

The Family Chronicle
1818-1819



The Grahams of Edmond Castle
and The Hall, Clapham

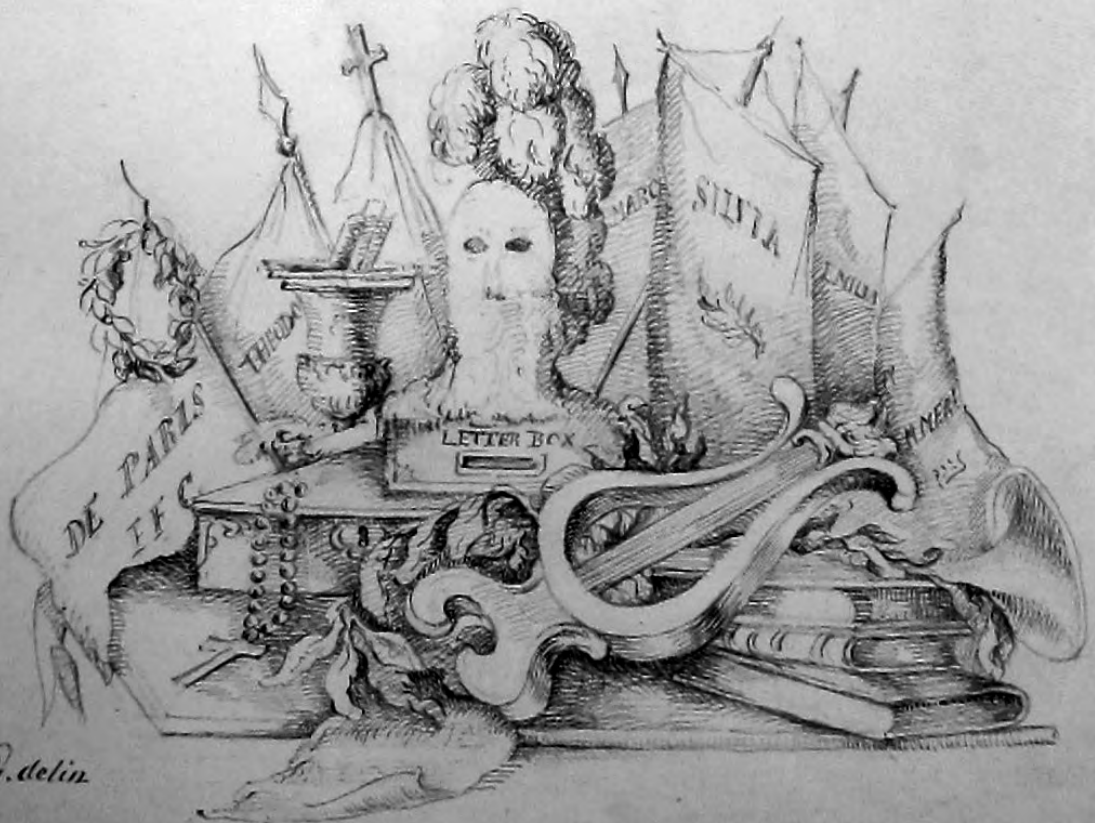
transcribed by James Sneyd.
Auckland
5 Dec, 2013

THE
FAMILY CHRONICLE

Instituted March 1st 1818.

.....from youth to age
Reviewing life's eventful page,
And noting ere they fade away
The little lines of yesterday.

Regen.



Preface

Introduction

In 1791, presumably either in London or Clapham, Thomas Graham of Edmond Castle married Elizabeth Susanna Davenport. I'm glad they married. They are my GGGG-grandparents.¹

Thomas was the son of a minor Cumbrian landowner², not from a hugely wealthy family. He had come down to London, probably when he was about 16 (around 1767), together with his brother James, to join the law firm of his uncle, James Coulthard. They were successful lawyers, specialising in the confidential treatment of society scandals (apparently), and became thereby considerably wealthier than they had been before.

Elizabeth Susanna Davenport was the daughter of John Davenport, Master of the Merchant Drapers Company, Draper to the King. When he died in 1789, John left £10,000 to his daughter, which sounds like rather a lot of money for 1789. So by the time she married Thomas Graham two years later, Elizabeth was rather more than comfortably off, probably just as wealthy, if not more so, than her husband.

