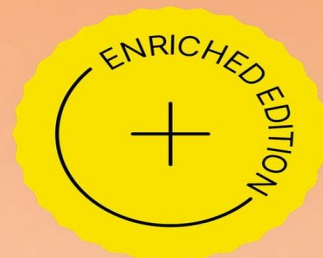
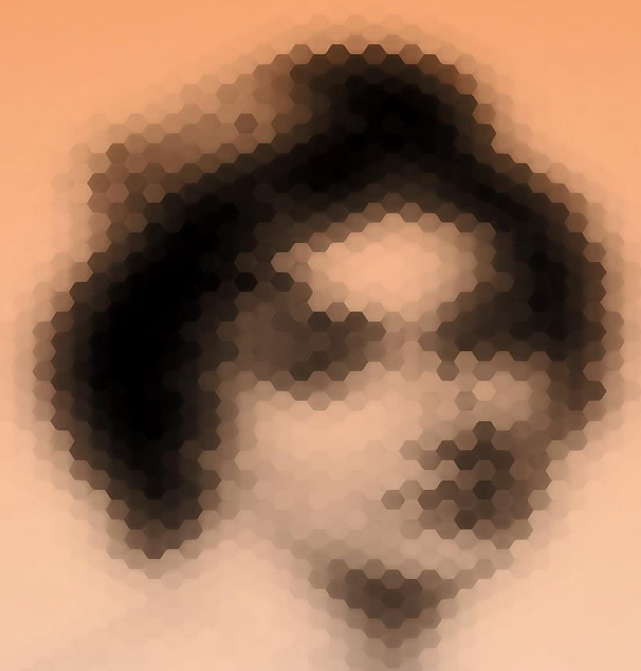


HARRIETTE WILSON



**THE LIFE
AND LEGACY
OF HARRIETTE
WILSON**

Harriette Wilson

The Life and Legacy of Harriette Wilson

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Erin Holloway

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Introduction

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This book charts how a woman, denied respectable power, learns to wield publicity, wit, and memory as her only reliable currencies. At its heart stands the contest between social reputation and personal agency, a struggle that unfolds not in courtrooms or parliaments, but in salons, drawing rooms, and the pages of print. The narrative presents a life negotiated amid scrutiny, where survival depends on naming, withholding, and reframing. Readers meet a voice determined to control the terms of her own story, crafting a self-portrait that unsettles easy judgments. The result is at once an intimate testimony and a public performance calibrated to a watchful age.

The *Life and Legacy of Harriette Wilson* belongs to the tradition of autobiographical writing, grounded in the world of early nineteenth-century Britain and the milieu now associated with the Regency. Harriette Wilson, known for her candid self-account, wrote in a period when aristocratic scandal and the expanding press fed each other. Her autobiographical work first appeared in 1825, entering a culture avid for personalities and revelation. The settings it evokes—London’s fashionable streets and private parlors, the thresholds between respectability and notoriety—provide a vivid social backdrop. As life-writing and social document, it occupies a distinctive place between confession, satire, and reportage.

The premise is disarmingly straightforward: Wilson recounts her path from constrained beginnings to a life lived at the

intersection of desire, money, and rank, narrating how she learned to read a room, bargain for security, and confront shifting loyalties. The reading experience is brisk, conversational, and disconcertingly frank, mixing worldly humor with cool appraisal. Scenes turn on gestures and glances as much as on transactions, and the stakes—livelihood, reputation, safety—remain legible without explicit sensationalism. Rather than a plotted novel, this is an episodic self-portrait, a sequence of encounters that reveal the fine print of social power while preserving the contingencies that shaped her choices.

Wilson's voice governs the book: audacious yet controlled, combative yet strategic, forever aware of an imagined reader. She refuses piety, resists melodrama, and declines to ask pity, preferring a ledger-like clarity about costs and gains. Names and titles appear not as trophies but as evidence in a case she argues before the public, even as she withholds as much as she discloses. The style is agile, turning from caustic observation to cool self-justification and back again. The tone sustains a paradoxical blend of intimacy and performance, acknowledging vulnerability while insisting on the right to narrate it.

