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THOMAS MANTE FONDS

MG 23, K 8

FindingAid No. 1750 / Instrument de recherche no 1750

Prepared in 1988 and 1989 by Patricia Birkett of the Pre-Confederation Archives Section

Préparé en 1988 et 1989 par Patricia Birkett de la Section des archives antérieures à la confédération.

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MG 23 MANTE, Thomas (ca. 1733-ca. 1785). Soldier, adventurer and author.
K 8

Originals, n.d., 1774-1781. 165 pages. Finding Aid 1750.

Very little personal information is available on Thomas Mant(e) (ca. 1733-ca. 1785). He was probably the eldest son, baptized 3 December 1733, of Thomas Mant of Havant, Hampshire, England, an employee of the Bishop of Southampton, and of his wife Mary, a daughter of the Reverend Joseph Bingham (1668-1723), rector of Havant and author of the monumental 'Origines Ecclesiasticae', or Antiquities of the Christian Church. If this identification is correct, he would have been a brother of the Reverend Dr. Richard Mant (baptized 2 July 1744/5), the master of King Edward's Grammar School and rector of All Souls, Southampton, whose eldest son, Richard Mant (1776-1848) was Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore from 1820.

Thomas Mant(e) (ca. 1733-ca.1785) received a 2nd lieutenant's commission in the 94th company of marines on 25 June 1756, and was promoted to 1st lieutenant in the 56th company on 1 November 1759. It was presumably in that capacity that he served as an assistant engineer at the siege of Havana in 1762. On 24 June 1762, he obtained a lieutenancy in the 77th Foot and served with his regiment in America until it was reduced in 1763. During the 1764 expedition against the western Indians, Mante served as a major of brigade under Colonel John Bradstreet (1711-1774), but was not remunerated for that service and had to pay his own passage back to England. Material relating to Lieutenant Thomas Mant, 1764-1772, is available in the papers of Colonel Bradstreet (MG 40, K 2).

After returning to Britain, Mante published a Treatise on the Use of Defensive Arms, translated from the French of Joly de Maizeray, with Remarks (London, 1771), which he dedicated to his former colonel, Lord Eglinton. In the following year, his History of the late War in North-America, and the islands of the West-Indies, including the campaigns of MDCCLXIII and MDCCLXIV against His Majesty's Indian enemies (London, 1772) was published. This work, a handsome quarto praised by the American historians Sparks and Bancroft, is available in the Archives Library (R+E 199 M29).

In 1773, Mante took service with the French government and, with one brief interval, continued in that service in various capacities for about eight years. During that period he also acted as a secret agent for the British government. In addition, he continued his writing and published his *Traité des prairies artificielles, des enclos, et de l'education des moutons de race angloise* (Paris, 1778) and *A Collection of Interesting Events* [Paris, 1779]. In 1779, he was imprisoned for four months on charges of conducting an illicit correspondence with the British government and remitting money to Holland with the intention of following it. As a result of that experience and a deterioration of health in consequence of having been cut for the stone twice in five months, he returned to England in the early part of 1781.

For some time after his return, Mante endeavoured fruitlessly to obtain compensation for his services from the British government and lived on the somewhat grudging charity of a brother and the benevolence of such senior military officers as the Duke of Richmond and Sir Guy

Carleton, to which latter, in 1781, he dedicated his *System of Tactics*, the second of his translations from the French of Joly de Maizeray. In 1781 also, Thomas Hookham of Hookham's Circulating Library, published Mante's romantic novel *Lucinda*, followed by his *Siege of Aubigny* in the following year.

It is possible that Mante died in 1785 or early in 1786, since his name no longer appears among the half-pay lieutenants of the 77th Regiment in the British Army List for 1786. The last two volumes of his *Naval and Military History of the Wars of England*, including those of Scotland and Ireland (London, 1795?-1807) are described as "completed by an impartial hand", which presumably indicates that he died before its completion.

Thomas Mante is believed to have been married, but no particulars of his wife or of any children are known.

