

Back to the Archives: Toward a Rereading of Hannah Cullwick through Her Autobiography “Hannah’s Places” (1872)

Sarah Russo

THE two short autobiographies and seventeen diaries of Hannah Cullwick (1833–1909) represent the largest archival collection of lifewriting by a female domestic servant of the Victorian period in England. While working as a servant in London and its surrounding counties for most of her life, Cullwick wrote diaries from 1854 to 1873 and composed the autobiographies in 1872 and 1873. She wrote for her upper-middle-class suitor and eventual husband, Arthur J. Munby (1828–1910), who read her diaries regularly as one would read letters. In 1984, Cullwick’s autobiographies and diaries were edited by Liz Stanley and published as *The Diaries of Hannah Cullwick, Victorian Maidservant*. Since then, critics have been reading the published version of Cullwick’s autobiographies and diaries as transparent records of her work life and cross-class relationship with Munby.

Critics’ perception of the transparency of Cullwick’s writing points to a larger problem that recent feminist work on lifewriting and archival research has called to our attention. Following the warning by Philippe Lejeune (1989) to archivists to avoid “deforming” the subject of the autobiographical account by “reading from above”

(202), Helen Buss (2001) has more precisely identified “the current ideological tendency of the academy” to appropriate rather than explicate archival texts and, moreover, to “locate historical subjects in victor/victim duality” (24, 34). Cullwick’s critics in particular have used her diary entries and autobiographies to flesh out their own narratives of her subjectivity that emphasize her class position and her sexuality in order to illustrate broad theoretical paradigms of Victorian class hierarchy and sexual ideology. These paradigms also inform Stanley’s editorial choices and biographical apparatus. Perhaps even more alarming than using Cullwick’s writings as “pure” evidence to substantiate—even to create—theories that implicitly privilege the middle class, critics attempt to rescue Cullwick from the deprived position they create for her, either by vindicating her as a victim of class hierarchy or by claiming for her forms of agency tied to her sexuality and work life. As an autobiographical subject, Cullwick has been repeatedly deformed by other critics’ selective framework, which filters and decontextualizes the information she provides about her life, thus ignoring the material and formal characteristics of her manuscripts.

Yet these characteristics of Cullwick’s writing—how as well as what she wrote—are central to a closer understanding of her life from her own perspective, which encompasses far more and signifies very differently than the monolithic middle-class perspective through which critics have interpreted her as a victim of class- and gender-based oppression. Returning to her manuscripts is necessary in order to attend to Cullwick’s own view of her life. In this essay, I offer a reading of Cullwick’s first autobiography, “Hannah’s Places” (1872), from the unedited manuscript. Cullwick’s telling of her life story creates a distinctive voice and a narrative logic, both of which have been elided by standard academic editing practices, which include silent omissions of words and punctuation. These elisions, in tandem with critics’ tendency to emphasize Cullwick’s sexuality and authenticity as a laborer while ignoring her as a writer, have reduced, distorted, and even muted Cullwick as an autobiographical subject. My own reading pays attention to class, gender, and sexuality, and in my view, questions of class and gender in Cullwick are more complicated and nuanced than critics have acknowledged. I privilege Cullwick’s perspective on them, and I consider how she situates her identity and subjectivity within a much richer social fabric than critics’ accounts of her life have indicated. Additionally, I examine Cullwick’s self-representational strategies as they develop throughout the manuscript, particularly as she constructs herself in relation

to family life, local culture, professionalization strategies, and interactions with strangers as well as a wide range of employers. In its attention to Cullwick's perspective, her development of self-representational strategies, and the historic specificity of her experiences, this essay attempts to do reflective, responsible archival work by pointing out specific problems with prior critical appropriations, by restoring rather than deforming the subject, and by refusing to use the victor/victim interpretive frame. I offer explication based on the irreducible particularities of the content, structure, and contexts of her autobiography.

Culture Clash: Hannah Cullwick In and Out of Her Life-writing Context

Before turning to "Hannah's Places," brief reviews of women's life-writing practices in the nineteenth century and of recent critical appropriations of Cullwick's writings will establish their production and reception contexts. Current reader expectations of the diary form as a personal document containing intimate details of experiences, emotions, and reflections are situated within a gendered history of diary production. This gendered history is particularly differentiated regarding privacy, since women often wrote explicitly for other people, and when not writing for others, maintained a restraint on what they recorded (see Bunkers 1988). In the nineteenth century, women used diaries and autobiographies as family chronicles and epistolary texts.¹ Cullwick's diaries and autobiographies are no exception, for she wrote about her daily work and other activities for Munby and mailed the diaries and autobiographies to him. Additionally, Cullwick's diaries and autobiographies were shaped both by Munby's specific requests about what she should record, and by the secrecy and time constraints under which she often wrote. Of particular importance is the secrecy Cullwick had to maintain while writing her diaries in her employers' houses (the autobiographies were written during vacations in relatives' homes), for writing by a servant was a suspect activity and grounds for dismissal; Cullwick lost at least two places because of her diary writing. The problems that Cullwick faced as a result of writing while in employers' houses reflects the pervasive perception among employers that servants' private writing was a sign of sexual impropriety. Fellow servants shared this notion: two coworkers noticed that Cullwick was writing "so much." She explains, "as I couldn't satisfy them who I wrote to, nor

say I was writing diary, of course the worst was made of it” (Stanley 1984, 83). Once the other servants insinuate to the employer that she “was living dishonestly,” the employer immediately fires her because, he tells her, “you are keeping company with a gentleman” (Stanley 1984, 83). Nineteenth-century assumptions about female servants’ heightened sexuality led employers to monitor their activities and restrict their movements (Gillis 1983, 115, 122). It is particularly urgent that critics working with Cullwick’s writings avoid reiterating this assumption by conflating her writings with her sexuality. Yet for over three decades, most critics who have taken up Cullwick’s diaries and autobiographies focus on the sexuality they perceive underwriting them.² While the narrative of Cullwick’s sexuality has become amplified as each new critic takes it up, Cullwick’s subjectivity has become increasingly distorted and reduced. Retrieving her own perspective on her life and discussing her writing as it was written can correct our view of Cullwick.

The existence of Cullwick’s writings was first acknowledged and a few brief excerpts published in Derek Hudson’s *Munby: Man of Two Worlds* (1972), a biography interspersed with lengthy passages from Munby’s diaries. Leonore Davidoff’s essay “Sex and Gender in Victorian England” (1983) was the first theoretical treatment of the diaries and autobiographies to focus on Cullwick and Munby, and it initiated the linking of class and sexuality that subsequent writers on Cullwick would take up. In her articulation of the interlocking power binaries of middle class/working class and male/female, Davidoff sees sexuality as larger social conflicts writ small (as small as the heterosexual couple). Davidoff uses Cullwick’s diaries as evidence of “the ways in which sexual practice, both on the individual and collective levels, may have enforced hierarchies of gender and class” (Newton, Ryan, Walkowitz 1983, 6). In the anomalous cross-class alliance of Munby and Cullwick, she argues, their sexual relationship reveals what was implicit in Victorian class relations: middle-class men’s sexual exploitation of silenced and invisible female servants of the household. Identifying Cullwick as a victim of both labor and sexual exploitation, Davidoff inadvertently repeats the silencing of Cullwick she decries in others by using Hudson’s decontextualized quotations from Cullwick’s writings rather than quoting the manuscripts directly. Furthermore, Davidoff conflates Cullwick’s voice and opinions with poems written by Munby in which he re-creates female laborers’ rural dialects. Thus, Davidoff patches together Cullwick’s subjectivity from three sources in as many genres, one source not even Cullwick’s. Davidoff asks

readers to accept her portrait of Cullwick as authentic while ignoring matters of genre and even of authorship.

Giving Cullwick a book of her own, Liz Stanley read prodigiously through the thousands of manuscript pages of Cullwick's seventeen diaries to make selections for *The Diaries of Hannah Cullwick, Victorian Maidservant* (1984). This was certainly an impressive and useful task that helped to provide wider access to a large sample of Cullwick's archived writings. Following the standard academic protocol for such projects, Stanley selected, transcribed, edited, and annotated excerpts from eight of Cullwick's diaries and the bulk of the texts of both autobiographies. Yet editing and converting handwriting to print by nature suppresses idiosyncrasies in the form, content, and graphic qualities of manuscript texts—idiosyncrasies that shed light on the writer and illuminate the writing process. The changes Stanley makes in order to improve readability carry with them suppression of meaning that can be gleaned from the manuscript's idiosyncrasies. Stanley's edition thus pushes Cullwick's writing closer to a product of academic standards for publication, whereas that writing was produced not in accordance with those standards but in a form that results from Cullwick's particular circumstances. The semi-standardized version then promotes inaccurate and biased readings.

Stanley's revisionism operates at the ideological and textual levels. In her introduction and apparatus, Stanley celebrates Cullwick's writings as first-person accounts of a female servant's life worth publishing. Because of Stanley's good intentions in recovering these lifewritings, however, we can discern an impulse to "lift up" Cullwick, constructing her as worthy of study in a way that reveals the editor's bias. For example, she rescues Cullwick from a label of sadomasochistic sexuality she imputes—incorrectly—to Davidoff.³ Stanley then reinscribes Cullwick firmly and narrowly in a social history of domestic service in order to validate her life as a worker. Stanley chooses passages that emphasize the physical stress of Cullwick's labor—a move that has led critics to unanimously construct Cullwick as a "drudge."

Stanley's bias in selecting material to present is amplified at the textual level of editing. The editorial decisions Stanley acknowledges in her introduction warrant closer examination because her version of Cullwick's writing, when compared with the original manuscript, reveals specific losses resulting from her having made that writing conform to academic publishing standards. If Stanley is concerned to rescue Cullwick's subjectivity from a dual domination

by class position and a sexual label, the editorial decisions she describes herself making undercut her attempt to promote an appreciation of Cullwick as a writer. For example, three alterations Stanley makes to increase readability have important ramifications. First, what Stanley calls Cullwick's use of *i* or *I* "in a fairly random fashion" she attributes to the fact that "spelling and usage were at this time still unstandardised and that people wrote in a fairly idiosyncratic fashion as the mood and fancy took them" (1984, 310 n. 48). A better explanation might be that Cullwick didn't have much education and so hadn't been trained to spell consistently. Cullwick's spelling, aside from truncated words like "trim'd," is very good and very consistent, which is surprising, considering her brief formal education. Her grammar isn't as good as her spelling, which may have to do with early-nineteenth-century education in which spelling was taught first, then grammar. Consequently, Stanley universally capitalizes the first-person pronoun to make "a reading of her diaries easier to the modern eye" (1984, 310 n. 48). In the context of Stanley's impulse to "lift up" Cullwick, this change points to a well-intentioned attempt to allow readers to understand Cullwick as asserting the authoritative subjectivity that we understand the standard capitalized personal pronoun to convey. Cullwick's manuscript does not reveal random use of capitalization or shrinking from authority, however, but a pattern of capitalizing the personal pronoun only when it begins a sentence. Otherwise, Cullwick uses a lower-case *i*, even when writing others' speech. Cullwick's capitalization pattern is perhaps best explained by the material conditions of writing. Several graphic aspects of her writing taken together, including leaving a space instead of beginning a new line for a new paragraph and utilizing the whole page, indicate techniques for saving paper, and in the cursive of the day, lower-case letters take up less space than capitals.

