

**The
Clumber
Love Story**

Janet Roberts

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The cover photograph was taken in Clumber Park

Georgiana

She must have been delighted, surprised and not a little apprehensive. At 42, following her recent marriage, Dowager Lady Georgina Middleton was pregnant. Her previous marriage to Thomas Willoughby, 4th Baron Middleton of Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire had been a long one, but childless.

Her new husband was Edward Miller-Mundy, who was a widower, a little younger than his new wife, who had already fathered five sons and a daughter. He was a very wealthy coal mine owner, who benefited from the building of canals and railways. He was High Sheriff of Derbyshire in 1772 and a Member of Parliament for nearly 40 years.

The marriage was clearly popular for Edward's own sister had previously described the house as *'the empty melancholy house at Shipley.'*

A few months before the baby was due Lady Middleton prudently wrote her Will. This impressive document is still available at the Records Office in Matlock, Derbyshire, and is about a yard square, on heavy parchment, and several pages long. In it Georgina disposes of all of her possessions from her favourite earrings and the silver on the sideboard to making provision for her unborn child, stating....

'... Interest on £41,500 and £40,000 Bank annuities to pay for the maintenance and education of all and every child or children. The said payment to be made half yearly on the feast of the Birth of our Lord Christ and the Nativity of St John the Baptist in every year....'

The baby was born on the 29th June 1789 at Shipley Hall, with the mother dying in childbirth. Lady Middleton was buried in Heanor Parish Church, and a few weeks later, on the 6th August, 1789 the child was baptised. Edward Miller-Mundy decided to call her Georgiana Elizabeth after her mother. Thanks to her prudence, the baby was a very wealthy heiress.

Georgiana grew up in imposing Shipley Hall just outside Ilkeston in Derbyshire, set on a hill in over two thousand acres of land. Edward Miller-Mundy liked to live like a country

gentleman. He kept a pack of hounds and a stable of horses and employed a Game Keeper and maintained covers for shooting. He carried out extensive building work on the Hall, adding a new front with a portico and side bay windows. He also added a large ballroom and, at the rear, two new servants wings. In fact he was doing some sort of building improvement for some 35 years!

Gardening was clearly important as the estate accounts show for in 1778 the gardener received a wage for half a year's work of £8. 8. 0., while the following year seed from Messrs Brunton & Forbes cost £7. 8. 0. In 1782 Edward Panton was paid the princely sum of £97. 7. 4. for glass and lead for the hothouse.

Edward Miller-Mundy landscaped around the Hall, using gardener William Emes. He had been a pupil of famous Capability Brown.

In 1822, An Encyclopaedia of Gardening describes Shipley...

'The house is modern and elegant, the grounds very well disposed and wooded, and the gardens celebrated of late for their orange trees. Both these and lemon trees are grown in borders and in boxes.'



Henry

Henry's father was the finely-named Thomas Pelham-Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, while his mother Anna Maria Stanhope was the youngest daughter of the Earl of Harrington. Henry was born on the 30th January 1785 in Walton in Essex, England.

For his education he went to Eton school, where he stayed for 5 years, but when he was only 10 years old his father died. Within a year his mother had remarried and the family moved into Kelham Hall, Nottinghamshire, leased to them by the Manners-Sutton family. Following Eton Henry unusually did not go on to University, but travelled with his family to the South of France, in order to improve their step-father's health.

Hostilities between England and France had ceased when they travelled, but unfortunately soon resumed, and they were unable to return home for five years, something Henry bitterly regretted and subsequently complained that he had passed his

'ripening years...in a foreign land, far away from the scenes of my interests and affections... cut off from all connexion with my own country.'

His lack of higher education was something he bitterly regretted, and was unusual for someone of his rank. His poor academic standing and lack of public speaking skills was a cause of continual distress and embarrassment to him, and he was to write

'I have no call whatever for making a figure but I should be sorry to appear ridiculous.'

It was in 1807, when he was only 22 that he married Georgiana. It is unclear how they met but as he grew up at Kelham Hall and she frequently spent time with an aunt in Kirklington and the two places are nearby, they could well have met there. Also Edward Miller-Mundy was famous for his parties, when he liked to entertain the gentry – and who better to invite than the young 4th Duke of Newcastle.

Then Miller-Mundy would hire a marquee, over 100 feet long, to be erected on the lawn, filled with small tables lavishly decorated with flowers, and the catering would be done by the well-known London firm of J. Lyons and Co. Ltd. An orchestra would be hired, often to play in the popular Viennese style, and the lavish evenings would end with a firework display.

