

Eleanor Frewen Turner (1786–1879): ‘Angel in the House’ and ‘Woman of Substance’

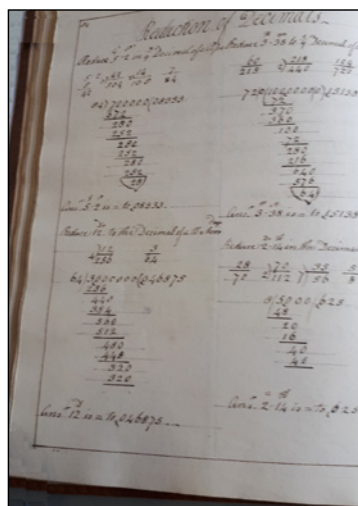
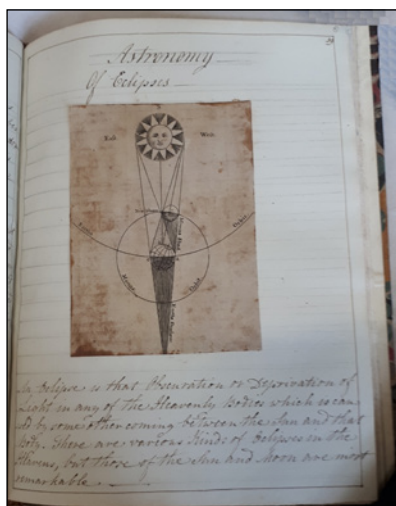
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The lives of women of the past, when they have been recorded, have often been written because they were different from that of their contemporaries. Such women have been hailed as ‘pioneers’, ‘ahead of their time’ or ‘revolutionaries’ and, as a result, attract the interest of historians seeking to understand what set them apart and why. Whilst it is important that such women become known, there is however a risk that their more exceptional lives may eclipse those who did not break the mould *per se* but were more conventional. They may not have been trailblazers or spearheaded new movements like, for example, the suffragettes, yet such women deserve to be known too. Greatness, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder, and this article argues Eleanor Frewen Turner was a great woman.

Eleanor was born in 1786 in London. Her parents, Elizabeth Hay and Charles Clarke had married in 1785 and lived in Millbank Row, Westminster. Their middle-class background, though low, meant that Eleanor, together with her mother and grandmother, could afford to regularly spend time abroad in Dunkirk, France, where the climate better suited Eleanor’s mother. Mary, Eleanor’s younger sister, was born in 1793. When Mary grew up, she set up home in Paris with her mother and established herself as a renowned salon hostess in nineteenth century Paris, using her apartment to invite famous writers, philosophers, politicians, and have intellectual discussions about the ‘hot’ political, socio-economic and literary issues of the day. (1) Mary did the opposite of what was traditionally expected of English middle-class women of her time, when intellectual inquiry was deemed to be a ‘masculine’ pursuit.

Whilst Eleanor undertook the activities expected of her sex and class such as drawing, embroidery, learning to play musical instruments and painting (2), she also expressed an interest in subjects traditionally reserved for boys. Eleanor’s carefully annotated and written books show she was a serious student and had a keen intellectual mind as she learned, for example, about the Gregorian Calendar, the Terrestrial Globe, the Astronomy of Eclipses, and the Reduction of Decimals.

Mary married Julius Mohl, a famous orientalist, when she was in her fifties, but Eleanor married when she was just twenty-two years old. Mary lived in ‘revolutionary’ Paris whilst Eleanor was mostly based in Cold Overton, a quiet village in the Melton district of Leicestershire. Mary had an ‘ uninhibited and lively personality’ but Eleanor a quiet and self-effacing one. (3) As a ‘modern woman’ Mary belonged ‘to another century’. (4) Eleanor, conversely, was very much a woman of her time. Mary had no interest in religion, whereas Eleanor was an Evangelical Christian, with a selfless devotion to her family and a long-lasting involvement in philanthropic activities. In a letter to Cecil Woodham-Smith, historian of the Victorian era, Sir Robert Martin wrote: ‘There can never have been two sisters more completely different in every way than were she [Mary] and her sister, Eleanor Frewen Turner, my great grandmother. ... she [Eleanor] was a most charitable and deeply religious woman.’ (5) Books and articles have been written about Mary, but no biographical accounts exist about Eleanor. This article attempts to reconstruct part of Eleanor’s life and character and aims to bring it ‘out of the shadow’ of her more famous sister. It argues that, though ordinary and uneventful by comparison



Eleanor’s book of Astronomy and book of Science, and one of her flower drawings. (Reproduced by permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.)

to her sister's, Eleanor's life is nonetheless worthy of being known too. Eleanor Frewen Turner's name does not appear in works on worthy women of Leicester and Leicestershire (6), and this article is written to assert that she too was a woman of 'Courage, Vision and Talent'.

