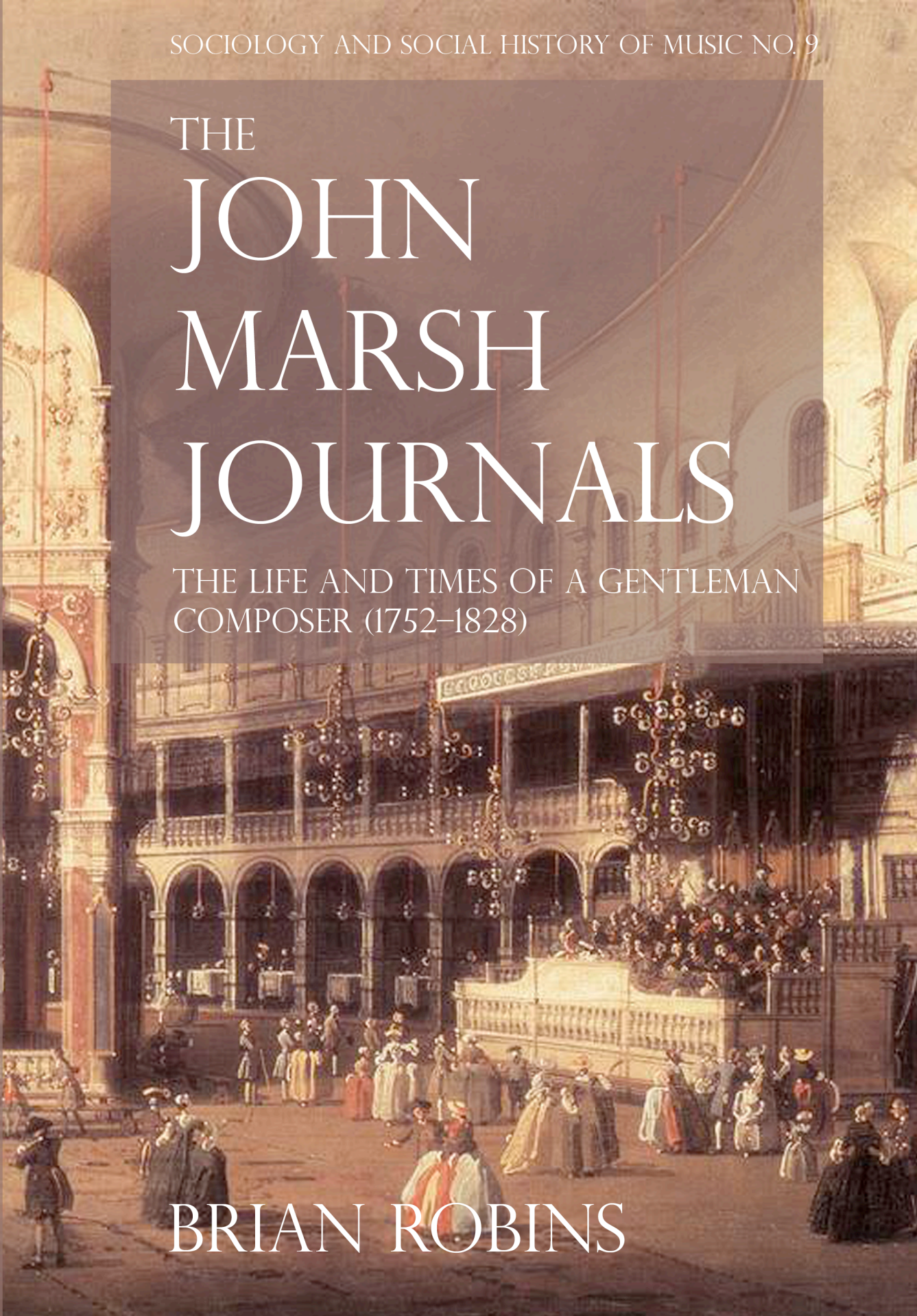


SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF MUSIC NO. 9

THE
JOHN
MARSH
JOURNALS

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A GENTLEMAN
COMPOSER (1752–1828)

BRIAN ROBINS



THE JOHN MARSH JOURNALS

The Life and Times of a
Gentleman Composer
(1752-1828)

History of my private Life

1752. I was born on May the 31st in the Year
Birth 1752. about 3 Months before the Style was
New Style altered by the suppression of 11. days, in
introduced consequence of which I have ever reckoned
the 11th of June as the Anniversary of my Birth

My Mother's My Father (being a Captain in the Navy)
Family married, in the preceding Year, Miss Tyler
one of the 6 Daughters of W. Tyler of Dorking
in Surrey, an eminent Draper & Haberdashier
Residence & Grocer, Charles's 2d (who had also 6 Sons)
at Dorking & took a House at Dorking, where he & my
Mother lived till after C^d of my next Brother

1755. Henry were born, after which they remained (on
Removal to Naval concerns) to Berry, near Gosport, where
Berry near my Brother Edward & Sister Mary were born.
Gosport

The most distant period of time to which
my Recollection carries me back is which
we were resident here when it well remembers

Frontispiece: The opening page of John Marsh's History of my Private Life
(Huntington Library Ms. Book 1, p.1).

THE JOHN MARSH JOURNALS

The Life and Times of a Gentleman Composer (1752-1828)

edited, introduced, and annotated by

Brian Robins

SOCIOLOGY OF MUSIC No. 9

PENDRAGON PRESS

STUYVESANT, NY

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Marsh, John, 1752-1828

[History of my private life. Selections]

The John Marsh journals : the life and times of a gentleman composer (1752-1828) / edited, introduced, and annotated by Brian Robins.

p. cm. — (Sociology of music ; no. 9)

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 0-945193-94-7 eISBN 978-1-57647-377-1

1. Marsh, John, 1752-1828. 2. Composers—England, Southern—Biography. 3. Music—England, Southern—18th century—History and criticism. 4. England, Southern—Social life and customs—18th century. I. Robins, Brian. II. Title. III. Series.

ML410.M352A3 1998

780'.92—dc21

[B]

98-44404

CIP

MN

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Introduction



Until relatively recently the extensive Journals (*History of my Private Life*) maintained throughout almost his entire life by the English gentleman composer John Marsh (1752-1828) were known only to a small circle of musical historians. This is surprising, for in its breadth and scope there are few contemporary parallels to a work unique for its colorful and vigorous evocation of life in the southern provincial cities in which Marsh lived and worked. This present volume represents an attempt to bring Marsh's vibrant world to the wider attention of both scholars and a more general readership.

For most of this century the Journals were known only in the clumsily edited and sanitized version now known to have been prepared after his death by his youngest surviving son, the Rev. Edward Garrard Marsh.¹ Quite what Edward's motives were in undertaking this daunting task has not been clearly established, although his own literary pretensions may have played their part - he was the author of a number of sermons and tracts of such a quality that "even the least discriminating of religious anthologists have passed them by."² It was the emergence of Marsh's original manuscript at an auction sale in 1990 that fully revealed just how maladroit Edward Garrard's work on his father's manuscript had been, the time lapses that had previously not made sense fully explained by the arbitrary excisions and running together of unrelated passages, thus telescoping events that might originally have been separated by days or, in extreme instances, weeks.

The full story of the exciting and at times exasperating search for the original has been related elsewhere³ and here it must suffice to give a brief description of Marsh's monumental manuscript, now housed in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.⁴ Comprising thirty-seven volumes bound in white vellum covers, the Journals consist of a total of 6,704 pages, each quarto volume containing around 180 pages. It is obvious that during their long disappearance they were carefully preserved, for they remain in remarkably good condition. This coupled with generally legible

¹University of Cambridge Library Ms.7757. Until recently four (Volumes I-III and Volume XIV) of the of the twenty-seven books were missing. In 1996 the Volume XIV was discovered in New Zealand and has now been reunited with its fellows. The same source also revealed a single chapter of a journal written by Edward Garrard between May 1817 and May 1818. The handwriting is identical to that of Ms.7577, thus proving the long-held suspicion that he was the editor and transcriber of his father's work.

²*Sussex County Magazine*, August 1927 Full ref.

³Brian Robins "An Introduction to the Journals of John Marsh," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, lviii/iv, 1997.

⁴Huntington Library Ms.54457.

handwriting, Marsh's clear margin headings and succinct year-end summaries have made the volumes a pleasure, if a somewhat daunting one, to work with.

My earlier work on the Cambridge version, roughly a third as long, posed relatively few editorial problems, but with the emergence of Huntington it became apparent that no publisher was going to look at anything other than heavy editing. The choice offered two possible solutions - to take a fragmentary approach that would encompass the entire span of Marsh's life, or to take a more restricted portion that made some attempt to preserve Marsh's narrative. For a variety of reasons there seemed to me little argument that the latter was the only serious option, a decision considerably aided by Marsh himself, for his work falls into two clearly defined sections. The earlier part of his *History* consists of memoirs written up from diaries he had kept since his thirteenth year and which with felicitous timing he brought up to date precisely on his fiftieth birthday. Some nine months later Marsh commenced work on the series of appendices that would take his work up to within weeks of the end of his life, weeks supplemented by a codicil written, once again, in the hand of Edward Garrard Marsh. It is with that first half century of his life that this volume is concerned. It has to be confessed that it was a decision not taken without regret, for Marsh's extraordinary industry and activity was certainly not diminished by the passing years, but the post-1802 period does start to see some decline in Marsh's musical activities and in particular the devotion to composition that had by that time already ensured that he would remain numerically the most prolific English composer of symphonies up to the present day.

I make no apologies for concentrating primarily, although far from exclusively, on Marsh's interests in music, an approach one hopes would have met with the approval of the author himself. In 1824 in the course of a biographical sketch provided for John Sainsbury's forthcoming *A Dictionary of Musicians*, Marsh noted that " - It must not however be supposed that, great as was his attachment to it, Music was Mr M -'s only pursuit..."⁵ And indeed it was not, for one of the most attractive features of the Journals is the diversity of interests and accomplishments that reveal Marsh as what one might currently term Renaissance man. In more recent years a new dimension has been added to the importance of Marsh's huge work in the increasing interest taken in it by social historians, in particular John Brewer.⁶ To portray a rounded and truthful picture of this remarkable man in addition to the milieu in which he lived and worked it was necessary that all these topics be included. The result, despite editing and covering only a part of Marsh's life, remains a substantial work, in itself a tribute to the vitality and breadth of so much of Marsh's writing.

A question remains as to whom Marsh was addressing in his history. His own assertion that it was written "for the sake of the amusement the thus tracing over my life afforded me at the time" seems ingenuous in the face of a number of insertions where he clearly appears to be addressing a wider readership, as does the fact that as

⁵Glasgow University Library Ms.132.

⁶John Brewer, "John Marsh's 'History of my Private Life, 1752-1828'," in T.C.W. Blanning and David Cannadine (ed.), *History and Biography. Essays in Honour of Derek Beales* (Cambridge, 1966) and *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp.531-572 (London, 1997).

INTRODUCTION

early as 1811 he willed the twenty-eight volumes “with any future volumes that might succeed”⁷ to none other than Edward Garrard Marsh, thus ensuring their survival (at least within the family) after his death. This contrasts markedly with the instructions Marsh left in his will that the diaries from which he culled the details of the history should be destroyed after his death, raising the interesting question of how much self-censorship he applied when he came to write his “private History.” Marsh’s original title is both curious and misleading - in fact, as Brewer has pointed out, an oxymoron. In keeping with the times he is in general reticent about revealing his own inner thoughts and emotions. But despite his own best endeavors he cannot hide all from the reader - in the course of over 6,000 pages that would have been an impossibility, and it is difficult to agree with Brewer’s suggestion that Marsh’s position is that of a seemingly dispassionate observer.⁸ Even at a distance of time, when he comes to write up an event that has angered or annoyed him the normally orderly progress of his pen is frequently disrupted by crossings-out and alterations. Other character traits emerge to contradict the initial superficial image of a well-balanced, middle-class Georgian gentleman. He could be highly sensitive to criticism, the leveling of which on occasions leads to pages of prolix self-justification that approach pedantry. A streak of vanity (about his person, not his work) runs through the earlier part of his life, and in his forties he could still sulk over being stood-up as a dancing partner by a young lady who preferred the attentions of a young naval lieutenant. Whilst always seeking to avoid controversy, Marsh frequently became involved in dissension, more often than not occasioned by the professional jealousy he met with as a result of his peculiar situation as a concert director dealing with insecure professional musicians. Generally, as in the case of his twenty-five year feud with Chichester Cathedral organist William Walond, we sense that although only hearing one side of the story justice favored Marsh’s side

The overwhelming portrait that emerges from these pages is that of an intensely sympathetic figure, of a man invested with more than a fair degree of good common sense, an excellent husband and father whose consideration for his often gout-stricken wife never wavered, and who was prepared to go to unusual lengths to see that his sons were given the best possible opportunities in life. Needy professionals or talented young musicians are provided with generous support and patronage; equally those who attempt to take advantage or falsely proclaim their talents have their pretensions recorded with withering sarcasm. But above all it is the unflagging industry of the man that leaps from these pages. Marsh was unquestionably hyper-active. The sheer amount of energy he frequently put into a single day is exhausting to contemplate - composing, arranging and copying music, writing, concert rehearsals, management and direction, visits to the theater, a dizzying round of social engagements (more often than not private musical parties), reading, sketching, astronomy, charitable activities - all fitted around a constant travel schedule in which he regularly managed to combine business with pleasure. Even when confined to bed Marsh worked, ensuring that pen and paper were brought to him in his room each morning, for, as he says himself, it

⁷Ms.Vol.I, title page.

⁸Brewer, “History,” *op.cit.*, p.84.

was impossible for him to remain idle. All this activity was accompanied by an astute business sense that recognized that he was unable to afford the upkeep (and social demands) of a large country house after the family moved to Nethersole. The same acumen made Marsh a successful concert manager, dealing fairly, but firmly with the sometimes unreasonable demands of the professionals who formed the backbone of his orchestras in Canterbury and Chichester. It is significant that after Marsh's departure from both Salisbury and Canterbury, concert life waned in both cities (although there were other contributory factors in Salisbury), and perhaps even more remarkable that he sustained a successful subscription series in Chichester until 1813, well into a period that had already witnessed a steady decline in the traditional concert life of English cathedral cities. Despite his dry and sometimes wry sense of humor, music is never less than a serious business to Marsh, a man quite capable of laying down his violin when his Kent society audience are more interested in idle chatter than listening to music.

As valuable as Marsh's inadvertent self-portrait are his images of others, often candid to the point of near cruelty. Although normally generous minded, he makes no effort to spare the foibles of others. His description of the cathedral Chapter as he found it on arrival at Chichester is devastating in its blunt appraisal of the rife nepotism and the worldly, insensitive senior clergy and their families. In a single paragraph of Austenesque perspicacity and penetration he paints a telling picture of four sisters who arrive to live in Salisbury. No edited version of Marsh's remarkable testament can fully aspire to capture anything like full comprehension of its range, vigor and immediacy. During his first fifty years he achieved more than most of us given a complete life span. It is that achievement that is celebrated in the following pages.

The paucity of public funding for literary work in Britain coupled with having to re-edit the manuscript in the light of the discovery of the Huntington original have dictated that this project has taken inordinate time to reach fruition. It would never have done so without the help and support of a number of people to whom my grateful thanks are owing, and who are in no way responsible for any errors that remain in the book. The late Josephine Janes deserves pride of place, not only for providing the funding to purchase print-outs and microfilm, but also for encouraging me to continue my work when I wilted at the thought of restarting after the emergence of Huntington. Further financial help came from the Hinrichsen Foundation and an Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship, whose generous award allowed me two invaluable and memorable months at the Huntington Library.

Many friends, scholars and research institutions have provided unstinting and unselfish assistance in the preparation of the footnotes. In the early years my old friend Arthur Cook did valuable work as an unpaid research assistant. The late Betty Matthews was another long-standing friend who has for many years coped with my pestering, putting her unrivaled knowledge of Salisbury's musical life generously at my disposal. Stanley Sadie's long-standing interest in Marsh led him to keep a paternalistic watch over the proceedings for many years, willingly acting when requested as referee and mentor. In more recent years Martin Renshaw has not only taken great interest in the development of the book, but provided much of the information you will find in my footnotes on the organ and organists, one of Marsh's great enthusiasms, but an

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Achilles heel of mine. Simon McVeigh generously provided me with programs from his unique data base of London concerts in addition to advice and information relating to near-forgotten musicians working in the capital. William Weber has given me not only the benefit of his unique knowledge on the social aspects of musical life in eighteenth century England but a new and much valued friendship. A fine artist and friend, Michealjohn Harris kindly agreed to draw the map that so clearly illustrates Marsh's movements throughout southern England. As suggested above, my work on Marsh might easily have been terminated by the sale of the original to the Huntington Library. That it did not is, in addition to the reason stated above, due to the generosity of the Huntington in allowing the manuscript to be photocopied in far quicker time than they would normally allow after purchase, thus facilitating my continuing work. For this and much else since I have to thank their Curator of Manuscripts, Mary L. Robertson, who has elevated friendly help and support to new meaning. To which I must add my thanks to all the research staff at an institution that combines superb scholarly facilities with a warmth of welcome to its visitors that is unparalleled in my experience.

Three local experts very kindly read through sections of the manuscript and as a result filled in missing details, corrected errors and provided helpful suggestions. To John Chandler, who read the Salisbury chapters, Bryan Gipps the Kentish, and Timothy McCann the long Chichester section go my particular thanks for devoting their time and expertise for nothing more than their interest.

Many more scholars and others with specialised local knowledge have also made invaluable contributions to my research - David Coke, Rachel Cowgill, Richard Dorment, Vivien Ettlinger, the late Pamela Farndon, MD, Trevor Fawcett, Gerald Gifford, Ian Graham-Jones, David Griffiths, Nevil Harvey Williams, Robert Hudson, the late Susi Jeans, Christopher Kent, Raymond W. Madsen, Philip Olleson, Andrew Parker, Curtis Price, Ernest Warburton, and Frank Warren all provided helpful responses to a variety of inquiries, as have the County Records Offices of Kent, Devon, Derbyshire, Durham, Hampshire, West Sussex, Surrey, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Norfolk, Buckinghamshire and Nottinghamshire, the Public Library services of Bath, Portsmouth, Birmingham, Greenwich, Leeds, Wiltshire and Westminster, the University Libraries of Cambridge and Durham, the Library of Southwell Minster, the City Archivist of Coventry, Portsmouth City Council Museums and Records Service, the Salisbury & South Wiltshire Museum, the Maritime Information Centre, Greenwich, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the Royal College of Organists, the British Library, and the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum.

The Pendragon Press have earned my undying thanks for stepping in where a number of British publishers feared to tread. Their instant recognition of the importance of the Marsh Journals earned an admiration that has not been diminished by our subsequent relationship. In particular my editor Kristina Kwacz has proved a tower of strength and good humored support.

Finally I must pay tribute to my long-standing companion Anne Young, without whose support my work would probably never have been completed. Over the course of long years she has not only become an expert proof-reader (no easy task for a period work), but has provided unfailing encouragement. Together we have been through

the happiness and hardships that producing this book has occasioned. To her I dedicate the final result.

Editorial Method

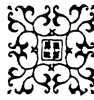
All editorial excisions are marked ... whilst additions to Marsh's text, usually dates, are indicated by square brackets and italics [].

As already mentioned, Marsh's handwriting poses few problems of legibility and instances where it is indecipherable once the reader has become accustomed to his style are rare indeed. Throughout his own spelling and punctuation have been maintained, the only alteration to the text being to reduce to lower case in most instances the capitals customarily used at the time for the first letter of a noun. Marsh's frequent abbreviation of words has also been preserved. The meaning of most of them is clearly apparent to the reader, but on the few occasions they are not clarification is provided. The setting of these shortenings is a uniform apostrophe, although Marsh employs a variety of devices such as "ch/w" for "which," here rendered therefore as w'ch. His inconsistent shortening of the word "the" to a hieroglyphic squiggle does present a problem. Some transcribers of extracts have rendered this as "ye," yet on the odd occasions he does use that old-fashioned version it is quite clearly written as "e/y." To avoid confusion I have used the modern spelling throughout. Passages underlined by Marsh for emphasis are rendered in italics. Marsh's spelling is more consistent than in many contemporary manuscripts, the major exception being that of names. Certain words, i.e. "imediately," which is always spelt with second "m" missing, or "chorusses" will look odd to the modern reader, whilst other spelling will look more familiar to American readers than those in Britain.

*Special thanks to the Director of the
Huntington Library for permission
to publish this edition from the original manuscript
(now Huntington Library ms. HM 54457).*

CHAPTER ONE

The Early Years - 1752-1764



INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1796 John Marsh started work on a family history which would trace his ancestry from the earliest times up to the present branches of both his parents' families. This history, completed in the following year, has not survived. In his Journals, Marsh explains how the idea had come to him during his years at the family seat of Nethersole House in Kent, where he had discovered papers relating to his genealogy.¹ He would also have been aware of the monuments in Womanswold church, about half a mile from Nethersole, which provide much detail about his forbears:²

To the Memory of Thomas Marsh esq, Lt. Coll. of the Militia of the Cinque Ports, Captain of Sandown Castle and of the Militia troop of horse deputy, Lt. of Dover Castle and to the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Kent and a worthy J.P. for the said county.³ He was descended from Anne,⁴ sister to Sir Francis Nethersole of Nethersole House in the Parish of Wymingswold and of Kingston, Knight for many generations. The seat of his ancestors from whence during the Civil Wars he retired was Pollesworth in Warwicks where he died and was buried in 1659. For want of issue he by his will gave his estates in Kent to his nephew John Marsh,⁵ son of his sister Anne, whose eldest son Henry Marsh succeeded his father in the said house and estate where he continued to the year 1697, when he surrendered them to his eldest son, the aforesaid Thomas Marsh who married Martha, daughter of Sir

¹The family coat of arms and family tree are to be found in *Visitation in Kent* in 1663-8 - p.108 (D.18,150) (Add.MS.5507,288)

²The plaque dates from sometime after 1739.

³The elder brother of Marsh's grandfather Henry Marsh, who was christened at St. Giles, Kingston, Kent on June 30, 1680.

⁴Anne Nethersole (b.1592) married Thomas Marshe (b.c1580-1634) of Brandred, Kent in 1606. He was Marsh's great-great-great grandfather and is buried at the church of St Augustine's, East Langdon, which contains a rustic tablet memorial to him.

⁵John was one of the most popular names in the Marsh family and we shall confusingly encounter no less than six gentlemen of that name in addition to the subject of this book. This one was the heir of the above Thomas Marsh, who married Anne Sanders of Canterbury in 1637.

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Edward Copley, Knight. He died without issue in the year 1739 aged 73, leaving his estate real and personal without limitation or condition to his near relative John Marsh of the Middle Temple esq,⁶ who in a new vault in this chancel deposited his remains with those of his wives and erected this monument in testimony of his gratitude and affection.

Counsellor John Marsh is himself commemorated by a marble obelisk in the same church:

In memory of John Marsh esq, Councillor at law who voluntarily quitted that profession at a time when his practise was very considerable and retired to his seat at Nethersole where he spent the remainder of his life. He was a constant and zealous asserter of the liberties of his country and died December 3rd, 1752 aged 70. John Winchester esq, one of his executors to whom after many bountiful legacies to his friends he bequeathed his real and personal estate for life only erected this monument in gratitude.⁷

Marsh's original intention was to write a single work in which his own memoirs would provide a natural extension to his family history,⁸ but less than two months after starting it, he changed his mind and decided to write his *History of my private Life* separately in the belief that they would be of little interest to others, and which he would write "for my own private amusement."⁹ This task, which he believed might occupy him for two or three years, was in the eventuality to employ him until two weeks before his death on 31 October 1828.

⁶Counsellor John Marsh was the son and heir of Richard Marsh of Faversham. He was admitted to Pembroke College, Oxford in 1699 and called to the Bar in 1706. - *Middle Temple Bench Book*.

⁷On July 28th 1757 the barrister John Baker recorded in his diary that he "played at whist with Mr. Winchester, once surgeon of some hospital, to whom Marsh, the lawyer, left his estate of £1500 a year for life for setting his dog's leg" - P. York, ed. *Diary of John Baker*, London, 1931. The true heir to the Nethersole estate was Marsh's father Captain Henry Marsh, a cousin of Counsellor John Marsh. For Marsh's account of how his father came to be dispossessed *vide infra* p.72.

⁸*Vide infra* p.598.

⁹*Vide infra* p.610.

History of my Private Life

I was born on May the 31st in the year 1752 about 3 months before the style was alter'd by the suppression of 11 days,¹⁰ in consequence of which I have ever reckon'd the 11th of June as the anniversary of my birth.

My father¹¹ (being a Captain in the Navy) married, in the preceeding year, Miss M. Tyler¹² one of the 6 daughters of Mr Tyler of Dorking in Surry, an eminent draper, haberdasher, grocer, chandler etc. (who had also 6 sons) & took a house at Dorking, where he & my mother lived till after I & my next brother Henry were born¹³ after which they remov'd (on Naval concerns) to Berry, near Gosport, where my brother Edward & sister Mary were born.

The most distant period of time to which my recollection carries me back is whilst we were resident here, when I well remember walking with my father & mother to Gosport (being then in petticoats) & going to a Presbyterian Meeting there, where Mr Williams was Minister¹⁴ (my mother being a Dissenter) & also being measur'd for my first suit of cloaths, at which time I remember I was much disconcerted at being set upon a table & handled by a rough looking man, & especially at his taking off not only my outer garments, but my stays also, which it was then the fashion to lace up children in.

¹⁰The Gregorian calendar dates from 1582. Although adopted by most Catholic countries by the end of the 16th century, many Protestant countries did not accept it until the early 18th century. Britain and her colonies were amongst the last to do so.

¹¹Henry Marsh, born on July 8 1713 and christened at Barnes, Surrey on August 4. He followed a career in the Royal Navy, sources differing as to its progress. According to *Records of Commissioned Officers of the Royal Navy* (1660-1815); vol. II, p.601 he was promoted to lieutenant in 1740 and commander four years later. However Commission records held in the PRO show that in March 1745 he was appointed 3rd Lieutenant of the *Namus* and 2nd Lieutenant of the *Barfleur* on October 3rd the same year (PRO ADM6/17). In 1747 he was appointed Captain of the *Chichester* (of 80 guns), a position he held until 1757 - *Commissioned Officers*, op. cit. p.601 & Charnock - *Biographia Navalis* vol. VI, 1797, pp.80 & 81.

¹²Mary (Molly) Tyler was almost certainly born in Dorking c.1715-1720. The Tyler family were Dissenters, whose births for this period are missing. The marriage took place at St. Christopher le Stocks (a Wren church demolished in 1782) on February 7, 1750 and is also recorded in the Register of Dorking Dissenters 1751/2 (Public Record Office RG4 3102). It was not the only link between the Marsh and Tyler families, for Marsh's uncle John married another of the Tyler girls, Ann in 1762. Tyler is almost certainly the Edward Tyler who occupied a property consisting of three messuages in West Street (numbered 379, 380 & 381 on the Dorking Tithe Map of 1831 and now 58-61 West Street), once the property of William Mullins, the shoemaker who sailed on the *Mayflower*. Tyler originally occupied the largest of the three premises (No.381) but by 1765 had moved to the middle (No.380), the larger having been assigned to uncle John Marsh - Dorking Parish Poor Rate Book. This would appear to be substantiated by Marsh's entry in 1765, where he records that his grandfather had now retired and the business was being run by his aunt Ann Marsh (née Tyler) and two of her brothers, Henry and George - *vide infra* p.32.

