

'I swim like a frog that has lost the use of its hind legs': The Pursuit of Health and Leisure in Buxton, 1781-90

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Abstract: As the eighteenth century progressed, the number of spa resorts proliferated; so too did an elaborate range of leisure options associated with them. Such was the extent of these offerings that the therapeutic qualities of the waters have a tendency to be overlooked in assessments of spa culture as the century drew to a close. Using Hester Newdigate's correspondence and Jane Macartney's accounts relating to Buxton, Derbyshire, this article examines the extent to which the reputation and perceived benefits of a resort's waters determined the choice of destination and the significance of hydropathic regimens during visitors' repeat visits.

Keywords: Jane Macartney, Hester Newdigate, Derbyshire, elite women, bathing, regimen, resort, spa, taking the waters

Hester Newdigate's correspondence with her husband, Sir Roger Newdigate, encapsulates many of the attitudes displayed by later eighteenth-century elite visitors to spas.¹ Much of the routine, including bathing, drinking the waters, excursions, social calls, balls and card assemblies, is described in an engaging and often self-deprecating style:

Wednesday [...] riding, water, drinking and bathing are at an end for the present. I was rather comforted to find it so for I really felt very ill in the night and had a little degree of turning in my head when I got up which I began to attribute not to the waters having had the same purgative effect as before.²

Her observations raise a number of interrelated issues: the significance visitors placed on particular waters in determining their choice of resort; the balance between health and leisure spending; the degree to which individuals followed recommended regimens; and collectively, what these reveal about attitudes towards a resort's medical benefits in relation to its social function. These issues are addressed through the letters of Lady Hester Newdigate (1737-1800) and the accounts of Lady Jane Macartney (1742-1828) during their visits to Buxton, Derbyshire, between 1781 and 1790.³ Newdigate's and Macartney's sojourns occurred at the peak of Buxton's season, and in the years when the resort was most in vogue. Indeed, John Byng observed that Buxton's waters 'depend upon fashion'.⁴ This was also a time when questions were being raised about the efficacy of Tunbridge Wells's waters and when Bath, amid rumours of 'putrid fever' in 1787, was thought to be losing its exclusivity.⁵ The desirability of being regarded as fashionable, however, often obscures a principal and enduring motivation for many spa visitors: the prospect of a cure. It is argued here that this was the case in both Newdigate's and Macartney's visits to Buxton.

Coming at a crucial time for wealthy, leisured British travellers (immediately before Europe was largely closed off as a consequence of war and revolution), Newdigate's and

Macartney's experiences are set within the contexts of contemporary literature and the experiences of other spa visitors to demonstrate that watering-places had multiple layers of significance dependent on shifting individual priorities.⁶ In arenas where women formed a sizeable component of the population, Amanda Herbert for the elite and Paul Langford for the middle ranks both note that spas brought together three motivations in life: health, diversion and marriage.⁷ Neither the aristocratic Newdigate nor Macartney was in the marriage market, but they were in the market for diversion, and for health, either for their own needs or as the companions to sick and infirm relatives.⁸ Rachael Johnson's study of Amabel, Countess de Grey (1751-1833), refines this view by demonstrating how status and the changes wrought by life-cycle stages impacted on female engagement with the spa experience.⁹ Grey's youthful visits to Tunbridge, initially for pleasure and perhaps to seek a cure for infertility, were replaced by visits coinciding with her husband's declining health, and later as a companion to her ailing father. By the 1790s her motivation had shifted again: Tunbridge became a place where she could take life more leisurely and where her own ill health could be attended to. As Newdigate's and Macartney's specific motivations for visiting Buxton correspond closely to the later phases of de Grey's spa-visiting, it is evident that women engaged in those aspects of spa life thought most conducive to their own changing situations.¹⁰

A widespread assumption (but not a universal one) is that by the later eighteenth century medicinal considerations for visiting spas had been deposed in favour of the pursuit of leisure; where taking the waters did occur, it was as much a social as a therapeutic activity.¹¹ J. H. Plumb notes that, although spas themselves declined, people began to 'accept frankly the idea of a holiday for holiday's sake'.¹² Maura Henry comments that resorts attracted the elite principally because of their social benefits, and John Walton notes the dilution of the medical importance of watering-places over time.¹³ Roy Porter attributes this decline, in part, to the 'medical charades' of resort physicians, who, operating in 'vast market places of quackery', exposed themselves to ridicule.¹⁴ Peter Borsay acknowledges their continuing therapeutic significance, but notes that spas were at the vanguard of cultural developments including retailing, social gatherings, the built environment and the cultivation of the picturesque.¹⁵ For Jon Stobart eighteenth-century English spas were primarily health resorts but offered 'an increasingly sophisticated range of amusements'.¹⁶ Undoubtedly, commercial enterprises, including assemblies, news rooms, shops, coffee-houses and theatres, were embraced by those who promoted such resorts and by those who frequented them, but two recent studies also demonstrate the continuing importance of water cures in Bath, Tunbridge Wells and Margate.¹⁷ It is argued here that this was also the case for the more northerly resort of Buxton. Moreover, as hydrotherapy remained the cure of choice for a host of physical and psychological illnesses throughout the nineteenth century, the time frame examined here provides a crucial link between early and later phases of spa development.¹⁸

Although known since Roman times, it was not until the 1570s that Buxton received medical recognition in print, via John Jones's *The Benefit of the Auncient Bathes of Buckstones*, or royal approval, through Mary, Queen of Scots.¹⁹ Even with the reconstruction of the baths (1710-12) and the publication of Charles Cotton's *The Wonders of the Peak* (1681) and Alexander Hunter's *A Treatise on the Nature and the Virtues of Buxton Waters* (1761), however, Buxton remained a very small, isolated settlement.²⁰ It was a second-rank resort, never as successful as earlier or contemporary spas such as Tunbridge or Bath, or later ones such as Leamington and Cheltenham. Yet between Hester Newdigate's first visit to the Hall Hotel in 1781 and Jane Macartney's final visit to the Royal Hotel in the Crescent in 1790, the physical appearance of Buxton changed considerably.²¹ Their

visits bracket a period of transition in Buxton's fortunes when the seasonal influx of visitors could triple the population. The first phase of a scheme initiated by William Cavendish, fifth duke of Devonshire and Buxton's principal landowner, to provide greater facilities for visitors saw the construction of John Carr's neo-classical Crescent with its hotels, lodging-houses and assembly room, and the Great Stables. These large-scale building projects involved significant financial investment, the diversion of the road to Manchester and the rebuilding of St Anne's Well.²² The improvements had a mixed response. James Pilkington thought that the Crescent 'in beauty and magnificence rivals, if not exceeds any other in this part of the kingdom'.²³ Arriving in 1790, when the Crescent was complete, Byng declared Buxton's scenery 'bleak' and the resort 'dreary' and the 'vilest of all spots'; 'The Grand Crescent might better be named The Devonshire Infirmary'.²⁴ Byng was more vociferous than most, but not alone in his disdain; it reassured such people that, while they might visit resorts and engage in their activities, they could still consider themselves to be above the *hoi polloi*.²⁵ To overcome the negativity, and with some success, Buxton adopted many strategies also deployed in Bath.²⁶ With the new developments Buxton offered substantially improved public and private spaces and facilities. Prints of the Crescent set within landscaped grounds, backed by hills, reinforced its *rus in urbe* environment for a discerning audience. The arrivals of prominent visitors were published in the *Derby Mercury*; morality and public responsibility were encouraged through donations to the Buxton Bath Charity and attendance at church services. By the 1780s Buxton was an established and fashionable hydropathic resort:

Among other causes of the frequent use of these springs must be reckoned the increasing Luxury of the Nation [...] and the fashion of the Times to visit [...] Watering Places [...] especially in countries that abound with delightful and uncommon scenes of Nature [...] The Tepid fountains of Buxton are resorted to nowadays almost entirely for the Purpose of removing or relieving Disorders.²⁷

There is no evidence to suggest that Newdigate and Macartney ever met, but they shared a number of similarities: they were near-contemporaries, childless, married to political men and, albeit for different reasons, spent time apart from their husbands. Sir Roger Newdigate (1719-1806) of Arbury Hall, Warwickshire, was the Member of Parliament for Middlesex (1742-7), and then for thirty years from 1751 MP for Oxford University. Hester Mundy of Shipley, Derbyshire, was his second wife. They married in 1776 at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London.²⁸ For much of their married life she suffered ill health (occasioning frequent separations from her husband) and sought relief at numerous inland and seaside resorts, including Buxton, Bath, Bognor, Brighton, Clifton Hotwells and Margate.²⁹ Sir Roger sometimes referred to his wife's infirmity, noting, for example, in a letter to the marquess of Donegal, that having been lame for some time, she had 'gone for the benefit of sea bathing to the coast near Chichester'.³⁰ In 1800 Hester's various ailments were diagnosed as dropsy.³¹ Now associated with oedema, resulting particularly from kidney diseases, in the eighteenth century dropsy was an ill-defined and little-understood complaint characterised by swollen limbs and, sometimes, puffiness around the eyes.³² Roger's comments about his wife's lameness and Charles Parker's description of seeing Hester at Buxton with 'a heaviness in her eyes' are consistent with the dropsy diagnosis.³³

Jane Macartney was the daughter of John Stuart, third earl of Bute (1713-1792) and Prime Minister (1762-3). Her maternal grandmother was the prolific writer Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762). Although 'good, kind, religious and thoroughly

conscientious', she was 'neither clever nor entertaining', but 'conventional' and narrow-minded; she was rather deaf and 'in appearance she somewhat resembled her father, but without the good looks'.³⁴ In 1768, in a match designed to enhance his career, she married the diplomat and politician Lord George Macartney (1737-1806), who had postings in Russia, the West Indies, India, China, Italy and Cape Colony.³⁵ Jane joined her husband in the West Indies in 1776 but on no other missions, perhaps because diplomatic careers were essentially regarded as being for 'unaccompanied' men, or because the Macartneys' marriage was believed to have rapidly deteriorated.³⁶ It may also have been the consequence of Jane's experiences in the West Indies, where threats of French invasions made life uneasy.³⁷ When tension rose in 1779, Lady Macartney returned home, but the ship caught fire in St Kitts harbour with the loss of nearly all of her possessions.³⁸ If, in consequence, she was reluctant to accompany her husband on future missions, she was also aware of the repercussions: 'Shall I go [to India] and make my mother miserable, or shall I stay and totally give up all prospect of cordiality and friendship with Lord Macartney?'³⁹ Although there were periodic reconciliations, and the Buxton excursions may be seen in this light, the couple spent years apart.

The perceived health benefits afforded by specific resorts were important considerations in a person's choice of destination. Medical treatises formed an intrinsic part of this process. They sought to preserve and promote the unique characteristics of a resort's waters, validate claims and bolster flagging reputations.⁴⁰ Comparisons were made between watering-places; distinctions were noted; experiments were conducted on air and water; there were analyses of local climatic conditions; and the views of leading authorities were cited.⁴¹ Buxton engaged fully in this discourse and attempted to distinguish itself from increasingly leisure-oriented resorts elsewhere by a continuing emphasis on health.⁴² Medical and scientific treatises listed an extensive range of ailments that would be cured or alleviated by taking the waters. Chief among these were signifiers of elite rank – rheumatism and gout – but cures extended to stomach and bowel complaints, acidity, want of appetite, indigestion, palsy, flatulence, diarrhoea, scrofula and nervous complaints.⁴³ Physicians reinforced their diagnoses and treatments by utilising Hippocratic 'connexions between fever and weather, season and locality', and guidebooks took up their cause with enthusiasm.⁴⁴ Buxton's exposed position, a thousand feet above sea-level, and fresh air dispelled the dangerous miasmas commonly released by low-lying land, standing water and stagnant pools. Its unpolluted waters were drawn from deep below ground, and abundant rainfall removed disease-causing particles in the air.⁴⁵ In a typical example Pilkington's *Present State of Derbyshire* described the county's climate, contrasting the 'remarkably clear and transparent' air of the High Peak with the nearby plains 'loaded with vapour'. Within the same volume Pilkington also published in full Erasmus Darwin's chemical analysis of Buxton's and Matlock's waters, which Darwin contextualised by reference to John Whitehurst's theory of the earth.⁴⁶ By setting medical opinion and regimens within the wider parameters of scientific theory and discovery, Buxton sought to reassure its visitors that its mineral waters remained modishly efficacious.⁴⁷ By such discourse, and via correspondence, visitors were informed of the therapeutic merits of particular places. This exchange of information remained significant despite satirical outpourings highlighting spurious illnesses and quackery, and the increasing significance of spas as places of amusement.⁴⁸ Prompted by medical authority and declining health, Anna Seward visited Buxton on at least four occasions between 1793 and 1800.⁴⁹ 'I am ordered to Buxton', she declared to a Mrs Jackson and to Revd Whalley; 'My rheumatic maladies impel me to go [...] to Buxton'.⁵⁰ She observed that 'Buxton [...] at present is chiefly peopled with invalids' of all ranks, echoing

John Byng, who commented on 'the generally crippled appearance of the company'.⁵¹ Evidently people continued to go to spas in search of a cure, but the significance of the waters needs to be considered alongside the perceived exclusivity of the resorts, the status of the individual and their desire to be regarded as fashionable.

As she stayed with her family *en route*, Hester Newdigate's decision to visit Buxton may have been prompted by its close proximity to the resort. If the Buxton excursions are examined in the context of her overall spa- and seaside-visiting, however, it seems likely they were occasioned neither by her family's proximity nor by the distinctiveness of Buxton's waters per se. Rather, increasing illness meant that she travelled to whichever waters were medically and socially fashionable, wherever they were. As the eighteenth century drew to a close, she largely abandoned inland resorts in favour of more modish coastal destinations.⁵² Even so, much was invested in the anticipated success of Buxton's waters. Hester's sister wrote to Sir Roger: 'I have never felt so full of hope and confidence in the success of Buxton as I now do [... Hester's] noon bathing seems to have removed all the difficulties.'⁵³ Hester was equally hopeful, but doubted the waters' efficacy. In October 1781, suffering ill health once again and expecting that the waters would have their same purgative effect as before, she was disappointed, questioning 'whether they do so work'.⁵⁴ Similarly, in 1793 Seward declared: 'There was reason to hope, that bathing and drinking the waters would have been of great use; but lo! A violent cold now shivers through my veins.'⁵⁵ Speaking of Matlock Bath, Buxton's Derbyshire rival George Lipscomb offered one (very convenient) explanation as to why waters were not always found to alleviate the ailments for which they were recommended: 'Persons often lose the benefit which might be derived from an early application, and injure the reputation of the springs, by resorting to them in a hopeless state of debility and decay.'⁵⁶ Scepticism and disillusionment regarding Derbyshire's spas differed little from that expressed by those frequenting other watering-places, where hope was also tempered by experience.⁵⁷ In 1785, responding to a letter from his daughter, Lord Bute stated: 'I expect by what you say of the Tunbridge waters this year they have not agreed with you so well, my dear Jane, as formerly.'⁵⁸ Mary Wortley Montagu and Mary Delany also expressed reservations, while Henry Matthew noted after ten days in Aix-les-Bains that 'the only effects produced on me were nausea, headache and general debility'.⁵⁹ Consequently, while the reputation of a spa's waters was sufficient in itself to attract the ailing to a particular resort, there was also scepticism about their benefits. This, however, did not prevent repeat visits by the likes of Newdigate or the seeking of alternative resorts promoted by physicians and guidebooks.⁶⁰