Acquired in 1957.

Finding Aid 1750 provides further information on Mante in an expanded inventory description, together with an indexed descriptive list of the papers in chronological order.

Correspondence, notes, accounts, etc., n.d., 1774-1781, some of which are in French. Many of the papers are drafts and rough notes, often without dates or the names and addresses of the correspondents. Even the original incoming letters are also not infrequently unsigned.

The papers include Mante's draft of a lengthy defence, 1774, of his service to the French government, which includes extracts of letters and information on money received and disbursed; promissory notes, receipts, bills and other financial papers; notes on Mante's imprisonment in France; pleas to the Prime Minister, Lord North, and the Secretary of the Treasury, John Robinson, for compensation for Mante's military and secret agent services, which he often rehearsed in detail; begging letters; an advertisement and subscription list, in French, for *A Collection of Interesting Events*, a two volume work by Mante (ca. 1779); correspondence with the publisher, Thomas Hookham, 1781, apparently about writing done for him; social correspondence with ladies; and other miscellanea, such as an undated advertisement for a quack doctor, who had learned much from his "long and painful residence amongst the savages of North-America".

July 19897-4594
J.P. Birkett
Pre-Confederation

ACR 1957/58

Thomas MANTE (ca. 1733 - ca. 1785)

(MG 23, K 8)

Chronologically arranged list of MS material relating to the services of Thomas Mante in North America during the Seven Years War, and subsequently as a Secret Agent of the British Government in France, 1773-1781. Acquired in 1957 from Edward Hall, Surbiton, Surrey, England.

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			<u>Pages</u>
	n.d.	Advertisement for a quack healer, described as a "disciple of nature" who had learned much from his "long and painful residence amongst the savages of North-America". Offers relief from such disorders as agues, fevers, hysterics, stomach pains, stranguary, apoplexy, palsy, gout, rheumatism, all chronical and cutaneous complaints, sterility, female troubles, etc. 3 pp. folio. Print.	1-3
10 juillet	?	Facture d'un coiffeur. 1 p.	4
	n.d.	Mémemorandum au sujet du revenue national de la France. 1 p.	5
	[1774]	"Réponse de Mr. Mante à la Lettre que lui à adressée, le 10 mars, Le Colonel Grant, laquelle est déposée aux Bureaux de la Guerre et des affaires Etrangères". Un rapport détaillé de Thomas Mante de ses services au gouvernement français. Il y fait rapport de l'argent reçu et deboursé et il y inclus des extraits de lettres. Endossé : "Reply to M. Grant's letter of 10 March 1774 which he pretended to have sent to me." Brouillon. 35 pp. folio.	6-40
	[ca. 1776]	Note, signée Du Pont, accusant réception de "votre ouvrage avec M. Turgot" (1727-1781), contrôleur général des finances, 1774-1776 1 p.	41
	1776	Compte de Mr. de Mante avec M. Mirey. 2 p.	42-43

Paris 10 septembre	1776	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 2,520 livres tournois à M. Gandon, le 26 décembre 1776. Reçu le 13 novembre 1776 2 pp.	44-45
Dieppe 19 octobre	1776	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 2,400 livres tournois à M. Saillant, fils, le 31 décembre 1776. Reçu le 10 janvier 1777. 2 pp.	46-47
Dieppe 22 Octobre	1776	Thomas Mante to Lord North. Letter entrusted to the Duke of Richmond requesting remuneration for his services. States that he had given Robinson certificates from the generals under whom he served, showing that he served the whole war "with reputation" to himself and that during the last campaign in America against the Indians he had served in the capacity of Major of Brigade, at the request of General Bradstreet, without remuneration. That he has served in France for the past 3 years, sending North intelligence via the ambassador's packets, at Robinson's request. That in North's name Robinson had promised him ample remuneration, which he fixes at £400 p.a. in a pension or civil employment in England with £1,000 in arrears for his past 3 years' service. If North will not give him his just pay he may be forced to stay in France, where he has been given a solid recompense, and abandon the country of his birth. Draft, 4 pp.	48-51
Polet, Dieppe 29 novembre	1776	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 300 livres tournois à M. Duchesne dans un mois. Reçu par Duchesne, sans date. 2 pp.	52-53
Dieppe 21 décembre	1776	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 2,900 livres tournois à M. Saillant, fils, le 25 décembre 1776. Reçu le 4 janvier 1777. 2 pp.	54-55
Dieppe 21 décembre	1776	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 1,200 livres à M. Le Brun, à vue. Reçu le 27 décembre 1776. 2 pp	56-57

