**Esther Sleepe, Fan-maker,**

**and her Family[[1]](#endnote-1)**

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In many published works on the Burney family, Esther Sleepe (1725-62) - the first wife of Charles Burney (1726-1814) and the mother of Frances Burney (1752-1840) - features at most in a few speculative paragraphs, and often in only one sentence. That sentence in the *Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney* furnishes the only information that has, to date, been definitively known: “[Frances’s] much beloved mother had died shortly after the birth of Charlotte, leaving Charles with six children, the eldest of whom was only thirteen and the youngest just six months.”[[2]](#endnote-2) This article uncovers key information about the life of Esther Sleepe, as well as the lives of her two sisters and their mother. It presents previously undiscovered archival evidence proving that the four Sleepe women were prosperous fan-makers and successful businesswomen – just a few of the thousands of female proprietors working in the luxury trades in eighteenth-century London. Uncovering their lives and details of their careers can fundamentally alter scholarly understanding of the economic power balance and the domestic dynamics of the first generation of the Burney family. It can also sharpen our awareness of the laborious attempts made, in that generation and subsequently, to conceal the Burneys’ trade connections in order to present an idealised self-image to posterity as a clan of genteel artistic professionals (a subject explored, elsewhere in this collection, by Cassandra Ulph). Finally, as I indicate in my conclusion, it can offer a meaningful context for Frances Burney’s marked preoccupation, in her fiction and drama, with fashionable consumption and female labour within the luxury trades.

 As it turns out, this information about the Sleepe women has been hiding in plain sight for centuries. It is sometimes related that Frances Burney’s maternal grandfather was a French fan-maker (Chisholm, 8; Harman, 10). This consensus derives from a note made by Charles Burney (in 1782, in preparation for his memoirs) of his first encounters with Esther Sleepe in the spring of 1748 at the private balls held by his brother, a dancing master. According to Charles, Esther was “daughter of Old Sleepe, the <Head> [of the City waits] and furnisher of bands for municipal [festivities, and Mrs Sleepe,] the daughter of a M. Dubois, [who] <kept> a Fan Shop in Cheapside”. The editors of Charles’ memoirs interpreted this note as meaning that Mr Dubois kept a fan shop and Mrs Sleepe was his daughter. (Klima *et al,* xxiii, 83n5).[[3]](#endnote-3) In fact, as this article will demonstrate, Charles Burney meant that *Mrs Sleepe* was Mr Dubois’s daughter, and *she* kept a fan shop.

 *Esther Sleepe Burney*

Before turning to Mrs Sleepe, let us give due attention to her daughter, Esther. In August 1747, at the age of 22, Esther went with her sister Martha (1717 - post-1773), then 29, to the Musicians’ Company (for the siblings and their ages, see Appendix). They each paid 18s. 4d., the standard rate, for their own freedom of the company by right of patrimony, i.e., by virtue of being their father’s daughters. Richard Sleepe (1683/4-1758), Charles Burney’s “Old Sleepe”, was a longstanding member of the Musicians’ Company and was serving as Warden at the time that his daughters were admitted.[[4]](#endnote-4) Both Esther and Martha subsequently took the Freedom of the City of London.[[5]](#endnote-5) London was distinctive among English cities in that women, like men, had to acquire freedom of a Company (London’s equivalent of guilds) and of the City in order to trade on their own account. Probably shortly after taking the freedom, Esther and Martha had their trade cards printed (Figures 1 and 2). They were trading not as musicians like their father, but as fan-makers like their mother.[[6]](#endnote-6) They were not unusual in being fan-makers in the Musicians’ Company: most of that company’s members were not practising musicians. (The City only required membership of *a* company to trade; it did not have to be the company that governed the trade in which an individual was involved.) The two trade cards are an inverse print of each other, identical except for two details: the address; and whereas they both sold “India and English fans”, Esther also sold “French and English Necklaces, Drops and Earrings”. Having a fan shop meant that fans were probably produced on the premises, almost certainly by a female labour force, and sold to a fashionable public. The Sleepe sisters also dealt in imported fans, probably through the East India Company, and traded wholesale as well as retail. So they supplied provincial and possibly even colonial shopkeepers.

[Figure 1: **Trade card of Martha Sleepe (**Heal, 60.13): © Trustees of the British Museum. All trade cards illustrated are available to view in the online collection.]

[Figure 2: Draft trade card of Esther Sleepe (Heal, 60.12): © Trustees of the British Museum.]

The elder Sleepe sister, Mary (1715 – post-1773), had married John Sansom in May 1743. Both bride and groom were aged 28 at the time and were probably still working as journeypersons in their respective trades. In September of that year, John obtained his freedom of the City through the Turners’ Company and they produced a joint trade card for his business of a turner and handle-maker and hers of a fan-maker (Figure 3).[[7]](#endnote-7) Mary Sansom, under the rule of a wife’s ‘coverture’ in marriage, traded under her husband’s freedom and did not require her own separately.[[8]](#endnote-8)

[Figure 3: Draft trade card of Mary Sansom (Heal, 60.11): © Trustees of the British Museum.]

All three of the Sleepe sisters’ shops were situated in Cheapside, which was the most exclusive shopping street in the City. By the mid-eighteenth century, high fashion retailers were also setting up premises in the West End - but this represented their multiplication, rather than any exodus from the older luxury centre of Cheapside. The Sleepe sisters were strategically arranged along the full length of the street (Figure 4). Martha’s and Esther’s shops both bore the sign of the Golden Fan and Seven Stars, but Martha’s was located at the west end of Cheapside, “next Door to the Black Swan, the North Side of St Paul’s Churchyard”, while Esther’s was at the east end “opposite the Old Jewry in the Poultry”. The Poultry (previously the market for fowl) is the eastern extension of Cheapside, spanning the short distance between the Mercers’ Hall, home of the wealthiest livery company in the City, and the Lord Mayor’s House. The Bank of England and the Royal Exchange were just to the east in Threadneedle Street. In between Martha’s and Esther’s shops, Mary Sansom had the Golden Fan next to the Nag’s Head (which would become 37 Cheapside when street numbers were introduced in the 1760s). Three fan shops run by Sleepes in the space of 500 metres (or ten minutes’ stroll) in the most fashionable shopping street of London must be accounted a significant commercial success.