¹³The house in which Marsh and his brother were born has not been identified.

¹⁴Thomas Williams (1724-1770). He was ordained at Gosport (a town with a long Dissenting history) in 1750, shortly after which he married Rebecca Isgar of Gosport. The couple had two daughters and a son Thomas, who in 1783 would marry Marsh's sister Mary - N.T. Harvey Williams - *The Williams Family in the 18th & 19th centuries*. Ms, 1989.

THE JOHN MARSH JOURNALS

From Berry my father (being appointed to the Catherine yacht at Deptford¹⁵) remov'd in the year 1757¹⁶ with my mother & also my cousin Elizabeth, a niece of my father's sister (who had lived also with us at Berry, being 10 or 12 years older than me) to Greenwich, where he took a large & pleasant house with a good garden etc on Croom's Hill.¹⁷ My two brothers & I were however left behind under the care of a Mrs Dove to have the small pox, for which purpose we were remov'd to a lone house at Garmar (or some such name) in Stoke's Bay,¹⁸ where we were all inoculated by Mr Porter of Gosport.¹⁹ As to my brothers, they had it very slightly indeed, but I had it very severely insomuch that I was blind 5 days, during which I used (as I have been told) frequently to call for a candle in open day. My arm also fester'd & seem'd inclin'd to be troublesome, on which it was daily touch'd with caustic by Mr Porter, whose appearance I then began to dread. At length however I recover'd without being seam'd or much mark'd with the disorder as had been rather apprehended, & was with my brothers & Mrs Dove remov'd for change of air etc. to a farm house at Brockhurst on the London Road near Gosport, where we remain'd till my father having finish'd his house & being quite settled at Greenwich at length summon'd us there. - The principal circumstance of which I have any idea, between the time of my father & mother's leaving us at Berry & our return to them at Greenwich, is the extreme ill temper & severity of Mrs Dove, who tyranniz'd over us in a manner, little I'm sure suspected by my mother who was mildness itself. Severe whippings, going supperless to bed, confinement for hours in a small chamber or closet, or tying us to the leg of the kitchen dresser with her garter, being inflicted for every trifling childish offence. I also remember the building of Haslar Hospital at that time going on,²⁰ which from Mr Porter (our inoculator) being appointed one of the surgeons of it, I used to call Mr Porter's great house.

The day being fixed for our journey to Greenwich, places were accordingly taken in the Portsmouth machine to London, which then went in 2 days, stopping for the night at Godlaming, where we slept & the following evening safely arrived at Greenwich

¹⁵Originally the Katherine of 9-guns, built in Chatham in 1674. In 1720 she was rebuilt and re-named the Catherine, under which name she remained in naval service until 1801, when she was sold.

¹⁶The date cited by Charnock (op.cit.) for the appointment is 1762.

¹⁷Crooms Hill leads from the center of Greenwich along the western boundary of Greenwich Park, rising gradually to the plateau of Blackheath. Of outstanding architectural interest, many of the fine 17th and 18th century houses have been preserved, although not without alteration in some instances. This is true of the house taken by Henry Marsh between 1757 and 1759. Now known as The Grange, 52 Crooms Hill, it had already been extensively altered by 1793 by which time it was virtually unrecognizable to Marsh - *vide infra* p.540.

¹⁸Gomer. A pond of this name existed in the 18th century on the northern fringe of Stokes Bay, which lies to the south-west of Gosport on the Solent. The fort later to bear the name Gomer was not built until much later, in 1850.

¹⁹Smallpox inoculation was an important 18th century discovery, having been popularized by Lady Mary Montague Wortley in the 1720's following her observation of the practice in Turkey. As Marsh's subsequent reaction shows, the treatment was not without its dangers.

²⁰Haslar Hospital, situated to the seaward-side of Gosport, was completed in 1762 and a chapel added the following year.

where besides my father, mother & cousin Elizabeth Marsh, we also found my aunt Ann Tyler, young sister to my mother.²¹

On our approaching Greenwich I remember Mrs Dove instructing us all in a short set speech to make to our father & mother, which unless we utter'd she threaten'd to *cut our tongues out*, which was one of her modes of enforcing her commands. As however we now began to receive the affectionate caresses of my mother & cousin & also of my aunt (which were become a new thing to us) we began to think ourselves as it were in Paradiſe, notwithstanding Mrs Dove still continued a short time with us at Greenwich.

Amongst other vexations, of which she seem'd to delight in being the cause, was her not letting us have a palatable drink with our meals, as instead of beer which she took in her head was improper for children, she contriv'd a nasty sour beverage that we co'd scarce bring ourselves to drink; in consequence of which we used occasionally to get a little beer by stealth, which being once brought me by the servant, she order'd it to be taken back & the usual drink to be brought, which I just tasted & sent it away again, which my father observing; desired to taste it himself, on w'ch he did not wonder he said, at our not liking it & order'd the servant in future to give us beer. - How Mrs Dove look'd upon this, or whether she made any observation or not I cannot take upon me to say, but imagine she was silent as my father was in general pretty peremptory. - This however is the last act of hers that I can remember as she very soon after our arrival at Greenwich was to our great joy dismiss'd, her presence being now no longer necessary.

We also found a new brother (William) at Greenwich, who was born there a short time before our arrival, after which my poor mother never enjoy'd her health owing, as it was thought, to her breeding so fast but gradually declin'd for the short remainder of her life. - We were now therefore five of us, viz. myself, born May the 31st. 1752. Henry born Aug't the 24th. 1753. - Edw'd Nov. 24th. 1754, Mary, April 10th. 1756. & Will'm, born Aug. 5th. 1757. of whom (to lessen the family & lighten my mother's trouble during her indisposition) Henry & Edw'd were sent to Mrs Gingham's school at Greenwich & my father took the charge of instructing me upon himself.

About this time I was very much afflicted with an asthma, which used to torment me at night after I was in bed & prevent my settling to sleep for some time, which used to alarm my mother a great deal as from being the first born I was (as is frequently the case) I believe something of a pet. It was however observ'd by the faculty that it probably proceeded from some straightness in my chest which, with proper care & attention, I might afterwards outgrow; & which prov'd to be the case, having never had any return of it since I was about 7 or 8. years old. - My poor mother's alarms were however once increas'd by the following circumstance. In the dead of a winter's night, when all was still & quiet, she distinctly heard the sound of a cuckow 2 or 3 times, on which she lamented my father's not being awake to hear the surprizing phenomenon. She however did not fail to acquaint him of it on his awakening in the morning, adding that she fear'd (not that she was at all superstitious, as she said) that it forboded

²¹Ann Tyler, b. December 31, 1736.

something fatal in the family, amongst which (forgetting poor soul her own weak & languishing state) she co'd not help thinking her poor astmatic boy most likely to be the object. My father of course endeavour'd to laugh her out of this, but did not I believe quite succeed 'till the next even'g, when happening to drink tea with our next door neighbours (Capt. & Mrs Falkingham²²) before we had been there an hour, the voice of the cuckow again obtruded itself upon us all, accompanied each time with the sound of a small bell; on which my father laughing most heartily told my mother there was her surprizing phenomenon which in fact was nothing more than a *cuckow clock* which Capt Falkingham had the day before put up in his hall.

Soon after our arrival at Greenwich it was that I discover'd my first attachment to the science of *music*, which has ever since been my grand source of amusement & delight. For, there being no Meeting House nearer than Deptford, my father & mother now usually went on a Sunday to the Hospital Chapel²³ where I was previously informed as a novelty that I should hear a fine organ, of which I could of course form no conception. On entering the pew therefore at the Chapel & the organ being pointed out to me, I was very inquisitive to know when it wo'd be play'd & fix'd my eyes upon it, expecting to see a pair of hands employ'd upon the feet of the gilt pipes in front to produce the sound. What was my astonishment therefore all on a sudden to hear celestial tones issuing of *themselves* (for aught that appear'd to the contrary) from a most elegant & beautiful instrument, on which my eyes remained fix'd till the voluntary ceas'd. This I co'd not help thinking was extremely short, & was very impatient for it to play again, which at length it did in giving out the psalm, after which I was very much disconcerted at the mens & boys discordant voices, which drown'd even the full organ, of which however I was gratified with a little between the lines of the psalm & in the interludes. Of this I afterwards complain'd to my father at home, whom on his asking how I liked the organ I told "very much indeed, but that part of the time the people made such a noise that I could scarce hear it." When the concluding voluntary began I remember I was kneeling upon the seat with my eyes again fix'd on it, rather wond'ring at the peoples coolly walking out whilst it was playing, & co'd not be prevail'd upon myself without some degree of compulsion to quit the pew; to which however I was in some measure reconciled the next time I went by my brother Henry, who observ'd that by going out when the organ was playing I sho'd hear it all the while I went down stairs, whereas if I staid in the pew 'till it was over I should have to go out without music. I was however still the last to quit the pew & hung back all the way as much as possible.

This, being the first musical instrument that ever obtruded itself on my ear, accounted for, as I take it, the strong prepossession I have ever had towards that noble instrument, which indeed, co'd I have had my own choice, or have had an organ to practice on, I sho'd have learnt afterwards in preference to the violin.

²²Captain Edward Falkingham. In 1757 he was captain of the Sutherland, being promoted the following year to captain of the Princess Caroline of 80 guns - Charnock op.cit. vol. V, 1797.

²³The chapel of Greenwich Hospital was the last part of the Hospital to be completed. Based on the design of Wren, it was built by Thomas Ripley and not completed until 1752. The organ, ready a year earlier, was the work of Abraham Jordan, one of the leading builders of the day.

In the beginning of the year 1759 I went as a day boy to Messrs Swinden & Bracken's Academy at Greenwich,²⁴ which I continued the whole of that year, during which my poor mother, being now in a deep consumption, gradually declin'd, 'till at length she departed this life in the autumn,²⁵ a few days previous to which I was with my 2 next brothers & sister & cousin Elizab'h sent to Mrs Galabin's School on Croom's Hill (to be out of the way) where I remember the death of my poor mother being made known to us by the violent but affectionate lamentations of my cousin, who was a considerable time inconsolable. As for me, with my brothers & sister, we were too young to have the least idea of our loss. - When the funeral was over, we were all remov'd home again, in the evening, being charg'd not to mention our late mother, & we were all 5 of us placed I remember in a semicircle upon the matt in the hall to eat our suppers, during which my father walked in & out from the parlour looking upon us in melancholy silence. My sister however being too young to attend to injunctions of this kind, & having of course no idea of the reason of it, soon began to prattle about her mamma being in the pit hole, on which my father suddenly left us & did not appear any more that evening.

In consequence of this heavy loss, my father now quitted this house & took a smaller one in Park Row, Greenwich,²⁶ to which he removed soon afterwards; sending me at the beginning of the year 1760. as a *boarder* to Mess'rs Swinden & Bracken's & my 2 next brothers as such to Mr Norton's Academy at Lewisham. My sister he also about the same time sent to be brought up by my aunts at Dorking, so that (my brother Will'm remaining with his nurse, Mrs Gray, near Park Row) my father & cousin Elizabeth were now left, except at school vacations, by themselves.

Our next door neighbour in Park Row was Mr Clutton, surgeon (who having been an Assistant Surgeon at the Hospital had without the consent of her father, Admiral Townsend the Governor,²⁷ married his daughter), a very pleasant, lively man with whom my father was very intimate... Mrs Pybus, who likewise lived in Park Row, Mrs Westcott of Croom's Hill, Mr Frances Cooke with his wife & sister Mrs Nutt (widow of Capt. Nutt) all of Greenwich Hospital, were also friends & intimate acquaintance of my father's, the latter of whom soon afterward married Mr Besson, one of the lieut'ts of the Hospital. These families often spent the evening together at each other's houses in the most neighbourly way... With all of these I also remember spending many happy evenings whilst I was at Greenwich Academy, particularly on twelfth day, the evening of which used to be always spent at Mr Westcott's, where the

²⁴Greenwich Academy appears to have been founded in 1715 by one Thomas Weston, later being taken over by Samuel Swinden. During the period Marsh attended the Academy it was situated in King Street (now King William Walk) - J.W. Kerby, "Early Greenwich Schools and Schoolmasters" (*Greenwich & Lewisham Antiquarian Society*, vol. III, No.5, 1930). Also *vide infra* p.34. Part of the site was subsequently occupied by Greenwich Hospital School - *vide infra* p.323.

²⁵Mary Marsh died in the latter part of September. She was buried at St. Alfege's on the 28th of that month - Burial records of St. Alfege's, Greenwich (London Metropolitan Archives, P78/AIF/63).

²⁶Park Row is situated on the northern edge of Greenwich Park, overlooking the Queens House and National Maritime Museum. The house taken by Capt. Marsh has not been identified.

²⁷Isaac Townsend (d.1765). After seeing active service in Malaga and the West Indies, he was appointed admiral in 1747 and became Governor of Greenwich Hospital in 1754.

old & social custom of drawing King & Queen round a magnificent twelfth cake used to be constantly observ'd,²⁸ at which our host generally contrived to get the character of Sir J. Falstaff drawn by my father...

I shall now relate a childish incident for which the excuse must be that I am at present relating the history of my childhood. - Being at home one Sunday in the summer with my brothers, as was also young Pybus, we all drank tea at his house before we return'd to school in the evening. Happening afterwards to go into the kitchen & finding the coast clear... we began looking about to see if perchance we might find any titbit to serve by way of bon bouche before we went back to our own respective schools. We however found nothing that wo'd do except a whole fruit pye, which we dared not touch for fear it should be discover'd on a sudden return of the maid before we got out of the house, in which case young Pybus at least might have come in for a thrashing. At the same time it was almost too great a temptation to resist & the smell of it made our mouths itch to be at it; happening therefore in feeling & handling it to loosen the crust we thought there cou'd be no harm in just taking a peep underneath to see what it's contents were, which being cherries it occur'd to us that tho' the crust if mangl'd wo'd tell tales against us, yet a few of the cherries might be taken out without its being discover'd at all. Accordingly we went to work with our hands & soon reduce'd them to so small a quantity that a discovery being now unavoidable we thought we might as well despatch the remainder of the fruit, after which we drank the syrup out of the dish with some spoons lying at hand & placing the crust very carefully over it as it was at first, escaped out of the house without it being discover'd, which it was not 'till on its being produc'd to the Cluttons & my father at supper, Mrs Pybus on cutting it up discover'd the fourberie,²⁹ on which Mr C. laughing very heartily said he wo'd forgive us the loss of his share for the ingenuity of the contrivance, which he took care not to forget & we have had afterwards many a good laugh about it.

About this time also it was that I met with a grievous disappointment for one of my age, for happening to drink tea one Sunday at Mrs Besson's, she promis'd to give me a piece of rich cake at going to school at night, & accordingly went into a dark closet where it was & cut off a large slice. As this however, tho' a good allotment for one or two, was not big enough to divide amongst the whole room I told my bedfellow only of it & agreed with him to defer our feast 'till the others were all asleep. This soon happening I gave my companion his share & we both began munching away, which was immediately succeeded by sputtering & I dare say pretty wry faces, if they co'd have been seen, as instead of the cake she intended Mrs Besson had cut off a large piece of *Castile soap*, which tho' thrown away with great indignation by us, was it seems valued by her much more than the cake so that her disappointment when she found out the next morning was greater than ours...

²⁸The custom of drawing King and Queen was described in a letter published in the Universal Magazine in 1774: "The Host filled up tickets, for the whole company, except King and Queen, taken by the Hosts. According to custom each party assumed character until mid-night. After supper was the King's speech etc, which included political satire etc." Other characters in the charade included such as Dolly Cowslip, Sir Tun Belly Wash, Bridget Hatchetface. "Particulars of the Origin of Twelfth Night" - Huntington Library Ms. 42204.

²⁹Fourberie or fourberry - deception.

As I was now a boarder at the Academy, I on a Sunday of course went with the rest of the boys to church,³⁰ where my father had now also a pew, & where my musical feelings were excited by another organ, which however I did not by any means like so well as that I had been used to at the Chapel, it being in fact an old one & in bad condition,³¹ besides which it was also vilely play'd; the organist (Mr Dyer) being an old superannuated dancing master, who was now become blind & paralytic, so that he co'd hardly make shift to do the duty. In consequence of this the parish was at length obliged to pension him for the remainder of his life & look out for a new organist, on which occasion it was to be played for a few Sundays by such candidates as chose to enter the lists. This contest (so great was ever my attachment to musical sounds) engaged my attention as much as a general election, horse race or other trial of skill usually does politicians, gents of the turf etc. & I soon found out that the candidates were Mr Croom, an elderly professor of Greenwich, Mr Hudson (then or afterwards organist of Limehouse), a Mr Wheatley & Mr Relfe, organist of the Hospital Chapel.³² There were however in fact but two candidates, as Croom & Relfe were to be in partnership, as were Hudson & Wheatley.

The first that play'd was Croom, who did not manifest any superior abilities either in point of style or execution; his voluntary before the first lesson both morning & afternoon being (as I well remember) simply a dry & stiff adagio upon the Diapasons, which stops he also confin'd himself to in giving out the psalms, without even using the Swell for the alternate lines, instead of which he made a little stop or pause at the end of each line. He however used the full organ with the voices & in his concluding voluntaries, which was all the variety he gave us. My wishes were therefore by no means in his favor, tho' Relfe was to be his partner, who having the chapel organ besides wo'd hardly ever I fear'd come himself to play at the church. - The next that officiated was Hudson, who I thought play'd in a very brilliant style, using the Trumpet & other fancy stops, & also the Swell, which I had not heard before except in giving out the psalm lines; but upon the whole was inferior as I thought to my favorite Mr Relfe. I however only heard him in the morning, as my father took me with him to London to dinner that day. - The next Sunday the organ was played by Mr Wheatley, who gave us a Cornet piece both morning & afternoon for his voluntaries, & tho' he had by no means a good finger, yet his style being new to me, as was the Cornet stop, I was pleas'd with his playing, tho' not so much as I had been with Mr Hudson the preceding Sunday. - The next Sunday I went to church more I fear with the thought of hearing Mr Relfe (whose turn I concluded it was now to exhibit) than with those of devotion, but was greatly disappointed at finding the organ again played by Mr Wheatley, whose style I soon recogniz'd as he gave us 2 more Cornet pieces & so much

³⁰St. Alfege, designed by Hawksmoor and built between 1712 and 1714.

³¹The organ was indeed "an old one," having been installed in the previous church on the site in 1552. The console of this instrument, which was in use until 1910, may have been used by Thomas Tallis, who attended the Court at Greenwich and is commemorated by a window in the south aisle. *Greenwich Parish Church - A brief history and guide*, 1975. The organ was repaired by George England in 1765.

³²Possibly Burton Hudson (d.1765), organist of St. Benet Fink in the City. Jonathon Wheatley (d.1800), organist and bass who took part in the Handel festivals of the 1780's. Lupton Relfe (d.1805), appointed organist at the then unfinished Greenwich Hospital Chapel in 1750, a position he retained for fifty years. Nothing is known of Croom other than Marsh's subsequent comments.

like those play'd the preceeding Sunday that some of the boys who had not very discriminating ears as to music pronounc'd them to be the same pieces. - I much wish'd of course to know how this matter stood & whether the election was determin'd, but not being able to get any information at school... I was obliged to suspend my curiosity 'till the next time I dined with my father, which I did not regularly every Sunday, or even every other Sunday, tho' he lived in Greenwich, but only occasionally about once in a fortnight or 3 weeks, according as my father sent for me, for whose well known livery I used eagerly to look out at my return from church every Sunday morning amongst those servants who then usually called to fetch some of the boys to their friends for the remainder of the day. By thus not knowing when I was to dine with my father I always took as a favor which I might have otherwise have look'd upon as a right, or matter of course at least... which was I suppose his reason for not having me; as he always wish'd to check any hankering after home except at the vacations. - On my next visit therefore to my father one of my first questions was, how the organ business was settled, when he told me that Hudson & Wheatley were the successful candidates,³³ the latter of whom was to live in Greenwich & generally do the duty, which he continued to do afterwards constantly in the style he set out with, giving us perpetual Cornet pieces, except about once in a month or 6 weeks perhaps a Trumpet & Echo piece. It was the more remarkable his playing always Cornet pieces, as they always require some degree of execution in the performance, but Mr Wheatley never had a good finger on the instrument in his life.

The organ however was not the only music that at this time obtruded itself on my ear, as the church bells next excited my attention, being, as they were always reckon'd, a fine sonorous peal. Of these, the common number usually rung was 8. to which I always used to attend when at school as much as possible & particularly to the changes. Six of them also used always to chime to church on a Sunday & sometimes 8. but never more. It being however the custom there, as soon as the ringing ceased, to raise the treble (or little bell) of the whole sett, & continue ringing it 'till the minister appear'd in the desk, when the tenor, or biggest bell always began tolling, it happen'd that as they were sinking the treble, for a short time the two bells always sounded together (as they never began sinking the treble 'till the tenor began) from attending which I found that the interval between the great & little bell was more than an octave, & in fact, form'd the interval of a tenth, which I discover'd by computing in idea the intermediate notes. From this circumstance I now found that there were 10 bells & not 8 only, as was generally suppos'd. I mention this to shew the *natural* ear I ever had for music, as I dare say that out of about a 100. boys at the school, not one besides myself had ever attended at all to this circumstance, or if they had wo'd only have observ'd that one was a small & the other was a large bell; for as to the smallest *cultivation* of my musical ear, that was totally out of the question, as my father, the whole time I was at school never wo'd let me learn an instrument, prudently foreseeing that it wo'd engross too much of my attention & divert it from other more material studies. Indeed I never had much inclination to learn the violin (the only instrument

³³Marsh is therefore at variance with Donovan Dawe, who in *Organists of the City of London 1666-1850* London, 1983 gives June 10, 1783 as the date of Wheatley's election.

taught at school) which I account for from my never then having heard it well played; there being only 2 or 3 boys that I remember learnt music & they made a miserable scraping; & the master was old Juggy Croom (as we used to call him) whose performance upon the violin was much of a piece with his organ playing, he being engaged at the school, as a good timeist & theorist, & as much I believe for his patience in attending stupid boys without genius in that science as anything; & as to the dancing master's kit,³⁴ its squeaking tones by no means prepossessed me in favor of the violin, of which I look'd upon it as a species.

Organs & bells being therefore the chief objects of my musical attention, I about this time met with a new species of music on the latter; for spending one of my Christmas vacations at Dorking with my grandfather, uncles & aunts, I soon observ'd a different kind of music on the church bells from any that I had yet heard, viz. a compleat tune played thereon, which I took notice regularly happen'd whenever the clock struck 3. 6. 9. or 12. The reason of this being explained to me, I used to take particular pleasure notwithstanding the coldness of a winter's evening, in going into the garden (when all was still & quiet) to hear the chimes at 6. or 9 o'clock from whence tho' I was frequently summon'd to tea or supper with the family, yet I co'd not go in 'till I had heard the old tune of Britons strike home³⁵ (then the stationary time) 3 times over upon the bells. - I now began to imitate this kind of melody myself by placing 6 wine glasses before me after supper & striking them with a key; but the difficulty was, how to get them in tune, the whole number in the house not affording 6. in anything like proper tune.³⁶ I soon however found out a method of tuning them by measures of water, after which I at the 1st. or 2d. essay, accomplish'd the tune quite to my satisfaction. Having thus become on a sudden a *performer* I next attempted such psalm tunes as I had heard at church & would come within the compass of 6. or 8. notes, in which I succeeded equally well. As however the sound of glasses struck with a key was not quite such pleasant music to the rest of the family as it seem'd to be to myself, & my aunts probably fearing that by an emphatical stroke I might now & then break a glass, my aunt Russell³⁷ (an elder sister of my mother's & widow of Capt. Russell of the Navy, who now liv'd with her younger sister Ann at her fathers at Dorking) recollected an old dulcimer that she had somewhere about the house, which she thought if put in order, might answer my purpose as well as wine glasses & at the same time produce more pleasing tones. - Accordingly, this being discover'd after a rummage in the lumber garret, with about half its complement of strings upon it, the other half were soon restored by my uncle Henry (who scrap'd a little upon the violin & with his younger brother George,³⁸ assisted their father in the grocery & chandlery part of the business) after which I soon *hammer'd* out all my tunes, with also an imitation of

³⁴The dancing master's kit consisted of the smallest member of the violin family, tuned an octave above the normal violin. Its narrow body was designed to fit into the pocket.

³⁵From the farce *Britons strike home: or The Sailor's Rehearsal* by E. Phillips, published in 1739. No composer is named. Marsh included the song as an example in his *Treatise on Thoro' Bass*, 1805/6.

³⁶This is the principal of musical glasses (or glass harmonica) which became popular in the 18th century, although they were stroked around the rim rather than struck.

³⁷Née Alice Tyler. She married John Russell in June 1746.

³⁸Henry Tyler (b. October 1738) and George Tyler (b. April 1742)

chiming, raising, & sinking the bells in peals, changes etc. upon the dulcimer, which I was the more proud of, as my uncle George, who was ten or twelve years older than me, co'd not ever after several efforts manage it half so well.

At this time it was that I first began to be pleased with vocal music in parts, it being the custom of my grandfathers on a Sunday evening, after reading a sermon etc. to sing a psalm or two together, in which my aunts & I used to sing the treble (or air), my uncle George the tenor & my uncle Henry the bass, by which addition to the melody I thought the effect much improv'd & render'd very grand.

At one of my Christmas vacations about this time (which must have been either at the latter end of the year 1759 or 1760) I went with my cousin Elizabeth to spend part of the holiday with my Aunt Pratten & her daughter Ann at Twickenham, the former of whom was an elder sister of my father. This was at the time of a very hard winter when the Thames was frozen over above London Bridge, as I remember going upon the ice from Twickenham with my cousins Eliza'h & Ann Pratten who walk'd over to Richmond & back, there being at the time a great concourse of people & a kind of fair upon the ice. This walk... so sharpen'd their appetites that meeting with a fine plump duck in their way home, quite ready for the spit, they bought it & play'd a trick upon my old aunt. She, having order'd in the cold mutton at supper time, after wondring what was become of the girls (who had been assisting & getting the duck ready in time) was surprized to see a cover placed on the table, upon the removal of w'ch it was I believe difficult to say who was most gratified, the old *sedentary* lady or the young ambulatory ones, as my aunt tho' she had long given up the use of her limbs from inaction always demonstrated as good an appetite as those who made ever so good a use of them, & always enjoy'd a good savoury dish.

I here met with a musical parrot that engaged my attention & much diverted me, a green bird of my aunt's that used to sing "Room for Cuckolds, here comes my Lord Mayor" - "Pretty Polly say" & "Cuckold, O word of fear" etc. - There was also a grey parrot in the same house who used to try to imitate the other but co'd not get on beyond the first 3 notes, tho' I used to take a great deal of pains in endeavouring to get them to sing a duett. All my efforts were however in vain, as the grey bird would never utter more than the 3 first syllables "Room for Cuck." Indeed I soon gave him up, as after even so much soothing & coaxing I seldom got more from him than "Get out you dirty dog" or some such genteel salutation which he had been taught by the servants, & which he always spoke very fluently, without sticking by the way.