Polet, Dieppe 29 mars	[1777]	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 660 livres à M. Grandmaison. Reçu environ le 2 juin 1777. 3 pp	58-60
Dieppe 2 avril	1777	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 600 livres à M. Vincent, le 1 juin. Reçu le 6 mai 1777. 2 pp.	61-62
Dieppe 14 avril	1777	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 3,386 livres tournois à M. Boullard, le 1 juin 1777. Reçu le 22 mai 1777. 2 pp.	63-64
Dieppe 14 avril	1777	Billet à ordre enjoignant le Sieur de Mante de payer 4,000 livres tournois à M. Boullard, le 1 juin. Reçu le 22 mai 1777. 2 pp.	65-66
Dieppe 2 juillet	1777	Demande du Sieur de Mante à M. Grandmaison de payer 120 livres à M. Le Brun, le 12 juillet 1777. Reçu, août 1777. 2 pp.	67-68
April-Sept.	1777	Account of money advanced by Thomas Mante on behalf of the Establishment. Mainly in English. Draft and fair copy. 5 pp.	69-73
[London]	[1778]	Note from Mrs. Mante to Lord North. After two fruitless applications to Mr. Robinson, she supposes him to be out of town and requests an audience with North so that she may communicate the intelligence she has received in letters from Paris. Draft. 2 pp.	75-75
[London] 6 June	1778	Note from [John] Robinson [(1727-1802), Secretary of the Treasury] to Mrs. Mante, arranging for her to visit him. With her note stating that she had visited him that day and given him the notes from her pocket book, which he wrote down in order to give them to Lord North. 3 pp.	76-78
[London] 21 July	[1778]	Note from Mr. Robinson to Mrs. Mante, at Mr. Dove's, Chancery Office, arranging for her to visit him next Thursday at 9.00 a.m. 2 pp.	79-80

[Paris]	1779	Thomas Mante's power of attorney for the receipt of his pay, in London, while he is resident in France. Draft. 1 p. folio.	81
Paris 6 juillet	1779	Lettre de [Jobelin Léger] à M. Bailleux, procureur au Chatelet, rue du Mouton, à Paris. Procès de Monsieur de Mantes avec Tronnet [ou Trouvet], traiteur. Avec remarque : "C'est ne pas vrai. M. de M. ne les ont jamais refusé car M. T. ne les ai jamais demandé." 4 pp.	82-85
	[1779]	Mémoire au sujet des deux emprisonnements de M. de Mante. 1 p.	86
	[1779]	"Proposé par Souscription. Un recueil d'événements intéressants, en Anglais. Par Thomas Mante, Ecuyer." Avec liste des 30 souscripteurs incluant "M. Turgot, ministre d'état; M. de Frances, ancien ministre plénipotentiaire; M. Franklin, ministre plénipotentiaire des états unies de l'amérique; M. le Duc de la Rochefaucalt; M. Burke; M. Walpole; et son excellence M. Le Comte d'Arranda, Ambassadeur de S.M.C." 2 pp.	87-88
	[1779]	Facture d'un relieur. 2 pp.	89-90
Lewes 1 Jan.	1780	Letter to M. de Mante, Paris, from an anonymous lady away from home on a visit [? Mante's mistress ?], congratulating him on his recovered liberty and health after his operation, and trying to put an end to their relationship. She asks for clarification about the title of a book that he has told her to subscribe for : A Collection of Interesting Events. 4 pp.	91-94