[Figure 4: Sleepe family locations, shown on detail from ‘Plan of the City of London, Westminster and Borough of Southwark’, S.Parker 1720. London Metropolitan Archives, City of London (Collage record no. 30390).]

Esther Sleepe was the fourteenth of her parents’ fifteen children (see Appendix). She was raised in the parish of St Vedast Foster Lane with St Michael le Querne, at the west end of Cheapside, near her sister Martha’s shop. Her own premises at The Golden Fan and Seven Stars, at the east end of Cheapside, had been taken (either rented or purchased) by Christmas 1746, when Esther was 21. Who initiated the transaction is unclear, since the parish rates on it that first year were recorded as paid by “ ---- Sleepe”. One possible explanation for the blank first name is that Esther’s mother, Mrs Sleepe, had taken the property: since under coverture it was her husband who owed the tax, if the tax collector did not know her husband’s name, he may have left it blank. By Christmas 1747 those rates were paid by Esther Sleepe herself.[[9]](#endnote-9)

 So in the late summer of 1747 Esther moved into the new premises (possibly with her mother), with shop below and house above, and printed her business cards. In the spring of 1748 she met Charles Burney at the dancing master’s balls. In September 1748, Burney’s apprenticeship indentures to Thomas Arne (1710-1778) were bought out by Fulke Greville (1717-1806) for £300 with another three years to run – and Esther was pregnant (Hemlow, 3). At Christmas 1748, the parish rates on the shop in the Poultry were paid by Charles Burney, suggesting that he had already moved in.[[10]](#endnote-10) Their daughter was born in May 1749, and Esther married Charles on 25 June 1749. They were both 23.[[11]](#endnote-11) On 3 July, Charles took the freedom of the Musicians’ Company by redemption (purchase), and his entry in the Musicians’ Company register records his address as “Fan Shop, Poultry”.[[12]](#endnote-12) The following day, Charles was made free of the City for a fee of £2 6s. 8d.[[13]](#endnote-13) Esther now operated her business under Charles’ freedom. Their neighbours were much wealthier than they were, but their level of land tax was still higher than the average even in the wealthiest ward of the City.[[14]](#endnote-14)

In October 1749, when Charles Burney secured the post of parish organist at St Dionis Backchurch, Esther moved her business to Fenchurch Street.[[15]](#endnote-15) Her new trade card as Esther Burney (Figure 5) is identical to that of Esther Sleepe except that in Fenchurch Street her sign was simply the Golden Fan (like her sister Mary Sansom’s in Cheapside). She was still selling jewellery as well as fans, and dealing wholesale as well as retail, alongside their neighbour, Sir Joseph Hankey, Alderman, banker and member of the Haberdashers’ Company. Other local luxury traders in the parish included James Hebert, mercer, and Elizabeth Hebert & Co., a milliner and coatmaker.[[16]](#endnote-16)

[Figure 5: Trade card of Esther Burney. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: Rogers Fund, transferred from the Library. [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)]

In accounts of Frances Burney’s parentage and childhood, Charles Burney is invariably presented in the literature as the sole support of his young family, valiantly struggling to maintain his large brood by his own efforts. Much is rightly made – as in Peter Sabor’s article in this collection - of his extraordinary facility for social mobility, and of his remarkable determination and energy.[[17]](#endnote-17) But Charles Burney was not left “with a wife and child to support” in the late 1740s (Lonsdale, 23); money was not “difficult to come by”[[18]](#endnote-18); he did not have to “fend for himself” or “keep the household going” (Harman, 12, 14). In fact, Esther Burney ran a highly successful business and certainly earned the major part of the household income. To put this in perspective: when Charles obtained the post of parish organist, his salary was £30 per annum.[[19]](#endnote-19) The Sleepe fan-makers, dealing as they did both retail and wholesale, must have employed journeywomen to produce the fans. (The Sleepe women were not themselves painting and assembling fans, and their apprentices, whom we will encounter below, were learning to run the business, not making the fans themselves.) It is likely that *each* of those journeywomen would have earned at least £30 per annum. The mid-century guides to London trades do not specify journeywomen’s wages in fan-making, but in trades of comparable or lesser status like milliners, hat-band makers, and linen-printers, women were reported to earn that amount. Campbell’s *London Tradesman* (1747), which was skeptical of the value of most London trades, and especially those that employed women, admitted that fan-makers “that are Masters, and keep open Shop, earn a pretty Livelihood”.[[20]](#endnote-20) Taking all this into account, we can state with some confidence that Esther Burney, not Charles, was the primary earner in the household.

In June 1750, Esther gave birth again. In September, she attended the court of the Haberdashers’ Company when one Mary Kenn, a surgeon’s daughter who had already served four years as an apprentice to a Cheapside Haberdasher, was “turned over” to Charles Burney, Citizen and Musician, for the remaining three years of her term. An apprentice was normally turned over to a new master when the previous one went out of business or died. A note pinned in the Haberdashers’ Company apprenticeship register records “Mrs B recd this”, meaning the apprentice and the contract.[[21]](#endnote-21) We may assume that the apprentice was to serve Esther. Under the common law doctrine of coverture, “Mrs B” could not contract in her own name, so the apprenticeship contract was made with her husband.[[22]](#endnote-22)

[Figure 6: photo of Haberdashers’ Apprentice Register ]

Esther probably knew Mary Kenn already, since Mary was a local, around 21 years old and had served a former master in Cheapside.[[23]](#endnote-23) With a toddler and a three-month-old, Esther probably needed an apprentice who had already acquired a good shop manner after serving four years. Although enrolled in the Haberdashers’ Company, it is possible that she had previously been working with fans, just as Esther was in the Musicians’ Company.

