

**An Analysis of the
Preston
Manor
Letters**

An unpublished collection of letters
by **Charlotte Turner Smith**
to her publishers Cadell and Davies
1786 to 1794

By

Gillian M. Anderton

July 2008

About the Author and this Project

Gillian (Jill) Anderton has degrees from Universities in the United Kingdom and the United States. She has taught at Universities in the U.K. (the Open University and the University of Sussex), the U.S.A. and New Zealand. She is currently teaching part-time for the University of Sussex and also working as an independent scholar. She lives in West Sussex.

Jill Anderton came across the Preston Manor letters while doing some research on local writers, on Charlotte Smith in particular. The letters were written by Charlotte Smith to her publishers Cadell and Davies and date from December 1786 to June 1794. The letters reveal much about Smith's life and her writings. In August 2007 the archive containing the letters had not been fully listed and they were only available on microfiche; the originals could not be checked until later in the year. There has not been any other extensive analysis of the original letters as yet.

Acknowledgements

The letters are the property of Brighton and Hove Museum Service, and extracts from the letters are published courtesy of The Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums (Thomas–Stanford Collection, Preston Manor, on deposit with East Sussex County Archives, as L/AE/1-98). I am grateful for this permission; I should like to thank the archive staff for all their help. In addition, I should like to thank the copyright holder for his help and his kind permission to make use of the letters. Thank you also to the colleagues and friends who have read my analysis of the letters.

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Introduction..... | 5 |
| Translations and plans for plays | 7 |
| Patronage: William Hayley and others | 10 |
| Negotiations about novels and poems..... | 11 |
| Smith and her husband..... | 14 |
| Smith and her family..... | 15 |
| Negotiations about money: advances and debts | 17 |
| Special favours..... | 24 |
| Smith's management of money - and her despair..... | 24 |
| Conclusion | 26 |
| Appendix..... | 27 |
| Dates of letters from Smith to her publishers December 1786 to June 1794 | 27 |
| Bibliography | 31 |
| | |
| Figure 1. Extract from letter L/AE/2 | 8 |
| Figure 2. The title page from Smith's pamphlet..... | 16 |
| Figure 3. Extract from letter L/AE/96 | 23 |

An Analysis of the Preston Manor Letters

Introduction

A collection of unpublished letters from the poet and novelist Charlotte Smith (1749-1806) to the publishing firm of Thomas Cadell and William Davies provides significant new information about Smith – and indeed much information about the role of a woman writing at the end of the eighteenth century. Charlotte Smith was an important influence on writers as diverse as William Wordsworth and Jane Austen, and Smith's letters are a significant part of her oeuvre because they complement her other writings.

The letters, dating from 1786 to 1794 when Smith was at her most prolific as a writer, originally came from the collection of a local antiquarian, Sir Charles Thomas-Stanford, of Preston Manor in Brighton. After Charles Thomas-Stanford's death in 1932, the letters were held at Preston Manor until they were moved in July 2004 to the East Sussex Record Office. The letters are not included in Judith Stanton's admirably annotated edition of Smith's letters.¹ Maida Butler wrote a short article about them in *The Sussex County Magazine* in 1956.² The letters are also referred to in several of the introductions to the recent Pickering & Chatto editions of *The Works of Charlotte Smith*.³ The collection consists of 94 letters from Smith to Thomas Cadell the elder or to William Davies (his assistant), 3 letters from Cadell to Smith, 1 draft of a letter from Davies to Smith (on the back of one of her letters), and 1 letter from the Proprietors of the European Magazine (by a Mr Sewell) to Smith. These letters date from December 1786, when Smith was at Woolbeding in West Sussex, to June 1794, when she was in Bath, a period when she was writing her major novels, *Emmeline*, *Ethelinde*, *Celestina*, *Desmond*, *The Old Manor House*, *The Wanderings of Warwick* and *The Banished Man*. In this period she was also writing her long poem *The Emigrants* and was working on at least one play. The letters are significant because of what they reveal about Smith's early relationship with her publishers, about her attitude to her writing and to her self-presentation, and about the continuing financial problems she faced. The letters reinforce the critical view of Smith's presentation of

¹ Judith Phillips Stanton, ed., *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, Indiana University Press (2003): 16 n.1. In a later article, Stanton explains how she discovered the whereabouts of the Preston Manor letters too late to include them in the collected edition, 'Recovering Charlotte Smith's Letters: A History, With Lessons,' in *Charlotte Smith in British Romanticism*, ed. Jacqueline Labbe (Pickering and Chatto 2008): 159-173.

² Maida Butler, 'Mrs Smith and Mr Cadell' in *Sussex County Magazine*, 30 (1956): 330-334.

³ Most references are brief. Stanton includes some discussion in her introduction to *Emmeline* in Volume 2 of *The Works of Charlotte Smith* ed. Stuart Curran (Pickering and Chatto 2005-2007): vii-xxiii.

herself as suffering heroine of her own story, as self-sacrificing mother of sensibility, as genteel victim of law and patriarchy – and as an often shrewd bargainer.⁴

Charlotte Turner Smith's life was an extremely difficult one, which makes her literary achievements all the more remarkable. She came from a privileged background but in adult life struggled valiantly to support herself and her children. Her mother died in childbirth when Charlotte was only three, and Charlotte and her siblings were brought up by their aunt at Bignor Park in Sussex. Her father, who owned estates in Surrey and Sussex, removed her from school at an early age, and she made a brilliant and precocious entry into London society. When her father decided to remarry, because of his many debts, Charlotte was married off at the age of fifteen to Benjamin Smith, son of a rich merchant. Charlotte had her first child at sixteen; she went on to have twelve children, nine of whom survived to adulthood. Her husband was charming, feckless, extremely extravagant and dissolute. Charlotte accompanied him when he was sent to prison for debt and embezzlement, and she eventually decided, in 1784, to try to get her sonnets published in order to pay some of his debts. When she began to earn money from writing, she had great difficulty stopping him from spending it – even when she finally separated from him. Benjamin's father, recognising his son's weaknesses, had drawn up a will designed to keep money out of Benjamin's hands and to provide for his many grandchildren. Unfortunately the will was so complicated that the case went to Chancery and lawyers argued over it for almost forty years, until after Charlotte and Benjamin's deaths, by which time most of the money had ebbed away. (This was probably the legal case that Dickens satirised in *Bleak House* as Jarndyce v Jarndyce). Charlotte had continual disputes with the various trustees over payments for the children and interest on her own marriage settlements. Her literary earnings were crucial to her family's survival. By necessity, Charlotte Smith was literally the breadwinner for a large family, and she spent most of her later life on the edge of poverty.

Attempting to get the best financial terms for her writing, Smith negotiated at different times with different publishers. As a woman on her own, she frequently had difficulty with these negotiations. Her first publisher, James Dodsley, was reluctant to print her sonnets. At that time the assistance of a neighbour and fellow poet, William Hayley, was significant, and it was Hayley who later introduced her to Cadell and Davies.⁵ Her relationship with the firm of Cadell and Davies was probably more important than that with any other of her publishers. The elder Thomas Cadell, assisted by William Davies, published her translations, her first three novels, *The Emigrants* and the later editions of her sonnets. The younger Cadell and Davies published two later novels and two other prose works. Smith wrote many letters to both the elder and the younger Cadell (also called Thomas), dealing with personal as well as with professional matters. The majority of the later letters can be found in Stanton's edition of Smith's letters. The unpublished letters from Preston Manor fill in some of the gaps that exist in what we know of Smith's early relationships with her publishers and of her early writing career (see Appendix 1). In the Preston Manor collection are the majority of all the existing letters written by Smith in the period from January 1787 to October 1790. If one looks only at letters to publishers, even if

⁴ See, for example, Sarah M. Zimmerman, 'Charlotte Smith's Letters and the Practice of Self-Presentation' in *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 53,1 (1991): 50-77, and Jacqueline Labbe, 'Gentility in Distress - A New Letter by Charlotte Smith (1749-1806)' in *Wordsworth Circle*, 35, 2 (2004): 91-93.

⁵ See footnote 11

the four separately published letters are included, the majority of Smith's letters to publishers up until June 1794 are in the Preston Manor collection.⁶ There are some gaps in the Preston Manor letters, most notably in late 1791 and late 1793, and there are a relatively small number of letters overall in 1791 and 1792. However, these variations, which are discussed below, are determined by who is publishing Smith's current work.

