexandre de Beauharnais and Josephine. He had married Princess Augusta, daughter of the Elector of Bavaria in December 1805. It was on this occasion that Napoleon had elevated the Elector King of Bavaria and Eugene Viceroy of Italy.
381 Eldest son of Maximilian I, and future Ludwig I of Bavaria (1786-1868), who reigned from 1825 to 1848.
eight years time. This last collection consisted largely of ancient sculptures. George regretted not being able to see the Ægina marbles that the Prince Royal had recently purchased & which the British Museum might have had.

Munich, with a population in 1820 of 60,000, struck George as a 'new' city, or a 'rising' capital, rather than an ancient one, on account of the amount of building then going on. One of the 'handsomest' buildings in Munich was, in his opinion, the theatre and opera house complex, having spacious 'degagements, corridors &c' and 'noble proportions'. They attended a play (as they did in every city they visited) to hear the famous German actor Esslair in Kotzebue's Menschenhass und Reue, and George as usual gave his impressions of the acting, which in this case he found 'too cold'.

Leaving Munich for Paris on 19 September, the Canning party travelled along Lake Constance, passed through Lindau and Überlingen, crossing from Bavarian to Württemberg territory at Mitten, then continued through Baden territory to Donaueschingen and Offenburg as far as Strasbourg. When they crossed the Rhine into France they were not importuned by the French customs officials, owing to a 'special paragraph at the bottom of the Duc de Caze's passport From Strasbourg they passed through Sarrebourg and Nancy, then along the Marne, skirting Epernay in Champagne where George remarked that 'Mons' Moette & Mons' Godard' were 'the two greatest capitalists' who produced champagne wines. They spent the night of the 28th at Châlons, capital of the département de la Marne, or 'to persons who learned their geography before the Revolution, of Champagne'.

Having so recently experienced the slowness and the surliness of the German postilions, George was pleased to return to an efficient posting system with a cheerful, conversation-ready driver. He found the French postilions more entertaining and more

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382 Now known by the Greek name Glyptothek, this museum is described by F. Brockhaus (ed.), in his Brockhaus Enzyklopädie, Wiesbaden, 1966-1981, vol. 7, p. 421, as being the custom-designed museum in Munich built by Leo von Klenze for Ludwig I of Bavaria.
384 Ibid., p. 135.
385 Ferdinand Johann Baptist Esslair (1772-1840), German actor. In 1820 he was employed at the Munich Hoftheater, but travelled in Germany making guest appearances in other cities. He was of a powerful build, possessed a strong voice and was particularly suited to heroic roles.
386 August von Kotzebue (1761-1819), German playwright. Menschenhass und Reue was published in 1788.
388 Ibid., p. 153. That is, the passport issued to them by Decazes.
intelligent than in any other country, and his description of the driver that took them on the last stretch of their journey to Paris is both colourful and revealing:

A french postillion is in many instances a very well mannered gentlemanlike sort of person – My friend from the relay at Dormant might have passed himself off in a foreign country for something very superior to a common postillion. His highly powdered chevelure terminating in a tapery tail instead of the usual heavy queue gave him the appearance of a finished coxcomb the slimness of his limbs that of a fashionable debauchée & his phraseology was quite that of the vielle [sic],\(^{390}\) – but what principally amused me & completed my astonishment was the easy familiarity with which he spoke of his superiors. The conversation turned upon the Prefect of the department no less an Authority in France than a Lord Lieutenant in England, & on my asking how he was liked, my friend’s reply was “C’est un charmant garçon.” The Minister of the Interior could not have spoken of the Prefect more unceremoniously. So much for French impudence with which was immediately coupled an exemplification of French levity of character “Car (he added by way of accounting for the Prefect’s popularity) il a été de l’avis de tout le monde, il ne s’est brouillé avec personne, tantot avec les Bourbons tantot avec Napoleon il a trouvé le moyen de rester toujours en place.

(Travel Journal, vol. 3, pp. 164-165)

The travelling party arrived in Paris on Saturday 30 September, Canning and George remaining until Tuesday 14 November. Their stay consisted of a continuous round of visits, dinners, and theatre-going. On the day of their arrival George left the Cannings at the Hotel Bristol in the Place Vendôme, where Viotti had made the pre-arranged reservations, and went immediately to pass the week-end with his mother at her newly purchased country residence at Châtillon-sous-Bagneux, which was to be her principal abode for the next three years.\(^{391}\) George wrote that the village of Châtillon was about two leagues from Paris, and praised its location. His commendation of the attractive site is echoed in a later nineteenth century description.\(^{392}\)

\(^{390}\) The term might be used in the sense given by Littré (ed., *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, Gallimard Hachette: Paris, 1961) of ‘un homme dont l’humeur est aisee, accommodante’ (vol. 7, p. 2487), or, if a mispelling for ‘vieille’, ‘un soldat qui a appartenu à la vieille garde de Napoléon’ (vol. 7, p. 2485).

\(^{391}\) She wintered in Paris during Viotti’s tenure of the directorship of the Paris Opera (as the Châtillon property had insufficient heating in winter), thereafter spending approximately four months of the year in England (winter to spring).

\(^{392}\) Dulaure (*op. cit.*, pp. 62-63) writes in 1858: “Le village de Châtillon est dans une belle situation sur une hauteur d’où l’on jouit d’une vue magnifique, l’œil plane au loin sur les villages de Bagneux, Montrouge […], on y découvre Paris, le cours de la Seine […]; dans le lointain, la belle vallée de
At Chatillon Blucher had his headquarters in the year 1814, and the home which now belongs to us was formerly the property of the Comtesse du Tessé Grande Ecuyere de la Reine in the time of Louis XVI: the view which it commands of Paris is most extensive, & as a habitation it is as delightful a Villa as can anywhere be seen.

(Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 166-167)

George spent each week-end of his six-week stay in Paris at Châtillon, returning to the Cannings’ hotel in Paris on Monday morning to resume his secretarial duties and to join the Cannings on their outings and visits, which were numerous. In the first week of their stay they attended theatre or opera performances on five consecutive evenings. On Monday it was the ‘Grand Opera français’ to see ‘Mademoiselle Bigotine’ in the ‘ballet de Clasi’, on Tuesday the Italian Opera (Théâtre-Italien) to hear the Agnese by Paër; on Wednesday the Comédie Française to see Marie Stuart by Lebrun; on Thursday the Italian Opera again to hear Rossini’s Barbiere di Seviglia, on Friday the acoustically poor Théâtre des Variétés ‘to laugh at Brunet the Liston of France’. On the sixth evening George went alone with his mother to hear Mozart’s Don Giovanni at the Italian Opera Theatre which was, like the Grand Opéra français, now under the direction of Viotti, and therefore frequently attended by Margaret.

Montmorency sert de fond à ce vaste et riant tableau. On jouit dans cet endroit d’un air pur et très salubre [...].

393 Gebhart Leberecht Blücher (1742-1819), Prussian marshal who distinguished himself in the French campaign of 1814.

394 Michaud (vol. 41, p. 189) lists a René de Froulai, comte de Tessé (1650-1725) from le Maine, who was a ‘colonel général des dragons’ and also a diplomat. P. Larousse (ed., Le Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle, Larousse: Paris, 1866-76, vol 8, p.855) notes a younger member of the same family, Charles-Louis de Froullay-Tesse (1687-1767), grand vicaire de Toulouse, later bishop of Le Mans, who founded numerous benevolent institutions. The above comtesse appears to belong to the same family.

395 On 20 October the Cannings moved out of the Hotel Bristol to the Hotel du Mont Blanc in rue de la Paix, quitting the latter for the Hotel des îles Britanniques in the same street (the Chinnerys’ favourite Parisian hotel) on 23 October.

396 The term used for the French opera seria, performed at the rue de Richelieu theatre (see Part I, p.198).

397 Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 167. Mademoiselle Bigottini (1784-1858), popular French dancer and mime, who appeared in some of the best known ballets that were performed at the Paris Opera.

398 Pierre-Antoine Lebrun’s Marie Stuart, a tragedy in five acts, was first performed at the Comédie Française on 6 March 1820. Jean-Joseph Mira, dit Brunet (1766-1853) was a comic actor, known as ‘roi de la bêtise’ (J. Balteau, M. Barroux, M Prévost, eds, Dictionnaire de biographie française, Letouzey et Ané: Paris, 1933-, vol. 7, p. 541). He was the director of the Théâtre des Variétés.

John Liston (1776?-1846), English comic actor, made his name at Covent Garden where he played until 1822.
During the first four weeks of their stay George found time to make detailed notes in his Journal of these performances, giving the names of plays, operas and performers, together with a brief appraisal of the performance. He also wrote accounts of special French jours de fête; described two invitations from a member of the Orléans family; gave the names of French statesmen and diplomats who invited them to dinner and whom they also entertained at their hotel; identified the English whom they frequented in Paris; described two visits to the Louvre; and wrote of his walks around the city with Canning. By November his remarks in the Journal had become hurried one-line entries. There are signs that George intended to expand on these later.\textsuperscript{399}

On 3 October George and the Cannings took part in the celebrations in honour of the birth of the Duchesse de Berry’s son the Comte de Chambord, ‘an event of singular interest to the Bourbons’, George wrote.\textsuperscript{400} A public holiday was declared, there was distribution of bread, meat and wine in the Champs Elysée (as there was to be for the young prince’s baptism seven months later)\textsuperscript{401} and banquets and games took place in every part of the capital. George described the celebrations thus:

\begin{quote}
The Champs Elysées were covered with booths, & besides the usual diversions of dancing swinging and the jeu de la bague,\textsuperscript{402} what seemed to create more merriment was the climbing of greasy poles: whilst we were there we saw two poor wretches vainly labouring to catch the prizes suspended from the summits of these poles [...] In the Evening at 8 O’clock splendid fireworks were let off from the Pont Royal, not equal though I think to our weekly display at Vauxhall, & to conclude the fête couplets appropriate to the occasion were sung at all the theatres: the theatre to which we went was the Italian Opera, beyond all comparison the best now in Europe [...] 
\end{quote}

(Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 168)

It is interesting to note that the custom of composing celebratory couplets to be sung on special occasions had not changed over the last half-century. The same tradition

\textsuperscript{399} On 31 October (Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 179) George reminds himself to ‘particularise some of these drawings [in the Louvre]’, and on 9 November (p. 180) to ‘name the Party’ [of guests] who attended a dinner, but these elaborations are nowhere to be found in the Journal.

\textsuperscript{400} Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 167. The Duchesse de Berry had been pregnant when her husband was assassinated outside the Paris Opera the previous February and this birth assured the succession of the Bourbon line.

\textsuperscript{401} See Part I, pp. 213-214 for a description of the later similar celebrations.

\textsuperscript{402} Larousse (ed.), \textit{op. cit.}, vol. 2, p. 51, describes this as a ‘jeu d’adresse, qui consiste à enfiler et à enlever, au galop d’un cheval, avec une lance, une épée, un stylet ou un bâton, un ou plusieurs anneaux suspendus à un poteau.’
was observed, as we have seen, by Madame de Genlis from her childhood to her old age. George gave fulsome praise to all the performances that he saw at the Italian Opera, which had now become, in the words of one French opera enthusiast, ‘le rendez-vous de l’élite de la société de Paris’, and ‘le point de réunion des nombreux étrangers qui apprécient peu notre musique conservatorienne’. But he did not enjoy the exaggerated way French actors interpreted tragedy. The performances of Talma and Mademoiselle Duchenois at the Comédie Française, he said, were ‘quite disagreeable to an English person accustomed to a more faithful representation of nature.’ Nor did he find the lighter pieces performed at the Variétés any more to his taste, writing that ‘Brunet’s merits are not sufficient to redeem the vulgarity & immorality which pervade the greater number of them.’ A second visit to the Variétés elicited the comment that the ‘secondary class of french light pieces’ was ‘the most intolerable trash.’ Two other theatres that the Cannings attended were the Porte-Saint-Martin (on 23 October) where they heard Potier in the Ci-devant jeune homme and Les petites Danaïdes, and the Odéon (on 31 October) to hear Racine’s Iphigénie. George thought the salle of the Odéon ‘incomparably the handsomest in Paris.’

One of plays they saw at the Comédie Française was particularly topical. It was the seventeenth century comedy by Montfleury entitled La Femme juge et partie, revived to coincide with the trial of Queen Caroline. The humour of it, wrote George, arose from ‘the miseries of a husband occasioned by the supposed infidelities of a wife whom he had ill used’. The French public were quick to appreciate the play’s similarities to the events then being played out in London: ‘the parterre caught with great glee the passages that were particularly analagous to the proceedings now carrying on in England in which it was proposed to prove the case by calling in Evidence [...].’

George had already alluded to the reaction of the members of the upper classes to this trial, which was by no means as gleeful as that of the lower classes. In the circles that

403 From the anonymous author of the document entitled ‘Observations désintéressées sur l’administration du Théâtre Royal Italien, adressées à M. Viotti’ (in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 276).
405 Ibid., p. 169.
406 Ibid., p. 177.
407 Charles Potier (1775-1838), was a popular French comic actor, who performed mostly at the Théâtre des Variétés and at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin. He was mentioned by the writer of the ‘Observations’ addressed to Viotti (in Giazotto, op. cit., p. 276).
409 Antoine-Jacob Montfleury, La Femme juge et partie, G. Quinet: Paris, 1669.
George and the Cannings frequented the view commonly expressed was that ‘whether Her Majesty’s guilt admits of proof or not the trial ought never to have taken place, because the nature of the inquiry must have the effect of degrading royalty in general, or, to quote the terms used by almost every frenchman upon the subject – cela ravale toutes les royautés jusque dans la boue.’

On 8 October, the Canning family (Canning, his wife, daughter and youngest son) paid a visit to Margaret Chinnery at Châtillon. George and Viotti were present, and Margaret describes the visit in great detail in a letter to William:

As soon as I was up yesterday morning I began to put all my rooms into the best order possible, put down the pretty carpet in the green closet, uncovered all the chairs, sofas, &c &c. Then we prepared a beautiful cabaret\(^\text{412}\) of fruits, wine and biscuits for them, and set it all ready to be brought into the room when wanted, after that, Matilda and myself dressed ourselves in nice morning dresses, and went into the Drawing to receive M. le Mercier, who with André, Albert & Norblin\(^\text{413}\) were already arrived. They quickly moved off into the Billiard room leaving only M. le Mercier André & George with us. About 3 oClock George saw M. & Mrs C. drive in, to the court in an equipage of the plainest possible description with two horses to the family travelling coach; — Maurice presently announced “Son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre Anglais avec Madame et Mademoiselle! – There was also a fine boy of about eight years old.\(^\text{414}\) Mrs and Miss Canning came in with smiling countenances. I thanked them for their goodness in coming to see me, — but the exterior of George’s best and kindest friend, is not encouraging, — it is reserved, cold, and retiring. I sat down with the two ladies on the sofa, — he placed himself at the little round table on the opposite side of the room, so that no conversation could take place generally. The ladies were both extremely amicable, chatty & agreeable, — I rang for the fruit which pleased the little boy, — his Papa eat a Pear, & he was delighted with the peaches grapes &c &c. Soon afterwards George asked Mr Canning if he should present Amico to him, & when this was done, they both talked together a little, always on the opposite side of the room — Amico begged leave to present his brother, & Mr C entered into conversation with André and made many enquiries of him with regard to the military courts of justice.

\(^{411}\) Ibid., p. 170.
\(^{412}\) A porcelain tea or coffee or any other service set on a small tray – in this case a wine decanter and bowls.
\(^{413}\) The four guests were André Viotti, Viotti’s step-brother; Albert, first dancer of the Paris Opera; Louis-Pierre-Martin Norblin de la Gourdaine (1781-1854), principal cellist of the Opéra orchestra, 1811-1841; and retired statesman, Comte Louis-Nicolas Lemercier (1755-1849).
\(^{414}\) Charles John Canning (1812-1862), afterwards Earl Canning, was Canning’s only surviving son and heir.
here. At length I proposed a walk in the garden, — they liked both house and garden very much, but M. C. was particularly pleased with the terrace on top of the house; I was in hopes when George gave his arm to Mrs C, I should have had his patron by my side, but no such good luck happened to me, and it was rather remarkable that he never once addressed himself directly to me, during the whole visit. When they had been all over the house, they talked of going, but the little boy was so much entertained with the various games, that they were induced to wait while he tried his skill at the Chinese game &c &c. After a visit of about an hour & a half they took leave, but as no opportunity of thanking M. Canning for his kindness to George had occurred, I wrote a note to him this morning, saying that the want of a favorable moment for this purpose, was the only thing that could have heightened the gratification I had derived from his visit to Chatillon, &c &c. George approved my note, & took it with him, intending to lay it on his table & say nothing about it. Miss Canning is a very pretty young woman, perfectly unaffected, with excellent manners and attractive conversation. Her Mama, lively, & amiable in the extreme. This is a full & particular account of an event that will interest you much.

(M to W, 9 October 1820, PM 94/143/1 – 17/50)

This portrait of Canning from a female point of view portrays him in a way that George would never allow himself to do in the Travel Journal. George’s Journal entry of the 9 October reads simply: ‘M & M’ C. came in the course of the morn yesterday to pay my mother a visit, & we had afterwards a party to dinner & music in the Evening.’ Margaret’s description of Canning’s coldness tallies with many other similar observations about his reserve with women and with strangers. Even George, who was by this time clearly on an intimate footing with Canning, noticed an initial aloofness whenever he renewed contact with Canning after a period of absence — an aloofness which seemed to be nothing more than shyness, and which he eventually succeeded in breaking down by means of frank and open conversation: ‘Whenever I see M.C. after a certain interval of time I am struck like Amico with his air embarrasse and his maniere boutonnee, but like Amico again I try to get the better of his diffidence by excessive frankness on my part.’ But Margaret was not comfortable with this behaviour. Her ardent desire for conversation with George’s patron was undoubtedly

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415 André Viotti was a colonel in charge of the courts martial in the French armed forces (the French equivalent of a British Judge-Advocate-General). See Glenbervie’s comment in his Diaries (Douglas, 1928, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 319).
417 G to M, 13 March 1821, Fisher.
matched by Canning’s own determination to withdraw from any such contact, leaving her perplexed and frustrated.

On Wednesday 8 November George entered the brief note in his Journal: ‘My mother & Amico dined with the Cannings – in the Ev8 we went to the Opera.’ 418 It would be interesting to know if Margaret’s opinion of Canning improved on second meeting. In March 1821 she paid another visit to the Cannings in Paris, and found ‘the daughter more amiable than the wife.’ 419 As it would have been improper for Canning to meet William Chinnery (who was then spending some time with Margaret and Viotti at Châtillon), George was restricted in the number of outings on which he could accompany his parents. Members of the French Government were under no such compunction however, and William and Margaret frequently kept company with the French Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs M. de Rayneval and his wife, whom Margaret appears to have met for the first time in 1814 when Rayneval was a member of the French legation in London. 420 George dined with his parents at Rayneval’s home on 27 October.

Canning and George spent most of their mornings composing dispatches for London, which were sent by the King’s Messenger, the carrier of British embassy mail. When they were not attending a spectacle, their evenings were spent either at the British embassy dining with the ambassador Sir Charles Stuart – where they met the French Prime Minister the Duc de Richelieu, 421 the Minister for Foreign Affairs Baron Pasquier, 422 and the ‘Lord Steward’ the Duc d’Escars, 423 – or at the many diplomatic soirées that flowed from these dinners. One of these was hosted by the capable Russian envoy General Pozzo di Borge. George was impressed with the Russian ‘who upon £7000 a year from his Gov. & without a private fortune contrives to keep up a very

419 G to M, 21 March 1821, Fisher.
420 See Part I, p. 174. There are two letters from Madame Alexandrine de Rayneval to Margaret Chinnery in the Fisher collection (dated 5 January 1821 and 11 September 1825).
421 When Decazes was forced to retire in February 1820, Richelieu became for the second time président du conseil des ministres for Louis XVIII.
422 Etienne-Denis, baron (later due) de Pasquier (1767-1862). After narrowly escaping execution during the Revolution, Pasquier was made conseiller d’Etat and baron by Napoleon. In 1814 he offered his services to the Bourbons, remaining faithful to Louis XVIII at the second Restoration in 1815, and was Minister for Foreign Affairs in Richelieu’s cabinet.
splendid Estab1.\textsuperscript{424} Pozzo di Borgo had also invited the Russian ‘Prince Soltikoff’ and the ‘Count Orloff’ and most of the foreign diplomats in Paris: the Austrian (‘Baron de Vincent’), the Dutch (Baron Fagel), their own Charles Stuart with his two secretaries (Vaughan and Crosbie\textsuperscript{425}), and the ‘ex-ambassadors’ to Naples (‘Prince Casteliscala’) and to Spain (‘Count Fernan Nunez’) who had recently been recalled by their ‘revolutionized Governments’.\textsuperscript{426} The Duke of San Carlos\textsuperscript{427} was another ex-ambassador (to London) whom the Chinnerys and the Cannings frequented (separately) in Paris. San Carlos sent an urgent letter through Viotti to Margaret in November – when she was making preparations to leave for England – regretting that he was unable to come to Châtillon and pay her a farewell visit before her departure, as his baby was unwell.\textsuperscript{428}

Other members of the Canning circle in Paris were the Humboldt brothers, and many fellow Englishmen, including Canning’s relatives Lord and Lady Frederick Bentinck,\textsuperscript{429} ‘M’ Wynn,\textsuperscript{430} M’ Long,\textsuperscript{431} Wellesley Pole,\textsuperscript{432} & M’ Labouchere the great banker a partner of Hope’s house & related to the Barings’,\textsuperscript{433} Mr Burges,\textsuperscript{434} Lady Montgomery,\textsuperscript{435} Lord Landon, Lord Francis Gower,\textsuperscript{436} Sir Sidney Smith; Lord and Lady

\textsuperscript{424} Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 170.
\textsuperscript{426} Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 170. There were revolutions in both Naples and Spain in 1820. None of the foreign diplomats except Fagel (see p. 660) has been identified. Some of George’s spellings may have been anglicised. ‘Orloff’ may have been a descendant of Count Aleksej Orlov (1737-1808).
\textsuperscript{427} The Duke of San Carlos (see Part I, p. 189) had moved from London to Paris in 1820. He was a staunch royalist who was opposed to the recent Spanish revolution.
\textsuperscript{428} Duke of San Carlos to Margaret Chinnery, 13 November [1820], Fisher. From the date of the letter, it would appear that Margaret intended travelling back to England at the same time as George and Canning.
\textsuperscript{429} Frederick Bentinck (1781-1828), major-general, was the youngest brother of the fourth Duke of Portland, Canning’s brother-in-law.
\textsuperscript{430} Charles Watkin Williams-Wynn (1775-1850).
\textsuperscript{431} Charles Long, Baron Farnborough (1761-1838).
\textsuperscript{432} William Wellesley-Pole, third Earl of Mornington and first Baron Maryborough (1763-1845), was the Duke of Wellington’s elder brother.
\textsuperscript{433} Peter Cesar Labouchere was a partner in the great mercantile firm of Hope. His wife Dorothy Elizabeth was the third daughter of Sir Francis Baring.
\textsuperscript{434} Possibly the son of Sir James Bland Burges (1752-1824), politician.
\textsuperscript{435} Lady Montgomery, wife of George Augustus Herbert, eighth Earl of Montgomery (1759-1827), general.
\textsuperscript{436} Lord Francis Leveson-Gower (1800-1857), statesman and poet. Lord Landon has not been identified.
Lovaine, Mr and Mrs Peel, and Lord Valletort. On 25 October Canning invited ‘our two Poets Wordsworth & Moore’ to dinner. Canning frequently had a small party of intimates to dinner at his hotel, where a larger party of French and foreign dignitaries would assemble later. Among these, on 30 October, was ‘the famous de Seze who was counsel to Louis XVI, & is now a Peer & President of the Cour de Cassation’.