Second, Stanley rightly points out that the appearance of Cullwick's hurried writing crowded on the pages reveals the physical circumstances of her diary writing. Nevertheless, Stanley's editing obscures Cullwick's technique of breaking up her prose into syntactical units (mainly by dashes and coordinating conjunctions) by "introduc[ing] a greater variety of punctuation, including sentenc[ing] and paragraph[ing]" (1984, 27). Stanley's standardization of Cullwick's writing, then, alters the meaning of Cullwick's prose by replacing the original rhythm—and the narrative logic it produces—with arbitrary breaks.

Stanley appears unaware of the changes in Cullwick's meaning she produces by her seemingly superficial mechanical alterations.

Long dashes separating fragments are quite common in nineteenth-century women's personal writings, as in the letters of Charlotte Brontë (1995). Cullwick's own punctuation creates a variety of nuances of meaning. For example, in addition to commas and periods, Cullwick uses dashes of several lengths, each of which has a subtly different signification and is context-dependent. For example, on the first page, a short dash indicates a brief pause for emphasis between two items in a list while in the next sentence a longer dash functions like a colon. Likewise, adding sentence and paragraph structure impart textual signals that create meaning. Stanley's paragraphing imposes groupings of ideas and topics that Cullwick did not create. These groupings then confer a meaning that does not arise in the manuscript text. On the other hand, presumably to save paper, Cullwick does create new paragraphs by leaving a space of about an inch between two sentences instead of indenting on a new line, but these breaks are only occasionally preserved in Stanley's edition. Thus, Cullwick's own formatting and its contribution to meaning are both suppressed by Stanley's alternative, and much more frequent, sentence breaks and paragraph divisions. Finally, and most gravely, Stanley silently omits certain passages in "Hannah's Places," particularly those, as we will see, that include Munby and another servant who is hostile to Cullwick.

While Stanley's merely mechanical aids may improve readability, they constitute an interpretation. The resulting biased view of Cullwick's life has been accepted by other critics, who in turn represent it as Cullwick's own view of her life. Proper care has not been taken by subsequent critics to acknowledge the extent to which Stanley's editing is itself an interpretation and the implications of that fact for their own arguments. Consequently, Cullwick's voice and perspective, which are conveyed through her mechanics and style as much as through the content of her manuscripts, have both been silently elided even as critics attempt to recover an "original" subjectivity through Stanley's redaction of her writings.

Heather Dawkins is the only critic to comment on some of Stanley's textual alterations and to link the editing of Cullwick's manuscripts to critical interpretations of Cullwick's subjectivity.⁴ In "The Diaries and Photographs of Hannah Cullwick" (1987), Dawkins situates diary-writing as a middle-class activity to which Cullwick's diaries do not conform in either form or subject matter (155). She then points out that although Stanley "corrected" Cullwick's capitalization, the original lower-case *i* "is important because it further disturbs the production of the [bourgeois] diaristic subject," a distur-

bance that Dawkins uses to reclaim Cullwick from middle-class subjectivity and in particular Munby (1987, 155). Accordingly, Dawkins states, “wherever possible I have quoted material in its original form” (1987, 155). Inexplicably, though, Dawkins relies on Stanley’s edition of the diaries throughout her essay and reproduces all quotations and passages with the standardized capital *I* (except for one passage, which Dawkins quotes from Davidoff, who uses Hudson’s more faithful transcription). Additionally, Dawkins foregrounds the problem in Cullwick criticism of what she calls “supplementing,” or assuming “the author/subject [is] a consistent character, recognisable in the text and able to be projected between and beyond the discontinuous [...] utterances making up the text” (Dawkins 1987, 156). In Cullwick’s case, Dawkins continues, the text is made up of “fragments that are dispersed throughout the diaries produced between 1854 and 1873” (1987, 156). Ultimately, however, Dawkins supplements Cullwick by depicting her as “resistant” and “disruptive,” a type of continuous character that Dawkins identifies despite the gaps between fragmentary diary entries and passages of the autobiographies—although Dawkins does not acknowledge formal and content differences between the diaries and autobiographies. Additionally, Dawkins’s interpretation reiterates the victim/victor binary tendency by making Cullwick a victor within class conflict (Dawkins 1987, 175).

Dawkins’s acute warning about the problems of supplementing in retrieving Cullwick from archived and published sources went unheeded by later critics. Anne McClintock, who has taken up Cullwick more recently than the other commentators I have discussed, creates what Dawkins would see as a heavily supplemented narrative of Cullwick and Munby’s sexual practices.⁵ McClintock then uses her own story about the pair to construct Cullwick and her diaries as resisting sexual and gender ideology. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (1995), in which McClintock devotes two chapters to Munby and Cullwick, has been influential in Victorian studies, yet it promotes a view of Cullwick that is both the most distorted compared with the archival documents and the most reductive compared with prior critics.

McClintock employs a late-twentieth-century formulation of the logic of sadomasochism that features cooperation and mutual control in ritualized, scripted sexual interaction. In this framework, McClintock’s argument spectacularizes the diaries and autobiographies as—and only as—a coherent narrative of sadomasochism. In so doing, she has completed a trend that had been long developing in Cullwick

and Munby criticism. Because she subordinates all the terms of her analysis of Cullwick (labor and class relations, race and empire) to Cullwick's purported sadomasochistic sexual relationship with Munby, McClintock's handling of Cullwick represents an apogee of the critical appropriation that Helen Buss has warned against. McClintock establishes Munby's sexuality in the first of the pair of chapters, and then draws Cullwick into the frame of analysis through "the pornographic logic of [Munby's] pleasure"; in this framework, Cullwick is the "center of his voyeuristic fantasy life" (1995, 128–29). In contrast to the detailed psychosexual biography of Munby, McClintock initially describes Cullwick's life as "nondescript," and states she was "destined for a lifetime of service," emphasizing the image of Cullwick's drudgery that is by now entrenched (1995, 141). Then McClintock rescues her from putative victimhood by elevating her from a drudge to the instigator and active partner in a sexual relationship in which both partners fetishized Cullwick's work. Notably, the victor/victim binary has assumed at this point in the criticism a greater power than simply either/or categorization, for McClintock first victimizes Cullwick in order to rescue her by redrawing her as a dominatrix. Although she intends to answer "the ... question of what kind of *agency* is possible in situations of extreme social *inequality*," McClintock ironically frames Cullwick at the expense of Cullwick's own perspective and in a way that suggests that Cullwick had no agency outside her sexual relationship with Munby (1995, 140, McClintock's emphasis). I discuss this distortion in more detail below in a comparison of Cullwick's rendering of first meeting Munby with McClintock's rescripting of this scene.

A large factor contributing to the cumulative reduction of Cullwick is critics' reliance on both published transcriptions of excerpts from Cullwick's writings and prior interpretations of these excerpts. With each critic, attention to the original textual context in which passages appear decreases while a particular narrative about Cullwick is projected onto her and naturalized as her own narrative. For example, whereas Davidoff established Cullwick's writing as evidence of her oppression in the class hierarchy, Dawkins emphasized her revolutionary disruption of bourgeois norms for diary writing, and McClintock focuses on the sexual work her writings perform. All of these readings of Cullwick's writing activity and her subject matter are based on Stanley's edition or Hudson's excerpts, or both, each with its own inherent bias, which intensifies the distortion. In an effort to understand Cullwick's own perspective on her life and subjectivity, I offer an explicative reading of "Hannah's Places"

from Cullwick's unedited and unrevised forty-two page manuscript.⁶ Read as a coherent life story, her autobiography generates a cumulative meaning and reveals patterns that cannot be gleaned from isolated passages.

“Hannah’s Places,” a Handwritten History of Cullwick’s Life from 1833 to 1872

Cullwick's first autobiography contains the only comprehensive account of her life from birth in 1833 to the time of writing on July 2, 1872, when she was thirty nine. (Her second autobiography, “A Servant’s Life” [1873] is a more detailed account of the years 1866–1872.) In “Hannah’s Places,” Cullwick writes about entering domestic service as well as her family and hometown, employers and co-workers, and important positive and negative life events at work and elsewhere. The manuscript offers the opportunity to study lifewriting in an incipient form because it is the first draft of her first attempt at autobiography. Furthermore, it was written in a single sitting on the afternoon and evening of July 2, 1872. In her short diary entry for that day Cullwick describes doing ironing and other housework, and continues “I wash’d the dishes, clean’d me & begun writing to Massa, with a hurried history of my different places. Posted the letter by 1/2 past 9 & to bed by 11” (Stanley 1984, 228). Thus, “Hannah’s Places” is the result of a temporal continuity in composition that was not possible in her diary writing, for she wrote most diary entries in secret at the end of physically taxing days at employers’ houses and because the daily format of the diary usually limited her topics to the events of a single day. Her first autobiography thus provides an opportunity to discern the effect of sustained writing about her life: the more she writes, the more she remembers and includes, which is indicated by an increasing use of detail and by two recursions along the otherwise linear structure. Cullwick’s autobiography consists mainly of descriptions of places she was employed, her position and/or duties in the place, as well as statements of when she worked in a particular situation and for how long, and reasons why she left. The two recursions, on the other hand, do not follow this formula and provide a great deal of insight into her own developing priorities of what to include in her history. Cullwick begins writing about her life in the third person through the perspective of an alien outsider, Munby, but then she shifts to her own perspective. In contrast to the critical tendency to situate Cullwick’s writing and life events relative

to Munby, my autobiographical reading reveals a rich social fabric and a series of life events in which Cullwick figures herself as an active participant and in which she articulates her own identity both before and after meeting Munby, who is mentioned infrequently. Additionally, close attention to Cullwick's written idiom and the unusual form of her writing, illuminates the linked processes of her making meaning from memories and her defining herself.

Cullwick begins her history of places, or jobs, by designating the time period it will cover, but soon delves into intriguing details about her childhood. The first sentence reads, "Hannahs' places—from her leaving the charity school in Shifnal, which was at eight year old, & after she'd done her yellow sampler—her Mother meaning her to do a white one for framing at a better school but what her never could afford" (Cullwick 1872, 1). "Hannahs' places" repeats the title of the work, which is written in Munby's hand on the previous page.⁷ Both the third-person title and third-person grammar in the first sentence indicate that Cullwick, writing specifically to Munby, assumed at first his point of view: she writes, for one sentence, biographically rather than autobiographically. In this first sentence, the initial awkwardness of writing her own history is also suggested by the tiny ink spots that fleck this first quarter of the page, as if she moved back over the sentence and checked it, resting her pen above the words "which," "sampler," "school," and "afford." Her words, too, bend downward when they encounter the right edge of the page: instead of breaking them off with a hyphen, she squeezes the whole word downward into the space along the edge of the paper. In spite of the unfamiliarity of writing a history, as suggested by the appearance of the first page, Cullwick immediately sets up what will become a main theme of her autobiography—her desire to work for wages. Her choice to begin her history at age eight, when she had finished her schooling and began work training, establishes the wage earning theme. Furthermore, in the pointed distinctions between a yellow and white sampler, a charity school and the private school that "never" could be afforded for her, she recounts the material markers of girlhood, a topic she develops in the second sentence. These material markers are directly tied to income, and specifically the possibility she soon encounters of earning her own income.

