HEMANS: The Literary Manuscripts of Felicia Hemans (1793-1835)

Contents listing

PUBLISHER’S NOTE
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Publisher’s Note

"The 19th century celebration of Hemans’s exemplary womanliness may be deafening, but for the critics who have helped to rehabilitate her in the last decade, Hemans represents another ideal: a subtly transgressive feminist, collapsing the gender constructions she appears to endorse and criticizing the social order which imposes such limits on women."

Frances Wilson, writing in the London Review of Books, 16 November 2000

The poetry of Felicia Hemans was read and admired by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Ann Evans, Walter Scott, Florence Nightingale, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Queen Victoria. She sold more books of poetry during the Romantic era than anyone but Lord Byron and Walter Scott. Though she died in 1835, her work remained central to literary culture throughout the nineteenth century. In fact, she was embraced during the Victorian period as not only one of the great poets but as a paragon of Victorian womanhood. This despite the fact that her marriage broke down after five years and she spent most of her adult life as the breadwinner of a large family, supporting her five boys as well as her mother and sister. Her best known volume – Records of Women – contains imaginative portraits of strong women throughout history and from a variety of cultures, from abandoned brides to martyred heroines.

And yet, in the 1990s, the Romanticist Jerome McGann was compelled to ask: Do we remember any of her poems? How then did her star fall?

Felicia Dorothea Browne was born in Liverpool on 25 September 1793 – the product of a cosmopolitan marriage between George Browne, an Irish merchant, and Felicity Dorothea (née Wagner), the daughter of an Italian diplomat. Felicia was the fifth of seven children and was a precocious child with a great memory and a gift for languages. At an early age she could speak English, Italian and French and she later learnt Latin, German, Spanish and Portuguese. She also had a musical ear and had a talent for drawing.

The convulsions in Europe caused by the French Revolution in 1789 and following caused problems for her father’s business and, as a result, the family moved to Gwrych near Abergele in Denbighshire, Wales in 1800. W M Rossetti describes the place as “close to the sea and amid mountains ... the very scene for the poetically-minded child to enjoy.” She spent the next nine years there, although she visited London in 1804, aged 11 and was impressed with displays of art and sculpture. Her father departed for Quebec during this period, but he was a broken man, whose business had failed and he died abroad in 1812 – so her mother was the dominant parental figure in her life. In November 1807 a French army commanded by General Junot swept into Spain and Portugal and precipitated the Peninsular War (1807-1814), in which Britain and Spain successfully combated the French forces. Two of Felicia’s brothers served in the conflict with Sir John Moore and the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers. She idolized them and later commented “that I could almost fancy I had passed that period of my life in the days of chivalry, so high and ardent were the feelings they excited.”

In 1808, when she was just 14, she published her first volume, titled simply Poems.

The publication was made possible by the financial assistance of a family friend, but it still had a healthy list of 978 subscribers including William Roscoe (who also wrote the Preface), Samuel Galton and a young Miss M Oliphant. The verse was of variable quality, although remarkable for so young a poet. It earned a harsh notice in the Monthly Review, but it did demonstrate a facility with language and a clear grasp of romantic sentiment, as is shown in her poem entitled ‘Melancholy’:

**MELANCHOLY**

*When autumn shadows tint the waving trees,*  
*When fading foliage flies upon the breeze;*  
*When evening mellow all the glowing scene,*  
*And the mild dew descends in drops of balm;*  
*When the sweet landscape placid and serene,*  
*Inspires the bosom with a pensive calm;*  
*Ah! then I love to linger in the vale,*  
*And hear the bird of eve’s romantic tale;*  
*I love the rocky sea-beach to explore,*  
*Where the clear wave flows murmuring to the shore;*  
*To hear the shepherd’s plaintive music sound,*  
*While Echo answers from the woods around;*  
*To watch the twilight spread a gentle veil*  
*Of melting shadows o’er the grassy dale,*  
*To view the smile of evening on the sea;*  
*Ah! these are pleasures ever dear to me.*  
*To wander with the melancholy muse,*  
*Where waving trees their pensive shade diffuse,*  
*Then by some secret charm the softened mind*  
*Soars high in contemplation unconfin’d,*  
*To melancholy and the muse resign’d.*

In 1808 also saw the publication of England and Spain; or, Valour and Patriotism, inspired by her brothers’ service in the Peninsular War. It was a powerful condemnation of Napoleon and a rallying call for freedom and liberty in the face of tyranny:

*Too long have Tyranny and Power combin’d,*  
*To sway, with iron sceptre, o’er mankind;*  
*Long has Oppression worn th’ imperial robe,*  
*And rapine’s sword has wasted half the globe!*

It ends by calling for peace:
Bid war and anarchy forever cease,
And kindred seraphs rear the shrine of peace;
Sales were disappointing. 1809 saw a further downturn in the family's financial position and they moved again to Bronwyfa, near St Asaph, Flintshire, in Wales. At one point the young Felicia met with Thomas Medwin, a cousin of Percy Bysshe Shelley's, whose descriptions of her beauty and poetic talents prompted Shelley to write to her. It came to nought, as Mrs Browne decided he was unsuitable and put an end to the correspondence. At about the same time Felicia also met Captain Alfred Hemans, a friend of her brother's on leave from the Spanish campaign. He found her bewitching and she professed her love to him, but they didn't see each other again until 1811, when he made a formal proposal. He was not rich and was very much older than Felicia, so he was told to cool his ardour for a year. But their love did not diminish and they were married at St Asaph Cathedral on 30 July 1812. They took up residence in Daventry, Northamptonshire, where he was appointed Adjutant to the County Militia. The marriage was certainly a productive one with the birth of five boys - Arthur, George, Claude, Henry and Charles – between 1813 and 1818.

