

## CHAPTER 6

### *Transmediations* *Marketing the coterie traveler*

But at KESWICK, you will, on one side of the lake, see a rich and beautiful landskip of cultivated fields, rising to the eye in fine inequalities, with noble groves of oak, happily dispersed; and climbing the adjacent hills, shade above shade, in the most various and picturesque forms. On the opposite shore, you will find rocks and cliffs of stupendous height, hanging broken over the lake in horrible grandeur, some of them a thousand feet high, the woods climbing up their steep and shaggy sides, where mortal foot never yet approached. On these dreadful heights the eagles build their nests: A variety of waterfalls are seen pouring from their summits, and tumbling in vast sheets from rock to rock in rude and terrible magnificence: While on all sides of this immense amphitheatre the lofty mountains rise round, piercing the clouds in shapes as spiry and fantastic, as the very rocks of *Dovedale*.  
(John Brown, [1755])<sup>1</sup>

The mountains, the rocky precipices, the woods and the waters, appeared in various striking situations every mile I travelled on, and formed the most astonishing points of view. Sometimes I was above the clouds, and then crept to enchanting vallies below. Here glins were seen, that looked as if the mountains had been rent asunder, to form the amazing scenes: and there, forests and falling streams covered the sides of the hills. Rivers in many places, in the most beautiful cascades, were tumbling along; and cataracts from the tops of mountains came roaring down . . . From hence (the top of a mountain) I saw several black subjacent clouds big with thunder, and the lightning within them rolled backwards and forwards, like shining bodies of the brightest lustre. One of them went off in the grandest horrors through the vale below, . . .  
(Thomas Amory, 1756)<sup>2</sup>

Chapter 5 examined a form of writing – the genre of the character – around which distinctions sharpened in the late 1770s and early 1780s between the values and allegiances of the literary coterie, on the one hand, and the commercial print trade – with its increasingly professionalized model of authorship and its insistence on “objective” criticism – on the other.

If Johnson's "Life of Lyttelton" represented for Elizabeth Montagu and Philip Yorke, Lord Hardwicke, as former centers of scribal coteries, all that was undesirable in the commodification of literature, the episode also underscored the marketability of copy related to elite circles. In this respect, the quarrel over the posthumous assessment of George Lyttelton's authorial achievements offers a condensed and simplified version of the more tangled and extended debate, outlined in Chapter 4, about the authority of the coterie in relation to that of the appreciative periodical reader or the critic when it came to interpreting Shenstone and his art. But if debates over poetic legacies highlighted differences between media systems, a media-oriented study of the developing genre of domestic travel writing in the second half of the eighteenth century tells quite a different story.

From the mid-1740s to the 1760s, Philip Yorke, Jemima Grey, George Lyttelton, and Elizabeth Montagu wrote lengthy epistolary descriptions of visits to the east coast and the north of England, to Wales and Scotland, and to country estates and related sites throughout the British countryside. At a time when the wealthy and well-connected Grey could playfully boast from Yarmouth to her friend Catherine Talbot that she had now, at the ripe age of twenty-seven, seen the sea for the first time, travel primarily for the sake of observation, with the end goals of pleasure and self-improvement, was still largely the privilege of the leisured male.<sup>3</sup> As a result of the exclusivity of such experiences, accounts of them tended to be produced as set-pieces to be hand-copied, perhaps with minor adaptations geared to different recipients, for reading and circulation in manuscript form among coterie members and even beyond a coterie's confines. The manuscript plan and description of William Shenstone's circuit walk at the Leasowes discussed earlier illustrates the sort of materials that often made their way into the print medium; because of the ongoing association of domestic travel with the landed elites, particularly gentlemen, they carried with them the marks of their coterie origins as guarantees of authenticity and authority.

This chapter will trace the movement of several influential domestic travel texts from script to print, but it will also demonstrate how this story of intermediation is much more than a one-way flow with print as its destination: works originating in the print medium in fact contributed to spur on the coterie traveler-writer and to whet the print reader's appetite for the productions of the coterie. The epigraphs of this chapter offer an example. For readers of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature, the locutions of the picturesque and the tour of the Lakes are

easily recognizable in them, yet they were produced in 1753 and 1756, respectively, fifteen years before William Gilpin's first articulation of the picturesque esthetic and at least two decades before the institutionalization of domestic tourism to the English Lake District in the late 1770s. The first traveler, the Reverend John Brown, is addressing a private letter, available only in manuscript form until 1767, to George, Lord Lyttelton. The second speaker, John Bunclé, Esquire, is a mere fiction, the eponymous hero of a novel whose first part was published anonymously in 1756. Thus, despite their parallel and prescient-sounding invocations of the clichés of the Lakes tour, these texts would at best appear to have been on the margins of what John Brewer has described as the "literary phenomenon" of domestic tourism, "stimulated by travel books and guides, by personal accounts of travels and by verses evoking the beauties of the British countryside."<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Brown's private letter and Bunclé's rhapsodic narration set in motion media events that at once stimulated and competed with each other to produce the idea of "the Lakes."

Although the widespread popularity of the Lake District tour in the final decades of the eighteenth century is well recognized, publications associated with the tour have long been examined primarily for their expression of the picturesque esthetic and their influence on the writing of Wordsworth and other so-called Lake Poets.<sup>5</sup> Recent writers such as Brewer, Barbara Korte, and Zoë Kinsley have also identified in the eighteenth-century discourse of British domestic tourism a unifying drive to examine "the present state of the nation" and to establish and celebrate a national identity, however uncertain and multifarious its foundations.<sup>6</sup> Critical analyses of writings associated with the Lakes in particular have further noted tensions between an esthetic ideal and the forces of commodification, democratization, and modernization.<sup>7</sup> However, while all of these studies have necessarily depended on the textual record to examine the historical and ideological significance of domestic tourism, little attention has been focused on the medium itself – that is, on the trajectory of the domestic tour's emergence as a popular and lucrative print commodity.

Brewer's account does note what generally goes unremarked: the role of the London-based print trade in creating the tour of the nation's most farflung regions. He describes the majority of travel books published between 1700 and 1770 as "typical Grub Street products, inaccurate works of pastiche that shamelessly plagiarized one another, cobbled together by aspiring writers who had yet to move from penury to fame." At the same time, he observes that "the guides, feeding off one another, gained weight and gravity as a genre" sometime around the 1770s.<sup>8</sup>

My discussion will show that rather than operating as a closed system of medium and genre that somehow authorized itself, the coalescence of a culturally prestigious discourse of domestic tourism in the 1770s was a phenomenon of intermediation, the collaborative product of both manuscript and popular print cultures. Thus, I will focus less on the substance of the Lakes discourse than on the modes of its circulation, its practitioners, and the way it was represented by those practitioners – in correspondence, published paratexts, and reviews. I will trace how popularly oriented and initially somewhat suspect print products invoked, absorbed, and exploited a coexistent body of coterie writings. In turn, the latter persisted through and shaped the newer modes of the print marketplace, ultimately elevating the prestige of the genre of domestic travel writing and, in the process, determining the cultural meanings of domestic travel. As in the previous chapter, the period of the 1770s and 1780s will prove crucial to this recalibration.