The second sentence doubles the number of words in the first, and the handwriting spreads more horizontally; stray marks are absent, indicating that she began writing more fluidly without stopping to check what she wrote. This sentence, too, is typical of the struc-

ture and rhythm of Cullwick's prose throughout the rest of the document:

Instead o` that a friend of Mothers /Mrs Phillips/ took me to work at her house off & on /not hired/ from 1841 to 43 & in that time got me out o` my school dress, & give me one of her ["old" inserted with arrow above the line] straw bonnets trim'd with a plaid ribbon _ & a new print lilac frock from Birmingham what i thought was the loveliest could be, & so it was, for i remember it well & have never seen a better nor a prettier ever since. (Cullwick 1872, 1)

In this sentence, as Cullwick gets caught up in the substance of her recollections, her rhythm of conjunctivity is established. At the same time, her point of view broadens out from the third-person limited to the first person. The topic of relative poverty in childhood, with its stunted narrative potential, is abandoned in light of the change in her fortunes that the new clothing from Mrs. Phillips represents. Here in her second sentence she begins to assert her authority over both her own life and the narrative she is writing. The theme of wage earning becomes overt in the second sentence: the bracketed inclusion of "not hired" anticipates her later insistence on remuneration for her labor since "not hired" implies its opposite—being hired and earning wages. And her precise notation of the details of her new manufactured clothing—and her fondness for it—strikes a keynote about possessions in the form of apparel to which she later returns. The straw bonnet, plaid ribbon, and colored, printed dress made an impression upon her, most likely because she was used to plain, homemade, or inexpensive "charity" fabrics, as her first sentence suggests.

Cullwick's varied punctuation, including ampersands, long and short dashes, and commas, each serve different functions such as making a connection or indicating a pause for emphasis, without closing off the current of thought as a period would. For example, Cullwick's long dash aligned with the bottom of the letters in "straw bonnets . . . plaid ribbon _" indicates a dramatic pause by which Cullwick emphasizes next the new belonging that was really special to her, the print dress. Stanley introduces a greater frequency (but not, as she claims, a greater variety) of standard current punctuation. Specifically, she replaces many dashes of varying lengths and positions on the line with less expressive commas to break up Cullwick's long sentences. She omits the dramatic dash in this sentence alto-

gether, thus making all the new items seem equal in value to Cullwick.

Stanley also breaks up this second sentence in a way she consistently does for the whole autobiography, by inserting a period after “(not hired) from 1841 to about 43” and beginning a new sentence with “And in that time” (1984, 35). Instead of writing out “and,” however, Cullwick uses an ampersand with no punctuation after “43” and moves immediately on to the next clause. In the manuscript, then, we can see a continuity of idea from “/not hired/ from 1841 to 43” to the most salient part of that period (her new clothes), to an evaluation of the dress from her present perspective (still the prettiest dress she’s ever seen). The long sentence Cullwick wrote encompasses a broader perspective that is effaced when her sentence is broken up. She moves from a description of her first place at Mrs. Phillips’s to a statement about the dress that affirms her present perspective. This continuity is lost when her sentence is divided into smaller sentences having the effect of separating the work at Mrs. Phillips’s from the dress and her delight in remembering it.

Cullwick’s next sentence goes back in order to expand on her work at Mrs. Phillips’s, and specifically, to explain her bracketed notation “not hired.” Although not paying wages to Cullwick, Mrs. Phillips was training her “how to do everything properly—to wait at table—to wash up—to clean silver, & indeed everything” (Cullwick 1872, 1–2). Additionally, Cullwick was exposed at Mrs. Phillips’s house to a different lifestyle than she had been used to, one she thought was good and good for her: “the living which was good & strengthen’d me as i was growing fair & tall” (Cullwick 1872, 1). Cullwick’s first “place,” then, was a training opportunity that she represents as an investment in her own future in terms of fostering bodily strength, skill, knowledge, and motivation to work. Cullwick writes that Mrs. Phillips “was so very kind to me,” and “she always praised me” for cleaning well (Cullwick 1872, 1, 2). Cullwick notably represents her domestic service training period in much more detail than her formal education, which she only refers to in a brief allusion in the autobiography’s first sentence as ending when she was eight.

Cullwick goes on to describe her release from Mrs. Phillips’s service: “at last i wasn’t wanted” (Cullwick 1872, 2). Upon her release, though, “the Master gave me a sovereign—i jump’d for joy & look’d at it as such a prize.” The possibility of payment for service has indelibly entered Cullwick’s ten-year-old consciousness: “but i was sorry to live at home again getting nothing after i’d begun.”

With a description of grocery errands for her mother, she suggests that she continued her training, for she ran and ordered items, ran home to perform some task, and ran back again before the grocer had finished tying up the packages, “so as i shd not be longer gone nor i ought to be” (Cullwick 1872, 3). As a child, Cullwick felt responsible for monitoring herself and accounting for her time. This sense of accountability, gained even before her first paying job, is an important part of her work ethic and thus a significant source of her authority as the narrator of her history of places.

Up to this point, Cullwick has not made a paragraph break, but Stanley has made two—one at “And might glad I was for going to Mrs Phillips” (Cullwick in fact wrote “mighty glad”) and the other at “At last I wasn’t wanted” (1984, 35, 36). In the manuscript, Cullwick ends paragraphs when an episode has finished by leaving a blank space of about an inch between sentences. By indenting a new line to indicate a new paragraph as we now do in standard English, Stanley signals to readers that Cullwick is starting a new topic when she in fact does not. Furthermore, since in the current understanding of paragraph structure, the first sentence governs the later ones in the body, Stanley bundles Cullwick’s discussion of her work at Mrs. Phillips’s into one paragraph, and her being released with a sovereign and returning home to work for no wages forms into another paragraph. In Cullwick’s manuscript, however, her short childhood and training are all narrated without a space break, suggesting that Cullwick considered it as one discrete period in her life. As at the sentence level, thematic development and continuity are discernable in the manuscript without the arbitrary paragraph breaks of the printed version.

The next events Cullwick narrates are interrelated by their psychological effects, and these effects produce behavioral constraints necessary for a young woman determined to earn wages as a servant: modesty and deference to women in other classes. Cullwick’s second place was at “the Lion for a shilling a week” where she

clean’d the tables & floors & even waited on the farmers dinner of a market day, & they gave me always 2 d or a penny each on the plate as i carried round o’ purpose, after the cheese, making a curtsy to them as give the most cause i thought they was the biggest farmers. (Cullwick 1872, 3)

Soon, however, two disruptions to this paying job are signaled by the first appearance in her prose of a disjunctive; in her well-established conjunctive rhythm, such anomalies are conspicuous signals, usually

appearing in the form of a rarely used word such as “but” or “however.” Following the description of earning tips, she explains in a new sentence “But my father thought it wasn’t good for me there [‘at a public house’ inserted above the text after “there”] & i was to give warning.” Cullwick’s inclusion of her father’s opinion without further explanation of his request or what prompted it suggests that she recalls only the element of warning it contained. Specifically, that implicit warning was that sexual propriety has a high stake for females and that it is easily compromised even in a legitimate place of business. It also forces Cullwick to revise assumptions about money and to see how its circulation is sexually inflected, for she juxtaposes her former implied logic (“i thought”) that the wealthiest and most important farmers would give her more because they had more is superseded by her father’s opinion that it “wasn’t good for me there.” In this juxtaposition between what she thought and what her father said, Cullwick seems to suggest that she learned from her father’s disapproval that the amount of tips she earned had more to do with certain men’s sexuality and perhaps her innocent response to it than their wealth.

In a second episode featuring gendered modesty requirements for her behavior, she represents herself as taking the advantage, again using disjunctives to signal its salience in her adolescent life. Leaving the Lion one day soon after she gave notice, she encountered Miss Phillips, Mrs. Phillips’s daughter, who had taken over management of the household for her ailing mother since Cullwick had left her training there. Cullwick vividly captures Miss Phillips’s insulting address, showing her excellent ear for other speakers’ diction: Miss Phillips says, “Hollo Miss what do you mean by having your hair in curl? /Miss always used to mean contempt with us in Shropshire & it’s so now i believe/” (Cullwick 1872, 3). After this bracketed aside (showing her assumption of increased narrative authority since she directs the reader’s interpretation), Cullwick’s response shows her turning this into an opportunity for a new job. She already knows behavior that will get her employment: “i said ‘my Missis at the Lion makes me curl it, she says i look better to wait in the parlour—i’m going to leave `tho, & i shd like to come to you again mam, if you want me,’ & i made her another curtsy” (Cullwick 1872, 3). Cullwick portrays herself here as wise while at the same time portraying how she obeyed conventions of modesty by curtsying to Miss Phillips. She also shrewdly promotes an image of her job at the Lion to the potential employer: “waiting in the parlour” sounds like an office more evocative of a lady’s maid than a public house

maid-of-all-work. Miss Phillips snaps back, “‘Well i’ll think about it, but you know its’ not respectable to have a girl out of a public house [“but I felt frightened rather at that” inserted above the line after “public house”]—however she very soon had me back again” (Cullwick 1872, 3–4). Stanley has incorporated the inserted text into the sentence without comment so that her version reads: “she said, ‘Well, I’ll think about it, but you know it’s not respectable to have a girl out of a public house,’ but however I felt frightened rather at that,” after which Stanley begins a new paragraph with “She very soon had me back again, off & on . . .” (1984, 36).

What Stanley’s transcription elides is Cullwick’s precise modification of “girl out of a public house” with a signal “but”; at the same time, the rarely used “however” exactly modifies only the phrase “she had me back again.” Cullwick’s precise use of “but” and “however” are flattened into grammatical redundancy in Stanley’s version. The manuscript, however, reveals Cullwick’s first attempt to narrate her interaction with another person while describing the feelings and opinions she carefully hides from that person. She inserts this statement of her feelings after writing out the event of being rehired. But because the statement of her fright is a complete thought rather than a clarifying phrase or a correction, as her other insertions are, this addition marks the beginning of Cullwick’s effort to toggle between objective narration and interiority. By the end of “Hannah’s Places,” we’ll see, Cullwick integrates her opinions into her narration of events. In the Miss Phillips passage, the effect of separately portraying her feelings and outward behavior is that she can point out her mastery of behaviors expected by employers and get the job while having Miss Phillips come off as a little foolish.