The themes are unmistakable and enduring. Power is tracked through money, patronage, and access; gender is examined as a structure that rewards charm while punishing autonomy; class reveals itself as both costume and gatekeeper. Reputation functions as a tradable asset, subject to rumor, print, and negotiation. The book probes the ethics of disclosure, the uses of discretion, and the unstable boundary between truth and strategy in self-representation. It also interrogates memory—what it preserves, what it edits, and how it can be mobilized as protection—suggesting that testimony is never innocent, yet can still be incisively true to lived experience.

For contemporary readers, the work remains bracingly modern. It anticipates the attention economy, revealing how fame and shame can be manufactured, monetized, and contested. It offers a case study in female agency under economic pressure, illuminating how choices constrained by inequality can nonetheless be choices. Its analysis of publicity's rewards and costs speaks to today's debates about privacy, consent, and narrative control. By mapping the circuitry of gossip, print, and power, it equips readers to recognize familiar dynamics in modern media ecosystems, challenging comforting myths about authenticity, merit, and moral clarity.

Approaching this book today means reading with empathy and skepticism in tandem: empathy for a narrator who insists on being the subject, not the object, of her story, and skepticism that honors her own insistence on calculation. As literature, it is agile and unsentimental; as history, it is a frontline document of a society negotiating desire, hierarchy, and exposure. Its legacy endures in every tell-all that claims candor as leverage, and in every memoir that tests the limits of confession. Above all, it matters because it teaches how narrative can be labor, shield, weapon, and, sometimes, a way through.

Synopsis

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Harriette Wilson's self-authored narrative presents an unsentimental account of a woman navigating the overlapping worlds of fashion, money, and reputation in Regency Britain. Framed by the urgency of earning a living and of correcting rumors, she writes to place her experiences on the record, neither pleading innocence nor courting needless scandal. Opening chapters establish her voice—direct, pragmatic, and attentive to social nuance—while sketching the crowded stage on which private bargains and public judgments collide. The book announces its concerns with survival, self-definition, and the price of visibility, balancing confession with critique to show how intimacy and power are transacted.

Wilson recounts the limited choices available to a young woman without independent wealth, tracing how practical needs and family circumstances steered her toward the demi-monde. Early episodes chart the first arrangements that secured lodging, clothing, and a measure of protection, while also binding her to obligations she could not fully control. She learns the codes that govern introductions, discretion, and termination, and she measures the value of charm against the more durable currencies of cash and credit. The emerging theme is apprenticeship: she studies how to negotiate, how to refuse, and how to preserve dignity amid constant appraisal.

As her circle expands, Wilson details the economics of patronage with matter-of-fact clarity. Allowances, gifts,

debts, and promises create a ledger that is personal yet transactional, and she demonstrates the risks of depending on volatile tempers or shifting fortunes. Episodes juxtapose declarations of attachment with sudden retrenchment, illustrating how romance could mask bargaining and how generosity might demand strict compliance. She confronts jealousy, surveillance, and gossip as occupational hazards, and she treats health, housing, and legal exposure as practical concerns rather than melodrama. Through these accounts, the memoir examines the price of independence when autonomy itself must be negotiated.

The narrative opens outward onto salons, theaters, and drawing rooms where politics, fashion, and finance mingle. Wilson's position grants proximity to influence without conferring security, and she records how information travels through whispers, invitations, and public appearances. She comments on the ease with which reputations are made and unmade, noting the gap between public virtue and private conduct. Her portraits of hosts, writers, and officeholders emphasize manner over pedigree, suggesting that style can be a form of currency and camouflage. The atmosphere is one of restless movement, with dinners, journeys, and changing seasons punctuating the oscillations of favor.

A central development arrives when Wilson turns her life into copy, weighing the ethics and economics of publication. She describes the circulation of proposals, the private overtures to omit names, and the public curiosity that grows around her project. Reactions range from alarm to indifference, but the common thread is calculation: reputations, livelihoods, and alliances are at stake. Legal, moral, and financial pressures intensify, and she frames authorship as both risk and recourse. The book thus becomes about the making of a book, charting how a

woman converts experience into narrative while navigating censorship, retaliation, and the market.

Throughout, Wilson's authorial stance remains paradoxical: she is at once participant and analyst, subject to circumstances yet alert to their structures. Anecdote-driven chapters build character studies that are brisk rather than sentimental, and her self-portrait stresses resilience over victimhood without denying vulnerability. She interrogates the language of propriety, exposing how moral claims often mask financial motives. The prose lingers on practicalities—rents, bills, schedules—as a means of demystifying desire. Moments of humor temper severity, and candor serves as a kind of armor, inviting the reader to weigh competing accounts of truth where memory, reputation, and self-interest overlap.

