

ARTHUR YOUNG, AGRICULTURALIST AND TRAVELLER, 1741-1820. SOME BIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

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“YOUNG’S influence on the development of British agriculture from 1770 to 1820 can hardly be exaggerated”. Thus wrote G. D. Amery in his article on Arthur Young for the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*.¹ One of the greatest agricultural historians, N. S. B. Gras, has called him “the prophet” of the agricultural revolution of the eighteenth century and has stated, “It is the lot of few private citizens to be personally so interesting and nationally so important.”² Likewise Lord Ernle declared Young to be “the first of English agricultural writers” and analysed his contributions as follows :

To him, more than to any other individual, were due the dissemination of new ideas on farming, the diffusion of the latest results of observation and experiment, the creation of new agencies for the interchange of experiences the establishment of farmers’ clubs, ploughing matches, and agricultural societies and shows.³

In the most recent serious evaluation of Young’s work, G. E. Fussell, the outstanding authority on British agricultural history, has summed him up in these words :

. . . he became the prophet of an improved agriculture of such industry that it is wonderful to relate. How he succeeded in finding the time to do all he did is puzzling, but he did it and so left an indelible mark on the history of his time, as well as a history of that time so far as its then major industry, farming, is concerned.⁴

Impressive as the above consensus is, some qualifications must be made. Every account dwells on Young’s failure as a

¹ The most complete compilation of Arthur Young’s writings, including his articles in the *Annals of Agriculture*, is also by G. D. Amery, “The Writings of Arthur Young”, *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*, lxxxv (1925), 1-31.

² N. S. B. Gras, *A History of Agriculture* (2nd edn., 1940), p. 213.

³ R. E. P. Ernle (R. E. Prothero), *English Farming Past and Present*, pp. 195, 197.

⁴ G. E. Fussell, “My Impressions of Arthur Young”, *Agricultural History*, xvii (1943), 144.

practical farmer. What could be more devastating than the very frank description of Young's farm in Hertfordshire by an intelligent young Scotchman in May 1770, the very year in which Young published his mammoth *Course of Experimental Agriculture* with its account of his two thousand agricultural experiments?

Came to Mr. Youngs at Bradmore farm near North mims. Mr. Young very discreetly show'd me his offices, implements of husbandry, & his fields that are experimentally occupied. . . . In the yard I took notice [sic] of a large muck hill turned up, and in very good order; but upon nearer examination, found that almost two thirds of it was clay which had been carried into the yard before winter, & had been turn'd up together with the dung in spring, but so far from incorporating with it, that it was run into lumps ten times tougher & more stubborn than when carried into the yard. His implements of husbandry are so many & various, & their several uses & perfections describ'd with such Volubility of tongue, that I can say little about them. . . . his Crops of Corn I did not see any & one field of Lucerne he show'd me sown broad Cast 20 lb to the acre, but instead of mowing four times, I doubt much whether it will ever mow once. . . . A field of cinquefoin [sic] much in the state of the Lucerne, and anoyr of Burnet very little better. . . .¹

Nor can one point to any outstanding technical change in agriculture which can be attributed to Young. Rather he was the popularizer of the new agriculture, the publicist of the Agricultural Revolution. By the very bulk of his writings he could not fail to make some impression. Between 1767 and 1774 thirteen works on agriculture came from his pen, totalling twenty volumes. Eleven of the thirteen works went through more than one edition. From 1784 until 1808 Young was the editor of the *Annals of Agriculture*, which ran to forty-five volumes, approximately one-fourth of which he wrote himself. Between 1794 and 1809 he made surveys of six English counties for the Board of Agriculture. In such a mass of writing, much was inevitably mediocre, and some hardly more than pot-boiling.

Several characteristics of Young's writings, however, made them both popular and significant. In the first place, he could express himself clearly and forcibly. For the most part he did not take pains to polish his style and usually when he tried it

¹ A. C. Brown, *The Wilsons. A Banffshire Family of Factors*, p. 157. The author was John Wilson, 1746-1816, who had been sent into England on an agricultural tour by the Earl of Findlater.

became turgid or stilted. But at his best, Young's English was not only vigorous and clear, but witty and epigrammatic. It is not surprising that he should have been so widely quoted. His style was essentially journalistic in the best sense of that term. A few examples must suffice. In his earliest important work, *The Farmer's Letters*, he urged the nobility to bring into cultivation the waste lands, and continued, ". . . never forget that there is fifty times more true lustre in the waving ears of corn, which cover a formerly waste acre, than in the most glittering star that shines at *Almack's*".¹ In his *Political Arithmetic*, a work of which Young was justly proud, he summed up his theories of population succinctly :

My principles are these : I mean to befriend population, and I think the only way to do it is to promote every branch of national industry, and never throw out any restrictions, laws, or rules with a view to population—ever let it be a secondary object flowing from wealth, if you would in fact have it the first.²

Very much later in 1803 Young answered an attack by Malthus on his proposals for allotments for the poor by pouring contempt on the only hope which Malthus held out for human improvement, namely, moral restraint : " And on what is the success of this revolution made to depend ? why on young men and women avoiding matrimony and keeping themselves chaste without it !!! " ³

A second reason for Young's influence as a writer lay in the fact that he practically invented the agricultural tour. Travel literature was certainly popular in the eighteenth century, but no one before Young had published travel literature which had the fundamental aim of giving agricultural information. Without doubt Young's most popular and significant writings were his " tours ". There were thirteen volumes of them—nine on England, two on Ireland, and two on France. In addition the *Annals of Agriculture* contain more than a thousand pages of

¹ A. Young, *The Farmer's Letters to the People of England* (3rd edn., Dublin, 1768), p. 306.

² A. Young, *Political Arithmetic* (1774), pp. 269-70.

³ A. Young, " On the Application of the Principles of Population to the Question of Assigning Land to Cottages ", *Annals of Agriculture*, xli (1804), 221. This article, " by the editor ", was missed by Mr. Amery in his compilation.

other tours taken through England and Wales.¹ Never did a man love travel more than did Arthur Young; seldom has a man travelled to better advantage. His main purpose was always the same—to study agriculture. The tours described common agricultural practices as well as the experiments and improvements of such “spirited” cultivators as Coke of Norfolk or Robert Bakewell. He always secured as many letters of introduction as possible to the important people who could furnish the necessary information. His method was to take copious notes on the spot, which he wrote up, presumably in the evening, in the form of a diary. He was interested in everything which pertained to agriculture—land tenures, size of holdings, rents, prices and wages, crops and their rotations, cattle, implements, and farm buildings. But Young was a man of very broad interests, and he did not hesitate to comment in his tours upon natural scenery, the state of roads and the character of inns, even the parks and mansions of the nobility and the pictures in those mansions. That Young was genuinely interested in all these things no one can doubt who has read the tours, but he was shrewd enough also to realize that his agricultural observations would be more palatable if intermixed with more general information. The adulatory description of a mansion was also a kind of recompense for the entertainment and information which he had received.

At the end of his more important tours Young introduced a long summary of the agricultural information which he had

¹ Five of the tours which appeared in the *Annals* have been reprinted by the London School of Economics and Political Science as No. 14 in its series, “Scarce Tracts in Economic and Political Science”, under the title *Tours in England and Wales Selected from the Annals of Agriculture* (1932). Unfortunately one paragraph in the one page introduction contains several errors. It reads in part as follows: “The earliest of them, the Welsh Tour, appeared in the *Annals* in 1792 but was based on observations made over fifteen years before. The last of them, which contains an interesting account of Hull and district, belongs to Young’s County-survey period. The other three belong to the period of the French Tour.” The Welsh Tour actually appeared in 1787 rather than 1792. Nor is it the earliest of them, for the Shropshire Tour was made in the spring of 1776 while Young was on the way to Ireland, and the Welsh Tour in the autumn of 1776 after his return from Ireland. Hence only two of the Tours belonged to the period of the French Tour.

obtained. Thus the entire fourth volume of *A Six Months' Tour through the North of England* is devoted to summary, which includes the average production of grain crops per acre, tables of rents, prices and wages, chapters on the newer crops—potatoes, cabbage, and clover—the proper amount of capital necessary to stock a farm, sections on tithes and poor rates, and a final chapter on the state of the roads. It is not surprising that Young's tours, above all his other writings, have furnished the social and economic historian with mines of information which have been used to support every possible thesis.

Probably Young's best writing is to be found in his tours. The nine volumes of English tours, which covered in succession the southern, northern, and eastern counties, and which appeared in the years 1768, 1769,¹ and 1771, contain some very dull pages. Nevertheless, interspersed with the dry facts of agricultural statistics are many fine descriptions and apt characterizations. For instance, in visiting one country house he displayed his consistent contempt for Rubens: "Nymphs in this master's stile; not tempting ones."² Again, he described the road through Wakefield as "so bad, that it ought to be indicted",³ and another road as "fit only for a goat to travel".⁴ The Northern Tour is notable for Young's detailed descriptions of such natural beauties as Teesdale and the Lake District. His final comment on leaving Keswick reflected the romantic mood of his day: "What are the effects of a *Louis's* magnificence to the play of nature in the vale of *Keswick*! How trifling the labours of art to the mere sport of nature!"⁵ In the same tour Young displayed much interest in the developments traditionally associated with the Industrial Revolution, the Crawley iron

¹ The date 1770 appears on the title page of the first edition of *A Six Months' Tour through the North of England* and is the date given by Mr. Amery. However, its publication was noted in the December issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1769, xxxix, 600. There is also a letter from the Earl of Holderness to Young, dated 8 December 1769, in which he states that he has already seen the work. Cf. B[ritish] M[useum], Add. MS. 35, 126, fol. 66.

² A. Young, *A Six Months' Tour through the North of England* (2nd edn., 2nd issue, London, 1771), ii. 78. This was a picture at Duncombe Park.

³ *Ibid.* iv. 424.

⁴ *Ibid.* iv. 427. This was the road to Askrig.