For Jane Macartney the Buxton excursions were occasioned primarily by concern for her husband's health and came towards the end of a fallow period in George's career, between his return from India in 1786 and his mission to China in 1792. In 1784, while George was in India, Jane commented that he 'complains much of his condition in general being [...] weakened by all he has gone through'.⁶¹ In 1785 she commented again on George's health: he 'has had some severe attacks of rheumatism'.⁶² Alongside the rheumatism, George was also troubled by gout. Being wounded in duels in India in 1784 and again in London in 1786 also did little for his health.⁶³ Arguably, the therapeutic reputation of Buxton's waters for rheumatism and gout influenced the Macartneys' choice of destination, particularly as George suffered several attacks of the latter ailment in 1789.⁶⁴ However, most resorts recommended their waters for these disorders, and there were also resorts far closer to London. Consequently, additional reasons for the Macartneys' decision to travel to Derbyshire should be considered. The Georgians believed in the therapeutic nature of travel: journeying into Wales in 1774, Hester Thrale and

Samuel Johnson regarded both it and a change of scenery as essential ingredients in maintaining a healthy body.⁶⁵ Glover and Mitchell both attest to the significance of a resort's proximity to nature in its ability to entice visitors.⁶⁶ By extension, the more distant the destination and the more varied the scenery, the more beneficial the journey. Derbyshire scored on both accounts, and if it could also encompass the Macartneys' interests in nature, landscape and the broader fashion for the sublime, so much the better.⁶⁷ Derbyshire's picturesque dales and the ideal of *rus in urbe* (in which the setting of spas within natural landscapes and the health benefits that would accrue as a result were highlighted in medical treatises) combined to make Buxton appealing.⁶⁸ Like Thrale and Johnson, Buxton's resident physician, Joseph Denman, believed that taking the water 'is greatly assisted by change of air, temperance and regularity in diet [...] moderate exercise, early hours and cheerful company' and that 'Gloomy reflections [which] suggest themselves to the sick' could be tempered by 'the benefit of a ride in some part of the day'.⁶⁹ His Hippocratic view that health was essentially a natural balance reinforced Dr Pearson's declaration regarding Buxton that 'the good effects of exercise are much increased when accompanied with pleasing Scenes of Nature'.⁷⁰

While medical theory encouraged travel, through Macartney's accounts it can also be seen that their excursions followed what was socially fashionable. In 1789 they travelled from London in a barouche with five horses, their personal servants, postilions, coachman and ostler. They visited Kedleston Hall, near Derby, with Lady Macartney recording £1 7s. 'given to servants for showing houses'.⁷¹ Given the state of George's health, they may also have drunk the 'most renowned sulphurous water in Derbyshire' from Kedleston's spa.⁷² The Macartneys journeyed to Ilam, on the Derbyshire/Staffordshire border, and as the road passed the entrance to Dovedale and the latter was firmly on the tourist route, they may have stopped and concurred with William Gilpin that it was 'picturesquely beautiful'.⁷³ The setting of John Port's house at Ilam was considered 'pleasingly romantic', and there they could witness the 'great curiosity' of the Hamps and Manifold rivers re-emerging from their underground courses.⁷⁴ They may also have had a more personal reason for visiting Ilam: Jane's family were well acquainted with Mary Delany, whose niece was married to John Port.⁷⁵ The Macartneys then took the strenuous twenty-mile route to Buxton.⁷⁶ Although much of Derbyshire's scenery had romantic associations, the final approaches to Buxton often drew unfavourable comments. In 1784 Saint Fond thought Buxton was 'situated in the midst of the most dismal and cheerless country' he had ever seen.⁷⁷ Gilpin noted that Buxton was 'surrounded with dreary, barren hills, and steaming [...] with offensive lime kilns, [so that] nothing but absolute want of health could make a man endure a scene so wholly disgusting'.⁷⁸ And once there, things did not necessarily improve. In 1782 Lord Thurlow bathed and drank the waters but, disgruntled with the quality of accommodation and finding little to do, retired early to bed.⁷⁹ Such comments imply that Buxton had acquired a following almost entirely because of the reputation of its waters, but they underplay the significance attached by the fashionable to remote locations, the more positive aspects of Buxton already noted and alluded to in Macartney's accounts, and Ousby's contention that negative accounts often serve to increase a place's popularity 'if only to show that [the visitors] are sophisticated enough to agree' with such judgements.⁸⁰

The Macartneys' 1789 return journey cost £58 8s. 11d., around 38 per cent of their total outlay.⁸¹ Costly travel to an expensive place for an extended stay (particularly one such as Buxton, which, despite road improvements, was still difficult to get to) was thus a conspicuous display of status. It reinforced contemporary views that 'true politeness was to be found in the most remote and rural of settings'.⁸² The relative inaccessibility

of spas such as Buxton, whether occasioned by cost, distance, road conditions or the frequency and quality of transport, was one way in which the elite attempted to preserve their superiority, while also displaying their wealth and leisure.⁸³ The Macartneys' expensive barouche with a fulsome entourage was visible to all upon arrival. Such transport enhanced one's prestige but could also bring forth disparaging comments. Despite protestations of indifference – 'It is very immaterial to us who comes or who goes for we never mix with Company' – neither Hester nor her sister could resist observing the latest arrivals.⁸⁴ When the Edmonstones arrived (the family of a 'Nova Scotia baronet' who would never make it into the English ranks), Hester wrote: 'They are magnificent People indeed, have a most splendid Equipage with supporters & four fine horses, 2 Laced postilions, servants out of livery, footmen I know not how many.'⁸⁵ Elsewhere they detailed the arrival of 'fine Varnished Coaches & Chaises', and their disappointment when their occupants were tradespeople and others regarded as inconsequential: '[T]he most shewy people here are either Lightbodies, Littletails or Hardmans.'⁸⁶ In the card room in October 1781 Hester espied, 'very handsome genteel looking young men, really above the common stamp, but not a Name amongst them. Where can they come from?'⁸⁷ Exclusivity was highly valued, but the reality, often to the elite's chagrin, was that spas also needed their middle-ranking visitors.

Whether visits were occasioned by health, fashion, exclusivity, leisure or a combination of all of these, the structured artificiality of spa life was such that determining where health regimens ended and leisure activities began is not easy. This was especially so when taking the waters and exercise, in the form of promenading, riding and excursions, were both social activities and prescribed aspects of the regimen.⁸⁸ With some variations, Hester had an established routine. In September 1781 she listed her activities:

We rise at 7, drink water till nine, Breakfast, pray at 10, Jumble and trot from Eleven till one, drink water, put on a clean shirt, dine at ½ past 2, write, read, work & play upon the guitar all evening, sup at 8, Bathe at 10 and then to bed.⁸⁹

In July 1781 she:

Had a very good night without the help of opium [...] I arose, drank my water, breakfasted a little past nine [...] Went out in the chaise for one hour, back for prayers at 12. Then into the bath where I stayed 20 minutes and thought it pleasant but was cold as usual when I came out [...] I drank a Bumper of wine and eat [*sic*] a slice of beef [...] and feel quite a different creature from what I was yesterday [...] I have now try'd 3 different times of day for bathing. Think I shall like it best (that is) which agrees best after my morning Jumble.⁹⁰

In Newdigate's regimen, which was not exclusive to Buxton, it was recommended that invalids should 'begin with the smallest quantity of water', to observe its effects and to adjust their intake accordingly:

If the first attempts do not succeed, but the water should appear to disagree, the point ought by no means to be given up hastily. In this situation a gentle emetic may probably be administered with advantage [...] It is not intended, however, to recommend emetics, or purgatives indiscriminately [...] Stray and stimulating purgatives are religiously to be avoided.⁹¹

Joseph Denman wrote extensively on the internal and external use of Buxton's waters. Critical of those who advised drinking three pints before noon and more in the evening, he

suggested a more moderate two glasses, each a third of a pint in size, before breakfast, waiting forty minutes between glasses. Two further glasses should be taken before dinner.⁹² Provided it remained agreeable to the patient, invalids should exercise and bathe frequently, 'assisted by some appropriate medicine' and 'a light supper with a little wine' if bathing in the evening.⁹³ In bathing before dinner, or later, when she found that she had the baths mostly to herself, Newdigate was in accord with Denman, who thought that recommendations for bathing before breakfast both indiscriminate and injudicious.⁹⁴ Instead, 'the time between breakfast and dinner seems the most proper for bathing'.⁹⁵ Finding that the 'Bath Maid' could swim, Hester engaged her services, believing that with much effort she would be able to 'make something out of it'.⁹⁶ Later, however, she noted:

No ground can I gain or more properly I cannot lose it; in vain do I try to throw myself in as she does & skim along [...] The Bathing goes on (I had like to have said swimmingly but that is not true) [...] I can throw myself with a spring forward upon the water and go plump to the Bottom as direct as any Stone.⁹⁷

She was also self-conscious about wearing a cork waistcoat (which was in every respect helpful apart from keeping her afloat), especially when other ladies were present: 'I am going to Bathe but not in my cork waistcoat as I find Mrs Beresford Bathes at the same time'.⁹⁸ Although Newdigate never mastered the art – 'I swim like a frog that has lost the use of its hind legs' – she followed the regimen, and her frequent comments about bathing, drinking the water and how she felt in consequence, underscore the significance this visitor placed on the health aspects of spa life.⁹⁹

Newdigate rose early, drank the waters, bathed, went on excursions and retired early, but her letters reveal other details that complicate the dynamics of spa life and the significance of the regimen to the individual. When the horses were too tired for her to go out in the chaise, she exercised by 'riding up and down the hills manfully'.¹⁰⁰ This was not the moderate exercise recommended by Denman or the genteel activity expected of an elite woman with dropsy. She ate well, often from hampers sent from Arbury containing venison, pineapples, peaches and partridges, sharing them with 'Lord Vernon, Ansons & Bishop of Peterborough'.¹⁰¹ Towards the end of July 1781 Newdigate offered afternoon tea to seventeen people.¹⁰² The receiving of hampers may have been occasioned by Buxton's size and location. Saville-Carey observed: '[T]here is no common market here; so that butcher's meat, poultry, and fish are very dear, and fruit is sold at an enormous price, being brought from a considerable distance.'¹⁰³ However, her behaviour was not just about circumventing the narrow range and high price of foodstuffs to be found in small resorts. By inviting guests into the privacy of her apartments and sharing the hampers, Newdigate was keeping good company and eating well, as recommended, but she was also letting others know that she was accustomed to such delicacies. It was a conscious and conspicuous display of luxury, consumption and status, noted by those privileged enough to have been invited, and also by those who had not.¹⁰⁴ The latter did not look favourably upon the elite absenting themselves from the card and assembly rooms in this manner, believing it to be an attempt to avoid the increasing presence of the middle ranks. Seward criticised those 'who from their wealth and rank, think it is fine to be unsocial, and have their meals sent from the hotels, to eat in aristocratic loneliness and state'.¹⁰⁵ Later she thought that seclusion resulted from a different cause: the new hotels separated the most prestigious guests from the rest. 'The facility of accommodation at Buxton now, enables the Aristocracy of the Crescent to abstract themselves from the General Company, and keep their own, unwholesome, topsy-turvy hours', she wrote.¹⁰⁶

Withdrawing from a resort's social life, however, was widespread and fashionable among the elite, particularly if their declared motivation was health-related or if, like the bluestockings Elizabeth Carter and Elizabeth Vesey, they used the privacy afforded by spa accommodation (often unavailable at home) to write without interruptions.¹⁰⁷ Hester was aware that such seclusion could occasion derisive sentiments – 'I dare say we are abused for shutting ourselves up' – but, in contrast to Elizabeth Montague at Tunbridge, she was reluctant to engage in temporary friendships, preferring instead the companionship of a small group of known people.¹⁰⁸ She offered a justification, while recognising that it was a balancing act:

[I]f I feel pretty well we will attend [...] for an hour in the Card Room for I find People think we are Sulky & proud, that we keep so close in our hole. I deny that charge but believe [...] time too precious a commodity to squander away in civilities to people that we neither expect nor wish to see again. I don't like to be abused neither, so will try to steer [sic] between the two extremes.¹⁰⁹

The social life of a resort was undeniably part of its attraction, but withdrawing from that sociability or choosing when to participate because you could afford to do so was regarded by some as the real mark of status.

Newdigate's regimen followed closely the recommendations given in Denman's *Observations*, but she also disregarded such advice when it suited her to be more sociable, or when she thought the regimen was insufficient: 'We had a famous ball last night.'¹¹⁰ There were 'Cotillions morning, noon and night' and, on occasion, 'Singing, and drinking champagne till 4 o'clock in the morning [...] Gallons of wine [...] were swallow'd.'¹¹¹ When bathing and drinking the waters failed to alleviate her distress, Newdigate self-medicated by consuming opium and emetics in substantial quantities. On 15 October 1781, unable to sleep, she took three opium pills at two in the morning, but, finding they increased her restlessness, she took two more at four, believing that the initial three had been too small a quantity: 'I thought I might go on taking two every two hours till they procured sleep and proceeded as far as number nine [...] no sleep came but my head was confused and I was sick.' Later she suffered 'violent sickness, nervous sinkings and cold sweats'. Recognising her folly, she sent for Samuel Buxton, an apothecary, who gave her a 'strong nervous draft'.¹¹² It was not an isolated occurrence; in July 1781 she had also resorted to an emetic and six opium pills to cure a headache.¹¹³

While Newdigate may have been genuinely ill, spa and seaside resorts provided fertile environments for the hypochondriac and the hysteric, the melancholic and the vaporous, to indulge their imaginations.¹¹⁴ In her letters it is difficult to disentangle the reality of Newdigate's condition from the drug-induced symptoms, and from the possibility that some ailments were specious. Her maladies – stomach aches, sleeplessness, headaches, vomiting and fatigue – could all be attributed to the fashion for feigned illnesses among the middling and elite ranks. Comments about attending events if she felt well enough and her disdain about spending time with people she did not wish to engage with intimate that Newdigate was also capable of using illness to her advantage, as a form of self-fashioning, and as a signifier of her elevated status.¹¹⁵ Those deploying such tactics could find themselves mocked. Monaghan cites the contributor to *The Lady's Magazine* (December 1795) who commented on fashionably sick women who, living only upon drugs, with weak stomachs and delicate constitutions, thought it 'indecent to enjoy a perfect state of health' and were, in consequence, 'indisposed at least three days in a week'.¹¹⁶ Newdigate, however, distanced herself from such sentiments by writing

enthusiastically about the occasions when she felt well, when she had rested without the usual torments, when her appetite was good and on the excursions and exercise she undertook. Her behaviour and diverse interactions with the resort's offerings display a complex response to spa-visiting. Buxton had been chosen because ill health obliged her to seek a cure and because she hoped the waters would prove beneficial, but she remained sceptical. She placed faith in her physician and followed his recommendations but consumed additional tonics, emetics and purgatives as she saw fit. She went to Buxton because it was fashionable, did largely what was deemed to be appropriate for an elite woman but often shut herself away from the more public aspects of resort life and thereby risked opprobrium. Whether her symptoms were real, feigned or drug-induced, however, throughout her letters it is evident that Hester's quest for a resolution to her ill health remained paramount.

