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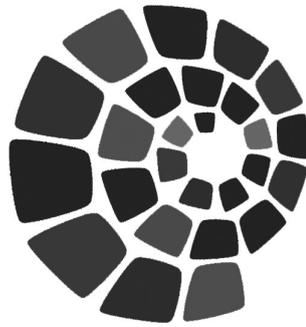
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MRS ALICIA MOORE, DEDICATEE OF HENRY
ROWLAND BROWN'S 1859 GUIDEBOOK
BEAUTIES OF LYME REGIS

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Mrs Alicia Moore, dedicatee of Henry Rowland Brown's 1859 guidebook *Beauties of Lyme Regis*

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Abstract

The 1859 second edition of the guidebook *The Beauties of Lyme Regis*, by Henry Rowland Brown (1837-1921) of Lyme Regis, was dedicated to 'Mrs Moore'. She is identified here as Alicia Anne Moore née Radford (bap. 1790-1873), Sheffield-born author and novelist, who was descended from the Lymen (or Leman or Lemman) family of Lyme Regis. She may have been a friend of George Roberts (bap. 1804-60), Lyme historian and mayor. Her peripatetic life with her second husband Robert Moore, spent partly overseas and in the Channel Islands (with good links to Lyme Regis), apparently arose from a disastrous first marriage and a technically bigamous second marriage.

Introduction

A recent reassessment of certain nineteenth-century writings about the Lyme Regis fossil collector Mary Anning (1799-1847), and of the networks to which their authors connected at Lyme Regis, led to the identification of the illustrated guidebook by Henry Rowland Brown (1837-1921), *The beauties of Lyme Regis and Charmouth*, as a more significant source for Anning than previously realised, especially in its second edition (Taylor and Torrens 2014b). This raised the question of the identity of the dedicatee of the second edition, one 'Mrs R. Moore [...] my first literary friend' (Brown [1859], vii). In this paper I identify her and outline her somewhat surprising history as a morally improving author who was also an apparent bigamist.

Abbreviations and repository information

Otherwise unsourced genealogical information is from standard sources accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk, www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk, and www.familysearch.org (published sources may also, or instead, be given). These periodical databases were searched at various times in 2012-13: *British Library British Newspapers 1600-1900* (Gale database), *British Newspaper Archive* (Brightsolid and British Library database), *British Periodicals, Collection I* and *Collection II* (ProQuest LLC database), *The Guardian* and *The Observer* archive (ProQuest LLC database), *The Scotsman* archive (archive.scotsman.com, accessed through www.nls.uk) and *The Times* archive (Gale database). Abbreviations: b., born; bap., baptised; BL,

Borthwick Institute for Archives, University of York, Heslington, York YO10 5DD; BL, British Library catalogue (URL: www.bl.uk); c., circa; LRPM, Lyme Regis Philpot Museum, Bridge St, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3QA; OPR, old parish register; SA, Sheffield Archives, 52 Shoreham Street, Sheffield S1 4SP; TNA, The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU (URL: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk; some wills accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk).

The dedicatee

Brown's acknowledgement of his predecessor, George Roberts (bap. 1804-60), Lyme historian and mayor, at once suggests a candidate for Mrs Moore as the author of that name whose *Historical pictures of the Middle Ages* (1846) was cited by Roberts in his fine *Social history of the people of the southern counties*; its social-historical approach, and interest in customs and costumes, seemingly struck a chord with him (A wandering artist [Moore] 1854, first published 1846; Roberts 1856, 412). This Mrs Robert Moore also wrote novels such as *Rosalind and Felicia, or, The sisters*, and *Eveleen Mountjoy* (BL). This last was reviewed by the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Anon. 1820, 53-4) as being 'written on Christian principles'. She also wrote the moral tract *Mary Morton, or, The advantages of the savings bank*, a 21-page pamphlet sold at 2d a copy in its second edition of 1820.

