

Georgiana's Journal

Melbourne 1841-1865



Edited by Hugh McCrae
Grandson of the Diarist



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Georgiana M'Kenzie.

*From a miniature self-portrait,
painted during the voyage to
Australia.*

A Note on the Text

A NEW EDITION of *Georgiana's Journal* provides the opportunity to include what some would say is a long-overdue acknowledgement: this book, as it stands, is not a faithful transcription of Georgiana McCrae's words. Her grandson Hugh McCrae rewrote much of the journal while editing it for publication in 1934.

I stumbled on this surprising truth when adapting the honours thesis I had written on Georgiana's life into a chapter for the 1985 book *Double Time: Women in Victoria – 150 Years*. Having been well trained in the history department of Monash University, I was naturally keen to examine the primary source material before the book was published. My thesis had been based only on documents available in Melbourne, chiefly an important series of letters written by Georgiana in her old age, kept in the La Trobe Manuscript Collection at the State Library of Victoria. The account of her early years in Melbourne and on the family's cattle station at Arthur's Seat was taken largely from the published *Journal*. It had not crossed my mind to consult the original manuscripts when working on my thesis: it would have required a trip to Sydney to look for the sources, which would have seemed a wild extravagance to a twenty-one-year-old student. I had assumed, along with many others more experienced than myself, that Hugh McCrae's edition was an accurate transcription of his grandmother's writing, embellished with a great many lively and fascinating notes.

Now I decided to visit the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney where the second half of Georgiana's journal, beginning in 1843, was kept. Armed with my dark brown paperback copy of the third edition, I settled down at a table and waited for the manuscripts to be delivered. I had thought it would be a simple matter of comparing the original handwritten pages with the printed ones and making pencil notes in my own book where the usual nineteenth century abbreviations had been changed by the editor. It wasn't long before I saw that the alterations were far greater than

writing ampersands out in full or moving superscript letters down to the line. The first few pages in that section of my copy are covered with pencil notes such as 'not in the MS' and 'whimsical comment by Hugh'. I persevered from the beginning of January to the end of April and then gave up. It was much more complicated than I had expected and impossible to correct in the margins.

I was careful not to quote from the published *Journal* in my chapter about Georgiana for the book *Double Time*, and apart from alerting readers in the note on sources at the end that it was clear that much of *Georgiana's Journal* "was reworded for publication",¹ took the matter no further. By then I was busy with an absorbing job and simply let it lie.

A few years later, when Brenda Niall contacted me as she began her full scale biography of Georgiana McCrae, I warned her about the rewritten journals. Brenda compared the manuscript with Hugh McCrae's edition, her task made easier by Lady Cowper's donation of her family papers, including the first half of the journal, to the State Library of Victoria in 1988. Brenda's analysis showed how the published version had given an impression of Georgiana's character that was in many ways misleading. She found it necessary to begin her book with an explanatory note:

Readers who know Hugh McCrae's edition of 1934, *Georgiana's Melbourne Journals*, will find differences in wording, some omissions and some new material in the journal entries quoted here. As grandson of the diarist, Hugh McCrae may well have drawn on family memories and added to what Georgiana wrote with a view to completing her picture. As a poet and a brilliant story-teller in his own right he no doubt found it difficult not to touch up her narrative. Many of the changes from Georgiana's manuscript are minor; others give a significant shift in tone and emphasis. Some of the additions may reflect what, in her grandson's view, Georgiana must have thought or felt. Omissions of some domestic details may have been done for reasons of space; but the choice of what could best be omitted reveals the editor's own priorities.²

1 Marguerite Hancock, 'Georgiana McCrae: Reluctant Colonist' in *Double Time: Women in Victoria 150 Years*, ed. Marilyn Lake and Farley Kelly (Penguin, Melbourne, 1985), p. 47.

2 Brenda Niall, *Georgiana A Biography of Georgiana McCrae, Painter, Diarist, Pioneer* (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1994), p. xv.

