5 Spaces of Sociability in Fashionable Society: Brighton and Nice, *c.*1825–35

Elaine Chalus

At the beginning of January 1830, Brighton was filling rapidly, as the migratory British social elite came to roost for the winter Season. The townhouses were freshly painted and refurbished, primped for entertainment; the ‘Queen’ of Brighton, Mrs Fitzherbert, was in residence accompanied by her pretty unmarried nieces, Loo and Coo Smythe;[[1]](#endnote-1) Brighton’s current musical darling, Madame Sala, was beginning her winter concerts;[[2]](#endnote-2) and competition for tickets to the exclusive Brighton balls—the ‘Almacks’ of Brighton, held in the Assembly rooms in the Old Ship Inn—was quickening. Despite the winter weather, the streets were gay with carriagesand the stylish promenades and shops thronged with chattering members of fashionable society making and renewing acquaintances. Uniformed officers, Continental diplomats and a smattering of young European aristocrats on tour added an extra dash of colour and cosmopolitanism to the scene.

For Elizabeth (Betsey) Lady Fremantle, it was a comfortably familiar scene.[[3]](#endnote-3) This was the fifth winter that she and her two unmarried daughters, twenty-nine-year-old Emma and nineteen-year-old Cecilia (Cicey), were spending in Brighton. As a worldly-wise widow of fifty-one with a lifetime’s experience of fashionable society in Britain and on the Continent, Lady Fremantle found Brighton suited her. It provided her with tasteful lodgings, desirable amenities and easy access to elite society—all within a conveniently walkable distance and for substantially less expense than in London. Her journals for *c.*1825–35 feature winters in Brighton and Nice, two important coastal resort towns which, although at different stages of urban development, attracted a similarly stylish clientèle. A study of her experiences during this period reveals that the construction of a cohesive social group in an urban framework was a transactional process that depended not so much upon place as space (that is, upon places used for purpose).[[4]](#endnote-4) Her journals suggest that the creation of fashionable society required the cooperative effort of individuals with shared social skills, behaviours and beliefs—people from different regions, or even countries, but with a shared social vocabulary based on similar class-based socialisation—who used the physical provision of the town to establish and replicate spaces of sociability that served both individual and collective needs.[[5]](#endnote-5)

These spaces played a vital role in establishing personal identities and fulfilling personal desires (for enjoyment, intimacy, connexion, ambition and belonging, to name only a few), as well as in engendering group cohesion and constructing social identities. Some, such as the homosocial spaces studied by Amanda Herbert for late seventeenth-century Bath, provided women with the opportunity to develop mutually beneficial female networks; others, such as the domestic spaces discussed by Benjamin Heller, or the extramural social arenas of London explored by Hannah Greig, were heterosocial and multipurpose.[[6]](#endnote-6) While Lady Fremantle’s journals suggest that her home served as her primary, and usually her most intimate and important space of sociability, other fashionable spaces of sociability included—with varying degrees of intimacy—the dining rooms, drawing rooms and ball rooms of friends and acquaintances, outdoor and/or public locations such as shops, promenades, pleasure gardens and sporting grounds, and commercialized venues such as theatres, libraries and assembly rooms.

With their emphasis on conversation, interaction and performance, these spaces of urban sociability privileged elite women who were by upbringing and education trained (and often skilled) social facilitators. In London, this period was marked by the formidable Lady Patronesses of Almack’s and by such outstanding socio-political hostesses as Lady Londonderry. But these women were exceptional. The construction and maintenance of fashionable society in the period, and its ability to adapt with relative ease to new locations, arguably owed more to the deep investment in sociability—and by extension the creation and maintenance of spaces of sociability—made by women like Lady Fremantle and her daughters. These wives, widows, mothers and daughters were the women of Hume’s ‘conversible World’, those ‘Women of Sense and Education’ whose very conversation was meant to civilize the men around them.[[7]](#endnote-7) They were also, as Leonore Davidoff argued in *The Best Circles*, elite society’s most exacting social arbiters and gatekeepers.[[8]](#endnote-8) They played a crucial role in the London and Paris Seasons, but their skills were arguably even more important in leisure-rich resort towns like Brighton and Nice, where elite society had to be quickly and annually reconstituted, and where the nature of the town prioritized the social arena.

As a widow who headed a female household in a resort town, Lady Fremantle was not unusual. The Fremantles’ antecedents and connexions gave them a fillip of cosmopolitan glamour and social prestige that exceeded their actual rank, however. Lady Fremantle’s unusual Continental upbringing, as part of a shared household with aristocratic *émigrés* from the French court, and her years as a naval wife (ending in Italy as the wife of the Commander in Chief of the Mediterranean), had given her exceptionally diverse contacts among a wide international elite. Her social reach was extended yet further through her sociable brother-in-law Sir William, who was Treasurer of the Household and often based in Brighton, and through the political and naval friends of her eldest sons. As a family, the Fremantles were representative of that important second tier of elite society, the British service elite. They were financially comfortable, socially and culturally accomplished, and very well travelled. While they lacked the means and desire to become fashion-setters among the *beau monde*, they were active participants in elite society and contributed to its formulation. As Lady Fremantle’s journals confirm, they were also peculiarly well placed to observe it in operation.

**Brighton and Nice**

Winters in Brighton run as a refrain through Lady Fremantle’s journals for 1825–35. Nice, where she spent the winter of 1835–6, offers a useful comparison. Nice was not yet the ‘southern French Brighton’ of *la* *belle époque*, but the towns already had many similarities.[[9]](#endnote-9) Both were important and rapidly expanding coastal resort towns that catered to a seasonal elite; both contained elegant lodgings and stylish hotels; and both were developing via planned, well-serviced modern suburbs. Each catered to the genuinely ill, with popular doctors and faddish cures, and to the leisured well, with tempting shops and cultured entertainments. Moreover, each town had its Season, when Society was reconstituted by an ever-changing panoply of fashionable visitors.

