

THE BECKFORD JOURNAL



VOLUME 7 SPRING 2001

The Beckford Journal

Volume 7. Spring 2001

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Liber Veritatis or Why has the Child been so Abused?

JERRY NOLAN

When Cyrus Redding noted a manuscript on the library table, Beckford was prepared to confess: "That is my '*Liber Veritatis*' which I thought of changing to '*The Book of Folly*.' I pull the peerage about sadly."¹ *Liber Veritatis* was at last published in 1930 with an introduction and notes by Guy Chapman who, dubbing the work 'the child of an obsession', justified publication of the jottings on the grounds that Beckford's *Liber Veritatis* was 'so much part and parcel of his whole make-up that it cannot be neglected...a curious sidelight into one of the angles of our social history.'²

Since 1930, Beckford's major biographers have tended to abuse the child. J.W. Oliver brushed it aside as 'a waspish and excessively dull examination of the antecedents of some of the chief titled families of Britain.'³ James Lees-Milne neatly pigeon-holed it as a symptom of 'Beckford's hankering after his lost peerage, and nagging grievance over his ill treatment by society from which he could never escape even towards the end of a long life.'⁴ Brian Fothergill rejoiced in it as damning evidence of Beckford's 'snobbery, envy and malice'.⁵ Tim Mowl denounced it as 'a malicious and sour-grape-ridden analysis of the present condition of the British peerage, listing all the misalliances and links with tradespeople that Beckford, himself descended from cobblers, was able to gather together.'⁶ Boyd Alexander ignored it; even though *Liber Veritatis* could well have been used as crucial evidence in the chapter on 'Character and Tastes' when he wrote of Beckford's apprehension of 'the pitiless pressure of universalism in the coming industrial and socialist society, and in its necessary precursor, conventional and *petit-bourgeois* Victorianism.'⁷ At the heart of the silence probably lay Boyd

Alexander's interpretation of Beckford's desire for a peerage as 'pathetic'- a case of a wealthy man ingratiating himself with perceived national and foreign establishment figures in the overwhelming desire to possess the bauble of a title.

Beckford's obsession with pursuing the elusive peerage probably began to grow from the moment in 1784 when the Powderham scandal (which flared up around Beckford when he was accused of sexual relations with the young William Courtenay) caused the cancellation of the patent for the barony set up by his friend Lord Thurlow, the Lord Chancellor. There followed two episodes of diplomatic intrigue which involved at first Portugal and then France. Beckford, posing as a *hidalgo*, accepted the mission from the court of Portugal to persuade the English government to supply men, ships and money for the war against Jacobin France, only to find that his hopes of success which might well have included the English Ambassadorship at the Portuguese court were dashed by the Duke of Portland in 1796. In the following year it was the turn of revolutionary France, when Beckford's cast himself in the role of plenipotentiary of peace in relations between England and France, only to find that his hopes of a *tour de force* were crushed by his childhood friend and implacable enemy William Pitt. Next came Beckford's extremely complicated scheme for a trade-off of two pocket boroughs for one peerage which involved Sir William Hamilton which fell apart after Hamilton's death in 1803. The expectation of help towards the peerage from his son-in-law the Duke of Hamilton began in 1810 and continued fruitlessly until Beckford's own death in 1844.⁸

Beckford's relentless pursuit of the peerage had little to do with party politics. His erratic membership of the House of Commons as Whig between 1783 and 1820 only fed his general contempt for the Lower House. The tempting conclusion is that his yearning for the Upper House can be reduced to snobbery. Yet in the light of *Liber Veritatis* Beckford's strategies may be

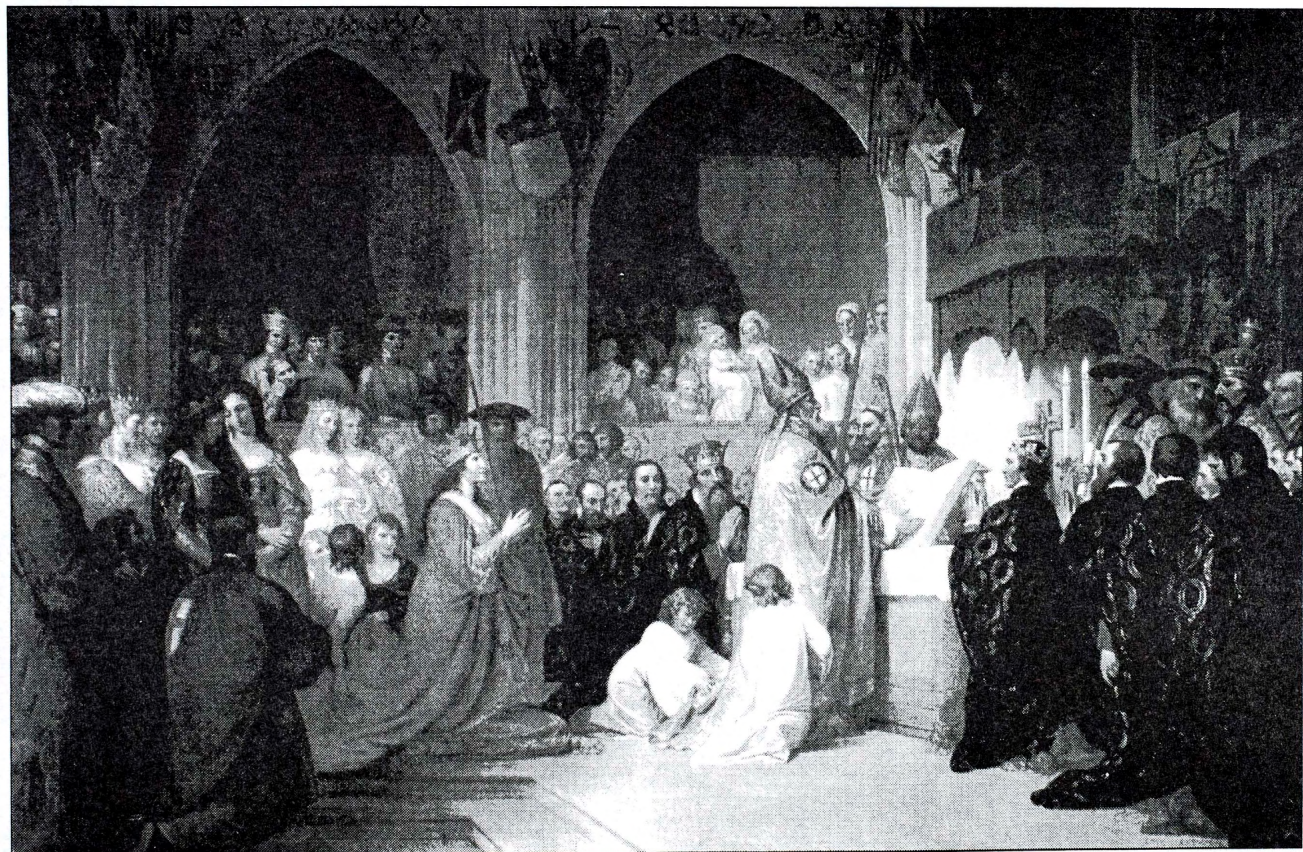
reviewed in the context of his own family background and a common obsession in his age.

From the beginning there was the passion for genealogy and an intense awareness of the drama of his own genealogy. His father the Alderman had had various bastard children before finally settling down to married life in 1756 with the widow Maria Marsh who was a daughter of the sixth earl of Abercorn, collateral of the dukes of Hamilton and descended through three lines from Edward III; after four years the couple produced William as the sole legitimate heir. Beckford's attitude towards the genealogy of the Beckfords who made their fortune on sugar plantations on the island of Jamaica (where his father was born) tended to be semi-detached. Clues to his view of the Beckford ancestry may be found in Beckford's 1807 memorandum in to Sir G. F. Beltz, the genealogist and Lancaster Herald when he recalled his own infantile petulance when as a boy he discovered that his great-great-grandfather on his father's side had been a shoemaker and expressed much sardonic amusement at the mock family coat of arms in honour of the Shoemakers, probably sketched out by Beltz, for a wall-cupboard at Fonthill with the motto 'Peace to the Souls'. While Beckford's view of his father's ancestry was somewhat contemptuous (even though he emulated his father's energy not on a political but on an artistic level), his mother's ancestry (even though he resisted her personal 'methodistical' ways) was viewed in romantic fashion: 'As no small portion of the family pride seemed to have been infused into me with the blood of the Hamiltons, I by no means relished the thoughts of this plebeian descent.'⁹

The Institution of the Order of the Garter

Provenance: Her Majesty the Queen. 113 × 176.5 in.

The Sketch in Beckford's possession, 'differing in composition from the great Picture at Windsor', was much smaller (16 × 22 in) and its present whereabouts is unknown.



Beckford's preoccupation with the details of family descent began to develop as a genealogical industry during the 1820s, with the emergence of the Anglo-Irishman John Burke 1787-1848.¹⁰ The genealogical studies of John Burke, from Elm Hall in County Tipperary, climaxed in 1826 with *Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage of the United Kingdom. Burke's Peerage*, as this work began to be known, was republished at irregular intervals until its ninth edition in 1847, whereupon its appearances became more frequent under the direction of Burke's son, Bernard. In 1833 Burke began another popular series *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland* which became known as *Burke's Landed Gentry*, about the landed gentry who were the only untitled aristocracy in the world.¹¹ The idea of compiling stud books of important people in the kingdom was democratically extended in 1849 when the first edition of *Who's Who* began as an almanac of the holders of thirty nine listed rank appointments.¹² What actually caught Beckford's eye was *The Annual Peerage of the British Empire* by Edmund Lodge, Norroy King of Arms, which was published in four volumes in 1829. Lodge's volumes highlighted examples of the emergence of a new titled and leisured class which was burgeoning as the direct result of intermarriage and the growing practice of having knighthoods and baronetcies conferred for certain services rendered. Beckford began to make notes, after the manner of a proto-*Private Eye* columnist (much more acerbic than Auberon Waugh!) adept at puncturing pretensions in a few words.

The two major targets for satire in *Liber Veritatis* were the female nobility prepared to accept the overtures of wool-spinners, cotton-spinners, iron-masters and merchant bankers; and the growing practice of ennobling people for ordinary relief work which was most evident in honouring highly dubious medical practitioners whom Beckford dubbed 'apothecaries'. One of Beckford's most notable butts for mockery of the Apothecary

was Duke Smithson, alias the Duke of Northumberland, whose grandfather had succeeded in having himself declared a Percy by deed poll.¹³ An example of Beckford's indictment of female nobility ran as follows: 'Our female nobility have shewn themselves in repeated instances most condescendingly ready to marry any person of tolerable substance and decent or even indecent manners who might fancy they acquired a sort of éclat by marrying them.'¹⁴

There followed a range of pot-shots at assorted targets: the Generals and Admirals who were in reality 'the hired slaughterers of their own species';¹⁵ William Courtenay's mother who 'owed her birth to a publican at Wallingford whose sign at least displayed the symbol of innocence, for it was the sign of the Lamb';¹⁶ Emma Hamilton 'the Circe, who transformed into tame Boars so many gallant wild young officers...the Cleopatra who proved the bane of our most triumphant admiral and fixed a foul and sanguine spot upon his glorious memory.'¹⁷ At this level of satire Beckford soon tired of the chase: 'No sportsman would waste his ammunition upon cock-sparrows, or tomtits, upon carrion-crows, jackdaws, owls, cuckoos or buzzards.'¹⁸ The underlying cultural threat did occasionally manage to surface above the carnage: 'Universal toleration will produce in process of time not only universal suffrage but universal simplicity of manners. The nonsense of poetry will be scouted; Lord Byron despised and Doctor Kitchiner venerated'.¹⁹

Later the Beckford family were to benefit from Burkean 'fictions' in a volume by the son of John Burke, Sir Bernard Burke (1814-1892), who extended his father's work in the office of the Ulster King Arms from 1853 with a large output on genealogy and heraldry. Sir John Bernard's *The Romance of Aristocracy* included a section on Fonthill Abbey containing an eulogy of William Beckford himself and acclaim for the Beckfords: 'At the time when the island of Jamaica submitted to the British Arms, four years prior to the Restoration, the knightly

family of Beckford filled a respectable position among the gentry of England.²⁰ The desire to debunk *Burke's Peerage* surfaced in Oscar Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance* when Lord Illingworth advised: 'You should study the Peerage, Gerald...it is the best thing in fiction the English have ever done.'²¹ Eventually in 1910, the scholar J. H. Pound tackled the fictions 'to which the name of Burke continues to give authority.'²²

For Sir Bernard Burke, who was himself knighted in 1854, the romance of aristocracy was bound up with exhibitions of early Victorian sentimentality to engender general sympathy for the plight of the great families visited by misfortune, to the point where the public was supposed to weep profusely at the rise and fall of the Cromwells of Hinchinbroke who peaked in the Lord Protector and plummeted in the grocer on Snow Hill London.²³ For William Beckford the romance of aristocracy was not primarily linked to the fluctuating fortunes of the gentry but with a profound sense of the need for cultural roots in an idealised past. Quite unlike the Burkes, Beckford's view of gentry was a metaphor ('A Grand Fiction', *pace* Wilde) for the celebration of the tradition of best patronage. An eloquent symbol of Beckford's idealism can be found in the painting by Benjamin West 'The Institution of the Order of the Garter' which was created for George III at Windsor c.1787. Beckford possessed a sketch of this picture which was described as 'A Grand Mass in the Interior of St. George's Chapel at Windsor' and was particularly significant for Beckford because the picture included the Kings of France and Scotland when they were prisoners at Windsor. The sketch was first acquired by Beckford in 1801 and included in the Christie Fonthill Sales Catalogue (17 September, 1822, lot 97) but excluded from Farquhar's actual Phillips Sale of 1823. The sketch remained in Beckford's possession until his death and was finally sold as lot 319 in Bath on 25 November 1845 for £113.8.0.²⁴ A local newspaper commented: 'It is well known that Mr. Beckford claimed descent from the Royal families of France

and Scotland, and kindred with many illustrious knights of the Order of the Garter...which induced the artist to designate this a family picture.'²⁵ A few years earlier, Edmund English had referred to it as 'Picture of a Coronation, introducing the ancestry of Mr. Beckford'.²⁶

Edward III is the king in the picture. At Fonthill Abbey, Beckford had commissioned a gallery devoted to King Edward and a series of portraits of knights from whom he imagined himself to be descended. The sketch which remained in his possession long after Fonthill's collapse testified to his version of the romance of aristocracy. The sense of imagination under threat from social revolution underpins *Liber Veritatis*. It has been the failure to detect the visionary gleam beneath the random satirical jottings that has caused 'the child of an obsession' to be so abused.