⁵ *Ibid.* iii. 127.

works and the prepared roadbeds for coal wagons, the cotton industries of Manchester, Josiah Wedgwood's potteries, and especially the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal. His description of the aqueduct over the Irwell at Barton Bridge is worth quoting :

The effect of coming at once on to *Barton Bridge*, and looking down upon a large river, with barges of great burthen towing along it ; and up to another river, hung in the air, with barges sailing upon it, form altogether a scenery somewhat like enchantment. . . .¹

Lack of space prevents any detailed analysis of his other English tours or of his Irish travels. It can only be pointed out that the tour through the eastern counties is confined much more strictly to agricultural subjects than the northern tour, while the Irish tour is notable for his attacks on the evils under which Ireland suffered and especially for his sympathy with the oppressed tenant farmers.

Young's greatest work, *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788 and 1789*, appeared in 1792. It is upon these French travels that Young's reputation as a man of letters rests. The first volume, which consists of his diary for these trips, surely ranks among the greatest travel books ever written. His sprightly journalistic style reached its height in this work. Of course he travelled in France at just the right time. No other single work has been more frequently cited as a source for the causes of the French Revolution and for its early history. Again a very few short quotations must suffice to show why this book has been so often re-edited. On the Languedoc Canal : " Here Lewis XIV thou are truly great ! " ² On the inn at St. Geronds : " . . . the most execrable receptacle of filth, vermin, impudence, and imposition that ever exercised the patience, or wounded the feelings of a traveller. " ³ On some new enclosures of poor sandy land near Dunkirk : " The magic of PROPERTY turns sand to gold. " ⁴ On the pre-steam channel crossing : " 14 hours for reflection in a vehicle that does not allow one power to reflect. " ⁵

¹ A. Young, *A Six Months' Tour through the North of England* (2nd edn., 2nd issue, London, 1771), iii. 219-20.

² A. Young, *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788 and 1789* (Dublin, 1793), i. 65.

³ *Ibid.* i. 80.

⁴ *Ibid.* i. 153.

⁵ *Ibid.* i. 213.

On the proposal for a written constitution in France, “. . . as if a constitution was a pudding to be made by a receipt.”¹ On viewing the experimental grounds of the Royal Agricultural Society in Paris: “What a sad thing for philosophical husbandmen that God Almighty created such a thing as couch (*triticum repens*).”² On showing some French friends how haymaking was done in England: “. . . such hot politicians!—it is well they did not set the stack on fire.”³ On expressing his disgust with the stupidity of the French merchants at a *table d’hôte* “Take the mass of mankind, and you have more good sense in half an hour in England than in half a year in France—Government! Again:—all—all—is government.”⁴ On the wild rumours in provincial France in 1789: “Thus it is in revolutions, one rascal writes, and an hundred thousand fools believe.”⁵

A vigorous English style and the intrinsic merit of his agricultural tours were thus two reasons for Young’s influence as a writer. Equally important was the fact that he became the leading spokesman for the agricultural interests. From the very beginning there could be no doubt where his primary loyalty lay. In the first chapter of his first book Young had written, “Agriculture is beyond all doubt the foundation of every other art, business, or profession: it has therefore been the ideal policy of every wise and prudent people to encourage it to the utmost.”⁶ He reiterated such sentiments throughout the vast body of his writings, and never deviated from them. The encouragement of agriculture would always redound to the national benefit. He consistently advocated the export bounty on corn, even when in every other respect he had become a supporter of *laissez-faire*. He opposed tithes as a hindrance to agriculture. In 1787 and 1788 Young fought vigorously but in vain on behalf of the wool growers against a bill intended to tighten up the prohibition on the export of raw wool.⁷ It was at this time that Young urged

¹ A. Young, *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788 and 1789* (Dublin, 1793), i. 260.

² *Ibid.* i. 240.

³ *Ibid.* i. 268.

⁴ *Ibid.* i. 283.

⁵ *Ibid.* i. 300.

⁶ Young, *The Farmer’s Letters*, p. 3.

⁷ He published two pamphlets against the bill: *The Question of Wool Truly Stated* (1788); *A Speech on the Wool Bill, that might have been spoken in the*

the agricultural interests to organize in order to resist more effectively the encroachments of the mercantile and manufacturing interests. In 1811 and 1812 he opposed the famous Report of the Bullion Committee which had advocated the resumption of specie payments. Young argued that a return to hard money would lower prices and hence impair the prosperity of agriculture.¹ Most important of all, he was a life-long advocate of enclosures as conducive to improved agriculture and to the cultivation of waste lands. He strongly supported the repeated efforts of the Board of Agriculture to secure the passage of a General Enclosure Bill which would reduce the costs and facilitate the process. Until nearly sixty years old he was completely blind to the deleterious effects of enclosures upon the poor, but after his religious conversion he endeavoured to safeguard the interests of the poor by giving them allotments to raise potatoes and keep a cow. No statement of Young's has been more frequently quoted than the following on the effects of enclosure upon the poor: ". . . the fact is, that by nineteen enclosure bills in twenty they are injured, in some greatly injured."² Such a conclusion did not mean that Young had become an enemy to enclosures, but only that some consideration should be given to the interests of the poor. He had extended his conception of the agricultural interest to include the cottars and labourers. Certain it is that no Englishman could have been chosen in 1793 as Secretary to the newly established Board of Agriculture who would have been regarded as more completely identified with the interests of agriculture than Arthur Young.

All the more surprising is it that a definitive biography of the greatest English agricultural writer has never been written.

House of Commons (1788). Volumes vi-x of the *Annals of Agriculture* contain nearly 500 pages devoted to the wool bill. His activity in Suffolk is reflected in the files of the *Bury and Norwich Post*.

¹ A. Young, *An Enquiry into the Progressive Value of Money in England* (1812). This was also issued as No. 270 of the *Annals* in the rare vol. xlvi of that work.

² *Annals of Agriculture*, xxxvi (1801), 538. This is taken from his famous pamphlet, *An Inquiry into the Propriety of Applying Wastes to the Better Maintenance and Support of the Poor* (1801), which first appeared in vol. xxxvi of the *Annals*, pp. 497-658.

Perhaps the very excellence of his *Autobiography* has made a complete biography seem unnecessary. Perhaps one look at a list of his publications has discouraged the prospective biographer. At any rate, the lack of a biography cannot be blamed on the paucity of materials. Before examining these sources in greater detail it may be useful to review his career very briefly.

Arthur Young came from a long line of Suffolk squires whose ancestral estate was at Bradfield Combust, about 6 miles south of Bury St. Edmunds. His father and brother were clergymen, the former chaplain to Speaker Onslow, the latter to George III. As a younger son, he was not educated in the family tradition at Eton and Cambridge but was apprenticed to a wine merchant at King's Lynn. So distasteful was the apprenticeship that at its end he abandoned all thoughts of a business career. He lacked the education to be a clergyman. His mother vetoed the army. He attempted to edit a magazine, but the venture proved a failure. In 1763, at the age of twenty-two, Arthur Young took a farm on the Bradfield estate, not because he loved farming but because he was bored and desperate. After all he must do something.

He continued to farm at Bradfield until 1767 when he left, partly because he was not successful financially, more largely probably because of friction between his mother and his wife. For twelve years Arthur Young was absent from Bradfield. Most of the period until 1776 was spent at North Mimms in Hertfordshire, only 17 miles north of London, where his farming was no more successful financially than it had been at Bradfield. His writings, however, between 1767 and 1776 made him the outstanding agricultural publicist in England. It was in this period that he was elected to the Royal Society and that he was very active in the Society of Arts. In 1776 he made his first trip to Ireland and for about a year in 1777 and 1778 acted as estate agent for Lord Kingsborough at Mitchelstown, near Cork. This arrangement was short lived, for friction soon developed between landlord and agent.

Thus, at the age of thirty-seven, Arthur Young found himself back at Bradfield. Although a noted author, he still had

no settled means of livelihood. Emigration to America was considered but the decision was to farm again at Bradfield. The death of his mother in 1785, and of his elder brother in the following year, made Arthur Young owner of the Bradfield estate. Shortly before his mother's death he had embarked in 1784 upon the publication of the *Annals of Agriculture*.

His three trips to France resulted in the publication of his masterpiece in 1792. On the whole Young showed himself quite sympathetic to the French Revolution in his *Travels*, and the work was widely hailed by the English friends of the Revolution. Before the year 1792 had ended, however, Young had completely shifted his position. The overthrow of the monarchy had greatly alarmed him, and early in 1793 there appeared the most influential of his pamphlets, *The Example of France a Warning to Britain*.¹ Before the summer of 1792 Young had in general supported the liberal point of view in politics; after that date he became a determined conservative.

The year 1793 marked the culmination of Young's career with his appointment as Secretary to the Board of Agriculture with a salary of £400 a year, a post which he retained until death. The fact that the appointment came in the same year as *The Example of France* inevitably led to charges that Young had been bought by the government, that he had changed his political views in order to obtain the Secretaryship. There is absolutely no proof of such a deal. The first change in his views can be dated several months before the Board was seriously considered. On the other hand, it seems quite doubtful whether Young would have been appointed if the Board had been established a year or two earlier when his views were at variance with those of the government. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the Pitt government regarded the appointment as a reward for *The Example of France* which was certainly among the most influential pamphlets in arousing public opinion against the French Revolution.

¹ This pamphlet went through four English editions within a year, was published in French at Brussels and Quebec, and in Germany and Italy. It was based upon three articles which appeared in the *Annals*, xviii (1792), 486-95, 582-96; xix (1793), 36-51. The pamphlet reproduced nearly every word in the articles, but completely rearranged the material and greatly enlarged it.

Young had not been bought, but had he not been rewarded for his change of view ?¹

With the establishment of the Board Young's time was pretty evenly divided between London and Bradfield. In 1798 the Board was installed in permanent quarters at 32 Sackville Street, off Piccadilly.² The most active period of the Board each year was the winter and spring when Parliament was in session. From December or January until the middle of June Young was usually to be found in Sackville Street, from June until the late autumn at Bradfield.