By 1830 Brighton had long replaced Bath as Britain’s leading spa town and was rapidly approaching the zenith of its popularity. Between 1821 and 1831 its resident population soared from 24,429 to 40,634 and it accommodated thousands of extra Seasonal visitors.[[10]](#endnote-10) London was only five hours away and up to twenty-three coaches a day left Brighton for London and points in Sussex.[[11]](#endnote-11) As *Baxter’s Stranger in Brighton and Guide* proudly announced in 1826, Brighton was ‘the resort of fashion and the seat of royalty’.[[12]](#endnote-12) Visitors could choose from boarding houses, hotels and townhouses of ascending quality and price. The townhouses recently completed along Marine Parade, on Brunswick Square and Terrace, and in the new suburb of Kemp Town, were the grandest and most expensive. While Brighton’s commercialized sea bathing was the chief draw for invalids and valetudinarians, visitors’ guides also lauded the ‘saline quality’ of the sea air and claimed that it was ‘better adapted to valetudinary habits’ than elsewhere in the kingdom.[[13]](#endnote-13) Well-paved promenades offered opportunities for both exercise and display. The most popular were the Steyne in the centre of town, the Esplanade, which stretched nearly a quarter of a mile towards neighbouring Hove, and the fashionable Chain Pier, which extended c.350 yards into the sea. The town had five subscription libraries for those of a more sedentary nature (including one dedicated to solely to music), as well as a theatre and commercial rooms that were used for concerts, assemblies and balls. Ambitious (and often shortlived) commercial pleasure gardens existed on the edge of town, as did the cricket and archery grounds, and the race course. Hackney coaches, flies and sedan chairs abounded for those who did not want to, or could not, walk; and horses could be stabled or hired, as there were many popular rides and drives nearby.[[14]](#endnote-14)

While the court of William IV and Queen Adelaide may have been stultifyingly dull, the king’s enjoyment of Brighton ensured that it continued to attract the *beaux monde* throughout his reign (1830–7). It would only fall out of fashion from around mid-century, as Queen Victoria abandoned Brighton for the Isle of Wight and/or Scotland and the smart set increasingly decamped to the thermal spas of Germany, the fresh mountain air of Switzerland, or the winter sun of Nice.

In the 1830s, however, Nice was just entering a century of popularity that would see it become the foremost cosmopolitan winter capital of Europe.[[15]](#endnote-15) Although its most rapid expansion would take place after *Rattachement* (Nice’s re-appropriation by France in 1860) and the coming of the railroad in 1864, the town grew steadily in the first half of the century.[[16]](#endnote-16) Between 1822 and 1838 its population climbed from 25,831 to 33,811.[[17]](#endnote-17) Initially a stopping-off point for eighteenth-century Grand Tourists on their way to Italy, Nice became an increasingly popular winter destination for members of the British elite, especially those suffering from chest complaints.[[18]](#endnote-18) Between 1815 and 1829 the town hosted *c.*80–100 British families annually (a visiting population of *c.*640–800 people) and, by 1835, the dominance of the British in Nice was such that all wealthy *étrangers* (as the winter visitors were called) were referred to as ‘*anglais*’, notwithstanding their actual nationality.[[19]](#endnote-19) The financial importance of the *étrangers* to Nice’s economic future was also apparent to the civic authorities and the Sardinian monarchy by the 1830s. The *Consiglio d’Ornato*, a council of local dignitariescharged with town planning, civic improvement and beautification had been officially established by the king in 1832.[[20]](#endnote-20) By the time of the Fremantles’ visit, the town, although far less developed than Brighton, was rapidly modernizing. Old Italianate Nice, with its narrow winding streets and painted houses clustered around the hill, was being superseded by ‘*la* *Nice new*’, ‘*La Nice Anglaise*’. The planned suburbs of Croix-de-Marbre and Carabacel on the west bank of the river Paillon featured wide, straight, flat streets and symmetrical houses, and catered specifically to fashionable tastes.[[21]](#endnote-21)

While Lady Fremantle was quick to note the developmental differences between Brighton and Nice when she arrived in Nice on 2 November 1835, the town already contained the key prerequisites for the performance of fashionable sociability. It may have been ‘a very quiet countrified place,’[[22]](#endnote-22) but it had well-appointed houses with rooms suited to both intimate and formal entertaining, and various attractive squares and promenades where status could be displayed, including the town’s famous elevated terraces and the increasingly popular *Chemin des Anglais* along the water’s edge. Theatre and opera were available during the Season; the best hotels offered rooms for assemblies, balls or concerts; and the Governor’s palazzo hosted grand, formal events. As in Brighton, any of these places could be turned into spaces of intimate sociability between friends but, on the whole, the more ‘public’ the location and heterogeneous the crowd, the more that sociability was used to claim status, underline group identity or proclaim social exclusivity.

**Fashionable Spaces**

Settling into a spa resort for a Season had its own routine. Lady Fremantle’s household was efficient, understated and respectable. Having moved into their rented townhouse and hired whatever servants were needed, Lady Fremantle and her daughters would quickly personalize their home and ready it for entertaining. In Brighton this meant adding their own accessories and linens, hiring or purchasing a few stylish extras and having their trusty grand piano, around which much of their entertaining centred, installed in one of the drawing rooms.[[23]](#endnote-23) They followed the same routine in Nice, including immediately hiring a piano for the Season. Years of experience showed in the speed with which they established themselves. Within thirty-six hours of moving in to Brighton for the first time in 1825, they were receiving morning visitors; within forty-eight hours, they made their entrance into Brighton society as a family group, by joining the parade of fashionable promeneurs on Marine Parade.[[24]](#endnote-24) This physical performance in one of Brighton’s most fashionable locations served multiple purposes: it announced their arrival in town to those who were outside their immediate circle of friends and family; it displayed the family together as an attractive and stylish unit (with daughters of marriageable age); and it made a tacit claim to class and group membership.

By 1829 their entrée into Brighton society was even quicker. Within minutes of arriving in town on the afternoon of 15 December 1829 they were receiving family visits and, later that same evening, they joined the most fashionable set in Brighton society by attending a party at the duchess of St Albans’s townhouse.[[25]](#endnote-25) While Lady Fremantle personally found the St Albanses ridiculous—the duke was exceptionally dull and inarticulate, and some twenty years younger than his bibulous ex-actress duchess—the duchess was immensely rich and their extravagant parties in London and Brighton were currently *de rigueur* with the smart set. Attending the duchess’s party therefore served the same purpose as a family promenade, but on a more exclusive scale; it marked the family’s arrival in town and underlined their membership of fashionable society. Pre-Season parties such as these operated in both Brighton and Nice. They offered guests the opportunity to reconnect with old friends and facilitated introductions among socially acceptable newcomers. These acquaintances could then be confirmed by exchanging visits, if desired, thus laying the basis for the rapid reconstitution of spa society. For unmarried young adults, such as the Fremantle daughters and their youngest brother Stephen, a naval officer who was then visiting his mother, they also offered an opportunity to display youth, beauty and polite accomplishments, including graceful deportment, elegant manners and skill on the dance floor.