Beckford's *Liber Veritatis* was scribbled down during a period of great social change in the United Kingdom which is comparable in many ways to this twenty-first century. Our dispensers of honours seem determined to pay most deference to the false gods of Speedy Modernisation, Upward Mobility, Class Dismissal and Tabloid Celebrity. Like Beckford, one must look beyond the widespread hypocrisies towards the sources of imagination which lie beyond the comprehension of the profiteering hypocrites.

One can only deeply regret the repeated failure of Beckford's recent biographers (apart from Chapman) to glimpse the apocalyptic gleam, transient but still shining, in the caricatures of *Liber Veritatis*? Would the biographers have bothered to pay closer attention to the child if Chapman had named the offspring as 'the bastard of a thwarted idealism'?²⁷

¹ Cyrus Redding, *Memoirs of William Beckford*, London, 1859, vol. 2, p. 341.

² William Beckford, *The Vision. Liber Veritatis*, edited with introduction by Guy Chapman, London, 1930, p. xv.

- ³ J. W. Oliver, *The Life of William Beckford*, Oxford, 1932, p. 296.
- ⁴ James Lees-Milne, *William Beckford*, Tisbury, 1976, p. 111.
- ⁵ Brian Fothergill, *Beckford of Fonthill*, London, 1979, p. 339.
- ⁶ Timothy Mowl, *William Beckford: Composing for Mozart*, London, 1998, p. 293.
- ⁷ Boyd Alexander, *England's Wealthiest Son*, London, 1962, p. 259.
- ⁸ I am indebted to Chapman's Introduction to *Liber Veritatis* for this historical summary account, pp. xi-xxix.
- ⁹ William Beckford, *Life at Fonthill: 1807-1822*, trans. & edited by Boyd Alexander, London, 1957, p. 38. A plate of the mock-heroic heraldic design is included.
- ¹⁰ See Henry Boylan, *A Dictionary of Irish Biography*, Dublin, 1988, p. 42.
- ¹¹ Today *Burke's Peerage* is still very big business with plans for future editions on view on its website.
- ¹² *Who's Who 2000* is no longer a slim volume but utterly weighed down with the inclusion of very many 'heavyweight' people.
- ¹³ *Liber Veritatis*, p. 97-98. ¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 93. ¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 116.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 112. ¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 111. ¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 137.
- ¹⁹ *Liber Veritatis*, p. 101. Chapman performed the thankless task of tracking down most of Beckford's victims. He reported on one of Beckford's pet hates: 'William Kitchiner, M.D. (1775-1827) was a miscellaneous writer and gastronome whose published work included *Apicus Redivius* (*The Cook's Oracle*), 1817 and *Peptic Precepts*, 1821, p. 154.
- ²⁰ Sir Bernard Burke, *Romantic Records of Distinguished Families*, 2 vols, London, 1850. The chapter on Fonthill Abbey is in Vol. 2, pp. 1-28.
- ²¹ Oscar Wilde, *The Complete Illustrated Stories, Plays & Poems*, London, 1986, p. 399.
- ²² J. H. POUND, *Studies in Peerage Law and Family History*, reprinted in 2 volumes, London, 1770, p. xxv.
- ²³ Sir Bernard Burke, *Vicissitudes of Families and Other Essays*, London 1859. The chapter on the Cromwells is to be found on pp. 26-39.
- ²⁴ See Helmut von Erffa & Walter Staley, *The Paintings of Benjamin West*, Yale, 1986, pp. 200-201.
- ²⁵ *The Bath & Cheltenham Gazette*, 26 November 1845.
- ²⁶ Edmund English, *Views of Lansdown Tower*, London, 1844, p. 7.
- ²⁷ See David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, London, 1992. This book documents and discusses the long decline, in terms of acres and influence, of the great eighteenth century families: 'The lions of yesteryear have become the unicorns of today', p. 708. A parallel cultural history remains to be written.

An Introduction to the Broadview edition of *Vathek with the Episodes of Vathek*

KENNETH W. GRAHAM

I would like to offer to readers of *The Beckford Journal* a special introduction to a new edition of Beckford's most popular work, not only because of their declared interest in matters Beckfordian. The contents of the Broadview edition of *Vathek with the Episodes of Vathek*, due to appear in the spring of 2001, are to an important degree indebted to an intelligent debate that appeared in these pages. In the Spring issue of 1995, Elinor Shaffer offered an assessment of two publications edited by Malcolm Jack: his *William Beckford Reader*, published by Pickering and republished, to acclaim, in a modestly-priced Penguin edition; and his Dedalus edition of the Marzials translation of *The Episodes of Vathek*.¹ Shaffer expressed some reservations about Jack's editions. She acknowledged what he accomplished, but also what needs to be done. Better notes, certainly, but the principal need she expresses in terms of a lost opportunity: '...the opportunity to bring together in English *Vathek* and the *Episodes* intended for it, and so to initiate a new discussion of this text on the scale and at the depth it deserves.'²

Jack's response in the next issue reflected the hard realities of publication in the 1990s. To demand too elaborate and expensive an edition could result in 'the non-production of Beckford's works in a reasonably priced form for another generation.'³ Certainly we have reason to be grateful to Malcolm Jack for his efforts in getting so much of Beckford's writing into print and in publications that are not painfully expensive.

The core of the debate concerns whether *The Episodes* should be published with the English version of *Vathek*. My own opinion, expressed in a review article some years ago, is that it is difficult to make a scholarly justification for combining as a

single work, Henley's translation of *Vathek* and Marzials's translation of *The Episodes*, and that the only combined text with scholarly legitimacy would be a version in the French language.⁴ Malcolm Jack argued that '*The Episodes* are not an intrinsic part of the tragedy of Caliph Vathek'⁵ and he reminds us of Beckford's source in the example of the *Arabian Nights* where 'the stories that derive from 'frame' stories need not bear much connection with the original.'

Over the past two years, two connected events encouraged me to return to this debate. The first was a response by a publisher's readers to my a modest proposal to Broadview Press for an edition of *Vathek* – I had in mind to use Beckford's 1823 edition of *Vathek* as copy-text and to respond to one of Elinor Shaffer's comments by re-doing the notes, Henley's notes, even as revised by Beckford, being painfully dated. The readers welcomed the proposal but two insisted that *Vathek* should appear with *The Episodes*, and with that opinion the publisher agreed. I thought the decision unfortunate owing to my reservations about combining disparate translations and my recognition that it meant doubling the work that I would have to do.⁶ Shuddering internally at the thought of the notes that *The Episodes* were going to require, I agreed to take it on. The second event followed from the first. In February 1999 I was looking at the Beckford Papers in the Bodleian wondering whether I can assume that the Melville edition of *The Episodes* (and therefore Marzials's translation) is a faithful reproduction of Beckford's manuscript – and **which** manuscript – when I encountered a title of a text I did not think existed, 'Histoire Des deux Princes Amis, Alasi et Firouz, dans le palais du feu Souterraine.'⁷ When I started reading the manuscript, Malcolm Jack's edition of *The Episodes* beside me for comparison, I quickly discovered that this was the original episode recounting a male-male love that Beckford had revised into a heterosexual story, changing Firouz into Firouzkah. The Broadview edition was assuming more extensive complications!

During the next year, with the help of undergraduate assistants and some expert help, I transcribed the Firouz manuscript, puzzled out unclear passages, deciphered most of the scorings-out, gradually rendered it into comprehensible French, and then translated it into English. The more I worked with that text the more I saw its importance to Beckford's original enterprise, the publication of *Vathek with the Episodes of Vathek* as a single work.

Although attempts have been made to unite (not always intelligently) the frame tale of *Vathek* with *The Episodes of Vathek*, the results have never been satisfactory, chiefly because of that clumsy twist the first *Episode* gives to its plot to transform the narrative from an audacious account of love between a man and a boy into a story of sanctioned heterosexual passion. This sexual sleight-of-hand that transforms Firouz into Firouzkah is accomplished so ineptly that readers, like Jack, could see no compelling reason for publishing *The Episodes* as part of *Vathek*. Certainly, the first *Episode* has done no good to Beckford's reputation as a writer.

The suppressed episode reveals the coherence of Beckford's original design to publish the stories together. *The Episodes* begin where *Vathek* ends, in an abode of eternal hatred and despair. All the condemned characters in *Vathek* and *The Episodes* make a genuine commitment to passion. All are doomed for their passion and for the atrocities that passion tempts them to commit. In the moral ambivalence of Beckford's narratives, sexual proclivities are accidental and yet subject to punishment. The religions that hinder or encourage passion are arbitrary and coercive, but there are no redemptive outcomes for these violent, passionate Others. The Firouz episode, with its unaltered story of paederastic love, is a strong argument for the union of *Vathek* and *The Episodes*. Such a union is now capable of responding to the perceived need expressed by Shaffer, 'a new discussion of this text on the scale and at the depth it deserves.'

The Firouz version reveals three important implications. First, it discloses a thematic unity in Beckford's original design to publish *Vathek* and *The Episodes* as a single work. Second, the Firouz version offers insights into Beckford's notions of same-sex love, especially valuable since he provided for our comparison a straight version of the same story. My edition provides both versions. To read the two stories side by side is to enjoy Beckford's subtle understanding of gender difference: I don't know of another eighteenth-century work that affords the same possibilities for understanding constructions of gender. Finally, the story and its suppression reveals much of Beckford's relationship with his own culture, apparently a relationship that mixed arrogance and apprehension at the time of writing. The uninhibited artistry of the young William Beckford in the most confident and creative period of his life produced an expression of his own ambivalent hopes and fears in relation to his society. His alienated, extraordinary characters experience ultimately the crushing irony of desire fulfilled as they are driven by their otherness to finish their careers damned to eternity.

The Firouz manuscript revealed mistaken readings that puzzled and plagued us until now. Beckford's amanuensis at this time wrote *F*'s that are easily confused with *J*'s, and *u*'s with *n*'s. Thus the list of Episodes in the Lausanne edition (1787) reads *Jironz* rather than *Firouz*. A more serious misreading of manuscripts on Lewis Melville's part in the first publication of the 'Firouzkah' episode rendered the name of Alasi's intended, *Roudabah*, as *Rondabah*, and the error is repeated in all the editions and translations of *The Episodes* published in the twentieth century. The importance of the error becomes apparent to a poor hack trying to make sense of the names that Beckford chose for his characters. In my translation of the Firouz episode, Firouz makes to Alasi a sardonic comment on meeting the imperious Roudabah: 'Is that a woman?' asked Firouz. 'No, it is the ghost of Roostum, or of Zalzar – the soul of these famous

warriors, Roudabah's ancestors, has seized possession of that long figure that we are asked to look upon as hers.'⁸ Melville, mistaking *Roudabah*, also mistook *Zalzar* and wrote *Lalzer* instead. Firouz offers a fictional ancestry for the imperious princess based on her name. According to the *Shah-nama*, Zalzar was the son of Persian king-hero, Sam. He was brought up by that wise bird, the Simorgh, and at maturity returned to his father and became his heir. He married Princess Rudaba, daughter of Mehrab, King of Kabol: 'all radiance, harmony and delectability.' After a difficult pregnancy and assisted by Simorgh, Rudaba gave birth to Roostam. And so a little puzzle is explained and two larger ones emerge from the explanation: Beckford chose the name *Rudabah* for its heroic resonances, but how many other mistakes did Melville make in transcribing the manuscripts and, perhaps more important of all, how does Beckford come to know the Persian epic of kings, Ferdowsi's *Shah-nama*, not translated into English or French until the nineteenth century. Was Beckford's knowledge of Persian and Arabian much better than he is given credit for? And where did he find the manuscript of the *Shah-nama*?

The Broadview edition of *Vathek with the Episodes of Vathek* should appear in print in the late spring of 2001. It comprises the English version of *Vathek* revised by Beckford for publication in 1816, my translation of the suppressed *Episode of Vathek* (carefully reconstructed from manuscript), the three *Episodes of Vathek* translated by Sir Frank T. Marzials, and an extensive series of introductions, explanatory notes, maps, and illustrations intended to provide contexts for the constructive reading of the combined work.

This edition is thorough and unique in the apparatus it provides. It should be startling and influential in its content, both in its offering an unknown episode by Beckford featuring same-sex love – a first-person narrative that I think is unique in British eighteenth-century fiction – and in its demonstration of coherent

and comprehensive thematic patterns that emerge from reading *Vathek with the Episodes of Vathek* as a single work. The Broadview edition will surpass all editions in English hitherto available and will bear out, convincingly I hope, Elinor Shaffer's contention that the combined edition is the only appropriate context in which *Vathek* should appear.

Like Malcolm Jack's editions of scarce Beckford texts, the Broadview edition responds to immediate needs. But while working on the edition, I was continually aware that much more remains to be done. All the manuscripts need to be examined and compared and a record made of variants among them. The Beckford Papers contain manuscripts of four different *Episodes of Vathek* and some miscellaneous jottings, seven entries in the catalogue:

- one manuscript of the suppressed 'Firouz' version of Episode One (MS. Beckford d.13)
- two manuscripts of the heterosexual 'Firouzkah' version of Episode One (MS. Beckford d.14 and d.15)
- two manuscripts of Episode Two, 'The History of Barkiarokh' (MS. Beckford d.16 and d. 17)
- two manuscripts of Episode Three, 'The History of Zulkais and Kalilah' (MS. Beckford d.14 [67 leaves] and d. 18)
- fragments of two episodes and notes pertaining to them in MS. Beckford d.19.

The relevant manuscripts represent 794 leaves in eighteenth-century French in a variety of hands, variously decipherable, and complicated by interlineations. All the episodes should be translated by a single translator. Since William Beckford worked in both French and English and since versions have validity in both languages, the appropriate answer is to provide scholarly editions of *Vathek with the Episodes of Vathek* in two volumes, one in French and one in English.