Spas attracted the ailing, but successful rural resorts also had to tempt visitors with more than just the prospect of a cure. To paraphrase Borsay, to catch the imagination of polite society the ailing, the healthy, the curious, the educated and the elite had to be offered unrivalled opportunities to indulge and satisfy their interests.¹¹⁷ Aside from Buxton's medicinal and social attractions, the region offered a plethora of caves, caverns, hills, dales, mills and estates, including Chatsworth. Occasionally Newdigate alludes to the costs of this wider spa experience, but she rarely elaborates. Visiting a Sheffield silver-plate manufactory, she made herself 'rich in conveniences' by giving 'full scope to extravagance', and in the same letter stated the cost of a week's stay: £13 14s. – 'Too much, but I don't know how to lessen the expense, without lessening Comforts'.¹¹⁸ In 1790 John Byng's stay at the Royal Hotel coincided with the Macartneys'. He was splenetic about the cost but, like Newdigate, was not specific about individual expenses. Buxton's short season meant that hoteliers and innkeepers were out 'to make a quick harvest, from the many people that must come, and from the many that choose to come'.¹¹⁹ Byng explored Buxton's surroundings, but was 'obliged to pay for my board and lodgings of every day that I have been absent, besides all the &c's [...] a longer abode would be folly; and the expense of this one week alarming'.¹²⁰ Within this context Macartney's accounts are invaluable. Dividing them into five broad categories – travel, accommodation, health, excursions and conspicuous consumption – makes it possible to determine the ratio of health expenditure to other costs. In 1789 the total recorded expenses amounted to £147 11s. 7d.¹²¹ Accommodation at the Royal Hotel included two bedrooms, a drawing room, a bedroom each for Lady Macartney's maid and for his lordship's servant and a further room for the other male servants. Occupying a suite of rooms underlined their status. For their month-long visit accommodation totalled £13 5s. 6d.¹²² Separate charges (Byng's '&c's') were made for tea, coffee, breakfasts, dinners and suppers for themselves and their servants, wine, coal for fires (even though it was summer), washing and wax and tallow candles. Payments were made to the waiter who attended the servants, to the chambermaid, shoeblick, saddler, stable boy and blacksmith. In the week ending 26 July 1789 these extras amounted to £10 14s. 10d. Expenditure on accommodation and extras accounted for 39 per cent of their visit, but how does health expenditure compare?

Physicians and apothecaries were often criticised for duping and swindling the public, and for encouraging spa visitors to extend their stays beyond what was required.¹²³ Even when medical practitioners were accorded respect, in their correspondence, and while bemoaning the expense such advice and treatments incurred, patients were rarely specific about costs. Gauging the importance of medical and hydropathic costs in relation to overall spa expenditure, therefore, can be problematic, as judgements are often based on

perceptions rather than reality. Macartney's accounts, however, reveal that £3 11s. was spent on George's bathing (effectively meaning that George bathed daily, reinforcing the importance of the hydropathic regimen), 5s. on the apothecary's bills and £2 7s. on doctor's bills.¹²⁴ Two amounts of 10s. 6d. each were paid to the 'woman at the well' and to the bathing assistants. Jane recorded no health-related expenditure specifically for herself, but it is likely that she drank the waters also.¹²⁵ While these were not inconsiderable sums, they represent around 5.5 per cent of their total expenditure. For their three-week stay in 1790 documented health expenditure totalled £1 19s. for George's bathing, 10s. 6d. to the 'woman at the well' and the same to the bathing assistants.¹²⁶ This was marginally under 3 per cent of their outlay. No amounts were recorded for medical or apothecary bills, suggesting that health was a less significant factor on this occasion. Although concerns over George's health may have initiated the Macartneys' visits, in terms of overall spending in 1789 it equated to around two-thirds of the amount spent on accommodation but nearly double the amount spent on two excursions. One was to Lyme Hall on the Derbyshire/Cheshire border, costing 2s. 11d., and a more extravagant one to Castleton at £4 0s. 5d., presumably to visit the caverns, suggesting that what irked contemporaries were not the medical costs per se but the fact that they felt obliged to pay them.¹²⁷ Perhaps they suspected that the treatments and potions were dubious and yet, fearful of the consequences to their health if they did not follow the regimen, paid what was asked. Given the low overall percentage outlay, it is tempting to downplay the importance of the regimen to the individual, but as Newdigate's and George Macartney's routines exemplify, the cost in terms of time could be substantial.

In contrast to more familiar, negative assessments of Buxton, Macartney's accounts cast a positive light on the nature and quality of goods and services available. In Buxton both Byng ('the shops exhibit no temptation, like those of Tunbridge') and Saville-Carey ('[T]he libraries here are small, nor are there any shops that can boast a respectable appearance') dismissed what for many were key components of leisure resorts.¹²⁸ Other writers, including Pilkington (1789) and Aikin (1795), made no mention at all of shops when discussing Buxton's attractions.¹²⁹ Yet the Crescent, aside from the hotels, housed luxury shops, and the *Universal British Directory* (1790-98) indicates the presence of a range of luxury goods and service providers.¹³⁰ Out of fifty-five businesses, twenty-two (40 per cent) catered to the needs of Buxton's well-heeled visitors: two doctors, a linen draper and a milliner were in residence for the season only. There were also resident surgeon-apothecaries, jewellers, hairdressers, perfumers, a toyman, a druggist, an engraver and petrificationers, whose sole function was to supply 'opulent visitants who resort thither for the waters [... with] fluor spars [...] turned into small [...] vases, columns, eggs, pears and watches, and cut into pyramids, pedestals &c'.¹³¹ In 1789 conspicuous consumption and leisure-related activities accounted for around 9 per cent of the Macartneys' spending, almost double that recorded for health. There were purchases of a dress, gloves and millinery, inkstands, petrifications, a backgammon board and books. An additional 6s. 10d. was recorded under the heading of 'paid little bills for myself'.¹³² In 1790 2 guineas were expended on subscriptions to the assembly room. Tickets for herself and her servants were purchased for Sheridan's *The Rivals*, performed by the 'desire of Lord and Lady Macartney'.¹³³ It was also customary for overnight visitors to make charitable contributions of a shilling to enable the poor to bathe.¹³⁴ Macartney recorded these contributions, for example, in the week ending 11 June 1790, next to which she remarked 'forgot money to the poor'.¹³⁵ She also made additional donations: on 25 July 1789 she recorded 'paid for cakes and gave away', and the giving away of 3 shillings.¹³⁶ In the two visits the value of the shilling donations and the money and cakes given away

amounted to 12 shillings and accords with Jane Macartney's wider charitable activity.¹³⁷ The entries in Macartney's accounts place health expenditure in perspective: it may have been costly, but it represents a fraction of their overall outlay.

Resorts bolstered their reputations through the claims made for their waters, and ill health featured in many people's decision-making before embarking on a spa visit. Ill health also dictated how people spent much of their time while there. Equally, the addition of multiple leisure-related activities contributed significantly to their allure, and some resorted to them entirely for just such purposes. During her time at Ashbourne Hall in 1798 Elizabeth Canning wrote with mounting expectation of her imminent trip to Buxton (and disappointment when it failed to materialise). Throughout her stay plans were being made to attend assemblies in the Crescent. She complimented herself on having adapted a muslin dress in preparation: 'it now looks most tasty as a dancing dress'.¹³⁸ There is no hint of ill health: just a young woman looking forward to a week-long holiday.