Thomas and Elizabeth proceeded to have 6 children, five of whom survived to adulthood. In 1806 Elizabeth's widowed mother died, and the happy couple and their five surviving children moved into The Hall, Clapham Common, the mansion built by John Davenport around 1770. Thomas died a few years after, in 1813.

So in 1818, when this Family Chronicle begins, the rich widow Elizabeth Susanna Graham was living at The Hall (see the picture on page 17), Clapham Common, with her three unmarried daughters. She was 54.

¹Who am I? Well, since genealogists care about such things, I am Alfred James Robert Sneyd, born 14 November, 1962, in Dunedin, New Zealand. My descent from Thomas and Elizabeth (and from many others) is given in a separate, equally fascinating publication I wrote some time ago. It wasn't a huge seller, and it's not generally available in bookstores. Go figure.

²Thomas Graham of Edmond Castle; the Grahams showed a lamentable lack of originality in their choice of names. In fact, the only way to keep track of them properly is to number them. In the usual numbering system, it was Thomas (v), son of Thomas (iv), who married Elizabeth, and their son was called Thomas (vi). Sigh.)

Her eldest child, Thomas (vi), was 25. Trained as a lawyer, there's a picture of him on page 19. John, the next child was 24, and another lawyer. John and Thomas lived mostly in Gower St., London, presumably working at the law practice³.

All the subsequent children were girls, and all were living with Mamma at The Hall; Elizabeth Maria was 23, Emily was 21, Harriet had died in 1806, and the baby, Anne Margaret, was 17. I know essentially nothing about their earlier life. Some early letters to and from the girls survive, but they are very difficult to read (usually crossed) and I haven't managed to decipher any yet. When I do so I'll be able to fill in a lot more details of their early life. However, from what I've managed to read so far it wasn't very dramatic. Rather the reverse.

Elizabeth and her children lived in one of the largest and grandest houses on the north side of Clapham Common (at the time it was considered to be in the country), spent the season in town, in Gower St., and the summers/autumns in Eastbourne. They had wads of money and moved in very respectable social circles. They collected antiques and art. They patronised musicians by holding private concerts.

And, in particular, they wrote.

Widow Elizabeth was a well-known author of the time, writing, under the pen-name Theresa Tidy, books for children about neatness and decorum, and grammar. They went to over 20 editions. Her children spouted doggerel like it was casual conversation. They wrote travel diaries and journals, they sketched sketches and painted paintings, they wrote about themselves, about their neighbours, they poked fun at themselves and at their neighbours, they told the world about all the silly things they did and thought, and where they went, and what they ate and who they met. And they did a good fraction of this in verse.

And then they collected all this nonsense and raillery, all their self-congratulatory and precious wit, all their silly observations and fantastic inventions, in a *Family Chronicle*, published every Saturday afternoon at 3 pm. They were real Georgian bloggers.

One complete year,⁴ 1818-1819, of *The Family Chronicle* survives, and here it is (together with two earlier editions of its predecessor, *The Strawseat Chronicle*, reproduced in the Appendix). In it you meet the serious and slightly pompous eldest child Thomas, his brother John with the delightful and irrepressible sense of humour, Emily the ill, who thought a lot about her health and digestion, liked to

³Well, I guess that John was, but I doubt Thomas had to work very hard, if at all, as he had by then inherited the Edmund Castle estate

⁴Possibly more, but I don't know where any copies might be.

lie around in bed and wouldn't eat cakes and sweets, Anne Margaret the shy and unwilling debutante, Elizabeth Maria the devout, and a great lover of nature. And in the middle of this laughing, (mostly) happy family, the strong and dominant personality of Madame Mere, Elizabeth Susanna Davenport/Graham, Theresa Tidy, supervising her herd of cats with a sharp eye for dirt and a stern word if they should ever so forget decorum as to be without a pocket handkerchief.

Indeed, I can do no better than to quote the Timeans themselves, from the Ode to the Chronicle.

And future Timeans in thy records learn
How friendship once her gentle fetters wove
Around one little band of Editors,
And bound each heart and pen in harmony.

I defy anyone to read this Chronicle and not like this family.

People and Pets

For the reader's convenience here are some potted histories of some of the major players and places in the Chronicle, together with a small amount of information about the servants and pets, which I personally found confusing upon a first reading. (All the Chronicle references are given as Volume/Page).