The main sources used are private letters written by Eleanor to various family members over more than sixty years. They also comprise letters addressed to her, or letters written by others about Eleanor, and entries from a diary she kept before she was married. These documents form part of the Martin Manuscripts, a collection of deeds and papers of the Martin family held by the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR). (7) The Martins are a prominent Leicestershire family with whom Eleanor became linked through her eldest daughter Selina marrying the Rev Robert Martin in 1839. Except for the brief descriptions of records available on the online catalogue, physical access to the Frewen Turner family records held at the East Sussex Record Office was not possible at the time of writing this article. (8) These, no doubt, would yield further information about Eleanor. For this reason, at least for now, this article can only be a partial biographical account.

As primary sources private letters are uniquely valuable. Through them historians can gain access to the intimate and domestic sphere of individuals and families, as they are usually written with no other purpose than communicating news or making enquiries about friends or family, and only intended for the recipient. They permit the reconstruction of family relations, dynamics and structures by including their authors' views, thoughts, emotions and perceptions. Though private letters need to be read with an awareness of the epistolary codes of the times in which they were created, they provide direct access to the 'voice' of the writer. They also reflect representations, ideologies and social mores of the time in which they were written.

The Georgian, Regency and Victorian societies in which Eleanor lived had an urge to define roles, duties and attitudes for both sexes. This gender separation of roles was most at work in the middle and upper classes to which Eleanor belonged and moved up to through her marriage. Respectable middle-class women were expected to be virtuous, pure and passive, and if married, be devoted wives and mothers. In this idealised picture of domesticity and gender roles, a housewife's place was in the private sphere of her home as 'the Angel in the House' whilst the public sphere was reserved for men. (9) These letters, moreover, were written at a time when the condition and role of middle-class women went through a period of flux. At the beginning of the nineteenth century women had no rights. They could not hold property, had no legal right to money they earned, and had no legal guardianship over their own children. Gradually however, as women became involved in organising

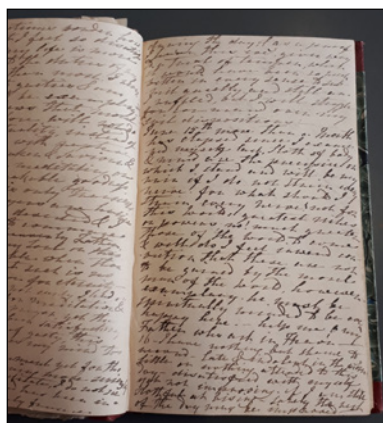
and participating in benevolent societies, petition drives, public rallies and public speaking, organisations were formed by the middle of the century specifically devoted to expanding women's rights. In addition to gender roles, religion was also central to early nineteenth and Victorian middle-class society.

The letters were read and studied within this context with a view to finding out about Eleanor's life events, emotions, relationships and activities, and the extent to which Eleanor fitted in with the societal expectations for women of her class and rank. As the correspondence amounts to hundreds of letters, sampling was done based on dates that covered the whole of her life, and when details entered on the record office catalogue were deemed to be potentially useful. The period covered by Eleanor's life was marked by major political, religious, economic and social changes in England; yet Eleanor's life seems to have been more characterised by continuity than change. On the face of it, Eleanor's life illustrates perfectly the 'Angel in the House' ideal; yet it is argued that, in Eleanor's case, this term needs to be redefined and shorn from its many negative connotations of passivity, inferiority, weakness and servile devotion to husband and family. Eleanor's life displayed these qualities of care, kindness and compassion in a large measure. Strength of character, sacrifice, resolve and resilience feature strongly too. Eleanor was not devoid of agency and independence, her life also being a 'Woman of Substance'. (10)

This article is divided into three topics. Eleanor's Christian faith; her relationship with her husband, sister, children, grandchildren, wider family and her friends, and thirdly her philanthropic activities.

Faith

Eleanor was first and foremost a deeply religious person. This is apparent from as early as 1804 from a letter Eleanor wrote to her friend Maria Brodie. 'But you should always endeavour to strengthen your mind, to bear misfortune. Young people are too liable in the sunshine of their happiness to forget from whom flows all the sources of their enjoyment and if it pleases the Almighty to bring them to a proper sense of gratitude, by afflictions they murmur and are not able to bear their misfortunes, whereas a contemplative mind will humbly thank Heaven for the benefits and mercies they daily receive ...' (11) The serious tone of this letter indicates that for an eighteen-year-old Eleanor seems to be mature beyond her years. In 1819 she writes of how she wished to spend her time: 'How to pass the day: rise early, spend one hour in prayer, reading scriptures, meditating, attend to the duties of the day, to waste no time you can avoid, govern the temper, use self-denial, exert benevolence, encourage the mind to return to God at all convenient moments, converse with your own heart when alone.' (12)



Eleanor's Diary, 1818-1819. (Reproduced by permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.)

