

## INTRODUCTION

John Cleland remains one of the most enigmatic and controversial figures in the canon of eighteenth-century literature. For many years his name was associated almost exclusively with the most famous of his literary works, the scandalous erotic novel *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748–49). John Nichols, in the most extensive obituary of Cleland, while declining even to name the work, described how its publication had brought a stigma on Cleland's name 'which time has not obliterated, and which will be consigned to his memory whilst its poisonous contents are in circulation' (item no. 135). The notoriety of the *Memoirs* casts a shadow over Cleland's subsequent career and posterity. He spent his later decades as a reclusive and anachronistic figure, nursing accumulated resentments about his personal lot and about the modern world in general. He appears not to have married, dying intestate with no obvious heir. While we know that he was buried in the churchyard of St Margaret's parish, London, his actual grave plot has never been identified. No portrait or sketch of him is known to exist, and we have found no contemporary record of his physical appearance. Even though there seems to have been little appetite amongst those who survived him to keep alive his memory or to make a vocal case for his literary and scholarly achievements, posterity has perhaps been even more unkind. His life was recorded in morally censorious terms in both *A New and General Biographical Dictionary* (1798) and *The General Biographical Dictionary* (1812–17), the latter expressing the devout wish that the author could reflect 'with shame and sorrow' on the 'extensive misery' caused by his most notorious publication. Cleland was omitted as a subject from the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885–1900), though he earned a fleeting mention under the life of his father, William Cleland, as a 'disreputable person'.<sup>1</sup>

The recent resurrection of interest in Cleland stems from a number of key undertakings. In 1963, the victory of the publisher G. P. Putnam's Sons in a legal case brought by the New York authorities ensured that an unexpurgated text of the *Memoirs* could circulate for the first time in the United States.<sup>2</sup> This was a critical

<sup>1</sup> Anon, 'Cleland, William (1674?–1741)', *DNB* (1887). The revised essay, by Freya Johnston, omits that phrase. Anon, rev. Freya Johnston, 'Cleland, William (1673/4–1741)', *ODNB* (2004).

<sup>2</sup> See Charles Rembar, *The End of Obscenity: The Trials of Lady Chatterley, Tropic of Cancer, and Fanny Hill* (New York: Random House, 1968).

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moment in initiating the liberation of the text from censorship and the opening up of Cleland's masterpiece to a new generation of readers. In 1985, Peter Sabor (Oxford World's Classics) and Peter Wagner (Penguin) brought out the first modern scholarly editions of the *Memoirs*, creating the conditions for its adoption as a canonical text within university syllabuses. By this stage, the first scholarly biography had already appeared in the shape of William Epstein's *John Cleland: Images of a Life* (1974), painstakingly piecing together the residual traces of Cleland's life and providing the basis of all subsequent biographical works. Epstein's labours have more recently been supplemented by Hal Gladfelder's *Fanny Hill in Bombay: The Making & Unmaking of John Cleland* (2012), which provides fresh information on Cleland's time working for the East India Company in Bombay, on the collaborative origins of the *Memoirs*, and on Cleland's possible involvement in homoerotic subcultures in eighteenth-century London. Alongside these works of biographical recovery have been important clarifications of the scope of Cleland's published oeuvre by Roger Lonsdale (1979) and James Basker (1987). Most of the publications of his later years, including novels, plays, poems, linguistic and medical treatises, translations, and assorted journalism, have long been out of print. In the past decade, the Canadian publisher Broadview has brought out student editions of both *Memoirs of a Coxcomb* and *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*.<sup>3</sup> It might even be said that Cleland is currently in vogue, a circumstance that never prevailed in his own time.

Cleland is not merely the most notorious but perhaps also the most elusive literary figure of his time. For literary historians it is frustrating that we know more about his activities before he became famous than afterwards. He left no literary remains, and for two centuries the archival record of his life was extremely limited. For all the meticulous research undertaken by Cleland's two modern biographers, most of their subject's life continues to vanish before our gaze. Epstein was sufficiently disconcerted by the manifest gaps in the biographical record to subtitle his study 'Images of a Life', a frank admission of the impracticality of doing more than merely assembling a series of fragmentary scenes. Gladfelder's study, which reads Cleland's life through his oeuvre, concludes by noting that, in Cleland's case, '[o]nly the texts are real; the life is a phantasm'.<sup>4</sup> These lacunae in the biographical record are partly owing to the relative dearth of surviving correspondence with which all chroniclers of Cleland's life have had to contend. In response to Gladfelder's statement, it might be proposed that the purpose of an edition of Cleland's letters and documents is to make Cleland 'real' again.

