

Fantasies and Transformations

The Inner Worlds of Sarah Martha (Serena) Holroyd 1739-1821

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Received: May 20, 2016 Accepted: May 27, 2016 Published: June 24, 2016

doi:10.5296/ijch.v3i1.9495 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ijch.v3i1.9495>

Abstract

On New Year's Eve 1801 Sarah Holroyd sister of John Baker Holroyd (Lord Sheffield) wrote to his eldest daughter, Maria, "I can hardly at times believe Louisa and you are not really my own. . . ." ¹ Linked with her fantasy of mother/ daughter was the fantasy of a young "companion:" from 1788 on, she was chaperoning Harriot Clinton, daughter of General Sir Henry Clinton at every opportunity—right down to Harriot's marriage with General Harry Chester in 1799. Her craving for "some young friend" ² was a pattern thirty years later in Lady Louisa Stuart's view of "Lou" Clinton, who had been exiled from her family by her mother Louisa Holroyd. (And SHE had been exiled—thrown out of the family--because of the hostile sentiments of her father.) The pressures of life for women in these families—with the resulting exile or obsession--drew their fire from the tight cordon of life's roles that were allowed for them.

Keywords: Friend, Daughter, Sister, Mother, Wife

On New Year's Eve 1801 Sarah Holroyd sister of John Baker Holroyd (Lord Sheffield) wrote to his eldest daughter, Maria, "I can hardly at times believe Louisa and you are not really my own. . . ." ³ Linked with her fantasy of mother/ daughter was the fantasy of a young "companion:" from 1788 on, she was chaperoning Harriot Clinton, daughter of General Sir Henry Clinton at every opportunity—right down to Harriot's marriage with General Harry Chester in 1799. Her craving for "some young friend" ⁴ was a pattern thirty years later in Lady Louisa Stuart's view of "Lou" Clinton, who had been exiled from her family by her

mother Louisa Holroyd. (And SHE had been exiled—thrown out of the family--because of the hostile sentiments of her father.)

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1. The Fantasy with the “Father”

And the companionship of a young girl was mixed by these eighteenth-century women with fantasies—which remained late in life—of companionship between a daughter and a father. In Serena's notebooks was inscribed a poem Behold the Daughter. It began: "She was a glory & an example to her Sex/Who while she lived was thus early/renowned for her Munificence." The daughter was glorified for "Too fondly attending on her sick Father":

Her every thought employ'd to cheer his pains
Who she saw languishing with Disease;
Over anxious for his health and
Negligent for her own

The result of "overanxious" care was a noble bonding with the father: A "few days after her Father," she died. It was death not merely of father and daughter, but friends:

In every thing similar to her Father
His usual & most pleasing companion
[. . .]
Happy Companions!

Opposite to the page Serena wrote, "Can words express? Thought reach?—the last, last Silence of a Friend!"⁵

2. The Fantasies with Her “Children”

In the real world, demands upon two different individuals—and different natures—prompted Serena to alter the advice and assistance she was giving to her “children:”

Tell Louisa that I give her great credit for her advance in dress, and set it down to myself. What will be said in future of a sage old Aunt preaching coquetry and dissipation? As my two children are opposites[,] my advice must be (like a Lawyer) calculated for both sides of the question.⁶

Her commitment to Maria and Louisa was warm and deep; and with their joys and sadnesses, she was taken, at times, to ethereal heights:

And what think you, my beloved Maria, was the effect of that dear letter of yours and the few expressive lines of Louisa received today. Absolutely a burst of tears till I sobbed, and which are still running down my Cheeks, and yet believe me, in looking back my whole life past, I cannot recollect a moment of such unmixed sincere heartfelt happiness as I feel at this instant. It is so compleat and so almost beyond idea that every concurring circumstance should so combine for us all, that I cannot compose myself sufficiently to be certain it is not a dream.⁷

The event was Maria's intended marriage. So much did this commitment run towards

sentimentality that Maria believed Serena was overly fond of bad news—that her attachments were so deep in order to provide food for the inevitably disastrous meal:

As Charity begins at home, I must wish your Friends and Acquaintances to employ you with a little Misery, because from my observations that you go plunging on, out of one, into another uncomfortable scene, I am perfectly convinced, if your Mrs Lyons, Mrs Byams, &c., were happy and so forth, that we S.P. folks should do something disagreeable to fill up the vacuum of your mind, and to furnish the supply of sorrowful food that is necessary to the support of your frame.⁸

3. Fantasies and Troubles for Serena's "Children"

Despite the unity of feelings on the surface, Louisa Holroyd perceived that the world—including Serena—viewed her and cared about her in less than flattering ways (unlike her sister). For instance, Louisa's portrait, newly painted by Edridge: "[He] made a miniature of Louisa, so like, it is impossible to look at it without laughing, not having omitted her stoop, which in a painting is more picturesque than if she was more erect."⁹ To Serena, Maria reported, "everybody as yet who have seen it quite squall at the resemblance."¹⁰

Concern for deformed children, along with orphans, grew during the last two decades of the eighteenth century and with greater intensity in the next three decades. Lady Sheffield, not surprisingly, had an interest in visiting orphanages. The last letter she sent to her Maria reported "a most charming sermon at the Asylum this morn, and heavenly singing from the Orphans."¹¹ But, in contrast to Maria, her sister Louisa may have felt like an orphan, rather than a viewer of them. She was "Miss Louisa" while sister Maria was "Miss Holroyd."¹² Living with Serena could not shake this confusion—the opposite of the fantasized results from the transformations depicted in Louisa's childhood wishes. After a year at Bath (1792), after her exile from Sheffield Place, Louisa Holroyd was becoming angry:

How most sincerely does one sympathize with the distress of others when it is ordained by the Fates that we should undergo the same hardships! How little did I feel for the sufferings of the Learned Pig who was harassed from morning till night by his Introductions! 'Sir, this is my Pig.' 'A very wonderful Pig, Madam.' . . . Heaven knows when this said niece will have been shewn to every one.

In Serena's efforts to introduce Louisa to "the world" (Maria's sloop, as Serena called it, having been launched [Serena and Gibbon's word] in 1789) the viewers were, as Louisa termed them, "composed of the halt, the lame, and the blind." Her introductions via Serena included "an old Maid, sister of Sir W. Dolben, bearing a perfect resemblance to one of the figures in the Dance of Death." And at the end of her letter (from March 1792), with so much of her social life depending now upon Serena, she rued to Maria: "I am using my utmost endeavors to teach Poor old Aunt that my name is Louisa, and am in hopes that in due time, she will remember it is not Maria."¹³ After marriage and children of her own, she was still being called—but not considered to be—Maria.¹⁴

The failure of Louisa Holroyd to make a mark of her own during her early years belongs to a background of family stress and frustration. Aside from her father's psychological problems,

his political aspirations never brought him to the first or second rank of notables. And Louisa's emotional and physical problems during the first dozen years of her life—difficult as they are to grasp for a researcher—were sufficient enough to her father and family to make her an outsider. Soon after the return of the family from Gibbon (Winter 1791) she was sent to Serena at Bath, to remain there through 1795.

The summer of 1792, Louisa, now at age 14, spent swimming with Serena at Southampton, and sharing the same room.¹⁵ Her exile rankled. Accusations from Maria of lack of patriotic fervor regarding affairs with France did not please her either.¹⁶ Her distance from the family, by 1793, was highlighted in the death of her mother. When news of the death reached Bath, Serena tried to keep it quiet "with the tender wish to spare Louisa."¹⁷ Hearing of the loss brought tears, but it did not bring her closer to her family—nor did they want her to come back. Serena was aware of their feelings. Writing to Maria two days after the death she assured them she would not be coming back with Louisa soon: "for yours and my Brother's sake I should think it better to wait a little."

