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**“In the way to do some good”:
The Charitable Donations of Mary Mee,
Viscountess Palmerston**

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial
fulfilment of the degree of MA in Eighteenth Century Studies
by taught course.

September 2013

For Alexander Iain
and
Cornelius Patrick

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Morgan Swan and Joshua Shaw of the Rauner Special Collections at Dartmouth College for their help providing me with copies of the letters from Count Rumford to Lady Palmerston.; the staff of the University of Southampton Archives and Special Collections for their patience and help sourcing documents and my colleagues at the Hartley Library for being so understanding of my odd hours during the course of my MA.

I would also like to thank all the lecturers and tutors on the Eighteenth Century Studies MA for their support and encouragement. In particular, my supervisor, Prof. Davis Brown for putting up with my crises of confidence over my ability to write a coherent dissertation with a story to tell. If I haven't managed it, it isn't for want of his advice.

And last but by no means least, I would like to thank my family for being so supportive during the whole process: few spouses would stand by and be so encouraging of their partners when they decided that combining maternity leave and part-time study was good idea, but Nick Gibbins didn't blanch, he has been a stalwart, a willing research assistant and excellent proof-reader; Alex has entered into the spirit of the eighteenth century in the way only a six year old can and also been very tolerant of his mum working at night; and finally Cory, whose arrival provided the excuse and opportunity for me to undertake this study, who has sat (and fed) through several seminars and charmed everyone he has met.

Naming Conventions

Mary, Viscountess Palmerston, will always be referred to by her maiden name, Mary Mee, to avoid confusion with the second viscount's first wife, Frances Poole. Where Lord Palmerston or Palmerston is mentioned, this will always refer to the second viscount, Mary Mee's husband, and not her eldest son, the future prime minister, who will be referred to as Harry Temple throughout.

Georgiana, wife of the 1st Earl Spencer, will be referred to Lady Spencer throughout, although technically she was the Dowager Countess Spencer after October 1783. Where the Lavinia, wife of the 2nd Earl Spencer, is mentioned, she will be listed as Lavina, Countess Spencer.

BR is the Broadlands Archive at the University of Southampton.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation sets out to examine the possible motivations and uses to which Mary Mee, 2nd Viscountess Palmerston, put her charitable donations; in particular to examine if she used her charitable giving to increase her social and symbolic capital with her social peers and to exercise social control of those beneath her in the social order.

Mary Mee was one of three children of the Bath and London-based merchant, Benjamin Mee. She married Henry Temple, the 2nd Viscount Palmerston, in January 1783, aged 28. Her husband was fourteen years her elder and had been married previously but his first wife had died following the stillbirth of their only child. Mee and Palmerston had met through a shared relative, William Godschall, and had known each other for several years until romance bloomed after they were both involved in a carriage accident. The marriage was a happy one and they had five children, four of whom survived to adulthood.

Descriptions of her in the historical literature invariably discuss her in the context of her male relatives. There has been no serious consideration of her since Connell's biography of her husband in the 1950s.¹ She is frequently characterised as being a social butterfly, a clinging mother and friend, pleasant but little more, and unsure of herself and her place in society. Chamberlain states that in her early widowhood "she plunged into a yet more feverish social whirl" while Bourne says of the same period that she cut "rather a pathetic figure. As the daughter of a merchant and a second wife she seems to have felt unequal to her husband's rank and his recollections of his first wife".² The entry for her son in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB), calls her a "colourless figure" which is rather at odds of contemporary descriptions

¹ Brian Connell, *Portrait of a Whig Peer* (London: Deutsch, 1957).

² M. E. Chamberlain, *Lord Palmerston, Political Portraits* (Cardiff: GPC, 1987), p. 16. Kenneth Bourne, *Palmerston: The Early Years, 1784-1841* (London: Allen Lane, 1982), p. 2.

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of her as a vivacious hostess.³ In many of the accounts there is more than a hint of either snobbery or misogyny or both.

Where she does appear in the literature in her own right is in a few local histories of Romsey, where she founded a non-denominational, free 'School of Industry' for local girls. At various times boys were also admitted to the lower years (starting as young as two). As well as being taught to read and write, the pupils were taught to knit, sew and spin and earned money from the work they did. Lady Palmerston entirely funded the school, and her account books and letters show she took a close interest in both its administration and the pupils. This rather serious and thoughtful activity is somewhat at odds with the descriptions of her in the most of the biographies of her son, where she seems to contribute little more to his upbringing but a sense of congeniality.⁴

Research Questions

Given the descriptions of the viscountess as lacking social confidence, combined with her active interest in her charitable foundation, certain questions spring to mind regarding the motivations behind Mary Mee's charitable interests.

Did Mary Mee use her charity work as social and symbolic capital to bolster her aristocratic status after her marriage? As the daughter and sister of a merchant (and not even a great heiress), Mee lacked social capital (and was relatively poor in economic capital) compared to peeresses who were themselves relatives of peers. Bourdieu defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition", or rather not what you know or what you can buy, but who you know and how you know them.⁵ Symbolic capital captures an individual's worth in terms of prestige and social honour, Mee was also lacking in symbolic

³ David Steele, 'Temple, Henry John, third Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2009 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27112>> [accessed 6 June 2013]

⁴ Pat Genge, Jessica Spinney, and Lower Test Valley Archaeological Study Group., *Romsey Schools 900 until 1940* (Romsey: LTVAS, 1991), pp. 17-21.

⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital (Trans. Richard Nice)', in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. by J.G. Richardson (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 241-58 (p. 248).

capital at the start of her marriage; she inherited some of her husband's but had little of her own.

Increasing her own capital would reflect back on that of her family, so a related question of whether she supported local causes in order to bolster her family's influence, particularly their political influence, in the region.

One method to increase both social and symbolic capital was to become a philanthropist. Charity was fashionable in the eighteenth century; large charity events were often the place to see and be seen, and as Prochaska notes, some women may have seen charitable giving as a fashionable enterprise and "a celebration of property".⁶ Did Mee give to charity to match her fellow peeresses? This in turn leads to a series of sub-questions: did Mee give to the 'fashionable' causes?; did her pattern of donations reflect those of other aristocratic ladies?; were her charitable interests typical for an aristocrat or did she favour charities generally supported by the mercantile classes?

Bourdieu regards gift giving, as in charity, an act of symbolic violence. Symbolic violence is the imposition of culture in such a way that it is experienced as legitimate by all involved.⁷ People misrecognise the power relations involved and see treatment such as being treated as inferior, denied social mobility, as 'the natural order of things'. This misrecognition, which can also include the perpetrator's misrecognising the violence they are inflicting as benevolence, is key to the operation of symbolic violence and its ability to perpetrate cultural norms. It is an expression of symbolic power (also called soft power) and impels the recipient of any gift to attempt to reciprocate in kind, usually through behaviour.⁸ Thus the poor could and were complicit in the production of behaviours which 'reinscribed' their subservient position.⁹ D.T. Andrew's work on the charities of eighteenth century London suggests there was a gradual change of motivation over the course of the century from

⁶ Sarah Lloyd, 'Pleasing Spectacles and Elegant Dinners: Conviviality, Benevolence, and Charity Anniversaries in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 41(1) (2002), 23-57; F.K. Prochaska, 'Women in English Philanthropy, 1790-1830', *International Review of Social History*, 19(3) (1974), 426-45.

⁷ Richard Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 104.

⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).

⁹ Jen Webb, Tony Schirato, and Geoff Danaher, *Understanding Bourdieu* (London: Sage, 2002), p. 25.

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concern to ease the conditions of the poor, to a concern also to improve the morals of society, to 'police' the recipients of that charity. E.P. Thompson takes the less benign view that charities were endowed by the middling and upper sections of society to ensure the lower orders were kept content and supine in their place.¹⁰ A second question is therefore did Mee support causes in order to 'manage' society? Did she use her school as a way of enforcing her own moral views?

Structure

The dissertation will start with an overview of the literature, in particular the historical depiction of Mary Mee, the historiographical debate concerning gender in the eighteenth century and the practice of charity and philanthropy throughout the 1700s and early 1800s.

The following chapter will look at the donations and areas of activity as recorded in Mee's two charity books, covering the years 1797-1805. The books list donations (both monetary and in kind) and expenses related to charities, people (both local pensioners, estate workers, friends, French émigrés and family) and her school. The smaller book also contains a detailed list of memorials given after her husband's death. In addition other sources such as letters, the Household account books and newspaper reports will be used to build up a more complete picture of her activities. Missing causes, such as electioneering and abolition will also be discussed.

The fourth chapter will look in detail at her establishments in Romsey, namely her School of Industry in Romsey and her soup shop, discussing their place in the context of eighteenth century scientific philanthropy.

The final chapter will draw together and discuss the concepts of symbolic violence, and symbolic and social capital in relation to Mee's philanthropic activities in comparison with her peers.

¹⁰ D. T. Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police: London Charity in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980)

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Who was Mary Mee?

Mary Mee was born in 1755, the daughter of Benjamin Mee, a Gloucestershire merchant who had moved to London and was based at 34 Fenchurch Street. She was of solid merchant stock, well-off but not an heiress of great fortune. Through her mother she was related to the Godschalls, who in turn were related by marriage to the Temple family.¹ The Mees were also related to stalwarts of the evangelical revival, the Raikes and the Thorntons.²

From the moment of her death she has been misrepresented: her obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* states she had only one son.³ Although little is known of Mee's early life, she was not brought up in Dublin as claimed by Ashley (and repeated unquestionably by Judd in his 1975 popular history), nor did she nurse an injured Viscount Palmerston back to health.⁴ The circumstances of their courtship were almost exactly the reverse of the fable: on 10th October 1782 Palmerston overturned his phaeton near Stoneham (north of Southampton) in which he was driving Mee and her elder sister, Sarah Culverden. Mee's elbow was dislocated and a repentant Palmerston started a correspondence with her which developed into a courtship.⁵ They married less than three months later in January 1783.

The Temples were not a wealthy family in comparison with other aristocrats. Their annual income was at most £19,000p.a. during their marriage. The Temples had a tradition of marrying mercantile heiresses, although not very rich ones. Palmerston's grandmother was the daughter of a governor of the Bank of England, his step-grandmother the widow of a wealthy pewterer and merchant, and his mother, daughter of a Lord Mayor of London. Socially, they

¹ Connell, p. 96.

² Bourne, p. 2.

³ *Gentleman's Magazine*, v.97, part 1, 1805, p. 97.

⁴ Anthony Evelyn Melbourne Ashley, *The Life and Correspondence of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston*. 2 vols (London: R. Bentley & Son, 1879), vol 1, p. 4 ; Denis Judd, *Palmerston, [British Prime Ministers]* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975), p. 2.

⁵ Connell, p. 139.

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were an aristocratic family but with strong familial ties to the mercantile and gentry classes.

There has been no published biography of Mee although she does play a major role in Connell's *A Portrait of a Whig Peer*, a biography of her husband. Connell's work is also the most sympathetic of the Temple biographers, describing the Viscountess as "a witty and enchanting woman".⁶ Other biographers are more equivocal in their descriptions but frequently with little evidence to back up their assertions. Bourne, in his biography of her elder son, describes Mee as "a lively and affectionate person" but while conceding she never attracted scandal, calls her rather indiscriminating in her company, and even appears to contradict himself a few lines later by stating any gossip against her only came from "a most malicious and unreliable" source. Presumably the indiscriminating comment is based on Lord Minto's comments that, in the final year of her life, she surrounded herself with a "herd of toadies, abigail and dependents".⁷ He also claims it is obvious that she felt out of her depth in the aristocratic milieu but gives no evidence for this. Steele's ODNB entry for the 3rd Viscount takes up this theme, claiming she was "never quite at ease among the aristocracy".⁸ He also calls her "a rather colourless figure beside her much older husband", a judgement at complete variance to numerous contemporary descriptions of her as a charming and vivacious hostess.⁹

Mee had five children in relatively quick succession: Henry (Harry) was born in 1784, Frances (Fanny) in 1786, William in 1788, Mary in 1789 and finally Elizabeth (Lilly) in 1790. Mary died in her third year as the result of a smallpox inoculation but the rest of her siblings survived into adulthood. Mee and Palmerston created a loving and happy home of their children. Their letters to each other constantly mention the "infantry's" doings (and illnesses) in the midst of political conversations and reports of adult activities. Both parents were closely involved in their children's upbringing, even if frequently they acted as single parents while the other was away. However certain activities

⁶ Connell, p. 143.

⁷ Bourne, pp. 2 & 37.

⁸ Steele, para. 1.

⁹ Connell, pp. 166 & 251.



Figure 1: Portrait of Mary Mee, 1801 by Mary Tate (reproduced from Connell)

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were seen as essential for both to attend: in April 1789 while Mee was in Bath nursing her mother, Palmerston wrote that Harry (4) and Fanny (3) had been invited to a children's party but declined as he didn't think they should make their entrance into "the gay world" in her absence.¹⁰ Mee's own letters to Harry, while he was away at school, are affectionate and frequently teasing.

Her relationship with her husband was warm and loving, despite their frequent separation. Her letters and diary entries after his sudden death in 1802 vividly express her grief. She came out of mourning for one last full season in the spring of 1804 when her eldest daughter was 18 but by then she already knew she was ill.¹¹ She died on 20th January 1805, possibly of uterine cancer.

Lack of interest in her and her family imbue many of the written accounts of her: Judd's unthinking repetition of an old, and previously disproved, story of her courtship; Steele's perverse description of her as colourless at complete odds with all other characterisations; Bourne's assertion that she was uneasy in aristocratic circles; Smith's entry for her husband in the ODNB conflates her father and brother.¹² Mee is not only written out of the historical record as anything other than an adjunct to the males in her family, when she does appear she is frequently misrepresented. Whether this is down to active misogyny, inherent snobbery or merely unthinking sexism, the result is the same; she is shown as largely irrelevant to the dynamics of her family.

Yet this is a woman who was obviously no wallflower: she had held out for a lovestruck match, not marrying until she was 28.¹³ She was not a political mover and shaker like some of her friends, such as the dowager Countess Spencer and her daughters, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire and Elizabeth, Countess of Bessborough, nor yet her successor as Viscountess Palmerston, Emily Lamb, but she was an intimate of the great and the good (the Princess of Wales called on her) and she regularly featured in the society columns, both attending

¹⁰ BR 20/6/9 Letter from Lord Palmerston, 10th April 1789.

¹¹ BR 18/5/5/138-40 Letter to Emma Godfrey, 4 May 1804. Mee mentions she is receiving treatment for an 'enlargement of the womb'.

¹² E. A. Smith, 'Temple, Henry, Second Viscount Palmerston (1739-1802)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/271111>> [Accessed 6 June 2013].

¹³ BR 21/8/19 Letter to Harry Temple, 23rd April 1802. In this letter to her eldest son, written in her early widowhood, she claims she fell in love with the second viscount when she was 16.

entertainments and entertaining (see appendix 1). She was not a writer nor a historian like Catherine Macauley but, like her husband, she was well connected with intellectual circles and counted Count Rumford, Sir Joshua Banks, the Berry sisters, Miss Carter and Mrs Cholmeley among her friends, and was one of the lady patronesses of the Royal Institution.¹⁴ Her letters are full of political news and frequently note scientific developments, comets she was following, books she was reading as well as family news and social gossip. She also founded a school for industry and her patronage of the establishment appears to have been entirely and completely of her own volition rather than at the behest of her male relatives.

Women, rank and charity in the 1700s

Mee was a female, aristocratic philanthropist in a society stressed by changing economic and political conditions.

The late eighteenth- and early nineteenth- century has been called the 'Age of Revolutions'. The truism covers a veritable cornucopia of revolutions from the political (the American and French revolutions), through the technical of the industrial and agricultural to the social including the rise of a print culture, the evangelical revival, the explosion in voluntary associations and the rise of the cults of sensibility and the domestic. Yet despite these revolutions and changes, the 1790s still had much in common with the 1690s.

Patronage was still a strong force in the late eighteenth century. It permeated every level of society. The Old Corruption ensured that those in positions of power remained in power and were able to favour and promote those who could be relied upon to support them. Patronage, another manifestation of symbolic violence, reinforced the prevailing culture and was accepted as normal. Social mobility decreased rather than increased as the century wore on. Entry into the peerage was jealously guarded. Authors at the time suggested that ruling elite was open to newcomers who had proved themselves in their own fields of endeavour, however the figures do not bear this out.¹⁵

¹⁴ Bourne, p. 4; 'News', *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 19-21 March 1800.

¹⁵ For example see chapter 23 of Daniel Defoe, *The Compleat English Tradesman* (London, 1726); Lawrence Stone, and Jeanne C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite? England, 1540-1880* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 247-251.

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The aristocracy was tight-knit, inter-related community. Marriages between the mercantile elite and the aristocracy declined over the course of the century. In the 1780s Mee was an exception marrying into a title, although she would have been in a significant minority had her marriage taken place sixty years earlier.¹⁶ Aristocratic daughters, especially those with the honorific 'Lady', rarely married outside the aristocracy, often preferring to remain single rather than marry down.¹⁷ Meanwhile, mercantile elites regularly married their children, male and female, into the county gentry landed elites.¹⁸

The total number of titled individuals in England was miniscule compared to other European states.¹⁹ The number of peers in the House of Lords remained fairly constant throughout the century until Pitt's flurry of new creations towards the end of the century; primogeniture meant extinctions and new creations roughly balanced out (Table 1).²⁰

1720	1740	1760	1780	1800
190	183	181	189	267

Table 1: Number of peers on 1st January 1720-1800

Bestowing Irish titles, even on families with little or no connection with Ireland, also kept the numbers of peers in Parliament low while rewarding endeavour with social prestige. However alongside the overt distinctions between the ranks of peerage (duke, marquis, earl, viscount, baron), there was a covert pecking order based on how recently a family had been ennobled. Although it usually dissipated within a generation or two, many aristocrats were sniffy

¹⁶ The percentage dropped from a high of 34% in the first quarter to less than 20% in the final quarter of the century. Douglas Hay, and Nicholas Rogers, *Eighteenth-Century English Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 39.

¹⁷ Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Society*. Rev. edn (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 56; John Rule, *Albion's People* (London: Longman, 1992), p. 51.

¹⁸ Rule, *Albion's People*, p. 53.

¹⁹ Linda Colley, *Britons. Forging the Nation 1708-1837*. Rev. edn (London: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 39.

²⁰ J. Cannon, *An Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984), p.15 as quoted in Rule, *Albion's People*, p. 32.

about those new to the ermine, and of the new titles, the Irish were perceived to be at the bottom.²¹

Downward mobility was common; the excess sons of the landowning elite went into the navy, army, government service and, increasingly, the church. A few went into trade (primarily as greater merchants or overseas traders), adding a layer to the gentry and providing aristocratic connections into the urban, mercantile classes.

Georgian society was almost schizophrenic in its attitude to titles. The freedom of the 'true-born Englishman' was emphasised and the lack of deference to the aristocracy celebrated (and frequently commented upon by foreign visitors).²² Elizabeth Bennett might have declared herself an equal to the much richer, earl's grandson Darcy as both were the children of gentlemen, but hers was a romantic fairytale. Rank and position were jealously guarded and snobbery was rife.²³ The widespread adoption of the mantra of politeness led to a general fuzziness as to who was whom; it became more difficult to read the rank of strangers through their dress and behaviour.²⁴ As incomes rose in the lower half of society, complaints also rose about "the perpetual restless ambition in each of the inferior ranks to raise themselves to the level of those immediately above them" and commenters worried "the present vogue of imitating the manners of the high-life hath spread itself so far among the gentefolk of lower-life that in a few years we shall probably have no common people at all".²⁵ People strove to cling onto their status making use of whatever

²¹ Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman 1689-1798* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 512; W. Stafford, 'Representations of the Social Order in the Gentleman's Magazine, 1785-1815', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 33(2) (2009), 64-9; Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660-1730* (London: Methuen, 1989), p. 157.

²² Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 66.

²³ Langford, *Public Life*, p. 515-517.

²⁴ Lawrence E. Klein, 'Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal*, 45(4) (2002), 869-98 (p.897); Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society: Britain 1660-1800* (Harlow: Pearson Education: Longman, 2001); Penelope J. Corfield, 'Dress for Deference and Dissent: Hats and the Decline of Hat Honour', *Costume*, 23(1) (1989), 64-79.

²⁵ Nathaniel Forester, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Present High Price of Provisions* (London: J. Fletcher and Co., 1767), p. 41; 'The Affection Good Breeding, and an over-Pressing Civility, Censured, as Being Troublesome and Ridiculous', *British Magazine*, 4 (1763), p. 417 as quoted in J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 226.

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capital (social, economic or political) they had access to; connections had to be maintained with those higher up the pecking order and anxiety over possible social faux pas was high, lest a connection be severed.

Much print was expended in trying to quantify and describe their society: three major surveys took place in 1688, 1759 and 1803.²⁶ Some writers suggested divisions based on a matrix of birth and capital, resulting in several categories (Defoe had seven). Others took a more clear-cut view of society, dividing it into two; those who worked with their hands and those who employed others (these were not proto-Marxist analyses and should not be seen as anything but expressions of an extreme utilitarian or rational viewpoint).²⁷ Notwithstanding these contemporary descriptions of their society, most Georgians still thought of themselves as part of the 'great chain of being' in which circle encircled circle.²⁸ Subtle distinctions divided one circle from the next and "shaped a social order whose gross inequalities were landscaped in gentle gradients rather than in giant steps".²⁹

Historians since, however, have been preoccupied as to whether Georgian society had two classes (plebeians and patricians) as described by E.P. Thompson or three classes (working, middle and upper), as favoured by Peter Earle, Asa Briggs, Peter Borsay and Penelope Corfield.³⁰ Yet other historians, such as Jonathan Clark, do not recognise a rising middle class and see the society as more granular, allowing for limited movement up and down but still economically dominated by the landed elite.³¹

Habermas saw the 1700s as the birthplace of the 'public sphere' in which the ruler's power and state authority was "publicly monitored through informed and critical discourse by the people" in contrast to the sphere of public authority (the State) and the private sphere (business and trade, governed by

²⁶ Porter, *English Society*, p. 48; Peter Matthias, 'Social Structure in the Eighteenth Century: A Calculation by Joseph Massie', *Economic History Review* (n.s.), 10(1) (1957), 30-45.

²⁷ P. J. Corfield, 'Class by Name and Number in 18th-Century Britain', *History*, 72(234) (1987), 38-61 (p.38).

²⁸ Corfield, *Class*, p. 103.

²⁹ Porter, *English Society*, pp. 49 & 69

³⁰ Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Asa Briggs, 'Middle-Class Consciouness in English Politics, 1780-1846', *Past and Present* 9(1) (1956), 65-74; Corfield, *Class*; Peter Earle, *Middle Class*.