- a critical edition of *Vathek et les Épisodes de Vathek* drawn from original manuscripts, providing collation notes and a critical apparatus, and combining *les Épisodes* with the French version of *Vathek* that was revised by Beckford and published in London in 1815.
- a parallel edition in the English language derived from the edition of *Vathek* revised and published by Beckford in 1816, for which I will translate *The Episodes* established for the French edition. The English edition of *Vathek and The Episodes of Vathek* will be partly original, partly translation, but wholly in accord with Beckford's original wishes towards these works, and with the translation done by someone with considerable experience of Beckford's style, works and sensitivities.

I am embarking on the preparation of these editions. They will take two or three years to complete. I think I have a publisher, but would value the advice and experience of readers of *The Beckford Journal* on the matter of a publisher and indeed on the whole undertaking. The name of an expert on Arabian and Persian languages, literatures and cultures, for example, would be invaluable. In the meantime, I hope you will enjoy the Broadview edition.

¹ William Beckford. *Vathek and Other Stories : A William Beckford Reader*. Edited with an introduction by Malcolm Jack. London: Pickering, 1993; and William Beckford. *The Episodes of Vathek*. Sawtry, Cambs.: Dedalus, 1994.

² Elinor Shaffer, 'Vathek and *The Episodes of Vathek* – separately, but not together,' *The Beckford Journal* 1 (1995), 29.

³ Malcolm Jack, "A Response to 'Vathek and *The Episodes of Vathek* – separately but not together' by Elinor Shaffer," *The Beckford Journal* 2 (1996), 45-46.

⁴ 'Beckford's Design for *The Episodes*: A History and a Review.' *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 71 (1977): 336-343. Strangely enough, none of the combined editions in French is entirely satisfactory. All draw the text of *Vathek* from the Paris 1787 edition and ignore the revisions Beckford

made to the text in his edition of Londres, 1815.

⁵ Jack, 'A Response,' p. 45.

⁶ Circumstances have encouraged me to revise my position on the English version; I was right, however, about the extra work entailed.

⁷ *Catalogue of the papers of William Beckford (1760-1844)*, compiled by T.D. Rogers (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1987), p.29.

⁸ 'Est-ce bien une femme que nous venons de voir? disait Firouz, non, c'est le spectre de Roostum, ou de Zalzar; l'âme de ces fameux guerriers, Ancêtres de Roudabah, s'est du moins emparée de la longue figure qu'on nous donne pour elle.' All quotations from the Firouz version in *Beckford Papers*. MS. d. 13. The English translation is mine.

Introduction to 'Beckford's letter from Geneva to Lord Thurlow, 22 May 1778'

DICK CLAÉSSON

As William Beckford, just prior to his seventeenth birthday, arrived in Geneva in the summer of 1777 together with his tutor, John Lettice, he entered into an ambitious regime of education softened by the presence of much admired intellectual giants and sweetened by the freedom offered by life on the continent. Though studying many topics which would be beneficial to the young heir in his future life, Beckford also devoted much time to other, more artistic pursuits. His biographers have made much of his separation from his friend and drawing-master Alexander Cozens during this period and have drawn upon letters written to him, from Geneva, in which Beckford outlines a parallel life, smoothly and safely out of sight of his appointed guardians.

Beckford led this life in a world of imagination. The writer, the artist, the intellectual and the aesthete – all these roles were assumed by Beckford as he read, dreamt and conversed freely with the intelligentsia of Geneva.

Beckford stayed in Switzerland for almost a year and a half. In May of 1778, he found time to write a lengthy report to his guardian, Lord Thurlow, about his education and his experiences in Geneva. The letter, which survives in a fair copy dated May 22, 1778, is a chatty yet informative account of his acquaintances and his studies. It offers a cross-section of the intellectual clique in Geneva at the time, and provides the reader with a rare glimpse into the continental education of a wealthy heir. It is also an implicit reminder of Beckford's real interests at the time. Apologetic, the letter begins with an interesting excursion into the double life of the aspiring artist, torn between the conflicting powers of reason and fancy.

The fair copy of the letter is contained within the covers of a small book which, somewhat surprisingly, also contains a draft of Beckford's short prose work *Hylas*. The letter is written in the hand of an amanuensis, as are many of Beckford's letters in fair copy, and spans twenty small pages. The present edition, which is transcribed with as much accuracy as is possible, retains the various spelling idiosyncrasies which are an inevitable aspect of all of Beckford's manuscripts. No explanatory footnotes are provided, and it is the expressed hope of the editor that the publication of the letter will spawn a discussion of the intellectual climate into which Beckford descended in the summer of 1777, a discussion which will no doubt shed new light on Beckford's intellectual and artistic development.

All words underlined in the manuscript have been rendered in italics. The original pagination has been retained within square brackets. The manuscript, which is found on fols. 34-43 in MS. Beckford d.9, is published with the kind permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Beckford's letter from Geneva to Lord Thurlow, 22 May 1778

[1] Dear Sir,

As you did me the honour to say a Letter from me would not be disagreeable I should have taken an earlier opportunity of writing had I not conceived some merit in not intruding too forwardly on your important engagements.

I have now passed almost a Year at Geneva and I don't know what I can better make the Subject of my Letter than some account of what I have been doing here and of some of the principal Characters, whose Acquaintance I have chiefly cultivated with a view to the improvement of my Time. Having for some time been persuaded that our Countryman Mr Lock has discovered the same sources of our knowledge, however short my application may have fallen of the wishes of my Friends, I cannot accuse myself of having sat still to wait for the development of *Innate Ideas* and having no pretensions to [2] Inspiration I have believed myself fairly left to the use of my Five Senses and a little reflection for the first materials of my knowledge. Simply to stock my Mind with Ideas and with Words to express them I suppose to have been the proper business of my earliest Years, and partly that of Education to direct me to those most worth acquiring. I dare not but flatter myself some little stores may have been thus gained to Memory. The natural Enquiry is what use I have made of them. I learn from the great Master of human Knowledge /just mentioned/ that there are two other powers which claim a right to the free use of these primary acquisitions. One delights to disjoin, or jumble them together with the wildest Caprice, and cares not for method, arrangement, or any thing else provided she holds up a pleasant Picture to the Mind. The other a grave and respectable Matron resolutely calls to Order, claims the Rule of the Ideal World and thinks it enough, that the former

should stand second in the intellectual Sovereignty. Her object is to change the whole Face of things; [3] she will not suffer the treasures, which memory has been collecting, to rest in their first State, unmeaning and passive, nor on the other hand to be heaped and huddled together at the arbitrary suggestions of Fancy. It is her province to marshal them in Order to examine their relation or disagreement, and to chain down each to its proper place. If now I return to the Enquiry into my own Conduct under the Influence of these two contending powers, I fear I shall stand self-convicted of having sacrificed a little to freely to Imagination. —

Numberless Ideas have I put asunder which Judgement would have joined; as many have I closely linked, where she has forbidden the Alliance. I may however boast the Merit of being at length brought to some sense of Duty in this affair, and of having at last resolved to subject my Imagination to the Dominions of her Rival. Whether the Steps I have taken are likely to effect my purpose is submitted to your opinion; I am going to trouble you [4] with them. — Having chiefly attached myself, whilst in England to Classical, Historical and moral Studies with some of their auxiliary Branches of Knowledge, I have, since my residence here enlarged the plan of my pursuits and have entered about six Months ago, on a Course of Experimental Lectures in Physics with Mr D’Espinass who formerly gave Lessons to several of the Royal Family and has brought from England a very noble Apparatus. As he is allowed to conduct his experiments with the severest reasoning, I hope I am, at the same time, making some advances in Logic and perhaps learning it in the best way. —

The English Philosophy has gained great Credit by our late discoveries in Electricity and fixed Air. The names of *Franklin* and *Priestly* are in high estimation at Geneva. The Civil Law still keeping its authority in this Republic is a good deal cultivated, and Geneva continues to produce Civilians of [5] distinguished abilities. — This advantageous circumstance joined with the

Consideration of Justinian's giving the Law in some of our own Tribunals and influencing in some measure the legislation of most of the Countries in Europe, has tempted me to undertake a review of this System of *written reason* in a Course of Lessons with an Advocate of reputation. [An annotation here provides the name "M. Naville Desartes".] As far as our time has admitted Mr Lettice and I have accompanied this Course with the reading of Montesquieu and Blackstone. If I had an opportunity, I believe I should attempt a parallel betwixt the Roman Law and that of England. An exercise of this kind might not only contribute to fix both in my Memory; but impress more deeply the Characteristic differences of each, which, for the happiness of our Country, are very considerable. We make some use of the Elements of Hennecius, esteemed here the best of the Commentators. His general method is, to give first the Definition of each Subject, and then to collect the Spirit of all the Laws upon it into two or three [6] concise axioms. The several Cases and Circumstances, to which they apply, are next deduced as necessary at least as natural consequences and he concludes with shewing how far each Law obtains at present in those Countries, where Justinian still maintain his Credit. I find this method clear and interesting; it at once makes the spirit of the Law intelligible and not very difficult to retain. These objects added to my former Studies, with some application to the Spanish, Italian & Oriental Languages and an attention to my Exercises have found me sufficient employment, and such as I hope my best Friends and particularly yourself will not disapprove. - - -

Having said full enough and I fear too much of myself, I will give you a slight sketch of some of those persons whose conversation I have chiefly sought here; some of whose Names you are probably not unacquainted with. - - -

I luckily caught the moment of seeing Voltaire before his [7] setting on our Horizon. -

All we shall ever see of him more at Geneva is the light of his

Genius reflected from his Works.

I will next present to you a less brilliant but far more sedate & moral personage Bonnet de G[?] from whom I have received a thousand flattering marks of kindness and affection. This Gentleman, since Linneus and Mallet are gone, may perhaps justly claim the first Rank in the walk of *Natural History*. It may be doubted whether his Vocabulary in this Language be of equal extent with theirs; but his experiments and discoveries shew him to have interrogated Nature with at least as much, if not more Sagacity than either of them. He is not less eminently distinguished in Metaphysics: He has endeavoured to strengthen the foundations of this Science by the application of some important discoveries in *Natural History*. [8] His System of the *Germ or Corps indistructible* is placed on the Ruins of Buffon's *organic molecules*. He appears on many occasions a warm Advocate for *Leibnitz's pre-established Harmony*; tho' he by no means adopts it in its full extent.

Mr Bonnet possesses in common with *Fenelon* and *Gravesend* the rare talent of composing whole Works without writing a Letter and that so correctly, as scarcely to change a Word when he commits them to paper. He was bred to the Law and is said to have shone in his profession; but his propensity to meditation and retirement occasioned his quitting the Bar at a very early period of Life. He lives upon his Fortune at an agreeable Villa on the Lake in the elegant Commerce of literary Men and is visited by most Strangers of Distinction and Merit who come to Geneva. - -

Mr De Saussure possesses the Chair of Natural Philosophy and it is but just to infer, that he is a *Philosopher*. All the World [9] however agrees, that Mr De Saussure has a comely Person, a fine House, a spruce Apparatus and a Cabinet of Natural History so amiably arranged that Philosophy with *him* seems to have thrown aside her Beard and Savage Air and to be attired by the Smiles and the Graces. -

Mr Frouchin de la Boissiere, called here the Montesquieu of

the Age is in Person, a striking contrast to Mr De Saussure.

He is unquestionably a Man of Genius and uncommon acquisitions in various parts of Literature. His attention has chiefly been turned to Law, Politics and History. He has perhaps a more general intelligence in the politics of Europe than any Man not particularly concerned in them. His *Lettres de la Campagne* gave occasion to the very celebrated ones *de la Montagne* of Rousseau.

The opposite principles violently insisted on in the one and the other have kept this Republic in perpetual agitation since the Year 1765. Rousseau having long renounced all personal interference in the Genevan Contest, Mr Frouchin remains the sole Oracle. - -

[10] He lives wrapped up in the Groves of his Villa, apparently retired from all political Concerns and if consulted at present, it is not without the affectations of a very mysterious secrecy.

Mr Mallet, Professor of History, was formerly employed in the education of the King of Denmark. The Tutor approaches much nearer to Aristotle than the Pupil to Alexander. - - - -

Whilst in this situation Mr Mallet found opportunity to cultivate the antiquities of the North. He has particularly explored the Customs, Manners and Mythology of the antient Scandinavians, which he has displayed at large in the very interesting and elegant Introduction to his History of Denmark. His acquaintance with polite Literature in general is reckoned very extensive. His manners and conversation are correct and easy without any of those insipid prettinesses, the common gingerbread gilding of Courtly Characters. He enjoys the first Consideration here and I have had the happiness of living a good deal with him. - - - - -

[11] Mr Senebier, the learned Librarian of Geneva, pursues many different branches of Literature with indefatigable application and most of them with success. In physics he has

shewn himself a watchful Observer of Nature and at a very early Age published his *L'Art d'observer*; a Work of merit. He has acquired more than a common knowledge of the Learned Languages both ancient and modern and has justified his pretensions to Criticism by several well written Articles in Literary Journals of France and by other Essays of Taste. - -

In the province of Antiquary and Biographer he has almost finished the Literary History of Geneva; a curious and interesting Work which he means to give to the World at his leisure and with a Sight of which I have been already favoured. - - -

He has now in the Press a very ingenious Treatise, the Object of which is to ascertain the age of antient Manuscripts. -

The public in the Course of last Winter has been indebted to Mr Senebier's pen for a very spirited Eulogy of the late Baron [12] Haller and the first Volume of the Memoirs of the Academy of Arts at Geneva. The Literature of France has likewise received some valuable accessions in several foreign Works of eminence translated by him and particularly the *Reproductions Animales* of the famous Italian Naturalist Spallanzani. As this Gentleman writes where other Men speak, and in short does nothing without Book he paid his addresses to his Wife in a sentimentel Novel; but as Nature formed him rather to think than to feel, it is questioned, whether all the Fame he has gained by this gallant piece of Work extends beyond the narrow sphere of the Lady's opinion. - - -

Mr Bertrand presides in the mathematical Chair with great ability and reputation. He is distinguished by the Liberality of his Sentiments and a very masculine Understanding. He is about to publish a Work in the Science he professes, in which some useful discoveries are expected from him. He possesses a good deal of information on various Subjects, which he displays very agreeably in the Conversation of his friends.