To complicate matters further, as Brenda Niall goes on to point out, the manuscripts that Hugh McCrae had worked from were not the original journals. Georgiana had copied them out in her old age when she was living with her married daughter and had very little to occupy her time. Thérèse Weber, who devoted a PhD thesis to a meticulous examination of the manuscripts and the way Hugh McCrae had rewritten them for publication, has deduced that Georgiana's rewriting was carried out in 1884, when she was eighty years old and conscious that her Port Phillip papers were a valuable historical record of the early years of the colony.

Thérèse Weber concluded that the published work is so different from the original that it "can no longer be read as the journal of Georgiana McCrae".³ It is certainly based on the journal, but Hugh McCrae's additions, deletions and changes are so pervasive that it is impossible to tell if the wording is his or his grandmother's without comparing the two.

As Dr Weber pointed out, many historians have fallen into the trap of quoting a particularly amusing or pithy entry from the *Journal* in the belief that it was written by a nineteenth-century settler when it was really the work of a twentieth-century poet. Because Hugh McCrae's turn of phrase is so witty, it is often his lines that are chosen. Only recently a writer in the *Melbourne Age* mentioned that Georgiana had described the muddy streets of the 1840s as looking like porridge. She had merely said they were "in an impassable state". It was her grandson who had come up with the apt and plausibly Scottish metaphor of cooked oats.⁴

One of the more pronounced examples of Hugh McCrae's changes to words and meaning is the account in the published *Journal*, attributed to Georgiana, of the celebrations that took place when it was known that the Port Phillip District was to separate from New South Wales and become the Colony of Victoria. It has been quoted by historians many times. Not only does it provide a colourful picture of an important event, it also gives the false impression of an intimate friendship between Georgiana and the

3 Thérèse Weber, 'Port Phillip Papers: The Australian Journal of Georgiana McCrae', unpublished PhD thesis, School of Language, Literature and Communication, University of New South Wales, 2000, p. 225. This note on the text owes a great deal to Thérèse Weber's thesis.

4 Jenny Brown, 'Boggy Road to Fields of Gold', *Age*, Domain section, 1 September 2012, p. 15; Weber, transcription of MS journal entry, 31 May 1845, p. 541.



GEORGIANA

A miniature self-portrait, painted at the age of twenty-one

district's Superintendent, soon to become the first Lieutenant-Governor, Charles Joseph La Trobe. Georgiana's account, in her own words, is in the left hand column below, for comparison with the published version which appears on the right, minus Hugh's bracketted comments, which can be read on pages 260-62 of this volume.

I am quite "done up," with the extraordinary doings of today & the long fast (from 9 a. m to 5 p. m) we were startled out of our sleep at 6 a. m by a Reveillée performed by the Saxe Horn Band & some singers, who gave us 'Hark! the lark at Heav'ns gate sings', "Ciascun lo dice ciascun lo sa" The National Anthem. & some stirring Polka Tunes to one of which the Band marched away poor Madame who is suffering from Neuralgic headache would gladly have foregone the well meant compliment

Mr La Trobe went out & thanked the party

16th A day full of surprises and excitement. At 6 a.m. the saxhorn band began to play a reveillée outside "The Chalet": a performance which had been kept secret even from Mr La Trobe himself, who now appeared in a flowered dressing-gown, straining his eyes at the window. He held my sleeve while some of the gentlemen put down their horns to sing "Hark, Hark the Lark!" in a key that was too high for them; yet it sounded better than the French *aubade* which immediately followed. After this they recovered their instruments and gave us stirring polka tunes, although poor Madame, who had one of her neuralgic headaches, would gladly have forgone that part of the programme. Mr La Trobe then walked out on to the veranda to put an end to the music, but with the opposite effect, for, no sooner did the performers behold him, than they joined, some with voices, some with saxhorns, in a tremendous rendition of the national anthem. His Honour bowed, and they would have gone through it again had I not led him into the house...So they marched away, still playing polkas.

