Postgraduate English
www.dur.ac.uk/postgraduate.english
ISSN 1756-9761

Issue 46 Winter 2024/25

Editors: Keerthi Vasishta and Annie Zaidi

Emotion, Intimacy and the Miniature Portrait in Jane Harvey's Gothic Castle Novels

Nicola Wigmore

Bishop Auckland College:
Nicola.Wigmore@bacoll.ac.uk

Emotion, Intimacy and the Miniature Portrait in Jane Harvey's Gothic Castle Novels

Nicola Wigmore
Bishop Auckland College

Postgraduate English, Issue 46, Late 2024

Figure 1: Miniature Portrait of Elizabeth Ann Benson (1841), by Harriet Mackreth[1]

Jane Harvey was a Newcastle-based author with a nationwide readership. Little biographical information about Harvey survives, but we know that she spent some of her adult life in the centre of Newcastle. Harvey ran a circulating library in Tynemouth and published at least ten novels. Her career as a writer began with *A Sentimental Tour of Newcastle* in 1794 and continued with volumes of poetry into the 1830s. Although no miniature portraits by Jane Harvey remain, several sources describe Harvey as a miniaturist as well as a novelist. This article is an extract from my PhD thesis, 'Material Culture and Luxury Goods in Women's Writing of North-East England, 1790-1825' which focuses in more detail on Jane Harvey, her potential sister Margaret Harvey, and Jemima Layton. The article focuses on miniature

[1] Harriet Mackreth was a Tyneside artist, who exhibited portrait miniatures in Newcastle.

portraits in two novels that Harvey published with Minerva Press, *Warkfield Castle* (1802), and *The Castle of Tynemouth* (1806).

Warkfield Castle (1802)

Before we analyse Jane Harvey's depiction of miniature portraits, some context is useful, to help us appreciate how the miniature portrait came to be such a popular belonging in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, the miniature portrait became an affordable and popular possession amongst the middle classes. Stephen J. Gores identifies an '"insatiable public demand" for miniatures', likening the production of the miniature to an assembly line: fashionable miniaturists such as Richard Cosway often painted twelve sitters a day.[2] Raymond Lister explains that the miniature painter 'economize[s] in space. He needs no special studio for his work […] his in an intimate art which should be produced in intimate surroundings'.[3] The market was consequently 'flooded' with miniatures, leading some Royal Academy portrait painters to suggests '"miniaturists were […] a mercenary corps more interested in personal gain than high art'.[4]

The eighteenth-century production line creation of the miniature portrait provides a marked contrast to its elite associations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the price of miniatures 'limited their clientele to the political elite'.[5] Marianne Koos describes sixteenth-century miniatures as 'guarded objects to which their owners were deeply attached emotionally'.[6] Portrait miniatures were carefully guarded, wrapped in paper or silk or enclosed in lockable receptacles of gold, decorated with jewels. Koos describes the 'act of concealing and revealing, opening and closing, of moving and chasing' as 'fundamental' to the miniature portrait.[7] The most important features of the miniature, from the sixteenth century onwards, were thus tactility and interactivity: the miniature could be held, moved, worn, concealed, opened, by its owner or wearer.

Within this context, therefore, it is important to remember that by the early nineteenth century, miniatures were popular and readily available possessions for the middling and

[2] Steven J. Gores, 'The Miniature as Reduction and Talisman in Fielding's *Amelia*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* 37.3 (1997), pp. 573-93 (p. 574).
[3] Raymond Lister, *The British Miniature* (Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1951), p. 4.
[4] Patrick Noon, 'Miniatures on the Market' in *The English Miniature,* ed. John Murdoch (Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 163-206 (p. 192).
[5] Gores, p. 574.
[6] Marianne Koos, 'Concealing and Revealing Pictures "In Small Volumes": Portrait Miniatures and Their Envelopes', *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma,* 6 (2018), pp.33-54 (p. 36).
[7] Koos, p. 41.

upper classes. Here we move on to consider Jane Harvey's first novel, *Warkfield Castle* (1802), which was published by the Minerva Press. A Gothic tale which centres on a castle, presumably based on Warkworth Castle in Northumberland, *Warkfield* is set in the 1640s. The main characters of the novel are introduced after several pages of architectural description. Lord and Lady Meldon live at Warkfield Castle, and their neighbours are Miss Henrietta Selby and her nephew Henry. Lord Meldon fights in the civil war on the side of the monarchy, and is forced to flee to France when they are defeated, along with his orphaned niece Celia Norford and the Reverend Mr Becket. In France Becket is reunited with his wife and their son Walter.

