

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

**Henry Bulwer** (1801–72) was the second son of Colonel (later General) William Earle Bulwer, of Wood Dalling, Heydon Hall, Norfolk, and his wife, Elizabeth Barbara Lytton. He was brought up by his maternal grandmother and then educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he cultivated an interest in horses. Henry gambled away the modest fortune left by his grandmother. In 1822, he published a small volume of poetry and, two years later, inspired by his hero, Byron (whose biography he published in 1835), decided to fight as a volunteer in the Greek war of independence. Instead, he got involved in a murky scheme to finance the cause. In April 1829, Henry took up a diplomatic post in Vienna and the following year was transferred to The Hague. After having played an important role reporting on Belgium's grievances against the Dutch, he took up the post of attaché in Paris in November 1832. Hovering between a career as a writer, a diplomat and a politician, Henry entered Parliament as MP for Wilton in 1830, then for Coventry in 1831 and 1833 and for Marylebone in 1835. Around this time, he published two substantial works: *France: Social, Literary and Political* (1834) and *The Monarchy of the Middle Classes* (1836). In August 1837, he committed himself wholeheartedly to a career as a diplomat, when he was appointed Secretary of the English Embassy in Constantinople. The following summer, he successfully concluded a commercial treaty with Turkey. Other postings included Secretary of the English Embassy in Paris in June 1839 and Minister-Plenipotentiary to Madrid in November 1843. The revolutionary wave that hit Europe in 1848 caused Henry to flee for his life from Spain because allegedly he had been involved in liberal risings against the conservative government. His conduct caused such a furore that he was effectively exiled to Washington as Minister-Plenipotentiary. Henry's three years in America turned out to be highly rewarding and his crowning achievement was the negotiation of the Clayton–Bulwer treaty with the American Secretary of State, John Clayton, signed 19 April 1850, which safeguarded the future building of the Panama Canal and the territorial rights of the surrounding countries. At the very end of his diplomatic career, he would be involved in negotiations over control of another strategically important waterway, the Suez Canal. In 1852, he returned

to Europe as Minister-Plenipotentiary in Florence but due to ill health came home to England three years later. On 9 December 1848, Henry married Georgiana Charlotte Mary Wellesley, the niece of the Duke of Wellington. The marriage proved to be unhappy. At the end of the Crimean War in 1856, he was involved in territorial negotiations. The final posting of his career was in 1858 when he became ambassador in Constantinople until his retirement in August 1865. Henry resumed his literary career by producing biographies of political figures with whom he had been acquainted. Knighted in 1848, he was raised to the peerage as Baron Dalling and Bulwer in 1871. His sudden death took place the following year in Naples on 23 May.

**William Bulwer** (1799–1877) was the eldest son of Colonel (later General) William Earle Bulwer, of Wood Dalling, Heydon Hall, Norfolk, and his wife, Elizabeth Barbara Lytton. After his father's death in 1807, the Heydon estate was mismanaged by the trustees appointed by the Court of Chancery until he came of age in 1820. The estate was heavily saddled with debts, which William was unable to clear during his lifetime. He married Emily Gascoigne in 1827 with whom he had six surviving children. After Emily's death following childbirth in 1836, he remarried in 1841. His second wife was Elizabeth Green, who survived him. William Bulwer died on 21 July 1877, having outlived his younger brothers.

**Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer** (1803–73) was a writer and politician who was the third and youngest son of Colonel (later General) William Earle Bulwer of Wood Dalling, Heydon Hall, Norfolk, and Elizabeth Barbara Lytton of Knebworth, Hertfordshire. After the death of his mother in 1843, when he inherited her family estate, he added Lytton to the end of his name. Edward had an unconventional early education before arriving at Cambridge in 1822. While at university, he engaged in a liaison with Byron's former lover, Lady Caroline Lamb of Bocket Hall in Hertfordshire. In those very grounds, he courted the Irish heiress Rosina Bulwer Lytton, who had inherited an impoverished estate near Limerick. They married on 29 August 1827 against the wishes of his mother, who registered her displeasure by discontinuing his allowance. Edward was forced to find other means to support their extravagant lifestyle and turned to writing. His output of novels, plays and poetry was prolific. His best-selling silver-fork novel *Pelham, or, The Adventures of a Gentleman* (1828) rocketed him to fame. He gained a degree of notoriety with novels whose heroes were criminals: *Paul Clifford* (1830), concerning a highwayman, and the Newgate novel, *Eugene Aram* (1832), about a murderer. The eruption of Vesuvius helped ensure the success of his best-known book, *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834). Edward also wrote successfully for the stage. As with his fiction, he experimented with sub-genres, including melodrama for *The Lady of Lyons* (1838) and the comedy

of manners for *Money* (1849). In addition, he edited the literary *New Monthly Magazine* from 1831 to 1833. Regarded as one of the greatest of living authors, in 1838 he was given a baronetcy for his services to literature. Edward was also highly successful in his political career, which was launched with his election to St Ives in 1831 as an independent radical. When the constituency was abolished by the Reform Act of 1832, he successfully stood for Lincoln. In 1841, Edward lost his seat to a Conservative. After a break of nine years, he returned to political life, defecting to the Tories, and in July 1852 he contested the Hertfordshire seat and won. In 1858, he was offered the post of Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord Derby's administration. In this he made his mark by helping to establish in 1858 the new colony of British Columbia, and presided over the secession of Queensland from New South Wales in 1859. In contrast to the success of his literary and political careers, his family life was in tatters. Edward neglected his wife and their two children, Emily and Robert. By 1836 relations with Rosina had deteriorated so badly that the couple formally separated. They only fully ceased tormenting one other when Edward died on 18 January 1873, probably from a cerebral abscess. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

**Elizabeth Barbara Bulwer Lytton** (1773–1843) was the only child of Richard Warburton Lytton of Knebworth Park, Hertfordshire, and Elizabeth Jodrell of Lewknor, Oxfordshire. In 1798, she married William Earle Bulwer, a colonel of the 106th regiment, known as the Norfolk Rangers, who was promoted to general in 1804. He was the owner of Heydon Hall in Norfolk, where Elizabeth lived until her husband's death in 1807. When her father died in 1810, she inherited Knebworth House in Hertfordshire and went to live there with her third and favourite son, Edward, adding 'Lytton' to her married name. She carried out major structural changes to the originally Tudor house, demolishing three-quarters of it. Mrs Bulwer Lytton was a formidable woman, who quarrelled with every rector on the Knebworth estate. Worn out in old age with the responsibilities of being a landowner, she died on 19 December 1843 and was buried in the nearby mausoleum she had built for herself and her family.

**Emily Bulwer Lytton** (1828–48), the first child of Edward and Rosina Bulwer Lytton, was born in Berkshire. Much of her childhood was spent in the care of her guardian, Mary Greene. With her younger brother Teddy (Robert), she often stayed in Dublin, Cheltenham and Coventry, at the homes of Miss Greene's relatives. When Emily was thirteen years old, her father sent her to be educated at a school run by Madame de Weling in Neuwied, a town on the Rhine. It was here that she cultivated her talent for languages, later working as a translator for Edward. When she developed curvature of the spine, he arranged for her to be treated at the Orthopaedic Institute of Jacob Heine in Cannstatt near Stuttgart. At the insistence of Mary Greene, Emily returned to England when she was sev-

enteen years old, where she spent a short time at a boarding school in London. Subsequently, she moved into lodgings on Brompton Road, London, with the Austro-Hungarian mother of Natalie Ritter von Zahony, who had been her best friend at Cannstatt. Emily considered returning with the family to their home near Trieste, which was then part of Austria. Instead, they had to leave without her for Vienna, which was in the midst of a revolution. The combination of the loss of her best friend and the accumulation of overwork had an adverse effect on her health, with the result that she contracted typhoid fever and died on the night of 29 April 1848.