Some brief account must also be given of Young's private life. He had been married in 1765, at the age of twenty-three, to Martha Allen of a wealthy family of Lynn. Martha's elder sister was second wife to Dr. Charles Burney. Every biographer has agreed that the marriage was an unhappy one, at least after the first few years. They were completely incompatible. In early life Martha Young was frivolous, in middle age shrewish, in old age hypochondriac. There is Fanny Burney's famous picture, dating from 1771 :

Mrs. Young has been on a visit to us for some days. She and her Caro Sposo . . . are a very strange couple—she is grown so immoderately fat, that I believe she would at least weigh []³ times more than her husband. I wonder he could ever marry her ! They have however given over those violent disputes and quarrels with which they used to entertain their friends, not that Mrs. Young has any reason to congratulate herself upon it, quite the contrary, for the extreme violence of her overbearing temper has at length so entirely wearied Mr. Young that he disdains any controversy with her, scarce ever contradicting her, and lives a life of calm, easy contempt.⁴

¹ This question has been discussed at greater length by the author in his essay, "Arthur Young, British Patriot" in *Nationalism and Internationalism*, Essays Inscribed to Carlton J. H. Hayes, ed. by Edward Mead Earle (New York, 1950), pp. 144-89.

² The building was still in existence in 1938 and the handsome room where the Board met could still be identified. Cf. Sir Ernest Clarke, "The Board of Agriculture, 1793-1822", *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*, lix (1898), plate opposite p. 21, which reproduces the plate by Pugin and Rowlandson from R. Ackermann, *Microcosm of London* iii. (1809), 73. Young and his family lived at 32 Sackville Street, and he was given an allowance for upkeep of the premises.

³ *Sic.*

⁴ *The Early Diary of Frances Burney*, i. 114-15.

Thirteen years later the youthful Count François de la Rochefoucauld wrote his father another account of Martha Young. After praising Young very highly, he continued :

In spite of all this, I do not enjoy paying him a visit, first because his table is the worst and dirtiest possible, and secondly on account of his wife, who looks exactly like a devil. She is hideously swarthy and looks thoroughly evil ; it is rumored that she beats her husband. . . . She continually torments her children and her servants and is most frequently ill-tempered towards visitors.¹

By 1809 Martha Young was a pitiable wreck, physically and mentally. In that year she ended one of her letters to her husband : “ My letter is a woeful counterpart of myself, the sooner I conclude it will be a release.”² In the same year she begged to spend part of the summer on the Suffolk coast instead of going to Bradfield :

I dread Bradfield at *present* the length of time to come, cold of every room terrifies me, high winds amongst those fine trees affected me, with such fear last time with every door thro’ the house shaking my bed . . . nor have I been in the church there these six years which is most shocking . . . you have no poultry either to enliven nor to eat . . . a joint is what does not agree with so relaxed a stomach. . . . I am so cowardly that without a servant before him I dread even Jack (old as he is) & the mere ride for two or three miles so circumstanced is better let alone. . . .³

The fault was not all Martha’s. Arthur Young was decidedly a lady’s man. Three years after his marriage he was flirting with the Burney girls. It was at this time that Fanny referred to “ that lively, charming, spirited Mr. Young ”.⁴ When forty years old he had a month’s flirtation with “ a very handsome and most agreeable girl ” at Lowestoft.⁵ In 1784 when he was forty-three Young began his long attachment to Betsy Plampin, then fifteen years old, who later became Mrs. Orbell Ray Oakes. In his *Autobiography* Young tells of attending a ball at the Plampin’s in 1784, an evening which passed “ with uncommon hilarity till the rising sun sent us home ”.⁶ There is no indication that Mrs. Young was present ! The friendship with Mrs.

¹ *A Frenchman in England, 1784, Being the Mélanges sur l’Angleterre of François de la Rochefoucauld*, p. 38.

² B.M. Add. MS. 35,130, fol. 270.

⁴ *Early Diary of Frances Burney*, i. 5.

⁵ *Autobiography of Arthur Young*, p. 100.

³ *Ibid.* fols. 273-4.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 154.

Oakes only terminated twenty-seven years later with her early death. In the later pages of the *Autobiography* she was "my friend" to whom he wrote journal letters and whom he described two years before her death :

A placid, sweet temper, with a good understanding ; that ever rec^d. me with kindness, and attention, and preference, with whom I was at my ease, and where I could be at any time. . . .¹

A careful reading of her letters, and those of her husband, to him make it seem very unlikely that the relations between Betsy Oakes and Arthur Young were in any sense guilty ones. Nevertheless, Martha Young could hardly have been pleased with the obvious preference which he showed for the much younger and more beautiful woman.

Arthur and Martha Young had four children. First there came two daughters, Mary, who outlived both her parents by many years, and Bessy who died at the age of twenty-six from consumption. Then came his only son, Arthur, who outlived his father by seven years. Fourteen years later in 1783 was born the baby of the family, Martha Ann, familiarly known as "Bobbin", to whom Young was completely devoted, and whose death in 1797 at the age of fourteen was the greatest tragedy in his life. He never really recovered from the blow and for years nursed his grief into a morbid melancholia.

Before Bobbin's death Young had not been devoutly religious, but after his loss he began a course of religious reading which led to the acceptance of the Evangelical doctrines so rapidly growing in the last decades of the eighteenth century. He was especially influenced by William Wilberforce and a close friendship developed between the two men. In the last two decades of his life Arthur Young was a transformed man. Now religion came first and foremost, although he never shirked his duties at the Board. A very considerable portion of his time was devoted to religious reading and the attendance of religious meetings and societies. At Bradfield he conducted schools for poor children and Sunday evening prayer meetings where he preached the sermons himself. In many respects his views were very narrow

¹ *Autobiography of Arthur Young*, p. 444.

and even obscurantist, but it was his religion which opened his eyes to the sufferings of the poor and made him compassionate.

The year 1811 was marked by further tragedy for Arthur Young. Mrs. Oakes died of tuberculosis after a long and painful illness. His own eyesight had been failing for several years. In 1811 he was operated on for cataract but the operation proved unsuccessful and from that time he was completely blind. Still he continued his work as Secretary to the Board of Agriculture. At times black despair settled down upon him, but usually his natural buoyancy reinforced by Christian resignation prevailed. In April 1820, Young died in Sackville Street at the age of seventy-eight.

As mentioned above, a definitive life of Arthur Young has never been written. In 1790 he published in the *Annals of Agriculture* a brief autobiographical memoir, confined chiefly to his experiences as farmer, traveller, and author.¹ In 1801 in the periodical *Public Characters* an anonymous biographical sketch was published, on the whole a remarkably well balanced and fair-minded appraisal.² Full credit was given to his agricultural attainments but the article criticized his too obvious prejudice in favour of the landed interest and his increasing absorption in politics. The tone of the whole was friendly as was the final summation: "BUT ARTHUR YOUNG HAS LONG AND FAITHFULLY SERVED HIS COUNTRY—MAY HIS ERRORS BE FORGOTTEN AND HIS SERVICES ONLY BE REMEMBERED!"³ Shortly after his death there appeared another anonymous article in *The Annual Biography and Obituary*,⁴ a mere summary of his career based on no private material. Much more important was the article by Dr. John A. Paris who had attended Young in his last illness.⁵

¹ *Annals*, xv (1791), 152-97.

² *Public Characters of 1801-1802*, iv. 559-94.

³ *Ibid.* p. 593.

⁴ *The Annual Biography and Obituary*, v (1821), 121-37. This article is prefaced by Young's portrait by J. Rising which appeared in a very short article in the *European Magazine and London Review*, xxviii (1795), 363-5. This last is a mere condensation of Young's article in the *Annals*. The article in the *Annual Biography* has also, as headpiece, a silhouette, presumably of Young, but without acknowledgement.

⁵ J. A. Paris, "A Biographical Memoir of Arthur Young", *The Quarterly Journal of Science, Literature, and the Arts*, ix (1820), 279-309. This article became the chief source for all accounts of Young published during the greater part of the nineteenth century.

It is quite clear that Dr. Paris was given considerable aid by the family and was shown certain private papers. No further substantial biographical material appeared until 1880 when Miss M. Betham-Edwards edited the *Travels in France* for the Bohn Library and included a Biographical Sketch of about twenty pages.¹ Since Miss Betham-Edwards was permitted to use the manuscript autobiography and correspondence, her sketch is much more detailed on Young's personal life than the memoir by Dr. Paris. In 1893 an excellent biographical sketch on Young by Albert Pell was printed in the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*.² Mr. Pell had visited Bradfield and also had been allowed to examine the manuscript autobiography and the *Elements of Agriculture*. He was also the first to use, although not extensively, the manuscript collections of the Board of Agriculture which were deposited in the Library of the Royal Agricultural Society.

In 1898 there appeared in print at long last *The Autobiography of Arthur Young* which became, of course, the foundation for all further biographical studies. The *Autobiography* was edited by Miss Betham-Edwards who also included a considerable number of letters from the manuscript correspondence. In her preface Miss Betham-Edwards made the following statement :

In his desire to be perfectly frank, the writer has laid upon his editor the obligation of many curtailments, the Memoirs from beginning to end being already much too long. . . . The Memoirs, while necessarily abridged and arranged, are given precisely as they were written—that is to say, although it has been necessary to omit much, not a word has been added or altered.³

¹ Miss Betham-Edwards used the following title in her edition : *Travels in France By Arthur Young during the years 1787, 1788, 1789*. Her edition included an Introduction, pp. v-xxvii, and a Biographical Sketch, pp. xxix-l. The text includes only the diary of the tours in France, and the section at the end where Young discussed the Revolution. The early printings included a portrait as a frontispiece, but later printings have omitted the portrait.

² Albert Pell, "Arthur Young", *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*, liv (1893), 1-23. This article reproduced the Rising portrait. Pell had also published an earlier article, "Arthur Young, Agriculturist, Author, and Statesman", *Journal of the Farmers' Club*, April 1882, pp. 49-71.

