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AUTOBIOGRAPHY, LETTERS
AND LITERARY REMAINS OF
MRS PIOZZI
(THRALE)

WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTORY
ACCOUNT OF HER LIFE AND WRITINGS

VOLUME 1

EDITED BY ABRAHAM HAYWARD



CAMBRIDGE

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Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs Piozzi (Thrale)

Highly educated and accustomed to intellectual society, the writer Hester Lynch Piozzi (1741–1821) became a close friend of Samuel Johnson through her first husband, the brewer Henry Thrale. Her second marriage, to the Italian musician Gabriel Mario Piozzi in 1784, estranged her from Johnson, but following his death she published her groundbreaking *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson*, anticipating Boswell's biography. In addition to publishing essays, memoirs, poetry and travel diaries, she was one of the first women to produce works on philology and history. Edited by the essayist Abraham Hayward (1801–84) and incorporating correspondence and other writings, this two-volume work offers a valuable insight into the life of an important woman of letters and how she was perceived by contemporaries and posterity. Reissued here is the enlarged second edition of 1861. Volume 1 is devoted to Hayward's biographical essay and critique of her works.

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MRS. PIOZZI'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY &c.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY
LETTERS AND LITERARY REMAINS
OF
MRS. PIOZZI (THRALE)

EDITED WITH NOTES
AND
AN INTRODUCTORY ACCOUNT OF HER LIFE AND WRITINGS

BY
A. HAYWARD, ESQ. Q.C.

Welcome, Associate Forms, where'er we turn
Fill, Streatham's Hebe, the Johnsonian urn—St. Stephen's

In Two Volumes
VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION

LONDON
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS
1861

PREFACE

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first edition of a work of this kind is almost necessarily imperfect ; since the editor is commonly dependent for a great deal of the required information upon sources the very existence of which is unknown to him till reminiscences are revived, and communications invited, by the announcement or publication of the book. Some valuable contributions reached me too late to be properly placed or effectively worked up ; some, too late to be included at all. The arrangement in this edition will therefore, I trust, be found less faulty than in the first, whilst the additions are large and valuable. They principally consist of fresh extracts from Mrs. Piozzi's private diary ("Thraliana"), amounting to more than fifty pages ; of additional marginal notes

on books, and of copious extracts from letters hitherto unpublished.

Amongst the effects of her friend Conway, the actor, after his untimely death by drowning in North America, were a copy of Mrs. Piozzi's "Travel Book" and a copy of Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," each enriched by marginal notes in her handwriting. Such of those in the "Travel Book" as were thought worth printing appeared in "The Atlantic Monthly" for June last, from which I have taken the liberty of copying the best. The "Lives of the Poets" is now the property of Mr. William Alexander Smith, of New York, who was so kind as to open a communication with me on the subject, and to have the whole of the marginal notes transcribed for my use at his expense.

Animated by the same liberal wish to promote a literary undertaking, Mr. J. E. Gray, son of the Rev. Dr. Robert Gray, late Bishop of Bristol, has placed at my disposal a series of letters from Mrs. Piozzi to his father, extending over nearly twenty-five years (from 1797 to the year of her death) and exceeding a hundred in number. These have been of the greatest service in enabling me to complete and verify the summary of that period of her life.

So much light is thrown by the new matter, es-

pecially by the extracts from "Thraliana," on the alleged rupture between Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi, that I have re-cast or re-written the part of the Introduction relating to it, thinking that no pains should be spared to get at the merits of a controversy which now involves, not only the moral and social qualities of the great lexicographer, but the degree of confidence to be placed in the most brilliant and popular of modern critics, biographers and historians. It is no impeachment of his integrity, no detraction from the durable elements of his fame, to offer proof that his splendid imagination ran away with him, or that reliance on his wonderful memory made him careless of verifying his original impressions before recording them in the most gorgeous and memorable language.

No one likes to have foolish or erroneous notions imputed to him, and I have pointed out some of the misapprehensions into which an able writer in the "Edinburgh Review" (No. 231) has been hurried by his eagerness to vindicate Lord Macaulay. Moreover, this struck me to be as good a form as any for re-examining the subject in all its bearings; and now that it has become common to reprint articles in a collected shape, the comments of a first-rate review can no longer be regarded as transitory.

I gladly seize the present opportunity to offer my best acknowledgments for kind and valuable aid in various shapes, to the Marquis of Lansdowne, His Excellency M. Sylvain Van de Weyer (the Belgian Minister), the Viscountess Combermere, Mr. and the Hon. Mrs. Monckton Milnes, the Hon. Mrs. Rowley, Miss Angharad Lloyd, and the Rev. W. H. Owen, Vicar of St. Asaph and Dymorchion.