Cleland's letters are scattered across a number of archives, including major repositories such as the Bodleian Library, the Morgan Library, and the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), as well as local collections

<sup>3</sup> John Cleland, *Memoirs of a Coxcomb*, ed. Hal Gladfelder (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2005); *Memoirs*.

<sup>4</sup> *Fanny Hill in Bombay*, p. 244.

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such as Northumberland Archives, Sheffield City Archives,<sup>5</sup> and the Médiathèque de Vire, Normandy. Around thirty items have been ‘discovered’ by members of the editorial team in the finite sense of their having been unknown to earlier Cleland scholars. One of the great achievements of Epstein’s pioneering biography was to have reconstructed so much of the life with such a small volume of correspondence at his disposal. In particular, he surmised, mainly from Lucy Cleland’s will, the very difficult relationship between Cleland and his mother, without any knowledge of a large cache of family and legal letters since acquired by the Morgan Library in New York that would have verified his account.<sup>6</sup> Ironically, just as Epstein’s biography preceded the surfacing of a significant group of new letters, so Gladfelder’s excellent recent study also narrowly predated further important finds of correspondence. Chief amongst these are twelve letters, mainly held in Northumberland Archives, between Cleland and members of the Delaval family that establish the Delavals as patrons of Cleland during the second half of his life,<sup>7</sup> and fourteen letters, held at the Médiathèque de Vire, between Thomas Pichon, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont, Frances Mayne, and their circle that shed new light on Cleland’s literary editorial work and his European travel in the 1750s and 1760s. In very approximate terms, it could be said that Epstein’s biography rested on conversancy with less than a quarter of Cleland letters now known to exist, while Gladfelder’s rested on less than half. Ironically, some recent letter ‘finds’ would not now need to be made, as the items have since come into public view through the digitisation of local card catalogues and the connecting of collections through the National Archives online catalogue. Only a few of Cleland’s letters remain stubbornly outside the reach of modern finding aids. The archival distribution of Cleland’s letters probably testifies to the fact that they were never retained or collected for their intrinsic value: they have survived mainly on account of the status and careful record-keeping of their recipients.

For all the recent scholarly advances, the epistolary record remains teasingly fragmentary, especially for the decades sandwiching the monumental publication of Cleland’s most famous work. We know next to nothing, for example, about the eight years between his return from Bombay in 1741 and the legal furore that erupted in 1749 following publication of the *Memoirs*: these were years in which, so it has been claimed, Cleland ‘wandered in obscurity over the cities of Europe’.<sup>8</sup> Equally, only a handful of his letters survive from the 1750s, the vast majority of which depict the fraught negotiations with his mother conducted through the intermediary of her solicitor, Edward Dickinson. Similarly, while James Boswell

<sup>5</sup> The Rockingham letters held at Sheffield have been discussed in Richard Terry and Helen Williams, ‘John Cleland and the Marquis of Rockingham: Two New Letters’, *Notes & Queries* 61 (2014), 441–44.

<sup>6</sup> *John Cleland*, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup> An introduction to these papers can be found in ‘Delavals’.

<sup>8</sup> James Douglas, *Glimpses of Old Bombay and Western India, with Other Papers* (London: Low, 1900), p. 255.

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has left us evocative glimpses in his journal of Cleland in his morose old age,<sup>9</sup> only three letters written by Cleland have come down to us from the last decade of his life. No juvenile letters at all have survived and we are aware of only three female correspondents: Lucy Cleland, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont, and Susanna Delaval. Our collection of letters moreover falls short of representing the full range of Cleland's linguistic abilities and the likelihood that he participated in a more global network of correspondents.

What, then, of Cleland's extant letters? It is regrettable for editors of his correspondence to need to admit that probably nobody's day was ever brightened by receiving a letter from Cleland. He was not a man with whom anyone should lightly enter into correspondence. The letters are of interest for their vivid presentation of an intense and volatile personality, one sometimes hard to find congenial. Many letters reflect his emotional and financial neediness, as well as his constitutional ingratitude to those who ministered to his needs. He was an eloquent and unflagging hater, with a tenacious memory for any perceived slights. He seems at times deaf to his own tone, with some of his letters lurching quickly between obsequiousness, cordiality, and personal defamation. Many of his acts of communication might have been improved had the equivalent of a 'recall email' function been available to him.