³ *The Autobiography of Arthur Young with Selections from his Correspondence*, pp. v-vi. Miss Betham-Edwards used a different portrait for the frontispiece from that used in the *Travels*, from a miniature in the possession of Alfred Morrison, Esq.

The text as edited runs to 476 pages. Unfortunately, the manuscript of the *Autobiography* has completely disappeared. Hence it is impossible to tell how much of value to the biographer was omitted. In 1931 the present author interviewed Mrs. Rose Willson, niece to the last Mrs. Arthur Young, whose considered opinion it was that the manuscript of the *Autobiography* was burned after Miss Betham-Edwards had edited it.¹

The publication of the *Autobiography* gave rise to several review articles which were really biographical sketches, notably by Augustine Birrell and Leslie Stephen.² Neither of these, of course, added any new material. Fortunately Henry Higgs also was able to make use of the recently published *Autobiography* when he wrote his excellent article on Young for the *Dictionary of National Biography*.³ Several other articles of a biographical character have appeared, most of them as prefaces to new editions of his works. Chief among these are those by Thomas Okey for the Everyman edition of the *Travels in France*,⁴ by Professor Constantia Maxwell in her editions of the French and Irish tours,⁵

¹ Mrs. Willson very kindly had photographs taken for me of the vegetable dish which was given to Young by the Board of Agriculture, and the snuff box given by Catherine the Great. Professor Rodney C. Loehr in an article in *Agricultural History* entitled "American Husbandry; a Commentary Apropos of the Carman Edition", xiv (1940), 105, n. 8, gives the impression that the manuscript may still be in existence: "A few years ago, a letter to Miss Betham-Edwards' solicitors asking for permission to use the unpublished parts of the *Autobiography* brought the reply that under no circumstances could they be made available."

² Augustine Birrell, *In the Name of the Bodleian*, 183-94; Leslie Stephen, *Studies of a Biographer*, i. 188-226.

³ Good as Mr. Higgs' article is, it does not seem to have gone beyond the material presented by Dr. Paris and Miss Betham-Edwards, and that in the *Autobiography*.

⁴ The Everyman edition by Mr. Okey was originally published in 1915 and has been repeatedly reprinted. The title page reads, *Travels in France and Italy*. The Spanish part of his tour was omitted. The evaluation of the Revolution was included. Mr. Okey provided an Introduction, pp. vii-xxi.

⁵ *A Tour in Ireland . . .* selected and edited by Constantia Maxwell (1925); *Travels in France during the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789* (1929). Professor Maxwell's edition of the French tours is notable because it includes generous excerpts from volume ii of the original work, and is the only modern edition in English to do so. The Editor's Introduction, pp. xiii-li, is more critical than biographical.

and by Elizabeth Pinney Hunt in her little volume *Arthur Young on Industry and Economics*.¹ Attention should also be called to Henri Sée's Introduction to his definitive edition of the *Travels in France* which appeared, in French, of course, in 1931.² Finally, mention must be made of the most recent article by G. E. Fussell, "My Impressions of Arthur Young",³ which is, however, more critical than biographical in character. There is no more judicious appraisal of Young.

Two more ambitious attempts have been made to write a biography of Arthur Young. The first of these, *The Biography of Arthur Young, F.R.S., from his birth until 1787*, by C. S. Haslam, appeared in 1930.⁴ Mr. Haslam prepared this work as a doctoral thesis for Professor Henri Sée at the University of Rennes. It is a careful, painstaking piece of work, and is based on Young's writings, the *Autobiography*, and the manuscript correspondence. Obviously it covers only the first half of his life. A more serious drawback is that it was published in a very limited edition, has long been out of print, and can only be obtained in the largest libraries. The book is really more of an analysis and critique of Young's early writings than a true biography. Nevertheless, so far as it goes, it is the most complete and authoritative biography which has thus far appeared.

The second, *Sheep and Turnips, Being the Life and Times of Arthur Young, F.R.S.*, by Miss Amelia Defries, was published in 1938.⁵ Miss Defries would be the first to disclaim that her work was meant to be a definitive biography. It is popular in character and tone. Nearly as much attention has been given to the "times" as to the "life" of Arthur Young. Very little manuscript material was used in the preparation of this work.

¹ Miss Hunt's work appeared in 1926. The Introduction consists of a biographical sketch and a critical evaluation of Young's work, pp. 9-34. The little volume also contains a fairly complete and very useful bibliography.

² Professor Sée's edition is in three volumes. It omits the Italian and Spanish trips, but includes all of volume ii. The Introduction, pp. 1-62, is far more critical than biographical. The notes are admirable.

³ Cf. n. 4, p. 393.

⁴ Published by George Over (Rugby) Limited, Rugby. Including bibliography and index it is 253 pages long.

⁵ Published by Methuen. Including bibliography, index, and notes it is 235 pages long.

Some of the imaginative reconstructions, as for instance the route which he followed when walking to and from London and North Mimms,¹ are very illuminating. In other cases liberties have been taken which the professional historian could not accept.

Quite recently Dr. John H. Middendorf has written a very interesting and scholarly doctoral dissertation in the field of English literature for Columbia University in which he has drawn upon Arthur Young's writings, chiefly his travels, as illustrating eighteenth-century standards of artistic and literary taste.²

Without any question the most important collection of Young manuscripts is to be found in the British Museum. These, in turn, consist of two major items, both acquired by the Museum from the Young family after the death in 1896 of the last Arthur Young. To the biographer the most important are the eight volumes of correspondence.³ The average length of each volume is about 500 folios, which means about 250 letters per volume. A conservative estimate of the total number of letters would therefore be 1,500. Naturally most of these letters were written to Arthur Young. At the most 100 are by him, which include those written to his daughters while he was in France and copies of certain business letters late in his career when he was blind and had a secretary. Young seems to have kept most of the letters which he received. Among his correspondents were, of course, many of the important men of his period—Edmund Burke, Dr. Charles Burney, Sir Joseph Banks, Jeremy Bentham, William Wilberforce, Sir John Sinclair, and Coke of Norfolk. Frequently much more interesting and illuminating for his biography are the letters from such close personal friends

¹ Defries, *Sheep and Turnips*, pp. 85-7.

² John H. Middendorf, *Arthur Young, Traveller and Observer*, 1953, Publication 6672, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan. A summary will be found in *Dissertation Abstracts*, xiv (1954), 129-30.

³ B.M. Add. MS. 35, 126-33. The British Museum also contains one letter to John Wilkes, Add. MS. 30,871, fol. 185; ten to the 3rd Earl of Hardwicke, Add. MS. 35,643, fol. 339, 35,652, fol. 216, 35,697, fol. 83, 35,700, fols. 183, 192, 198, 204, 207, 235, 318; eight to Jeremy Bentham, Add. MS. 33,541, fol. 609, 35,542, fols. 462, 471, 485, 498, 502, 504, 511; two to the Earl of Liverpool, Add. MS. 38,225, vol. xxxiii, fol. 122, vol. xxxvi, fol. 122.

as John Arbuthnot, Rev. John Symonds, the "Earl-Bishop" of Bristol, and Thomas Ruggles.¹ To the biographer there are disappointing gaps in the collection. There are very few letters from his daughter Mary or his son Arthur, and comparatively few from his wife. There are none from Mrs. Oakes until the last few years of her life. The question can never be answered, of course, whether he just did not bother to keep these letters, or whether members of his family thought it better to destroy them. The correspondence is much more complete for the later years of his life, perhaps because his secretary was more systematic than he had ever been. Four out of the eight volumes cover the period from 1808 to his death in 1820, when his interests were predominantly religious.

The other body of Young manuscripts in the British Museum consists of his great systematic treatment of agriculture, entitled *The Elements and Practice of Agriculture*. The Museum possesses both the original manuscript in thirty-four volumes and a later transcript in ten large volumes.² It has never been published, largely because of its size. Shortly after his death attempts were made in vain to secure a London publisher and somewhat later Sir John Sinclair tried to find an Edinburgh publisher with no better results.³ The work is a veritable encyclopaedia of agriculture. All during his life Young had made it a practice to take extensive notes on his reading. Much of the *Elements* was taken from his own works and writings, much from the work of others, but all meticulously documented. Young's Preface starts as follows :

The work which I now presume to offer to the public, has been founded on the basis of 50 years experience ;—much of the labor of more than 30 years ;—and travelling to an extent of more than 20,000 miles. . . .⁴

¹ John Arbuthnot, 1729-97, was father to the statesman, Charles Arbuthnot. For many years he had a large farm at Mitcham, in Surrey, and was on very intimate terms with Young while he was living at North Mimms. Rev. John Symonds, 1729-1807, was Professor of History at Cambridge and had a fine home just outside Bury. He was probably Young's most intimate friend. The infamous Earl-Bishop, 1730-1803, 3rd Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry, was a neighbour who lived at Ickworth near Bury. For Ruggles, see pp. 422-23.

² B.M. Add. MS. 34,821-54, and 34,855-64.

³ Amery, "Writings", pp. 13-14.

⁴ B.M. Add. MS. 34,855, fol. 3.

As late as 1814 a note in the *Autobiography* reads: "This year I paid much attention to the 'Elements'." ¹ It is quite apparent that during the latter part of his life he devoted four or five hours daily to this work during the long summer vacation at Bradfield. The work covers every possible aspect of agriculture. Some idea of the scope may be appreciated by the fact that one whole volume is devoted to manures and more than a volume to livestock. Still another volume is given over to a description of all kinds of agricultural implements. The second half of this volume contains a large number of interesting plates, many of them of implements and farm buildings at Bradfield. Certainly Young had taken great pains to make his last work as complete as possible. Yet he was modest as to his results, for he stated in the Preface: "Of all vain ideas, that is most futile and contemptible, which can induce any individual to imagine for a single moment, that he has exhausted a subject." ²

Four other libraries in and near London contain manuscript collections useful to the biographer of Arthur Young. Of these the most important are the manuscript records of the Board of Agriculture which are deposited in the Library of the Royal Agricultural Society. ³ There are two volumes of a Letter Book, the first of which ends in 1800, and the second of which begins in 1810, so that there is a gap here of ten years in the records. More important are seven volumes of minute books, but again there is a serious gap, from 1808 to 1817. The minute books are both of committee meetings and of the Board as a whole. From these records it appears that the Secretary was kept busy. At meeting after meeting motions were passed giving directions to him to prepare a report on some aspect of the Board's work. When it was decided that the Board should have permanent quarters the Secretary was directed to find a suitable house. ⁴

¹ *Autobiography*, p. 456.