Beneath Serena's devotion and fantasized attachment with Louisa there was her knowledge of deep-seated problems in her brother's family. At the center of these, as perceived also by Maria, was her father. And so Serena went on in her April 5th letter, telling Maria about a vital decision concerning future emotional health for Louisa. It was clear where the deepest commitment of Aunt and sister lay: "In this I entreat you to judge, and only settle it as best for my d^r Sheff and yourself."¹⁸ By autumn, Louisa Holroyd was receiving treatment instead of care. At Tunbridge Wells, Maria gave news that "the Waters have been of very great use to Louisa, she is in much better spirits and has a better appetite than she has had in a great while. I hope Papa sees this, and that he will not be in a hurry to move. . . ."¹⁹

By August 1794 all had become "uneasy" about Louisa.²⁰ And again treatment was the answer: "We paid a Visit yesterday to the dear Invalids at Tunbridge. It is impossible to doubt the good effect of the waters when one sees Louisa, for she has some colour; she complains [also in her letters of 1788] of being hungry."⁵⁴ Arguments continued as well, Maria rebuking Louisa later that month for "moralizing."²¹

In late December 1794, their father married again. Lucy Pelham, daughter of a rich and influential family, was Holroyd's choice, but not his first one. The wedding was a complete surprise to Maria and Louisa. They were invited to attend, with a special dinner set up by Ann Pelham for Louisa, now seventeen years old. ("Miss Louisa's Dinner is already ordered at two o'clock."²² But neither the dinner offer of her new grandmother nor the wish to meet a new mother brought Louisa.²³

January 1795 opened with Louisa Holroyd still with her aunt Serena at Bath, and Serena sending a note to Maria, "Beg of the dear Lady to love me, and to accept Louisa's and my most affect. wishes."²⁴

4. Marriage for One of Serena's "Children"

A reevaluation of the present was about to match Serena's intended reevaluation of the past. For the first time she told Maria that Louisa's exile should end: "She is now past eighteen. On the whole I do really wish her to be four or five weeks in London to see her friends, and in short to have some of the advantages of her father's House, and Lady Sheffield's society as

well as yours." ²⁵ In June of that year [1795], Serena got her wish; it was painful nevertheless:

You are a dear Soul, and are always attentive to me in time of need. Your letter has really done me more good than anything else could, and I love you for the thought. Three years and a quarter never having had dear Louisa out of my sight, and so often requiring care, I may as well as confess what you would know without it, that it is like tearing a Polypus out of my heart, root and all, and that I feel like Jacob, bereft. . . . As soon as I recovered my Stupor yesterday I took such an Antipathy to everything round me that I went and shut myself below stairs where I never sit, and I rejoiced sulking in the rain that nobody might call. . . . Tell dear Louisa I hope to hear she is good and happy the moment she sees you.²⁶

Later that spring (1796), the family made an effort to help: "the Ceremony of Presentation is over with Louisa." To their delight, she "acquitted herself extremely well"; she even "managed her Hoop very well and nothing could be better than her manner when presented, as if she had been at Court all her life." The affair was "an immense squeeze" but, richly dressed, Louisa enjoyed the opportunity of seeing royalty and "many of the Belles of the day, of whom she has so frequently heard." Maria Holroyd knew what lay beneath the glitter for her unhappy sister, nevertheless: "You would be surprised to see how she resigns herself to fate. . . ." ²⁷ Fate for Louisa Holroyd may have been obvious; by next spring she was the wife of General William Henry Clinton.

The colloquy of "mother" (Serena) and daughter (Maria Holroyd) at that moment speaks again and again of "relief":

You will easily conceive that it was great relief to me when at last this long-intended union took place. . . . Louisa looked uncommonly well, and as easy and unaffected as possible. I expected her to be nervous; but she seemed only serious and attentive. William looked quite handsome, with happiness and affection in his eyes.²⁸

Maria's response to Serena contained that curious mixture of already thinking about the terminality of things, just as their instant of happiness—the start—seemed greatest:

You now see both your children disposed of in such a way as few mothers can dare flatter themselves to hope for their darlings. My happiness can hardly admit of addition, except from once again being within distance of the few near and dear friends I am for a time taken from. This is a prospect I can indulge in with certainty if we live, which I hope to God we all shall for many years; for I should not like to spare anybody for some time, and I don't think you would approve of my taking myself off yet awhile. Louisa's prospects are as fair as mine, with the exception of not having all the income we could wish her.²⁹

Serena was now with another of her "friends" at this time, Harriot Clinton, over two years away from marriage to Harry Chester. Serena's enthusiasm knew few limits:

Just as I was setting out with Harriot Clinton for this place [Bush Hill, the

home of the Chesters], I received your dear welcome lines, and you have been a nice thing for writing just as you do. True it is I feel like a mother that has disposed of her two darling girls to my heart's content, and every observation you make on the subject is perfectly just. . . . The longer I live the more convinced I am that all our best happiness consists in family love. . . .³⁰