The humor Cullwick imparts in showing how she secretly gained the upper hand with Miss Phillips despite her fright disappears when Stanley ends the paragraph with Cullwick’s fright, which conveys a note of submission. This editing choice unduly victimizes Cullwick at the hands of a member of the gentry class. Likewise, the new paragraph that begins “She very soon had me back again” is inexplicable within the revised narrative logic of the passage as Stanley presents it because it gives the misleading impression that Cullwick, as well as using strange grammar (“but however”), is an inept narrator who leaves out information.

Attention to Cullwick’s precise wording reveals her subtle dramatization of this moment, in which she figures herself as feigning humility while implicitly criticizing the contemptuous Miss Phillips for not showing the politeness and benevolence of people of her so-

cial station—the very qualities Cullwick adores and respects in Mrs. Phillips. Cullwick’s manuscript here reveals a benchmark episode in her adolescence that she narrates with sophisticated nuance. This episode demonstrates nothing less than Cullwick’s rapid, intuitive maturation into adult female consciousness: she now realizes that sexual propriety is indexed by her place of employment not only in her father’s view, but also in the view of women who employ servants. The impact of this encounter with Miss Phillips, and especially her fright upon realizing that public house work could compromise her hirability, resonates throughout the rest of the autobiography as she points out how she accumulated an increasingly good character and took employment only in respectable houses with respectable mistresses (with a few exigent exceptions later in her career). The formative role in her socialization that this episode played is indicated by Cullwick’s including the details and dialogue of her encounter with Miss Phillips. By contrast, she narrates having to quit the Lion without comment or detail. Most important, perhaps, is that female-to-female interactions across class lines appear to have had the greatest impact on Cullwick’s early development of an identity, social behaviors, and employment-seeking skills—all of which are precariously predicated on an unspoken definition of sexual propriety that is rigidly policed by other women (or exploited, in the case of the female Lion manager). This has important implications for analyses of Cullwick’s supposed sexuality and for her later heterosexual relationship with Arthur Munby, to which I will return after discussing how Cullwick further portrays gender differences in interpersonal interactions.

The final event that had a major impact on Cullwick’s youth was her parents’ deaths in December 1847 when she was fourteen, which she links narratively to her status as a wage-earner. Working at Ryton, only about three miles from home, she did not even know that her mother was ill until she was notified that both her parents had died (the month before, her mother had written that her father was ill). She portrays her new employer’s brutal coldness in relating the news: “missis call’d me out `o the schoolroom from minding the children there on a 1/2 holiday—into the dining room, & told me, i fell on the floor & she left me to cry by myself” (Cullwick 1872, 5). Nor would her employer allow her to return home. Grieving for her mother, she writes, “it seem’d as if my care for life or work was all gone. I’d bin thinking how i shd work & make her happy for she shd have all my money, & id quite lost my love for finery as i had when i wore the charity dress” (Cullwick 1872, 6). At fourteen, Cullwick’s

attitude toward money has already matured from prizing its exchange value for manufactured clothing into providing her mother with income. Accordingly, Cullwick's attitude toward her clothes had gone back to indifference, as it had been when she was as a young child in a plain dress. Stanley has incorrectly transcribed "living" for "finery" in the phrase "I'd quite lost my love for finery," which substitutes a note of pathos in place of Cullwick's important material referent. "Finery," notably appearing in a sentence describing her grief, connects Cullwick's relationship to material goods and to her mother back to the first sentence of "Hannah's Places" and shows change in the value she places on earned money. Domestic servants earned yearly wages settled at the time of hiring; if the servant left or was dismissed, she received the portion of wages she had earned up to that date.

For the first time in the autobiography, Cullwick mentions how she disposed of her earnings and identifies herself as an earner in her family just at the moment it dissipated. This twist of fate makes for deep irony, but Cullwick's tone throughout this passage about her parents is not ironic; instead she is uncharacteristically expansive and her language is laden with rekindled grief. Her distress over the deaths is accompanied by a solemn formalization only at this place in the autobiography of her parents' identity—and through theirs, hers. In her account of their deaths, she orders events so that they convey her knowledge of events gained afterward rather than her experience of the events. In a notable departure from Cullwick's usual recounting of events strictly from her own vantage point, then, she narrates the circumstances of her parents' deaths in their actual order. Cullwick begins with the details of their deaths, as if she had been present: they died of "fever," "on the same day & the same hour as one another only a fortnight between" (Cullwick 1872, 4). She then explains that she would have run the three miles home in half an hour if she had known about her mother's fatal illness and goes on to narrate that her family's acquaintance Phillip Blud arrived at her employer's house on the night of her mother's death with the news. Only then does Cullwick recount events from her point of view: how the news was given her by her mistress, her tearful reaction, and then speaking with Phillip in the hallway. In the account of actual events before she returns to her own point of view, she places her parents first, her own devotion to them second, the man she knew from home third, and her unkind employer last. Afterward, rather than linger on her employer, she continues with a long description of her reactions—wishing her mother would come back to

life, “trying to dream of her ghost,” and asserting that she had intended to give her mother her wages. Her account ends with the governess trying to comfort her; refusing to be consoled, Cullwick vows that she will never “play again or bowl the hoops round the garden to please the children” (Cullwick 1872, 6–7).

Her handwriting sheds additional light on the impact of her parents’ death on her. Cullwick’s description of the events surrounding their deaths occupies two and a half pages, the longest passage on a single incident in her autobiography. On the second full page of this passage, Cullwick’s handwriting is larger and more expansive, with fewer lines on the page than usual, suggesting that her memories or her attitude to her dead parents or both are consuming enough to make her forget her frugal mode of composition (frugal in the senses of conserving paper and ink and restraining emotion). By contrast, the paragraph that follows the story of her parents’ death returns to her usual compact handwriting that runs to the right and bottom edges of the paper, some words even bending downward at the right edge. In this paragraph, she simply lists her duties at Ryton: “a deal of hard work” caring for eight children, cleaning the nurseries and passages, boot-cleaning, hauling coal and water up and down stairs, washing, dressing, and getting the children to bed (Cullwick 1872, 7). The page seems hardly wide or long enough to contain the crowded words describing her duties. Perhaps, too, she was trying to compensate for the paper used up by her more expansive handwriting on the previous page. The difference in handwriting and tone between the description of her parents’ deaths and the litany of her duties at Ryton points out a marked separation between her handling of family and personal matters and work.

When she comes to her reason for leaving Ryton, she again uses a “but”: “But what i couldn’t bear was the Missis rushing at me as she did with wild looking eyes, & i told my aunt i was very uncomfortable” (Cullwick 1872, 7). The reason for the mistress’s behavior is unexplained here and not mentioned elsewhere in the text, but it prompted Cullwick to leave Ryton. However, the alternative Cullwick chose—living and working at home without pay—proves unsatisfactory. First, she notes how much she had earned at Ryton, a little over three pounds, which she gave to her aunt “not as i couldn’t o kept it but wanted her to see how much i’d” [I had] (Cullwick 1872, 7). But after working at home, she insists for the second time in the narrative on earning wages rather than performing similar work at home without remuneration: “i begun to feel i was losing time & getting no money, & before the year was out i heard of a place at

Newport” (Cullwick 1872, 7). Not only is Cullwick’s insistence on earning wages for women’s work extraordinary, it also contradicts critics’ tendency to commiserate with Cullwick’s “inevitable” fate as a “drudge,” a tendency that culminates in McClintock’s claim that “Hannah Cullwick’s childhood was the commonplace story of a girl destined for a lifetime of service in Britain’s ruling households” (1995, 141). Rather, “Hannah’s Places” reveals that Cullwick chose and carefully groomed herself for a career in service. In addition, she does not work only in “ruling households,” if “ruling” means either wealthy or titled households: she also works in a variety of middling households and in some businesses run by women of little means and respectability. She availed herself of a range of work opportunities.

Cullwick sought new skills and training in the situations that follow in the narrative, and she commanded a higher yearly wage in each subsequent place: five pounds as a nurserymaid at “a lawyer’s & a biggish house” in Newport and then eight pounds as servant in a clergyman’s house (Cullwick 1872, 8). She describes what she sees as benefits at these jobs: as nurserymaid “i was took to the seaside – to Southport, a long ride & a wonderful thing I thought it & very good luck,” and in the clergyman’s house “the family was very particular & the young gentleman/Master [Scottsman?]/ used to correct me often in talk – i learnt a good deal from them” (Cullwick 1872, 8). Her career advances after working for the clergyman’s family, for “the lady” of the house gives Cullwick a “good character” to Lady Boughy of Aqualate Hall. This is Cullwick’s first mention of a “character,” an oral or written recommendation from the former employer that was a servant’s best chance of getting a good new place. She also benefits from her employer’s connections by moving to a household of higher social status.

At Aqualate Hall, though, her place as “under housemaid” ends when she and another servant are caught “playing as we was cleaning our kettles” (Cullwick 1872, 8–9). Both were immediately released by the incensed Lady Boughy, but she gave a good character of Cullwick to Lady Louisa Cotes of Woodcote (Cullwick 1872, 9). This next place, however, introduced Cullwick to “very different work.” After working in the family’s living space at Aqualate, the dirty, isolated work of a scullion at Woodcote made her cry “when I come to clean the stewpan & great spits & dripping pan & live only in a rough outhouse next to the kitchen” [“and could only get out through the coalhole unseen” inserted after “kitchen”] (Cullwick 1872, 10). This initial reaction to the work at Woodcote is significant, for it belies Cullwick’s embracing of “drudgery” that critics,

following Munby's view of Cullwick, have claimed was Cullwick's natural preference.⁸ In fact, Cullwick indicates that she did not embrace her new position until her work is positively reinforced by another. The cook recognizes her ability—"he said i was a good un to work in the kitchen"—and when he finds out Cullwick had been obeying the housekeeper's request that she help the housemaids in spare moments, the cook makes her go for walks instead (Cullwick 1872, 12). Chosen to go with the cook to London, Cullwick writes that she was "pleaas'd with London, & besides i was more at work in the kitchen, & i thought better for me to learn more" (Cullwick 1872, 13). Thus we see her positive attitude regarding scullery work as a result of outside encouragement instead of preference. Up to this point in her history, she has learned to perform tasks belonging to a great variety of service positions. But like Mrs. Phillips, whose praise caused Cullwick to improve herself even at home, Cullwick adds to the cook's praise what she sees as opportunities to move up in the service hierarchy. Cullwick represents her work under the cook in London as a step up from the isolation of cleaning kettles and scullion work, and as a chance to improve her hirability, which she seizes. Cullwick provides a much different picture of her relationship to her work than the abject drudgery that critics claim as the basis for her victimization or else as the spring behind their vindication of her.