People

Elizabeth Susanna Davenport Madame Mere in this Chronicle. Born in 1764, the daughter of John Davenport and Elizabeth Eade. John Davenport was a wool merchant and draper, and got very rich. He ended up buying large amounts of land on the north side of Clapham Common, and building "The Hall" in about 1770. It was one of the grandest houses on the north side of Clapham Common. In 1795 his widow bought a whole lot more land on the north side of the common, which was all inherited by her daughter, Elizabeth Susanna, in 1806. So she was pretty wealthy.

When Elizabeth was young she wrote a diary, some of which survives. It's excruciatingly dull. She had two brothers; Richard and John. In 1818 Richard was living at Darwell Bank, and plays a major role in the Chronicle. I don't know what John was doing, or where he was.

Elizabeth married Thomas Henry Graham in 1791 and had six children with him, five of whom survived to adulthood. These children (and her) are the Timean clan, who wrote this Chronicle.

She wrote two well-known books. 1) “Eighteen Maxims on Neatness and Good Order”, published by Hatchard under the pseudonym Theresa Tidy. 2) Writing as Lemuel Gulliver Jr. “Voyage to Locuta”, published by Hatchard 1818. This came out while the Chronicle were being written and there’s a lot of mention of it. Eighteen Maxims went to well over 20 editions, so it was a real hit.

Elizabeth died in 1844, still living at The Hall.

Thomas (v) Henry Graham of Edmond Castle Husband of Elizabeth Davenport, but already dead by the time this Chronicle was written. He was born up in the wilds of Cumberland (in Edmond Castle) in 1751. J.P., F.S.A. of Lincoln’s Inn. Admitted an attorney of King’s Bench June 28th, 1773, and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquities, 29th April, 1808. He succeeded to the family estate at Edmond Castle, but only survived his father a few years. He died in 1813 at Clapham.

He went to London when he was about 16 (with his brother James) to join the law firm of his uncle, James Coulthard⁵. This was a successful law firm, so he made quite a lot of money. Brother James made more, and ended up as a Baronet (see the entry on James Graham of Kirkstall), but Thomas never attained such dizzy heights.

I’m betting that Thomas was solid and worthy but dull, without the spark of his younger brother, and certainly without the spark that his wife had.

Thomas (vi) Henry Graham of Edmond Castle Eldest child of Thomas (v) and Elizabeth Davenport. Born in 1793, he inherited the Edmond Castle estate when Thomas (v) died in 1813, and so at the time of this Chronicle (when he was 25) he was already independently wealthy (or so I assume). One of the authors and Editors of the Chronicle, he appears in it regularly as “Theodore”, and comes across as a serious young man, not all that good at writing doggerel, patriotic, proud of being presented at Court, prone to be teased by his siblings, but putting up with it in a goodnatured way. He

⁵This law firm still exists today (Lawrence Graham LLP) and has been the subject of scholarly articles (Albert J. Schmidt, 1999, *Marketing Property in Eighteenth-Century England: Lawyer History in the Huntington Library’s Stowe Collection*, *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 62, 15-143; Albert J. Schmidt, *Provincial to Professional: the mentalité of attorney James Coulthard (1718-86)*, *Quinnipiac Law Review* 213, (2003))

wasn't all that serious as he did once dress up as a lady and play the fool (XIX/7), but he was clearly more interested in art and antiques.

He lived down south (paying visits to Edmond Castle, but not living there) until some time between 1819 and 1829, when he married Mary Carnegie (super wealthy I think). He did extensive rebuilding of Edmond Castle from 1825-1829, finally moving up there to live with his new bride. They had no children, but I get the strong impression that they loved children, and wanted some. They were great benefactors (although pompous ones) of the Hayton church, and were clearly devoted to charitable works.

He died in 1881 up at Edmond Castle.

John Graham Second son of Thomas (v) and Elizabeth Davenport, younger brother of Thomas (vi). Born in 1794. Called "The Chancellor" in the Chronicle. What a difference from his brother! John had all the wit and spark; he couldn't resist writing reams of doggerel, seemingly without effort. As he wrote himself (XXI/4):

Expect to hear from me again in due time
And (if no offence) I shall stick to my rhyme
I always loved rhyme, for dull prose does but fetter a
Genius like mine – sans adieu – Yours et cetera

Full of silly stories, hilarious observations, I'm guessing he was just like his mother. From the comments in the Ode on the Family Chronicle (page 577) it seems he was one of the main instigators of the Chronicle.