 In March 1751 Charles fell ill and took lodgings in the healthier air of Canonbury, an hour’s walk to the north. Esther did not go with him: their son Charles was born in Fenchurch Street in June, less than a year after his older brother. No official listing survives in which we can glimpse Esther Burney in 1751, but we can nonetheless reconstruct her household in Fenchurch Street. It now appears to have included three infants (of whom the eldest had just turned two), and at least one and possibly two wet nurses. London business women sometimes hired wet nurses for their children, especially if the business required fashionable attire and public attendance, as Esther’s did, since the commerce would have inhibited breastfeeding. Short birth intervals, like those experienced by Esther Burney and those observed in wealthy Cheapside parishes, suggest that wet nurses were being employed.[[24]](#endnote-24) Charles recalled that during his illness in early 1751 “my dear and affectionate Wife, who administer[e]d all my medecins, sat up with me every night, & scarcely ever left me, but to quiet a fractious child who was just taken from nurse” (Klima *et al*, 104). Charles, even after his removal to Canonbury, probably would have returned to Fenchurch Street to continue teaching his three (female) musical scholars.[[25]](#endnote-25) An experienced apprentice like Mary Kenn would have been a great boon to a fan-maker with small children and a sick husband. To wash, cook and clean for around four adults (Esther Burney, Mary Kenn, one or two wet nurses, and occasionally Charles Burney) and three infants would probably have required in addition two live-in female servants, which amounts to a nine- or ten-person household with only one adult male, who was there for the first two months of the year, partly present for five months, and then absent.

 In September 1751, Charles moved to King’s Lynn “for his health” and to take up a parish organist post (Ribeiro, xix). On 19 December, Charles’ letter to Esther makes clear that she has not yet moved (Ribeiro, 3-6). Frances Burney, writing in the 1820s of a time before she was born, described Esther as being “detained in town” by her children at this time.[[26]](#endnote-26) Surely the decision to leave her siblings, her mother, her business, her apprentice, and her wet nurse(s) must also have been difficult. Charles must have continued to visit London since he only resigned as parish organist there at Easter 1755.[[27]](#endnote-27) We may assume that Esther moved to Lynn sometime in the first half of 1752, since Frances was born there in June. It was Esther’s fourth birth in the space of three years.

 In 1753 Charles penned another letter to “Mrs Burney” which was (according to Frances more than half a century later) on the occasion of “a short separation” (Ribeiro, 13-15). But it is not impossible that Esther spent time in London during the period 1752-60 when they were resident in Lynn. Perhaps she maintained some interest in the business in Fenchurch Street, or in her family’s business, although if she did sell her stock in 1752, the cash would have provided a very significant financial boost to the family in Lynn. Charles visited London each winter (Wagstaff), and Esther could have accompanied him to buy stock to sell in Lynn. Certainly the miniature portrait of Esther dated 1759 (Figure 7) would have been sat for and painted in London, and would not normally have been affordable to a parish organist.

In total, Esther gave birth to six children in Lynn between 1752 and 1760. She also buried three. She pursued literary interests with her husband, according to his letters. He proudly described Esther’s literary interests as “masculine” to Dr Johnson (Ribeiro, 19-20). (Charles’s first foray into literary publication, *An Essay Towards a History of the Principal Comets that have Appeared Since the Year 1742* (1769), included (anonymously) Esther’s translation of Maupertuis’ ‘Letter upon comets addressed to a Lady’.[[28]](#endnote-28)) In late 1760 the Burneys returned to London, and Esther died in September 1762, aged 37, having been unwell since the birth of her ninth child the previous November.[[29]](#endnote-29) Six of Esther’s children survived to live long and well-documented lives. Esther’s own mother was luckier in her lifespan, although less fortunate in her children.

[Figure 7: Esther Sleepe Burney (c1725-1762), mother of Frances Burney. Oval portrait miniature, watercolour on ivory, by Gervase Spencer (1770-1763). 2” x 1.5” (5 x 3.8 cm). Signed and dated (lower right): “G.S. 1759”. Photograph, Oliver Lei Han, for Bloomsbury Auctions NY, 2009. Provenance: Peyraud Collection, Chappaqua, NY; Prudence E. Carlson, NYC. With kind permission of Prudence E. Carlson, present owner. Peyraud Collection sale, Bloomsbury Auctions, NYC, 2009, Lot 186 (above image), $3904, including fees. For Burney properties at the Peyraud sale, see illustrated articles by Maureen E. Mulvihill, ECS (Fall, 2009) and The Burney Letter (Spring, 2010). Our appreciation to Dr Mulvihill for coordinating this permission.]

*Frances Wood Sleepe and her family*

It has long been known that Frances Burney’s maternal grandmother outlived her daughter Esther and survived until Frances Burney’s own adulthood, exercising a strong influence over her formative years and inducing grievous mourning when she died (Harman, 9-11; Doody, 23). But the description that Frances Burney provided of her grandmother in later life (which is, in Claire Harman’s words, “so idealised as to be positively irritating” (9)) sits uneasily with the biographical and professional records of the woman whom – if we accept the Sleepe family’s strong connections to the fan trade - was almost certainly Esther Sleepe’s mother. As in the previous section of this article, in order to excavate the evidence of her life, it is necessary to challenge certain misapprehensions that hang upon slender textual evidence, and have nonetheless been repeated in numerous accounts.