5. Serena and Her “Grandchild” and Female Virtue

Within the year, the first Clinton/Holroyd child was born. Of interest to Maria were the physical likenesses of mother and child—to different images: "As to Louisa, I never was so surprised at the alteration in her looks. She struck me with having a strong likeness to mama, which formerly was the last resemblance I should have thought of finding for her. I am delighted with little Lou, the most good-tempered, good little animal I ever saw. . . ."³¹ But birth did not bring an end, and may have exacerbated the ominous possibilities for physical and emotional health. Three years later, the picture of a half-century of pain was looming for Louisa Holroyd Clinton: "I had rather wear horsehair shirts, sleep in sacking and cattle rugs, eat sheep's head and barley bread; nay, give up my writing-box and armchair before I would again depend on my own feet and my neighbours' charity."³²

Long and fascinating interchanges with different worlds of relationships filled Serena's notebooks. These worlds were overarched by the unwavering commitment to her "children". In 1793, she entered "My Prayer":

My prayer is heard O kind indulgent Heaven
Has to my child each female virtue given
Manners engaging & affection kind
A face expressive of her gentle mind
A bosom form'd to feel for others Woe
Most happy if she can relief bestow
Afflictions bitter tear it she can dry
Benignant pleasure sparkles in her eye
Pursue sweet girl improvement every year
Be pious, mild, benevolent sincere
So shalt then be by those thou lov'st beloved
By all respected & by all approved
And when with me this transient scene is o'er
And when we must part to meet on Earth no more
Still think as Mother I thy steps attend
Unseen thy Guide, thy Monitress & friend
Such is thy duty, such thy filial love^[*]
Still thou wouldst act as I should most approve
Once more kind Heaven attend a Mothers prayer [only Moth underlined]
Make ~~my~~ [my was written, then crossed out] lov'd Louisa thy peculiar care
Bless her in every part of social Life

Happy as daughter, sister, Mother, Wife!³³

SH SH 1793

Serena signed her initials twice beneath the poem, marking a rereading and recommitment after it was written—the custom in these families.** They may also join common pains suffered; numerous times Maria often called Serena and Louisa the "Invalids."⁷⁵ In September 1795, she recalls Serena "talks of not sleeping and not being able to walk far..."

Bonding between Serena and Louisa in fantasy and real life was carried by Serena into her endearment to Louisa's first child, Louisa Lucy ["Lou Clinton"], born on December 22, 1797:

To Louisa Lucy Clinton on her birthday a year old

With Joy unmix'd the Morn we view

That to retrace but one short year

Arose in ev'ry varied hue

Of trembling hope & anxious fear

Louisa ere of this fond heart

Thy Infant smiles had claim'd a share

Thy Mother held so large a part

She never fear'd a Rival there

Dear Rival of that Parents love

May'st thou thro' many a circling year

(While each thy opening charms improve)

This memorable day endear

Grateful I'll bless the hand Divine

That spared her Life [a line crosses capital L*] & gave us thine.³⁴

Four years later, December 22, 1801, Serena again wrote a birthday poem in her notebook honoring her "grandchild." Two years and a day after Louisa's birth (1797) came the wedding day for Henry Clinton Jr, her uncle. The next day was her father's birthday, also the anniversary of the day his father (Sir Henry), died. As with Louisa Holroyd Clinton herself, her own daughter was born during a conflicting memorial/festival period. Like her, she would be tainted. And so the mother, Louisa Holroyd Clinton, found someone (Lady Louisa Stuart) to take care of her daughter, as Serena did in her own life. At this moment, in 1801, the words of the poem also charted out a new direction for Serena—now about to enter her sixty-third year:

To Louisa Lucy Clinton the day she was four
years old Dec^r 22-- 1801 SH [her initials]

Thou dearest object of Maternal care

Hear my daily & most ardent prayer

May Heaven to thee its choicest gifts impart

May every virtue animate thy heart!

