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The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl Of Orford

In Five Volumes

Walpole, Horace

London, 1798

A Card to Lady Blandford

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A CARD TO LADY BLANDFORD.

WHERE silver Thame from Twitnam's emerald-meads
To Teddington his winding current leads;
Where at an obelisk three highways meet,
There stands an ancient ivy-mantled seat,
Yet still less ancient than its ancient lord
(If Raftor true and Catherine Clive record).
With storied windows is the mansion dight,
That half enrich and half exclude the light:
Shields, fabres, spears of Saxons, Goths and Gauls,
Trophies of better days, adorn the walls;
With many a portrait sav'd from time and flames,
Of sages, warriors, and their beauteous dames;
Fair dames, who govern'd those who govern'd all.
Within this castle's antiquated hall,
On Monday next, when Phœbus sinks beneath
The western boundary of Hounslow-heath,
Will meet five matrons of unspotted fame,
Of gentle blood, and lovers of the game
Of cribbage. First, of hapless Monmouth's race,
Jane, aunt and daughter of Buccleugh his grace;
Next, Margaret, Northampton's high-born daughter:
Three victims then to hymeneal slaughter,
By prose-men widows hight: of these, the first,
In Ireland wedded, though in England nurst,
To Strafford's noble blood asserts her claim,
And drew from royal Anne her christian name.
The fourth, twice clad in Hymen's saffron gown,
Whom men once Farmor call'd, and now call Browne.

The

The last, not least, but of the castle niece,
 And pleas'd her uncle and his guests to please,
 Would feel her joys in number six complete,
 If lady Blandford would these ladies meet'.

Strawberry-hill,
 Aug. 15, 1778.

* This was written for the diversion of Maria Catherina de Jonghe, widow of the marquis of Blandford, only son of Henrietta duchess of Marlborough. The marchioness was then 84. The other ladies were, lady Jane Scott, lady Margaret Compton, lady Anne Conolly, eldest daughter of Thomas Wentworth earl of Straford and widow of William Conolly, esq. Hester Edwards, widow of George Cholmondeley viscount Malpas, eldest son of George earl of Cholmondeley, by Mary daughter of sir Robert Walpole; and Frances Sheldon, first married to Mr. Farmor and afterwards to sir George Browne. Mrs. Clive and Mr. Raftor, comedians, lived in a house belonging to Mr. Walpole, near Strawberry-hill, and came thither the year after him, and were witnesses to his buildings in the Gothic style there. H. W.