14 March	1780	Letter to M. De Mante, Paris, from an anonymous [lady, ? his wife ?] regarding arrangements for the payment of his debts to Mr. Walker. She will not tell Walker that Mante has sent her some certificates. She has no money. There is none in London nor in Israel. Good wishes for his recovery. Expects a change in the ministry as a result of the vote on Burke's bill to abolish the Board of Trade. Urges Mante to come and avail himself of the beneficial change. 2 pp.	95-96
[Paris] 15 mars	1780	Bastriés, fournisseur des volières et ménagerie du Roy, à Monsieur de Mante, à Paris ou Dieppe. Lui demandant d'obtenir du Duc de Richmond précision sur la livraison de sa commande d'oeufs de faysans et de perdrix. 3 pp.	97-99
Paris 4 juillet	1780	Reçu de M. Grandmaison à M. de Mante pour 120 livres. 1 p.	100
22 July	1780	Letter to M. de Mante in Paris, from his anonymous lady friend. Had received a copy of his letter of 8 June from M.M. [Mante's wife or mother ?] before receiving his of 4 July. Wishes him a perfect recovery of health. Asks for his assurance that he will never try to see her again. Mentions Mante's disbelief in an after life. 3 pp.	101-103
	1780	Proposed inscription for a monument erected "By order of the Congress" to commemorate Brigadier-General Richard Montgomery (1736-1775), who died in the assault on Quebec. Copy. 3 pp.	104-106

- [1781] [Thomas Mante to John Robinson]. Having just arrived in England on Sunday, he wishes to speak with Lord North to explain his conduct in France. Criticizes the way in which the British Consul at Ostend had treated 140 British sailors captured by a Dunkirk privateer, who had applied to him for assistance in returning to England. Draft. 2 pp. 107-108
- London
1 March 1781 Sir Robert Herries (1730-1815), merchant and banker, to Thomas Mante, Castle, Salt Hill, near Windsor. Remitting the balance of Mante's account, £20.14.0, and enclosing a letter forwarded by Messrs. William Herries and G. Keith of Ostend. (No enclosure) 2 pp. 109-110

London	[1781]	<p>[Thomas Mante to John Robinson]. Has had no answer to either of his letters. Recalls to Robinson's memory the circumstances under which Mante had returned to France at his order. Mentions his services to the French: taking a survey of the fleet at Plymouth; serving between three and four years in the department of finances; and employment, since the Spanish war, by M. Le Comte d'Arranda, the Spanish ambassador. Discusses the financial problems of his French employment (including his attempt at raising English sheep on 400 acres of the King's domain assigned to him as part of his pension) and his arrest by a lettre de cachet for carrying on an illicit correspondence with the English ministry and for having remitted money to Holland with the intention of following it. Mentions his four months' imprisonment and the loss of his health following two operations in five months for the stone. Mentions also his pleas sent to Lord North by Lord Mansfield and the Duke of Richmond, and the jesuitical fashion in which North had disclaimed having sent him to France and any obligation to remunerate him. Also recalls his unremunerated military service in America against the Indians. Asks for satisfaction.</p> <p>Draft. 4 pp. folio</p>	111-114
[London] 2 April	1781	<p>Thomas Mante to Lord North. Rehearses the story of his unremunerated service in America and in France, his imprisonment, his ill health, his destitution, his ostracism by his family and society because of his reputed treachery to his country. Asks for relief. Copy of a letter personally delivered to North in the lobby of the House of Commons.</p> <p>4 pp.</p>	115-118
[London] 6 April	1781	<p>With :</p> <p>Thomas Mante to Lord North. Has had no answer to the above letter and is in urgent need of money.</p> <p>Copy. 1 p.</p>	118