While social exclusivity was intrinsic to fashionable elite entertainments, a series of events triggered by the Fremantles’ attendance at Lady George Seymour’s opening ball of the 1830 Brighton Season on 4 January is indicative both of the way that various spaces of sociability were interwoven and the close attention paid by contemporaries to public social recognition by society leaders. The Seymours moved in the highest court circles and Lady George’s guest list was carefully chosen. Lady Fremantle, who had chaperoned her youngest daughter, Cicey, remarked approvingly that the ball was ‘very Select & good’.[[26]](#endnote-26) Cicey was the beauty of the family, a vivacious and charming young woman, who was also an excellent dancer.[[27]](#endnote-27) At some point during the ball, the 6th Duke of Devonshire had approached the Fremantles and invited them to his grand ball on Thursday.[[28]](#endnote-28) He was a friend of Cicey’s older sister Augusta and her husband, Sir James FitzGerald, and Cicey had met him while staying with the FitzGeralds at Chatsworth in 1828. He was not only of impeccable social standing, a member of the court and the most eligible bachelor in England at the time, but he was also a very keen dancer who was noted for having introduced the Russian mazurka to England. The day after the Seymour’s ball, the duke met the Fremantles promenading on the Chain Pier and stopped to ask Cicey if she would join his set in dancing the mazurka at his ball. That evening, however, Lady Fremantle recorded somewhat acidly that Mrs Fitzherbert, whom she had met at a musical party at the duchess of Roxburgh’s, ‘says she did not know we were come but has not asked us to her Ball Friday’.[[29]](#endnote-29) As Mrs Fitzherbert was the ‘queen’ of Brighton at the time, this was understandably interpreted as a social slight, especially as the Fremantle daughters and Mrs Fitzherbert’s nieces had visited each other frequently in previous Seasons.[[30]](#endnote-30) This ‘omission’ was corrected immediately after the duke’s ball on Thursday night. Cicey’s high-profile inclusion in the duke’s very select group of dancers, as the partner of the Danish Count Danneskiold, not only confirmed the Fremantles’ fashionable standing in Society, but also would have made their absence from Mrs Fitzherbert’s guest list all too noticeable. Lady Fremantle noted the result with more than a *soupçon* of cynicism:

Mrs Fitzherbert came across the room to tell me She had sent me an invitation for to morrow; which I had never received & I firmly believe never was sent, but whether or not she was very civil & also Mrs Smythe & Loo —[[31]](#endnote-31)

Lady Fremantle preferred select soirées and balls where she could move comfortably among people who were of similar social standing, many of whom she knew personally. They allowed her to meet friends, exchange the latest news and gossip, cast judgment upon the looks, figures and social graces of others, note developing flirtations, and identify the latest trends in entertaining.[[32]](#endnote-32) By contrast she disliked both the formality of court etiquette and the vulgarity of large heterogeneous crowds. Consequently she avoided court events in London whenever possible and attended few events at the (Royal) Pavilion in Brighton. In Nice, although she was astonished by the ‘grande Toilette’, diamonds and orders on display at Governor de Candia’s New Year’s ball, she was not similarly put off, primarily because she had been socializing regularly with the de Candias since her arrival and they put on no airs. Madame de Candia, in particular, was ‘a good humour’d person’ who was neither stiff nor overly formal.[[33]](#endnote-33) Large subscription balls, such as Brighton’s Almacks or Nice’s Philharmonic balls, tended to attract a disparate and often less socially discriminating public. While it was fashionable to appear at them occasionally, they tended to be rather stiff affairs early in the Season, when few people knew each other, and they could attract a rather vulgar crowd.[[34]](#endnote-34) When Lady Fremantle was new to Brighton she attended the first Almack’s ball of the 1826 Season:

We went to the Ball before ten oClock, & tho’ it was well attended there being about 280 persons, a band from London the rooms well lighted, still I thought it went off heavily, but people met for the first time & are not yet acquainted … we were home before two & the dancing quite over —[[35]](#endnote-35)

In subsequent years, she would miss the first balls of the Season and attend later ones with friends. Thus, in mid-January 1830 the Fremantles went as part of an evening party of seventeen, headed by Lady Selina Kerr; then two weeks later, they attended again, this time taking with them Emma’s friend, the Irish heiress Miss Gibbings: ‘some terrible figures & a miserable set of men ... & Mrs. Fitzherbert in her glory’.[[36]](#endnote-36) Having made their appearances, they then did not go again for the remainder of the Season.[[37]](#endnote-37) Lady Fremantle adopted a similar practice in Nice. She sent her son Charles to the first Philharmonic ball on 21 November. Perhaps as a result of his report, she chose to skip subsequent balls, but to attend the Philharmonic’s more exclusive musical concerts instead. It was not until the height of the Season in mid-February, by which time she was sure that she would have like-minded company, that she recorded attending a Philharmonic ball: ‘We found all the English & the best of Nice Society at the Ball, with some ridiculous figures—I sat by Mde. de Candia & the Cessoles & came away at 12 oClock with the Selwins.’[[38]](#endnote-38)

Some balls, however, were a social duty. As one of the patronesses of the charity ball held annually to raise money for the Brighton hospital, Lady Fremantle had to attend. In 1833, having disposed of her twenty tickets, she went with her daughters, one of her nieces and one of her daughters’ friends. She found the size of the ball and its lack of exclusivity unappealing. By 1835, even a contingent from the Pavilion could not make it enjoyable:

I disposed of twenty tickets for the Hospital Ball, & Chapron’d Freddy Bishop there, I went first to Ly. Ellenborough’s with both the Girls, but only Cicey came on to the Ball, which was the greatest crowd I ever saw at a Brighton Charity Ball, the heat insupportable & the whole thing very disagreeable. A large party came from the Pavilion with Ly. DeLisle & Ly. Augusta Erskine —[[39]](#endnote-39)

While the first Philharmonic ball in Nice took place in November, the Season started officially in the New Year. As a result, most pre-Season entertaining took place in private homes and lodgings. Visits and invitations to join riding parties, or attend teas, dinners or small balls therefore played an arguably even more important part in Nice than they did in Brighton in constructing the social networks from which the Season’s socializing would develop. Lady Fremantle met the Cessoles at her daughter’s; the governor and his wife at the Wyvills; Prince Salm Salm at the Selwyns[[40]](#endnote-40)—and so on. By the time that the Nice Season began in January, the Fremantles had been socializing in Nice almost daily for two months. It is a testimony to Lady Fremantle’s networking that she was able to hold a successful musical party for fifty in her lodgings on 28 December and, true to her established practice of holding balls early in the Season, a ball for ‘everybody I know’ on the 4th of January.[[41]](#endnote-41) Her preparations for the ball speak not only to the way that domestic space was adapted into social space, but also to the elite and cosmopolitan nature of fashionable society in Nice at the time:

The Salon was clear’d of all furniture, with a new *Toile* to cover the carpet & plenty of Lamps was made to look well, Charles’s bed room was converted into a drawing room & the next petit Salon belonging to the untenanted apartment was appropriated for refreshments with a long table &c &c this gave us five rooms en Suite which had a good effect & by taking away all the awkward doors, made more Space—Cicey and Charles dined at the Seymours but came in early & our rooms soon fill’d. The Governor and Mde. Candia, M. & Mde: de Roigt, The President, & Csse de Cessole, the young Cessoles, Castellanes, Duc de Cador, Prince Salm Salm, Sir Richard and Ly. Living, Hippisleys, Schorms [Schoms?], Fortescues, Wyvills, Halls, Hedleys, Marquis Bassecourt & two sons, Ly. Elizth. Feilding & Co: in short every body I knew, & tho’ about 25 people were prevented coming we had quite enough, the music was good & dancing kept up till 2 —’[[42]](#endnote-42)