Translations and plans for plays

The first unpublished letter from the Preston Manor collection deals with Smith's *The Romance of Real Life*, a translation of selected cases from Gayot de Pitavel's *Les Causes Célèbres*; she is about to forward the manuscript which will, she says, make up three small volumes about the same size as *Tristram Shandy* (L/AE/1, 20 December 1786). This letter predates by six months the first letter from Smith to Cadell that Stanton includes (see Appendix 1). Smith's acquaintance with Cadell has only just begun; she writes that she is 'unknown' to him yet he is 'very liberal and obliging' towards her because of William Hayley's 'opinion and recommendation.' She asserts, rather unrealistically considering her financial insecurity: 'I trust, [sic] that I shall not be obliged to intrude on you, for payment, much, if at all, before the usual time.'

The second letter in the collection is important because it indicates Smith's feelings about her translations:

I cannot say that I prefer being engaged in translations at all; but as I can do them when surrounded with my children and amid the interruptions unavoidable in so large a family; when I could not possibly disengage my mind enough for original composition; it amuses, without fatiguing me; and is at least doing something. (L/AE/2, 3 January 1787. See Figure 1).

At this time Smith had eight children living with her, the youngest under two years old, and was about to separate from her spendthrift and unfaithful husband.⁷ Besides the practical difficulties of finding space and time for 'original composition,' it can also be argued that in translating she was able to experiment with, and gain confidence in, different voices as a prose writer and that she was able to deal with subjects, such as sexual imposture and violent murder, that a woman writer would hesitate to address in her own voice. (Smith did make over £300 from her translation of *The Romance of Real Life*, but her first attempt at translation from French literature, *Manon L'Escaut*, had been attacked on moral grounds and she was also accused, incorrectly, of plagiarism).⁸ Later she briefly considered the possibility of

⁶ For separately published letters, see Labbe: 91-93; Richard C Taylor, '“The evils, I was borne to bear”: Two Letters from Charlotte Smith to Thomas Cadell,' *Modern Philology*, 91, 3 (1994): 312-318; Amy Garnai, 'A Letter from Charlotte Smith to the Publisher George Robinson,' *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 19, 4 (2007): 391-400.

⁷ For a detailed and sympathetic account of Smith's troubled life see Loraine Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography*, Macmillan (1998).

⁸ Fletcher: 82-86.

and Richard; However I believe this is enough for several
performers; and some subjects that I shall by no means
enjoy them — I cannot say that I prefer being engag'd
in Translations at all; but as I can do them when surrounded
with my children and amid the interruptions unavoidable
in so large a family; when I could not possibly disengage
my mind enough for original composition; it amuses,
without fatiguing me; and is at least doing something.

Be so obliging as to acknowledge by the Post the receipt
of the parcel containing the two first Volumes; and let me
know whether you think them new, likely to make
when printed, Books of the size you wish them to be?

I am, Sir
your most obed^t & oblig^d Serv^t
Charlotte Smith

I hope the pass part of meat week at Eastham; but if you are so
good as to write by an early post, how far the transcripts accompanying
this, answer your expectation as to quantity, I shall be at home till Sunday
and shall hear before I go.

Figure 1. Extract from letter L/AE/2

other translations, particularly when she thought she had a project that would prove profitable, for instance translations of the 'best sonnets' (L/AE/ 43, 5 February 1790).

In the first letter, in addition to her translating, Smith mentions a 'Comedy in three Acts with Songs' that she has 'in her hands' (L/AE/1, 20 December 1786). She asks if Cadell can help with contacting theatre managers: 'of the Managers, I know nothing, and am discouraged from applying to them by various accounts I have received of their conduct towards Dramatic authors.' Unlike Elizabeth Inchbald who had worked as an actress before writing her successful plays in the 1780s, Smith had no personal contacts amongst theatre managers. She seems prepared, nevertheless, to try any genre that might prove popular and profitable.

The second letter shows Smith's forward-planning and networking in connection with her play. She thanks Cadell for offering to take the manuscript to Mr Harris, but meanwhile a friend is speaking to Mr Linley about the play. She wants to get 'the matter' resolved, she writes, revealing some practical knowledge of the theatre, because managers often refuse plays late in the season as they cannot 'set them up' in time (L/AE/2, 3 January 1787). In a more formal letter the next month, she thanks Cadell for applying to Mr Harris for her and explains she gave the play to Harris when he called at her lodging (L/AE/4, 9 February 1787). A year later it seems that she is writing another play, or at least revising the first one. She states that Mr Colman has given her the most 'flattering hopes' about her comedy, but she is at present spending so much time with her sick aunt (her mother's sister and old Mr Smith's widow) that she is unable to work on it (L/AE/9, 18 February 1788). However, only two months later she complains that Mr Palmer has her 'Comedy in three Acts' and that she cannot get it back (L/AE/11, 7 April 1788). Is this a different comedy?

The following December, Smith writes to Cadell of a comedy for the Haymarket: she is 'hoping to prosecute with steadiness the plan you obligingly named to me of writing a comedy for the Haymarket Theatre' (L/AE/15, 17 December 1788). A few months later she writes that she has not got time to finish her comedy, which she undertook with 'much avidity on Mr Colman's encouragement' and that she must not risk a 'hasty and crude' production (L/AE/22, 9 May 1789). Is this the same play about which Mr Colman, who was the manager of the Haymarket, had given her 'flattering hopes' the previous year? Smith wonders if she should ask William Hayley to accompany her to see Mr Colman about the play to explain why she could not finish it, but she is concerned that she doesn't know the 'Etiquette' and questions whether such a visit would be 'proper.' One sees here the problems faced by a woman writer who lacked the assistance of a father, husband or brother. In the same letter she notes that playwriting 'requires much more attention & contrivance than any other species of writing.' This suggests her lack of confidence in the genre – which is underlined by the constant references to other people's opinions of her plays. The following year she writes that she would work on her comedy if she were not so 'harassed' and that Mr Harris would accept it if she could finish it (L/AE/45, 11 April 1790). Are the delays primarily a result of Smith finding play-writing difficult or is the issue the difficulty, despite the contacts she seems to have made, in getting plays staged?

Stanton discusses the problems of the play(s) in connection with a later letter to the Duchess of Devonshire of February 1795, where Smith writes of a play she began

about five years previously (i.e. about 1789/1790) then abandoned.⁹ Another published letter by Smith, probably from February 1788 and to an unnamed recipient - perhaps Colman - reveals her insecurities about play-writing as she discusses the recipient's criticisms of part of the draft of a play.¹⁰ Smith is the presumed author of *What is She?* a comedy in five Acts performed in 1799 at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, but the date of writing and how many drafts were involved are unknown. *What is She?* is, however, dedicated to Mr Harris.

In contrast to her play(s), Smith wrote the majority of her novels with facility and speed. From 1788 to 1798 she wrote a novel almost every year. When working on *Ethelinde*, she maintains that she is writing 20 to 30 pages a day (L/AE/30, 6 July 1789). During her visit to Hayley at Eartham in 1792, Smith wrote a chapter a day of *The Old Manor House* without having to make any corrections, according to George Romney's account.¹¹

Patronage: William Hayley and others

The importance of Smith's relationship with William Hayley in the first part of her writing career is backed up by the letters in the Preston Manor collection.¹² Smith had dedicated the first edition of her *Elegiac Sonnets* to Hayley in 1784, and Hayley recommended Cadell to her (L/AE/1, 20 December 1786; L/AE/3, 14 January 1787). Hayley arranged for her to meet William Cowper and George Romney at Eartham in August 1792 - at what turned out to be a literary and artistic house party.¹³ Hayley read through and corrected Smith's early novels and *The Emigrants* before she sent the manuscripts to the printer. She refers several times to this and to his critical opinion of her work, for example L/AE/2, 3 January 1787; L/AE/27, 10 June 1789; L/AE/66, 14 June 1793; L/AE/79, 19 January 1794; L/AE/80, 26 January 1794. Specifically, she comments that a small change (she does not give details) is needed to sonnet 44, 'Written in the church-yard in Middleton, Sussex,' but that she needs to consult Hayley about this (L/AE/62, 2 April 1792). Smith mentions too her neighbour John Sargent as a source of literary support (for example, L/AE/2, 3 January 1787; L/AE/7, 22 September 1787; L/AE/9, 18 February 1788). The Reverend Dunster from Petworth also helped with correcting and reading proofs (L/AE/92, 28 April 1794; L/AE/96, 14 May 1794). Perhaps most significant, Cowper read *The Emigrants*, which was dedicated to him, before it went to press (L/AE/65, 2 April 1793; L/AE/66, 14 April 1793). Smith was prepared to hold back the manuscript of *The Emigrants* until it could be seen by Hayley and Cowper, and apologises to Cadell for the delay. There is, however, a hint in 1793 of the coming rift between Hayley

⁹ Stanton, *Letters*: 189-190 n.6

¹⁰ Stanton, *Letters*: 14-16 n.1.