Her diary entries show that she struggled to keep up with her religious disciplines: 'Although every hour's experience teaches me that no inner joy is here to be found but in the spiritual mind, and though I have an indifference to the pleasures of this world, yet the want of love to my Father and my saviour makes me despair. I do not love my Bible or Prayer and until I do I shall not be in the right mind and yet I think, alas, I am made up of contradictions.' (13) 'Has this last year been a year of prayers? ... Have I been thankful for mercies received and attentive to observe deliverances and answers to prayer? ... Am I deeply conscious that the root of all sin is in having lost God and found self in his place?' (14) Even whilst on holiday abroad with her sister, Eleanor tried to find a place of worship. 'On Saturday evening my sister ferreted out some English people ... In her anxiety to find out if there was a Protestant church. It turned out that these very people were in the habit of holding a service, complete with sermon, in their dining room.' (15)

Eleanor's religious convictions can also be seen during her courtship with John Frewen Turner. In the letters they exchanged, John writes in June 1808 of Eleanor's 'most rare and excellent qualities' (16), of her 'energetic and most virtuous mind' and adds, 'Such qualities as you possess will make anyone happy in any corner of the world'. (17) Eleanor was reportedly physically beautiful. Mary writes in 1873, when her sister was about 87 years old: 'She is still beautiful. I never before saw a very old person who was agreeable - *very* agreeable - to look at, although she does not look at all young for her age'. (18) Moreton Frewen, Eleanor's grandson, also makes mention of this trait: 'My grandmother was a beauty of Bath'. (19) John Frewen Turner had been 'captivated by Eleanor when she was living in Westminster' (20), but she does not appear to have encouraged him: 'I shall avoid being in your company that I may not continue to recollect the many pleasing hours I have passed in your society'. (21) In an undated letter it appears indeed that Eleanor resisted John's offer and expressed her feelings towards marriage to him: 'For as I have before observed I have no particular predilection for the marriage

state, although should fate ever decide my entering its bands, I should be as anxious to discharge its sacred duties as in other situation the Almighty may place me should my health continue to be unequal to the situation I am in.... I must beg leave to remind you that to avoid wounding the feelings and unspotted reputation of a female, your conduct, manners and conversation must be, in this case, no further than friendship'. (22)

Eleanor's reluctance may have been dictated by the need to appear respectable as well as by the fact that John, still a bachelor then, was thirty-one years older than her. Perhaps this was also further complicated by the fact that money had been offered, as she mentions a 'pecuniary friendship'. In another undated letter Eleanor expressed great respect for John which could be interpreted that she was nonetheless attracted to him: 'One of the best and worthiest of my friends' and is full of praise for him. 'I earnestly hope I shall ever have the happiness of retaining your esteem and good opinion although far exceeding my desserts to express my grateful sense of your benevolent and generous intentions.' (23) By 29th June there was indeed what appears as a sudden change of tone suggesting there was romance and even a marriage proposal as John writes to Eleanor, 'I need not any more express my assurance of your worth and my regard and as I have said it would be a happy epoch in my life to be so united as to spend the remainder of it honourably with you ... I hope for some conversation with you upon this subject. I believe there are no two more similar in disposition.' (24)

John and Eleanor married on 1st August 1808, he was 53 and she was 22. Mary remarked that her sister had married 'so young' (25). What could have led Eleanor to marry one so much older than herself? Possibly having lost her father in 1801, she was now left without her main source of income. In 1808 her mother, grandmother and sister Mary moved to live in France permanently, leaving Eleanor facing the reality of being on her own. She perhaps felt that marriage to John Frewen Turner, an English landowner, politician and High Sheriff of Leicestershire, was a way of ensuring a relatively financially secure future. The diaries kept by John Frewen Turner during the period 1781-1805 reveal he shared her Christian faith and was a 'serious-minded man who ...sought guidance in his Christian faith. His leaning might be best described as those of a moderate evangelical, evidenced in his moral code, his sense of a constant struggle against sinfulness, and his reliance on scripture.' (26) In 1815 she wrote of her husband, 'For the love of kindness is in him a stronger feeling than in most others'. (27) On the occasion of his death in 1829 Eleanor writes 'I have no right to grieve yet my loss is very great! a singularly happy union of twenty years with no alloy but sickness which was good for our souls - he was greatly beloved!' (28) Four children were born from their union: Selina, Thomas, Charles and John, born in 1809, 1811, 1813 and 1818 respectively,

Eleanor writing: 'I am thankful to say we had had much in seeing the good promise which our children give.' (29) It is difficult to ascertain from the letters whether 'romantic love', as understood by a twenty-first century observer, was a priority in Eleanor's decision to marry John. Through the marriage she could fulfil the ideals of female piety and purity enshrined in the metaphor of 'Angel in the House', whilst with an acceptance of the likelihood of becoming a widow earlier than expected, she also displayed a realistic and pragmatic approach to her life as a 'Woman of Substance'.