It is ironic that during this visit to Paris George should have been a guest at the country house of the Dowager Duchess of Orléans, the one-time friend turned implacable enemy of Madame de Genlis, who was a former correspondent and close friend of his mother. The Cannings visited the Duchess twice at her Ivry home, which George said she had purchased and given to her chamberlain, the old ‘Comte [Rouzet] de Folmont’, whom she was suspected of having secretly wed. Nine days after their second visit to Ivry the death of Folmont ‘intendant de la maison de la Duchesse douairière d’Orléans’ was announced, George wrote, in the Moniteur (28 October 1820). George remarked that it was fortunate that the Comte had predeceased the Duchess, as the latter had considerable property that might have been lost to the Orléans family if he had survived her.

At Ivry George met several French dignitaries, among whom the Marquis d’Antichamp (governor of the Louvre), the Archbishop of Sens (premier aumônier of the Duchesse d’Angoulême), and the Bishop of Chartres (premier aumônier to Monsieur [le Comte d’Artois]); two old friends of the Duchess, the Marquise de Castera and the Marquise de Laage; the Chinnery friends the Duke and Duchess of San Carlos; and the new Spanish ambassador the Marquis of Santa Cruz. George found it odd that while Louis XVIII was prepared to acknowledge the representative of the new Spanish Government, he did not intend to acknowledge the Neapolitan envoy, Prince Cariati.

437 Robert Peel, was now a private member of parliament, having quitted his post as Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1818. He had married earlier in 1820. The other lords are unidentified.
438 See Part I, pp. 201-202, 213 for an account of Thomas Moore in Paris in these years.
439 Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 178. Etienne-Romain, comte de Seze (1780-1862), French magistrate. George remarked that the King had made de Seze introduce ‘les Tours du Temple into his arms with Le 26 Dec’ 1792 for motto.
440 Madame de Genlis had been dame d’honneur to the Duchess when the latter was a newly-wed at the Palais Royal before the Revolution, but the Duchess had turned against her when she learnt of Madame de Genlis’s affair with her husband (Philippe Egalité).
441 The offending Mémoires had not yet been published.
(whom George had met in Naples the previous summer) 'any more than the Emp. of Austria [Francis I] would admit the D. de Gallo at Vienna a few weeks ago.'

George and Canning went twice to the Louvre, and also visited ‘M. Denon’s interesting museum’. They were accompanied on their first visit to the Louvre by its governor the Marquis d’Antichamp, who showed them some portraits and historical paintings by Louis David’s famous pupil, François Gérard. George thought that since the return of many of the Italian masterpieces to their original homes the picture gallery of the Louvre had become ‘relatively insignificant’, and that ‘from being the richest it is become the poorest gallery in Europe.’ The Louvre’s gallery of statues was ‘also much impoverished’, and in George’s opinion was far inferior to the Vatican and the gallery at Naples. The Marquis d’Antichamp also conducted them over a large part of the unfinished palace ‘to which so many French sovereigns had contributed’. One ‘great saloon’ was nearly completed and would be used by the Peers.

On Sunday 12 November Canning retired to bed early, only to be woken by George to read a note from Sir Charles Stuart ‘with the telegraphic communication of the defeat of the Bill agü the Queen.’ Monday 13th was spent packing, and on Wednesday Canning and George reached St Omer, having travelled all night and succeeded in getting the gates of the town opened. On Thursday they reached Calais, went to the Hotel Dessin, and were disappointed at not finding any letters arrived from England. That was the last entry in the 1820 Journal.

At the end of the Journal, under the heading ‘Notes from Eustace’ (John Chetwode Eustace’s Tour Through Italy), George has given a summary of readings recommended by Eustace to the traveller in Italy. The list is clearly meant to apply to the 1819 tour, as most of the authors cited deal with classical Italy. The list begins with

444 Ibid., p. 176. Marzio Mastrilli (1753-1833), Italian diplomat who offered his services to France in 1806. He had been made Duc de Gallo by Murat in 1808. As a representative of the new revolutionary Government of Naples he went to Austria, but was not allowed to proceed beyond Klagenfurt. The reason both envoys were snubbed undoubtedly had to do with the fact that they had been close associates of Murat, which association made them offensive to the Bourbons and their Austrian allies.

445 Dominique Vivant, baron de Denon (1747-1825), favourite courtier of Louis XV, diplomat, artist and collector, became Napoleon’s chief art advisor, and accompanied the Grande Armée throughout Europe, selecting works of art to be brought back to the Louvre. In 1815, when the Allies forced most of these pieces to be restored to their country of origin, Denon resigned his post as directeur des musées, and devoted his energies to his own art collection, which was dispersed in 1826. For George’s list of what it contained, see Travel Journal, vol. 3, p. 171.


447 Ibid., p. 32.

448 Ibid., p. 180.
a recommendation of eight classical (or neo-Latin) authors to be read during a tour of Italy, adds four authors of history and art works, in English, French and Italian (Aldrich, Reynolds, Dufresnoy, Denina), a general work on travel by Addison, and three useful maps (Molini’s, D’Anville’s and Zannoni’s). 449

Shortly after arriving in London Canning tendered his resignation from the Ministry (13 December) and it was accepted. His position vis-à-vis the King had become untenable, with George IV bearing a personal grudge against him for the outcome of the Queen’s trial. 450 For the second time in his career he was out of office (December 1820 – August 1822). The Queen Caroline affair was still being hotly debated in the House of Commons in February 1821, when Margaret wrote to William: ‘Tierney made a most powerful speech in the debate upon the Queen’s allowance, – which was a very boisterous debate altogether, & more like the french debates in their house of commons, than like any thing ever heard before in an english house of commons.’ 451

George IV was crowned at Westminster Abbey on 19 July 1821. His wife was refused admission to the ceremony. She died on 7 August, bringing to an end the whole sordid affair, probably to the King’s, Canning’s and Parliament’s great relief.

449 The ‘classical’ authors are Virgil, Horace, Catullus, Vida, Sannazarius, Frascatorius, Flaminicus, and Politian. The other works are Carlo Giovanni Denina’s Delle Rivoluzioni d’Italia, Turin, 1769-70; Henry Aldrich’s Elements of Civil Architecture, translated by Philip Smyth, Prine and Cooke: Oxonii, 1789; Joseph Addison, Remarks on Several Parts of Italy etc in the Years 1701, 1702, 1703, Jacob Tonson: London, 1705; one of Sir Joshua Reynolds’s Discourse[s] Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy on the Distribution of the Prizes (delivered almost yearly between 1769 and 1790). Giuseppe Molini’s ‘general map of modern Italy’ was undoubtedly for sale at his bookshop in Florence, but is not listed in the British Library catalogue. J.B. Bourguignon d’Anville’s ‘map of ancient Italy’ may have been his Analyse géographique de l’Italie, V°es Estienne: Paris, 1744. Giovanni Antonio Rizzi Zannoni’s Osservazioni astronomiche [...]complete with a carta geografica generale terrestre e nautica del Regno di Napoli was published in Naples in 1786.

450 On the second reading of the bill Canning’s supporters in the House of Lords had voted against proceeding with the prosecution, and as a result of the diminished support for the bill, it was dropped.

451 M to W, c. 4 February 1821, PM 94/143/1 – 17/51.
(x) The Governor-Generalship of India offered to Canning, and Castlereagh’s suicide. 1821-1822

A series of seventeen letters from George to Margaret (March – July 1821) in the Fisher collection give an indication of Canning’s movements during this period, and describe George’s own life as part of the beau monde of London. After Canning’s second resignation had been accepted, he retired to Paris, returning to London just before the Catholic question was to be debated in the House of Commons on 17 March 1821. George wrote to his mother that he had had a brief conversation with him at Charles Ellis’s house at Connaught Place before being interrupted by the arrival of Huskisson. He presumed that Canning was going to stay in London for a while, as he was moving back into Gloucester House. George’s next letter reported that he had had an invitation to dine at Connaught Place the following Sunday, but that he had not yet called on Canning. He wrote that ‘the two or three exhibitions of oratory made by M. C. in the House of Commons since his return clearly prove his intention to support ministers, & people of course conclude that his obtaining a seat in the Cabinet cannot be a distant event’, although, he thought, it would not take place ‘during the present session.’ The last statement is indicative of the weak state of the Ministry without Canning, who was by far the most competent speaker in the House. On 4 May he wrote that Canning had just returned to Paris, but that there was a rumour circulating that ‘there may be an arrangement for his coming back into the Cabinet.’ George’s letter of 21 May continued to hypothesise on Canning’s return to office, and although Tierney had told George that Canning would not be coming back, George tended to believe Backhouse’s and Binning’s information, which said he was. On 11 June George wrote that Canning had returned to London, but would not be rejoining the Cabinet. Lord Liverpool sorely missed his able former Minister and tried his hardest to bring Canning back into the Cabinet, as two letters published by E.J. Stapleton show. In

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452 G to M, 13 March 1821, Fisher.
453 G to M, 21 March 1821, Fisher.
454 G to M, 4 May 1821, Fisher.
455 G to M, 21 May 1821, Fisher.
456 G to M, 11 June 1821, Fisher.
457 Canning to Liverpool, 21 June 1821, and 23 June 1821, in E.J. Stapleton (ed.), Some Official Correspondence of George Canning, Longman Green: London, 1887, vol. 1, pp. 24-27. In the first, Canning entreated Liverpool not to press him upon the King, and in the second he demurred at the way his friend Huskisson would be passed over in the event of his re-entering Cabinet.
mid-June he even threatened to resign over the King’s refusal to have Canning back. In George’s letter to his mother of 28 May 1821 there is an allusion to the tension, fuelled by the Queen Caroline debate, that existed at the time between the King and his Ministers. According to George, the Tory Ministers were so outraged at the new King’s intention of showing public favour to a prominent Whig politician, that they threatened to resign: ‘The King through Lady Conyngham’s influence was to have dined last Friday at the D. of Devonshire’s, but Ministers it is said threatened to give up their places if H.M. selected a leading Member of the Opposition as the first Subject with whom he should dine.’

Canning, citing the King’s hostility, continued to resist all attempts to bring him back into the Cabinet, bringing upon himself charges of political conniving. Rumours circulated as early as May 1821 that, having almost exhausted his wife’s fortune, he was angling for the lucrative governor-generalship of India. Historians have proposed different theories on why Canning was so recalcitrant, ranging from a desire to express his silent disapproval of Castlereagh’s foreign policies, to mere lassitude with the turmoil of public life, especially after the death of a son, all taking into account the personal grudge borne him by the King. On 15 June, George wrote of a half-hour private conversation he had had with Canning — ‘in our usual free & easy manner’ — at Gloucester Lodge on 9 June, two weeks before Canning’s two letters to Lord Liverpool were penned. Far from exhibiting any of the signs of either burning ambition or of weariness, Canning intimated ‘that there was not an utter hopelessness of his coming again into Office, — only that his restoration to power if it takes place at all will hardly be till after the summer.’ In November 1821 Canning was informed by the Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company that the governor-generalship was soon to fall vacant and that the Court favoured his appointment. Clearly George was worried about his own fate if Canning went to India, and wrote to his friend Charles Hall about his fears, asking him to intercede on his behalf.

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458 Lady Conyngham was the King’s mistress.
459 G to M, 28 May 1821, Fisher. The king did not in the end dine with the Duke of Devonshire.
463 G to M, 15 June 1821, Fisher.
464 Ibid.
465 Rolo, op. cit., p. 106.
of Christ Church, who followed closely Canning’s career moves, and whom Canning clearly treated as a confidant, nevertheless did not feel that he could press Canning for favours. He responded cautiously:

You conclude I think too hastily that Mr C. is not to come into office at home, for I am persuaded that every attempt will be made to vacate an office for him – and to get the better of the Cottage prejudice.\(^{466}\) In the mean time India he tells me now remains open for his decision in the Autumn of next year. I have always thought and still think that it will be better for you, when you see him, and have a proper opportunity, to represent your situation to him, and to ask his advice. He must feel that you lost your former situation on his account,\(^{467}\) and he is decidedly desirous of serving you [...] When I first requested for Canning to take you to Lisbon I flattered myself that I was serving you [as] a personal friend, and that when a connexion behind you was once established no further interposition on my part would be necessary and I still hope that I shall not be disappointed. I really do not think that he would like my speaking to him, so well as your doing. If I am not mistaken, he told you once that he had thought of something which failed. That circumstance, and his recent attentions to Treasury give you a perfectly fair opening for communication with him, and nothing would make me happier to learn that you had made it, and made it with success.

God bless you. Every good & kind wish from Mrs Hall

Your affectionate Friend

Charles Henry Hall

(Charles Hall to George Chinnery, 16 December 1821, Fisher)

The letter shows the extent of Hall’s protection of George, but equally, that protection could not go beyond a certain point. That the Dean was genuinely fond of his protégé is shown by George’s statement in a letter to his mother, that he had breakfasted with the Dean every year since leaving College, when the latter came to London for the election of the Westminster Students.\(^{468}\) The ‘Cottage prejudice’ was eventually overcome after much hard work on Canning’s part. Canning, like Madame de Genlis, had a personality that attracted either violent antipathy or fierce loyalty. The Dean of Christ Church belonged to the last category, as his letters to George attest, while others,

\(^{466}\) See p. 625, note 92.

\(^{467}\) George’s former staff situation with Lushington.

\(^{468}\) G to M, 28 May 1821, Fisher. The Westminster [School] Students constituted the majority of the Christ Church Student population, and were elected before coming up to university.
such as Harriet Arbuthnot, wife of Charles Arbuthnot, Joint Secretary of the Treasury, were 'furiously anti-Canningite'. Margaret Chinnery might easily have fallen into the anti-Canning category, had she not had personal experience (through George) of Canning's constancy and kindness. In spite of the King's personal dislike of Canning in the early 1820s, by the end of 1825, when Canning was able to prove his superior ability in the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and place England once more at the head of the Powers of Europe, he swung right round to become an avid supporter.

George's social life in London during the spring season of 1821 took place in the highest and most fashionable circles. He was the guest of dukes and counts, bishops and financiers, poets and publishers, actors and antiquaries, diplomats and politicians, as well as of members of his own family (the Hollands and the Rowles) and of his staid godfather, Sir Robert Preston. He attended balls, dinners and assemblies, and even procured a ticket of admission to the coronation of George IV. Indeed, he had so many invitations that he was provided with a dinner and a party for almost every night of the week. A remark to his mother in his letter of 28 May concerning an invitation from a great Yorkshire family, that 'they do not move in that very high circle of fashion, to which [...] the greater number of my acquaintances belong' proves that he had been admitted to the very pinnacle of English society. He dined with the wife of the primate of Ireland, and with the Duke of Devonshire and the Duke of Montrose, consorted with Canning's relatives the Marquess of Titchfield and the Portlands, and the wealthy Chinnery friend and collector Thomas Hope, whose 'new gallery was thrown open for the first time to the beau monde'.

This gallery, George explained, had been built expressly to exhibit 'the Dutch cabinet pictures lately bequeathed to Mr Hope by one of his relations.' The gallery George considered in particularly good taste, unlike Hope's wife, who 'looked as if she thought herself not the least valuable of her husbands bijoux!'

On 20 June he wrote for his mother a description of an assembly at which Harriet Canning made her debut:

470 Sir Robert Preston, barrister-at-law. He was generally thought to be a great bore. Thomas Moore's journal entry of 21 May 1819 contains an amusing anecdote about 'a most boring harangue' he gave in court (Moore, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 176).
471 G to M, 3 July 1821, Fisher.
472 William Henry Cavendish Bentinck-Scott (1796-1824), eldest son of fourth Duke of Portland, styled Marquess of Titchfield from 1809.
473 G to M, 21 May 1821, Fisher.
Miss Canning made her debut at Almack's last Wed. & was greatly admired, but so Frenchified in every part of her dress that I literally did not recognise her at first though standing in the same quadrille. She danced with Capt. D'Este & afterwards with her cousins Lord George & Lord John Bentinck. I was likewise present at her second appearance next night at Devonshire House, & the Duke himself danced with her [...] 

(G to M, 20 June 1821, Fisher)

But George did not think Harriet Canning the prettiest person in London: 'Among her superior rivals is Miss Fitzgerald a daughter of Lady Robert Fitzgerald's', who had also lived much in Paris. George was not always on the receiving end of favours. He managed to be of service to one of his friends, a 'Mrs Maberley', in looking out for a German tutor for her children, and he was even of use to Charles Hall's son on several occasions in getting him invitations to sought after balls.

In spite of George's acceptance into the highest stratosphere of London society, there was the odd occasion when his father's disgrace reflected on himself. For example, in March 1821 his nomination for membership of the Travellers Club was blackballed by one dissenter, although according to those present, this ungracious behaviour was considered most 'ungentlemanlike'. However, he had no such bad luck when it came to the United Universities Club. The Marquess of Titchfield, a Christ Church graduate, in informing George that he had put his name on the list of original members, remarked flatteringly: 'When you thought it might be necessary to tell me your University, you must have suspected me of strange ignorance as to who are to be considered as the “distinguished sons” of Oxford.' The new club, Titchfield explained, aspired 'to be conspicuous for combining excellence and economy' and would cater to

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475 Famous assembly rooms in London that were named after William Almack (d. 1781), their founder. From 1763 Almack was 'the leading caterer for the amusement of the fashionable world of London' (DNB, vol. 1, p. 339).

476 Sir Augustus Frederick D'Este (1794-1848), son of Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, sixth son of George III, made his career in the army.


478 Lord Robert Fitzgerald had been ambassador in Paris, and his wife a friend of Madame de Genlis (see Part II, Chapter 2, p. 363).

479 G to M, 21 May 1821, Fisher.

480 Ibid. There is another letter on this matter in the Fisher collection from Colonel Shawe [Commissioner of Stamps] to the Chinnery friend Charles Flint, dated 22 March 1821. A third letter (C.K. Cockrell to George Chinnery, 24 March 1825, Fisher) confidently predicts George's successful election to the Travellers' Club on that day.
the needs of ‘ill-paid public servants’. Another Oxford graduate, a clerk in the Home Department, lived in the same building in Mount Street where George had his bachelor apartment, and the two often walked together to Whitehall. However, George noted, the latter had ‘the superior advantage over me of being a Fellow of Merton which gives him an addition of £300 a year to his official income.

In 1822 the King was so vehemently opposed to having Canning in office that he was pleased when the post of Governor-General of India fell vacant, and promoted Canning’s candidature with all his might, aiming to be free of both Liverpool’s pestering and Canning’s presence in England. Canning, after much indecision, accepted the post in late March 1822. In the Fisher collection is a series of five letters from John Backhouse to George Chinnery (March – August 1822), and one from George to Canning, that add some interesting details to what is already known of the events leading up to Canning’s abandoning the Indian governor-generalship and his re-admission into Cabinet. On 21 March Backhouse wrote a private note to George letting him know in advance that it was highly probable that Canning would succeed Lord Hastings as Governor-General of India. He informed George that representations had been made to Canning both by Lord Hasting’s friends and by the East India Company’s directors. The question of Canning’s acceptance of the post was of intense personal interest to George, as the absence of his patron would spell a certain death sentence to his hopes of advancement. If he had entertained hopes of accompanying Canning to India, these were quashed by Backhouse’s information that Canning had had conversations with one of the directors of the East India Company about procuring his [Backhouse’s] leave of absence from the India Board – a clear indication that it was Backhouse who was to accompany Canning, not George. Backhouse told George that ‘the question was put hypothetically, but Mr C. you well know, is not in the habit of encouraging expectations on light grounds.’ (The last statement would indicate that

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481 Marquess of Titchfield to George Chinnery, 2 November 1821, Fisher.

482 George had taken the apartment when Margaret’s house in Montagu Street, Portman Square was let when she went to France with Viotti in 1819.

483 G to M, 21 March 1821, Fisher. The *Alumni Oxonienses* does not give the duration of the tenure of George’s Studentship (although it does for many of his contemporaries, and these average about twelve years). It appears likely that George did still hold his Studentship in March 1821 (see Part II, Chapter 3, pp.417-418), in which case the above statement would indicate that Merton Fellowships were much more valuable than Christ Church Studentships.

484 Francis Rawdon-Hastings, first Marquess of Hastings and second Earl of Moira (1754-1826) was Governor-General of Bengal and Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in India from 1813-1823.
Canning’s friends believed him to be a man of his word, whereas his enemies, who did not know him so well, held the opposite view. Feeling a need to justify his position, Backhouse pointed out to George that he had a wife and children to provide for and that ‘upon his [Canning’s] relinquishing the Representation of Liverpool, I should inevitably be stripped of the greatest part of my means of subsistence’. But this was small comfort to George, who wrote a moving four-page letter to Canning, throwing himself on his mercy.

Dated 28 March 1821, George’s letter was in response to Canning’s which confirmed that he had accepted the governor-generalship and that Backhouse was to accompany him to India. George wrote that although he ‘never allowed myself to entertain a hope that the greatest prize which you would have to bestow could fall to my lot’, he nevertheless admitted that ‘now [...] that the long pending arrangements are concluded, I candidly confess that the certainty of not accompanying you grieves me to the heart’. He continued:

This is human nature, and if it be a weakness you must forgive it. Besides how can it be otherwise. I should be deficient in the commonest gratitude towards you and should therefore not be doing justice to myself if I could hear of your departure with indifference.

To have had the good fortune to boast that you were my patron (I dare not say friend for that would be too familiar a term) with the inestimable advantage of nearly an eight years intercourse, and then to find that we are no longer to be even inhabitants of the same part of the globe, cannot otherwise than cost me a pang.

(George Chinnery to George Canning (copy), 28 March 1822, Fisher)

Asking for a meeting with Canning to discuss his future prospects, he wrote despairingly of rising any higher in his office, since ‘individuals young in office are precluded from ever attaining even to a competency’. Had Canning remained in England, George said, he might have hoped that he would eventually ‘be lifted out of such a humble sphere’. To this letter Canning replied, through Backhouse, ‘that what with conferences on his intended R. Cath. Motion, & applications connected with India,

485 See Harriet Arbuthnot’s opinion that Canning was ‘a tricking, dishonest politician’ (in E.A. Smith, op. cit., p. 81).
486 John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 21 March 1821, Fisher.
487 George Chinnery to George Canning (copy), 28 March 1822, Fisher.
he has not had a moment's leisure since Saturday: but he will take the first opportunity of leisure, which he trusts the Holidays will afford him, for seeing you. 488 Perhaps this opportunity did not come until May, when George wrote to his father that he had been to Gloucester Lodge for dinner. But the dinner, which he described as 'decidedly dull' disappointed him, as there was 'nobody of the party worth mentioning to you & no opening for private conversation.'489 Any doubts held by Canning's contemporaries about his sincerity or hesitation in accepting the Indian post were disproven by George's final remark to his father that 'G. Lodge is about to be sold & the departure seems fixed for the early part of September.'490

The next communication from Backhouse concerned George's intention of being present at Canning's farewell dinner for his Liverpool constituents on 23 August (for which Canning would procure leave from Treasury for George). Backhouse promised that 'The Stewards of the Dinner shall be notified, to ensure their setting apart a Ticket for you.' He also informed George that 'Mr Canning's intention is to leave Town, for some visits on his way, a fortnight before the day of the Dinner.'491 On 10 August, after George had paid a visit to Fonthill492 at the same time as Canning had made his farewells to Charles Hall at Nuneham, Backhouse sent a note to George telling him of Canning's offer to bring him [George] back to London in his carriage on Tuesday. George, having promised to return to the Treasury by Monday morning, was unable to accept the offer, and wrote to Canning accordingly. Arriving in London on Monday 12 August, George learned of Castlereagh's suicide the same morning, and was able to include the information in his letter, thereby making him the first person to impart the news to Canning: 'The Postscript to my letter to Mr C. acquainted him with the unexpected event of Lord Castlereagh having that morning cut his throat.'493 This turn of events was to change the course of Canning's career, and therefore also of George's. Writing of it on the back of a letter to Backhouse, George could hardly contain his joy:

488 John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 4 April 1822, Fisher.
489 G to W, 20 May 1822, PM 94/143/1 – 18/3.
490 Ibid. Gloucester Lodge was not sold in the end. It was undoubtedly withdrawn from sale after Castlereagh's death.
491 John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 19 July 1822, Fisher.
492 The reason for this visit is not given. Fonthill was the neo-Gothic residence of the author William Beckford, who sold his extraordinary edifice for £330,000 to John Farquhar in 1822.
493 George's note was appended to the end of Backhouse's letter to him of 10 August 1822 (John Backhouse to George Chinnery, Fisher).
Lord Londonderry put an end to his existence on Monday the 12th of August — I was in town & sent the earliest possible intelligence of it to M. Canning by a letter directed to Nuneham Harcourt where I knew that he was [to] sleep that night. M. Canning came to Gloucester Lodge on Tuesday — On Wed. I wrote a few lines to Backhouse saying that M. Canning could not doubt how happy I should be to pay my respects to him before he went out of town again, which I understood was to be on Friday, and that if I did not do so I was persuaded that he (B) would be good enough to explain that I felt that my visit, at such a moment, would only [be] indiscreet & troublesome.