[London] 6 April	1781	Thomas Mante to Lord North. Has had no answer to the letter of 2 April that he had personally delivered to North in the lobby of the House of Commons, and is in urgent need. Draft. Duplicate of the copy above. 1 p. With :	119
[London] 6 April	1781	Thomas Mante to Mr. Robinson. Plea for relief of his poverty. He desires to retire to Wales to support his wretched life by industry and frugality. Draft on a partially used sheet of paper bearing the manuscript title page of a book written by Mante : A Collection of Interesting events, & c. - The Assassination of the Duke of Orleans. No. 1. 3 pp.	120-122
[London] 9 April	1781	Thomas Mante to General Sir Guy Carleton (1724-1808). Informs Carleton of his destitution and begs his help. Encloses copies of his letters of 6 April to Mr. Robinson and Lord North (see pages 119-122 above), to which he has had no reply. Inveighs against Robinson. Draft on a partially used sheet of paper bearing the manuscript title of a book written by Mante : A Collection of Interesting events. 3 pp.	123-125
30 April	1781	Thomas Mante to Lord North. Begs for financial relief. Draft. 3 p.	126-128
11 May	[1781]	Letter to Thomas Mante, Imperial Hotel, Suffolk Street, Charing Cross, London, from his anonymous lady friend. As a woman turned 30, she would be an absolute idiot to credit his talk of his health's depending on her. She wishes his recovery but will not see him again. Her concern for the happiness of [? Mante's wife or mother, from whom] she hopes soon to have better news of his health. 3 pp.	129-131
21 May - 13 June	[1781]	Itemized bill for "Bord and Lodgin" at the Hotel on Suffolk Street 4 pp. folio	132-135

- [St. Albans] [1781] Thomas Mante to ? Asking for the renewal of his protection. Says that he does not deserve his dreadful situation. He has been unswervingly faithful to his country, for which he has risked his life. Mr. Robinson has not answered his letters nor allowed him to give him information about a peace plan projected by Vergennes and the Spanish Ambassador, the Comte d'Arranda. He gives particulars of the terms which were to have been sent to Madrid for approval and then put forward with the mediation of the Empress of Russia. Encloses a copy of his letter to Robinson [perhaps the one on pages 111-114 above], to which he asks his correspondent to give his support. He is now sufficiently recovered to go to London if necessary. Copy. 4 pp. 136-139
- [St. Albans] [1781] Thomas Mante to ? Encloses a statement of his case, which the Duke of Richmond has advised him against publishing. He is unable to pay for his board and lodging and begs assistance. He has some publications ready for the press [perhaps his System of Tactics, and his novels Lucinda and Siege of Aubigny, which were published in 1781 and 1782] and hopes that he may perhaps eventually be able to repay his benefactor. His health has improved and he hopes to be able to support himself by offering his services as a manager for a gentleman's estate, since he has had experience on three estates. (No enclosure.) Draft. 2 pp. 140-141
- [St. Albans] [1781] Thomas Mante to [? his brother ?]. Regrets not having been able to meet with him. Has moved to St. A[lbans] and his health is somewhat better, though recovery will be a miracle. Necker's dismissal gives him hope that his French affairs may improve, but he has not much hope of justice from the English government. The Duke of Richmond's intervention on his behalf has been counter-productive, and Richmond has advised him against publishing his grievances. He is following this advice at present but making matters known is the only way of rehabilitating his reputation. Draft. 2 pp. 142-143