³¹ Clark, *English Society*.

the individual rather than the state).³² The rise of voluntary associations was an intrinsic part of Habermas's public sphere model. Societies provided arenas for the disenfranchised wealthy to circumvent their lack of political power and their increasing local influence led to their values eventually dominating public discourse. The increase in all types of voluntary societies, including associative charities, has been seen as part of an urban revival, the expression of aspirant middling ranks.³³ Public charity was an "articulation of social difference" and an "arena in which [social] boundaries were made, tested, and reinforced".³⁴

Habermas's model has been criticised for its lack of engagement with religious identity, a glaring omission in the context of the Anglican evangelical revival.³⁵ The evangelical revival of the late 1780s onwards, the increasing religiosity which emphasised biblical faith, personal conversion and piety, was led by the plutocratic elite Clapham Sect.³⁶ Evangelicals were often socially conservative and their influence can be seen in many of the voluntary associations founded in the mid- to late-eighteenth century. Hannah More was one evangelical writer on charity who believed in the controlling power of philanthropy; the poor and lower orders had to be kept in their place.³⁷

Charity and philanthropy had been construed as a moral rent on property; as Bishop Butler preached "the Rich, then, are charged by natural providence, as much as by revealed appointment with the care of the poor."³⁸ Charity was still very much in the gift of the rich, landowning interests; the giving of charity was an expression of power. The 1700s saw massive growth in the numbers of charities, it was "an Age of Benevolence", claimed Hannah More.³⁹ The growth

³² Habermas was first translated into English in 1989. Jürgen Habermas, Thomas Burger, and Frederick Lawrence, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere : An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* ([London]: Polity, 1989).

³³ Borsay; P. J. Corfield, *The Impact of English Towns 1700-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982); Earle, *Middle Class*; R. J. Morris, 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites, 1780-1850: An Analysis', *The Historical Journal*, 26(1) (1983), 95-118.

³⁴ Mary E. Fissell, *Patients, Poor, and the Poor in Eighteenth-Century Bristol* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) pp. 87-88.

³⁵ Jane Rendall, 'Women and the Public Sphere', *Gender & History*, 11(3) (1999), 475-88 (p.483).

³⁶ Porter, *English Society*, p.308.

³⁷ Mona Scheuermann, 'Hannah More and the English Poor', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 25(5) (2001), 237-51.

³⁸ Sermon to the London Corporation, 1740 in *The Works of Joseph Butler*, ed. W.E. Gladstone, as quoted in Asa Briggs, p.65.

³⁹ As quoted in M. G. Jones, *The Charity School Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), p. 3.

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of associative, subscription charities led to a democratisation of charity; the middle ranks of society were able, by subscribing to charities, to take part in a social obligation that previously had been restricted to the elite.

Charities aimed to improve the morals of the population (to police) to make society more stable and more industrious and, buoyed by the evangelical revival, to build the foundations of a new Christian Britain.⁴⁰ For much of the century, there was little thought given to whether a charitable action was for the religious or social benefit of the recipient; the virtuous circle meant that such a distinction was arbitrary.⁴¹

There was considerable dissatisfaction with state organised Poor Law relief and a widespread belief that “charity voluntarily administered by reasonable citizens would be more effective than relief from the parish poor rates”.⁴² The Poor Law placed a duty of care on each parish to support all paupers who were settled within the parish. Despite calls by Enlightenment philosophers such as Hume and Smith, that labourers should be paid a good living wage to cushion against adversity, many agreed with Arthur Young that “everyone but an idiot knows that the lower class must be kept poor or they will never be industrious”.⁴³ Relief was spent on topping up the wages of the labouring poor rather than on supporting orphans and foundlings or those who could no longer work due to age or infirmity. From the mid-century onwards Poor Law relief costs started to spiral upwards (see Table 2).

⁴⁰ Andrew, *Police*; F. M. Dodsworth, 'The Idea of Police in Eighteenth-Century England: Discipline, Reformation, Superintendence, C. 1780-1800', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 69(4) (2008), 583-604.

⁴¹ F. K. Prochaska, *Royal Bounty: The Making of a Welfare Monarchy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 3.

⁴² For examples from both sides of the debate Joseph Townsend, *A Dissertation on the Poor Laws* (London: C. Dilly, 1786); Fredrick Morton Eden, *The State of the Poor*. 3 vols (London: J. Davis, B. & J. White; G. G. & J. Robinson; T. Payne; R. Faulder; T. Egerton; J. Debrett; and D. Bremner, 1797); Jeremy Bentham, 'Pauper Management Improved, Originally Published as Situation and Relief of the Poor', *Annals of Agriculture*, XXIX (1798), 393-426.; Sir Matthew Decker, director of the East India Company & Tory MP as quoted in Andrew, *Philanthropy*, p. 27.

⁴³ Coats A. W., 'Economic Thought and Poor Law Policy in the Eighteenth Century', *Economic History Review*, 13(1) (1960), 39-51, p. 44; Arthur Young, *The Famer's Tour through the East of England* (1771) vol. 4, p. 361 as quoted in Roy Porter, *Enlightenment* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 377.

Year	Expenditure (£)
1700	600,000
1776	1,500,000
1786	2,000,000
1803	4,200,000

Table 2: Poor Law Costs 1700-1803⁴⁴

Poor Law relief, indeed any alms given without the need to reciprocate, was felt to encourage idleness and being “highly detrimental to public œconomy”.⁴⁵ Many parishes tried to counter this by running workhouses or houses of industry for the unemployed poor. These in turn were attacked as destroying “the bonds of domestic feeling among the poor”, or, more pragmatically, costing a great deal of money and succeeding in very little except killing off or weakening their inhabitants and keeping the poor from view.⁴⁶

As large-scale associative charities increased, there was also a rise in calls to maintain a personal connection between donor and recipient.⁴⁷ Malthus articulated this when he called for close monitoring of claimants on charities; the close, personal attention from charity workers would create a bond of reciprocity between the giver and receiver.⁴⁸ In this Malthus was pre-empting the Bourdieusian theory of reciprocity, wherein the recipient is forced, by social

⁴⁴ Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 376.

⁴⁵ William Man Godschall, *A General Plan of Parochial and Provincial Police* (London: Messrs. T. Payne and Son; J. Robson and W. Clarke; G.G.J. and J. Robinson; and J. and S. Russell, 1787), p. 26.

⁴⁶ Samantha Webb, 'Wordsworth, Count Rumford, and Poverty', *Wordsworth Circle*, 63(1) (2012), 29-35 (p. 29); Jonah Hanway calculated that a child aged 3 or under sent to a London workhouse would, on average, survive only a month. Porter, *English Society*, p. 131-132.

⁴⁷ Langford, *Public*, p.572.

⁴⁸ Thomas Malthus, *Essay on Population*, Book IV, ch. 5 as quoted in Michael J D Roberts, 'Head Versus Heart? Voluntary Associations and Charity Organization in England C.1700-1850', in *Charity, Philanthropy and Reform : From the 1690s to 1850*, ed. by Hugh Cunningham and Joanna Innes (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 66-86 (p. 74).

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expectations, to repay the charity in some form, for example, conforming to the behavioural expectations of the giver. As a form of symbolic violence, charity could act in the direct opposition to the interests of the recipient and in the interests of the giver by reinforcing inequality, yet it would be misrecognised by both the donor and recipient as beneficial to both.⁴⁹ Thus “the giving and receiving of alms became increasingly *a symbolic and exemplary exercise*, as much an act of control as relief”.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the recipients of charity did not always behave as the givers wanted.⁵¹

Charity was no longer a purely private affair; published subscription lists were used as adverts for the charity, listing not only the donors but also the amount given. Would-be donors could be shamed into subscribing in order not to be conspicuous by their absence.⁵² Patrician subscribers were frequently sought to add social cachet. Charities allowed the middle rank subscribers to network with each other, to make business connections, to exert social power, and to bask in reflected glory regardless of how much they individually gave.⁵³ The annual dinner for major donors was frequently preceded by a church service during the day, with choreographed displays of deference by the recipients of charity to their benefactors.⁵⁴ Those for London-based charities were often prominent features in the social calendar, and on at least one occasion a Royal review was rescheduled to avoid a clash with the Charity Schools parade.⁵⁵

The increasing socially conservative and moral overtones attached to charitable activities led Thompson to claim “the humanitarian tradition became warped beyond recognition”.⁵⁶ Porter saw donors as being driven by a variety of motivations depending on their philosophical background.⁵⁷ However Prochaska stated “the conservative nature of much late eighteenth- and early

⁴⁹ Webb, Schirato, and Danaher, pp. 22-24.

⁵⁰ Borsay, p. 296.

⁵¹ Lloyd, *Pleasing Spectacles*, p. 38.

⁵² D T J Bellenger, 'Fearless Resting Place': The Exiled French Clergy in Great Britain, 1789-1815', in *The French Émigrés in Europe and the Struggle against Revolution, 1789-1814*, ed. by Kirsty Carpenter and Philip Mansel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), pp. 214-229 (p.219).

⁵³ Morris, Earle, Borsay.

⁵⁴ Sarah Lloyd, 'Pleasure's Golden Bait: Poverty and the Magdalen Hospital in Eighteenth-Century London', *History Workshop Journal*, 41 (1996), 51-70 (p. 56).

⁵⁵ Sarah Lloyd, *Pleasing Spectacles*, p. 25.

⁵⁶ Thompson, *Working Class*, p. 61.

⁵⁷ Porter, *English Society*, p. 301.

nineteenth-century charity is indisputable” and Borsay saw philanthropy as “provid[ing] an altruistic façade behind which to pursue self-centred ambition”.⁵⁸

At the time many were aware of the self-interested motives of some donors. Mandeville most famously railed against the insincerity of public shows of charity, claiming “pride and vanity have built more hospitals than all virtues together”.⁵⁹ Several decades later a French visitor commentated: “l'ostentation et la vanité ... tous ces actes de bienfaisance”.⁶⁰

Women were not immune to the social benefits of charitable associations. Some women may have seen charitable giving as a fashionable enterprise, or a salve to their conscience, and single women, in particular, may have used active involvement in charity as a means to offset prejudice against their marital position or an escape from boredom.⁶¹ However many more were motivated by the perceived feminine virtues of compassion and tenderness and felt their contributions, both monetary and physical, as a virtuous duty.⁶² The activities of Queens Charlotte and Caroline were important in the acceptance of female philanthropy.⁶³ Hannah More declared, “Charity is the calling of a lady; the case of the poor is her profession, [her vocation was] instructing the poor, as the grand means of saving the nation”.⁶⁴

The level of charitable support by women is disputed. Some studies have identified only 10% of subscribers as female, however others have found levels nearer 30%.⁶⁵ In all studies the number of women are probably underestimated,

⁵⁸ Borsay, p. 252, Prochaska, *Women*, p. 440

⁵⁹ Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The Second Edition, Enlarged with Many Additions. As Also an Essay on Charity and Charity Schools*. 2nd edn (London: Edmund Parker, 1723), p. 294.

⁶⁰ As quoted in Prochaska, *Royal Bounty*, p. 33.

⁶¹ Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal*, 36 (1993), 383-414, p. 399; Prochaska, *Women*, p. 441.

⁶² Prochaska, *Women*, p. 432; Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Womens' Lives in Georgian England* (London: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 254.

⁶³ Prochaska, *Royal Bounty*, p. 14.

⁶⁴ Hannah More, *Cœlebs in Search of a Wife* 2 vols (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808), ch. 28.

⁶⁵ Leonore Davidoff, and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), p. 432; Fissell, p. 91, Clare Midgley, *Women against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870* (London: Routledge, 1992) p. 17; Prochaska, *Women*, p. 429-430.

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not only due to some donations being anonymous (many of which will have been by women), but also because female donations will often be rolled into household subscriptions which will be listed under the (male) householder's name.⁶⁶

Donating was not the only way women were involved in charities. The extent to which a woman was involved was dependent on her social rank as well as her own inclinations. Although in general voluntary organisations tended towards homo-sociability at the turn of the century, some charities did have separate women's committees to organise fundraising from other women or to undertake some of the more day-to-day activities.⁶⁷ The more elite a woman was, the more likely her involvement would be as a patron or committee member, the lower a woman's rank, the more likely she was to undertake day-to-day tasks.⁶⁸

Yet according to the generally received idea, she should have been content to stay at home planning social events given that, as Lawrence Stone succinctly described it, "the wives of the middle and upper ranks of society increasingly became idle drones".⁶⁹ The impression that middling and elite women were being pushed out of public life and kept in the realm of the domestic was reinforced by Davidoff and Hall's influential work, *Family Fortunes*. They saw the rise of a distinct, highly moral, middle class culture in the late 1700s as crucial to the separation of male and female spheres. For them, Hannah More gave the clarion call for this new bourgeoisie, for her "the emphasis is on sexual difference".⁷⁰

While there was a distinct change in the tone in which women were discussed from the start of the century to its close, the ideas Davidoff and Hall emphasis

⁶⁶ Lady Spencer is on record as saying she would donate anonymously to those causes where she felt she didn't know enough about the cause to lend it her name. Donna Andrew, 'Noblesse Oblige. Female Charity in an Age of Sentiment', in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. by John Brewer and Susan Staves (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 275-300 (p. 281); Kathryn Gleadle, *Borderline Citizens: Women, Gender and Political Culture in Britain, 1815-1867* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2009), pp. 125-126.

⁶⁷ Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (London: Longman, 1998), p. 268.

⁶⁸ Roberts, p. 77; Prochaska, *Women*, pp. 432-433.

⁶⁹ Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 396.

⁷⁰ Davidoff and Hall, p. 171

in their reading of the contemporary literature were not new; they can be found in Addison and Steele.⁷¹ However, in the same period, both Daniel Defoe and Mary Wray, following Lockean ideas of the rational individual, argued that men and women had equal understanding and although both accepted the primacy of the male in the legal sense, neither saw that that as equating to women being relegated to the domestic.⁷²

Davidoff and Hall also followed the traditional view that the Industrial Revolution acted as a catalyst for the development of separate spheres; women's work was devalued in the family economy as paid work moved outside the home. While this view can hold true for developed industrial societies, late eighteenth-century England was still only an early industrial society. Most manufacturing was based in the home, using the 'putting-out' system, and subsequent studies have shown that in many cases labouring women's earning capacity increased during this period before factories took over.⁷³ Women ran businesses such as lodging houses, coffee house, milliners, grocers, booksellers, schools just as much at the end of the century as they had at the beginning.⁷⁴

The major change in the concept of gender during the eighteenth century was the adoption of a new 'scientific' understanding of the biological differences between men and women from a one-sex model to a two-sex model, with accompanying gradual shifts in attitudes to female virtues and capacities. The one-sex model saw men and women as different forms of the same sex;

⁷¹ Marlene LeGates, 'The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 10(1) (1976), 21-39; Vickery, *Spheres*, p. 398.

⁷² D.L. Simonton, '*The Education and Training of Eighteenth-Century English Girls, with Special Reference to the Working Class*', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Essex, 1988), pp. 18-20.

⁷³ E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: 1789-1848* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1962), p.37; Maxine Berg, 'What Difference Did Women's Work Make to the Industrial Revolution?', *History Workshop Journal*, 35 (1993) 22-44; Shoemaker, pp. 147 & 171.

⁷⁴ Hannah Barker, 'Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution: Female Involvement in the English Printing Trades, C.1700-1800', in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (London: Longman, 1997), pp. 81-100 (p. 81); Corfield, *English Towns*, p. 63-64; J.R. Oldfield, 'Private Schools and Academies in Eighteenth Century Hampshire', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, 65 (1989), 147-156; Susan Steed, 'Women Teachers and the Expansion of Girls' Schooling in England C. 1760-1820', in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (London: Longman, 1997), pp. 126-47.

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women were imperfect versions of men, their sexual organs simply an inversion of male sexual organs. Thus, like men, they could be lustful; conception was thought to only be possible following orgasm by both parties. The two-sex model, where women were seen as a distinct, separate sex, led to ideas that women were different from men in every conceivable manner.⁷⁵ Women were cast as sexually passive, fulfilled not by the sexual act but by childbearing and motherhood. As women came to be seen as less sexually aggressive, female faults (vanity, capriciousness and so on) were blamed on a lack of education rather than passionate urges.⁷⁶ How best to educate girls became a major point of debate.⁷⁷

By the 1790s the rhetoric of the domestic, civilising woman had become the dominant paradigm. It was reproduced in conduct books, newspaper reports, stereotypes and archetypes in cartoons, and in women's biographies and obituaries.⁷⁸ This emphasis on the domestic was reflected in women's periodicals; sections on science and politics were dropped or contracted in favour of items on cookery and childcare.⁷⁹ Although it could also be limiting and cast any activity beyond the uber-domestic as unnatural, many women embraced this greater emphasis on the woman as the guardian of domestic virtues, and the extended role as guardian of the nation's morals.⁸⁰ The home became to be associated with a "moral retreat from a corrupt world".⁸¹

However the gap between what was written and reality could be quite wide. Married women had more legal agency than theoretically allowed and private

⁷⁵ Karen Harvey, 'The Century of Sex? Gender, Bodies, and Sexuality in the Long Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal*, 45(4) (2002), 899-916; M. Mckeon, 'Historicizing Patriarchy, the Emergence of Gender Difference in England, 1660-1760', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 28(3) (1995), 295-322 (p. 301); Ruth Watts, 'Whose Knowledge? Gender, Education, Science and History', *History of Education*, 36(3) (2007), 283-302 (p. 288).

⁷⁶ Shoemaker, p.33.

⁷⁷ Simonton, pp.102-110.

⁷⁸ Stephen Howard, "'A Bright Pattern to All Her Sex': Representations of Women in Periodical and Newspaper Biography", in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations, and Responsibilities*, ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (London: Longman, 1997), pp. 230-49.

⁷⁹ Shoemaker, p.40; Simonton, p.25.

⁸⁰ For example, Dror Wahrman, 'Percy's Prologue: From Gender Play to Gender Panic in Eighteenth-Century England', *Past & Present*, 159(1) (1998), 113-60 (p. 134).

⁸¹ Shoemaker, p. 34.

writings show a “strong complementary and companionate ethos”.⁸² Women who did not meet the high ideals of conduct books cannot be assumed to be transgressive.⁸³ Women legitimately appeared in the public sphere as part of a patriotic display, leading fundraising and making speeches for the war effort.⁸⁴ Women frequently canvassed during elections without censure and some female freeholders even voted in local elections.⁸⁵ They actively engaged in political movements and were instrumental in boycotts.⁸⁶ The sheer presence of literature calling for women to stay in the domestic realm is testament that they were not confined to the domestic.⁸⁷ Women as diametrically opposed as the conservative Hannah More and radical Mary Wollstonecraft accepted and used the rhetoric of the cult of domesticity.⁸⁸ Through this ‘submissive acceptance’, by embracing it openly in their work, they were able to subvert the perceived constraints on women’s behaviour and abilities and justify their non-domestic activities. The cult of domesticity was not a true reflection of the lives of middle class women and even less so of their elite and plebeian sisters.⁸⁹

A woman formally took her husband’s rank on marriage thus gender was not always the primary difference; rank was privileged “over gender as the primary demarcation of inclusion”.⁹⁰ Patrician women were able to outrank non-patrician males in many arenas and had access and influence on Habermas’s sphere of public authority which was simply not available to middling and

⁸² LeGates, p. 25; L. E. Klein, 'Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the 18th-Century - Some Questions About Evidence and Analytic Procedure', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 29(1) (1995), 97-109 (p. 101); Margot Finn, 'Women, Consumption and Coverture in England, C. 1760-1860', *The Historical Journal*, 39(3) (1996), 703-22 (p. 714).

⁸³ Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (London: Hutchinson, 1982), p. 92.

⁸⁴ Colley, *Britons*, p. 266; Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 51.

⁸⁵ Rendall, pp. 484-485; Elaine Chalus, 'Women, Electoral Privilege and Practice in the Eighteenth Century', in *Women in British Politics, 1760-1860: The Power of the Petticoat*, ed. by Kathryn Gleadle and Sarah Richardson (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp. 19-38 (pp. 21-22).

⁸⁶ Oldfield, *Anti-Slavery*, p.139; Migdeley, p.39.

⁸⁷ Colley, *Britons*, p.281.

⁸⁸ Mitzi Myers, 'Reform or Ruin: "A Reform in Female Manners"', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 23(11) (1994), 119-216.

⁸⁹ Vickery, *Separate Spheres*; Patty Seleski, 'Women, Work and Cultural Change in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century London', in *Popular Culture in England c1500-1850* ed. by Tim Harris (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 143-67.

⁹⁰ Wilson, p. 77; Klein, *Gender*, pp.98-100.

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lower ranks. However in settings where all participants were of the same rank, then rank would outweigh gender, and where all the participants were of the same gender and ostensibly the same rank, then the subtle gradations and snobberies would come into play.

At the bottom of the heap, however it was divided and no matter how fine the gradations, were the labouring poor and paupers. And at the bottom of those, were usually women.⁹¹ As Janet Todd succinctly put it, "at the bottom levels of the rural population where most women existed, life was a remorseless struggle against poverty, a foraging for food and firewood, and an unremitting war against disease and lice".⁹² And there they and their children would stay unless someone else gave them an opportunity to work at a well-paid rather than underpaid job, or for an education.

The evangelical revival (and its criticism of loose aristocratic values), the rise of the cult of domesticity, and the greater value placed on middle class and mercantile values of prudence, sobriety, politeness led to the ruling elite, in part, taking on these attributes. The gradual change in the balance of aristocracy and plutocracy can be seen in the trend for younger sons of the nobility and landowners to take legal qualifications without ever planning to practice law. They were seeking social capital by 'appropriat[ing] the status symbols of their erstwhile challengers, rather than the other way around'.⁹³

The multifaceted aspects of Georgian society may be better described using Bourdieusian terms of capital rather than Marxist concepts of patricians and plebeians, nor yet a nineteenth century, three class system. Great merchants could be rich in economic capital but relatively low in social capital compared to some gentry who could be very rich in social capital and connections yet poor in economic capital.

⁹¹ Richard Connors, 'Poor Women, the Parish and the Politics of Poverty', in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, ed. by Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (London: Longman, 1997), pp. 126-47. Connors estimates 80% of paupers receiving parish relief were women.

⁹² Janet Todd 'The belaced and the beliced', *THES*, 16th Feb 1996 as quoted in Richard Connors, p. 127.

⁹³ Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People? : England 1783-1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 133.

Mee was a viscountess but she was only the second viscountess and although the Temple family had been knights before they were viscounts, and were a cadet branch of the family that went on to become English dukes, they still held an Irish title of fairly recent origin. She herself was from a non-aristocratic background; her paternal family had only just moved to London, her maternal family had a longer and more illustrious city pedigree but although they might have villas and small country estates, they were still highly involved in city business. Mee's social position and social capital was thus more precarious than it might at first seem.

Women tended to marry within their class, or slightly above ('a good marriage'). A woman who married beneath herself was subject to approbation by her peers and, indeed, greater society for going against the order of things. While men could marry women several ranks beneath them (both in reality and in literature) the same luxury of choice was not acceded to women. To marry a man of lesser economic or social status went against the prevailing ideals of women desiring the best for their children, it violated the ideas of women being non-sexual and governed by their caring virtues rather than their sexual desires. Conversely women who married up socially, had to strive to show they deserved their husband's regard. The cult of domesticity and the increasing disdain for arranged, mercenary marriages left women who had jumped several nice distinctions of rank, at the mercy of gossips who resented their 'success'.

Notions of charity were also closely bound up with ideas about the correct order of society. Although it would be wrong to brush every charitable endeavour with the arch conservatism of Hannah More, there was always a practical element to philanthropy throughout the 1700s and all charitable efforts took place within a consensus regarding the overall structure of society.