B’s note on the back of which I write this Mem’ was an answer to the above.

(on cover of letter from John Backhouse to George Chinnery, 15 August 1822, Fisher)

Three days later Backhouse wrote again to George to inform him that the Liverpool dinner would proceed as planned, except that it would now take place on Friday 30 August. The East India Directors’ dinner was also to go ahead, but the date was uncertain, and perhaps would not take place until September or October. There is no more 1822 Chinnery correspondence regarding Canning’s subsequent rise to power, but the sequence of events is well known: Lord Liverpool, with the support of the Duke of Wellington, successfully overcame the King’s resistance to Canning’s re-entry into the Ministry (although not his personal prejudice against him), Canning was made Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Leading Minister in the House of Commons (September 1822), and the stage was set for the most brilliant phase of his career.
(xi) Canning the new Foreign Secretary and George’s transfer to the Foreign Office, 1823

Letters from George to his mother in Paris and to his father in Le Havre (in the Fisher and Powerhouse collections), as well as other miscellaneous letters from British Government officials (in the Fisher collection) are the main source of information concerning George’s career in 1823. Although by January 1823 Canning had been Foreign Secretary for four months, George was still on tenterhooks regarding his own job prospects, writing to his mother on 17 January that he had had discussions with Canning on the subject,494 and to his father on several subsequent occasions in January that he had heard nothing further. On 22 January he wrote that he had had dinner with his father’s good friend Herries, who ‘kept urging that I had a right to look to M.C.’495 Administrative changes took place in the Government on the re-opening of Parliament on 4 February,496 and one of the more significant appointments, as far as both Canning and George were concerned, was that of Lord Francis Conyngham, son of the King’s mistress Lady Conyngham, as Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office.497 Canning made the appointment as a conciliatory gesture to George IV, who still harboured ill-feeling towards him. George remarked in the same letter that the appointment had healed the rift between the King and Canning: ‘It is very true that the K. & M.C. are now really allies. L’d F.C. served to clench the matter. This ought to help me & yet it has not done so yet.’498 In the same set of administrative changes Herries had become the Finance Secretary of the Treasury,499 and George worried what his Treasury colleagues would think when he [George] was passed over as the latter’s private secretary.500 Clearly they knew of Herries’s protection of George, but not of

494 G to M, 17 January 1823, Fisher. George mentions another letter of 14 January (missing) in which he described these discussions.
495 G to W, 22 January 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 18/6.
496 Herries was appointed financial secretary to the Treasury, and at a by-election the same month became the member for Harwich as a colleague of Canning.
497 Francis Nathaniel Conyngham (1797-1876), Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1823-1826. There were two under-secretaries of State, the administrative and the parliamentary. The former carried out the serious work of the office, while the latter post was often little more than a sinecure, as was certainly the case here.
498 G to W, 22 January 1923, PM 94/143/1 – 18/6.
499 Officially known as the Junior Secretary (T 29/218 p. 77, in Sainty, p. 132). At the time, Herries was a member of a parliamentary commission enquiring into the revolutions in Spain, Portugal and Naples, which gave him ‘more business than he ever had in his life’, George wrote to his father (G to W, 9 January 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 18/4).
500 G to W, 27 January 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 18/7.
Canning's. George wrote to his mother that another person who was 'in a worry' about what was to happen to him as a result of the changes was John Backhouse, Canning's former private secretary.501

Canning finally found time to attend to his protégé's case after the February administrative changes, moving him on 10 February to the Foreign Office, and making him his deputy assistant private secretary.502 His chief private secretary was his nephew, Lord George Bentinck. The precise nature of George's previous relationship to Canning (since his return from Lisbon) remains rather vague and perhaps secretive, if George's Treasury colleagues had remained ignorant of it. Judging from the Chinnery correspondence, it appears to have been restricted to serving Canning during vacations on the Continent. Now Canning arranged with Liverpool (as Prime Minister and first lord of the Treasury) and Charles Arbuthnot (as Secretary of Treasury)503 for George to obtain 'indefinite leave of absence' from the Treasury.504 George explained to his mother that Canning would not allow him to relinquish altogether his Treasury post: 'My hold there he would not allow me to give up, and this arrangement is therefore after all to be considered as of a temporary nature, but perhaps, as a prelude to something better.'505 Thus George was, in effect, holding two situations, one in Treasury and one in the Foreign Office, with his salary being drawn in the name of Canning's new private secretary, Lord George Bentinck. His discomfort in this ambiguous position is evident from a remark to his mother about his salary: 'As to salary I should tell you that it is made over to me as the acting P.S. though drawn for in Ld G.B.'s name. There is an advantage perhaps in this — that no observations can be made in the H° of Commons or elsewhere by ill-natured persons as to my holding two offices'.506 A letter from Britain's minister in Naples, William Richard Hamilton, congratulates George on 'having exchanged the drudgery of 2 + 2 making 4 — for bearing an active share in regulating the affairs of Europe as your present Situation gives you.' As the letter makes clear, George's new situation was not a promotion in terms of salary increase, rather the reverse. Hamilton writes: '[...] I conclude you have not yet given up the hold you had,

501 G to M, 31 January 1823, Fisher. Backhouse was given a permanent position in the Foreign Office.
502 G to W, 8 February 1823, Fisher.
503 On 7 February Charles Arbuthnot was removed, at his desire, from this position (T 29/100 p. 166, in Sainty, p. 110) to that of First Commissioner of Woods and Forests.
504 G to M, 10 February 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/3.
505 Ibid.
506 G to M, 6 July 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/17.
on a more profitable one [situation] – as these are not times to sacrifice beef & mutton to vain honor [...] Europe is just now in a State to keep you pretty warmly employed & I should think will keep so for some time: so that you need not look forward for a year or two to the luxuries of a Sinecure."

George’s long wait for confirmation of a situation was not surprising given the Franco-Spanish crisis that was occupying Canning at the time. His onerous duties as Foreign Secretary had caused him to give up his seat of Liverpool, taking on instead the less demanding representation of Harwich. Canning had stepped into the Foreign Secretary’s shoes just before the meeting of the Neo-Holy Alliance Powers at the Congress of Verona (November 1822) when relations between France and Spain were becoming extremely strained. At a time when many parts of Europe (Spain, Portugal and Naples) were revolting against the old monarchical system rigidly re-enforced since the fall of Napoleon in 1815, the Neo-Holy Alliance between Russia, Prussia, Austria, France and England aimed to maintain the royal status quo. The meeting of the European Powers in Verona in November 1822, the last congress of its kind, had the effect of causing a crack in the union between France and the other Powers, and especially between France and Britain. France, feeling Bourbon absolutism threatened by the revolutionary movement in Spain, had amassed 100,000 troops along the Spanish border in a blatant show of aggression. Ostensibly created to protect France against a yellow fever outbreak in Spain, this ‘Corps sanitaire’, now re-named the ‘Corps d’Observation’, was in reality more concerned with the spread of revolution than the spread of disease. Confirmation of France’s aggressive intentions came on 28 January 1823, with Louis XVIII’s inflammatory opening speech to the two French Chambres, claiming that France would come to the aid of a brother Bourbon to re-establish the doctrine of Legitimacy in Spain. Even Louis’s own royalist Ministers thought his declaration too strong. Canning summoned the French ambassador in London, and issued a strong protest. On 30 January George wrote to his father that he had a copy of the King of France’s speech, and in reply to a question of his father’s, opined that England’s stance would be pacific, but that having no access to any reliable information

507 William Hamilton to George Chinnery, 16 July 1823, Fisher.
on the question, he begged his father to be patient: 'A few days must shew how the Cabinet here propose acting [...]'

William Chinnery, now established in a promising trading partnership with Joseph Cary in Le Havre (trading in spices, tea, coffee and sugar from the East and in champagne and other wines from France), was anxious about the ramifications that war would have on his commerce, particularly if Franco-British relations worsened. As a private secretary to Britain’s Foreign Minister, George was able to supply his father with reliable inside information on Britain’s position vis-à-vis France. William, for his part, was able to supply George with some snippets of local information from France which were gleaned from his business contacts and which might interest Canning. For example, in mid-January George had informed Canning of ‘Gen. Benard’s inspection of Cuba’ in case the intelligence, which he cited ‘as coming from a correspondent at Havre’, might ‘throw light on the ulterior designs of America’. In early February, George drew up for his father (in Italian, for security’s sake) a six-point summary of Britain’s foreign policy as it stood at that time. The memorandum or, as George called it, ‘my Italian scrap’, was sent, he wrote cryptically, through ‘C.R.’

C.R.[ochay] appears to have been William’s commercial agent in London, whom George kept up to date with the latest British intelligence for the benefit of his father. Rochay may have been a minor official of the French legation in London. The only information given about him in the letters is that he ‘was quartered’ at the London Coffee House on Ludgate Hill. George wrote on 6 February (immediately before his transfer to the Foreign Office) that as a result of Rochay’s coming to him at Montagu Street and pressing him for information, he had spent an entire afternoon at the Foreign Office trying to find out the latest British policies. Once he had been transferred to the Foreign Office, keeping Rochay informed of political events was comparatively

509 G to W, 30 January 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 18/8.
511 G to W, 15 January 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 18/5. The United States had already arrived at a de facto recognition of the South American States, and Canning was worried about a possible American occupation of Cuba, in which case Britain’s trade with Jamaica would be adversely affected (see Rolo, op. cit., p. 224).
512 George Chinnery’s Memorandum (in Italian), c. 1823, Fisher. In George’s letter to William of 8 February (Fisher), he told his father he had sent three such memoranda. The other two are missing. In George’s letter to William of 13 February, 1823 (Fisher), he mentions his father’s acknowledgement of ‘my Italian scrap’.
513 G to W, 13 February 1823, Fisher.
514 G to W, 6 February 1823, Fisher.
easy. But he had to be careful not to be caught giving away British secrets to the French, and wrote on 3 March to his father that he had been keeping Rochay secretly informed, but dared not even initial his notes! The gist of the memorandum that George sent to his father was:

1. Our government did not want to involve itself in the internal disputes of other countries at the Congress [of Verona].
2. We have done all in our power to prevent war between S[pain] & F[rance] — as a friendly gesture only, with no promise of maintaining neutrality.
3. We have reason to hope that peace will continue between R[ussia] & T[urkey] in Eastern Europe.
4. We have received new assurances from all the Allied Powers of good faith and friendly intentions.
5. S[pain] made a pact to pay what it owed to the British Merchants.
6. New articles have been signed between S[pain], H[olland] & E[ngland] to take stronger measures against the sale of slaves.

Canning did all he could to bring about a rapprochement between France and Spain, making a last-ditch attempt on 9 February 1823 to prevent hostilities, as a private letter written from Canning to Sir William A’Court, Britain’s trusted envoy in Madrid, shows. George kept [his version of] a copy of this private letter. On the cover of the letter George wrote: ‘Policy of the British Cabinet in regard to the invasion of Spain by France, February 1823’. He prefaced his copy with the following words:

Some day or other I am satisfied that people will affect to doubt whether England did all she could to prevent hostilities between France and Constitutional Spain —

To set this matter at rest I keep a memorandum of a private Letter which in my capacity of Private Secretary I have just written over for Mr Canning’s signature.

Indeed, having just written it, I think I can sufficiently trust my memory to say that what follows amounts to a memorandum verbatim —

515 Ibid.
516 G to W, 3 March 1823, Fisher.
517 Canning had not ruled out the possibility of coming to Spain’s aid if France showed signs of threatening Portugal, or interfering in the Spanish South American colonies.
518 Alexander of Russia had been threatening to march on Constantinople.
519 Pirates off the coast of Cuba (a Spanish colony) had been preying on British merchant ships, and Britain demanded compensation from the Spanish Government.
The letter is addressed to Sir William A’Court:

My dear Sir,

This insecurity of the communications is a sad drawback upon our correspondence. In one word, time is precious — Let the Spaniards send us some reasonable proposal; such as may put France in the wrong, if she refuses to entertain it — Why not, that Spain will remodel her constitution, provided that France will withdraw her Army of Observation? — or will engage solemnly to keep it within her own frontiers, & not to foment civil war in Spain?

But to make the latter demands without any corresponding condition will never do — There is time for one such communication before the French begin hostilities, but for no more. Urge the Spanish Minister therefore to seize the present moment —

Very sincerely yours

G.C.

(Copy of George Chinnery’s version of a letter from George Canning to William A’Court, 9 February 1823, Fisher)

The first sentence confirms the well known fact that official dispatches were more often than not opened by spies along the route. Ministers expected it, and were therefore constrained to mind their words in such letters. The sums of money that governments spent on spying activities were substantial, especially in times of war, as testified by a reply by George to a remark of his father’s. George wrote: ‘You rather surprize me by stating that the Gov [ ... ] I can only account for it by the secret service paym in Spain having been exorbitant.’ The Chinnerys were likewise aware of the risk of their letters being intercepted, and for this reason, if discussing secret or sensitive matters, often rendered their letters to and from France into Italian, as George did with the above memorandum to his father.

The Spanish did not ‘seize the present moment’ and offer to remodel their constitution, even though, as Temperley notes, most Spaniards agreed it needed changing and was unworkable in its present form. The revolutionaries’ demand that

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520 What appears to be an official dispatch of the same date is cited in Temperley, op. cit., p. 81.
521 G to M, 29 April 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/14.
522 Temperley, op. cit., pp. 76-77.
King Ferdinand VII accept the constitution of 1812. Temperley describes as ‘an experiment in the wildest democracy’, and was not a measure that Canning favoured, even though he approved of constitutional reforms generally in Europe’s revolting nations. George wrote to his father on 13 February that England was still doing everything possible to prevent war both in Paris and Madrid, and that ‘if Sp. would make any modification of her constitution & give F[d Ferdinand] a semblance of royal dignity, France would give up war.’ But it was too late. Spain had already withdrawn her ambassador from Paris, in response to Russia, Prussia and Austria withdrawing theirs from Madrid, and Canning’s overtures to both the Spanish Constitutional party and to the French moderates failed. On 3 March George wrote to his father: ‘After M. de Ch.’s speech [Chateaubriand, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs], there is no possibility of avoiding blows’, and to his mother on the 14th: ‘our latest tidings induce me to think that the crisis is inevitable.’ And so it proved to be. On 6 April the French forces under the command of the Duc d’Angoulême crossed into Spain and hostilities began. Nevertheless, George was able to reassure his mother in Paris, who worried about the war interrupting their correspondence, that whatever the outcome of ‘pending political contests the communication between Fr. & Eng[d] will continue uninterrupted.

Two days later George wrote to his mother that he was reading the King of France’s pamphlet (presumably a version of the speech that the latter had delivered on 28 January), which was ‘a singular publication to have appeared in a moment of such political fever!’, but ‘in spite of the fever, we are very quiet here.’ The French forces in Spain met little opposition from the revolutionaries, with George writing on 29 April: ‘We are told that the Royalist party prevails, & that the Constit.[t] in Spain make but a bad fight of it.’ Canning made two famous speeches in the House of Commons on

523 A constitution drawn up in Cadiz for adoption by Spain at the end of the Peninsula Wars. This was the constitution favoured by the revolutionaries. It abolished aristocratic privileges, established a unicameral legislature with general control over legislation, and stripped the King of all real power.
524 Temperley, op. cit., p. 10.
525 G to W, 13 February 1823, Fisher.
526 François-René, vicomte de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), better known as a writer, had been the French ambassador to London, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1822-1824.
527 G to W, 3 March 1823, Fisher.
528 G to M, 14 March 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/4.
529 Ibid.
530 G to M, 8 April 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/9.
531 G to M, 29 April 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/14.
14th and 30th April, defending his foreign policy, which had come under increasing attack from opposition members. On Tuesday 15 April George wrote to Margaret: ‘The H' of C. was so overfull yesterday, that getting under the gallery even by a stretch of favour was impossible – but M.C.'s exposé of our For. Policy which had long been fixed for the 14th gave universal satisfaction – at least to all impartial members – & the papers which he had on the Table will I suppose be printed on your side of the Channel, in spite of all efforts to prevent the publication.’

Margaret had heard reports of Canning’s ‘peremptory answer to Brougham’ and approved of his ‘publick & political sentiments’. On 2 May George wrote of Canning’s triumph over his critics: ‘The Papers will tell you of M.C.’s triumph on Wed’y night. A motion of Mr M’Donald’s censuring the Course of Foreign Policy pursued by Min’y [Ministry] was debated three successive nights, & finally rejected by a majority of 352. As Sec’y of S.[Secretary of State] for For. Affairs it places M.C. on the highest ground.’

In spite of the prestige and the insight into foreign affairs that it afforded, George had reservations about his present post. ‘It would be absurd to encourage or even to allow a distaste for publick business till after a longer trial,’ he wrote to his mother, ‘but it is impossible to acquire a predilection in it’s favour, till it carries with it some of those agrémens which are really worth purchasing at the expense of part of one’s free agency: a mere trifling addition of salary, though very well in it’s way would not, in the long run, be an adequate compensation.’

It was the long hours and the loss of most of his leisure time that was the main drawback. Judging by his request to his father to send some paté in his French food parcels because it could be eaten quickly in the office, he did not even have time for proper meals. He also wrote to his mother that he would like to move out of the house in Montagu Street, as it was too far from the Foreign Office at Downing Street, and prevented him from making use of the University Club, which ‘to a Batchelor [...] is a great resource supplying him with society

532 G to M, 15 April [1823], PM 94/143/1 – 12/2.
533 Henry Peter Brougham, Baron Brougham and Vaux (1778-1868), barrister and statesman, was one of the founders of the Edinburgh Review. He was brash, pushy and domineering, but he was also able and sharp-witted. He was Queen Caroline’s counsel during her trial.
534 G to M, 29 April 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/14. On 23 April Brougham had made a violent attack on Canning for refusing to press the Catholic claims.
535 G to M, 2 May 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/15.
536 G to M, 26 July 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/18.
537 The tenants having vacated the house in June 1821, George had moved back in.
whenever he pleases without the necessity of hunting for it in drawing rooms.\footnote{G to M, 7 [April 1823], PM 94/143/1 − 12/8.} In the summer of 1823 he had just three weeks leave, which he spent with his Aunt Marsh’s family at Orpington, afterwards accompanying them to Brighton. His mother and Viotti had meanwhile moved to Châtillon for the summer.

When George became Canning’s private secretary, he received as many requests for favours from friends as he had when he was in the Treasury. Since 1819 George had been helping a friend of Viotti, General Edme-Etienne Desfoumeaux\footnote{Edme-Etienne Borne-Desfoumeaux (1767-1849), French general who distinguished himself in battles in Santo Domingo in 1792 and 1797, soon after becoming Governor of Guadeloupe. At the Restoration he received the Legion d’honneur. There is a lot of discussion of his affairs in Chinnery letters, as well as letters from him and from his son (who was at Mortlake Military Academy in England) in the Powerhouse and Fisher collections.} in his application for compensation from the British Government for losses incurred by his wife’s father at the time the French retook Guadeloupe from the English in 1794. The General’s father-in-law, who had helped the British retreat, died in a French gaol and his widow claimed £25,000 in compensation for the loss of goods and slaves taken at the time by the British troops.\footnote{The full details of the affair are given by Margaret in her letter to William of 25 February 1819 (PM 94/143/1 − 17/45).} In 1825 the British Treasury agreed to pay compensation of £20,000, but shortly after retracted the offer. On 18 April 1823 George wrote to Margaret with instructions for Viotti:

> Amico must explain to the General [...] that M. de Marcellus [French ambassador in London] has not neglected his affair, — far from it — but that publick business of the deepest interest on which he has had occasion to see M.C.[anning] has necessarily put individual cases rather out of sight for the present. So much for Mons. de M.[arcellus] & F.O.[Foreign Office] — but that after all son affaire releve du dep\^1 des finances, & that I have requested Planta [Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs]\footnote{Joseph Planta (1787-1847) had been a clerk in the Foreign Office since 1807. In 1809 Canning made him a precis writer, and his services were equally valued by Castlereagh, whom he accompanied to Paris in 1814 and Vienna in 1815. In 1817 he was made administrative Under-Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs, the first clerk to have risen to such heights (see Webster, The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1815-1822, op. cit., pp. 36-37). Temperley (op. cit., p. 260) describes him as ‘an excellent permanent official, a prudent diplomat, a kindly and humorous man, and an old and devoted friend of his master [Canning].’} this morning to do his best towards promoting & producing an early decision — I have from the first felt sure & always said that M.C. could do little more than refer the matter to the T\^2 [Treasury] for it is not a F.O. question.

(G to M, 18 April 1823, PM 94/143/1 − 12/12)
He went on to ask Viotti to ‘discourage all thoughts of the General’s coming to Eng’ as it would not assist his cause and George would not have time to see him. Proving how little time George had to himself, he wrote for Viotti’s benefit: ‘Amico should also say to the Gen’ that if I do not write to him myself it is because I really have no spare moments, & that considering Amico as an “autre moi-même” I request him to be my substitute.’

There was also Viotti’s own ‘affaire’ that George had to pursue. It was an old debt of £930 owed to Viotti by his Portuguese friend Dom Lourenço da Lima, an inveterate gambler. He had paid Viotti an instalment of the debt in Paris in 1819 but nothing since his return to Portugal the same year. The channel that George used to follow up this matter was the former Portuguese ambassador in London and Chinnery friend, the Marquis de Palmella. In 1821 George wrote to his mother in Paris that his negociation with Lima was ‘in suspense’, but that as King John VI’s return from Brazil was imminent, and that as Palmella would be his Prime Minister at Lisbon, he would wait until then to ‘attack him [Lima] vigorously’.

George wrote again concerning this matter in August 1823:

You are quite right about Palmella; I had not intended to ask for the letter till I was settled again in London, for I shall then accompany Amico’s application with a few lines from myself mentioning the situation which I hold & requesting Palmella to send his answer through me. My despatch moreover shall be transmitted under cover to Sir Edward Thornton our Envoy at Lisbon. It will be a last Appeal — the last I mean attended with much hope, but I would never cease urging the family to do their duty so long as Lima lives.

(G to M, 11 August 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/19)

Copies of both letters (from Viotti to Lima and from George to Palmella) are in the Powerhouse collection.
Among other private petitioners for Canning's favour via George was a certain 'B. D'Aubany',\textsuperscript{547} who asked George to intervene on behalf of two of his friends. The first was a surgeon by the name of West, whom Canning had known in Portugal, and who wished to succeed Macgregor as Surgeon to the Royal Nobility Asylum at Chelsea. The second was Sir George Elder, who had also known Canning in Portugal, and who sought employment for his thirteen-year-old nephew, Benjamin Elder, in the East India's Civil Service.\textsuperscript{548} There was also George Villiers,\textsuperscript{549} who asked for and obtained an offer of "the Clerkship of the Securities at the Excise", through George's connection with Canning\textsuperscript{550}, but then refused the offer. George also interceded on behalf of family and friends. Francis G. Smyth, a close Chinnery family friend since 1811, had availed himself of George's good offices with the Dean of Christ Church to get his son accepted into Christ Church College; and George had also helped his own cousin Matilda, whose husband\textsuperscript{551} he recommended to the new Governor-General of Bengal, Lord Amherst,\textsuperscript{552} who wrote from Saltram that would be happy, for George's sake, to 'advance Capt Hodgson's interest' whenever possible, but that for the moment he was unable to do anything.\textsuperscript{553} George had written with the same request to the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces at Madras, as a result of which Hodgson had obtained a promotion to the rank of Captain.\textsuperscript{554}

It had been made clear to George in February 1823 that his private secretaryship with Canning was temporary, until some better post could be found. It was not until September that an opportunity presented itself. On 19 September George wrote to his mother that he would not be Canning's deputy private secretary for much longer. He had just been to Gloucester Lodge where he had remained with Canning until the latter set off with Lord Liverpool for a meeting with the King at Windsor. George gained the impression that Canning and Liverpool may have discussed his case in the carriage, and

\textsuperscript{547} It is impossible to ascertain the spelling of this name, owing to the illegible signature. There are many Daubenys listed in the \textit{Alumni Oxonienses}, but none with the initial 'B'. Perhaps he was a relative of Charles Giles Daubeny (1795-1867), a contemporary of George at Oxford and a doctor.