In 1821 he married Caroline Curteis, whose family also appears in the Chronicle many times, as they were good friends of the Grahams. They had five children (I'm descended from his eldest child, Reginald John Graham, who inherited Edmond Castle when Uncle Thomas (vi) died childless). The Curteis family lived at Windmill Hill, close to Eastbourne, where the Grahams spent their summer/autumn at the seaside; she was the daughter of the local MP.

In 1833 John and Caroline were living at Rose Lodge (later called Northfields), on the north side of Clapham Common, part of the extensive estate owned by his mother, but they moved into the Hall when Elizabeth Davenport died in 1844. (Brother Thomas of course had long gone north to live at Edmond Castle.) However, John and Caroline continued to spend large amounts of time in Eastbourne, and finally moved there permanently in the 1850s, where they had bought a number of properties – Rose Cottage (said

to be haunted), Elm Cottage and New Susans, which they extended and renamed The Elms. He sold The Hall in 1853.

John died in 1879, at Eastbourne. Since he died before his elder brother (who had no children), John's eldest son, Reginald, inherited the Edmond Castle estates.

Elizabeth Maria Graham Called Maria, and appears in the Chronicle as Sylvia. She doesn't really emerge clearly either from this Chronicle, or from any subsequent history. All we really know is that she loved nature, and was very devout. She never married, and apparently spent her life doing good works for the church. From 1843 to around 1865 she lived at another house owned by the Grahams on the north side of Clapham Common. This house became known as The Grahams, from its close association with the Grahams and with Maria in particular. She was instrumental in the building of St. George's church, Battersea, with its associated schools and vicarage. Quite a few of her letters survive, but, typically, I haven't yet managed to decipher them.

I don't know when she died, exactly. However, her will was proved at London, on 19 January 1875, and left £300 to some trust supporting the Battersea church⁶ so she must have died before then. Most likely close to that date.

Emily Graham We know a lot more about Emily (Emilia in the Chronicle). She was also of a religious bent, and ended up marrying the Reverend Thomas Collins, who was immortalised in a truly awful book by the Reverend Samuel Coley, in 1869. With a portrait and all. And when I say truly awful, I do indeed mean truly awful. I don't actually know why anybody bothered to write a book about Thomas Collins, and since the book's too bad to read, I probably won't learn. Anyway, Emily makes a number of appearances in this book. For me, the most intriguing sentence is "Stories, foolish and untrue, of her patrician relations somehow got disseminated by the newspapers at the time of her marriage". I would rather love to read these stories, so probably a trawl through the newspapers of the day is in order.

A quick search through this book reveals at least one son and two daughters. And a thoroughly self-righteous small-minded petty little clergyman, who never let his children wear nice clothes, although not entirely without humour. Poor Emily.

Emily died at 40 minutes past 12 pm, on Wednesday January 6, 1864, after a

⁶A History of the County of Surrey, Vol. 4, Edited by H.E. Maiden, 1912.

struggle with asthma and heart disease. At least one of her daughters, Emily, had died before her.

Anne Margaret Graham I would know a whole lot more about Anne Margaret if I deciphered all the letters she wrote, but I haven't so I don't. She married a Polhill, about which family lots is known. There are very vague hints in the Chronicle that she suffered from depression, and her letters in later life show her "weighed down with domestic cares" according to the Lambeth archive. She lived in France for some time, as it was cheaper there, and at least one of her sons died young, as a soldier. A picture of her in later life is given on page 20.

She died in Brighton in 1882.

T.I.M.E.A. The Timeans, the Timean family, etc etc. Formed from the initials of the children's names; Thomas, John (Iohannis), Maria, Emily, Anne. The use of I instead of J is a typical Timean conceit.

