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978-1-108-07735-4 - Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century:
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as a Sequel to the 'Literary Anecdotes': Volume 2

John Nichols

Excerpt

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ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE
LITERATURE
OF THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

ORIGINAL LETTERS OF MR. (AFTERWARDS BP.)
WARBURTON TO DR. STUKELEY.

LETTER I.

For Dr. STUKELEY, next door to the Duke Powis's
house, in Ormond-street, London*.

SIR, *Newarke, August 4, 1722.*

MY neighbour Mr. Twells † telling me he had promised you some account of the Roman Sepulchral Urns lately dug up here, and my ambition to oblige a gentleman for whose character I have the utmost esteem seconding my friend's entreaties; I had but one objection to deter me from sending you what I know, or conjecture, of this discovery; and that was, my slender acquaintance with this kind of learning: but, knowing how well able you are to improve upon the most imperfect hints, that remained no longer such. What then I could collect from a transitory view, and very uninforming relation, take as follows. The gentleman, in whose ground they were, discovered them in planting trees next the Foss-road side. There were four in number, lying in a straight line, and at equal distances;

* This and all the subsequent Letters to Dr. Stukeley are carefully printed from the Originals, communicated by the Rev. J. Fleming St. John, M. A. Prebendary of Worcester.

† Who afterwards married Mr. Warburton's sister Elizabeth.

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but, through the knavery of the workmen, who imagined they had found a treasure, and so carelessly and clandestinely dug them up, they were broke into a thousand pieces. I shall only take notice of what was contained in the most remarkable of them. Amidst the burnt bones and ashes, was found a rude mis-shapen lump of brass, about the bigness of a small walnut, half melted down, with a bit of bone, and some of the ashes sticking in the surface of it. At first view I conjectured it to be the Roman Fibula, as presuming the dead were generally burned in their ordinary habit, and am yet of that opinion. The other remarkable was a small brass figure, about an inch and half long, very much the shape of a Legionary Ensign, on which I presume were the Emperor's head, and other usual decorations, but quite defaced by the injury of time. I leave you to make your inferences from this, of the degree or profession of the owner*.

This adventure may not be inconsiderable, as it tends to a more perfect recovery of that part of the Foss-road that adjoins to us. You know, Sir, the Bishop of Lincoln †, by Mr. Foxcroft's information, has fixed two stations in Brideford and Collingham fields, on each side us, grounded on the discovery of some coins in those places. But we, methinks, seem to have more than an equal claim to that honour with them, as it is less probable that Urns should be found in any other place, than that Coins should. Besides, the argument will receive no small force from this consideration, that the place where they were dug up is not above half a dozen yards from what we call the Foss, and on a very superior eminence on the South-west part of this place. If I can be further serviceable to you in any thing, I shall enjoy your commands, who am, Sir,

Your very humble servant, W. WARBURTON.

* See Stukeley's "Itinerarium Curiosum," vol I. p. 104.

† Dr. Edmund Gibson, afterwards Bp. of London.

LETTER

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MR. WARBURTON TO DR. STUKELEY.

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LETTER II.

For WILLIAM STUKELEY, Esq.

VIR SPECTABILIS, 28 Jan. 1728-9.

SALVUS sis cum tuâ Podagrâ bene dotatâ, nobis Fortunæ nothis vix concessâ. In *Diversorio Camberiano* jam dego*. Si malum tuum superbum ferias agat, unum et alterum amicorum tuorum hic invenias. Officium epistolæ et tabularii nostri præstarem, sed nunc Acheronta non fert animus movere. Intelligis. Verbum sat est. Uxorem tuam optimam saluto. Tibi strictè devinctus, GUL. WARBURTON.

LETTER III.

For WILLIAM STUKELEY, Esq. at Grantham.

DEAR SIR, B. Broughton, Mar. 1728-9.

