

**PARIS IN '48; LETTERS
FROM A RESIDENT
DESCRIBING THE EVENTS
OF THE REVOLUTION**

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Paris in '48; letters from a resident describing the events of the revolution by Baroness Bonde (Robinson) & C. E. Warr

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BARONESS BONDE (ROBINSON) & C. E. WARR

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Baroness Bonde.
Circa 1830.

PARIS IN '48

LETTERS FROM A RESI-
DENT DESCRIBING THE
EVENTS OF THE REVOLUTION
BY BARONESS BONDE (*NÉE* ROBINSON)

EDITED BY C. E. WARR

WITH A PORTRAIT

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PREFACE.



In 1900 my friend, the late Baroness Bonde, entrusted to me the pleasant task of editing her letters, and at the end of the same year she died. This little volume thus becomes a memorial of one of the accomplished and charming women of the last century. The letters, which were written in Paris during the time of the Revolution of 1848 which she witnessed from day to day, are doubly interesting from her intimate acquaintance with the diplomatic circle, and her power of fresh and vivid description combined with shrewd appreciation of character. The notes which I have appended are designed to furnish historical details sufficient to explain her allusions to the men and the incidents of the time, and I have added a short connected sketch of the events which preceded and led up to the political crisis. Where subsequent history has thrown more light on some of the leading actors, I have indicated the fact, and here and there I have

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substituted English for the French phraseology which the writer borrowed from her associations, along with much of the lightness and verve of the French style.

Here is the short autobiographical sketch which Madame Bonde gave me :—

“ The following letters, written more than fifty years ago, were never intended for publication, as will easily be seen by any one who may be tempted to read them. They were a daily almost hourly correspondence with my friend Mrs. Ashburnham, whose husband was officially employed in London. They had lived for some years in Paris, and both had been much in French society and took the deepest interest in that most extraordinary revolution.

“ In those days, when electricity was in its infancy, when mails were stopped and letters opened, newspaper correspondents were often unable to convey intelligence, but I had a constant opportunity of sending my letters direct by private hand to Mr. and Mrs. Ashburnham, and they were eagerly devoured by them and their friends. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Palmerston were said to have clamoured for them, as did also many others, so that Mrs. Ashburnham had them copied as she feared they would be worn out, and she thought they ought to be kept in the family.

“ I had many requests to allow them to be published,

but they were too personal, and would have required more weeding than I then had time for; but now, after the lapse of half a century they can no longer give offence, and a very dear friend has offered to take the matter in hand.

“It may interest some to know how I happened as an Irishwoman to be so much in France, and how I was intimately acquainted with so many celebrities and men in office of that day, so I shall add a very brief biographical sketch.

“My father Sir Richard Robinson of Rokeby in Ireland, with my mother a daughter of Lord Mountcashel, settled in Paris in 1819, and for more than thirty years it was our real home, varied by a few, very few, trips to England. The first revolutionary epoch in my life was when the Bourbons made way for the Orleanists under Louis Philippe, and I saw the barricades of July, 1830, when, returning from the country with my father, we assisted at the storming of the barracks of the Rue de la Pèpinière and when, after seeing two men shot, I was dragged into a porter's lodge, with the exclamation: ‘*Il n’y a pas de bon sens de laisser un enfant dans la rue sous un feu croisé.*’ The fact was that all communications were cut off, and my father had been so anxious for my mother and the younger children, that he returned to Paris and, not knowing what to do with me, took me with him, on my promising not to cry—a promise that I need not say I faithfully fulfilled; and I fancy

my taste for tumultuous times dates from this period, when I received 'le baptême du feu.'

"After this, my mother's salon became very Orleanist, though we still saw many relics of the past. I remember, among others, going to see 'le beau Dillon' in his dotage, and M. de Vaudreuil much in the same state; their wives were much younger, and gave graphic accounts of the Court of Marie Antoinette where their husbands were the Queen's favourites. I also saw the Princesse de Vaudremont, of the House of Lorraine, who managed the escape of Lavalette, and heard both Count Löwenhielm and Lord Aboyne (afterwards Lord Huntly) relate how they had danced at Versailles with the unfortunate Queen. Among the salons I frequented in my youth was that of the Princesse de Chimay, the once famous Madame Tallien, then called 'Notre dame de Thermidor.' Later on I became better acquainted with other celebrities;—Prince Talleyrand, whom I remember playing at whist, while the young friends of his great-niece curtsied to him as they passed through to the ball-room; Count Pozzo di Borgo and Baron de Vitrolles, who always boasted that they brought back the Bourbons. I once sat next Marshal Soult (the Duc de Dalmatie) at a dinner given to him by the Duchesse Decazes on his return from the coronation in London. He was extremely disagreeable, and evidently thought me unworthy of the place I occupied, nor can I remember why I was there. Marshal Marmont (the