

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-82285-5 - Samuel Richardson: Correspondence with George Cheyne:

Correspondence with Thomas Edwards

Edited by David E. Shuttleton and John A. Dussinger

Excerpt

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RICHARDSON'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH
GEORGE CHEYNE

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 21 DECEMBER 1734

George Cheyne to Richardson

Saturday <1733–4>

MS: Edinburgh University Library, Laing Mss III, 356, Letter I. Copy in another hand.

First printing: Mullett (1943), 31.

Sir,

I am perfectly satisfied with your Reasons and if your Delays are grounded on them I shall not be impatient for the Future. The Additions and Alterations I cannot remedy, and if I were to revise each Sheet twenty Times I must make new ones – You will have the rest of the 2nd Part by Mr Leak's Parcel.¹ I fancy we shall make no further second Revises and so go on more swimmingly for the Future – send the Sheets as they are work't off and I'll be collecting the Errata and Contents – I am satisfied no Printer can do more than you can – I wish the attentive Correction of the Book may influence to take Care of your own Health, which I am told is disposed to Rotundity and Liquor. Fatness is but another Word for a Dropsy of Flesh which a little Time will melt into Snow-water.

Saturday.²

¹ SR's brother-in-law, the Bath bookseller James Leake (1686–1764), who had a commercial success in publishing Cheyne's *Essay of Health and Long Life* (1724). See General Introduction.

² Ms provides no year. Mullett conjectured '1733' on the reasonable assumption that Cheyne refers to correcting proof-sheets for *EM* which has 'Three Parts'. SR was responsible for printing the first edition of 1733 and two further editions in 1734 (Maslen, 70). The fact that Cheyne only appears to be aware of SR's constitution through the word of a third party supports a date prior to SR's month-long visit to Bath during the summer parliamentary recess in 1734 (*Cheyne to SR*, 21 December 1734).

George Cheyne to Richardson

21 December 1734

MS: Edinburgh University Library, Laing Mss III, 356, Letter II. Copy in another hand.

First printing: Mullett (1943), 31–2.

Sir.

I have often been resolved to take an Opportunity to thank you for your many Civilities and extraordinary Gratitude for the small

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 21 DECEMBER 1734

Obligations I was able to do you here. I have neither forgot nor want a due Sense of your Oysters and excellent Apples; but the weekly *Miscellany*¹ is what I have so great a relish and Gratitude for, that no Money should make me be without it, and as far as my Interest reaches and a proper Occasion offers, I have done it Justice, and perhaps, some Time or other may offer my Mite to keep it full. At present I have something of a Kind with it, which engages my Attention.² Too large for many Months Papers such as yours, and but too small for any Thing but a Pamphlet which I hate; but, if my *Imprimatur-Friends*³ so think, I shall, I believe, manage between you and I, without any Communication with Booksellers whom I abominate.⁴

I am sorry to hear your great Business and close Application sinks your Spirits often. I wish you could resolve once more to make a little Recess at Bath again: did I and you converse but honestly and freely one Month again, without the Participation or Example of your Brother in law,⁵ I should be able to make you as much or more alive, active, & gay than I am myself, who have been able cheerfully and comfortably to go through more Business of all Kinds these 6 Months, since I recovered of that Misfortune you saw me under, than I have been these 30 Years by past in double the Time. In the

¹ Periodical owned and edited by the Church of England clergyman and theological writer William Webster (1689–1758), under the pseudonym ‘Richard Hooker of the Inner Temple’. It ran from 16 December 1732 to 27 June 1741, adopting a High-Church position while mainly addressing matters of religion and public morality. Sale (1950) states that ‘we may safely assume that SR printed the *Miscellany* from its inception until December 1736’, citing this letter as supporting evidence that SR also acted as an assistant editor (68–70). *The Weekly Miscellany* carried advertisements for *EM* and Cheyne’s other titles. It printed an extract from Cheyne’s autopathography (*EM*, 325–64) under the heading ‘The True Man of Pleasure’ on 1 March 1735, and a complimentary ‘Extract of a Letter written some Years Ago by the Rev. Mr H—e, concerning Dr Cheyne and Temperance’ on 21 July 1738, but any original contributions by the physician remain unidentified.

² Not further identified.

³ Either a reference to friends who publish or to those, like Richardson, who are in the printing trade (as opposed to booksellers).

⁴ As discussed in the General Introduction, Cheyne constantly felt cheated by his booksellers, notably James Leake of Bath and George Strahan in London who, so he claimed, underpaid him for his manuscripts while trading on his fame as a fashionable physician.