I received the favour of yours of the 21st of the last month some few days ago; and am glad to find, by the agreeable society you invite me to on Friday se'nnight, that your gout has left you free to enjoy that philosophic gaiety and serenity of mind that makes you happier than Eastern Monarchs; or (who I believe you think had a greater share of it) than the wisest Sages of Antiquity; for we can scarce meet with one of them, whose natural temper an attentive view of the follies of the greater world had not strained and violated: one lamented mankind, another laughed at them, a third railed against them, which was an evident proof that their study of human nature, how refined and delicate soever they had brought it to, had been too dearly purchased, even at the expence of their own quiet, and integrity of temper. Alas! all their boasted study of humanity could never teach them to conquer their passions or disguise their superstition. One of them, you know,

* He had been recently presented, by Sir Robert Sutton, to the Rectory of Brand (or Brent) Broughton.

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was so high-mettled, that he was for *planting men* even on forbidden ground; and the other so mealy-mouthed, that he would not allow the planting even of *beans*; which, in contempt of this latter, I am this moment a-doing in the farther end of my garden—as you, in defiance of the former, have undertaken the other part of cultivation in a sweet sequestered spot, which none but gods, or a man like them, is worthy to approach; where I desire my humble respects may be tendered, along with those I offer to yourself, when I profess how much I am, dear Sir, your most humble servant, and affectionate friend,

W. WARBURTON.

P. S. I understand that “the Friday of the Assize week” means Lincoln Assizes. I purpose to attend you there; if any thing prevents your coming, or if I mistake the time. be so good to let me have a line. I return you Pemberton * with this, and with more thanks than he got guineas.

LETTER IV.

FOR WILLIAM STUKELEY, Esq. M. D. at Grantham.

DEAR SIR, *Newarke, March 12, 1728-9.*

I hope you received one of mine last week with my intentions of waiting on you at Ancaster at the day. Since that, I have been pressed by a solicitation I could no-ways withstand, to attend a trial between Sir Robert Sutton and Mr. Plumtre about the boundaries of their estates: this will necessarily draw me to Nottingham on the very day I had proposed to myself the pleasure of attending you. My best respects and esteem to the gentlemen you

* Probably Dr. Henry Pemberton, M. D. F. R. S. and Professor of Physick at Gresham College, who published, by a large Subscription, “A View of Sir Isaac Newton’s Philosophy” in a magnificent quarto, but which greatly disappointed the expectations of his Patrons.

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MR. WARBURTON TO DR. STUKELEY. 5

meet there, whom I live in expectation of meeting there in Summer. In the mean time I am daily in expectation of your kind visit to Broughton, and that you will contrive to stay a night or two with me, where we may converse together *de quolibet ente*, and laugh at the follies and impertinence that surround us.

Dear Sir, your most affectionate friend, and
humble servant, W. WARBURTON.

LETTER V.

FOR WILLIAM STUKELEY, Esq. at Grantham.

DEAR SIR, *Newarke, June 9, 1729.*

I had a great temptation to have gone over to Hough last Thursday, where I expected you was, and was heartily vexed that a pack of blockheads should have stopped my way. About two hours ago poor Doctor Hunter took a leap into the dark. I should heartily wish that this, or any other occasion, could bring you amongst us here*, where every one has so just an esteem for my dear Friend.

Just this moment I was lamenting to my uncle Rastall of the small hopes I had of so much happiness; and he went so seriously into it, as to mention the service he thought himself capable of doing you in such a case, which he thought not small.

Dear Sir, you will be so good to pardon the freedom of this officious Letter, and believe me to be, with much gratitude,

Your most obliged humble servant, W. WARBURTON.

* Dr. Stukeley was a native of Holbech in Lincolnshire; and, having taken the degree of M. B. at Cambridge 1709, commenced practice as a Physician at Boston in his native county; but, in 1717, removed to London. where he was in that year elected F. R. S.; became one of the Re-founders of the Society of Antiquaries 1718; and in 1719 took the degree of M. D. at Cambridge, and became a Fellow of the College of Physicians. In 1726 he removed to Grantham, where he continued to reside till 1729; when he entered into holy orders. See p. 6.

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LETTER VI.

FOR WILLIAM STUKELEY, Esq. at Grantham.