To recap the known facts: Esther’s parents, Frances Wood and Richard Sleepe, married by licence in December 1705. She was at least 20; he was 22, and both were resident in the parish of St Anne Blackfriars.[[30]](#endnote-30) This is all that we know for sure about Frances Burney’s maternal grandparents. Above and beyond this, it has long been repeated, following the *Memoirs of Dr Burney* (79-80), that the maiden name of Esther Sleepe’s mother was Dubois, and that she was a Catholic of Huguenot origin (although the oddity of this conjunction is passed over).[[31]](#endnote-31) This consensus arises from the fact that in his notes towards an autobiography, Charles Burney called Mrs Sleepe’s father “M. Dubois” (Klima *et al*, 83), which all subsequent scholars have assumed was the original family name, anglicised to Wood by the time of Frances’ marriage in 1705. On the strength of this one reference, Esther Sleepe’s maternal grandfather has been identified as “probably Pierre Dubois, of an immigrant Huguenot family”.[[32]](#endnote-32)

There is a more credible candidate for Esther Sleepe’s maternal grandfather. The 1695 listing of ‘London Inhabitants within the Walls’ identifies a family of Francis Wood, his wife Arabella, and their two daughters Mary and Frances, in the parish of St Anne Blackfriars.[[33]](#endnote-33) Francis Wood paid the land tax in that parish from its inception in 1692 until 1711. And in April 1706, four months after his daughter Frances’s marriage, Francis Wood was recorded in the London ‘Return of Papists’. (His newly married daughter, still resident in the same parish, would have escaped identification because the head of her new household, Richard Sleepe, was Anglican and the listing recorded only the heads of Catholic households.) The Return was a house-to-house enquiry made by churchwardens, and in 1706 they included occupations: Francis Wood was a fan-maker. There were also another twenty Catholic fan-makers in the same parish -- and none in any other parish.[[34]](#endnote-34) In March 1709/10, Francis Wood was one of seventeen Catholic fan-makers in Blackfriars; he was a householder but many were lodgers, and some had French names.[[35]](#endnote-35) In April 1711, Francis Wood, Arabella his wife and their servant appear for the last time in the Return of Papists.[[36]](#endnote-36) On religious and on occupational grounds, it seems reasonable to conclude that Frances, the daughter of Francis Wood, fan-maker, was Esther Sleepe’s mother.[[37]](#endnote-37) The family name, therefore, had been Wood since at least 1692.

It is therefore indeed likely that Frances Sleepe (née Wood) was Roman Catholic, but I have as yet found no evidence that her parents were ever Huguenots. There is no record of a Francis Dubois among the Huguenots, who are admirably catalogued in the numerous Huguenot Society volumes, nor is there any evidence that Francis Wood was ever François Dubois. He may have been French in origin, like his neighbours and fellow fan-makers in Blackfriars, but he cannot be identified as Protestant at any point.[[38]](#endnote-38) Lacking any christening or marriage record, Francis and Arabella Wood remain, beyond the information offered here, untraceable.[[39]](#endnote-39) Francis Wood disappears from the records from 1711.[[40]](#endnote-40) Frances Burney’s idea that her grandmother Frances Sleepe was the daughter of a Huguenot refugee who had been brought up Catholic as a result of “maternal education” (*Memoirs of Dr Burney*, 79-80) appears, therefore, to have been confused or fictitious.

How, though, to account for Charles Burney’s reference to “M. Dubois” (whom he never met, and who appears to have died before his sweetheart was even born)? For the time being, this must be a matter of surmise. Perhaps Esther and Charles flirted in French at the dancing master’s balls, and she once told him that her mother’s maiden name was DuBois. It is also worth noting that the Burneys frequently indulge in wordplay and nicknaming in their letters and life writing, often using French or other continental variants of names for one another: Susan Burney, for example, is frequently called “Susette” in their letters,[[41]](#endnote-41) Frances is “Fanchon”,[[42]](#endnote-42) and Charles Burney Jr. is “Carlos” or “Carlucci”.[[43]](#endnote-43) It would not be out of character for Charles Burney Sr. to absentmindedly refer to his grandfather-in-law as “Dubois” rather than “Wood”.

 If this revisionist theory about Frances Burney’s maternal ancestry is accepted, then we can be sure that her grandfather, the Anglican Richard Sleepe, and his Catholic wife Frances lived in St Ann Blackfriars where their first six children were born until 1714, when they moved to the north of St Paul’s, to the parish of Christ Church Greyfriars. There one child was buried and another six were born in the space of eight years. The short intervals between Frances Sleepe’s childbirths suggest that she too was employing wet nurses. However, no evidence of an occupation that might have required wet nursing appears until 1722, when – a few weeks after her twelfth childbirth - Frances took her first-born son, Francis, apprentice. The apprenticeship was formally to her husband, but the boy was to learn the trade of fan-making “which his Mother then followed.”[[44]](#endnote-44) As we have seen, a married woman had to take apprentices through her husband’s company, under coverture. From 1709 there was a Fanmakers’ Company, but under coverture Frances belonged to her husband’s company, not the one which managed her own trade.[[45]](#endnote-45)

 By 1723, the Sleepes were in the parish of St Michael le Querne with St Vedast Foster Lane, at the west end of Cheapside, and three more children were born, of whom only Esther survived.[[46]](#endnote-46) Of all fifteen children, only five are known to have survived to adulthood (see Appendix). That Frances Sleepe continued in the fan-making business is clear from Mary Sansom’s trade card in the 1740s, describing her as “fan-maker from Mrs Sleeps” (Figure 3). Whereas all three fan-making Sleepe sisters had learned their trade from their mother, Mary could not count on the name recognition that her two unmarried sisters enjoyed, so invoked her mother on her card.

 In 1732, Richard Sleepe took a second property nearby, according to the land tax records. This could have been for one or more of their eldest three children, now adults; perhaps it was the premises which later became Martha’s shop on “the north side of St Paul’s Churchyard”. It is also possible that Frances wanted to live separately from her husband. Frances Burney, in the early nineteenth century, famously contrasted the angelic nature of her grandmother Sleepe with the worthlessness of Richard Sleepe, without explaining either characterisation (*Memoirs of Dr Burney*, 63).[[47]](#endnote-47) Joyce Hemlow memorably referred to the “mysteriously reprehensible Mr Sleepe” (5). There is as yet no independent evidence of disreputability on Richard Sleepe’s part. In 1708, three years after marriage, he took the freedom of the City.[[48]](#endnote-48) In 1711, he paid for admittance into the City Waits, or mayor’s band which performed at civic functions.[[49]](#endnote-49) By 1732 he had fathered fifteen children, and buried at least nine, including four infant Richards. He served as a churchwarden in 1737. In 1739, when he was over 50, he took an apprentice for himself.[[50]](#endnote-50) In 1742, he petitioned the Court of Aldermen for some benefit, on the ground of long service and having lost the use of one eye, and “since places [in the Waits] are very much reduced in value by reason of the discontinuance of sundry entertainments” (Crewdson, 151). In 1746, either Richard and Frances, or Frances alone, took the property at the east end of Cheapside that would become Esther’s shop. When Charles Burney met “Old Sleepe” in 1748, Richard was in his early 60s. He was head of the Waits, Warden of the Musicians’ Company, and one of the first subscribers to the new Society of Musicians – to all appearances an upstanding citizen.[[51]](#endnote-51)