¹¹ Quoted in Fletcher: 162.

¹² William Hayley (1745-1820) was a friend and patron of poets William Cowper and William Blake, of artists George Romney and Joseph Wright of Derby, and of the sculptor John Flaxman. Hayley's own poetry was popular with his contemporaries and he was offered, but refused, the laureateship in 1790. He was a neighbour of Smith in Sussex.

¹³ Fletcher: 161-163.

and Smith when Smith asks Cadell, in a hurried postscript, not to inform Hayley of her request for £20:

Have the goodness not to mention my request to Mr Hayley as he w. [sic] with some reason be discontented at my applying in a business which he had has [sic] the goodness to negotiate for me. – Nor could indeed anything but an unusual complication of vexation excuse it.’ (L/AE/65, 2 April 1793).¹⁴

Smith seems here very embarrassed about the scale and frequency of her requests for money and about Hayley’s involvement in her financial affairs. There is no other evidence in the Preston Manor letters of what caused the gradual diminishing of Hayley’s support for her after 1793/1794.

Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cumberland was also an important patron; she headed the list of socially elite supporters (who included the Archbishop of Canterbury) of the subscription edition of the *Elegiac Sonnets*, which was published at the beginning of 1789. Smith took care to cultivate her patrons and was aware of the importance of the subscription edition of the sonnets (L/AE/6, 15 August 1787). Two years later, Smith writes that the Duchess gives permission for *Ethelinde* to be dedicated to her and asks for Cadell’s approval of this (L/AE/33, 21 September 1789). In a slightly later letter Smith notes meeting her ‘R.H.’ who had complained she had not received the sonnets despite subscribing; Smith instructs Cadell to bind the sonnets in ‘the most elegant manner’ for her ‘R.H.’ (L/AE/37, 15 November 1789).

Negotiations about novels and poems

Smith was careful to keep Cadell apprised of the progress of the work on which she was engaged and to explain delays (usually in terms of financial preoccupations or ill-health). For instance, she promises that *Ethelinde* will be ready by 30th March 1789 (L/AE/15, 17 December 1788). She actually finishes the third volume in May 1789, after ‘early rising’ to make up for time lost in problems with ‘petty duns’ and money worries, and then asks if she should write another volume (L/AE/22, May 9 1789). The terms that had been agreed with Cadell were £50 per volume, so it is probable that financial pressures were influencing Smith. This seems even more likely when she suggests extending *Ethelinde* to five volumes ‘the story continuing very productive of affecting incident’ – and also requests a further advance from Cadell (L/AE/29, 18 June 1789). She notes too that it would be desirable for the novel to be published before Parliament breaks up, presumably because sales of the novel would then be greater (L/AE/27, 10 June 1789). Six weeks later, however, she writes that she has now finished the five volumes except for about fifty pages but that ‘unless I shorten and weaken the conclusion extremely and indeed spoil the whole,’ the last volume will be very long (L/AE/31, 1 August 1789). An alternative would be to have a sixth volume, for which she has ‘ample materials.’ She goes on to state:

¹⁴This letter has a large section of the second page missing which looks as if it has been cut off. What is left of the second page is blank, except for the postscript about Hayley.

I should I own have some apprehension of a Novel of such length becoming tedious - But I do not think there will in fact be more writing in it than in Cecilia and if I believe my present Critic's [sic] the Story loses no part of its force by its extension – And the groups are such as it is impossible to delineate with effect if space is not allowed to make them stronger than mere sketches.

She argues that her motives are not primarily financial:

The additional fifty pounds will certainly be very acceptable to me at this period, that has had I assure you no influence in this enlargement. But, had it been possible without mutilating and enfeebling the whole, I should rather have concluded it in five Volumes of 280 pages each or thereabouts . . .

These comments indicate the looseness of form of her novels – and also her financial straits. Nevertheless, she did not extend *Ethelinde* to six volumes, presumably because Cadell would not agree to the extension. She complains later of the 'woefully numerous mistakes' in the proofs of *Ethelinde* which she has been correcting (L/AE/38, 11 December 1789).

Despite the financial pressures, Smith is aware of the 'hazard of over-writing' (L/AE/36, 3 November 1789). Yet in the same letter she asserts that she must do something in order 'that my children may eat,' that she must 'obey my poverty and not my will.' Not long afterwards she writes, 'I am well aware that it is very possible to over-write myself,' and mentions that she has been ill with pleurisy (L/AE/37, 15 November 1789). Smith's labours at her writing are perhaps already affecting her health; pleurisy was to trouble her again in the future.

Her next novel, *Celestina*, is four volumes in length yet takes longer to complete than *Emmeline* and even longer than *Ethelinde*, presumably because in this period Smith was so 'harassed' by financial difficulties (L/AE/45, 11 April 1790; L/AE/54, 12 January 1791). When it is finished in spring 1791 she starts, as usual, on another work which she promises to Cadell by the following January (L/AE/57, 27 July 1791). She proposes a novel in letters in two volumes, 'containing description and character' rather than events, with some poetry. In the Preston Manor collection is Cadell's reply to this letter. He writes that he is sorry that there is the 'necessity' for her to appear in print again so soon but adds that 'your genius will, however, I doubt soon overcome any prejudice the Public may entertain against so speedy a publication' (L/AE/58, 28 July 1791). Nevertheless, he declines to publish her new work under the terms mentioned as 'some circumstances during the printing of the last Work [*Celestina*] called forth reflections which at the time made me very unhappy, and which also made me determine never more to place myself in like situation.' It has often been assumed that Cadell turned down Smith's new novel *Desmond* (published by Robinson in 1792) primarily because it was too radical, but Cadell's July letter suggests that there were also other 'circumstances.'¹⁵ Smith does say *Desmond* is a 'political novel of which great expectations (perhaps more than it deserves) have been formed,' but there is no fuller reference to the novel in these letters (L/AE/61, 25 March 1792). In fact there are no references in the Preston Manor letters to current political debates or to events in France. Smith shows little reticence in writing to Cadell of her domestic affairs but censors herself from political comment.

¹⁵ This supports Labbe's argument concerning Smith's letter of October 25, 1791, 'Gentility in Distress: A New Letter by Charlotte Smith (1749-1806)': 92.

In other letters in the collection Smith gives careful attention to the production and marketing of her work, and also shows concern for her name as author. She details her preferences for the printing of the subscription editions of her sonnets and for the accompanying plates (L/AE/6, 15 August 1787; L/AE/11, 7 April 1788; L/AE/21, March [?] 1789). She proposes a second volume of poems with plates (L/AE/88, 16 March 1794). She considers how to arrange for an engraving to be made from the portrait of her in pastels by Romney; Hayley will not release the original, and Smith writes to Davies asking him to omit the proposed 'Ode to the Painter' (L/AE/64, 3 October 1792). She discusses the issues involved in the printing of the sonnets and her novels in Ireland, trying to pre-empt pirated editions (L/AE/34, 13 October 1789; L/AE/36, 3 November 1789; L/AE/50, 13 July 1790; L/AE/90, 13 April 1794).¹⁶ She is concerned that a novel called *D'Arcy* has been published under her name in Dublin (L/AE/79, 19 January 1794). In the same letter, she asserts she is 'disgusted' because Mr Bell (publisher of *The Old Manor House* in 1793) assumed he could in future publish all her writings and because he claimed that she had promised him two rather than just one volume of its sequel *The Wanderings of Warwick* (published in 1794).¹⁷ A week later she complains that a story is 'going round' that she is not herself writing the current novel (*The Banished Man*); she asserts that she had only been employing her daughter to write notes for her and sends to Cadell the first volume in her own writing with all the 'blots' and Hayley's corrections (L/AE/80, 26 January 1794).¹⁸ Shortly after, she claims that Bell has put out other novels, *Hartleborn Castle* and *The Haunted Priory*, suggesting that they are by Charlotte Smith (L/AE/83, 23 February 1794).

Smith explains the need to change the proposed title of *The Exile* to *The Banished Man* because of Mrs Clara Reeves's novel called *The Exile* (L/AE/82, 12 February 1794; L/AE/83, 23 February 1794). She asks Cadell to procure for her copies of Mrs Barbauld's *Evenings at Home* as Christmas presents for her two smallest children (L/AE/78, 13 January 1794). Stanton includes in her edition a letter to Davies written a few months later in which Smith says that she is herself thinking of writing a children's book similar to Mrs Barbauld's (which had 'an amazing sale') but less 'desultory.'¹⁹ Other references to contemporary authors show Smith concerned with getting competitive terms for her own writing. In an early letter she makes certain that she gets the same rates for *Ethelinde* as Fanny Burney got for *Cecilia* (L/AE/15, 17 December 1788 and L/AE/16 – Cadell's reply written shortly after). In a later letter she complains that Mrs Radcliffe had received £500 for *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, despite the novel being 'tedious' with its 'eternally recurring Landscapes,' 'incidents borrowed' from other novels (including *Celestina*), 'a very bungling catastrophe' – as a whole, despite some good writing, 'four volumes of impossible stuff' (L/AE/95, 11 May 1794). Smith's emphasis on payments received and on what was marketable is natural considering her position as sole provider for a large family.