DEAR SIR, *B. Broughton, June 13, 1729.*

I was perfectly charmed with the secret your obliging Letter of the 11th instant communicated to me. I have great satisfaction in the prospect of the services you will do the *Church**; and of the honours you, I make no doubt, will in return receive from it: but, above all, you will allow me to indulge myself in the pleasing prospect I *now* have of a Friend of the *Order*. I shall now begin to entertain more ambitious thoughts, when I can have such an assistant of my schemes; and I can readily forgive all the strange malice I have hitherto met with, to be at length rewarded with a friendship, whose last great bond is, as our friend Tully expresses it, *ab eorundem studiorum usu*. As to the alteration this will make in yourself, I do not think you could more consult your happiness, or advance your interests of every kind, than by this resolution. You have a fine fortune, that of itself can provide you with the ornaments, as well as conveniences of life; which, put to the addition you may reasonably expect in the Order, will furnish you with all the variety of satisfactions that a mind like yours can digest. Above all, I am pleased with your thinking of London not above a month in a year. And for those serene pleasures of contemplation which so much delight you, you will find them much heightened in the freedom and disengagement of our profession. I long to see you; so that, if you do not let me see you, or know next week of some short day in which I may expect you; on Sunday se'n-night, in the afternoon, I will make you a visit. To fill up the paper, I send you the following criti-

* Dr. Stukeley was ordained by Abp. Wake, July 20, 1729; and, in the October following, was presented by Lord Chancellor King to the Rectory of All Saints, Stamford; a preferment for which he was in some degree indebted to the friendship of Sir Hans Sloane, as will appear hereafter.

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cism on a passage of Paterculus*, lib. I. cap. 4; which I must desire your judgment of. You are to know that there is only a single MS. of this Author preserved, and infinitely faulty; so that the book is but a heap of errors, notwithstanding the attempts of many upon it. This Author, speaking of the original of Cuma and Naples, says, "*Cumas in Italia condiderunt.*" (sc. Hippocles & Megasthenes.) "*Pars horum civium magno post intervallo Neapolim condidit. Utriusque urbis eximia semper in Romanos fides. Sed ALIIS diligentior ritus patrii mansit custodia: Cumanos Osca mutavit vicinia. Vires autem veteres earum urbium hodieque magnitudo ostentat Mœnium.*" Now, I dare say, the word *aliis* sticks at first sight pretty much with you, for you observe this is all the way a conjoint account of the two cities, but in this part of the sentence it is dropt, and very impertinently said *others* preserved their Country rites more diligently; which, certainly, so fine a Writer could not be guilty of. I read, therefore, *Sed NEAPOLIS diligentior ritus patrii mansit*; which makes it a pertinent observation, and worthy the notice of an exact Historian. And it is not difficult to conceive *Neapolis* being corrupted to *aliis* by a stupid copyer. I would only know whether you can give me any light from some other Writer about this piece of Antiquity, that Naples continued the Grecian manners longer than Cuma.—I will offer another to your consideration: Our Author, cap. 10, speaking of the severity of a Censor upon his Brother, expresses himself thus: *Aspera circa hæc tempora censura Fulvii Flacci et P. Albini fuit, quippe Fulvii censoris frater, et quidem CONSORS, Cnæus Fulvius, se iatu motus est ab iis censoribus.*" Now where is the wonder that a man's brother should be called his *Consors* too. It is true sometimes they are not so: but here Paterculus lays an emphasis on it as increasing the relation, *et QUIDEM Consors*.

* Of whose "History" he was then meditating an edition.

I read

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I read therefore as the true, *et quidem CONSOCER.* And this indeed might raise the wonder ; for there was not only the nearness of Brotherhood, but the bond was tied more close by marrying their children together ; for *Consoceri*, you know, are they whose son and daughter are married together.