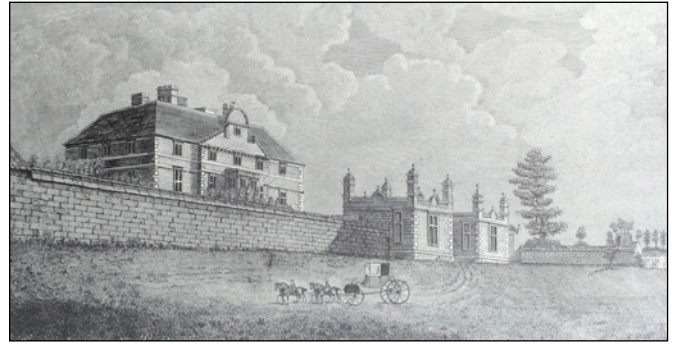
Family and Friends



Eleanor Frewen Turner painted in 1845 by Margaret Carpenter (1793–1872). (Reproduced by permission of the Paul Mellon Photographic Centre Archive, image ref. PA-F06266-0047, PMC Neg: 89/0292. Coll. Brickwall House School, E. Sussex.)

In addition to her evangelical faith, Eleanor also displayed great love and dedication to her family despite conflicts and tensions. These conflicts were never mentioned in her correspondence to her granddaughter Eleanor Ann Martin, and only vaguely alluded to in her letters to her sister Mary. The relationship between the two sisters remained a very close one throughout their lives. Mary wrote that she had, 'an indescribable tenderness for her that I have for no one else, nor ever had except for my mother' and every year she would make extended stays at Cold Overton Hall where Eleanor lived after her marriage. (30) In almost all her letters addressed to members of the Frewen Turner's family, to the Martin family and friends, Mary's correspondence is marked by her constant enquiries and anxiety over her sister's well-being which gives a hint that there were ongoing difficulties within the Frewen Turner family, as can be gathered from Mary's letters to Eleanor Ann Martin: 'You know I am always on tender hooks about my poor sister.' (31)

Mary did not like staying with the Frewen Turner family; she found them 'very old-fashioned, well-bred and broad-landed country squires'. (32) Her feelings concerning the family were made very clear in the following letter to Eleanor Ann Martin:



Cold Overton Hall. (Source: John Nichols, History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester, (1795), vol. II, pt. I, plate XXXII, opp. p.139.)

'I am always anxious about your grandma, I never felt perfectly easy about her, never, never, never, what with her health, her age and her terrible family, her son bothering her more than all the others put together.' (33) The son referred to was probably Charles, born on 25th May 1813 and who died on 1st September 1878, and the difficulties seem to have been primarily about financial matters. (34) Similar feelings towards Charles were echoed by Julius Mohl, Mary's husband in 1874 when he wrote to Eleanor Ann Martin: 'She [Eleanor Frewen Turner] is so attached to him that she is powerless against anything he may say to her. I cannot tell you how I feel for her who is so gracious, so mindful of others, so gentle and of such deep feeling, to have a son so much the contrary to her.' (35) In another letter Mary added: 'I am only unhappy at my poor sister being under such a yoke!' (36)

Eleanor's older son Thomas had been suffering with health issues for a few years, and died on 14th October 1870, aged fifty-nine. Julius Mohl wrote on this occasion: 'And so poor Tom is dead! I dare not dare to write to your grandma; what can one say to a mother whose son dies? Her sweet and devoted temper will I hope, help her to bear it.' (37) Mary too expressed her sorrow at this sad event: 'I am sorry for poor Tom but I only wonder it did not happen sooner, not only because his father was stricken in the same way even before he was as old as Tom but because his regimen was enough to bring it on in the most healthy subject.' (38) John, the third son also died a premature death in 1844. The cause given for his death was a 'decline'. (39) John had been disinherited by his brother Thomas a few years earlier because John had married his sister's governess. (40) It seems this caused a rift within the family. John's premature death had been followed by that of his sister Selina, who died on 6th November 1852, possibly as a result of contracting septicaemia from: 'Having a scratch on one's thumb, and to die from the inoculation of this virus!' (41) Mary wrote of her sister on the occasion of this tragic event: 'My sister is a surprising woman. She says herself that this affliction, which she never could have contemplated, is without any bitterness. She is sure God alone could have upheld her.' (42) Mary also writes: 'I received a letter from your dear grandmama, she says

