

**LETTERS FROM LADY JANE  
COKE TO HER FRIEND,  
MRS. EYRE AT DERBY,  
1747-1758. [LONDON]**

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Ambrose Rathborne

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**AMBROSE RATHBORNE**

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# LETTERS

FROM

LADY JANE COKE

TO HER FRIEND

MRS. EYRE

AT DERBY

1747—1758

"Letters bring things more home, and represent them more to the life, than either Annals or Lives."—BACON.

EDITED, WITH NOTES,

*Florence Ada Monica (Buckton),*  
MRS. AMBROSE RATHBORNE



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1899

*Authors and Works consulted and quoted :*

Horace Walpole, Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu, G. Selwyn, Lady Hertford, Walford, Jesse, "Beauties of England and Wales," "Glover's History of Derby and Derbyshire," "Cox's Derbyshire Churches," "Hutton's History of Derby," and other genealogical, historical, biographical, and reminiscent books of the period.



I am always Dear M<sup>rs</sup> Eyre's  
affec<sup>t</sup> Friend  
B. Danble Sec<sup>y</sup>  
J. Colles.

## INTRODUCTION.

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The Wharton family, of whom Lady Jane Coke was the last surviving representative, derived its surname from a "fair lordship" upon the river Eden, and traces its descent from Henry Wharton, of Wharton in Westmoreland, living in the reign of Henry V. Another ancestor, Sir Thomas Wharton, was governor of the town and castle of Carlisle, in the reign of Henry VIII., and successfully resisted an incursion of the Scots, putting them to rout, and making captive the Earls of Cassilis and Glencairn. He marched into Scotland with Lord Dacre, and was at the taking of Dumfries; for which, with other eminent services, he was created Baron Wharton and summoned to Parliament in 1545.

Lady Jane Coke was the eldest daughter of Thomas, fifth Baron and first Marquis of Wharton, whose father had been a staunch Puritan and Parliamentary partisan in the time of



Charles I. This nobleman, who was esteemed a profound and eloquent statesman, devoted himself zealously to accomplish the Revolution, and is said to have composed the first draught of the invitation to the Prince of Orange, and was created by Queen Anne, Viscount Winchenden and Earl of Wharton. A few years later he was advanced to the dignity of Marquis of Malmesbury, and Marquis of Wharton, and also made a peer of Ireland as Baron Trim, Earl of Rathfarnham and Marquis of Catherlough. He filled with great *éclat* the high appointment of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and took Addison with him as secretary.

The Marquis of Wharton had inherited two estates through his mother, the heiress of the Goodwyns; Winchenden, and Wooburn, both in Buckinghamshire; and the former he made his chief residence, effecting considerable improvements in the ancient manor, and its surrounding grounds, which at that time were considered as the finest in the county. On the attainder of his son, Philip Duke of Wharton, the Winchenden estate was sold to the famous Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, from whom it descended to the present Duke of Marlborough. The old mansion was pulled down at the close of the last century

and the materials sold, only a small portion of it remaining, which was used as a hunting seat. Wooburn was not neglected, for Lord Wharton is said to have expended £100,000 in altering the grounds belonging to the Manor House, which was surrounded by a moat, and retained its ancient character of feudal magnificence. The gardens as improved by the Earl were in that age highly celebrated, and are reported to have been in a line of terraces on the side of the hill, which has since been converted into pasture. The manor was very large and the apartments spacious. The gallery was 120 feet long, and contained the very celebrated collection of portraits of the Wharton family, which were afterwards purchased by Sir Robert Walpole, and subsequently sold by his grandson, amongst the famous Houghton collection, to the Empress Catherine of Russia. This mansion was taken down in 1750 after the death of the Duke of Wharton, and the materials disposed of for £800, the estate itself being sold to John Marse, Esq.

Lord Wharton's first wife was Anne, co-heiress of Sir Henry Lee, of Ditchley, Oxfordshire, but by that lady he had no issue. He married secondly Lucy, the daughter of Adam Loftus, Lord Lisburn, and grand-daughter of George

Brydges, Lord Chandos, by whom, at his death in 1715, he left issue a son Philip, created Duke of Wharton in 1718, an elder daughter, Lady Jane, the writer of these letters, and another daughter, Lady Lucy, who married Sir William Morice, a Devonshire Baronet, and died in 1738.

The life of Philip, Duke of Wharton has been written in detail by Jesse, by Walford, and recently by Robinson, and constantly recurring remarks about him are contained in letters by persons at this period, so that it will be only necessary to mention a few of the salient features of so eccentric a career, commencing with every advantage that extreme cleverness, great wealth, and position could give, and closing, bereft of all, in an exile's grave.

Philip was born in 1698, and married in March, 1714, when in his sixteenth year only, the eldest daughter of Major General Holmes. The marriage was performed by a Fleet parson, and was the first of the long series of escapades for which the young nobleman became afterwards so notorious. The young wife was said to be a person of "extraordinary education," and she appears to have preserved through all her troubles a blameless character. Her husband deserted her shortly after their marriage, partly,