² B.M. Add. MS. 34,855, fol. 10.

³ For some time after the dissolution of the Board of Agriculture in 1822 its records seem to have been in the Tower of London, but in 1839 they were delivered to the Royal Agricultural Society. This information was given to me in a letter of 12 October 1938 from R. B. Pugh in which he quoted obsolete Tower records, OBS/687, fols. 234-6.

⁴ London, Library of the Royal Agricultural Society, Minute Books, no. 4, fol. 36.

On 27 March 1801, the Secretary led Mr. Hoar and the Board about Hyde Park in a test of Hoar's *Virgula Divinatoria*, an experiment which seems to have been very successful.¹ Not infrequently when the Board adjourned in June for the summer, a motion was passed ordering the Secretary to take certain papers with him into the country and to make a report on the same when the Board should reassemble.

Hardly less important for the earlier part of Young's life are the manuscript records of the Royal Society of Arts. Since these have been examined in a separate article, note need only be made that they contain eight manuscript letters by him and many volumes of minutes which reflect his activities in the Society.²

At the Public Record Office, in the Chatham Papers, are five letters from Arthur Young (and one from Mrs. Young) to William Pitt the Younger.³ His letters are for the early years of the Board of Agriculture, 1796-9. One was a protest against Pitt's so-called "Triple Assessment" which would triple the taxes on houses and windows, and such luxury items as male servants, horses, carriages, dogs, and watches. It is interesting as showing Young's devotion to the landed classes, and his willingness to disagree with government views.

Prince's Street Hanover Square
No 11

Dec^r 20. 97

Sir

From a knowledge of country gentlemen & resident clergy, more extensive perhaps than is possessed by any other man in England, I am confident either y^t. yr new tax will not be paid, or if paid do more mischief to government than double y^e amount raised on different principles—taking it for granted therefore that it must either be reduced very greatly or that you will give it up when the collection becomes too oppressive, permit me to suggest another to make up the deficiency.

This is an excise of $\frac{3}{4}$ ^d per lb on meat, with exemption to the poor mans hog, which upon y^e lowest calculation w^d produce £1,500,000 & perhaps £2,000,000.

¹ London, Library of the Royal Agricultural Society, Minute Books, no. 5, fol. 199.

² John G. Gazley, "Arthur Young and the Society of Arts", *The Journal of Economic History*, i (1941), 129-52.

³ Public Record Office, Chatham Papers, GD 8/193. The dates are 2 November 1796, 20 December 1797, 1 December 1798, 6 April 1798, 28 November 1799. Mrs. Young's letter was dated 29 November 1795.

The butcher would make it 1^d, & y^e difference of seasons lays a heavier tax than this without being oppressively felt.

A stamp upon all places of public diversion, public dinners, clubs &c &c not forgetting debating societies & jacobin meetings would produce more than commonly supposed & tend to restrain that violent emigration to towns w^{ch} the measure dreadfully threatens At Bath they are in high spirits, their town will be crouded. [sic]

Licences to every sort of trader

D^o to shopmen

If tripling & quadrupling &c be persisted in, much time must be given before the first payment, or it cannot be collected. The old assess'^d taxes will suffer incalculably, every man will & must make a vast reduction.

I know numbers who on an income of £600 a y^r keep a four wheeled carriage footman & postillion ; it is self evident y^t all must go except perhaps the footman, & many will for him substitute a maid.

I avoid expressions of respect and attachment because your time is precious ; none feels them stronger than

S^r Your most faithful
& obliged ser^t

Arthur Young

If there is one principle in taxation clearer than another it is that the weight should bear proportionably light on an infinite number of points—heavily on none. I cannot calculate y^e income of the country at less than 200 millions, the mass of taxation is therefore on y^e whole light ; but it is the multitude of *points* hitherto y^t makes it so.¹

A fourth repository of Young manuscript letters in the London area is the Library of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew where are to be found six letters to Sir Joseph Banks. All but one, and that not really a letter but just a note, are for the period 1789-91.² Two are concerned with a new corn law and several with articles which Banks was submitting for the *Annals*. The Banks correspondence seems to have been widely diffused. There are twenty-six letters from Young to Sir Joseph in the Yale University Library at New Haven,³ and at least eight in the Sutro Branch of the California State Library at San Francisco, Cali-

¹ Young elaborated on some of the points in this letter in an article in the *Annals*, xxx (1798), 177-84.

² Kew, England, Library of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Banks Correspondence, vol. i, fol. 341, vol. ii, fols. 26, 28, 39, 44, 263.

³ These letters cover the period, 1786-99. Most of them have to do with the mutual opposition of Young and Banks to the Wool Bill in 1787-8. The Yale University Library also possesses two letters in the Boswell Papers from Young to Boswell, written in 1768.

fornia.¹ One of Young's most interesting letters to Banks was written while he was making his survey of Lincolnshire for the Board in 1797. It reveals his difficulties and the spirit in which he undertook these surveys.

Sept. 4 Barton

Dear Sir

I this morn rec^d. y^r favour in which you liken me to what I have no resemblance to, a comet—I have made but one rule & y^t is to stay every where as long as I can procure intelligence, & no longer I have been above a month in y^e county & have a great deal to do to finish only a part of it; I should have been slower had people been at home but unluckily many have been absent at water drinking places, and at some places I have not rec^d all y^e information y^t might have been given me—but this is what every one must expect y^t undertakes such a work; upon y^e whole I have found people very communicative very civil & very intelligent & I have collected much more important information than I expected; or than I ever did before in an equal space of country. The Isle of Axholm is very important; I called on M^r Johnsons but he was at Buxton, M^r Lyster a bad accident in y^e family & M^r Stovin not at home. D^r P. a physⁿ. so costive I c^d get 0 out of him—but I found a Suffolk parson at Haxey of whom by his means or his farmers I got much—& I followed warping to y^e source & got a thorough view of it & accounts satisfactory. I was with M^r Goulton & shall meet him again tonight—I will call on all y^o have named and hope to reach Revesby after sweeping the Wolds & marsh before me.—Some time after y^e 9th. I hope you will look out papers about East West and Wildmore: everything it supports at present, N^o sheep, horses, cattle, geese, &c &c acres, value, rights, &c.

I have gone only fr^o Gainsbro to Barton in 9 days & you talk of a comet. Depend on it I neglect nothing but the county is so large y^t my time is much too short—and here is a wet harvest for my corn at Bradfield on 300 acres & y^e farmer rambling in Lincolnshire! I am exceedingly obliged to you for your kindness & will neglect nothing you mention being

D^r S^r.

Your much obliged
& Respectful, &c.

Ar. Young.

I know nobody fr^o Newark to Grantham nor fr^o Grantham to Stamford where I must go—Also from Spalding to Wisbeach except Long Sutton w^{ch} I have done.²

Next to the British Museum the most important English repository of manuscripts for the biography of Arthur Young is

¹ These letters cover the years, 1789-1804. This collection is in process of being catalogued and it is possible that more Young letters will be found.

² New Haven, Conn., Yale University M.S., Banks Correspondence, fols. 311-13. I am indebted to the Yale University Library for permission to print this letter.

the John Rylands Library at Manchester, where two important collections are to be found. The Bagshawe Muniments contain three sets of manuscripts that concern the Young family. Least important are six letters from Arthur Young to Sir James Caldwell of Castle Caldwell in Ireland, which cover the years 1772-9. Three are originals, three from a copy book of letters.¹ They are concerned partly with Young's impending visit to Ireland, and partly with plans for publishing his Irish tour.

Much more important are fifteen letters from Young's son, the Reverend Arthur Young, written to his father, mother, and wife. Most of them concern his travels in Russia.² They will furnish the most important source for a subsequent article in this BULLETIN on the Reverend Arthur Young.

The third and most important item for Arthur Young the agriculturist are eleven leaves from the original manuscript of his *Autobiography*, parts of which were omitted by Miss Betham-Edwards in her edition. It cannot be said that these omitted portions throw any revolutionary light on Arthur Young's character or career. They are purely supplementary. Indeed if they could be taken as indicative of the sort of material which Miss Betham-Edwards omitted, one might feel reasonably sure that the printed *Autobiography* included most of what was important. All of them are taken from a "book letter" which Young started to his daughter-in-law, Jane Young, in 1809.³

The longest and most interesting omission is for the entry of 1 December.⁴

¹ John Rylands Library, Bagshawe Muniments, B 3/16, fols. 410, 412, 413, 1167-9, 357-60, 381-3.

² Ibid. B 22/6, fols. 2-15.

³ Ibid. fol. 1. In four places Miss Betham-Edwards omitted portions of the original letter book. Two of these are not very important and will be dealt with in this footnote. Two have been thought interesting enough to be printed verbatim. In the entry for 4 August the following sentence should be inserted just before the last sentence of the first paragraph on p. 448 of the *Autobiography*, after a description of his Sunday evening prayer meetings at Bradfield: "Mr. Edwards always present, & Mrs. Edwards & Mrs. Raymond very often." The Edwards family seem to have been farmers on Young's estate. After the entry of 9 April 1810, at the end of paragraph one on p. 452, a fairly lengthy paragraph was added, devoted almost entirely to religion, and hardly worth quoting.

⁴ This paragraph should follow immediately at the end of the first paragraph on p. 449 of the *Autobiography*.