By its close, the work has become both a social document and a case study in authorship, offering a rare inside view of how gender, class, and commerce shaped private lives and public stories. Without resolving every dispute or naming every consequence, it clarifies what was at issue: who gets to narrate, who pays the price, and how accounts endure. The book's broader significance lies in its frank depiction of the machinery behind elegance and scandal, and in its assertion of a woman's voice in a crowded marketplace of claims, a resonance that continues to inform readings of the period.

Historical Context

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Harriette Wilson's memoir emerged in 1825, in late Georgian Britain during and just after the Regency (1811–1820). Her world centered on London's West End—Mayfair, St. James's, and the theatres and parks that hosted elite sociability. The monarchy transitioned from the long illness of George III to the flamboyant Prince Regent, later George IV. Parliament, the law courts, and a burgeoning metropolitan press framed public life, while private arrangements governed much of the aristocracy's conduct. Born in 1786 to a Swiss-born watchmaker, Wilson entered society as a courtesan in her teens, observing at close range the customs, money, and manners that connect politics and pleasure.

Britain's rigid hierarchy endowed titled men with wealth, offices, and access to exclusive institutions. Clubs such as White's and Brooks's, and the patroness-ruled assemblies at Almack's, policed admission to fashionable life. Around this sphere existed the demimonde: courtesans who negotiated annuities, houses, and protection in lieu of marriage. In a legal order shaped by coverture, married women's property merged with husbands', and respectable employment for genteel women was scarce. Negotiation, reputation, and correspondence thus served as financial instruments. Wilson's dealings with peers, ministers, and heirs encapsulated these arrangements, revealing how personal liaisons, gifts, and debts underpinned influence and sustained elite consumption.

Urban leisure provided the stages on which reputations were made. The King's Theatre in the Haymarket, Drury Lane, and Covent Garden drew politicians, soldiers, and heirs into proximity with actresses and courtesans in private boxes and salons. The Morning Post and allied newspapers chronicled aristocratic movements, while carriage routes in Hyde Park and St. James's became theatres of display. Gambling, card rooms, and private suppers cemented alliances that could translate into patronage or protection. Wilson's narrative grows from this geography, in which wit, fashion, and proximity functioned as currency, and where introductions could carry more weight than formal petitions.

Her adulthood coincided with the later Napoleonic Wars (resumed 1803) and their aftermath. Britain's victories, culminating at Waterloo in 1815 under the Duke of Wellington, elevated military heroes into political arbiters. Lord Liverpool's long Tory ministry (1812–1827) oversaw a patronage-heavy state criticized by radicals as "Old Corruption." Cabinet posts, pensions, and diplomatic placements often intersected with family networks and club friendships. Wilson encountered figures at the apex of this system, offering observations on how appointments, duels of reputation, and private obligations shaped public careers. Her vantage shows politics as a social process conducted in drawing rooms as much as in Parliament.

The 1820s saw an expanding reading public and a brisk market for memoirs, scandal sheets, and caricature. Publishers like John Joseph Stockdale trafficked in sensational material, exploiting gaps between strict libel laws and public appetite. Wilson's Memoirs appeared through Stockdale in 1825 after she and the publisher solicited payments from men she proposed to name. The Duke of Wellington reputedly replied, "Publish and be damned," refusing any fee. Under the Six Acts (1819) and

prevailing libel doctrines, naming names risked prosecution, yet notoriety drove sales. The episode underlines how print could redistribute power by converting private knowledge into public leverage.

Simultaneously, moral reform gathered force. Evangelical activism and societies such as the Society for the Suppression of Vice (founded 1802) sought prosecutions for obscenity, gambling, and prostitution. The Vagrancy Act 1824 expanded summary powers against “idle and disorderly” persons, often used to police street-walkers and beggars. Before the Metropolitan Police were established in 1829, enforcement relied on magistrates and the Bow Street Runners, producing uneven oversight of elite and poor alike. Wilson’s account reflects this climate: a double standard praised male libertinism while stigmatizing women, yet tolerated arrangements that channeled wealth discreetly. Respectability, not law alone, regulated reputations.