An independent test of this identification is offered by manuscript annotations to the printed dedication of the LRPM copy of the second edition of *Beauties*, apparently written by the same, and seemingly elderly, person at different times. 'My cousin/ [signed] JG' plainly refers to Mrs Moore. The second annotation is 'My grandmother/ is alluded to/ a native of Lyme Regis [word seemingly omitted here, but 'descended' perhaps intended]/ from the two of its greatest/ inhabitants'. This apparently refers to Brown's statement in the dedication that Lyme was the 'birth-place of many of your [Mrs Moore's] esteemed ancestors' (Brown [1859], vii). Mrs Moore the author satisfies this test as she had two cousins with those initials and alive in 1859. She herself was born Alicia Ann (or Anne) Radford at Sheffield, and baptised at Sheffield Cathedral on 17 March 1790, daughter of Thomas Radford (bap. 1748-1816) of Attercliffe,

minister of St James, Sheffield, and later also rector of Hardmead, Buckinghamshire, and his wife Elizabeth née Gunning (b. c. 1755). Elizabeth's brother, and Alicia's uncle, was the Rev. Joseph Gunning (c. 1738/1742-1806), Vicar of Sutton and Rector of Spexhall in Suffolk, who had married, on 25 November 1768, Elizabeth Brown (c. 1746-1831) 'of Oxford' (Anon. 1768, 1806, 1831; Foster [1888]; her Oxford link implies that she was unconnected to the Wyke Regis and Lyme Regis Browns of Henry's family). Joseph and Elizabeth Gunning's children were therefore cousins of Alicia, and included two who could be the 'JG' of the inscription: John Gunning C. B. (1773-1863), army surgeon at Waterloo and latterly Inspector-General of Hospitals, and Joseph Waldegrave Gunning (1777-1860), solicitor and secretary to St George's Hospital, London (Anon. 1850, 1863; Peach 1890, family tree). The Lymian connection arose through Alicia's maternal, and John and Joseph's paternal, grandmother Elizabeth Lymen (or Leman or Lemman) (c. 1712-56 or -86), the daughter of John Lemman (b. 20 August 1679, Lyme Regis). On 14 October 1732, she married John Gunning (1702/1706-74) of Torney's Court, Cold Ashton and then Swainswick (Burke 1862-63, vol. 1, 614-15; Peach 1884, 6-7, 1890, family tree).

Marriage and exile

Alicia was married to Captain the Honourable Valentine William Gardner R.N. (1787-1820), at St Peter's and St Paul's Cathedral, Sheffield, on 18 August 1810, by her brother the Reverend John Radford (Anon. 1810a, 1810b, 1810c; John Radford was later Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford University, Ward 1909). Gardner was a younger son of the naval officer and politician Admiral Alan Gardner, later 1st Lord Gardner (1742-1808/9) (Port and Fisher 1986; Laughton and Doorne 2004-08). He was in the country in at least 1818 when he took command of the ship-sloop H. M. S. *Dauntless* to commission her for service in the East Indies, whither *Dauntless* proceeded in February 1819 (Anon. 1818a, 1818b, 1819).

Gardner died at Canton, China, on 15 November 1820 (Anon. 1821a, 1821b). Yet Alicia had, on 8 July 1816, already married Robert Moore (1784-1870), youngest son of the Reverend Stephen Moore (1747-1807), Vicar of Doncaster, at Annan in Scotland (OPR, as 'Robert Moor'; Anon. 1816a, 1816b). Stephen Moore, or a son of his, was said to be an intimate friend of Alicia's father (the, however, ambiguous source is Ward 1909, 18, 26). Robert himself was presumably the land surveyor of that name who was executor in

Alicia's father's will signed on 15 August 1815 (TNA Prob/11/1592). Alicia's father died on 10 November 1816, soon after this second marriage (Ward 1909, 234).