It is now time to return to Greenwich where my cousin Eliz'h made my time between the school vacations pass much pleasanter than it otherwise wo'd... as she used frequently, besides giving me toys, trinkets & now & then what little money she co'd conveniently spare, to send for me on a summer's evening to take a walk in the park, heath etc. & sometimes accompany her on a tea visit when my father was not of the party... My cousin also sent for me once I remember to see the Cherokee Kings³⁹ when they were in England & came to see the hospital, at which time I was fairly taken

³⁹The Cherokee Indians of North America submitted to the British colonialists in 1761, much the time to which Marsh is referring.

off my legs by the crowd, & carried into the Chapel, where I at length had leisure to contemplate the physiognomy of the Cherokees, who were the most disgusting looking people I ever saw...

The time now approach'd however that I was to lose my cousin Elizabeth, for Mrs Pybus (with whom she was very intimate) being about to return to her husband in the East Indies, & my cousin signifying a wish to accompany her, if my father wo'd consent, Mrs Pybus not only express'd a great desire of her company, but undertook to solicit her uncle's consent, which he at length gave, as soon as he found she had set her heart upon it, having first however used such dissuasions as he had to urge against it. My father now of course gave her up what money he had of hers in his hand & was also so good as to help her out in the expenses of her voyage to the best of his power. Accordingly soon afterwards I was sent for (I believe in the spring of the year 1761) to spend the last day with my cousin before she sail'd, when she loaded me with toys etc. & taking me with her in the chaise which was to take her to London set me down at the school door where we took an affectionate leave of each other, little thinking we were never to meet again, as she never return'd from India having engaged herself on her passage to Lieutenant Cosby in the India Service, whom she married soon after her arrival there, by whom she had 4 children, soon after which she died...

As my cousin was much admir'd & taken notice of at Greenwich as well for her handsome figure & agreeable person as for her good temper & vivacity, it was thought by my father & I believe by most of her acquaintance, that she might have done better for herself (as it then appear'd) had she remain'd in England...

I come now to relate an event that gave me more pleasure than anything I had then experienc'd & I believe I may say that few things since have given me equal delight. I mean my voyage to Holland in the yacht with my father, with whom happening to dine one Sunday, a short time before the Whitsun holidays in 1761. he receiv'd in the afternoon a letter from the Admiralty ordering him to hold himself in readiness to sail in about 3 weeks time to fetch the Dutch Ambassador from Holland. I now therefore reminded him of a promise he had before made me, that if at any time he should happen to go about the vacation time he wo'd take me with him, which he acknowledging & agreeing to verify, I return'd highly delighted in the evening to school & related my approaching voyage to my friends there, which however (as well as any other journey, except to the grave) I had like to have been prevented from taking, by an accident that happen'd to me about a fortnight or more before I sailed, when being walking by myself in the playground (meditating perhaps on my approaching voyage) & a set of great boys being playing with some large ninepins at a little distance from me, one of them taking up one in his hand, said to the others "Now mind the Marsh's head" on which he threw the ninepin, which striking me on the crown of the head (& being very large & heavy) fell'd me to the earth. Had it struck me on the temple, it probably wo'd have done for me, but as it was, I was much stun'd & was carried in, my head bleeding most profusely, being laid open to the bone. There being nothing imediately at hand to apply to the wound, an old newspaper was press'd against it, w'ch was cover'd with blood very soon, after which by cutting away some of the hair the wound was got at & styptic & plaister being applied by the surgeon, I was put to bed & fortunately did very well. On the boy who threw the pin being ask'd

what co'd induce him to do so wanton a piece of mischief, he said he had not the least idea of hurting or even striking me, for not having any reason to fancy himself a good marksman, he thought as likely a way as any to be sure of missing my head was to aim directly at it, in which however he had like to have had the death of a schoolfellow upon his conscience to counterbalance the clat of his being a good marksman...

Being happily recover'd from the accident of the ninepin before mention'd, I when the time came was sent for home & went on board the yatch with my father & a party of ladies & gentlemen of his acquaintance at Greenwich, with whom we glided down the river as far as Gravesend, where having dined on board, the party went on shore & return'd in chaises to Greenwich. This kind of party of pleasure my father generally made, if the weather was favorable whenever he sailed in the yatch.

From Gravesend we pass'd the Nore⁴⁰ where we were join'd by our convoy, a sloop of 16. guns commanded by Capt Keith, the yatch carrying 8. guns. - We now left the coast of England & the next day were out of sight of land (being nearly becalm'd) the whole day, nothing but a wide expanse of sea & our convoy sloop to be seen, except the masts of a vessel which had been some time before wreck'd on a sandbank & were still standing, as a beacon... But tho' there was a gentle swell which caus'd an up & down motion in the yatch I felt not a symptom of sea sickness. I indeed felt a little headache in the afternoon, but that I attributed to sitting in the sun & also getting into the smoke of the forecabin, where I was much diverted with the jollity & quaint sea wit of the tars, who in all the yatches were pick'd men of first rate abilities in their line.

The next morning on arising from my little cot I was summon'd upon deck to be shewn the coast of Holland, with the isle of Gorea off Helvoetsluice,⁴¹ where we were to land. But before we quit the yatch, I should observe that it was fitted up & furnish'd in the most elegant manner that can be conceiv'd, the front cabin windows being single plates of glass & the hangings & bed curtains of green silk ornamented with gold, with also an elegant carpet, the window seats of mahogany & everything in the most sumptuous style, the beds being in little recesses close to the sides of the cabin, without which was another good room, also elegantly fitted up, called the stateroom, where my father used to dine & smoke his pipe with the surgeon (his only messmate when he had no passengers on board), so that the yatch was a little floating palace.

On landing at Helvoetsluice the first thing that struck my attention was the form of the gable ends of the houses, which instead of forming two sides of a triangle like those in England were circular. The long inscriptions over the shop doors & windows also amus'd me, which being in low Dutch many of the words resembl'd English ones, from which I could pretty well make out the meaning of the whole. I here also met with another cause of wonder, as my father's servant Richard Graham (who had been

⁴⁰A sandbank in the Thames Estuary. During the 17th and 18th centuries the Nore was frequently used as an anchorage by the Royal Navy. It was the location of the famous mutiny in 1797 - *vide infra* p.646.

⁴¹Helvoetsluice was an important packet-boat port on the island of Voorn. Denson's *A New Travellers Companion Through the Netherlands*, London, 1756 describes it as "Small, consisting only of a handsome key, and two or three diminutive streets, but it is well fortified and esteemed the safest harbour in the country" - p.233.

two or three times before with him to Holland) told me he would give me a penny for every pebble I brought him. I however at first laugh'd at this, thinking he was provided with some subterfuge to save his pence, but I afterwards found he was in earnest, there being in fact no such thing as a stone or pebble to be met with in that soil, which is all clay or sand.

We here met with an English naval officer of my father's acquaintance, who was a great deal with us whilst we were at Helvoetsluice. He also with another friend & the surgeon of the yatch joined us one fine day on a walking party to see a gentlemans house & grounds near the Brielle,⁴² on which day I walked more I believe than I ever did on one day either before or since; for the Brielle being about 7 miles from Helvoetsluice, & the house & grounds we went to see, between 2 & 3 miles beyond the Brielle, to which we return'd to dinner & the same evening back to Helvoetsluice, the whole, with little excursions I made in the way & deviations from the straight road, made upward of 20 English miles; in addition to which we went up the lofty tower of the Brielle church for the sake of the prospect from thence, which likewise added to the fatigues of the day. As for myself however, fatigue was out of the question as a good nights rest in my little cot set me perfectly to rights again, but the officer... being an elderly man, & subject to gouty attacks was not firmly upon his legs for some days afterwards & began to despair of ever recovering it. My father too was by no means inclin'd to move more than necessity requir'd for 2 or 3 days afterwards...

When we first arriv'd here, my father of course imediately sent to acquaint the Dutch Ambassador (Mr Boreill) of it, who sent back word that he was then ill & in the hands of the faculty by whom he was told that it wo'd be very improper for him to venture upon his voyage to England in less than a fortnight or 3 weeks time. We had therefore an opportunity of embracing a proposal that had been made us by a small party of ladies & gentlemen just arriv'd from England (with some of whom my father happen'd to be acquainted) of accompanying them as far as Amsterdam in their way to Utrecht etc.

We therefore accordingly set out again for the Brielle (not indeed on foot as before) but in a *rattler*, as it was called (& not without reason, from it's incessant clatter & noise as it went on) a kind of light waggon with the seats across it, the only kind of travelling vehicle to be hir'd in Helvoetsluice. On our arrival at the Brielle, we quitted this disagreeable machine (in which we could scarce hear ourselves speak) & went up the Maese in a large hoy or vessel to Rotterdam,⁴³ where I seem'd got into a new world, all the principal streets having large canals in the middle of them, full of mercantile vessels, many of which were anchor'd literally at their owner's doors & warehouses. On each side of these canals (or on one at least) besides the road, or street, were terras walks with trees planted & over them handsome bridges at the principal cross streets. Except however this *general* appearance of the city, & its great bustle & populousness, I dont recollect anything that particularly struck me in Rotterdam, from whence we

⁴²"The Brielle is likewise a Town on Voorn on the River Meuse, 5 miles north of Helvoetsluice. The Buildings are old, but regular, the Streets broad and planted with Trees" - Ibid., p.234.

⁴³The boat to Rotterdam sailed daily on the tide. Rotterdam was at this time "a large and populous City, of a triangular figure, Handsome built of Brick, the Streets wide and well Paved" - Ibid., p.117.

went in treckscuytes along the inland canals thro' Delft & on to The Hague.⁴⁴ These treckscuytes are a kind of long boat, with a neat & commodious cabbn in the middle, in which we not only took our meals as comfortably as in a parlour, but in the intervals co'd read or write & the ladies work, play at cards or amuse ourselves with the view of the numerous villas on each side of the canals, as we glided along at the rate of about 3 miles an hour, the whole being drawn by a horse, which travel'd in a road close to the side of the canal, from the shore of which the boat was kept by means of the rudder, the man at which was the only one employ'd except now & then when the wind happening to be favorable, a small sail was put up, more I believe for the purpose of easing & lessening the drought of the horse, than for the sake of expediting us. - As we frequently came to a bridge it then became neccessary to detach the line from the horse, which was restor'd again on passing the bridge by a man always attending for the purpose, who on taking off the line throws a little box called a Doyt Box (resembling a dice box) into the treckscuyte in order to receive a few of those small coins not equal in value to our farthings, which is thrown out to him again on his restoring the line. It being my office at first (as junior I suppose) to collect these pieces of coin & throw them afterwards with the box containing them to the man on the shore; it happen'd once (tho' the boat was seldom at that time more than a yard or two from the shore) that I did not bestow quite force enough, in consequence of which it fell short into the canal & we left the poor man grumbling & groping in the water for it, being likely as we fear'd instead of gaining Doyts to lose his box. After this I was of course suffer'd only to make the collection, & to leave it to an abler hand to throw it onshore.

At The Hague where we halted a day or two I recollect but little except that the buildings were very good & the walks about it pleasant. It was also at the time of the Great Fair,⁴⁵ but as the articles there sold were chiefly mercantile goods etc. I was considerably disappointed, after what I had heard of it, & did not find it so much to my taste as Blackheath Fair,⁴⁶ where I had been used to go with the boys from Greenwich & where commodities more to the taste of one of my then age were exhibited to view & disposed of, besides which... the amusements of the puppet shows, tumbling etc. all contributed at Blackheath to heighten the humours of the fair.

From hence we resum'd our voyage in the treckscuyte to Leyden,⁴⁷ where I first observ'd the predilection of the Dutch for chimes of carillons, the bells for which (independent of & in addition to those larger bells used for ringing, tolling etc.) were placed on the outside of the spires, steeples etc. in little niches or recesses adapted to them, so that whenever they played one co'd see the hammers at work upon the bells,

⁴⁴The Hague was the capital of the Seven Provinces. Denson claims that "for extent, number of people (the population was about 50,000) and opulence" the Hague "may be rank'd amongst the best Cities of Europe" - Ibid. p.82.

⁴⁵The Great Fair (or Kermis) was held every May and lasted a week.

⁴⁶Blackheath, today an irregular, largely treeless plateau above Greenwich, had long been a famous meeting-place. The first fair was held in 1683.

⁴⁷Leyden, situated on the Rhine nine miles from The Hague was "Esteem'd one of the neatest and pleasantest Towns in the Netherlands, and the largest in Holland next to Amsterdam. The Buildings are very beautiful and magnificent, the Streets broad, well proportioned and exceeding clean, with Canals in the middle of them planted with Trees" - Denson, op.cit. p.165).

with which I was much amus'd. Here also I observ'd their passion for organs, there being at least 2 of different dimensions in each of the larger churches, the front pipes of which were never gilt or painted, like our English organs, but only polish'd very bright, except the principal organ in one the churches, the pipes of which were silver'd over. - Being here on a Sunday we went in the morning to one of the churches where we met with a remarkable circumstance, viz. 12 couple (who were all dress'd in black) all married by one ceremony, being all ranged in a semicircle for that purpose opposite the altar. Except the churches & a large square, with shady walks across & round it, & also a pleasant walk & gardens upon the side of the canal, I remember nothing at Leyden from whence the next place we arriv'd at was Haerlem where we dined, intending to get to Amsterdam in the evening. Having however all a great desire to hear the celebrated organ in the Cathedral there⁴⁸ (said to be the largest but one *then* in the world) we accordingly sent to the organist, who to our great disappointment was not to be found. We thought however that we might as well see the church & gratify ourselves at least with a sight of the organ, which it was well worth, as with its ornaments it almost fill'd up the whole west end of the nave or middle aisle of the church. There were also 2 other small organs in different parts of this church, which we were told were used for different purposes & common occasions, the grand organ being only used on Sundays & festivals. We also observ'd that the whole body of the church was open without any choir enclos'd as in our cathedrals, there being only a few detach'd pews or seats, I suppose for the dignitaries belonging to the Cathedral, all the rest of the west end of the church being fill'd with chairs placed across in straight rows, for the congregation promiscuously to sit on.

At length however to my great joy the organist being found came (with the bellows blower) tripping into the church, as pleas'd I suppose in the anticipation of his golden fee (which is always a Ducat with about half a Crown for the blower) as we were with that of the celestial harmony we were to hear. We now therefore ascended the organ loft with him, who shew'd us the inside of the choir or small organ in front & explain'd to us the nature of the several rows of pipes we saw therein after which he shew'd us (as it was mark'd on a stick) the diameter of the largest pipe in the great organ, thro' which we could each of us have got, except my father, whose diameter (tho' he was very large & corpulent) very little exceeded that of the pipe, which was 32 feet in length. Having shewn us these things, he went to work both hand & foot upon the Great Organ, there being a compleat sett of large keys of 2 octaves for the feet, which he seem'd to use as dextrously as his hands, the effect of which altogether was astonishingly grand, & seem'd to fill the whole church. We however finding it too powerful for the organ loft (the worst place to hear an organ, to any advantage) went down & seated ourselves in some of the chairs & detach'd pews below, where we were much pleased with the effect. After having played the Full Organ a short time he used some of the fancy stops, with which we were much pleased, particularly with the Vox Humana & Dulcian. He also by way of contrast, gave us an admirable flourish of

⁴⁸The organ of St. Bavokerk was built between 1737 and 1738 by Christian Müller, the eminent Dutch or German builder based in Amsterdam from 1720 to 1770. Müller built many of the finest organs in Holland, of which the Haarlem organ is the most famous. The organists from the time of the building were members of the Radeker family, of whom Henricus Radeker was the likely incumbent at the time of Marsh's visit.

trumpets & kettledrums, with some whimsical imitations of birds, particularly the cuckow, which he introduc'd with good effect, after which he concluded with a grand piece upon the Full Organ, using the pedals as he did at first. After this treat we had just time to walk over the long causeway by the side of the Haerlem Mer, & from thence to cross over in a large boat to Amsterdam, where we arriv'd latish in the evening, where in 3 or 4 days time our friends took leave of us & proceeded on their journey to Utrecht. Previous to this however we had a little excursion across the Zuyder Zee to North Holland to see a little of that beautiful country & eat watersouchy (a peculiar way of dressing perch) with which I sho'd have been better pleas'd had it not been for their nasty black bread that accompanied it, the only kind there to be had. Indeed ever since I had been in Holland, the only alloy to the extreme delightfulness of the tour was our not meeting with any bread except that made (or fermented) with leaven, which gave it such a sour taste as to render it extremely unpalatable & take off the zest of all my meals. At our return therefore to Helvoetsluice, I remember once running to tell my father with great glee that I had seen a great English loaf lying on board a vessel just arrived from that country.

Our friends having now left us we remain'd but two or three days longer at Amsterdam, which in the time that we had been there I had pretty well explor'd accompanied sometimes by my father etc. & at others by Richard Graham, his servant. In the course of these peregrinations the amazing passion for chimes & carrillons again struck me, most of the churches (which are very numerous here) having them, at some of which there was a tinkling of bells every 5 minutes, except at the quarters, when a small part of a tune was play'd, & a whole one 3 or more times over at every hour, so that reckoning the variation of time in the different clocks, there were scarce 3 minutes together without a tinkling of bells to be heard somewhere, besides the tolling for prayers & funerals. The Stadthouse⁴⁹ (or Townhouse), a large & magnificent structure, has also its clock & carrillons over it in a turret, or cupola, over the centre of the building. These carrillons are however also played twice a week at a stated hour, by a person called the carrillonneur, who stripping himself to his shirt & putting on a kind of gauntlets on his hands falls to work on a sett of iron keys, placed not close together like those of the organ etc. but wide apart so that each may be struck by the whole hand, which it is necessary to do in order to work the hammers upon the bells. This carrillonneur upon about 3. octaves of bells produced astonishing effects, which performance is admirably described in Dr Burney's *Musical Travel's*.⁵⁰ Tho' these are played but twice a week by the carrillonneur, they are however played every hour by the machinery of the clock & in a small degree at every quarter & smaller still at every five minutes. There being an open circular space or gallery close under the bells Richard once or twice wish'd me to go up with him at the time they played. I don't

⁴⁹The Stadthouse in Amsterdam dates from the 17th century, when it was built for the then enormous sum of over three million guilders. Because of the marshy nature of the land around Amsterdam, it was founded on vast wooden piles; these foundations were said to have cost as much as the building itself.

⁵⁰Charles Burney (1726-1814). Musical historian, organist and composer. During the early 1770's Burney undertook two tours of the principal European countries to research material for his *General History of Music*, first published between 1776 and 1789. His impressions of music in Holland were published in 1773 in *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Provinces*. Marsh encountered Burney on several occasions, initially in 1783 - *vide infra* p. 291.

know however how it happen'd, whether from my auditory nerves being unusually delicate (as may be exemplified in my extreme attachment to musical sounds) or from whatever other cause it might be owing, but from the time I was an infant 'till I was about 12 years old, I had always an extreme aversion to loud noises or piercing sounds of every kind & dreaded the sound of a church bell or report of a cannon when near either of them. In my passage over therefore in the yacht, I remember being sent for once upon deck to see the operation of a gun being loaded & fired as a signal to our convoy, with which it was thought I sho'd have been much pleas'd. I however no sooner found what was going forward than I went down & shut myself in the cabin, where I remain'd till the business was over. Having therefore the same idea of the disagreeableness of the sound of church bells when nearly in contact with them, I co'd not be prevailed to go near them except imediately after the chiming was over, when I was always sure they would be silent for some little time at least. For this reason I have never yet prevailed upon myself to be present when St Pauls clock struck, tho' I have often been to see the Great Bell. I also remember, when I was very young to having a great aversion to the *sight* of a speaking trumpet, my father having a large one which stood in one of the garrets, which I therefore never wo'd enter... This antipathy my father & I never co'd account for otherwise than by supposing (which was probably the case) that when I was an infant somebody must have taken up the trumpet & spoke to me suddenly, or hallow'd through it, which wo'd have been enough to have frighten'd any child of 3 or 4 years old & to have made him dread the sight of the trumpet, which was a very large one & of great length when drawn out to its full extent, & which made the sound of a voice thro' it not only very loud but exceedingly rough & harsh. This circumstance may therefore account for my aversion to all extreme loud or violent sounds of any kind.

My father having now fix'd the Monday following for setting out on our return to Helvoetsluice, gave me the choice however of comencing our journey either then or on the day before (Sunday) when we might have an opportunity of hearing the great organ at Haerlem at service time. As however I had fallen in love with Amsterdam & experienc'd greater pleasure in this journey than I had ever before felt, I co'd not separate the idea of returning to Helvoetsluice from setting out on my imediate return to England & of course to school, & therefore feeling a repugnance to leaving Amsterdam for once put by my musical hobby & determin'd on staying where I was as long as possible so that we did not set out 'till the Monday.

I sho'd however before I quite leave this city, mention the sloes, or sledges, the substitute for Hackney coaches there, being in fact coaches without wheels, having nothing but leather under the bodies of them to defend the bottoms from injury from the pavement, which being sometimes very rugged & uneven the jolting was excessive, & sometimes in passing other carriages one side of the vehicle wo'd get into the gutter, & being on a slope wo'd be near tipping over. I remember once going in one of these with some of our party, of an evening when we were, by a sudden jolt very near tipp'd into a butcher's shop, on which one of the ladies being much frighten'd, we did not enter a second time into one. By the side of these sledges a man always runs with a piece of board in his hand, having a great dab of grease on it, with which he (taking advantage of its

frequent healing) contrives occasionally to slip under the bottom of it to facilitate its motion.

We now set out on our return to Helvoetsluice, which we accomplish'd in much less time than that of our journey from it, as we made no halt on the road (except just to call on Lady Aylesbury ⁵¹ at Leyden, whom my father had, I believe, taken over to Holland a year or two before in the yatch) & went the greatest part of the way in carriages. As we got to the Brielle in the evening, we took a rattler immediately for Helvoetsluice, which we at first thought of reaching that same evening, but fearing afterwards that we sho'd be too late, the gates being always shut at a particular hour, we stopt at a house called the Half Way House, kept by a Mrs Anderson, an English widow woman, (where we used frequently to go from Helvoetsluice for a walk to drink tea etc.) whom my father consulted as to the chance of being in time, wishing otherwise to sleep there, send back the rattler & walk into Helvoetsluice (about 3 miles) the next morning to breakfast. Mrs Anderson however having at first said she thought we sho'd be in time, seem'd determin'd to maintain her point & was (perhaps also to shew her great disinterestedness) so vehement in her assurances that we were not too late that my father (as much I believe to save trouble of the torrent of her eloquence, as from any real conviction of being in time) at length reluctantly complied, in consequence of which we found ourselves shut out as he had suspected wo'd be the case, & were forced to wait on the drawbridge about 20. minutes, 'till our names had been carried in form to the Governor & leave was obtain'd (on paying 3 Guilders, about 5s) to open the gates for us...

On our return to Helvoetsluice, my father & I, tho' actuated probably by different motives, had yet an equal wish to know how the Ambassador was, in which respect we had an immediate opportunity of being gratified as we there found a letter from him, acquainting us that tho' he was quite recover'd, yet his wife was now indispos'd, on which it would be necessary to detain us some days longer. As the term of the school vacation was now pretty well expired, I knew I sho'd return there almost immediately on my arrival in England & therefore consider'd this delay as just so much added to my holidays, with which I was not a little pleas'd & only wish'd that the faculty might keep Madam as long in their hands as they had done her husband.

As we return'd to Helvoetsluice a day or two before the King's birth day, ⁵² Capt Keith's sloop, which lay about half a mile off from the pier head, was to fire a salute, which co'd not be done by the yatch, which ever since her first arrival had been laid close alongside of the pier in the haven. On this, I was thrown into rather an awkward dilemma by Capt Keith asking if I wo'd not like to be on board at the time of the firing which I had of course not the least wish for but at the same time was rather asham'd to acknowledge the true reason, so after a little recollection told him I thought we sho'd have a much better sight of it from the pier, on which my father laugh'd & nothing more was said about it. Accordingly at one o'clock, we all assembled on the

⁵¹Lady Caroline Ailesbury (1721-1803), the third wife of Charles Bruce, Earl of Ailesbury, who died in 1747. In the same year she married Field Marshal the Hon Henry Seymour-Conway. It is not known why she was living in Holland at this time.

⁵²George III (1738-1820), who had succeeded to the throne the previous year. His birthday was on June 4.

pier, when the sloop, meaning to cut a figure in honor of our new sovereign (George the 3d.) in the eyes of the Mynheers, attempted to fire a royal salute (of 21. guns). As however the sloop had but 16. the only way that this co'd be accomplished was by reloading the first 5 guns imediately after their being fir'd, so as to be ready after the 16th gun, to continue the salute. It happen'd however (whether they were too quick in firing the 16 or too slow in reloading the first 5) that at the end of the 16th. fire there was a long pause, w'ch entertain'd us much on the pier, from whence we could hear the lieut't damning their blood & calling out lustily "Why don't ye fire" etc. to the great diversion of the veteran tars of the yatch some of whom were also then on the pier. At length however the *royal* salute was finish'd, which might rather have been called a double salute of 16. & 5 guns.

In the following week my auditory nerves had another narrow escape, as dining with my father & other company on board our convoy, my father drank my health after dinner, adding that it was my birthday (the 11th. of June) on which Capt Keith proposed a general bumper & (whether in jest or earnest I know not) proposed firing a small (*not a royal*) salute upon the occasion, as is sometimes customary on drinking healths at sea or out of English ports. One of the company however, observing that it was the 12th of June & not the 11th I readily agreed with him (tho' in fact I knew nothing of the matter) saying I was sure it was the 12th, on which the salute was of course abandon'd.

The time at length arriving (& not with leaden wings) in which the Ambassador inform'd us of his lady being recover'd & announc'd his intention of embarking in a day or two with his family, the yatch sailed out of the haven & anchor'd near our convoy, where in the evening we receiv'd the Ambassador, his lady, son & 2 daughters, who coming on board after sunset, the salute on the occasion was deferr'd 'till after sunrise the following morning, which not being inform'd of, I went to bed without the anticipation of being awaked in so unpleasant a manner, which however in fact I was not, as tho' 7. of the yatch's guns (which were I believe 6 pounders) were fir'd early in the morning, I was fast asleep & never dreamt of any such thing, which I indeed knew nothing of 'till on getting up at my usual time I was ask'd if [I] had not been awaken'd by an agreeable serenade, which being explain'd to me, I congratulated myself on being so sound a sleeper, tho' I seem'd at the same time to recollect something unusual jarring me in my sleep.

Having now dress'd myself, I went upon deck to cast a farewell glance at Helvoetsluice, but was surprized to find I had done that the evening before, being now out of sight of that place, having been under sail with a fine breeze ever since day break & passed the Isle of Gorea, which with the other shores of the Dutch coast, gradually diminish'd 'till about 11 o'clock & we were out of sight of land, in w'ch situation however we were only about 6. hours, as (having a fair wind) about 5 in the afternoon, the coast of England began faintly to appear, near which about 9. or 10. o' clock, we came to an anchor for the night, which being exceedingly fine we all (with the Ambassador & his family) walked on the quarter deck after supper, when we were regaled with a Dutch song from Miss Boreille, which with her soft & sweet voice appear'd as delicate as if it had been Italian. She also afterwards gave us a French song.