Georgiana was only 18 when she married Henry, by 'special licence' at Lambeth Palace, London on the 18th July 1807. Georgiana wore a silk dress and the Derby Mercury for 23rd July 1807 wrote

'Immediately after the ceremony the happy pair set off for the Marquis of Sligo's seat near Barnet.'

Upon their return, Henry took his new bride to Clumber House. It was one of a series of estates in Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire, each with a large residence, in what was known as The Dukeries.

Clumber House was completed in 1770's, being built of Steetly stone obtained from local quarries in Cresswell Craigs, Roche Abbey and Mansfield. Hundreds of bricks were made at Bothamsall and Gamston Moor.

Marble was a particular feature of the house, creating pillars, staircases (the main one alone consisted of 12 tons) as well as whole walls. In 1809 the main bathroom was replaced by one adorned with marble and alabaster and which had domed skylights and circular windows.

A principle feature of the house was the Dining Room which was described by F. Laird in 'Beauties of England & Wales' in 1813...

'a most magnificent apartment 60' in length, 34' in breadth and in height 30'. It is sufficiently large to accommodate 150 guests at table. The ceiling and panels are extremely rich in stucco and gilding.'



The south side of the House overlooked a lake. This had been created by the 2nd Duke using the River Poulter and is half a mile long, serpentine in shape and is fairly shallow. Because the river is very slow running, there was a constant problem with silting. Estate records mention dredging in 1801, followed by a new cut in 1817.

There were pleasure boats and a ferry on the lake and accounts show bills for repairing and replacements of ropes. The Duke employed a sailor, a John Sinclair, for his wages amounted to £40. 16s. 0d. He was also mentioned as receiving 2 tons of coal in July 1821 and 1822. This was almost certainly for the frigate 'Lincoln'.



Living Together

The happy couple established the custom of exchanging letter to each other on New Year's Day. This is quite typical

Clumber Jan. 1st 1809

Accept my beloved Georgiana these trifles as a token of my love and affection. May we often experience many, many happy returns of this day and may we on looking back to each first of the year be able to say that we have always to the best of our power contributed to the happiness and comfort of each other by uniformly and strictly discharging the several duties of husband and wife. As each year comes round may we have the delightful satisfaction of thinking that we have annually improved upon our conduct. You my beloved Georgina in gentleness (which above all things becomes a woman) in contentment with your situation whatever it is as far as lies in your power, placing in every respect a full reliance on your husband, who on his part will never deceive you, will at any moment willingly make any sacrifice for your comfort and happiness when the object to be attained is reasonable and who believe me, ever dearest Georgiana, loves you the truest and most affectionate attachment.'

Whenever they were apart, they wrote constantly to each other, and because they so hated these times, usually caused by the Duke's attendance at the House of Lords, he bought 39 Charles Street, Berkley Square, London. This enabled the family to stay together, and indeed their third child, a longed-for son and heir was born there.

Georgiana must have been constantly pregnant for a year following her marriage she gave birth to their first daughter, named after the Duke's mother.

Anna Maria - born 1808

Georgiana - born 1810

Henry - born 1811

Charlotte - born 1812
Charles - born 1813
Thomas - (Charles' twin) - born 1813
William - born 1815
Edward -.born 1816
John -.born 1817 - died after only 18 hours
Caroline Augusta -.born 1818
Henrietta -.born 1819
Robert Renebald -.born 1820

Tragedy Strikes

By 1822 Georgiana was again pregnant, and it is possible to read the Duke's own words for the first of eight diaries, containing over a million words, have survived.

It begins with the poignant words

May 27th 1822. On this melancholy day we have lost our dear child Anna-Marie – about a week and two days since she complained of weakness and no appetite.

May 28th 1822. Mr Westmacott the sculpture has taken a cast of her beautifully serene face – he is to make a bust or statue of it.

The 14 year old was buried privately and temporarily in Marlebone Church, London. The Duke planned to build a church and family vault at Bothamsall.

As always, the Duke's chief concern was for his beloved Georgiana.

He wrote following the funeral on the 1st June, 1822....

The fatigue arriving from a constant and unremitting attendance upon our child during her illness has made a considerable impression on the health of the Duchess who was anyway pregnant. The funeral being over, we left London about 1 o'clock to see what a change of air and scene could affect.

June 9th The weather has been prodigiously hot. My dear wife has not derived benefit from the change. I would hope for further improvement.