To marry at Annan might suggest what Scots law called an irregular marriage, as favoured by elopers to nearby Gretna. In fact the Moores' marriage was regular, by a clergyman (Shelford 1841), for which they would have had to conform to the admittedly minimal residency requirements. Nevertheless this new Scottish marriage was valid only if Alicia's English marriage to Gardner was dissolved, which – in England – required an Act of Parliament, or a declaration of nullity in the church (consistory) courts. No such Act of Parliament seems to exist; the Sheffield marriage register was never annotated to indicate such a change (SA PRM109, 242, entry 332, Mr Tim Knebel, pers. comm. 17 January 2013); and the marriage is not mentioned in the church court book, or cause paper database, from 1810 to July 1816 for the diocese which included Sheffield (diocesan archives, BI CONS. AB.106, Ms Alexandra Medcalf, pers. comm. 20 March 2013). Divorce, especially for a woman, was much easier in Scotland, but few English marriages were dissolved there, partly because both husband and wife had to fulfil residency requirements, and Alicia's was not one (Leneman 1998). In any case there was real uncertainty after a case of 1812 in which the English judges perversely refused to accept the validity of Scottish marital law, and convicted an unfortunate divorcee of bigamy when he remarried. This, of course, breached the Treaty of Union, and the victim was quietly pardoned, but this left an unsettled legal situation discouraging what one might call English divorce tourists (Shelford 1841, Leneman 1998).

This Scottish marriage seemingly left Alicia guilty of bigamy, and Moore liable for damages for 'criminal conversation'. In fact, no legal action is known. One possibility is that Gardner had preferred to avoid an expensive and public divorce, especially as there were no children to worry about; in any case, death soon removed him from the scene, and his family would have been preoccupied by a series of succession disputes complicated by adultery, divorce and illegitimacy (Gibbs and Doubleday 1926, 618-19; Bierbrier 1998). Nevertheless, the situation remained unresolved, especially concerning Alicia's bigamy, and this might well be a reason why the Moores now travelled on the Continent, outside English or Scottish jurisdiction. When they returned to England, their known locations were in Cornwall or the south coast, perhaps not coincidentally, at least to begin with,

convenient for a quick departure. In any case, however, the Continent was where Alicia gathered material for her historical writings, spending 'nearly six years' in Switzerland up to 1846, in which year she signed a preface at Bagni di Lucca, Italy ('Baths of Lucca'; it is not clear whether the total of almost six years was cumulative or consecutive, but she had accumulated a total of nine years by 1854, Moore 1854, vol. 1, x, xii, xiv). The Moores were lodging in Haviland Street, St Peter Port, Guernsey, on the night of the 1841 census, with Robert described as 'Ind[ependent]'; the Channel Islands were not legally part of the United Kingdom, but Lyme had an extensive trade with them by sailing packet and cargo ship, not to mention the smuggling of Continental luxuries (Roberts 1834, 181; Lacey 2011).

In the 1851 census, the Moores were in Sennen, Cornwall, but perhaps only on holiday, as the enumerator noted that Robert was a landed proprietor and fundholder, renting a house on Guernsey. The printing locations of *Mary Morton* in Dorchester (2nd edition, 1820), convenient for the Channel Islands via Lyme or Weymouth, and Guernsey itself (4th edition, 1853) (BL), are also consistent with this pattern. The Moores did later visit Britain, and then settle there, but seem to have stayed close to the south coast. In 1854 Alicia stated that they had only recently returned to 'her native country after many years' absence' (Moore 1854, vol. 1, xii, xiii). As noted above, they were living in the Worthing area in 1861, and also in 1863 when Robert made his will. They might then have moved to the Pas-de-Calais, France. Robert is perhaps the Robert Moore 'of Boulogne-sur-Mer, France' who made a donation to a Sheffield anti-slavery charity in 1865 (Anon. 1865), while Alicia wrote a letter from Calais in 1866 (see below). They later moved to Folkestone in Kent, where Robert died in 1870, and Alicia herself died on 24 February 1873.