- [St. Albans]
17 July 1781
- Thomas Mante to his brother, [the Reverend Dr. Richard Mant, Southampton]. Wishes to stand well with him. Finds the conduct of Joseph, [? his brother Joseph Bingham Mant (baptized 10 Feb. 1737/8) ?], extraordinary. In spite of Joseph's puerile threats, he would have paid his "duty at H[avant] if it would have been acceptable," but for "reasons of a very peculiar nature." Desires a meeting, but cannot risk going anywhere near the sea. The purpose of the meeting is to show his brother the real state of his affairs and secure him the payment of the money he has advanced to Mante. It is not to ask for more money, though he is in need. Since his return to England he has been living on the benevolence of his friends and the money with which his correspondent has assisted him. Has received £20 each from the Duke of Richmond, Sir Guy Carleton, and Lord E[glinton - Archibald Montgomerie (1726-1796), 11th Earl of Eglinton, who in 1762 commanded the 77th Foot in which Mante served in America, and to whom Mante had dedicated his Treatise on the Use of Defensive Arms, in 1770], in addition to about another £20 made up by three or four others. He would not be in this distress but for his illness. He owes his health to the money that his correspondent has been so good as to send him. He is now destitute and owes £25 at two places, which he must pay before he can get his possessions. Wishes to give his correspondent preference in the final distribution of his claims and possessions. 144-147
Incomplete draft. 4 pp.
- [London]
[17 July 1781]
- [Thomas] Hookham, [Bookbinder, stationer, and owner of Hookham's Circulating Library] to T. Mabley [alias Thomas Mante], St. Albans Post Office. Encloses something that came by post for Mabley yesterday. Has not seen Mabley's friend Mr. Walker. Is short of money and has also lost his case. Has spoken with his printer about the "little affair" [perhaps *Lucinda*, published in 1781, or the *Siege of Aubigny*, published in 1782] Mabley had sent him and shall have it done out of hand. Asks what he is to give Mabley for it. Parliament is expected to be up next Thursday, when Lord North would have more time to settle old accounts. (No enclosure.) 2 pp. 148-149

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|----------------------|-------|---|---------|
| Marlbro.
29 July | 1781 | Letter to Thomas Mante [living under an alias at St. Albans] from a lady. Comments on Mante's attitude towards country living. Admires his book on Lucinda and comments on the plot and characters. Mentions other books she has recently read. If she thought that Mante could dress himself tolerably smart, she would send him a ticket for the ball and engage him to dance with her. Wonders if she has offended her Berkhamstead cousin.
4 pp. | 150-153 |
| [London]
[31 July | 1781] | [T.] H. [Thomas Hookham] to Thomas Mabley [alias Thomas Mante], St. Albans Post Office. Hopes Mabley has received "the little Parcle or Book (enclosing what you desired) by yesterday's Coach". Hopes the enclosed double letter will contain what Mabley has reason to expect. (No enclosure.)
3 pp. | 154-156 |
| [London]
[8 Aug. | 1781] | [Thomas] Hookham to Thomas Mabley [alias Thomas Mante], St. Albans Post Office. Has been very busy without the assistance of Mrs. Hookham who has been at Margate for 10 days. When she returns, he will be leaving for Ostend, Holland, and Mastricks [Maastricht], Leige [Liège]. He will want all the short stuff he can get. Is sorry that he has not been able to send Mabley any money. Thanks Mabley for his present which was eaten with pleasure at a family meal last Sunday. Mentions the death of Mabley's mother.
3 pp. | 157-159 |
| [London]
[13 Aug. | 1781] | [T.] H. [Thomas Hookham] to Thomas Mabley [alias Thomas Mante], St. Albans Post Office. Is very distressed financially. Obscure references to confidential matters.
2 pp. | 160-161 |
| [London]
[16 Aug. | 1781] | [T.] H. [Thomas Hookham] to Thomas Mabley [alias Thomas Mante], St. Albans Post Office. Is very sorry that he could not do for Mabley what he most sincerely wished, but has sent him by coach, as Mabley desired, one guinea, directed as before in a book. Will be leaving [for Margate] on Saturday.
2 pp. | 162-163 |

[Southampton]

[21 Aug.

1781]

[Thomas Mante's brother, the Reverend Dr. Richard Mant], the father of seven children, to Thomas Mabley [alias Thomas Mante], St. Albans Post Office. Replies to Mabley's letter of 3 [August 1781]. He has sent him all the money that he can. It should, together with what Mabley has received from others, have been enough to maintain him very handsomely since his arrival in England. He finds that yielding to one request merely leads to another. Repeats that he does not choose to part with any more money. Unsigned
2 pp.

164-165

Thomas MANTE (ca. 1733 - ca. 1785)

(MG 23, K 8)

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