August The beginning of this month has passed agreeably with the amendment in my dear wife's state of health. However at the end of it, her health has declined. She has been obliged to give up going out in the garden chair and has lost strength and flesh very visibly. How frequently has my heart sunk within me and appeared to scarcely to beat when I have involuntarily gazed upon her shrunken cheeks and hollow temples and yet have not dared, at least have endeavoured to withhold, what agony the sight has inflicted.

Sept 24 The Duchess taken with labour pains about the middle of the day. Dr. Feltham luckily at the house and was here immediately. A wonderful labour. At last at a quarter to 10 at night a girl was brought forth, stillborn, and 20 minutes afterwards a boy who tho' thin appeared healthy. To my inexplicable delight notwithstanding all that she had gone through my dearest Georgiana is wonderfully well. I have seldom seen her better after her lyings in. She also looks uncommonly well and more at ease than I have seen her for months.

Sept 26 How all my fondest hopes are ousted. I have this day lost that inestimable treasure which has made the happiness and comfort of my life for 15 years. My beloved and admirable Georgiana, my wife, my companion and my friend, died on this day at a quarter past 8 in the morning.

At the last moment she screamed excruciatingly, pain internally. I was rubbing her first in one place and then another, when the dear soul urged me to rub the side of her stomach.

When this afforded no relief exclaimed "This is too much. I can bear it no longer" and almost instantly in that breath, in my arms, her soul slipped to the hands of her Creator.

Oct 6th the little infant has been very poorly for some days. Today the 6th Oct. finding him so very ill and weakly he was baptized by Mr. Frederick Mundy. I called him George in memory of his own dear mother.

Oct 7th Our dear and beautiful, for such he was, infant died at 25 mins past 10 at night.

The funeral took place on the 8th October 1822. Georgiana was 33 years old and had given birth to 14 children.

On the 10th October 1822 the Duke wrote

The dear Infant was buried this day at Bothamsall. When the Funeral took place on the 8th day my dear child Anna-Marie whose remains had been brought from London, was at the same time interred, so that nearly at the same period the inestimable mother and 3 of her children were laid in the same vault by the side of each other.

That winter the diary is full of references to how much the Duke missed his Georgiana
How much, how very much, I miss my dear companion. It is such a season that nothing can supply the want of such a blessing on whom one had been accustomed to give to, and from whom one had received, every earthly comfort.

At the end of January he wrote....

30th Today is my birthday. I have this day completed my 38th year. A heavy cloud hangs over me, and affects me greatly – I cannot help comparing my situation now to what has been in former years. On this day I used to receive the earliest congratulations of my dearest wife, enhanced by a thousand kindnesses and amiable attentions. Now what a change, a dreary blank. No loved responsive voice, no dear companion to share my joys or assuage my griefs. All now depends on myself. For the sake of my dear children may He enable me to conduct myself that I may be a kind Parent, a just monitor and a conspicuous example for them to follow.

The Duke decided during that winter to have an engraving done of Georgiana. He chose the artist Reynolds as he was considered to be the best engraver at the time. He gathered up all the portraits of his wife to take to London, including a miniature by Hargreaves

Which resemble so much as to provide me a painful pleasure in looking upon it. Now that I know what it is to prize the representation, how should I treasure the dear original, did I now possess it.

Later he took a portrait of Lady Middleton 'which so much resembles her daughter'.

He also started to have discussions with Mr Westmacott about a monument

'which I mean to build to cherish the memory of her who will never be forgotten by me. He is to consult with Mr Smirke who is to build a church.'

Later that year he wrote

Mr Reynolds has now completed the portrait. I think it is an admirable one, and finely drawn. He is to do another of me which he wishes to exhibit.

On looking at the engraving he noted

It is a real comfort to me to possess such a resemblance of one whom I for now wish to remember.





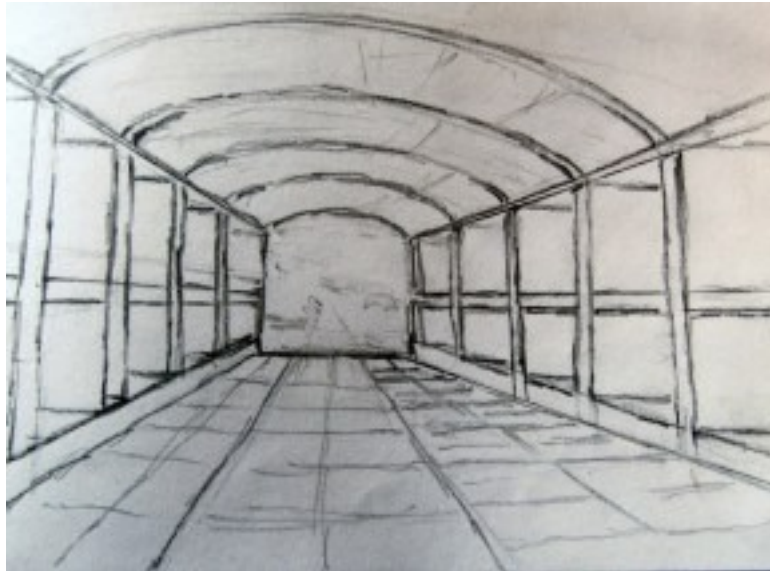
The year after Georgiana's death the Duke wrote..