It is perhaps idle to conjecture whether Cleland suffered from specific psychological conditions, but the letters suggest a complex and unstable personality. He was incapable of recollecting emotion in tranquillity; past slights and disappointments returned to his mind with unusual emotional immediacy whenever he recounted them. The sheer longevity of his resentments is also remarkable. In a letter of 22 May 1772, he accosted David Garrick over the rejection of his tragedy *Titus Vespasian*, a decision the theatre manager had made eighteen years earlier (item no. 120). His most enduring grievance, which he decried as his 'singularly cruel and unexampled usage' (item no. 99), related to a belief that he had been offered a role as a government propagandist during the ephemeral Bute administration of 1762–63 only for the offer to be revoked. This misfortune, which Cleland bemoaned for the rest of his life, can be tracked in numerous letters and documents in our edition, the latest being the record of a conversation he held with Josiah Beckwith on 27 May 1781. Although a theme of the letters is Cleland's regular solicitude for the health of his correspondents, he sometimes appears insensible to the larger tragedies afflicting others. The immediate occasion of his one surviving letter to Lucy Cleland was the death, a few days earlier, of her sister Margaret, Viscountess Allen, but Cleland quickly abandons the rhetorical proprieties of bereavement in favour of an outpouring of resentment at his treatment by his mother. The last letter we include in the volume sees Sir John Hussey Delaval defending himself against Cleland's accusation of a 'falling off' of his regard by citing his continuing grief for the loss of his wife (item no. 134). For all

<sup>9</sup> Included here as items no. 119, 128, 131, and 136.

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that Cleland's letters are often lively and amusingly forthright, nobody could ever have sustained a correspondence with him without a combination of indulgence and stoicism. Those who bore the brunt of his most troublesome letters – David Garrick, Edward Dickinson, and Sir John Hussey Delaval – are perhaps the real heroes of our volume.

Cleland's letters do not belong to any established epistolary tradition. He could never have imagined that they would be published and would probably have been alarmed at the prospect. They do not testify to his own likeability, as Alexander Pope intended his published letters to do; they bear no similarity to the homely and elegant ruminations of a William Shenstone or William Cowper; and they have nothing of the lofty sagacity of many of Samuel Johnson's letters. Yet they are, in their own right, some of the most remarkable letters written during the eighteenth century. Very few of the letters printed here are perfunctory or narrowly transactional. Nearly all have something to say, and many show a high level of mental and rhetorical application. As we draw out in our annotation, much of Cleland's epistolary output overlaps with his own journalistic and scholarly writings, rehearsing or iterating ideas that were at the forefront of his mind.

His distinctive tones are perhaps self-pity and indignation, the latter frequently rising to apoplexy at his own ill treatment or the general state of affairs. At the heart of our volume lies a sequence of letters between November 1752 and 23 September 1762 concerning Cleland's relationship with his mother. Collectively they form, alongside Johnson's *Life of Savage* (1744), one of the most gripping eighteenth-century narratives of maternal rejection. The letters are mainly spaced throughout Cleland's fifth decade but are strikingly adolescent in tone as he chafes against his dependency on his remaining parent. While Cleland could not exactly be termed an epistolary stylist, his rhetorical salvos are sometimes powerful and moving; as early as 1736, in connection with his legal work at Bombay, a contemporary commented on his 'poinant and ready' pen.<sup>10</sup> For a man who was not habitually self-aware, some of the crafted moments in the letters are self-reflective in nature: in a letter to the Marquess of Rockingham, he disparages his own literary efforts as 'the childish amusement of picking up cockleshells along the shore of that literary Deep'; another late letter to Sir John Hussey Delaval elicits the plangent confession that 'I have, S<sup>r</sup>: John, sincerely renounced all commerce with the world: I am grown a kind of extramundane being' (items no. 1111, 1112).

Cleland was one of a cadre of young men (many of them, like him, Scottish) who in their early years embarked on a career in the East India Company. In later life, he hustled to make a living by his pen by writing novels, plays, and various works of pseudo-scholarship and working as an editor. Over his lifetime, he must have scribbled millions of words of journalistic copy, mainly in the form of letters to newspapers. (These items have proved too numerous, and some of the issues of attribution too intractable, for us to be able to include them here, though we

<sup>10</sup> *John Cleland*, p. 212 n. 77.