The next morning we arriv'd at the Nore, where our convoy taking leave of us we proceeded up the Thames, during which we all dined upon the quarter deck in preference to the cabin, the Ambassador wishing for more air. Whilst however we were at dinner a sudden breeze made us heel considerably insomuch that away went the dishes & plates into the laps of those that sat on the lee side & down went the butter boats etc. By a dextrous management however of the helm by the steersman we got to rights again as suddenly as we had been disturb'd, all that had happen'd being a little gravy etc. spilt on some of the ladies garments, with a little screaming etc. - Having finish'd our dinner, we now glided up the Thames, being now got into smoother water, & soon (by far too soon) the well known cupolas of Greenwich Hospital began to appear, which magnified in a surprizing degree, as I thought, before which we at length came to an anchor, & chaises were immediately sent for to the Hospital for the Ambassador & his retinue, on the arrival of which we all landed. On quitting the yacht I seem'd as if parting from an old friend, & gave it many a look in going toward the shore, envying almost the men that were left on board. As however my father told me I sho'd stay at home a day or two to see my friends at Greenwich etc. before I return'd to school, I did not go ashore with quite so heavy a heart as I otherwise sho'd have done.

On my return to school, I had now a great deal to relate to my schoolfellows, particularly those who slept in the room with me, amongst whom no one was so inquisitive into the particulars of my voyage etc. as my friend Boscawen, a son of the late Admiral's,⁵³ who was rather older but in the same class with me, being a boy of a very enterprizing disposition & with whom I happen'd to be very intimate... Being fill'd with enthusiasm on the glory his father had acquir'd in the service, he thirsted after a more active life, often expressing his wish to go to sea, & declaring that nothing co'd give him so much pleasure as being in a 74 gun ship & laid alongside a Spanish man of war & giving her a few broadsides... I remember once he took me up into his room & shew'd me a large parcel of old school books that had belong'd to his father which he brought to school in case he might want any of them. These he propos'd our dividing equally & stationing ourselves w'th our respective shares at each end of a long entry adjoining to his room & pelting one another with this kind of ammunition, which exercise he called a battle of books. Accordingly throwing a large book into the middle of the entry by way of bait, on my running to seize it (to increase my own stock of ammunition) I had one still larger thrown at my head & so we went on 'till the greatest part of his being spent I had to bait him in the same way, besides which many books fell short of their intended destination & dropt in the passage, & sometimes books in opposite directions encounter'd each other in the air & books fell short, the obtaining of w'ch occasion'd a struggle between us. The bell however ringing for school, we were obliged to come to a cessation of arms, when in putting by the ammunition we discover'd that many books were mutilated by the loss of their covers etc. which however Boscawen did not seem much to regard, but propos'd to come & renew the combat the next day. This we accordingly did, but had been not long engaged before

⁵³William Glanville Boscawen. He was the second son of Admiral Edward Boscawen (1711-1761), who following a distinguished naval career had died of fever at his Surrey home, Hatchlands Park in January 1761.

one of the masters hearing an odd kind of bustle above stairs, had the curiosity to come & see the cause of it, whom in the heat of the battle we did not discover 'till he was fairly in the midst of the field & had like to have come in for a random shot or two himself. He was however no sooner observ'd than both parties took to flight, leaving the spoils to the master, the whole of which he seized & took into his own rooms & there kept it, so that here ended the *battle of books*. Boscawen was also a great politician & very fond of newspapers, court calendars etc. which he prefer'd I believe to all school books except Caesar's *Comentaries*... As he also learnt to draw & was a great favorite of Mr Highmore's the drawing master (as he was of the whole school) for his open generous disposition, he found no difficulty in getting sea pieces, shipping, castles etc to draw instead of common landscapes. He also sung a tolerable good song, but as may be suppos'd confin'd himself to sea songs, such as "Hearts of Oak," "Cease rude Boreas," "Life is chequer'd" etc.⁵⁴ which he used to roar out with great energy & vociferation. I also once pick'd up a sea song in the holidays, in which his father was honorably mention'd, the 1st. verse concluding with "Boscawen's the bravest of tars,"⁵⁵ by singing which I believe I gain'd his favor & friendship as much as by any thing. With this flattering disposition, his friends must have had great expectations of him in his future destination, which were however cruelly disappointed by his premature death, being drown'd in bathing during his first sea voyage⁵⁶... Had it not been for this event, there is no person I sho'd have been happier to see, or wo'd have gone farther to meet after a 10. or 20 years absence than him whom I flatter myself wo'd have felt equal delight in talking over old stories & retracing the innocent but then interesting events of our youth...

As to myself, I dont recollect any active quality calculated to distinguish me from the generality of the boys. Before I went first to school, my father (as I have said before) took some pains in teaching me to read & who being rather austere in his manner contriv'd (as sho'd certainly be aim'd at by all parents, teachers etc.) to make himself both loved & fear'd by us all. With this disposition therefore I came first to school standing in much awe of Mess'rs Swinden & Bracken etc. whom I thought much more austere than my father. I therefore soon found that the safest & best way of going on was by a close attention to my studies in school time & avoiding all wanton or vicious mischief out of school: & in pursuance of this plan I managed to gain the esteem & goodwill of my several masters, & obtain'd many a little reward on being called upon to solve some difficulty in grammar that some in a superior class co'd not do. - Whether however I was too much flatter'd by this, or thought myself too secure & relax'd a little in my attention to business, I know not, but I somehow managed in a year or two to lose the good opinion of Mr Bracken who once said to me on some occasion I don't now recollect, that I used to be as good a little boy as any in the school, but was now

⁵⁴William Boyce's "Heart of Oak" comes from David Garrick's pantomime *Harlequin's Invasion*, first produced at Drury Lane in 1759. The original tune differed considerably from that generally heard today. "Cease rude Boreas" (words: George Alexander Stevens) appeared in a number of popular 18th century collections - cf. *The Convivial Songster*, 1782 (Huntington Library Ms. 146464). Maurice Greene's song "Life is chequer'd" also appears in *The Convivial Songster*.

⁵⁵The song has not been identified.

⁵⁶William Boscawen was drowned in Jamaica on April 21, 1769.

grown as idle as any of them. - I must however do my self the justice to say that this stimulated me immediately to set about recovering what I had lost by resuming my former diligence in which I so far succeeded as to reestablish my self in the opinion of Mr Bracken in which I have reason to think I continued during the remainder of the time I stay'd at that school. Not that I was ever so good a scholar as many that were there, as my father never wo'd let me learn Greek, thinking Latin fully sufficient (of Classical learning) for a gentleman. I however learnt French, arithmetic, mathematics, drawing & dancing, which altogether took off much of my attention to the Latin classics. In French I remember I made a considerable progress & won 2 prizes. For it being usual a few weeks before each vacation to put the French boys into 6 classes, each of which were to do a series of exercises for a prize; I being in the 3d. class had such an advantage over the others in that class from having learnt Latin that tho' they had learnt French some months longer than I had, I yet left them all so considerably behind that some of them soon declin'd the contest. In consequence of this I was presented by Mr Bracken with "La Vie privee des Romains"⁵⁷ very neatly bound in gilt & was at the next exercises advanc'd to the 2d. class, where the others being all far beyond me both in Latin & French I was now left behind. The French master thinking I was not fairly dealt with in being class'd with these veterans, reinstated me afterwards in my former class, all of whom I again outstripp'd & was now rewarded with 2 vols. of Telemachus⁵⁸ with my name honourably enter'd therein.

But of all my studies my favorite ones were drawing & mathematics, which indeed I consider'd as relaxations insomuch as I remember being once much disconcerted at a half holiday being given us of an afternoon which wo'd otherwise have been appropriated to the mathematics, the dry & abstruse parts of which were reliev'd by drawing the different figures (for which I had an excellent case of instruments) & by the use of the globes; besides which occasionally on a fine afternoon in the summer those who learnt this branch were taken into the park by the mathematic master to learn surveying (for which we had a compleat apparatus belonging to the school) which was a delightful way to me of spending an afternoon, tho' as one of the juniors (at first) I had to help carry the chain & remove the targets, the seniors taking the angles by the theodolite & making notes & remarks in small books carried by them for that purpose. In consequence of these peregrinations several beautiful & accurate plans of Greenwich Park were at different times taken by the senior boys amongst whom however were several dunces, who paid more attention to surveying the crab apple trees in some part of the park & were more ready to enter into any kind of frolic or mischief than attend to the drudgery (as they thought it) of this science.

With regard to drawing, tho' from a child I was nearly as fond of this amusement as of music & used to practise it on a slate yet from not having naturally a free hand... I did not succeed so well in either landscapes or figures as my father had expected I sho'd, my drawings being always (like my writing) stiff & formal with thick & strong outlines etc. I however readily enough acquir'd an insight to perspective & made all

⁵⁷The exact identity of this volume is unclear. It may have been a translation drawn from Plutarch's famous *Parallel Lives*, well known in the 18th century both in French and English.

⁵⁸Probably the successful novel *Les Aventures de Télémaque* by François Fénelon, first published in 1699.

my drawings very accurate & exact as to proportion etc. every deviation from which was always a great eye sore to me. For this reason I always prefer'd drawings in which buildings, churches etc. were the principal objects.⁵⁹

As to my out of school habits, as I was always of a rather sedentary turn & generally prefer'd a book from the school library or amusing myself with a pen & ink, or with some musical ideas with w'ch my mind was then pretty well stor'd, I did not so often join in the common amusements of cricket trap ball etc. (tho' I sometimes did with a sett that I liked) I was I suppose look'd upon by the generality as rather unsociable. There were however always a few that I prefer'd to the rest & liked to associate with & who, if older than me were ready to take my part on occasion. Neither they however or others co'd induce me to join in any very mischievous frolic or to assume the character of a *buck* the cant term for those who were always ready to enter into any dashing scheme or to do an act merely because they were dared not to do it. Yet I have reason to think that upon the whole I was always respected by the boys in general...

As to the number of boys at a time at this Academy the greatest that I remember is 104 which they once came up to in the latter part of Mr Swinden's time, before & after which it generally fluctuated from about 75 to near 100. - When I first went there were many large boys, but these being very turbulent & difficult to manage Mr Swinden gradually got rid of them, & Mr Bracken refused taking any above a certain age in consequence of w'ch they were in general a much smaller set in his time...

As to the building that contain'd this large family, it was like a little town, being a large old fashion'd irregularly built house with a hall in the middle, on the right of which & behind it, were the parlours kitchen etc. & rooms occupied by the master & his family, & on the left were three rooms communicating together (two of w'ch were very large) forming the Latin, writing & French schools over all which & the hall were several rooms in w'ch the boys slept, besides which there were also large garrets over the whole house in w'ch the larger boys slept. The room over the hall being appropriated for the smaller boys & newcomers I slept there for the first 2 or 3 years, during w'ch we were always particularly caution'd by the maid to be very quiet on a Friday night, that being as she term'd it *brown bowl night*, when the masters or ushers (who always inhabited the hall) always spent the evening together making it a kind of club night & made merry with a bowl of punch on that even'g allow'd them according to ancient custom by the senior master.

But notwithstanding the largeness of the family altogether, nothing co'd exceed the regularity with which everything was always conducted; the school hours being from 6 in the summer & 7. in the winter 'till 9. when we breakfasted. From 10. 'till 12. when we came out, dined at 1. & were in school again from 2 'till 5. except on Thursdays, when we came out at 4. but had then a repetition to learn against the next morning & also except Saturdays when we had always a half a holiday. We had also holidays every saints or state day & a month & 3 or 4 odd days vacation at Whitsuntide & Christmas.

⁵⁹Marsh continued to make drawings of churches throughout most of his life. None are known to have survived.

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The boys being always divided into several classes in both the Latin & French schools, every one after each vacation had a paper given him, denoting which school he was to be in or which particular branch he was to apply to every day of the week & every part of the day, in the following form, which was the last that was given to me before I left school.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Before Breakfast	Writing	Mathematic	French	Arithmetic	French	Writing
After Breakfast	French	Latin	Drawing	French	Drawing	French
Afternoon	Latin	French	Latin	Globes etc.	Mathematic	

There was also the same regularity as to our living, having fix'd dinners for every day in the week viz. on Sundays roast beef & baked plumb puddings - Monday's, boiled legs of mutton & cold or hash'd beef - Tuesdays, boil'd buttock of beef & pudding - Wednesdays roast legs of mutton & fried beef - Thursdays, roast veal & cold mutton - Fridays boil'd beef & pudding - & Saturdays; pease soup & roast mutton. - As we always sat at 3 long tables, the principal hot joint of meat was at the head of each (of w'ch there were of course always 3) & cold mutton, hash or fried meat at the bottom of each, which were carv'd by the masters who (except the head master, who however assisted in carving for us) took their dinners with us. We also always chose our breakfasts & suppers for the week at the beginning of each (whether bread & butter, Gloster or Cheshire cheese, or milk & bread) for w'ch lists were made out accordingly by one of the senior boys & deliver'd to the cook, & had hot roles (either butter'd or with cheese, as we had chosen) every other morning. On Sundays however we had plumb & seed cake alternately, unless we prefer'd the usual weekly breakfast & also every Sunday from the Whitsuntide to the Christmas vacation had either gooseberry, currant, cherry, damson or apple pye for supper.

We also kept particular feast days, namely *Shrove Tuesday*, when we had our fill of pancakes, w'ch Mrs B. used to say (from the great trouble of providing them for so many hungry boys) she grudg'd us more than anything; *Michaelmas Day* when 9 geese were always consum'd, viz. 6 in the school, one in the parlour, one in the kitchen & one in the hall by the masters who on that day dined by themselves; & finally the headmaster's *wedding day* when we were regaled with ham, veal & apple pye.

When my father took possession of the yatch in 1757. he of course look'd upon it as a permanency, like a captaincy in Greenwich Hospital or any other sinecure (which it was almost) that would be held for life, or at least *dum se bene gesserut*.⁶⁰ In this however he was cruelly disappointed, as about the end of the year 1763 the yatch was suddenly taken away from him, for no other reason than to be given to Capt Percival, son of Lord Egmont (then first Lord of the Admiralty) in order to make him a Post Captain, the yatches always conferring that rank upon their comandars.⁶¹ There

⁶⁰As long he behaves well.

⁶¹Marsh's account is erroneous. The command of the Catherine was given (in December 1763) to Alexander Hood, who was already a Post Captain. Philip Perceval, the third son of the Earl of Egmont had also already been made Post (in 1759) and was given command of another naval yacht, Fubbs, but not until 1766.

not being the shadow of a complaint to be made against my father, the only method by which this co'd be done was by putting the yatch out of comision & recomissioning her a day or two afterwards with the appointment of a new captain.

Lord Egmont however virtually acknowledg'd the unfairness of the transaction by promising my father to do what he co'd towards *making him amends* by keeping him always employ'd in a guardship at home, which by the bye was far from so doing, as the yatch besides entitling him to full pay with very little service annex'd to it, was always accompanied with many *valuable perquisites*, which were of course now to be given up, & which was a great loss to his family. My father indeed wo'd have made a greater stir about it than he did, had it not been hinted to him that his yielding it up quietly & with a good grace, might afterward be of use to any of his sons that he sho'd bring up in the naval line, by giving him a fair & plausible claim upon the Admiralty on their behalf.

My father being now therefore appointed to a guardship at Portsmouth,⁶² went about Christmas 1763. & took me with him to a Mr Collins's an intimate friend of his who had been a purser, but now lived in a house of his own in Cold Harbour Gosport, where I spent a very pleasant fortnight or 3 weeks Mr Collins having then his 2 sons at home who were nearly of my own age. On Christmas Day in the evening I remember I went, for the first time to the chapel,⁶³ which was then handsomely lighted up (according to annual custom on that evening in consequence of a legacy for that purpose). - As this was now to be our place of residence, I was of course in hopes I sho'd find an organ in the chapel, w'ch however I was afraid to ask about beforehand for fear of a disappointment, but on approaching the chapel in the evening was glad to hear the sound of it, it being on that occasion played before the service began. As the chapel being so lighted up was an unusual thing a great concourse of people always then attend, more I sho'd suspect to see the illumination (there being a great many more candles than necessary for the purpose, particularly about the communion table etc.) than from true devotion. The organist also (Mr Wafer⁶⁴) used to take that opportunity of shewing off, so that not being then acquainted with his usual style of play, I thought him a capital player & more than equal to Mr Wheatly at Greenwich.

In the course of the following spring (1764) my father remov'd entirely from Greenwich & took possession of a house he had bought in Cold Harbour, Gosport, next door to Capt. Barker, (who had a son at Greenwich Academy with whom I was very intimate) taking with him my aunt & cousin Pratten (who had lived with us some

(Information supplied by the Maritime Information Centre, Greenwich.) Charnock (op.cit.) is also inaccurate, claiming that Henry Marsh remained in command of the Catherine until 1765.

⁶²Charnock quotes (and dismisses) reports that Capt. Marsh was appointed to the Triumph, a guardship of 74 guns. Otherwise the identity of his command until the beginning of 1765 is not known.

⁶³Holy Trinity. The organ, built by the Abraham Jordans in 1720, was purchased in 1748 from the Duke of Chandos' private chapel at Cannons and had almost certainly been played by Handel. The first organist to be appointed was James Peaceable of Southampton, whose tenure lasted eleven years.

⁶⁴Little is known of Wafer (d.c.1791), presumably Peaceable's successor and shortly to become Marsh's only formal music teacher. By 1774 he had moved from Gosport and was living in London with his sister in Well Street, having been appointed organist of nearby Berwick Street Chapel. He also taught singing.

time at Greenwich) & also my brothers Henry & Edward, whom he now sent to the Rev'd Mr Gibson's school at Bishop's Waltham, Hants. In the following Whitsuntide vacation I therefore went down with my friend & chum J. Barker & 3 of his sisters (whom we took up at Mrs Castlefrank's school at Clapham Common) under the convoy of our friend Mr Francis Cooke of Greenwich Hospital (who was then going to Portsmouth) in the machine, which now went (according to advertisement) to & from Portsmouth in *one* day; that is to say it sat out at 12 o'clock at night at London & Portsmouth & arrived at the end of its journey about 6 or 7 o'clock the next evening. Here besides my aunt, cousin & bro's Henry & Edw'd I found my sister whom my father on his removal from Greenwich to Gosport had taken from Dorking & brought home again.

At the latter end of this year the guardship that my father commanded being order'd to get ready to go to sea, my father went to London to solicit another instead of it, & intended taking me back with him for the Christmas holidays, but unfortunately in getting in or out of a Hackney coach he happen'd to break his shin... He therefore now went to Mr Cooke's at Greenwich Hospital, in the hope that by laying up his leg for a few days, & giving it entire rest he might get it heal'd. It however soon began to ulcerate as usual & he found it at length necessary to take to his bed so that I went down to Gosport with Jack Barker & spent the holidays with my aunt, cousin, brothers & sister without seeing my father the whole time.

On my arrival at Gosport w'ch was in the evening, one of the first things I enquir'd about was concerning my sister's proficiency in music, who had for 3 or 4. months been learning, of Mr Wafer the organist to play upon an old spinnet of my Aunt Pratten's which she had lately sent for from Twickenham, where she had left it on coming to live with my father; & in this I was immediately gratified, not indeed by a mere recital of what she co'd do but by the thing itself, as at my aunts desire, she immediately sat down to the spinnet; & with the first introductory prelude she played I was unexpectedly pleas'd particularly with the *chords*, which I thought much in the style of my favorite instrument the organ. After this I listen'd with great attention to T'amo tanto, a ground of Mr. Wafer's, Lady Coventry's Minuet,⁶⁵ & 2 or 3 other tunes in different keys, of the same kind, but not without insisting on the proper prelude or chords being struck at each change of key, previous to a fresh tune being began. Having now an opportunity of hearing music upon easier terms than ever, I thought myself very happy in having this valuable addition to my other amusements during the holidays.

As I was so much pleas'd with the little my sister played my aunt told me there was a young lady (Miss Wood) who liv'd at the next door to us, with her mother (Mrs Hamilton) that was older & had learnt much longer than my sister, & as Mr Wafer sometimes attended her of an evening, she wo'd ask leave to introduce me there the next evening he came, which she accordingly did, & I was delighted with the effect

⁶⁵From Artaserse by Atillio Ariosti (King's Theatre, London, December 1724). The tune was also used in the ballad opera *The Wedding* (set to the words "Porter, Nantz, hot-pot and gin shall inspire us") and *Polly*, the sequel to *The Beggar's Opera*. "Lady Coventry's Minuet" was a popular anonymous tune. It was used by the Chapel Royal organist Thomas Dupuis as the basis of a set of keyboard variations (pub. Bland, London, 1792).

of the fiddle (which Mr Wafer played) & spinnet together. Tho' this was the first time I had been admitted to hear Miss Wood play yet I had before, as it were, glean'd some of the sounds of her spinnet, as in the preceeding summer vacation when at play of an evening with my brothers, J. Barker etc. I sometimes, when Miss Wood happen'd to be playing to some company with the parlour windows open, had been induced to leave my playfellows & was attracted to the steps of the house, where I stood fix'd attentively listening to Felton's Gavot & Minuett with the Variations ⁶⁶ etc. w'ch Miss Wood then play'd very neatly.

In order to make these Christmas holidays as pleasant to us as possible, & also to prevent our littering every room in the house, my Aunt Pratten had the front parlour stript of its furniture & appropriated entirely to the use of my brothers & me when we were within doors, amongst our amusements in which, one was turning it into a church & performing the service (after tolling a little hand bell for some time) in which my bro'r Henry with a dicky shirt on by way of a surplice officiated as parson, Edw'd clerk & I organist for w'ch purpose I had contrived a skreen in a corner of the room with the figure of an organ drawn in front which I at intervals imitated. At other times, Cold Harbour afforded us a fine playground & now & then a walk to the ship, in the upper part of the harbour (which my father still commanded & where the officers were always very civil to us) made a variety that pass'd away our time very pleasantly. In the evenings (except when we now & then paid a visit to some young folks of our acquaintance) my old aunt was always ready & occasionally my cousin, to make one with us in a round game, or at the game of the goose⁶⁷ (of w'ch I made a board myself with some variation from the printed one), with now & then a little music, especially when we could get Mr Wafer to come to give my sister her lesson of an even'g, when his violin with the spinnet gratified us with what we then thought a pleasant concert, not that I believe my brothers were much interested in it, as they generally sought some other amusement...

As to my good old aunt, tho' she had been a cripple, as it were, for above 20 years, having nearly lost the use of her legs simply for want of using them, yet she enjoy'd pretty good health in the main, had always good spirits & was as well as her daughter exceeding good company, they being both very clever women & much attach'd to us all. But tho' my aunt was almost a fixture in the house (keeping her own room generally 'till near dinner time & then coming down to the parlour where she remain'd in her great chair 'till bed time) & was not able to walk 200 yards from it, with the help of her daughter's arm on one side & a short crutch stick on the other, without stopping at some house to rest at least twice by the way, (Sedan chairs being a luxury not then to be had at Gosport) yet she about once a year made an effort at the expence of much breath & with many haltings to get to chapel (which was at the opposite extremity of the town from our house) & receiv'd the sacrament...

⁶⁶William Felton (1715-1769). From the Andante and Variations of his Concerto op.1 no.3. Also known as "Farewell Manchester," the Gavot achieved a widespread popularity which lasted until well into the 19th century.

⁶⁷A game played with counters on a board divided into squares, every fourth or fifth one of which depicted a goose. It dates from the end of the sixteenth century, having been registered by John Wolfe at Stationer's Hall in 1597.

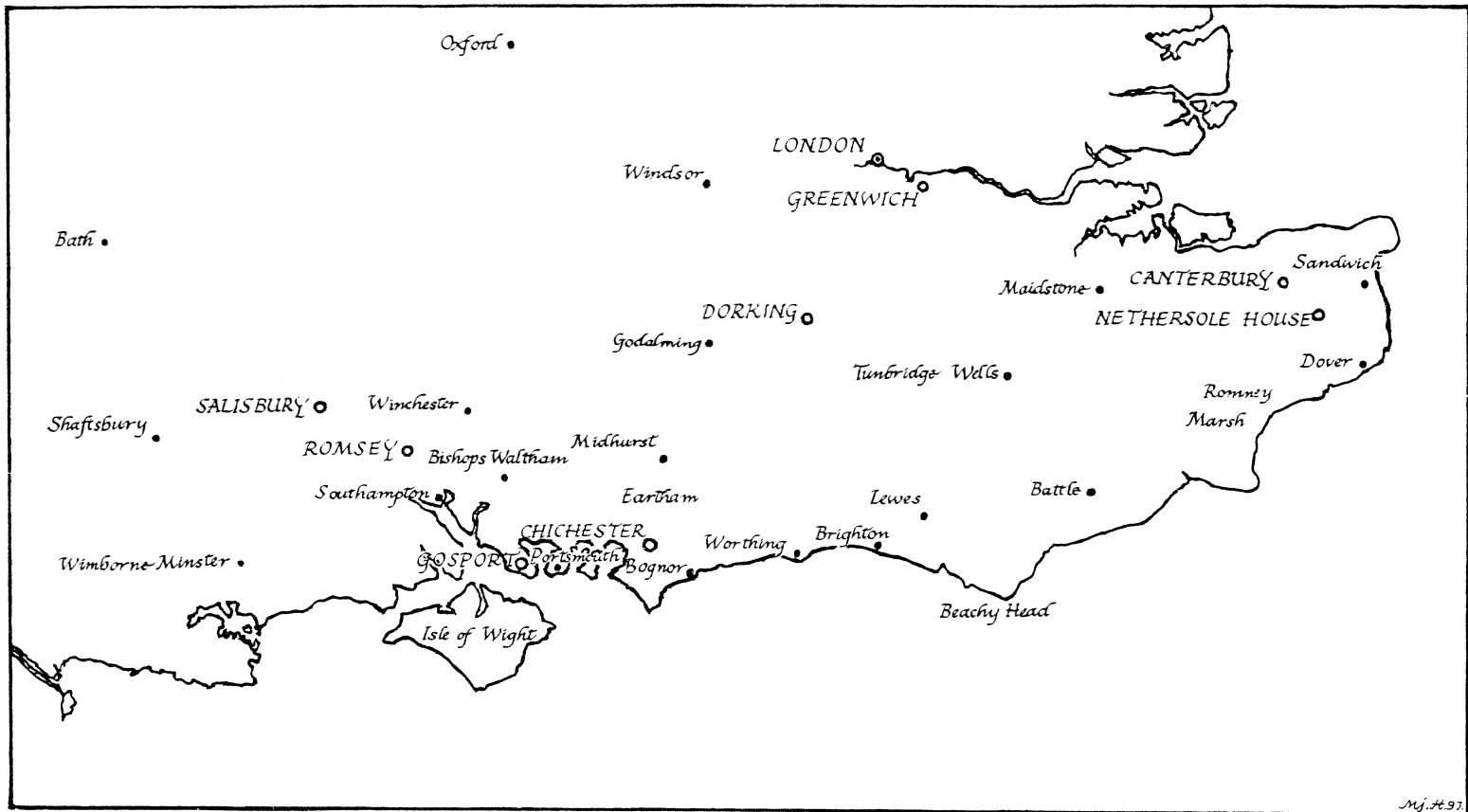


Plate 1: Map of Southern England showing principal towns and cities associated with Marsh. ©1997 Michealjohn Harris

CHAPTER TWO

Greenwich & Gosport 1765-1768



At the beginning of this year (1765) I bought a pocket book & began keeping a diary, which (except the omission of the greater part of the following year 1766) I have continued ever since so that in future I can be more particular as to dates etc. & shall probably recover several circumstances w^{ch} otherwise wo^d have been totally forgotten. From this diary it is that I have been able so particularly to mention what passed in this vacation, in w^{ch} the only alloy to our happiness proceeded from our anxiety about my father, whose letters were far from being so satisfactory as we co^d wish as they uniformly acquainted us with his being still confin^d to his bed (which he had taken to on the 31st Dec^r) without perceiving in consequence of it any tendency in his wound to heal...