My argument here will illustrate once again the premise of this study that, in the words of David Thorburn and Henry Jenkins, no medium is pure or static but is rather “touched by and in turn touch[ing] its neighbors and rivals” and that, therefore, “medium-specific perspectives may limit our understanding of the ways in which media interact, shift and collude with one another.” And again, this argument rests on evidence that coteries cultivating the exchange of literary manuscripts in the mid-eighteenth century were in fact highly visible to their contemporaries. While previous chapters have made clear the central participation of women in the creation and conduct of some of the century’s most prominent literary coteries, and while I will show some of these same women to be involved in manuscript travel writing, the scribal activity discussed in this chapter centers on men: landowning gentlemen primarily, but also university-educated men of gentry or middling status who were part of these gentlemen’s clientage networks as tutors, secretaries, and recipients of livings. This is because the sorts of cultural influence I trace here originate in the elite education, university connections, geographical mobility, and leisure traditionally associated with males of the landowning class. As Susan Lamb has written of the Grand Tour, a gendered tradition was imaginatively dominant in the eighteenth-century literary travel account: “While the tourist population itself was mixed, the Traveller was male.”<sup>9</sup>

To illustrate the interpenetration of print and scribal traditions throughout this period, I will frame my discussion with the publishing history of Daniel Defoe’s *A Tour thro’ the Whole Island of Great Britain*,

a remarkably long-lived enterprise originating in 1724 and seeing eight continually revised editions up to 1778. In the course of those eight editions, the English Lake District is transformed from a region dismissed as terrifyingly wild and inhospitable into an object of pleasure – a transformation that demonstrates the ongoing power of manuscript culture in eighteenth-century Britain to define the terms of discourse. Tracing the interface of manuscript and print in the forging of the Lakes as an idea reveals an ongoing struggle for control of that idea between the forces of the commercial and the esthetic, the popular and the exclusive, the cultivated and the natural. The shifting balance between these opposing terms can be surprising; if the early success of Defoe's *Tour* and of writing about the Lakes is generated by London-centered commercial print, this success gives way to an appeal founded on a gentlemanly coterie of correspondents, whose anonymous amateurism in turn evolves into the authority of the author of genius, exploited for his print-based celebrity status. Note that here the amateur ultimately reasserts himself in the newfound authority of the educated local resident, whose dedication to inquiry and accuracy as informant is redefined in print as “modern,” lending him a cultural authority correspondent to that of the leisured traveling gentleman in his own coterie circle. Ironically, by the time the Lakes tour is represented in the 1780s as having a textual tradition of its own, its acknowledged founders are not its original commercial purveyors but the writers who initially restricted the circulation of their travels to the manuscript medium. In this way the story of this chapter counter-balances that of Chapter 5, where the future of literary criticism was asserted to lie in the commercial and professional realm.

### Travel description in the Montagu–Lyttelton correspondence

The Yorke–Grey correspondence records contain several examples of epistolary travel journals kept by Jemima Grey and Philip Yorke. Their preservation as discrete documents, together with internal evidence such as Grey's midstream shift of addressee, in her 1750 account of a journey northward, from Catherine Talbot to “Your Ladyship” (perhaps her sister-in-law Elizabeth Yorke, now Lady Anson) and her conclusion “And thus Ends the History of my Travels. – which I beg may be sent on to Miss Talbot, as the former part d. Taymouth. Monday July 28th,” shows that these journals were copied, reread, and circulated as valued coterie works in their own right. Philip Yorke's travel journal spans twenty years, from 1744 to 1763, including “a tour into the North” (1744), “a journey into

Staffordshire" (1748, with Grey), "a journey through Norfolk" (1750, with Grey), "Oxford" (1750), "Scarborough" (1752), "Portsmouth" (1755), "Scotland" (1755, with Grey), "Salisbury" (1760), and a "Midland tour" (1763, with Grey); Yorke also notes the existence of a separate memorandum book, now disappeared, of his 1749 travels to the Hague and Paris.<sup>10</sup> While their format is rather barren and list-like, these records provide a good indication of what the mid-century gentleman traveler was expected to record: primarily descriptions of country seats, including their situation, any remarkable architectural features of the houses, and their paintings; with additional accounts of principal historical sites and major public works; and rather cursory notes on landscape, weather, roads, and towns.

Elizabeth Montagu embellished the genre with the seriousness she devoted to all her early epistolary performances. In 1747, for example, she sent the Duchess of Portland a detailed description of Lady Fane's grotto, complete with a dramatic, allusive, and humorous account of the party's coach breaking down en route, leaving them stranded overnight. The letter concludes, "& we came Home laughing at our Adventures which we arrogantly compared to those of the Valourous Quixote, or Marvellous Robinson Crusoe, we hope if Dr Pocock (who was of our Party) should add them to his Travels your Grace will buy the new Edition for the sake of so important, interesting, & entertaing an addition." Montagu incorporated this set-piece into a letter to her sister as well, and very possibly sent it to others; such general distribution is a good indication in her correspondence of the value she attaches to an epistolary composition. Montagu's correspondence with her husband in the 1740s and 1750s also indicates a shared pleasure in descriptions of various noble houses visited by one or the other, although here the writing is more informal, with correspondingly blunter judgments about building and landscaping tastes. For example, Montagu responds to her husband's account of a house in an extravagantly chinoiserie style built by a Mr Hart on the property of a neighbor, leased for a mere fifteen years. Edward Montagu disapproves of this as "no more than a whim & so much money flung away," with which his wife concurs vigorously – "Mr Harts scheme of building an expensive bawble on another persons Land was the foolishlest prodigality I ever heard of" – but also with high appreciation for her husband's literary efforts: "I must have a bad taste if I thought your descriptions too long, for without compliment no one has a more genteel & elegant pen, & I saw Killum with more pleasure in your letter than the finest prospect could give me."<sup>11</sup>

But the fullest flowering of Montagu's manuscript travel writing seems to have come through her relationship with Lyttelton and his friends in the mid-1750s. This study has demonstrated Lyttelton's significance in relation to several scribal coteries of the period, and in Chapter 7 will note the popularity of his poetry in manuscript compilations. Given this prominent position in coterie literary culture, it is not coincidental that Lyttelton's writing and circulation of domestic travel accounts seem to have been one of the most influential forces in the development of the genre in his day. Additionally, as proprietor of Hagley Park from 1751, he attained fame in his own right as an improving estate owner who created one of the showpieces of eighteenth-century landscape gardening. He was also, as we have seen, an important conduit of his neighbor William Shenstone's fame as landscape artist, bringing both aristocratic parties and fellow-artists such as the poet of *The Seasons*, James Thomson, to tour the Leasowes. Thus, the descriptive travel accounts of Lyttelton himself, written when he toured Wales in the summer of 1755, were copied, passed around, and preserved in manuscript collections such as Montagu's as well as finding their way into print; these letters will be discussed further below. Other members of the Montagu–Lyttelton coterie (Benjamin Stillingfleet, for example, reporting on travels in Wales) contributed to the production and exchange of such writings as well.