¹⁶ Smith's Irish friend Joseph Walker eventually helped Smith to prevent some of the pirating, and to earn some money, by liaising between Smith and the Dublin printer and bookseller John Rice. Stanton, *Letters*: 57 n.1.

¹⁷ See the discussion of this in Stanton, *Letters*: xvii; 89 n.4; 316.

¹⁸ This dispute is significant because it shows Smith was working on two novels at once – *Warwick* and *The Banished Man*. See the discussion by M. O. Grenby in the introduction to Volume 7 of *The Works of Charlotte Smith*: xix.

¹⁹ Stanton, *Letters*: 130-131.

Smith and her husband

Smith's relationship to her estranged husband Benjamin Smith is a key issue throughout this period and complicates the financial arrangements she makes with Cadell. The date on which the couple separated is given as 15 April 1787.²⁰ Without a formal separation (which would have resulted in Benjamin being given custody of the children), Smith was a '*femme couvert*, a single legal entity with her husband,' in Stanton's term.²¹ In several of the Preston Manor letters Smith refers to her fear that her husband will manage to access her earnings. Smith worries, for instance, that if Cadell and Davies publish a subscription edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, Benjamin will know of this and be able to get from the publishers any money that has been received or will be received (L/AE/5, 17 June 1787). Later she worries about the significance of Benjamin's 'clandestine return' to England and asks that the money due to her be paid out in the name of a friend, Reverend Thomas Collins:

Tho I cannot yet persuade myself he [Mr Smith] would attempt to take out of your hands any money you hold on my account, yet Mr Sargent whom I yesterday saw, as well as others of my friends are uneasy at it (L/AE/7, 22 September 1787).²²

This is, in fact, what Benjamin threatened to do. A significant letter from Smith to Cadell in January 1788, published by Stanton, details Benjamin's forceful attempts to gain his wife's literary earnings.²³ After this incident, Smith asks Cadell not to reveal her address to her husband (L/AE/9, 18 February 1788). When discussing the publishing of *Emmeline*, she angrily refuses to change the dedication to which Benjamin had objected and also comments, 'If Mr. Smith dislikes that his children should either be or appear to be the object of my attention he may take those from me that will live with him' (L/AE/12, 15 April 1788). However, the very next day Smith writes again to Cadell and, although saying that Benjamin's creditors worry her for money, agrees to suppress the dedication in future copies on the advice of a friend (L/AE/13, 16 April 1788). As she wrote in 1792, Smith is 'aware that for a woman, "The Post of Honour is a Private Station",' but her desperation and anger are making her enter the public arena.²⁴

In letters written in 1789, Smith again reiterates her fears about Benjamin getting money from her publishers. It seems that at this stage Cadell, after some differences with Smith over her drawing of drafts, had expressed a wish for Benjamin to be party to the agreements between writer and publisher. This illustrates the problems faced by a woman in a predominantly male world of business. Smith tactfully writes that she would have been pleased for Cadell's wishes to be 'complied with in regard to Mr Smith's giving his discharge when ever our accounts are settled' but does not want him made a party to their agreements (L/AE/31, 1 August 1789). She adds, 'If once

²⁰ Fletcher: 87.

²¹ Stanton, *Letters*: xv.

²² This may be the same 'Mr Collins' to whom Smith refers in letters of the same month to James Upton Tripp. Stanton, *Letters*: 763.

²³ Stanton, *Letters*: 12-14

²⁴ Smith, *Elegiac Sonnets*, vol.1, p.xii.

you seemed to consider my book-money as his property I cannot tell what might be the consequence' – and refers to Benjamin's creditors. She asserts that she will try to get 'a proper paper' from him relinquishing any claim to 'past, present or future money the product of my pen.' She would 'throw my pen away for ever' if he could get hold of her money and thus 'rob' her children. The following year she writes that 'Mr Smith seems determined to oblige me to live with him' and that she needs to go abroad to get away from the trouble he causes; she is 'afraid every hour of Mr Smith coming hither' and does not know where to go (L/AE/43, 5 February 1790). Smith does, however, eventually get her solicitor, Mr Bicknell, to draw up a power of attorney before Benjamin leaves for 'the north' (L/AE/51, 9 October 1790).²⁵

Perhaps Benjamin's agreement to the power of attorney was a result of Smith's threat to move her dispute with him into a more public arena. In April 1790 she sends Cadell a copy of the title page of a pamphlet on her 'history' that she has prepared (see Figure 2). She writes that the pamphlet is a piece of 'Generalship' that will be 'more like wormwood than honey' to Benjamin and that 'the fear of it' may make him cooperate with her (L/AE/47, 13 April 1790). She states that she will 'print on my own account and you are merely the publisher.' However, in her next letter, presumably in response to Cadell's dislike of his name being on the pamphlet, she asserts that she has no intention of publishing the pamphlet but is using it as a 'bugbear' and has only sent Benjamin a copy of the proof because she is 'desperate' (L/AE/48 no date). She assures Cadell that Mr Hardinge will assist her, and she adds, using a self-consciously literary metaphor, 'if Law must be had recourse to' he will undertake this with no other fee 'than my promising to write Novels and Sonnets to the end of the Chapter.'²⁶ She continues with an equally witty summing up:

I trust this account of myself will convince you I am not going to do anything rashly – And that as an Author and a Woman, I am not either hot headed or many headed [sic].

Smith and her family

In both these letters about the pamphlet, Smith mentions her hopes of her daughter's marriage. These hopes, Smith states, necessitate trying to keep things quiet, not publishing the pamphlet. In a slightly earlier letter, Smith writes that her eldest daughter (Charlotte Mary) might be on the point of making 'an advantageous match' to a 'Gentleman of landed property, of unexceptionable character and family' (L/AE/45, 11 April 1790). Smith asserts that she cannot 'keep up appearances 'till the affair can be brought about' as she has to 'break up housekeeping and go God knows whither.' For this reason she asks Cadell for advances until the end of the year, which, as is discussed later, he refused. Her plans for her daughter's marriage which she claims 'would probably be the salvation of all the children', are ironic considering that she herself had been 'sold' in marriage at fifteen.²⁷ Her desperate concern for

²⁵ See also her letter of 8 September, 1790. Stanton, *Letters*: 29.

²⁶ It seems Mr Hardinge was a friend of Smith's, a Member of Parliament and a magistrate. Stanton, *Letters*: 30 n.5, 380 n.5.

²⁷ In a letter to her friend Sara Rose, Smith wrote that she was 'sold a legal prostitute' to Benjamin. Stanton, *Letters*: 625.

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
SITUATION
OF
Mrs. Charlotte Smith and her
Children ;

VIDELICET,

William, Nicholas, Charles, Lionel, and George
Smith ; Charlotte-Mary, Anna-Augusta, Lucy-
Elenore, and Harriet Amelia Smith ;

From the 3d of Nov. 1783, to the present Time, April 1790.

With the Conduct of the Trustees, the Origin of their Trust,
and their Letters, by which all Applications for Redrefs on the
Part of Mrs. Smith have been evaded till this Time.

Written by herself, and published at the Desire of her
particular Friends.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

Figure 2. The title page from Smith's pamphlet.
(The original is awkwardly printed so the angle cannot be corrected).

money seems to be over-riding her concern for relationships. The account of Charlotte Mary's suitor in the letter of 28 September 1790 discovered by Taylor shows that Smith was still in Brighton at the end of September and still trying to promote the match.²⁸ In October Smith writes that Charlotte Mary has been extremely ill and was going to stay with her aunt in Petworth for a change of air (L/AE/51, 9 October 1790). The suitor is not mentioned again. The illness may have been either the cause or the result of the suitor's withdrawal, although the time scale makes the latter unlikely. Charlotte Mary never married. Smith's next eldest daughter, Augusta, married for love, a penniless French émigré, with Smith's support.