Like other spas, eighteenth-century Buxton developed in neo-classical style and drew heavily on Hippocratic notions of air, water and setting to validate the therapeutic qualities of its waters.¹³⁹ In so doing, it became fashionable: 'Its salubrious waters make it resorted to by the sick, and the accommodation and amusements make it agreeable to those who come with the sick.'¹⁴⁰ Although doubts were expressed, and despite the quackery and the emphasis on leisure, the anticipated benefits of regimens remained prominent features of spa-visiting. Many believed in the efficacy of the waters either for themselves or for their companions. In a role-reversal from their 1781 visits, and not withstanding her own experience of taking the waters, Newdigate's excursion to Buxton in 1784 was as companion to her sister Nelly, who was recovering from a serious illness.¹⁴¹ Byng and Seward expressed their disquiet at the sight of so many incapacitated people, but the continuing presence of the latter offers further evidence of the sustained importance of the waters at resorts at the end of the eighteenth century.

Rural spas were founded on ill health, promoted by medical treatises and enterprising individuals, and flourished or fell according to the whims of fashion. They were, in effect, theatres with artfully constructed backdrops set within natural environments in which the healthy and the ailing could perform their allotted roles.¹⁴² Spas offered entertainment and distraction, while simultaneously being places where it was acceptable among the elite for fashion to act as the indispensable partner to illness. For the likes of Newdigate and the Macartneys their staged encounters and rituals in the pursuit of health and leisure were governed in large measure by the regimen. Without health as a key consideration the sociable spaces of second-rank resorts would have been insufficient to attract and keep resident the elite for sustained periods, as evidenced in Macartney's comparatively limited expenditure on conspicuous consumption in Buxton and summed up by Newdigate's comment regarding the arrival of the party accompanying Lord Shelburne's son: 'What will they find to do?'¹⁴³ Newdigate's eschewing of many of the wider social aspects of Buxton could be interpreted as super-elitism, yet it is evident that her purpose in going was to seek a cure by following the regimen as others did, generally at the same time and in the same places. Relentless schedules exemplify the privileges enjoyed by the wealthy and the leisured, but they also formed an admirable series of distractions from the ill health that had drawn people there in the first place. The fashionable status of particular watering-places and the timing of visits were undoubtedly important in an individual's choice of destination, but so too was the search for health, which remained a primary consideration for many late eighteenth-century spa visitors.

NOTES

Thanks to Jo Taylor for comments on an earlier version of this article.

1. Warwickshire Record Office (WRO), Newdegate of Arbury Papers, CRO136/B2726-2803, 1781. All Hester Newdigate's letters were addressed to her husband, Sir Roger Newdigate. The Buxton letters, usually written over several days, also contain correspondence from her sister Nelly Mundy and from Charles Parker. There is a published edition: Lady Anne Emily Garnier Newdigate-Newdegate, *The Cheverels of Cheverel Manor* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1898).

2. WRO, CRO136/B2803, Hester Newdigate, 3 October 1781.

3. Newdigate is mentioned briefly in Phyllis Hembry, *The English Spa, 1560-1815* (London: Athlone Press, 1990), p.217, 220, but her short stays at Buxton have been eclipsed by her husband's extensive correspondence covering more than seventy years: Sir Roger Newdigate, *The Correspondence of Sir Roger Newdigate of Arbury Warwickshire*, ed., A. W. A. White, vol. XXXVII (Stratford upon Avon: Dugdale Society, 1995). At just twelve barely filled pages Macartney's account book looks initially unpromising. No letters by her from Buxton survive. She was neither as prolific nor as gifted a letter-writer as her grandmother Mary Wortley Montagu or her sister Louisa Stuart: Oxford, Bodleian Library (Bodl), MS Eng. Misc. e880, Lady Macartney's Accounts of her Expenses at Buxton, 1789-90.

4. John Byng, *The Torrington Diaries, Containing the Tours through England and Wales of the Hon. John Byng between the Years 1781 and 1794*, 4 vols, ed. C. Bryan Andrews (London: Methuen, 1970), vol. II.186.

5. Louisa Stuart to Elizabeth, duchess of Buccleuch, Bath, 8 November 1787, in Mrs Godfrey Clark (ed.), *Gleanings from an Old Portfolio Containing some Correspondence between Lady Louisa Stuart and her Sister Caroline, Countess of Portarlington and Other Friends and Relations, 1785-1799*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: Douglas, 1895), vol. II.96; Rachael Johnson, 'Spas and Seaside Resorts in Kent, 1660-1820', PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2013, p.240; Anita Gorman, 'Seeking Health: The City of Bath in the Novels of Jane Austen', in Annick Cossic and Patrick Galliou (eds), *Spas in Britain and France in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006), p.324-5; Roy Porter, *Bodies Politic: Disease, Death and Doctors in Britain, 1650-1900* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), p.165; Brigitte Mitchell, 'English Spas', *Bath History* 1:8 (1986), p.196.

6. Newdigate visited in the summer and autumn of 1781, and in the summer of 1784. The Macartneys arrived for a four-week stay on 13 July 1789, the eve of the storming of the Bastille. They returned to Buxton in June 1790. Contrasting experiences and expectations of Buxton feature in Byng, *Torrington Diaries*, vol. II, Anna Seward, *Letters of Anna Seward*, 6 vols (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable & Co., 1811), and Dr Joseph Denman, *Observations on the Effects of Buxton Water* (London, 1793).

7. Amanda Herbert, *Female Alliances: Gender, Identity, and Friendship in Early-Modern Britain* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), p.117-27; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.102.

8. Annick Cossic, 'The Female Invalid and Spa Therapy in Some Well-Known Eighteenth-Century Medical and Literary Texts: From John Floyer's *The Ancient Psychrolousia Revived* (1702) to Fanny Burney's *Evelina* (1778)', in Cossic and Galliou (eds), *Spas in Britain and France*, p.115.

9. Rachael Johnson, '"Now the Scene Appears Chang'd": Amabel, Countess de Grey, Lifecyles and the Visitor Experience of English Watering Places, 1775-1826', *Cultural and Social History* 13:2 (2016), p.1-16.

10. Herbert, *Female Alliances*, p.118-28.

11. See, for example: Rosemary Sweet, *The English Town* (London: Routledge, 2014), p.22-4; Alain Kerhervé, 'Writing Letters from Georgian Spas: The Impressions of a Few English Ladies',

in Cossic and Galliou (eds), *Spas in Britain and France*, p.277; Peter Borsay, 'Health and Leisure Resorts'; and Hembry, *English Spa*, p.129, 303.

12. J. H. Plumb, 'The Commercialisation of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England', in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialisation of Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Europa, 1982), p.283.

13. Maura Henry, 'The Making of Elite Culture', in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p.326; John Walton, 'Health, Sociability, Politics and Culture. Spas in History, Spas and History: An Overview', *Journal of Tourism History* 4:1 (2012), p.9.

14. Porter, *Bodies Politic*, p.167, 169.

15. Peter Borsay, 'British Spas and the Urban-Rural Interface', *Journal of Tourism History* 4:2 (2012), p.155-6; Borsay, 'Health and Leisure Resorts', p.789-90, 798; Peter Borsay, 'Image and Counter Image in Georgian Bath', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 17:2 (1994), p.165-6.

16. Jon Stobart, 'In Search of a Leisure Hierarchy: English Spa Towns and Their Place in the Eighteenth Century Urban System', in Peter Borsay, Ruth Elizabeth Mohmann and Gunther Hirschfelder (eds), *New Directions in Urban History: Aspects of European Art, Health, Tourism and Leisure since the Enlightenment* (New York: Waxmann, 2000), p.19.

17. Rose McCormack, 'Leisured Women and the English Spa Town in the Long Eighteenth Century: A Case Study of Bath and Tunbridge Wells', PhD diss., University of Aberystwyth, 2015; Johnson, 'Spas and Seaside Resorts'.