\textsuperscript{548} B. D'Aubany to George Chinnery, 8 May 1820, Fisher.

\textsuperscript{549} George William Villiers, fourth Earl of Clarendon and fourth Baron Hyde (1800-1870). In 1823 he was appointed a Commissioner of Customs.

\textsuperscript{550} George Chinnery to George Villiers (copy), 7 October 1823, Fisher, and George Villiers to George Chinnery, 8 October 1823, Fisher.

\textsuperscript{551} Matilda Chinnery married Samuel Iront Hodgson on 28 September 1822 (\textit{Notes and Queries}, 1927, vol. 152, p. 76). See also Introduction, p. 25, note 69.

\textsuperscript{552} William Pitt Amherst, second Baron Amherst (1773-1857), Governor-General of Bengal, 1822-28.

\textsuperscript{553} Amherst to George Chinnery, 8 March 1823, Fisher.
that Lord Liverpool was kindly disposed towards him. The problem of George’s straddling two Government departments was a difficult one to overcome. Liverpool told him that ‘no retired allowance could be obtained from the Treasury’ if he left it now. This meant that George would have to either resign, getting nothing for past services, and link his fate to Canning’s, or remain attached to the Treasury for the sake of a reliable income. George had not ceased reiterating to Canning his yearning for a diplomatic career, but Canning was solicitous for George’s financial security, pointing out to him that to give up the permanency of office at home to accept a minor secretarialship of legation abroad would be a great risk, especially as he had his mother to support.\(^{555}\) George was embarrassed to admit that, in spite of his family’s misfortunes, his mother remained financially independent. He told his mother that it was fortunate that at that moment the arrival of ‘a visitor prevented us from entering upon the subject, & it would perhaps not have been easy to deal with it properly without a little preparation.’\(^{556}\)

The post that Canning had in mind for George was British Commissioner of Claims in Madrid. One of the outcomes of the Congress of Verona was an undertaking by Spain to pay compensation to British merchants whose ships had been plundered by South American pirates in Spanish waters off the coast of Cuba.\(^{557}\) Many of these ships had been attacked with the knowing connivance of Spain, and one had even been captured by a royal Spanish privateer, and condemned by the courts of Porto Rico.\(^{558}\) As a result of Sir William A’Court’s effective diplomacy in Madrid, where he had been sent by Canning at the end of 1822, Spain now agreed to co-operate in redressing the depredations suffered by the British traders, and to call a Convention to settle differences. A joint Anglo-Spanish Commission was set up to consider the claims, as

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554 Reported in G to M, 10 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/22.
555 As Canning had to support his own mother, a former actress of limited means, he was keenly aware of George’s duties in this respect.
556 G to M, 19 September 1823, Fisher. Before fleeing England William had clearly managed to secrete into a private bank account enough funds for Margaret’s future upkeep. It is evident from the letters that Margaret’s lifestyle was little diminished by William’s dismissal, and that she had sufficient capital for purchasing property and for investing in funds both in London and Paris. Conner, op. cit., p. 22, n31, cites a Farington Diary entry of 18 July 1812 as his source for a remark that Margaret was left sufficient income by William to live comfortably after his flight (not to be found in the 1922-28 edition of the Diary).
557 See Temperley, op. cit., p. 106.
558 See Rolfe, op. cit., p. 224.
soon as Ferdinand was restored to his throne in Madrid.\textsuperscript{559} It was to consist of two British and two Spanish Commissioners in London, and one British Commissioner and his Spanish counterpart in Madrid. The Madrid-based branch was established under the 7th Article\textsuperscript{560} of the Convention.

Still showing a regard for George's best interests, Canning had Joseph Planta write to George Harrison at the Treasury, to enquire if it would be possible for George to retain his post at Treasury while employed in the commissionship. The letter, dated 11 November, requests Harrison to enquire of ‘the Lords Commissioners of H.M. Treasury’ if ‘Mr Chinnery’s services in their Lordships’ Department can be conveniently dispensed with, for a time, on his resigning such a proportion of his Salary as shall ensure the performance by a competent substitute, during his absence’.\textsuperscript{561} The answer was negative. The Treasury minute conveyed to Planta stated that the Lords of the Treasury could not allow Mr Chinnery extended leave of absence, as it would create ‘a very inconvenient Precedent.’ They therefore proposed allowing him to quit his present situation, with the condition that once the business in Spain was concluded, he might return to his post ‘with the benefit of any Improvement of rank or Income in the office which would have accrued to him in the mean time’.\textsuperscript{562} Thus was George forced, in spite of Canning's best attempts to prevent it, to resign from the Treasury.

From a colleague at the Treasury, Henry William Vincent,\textsuperscript{563} George received a letter wishing him well in his new posting, and complaining of the tedium of his own employment. Such complaints from well-educated young men in civil service situations occur with regular frequency throughout the Chinnery letters. Those who had been led by their liberal education into the higher realms of poetic imagination and had developed an appreciation of the beauties of literature, felt stultified by the trivial nature of their duties. Henry William Vincent held a post in the Treasury Department of Customs and Excise, and detested his daily routine as much as George had detested his

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\bibitem{559} The French invasion had met no real opposition from the revolutionaries, and after being blockaded in Cadiz, Ferdinand was returned to power towards the end of 1823. The Commission was established on 11 October 1823 (See George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 21 April 1824, Fisher).
\bibitem{560} George Chinnery refers to himself and his colleagues in Madrid as ‘we gentlemen of the 7th Article’, (George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 4 August 1824, Fisher).
\bibitem{561} Joseph Planta to George Harrison, 11 November 1823, Fisher.
\bibitem{562} 'Copy of the Treasury Minute dated 26 day of November 1823,' Fisher. This minute, together with the previous letter, was forwarded to George by Joseph Planta, under instructions from ‘Mr Secretary Canning’ (Joseph Planta to George Chinnery, 11 December 1823, Fisher).
\bibitem{563} Henry William Vincent, Assistant Clerk in Treasury, March 1823 - August 1824 (T 29/219 p. 151, in Sainty, p. 156).
\end{thebibliography}
in the Minute Office. He wrote that he hoped that George’s interests would be furthered by his new appointment. ‘Me’, he wrote, ‘you leave buried in Customs, Excise & the rubbish of the dregs of business – one feels that one’s nobler intellect lies dormant under this mass of inert occupation.’ Continuing in the same vein, he said that he felt ‘pent in’ by those pettinesses of subordinate office, which Burke speaks of as “the Chinese Shoe of the mind” and which Montesquieu characterizes in still more contemptuous terms!\(^{564}\)

There is another letter from William Vincent, this time written in an official capacity. On the outside of the letter is the note: ‘Relative to Mr Chinnery’s Salary when to cease as Clerk in the Treasury & when to commence as Commissr under the Spanish Convention.’\(^{565}\) Vincent requests information from Canning ‘in order that it may be known on what principle the Salary Warrant in the Revenue Room is to be made out as far as you are concerned’.\(^{566}\) An undated memorandum, entitled ‘Proposed Estab of the Commission under the Convention with Spain, for the Adjustment of British Claims upon the Span. Govt’, provides him with the information requested. It lists all the positions to be filled by British officials appointed to take part in the commissionship, and includes their Spanish counterparts.\(^{567}\) In London there were to be two British commissioners, both on a salary of £1,500, two Spanish commissioners, a British arbitrator (a Crown lawyer) and a Spanish arbitrator (the Spanish envoy), a secretary with a salary of £600, a clerk on a salary of £400, and four other clerks on diminishing salaries. Included in the costs was a messenger (£80), the rent of an office and ‘contingent expenses’. The headquarters of the Commission was established in the Manchester Buildings, London.

At Madrid there was provision made for one British commissioner (George Chinnery) on a salary of £1,200, one Spanish commissioner, a secretary on a salary of £500, and an assistant on a salary of £250. The amount allowed for ‘contingent expenses’ is left blank, as these were to be determined on arrival at Madrid. An additional allowance for ‘outfitting’ in London was set at £200. Canning was not over-

\(^{564}\) Henry William Vincent to George Chinnery, 26 November 1823, Fisher. In his \textit{Lettres Persanes} Montesquieu wrote: ‘Nous avons une maxime en France [...] c’est de n’élever jamais les officiers dont la patience a langui dans les emplois subalternes. Nous les regardons comme des gens dont l’esprit s’est rétréci dans les détails, et qui, par habitude des petites choses, sont devenus incapables des plus grandes’ (Lettre XLVIII, Usbek à Rhédi). I have been unable to locate Burke’s pithy quote.

\(^{565}\) Henry William Vincent to George Chinnery, 18 December 1823, Fisher.

\(^{566}\) \textit{Ibid.}\n
\(^{567}\) Henry William Vincent to George Chinnery, 26 November 1823, Fisher.
strict with George's contingent expenses in Madrid, as long as these were kept 'within bounds'. George's first claim, for the amount of £50 was submitted to Joseph Planta in February 1824, and was for 'Rent of Office & Purchase of articles of furniture for the Commission'.

This was approved, as was his second claim for £54/1/1, applied for on 5 July 1824, and approved on the 24th.

Before departing for Madrid George bought a sturdy office desk with a drawer that locked, invested £253/10 in a three percent bond, as a letter from his banker Drummond shows, and wrote a will. On 12 December George received a letter from Canning at Gloucester Lodge, stating the exact date of his departure:

All things maturely weighed, I find that I cannot part with you before January. There is no harm, however in letting Stapleton go on, with occasional inspection, while you attend to your own concerns next week.

The week after, (when I am out of Town) your aid will be necessary, as the Office will be a desert.

I shall be back on the 3d of January — & on the 5th you may really go.

G C.

(George Canning to George Chinnery, 12 December 1823, Fisher)

Stapleton, a twenty-three-year-old new Cambridge graduate, was George's understudy in the Foreign Office. He succeeded George as Canning's deputy assistant private secretary when George went to Madrid in January 1824, and in May 1824 succeeded Lord George Bentinck as Canning's private secretary 'en chef' when Bentinck left the Foreign Office on the death of his elder brother the Marquess of Titchfield. If what George told his father was true — that Stapleton was 'a natural son of our Lord Morley's ci-devant Boringdon, & one of our chief's great allies' he

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567 In Fisher collection.
568 Joseph Planta to George Chinnery, 9 March 1824, Fisher.
570 Mentioned in George's letter to Planta of 5 July 1824.
571 See A.B. Drummond to George Chinnery, 1 December 1823, Fisher, debiting him for the amount of £253.10 for a £300 bond.
572 See p. 761.
573 Augustus Granville Stapleton (1800-1880), biographer of George Canning and political pamphleteer, was educated at Rugby school and at Cambridge, taking his B.A. in 1823.
574 G to M, 13 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/26.
575 G to W, 2 December [1823], PM 94/143/1 – 18/9. John Parker, second Baron Boringdon and first Earl of Morley (1772-1840) was a staunch Canning supporter and personal friend.
probably owed his position in the Foreign Office to Canning’s close association with his father. The two secretaries worked arduous hours which extended over the Christmas break. While Canning was out of town the office had to be kept open by his subordinates. In the event, it was George alone who kept the office functioning, as Stapleton having hinted he would like to go to the country for Christmas, George had offered to stand in for him. George wrote, presumably to Joseph Planta, that ‘as he [Stapleton] is not yet in possession of the private key, he might be spared. I suggest this of my own accord so that Mr Canning, if he sees fit, might surprize Stapleton with an agreeable proposal.’ On the bottom of the same letter, scrawled in pencil, is Canning’s reply: ‘It is very kind and considerate in you. I will see about it – when my plans are fixed – which indeed I fear they are by Gout.’

During 1823 Canning had been almost solely occupied with the affairs of the Peninsula. While France held sway in Spain, England did not want to lose her grasp on Portugal. Having returned from Brazil in 1821, King John VI was restored to the throne in 1823 by a moderate royalist coup initiated by an army officer who feared that the French push for absolutism might reach into Portugal. The French would indeed have liked to hold Portugal as well as Spain, in spite of their promises to Canning not to infringe on Portuguese territory, and seemed close to getting their way at the end of 1823. After the military coup staged by John’s fanatical son Prince Miguel in May 1823, both the French and the British diplomats endeavoured to win the King over. As a result, three factions emerged in the struggle for power. The right-wing Dom Miguel led the first, the pro-French Subserra the second, and the pro-British Palmella, who had been Portuguese minister in London, the third. The Count Subserra was a former soldier who had fought on the French side during the Peninsula Wars, and was leader of a faction that was violently anti-British. Palmella, who had been made Foreign Minister in June 1823, gained the upper hand for a brief period, and called on the British for assistance. Canning sent a new envoy, Sir Edward Thornton, who had been in Brazil with King John, and was well-liked by him, and also a naval squadron. Beresford was

576 George Chinnery to [Joseph Planta] (copy), with reply from Canning, 16 December 1823, Fisher.
577 Manuel-Ignacio-Martins Corte-Real, count de Subserra, baron de Pamplona (1760-1832), Portuguese general and statesman. He fought in the Russian campaign of 1812 in the French army, remaining in France at the Restoration. He returned to Portugal in 1821, and was Minister for War and President of the Council of Ministers, 1821-23, then sent as ambassador to Spain, 1825-27.
recalled as an advisor. Most importantly – at least in the eyes of the King – he sent Sir George Nagler, bearing the Order of the Garter to be conferred on the King. France, vying strongly with Britain for John's favour, also intended bestowing honours on the King and his son Prince Miguel. But the impressionable King was easily won over by the more ostentatious English honours. Combined with the warships that had been sent, the investiture, Canning hoped, would sway the King in England's favour.

This somewhat farcical contest to win King John's favour is described in two letters from George's friend Augusto West (member of the British legation in Lisbon), dated 13 and 27 September 1823. In the first West wrote:

I really cannot tell you how pleased the King is with [...] the manner in which the Ships of War have been sent here and the manner in which you have sent out our friend Sir George Nagler – to invest His Majesty with the Order of the Garter.

The sensation has been general & the effect just what every good Englishman would wish – already the balance is decidedly in your favour and the [feeling?] is, England is the only country! – the King & Royal Family are delighted to have Sir Edward Thornton again but the King particularly so – His Majesty has an attachment toward Sir Edward.

The Army here is still in an unsettled state & the Prince a fine young man but unfortunately has no one to guide him – I know that His Majesty is most anxious about the Prince & the state of the Army, and I know that His Majesty is equally anxious to see Lord Beresford on this subject – Entre nous – the King has been anxiously expecting Lord Beresford & when his Lordship does arrive he will be most graciously received. The Public in general are really longing to see him — The time is now arrived that he may come here just as he or the Government of England pleases. — Palm is losing ground every day & so is his party —

The King is to be invested on the 18th as well as Prince Miguel with the French order of Espirito Santo. — The King hardly speaks of it — The Order of the Garter is His Majesty's Hobby.

(Augusto West to George Chinnery, 13 September 1823, Fisher)

In the second letter West notes the King's childish delight in the pomp and ceremony of the investiture of the Garter, and especially how the King's fancy was
taken by the full regalia of the Garter, which made the French Order, presented to the King and Prince Miguel a few days earlier, seem ‘so poor a thing’. West writes:

The investiture of the Garter took place on the 23rd. The King was amazingly pleased and satisfied – in truth no man could be more happy than His Majesty was on that day [...] The ceremony took place at the Aquida Palace at 2. o’clock – & the Court was most numerous, and splendidly dress’d – the whole arrangement of the Procession &c was most regular & the ceremony admirably manag’d [...] The Queen & princesses were highly gratified & so were [sic] every person present except Pn[amplona] & a few others.

(Augusto West to George Chinnery, 27 September 1823, Fisher)

On the cover of the second letter, penned after the ceremony had taken place, George has written: ‘Great delight of the K. of Portugal on being invested with the Garter’.

But the investiture could not compete with Subserra’s machinations, and it was not until this trouble-maker was dispatched to Madrid, and the French ambassador in Lisbon recalled to France, that Canning was able to have his way in Portugal. 579

578 There were nine insignia to the Order: the Garter, worn below the left knee, was a ribbon of dark blue velvet, edged and buckled with gold, and bearing the words Honi soit qui mal y pense; the Mantle of blue velvet; the Hood of crimson velvet; the Surcoat of crimson velvet lined with taffeta; the Hat of black velvet to which was attached a plume of white ostrich feathers; the Collar of gold; the George, of gold enamel, representing the figure of St George; the Badge (or Lesser George) of gold; the Star and the Ribbon.

579 See pp. 753-754.
The final years of George Chinnery’s life were spent in Spain. The period from early 1824 to his death in October 1825 is described in detail by an important series of letters from George in Madrid to his mother at Châtillon in France. Margaret’s side of the correspondence is missing, probably because George, from a long-cultivated habit of carefully preserving all personal correspondence, had unfailingly locked away all her letters bar one in a safe place which was not discovered at the time of his death. Two other smaller correspondences between the ambassador Sir William A’Court and George, and between the Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office Joseph Planta and George (both 1825) throw light on Anglo-Spanish relations at this time.

By 16 January George had still not departed for Madrid, as a letter from Algernon Percy, British secretary at the Paris embassy, shows. The letter specifies the route taken by George, which was the same as that of all the diplomatic staff travelling to Madrid, – overland through France, across the border at Bayonne, and thence via the Irun road. (The sea route to Bilboa was used for diplomatic baggage.) It was probably a very quick journey, as British envoys proceeding to new missions were expected to and George did – carry official dispatches, which had to be delivered in the shortest possible time. Frederick Lamb’s journey from Paris to Madrid in June 1825 took only six days. Percy informed George that he had written to Saint-Cricq (a French civil servant) about George’s ‘carriages & effects so that I trust you will find an easy entrance into H.M.C.M.’s States with regard to furthering your wishes to Sir Wm A’Court.’ The Irun road was infested with bandits. Percy wrote, not very encouragingly, that he supposed George would have heard of ‘Bosanquet’s safe

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580 See p. 759.
581 Algernon Percy (1779-1833), second son of Algernon Percy, second son of the first Duke of Northumberland. He was an official at the British embassy at Paris (1823-1825) and in 1825 was sent as minister plenipotentiary to Switzerland.
582 G to M, 8 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 - 12/61.
583 Frederick James Lamb, third Viscount Melbourne and Baron Beauvale (1782-1853), diplomat. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, he was minister at the court of the Two Sicilies (1812), secretary of legation at Vienna (1813), minister at Munich (1815-1820), and replaced Sir William A’Court as minister at Madrid on 18 February 1825. He remained there until 1827, when he was sent to Lisbon as ambassador.
584 G to M, 2 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 - 12/64.
585 Algernon Percy to George Chinnery, 16 January 1824, Fisher.
586 George Jacob Bosanquet (1791-1866), B.A. 1813, had been George’s contemporary at Christ Church. He had held the diplomatic post of attaché at Berlin (1815) and Paris (1817) before arriving in Madrid in early January 1824.
arrival without even being plundered'. Percy made clear the drawbacks of certain diplomatic missions, confessing to George that he would not like Bosanquet’s posting, and that he hoped ‘to step into Hill’s shoes when he quits his mission’,\textsuperscript{587} as the quiet would suit him better than ‘this eternal Chaos of pleasure profligacy & pen and ink’.\textsuperscript{588}

Assuming that George departed London shortly after receiving Percy’s letter, he would have arrived in Madrid around the end of January 1824, allowing eight to ten days for the journey. (The surviving series of Madrid letters from George to his mother only begins in May 1824, but there could be many reasons for the loss of the intervening letters, and the late start of the Madrid correspondence does not necessarily mean that George was not in the capital before that date.) George’s accommodation in Madrid consisted of rooms in a building for which he paid £26 a year rent. His travelling companion to Madrid, the young attaché Robert Dundas,\textsuperscript{589} had rooms in the same building, which he shared with the other British attaché George Bosanquet. The building was directly opposite Sir William A’Court’s house, where George was welcomed to dinner each night, even though he was not attached to the diplomatic mission. George did not have much in common with either Bosanquet, who liked to hunt, or Dundas, who, although he affected an interest in the classics, knew no Greek and only kept up a smattering of Latin ‘because his papa and mama advised it’.\textsuperscript{590} But for A’Court he had a warm regard, which was reciprocated, as the correspondence between the two in the Fisher collection attests. George told his mother: ‘With my chief I have every reason to be pleased; he is a kind & excellent person, & so is Lady a C.’\textsuperscript{591} George missed this considerate and like-minded friend – the only one he had in Madrid – when the latter left in the autumn of 1824 to take up his new appointment as ambassador to Portugal.

George arrived in Madrid only about a month before the death of Viotti at his mother’s rented abode at 5 Upper Berkeley Street, London.\textsuperscript{592} It was a time of enormous emotional and physical upheaval for Margaret, who had to manage the winding up of

\textsuperscript{587} William Hill, whom George had met in Genoa in 1819, was now British minister at Turin. Percy had been attached to his legation until April 1823. See G to M, 2 May 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/15.

\textsuperscript{588} Algernon Percy to George Chinnery, 16 January 1824, Fisher. Life at the British embassy in Paris was a mixture of hard work and a constant round of parties.

\textsuperscript{589} Robert Dundas, (1803-1886), third son of second Viscount Melville, Robert Saunders Dundas.

\textsuperscript{590} G to M, 15 July 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/30.

\textsuperscript{591} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{592} Margaret and Viotti had moved into these rented premises in December 1823, to free up the Montagu Street house for letting (see G to M, 31 January 1823, Fisher).
her own and Viotti's affairs all alone. She sold her Montagu Street house for what she considered to be a pittance, put most of the furniture and effects up for sale, and leaving the auction by Evans in the hands of the family friend, Sir Charles Flint,\(^{593}\) went to seek a few brief weeks of solace at Orpington, the home of her sister's family. Six weeks after Viotti's death she departed England. William, whose Le Havre business had foundered in October 1823, awaited her in Paris. The family's 'little chateau'\(^{594}\) at Châtileux was to be sold, and Margaret intended settling down with William in a small ground floor apartment with a garden in a quiet quartier of Paris – perhaps in Passy, Saint-Germain or the rue de Clichy – until George's return to London. After this she would once more alternate her abode between London and Paris. But the Châtileux property proved difficult to sell,\(^{595}\) and Margaret, having initially re-established herself there in the spring of 1824 in order to prepare the property for sale, ended up remaining for the next sixteen months, with William making the trek out to the country by horseback on week-ends, as he used to do in happier days to Gillwell.

In Madrid George's most pressing problem was to ascertain the best channel for sending mail. There is not a single one of the existing fifty-three letters that George sent to his mother from Madrid (May 1824 – October 1825) that does not mention mail arrangements. There were various ways of sending dispatches from Madrid to Paris, most of them reliable, but some faster than others. Then there were additional arrangements to be made for getting mail to London, to Châtileux, and to India (where Matilda Chinnery, now married to Captain Hodgson, was living). Sending letters out of Madrid was not as difficult as George had anticipated, thanks to the efficient weekly French estafette\(^{596}\) service. Originally established to serve the French army of occupation in Spain, it was fast, regular and reliable, and all the members of the different diplomatic corps at the court of Madrid used it to send both official and private dispatches. The estafette departed Madrid weekly on a Wednesday and took about six days to reach Paris. George wrote that the French estafette was 'the only regular & safe conveyance. There is no communication established between our Embassies at Paris &

\(^{593}\) Sir Charles William Flint was George's second godfather. There is a letter from him to William Chinnery dated 24 November [1820] in the Fisher collection.