It is in this context that Montagu honed her own travel-writing skills in letters to Lyttelton especially, where she recounted unusual local travel experiences. One of the most adventurous of these accounts is a romantic set-piece about a journey of forty miles by night, in which she is treated to “the magnificent spectacle” of “the rising of every star till the whole heaven glow[s] with living sapphires” and she “los[es] [her]self in worlds beyond worlds, and system beyond system; till [her] mind [rises] to the great Maker of them all.” Montagu shares this piece with Lyttelton because “the good folks I converse with, care not for any of the glittering host of heaven, but the harvest or hunter's moon.” Her opportunities for travel soon became much more extensive than those of the typical woman of wealth, with her husband's inheritance in 1758 of northern estates and coalmines, in the management of which she engaged actively. From the beginning, Montagu used her travels northward as the basis of descriptive letters to Lyttelton; as she journeys in October of 1760, for example, she “wishes very much to have snatched your Lordship for an hour from Hagley, where every rill has its course directed in the line of beauty, to the banks of a rude, rough, roaring, boisterous river at Weatherby” whose progress she proceeds to describe.<sup>12</sup>

### The gentleman traveler in the print marketplace

The 1724 first edition of Daniel Defoe's *Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, though nominally "By a gentleman," is clearly a commercial undertaking, printed and sold by at least six booksellers and notable for its celebration of the enterprising spirit that has led to a continual "Encrease of Glory" for the nation. For Defoe, the "Jewels . . . in the rich Coronet" of Britain are the "Gentlemen's meer *Summer-Houses*, or Citizen's *Country-Houses*" which line the banks of the Thames between Richmond and London, "whither they retire from the hurries of Business, and from getting Money." In this inauguration of the *Tour*, the individualized imprimatur of an author is not invoked to lend value to the text; rather, the "Authority of the Relation" is founded on the "Eye-witness" report of the hardworking traveler-journalist who has "Travell'd critically" throughout "the North Part of *England*, and the South Part of *Scotland* five several Times over." The *Tour's* thirteen London-originating circuits embody the unified, centralized, and prosperous national identity being forged in the early decades of the century; from this perspective, Westmorland is for the narrator "a Country eminent only for being the wildest, most barren and frightful of any that I have passed over in *England*, or even in *Wales* it self."<sup>13</sup>

Anonymity and claims of inclusivity and completeness meant that the original *Tour* lent itself well to reprinting, revision, and expansion as needed. The third edition was thus advertised on its title page as containing "very great Additions, Improvements, and Corrections; which bring it down to the Year 1742." The editor-authors now were men of the London book trade – principally Samuel Richardson, perhaps also Edward Kimber and others – who remained anonymous, as did Defoe. However, the "Editor" claims on behalf of the "Proprietors," who have "spare[d] no Expence" in improving the work, that he "has been favour'd with . . . ample Materials by several curious Gentlemen" to complete this account of the nation. Apparently, these travelers are interested in what had recently seemed only the "frightful" periphery, and so the preface promises to correct what was "very defective" in the "Description of the Northern Counties of *England*." In addition to fuller descriptions of the region's prosperous towns, the mountains that Defoe's original narrator found "in my thoughts, monstrous high" are now "all, in my Judgment, of a stupendous Height"; where once "nor were these hills high and formidable only, but they had a kind of unhospitable terror in them," now "as these Hills were lofty, so they had an Aspect of Terror." The land is still "of



no Use either to Man or Beast,” as in the first edition, and Westmorland is still “eminent” for its superlative wildness, but there is no doubt that just as the traveling spectator expresses himself more elegantly, he feels a parallel increase of ease among mountains.<sup>14</sup>

This addition of a gentlemanly veneer is triply reinforced in the preface to the 1748 fourth edition, wherein the proprietors “thankfully acknowledge ourselves indebted to several worthy Gentlemen, who have kindly communicated to us many curious Particulars,” then “declare, that we shall always pay a grateful Regard to any such Corrections, Improvements, and Additions, as we may be favoured with.” Finally, they indicate their responsiveness to the wishes of “several Gentlemen, Favourers of this Work, expressing a Desire of having a Set of Maps, of a proper Size, to bind with this Edition”; thus, “the Proprietors (always ready to embrace every Proposal which tended to the rendering this Work more useful) have engaged several eminent Geographers and Engravers to draw and engrave, in a neat Manner, a new Set of Maps.” The maps are accompanied by tables of roads, market days, and distances “for the Benefit of Travellers.” Clearly, the commercially alert proprietors are pitching their text to a group of gentlemen who constitute the knowledgeable, traveling portion of their clientele, and who will pay for such value-added features – as well as to those who will see the involvement of such gentlemen at every stage of production as lending authority to the text.<sup>15</sup>

But just who are these imagined gentlemen of the 1740s? Samuel Richardson’s runaway bestseller about an upstart servant-turned-gentlewoman might seem an unlikely place to look for them. Yet, inspired perhaps by the third edition of Defoe’s *Tour* – which Richardson himself revised and published in that same year – the heroine of the 1742 sequel to *Pamela* becomes a proficient traveler, being conducted by her Mr. B. “over the greatest part of England” as a means of recovering from her frequent childbirths. Nevertheless, the emphasis shifts when the time comes for written instruction in traveling, as part of Pamela’s “little book upon education, which I wrote for Mr. B.’s correction and amendment, on his putting Mr. Locke’s treatise on that subject into my hands, and requiring my observations upon it.” While it is the heroine who underlines the importance, even necessity, of what she calls “*Home Travelling*,” her arguments are entirely geared toward the gentleman’s son and heir. She explains that this son “may with good advantage begin, at fourteen or fifteen, the tour of Great Britain, now-and-then, by excursions, in the summer months, between his other studies, and as a diversion to him.” Amusement is certainly not the only goal, for by gaining first-hand

knowledge of “the situation, conveniences, interests, and constitution of his own country,” the young gentleman “will be able to lay a ground-work for the future government of his thoughts and actions, if the interest he bears in his native country should call him to the public service in either house of parliament.” Even the “noble art of navigation,” to be observed on board ships traveling along the British coasts and between the islands of the periphery, is “a knowledge very far from being insignificant to a gentleman who is an islander, and has a stake in the greatest maritime kingdom in the world.”<sup>16</sup>