[13] There is something singularly attractive in his Manners. As he sometimes takes an active part in the affairs of the

Republic his civil Character is marked by an intelligible upright and decisive Conduct. - - -

Mr le Syndic Turretini is too conspicuously placed not to command my respects upon this occasion. He is visible head of a Commission appointed to form a new Code of Laws for the Republic. He is favoured with the gift of Tongues in a superior degree and deluges a Conversation with Words in half a Dozen Languages. - -

When the present King of Sardinia visited the Frontiers of Savoy, Mr Turretini was chosen to present his Majesty the Devoirs of the State. (By the way, I believe the Conduct of this Ceremony with the Adjustment of some little differences about a few Acres of Territory has sometimes been stiled Mr Turretini's Embassy) On all similar occasions this Syndic is made the Organ of the fine speeches of the Republic. His *managements* betwixt the two parties of the Commonwealth have now and then exhibited something a little problematical to the [14] politicians of Geneva. - -

He is reckoned an able Civilian and is allowed to have acquitted himself with Eclat as Mr De Saussure's Predecessor in the Professorship of Natural Philosophy.

Mr Moulton was formerly of the Church and admired as an accomplished Orator. I am not acquainted with the Motives which induced him to quit his profession. His Fortune must undoubtedly have rendered him indifferent to its emoluments; but he is not a Man to act upon negative Reason only. A great share of Genius and Learning united with Taste and Delicacy of Manners from the Ground of his Character, which is still rendered more affecting by a deep shade of melancholy. - -

The Charms of his Understanding have won him the esteem of *Voltaire*, the sensibility of his Heart has endeared him to *Rousseau*.

His enthusiasms for Freedom, which has probably had its share in engaging him the friendship of the latter, has secured

[15] him the affection of the Citizens of Geneva, who assure themselves his influence will give a little of the genial warmth of Liberty to the Aristocratic phlegm of the Code. He is lately gone to Paris to read Rousseau's Memoirs of his own life, and is supposed to be almost the only person to whom they are to be communicated before the Death of their Author. It is not improbable his Design is to submit in his turn an Idea of the Genevan Code to the inspection of his Friend. - - - - -

Mr Vernet the theological professor, boasts a presence of Mind and Vigour of Constitution equally uncommon at Fourscore and four.

I know not whether our Nestor in the World of Letters may not be said to have seen two Generations pass away and to live in the third. He may make the same reflection on the literary Race, which the Sage of Pilos does on the natural.

Having been engaged in Controversy he often recounts his polemical scars. He is well versed in antient learning and profoundly Master of that of France. He has known and lived [16] with many of the great Men, who figured in the Annals of Louis XIV; as well as with the brightest of their Successors: It makes the chief Amusement of his old Age to relate their Memoirs and Anecdotes and to describe their Characters and Writings, As Homer's Sage would recite the warlike Actions of a Theseus, or Polyphemus, our venerable Professor celebrates the Literary Achievements of a Huygens, or Cassini. We hear how the former taught the Pendulum to vibrate in the Cycloid, and the latter subjected to the Empire of Science the inundations of the Po. — Sometimes we follow him thro' the paradoxes of a *Hardouin* and the peregrinations of *Saint Peter* shadowed forth in the *Æneid*, are led with rapture thro Fontenelles' plurality of Worlds, or taught to choose the best with Massilon, or Saurin. I have frequently heard him harangue a Literary Circle on some point of Erudition for the Space of half an hour together, which he does with a Compass of knowledge and facility of expression

that would not have dishonoured his most rigorous years. Thus at an Age which seldom offers anything to notice but what excites mortification, Mr Vernet is the delight of [not numbered [17]] of [sic] every Society he enters. - - -

His learned and liberal researches in his own profession will probably secure him the regard of a future Generation, as a life that corresponds to the Doctrine he preaches, attracts the Veneration of this. - -

In Mr Huber I introduce to your acquaintance a Genius so wild, so irregular, so various, a Camelion that presents himself under so many different Colours almost at once, that I know not which to call most properly his own, nor which I shall attempt to catch first in the rapid succession. I see him this moment starting from his Chair with his Instrument in his hand and playing an Italian Air with all the fire, feeling and expressions of a great Master. Now he sits down and instructs his Friends with a solemn dissertation on the present state of Europe. He has just snatched up his Scissars and is cutting at figures in paper. What an unworthy amusement, some Stranger exclaims; It is Hercules with his Distaff! – But all is consecrated in his hands. We are [18] presently astonished with a fine Landscape a beautiful assemblage of picturesque Objects, or perhaps a Colossal Hero frowning in paste-board. The Scissars however are not Mr Huber's only Instrument of Design. At the age of forty, he took up the Pencil. We have scarcely time to admire the wonders he works with it, before we find him passionately occupied in examining the Nature, Gravity and pressure of Fluids. Whilst his Friends are promising another Archimedes or Boyle to the Science of Hydrostatics, he is suddenly engaged in a Treatise on Falconry and his Imagination is soaring into the Clouds with his Hawks. At this Moment he comes reeking from his Diversion all over blood and filth with Lures and Copping Irons, dangling about him. We meet him next in the Drawing Room transformed into a fine Gentleman and entertaining the Italian, the Spaniard, the

German or the Englishman, each in his own Language, with descriptions, anecdotes or customs, of their several Countries.

His discernment instantly seizes the ridicule of every Character, [19] which, at certain intervals, he seldom fails to reflect back in the most vivid colouring that Mimickry and Wit can furnish. After so many strange Instances of Versatility we are not surprized to see him dispensing Justice in one of the Tribunals of the Commonwealth, nor, as soon as he is escaped to his Villa from the Trammels of Business, exulting in the Views of the Lake, the Woods and Mountains around him and describing their effects in the Language of Inspiration.

When I cast my eye back on some of the Traits of the original I have been drawing, I know not whether I should apologize for the fidelity of my piece: Unless however you should condescend to correct me, I shall be half inclined to think they ought not to have been omitted. —

Here Sir, I have presented to you a respectable Company, to whom I am indebted for the pleasures of the most agreeable Society. I could much have enlarged the number by the distinguished Names of *Le Sage*, *Tremblay*, *De Rochmont*, a *Clapere* and a *De Lolme*; but that I have wanted opportunities of [20] cultivating them sufficiently to do justice to their merit. I may add too that I have all along felt some discouragement under the idea of addressing these pourtraits to a Gentleman whose own Character presents one so superior to them all.

I have the honour to be

Dear Sir

Your Obedient and Obliged

Humble Servant

William Beckford

Thanex[?]

May 22d

1778

William Beckford: Composing for Mozart **by Timothy Mowl**

ERIC DARTON

A biographer who describes his subject as 'a fluent and seductive liar',¹ on his first page and later calls him a 'paedophile',² and 'a barely socialised psychopath',³ can hardly be considered sympathetic or even unbiased. Such remarks reveal a degree of intense dislike, and one wonders why Timothy Mowl came to choose William Beckford as his subject.

The subtitle *Composing for Mozart* is based on the conversation recorded in Lansdown's *Recollections* regarding *Non più andrai*, when Beckford stated he had improvised the original tune during his lessons with Mozart. Mowl evidently believes this to be untrue, and uses his subtitle as a metaphor for lying, a not entirely wise choice. As he admits, no one could 'confidently swear that Beckford could not possibly have been the original composer.'⁴ The lying that Mowl refers to might better be described as fantasising. A degree of fantasy is necessary in all art.

The first chapter is devoted to a paraphrase or 'realisation' of Lansdown's *Recollections*. Mowl begins by saying that there had been 'several months' delay, 'Henry Goodridge had made excuses, even offered grave warnings',⁵ none of which appears in the opening letter. Whereas Lansdown gives a clear and very matter-of-fact account of his meetings with Beckford, we are given embellishments on the thoughts and emotions of those involved, which at best can only be guesses. Some quotations are marred by a curious repositioning of words. Lansdown is quoted as saying 'This place puts me in mind of',⁶ whereas the original gives 'This place puts one in mind of',⁷ or 'I was never so convinced',⁸ where the original is 'I never was so convinced'.⁹ Or again, 'If my father's advice had been taken',¹⁰ instead of the

original 'Had my father's advice been taken'.¹¹ While these alterations may not seem important, they do alter the speech patterns of 1838 to those of today.

Mowl suggests that Beckford's Catholic sympathies were possibly prompted by the opening of the Chapel at Wardour Castle in 1776, but says it is unprovable.¹² Beckford was sixteen at the time and considering his mother's religious attitudes and that he was under the tutelage of the Rev. John Lettice, this seems most unlikely. There is no evidence that he ever visited Wardour and he certainly never mentioned doing so. It is arguable that comparison of the Chapel with the average places of worship of the period, particularly those of dissenters, might well convert one to Catholicism on purely aesthetic grounds.

Mowl refers to Beckford as being 'ambivalently semi-Catholic for the rest of his life – at the same time as being...closely involved with Freemasonry'.¹³ His explanation for this latter claim is that Beckford joined the craft secretly when in Geneva in 1777. On the grounds that Beckford's 'great uncle on his mother's side was James Hamilton...in 1726 the Eighth Grand Master of the first Grand Lodge of England' and tracing the masonic connections of other members of the Hamilton family, Mowl concludes that Colonel Hamilton, Beckford's host, was probably 'also a Freemason'.¹⁴ Although Catholicism and Freemasonry were not considered compatible, Mowl describes this as 'a quintessentially Beckford paradox'.¹⁵ There seems to be no evidence to support this theory.

It is generally accepted that Beckford was a fine keyboard player, and Mowl actually quotes Henri Meister's well-known words to this effect.¹⁶ He may not have known that Lady Hamilton was a fine musician and had been described as having 'a very neat finger and plays the harpsichord with great delicacy, expression and taste'.¹⁷ Mowl, however, describing them at Portici, says, "They made a precious pair...She had a 'sweetly soft' touch on the keys, while Beckford strummed and hammered

away dramatically: two music bores, blissfully happy with their art",¹⁸ hardly a fair appraisal. Mowl is equally dismissive of John Burton, another fine harpsichordist and composer, 'A celebrated performer',¹⁹ whom he calls Beckford's 'captive musician'.²⁰

Most disturbing is Mowl's continuing interest in Beckford's sexual predilections. There are various references to 'carefree sexuality',²¹ 'homo-erotic passion',²² and the like. The Cornaro affair in Venice is mentioned, when "he and his male lover 'suffered a strange delirium which had nearly proved fatal' ", and also that " 'Delirium' was Beckford's code word for sexual play."²³ In particular Mowl deals with the Courtenay affair, 'The relationship between the two Williams was soon to become actively and physically paedophilic. They slept together as lovers'.²⁴ Then, after Beckford's marriage, 'he still made love to Courtenay when the opportunity arose'.²⁵ Mowl says of the scandal, 'It is not known exactly what Beckford got up to with Courtenay at Powderham during his visit',²⁶ but is obviously prepared to believe the worst. He refers to the possibility that 'Lord Loughborough and the Courtenays were likely to make public the damning letters he had written to his lover'.²⁷ As to Beckford travelling to Jamaica and possibly dying there, to his mother, 'even a dead son might possibly have seemed preferable to a live son who indulged in sodomitical practices'.²⁸

Mowl then asks, 'Was his real vice the writing of sexual prose rather than the performing of any sexual act?' and 'Was Beckford's only real perversion poetic prose?'.²⁹ Mowl later deals with 'the theory that the whole Courtenay scandal was engineered to neuter the possible left-leaning political influence of his [Beckford's] huge fortune'.³⁰ Like others before him, Mowl finds it all very confusing.

Writing of Franchi and Beckford, Mowl says, 'At a guess...their relations were never sodomitical',³¹ but later refers to Franchi as Beckford's lover, adding that 'Gregorio Franchi became his pimp, plying the streets of London for willing

youths'.³² There is, of course, no evidence for this other than Beckford's letters, apparently in reply to Franchi's. From the badinage they contain it is apparent that Beckford was deliberately trying to appear the more outrageous. 'A good letter-writer gets carried away, he dramatises and exaggerates his moods and feelings.'³³

Farington is quoted on several occasions about the building of the Abbey, yet at the same time Mowl states that there 'is a danger in following Farington too closely' as he 'often misinterpreted casually expressed intentions as actual commitments, minor refacings as catastrophic collapses.'³⁴ Farington had never met Beckford nor visited Fonthill.

It is not possible to deal with all of the many questions the book raises. Despite its obvious flaws, it is a well written and presented work, and therein lies the danger. Mowl's condemnation of other writers on Beckford may discourage newcomers to Beckford from reading further, believing that this is the last word on the subject. But as Mowl himself says, 'trust no quotation from any printed source.'³⁵

¹ Timothy Mowl, *William Beckford: Composing for Mozart*, London, 1998, p. 1. Unless otherwise stated, all further references are to this work.

² Mowl, p. 104. ³ p. 111. ⁴ p. 16. ⁵ p. 7. ⁶ p. 12.

⁷ Henry Venn Lansdown, *Recollections of the late William Beckford*, 1893, Kingsmead Reprints [1970], p. 17.

⁸ Mowl, p. 13. ⁹ Lansdown, p. 19. ¹⁰ Mowl, p. 18. ¹¹ Lansdown, p. 37.

¹² Mowl, p. 43. ¹³ p. 44. ¹⁴ pp. 60-61 ¹⁵ p. 44. ¹⁶ p. 201.

¹⁷ Charles Burney, *Music, Men and Manners in France and Italy, 1770, 1774*, p. 177.

¹⁸ Mowl, pp. 95-96.

¹⁹ Stanley Sadie, ed., *The Grove Concise Dictionary of Music*, 1988, p. 117.

²⁰ Mowl, p. 119. ²¹ p. 31. ²² p. 77. ²³ p. 94. ²⁴ p. 107.

²⁵ Mowl, p. 111. ²⁶ p. 127. ²⁷ p. 140. ²⁸ p. 141. ²⁹ p. 157.

³⁰ Mowl, p. 226. ³¹ p. 174. ³² pp. 245 & 258.

³³ Boyd Alexander, *Life at Fonthill*, 1957, p. 26.

³⁴ Mowl, p. 231. ³⁵ p. 305.

