

**ENGLISH MEN OF  
LETTERS; FANNY BURNEY  
(MADAME D'ARBLAY)**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649574759

English Men of Letters; Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay) by Austin Dobson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**AUSTIN DOBSON**

**ENGLISH MEN OF  
LETTERS; FANNY BURNEY  
(MADAME D'ARBLAY)**



*ENGLISH MEN OF LETTERS*

FANNY BURNEY

(MADAME D'ARBLAY)

BY

AUSTIN DOBSON

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LIMITED  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THREE

## PREFACE

THE main sources for this memoir of Frances or Fanny Burney,—afterwards Madame D'Arbly,—in addition to her novels, the literature of the period, and the works specified in the footnotes, are as follows:—

1. *Memoirs of Dr. Burney, arranged from his own Manuscript, from Family Papers, and from Personal Recollections.* By his Daughter, Madame D'Arbly. In Three Volumes. London: Moxon, 1832.
2. *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arbly, Author of "Evelina," "Cecilia," etc.* Edited by her Niece. [In Seven Volumes.] London: Colburn, 1842-46. [The edition here used is Swan Sonnenschein's four volume issue of 1892.]
3. *The Early Diary of Frances Burney 1768-1778. With a Selection from her Correspondence, and from the Journals of her Sisters Susan and Charlotte Burney.* Edited by Annie Raine Ellis. In Two Volumes. London: George Bell and Sons, 1889.

I am indebted to the kindness of Archdeacon Burney, Vicar of St. Mark's, Surbiton, for access to his unique extra-illustrated copy of the *Diary and Letters* of 1842-6, which contains, among other

interesting MSS., the originals of Mrs. Thrale's letter mentioned at page 86 of this volume, and of Burke's letter mentioned at page 124. Archdeacon Burney is the possessor of Edward Burney's portrait of his cousin (page 88); of the Reynolds portraits of Dr. Burney and Garrick from the Thrale Gallery (page 94); of a very fine portrait of Dr. Charles Burney by Lawrence; and of a group by Hudson of Hetty Burney, her husband, Charles Rousseau Burney, and her husband's father, Richard Burney of Worcester.

I am also indebted to Mrs. Chappel of East Orchard, Shaftesbury, granddaughter of Mrs. Barrett, the editor of the *Diary and Letters*, for valuable information as to Burney relics in her possession.

A. D.

75, EATON RISE, BADING, W.,  
September 18, 1903.

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I	
THE BURNBY FAMILY . . . . .	1
CHAPTER II	
NO. 1, ST. MARTIN'S STREET . . . . .	31
CHAPTER III	
THE STORY OF "EVELINA" . . . . .	61
CHAPTER IV	
THE SUCCESSFUL AUTHOR . . . . .	88
CHAPTER V	
"CECILIA"—AND AFTER . . . . .	117
CHAPTER VI	
THE QUEEN'S DRESSER . . . . .	145
CHAPTER VII	
HALF A LIFETIME . . . . .	176
INDEX . . . . .	208



# FANNY BURNEY

## CHAPTER I

### THE BURNEY FAMILY

IN the second half of the seventeenth century, there lived at the village of Great Hanwood, four miles from Shrewsbury, a country gentleman of a good estate, named James Macburney. In later life, he was land-steward to the Earl of Ashburnham; and he rented or possessed a house in the Privy Garden at Whitehall. Tradition traces his family to Scotland, whence it was said to have arrived with James I. However this may be,—and the point was not regarded as of much importance by his descendants,—James Macburney married his Shropshire rector's daughter; begat a son; and in due time, became a widower. The son—also James Macburney—was educated at Westminster School under the redoubtable Dr. Busby. Then, taking to art, he worked as a pupil of the "eminent Face Painter," Michael Dahl. About 1697, at the age of nineteen, he ran away with Rebecca Ellis, an actress in Giffard's Company, and younger than himself. Thereupon his irate father disinherited him, and in further token of his displeasure, took to wife his own cook, by whom he had another son called Joseph, who, as soon

as he arrived at man's estate, removed all possible difficulties in regard to the succession by dissipating the property. Having effected this with much promptitude, he settled down contentedly as a Norfolk dancing master. Meanwhile, his elder half-brother,—who, though lacking in discretion, had many pleasing gifts (he was, in particular, an accomplished violin-player),—being left, by the death of his actress-wife, with a numerous family, wedded, for the second time, a beautiful young lady of Shropshire, Mistress (*i.e.* Miss) Ann Cooper. Miss Cooper was currently reported to have rejected Wycherley the dramatist, who, it may be remembered, like the elder Macburney, was desirous of disappointing his natural heir. Miss Cooper had some money; but James Macburney's second marriage increased the number of his children. The youngest members of his family were twins, Susannah (who died early), and Charles, afterwards the well-known historian of music, and the father of Fanny Burney. Like his predecessors, he was born Macburney, but the "Mac" was subsequently dropped.

Not long after Charles Burney's birth, which took place on the 12th April 1726, in Raven Street, Shrewsbury (a name probably derived from the famous Raven Inn once familiar to Farquhar and "Serjeant Kite"), James Burney, as we may now call his father, settled at Chester as a portrait painter, leaving his little son at nurse in Condover, a village near Shrewsbury. Here, with an affectionate foster mother, Charles Burney thrived apace, until he was transferred to the Chester Grammar School. At this date his natural gifts were sufficiently manifest to enable him at a pinch to act as deputy for the Cathedral organist.

Subsequently, he became the pupil of his half-brother, James, the organist of St. Margaret's at Shrewsbury. Then, being again in Chester when the famous Dr. Augustine Arne was passing through the town on his return from Ireland to London, he was fortunate enough to be taken as that master's apprentice. This was in August 1744, when he was eighteen, pleasant-mannered, intelligent, very musical, very versatile, and—as he continued to be through life—an indefatigable worker. From Arne he did not learn much except to copy music, and to drudge in the Drury Lane Orchestra, which Arne conducted; and, although he had an elder brother in London, he was left greatly to his own devices. But his abilities and personal charm brought him many friends. He was frequently at the house in Scotland Yard of Arne's sister, Mrs. Cibber, the foremost tragic actress of her day; and here he made acquaintance with many notabilities. Handel was often among the visitors, playing intricate fugues and overtures with his pudgy fingers upon the harpsichord; and Garrick, with the wonderful eyes; and Garrick's surly old rival, the *bon-vivant*, James Quin; and Mason; and Thomson the poet of *The Seasons*.

With Arne, Charles Burney would probably have remained, but for a fortunate accident. At the shop of Jacob Kirkman, the German harpsichord maker in Broad Street, Golden Square, he met Mr. Fulke Greville, a descendant of Sidney's friend, the famous Fulke Greville of Queen Elizabeth's days. The Greville of 1746 either possessed, or affected to possess, many of the attributes of Bramston's *Man of Taste* :—