The decade also witnessed the politicization of scandal. The 1820–1821 proceedings against Queen Caroline, in which George IV sought a divorce through a bill of pains and penalties, enthralled crowds and the press, demonstrating how public opinion could shield a woman against elite censure. Two years earlier, the Peterloo Massacre (1819) exposed tensions between reform movements and state force. Caricaturists like James Gillray and, later, George Cruikshank amplified reputational warfare. Within this environment, letters, diaries, and whispered testimony became political weapons. Wilson’s use of correspondence and names capitalized on a culture already primed to read intimacy as evidence.

Wilson’s Memoirs thus register a society in which rank, wealth, and gender shaped opportunity while publicity recalibrated power. Her portraits of grandees, the price of

concealment, and the economics of keeping mistresses expose networks usually hidden beneath ceremony. By converting private experience into print, she contested moral double standards and the aura of untouchability around officeholders. The work helped establish the template for candid celebrity memoirs, while offering scholars evidence of how the Regency elite managed sex, money, and image. Its enduring interest lies in the critique it embeds: that Britain's public virtues often rested on carefully negotiated private arrangements.

The Life and Legacy of Harriette Wilson

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VOLUME ONE

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CHAPTER I

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I shall not say why and how I became, at the age of fifteen, the mistress of the Earl of Craven^[1]. Whether it was love, or the severity of my father, the depravity of my own heart, or the winning arts of the noble lord, which induced me to leave my paternal roof and place myself under his protection, does not now much signify; or, if it does, I am not in the humour to gratify curiosity in this matter.

I resided on the Marine Parade at Brighton, and I remember that Lord Craven used to draw cocoa trees, and his fellows as he called them, on the best vellum paper for my amusement. "Here stood the enemy," he would say, "and here, my love, are my fellows. There the cocoa trees, &c." It was, in fact, a dead bore^[1q]. All these cocoa trees and fellows, at past eleven o'clock at night, could have no peculiar interest for a child like myself, so lately in the habit of retiring early to rest. One night, I recollect, I fell asleep; and, as I often dream, I said yawning, and half awake, "O Lord! O Lord! Craven has got me into the West Indies again." In short I soon found that I had made but a bad speculation, by going from my father to Lord Craven. I was even more afraid of the latter than I had been of the former. Not that there was any particular harm in the man beyond his cocoa trees; but we never suited nor understood each other.

I was not depraved enough to determine immediately on a new choice, and yet I often thought about it. How indeed could I do otherwise, when the Honourable Frederick Lamb was my constant visitor, and talked to me of nothing else? However, in justice to myself, I must declare that the idea of the possibility of deceiving Lord Craven while I was under his roof, never once entered into my head. Frederick was then very handsome, and certainly tried with all his soul and with all his strength, to convince me that constancy to Lord Craven was the greatest nonsense in the world. I firmly believe that Frederick Lamb sincerely loved me, and deeply regretted that he had no fortune to invite me to share with him.

Lord Melbourne, his father, was a good man. Not one of your stiff-laced, moralising fathers, who preach chastity and forbearance to their children. Quite the contrary, he congratulated his son on the lucky circumstance of his friend Craven having such a fine girl with him.

"No such thing," answered Frederick Lamb, "I am unsuccessful there. Harriette will have nothing at all to do with me."

"Nonsense!" rejoined Melbourne, in great surprise, "I never heard anything half so ridiculous in all my life. The girl must be mad! She looks mad. I thought so the other day, when I met her galloping about, with her feathers blowing, and her thick dark hair about her ears.

"I'll speak to Harriette for you," added his lordship, after a long pause, and then continued repeating to himself, in an undertone, "not have my son indeed! Six feet high! A fine,

straight, handsome, noble young fellow! I wonder what she would have!"

In truth, I scarcely knew myself; but something I determined on: so miserably tired was I of Craven, and his cocoa trees, and his sailing-boats, and his ugly, cotton nightcap.

"Surely," I would say, "all men do not wear those shocking nightcaps; else all women's illusions had been destroyed on the first night of their marriage!" I wonder, thought I, what sort of a nightcap the Prince of Wales [2] wears? Then I went on to wonder whether the Prince of Wales would think me as beautiful as Frederick Lamb did? Next I reflected that Frederick Lamb was younger than the Prince; but then again, a Prince of Wales!