'I have not been able until today to bring myself to look over my dearest wife's wardrobe with a view to selection and to give the contents to her maid. It has indeed been a painful task, but I received, if any were wanting, still stronger proofs of her love and affection to me. The gowns I have given her, or any other things, were quite worn through, but still favoured. I was not before aware of this. How affection and attachment were deep and rooted. She was indeed matchless as a woman and a wife.'

The following day the maid came to collect the things that had been selected for her
I cannot describe my painful feelings and poignant regrets. The blank in my existence is indeed most sensibly felt at almost hour of the day.'

The Mausoleum

By 1824, two years after his wife's death, Henry had decided to locate the new Church and family cemetery at Markham in North Nottinghamshire. He had already chosen Robert Smirke to be the architect and had inspected some of Smirke's London work, which included Somerset House, the Royal Mint and the British Museum. The sum of one thousand guineas, payable when the building was complete, was agreed on. However, the total cost of the new vicarage and mausoleum was well over £15,000. Beneath the building was a vault with room for 72 coffins, although in fact only 12 were ever built there.



Later Robert Smirke was to claim that the inspiration for the building, in Greek-Doric design, came from a temple near Athens.

On the 10th October the Duke wrote:

I have left off black this morning. What a space of time since I first put it on, and yet more than 2 years have passed seeming but a day.

In the summer of 1825 the Duke went to the Royal Academy exhibition at Somerset House. Westmacott had contributed a Madonna and child, which he thought might make a fitting monument to Georgiana. However, the Duke wrote in his diary

I shall prefer something else. I have given him the idea. It is to be my dear child Anna Maria borne in a cloud, ready to receive my beloved and sore lamented wife, who looks towards her having in each arm an infant who are preparing to advance to Heaven.