Thus, the democratizing and gender-inclusive effect of having the low-born Pamela herself travel through the island gives way to a reinforcement of the association between the gentleman and domestic tourism by means of Pamela’s extended argument that domestic travel is as important as the Grand Tour to the formation of a British gentleman. A further 1740s elaboration of the gentleman-traveler persona in conjunction with domestic tourism is found in the first known publication of William Gilpin, future writer of travel accounts elaborating his theories of picturesque beauty. Composed while Gilpin was still a university student, the 1748 *Dialogue upon the Gardens of the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Cobham, at Stowe in Buckinghamshire* introduces Polyphthon as “a Gentleman engaged in a way of Life, that excused him two Months in the Year from Business; which Time he used generally to spend in visiting what was curious in the several Counties around him.” Polyphthon visits Stowe with a friend, creating the occasion for a dialog about the relationship between ethics and esthetics in response to art in general, and landscape gardening in particular. Although he is not a landed peer, he feels the freedom to discuss at length with his friend Callophilus the proper use of an estate and the social value of a landscape garden, beginning, “Were I a Nobleman, I should endeavour to turn my Estate into a Garden, and make my Tenants my Gardiners.”<sup>17</sup>

This vaguely democratized persona is important as a backdrop to Stowe’s socially broad range of traveler types. For Gilpin, the gardens serve not only to entertain well-educated gentlemen who can appreciate the classical and contemporary allusions but also to offer “Improvement” to “our Country Squires,” who if they would “flock hither two or three times in a Year” would “return Home with new Notions, and begin to see the Absurdity of their clipped Yews, their Box-wood Borders, their flourished Parterres, and their lofty Brick-walls.” Those of all ranks who visit the gardens simply for recreation experience the benefits of esthetic pleasure; although the faces of inarticulate laborers may simply be “marked with the

Passion of gaping Wonder,” for them, “a *Sunday* Evening spent here, adds a new Relish to the Day of Rest and makes the Sabbath appear more chearful . . . after a toilsome Week.” Moreover, Polyphthon’s gentlemanly travels coexist with his recognition of tourism as a profitable industry. As a result of its wide appeal, a significant component of Stowe’s value is “the Money spent in the Neighbourhood by the Company daily crouding hither to satisfy their Curiosity. We have a kind of a continual Fair; and I have heard several of the Inhabitants of the neighbouring Town assert, that it is one of the best Trades they have.”<sup>18</sup>

Economically profitable appreciation of sites such as Stowe, Gilpin implies, is created by writers like Polyphthon, who clearly belongs to the category of “the Man of Taste [who] is seen examining every Beauty with a curious Eye, and discovering his Approbation in an half-formed Smile.” Polyphthon and Callophilus seem to form part of the meritocracy of taste soon to be identified with their contemporary William Shenstone and practiced by businessman Robert Dodsley and Oxford Professor Joseph Spence as they produced their descriptions of the Leasowes. Thus, it is significant that Gilpin chooses to have Polyphthon introduce into the dialog the “northern Counties,” including the author’s native Cumberland, as the locus of the most “elegant natural Views” in the kingdom. Having been “carried” north by “Curiosity indeed, rather than Business,” and having spent his unencumbered time “in hunting after beautiful Objects,” Polyphthon describes the landscape around the Eden River as superior to that of Stowe: “I cannot forbear . . . wishing . . . that his Lordship [Cobham] had such Materials to work with, and it could not be but he would make a most noble Picture.”<sup>19</sup>

### The gentleman traveler as coterie writer

Gilpin’s characters are fictionalized elaborations of the traveling gentleman, designed to appeal to the purchasers he addresses openly in his “Advertisement.” Not long afterward, in 1753, a similar ethos of leisured sociability and gentlemanly exchange – but one more restricted of access – is invoked in the private letter quoted in my first epigraph, written by the young Gilpin’s former tutor and another Cumberland native, the author and clergyman John Brown. Addressed to George Lyttelton, who was Cobham’s nephew, the letter was first published in part only after Brown’s death, as a seven-page pamphlet entitled *A Description of the Lake at Keswick, (and the Adjacent Country) in Cumberland. Communicated in a Letter to a Friend. By a Popular Writer* (1767).

However, Donald Eddy has shown that the letter circulated in manuscript from about 1753 onward among members of the Lyttelton family and their friends. Eddy cites as evidence that the description was familiar to Lyttelton's brother Charles and their friend Archibald Bower a 1755 letter from Bower to Charles in which he refers to a walking tour of the Keswick area conducted by Brown, during which they "discovered cascades, woods, bourns, mountains, rocks, vales &c. unknown even to the Columbus of Keswick Dr. Brown."<sup>20</sup>

Thus, although several critical accounts use the 1767 print publication of the prose section of Brown's letter to date the inception of the Lake tour's popularity,<sup>21</sup> by 1755 members of the Lyttelton circle were invoking "the Columbus of Keswick's" travel writing in terms that suggested its already established reputation. The fourteen-year preprint circulation of Brown's letter suggests that his description of the landscape of Keswick exerted an influence well before 1767 among an extended community of travelers who communicated by means other than print. As late as 1776, this mode of "publication" was still functioning. When in that year the original poetic conclusion to Brown's letter was printed for the first time by the playwright Richard Cumberland, he described the poem as taken from "a Manuscript of the late ingenious Dr. Browne," a "valuable specimen of the author" that he had been "favoured with" even after a portion of it had already "got forth into the world, and was in print." For twenty-four years, then, the private exchange of this manuscript was reinforcing the privilege of membership in select coteries of patrons and connoisseurs. As the original recipient and circulation history of this letter indicate, at the center of this network was George, Lord Lyttelton; in fact, Brown's letter begins, "In my way to the north from *Hagley*," recording the author's status as an adherent, if not a regular, of Lyttelton's social circle, to which he had been introduced in turn by Charles Yorke.<sup>22</sup>