Mee's philanthropic activities would have allowed her to exert her power as an aristocratic and member of the landed elite on those below her in the social order. They could also, if she chose, garner her social credit for behaving as a peeress ought to behave. What she did and how she exploited her actions will be examined in the following chapters.

Chapter 3: Noblesse Oblige

With property came obligations: the rich were responsible for the poor as part of the Great Chain of Being that linked the lowest pauper all the way up to God. Aristocrats sat only below the monarch in the great chain. The monarch had the care of the country, the aristocrat, the care of the county. Failure to meet one's obligations would lead to social disgrace; while improvers were often ridiculed for their constant harking on new developments, landowners who paid no attention to their estates and left them to rack and ruin were also castigated in the Press.¹ The wives of landowners had a role in providing welfare to those under their care. This would extend beyond the immediate household, beyond even tenants, to those who lived in the area surrounding the estate. Aristocrats had economic, political and social capital invested in the good management of their estates; failure to run their estates well and attend to the accepted norms of behaviour would have a detrimental effect on their perceived capital.² For wives, most of the capital they had invested personally was social capital as they were dependent on their husbands for economic capital, and although they could influence the political capital of their husbands or sons, they technically had none of their own.

In the eighteenth century, most people accepted the prevailing social order; the strong belief in the duty of the rich to care for those lower down the social order in their geographical area, reinforced the status quo. The giving of alms or other forms of charity carried an implicit expectation that the receiver would at least be grateful and would confirm to the expectations placed upon them. The public display of such charity, the "theatre of power", emphasised the landowners place at the top of the local pecking order, bolstering the self-worth of those who did not need the charity and obligating those who did.³ This use of charity as a form of symbolic violence was seen an important tool in the maintenance of social order, and replication of culture.

¹ Rule, *Albion's People*, p. 43.

² *ibid*, p. 38.

³ Porter, *English Society*, p. 65.

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Therefore local aristocratic philanthropy benefitted not only the aristocrat by maintaining their reputation by doing the correct, expected behaviour, but it also reinforced ideas of social obligation upon all ranks.

Mee did not have a predecessor in whose sure footsteps she could follow. Broadlands had only been the family seat since 1736 and there had only been viscountesses for half of that time. Her mother-in-law, Mrs Temple, lived at East Sheen and had never been doyenne at Broadlands. There were no local traditions tied to her office as mistress of Broadlands.⁴ Few letters survive from the early days of her marriage, so to whom she turned for advice is unknown, or if indeed she did turn to anyone for advice as to how to behave and what to do.

Account books

The main sources of information about Mary Mee's charitable giving are her two account books covering the years 1797-1804.

Unfortunately Mee is not a consistent book-keeper, nor a neat one.⁵ The first book starts in 1797, has no entries for 1798, and restarts in January 1799.⁶ Entries continue sporadically for 1800 and 1801. There are seven entries for 1802 before moving onto 1803 and then continuing until February 1804. The second book starts a few weeks after the death of her husband on 16th April 1802 and mainly consists of details of the memorials given away until September 1802 when the entries begin to mention other expenditure. Entries for the book continue until May 1803, meaning that during 1803 Mee was swapping between both books

⁴ Not all landowners were so lucky; see Sir Joshua Banks's complaints. Porter, *English Society*, p. 66.

⁵ Her handwriting is frequently illegible, a fact her son often complained about to his sisters. BR 24/2/6 Letter from Harry Temple to Fanny Temple, 1st March 1801.

⁶ BR 18/2/1 Account Book 1799-1803. The book itself is leather bound with marbled inside covers. It had been used for something previously as the first ten pages have been carefully cut out. Although the spine has 'account book' in embossed gold letters, the pages are blank, without printed accounting columns.

Charity	Annual Subscription Rate (£.s.d)	Active Subscription
Lying-in Hospital	3.3.0	1785
Charitable Society	3.3.0	1786-
St Georges Hospital	5.5.0	1787-
Mortlake Charity Sermon	3.3.0	1795, 1798
Society for Exploring Africa	5.5.0	1790-
Widow's Bread, Sheen	3.13.2-6.10.6	1792-
Relief of the Poor, Sheen	10.10.10	1792-

Table 3: Household Charitable Subscriptions 1785-1798⁷

Some of Mee's letters to friends and family and her engagement diaries for 1799 and 1803 are also extant and mention her charitable interests.⁸ Other sources for charitable expenditure can be found in household account books; namely the account book of travelling and sundry expenses, covering 1775-85 (in a servant's hand) and the general account book, 1780-98 (in Lord Palmerston's hand).⁹ The general accounts start three years before Palmerston's marriage to Mee and continue until four years before his death. All Palmerston's household expenditure is listed from Lady Palmerston's quarterly allowance, covering annuities for her mother and other family retainers through spending on newspapers, candles, parmesan cheeses and seltzer water from Mr Schweppe to opera and club subscriptions, charitable donations and taxes.

Mee's charity books are important as they show which donations she made in her own name at her own instigation. Frequently it is difficult to find evidence

⁷ Subscription information taken from BR 12/2/8 and BR 12/2/11.

⁸ BR 18/1/4 diary for 1799; BR 18/1/5 diary for 1803.

⁹ BR 12/2/8 Account Book 1775-1785 and BR 12/2/11 General Account Book 1780-1798.

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Date	Charity	£.s.d
January 1795	Relief of the Poor at Romsey	15.15.0
January 1795	Relief of the Poor at Sheen	10.10.0
October 1796	Society for the Internal Defence of the Country	100.0.0
November 1796	Relief of the Poor at Winchester	20.0.0
April 1796	For the Provision of bread to the Poor at Reasonable Prices, Winchester	100.0.0 ¹⁰
August 1797	Native Poor of Winchester	3.3.0
October 1797	Seamen's widows and families ¹¹	10.10.0

Table 4: Household one-off donations 1795-1797

of any female charitable donations as often the head of the household is the only name listed on subscription lists.¹² Yet the householder may only be acting on the wishes of other household members; it is simply not possible to tell in most cases from where the impetus comes to subscribe to a particular cause.

It is noticeable that there are few charitable payments listed in the household accounts before their marriage but several start after (Table 3). This may be because the added income Mee brought to the marriage meant there was more spare money, or it could be Mee's influence on how family money was distributed.

¹⁰ This may be £200. An amount of £100 is entered for April 1797 on two consecutive pages of the account book.

¹¹ Presumably this is the Lord Nelson's Victory Fund for Relief of widows and children which advertised its subscribers in several London newspapers including *The Sun*, on 18th October 1798 and listed Lord Palmerston as giving ten guineas.

¹² Prochaska, *Women*, p. 427.

Of the subscriptions paid from the general household accounts, it is impossible to say for definite who was the instigator of any given one. However given their personal interests it is extremely likely that the idea to subscribe to the Society for the Exploration of Africa was Lord Palmerston's and to the Lying-in Hospital was Mee's. The East Sheen subscriptions only appear in the account books after the death of Palmerston's mother, Mrs Temple, whose primary residence had been East Sheen. It, therefore, can be assumed that as the subscriptions had been paid by the steward at East Sheen, these were a continuation of donations that she had regularly made in her lifetime.

Both St George's Hospital and the Lying-In Hospital were very fashionable and very aristocratic charities. St George's had the largest proportion of aristocratic subscribers of all the London voluntary hospitals; the relatively high subscription rate of five guineas was deliberately set to exclude the lower middle classes from the Board of Governors.¹³ The Lying-In Hospital was founded in 1765, under the patronage of both the Queen and the Princess of Wales, and had support from all sectors of society (see Lying-in Charities below).

Quite which charity the 'Charitable Society' referred to is unclear. It could be the Ladies' Charitable Society which was established in London in 1774 "to relieve those who are really entitled to it, and, as far as can be lawfully done, punish imposters and cheats". The society was founded by a group of evangelical women and was also supported by Lady Spencer. Its aims were very much within the older tradition of personal, private charity and its foundation reflected the worries of some donors that they were being defrauded. It advocated close record keeping of donations and recipients¹⁴

In addition to these regular donations, the Palmerstons gave one-off donations to charities, including a guinea to the Society for Reforming the Criminal Poor in 1792, and in the mid-1790s, in response to the higher prices and increased hardship, a cluster of donations as detailed in Table 4. The large donations to Winchester charities reflect Palmerston's position as MP for the city.

¹³ David Owen, *English Philanthropy 1660-1960* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 43.

¹⁴ Roberts, pp. 71-72.

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In January 1803, Mee subscribed to the Dorcae (or Dorcas) charity. She paid subscriptions in her name and in the names of all of her children, amounting to a total of twenty guineas “to be encreased”.¹⁵ What this charity was is unknown.

Clothing the poor

Mee’s first account book starts with “On the Sunday they all had soup in the Hall after going to Church” before listing clothes given to the poor. The giving of alms at Christmas or New Year was a long-standing tradition in England.¹⁶

Despite it being the one constant throughout the seven years of accounts which she kept, there is no record of clothes been given to the poor in the household account books or Mee’s dairies. However it was not a new tradition; two letters from Harry to his mother in February 1795 shows it was well-established before 1797, and a tradition in which she involved her children.¹⁷ The letter also mentions her list of poor to be clothed and in her book, Mee kept detailed lists of who got what each year, although she rarely calculated the cost (see appendix 1 for examples). In 1799 she did add up the costs; £23.4.0 on clothing men, women and children in Romsey and a further £3.3.0 on clothing the poor in Southampton.

In addition to the annual gifts of clothing at the New Year, she also gave out clothes, and one at least one occasion household linens, throughout the year on a need basis. Occasionally these gifts of clothing are to an anonymous recipient, such as a shilling ‘to clothe a poor child’ in 1803, but more frequently they are to named individuals.¹⁸

¹⁵ BR 18/2/1 p. 127.

¹⁶ Various examples exist of annual clothing bequests; in Southampton in the 1600s John Cornish left £100 and George Gollop £200. Southampton: Churches, public buildings and charities’ in *A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 3* (1908), <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42037>> [Accessed 16th August 2013].

¹⁷ BR 22a/1/8, Letter from Harry Temple, 10th January 1795; BR 22a/1/10 Letter from Harry Temple, 1st February 1795.

¹⁸ BR 18/2/1. Mee used given names the majority of instances, although sometimes she used descriptions such as ‘the child at the Gate’, the Garden woman or Mr Young’s sister.

The giving of the clothes in 1797 was linked to a religious service and the clothes Mee gave away would have been instantly recognisable as alms clothes. Unlike the clothes given away during the rest of the year, the January donations with the proceeding church service and soup were not quiet charity. This was a public act of beneficence, a deliberate show of both the riches of the Broadlands estate and the patrician care its inhabitants owed their poorer neighbours.

Visiting the poor

Harry's letter of February 1795, also asked his mother for instructions "if you want anything to be carried to own and whether we shall take the medicine chest to town with us or leave it here".¹⁹ Mee only noted once in her diaries that she 'went to Romsey saw Poor', yet from Harry's questioning, visiting the poor must have been a regular event.²⁰ Again this is a very traditional activity for gentry ladies; the provision of medicines to the sick and visiting the poor would allow the donor to have close personal knowledge of those in receipt of her alms.

Monetary gifts

Mee's monetary gifts can be divided into two categories: one-off payments to paupers or people suffering from short-term distress (such as the man robbed in January 1803 or the man who broke a bone during the winter of 1804), and regular weekly payments to poor families.

Half a crown was a typical amount given to the poor throughout the period covered by the account books regardless of inflation; in 1776 a poor woman was given 2s6d by Lord Palmerston (or his agent) and in 1802 Mee also gave 2s6d to another poor woman. However larger one-off payments were made from time to time; in February 1782 Palmerston gave a poor man 10s6d and in January 1799 Mee gave two poor women ten shillings each.

The regular weekly payments Mee made were also set at 2s6d for the household, regardless of the size. The one exception to this was a change in

¹⁹ BR 22a/1/10.

²⁰ BR 18/1/4 1799 Engagement Diary, entry for 3rd December.

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payments to Mrs Holloway in 1799, which increased to “3s6d a week until she lays in in May”.²¹

The Holloways were one of the Mee’s long-term dependent families. They were regularly clothed every January, the girls attended the school, the boys were paid to go to school elsewhere and the mother was paid 2s6d a week from 1797 onwards. However the Holloways appear not to have been told they could always depend on Mee’s charity; entries noting their allowance frequently have an end date so they would have to regularly reapply.²²

A fixed-term for charitable donations was common for the eighteenth century. Some families do appear and then disappear from lists, presumably their circumstances having improved. The requirement for frequent applications also chimes with the concern that charity be personally delivered and monitored, a form of charity thought to be suited to women..²³

Mee does appear to know several of her dependents relatively well from the frequency of their appearances in her books, and as a long-term dependent family, she took a close interest in the Holloways. She makes a note in 1804 that “poor Hannah Holloway died of a decline about 3 weeks since”, the one of only three deaths noted in her charity book.

Lying-In Charities

The Palmerstons paid an annual three guinea subscription to the Lying-In Hospital in London. It helped soldiers and sailor’s wives and “Wives of poor Industrious Tradesmen or distressed House-keepers, and who either from unavoidable Misfortunes or the Expenses of maintaining large Families are reduced to real Want”.²⁴ It was however less effective in the numbers it reached than the more mercantile backed, Lying-In Charity (established 1757) which

²¹ BR 18/2/1, p. 24.

²² BR 18/2/1, p. 152. Mee lists the Holloways payment as an annuity, but only agrees payment on a quarter by quarter basis.

²³ For example see Thomas Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* (London: T. Cadell jun. and W. Davies, 1797), p. 190.

²⁴ 'York Road', *Survey of London: volume 23: Lambeth: South Bank and Vauxhall* (1951), <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=47036&strquery=lying-in>> [Accessed 16th August 2013].

sent midwives out to women in their own homes.²⁵ Payments were initially made by Lord Palmerston and taken over in 1803 by Mee after his death. This was the only regular subscription she personally took on.

The Lying-In Hospital was not a hands-on activity for either Palmerston. Apart from the annual election of committee officers (in which Palmerston does not appear to have taken part), there was little outlet for activity within the charity. This is not the case with the other lying-in organisation which Mee supported.

She gave both money, goods and, apparently some time, to a lying-in establishment 'at the lodge' in Romsey.²⁶ She lent bedlinen, blankets and napkins to women and gave gowns and caps for the babies at the lying-in establishment. Lending linens to women lying-in was a tradition role for gentry ladies.²⁷ In November 1799 she sent five rattles for newborns and also sent a bottle each of brandy and sherry to "to poor woman who lost her child".²⁸ She visited the establishment and often noted the names and addresses of the women currently lying-in in her account book.

In December 1803, Mee gave a total of seventeen guineas from herself and her children to a 'Lying-In Charity'.²⁹ Whether this was a local charity or the London-based charity which attended poor women in their homes, is unclear. It is definitely not the London hospital as the annual subscription of three guineas is listed in the same entry. It again emphasises Mee's personal concern to aid fellow mothers.

Maternity was "that social and biological fact which could bridge ranks at a single bound".³⁰ The cult of motherhood, bound up as it was with the greater fashionability of the domestic, combined with more utilitarian ideas of the need for strong mothers and infants for the continued strength of the nation,

²⁵ The Lying-In Charity attended approximately 5000 deliveries annually, whereas the Hospital only managed 400-500. Owen, *Philanthropy*, p.51. Less than 2% of the Lying-In Charity's subscribers were of the upper class. Andrew, *Police*, p.88.

²⁶ BR 18/2/1, for example see pp. 44-45.

²⁷ Davidoff and Hall, p. 434.

²⁸ BR 18/2/1, p. 18.

²⁹ BR 18/2/2, 15th recto.

³⁰ D.T. Andrew, 'Noblesse Oblige. Female Charity in an Age of Sentiment', in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. by John Brewer and Susan Staves (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 275-300 (p. 288).

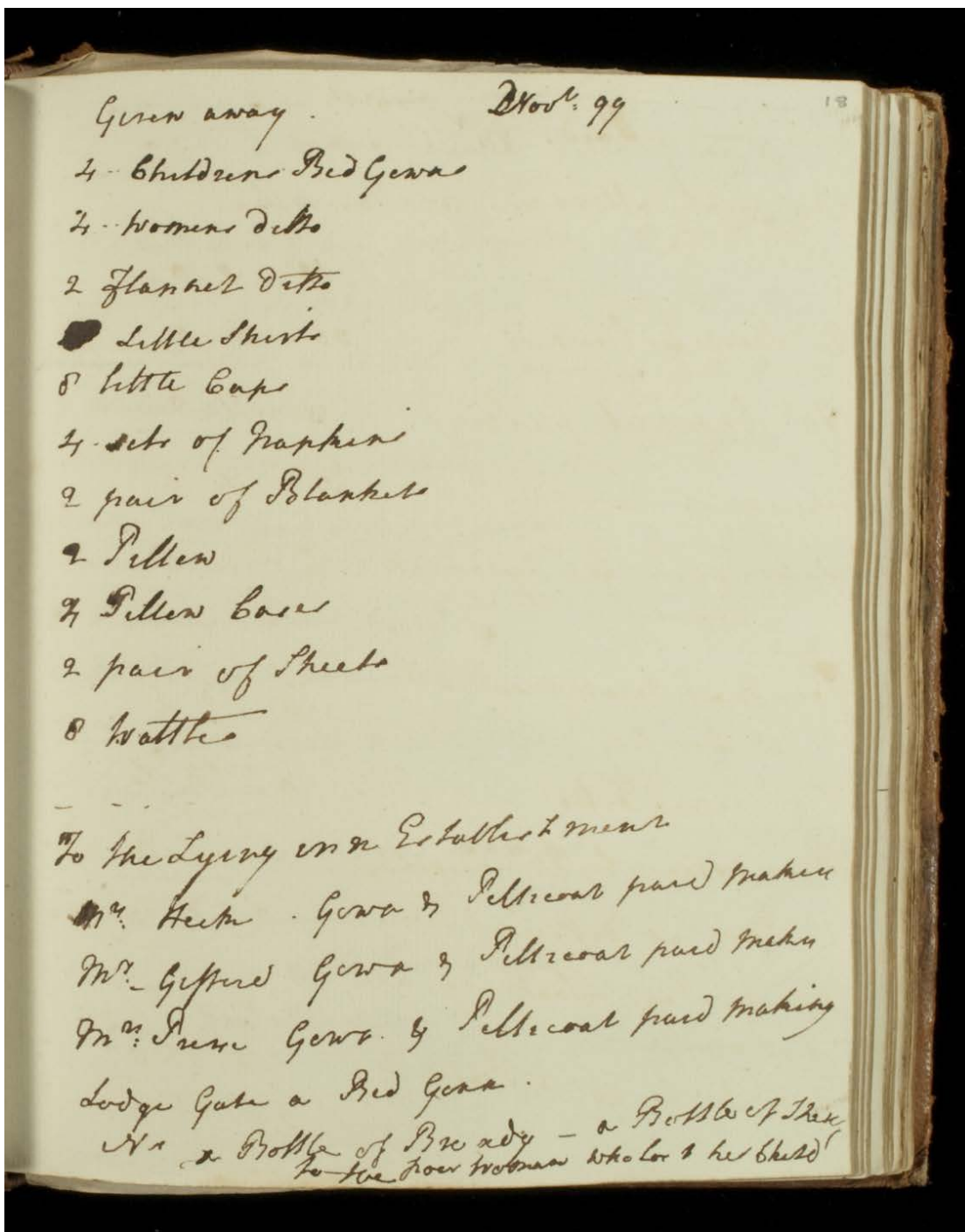


Figure 2: Mee's Account Book 1797-1804³¹

made maternity charities a triple winner for their female supporters. They could indulge their sentimental feelings and sensibilities in a charitable concern which was seen as suitable for women while at the same time

³¹ BR 18/2/1, p.18.

supporting a charity which benefited the nation.³² The motto of the Lying-In Charity made this explicit: “Increase of Children a Nation’s Strength”.³³

French Émigrés

Hampshire was a popular refuge for fugitives from the French Revolution. Both Southampton and Winchester were lay émigré centres and from 1792 to 1796 a group of French priests were settled at the King’s House in Winchester.³⁴ Mee interacted with refugees in a variety of ways.

For those refugees who were ‘people of fashion’, she provided entertainments at Broadlands. On the evening of the 18th July 1791, while Lord Palmerston was in Paris observing the Constitutional Assembly, she planned “a very pretty fête under the trees” which fell foul to the British weather and had to relocate inside.³⁵ Lord and Lady Malmesbury were present and helped in the success of the evening as Mee was not fluent in French.³⁶ They also attended on 29th July when Mee had “all of Brittany to dine and sup”.³⁷ She retained an interest in the comings and goings of the émigrés, writing in August 1791 that they were leaving Romsey “for Jersey”.³⁸ Mee felt of her entertainments that “I did the right thing”.³⁹ She was not alone in giving entertainments and parties for well-to-do émigrés; other Whig hostesses did the same, the Duchess of

³² Mee herself was definitely prey to the language of sentimentality and sensibility in some of her descriptions both in her charity books and her letters.

³³ Colley, *Britons*, p. 245.

³⁴ Kirsty Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution: Émigrés in London, 1789-1802* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), figure A.1, p. 191 & p. 58; D T J Bellenger, ‘The French Priests at the King’s House, Winchester, 1792-1796’, *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, 40 (1984), 99-105. Some priests remained in lodgings in Winchester after the majority were moved to Readings to free up the King’s House for barracks.

³⁵ BR 11/16/2 Letter to Lord Palmerston, 18th July 1791.

³⁶ BR 11/16/4 Letter to Lord Palmerston, 29th July 1791. Mee’s lack of French is an obvious marker of her non-aristocratic background. Although French was often taught to daughter of the gentry, it was almost de rigueur for daughters of the nobility where French was “still a prerequisite for entry into high society or high office”. Colley, *Britons*, p.167. Mee started to learn French in December 1788 (BR 11/13/8) but had still not mastered it by 1802 (BR 21/8/36).

³⁷ BR 11/16/4.

³⁸ BR 11/16/8 Letter to Lord Palmerston, 25th July 1791. Their refuge in Jersey was to be short-lived as the Channel Islands were forcibly evacuated of all émigrés in 1797. Carpenter, *Refugees*, p. 98.

³⁹ BR 11/16/4.

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Devonshire's entertainments were particularly renowned within the émigré community.⁴⁰

Not all émigrés were as well-off. By 1797, there are no more records of parties for French, instead in January Mee gave clothes to a poor Frenchwoman and her young son, in February she paid for the doctor to attend "a poor French family" and gave them alms of half a crown a week until April. Unfortunately there are no more entries for 1797 so it is impossible to tell how long she continued to support the family.⁴¹

Nor did all the refugees move on so quickly as her garden party guests. Despite the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire ordering French to leave in May 1798 (an order not entirely popular with the Southampton Corporation), French were still living locally in 1802.⁴² Mee gave three guineas to a French priest in January, three guineas to a Monsieur Le Jettier and an annual subscription of five guineas for an émigré school in February. In total within a six week period she had spent eleven guineas on charitable causes related to French refugees.⁴³

This generosity may or may not have continued. Many émigrés returned to France in 1802 and the only mention of émigrés after then is an entry in January 1803 noting a guinea given to a French priest for milk.⁴⁴

Mee also subscribed to the Émigré Society administrated through Miss Francis, a personal acquaintance, paying five pounds in January 1802. Lord Palmerston had also supported the charity, giving Miss Francis five pounds in 1798. He also listed giving a guinea for 'aliens at Winchester' in 1797.⁴⁵

Émigrés were a popular cause in Georgian England. Very soon after the start of the Revolution, committees were set up to raise funds and money flooded in from all sectors of society.⁴⁶ The Palmerstons did not contribute at this time as they themselves had only recently fled France and were on an extended trip

⁴⁰ Carpenter, *Refugees*, p. 77.