In Gothic narratives such as *Warkfield,* the miniature portrait becomes a useful motif to guide the reader through mysterious plotlines. The young Walter Becket and Meggison, Lord Meldon's steward, are caught in a 'dreadful storm' while travelling through Germany.[8] Becket sees the 'towers of an ancient building', and believing it to be 'perhaps a convent', they approach and take shelter here.[9] Inside the castle, they are greeted by Dorcella, a young lady whose 'form and features were such as conveyed to the beholder an idea of the most perfect beauty, and her countenance was fraught with the most lively sensibility, engaging sweetness, and artless innocence.'[10] Dorcella lives at the castle with her mother, where they 'lead a very retired life' and 'never [join] any public amusement', as if the castle is indeed a convent.[11] Becket examines Dorcella's drawings, including an 'unfinished miniature of a gentleman', and feels 'an anxious wish to obtain possession' of a small landscape she has painted, as 'it was the work of Dorcella, and might, when far distant, remind him of the Castle, and of the lovely artist who resided there'.[12] Dorcella and Walter are interrupted before she is able to give Walter permission to take the picture, but Walter, 'availing himself of the half permission he had received, deposited the landscape in his pocket-book'.[13] In exchange, Walter gives Dorcella a miniature drawn by Celia Norford of Miss Selby, 'copied from an original, which Mrs. Norford had worn in a bracelet'.[14] Dorcella examines the drawing when she is alone, admiring 'the elegance of features and amiable sensibility of countenance which characterized Miss Selby's miniature, and anxiously wished to know

[8] Jane Harvey, *Warkfield Castle*, 3 vols (Minerva Press, 1802), Nineteenth Century Collections Online <https://go-gale-com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/ps/start.do?p=NCCO> [accessed 01 September 2018], II, p. 12.

[9] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II p. 12.
[10] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, pp. 18-9.
[11] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, p. 25.
[12] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, p. 29; p. 34.
[13] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, p. 37.
[14] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, p. 32.

something more of the original'.[15] She 'endeavoured to trace a resemblance between the picture and the young gentleman from whom she received it', but 'there certainly was not the least likeness between the features of Miss Selby and those of Walter Becket'.[16] Becket and Meggison leave the castle without finding out who Dorcella's father is, and are told the castle is 'called the Castle of Welberg […] and it is haunted by the spirit of a person who was murdered there some years ago'.[17] This exchange reflects a confusion surrounding identity, a key theme of *Warkfield.* Walter Becket tells Dorcella that Celia Norford is his sister, although she is just a close family friend, and Dorcella does not tell Becket anything about her family.

Dorcella's enigmatic past matches the popular Gothic trope of the mysterious orphan employed by authors such as Charlotte Smith in *Emmeline, The Orphan of the Castle* (1788), and Ann Radcliffe in *The Italian* (1796). It is particularly fitting that Dorcella gives Becket a landscape, rather than a portrait of herself or a family member, as a landscape reveals nothing about her obscure heritage. The miniature picture simply reveals what Becket already knows: the location of Dorcella's imprisonment at the Castle of Welberg, and Becket exchanges it for a portrait of Miss Selby, which confuses Dorcella's understanding of his own heritage, as she falsely believes that the creator of the portrait, Celia, is Becket's sister. Becket initially believes that Clement is the man in the unfinished miniature created by Dorcella, and laments that 'the relationship between Clement and the lady of the Castle [Dorcella], and the history of the person for whom the miniature pictures had been designed, were mysteries which he now never expected to unravel'.[18] Dorcella's identity and family connections are obscured, and Becket seeks to determine her connections to the Meldon, Clement, and Selby families.

Miss Selby, the subject of the other miniature, also harbours a secret about her child's lineage. Henry Selby is believed to be Lord Selby's illegitimate son and thus Henrietta's nephew, but is later revealed as the product of Henrietta Selby's marriage, giving him a claim to Selby Hall. Similarly, in *Tynemouth,* the character Orpheline is later revealed to be a marchioness's daughter. Diane Long Hoeveler states:

> proving one's legitimacy, proving that one is not an "orphan," or fatherless, becomes a persistent refrain in female gothic novels. Why? Clearly, the answer one is forced finally to confront concerns the nature of the "patriarchy" as perceived by the very different white, middle-class women who were reading and writing gothic novels.[19]

[15] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, p. 40.
[16] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, p. 40.
[17] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* II, p. 51.
[18] Harvey, *Warkfield Castle,* III, p. 48.
[19] Diane Long Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (Penn State University Press, 1998), p. 34.

Even women who were not technically orphans, like Dorcella, had to prove their legitimacy and were disinherited by their gender. Hoeveler contends that Smith's Emmeline, who is an aristocrat through her father and middle class through her 'beautiful mother', embodies the fact that 'the British middle class built itself on the shorn backs of the aristocracy, taking wealth and property where they could and justifying the rout by exposing the emotional and spiritual inadequacies of the class they were replacing'.[20] Dorcella's identity is deliberately obscured by her own father, Fowler, to punish her mother. She is not a true orphan, but is separated from her family status and inheritance by the patriarchal figure of her father. Dorcella is therefore a victim of patriarchy, made vulnerable by her gender and imprisoned by her own father, and can only be rescued by the traditional protection of marriage to the middle-class Becket. The miniature in *Warkfield* raises more questions than it answers, as Becket spends most of the novel reflecting on the miniature of a gentleman created by Dorcella: 'it was a mystery he could not solve; and the more he thought about it the more did he feel himself entangled in a maze of vague and uncertain conjectures.'[21]