In the winters of 1853 and 1854 while at Woodcote, Cullwick and the cook were stationed at another Cotes residence in Pitchford to help prepare for two "grand balls" with sleep-over company "so we was both very gay & hardwork'd too, for i seem'd as pleas'd to peep through the bushes to see the ladies & gentlemen start as if i was one of 'em" (Cullwick 1872, 14). This reference to "gentlemen" leads directly into her first mention of Munby. Prefaced by her vision of an anonymous face in a cooking fire, Cullwick's description of first seeing Munby in the street is prompted by association rather than adherence to her chronological format. Right after her sentence about seeing "the ladies and gentlemen," Cullwick writes,

at home the kitchenmaid & me had our meals alone in the kitchen & at tea one day i saw a man's face as clearly as could be in the fire, & i show'd it to Emma _ she said, "Ah one of us will see somebody like that someday" – it was such a nice manly face with a moustache—i little thought i sh'd see such a face, much less to love such a face, but in 54 i did see it—it was the day after i'd turn'd 21 & i was took to London again - My brother had been to

see me & i walk'd with him part of his way home—i'd my lilac frock—a blue spotted shawl & my black bonnet on, & an apron. When i had kiss'd Dick & turn'd again & was crossing for the back street on the way to Grosvenor St a gentleman spoke to me, & i answer'd him—that was Massa's face that i'd seen in the fire but i didn't know it again till a good while after. i was to leave London again wi' the family in June—i came back & early in 55 i had to leave Woodcote. i started to London & got lodgings, in the cold—a tiny room it was, for 5 & 6^D a week __ There Massa came to see me again, & there was where i first black'd my face with oil & lead. . . At the end of 3 weeks i got another kitchenmaids place /i forgot to say how Lady Louisa rais'd me first before i come to London last time/ at Lord Shadbroke's, but it was at Henham in Suffolk (Cullwick 1872, 14–16)

To privilege Cullwick's viewpoint, it is crucial to read her account of her vision and early meetings with Munby in light of the cumulative life history she has already given. Cullwick has earlier evoked the complex impact on her development of the social networks of her childhood and adolescence as in her responses to her parents and employers that show she is learning their values as well as their expectations for her. By the time she narrates meeting Munby, her worldview is emerging in her history as she explains events by connecting them to each other and assigning meaning to them. For example, her emphasis on the fact that her parents died on the same day and hour two weeks apart indicates her understanding of their cohesion as mates and sanctifies their otherwise inexplicable departures from her life. She is attuned to luck, as she casts her view of going to the seaside with the clergyman's family. Likewise, her seeing a face in the fire should not be viewed as an isolated occurrence for Cullwick related only to Munby. The face in the fire says more about Cullwick's worldview than about Munby or even their *ex post facto* relationship. In the textual context, we can see that Cullwick links her glimpses of "ladies and gentlemen" arriving and departing at Woodcote to her seeing another anonymous gentleman's face in her cooking fire. But it is only in retrospect, after her relationship with Munby is established, that she assigns a specific meaning to her vision by identifying the face as Munby's. Also of note is that the kitchenmaid, Emma, also sees the face in the fire. Cullwick's inclusion of an eyewitness here who corroborates important life events is consistent with her practice throughout this autobiography. Yet critics have consistently ignored what Cullwick's scripting of this incident can tell us about her worldview.

Cullwick's use of certain details more than usual in this scene announcing the advent of Munby into her life also provides insight into what significance she attached to it. In this passage about their first meetings, as throughout this manuscript, Cullwick's detailed descriptions of her personalized conversation with Emma and time with Dick contrast sharply with a striking lack of detail concerning Munby. He does not figure in Cullwick's account as charismatic or even as an independent agent: Cullwick fits him into the details of *her* life and social network. She acutely recalls the particulars of her dress, her parting with Dick, and her movements through space as she turns away from her brother, yet she does not recount Munby's first words to her or her exact reply: she merely notes that "a gentleman spoke to me & i answered him." Thus, from Cullwick's perspective, we see her response to an anonymous "gentleman" as a fairly meaningless, routine obligation. Her differential use of detail also suggests that she recalls this particular gentleman who spoke to her because it happened right after a rare visit with her sibling.

Within its textual context, this passage reveals a much different picture than critics have suggested. Their detachment of this episode from the text of the rest of "Hannah's Places" has led them to assume that Munby played a charismatic and central role in Cullwick's life from the moment they met. In the published version, Stanley begins a new paragraph with Cullwick's description of seeing a man's face in the fire and ends it with Cullwick blackening her face "with *oil & lead*" (1984, 40). Thus Stanley's paragraphing visually and conceptually isolates Munby's first appearance into Cullwick's life. Easily extracted by Stanley in the print version from its narrative context in the manuscript, the passage has been picked up by other critics such as McClintock and treated as a metonym for the couple's entire relationship.

A closer look at McClintock's scripting of Cullwick's subjectivity is worthwhile because it illustrates pronounced supplementation of Cullwick's writing. After a whole chapter devoted to a psychosexual biography of Munby, McClintock at last gives a cursory biography of Cullwick's "nondescript" life (1995, 141). Claiming she was "destined for a lifetime of service," the brief biography closes with a short narrative that fixes Cullwick as destined to be Munby's sexual partner. Quoting this narrative at length shows the extent of its distortion when compared with Cullwick's original manuscript:

In 1851 Cullwick traveled with her employers to London, the rhythms of her life following the class logic of their seasonal mi-

grations. In London a prescient vision in the fire showed her Munby's face. In 1854, she returned to London, where Munby approached her in the street. When she returned again the following year, she found lodgings in a cold, tiny room: "There Massa came to see me again, & there was where I first black'd my face with *oil & lead*." At Cullwick's instigation, the couple began their lifelong career in domestic and racial fetishism and soon after, Cullwick began to write the first of her seventeen diaries. (McClintock 1995, 142)

Contrary to the picture of herself that Cullwick has created, McClintock rhetorically positions her as physically and psychologically dominated by the employing class—as a helpless follower of middle-class "migrations," a passive witness of Munby's face autonomously appearing in the fire (not a prescient viewer and active interpreter of the face), and the meek receiver of Munby's approach. Taken all together, up to the part where Cullwick blackens her face, this truncated series of events and the way they are cast give the cumulative impression that Cullwick is an empty and silent subject, even compliantly finding the rented room where Munby will sexually dominate her. Furthermore, by beginning the paragraph with the attention to Cullwick's life determined by middle-class traveling, implying that she returned to London with employers again, and insinuating that she found a tiny room of her own away from employers, McClintock suggests that Cullwick's class domination will be completed sexually and in secret by Munby. But after creating such a subordinate subject position for Cullwick, McClintock suddenly turns Cullwick into an agent—and specifically the instigator of fetishistic sexual ritualism. Thus McClintock animates the victim/victor binary in its most fully supplemented form compared to prior critics. After McClintock characterizes Cullwick as a victim of class- and gender-based domination, McClintock makes all the more dramatic Cullwick's purported seizure of the dominating role in the private and symbolic realm of fetishistic sexual practices. In the final event of McClintock's narrative, the phrasing attributes to Cullwick the idea to write diaries when it was in fact Munby's request that she do so. In McClintock's rewriting of Cullwick's story, the diaries become the crowning event in an escalating narrative of sexuality, thus placing Cullwick as a writer in the tradition of the Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch.⁹ The critical debate beginning with Hudson over the couple's sexual practices has finally crystal-

lized into a misleading and titillating narrative in McClintock's hands.

It is worth pointing out that in her manuscript, Cullwick leaves her employer for an unspecified reason but does not return to London, as McClintock's narrative implies, because her employer does. Her wording makes her appear to control her own movements, which is perhaps more important to understanding her as a writer than knowing the reason she left. More important, she does not describe any sexual activity; she doesn't even explain how the relationship had proceeded to the point that Munby visited her. She writes,

early in 55 i had to leave Woodcote. i started to London & got lodgings, in the cold—a tiny room it was, for 5 & 6^D a week __ There Massa came to see me again, & there was where i first black'd my face with oil & lead. . . At the end of 3 weeks i got another kitchenmaids place (Cullwick 1872, 15)

The meaning of Cullwick's mention of first blackening her face is elusive, and it comes as an oddly detached fragment among more mundane details: the weekly price of her lodgings and her next place as a kitchenmaid. The sentence also stands out because of Cullwick's use of capital initial letters and unusual punctuation. Her infrequent use of capital letters makes those she does use emphatic. It is reasonable to interpret both "There" and "At" in the quotation as Cullwick's signaling a new topic. With the second long dash and ellipsis points, the only place in the manuscript she uses those points, Cullwick effectively brackets her reference to Munby's visits and relies on Munby to fill in the ellipsis with his own memory. The placement of the ellipsis points suggests mystery, but Cullwick's text does not confirm any activity except blackening her face. In order to avoid supplementing Cullwick's writing, the most a reader can do is to acknowledge that she paraleptically treats this part of her narrative and move on.

Cullwick certainly moves on. More precisely, she moves back in time through a recursion—the first of two—in order to narrate two important events not involving Munby. These two recursions reveal a shift in Cullwick's attention to her personal life; her family, salient events, and important experiences become the center of her autobiography, and the strict chronology of her work history is interrupted. Both major recursions are structural shifts that directly oppose both the linear format and content of her history of places. She slips out of the mode of viewing herself—or being ever mindful of documenting

her work—from a position of an alien observer (Munby), to discuss other life events that were important to her. When the account of her first meeting with Munby is considered in its context in the autobiography—just prior to her first recursion—it is better seen as an anomalous thin spot within the thickening narrative fabric of her family and personal life than an epitomizing moment, as critics have insisted.

In the recursion following her meeting Munby, Cullwick first backtracks to time spent with her sister Ellen and then goes back further to a stranger's attempt to sexually assault her. This recursive segment begins and ends with Cullwick's writing that Ellen was working under her as a scullion at Lord Shadbroke's in late 1855 (Cullwick 1872, 18). This initial detail prompts her to backtrack to the spring of 1855, when she asked Lord Shadbroke whether Ellen, "hardly 16 year old, but grown quite big" could join her as scullion, to which Shadbroke consented (Cullwick 1872, 20). Cullwick's including this information signals its importance for her: because the events do not strictly count as her own work history, she is departing from her usual topics to include personal information, suggesting that she valued her sister's presence at the work place and that she enjoyed being with her younger sister from whom she had been mostly apart since age eight. Most likely, Cullwick was attempting to provide Ellen with a means of self-support by training her in domestic service.