Wishing to give all the servants a whole Holiday Madame asked me to take her place in the carriage & to do the Bowing for her while she should stay at home, away from the cannonading so I equipped in Madame's black satin Polka jacket trimmed with Australian swandown (this a present from M^r Cowper of Sydney) & my own Grey silk bonnet, like madame's started at eleven with Agnes, Nelly, Cecile, Charley & Mademoiselle Beguine Adolphe de Meuron, Madame's nephew lately arrived from Neuchâtel, on the Box with M^r Ed^d Bell, who drove us up to the Treasury where from the window of M^r La Trobe's room, we had a good view of the processions as they formed. At noon, M^r La Trobe mounted the Box and we took up our station at the corner of Swanston & Collins Streets, to see the processions come through the town, when all of them had passed by we drove to take up our stand next to the Bishop's carriage just in front of the Prince of Wales Hotel whence we had a full view of the green hill opposite.

Upset by the saxhorn band, and fearful of any cannonading, Mrs La Trobe appointed me her deputy at the opening of the bridge, an arrangement hardly completed, when Mr Edward Bell blew a bugle to announce his arrival in a carriage and pair.

Behold me now, equipped in Madame's black satin polonaise jacket, trimmed with Australian swansdown (a present from Mr Cowper, of Sydney), and my own grey silk bonnet! The Superintendent, having first of all handed me into the carriage, entered it himself followed by Agnes, Nellie, Cecile, Charlie, and Mademoiselle Beguine. Adolphe de Meuron sat on the box, beside Mr Bell, and thus snugly packed together, we came to the Treasury, where Mr Bell changed places with His Honour who drove us, more slowly than his predecessor, to the corner of Swanston and Collins streets, and thence, after a view of the procession, to our proper stand beside the Bishop's barouche in front of the Prince of Wales Hotel.

A tent and a few field pieces pitched on the brow of the hill the processions & their gay banners all drawn up in a line, closed by Carriages and Horsemen was a very pretty sight The cheers were given heartily and had but the two bands of instruments, that followed the Saxe Horn Band been more d'accord there would have been nothing to mar the Harmony that prevailed Every body appeared to be pleased with every thing After the cannons had ceased firing M^r La Trobe drove us onto the Bridge and when halfway across stopped the Horses and declared "Princes Bridge open" next next moment we met the procession of Oddfellows in pairs linked together by their little fingers, each of the men as they passed the carriage, ducked his head to Madame, whose "double" returned the bows in her usual gracious manner.

From this point of vantage, we had a clear sight of the hill, with its tent and a few field-pieces, opposite, while constantly moving banners, very small in the distance, glittered and went out again, according as the phalanxes changed places in the sun. Horsemen had hard work to keep onlookers from trespassing on the field, and we witnessed many rushes, but none which broke the line. For want of control, the cheering was ragged, and, no doubt, if the two lots of instrumentalists that followed the saxhorn band had been more *d'accord*, the music would have been better.

At 12 a.m. Mademoiselle Beguine, who had been observing the hill through her *lunette d'approche*, exclaimed that she saw smoke, and, on the instant, there arose a prodigious noise of guns, the signal for us to set out for the bridge. Mr La Trobe gathered up the reins and we proceeded at a majestic pace until we reached the middle of the arch, 75 feet from either bank; here His Honour stopped, and merely saying "I declare Prince's Bridge open", drove to the opposite side. During our progress thither, we were passed by a procession of Freemasons, and each man, as he went forward, ducked his head to "Madame", whose double in the black satin jacket replied with the most gracious salaams.

Arrived at the summit of the hill we found a dense crowd!

After the Queen's health had been drunk by the Authorities in small ale from a cask standing close by

M^r La Trobe returned to us, and we all alighted to walk to the gate of the Botanic Gardens, to see Buns distributed to all the school children of the different denominations, assembled in the gardens (afterwards the Bishop told me that before he left over 2,000 buns had been given away) deduct from these two begged by M^r Eyre Williams "for his little boy" and three given to Charlie, Cecile and Nelly La Trobe, while Agnes [*sic*]

Mlle Beguine & I were looking on with longing hungry eyes

His Honour drove us back to Jolimont leaving Mr Bell to follow on "Tasman" Charlie carried his papa's sword & sat on the box beside him It was nearly 4 p. m. before we got back to Jolimont barely in time to escape from a storm of wind and rain The gardeners old helping man, had stayed at home to mind the House and had cooked a round of Beef & vegetables off which we all dined en famille most heartily ⁵

5 This transcription is based on the one that is given in Weber, pp. 646-48. The ms is held in the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney, RB 1164.2.