Dramatisations of *Vathek*: Genlis and After

JON MILLINGTON

What prompted Beckford to choose *Vathek* rather than some other historical figure as the hero of his fantastic tale? With his well-known interest in oriental literature, he would have had a wide choice of subjects. Perhaps the explanation is that, when he was passing through Paris in the spring of 1781 at the end of his grand tour, he came across an early work by the Countess de Genlis, *Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes*,¹ later called *Théâtre d'éducation*.

This collection of plays had recently been published in four volumes, and even if Beckford hadn't seen it, he might well have seen the English translation which appeared in 1781. An 'Advertisement' stated; 'The work is equally adapted to the instruction of both sexes, who will find engaging descriptions of characters well worth their imitation, and meet with instructive examples to deter them from those vices and follies...[in] an early period of life.'² Among other worthy plays for the young was 'Vathek, A Comedy in Two Acts', set in an apartment in the Caliph's palace, although here the Caliph was not *Vathek*, but his father, *Motassem*.

Roger Lonsdale, in the introduction to his edition of Beckford's *Vathek* in 1970, was the first in recent times to draw attention to 'Vathek, A Comedy'. Interestingly enough, he did not speculate on whether Beckford might have been influenced by it, but confined himself to a comparison between the two works:

'This sentimental, sententious, humourless and didactic drama on the education of the young *Vathek* makes clear the chasm between what could so perfunctorily pass for 'oriental' literature at this period and Beckford's ability to start from *Vathek* as an actual historical personage as described in d'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale* (1697) and create around

VATHEK,

A

COMEDY;

IN TWO ACTS.

A disinterested and generous man is born a ruler; and he is at the same time the greatest of politicians, were policy only to be considered.

SIR C. GRANDISON, vol. vi.

THE PERSONS.

MOTASSEM, *The Caliph.*

VATHEK, *Son of Motassem.*

ALMANZOR, *Vathek's Governor.*

The VIZIER.

OSMYN, *Son of the Vizier.*

NASSER, *Friend of the Vizier.*

JAFFIER, *Friend of Almanzor.*

SCENE in the Caliph's palace.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

Represents the inside of an apartment in the palace.

NASSER and VIZIER.

NASSER.

LET us wait here; the young Prince has not yet returned from hunting; let us therefore converse freely

him a world which had its own imaginative intensity and coherence.³

Another Beckford scholar who has studied the play is Jerry Nolan. He found that it mainly dealt with an intrigue surrounding the love of the young Vathek for Zulica, the daughter of Almanzor, who already has a secret marriage with Nadir. Finally the Caliph commands Vathek to sacrifice his love of Zulica for the good of the kingdom, and the youth obeys.⁴ Jerry Nolan also felt that it was difficult to imagine young people, in any age, warming much towards the Countess's 'Vathek' beyond a residual curiosity about the vaguely oriental setting. He noted that:

There is a great deal of talk, including some very long speeches, but there is little dramatic action. An actual appearance of Zulica might have livened up things in the early stages, but the Countess insisted on modest exclusion for women who can only be talked about on stage...There is a remarkable absence of wit and humour from this 'comedy', apart from quite amusing unintended bathos from time to time. The play is a comedy only in the sense that it has a supposed happy ending. In fact, the happiness is directed towards the future well-being of the kingdom because Vathek shows himself fit to rule in the footsteps of his father by giving up the married woman he loves. There is a strong underlying note of personal tragedy in Vathek's dutiful self-sacrifice, and in the hands of professional actors the final impassioned exchanges between father and son could be brought to full dramatic life.

The Countess de Genlis (1746-1830) was born of a noble Burgundian family; she was educated at home and became a skilled harpist. Marrying young did not deflect her from her zeal to improve her knowledge, and she became governess to the children of the Duke of Orleans, later King Louis Philippe. She devised an original educational scheme for them, and to enable her theories to reach a wider audience she wrote a number of

improving plays for young people. Most were translated into English and other languages almost as soon as they appeared. During her long life she published almost one hundred works, and travelled widely, including to England. Her husband, from whom she was estranged, was guillotined in 1789, but she was in favour of the Revolution.

Perhaps it is no more than a possibility that Beckford was inspired by the Countess's 'Vathek', but at least two full-length dramas based on his *Vathek* are known. One is an unpublished manuscript of 134 folios on paper watermarked 1832 which was sold at Sotheby's in 1974.⁵ Some idea of how much this anonymous and hitherto unrecorded play has in common with Beckford's *Vathek* may be gauged by this extract from Sotheby's sale catalogue:

The play reproduces the central theme and the main features of Beckford's novel, and its principal characters – the Caliph Vathek, his wicked mother Carathis, the Giaour or Indian Merchant, servant of Eblis, etc. – but the dramatist uses this material with creative freedom, inventing new incidents and characters and blending these to produce a dramatically effective entertainment which remains close to the essential spirit of Beckford. The dramatist's bold originality is revealed in the opening scene, which is set in the Gold Mines where gnomes and subterranean spirits are labouring under the direction of the Giaour and suddenly break through into the open air.

A further dramatic interpretation of Beckford's *Vathek* appeared a little later in the nineteenth century in the form of a long poem in three acts by George Yeilding MacMahon. It appeared in 1859,⁶ and *Vathek* occupies the first ninety-seven pages, with other short poems on the remaining nineteen. In an 'Advertisement' the author, who does not seem to have published anything else, said:

The following Poem is founded on the "Vathek" of Beckford;

but the incidents of that tale have been made use of, or rejected, as suited the purpose of the author. In particular, the catastrophe in the third Act will be found to present an entirely different scene from the "Hall of Eblis."

As the play opens, we are in the Palace of Vathek in the neighbourhood of Samarah, and Vathek, standing on the 'Summit of the Great Tower' at midnight, begins a long soliloquy:

I stand at length upon this giddy height
Of wearying clamber, where I hope to hold
Closer communion with the host of heaven,
And in its luminous countenance to read
The purport of this throbbing life around me;
And that within me throbbing responsively
To the untiring pulse of that without;
Yet am I nearer to the welling fount
Of longed-for knowledge? can I, face to face,
Question the star and wring the answer from it?

Whether any of these three plays were ever performed is not known, nor have others based on *Vathek* come to light. But the two that it inspired give some indication of the great dramatic possibilities of Beckford's amazing novel.

¹ Stéphanie Félicité Brulart de Genlis, Marchioness de Sillery. 'Vathek.' In *Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes*. 4 vols. Paris: Panckoucke, 1779-1780.

² *Theatre of Education*. English trans. by Thomas Holcroft. 4 vols. London: T. Cadell, & P. Elmsly; T. Durham, 1781. 1:1-2. 'Vathek', 3:143-242. German & Italian trans. of *Théâtre* in 1780, and Dutch in 1786-1788. 'Vathek' reissued in *The Beauties of Genlis*, 151-190. Perth: Morison, 1787.

³ William Beckford. *Vathek*. Edited with an introduction by Roger Lonsdale. London: O.U.P., 1970. p. xxiv.

⁴ Private communication from Jerry Nolan, to whom I am grateful for help with this essay.

⁵ It was lot 415 on the second day of a Sotheby's sale on 19 November 1974 (when it sold for £380). Catalogue, pp. 112-113.

⁶ *Vathek, a Dramatic Poem; The Dream of the Captive City, and Other Poems*. London: J. F. Hope, 1859.

No More Green Cloth Boardings: The Fastidious Book Collecting of William Beckford

STEPHEN CLARKE

Book collecting was a central activity of William Beckford's life for over sixty years. He accumulated at Fonthill Abbey a library of about 6,000 volumes, most of which were sold in 1822, and then over the next twenty-one years created at Bath a new library that by the time of his death was almost twice the size of its predecessor. The best account of his collection is by Anthony Hobson (in *The Connoisseur* of April 1976), who stressed his concern for condition and dedicated and sustained commitment, grounded in an insatiable appetite for books. The social isolation of Beckford's life at Fonthill and at Lansdown was deflected by his copious and extensive reading, evidenced by the scale of his acquisitions and by the attentive and frequently acerbic notes carefully written in the flyleaves of many of his books – themselves long prized by subsequent generations of collectors.

An understanding of Beckford is bound to be partial without an effective comprehension of this essential aspect of his life. The sale catalogues of Christie's in 1822, Phillips in 1823, and the Hamilton Palace sale catalogue of 1882-3 have always been the primary documents for this study, but Beckford's correspondence on his collecting has remained largely unpublished. Now, thanks to the labours of Robert Gemmett, we can read Beckford's correspondence with George Clarke, his bookseller between 1830 and 1834, and it is fascinating material.

Mr Gemmett, the editor of *Biographical Memoirs of Extraordinary Painters* (1969), *Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents* (1971), and *The Episodes of Vathek* (1975), has provided an annotated and scholarly edition of some 345 letters from Beckford, and a couple of surviving letters from Clarke. They are important for the account they provide of Clarke's part

in the negotiations in 1834 for the publication of *Italy; with Sketches of Spain and Portugal*, and of the reprinting of *Biographical Memoirs* and *Vathek* – with the *Episodes* held back as requiring a higher price than Bentley was prepared to pay. They are also revealing of Beckford's trenchantly held views on a variety of issues. He is entranced by the novels of the young Benjamin Disraeli, enthusiastic about Cruikshank's illustrations, and in August 1832 as contemptuous of Thomas Johnes's Gothic elysium at Hafod – 'I care little about the scenery or acres near that vile fabric called Hafod House. The library alone is to me interesting' – as he was of Strawberry Hill.

But it is with the collecting of books that the correspondence is fundamentally concerned. They show Beckford in a variety of guises. He is alternatively excited, cajoling, offended, and mistrustful to the point of paranoia. He is also obsessive. It is worth bearing in mind that he wrote the letters in his early seventies, but is displayed pursuing his quarry with the fevered enthusiasm of a far younger man. The flux of his emotions as an auction sale approaches, for example, is well described by Anthony Hobson:

First Beckford gets wind of the sale and writes for more details; then he speculates gloomily on its probably poor quality and wonders if he should come to London for it; then the catalogue arrives and the gloomy predictions are confirmed, although reports are requested on a few lots. Letters now come daily from Bath, demanding reports on other lots and sending instructions [on] which are to be bought at any price and which to be run up and dropped on rival booksellers. While the sale is in progress, there are often two letters a day, passionate with rage, anxiety and joy. Finally it is over, the bill paid, and the tempest dies away in shrill gusts of disappointment and long-drawn sighs of satisfaction.

All this makes for an illuminating account of an emotionally charged, furiously engaged Beckford. Clarke is praised for his achievements, but more often traduced for his delays in replying

to Beckford's at times daily letters. If Beckford celebrates their auction successes, he gnaws over the missed opportunities. Of a lost lot at the Hanrott sale, for example, he exclaims in August 1833, 'Good God! One hundred drawings to Bohn for 5.10!! to Bohn! to Bohn! I shall never recover this stroke. It is worse than the palsey. 100 nicely executed drawings given up to Bohn for 5.10 for 5.10 to Bohn! to Bohn for 5.10! Grant me patience gracious heaven.'

The correspondence also underlines his extraordinary demands as to condition. Hobson listed his ideal attributes as immaculate cleanliness, inside and out; large or fine paper; a handsome binding; and a distinguished provenance. The letters show repeatedly that any lapse from those standards could have a book rejected and propelled back to London. But the two elements of these lofty desiderata that run as a continuous thread through the correspondence are concern for the quality of impression of engraved illustrations, and for the quality of bindings, in particular the bindings commissioned by Beckford of books he had bought. Even his favourite binder, Charles Lewis, nicknamed the Angel, whom he described in December 1831 as 'the first artist in this line that Europe can boast of,' frustrated him by seemingly interminable delays. For binders who failed to satisfy his standards, especially for 'Beast' Wilson, his fulminations are unstinted. Deliveries to Bath of newly bound books would often provoke an outburst of frustration. In April 1833 he wrote to Clarke of a batch of books where one was coarsely tooled and most of the rest were indifferently executed:

These are insupportable. I make haste to return them with my warmest execrations. The beast has neither taste nor eye. Witness the vile blue sides and harsh flaming scarlet linings he has inflicted upon G[reenlan]d & the Mariner. The green paper of Al Raoui discharges the colour when rubbed even with the finest cambric. I therefore positively forbid green paper and the application of ill proportioned crosses and [cinquefoils] as in the case of Al Raoui. Your beast is a

very 2d rate tasteless binder. Be assured of that, and pray where is the book of Job?... I shall soon be sickened of crosses and cinque foils, and indeed of binding in all its branches. The last cargo disgusted me almost in every particular. What more like a law book or school book than the advice to Julia. How tasteless for such a book! What more blightest and disagreeable than the strange skim-milk (London milk) colour of the opium eater, contrasted with the clotted blood red of the lettering. How formal and fusty blind tooling and armorial badges for L. H. Bacchus in Tuscany. How utterly inappropriate!

Beckford's frustrations must have been matched by the bewilderment of Clarke on receiving these effusions, perplexed as to how to satisfy such fastidious and apparently unpredictable demands, while Beckford no doubt thought his criticisms measured and transparently self-evident. As Beckford had written to him in July 1831 on receiving some books that included one where the binder had presumed to use green cloth on the boards, 'No more green cloth boardings upon any account. Such a green too! How could you imagine such a tint could be tolerated by me?'

Only Charles Lewis ultimately satisfied his requirements in providing restrained, elegant and beautifully lettered volumes, their cinquefoils and Latimer crosses on the spines standing as silent witnesses to chaste understatement.

If possible, even concern with bindings is eclipsed as a leitmotiv to this correspondence by the obsession with the quality of impression of the engravings illustrating the books he bought, and the paramount need for fine proof impressions. Beckford prided himself on the acuteness of his eye, as evidenced by his rejection in November 1831 of a Bonington plate – 'There is a little spot (like an ink spot) in the sky in the view of a tower at Bologna by Bonington. Take the <time> therefore to get the plate changed.' This in turn introduces the phenomenon of the interchangeability of plates, with Beckford commissioning Clarke to harass engravers for proof impressions to insert in the contemporary books he bought, whether illustrated books as

such, frontispieces to letters and memoirs, or even the popular illustrated Annuals.