1812 witnessed Napoleon's disastrous campaign in Russia and the publication of Hemans's The Domestic Affections, and other poem. Both were to cause friction in the marriage. Lack of money and close family support for Felicia caused them to move back to live with her mother in St Asaph in 1813. This was probably not a comfortable situation for Captain Hemans, who also had to deal with his wife's apparent success. The situation got worse with the end of the war in Europe in 1815, for there was no longer a need for a large standing militia; Captain Hemans was made redundant in 1817. At the same time, Felicia Hemans began to gain a reputation as a poet. She sent a poem to Walter Scott that had been inspired by reading Waverley and he had it published in the Edinburgh Annual Register. She also had successive volumes of poems published by John Murray, including The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy (1816), Modern Greece (1817) and Translations from Camoëns and other Poets (1818, together with original verse). The first of these, on the return of Italian treasures from the Louvre to their former homes in Italy was praised by Byron who called it "a good poem – very".

At this point the Hemans marriage (six years and five boys) was effectively over. We do not know the precise details, but Captain Hemans departed for Italy "for the sake of his health" just before the birth of his fifth son. He never returned. W M Rossetti describes the excuse as "a very inconvenient motive, or a highly convenient one according to the circumstances" and he quotes from a memoir by Harriett Hughes, Felicia's sister:

"It has been alleged, and with perfect truth, that the literary pursuits of Mrs Hemans, and the education of her children, made it more eligible for her to remain under the maternal roof than to accompany her husband to Italy."

Maria Jane Jewsbury also suggested that Captain Hemans was uneasy living off his wife's income. Felicity and Felicia, mother and daughter, were certainly very close, and both helped to raise the children while Felicia's writing career went from strength to strength, as she realized the earning potential of her skills as a writer.

In 1819 she published Tales and Historic Scenes in Verse, which incorporated earlier verse with new material and quickly went through three editions. In the same year she also won a £50 prize for her poem, Wallace's invocation to Bruce: a poem, which was published in Blackwood's Magazine. This was followed in 1820 with The Sceptic, which she described as "a picture of the dangers resulting to public and private virtue and happiness, from the doctrines of Infidelity." It has been interpreted variously as a philosophical exploration of perils of scepticism, an attack on Byron and a critique of contemporary sexual politics. Byron took the attack personally and responded with fierce criticism. The whole debate raised her profile and prompted a meeting and subsequent friendship with Reginald Heber, then Rector of Hodnet, in Shropshire. He liked her religious orthodoxy and encouraged her to write another poem, Superstition and Revelation on faith.

In 1821 Hemans won another prize (50 guineas), awarded by the Royal Society of Literature for the best poem on Dartmoor. This was followed with a new collection of verse, Welsh Melodies, which included a gothic flavoured account of a night on Cader Idris:

**The Rock of Cader Idris**

I lay on that rock where the storms have their dwelling,
The birthplace of phantoms, the home of the cloud;
Around it for ever deep music is swelling,
The voice of the mountain-wind, solemn and loud.
'Twas a midnight of shadows all fitfully streaming,
Of wild waves and breezes, that mingled their moan;
Of dim shrouded stars, as from gulfs faintly gleaming;
And I met the dread gloom of its grandeur alone.
I lay there in silence–a spirit came o'er me;
Man's tongue hath no language to speak what I saw:
Things glorious, unearthly, pass'd floating before me,
I felt their dim presence,–but knew not their forms!
And I call'd upon darkness the vision to cover,
For a strife was within me of madness and death.
I saw them–the mighty of ages departed–
Men, and I call'd upon darkness the vision to cover,
For a strife was within me of madness and death.
I saw them–the mighty of ages departed–
I felt their dim presence,–but knew not their forms!
I saw them–the mighty of ages departed–
And I call'd upon darkness the vision to cover,
From their eyes, as they pass'd, a cold radiance they darted,–
There was light on my soul, but my heart's blood was chill.
I saw what man looks on, and dies–but my spirit
Was strong, and triumphantly lived through that hour;
And, as from the grave, I awoke to inherit
A flame all immortal, a voice, and a power!
Day burst on that rock with the purple cloud crested,
And high Cader Idris rejoiced in the sun;–
But O! what new glory all nature invested,
When the sense which gives soul to her beauty was won!

Her venture into drama was less successful, but tells much about the reputation and contacts that she had made. She completed The Vespers of Palermo: a tragedy, in five acts in 1823 and Charles Kemble mounted a production at Covent Garden by the end of the year. It closed after one night, but this did not discourage Joanna Baillie from prompting an 1824 Edinburgh production with Elizabeth Siddons in the main role and with an epilogue written by Sir Walter Scott.

In 1825 she moved across the River Clwyd to Rhyllon and the difference between the two houses is suggested in her poem: Dramatic Scene between Bronwyfa and Rhyllon.

Whilst Bronwyfa was a small but pleasant home, covered in roses and blending in with its surroundings, Rhyllon was a tall brick house, standing out proudly like a dragon in the beautiful valleys. Her sister describes this as the happiest period of Felicia’s life – with the boys spending much of the time outdoors.