The concern Smith expresses for the financial security of her children is a constant refrain in the letters. She is particularly worried about the future of the disabled Charles who lost a leg fighting in France (L/AE/88, 26 March 1794). She also keeps repeating her desire for her fourth surviving son, Lionel, to go to Oxford and take orders so that he can in due course take up the family living that is available, and she is very distressed when he wants to take up a potentially dangerous military career instead (L/AE/86, 12 March 1794; L/AE/93, 30 April 1794). She is almost distraught about her daughter Augusta's health problems in 1794 (L/AE/95, 11 May 1794).²⁹ Smith's concern for others also extended beyond her family. She shows her sensibility in two little vignettes in the letters. After writing of her own difficulties at the beginning of 1791, 'with all my family at home and nothing to support them', she tells the story of someone more 'cruelly situated,' a poor man, 'now in London with a Housefull [sic] of dying children' (L/AE/53, 7 January 1791). Lord Egremont had given her £20 in November 1789 for this man and she had retained 5 shillings to do something that she did not do, so she asks Davies to pay the man double that amount on her behalf. The second incident concerns a 'little servant boy' whom Smith cared for when he seemed near death (L/AE/82, 12 February 1794). She delayed her return to Storrington so that she could give him her constant attention, and then when he was recovering she sent him home to his mother.

Negotiations about money: advances and debts

Smith's sensibility is often evident, but money is certainly the over-riding concern in her letters to Cadell. She wishes to have a gentleman publisher who treats her according to her social position rather than her poverty, but financial considerations are most important. The Preston Manor letters show how frequently Smith draws funds in advance from Cadell. For instance, in the third letter in the collection she writes that she has drawn £20, payable at a month, Hayley having said Cadell would 'oblige her in this way' (L/AE/3, 14 January 1787). Over the next two years she draws, at intervals, at least £54, and then draws £50 in December 1788 and a further £10 the next month (L/AE/18, 29 December 1788; L/AE/19, 13 January 1789). Four months later she is pressed for money and asks for £50 - and at the same time proposes extending *Ethelinde* (L/AE/22, 9 May 1789).

²⁸ Taylor: 312-315.

²⁹ See also Smith's letters to Joseph Walker and to James Upton Tripp about Augusta's and Charles's problems and about Lionel's future. Stanton, *Letters*: 112-124.

What happens next is not completely clear because of the questionable dating of one of the letters. L/AE/23 in the Preston Manor collection is Smith's response to a letter from Cadell turning down her request for money, but it is not certain whether the letter dates from 1789 or 1790. The letter has a date in pencil, April 1790, not in Smith's hand, and a line through the month and year with '89 added – again in pencil, not in Smith's hand. In this letter Smith emphasises how distressed she is by Cadell's 'very cold refusal,' and also how 'mortifying' it is for her to have to make such a request. She states that because of his refusal she has to go to London to see the Trustees instead of remaining 'here' another month to complete her new work. She also asserts, 'You have certainly never yet been a loser by me,' a sentence which becomes another refrain in her letters. L/AE/22 of 9 May 1789, which asks Cadell for money, is written from London, although she is planning to move to Brighton. This makes it seem unlikely that L/AE/23 belongs in this sequence. Yet L/AE/24, which has only the month when it was written, not in Smith's hand, in pencil and with a question mark, could follow on from L/AE/23. It opens: 'I am very sorry we do not seem likely to understand each other on the matter which I wrote to you' (L/AE/24, May? 1789). She asserts that although other publishers are interested in her work she considers herself 'bound in honour' to Cadell.

Whatever the year of L/AE/23, it is clear that by June 1789 relations between Smith and Cadell have become very strained. At this stage Cadell refuses a draft of £15, but she maintains that she would have sent him the whole of *Ethelinde* before the draft was drawn and complains, 'I know it is not customary to pay anything till a month after publication yet I thought so well of your liberality (whatever has been said to me in dispraise of it) that I could not believe' the draft could be refused (L/AE/29, c.18 June 1789). In the same letter Smith confidently asserts the 'advantage which I know any Novel of mine must have over the generality of such publications'. She states that she has been offered good terms by another gentleman 'whose respectability in his line is second only to yours,' and that she will dispose of her 'literary property to the highest bidder.' These statements illustrate succinctly Smith's concern with both respectability and with marketing. Her new publisher will, Smith proposes, repay Cadell what he has already advanced, with interest. She finishes by stating that Cadell must decide whether he wants to continue as her publisher but in any case they will part as friends. She repeats that 'hitherto you have been no means a loser by our connection.' A letter to George Robinson, also written on 18 June 1789, expresses her dissatisfaction with Cadell and proposes that Robinson take over on the above terms.³⁰ This dispute with Cadell is settled, and next Smith writes she does not intend her letter to be 'angry' but was 'hurt to find you were apprehensive of losing by me' (L/AE/28 [incorrectly numbered], 23 June 1789). She will instruct Bicknell to draw up an agreement between them; she agrees to stay with Cadell and Davies while being free to sell copyrights as she wishes. She adds, however, that she has had an offer of £50 per volume from 'a Man of great respectability.' She still seems to be playing one publisher off against another.

In August she writes that she will draw on Cadell for £80 at six weeks as she has 'heavy bills' to pay (L/AE/31, 1 August 1789). A letter to Davies, partly in dialogue form, about Mr Lane, 'an ill-bred man' offering her £200 for a novel is dated later in August 1789 (L/AE/32, 28 August, 1789). (This suggests that her letter to Hayley dramatically describing the encounter with Mr Lane in more detail also dates from

³⁰ Stanton, *Letters*: 20-21. See also 21 n.2 on Cadell's 'liberality.'

summer 1789).³¹ In September Smith writes that she is ‘extremely distressed for money’ and that she has been ill (L/AE/33, 21 September, 1789). She also states that she is planning a series of short tales ‘in the way of Marmontel (but without his tendency to immorality)’ as her next work.³² She claims that as there is nothing similar in English ‘well done,’ such little tales would ‘sell well’. Exactly a week later she writes to Robinson complaining of Cadell’s ‘scruple and hesitation’ and asserting that she plans to begin immediately some ‘tales in the way of Marmontel.’³³ In October she tells Cadell that she ‘must write on’ but will say no more about her ‘projected book’ as he ‘may not chuse [sic] to make two purchases so near together’ (L/AE/34, 13 October 1789). At the beginning of November Smith writes to Cadell that she feels ‘you have enough of me for the present,’ and that she will offer her new book to Robinson (L/AE/36, 3 November 1789). Yet, having indicated the marketable value of her work and explored the possibility of contracting with other publishers, she once again seems reluctant go through with the move from Cadell. Two weeks later she states that he ‘mistook’ her if he thought that she was offering her work to Robinson because she was dissatisfied with Cadell, that she has made no agreement with Robinson, and that she will not go to any other publisher while Cadell is willing to publish her work (L/AE/37, 15 November 1789).

Smith seems to have been particularly pressed for money again at the very end of 1789. At the beginning of December, she complains that she has ‘everything to pay at Christmas and very little to receive’ and draws £30 (L/AE/38, 11 December, 1789). In a letter written probably at the end of 1789, she says that either Mr Rose, or his brother-in-law Mr Duer, will accept a bill so Cadell can cancel the draft that she had requested (L/AE/52 – no date). There is also a reference at the beginning of the year to Mr Duer helping her out financially so she can avoid drawing money from Cadell (L/AE/20, 27 January, 1789). Smith seems to be trying to avoid asking too much of Cadell if there is any possible alternative. (Samuel Rose was a friend of Hayley and Cowper, defended Blake against treason, and also knew William Davies. In 1803 he acted as arbitrator between Smith and her husband. Smith wrote many letters to her friend Sarah, Rose’s wife).³⁴

During 1790, circumstances apparently force Smith to make increasing financial demands on Cadell. In January she draws on him for £50 (L/AE/42, 2 January 1790).³⁵ In March she writes of her health ‘everyday declining,’ and she considers the possibility of ‘making over’ for eighteen months the interest she received, irregularly, on one of her marriage settlements so as to get some respite from her money troubles and pay some debts (L/AE/44, 8 March 1790). She asks Cadell to assist her by going to see Mr Boehm (a Smith relative) to see if anything can be done for her. She complains that ‘at present I am only getting into debt without any chance of paying it, which is an injustice I cannot bear to be guilty of.’ She asks him not to answer any enquiries from creditors. She writes of it being ‘impossible for me to live’ and that she is being ‘driven mad’ and may be ‘actually destroyed’ by the ‘totally

³¹ Stanton, *Letters*: 17-18.

³² Jean François Marmontel (1723-1799) French writer of tales and plays, historian and critic.

³³ Stanton, *Letters*: 24.

³⁴ Stanton, *Letters*: xxix.

³⁵ Smith’s borrowing from Cadell during 1790 is shown by this letter and the following letters cited here to be greater than has previously been assumed. Labbe: 92.

unsupportable pain to which I am exposed,' with 'strength and courage utterly failing me.'

