

## 477. Frances Merivale, Commonplace Book

England 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> c.  
ca. 1799-1813

A common place book belonging to Frances Merivale (d. 1851, 2<sup>nd</sup> wife of John Lewis Mallet, mother of Sir Louis Mallet, and sister of John Herman Merivale) consisting almost entirely of poetry, much transcribed from popular, often romantic, authors of the time (those identified include John Herman Merivale; James Mercer; William Wordsworth; Robert Burns; Thomas Blacklock; David Mallet; Sir Walter Scott; Luis de Camoens as translated by Percy Smythe, Viscount Strangford; Thomas Campbell; Margaret Holford; William Robert Spencer; George Gordon, Lord Byron; Thomas Moore; Alexander Hume; Percy Bysshe Shelley; Anna Laetitia Barbauld; and Felicia Dorothea Hemans). There are several items which are currently unidentified, particularly a sequence of poems exchanged between a Miss Savery and a Miss Hole. Merivale began keeping the book in 1799 according to an inscription on the front flyleaf, and the last identifiable date is 1816, although this is not the final entry.

### *Physical Description*

Paper. Fol. 81 leaves (1 contemporary sequence of pagination in ink in the top outer corner of each page (fols 3r-59r): 1-6, 13-119 pages. Interruption in pagination indicates 3 stubs where written leaves have been excised between folios 5 and 6, and there also 4 stubs between the blank leaves 78 and 79. Page size: 197 x 125 mm. Text area: variable but typically ca. 187 x ca. 110 mm.

*Binding:* Contemporary late 18<sup>th</sup> c. English leather (tan) over pasteboard. Decoration to boards: gold-tooled border (double-fillet). 5 raised bands to spine (repaired and rebaced by the Oxford Conservation Consortium, December 2018: fragments of original spine kept with item in separate envelope, show some signs of gold double fillet decoration). All edges sprinkled red. 203 x 130 mm.

### *Contents*

1. Fols. 1r-81v: Merivale, Frances, Commonplace book chiefly consisting of verse. English with one verse in French. Single 18<sup>th</sup> c./19<sup>th</sup> c. cursive hand in ink throughout. Written in single column/long lines, with ca. 21-26 lines to a page. Captions usually between short-double rules in ink. Contents from captions as follows:

- i. Fols 1-2: blank except for inscriptions (see Provenance)
- ii. Fols 3r-4r: "The Exile. March 1797." At end: "J.H. Merivale."
- iii. Fol. 4r: "Song by Miss [C.G?] Savery."
- iv. Fol. 4v: "Song by the Same."
- v. Fol. 4v: "By the Same."
- vi. Fol. 5r: "From Anacreon translated by J.H. Merivale" At end: "May 4<sup>th</sup> 1797."

- vii. Fol. 5v: "Lines sent by [Culler A. Carpenter?] to Ann Rutter with two sprigs of Eye bright gathered on a bank by the Dover road after he had parted from her & was on his way to Edinburgh."
- viii. Fol. 5v: "Lines sent to Ann Rutter out of Scotland with sprigs of flowers gathered in different countries."
- ix. Fol. 6r: "Sonnet by Miss Hole. 1793."
- x. Fol. 6r: "Sonnet to the Nightingale by the same. 1794."
- xi. Fols 6v-8r: "To Novelty [by James Mercer]."
- xii. Fol. 8r: "Sonnet by Miss Hole. 1793."
- xiii. Fol. 8v: "Sonnet by the same."
- xiv. Fol. 8v: Opening fragment of verse "To Miss Hole on reading her Sonnets by Miss C.G. Savery [added in pencil] F. Merivale." Fol. 9r blank.
- xv. Fols 9v-10r: "Continuation of the Minstrel [by John Herman Merivale]. 1797."
- xvi. Fols 10v-11r: "Lines written near Richmond upon the Thames at evening. Lyrical Ballads. [by William Wordsworth.]" With a footnote: "Collins's ode on the death of Thomson the last written I believe of the poems which were published in his life time. This ode is likewise alluded to in the next stanza."
- xvii. Fol. 11v: "Hymn." At end "Burns."
- xviii. Fols 11v-12r: "A Description of our Saviour's person, now in the French king's library, sent by Publius Lentulus president of Judea, to the Senate of Rome, when the fame of Jesus first began to spread abroad."
- xix. Fol. 12v: "Verses written by a Gentleman [i.e. Henry Temple, 2<sup>nd</sup> Viscount Palmerston] whose Lady died at Bristol Wells [often attributed to William Mason]."
- xx. Fol. 12v: Opening fragment of verse "On seeing a Negro weeping over Mr Boscawen's Tomb."
- xxi. Fol. 13r: "Song by Robert Burns."
- xxii. Fols 13v-14v: "Lines by Miss C. Savery to Mrs Hole on her saying that she was under no obligation to her."
- xxiii. Fols 15r-16r: "Ode to Time. By Miss Bradford." With a footnote on 15v.
- xxiv. Fols 16r-17r: "To a Mountain Daisy on turning one up with the plough. April 1786. Burns."
- xxv. Fols 17v -18r: "A Bard's Epitaph." At end "Burns."
- xxvi. Fol. 18r: "On the Author's Father by Burns."
- xxvii. Fols 18v-19v: "To a Mouse on turning up her nest with the plough. November 1785." At end "Burns."
- xxviii. Fols 19v-20r: "Song by Burns. Tune 'Roslin Castle.'"
- xxix. Fols 20v-24r: "The Cotter's Saturday Night." At end "Burns."
- xxx. Fol. 24r: "Gloomy December. By Burns."
- xxxi. Fols 24v-25r: "Song by Burns to the tune of [To?] Janet."
- xxxii. Fols 25r-25v: "Song Mary Morison by Burns to the tune of 'Bide ye yet.'"
- xxxiii. Fols 25v-26r: "Song by Burns."
- xxxiv. Fol. 26r: "The Banks of Nith a song by Burns to the tune of 'Robie Donna Gorach.'"
- xxxv. Fols 26v-27v: "Ode to Benevolence – by Blacklock [i.e. Thomas Blacklock]."
- xxxvi. Fol. 27v: Verses in French. Untitled [at least partly by Jean Bertaut].