Lyttelton's own "discoveries" of picturesque landscapes in Wales are described in two lengthy letters written in the summer of 1755; an examination of the circulation and contents of these letters fills in details of a tradition of domestic travel description originating with the Lyttelton coterie.<sup>23</sup> Manuscript versions of these letters are found in the correspondences of both Montagu and Charles Lyttelton, a leading antiquarian and Dean of Exeter at the time. Lyttelton's two letters as preserved in the Montagu Collection are autographs addressed to Archibald Bower, who is asked by Lyttelton to greet "the Madonna," Lyttelton's current coterie name for Montagu. The manuscript copies of these letters held in the British Library are very similar but are addressed to Charles, who is again

asked to greet the Madonna. As further evidence of this coterie's circulation of travel writings, in closing his second letter Lyttelton writes to Bower, "Thus, My good Father, I have given you a Landschape of all North Wales in return for those you gave me of Cumberland and of Scotland" (Bower had apparently written his own account of his tour of the Lakes with Brown). Finally, although no manuscript of Brown's original letter about Keswick has been located, a comparison of the printed portions discussed above with Lyttelton's letters from Wales reveals a similar preference in the latter for picturesque landscapes in which "agreeable vallies" are "ennoble[d]" by the irregular slopes of Mount Snowden towering above them. In this context, Lyttelton's manuscripts can be described as attaining scribal publication in their own right. They also appeared in print shortly after his death in 1773, among the "never before printed" items in his posthumous 1774 *Works*, edited by his nephew George Edward Ayscough. In 1781, they were appended as a selling feature, advertised on the title-page, of Henry Penruddocke Wyndham's second edition of *A Gentleman's Tour through Monmouthshire and Wales, in the months of June and July, 1774*. Thus, like the private letters of "the Columbus of Keswick," these manuscript descriptions made their way into print to lend authority to a developing print genre of domestic travel descriptions – in this case, becoming influential as what Christine Gerrard calls "one of the earliest Romantic tourist accounts of Wales."<sup>24</sup>

The social life of Brown's text also demonstrates how the descriptive domestic tour was aligned with patterns of patronage and land ownership. In Lyttelton's travel letters, formulations about how a particular landscape might be improved by an estate's proprietor (for example, "There is a Park which would be most beautifull if the Master of it had any Taste") blur into evaluations of wilder prospects as meeting or falling short of a picturesque ideal. By contrast, as we have seen, Gilpin's early account of Stowe models critical appreciation of the landowner's taste while carefully not claiming his subject position. If, as Kim Michasiw has argued, Gilpin's model of the picturesque is designed for "those who are transient presences in the landscape" rather than for the "local improver," the writings of the Lyttelton coterie reflect the existence of a thriving parallel discourse of proprietary domestic tourism dating from at least the middle of the century. These divergent socially and politically inflected paths can be aligned with print versus manuscript dissemination practices. However, any claim that printed domestic tour discourse challenges the cultural supremacy of the property owner is undermined by the trade's increasing exploitation of the elite associations of the coterie to lend cachet to its products.<sup>25</sup>

### Marketing the coterie traveler and the Lakes in the 1750s and 1760s

The appeal of the coterie was in fact used to market descriptions of the Lakes as early as 1755, well before the emergence of such texts as Brown's and Lyttelton's into print in the late 1760s and the following decade. The aura of this world was brought to a commercial audience by the Reverend John Dalton, a Westmorland-educated clergyman who in that year published his *Descriptive Poem Addressed to Two Young Ladies at Their Return from Viewing the Mines near Whitehaven, to which are added, Some Thoughts on Building and Planting, to Sir James Lowther, of Lowther-Hall, Bart.* Dalton's preface introduces the poem as having been written two years earlier to commemorate a return to his native county and invokes the coterie-based trope of reluctance to publish overcome by the encouragement of friends who have read the work. The poem itself recounts the visit of two "Misses Lowther" to the mines developed by their family and includes descriptions of the setting of Lowther-Hall, the Keswick valley, and Derwentwater. Dalton thus uses this occasional poem to acknowledge Westmorland and Cumberland's most powerful landowning family, likely in an attempt to catch the attention of the newly minted, and fabulously wealthy, Sir James Lowther, the fifth baronet. He claims that the occasion of the ladies' tour "gave him (what he valued most) a natural opportunity of expressing his just esteem for a truly respectable family, with whose merit he had long had the happiness of being well acquainted, whose Interest appears to be inseparably connected with That of his native country, and to which It already owes the most considerable advantages." Footnotes to Dalton's text betray its commercial ethos, however, by repeatedly recommending to the reader a set of prints of the scenes described, created by the poet's brother and available for purchase. Other notes containing explanatory descriptions of the mines are contributed by the "kind and friendly design" of a friend and Fellow of the Royal Society, Dr William Brownrigg of Whitehaven. Again opportunity is taken for mutual puffing, with Dalton recommending Brownrigg's out-of-print treatise on *The Art of Making Common Salt* and appending a "Letter to the Author" in which Brownrigg praises the brother's prints, compares Dalton's poem to Pope's *Windsor-Forest*, and hints that the public can "have the pleasure of seeing the sister arts mutually reflecting light upon each other" by purchasing both.<sup>26</sup>

Although we have seen Polyphthon, "Columbus" Brown, and even the Misses Lowther deem the northern counties worth a visit, the first popular publication to feature the Lake counties extensively was the Irishman

Thomas Amory's fictional autobiography *The Life of John Bunclé, Esq.*, published anonymously in two parts in 1756 and 1766. The work was evidently the production of a widely read author, but its motley genre, anonymity, and idiosyncratic blend of Unitarian theology, geological theory, landscape description, and accounts of Bunclé's sequence of seven beautiful wives left its reviewers puzzled as to how to respond. Their reports range from the facetiously tolerant to the damning. Amory's detailed, enthusiastic narrations of Bunclé's travels in a Westmorland that is "the most romantic and the most beautiful solitude in the world" are seen to be of a piece with his theology and amours, what *The Monthly Review* terms "the produce of a genius and imagination overheated and run to seed in the hot-beds of romance and religious controversy." The same publication's generally appreciative account of the earlier 1756 installment sees Bunclé as possessed by "the Arcadian spirit" and "in excellent trim for a fancy-flight" when he begins to describe "the wilds of Stanmore" in Westmorland in a sequence from which the second epigraph to this chapter is taken. *The Critical Review*, on the other hand, sneering at the intellectual pretensions of a hero with the name of "Jack Bunclé," criticizes the book's "flowery stile" and announces that "we could not, on the most careful perusal, meet with any thing that gave us the least pleasure throughout the whole." In 1766, the same journal dismisses the second volume in a single sentence: "This is an irreviewable performance, because the nonsense we encounter in pursuing it, is insufferable."<sup>27</sup>

One might, then, be excused for concluding that this attempt at popularizing an appreciative discourse of the Lakes was a failure. But in her 1810 introduction to *The British Novelists*, Anna Letitia Barbauld speculates that *John Bunclé's* descriptions of "the fells and mountains of Westmoreland," since "the book was much read, have possibly contributed to spread that taste for lake and mountain scenery which has since been so prevalent." We know that Bunclé was a popular enough character to see his story reissued in a second edition in 1770, and to give birth to a 1776 sequel, *John Bunclé, Junior, Gentleman*. The latter led even *The Critical Review* to acknowledge the new hero's father as "John Bunclé, gent. of marvellous memory; who leaped precipices, tumbled through mountains, found wise and good men, beautiful and learned women, 'Where you and I might all day travel, / And meet with nought but sand and gravel.'" And Amory himself signals his alertness to, and helps create, a commercial, competitive tradition of Lake discourse: in the second part of *John Bunclé*, he references the Dalton brothers' depictions of Keswick and Derwentwater in Cumberland, only to claim that these beautiful places are "inferior in



charms to the vale, the lake, the brooks, the shaded sides of the surrounding mountains, and the tuneful falls of water” of Westmorland.<sup>28</sup>