Elizabeth Clunie The Abbess de Clugny. This person intrigues me, as I can't work how who she is, or what her exact relationship was to the Grahams. Confidential friend, they say themselves, and she certainly lived with them, but was she a governess? She was certainly very intelligent. Who would be living with the family like that, if not a governess? I get the impression she was older than the girls, although not as old as the mother, and she was clearly their constant companion (usually of the girls, sometimes of their mother). From the evidence in the Chronicle she went with the family to the Theatre, to Exhibitions, and on day visits to friends, but she didn't go with them to social engagements in the evening as there's not a single mention of it in the Chronicles. There are vague indications that, when the family travelled, she went on ahead to get things ready, and met them when they arrived. This smells to me like she was a clearly inferior social class, but possibly I'm just reading too much into this. Her mother visited the Grahams frequently (XIV/1, XIX/4, XIX/7, XLVII/2), her parents lived on Lambeth Hill (X/1, XXIV/1), and her father (most likely) was called Alexander (XLVII/2). She seems to have been originally from further north, around the Humber (III/8). Why wasn't EC living with her parents? And why was she called the Abbess. She doesn't appear to have been Catholic as far as I could tell. Was this all just nonsense? I'd like to know.

James Graham of Edmond Castle, Baronet of Kirkstall The younger brother of Thomas (v), he did a lot better than his brother, was an active politician,

and ended up getting a promotion to Baronet. He appears, together with his son Sandford Graham, in the Chronicle in a number of places, usually called the Viscount Kirkstall. The Baronet line died out after a couple of generations, so there are no more Grahams of Kirkstall. Canon W.H. Mackean, D.D. wrote a short treatise called *The Grahams of Kirkstall*. I was sent a copy by a descendant, Simon Graham-Harrison, but it's not widely available. So we know rather a lot about the events of his life, far too much to put in here.

Richard Davenport The “Duke” of Darwell Bank in the Chronicle. The brother of Madame Mere, Elizabeth Susanna Graham/Davenport. He and his wife, Sophia (XLVII/4), were living at Darwell Bank. He was a JP in 1836, and died at Darwell Bank in 1838 (August 17) at the age of 74.

The Curteis family Often misspelled in the Chronicle as Curties (at least as far as I can read the handwriting). They lived at Windmill Hill, reasonably close to Eastbourne, and were good friends of the Grahams, seeing a lot of them when the Grahams were in Eastbourne. The father was an M.P., and lots is known about him, particularly from his obituary in the Gentleman's Magazine. However, we are more interested in his daughter, Caroline, who married John Graham in 1821, only a couple of years after this Chronicle ends. I find it really interesting to read about the interactions of the Graham and Curteis families, *before* they were linked by marriage. What did John say to Caroline? They must have met a lot. I'm curious.

Servants Because of the Timean habit of calling everyone by a fanciful title, it's not always clear who is a servant, who is a visitor, who is a servant of a visitor, etc. It's all too complicated to list every single servant (at least the ones that I recognise), but some of the servants recur regularly. Mary Spittle was nicknamed the State Fool, or the State Buffoon (I have no idea why), and she finally marries Mr. Spear (XLI/5), another Graham servant. She had disagreements (XLI/1) with another servant, Catherine Elliot (who married Mr. Douglas; XLI/5). Something about who had to wash the dishes, it seems⁷.

There was even a disagreement between Emily Graham and the servants' quarters (XXXII/3-4).

Volume X, Page 2 has a list of servants, with somewhat fanciful roles, written down on the occasion of the grand musical fête when Naldi performed.

⁷Not unlike teenagers, it seems, although maybe less expensive. That's a good question. Are servants less expensive than teenagers? Inquiring minds wish to know.

Two of the most important servants are the two nurses, Rann and Barlow. They give their names to the Rann Age (XXXVI/4) and the Barlow Age (XVII/1), which come with descriptions of the early childhood of the Timeans. Rann even gets a list of nicknames (VI/5).

Slight, or Sleight, the Tailor also makes a number of appearances. Making clothes too large (upon the mother's request) discussing which way the stripes should go around the leg, etc.

Pets

The various pets were somewhat confusing, at least at first glance. Blucher, Tartar, Trip, Elfin, Sprite, Fairy, Gypsy, are all dogs, although they write one another letters, and all have fanciful titles. The bantam roosters appear in a number of places, as do the pet birds such as Mr. Linnet, Mr. Dick, or the Java Princesses (see, for example, XVI/4-5). The animals even have their own Grand Anniversary Dinner (XVI/5-6). Again, I'm not going to list all the pets and animals here, but leave it to the reader to find them all for themselves. Just be warned that some of the Lords and Ladies listed are actually animals.