The treatment of the miniatures by Becket and Dorcella indicates an intimate connection between the two characters. When Becket hands the miniature of Miss Selby to Dorcella, a 'blush […] overspread her face when she took the miniature from his hand'.[22] Dorcella's blush is an implicit recognition of the miniature's meaning: a visual representation of the intimacy and love that Becket feels for her but is unable to put into words. When Becket leaves the Castle of Welberg, he is 'unable to dwell on any idea unconnected with Dorcella', and he reflects on 'the miniature-portrait pourtrayed [sic] by the fair hand of that young lady'.[23] As it could not be her father, a thought occurs that 'gave to the bleeding heart of Becket the most acute and painful sensations. The original of the portrait might probably be the favoured lover of Dorcella.'[24] Later in the novel, when Becket learns that Dorcella sent the miniature of Miss Selby to a jeweller in Juliers, 'it appeared that Dorcella had so far valued his present as to send it be to set, and this idea was so delightful'.[25] Becket 'reposed the secret of his love in a breast where he knew it would be kept sacred, and from the circumstance of the miniature having been sent to Juliers, he cherished a belief that Dorcella valued his presents'.[26] Richard Walker argues that 'the eighteenth-century miniature began to lose

[20] Hoeveler, p. 49.
[21] Harvey, *Warkfield,* III, p. 121.
[22] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 31.
[23] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 63.
[24] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 63.
[25] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 160.
[26] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 179.

something of its esoteric mystique and was used to embellish rings, brooches and bracelets'.[27] The use of the words 'cherished' and 'sacred' by Becket, however, indicates that some of the esoteric connotations of the miniature remained. The miniature here represents the sacred in the everyday: the domestic woman who can be worshipped. Men such as Becket fixate on the women depicted in miniature portraits, and the women who paint them, both idolising and idealising these women as perfect.

A second significant incident involving a miniature portrait returns *Warkfield's* narrative to the Meldon family. Dorcella's father, Fowler, steals the miniature of Miss Selby to stage a false affair between her and Lord Meldon. Fowler finds the portrait at the Castle of Welberg and:

> as he gazed on the miniature, formed the diabolical project of using it as an instrument to gratify his revenge on Lord Meldon, by poisoning his domestic happiness. Putting the picture in his pocket, he shewed it to Errington, and between them they planned and executed the following scheme: Fowler carried the miniature to a jeweller's shop, and left it there to be set; he then sized the first opportunity of being alone with Lady Meldon to praise the beauty of a picture belonging to her Ladyship, which, he said, he had seen by accident.[28]

Fowler moves the intimacy of the miniature discussed above into the more public realm: physically, to a shop where the miniature is left to be reset, and metaphorically, as it opens the Meldons to wider issues such as gambling and potential public disgrace. The 'diabolical' and 'poisoning' scheme contrasts to the language that surrounds Becket's use of the miniature, which he cherishes and treats as sacred. Fowler and Errington take advantage of the diminutive nature of the miniature's size: its smallness allows it to be stolen with ease, concealed, and transported to a jeweller. The size of the miniature portrait of the gentleman created by Dorcella is revealed by the fact that Becket holds 'the miniature in his hand'; the human body is used to determine scale, an argument made by Susan Stewart, who states 'the body is our mode of perceiving scale'.[29] Chloe Wigston Smith and Beth Fowkes Tobin make a similar argument, examining 'how small things helped individuals negotiate larger political, cultural, and scientific shifts'.[30] The exact size of the object is suited to the intimate relationship it signifies: small enough to be held with ease, transported, and worn discreetly.

---

[27] Richard Walker, *Miniatures: 300 Years of the English Miniature Illustrated from the Collections of the National Portrait Gallery* (National Portrait Gallery, 1998), p. 9.
[28] Harvey, *Warkfield*, III, p. 236.
[29] Harvey, *Warkfield*, II, p. 31; Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Duke University Press, 1993), p. xii.
[30] Chloe Wigston Smith and Beth Fowkes Tobin, 'Introduction' in *Small Things in the Eighteenth Century: The Political and Personal Value of the Miniature,* eds. Chloe Wigston Smith and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Cambridge University Press, 2022), pp. 1-14 (p. 1).

Both Becket and Fowler place the miniature in their pockets. As Koos points out, the size of the portrait miniatures 'demand to be taken into one's hands, and in a concentrated act of immersion, studied in every detail'.[31] Gores reiterates the effectiveness of the miniature's size, arguing the 'miniature's smallness permits it to be treated not only as an image […] but also an object. The portrait miniature's materiality was, in fact, celebrated by the elaborate and valuable encrustations of gold and gemstones that sometimes surrounded it'.[32]

Errington and Fowler carry 'the miniature [of Henrietta] to a jeweller's shop, and leave it there to be set', confirming the size of miniatures in the novel: small enough to be set in a necklace or bracelet.[33] Errington then informs Lady Meldon that her husband left the miniature at the jeweller's, implying that he must therefore be having an affair with the portrait's subject, Henrietta. In this instance, the miniature is not set in jewellery to increase its value, but to expose a potential scandal, with the jewelled setting drawing attention to the portrait and the intimacy it reveals. As stated above, the miniature was often set with gold and jewels, but then hidden away in silk or in a pocket, making it a liminal item in the sense that it is dressed for exhibition but hidden in intimate spaces. This liminality associated with the miniature echoes the social marginality of the exiled Dorcella, falsely orphaned by her father, Henrietta Selby, who cannot publicly claim her marriage, and Henry Selby, who is falsely orphaned by his mother's claim to be his aunt. The miniature is ideally suited for the intrigue and secrecy of the plots that surround it, by its size, portability, and liminality. The miniature is a physical representation of other means with which a woman's reputation can be damaged. Gossip, for example, can also be released into the public sphere beyond the subject's control, while the subject remains passive and sometimes even unaware of their association with scandal. While gossip is more traditionally associated with femininity, however, both sexes engage with the miniature portrait, allowing men and women to utilise it as a means of spreading scandal.