[Captain Marsh was confined to his bed for nearly two months and it was to be mid-March before he fully recovered, his condition having been the cause of considerable alarm during the early weeks of the year.]

My father being now appointed to the St. Antonio (a large Spanish 64 gun ship, built of cedar & mahogany & now fitting up at Woolwich in order to be sent round to Portsmouth as a guardship there¹) went on April the 2^d. to take possession of her at Woolwich taking me with him, whom he enter^d on board as his clerk (a perquisite usually allow^d to captains of men of war who have families) for which purpose it became necessary for me to take a walk to Woolwich (about 3 miles) about once a month to muster, which I had not the least objection to. We there dined on board ship with the 1.st Lieut^t (now Capt. Hawker²) & his wife then a very pretty woman, the purser & his wife & another officer or two, who were afterward very civil to me when I went to muster, at one of which times (as Mr Hawker play^d the fiddle) they made a dance for me in the wardroom.

About this time I find by my diary that I was very much affected with bad headaches, insomuch that I was sometimes obliged to go to bed at 7 o'clock. These however afterwards went off, tho' I have frequently at times been subject to that

¹The San Antonio (of 60 guns), which according to Charnock was taken from the Spaniards at the Battle of Havanna in 1762.

²Captain James Hawker. Later commander of Hero 74, a 3rd-Rate built in 1759 and in which he saw action at Porto Praya in 1781 and Provodien in 1782.

complaint since, but not to that degree or so frequently as I used about this time to have them. - These headaches leaving me rather suddenly, have been (with what truth however I know not) attributed to my being electrified 2 or 3 times by the Lieut't. Governor of the Hospital, Capt Boys;³ an intimate friend of my father's with whom I used now & then to dine after my father left Greenwich, & who had a small electrical apparatus which he was fond of exhibiting.

On the 5th of April my father took his departure from Greenwich & in his way home carried me with him to Dorking where I spent the Easter holidays with my uncle & aunt Marsh, & on the Saturday following (the 13th) return'd to Greenwich... where I return'd on the Monday morning to school. At Dorking I paid my usual attention to the chimes & found that instead of "Britons strike home" they now play'd "Fill ev'ry glass,"⁴ a much better tune for the purpose, as it employ'd the whole 8. bells, whereas in the other only 6. were used. My uncle & aunt were now settled in my grandfather's house (who had retired from business) where my aunt now carried on the business with her two brothers Henry & George.

Tho' I have no reason to think I was ever anything of a Mendoza or Broughtonian⁵ yet I find in my diary 3. battles of mine recorded for this year enter'd as follows, viz. "March 22d. fought Norman lick'd him." "April fought Dayrell lick'd him." "Aug'st 27th. fought Gullan." This latter I remember was a drawn battle, as Mr Bracken made his appearance & separated us, which just saved my credit, as my adversary was a stout, hardy day boy & rather bigger than me, in consequence of which I had much the worst of it & sho'd have been obliged to yield had the battle lasted much longer. Mr Bracken however consider'd fighting as an evil not to be prevented by severity & therefore tho' he frequently threaten'd punishment yet never put his threats into execution at least he never went beyond separating & confining the parties within for the remainder of the day.

As I used to dine with my father about every 2d. or 3d. Sunday when he lived at Greenwich I at first on his leaving it began to think I sho'd find a great difference in this respect, but owing to the kindness of my (or rather my father's) friends I believe I rather benefited by his removal, as in my pocket book I find frequent entries of dining on Sundays, holidays etc. with J. Barker, Pybus etc. at Mess'rs Cookes Bessons Westcotts Cluttons, Capt Smiths, the Lieut't Governor (Capt Boys) & Admiral Ward's,⁶ a noisy, rattling man whom we used to like very much. By this time also J. Barker & I used to be knowing enough to send a note to some of our friends a day or two previous to a holiday offering to do ourselves the pleasure of dining with them that day if convenient. Being however once detected in this Mr Bracken threaten'd

³Captain William Boys (1703-74) became Lieutenant Governor of Greenwich Hospital in 1761. Originally a merchant seaman, Boys left a remarkable account (included in Charnock, op.cit, vol. VI, pp.304-10) of the loss of the Luxborough (in 1727), a vessel owned by the South Seas Company and of which he was 2nd Mate.

⁴"Fill ev'ry glas," a popular air used in *The Beggars's Opera* (Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, 1728).

⁵Daniel Mendoza (1764-1836) and Jack Broughton (c1704-1789) were the two most famous boxers of the 18th century, the former being the first important fighter to replace mere slugging with scientific boxing.

⁶Henry Ward. On his return from Mediterranean duty in 1757 he was retired with the rank of Rear-Admiral. He died in 1766 - Charnock, op.cit. vol. V, pp.128-9.

us with the utmost effects of his displeasure if we were ever so detected again, which put a stop to the practice.

During these visits I had of course my favorites & flirts amongst the young misses of my age the chief of which & between whom my attentions seem'd always most divided were Miss Cooke & Miss Clutton, both of whom I admired as well for their agreeable persons & figures as for their good nature & pleasing manners. The latter however I rather think I inclin'd to as being the sweetest temper'd & most accomplish'd, especially in music.

As I dont find it enter'd in my pocket book amongst the events of this year I conclude it was before that my father once introduc'd me to a concert (the first I ever was at) in the Council Room at Greenwich Hospital, which was occasion'd by the remarkable family of the Sharps in London,⁷ of whom there were 7 brothers, all musical who one fine day coming down the river in a barge with Mr Hay,⁸ the celebrated violin player of the time were induced to stay & give a concert there, assisted by old Mr Galabin on the violoncello, a Frenchman, husband of a *Dutch* lady who kept the *English* boarding school... & such other 2 or 3 performers as could be procur'd at so short notice in Greenwich. And I suppose it must have been some years before this as I dont recollect any particular circumstances of the concert except that my father pointed out Mr Hay's violin as the principal object of attention, & that the whole concluded with God save the King in which all the company join'd chorus...

On Saturday Nov. 30th I went with Pybus to my Aunt Lynns in London,⁹ where we stay'd 'till the Tuesday evening following when we returned to school & Tuesday Dec'r the 17th. I left Mr Brackens for the last time as it turn'd out (...) as about the middle of the vacation my father hinted to me one morning at breakfast that he suppos'd I should think myself degraded were he to take me from Mr Brackens & send me with my brothers to Waltham School. A six years confinement within the walls of Greenwich Academy had given me quite enough of that seminary, & I had often heard my brothers mention the liberty they enjoy'd at Waltham of ranging uncontroll'd about the town & neighbourhood, not being confin'd within walls as we were at Greenwich. So that liberty having probably as many charms for a schoolboy as for a politician I believe I had rather *envied* my brothers their situation than otherwise. This therefore together with the love of novelty natural to youth & the additional pleasure of being with my brothers (another novelty) induced me to acede readily to my father's proposal.

⁷By the early 1770's the Sharpe family were running a celebrated concert series, initially in Mincing Lane, Leadenhall Street and later in Old Jewry - *Recollections of R.J.S. Stevens*, op.cit. p.10. Stevens names the flautist Granville and the name Sharp(e) occurs occasionally in London concert programs of the period; some or all of the following may also have been members of the family: Michael (oboist), Francis (double-bass), William (cellist), Richard (double-bass) whilst John and Joseph are listed as instrumentalists.

⁸Richard Hay (?-1785) was one of the leading players of the day. In addition to leading the famous Bach/Abel concerts in the late 1760's, Hay jointly (with Cramer) lead the huge band at the first of the Handel Commemoration concerts in 1784.

⁹Another of Marsh's five aunts on his mother's side, possibly Elizabeth (b.1734), the name given by the Lynns to one of their daughters.

Having now mention'd all the private & domestic events that happen'd whilst I was at the Academy in which I was in any way concern'd, I shall before I finally conclude my account of it, just mention what public events I remember to have happen'd, which were the following viz. the death of King George the 2d. in 1760. The taking of Pondichery from the French in 1761. & the peace with France & Spain in 1763.¹⁰ (for each of w'h latter events we had a holiday given us) the great total eclipse of the sun on the 1st. of April 176 [blank]¹¹ & the death of the Duke of Cumberland in November 1765.¹²... As to the eclipse it began I remember on a Sunday morning about (or before) 9.o'clock, on which account (as it lasted above 2 hours) the service of the church was put off 'till 11 o'clock. To prevent I suppose great dilapidations from being made amongst the windows of the school in order to procure broken glass to smoke for the occasion Mr Bracken gave notice the day before that a sufficient quantity of smoked glass wo'd be provided for the use of the boys at the time of the eclipse, w'ch was accordingly done, & the weather being very favorable we had all an exceedingly good sight of it. This was the greatest eclipse I ever saw (& the greatest that had been for many years before) tho' the darkness when the whole face of the sun was obscur'd was not so great as we had expected. It was however sufficiently so as we heard afterwards to induce the smaller birds poultry etc. to go to roost. - As this happen'd on the 1st. of April I remember it being the occasion of many boys being made April Fools by being induced to get up an hour or two earlier than they need have done...

I cannot totally conclude my account of this Academy without mentioning the great reputation it was in the whole time I was at it as appears from its being kept up about 20 years after Mess'rs Swinden & Bracken together, & about 15 years after Mr Bracken had left it in *their names*; for Mr B. finding his state of health injur'd by his constant attention to the duties of his school, did not keep it above 4. or 5. years after Mr Swinden left it but retir'd to Bath, & was succeeded in the Academy by the Rev'd Mr James, who kept it, 'till the house was pulled down several years afterwards & the site of it, with its garden & playground thrown into the Hospital School ground, when it was remov'd to a large house at the bottom of Crooms Hill, the whole of w'ch time, it was describ'd in gold letters over the entrance as the Academy "late Mess'rs. Swinden & Brackens." About the year 1794. it was however quitted by Mr James & is now carried on by Dr Chas. Burney,¹³ but no longer with Mess'rs Swinden & Bracken's name put up.

When I, as it were, thus retrace the events of my early youth, I sho'd be induced to look upon the time spent at school as having been some of the happiest of my life, were I not at the same time to consider that all the incidents before related of visiting my father at Greenwich, my voyage to Holland & all the school vacations during the

¹⁰The Peace of Paris in 1763 marked the end of the Seven Years War.

¹¹1763.

¹²William, Duke of Cumberland was the brother of George II and the victor of Culloden.

¹³Dr. Charles Burney (c1753-1817) was the son of the music historian (*vide supra* ch.1 n.50) and a distinguished Greek scholar. It seems likely that he was a master at Greenwich for several years before buying the Academy from the Rev James. After he took over it was known as Burney's Academy, in which form it flourished until well into the 19th century - Kerby, op.cit, Ch.1, n.24).

6 years I was a boarder there cannot have really taken up altogether more than one fourth of that time (...) & that therefore the remaining three fourths must have consisted in general of tedious days spent (except when occasionally enliven'd by the amusements before mention'd & Boscawen's good humour) mostly in the dry study of languages etc. in constant & invariable rotation; so that were I to be endued with the power of setting my life back & spending any part of it over again, I sho'd not certainly avail myself to that degree (if I did it at all) as to pass over again any of the time I was at this or my succeeding school.

In this Christmas vacation I found a great addition & acquisition to our society in the company of our next door neighbours Mrs Hamilton & Miss Wood who generally dined with us once or twice a week & spent almost every evening that they or we were not otherwise engaged with us. Here was the beginning of that intimacy between my father & Mrs Hamilton that afterwards ripen'd into something more than common friendship, as will be hereafter related. And if the manners of Mrs Hamilton were particularly pleasing to my father those of her daughter (a fine & rather handsome young lady about a year or more older than myself) were at that time no less so to my brothers, sister & myself..

1766

On Friday Jan'y 24th. 1766. I accompanied my brothers Henry & Edward in the caravan to Bishops Waltham School, where we arrived at dinner time & were much pleas'd at finding that a mountebank doctor & his Merry Andrew ¹⁴ attended at Waltham every Friday afternoon during which time we had frequently a half holiday on those days.

Here I found matters upon a much smaller scale than at Greenwich, there being only about 30. boarders & 3 or 4 day boys. We however applied closer to our books, & fag'd more than we did at Greenwich at least in the winter, as we here always spent those evenings, (after supper) at our desks in doing exercises & preparing for the next morning's business. I also here applied much more to classical learning than I had done before as I learnt little else except arithmetic, our French master coming from Gosport & only attending Thursday afternoons & Friday mornings. Mathematics too, tho' Mr Gibson (the Head Master) often talked about resuming it with me, yet never put his intention into execution... But tho' upon the whole I applied closer than I did at Greenwich yet out of school the liberty of ranging about uncontroul'd particularly in the summer, & on Sundays & holidays made ample amends for it. In the winter indeed we mostly confin'd ourselves to the churchyard & town, w'ch being without trade or any kind of amusement (except the Merry Andrew for a few weeks) was very dull & stupid. But in the summer etc. we used to get into the chace or forest & occasionally on Saturday afternoons or holidays made parties & walked to a place called Yew Tree bottom (from its abounding with those trees), taking with us tea, sugar, bread, butter, a boiler tin cups etc. where we made fires under the trees, toasted our bread & regaled ourselves with great delight...

¹⁴Mountebank - an itinerant quack who appealed to his audience by means of stories, juggling etc. Merry Andrew - a buffoon or clown who assisted mountebanks.

Finding myself now one of the great boys or chiefs of the school (which I had not yet arrived at, at Greenwich) I began to take the lead in my turn amongst the boys; & finding that the making of sugar cakes (a profitable occupation at Greenwich) had not been practis'd here, I thought I might as well avail myself of the novelty & profit by it.¹⁵ Accordingly I provided myself with lemons sugar & small saucepan & produced several at 1d each which were soon dispos'd of, being much relish'd by the boys, by which I suppose I gain'd a profit of 20 or 30 per cent besides having several left for myself & brothers. - My brother Ned however having soon expended the money he brought with him, & thinking this an easy way of replenishing his pockets, now ruin'd my trade by underselling me, for borrowing a trifle just to buy a little sugar & finding lemons then too dear to venture upon purchasing he thought water might do as well to moisten the sugar with & accordingly made cakes of merely sugar & water which he offer'd at a halfpenny apiece & which were therefore purchas'd in preference to mine...

My brother Ned however (poor fellow) did not long remain in my way as in the spring my father came & took him from school in order to send him on his first voyage to sea (to Newfoundland) which was in the Gibraltar of 20 guns, commanded by Capt Braithwaite.¹⁶

Exactly opposite to Mr Gibson's school was one for young ladies kept by Miss Wyatt, amongst whom were 2 or 3 very pretty girls, particularly Miss Orton (whose brother was with us) who was the object of particular attention of most of us. There was of course much looking & ogling from the windows of the 2 schools & in church, where the seats of the 2 schools were likewise together. But beside this kind of distant intercourse, once a week all the boys that learnt dancing had an opportunity of meeting the young ladies under the same roof & as it were, face to face; it being there the practice for the dancing master (Mr Wright from Porstmouth) to teach the 2 schools together every Monday afternoon, on which occasion we went over in our best cloaths & were usher'd into one end of a long room at the other end of which the ladies with a governess afterwards enter'd by another door. From these 2 opposite groupes, Mr Wright used to select one of each in rotation to dance minuets together after which a couple of country dances altogether concluded the business of the afternoon. In standing up for these, there was frequently much scrambling & jostling amongst the boys, each endeavouring to place himself so as to obtain a good partner & particularly Miss Orton. He however who seem'd oftenest to succeed & appear'd to be most in the good graces of the lady was young Hood, (son of the present Lord Hood & now Capt S. Hood¹⁷) who was also I believe sometimes admitted (under the rose) to drink a dish of tea with the young ladies in presence of their governess, which happen'd

¹⁵Marsh's account of the sugar cake trade at Greenwich Academy has been omitted

¹⁶According to Charnock Richard Braithwaite was appointed to the Gibraltar in 1767. He was promoted to Rear-Admiral in 1790 - op.cit. vol. VI, p.430.

¹⁷Lord Hood - Admiral Sir Samuel Hood (1724-1816), one of Britain's most distinguished naval officers and commander in chief of the Mediterranean fleet in the early years of the French Wars. He was elevated to the peerage in 1796. The son referred to here is Henry Hood (1753-1836) who quitted a naval career after only a short spell on board.

probably from his being acquainted & spending most Sundays at Mr Beale's the clergyman of the parish, whose daughter went to Miss Wyatt's school.

Having before I came to Waltham by enquiring of my brothers found there was an organ at the church I was of course impatient to hear it the first Sunday but was rather disappointed at finding it a very small one placed very high in an upper or second gallery, the front of which coincided with the front of the organ w'ch was therefore played on behind. This indeed had been a house organ belonging to a Mr Horner of that place, who gave it to the church, which being large it had but little effect, except in accompanying the singers, which then were a very good sett. It was also very indifferently played by a Mr Elton, a poor musician, who I believe turning [*sic*] his playing country dances at the neighbouring assemblies to as much account as his organ playing. As to his voluntaries he had but *one* sett (of Stanley's¹⁸) proper to play before the 1st, lesson which he played in turn on Sunday afternoons & then began them again, to husband which as much as possible, he used to play an extempore adagio upon the Diapasons of a morning. The principal movements in these printed voluntaries soon became so familiar that I co'd sing them by heart, which I used to do sometimes after we were in bed, imitating the different stops of the organ with my voice. - The singing however seem'd to make ample amends as besides the psalms which were well sung in 4 parts we had almost always a verse anthem of an afternoon & sometimes a solo for a counter tenor of which kind there was then a very good singer. They also used generally to practise after evening service, which I (with some few of the congregation & particularly old Mr Horner) used generally to stay & hear & was much pleased; the effect of singing in 4 parts accompanied by a soft organ being quite new to me.

Next to the organ & singers my musical attention was directed to the bells, of which there were only 6; but they were very well rang not only on holidays etc. but once or twice a week of an evening by way of practise for the ringers, who used to ring the Grandsire¹⁹ & other peals of changes very well. - It being customary here as at other places to raise one of the bells on a Sunday by way of notice of there being service about 2 hours or more before it began both morning & afternoon, I, being fond of running into the belfry at those times with other boys, got leave at length from the sexton to raise this notice bell (which happen'd to be one of the small ones) & after 2 or 3 trials succeeded in raising it compleatly & sinking it again, after which I was a constant attendant for that purpose at 8. in the morning & 2 in the afternoon & had the privilege of being let in singly by the sexton whenever too many of the other boys (as was sometimes the case) attempted riotously to rush in & pull the ropes about. - I also afterwards tried at chiming to church with the ringers, but in this being obliged to enter into a competition with veterans who had the bells perfectly at command, I did not make out so well...

¹⁸John Stanley (1713-1786). Despite being blinded in childhood as the result of an accident he became an outstanding organist and a fine composer. He was appointed one of the organists of the Temple Church in 1734 and after Handel's death in 1759 joined John Christopher Smith as joint director of the Lenten Oratorio season, in which context Marsh encountered him in 1774 - *vide infra* p.119. Stanley's 30 surviving organ voluntaries were published in three equally divided sets, op.5, 6 and 10.

¹⁹The original method used in change-ringing to provide a greater number of possible permutations.

As I this year omitted continuing my diary after the end of February I know little of what pass'd at our summer vacation, at which my brother Hen'y & I doubtless came home at the usual time...

When we came home for this vacation, one of the 1st things my aunt & cousin told us was that Mrs Hamilton & Miss Wood had spent 5 or 6 evenings in a week with them since the last holidays, besides dining on Sunday etc. which my brother & I thought was all for the better but observ'd that they were not so well pleased at it, foreseeing doubtless what it seem'd to lead to, in w'ch they were gratified in the event. This intimacy they of course continued all the Whitsun holidays; during which I also recollect that my aunt having discover'd that my brother Will'm (who had sometime before been brought home from Dorking school) had both a good voice & ear, had set him to learn most of my sister's songs, with whom he now sang in unison whenever Mr Wafer came, who also taught them "Hope thou muse"²⁰ & another duett or two to sing together. As Mr Wafer now used to leave a fiddle at our house in order to accompany my sister when he came, I now began to take it up & try what I could make of it without any instruction whatever & accordingly made a shift to scrape over a few times in a very discordant way whenever my father was not by who did not seem to like having his ears so annoy'd...

[During the autumn Marsh was chosen by his headmaster to accompany him on a trip to Winchester, the first of his many visits to that city. Perhaps not surprisingly it was the opportunity to attend a Cathedral service which left a lasting impression:]

On our arrival there the first visit was to Mr Burden bookseller in College Street, of whom a considerable assortment of books, papers, wax tapers & stationary were order'd. Mr Burden was of course glad to see us, & imediately ask'd us to dine with him upon a fowl & piece of bacon, to which if we staid, another fowl sh'd be added which we accordingly partook of, after which hearing that the Cathedral service began at 4. in the afternoon, which kind of service I had then never heard (except perhaps when quite a child at St Paul's) I was fix'd at the choir door soon after the bells began chiming & waited with great anticipation 'till the chanting began, with the solemnity of w'ch I was much affected & highly delighted; & the chant then used, tho' a common one, made so great an impression upon me, that it not only ran in my head for some days afterwards but to this day, I well remember it. This with Mr Burden's couple of fowls & bacon is all that I recollect of the gloomy city of Winton, tho' I suppose I must have seen other parts of it, particularly the Colledge,²¹ but the Cathedral, organ etc. so occupied my mind for some time afterw'ds as I suppose to exclude other ideas...

During the first half year I was at this school Mr Gibson got Molieres plays for me in 10. vols. French & English, which I afterwards used to construe with Mr Suine. As the English translation (tho' by no means a good one) afforded as much amusement

²⁰The duet "Hope thou muse" appears in Arne's popular pasticcio ballad opera *Love in a Village* (Covent Garden, December 1762). The source is "Let Ambition fire the Mind" from John Weldon's opera *The Judgement of Paris* (1701).

²¹Winchester College is the oldest public school in England, having been founded in 1382 by Bishop William of Wykeham, one of the later architects of Winchester Cathedral. The latter was commenced in 1079, but took over three hundred years to complete.

in reading out of school time, we at length took it into our heads to act one of them amongst ourselves of which we selected "The forc'd Marriage"²² for 2 reasons, the 1st of w'ch was that it had but one female character in it (except a couple of gypsies in one short scene) & the 2d. that it was short & wo'd not exercise our memories too much. When first we thought of this, we only intended to act it amongst ourselves in the dining room without any attention to dresses, scenery, music etc. but some of the boys having mention'd it to the Beresford's & others who expressing a wish to be at it, we then began to think of performing it in style & to invite company etc. & accordingly wrote out play bills & sent them with tickets to the families in & about Waltham that had shewn us any civilities & also to the young ladies & their governess at the boarding school over the way, not suspecting that any objection wo'd be made by Mr or Mrs Gibson the latter of whom however, on our first hinting at what we had done, peremptorily forbid our asking any one to the school room, foreseeing no doubt that it might then be incumbent on her to provide refreshments etc. We therefore however got Mr Gibson's leave to act it in a long room at one of the inns, w'ch the landlord offer'd us gratis.

As the time approach'd we had evening rehearsals in the dining room at school 2 or 3 times a week, & in the last week, every evening & once or twice in the parlour before Mr Gibson, who had much ado to break us of a habit we had got into of speak'g much too fast. With regard to dresses the only difficulty was as to the principal female character (acted by young Hood) as the maids old gowns did for gypsies. But in this our friends the Beresfords assisted us, besides which young Hood, from his peculiar intimacy at the ladies school, had some assistance from them & had I believe the honor of being clad in part from the wardrobe of his favorite Miss Orton. - The time had at length nearly arriv'd for the representation when the whole scheme was like to have been frustrated by the illadvis'd interference of Mrs Gibson, who finding that the boys wo'd be at some little expence concerning this, propos'd by way of indemnifying them that every body that came to see the play sho'd pay the paltry sum of *sixpence*, a day or two after which report had got about, the tickets already sent to the ladies school were return'd to us without any message on which I was deputed to go & speechify to Miss Wyatt the governess, who said that hearing we alter'd our plan & that people were to pay at going in, she meaning to do as others did, had return'd the tickets thinking them of no use. She however was prevailed on to take them again on my saying that this new proposal did not come from the boys, who beg'd that all who had any tickets presented them wo'd use them without thinking of paying anything.

The busy day at length arriving, young Burgess & I obtain'd leave to be absent from school the whole day in preparing the room etc. & the other boys were to have half a holiday. We accordingly sat out as soon as we arose, taking with us as privately as we co'd some old green curtains from our beds with the rods, which being straight, we easily unshipp'd; no other mode having occur'd to us of hanging the main curtain. As however these rods were very short, it required 3 of them to cross the room so that it was necessary to drive 2 hooks into the ceiling to suspend the ends of them from, which Mr Cook the landlord was preparing to do when Mrs Cook made her appearance

²²Molière's *Le Mariage forcé* was first performed in 1664. The English translation dates from 1762.

& objected to the ceiling being injured... She however immediately suggested another contrivance (which as it wo'd be attended with much less trouble we wonder'd had not occur'd to us) viz. by straining their washing line across the room from 2 hooks in the wainscot at the sides, which was immediately adopted. Having thus hung our front curtain, the next thing wanting was something by way of side & back scenes, which seem'd to be attended with greater difficulty in contriving. In the midst however of our perplexity, Mr Beale the clergyman of the parish made his appearance, saying that tho' he did not doubt our being fully prepar'd as to the acting part, yet he fear'd we might be at a loss as to our apparatus towards which he suggested the use of a large 4 leaf'd screen for the back scene & also 2 others of a smaller size, if we could get them for side scenes good natur'dly offering at the same time his own & mentioning where we might borrow another; to which, knowing that Mr Gibson had one, we now thought all our difficulties were over; but here again Mrs G. stood in our way by refusing her screen for fear it sho'd be injur'd in moving it. We however had the good fortune to hear of another which was immediately lent us. - As to music, we had volunteers enough, as Mr. Elton the organist brought his fiddle & what few amateurs the place afforded brought their instruments, so that we had about 3 fiddles, a flute, violoncello & French horn, which wo'd have amus'd me as much as the play, had I not been so deeply concern'd in the latter, in which I had 3 characters. - The sixpenny scheme of Mrs Gibson now occasion'd us a great deal of trouble & confusion, as half the rabble of the place sent for tickets & were very impatient to get in, before the gentry to whom we had given tickets could be accomodated: We however manag'd with Mr Beale's assistance to get the latter & ladies of the boarding school in & seated, after which the back seats were left for the rest. - The play now came on & was acted very correctly (Mr G. being prompter) after which it fell to my lot to speak an epilogue address'd to everybody in the character of Nobody which finish'd that part of the entertainment. There being however ladies & music at hand we co'd not of course break up without a dance in which both schools were indulg'd for about 2 hours, in which I had the honor of Miss Orton's hand, young Hood dancing on the ladies side...