⁵ James Leake, as detailed in the General Introduction.

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 9 AUGUST 1735

mean while, till we meet, if you do what is directed on the other
Leaf,⁶ I hope you will find Benefit by It, which will much rejoice
Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant,

Geo. Cheyne

For Mr Richardson

For Lowness of Spirits, bad Appetite &c.

R⁷ Mass. Pilul Gummos

de Aloe lot ā ʒŷ

Extract Ecphractic

Quinquin ā ʒŷ

Ol Junip. Q.S. m fiant pilul.

Minim. quarum capt. tres singul Noct. decubit.

Bibat Ag. Pymont pro Potu ordinar. cum vin pauxillo.⁸

⁶ Cheyne refers to the medical 'receipt' included below, which provided abbreviated instructions for SR's apothecary to follow in making up prescriptions.

⁷ 'Take of pill gum substance, of aloes lotion, of each 2 drams; extract of ecphractic, cinchona preparation, of each 2 drams; as much oil of Juniper as suffices, mix, let it be made into pills of which take at least three one by one each night upon retiring. Drink Pymont water with a very little wine instead of ordinary drink.' An 'Ecphractic' describes an aperient designed to remove obstructions. Pymont Water was sourced from springs at the German spa town of Bad Pymont in Lower Saxony. For cinchona ('chinchona') see General Introduction.

⁸ 'Gummy Pills': 'Take Gum-Ammoniac, and Sagapenum, each half an ounce; *Russia* Castor, and Myrrh, each three drams; Assa foetida, and Galbanum, each two drams; distill'd oil of Amber, half a dram; and with sufficient quantity of Elixir Proprietatis, bring them, by art, into a mass' (PE, 151). 'Extract of Aloes': the very bitter juice of a succulent plant of the *Liliaceae* family (not to be confused with 'aloes-wood' or '*Lignum Aloes*'). Only the milder 'Succotrine Aloes' were given internally as a cathartic (Quincy, 190). Oil of Juniper was produced by the distillation of a lightly fermented solution of bruised juniper berries seeped in spring water (PE, 197).

George Cheyne to Richardson

9 August 1735

MS: Edinburgh University Library, Laing Mss III, 356, Letter III. Copy in another hand.

First printing: Mullett (1943), 32–3.

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 9 AUGUST 1735

Dear Sir.

Mrs Leake¹ tells me you have got a grievous Cold which oppresses your Spirits, blunts your Appetite and stuffs you with Phlegm and Wind. I apprehend it is rather a Defluxion and that your Glands are obstructed with gross Humours, for at this Time of the Year a mere Cold could not be long so oppressive and obstinate but whatever it be I am certain that Nothing but the Method and Medecines I have prescribed for you will effectually and durably cure you and I am confident this Method will. I should advise you to ride out every Afternoon if possible five or six miles, to live as light as you can² till you are clear and to drink Nothing but a little white Wine and Bristol-water³ and I hope you will soon get well and clear again.

If ever you have any Complaint worth the Minding I conjure you to write directly to myself. As to your Fees you have paid all can be due already did I want or on any score would receive any other you pay weekly by your Miscellany⁴ which if I had not from you I should most certainly purchase at any Price I could spare, for I value it much and have read more just and solid Papers in it than in any Thing I ever read of the Kind and I never fail (nor shall) to make all my Friends that have it not get it, so that you'll be either impertinently nice in Writing where I can serve you or ridiculously negligent of your Health I will in the next Edition of my English Malady, put you in the List of the Self-murderers⁵ – I am Sir, Your real Friend and humble Servant,

Geo. Cheyne

Bath Aug. 9. 1735.

For Mr. Richardson

For a violent Defluxion & obstructed Glands by a Cold.⁶

¹ For Hannah Leake, SR's sister-in-law, see General Introduction and above, p. 3, *Cheyne to SR*, Saturday <1733-4>, n. 1.

² For Cheyne a 'light' diet meant avoiding red meat, spices and fortified wines.

³ Mineral water bottled from warm springs at Clifton Spa near Bristol, Somerset.

⁴ For the *Weekly Miscellany*, see above, p. 4, *Cheyne to SR*, 21 December 1734 and n. 1.

⁵ Cheyne often implies that wilful neglect of one's health amounts to suicide.

⁶ All of the four following prescriptions, contain either vomitive or purgative drugs combined with ameliorative substances designed to cleanse the body.