Accounting for Ellen's arrival at Cullwick's place of employment, however, necessitates the narration of prior circumstances—Ellen's nearly fatal illness "a while ago" when Cullwick worked for the Cotes family (Cullwick 1872, 20). At that time, her aunt had written Cullwick to alert her to Ellen's serious condition, and Cullwick immediately asked for leave to go to her. Cullwick's behavior in this instance reminds us of her response to being absent for her parents' death, though she does not comment on this connection. Unexpectedly, though, Cullwick's arduous journey home through flooded roads to see Ellen leads not to an account of her visit or her sister's condition, but to a strange man's attempt to sexually assault Cullwick on her way back to work. Perhaps an account of Ellen's condition is obviated by the previous statement, in which Ellen is well and working with Cullwick. She next writes, as though arriving at the more pressing reason for backing up, "and it was then, when i come back & miss'd the carrier's cart from Shrewsbury & started to walk that Major Evans offer'd me a lift in his carriage" (Cullwick 1872, 20). Cullwick accepted the ride and when she was dropped off

near Woodcote, the other passenger, whom she later learned was a Captain Humphries, got off too:

The Major drove off & left him with me - in a very lonely place, but i never thought anything bad of him till he offer'd to kiss me & said something about me bein pretty - two men come round the corner just then, but i wouldn't let them see my face, & when they was gone, i said Now sir, if you offer to touch me again i'll do something you won't like, so you go your way & i'll go mine - i'm much obliged for the ride but i don't want you to come with me - i can find my way. He wanted to shake hands but i said No sir, i certainly will not. and he let me go - i turn'd round sometime after & he was standing in the same place. i felt i'd had an escape but thought i would tell no one of it. (Cullwick 1872, 20–21)

This scene is remarkable for its vivid detail and Cullwick's tone-inflected speech. Most remarkable, however, is her composure and shrewd self-defense, by averting her face in consideration of her reputation, behavior crucial for her continued employment. Cullwick's firm resistance to the Captain—not only to his attempt to kiss her but also to take her hand—not only affirms her dignity and independence, but also sends a message to her reader—Munby. Notably, this incident occurred four years before she met Munby, yet in her narrative order it follows her narration of their meeting. Thus she shows Munby that she has asserted a firm sense of propriety and successfully defended it prior to meeting him, and she does so again in her writing “after” meeting him. In these recursions to Ellen's working at Lord Shadbroke's and the attempted sexual assault, Cullwick sets down her personal history with more detail and sustained attention to the causation of events than in her narration of the succession of places.

As if to close off from her professional history this recursion, which more thickly describes events of personal importance than does the bulk of her history, Cullwick begins a new paragraph by restating the claim that began the recursion: “My sister was with me the winter at Henham” (Cullwick 1872, 21). The fact of Ellen's being at work with Cullwick and her encounter with the Captain are causally linked. Notably, they are not strictly pertinent to Cullwick's work history. Other incidents of personal importance such as her parents' death arise from the work chronology, but this recursion (as is the second) is a fleshed-out narrative in which Cullwick assigns causal links as opposed to reporting circumstances such as the deaths and their timing; thus it is quite unlike the bulk of the history and

stands out from a larger canvas like an enlarged detail in a larger canvas. What is more, Cullwick's interruption of her linear chronology in order to move back in time and cover events signals an emerging priority of recounting important life events in addition to the facts of her work history. She will do this again, but for now she resumes her chronology of places, subordinating other personal information about herself and, as before the recursion, only sporadically providing commentary about employers and events related to work. What her account of the next eleven places shows is her increasing resourcefulness in obtaining jobs—by such means as a newspaper ad, the Register Office (twice), the Servants' Home, and Soho Bazaar (twice) in addition to personal connections and employers' connections and characters. For the eighth place in this section, she becomes even more independent by writing to a former employer and getting rehired. After this place, which was for the summer, she writes, "i went to the bazaar & hired myself to Mrs Redmayne"; her sense of owning her labor is complete (Cullwick 1872, 32). Her wages, too, increase from 16 pounds at the first place, gotten from the newspaper ad, to 22 pounds at the tenth place, at a Mrs. Sanders's house. Cullwick's mention of several places that she could have gotten but refused additionally indicate her pride in controlling her employment; she even has enough money to give herself a "holiday" from wage work as she waits for a new place to begin (Cullwick 1872, 32).

In this litany of her last eleven places but one at the time of writing, her employers, all female, run the gamut of social status from middle-class women of good reputations with families to single, self-supporting women of little means. Cullwick describes two employers, polar opposites in character and class status, in more detail than the others. Miss Knight, a self-supporting "lady" of the middle class, ran a lodging house in the resort town of Margate and hired Cullwick for the summer guest season in 1864 (Cullwick 1872, 25). At this place, where her employers are kind and unintrusive, Cullwick writes, "i liked being alone in the kitchen, & my work, & the air at Margate, & used to go regular to church, & could write freely & nicely that i felt quite happy" (Cullwick 1872, 26). (Notably, Stanley does not include extracts from Cullwick's diary during this happy period.) Miss Knight is a friendly employer who openly admires Cullwick's hard work and who—unusually—gives her freedom to go out to a church of her choice and to do her writing in the open. Miss Knight is the employer to whom Cullwick later writes and gets rehired. The complete opposite, Mrs. Bishop is a "vulgar person"

who is never satisfied with Cullwick's hard work (Cullwick 1872, 29). Mrs. Bishop runs a London boarding house—a disreputable occupation for a woman at this time; Cullwick reinforces this cultural attitude with her comment that “there was something about the place so lowlified” (1872, 29). One day while cleaning the hallway on her hands and knees, a lodger steps over Cullwick, calling her “Mary” (Cullwick 1872, 30). The whole unsatisfactory job ends when Mrs. Bishop fires Cullwick after accusing her of not “look[ing] after her interests enough in the board & things for the lodgers,” implying that Mrs. Bishop expected Cullwick to give lodgers smaller portions of food, drink, fuel, and other items to save money (Cullwick 1872, 30). It is notable that Cullwick describes both these women in more depth than other employers. They have in common that, like Cullwick, they were both self-supporting. By contrast, like the anonymous ladies and gentlemen at Woodcote, women employers at the heads of traditional family households, including the other nine employers in this section, are undifferentiated by Cullwick, who mainly distinguishes between them only by family name.

By the end of this account of eleven places, Cullwick's handwriting is more cramped and hurried than elsewhere in the manuscript: several lines are crossed out and rewritten. Cullwick has been writing continuously, attempting to finish her account so that she can put it in the night mail, as she writes in her diary later that evening of July 2 (Stanley 1984, 228). Thus, she briefly mentions her next place from July 1869 to February 1872 and refers Munby to her diary for a fuller account (Cullwick 1872, 34). But before she ends her autobiography, there is an important set of events that she must include aside from her work history. In the second recursion of the autobiography, only pages from the end, she recounts stories of her birth, christening, and first memory—events necessarily omitted when she began her narrative at her eighth year. Like the first, this recursion seems to be triggered by association, as we'll see. First, she recounts the story of her naming, which effectively counteracts the depersonalizing gesture of the stranger who called her “Mary,” the generic name for a female servant. Like this incident, the story of her naming includes a conflict with the proprietary gestures of Miss Eyton, her gentrywoman godmother, but contains it by ending with an affirmation of the Cullwick family's self-conferred identity. After referring Munby to her diary for information on her second to last place (the eleventh in that section), she moves into the story of her christening without a transition. Referring back to an event at Woodcote that occurred earlier in the autobiography, she writes:

I said a lady had never touch'd my hand before the Countess of Shadbroke did but i meant such a lady. it wasn't the first time a lady had touch'd me for it was one who give me to the clergyman when i was christen'd – A Miss Eyton who my Mother used to dress & live with. She stood to me & named me as much like herself as my Mother would let her. Her own name was Anna Maria Dorothea & she wanted mine to be the same, but my Mother said it was [“too,” above line] much out o' the way for mine, & all it shd be was Hannah & that'd be a scripture name, & a plain name & still be something like my godmothers—So that's how my name come to be Hannah – as plain a name for a servant, as could be. Betty Parton who's now in the widows home where my aunt is, says she well remembers the day i was Christen'd for she was in the Church with another child, & how Miss Eyton look'd (Cullwick 1872, 34–35)

Cullwick's reference to an eyewitness stresses the collective nature of memory and identity, and its oral and visual forms of verification, among those in Cullwick's own social network. Yet Cullwick does not linger on the particularities of Miss Eyton's appearance; instead, she moves back further in time to assert,

i was born in 1833, & the furthest back i can remember was when i was 5 year old & Mrs. Neave | my godmother who was married by then | was visiting at Major Moultsie's at Ashton Hall, & she sent the butler to our house with a bible for me & a new print dress for Mother & Her & me was to go up that evening to the hall to see her. i remember it because it seem'd so grand to me & i polish'd my shoes as well as ever i could, & i trotted up by Mother as fast as possible o' purpose to see my godmother who was a lady! (Cullwick 1872, 35)

As before with the circumstances of Ellen's arrival at Lord Shadbroke's, Cullwick makes two recursive moves to tell this story. She begins with the story of how she came to be “Hannah,” which involves her godmother, and then circles back to another memory that centers on the godmother, who was also her mother's former employer. Even as late as 1838, this rural relationship between a member of the landed gentry and a tenant is distinctly feudal, thus revealing that Cullwick's insistence on earning regular wages is a sharp departure from the arbitrary rate and method of compensation (in Bibles and new or secondhand clothing) by the gentry in her hometown. Her narrative of her christening and her first memory, however, reveal her firm sense of a family-based identity shaped in

relation to the “lady” of the landed, employing, and patronizing class. Ultimately, though, her explication of what her name signified to her mother is a positive claim to her social identity as it is, rather than either a declaration of oppression by or a desire to be like Miss Eyton. The christening story also memorializes Cullwick’s mother, whose prerogative of naming her own child asserts an agency stronger than fealty, an agency that Cullwick claims for her family and herself.