This country is quite changed since you were here ; Mr. Rookwood brother to Sir Thomas Gage, married to Miss O'Donnell, with a fortune of £30,000 is just fixed at Coldham : Sir Thomas Gage married to Lady Maryann Brown, the daughter of Lord Kenmare, is in Kedingtons house at Rougham ; Kedington is gone into his Cottage, and is now again the Reverend, and his Shepherdess sent about her business. Sir Charles Davers is dead, and Colonel Rushbrooke, married to one of his daughters, has got Rushbrooke, the Park and 1,500 acres about it. Phillips, at Welnetham is dead, and Mr. Cartwright of Ixworth, has got the Living and resides there, with his two Sisters, two agreeable young women. I called upon Sir Thomas Gage as he is a man of science ; upon Colonel Rushbrooke, as I had met him at Lord Bristols, found him an agreeable man, and should be liable to meet him again ; and also upon Cartwright, being so very near a neighbour ; I forgot Mr. Davers at Monks Bradfield, married to a very good woman, and settled there. I called also upon him. Another new comer is the Reverend Mr. Godfrey, who lives in the house where Gooch resided at Cockfield ; who married one of the Miss Possons, a pleasant woman : all these returned my visit and I have since asked them to dinner, and I have dined with them all ; with Colonel Rushbrooke yesterday for the first time ; the invitation was to meet Lord Bristol, but he was obliged to go to London suddenly on business, and therefore was not present. Colonel Osborn and his wife, sister to Mrs. Rushbrooke, and Kedington were the party. It is a mortifying thing to me that I cannot go into company without hearing something or other that must offend a Christian : they were talking of Sir Harry Parker of Melford, and one observed that it was very disagreeable to Colonel Parker &c that his Father talked more of the other world than of this. I remarked that with a man past 70 it was high time to think of another world ; Rushbrooke answered, why yes he may think of it, as much as he please, but he ought not to talk of it. God tells us expressly, that we *shall* make his precepts and commands the constant subject of conversation ; and rebellious man tells us we ought not to do it : and such is the mental blindness of worldly men, that they have not the smallest sence [*sic*] of any impropriety in such opinions. Cartwright when he dined here, was asked how he liked Hannah Moores Coelebs, his answer was, " I read a little of it, and found that it was about religion, I did not go on with it." Kedington called on me in the morning, the present Reverend, and took the name of God in vain five times in a quarter of an hour ; nor is a man in the smallest degree, less respected for such opinions ; but he is liked the better for them. This utter deadness in every thing that respects religion is the great curse of this vicinity ; but if any opportunity offers by which I can become acquainted with Sir Harry Parker, I shall do it, for the feature of talking of the other world is the best that I have heard of any person in this country ; as to my old acquaintance except a very few, and the new ones also, they are upon the whole of such a stamp, that I shall without regret renounce them all. I kept up, and have increased through want of judgement the transient connection of now and then visiting these people ; and my motive was, that, they might not have it to say, *there ! look at Young ; he was an agreeable man once, but see what religion does, it has made him a recluse savage* : but I gradually feel that there is something fallacious in this motive and that it will not bear a strict scrutiny. You were never fond of dinner visits, but that might have resulted from your having enjoyed a choicer mode of association :

I do not think however, when you come here, that you will be very desirous of much Society.¹

There is also an entry for 25 June 1810, none of which appears in the printed edition.²

The beginning of last Novr. a Rheumatic disorder began with me, which has lasted ever since, nor have I been 5 hours free from it in all time, except when in bed ; when down at Easter, I was able to walk it off, for the time being, but now the more I walk, the worse I am ; I have tried a number of remedies, each of which was to have performed a cure ; it is become a confirmed sciatica from the ankle to the hip, and I almost despair of its removal ; I reproach myself for want of patience and resignation, under an affliction which comes from God, but I earnestly pray to him that he will render me perfectly resigned whatever may be his pleasure, and that it may have the effect of weakening every chain that ties me to the world ; resignation is right at your age what then is it at mine ? The climate of Russia has agreed so ill with you, that this virtue must be not a little necessary. I came from town last friday, and the weather is delightful, but this new complaint added to the state of my sight, should feelingly convince me that all my views and expectations should be deeply fixed upon another world ; may the Lord in his mercy render these circumstances the means of drawing me nearer to God. It is high time that all pursuits should cease, but a whole summers work is yet wanting to finish my Elements of Agriculture, which now becomes a burthen to me ; it is the last undertaking of any extent in which I shall engage ; for as to the gradual arrangement of my papers on religious subjects, it is an employment adapted to the state of my mind ; and thanks to

¹ Some of the names in this paragraph can be identified. Mr. Rookwood was born Robert Gage but took the name of Rookwood. His seat at Coldham was but a mile from Bradfield. Sir Thomas Gage was the 7th Baronet, born in 1781 and married in 1809. His bride, Mary Ann Brown, was daughter to the 1st Earl of Kenmare. They were apparently living in Rougham Hall, the seat of the Kedington family. The Rev. Roger Kedington, whose life and habits seem to have left much to be desired, became Rector at Bradfield in 1816, probably not entirely to the satisfaction of Young. But the Kedingtons were old friends to Arthur Young. Col. Robert Rushbrooke was born in 1779 and in 1808 had married Frances, a natural daughter of Sir Charles Davers who had been owner of Rushbrooke Hall, one of the famous mansions of west Suffolk. The legitimate line of the Davers family seems to have ended with Sir Charles. The Mr. Davers of Monks Bradfield was probably an illegitimate son. The Rev. William Gooch was one of Young's protegés and had become estate agent for Lord Templetown at Castle Upton in Ireland. The Parkers owned another of the famous mansions of this district at Long Melford. Sir Harry Parker, 1735-1812, was succeeded by his son, Sir William Parker. There is some reflection of these visitings in the Young correspondence, B.M. Add. MS. 35, 130, fols. 306, 308, 323-4.

² This paragraph would be inserted on p. 452 of the *Autobiography*, after the paragraph on religion referred to above in footnote 3, p. 416, the paragraph which has not been reproduced.

the Lord I think my heart will go with it : but he may not give me time for either ; at my age, to expect even a month would be ill founded. His will be done——¹

Even more important than the Bagshawe Muniments to the biographer of Arthur Young are the letters from Marianne Francis to Mrs. Piozzi. This large collection of 160 letters covers the years 1806-20.² Marianne Francis was the niece of Fanny Burney and granddaughter of Dr. Charles Burney. Naturally she wrote long and clever letters, kept a diary when she was thirteen, and in short was a bluestocking. Like a good Burney she adored music. She had a great gift for languages, and at the age of twenty had mastered Latin, French, Spanish, and Greek, had some acquaintance with Portuguese and Dutch, and was working on Hebrew. No wonder her grandfather referred to her as “ a monster ”³ of learning. She was a prodigious walker and thought nothing of a jaunt from London to Richmond. Finally, she was a devout Evangelical. In 1811 Marianne Francis met Arthur Young and until his death was very close to him. She spent many summers at Bradfield where she helped Young with his schools and prayer meetings. At times she served almost like a second secretary to the blind old man, but the relationship was a very intimate and affectionate one on both sides, almost like grandfather and granddaughter.

When Marianne Francis started writing to the famous Mrs. Piozzi she was a girl of sixteen with a “ crush ” on a celebrity. In 1807 she signed herself in one letter, “ I am ever my dear Mrs. Piozzi’s madly attached Marianne Francis ”.⁴ In addition to her study of foreign languages, she exhibits some familiarity with modern poetry. She considered “ Marmion ” inferior to the

¹ The reference to his “ papers on religious subjects ” is to the selections which he later published from the works of Richard Baxter and John Owen as *Baxteriana* (1815) and *Oweniana* (1817).

² John Rylands Library, English MS. 582-4. See W. Wright Roberts, “ Charles and Fanny Burney in the light of the new Thrale Correspondence in the John Rylands Library ”, *BULLETIN OF THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY*, xvi (1932), 115-36. Mr. Roberts seems to have made an error in citing the number of these manuscripts (p. 130) as 589-91. There is some further material on Marianne Francis in the same volume, pp. 12-14, under the heading “ Library Notes and News ”.

³ R. Brimley Johnson, *Fanny Burney and the Burneys*, p. 358.

⁴ John Rylands Library, English MS. 582, fol. 5 (30 April 1807).

“Lays”.¹ Her habit of early rising had been gained from a reading of Thomson’s “Seasons”.² She admired Crabbe, “. . . the best modern Poet, almost, I think, is Crabbe . . .”.³ Her evaluation of the Lake poets is amusing :

Coleridge and Wordsworth are read very much, who have published sets of Sonnets & Odes, & short Poems that are simple & pretty, but the thoughts not very new—so they are in general thought to be *trashy*.⁴

She was a vigorous feminist who rather resented her grandfather’s distaste for her devotion to the classics : “ I believe no man ever yet sincerely tolerated a dead language in a live female. . . .”⁵

In the summer of 1811 Marianne and her mother spent several months at Bradfield. Of course she told Mrs. Piozzi all about it, and her letters throw much light upon Bradfield and its septuagenarian owner.

Sept. 8. This dear Arthur Young is a delightful old man—so good & kind & patient under his sad *poetic* complaint of blindness. . . . I scour about in the grounds, which are delightful, with magnificent trees, & beautifully laid out by Mr. Young himself—the shade & the air—and the good Library—and a kind welcome—make amends for want of a Pianoforte. . . . Arthur Young believes in *steam engines*—& says it is the maxim of some famous farmer that the science will never be brought to perfection till every farm is a circle & the steam engine in the centre to do all the work. . . .⁶

Sept. 24. You *would* like Arthur Young, & he would adore you—has such true enjoyment for excellence of any sort—admires you & Dr. Johnson as much as the Plough & the Steam-Engine, which is saying a great deal for *him* . . . & famous, *very* famous I believe he *has* been in his time—medals without end, for his services ; the king of England sending him Rams & the Empress of Russia snuffboxes, for his labours. . . . But a Pond & a Boat & an island to row to, are delightful to me. . . .⁷

Oct. 18. . . . & till the leave taking & packing up moments arrived, all I had were spent in reading & writing for Mr. Young, whose constant amanuensis was unfortunately cut down with a fever—of course I felt but too happy in devoting my poor services to our kind & hospitable Friend . . . who was so well content with my Secretaryship, that if the funds fail, he advises me to make it my *profession*. . . . I saw some beautiful letters from Wilberforce to him—there is a great Friendship between them—He has Wilberforce’s picture in his drawing-room—his book in his Library, his name upon his lips—and, better than all—his *spirit* in his heart. . . .