In less than a week after this important day, we all receiv'd an invitation from Miss Wyatt to be present at the representation of Gay's Toyshop²³ in her dancing room by the young ladies, to which we accordingly went & were much entertain'd, especially as that also ended with a dance. The music however fell far short of ours as they only had an old man who play'd the fiddle occasionally for the dancing master, who was so vile a scraper that Mr Gibson complain'd that the music made his belly ache.

In a very few days after this our Christmas vacation began, & we once more paid a visit to Gosport from whence I return'd no more to school (tho' I was ignorant of this at my coming home)... During this vacation I find but little recorded except a ball & supper at the beginning of Jan'y for young people at Mr Bedford's Gosport, which my sister, Henry & I went to & were much delighted with.

²³An afterpiece by the author, printer and bookseller Robert Dodsley (Covent Garden, 1735). Thereafter it was the subject of numerous revivals up to and including the 1790's. No evidence supports Marsh's attribution to John Gay.

1767

Soon after this being with my brother amusing myself in hanging a small bell, in the manner of a church bell on a beam in the washhouse to raise with a string, my father came in & asking what we were about, added that provided I was inclin'd & wo'd promise to make a better use of my time by spending 2 or 3 hours every morning in reading history, keeping up my Latin, French etc. he wo'd send me no more to school especially as it was probable he might put me out in the law line (which I seem'd to chuse) in the course of the following summer.- With this proposal I of course readily closed & accordingly the next day my father gave me the 1st vol. of *The Universal History*²⁴ (beginning with the life of Mohamed) & the 1st of Rapin's *History of England*,²⁵ to begin with, on each of which in turn, I bestow'd an hour in reading on Mondays Tuesdays, Thursdays & Friday mornings, allotting the other 2 mornings to a more amusing kind of reading such as Dryden's *Virgil*, *Telamachus*, *Charles 12th.* etc.²⁶ I also *began* a translation of *Diabre Boiteaux*²⁷ & a prose one of *Virgil's Eneid*, but as my father now spent about 2 hours every morning at next door (which, as we dined at 2 o'clock, ran deeply into it) & employ'd the remainder generally in instructing my sister & taking his 2 mile walk as he used to call it, whenever the weather permitted & an hour or two more in the afternoon in writing out music for my sister, he of course had no time left to superintend my proceedings, which were carried on in my own room (except now & then asking me a question or two in history, in which he was well vers'd) so that being left to myself I soon began to relax in my attention to languages from which the most trifling circumstance served to divert me, especially as I had now a new source of amusement which engross'd much of my time & voluntary attention, which I shall next mention.

Having always had a great desire to learn music, which my father had always objected to my doing at school for fear of it interfering too much with my other studies, I now hinted to him that his principal objection being at an end, I hoped he wo'd now let me learn the fiddle, which being a portable instrument wo'd be attended with no inconvenience on a change of residence etc. & would enable me to accompany my sister. This being seconded by my aunt Pratten, he accordingly consented, tho' he afterw'd hinted that my continual discordant scraping upon Mr Wafer's fiddle to the annoyance of his & Mrs H's ears induced him as much as anything to forward my being put into a proper method of fingering etc. In consequence of this, on the 12th. of Jan'y 1767 (w'h I consider as the beginning of a new era in my life) I began learning my gamut of Mr Wafer, who attending me twice a week from that time, my father was very soon pleased to observe that my tones were no longer disagreeable & that I came

²⁴*The Universal History*, edited by Tobias Smollett and John Campbell, ran to forty volumes published between 1759 and 1766.

²⁵Rapin de Thoyras' (1661-1725) *History of England* originally appeared in French in five volumes. It was issued in an English translation by the Rev N.Tindal between 1732 and 1747.

²⁶John Dryden's *Virgil's Husbandry*, or *An Essay on the Georgics* (1724/5). Voltaire's *Histoire de Charles XII* was published in 1731. The first of a number of English translations dates from the following year.

²⁷One of the most popular works of Alain Rene Le Sage (1668-1747). There were numerous English translations under the title *The Devil on Sticks*.

on very well. In about a fortnight's time I remember I was able to accompany my sister in T'amo tanto (which had been her as well as my first tune) of which I was not a little proud.

On the 24th of this month we were rejoic'd with the tydings of the Gibraltar being arriv'd at Spithead & the next day my father's boat was dispatch'd for Ned who came home in high spirits & amused us with his sea wit & quaint expressions which he had acquir'd in his 1st voyage. A few days after this we went on board the Gibraltar with Edw'd to fetch home the remainder of his things, when Edw'd shew'd us the ship & particularly what he called his birth, a little dark place inclosed within 3 or 4 large chests which serv'd as seats, in which there was no seeing at any time without a candle...

In the following week my bro'r Henry return'd to school by himself, as Edward was now to prepare for another voyage & I remain'd at home devoting part of the mornings to my studies & a considerable part of the day to music, in which I trust I may say without imputation of vanity etc. that I made a rapid progress...

Having now done with going to school, my father subscrib'd for me to Gosport Assembly which I regularly attended every other Tuesday during the remainder of the Winter, at w'ch it was the custom to draw for partners for the first 2 dances at the end of which tea was brought in, after which gent'n engaged their own partners for the remainder of the dance which always finish'd at 12 o' clock. Of the ladies who then attended this assembly my favorite partner was Miss Denny ... who was a very pretty & pleasing girl about my own age & who whilst I remain'd at Gosport continued to be the principal object of my affections...

On the 27th. of April (there being players at Gosport) my brother Edw'd, sister & I went for the first time to the comedy of *All in the wrong*²⁸ perform'd by Collins & Johnson's Company (afterw'ds Collins & Davies)²⁹ at which we were so much pleased that as they were to perform but 2 nights more we obtain'd leave to go to both on one of which was perform'd "The Beggar's Opera," with the Mayor of Garratt,³⁰ & on the other the Tragedy of Cleone with *The Way to Keep Him*,³¹ so that on the 3 nights we took in the whole species of comedy, opera, tragedy & farce. On the last night previous to the entertainment I remember Mr Johnson (a large fat man) was to speak an epilogue mounted upon an ass, during the preparation for w'ch exhibition behind the curtain, a wag in the pit suddenly drew it up & discover'd 2 or 3 men holding the ass

²⁸*All in the Wrong* by the barrister, actor and author Arthur Murphy (1727-1805) (Drury Lane, June 1761).

²⁹The company was in fact still under the sole management of Samuel Johnson, Thomas Collins (an actor with the company) not becoming a partner until the following year. Around 1770 Johnson disappears from the records, being replaced by James Davies, a partnership which co-managed a group of small play houses based on a circuit of Salisbury, Winchester, Chichester, Southampton, Portsmouth and (later) Newport (Isle of Wight) until c. 1807. A history of the company can be found in A. Hare, *The Georgian Theatre in Wessex*, London, 1958. The present season was not known to Hare, who records only one visit to Gosport (in 1765) by the company and gives no details of the theater, later described by Marsh as "being hardly worth that name" - vide infra p.70.

³⁰*The Beggar's Opera* by John Gay with music adapted by J.C. Pepusch. (Lincoln's Inn Fields, February 1728). *The Mayor of Garratt*. Afterpiece by the actor and dramatist Samuel Foote (1720-77) (Haymarket, June 1763).

³¹*The Tragedy of Cleone* by Robert Dodsley (1703-64) (Covent Garden, December 1758). The afterpiece *The Way to Keep Him* (Drury Lane, January 1760) was one of Murphy's most popular works.

which Mr Johnson was mounting, which of course produced a general laugh & much disconcerted Johnson. Soon after this as they were resuming their preparations a midshipman thinking this a monstrous good joke & worthy of being repeated again drew up the curtain with however not the same success as before as besides a general hiss & a pointed oration from the manager the following remark was utter'd from the gallery "What signifies drawing up the curtain to see one ass, look into the pit & you'll see asses enough". - Notwithstanding all this wit & humour, this last play did not upon the whole pass off so well as the others, as owing to the crowd (being the last night of performing) my brother Will'm... lost his hat & was forc'd to go home without one & my sister from the heat, or deepness of the tragedy, fainted away & gave us no small trouble to get her out. My father & aunt seem'd therefore to be well pleas'd that these amusements were now over, especially as they seem'd to have entirely ingross'd our attention for the last week, being the first theatrical exhibitions my brothers, sister & I were ever at, except indeed when I was very young, when I once went to "Love for Love" with "The Genie"³² & "The 2 Gentl'n of Verona" with the pantomime of "Harlequin Cherokee" at Drury Lane.³³ At these theatricals the grand critic I remember was Mr Ja's Bedford attorney (...) who with his nephew the Rev'd Tho's Bedford always had chairs upon the stage, whether there wanted room in the pit or not, where Mr Ja's. always seem'd to govern the applause etc. bestow'd, by being the first so to do himself & look significantly toward the pit, as if he were the only person capable of judging.

On May the 29th. as I see by my diary, I felt the first symptoms of manhood in being shav'd for the 1st. time, tho' I was now under 15. years old; what however is more extraordinary is that in about a year afterwards I began on the right side of my head to grow grey which continued to increase so that I have almost ever since been generally taken to be older than I really am or was.

About this time I was gratified by possessing a violin of my own, which my father bought for me of Mr Wafer, one of whose instruments I had hitherto play'd on.

On June the 2d. my brother Henry left Waltham School for good bringing home so lamentable account of Mrs G's housekeeping that my father said he sho'd return no more. We were therefore from this time for upwards of a twelvemonth, occasionally (when my brother Edw'd was return'd from his cruises) all 5 of us at home during which time my brothers & I, with my former schoolfellow & chum J Barker used frequently to amuse ourselves by going on board my father's ship (...) where the officers on board after finding we were seamen enough to manage a little sailing boat belonging to the ship used to indulge us with it occasionally 'till at length on our getting into some difficulties it was put a stop to. Of these disasters the principal (which might have prov'd fatal to us) was kept by us secret from the officers, as it would otherwise have abridg'd the period of our being indulg'd with the boat. This happen'd thus; Being

³²William Congreve's *Love for Love* (Lincoln's Inn Fields, April 1695), was given with the *The Genie*, a pantomime by the actor, dancer and author Henry Woodward (Drury Lane, December, 1752) on October 6, 1763, almost certainly the date on which Marsh saw the two plays.

³³The performance of *Two Gentlemen of Verona* seen by Marsh in tandem with James Dance's afterpiece (music by Walter Claggett, a Drury Lane violinist) *The Witches or Harlequin Cherokee* (November, 1762) would have been in December 1762 or February, 1763.

by ourselves & J Barker one fine afternoon in the summer, a little without the harbour a sudden fog came on, w'ch we not paying sufficient attention to when 1st. perceiv'd soon envelop'd us so that we lost sight of the shore. As however we had pointed the boat toward the harbour's mouth & began steering straight for it, we had not the least idea of her swerving from that direction & so thought ourselves doing very well 'till at length we began to perceive some large opaque body thro' the fog imediately before us & almost at the same time found ourselves on shore opposite to Haslar Hospital (which was the opaque body) from whence we co'd now easily coast it round to the harbour close to the shore. The oldest & most considerate of us now began to be sensible of the danger we had providentially escaped, as had the boat diverg'd to the right instead of to the left after first pointing it toward the harbour we might have proceeded to St. Helens & perhaps into the open channel the idea of which in our situation, in a small boat without compass or provision of any kind was too dreadful to think of. - But tho we at length got safe into harbour, yet our disasters were not at an end as owing to the fog, our mast ran foul of the bowsprit of a large vessel, on which a surly fellow ran up it & taking hold of our mast pulled it up & down & spash'd us to our no small terror, the gunwale of the boat very nearly touching the water, which had it quite done we must have sunk with the boat or come in for a ducking at least. We therefore finding our clamours & remonstrances of no avail now raised the oars & aiming at the man's hand caused him to dismiss us with a volley of oaths, after which we speedily reach'd the ship in safety... But what at length put a stop to our expeditions was our getting frequently aground in the harbour, as the tide was going down & thereby occasioning another boat from the ship to come & bring us off. Mr Hawker (the 1st Lieut't) therefore now told us that as we might when out of sight of the ship happen to get aground & be obliged to remain all night upon the mud, he wo'd no longer be answerable for us or let us have a boat to ourselves without my fathers particular orders which we did not think fit to apply for. We however afterw'ds went on parties occasionally with some of the officers up to Fareham, Porchester etc.

Having chosen the law as a profession my father about midsummer this year took me with him to Town, intending to place me with Mr Morris Robinson a sollicitor in Chancery, a friend of his. His terms however being very high, & as he seem'd rather to throw cold water upon the scheme, recomending my father to bring me up to the church instead, nothing was therefore determin'd on & I return'd with my father soon afterwards to Gosport...

On July the 10th ... I went to my uncle Lynn's in Harp Lane Tower Street, London³⁴ where I remember going one Sunday with Mr Harvest (one of the masters of the Academy in Little Tower Street, whose sister lived as an assistant to my aunt Marsh) to St. Paul's Covent Garden, where I was much pleased with the celebrated & eccentric Mr Clarke's performance on the organ, who was then reputed to be the first performer on that instrument in London,³⁵ after which we went to the chapel at

³⁴Readers are referred to Rocque's 1747 map of London for this and other London addresses and venues referred to by Marsh. *The A to Z of Georgian London*, London, 1981 is a modern edition in gazetteer format.

³⁵Edward Clarke (?-1789) served as an apprentice at St. Paul's, Covent Garden under John Travers, succeeding him on his death in 1758.

Chelsea College.³⁶ Whilst I was staying here I occasionally gratified my taste for chimes bellringing etc. by attending the former at St Dionis Backchurch Fenchurch Street & the latter at Bow Church, at each of w'ch there were 10 bells the latter of which were reckon'd the best peal in London.³⁷ Here I used frequently to ring the prayer bell at 4 in the afternoon, which bell was just as heavy as I co'd manage to raise, & the belfry was a very neat room pannel'd & painted like a parlour...

[Marsh and his father returned to Gosport on August 6 after having been delayed at Dorking for several weeks on account of a fresh injury to Captain Marsh's leg.]

On the 17th. [August] having (considering the time I lost at Dorking etc.) not learnt half a year, I began practicing Corelli's solos, of which I learnt the 7th. 8th. & 9th.,³⁸ and on October the 12th. began his sonatas of which I pick'd out a new one against every time Mr Wafer came.³⁹ By this means I went thro' the whole 48. in less than half a year & soon learnt to read music so as to play (what was within compass of my execution) at sight, which indeed I did as soon as I came to the 6th Sonata, which I so played to Mr. Wafer, happening not to have had the time to look at before he came to attend me.

As the season for the Assemblies was now approaching, it was thought proper that my brother Henry & I should begin having our hair tied according to the absurd fashion of those days (tho' we were but little turn'd the age of 15). - Each of us therefore were accomodated by Mr Hewit with a false tail 'till our own hair should become long enough to club. These however were so clumsily applied that the 1st time we walk'd out (not a little proud perhaps of our new appendages) we overheard some remarks from some blackguards behind us, one of whom observ'd to the others that when he became a gentleman, he wo'd have a false tail about as long as one of the crutches another of them was walking with. This induc'd us with our cousin's assistance so to reduce their dimensions etc. as to prevent the deception being quite so evident in future.

But tho' we were thus prepar'd to appear as men at the Assemblies, yet the mal a propos death of the Duke of York on the 14th of Sept.⁴⁰ prevented our attending for

³⁶The Royal Hospital, Chelsea. Commissioned by Charles II and designed by Wren as a hospital for invalid soldiers and veterans, the Hospital was completed in 1689, although the chapel was not consecrated until two years later. Wren's original conception remains largely unaltered

³⁷St. Dionis Backchurch, Fenchurch Street was rebuilt by Wren in 1674 following the destruction of the original 13th century church in the Great Fire of 1666, the three-storied tower being completed ten years later. A small bell turret was removed in 1839 and the church wholly demolished in 1878. The range of the bells of St. Mary le Bow, Cheapside originally defined the limits of the City of London and to have been born within their sound remains the essential qualification for claims to be a true Cockney. The bells heard by Marsh were silenced in 1941, when the entire interior of the church was gutted during the City's most devastating air-raid.

³⁸From the twelve Violin Sonatas, op.5 (Rome, 1700).

³⁹The four sets of Trio Sonatas, opp.1 to 4. Although by this time old-fashioned, Corelli's chamber works and the 12 Concerti Grossi, op.6 remained extraordinarily popular in England throughout the 18th century; there are frequent references to them in the *History*.

⁴⁰Edward, Duke of York (1739-67). He was a younger brother of George III, well-known for the dissipated way of life that probably caused his premature death in Monaco.

want of mourning, w^{ch} my father did not think fit to provide for us. - This event however occasion'd a manoeuvre of our next door neighbours to get me (who seem'd I believe terribly to hang upon hand) provided for at once in the cheapest way, by being ship'd off to sea, as well as my brothers. This was contriv'd in the following manner. My father one morning at breakfast, after joking with me on being depriv'd of going to the Assemblies by this unlucky court mourning, at length observ'd that tho' it was certainly not worthwhile for me to have a suit of black cloaths for 3 months (w^{ch} I sho'd probably outgrow before I had occasion for them again) yet as I was then enter'd on board his ship, I was entitled to a midshipman's uniform, which I might as well wear as any other cloaths, & during the mourning might apply a piece of black crape round my arm. I of course readily caught at this bait, thinking only of the Assemblies, but my aunt & cousin who saw deeper into things told me as soon as we retired after breakfast that they were sure this was not propos'd in order to accomodate me as to the Assemblies, but was a scheme of Mrs H's. to pave the way for my being ship'd off out of the way as if I became once equip'd in a naval dress, my readily acquiescing in it wo'd be urg'd against me & I sho'd find it more difficult to act according to my own inclination. They therefore advis'd me by all means, imediately to go & tell my father that I thought the matter of the Assembly of too little consequence for me to have a uniform made on purpose, especially as I then happen'd to be in no particular want of new cloaths. To this I rather demur'd, as I had thought all matters very happily settled by my father, but on their both repeating that if I once put on a uniform I sho'd *never quit it again* at least 'till I became my own master I was induc'd to comply; on w^{ch} my father said that the expence co'd be of no consequence, as I must have a uniform soon at any rate, as he did not know how to provide for me otherwise than by sending me to sea. This mode of life however I co'd not but protest against, alledging that 3 out of 4. I thought ought to suffice for that line, besides which Mr Winchester's death might on a sudden give me a title to the Kentish estate⁴¹ when I might be on a foreign station & not able for some years to take possession of it; but above all I had a strong dislike to the service & prefer'd the profession of the law being ready as soon as he pleas'd to be become articled to an attorney... To this my father replied that he co'd prevent my being sent out on long stations & only meant for me to go on short trips to the Mediteranean etc. adding however that I differ'd much from him who had rather do anything than sit driving a quill all day long. On this we parted & my father carried I suppose a different account of the termination of the scheme to next door than was expected & I co'd not but think that if the ladies at our house look'd upon this a scheme of those at next door, they on their parts wo'd attribute its frustration to the influence of the former. As to my father, who may not appear to advantage in this matter, I think it but justice to add that he probably did as others naturally do when under female influence (...) & have not the least idea of his having acted contrary to what he then thought right; for it must be observ'd that Mrs H. was then a woman every way qualified to influence & bias the judgement of a man of easy temper like my father, her manners being in general pleasing & being far from deficient in either sense or art.

⁴¹The Nethersole estate - *vide supra* p.1 and *infra* p.283. John Winchester's death did not occur until 1781.

During the remainder of this year I find scarce anything recorded except that... in December I saw the Ajax, 74 gun ship launch'd⁴² (the 1st. sight of that kind I had ever been at) but what was probably an amusement more to my taste was my going now & then about this time with Miss Wood my sister etc. & Mr Wafer to the chapel organ (out of service time), which they each play'd in turn, when my delight was to try the different varieties that might be made by mixing & blending the stops...

On the 28th of November Capt Anth'y Tonym was appointed to the San Antonio (which was now order'd to sea) in the room of my father, who was to have another guardship at Portsmouth instead.

1768

On Twelfth Day this year my bro'rs, sister & I were at another ball & supper at Mr Bedford's upon the plan of that of last year; a day or two after which I composed a gigg (my first attempt of that kind) in imitation of the style of those of Corelli a copy of which Mrs Hamilton transmitted soon afterwards to her brother Mr Burgess at the East Indies. This I was led to from composing some little preludes or imitatory tunes for the violin for my brother Will'm (whom I now began teaching on that instrument) for want of being able to meet with any I exactly liked for that purpose my own imitatory tunes being the same that were my sister's, & more fit as I thought for the harpsichord etc. than the violin.

I also about this time (the mourning being over) began attending the Assemblies again & on Friday the 29th went with Mr Wafer for the first time to Mr Phillips's little weekly concerts at Weovill,⁴³ where there happening that evening to be no one else present we play'd only Corelli's sonatas, of which I took the 1st. fiddle, & old Mr Phillips the 2d. & Miss P. the thorough bass on the spinnet accompanied by Mr Wafer on the tenor.⁴⁴ As I had never heard these sonatas compleat before, I was much pleas'd by the wonderful improvement occasion'd by the addition of the bass & promis'd myself much pleasure as well as improvement from these weekly meetings. Soon after this I began attending another of the same kind at Mr Wafers on a Saturday evening, both of which meetings were occasionally attended by Mr McArthur, then principal 2d. fiddle at Portsmouth Concert,⁴⁵ Mr Clarke, writing master at the Naval Academy, an elderly & very respectable man, tho' but a moderate performer upon the fiddle; Mr Chapman, apprentice (or assistant) to Mr Hawker, organist of Portsmouth,⁴⁶ who

⁴²A 3rd-Rate of 74 guns, the first of a number of Royal Naval ships to bear the name. She saw service at St. Vincent (1780), off Martinique (1780), Chesapeake (1781-2) and St. Kitts (1782) before being sold in 1785 - Manning and Walker, *British Warship Names*, London, 1959.

⁴³Weovill, Gosport. The lake now called Forton Lake was formerly known as Weevil Lake.

⁴⁴The old term for viola. Marsh never used the latter and except where the word obviously applies to a singer it should be taken to mean the instrument. Marsh's *Instruction Book for the Tenor* (pub.1821) remained in use for much of the 19th century with the word unchanged.

⁴⁵Local newspapers of the period have not survived and no other evidence of regular concert giving in Portsmouth in the late 1760's has to date emerged.

⁴⁶Moses Hawker (d1797), organist of St. Thomas' church (now Portsmouth Cathedral) from 1740 to 1797.

play'd the tenor, & Mr Ducket of Gosport an elderly gentleman who play'd a very good fiddle in the old style of playing; so that we frequently play'd Corelli, Handel & Geminiani's concertos compleat,⁴⁷ of which I now began playing the ripienos at sight.⁴⁸ - The modern symphony or overture with hautboy & horn parts instead of ripieno violins having been introduc'd not long before this time, Mr McArthur soon brought the two first setts of Bach & Abel⁴⁹ to our meetings as a valuable addition & variation of style, which he used to lead with great spirit & rapidity. It was however some time before he could bring over any but Mr Chapman to his opinion, as Mr Ducket used to twist about in playing the 2d. fiddle & wanted to rest at the end of every quick movement. Little Wafer too grumbl'd at the reiterated quavers upon one note for several bars together, which not being used to, he co'd hardly manage to play at sight, & did not like quitting Corelli, Handel etc. most of which he was well acquainted with, the basses of which were also of much more consequence than those of the modern symphony.⁵⁰ - Messrs Phillips, Clarke & I too, whose lot it was to play the hautboy parts as ripienos did not much like them, tho' for different reasons the 2 former complaining of the quickness of the allegros, & last movements in particular (in w'ch they used to say they co'd scarce get a note in edgeways) & I not liking the long holding notes for several bars together, but rather wishing for something more to do with the bow.⁵¹ I also did not like the middle strains being almost always mark'd *tacet* for the hautboys etc. as I by no means wish'd to be unemploy'd with a fiddle in my hands. As to the quickness of the prestos etc. that I did not at all care about but felt myself rather flatter'd in being able to keep up with them (& leaving the old gentlemen behind) in the few notes I had to play. Indeed the only parts that had any execution in them were the 2 fiddle parts (which were very brilliant) & the tenor which had much more to do than in the old concertos (in which it was a mere ripieno) as great part of it in Bach & Abel's symphonies was in unison or octave with the bass.

⁴⁷The Handel concertos are the six of op.3 and twelve of op.6. Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762) was another of the many foreign composers who took up residence in London during the 18th century. His five published sets of concerti grossi closely follow the Corellian model and enjoyed wide popularity.

⁴⁸The continuing popularity of baroque concertos in England can be at least partially explained by the division between difficult concertino parts (for soloists) and the easier ripieno writing for the body of players, thus allowing performers of varying technical abilities to play together.

⁴⁹Bach - Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782), the youngest of the sons of J.S.Bach. After spending some years in Italy he was invited to London in 1762 and lived there for the remainder of his life, producing a large body of instrumental works in addition to having a number of operas staged. The first of his published sets of symphonies (op.3) had appeared in 1765. It should be noted that all Marsh's future references to Bach refer to Johann Christian. Karl Friedrich Abel (1723-87). Composer and viola da gamba virtuoso who arrived in England three years before Bach and later collaborated with the latter in a famous London series of public subscription concerts. His symphonies, concertos and chamber music were highly esteemed, many of his works achieving publication in London and Berlin from the early 1760's.

⁵⁰The first of a number of instances in the *History* which illustrates the opposition by many musicians to the "modern" symphony. Most took a stance of being either pro or anti, a division exemplified by the differing opinions of the two great historians of the period, the progressive Burney and the conservative Sir John Hawkins. Marsh's even-handed attitude to the subject is therefore unusual and many years later would be articulated in an important essay, "Thoughts on the Different Styles of Music & Comparison between the Ancient & Modern," 1794, published anonymously in *The Monthly Magazine*, vol. II, 1796.

⁵¹Sustained oboe (and horn) parts in early symphonies were frequently used to "bind" orchestral texture.

In a short time we were join'd by Mr Lethin, a German, (1st. violin at the Portsmouth Concerts) & a Mr Wilde, a Navy agent, a very *so so* performer on the violin, tho' I believe he tho't himself little inferior to any of us except Mr Lethin. He too was very fond of the new style of music. - As we were also now & then join'd by some other amateurs we had sometimes very respectable concerts, both at Weovill & at Mr Wafers, which I believe nobody enjoyed more than I did or was more disappointed at any Friday or Saturday evening passing off without a concert, which was sometimes the case, particularly on Saturdays, as I never went to Mr Wafers but on his sending to let me know some one at least of our performers was come, as the Phillips's did not attend his concerts & those from the other side of the water were frequently prevented from coming over by windy weather, of which Mr Clarke in particular was much afraid. I therefore used every Saturday to be upon the lookout for Mr Wafer's maid with my fiddle ready put up for her to take & seldom was willing to give over her coming till at least half an hour after the usual time of her so doing. As to Mr Phillips's concerts, Mr Wafer & I were sufficient of ourselves with the family (if nobody else came) to play Corelli, Humphry or Boyce's sonatas etc.⁵² w'ch we all enjoy'd & were even now & then glad to be thus left to ourselves & so escape Bach & Abel's symphonies. - At both these meetings we always had a plain cold supper at 9 o'clock & always came away at about half past 10.