In her desperation, in April Smith asks for advances up until the end of the year. She has been confined to bed for four days, unable to use her hands. She is very concerned about unpaid bills and needs 'to keep up appearances' for her eldest daughter's sake (L/AE/45, 11 April, 1790). She had hoped her daughter would have received a portion of the grandfather's legacy on coming of age, but instead the case has been referred to Chancery. Smith asks for a reply by return of post 'as my present situation is dreadful.' Cadell's reply to this letter is included in the collection: 'Madam, Your letter this day received gave me infinite concern' because she has asked for more than he can advance (L/AE/46, 13 April 1790.) He claims that he has already accepted drafts for 100 guineas plus almost £50 and now she is asking for more. He will, however, try to accommodate her partially if he can do so with 'safety' and if Mr Bicknell can arrange some way of doing it. If the letter with the unclear date mentioned above, L/AE/23, is for April 1790, it fits into place as Smith's answer to this letter from Cadell. At this time too Smith is in Brighton, and, in her next letter, she asserts that she does not want to press Cadell to do anything 'unsafe and incompatible' with his interests (L/AE/47, 13 April 1790). However, in this letter and the following one Smith is concerned primarily with the proposed pamphlet about her 'history' rather than with Cadell's refusal (L/AE/48, no date). Thus no conclusive evidence exists for placing L/AE/23 in 1790 rather than in 1789, although the latter seems the more likely date. In two later letters in 1790, Smith asks for advances, and the October letter refers to an agreement between Smith and Cadell drawn up by Mr Bicknell (L/AE/50, 13 July 1790; L/AE/51, 9 October 1790).

In January 1791 Smith complains despairingly of her lack of money and of the impossibility of writing 'with all my family at home and nothing to support them,' adding, 'I really think I shall be driven mad' (L/AE/53, 7 January 1791). She pleads with Cadell just to keep any bills that are presented - she does not expect him to pay them, but she asks him not to 'disgrace' her by returning the bills (L/AE/54, 12 January 1791). At this point she exclaims, 'I do not know what I write, so dreadfully am I harassed!' She explains that she can no longer get any money at all from the Trustees as the case is going to Chancery, but she promises to repay her debt to Cadell and says *Celestina* is almost finished (L/AE/55, 21 January, 1791). She asks Cadell not to talk of her financial affairs; she claims that she has heard of comments, allegedly originating from him, repeated about her borrowing (L/AE/56, 12 February 1791).³⁶ Then there is a gap in the letters until July 1791 when Smith proposes a new work in two volumes, and asks for an advance of £40-£50 (L/AE/57, 27 July 1791). At this point there is a letter from Cadell, as discussed above, refusing the new work (L/AE/58, 28 July 1791). In a letter to Davies, she asserts 'from his letter I do not find it likely our connection will continue which I am sorry for' (L/AE/59, 5 August 1791). Robinson publishes her new work, *Desmond*, in 1792, and Bell publishes *The Old Manor House* in 1793. Cadell and Davies, however, continue to publish further editions of the sonnets, and although there are only a small number of letters to them in 1792, several letters relate to the sonnets. Smith writes, for instance, that she has no time to add extra sonnets to the new edition of the *Elegiac Sonnets* unless she can

³⁶ Labbe discusses this gossip in relation to Smith's letter to Cadell dated April 1792. Labbe: 92.

make some money from this as she is ‘compelled to deal like any dealer in corn and Cattle’ (L/AE/61, 25 March 1792). She adds: ‘Long continued calamities and oppressions have compelled me to put my writing into the hands of those who have not so much reason to be tired of me.’

Smith’s letters to Cadell and Davies become more frequent the following year when she is writing *The Emigrants* and when she is again having a financial crisis. She again draws money in advance. Apparently Cadell refuses a draft for £20 in the spring of 1793, and she acknowledges the justice of his refusal: ‘nothing but the peculiar and tormenting situation I am in could have excused it’ (L/AE/65, 2 April 1793). She asserts that she was desperate to pay two debts for her son – people were ‘so clamorous.’ In her next letter she writes that she is ‘infinitely obliged’ for his ‘accommodation’ which is her only means of extricating herself from a ‘situation most mortifying and painful’ (L/AE/66, 14 April 1793). She promises *The Emigrants* will soon be completed ‘unless my present distressing circumstances absolutely annihilate my faculties.’ Four days later she again apologises for drawing drafts with the plea that she had to spend over £50 of his money on her rent (L/AE/67, 18 April 1793). She is ‘torn to pieces with anxiety for so many children,’ and has a ‘breaking heart.’

It seems Smith’s relationships with Cadell and Davies, and with Hayley too, almost break down under the strain of the borrowings arising from her financial extremities during the spring and early summer of this year. Apparently her books and furniture were seized because of her failure to pay her rent in Brighton. Stanton notes the circumstances and also the gap in the published letters from the end of March until the end of July.³⁷ In the Preston Manor collection are a number of letters to Davies dated from May to July in which Smith desperately tries to find out the exact profits she will be getting and in which she gives excuses to delay paying back the money she has borrowed (L/AE/68, 13 May 1793 to L/AE/75, 11 July 1793). She writes to Davies as the elder Cadell was out of London for much of the time during this period. The series of letters culminates in an unsigned letter, not in Smith’s handwriting and presumably written for Smith, in which she is said to be too ill, with fatigue from travelling to London and from the heat, to call on Davies with the money she owes (L/AE/76, 15 [?] July 1793).

There is then a gap in the Preston Manor collection from the letter written for Smith in July 1793 until January 1794. In a published letter of 16 December 1793 to the elder Cadell, Smith rather tentatively offers *The Banished Man* to him and complains of Bell’s ungentlemanly treatment of her.³⁸ In January she writes to Cadell again saying she hopes to have the novel ready by April and that she will repay her debt to Davies with the first money coming from the new work (L/AE/77, 3 January 1794). Although she continues to correspond with the elder Cadell for another six months, in this letter she writes as if he is retiring. She asserts that she has been dissatisfied with other booksellers, that she regrets that he has not published all her writings and that she is sure ‘the Shop’ will continue to have ‘the first character for respectable publications and upright dealing.’ Nevertheless, there are further serious problems with the drafts which Smith draws on Cadell and Davies. Although she is in debt to Davies, she writes of drawing £25 in late January and £20 at the beginning of March (with £5 to go to Davies in partial repayment of her debt) (L/AE/79, 19 January 1794;

³⁷ See Stanton, *Letters*: 61 n.1; 90-91 n.2.

³⁸ Stanton, *Letters*: 87-89.

L/AE/84, 4 March 1794). Then she asks a week later for an advance of £25 – which she admits, in the next letter, is ‘reluctantly granted’ (L/AE/86, 12 March 1794; L/AE/88, 16 March 1794). With sad self-awareness and recognition of the limits of sympathy, Smith comments in the later letter that she is not surprised ‘that those to whom I have from year to year been telling the same story, begin to be weary of it.’ Even in this difficult period she writes of working on her novel (*The Banished Man*) ‘con amore’ (L/AE/87, 13 March 1793). Yet Smith’s letters written during March to Lord Egremont’s steward at Petworth, James Upton Tripp, show the increasingly desperate financial situation of herself and her family.³⁹ Smith was at this point in the process of moving to Bath for treatment for her rheumatism.

In Bath Smith receives some benefit from the waters, but her expenses force her to ask Cadell for a further £30 – which is not granted (L/AE/91, 17 April 1794; L/AE/93, 30 April 1794). She claims this ‘mortification’ is owing to a problem with the timing of the bills, and in the same letter she asks Cadell to accept a draft for £50 in four weeks, in order to pay for her daughter Augusta’s confinement and for the expenses her disabled son incurs (L/AE/94, 4 May 1794). She complains of the rheumatism in her hands but claims that when she can she writes all day – although this is against medical advice. A week later she expresses her distress and despair at his refusal of her request (L/AE/95, 11 May 1794). The matter is settled, however, and the next two letters convey her sense of obligation. Smith is careful to point out that although she had written of the ‘enormous price’ paid for *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, she has not the ‘remotest wish’ of offering her own novel to anyone else (L/AE/95, 11 May 1794; L/AE/96, 14 May 1794. See Figure 3). She asserts that this would be ‘folly and ingratitude’ and that ‘I had rather have your name as a publisher even at an inferior profit than any other Bookseller.’ Her gratitude and praise thus accompany her comment on the value of Radcliffe’s work – and thus, by implication, of her own work. In her next letter Smith is careful to assure Cadell she has drawn only half the sum she asked for because of the problems of discounting the bill ‘at so long a date’ (L/AE/97, 20 May 1794).⁴⁰ In the final letter in the collection, Smith writes to Davies asking for some books to be sent on to her in Bath, including the *Critical Review* for May, and asks for a small packet to be sent to her sister, Mrs Dorset (L/AE/98, June 1794).