\(^{594}\) G to M, 2 May 1823, PM 94/143/1 – 12/15.

\(^{595}\) It appears to have been sold in August 1825, but definitely before October 1825.

\(^{596}\) A mounted courier.
Madrid, to be depended upon'. As an example of the efficiency of the French communication services, George cited the speed with which they received news of the death of Louis XVIII on 23 August 1824: ‘poor Louis died on the Thursday morning at 4 o’clock, & at 6 o’cl. on the Evening of Saturday we were aware of it!’ The news came ‘by telegraph’ as far as Bayonne, & by Estafette the rest of the way.

The second channel for mail destined for London or Paris was the King’s messenger. This messenger, known to George as Vigo, was the official courier of the court of St James, and always passed through Paris on his way to Madrid and again on his return journey to London, making him a convenient carrier of letters and parcels to both cities. George used this service when it was operating, but it was far too irregular to be depended on, so that most of his dispatches to Canning were sent by the French estafette. As with the estafette, George used the King’s messenger to deliver private mail as well official dispatches. The third channel was by some private gentleman, generally a member of one of the foreign missions in Madrid, or of the French military, who was returning to Paris or to Northern Europe via Paris. In this case George was careful to restrict his dispatches to one only – to his mother. Whether the carrier was British or French, the whole diplomatic community availed itself of the service.

The least desirable channel for sending mail was the ordinary post, which was expensive, but which George had to resort to when the estafette service threatened to cease at the end of 1824. The ordinary post took about eleven days to Paris via London, and an additional day to reach Châtillon by the ‘petite poste’. George wrote: ‘The difference between Paris & London is I apprehend as nearly 24 hours as possible, so that you would hear from me by this common channel in 11 days or rather on the 12th being at Chat.’ which necessitates a petite-poste delivery after the general. The occasions when he used the general postal service were the only times George addressed his letters directly to Châtillon. On all other occasions he sent his mother’s and father’s letters either under cover to a certain M. Pontois at the Ministère des

597 G to M, 2 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/24.
598 A system of semaphore telegraphy launched by Claude Chappe in 1794 which continued into the mid-nineteenth century.
599 G to M, 26 September 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/40.
600 The postal service within Paris and its environs.
601 G to M; 3 January 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/49.
On her side, Margaret also made use of the weekly estafette service, sending her letters for George to Pontois at the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères under cover to George’s friend Mortier, a secretary at the French embassy in Madrid. George did not take this facility for granted, and to show his gratitude advised Margaret to put in one of her covers to Mortier a note addressed to Mortier himself to thank him for his kindness. When the French ambassador the Marquis de Talaru departed Madrid in August 1824, taking Mortier with him, George advised his mother to address her letters given to Pontois simply to ‘la Legation Britannique à Madrid’. The other alternative was to leave letters and parcels (as the latter could not be carried by estafette) with the ambassador Sir Charles Stuart at the British embassy in Paris to be collected by the King’s messenger on his way through. However, George did not recommend this means of conveyance, as ‘the opportunities do not average more than three or four in the half year or indeed in the whole year.’ Sometimes the messenger was kept back to await special instructions from Canning to one of his ministers abroad, or to announce changes in diplomatic arrangements. Moreover, if an official at the Paris embassy was careless, letters were left behind or mislaid and did not reach their destination until months later. Even official dispatches were occasionally left lying neglected at the chancellerie, and George’s friend in the Foreign Office in London, John Bidwell, was once obliged to write to Paris to make enquiries about a month-long dearth of mail in Madrid. On this occasion George received many letters at once from his mother at the end of October, the earliest being dated August.

It was only as a last resort that George advised his mother to put a single sheet ‘into the Boète aux lettres’, in which case William had to pay ‘the Paris part of the postage’ himself. Letters going by the common post from France to Spain had to be paid for by the sender as far as the border. The recipient bore the cost of postage from the border to the letter’s destination. In reverse, the same system applied. When George’s

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602 This was the favourite hotel of the English in Paris. The Chinnerys stayed there often and were clearly known to the proprietors.

603 The Marquis de Talaru (1773-1850), had the difficult task of appeasing the warring factions in Spain, following the capitulation of the Constitutionalists at Cadiz in October 1823. He did so even-handedly and negotiated with Spain several advantageous deals for France.


605 G to M, 20 October 1824, FM 94/143/1 – 12/42.
letter of 22 August missed the estafette, he managed to transfer the delivery cost from Margaret to the French Government by asking the French chargé d’affaires to send it under cover to Pontois ‘par la voie ordinaire, for I calculated that my gossip would otherwise not be worth the postage that it would cost you.’606 His present letter, he explained, would go ‘post paid to the frontier, in the usual manner – not the quickest but a sure channel.’607 The frontier town by which the mail for France passed was Bayonne, judging by a stamp on one of George’s letters. When the estafette service was curtailed at the end of January 1825, George came up with still more possible avenues for sending mail – in the packet of dispatches that Bosanquet sent ‘under flying seal to Ld Granville’608 [the new British ambassador at Paris]; and Couriers from the Austrian & Russian Legations whenever any happen to be sent & notice of their going is given to me.’609 It was rare for the Chinnerys, or any other well-to-do members of society, to pay for mail, whether in sending or receiving, as all had friends in Government who had franking privileges, friends in diplomatic circles who could use diplomatic bags for private mail, and friends who frequently travelled abroad who could carry letters and parcels. In those days, a person’s annual expenditure on postage was a fair indication of his social status – the lower the expenditure, the higher the status.

Letters for friends and relatives in England George sent under cover to Bidwell at the Foreign Office. Parcels for Matilda in India – made up at regular intervals of an accumulation of letters, along with items unprocurable in India that were purchased for her in Paris or London – were sent, via the British chancellerie at Paris, to the Chinnery friend at the India Board, Thomas Courtenay.610 The latter was able to frank these bulky dispatches and have them put straight into a Madras-bound East India Company ship. George was able to receive all India dispatches through the Foreign Office, sent under cover to Canning, who gave directions for their forwarding to Margaret in France. It is surprising to find an extremely busy Foreign Minister taking charge of mail for his subordinates in this way. When George was still in London he was frequently with

606 G to M, 25 August 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/71.
607 Ibid.
608 G to M, 6 January 1824 [recte 1825], PM 94/143/1 – 12/21. By this channel the letters were franked by Bosanquet in Madrid and sent with a seal attached but not closed, so that they could be read by Granville before he forwarded them to the Foreign Office in London.
609 G to M, 20 January 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/50.
610 Thomas Peregrine Courtenay (1782-1841), statesman and author. He was secretary to the commissioners for the affairs of India from 1812 to 1828.
Canning at Gloucester Lodge when mail arrived for him from Margaret, and Canning was able to hand it over to him personally.

In December 1824, when General Digeon,611 the commander of the French army of occupation, departed Madrid, the estafette threatened to cease altogether. On 3 January 1825 George wrote that he was surprised that the French chargé d’affaires continued to operate ‘with so tardy & imperfect a channel of corresp.’ and hoped ‘that a substitute for the Estaf. may be devised’. (The estafette was restored at the end of January 1825 as a fortnightly service.) His next comments illustrate that even though all members of the various diplomatic corps used each other’s services, the extent of distrust that existed between France and England at the time was considerable. They also prove that it was not an unusual occurrence for official dispatches to be opened and read by paid government couriers:

They talk of the members of the Corps dipl. clubbing [sharing] a Courier, — but it is an old project revived & not likely to succeed, because neither of the Corps being individually responsible for the man they would all mis-trust him, & all would be afraid of their despatches being read in transitu! [...] M. de Bois le Comte [French Chargé d’Affaires in Madrid] is permitted to send a special Courier of his own whenever circumstances require it. This convenience will indeed be but occasional, — only we hope that other Ministries at this Court, who hitherto availed themselves of the Estaf., may do as much & that among them opportunities of the kind may be tolerably frequent.

(G to M, 3 January 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/49)

For a diplomat in Madrid in 1824 daily life was nothing short of a drudgery. Entertainment was scarce and many basic household necessities were lacking. As Madrid was situated far from any sea port, all commodities had to be transported by mule as far as the capital and were therefore exorbitantly priced. Although daily commodities such as tea and coffee were good and plentiful, coming from the Spanish Philippine Company, sugar was dearer than in France or England. All toiletries were imported and therefore expensive and rare, and there was no shoe blacking to be had, except for what was sent from England especially for the legation to protect its members

611 Alexandre-Elisabeth-Michel, vicomte de Digeon (1771-1826), French general faithful to the Bourbons. He was a former aide-de-camp to the Comte d’Artois, and in 1824 commanded the French army of occupation in Spain.
from appearing ‘unpolished’ at Court.\textsuperscript{612} Lamp-cottons for lighting were also either scarce or unavailable, and George gratefully received six from his father in 1825.\textsuperscript{613} Because George’s mercantile mission was separate from the British diplomatic mission, he was often forgotten by his colleagues, when it came to dinners or Christmas festivities. Although Sir William A’Court had always opened his house to George, the younger members of the British legation were not so attentive or thoughtful. George Bosanquet, who became chargé d’affaires of the British legation after Sir William’s departure for Portugal, was, in spite of being the same age as George, an acquaintance rather than friend. George wrote in October 1824 that ‘our Chargé d’Aff. does not pretend to keep house. We each have a separate ménage.’\textsuperscript{614} In other words, George dined alone. On special occasions such as his mother’s birthday, he called his servants to join him at table. When the new British minister Frederick Lamb arrived, George was invited occasionally to share his table, but knew that he would never have the same ‘daily entrée at his house as in Sir W. à Court’s time.’\textsuperscript{615} He assured his mother that he did not mind being left alone so much, as he had plenty of reading matter. Just as he had done as an undergraduate in Oxford, George sent Margaret, who had complained that he spoke too little of himself in his letters, a plan de journée of a typical (summer) day in Madrid. It bears a remarkable resemblance to his Oxford daily plan, his early studious habits clearly having never left him. Sent in a letter dated 29 June 1824, before Sir William A’Court left Madrid, it may summarised thus:

\begin{itemize}
  \item 7 – 8: Rises, and spends one hour on his toilet.
  \item 8 – 8.30: ‘private devotions’.
  \item 8.30 – 10: Breakfast, during which he reads ‘some moral treatise’ such as an Epistle or some Horace in Latin.
  \item 10 – 11.30: Has a Spanish lesson, given by a private tutor. Reads or writes for the rest of the morning. Walks up and down the longest room for exercise.
  \item 3.30: Dresses and goes to Sir William A’Court’s for dinner.
  \item 6 – 7: Conversation or reading newspapers in the A’Courts’ drawing room.
  \item 7 – 9.30: The A’Courts go for a carriage ride, and George rides alone on horseback in the dark. (It is too hot to ride in daylight hours.)
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{612} G to M, 27 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/27.
\textsuperscript{613} G to M, 28 March 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/54.
\textsuperscript{614} G to M, 5 October 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/41.
9.30—11.30: Back in his apartment, he writes letters or continues his morning study of the New Testament and Doddridge’s *Family Expositor*.616
(G to M, 29 June 1824, PM 94/143/1—12/28)

Other reading matter that helped occupy George’s day was Pindar’s *Odes* in Greek, *Don Quixote* and *Gil Blas* in Spanish,617 and various English and French books sent by his mother, among which was Captain Medwin’s *Conversations of Lord Byron*, ‘Lord Chatham’s Life’ and ‘M. de la Borde’s Itineraire en Espagne’.618 The reading matter that was received by the British legation was restricted to a couple of newspapers for general information, *The Sun* and *The Morning Herald*, and the *London Gazette*, which detailed administrative arrangements. All were of intense interest to members of the British diplomatic corps, as the publications kept them in touch with British affairs.

George’s interest in intellectual pursuits took him outside the diplomatic community. In reply to Margaret’s taxing him with ‘bibliomania’, he assured her that it was necessary to have some kind of pursuit ‘to relieve the monotony of daily life here.’619 He was a regular visitor to the library of the Royal Academy of History of Madrid and in April 1825 he was made a ‘Corresponding Member’ of that institution. George’s other pursuits were collecting illuminated missals, rare editions of books, and prints representing classical works of art, with which he intended to compose a scrap-book, and which he posted off at regular intervals to his father in Paris.620 He was not the only British visitor at Madrid to take advantage of cheaply priced works of art to be found in Spain. The British ambassador Sir William A’Court, the consul general, General Meade,621 and the late British secretary of Claims in Madrid, Peter Tupper,622 were all collectors. General Meade, in congratulating Sir William on some advantageous purchases, once informed him, via George, that he had ‘recently enriched

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615 G to M, 27 June 1825, PM 94/143/1—12/68.
616 This was the same text he had used at Oxford.
617 The Spanish translation of Lesage’s work.
619 G to M, 8 May 1825, PM 94/143/1—12/61.
620 William Chinnery offered to help George in his hobby by scouring the quays and boulevards of Paris for ‘any scraps illustrative of antiquities (statues busts bassorelievos &c illustrated by engravings),’ (G to M, 4 April 1825, PM 94/143/1—12/55).
622 Peter Tupper, British consul at Barcelona, and secretary of Claims at Madrid, died of epilepsy in Madrid in April 1825.
his own collection with four undoubted Murillos at very moderate prices. A’Court supposed that Meade would drive a hard bargain when purchasing the late Tupper’s pictures from his heir. George, who had no doubt inherited from his artist uncle a discerning eye for art works, would have dearly loved to indulge such an interest, and wrote to A’Court ‘I am the greatest possible admirer of your hobby horse & only wish that I could afford to ride it in person."

As far as the musical arts were concerned, the only good music that George heard the whole time that he was at Madrid was at the home of Viotti’s friend the violinist Vaccari, who, having been sacked from the service of the unappreciative King, and replaced by ‘rivals who are unfit even to rosin his bow’, now found himself in unhappy circumstances. George spent a nostalgic morning with Vaccari and his family – to whom he had sent a print of Viotti from a bronze medallic portrait which had been executed in Paris shortly before his death – and described the visit for his mother:

I had brought with me three or four impressions of Amico’s Print, & I sent one two days ago, framed, with a corresponding letter in Spanish, to poor Vaccari, who is very low in health & spirits, so much so that his dejection nearly amounts to an alienation of intellect. His undeserved expulsion from the King’s service through the intrigues of rivals who are unfit even to rosin his bow, has been the cause of it: but my present & letter gave Mad. V. (who is just the same as when you knew her) sincere pleasure, & she immediately invited me to a private concert at their house given yesterday morning, where for the first time since I have been in Madrid I heard something like music. Vaccari himself though distressingly grave & silent plays as well as ever, & Mad. Vaccari’s brother, Bruneti, is a prodigy on the Violoncello, quite equal to Duport & Crosdill & very superior to Lin[d]ley. A female pupil of Vaccari’s executed one of

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623 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 10 April 1825, Fisher.
624 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 26 April 1825, Fisher. Peter Tupper’s heir was his brother, Thomas Tupper, who was appointed British consul at Riga in 1825.
625 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 10 April 1825, Fisher.
626 The print in question was taken from a bronze medallic portrait by Peuvrier, now in the Royal College of Music, London. In Madrid George had read about the portrait in one of the Paris newspapers: ‘I read in one of the Paris journals (with reference to a series of medallic portraits) “Le meme artiste, Peuvrier, s’occupe du portrait de Viotti, compose d’apres nature avant son depart pour Londres [late October 1823]. Il paroitra incessament chez l’auteur Rue Mazarine No. 26; et chez l’Eveque graveur, Palais Royal No. 121, passage Seraphin.” Doubtless my Father will be anxious to secure you a good impression before the die is worn’ (G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23).
627 Francesco Brunetti (b. 1770), son of Gaetano Brunetti (1744-1798), Italian composer and violinist who was resident in Spain, was a cellist in Ferdinand’s royal chamber orchestra, and his father’s successor as its director.
Amico's concerto's [sic] on the violin, & this was almost too much for me, those sounds not having vibrated on my ear since they last came from the "parent-lyre"—

Amico's print occupies the most distinguished place in Vaccari's drawing room, & though the poor man's finances are probably slender his habitation is excellent, being the rez de chaussee of the hotel of the Duque de Tamame's.

(G to M, 4 July 1825, PM 94/143/1 - 12/69)

Assemblies, balls, concerts and the other such entertainments that were part of diplomats' daily lives in London and Paris were scarce in Madrid. Moreover, King Ferdinand, unlike other European monarchs, contributed nothing 'to the amusement of the publick; & what we should elsewhere call the Society of the Metropolis.' When the feast day of Saint Louis was celebrated by the French legation in August 1824, it was an event worthy of note. George wrote to his mother of the fireworks that were let off on the Prado, and of the concert afterwards that was 'as bad as possible.' He described how, in order to 'partake of both entertainments, we went full-dressed to the Hotel of the French General in Chief', and how, earlier in the day there had been a dinner for a hundred to which were invited all the 'Chiefs of Missions[,] Ministers of State, the principal Nobility & Officers of high rank'. The most worthwhile part of the whole fête, George concluded, was the opportunity to get dressed up in 'my brown court suit; steel sword & silver buckles', a necessary but rarely worn raiment that had cost him a good deal of money.

At the beginning of George's stay in Madrid, the only society he frequented was that of the Duchess of Benevente, who held Sunday evening parties when she was not away at her country house. By September, the family of the Neapolitan ambassador Prince of Cassavo had arrived, and in the winter of 1824-25 George expected Madrid to be 'more sociable'. To the Duchess of Benevente's Sunday parties would be added the Monday evenings of the Portuguese ambassadress the Countess de Porto Santo; the Saturday parties of the Neapolitan ambassadress the Princess of Cassavo; and the yet-to-be-announced evening of the Comtesse de Brunetti, wife of the Austrian envoy. The Russian Minister's wife 'Mad. de Oubril' would add a fifth evening to the social week.
when she arrived in spring.\textsuperscript{631} But George hastened to add that these soirées were 'very unlike English or French Assemblies; and instead of apprehending crowds we have great difficulty in mustering a small number of persons.'\textsuperscript{632} Unfortunately, the social season had only just got under way when the Prince of Cassavo's house had to be closed out of respect for the death of the King of Naples. Now, George wrote, 'we all have to resume for His Sicilian Majesty the black coats which we had been wearing for poor Louis 18\textsuperscript{th}.'\textsuperscript{633} The mourning suit that was worn at court by the entire diplomatic corps for any royal death was another expensive item for George. On his arrival in Madrid the court had been in mourning for the death of the King of Sardinia, and in order to spare him the immediate expense of purchasing such a suit, Sir William A'Court had held back the date of his presentation to King Ferdinand.\textsuperscript{634} But it was clearly an indispensable item of court dress that George had occasion to don on two subsequent occasions.

The only 'splendid party' held in Madrid during George's two-year stay was a fête in June 1825:

\begin{quote}
Fêtes being ceremonies unknown in this country [...] the Madrid world was perfectly astounded on Friday last by one which the Portuguese Amb' gave in honour of his Sovereign's Saints-day, consisting of a ball & Supper & every body in Court-dresses. [...] My steel-sword had accordingly to figure for the fourth, & probably for the last time.
\end{quote}

(G to M, 27 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/68)

There was one other brief respite from 'this wretched dreary, barren, frightful, ignorant & uninteresting Capital',\textsuperscript{635} and that was the yearly transfer of the court from Madrid to Aranjuez for a month in spring. George spent five days there, and was agreeably surprised by the luxuriant vegetation of this resort compared to the barrenness of the capital. But the gardens and the improved social life hardly compensated for the expensive and uncomfortable exercise of moving. Because of the lack of any regular

\textsuperscript{631} None of these foreign diplomats have been identified.
\textsuperscript{632} G to M, 3 January 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/49. Proof of the crowds of lords and ladies who sought invitations to the British ambassador's ball in Paris is found in a seven-page poem in rhyming couplets penned by William Chinnery. Wickedly witty and perspicacious, it to be found in the Osborn collection, fd. 11, item 33.
\textsuperscript{633} G to M, 22 January [1825], PM 94/143/1 – 12/51.
\textsuperscript{634} George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 23 February 1824, Fisher.
posting service in Spain, travellers had to hire carriages and mules at great cost: 'Moving here is a great undertaking, – the carriages unwieldly, & mules to be hired for the expedition, whether long or short, at an exorbitant charge [...]'636 Once arrived, George's accommodation in the village consisted of nothing more than a room with a bed. He had not even space for a servant.

When Sir William A'Court departed for Lisbon there was a reshuffle of young attachés at the British legation. Robert Dundas, who was attached to Sir William, departed with him. There ensued a nine-month interval before the arrival of the new envoy Frederick Lamb in June 1825.637 Bosanquet, the most senior member of staff left at the British legation, therefore became chef de mission, and as such, was obliged to contribute to the cost of carrying out his duties in a manner befitting a representative of the British crown. It was fortunate, George wrote to his mother, that the 'temporary reign' had not fallen to him. His remarks underscore how important it was for aspiring diplomats to be well provided with independent means:

In the meantime it is better that the temporary reign should have fallen to B.'s lot than to mine; for a Chargé d'Aff. is not overabundantly well paid, and if he wishes to keep up the least of a representative character il faut mettre du sien. This B. can well afford for his father (whose eldest son he is) is an E.[ast] Ind.[ia] Director, nearly the doyen of that corporation, & a man of considerable property.638

(G to M, 3 November 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/44)

He considered it a little unfair that Bosanquet was made to bear the costs of keeping an attaché in the absence of a new envoy, but supposed that it did not matter much 'for B. draws on his father I suspect to a very liberal extent besides what Gov. allows him as Chargé d'Affaires.'639 After being chargé d'affaires Bosanquet could hardly descend again to the level of attaché when Lamb arrived, and George guessed that he would be promoted to secretary of legation, which was what happened.640

635 G to M, 21 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/58.
636 G to M, 28 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/63.
637 The reason given for the long delay was that Frederick Lamb had contracted whooping cough.
638 The Alumni Oxonienses gives as his father Jacob Bosanquet.
639 G to M, 9 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/56.
640 G to M, 20 October 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/42, and William A'Court to George Chinnery, 10 November 1824, Fisher.
There was an established hierarchy in the British foreign missions. The most junior members of staff were the attachés, followed by the secretary of legation, the chargé d’affaires (in the absence of a higher official), minister plenipotentiary, and lastly the fully accredited ambassador. There were two categories of attachés, paid and unpaid (or on half pay). While the former were serious in their career intentions, the latter were often the frivolous sons of wealthy noblemen who were friends of the envoy to whom they were attached, and who were often only interested in a gay social life in some foreign city. Sometimes they came only for the duration of their summer vacation. If the mission they were assigned was not to their liking, they simply left it. The majority of the unpaid attachés entered a career in diplomacy only to fill in time until something better came along, as was the case for Robert Dundas, the unpaid attaché of Sir William A’Court at Madrid who accompanied his chief to Lisbon in September 1824, but had left him by May 1825, when he was made a Navy commissioner. Dundas was nevertheless miffed by the appointment of a paid attaché at Lisbon, a post he had hoped to get himself. George’s remark that the naval appointment was ‘a magnificent provision for a younger Son’ gives a clue to the way the aristocracy managed their careers. It was only the younger sons who dabbled in diplomacy.

Many new attachés arrived in Madrid to join Frederick Lamb’s staff in 1825. George doubted that they would have enough work to occupy them: ‘the chancellerie will be numerous, but with little work for the young gentlemen.’ The first to appear was Waddington in April, followed by Stanhope and Wyndham in June, and Bingham in July. George wrote contemptuously of Wyndham:

Another soi-disant Attaché has joined us, that is a personal friend of Mr Lamb, an Officer of the name of Wyndham (a natural son I believe of L’Egremont) whose object seems to be de passer le temps & to find himself daily at Mr Lamb’s table. I conclude that he is on half pay, but his history either generally or in detail we shall not [know] till

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641 The paid attaché was Bloomfield, son of Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, ex-private secretary to George IV.
642 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 25 February 1825, Fisher.
643 G to M, 8 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/61.
644 George Joseph Stanhope (1806-1828), was the second son of Philip Henry, fourth Earl Stanhope and the great-grandson of William Pitt. He was only nineteen years old when he went to Spain. Waddington has not been identified.
645 Colonel Charles Wyndham (d. 1866), third son (natural) of George O’Brien Wyndham, Earl of Egremont.
646 Richard Bingham (1801-1872), son of the second Earl of Lucan. He later became chargé d’affaires at Venezuela (1852-1858).
our Chief’s arrival from Aranjuez. — What is extraord’y is that Mr Richard Bingham
(Lď Lucan’s son) another personal friend of Mr Lamb is on the road, so that there will be
four Attaché’s [sic] besides Bosanquet who remains Sec’y in Chief.