The correspondence between Elfin and Sprite is a lovely read (XXXVI/3), once you realise what on earth is going on. It took me a while. Maybe you'll catch on faster.

Too long, didn't read

Fine, so you're like my siblings and have the attention span of a chipmunk. And even less interest in family history. Nevertheless, it's worthwhile dipping into this Chronicle and having a look at some of the best stuff. Here are my picks.

The Chronicle FAQ. Always a good place to start, to learn more about the Chronicle. Pay particular attention to the following question and answer:

Q. Do its authors strictly adhere to Truth?

A. By no means. There is nothing they take so much pains to avoid as a simple statement of facts.

(XLIX/3).

Tooi and Teteri. Two of the very first Maori to visit England were Tuai and Teteri, and they met the Grahams at least twice. And appear in the Chronicle. The most detailed account was that of a Grand Cannibal Dinner, with a description of the two Maori (IX/1, X/2, X/5, XIV/3, XL/2-4, XLIII/5).

A Mrs. Radcliffe novel neatly summarised in one page of doggerel (XLIII/6).

To write or not to write. Shakespeare as you've never heard him before (IX/3).

Early stories of the children as recounted by their mother. Very interesting for those who like to learn all sorts of trivia about their ancestors (II/2-3, III/5-6, IV/4-6, VI/2-3, VII/5-6).

More stories about their childhood, and accounts of silly nursery conversations. The Barlow Age (XVII/2), the Rann Age (XXXVI/4) and the Harrow Age (LI/7, LII/4). A short account of the childhood of Elizabeth Davenport, and the building of The Hall (XVI/3-4).

A silly poem For example:

This morning's shoppings were they wise or silly?

Are silks best in Pall Mall or Picadilly?

(V/8).

Traveling to the future The Timeans imagine that someone in the year 2018 finds their Chronicle. I kid you not. It's uncanny, I tell you. And their dream of the treatment of women in the future was pretty spot on. Clearly, the Graham women were not at all happy being relegated to supporting roles (VI/2-4).

... like a fish needs a bicycle. And on the same theme, two poems supporting the cause (VI/4, VII/8).

Idiot Mothers who make their children wear clothes too big, so they can grow into them. Now, who does that remind me of...? Also, the stripes around the leg comment, which became famous in the family badinage (IX/4).

Military campaign of the Chaperons vs the Dandies (XVI/2).

The Emperor of China sends a testimonial to the Family Chronicle (XVIII/1).

Travel diary in verse, no less, by John Graham (XXVIII/1).

The departure from Eastbourne. All is panic, panic (XXXV/1).

The various illustrations. There aren't many. (V/6-7, XI/5, XXXV/4, XL/2, XLIV/4).

The attack on puns and other bad poetry. Just slightly disingenuous (XLII/3).

For the doctors among our readers. The Health Dinner and associated poetry, including the immortal line

Still prosper and give digitalis
To whoever thin and pale is

(XLII/4-5).

A was an Abbess who studied Romances. The ABC for children (XLVII/4).

Hapless elves in servitude are immortalised in verse. Oh, those poor servants (XLI/5).

Advice for parties Read and learn (XLII/4).

Deck the Halls with the Timean Christmas song, featuring Miss Nobrains and Miss Automaton. Even for the Timeans this is a pretty silly song (L/2).

Finally, an ode on the Family Chronicle. I think it's rather a nice ode, to celebrate the one year anniversary of the Chronicle, but then what do I know? I don't even like Wordsworth. Or Byron. Or Shelley. Etc. (Page 577.)

Brief notes on the transcription

I'm not an expert on Georgian society, far from it. I'm not good at reading Georgian handwriting, or deciphering names of society people. I'm not good at photographing old documents with delicate spines. I don't have time to do a meticulous Photoshop modification job on every single page.

The words of Richard Davenport (XLI/4) are particularly apropos here:

But sisters five, ere wit can flow
Somewhere it must exist, you know
And from my brain ere I begin
To bring it out – it must be in

So what you get is an error-ridden amateur attempt at reproducing and transcribing the Chronicle. Of course, as far as I know it's the *only* attempt, and it didn't cost you anything, so it's not all bad. If you don't like the errors, or the words I couldn't read at all, or my foolish and ridiculous attempts at guessing the names of people, well, tough luck. Do it better yourself and then send me a copy. Of course, I encourage you to tell me of all the errors you find, so I can correct them. Do please email all the errors you find to **james@burningviolin.org** or to **sneyd@math.auckland.ac.nz**.