She appeared increasingly in the periodical press. For instance, she made 171 appearances in the New Monthly Magazine between 1823 and 1835 and 75 appearances in Blackwood’s Magazine between 1826 and 1835. Then, in 1825, she published The Forest Sanctuary, a collection of poems that included ‘The Lays of the Many Lands’ series, generally regarded as one of her finest volumes of poetry. Mary Ann Evans (George Eliot) was among its many admirers, declaring it “exquisite!” The volume went through three English editions, one German edition and two American editions, commencing with a Boston edition in 1827.

This was really the beginning of her great success in America. Peter Cochran quotes an article in the North American Review for April 1827, which contends:

"The highest value is set on every effort of mind connected with the investigation of truth, or the nurturing of generous and elevated sentiments... Where the public mind has thus been formed, the poetry of Mrs Hemans was sure to find admirers."

Another review in the Christian Examiner praised her "glorious poems" and stated:

"Her poetry, so full of deep sentiment, so pure, and elevating, calls up images and emotions, like those with which we view the brilliancy of the evening star in the stillness of a summer night."

The author of both was Professor Andrews Norton of Harvard Divinity School and he championed her work and even offered her the editorship of a magazine. A fourth edition of her Poems was published in New York in 1828 and over the ensuing years she became the most anthologized writer in literary annuals and gift books published in America. The writer and editor, Lydia Sigourney, another admirer, was even described as "the American Hemans."

The death of her mother in January 1827 was a heavy blow for Felicia Hemans, causing a profound grief from which she never fully recovered. In the following year she moved from Wales back to Wavertree in Liverpool, and her two eldest boys went to Italy to live with their father.

1828 saw the publication of Records of Women, which was her last great volume of verse. It included a number of long poems that became instant favourites with her audience, including ‘Arabella Stuart’, ‘Properzia Rossi’, ‘The Peasant Girl of the Rhone’ and ‘The American Forest-Girl’. This volume also included a poem that would become one of her best-loved works, ‘The Homes of England.’ She writes with great fluency and her verse has a sonorous quality as seen in this extract from ‘Joan of Arc’:

JOAN OF ARC, IN RHEIMS.

That was a joyous day in Rheims of old,
When peal on peal of mighty music roll'd
Forth from her throng'd cathedral; while around,
A multitude, whose billows made no sound,
Chain'd to a hush of wonder, tho' elate
With victory, listen'd at their temple's gate.
And what was done within?--within, the light
Thro' the rich gloom of pictur'd windows flowing,
Tinged with soft awfulness a stately sight,
The chivalry of France their proud heads bowing
In martial vassalage!--while midst that ring,
And shadow'd by ancestral tombs, a king
Receive'd his birthright's crown. For this, the hymn
Swell'd out like rushing waters, and the day
With the sweet censer's misty breath grew dim,
As thro' long aisles it floated o'er th' array
Of arms and sweeping stoles. But who, alone
And unapproach'd, beside the altar-stone,
With the white banner, forth like sunshine streaming,
And the gold helm, thro' clouds of fragrance gleaming,
Silent and radiant stood?--The helm was rais'd,
And the fair face reveal'd, that upward gaz'd,
Intensely worshipping;--a still, clear face,
Youthful, but brightly solemn!--Woman's cheek
And brow were there, in deep devotion meek,
Yet glorified with inspiration's trace
On its pure paleness; while, enthron'd above,
The pictur'd Virgin, with her smile of love,
Seem'd bending o'er her votaress.--That slight form!
Was that the leader thro’ the battle storm?
Had the soft light in that adoring eye,
Guided the warrior where the swords flash’d high?

In 1829, an enlarged edition of *The Forest Sanctuary* was published, including new lyrics such as ‘Casabianca’, which had first appeared in a periodical in 1826, but came to be memorized by thousands of school children both in England and America for the next hundred years.

Hemans was restless in Liverpool and started a series of travels to Scotland and the Lake District, where she met with Scott and Wordsworth. She got on well with Scott who declared “There are some whom we meet, and should like ever after to claim as kith and kin; and you are one of those.” Her visit also prompted a very favourable review of her work in the *Edinburgh Review* by Francis Jeffrey. She was delighted by the Lake District, staying two weeks at Rydal Mount near Ambleside and a further two months close to Lake Windermere. To Wordsworth she wrote:

*Thine is a strain to read among the hills,*
*The old and full of voices;—by the source*
*Of some free stream, whose gladdening presence fills*
*The solitude with sound; for in its course*
*Even such is thy deep song, that seems a part*
*Of those high scenes, a fountain from their heart.*

In 1831 she moved to Dublin to be close to her brother George. She continued to write, although she was now an invalid. *Songs of the Affections* (1830), *National Lyrics, and songs for music* (1834) and *Scenes and hymns of life, with other religious poems* (1834) were her last three collections of verse and were of an increasingly religious nature. Her frail state was brought to the attention of Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister, who sent her a cheque for £100 to ease her condition, and promised a clerkship for her youngest son.

Felicia Hemans contracted scarlet fever in 1834, which further weakened her condition, and she died in Dublin on 16 May 1835 from a respiratory infection that turned to ague, aged 41. She was buried at St Anne’s Church in Dublin. Her sons were now 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 and all were well set in life. Both Laetitia Landon (‘L.E.L’) and Elizabeth Barrett wrote commemorative stanzas and Wordsworth subsequently described her as “that holy Spirit, sweet as the Spring” (*Extempore effusion upon the death of James Hogg*).

Blackwood’s issued a 7-volume collected edition of her works with a memoir by her sister, Harriett Hughes, from 1839 onwards and dozens of different editions of her ‘poetical works’ were published in America between 1836 and 1867. In expansionist America and in imperialist Britain she was seen as one of the great advocates of duty and patriotism and she inspired a new generation of women writers, as well as poets such as Tennyson.