(G to M, 19 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/66)

By July Charles Wyndham had had enough of Madrid and departed, to be
replaced by Richard Bingham, who had done a brief two-week stint in Madrid the
previous summer, and who had arrived ‘in spite of his disinclination to come’. 647
George wrote that he would probably not fare much better:

He [Bingham] will serve to replace Col. Charles Wyndham Mr Lamb’s personal friend
who was so strongly possessed with the demon of Ennui at the end of a ten days
residence here that he bolted at 24 hours’ notice, and I cannot believe that his successor
will abide it much longer, for he is a thoroughly spoiled dandy.

(G to M, 14 July 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/70)

George liked the other two new arrivals. Waddington, whom he described as ‘an
agreeable addition to Madrid society’, 648 was a paid attaché who had been ‘previously
unsalaried in the same capacity at Petersburg’. 649 He brought George some books that
Margaret had left at the British embassy in Paris. Stanhope was the grandson of Lady
Griselda Stanhope, 650 who had sat with Margaret at the time of Viotti’s death, and
George wrote that the young man was ‘a delightful acquisition to our little society, — so
thoroughly gentlemanlike & amiable, so mild in his manners & so well informed.’ 651

None of the official correspondence regarding the Commission survives in the
Chinnery Papers, even though George said that he kept copies. However, the copies of
his private dispatches to Joseph Planta do survive, along with Planta’s to George, and
give intermittent glimpses of Anglo-Spanish relations at the time and interesting
commentary on certain personalities. George phrased his letters to Planta in such a

647 G to M, 14 July 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/70.
648 G to M, 19 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/62.
649 George Chinnery to William A’Court, 10 April 1825, Fisher.
650 Griselda Stanhope (1778–1851), second daughter of Charles, third Earl Stanhope and Lady Hester Pitt,
eldest daughter of William Pitt, married John Tickell in 1800. There is a letter from Tickell (in
Montreuil) to George (at Calais), dated 23 March 1816, containing instructions for forwarding an
official dispatch, and describing their present lodging at Montreuil-sur-Mer and the large number of
cheap châteaux for sale in the environs.
651 G to M, 9 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/65.
manner as to be ‘ostensible’ to Canning. He liked to receive news of British administrative affairs – diplomatic arrangements and foreign policies in particular – in order to be able to ascertain more certainly his own fate. With this motive, he also wrote to Stapleton and other civil servants such as Edward Drummond at the Treasury, and was frustrated when they omitted to speak of public business in their letters.

Joseph Planta, as principal Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was George’s best source of early information on public business, and George was alarmed to hear rumours in June 1824 of Planta’s possible departure from the Foreign Office to take up the secretaryship of the Treasury. On 13 June he wrote to his mother:

> It would be odd enough if P. should quit the F.O. — & inconvenient too for he is certainly the most useful person there. [...] Somebody in the office will probably, should a change occur, be promoted to be the principal labouring oar, as P. himself was; but who will be the fancy colleague in L[ Francis C. [onyngham]’s place? Nous verrons.  

(G to M, 13 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/26)

The above gives a fair indication of the amount of Foreign Office work undertaken by Planta compared to that done by the King’s protégé Lord Francis Conyngham, whom Canning had been obliged to appoint to appease the King, and who was about to leave his post to be married. It may have been because of the disproportionate amount of work that fell to Planta’s lot that he desired to change posts. In the end Planta did not leave the Foreign Office, but he did not receive much help from the new appointee to the under-secretaryship, Lord Howard, of whom George wrote that he was ‘still more a “fancy” U. Sec. of State, & will be of no help whatever to poor P. who is overloaded & wants a practical colleague.’ By 6 August Conyngham had still not departed the Foreign Office and he and Howard were sharing the parliamentary undersecretaryship. But the combined aid of two such officials was of little more help to Planta than a single one had been before. George wrote that they (Conyngham and Howard) divided the duties and the salary of the post, ‘so there are

653 Edward Drummond (1792-1843), was the second son of Charles Drummond, banker. He was Assistant Clerk of Revenue in the Treasury, 1817-1834 (T 29/155 p. 263, in Sainty, p. 123).
654 On his marriage to Lady Jane Paget he came into a fortune, receiving £30,000 from his mother’s brother (Denison) and £20,000 from the King (see G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23).
655 Possibly the Hon. William Howard (1782-1843), brother of George Howard, Viscount Morpeth.
656 G to M, 27 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/27.
just now three Under Secretaries of State; but Planta, as before has the entire department called South.'  

While the appointment of such ineffectual civil servants was a disadvantage to the Government in terms of efficiency, it was an advantage in terms of savings in salary costs. The sharing of posts was no doubt an expedient measure by which the Government was able to fulfil all its obligations with regard to patronage at no additional cost. Although it did not matter to the wealthy lords whether they received a full salary or not, it did to officials such as George Chinnery and Augustus Stapleton (now Canning's chief private secretary), who, without the backing of lofty lineage, had to make their own way in the world. In one of Stapleton's letters to George (missing from the Chinnery collection), he complained to George that he did not receive the full salary of a private secretary. George surmised that part of Stapleton's salary went to Thomas Liddell (the new deputy assistant private secretary), as it had done to him when he had been deputy assistant to Lord George Bentinck. George explained to his mother: 'but the Cases are different – they are both on the Establishment of the F.O. & Stapleton wants the addn which Ld G. [Bentinck] did not.' By this he meant that Stapleton and Liddell were both trying to forge a career at the Foreign Office, whereas Lord Bentinck was simply filling in time until something more lucrative offered – whether marriage (as in the case of Lord Conyngham) or a more prestigious appointment.

To Joseph Planta George wrote of local affairs that he thought would be of interest to him. According to George the two most respected diplomats in Madrid were Sir William A'Court and the French ambassador, M. de Talaru, who in February 1824 was awarded the Cordon du Saint Esprit as a reparation 'for the affront of Marcellus's equivocal mission.' As far as George's own mission was concerned, business was proceeding at an excruciatingly slow pace, no claims at all having been dealt with in the first six months of his commissionship. By mid-July the extent of negotiations with his Spanish counterpart, Don Luis Noeli, amounted to 'two visits of civility [...] – nothing more.' Sir William A'Court had told George privately that the Spanish authorities always tried to involve the British in discussions on abstruse points to gain time. Their

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657 G to M, 6 August 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/33. That is, the countries of Southern Europe.
658 George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 23 February 1824, Fisher. Michaud (vol. 40, p. 584) mentions a 'mission extraordinaire' that Marcellus was sent on by the French Government to Spain, supposedly to support Talaru in his struggles with the difficult Spanish cabinet. Perhaps he succeeded only in making matters worse.
aim, George wrote to Planta, was to gain another six months, but Sir William was
determined not to allow it. If the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs the Conde de
Ofalia\textsuperscript{660} proposed a date different from the one originally agreed on (11 October
1823)\textsuperscript{661} he would be told it was out of the question. Under the terms of the Convention,
Spain was also entitled to claim indemnities from the British for the capture of Spanish
ships, but here again they appeared to be using stalling tactics, since the claims
submitted were all for captures prior to 1808 – therefore inadmissible under the terms of
the Convention.\textsuperscript{662}

On 5 July 1824 George wrote to Planta that there had been changes in the
Spanish Government, that the Count of Ofalia had been replaced, and that he feared that
‘the Party that triumphs will be capable of every breach of good faith.’\textsuperscript{663} Don Ramon
Alvarado, the newly appointed Spanish Commissioner bound for London,\textsuperscript{664} was due to
join his colleague in London, ‘M. de Tajon’, in the second week of August. Not until the
end of July did George receive his first claim for compensation from a British merchant.
It came from a Captain Stephenson: ‘The first case referred to me by the Commiss’\textsuperscript{9} in
London arrived on Thurs. last, & yesterday I sent off my reply inclosing a document in
support of the Claim in question.’\textsuperscript{665} To Planta he wrote: ‘the Commissioners in London
& we gentlemen of the 7\textsuperscript{th} Article, have at length exchanged letters on the subject of a
specifick claim.’\textsuperscript{666} George was satisfied that his Spanish counterpart Noeli was
co-operating as best he could. Noeli, George wrote in the same letter, was a cultured
gentleman who had been a diplomat in America, in the Brazils, at Berlin, St Petersburg
and Naples, and was therefore more broad-minded than most Spaniards.\textsuperscript{667} Noeli had
confided to George that his hands were tied by the present regime, and that there was no
hope of ‘regenerating the country’ until there was ‘a change of system’. The Spanish
Government, he said, was in massive debt, and ‘the want of credit paralizes every

\textsuperscript{659} G to M, 15 July 1824, PM 94/143/1 -- 12/30.
\textsuperscript{660} Narciso de Heredia, Conde de Ofalia (1777-1843), Spanish diplomat and statesman.
\textsuperscript{661} Date of the establishment of the Convention.
\textsuperscript{662} George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 21 April 1824, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{663} George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 5 July 1824, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{664} Alvarado is unnoticed in the Spanish \textit{Enciclopedia universal ilustrada}, but is described by George as
‘no very beautiful or sapient specimen of the Spanish nation [...]’ (George Chinnery to Joseph Planta
(copy), 5 July 1824, Fisher).
\textsuperscript{665} G to M, 27 July 1824, PM 94/143/1 -- 12/31.
\textsuperscript{666} George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 4 August 1824, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{667} \textit{Ibid}.
Noeli owed his appointment as Spanish commissioner of Claims in Madrid to the Conde de Ofalia (to whom he was related by marriage), but with the downfall of Ofalia, he was likely to be stripped of his office. Clearly Noeli was frustrated by the bureaucratic inadequacies, but, deciding to put the best face on the inevitable loss of his post, set about making alternative plans to set up 'a soap manufactury (the most profitable business in Spain').

Other local news that George gave Planta in the same letter pertained to King Ferdinand, who was swayed in all he did by the Russian envoy. George wrote that the British were disappointed with the new 'great Aristocrats' Representative at this Court.' They had hoped that Count Bulgari's successor, M. d'Oubril, 'would not have been so completely domineering over the rest of the Dipl. Corps with regard to influencing Ferdinand.' (Czar Alexander was by far the most reactionary of the great Powers of Europe, and wished to inflict his absolutist policies on all those European states that had recently exhibited revolutionary tendencies.)

George appears to have been under instructions from Canning to send fortnightly reports, as well as the mandatory quarterly reports that all members of foreign legations sent back to England. By mid-September he had sent fifteen dispatches, but clearly as a matter of duty only, as he had no progress on the Commission to report. By New Year 1825 matters were still at a standstill in the Commission, and George was so idle that he had time to help Bosanquet with his diplomatic duties. Indeed, as far as competence for the position of chef de mission was concerned, George was far better qualified than his young colleague to fill it. On 6 January he wrote to Margaret: 'B. brings me a little work for his chancellerie, which I am always delighted to undertake.' The reason that Bosanquet brought him work was clearly that George's knowledge of the Spanish language was an invaluable aid to him. It must have been galling to George to have been used as a mere attaché to a person whose abilities – in mathematics as well as in languages – were inferior to his own, but he was generous enough never to show it in his letters. In January 1825 he noted that he had been 'of some real use to B. in preparing the budget which the Mess'[enger] takes

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668 Ibid.
669 Ibid. Soap was one of the commodities in short supply in Spain.
670 Ibid.
671 G to M, 3 October 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/73.
672 G to M, 6 January 1824 [recte 1825], PM 94/143/1 – 12/21.
together with this letter', 673 and in April he sent Planta a translation of 'the inquisition Judgement in regard to the members of the Const', remarking that it was 'as prosy as it was iniquitous.' 674

On 9 January 1825 a King’s messenger arrived in Madrid bearing news of the British recognition of the independence of Mexico and Colombia. Canning had previously made several unsuccessful attempts to persuade Ferdinand to recognise the independence of certain of her South American colonies. Faced with Ferdinand’s intractability and a possible future threat of a combined maritime power of France and the United States, Canning decided the time was right to go ahead and take the step without reference either to Spain or to her other Neo-Holy Allies. It was a significant event in history and at the time was seen as Canning’s personal moment of triumph, as it brought England back to the forefront of the European Powers. George played a small part in the British triumph, having been able to make a translation of the Spanish Foreign Minister’s reply to Canning’s dispatch informing him of Britain’s coup: ‘it has been a great pleasure to me – particularly in making a translation of the Sp. Minister’s Note, of seventeen pages, in answer to Mr C.’s declaring the Recognition.’ 675

George wrote in detail of Canning’s brilliant diplomatic coup in his letter to his mother of 20 January. He was particularly interested in the event for the impetus it would give to his own mission:

This letter will probably be conveyed by an Eng. King’s Mess. on his return to London. He arrived here on the 9. having had special directions not to pass through Paris, for he was the bearer of a communication to be made to the Sp. Gov. before it was known to the other Powers, and a most important one it was, — probably the subject upon which people at Paris are chiefly conversing at the present moment; — in short the Recognition on the part of Eng of the Independence of Mexico & Columbia — It was a great thing for Bosanquet under any circumstances to become Chef de Mission; but to have been the channel for apprising Spain of a political measure of such magnitude is of incalculably greater interest and renders him quite an historical character. — As yet the Sp. Gov. have returned no answer to B.’s official note, but it is understood that this act of Recognition is felt by them most severely & that the members of the Holy

673 G to M, 22 January 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/51.
674 George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 3 April 1825, Fisher. After the French had restored Ferdinand to the throne he immediately embarked — much to their embarrassment — on a reign of terror, executing scores of rebels.
675 G to M, 22 January [1825], PM 94/143/1 – 12/51.
Alliance who support Spain in her pretensions of supremacy over the now independent provinces are furious at the step which we have taken — It is impossible to calculate what precise effects the act in question will have on the material policy of this Country & G. Britain, but all favourable dispositions on the part of the former towards the latter must probably be at an end; and a view of things which I cannot help taking at once is the satisfaction of the Claims in which I am concerned will be totally out of the question. The pretence will be plausibly urged that we have stripped them of their Colonies, and thereby of the means of paying us. It is quite evident to me that the measures just concluded must speedily bring about some new arrangement of the Commission. I had already heard that the Commissioners in London, unable to agree upon any one point had actually shut up their office in Manch[ester] Buildings!

(G to M, 20 January 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/50)

George was optimistic that the commissionship would not be long in terminating, that he would soon return to London, and that his patron’s rising popularity — both with the British people and with the King — would result in some tangible benefits for himself. George’s remark ‘Popularity gives Power’, was especially applicable to Canning’s case at that time. For once he felt he could run with his father’s optimism. On 22 January he wrote to Margaret:

A few lines from young Atkins676 also just received describe M’ C.’s popularity as increasing daily & wonderfully. The recognition of the S° Am. States will carry it’s acme; & though my Father is apt to be a little sanguine I cannot help joining him to the full Extent in the view which he takes of the probable advantages to result from [such] a turn in publick affairs, — advantages both publick & private. Popularity gives Power, & I therefore imagine you & I may safely calculate that whenever my Commiss. is over I shall not be suffered simply to resume my seat at the desk in Whitehall as a Treas’y Clerk. I am really not ambitious of honours; but something thoroughly gentlemanlike & permanent I should covet, — something adequate to a small establishment & above all that should give you a home, free from care, under the roof of an affectionate daughter in law —

(G to M, 22 January 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/51)

This was not the first time that George’s marriage had been discussed. Margaret was eager that George should marry on his return to England — hopefully in the spring

676 The son of the Chinnery friend John Atkins, now a London alderman. He may have acted as a commercial agent for William in London.
of 1825 – and George concurred. He wanted to be able to give his mother a permanent
refuge, after her long experience of real estate headaches. The repeated disadvantageous
sales,\(^{677}\) difficult lettings, and incessant removals had worn her out. Margaret was now
sixty years old and yearned for a tranquil life. Her present preoccupation with dishonest
and unreliable servants was not conducive to peace of mind, and George, who severely
felt his helplessness at such a great distance, longed to free her from her worries. With
Viotti gone she was ready to settle down for half the year in England with George and
the other half in Paris with William. George joked that the abode he hoped to offer her
would not be ‘a chateau en Espagne’, but a house in England where she might live
‘during the months that are not devoted to my Father’.\(^{678}\)

In continuing his commentary on the effects of the British recognition in Spain,
George foresaw that a successful outcome for the British ship owners’ claims now
seemed unlikely:

The Courier re-despatched this Evening conveys the Sp. Minister’s Reply to the
Recognition Note, protesting as you may guess most strongly, & still hoping that the
British Gov.\(^1\) will suspend the execution of the measure: but it is too late. The
determination is irrevocable; — so the K. of Sp. will be told if Mr C. should think fit to
send a rejoinder. Whether the hopelessness to avert the blow thus given to their
Colonial possessions will drive the Spaniards to some violent measure against England,
a few weeks will shew: but it is not in human nature that they should at present grant us
any facilities, and consequently I look upon the arrangement of our commercial claims
as a woeful plight. —

How very very interesting will be the first debates in Parl.\(^1\) on the subject of Mexico &
Columbia, & what a wide field of business is opened with this new & independent
world both for Statesmen & private adventurers! — I already foresee that the Foreign
Office as now constituted will never be able to manage so much without an increase to
it’s Estab.\(^1\) & that an add\(^1\) Under Sec\(^2\) of State, at least, & more Clerks must be set to
work in Downing S\(^e\) ere long.

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\(^{677}\) Gillwell (the house and its estate, divided into four lots) had been sold for £6,400, way below its real
value, as had Margaret’s house in Montagu Street, which she said she had ‘given away’ (G to M, 8
May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/61). She was currently negotiating for the sale of the Châtillon property
through her Paris banker Agasse. Her expectations of receiving 100,000 francs seemed unlikely to be
fulfilled, and offers as low as 60,000 had been considered. An offer of 75,000 in May 1825 appears
not to have proceeded (see G to M, 4 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/55).

\(^{678}\) G to M, 22 January [1825], PM 94/143/1 – 12/51.
The H of Commons will not grudge the expense considering how much the country gains in other ways by the Recognition, and it would be a very pretty enlargement of Mr C.’s portion of patronage.

(G to M, 22 January [1825], PM 94/143/1 – 12/51)

The Spanish protest to the English coup was answered brilliantly by Canning, who sent a copy of his ‘magnificently triumphant Answer to that Protest, addressed to M. de Los Rios [Spanish envoy in London]’ to the British legation in Madrid and to William A’Court in Lisbon. The latter commented that it was a triumph not only over Spain, but also over the Holy Alliance.

The last comments in the above passage reflect George’s optimistic hope that something better would be in store for him on his return. An enlargement of the Foreign Office would surely create an opening for a staff appointment of some kind – or perhaps a consulship in Paris. From January 1825 therefore, George was anxious that negotiations on the claims should proceed, which would expedite his recall to London and his transfer to a different post. As he wrote to Sir William A’Court in Lisbon in February 1825, negotiations on the claims had been ‘stagnant’ for the past six months. But he hoped that the new Spanish appointments in London of both a Commissioner (M. de la Serna) and an envoy (M. Camille de Los Rios), were a sign that the Spanish were at long last moving to act. If not, George wrote, throngs of merchants would swamp the House of Commons. The last remark was not entirely facetious. The British merchants were impatient to have an outcome to the matter, and were pressing their members of parliament to agitate on their behalf on the resumption of the sitting of the House in February.

From information that Sir William A’Court was able to give George regarding the enormous sum that the Claims Commission had already cost Britain, it was clear that the delay was a matter of concern to Parliament. Even though Sir William was now in Lisbon he kept up an interest in George’s concerns and sympathised with him about the protracted negotiations, writing as early as November 1824 that George’s account of the claims business was ‘lamentable’. In March 1825 he wrote to George: ‘I see by the Civil Contingencies laid upon the table of the House of Commons, that it has already

679 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 10 April 1825, Fisher.
680 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 26 April 1825, Fisher.
681 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 25 February 1825, Fisher.
cost at the end of December, above £8200—Joey Hume will probably say a word or two upon this subject, when the Contingencies come to be discussed.'

Joseph Hume was not the only one who had something to say on the matter. The outspoken Opposition member Henry Brougham also took up the issue. George read in the British newspapers of Brougham’s intention to bring a motion on the subject after the Easter recess, and was confident that this would give the negotiations the jolt they needed. He was also confident that if financial cuts were to be made they would be made in the Madrid arm of the Commission, hopefully leading to his recall:

What everybody expected has already occurred. The British Merchants have prevailed on their friends in the House of Commons to take an interest in their claims, and Brougham has given notice of a motion to come on after Easter by which he means to call on the Government to press Spain for the Execution of the Treaty, inasmuch as Commissioners here appointed under it who appear hitherto to have done absolutely nothing. This must bring matters to a Crisis, & whatever arrangement is determined upon, I calculate that Government itself will offer to lessen the Expense of the machinery, & that the obvious curtailments will be in the foreign branch of the Commission.

(G to M, 28 March 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/54)

In letters to his mother and to Planta, both dated 9 April, George wrote that Bosanquet had been instructed to prepare the Spanish Government ‘for being pressed on the subject of the Commission.’ George was clearly frustrated to learn from the official dispatch the Foreign Office’s view ‘that with more Diligence & Good Faith the claims might have been settled six months ago!’

Another event that George thought would expedite the settlement of the claims was the death of the British secretary of the Commission in Madrid, Peter Tupper, who had also been British consul in Barcelona. As consul, Tupper was the best-informed British official in Spain regarding the British merchants’ claims. George wrote to his mother that if Canning decided not to replace him ‘the machinery of the Commission becomes rather dislocated; for he was the person peculiarly au fait in regard to the

682 Ibid.
683 Joseph Hume, (1777-1855), was a Whig politician who was a voluble agitator in the House of Commons. He was ‘indefatigable in exposing every kind of extravagance and abuse, but he particularly devoted himself to financial questions’ (DNB, vol. 10, p. 231).
684 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 18 March 1825, Fisher.
685 G to M, 9 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/56.
Claims & brought up from Barcelona to assist in the business. 686 By the end of April George was confident that his commissionship would be speedily terminated, and that he would learn what post was in store for him in London within a month. Indeed he was so sure that he would leave Madrid by the autumn of that year, that he wrote confidently to Margaret: ‘Every twenty four hours now brings us sensibly nearer to each other.’ 687 Just how tedious his sojourn in the uninteresting capital had become is evident in his letter to Margaret of 21 April in which he describes his frustration at having ‘vegetated 18 months in Madrid & to have seen nothing of Spain.’ 688 The lack of action within the Claims Commission had made him feel ‘utterly useless’. 689 Of course George was careful not to mention these feelings to Planta, and warned his mother against showing too explicit an impatience for George’s recall when writing to Canning to try to ascertain when this might be. 690 But he did try to extract from Planta a rough estimate of the date of his recall, and wrote on the pretext that he needed to know if he should buy another hack, as he had sold his previous one. He also mentioned his desire to travel in Andalusia and Valencia before returning to England. His choice as to whether to travel straight home to England, carrying official dispatches, which had the advantage of ‘saving the expense of the journey, besides being eminently respectable’, or whether to travel independently, enabling him to spend a few days at Châtillon on route, was a matter of much discussion with his mother. 691

On 1 May ‘after a long & total stagnation of business’, 692 George received a dispatch instructing him to procure documents relating to a new claim – only the second in the eighteen months that he had been in Madrid. When the post of 8 May brought George another dispatch from the Commissioners in London he told his mother he was glad ‘because it makes me feel not altogether useless’. 693 He had already heard that the Spanish Government was anxious to come to a compromise on the claims, and this intelligence was confirmed by Lamb on his arrival. This was good news, as acceptance of a compromise would mean the immediate closure of the Madrid branch of the Commission. But matters dragged on, and even though Tupper was not to be replaced,

686 G to M, 18 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/57.
687 G to M, 19 May 1825, PM94/143/1 – 12/62.
688 G to M, 21 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/58.
689 G to M, 28 March 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/54.
690 G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23.
691 G to M, 21 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/58, and 25 April 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/59.
692 G to M, 8 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/61.
there seemed no end in sight for George. Lamb had instructions to press the Spanish Government with regard to the claims and to insist on no further loss of time. But until further notes had been exchanged with the new Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. de Zea, no estimate for the duration of the Commission could be given. George was not the only one who found the claims business tedious. Lamb further reported that one of the commissioners in London, young Dawkins, 'was sick to death of the business & anxious to return to the diplomatick career from which he was temporarily taken', and to rub salt into the wound, wondered out loud 'what induced M. C. to send me out to Sp.', which George construed to mean that 'I was of no great use here, & that the business might just as well be managed by the Legation."