### Commodifying and canonizing the gentleman traveler

By 1767, then, when the Reverend John Brown’s coterie manuscript finally made its print debut, the most widely available material on the domestic tour idealized gentleman travelers of taste and offered highly colored descriptions of Lake Country landscapes – a ground well prepared for the reception of such a text. If Irishmen like John Buncler and servant-girls like Pamela did not qualify as ideal travelers, the soil nevertheless proved fertile for cultivation by professional literary authors, whose progressively increasing cultural status has been observed in the previous chapter. The seventh edition of Defoe’s *Tour*, published in 1769, was the first to be authorized by association with celebrity writers. Here the earlier formulaic “By a Gentleman” was replaced on the title-page with “Originally begun by the celebrated Daniel De Foe, continued by the late Mr. Richardson, Author of *Clarissa*, and brought down to the present Time by a Gentleman of Eminence in the Literary World.”

This commercialized appeal to posthumous reputation prefigures the ultimate public identification of the poet Thomas Gray, who ostentatiously disdained commodified literature, with travel writing. When in 1773, two years after Gray’s death, his friend and literary executor William Mason first privately printed *A Catalogue of the Antiquities, Houses, Parks, Plantations, Scenes, and Situations in England and Wales, Arranged According to the Alphabetical Order of the Several Counties*, he forbore to name Gray as the compiler of “[t]his Catalogue . . . originally drawn up on the blank pages of Kitchen’s English atlas,” referring to him as “a person of too much eminence to be mentioned on so slight an occasion.” Originating as a manuscript supplement to a printed work, the newly printed *Catalogue* occupied a liminal space closer to the restricted circulation of coterie networks than to public print distribution. Mason, as anonymous editor, explains that “as many of [the Cataloguer’s] friends had transcribed it in his life-time, and many more have requested copies since his decease, it was thought best to print it in this pocket form.” Only one hundred copies were printed, as in the case of Hardwicke’s 1781 second edition of the *Athenian Letters*, and these were interleaved with blank pages so that “those, to whom they shall be presented, may at their leisure make such short remarks as their own personal knowledge of the several counties enables them to do; and in these to add or expunge what they may think



proper.” But in this way the limited edition was also situated as a transitional step between the two modes of circulation: Gray’s “catalogue friends” are invited to contribute to the text “not only for their present gratification, but as the most likely means of rendering this little work complete, and of fitting it hereafter for the eye of the public.”<sup>29</sup> Thus those to whom the hundred copies were presented – not sold – would by implication become part of an already existing coterie that had been circulating Gray’s *Catalogue* from the time of his tours in the late 1760s, while contributing to his becoming a celebrated travel writer.

Despite Mason’s reticence, it was quite possible by this time for printed domestic travel writing to accommodate the extremes of explicit commodification and coterie authorship, as two other publications appearing not long after the 1769 seventh edition of Defoe and Richardson’s *Tour* illustrate. Although both Arthur Young, author of agricultural tours of Britain, and Thomas Pennant, naturalist-traveler, were from small land-owning families, their approaches to publicity reflect differing views of authorial identity that parallel the dual print and manuscript traditions I am tracing. Young, as a second son with his way to make in the world, was not university educated but rather apprenticed to a wine merchant, and published his first political pamphlet at the age of seventeen. His initial periodical letters on agriculture appeared merely a year after he took up farming as his mother’s tenant, suggesting at least as much interest in professional authorship as in agricultural tourism. Young’s popular *Tours* through various parts of England were published between 1768 and 1771, and became part of the tradition of domestic travel writing for their combination of agricultural accounts with descriptions of houses, parks, and anything that “contribute[s] to render our country beautiful or convenient.” Discussing Young’s *Six Months’ Tour through the North* in 1770, *The Monthly Review* opines that he has “very properly and agreeably” described both the ornamented estates and the natural embellishments of the rural landscape, supplies lengthy extracts of scenes Young calls “gloriously romantic,” “truly sublime,” and “elegant,” but then abruptly concludes by placing him firmly within an inferior commercial tradition: “All this is very fine, but the painting is certainly too much in the style of John Bunce.”<sup>30</sup>

Young’s aim at a broad print market is shown in his explicit appeal across class boundaries. He explains that having advertised unsuccessfully in the papers for information to be supplied by “such of the nobility, gentry, landlords, farmers, and others, as possess, or are acquainted with, any particular improvements, experiments, customs, implements, etc. in

the agriculture of the following counties, . . . I compensated the loss of such intelligence as gentlemen alone can give, by applications to many farmers." At the same time, he finds that farmers lack a broader vision of improvement and experimentation, whereas "In all these points, I have found many gentlemen extremely satisfactory." Acknowledging his informants in the preface to *A Six Months' Tour*, Young justifies "joining peers and common farmers in the same page" because "He, who is the BEST FARMER, is with me the GREATEST MAN." Thus, while highly class conscious, Young establishes for himself a persona that stands outside hierarchies that might define and limit his readership. Similarly, his text follows an epistolary format, but with no attempt to create the impression of an actual familiar exchange; like Defoe's letters constituting his *Tour*, these are empty conventions, often without date or salutation and with no named or characterized addressee. Although Young asserts his "obligations" and "gratitude" to his informants, he does so in the generalized sense of one seeking to present his textual tours as "a complete view of *British* agriculture," much as Defoe sought to encompass all of Great Britain in his "tour thro' the whole island."<sup>31</sup>

Thomas Pennant's use of epistolarity, on the other hand, invokes a particular reader, "Sir Roger Mostyn, Bart., of Mostyn, Flintshire," to whom his 1771 *A Tour in Scotland. MDCCLXIX* is dedicated. First published in Chester, this work presents itself as much closer to the amateur coterie pole of the spectrum than does the work of Young. As the eldest son of an old Welsh family, Pennant had attended Oxford, begun his publishing career with an article in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions*, established connections with European naturalists such as Carl Linnaeus and the Comte de Buffon, inherited the family estate, and published leading works on zoology by the time he undertook his first domestic tour of Scotland in 1769. Whereas Young attempted to appeal to knowledgeable gentlemen through the public papers, Pennant invented the method of building his tours upon questionnaires circulated in advance to "the Gentlemen and Clergy of *North-Britain*, respecting the Antiquities and Natural History of their respective Parishes," thereby scaling up the ethos of private correspondence associated with select groups like the Royal Society. In Pennant's 1774 *Additions* to the *Tour in Scotland*, he explains that this supplement is a tribute to "the liberal spirit of communication among the Gentlemen of the Northern parts of this Kingdom," which has enabled him to produce an edition "freed from some errors that must unavoidably attend the performance of a rapid traveller, notwithstanding

all his wishes to be accurate.” He politely lists in his “Advertisement” those who provided information but have not been named in the work itself.<sup>32</sup>