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 9 AUGUST 1735

R⁷ Tinct. Rad. Ipecacuan. ʒii
 Vin Emet Benedict Depurat ʒi
 Oxyssel Squillit ʒii M. fiant.
 Vomitor cum Regimine debito sumend.⁸

R⁹ Aethiop Mineral ʒii
 Mass Pilul Gummos ʒii
 Nitri purificat ʒils
 Syrup Balsam q. s. m. fiant
 Pilul Med. capt. v mane & vesper.
 Superbibend Cochlear iii sequent Misturæ.¹⁰

R¹¹ Infus. amar. S. (cum quinquin ʒi Fact.)
 ad ii Elix. Vitriol ʒii Ag. Absinth.
 magis compos. ii M.¹²

⁷ 'Take tincture of ipecacuanha root, 2 ounces; of cleansing emetic wine, 1 ounce; of oxyssel of squill, 2 drams. Mix, let it be made, taking as a vomit with appropriate regimen.'

⁸ 'Tincture of ipecacuanha': an infusion (usually in alcohol) of the root of *Cephaelis Ipecacuanha*, a small shrubby South American plant possessing emetic, diaphoretic and purgative properties. Emetic or 'Antimonial Wine' is wine to which antimony has been added to impart emetic properties. 'Oxyssel of squill' is a medicinal syrupy drink made by adding honey to 'squill vinegar', an infusion using the bulbs of the squill or sea onion (*Drimys maritima*), which acted as an emeto-cathartic (PE, 121). Cheyne recommends squill vomits for both paroxysms and asthma to be followed by 'Squill Pills of the Edinburgh Dispensatory' in NM, 170, 268.

⁹ A long 'g' is added by the same hand in left margin. Recipe translates as: 'Take half an ounce of Aethiop mineral powder, 2 drams of gummy pill substance, a dram and a half of purified nitre, as much syrup of balsam as suffices, mix, let it be made into medium pills, take five morning and evening, drinking afterwards 3 spoonfuls of the following mixture.'

¹⁰ Aethiop mineral, named for its black colour, was an equal mixture of powdered flowers of sulphur and mercury (PE, 240); commonly used to remove 'Crudities and Acrimony of the Humors' (Quincy, 284). The mineral salt nitre ('nitrum' or 'saltpetre'), sodium or potassium nitrate was used as a diuretic (Quincy, 169).

¹¹ 'Take a bitter infusion, sulphate (made with an ounce of cinchona), add two drams of elixir of vitriol, two ounces of wormwood water, completely mixed.'

¹² It is unclear what is indicated by sulphate in this context. For cinchona see General Introduction. 'Elixir of vitriol' was made by taking the 'roots of *Calamus aromaticus*, Galangal and gentian, of each half an ounce; Camomile-flowers, and the leaves of Mint of each three drams: Cloves, Cinnamon, Citron or Lemon-peel, Cubebs, Nutmeg and Ginger, of each a dram and half: slice and bruise the ingredients, and pour thereon a quart of rectified Spirit of Wine; let them digest for two days; and add by degrees half a pound of Spirit of Vitriol; digest for two days longer, and then filter the Elixir in a glass funnel' (PE, 95). Two varieties of the bitter, aromatic herb wormwood (*Absinthium vulgare* and *romanorum*) were commonly used as stomachics (PE, 1).

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 13 JANUARY 1736

R¹³ Tinct. Hier. Picr. ℥ii
Spt. Lavend. C. ℥ss M.
capt. semel in Septimama Decubitur¹⁴

Aug. 9. 1735.

¹³ 'Take 2 ounces of tincture of hiera picra, about half a dram of compound spirits of lavender, mix. Take once a week upon retiring.'

¹⁴ Hiera picra, a purgative compound drug made as follows: 'Take Succotrine Aloes, four ounces; the lesser Cardamoms, Galangal, Rhubarb, *Virginia* Snake-root, and Zedoary, of each three drams.' To make a tincture this powder was infused in Spanish white wine (PE 133–4, 92). 'Spirits of Lavender', known as 'Palsy Drops', a recognized cordial for 'paralytic Affections', made by distilling the tops of the aromatic plant lavender (*Lavendula vera* or *spica*) (PE, 71; Quincy, 73). For aloes, see above, p. 5, *Cheyne to SR*, 21 December 1734.

George Cheyne to Richardson

13 January 1736

MS: Edinburgh University Library, Laing Mss III, 356, Letter IV. Copy in another hand.

First printing: Mullett (1943), 33–4.