she has many troubles, her letter is more melancholy than usual, but she did not say why, do tell me my dear child, has Tom behaved worse?' (43) In another letter Mary writes: 'My poor sister I am sure got a shock she never will get over, she cried the whole afternoon, I had not the heart to see her.' (44) Mary continued in her criticism of the Frewen Turner entourage: 'I believe the Frewens did harm ... but I can do nothing, I have no influence over them their being so low minded and a person as Mrs Frewen has brought them down entirely to her level and out of my reach ... the old traditional spirit of the family is gone out ...' (45) The early death of John Frewen Turner in 1829 meant that Eleanor became a widow at forty-three. By the time of her own death in 1879 Eleanor had outlived all her children. Following the loss of her daughter, Eleanor took a special interest in the welfare of Selina's children. Eleanor kept a correspondence with all her grandchildren, but had a closer relationship with Eleanor Ann Martin, the oldest of Selina's children, writing in 1870: 'I cannot have the favourite of all my Grandchildren out of my will and I must take care of her. I always said to my daughter she was to be my child. I love all my grandchildren, but she is the one more especially mine.' (46) After her sister's death, Mary wrote: 'My sister, to whom I was greatly attached lost her only daughter, who was still young, and who left seven children, the youngest only six months old. From that time my sister never left them.' (47) Even in doing so though, Mary thought that her sister was at times being taken advantage of: 'Your grandma is not of an age to be eternally made useful and it vexes me beyond measure. ... She is always sacrificing herself to others and some day she will break down ... suppose my poor sister had nine lives to see the constant use she is being put to by all of you it is enough to provoke a saint.' (48)

Mary was in regular contact with Eleanor Ann Martin, seeing her as best placed for the latest news about her sister, and as an important member of the family to help with the care of her sister: 'I am quite certain you are more necessary to your grandma when you are well, than any of the others because she confides more in you, ... your not being so strong in the muscular way is nothing, ... but she has more confidence in you ... you are the only one who writes all the little ins and outs about her. (49) However, Mary did not approve of her sister's preference of Eleanor Ann Martin. Mary, writing to Margaret Grace Martin, Eleanor's fourth grandchild, in 1880: 'You were not as great a favourite with your grandma as Eleanor was and I in my own mind thought that was not just but I kept my opinion to myself, but I did more for your education than I did for the others ...' (50) These children found in their grandmother a confidante and friend and especially after their father, The Rev Robert Martin who had remarried in 1860, died in 1871 and the children were left in the care of their stepmother. In this uncertain context, Eleanor Ann Martin wrote to her grandmother asking for advice as to what they should do. Her grandmother's

reply was: 'First, let me say while I have a home on earth, you have one, but I trust that will not be needed. Secondly, I would say follow the guidance of circumstances, don't run away from the dear home abruptly, to hurt anyone's feelings, but let all things shape handsomely, accept Mrs. Martin's kindness gratefully, if she wishes you to stay.' (51) On this occasion, Eleanor Ann Martin wrote to thank her grandmother: 'Thank you from all our hearts for saying you will give us a home if necessary. I hope and I think that we shall have the means of being independent. We do not know yet, but Robbie thinks we shall have a little more than £100 a year cash, so that is quite enough.' (52) A few days later, Eleanor again wrote to Eleanor Ann Martin: 'My dear Eleanor, I have trembled years gone by when it passed through my mind, if they should be left with only a grandmother's care! There is so much to be thankful for when we think that the dear Father was spared to see the 7 grown up ...' (53) Another grandchild, Selina Mabelle, wrote touchingly of her grandmother: 'But for you, we should be indeed desolate orphans, ...' (54) Eleanor Ann Martin wrote that her grandmother, 'felt almost like a mother for her dear Papa.' (55) Indeed, a few years earlier, The Rev Robert Martin, had written to his mother-in-law, of his indebtedness: 'No one ever owed another more than I owe you and be sure I must lose my senses before I ever forget this.' (56)

In the midst of all the grief, family tensions and difficulties, Eleanor kept her composure, courage, resilience, selflessness and dedication to her family as well as her ongoing faith: 'How tenderly the God of love provides for you all under all circumstances. Trust Him, dear Margy.' (57)

Philanthropic Activities

Eleanor's compassionate and caring nature was expressed outside her family circle through her philanthropic work. Philanthropy took the form of benefactions towards the creation of an asylum able to accommodate twenty orphan girls in 1826 in Cold Overton. (58) This was discontinued in 1877 and replaced by a free school for local boys and girls. In a letter to her grand-daughter, Eleanor mentions some girls and ladies who were looked after at the asylum and turned out many years later 'very well' and found employment. (59) The girls from the asylum were at times invited at Eleanor's home at Cold Overton Hall for tea and games. (60) Eleanor's benefaction also included having a village school built in 1855 at nearby Knossington. (61) Eleanor's involvement with building a school and supporting the asylum would also have been a result of belonging to the landed gentry and thus to fulfil a paternalistic obligation to look after those less privileged who worked on their lands.