At the summit of the hill, Mr La Trobe alighted, and, standing by the flap of the tent, spoke a few words suitable to the occasion. Mayor Nicholson said something supplementary, after which the Superintendent proposed the Queen's health, this being drunk off in small ale drawn from a barrel under a cart where it had been placed to keep cool.

His Honour then returned to us, and we accompanied him (walking) to the Botanic Gardens, where two thousand buns were distributed to children of all denominations; deduct from these, two begged by Mr Eyre Williams for his little boy, and one each for Charlie, Cecile, and Nellie La Trobe.

Mademoiselle and myself were so hungry, we felt we could have eaten the whole two thousand between us!

The Superintendent drove us back to Jolimont, Charlie beside him, carrying the ceremonial sword. On the journey, a few spots of rain made me anxious on account of Madame's best jacket which had already been stickied by Nellie's saved-up bun. Then, when we arrived at "The Chalet", the wind blew through the house, throwing the doors open, and the children made so much noise shutting them again that poor Mrs La Trobe retired to her bed. The servants were still absent, but the gardener's old helping-man, who had stayed at home, brought in a round of beef with vegetables, and on these we dined *en famille*, most heartily.



ANDREW MURISON McCRAE

A miniature by Georgiana

Hugh McCrae undertook the task of editing the journal in 1934. He was by then fifty-seven and had been a professional writer since his early twenties after abandoning a job in an architect's office that was expected to lead to higher things. Influenced by his friends Norman and Lionel Lindsay, he had decided to concentrate on poetry, supporting himself by providing stories and line drawings for the weekly papers that proliferated at that period. In 1901 he married his childhood friend, Nancy Adams, and settled in Sydney. They went on to have three daughters. There was never much money: his son-in-law Norman Cowper wrote that "insecurity was always either in the house or lurking around the corner".⁶ He published

⁶ *The Letters of Hugh McCrae*, ed. Robert D. Fitzgerald (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1970), p. xvii.

several books of verse and a humorous prose work in the style of the eighteenth century called *The Du Poissey Anecdotes*, but although his writing was admired, it failed to sell. An outstandingly handsome man with a good speaking voice, for some years he tried his luck on stage in New York and later in Melbourne and even made a silent film. But by 1930, at the beginning of the Depression, he was receiving a Commonwealth Literary Fund allowance of £52 per year and making what he could from his writing. When he realized that he would be unable to finish a verse drama about Joan of Arc intended to be his masterpiece, he suffered a crisis of confidence that left him feeling unable to write poetry any longer.

Encouraged by his friend, the writer and critic Nettie Palmer, he decided to edit his grandmother's journal in time for its publication to coincide with Victoria's centenary celebrations, planned to begin in October 1934. Nettie Palmer had written: "It seems to me that here is the greatest chance for using your family mss. An edited selection of your grandmother's diary & George's [Hugh McCrae's father's] reminiscences couldn't that be published in a smallish book without detriment to what remained? It's just a suggestion. I feel that so few families have preserved their past like yours."⁷ Early in the year he submitted a section of his handwritten manuscript to the publishers Angus & Robertson and was given just under four months to complete the task (later extended to about six). He found that he thoroughly enjoyed adapting and annotating the text, despite the unrealistic and punishing deadline. Once his family in Melbourne were told about the project, his elder sister, Helen, let him know they were worried about what he would reveal. One cousin, Margaret Outhwaite, was very much hoping that he would "not put anything embarrassing about the Gordons in".⁸

The McCrae family had a secret: Georgiana was illegitimate. Her father was the fifth Duke of Gordon and her mother, Jane Graham, about whom very little is known, was the daughter of a labourer. Georgiana, a child of the Regency, saw the circumstances of her birth very differently from her grandchildren, born during the reign

7 Nettie Palmer to Hugh McCrae, 26 August [1933], MS 12831, F 3607/11 (r), McCrae Family Collection, Australian Manuscripts Collection, La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria.