What would the leader of the Waits and his prosperous and fashionable wife have thought when in late 1748 their youngest daughter’s beau - a man who was still effectively an apprentice - moved in with her, and then she gave birth? The resulting marriage may have been a relief, even though Burney had no income. Frances Sleepe appears to have provided Esther with emotional support, and she probably could have offered practical support. Frances would certainly have known midwives who could take care of a delivery discreetly. Or perhaps Esther told the neighbours that she and Charles were married before they actually were, thus obviating the need for secrecy about the birth.

In 1753, after Esther and Charles had left London, and Frances – if she ever had lived in the Poultry - was back in St Michael le Querne with Richard, he took another apprentice, Sarah Sarjant, age 17 or 18 and probably a neighbour, who was clearly destined to serve his wife. So Frances Sleepe must have been still trading in fans at the age of 68.[[52]](#endnote-52) Richard retired from the Waits the following year and died in 1758 (Crewdson, 155; Ribeiro, 1:30n).[[53]](#endnote-53) The Burneys returned to London from Lynn in 1760, and Esther was either already or quickly became ill. Both then and after her death in September 1762, her mother probably had a role in caring for the six surviving Burney children. In the Burney literature, this is the one occupation allowed to Frances Sleepe: helping to raise her later famous granddaughter (Doody, 94).

The 1767 Return of Papists records Frances Sleepe in the parish of St Michael le Querne, now as head of household. She was still a fan-maker, her age was given as 74, and she had resided in that parish for 54 years.[[54]](#endnote-54) However, if she was aged at least 20 as her marriage licence stated in 1705, then in 1767 she was in fact 82 years old, not 74.[[55]](#endnote-55) Her will, proved in December 1773, shows that she lived to at least her later 80s. The fact that it was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury suggests that she owned property in more than one jurisdiction, although this is not specified. She desired, first, that her two rents and her trade debts to a man and two women would be satisfied. Her household goods were to be divided amongst her three surviving children, James and Martha Sleepe and Mary Sansom. She gave a guinea to each of her eleven surviving grandchildren, six of whom were Burneys.[[56]](#endnote-56) Young Frances Burney was 21. In the *Memoirs of Dr Burney* written fifty years later, she eulogised “my darling grandmother” as “an angel upon earth” (79).

Our impression of the origins of the Sleepe family has been heavily coloured by the romantic notions of Frances Burney’s *Memoirs of Dr Burney*, and by the obfuscations of Richard Allen Burney, applying for a coat of arms in 1807 (Hemlow, 462-3). The secondary literature’s focus on manners, civility, and the inferior social and legal position of women in determining Burney family attitudes, has overlooked the evidence of commercial prosperity in the Sleepe family. Frances Burney may have been inhibited by “conventions of female propriety”, but she certainly did not learn “professionalism and self-belief” only from her father.[[57]](#endnote-57) She was hardly “lacking elegant female models”.[[58]](#endnote-58) She had multiple models of elegant, professional, self-confident prosperity in her mother’s family: her maternal grandmother, and her aunts, Martha Sleepe and Mary Sansom.

 It is not clear how much Frances knew about her mother’s career and her financial role in supporting the family in its early years, since it is possible that Esther did not trade after moving to King’s Lynn before Frances’ birth. But after her mother’s death in 1762, Frances appears to have spent a great deal of time with her grandmother, Frances Sleepe, until her death a decade later, when Frances was 21. She may also have been in close contact with her aunts, Mary Sansom and Martha Sleepe, who were also still trading in fans. It is striking (now) that Frances Burney left no surviving life writing which mentions the trade in which her mother, her grandmother and her aunts spent their lives. In the *Memoirs of Dr Burney* (63, 79) Frances Sleepe is represented as a perfect gentlewoman, which appears to be in conflict with a commercial role since gentility was traditionally defined as not working for a living. Must we add to the deceptions that Frances Burney created in the *Memoirs of Dr Burney* not only her great-grandfather Wood’s name, his religion and the length of his life, but also a misrepresentation of the milieu in which her mother’s family moved?

 Perhaps though, conversely, Frances Burney’s characterisation of her grandmother as a gentlewoman was merely another way of insisting that manners rather than birth defined gentility. Never explicitly defined, gentility rested increasingly in the eye of the beholder. In London status was particularly ambiguous since both ordinary gentry and citizens (that is, those holding the freedom of the City, like the Sleepes) shared the same titles: Mrs and Mr.[[59]](#endnote-59) From the position of City trade, and certainly from the position of the young Charles Burney, fan shops were prosperous and genteel – their owners wealthier than the great majority of the population who were entitled to use only their names, without any prefix, because they were not mistresses or masters. From the position of those born to landed wealth, including many of Frances Burney’s associates in later life, the maintenance of superior status depended on distinguishing their gentility from ‘mere’ citizens in trade. But these two groups regularly intermarried (for example, Thrales, Fieldings, Popes), which supports their fundamental economic overlap. It was a highly complicated and contested social landscape that Frances Burney negotiated.