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have identified some pieces in our annotations.) During the 1750s, he was a staple reviewer for Ralph Griffiths's *Monthly Review*, as such forming part of the first team of literary reviewers in England. Yet even these exertions did not grant him the level of subsistence he craved. The two greatest traumas of his life seem to have been the unfulfilled promise of government employment under Bute and the caution of his mother in permitting him an allowance only on strictly regulated terms, which prohibited his borrowing against it. In later life, his scanty income seems to have been supplemented by handouts from Sir John Hussey Delaval, who occupied the role of Cleland's patron. Cleland paid for this service by sending loyal albeit sometimes testy letters, supplying health tips, and occasionally planting letters in newspapers supporting Delaval's interests. In his career as a jobbing author and his quest for financial support and patronage, Cleland's struggles mirrored those of many writers of his time. What makes him so lastingly relevant to eighteenth-century studies is our sense of his being not just an extraordinary maverick but a representative figure as well.

*Early Years*

The date of Cleland's birth is unknown and can only be surmised from that of his christening. This took place, as recorded in the parish register, on 24 September 1710 at All Saints Parish Church, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey;<sup>11</sup> in light of this, it seems likely, as Epstein conjectures, that Cleland was born 'in the late summer or early fall' of 1710.<sup>12</sup> The standard christening entry in the register normally records the name and gender of the child and the Christian name of each parent without any marker of social rank, yet his own entry reads 'John Cleland S. of William & Lucy Gent[leman]' (Appendix I). The spelling 'Cleland' (see also items no. 102, 111) probably reflects a common pronunciation of the family name, and Cleland's name is spelt this way or as 'Cleeland' in some documents included in this edition (items no. 48, 53). His younger brother was christened on 13 October 1711 as 'Henry Clayland S. of Major William and Lucy His Wife'. The dates of the birth and christening of their sister, Charlotte, remain unknown.<sup>13</sup>

Cleland was born into circumstances of transition and uncertainty for his parents. On 1 January 1706, William Cleland had been commissioned as a captain in Lord Mark Kerr's regiment of foot, participating in the Battle of Almansa in April 1707. At the end of that campaign, and by now promoted to major, he returned to England, where he met and married Lucy DuPass, the daughter of a wealthy Flemish merchant who had settled in England around the time of the Restoration.

<sup>11</sup> Parish register for All Saints, Kingston upon Thames [MS], Surrey History Centre, finding reference P33/1/11.

<sup>12</sup> *John Cleland*, p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> *John Cleland*, p. 200 n. 53.



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Shortly after his first two children were born, William Cleland's regiment was disbanded, with its officers placed on half-pay, and he found himself scrambling for some new form of livelihood. One scheme he entertained was moving his young family to France, but his fortunes were resolved when, probably through the influence of the Earl of Mar, he was appointed a commissioner of customs for Scotland on 19 September 1713. For a while, his post involved travel between London and Edinburgh, but in 1723 he transferred to the English Commission for affairs of taxes at an annual salary of £500.

In 1721, a ten-year-old John Cleland matriculated at Westminster School, among the most prestigious institutions of its kind in the country. How his father proposed to fund such an elite education is not clear: Westminster's student body overwhelmingly consisted of the offspring of peers, the gentry, and the professions. Yet Cleland seems to have quickly found his feet, and within a year he had been elected as a King's Scholar, one of an elite of forty students supported by the Crown and destined for scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge. It seems all the more surprising that, within a year of this award being conferred, Cleland's Westminster adventure came to an abrupt halt when he was withdrawn from the school roll. The reason for this sudden reversal remains unclear. It may have been connected with the new post his father took up in the same year, volatility in the family's finances, or perhaps some misdemeanour committed by the young Cleland. A further twist in the tale is provided by Cleland's brother, Henry, who matriculated at Westminster in the same year that John withdrew and remained there for the rest of his educational career. In a letter from Alexander Pope to the Earl of Oxford on 3 November 1730, Henry, then nineteen, emerges as his father's 'Favorite Son',<sup>14</sup> and the family certainly chose to invest more in his education than in his elder brother's. It may just have been that Cleland, by his own volition, was set on a different course, the one that he was fulfilling the next time we hear of him, when, in 1728, having enlisted as a soldier in the service of the East India Company, he embarked on a ship to Bombay, there to spend the next twelve years of his life.