8 Helen McCrae to Hugh McCrae, 2 May 1934, MS 12S31, *ibid*, quoted in Weber, p. 59.

of Queen Victoria. By 1934, an illegitimate grandmother, even if she was the daughter of a Duke, was considered a skeleton in the cupboard. Not quite so shameful as having convict blood, but something not to be mentioned and certainly not in print. Hugh McCrae bowed to his family's wishes. There is no explanation of Georgiana's parentage in the *Journal*, although it is clear she has noble Scottish connections. Early readers must have been puzzled and curious to know more, especially since her illegitimacy was central to her stepmother's treatment of her regarding her will, which she rails against in the *Journal*. It was more than thirty years, or another generation, before the McCrae family admitted the facts in an article about Georgiana for the second volume of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* published in 1967. This was written by Norman Cowper, who used the less confronting term "natural daughter", and was reproduced at the beginning of the third edition of the *Journal*, providing some badly needed background information. The absence of the Duke of Gordon from the first two editions had been glaring. Hugh McCrae obviously felt this himself: he pasted a colour reproduction of the Duke's portrait into his own copy of the book and wrote the caption "Georgiana's father" underneath.⁹

Apart from concealing the family secret, why did Hugh McCrae find it necessary to rewrite his grandmother's journal so extensively? Clearly, he felt the family papers were his to alter as he pleased, an attitude shared by many editors at the time. He wanted to produce an attractive, entertaining book that would please his publishers and the reading public. Always hard up, he was hoping that his new venture into non-fiction would be a financial success. The Australian economy was still suffering from the effects of the Depression in Victoria's centenary year.

Tying the book's publication in with the centenary gave Hugh McCrae reason to portray his grandmother as a pioneering heroine, emphasizing her stoicism and practicality while toning down her homesickness and strong reactions to the trials that befell her. It seems that in order to show her in an especially positive light, he

⁹ Hugh McCrae's copy of *Georgiana's Journal*, heavily annotated in his handwriting, is in the McCrae Family Papers in the Australian Manuscripts Collection, La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria. MS 12018, 2517/2. He continued to make annotations as late as 1950 and pasted in newspaper cuttings, drawings and photographs that related to the text.

chose to make his grandfather, Andrew McCrae, into a far less sympathetic character than was actually the case. Brenda Niall points out that "the most important changes affect Andrew McCrae who emerges from his wife's text as a more complex character than in the grandson's almost wholly negative construction."¹⁰

Due to an unfortunate combination of last-minute delays, which held up publication, and a lack of publicity in Melbourne, where sales would have been expected to be strong, the first edition failed to sell well and was remaindered and sold off at a much-reduced price at the Myer Emporium. It could have been considered a failure, and yet *Georgiana's Journal* certainly gained a readership and inspired a public petition calling for Dromana West on the Mornington Peninsula to be renamed McCrae in the family's honour, which was achieved in 1938. This was the place where they had lived between 1845 and 1851 in a homestead designed by Georgiana that still remained standing. When threatened with demolition to make way for holiday houses in the 1940s, the developer's mother insisted on buying the house and land herself. She had read the *Journal* and was determined to rescue Georgiana's "mountain home". In 1961, Hugh McCrae's nephew George Gordon McCrae bought the homestead and restored it, opening it to the public. After George McCrae's death in 1968 it was taken on by the National Trust, which continues to maintain it today. Without the *Journal*, the house would not have been saved.

The McCrae homestead, in its turn, awoke new interest in *Georgiana's Journal*, and in 1966, eight years after Hugh McCrae's death, the second edition, reset and redesigned, was published. In contrast with its predecessor, it was an immediate success. Two further paperback editions were published in 1978 and 1992.