I was undecided: my heart began to soften. I thought of my dear mother and I wished I had never left her. It was too late, however, now. My father would not suffer me to return, and, as to passing my life, or any more of it, with Craven, cotton night-cap and all, it was death! He never once made me laugh, nor said anything to please me.

Thus musing, I listlessly turned over my writing book, half in the humour to address the Prince of Wales! A sheet of paper, covered with Lord Craven's cocoa trees, decided me, and I wrote the following letter, which I addressed to the Prince.

"BRIGHTON

"I am told that I am very beautiful, so perhaps you would like to see me; and I wish that, since so many are disposed to love me, one, for in the humility of my

heart I should be quite satisfied with one, would be at the pains to make me love him. In the meantime, this is all very dull work, Sir, and worse even than being at home with my father: so, if you pity me, and believe you could make me in love with you, write to me, and direct to the post office here."

By return of post, I received an answer nearly to this effect: I believe from Colonel Thomas.

"Miss Wilson's letter has been received by the noble individual to whom it was addressed. If Miss Wilson will come to town, she may have an interview, by directing her letter as before."

I answered this note directly, addressing my letter to the Prince of Wales.

"SIR—To travel fifty-two miles this bad weather, merely to see a man, with only the given number of legs, arms, fingers, &c., would, you must admit, be madness in a girl like myself, surrounded by humble admirers who are ever ready to travel any distance for the honour of kissing the tip of her little finger; but, if you can prove to me that you are one bit better than any man who may be ready to attend my bidding, I'll e'en start for London directly. So, if you can do anything better in the way of pleasing a lady than ordinary men, write directly: if not, adieu, Monsieur le Prince."

It was necessary to put this letter into the post office myself, as Lord Craven's black footman would have been somewhat surprised at its address. Crossing the Steyne I met Lord Melbourne, who joined me immediately.

"Where is Craven?" said his lordship, shaking hands with me.

"Attending to his military duties at Lewes, my lord."

"And where's my son Fred?" asked his lordship.

"I am not your son's keeper, my lord," said I.

"No! By the bye," inquired his lordship, "how is this? I wanted to call upon you about it. I never heard of such a thing in the whole course of my life! What the devil can you possibly have to say against my son Fred?"

"Good heavens! my lord, you frighten me! I never recollect to have said a single word against your son, as long as I have lived. Why should I?"

"Why, indeed!" said Lord Melbourne. "And, since there is nothing to be said against him, what excuse can you make for using him so ill?"

"I don't understand you one bit, my lord." The very idea of a father put me in a tremble.

"Why," said Lord Melbourne, "did you not turn the poor boy out of your house as soon as it was dark, although Craven was in town, and there was not the shadow of an excuse for such treatment?"

At this moment, and before I could recover from my surprise at the tenderness of some parents, Frederick Lamb, who was almost my shadow, joined us.

"Fred, my boy," said Lord Melbourne, "I'll leave you two together, and I fancy you'll find Miss Wilson more

reasonable." He touched his hat to me, as he entered the little gate of the Pavilion, where we had remained stationary from the moment his lordship had accosted me.

Frederick Lamb laughed long, loud, and heartily, at his father's interference. So did I, the moment he was safely out of sight, and then I told him of my answer to the Prince's letter, at which he laughed still more. He was charmed with me, for refusing His Royal Highness.

"Not," said Frederick, "that he is not as handsome and graceful a man as any in England; but I hate the weakness of a woman who knows not how to refuse a prince, merely because he is a prince."

"It is something, too, to be of royal blood," answered I frankly; "and something more to be accomplished: but this posting after a man! I wonder what he could mean by it!"

Frederick Lamb now began to plead his own cause.

"I must soon join my regiment in Yorkshire," said he: he was, at that time aide-de-camp to General Mackenzie: "God knows when we may meet again! I am sure you will not long continue with Lord Craven. I foresee what will happen, and yet, when it does, I think I shall go mad!"

For my part I felt flattered and obliged by the affection Frederick Lamb evinced towards me; but I was still not in love with him.

At length, the time arrived when poor Frederick Lamb could delay his departure from Brighton no longer. On the eve of it he begged to be allowed to introduce his brother William to me.

"What for?" said I.

"That he may let me know how you behave," answered Frederick Lamb.

"And if I fall in love with him?" I inquired.