On 22 June he wrote to his mother that Lamb had now spoken to Zea and a plan had been settled on for private negociation on the settlement of the claims. This would involve one of the merchants directly concerned in the claims coming out to Spain and treating ‘commercially’ with the Government, thereby obviating any need for a King’s Commissioner (George’s role). George wrote that ‘any unreasonableness on the side of either party, debtor or creditor, as to terms might put an end to it, and then, as Mr L.[amb] observed we should have to revert to the proceedings under the Treaty & wage a war of official correspondence.’ Using a private agent rather than a King’s Commissioner to negociate the claims would render George's presence in Madrid superfluous. However, Downing Street appeared as yet to be unaware of the new developments and in mid-July was still sending George instructions regarding new claims. At the end of August matters remained “in status quo” and ‘the examination of claims proceeded as if no proposal for a new arrangement had occurred.’ Now George was finally ‘briskly at work’ following instructions sent from London, and doubted that the mooted private negotiations would ever take place.

The last letter addressed by George to Joseph Planta is dated 29 August 1825, and is written to inform him of the outcome of a rebellion against the Spanish King.

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693 Ibid.
694 See George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 9 April 1825, Fisher.
695 François Zea Bermudez (1772-1850), took over the portfolio of Foreign Affairs after the Count of Ofalia left, but remained in office for only one year (1824-1825) before being dismissed.
696 G to M, 9 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/65.
697 G to M, 19 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/66.
698 G to M, 22 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/67.
699 G to M, 14 July 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/70.
700 G to M, 25 August 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/71.
George took it upon himself to report to Canning in the absence of Lamb, who was away at the King’s ‘Sitio’ [seat], St. Ildefonso, generally known as ‘la Granja’ [the farm]. Famous for its ‘water works’, this was the spot where the King repaired for three months to escape the unbearable Madrid summer heat of July, August and September. George wrote, somewhat unsympathetically, of the execution of the rebel:

The criminal conduct of Bessieres in putting himself at the head of a rebellious party was already known to you, but it was not I imagine expected that the traitor would so soon pay the forfeit of his life. The zeal manifested by the officers employed in apprehending him, and the summary execution of the sentence passed upon himself & his accomplices will no doubt check others who were perhaps inclined to follow so dangerous an example.

(George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 29 August 1825, Fisher)

Meanwhile, in Portugal things were still not going Britain’s way. The British Minister at Lisbon Sir Edward Thornton had been unsuccessful in reimposing British dominance at the court of John VI, and had displeased Canning by making rash promises to the Portuguese. This had led to his dismissal and his replacement by Sir William A’Court. In July 1824 George’s parents had heard a rumour that A’Court was to be sent on a mission to South America. George assured them that it was false: ‘Those revolutionised countries are not yet worthy of a man of his calibre. Il est trop grand seigneur to be sent on a voyage of discovery.’ The comment shows the high reputation as a diplomat that Sir William enjoyed. In June 1824 A’Court had already been offered the governor-generalship of India. But, wrote George, the latter ‘being an independent man, with an excellent Estate in Wiltshire, and the certain prospect of rising to the rank of Amb has absolutely declined Asiatic honours’. Sir William’s own preference was for a transfer ‘from this degraded Country to a Northern Court.’ But Canning allowed him no choice in the matter. He had not even waited for A’Court’s

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701 G to M, 19 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/62.
702 Georges Bessières (c. 1780-1825) was a Frenchman who came over to the service of Ferdinand VII, and was made a general by him. Michaud (vol. 4, p. 211) implies that Bessières was betrayed by intriguing ministers attached to the court of Ferdinand, who may have known of or even orchestrated the rebellion. Spurred by the hope of reforming the existing system, Bessières led a small band of soldiers who marched on Fuencarla, Torrejo de Ardos and Bribuega. Captured on 25 August, Bessières was executed the next day.
703 G to M, 15 July 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/30.
704 G to M, 27 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/27.
acceptance of the Lisbon post before sending him his letters of accreditation. George, who had been looking forward to the King’s messenger’s speedy return from London bearing instructions from Canning to A’Court (with letters from his parents in the same bag), was disappointed: ‘M. Canning did not wait to receive Sir W. à Court’s acceptance of the Embassy to Lisbon, but assuming it to be infallible (as well he might) sent off another King’s Messr in the mean time with what are styled the “Letters of re-credence.”’

When Sir William A’Court left Madrid his travelling caravan was cumbersome, and because of civil unrest in both countries a military escort was provided. The Caravan consisted of three carriages including Dundas’s, two waggons, and an escort of eight soldiers, and took a fortnight to reach Lisbon. Another carriage bore the servants. Still more waggons with a separate escort had been dispatched a week earlier. George had helped Dundas find servants and ‘equipages’, for which he was grateful, writing thirteen months after his arrival in Lisbon that the journey had gone smoothly, thanks to George’s assistance. For his part, George was grateful to Sir William for his kindness in Madrid, writing humbly that it was a kindness to which he had ‘no right or pretension’ not being a member of his legation.

Sir William’s three letters to George all contain references to the tug o’ war between France and England for the favour of John VI, as well as his views on Peninsula affairs in general, diplomatic arrangements, and private hobbies. When A’Court arrived in Lisbon the Portuguese Government was completely under the thumb of the French. Canning’s brief to Sir William was to bring the Portuguese back over to Britain. In A’Court’s first letter he wrote that his task was difficult and unpleasant, because ‘M. de Subserra & his Gov. are little more than the tools of the French Ambassador, he holds the wires by which the puppets are moved, & after all the blood & treasures we have spent for this Country, we have not influence enough to move a Clerk, whilst M. de Neuville makes, & unmakes Ministers, at pleasure.’

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706 G to M, 1 September 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/38.
708 Robert Dundas to George Chinnery, 29 November 1824, Fisher.
709 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 8 September 1824, Fisher, and G to M, 13 September 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/39.
710 Jean-Guillaume, baron Hyde de Neuville (1776-1857), French diplomat of English descent. At the time of the Revolution he emigrated first to England, then to America, returning to France in 1814. He went as French minister plenipotentiary to the U.S.A. in 1816, then to Portugal, from where he was
William’s own post had been elevated to a full ambassadorship—clearly to put him on a par with the French ambassador, and to demonstrate by the establishment of a full embassy in Lisbon712 the importance Britain attached to her old relationship with Portugal. ‘I shall do my utmost’, A’Court wrote,

> to bring these people to an understanding of their true interests, (for we still wish to do them good if they will let us) but if I find them incorrigible, there is but one line to follow—Abandon them—leave them to their own fancies, & seek our old ally of the Braganza Rose on the other side of the Atlantic—The Brazils must be our Portugal, if the Portugueze are tired of independence, & wish to be the Slaves of France & Spain. When I say the Portugueze, I speak too vaguely—I should rather say M. de Subserra, & his adherents. The Nation still cherishes the English name, & English Alliance, & a heavy & unfortunate day it will be to Portugal when our squadron crosses the bar & we leave them to their new friends, new politics, & new Councils.

(William A’Court to George Chinnery, 10 November 1824, Fisher)

Nevertheless, by February 1825 A’Court had, through his superior diplomatic skills, ‘brought about the desired changes in Portugal’.713 By March he had prevailed upon John to send the troublemaker Subserra out of the country— as envoy to Madrid. Sir William wrote on 18 March to George that ‘Subserra and his wife left Lisbon for Madrid on the 16th [March 1825]—they are under-bred, vulgar people, full of pretence & cunning & overflowing with hatred for every thing English.’714 Sir William also wrote that they were expecting the ex-ambassador to Paris Sir Charles Stuart ‘hourly’. On 26 April A’Court informed George that things were ‘going on very quietly and favorably’ in Lisbon and that ‘there has not been a hitch of any sort, since the departure of Subserra—All the low miserable intrigues, (the little resources of a little Mind) have disappeared with their Author—The change is most sensible in every respect.’715 He

recalled (partly at Canning’s instigation) by early 1825. Described by Rolo, op. cit., p. 218, as ‘a friend and disciple of Chateaubriand’, Hyde de Neuville was a belligerent advocate of the French cause in the Iberian Peninsula, and encouraged Subserra’s scheming.

711 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 10 November 1824, Fisher.
712 The terms embassy and legation were then clearly differentiated. An embassy could not pretend to that appellation unless it was provided with a fully-accredited ambassador. Any other mission was known simply as a legation.
713 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 25 February 1825, Fisher. His task had been aided by Canning’s success in having Neuville recalled by the French Government. With Neuville gone, Sir William was able to have his way with King John.
714 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 18 March 1825, Fisher.
715 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 26 April 1825, Fisher.
expected soon to be able to write of Stuart’s successful mission in Lisbon, but guessed that ‘the real difficulty will be found on the other side of the Atlantic.’ Stuart was en route to Rio de Janeiro, where, as a representative of the Portuguese Government, he was to secure an agreement for the independence of Brazil. He went also as British Minister to Brazil. In the same letter Sir William mentioned various diplomatic arrangements: Bloomfield was going to Stuttgart to succeed Hamilton as secretary of legation, Hamilton was going to Paris to replace Percy in the same position, and Percy was to replace Vaughan in Switzerland.

George wrote to congratulate A’Court on his diplomatic triumphs, and to trade news. He had heard through the Duchess of Berwick, a member of British society in Madrid, that Sir William was dissatisfied with ‘the Chateau at Cintra purchased on his behalf.’ Canning had also had a secondary residence in Sintra during his stay in Portugal, and George was familiar with the area. He hoped, for Sir William’s sake, that the beauty of Sintra and the orange groves would compensate for the discomfort of the house itself. At least, he remarked, it would be preferable to breathing ‘the offensive Effluvia of the Capital.’

The malodorous capital of Portugal was notorious for its stinking streets. Robert Dundas also spoke of the repulsive smell of the capital, but was thankful that the street where Sir William and his staff lived did not smell as bad as the others! In his long letter to George of November 1824 he devoted much space to his impressions of Lisbon. He was sharing a house, he told George, right opposite Sir William’s, with another member of the British mission, Francis Forbes. Although Dundas was glad to get out of Madrid, he found that life in Lisbon was hardly any better. His letter consisted of a long string of complaints: the climate had a soporific effect on him; the little ‘attempt at society’ that was made was ‘in bad style’; the Portuguese women were not ‘the fairest or comeliest’, and wanted ‘freshness’ and ‘watering’, as they emitted a bad smell when

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716 Ibid.
717 Unidentified. Perhaps a younger relative of William Richard Hamilton.
718 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 26 April 1825, Fisher. After serving as minister plenipotentiary to the Confederated States of Switzerland, 1823-1825, Vaughan went as envoy-extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the United States.
720 George Chinnery to William A’Court (copy), 25 February 1825, Fisher.
721 The Hon. Francis R. Forbes was possibly a member of Baron Forbes’s family. Forbes had been secretary of legation at Lisbon before the mission was upgraded to an embassy, and was chargé d’affaires for a brief period between the departure of Thornton and the arrival of A’Court.
they all gathered in a room; and finally, there was no theatre, merely an Italian opera company, by whom ‘poor Rossini is murdered without mercy’.722

From Stapleton in London came more news of Portugal. His letter to George of 25 April 1825 cites continuing rebel activity in Portugal, and indicates that, in accordance with George’s prediction, the Foreign Office was being expanded as a result of Canning’s increased stature: a new recruit William Hervey, third son of Lord Bristol,723 had joined Liddell as Stapleton’s assistant. After commenting on the extraordinary number of marriages in 1825 – including Harriet Canning’s to the fabulously wealthy Irish Marquess of Clanricarde, which took place on 4 April724 – he gave George a humorous account of the death of the British consul Rowcroft in Portugal. The unfortunate Rowcroft had been the cause of much hilarity in the Foreign Office in 1823, when, as an official of the Copper Office, he had sent Canning a voluminous amount of information on the recent insurrections in the West Indies.725

When George (then Canning’s secretary) had asked what to do with all the material, Canning had replied wittily ‘I think the fire would do very well & very fairly for them’.726 In George’s reply to Rowcroft on Canning’s behalf he had inadvertently included the document containing Canning’s comment, to which Rowcroft good-naturedly drew his attention.727 Canning sent Rowcroft’s response to George, exclaiming laughingly ‘Behold what you have done!’ George was mortified. But Stapleton had reassured him: ‘Poor Mr Rowcroft! It doesn’t signify two farthings – Mr C. only laughed at it.’728 George then set about drafting – on Canning’s behalf – a lengthy and humble letter of apology which Canning found far too abject, writing on it: ‘I have shortened this considerably which I am sure is an improvement & lightened it of some of its humility which I think is one.’729 At the time, Rowcroft had been about to

722 Robert Dundas to George Chinnery, 29 November 1824, Fisher.
723 William C.B. Hervey (1805-1850), third son of Frederick William, first Marquess of Bristol, who was Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1801-1803.
724 In writing to his mother of the marriage George remarked in wonder: ‘in Ireland the tenantry of a great nobleman is the entire population of a considerable Town. When I recollect that in 1815, at Lisbon, Lady C[lanricarde] allowed poor Young & myself to play with her as with a child, it appears to me impossible that so many years should have passed over my head!’ (G to M, 19 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/62).
725 One of these printed documents is in the Fisher collection and is entitled ‘The late Insurrection in Demarara and Riot in Barbados’, 24 December 1823.
726 This comment was written on the above document.
727 Rowcroft to Canning, 25 December 1823, Fisher.
728 Augustus Stapleton to George Chinnery, 25 December 1823, Fisher.
729 Canning to Rowcroft (draft copy), 26 December 1823, Fisher.
embark on the 'Cambridge' to sail to Portugal to take up his consulship. There were still rival factions operating against the King in Portugal, and unhappily, the earnest, empty-headed British consul was the victim of one of them. Stapleton described the events leading to his death with irreverent amusement:

Poor Rowcroft, who had got rid of all y* complaints which generally afflict mankind, by means of Hay Tea, by the aid of which he fondly hoped to rival Methusalem in age, was cut off in the prime of life by sheer folly. The Independent Army entered Lima & he knew they were advancing to Callas, to which place he had been in the uniform of some Regt to which he belonged, in his carriage & with his saddle horses. A detachment of the Independents advancing towards Callas hear in the dark the Consul's carriage returning, the noise of which they imagine to be some of the enemy's Artillery. Rowcroft orders the carriage to stop and gets on horseback & valiantly advances towards the troops who demand the password & in the glimmering perceive his uniform. Of course no password has he, & of course they immediately fire & by so doing at once deprive the British Consul of all hope of carrying into effect his darling project on health & longevity.

(Augustus Stapleton to George Chinnery, 25 April 1825, Fisher)

Stapleton also reported on Canning's worsening gout: 'Mr C. is still confined with gout. He was getting quite well, when the H of C on Tues – the Levee on Wed – & a long speech on Thurs – threw him back & have given him a fresh attack.' William A'Court had also heard poor reports of Canning's health, and wrote to George: 'Mind will ever operate upon matter, & ultimately wear it out. – Few official men live long in England.'

George's own life was to be cut off within six months of receiving A'Court's fateful words. There is no indication in the last two letters to his mother that anything was wrong with his health. Nor was there any definite indication of a homecoming date. Indeed, the second last letter, dated 9 September 1825, announces his move to a new apartment on the other side of town. Since George's last optimistic predictions of an early settlement of the claims in his 27 June letter, the claims had been proceeding as though no new settlement process had been acknowledged in Downing Street. George wrote that his new apartment was more compact, more comfortable and closer to his

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730 Augustus Stapleton to George Chinnery, 25 April 1825, Fisher
friends. But what he did not like was that it suggested ‘the feeling of a continuance abroad, a lengthening of our separation for a few additional weeks.’ His next and last letter, dated 3 October, refers to other (missing) letters in which he divulged to his parents some confidential information about the claims. These may have given a clue to the exact date of his departure, but it is clear from his September letter that he was expecting to leave Madrid within a month or two at the latest.

The only surviving letter from Margaret to George in Madrid is dated 21 October 1825. By then he was dead. It was Canning himself who imparted to Margaret the tragic news. Canning’s letter, written from Charles Ellis’s home at Seaford, was dated 31 October 1825. Allowing eight to ten days for the news to reach him from Madrid, the date of George’s death may have been on the very day that she penned her last letter to him. In a bitter twist of irony, her letter was full of happy news: William had given her tasteful gifts of an armchair for her birthday (on 16 October) and a painting for their wedding anniversary (on 21 October); Margaret’s sister’s husband, William Marsh, had been cleared of his debts; and she and William had found an apartment to rent in Paris which they had taken for a year. There was a jocular note from William attached to the end of the letter.

The cause of George’s death was a disease that ‘baffled the skill of the most eminent physicians at Madrid.’ There had been an outbreak of yellow fever in the south of Spain in 1820, and in 1825 Margaret had heard of a fresh outbreak in Cadiz. George had assured his mother that this was a false report and that in any case yellow fever could never reach the central plains of Madrid. Canning’s letter does not throw any light on the nature of the illness, and his words ‘your poor son had every attendance

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731 William A’Court to George Chinnery, 26 April 1825, Fisher. This was a true comment. Pitt had died at 47, Castlereagh at 53, Liverpool at 58, and Canning was to die at 57.
732 G to M, 9 September 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/72.
733 William Marsh (or his father) was one of the founders of the banking house of Marsh, Sibbald and Co. of Berners Street, London. In September 1824 one the firm’s younger partners, Henry Fauntleroy, was arrested and in October found guilty of misappropriating large sums (some reports said a quarter of a million pounds) of clients’ funds. He was hanged on 30 November 1824, and the affair forced Marsh, who was a large debtor to the house, out of business. All his property and effects were sold and the family went to live in Paris. In May 1825 they spent a week with Margaret at Chatillon before settling in rue Monsieur, later to move to Versailles. A poem in the Osborn collection (Osborn fd. 11, item 51) written by Margaret’s niece bears the superscription ‘Lines addressed to Chatillon the 9th May 1825 – Copied fair the 20th May – having been written in Pencil, at the Wood at dear Chatillon, & put into my Aunt’s Bag, unknown to her, at the moment of departure! M[artha] M[arsh].’
734 The sale of the Châtillon property appears to have taken place c. August 1825. See G to M, 25 August 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/71.
735 George Canning to Margaret Chinnery, 31 October 1825, RCM.
& attention that could be afforded him, where he was'\textsuperscript{737} would have been small comfort to Margaret, who had for so long and so ardently desired his return to a more civilized country.

George's death in Spain may explain the loss of all Margaret's letters to Madrid except the last, which never came into George's hands. At the time of his death one of the members of the British legation would have had to sort his belongings and papers as he himself had helped Thomas Tupper to do at the time of Peter Tupper's death. The fact that many of the letters from Planta and other civil servant friends were salvaged after his death, whereas his mother's letters were not, proves that George kept his family letters in a separate, undoubtedly safer, place. Missing along with his parents' letters were two red leather commonplace books, which he had asked Margaret to send him, and which he had filled with 'cullings from all parts' by the end of his stay.\textsuperscript{738} These private writings, along with his mother's letters, may have been kept locked in the drawer of the desk that he purchased before leaving London, and may have therefore been overlooked in the final collecting of his effects to be sent back to his family. Large items of furniture – usually purchased at the official's own cost – were not transported back to England at the end of a diplomat's term in a foreign country, as letters from Sir William A'Court\textsuperscript{739} and from George himself prove. In submitting a claim to Planta for reimbursement for expenses in July 1824 George had said that his office table was an essential item of furniture 'for the safe custody of original documents', and that if his claim for the cost of it was disallowed by Government it would 'share the fate of the furniture which I brought for my private use, & which I shall have to dispose of, or rather give away, whenever I leave Madrid.'\textsuperscript{740} Therefore, the letters probably remained with the desk in Spain.

It is difficult to predict what course George's career might have taken had he lived to return to England. But with Canning approaching the pinnacle of his career, and with still another two years to elapse before his death, George would almost certainly have gained the post of his choice, especially since he was no longer ambitious for honours or wealth, but simply desired a permanent post which would give him 'a

\textsuperscript{735} G to M, 19 August 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/35.
\textsuperscript{737} George Canning to Margaret Chinnery, 31 October 1825, RCM.
\textsuperscript{738} G to M, 26 September 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/40.
\textsuperscript{739} See William A'Court to George Chinnery, 18 March 1825, Fisher, in which he makes enquiries about the £50 from the sale of his Madrid furniture, and hopes that Lamb will buy the rest.
gentlemanlike sufficiency\textsuperscript{741} – such as the coveted British consulship in Paris. Canning was clearly appreciative of George’s many talents, not the least of which was his fluency in all the commonly-used European languages. Canning was the first British Foreign Minister to recognise the importance of a knowledge of modern languages in the conduct of diplomacy, and had made a point of learning French, a language he had not been familiar with at university. (Castlereagh, who had never learned French, had conducted all his European negotiations between 1815 and 1822 with interpreters.) A remark that George had made in June 1825 making reference to ‘the importance which Mr Canning is said to attach to a knowledge of the Spanish language’ – especially in view of the fact that he had just ‘opened a New Spanish World’\textsuperscript{742} – shows Canning’s continuing awareness of the need for British diplomats to know the language of the country they were dealing with.

It was not only George’s linguistic talents that Canning came to appreciate after their ten-year-long association. He also knew him to be an honest and dependable hard worker. The fact that Canning, a busy Cabinet Minister who was labouring under the dual burden of work pressure and his own health problems, found time to write himself the letter to Margaret that contained the dreadful news, says much about his regard for George. The final words of his letter testify to the general esteem in which George was held: ‘He has left among them [his colleagues in Madrid], and among all with whom the business of this office had brought him into contact, the sincerest regret for his loss, and esteem for his character.’\textsuperscript{743}

\textsuperscript{740} George Chinnery to Joseph Planta (copy), 5 July 1824, Fisher.
\textsuperscript{741} G to M, 29 June 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/28.
\textsuperscript{742} G to M, 9 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/65.
\textsuperscript{743} George Canning to Margaret Chinnery, 31 October 1825, RCM.
A copy of George Chinnery’s will, made on 23 November 1823 before leaving for Spain, and proven on 26 February 1826, exists in the Powerhouse collection. The executors of his will were ‘two of my oldest and truest friends’ John Charles Herries and Sir Charles William Flint. All his property was left to his mother, ‘my Father being so circumstanced as not to be able to hold any property in his own person or name’. In the case of his parents’ death, it was to go to Matilda Hodgson his cousin.

Three letters of condolence survive, the first from the French diplomat Caraman, the second from the Chinnerys’ former neighbours and close friends in Epping Forest the Sothebys, and the third from the Duke of Cambridge. All knew of the pains that Margaret had taken with her son’s education, and of the exceptionally close relationship between mother and son that had resulted from it. And all respected George for the morally upright adult that he had grown into. The former representative of the Richelieu Ministry in London, Georges de Caraman, now on a posting at Stuttgart, spoke of Margaret’s devotion to her son and of the high regard in which she was held by her large circle of friends: ‘Il n’y a pas de consolation à offrir à une mère et surtout à une mère telle que vous, Madame, après une telle perte; mais l’intérêt véritable de vos nombreux et sincères amis pourra peut-être apporter quelqu’adoucissement à vos peines.’ Mary Sotheby, wife of the writer William Sotheby, also paid Margaret a compliment in emphasising George’s honest life, writing ‘believe me no one sympathizes more sincerely with you & M’ Chinnery in your sorrow, for which I presume to offer no consolation but that we have reason to hope a young man who had lead a virtuous life will be far happier than aught this life could have afforded him.’