At this point Smith’s business correspondence with the elder Cadell effectively ends, although there are published letters to him of 18 July, 22 July and 30 July, 1794.⁴¹ (See Appendix 1). The elder Cadell seems to have retired during 1794.⁴² The younger Cadell was much less experienced than his father and less ready to fit in with what Smith asked. Smith and the younger Cadell disagreed seriously later that year. The end of Smith’s correspondence with the elder Cadell in June/July 1794 may explain why the Preston Manor collection ends when it does.

³⁹ Stanton, *Letters*: 98-102.

⁴⁰ See also her account of this to Tripp. Stanton, *Letters*: 116-117.

⁴¹ Stanton, *Letters*: 136-138, 142-143.

⁴² Stanton first gives the elder Cadell’s retirement date as 1793 and then as 1794. Stanton, *Letters*: 89 n.2; 116,117 n.1. The situation, though, was not clear cut and Smith continued to write to the elder Cadell even when he spent little time in the office. Stanton *Letters*: 127 n.3; 148 n.3; 159 n.3.

Dear Sir

I am very much oblig'd to you for the accommodation you have granted me - When I spoke of the enormous price given for Mr. Nathals's Novel I was far from meaning to intimate the remotest wish of offering what I am about to ^{the} any person - which w^d be folly & ingratitude - The terms you have always offer'd me & fulfill'd were ^{ever} always very liberal & I assure you it is not in the way of flattery I say, that I had rather have your name as a publisher seen at an inferior press than any other Bookseller - I have done 3 volumes. Mr. Stafford is in possession of all the 3. but about 50 pages which Mr. Dunster, who is so good as to correct my errors now & then, returned me to day, so that they will be up this week - with part of the 4. volume - He has a very high opinion of the work - much more so I fear than it deserves. I hope & believe

Figure 3. Extract from letter L/AE/96

Special favours

Not only did Smith use the firm of Cadell and Davies like a bank or credit agency, but she also frequently asked for letters and books to be sent and parcels to be delivered. For example, she requests Bowles's *Sonnets* and Gray's *Letters* (L/AE/30, 6 July 1789; L/AE/40, undated). On another occasion, she asks for a 'strongly bound' set of Johnson's and Stevens' *Shakespeare*, Mrs Barbauld's *Evenings at Home*, and Madame D'Arblay's [Fanny Burney's] pamphlet on 'The French Immigrant Clergy,' which are all to be sent to her via her brother at Fittleworth (L/AE/78, 13 January 1794). She even requests Davies to try to find for her an account of the Pyrenees for her novel (*Celestina*), asking him to look in the last Appendix of either the *Monthly Review* or the *Critical Review* – she cannot remember which (L/AE/50, 13 July 1790). She expects copies of her own books to be provided free for her family (L/AE/59, 5 August 1791; L/AE/60, 4 February 1792; L/AE/81, 26 January 1794). She sends and receives letters from her sons in India via Cadell's office (L/AE/48 no date; L/AE/67, 18 April 1793; L/AE/82, 12 February 1794). She requires Cadell to look after a 'heavy box of books for her' and asks for parcels and baskets to be delivered (L/AE/26, 3 June 1789; L/AE/43, 5 February 1790; L/AE/67, 18 April 1793). As Jacqueline Labbe points out, Smith expected her publishers to treat her with special consideration because she was a woman and had originally belonged to the landed gentry – and she also tried to drive a hard bargain whenever possible.⁴³ Smith was conscious of the value of her own talent and was always trying to get the best price and the best publishing agreement that she could. She frequently uses the language, and the tactics, of the marketplace while also expecting special favours because of her sex and class. Considering her beleaguered position, however, surrounded by dependent family members and without any long-term male protector or patron, it is not surprising that she made use of any help that was available while also trying to maximise her earnings.

Smith's management of money - and her despair

In a very helpful analysis of Smith's 'literary business,' Stanton discusses Smith's literary earnings in relation to the costs that she incurred.⁴⁴ Smith needed money to feed, clothe and house her dependent children, but she needed funds too for schooling (for the boys), medical expenses (one son lost a leg; at least two of the daughters had serious illnesses) and army commissions. Her two elder sons did eventually give her some financial help, but this arrived at irregular intervals and was counterbalanced by the debts the eldest son later incurred.

There is some uncertainty over the degree of economy that Smith practised.⁴⁵ During one of her financial crises, in 1793, she asks Cadell to send any letters from India on to her by the Stage as this only costs 1 shilling as opposed to 14 pence (L/AE/67, 18

⁴³ Labbe: 92

⁴⁴ Judith Phillips Stanton, 'Charlotte Smith's "Literary Business": Income, Patronage, and Indigence,' in *The Age of Johnson: A Scholarly Annual*, 1 (1987): 375-401.

⁴⁵ Stanton: 385; Fletcher: 105-106.

April 1793). There is no evidence in the Preston Manor letters of any extravagance. Smith several times mentions actual costs which do not appear to be excessive, and she seems very careful in her search for adequate yet inexpensive housing. In September 1788, she has to move from her cottage in Brighton because repairs are necessary and the landlord has pulled down part of the stairs (L/AE/14, September 1788). In May 1789, she has decided to return to Brighton ‘which is at this season as cheap as any place’ where she can ‘have a lodging for a Guinea a week - which will contain the five children and three servants’ (L/AE/22, 9 May, 1789).⁴⁶ In the same letter she says it will cost 10 guineas for her to convey them all from London to Brighton – and asks for an advance. (The servants are needed to help with child care and domestic chores so that she is free to write). Specific addresses are not always given. In Brighton she stayed at New Buildings West, at Middlestreet, and at 6, North Parade (L/AE/14, September 1788; L/AE/32, 28 August 1789; L/AE/67, 18 April 1793). London was more expensive than Brighton, but Smith had to go there at intervals on business connected with her father-in-law’s will and with her own writing. In an undated letter in 1789, she writes that she is leaving her lodgings for less expensive and quieter ones at 36, Norton St., Portland Place (L/AE/41, date torn off and address indecipherable).

As her children grow older, new expenses are involved; in January 1790 she writes of the expense of fitting her son out for India. In the same letter she talks of her wish to go abroad to Switzerland or Italy, mainly to get away from her husband, but adds, ‘it will be impossible to lengthen my chain so much.’ She asks, ‘Do you think my fashion will last long enough to allow me the expectation of deriving such advantage from my pen?’ (L/AE/42, 2 January 1790). In May 1793 she hopes to move to a ‘cheap retirement ‘for the summer’ (L/AE/68, 13 May 1793). In January 1794 she writes that she has been advised to go to Bath because of a ‘rheumatic complaint’ (L/AE/80, 26 January 1794). She does not manage to go to Bath until March when she has the opportunity to go with a friend; after a month there her hands have improved and her writing is more legible (L/AE/ 89, 26 March 1794; L/AE/92, 28 April 1794).

Despite the frequent requests for advances, details of the cost of specific items are rarely given. In an early letter, Smith writes that she needs £11 for ‘College furniture & fees’ for her fourth son who is going to Winchester (L/AE/ 9, 18 February 1788). The next year she asks to draw 5 guineas to pay the coal merchant (L/AE/36, 3 November 1789). In April 1790, she writes that her ‘present situation is dreadful’ as she is desperate for money and unable to pay a shoe-maker’s bill of £5, for her three elder boys (L/AE/45, 11 April 1790). In January 1794 she asks to draw £25 as she has her youngest boy (George) to clothe and send to school (L/AE/79, 19 January 1794). In March she requests an advance of £25 for fees for her son, Lionel (L/AE/86, 12 March 1794).