A markedly different explanation of Alicia Radford's marital history was given by Joseph Hunter (1783–1861), native of Sheffield, antiquary, and records scholar, and known to historians of natural science as the Bath clergyman who was the first historian of the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution (Crook 2004–08; Torrens 2005). In a posthumously published manuscript (Hunter in Walker 1936, 78), he wrote:

Alicia Ann Radford only dau[ghter was], mar[r]ied] at Sheffield to Valentine Wm. Gardner, Esq., son of Alan, Lord Gardener [sic], and so it stands in Bryd[ge]'s edition of Collins' *Peerage*, ix, 382. She was indeed married to a person who assumed that name and title, but too soon found

to her cost that she had been imposed upon. Who he was has not transpired. She returned to her father's house. No issue; married 1816 to ... Moore of Doncaster, son of Rev. Stephen Moore, Vicar of Doncaster.

This raises the question of whether Hunter could be misinformed about an event so far from Bath. In a sense, Alicia would have been 'imposed upon' when her first husband left her, whether he was the real Captain Gardner RN or the mysterious A.N. Other. However, it is clear from the published diaries and letters of Hunter's friend Thomas Asline Ward (1781–1871), manufacturer and sometime Master Cutler of Sheffield, that Hunter would have been well informed about events in Sheffield. Like Ward himself, Hunter was socially well known to the Radford family, Alicia's father having encouraged Hunter in antiquarian pursuits; Ward kept Hunter up to date in gossipy letters; and Hunter could easily have heard the story on his various returns to Sheffield, especially during the summers of 1810 and 1811 (Ward 1909: 18, 26, 55, 79, 96, 104, 135, 136–37, 142–43, 162, 170, 240–43). Moreover, Ward himself confirmed the story in the printed version of his diary (1909: 163): 'August 18, Miss Radford married to a fellow pretending to be the Hon. V. Gardner' and 'It was afterwards discovered that the man was an imposter.' Ward's MS. diary (SA SLPS/132) still exists, and a check from 18 August through to the end of the diary in December 1810 shows that the editor accurately quoted it concerning Alicia's marriage, but editing to eliminate duplication (pages for 18 August 1810, and for 'Memorandums, Observations and Appointments in December 1810', Mr Robin Wiltshire, Archivist, SA, pers. comm. 21 November 2013).

The relevant part of the 1909 book (Ward 1909, unpaginated prefatory remarks) was annotated by one R. E. Leader who commented that 'The sensation caused by this melancholy affair extended far beyond Sheffield, for it got into the newspapers and magazines. Subsequently, the marriage was annulled' (ibid. 163). However, this was seemingly a retrospective comment by Leader himself rather than by Ward, as indicated by the above check of the diary. No confirmation of the story getting into the newspapers has been found in an initial check of the *Sheffield Mercury* newspaper for August–December 1810 (not, however, completely legible), or in Sheffield Library's local newspaper card index (Mr Robin Wiltshire, Archivist, SA, pers. comm. 21 November 2013), or in the diocesan records (as noted earlier). Nor can Leader's comment be

confirmed from currently available newspaper and periodical databases. Those admittedly lack Sheffield newspapers for the time in question, but one would have thought that newspapers elsewhere would be only too keen to run a juicy story of aristocracy and romance (and worse), with a dash of Britain's heroic navy. This is, to some extent, evidence that the matter was never taken as far as a court case, but it is negative evidence, and the question of the accuracy of Leader's comments is best left open. In the longer run, some genealogists incorporated the 'fact' of Gardner's and Alicia's marriage into their works of reference, though others omitted it and even Gardner's existence (Burke 1837, 330-31; Lodge 1838, 224-25; Collen 1841, 410; Gibbs and Doubleday 1926, 618-19).