*India*

When Cleland landed at Bombay Harbour on 28 August 1728, at about the time of his eighteenth birthday, he probably sent letters to friends and family in England. He would surely, at least, have let his father know of his safe arrival on Indian soil after six months at sea. No such letters are known to have survived; nor do we have any of Cleland's personal correspondence for the thirteen years that he spent abroad before his return to England in August 1731. Thanks to the meticulous record-keeping of the East India Company, however, we do have an

<sup>14</sup> *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn, vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), p. 144.

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extensive record of Cleland's activities in Bombay in the form of documents transcribed by secretaries in massive ledgers, preserved in the British Library's India Office Collection.

The earliest of these documents, dated 26 August 1730, announces Cleland's appointment as an attorney at the Mayor's Court of Bombay. Since he was 'already somewhat acquainted with the business', he was considered 'the fittest person for that Employ', despite his lack of any formal legal training (item no. 1); like most of the Company's attorneys in Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, he was expected to practise law without having studied it. The second document, dated 5 February 1731, in which Cleland seeks the potentially lucrative position of 'Writer' for the Company, outlines his previous appointments – beginning with his enlisting as a soldier in the Company's army in London in February 1728 and following his subsequent promotions to assistant gunner and then assistant to the secretary of the Bombay Council, Edward Page, who found him 'well qualify'd in Bookkeeping, writing, & languages, sober, faithfull, and diligent' (item no. 2).

When Cleland's own distinctive voice is heard for the first time in his plea to the Mayor's Court of 27 November 1734, however, sobriety, fidelity, and diligence are not the terms that come to mind. Throughout his adult life, Cleland was a great hater, and his contempt for Henry Lowther, chief of the Company's Custom House at Surat, resonates through this document. Cleland was representing Lollaboy Soncurr Ballanot Vassentroy, a Hindu resident in Surat, who had accused Lowther of failing to repay a very large loan and who wished to have his case heard in Bombay, not in Surat. Even at the outset, where legal technicalities might be expected, Cleland declares that he is moved by 'the utmost indignation, & the deepest concern for the Honour of this Court'. Were Lowther, the defendant, to prevail, 'it wou'd be to the utter Disgrace of the English Justice in these Parts'; the Bombay court would be less equitable than those of a 'Turkish Bashaw, a Rajah', 'a Caun's Government', or 'a Moorish Durbar'. The rhetoric gradually intensifies, as Cleland continues to imagine the disastrous consequences of Lowther winning the case: this would 'effectually tear up all publick faith & Credit by the Roots, fundamentally destroy the whole English Trade in these Parts & Convert our Island into an Assylum or Sanctuary only sacred to Pillage & Rapine'. The 'Island' here is presumably that of Bombay, but Cleland seems also to be hinting at the British Isles, whose legal principles the Bombay court is supposed to uphold. 'The Honour of your Nation', Cleland portentously reminds the mayor and council, 'is now palpably at Stake', together with 'your religious Regard to Justice & Natural Equity in Dealings betwixt Man and Man' (item no. 7).

Cleland's onslaughts here and on subsequent occasions in support of his client, decorously described by Epstein as an 'unfettered line of argument',<sup>15</sup> proved to be rebarbative. In a ruling of 4 December 1734, the court found against Vassentroy, advising him to take his case to the court at Surat. The dispute between Cleland and

<sup>15</sup> *John Cleland*, p. 39.



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Lowther, however, continued. Lowther found an ally in Robert Cowan, formerly the governor of the Bombay Presidency, whose letter to the mayor and council of 12 December 1734 (item no. 9) is itself an extraordinary document. Although on record in February 1731 as ‘approving’ of Cleland’s conduct (item no. 2), Cowan turned against his former employee with a vengeance. Among various charges against Cleland, Cowan claims that he had ‘not many years since deserted his King, Country & even the Colour Nature design’d him, & was sent to me from Mahim (when I was Second in Council) as a pinion’d Slave;—Circumstances indeed that best suit his Principles & Practices, but render him unworthy of even my Horsewhip’ (item no. 9). It is hard to know what to make of this diatribe. Cowan was ‘Second in Council’ in Bombay for two years, from January 1727 to January 1729; the event in question must therefore have taken place very shortly after Cleland’s arrival in India, if it took place at all. Both of Cleland’s biographers, William Epstein and Hal Gladfelder, find the charge implausible<sup>16</sup> – although it was repeated by at least one member of the East India Company, William Henry Draper (item no. 24).