Similar acknowledgments become the focus of the “Advertisement” in Pennant’s 1774 *A Tour in Scotland, and Voyage to the Hebrides; MDCCLXXII*. In addition to extensive recognition of his two travel companions, the Reverend Mr. John Lightfoot, Lecturer of Uxbridge, and the Reverend Mr. John Stuart of Killin, who not only supplied their knowledge but also “all the comforts that arise from the society of agreeable and worthy companions,” Pennant lists twenty-three gentlemen “who favored [him] at different times with accounts and little histories of the places of their residence, or their environs”; this list includes such figures as John Aikin, Thomas West (see below), Joseph Banks, and Alan Ramsay.<sup>33</sup> I would argue that, paradoxically, one ingredient of the commercial success of Pennant’s publications is his ability to import into them the aura of the coterie; or, more precisely, to suggest that he is making available to the general reading public the efforts of a manuscript-exchanging network of amateur specialists, whose private correspondence and labors are undertaken for the general good of the nation.

Malcolm Andrews has described Thomas West’s 1778 *Guide to the Lakes: Dedicated to the Lovers of Landscape Studies, and to All Who have Visited, or Intend to Visit the Lakes in Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire* as the moment when “the Picturesque tour of the lakes was institutionalized,” presumably through West’s gathering together of the scenes described by previous travelers in the form of viewing stations recommended to future tourists. Himself one of Pennant’s correspondents, West invokes and thereby begins to establish a textual canon of the Lakes tour, referring to the “pleasing accounts” of the Lakes by “persons of genius, taste, and observation,” particularly “Mr. Gray . . . in 1765, and Mr. Pennant . . . in 1772,” which have inspired “the curious of all ranks” to visit the region. Later versions of West’s guide, beginning with the posthumous 1780 second edition edited anonymously by William Cockin, expand on the authorities comprising this tradition. Thus West is said in Cockin’s preface to have “consult[ed] the most esteemed writers on the subject (as Dr. Brown, Messrs. Gray, Young, Pennant, etc.)”; an epigraph quotes Richard Cumberland’s 1776 pronouncement that “in truth a more pleasing tour than these lakes hold out to men of leisure and curiosity cannot be devised”; and “Addenda . . . containing a collection of several valuable miscellaneous pieces which have occasionally appeared respecting the lakes” are appended to the guide. In the second edition, these pieces include excerpts from Dalton, Brown, Gray, and Cumberland.<sup>34</sup>

When Thomas Gray's *Catalogue* finally makes its fully public debut in 1787, under the imprint of a Fleet-Street bookseller, it has become *A Supplement to the Tour through Great-Britain, containing a Catalogue . . . By the Late Mr. Gray, Author of the Elegy written in a Country Church-Yard, etc.* (Figure 6.1). This prominent naming of Gray and his most popular poem is no accident; an addition to Mason's original "Advertisement" observes confidently that

the name of the Compiler will secure to [the publication now offered to the World] a favourable reception. What Mr. Gray thought important enough to engage his attention, those for whose use it is intended will not receive with neglect. Scenes, Situations, Seats, and Antiquities, selected as worthy of notice by the elegant Author of the Church-Yard Elegy, will be visited with a degree of respect unfelt before. To his taste no person will venture to dissent, and to his judgment few but will readily subscribe.

The audience for this *Supplement*, it is clear, is no longer the one hundred elect who were to assist in rendering the *Catalogue* complete according to "their own personal knowledge" and "what they may think proper." Rather, the book is "offered to the World" in response to "[t]he present prevailing passion for viewing and examining the beautiful scenes which abound in our native country." Evidently, many of those smitten by this prevailing passion needed the sanction of a connoisseur whom they could trust, whom they knew as the author of a famous poem, to assure them of what was worthy of their attention.<sup>35</sup>

### The triumph of the coterie

The emergence of this authoritative tradition, however, was not simply a matter of typesetting originary manuscript materials. In his private letters to traveling friends or about his own tour of the Lake counties, Gray refers constantly to previously published "two-shilling prints" and written accounts of the scenes he is describing. The process whereby the producers of such materials are replaced by a canon of largely coterie-based, or at least coterie-claiming, authors as "discoverers" of the Lakes in publications like West's *Guide* is made visible by the acts of elevation performed by Mason in his 1775 edition of Gray's works and memoirs. Mason repeatedly offers Gray's methods and opinions as the guide to his readers' travels: "the advice here given to the curious traveller . . . , and the reasons for it, are so well expressed, and withal so important, that they certainly deserve our notice," or "those who can content themselves with an elegant simplicity of