Her fame continued throughout the Victorian period and her works stayed in print until just after the First World War, with a major edition of her works appearing in 1920.

So what precipitated her decline? Was it a generational shift? Or did a nation traumatised by a world war dismiss her notion of the nobility of dying for duty’s sake? Or was it the onset of modernism and a new style of poetry against which her prominent rhyming schemes and use of poetic language (with words such as o’er, ‘twas and ‘midst) now seemed somewhat arch? All of these factors played a part – as did the fact that the public no longer had a stomach for didacticism and sentimentality.

She also suffered from her own popularity. Works such as ‘Casabianca’ were ruthlessly parodied in music halls and in the playground. The famous opening lines:

*The boy stood on the burning deck*  
*Whence all but he had fled;*  
*The flame that lit the battle’s wreck*  
*Shone round him o’er the dead.*

were an easy target for comic versifiers. Amongst the least bawdy versions was:

*The boy stood on the burning deck*  
*His feet all covered in blisters,*  
*The flames reached up and burned his pants,*  
*And now he wears his sister’s.*

These comic versions were still in mass circulation in the 1930s and 1940s. Another Hemans poem that was parodied was ‘The Homes of England’, which began:

*The stately Homes of England,*  
*How beautiful they stand!*  
*Amidst their tall ancestral trees,*  
*O’er all the pleasant land.*

In this case the parodist was Noël Coward, who wrote:

*The stately homes of England,*  
*How beautiful they stand,*  
*To prove the upper classes*  
*Have still the upper hand.*

Perhaps Coward’s parody was inspired by the quotation that she placed at the head of the verse: “Where’s the coward that would not dare / To fight for such a land?”
The rebirth of interest in Hemans’ work began in the 1980s and 1990s. Peter Trinder’s brief biography of Mrs Hemans appeared as part of the ‘Writers of Wales’ series and a group of scholars – including Norma Clarke, Paula Feldman, Gary Kelly, Anne Mellor, Julie Helnyk, Marlon Ross and Nanora Sweet – have all suggested new critical approaches to her work.

One of the most obvious problems for scholars is access to the sources. The University of Pennsylvania has provided free access to the majority of her printed output through their digital library (see the web resources that follow). However, her manuscripts are widely dispersed.

We are delighted to have been able to work with Professor Paula Feldman to bring together a good number of the outstanding sources in this project.

We offer access to the three major archives at Liverpool City Library (including her commonplace book, seventeen autograph poems, letters and other material), Trinity College, Dublin (Commonplace entries, several volumes of manuscript poems and a good number of letters) and the National Library of Wales (twenty letters, two more collections of manuscript poetry and many individual poems). To these we have added other significant sources from the Harry Ransome Center, University of Texas, Austin; Bedfordshire & Luton Archives; Trinity College, Cambridge; Derbyshire Record Office; the Representative Church Body, Dublin; the University of Liverpool Library; London Metropolitan Archive; the Society of Antiquaries Library; the Wellcome Institute; Nottinghamshire Archives; and the British Library.

We are grateful to all of these archives for their co-operation and to Professor Feldman for providing us with the list of sources to track down. This list is reproduced in the digital guide for the convenience of scholars.

Hemans is a major writer whose work deserves to be re-examined. We hope that the publication of these sources will provide fresh impetus to scholarly investigation.

**Web Resources and Select Bibliography**

**Web Resources**

**University of Pennsylvania** – a detailed biography and access to digital editions of her major printed works:

http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/hemans/biography.html

**University of Maryland** - Romantic Circles – a refereed scholarly Website devoted to the study of Romantic-period literature and culture:

http://www.rc.umd.edu/

This includes an excellent critical analysis by Nanora Sweet and Barbara Taylor of The Sceptic: A Poem:

http://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/sceptic/contents.html

**San Jose State University** – an attractive Hemans website with a brief biography, images, sample poems and criticism:

http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/harris/StudentProjects/Kim/index.html

**University of Montreal** - Romanticism on the Net – an International Refereed Electronic Journal devoted to British Romantic studies with occasional articles on Hemans:

http://www.ron.umontreal.ca/

**The Victorian Web** – a good page on Hemans with links to online texts:

http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/hemans/index.html

**Select Bibliography**


Mellor, Anne. Romanticism and Gender. (Routledge, 1993).


Rossetti, W. M. "Prefatory Notice." The Poetical Works of Mrs. Hemans. (Moxon, 1873)


Trinder, Peter W. Mrs Hemans. (University of Wales Press, 1984).


Contents of Reels

REEL ONE

The Poetical Works of Felicia Hemans.
Introduction by William Michael Rossetti
(London & Melbourne: Ward, Lock & Co.)

REEL TWO

Liverpool City Library

1. Hemans portrait and letter (St Asaph, 5 Jan 1828) (poor condition)
   "And there is a Spirit Harper who lives far down in the Lake..." n.d.

2. Fragment of letter by Hemans to Henry Chorley:
   "n.d.

3. Common Place Book of Mrs. Hemans and related items (Acc. 2566) (poor condition)
   Common Place Book of Mrs. Hemans, n.d.
   Inscribed "Given to M.L Bosomworth by a friend of Mrs. Hemans. June 1851"
   Followed by a typescript transcription and note on provenance.
   Ms Poem: The Charmed Picture, May 1829.

