

## The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney: Volume I: 1786 (Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney 1786 - 1791)

Peter Sabor

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This volume is the first of six that will present in their entirety Frances Burney's journals and letters from 17 July 1786, when she assumed the position of Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, until 7 July 1791, when she resigned her position because of ill health. Burney's later journals have been edited as *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame d'Arblay)*, 1791-1840 (12 vols., 1972-84). Her earlier journals have been edited as *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney* (4 vols. to date, 1988-). *The Court Journals and Letters of Frances Burney* continues the modern editing of Burney's surviving journals and letters, from 1768 until her death in 1840.

The only previous edition of the Court journals and letters is the *Diary and Letters of Madame d'Arblay*, edited by Burney's niece Charlotte Barrett and published by Henry Colburn in seven volumes, 1842-46. Barrett's edition, however, is heavily abridged. For the Court years, it excludes about half of the extant material, which will be printed in the present volumes for the first time. In addition, Barrett made no attempt to recover the thousands of lines obliterated by Burney in the Court journals and letters, and indeed added many further deletions of her own. Barrett's edition was subsequently revised by Austin Dobson in a sixvolume edition, 1904-05, containing new annotations and illustrations, but no alterations to the text.

The present edition includes every extant letter that Burney wrote during her five years at Court, as well as all of her copious journals. The elderly Madame d'Arblay attempted to edit her own journals and letters, making numerous changes that would, she believed, make them fitter for publication. This edition aims to restore the manuscripts, as far as possible, to their original state. It recovers the words, lines, and entire passages that Madame d'Arblay strove to conceal and it contains a comprehensive commentary on the text.



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