Throughout I've tried to follow the original spelling and punctuation as far as is practicable. Often this isn't very far; the writers seemed to view fullstops (for example) as optional extras, and dashes as indispensable decorative items in all sorts of odd places. The headings are delightfully varied in style, although somewhat lacking in consistency. I didn't even bother to try and follow them exactly.

In many places I could add copious notes giving more details about the context of the Chronicle. They quote freely from the literature of the time, and from classic works. They acted out plays which are well known as popular Georgian entertainment. Many of the people mentioned were known in their own right, and are worthy of detailed footnotes. I did very little of this. Maybe an expert will come along behind me and do a properly edited and annotated version. Although probably one won't.



Figure 1: The Hall, Clapham Common. Sketched by Thomas Henry Graham. Note how it's labelled The Timean abode, in homage to the Chronicle. Thanks to Patrick Baty and Colin Tolm for this picture.



Figure 2: Another sketch of The Hall, Clapham Common, complete with children playing with a dog on the lawn. Sent to me by Patrick Baty.



Figure 3: Thomas Henry Graham (Theodore) in later life. By an unknown painter. This portrait belongs, I believe, to some Cumbrian Archive, but I don't know exactly where it is.



Figure 4: Anne Margaret Graham (La Marguerite) in later life. Thanks to Patrick Baty for this picture.

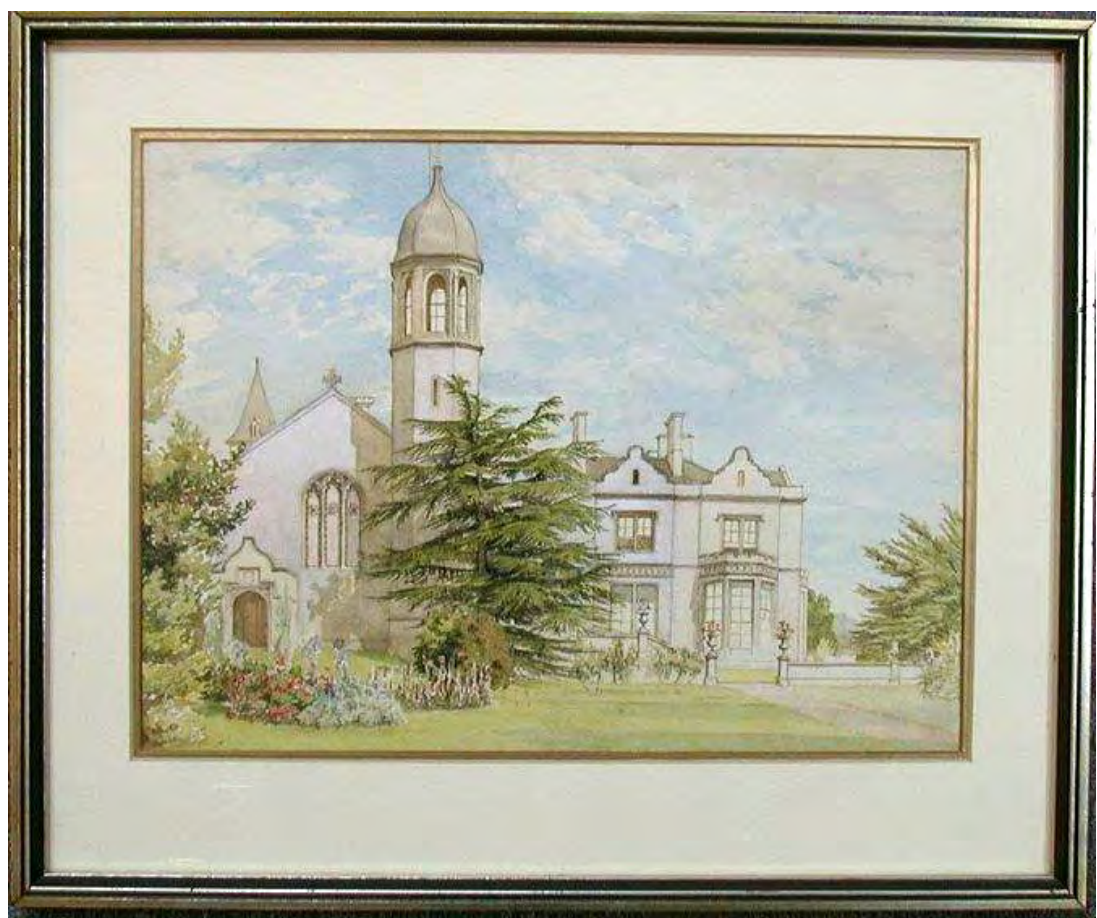


Figure 5: Painting of Edmond Castle, by Anne Margaret Graham.