It is salutary that this obsession with state applies as much if not more to contemporary publications of limited value as to older books. 'I loathe, abominate, and cannot endure bad impressions even of the most trifling vignettes', he exclaimed in May 1831, and it makes curious reading to see the same energy expended on *Forget Me Not*, *The Keepsake*, *The Amulet* and other Annuals as was engrossed in the splendours of the Hanrott and Heber sales. He laments in September 1832 the quality of the texts of 'these tiresome, vapid, farragoes,' but cannot resist the plates. This quest for proof impressions could lead to dire disappointment, as when he suspected that rather than uncover true proofs, the engravers Clarke approached had merely blocked out the lettering and run off a tired impression from a worn plate, masquerading as a proof. At such points Beckford's rage explodes: 'I am sick to death of annuals and annual tours, and false proofs, and steel engravings,' he cries in May 1833.

The reader, confronted with over 300 of these passionately cajoling letters may question what sense of proportion is operating here. For example, in 1831 Clarke is instructed to obtain Hall's recently published *Guide to the Town of Wimborne-Minster* – over the course of some seven letters he is beseeched with mounting impatience to find a copy on large fine paper with proof impressions. When at length in March 1831 the book arrives at Lansdown it is summarily dismissed as 'scarcely worth having upon any paper.' Yet the same persistence and attention to detail, the same energy and commitment created an extraordinary collection of fine and rare books in exquisite condition. Of the books he kept at Lansdown Tower he was able to write in February 1833, 'The tower is quite a paradise of well conditioned, beautiful books. The new pedestal cases hold about 50 volumes of the first order – *chef d'oeuvres* of Lewis, de Rome, R. Payne etc. It does one's heart good to see such perfect copies.'

The correspondence is carefully and revealingly edited. Mr Gemmett has clearly gone to great pains to trawl through the auction records for these years to identify as many as possible of the lots that attracted Beckford's attention which, like a good deal of the other references in the letters, are otherwise scantily identified. The items that excite him underscore the range of his collecting interests that Anthony Hobson has discussed, with its emphasis on travel, history, biography and memoirs – and of course in all areas on condition.

Mr Gemmett has run an impressive number of these to ground, though it can be frustrating that these cannot generally be traced through the rather slender index – where so much of the identification and information lies in the notes, this might have been a case for indexing fully the notes as well as the letters. An example is a lot of Richardson novels in the Williams sale. 'I hope the *Clarissa*, *Grand[ison]*, *Pam[ela]* etc. will turn out right as I have long wanted the book to read,' he writes on 27 March 1832 – had the 71 year old Beckford not read Richardson? In three further letters in March and April he refers to Richardson or the titles of the novels, but neither feature in the index. With the text of the letters so dense with allusions and asides, the notes are essential to comprehension, and perhaps inevitably on occasion one would wish for more – but perhaps this is unrealistic given the extent of the undertaking and the identifications that Mr Gemmett has achieved.

The quality of production of the book is all that one could ask for. Fittingly for its subject matter, it is handsomely designed and bound in real cloth (burgundy, not green), rather than the ubiquitous glazed paper imitation, and has eight pages of plates. It is simply essential reading for an understanding of Beckford as book collector, and is in turn illuminating about his concerns and obsessions. Would that it might be the precursor to a more comprehensive publication of the great body of Beckford's correspondence.

The Consummate Collector: William Beckford's Letters to his Bookseller, edited with an introduction and notes by Robert J Gemmett, was published in 2000 by Michael Russell (Publishing) Limited, Wilby Hall, Wilby, Norwich NR16 2JP in an edition of 450 copies at £39. ISBN 0-85955-252-7.

The Professor of Paederasty

MALCOLM JACK

George Haggerty devotes a section of his wide-ranging and erudite book on eighteenth-century concepts of masculinity and sexuality, *Men in Love*, (Columbia University Press, 1999) to Beckford. The book is a detailed examination of sexuality in a distantly pre-Freudian age, though it owes a good deal to Foucauld's theories of Enlightenment sexuality. One of Haggerty's main assertions is that applying the modern binary distinction of heterosexual/homosexual to this period and to figures like Thomas Gray, Horace Walpole and Beckford is an unhelpful anachronism. During much of the eighteenth century, gender and sexuality were fluid concepts; the idea of masculinity, in particular, was much in flux. The book attempts to trace, mainly in the English context, a love if not unnatural, then unconventional in the lives of the Man of Feeling, a creature endowed, perhaps over-endowed, with the much-vaunted eighteenth-century quality of Sensibility.

The treatment of Beckford's sexuality is subtle, although Haggerty cannot resist quoting Hester Lynch Piozzi's academic accolade (the title of this review) or Byron's even less kind description of Beckford as 'the Apostle of Paederasty'. It is radical too, for Haggerty's contention is that 'Beckford threatened to expose the very foundations of culture. His paederasty sings out in a voice that had never been heard before' (page 140). First and foremost Haggerty divorces paederasty, in the Beckfordian context, from sodomy. He is right to do so. He

also distinguishes it from the notion of 'Greek love', largely invented by nineteenth-century Romantics who found it hard to accept the unsentimental/unproblematic nature of man/boy relationships in ancient Greece. What Haggerty says is that Beckford's relationship with William Courtenay was, in fact, a strong emotional attachment of the sort that was nearer to modern, homosexual romances than to the sub-culture of the eighteenth-century 'Molly house'. He might have taken that analysis further by considering Beckford's relations with Franchi, but he does not do so.

Haggerty is particularly acute in his observation of Beckford's attitude to women within the homosexual pattern of behaviour he ascribes to him. Not only was Louisa a go-between in Beckford's most infamous affair, she was an essential part of it. Lady Margaret must have understood her husband's sexual proclivities too, and in her own way was also party to them. That is certainly a more convincing explanation of her loyalty to Beckford following the Powerham scandal than any idea that she did not know about this side of his personality or did not believe it to be true. When it comes to Beckford's love of Franchi, Haggerty's analysis might be applied to figures like Donna Henriqueta, the Marquis of Marialva's daughter, or to the various aristocratic ladies with whom Beckford had amorous affairs in Madrid whilst probably at the height of his infatuation for Franchi.

Also perceptive is Haggerty's treatment of the fantasy elements in Beckford's sexual make-up. Beckford was, after all, a man of acute imagination. No reader of *Vathek* can fail to be aware of the constant sexual undertones (and indeed overtones) in its imagery. But rather than just pick at one incident or another in the sexual experience or imaginings of Beckford, Haggerty considers him in a wider context of eighteenth-century culture which makes much more sense of his sexual idiosyncrasies. Whilst he might have made more allusion to French influences, for that reason alone this study is novel and important.

Engravings of Fonthill

JON MILLINGTON

Most of the engravings here come from books or periodicals, which are listed chronologically. These views are given in the order in which they appeared in the work, except where it seemed more convenient to group some together, such as woodcut vignettes. At the end are views of Fonthill published as free-standing prints, followed by plans from catalogues of later sales of the Fonthill Estate.

For each entry, the wording before the dimensions is as it appears on the print, apart from anything in square brackets. Unless otherwise stated, the views are line engravings on copper or steel, and those of the Abbey are views from the south west.

Measurements are of the image, excluding any border, and are in millimetres (height before width). Different copies of the same print may vary slightly in size.

The Editor would be grateful to hear about any mistakes and omissions in what follows.

John Woolfe & James Gandon. *Vitruvius Britannicus*. Vol. 4. 1767. All
'J. Woolfe del. T. White sculp.'

Ground Plan of Fonthill. Plan du rez de Chaussée. [Pl.] 82. 332 × 653.

Plan of the Attic Floor. [Pl.] 83. 220 × 413. **Plan of the Principal Floor of Fonthill. Plan du Premier Etage.** 270 × 418. Both on the same plate.

Elevation of the Principal Front of Fonthill in Wiltshire, the Seat of Will^m Beckford Esq^r. **Elevation de la Maison de W^m Beckford Esq^r.** [Pl.] 84, 85. 125 × 668.

South Front of Fonthill. Elevation au Cotéz du Sude. [Pl.] 86, 87. 126 × 662.

Universal Magazine. July 1770.

The Principal front of Fonthill in Wiltshire, the Seat of the late W^m Beckford Esq^{re}. 125 × 245. Copied, without the wings, from Pl. 84, 85 in *Vitruvius Britannicus* Vol. 4 (1767).

William Angus. *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in Great Britain and Wales*. [1797].

Fonthill House in Wiltshire, the Seat of William Beckford Esq^r. Pl. 50.
W. Turner del^t A.R.A. W. Angus Sculp^t. Published as the Act directs,
March 1st 1800 by W. Angus N^o 4, Gwynne's Buildings, Islington.
131 × 186.

Gentleman's Magazine 71 Pt. 1 (April 1801).

Lord Nelson's Reception at Fonthill. *Gent Mag.* April. 1801. Pl. I. p.
289. 165 × 120. The temporary arch, and Abbey beyond. With border.

John Britton. *The Beauties of Wiltshire*. 2 vols. 1801. From vol. 1. Both with a border and: 'London. Published April 2, 1801 by Vernor & Hood, Poultry, for the Beauties of Wiltshire.'

Fonthill. Britton del. Storer sculp. 91 × 151. North Front of Splendens.

Fonthill. J. Smith del. Storer sculp. 94 × 146. South Front of Splendens.

James Storer. *A Description of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire*. 1812. All except the Oratory: 'Drawn & Engraved by J. Storer. Published by W. Clarke, New Bond St. May 1, 1812'.

West Door of Fonthill Abbey. Views of the Abbey at Fonthill, Wiltshire.
142 × 91. Engraved title-page.

Fonthill Abbey from the Beacon. 120 × 153.

Fonthill Abbey from the American Plantation. 151 × 114. From the S.
N. End of the Gallery, Fonthill Abbey. 108 × 155.

S. W. View of Fonthill Abbey. 119 × 151.

South View of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire. 154 × 114.

South East View of Fonthill Abbey. 151 × 114.

[The Oratory]. 90 × 81. Vignette in text.

George Alexander Cooke. *Topographical and Statistical Description of the County of Wilts*. c. 1820.

Wiltshire. Fonthill. 42 × 69. With a border. (with 'Wardour' beneath.)

Literary Gazette, 24 Aug 1822.

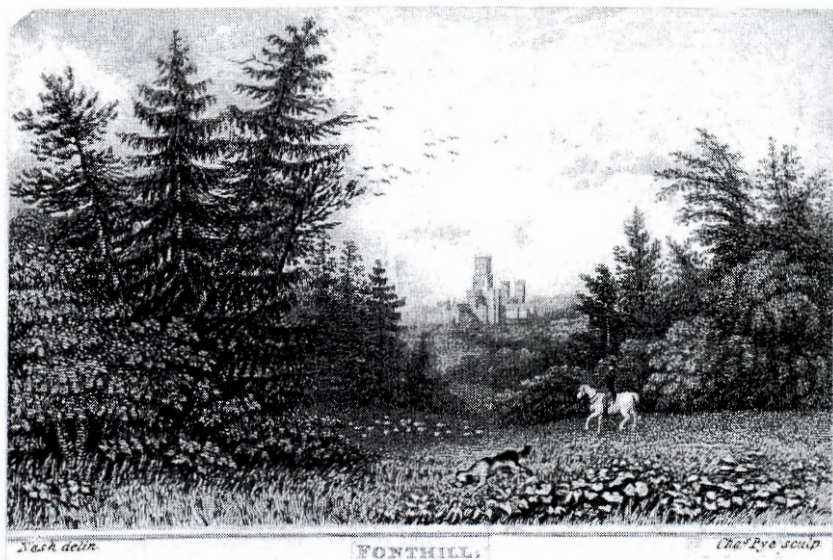
[Fonthill Abbey]. 79 × 121. Woodcut.

Gazette of Fashion, 24 Aug 1822.

Fonthill Abbey. J. Clark [sc]. Engraved expressly for the *Gazette of Fashion*. 100 × 140. See illustration.

Gentleman's Magazine, Sept 1822.

Fonthill Abbey, Wilts. S. W. J. C. Buckler del. J. Barnett sc. *Gent. Mag.*
Sept. 1822. Pl. I. P. 201. 102 × 170.



John Rutter. *A Description of Fonthill Abbey and Demesne*. 1822.

South West View of Fonthill Abbey, Wilts. Drawn by J. Rutter.

Engraved by T. Higham. Pub^d July 15, 1822 by J. Rutter, Shaftesbury.
100 × 160. With a border.

Whittaker. *A New Guide to Fonthill Abbey*. 1822.

Fonthill Abbey, Wilts. the Seat of W^m Beckford Esq^r. Drawn by T.

Higham. Engraved by J. Greig. Published Oct 8, 1822 by P. Youngman,
Witham, Essex. 87 × 140. From the west. With a border.

Lady's Magazine, Oct 1822.

A View of Fonthill Abbey. Not seen.

Mirror of Literature, 23 Nov 1822.

Fonthill Abbey. Sears sc. 70 × 104. From the west. Woodcut copied from
Whittaker (1822).

Lady's Magazine, Dec 1822. Both with a border. See illustration.

View from the great Western Entrance. 59 × 105. On the same plate as:

S. E. View. Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire, late the seat of W. Beckford. S.

Rayner del. from Sketches by T. Higham. J. Lambert sculp^t. 59 × 105.

Probably from a sheet of small engravings. c. 1822.

Fonthill after the Fire 1755. 28 × 49. With a border.

From a calendar. c. 1822.

Fonthill Abbey, Wilts. October. 25 × 51. Octagonal. With a border.

Unknown Source, possibly *Lady's Magazine*, Oct 1822.

Fonthill. Nash delin. Cha^s Pye sculp. 59 × 93. Figure on horseback, with
Abbey in distance. With a border. See illustration.

James Storer. *The Portfolio and Description of Fonthill Abbey*. Both 1823. All
except title-page: 'Drawn & Eng^d by J. & H. S. Storer. Pub^d by Sherwood &
Co. Oct 1, 1822.'

West entrance to Fonthill Abbey. Port Folio. Vol. 1. Drawn & Eng^d by

J. & H. S. Storer for the Port Folio. Pub^d by Sherwood, Jones & C^o

Feb 1 1823. 121 × 65. Engraved title-page

Fonthill (in 1566). 67 × 104.