After Mr Lethin first join'd us we used I remember to have a cessation of about a quarter of an hour or more about the middle of the performance to accomodate him, who being a true German co'd not sit to play 3 hours together without smoking a pipe in the course if it, for which purpose he used to carry a long wooden pipe (w'ch took to pieces in joints) in his pocket. As however we neither much liked this interruption or to play without him in his presence, Mr McArthur at length ask'd him if he co'd not play a piece & smoke at the same time, which he agreeing to do, we took him at his word & found the pipe did not stand in the least in the way of his execution. The next time therefore we look'd out Geminiani's celebrated concerto, call'd from its extreme difficulty, the Devil's Concerto,⁵³ which he played very correctly keeping his pipe alight all the time, after w'ch he told us he co'd do more than this which he immediately exemplified to our great diversion by singing an Italian song, accompanied by himself upon the fiddle, with the pipe in a corner of his mouth all the time, w'ch he kept alight by puffing away with all his might during the symphonies etc.⁵⁴ After this discovery we therefore no more lost time on account of the pipe...

⁵²Humphry is probably John Humphries (c1707-c1740) whose "XII Sonatas for two Violins with a Thorough Bass" were published by Walsh in 1734. Hawkins disparages them, concluding that were "greatly beneath" the elegant Italian style and that their practitioners must have been those who were "small proficient in harmony." London-born William Boyce (c1710-1779) was one of the finest English composers of the 18th century. His substantial output included works for the stage, sacred and instrumental music, of which the "Twelve Sonatas for Two Violins; with a Bass for the Violoncello or Harpsichord" were published in 1745.

⁵³No other reference to a Geminiani concerto being known as "The Devil's Concerto" has been found, although Marsh's designation "celebrated" suggests that he may be referring to op.3 No.1 in D, which became the most frequently played of Geminiani's concertos in the latter part of the century and does have a particularly florid solo violin part in the second movement.

⁵⁴Symphonies - instrumental ritornelli between verses.

In March this year my father bought a small fiddle for my brother Will'm, whom I undertook to teach & found to be a very apt scholar w'ch afterw'ds did me great credit, as he had always a good ear.⁵⁵ He also began learning the German flute by ear about the same time on w'ch instrument he also afterwards made considerable proficiency. Henry & Edw'd likewise about this time began trying at the flute, being instructed by a gent'n on board my father's ship, but neither of them ever made any hand of it, particularly Henry who having no natural ear for music soon laid it down again. Edw'd indeed continued always to play a little, but intirely by ear (as he never wo'd take the trouble of learning the notes) & sometime afterwards took to the hautboy in the same way, but brought such a horrid tone from it that he never I believe amus'd any body on that instrument but himself.

On the 30th. of March, in less than 6 months since I began them, I finish'd going thro' the whole 48. sonatas of Corelli, after w'ch I went on with some more of his solos (not omitting some of the double stop ones) & began learning some difficult solos of Festing's in a more modern style⁵⁶...

At the latter end of April, my father having business in London about getting another ship (...) now took my brother Henry with him (as I went the last time) & staid 'till the middle of May. During their absence we got Mr Wafer & his sister Mrs Berrow once or twice to spend the evening with us, when with his fiddle & mine the spinet & the voices of my sister & William we made an agreeable little concert. I also at this time began practising the concertos of Corelli, w'ch my father got for me just before he went away.

On May the 2d. I play'd at Porstmouth Concert for the 1st. time, with Mr Ducket & was much delighted. Having now a great deal of leisure & wanting the bass of Corelli's sonatas, w'ch then cost a guinea compleat (my father having only the 2 fiddle parts by him, w'ch he gave me) I took the pains of my own accord to write out the bass of the whole 48. which however was I found sometime afterwards to very little purpose, as on going thro' the Exeter Change in London I met with the bass book alone secondhand, which I got for half a crown.

When my father went to town this time he meant to get a harpsichord for my sister (as he had promis'd her) but calling to consult Miss Tom, daughter of the surgeon of Greenwich Hospital, a very fine player, she advised by all means (especially as my sister sung) to get a piano forte, which instrument was then just invented & brought into fashion, adding that they had got one themselves (w'ch he saw & was much pleas'd with) & had turn'd their harpsichord into the garret.⁵⁷ My father therefore got one of

⁵⁵Despite suffering from hearing problems for much of his life, William Marsh became an accomplished musician. The amateur composer and enthusiast William Gardiner described playing with William at Southwell: "Our first violin was a Captain Marsh of the navy, who was so deaf that he could not hear any instrument but his own, yet was so steady in his time that we had no difficulty in following him" - *Music and Friends*, vol. I p.405, London, 1838.

⁵⁶Michael Festing (c1680-1752). English composer and violinist who studied under Geminiani. His violin solos were praised by Hawkins, who considered Festing to have "but few equals" in such compositions.

⁵⁷The piano had in fact been invented some fifty years previously, but it was the latter half of the century that witnessed the extraordinary rise of popularity which would consign many a harpsichord "into the garret."

Mr Zumpe's instruments,⁵⁸ which my sister still has tho' almost worn out. On its arrival we were much pleased with its tone & capability of expressing the pianos & fortes, a great advantage in accompanying the voice. Mr Wafer however seem'd rather disappointed & not to like the exchange at all, complaining of the injury to the finger from the extreme easiness of the touch, & want of resistance. - The spinet was therefore (like Miss Tom's harpsichord) now sent upstairs into my sister's room for her private practice...

About the latter end of May this year Capt. & Mrs Falkingham (our former next door neighbours at Croom's Hill, Greenwich but who now lived at Southton⁵⁹) came upon a visit to a family in Cold Harbour for a few days, which brought about a new era in my life; for Mrs F. seeing me frequently lounging about & walking with Miss Wood etc. took the liberty as an old friend of questioning my father about me, as she co'd not bear she said to see me at the age of 16. losing time & being totally without a pursuit of some kind. On the 30th. they spent the evening with us when the conversation was resum'd & it was at length settled that Mrs F. sho'd write imediately to her acquaintance Mr Daman attorney of Romsey near Southton (which latter place he had lately left on the death of Mr White attorney of Romsey) to know whether he was inclin'd to take an articled clerk & upon what terms, which produced an answer informing her that he wo'd take one of her recomending for 5 years for £200. w'ch being agreed to by my father, she afterwards managed to get my washing included, as otherwise she said my pocket money wo'd always be running away in washing bills, w'ch tho' an object to me co'd be of very little consequence to the Damans, as my things wo'd add but little to the general family wash.

My destination was therefore now settled & a time talked of for my going with my father to Romsey to see & talk over matters with Mr Daman, but this was postpon'd for some time by my father having again the misfortune to break his shin, w'ch laid him up from the 22d. of June 'till the 12th. of July, when he came down stairs again.

On the 3d. of June my father was appointed to the Achilles (then the Admiral's ship)⁶⁰ & on the 23rd I composed another gig, soon after which I began to attempt greater things & actually composed a concerto in 7 parts upon the plan & humble imitation of the style of Corelli, with which Mr Wafer was much pleas'd, particularly when he found it was all my own & not copied from Corelli.

As I never excell'd in penmanship, & owing partly to not being able to make good pens, wrote but a very indifferent hand, my father was afraid this wo'd be a considerable objection with Mr Daman, on w'ch he proposed my going to a writing master every day whilst I remain'd at Gosport for a couple of hours to improve my self & learn the law hands. I therefore now began attending every afternoon at the school

⁵⁸Johann Zumpe (before 1735-1783), a German maker who arrived in London about 1760 and was responsible for popularizing the square piano. After working for Burkhart Shudi he opened his own workshop manufacturing both pianos and harpsichords at 7 Princes Street, Hanover Square in 1761.

⁵⁹Southton - Southampton.

⁶⁰The appointment was not recorded by Charnock. Achilles was a 2nd-Rate of 60 guns launched at Harwich in 1757 - J.J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, rev. ed, London, 1987.

of Mr Smith a little deform'd man, in whose parlour I used to write where owing to his good pens & ink I made an immediate improvement. He however taught me to write German text with 2 pens, one for the fine strokes & another very wide nib'd pen for the broad ones, at which Mr Daman whom I afterward mention'd it to used to laugh very heartily. Not that as it happen'd we need to have been so anxious about my handwriting, as my father soon afterwards receiv'd a letter from Mr Daman himself so very badly written that it gave him some trouble to decypher it. - Saturday July the 9th being one of our practise evenings at Mr Wafer's, at which were Mess'rs Lethin, McArthur, Duckett etc (to whom I, as I frequently now did) play'd the bass on the tenor, my cousin Pratten, sister & Miss Wood came to hear us & were much pleas'd with our concert, w'ch seem'd to exceed their expectations.

On the 11th of July I went again to the Subscription Concert in Portsmouth & played 2d. ripieno with Mr Fitzherbert, the timber merchant who liv'd close to the concert room. - At this concert the music then usually play'd was Handels overtures, Corellis Geminianis Handel's, Defesch's⁶¹ Humphrey's & Stanley's concertos & Bach & Abel's symphonies with others of the same kind, particularly that of "La buona Figliola,"⁶² then lately publish'd, with w'ch I was so much pleas'd that I immediately got it for my own private practise. We had also now & then a violin concerto from Mr Lethin & organ concerto from Mr Hawker. The only singer was Mr Chapman, who used to sing mostly Jackson's⁶³ songs in no very elegant style. - On the 20th. I began learning the tenor (having before learnt the bass cliff on the fiddle⁶⁴) & practised that part of Corelli's concertos with Mr Wafer during the short time I remain'd at Gosport.

On the 29th my father & I went in a post chaise to Romsey & dined at Mr Daman's whom as well as Mrs D. we both seem'd to like much. We also liked the appearance of Romsey, as a large bustling town, & particularly the church which is built in the form of a cathedral & is one of the largest parish churches in the kingdom⁶⁵...

About this time Mr Peachy our neighbour got a small organ for his drawing room which immediately attracted my notice. Being impatient to hear it & giving Mr Peachy a broad hint one day (tho' we did not visit) he immediately invited my sister to come &

⁶¹William Defesch (or de Fesch) (1687-1761). Dutch-born organist, violinist and composer who settled in London in 1731. Most of his published compositions were of chamber music, but his op. 10 consisted of "8 Concertos in seven parts," doubtless the works played at Portsmouth. Burney considered his concertos "dry and uninteresting," a verdict posterity has not troubled itself to correct.

⁶²Opera by Nicola Piccinni (Rome 1760). The composer's most successful work, it enjoyed frequent revivals in Italy and other European centers, particularly in London, where it was given almost every season between 1766 and 1785. That Marsh should bracket the overture with the symphonies of Bach and Abel is indicative of the lack of distinction between the two forms at this time; indeed a number of Bach's published symphonies started life as operatic overtures.

⁶³William Jackson (1730-1803), of ten known as "Jackson of Exeter," where he was born and became organist and master of the choristers in 1777. His numerous songs were popular and highly regarded for their charm and melodic appeal. Marsh met Jackson during a visit to Exeter in 1792 - vide infra p.524.

⁶⁴Cliff-an old word for cleft

⁶⁵The census of 1801 recorded the population of Romsey as being 4,274, comparatively larger than today. It is dominated by the Norman abbey church, founded around 907. After the Dissolution it was purchased for £100 for the use of the parishioners of the town.

play upon it & all of us to come & hear it, on w'ch a morning was fix'd & my sister play'd some of Handel's concertos, during which my delight was to shift the stops for the forte & piano parts, there being no pedal for that purpose. The youngest Miss Peachy also play'd, but not near so well as my sister. After this whenever I came to Gosport & met Mrs P. I was sure to ask after the organ w'ch always brought on an invitation to come & hear it w'ch was of course accepted, tho' my aunt & cousin liked the piano forte much better than this organ, w'ch was indeed but a very poor one, but anything like an organ always had charms for me.

Being now upwards of 16 years old my father (on the 9th of Aug't) got me a new silver watch (of which I afterwards took very good care) & on the 12th being now going to leave Gosport took my last lesson upon the fiddle, or as I may truly say, my subsequent knowledge of composition, thorough bass, with the practice of the organ & violoncello being all acquir'd myself from treatises, books of instruction, hints from other amateurs etc.

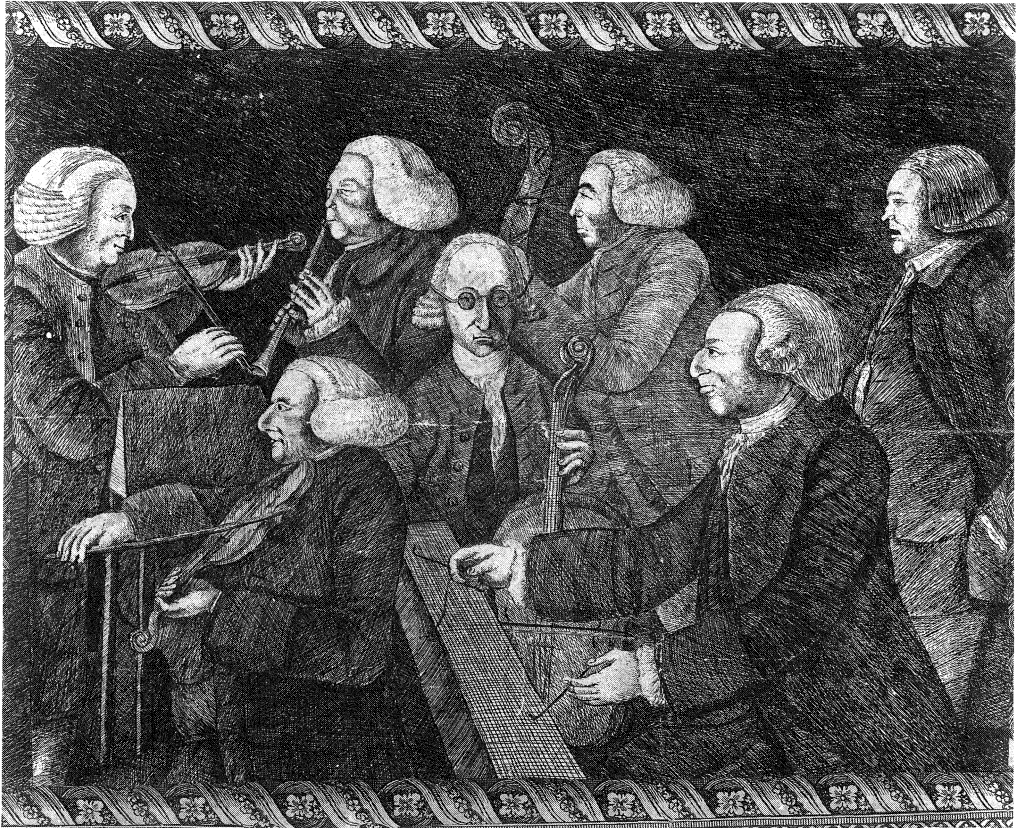


Plate 2: *A Concert at Cambridge*, etching ca. 1770, by Sir Abraham Hume. A septet of professional musicians. (London, Royal College of Music.)

CHAPTER THREE

Attorney's Apprentice - 1768-1770



On Saturday Aug'st the 13th (a day I had long anticipated) I went in the hoy to Southton where I arrived in the evening & went to Capt Falkingham's, where I spent the following day, (...) & on the next day (Monday the 15th.) went in a return'd chaise to Romsey, where I met Mr Daman on my way to his house, who being going to walk to Lord Palmerstons at Broadlands¹ within a mile of Romsey (then an old fashion'd brick house with a multiplicity of casements, a long straight avenue of trees before it, & corn fields & brick wall'd gardens adjoining to it) took me with him after which, on our return home I found a post chaise waiting to take Mr & Mrs D. to Mr Chamberlayne's of Baddesly (...) in which they took me with them to dinner. It was not therefore 'till the next day that I became acquainted with Mr Damon's family when [sic] then consisted of 3 daughters Mary (then about 7 years old) Lucy & Nancy & a boy (Will'm) then out at nurse... There was also a clerk or writer (Mr Warner) a very respectable young man, who lived in the house & occasionally dined & supped with us in the parlour, but generally in the kitchen. He originally belong'd to the Charity School at Romsey & was recomended to Mr White (Mr Daman's predecessor) as a lad of good character & that wrote a good hand.

I now began to try my hand at ingrossing with Mr Daman & Mr Warner's instruction & made out much better than I did with Mr Smith's stiff & formal method at Gosport. By way of bringing my hand in Mr Daman proposed my writing copies both in the ingrossing & secretary hand² & as he left the choice of words to me the 1st. that occur'd were those naturally suggested by my great propensity to music, to the great diversion of Mr D. who observ'd afterwards that instead of the names of musical authors, as Corelli, Geminiani, Handel etc. (which I had ingross'd) I sho'd write those of eminent lawyers, as Cook Littleton Hawkins Hale Blackstone etc.³ &

¹Lord Palmerston: Henry Temple (1739-1802), an Irish Whig peer and a Lord of the Admiralty. He was the 2nd Viscount, a keen art collector and a friend of the painter George Romney, a founder subscriber of the Concert of Ancient Music and a member of the Glee Club from 1771. Broadlands is situated about half a mile from Romsey. Originally a small Tudor manor, it was extensively enlarged into a Palladian-style mansion during the 18th century, being completed by Lancelot "Capability" Brown in the 1760's.

²A style of writing employed particularly in legal documents from the 15th to the 17th centuries

³ Sir Edward Coke (1552-1634); Sir Thomas Littleton (1422-1481); William Hawkins (1673-1746); Sir Matthew Hale (1609-1676); Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780). I am grateful to Ian Davies for the corrections to this list.

instead of allegro adagio andante presto & other musical terms, sho'd write the legal technical terms "This indenture tripartite, quadrupartite, quinquopartite etc. etc." - Some time after this, when I had occasion in draughts to make marginal references, instead of asterisks & the common marks I us'd to put sharps, flats, naturals etc.

As my father when he first came with me to Mr Daman's had stipulated for my having a little time every day after dinner to practice on the fiddle; as soon therefore as I had dined the 1st day I went up to my room for that purpose, but was soon desired to bring down my instrument & play in the parlour, where I gave them Handel's Water Music & other pieces to the amusement & delight of the children in particular, who chuckl'd away at the sound of the fiddle. I however generally play'd about half an hour in my own room at that time every day except when now & then called down to play to any client of Mr D's. who happen'd to call in at that time whom Mr D. thought it might amuse as well as himself. This however (which indeed I did not much like) was soon discontinued & I was suffer'd to practice in my own room lest, as Mrs D. told me, it sho'd be said that Mr D's. clients came as much to hear his clerk play as for advice etc. in law.

As I always accompanied Mr & Mrs D. whenever they went out visiting either to dinner or tea, I soon became acquainted with the principal families at Romsey, which were old Mr *Seward* (apothecary), his wife & 2 daughters (...) & son Godwin, then a surgeon in considerable practice - Mrs *Norris* (widow of Mr Norris a Justice of Peace...) & her sons, who lived in a large house fronting the churchyard; Mrs *Udney*, a pretty & very lively & agreeable widow in lodgings there; Capt *Higgs* of the Navy, an elderly man, his wife & her sister; Mrs & Miss *Pretty* (the latter not very young but pleasant & agreeable) - The Rev'd Mr *Burch* the curate; Mrs *Carter* (a formal & rather stupid elderly lady whose only daughter was then at school at Sarum⁴) - Mr *Timothy Jones*, mercer wine merchant etc. his wife & daughters; Mr *Van Rixtel*, son of a Dutch merchant (a very eccentric man with a moderate fortune) - Mr Alderman *May* miller & family etc.etc. which with the Chamberlaynes form'd a considerable circle amongst whom when the winter evenings came on Mrs D. taught me to make one at penny quadrille. - Of these the only musical people were Mr *Burch* who played the harpsichord a little Mr *Van Rixtel*, who had considerable execution upon the flute but no idea of time & Mr *May*, who play'd a little upon the hautboy. I also sometimes at Mr *Burch's* met a Mr *Elletson*, a Lieut't in the Navy, who lived at Mr *Baker's* attorney (whom the Damans did not visit) & who play'd the flute a little. But neither of these being able to play in concert, or in fact to play anything but the air or principal melody of marches, minuets, song tunes etc. I was obliged, in order to make out something like *harmony* to play & frequently compose a second fiddle part except in 2 or 3 marches or tunes of which Mr *May* or Mr *Elletson* had before practised the second part. Besides this I was obliged always to beat time pretty loud to keep them at all together & keep back Mr *Van Rixtel* who flew over every rest that came in his way as if it were a 5 bar'd gate in the way of his hunter. - When I had been some months at Romsey I remember Mr *Elletson* invited Mr *Van Rixtel* & I to have some music together one afternoon in a summer house of Mr *Baker's* by the river side, in consequence of which, as I thought none of my music wo'd suit them I sent only my fiddle. On enquiring therefore when

⁴Sarum - Salisbury.

we had put our instruments in tune for the parts of what they had to play (expecting that they wo'd have had at least a second or bass for me to take on the fiddle) they said they each had only brought a single book with airs & pieces for the flute, but w'ch we might play all 3 *of us together in unison*, & this was their idea of a *concert*. As this however wo'd not do for me, I whilst the 2 flutes play'd (I'm afraid I can't strictly say in *unison*) play'd an extempore second or bass to them. - It might be supposed that the state of music at Romsey (as a relaxation from my legal studies) was one of my 1st. questions when I came there on which I was not a little disconcerted to find only the before mention'd performers with one Rich'd Marshall, keeper of a turnpike gate who play'd a coarse country dance fiddle & a rough hautboy or two that accompanied the church singers; so that nothing like a concert or even a trio co'd be form'd to supply in some measure the place of the concerts I had so recently been in the way of enjoying at Messrs Philips's, Wafers etc. at Portsmouth. On this account, & seldom hearing anybody play that even equall'd myself whilst I was at Romsey & likewise having but little time to practice a stop was therefore put to all further improvement in music, instead of which it was as much as I co'd do to keep up what I had before attain'd. - I was also disconcerted to find no organ in the church, which was a very fine large gothic building, & seem'd as I thought, to require one.⁵ Not withstanding however these disappointments, the charms of novelty are so great in youth of my then age that I still thought myself happy in my new situation especially as I was now no longer losing time; so that when my father came, after the short time of probation was expir'd to settle the business with Mr Damon & execute the articles etc I on the 30th. of Aug'st very readily sign'd them also & surrender'd up my liberty to Mr D. for 5 years, without the smallest wish to return to Gosport with my father w'ch he did the next day. What made this interval particularly pleasant to me was that I found myself in a family of sensible, well inform'd people, Mr & Mrs D. being both remarkably so; & tho' Mr D. was at times hasty & passionate, yet he made ample amends at other times by his good humour & facetiousness; the more exceptionable part of their characters & dispositions (particularly that of Mrs D.) not having yet began to display themselves before me... - I was also in this interval indulged with a ride to Andover with Mr D. on horseback where he went on business, a kind of exercise I had then never practiced (except when at Dorking in the Spring of the preceeding year). - The journey however being 40 miles (20. & back again) in one day, was far beyond what I had ever taken before so that I found I had quite enough when I got back to Romsey & was not a little stiff & tender in a certain part all the next day. - I also with Mr Warner (...) went out one day with a Mr Sparks who was employ'd by Mr D. to survey some lands near Romsey w'ch employment I used to be so fond of at Greenwich. This Mr Sparks kept a small free school at Swathling near Southton... & was not a little vain & conceited with his abilities w'ch always afforded scope for merriment with Mr D. who (as Mr Sparks was also a bit of a musician & scrap'd a little upon the fiddle) desired me to

⁵It was by no means uncommon for English parish churches to lack an organ, accompaniment for the choir frequently being provided by wind players, as already indicated by Marsh. Such traditions were often deeply entrenched; as late as 1797 Marsh records the opposition of the singers to the replacement of wind players by an organ at Battle church in Sussex - *vide infra* p.649. It would take a further fourteen years for Romsey Abbey to have an organ installed, an event in which Marsh would take a prominent part - *vide infra* p.256.

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play him one of Corelli's solos which however he did not seem to think much of saying that he wo'd undertake to play the same as well after a week's practice, tho' he could in fact scarce play 2 bars together either in tune or time...

The annual Music Meeting, or Festival of St. Cecilia at Salisbury⁶ being generally about this time of year Mr Damon by way of encouraging me to get on in my ingrossing, told me that if I ingross'd a skin of parchment to his satisfaction before that time I sho'd go with him on the 29th of Sept. to the Messiah⁷ at Salisbury. I see however by my diary that I accomplish'd this task on the 14th on which day I ingross'd a lease for a year upon parchment, & accordingly on the 29th went with Mr D. in his chaise early in the morning... & was highly gratified with the performance, which was in the Cathedral, of which I hardly lost a note. At the end however of the 2d. part, many of the audience walking into the body of the church & into the church yard for a little air (it being a very fine morning) Mr D. & I also went there, where meeting Mr Stanley (Member for Southton)⁸ Mr D. & he got into a conversation, during w'ch they diverg'd so far from the church that I began to be apprehensive of losing some of the third part, which on my gently hinting, Mr Stanley immediately turned about, saying he had quite forgot there was any more of the performance to come at w'ch had I then known as much of as I soon afterwards did I sho'd have been by no means surprized, he being remarkably absent at times. As it was we lost all but the concluding symphony of "I know that my Redeemer liveth" w'ch I just recogniz'd as we came in again being the only part of the Messiah that I had then before heard & that only play'd upon the organ, & w'ch I much wish'd to hear sung. - The chief performers at this Festival were Sig'r Gustinelli, Mr Norris & Mr Matthews of Oxford principal singers,⁹ Mr Melchior & Mr Lates of Oxford 1st. & 2nd. fiddle with whom played Mr Tewksbury, leader of the Salisbury Concerts & Mr Tockett 2d. fiddle there.¹⁰ The organ was play'd by W.B.

⁶Large scale festivals became an increasingly familiar part of provincial music making during the 18 th century, particularly in cathedral cities. Salisbury's Festival of St. Cecilia dated from 1742, although it had foundations before the turn of the century in the tradition of celebrating St. Cecilia's Day. The 1768 Festival was held between September 28th and 30th.

⁷Handel's oratorio *Messiah* (Dublin, April 1742), subsequently by far the most frequently performed choral work of the century. This was the first of innumerable performances Marsh would attend.

⁸Hans Stanley (c. 1720-1780), first elected as a Tory MP for Southampton in 1754, a seat he retained until his death. He was also Governor of the Isle of Wight from 1764-66 and from 1770-80.

⁹Giuseppe Giustinelli (fl.1762-9). Italian soprano castrato who sung with the Italian opera company at the Kings Theatre, London. After visiting Lisbon to appear in opera he returned to England, where his subsequent career appears to have been on the concert platform. Thomas Norris (1741-90) was a tenor, organist and composer of, amongst other works, six symphonies. In 1765 he was appointed organist of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. A frequent performer at the Three Choirs and Salisbury Festivals, Norris also sang at the Handel Commemoration in 1784. Little is known of Matthews of Oxford, but he is probably the performer listed by Doane in his *A Musical Directory For the Year 1794*, London, 1794 as a principal bass who also appeared at the 1784 Commemoration.

¹⁰Melchior - *recte* John Baptist Melsher or Melchair, co-leader of the Oxford concerts in the 1770's and early 1780's - Mee, op. cit. pp.47/z and idem. John Lates (d.1777) was one of the most esteemed violinists of his day. Trained in Italy, he was leader of the Oxford Concerts and enjoyed the patronage of the Duke of Marlborough. Tewksbury was a dancing-master who came from Wincanton, Somerset. Marsh thought highly of him as a performer (*vide infra* p. 147), an opinion echoed in a notice which appeared in the Salisbury Journal (October 30, 1780) after his death. He was, we are told "no less eminent in his profession of music and dancing than for his many good qualities which endeared him to all his acquaintances." Tockett is unknown save for a single further reference by Marsh at a Winchester concert - *vide infra* p. 102.