4. Ms Poems (Acc. 1796)
   /1. Kean’s Good-night to a Liverpool audience, 1820
   /2. The Ruined House, n.d

5. Ms Poems (Acc. 2606)
   /5. Fourteen lines of Sensibility, 18 Sept. 1834
   /4. The Wishing Gate, 3 Aug. 1833 (poor condition)
   /6. O Fons Bandusia, n.d.
   /3. A Thought of the Future, Nov. 1829
   /2. The Angels’ Greeting, Nov. 1827
   /1. The Army, 9 Mar. 1816
   /7. Reform – a Poem, n.d.
   (The poem numbers 1-8 refer to the original Liverpool City Library catalogue order.)

6. Other Mss of Felicia Hemans (Acc. 2606)
   /1. Copy of Yarrow Revisited by Wordsworth, n.d.
   /2. Directions for a visit to places in the Lake District, n.d.
   /4. Ms entitled Scene – My drawing room – enter Dr. H. G[ray] in great haste
   /5. Unidentified Ms, n.d.

7. Other Mss (Acc. 2606)
   /1. Der letzte Wunsch nach Mrs. Hemans, n.d.
   /2. 8 lines omitted in Blackwood at the end of Mrs. Hemans’ Poem of the Swan and the Skylark.
   /3. Arva Beata (a Latin rendering of Mrs. Hemans’ The Better Land in the [unidentified] translators writing), n.d
   /4. Ms transcription of the tablet erected in St. Asaph’s Cathedral in memory of Felicia Hemans. Also sketch and description
   of the location of the tablet.

8. Printed Items (Acc. 2606)
   /1. W E Channing, Remarks on the Character of Napoleon Bonaparte occasioned by the publication of Scott’s Life of Napoleon
      (1827).
   /2. W E Channing, Remarks on the Character and Writings of John Milton (1828).
   /3. W E Channing, A Discourse delivered at the ordination of the Rev Frank Farley (1829).
   /5. pp. 7-18 of an [unidentified review of Mrs. Hemans’ poetry], n.d.
   /6. Pamphlet inviting subscriptions for the erection of a memorial window to Felicia Hemans in St. Anne’s Church, Dublin, n.d.
   /7-8 Inscription composed by Mrs. Hemans for the Monument of John James and George Wedderburn, n.d.
   /9. Review of Hymns for Childhood

9. Autograph Letters (Acc. 2645)
   /1. Felicia Hemans (henceforth FH) to (John Murray), Bronwyfa.
      7 Dec. 1821 – regarding the acquisition of books.
   /2. FH to Joanna Baillie, Rhyllon, St. Asaph, 3 May 1826

10. Autograph Letter
    /1. FH to Dr Gay, Bronwyfa, 26 Feb, n.d.

11. Ms Poem (Acc. 2741)
    /1. The Hour of Prayer, n.d [watermark 1824]

12. Autograph Letter (Acc. 2743)
    /1. FH to Mary Milford, St. Asaph, 10 Nov, 1828
    /1A. Typescript description of above made by the vendor.
13. Autograph Letter (Acc. 2784)
/1. To an autograph seeker, 25 June, n.d.

14. Autograph Letters (Acc. 731)
/1. FH to Mrs Fletcher (Maria Jewsbury)
"My dear Madam..."
/2. FH to Henry Chorley, Sep 1829
"Instead of requiring you to be made of apologies..."

15. Autograph Letters and Poems (Acc. 852)
/1. FH to (Henry Chorley), Dublin, May 1834.
"My dear Henry, I have indeed many kindly marks..."
/2. Letter from Felicia Hemans
"I fear you were very unwell the other evening..."
/3. Poem by Felicia Hemans: "Songs of the Affections" (2pp)
/4. Ms by Felicia Hemans: "The Cross of the South"

/1. Poem: "The Memory of the Dead"- preceded by booksellers description.
/2. Poem: "The Boon of Memory"

This comprises 138 documents bound in one volume and two loose items.
It is prefixed by a full catalogue description of the contents.
Items 1-14, 20-22 are poems by FH's sister, Harriett Mary Browne;
Item 15 is the Preface to Felicia Browne's first volume of verse;
Items 16-138 (with gaps) are letters between Mrs Felicity Browne (d1827), Felicia Dorothea Browne (later Hemans) (1793-1835), Harriett Mary Browne (1798-) and Matthew Nicholson (1746-1819).
The collection of letters is also interspersed with many original poems by Felicia Browne (FH) including:
/24. To Miss Anne Wagner.
/42. Lines Sacred to the Memory of Miss Egton.
/55. The Call of Liberty.
/59. The Silver Locks.
/64. The Wreath of Loyalty.
/80. Address to My Eldest Brother with the British Army in Portugal.
/98. Conway Castle by Moonlight.
/100. To Mr Edwards of Conway after hearing him perform on the Welsh Harp.
/106. To the Memory of Gen. Crawford who was killed at the Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo.
/111. Ruins of Denbigh Castle.
/113. Address to Lord Wellington.
/130. The Chamois Hunter's Love.

Items 139 and 140 are printed items:
/140. Harriett Mary Browne. The Infantile Pleasures of Willow-Dale by HMB (aged Eight Years). (1808).

