

Preface to Temple's *Letters to the King*

Textual Introduction

Swift's journey to England in the summer of 1702 lasted from April to September, as John Lyon recorded, evidently from Swift's lost account book for 1701-2.¹ Whatever else Swift may have sought to accomplish, the third and final volume of Temple's *Letters* in chronological series went to the printer, and as Editor, he was remunerated by his bookseller and wrote out this receipt:

Sep^{tbr}. 3^d. 1702

Then received of Benjamen Took the Sum of fifty Pounds
ster^l. in full for certain Papers containing a third Volume of S^r
W^m Temple's Letters; I say received by me Jon: Swift

[Endorsed, on verso, in Benjamin Tooke, Jr's hand]:

M^r. Swift's Receipt
for Temple's Letters 3^d vol
Septemb^r 3^d 1702²

The previous year Swift had already received £30 for the copyright of Temple's *Miscellanea: The Third Part* (London: Benjamin Tooke, 1701), and later was to receive another £40 for Temple's *Memoirs: Part III* (London, 1709).³

The Preface of *Letters to the King* reveals Swift's dismay over the stream of rival publications – no less than three volumes at yearly intervals – threatening his executorship. As Ehrenpreis has noted, “[Swift's] preface sounds hastily written and reverberates with insinuations against competitors.”⁴ On 19 May

¹ Lyon's annotated copy of John Hawkesworth's *Life of the Revd. Jonathan Swift, D. D.* (Dublin: S. Cotter, 1755), p. 36. Sarah Cotter's was the only separate printing of this work. In London, the Hawkesworth *Life* appeared as part of Volume I of Hawkesworth's edition of Swift's *Works*, first published earlier in 1755. Lyon's copy is in the National Art Reference Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, today (shelfmark 48.D.39) (A. C. Elias, Jr, “Swift's *Don Quixote*, Dunkin's *Virgil Travesty*, and Other New Intelligence: John Lyon's ‘Materials for a Life of Dr. Swift,’ 1765,” *Swift Studies*, 13 [1998], 27-104 [p. 28n1]). See also Ehrenpreis, *Dr Swift*, p. 79n1; *Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 146 and n; DAYBOOK, s.v. “April-7 September 1701.” For Swift's account books in general, see THOMPSON AND THOMPSON.

² *Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 146; Swift's holograph is in the Rothschild Collection at Trinity College, Cambridge (THE ROTHSCHILD LIBRARY, II, 610 [2256]).

³ *Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 145 and nn; 250-51 and n.

⁴ *Dr Swift*, p. 79; a view endorsed by Michael Treadwell, “Swift's Relations with the London Book Trade to 1714,” *Author/Publisher Relations during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth*

1699, David Jones had published his edition of *Letters Written by Sir William Temple during his Being Ambassador at The Hague* (London: A. Baldwin, 1699)⁵; in November 1700, Thomas Bennet brought out *The Right Honourable the Earl of Arlington's Letters to Sir W. Temple* (London: by W. N. for Tho. Bennet, 1701), and in August of the following year, *Select Letters to the Prince of Orange (now King of England), King Charles the IId. and the Earl of Arlington, upon Important Subjects ... All Written by Sir William Temple* (London: Tho. Bennet, 1701).⁶ In this context, the logic of Swift's Preface is easy to follow.

Publication took place on 14 January 1703 (*The London Gazette*), three months after Swift's return to Ireland.⁷ Three presentation copies inscribed by the Editor are known today. Following his gift of *Miscellanea: The Third Part* in 1701, Swift presented one copy of *Letters to the King* "To His Grace / Narcissus, Lord Primate of / all Ireland / By His Grace's / most obedient / and most / humble Servant / The Publisher,"⁸ and Marsh (who was nominated to the Primacy on 26 January 1703)⁹ wrote at the foot of the title page: "Ex dono rev^{di} Editoris N. Armach."¹⁰ The British Library owns another, which completes a set of Temple's *Letters* (1700-3),¹¹ and which was presented to the eminent Florentine statesman and scholar Lorenzo Magalotti, the trusted secretary of Duke Cosmo III of Tuscany, whom he accompanied on a visit to England in 1669.¹² Volumes I and II are uniformly bound in blue morocco, gilt, with the ownership signature "March: is Alexandre Rinuccini" in volume II. Volume III, in contemporary calf, gilt, is not a matching binding, however. On the verso of the title page, Swift has neatly written "To / His Excellency, Count Magalotti, / Councillor of State to His / Most Serene Highness, the / Great Duke of Tuscany. / By His Excellency's / most obedient / and / most humble Servant. / Jonathan