¹ John Rylands Library, English MS. 582, fol. 17 (24 April 1808).

² Ibid. fol. 54 (28 March 1810).

³ Ibid. fol. 26 (4 October 1808).

⁴ Ibid. fol. 19 (10 June 1808).

⁵ Ibid. fol. 53 (9 March 1810).

⁶ Ibid. 583, fol. 82.

⁷ Ibid. fol. 83.

30 or 40 poor neighbouring children are clothed & educated by Mr. Young, & on Sunday they always come to be instructed in religion. I am very fond of teaching poor children, though they *are* such fools : & he used to make me hear them the Catechism. . . . There is only service *once* in the day ; so every Sunday evening, from 80 to 100 poor Tenants & Villagers come to the Hall—forms placed for their reception ; St. Croix reads a sermon ; Mr. Young comments upon it afterwards & talks to them *admirably* ; then makes a beautiful prayer & they go home. He is so innocent & humble about all his excellent devices ; says he has no other ambition but to be a *rival to the Alehouse* ; that it is better they should all come to him than go *there*—You may think how sorry we must have been to come away ; but he insists on our corresponding with him.¹

In 1812 Marianne was again at Bradfield during the summer and fall. Her comment on Mrs. Young reinforces the general impression : “ How is it, that *good men*, from the days of Job, to those of Arthur Young, are plagued by their *wives* ? ”² That summer Young and Marianne were bothered not only by “ vipers & hornets ”,³ but also by a “ poaching Parson ” who had taken a curacy to enjoy the shooting.⁴ In one passage she commented on Young’s schools somewhat more in detail :

In Suffolk I was much employed in Mr. Young’s Schools for poor children, superintending the mistresses & endeavouring to introduce the new mode of monitors : making the children teach each other. I had many more than 100 scholars, & felt regret at leaving the poor little things.⁵

Again at Bradfield in 1813, Marianne described Young’s *fête champêtre* for his schools in a letter of October 4 to Mrs. Piozzi :

Our humble theatre was a barn ; the scenery, branches of oak & ash with flowers, wh. concealed the walls, & made it look like Rosamund’s bower ; the *actors*, Mr. Young’s school, 130 children. *The parts* they had to perform, were all alike, & had more to do with the teeth than the tongue, being the consumption of beef & plumb-pudding, with a profusion of which the tables were covered. We waited on the children ourselves, who, tho’ they did not *look*, like Despair as if they “ *never dined* ”, certainly *eat* as if they never had before. After this, they sung a hymn ; & when they had enough eating & playing to their hearts’ content, we all went to church. Our Rector preached an excellent, simple sermon on the benevolent words of our Saviour : “ Suffer little children to come unto me ” : & there our day’s happiness closed : the children went to their home, & we returned to ours. It was melancholy to see dear Mr. Young in the midst of so much innocent gratification, all of his own creating, unable to behold it : yet

¹ John Rylands Library, English MS. 583, fol. 84. William de St. Croix was Young’s secretary.

² *Ibid.* fol. 99 (10 August 1812).

³ *Ibid.* fol. 101 (26 September 1812).

⁴ *Ibid.* fol. 100 (1 September 1812).

⁵ *Ibid.* fol. 104 (28 November 1812).

it was *delightful* too, at his great age, 73, to see him so anxious to contribute to the happiness of others, & taking so much pleasure in *hearing* that they were pleased.¹

While at Bradfield late in 1817, Marianne wrote about a meeting of the Bible Society at Bradfield Hall :

We had the anniversary of a Bible Socy held here, at Bradfield Hall, last Tuesday, 5 clergymen attended, & spoke ; & good Mr. Arth. Young, who is almost 80 years old, & perfectly [word omitted] but his heart warm in the cause, took the chair. Farmers, poor people, & rich poured in, from all quarters. Nearly £50 were collected to supply the neighbouring poor with Bibles. . . .²

Finally in 1820 there is Marianne's letter telling Mrs. Piozzi of Arthur Young's death :

We have just lost our kind, excellent, pious old friend Mr. Arthur Young—I saw him two days ago, little thinking it was for the last time. He was suffering, I grieve to say, under a most excruciating malady, the stone, which was almost immediately fatal. This loss has deeply affected us all, who were much attached, (my mother particularly) to our most excellent old friend & relative. . . . Poor dear Mr. Young !—it is a blessed transition for him to the place where there is none of the pain which racked him here ; but his gain is the loss of his country, his friends, the poor, to whom he was a friend indeed, & all who knew him, except the fashionable world, from whom, in conformity to a high authority . . . he had long come out & separated himself before that heavy deprivation, loss of sight overtook him.³

The only notable private collection of letters from Arthur Young to a personal friend are those to Thomas Ruggles, which are preserved at Spains Hall, Essex, where there is also a very fine pastel portrait of Young done by John Russell in 1795.⁴ There are twelve of these letters which run from 1795 to 1811. Thomas Ruggles was one of Young's oldest and best friends and had been a school fellow at Lavenham. He was a lawyer, a writer on the poor laws, and eventually became Treasurer of the

¹ John Rylands Library, English MS. 583, fol. 117.

² *Ibid.* 584, fol. 151 (6 November 1817).

³ *Ibid.* fol. 160 (14 April 1820).

⁴ I am greatly indebted to the kindness of Col. Sir Edward A. Ruggles-Brise for allowing me to see the letters of Arthur Young, to have them copied, and to use them. This portrait, which I consider the finest portrait of Young, was reproduced by Miss Defries as the frontispiece for her biography. There is one other major portrait, a pencil drawing made by George Dance in 1794, which now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. It has been reproduced in Constantia Maxwell, *Country and Town in Ireland under the Georges*, opposite p. 192.

Temple. The letter quoted in part below is a good example of Young's epistolary style before he became religious, and reflects some of his interests and activities when at the height of his powers.

London : feb 26. 95

Dr. Ruggles,

I rec^d. your favour in which I am ready to confess you complain with some degree of reason for I have been but a bad correspondent ; I have however to plead much ill-health—much anxiety—and a great deal of business, for the Board has been so anxious on the subject of Potatoes and the apprehended Scarcity that I have worked double tides ; and not only have had to dictate L^{rs}. for hours, but to write memoirs into the bargain. I believe from the returns which I have rec^d. from above thirty counties that the apprehension is not well founded and that there is corn enough in the kingdom to last with the spare consumption that always attends a high price till the next crop.

In regard to y^r papers on the poor, the Annals have not prospered of late w^{ch} made me reduce them, in y^t situation it will not do to print matter already before the public—but I shall consider of it in better times—I have thought more than once of dropping the work entirely, but y^e dead stock of £3000 in my warehouse prevents doing anything rashly. It is a beggarly landed interest that cannot support one periodical publicⁿ on that subject.

Why do you complain of having spent y^r money, seeing that it is to make a comfortable house in w^{ch} you will live happily *in the family way* : the only way a man can be happy at all ; and I am one instance of the want of it. . . .

I have not had good spirits, or too good health ; otherwise I should pass this winter agreeably enough. I have been much sought after and had a good round of dinners with evenings well enough in circles that never see a card table, but I like the country and more quiet scenes. I have established a farmers club that meets for the first time next saturday at the thatch'd house and consists at present of the Dukes of Bedford, Buccleugh & Montrose, The Earls of Egremont and Winchilsea, Lord Darnley—Sirs Joseph Banks, J^{on} Sinclair, J^{on} Call—Fra^s Basset—Peter Burrel—M. P.s Coke, Sumner, Fergusson, also Hervey Astors, Vordyce, Surveyor General—Mr. Northey—Mr. Conyers of Essex, and y^r hble Serv^t. There is no such club, and I hardly named it but it took like Wildfire.

What do you say to politicks ? To the thriving, growing, rising, increasing resources—the inexhaustable resources of this country y^t will bear in one year 16 hund. thous. pounds new taxes & laugh at them like a feather. . . . I have not thank'd you enough for y^r L^{rs}. but I am very grateful—Take my best rememb. to Mrs. Ruggles and all friends at Clare. What is Shrino doing ? Does he keep a pretty maid yet ? The dog will never leave that work off. Adieu My good friend believe me with great truth

Yrs faithfully

A. Y.

I hope you plant 10 acres of potatoes.¹

¹ On 23 January Young had issued a questionnaire on the food scarcity, to which he received seventy-nine replies. The text of this questionnaire is to be

One other important but non-manuscript source in England for Arthur Young's life is to be found in the files of the *Bury and Norwich Post*. This weekly newspaper was started in 1782. The local news items do not contain much material about Arthur Young, but he was an inveterate letter writer both on local and national affairs. The columns devoted to public advertisements show that Young frequently took the lead in calling meetings and sometimes presided at them. Thus in 1782 he engaged in a spirited controversy with Capel Lofft in the *Bury Post* over the advisability of county subscriptions to furnish ships for the war against France. The files of the same paper show what an active role he played in 1787-8 in arousing public opinion in Suffolk against the proposed wool bill. Early in 1792 he organized a campaign against mad dogs, while later in the same year he was agitating for the establishment of a wool fair for Norfolk and Suffolk to be held in Thetford. Still later in that year Young was writing in opposition to certain tithe abuses. The files of this newspaper also reveal that Young was for many years an active Justice of the Peace.¹

By far the largest number of letters *by* Arthur Young is to be found in the New York Public Library. They are part of the

found in the *Annals*, xxiv (1795), 42-3, and Ruggles' reply on pp. 138-9. In 1793-4 Ruggles had published a two volume work, *History of the Poor*, to which Young was probably referring. Ruggles had already published much in the *Annals*, including articles entitled, "Picturesque Farming", "Gleaning", and "On the Police of the Poor". "Vordyce" must be a mistake, and probably J. Fordyce was meant. "Shrino" is what the letter appears to read, but the reference is probably to William Shrive of Clare, a neighbour and friend of Ruggles. He was listed as one of the charter members of the Melford Agricultural Society, *Annals*, xx (1793), 409. On 13 June 1796 Young had dinner with Shrive, a fine meal of tench, *Annals*, xxviii (1797), 99-100.