Adolphus Frederick repeats the above tributes, and mentions the regard that Canning had for George. His closeness to the Chinnery family comes through clearly in the letter. He writes from Hanover:

My dear Mrs Chinnery,

You will, I have no doubt, have been surprized, and indeed, I may add, hurt, at not having heard from me sooner after the great misfortune which has befallen you, but

744 Margaret Chinnery, Legal Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 11/30.
745 Georges de Caraman to Margaret Chinnery, 19 November [1825], Fisher.
746 Mary Sotheby to Margaret Chinnery, 16 January 1826, Fisher.
when I assure you that it was not till this morning that I received by the English Mail of the 10th the information where you were, I am confident that I shall stand excused in your eyes.

Indeed the very moment after I had read in the newspapers the melancholy account of poor George’s death I wrote to enquire where I was to direct my letter as I had understood that you were not in England, and it is only this morning that I received an answer that you were at Paris, and that I was to send my letter to M' Planta.

Much as I regret this delay, it so far has been attended with that advantage to me that I have learnt from the Individual to whom I applied that full justice had been done by Mr Canning to your Son’s merits; and I know that this will be the greatest comfort you can feel, and the only one in addition to Religion which will sooth you in your affliction.

As for myself, you know my dear Mrs Chinnery how I have loved poor dear George from a boy, and therefore you can not doubt how sincerely I regret his loss both in a public and private view, and I flatter myself that you know me well enough to be convinced that I never forget my old friends, and that everything which concerns them must deeply interest me.

Among them I have always looked upon you as one of the first, and believe me that neither separation nor time can make any difference in my sentiments towards you, and that far or near you will ever find me

My dear Mrs Chinnery
Yours truly, most sincerely
Adolphus Frederick

(Adolphus Frederick to Margaret Chinnery, 17 March 1826, Fisher)

The envelope is addressed in the Duke’s hand ‘Mrs Chinnery, Paris’, and franked ‘Cambridge’. Another hand (perhaps Planta’s) added the address ‘Rue pigal n° 2’.

Margaret had now lost all three of her children, and the lengthy correspondences which had necessarily occupied a large part of her life ceased. She and William settled down to what must have seemed to her a barren life in Paris. It is difficult to piece together their existence from the dozen or so remaining letters in the Chinnery collection that post-date George’s death. But it is clear that the large network of admirers and supporters that she had attracted over a lifetime did not abandon her, and that although parenthood ceased, friendship did not. It is largely George’s letters to his mother from Madrid that give a clue to the extent of the network. What emerges from them, as well as from the few subsequent letters, is a picture of a woman with a circle of friends who still cared about her welfare, who still appreciated her intelligent mind, and
who, most importantly, continued to remain in contact with her. William too, had ongoing friendships, so that their life appears to have been filled, if not fulfilled, right into old age.

Well-wishers in France included the diplomat Rayneval and his wife, who had received mail from England for the Chinnerys over the past few years; Osmond the ex-diplomat who owned a property in the environs of Châtillon and was ‘a faithful neighbour’; Saint Sauveur, of the French military nobility who owned a château in the country from where Margaret procured her carriages and who had come to Madrid in May 1824 to take his turn (albeit reluctantly) as ‘an Officier of the Garde du Corps in the duties of the Army of Occupation’; the Chevalier de Ladébat, who also spent time in Madrid and carried a letter for Margaret on his departure (6 August 1824); the artist Madame Vigée Lebrun, who had had her own room at Margaret’s Châtillon house; and old musical friends such as Cécile Cherubini, Pierre Rode and Madame Catalani and her family.

As well as their French friends, William’s and Margaret’s circle of acquaintance in France included those impoverished Englishmen who could live on a reduced income abroad more comfortably than in England. Among the latter were William Spencer, whose debts had eventually overtaken him and forced him to leave England, and the Marsh family, who had sought refuge in Paris after their bankruptcy, and whose descendants appear to have lived much in France. Another Englishman (or rather an English resident of Genoese descent) who had means enough to purchase a run-down château going cheaply was Lord Grimaldi. Nor did many well-to-do English compatriots, such as the new British ambassador and ambassadress at Paris Lord and

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747 In a very affectionate letter from Alexandrine de Rayneval to Margaret Chinnery (11 September 1825, Fisher), she informs Margaret of their imminent departure to Switzerland to take up a diplomatic posting, congratulates Margaret on the sale of her Châtillon home, and suggests Caire as a refuge where she would find rents and the cost of living low, yet society good.

748 G to M, 26 October 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/43.

749 G to M, 20 May 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/23.

750 George wrote to Margaret: ‘You can have no idea with how much comfort small English families, on reduced incomes, have lived at Tours, Blois, & Orleans’ (G to M, 9 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/65).

751 In George’s letter to Margaret of 25 August 1825 (PM 94/143/1 – 12/71) he had written: ‘It was indeed a surprise to hear that Mr Spencer was at Calais & had given up the Stamp Office; but I conclude & heartily trust that he has a retired allowance; & if, poor man, every sixpence that he can possess were not committed to pay off old debts he might still be happy & at his ease on such a pension.’

752 Possibly Stacey Grimaldi (1790-1863), antiquary, or a member of the same family. See Grimaldi to William Chinnery, 27 July 1826, Fisher.
Lady Granville—former guests of the Chinnerys at Gillwell—forget Margaret or ignore William, whose misdemeanours were by now as good as obliterated from the collective English memory.

Friends in England who remained faithful included George’s godfather, Sir Charles Flint; the kind-hearted John Charles Herries who had helped George begin his career; Maria Staniforth, who was a witness to the document of transfer of George’s assets to his mother; and the Smyths, whose son Henry had been admitted into Christ Church by George’s recommendation to the Dean. As far as their own family was concerned, many members had died: Aunt (Bridget) Holland, wife of the architect Henry Holland in September 1823, and Richard Holland in the winter of 1824-25. Fanny Long and her husband were still alive, although their son had died earlier. ‘Little Margaret’ Chinnery had married Captain Charles Girardot in c. 1822 and was living in England. By 1824 she had two children and her husband was a Recruiting Officer based at Aldborough on the Suffolk coast.

There are letters from most of the above-mentioned friends and family in the Fisher collection, and all prove that Margaret was esteemed by men and women alike. The women’s letters are without exception warm and affectionate, and Madame Vigée-Lebrun in particular wrote of a special empathy she felt towards Margaret, which is rather reminiscent of the rapport that had existed between Madame de Genlis and Margaret. The 1833 letter is signed ‘à toujours a vous tendrement attachée, Le Brun.’

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753 Lord Granville Leveson-Gower’s marriage to Lady Harriet Elizabeth Cavendish, second daughter of William, the fifth Duke of Devonshire (and relative of William Spencer) in October 1809, is spoken of in two Chinnery letters (M to G, 19 November 1809, Ch.Ch.; and Caroline Chinnery to William Spencer, 25 October 1809, Fisher).

754 William and Margaret were invited to the ambassadorial ball in Paris in May 1825. Only William attended. (See G to M, 28 May 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/63, and William’s poem in Osborn fd. 11, item 33.)

755 Margaret Chinnery’s Legal Papers, PM 94/143/1 – 11/30.

756 G to M, 15 December 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/47. George wrote that his aunt had informed him that there was little hope of ‘our excellent relative Mr Richard Holland surviving the winter that we have just entered upon.’

757 Fanny Long, wife of Captain Long, was Margaret’s cousin (See G to M, 5 June 1821, Fisher, and Fanny Long to William, 11 December 1823,Fisher). She lived in Hans Place and her husband was the rent-collector for the Hans Place housing estate built by Margaret’s uncle Henry Holland (See G to M, 31 July 1823, Fisher). She appears to have been one of the five daughters of the latter.

758 G to M, 6 August 1824, PM 94/143/1 – 12/33. George reported that Margaret was ‘about to have another infant, which, knowing the narrowness of their means, I regret to hear.’

759 She wrote: ‘tout ce que vous me mandes je l’éprouve de même, ce sentiment est une vraie sympathie’, (Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun to Margaret Chinnery, 7 July 1816, Fisher).

760 Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun to Margaret Chinnery, 2 January [1833?], Fisher.
It is evident from the different addresses on Margaret’s mail, that she and William moved house in Paris at least twice. The apartment that Margaret described to George in her letter of 21 October 1825 appears to have been at 2 rue Pigalle, the address to which the Duke of Cambridge’s letter was sent. One year later they were at 88 rue du Faubourg-Saint-Martin, the address on the cover of a letter sent by Isabella Sotheby. A letter from Mary Sotheby shortly after was addressed to Margaret at 88 rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honoré, but these two look suspiciously like the same address. The last of Madame Vigée-Lebrun’s letters to Margaret (1833) was addressed to ‘grande rue verte, n° 8, Fb St Honore’ (probably yet another variation of the above address). In addition, William and Margaret appear to have purchased another French country property. In Lord Grimaldi’s letter to William of 27 July 1826 he hoped that the Chinnerys had comfortably established themselves in their ‘new chateau’.

There are three Sotheby letters that post-date George’s death – two from Mary Sotheby and one from her daughter-in-law Isabella, who married Hans, George’s old playmate at Gillwell. They give mostly family news, include a small debt for the maintenance of a shrine in the gardens of Gillwell (either Walter’s urn or Caroline’s column), and the second letter from Mary Sotheby talks of her husband’s continuing literary activity. According to his wife, William Sotheby still had the same ebullient personality of yore: ‘He has the same vivacity, can still walk eight miles without being over tired, and can still write a prologue in a short time. He ‘has lately been occupied with Editing a Virgil in six languages, Latin, english, Spanish Italian German & French. it is a large Quarto, & will be a very handsome Book.’

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761 M to G, 21 October 1825, Fisher. The apartment belonged to the prefect of Versailles, M. Destouches, who wanted 6,000 francs per annum. Margaret offered 4,000 and he accepted. The apartment had many small parquetted rooms, ‘fitted richly with glasses & handsome chimney pieces’, but needed redecorating.

762 Isabella Sotheby to Margaret Chinnery, 1 March 1827, Fisher, and Mary Sotheby to Margaret Chinnery, c. 1827, Fisher.


764 At the time of Walter’s death Margaret had erected in his memory a stone urn, which she filled daily with flowers. Mary Sotheby wrote in her 1827 letter: ‘The sad memorial is in perfect preservation’.

Two other letters testify to Margaret’s continuing interest in current publications, and one to much more than just a passing interest. One is from the barrister-at-law and Catholic apologist Charles Butler, and shows that Margaret had written to him praising his work and expressing interest in having his Reminiscences translated into French. In his reply Butler said that it would be ‘highly gratifying’ to him if any of his books ‘should be translated into French and coming into the world [sic] and be published under your auspices.’ Was Margaret now a patron of learned authors, as she had been patron of an unknown playwright at Tunbridge in 1811? It is unlikely that she meant to undertake the work of translation herself—although it would have been a stimulating exercise for her now that a large amount of her time had been freed of lengthy correspondences. It is more likely that she arranged for the translation and publication of Butler’s work through her extensive connections in Paris. Butler suggested two more of his works that he thought might be successfully translated into French ‘The Revolution of the German Empire’, and ‘The History of the Gallican Church during the reign of Louis XIV ans XV and the French Revolution.’ His letter, dated 12 May 1831, and sent from Lincoln Inn, was addressed to ‘Mrs Chinnery, 89 Snargate Street, Dover’, where Margaret may have been staying en route to France. It is curious that Margaret continued to travel back and forth to England considering that William was unable to accompany her, and that she had no immediate family there. It may have been her strong friendships that drew her back, or it may have simply been her quintessential Englishness that made her feel more comfortable in her homeland, especially as she grew older. The advent of steam packets in 1821 made the cross-Channel journey less miserable than in the days of sail, but it was still an arduous voyage for an elderly woman.

That Margaret was more comfortable in Britain than in France was made clear in George’s letters from Spain. They were full of discussion of her continuing disputes

766 Charles Butler (1750-1832), Catholic and legal writer.
768 Works by Butler mentioned in this letter include Memoir of the Life of Henry-Francis d’Aguesseau (Murray: London, 1830), Hora Biblicae (printed for private circulation: London, 1797), and A Continuation of the Rev. Alban Butler’s Lives of the Saints (Keating and Brown: London, 1823). The last two had already been translated into French.
with French servants who were disloyal and dishonest, and of the difficulties of persuading a good English lady’s maid to come to France. In addition, her interest in British affairs was still as lively as ever. In 1831 Butler wrote to her of the fledgling Reform Movement: ‘The public feeling for Reform among the middle, and even the highest ranks of society, is surprisingly strong and extensive. It has not yet produced [...] excesses, and it is yet lawful, so I hope nothing but good from it, it is however a new and unexpected event, and the consequences of it cannot now be foreseen.’

Margaret’s mind, like Madame de Genlis’s, remained active throughout her life. At sixty-six, as an 1831 letter from an unidentified woman proves, she had lost none of her interest in education, and was closely involved in the education of a six-year-old girl. The young child in question, who called Margaret ‘g de Maman’, was most probably Matilda’s eldest, a daughter born on Christmas Day 1824, and who, like her mother, had been sent to England to be educated. The writer of the letter, a governess, is clearly frustrated by Margaret’s interference in and criticism of her management of the child’s education. The person is a French-speaker and an old friend judging by her remark that she would like to ‘voir durer les relations d’amitié et de Société qui ont existé depuis longtemps entre nous’.

William had died in 1827, but the only mention of it is in an 1834 letter (in French) from an unidentified diplomat writing from London to Margaret in Paris in December 1834 regretting the death of Margaret’s old diplomatic friend Baron de Pfeffel, and indicating that he had been ignorant of the death of William Chinnery.

One of the last letters in the Chinnery collection is dated 12 April 1837. It is from Evan Greene in England and is addressed to his sister Mary Greene at 19 rue de Lille, Faubourg St Germain, Paris. It concerns a search he has carried out in England for Margaret ‘respecting Leonard Tresilian’s affairs’. It also encloses a letter from his brother William, and a short note from [William’s wife?] Sophie. As well as giving information on the letters of administration on Margaret’s father’s death and his burial place, the letter describes the life of the Greene brothers. Evan H. Greene is a wine

770 Charles Butler to Margaret Chinnery, 12 May 1831, Fisher.
771 George mentions the date of birth of Matilda’s first-born in his letter, G to M, 9 June 1825, PM 94/143/1 – 12/65.
772 Unsigned letter to Margaret Chinnery, 12 February 1831, Fisher. It may have been from the Chinnery children’s old governess, Mademoiselle Virginie Lorraine, returned to undertake the education of the next generation.
merchant, and lives in Islington. William Greene and his young family live in Basingstoke, in Hampshire, and he has employment with an English dentist, but would like to begin a business marketing medicinal drugs in France.

The Greenes are clearly relatives of Margaret, and a clue to their relationship to her may be found in the Osborn collection at Yale University. Among the poetry in that collection are the verses penned by Margaret's niece, 'M.[artha]M.[arsh]' when Margaret's sister and her family sought refuge at Châtillon at the time of William Marsh's bankruptcy. In the same collection is a love poem from 'Henry' to 'Martha', written on their betrothal. If 'Martha' is allowed to be Martha Marsh, and the man she married Henry Greene, then William, Evan and Mary might have been their children. Alternatively, it might have been Martha's sister Georgina Marsh who married a Greene. In either case, William, Evan and Mary would have been Margaret's grand-nephews and grand-niece. This hypothesis is strengthened by correspondence to be found in the collection of Viotti Papers in the Royal Academy of Music, London. The Chinnery relative Algernon Greene, who gave some of his family's letters to Heron-Allen, described himself as the grand-nephew of Caroline Chinnery. He may well have been the son of William Greene.

The last two letters in the CFP collection are dated August 1843, after Margaret's death, and are addressed to Miss Mary Greene at 13 Cambridge Street, Hyde Park, London. They are both from the aide-de-camp of Prince Albert, Sir Henry Bishop, asking for Madame Cherubini's address in Paris. Sir Henry said he had also written to 'Mme Ch.', but did not know if the letter had reached her. By 1843 Margaret had been dead for three years. The existence of these letters in the Chinnery family papers after the death of Margaret would indicate that Mary Greene was the inheritor-

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773 The letter, dated 16 December 1834, is from a friend of M. de Pfeffel, the late Bavarian Minister in London (Fisher).
774 Evan Greene to Mary Greene, 12 April 1837, PM 94/143/1 – 11/31.
775 See Introduction, p. 4. E. Van der Straeten ('Viottiana', The Connoisseur, November 1911, p. 155), says that Algernon Greene lived at Surbiton. The 1881 Surrey census index lists an Algernon Greene then living in Egham, a small town on the Thames not far from Windsor. He was then aged 38 (therefore born in 1843), and is described as an unmarried copper smelter from Basingstoke, Hampshire. The coincidence of William Greene's also living at Basingstoke is too great to be ignored.
776 Albert Francis Charles Augustus Emmanuel, Prince Consort of England (1819-1861).
777 Perhaps the son of Sir Henry Rowley Bishop (1786-1855), musical composer who had studied under Viotti's old friend Bianchi.
custodian of the family papers. Three sets of undated verse addressed to Miss Mary Greene from an admirer in Paris\textsuperscript{778} add further proof that this was so.

Here the correspondence ends. The collection of the Chinnery Family Papers – in all its rich and interesting detail – owes its survival largely to the woman who kept this dislocated family together by treasuring and preserving the letters of its various members. Correspondence is born of absence. Margaret Chinnery’s strong sense of family loyalty and affection bound the family together then, and ensured the preservation of its memory today.

\textsuperscript{778} Miscellaneous Verse, PM 94/143/1 – 32/11, 32/12, 32/14.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has aimed to bring to light a hitherto largely unexplored collection of private papers belonging to a family, who, although playing no centre-stage role in the history and culture of their era, had close ties with people who did. Viotti in the field of music, Madame de Genlis in the field of education, and Canning in the field of British politics are the three most important eighteenth century personalities whose unpublished letters figure in the collection, but there are many others. The three main areas of interest in the CFP collection – music (treated in Part I of the thesis), education (treated in Part II) and the workings of the British civil service in the first quarter of the nineteenth century (treated in Part III) – are divisions that arise naturally from the subject matter, and they overlap and merge in different places. The focus is on the Chinnery family and the context in which they lived, rather than on developing these topics. The main connecting thread of the subject matter is the history of the family itself. In an attempt to keep to the above-mentioned three broad avenues and to avoid too many distracting divergences, it has not been possible to explore the myriad of side-streets and alleyways that hold still more fascinating subjects to be explored – subjects ranging from finance, medicine, art, cuisine, housing, London transport services, Channel crossings, social conventions and niceties, right down to the trivia of daily life, including the availability of certain basic commodities in London and Paris, qualities looked for in a lady’s maid, the manner of presenting meals, ways of helping servants’ relatives obtain posts, and many more of the everyday minutiae that do not usually find a place in history books.

As the sorting and deciphering of this voluminous amount of material progressed, it became clear that a choice had to be made between an in-depth treatment of any one of the three identified themes or a comprehensive presentation of all the material. The decision was made to opt for a discursive account of the material in its entirety rather than to engage in an exhaustive study of any one or all of the areas of interest identified, that is, to provide a coherent presentation of an originally inchoate mass of material. This decision has necessarily had two results – that of extending the thesis to great length, and of inhibiting further expansion of the three themes identified. It is hoped that by presenting the material in the way chosen future scholars will be enabled to undertake more specific research into the various themes raised, be they
Viotti’s influence on later generations of violinists and composers, educational theory and practice in the early nineteenth century, the use and abuse of patronage in the nineteenth century, the history of travel, or any of a host of others.

The defining characteristic of the Chinnery Family Papers is their cross-Channel interest. They are valuable not only for the lively and limpid view they afford of domestic events (the explosion of interest in music in London in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the madness of George III, the trial of Queen Caroline) and personalities (musicians, writers, artists, collectors, parliamentarians, members of the royal family and prominent aristocrats) in England, but also for their equally bright illumination of different French identities, notably of musicians, artists, of the cultured literati, of the many exilés that were in England during the Revolution — especially those attached to the Comte de Provence (future Louis XVIII) and to his brother the Comte d’Artois — and of representatives of the French Government and members of the French court — both Napoleonic and post-Restoration Bourbon. The large number of foreign diplomats’ letters in the CFP collection contribute considerably to the cross-Channel interest.

The preservation of all this valuable material is due, in the first instance, to the matriarch of the family, Margaret Chinnery, an intelligent and cultured person, who was also intensely Francophile. Intimate cross-Channel friendships were forged by what her contemporaries would have called her ‘liberality’. Her love of French literature and her interest in education was responsible for her friendship with Madame de Genlis, and her love of music was, in the first instance, the reason for her relationship with Viotti and for the admission of his many musical colleagues into her home. Likewise, her love of the fine arts (shared with William Chinnery) led to a lifelong friendship with Madame Vigée-Lebrun. In addition, the career of her husband in the Treasury, and that of her son in the Foreign Office, facilitated contact with leading British and French politicians.

The correspondence takes place against a backdrop of tumultuous historical events, from the French Revolution through the Napoleonic wars and the Restoration years. But what these Papers show us is not so much a historio-political relationship between two countries — although they do this as well — as a relationship between two peoples on the most intimate of levels. The papers throw light on lives both famous and ignored. They document moments in history trivial and sublime, but above all depict the human side of every moment.
As the Chinnery story unfolds, the reader of the letters is constantly surprised by the many coincidences of acquaintance on both sides of the Channel. Just how small the society was in which the aristocratic classes of England and France moved, is brought home by the many common links of friendship uncovered by the letters. For example the circle of musical acquaintance of Madame de Genlis overlapped with that of Margaret Chinnery long before they met. And the conscious cultivation of what were considered to be ‘refined’ tastes by the liberally educated English aristocracy – which coincided largely with those of the French upper classes – meant that there were many overlapping circles of interest here too. Amateur musicians, classical translators, gentlemen versifiers and connoisseurs and collectors abounded in both societies, a mix of these accomplishments frequently being found in the one person. The large number of French émigrés in England during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic years meant that the upper classes of these two countries – together with their cultures – mingled as never before. The ties that already bound members of the French and British aristocracy were strengthened, and even members of opposing regimes found that their common tastes transcended politics. Diplomatic representatives traditionally belonged to the upper class, irrespective of the regime they were serving, and this fact, rather than any bond of nationality, forged the links that are so noticeable in the Chinnery letters.

It was the separation of the family members which gave birth to the correspondence, and so it followed that when they were re-united or died, the correspondence died also. With the death of Viotti in 1824, and of George Chinnery in 1825, the two longest series of letters in the CFP collection were brought to an end. Although there are isolated letters after that date that throw some light on Margaret and William Chinnery’s subsequent life, 1825 marks the real end of the Chinnery family correspondence.

It was exciting to discover such a large and rich collection of (for the most part) forgotten manuscripts, and it has been intensely satisfying putting the far-flung pieces of the jigsaw back together again. There may well be still more pieces lying undiscovered somewhere in the world.\(^1\) However, as it stands, the CFP collection with its more than 8,000 pages of manuscript is a remarkably coherent and complete collection.

\(^1\) Since the completion of the thesis further Chinnery material auctioned by Sotheby’s on 19 December 1962 (lot 776) has come to light. A discussion and full inventory of this material will be found in a forthcoming article by Frances Barulich, a reference specialist in the Music Division of the New York
Public Library, to appear in the music journal *Fontes Artis Musicae*. It was not possible to include references to the content of this material in the revised thesis, but the lot number has been included below in 'Works Consulted' (under Sotheby and Co) so that all the relevant lot numbers in Sotheby auctions of Chinnery material are made known to future researchers.
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William Bassett Chinnery's name is abbreviated to WBC, Margaret Chinnery's to MC, George Robert Chinnery's to GRC and Caroline Chinnery's to CC. William Robert Spencer's name is abbreviated to WRS and Giovanni Battista Viotti's to Viotti. Christ Church College is abbreviated to Ch.Ch.

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