⁴¹ BR 18/2/1, p. 25.

⁴² The Mayor of Southampton wrote to the Duke of Portland to ask if some émigrés could stay in the town for another month, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Saturday 26th May 1798.

⁴³ BR 18/2/2, 11th recto.

⁴⁴ Carpenter, *Refugees*, p. 56, BR 18/2/2, 13th recto.

⁴⁵ BR 12/2/8.

⁴⁶ Carpenter, *Refugees*, p. 47.

around Europe. Nor were they not in the financial position, unlike several other Whig families, to provide pensions for aristocratic émigrés.⁴⁷

By the time they returned to England, the government had taken on the cost of émigrés' relief, to be distributed via the Wilmot Society (one of the original fundraising committees). The Wilmot committee was heavily partisan; the vast majority of its committee members were Whigs as were its initial subscribers.

When, during the winter of 1795-6, it became apparent that funds were not reaching all needy cases within the émigré community, Wilmot committee members' wives organised themselves to tackle the problem. They published a pamphlet describing some of the worst cases of need, concentrating on mothers and young families and appealing to sentiment. They organised support in kind for the London émigré community, consisting of clothes, blankets and medical aid, similar to the alms that Mee provided in Romsey. They also set out to fundraise; the ten women each had to contact a further ten women, preferably spread throughout the kingdom and all would seek donations from friends and acquaintances.⁴⁸ It may well be that the two guineas given by Lord Palmerston in 1796 "to emigrants by Mrs Nugent" was part of this fundraising effort.⁴⁹

Schooling

Mee gave money to support a school for the children of French émigrés but this does not mean that she neglected the education of British children. Her school for industry and associated infant school in Romsey will be discussed in the next chapter, but even before she established her school, she was paying for the education of local children.

Mee paid to place girls and boys with various teachers in Romsey. In 1797 she paid for Mrs Rout's daughter to go to school with Miss Tarver at a crown a quarter (Rout later became the governess of the school of industry and her daughter transferred there). She notes she has put 14 children in total to Newman's and Clarke's schools in January 1803, by December that number had

⁴⁷ Andrew, *Noblesse Oblige*, p. 266, n. 46.

⁴⁸ Carpenter, p. 94.

⁴⁹ BR 12/2/11, entry for March 1796.

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risen to 15. In January 1804 she lists ten children at Newman's school for whom she paid £1.5.0, four children at Mrs Oakley's and two boys to Dawkin's school at 3s6d per quarter.⁵⁰

Who these teachers were is unknown. They are not listed in Oldfield's compilation of private schoolmasters or schoolmistresses in Romsey, nor do they appear to be related to the Free School for boys based within the Abbey building.⁵¹ They may well have run dame schools, as the costs are considerably below those advertised by private schools.⁵²

Begging Letters

Only one begging letter to Mee survives, dated 17th January 1802.⁵³ Begging letters of this sort were an occupational hazard for nobles, and indeed anyone of any wealth. These letters harked back to the idea that charity was a rent on property and that those in need had the right to remind the rich of their obligations. Begging letters, and the closely associated newspaper adverts, followed formulae laid out in various letter writing manuals.⁵⁴

Generally the letters fall into one of two types: the personal letter written by the supplicant, in which case they will always include some appeal to a common interest such as a link between the writer's family and the recipients, whether by blood, marriage, employment, friends or locality in common, or a letter written on behalf of the supplicant by a person usually known to the recipient, seeking patronage on behalf of the third party. It was important for the requestor to provide credentials to show they were deserving of aid, and could be 'known'. Some donors organised agents to check up on requestors before making a decision.⁵⁵ The late eighteenth century was on "an historical cusp, a period when personal knowledge was still a valued requisite for attention, but had been pushed to its limits".⁵⁶ Lord Palmerston received a

⁵⁰ BR 18/2/1, pp. 125, 152 & 191.

⁵¹ Genge & Spinney, p. 6; Oldfield *Private Schools*, p. 151.

⁵² Oldfield, *Private Schools*, p. 151.

⁵³ BR 18/5/3 (see appendix 2 for transcript).

⁵⁴ Andrew, *Noblesse Oblige*, pp. 276, 277 & 282.

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p. 279.

⁵⁶ *ibid*, p. 293.

letter of the latter type in 1784 but this example was written by the supplicant herself. F St Hill, who claimed to know Mee personally.⁵⁷

Unlike Lady Spencer who noted on the numerous letters she received what her decision had been, there is no indication as to whether Mee sent a reply and whether it was positive or negative.⁵⁸ Although it falls within the timeframe of the account books, no specific donation can be linked back to the letter, however there is an anonymous loan of two guineas noted the same month, a rather smaller sum than the £50 the writer was asking for.

Britannia's handmaidens

Fundraising and charitable works by women associated with the war effort in the late eighteenth century was significant. The backlash against the French Revolution, reinforcing the image of British womanhood as gentle and virtuous in opposition to their French sisters, gave women access to public space through patriotic display.⁵⁹

Mee was one of the lady patronesses and sponsors of a concert of thanksgiving at Haymarket in 1801.⁶⁰ However beyond the sponsorship of the concert and attending public events, she does not appear to have been very involved in patriotic activities.⁶¹

One of the typical events that women were involved with was the presentation of colours to local militia. Women gave speeches which were often reported in the Press.⁶² Most of the voluntary militia were formed from the gentry and mercantile classes, so it is little surprise that many of the presentations were by plains Mrs not Ladies. In July 1798 a Mrs Amyatt presented the colours to the Southampton Volunteer Cavalry (her speech was reported in the Hampshire Chronicle) and a month later a Miss Barnouine did the same for the Loyal Associated Householders of Southampton. The latter's speech was not reported but the colours were described as "embroidered by the young ladies

⁵⁷ Connell, pp. 158-160.

⁵⁸ *ibid*, p. 282.

⁵⁹ Colley, *Britons*, pp. 256-268.

⁶⁰ *The Morning Post and Gazetteer* (London, England), Monday 11th May 1801, p. 1. See appendix 4 for transcript.

⁶¹ BR 18/1/4, 3rd June 1799 'watched the King reward Volunteers at Hyde Park'.

⁶² Colley, *Britons*, p. 266.

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of her school” who “near seventy scholars, all dressed in white, and forming a semicircle in two rows, gave a simplicity and elegance to the whole”.⁶³ However Mee is not recorded as having undertaken any similar activities.

Nor was Mee involved, as far as can be ascertained, in any of the groups of women who came together to provide warm clothes for soldiers leaving for war. These initiatives were almost entirely driven by middle class women.⁶⁴

In her patriotic activities Mee appears to be acting solely as a patrician. She is sponsoring celebrations without getting involved with the hands-on activities such as collecting clothes.

Personal Recommendations and Patronage

Not all charitable actions required an outlay of money. Patronage was an important aspect of the Georgian social order, and small acts of patronage allowed many genteel poor to maintain their place in the social pecking order long after their economic wherewithal ran out.⁶⁵

Mee took a personal interest in the subsequent careers of girls from her school of industry and notes in her books where they were placed after leaving, “got into good places turning out well”.⁶⁶ She also records agreeing to speak on behalf of people, to find tenants for local landlords and generally to act as a patroness. In turn, people lower down the social scale recommended families to Mee for aid and she noted these recommendations in her accounts.⁶⁷

Messers Seward and Comley both recommended deserving cases to Mee. Mr Warner, who also acted as an agent doling out alms for Mee when she was

⁶³ Linda Colley, 'Whose Nation - Class and National Consciousness in Britain 1750-1830', *Past & Present* 113 (1986), 97-117 (p. 114); *Hampshire Chronicle* Saturday 14th July 1798; *Hampshire Chronicle* Saturday 18th August 1798. The event was also commemorated in *Verses sent to a Lady on the Morning she presented a Standard to the Loyal Associated Gentlemen of Southampton* which was published in an engagement diary, *The Ladies Useful Repository for the Year 1799*, printed and sold by I Bell and T Baker, Southampton, a copy of which was owned and used by Mee (BR 18/1/4). Miss Barnouin ran a boarding school for young ladies at 7 Gloucester Square, Southampton. Oldfield, *Private Schools*, p. 154.

⁶⁴ Colley, *Britons*, p. 264-266.

⁶⁵ Andrew, *Noblesse Oblige*, p. 281

⁶⁶ BR 18/2/1, pp. 51 & 177-178.

⁶⁷ For example she noted that she gave 10s6d each to a poor man recommended by Mrs Comley and a poor man recommended by Mrs Routledge in August 1799. BR 18/2/1, p. 36.

absent from Broadlands, compiled lists of 'names given in' for consideration of aid, particularly during the famine years of 1799-1802.⁶⁸ Nor is it just members of the local gentry or merchants classes who could act as patrons; the Broadlands' steward, Hold, also recommended deserving cases.⁶⁹

The Missing Causes

Electioneering

For patrician women in the eighteenth century, involvement in politics was not only possible but expected in the run up to elections. Elite women canvassed, accompanied family members to campaigning events and hosted such events. Some elite women even controlled the selection of candidates in their areas of influence.⁷⁰ The women of both Tory and Whigs families canvassed.⁷¹

Mee, however, was in a somewhat different position. Palmerston was not a party grandee; he did not control any seats in the House of Commons and he did not sit in the English House of Lords by right. Instead Palmerston, like the sons of English peers, had to contest constituencies and was, to an extent, at the mercy of those landowners and magnates who did control the boroughs where he stood (as late as 1807, 234 constituency MPs owed their seat to aristocratic intervention).⁷² Even as the candidate's wife, Mee does not appear to have taken much part in constituency politics unlike many of her fellow political wives such Mrs Crewe, a family friend and a seasoned Whig campaigner.⁷³

This is not because she was uninterested in politics. Her letters to her husband, her uncle William Godschall and other friends and family, are packed

⁶⁸ BR 18/2/1, p. 25 for example.

⁶⁹ BR 18/2/1, p. 74 for example.

⁷⁰ Elaine Chalus, 'Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Eighteenth Century England', *The Historical Journal*, 43(3) (2000), 669-97; Amanda Vickery, 'Introduction', in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present*, ed. by Amanda Vickery (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 1-56; Midgley, p. 24.

⁷¹ Judith S. Lewis, '1784 and All That: Aristocratic Women and Electoral Politics', in *Women, Privilege, and Power British Politics, 1750 to the Present*, ed. by Amanda Vickery (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 89-122 (p. 91).

⁷² Colley, *Britons*, p. 157.

⁷³ Lewis, pp. 106-107.

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full of political comings and goings. Her lack of involvement could be due to altogether more pragmatic reasons: being a mother of young children, and her husband's preference for buying rather than campaigning for his seats (see appendix 8).⁷⁴ It may also have been due to personal preference and a lack of desire to perform in public. Were the latter true, she would not have been alone; despite having Lady Spencer as a mother-in-law, Lavina, Countess Spencer, had little interest in political campaigning and her husband recognised this.⁷⁵ However as Palmerston's first wife canvassed for her brother rather than her husband in the 1768 election, it is most likely that his choice of seats simply did not give the opportunity for involvement. Palmerston undertook very little canvassing in any of his elections; for Newport he spent a total of four days (including travel) on the island, at Winchester he spent a total of £18.12.0 on a few dinners and some hogshead of beer.⁷⁶

Palmerston's decision to step down from parliament after one term in Winchester may well have been behind the lack of interest the couple took in local affairs in Winchester towards the end of Palmerston's term as M.P. Compared to 1796 and 1797, their support of local activities was minimal.⁷⁷ As a widow Mee did give a donation to the Winchester Hospital of £5 5s 0d in January 1803, a cause which Palmerston also supported, but their names do not appear in subscription lists for local charities in the *Hampshire Chronicle* after 1800.⁷⁸

Abolitionism

Perhaps surprisingly given her son's later strong anti-slavery stance, abolitionism was not a cause Mee supported. The anti-slavery movement was the one, single most popular philanthropic cause of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Yet it was not one greatly supported by the

⁷⁴ Not that being a new mother stopped some of her contemporaries: Mrs Bouverie had a child under one and the Duchess of Rutland had five under five when they both canvassed in the 1784 Westminster election. Lewis, pp. 107 & 103.

⁷⁵ Lewis, p. 111.

⁷⁶ Connell, pp. 332-334; BR 12/2/11. Palmerston still had to support constituency events and he spent a total of £86.5.0 in 1786 on the Boroughbridge races

⁷⁷ The 1797 Winchester Race meeting cost Palmerston £490.10.0 to cover non-personal expenses such as dinners, plates, clerk of the course, waiters, master of ceremonies, food and wine consumed (BR 12/2/11).

⁷⁸ *Hampshire Chronicle*, 12th April 1802, p.i.

aristocracy, and in this Mary Mee was quite in tune with her fellow peeresses. The August 1788 subscription list published by the London Committee only contains three peeresses: Lady Hatton of Lanstanton, the Dowager Countess Stanhope and the Dowager Viscountess Gallway.⁷⁹ The Abolition movement was mainly a “middle-class concern”, bringing together “people across the lines of gender, religion, and politics” however aristocrats were conspicuous by their absence.⁸⁰

There is no evidence that Mee supported calls for abolition of the slave trade, even if she did not openly donate. In fact, quite the opposite. Discussing the Abolition Bill of 1804, she wrote that

You will see the Lords have flung out the Abolition – which it was always imagined would be the case the Lords having more judgement and less sentiment than the Commons.⁸¹

Like her husband she favoured amelioration of the slaves’ conditions. As he wrote to his brother-in-law after the failure of the 1791 bill, “The West Indians...have had fair warning and if both by law and by general practice they do not introduce some effectual reformation...let the consequences be what they may”.⁸²

She was not a scientific racist, unlike the writer Edward Long, and rational philosopher David Hume, even if she was somewhat lacking in imagination regarding educational opportunities. In reply to Harry’s description of a visit by a black woman to his tutor, Prof. Stewart’s house, she wrote she believed that Prof. Stewart’s doctrine of intellectual equality of the races may be true but it would be difficult to prove due to “the improbability of ever giving a Negro the same advantages of education and the habits of good society which they never can gain admittance into on equal footing with Europeans”.⁸³

⁷⁹ Oldfield, *Anti-Slavery*, p. 137.

⁸⁰ Oldfield, *Anti-slavery*, p. 148; Midgley, p. 18.

⁸¹ BR 21/10/37 Letter to Harry Temple, 4th July 1804.

⁸² BR 11/16/14 Letter from Lord Palmerston to Benjamin Mee, 20th April 1791.

⁸³ BR 21/7/13 Letter to Harry Temple, 2nd April 1801.

Conclusion

Mee had to find her own way as the local patroness at Broadlands. There were no pre-existing causes for her to take over. It is possible she was pointed in various directions by her husband, mother-in-law or family friends such as the Dowager Countess Spencer. Lady Spencer was a member of her husband's close social circle, well-known for her charitable endeavours and for being "the exemplar of aristocratic female virtue" to whom people wrote for information about charitable establishments.⁸⁴ Another commoner who had married an aristocrat, she may well have spoken to the young bride about her social obligations. Mee's own preference for hands-on charity may owe an influence to Lady Spencer, who, in a move atypical for peeresses, closely supervised those charities she supported (it is hard to imagine Lady Salisbury or the Duchess of Buckingham, both well-known for their traditional, aristocratic hauteur, noting down how many rattles to send to local newborns, nor yet delivering the presents themselves).⁸⁵ However, other writers also called for donors to keep a close watch on the use to which their donations were put, so Lady Spencer cannot be pinpointed as sole possible influence on Mee.

Her uncle, who in his role as J.P. had published a pamphlet with advice for Oversees of the Poor, may also have discussed with her his ideas regarding charity, especially those concerning the education of the poor.

Mee's charitable undertakings, outside her school and soup shop, followed exactly the model that would be expected of a British peeress. She doled out alms, in the form of clothes, education as well as money, to the local needy on her estate; she benefited local feminine endeavours, in her case a lying-in house; she acted as an patroness for those lower down the social order and she sponsored patriotic events. She, like many Whig aristocrats, entertained upper-class émigrés, and like many Britons, supported more impoverished émigrés through donations to relevant charities.

Mee appeared to be following the role set out for her as a traditional landowner's wife, dispensing noblesse oblige. However her notes in her

⁸⁴ Langford, *Public Life*, p. 571-2; Andrew, *Noblesse Oblige*, n.54.

⁸⁵ See Lewis, p. 111 for the Countess's reputation and Porter, *English Society*, p. 48 for the Duchess's.

account books and obvious interest in certain charities, such as the lying-in, suggest she was undertaking the role more because she wanted to rather than simply dutifully going through the motions.

Chapter 4: Scientific Philanthropy

1799 saw the beginnings of a new direction in Mee's charitable giving, although only a tantalising glimpse of this can be seen in her account book for that year. During the last five years of her life she was very much concerned with hands-on, practical philanthropy through two institutions she established in Romsey: a girls' school of industry and a public kitchen serving soup and meals.

The first hint of this change is the purchase of sundry kitchen equipment in November 1799 for £17.14.0. Mee listed all the equipment but did not note what it was for or where it was to be installed; earlier that year she had 'taken a house in Romsey for the poor at 16 guineas a year' and a letter from her uncle, William Godschall in January 1800 refers to her 'public kitchen at Romsey' so the kitchen may have been installed in that building.¹ Wherever it was housed, the kitchen was designed and ordered on Mee's behalf by Count Rumford based on a similar installation of his she had seen.²

Rumford's letter to Mee discussing the installation of the kitchen also provides the first mention of Mee's other great preoccupation, her school of industry. Rumford was the inspiration for her move into more practical, institutional charity; she wrote that she was "obliged to Count R for having put me in a way to do some good in a place which, too extensive for particular charity, I must do some on a large scale".³

Count Rumford and Scientific Philanthropy

The Palmerstons first met Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford, on 18th June 1793 while they were on their continental tour and instantly struck up a friendship.⁴ Rumford has been described as:

loyalist, traitor, spy, cryptographer, opportunist, womaniser,
philanthropist, egotistical bore, soldier of fortune, military and

¹ BR 18/2/1, p. 33; BR 19/6/53 Letter from W M Godschall, 30th January 1800.

² Dartmouth College, Rauner Special Collections Library, Rumford 493528. See appendix 5 for a transcript.

³ BR 21/7/8 Letter to Harry Temple, 24th February 1802.

⁴ BR 11/19/12, Letter to Benjamin Mee, 2nd July 1793.

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technical advisor, inventor, plagiarist, expert on heat (especially fireplaces and ovens) and founder of the world's greatest showplace for the popularisation of science, the Royal Institution.⁵

Rumford was an American-born, British subject, knighted by George III and created a count of the Holy Roman Empire by the Elector of Bavaria for whom he worked in the 1780s and 1790s, reorganising both the army and poor relief.⁶ He was interested in “the applications of science to the common purposes of life”.⁷

His philanthropic investigations were not driven by evangelical zeal but a wish to be as efficient and effective as possible; charity should be based on scientific rather than moral assumptions.⁸ Like John Locke and Adam Smith before him, he believed that the poor should be employed and not simply given relief; employment, a sense of worth, added to an individual’s happiness and spurred on ambition whereas relief dampened ambition and demoralised the recipient. His philosophy could be summed up in his query:

to make vicious and abandoned people happy, it has generally been supposed necessary *first* to make them virtuous. But why not reverse this order! Why not make them first *happy* and then virtuous! If happiness and virtue be *inseparable*, the end will be as certainly obtained by one method as by the other.⁹

Rumford strongly believed in voluntary charity, run on a settlement-wide basis by a committee made up of the highest ranks of society, while the administration should be carried out by those from the middle ranks.

⁵ W. H. Brock quoted in Peter Day, 'Mr Secretary, Colonel, Admiral, Philosopher Thompson': The European Odyssey of Count Rumford', *European Review*, 3(2) (1995), 103-111 (p. 103).

⁶ Phillip Drennon Thomas, 'Thompson, Benjamin', in *American National Biography Online* (2000) <<http://www.anb.org/articles/13/13-01660.html>> [Accessed 31 July 2013].

⁷ As quoted in Thomas Martin, 'The Experimental Researches of Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford', *Bulletin of the British Society for the History of Science*, 1(6) (1951), 144-58 (p. 144).

⁸ John Riddoch Poynter, *Society and Pauperism : English Ideas on Poor Relief, 1795-1834* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1969), p. 89.

⁹ Benjamin Thompson, *Complete Works* (Boston, 1874), p. 258 as quoted in Poynter, p. 89.

Government should only be involved to recommend good schemes and ensure the laws are compatible to the practice of any given charitable scheme.

Mee and Rumford enjoyed a long correspondence. He wrote lengthy letters, often describing his experiments at the poor houses in Munich or military doings on the continent, mixed with gossip about mutual friends. Mee, in turn, passed on news from and about Rumford to her husband, uncle and other friends.¹⁰

From 1799-1802 he lived in London and founded the Royal Institution, with which the Palmerstons were also closely involved (Palmerston was one of the first Visitors, Mee was one of the book holders for ladies' subscriptions).¹¹

Rumford, ever the self-advertiser, published information about his experiments in Bavaria regarding the feeding and housing of the poor in his *Essay* series, starting in 1795.¹² He also persuaded people to install his kitchens as exemplars: Sir John Sinclair, a Scots politician, founder and president of the Board of Agriculture, and coiner of the term 'statistics', had a kitchen installed which was open for public viewings.¹³ Unfortunately for Rumford, the British (and Gillray) did not always agree with him on their efficacy (Figure 3).

His techniques attracted the interest of a fellow Anglo-American, Sir Thomas Bernard. In 1796 Bernard founded the Society for Bettering the Condition and Increasing the Comforts of the Poor (SBCP).¹⁴ Rumford was given life membership of the Committee in recognition of his influence on their objectives.¹⁵ The Society saw itself as providing "useful and practical

¹⁰ On 9th Dec 1794 Mee reported back to Palmerston in a letter details about Rumford's latest soup experiments BR 11/22/1. Her uncle, William M. Godschall was particularly interested in Rumford and his ideas.

¹¹ News, *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 1st August 1799; News, *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 19-21st March 1800.

¹² Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford, *Count Rumford's Experimental Essays, Political, Economical, and Philosophical. Essay I. An Account of an Establishment for the Poor at Munich*. (London: T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1795).

¹³ Fritz Redlich, 'Science and Charity: Count Rumford and His Followers', *International Review of Social History*, 16(2) (1971), 184-216 (p. 198); BR 21/9/3a. Letter to Harry Temple, 23rd January 1803. Despite both admiring Rumford, Mee was not an admirer of Sinclair, "how a man can go about so foolish".

¹⁴ Owen, p. 106. Bernard and Barrington were also the largest subscribers, giving £52.10.0 each for a lifetime subscription.

¹⁵ Poytner, p. 91.