REEL THREE

Trinity College, Dublin

Poems / by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]. –Mostly copies, 1 original
Owned. MS3750. –[Jun 1992]
This consists of extracts from a volume of miscellaneous poems including:
F57 The Death Song of Alcestis
F58 Rekla's Song

Commonplace book / kept by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
Owned. –Includes prose and poetry by Hemans. MS4570. –[Jan 1991]
This consists of extracts from a volume of miscellaneous poems including:
F13-16 The Hour of Death
F34-35 Hymn of the Mountain Christian

Song of a guardian spirit: [poem] / by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
With a poem by Wordsworth. Owned. MS5020. –[Aug 1991]

3 letters from Felicia Hemans, 2 to Professor Hamilton and 1 to Mrs Hamilton.
–1833-1834

Poems / by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
Owned. – MSS5123-5133/2214-2215. –[Aug 1991]
Contents:
/1. Mary [Magdalen] at the feet of Christ
/2. Mary Magdalen at the Sepulchre
/3. Come to me gentle sleep
Correspondence between Felicia Hemans and Clarissa Graves von Ranke. –[18--]
Owned. MS10047. –[Jan 1991]

Letters from Amy and Sister England [i.e Felicia Hemans] to Clarissa Graves.
--[1827-1834 & undated]. –About 12 items
Autograph. –Owned. MS10047/32. –[Dec 1992]

Poems / by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
Owned. – MS10047/39/34-35
Contents:
/34. The Death Song of Alcestis
/35. Sabbath Sonnet
Also, letter FH to Graves, 27 Apr 1835.

Family letters of Clarissa Graves von Ranke. –[18--]
Owned. MS10047/59/1-15. –[Jan 1991]

Letters to FH from Coleraine. –[18--]
Owned. –MS10047/104/27

National Library of Wales
Letter from Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
Owned
In NLW MS.16726A

Poem / by Felicia Hemans. The Harp of Wales –[18--] –Copies
Owned. In NLW MS.1815C
The silver locks to Mrs Foulkes, Eriviatt; and Our Lady's well: [poems] / by Felicia Hemans. –[1809 & undated]
Autograph. –Owned
NLW MS.9135C

2 letters from Felicia Hemans, 1 to J.C Graves and 1 to Lady John Campbell. –[1821? & undated]
Autograph. –Owned. With autograph poems by Hemans: Hymn on the resurrection – To the memory of Bishop Heber – "In the green trees, and kindling on all sides"
In NLW MS.10707C

"Inscription for the Monument of John James Wedderburn: [poem]/ by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
 Owned
In NLW MS.10931C

8 letters from Felicia Hemans. –[1811-1830 & undated]
Autograph. –Owned. –Recipients include: M. Nicolson –H[enry Hart] Milman –Miss Jacobs – Lord Jeffrey – Miss Alison. – With poems by Hemans, including 'Imelda', 'the messenger bird', 'Gertrude' and 'the tombs of Plataea', and translations into English of 3 Italian sonnets with copies of the originals. –With portraits of Hemans and other related papers.
NLW MS.10959E

Letter from Felicia Hemans to Samuel Parkes. –[18--]
Autograph. Owned. With printed and MS copies of poems by Hemans entitled 'The child's first grief', 'Child of Earth', 'The Better Land' and 'To the cliffs of Dover'
NLW MS.11066C

5 letters from Felicia Hemans. –[1832? & undated]
Autograph. –Owned. –Recipients include: Mrs John Wordsworth –Mrs Watts – John Lodge. –With, on 1 of the letters, the poem "Brother! Were we there with thee". –With "The rising of the dead", poem by Hemans
NLW MS.17232C

'For love bids it welcome': [poem] / by F[elicia] H[emans]. –[18--]
Autograph. –Owned
In NLW MS.1201D [Apr 1992]

Poems / by Felicia Hemans. –[1825 & undated]
Owned. –Contents: To Bernard Barton's daughter – To Rydal Mount – To a Departed Spirit.
In NLW MS.16799D

Letter from Felicia Hemans to Captain Hemans. –[18--]
Owned
In NLW MS.16098E

Poems / by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
Owned. –Contents: The Rock of Cader Idris – Lotus dying – Sketch: The painter
In NLW MS.20577E

Letter from Felicia Hemans to W[illiam] Wordsworth. –1834
Owned.
In NLW MS.21557D
HEMANS: The Literary Manuscripts of Felicia Hemans, 1793-1835

The Vespers of Palermo: [fragment of a poem] / by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
and Tell Me No More (a fragment) Autograph. –Owned
NLW MS.21820E

Letter from Felicia Hemans to [Harriett] Brown. –1816
On deposit. –Includes verses by Hemans. –Letter mutilated: signature cut off. –With copies of poems by Hemans
J.R.Hughes MSS and Papers I, no.110

REEL FOUR

Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, Austin

i) Untitled poem - My fatherland! My fatherland! In Thackeray/Misc.
ii) O'Connell, Daniel Autograph fragment 20 Oct 1828

iii) Letters to FH

Heber, Reginald 12 May ----
Hall, Basil 3 Aug 1829
Channing, W E 23 Feb 1827
Campbell, Thomas 3 Nov 1826
Baillie, J letters, n.d.

iv) Greek funeral chant. Autograph manuscript (1 leaf) nd.
v) [Poems.] Autograph manuscript written in small notebook [8pp], nd.