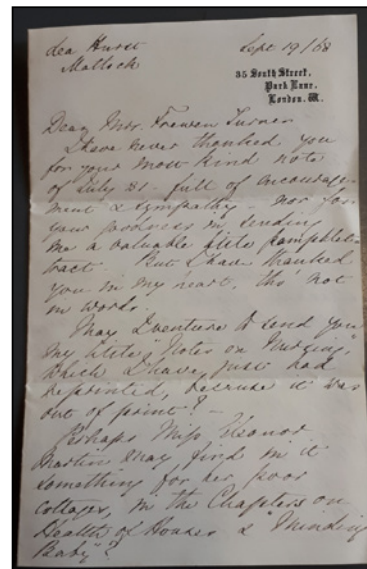
In addition, Eleanor also took part in anti-slavery activities. One of Mary's friends in France alludes to Mary being 'condemned



Knossington National School, c1930s-1950s. (Reproduced by permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, DE8655/178.)

to Demerara sugar' whilst she was staying with Eleanor, as white sugar was being boycotted by those opposing slavery. (62) Eleanor's daughter, Selina, writes of attending a committee in Leicester where she expected to see a Miss Watts, presumably the abolitionist Susannah Watts (63), a Leicester woman who, together with Elizabeth Heyrick, née Coltman, published in 1824 a periodical entitled *The Hummingbird or Morsels of Information on the Subject of Slavery* in which they promoted their abolitionist views. (64) Susanna Watts must have been on sufficiently friendly terms with the Frewen Turner family (65) as on the impending death of Eleanor's husband, she was able to visit the family home and afterwards wrote: 'to give you intelligence of our most valued friend... he is still alive ... Our honoured friend is departing in peace, surrounded by his inestimable wife.' (66) Elizabeth Heyrick had a 'leading role ... in a crucial challenge to the all-male national leadership of the British anti-slavery movement, a challenge that set in motion debates that led to a fundamental shift in abolitionist policy in both Britain and the United States.' (67) This, however, did not always meet with male campaigners' approval. One of its leaders, William Wilberforce, wrote, 'for ladies to meet, to publish, to go from house to house stirring up petitions - these appear to me proceedings unsuited to the female character as delineated in Scripture.' (68) The fact that Eleanor and her daughter Selina supported such a movement shows that Eleanor was not a strict 'keeper at home' but was prepared to support activities beyond the domestic sphere. The line of demarcation between private and public spheres could be crossed by middle class women motivated by philanthropic aims. Throughout her life, Eleanor's faith motivated her in her philanthropic activities and her support for anti-slavery. In this, Eleanor was the 'Angel in the House' as well as 'The Angel out of the House'. (69) Other letters highlight Eleanor's views on the importance of thriftiness, being dutiful, mixing with people of good manners and on marrying people of the same rank and station in life. (70) These show a more conservative outlook on life and that she was a woman of her times in terms of following a traditional path of womanhood and femininity; she was not, however, so in a strict manner, as can be seen in other letters.

Eleanor corresponded with various people during her life. One of these was Florence Nightingale. In her correspondence with Eleanor, Florence Nightingale wrote in 1868: 'I have never thanked you for your most kind note of July 31st, full of encouragement and sympathy, nor for your goodness in sending me a valuable little pamphlet-tract. Dear Mrs Frewen Turner, I so often think of you, of the kind defence which I once heard you make of me and which I dare say you have long since forgotten, of the peace and happiness which I pray that you may be enjoying, as I think you should after a long life spent in the service of God though with many cares and sorrows.' (71) Florence Nightingale came from an upper-class background and suffered a great deal from her own family's strong opposition to her going into nursing or indeed undertaking any form of work other than philanthropy. Bostridge writes of: 'Florence's bitter frustration, alternating with hopeless despair, at her plight as an extraordinarily gifted woman, constantly thwarted in her attempts to find work and training ...' (72)



Letter from Florence Nightingale to Eleanor Frewen Turner, 19th September 1868. (Reproduced by permission of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.)