Figure 6: Another view of Edmond Castle, by Anne Margaret Graham. At least it was labelled as a painting of Edmond Castle by the auctioneers, but I'm not so sure. It's certainly an unusual view of the Castle, and may be of some other place.

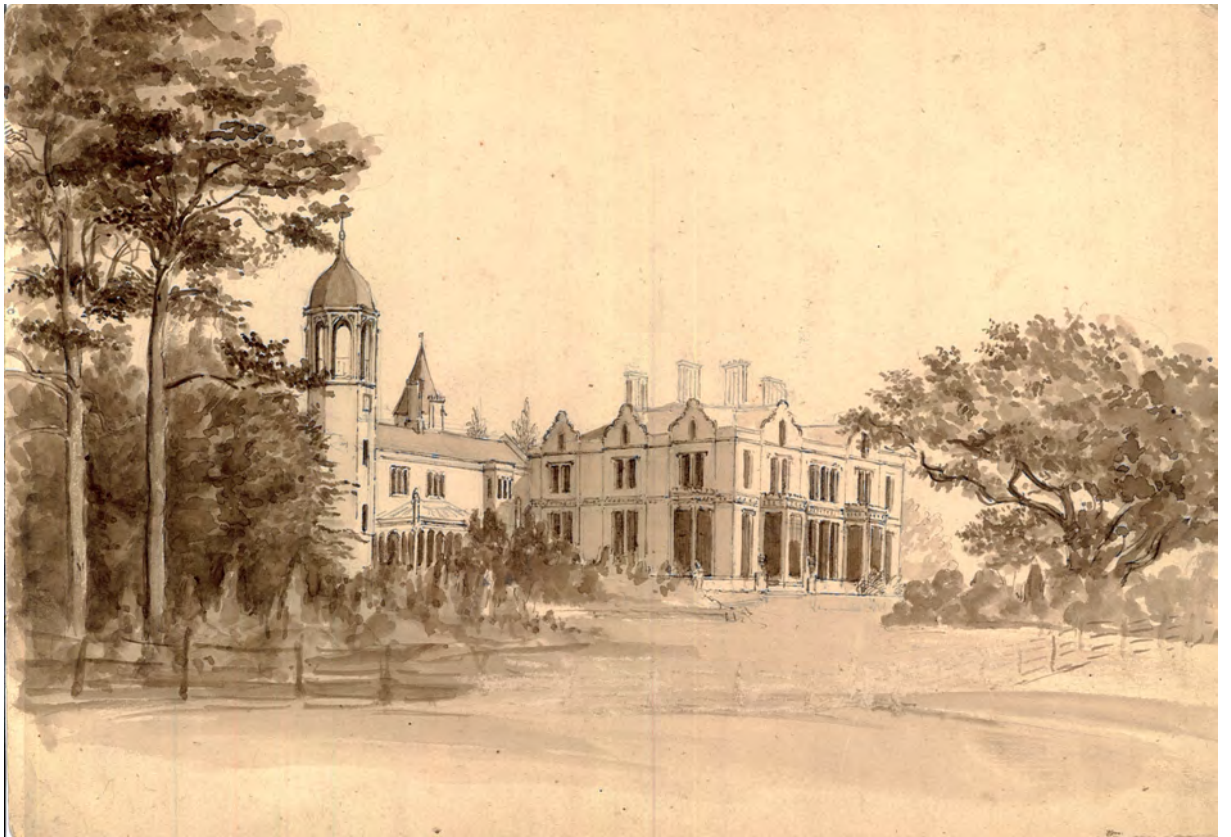


Figure 7: Sketch of Edmond Castle, from the Lambeth Archives. Done by one of the Graham children, but I don't know which one.