Bedfordshire and Luton Archives

Letter from Felicia Hemans. – Rhyllon, 25 June 1826
On deposit. –Recipient ("My dear Sir")
Unidentified. In HW94. --[Oct 1990]

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Letter from Felicia Hemans [to John Murray]. --1818
Autograph. --Owned
Access: by appointment. --[Dec 1990]

Trinity College, Cambridge

Letter from Felicia Hemans to Mrs Graves. –[18--]
Autograph. --Owned
Library: Cullum N47(1)

Derbyshire Record Office

The two voices: [poem] / by Felicia Hemans. –[18--]
On deposit. –With, on the second folio, a note from Hemans. –With copies of other poems by Hemans
In D23872/Z1

Representative Church Body, Dublin

Letter [fragmentary] from Felicia Hemans. --1834
Owned
Library: MS.94/46. -[Jun 1992]

University of Liverpool Library

Owned. In G.36.21

Gertrude: [poem and preface to poem]/ by Felicia Hemans. –[ca.1825-1827]
MS.26.4(6)

The return: [poem]/ by Felicia Hemans. –[183-?] 
Autograph. 2pp –Owned. MS.3.1(83)

To the Hebe of Canova: sonnet from the Italian of [Ippolito] Pindemonte/ translated by Felicia Hemans. –[ca. 1830]. 1p.
Owned. –With an address on the back to "[?] Parker Esqre"
MS.3.1(84)

2 letters from Felicia Hemans to Joseph Blanco White. –[1827-1829]
Autograph. --Owned.
HEMANS: The Literary Manuscripts of Felicia Hemans, 1793-1835

Rathbone papers V.4.18 & XXI.11.11(1)
/1. FH to J Blanco White, Rhyllon, St Asaph, 1 Feb 1827 – 4pp.
/2. FH to J Blanco White, Liverpool, 10 May 1829 – 4pp.

Letter from Felicia Hemans to Lady Wedderburn. –[1831]

Letter from Joseph Blanco White to Felicia Hemans. – 30 July 1834. 1p.
Owned. Blanco White I.279

London Metropolitan Archive

The willow song; [poem] / by Felicia Hemans. –[18–]

Letter from FH to Mrs Robert Arkwright, Wavertree, near Liverpool, 18 Mar [1831]

Society of Antiquaries Library

Poem: [fragmentary] / by Felicia Hemans. –[18–]
Autograph. – Owned. – With an engraved portrait of Hemans Cely-Trevilian Bequest (MS444) XI, 99-100

Wellcome Institute

Letter from Felicia Hemans to Joanna Baillie. –1828
Owned
Western Manuscripts. MS.5615/109

Nottinghamshire Archives

Letter from Felicia Hemans. –[182- or 183–]
Autograph. – On deposit
DD.1251/20/169.

British Library

Add Ms 36747
Hemans (Felicia Dorothea). The Spirit’s Mysteries : a poem 19th cent.
Add. 36747 f. 57 within a volume of historical and literary miscellanea.
The whole volume has been included and the abbreviated contents of this are as follows:

MISCELLANEOUS autograph letters, etc.
2. Accomp by Edmund Meyrick, of Jesus College, Oxford, of the expenses of his cousin Henry Roberts, of Jesus College, Jan 17 29/30 June, 1712; sent with a letter (f. 9) to his uncle [Roberts father]. f. 2.
3. Martin Farquhar Tupper to Sir Henry Ellis, Principal Librarian of the British Museum ; Albury, 10 Dec. [1850], 12 Dec 1850, 7 Feb 1851. ff. 10, 13, 14. In the first letter is enclosed A Hymn for All Nations, 1851, dated Nov. 1850, which was published in thirty languages. Followed (f. 16) by four other autograph poems by M. F. Tupper, printed in his Select, Miscellaneous Poems [1881], pp. 158, 203, 357, 419. Presented by Henry John Ellis, Fsq.
C. 1. Narrative of the march of the English army under Lord Cornwallis from Bangalore to Seringapatam, the defeat of Tippoo Sultan, 15 May, 1791, and the march back to Bangalore (cf. H Beveridge, History of India, 1862, ii. p. 600, and an account by Major Skelly in Add. MS. 9872, f. 90); 5 July, 1791. f. 26.
2. Brig.-General Hildebrand Oakes (cr. Bart. 1813) to General giving an account of the arrival of the English fleet in Aboukir Bay on 2nd March, the landing on the 8th and the battle with the French on the 13th; Camp before Alexandria, 17 Mar. 1801. f. 44.
D. An anonymous Spanish duet and song, with pianoforte accompaniment. Early 19th cent. ff. 46, 48.
E. 1. James Boswell to Bennet Langton: “You may rest assured that you shall see your Johnsoniana before I print them. I have printed twenty sheets of my Magnus Opus. It will be the most entertaining Book that ever appeared. Only think of what an offer I have for it-a cool thousand. But I am advised to retain the property myself,” etc.; London, 9 April, 1790. f. 50.
2. [Augusting Bon Joseph] Robespierre, [dit le jeune], as Representative of the People with the Army in Italy, to [M. Tilly], French Chargé d’Affaires at Genoa, warning him against a traitor who is about him; Nice, 24 Brumaire, 2e Rep. [14 Nov. 1793]. f. 52.
3. Robert Fulton, inventor of the steam-boat, to Paul Francois Jean Nicholas Barras, on his newly invented torpedo and the destruction of the English fleet; [27 Oct. 1798] f. 53.
4. Instructions from Viscount Nelson to his admirals and captains on the best way of fighting an enemy ; [Sept. 1805].
G. James V of Scotland to Pope Clement VII, notifying the death of James Hepburne, Bishop of Moray, recommending Robert Schawe, Abbot of Paisley, for the see, and asking the Pope’s favour on behalf of John Hamyltoun, a monk of Kilwinning, to succeed to the abbacy, though only in his 14th year and an illegitimate son of James, Earl of Arran; Edinburgh Castle, 11 Jan. 1524. Latin. Signed. f. 60. John Hamilton was appointed Abbot, and in 1546 became Archbishop of St. Andrews. He was hanged in 1571
HEMANS: The Literary Manuscripts of Felicia Hemans, 1793-1835

H. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy to E. Buxton, as to the arrangements for the performance of Elijah at Exeter Hall, etc.; Leipzig, 2 Feb. 1847. f. 61.