May mild Benevolence to thee be given
And fervent Piety——Best boon of Heaven!
May Innocence still guard thy tender Youth
With modesty——Sincerity & Truth——
Thy Mother's Task those Virtues to improve
And thine to merit thy fond Parents love.³⁵

6. The Challenge of Transformations

After many years of “moralising,” Serena was beginning to see life with a new magnification as she entered her seventies in the second decade of the nineteenth century:

When I look back on my life past and recollect the total retirement I lived in for many years when much younger, and now so very much the reverse, I think it was badly managed [a frequent self- and family criticism, for a century], as it ought then to have been what it now is, and in the last stage of my life live more soberly. Yet as I never go to the public rooms or to card parties I think my life may be trifling, but still not very censurable. I do like cheerful innocent amusement, doing as I go along a little good and being kind to all the world.⁸⁴

In late 1819, the end was near for Serena, with Sheffield assuring Maria that “she is in the most comfortable state of composure.” Nobody could sum up Serena's long life better than her most gifted “child”:

I was much grieved, dear little aunt, to find from your letters that you are at last obliged to acknowledge that you . . . feel rather more than twenty years old. I hope quiet and care will again restore you to the full enjoyment of society on a larger scale than you can at present bear; but if not, what a blessing it is still to preserve all the faculties of your mind and the power of feeling affection as vivid as ever; and to experience that happy composure and peace of mind which has hitherto made your path through life as easy and happy as human nature can expect. Nobody but you, I think, ever went on making new friends in advanced life, who became as much attached as those of an older date; and to young people your society has always been as agreeable as that of a person of their own age. I regret very much that my girls have not had an opportunity of seeing and knowing and loving you. . . .³⁶

*An epitaph, proposed by a friend (John Duncan, Esq.), for Serena:

Here pious Holroyd lies, whose modest mind
By genius fired, by liberal arts refined,
O'er fashion's heights long urged its heavenward way
And bade the gay be good, the good be gay.³⁷

7. Roles for Women

Serena may have wished for happiness for her children (daughter, sister, mother, wife). The problem was, she herself had less than a firm idea of what these roles should be. A variety of pictures of women viewing themselves were presented in her notebooks. These new and

enlightening disclosures of what Serena and her friends were talking about for decades also reveal an unhappiness which, for them, was insoluble as long as it was necessarily linked to the fourfold options of family life for women.

The following was a picture of themselves which the women in this history drew most consistently for seventy years:

Naked in nothing should a Woman be
But veiled her very wit with Modesty
Let Man discover, Let not her display
But yield her charms of mind with sweet delay.³⁸

The next picture lamented the necessity of transformations. In one a jellyfish:

The graceful bow, the Curt'sy low
The floating forms that undulating glide
Like anchor'd Vessels on the swelling tide
[. . .]
Still with fix'd glance, he eyes the imagin'd Fair
And turns the corner with remember'd Care
Not so his partner——From her tangled Train
To free her captive foot she strives in vain.³⁹

In another, a Caterpillar:

[. . .]
If in a Worm a Soul may dwell
or even in a Modish Belle,
Philosophers are not agreed
But differ widely in their Creed
[. . .]
Thy beauties now are on the Wing
To thee, no Future Time shall bring
Superior Joy, or higher pow'r
Than such as yields the present hour
[. . .]
Alas! far other is thy Doom
The next sad change is to the Tomb.⁴⁰

8. The Problem with Men

Still another fragment of the dialogue among Serena, her friends, and her children, was this perception of sharing the future with men, and using the past as a storehouse of learning instead of pain:

I joy to see this generous Age
Unclosing Nature's folio treasure

Confine not to her Son's the page
But bid her daughters share the pleasure.⁴¹

Nevertheless, the bitterest message seems to have been the deepest, for generations of these families:

Yes—I'm resolved—I'll live & die a Maid
Exposed & jeer'd! abandon'd & betrayed
Such usage! Monstrous! bear it those who can
Here, I renounce that faithless creation Man
[. . .]
What! can one then devise no kind of plan
Without that necessary evil Man
Can woman singly find herself no Station?
[. . .]
Whatever Womans vanity may boast
He makes the Peeress & he makes the Toast
Her last best title she from him derives
For—To be Widows we must first be wives. . . .⁴²

¹ December 31, 1801, Adeane, *Early Married Life*, p. 227, to Maria.