Georgiana's Journal is not a serious work of scholarship. Hugh McCrae was a poet, not a historian, and his cavalier treatment of his grandmother's text could not be further removed from the painstaking care taken by Thérèse Weber when she transcribed the manuscript journals for her PhD thesis. Hugh McCrae set out to create an entertaining story for a general audience and succeeded in doing so. He produced a book that is still read with pleasure almost eighty years later and has won Georgiana a legion of admirers.

10 Niall, p. xv

Thanks to him, she is one of the few women to have been given her own entry in the early volumes of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. She is the subject of a superb full length biography by Brenda Niall, who also wrote her entry in the *Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women*. Georgiana's paintings and drawings are now in the collections of the National Gallery of Victoria and the Australian National Gallery in Canberra.

Since Hugh McCrae's daughter Lady Cowper gave the early journals to the State Library of Victoria, the two halves of the manuscript have been available in public collections. Historians wishing to quote from them have every opportunity to check the primary source material, just as every good historian should. Hugh McCrae's sister Helen called *Georgiana's Journal* an Australian classic, and so it is. It should be considered a work of literature rather than a historical document. You have been warned!

Marguerite Hancock

12th The Prince's Bridge to be opened on Friday; the ball to take place on this day fortnight.

13th Another sitting from Charlie, but not a good likeness. Indeed, I fear the excitement of the Separation doings has had an unsettling effect upon me. Also, Master Charlie himself has grown restive since he heard that a royal salute is to be fired at one o'clock, and jumped about like a mad thing when his papa invited him to come and "see the smoke!" Arrangements for the illuminations are well in hand, stands are being built, and a hundredweight of candles has been ordered from Jackson and Rae's, and now it is whispered abroad that one of the Bishop's men-servants has composed an ode or is it only a congratulatory address? to be read to "The First Governor of Victoria".

14th A sitting from Charlie, who has assumed the airs of a man-about-town since he was allowed to eat the mustard Mr Bell had put upon his plate!

16th A day full of surprises and excitement. At 6 a.m. the saxhorn band began to play a reveillée outside "The Chalet": a performance which had been kept secret even from Mr La Trobe himself, who now appeared in a flowered dressing-gown, straining his eyes at the window. He held my sleeve while some of the gentlemen put down their horns to sing "Hark, Hark the Lark!" in a key that was too high for them; yet it sounded better than the French *aubade* which immediately followed. After this they recovered their instruments and gave us stirring polka tunes, although poor Madame, who had one of her neuralgic headaches, would gladly have forgone that part of the programme. Mr La Trobe then walked out on to the veranda to put an end to the music, but with the opposite effect, for, no sooner did the performers behold him, than they joined, some with voices, some with saxhorns, in a tremendous rendition of the national anthem. His Honour bowed, and they would have gone through it again had I not led him into the house So they marched away, still playing polkas.

Upset by the saxhorn band, and fearful of any cannonading, Mrs La Trobe appointed me her deputy at the opening of the bridge, an arrangement hardly completed, when Mr Edward Bell blew a bugle to announce his arrival in a carriage and pair.

[We should note the use of bugles during the forties and the fifties. On 20th August 1845, Mr Powlett announced his approach towards Arthur's Seat station by bugles blown from the beach; here, again, Mr Edward Bell winds "Ta-ran-ta-ra!" Also, on 13th February 1844, Mr Horsfall heralded his advent with "sundry flourishes on his cornopean"; while Aleck Hunter, writing to his mother in Scotland (1839), asks her to send him "one brace hooked pistols, and a small plain bugle". Finally, these instruments emulated the municipal geese of Rome, and, by their brazen cackling, often saved the town. See entry of 8th March 1845: "A fire, in Collins Street, at 2 a.m. The alarum-bell rang; and bugles sounded."]