Earle Esq & the whole conducted by Dr Stevens organist of Sarum.¹¹ The principal violoncello I do not recollect. Of this performance the part that principally remain'd afterwards in my mind was the grand Hallelujah of w'ch my head was full for some days afterwards, being much pleas'd with the brilliancy of the fiddle parts contrasted with the solemnity of the vocal & the grandeur of the whole & surprizing effect of the trumpets & kettle drums, not introduced in the oratorio 'till that chorus & w'ch I had never before heard. Of the performers Mr D. & I were much pleased with Melchior's bowing who took, as he observ'd long strokes, & of the singers we co'd not but observe the modesty of Sig'r Justinelli (so unusual amongst that class of people) who having a scarlet coat on, when first he stood up to sing his face became of much the same colour. Of the choristers the principal was Parry, who soon afterw'ds became so famous as a bass singer.¹² Amongst the other performers I espied my friend McArthur whom I afterw'd tried to find out in order to ask him (as during the autumn he was staying with the Southton band) if he co'd occasionally come over to Romsey once a week or give me a few lessons at Southton on my going over for that purpose whilst he staid there to prevent my getting into bad habits or falling off in my execution etc. We however were not so fortunate as to meet with him he being walk'd out with some other performers.

Having since my coming to Romsey frequently express'd my surprize at so large a parish & so fine a church having no organ in it, to w'ch the great expence, as was suppos'd, of a proper one for that church was the principal objection; Mr Daman & I after the oratorio was over thought we might as well call on Mr Green the organ builder there¹³ & ascertain the lowest price that an organ with no more stops than absolutely necessary could be put up for. We here found an organ with which I amused myself & Mr D. for some time who taking up some loose trumpet pipes that were lying about & blowing in to them, said they wo'd make excellent posthorns which Mr Green did not seem to take as any compliment. I here saw a curious instrument with bells struck by hammers, play'd with a sett of keys like a harpsichord making for a gentleman, but which kind of instrument I never heard of afterwards.¹⁴ - With respect to the object of our errand Mr Green said he co'd make a very good organ with a plain case for about £200. on w'ch after our return we began collecting subscriptions & the singers tried the different galleries to ascertain the situation in which an organ wo'd have the best effect. On Mr Green however coming a short time afterward & looking at the church

¹¹William Benson Earle (1740-96), a wealthy amateur musician and composer of several charming songs. Earle made a substantial contribution to the musical life of Salisbury, taking over the management of both the Festival and subscription concerts after the death of James Harris in 1780. Dr. John Stevens (c1720-1780). He was a chorister at Gloucester Cathedral and organist of St. James', Bristol (1744) before arriving in Salisbury in 1746. Stevens succeeded Edward Thomson as organist of Salisbury Cathedral in 1763.

¹²Robert Parry (c1750-92), a chorister and organ scholar at Salisbury Cathedral. In 1775 he was appointed organist of Wells Cathedral, returning to Salisbury as cathedral organist six years later. Parry became an eminent bass singer who appeared in London with the Concert of Ancient Music.

¹³Charles Green, organ builder of Salisbury. He is often referred to as Green of Salisbury to distinguish him from the more famous Samuel Green (1740-1796), to whom he does not appear to have been related although the latter witnessed his will and took on some of Charles Green's work after his death at Wells in 1779. For Marsh's scathing comments on the work Charles Green carried out at Salisbury Cathedral *vide infra* pp.214 and 229.

¹⁴A keyed-glockenspiel. Similar to the modern celesta and the same type of instrument as that played by Papageno in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.

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he said it was so large & unfavorable for sound (being not ceiled) that he co'd not put up an organ there to gain any credit by it under £300. which being much more than we were likely to raise the scheme dropt, to my great disappointment.

Having finish'd our business & pleasure at Salisbury & admir'd its beautiful Cathedral & lofty spire,¹⁵ & eat our dinner at the Black Horse we afterwards return'd to Romsey, having enrich'd my mind with a new stock of musical ideas of which I hoped to avail myself at my leisure in my future compositions.

I must now relate a circumstance w'ch I sho'd be induc'd to conceal did not historic truth (as Fielding says¹⁶) oblige me to relate it; or were I not of opinion that the blame lay rather in the absurd fashion of the time than in myself. - Tho' I had for some months past (...) sported a false tail yet the rest of my hair was always comb'd smooth without powder or dressing except on Assembly days etc. 'till I came to Romsey, when it became expedient (as it was then thought) for me to commence man, tho' but just turn'd of 16. by having my hair constantly dress'd & powder'd. Neither was this done in the simple & convenient method now practised (in the year 1797) but your fortitude & patience were both put to the test by the torture the friseur gave in the operation of craping, frizzing etc. the whole toupee & sides & the time it daily took up. At my 1st. coming therefore to Romsey I agreed with a tonsor & quarter, & as pride is said to feel no pain, submitted with great patience to the daily operation. I soon however found other unforeseen inconveniences attending this perpetual hair-dressing for these friseurs using the same comb for all their customers & nor probably taking the best care to keep it clean, I soon found a more frequent use of the small tooth comb necessary, w'ch the constant frizze my hair was in prevented my using ('till then) oftner than about once a week, neither co'd I use it effectually, as it required so much time to get my hair sufficiently disentangled, during which I was sometimes interrupted by being summon'd to the office. Matters therefore soon came to such a head that, being asham'd to call in other assistance, & at that time ignorant of any other more efficacious method than the comb of attaining the same purpose, my uneasiness was discover'd by Mr & Mrs D. with the cause of it, who both advised me to have my hair cut off & wear a wig made to resemble my own hair, w'ch wo'd not only be an effectual bar to anything of this kind happening again; but would save much time & trouble. To this I however demur'd but at length considering that my time was not my own & not being unwilling so easily to be rid of the great trouble then attending a fashionable head of hair, I the next day suffer'd the whole to be cut off & shav'd close, & confined myself to my room 'till a proper wig co'd be made, w'ch however by no means look'd so well as I had expected, neither did I save so much time as I thought to have done, as I had left my toupie growing to frizze into that of the wig every day & as to pain I had every now & then to submit to the operation of shaving the head w'ch when done with a bluntish razor (as sometimes happen'd) was by no means inconsiderable. On my necessarily acquainting my father with this unpleasant circum-

¹⁵Salisbury Cathedral was commenced in 1220 and consecrated in 1258, although the west front was not completed until several years later. The famous spire, at 404 ft the highest and finest in England, was added in 1330.

¹⁶The novelist and dramatist Henry Fielding (1707-54). The reference is most likely to be from *Tom Jones* (1749): "that historic truth to which we profess so inviolable an attachment, obliges us to communicate it to posterity." I am grateful to Claire Berget for this suggestion.

stance, he replied to it very laconically, saying it was too *moving* a subject to dwell upon.

The 1st. Romsey Assembly happening during my few days confinement on the foregoing account, I was of course debar'd from going to it, which by no means lessen'd the tedium of my confinement. - On the next however (Oct'r 24th.) I went & danced with a Miss Saltmarsh staying at Mr Seward's. But, tho' I found a great falling off in respect of numbers after Gosport Assembly, (there being but 7 couple & 2 card tables) yet I thought it much more sociable & pleasant, being acquainted with everybody there. We danced with the same partner the whole evening & left off (as I found always the case) at 12 o'clock. As however we then used to begin going a little after six we had always plenty of dancing, in the course of w'ch we generally drank tea in the cardroom about 9. o'clock. At this assembly Sign'r Constantini (who gave the two unsuccessful balls at Gosport...) made his appearance & entertain'd us with a hornpipe & a few new steps, being an excellent dancer & fine figure...

About the middle of Nov'r Mrs D. having a spinnet at Southton had it brought home when I immediately at my leisure sat about teaching myself on that instrument, but meeting unfortunately with an erroneous book of instructions it put me into an improper mode of fingering, from w'ch I have scarce ever since been able to recover...

As Christmas now approach'd I look'd forward with pleasure toward spending a fortnight at Gosport again, for tho' I was so eager to come to Romsey in August, & to remain there after my probation, yet by this time the great confinement began to be irksome to me, besides w'ch I longed for a little tolerable music again. Mr & Mrs D. too I by this time found to be not the immaculate people I thought them at first, as Mr D. prefer'd meeting farmers on business at public houses to his own office where he was apt to drink too much strong beer & come home in liquor, when Mrs D. (who... had not the best of tempers) used to aggravate & work him up into such a passion as made it very disagreeable to me, who was forc'd to be present if at home unless I took myself into the kitchen, which I sometimes did... I must however do Mr D. the justice to say that whenever he came home of an even'g the least in liquor he always omitted the family prayers for that night.

On the 20th therefore I obtained leave for a fortnight's vacation & went to Capt Falkingham at Southton with whom I staid 'till the 23d. when I went to Gosport in the coach, where I met with jokes from my brothers & sister about my *caxon*.¹⁷ Here I found a luxury I had long been debar'd from in being able to play again in 2 parts with my bro'r W'm who was much improv'd, having begun to learn of Mr Wafer, with whom the next day my sister, W'm & I drank tea & had music, & on Friday the 30th I went to Mr Philip's with Mr Wafer, & amused ourselves with Corelli's sonatas, which I had not heard since I left Gosport.

¹⁷A kind of wig.

1769

On the 2d. of Jan'y 1769. I went to the Portsm' Concert, where I play'd 2d. ripieno & was wondrously pleased at meeting again with a grand crash, there being 16 performers, & on the 5th. return'd in the Salisbury coach to Romsey, with not quite as much alacrity however as I went the last time

On the... 18th. I accomp'd Mr Daman to see "The Wonder"¹⁸ at Mr Fox's at Winterslow,¹⁹ acted by him & a party of ladies & gent'n, but owing to Mr D's usual dilatoriness were too late & co'd only get into the back seats amongst the servants, where we co'd see nothing of the stage to my great diappointment. The music however between the acts made me some amends, there being a good band from Salisbury who play'd some of Bach's opera overtures w'ch I had not then heard, & w'ch therefore gave me some new musical ideas in respect to style, of which I avail'd myself in my next composition of that kind & particularly in the horn parts, which instrument I had before only met with at Portsmouth Concert when I was too much occupied with my own part to attend to their particular effect. - After the play there was an elegant supper provid'd for a numerous company... The next morning on acquainting Mrs Daman with what I had literally *seen* at the theatre (to wit, the *ceiling*) I was finely laughed at & rallied by her on the occasion...

Being much troubled about this time with the toothache, I was much persuaded to have it extracted, but having never experienc'd that operation & form'd a great dread of it, it was not 'till after the loss of 2 or 3 nights rest & suffering much by day that I at length found it necessary to submit & was agreeably surprized at the dexterity with which it was drawn & little pain it occasion'd, in consequence of w'ch I determin'd never to suffer so much again from the same cause.

On the 18th of Feb'y I drove Mrs D. to Southton for the 1st time, which however was no very pleasant operation, as Mrs D. was alarm'd at every carriage we met & sometimes caught the reins out of my hand, so that I found that I co'd get no credit by my driving. Having dined with my friends the Falkinghams I afterwards introduced myself to Mr Day the organist by calling to make some trifling musical enquiry; when he was so obliging as to play to me on the harpsichord & finding I was an amateur was pleased to say that he sho'd at any time be glad to see [*me*] when I was at Southton of an evening & have a little music together; of w'ch I took care afterward occasionally to avail myself & our acquaintance was further increased by his afterw'ds coming sometimes to our assemblies with Mr Burgat, dancing master of Southton; which however I found Mrs Daman was much disconcerted at, who never spoke of him as organist or music master but always as *Day the shoemaker's son*.

¹⁸*The Wonder*, or *A Woman keeps a Secret* by Susannah Centlivre was first produced at Drury Lane in April 1714. One of her most popular plays, it was frequently revived, particularly during the second half of the century.

¹⁹Winterslow House was the home of Stephen Fox (brother of the eminent Whig politician Henry Fox) and Lady Mary Fox. Situated some eight miles from Salisbury, the house incorporated a private theater in which (from c.1766) the Foxes indulged their passion for the stage. Hare, op.cit. pp.127-136.

At the last Christmas holidays came home from school at Salisbury Miss E. Seward (a great overgrown goodnatur'd girl of about 16) & Miss Carter who tho' very plain, yet being in the bloom of youth & having a good independent fortune she contrived by smartness of dress & fashionable appearance to become one of the chief Romsey belles, with whom as such I soon began a little flirtation in preference to the principal toast of Romsey Miss Godfrey who was certainly very handsome & of a good figure, but had a great vulgarity in her manner & conversation in which Miss Carter had much the advantage of her...

On the 20th of March was the last Assembly for the season, when I made my appearance in a new suit of Pompadour cloaths, trim'd with a narrow silver edging, w'ch Mrs Marshall of Gosport, who supplied the cloth, persuaded my father to have to my no small surprize as he was in general much averse from finery of any kind. - At this Assembly I danced (as I had done at the last) with Miss Carter, who a few days afterward receiv'd a new harpsichord, provided for her by her last master Dr. Stevens of Salisbury. I was however rather disappointed at finding her to be a very moderate proficient indeed, as I had promised myself some pleasure in occasionally attending with my fiddle & accompanying her; instead of w'ch I now whenever I was there used I believe rather to sit down & thrum myself on the harpsichord, which was the only instrument of the kind in the place except Mr Burch's, to which, as a new one, it was much superior.

About this time my father treated me with Abel's 2d. sett of Overtures²⁰ which I used to play with Mess'rs Lethin, McArthur etc. at Gosport, Weovill etc. & the 1st. fiddle of which I now daily practised with other music.

On the 4th of April the Rev'd Mr Ja's Scott of Southton coming over early in the morning to Mr D. on business w'ch he found wo'd detain him an hour or two & finding (I suppose from seeing violin music lying about) that there was a brother fiddler in house (being himself a very good one) sent before I came downstairs to borrow my fiddle, which soon brought us together when we literally *scrap'd* an acquaintance with each other of which I afterward avail'd myself in my visits to Southton, where he always appear'd glad to see me & used to look over my compositions, giving me a few hints as to style etc.

On the 12th I heard of an event w'ch gave me great pleasure as it increased my father's income and comfort at the same time viz. his being appointed one of the Captains at Greenwich Hospital. I have before related²¹ that on his being so shamefully put out of the yatch in 1763. he was promised at the Admiralty to be always provided for without going out of England by guardship stations etc. w'ch promise had been hitherto duly fulfilled, but a vacancy now happening in Greenwich Hospital his friend Mr Francis Cooke (being on the spot & having the earliest intelligence of it) imediately applied personally at the Admiralty for it, without waiting for my father's instructions by w'ch means he obtained the promise of it & accordingly now went to take possession...

²⁰ Symphonies, op.4 (1762).

²¹ *Vide supra* p.26.

[The following day Marsh visited Southampton, where he learned from the Falkinghams that a prospective purchaser of his father's house in Gosport was untrustworthy.]

- Being however at Southton I co'd not refrain from calling on my new friend Mr Scott & Mr Day, in consequence of w'ch we raised a trio at the latter's before I return'd to Romsey, w'ch was now become a great luxury to me. Here I met Capt Hooke who play'd the bass prettily enough, but as he profess'd not to like Corelli's sonatas, of which we play'd some I form'd no very high opinion of his judgement as a violoncello player w'ch part in Corelli's is at least of equal consequence with the first fiddle part...

[Having obtained leave from Daman, Marsh now set out for Gosport to warn his father of his impending buyer, only to find that he had left for London and Greenwich earlier the same day. Ascertaining that his father had reached no agreement regarding the disposal of the house, Marsh gained permission to remain at Gosport on summer vacation until his father's return two weeks later.]

The day after this my brother Edw'd came home from a cruize. My bro'r Will'm however being at home & considerably improved on the fiddle, was more of a companion for me after being so long without any one even to play a duet with me in any kind of style, except at Southton for w'ch I now made myself amends by fiddling away with him great part of the day. - I now also took an opportunity of trying over my 2 first concertos at Mr Ducket's with him & Mess'rs Lethin & McArthur & was much gratified at hearing the effect of my own compositions in parts, w'ch I had not done before. They also were pleas'd to pay some compl'ts (particularly to the harmony) on a first attempt without having the advantage of any kind of instruction. I however discover'd some errors, w'ch otherwise I sho'd not have done & w'ch afterward I rectified. Of these 2 concertos I have only preserv'd the last movement of one of them, an air with variations, tho' I have now upward of 60. instrumental pieces upon my catalogue, composed since.²² The subject, or theme of the 1st. movement of the 2d. concerto I however still think very good & have often thought of recomposing it, but have never done it yet, finding it easier to take *new* subjects as they occur & work them up imediately. On the 24th I went to a private Subscription Concert at Portsmouth, on the 28th to Mr Phillips's weekly meeting at Weovill & the next evening to Mr Wafer's, at both of which latter my brother W'm play'd a ripieno part & I the bass on the tenor...

On Saturday the 29th my father return'd from London after which he was so good as to buy for me a violin Mr Ducket had lent me, on w'ch my broth'r Will'm took my old one ...on the Thursday after I went back to Romsey with my sister, who staid at Mr D's 'till May the 15th, dur'g w'ch time we much amused the Damans, Mr Burch & others of our acquaintance with her playing & singing accompanied by my fiddle.

On the 15th [May] my father & Miss Wood came in a post chaise to spend a day with us & take back my sister the following afternoon in which short interval we shew'd them the famous apple tree growing upon the top of the church which was formerly

²²Marsh was writing in 1797. His numbered catalogue of instrumental pieces was commenced in 1770 - *vide infra* p.72.

a great curiosity, as it sprang accidentally from a seed lodg'd (probably by a bird) in a chink in the wall & grew to a considerable size, in which state it was then shewn to strangers by the sexton, who fearing at length it wo'd die & he sho'd lose his perquisite, carried up at times a quantity of earth in which it has now taken root & has been grafted, bearing 2 sorts of apples. The following morning ... we all called in at Mrs Carter's where my sister & Miss Wood played on the harpsichord, & here we first discover'd that envy that afterwards more particularly display'd itself in Miss Wood in regard to my sister, for having learnt the harpsichord (merely as a polite accomplishment) without any particular ear or taste for music near 2 years before my sister, she was a considerable proficient when the latter began who having naturally a good ear & being kept regularly to practice by my aunt Pratten, had long before this time overtaken Miss Wood, over whom she had also another advantage in a good voice... My sister therefore being much applauded... whilst Miss Wood's piece, play'd not in the best time (tho' with neat & considerable execution) was more coolly receiv'd, she attempted to make it appear that my sister's superiority was occasion'd entirely by dint of constant practice, whereas she (as she observ'd) paid attention to other things *more material*. This however was by no means the case, as I believe few young women were ever brought up to do so little as Miss Wood, which is the more surprizing considering *who* had the entire superintendance of her education & bringing up.²³

Having frequently express'd my disappointment to Mr Day at there being no Subscription Concert at Southton as at Portsmouth... he told me there were some at Winton to one of w'ch he wo'd attend me at any time,²⁴ provided I wo'd promise to go again to Mr Kents (organist of the Cathedral and College) annual concert in the race week,²⁵ which he always made a point of attending himself, having been I believe his pupil. To this I accordingly agreed & on May the 22d. rode to Southton dined with Mr Day & afterw'd accompanied him to Winton, where calling on a friend of his, he told us the concerts were not worth going to, which as Mr Day seem'd to waver not a little disconcerted me. On however telling him that my sole object in coming was the concert, we imediately went paid our halfcrowns & play'd a duplicate 2d. fiddle part together of Abel's 3d. set of Overtures etc. which I then heard for the 1st. time & much liked.²⁶ If Mr Day's friend on whom we had called, judg'd of the concert (as many ladies do) by the company attending it, he might have been right enough in his disparagement of it, there not being above 6. or 8. people besides the performers, but the band being pretty good (with 2 or 3 singers, which was not the case at Portsm'o) & considering it as opportunity of practice I co'd not now elsewhere get, I was very well pleas'd & should not have car'd if there had been no audience at all. As we had assisted in the orchestra & Mr Day was a professor, our half crowns were return'd to

²³The reference is to her mother, Mrs. Hamilton.

²⁴Concerts were held at St. John's Room, all that remained in the 18th century of the medieval St. John's Hospital. Situated near East Gate, it was divided into offices in the 1960's.

²⁵James Kent (1700-76). He was a composer and organist of Winchester Cathedral between 1737 and 1774. Kent assisted William Boyce in the compilation of his *Cathedral Music* and had a number of his own sacred works published towards the end of his life. It was common practice for benefit (and other) concerts to be held during race or assize weeks, when a city's population would be swollen by visitors.

²⁶Six Symphonies, op.7 (1767).

us by the doorkeeper (at the direction of Mr Fussell the manager²⁷) as we went out of the room...

On the 8th. of June Lady Palmerston was buried at Romsey Church,²⁸ after which a sum of money was by his Lordship's direction distributed amongst the poor, of whom (as I believe frequently happens in such instances) some were I remember dissatisfied with the share allotted to them, tho' the whole was an entire benefaction, to w'ch they could not have the least claim.

On the 14th I hired a horse &, accord'g to my promise, met Mr Day at Winton (being the time of the races) & went with him, Mr Burgat dancing master (...) & a Mr Stainer of the band of Southampton, Mr Kent's concert, at St John's Room. Mr Burgat having a new scarlet coat & flashy silk waistcoat, cut a conspicuous figure in the orchestra for which reason chiefly I suppose (as he was no capital performer) he was directed to play with Mr Lates the leader Mr Day & I playing a duplicate 1st. fiddle or ripieno together. - In attending this concert as a volunteer I so oblig'd Mr Kent (the well known & very respectable author of "Hear My Prayer" & other anthems) that he never afterwards saw me without mentioning it. He also was so good as (at my desire) to write me out a few chants & send them to Romsey, with the practise of which on Mrs Daman's spinnet, I was then much pleased...

My musical acquaintance Mr Day having always an annual concert at Southton during the season there which was this year fix'd for the 11th. of Aug'st he of course applied for my assistance w'ch I promis'd him (with Mr D's permission, who accompanied me to it) & play'd a 1st. fiddle part with my friend Mr Scott, after which I had a dance with Miss Moody. At this concert I first heard Mr Corfe of Salisbury²⁹ who was the principal singer, & the leader was Mr Lethin of Portsmouth. There was also a Mr Woodington then staying at Southton, who play'd a capital fiddle for an amateur who supported Mr Lethin & with whom he also played a duet of Kammell's.³⁰ Having taken over some of my own compositions in hopes of being able to try them in 5 or 6 parts with some of the performers the morning after the concert, Mr Day mention'd it to them in the evening when a general crash by the whole band was voted to be in the great room at the Coach & Horses the next morning at eleven o'clock. There being however a Mr Munro, a gent'n performer who had put himself very forward at

²⁷Peter Fussell (d.1802) was a chorister under James Kent, later becoming organist of St. Maurice, Winchester and Winchester College. He succeeded Kent as organist of Winchester Cathedral in 1774, a post he retained until his death. It was customary for strangers to be admitted to subscription concerts on payment of an entrance fee. It is not clear whether the return of the fee for participating was standard or only applied because Day was a professional. Marsh makes no other mention of the practice.

²⁸Francis, Lady Palmerston (ne Poole) (1729-1769) died in childbirth at the Admiralty, Whitehall on June 1. She was buried in the family vault in Romsey Abbey.

²⁹Joseph Corfe (1740-1820). Chorister at Salisbury Cathedral and later a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. In 1792 he succeeded his rival Robert Parry as organist and master of the choristers of Salisbury Cathedral, offices which he held until 1804. Corfe, whose name will recur frequently in Marsh's narrative, was also a composer of glees and various sacred works and wrote several treatises.

³⁰Anton Kammell (1730-c.1786). Composer of numerous concertos, chamber and instrumental works etc. Six duos for 2 violins were published as op.5 in London c.1768. It is possible these are the works referred to here. *Vide infra* p.147 for Marsh's opinion of Kammell as a violinist.

the concert, tho' a very unsteady & indifferent player upon the fiddle it was agreed to keep this matter secret from him, but he managed to get scent of it & made his appearance soon after we began, on which Mr Scott whisper'd to me that he had almost as soon have seen Old Nick come in. - I enjoyed this meeting much more than the concert the evening before, as besides trying over a new Symphony & Concerto of mine we had about 3 hours sheer practice, in w'ch we were all engaged, having the 3d. sett of Abel's Symphonies then lately published, w'ch we tried nearly all thro' without any intermixture of solos or more than one duet or trio etc. which kind of pieces precluding me from a share in the performance, I did not at all like.

After this I dined & fiddled again with Mr Scott & return'd to Romsey in the evening. But tho' Mr Scott was pleas'd thus to take notice of me, I co'd plainly perceive I was no favorite of his wife a crabbed, sour morose looking woman, who however she might dislike harmony of any kind had no reason in fact to be offended with either harmony or discord of our making as she never staid in the room to hear it, or rather we never play'd in the parlour but the hall...

I come now to an event that gave me as much pleasure as anything I met with during my clerkship & my father more displeasure I believe than I ever occasion'd him in my life. - On the 24th. of Aug'st ... Mrs Pye, a lady of fashion then at Southton, gave a masquerade at the Rooms to all the subscribers to them, not being one of which (or even a resident of Southton) myself I sho'd therefore as soon have thought of going to a masquerade in London as to this had not Mrs D. put it into my head, suggesting that by subscribing 5s. to the Room I sho'd be as much entitled to go as anybody. Being however once set upon going, I was as might be expected as eager as any one of my age wo'd naturally be for it. The next consideration therefore was my dress, w'ch as I had been much used to the sea dialect I at once fix'd on as that of a sailor... on consulting Mr Lee, the mercer at Southton he told me (...) that an ordinary seaman's jacket etc. wo'd be by no means proper & that I must have good cloth & materials for the jacket & trousers, with narrow gold edgings to the former & also a new round hat (cock'd ones being then generally worn) with a narrow gold lace to it. This I at once foresaw wo'd be attended by much more expence than I had been aware of, but I was now *in for it*... When the day came I went with Mr Daman (who also meant to attend the masquerade in a domino) & dined with him at Mr Trenoweth's & having paid my 5s. subscription to the Rooms, went in the evening with his son (the Rev'd Mr Trenoweth...) & daughter... (who went as a shepherdess) & a Mr Perdue (a grave young gent'n who dined with us there) in chairs to the Rooms, in getting out of which I was a little disconcerted at the boistrous mirth of the crowd assembled, w'ch made a lane from the chair to the staircase through w'ch we necessarily pass'd in our masks etc. Having however soon pass'd this ordeal, we were happy to find ourselves mix'd with many other masks within the Rooms, where it was at length observ'd that of 8 sailors I was by much the smartest & best dress'd. Soon after this the dancing began in the great room, when I had the pleasure of having Miss Trenoweth for a partner, but there being too many to dance comfortably in one sett, another was form'd in the old room adjoining & the band divided. Of the humours of the evening I don't recollect much, neither do I believe there were many characters at all interesting, being chiefly dominoes. I however recollect Capt Hooke (...) who in the character of Mungo in The