**Elite Sociability in Domestic Settings**

The ease with which Lady Fremantle and her daughters slipped into society in Brighton and Nice, and quickly formed their own international social networks, reflects their characters and social experience; it also speaks to the persistence of shared practices of elite sociability in urban settings. Of these, many centred around the home, which was arguably the most important space of female sociability. For single women of independent means and prosperous widows with their own establishments, the home was also their most important locus of personal power, not just because these women commanded their own households and servants, but also because they controlled the use of space.[[43]](#endnote-43) Their homes provided them with the ability to make statements of status, establish claims to culture and taste, and to be their own arbiters of intimacy. In resort towns like Brighton and Nice, where the need to recreate society annually heightened contemporaries’ self-interested awareness of incomers’ social and financial status, the choice of a house or lodging, its location and deployment, were particularly important. They testifed to a woman’s social status and acted as a physical stage and backdrop to female action, while also accommodating the contradictory reality of a fashionable woman’s life—ostensibly domestic but unceasingly social. The home’s value as a space lay in its ability to be endlessly repurposed; it could be private or public, informal or formal, frivolous or serious, homosocial or heterosocial, depending upon personal preference, time of day, the nature of the company and/or the need of the moment.

Location, practicality and suitability for entertaining all mattered. As her primary site of sociability, as well as her home, Lady Fremantle chose houses that were fashionably located, economical, tasteful and suitably arranged. They had to have a good dining room (or rooms) and, especially, double drawing rooms on the first floor. The latter could be used individually for morning or evening visits, or as separate withdrawing rooms after dinners but, most importantly, they could be combined into one large room by opening or removing the folding doors to create space for concerts, soirées and small balls. Yet better was a house where the drawing rooms could become part of an interlinked suite of rooms (with the removal of doors and some imaginative reorganization of furniture, as in Nice), thus allowing for grander balls and buffet suppers, or entertainments with separate cardrooms.

Finding such a house in the right location for the right price could take time and persistent negotiating. It could also involve taking an interim let until the appropriate house came available. This was the case when Lady Fremantle, her three daughters, their rapscallion dog Jet, and several servants arrived in Brighton for the first time in November 1825. She had had her old cook, who lived in Brighton, hire them a small, cosy house, ‘every thing very snug & comfortable’, that would do until she found the townhouse she wanted.[[44]](#endnote-44) She had made a point of arriving in Brighton early, as her widowed younger sister Eugenia (Mrs Robert Campbell) would be joining her for the winter. Given that Eugenia was also bringing her children, their tutor and some servants, Lady Fremantle needed a townhouse that could sleep at least seventeen. After four solid days of househunting, she rented 76 Grand Parade for three months at only 6 guineas per week. It was ‘a great bargain.’[[45]](#endnote-45) It was also an excellent house for someone who was introducing herself to Brighton society: ‘in a very good Situation, looking into the Pavilion Gardens’. It was also ideally suited for entertaining, including the desired conjoined drawing rooms.[[46]](#endnote-46)

Five years later, Lady Fremantle was a seasoned Brighton veteran: she knew the town and its housing well, and knew exactly what she wanted to rent and where she wanted to live. Having learned while still in London that No. 8 Old Steyne was available, she rented it immediately. It was reasonably priced—5 guineas a week for the months of January and February, the height of the Brighton Season, and then 4 guineas a week thereafter.[[47]](#endnote-47) It was roomy, neat and tasteful, and met her criteria for location, sociability and comfort. Although not in the newest or the most expensive part of Brighton, it was centrally located, easy for her visitors to find and on a stylish street only a few minutes’ walk from the Steyne, the Marine Parade, the Esplanade and the Chain Pier.[[48]](#endnote-48) As she enjoyed walking and never kept a carriage in Brighton, being within easy walking distance of friends and the key promenades mattered. Being inland, sheltered from the winter winds, was also important, as she believed they made her ill. Much as she admired the elegant new homes on Marine Parade and Brunswick Terrace, she was convinced that they were too exposed. Their chimneys also smoked ‘dreadfully’ during the winter storms.[[49]](#endnote-49) No. 8 promised her a warm, healthy, smoke-free, sociable winter: ‘Just what I expected & will be very comfortable’.[[50]](#endnote-50)

She applied the same criteria when it came to choosing a house in cosmopolitan Nice. When the FitzGeralds and the Fremantles (Lady Fremantle, Emma, Cicey and Charles) arrived in Nice on 2 November 1835, the town was only just starting to fill. The local elite were filtering back from their country houses and the bulk of the *étrangers* had not yet arrived. The Fremantles consequently lost no time; they checked in to Nice’s leading inn, the *Hôtel des Etrangers* on the edge of the Old Town, and promptly went househunting.[[51]](#endnote-51) Sir James, who loved to entertain, rented Maison Castellane, a grand and expensive villa owned by one of the region’s noted aristocratic families. In accordance with the medical advice he had been given, he chose a house that was set well back from the sea and sheltered from the wind and sea air. Lady Fremantle preferred something more central and economical.[[52]](#endnote-52) Within three days of arriving, she had settled comfortably into the stylish English suburb of Croix-de-Marbre. Her house, as was the case with the most desirable lodgings in Nice, was oriented to benefit from both the sun and the sea breeze. It had rooms suitable for intimate and larger entertainments, and gardens running down towards the sea. It was also close to two important amenities, the church of St Pierre, enabling her to attend services even in the worst weather, and the English Pension, which could provide catering for entertainments at a reasonable price.[[53]](#endnote-53) Nice’s shops and favoured promenades—the famous elevated Terraces in the centre of the Old Town overlooking the Corso (the modern *Cours Saleya*) and the *Chemin des Anglais* (the precursor to the *Promenade des Anglais*)—were within easy walking distance.[[54]](#endnote-54)