 Whether Frances Burney sought to conceal or to validate the occupation of her maternal kinship network when she referred to her grandmother’s gentility in the *Memoirs*, it is certain that her ancestral involvement in the luxury trades left a forcible imprint on her creative consciousness. In recent years, Jennie Batchelor and Chloe Wigston-Smith have both investigated Burney’s close attention to the social and economic value of women’s work, manual as well as intellectual, from a literary perspective.[[60]](#endnote-60) Betty Schellenberg, too, has demonstrated that she was not forging new ground as a woman novelist but extending a well-defined career path in professional writing.[[61]](#endnote-61) This article seeks to fortify those observations with hard evidence which – to borrow Margaret Doody’s phrase - embeds Burney’s “life” – or at least her mother’s and grandmother’s lives – at the heart of her “work”. When we enter the chaotic world of Mrs. Wheedle’s milliner’s shop in *The Witlings*, we might detect an echo of the young Frances Burney’s time spent in her own grandmother’s commercial premises, or in those of her aunts.[[62]](#endnote-62) When the window-shopping expedition of Camilla and Mrs. Mittin is treated by shopkeepers with suspicion bordering on hysteria, we might ask what tolerance the Burney fan-makers had for tourists who consumed their time but put down no money for their wares, and how this inflected their young relative’s understanding of gendered labour and consumption.[[63]](#endnote-63) When Juliet’s manual labour is exploited in *The Wanderer,* we must ask what anecdotal or direct experience of such working conditions Frances Burney had encountered, in order to generate such an apt site to dramatize women’s struggle for independence.[[64]](#endnote-64) In short, the world of the Sleepe fan-makers, and the circumstances of the extended family in which Frances Burney she grew up, may cast new light on her writings, and the way in which they blur the boundaries between social, economic, and moral value.