Fowler's 'diabolical project' with the miniature works because of Lady Meldon's 'vanity, and frivolity […] her mind remained almost as little furnished with useful ideas as it was at the hour of her birth.'[34] Fowler seeks revenge for Lord Meldon's support of Henrietta Selby's marriage: years before the events of the novel, Fowler wished to seduce Henrietta in spite of his own marriage, but Lord Meldon helped Henrietta to arrange a secret marriage to Lord

[31] Koos, p. 36.
[32] Gores, p. 576.
[33] Harvey, *Warkfield,* III, p. 236.
[34] Harvey, *Warkfield,* I, p. 7.

Selby, thus protecting her from Fowler. Errington and Fowler are able to enact their revenge plot because Lady Meldon is a frivolous woman, who is initially indulged by her husband. She 'contracted debts, which his Lordship […] had found it difficult to discharge. But of her thoughtless conduct his Lordship never complained to any of his friends'.[35] The couple often live apart, as Lord Meldon prefers the countryside, while his wife favours fashionable locations such as Paris and London. When his wife visits him, Lord Meldon 'represented, though in the mildest terms, the disastrous consequences that would attend a perseverance in her present habits of expense'.[36] Lady Meldon was, 'however, too fond of what the gay world calls, or rather miscalls, pleasure, to profit by the exhortations of her Lord: she still went on in the same way'.[37]

Lord Meldon hopes their removal from Paris may reconcile his wife 'to a more rational way of thinking, and [teach her] to relish the simple and refined pleasures attendant on a more retired mode of life', but his plan is unsuccessful.[38] Gambling was a common 'habit of expense' among the upper classes of British society: Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire was notorious for her gambling addiction and died without paying her debts. Both genders indulged in gambling: Lord Byron amassed enormous debts through gambling and profligate spending, and in Frances Burney's *Camilla* (1796), the eponymous protagonist's brother Lionel is a reckless spender and gambler. In Burney's *Cecilia* (1782), the protagonist's guardian Mr Harrel spends money freely on luxuries and gambling, and threatens suicide to convince Cecilia to pay his debts. Camilla and Cecilia, Burney's respective heroines, both fail to temper this extravagance, in spite of their feminine sensibility.

Lady Meldon confronts her husband about the miniature when Errington has informed her: 'I saw the picture of Henrietta Selby, which you sent to Juliers to be set by the hands of Meggison, your confidential friend'.[39] Lord Meldon 'paced the room with an unusual degree of emotion, while the countenance of his lady exhibited evident symptoms of anger and confusion'.[40] His wife claims: 'I myself saw the picture in a jeweller's shop, where it was left to be set, and I will believe the evidence of my own senses before all the Meggisons in the kingdom'.[41] Lady Meldon refuses to identify the man who told her about the miniature, and her husband 'shudder[s] to think what influence that man must possess in your heart who

[35] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 284.
[36] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, pp. 284-5.
[37] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 285.
[38] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 286.
[39] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 127.
[40] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 128.
[41] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 128.

could persuade you to dispute the faith and honour of your husband'.[42] Lord Meldon decides: 'since you have chosen to withdraw the confidence you ought to have placed in me, and to repose it in them, you are no longer worthy to be called my wife: we must part, Lady Meldon'.[43] Lord Meldon's niece, Celia, encounters her aunt afterwards and reveals: 'surely, my dear aunt, the picture you mention must have been carried into Germany by Walter Becket! I copied a miniature of Miss Selby from this on my arm, and gave it to him'.[44] Celia intervenes with her uncle on Lady Meldon's behalf: 'Lord Meldon esteemed his lady from principle, not from passion; she was the wife chosen for him by his father; he had borne patiently with all her errors, and hoped that time and experience, by correcting her judgement, would remove them; and he now felt his anger totally subside'.[45] The couple are reconciled, but Lady Meldon 'lost much of her usual gaiety, and was at times grave and dejected'.[46]

Following this confrontation, Errington joins the Meldon household as a guest. Errington tries to seduce the family's young friend, Fanny Curry, and abducts her when she refuses his advances. Lady Meldon is devastated and admits:

> Ah, my Charles! how shall I speak what I have so long concealed! My losses at play, while I was in Germany, amounted to two thousand pounds, besides the remittances I received from you; with this sum Errington furnished me, and fifteen hundred of it yet remains unpaid – this, this is my fault. Oh my Lord! I do not, I cannot expect forgiveness.[47]

Lady Meldon again invites comparison to Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, who borrowed money from various sources, including the Prince of Wales, leaving her vulnerable to threats and blackmail.[48] Lord Meldon, 'far from upbraiding, […] raised her from the ground and pressed her to his bosom'.[49] Lady Meldon declares 'my repentance is sincere: from this hour I will abandon all my follies: in the presence of Mr. Becket I solemnly promise to do so'.[50] The partial reformation of Lady Meldon is now completed, and the Meldons are fully reconciled. Errington's plot with the miniature is a precursor of his capabilities, a manipulation of intimacies which he continues by lending Lady Meldon money and by eloping with the unwilling Fanny Curry. Fanny Curry is rescued, virtue intact, and Errington is reformed by Walter Becket. The miniature of Henrietta Selby is a tangible suggestion of impropriety, but