As in Brighton, the Fremantles quickly prepared for company. This duly appeared on the morning of their third day with a visit from the English Consul, Pierre Lacroix, and Nice’s leading banker, Etienne Carlone. Cards and the first visits from English acquaintances already in residence followed promptly.[[55]](#endnote-55) As newcomers to Nice, the onus for initial visits rested with the Fremantles and FitzGeralds; consequently, Lady Fremantle and Augusta spent the morning of their fourth day in Nice (6 November) making calls. As the Fremantles’ primary purpose in going to Nice was to support Augusta, who was within a few weeks of her confinement, and to amuse Sir James in the evenings, as the night air in Nice was considered too dangerous for invalids and he chafed at inactivity, Lady Fremantle did not immediately begin to entertain in her own right.[[56]](#endnote-56) Sir James, however, was determined to socialize and some or all of the Fremantles spent their evenings with the FitzGeralds during the first few weeks in Nice. Thus, it was Sir James and Augusta, not the Fremantles, who held the first dinner for an astutely chosen guest list less than a week after their arrival in town. They invited their landlord, Jules de Castellan, and the young marquis de Béthézy (a fourth cousin to the king of Sardinia) to dine *en famille* with the combined families. According to contemporary practice, they issued a second set of invitations for the evening. These went to their landlord’s parents, the marquis and marquise de Castellan, his sister the comtesse de Cessole, and the Carlone family. Their guests therefore represented the Sardinian and Provençal nobilities (Béthézy and the Castellans), Nice’s cultural and service elite (the Cessoles), and the town’s leading bankers (the Carlones). Choosing to entertain the local elite before the resident English—whether consciously or unconsciously—was an astute piece of flattery. It was also a tacit statement of the FitzGeralds’ and Fremantles’ facility with languages and their ease in cosmopolitan European society.[[57]](#endnote-57) The evening ended with a display of fashionable female accomplishments, much as it would have done in Brighton: the Carlone daughters sang for the gathered company, probably to the accompaniment of a rented piano.[[58]](#endnote-58) Two days later, after Augusta completed the last of her formal visits with a call on madame de Candia, the Governor’s wife (something that Lady Fremantle characteristically put off doing for another four days), the FitzGeralds, supported this time by Charles and Cicey Fremantle, invited to dinner the first of the resident English families—the Selwyns and Wyvills—and LaCroix, the English consul. Lady Fremantle and Emma joined them later for the evening, as did the marquis de Béthézy, the Castellans, the Carlones and the Miss Wyvills. This international guest list proved a success—‘quite a party in the Eveng’—and culminated in ‘a little music & dancing’.[[59]](#endnote-59) This sort of impromptu ‘dance on the carpet’, where the music was provided by a complaisant pianist like Lady Fremantle, who was willing to play by the hour, had long been fashionable in Brighton. It was a mark of comfortably informal sociability and usually took place before the Season started in earnest (that is, before the carpets were taken up for the grand, formal balls).[[60]](#endnote-60)

These first joint visits and dinners in Nice led swiftly on to more individualized socializing, as Sir James soon acquired a small group of male friends with whom he could play chess or whist in the evenings. This freed Lady Fremantle to create her own social networks and settle into the routine of the town. As in Brighton, she used her socializing to take stock of the people she met. Some were quickly dismissed and would never become more than social acquaintances: the Feildings, for instance, were ‘*exclusives*’ and Lady Fremantle, who had no time at all for capricious affectation, soon decided that Lady Elizabeth Feilding, who had more than a little of the diva about her, was ‘rather whimsical & *fine*’. The Carlones, on the other hand, while good people, were ‘very *vulgar*’;[[61]](#endnote-61) similarly, the Wyvills were judged good company, but some of the people they had at their first ball were a ‘Sett of English not at all what I should wish to know.’[[62]](#endnote-62) Others became friends. These included Mrs Selwyn—‘an amiable little Woman but has very bad health’—and the dowager Lady Clinton and her husband, Sir Horace Seymour. As Lady Fremantle and this last couple shared naval and court connexions in England, and Lady Clinton was the first woman to leave a card on the Fremantles’ arrival in Nice, they may well have known each other prior to Nice. They became frequent companions on riding parties and met often at dinners and soirées. Sir Horace’s ten-year-old daughter from his first marriage, ‘Yaddy’, often accompanied them as well. As Lady Fremantle and her daughters frequently entertained friends’ sons who were going to boarding schools in or near Brighton, having Yaddy over for an afternoon’s visit on her own was not at all unusual. It was part of the practice of informal socialisation common to elite children at the time. Yaddy, however, proved a handful and stretched even Lady Fremantle’s patience. She was, Lady Fremantle remarked later in her diary, ‘so wild & troublesome that [madame de] Petit [who had also come to call] said “quel Diable que cet Enfant” ’.[[63]](#endnote-63)

It was the Cessoles, however, who would become Lady Fremantle’s closest—and lifelong—friends. The two families were well suited and the social spaces in which they met facilitated the formation of their friendship. Both families were recently ennobled members of their country’s service elites and both featured women trained in aristocratic sociability. Both were also profoundly musical. Félicie, comtesse de Cessole, was the same age as Cicey Fremantle yet, despite the age gap, she would become one of only a handful of female friends ever referred to in Lady Fremantle’s journals by her first name. She was lively, intelligent and gracious; aristocratic without being haughty; and the mother of several pretty, well-behaved children. Moreover, like Lady Fremantle and her daughters, she was finely attuned to social nuances and had a dry appreciation of the ridiculous. As the great-great-granddaughter of madame de Sevigné and the daughter of one of the outstanding aristocratic French hostesses of the previous generation, she had learned her social skills at her mother’s knee.[[64]](#endnote-64) Her husband’s family, the Cessoles, were among Nice’s foremost civic leaders: in 1835 her father-in-law, after years of service to the town, had been appointed the first president of Nice’s Senate. In addition to his legal and bureaucratic skills, he was also an author and accomplished amateur musician. He patronized noted contemporary composers and was one of the founders of Nice’s famous Cercle Philharmonique (established 1806).[[65]](#endnote-65) The comtesse’s husband Eugène was similarly a member of the Senate, a councillor on the Court of Appeal and an outstanding violinist in his own right.[[66]](#endnote-66) According to Florence Fossat, the Cessoles were the leading cultural family in Nice at the time: ‘*d’une famille légitement surnommée “protectice des Arts et de la Musique”* ’.[[67]](#endnote-67) The connection between the women developed through mutual visits, shared conversations at teas, assemblies and balls, and joint activities. The comte also clearly enjoyed the Fremantle women’s company, but it was their musical prowess that proved irresistible and quickly transformed his courtesy calls into a lasting musical friendship. Within a month of their arrival in Nice, he had become a regular visitor, bringing his violin with him and stretching the time for ‘morning’ visits to its utmost limits by practicing pieces with them until as late as 2 p.m.[[68]](#endnote-68)