Dear Sir,

I should have thanked you long ago for your kind present first of your Apples then of your Book¹ and last of your Oysters. I am in my Nature neither forgetful nor ingrate. I have been in a good deal of Hurry from Business and necessary Letter writing to my Patients abroad but I thank God I have pretty great Sense of Civilities and a lively Remembrance of Good Usage. I wish I could soon forget Unkindnesses but sometime or other it may be in my Power to acquit myself of the first and I hope I never shall of the latter – If ever you imagine I can by Word or Deed be serviceable to you, you may depend on all the Service and Friendship while any Sense of Virtue or its Friends remains with me of, Sir, Your most humble and obedient Friend and Servant,

Bath

Jan. 13, 1735–6

Geo. Cheyne

¹ The book is not further identified.

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 4 SEPTEMBER 1737

Ps. I think myself obliged to apprize you that your Fishmonger used you ill by sending neither Colchester nor good common Oysters but absolutely stinking Garbidge.²

² Colchester in Essex, famous for fine oysters.

George Cheyne to Richardson

4 September 1737

MS: Edinburgh University Library, Laing Mss III, 356, Letter V. Copy in another hand.

First printing: Mullett (1943), 34–5.

I am of Opinion, – If it could be possible to persuade those who are tolerably well, and are obliged to follow a sedentary Occupation and to use their Heads and intellectual Organs in their Professions to give over all fermented Liquors but on Occasitions of Gallantry, Gaiety or Lowness, to abstain from Animal Food in Spring and Autumn but especially in the hot Months when Fruits and Garden-stuffs are in their Perfection and to follow Nature in the Products of the Animal and Vegetable Kingdom according to the Seasons of the Year: the Spring Animals and Vegetables being more aqueous, tender, and freer from Salts and Oils; the Autumn Foods being richer; but the Winter ones having attained their greatest Perfection of Concoction and Maturity. Such Persons would go a great Way to preserve their Health and Serenity with few Diseases epidemical or acquired. For in the Spring all Nature is under an universal Fermentation to throw off Crudities and Morbosity; and it is a wise Providence that Lent Time¹ falls out at that Season; which if kept according to its original Intention in Seeds and Vegetables well drest would go a great Way to preserve the Health of the People in general as well as dispose them to serious < > Reflection: So true it is that Goodness has the < > of this Life & that which is to come.

¹ Period in the traditional Christian calendar including forty weekdays extending from Ash Wednesday to Easter Eve, observed as a time of fasting and penitence in commemoration of Jesus' fasting in the wilderness.

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GEORGE CHEYNE TO SR, 7 SEPTEMBER 1737

For Mr. R.

R² Traê Fugilin (ex Sylph. Ver. cum Ag. Paeon. c & Fugilin
 Liqu. fact.) ʒii Traê Castor ʒi, ʒii M. Caph Cochlear unurn in
 Haust. Ag. Pymont in languor aut flatulentiis.

Perstet in usu Philul. præscript. per Sex Septimam. Vere &
 Autumno.³

G.C.

Sepr. 4. 1737

I think the R stands thus:⁴

R Trae Fulig (ex Syph. Vero in Ag. Pæon. C. et Fuligin Ligu.
 fact.) ʒii

Trae Castor ʒi, ʒii m cap. etc.

² 'Take two ounces of tincture of soot (made from true sulphur with compound peony water and wood soot), one dram of tincture of castor, <two drams>, take one spoonful in a draught of Pymont water for languor or flatulence. Continue using the prescribed pills for six weeks, spring and autumn.'

³ The primary ingredient of 'compound peony water' was the roots of the peony plant (*Poeniae*), but contemporary recipes typically add lily-of-the-valley, lavender, rosemary and other simples. Quincy describes it as a 'cephalic' which 'can be exceeded by nothing in all nervous Cases' (371–2). Castor, a substance secreted by the beaver, was a common ingredient of drugs. For 'tincture of castor', 'Take a Russia castor an ounce and a half; salt of Tartar, two drams; rectified Spirit of Wine, a pint: digest them together, in a gentle heat, for four days; and afterwards strain off the Tincture' (PE, 83).

⁴ This note, amending the transcript of this prescription, is in a different hand, possibly that of SR. Apart from spelling 'fuligin' correctly, it provides the same wording as the main copyist's version.

George Cheyne to Richardson

7 September 1737

MS: Edinburgh University Library, Laing Mss III, 356, Letter VI. Copy in another hand.

First printing: Mullett (1943), 35.

Sir.

I hope you have read over my Manuscript and that you will honestly tell me your Opinion both of what you think of its Merit in general and also if it will be best to bring it into One or Two Volumes, I mean for the Benefit of the Bookseller.¹ I told you I

¹ His medical treatise which, after protracted revisions, rearrangements and additions, became the companion volumes *ER* and *NM*. A handwritten contents list in the papers of Cheyne's