Centuries, eds Robin Myers and Michael Harris [Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic Press, 1983], pp. 1-36 (7-8).

⁵ On David Jones, an officer in the English army, see Ehrenpreis, *Dr Swift*, p. 34 and n2.

⁶ Elias, Jr, *Swift at Moor Park*, pp. 218-19n67.

⁷ Swift returned to Ireland in October (*Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 146n; see also DAYBOOK, s.v.).

⁸ In Marsh's Library, Dublin, today; see the facsimile in Sophie Shilleto Smith, *Dean Swift* (London: Methuen, 1910), facing p. 18.

⁹ The exact date of the promotion seems to be controversial (see COTTON, III, 23, and Muriel McCarthy, *All Graduates & Gentlemen: Marsh's Library* [Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 1980], p. 24).

¹⁰ N. F. Lowe and W. J. Mc Cormack, "Swift as 'Publisher' of Sir William Temple's *Letters* and *Miscellanea*," *Swift Studies*, 8 (1993), 46-57 (pp. 50-51).

¹¹ Shelfmark C.28.f.5.

¹² R. D. Waller, "Lorenzo Magalotti in England, 1668-9," *Italian Studies*, 1, no 2 (1937), 49-66.

Swift.” It has recently been pointed out that Sir William Temple, three of whose letters were addressed to the Grand Duke, probably “first put Swift in touch with Magalotti, but the fact that Swift signs himself by name ... suggests that the friendship was not just formal.”¹³ The third presentation copy, which is in St Finbarr’s Cathedral Library, now held by the library of University College, Cork, went to Charles Crow, Bishop of Cloyne since October 1702, a clergyman whom Swift would have wanted to impress. The autograph inscription signed “The Publisher” is “To the Right Reverend / Charles, Lord Bishop of Cloyne, / by his most faithfull / humble Servant.”¹⁴

The entire text of *Letters to the King* was reprinted in Temple’s collected works of 1720; John Nichols added Swift’s Preface alone to the HAWKESWORTH edition of *Works* in 1775 (pp. 353-56). Swift’s addendum to Temple’s letter to the Duke of Ormond of 2 July 1678 occurs on pp. 355-56 of *Letters to the King*. It was first collected by Ehrenpreis in *Prose Works*, XIV, 1.

Historical Introduction

Letters to the King is a bulky volume.¹⁵ Containing 164 letters of Temple’s, chiefly addressed to Charles II, Secretary of State Williamson, and Lord Treasurer Danby, it is equal in length to the two earlier ones combined. The period covered by the letters is that of Temple’s second and third embassy at The Hague from February 1674 to February 1679. Thus, they cover the same period as Temple’s *Memoirs of What Past in Christendom from the War Begun 1672 to the Peace Concluded 1679* (generally referred to as *Memoirs: Part II* [London, 1691]),¹⁶ and it is clear that they were utilized not only by the author in compiling his *Memoirs*, published 30 November 1691, but also by Lady Martha Giffard, Sir William’s widowed sister and his confidante, for her manuscript *Life of Sir William Temple*, “writ in 1690.”¹⁷ All three accounts detail the events

¹³ Lowe and Mc Cormack, “Swift as ‘Publisher’ of Sir William Temple’s *Letters* and *Miscellanea*,” p. 49.

¹⁴ Lowe and Mc Cormack, “Swift as ‘Publisher’ of Sir William Temple’s *Letters* and *Miscellanea*,” pp. 46-47, 51; COTTON, I, 298-99; IV, 24-25.