- xxxvii. Fols 28r-29r: "To the Memory of Mrs Palfrey a lace-maker of Exmouth. 1773."
- xxxviii. Fol. 29r: "Flowers." Fols 29v-30v blank.
- xxxix. Fols 31r-31v: "Extract from Mallets [i.e. David Mallet or Malloch] Hermit or Amyntor & Theodora."
- xl. Fols 31v-37v: "Glenfinlas or Lord Ronald's Coronach [by Sir Walter Scott]. from Lewis's Tales of Wonder."
- xli. Fols 37v-42r: "Poems. From the Portuguese of Camoens by Lord Strangford."
- xlii. Fols 42v-44v: "Lines written in April 1805."
- xliii. Fols 45r-49v: "Extracts from [Thomas] Campbell's Gertrude of Wyoming." With footnote on fol. 45r.
- xliv. Fols 49v-50v: "Hohinlinden [sic. by Thomas Campbell]."
- xlv. Fols 50v-51v: "Ye Mariners of England. Campbell [i.e. Thomas Campbell]."
- xlvi. Fols 51v-59r: "Extracts from Wallace or the fight of Falkirik [by Margaret Holford]."
- xlvii. Fol. 59r: "To Miss --- [by William Robert Spencer]."
- xlviii. Fol. 59v: "To Lady Anne Hamilton [by William Robert Spencer]."
- xlix. Fols 59v-60r: "To a Butterfly at the end of Winter [by William Robert Spencer]."
- l. Fol. 60r: "Origins of a Pen [by William Robert Spencer]."
- li. Fol. 60v-61r: "Epitaph upon the year 1806". At end: "From Lord Byron's Childe Harold. p. 73-74."
- lii. Fols 61v-62r: At end: "Childe Harold. p. 104-105."
- liii. Fols 62v-64v: "From Moores [i.e. Thomas Moore] Irish Melodies."
- liv. Fols 65r-65v: At end: "Lord Byron's Giaour page 7."
- lv. Fol. 65v: "On the P.R. being present at the late opening of the Tombs at Windsor. 1813 [by Lord Byron]."
- lvi. Fol. 66r: At end: "Irish Melodies."
- lvii. Fol. 66v: "Lord Byron's Hebrew Melodies."
- lviii. Fol. 67r: "She walks in Beauty." At end: "Hebrew Melodies."
- lix. Fols 67v-71r: "Thanks for a Summer Day by Alexander Hume ... ." With glosses of unfamiliar words at foot of each page.
- lx. Fols 71v-72r: "Lines on the Burial of Sir John Hearne ascribed by some to Campbell, by others to Lord Byron, but probably neither of them the real author."
- lxi. Fol. 72v: "Lines written by Percy Byshe Shelley on the Funeral of his friend Keats."
- lxii. Fols 73r-74v: "Address to the Deity. Mrs [Anna Laetitia] Barbauld."
- lxiii. Fols 75-75v: "Lines on the Splendid Funeral of Sheridan. July 1816."
- lxiv. Fol. 75v: "39: Forest Sanctuary Mrs [Felicia Dorothea] Hemans."
- lxv. Fol. 75v: "72." Another verse.
- lxvi. Fol. 76r: "Lines extracted from Fletcher." Fols 76v-81v blank, except for a single word or pen trial on 79r.

### *Provenance*

1. On fol. 1r, inscription reading: "Fanny Merivale began this Book Sepr. 1799." Beneath is an inked out bar possibly covering other text. On rear pastedown minor pen trials perhaps spelling "mer."

2. Donated to Balliol College by Nicola Freegard, a researcher with interest in the Mallet family, in June 2018. She discovered the item in a box of car parts at a car boot sale in Tucson, Arizona priced at 5\$ (see inscription in pencil on front pastedown) Although the seller had no provenance information, Ms Freegard notes that several of the Mallet family moved to America in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.