¹ There is a file of this newspaper in the Cullum Library at Bury St. Edmunds. At first it was *The Bury Post, and Universal Advertiser*. In 1786 it became *The Bury and Norwich Post : or, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex Advertiser*. I was able to examine these files in person to 1792. From that date until 1820 notes were taken for me by Roger H. Sheldon, at that time a graduate student at Oxford, and by Miss J. Dimock of Bury St. Edmunds. Capel Lofft, 1751-1824, was a neighbour, a fellow J.P., a Radical in his politics. Personal relations between Young and Lofft were on the whole amicable enough, but politically they were always on opposite sides.

Burney Papers in the Berg Collection.¹ There are more than 100 letters by him to Marianne Francis, her mother Charlotte Broome, and her sister Charlotte Barrett. They begin in 1811 and continue to within six months of his death. They are interesting primarily as showing Young's relations with Marianne and as reflections of his religious views and activities. In one letter he described himself as "your poor old blind papa",² while in another he wrote, ". . . you are young enough to be the youngest of a very numerous family by a very late marriage".³ He felt her absence from Bradfield in the summer of 1814 so acutely as to remind one of his grief at Bobbin's death :

. . . the three last summers I had my little companion whose company caused perpetual cheerfulness [*sic*] ; her various employments ; her benevolent attentions to the poor people ; the steady regularity with which she attended to the cultivation of her own mind ; and the constant spring of a vivacity which never failed, were so truly pleasing to me, that the loss of all sits as a cloud as dark as blindness itself. I have peoked [*sic*] about the Library and felt the little girl's chair and table, her desk and her drawer, and even the barley box from which she fed the chickens,—all in their place, but unanimated by her who rendered them agreeable. . . .⁴

Young had always regulated his time carefully. In a letter to Marianne he described his typical day at Bradfield in 1811, a routine which would probably have varied but little during the last decade of his life :

My day is thus past. I rise between 5 and 6 pray to God the best I can, walk in the Hall &c 25 yards, till 7, then Mr St. Croix reads a prayer and a chapter in the Bible with Scott's practical observations ; then the religious papers for arrangement, till half past nine, dress and breakfast at ten, then wool gathering till two ; walk in the rope walk with Jane till three, then newspapers and letters, then wool till five ; after dinner Jane reads a Chapter in Bennetts intermediate state, and too often a nap till tea at 8 but not always ; after tea, that is from nine till ten Sully's memoirs, having finished Thibauts recollections of Berlin ; at ten a chapter in the Testament and prayer ; bed by half past ten : such is the day, how do you like it ?⁵

¹ I am greatly indebted to the Curator of the Berg Collection, Dr. John D. Gordon, for permission to make use of these letters and to make the quotations from them which appear in the following paragraphs.

² New York Public Library, Berg Collection, Burney Papers, Arthur Young to Marianne Francis, 10 November 1813.

³ *Ibid.* 6 December 1811.

⁴ *Ibid.* 4 July 1814.

⁵ *Ibid.* 6 December 1811. The books referred to are in order : Thomas Scott, *The Holy Bible . . . with original notes, practical observations* ; George

The only other important collection of letters by Arthur Young in the United States, besides those to Sir Joseph Banks already noted above, are six letters in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., which Young wrote to George Washington. They cover a span of eight years, the first in 1786 and the last in 1794.¹ The first letter in the series is indicative of the tact with which Young usually approached men who were more important than he.

Bradfield Hall near
Bury Suffolk

Jan : 7, 1786

Sir

I scarcely know what apology to make for a letter so out of common forms as the present ; but the spectacle of a great commander retiring in the manner you have done from y^e head of a victorious army to the amusements of agriculture, calls all the feelings of my bosom into play & gives me the strongest inclination, I fear an impotent one, to endeavour in the smallest degree to contribute to the success of so laudable a pleasure. I should not however have been so abrupt, had I not received an application to assist in procuring you a bailiff well skilled in English husbandry, for w^{ch} purpose I had made inquiries, & doubt not should have succeeded, but I hear fr^o M^r Rack of Batts y^t he has met with one likely to suit you : In this little negotiation M^r Fairfax gave something of a sanction to the liberty I at present take in addressing you.

I have sent you by M^r Athawes of London the first four volumes of the *Annals of Agriculture* a work I am at present publishing. Will you do me the honour of accepting them, as a very small mark of my veneration for the character of a man whose private virtues rendered a cause successful and illustrious, which I have been solicitous as an englishman to condemn. Permit me also to send by the same conveyance the rest of the Volumes as they are published.

But Sir—as my love of agriculture is even stronger y^a y^t I feel for any species of military glory, you must permit me to speak to you as a brother farmer ; & to beg, that if you want men, cattle, tools, seeds, or anything else that may add to y^r rural amusement, favour me with your commands, & believe me I shall take a very sincere pleasure in executing them.

I find by y^e extract from your letter sent me that you have discontinued Tobacco & maiz [sic] & wish a well regulated farm in the english culture : your expression concerning manure being the best transmutation towards gold, is good, and shews that you may be as great a farmer as a general. The culture

Bennet, *Olam Hanashamoth, or a View of the Intermediate State* . . . (1800) ;
Dieudonné Thiébault, *Original Anecdotes of Frederick the Second* . . . (1805) ;
Memoirs of the Duke of Sully. I think “ wool gathering ” refers to his work on the *Elements of Agriculture*.

¹ The Papers of George Washington, vols. 234, no fol. number ; 237, fols. 257-69 ; 241, fols. 322-5 ; 253, fols. 218-29 ; 258, fols. 217-25 ; 267, fols. 240-2.

of those plants that support cattle you will probably find the true means of improvement, & amongst those, turneps [sic], cabbages and potatoes are very important.

Permit me to remain

with the greatest Respect

Sir, Your most obed^t

& Devoted Serv^t

Arthur Young.¹

An examination of Young's later letters to Washington makes it seem quite probable that his main object in opening the correspondence was to procure letters from the great American to insert in the *Annals of Agriculture*. Washington was adamant, however, in his refusal.² Young's letters are confined almost entirely to agricultural matters. In one he sent Washington a detailed plan for a barn which was actually erected on one of Washington's farms.³ Some of the letters are very long, one running to twenty pages. This latter one was in reply to one from Washington which contained accounts of four farms, one of them that of Thomas Jefferson. Young was incredulous about the details of these farms, for he could not understand the wastes of the slave plantation system, and he was shocked that American farmers paid so little attention to careful farm accounting and to the desirability of keeping a large stock of cattle. In this letter Young threw aside the deference which had marked his first letter.

Your information has thrown me affloat [sic] upon the High Seas. To analyze your husbandry has the difficulty of a problem: I cannot understand it; and the more I know of it the more surprizing it appears. Is it possible

¹ The Papers of George Washington, vol. 234, no fol. number. Mr. Fairfax was George William Fairfax, 1724-87, who was living at that time at Bath. Mr. Rack was Edmund Rack, first secretary of what afterwards became the Bath and West of England Agricultural Society.

² After Washington's death Young published Washington's letters to him in a small volume entitled *Letters from his Excellency George Washington to Arthur Young . . .* (London, 1801). Two years later there appeared at Alexandria, Virginia, a volume entitled *Letters from his Excellency George Washington, to Arthur Young . . . and Sir John Sinclair*.

³ Papers of Washington, vol. 237, fols. 257-69. The date is 1 February 1787. Young printed the plans for this barn in the *Annals*, xvi (1791), 149-55. The barn was constructed on Washington's "Union Farm". Cf. Paul L. Haworth, *George Washington, Country Gentleman*, p. 117.

that the inhabitants of a great continent not new settlers who of course live only to hunt, to eat and to drink can carry on farming and planting as a business and yet never calculate the profits they make by *percentage* on their capital? Yet this seems to be the case. . . .

But I have a heavier objection than this and which bears upon the pith of the subject. How can Mr Jefferson produce annually 5000 bushels of wheat worth £750 by means of a cattle product of only £125? I do not want to come to America to know that this is simply impossible: At the commencement of a term it may do; but how long will it last? This is the management that gives such products as 8 and 10 bushels an acre. Arable land can yield wheat only by means of cattle and sheep. It is not dung that is wanted so much as a change of products & repose under grass, which is the soul of management. . . . it is only by increasing cattle that you can increase wheat *permanently*. £125 from cattle to £750 from wheat would reduce the finest farm in the world to a caput mortuum. . . . I should however be greatly obliged by an explanation from Mr Jefferson.¹

Quite possibly many more letters by Arthur Young will come to light. Unfortunately he was not quite an important enough figure for all of his letters to have been saved. He probably wrote several hundred letters to Sir John Sinclair which would undoubtedly throw much additional light upon the Board of Agriculture. His position as the spokesman of the agricultural interests would be much clearer if his letters to the 5th and 6th Dukes of Bedford, Thomas Coke of Norfolk, Lord Sheffield, and the 3rd Earl of Egremont could be found. Very likely he wrote more than 100 letters to William Wilberforce, chiefly on religious subjects. The problems of his private life and personal character would probably be largely resolved if one could discover his letters to Dr. Charles Burney and Fanny Burney, to John Arbuthnot, the Rev. John Symonds, to Maximilien Lazowski and the Duc de Liancourt, and, above all, to Mrs. Betsy Oakes.

¹ Papers of Washington, vol. 258, fols. 217-19. The date is 17 January 1793. Much of this letter is published in *Letters from . . . Washington to . . . Young . . . and . . . Sinclair* (1803), pp. 87-92. For Washington's letter with its enclosures, see *ibid.* 50-78. Jefferson's account to which Young took exception is on pp. 57-61 and Jefferson's answer to Young on pp. 93-5.