Stanton estimates that Smith’s literary earnings were highest in 1789 and 1794 but that 1794 was also a year when she faced particularly heavy demands – because of her daughter Augusta’s difficult pregnancy, because of the moves she had to finance (for

⁴⁶Although Smith usually refers to Brighton as ‘Brighthelmstone,’ she does occasionally use the modern name, for example L/AE/44, 8 March 1790; L/AE/50, 13 July 1790.

her own health and for her daughter's), and because of the expenses of her disabled son and of her sons' military careers.⁴⁷

In the later letters in the Preston Manor collection, Smith shows her increasing despair about meeting the financial demands made upon her. The overall tone of her letters becomes darker; her own health affects her writing and at times she seems near to giving up her struggles. She tries to remain incognito in Bath: 'peace is absolutely necessary to me,' and whenever people think 'I am earning or have earned any money, I am tormented to death' (L/AE/92, 28 April 1794). Two days later she writes: 'Calamity of every sort seems to be my lot; and after a long struggle against it, it must crush me' (L/AE/93, 30 April, 1794). In May, referring to her daughter Augusta, she asserts 'the benumbing powers of poverty, my strength of mind was able in some degree to counteract for many years, but when I see my child exposed to its horrors, my courage fails. . . God help me! -It would have been an act of mercy if any good soul had shot me twenty years ago!' (L/AE/95, 11 May 1794). Despite the benefit of the waters, her rheumatism still hinders her writing. At this time she writes that the rheumatism in her hands 'destroys me' (L/AE/96, 14 May 1794). In these letters Smith is trying to arouse sympathy so that she can get the advances that she wants, but, despite the self-dramatisation, her raw and acute desperation comes through. Her pressing financial needs and her physical and mental suffering dominate the final letters.

Conclusion

The letters in the Preston Manor collection disclose significant information about Charlotte Smith's personal feelings, about her writings and her attitude toward what she wrote, and about her relationship with the firm of Cadell and Davies during the years 1787-1794. The letters reveal Smith's uncertain hopes for the health and wellbeing of both her family and herself in her frustrated quest for financial stability. They show her pressured to write as many words as she could each day in order to support her large and troubled family, and they clarify her often desperate attempts to gain the best possible financial terms for her writings. Details in these letters fill in some of the gaps that exist in the published letters and in current knowledge of her life and work. Her own words reveal her attitude to her translations and her plans for plays. She indicates some of the details of Hayley's patronage. She worries over problems with her estranged husband. She gives almost a stage by stage account of her writing of the later volumes of *Ethelinde*. She displays her increasing confidence in the literary and monetary value of her own writings. Above all, the letters reveal a great deal about her relationship with the elder Cadell during these crucial years, in particular about her financial desperation during the transactions of 1789 to 1794 when she seemed to face one crisis after another. The letters in the collection comprise, in fact, the majority of all the letters that Smith wrote to the elder Cadell. They give an excellent account of a woman writer's relationship with her publisher at the end of the eighteenth century. The letters not only reinforce what is known of Smith's difficult life and of her literary achievements, but they also provide dramatic further evidence of the financial demands she faced and of the acute pressures under which she was writing.

⁴⁷ Stanton: 393.

Appendix

Dates of letters from Smith to her publishers December 1786 to June 1794

| Preston Manor unpublished letters (to Cadell and Davies) | *Published letters (to Cadell and Davies and other publishers) |
|--|--|
| 1786 | |
| 20 December | |
| 1787 | |
| 3 January | |
| 14 January | |
| 9 February | |
| | 3 June (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| 17 June | |
| 15 August | |
| 22 September | |
| 1788 | |
| | 14 January (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| 9 February | |
| 18 February | |
| 3 April | |
| 7 April | |
| 15 April | |
| 16 April | |
| ? September | |
| 17 December | |
| 19 December | |
| 29 December | |
| Late 1788 to 1789 | |
| | winter/spring 1788 (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| 1789 | |
| 13 January | |
| 27 January | |
| | 3 February (Cadell, Sr.) |
| ? March | |
| 9 May | |
| c. May ? | |
| summer | |
| probably 1789 | |
| 3 June | |
| 10 June | |
| c. 18 June | 18 June (to George Robinson) |

| Preston Manor unpublished letters (to Cadell and Davies) | *Published letters (to Cadell and Davies and other publishers) |
|---|---|
| 1789 | |
| 23 June | |
| 6 July | |
| 1 August | |
| 28 August | |
| 21 September | |
| | 28 September (to George Robinson) |
| 13 October | |
| 3 November | |
| c. 6 November | |
| 15 November | |
| 11 December | |
| 22 December | |
| 1789 ? | |
| ? end 1789 | |
| 1790 | |
| 2 January | |
| 5 February | |
| | 19 February (to Davies) |
| 8 March | |
| 11 April | |
| 13 April | |
| ? April | |
| 19 April | |
| 13 July | |
| | 22 August (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| | 8 September (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| | **28 September (to Cadell) |
| 9 October | |
| 1791 | |
| 7 January | |
| | **10 January (to George Robinson) |
| 12 January | |
| 21 January | |
| 12 February | |
| | 8 May (to Cadell, Sr) |
| | 8 June (to Davies) |
| 27 July | |
| 5 August | |
| | **25 October (to Cadell) |

| Preston Manor unpublished letters (to Cadell and Davies) | *Published letters (to Cadell and Davies and other publishers) |
|---|---|
| 1792 | |
| | 20 January (to George Robinson) |
| 4 February | |
| 25 March | |
| 6 April | |
| | ? April (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| | 4 July (to George Robinson) |
| 27 July | |
| 3 October | |
| | 21 October (to Davies) |
| | c. 16 December (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| 1793 | |
| 2 April | |
| 14 April | |
| 18 April | |
| 13 May | |
| 19 May | |
| 21 May | |
| 26 May | |
| 4 June | |
| 2 July | |
| ? summer | |
| 11 July | |
| 15 July | |
| | 13 November (to Davies) |
| | 16 December (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| 1794 | |
| 3 January | |
| 13 January | |
| 19 January | |
| 26 January (1) | |
| 26 January (2) | |
| 12 February | |
| 23 February | |
| 4 March | |
| | **9 March (to Cadell) |
| 12 March | |
| 13 March | |
| 16 March | |
| 26 March | |
| | 31 March (to Cadell, Jr.) |
| | 4 April (to Davies) |
| 13 April | |

| <i>Preston Manor unpublished letters (to Cadell and Davies)</i> | <i>*Published letters (to Cadell and Davies and other publishers)</i> |
|---|---|
| 1794 | |
| 17 April | |
| 20 April | |
| 30 April | |
| 4 May | |
| | 9 May (to Davies) |
| 11 May | |
| 14 May | |
| 20 May | |
| ? June (Last letter in the Preston Manor collection) | |
| | 11 June (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| | 22 June (to Cadell, Sr.) |
| | ***25 June (to Davies) |

*The published letters that Smith wrote to her various publishers are included in the second column. Stanton includes the majority of these letters in her edition, plus many letters from friends and acquaintances in the years after 1793.

**These four letters have been published separately; they are not in the Stanton edition. 28 September, 1790 (Taylor: 313-316). 10 January, 1791 (Garnai: 399-400). 25 October, 1791 (Labbe: 92-93). 9 March, 1794 (Taylor: 316-318). It can be assumed from the dates that the letters of 28 September, 1790 and 25 October, 1791 are to the elder Cadell. The letter dated 9 March could be to the younger Cadell.

*** Smith wrote three further letters to the elder Cadell on the 18 July, 22 July, and 30 July 1794. (Stanton, *Letters*; 136-138, 142-143). After this point all Smith's letters to the firm are to the younger Thomas Cadell, to Davies, or to the younger Cadell and Davies jointly. Smith had previously written to the younger Cadell on 31 March, 1794 and to the younger Cadell and Davies on 8 July 1794 (Stanton, *Letters*: 106; 132). All the Preston Manor letters addressed to Thomas Cadell seem to be to the elder Cadell.

Bibliography

- Butler, Maida. "Mrs Smith and Mr Cadell." *Sussex County Magazine* 30 (1956): 330-334.
- Curran, Stuart, ed. *The Poems of Charlotte Smith*. Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Curran, Stuart, ed. *The Works of Charlotte Smith*. Pickering and Chatto, 2005-2007.
- Fletcher, Loraine. *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography*. Macmillan, 1998.
- Garnai, Amy. "A Letter from Charlotte Smith to the Publisher George Robinson." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 19, 4 (2007): 391-400.
- Labbe, Jacqueline, ed. *Charlotte Smith in British Romanticism*. Pickering and Chatto, 2008.
- Labbe, Jacqueline. "Gentility in Distress – A New Letter by Charlotte Smith (1749-1806)." *Wordsworth Circle* 35, 2 (2004): 91-93.
- Stanton, Judith Phillips, ed. *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*. Indiana University Press, 2003.
- Stanton, Judith Phillips, "Charlotte Smith's 'Literary Business': Income, Patronage and Indigence." *The Age of Johnson: A Scholarly Annual* 1 (1987): 375-401.
- Taylor, Richard C. "'The evils, I was borne to bear:' Two Letters from Charlotte Smith to Thomas Cadell." *Modern Philology* 91, 3 (1994): 312-312.
- Zimmerman, Sarah M. "Charlotte Smith's Letters and the Practice of Self-Presentation." *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 53, 1 (1991): 50-77.