Although the first marriage was rendered invalid *ab initio* by the identity fraud, canon law seemingly still required a formal voiding in the church courts (Shelford 1841, 221-22, 482-84). Perhaps Alicia disregarded this to save legal costs, and to avoid having to revisit the appallingly embarrassing story of her prominent wedding to the imposter in Sheffield Cathedral. Alicia and Robert might then have been forced to go to Scotland simply because they were refused marriage by the Sheffield clergy who would have inevitably been aware of her situation, on what no doubt seemed a tiresome, unjust and expensive technicality. They would have known of a local couple who adopted this same solution some years before to evade a different Church restriction (Ward 1909, 86). The Moores may also have been (unsurprisingly) confused about the legalities of English versus Scottish marriage law, or wanted a document for travel on the Continent. But this Scottish marriage was technically bigamous, for all the religious morality shown in her novels. The 1810 'husband' was hardly likely to prosecute Alicia for bigamy or sue Robert for 'criminal conversation', as this would amount to a confession of fraud and the (technically) capital crime of forgery (in signing the marriage register as Gardner, for instance). Nevertheless, there remained the risks of third party blackmail and of a malicious report for bigamy; perhaps embarrassment about the 1810 'marriage' was sufficient reason for exile when added to the lower cost of living and the pleasures of life on the Continent.

George Roberts's interest in geology (Taylor and Torrens 2014a), and of course Lyme's fame as a fossilist's paradise, raise the question of whether Alicia had any particular geological expertise. A surviving letter from her suggests not. It was written from Calais on 29 December 1866 to the noted

geologist and metallurgist Henry Clifton Sorby (SA SLPS/51/307), concerning 'meteoric stones' from 'Cape Blonnez'. This must be Cap Blanc Nez in the Pas de Calais, in a chalk area, implying that she had made the classic misidentification of iron mineral concretions as meteorites.

Conclusions

The identification of Alicia Radford as the dedicatee of Henry Rowland Brown's book does not throw any obvious new light on Mary Anning, but it does clear up an unresolved question about the book, which is an important source for Anning. It also clarifies familial networks and links within and beyond Lyme, and illustrates Lyme's connections with the Channel Islands.

A final question remains, on just how Alicia Moore came to befriend young Henry Brown and to encourage him in their common literary interests. One possible link is through his uncle Henry Rowland (bap. 1804-66), landowner, farmer and maltster, and his wife Elizabeth (bap. 1809-69) of Newton, Blackwell, Derbyshire, which is not far from Sheffield (Taylor and Torrens 2014b). Alternatively, the Moores perhaps got to know Roberts at Worthing; the Moores were resident at Broadwater near Worthing in the 1861 census, not long after Roberts's known residence there (Taylor and Torrens 2014a). However, a far simpler reason lies in Alicia's interest in history and doubtless in her Lymian roots, which might have led her to consult Roberts at Lyme, seeking his knowledge of local history. There is a 'Mrs Moore' on the subscription list of Roberts's history of Lyme (1834), but, unfortunately, Moore is (apparently coincidentally) too common a Lymian name to identify this subscriber as Alicia with any certainty (the lack of an address implies a local resident, but would just as well fit Alicia if omitted for privacy or for want of a fixed abode). Nevertheless any visit to Lyme with family history in mind would almost certainly probably have led to meeting the Browns, perhaps at Roberts's introduction. The Browns occupied part of what had been the Great House in Broad Street, owned at one time by Alicia's forebears as Henry Brown himself pointed out allusively but unmistakably (Brown [1857], 60, [1859], 102-3; Bull 2013; Fowles MS.; the house was subdivided and much changed by the Browns' time). The names in several property transactions involving the Great House in 1718, 1721 and 1728, do indeed match members of the Lymen family, and relatives listed in the 1715 will of

John Lyman (d. c. 1715-17, TNA PROB 11/567, Fowles MS.). In particular, Alicia's grandmother Elizabeth Lyman (b. c. 1712) is likely to be the child of that name mentioned in this will. However, further research would be needed to confirm this and to suggest whom Alicia's cousin might have intended by 'two of [Lyme's] greatest inhabitants'.

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