**Robert Bulwer Lytton** (1831–91) was the only son of Edward and Rosina Bulwer Lytton. Born in London, he was christened Edward but later known by his second name to avoid confusion with his father. He was educated at Harrow, where he was bullied, and then at Bonn in Prussia. His aspirations to be a poet were not encouraged by Edward. Nevertheless, by 1849, he had written most of the poems contained in his first volume, *Clytemnestra* (1855), which he published under the pseudonym ‘Owen Meredith’. In 1849, Robert embarked on a career in diplomacy, serving his apprenticeship as Private Secretary to the ambassador, his uncle Henry, who was his father’s younger brother. Robert continued in the same capacity in Florence, when his uncle was posted there, gaining further experience as a diplomat at the embassies of The Hague, Vienna, Belgrade, Athens and Lisbon. He still continued to write and publish poetry, most notably *Lucile* in 1860. His marriage to Edith Villiers took place four years later. In January 1876, Robert was offered the viceroyalty of India by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. He was installed as Governor-General and Viceroy of India on 12 April 1876 and set about organizing the lavish Delhi Durbar for the following New Year’s Day, for the purpose of proclaiming Queen Victoria the Empress of India. Robert’s pursuit of British interests in India, particularly his laissez-faire policies, was highly controversial. His mis-handling of the Indian famine and provocation of the Second Anglo-Afghan War was attacked by his opponents. With the fall of the Lord Beaconsfield (Disraeli) government, he resigned from office. On returning to England, Robert was created Earl of Lytton on 28 April 1880. For the next two years, he retreated from public life, writing a biography of his father. He followed his father’s footsteps in 1886 when he was appointed Lord Rector of Glasgow University. In the same year, he resumed his diplomatic career as ambassador to France and died unexpectedly at the British embassy in Paris on 24 November 1891. Robert was buried in his family’s mausoleum at Knebworth. Among his surviving children were Constance Georgina Bulwer Lytton, who was later to become a celebrated suffragette, and Victor Alexander George Robert Bulwer Lytton, who succeeded to the earldom and served during the 1920s as Governor of Bengal and acting Viceroy of India.

**Anna Wheeler** (1785–1848) was the daughter of Nicholas Milley Doyle, prebendary of Fennor parish in the county of Tipperary, and Anna Dunbar; her godfather being the Irish politician, Henry Grattan. Her two brothers were Charles and John and her one sister, Bessie. In 1800 she married Francis Massy Wheeler, a landowner who spent his days hunting and his nights drinking. Only two of their many children survived infancy: Henrietta and Rosina. Wheeler left her drunken husband in 1812, taking her sister and daughters with her, and went to Guernsey, where they lived with her uncle, General Sir John Doyle, governor of the island, mingling with émigrés of the French Revolution. She rejected a proposal of marriage from the Duc de Bouillon, cousin to the French king. Wheeler moved to Caen in France in 1816 where she became part of a circle of radical thinkers and gained a reputation as ‘Goddess of Reason’. On the death of her estranged husband in 1820, Wheeler went to London, meeting the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham and the cooperative thinker Robert Owen. In 1822, Bentham introduced her to the Irish landowner and socialist William Thompson. Together they produced *Appeal of One Half the Human Race, Women, against the Other Half, Men* (1825), published under Thompson’s name. While in Paris in 1823, Wheeler met Charles Fourier who greatly admired her and probably coined the term ‘*feminisme*’ with her in mind. In her role as transnational mediator, Wheeler disseminated his ideas within Owenite circles as well as collaborating with Owen’s follower Marc-Antoine Jullien through a mutual support for Greek independence. She was also responsible for introducing the ideas of the French feminists, the Saint-Simoniennes, to the English public, translating their work in Owen’s journal *The Crisis*. Wheeler was a staunch activist for women’s rights, writing speeches and articles published under the pseudonym ‘Vlasta’ in the cooperative press. She died on 7 May 1848, at the height of the European revolutions of that year, in a flat in Camden High Street, London, surrounded by women comrades and her brother John.