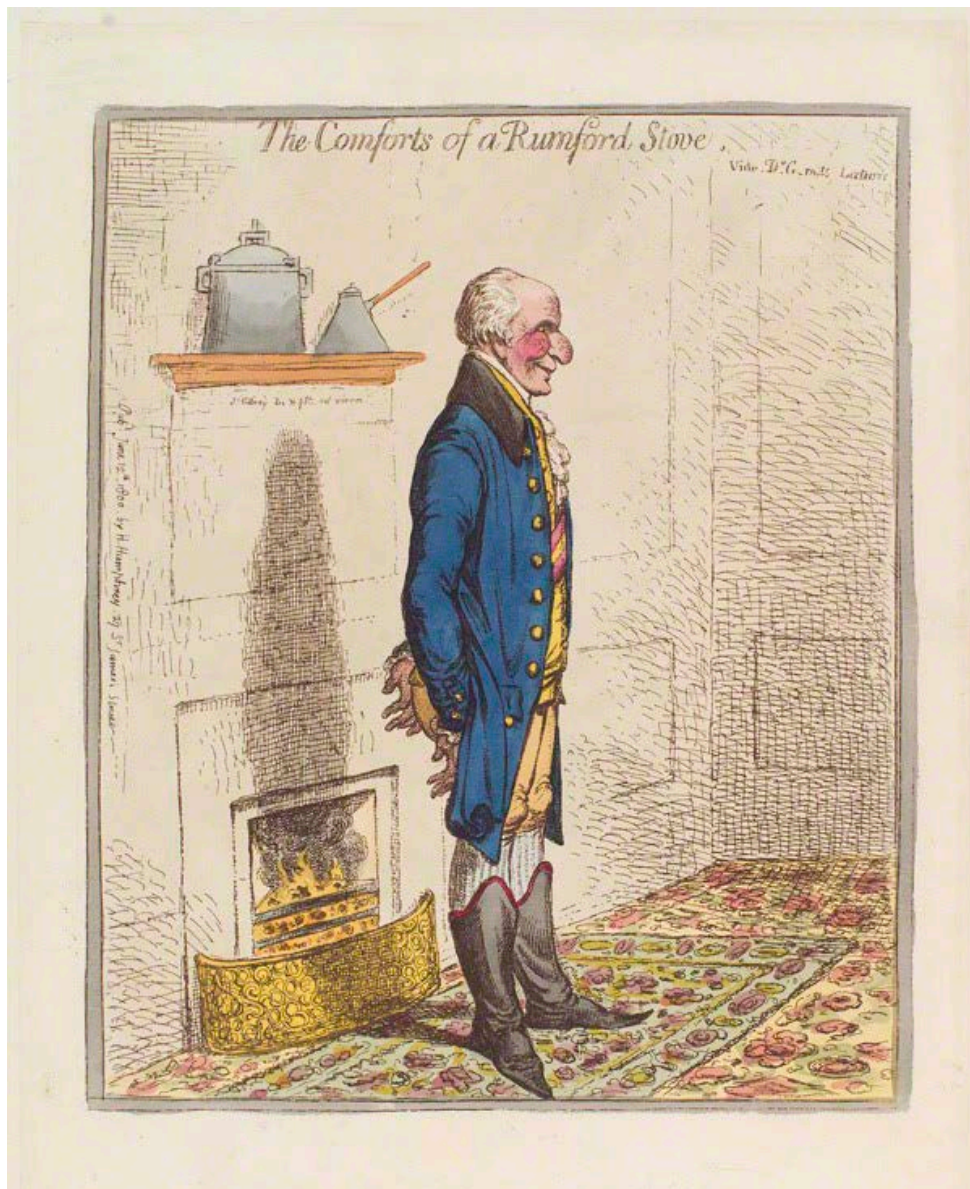


Figure 3: James Gillray, 'The Comforts of a Rumford Stove'
(London: Hannah Humphrey, 1800) © National Portrait Gallery, London

information derived from experience, and stated briefly and plainly” to potential philanthropists rather than managing actual institutions.¹⁶ They hoped to bring in “a new era in the science of managing the poor”.¹⁷ Like Rumford, the SCBP believed not only that it was important to inculcate a culture of self-help amongst the poor, but that misapplied charity could do more harm than good. To begin with the Society very much promulgated

¹⁶ *Reports of the SBCP 1*, App, p. 3 as quoted in Owen, p. 106.

¹⁷ *Rules and Regulations of the Society for the Bettering the Condition of the Poor at Clapham* (London: Henry Teape, 1805), p. 8 as quoted in Andrew, *Police*, p. 174.

Rumford's ideas regarding the poor however the strong evangelical presence on the board of directors, gradually led to the SBCP taking on a more moralistic and socially conservative tone.¹⁸

The SBCP had two main topics of interest, the same two topics as caught Mee's attention: feeding the poor and educating the poor. Yet the SBCP was not a cause that Mee herself actively supported; neither she, nor any members of her family, appear on the subscriptions lists however other Whig aristocrats do, notably Lady Spencer who gave ten guineas. Mee had the advantage, of course, of being able to discuss Rumford's ideas directly with Rumford himself.

Feeding the Poor

The bad harvests in 1794-1796 and 1799-1801 led to an explosion of food charities.¹⁹

Based on the soup recipes he devised (unfortunately miscalculating the nutritional benefit, as he assumed water had a calorific content), Rumford calculated that in London 1200 meals of pea and barley soup with rye bread (including fuel and wages) would cost £3.9.9¾, or £3.4.7¾ for barley-potato-pea soup.²⁰ The idea that 500 poor could be well-fed for just over a guinea appealed to both the humanitarian and the thrifty.

Patrick Colquhoun, a SCBP committee member, set up a soup kitchen in Spitalfields in 1797 and wrote about the experience.²¹ Soon charities were set up to organise and subsidise soup kitchens throughout the country.²² Numbers fed grew steadily until they dramatically increased in the bad year of 1799-1800, reflecting not only the particularly harsh conditions but also the increasing efficiency of the kitchens, many by then in their third or fourth season of operation (see Table 5).

¹⁸ *Reports of SBCP 2* p.389 as quoted in Andrew, *Police*, p. 176.

¹⁹ Andrew, *Police*, p. 179.

²⁰ Redlich, pp. 190-191.

²¹ Patrick Colquhoun, *An Account of a Meat and Soup Charity, Established in the Metropolis, in the Year 1797, with Observations Relative to the Situation of the Poor* (London: H. Fry, 1797).

²² Roger Wells, *Wretched Faces: Famine in Wartime England 1793-1801* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1988), pp. 214 & 255.

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Year	No. of poor served	Pints of soup sold
1796-97	10,000	184,581½
1797-98	40,000	481,336
1798-99	44,000	750,918
1799-1800	148,000	4,780,604

Table 5: Soup Kitchens in London, 1796-1800²³

As envisaged by Rumford and the SBCP, the kitchens were run under the patronage and direction of local elites. Mee's own uncle, William Godschall, took a keen interest in the soup kitchen at Guildford, going as far as sending his niece a copy of the soup recipe they were using.²⁴ In addition to soup, many kitchens provided staples such as potatoes, rice, herring, and pork at subsidised prices.²⁵

The idea that the poor should eat soup did not however have undivided support; Lord Wycombe, while allowing that Rumford had some good points, wrote that he did "not think the invention of bad soup by the union of Ox head with potatoes the noblest flight of human genius".²⁶

There was a widespread belief that the poor would not starve if only they knew how to feed themselves better. The SBCP, the Board of Agriculture, the government and newspapers published recipes and urged the use of crops, such as potatoes and barley, which had not previously formed a large part of the British diet.²⁷ Many of the dishes suggested were less than appetising, even

²³ Based on figures from Redlich, p. 202-204. These figures are not completely comparable given that 18 of the 44 soup kitchens in 1799-1800 were open year round, nor are the figures complete, but they do give an overall idea of the growth of the sector.

²⁴ BR 19/6/65 Letter to W M Godschall, 2nd November 1800.

²⁵ Andrew, *Police*, p. 179.

²⁶ As quoted in Wells, p. 215. See also p. 215, n. 36 for references to other examples.

²⁷ Board of Agriculture, *Report of the Committee of the Board of Agriculture, Appointed to Extract Information from the County Reports, and Other Authorities, Concerning the Culture and Use of Potatoes* (London: W. Bulmer and Co. for George Nicol, 1795); Susan E. Brown, "'A Just and Profitable Commerce': Moral Economy and the Middle Classes in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 32(4) (1993), 305-

to hungry people; not every would-be nutritionist was like Godschall and willing to try the recipes they promoted.²⁸

Many people saw the concentration on dietary reform and economy by both the government and voluntary bodies such as the SBCP as a diversionary tactic, obfuscating what they believed to be the real issues: lack of action against the price-fixing practices of forestalling, regrating and engrossing.²⁹ Some, more paternalistic, landowners, like Earl Temple, insisted their tenant farmers sell wheat at a reasonable price but others were content let Smith's invisible hand rule the market.³⁰

Mee recorded that there had been a meeting in Romsey "to alter the price of bread, butter and meat and it became so tumultuous that the riot act was read" on 1st September 1800.³¹ The Romsey riot had followed a number of protests during the year complaining about the price of food in the town.³² That September saw widespread unrest throughout the country as the bad harvest was followed by steep price rises. Riots also took place in Portsmouth, Hinton Amper and, according to Portsmouth pamphleteers, even in "that aristocratic place Southampton".³³

In many instances, food riots were met with sympathy and understanding by paternalistic, local elites. Foods riots "often contained an element of ritual or game"; rioters demanded their right to reasonably priced food with much noise but very little actual physical damage to property, sometimes claiming *taxation populaire* and helping themselves to food. The authorities, in turn, showed force but rarely instigated violence against the crowd.³⁴ Even after the Riot Act

32. (p. 308); Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 3rd March 1800; Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 10th March 1800; News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 28th April 1800; Wells, p. 225.

²⁸ Brown, *Moral Economy*, p. 309. BR 19/6/52 Letter to Mary Mee from W M Godschall, 17th January 1800.

²⁹ Brown, *Moral Economy*, p. 309; also frequent columns in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, for example, Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 21st July, 1800.

³⁰ Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 17th November, 1800.

³¹ BR18/5/5/25-30 Letter to Emma Godfrey, 2nd September 1800.

³² A notice had been posted on the Market house threatening to burn down all the bakeries if the price of bread was not lowered. In response the Volunteers mounted a nightly watch. Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 17th February 1800.

³³ Wells, chapter 8.

³⁴ Ian Gilmour, *Riots, Rising and Revolution: Governance and Violence in Eighteenth Century England* (London: Pimlico, 1993), p. 233; Douglas Hay, 'War, Dearth and Theft

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was read, few magistrates ordered the troops to disperse the mob. E.P Thompson saw this hesitancy of local authorities to act against food rioters as recognition of the morality of the mob, defending their traditional rights to affordable food.³⁵ The Romsey Riot, which was attended by the Volunteers and the 15th Light Dragoons, ended “before much mischief ensued”.³⁶

The need to not waste food extravagantly in a time of want was recognised by some of the elite. In December 1800, the Government rushed out a Royal Proclamation (printing it before the King had even seen the text) which called upon all subjects to restrict themselves to ‘one Quartern Loaf for each person in each week’.³⁷ Many people initially derided and ignored the proclamation but some, such as Godschall, took their civic duty seriously.³⁸ Mee herself wrote “we are all upon economy. I allow no soups, second courses or pastry, and only one piece of bread at dinner ... I really think it is one’s duty not to waste or expend unnecessarily”.³⁹ Mee’s deprivations were not on the same scale as the labouring poor neighbours, but she showed an awareness of how her own family’s behaviour would be perceived by those they live amongst. Yet for every Mee there was a Parson Woodeford who would unthinkingly sit down to a multi-course dinner while his poorer parishioners survived on rations of wheaten bread.⁴⁰

Soup Shop

It is difficult to tell exactly when Mee opened her soup shop. Model kitchens opened throughout the country in the winter of 1799-1800.⁴¹ Her kitchen was built and operating by the end of January 1800 as Godschall sent her Mee a soup recipe to mark the event, and on the 5th February sent a letter “designed to catch your Ladyship before you leave the kitchen”.⁴² Lord Palmerston

in the Eighteenth Century: The Record of the English Courts', *Past & Present* 95 (1982), 117-60 (p. 129); Wells, pp. 99-106, 131& 322.

³⁵ E. P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past & Present* 50 (1971), 76-136 (p. 78)

³⁶ Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 8th September, 1800

³⁷ Wells, p. 222.

³⁸ BR 19/6/56 Letter from W M Godschall, 10th March [?1800].

³⁹ BR 21/6/7 Letter to Harry Temple, 18th December 1800.

⁴⁰ E. P. Thompson, *Moral Economy*, p. 136.

⁴¹ Wells, p. 214.

⁴² BR 19/6/53 From W M Godschall, 30th January 1800; BR 19/6/54 Letter from W M Godschall, 5th February 1800.

referred to a now missing letter from a Mr Poulter about her ‘establishment at Romsey’ in February 1800 (although it could as well refer to her school of industry), and there were reports of agitations and “popular demands for ‘what they call their natural food’” in Romsey, a common response to soup kitchens.⁴³

Having unsuccessfully tried to attract subscribers to her scheme in the months following the Romsey food riot, Mee opened it at her own cost in December 1800.⁴⁴ Mee was not alone in finding subscribers hard to come by in the second season of operation; other aristocrats had similar problems.⁴⁵ By early January between 120-150 quarts of soup were sold daily.⁴⁶ It closed in February 1801, earlier than Mee had wanted: “I fear we shall go to Town earlier than I wanted. I find I must close my Soup House when I leave because not having found a proper Person to take care of it”.⁴⁷ Mee was concerned “to lessen the evil to the very indigent” and, despite a slight mix-up with sending letters to Farnham instead of Fareham, she finally engaged a Mrs Parry (“very respectable and like a neat Housekeeper”) to sell rice “drest in different modes” before she left for London. She “assembled my old Customers who approved of what I gave them to taste”.⁴⁸

Mee re-opened her soup shop on 16th November 1801; once again she was a hands-on patron, telling Harry “I have little society to tell you of as I live in the Soup House making my Fortune”.⁴⁹ The soup sold “remarkably well” at a penny a quart, halfpenny a pint and farthing a halfpint.⁵⁰ She jokingly advised her son Harry, that as she was a weather-hardened shopkeeper well on her way to making her fortune, “if you behave well I will make you my Heir to my soup fortune which will enable you to live swimmingly away”.⁵¹

Mrs Parry did not initially seem to be up to the task of running a soup rather than a rice shop as on the second day of operations Mee despairingly asked

⁴³ BR 20/17/1 Letter from Lord Palmerston, 10th February 1800; Wells, p.220.

⁴⁴ BR 21/6/7.

⁴⁵ Wells, p. 211.

⁴⁶ BR 21/7/1 Letter to Harry Temple, 5th January 1801; BR21/7/8 Letter to Harry Temple, 24th February 1801.

⁴⁷ BR 21/7/5 Letter to Harry Temple, 28th January 1801.

⁴⁸ BR21/7/8.

⁴⁹ BR 21/7/31 Letter to Harry Temple, 21st November 1801.

⁵⁰ BR 21/7/33 Letter to Harry Temple, 27-28th November 1801.

⁵¹ BR 21/7/32 Letter to Harry temple, 23rd November 1801.

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Emma Godfrey if she has any suggestions for a women to run the Soup Kitchen given “ Mrs Parry has no more idea of undertaking the business than the Empress of all the Russias”.⁵² However as Mee gave her a bottle of wine at New Year, she was not immediately replaced.

The Romsey soup shop does not appear to have had differential pricing unlike many other soup shops which frequently distinguished between levels of poverty or distress and, as many soup kitchens were funded via parish-based subscriptions, on the basis of locality. For example, the Guildford soup kitchen had differential pricing with a quart costing a penny for local paupers, twopence for less distressed people and threepence for strangers.⁵³ However Mee may well have given away some her of soup for free to the very poor (as recommended by Rumford) as she wrote about “a large number of debtors”.⁵⁴

After the soup shop closed for the season in the first week of February, Mee continued to sell coal and rice at cut rate prices to the poor. She sold coal at a shilling a bushel when the market price was 15d a bushel. As she explained to her eldest son, “threepence in a shilling is an object to a poor Person”.⁵⁵

The soup shop was repainted for the winter of 1801/1802 when it appears two people (Lloyd and Jackson) were employed in it. Mee spent two guineas on potatoes for the poor that January and gave away a guinea’s worth of soup (equating to 252 quarts).⁵⁶

Despite William Godschall gently teasing his niece in a letter in autumn 1802, writing “your charity is now in high season, and I think I hear your maidens gratefully praising your hot soup and Kindness”, the soup shop did not open during the winter of 1802/3 as “fortunately the winter [was] so mild the soup [was] not necessary”.⁵⁷

⁵² BR 18/5/5/72-5 Letter to Emma Godfrey, 17th November 1801.

⁵³ BR 19/6/53.

⁵⁴ BR 21/7/8.

⁵⁵ BR 21/8/3 Letter to Harry Temple, 1st [?February] 1802.

⁵⁶ BR 18/2/2, 11th verso.

⁵⁷ BR 19/6/104 Letter from W M Godshall, October 1802; BR 21/9/1 Letter to Harry Temple, 2nd-3rd January 1803.

In 1803, the soup shop reopened on the 6th December with the soup still costing only a penny a quart.⁵⁸ Once again Mee ventured into selling provisions; in January 1804 she sold 43 bushels and nine half bushels of coal at the price of a shilling per bushel. The following winter Mee was too ill to open the soup shop; she died in January 1805.

Mee was a hands-on patroness and visited the soup shop daily, a fact that was emphasised in the *Hampshire Chronicle's* report.⁵⁹ Her hands-on approach was dropped from the report that ran a few days later in the London-based *Morning Post and Gazetteer*. This was followed a few paragraphs later with a one-line report of Broadlands being "at present the scene of much musical festivity".⁶⁰ Whether by accident or design, the local newspaper report emphasised Mee's own involvement which would most likely impress the local readership whereas the London readership was likely to be less interested in her motivations and her daily attendance, but impressed by her patronage and her gracious living.

Ordinary

In addition to the soup shop, Mee opened an ordinary providing meals for a fixed price.

Mee proposed an ordinary attached to the school of industry.⁶¹ It opened on 11th November with breakfast of rice and milk costing a farthing a day and dinner sixpence a week.⁶² In its first season, fifty-five children went to the ordinary at the school. Mee remarked "It really is a pretty sight to see so many children with a comfortable dinner".⁶³ The ordinary was closed at the same time as the soup shop in February 1802.

There is no information as to when the ordinary ran in the milder winter of 1802/3 but by December 1803 a Mrs Smith is listed as cook at the school for which she was paid 5s per week in December and January.

⁵⁸ BR 18/2/1, p. 146.

⁵⁹ Home news: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 13th January, 1802. See appendix for full text.

⁶⁰ *The Morning Post and Gazetteer*, Friday 15th January, 1802.

⁶¹ BR 21/7/29 Letter to Harry Temple, 5-6th November 1801.

⁶² BR 21/7/29; BR 21/7/30 Letter to Harry Temple, 10th November 1801; BR 21/7/37 Letter to Harry Temple, c. 15th November 1801.

⁶³ BR 21/7/37.

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A external ordinary appears to have been set up during the winter of 1803/4: a carpenter's shop and garden in Banning Street was rented for the ordinary at a cost of £7.15.6 and sundry crockery and cutlery including five dozen plates, three dozen bowls and three dozen soups were bought for £1.0.4. This ordinary opened on 27th November 1803 and also cost 6d for five days' dinner. Mee noted down the menu:

Monday	soup and potatoes
Tuesday	pease pudding
Wednesday	soup
Thursday	pudding
Friday	soup

In addition, the poor could buy breakfast of rice pudding at half a pint a farthing (with boiled potatoes available in case the rice pudding ran out).⁶⁴ Mee was again closely involved in the organisation of the Ordinary. She noted that she had arranged with Mrs Doswell to supply puddings at a penny per portion on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In her initial calculations she assumed twenty people would eat at the Ordinary but in the end there were thirty eight regulars that winter.

The soup and food shops and Ordinaries were not permanent fixtures, unlike Rumford's original concept; only a few soup shops in Britain were permanent, and those were in London during the famine year of 1800. Mee appears to have viewed her food outlets as a short-term measures to ease the worst of the shortage as was traditional with food charities in England. Either she did not appear to have been aware that starvation could still continue beyond the worst of the winter weather or she felt that the poor would be adequately supported through parish poor relief during the spring and summer. Unfortunately her writings are silent on the matter.

⁶⁴ BR 18/2/1, p. 143.

Educating the Poor

There had been endowed schools since the Middle Ages which provided free places for clever but poor children. As Stone noted, “efficiently stratified society always makes allowance for upward mobility by a handful of lower class children, thanks to a system of “sponsored mobility”, regulated by scholarships, the recipients of which are selected and controlled by upper-class patrons.”⁶⁵

The move to make more general educational provision for the labouring and middling ranks of society only really gathered momentum in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Reasons for the increased interest in education are manifold but a major driver appears to be the spread of Protestant Christianity. Protestantism emphasised the believer’s ability to read the Bible in a way that Catholicism did not. To be a truly devout Protestant nation meant to be a literate nation.

Coupled to the religious motivations were the Lockeian ideas that children were innocent tabula rasa to be carefully taught. “We have reason to conclude,” wrote Locke, “that great care is to be had of the forming children’s minds and giving them that seasoning early, which shall influence their lives always after.”⁶⁶ A century later, Mee’s uncle believed “children should first be taught what is right before they are corrected for doing what is wrong”.⁶⁷

After the Glorious Revolution, there was a rapid increase in the number of educational institutions available to all children of the non-elite, much of the momentum provided by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) (see Figure 4).⁶⁸ Many were supported by subscriptions but some were endowed by individuals, such as Lady Hasting’s schools in Yorkshire.⁶⁹ In Romsey there was an endowed free school for boys supported by various

⁶⁵ Lawrence Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900', *Past & Present*, 42(1) (1969), 69-139 (p. 73).

⁶⁶ John Locke, *Educational Writings*, as quoted in Simonton, p. 75

⁶⁷ Godschall, p. 6.

⁶⁸ Jones, p. 23.

⁶⁹ Mae Baker, 'The Lady Hastings' Charity Schools: Accounting for Eighteenth-Century Rural Philanthropy', *History of Education*, 26(3) (1997), 255-65.



Figure 4: Map of Charity Schools by County, 1724⁷⁰

bequests.⁷¹ The nearby Southampton school, founded in 1713, had to be re-founded under George III as there was a general dip in enthusiasm for charity schools mid-century (while private schools flourished).⁷² Nevertheless the annual church parades and associated charity sermons and benefit dinners were regular events in the social calendars of many towns and cities. They demonstrated the generosity of the benefactors, although in the case of the combined parade in London they were also immense spectacles as over 2,000 boys and girls paraded through the city to St Paul’s in their differently coloured uniforms.⁷³

One striking difference between foundations of the late seventeenth century onwards and those before, is the inclusion of girls. There was general

⁷⁰ Langford, *Polite*, p. 131.