Florence also became a close friend of Eleanor's sister Mary and regularly visited her in Paris. (73) Mary commented on her sister being of the same temperament as Florence Nightingale, 'They both have an intensity of feeling verging on madness'. (74) Mary's husband wrote that Eleanor was, 'so gracious, so mindful of others, so gentle and of such deep feeling'. (75) On hearing of Eleanor's death, Florence wrote to Eleanor Ann Martin: 'And your dear grandmother she is home, beyond all misunderstanding, where all is love.' (76) She wrote again the following month: 'It is well with her, she is gone home! One does indeed feel what a blank life is to you just now, but what a joy to her that you were provided for. Ah but it is a good thing that at her death there was no aged person to be turned out of home!' (77) Eleanor was described by other family members as 'redoubtable'. (78) Moreton Frewen, one of Eleanor's grandchildren on the Frewen's side, recalls: 'My father, [Thomas Turner] was recluse, valetudinarian; His brother Charles was generally of the party, a pompous and futile

person. There, too, would be my father's mother, who lived to ninety-six, and who regarded her awesome son Charles as a naughty boy and would cut in on his duplicate perorations with scant ceremony.' (79)

In conclusion, it can be said that Eleanor was a conservative woman, gentle and compassionate; her quiet and retiring personality to some extent suiting her conservative outlook on life. On the other hand, she exuded a quiet strength and self-possession. Eleanor was a woman of her time, but she was not a passive woman or simply an 'adornment' in her home. Her compassionate and caring nature together with her strong temperament and faith enabled her to stand up to all the vicissitudes she had to endure during her long life. Her advice to her granddaughter was: 'My dear Eleanor, remember that much of our happiness depends on ourselves'. (80) Her life perfectly portrays both the 'Angel in the House' and the 'Woman of Substance'.

References:

1. For the concept of salon hostess see M. Schippers, 'Elizabeth Gaskell, Citizen of the World: Civic Lessons', unpub. Ph.D. thesis, (Univ. Leicester 2016), pp.81-83.
2. Eleanor's Book of Science, Drawings, Astronomy, c1800, Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR): DG6/C/78, 79,80,82; DG6/C/115 also mentions 2 miniatures painted on ivory by Eleanor as a girl.
3. Margaret Lesser, *Clarkey, A Portrait in Letters of Mary Clarke Mohl, 1793-1833*, (OUP, 1984), p.5.
4. *ibid.*, p.5.
5. Letter from Sir Robert Martin to Mrs Cecil Woodham-Smith, 12th Dec. 1952, DG6/C/116/1.
6. Shirley Aucott, *Women of Courage, Vision and Talent, Lives in Leicester 1780 to 1925*, (Leics. County Council, 2008).
7. ROLLR: DG6.
8. East Sussex Record Office
<https://www.thekeep.info/collections/search/?s=Eleanor+Frewen+Turner>
9. The concept of 'Angel in the House' derives from a narrative poem by Coventry Patmore in 1854 in which he extols his wife's character and virtues. It became synonymous with the perfect Victorian bride and wife.
10. 'Woman of Substance': the term 'substance' in this article encompasses notions of importance, significance, solidity and meaningfulness.
11. Letter from Eleanor Clarke to Maria Brodie, 5th Nov. 1804, DG6/D/37.
12. Diary of Eleanor Frewen Turner (subsequently referenced as EFT), 1819, separate note, DG6/C/83.
13. *ibid.*, 16th April 1819.
14. *ibid.*, 1819, entry for 1824.
15. Lesser, Letter from Mary Mohl (subsequently referenced as MM) to Fauriel, 7th June 1826, p.70.
16. Letter from John Frewen Turner to Eleanor Clarke, 12th June 1808, DG6/D/39/4.
17. *ibid.*, 24th June 1808, DG6/D/39/7.
18. Lesser, Letter from MM to Ida von Schmidt, 9th Sept. 1873, p.201.
19. Moreton Frewen, *Melton Mowbray and Other Memories*, (London: Herbert Jenkins Ltd., 1924), p.17.
20. Lesser, p.15.
21. Letter from John Frewen Turner to Eleanor Clarke, 24th June 1808, DG6/D/39/7.
22. Letter from Eleanor Clarke to John Frewen Turner, Esq., n.d., DG6/D/39/6.
23. *ibid.*, n.d., DG6/D/39/8.
24. Letter from John Frewen Turner to Eleanor Clarke, 29th June 1808, DG6/D/39/5.
25. Lesser, p.137.
26. Peter Shipley, 'A Georgian Country Gentleman and His World: The Diaries of John Frewen Turner of Cold Overton Hall, 1781-1805', *Transactions of the LAHS*, 88 (2014), pp.122-123.
27. Letter from EFT to Dr Frewen, 23rd Aug. 1815, DG6/D/259.
28. Letter from EFT to Mr. Frewen, 13th Feb. 1829, DG6/D/263.
29. *ibid.*, 13th Feb. 1829, DG6/D/263.
30. Quoted in Lesser, p.16.
31. Letters from MM to Eleanor Ann Martin (subsequently referenced as EAM), 14th Oct. 1867, DG6/D/168, 6th Nov., n.d., DG6/D/185.
32. Lesser, p.16.
33. Letter from MM to EAM, 16th Feb. 1866, DG6/D/165.
34. Letter from MM to EAM, n.d., 1872-1877, DG6/D/203/2.
35. Letter from Julius Mohl to EAM, 5th Sept. 1874, DG6/D/203A/6.
36. Letter from MM to EAM, 26th Sept., n.d., 1866-1874, DG6/D/202/14.
37. Letter from Julius Mohl to EAM, c Oct. 1870, DG6/D/203A/4.
38. Letter from MM to EAM, n.d., DG6/D/199.
39. 'Decline' is an obsolete medical term for tuberculosis.
40. Lesser, p.224; Letter from MM, DG6/D/273,
41. Lesser, p.137.
42. Lesser, p.141.
43. Letters from MM to EAM, 16th May, n.d., 3rd Oct., n.d., DG6/D/187 and DG6/D/196.
44. Letter from MM to unknown, c1872-1877, DG6/D/203/2.
45. Letter from MM to EAM, n.d., DG6/D/194.
46. Letter from EFT to Robert Frewen Turner, 20th Sept. 1870, DG6/D/143.
47. Lesser, Letter from MM to Lady Eastlake, 1879, p.137.
48. Letter from MM to EAM, 26th April 1861, DG6/D/160.
49. Letters from MM to EAM, 4th Oct., 6th Nov., n.d., DG6/D/183 and 185.
50. Letter from MM to Margaret Grace Martin, 5th Dec. 1880, DG6/D/273.
51. Letter from EFT to EAM, 13th July 1871, DG6/D/235/189.
52. Letter from EAM to EFT, 14th July 1871, DG6/D/45/6/2.
53. Letter from EFT to EAM, 16th July 1871, DG6/D/235/190.
54. Letter from Selina Mabelle Martin to EFT, 11th July 1871, DG6/D/45/2.
55. Letter from EAM to EFT, 15th July 1871, DG6/D/45/7/2.
56. Letter from Rev Robert Martin to EFT, DG 6/D/43/3.
57. Letter from EFT to Margaret Martin, 21st June 1873, DG6/D/271/2.
58. Grant in Trust ... to Rev James Eyre Harrington of Sapcote (clerk) of £6000 from John Frewen Turner of Cold Overton, for the use of John Frewen's Turner's Wife, Eleanor, to found and endow a public or parochial institution for charitable purposes, 14th Dec. 1824, DG6/E/10.
59. Letter from EFT to EAM, 30th Jan. and 1st Feb. 1858, DG6/D/206.
60. Letter from EFT to EAM, 21st Sept. 1854, DG6/D/205/3.
61. DG6/D/205/2; DG6/D/235/207; DG6/E/10, 12,13,14.
62. Lesser, Letter from Claude Fauriel to MM, 24th June 1825, p.63.
63. Letter from Selina Martin to EFT, 5th Jan. 1842, DG6/D/42/1,2.
64. For more information on Susanna Watts, see Aucott, 2008, pp 201-205.
65. Mary Frewen was EFT's sister-in-law. See also Shirley Aucott, 'My Dear Madam' - Letters sent from Susanna Watts to Mary Frewen 1805-1810', *Leicestershire Historian*, vol. 56 (2020), and vol. 57 (2021).
66. Letter from Susanna Watts to a friend, 31st Jan. 1829, DG6/D/261/1.
67. Clare Midgley, 'The Dissenting Voice of Elizabeth Heyrick: An Exploration of the Links Between Gender, Religious Dissent, and Anti-Slavery Radicalism', in *Women, Dissent, And Anti-Slavery in Britain And America, 1790-1865*, ed.by E. J. Clapp and J. R. Jeffrey, (OUP, 2011), p.88.
68. Letter from William Wilberforce to T. Babington, Esq., 31st Jan. 1826, in Robert Isaac Wilberforce and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*, 5 vols, (John Murray, 1838), V, pp.264-5.
69. Doris Williams Elliott, *The Angel out of the House: Philanthropy and Gender in Nineteenth-Century England*, (Univ. of Virginia Press, 2002).
70. DG6/D/206, DG6/D/213/235.
71. Letter from Florence Nightingale to EFT, 19th Sept. 1868, DG6/D/44.
72. Mark Bostridge, *Florence Nightingale*, (Penguin Books, 2009), p.177.
73. *ibid.*, pp.64-65.
74. Lesser, Letter from MM to Hilary Bonham-Carter, March 1863, p.169.
75. Julius Mohl to EAM, 5th Sept. 1874, DG6/203A/6.
76. Letter from Florence Nightingale to EAM, 24th Mar. 1879, DG6/D/223.
77. Letter from Florence Nightingale to EAM, 12th April 1879, DG6/D/224.
78. E. Turner, *Robert Martin of the Brand* (Leics. Libs. & Inf. Serv. 1985).
79. *op. cit.*, Moreton Frewen, p.16.
80. Letter from EFT to EAM, 1st Feb. 1858, DG6/D/206.