L. Autobiographical memoir of Charles Gounod, to 1853. Fr. Autogr. f. 68. With five portraits. ff. 70-74.


M. 1. Hans Christian Andersen to [Mary Howitt], on his year’s travel in Europe, and his reception by the King of Prussia, and sending five poems, Kleiner Viggo, Thränen, Das sterbende Kind, Der Soldat, and An eine dame mit einem Veilchensraus; Oldenburg, 28 Sep 1846. Ger. f. 77. With a translation of the letter and three of the poems (f. 79).

2. Cardinal John Henry Newman to a lady, on a portrait of him recently painted and the sadness of expression delineated by the artist: “My painter, a man of genius, made, like men of genius, a great mistake. He acted on a theory. He caught at some passage of my Apologia in which I speak of my sorrow at my loss of my Oxford friends and determined to represent me as mourning for them”; The Oratory, 20 Jan. 1875. f. 83.

N. “The Names of the best Plays and Comedies,” [1598-1697], the authors and plays being respectively arranged alphabetically; c.1700. f. 86.

The compiler notes the reception accorded to the later plays. Of that accorded to the earlier ones it is not always possible to say if he was speaking from tradition or a revival in his own day. Under “W- Shakespear” he writes, “Othello Moor of Venice this tragedy is esteemed one of his best. 2 Pericles much esteemed during the Authors life. 3 The Puritan, thought very diverting,” etc.


Add Ms 39316

Hemans (Felicia Dorothea). Stanzas by, copied and signed by Joanna Baillie aft. 1825. Add. 39316 f. 63 within a volume of literary miscellanea.

The whole volume has been included and the contents of this are as follows:

39316. BERKELEY PAPERS. Vol. XIII. Miscellaneous papers, 1696-1870, of George Berkeley, D.D., Bishop of Cloyne 1734-1753, as follows:

1. Religious papers, viz. (a) “Some collects occasioned by a meditation upon Christ’s sufferings. In ye Passion Week, 1696.” f. 1-; (b) Two tracts. “Of the Trinity,” f. 3 ; “Of the nature of excellency and evil,” f. 12 b-; (c) Sermon on Acts xii. 6, 7, with corrections in Bishop Berkeley’s hand. f. 15.

2. Indentures of sale of two slaves to George Berkeley, Dean of Derry, 7 Oct. 1730, with confirmation, 17 Oct 1731, by Joseph Jencks, Governor of Rhode Island. ff. 31, 32, 33.

3. Characters of two Irish deans, viz. [John] T[rence], Dean of R[aphoe] (d. 1725) and [Richard] D[aniel], [Dean successively of Armagh and Down] (d. 1739), in the hand of Anne Berkeley. f. 34.


5. Literary remains of Catherine Talbot, viz. (a) Fragment of an unpublished essay. Autogr. f. 38-; (b) “Part of a letter to - on ye death of -”, in the hand of George Monck Berkeley, f. 40-; (c) Unpublished poems, in the same hand, with remarks by Eliza Berkeley. f. 41.


7. Miscellaneous poems, viz.:

(a) “We Deum laudamus,” by [Alexander] d’Arblay, son of Frances Burney, 1831. Autogr. f. 61-.

(b) Two stanzas from Felicia Hemans, “The Child and Dove,” copied and signed by J[oanna] Baillie; watermark 1826. f. 63; (c) Epigrams, English and Latin, by Robert Lloyd (1733-1764). f. 64-.


(e) “Flurttation.” Verses on Sophia Howe (cf. Letters of the Countess of Suffolk and the Hon. George Berkeley, 1824, pp. 35-41). Cir. 1719. f. 69-.

(f) Poems by A. H., “A Legendary Tale, 1811.” f. 73; “Cambria.” f. 75-.

(g) “On reading the Sorrows of Werter, by Mrs. Pickard.” Endorsed by Eliza Berkeley; before 1800. f. 77-.

(h) Miscellaneous pieces in different hands. f. 78-.

(i) “The Installation Ode.” Fragment on the appointment of Hugh James Rose as Principal of King’s College, London, 1836. f. 91.

8. Anecdotes of Sydney Smith, Lord Byron, Princess Dashkov, and others. f. 94 b.

9. Opinions of R. Whitcombe and T. Campbell, barristers, on six questions concerning the privileges of prebendaries of Chichester Cathedral; 1830. f. 96.


Hemans (Felicia Dorothea). Correspondence with Sir Robert Peel 1835. Add. 4014 ff. 291-292 Peel to FH, Whitehall, 7 Feb 1835 (two versions) Add. 4014 ff. 14-16 FH to Peel, Dublin, 10 Feb 1835

REEL FIVE

Add Ms 33964

Hemans (Felicia Dorothea). Letters, 1819, 1823. Add. 33964 ff. 256, 258

Within a volume of historical and literary miscellanea. The whole volume has been included. The contents are as follows:

ORIGINAL LETTERS of sovereigns and noblemen, actors, artists, and authors; arranged in each class, according to the nationalities of the writers, under the heads of England, Flanders, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America; 16th-19th centt. The names of writers are given in the Index. Among them are:-


Paper; ff. 457. A few portraits are interspersed. Folio.

Bequeathed by Andrew George Kurtz, Esq., of Wavertree, Liverpool.