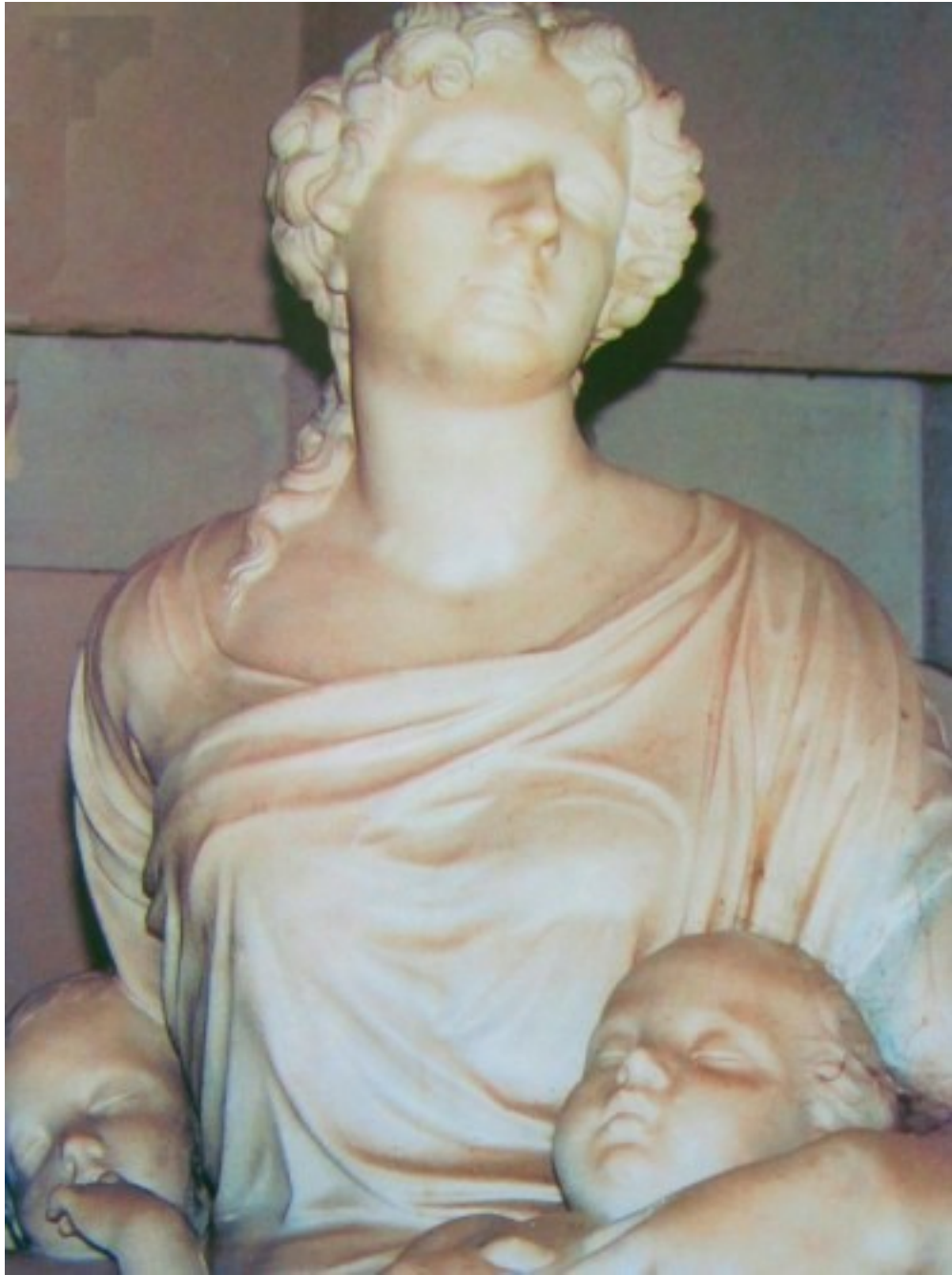


During 1826 the Duke was to write

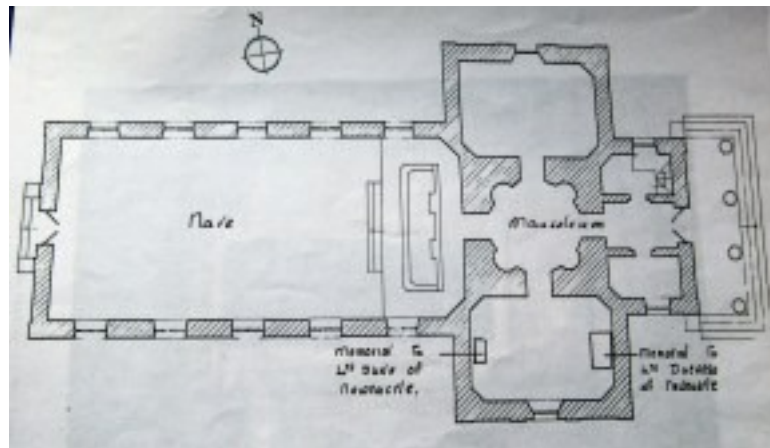
I was for some hours today with Mr Westmacott modelling the head of the figure intended to represent my ever dear wife. I was tolerably successful in bringing out a likeness which I hope to improve tomorrow. The whole design which is now in plaster is, I think, beautiful.

The following day

Again with Mr Westmacott about our work which is greatly improved in likeness. The profiles are very correct – a little is yet wanting to give the exact character to the full face.”



The building is, from east to west 105 feet, 32 feet wide in the chancel and the transept is 57 feet.



The Mausoleum was consecrated by the Archbishop of York on the 27th December, 1833, some 11 after Georgiana's death.

Henry, 4th Duke of Newcastle was to live for another 29 years as a lonely widower. His only comfort was his children although he struggled to raise them alone.

In 1828 he wrote in his diary

'My family is growing up. The responsibilities of my charge requires a heavier weight and the entrance of my daughter into what is called the world not only adds to my care, but also to my labour. How I miss Her who could so well have guided our dear child thro' the difficulties and perils which she must encounter. How constantly, how severely my spirit is perturbed by the loss and absence of the dear and incomparable companion of so many former years.

This love story may well have disappeared had the 4th Duke not left such detailed diaries which, whilst only the eight volumes remain, still contain some 2,300 pages and over one million words. Now several impressive books have been published quoting these diaries.

Increasing the upkeep of such a vast mansion was no longer viable, and the contents were sold at Sotheby's Auction House, with the books from the library alone raising the equivalent of three million pounds. Clumber House was pulled down in 1938.

The parkland, covering nearly four thousand acres was bought by the National Trust in 1948 so is now enjoyed by the general public.

The title Duke of Newcastle became extinct in 1988 following the death of the 10th Duke who had no heirs.

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