I am, dear Sir, your most obliged and most affectionate humble servant,

W. WARBURTON.

* * * On this Letter Dr. STUKELEY has written :

“ I can think of no other meaning in it, than that, although these two places, Cuma and Neapolis, had the same founders, and sat quietly under the Roman government, yet Naples did not so readily change its Greek customs, language, and manners, as Cuma did. This seems intimated by what immediately follows, *Cumanos Osca mutavit vicinia : id est*, the neighbourhood of the Oscan, or old Latin language, helped to alter that of Cuma ; and perhaps the Oscans subdued before the Romans ; whence the Author adds that observation of their former strength, and the circuit of their old Walls. Naples was ever famous, not only for its sweet situation and air, but for its gaiety ; for the frequency of men of learning, whence the Romans went thither as to a Grecian Academy, for that freedom from noise, trade, and business, which Rome was full of. The very Country of Campania, where it stands, broke the force of Hannibal's army by its softnesses and delights. In this, I suppose, it differed considerably from the rough parsimonious way of the other parts of Italy the Romans were masters of. There are endless quotations out of the old Authors, touching the charms of the place and the politeness of the people ; which being much earlier than that of Rome, might, perhaps, give occasion to that reflection of the Author, that the Neapolitans retained their Country fashions longest. So that I hold your correction for good. — I know of nothing better than what you offer about *Consors* ; unless you suppose they were colleagues in some other office, and many were the *Collegia*, or companies at Rome.

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LETTER VII.

For the Rev. Dr. STUKELEY, Rector of
All Saints, Stamford.DEAR SIR, *September 5, 1730.*

I WAS much disappointed in not seeing you at Grantham, according to expectation. My brother Twells shewed me a Letter, wherein you charged the blame of it on me. But I must appeal to your own ingenuity, whether it be rightly placed, after I have told you that, when I came into Grantham, I inquired of every one that I thought could give me intelligence concerning you, but could hear no news. At length Mr. Smith told me he *thought* he saw you ride by, and believed you was gone to the Bishop. From that intelligence, if it was right, I concluded that (as you had not called at Grantham, nor left any word by any one for me, as you went through,) you would not return to Grantham that night. Nor did Mr. Smith give me the least encouragement to think you would be back that night; but, on the contrary, when I asked him of his own coming back, who was then himself going to the Bishop, he returned me such a doubtful answer as could give me no encouragement to stay, though I told him my chief occasion of coming was to meet you. After this, you may easily imagine I had little encouragement to pass the night alone at Grantham.

This is a fair state of the case; and I hope you will consider over again before you confirm your condemnation of me. It was 6 o'clock before I left Grantham.—This matter has been a real concern to me; but would be much greater, did I not think you was well assured how much I am, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend and obedient humble servant,
W. WARBURTON.

My humble service to good Mrs. Stukeley.

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LETTER VIII.

To the very Rev. Dr. STUKELEY, at Stamford.

DEAR SIR,

August 18, 1731.

I am first to thank you for my kind entertainment the last time I was with you; and to hope that this will find you in that serenity of mind, which, to the pleasure of your Friends, so amiably lightens in your countenance, and which it should not be in the power of fools and scoundrels to ruffle. I think it is great pity that your region will not afford friends and acquaintance, not so much for your sake, as for theirs who might have the benefit of such a converse. But you have one peculiar happiness that makes amends for greater inconveniencies; and that is, the agreeable companion you have at home, capable of enhancing all the pleasures, and soothing all the cares, of human life. And from the accomplishments of such a companion the man receives peculiar honour, as the younger Pliny says of his Friend, “*magnâ gloriâ dignus est qui uxorem, quam virginem accepit, tam peritani politamque reddiderit.*” For you must know, my good Doctor, that I regard Woman in her natural state as one of those odd pictures that I have formerly seen at Oxford, which they use for a very pretty experiment in Optics. They produce you a board, on the plane of which is thrown together a great number of colours, *as it appears*, with the utmost confusion and disorder, the most *visible* work of chance. But, by applying to it a cylindrical steel mirror, there immediately rises on its bosom a beautiful reflected form in all the justness and artifice of design. A woman is this coloured table; in whose capricious and variable fancy discordant and monstrous ideas are, by the force of the passions, whimsically daubed on at random, which present no mark of the workmanship