18. Thomas Carlyle and Charles Darwin both undertook hydropathic regimens: Porter, *Bodies Politic*, p.162-5.

19. Mike Langham, *Buxton: A People's History* (Lancaster: Carnegie Publishing, 2001), p.1.

20. In 1789, excluding visitors, Buxton contained 238 inhabitants and seventy-seven houses: Hembry, *English Spa*, p.222; James Pilkington, *A View of the Present State of Derbyshire with an Account of its Most Remarkable Antiquities*, 2 vols (Derby: 1789), vol. I.215.

21. On Buxton's development see Langham, *Buxton*, and Ivan Hall, *Georgian Buxton* (Matlock: Derbyshire Museum Service, 1984).

22. Hall, *Georgian Buxton*, p.19-23.

23. Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, vol. I.214.

24. Byng, *Diaries*, vol. II.167, 184, 186. See also Barthélemy de Saint Fond, *Travels in England and Scotland and the Hebrides Undertaken for the Purpose of Examining the State of the Arts, the Sciences, Natural History and Manners in Great Britain*, 2 vols (London, 1799), vol. II.266; Staffordshire Record Office (SRO), Sutherland Papers, D868/10/23, Lord Thurlow to Granville, second Earl Gower, 1782; D868/10/25, Lord Thurlow to Granville, second Earl Gower, [1782?]; and D868/10/25, Lord Thurlow to Granville, second Earl Gower, Saturday [1782?]. Simultaneous positive and negative images of resorts were commonplace: Borsay, 'Image and Counter Image', p.165-80.

25. McCormack, 'Leisured Women', p.126-7.

26. Borsay, 'Image and Counter Image', p.165-79.

27. George Pearson, *Observations and Experiments for Investigating the Chymical History of the Tepid Springs of Buxton*, 2 vols (London, 1784), vol. I.13. See also Denman, *Observations*, p.88, and Alexander Hunter, *A Treatise on the Nature and the Virtues of Buxton Waters* (London, 1761).

28. Newdigate, *Correspondence*, p.xlii.

29. Newdigate, *Correspondence*, p.li, 269-70 n.2, 292.

30. Newdigate, *Correspondence*, p.269.

31. Newdigate, *Correspondence*, p.299.

32. Steven Peitzman, *Dropsy, Dialysis, Transplant: A Short History of Failing Kidneys* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), p.8-12.

33. WRO, CROI36/B2734, Charles Parker to Roger Newdigate, 15 July 1781.

34. Helen Macartney-Robbins, *Our First Ambassador to China: An Account of the Life of George, Earl of Macartney with Extracts from His Letters, and the Narrative of His Experiences in China, as Told by Himself, 1737-1806* ([London, 1908] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) p.49, 52.
35. Robbins, *First Ambassador*, p.49; George Macartney was envoy-extraordinary to St Petersburg (1764-7), chief secretary for Ireland (1769-72), governor of Grenada, the Grenadines and Tobago (1775-9), governor of Madras (1780-85), ambassador to China (1792-4), a diplomat in Verona (1795-6) and governor of Cape Colony (1796-8); Roland Thorne, 'George, Earl Macartney', in C. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
36. Jennifer Mori, *The Culture of Diplomacy: Britain in Europe, c.1750-1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p.63.
37. Robbins, *First Ambassador*, p.98-9, 103-8.
38. Robbins, *First Ambassador*, p.111.
39. Lady Macartney to Lady Carlow, 1 May 1785, *Gleanings*, vol. II.20.
40. Sweet, *English Town*, p.22; Brigitte Mitchell, 'English Spas', *Bath History* 1:8 (1986), p.195; Langford, *Polite and Commercial People*, p.102.
41. For example: Pearson, *Observations*; Denman, *Observations*; and George Lipscomb, *A Description of Matlock Bath with an Attempt to Explain the Causes of the Heat and of the Petrifying Quality of the Springs to Which Is Added Some Account of Chatsworth and Kedleston, and the Mineral Waters of Quarndon and Kedleston* (Birmingham, 1802). See also Hembry, *English Spa*, p.302, 310.
42. Langham, *Buxton*, p.1.
43. Denman, *Observations* (2nd edn, 1801), p.86-100; Cossic, 'Female Invalid and Spa Therapy', p.116-17.
44. Roy Porter, *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind: A Medical History of Humanity from Antiquity to the Present* (London: Fontana, 1999), p.60.
45. Porter, *Greatest Benefit to Mankind*, p.259; Che Binder, 'A Tour of the Peak: Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Derbyshire, c.1700-1850', PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2011, p.61.
46. Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, vol. I.30, 256-75.
47. Binder, 'Tour of the Peak', p.55.
48. McCormack, 'Leisured Women', p.41, 44-5; Porter, *Bodies Politic*, p.164-9; Plumb, 'Commercialisation of Leisure', p.284.
49. Kerhervé, 'Writing Letters', p.268.
50. Seward to Jackson, 3 May 1793, Seward, *Letters*, vol. III.226; Seward to Whalley, 3 July 1798, Seward, *Letters*, vol. V.128.
51. Seward to Mr Saville, 10 June 1793, Seward, *Letters*, vol. III.254; Byng, *Diaries*, vol. II.189.
52. Newdigate, *Correspondence*, p.xliii, li, 269; Porter, *Bodies Politic*, p.165-6.
53. WRO, CRO136/B2728b, Nelly Mundy to Roger Newdigate, 9 July 1781.
54. WRO, CRO136/B2803, Hester Newdigate, 3 October 1781.
55. Seward to Mrs Adey, 4 June 1793, Seward, *Letters*, vol. III.255.
56. Lipscomb, *Matlock Bath*, p.33-4.
57. Langford, *Polite and Commercial People*, p.103.
58. Bute to Jane Macartney, 13 September 1785, *Gleanings*, vol. II.51.
59. Kerhervé, 'Writing Letters', p.275-6; Henry Matthew, *Diary of an Invalid: Journal of a Tour in Pursuit of Health, 1817-19* ([1820] Stroud: Non Such Publishing, 2005), p.277.
60. For example, Dr Richard Russell, *A Dissertation Concerning the Use of Sea Water in Diseases of the Glands* (Oxford, 1753).
61. Lady Macartney to Lady Carlow, 2 August 1784, *Gleanings*, vol. I.264.
62. Lady Macartney to Lady Carlow, 2 June 1785, *Gleanings*, vol. II.29.
63. Thorne, 'George, Earl Macartney'; *Gentleman's Magazine* (1786), pt I, p.523.