⁷¹ The Corporation had been left a, now untraceable, legacy to pay for the school. There were later bequests were by John Nowes of Lee House in 1681 and Sir John St Barbe of Broadlands in 1723. Genge and Spinney, pp. 6-10.

⁷² Langford, p. 132; J.H. Plumb, 'The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 67(1) (1975), 30-63 (p. 72).

⁷³ Lloyd, *Pleasing Spectacles*, p. 35.

consensus on the need for girls to be educated to be fit wives and mothers but although both liberals and conservatives could agree on the need for education, the extent of that education was still open for debate.⁷⁴ Mee definitely preferred a well-educated girl. She praised Lady Carnegie as “the most sensible woman” she had ever met because of the quality of the education she gave her daughters and was aghast at the lack of education in Neapolitan noblewomen.⁷⁵ However there was a consensus that education should differ based on rank.⁷⁶

Eighteenth-century educationalists emphasised practical, industrial, education over academic for the poor.⁷⁷ A significant minority viewed charity schools as disrupting the social order by educating children above their station: they were “more hurtful than beneficial: young persons who continue there so long as to read and write fluently become too delicate for hard labour and too proud for ordinary labour”.⁷⁸ Evangelical Sarah Trimmer wrote:

The children of the poor should not be educated in such a manner as to set them above the occupations of humble life, or so as to make them uncomfortable among their equals, and ambitious of associating with persons moving in a higher sphere, with whom they cannot possibly vie in experience or appearance without manifest injury to themselves.⁷⁹

The Lockean ideas as modified and expounded by educationalists such as the Edgeworths and Anna Barbauld, who believed that education should be stimulating, pleasurable, encouraging and, importantly, not limiting, were an anathema to Hannah More:

⁷⁴ Earle, p. 161-162; Harriet Guest, *Small Change. Women, Learning. Patriotism, 1750-1810* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 38-19; Porter, *Enlightenment*, ch. 15; Langford, *Polite*, p.109; for examples see Watts, *Whose Knowledge*, 283-302, and W. Gunther-Canada, 'Cultivating Virtue: Catharine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft on Civic Education', *Women & Politics*, 25 (2003), 47-70.

⁷⁵ BR 21/9/1; Connell, p. 275.

⁷⁶ Simonton, pp.104-106; Michèle Cohen, 'Gender and 'Method' in Eighteenth-Century English Education', *History of Education*, 33(5) (2004), 585-95.

⁷⁷ Rosemary O'Day, *Education and Society 1500-1800: The Social Foundations of Education in Early Modern Britain* (London: Longman, 1982), p. 259.

⁷⁸ Kames, *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774) as quoted in Owen, p. 27; see also Mandeville's charity school essay.

⁷⁹ Sarah Trimmer, *Reflections on the Education of Children in Charity Schools* (1792) as quoted in Simonton, p. 97.

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Is it not a fundamental error to consider children as innocent beings, whose little weaknesses may perhaps want some correction, rather than as beings who bring into the world a corrupt nature and evil dispositions, which it should be the great end of education to rectify.⁸⁰

By end of the century, many of the original charity schools were no longer educating the poorest in society but the children of semi-skilled and skilled artisans.⁸¹ Many schools charged book and fuel fees which immediately put them out of the reach of the very poorest. Educating a child also involved an opportunity cost; when a child was at school they could not be earning and adding to the family income.

Two new forms of school appeared in the late 1780s to address this opportunity cost; Sunday schools were attended by those children who worked during the week, and schools of industry ran during the week for those without employment. Thus there was a three tier system within charity schools. Trimmer declared the new schools were for the “bad and dull” children who could be trained up to work in manufactories or as common servants whereas the older style schools were for the “first degree among the Lower Orders” as there were “degrees of poverty as well as of opulence”.⁸²

Sunday schools were championed by Robert Raikes in Gloucestershire; More, who ran Sunday schools in the Mendips with her sister; and Trimmer, who advised Queen Charlotte on the subject.⁸³ The schools were primarily about religious education. The curriculum was generally limited to the catechism, bible stories and learning to read. More refused to have writing taught in her Sunday schools as unnecessary for the labouring classes, but it was taught in some schools.⁸⁴ The movement grew rapidly; in 1787 the Sunday School

⁸⁰ For more information on the Edgeworth and Baurbauld, see Ruth Watts, 'Some Radical Educational Networks of the Late Eighteenth Century and Their Influence', *History of Education*, 27 (1998), 1-14 and Marjory Lang, 'Maria Edgeworth's the Parent's Assistant (1796): A Document of Social Education', *History of Education*, 7 (1978), 21-33; Hannah More, *Strictures on Education*, I, p. 64 as quoted in Simonton, p. 83.

⁸¹ O'Day, p. 249.

⁸² Trimmer, *Reflections on the Education of Children in Charity Schools* (1792) as quoted in Jones, p.16.

⁸³ Aileen Fyfe, 'Reading Children's Books in Late Eighteenth-Century Dissenting Families', *The Historical Journal*, 43(2) (2000), 453-73 (p. 456).

⁸⁴ Jones, pp. 150 & 159.

Society reported 201 affiliated schools teaching 10,232 children, a decade later 69,000 children attended 1,086 schools.⁸⁵ In Romsey, the non-conformist Sunday school opened in 1785 and the Anglican in 1792 or 1793.⁸⁶

The second category, the schools of industry, could trace their history back to the 1720s when the SPCK championed the school run by Mrs Harris in Artleborough. Less school and more workshop, it ran for 15 hours a day with a short break for lunch, covered its costs and made as much as £500-£600 annual profit for the town coffers.⁸⁷

Had Pitt's Poor Law reform of 1795 succeeded, every parish would have had to set up a school of industry; attendance would have been compulsory for the children of those on poor relief. Instead the provision was piecemeal and usually only flourished under an enthusiastic patron, although even that did not guarantee success; Trimmer, who advocated schools of industry even more than she advocated Sunday Schools as instruments of moral education, had both of her schools of industry fail after only two years. A 1803 government survey of children receiving parish poor relief found that only 11% of children were in schools of industry.⁸⁸

The SBCP supported schools of industry (as did Rumford). They singled out various schools as exemplars, including the schools run by William Gilpin at Boldre in the New Forest.⁸⁹ Gilpin, formerly headmaster of the Cheam school and author on the picturesque, had retired to Boldre and using the profits from his hugely successful *Travelogues*, set up a school for industry in the village with both a boys' and a girls' section in 1791.⁹⁰ There is no evidence that Mee visited the Boldre schools, although she may have heard of them.

School for Industry

The exact opening date of Mee's school for industry is unknown. The first references Mee makes to the school in her extant letters date to January 1801

⁸⁵ Jones, p. 153; Owen, p. 115; Porter, *English Society*, p. 296.

⁸⁶ Genge and Spinney, p.33.

⁸⁷ Jones, p. 90.

⁸⁸ Jones, pp. 157-158.

⁸⁹ Jones, p. 156

⁹⁰ William D Templeman, *The Life and Work of William Gilpin* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1939), p. 194.

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but Rumford's letter about the kitchen equipment in November 1799 also mentioned the school.⁹¹ It is very probable that the school opened before 1801: an undated list of thirty 'Girls at my school' is written in the Account book and could date from any time from between December 1799 and January 1801.⁹² In addition, Mee's reference to the school increasing to sixty, appointing of a sub-governess and needing to draw up rules in January 1801, strongly suggest that the school had been running in a smaller form since 1799 or 1800.

In common with other girls' schools, Mee appointed local ladies, namely Mrs. Latham, Seward, J. Latham, Tarver and Comley, to act as visitors. All four families appear in Mee's books as having recommended people to her for help. The women and Mee took turns to make weekly visits to the school to ensure it was running well. There is also evidence that the governess wrote regular reports to Mee when she was away from Broadlands.⁹³

Initially, the school taught girls aged four to fourteen. The skills taught were spinning, knitting and all aspects of dressmaking, although the exact tasks would be age dependent; the youngest seem to have started with knitting.⁹⁴ Work was taken in at rates half the women's rate and the girls were paid for the work they did.

They were also taught reading and spelling and their catechism (or equivalent for dissenters), and the oldest girls were taught practical housekeeping skills. Mrs Rout, the governess, had a supply of books to be given out gratis to those pupils who showed enthusiasm for reading. No mention is made of writing but as the children's parents were expected to be able to write absence notes and there is little purpose being able to spell if you cannot write, writing may well also have been on the curriculum. Likewise arithmetic is not explicitly on the curriculum but basic numeracy would have been integral to dressmaking and knitting. Mee unfortunately is quiet on her views about the teaching of writing.

⁹¹ BR21/7/5; Rumford 493528.

⁹² BR 18/2/1, p. 51; BR 21/7/8. The list of names totals 30 girls, and one boy, Richard Rout, presumably the son of the governess, Mrs Rout.

⁹³ BR 19/11 Letter from Ann Rout, 27th May 1803.

⁹⁴ BR 18/5/5/109-12 Letter to Emma Godfrey, [?]Jan] 1803.

Many small schools did not offer it as a standard subject but as a paid for, added extra as at Gilpin's school.⁹⁵

In February 1803 an infant school was opened, taking girls and boys as young as two. Mee demonstrated her pragmatic character, in not only making sure she had a good supply of beer in for the pre-enrollment meeting with the parents, but in recognising that the provision of free childcare enabled parents to be more economically active; "they all seemed delighted with the plan (not merely the beer) but of getting rid of their children which will allow them to go out".⁹⁶ With the opening of the infant school, the total number of pupils was in the region of 100 girls.

The school day was considerably shorter than the 15 hours of the Artleborough school; 4 ½ hours in the winter, 6 hours in the summer with a two hour lunch break starting at noon. Girls could either go home at lunchtime or have their lunch in the governess's 'first kitchen' and play in her garden.

Holidays were fixed at the discretion of the governess, in another pragmatic move, to be "most advantageous to the parents, and to the children, at the different seasons of the year". Mee's pragmatism also extended to the girls' appearances. Each girl was expected to be clean and tidy (with short hair like Mee's own daughters when young) and "as neat as the circumstances of her situation will admit of".⁹⁷

A system of rewards and punishments was used. Performance was recorded in three books (rewards, forfeits and work done). Tickets were given out for both good and bad behaviour. Mee pre-empted the SCBP's advice that "that kind of merit which might offer to *every scholar* the ground of competition - viz *regularity of attendance, cleanliness of person, habitual diligence and orderly behaviour*" be rewarded.⁹⁸

Punishments were usually in the form of a monetary fine from earnings and a headband to with the legend 'for misbehaviour' to be worn for the rest of the

⁹⁵ Templeman, p. 197.

⁹⁶ BR 21/9/6; BR 18/5/5/105-8 Letter to Emma Godfrey, [?5] Jan 1803.

⁹⁷ BR19/17/1 *Rules and Regulations* (see appendix 7).

⁹⁸ *Reports of the SCBP*, 3:240 as quoted in Andrew, *Police*, p. 171, n. 25.

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day. Mee believed that the punishments were “not very severe [and] more likely to produce a good effect from those commonly made”.⁹⁹

Lying was taken very seriously and warranted two days suspension, the loss of seven days earnings and wearing the black headband for seven days.

Repetition of lying would lead to permanent exclusion. Stealing was a cause for immediate expulsion, as Hannah Doling discovered in 1803 when she stole money from the teacher’s desk to buy peppermints.¹⁰⁰

All forfeited earnings were collected and given by Mee to the most deserving girl every Christmas and Whitsun. Monthly and annual rewards were given out; the monthly prizes were in the form of clothing of up to half a crown’s value for the third class, two shillings for the second class and one shilling and six pence for the first class and the girls would wear a white band emblazoned with ‘A Reward of Industry’.

On New Year’s Day the annual prizes of clothes were awarded. Five prizes were available to each class.

First Prize	Gown, petticoat, shift, stockings, shoes, hat
Second Prize	Gown
Third Prize	Petticoat
Fourth Prize	Shift
Fifth Prize	Pair of stockings

The bill of S. Newell in December 1803 for the clothes for the school, came to £27.3.0.¹⁰¹ School leavers were given bonnets and in 1803 Mee planned to give all the girls cloaks to wear when going to church.¹⁰²

The giving of clothes was an important symbolic act, and one typical for charity schools. Clothes were expensive and the provision of a regular uniform was a significant saving for a household, particularly if they had more than one child at school. Mee does not appear to have insisted that parents undertake not to

⁹⁹ BR 21/7/8.

¹⁰⁰ BR 18/2/1, p. 131.

¹⁰¹ BR 18/6/1 Receipt from Sharp & Newell, 1804.

¹⁰² BR 21/9/1.

sell off or swap the clothes, or return them once the girl left, unlike other charity schools.¹⁰³

The use of rewards alongside punishments was a development in educational theory in the eighteenth century. Enlightenment thought generally believed that reward was a more effective incitement than punishment. Gilpin famously introduced rewards at Cheam to encourage good behaviour and studiousness.¹⁰⁴ Alongside the prize system of rewards, the girls earned money based on their industriousness and were allowed to keep the first pair of stockings they made.

Continued bad behaviour would result in being excluded from the annual dinner. The dinner was the highlight of the year and Mee took great care in 1803 and 1804 to write up the event. In 1803 It fell on her wedding anniversary; “till now for 19 years the happiness day of the my life – to see others so is now my only pleasure”.¹⁰⁵ In 1804, 136 girls, teachers and Mrs Smith the cook dined. They were waited upon by the Lady Visitors, and other families and friends including Lord Ashburton. Mee wrote “their dinner Roast Beef, Plumb Pudding, Potatoes, Green Bread and strong and small beer – after dinner they went into the Spinning Room to dance [...] Love Country Dances very well and Harry and Lilly etc danced with the infants. I never saw a gaier Ball & the pleasure arising from seeing so many happy is reflected back doubly upon those who enter it. They danced until 9 o’clock then had warm milk or water and a piece of cake”.¹⁰⁶

Another intangible reward was being invited to Broadlands. In January 1803, the school girls came to the house to receive their New Year prizes and Mee wrote to Harry later that day that “this morning had my school here and am quite ruined in presents”¹⁰⁷ Mee frequently made mock complaints to her son about the good behaviour of her schoolgirls costing her a fortune. Harry replied in the same tone with a modest suggestion that she should “introduce

¹⁰³ Sarah Lloyd, 'Agents of Their Own Concerns'? Charity and the Economy of Makeshifts in Eighteenth Century Britain', in *The Poor in England 1700-1850 : An Economy of Makeshifts*, ed. by Steven King and Alannah Tomkins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 100-36 (p. 111).

¹⁰⁴ O'Day, p. 206-207.

¹⁰⁵ BR 18/2/1, p. 117.

¹⁰⁶ BR 18/2/1, pp. 197-200.

¹⁰⁷ BR 21/9/1.

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some sly little discordant Pippin among them, and make the young ladies misbehave their prizes away in forfeits".¹⁰⁸ Certainly Mee's school does not appear to have suffered from the absenteeism that occurred in other charity schools¹⁰⁹. This is probably due to the fact that the girls earned income by attending and the holidays were to be fixed at the parent's convenience, so the economic pressures to remove children at harvest time and other local opportunities for temporary employment were not so acute.

The school was open to both Anglicans and dissenters. Mee was not loud in her religiosity (she rarely mentions religion or God in her letters), but when she does turn to religious matters, she appears sincere in her beliefs.¹¹⁰ Weekly attendance at church or chapel was compulsory; they had to meet at the School to walk to worship together, accompanied by a teacher. Seats were set aside for them, and both ministers awarded book prizes for best attendance and best behaviour at worship every Christmas and Whitsun. The requirement for charity school pupils to attend a religious service on Sundays was a well-established tradition.¹¹¹ Even if Mee had not consciously intended it, her requirement meant that the pupils made a weekly public demonstration of their status as recipients of Mee's benevolence.

Mee remained interested in the girls once they left her school. She listed the leavers and their destinations every year in her books and invited the leavers back for the annual dinner. After the school had been going for a few years, she rented the house next to the school to provide workroom for those who haven't gone on to other employment, to ensure that 'her girls' didn't fall prey to that 'degenerating evil, idleness'.¹¹²

As there was no other girls' charity school in Romsey, there was no stratification between the school of industry and another institution. The girls in Mee's school came from a variety of backgrounds. Some had no father's occupation listed, some were the daughters of labourers, gardeners,

¹⁰⁸ BR 21/9/3 Letter from Harry Temple, 17th January 1801.

¹⁰⁹ See Lloyd, *Agents*, p. 112.

¹¹⁰ BR 21/9/7 Letter to Harry Temple, 25th February 1803. One of the few times she expressed her religious views in her letters, was to decry the seemingly methodistical turn her illegitimate stepson, Campbell, had taken in his preaching.

¹¹¹ Lloyd, *Agents*, p. 108.

¹¹² BR 21/8/3.

bricklayers and washerwomen while others were the daughters of more skilled workers such as shoemakers, butchers, carpenters and tailors. Despite being the only girls' charity school in Romsey, not all girls were admitted. Mrs Rout, the governess, took the decision as to whether girls would be admitted and occasionally she did turn down a girl.¹¹³ Only those who could demonstrate that they would be likely to make use of the education offered were accepted.

Mee did not leave a legacy to her school. The omission is not that unusual for the early nineteenth century. The size and frequency of bequests declined over previous century: between 1675-1700 70% of wills included bequests whereas between 1800-1850 only 29.9% contained bequests.¹¹⁴ The last major charitable bequest in London was Sir Thomas Guy's in 1727. In Hampshire, the last large bequest was by Richard Taunton, a Southampton wine merchant and former mayor, who left £13,000 to various charities on his death in 1752.¹¹⁵ Throughout the eighteenth century, inherited wealth was increasingly restricted to the nuclear family, at the expense of charities and extended family.¹¹⁶ The growing distrust in the administration of charity and a desire to directly control how one's money is spent, even from beyond the grave, may have influenced the reduction in bequests.¹¹⁷ Lord Palmerston's single major bequest to Winchester Hospital was unusual enough to be reported as far afield as in the *Bury and Norwich Post*.¹¹⁸

In this context, Mee's lack of legacy should not be seen necessarily as lack of care for her institution but rather an assumption that charitable institutions should be paid for by the living, not the dead. She did want her school to continue as she wrote in January 1803, "my hopes carry me to think when I no longer exist this school will live and flourish".¹¹⁹ But in a further letter to Harry Temple, in May 1804, seven months before her death, Mee detailed her

¹¹³ BR 18/2/1, p. 115. January 1803, Mee lists girls seeking admitted and notes one was 'not approved by Mrs Rout'.

¹¹⁴ Andrew, *Philanthropy*, p.46; Langford, *Polite*, p.131.

¹¹⁵ Owen, p. 80.

¹¹⁶ Will Coster, *Family and Kinship in England, 1450-1800*, (London: Pearson Education, 2001) as quoted in Steven King and Alannah Tomkins, 'Introduction', in *The Poor in England 1700-1850: An Economy of Makeshifts*, ed. by Steven King and Alannah Tomkins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p.23.

¹¹⁷ Andrew, *Philanthropy*, p.46.

¹¹⁸ *Hampshire Chronicle*, Monday 8th November 1802; *The Bury and Norwich Post: Or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, and Cambridge Advertiser*, Wednesday 24th November 1802.

¹¹⁹ BR 21/9/2 Letter to Harry Temple, 13th January 1803.

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expenditure and debts and listed the allowances she would like to be paid after her death. She wrote:

With respect to the School establishment it may be too expensive. I therefore have no right to be continued – I am sure I have no pretension to ask it.¹²⁰

Owen, in his work on English philanthropy, dismissed the schools of industry as “anachronisms”, “ineffective and ephemeral” and their advocates as labouring under “a series of misapprehensions about the currents that were revolutionising British life”. He also calls into question if schools of industry were even philanthropic ventures.¹²¹ This verdict is rather harsh, and while it might deserved by some advocates, such as Trimmer who thought that spending a day spinning constituted a good moral education to keep children “from the dangers to which idleness exposes every human being”, it is probably unfair on those who saw schools of industry as an alternative to industrial workshops, with added free education, and completely ignores those who saw them as the only way for education to reach the very poorest in society. Mee’s school was philanthropic; it did not pay its own way through the children’s labour.

It also does not accurately describe Mee’s school. Although it did eventually close, being amalgamated into the Girls National School in the 1850s as part of a rationalisation of education in Romsey, it did not wither. Nor did it disappear without a trace, as the specialist needlework class in the National School was called Lady Palmerston’s. Mee was not detached from the new forces of industry as Owen suggested; she toured factories with her husband and urged her children to maintain awareness of manufacturing conditions.¹²²

Although it was common for aristocrats to sponsor schools on their estates, appearing at prize days and annual dinners giving out beneficence, most urban educational charity was founded by the middle classes.¹²³ Mee’s personal interest in her school in Romsey, in particular her close knowledge of the girls, was atypical. She never spelt out her motivations but the school rules and her

¹²⁰ BR 21/10/19, Letter to Harry Temple, 16th May 1804.

¹²¹ Owen, p. 115.

¹²² Connell, p. 438; BR 21/8/19.

¹²³ Plumb, p. 71; Simonton, p. 94.

letters hint that she was in part motivated by a Christian desire to help others live better and more fulfilling lives, and her expression of that wish was pragmatic, informed by scientific philanthropy.

The soup kitchen was a typical activity for patricians to patronise during times of scarcity, but again it was unusual to be so personally involved as Mee certainly was in its early seasons.

Mee's on-going involvement in her charitable establishments marks her out as unusual for her rank. A near-contemporary fellow wife of an Whig M.P., and daughter of a newly ennobled Irish peer, Mrs Frances Calvert did personally inoculate the local villagers on her estate against smallpox. However while she helped out the local schoolmistress over the course of several days when setting up the local Sunday school, she wrote that it was not something she meant to carry on doing and in the future her visits were to be more occasional.¹²⁴ Lady Spencer took close interest in her various causes at the administrative level but was unlikely to be found daily at her food charity.¹²⁵

Mee was on the cusp between 'particular charity' to larger, institutional based charity. While Mee may well have been concerned that her money was not wasted and may also have been subconsciously aware of the effect of her personal presence in creating a stronger bond of loyalty between the giver and the recipient, it is also clear from her letters, that she enjoyed the involvement and derived her own personal pleasure from seeing the results of what "interest[ed her] exceptionally".¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Stone and Stone, *Open Elite*, p. 324.

¹²⁵ Andrew, *Noblesse Oblige*, p. 295, n. 19.

¹²⁶ BR 21/7/8.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study set out to consider two questions relating to Mee's charitable works: did she use her philanthropy to bolster her own social position; and did she use charity to impose her own moral views on, to police, those below her in the social order?

Considering the second question first, according to Prochaska, "charity created dependent clients, while making power visible".¹ Was Mee aware of this aspect of charity? If she was, did she use the power to ensure that her dependent clients behaved as she wanted? She did not, in any of her writings, express sympathy with the ultra-conservative views of Hannah More, who saw charity entirely as a means of social control. Nor did she have as extreme a view of the lower orders as the Duchess of Buckingham who described them as "the common wretches that crawl on the earth".² Mee wrote of help she'd received from a working man on Hampstead Heath in May 1803, "I only mention this circumstance as an different demeanour has of late appeared in the lower orders since the fatal Revolution", showing that she was slightly more sympathetic to their potential nobility than was the Duchess.³

However, the notion of policing society, maintaining an ordered society for the benefit of all its members, was pervasive in eighteenth-century England. Mee would not explicitly have to agree with social conservatives in order to believe that those of higher rank had a moral duty to instruct those beneath them. So widespread was this idea of policing that Mee might not even have been aware of it as a motivation.