[42] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 129.
[43] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 130.
[44] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 135.
[45] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 138.
[46] Harvey, *Warkfield,* II, p. 141.
[47] Harvey, *Warkfield,* III, p. 94.
[48] Amanda Foreman, *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire* (Harper Perennial, 2004) p.?.
[49] Harvey, *Warkfield,* III, p. 94.
[50] Harvey, *Warkfield,* III, p. 95.

the virtue of Celia and Lord Meldon overrule its salacious suggestibility. Although Errington's plot creates discord between the Meldons, it ultimately leads to the chastening of Lady Meldon and a reformation of her behaviour. The miniature itself is not enough to determine a relationship, therefore: the reader must also examine how people interact with the miniature to discover relationships. A miniature, like a book, is read by a person who interprets it based on their own perspectives and motives; its message is changeable and liminal. The subject concerned, in this example Henrietta Selby, can be unaware of the use of their image: the image of the sitter is commodified and reduced to an item that can be manipulated and used in plots such as Errington's. The concealment of miniatures thus denotes not only the intimacy involved, but the implicit dangers of viewing a miniature out of context and without the explanations of those concerned.

As we have seen, Jane Harvey explores the potential of the miniature as a driver of the plot from the beginning of her novel-writing career, with *Warkfield.* Becket uses the miniature as part of his idolisation of Dorcella, and a stolen miniature creates scandal and intrigue. This intrigue is woven through the plot of the novel, where characters such as Dorcella are enigmas, and many identities are shrouded in secrecy.

The Castle of Tynemouth (1806)

Harvey's second novel, *The Castle of Tynemouth* (1806), is a Gothic tale set in 1491, before Tynemouth Castle became a ruin. The first chapter of *Tynemouth* is a history of the 'ancient monastery, town, and castle of Tynemouth'.[51] In the second chapter, the reader is introduced to Norton, the Count of Wooler and governor of Tynemouth Castle, 'one of the most conspicuous and distinguished characters in the reign of the seventh Henry', and his 'two beautiful and promising children', Ida and Rosetta.[52] The family's housekeeper, Judith Cresswell, has heard strange reports about Tynemouth Castle, and warns Ida 'after the sanctuary of Tynemouth monastery was violated, and our ancestor, Robert de Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, was dragged from it and murdered, a spell of enchantment was laid on the Castle of Tynemouth'.[53] Judith thus establishes from the beginning of the novel the Gothic and haunted nature of the castle, although the Nortons are sceptical: Ida is 'no longer

[51] Jane Harvey, *The Castle of Tynemouth*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806; repr. Newcastle: Mackenzie, Jr., 1830), Chawton House Library <https://www.chawtonhouse.org> [accessed 01 September 2018], p. 10.

[52] Harvey, *Tynemouth*, p. 19.
[53] Harvey, *Tynemouth*, p. 21.

able to command his features' when Judith issues this warning, and Rosetta is 'not less diverted than her brother'.[54]

In *Tynemouth,* as in *Warkfield,* the miniature is an appropriate vehicle for the Gothic plot of the novel. While in France, Norton, Count of Wooler, becomes 'a complete dupe to the most artful of her sex.'[55] He is introduced to the aptly named Narcisse, Madame de Montmiril, and a miniature portrait facilitates their romance. The first husband of Madame de Montmiril 'died in consequence of a wound which he received in a reencounter [sic] with a favourite gallant of the countess', but this information is given to Ida, not to Norton.[56] When Madame de Montmiril observes Norton's love for his daughter, 'the soft sigh of parental solicitude was reverberated from [her] gentle bosom'.[57] Madame de Montmiril tells Norton:

> "[…] how happy should I be to embrace your charming daughter, and cultivate an interest in her invaluable esteem; for I am prepared to love her by both your lordship's description, and the lovely miniature which is in your son's possession."
>
> This miniature was constantly worn by Ida, and had at his father's request been exhibited to Madame de Montmiril, who instantly and repeatedly noticed the extreme resemblance she thought it bore to the earl; and consequently the term *lovely*, which was now so unequivocally bestowed upon it by the rosy lips of Madame, could not sound otherwise than highly pleasing on his enamoured ear; not less so indeed, than was his reply to that of the countess; "Consent then, most charming of women, to honour England and Rosetta with your presence."[58]

Narcisse's description of the likeness as '*lovely*' pleases the earl so much that he invites Madame de Montmiril to England.[59] Pointon emphasises the role of miniatures in personal relationships, with the 'giving, receiving, and wearing of portrait miniatures [a] part of fashionable social practice'.[60] Here, Harvey uses the miniature as a physical representation of multiple personal relationships: between Rosetta and her father, between Norton and Madame de Montmiril, and between Rosetta and her brother Ida. The engagement in the 'fashionable social practice' of wearing portrait miniatures demonstrates the good taste of the Norton family, but the relationships honoured by the miniature make it a sentimental object rather than a materialistic possession. Ida 'constantly' wears the miniature of Rosetta, reinforcing the apparently loving connection between members of the Norton family, and giving her family a way of remembering their sister or daughter who remains in England while they are

[54] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 21.
[55] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 49.
[56] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 50.
[57] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 50.
[58] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* pp. 52-3.
[59] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 52.
[60] Marcia Pointon, '"Surrounded with Brilliants": Miniature Portraits in Eighteenth-Century England', *The Art Bulletin* 83.1 (2001), 48-71, p. 52.

in France. With the miniature portrait, Norton and Ida can display Rosetta's value to them, even in her absence. The use of Rosetta's likeness here, however, is beyond her control or even her awareness: she does not know that her father has shown Madame de Montmiril the miniature, and is unaware at this point in the novel that Madame de Montmiril even exists. Her role in this courtship is therefore completely unintentional, and she is used as an object by her male family members without her knowledge or consent. If we consider women as the 'supreme gift', as identified in the previous section, Rosetta is used to facilitate not only her own marriage, but also the marriage of her father.