In both Brighton and Nice, visits and encounters in domestic homes lay the groundwork for (or discouraged) closer friendships. Homes became primary nodes of contact in a spiderweb of connexions where women, as hostesses, even when they were not also the heads of households, were most frequently the key connectors. The Fremantles’ homes in both Brighton and in Nice were vibrant heterosexual, largely multi-generational, social spaces. Women of all ages could be found chatting, playing cards or music with British or Continental guests. Country neighbours, passing naval officers and diplomats, and a smattering of dashing young officers and aristocratic adventurers (for instance, Count Danniskiold and Prince Pückler-Muskau), were frequent visitors in Brighton. As neither Emma nor Cicey were wealthy enough to attract fortune-hunters and Lady Fremantle appears to have been remarkably unconcerned about their marrying, the Fremantles’ chief attraction was their relaxed and cheerful sociability, joined to outstanding musical ability and a willingness to take part in charades and tableaux. Thus, the two young Ashley brothers, both of whom had ‘magnificant voices, & extraordinary talent’, found their first morning visit to the Fremantles in Brighton in 1829 lasted ‘till after three trying music’. They were back the next afternoon for tea and to join four other excellent amateurs singers (two female and two male) to sing Italian opera.[[69]](#endnote-69) Within a week, they were regulars. Similarly, when Lady Fremantle’s niece’s husband, George Butler Danvers (later 5th Lord Lanesborough), wrote a play and wanted to have it performed at the height of the Brighton Season of 1829, it was to the Fremantles he turned for assistance. They hosted a week’s worth of rehearsals for his cast of elite amateurs. Cicey and Emma agreed to act and sing, and Lady Fremantle transformed her ‘Second drawing room’ into a theatre: ‘having removed the folding doors & put up a green Curtain, it all looked extremely well.’[[70]](#endnote-70) Similarly, as charades and tableaux became increasingly fashionable from the early 1830s, the Fremantles took part themselves and helped others prepare for their parts. Thus, in Brighton in 1835, they helped costume Mr Cadogan, who needed to be made up as a Turk for charades at the Grevilles’ party, and, the following year in Nice, Emma, Cicey, Charles and Augusta joined other members of the English and Niçois elite to put on an elaborate series of tableaux. For Lady Fremantle, who had not encountered tableaux before, the event was interesting in itself; for historians, it is revealing of the shared cultural knowledge of a cosmopolitan European elite. The tableaux featured detailed scenes from classical history, Western art, Shakespeare and contemporary literature (including the Minna and Brenda scene from Sir Walter Scott’s 1821 novel, *The Pirate*). In order for the tableaux to be successful, the scenes had to be readily recognisable—and they were:

We went at 8, & found all Nice, *Sir James* & Augusta, this was his first attempt at going out for nearly two years. The Tableaux Succeeded extremely well the only fault being too much light giving it more stage effect, than the light & Shade of a picture. The first was Cornelia, Miss Clare, with her Children, Yaddy & Henry Selwin, & Mrs. Hall as the Roman Lady of Campania displaying her Jewels—the Second was much prettier Major Hall, & Charles as Bandittis & Cicey the Banditti’s Wife ... next came Margaret of Anjou ... we had afterwards the Scene of Esmerelda taken from Notre Dame de Paris of Victor Hugo—Emma being the mother of fleur (sic) de Lys, setting up her Tapestry work, Mrs. Hall beautifully dress’d as Fleur de Lys, young Seymour as Phoebus, to whom she is betrothed, Mde. de Cessole & Yaddy the other Ladies—& Cicey as the dancing Girl Esmeralda (*sic*), who is introduced with her Goat ... The next picture was a great failure, Minna & Brenda the former was intended for Mrs.Ponsonby [who had had to withdraw at last moment because of a death in the family], & the latter Miss Feilding, who gave up the part owing to her mother’s usual Caprice, & Miss Clare, who did it was not fair enough nor Miss Forescue dark for Minna to contrast with her. Charles was the old Father, & Sir Horace Nonna—he is too Gigantic for any part in a tableau—the Dutch picture follow’d & was much applauded as the best representation, the final was Romeo & Juliet ... upon the whole is was (*sic*) well done & Succeeded perfectly—it was over at 12 & we all came home, the moment it was at an end.[[71]](#endnote-71)

**Conclusion**

Sociability was central to the creation of fashionable elite society at the beginning of the nineteenth century and this chapter has suggested, through a study of Lady Fremantle’s journals in Brighton and Nice, *c.*1825–35, that women played a central part in creating and using spaces of sociability to construct cohesive social groups in urban settings. While this chapter has focused upon these two leading resort towns at different stages of their development, in part because society in these sorts of towns depended upon an accelerated annual reconstruction of sociability, the conclusions it draws about the operation of sociability in the street (loosely defined), in civic, commercial or national institutions, and in the private home is broadly applicable to studies of elite sociability at the time in London, Paris, Florence, or the English provinces.

Spaces of sociability mattered. They were crucial to the creation and maintenance not only of the fashionable coteries which operated in what was a subtly as well as overtly stratified society in England, but they were also vitally important to the reconstruction and survival of European elite society after the end of the Napoleonic Wars. They were created by the cooperative effort of individuals who shared social skills, a social vocabulary and similar class-based values. Elite women, because of their socialisation and their roles as leading social arbiters consequently played a crucial part in creating and maintaining the spaces of sociability through which elite society operated. The physical provision of the town provided them with the basic materials they needed. While all of these spaces of sociability were interlinked, control and use of the home was at the heart of women’s social power. This was especially true for those women like Lady Fremantle who were of independent means and controlled their own households.