¹⁵ London: Tim. Goodwin and Benj. Tooke, 1703.

¹⁶ See the bibliography in Homer E. Woodbridge, *Sir William Temple: The Man and his Work* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, and London: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 334.

¹⁷ *The Early Essays and Romances of Sir William Temple, Bt. with The Life and Character of Sir William Temple by his Sister Lady Giffard*, ed. G. C. Moore Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), pp. 3-25. For the manuscript, see THE ROTHSCHILD LIBRARY I, 247 [1004, 1005, and 1007]. See also *Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 113n8.

of 1678, in which the nefarious Joseph August Du Cros was employed to frustrate Temple's diplomacy, leading ultimately to the writing of *An Answer to a Scurrilous Pamphlet* in Temple's defence (1693).¹⁸

It is also possible, as is indicated by the substantial editorial note he contributed, that Swift had another, political reason for bringing the letters out at the end of 1702. For one thing, this gloss expanded a point in Sir William Temple's letter of 2 July 1678 to the first Duke of Ormond, which reported the Duke of York's opinion that "nothing could be more evident than that *France* intended a Universal Monarchy, and nothing but *England* could hinder it,"¹⁹ a view that Temple and Swift shared. For another, it revealed an instructive parallel to the crisis of 1702, as becomes evident, too, in an argument Queen Anne used in her Address to the Parliament of Scotland of 10 May 1702: "The exorbitant power of the French King threatening the liberties of all Europe, and ... tending visibly to the subversion of the Protestant Religion and the ruin of our subjects in all that is dear to them, have obliged us ... to declare war in this, as well as our other Dominions, against France and Spain."²⁰ In 1678, after offering Charles a bribe to support the French in the negotiations at Nimeguen, Louis wrote an unexpected article into the agreement: "Louis, according to what Swift retails from Temple, had required Charles to promise that he would never keep more than 'eight thousand men of standing troops' in all his armies. This demand stunned Charles and ended the Anglo-French *entente*."²¹ Since the evidence was "exactly as [*the Editor*] had it from the Author [Temple]" (l. □), Louis XIV's craving for European hegemony, Swift insinuates, was continuing unabated, and war was bound to be inevitable.

Abel Boyer appraised *Letters to the King* in his *Memoirs of the Life and Negotiations of Sir W. Temple* of 1714, in the course of which he tried to settle old scores with Swift, displaying a nice feeling for irony: "Since Dr. Swift had the Modesty to make this anticipated Apology for the *Faults* in the *Translation* [from French], which, indeed, are many, and some of them very gross; it would be ungenerous to bear too hard upon him upon that score. There is an Error, in particular, which I would not, by any means, charge upon the Doctor; and that is, the mistaking the *Land-Lady* for the *Land-Lady's Daughter*; a mistake, I'm

¹⁸ See the Textual Introduction to *An Answer to a Scurrilous Pamphlet*, p. , and, for a précis, *Correspondence*, ed. Woolley, I, 114-15 and nn3-5, 117n5.

¹⁹ *Letters to the King*, p. 355.

²⁰ *The Letters and Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne*, ed. Beatrice Curtis Brown [London: Cassell, 1968], p. 89.

²¹ Ehrenpreis, *Dr Swift*, pp. 79-80.

sure, he could never be guilty of.”²² Of the 1703 volume, Boyer observed: “By this Preface it appears, that the *Third Volume* of Sir *William Temple*’s Letters were the *last Papers* of any kind, about which Dr. *Swift* had Sir *William*’s *particular Commands*; and therefore it is not to be wonder’d, if the Lady *Giffard* took ill at his Hands, his publishing the *Third Part* of the *Memoirs* before-mention’d, without her Consent.”²³

²² Abel Boyer, *Memoirs of the Life and Negotiations of Sir W. Temple* (London: W. Taylor, 1714), p. 421.

²³ *Memoirs of the Life and Negotiations of Sir W. Temple*, p. 422.