The miniature transports its subject: in *Tynemouth,* Rosetta is taken to France, and in *Warkfield,* Miss Selby is carried to Germany. As Stewart points out, 'a reduction in dimensions does not produce a corresponding reduction in significance'.[61] Indeed Rosetta is more significant in miniature form, expediting the marriage between her father and Madame de Montmiril in a way she might not be able to in person, and likewise Miss Selby implicates the Meldons in scandal in *Warkfield,* a plot which could not have been undertaken using her physical person. The miniature in *Tynemouth* serves both as a reminder of Rosetta's merit, and a talisman of her male relatives' 'possession' of her, even when they are on the continent and she remains at home in England. The miniature's portability allowed men to travel the world and fully inhabit the public sphere, while carrying a miniature of their female loved ones, anticipating the cherished photographs carried by modern travellers. The Norton men use the miniature portrait to openly display their sentimentality and attachment to their female relative. Their actions are performative and their sincerity is questionable. Later in the novel, Norton imprisons Rosetta under Madame de Montmiril's directions. Such complications are in keeping with the history of the miniature – in the previous section of this article, I discuss Koos's example of Queen Elizabeth kissing a miniature portrait of Mary Queen of Scots. This relationship was exceptionally complicated: Queen Elizabeth kissing a miniature of her cousin is as performative as Ida wearing the miniature of his sister, who is later imprisoned by their father. The surface relationships depicted by the miniature thus have deeper meanings that are not immediately apparent, allowing the miniature to be used as a deceptive device. A narrative can be created around it that does not reflect the entire truth, making it an ideal tool to reflect unreliability and complexity.

The miniature in *Tynemouth* is displayed very differently to the miniature in *Warkfield,* which is concealed first in the pocket of Becket, then in Fowler's pocket. In *Tynemouth* the

[61] Stewart, p. 43.

miniature is 'exhibited', like a portrait in a gallery, which highlights the central paradox of the miniature: the simultaneous existence of the intimate connections discussed above and the typically public exhibition of portraits. Ancestral portraiture was commonly displayed in aristocratic homes: for example, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), the protagonist Elizabeth Bennet views portraits of the Darcy family at Pemberley. Christopher Rovee identifies such portraits as 'essential elements in a visual display of wealth and power'.[62] Likewise, the Nortons employ the miniature portrait of Rosetta as a visual display of the wealth and power that Madame de Montmiril would gain by marrying the Count. In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) portraiture and wealth are similarly associated, when the servant Justine is falsely accused of murdering Frankenstein's younger brother William and stealing his miniature portrait of their mother Caroline. Rovee points out Justine, 'in effect, is accused of coveting not just the portrait, but Caroline's standing. Her personal history is particularly threatening to the bourgeois ideology of upward mobility' because Justine becomes a servant after her father's death, rather than being born into servitude.[63] The theft of the miniature portrait at the time of the murder conflates the stealing of Caroline's likeness in the portrait and the taking of her life.

This coveting of social status mirrors events in *Tynemouth*, where Madame de Montmiril admires the miniature portrait of Rosetta for the potential upward mobility it represents: Madame de Montmiril's elevation to the title of Countess of Wooler. The miniature of Rosetta embodies a microcosm of the higher social class held by the Count of Wooler and his son. Justine in *Frankenstein* is falsely accused of stealing the miniature, but Madame de Montmiril deliberately manipulates the miniature, and its surrounding narrative, to her advantage. The sinister hint that a woman might murder another for her social standing is reflected in Madame de Montmiril's plotting, when she has Rosetta imprisoned and plans to have her stepdaughter disposed of. The miniature portrait can therefore be an emblem of danger for its subject: women such as Caroline or Rosetta are made vulnerable by the creation of their likenesses. The Norton men believe they control the narrative created by the miniature, but it is in fact manipulated by Madame de Montmiril to her own advantage.

When the miniature portrait is considered in this fashion, a double presence of a person and their likeness is established, which draws on the Gothic motif of the double. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar write about Bertha as Jane Eyre's double in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane*

[62] Christopher Rovee, *Imagining the Gallery: The Social Body of British Romanticism* (Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 1.
[63] Rovee, p. 137.