While Cleland was still embroiled in his conflict with Lowther, which generated an increasingly vitriolic series of charges and countercharges, he made a new and equally implacable enemy in Bombay: William Boag, a sea captain. According to Boag, in a complaint brought against Cleland at the Mayor’s Court in Bombay in September 1735 (item no. 15), Cleland had unlawfully set at liberty Boag’s ‘Servant or Slave’ Marthalina, ‘telling her she might go and Live where she pleased’ and thus depriving Boag of his ‘right and property’. This might make Cleland seem like an upholder of human rights and an advocate of the abolitionist cause, but such was not the case. A slaveowner himself, as he acknowledged, Cleland had taken up Marthalina’s cause only because she had persuaded him that she had been freed by Boag, who had no claim of ownership over her. Boag had thus made a ‘base and malicious accusation’ against Cleland, knowing it to be ‘false and Forged, and without the Least Shadow of proof, or probability to support it’. Although Marthalina had made claims of appalling violence used against her by Boag, who would strip her naked, bind her, beat her with a cane, ‘hold a Naked Sword to her Breast, and threaten to stab her’, this was not Cleland’s primary concern. Had Marthalina been Boag’s slave, Cleland would not have defended her; it was not Boag’s cruelty that disturbed him so much as Boag’s false claims of ownership.

On this occasion, the court found in favour of Cleland; Boag’s complaint was dismissed, and he was ordered to pay the legal costs. And when Cleland, ‘being well versed in the Portugueze Language’, was appointed as the secretary for Portuguese affairs in Bombay in November 1735, his fortunes seemed to have taken a turn for the better (item no. 16). Just three months later, however, Cleland’s father was writing to the directors of the East India Company complaining about his son’s ill treatment over the Lowther case, in which he had been ‘insulted and treated in

<sup>16</sup> *John Cleland*, p. 42; *Fanny Hill in Bombay*, p. 22.

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the most arbitrary and oppressive manner' and 'threatened with further Violence' (item no. 18). Lowther had many powerful allies in India, and his conflict with Cleland would continue for several more years. And although Cleland rose gradually through the ranks of the East India Company, culminating in his appointment as secretary of the council in October 1738, nothing suggests that he was ever much enamoured of his life in India.

In his resignation letter to the Company of September 1740 (item no. 36), Cleland claimed that '[n]othing could oblige me to leave at this Juncture, but an indispensable Call Home'. Some light is thrown on this cryptic statement by an undated letter, probably of late 1740, from James Fraser to Cleland, in which Fraser apparently copies out a sentence from a previous letter by Cleland: 'As my Fat<sup>r</sup> in his Last Letter has expressed his desire to see me home & as some family Concerns do now absolutely require it—I have resolved to Comply with his request' (item no. 37). This is echoed by a letter from Alexander Pope to Hugh Bethel of January 1742 (item no. 39), in which the poet marvels at William Cleland having 'received at one post three Letters, from each of his children, from different Ends almost of the Earth, with the News that two of them were upon the way to see him'. One end of the earth was the West Indies, where Cleland's younger brother, Henry, was stationed; his letter to his father (not extant) presumably explained that he could not return at present. The replies to their father by John Cleland and his sister, Charlotte, who had joined him in Bombay in 1736, are also missing, but it is evident from Pope's letter that they set sail from India rapidly. According to James Douglas, Cleland 'left Bombay in a destitute condition, somewhat hurriedly, and for unknown reasons connected with a quarrel he had with members of Council there'.<sup>17</sup> At least parts of this statement are true; Cleland did leave hurriedly, although for a known reason, and he might well have been close to destitute, as he would be for the remainder of his life.

*The Publication and Censorship of Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*

During his time in Bombay, Cleland must have rubbed shoulders with many other young men who had emigrated to take up military or civilian roles in the East India Company. One such was Charles Carmichael, the youngest son of a Scottish peer. Cleland seems to have appreciated that Carmichael's pedigree destined him to cut a notable figure, describing him as 'a young gentleman of the greatest hopes that ever I knew' (item no. 49). Their acquaintance was a brief one, as Carmichael seems to have been in Bombay for only three years before contracting a fever and dying in July 1733.<sup>18</sup> Yet there are reasons to believe that the

<sup>17</sup> Douglas, *Glimpses of Old Bombay*, p. 255.

<sup>18</sup> Uncertainty over the date of Carmichael's death has been resolved by Gladfelder. See *Fanny Hill in Bombay*, p. 18.