After this second major recursion, Cullwick returns to the narrative present to complete her history of places with a discussion of her last employer, Miss Otway, whom she left about six weeks prior to the time of writing. The Miss Otway segment represents the most detailed and complex use of narrative point of view of any section in her history. Cullwick’s rendering of Miss Otway is implicitly critical. For example, Cullwick comments that Miss Otway “rang the bell of her own house” when Cullwick arrives for the interview and meets her as she too is coming up to the house (Cullwick 1872, 40). Then Miss Otway makes Cullwick wait while she goes to pay the housekeeper (Miss Otway says, “when i’ve got money i never like to owe anything”). During the interview, Miss Otway requests that Cullwick keep her voice down because she needs to fire the servant Cullwick will replace, but Miss Otway confesses she doesn’t know when or how she will do it. These details underscore Cullwick’s criticism of Miss Otway’s incompetence as an employer: she does not assume control over her own home, and she breaches boundaries with Cullwick by discussing her finances. Cullwick’s instant doubt about working for Miss Otway soon increases:

Miss O. took me in the dining room - i curtsied to her. She askd me if i could clean grates - i said “Yes mam” & a few more questions, but she says “i needn’t ask about your temper, your face looks good, & Miss Margaret spoke so highly of you i’m sure you’re an excellent creature.” i thought she was uncommonly free & i didn’t like her manner, for a Missis she was a deal too free to last, but i was only to be charwoman so it didn’t matter to me & i was to have high wages & so i was willing to come.” (Cullwick 1872, 41)

The tension in this interaction, heralded by Cullwick’s characteristic “but,” stems from Miss Otway’s familiarity, which breaches the strictly professional behavior that Cullwick expected of her employers. Miss Otway’s “free” comments are also a sign, highly legible to

Cullwick at this point in her career, that this employer will be likely to intervene in Cullwick's personal life, thus making Cullwick expect to have to quit ("a deal too free to last"). But, Cullwick shrewdly rationalizes, because the position is "only" a charwoman, it will do for a temporary employment, implicitly because it will keep her mostly out of Miss Otway's sight by the nature of the work (cleaning), which Cullwick presents as a distinct advantage in Miss Otway's house. Additionally, Cullwick writes that the job was arranged by her last employer, who gave Miss Otway a verbal recommendation. This circumstance allowed Cullwick to keep her written character for a future place, even if the job at Miss Otway's house ends badly: "i was highly pleas'd too to think i'd got work & a place without risking my character" (Cullwick 1872, 41). Cullwick is delighted about saving her written character for future use, as she recounts having told Munby, whom she meets by prearrangement after the interview. The next night, Munby surreptitiously accompanies Cullwick to Miss Otway's, but at a distance, to see if her job will start then; Miss Otway lets Cullwick in and instructs her to stay:

she'd got someone in the parlour, & told me to go down to the kitchen - a more wretched place i never went into - no fellow servant to speak to & only a bit o' candle burning - I couldn't get out again to speak to M. as the front door was shut to & area gate lock'd up - a charwoman come down by & bye - she'd bin doing the lady's bedroom at that late hour | 10 oclock | i ask'd her if i might go out for 1/2 a pint o' beer |after she'd ask'd me if i was come to be Tenant & when i said "Yes Mam" she curl'd her lip & said "i hope you'll like it" i said "is it so bad then -" She said i'll leave you to find that out, for when i get my money | & i shan't go without it | tonight you'll see no more of me nor Miss Otway either, & she won't like your fetching beer i know. i said "it doesn't matter" but i felt very uncomfortable, & sat there stock still, feeling the difference 'twixt it & an hour before with M. in his rooms, & sorry i couldn't just tell him, when another servant come with her bundle, & i found she was used to the place having bin 3 times afore. (Cullwick 1872, 41-42)

Unexpectedly, Cullwick cannot tell Munby good-bye or good-night, for she is locked up in the house and even her desire to leave the house briefly to meet Munby is controlled by the spiteful charwoman and her new employer. In both the interview with Miss Otway and this exchange with the charwoman, Cullwick skillfully shuttles between rendering the outward scene—what she communicates to em-

ployer and coworker—and her inner reactions, including her thoughts and the secret knowledge that Munby is still waiting outside.

The entire section about Miss Otway and the charwoman is important because it exhibits a double, internal and external, narrative perspective. Yet Stanley omits two separate passages about Munby meeting Cullwick after her interview, Cullwick's comments about saving her character, her mention of getting "high wages," and all of the text about the other charwoman. These elisions reduce and simplify Cullwick's complex perspective in this passage. In particular, when Stanley omits the text about the charwoman, Cullwick appears oppressed when she doesn't represent herself as a victim. When Cullwick returns to Miss Otway's house the night after the interview, Stanley's transcription reads,

I was let in by Miss Otway. She'd got someone in the parlour & told me to go down to the kitchen. A more wretched place I never went into. I felt very uncomfortable & sat there stock still, feeling the difference 'twixt it & an hour before with M. in his room & *why* I couldn't just tell him, when another servant came with her bundle & I found she was used to the place, having bin 3 times afore (1984, 52; my italics)

By omitting Cullwick's comments on the lack of servants to talk to as well as the charwoman's disparaging comments, Stanley directs the reader to interpret Cullwick's statement "I felt very uncomfortable" as prompted by the kitchen, and specifically by its prison symbolism. Cullwick's manuscript in fact reveals that her discomfort is caused by the disgruntled, hostile charwoman who has just quit. In addition, an incorrect transcription of "why" when Cullwick wrote "sorry" reflects more of Stanley's sensibility than Cullwick's. Stanley's small error promotes a large misreading, in which Cullwick appears conflicted about confessing something to Munby. This construction of Cullwick is not faithful to the decisive sensibility with which she consistently characterizes herself and does not make sense within Cullwick's pattern of language use. Elsewhere in the document, if Cullwick omits a verb in a predicate, then the last verb written controls the meaning of the clause. Thus, Cullwick is *feeling* the difference between now and an hour before, and she is *feeling sorry* that she couldn't slip back out to let Munby know she must stay the night. Furthermore, Cullwick sometimes mentions being "sorry" and disappointed in her writings, but she never expresses ambivalent

emotions (i.e., wondering why she can't just tell Munby, in Stanley's version, implies that she would like to quit service but is too proud).

In addition to erasing her double perspective, Stanley's omissions promote a deceptive image of a victimized Cullwick, an image consistently fostered throughout Stanley's edition. Furthermore, Stanley presents her altered version of "Hannah's Places" as a framing device for the diaries: by beginning the volume with the two autobiographies, Stanley intends to "provide the reader with a [. . .] general framework within which to locate the more specific material which follows them" in the published volume (1984, 26). Stanley's subtle promotion of Cullwick as a victim, then, infiltrates the reader's reception of the rest of her writings. This has perhaps contributed to critics' tendency to assign Cullwick a victim or victor status, or both.

Gender, Class, and Autobiography from Cullwick's Perspective

Over the course of "Hannah's Places," two patterns emerge concerning gender and class. By reconsidering Cullwick's autobiography as a whole, with its own narrative logic and characteristic patterns, we can see that each pattern is more complicated than the male/female and middle class/working class binaries with which critics have framed interpretations of Cullwick's life and writings. These patterns show that not only are gender and class dynamics dependent upon specific social and geographic contexts, but they also complicate each other. Thus, Cullwick's autobiography reveals a wide variance in interpersonal power dynamics and attitudes, and their impact on her self-representation and portrayal of others even within a single class or gender. This variance is occluded when the autobiographies are approached, in Philippe Lejeune's phrase, "from above," through totalizing theories.

The first pattern to emerge is Cullwick's establishment of personal boundaries, including class identification: she actively maintains a boundary between herself and her employers while aligning her identity with her family and friends. She makes a point of mentioning the otherwise routine act of curtsying to various employers, which signals its importance in her self-characterization. For Cullwick, curtsying is a ritual intended to elicit a certain response from

the other that she can use to judge the other's potential as an employer. For example, when she hears the plainly dressed Miss Knight speak, she can tell she is a "lady" and she curtsies to show that recognition (Cullwick 1872, 25). Cullwick idealizes the female servant/mistress relationship as one of mutual respect, yet her writing shows a separation between her personal and professional identity because she demonstrates a practical understanding of class politics carried out through the universally recognized gestures of professional servant manners. Her best work experiences were with employers who implicitly understood her manners as gestures as opposed to those who conflated her professional demeanor of politeness and obedience with a presumed inherent quality of subservience. Cullwick had reason to expect that well-bred women like Miss Knight would recognize her as trustworthy, physically capable, and expert at her work; employers like these were ideal for her because they expressed appreciation for her work but did not pry into her personal qualities, private activities, or work performance. On the other hand, she makes clear in her writing that she was unhappy when working for women who made assumptions about her character or who constantly judged or managed her work, as attested in her descriptions of Miss Otway as "a deal too free" and the "vulgar" Mrs. Bishop who "couldn't understand" her and monitored her closely (Cullwick 1872, 41, 29). Moreover, Cullwick indicates different levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the work at different places, in contrast to critics' perceptions of her domestic service as meaningless and undifferentiated drudgery for her.

Another indicator of Cullwick's experience of her class identification and boundaries is her use of different levels of detail for describing other people. For example, Cullwick's language is vague when she distinguishes between the "lady" Miss Eyton and "such a lady," the titled Countess of Shadbroke, thus strongly suggesting that she identified very little with these women's social status distinctions. On the other hand, she calls Mrs. Bishop a "vulgar *person*," indicating that she views herself as morally, economically, and socially superior to her because she does not merit even a gender descriptor. By contrast with this vagueness, her use of personal names for family, friends, and friendly coworkers, and of rare capital letters (even for a third-person pronoun) when referring to her mother, stands out. Thus, Cullwick writes about Phillip Blud without explaining who he is, while her "missis" at Ryton, despite her memorable behavior of rushing at Cullwick, is named in the text in the opposite manner—just by status. Additionally, the mode of represen-

tation differs for people outside her kin network. For example, the story of her first memory, going to see her godmother, is one of spectacle witnessed close by the side of her mother; her physical position next to her mother is rendered with more tangible detail than the fairy-tale-like enchantment that her godmother presented to her young mind.

Although not inclined to distinguish much among rank in other classes, Cullwick's accounts of her different places do provide readers with insight into the nuanced system of inter- and intraclass stratification in which Cullwick lived, from the titled Shadbrokes with their elaborate servant hierarchy to lower-middle-class women who run boarding houses. She quickly learned that her own respectability and eligibility for employment was predicated on the social status and reputation of her employers. Her understanding of the variables affecting her image in relation to employers becomes ever sharper as "Hannah's Places" proceeds. But the reverse can also be glimpsed: Cullwick's direct and indirect indications of what concerns her employers, such as her playing while scrubbing kettles, needing to hide her face from passersby when she is being sexually accosted, or serving too large portions of food, points to the confluence of moral, economic, social, and sexual factors affecting social status not just for Cullwick, but for employers of servants in a range of classes. Cullwick's positions also vary from place to place, covering a considerable range from lower positions such as scullion and charwoman to the higher positions of under-housemaid and cook. Such distinctions that Cullwick makes among her positions have been consistently ignored by critics, who categorize Cullwick firmly as "drudge." Additionally, interpretations of Cullwick that privilege the middle class as the main category of analysis tend to assume the middle class is a monolithic entity. Yet Cullwick's mobility among households and businesses at various levels of middle-class status puts pressure on us to attend more to intraclass distinctions. At the same time, Cullwick's pronounced opinions and even manipulation of certain employers should prompt us to recognize interactions between servants and employers as bidirectional, instead of as a unidirectional middle-class control of the working class.

The second pattern Cullwick's autobiography reveals is that specific interactions between gender and class are most apparent in the complex relationships among women that underwrite nearly every incident and place she recounts. The many women who populate her autobiography represent a great range of class, financial, and proprietary statuses—her mother and sister, coworkers of different ori-

gins and attitudes toward their work and to other servants, women who run domestic service placement agencies, her godmother and local gentrywomen, and employing women of many stripes. Additionally, Cullwick's interactions with these women are partly governed by their networks with each other, as demonstrated by the new places she gets when employers recommend her to friends. At the same time, rural and urban differences affect female to female interactions across class lines. Cullwick's jobs in her native area are often obtained through employing women's relationships with one another, or with Cullwick's direct application to an employer like Miss Phillips, whereas in London the means of finding employment are more varied and more anonymous. Through the agencies and in the bazaars of London, strangers can hire Cullwick: in these cases, Cullwick's reading of the prospective employing woman's manners toward her are critical for securing the most satisfying place possible. Attention to the predominantly female interactions that Cullwick writes about adds an important dimension to gender analyses of Cullwick's subjectivity, and complicates critical stances that view her through Munby or focus on their relationship as a metonym for male-female and middle class-working class dynamics of the period.