Fonthill (before the fire in 1755). 62 × 106.

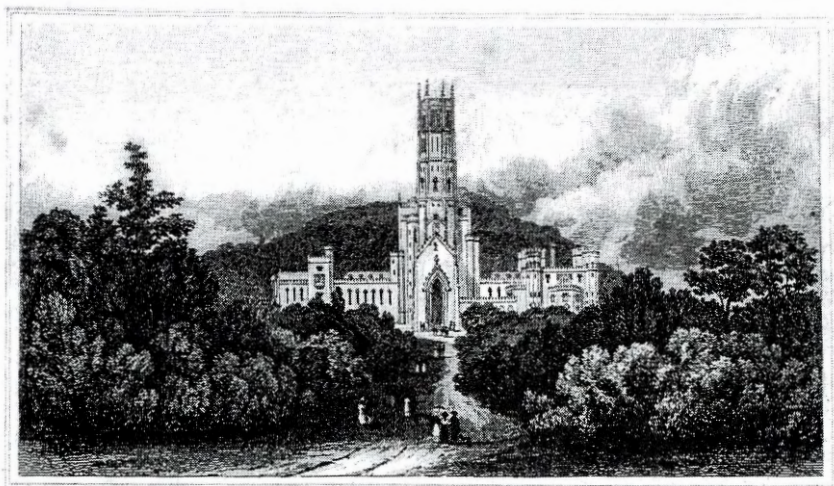
Fonthill (after the fire in 1755). 60 × 103.

Fonthill Abbey (S. W. View). 68 × 90.

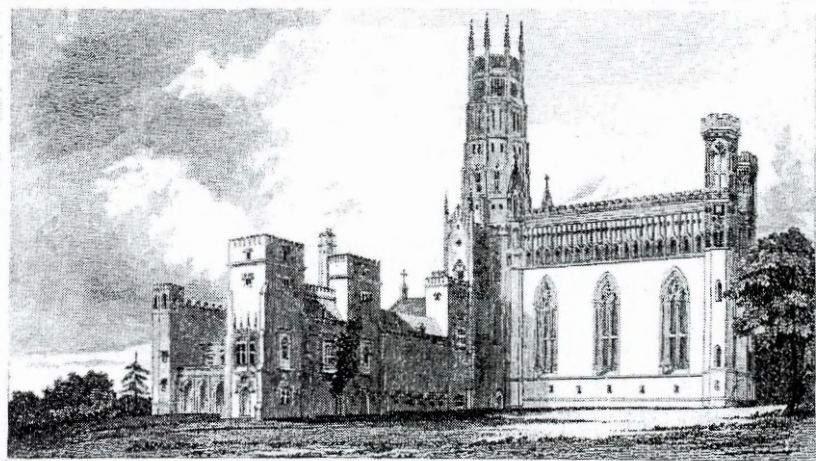
Fonthill Abbey (The Hall & part of the Octagon). 102 × 70.

Fonthill Abbey (South end of the Gallery). 92 × 70.

Fonthill Abbey (The Oratory, or N. end of the Gallery). 88 × 69.



View from the great Western Entrance.



J. B. H. del. from Sketches by T. H. H. H.

S.E. View.

J. Lamborn. sculp.

FONTHILL ABBEY, WILTSHIRE.
late the seat of

W. Beckford

John Rutter. *A New Descriptive Guide to Fonthill Abbey and Demesne*. 1823.
South West View of Fonthill Abbey. Drawn & Engraved by T. Higham.
July 1, 1823. 96 × 159. With a border.

Fonthill Abbey from the Barrier. Drawn & Eng^d by T. Higham. 53 × 89.
View from the south east. Vignette on engraved title-page.

Phillips. *The Valuable Library of Books...The Unique and Splendid Effects...
The Pictures and Miniatures at Fonthill Abbey*. 1823.

A Catalogue of the Costly and Interesting Effects of Fonthill Abbey.

1823. Stedman Whitwell, Arch, del. Thomas Higham, sculpsit.

186 × 117. Eastern Towers, with Central Tower beyond (93 × 41).

Beneath are two panels linked by a smaller one. The left and central ones read either 'Books' & 'Part 1' or 'Furniture and Articles of Virtu' & 'Part 2' or 'Pictures' and 'Part 3' or 'Price 12s' and blank. In the right-hand panel is the engraved signature H. Phillips. With a border.

Phillips Admission Ticket to Fonthill Abbey. The same engraving as above, apart from the altered title, blank left and right panels and 'Visitors' between them. Two detachable tokens beneath the ticket bearing the initials 'HP' and 'FA' in 19 mm roundels are usually missing from surviving examples.

**This Ticket will admit two visitors on any two days during the view
and is not transferable. Fonthill Abbey 1823.**

**This Ticket will admit three visitors during the view and is not
transferable. Fonthill Abbey 1823.**

John Britton. *Graphical and Literary Illustrations of Fonthill Abbey,
Wiltshire*. 1823. All with a border and: 'London. Published/Printed by/for the
Author April 1, 1823.' except pl. x, dated May 1, 1823 & title-page woodcut.

Fonthill Abbey; Hall from the Octagon. Pl. VI. Drawn by Gastineau,
from a Sketch by Cattermole; Engraved by R. Sands for Britton's
Illustrations of F.A. C. & C°. 207 × 163.

**Architectural & Heraldical Title for Britton's Illustrations of Fonthill
Abbey.** (Vide description.) Pl. XI. Engraved by J. Le Keux.— Designed
by J. Britton.— Drawn by J. Rayner. C. & C°. 222 × 162.

View from the end of the Western Avenue — Engraved by J. Thompson,
from a Sketch by T. Higham. 70 × 144. Woodcut on title-page.

Fonthill Abbey, Plan of the Principal Floor. Pl. I. Drawn and Measured
by G Cattermole, Oct 1822, Engraved by J. Roffe for Britton's
Illustrations of F.A. 177 × 208.

Fonthill Abbey, N. W. View. Pl. II. Engraved by J. Lambert from a
Drawing by G. Cattermole for Britton's Illustrations of F.A. M.Q.
202 × 159.

Fonthill Abbey, S. W. View. [Pl. III.] Engraved by H. Winkles, from a Drawing by G. Cattermole for Britton's Illustrations of F.A. 141 × 194.

Fonthill Abbey. S E. View. Pl. IV. Engraved by W. Tombleson: Sketch^d by T. Higham: Drawn by S. Rayner for Britton's Illustrations of F.A. Hay:. 154 × 217.

Fonthill Abbey, Distant View from S. W. Pl. v. Engraved by J. C. Varrall: Sketch^d by T. Higham: Drawn by J. Martin for Britton's Illustrations of F.A. C & C°. 96 × 156.

Fonthill Abbey. Octagon, looking S. E. Pl. VII. C. & C°. 201 × 138.

Fonthill Abbey. King Edward's Gallery, looking N. Pl. VIII. Engraved by J. Le Keux from Sk^s by Cattermole, Shaw, &c for Britton's Illustrations of F.A. C & C°. 168 × 219.

Fonthill Abbey, S. End of S^t Michael's Gallery. Pl. IX. Engraved by M. Dubourg from A Drawing by G. Cattermole for Britton's Account of F.A. H. 171 × 220. Coloured aquatint.

Fonthill Abbey, Window &c in S^t Michael's Gallery. Pl. x. Engraved by Havell & Son: Drawn & Etch^d by H. Shaw, from Sketch by G. C, for Britton's Illustrations of F.A. HAV. 197 × 151. Coloured aquatint.

John Rutter. *Delineations of Fonthill and its Abbey.* 1823. All plates with a border and, except two, 'Published June 2nd 1823, by J. Rutter, Shaftesbury'.

Fonthill Abbey from the Barrier. Drawn & Eng^d by T. Higham. 53 × 89. View from the south east on upper cover. Vignette from engraved title-page of Rutter's *New Descriptive Guide* (1823).

Fonthill Abbey. Interior of S^t Michael's Gallery, Looking across the Octagon into King Edwards Gallery. Plate 7. Drawn by W. Finley. Engraved by John Cleghorn. Aquatinted by D. Wolstenholme Jun^r. 202 × 154. Coloured aquatint.

An Illustrated History and Description of Fonthill Abbey. MDCCCXXIII. By John Rutter. Shaftesbury. Altar Piece. Fonthill Abbey. Plate 8. C. F. Porden del. Havell & Son sculp. March 1, 1823. 202 × 154. Engraved title-page. Coloured aquatint. No border.

Fonthill Abbey. Plan of the Principal Story. The dotted lines represent the Ornamental Ceilings, Groining, &c. Plate 2. Drawn by J. Rutter. Engraved by J. Cleghorn. 187 × 150.

Fonthill Abbey. Longitudinal Section, Through the Centre of the Tower, Galleries, &c. looking East. Plate 3. Drawn by C. F. Porden, Arch. Engraved by John Cleghorn. 144 × 220.

Fonthill Abbey. Section of the Grand Saloon, Vestibules, Nunneries, &c. Looking East. Plate 9. Drawn by C. F. Porden, Arch. Engraved by John Cleghorn. 233 × 195.

- Fonthill Abbey. Interior of the Great Western Hall.** Leading to the Grand Saloon or Octagon. Plate 4. Drawn by Geo. Cattermole. Engraved by J. C. Varrall. 213 × 160.
- Fonthill Abbey. The Grand Drawing Room.** Plate 5. Stedman Whitwell, Architect, del. Engraved by John Cleghorn. 157 × 205.
- Fonthill Abbey. Interior of King Edward's Gallery,** Looking across the Octagon into S^t Michael's Gallery. Plate 6. Drawn by C. F. Porden. Etched by John Cleghorn. Engraved by Rob^t Havell & Son, Chapel Str, Fitzroy Squ. 149 × 197. Coloured aquatint.
- Fonthill Abbey. Specimens of the Ceilings.** Plate 10. Drawn by J. Rutter. Engraved by J. Cleghorn. 205 × 143.
- Fonthill Abbey. View of the West, & North Fronts.** From the End of the Clerk's Walk. Plate 11. Drawn by J. Martin. Engraved by T. Higham. 152 × 202.
- Fonthill Abbey. View of the South Front,** From the Lawn. Plate 12. Drawn by J. Martin. Engraved by T. Higham. 152 × 204.
- Fonthill Abbey. View of the West & South Fronts,** From the Beacon Terrace. Plate 13. Drawn by G. Cattermole. Engraved by T. Higham. 151 × 204.
- South West View of Fonthill Abbey.** Drawn & Engraved by T. Higham. July 1, 1823. 96 × 159. From Rutter's *New Descriptive Guide* (1823).
- Part of Fonthill Domain;** surveyed and planned, for John Rutter's History and Description of Fonthill Abbey. 1823. Drawn on stone by B. R. Baker. S. Paull, Surveyor, &c., Castle-Cary. Printed by J. Boosey & Co: 310 Strand. March 1, 1823. 382 × 490. Lithograph.
- [Undated woodcut vignettes in the text]:
- [Achievement Charged with Thirty-six Quarterings].** A. Harrison del. W. Hughes sc. 114 × 75. On printed title-page.
- The Entrance Gateway and Lodge, near Fonthill Bishop.** T. Higham del. W. Hughes sc. 75 × 125.
- The Eastern Postern Tower.** T. Higham del. W. Hughes sc. 52 × 40.
- A Groupe [Group] of the Rarest Articles of Virtu.** T. Higham del. Whitwell, Arch, dir. W. Hughes sc. 79 × 127.
- The Oratory Lamp.** 64 × 44.
- Corbel of the South Oriel Window.** Drawn by T. Higham. SW [Stedman Whitwell]. Eng^d by W. Hughes. 65 × 125.
- The Marble Fountain and Bas [later Basin].** Drawn by J. Rutter. Eng^d by W. Hughes. 58 × 68.
- A View of the Scenery of the American Plantations.** SW del. Eng. W. Hughes. 63 × 120.

The Norwegian Hut. SW [hidden]. 48 × 51.

A Secne [later Scene] in the Alpine Gardens. SW. W. Hughes sc.
77 × 120.

The Boat House. SW. WH. [both hidden]. 42 × 58.

Fonthill Gifford Church. J. Rutter del. W. Hughes sc. 63 × 125.

High Park Lodge, or Summer House. SW [hidden]. W. Hughes sc.
38 × 63.

The Remaining Wing, or Pavilion. J. Rutter del. W. Hughes sc. 63 × 126.

The Convent in Ruins. TH [hidden]. 52 × 118.

[**Fonthill Abbey from the west**]. 51 × 62. Small partial view on colophon.

Ackermann's Repository of Arts, 1 Aug 1823.

Fonthill Abbey. The Pavilion (now used as a Dormitory for the Visitors) and the Lake, In the Old Park. W. Finley del.

J. Stedman Whitwell Architect dir. Cleghorn litho. N^o 8 of R.

Ackermann's Repository of Arts, &c Pub. Aug. 1. 1823. Printed by
Boosey & C^o. 117 × 185. Coloured lithograph.

The Gleaner, 1, 8, 15 Oct 1823. Woodcuts copied from *The Portfolio* (1823).

Fonthill Abbey. (South West View.) 71 × 94.

Fonthill Abbey. (The Oratory, or North-end of the Gallery.) 95 × 72.

Fonthill Abbey. (The Hall and part of the Octagon.) 104 × 72.

Robert Havell. *Picturesque Views of Noblemen's & Gentlemen's Seats*. 1823.

Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire. View from the South. To William Beckford Esq^r the Founder of this Splendid Mansion, the Present Plate is

Inscribed. Drawn by H. Gartinean [Gastineau] from a Sketch by

T. Higham. Engraved by R. Havell & Son. London, Published July 1,
1823, by R. Havell, 3 Chapel Street, Tottenham Court Road. 211 × 299.
Colour aquatint. Pl. X. With a border.

John Preston Neale. *Graphical Illustrations of Fonthill Abbey and Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen*. 2nd series, vol. 1. Both 1824. All plates with a border and: 'London Pub. Feb 1, 1824, by J. P. Neale, 16 Bennett St, Blackfriars Road & Sherwood & Jones, Paternoster Row.' except pl. II (two dates).

Eastern Towers. 60 × 60. Woodcut vignette showing Beckford's arms.
Also on upper cover, without title.