² Serena wrote and collected verses; five remaining handwritten books are in Yale University's Beinecke Manuscript Library, Clinton Papers, Box 9. Each is labelled with the approximate years of the materials, and a roman numeral. "Some young friend," Jane Adeane, *Girlhood of Maria Josepha Holroyd*, p. 318—at that time (during the spring of 1795), the Holroyd family was drawing Louisa back from Serena. See also March 21, 1797, Jane Adeane, *The Early Married Life of Maria Josepha Holroyd Stanley—1st Lady Stanley of Alderley*, p. 123—Serena was accompanying Harriot to the Chester home at Bush Hill.

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⁵ *Verses Collected by Miss Holroyd . . . , Book III, 1793-1801 ca.*, pp. 70-72.

⁶ January 29, 1796, Adeane, *Girlhood*, pp. 364-5, to Maria.

⁷ At Bath, Sunday Morning, (4 A.M.), May 8, 1796, *ibid.*, p. 380.

⁸ November 11, 1795, *ibid.*, p. 346, to Serena.

⁹ September 22, 1795, *ibid.*, p. 334.

¹⁰ September 20, 1795, *ibid.*, p. 332.

¹¹ Friday, March 29, 1793, *ibid.*, p. 217, to Maria. In a letter to Maria [now at age sixteen], Aunt Serena introduced her young friend to this growing phenomenon: "I daresay you have heard of Sunday Schools. It is but lately we have had that institution here, and at first it went on slowly; but by joining it to a School of Industry, they now all crowd to the other, which is a necessary step to that of industry."

Serena went on to describe the wonderful marriage of piety and industry in the gathering of 900 "poor little creatures" collected from the area around Bath who before "had been starving and without a

home." In the usual fashion of the era, she praised "how much this order and decency must civilize these children, and what a great step this is towards reformation of morals." Here is an example in action:

"At one instant also, without direction to do so, the nine hundred dropped on their knees and rose again, which showed they knew what they were about; their little hands lifted up and joined together, looking with such innocent devotion. They sang the Psalms, all in time with the organ by heart, and notwithstanding the number, the sound was neither too loud nor too harsh, but, on the contrary, soft and affecting beyond measure. I confess, though I am no enthusiast, it drew tears from me. . . ." (May 4, 1787, *ibid.*, pp. 17-18.)

The dialogue on children and childhood at century's end also prompted Serena's observations to Maria, after the birth of her first three children: "At present they are but playthings; . . . when they become companions and friends, it is then they excite all the interest and anxiety." (December 31, 1801, Adeane, *Early Married Life*, p. 227.

¹² August 25, 1791, Adeane, *Girlhood*, p. 72, Charlotte Moss to Maria.

¹³ Friday, March 9, 1792, *ibid.*, p. 128.

¹⁴ 1806, Adeane, *Early Married Life*, p. 292.

¹⁵ August 18, 1792, Adeane, *Girlhood*, p. 181, to Maria.

¹⁶ December 9, 1792, *ibid.*, p. 208. Interestingly, Maria had considerable concern for the poor and the Jews. March 1793 she wrote to Ms. Firth, a family governess: "It makes me uncomfortable to think how it is possible the poor people can buy meat now it is so high. What a disagreeable thing it is we cannot live without Money." (March 13, 1793, *ibid.*, p. 213.) Seeing a play also aroused sympathies for those less fortunate; sentiments she did not earnestly express for Louisa in her early life: "The Play was a new one of Cumberland's, called 'The Jew.' It did not please me much, because at a Comedy I expect to laugh, and there was so much sentiment throughout, that with a very little Pains [*sic*] one might have cried." (May 14, 1794, *ibid.*, pp. 281-282, to Firth.)

¹⁷ April 5, 1793, *ibid.*, p. 221, to Maria.

¹⁸ April 5, 1793, *ibid.*, p. 222.

¹⁹ October 13, 1793, *ibid.*, p. 245, to Firth.

²⁰ August 12, 1794, *ibid.*, p. 297.

²¹ August 24, 1794, *ibid.*, p. 301, to Firth.

²² December 16, 1794, Adeane, *Girlhood*, p. 310, to Maria.

²³ January 28, 1795, *ibid.*, p. 317, Serena to Maria.