Eyre (1847).[64] Gero Guttzeit argues that the doubling of Frankenstein and his monster in Mary Shelley's novel poses a threat to the 'myth of the "solitary genius" of the Romantic author': the author cannot be unique and original if his copy exists.[65] Barry Murnane identifies the doppelganger as 'an unsettling figure because it renders problematic any fixed sense of individuality or subjectivity—it is a figure of identity as/in crisis'.[66] The doubling of Rosetta, as a person and as a miniature, in Harvey's Gothic novel, reflects two crises in the novel: the crisis of Rosetta's identity as her new stepmother manipulates her father and has Rosetta imprisoned, and the wider identity crisis created by social mobility. The miniature engages in a narrative separate from Rosetta's own, by being present in France and 'meeting' Madame de Montmiril without her awareness. Madame de Montmiril is given the advantage of seeing her stepdaughter before Rosetta can meet her. The miniature portrait, however, is a facsimile of Rosetta's body (presumably head and shoulders, although Harvey does not specify), without the presence of her identity and character.

This doubling creates a narrative that spirals beyond its creator's control, like the works of the Romantic author. Multiple narratives are created around the miniature by Madame de Montmiril, Ida, the Count, and Rosetta. As discussed in the previous section, this also takes place in *Warkfield,* where Miss Selby is implicated in a scandal without her knowledge and consent. In *Warkfield,* Fowler and Errington create a false narrative, where Lord Meldon has the miniature of Miss Selby set in jewellery because she is his mistress, and this story is believed by Lady Meldon. Identity thus becomes open to interpretation, and can be manipulated by others. This untethered identity creates instability. Rosetta's circumstances are similarly changeable, as her stepmother, 'scowling with dark malignity', attempts to force Rosetta to marry O'Bryen instead of her betrothed, Lilburne.[67] When Rosetta refuses, Madame de Montmiril has her imprisoned and tells Norton 'our darling child is […] the suffering victim of sorcery and magic: her fine understanding is gone, and she is now labouring under the most dreadful insanity.'[68] In the same way that Rosetta has little control over the narratives that surround her miniature, she has little control over her own life. Rosetta is 'fully sensible of the danger she was exposed to, by being thus in the power of her artful

[64] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic: the Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination,* 2nd edn (Yale University Press, 1979; repr. 2000) offers a detailed analysis of doubles such as Jane and Bertha in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre.*
[65] Gero Guttzeit, 'Authoring Monsters: Mary Shelley, Edgar Allan Poe and Early Nineteenth-Century Figures of Gothic Authorship', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 54.3 (2018), 279-92 (p. 284).
[66] Barry Murnane, 'Doppelganger', in *The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters,* ed. Jeffrey A. Weinstock (Ashgate, 2013), pp. 172–77 (p. 172).
[67] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 75.
[68] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 70.

step-mother.'[69] Clifford attempts to help Rosetta escape, but they are discovered and Rosetta is 'restored to the exquisite misery of her situation', where 'she sunk beneath such accumulated misery, and a raging fever reduced her, in three days, past all hope of recovery.'[70] Rosetta is therefore reduced, physically and mentally, to little more than a 'lovely inanimate form'.[71]

This absence of a fixed identity is helped by the fictionalised elements of the miniature portrait. The miniature represents an idealised version of the sitter, and their associated social position, rather than a realistic facsimile. The clothes and jewellery represented in portraits were often exaggerated or even invented by the painter, reflecting a level of invention present in portraiture similar to the descriptions of clothing in novels. Furthermore, women borrowed or hired jewels, and women who owned many jewels often chose to be painted without them.[72] When Madame de Montmiril becomes Countess of Wooler, she is 'eclipsed' by Rosetta and consequently 'nourished the bitterest envy, the most rancorous hatred, against the sweet unsuspecting girl; and resolved to seize the earliest opportunity of ridding herself of so formidable a rival'.[73] This 'rancorous hatred' is a marked contrast to the maternal love that Madame de Montmiril promises to provide when she views the miniature portrait of her stepdaughter. Madame de Montmiril's manipulations demonstrate the ease with which the miniature becomes part of a narrative. The discrepancies between fantasy and reality can be used to the advantage of manipulative characters such as Madame de Montmiril. Madame de Montmiril can present herself as an ideal stepmother because the miniature offers a one-sided relationship, allowing control over her own reaction to Rosetta, without Rosetta's response.

Unlike a face-to-face meeting between two people, the Count of Wooler only sees Madame de Montmiril's opinion of his daughter, without being exposed to Rosetta's judgements of her stepmother, allowing Madame de Montmiril to direct the situation. Rovee argues 'portraiture summons the spectre of the missing original even as it eradicates the original', which can be applied to the situation in *Tynemouth*: Madame de Montmiril is more capable of loving a 'spectre' than a female rival who can 'eclipse' her.[74] The reality of the life envisioned by Madame de Montmiril is disappointing, in the same way that Rosetta's actual presence is different to her miniature, indicating that Madame is unsuitable to enter the nobility: an idea

[69] Harvey, *Tynemouth*, p. 71.
[70] Harvey, *Tynemouth*, p. 81.
[71] Harvey, *Tynemouth*, p. 80.
[72] Pointon, *Brilliant Effects*, pp. 20-30. Pointon writes at length about the complexities of analysing the jewellery depicted in portraiture.
[73] Harvey, *Tynemouth*, p. 66.
[74] Rovee, p. 147.

explored throughout Harvey's novels, where good character and breeding are essential for a person to successfully fulfil an aristocratic role. In this context, therefore, the miniature points to the potential complications and disappointments of upward mobility. Madame de Montmiril is poisoned at the end of the novel under Shipperdson's orders, and 'after the guilty and wretched Countess of Wooler had confessed the crimes of her ill-spent life […] she then expired, and her departure was marked by the most dreadful agonies.'[75] Her social mobility ultimately fails, as:

> the remains of the unhappy countess were consigned to the grave with as little funeral pomp as could be used, consistently with the rank she had held in life: and all who knew the earl, sincerely rejoiced on seeing him emancipated from his connection with a woman, who was at once a disgrace and scourge to his name and family.[76]
>
> Madame de Montmiril is the inverse of Rosetta and Ida's 'lamented mother'.[77]

Marilyn Francus writes about Nicholas Rowe's *The Ambitious Stepmother* (1700) and the Earl of Carlisle's *The Stepmother* (1800), which both 'use the wily machinations of stepmothers to trigger their plots'.[78] Francus points out that 'neither play features a strong patriarchal figure, as fathers are physically and psychologically absent.'[79] The same is true of *Tynemouth,* where the Count of Wooler and his son Ida are physically absent for most of the novel, and when Wooler discovers his wife has imprisoned Rosetta, he is 'unsuspecting and deluded'.[80] Wooler allows his wife to persuade him that 'nothing will hurt her health as much as the sight of those she loves', and so does not visit his daughter.[81] 'The tender, though weak and easy father, placed the most implicit reliance on her [Madame de Montimiril's] assurances'.[82] Francus identifies 'an unexamined stereotype of stepmotherhood, a stereotype that functions as cultural shorthand for female maliciousness', citing examples from Henry Fielding's *Amelia* (1751), Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall* (1762), and Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794).[83] As Francus states, 'the stepmother defies the essentialist narrative of motherhood and family – a narrative that is central to domestic ideology and the idealization of motherhood – and so stepmotherhood is typed as inherently deviant, naturally unnatural.'[84]

---

[75] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 109.
[76] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 110.
[77] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 19.
[78] Marilyn Francus, *Monstrous Motherhood: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Ideology of Domesticity* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), p. 123.
[79] Francus, p. 124.
[80] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 70.
[81] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 71.
[82] Harvey, *Tynemouth,* p. 71.
[83] Francus, p. 125. Francus also writes about Elizabeth Allen Burney, stepmother to Frances Burney, who was widely criticised by Frances and her siblings.
[84] Francus, p. 125.

In the Gothic tale of *Tynemouth*, Madame de Montmiril is certainly the most threatening monster encountered by the heroine Rosetta.

In *Tynemouth*, the miniature continues to be embroiled in scandal and intrigue, but it evolves to become a vehicle for the Gothic plot of the novel. The miniature portrait in *Tynemouth* creates a double presence, a classic Gothic motif, and a consequent absence of fixed identity for the person represented within the portrait. From this point on, miniatures are almost exclusively portraits, rather than the landscapes that are created by Dorcella in *Warkfield.* Jane Harvey takes full advantage of the potential for a portable likeness of a person to be transported, concealed and engaged in intrigue – largely because of the power of the Gothic double presence created by a small portrait.

Works Cited

Foreman, Amanda, *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2004)

Francus, Marilyn, *Monstrous Motherhood: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Ideology of Domesticity* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013)

Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: the Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination,* 2nd edn (Yale University Press, 1979; repr. 2000)

Gores, Steven J., 'The Miniature as Reduction and Talisman in Fielding's *Amelia*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* 37.3 (1997), 573-93

Guttzeit, Gero 'Authoring Monsters: Mary Shelley, Edgar Allan Poe and Early Nineteenth-Century Figures of Gothic Authorship', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 54.3 (2018), 279-92

Harvey, Jane, *The Castle of Tynemouth*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806; repr. Newcastle: Mackenzie, Jr., 1830), Chawton House Library <https://www.chawtonhouse.org> [accessed 01 September 2018]

——, *Warkfield Castle*, 3 vols (Minerva Press, 1802), Nineteenth Century Collections Online <https://go-gale-com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/ps/start.do?p=NCCO> [accessed 01 September 2018]

Hoeveler, Diane Long, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (Penn State University Press, 1998)

Koos, Marianne, 'Concealing and Revealing Pictures "In Small Volumes": Portrait Miniatures and Their Envelopes', *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma,* 6 (2018), pp. 33-54

Lister, Raymond, *The British Miniature* (Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1951)

Murdoch, John (ed), *The English Miniature* (Yale University Press, 1981)

Pointon, Marcia, *Brilliant Effects: A Cultural History of Gem Stones and Jewellery* (Yale University Press, 2010)

——, '"Surrounded with Brilliants": Miniature Portraits in Eighteenth-Century England', *The Art Bulletin* 83.1 (2001), pp. 48-71

Rovee, Christopher, *Imagining the Gallery: The Social Body of British Romanticism* (Stanford University Press, 2006)

Smith, Chloe Wigston and Beth Fowkes Tobin (eds), 'Introduction' in *Small Things in the Eighteenth Century: The Political and Personal Value of the Miniature* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Stewart, Susan, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Duke University Press, 1993),

Walker, Richard, *Miniatures: 300 Years of the English Miniature Illustrated from the Collections of the National Portrait Gallery* (National Portrait Gallery, 1998)

Weinstock, Jeffrey A. (ed), *The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters*, (Ashgate, 2013)