8, St. James's Street:

Oct. 18th, 1861.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

	PAGE
Origin and Materials of the Work . . .	3—7
Object of the Introduction	7
Origin, Education, and Character of Thrale . .	7—11
Introduction of Johnson to the Thrales . .	11—14
Johnson's Habits at the Period	14—20
His Household	21—24
His Social Position	25
Society at Streatham	26
Blue Stocking Parties	27—28
Johnson's Fondness for Female Society . .	29—35
Nature of his Intimacy with Mrs. Thrale . .	35
His Verses to her	36—38
Her Age	39—40
Her Personal Appearance and Handwriting .	41—42
Portraits of her	43—44
Boswell at Streatham	44—48
Her Behaviour to Johnson	48
Her Acquirements	49—52
Johnson's Estimate of her	53—57
Popular Estimate of her	58
Manners of her Time	59
Madame D'Arblay at Streatham	60

	PAGE
Her Account of Conversations there . . .	61—67
Johnson's Politeness	68
Mrs. Thrale's Domestic Trials	69—70
Electioneering with Johnson	71
Thrale's Embarrassments, and Johnson's Advice . .	72—74
Johnson on Housekeeping and Dress	75—77
His Opinions on Marriage	78
Johnson in the Country	79—80
Johnson fond of riding in a Carriage, but a bad Traveller	80—81
His Want of Taste for Music or Painting	82
Tour in Wales	82—89
Tour in France	90—91
Baretti	91—99
Campbell's Diary	99—102
Mrs. Thrale's Account of her Quarrel with Baretti	103—108
His Account	108
Alleged Slight to Johnson	109
Miss Streatfield	110—122
Thrale's Infidelity	123
Madame D'Arblay as an Inmate	124—126
Dr. Burney	127
Mrs. Thrale canvassing Southwark	127
Attack by Rioters on the Brewhouse	128
Thrale's Illness and Winter in Grosvenor Square	129—131
Proposed Tour	131—132
Thrale's Death	132—136
His Will	137
Johnson as Executor	138
Her Management of the Brewery	139—140
Italian Translation	141
A strange Incident	142
Mrs. Montagu — Mr. Crutchley	143—144
Sale of the Brewery	144—147
Mrs. Thrale's Introduction to Piozzi	147
Scene with him at Dr. Burney's	148—151
Her early Impressions of him	152—153
Melancholy Reflections	154

	PAGE
Johnson's Regard for Thrale . . .	155—156
Mrs. Thrale's and Johnson's Feelings towards each other . . .	156—160
Johnson at Streatham after Thrale's Death . .	161
Piozzi — Verses to him . . .	162
Johnson's Health . . .	163
Self-Communings . . .	164
Town Gossip . . .	165
Verses on Pacchierotti . . .	165—167
Fears for Johnson . . .	167
Reports of her marrying again . .	167—168
Reasons for quitting Streatham . .	169
Resolution to quit approved by Johnson .	169—170
Complaints of Johnson's Indifference . .	171
Piozzi — to marry or not to marry . .	172—175
Was Johnson driven out of Streatham . .	176
His Farewell to Streatham . .	177—178
His last Year there . . .	179—185
Johnson and Mrs. Thrale at Brighton . .	186—188
Conflicting Feelings . . .	189
Gives up Piozzi . . .	190—191
Meditated Journey to Italy . . .	192
Parting with Piozzi . . .	193—195
Unkindness of Daughters . . .	197
Position as regards Johnson . . .	198
Objections to him as an Inmate . . .	199—204
Parting with Piozzi . . .	205
Verses to him on his Departure . . .	206
Her undiminished Regard for Johnson proved by their Correspondence . . .	207—214
Character of Daughters . . .	212
Madame D'Arblay, Scene with Johnson . .	214—216
Lord Brougham's Commentary . . .	216
Correspondence with Johnson . . .	217—219
Recall of Piozzi . . .	220—221
Trip to London . . .	222—223
Verses to Piozzi on his Return . . .	224
Journey with Daughters . . .	225

	PAGE
Feelings on Piozzi's Return, and Marriage	226
Objections to her Second Marriage discussed	227—230
Correspondence with Madame D'Arblay on the Marriage	231—233
Objections of Daughters — Lady Keith	233—236
Correspondence with Johnson as to the Marriage	236—243
Baretti's Story of her alleged Deceit	243—247
Her uniform Kindness to Johnson	247—248
Johnson's Feelings and Conduct	249—251
Miss Wynn's Commonplace Book	251—253
Johnson's unfounded Objections to the Marriage and erroneous Impressions of Piozzi	254—255
Miss Seward's Account of his Loves	256
Misrepresentation and erroneous Theory of a Critic	257—260
Last Days and Death of Johnson	261—262
Lord Macaulay's Summary of Mrs. Piozzi's Treatment of Johnson	262—266
Life in Italy	266—269
Projected Work on Johnson	269—270
The Florence Miscellany	271
Correspondence with Cadell and Publication of the "Anecdotes"	272—274
Her alleged Inaccuracy, with Instances	274—285
H. Walpole	286
Peter Pindar	287—289
H. Walpole again	290
Hannah More	291
Marginal Notes on the "Anecdotes"	292—297
Extracts from Dr. Lort's Letters	297—299
Her Thoughts on her Return from Italy	299—302
Her Reception	303—306
Miss Seward's Impressions of her and Piozzi	307
Publication of the "Letters"	307—308
Opinions on them — Madame D'Arblay, Queen Charlotte, Hannah More, and Miss Seward	309—314
Baretti's libellous Attacks	314
Her Character of him on his Death	315—318