Mee herself expressed her motivations in terms of doing something useful; the utility of her charity could benefit both the recipients and the wider society. The rewards in her school were very pragmatic; money and clothes were items that would be practical and useful to a poor family. The academic was not entirely forgotten, with books given out to enthusiastic readers, but books were relatively cheap; penny tracts for children were well within the reach of

¹ Prochaska, *Royal Bounty*, p.7

² Porter, *English Society*, p.48.

³ BR 18/1/5 Diary, May 1803.

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many labouring families.⁴ Yet it was behaviour and industry that were primarily rewarded. Her school for industry was never going to produce well-educated girls compared to those of the middle- or upper-classes. Her own daughters observed astrological events and scientific experiments, puzzled over maths problems for enjoyment, knew several foreign languages and studied drawing; the girls at her school were highly unlikely to do any of these.⁵ Mee was not a radical; she may have read Mary Wollstonecraft and declared to her husband that he would find her “very tenacious of [her] rights and privileges”, but she was not about to overturn the ‘natural’ order of things.⁶ She followed the conventional wisdom that girls of different social ranks should be taught differently; as the Hampshire Chronicle report of her school stated, its aim was to turn out “excellent servants”.⁷

As discussed in chapter 4, Mee's regulation that her school pupils attended a Sunday religious service was not a new departure. The insistence that the girls attended en bloc rather than with their families had a two-fold effect: it produced a weekly public display of Mee's beneficence, a display of symbolic power to be seen by those who did not attend the school; and it removed the girls from the influence of their families.

The need to remove the children of the poor from the baleful influence of their parents was another tenet widely held by those who sought to police society (Godschall believed that “they can scarcely be taken too soon from the idle and dissolute”).⁸ Mee does not appear to have been dismissive of the parents at her school — she certainly expected them to be involved in discipline — nor did she require her girls to spend most of their Sundays apart from their families (in contrast to Gilpin's school).⁹ Nevertheless, the effect of her regulation on church attendance was to place loyalty to the school above loyalty to their families. As such, Mee was acting in the paternalistic tradition of middle and

⁴ Evelyn Arizpe and Morag Styles, “‘Love to Learn Your Book’: Children's Experiences of Text in the Eighteenth Century”, *History of Education*, 33 (2004), 337-52 (p. 344); Mitzi Myers, 'Hannah More's Tracts for the Times: Social Fiction and Female Ideology', in *Fetter'd or Free? British Women Novelists 1670-1815*, ed. by Mary Anne Scholfield and Cecilia Macheski (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1986), pp. 264-85 (p. 266).

⁵ BR 24/4/5 Letter from Harry Temple to Fanny Temple, 11th February, 1804.

⁶ BR 11/18/5 Letter to Lord Palmerston, 13th May 1791.

⁷ *Hampshire Chronicle*, 13th January 1802 (see appendix 6).

⁸ Godschall, p. 22.

⁹ Templeman, p. 195.

upper class philanthropy, in that she assumed that she knew what was best for those in the lower orders of society.

Mee's self-awareness of her motivations appear to be that of 'benefactress', and she does not knowingly seem to have set out to maintain a strict social order. Not recognising the true impact of one's actions is a key element in Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence; misrecognition does not negate the fact that her school was not socially progressive. Thus under Bourdieu's definition of symbolic violence as an instrument of cultural reproduction, her school of industry was an instance of symbolic violence. The soup shop is likewise imbued with symbolic violence in the Bourdieusian model. Mee's customers were not undertaking a strictly commercial transaction; they were buying their food and provisions at a subsidised rate and the subsidy was provided by Mee. They were thus indebted to Mee, a debt they could only repay through social actions such as deference.

Mee's other activities in Romsey are also shot through with paternalistic concern. Her clothing, alms and visits to the poor and sick are likely to have been selectively directed to those whom she felt were deserving of her attention. Unfortunately, her selection criteria are unknown, although families with children predominate her lists, unsurprisingly as family finances are usually at their worst when children are young.¹⁰ The obligation was one of being beholden; the bond of gratitude and social debt produced by the personal intervention of the 'lady of the manor' would be strong. The symbolic violence in such actions is undeniable and would reinforce the existing social order

If Mee was not fully cognizant of the policing effects of her charity, was she aware of the social effects of her works on her and her family's standing?

Charitable undertakings bolstered a person's social and symbolic capital in Georgian England. Newspaper reports of charitable activity have no other purpose than to advertise the 'good deeds' of others. They would never have been read by anyone who could actually benefit from the charity described. For

¹⁰ John Styles, 'Custom or Consumption? Plebeian Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England', in *Luxury In The Eighteenth Century: Debates, desires and delectable goods*, ed. by Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 103-15 (p. 106).

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example, the *Hampshire Chronicle* carried reports of the Duke of Bolton donating £10 for the relief of the poor in Basingstoke, Lady Mary Ann Sturtgave giving food and clothes to the Poor of Long-Critchill, Dorset, the Duke of Bedford employing the poor on his estate, Lady Thomas opening a Sunday School in Chichester, and Lord and Lady Temple carving Christmas dinner for 300 poor, as well as a report of Mee's school and kitchen.¹¹

Reports in London papers of regional charitable activity were even more about the social prestige of the donor. Ostensibly reports of good deeds to act as a model for others, the reports in fact acted as adverts for the donor's economic and social capital; it was not quiet charity by any means. National reputations could be built on the back of continued reports. Although only Mee received one known letter enquiring about her charitable establishments in Romsey, Lady Spencer was a well-known correspondent on all matters philanthropic and was consulted by people from all over the country.¹² It is possible that had she lived longer, Mee may have become a 'female expert' in a small way.¹³

Mee's charity acted upon more people than just the direct recipients. In the early years of her marriage, Mee behaved as a typical member of the landed elite as described by Stone: she stayed mainly on her estate, raised children and created ties with the local gentry.¹⁴ Mee was very aware of this need to make links with those lower down the great chain; in a letter to her husband in 1791, she remarked of her dinner companions that "I invited poor Cindy out of Compassion as she is all alone and looks sadly. I Hope you will give me credit for my virtue".¹⁵ Unlike Lord Pembroke, who was driven from Wilton to Broadlands from "fear of being obliged to give the Judges a dinner" or the fictional Emma Woodhouse, who had to be reminded of her obligations to

¹¹ Newspaper reports, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Home News: Winchester Monday 19th January 1789; *Hampshire Chronicle*, Home News: Winchester Monday 23rd February 1789, *Hampshire Chronicle*, Home News: Winchester Monday 14th May 1789; *Hampshire Chronicle*, Home News: Chichester, Monday 25th May 1789; *Hampshire Chronicle*, Home News: Winchester Monday 12th January 1801.

¹² Langford, *Public Life*, p. 571-2; Andrew, *Noblesse Oblige*, p.294 n. 3 & p. 299 n. 54.

¹³ Gleadle, p. 47.

¹⁴ Stone and Stone, *Open Elite*, p. 323.

¹⁵ BR 11/16/10 Letter to Lord Palmerston, 5th September 1791.

those not so fortunate as herself, Mee does not seem to have found local entertaining and networking bothersome.¹⁶

Mee also engaged local families in her patronage network to provide charity to those deserving of aid. Thus she tied them to her family as part of a larger social enterprise and strengthened the social networks of her family. Behaving as the traditional lady of the manor also increased her own symbolic capital, as she was seen as behaving in a manner befitting her rank. However she very much kept her activity to Romsey, not Winchester, where she would have come up against other local patronesses such as Lady Mildmay, wife of the other MP for the city.¹⁷ She does not appear to have been aiming for a county role, to compete with the local major aristocrats such as the Dukes of Bolton.

Much of the charity of the eighteenth century was practised with more self-interested motives than the participants would be willing to admit. Certain causes became fashionable and people often donated in order not to be left behind socially, rather than due to any strongly held convictions. This dissertation set out to discover if Mary Mee gave to the 'fashionable' causes, and if her pattern of donations reflected those of other aristocratic ladies. Between them the Palmerstons certainly did donate to fashionable and aristocratic causes such as St George and the Lying-In hospitals and to émigré charities, but Mee spent more on her own particular charities.

But were her charitable interests typical for an aristocrat or did she favour charities generally supported by the mercantile classes? Most Georgian charities were dominated by the middle classes. As a class, the aristocracy were not great philanthropists; they often had to be reminded of their obligations to support causes in their local community and in 1802, the aristocratic reticence to subscribe to the Patriotic Fund even caused the government to defend peers in the press.¹⁸ Apart from a few notable exceptions such as Lady Spencer, the 3rd Earl of Egremont and the 8th Earl of Winchelsea, there were no great aristocratic philanthropists who could compete with the likes of Hanway or Wilberforce for breadth of interest and

¹⁶ BR 11/16/6 Letter to Lord Palmerston, 3rd August 1791.

¹⁷ The Mildmays gave to charity, held local balls and so on. For examples see Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle* Monday 3rd February, 1800 and Home News: Winchester, *Hampshire Chronicle* Monday 18th January, 1802

¹⁸ Langford, *Public*, p. 566; Colley, *Whose Nation?*, p.110.

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charities supported.¹⁹ Mee is certainly not in their league for sheer amount of money donated, but the type of charity she practised was certainly more like their interested, active philanthropy than the distant, figure-head charity most aristocrats bothered with.

Further work

Other questions arose during the course of this research, that unfortunately fell outside the scope and timeframe of the current project. Did Mee seek advice from other peeresses in her husband's social circle at the start of her marriage? What charities, if any, did her sister and brother-in-law support, and how did these differ from her own interests? Were any of the boys she sponsored at schools given the advantage of a solid artisan rather than labouring class education up to help them move up the social ladder? It may be possible to answer these questions with further archival work in Northamptonshire, London and Winchester.

Conclusion

In many respects, Mary Mee behaved as a typical wealthy woman of the late eighteenth century. She expressed societal norms in believing that the rich had a duty of care for, and the right to instruct, the poor. Although she never expressed the concept openly in her writing, her actions show she had indeed inculcated the concepts of policing. Much of her charitable activity followed traditional paths for the mistress of a great house: visiting the ill, clothing the poor, lending linens to new mothers, providing food in times of want. Her school was more atypical in that it was a school of industry rather than a Sunday school or traditional charity school, however it fitted within accepted conservative bounds for the education of working class girls.

She was not an evangelical philanthropist, if anything she was a rationalist, spurred on to action by the thought that she could improve the conditions of the poor rather than benefit her own or others' souls. She was not a 'great' philanthropist, but she did spend a significant amount of her own annual allowance on her charity; from her own relatively modest income of £100 per

¹⁹ Langford, *Public*, pp. 561 & 575, Hilton, p.138.

quarter she spent over £66 in August 1799, at the same time as her family's finances were under pressure.²⁰ Many aristocrats did far less.

Holding an Irish title but with no major English estate, her social position was that of a peeress, but her economic position was more akin to the upper landed gentry, and her behaviour conformed more to the stereotypical landed gentry than it did to the major aristocracy. She may in the most part, have followed the more aristocratic model of personal, localised projects rather than associational charity, but her choice of causes and personal involvement in her charities point forward to the more 'middle class' aristocracy of the nineteenth century.²¹ Her son has often been called one of the last Georgians; perhaps it might be better to call his mother one of the first Victorians.

²⁰ BR 18/2/1, p.34.

²¹ Gleadle, p. 125.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Newspaper reports featuring Mee

Selected newspaper reports mentioning Lady Palmerston 1783-1805

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1783-01-13	Hampshire Chronicle	Winchester	"Same day was married the Right Honorable Lord Palmerston to Miss Mease of Fenchurch Street"
1787-02-08	World and Fashionable Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended drawing room of 8 th Feb
1787-03-19	World and Fashionable Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended drawing room of 18 th March
1787-04-27	World and Fashionable Advertiser	News	Lady Palmerston attended drawing room of 26 th April
1787-05-17	World and Fashionable Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Vauxhall with Prince of Wales on 16 th May
1787-07-09	World and Fashionable Advertiser	Arts & Entertainment	Lord and Lady Palmerston left for the country

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Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1788-06-05	Morning Post and Daily Advertiser	News	Attended King's Birthday Drawing Room. Lady Palmerston wore white crepe embroidered with silver and foil, with heavy blue silk border, also embroidered, blue crepe train with fringe
1788-09-15	Hampshire Chronicle	Winchester	Winchester Annual Musical Meeting, attended by Palmerstons.
1789-01-19	Hampshire Chronicle	Winchester	Mary's birth notice
1789-04-17	World	News	Lady Palmerston in Bath (other aristocrats also listed)
1789-11-20	Oracle Bell's New World	News	Lady Palmerston at drawing room of 19th Nov
1789-11-20	World	News	Lady Palmerston at drawing room of 19th Nov
1790-04-16	World	News	Lady Palmerston at drawing room

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1790-07-31	World	News	List of notables arrived at Southampton, includes Lord and Lady Palmerston, also the Earls and Countesses of Macclesfield, Cavan and Malmesbury
1791-08-12	World	Classified ads	Lady Palmerston listed as subscriber to the Poetry of the World vol III & IV published that day for 7s. Subscription list headed by King, Queen, Prince of Wales, Princess Royal.
1791-08-24	Oracle	News	News from Portsmouth. On 21st August 'the following Nobility and Gentry paid Lord Hood a visit on Victory, and afterwards dined at the Fountain: Duke of Richmond, Lord Camden, Ld Charles Fitzgerald, Mr Finley, Lady Palmerston and family, Lady Radnor and Family, Mr & Mrs Hankey and family, Mr & Mrs Hankey and family, Mr & Mrs Burch and family, Lord Shrewsbury, Lord Amherst and nephew, Mr Huson and party, Mtr and Mrs Drummond Smith, Mr Rose Jun., Mr Banks and party, Mr Partridge, Mr & Mrs Stratton, Mr & Mrs Chaine, Mr Southgate
1792-03-19	Morning Chronicle	Arts & Entertainment	List of week's entertainments, including Lady Palmerston's Rout on Thursday
1792-07-06	Morning Chronicle	News	Lady Palmerston came to the drawing room on 5 th July 'for the first time this season'
1792-07-06	Star	News	Lady Palmerston came to the drawing room on 5 th July 'for the first time this season'
1792-07-06	World	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended drawing room of 5 th July

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Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1792-08-08	Star	Arts & Entertainment	'Lord and Lady Palmerston have gone on their tour through Italy'
1794-04-28	Oracle and Public Advertiser	News	'Lord and Lady Palmerston still at Naples'
1794-10-06	Sun	News	'Harwich, 5 th Oct, Lord Palmerston and family arrived from the Continent by Prince of Wales Packet'
1794-10-07	Oracle and Public Advertiser	Business	'Harwich, 5 th Oct, Lord Palmerston and family arrived from the Continent by Prince of Wales Packet'
1795-01-21	Sun	News	'Lady Palmerston and Lady Malmesbury arrived in Bath'
1796-03-02	Sun	News	'Lady Palmerston arrived in Bath on 29 th Feb'
1796-03-18	Oracle and Public Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Queen's drawing room on 17 th March

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1796-09-13	Oracle and Public Advertiser	Business	Death notice for Lady Palmerston's mother who died at Broadlands on Fri 2 nd September
1797-01-14	Oracle and Public Advertiser	News	Lord Palmerston to join his 'amiable lady' at Broadlands
1798-03-30	Oracle and Public Advertiser	News	Lady Palmerston at Covent Garden on 29th, as were the royal family
1798-05-04	Sun	News	Lady Palmerston at drawing room
1799-03-15	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lady Palmerston at drawing room
1799-05-10	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lady Palmerston at drawing room
1800-02-22	Morning Post and Gazetteer	Arts & Entertainment	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended the Duchess of Gordon's Gala

Appendix 1

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1800-03-14	Sun	News	Lady Palmerston at drawing room
1800-03-19-21	Lloyd's Evening Post	News	Information about the Royal Institution (King patron). "The following ladies have been requested by the Board of Managers to hold Books in which the names of Ladies desirous of becoming subscribers are to be entered and no Lady is to be admitted a Subscriber but upon the recommendation of one of the Ladies holding the books for that purpose: Duchess of Devonshire, Countess of Sutherland, Countess Spencer, Countess of Bessborough, Viscountess Palmerston, Mrs Barrington, Lady Campbell, Mrs Bernard, Mrs Crewe.
1800-03-25	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended the Thellusson's rout
1800-03-26	Morning Post and Gazetteer	Arts & Entertainment	Lord and Lady Palmerston both attended the Duchess of Gordon's Rout the night before
1800-04-25	Morning Post and Gazetteer	Arts & Entertainment	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Lady Mary Bentick's ball at the Duke of Portland's mansion
1800-04-30	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Countess of Leicester's ball on Monday
1800-05-05	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended the Marchioness of Hertford's rout the previous Thursday

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1800-05-14	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lady Palmerston attended Viscount Falmouth's rout on Monday evening
1800-05-16	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lady Palmerston attended Mrs Boone's rout on Wednesday
1800-05-20	Oracle and daily Advertiser	News	Lady Palmerston attended Mrs George Rose's rout
1800-05-23	Morning Post and Gazetteer	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Mrs Milne's rout on Tuesday
1800-11-18	Oracle and Daily Advertiser	News	Lord and Lady Palmerston left Edinburgh with Count Rumford to take time to make their way back to London
1801-03-23	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Viscountess Palmerston's Rout at Hanover Square on Wednesday
1801-03-27	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Lady Palmerston attended drawing room at which Catherine Harris was presented by her mother, Countess of Malmesbury

Appendix 1

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1801-03-30	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Lord and Lady Palmerston attend Marchioness of Abercorn's ball, also attended by the Prince of Wales who stayed for supper which was very unusual
1801-04-20	Morning Post and Gazetteer	Mrs Milne's Second Rout	Lady Palmerston attended. The Prince of Wales also attended but fewer dukes than previous ball.
1801-04-24	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Viscountess Dungannon's Rout. Prince William of Gloucester also attended.
1801-04-25	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Duchess of Buccleugh's Rout	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended
1801-04-30	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Mrs Milne's rout
1801-05-06	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Lady Palmerston attended the Marchioness of Abercorn's rout
1801-05-07	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Viscountess Newark's rout

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1801-05-08	Morning Post and Gazetteer	The Fashionable World	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended Mr T Hope's rout, as did the Prince of Wales
1801-05-11	Morning Post and Gazetteer	King's Theatre	Advert for The Prpphecy, (see appendix 4)
1801-06-15	Morning Post and Gazetteer	Mrs Morton Pitt's Masquerade	Lord and Lady Palmerston attended. Very well attended 600+ including the Prince of Wales.
1802-01-18	Hampshire Chronicle	Winchester	Report on Soup Shop & School
1802-01-15	Morning Post and Gazetteer	News	'Lady Palmerston has established a Soup shop at Romsey, Hants, from which the Poor are supplied with large proportions, at very modest prices' / 'Broadlands, the seat of Lord Palmerston is at present the scene of much musical festivity'
1802-09-06	Hampshire Chronicle	Winchester	Mr Cove (the steward) presented royal family with fruit at Romsey on behalf of Lady Palmerston.
1802-09-07	Morning Post and Gazetteer	Royal Journey	Lady Palmerston, 'who is at Broadlands', presented baskets of fruit to the King, Queen and 4 princesses while they stopped at the White Horse Inn in Romsey on their way back from Weymouth, 'by the hand of the House Stewart, Mr Cave.

Appendix 1

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1803-07-01	Morning Post	The Fashionable World	Lady Palmerston attended Countess Chomoldley's ball
1803-07-06	Morning Post	Epigram	Lady Palmerston has left town for her elegant villa at East Sheen
1803-08-04	Morning Post	The Fashionable World	"Viscountess PALMERSTON is passing her widowhood at the romantic family villa, near East Sheen, in Surrey."
1804-01-30	Morning Post	News	"Broadlands, the elegant seat of Viscountess PALMERSTON, in Hampshire, exhibits a scene, at present, of much gaiety. A large party of friends are there assembled, during the vacation of the young Lord from Cambridge, who have amused themselves by getting up some of the most approved comedies in the English language. Among the performers are, Viscount PALMERSTON, Lord ASHBURTON, Hon. MISS TEMPLES, Mr and Miss TATE, Miss RUSSELLS, Mr, WM. SLOANE, Mr. MACKIE, Mr THOMAS, son of SIR J. THOMAS, Bart. And MISS TOWNSEND."
1804-03-15	Morning Post	Sir Watkin and the Miss Wynne's Ball	Lady Palmerston attended (as did Duchess of Devonshire)
1804-05-05	Morning Post	New amateur concert and assembly	Concert rooms in Hanover Square to be open 6 times in the season, done by amateurs, cold supper provided. The list of directresses: D. of Devonshire, D of Marlborough, D of St Albans, D. of Leeds, L. Melbourne, L C?, L. Elizabeth Spencer, L ?. L. Langford, L Palmerston, L Dartmouth, L Buckinghamshire, L James, L Percival, L Kenmare, L. Westmeath.

Date	Newspaper	Section	Details
1804-05-09	Morning Post	The Fashionable World	Lady Palmerston attended Mrs Robinson's ball
1805-01-28	Hampshire Chronicle	Winchester	Mee's death notice.
1805-01-30	Bury and Norwich Post	Saturday's Post	Notice of Lady Palmerston's death at Broadlands
1805-12-11	Morning Post	Classified ads	First of four calls for creditors on MM's estate to contact Messrs Oddie, Oddie and Forster, Carey-street, Lincoln's Inn on 27 th Dec

Appendix 2: Clothing the Poor

Information taken from BR 18/2/1, pp. 9-19.

Description of clothes given away in January 1797

Girls: A gown of light grey cloth trimmed with a dark blue binding made high up in the neck and with a fabric waistcoat to tip. The dress made round. A flannel petticoat, 2 shifts, 2 pair stocking, 1 handkerchief, 1 pair shoes, 1 black beaver hat with black ferret to top it on.

Infants: 2 bed gowns, 2 shirts, 2 little caps, piece of flannel

Boys: suit of clothes [of] mixed cloth edged with purple binding the same as the girls, 2 pair stocking, 1 pair shoes, 2 shirts, 1 beaver hat

Woman (Sarah, garden women): same things, the gown of a peculiar sort of stuff

List of children clothed in January 1797 (by family, ages in brackets)

Richard Lion, Woodsman: 2 boys (16 & 11), 2 girls (11 and 0)

Carter's widow: 3 girls (11, 9, & 4)

Parent Carter: 2 girls (2yo & 6 weeks)

Pope (recommended by Mr Seward): 2 boys (14 and 11) and a lame girl, 14 years old

William Rupert (Morgan's labourer): 1 boy (11) and 2 girls (12 and 8)

Rubens (garden labourer): 1 boy (11) and 2 girls (8 and 4)

Newham (garden labourer): 3 boys (14,12 and 8) and 2 girls (18 and 16)

Holloway: a girl (4) and an infant - did not come*

1 soldier's boy (7) brought by Morgan

In total: twelve boys and sixteen girls

* Entry for 21st February 1797 states Holloway was given shifts and handkerchiefs for a six year old girl and an eight year old girl.