64. Robbins, *First Ambassador*, p.168.
65. Alison Stenton, 'Late-Eighteenth Century Home Tours and Travel Narratives', PhD diss., King's College, University of London, 2003, p.72-4, 78, 82.
66. Katharine Glover, 'Polite Society and the Rural Resort: The Meanings of Moffat Spa in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34:1 (March 2011), p.68; Mitchell, 'English Spas', p.197.
67. Lord Macartney visited several landscaped gardens: Laurence Williams, 'Anglo-Chinese Caresses: Civility, Friendship and Trade in English Representations of China, 1760-1800', *British Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies Journal* 38:2 (June 2015), p.290. In 1785 Lady Macartney received a set of her father's *Botanical Tables*: Heather Pardoe, 'John Stuart, Third Earl of Bute (1713-1797). *Bute's Botanical Tables*', www.museumwales.ac.uk/articles/2013-09-30 [accessed 4 March 2016].
68. Borsay, 'Image and Counter Image', p.165-6; Joyce Ellis, *The Georgian Town, 1680-1840* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p.145; Roy Porter, *England in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Folio, 1999), p.212.
69. Denman, *Observations*, p.37-9, 89.
70. Pearson, *Observations*, vol. I.143; Porter, *Greatest Benefit to Mankind*, p.267.
71. A marginal note reads: 'Went to Kedleston and Ilam': Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fol. 2.
72. Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, vol. I.235.
73. William Gilpin, *Observations, Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1772, on Several Parts of England; Particularly the Mountains, and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland*, 2 vols (London: R. Blamire, 1786), vol. II.228-32.
74. Gilpin, *Observations*, vol. II.233-4.
75. Mary Delany, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany with Interesting Reminiscences of King George the Third and Queen Charlotte*, ed. Augusta Hall, 6 vols ([1862], Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), vol. VI.198.
76. There was no 'acceptable' coaching inn between Ashbourne and Buxton until 1795: John Britton and Edward Brayley, *The Beauties of England and Wales, or Delineations Topographical, Historical and Descriptive of Each County Embellished with Engravings*, 18 vols (London, 1801-15), vol. III.429-30.
77. Fond, *Travels*, vol. II.266.
78. Gilpin, *Observations*, vol. II.218.
79. SRO, D868/10/23, Thurlow to Gower, Thursday; D868/10/25, Thurlow to Gower; D868/10/25, Thurlow to Gower.
80. Ian Ousby, *The Englishman's England: Taste, Travel and the Rise of Tourism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.133.
81. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fols 2, 3.
82. Glover, 'Polite Society', p.68. See also Borsay, 'Health and Leisure Resorts', p.794.
83. Walton, 'Health, Sociability, Politics', p.13; Peter Borsay, 'Urban Life and Culture', in Dickinson, *Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p.205; Henry, 'Elite Culture', p.326; Trevor Fawcett, 'Eighteenth-Century Shops and the Luxury Trade', *Bath History* 3 (1990) p.52.
84. Nelly Mundy to Roger Newdigate, 1 October 1781, *Cheverels*, p.36.
85. WRO, CRO136/B2729a, Hester Newdigate, undated.
86. Hester Newdigate, 11 October 1781, *Cheverels*, p.43-4.
87. WRO, CRO136/B2803, Hester Newdigate, 6 October 1781.
88. Sweet, *English Town*, p.23; Walton, 'Health, Sociability, Politics', p.11.
89. Hester Newdigate, 28 September 1781, *Cheverels*, p.33. Similar routines were followed in Bath: Gorman, 'Seeking Health', p.317.

90. WRO, CRO136/B2726, Hester Newdigate, undated. A 'jumble' was a carriage ride; a 'bumper' 'a glass filled to the brim' (*OED*).
91. Denman, *Observations*, p.94-5.
92. Denman, *Observations*, p.110-11. Similar amounts were recommended at Tunbridge: McCormack, 'Leisured Women', p.72.
93. Denman, *Observations*, p.124, 127, 130.
94. WRO, CRO136/B2728a Hester Newdigate, 10 July 1781.
95. Denman, *Observations*, p.126-7.
96. WRO, CRO136/B2728a, Hester Newdigate, 10 July 1781.
97. WRO, CRO136/B2737, Hester Newdigate, 22 July 1781.
98. Hester Newdigate, 26 September 1781, *Cheverels*, p.32.
99. Hester Newdigate, 2 October 1781, *Cheverels*, p.37.
100. Hester Newdigate, 9 October 1781, *Cheverels*, p.43.
101. WRO, CRO136/B2803, Hester Newdigate, 5 October 1781.
102. WRO, CRO136/B2736, Hester Newdigate, 24 July 1781.
103. George Saville-Carey, *The Balnea, or, An Impartial Description of all the Popular Watering Places in England* (London, 1799), p.188-9.
104. Glover, 'Polite Society', p.72.
105. Seward to Mr Saville, 10 June 1793, Seward, *Letters*, vol. III.251.
106. Dr Johnson's Birthplace Museum, Lichfield, MS 38/23, Anna Seward to Mary Powys 22 October 1808.
107. Kerhervé, 'Writing Letters', p.288-9; Alison Hurley, 'A Conversation of Their Own: Watering-Place Correspondence among the Bluestockings', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40:1 (2006), p.1-2, 7, 11.
108. Hester Newdigate, 30 September 1781, *Cheverels*, p.35.
109. WRO, CRO136/B2803, Hester Newdigate, 4 October 1781. Countess de Grey also spent much time privately with friends of similar rank: Johnson, 'Now the Scene Appears Chang'd', p.6.
110. WRO, CRO136/B2730, Hester Newdigate, 12 July 1781.
111. Hester Newdigate, *Cheverels*, p.26.
112. Hester Newdigate, *Cheverels*, p.45-6.
113. Hester Newdigate, *Cheverels*, p.22. Writing about symptoms and routines was a way of dealing with ill health: McCormack, 'Leisured Women', p.76.
114. Gorman, 'Seeking Health', in Cossic and Galliou, *Spas in Britain and France*, p.322.
115. Jessica Kate Monaghan, 'Feigned Illness and Bodily Legibility in Eighteenth-Century British Culture', PhD diss., University of Exeter, 2015, p.4.
116. Monaghan, 'Feigned Illness and Bodily Legibility', p.71.
117. Borsay, 'Health and Leisure Resorts', p.800.
118. WRO, CRO136/B2803, Hester Newdigate, 5 October 1781.
119. Byng, *Diaries*, vol. II.189.
120. Byng, *Diaries*, vol. II.189-90.
121. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fol. 7.
122. For 19-26 July 1789 the drawing room cost 18s., bedrooms £1 8s. and servants' rooms £1: Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fols 4, 11. In 1800 furnished lodgings in Bath cost 10s. 6d. per week: Hembry, *English Spa*, p.140.
123. Porter, *Bodies Politic*, p.167-9. See also McCormack, 'Leisured Women', p.63-4.
124. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fols 6, 7. A private bath cost 3s.: Hembry, *English Spa*, p.222.
125. Jane Macartney visited Tunbridge in 1784 and 1785: Clark, *Gleanings*, vol. I.260, 265, vol. II.51, 61.

126. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fol. 13.
127. The Macartneys travelled in their own barouche to Lyme; for Castleton they hired horses and a hack chariot. Dinner cost £1 16s. 5d.: Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts fols 5, 24.
128. Byng, *Diaries*, vol. II.186. Saville-Carey, *Balnea*, p.187. Stobart, 'Leisure Hierarchy', p.19-20.
129. Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, vol. I.211-23; Aikin, *Description*, p.489-92.
130. Hall, *Buxton*, p.19; P. Riden (ed.), *Derbyshire Directories 1781-1824*, Derbyshire Record Society, XXXIII (Chesterfield, 2006), p.41.
131. Fond, *Travels*, vol. II.268.
132. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fol. 24.
133. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fol. 12; Byng, *Diaries*, vol. II.188.
134. Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, vol. I.222.
135. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fol. 24.
136. Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, fol. 11.
137. Two entries for cakes in 1789 amounted to 14s., but whether they were given away is unrecorded: Bodl, MS Eng. Misc. e880, Macartney's Accounts, p.11, 12. In 1774 Jane Macartney was on Countess Spencer's charitable committee: William McCarthy, *Anna Letitia Barbauld: Voice of the Enlightenment* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), p.143.
138. Bath Central Library, AL/2152, 2158, 2162, 2163, Letters of Elizabeth Canning to Mrs Mehetabel Patrick Canning; 6, 26 August, 16, 20 September 1798.
139. Pearson, *Observations*, vol. I.143.
140. James Plumptre, *Plumptre's Britain: The Journals of a Tourist in the 1790s*, ed. Ian Ousby (London: Hutchinson, 1992), p.64.
141. Hester Newdigate, *Cheverels*, p.57-9.
142. Porter, *Bodies Politic*, p.24-5, 168.
143. WRO, CRO136/B2803, Hester Newdigate, 6 October 1781.

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