²⁴ January 28, 1795, *ibid.*, p. 317. The outer pattern of mourning was changing. Serena observed [after the death of Sir Henry Clinton] that "it used to be six weeks for a first cousin; but I believe now not above half the time." (January 1, 1796, Adeane, *Girlhood*, p. 358.) Trumbach presents figures on mourning periods (without citation or time reference) which are at odds with those of Serena. (Trumbach, *Family*, p. 35.) More importantly, it is hard to find in these families and lives a parallel between the inner life of grief and the outer world's mourning practices and fashions. The private world of pain had a complex history and continuity of its own.

²⁵ April 10, 1795, Adeane, *Girlhood*, p. 319.

²⁶ Tuesday, June 9, 1795, *ibid.*, pp. 322-3.

²⁷ April 15, 1796, *ibid.*, pp. 372-3, to Firth. This day was also Sir Henry Clinton's birthday.

²⁸ 错误!仅主文档。 March 16, 1797, Adeane, *Early Married Life*, p. 122, Serena to Maria. A month earlier, though,

Louisa was quite apprehensive:

"Though I lately gave Louisa a long lecture about her propensity to look forward not to blue skies but to black, to which she gives way so unhappily for her comfort, yet who shall say they possess any hold on happiness in this world?"

(February 17, 1797, *ibid.*, p. 118, Maria to Serena.)

²⁹ March 17, 1797, *ibid.*, p. 123.

³⁰ March 21, 1797, p. 123, from Bush Hill, the family home of the Chesters.

³¹ June 1, 1799, *ibid.*, p. 181, to Serena.

³² January 3, 1800 [Maria's birthday], *ibid.*, p. 190, Louisa to Maria. Within three months came the first of Louisa's references to "Clinton Bad Luck," a refrain that would be used by her and her daughter for the next three decades—pointing to money troubles and Sir William Henry Clinton's ineptness in resolving them. (April 1800, *ibid.*, p. 197.) When describing stress or anxiety the Holroyd sisters used, or overused, the word "pierce." Three decades later, Lady Louisa Stuart took notice of its use by Louisa Dorothea Holroyd Clinton's daughter, Louisa Clinton. Maria put it to work, in late September 1800:

"Poor dear old Aunt,—How ill people do use you! I know I am very good for nothing, and yet when your last letter arrived I really was so pierced, I did not think I could ever be idle again."

(*Ibid.*, p. 202.)

³³ Verses Collected by Miss Holroyd . . . , Book V, 1793-1801 ca., p. 64. The first writing was more than likely the version in Book II, p. 22.

³⁴ Verses Collected by Miss Holroyd . . . , Book I, 1796-1817 ca., p. 33; a copy in Book V, 1793-1801 ca., p. 65.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Book III, 1793-1801 ca., p. 58; another copy, Book V, 1793-1801 ca., p. 66. In the Book V version the following lines are absent:

May Innocence still guard thy tender Youth

With modesty—Sincerity & Truth—

³⁶ December 5, 1819, Adeane, *Early Married Life*, pp. 409-410.

³⁷ Adeane, *Early Married Life*, p.412.

³⁸ Verses Collected by Miss Holroyd . . . , Book III, 1793-1801 ca., p. 64; also in Book V, 1793-1801 ca., p. 67.

³⁹ *Ibid.* Book I, 1796-1817 ca., pp. 8-9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* Book I, 1796-1817 ca., pp. 47-48.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* Book I, 1796-1817 ca., p. 34. Remembering the eye afflictions of Serena and her friends, I was struck by the emphases of Janice G. Raymond in *A Passion for Friends*, especially in her chapter "A Vision of Female Friendship: Two Sights-seeing" [Boston: Beacon Press, 1986]. For a modern structure of insight into the remarkable changes and regeneration in the lives of Serena's world, see Annis Pratt et al., *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981]; see especially the chapter "Novels of Rebirth and Transformation" where the idea is discussed of "a transformation of the personality, centering upon personal, rather than patriarchal space. . . ." (p. 135) For the dynamism of inner criticism linked with outer action (appropriate for an understanding also of the Lady Louisa Stuart/Lou Clinton relationship) see Judith Lowder Newton, *Women, Power, and Subversion* [Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981] and Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez [New York: Columbia University Press, 1991].

⁴² *Ibid.* Book III, 1793-1801 ca., pp. 65-66.

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