Appendix 3: Letter from F St Hill, Liverpool

Transcript of BR 18/5/3

Madam,

Although I have gained the courage to address your Ladyship, I feel I myself so unequal to the making a sufficient apology for the liberty I am taking, and I should, I fear fall so infinitely short at last, in my own ideas, that I can only rest my hopes of your excuse upon the never failing benevolence of your heart – After so long a seclusion from society, and after having withdrawn myself from the notice your Ladyship was so kind to honour me with when I considered myself deserted by the World, I need not attempt to describe my feelings at this moment. All the allowances that humanity can dictate, or generosity can bestow I am sure of receiving from Lady Palmerston – My sad story is too well known to need a recapulation; let, I beseech you, the remembrance of the Error be likewise buried in the Graves and may the Opinion you once had of me, and the misfortunes of the latter years of my life (which have been spent in a way which you would approve) efface from your remembrance the middle period – your ladyship will naturally wonder what induces me at this time to introduce my on your notice, & will perhaps scarcely give me [cause] for the regret I have ever felt at being excluded from accumulated misfortunes, have indeed urged me to an attempt I have long essayed to make – Having no near Relation except my mother, who is alas incapable of assisting herself, & standing as it were alone in the World, my mind naturally reverts to those, whose disposition leads them to restore tranquillity to a heart torn by misfortune, I am truly sensible I have no other claim on your Ladyship but I likewise feel it is the greatest I can make either to you or Lord Palmerston – Even no, I scarcely dare to name the purpose of my letter, the soliciting any sort of pecuniary favour puts me in so new a situation. It is to intreat your Ladyship to intercede with Lord Palmerston to save from much distress, the loan of Fifty Pounds for about a year would [?] my future Peace – I have no security to offer, but I am sure his Lordship would need none, and that he would rely on my promise, & believe I never could forget the great Obligation, & I may say happiness he would confer – it may possibly occur, that Mr [Willams?] would lend me this assistance, but having experienced great kindness, any application to him just now, would only greatly add to my distress – What can I offer in excuse for the liberty of

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this Request! 'Tis the knowledge of the pleasure both your Ladyship & Lord Palmerston ever take in alleviating the afflictions of others that induces it -

If your Ladyship could for a moment form an Idea of the heartfelt Joy it would give an Exile from the World to be again acknowledged by those who are ever thought on with affection & Esteem, I flatter myself I might before long be honour'd with an answer, and if you could inform me of my ever revered friend Mr Godshall it would be consider'd as an additional pleasure confer'd on your Ladyship's Obliged and Obedient Servant

F. St Hill

Liverpool, Jan 17th 1802

P.S. Your Ladyship will please to address to me under cover to Mrs Herbert, Post Office, Liverpool.

Appendix 4: Concert Advertisement, 1801

As published in *The Morning Post and Gazetteer* on Monday, 11th May, 1801.

By the Permission of the LORD CHAMBERLAIN. THEATRE ROYAL HAYMARKET. On Thursday, May 14, by particular desire, and under the immediate auspices of the Right Hon. Countess of Cavan, Right Hon. Viscountess Palmerston, Right Hon Lady Tylney Long, Right Hon. Lady Sarah Crespigny, Right Hon. Lady Catherine Colyer, Lady Hudson and other Ladies of Distinction; will be performed THE PROPHECY, a Sacred Oratorio, in Two Parts (performed at this theatre, March 20, 1799, with the highest and most universal applause). After which NAVAL GLORY, a Grand Thanksgiving Ode, written by Mrs, Crespigny, in honour of our splendid Victories. To conclude with AN ANTHEM, in celebration of the Union, written for the occasion by Henry James Pye, Esq. Poet Laureate. The Music of the Ode and Anthem, entirely new, The whole composed by Dr. Busby. The principal Vocal Parts, by Madam Dussek, Miss Richardson, Master Cutler, and a Young Lady (being her first appearance in public); Mr. Page, and Mr Chard (of Winchester); Mr Walker, and Mr. Welsh. Leader of the Band, Mr. Rimoudi. Organ Mr. S Wesley. Conductor Dr. Busby, who will preside at the Piano-forte. Boxes 7s. Pit, 4s. First Gallery, 2s6d. Second Gallery, 1s6d. The Doors to be opened at Six o'clock, to begin precisely at Seven. Tickets to be had at all the principle Music Shops; at no. 9, China Terrace, Vauxhall-road and of Mr. Rice, at the Stage Door, of whom Places for the Boxes may be taken.

*** The Public are respectfully informed that the Oratorio of The Prophecy is about to be published by Subscription, Proposals for which may be had in a few days, at all principal Music Shops in London.

Appendix 5: Rumford's letter to Mee, Nov 1799

A transcript of the letter from Count Rumford to Lady Palmerston, Broadlands [Rumford 493528, Dartmouth College Library]

Brompton 26th Nov 1799

You must own that you are a most ungrateful creature to tax me with not being disposed to write for you. Have you then forgotten the Treatise I wrote expressly for your private use and which God Knows whether you ever look the trouble to read! Everyday I find new reasons for adopting the vulgar opinion that too much indulgence spoils even the best of People. You are a dear good woman but I am afraid your friends have indulged you too much. I will however do everything in my power to assist you.

I have ordered for your kitchen, the grate ? which you saw at Summer's - I will if you approve of it put up a most complete Roaster on one side of it, and as complete a family Boiler with steam dishes etc on the other side of it. In short to copy Summer's Kitchen exactly, not so much indeed for the use it will be of to the Poor, but to the very great use of it will be of to Rumsey and the neighbourhood, as a model.

For the purpose of cooking for the Poor who frequent your School of Industry I have ordered a boiler which holds about 40 Gallons and a nest of four small ovens, of sheet iron all heated by the same fire.

This large boiler and these four ovens will not cost more than 5 guineas when finished and properly set in brick work. I am doing my utmost to get all these things made as soon as possible and I think they will be finished by the end of this week. As soon as they are done I shall send them down by the waggon and shall send down my bricklayer by the coach to put them up. As to spinning wheels and other implements for setting the Children etc to work you must regulate their number by the number of Persons you expect to collect to use them. Your Rumsey friends will be best able to give upon advice in this but don't ask me for the particulars of what is doing at Munich. My Princess has written me the kindest but most distressing letter on the subject. I cannot

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think of it without feeling a degree of grief that you may imagine but which I cannot express.

You will love my Princess when you are informed that she offered to furnish me with any sum of money that might be necessary to keep up my establishments but I declined of course accepting her generous offer. Everything at Munich indicates some great change most probably a change of Residence and perhaps of Government. But this to yourself – everything that will fetch money is selling even the Palace's farms, brew hoses, Houses of Industry etc etc

What a cruel situation would mine of been at this moment had I not published my first and second essays! But my works will remain in spite of the fury if the Goths and the Vandals.

I don't think I am yet much better as to my health.

The Institution for the Poor is to be pre[...]. But how can it excer[...] the House of Industry [...] I know not.

This letter contains more than a score of the little dabs of notes you send me.

Appendix 6: News report of Soup Shop and School of Industry

As published in the Winchester section of the *Hampshire Chronicle* on Monday 13th January 1802:

Lady Palmerston has established a soup-shop at Romsey, from which the poor are provided with large proportions, at very moderate prices. This charitable establishment is under the immediate inspection of her ladyship, who attends the delivery of the soup every day. There is also an institution under the same patroness, for the education of young girls, where above fifty are instructed in spinning and other acquirement necessary to make them excellent servants; both these liberal institutions are conformable to the plans of Count Rumford.

Appendix 7: School of Industry Rules & Regulations

Transcript of BR 19/17/1, printed in 1801. Both copies Mee sent her daughters bearing the note 'from the author to Frances/Lilly Temple for the benefit of her children' are exant, although she also sent a copy to Harry (now lost).

Rules and Regulations

To be Observed by the CHILDREN admitted into

LADY PALMERSTON'S

SCHOOL of INDUSTRY

1801

- I. A Paper with the Name and Age of the Child, the Employment of the Parents, the Place of their Residence, and the Name of the Person by whom she has been recommended, is to be delivered to Mrs. ROUT the Governess, and on that day week, the Parent is to be informed whether the Child can be admitted.
- II. When the Child is accepted, she must have her Hair *Cut*, and *kept Short*; and she must never appear in School, without her Head, Face, and Hands being perfectly Clean; and her general appearance is to be as neat as the circumstances of her situation will admit of.
- III. The Children are expected to be Exact to the Hours appointed for Meeting; which are Nine in the Morning, in Summer; and Half-past Nine, in the Winter; to remain in School till Twelve. And to return at Two, there to remain till Four o'Clock, in Winter; and till Five o'Clock, in Summer. The Holydays are to be fixed by the Governess, in a manner the most advantageous to the Parents, and to the Children, at the different Seasons of the Year.

In the case of their not coming to School till a later Hour than appointed, if they do not bring a Note or Message from their parents to justify their Absence, after the first offence, they are to forfeit one Half-penny each time; which is to be taken out of the Money they earn by their Work. And all Forfeits are to be put into a Box locked up, which is to be opened in the presence of all the Scholars, and of the Lady who visits at that period, by the Governess, at Christmas,

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and at Whitsuntide, and the money therein contained, to be laid out in some Prize, chosen by LADY PALMERSTON, for the benefit of the Scholar who has proved herself deserving of a Reward for her Industry and good Conduct during that period.

- IV. In the Hours of School the most quiet and perfect obedience and regularly attentive behavior to the Governess and to the Teacher is required.

Attention to the Work the Children are employed in, the Instruction they are receiving, or to the Book they are Reading in, is absolutely necessary, in order for them to obtain any advantage from the pains taken in their Education.

- V. Any of the Scholars who offend by making a noise, talking, quarrelling, using improper language, or being idle when they ought to be employed, after the first time they have been admonished by the Governess, or by the Teacher, are to pay a forfeit of one Half-penny. And if the offence is repeated the Scholar is to pay one Half-penny each time, and to wear a black Band round her head instead of Hat with this Motto, '*For Misbehaviour*' and she is to set apart from the rest of the Scholars for that day.

- VI. If any of the Scholars should be guilty of telling a Lie, for such offence she is not to be admitted into the School for two days, and a Ticket is to be sent to her Parents to inform them of the cause of her non-admission. And on her return to School, the earnings of the ensuing seven days, are to be put into the forfeit Box, and she is to wear the Black band for that time. And in case of a repetition of that Crime, she is to be excluded for ever, from being admitted into the School.

- VII. The Scholars are to be Instructed in Spinning, plain Works of all kinds, Marking, Knitting, and Cutting-out, and Making all kinds of common wearing Apparel; as far as their early Age will allow them to perform, and in Reading and Spelling.

And the Profits of their Industry is to be given to them to carry Home to their Parents, except what is forfeited by misconduct.

Any Child sent with any Disease, or Complaint, that can be in any way Infectious, can never be received again into the School.

- VIII. When the School Hours are over, both at Noon, and in the Afternoon, each Scholar is to show to the Governess, or to the Teacher, her Work, her Thimble, Scissors, Needle, Thread, Knitting, and her

Knitting-Needles and Worsted, and to put them up carefully into her Work-Bag; which is to be hung up in its proper place. And in case of any thing being lost, belonging to the Materials for Work, by carelessness, the Child is to replace it at her own expense, out of her earnings. And for repeated acts of neglect, and untidiness, she is to forfeit one Half-penny.

- IX. The Scholars are to be divided into three Classes, the first Class from four to seven Years; the second, from seven to ten; and the third Class from ten to fourteen.

Two of the third Class, are to take charge of the House for one Week at a time, by Rotation, to sweep clean, and dust, all the Rooms and the Furniture, and one of the second Class is to attend also in Rotation, to assist as far as they are able, and in order to learn the business when they enter into the third Class.

In any of the Classes should any of the Scholars of that Form to which they belong behave improperly, they are to be placed in the lowest part of it, and the next take the offending Scholar's place, which is to be retained until the one displaced recovers her situation by some meritorious behavior; when she is to be reinstated in her former rank in the School.

Those who are in waiting must come earlier by half an hour, to open the Windows, clean out the House, sweep down the Stairs, and prepare the Apartment for the reception of the Governess, and for the rest of the Scholars, and to remain to sweep the Rooms, after the Scholars have left it.

They are to see that the Scholars take off their Pattens at the Door, (on which account *one* of those in waiting must take it in rotation to wait below stairs, till the School is assembled,) and see them placed on the shelves appropriated for them: And that the Hats, Bonnets, Cloaks, and Handkerchiefs, are arranged equally, neatly, and in due order: And in case any of the Pattens, Cloaks, &c. are found out of their proper place; after the first offence, the Scholar who has so left them is to pay a forfeit of one Half-penny. And the Teacher, is to go down once during the Hours of the Morning and the Afternoon School, to see that this regulation is attended to. And the Scholar whose turn it was to attend at the Door must pay a forfeit of one farthing, for not seeing those orders obeyed.

The Teacher is to take care to see that those who are in waiting perform that part of their duty well. She must teach them the right Method of cleaning and sweeping the Rooms, lighting Fires, cleaning Grates, and rubbing the furniture, &c. And she must particularly attend to the Spinning-Room, that when the Scholars leave it, the materials are put away, and the Room cleared and made neat. And therefore the Teacher must be as punctual to her hour of Attendance as the Scholars.

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The Girls who are in waiting, are to attend to open the door to any Company who may visit at the House, to take charge of any business required, to assist in any Cooking, that may happen to be going on, to prepare the Table for any dinner that may be dressed or ate in the House.

All the Brooms, Brushes, Dusters, &c. are to be carefully replaced when the business is finished. And the Rooms are to be swept before and after School Hours, both Morning and in the Afternoon.

- X. As there can be no real happiness in this World, without a strict attention to our Religious Duties, or any security for the possession of any Moral Principles, without a just sense of our Duty to God, it is necessary to be punctual in our attendance on Divine Worship. The Children are expected to appear at Church or Meeting on Sundays at least once in the day. And they are to assemble at the School, ten minutes before the Hour of going to Church or Meeting, and the Teacher will be there to meet and attend them to Church, where a Seat will be provided for them. Those who go to Meeting will have a Seat provided for them also.

They are to learn their respective Catechism; and on Fridays in the Afternoon are to be examined on that subject by the Governess or Teacher. And at stated periods of the Year, the Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS and the Rev. Mr. BENNET have most kindly undertaken to hear and ascertain what progress they have made in that most essential part of their Education.

Mrs. LATHAM, Mrs. SEWARD, Mrs. J. LATHAM, Mrs. COMLEY, and Mrs. TARVER, have been so obliging as to join with LADY PALMERSTON, in inspecting the conduct of the Scholars, and the various Works performed by them. And they will each take a Week for their turn independant of occasional Visits.

They will look over the Work Book, the Reward Book, and the Forfeit Book. And on the first Monday in every Month, they will award the following Prizes, to the most industrious and well-behaved Scholar of the three Classes.

To the first of the third Class, something to wear of the Value of Two Shillings and Six-pence.

To the first of the second Class also something to wear of the Value of Two Shillings.

And to the first of the first Class some article of the Value of One Shilling, and Six-pence.

And on that day the three Scholars are to wear a Band with the following Motto, '*A Reward of Industry.*'

XI. On New-Year's Day, the Scholars in the three respective Classes, who can show most Bands with this Motto '*A Reward of Industry,*' and who have received most Reward Tickets, (which are to be given on any proof of good conduct) are to receive as an encouragement for such meritorious behaviour, a new Gown, Petticoat, Shift, pair of Stockings, a pair of Shoes, and a Hat. The second most industrious in each Class, a Gown, the third a Petticoat, the fourth a Shift, and the fifth a pair of Stockings. The Governess and Teacher will make daily insertions into the Book kept to record the good or bad Conduct of the Scholars, that the Prizes may be adjudged without partiality, according to the merit of the Children. Those who are found by the Book to be idle, neglectful, and ill-behaved, are not to be admitted to the Annual Dinner.

XII. When any of the Scholars dine at the School, they are to eat their Dinner in the Governess's first Kitchen, and they may play in the Garden belonging to the Governess's House, provided they do not do any mischief in it.

If any of the Children should continue refractory after having been admonished by the Governess or Teacher, the Governess and the Lady who visits at that time are to decide what punishment is to be inflicted; either by forfeit, removal from the Class, absence from School, or by total Exclusion.

A Prayer is to be read by the Governess, every Morning, after the Children are assembled, (which renders the punctuality of their attendance indispensably necessary.) And on Monday Morning immediately after the Prayer, these Rules and Regulations are to be read over, that none of the Scholars may be uninformed of the Regulations they are expected most *strictly* to attend to, and which are *invariably* to be enforced.

XIII. The Parents are to be made acquainted with these Rules, and any of them who do not chuse to have their Children submit to them implicitly cannot have their Children admitted to this School.

The Governess will have small Books to distribute to those who appear by their attention to their Reading to merit that Encouragement.

And the REV. Mr. WILLIAMS, and the REV. Mr. BENNET, will at Christmas and at Whitsuntide give Prizes to those who have received most tickets of Reward for constant attendance at Church or Meeting on Sundays, and for an attentive and proper behaviour during Divine Service, of a Bible, or Prayer Book, or in case of the Scholar's having these Books in their possession, some others chosen by Mr. WILLIAMS, and Mr. BENNET.

A PRAYER

To be Read by the Governess in the SCHOOL of INDUSTRY every Morning after the Children are Assembled :- and to be Learned by Heart by each of the Scholars.

O Almighty God, pour down upon us the continuance of thy blessing; and take us under thy Protecting Power. Inspire our Youthful Minds with humble Gratitude for all the Mercies conferred upon us; and teach us to walk in the Paths of Religion, Truth, Peace, and Godliness. That we may Respect and Obey our Parents, Teachers, Pastors, and Masters, Honour our King, and revere the Laws, that we may live in Harmony with our Brethren and Sisters: In Friendship with our Neighbours, and in Charity with all the World. That we may have neither Malice, Hatred, or Envy in our Hearts; and that we may hurt no one either in thought or deed: but do unto others as we would wish they would do unto us. And grant O Merciful Lord, that we may during every Hour of this transitory Life perform our duty with piety, and cheerfulness, in that state in which it hath pleased thee to call us. And that having spent our days in Peace, Innocence, and Purity, we may be admitted into thine everlasting Kingdom, through the Merits of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose most comprehensive and prevailing words we farther call upon thee, Saying,

Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come; thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven; give us this day our daily Bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Appendix 8: 2nd Viscount Palmerston's electoral campaigns

Viscount Palmerston's electoral campaigns

General Election Dates	Constituency	In the interest of	No. of electors	Cost*	Family Matters
28 th May 1762	East Looe, Cornwall	Mr Buller	49	unknown	Aged 23, unmarried
1768	Southampton, Hampshire	Hans Stanley	400+	unknown	Married Frances Poole, 8 months previously
1774	Hastings, Sussex	Lord North	?	unknown	Widower
30 March – 10 May 1784	Boroughbridge. North Yorks	Duke of Newcastle	<100	£2,685	Father of 6mo child (Harry)
22 June 1790	Newport, Isle of Wight	-	24	£4,200	Children's ages: Harry-5, Fanny-4, Willy-2, Mary-1, Lilly-3m
1796	Winchester, Hampshire	-	36	£87.12.0	Children's ages: Harry-12, Fanny- 10, Willy-8, Lilly-6

* Cost is taken from Connell's calculations, see pp. 155, 207, 334.

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BR 11/16/2	1791-07-18	Lady Palmerston to Lord Palmerston
BR 11/16/4	1791-07-29	Lady Palmerston to Lord Palmerston
BR 11/16/6	1791-08-03	Lady Palmerston to Lord Palmerston
BR 11/16/8	1791-08-15	Lady Palmerston to Lord Palmerston
BR 11/16/10	1791-09-05	Lady Palmerston to Lord Palmerston
BR 11/16/14	1791-04-21	Lord Palmerston to Benjamin Mee
BR 11/18/5	1791-05-13	Lady Palmerston to Lord Palmerston
BR 11/19/12	1793-07-02	Lady Palmerston to Benjamin Mee
BR 11/22/1	1794-12-09	Lady Palmerston to Lord Palmerston
BR 12/2/8	1775-1785	Account Book*
BR 12/2/11	1780-1798	General Account Book
BR 18/1/4	1799	Lady Palmerston's engagement diary
BR 18/1/5	1803	Lady Palmerston's journal
BR 18/2/1	1799-1805	Lady Palmerston's Account Book
BR 18/2/2	1803-1804	Lady Palmerston's Account Book
BR 18/5/3	1802-01-17	F St Hill to Lady Palmerston
BR 18/5/5/25-30	1800-09-02	Lady Palmerston to Emma Godfrey
BR 18/5/5/72-5	1801-11-17	Lady Palmerston to Emma Godfrey
BR 18/5/5/105-8	1803-01-5	Lady Palmerston to Emma Godfrey
BR 18/5/5/109-12	1803-01	Lady Palmerston to Emma Godfrey
BR 18/5/5/138-140	1804-05-04	Lady Palmerston to Emma Godfrey

*The Archives catalogue describes BR 12/2/8 as a "Account book of travelling and sundry expenses belonging to Mary Mee, second Viscountess Palmerston, 1775-85" however Mee did not become Viscountess until 1783 and there are entries in the book referring to Lord Palmerston's political work which pre-date the marriage. Therefore the account book must have belonged to her husband, not Mee.

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BR 19/6/53	1800-01-30	W M Godschall to Lady Palmerston
BR 19/6/54	1800-02-05	W M Godschall to Lady Palmerston
BR 19/6/56	1800-03-10	W M Godschall to Lady Palmerston
BR 19/6/65	1800-11-02	Lady Palmerston to W M Godschall
BR 19/6/104	1802-10	W M Godschall to Lady Palmerston
BR 19/11	1803-05-23	Ann Rout to Lady Palmerston
BR 19/17/1	1801	Rules for the School of Industry
BR 20/6/9	1789-04-10	Lord Palmerston to Lady Palmerston
BR 20/17/1	1800-02-10	Lord Palmerston to Lady Palmerston
BR 21/6/7	1800-12-30	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/1	1801-01-05	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/5	1801-01-28	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/8	1801-02-24	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/13	1801-04-02	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/29	1801-11-06	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/30	1801-11-10	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/31	1801-11-21	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/32	1801-11-23	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/33	1801-11-27	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/7/37	1801-11-15	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/8/3	1802-02-01	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/8/19	1802-04-23	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/8/36	1802-06-14	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/9/1	1803-01-02	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/9/2	1803-01-13	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/9/3	1803-01-17	Harry Temple to Lady Palmerston
BR 21/9/3a	1803-01-23	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/9/6	1803-02-13	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple

BR 21/9/7	1803-02-25	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/9/31	1803-05-11	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/10/19	1804-05-16	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 21/10/37	1804-07-04	Lady Palmerston to Harry Temple
BR 22A/1/8	1795-01-10	Harry Temple to Lady Palmerston
BR 22A/1/10	1795-10	Harry Temple to Lady Palmerston
BR 22A/1/65	1801-03-28	Harry Temple to Lady Palmerston
BR 24/2/6	1801-03-01	Harry Temple to Fanny Temple
BR 22/4/5	1804-02-11	Harry Temple to Fanny Temple

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