In sharp contrast to the many interactions with women Cullwick portrays, men figure in autobiography only very briefly and without distinguishing details, with the exception of Captain Humphries. Even her father and brother are only mentioned briefly. We can gather that men did not hold her attention or exert a material sway over Cullwick to the extent that women did. Since women raised children, trained or hired female servants, and communicated their servants' characters to other women, we may conclude that men in Cullwick's life typically imposed themselves very little on her daily life and career. Interestingly, too, aside from a few references to shared experiences with Munby, Cullwick only includes incidents that occurred to him that were compromising—his fall from a horse that injured his head, for example, and his getting lost after visiting Cullwick at a country place (Cullwick 1872, 21, 27). Rather than fitting into the male-female power dynamics that critics have identified as a Victorian social norm, Cullwick's detailed representations of other women reveal that female-to-female socialization was more intensive. While I acknowledge that such feminized socialization is shaped by patriarchal social organization, it is crucial to grasp the practical implications of the female-dominant social and psychologi-

cal fabric of Cullwick's life in order to understand her relationship with Munby.

Cullwick's recursion, after recounting her first meeting with Munby, to the episode with Captain Humphries is an exception to the predominance of women's interactions in "Hannah's Places" that proves the rule. Viewed in the context of female-dominated employment realities, Cullwick's cool-headed ability, when confronted by Captain Humphries, to avert her face from the passing men, and her quick, threatening repudiation of the Captain's advances can reasonably be attributed to the immediate need to maintain her eligibility for work, which was most directly policed by women as the overseers of servants. This pattern, in Cullwick's writing, of female sexuality being controlled by both men and women, with women receiving more attention in her history, was established in her first allusive mention of sexual politics. Cullwick's father first restricts her from serving men at the Lion, but Cullwick moves immediately into a more detailed account of how this new awareness of sexual politics both threatened and empowered her in her successful negotiation with Miss Phillips. Likewise, after her brief and mysterious mention of meeting Munby in her room, Cullwick goes on to narrate in depth how she protects herself from the Captain and from the men passing by; implied in her move to protect her identity from the passersby is that she assumed those passersby would automatically interpret her interaction with Humphries as a voluntary and licentious one. Even an admission of this incident could compromise her professional status: "i thought i would tell no one" (1872, 21). The content of this scene, and Cullwick's disruption of the chronology of her work history in order to backtrack and detail it, shows that Cullwick had a critical handle on heterosexual power dynamics, and that her understanding was more complex than critics have acknowledged because it accounted for both male and female perceptions of and consequences for her. Thus "Hannah's Places" may provide a starting point for reexamination of Cullwick's sexuality in a way that privileges her own insight into it.

In addition to revealing class and gender patterns from Cullwick's perspective, "Hannah's Places" provides insight into her development of self-representational strategies. The effects of autobiographical writing become apparent when attending to the textual characteristics of the manuscript. The trajectory of "Hannah's Places," with its two recursions, demonstrates the effect of writing an autobiography: the more she writes, the more she actualizes her narrative authority. She began her autobiography with her first "place,"

her training at age eight. But after describing every place she has worked and some events of personal importance, she returns near the end to the story of her beginning that she has not yet told. She stresses that her name suits her occupation, for she has at this point in the narrative claimed her occupation as an important part of her identity. Thus, by the end of the manuscript she melds the two main aspects of her life that have come out onto the page, professional and private experiences, into a cohesive subjectivity: her mother's insistence on a "plain" name is a claim to identity and at the same time reinforces her career and work ethic, of which, like her heritage, she is equally proud. In her own writing, Cullwick tells the story of a life that she accepted and interpreted herself; any interpretation of her writing and the life it illuminates should therefore recognize her self-interpretation before adding commentary.

As Cullwick unfolds her history, she also develops a mode of self-representation characterized by a more complex perspective and inclusion of more intimate details about herself such as her first memory and her feelings. At the beginning of the autobiography, she simply names the external markers of her experience of childhood (a sampler, a school, a distinction in clothing), but near the end of her autobiography, she revisits her childhood in fuller narrative form (the vividly rendered sequence of being summoned to Miss Eyton's and going there with her mother) and with an explicit intention: to validate her origins in terms of family. Additionally, her skill in rendering perspective increases over the autobiography, from asides bracketed from the main story to fluidly combining her observations of external action and her internal reactions in continuous narrative. Of particular note is that in the beginning, she brackets her opinion of employers, such as the aside "Miss [Phillips] always used to mean contempt with us in Shropshire" (Cullwick 1872, 3). By the end, though, she more frequently and seamlessly writes into her narrative her frank assessments of others, such as her comment that Miss Otway was "a deal too free" (Cullwick 1872, 41). Further, at the end of the autobiography Cullwick even gains a technique for weaving her critical viewpoint into her narration as she reports with a tone of understated aloofness on Miss Otway's series of blunders, which reveal her character to the shrewd Cullwick.

But perhaps the most important effects of Cullwick's autobiographical writing are revealed in her deviations from her customary work history format. Each of her two recursions represents an insistence on recounting singular events that do not fit into a strict chronology of her places. Indeed, the inclusion, late in the narrative, of

her birth and christening suggests that the act of writing autobiography itself necessitates this claim to identity, which was not initially her need or intention. When she set out to write a “hurried history” of her places, those places were the autobiographical subject, and they were “born” when she was eight. The act of writing about others’ depersonalized perceptions of her, such as Munby’s approaching her as an object of interest and the stranger’s generic view of her conveyed by calling her “Mary,” stirs her to respond by asserting her identity through her own sense of self. The explication of her identity in both recursions requires her to deemphasize her work history and foreground her personal identity and socially embedded experiences. At the same time, these recursions demonstrate that Cullwick derives her identity from the locality and social network in which she was born and raised—that she links her identity to her origins and not to her present relationship with Munby. By the end of “Hannah’s Places,” Cullwick has become—has written herself into—an autobiographical “I” that Avrom Fleishman defines as an “interplay of I-past and I-present,” which “creates a complex psychological narrative structure” as opposed to what critics have perceived as a transparent record of information (qtd. in Corbett 1992, 261 n. 5).

All these patterns among gender, class, and autobiographical writing are saturated with Cullwick’s self-defined subjectivity, and they are discernible not only by reading her text as a whole, but also by taking into account the logic her manuscript reveals. Reading Cullwick’s text in manuscript reveals problems, including reduction, elision, and biased presentation, inherent in academic editing practices; these problems raise questions about editing any manuscript not originally intended for print. Such questions are especially applicable to nineteenth-century women’s lifewriting manuscripts because they were frequently written by hand for private audiences only.

Such is certainly the case with Cullwick’s seventeen diaries and two autobiographies, which remain unplumbed for the wealth of insight they can provide about Cullwick’s almost daily writings between 1854 and 1873. Like “Hannah’s Places,” the diaries show a progression from perfunctory two-line entries in 1854 to longer entries containing reflection, reminiscence, strategically rendered dialogue with employers and others, and theorizing about her life. My analysis of the “Hannah’s Places” manuscript may provide a starting point for rereading Cullwick’s diary manuscripts, which offer a rich opportunity in archival studies. For while the Hannah Cullwick we think we know is a distortion of the collective critical imagination,

an entire box of her lifewritings in the Munby Collection at Trinity College still awaits a close and careful reading.

Notes

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1. See, for another example, McDonald (1992). At her husband's request, Cornelia P. McDonald kept a diary about events at home during the Civil War and subsequently hand-copied the diary for each of her eight children. For consideration of the effects of this diary's audience on its content, see the excellent introduction by Minrose C. Gwyn.

2. One exception is Julia Swindells (1989), who instead examines "how the autobiographical mode—in the diaries and autobiographical fragments—places the subjects and objects in its text (produced in conditions of nineteenth-century capitalist patriarchy), and to see whose voices, whose story, whose history emerges" (29–30).

3. See Stanley 1984, 13–14. Stanley attempts to reconcile "aspects of [Cullwick and Munby's] relationship which might shock, startle or offend some people on moral or political grounds" with her own insistence on Cullwick's autonomy. Stanley first cites Davidoff's argument about sexist and classist attitudes by which Cullwick and her writings were created by Munby, then provides more evidence from Cullwick's writings that supports Davidoff's argument, introduces the label "sadosomachism" for "these elements of their relationship," and finally argues in detail how the label doesn't fully explain the "complexities" of the relationship. Thus, Stanley imputes the sadosomachism label to Davidoff, and later critics, particularly Dawkins and McClintock, repeat the label.

4. Swindells (1989) cogently analyzes the biased reading of Cullwick's writing that Stanley's introduction promotes, but does not address the bias inherent in Stanley's editing of the manuscripts.

5. The increasing focus on Cullwick's sexuality applies also to the trajectory of criticism on the Munby Collection's many photographs. See *Pleasures Taken* (1995), art historian Carol Mavor's intimate and detailed musings on the sexuality she sees in photographs of Cullwick.

6. All quotations from the manuscript "Hannah's Places" are by permission of the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge. Because the manuscript pages are unnumbered, I have assigned consecutive numbers to each page beginning with the first full page of text. For all quotations, I have reproduced Cullwick's original spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and spacing as faithfully as the conversion of her handwriting to printed text will allow. All square brackets inside quotations are mine.

7. I determined that this different hand is Munby's by comparing the formation of the word "Hannah" and the formation of other letters in a photograph of Munby's handwriting in Mavor 1995, 79.

8. See Hudson 1972, 369 and Davidoff 1983, 42–52 for a discussion of Munby's fascination with drudgery and his "training" of Cullwick to embrace it; also see McClintock 1995, Chapter 3, which underlines drudgery throughout the analysis and in McClintock's captions for photographs of Cullwick (Figure 3.13). Stanley (1984) discusses Cullwick's image as a drudge in the criticism and in light of Munby's construction of Cullwick, thus perhaps inadvertently reinforcing the image (12–18).

9. Several factual errors contribute to McClintock's distorted image of Cullwick: in the manuscript, Cullwick sees a face in the fire not in London but in the country at Woodcote and does not recognize the face as Munby's "till a good while after" meeting him (Cullwick 1872, 15). She does not write of her room being cold but of searching for lodgings "in the cold" January weather (Cullwick 1872, 15). It makes sense that she would be sensitive to outdoor cold because working in a hot kitchen year-round would accustom her to very warm temperatures. While these may seem like small slips, they add up to a large discrepancy between what Cullwick wrote and McClintock's representation of it.

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