1. This research began life with work on a grant from the Leverhulme Trust, (F/09 674/G ) ‘The Occupational Structure of England and Wales c.1379-c1729’. I am grateful to Sophie Coulombeau for editing, to Cynthia Comyn for genealogical research, and to Prudence E. Carlson, collector, NYC, owner of the John Bogle Frances Burney and the Gervase Spencer Esther Sleepe Burney (Peyraud Collection sale, NY, 2009). Maureen E. Mulvihill, Princeton Research Forum, NJ., and collector, Brooklyn, NY / Sarasota, FL. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Kate Chisholm, The Burney family,’ in *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, ed. Peter Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 11. More detailed speculations about Esther’s background and character can be found in Margaret Anne Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), Kate Chisholm, *Fanny Burney: Her Life* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998), and Claire Harman, *Fanny Burney: A Biography* (London: Harper Collins, 2000). These accounts are largely based on information in Joyce Hemlow, *The History of Fanny Burney* (Clarendon Press, 1958) and Slava Klima, Garry Bowers and Kerry S. Grant (eds.), *Memoirs of Dr Charles Burney 1726-1769*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. The editors follow Percy Scholes, *The Great Dr Burney* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948), who hypothesizes M. Dubois’s membership of the fanmakers’ guild in Paris to explain the family’s residence in a fan shop in London, all the while assuming that M. Dubois was a musician like his son-in-law Sleepe (52). Klima *et al* follow the idea that Dubois kept a fan shop in Cheapside even while noting that ‘Esther Sleep’ paid the rates on the property (86n4), assuming that this person was Dubois’s daughter and Esther Sleepe Burney’s mother. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. The record of the Sleepe sisters’ freedom appears in the original Musicians’ Company Renter Warden Accounts (London Guildhall, hereafter LG: Ms 3091), which lists fees received. They are not recorded in either of the official lists: Musicians’ Company List of Freemen 1743-1831 (LG: Ms 3098) or Musicians’ Company List of Freemen 1743-69 (LG: Ms 3097), and so consequently are not in the Records of London Livery Companies Online (ROLLCO). There are many other women and some men in the same situation. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Both names appear in the admissions calendar, but only Esther’s freedom record (her certificate from the Musicians’ Company) survives. This records that ‘Esther, dau[ghte]r of Richard Sleep’ admitted by patrimony ‘because he [sic] is legitimate, and was born after the Admission of his father into the said freedom. The admission of his father is entered in the book marked with the letter [blank] and bears the date the 21 of Aug in the year of our lord 1705.’ The masculine pronoun must have been pre-written on the form since the document was signed by Richard Sleepe, as Warden of the Company, who knew the sex of his offspring. Both the name and the date of this record are entered incorrectly in Ancestry.com, as follows: Esther Daw (a misreading of ‘Esther dau of Richard’), admitted 21 Aug 1785 (a misreading of the father’s admission date of 21 August 1705, where the ‘0’ is torn). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. To the best of my knowledge, Claire Harman is the only author who gives the Sleepe daughters credit for pursuing a trade, although she thinks they were musicians. *Fanny Burney*, 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. John Sansom, son of Oliver Sansom, Citizen & Draper, was apprenticed to one John Clark, Citizen & Turner, on 3 September 1731, and would have been eligible for the freedom of the company in 1738, but he must have worked as a journeyman for five years, because he did not take the freedom of the City until 7 September 1743 (Freedom Papers and parish registers on Ancestry), three months after his marriage, when the new couple were in a position to open their own shop. John Sansom was born to Oliver and Elizabeth Sansom 11 April 1715. “England and Wales Non-Conformist Record Indexes (RG4-8), 1588-1977,” database, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FQDN-7YM). [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. A.L. Erickson, “Married Women’s Occupations in Eighteenth-Century London,” *Continuity & Change* 23 (2008): 267-307. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. London Metropolitan Archive (hereafter LMA): Ms 67: St Mary Colechurch Churchwardens’ accounts 1700-69. The Scavenger’s Rate at Christmas 1746 and the Poor Rate at Easter 1747 were both paid by an unspecified Sleepe. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. The land tax was paid in spring in both 1748 and 1749 by Esther Sleepe (LMA Ms 11316/148 and /151). Harman, *Burney*, 12, notes that Burney had “taken over payment of the rent on Mrs Sleepe’s fan shop at Easter 1749.” Klima *et al*, *Memoirs*, 86n4 also references the taxes with thanks to Hemlow. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Esther is often reported as being years older than Charles (e.g., Hemlow, *Burney*, 5) but she was only some months older. John Wagstaff, “Burney, Charles (1726–1814),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013 at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4078>), hereafter *ODNB*. Note that Frances Burney’s *ODNB* entry gives the marriage date as 25 July. It is suggested (Hemlow, *Burney*, 6; Klima *et al*, *Memoirs*, 84) that the marriage by licence in St George’s Chapel, Mayfair may have been clandestine to keep their illegitimate child secret, but half of the marriages in London took place in ‘clandestine’ centres in the mid-eighteenth century. J. Field, “An Examination of Fleet Weddings, c. 1710-50: Who Married There?,” forthcoming in *Continuity & Change*. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. LG: Ms 3098, Musicians’ Company List of Freemen 1743-1831, 3 July 1749. At some later point, this entry was crossed out and overwritten ‘Musician, Queen Square’. Roger Lonsdale, *Dr Charles Burney: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 23, thought that Burney had merely taken lodgings at the fan shop. Richard Crewdson, in *Apollo's Swan and Lyre: 500 Years of the Musicians' Company* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), 152, avers that Burney took up the freedom because of his musical appointments ‘and through his father-in-law’s persuasion’, but this seems unlikely in view of the record. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Freedom of the City Admission papers, 1681-1925, on www.ancestry.com. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Their rate was £4, whereas the mean and median were around £3 in the 1720s. Ann M. Carlos and Larry Neal, “Women in the City: London 1720-1725” (paper presented at the XIV International Economic History Congress, Helsinki, 21-25 August 2006). [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. The parish minutes of St Dionis Backchurch can be viewed on www.LondonLives.org. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. LMA: Ms 4221/1: Rate book 1704-1750, and Ms 11316/155: Land Tax (via Ancestry.com, where Charles Burney in 1750 is mislabelled as St Martin Ludgate). Bills of 1740 from the Heberts are preserved in the British Museum (Heal, 86.39 and 84.114-115). For Hankey see <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/london-aldermen/hen3-1912/>, 166-172 and 195-211. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Chisholm, *Burney*, 10; Margaret Anne Doody, “Burney and Politics,” in *Cambridge Companion*, 94; Klima *et al*, *Memoirs*, xxii; Wagstaff, “Burney.” [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Janice Farrar Thaddeus, *Frances Burney: A Literary Life* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 13. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Wagstaff, “Burney”, and the original parish minute is available at https://www.londonlives.org/browse.jsp?id=GLDBMV30501\_n3286-1&div=GLDBMV30501MV305010399#. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (London: T. Cowley, 1747), 211. For other trades, see *A General Description of all Trades* (London: 1747), 33, 87, 116, 149, 175. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. LG: Ms 15860/8: Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, Register of Bindings, p. 550. It was this entry that set me wondering why Charles Burney would take on a Haberdasher’s apprentice and led to the discovery of the Sleepe family of fanmakers. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. For female apprenticeship, see A.L. Erickson, “Eleanor Mosley and Other Milliners in the City of London Companies, 1700-1750,” *History Workshop Journal* 71 (2011): 147-72. Esther Burney is noted on 153-4. All apprenticeships in London Companies ran for seven years. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Her master, Thomas Chapman, is recorded as a Cheapside haberdasher in the Haberdashers’ Company Register. The British Museum holds a trade card (Banks, 72.42) for a Thomas Chapman in Cheapside opposite Wood Street, which was in between Martha Sleepe and Mary Sansom. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Gill Newton, “Infant Mortality Variations, Feeding Practices and Social Status in London between 1550 and 1750,” *Social History of Medicine* 24 (2010): 260-80. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Alvaro Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney, 1: 1751-1784* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Frances Burney*, Memoirs of Doctor Burney, Arranged from His Own Manuscripts, from Family Papers, and from Personal Recollections*, 3 vols. (London: Edward Moxon, 1832; ebook Cambridge University Press, 2010) 1:87. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. St Dionis Backchurch Minutes of Parish Vestry, at https://www.londonlives.org/browse.jsp?id=GLDBMV30501\_n3510-1&div=GLDBMV30501MV305010436#. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Klima *et al*, *Memoirs*, 179n1. [Charles Burney, but published anonymously] *An Essay Towards a History of the Principal Comets that have Appeared Since the Year 1742. ... To which is prefixed … A Letter upon Comets. Addressed to a Lady, by the late M. de Maupertuis*, (London: T. Becket and P.A. de Hondt, 1769). The annotated translation is at 8-35. We do not know when Esther Sleepe made her translation, but the French edition was a topic of interest in London in the year of its publication. *Miscellaneous Correspondence … Sent to the Author of the Gentleman’s Magazine* (London, 1742), 75-9. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. *The Court Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney, 1786-1791,* general ed. Peter Sabor, 6 vols., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011-., 1:xlii. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Ribeiro, *Letters*, 30n. The marriage occurred in St Martin Ludgate parish, where many marriages were by licence. The original can be viewed on Ancestry. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Austin Dobson, *Fanny Burney* (1923), 5; Hemlow, *Burney*, 5; Harman, *Burney*, 10; Doody, “Burney,” 94. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Harman, *Burney*, 9, who follows Klima, *et al*, *Memoirs*, 83, 86, in thinking that the woman who married Richard Sleepe in 1705 was named *Esther* Wood, rather than Frances. One of the two Pierre Dubois’s in London did indeed have a daughter named Esther, but in 1705 she was only 12 years old. In the original version of this paper given in Cardiff, I proposed that Esther Dubois somehow changed both her first and her last name to become Frances Wood because the birth date matched the age of Frances Sleepe in the 1767 Return of Papists. I have since concluded that the name ‘Esther’ was simply a slip on the part of Klima *et al*. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. London Record Society, 2, 1966. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. LMA: CLA/047/LR/02/04/047. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. LMA: CLA/047/LR/02/04/050. The earlier 1700 Returns recorded no names. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. LMA: CLA/047/LR/02/04/051. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. I am very grateful to Cynthia Comyn, whose extensive research on the Sleepe family directed me to this candidate for ‘Frances Dubois/Wood’, and following positive identification of Frances’ father, Francis, as a fan-maker I am convinced that this is the right person, despite the incorrect age given for Frances Sleepe in the 1767 Return of Papists, which would have made her born in 1693 like Esther, daughter of Pierre Dubois. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Doody, 94 states “Esther Sleepe Burney was French,” but she was at most half French and quite possibly not that much. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. It was not uncommon for Catholic children to be baptised in Anglican churches in the eighteenth century because this gave the child the right to settlement and poor relief should that become necessary, but no Anglican baptism records have been found for Frances or Mary Wood. The family appear to have been sufficiently prosperous not to feel the need to establish settlement rights. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. The family appears in the Land Tax and the Papist Return of 1711, but not thereafter in Blackfriars or anywhere else either in the tax or the Return of Papist for March 1714/5. LMA: CLA/047/LR/02/04/055 and CLA/047/LR/02/04/053. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. See, for example, Frances Burney, Journal for 1775, 23 March, *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney,* general ed. Lars Troide, 5 vols., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988-2012 (hereafter *EJL*), 2:94. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. See, for example, Samuel Crisp to Frances Burney, 8 May 1775, *EJL* 2:121. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. See, for example, Frances Burney to Charles Burney Jr., 11 November [1800], *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame D’Arblay), 1791-1840*, ed. Joyce Hemlow *et al,* 12 vols., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972-84, 12: 997. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. City Admission Papers of Francis Sleep on ancestry.com. The original apprenticeship indenture does not survive so this information is fortuitous. Francis Sleep’s application for freedom of the City explained that he was a musician like his father, but he could not be admitted under the normal rules of patrimony because he had been born just before his father was made free of the City, but in any case he had been apprenticed by his father to serve his mother. This apprenticeship too was a turnover, of a fictive kind, with an apprenticeship to a member of the Fanmakers’ Company on 7 May 1722, followed by being turned over to his father on 8 May. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. See Erickson, “Eleanor Mosely.” The Fanmakers’ Company records are in the London Guildhall but start only in the 1760s. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. The two parishes were joined in 1670. The children are included in the christenings of St Vedast Foster Lane; Frances Sleepe’s will records her as of St Michael le Querne. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Frances Burney, *Memoirs of Doctor Burney* (1832), 1:63. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Richard Sleepe was admitted to the Musicians’ Company in August 1705 but not into the City Freedom until February 1708/9. Freedom of the City Admission Papers of Francis Sleep on www.ancestry.com. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. LMA: COL/OF/02/157. For Sleepe's history with the company from 1711, see Crewdson, *Swan and Lyre*, 149-52. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Charles Manning 9 October 1739. Earlier he had taken two apprentices who were turned over to a male kinsman the following day: James Jenkins in Sept 1736, turned over to John Jenkins ; and Joseph Slater in May 1737, turned over to Richard Slater, just as his own son had been turned over to him by a Fanmaker (see note 41). ROLLCO. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Crewdson, *Swan and Lyre*, 151-2. Crewdson says he was “about 70” but I cannot substantiate this in the parish registers. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. This apprenticeship is noted on Esther Sleepe’s trade card preserved in the British Museum, in the hand of the collector, Ambrose Heal. The apprenticeship was to ‘Richard Sleepe, fanmaker’. I can find no record of this apprenticeship in the Musicians’ or Fanmakers’ Company and it is not clear where Heal obtained the information. A Sarah Sargent was born 1735 in St Vedast Foster Lane & St Michael le Querne to Robert and Mary Sargent, so they were neighbours of the Sleepes and possibly co-religionists of Frances, since they swore the oath of allegiance in for non-Anglicans in 1723. LMA: CLA/047/LR/02/04/028. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Crewdson, *Swan and Lyre*, 155; Ribeiro, *Letters*, 1:30n. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. E.S. Worrall, ed., *Returns of Papists, 1767*, vol. 2 (London: Catholic Record Society (Great Britain), 1989). Her long residence is confirmed by the baptism of her thirteenth child there in 1723 (see Appendix). [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. That was an unusual mistake for a literate, numerate woman. She wasn’t guessing. People who guess use multiples of 5: 70, 75, 80. To be off by eight years is distinctly odd. However, if she was 74 in 1767, then she would have been married at age 12, which is even odder. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. The National Archives: Prob 11/993, will of Frances Teresia Sleepe, 11 December 1773. I have found no wills for any other member of the Sleepe or Wood families. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Vivien Jones, “Burney and Gender,” in *Cambridge Companion*, 116. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Betty Rizzo, “Burney and Society,” in *Cambridge Companion*, 135. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Erickson, “Mistresses and Marriage; or, a Short History of the Mrs,” *History Workshop Journal* 78 (2014): 39-57. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Jennie Batchelor, *Dress, Distress and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and *Women’s Work: Labour, Gender, Authorship, 1750-1830* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2010); Chloe Wigston Smith, *Women, Work, and Clothes in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), ch. 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Frances Burney, *The Witlings and The Woman-Hater*, eds. Peter Sabor and Geoffrey Sill (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002), 47-64. For a reading of Burney’s play in which the unusual setting of the milliner’s shop is noted as a “fresh… surprise… the setting is so entirely different from the usual sort [of setting utilized in late eighteenth-century comedy]”, see Doody, *The Life In The Works*, 77. See also Barbara Darby, *Frances Burney, Dramatist: Gender, Performance, and the Late Eighteenth-Century Stage* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 27. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Frances Burney, *Camilla: or, a Picture of Youth*, eds. Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). For considerations of the important relationship between curiosity and consumption in *Camilla*, see Harriet Guest, *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (University of Chicago Press, 2000), 77-79 and Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 94. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Frances Burney, *The Wanderer: or, Female Difficulties*, ed. Margaret Anne Doody, Robert L. Mack and Peter Sabor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 425-451. For a consideration of Juliet’s indenture in Mrs. Matson’s milliner’s shop in *The Wanderer*, see Wigston-Smith, 171. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)