"I am sure you won't," replied Fred. "Not because my brother William is not likeable; on the contrary, William is much handsomer than I am; but he will not love you as I have done and do still, and you are too good to forget me entirely."

Our parting scene was rather tender. For the last ten days, Lord Craven being absent, we had scarcely been separated an hour during the whole day. I had begun to feel the force of habit, and Frederick Lamb really respected me, for the perseverance with which I had resisted his urgent wishes, when he would have had me deceive Lord Craven. He had ceased to torment me with such wild fits of passion as had at first frightened me, and by these means he had obtained much more of my confidence.

Two days after his departure for Hull, in Yorkshire, Lord Craven returned to Brighton, where he was immediately informed by some spiteful enemy of mine, that I had been during the whole of his absence openly intriguing with Frederick Lamb. In consequence of this information, one evening, when I expected his return, his servant brought me the following letter, dated Lewes:

"A friend of mine has informed me of what has been going on at Brighton. This information, added to what I have seen with my own eyes, of your intimacy with Frederick Lamb, obliges me to declare that we must separate. Let me add, Harriette, that you might have done anything with me, with only a little mere

conduct. As it is, allow me to wish you happy, and further, pray inform me, if in any way, *à la distance*, I can promote your welfare.

"CRAVEN."

This letter completed my dislike of Lord Craven. I answered it immediately, as follows:

"MY LORD—Had I ever wished to deceive you, I have the wit to have done it successfully; but you are old enough to be a better judge of human nature than to have suspected me of guile or deception. In the plenitude of your condescension, you are pleased to add that I 'might have done anything with you, with only a little mere conduct,' now I say, and from my heart, the Lord defend me from ever doing anything with you again! Adieu,

"HARRIETTE."

My present situation was rather melancholy and embarrassing, and yet I felt my heart the lighter for my release from the cocoa-trees, without its being my own act and deed. "It is my fate!" thought I; "for I never wronged this man. I hate his fine carriage, and his money, and everything belonging to or connected with him. I shall hate cocoa as long as I live; and I am sure I will never enter a boat again if I can help it. This is what one gets by acting with principle."

The next morning, while I was considering what was to become of me, I received a very affectionate letter from

Frederick Lamb, dated Hull. He dared not, he said, be selfish enough to ask me to share his poverty, and yet he had a kind of presentiment that he should not lose me.

My case was desperate; for I had taken a vow not to remain another night under Lord Craven's roof. John, therefore, the black whom Craven had, I suppose, imported with his cocoa-trees from the West Indies, was desired to secure me a place in the mail for Hull.

It is impossible to do justice to the joy and rapture which brightened Frederick's countenance, when he flew to receive me and conducted me to his house, where I was shortly visited by his worthy general, Mackenzie, who assured me of his earnest desire to make my stay in Hull as comfortable as possible.

We continued here for about three months, and then came to London. Fred Lamb's passion increased daily; but I discovered, on our arrival in London, that he was a voluptuary, somewhat worldly and selfish. My comforts were not considered. I lived in extreme poverty, while he contrived to enjoy all the luxuries of life, and suffered me to pass my dreary evenings alone, while he frequented balls, masquerades, &c. Secure of my constancy, he was satisfied—so was not I! I felt that I deserved better from him.

I asked Frederick one day, if the Marquis of Lorne was as handsome as he had been represented to me. "The finest fellow on earth," said Frederick Lamb, "all the women adore him;" and then he went on to relate various anecdotes of his lordship, which strongly excited my curiosity.

Soon after this he quitted town for a few weeks, and I was left alone in London, without money, or at any rate with

and 1 shilling), so 25 guineas equalled £26 5s at the time, a substantial sum in the early 19th century.

94 Lincoln's Inn is one of the four Inns of Court in London, the professional associations for barristers; the passage presents Mr. Treslove as a lawyer or legal adviser connected with that institution who advised against accepting a restricted annuity.

95 A dowager duchess is the widow of a duke who retains her title after his death; the term distinguishes the widow from the current duke's wife.

96 Christ Church is one of the colleges of the University of Oxford; saying two men were 'at Christ Church together' indicates they were contemporaries at that college.

97 A French phrase used in English to mean a private conversation or private meeting between two people, often implying intimacy or seclusion.

98 A chaise longue is a long reclining chair (French origin) used for lounging or reclining; in 19th-century interiors it denoted a piece of salon furniture for relaxation.