Behold me now, equipped in Madame's black satin polonaise jacket, trimmed with Australian swansdown (a present from Mr Cowper, of Sydney), and my own grey silk bonnet! The Superintendent, having first of all handed me into the carriage, entered it himself followed by Agnes, Nellie, Cecile, Charlie, and Made-moiselle Beguine. Adolphe de Meuron sat on the box, beside Mr Bell, and thus snugly packed together, we came to the Treasury, where Mr Bell changed places with His Honour who drove us, more slowly than his predecessor, to the corner of Swanston and Collins streets, and thence, after a view of the procession, to our proper stand beside the Bishop's barouche in front of the Prince of Wales Hotel. [In those days, Melbourne's swagger residential, catering almost exclusively for the Major St Johns and the Edbens of Port Phillip, that is to say, for military officers and the oxocracy. Captain Bunbury, who was an habitué, said, ambiguously, "The Prince of Wales orchestra plays nothing so well as the national anthem." ... A stranger, for the first time about town, became aware of the Union Jack purifying the democratic atmosphere for chauvinists underneath.] From this point of vantage, we had a clear sight of the hill, with its tent and a few field-pieces, opposite, while constantly moving banners, very small in the distance, glittered and went out again, according as the phalanxes changed places in the sun. Horsemen had hard work to keep onlookers from trespassing on the field, and we witnessed many rushes, but none which broke the line. For want of control, the cheering was ragged, and, no doubt, if the two lots of instrumentalists that followed the saxhorn band had been more *d'accord*, the music would have been better.

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Mademoiselle and myself were so hungry, we felt we could have eaten the whole two thousand between us!

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17th Yesterday's procession is said to have been three miles long, and Mr La Trobe estimates the number of people assembled

on the hill at twenty thousand. (Mr J. B. Were informs me that a ship was to sail from London on August 10, by which time the Act of Separation would probably have received the royal signature.) The *Senate* reached port, yesterday, with letters to July 27. Alfred Cummins arrived to join the staff at the Union Bank. The Lonsdales went to meet their English governess (passage paid) at £80 per annum.

Mrs Perry brought in her needlework this forenoon, and, during the course of our conversation, she said to me, *à propos* of nothing at all, "Pray, forgive me, Mrs McCrae, but I have often wondered whether you are a *Britisher*, or not? Your accentuation of certain words has given me reason for doubt. ... " The term "Britisher" rang disagreeably in my ears, and I insisted upon my claim to English birth; at the same time, I conceded that foreign tricks may have crept into my mode of speech, through years of association with French *émigrés* at my most impressionable age.

18th Tête à tête with Madame, I told her of Mrs Perry's remarkable interrogation, and thus unconsciously began to dwell on my early days among the French ladies of the *ancien régime*. Madame, on her part, remarked that she, herself, was a great granddaughter of the Rev. John d'Osterwald, translator of the Swiss Bible, and that her aunt, Madame d'Osterwald, was, for two years, finishing governess to the celebrated Duchess of Gordon's daughter, with a salary of £200 per annum. I had often heard Lady Cornwallis speak of Mlle d'Osterwald, and knew that the young Duke (with his tutor) had spent five years at Geneva, having the freedom of that city presented to him. While there, he formed friendships with d'Osterwald, de Saussure, Agassiz, Piltet, and Dr Des Roches. These friendships have been continued by descendants of both sides. Mlle Sophie Piltet stayed some time at Gordon Castle with the Brodie Duchess; it was here that she sat to me for her portrait, said to be the best I have painted. She was never a handsome woman, but her face was mobile and expressive.

Although Mrs La Trobe likes to converse with me in French, she speaks in English to Mrs Perry, *always*. [*Mrs Perry, wife of Bishop Perry, whose strength of mind and body made her suited to the times.*] Mrs La Trobe's family belongs to Neuchâtel "de Mont Mollin"—

Supporters of the New Edition

The publication of the 5th edition of *Georgiana's Journal* was possible because of the untiring and generous support of many people. The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) worked in partnership with the McCrae family, their friends and others interested in the Georgiana McCrae story to raise funds. We would like to sincerely thank everyone who contributed. Every donation has been greatly appreciated.

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She was going to a strange country; "supposed to have been a comet dropped in the sea".

— *Samuel Butler*

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