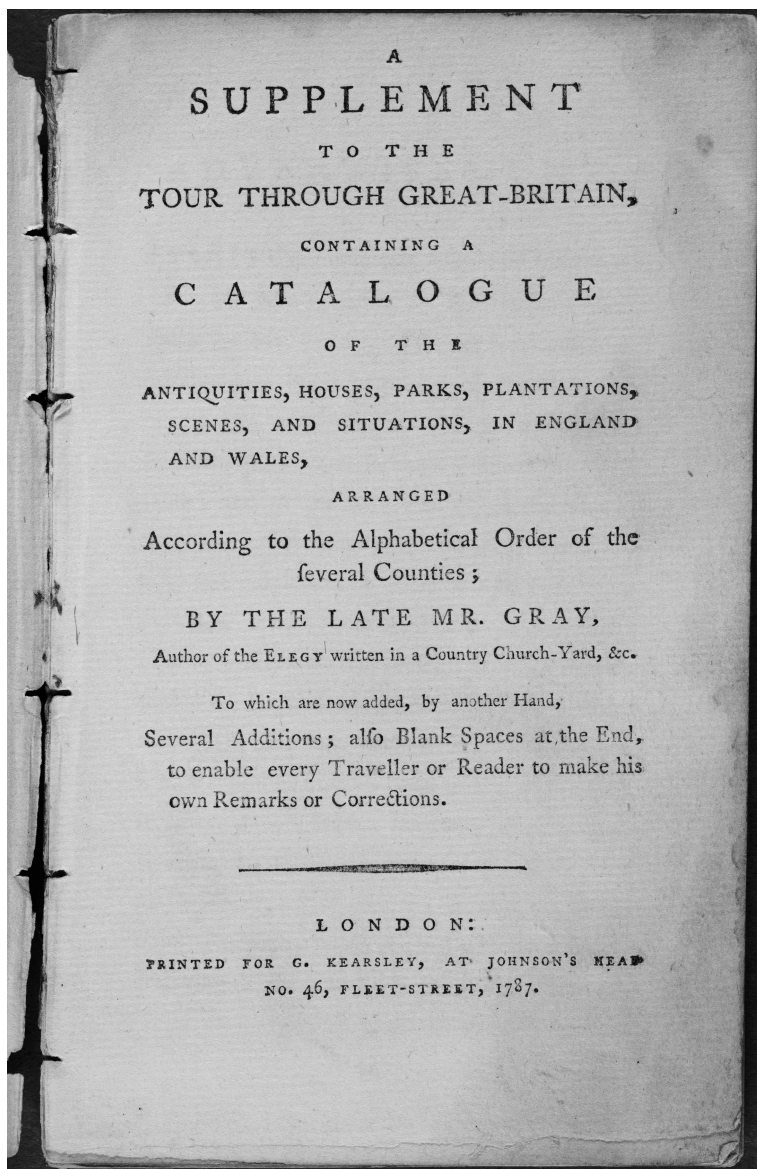


Figure 6.1 Thomas Gray, *A Supplement to the Tour through Great-Britain, containing a Catalogue . . . By the Late Mr. Gray, Author of the Elegy written in a Country Church-Yard, etc.* (1787).

narrative, . . . if they make it their companion when they take the same tour, it will enhance their opinion of its intrinsic excellence.” Despite Gray’s own reliance on printed materials in his own travels, then, Mason acts as a kind of midwife of manuscript travels for the masses, recommending, for example, the “one piece of verbal description which completely satisfies [him], because it is throughout assisted by masterly delineation”: the “*unique*” manuscript “composed by the Rev. Mr. Gilpin, of Cheam in Surry,” which “contains, amongst other places, an account of the very scenes which, in this tour, our author visited.” Mason regrets the fact that this unique, completely satisfying description seems doomed to remain in a manuscript form inaccessible to the general reader, “for would [Gilpin’s] modesty permit him to print it, the great expence of plates would make its publication almost impracticable.”<sup>36</sup> Gilpin’s tour of the Lakes was, of course, published eleven years later.

Thus travelling gentlemen and men of letters like George Lyttelton, John Brown, Thomas Gray, and William Gilpin, endorsed by members of their respective coteries, were absorbed into the production, marketing, and distribution mechanisms of the urban bookseller. In keeping with the cases examined in previous chapters, this is not a simple story of a more primitive amateur, gentlemanly, scribal culture being exploited by a modern commercialized and professionalized print culture. If picturesque tourism after the outbreak of the French Revolution became “the modern form of the flight from modernity,” this flight was defined by an alliance of the gentlemanly with the modern. The increasing authorization of printed accounts of the domestic tour, and specifically of the Lakes tour, by reference to “the informations of gentlemen resident on, or in the neighbourhood of, the spots they have described,” to “travellers of independent fortunes,” and to “[m]any of the first literary characters of the age, at the two universities, and in most capital towns,” is clearly demonstrated in the preface to the 1778 eighth edition of Defoe’s *Tour*. Adopting a fashionably spacious and streamlined typeface and a reduced use of capitals, the preface promises to “[present] to the reader a modern geographical state of *Great Britain*.” What is striking here is the representation of modernity and the independent gentleman traveler as together transforming the meaning of such peripheries as the Lakes:

Modern travellers have enabled us to give a more accurate description of the principality of *Wales*, than could reasonably be expected in the former edition, many gentlemen having, since that time, traversed the *Welsh* mountains, and critically noticed the towns, modes, manners, and customs, of that part of our island . . . The description of every county in the kingdom



has been modernized, and many of their natural beauties, hitherto unnoticed, brought forth to view, particularly those of the northern counties, as *Yorkshire, Lancashire, Westmorland, and Cumberland*. The two last counties were formerly considered as little better than barren and inhospitable deserts, and, being so remote from the metropolis, were seldom visited as the objects of pleasure, till the amazing improvements lately made (and still making) in all the roads through the kingdom, gave a spur to travellers of independent fortunes, who have now made us almost as well acquainted with the northern, as we before were with the southern parts of our island.

The transformation of “barren and inhospitable deserts” into “objects of pleasure” has been the work not merely of modern roads, but also of “travellers of independent fortunes” who have “critically noticed” those objects and thereby shaped the perspective of the reading public.<sup>37</sup>

And what of the likes of Pamela and John Bunclé, those fictional travelers who reached a considerable audience in the middle decades of the century? We have seen that Barbauld, in her 1810 introduction to *The British Novelists*, credits Amory’s creation with promoting “that taste for lake and mountain scenery which has since been so prevalent,” and I have cited evidence of *John Bunclé’s* reach in the form of review references extending to the 1770s. James Mulvihill has drawn a connection between Amory’s style and that of Wordsworth’s *Excursion*.<sup>38</sup> But aside from Barbauld’s passing comment in 1810, turn-of-the-century accounts of the phenomenon of the Lakes tour are silent about this once-popular tourist. In fact, Barbauld’s own memory is blurred: she names John Bunclé as the author, rather than protagonist, of Amory’s work, and appears to associate its Westmorland descriptions with Amory’s 1756 *Memoirs of Several Ladies*, another work altogether. Bunclé/Amory, for all his possible influence on the taste for travel to the Lakes, has faded from view, succeeded by travelers with greater prestige. Like Kitchen’s atlas and the two-shilling prints – those works to which Gray’s original coterie writings were merely a supplement, but which were finally subsumed into the persona of Mr. Gray the poet-traveler – neither John Bunclé nor his creator is ever mentioned along with the acknowledgements paid to Brown, Gray, Pennant, and other gentleman travelers who ostensibly founded the tradition.

It would appear that, if the figure of the gentleman traveler was exploited and commercialized by London-based print professionals to authorize their commercial publications about the Lakes, so too the gentlemanly coterie culture within which the model of the leisured traveler flourished was in effect sustained, authorized, and disseminated by such publications.

The emergence of the tour as a literary phenomenon thus demonstrates “the tenacity of existing technologies . . . [and] their related materials and practices” – in this case, those of the coterie. In the process, the idealized traveler became reified and even clichéd, an overdetermined amalgam of social privilege, elite or specialized education, and artistic genius – not to mention masculinity – that receded increasingly from the reader. While fostering a “prevailing passion” for the Lakes tour, then, booksellers and professional authors were helping to entrench a social and cultural gap between the privileged traveler and the humble tourist, between the coterie writer and the uncultivated reader. Nicola Watson has argued that the opening of such a gap in the late eighteenth century paradoxically served only to heighten readers’ desire “to authenticate the reading experience in a more ‘personal’ way, to reinforce an incompletely intimate and unsatisfactorily vicarious reading experience” by retracing an author’s steps through the landscape.<sup>39</sup> Such a desire can also help explain the attraction of periodical readers to the modest Shenstone and his embodied art at the Leasowes, noted in Chapter 4. In my final chapter, I will approach those humble, or at least unknown, readers in another way, asking if and how they obtained for themselves the experience of coterie sociability.