99 Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston (1784–1865), a prominent British statesman who later served as Prime Minister; here he is mentioned in a military/local role as colonel/commander of a militia regiment.

100 *Le Malade Imaginaire* ('The Imaginary Invalid') is a comic play by the 17th-century French playwright Molière; the narrator mentions adapting it into a shorter English piece.

101 A tilbury is a light, open, two-wheeled carriage drawn by one horse, popular in the late 18th and early 19th

centuries for short drives or as a fashionable conveyance for one or two passengers.

102 French for a 'place lackey' or hired footman, a laquais de place was a local servant or hotel-attached attendant engaged to wait on lodgers or visitors in early 19th-century France.

103 An older term for the mail coach — a horse-drawn long-distance stagecoach of the 18th–19th centuries that carried mail and passengers on scheduled routes, often taking several days or nights.

104 A variant or phonetic spelling of Leicester Square in central London, historically known for its theatres, public gardens and fashionable entertainments in the 18th–19th centuries.

105 A light, two-wheeled carriage pulled by a single horse, popular in late 18th–early 19th-century Europe for short urban journeys; the term here denotes the mode of transport Lord Ebrington used.

106 A colloquial British nickname for Napoleon Bonaparte commonly used in the early 19th century, often with a mocking or disparaging tone.

107 A French phrase meaning 'salon of foreigners'; in early 19th-century Paris it referred to a private assembly or entertainment venue for visitors where admission commonly required an introduction, so being 'refused admittance' signals its exclusivity.

108 Refers to the Tuileries, the large formal gardens (and formerly a royal palace) in central Paris where people promenaded; the spelling here reflects 19th-century usage for the public park adjacent to the Louvre.

109 A French phrase meaning 'inopportune' or 'ill-timed'; in 19th-century English usage it denotes an inappropriate or badly timed remark, action, or visit.

110 A French phrase meaning "in the Chamber of Peers," the upper legislative house of France during periods such as the Bourbon Restoration (roughly 1814–1830); here it indicates the debates the narrator had attended.

111 Refers to François-Joseph Talma (1763–1826), a leading French actor of the period renowned for his performances in classical tragedies, especially plays by Jean Racine.

112 An exclusive London dining and social club run by a proprietor named Wattier that staged lavish entertainments and masquerades in the Regency era; active in the early 19th century and noted for assembling aristocratic guests to celebrate major events.

113 A type of heavy, glossy silk fabric (literally 'Gros de Naples') used for fine garments in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, valued for its rich appearance and often employed for formal dress or costume.

114 Better known as 'Beau Brummell' (c.1778–1840), the leading arbiter of men's fashion in Regency England, famed for his immaculate dress and influence on tailoring and etiquette among the aristocracy.

115 The popular name of George Bryan Brummell (c.1778–1840), a leading Regency dandy famed for his influence on men's fashion, manners, and tailoring in early 19th-century London; he later suffered financial ruin and spent his final years abroad.

116 A reference to the Italian term *cecisbeo* (here spelled 'Cecisbo'), historically used for a gallant or accepted male

companion of a married woman in 18th-century Italy, often depicted in contemporary literature as a devoted admirer.

117 A French phrase meaning literally “the beautiful old times past,” used here to evoke nostalgic praise of former days; such expressions were commonly employed in 18th-19th century English writing to suggest genteel reminiscence.

118 ‘Jack Ketch’ is the conventional name given to English executioners from the 17th century onward and is used idiomatically here to mean the hangman or the act of execution, rather than referring to a single historical individual in this passage.

119 An informal abbreviation of ‘plenipotentiary’, a diplomatic agent invested with full powers to negotiate on behalf of a government; here used humorously as a title for Frederick Lamb rather than a strict office description.

120 A French phrase literally meaning ‘for his/her beautiful eyes’, used idiomatically to mean doing something solely to please someone or out of regard for their charms.

121 French for ‘father-in-law’ (literally ‘the handsome papa’); in this context it implies a man has become related by marriage and is being referred to in that familiar way.

122 A historical title referring to the senior official responsible for the production and regulation of coinage (the Royal Mint); here it is used as an honorific in a list of titles.

123 Likely refers to Henry Brougham (1778–1868), later 1st Baron Brougham and Vaux, a prominent English barrister, reforming politician and Lord Chancellor who was well