Fonthill Abbey, The Western Entrance, Hall &c. Drawn by J. P. Neale.
Engraved by R. Sands. Printed by J. Bishop. March 1, 1824. Pl. II.

132 × 88. Also newly engraved on a 12 mm taller plate as: **Fonthill Abbey, (Western Entrance, Hall &c) Wiltshire.** Drawn by
J. P. Neale. Engraved by R. Sands. Oct 1, 1824. 131 × 87.

Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire (South West View). Drawn by J. P. Neale.
Engraved by W. Tombleson. Printed by J. Bishop. 93 × 124.

Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire. The East Oriel of S^t Michaels Gallery, with the Postern Towers &c. Drawn by J. P. Neale. Engraved by W. Wallis. Printed by J. Bishop. 83 × 122.

Fonthill Abbey, The Oratory. Drawn by J. P. Neale. Engraved by W. Deeble. Printed by J. Bishop. Pl 4. 125 × 87.

Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire (General View). Drawn by J. P. Neale. Engraved by J. C. Varrall. Printed by J. Bishop. 85 × 121. From the south across Bitham Lake.

John Britton. *The Beauties of Wiltshire*. Vol. 3. 1825.

Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire. The Seat of William Beckford Esq^r.

Engraved by S. Rawle, after a Drawing by C. V. Fielding, from a Sketch by J. Britton, for the Beauties of Wiltshire Vol. III. London. Published Jan^y 1, 1819, by Longman & C^o. Paternoster Row. 110 × 162.

Rev. J. Goldsmith. [Sir Richard Phillips]. *The Natural and Artificial Wonders of the United Kingdom*. 3 vols. 1825. From vol. 2.

Fonthill Abbey. W. Read. sc. Published by G. B. Whittaker, 1825. 75 × 120. From the west. Copied from Whittaker (1822).

Mirror of Literature, 15 July 1826.

Fonthill Abbey, South East View. 55 × 75. Woodcut copied from Higham's sketch for Pl. IV. in Britton's *Fonthill Abbey* (1823).

Alan Cunningham, ed. *The Anniversary for 1829*. 1828.

Fonthill. J. M. W. Turner R. A. del. T. Crostich sculp. Published Oct 1, 1828, by John Sharpe London. 87 × 128. Reprinted in *The Anniversary; an Elegant Literary Present*, edited by Horace Harvey, without date or publisher's name.

Richard Colt Hoare. *A History of Modern Wiltshire. Hundred of Dunworth and Vale of Noddre*. 1829. All plates with a border and: Pl. II - III 'Published by Sir R. C. Hoare, January 1828.', Pl. IV - VI 'Published by Sir R. C. Hoare, Bar^t January, 1829.'

Fonthill. – antiquus. Plate II. 157 × 254.

Fonthill. – redivivius A^o 1755. Plate III. 156 × 254.

Fonthill. – splendens A^o 1805. Drawn by J. Buckler. Engraved by Tho^s Higham. Plate IV. 155 × 254.

Fonthill. – cheu! dilapsus A^o 1825. Drawn by J. Buckler. Engraved by Tho^s Higham. Plate V. 137 × 206.

Fonthill. – resurgens A. D. 1828. The Seat of Geroge Mortimer Esq^{re}.

P. Crocker del^t. Tho^s Higham Sc^t. Plate vi. 153 × 252.

The Church. 71 × 46. Plan of Fonthill Gifford Church. Woodcut.

John Bowyer Nichols, ed. *Historical Notices of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire*. 1836.

– From Rutter's *Delineations* (1823):

Ten plates Nos. 2-5, 9-13 and the South West View, here renumbered 1-10.

Fifteen woodcuts: The Entrance Gateway and Lodge, near Fonthill Bishop;

High Park Lodge, or Summer House; The Convent in Ruins;

[The Eastern Postern Tower]; The Pavilion, or Remaining Wing of

Alderman Beckford's Mansion; The Marble Fountain and Basin;

A Group of the Rarest Articles of Virtu; Corbel of the South Oriel

Window; [Achievement of thirty-six quarterings]; [The Oratory Lamp];

Fonthill Gifford Church; A Scene in the Alpine Gardens; [The Boat

House]; A Scene in the American Plantations; The Norwegian Hut.

– From Richard Colt Hoare's *Wilts. Dunworth* (1829):

Fonthill. – eheu! dilapsus. A^o 1825, Plate v with the plate number removed.

Plan of the Church. Woodcut.

Free-standing Engravings

Line Engraving

[**Fonthill Splendens, entitled *Aedes Fonthilliana*.** W. Byrne after

Hendrik de Court.] 1793. Approx. 410 × 510.

Lithographs

Fonthill Abbey, Wilts. BS. 1822. Bedford's Lithog. 165 × 261. c. 1822.

Fonthill Abbey – Wiltshire. Bedford's Lithog. 2nd Edition. 170 × 252.

c. 1822.

Fonthill Abbey. 3rd Edition. Bristol. Printed at T. Bedford's Lithographic Press, 23 Broad St. 178 × 255. c. 1822.

Fonthill. Drawn on stone by E. Quick. Printed by E. Barrett, Bath.

190 × 170. c. 1823. A very similar view to Bedford's 2nd & 3rd eds.

Fonthill Abbey. View of the Fountain Court within the Western

Cloister. With the additions made in June 1823, to convert it into a

public refectory for the visitors. Restaurateur, M^r. Dore, White Lion,

Bath. Stedman Whitwell Arch^t del. J. Boosey & Co Lithog. 152 × 199.

Coloured. Designed to be bound with Rutter's *Delineations* (1823).

With a border.

South West View of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire; The Seat of William

Beckford Esq^{re}. Drawn by J. Buckler July 1821. James Wyatt,

- Architect. N. Chater & Co. Lithog. London. Printed by N. Chater & Co. & Published by J. Buckler, Bermondsey, Surrey. Feby 1823. 279 × 376.
- North West View of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire, The Seat of William Beckford Esq^{re}.** J. Buckler del. July 1821. J. Wyatt, Architect. Drawn on stone by N. Chater & Co. London. Printed by N. Chater & Co. & Published by J. Buckler, Bermondsey, Surrey. Feby 1823. 294 × 380.
- Fonthill. View of the Abbey from the Old Park.** J. Boosey & Co Lith 310 Strand. 162 × 246. c. 1823. From the south. Coloured.
- [Distant view of Abbey from South West].** G. H. I. 153 × 245. n. d. Without Eastern Transept.
- Fonthill Park.** [Four views on one sheet.] W. Day lithog. 17 Gate Street. **The Entrance, Gateway & Lodge,** 85 × 136. **A Scene in the Alpine Gardens,** 100 × 146. **A View of the Scenery of the American Plantations,** 85 × 145. **The Boat House,** 96 × 142. c. 1823. All enlarged copies of vignettes from Rutter's *Delineations* (1823).
- A View at Fonthill Abbey.** B. O. litho. 121 × 109. c. 1823. Beckford's dwarf, with the Abbey to the north across Bitham Lake. Sometimes bound into Britton's *Fonthill* (1823).
- Ruins of Fonthill Abbey. The Tower fell 21st December 1825.** "And thus this unsubstantial Fabrick falling left a sad wreck behind!" Drawn on stone by W. Westall A.R.A. from a Drawing by J. Buckler F.S.A. – Printed by C. Hullmandel. Published by J. Buckler, 2 Spa Road, Bermondsey, Surrey. 1825. 264 × 387.
- A Sketch from the Ruins of Fonthill.** MD [on mound]. London. Pub^d by G. Humphreys, 24 St James S^t. 173 × 140. Caricature of Farquhar. Bdr.

Polygraph

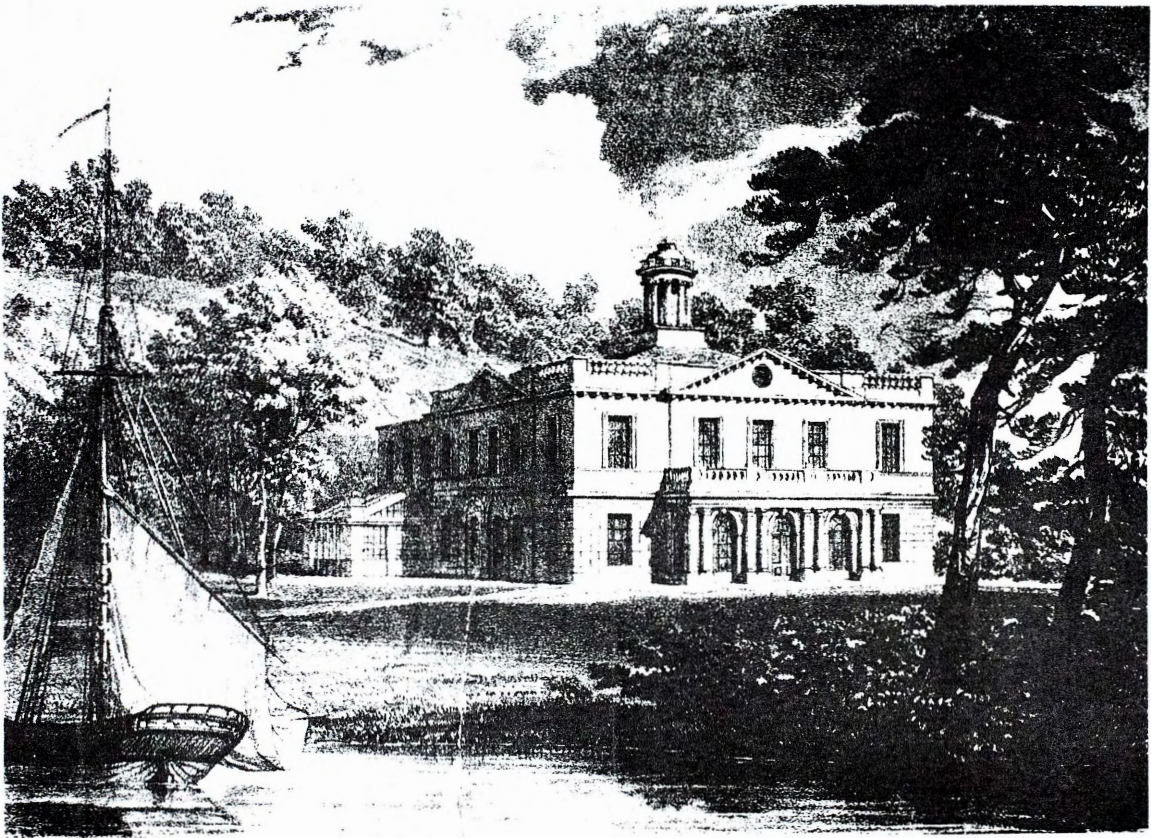
- Fonthill Abbey.** Polygraph No. 52 published by Hodgson & Co., 10 Newgate Street, London. 138 × 191. c. 1823. In colour.

1829 Sale by George Robins

- A Plan of Fonthill Park and Estate.** The Property of George Mortimer, Esq^{re}. To be Sold by auction by Mr George Robins at the Mart in London, on Thursday the 29th Oct^r 1829 at 12 o'Clock in 3 lots. 460 × 330. Lithograph.
- Fonthill Pavilion.** W. Day. Lith. 17 Gate S^t. 186 × 258. Lithograph. Probably the frontispiece to the catalogue.

1838 Sale by Phillips

- Plan of Fonthill Abbey Grounds and Lands Adjoining.** Waterlow & Morland, Lithrs, 24 Birchin La, London. 435 × 550. Lithograph. The sale of the estate was due to take place on 30 October 1838.



Fonthill Pavilion in 1829

Notes on Contributors

Dick Claésson, Department of Comparative Literature, Göteborg University, Sweden, is writing a dissertation on Beckford's early aesthetics, up to and including *Vathek* (1786). The dissertation focuses on Beckford's texts, and the ways in which they display various literary-rhetorical strategies. He published in 1995 *William Beckford av Fonthill, Wilts., 1760-1844, En forskningsöversikt* and in 1996 Beckford's manuscript *The Transport of Pleasure* which he edited.

Stephen Clarke is a London lawyer and the joint author of a bibliography of R.W. Ketton-Cremer, the historian and literary biographer. He has published papers on Sterne and Jane Austen, and has a particular interest in the early Gothic revival.

Eric Darton is interested in music, art and literature, particularly relating to the eighteenth century. His first visit to Lansdown Tower in 1978 aroused an interest in William Beckford, since enhanced by studying Beckford's writings, conversations with James Lees-Milne and Leslie Hilliard, and visits to Fonthill. Jon Millington introduced him to additional aspects of Beckford and encouraged him to write about them.

Kenneth W. Graham is an active scholar of the Gothic novel and of the eighteenth-century writers, William Godwin and William Beckford. He has published seven scholarly books, numerous articles and reviews, and has produced six video lectures. His two most recent books have just appeared: *William Godwin Reviewed 1783-1834: A Reception History* (New York, AMS Press, 2001) and an edition of William Beckford's *Vathek with the Episodes of Vathek* (Calgary: Broadview Press, 2001).

Malcolm Jack's books on William Beckford include *Vathek and Other Stories* (1993), *The Episodes of Vathek* (1994) and *William Beckford: An English Fidalgo* (1996). He has written widely on Enlightenment subjects and reviews books on Portuguese history and fiction. He has been commissioned to write a book on Sintra. Chairman of the Beckford Society since 1995, he is now also Secretary of the Johnson Club.

Jon Millington is on the Council of Management of the Beckford Tower Trust and wrote the guide to the Tower. For the 1976 Beckford Exhibition he produced the slide show and contributed to the catalogue the essays, 'Man of Letters' and 'Bibliophile Extraordinary'. He edited the *Beckford Tower Trust Newsletter* (1980-1994). To mark the 150th anniversary of Beckford's death he devised the exhibition *Souvenirs of Fonthill Abbey*.

Jerry Nolan, a freelance writer, lectures on and continues to publish scholarly essays on the cultural aspects of the Irish Revival which took place about one hundred years ago. He is on the National Council of the British Association of Irish Studies, as well as being editor of the Association's quarterly newsletter. He is the Secretary of the Irish Literary Society London which was originally founded by, among others, W.B. Yeats in 1892. His continuing interest in Beckford remains centred on exploring the religious, apocalyptic and radical dimensions in Beckford's life and works.