1. Richard Buckle, *The prettiest girl in England: the love story of Mrs. Fitzherbert’s niece* (London: John Murray, 1958). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Henrietta Florentina Caterina Sala (née Simon) was the daughter of a free woman of colour and the official translator of Demerara. She debuted at the opera in Covent Garden in 1827 after the death of her husband left her with little money and five children to support. She performed frequently in Brighton and would, in 1831, sing with Paganini at his two concerts there. Cassandra Pybus, ‘Tense and tender ties: reflections on lives recovered from the intimate frontier of empire and slavery’, in Paul Longley Arthur (ed.), *International life writing: memory and identity in global context* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 12; Peter Blake, *George Augustus Sala and the nineteenth-century periodical press* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 22, fn. 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Special thanks to Betsy and Iain Duncan Smith, the late Lord and Lady Cottesloe and the Fremantle Trust for permission to consult Elizabeth Wynne Fremantle’s diaries. Extracts from the early diaries were published as Anne Fremantle (ed.), *The Wynne diaries*, 3 vols. (London, 1935–40). All references here are given by date to the original manuscripts now in the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and catalogued at D-FR/D. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Michel de Certeau, *The practice of everyday life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 117. I am here following Certeau’s notion of space as ‘a practiced place’, created by a convergence of factors at a given point in time, but do not necessarily follow to his conclusion that the relationship between space and place is reducable to an active/passive binary. It is perhaps more fruitful to consider Lloyd Kermode’s idea of ‘accretion’. Kermode understands the relationship between place and space to be accumulative: ‘one *becomes* the other one, not so much in the sense of transforming as it is in the sense of accreting, producing either interesting contradictory layers of meaning or complementary stratifications over time.’ Doreen Massey also thinks of the relationship between place and space as one of ‘becoming’; for her, the ‘spatial’ is ‘the interlocking of “stretched-out” social relations’; however, she abstracts the notion of place, separating it from that of location. For her, place is a node, a point at which specific ‘open and porous networks of social relations’ interact at a certain location, an interpretation that is echoed in Hannah Greig’s work on the eighteenth-century *beaux monde*. Lloyd Edward Kermode, ‘Experiencing the space and place of early modern theater’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 43:1 (2013), 7; Doreen Massey, *Space, place and gender* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998), 22, 121; Hannah Greig, *The beaux monde* (Oxford: OUP, 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Shirley Ardener universalized this concisely as ‘*people define space*’ in Shirley Ardener, ‘Ground rules and social maps for women: an introduction’, in Shirley Ardener (ed.), *Women and space: ground Rules and social maps*, Rev. edn (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 3. For a psychologist’s view on sociability, see Michael Argyle, *Cooperation (psychology revivals): the basis of sociability* (Hove: Routledge, 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Amanda E. Herbert, ‘Gender and the spa: space, sociability and self at British health spas, 1640–1714’, *Journal of Social History*, 43, 2 (2009), 361–83; Benjamin Heller, ‘Leisure and the use of domestic space in Georgian London’, *The Historical Journal*, 53, no. 3 (2010), 623–45; Greig, *Beaux Monde*. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. David Hume, ‘Of essay writing’, in *Essays moral and political*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1742), ii, 1, 5. Amanda Dickins has emphasized Hume’s coy tone in these passages and suggested that his imagined role for women was both gendered and constrained, having been modelled upon the gendered self-effacement of French *salonnières*, Amanda Dickins, ‘An “Intercourse of Sentiments” and the seductions of virtue: the role of conversation in David Hume’s philosophy’, in Katie Halsey and Jane Slinn (eds), *The concept and practice of conversation in the long eighteenth century, 1688–1848* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), 32; [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Leonore Davidoff, *The best circles: society etiquette and the season* (London: Croom Helm, 1973). [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Horace Rumbold, *Recollections of a diplomatist*, 2 vols (London: Edward Arnold, 1902), i, 70. Rumbold first visited Nice as an ambitious young diplomat in 1847–8. He recalled the town as dull and lacking amenities, but commented favourably upon ‘the pleasant foreign *coterie*’ of English, Russians, Germans, Sardinians and French that gathered in the town for the winter, ibid., 70–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. John Ackerson Erredge, *Brighthelmstone, Sussex: the ancient and modern history of Brighton ,* 249. See also Brighton History: Population: <http://www.brightonhistory.org.uk/numbers/population_totals.html> [accessed 17/11/18]. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. John Bruce, *The history of Brighton, with the latest improvements, to 1835*,4th edn (Brighton: John Bruce, 1935), 99. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. J. Baxter, *Baxter’s stranger in Brighton and guide* (Lewes: Sussex Press, 1826), vi. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Richard Sickelmore, *History of Brighton and its environs* (1827), 22, 18–19. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Visitors’ guides also included details of the local churches. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Contemporary publications abound that sing the praises of Nice and its rise to international popularity in the nineteenth century. See, for instance, Émile Negrin, *Les promenades de Nice* (*c.*1867); Marie de Solms [Madame Ratazzi], *Nice ancienne et moderne* (Florence, 1854); Robert de Souza, *Nice: capitale d’hiver* (Paris, 1913). The noted historian of the Midi, Marc Boyer, pinpoints Lord Brougham’s ‘discovery’ of Cannes 1834 as the beginning of the Midi’s romantic ‘*grand siècle d’hiver*’; however, Nice’s renaissance was already well under way by then: [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. The population grew by nearly 90 per cent between 1815 and 1858: Alain Ruggiero, *La population du comté de Nice de 1693 à 1939* (Paris: Editions Serre, 2002), 73. For more detail on the development of Nice in the first half of the nineteenth century, see Chalus, ‘*Cette fusion annuelle*’. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Ruggiero, *La population du comté de Nice*, 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Tobias Smollett, *Travels through France and Italy*, 2 vols (London: R. Baldwin, 1766). [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Roger Isnard, ‘Les Anglais à Nice’, *Nice Historique*, no. 145 (1985), 110: <http://www.nicehistorique.org/vwr/?nav=Index&document=2170> [accessed 17/11/18]. The British gradually lost ground to other national groups (namely the French and Russians) in the mid-nineteenth-century, but they retained their overall numeric superiority in Nice until 1870, when they were finally outnumbered by the French: Dominic Escribe, ‘Les Anglais à Nice au XIXe siècle’, *Recherches régionales: Alpes-Maritimes et contrées limitrophes 52e année*, no. 197 (Jan.–Mar. 2011), 29. By the winter of 1855–6, there were 743 families, representing 15 nationalities, wintering in Nice. They were, in descending order, English, French, German, Italian, Swiss, Polish/Russian, American, Spanish, Belgian, Dutch, Swedish and Norwegian, Danish and Moldavian; the English comprised 41 per cent of the total. Compiled from the four-part, ‘*Liste générale des étrangers séjournant à Nice pendant l’hiver 1855–56*’, published over two weeks in *L’Avenir de Nice* (14, 19, 21, 24–5 Dec. 1855). In 1858–9, on the eve of *Rattachement*, there were 803 families, 43 per cent of which were English: Robert Latouche, *Histoire de Nice: des origines à 1860*, 3 vols (Published by the city of Nice, 1951), i, 145–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Michel Steve, ‘L’Architecture à Nice entre 1850 et 1860’, *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 74 (2007), 74. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Alexandre Dumas, *Impressions de voyage: une année à Florence* (Paris: MichelLévy Frères, 1889), 83–4. This suburb was frequently referred to by contemporaries as ‘New Borough’, ‘*Petite Londres*’, or ‘*la Cité Anglaise*’: Dominique Escribe, ‘Nice au temps des frères Gautier, 1825–1910’, *Nice Historique*, no. 106 (1994), 67. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Elizabeth Wynne Fremantle (1778–1857) [hereafter EWF], Journal, Nice, 2 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. In 1825, the piano was shipped to Brighton from Swanbourne, arriving on Christmas Eve: EWF, Journal, Brighton, 24 Dec. 1825. In subsequent years, she frequently stored it for the summer at her brother-in-law’s house in Brunswick Terrace. In 1827, she had the piano installed within five days of arriving in Brighton, even though she was in interim housing and intended to move again: EWF, Journal, Brighton, 19 Nov. 1827. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 25 Nov. 1825. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 15 Dec. 1829. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. EWF, Journal, 4 Jan. 1830. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Peter James Bowman, *The fortune hunter: a German prince in Regency England* (Oxford: Signal, 2010), location 1459 (Kindle). According to Bowman, Prince Pückler-Muskau thought Cicey Fremantle was the prettiest girl in Brighton when he met her in 1827–8. Given the frequency of his visits to the Fremantles during his stay in Brighton, he certainly enjoyed their company. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. EWF, Journal, 4 Jan. 1830. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. EWF, Journal, 5 Jan. 1830. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. The underlying reason for this apparent slight may well have been because Louisa Smythe had turned down a marriage proposal in summer 1828 from Sir Frederick Hervey Bathurst (Sir William Fremantle’s step-son), possibly at the instigation of Mrs Fitzherbert, who at the time disapproved of the young man. Moreover, both Mrs Fitzherberts and the Smythes were actively courting the Tankervilles in the 1830 Brighton Season, as their heir, Lord Ossulton, was dangling after Louisa. Not inviting the Fremantles to the ball may consequently have been a calculated social snub, as their presence could have been taken as a sign of a revived Fremantle/Bathhurst connection and, at the very least, it would have reminded the Brighton gossips of Louisa’s previous relationship. Ironically, when the Tankervilles’ disapproval later that winter of Louisa’s mother put paid to Mrs Fitzherbert’s schemes and Louisa’s hopes of marriage, the Fremantles’ presence at Mrs Fitzherbert’s ball might have proved fortuitous and facilitated the re-establishment of connections with Sir William Fremantle and his wife. By the 1831 Season, both Mrs Fitzherbert and Louisa had changed their minds about Sir Frederick. The relationship was speedily revived and the couple married that autumn. For extracts of the Smythe girls’ journals and correspondence for this period, see Buckle, ed., *Prettiest girl in England*; Kathryn Wilson, ‘Travel narratives of the Victorian elite: the case of the London season’, in Tijana Rakic and Jacqueline Tivers (eds), *Narratives of travel and tourism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 18–19. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. EWF, Journal, 7 Jan. 1830. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Suppers were fashionable at balls in the 1826 Season. By early January, Lady Fremantle had concluded she would need to give one at her ball: ‘I find that we must inevitably give one too on Friy. to be like other people’: EWF, Journal, Brighton, 11 Jan. 1826. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. EWF, Journal, Nice, 1 Jan. 1836; 3 Dec. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Access to these balls was, as in London, in the gift of a set of elite patronesses who acted as social arbiters; in practice, in Brighton by the 1830s, they were ruled over by Mrs Fitzherbert. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 1 Oct. 1826. The Lady Patronesses that year were Lady Queensberry, Mrs St John, Lady Floyd, Mrs Herbert and Mrs Fitzherbert. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 13, 27 Jan. 1830. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 11 Dec. 1833. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. EWF, Journal, Nice, 21 Nov. 1835; 13 Feb. 1836. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. EWF. Journal, Brighton, 14 Jan. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Lady Fremantle spells ‘Selwyn’/’Selwin’ inconsistently throughout her journal. I have chosen to use ‘Selwyn’, but have left her use of ‘Selwin’ if it appears in quotations. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. EWF, Journal, Nice, 28 Dec. 1835; 4 Jan. 1836. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. EWF, Journal, Nice, 4 Jan. 1836. Her guest list speaks to the cosmopolitan nature of fashionable society in Nice at the time [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. For an interesting counterpoint that serves to emphasize the importance of female economic independence, see Amanda Vickery’s study of the interiors and objects of middling/genteel spinsters and widows in *Behind closed doors: at home in Georgian England* (Yale, 2009), ch. 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 18 Nov. 1825. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 23 Nov. 1825. She took it again on 23 Nov. 1826 for the 1826–7 Season, persuading Mr Cooper to rent it to her for 6 guineas/week for the first 9 weeks and then at 4½ guineas/week thereafter. Over the summer, it had been ‘new painted & papered & is very nice & clean’. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 22 Nov. 1825. She rents the house again the following autumn. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. EWF. Journal, Brighton, 10 Dec. 1829. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Anon., *Brighton and its environs*, 10th edn (Brighton: C. and R Sicklemore, 1830), 17–18, 44–5, 52, 58. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 19 Dec. 1827. The stormy autumn of 1825 had convinced her that the houses along Marine Parade were too exposed to the wind. A visit to Lady Minto at Albion House on the seafront on a stormy day the following autumn only reinforced this: ‘it really is so exposed that I was blown away getting in & out of the carriage, tho’ in the Gd. Parade I was not at all aware of its being a Stormy Night & I am now quite determined not to go on the Cliff’: ibid., 25 Nov. 1825; 16 Oct. 1826. In 1831, however, with the Court settled in Brighton until February and no centrally located houses to her taste, Lady Fremantle rented 2 Bloomsbury Place, a south- and sea-facing house: the double drawing rooms and dining rooms clinched the deal. Ibid., 17 Nov. 1831. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 15 Dec. 1829. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Mariana Starke, *Travels in Europe*, 8th edn (London: John Murray, 1833), 114. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. William Farr, *A medical guide to Nice* (London: Ibotson and Palmer, 1841), 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. As was the case with most seasoned British travellers, she had brought very few servants with her, preferring instead to complete her household with a local housemaid, manservant and female cook. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. EWF, Journal, Nice, 4, 29 Nov. 1835; Lady Fremantle clearly liked the neighbourhood, as she chose a house nearby when she returned to Nice twenty years later. For promenades, see *Guide des étrangers à Nice* (Nice: Société Typographique, 1827), 89–90, 115;Louis Roubadi, *Nice et ses environs* (Paris, 1843), 23, 39. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. EWF, Journal, Nice, 6 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Farr, *Medical guide to Nice*, 19. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. Lady Fremantle’s first language appears to have been French; she also spoke Italian and some German. Her daughters were used to speaking French at home and had also lived in Italy between 1815 and 1819. Charles was perhaps the least fluent of the group, but languages mattered to naval officers and, as a young midshipman, he had been kept at home for several months after recovering from a fever specifically in order to learn more French from his mother. The FitzGeralds also had strong European ties. Augusta had met Sir James during her first Paris Season and his family either owned or leased a chateau in Chantilly, in addition to their Irish landholdings. His sister married into the Italian aristocracy. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. EWF, Journal, Nice, 8 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. EWF, Journal, Nice, 10 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. See, for instance, EWF, Journal, Brighton, 2 Feb. 1827, 15 Dec. 1831; Nice, 18 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. EWF, Journal, Nice, 12, 19 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. EWF, Journal, Nice, 17 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. EWF, Journal, Nice, 3 Jan. 1836. ‘Yaddy’, whose actual name was Adelaide Horatia Elizabeth, held on to her nickname even as an adult. She would later become the 4th Countess Spencer, marrying Vice Admiral Frederick Spencer, 4th Earl Spencer, in 1851 as his second wife (thus becoming the great-great-grandmother of Diana, Princess of Wales). [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Marie Baptistine Félicie de Castellane Majastres (1809–93): <http://gw.geneanet.org/pierfit?lang=en&p=marie+baptistine+felicie&n=de+castellane+majastres> [accessed 20/03/2016]; Horace Rumbold, *Recollections of a diplomatist*, i, 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Florence Fossat, ‘Le comte Hilarion Spitalieri de Cessole (1776–1845), *Cahiers de la Mediterranée*, 55: 1 (1997), 131–42: DOI: 10.3406/camed.1997.1206 [accessed 20/03/2016]. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Eugène Spitaleri de Cessole (*c.*1805–76): <http://gw.geneanet.org/pierfit?lang=en&p=eugene&n=spitalieri+de+cessole> [accessed 20/03/2016]. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Fossat, ‘Le comte Hilarion Spitalieri de Cessole’, 138. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. For example, EWF, Journal, Nice, 21, 23, 26, 30 Nov. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 4, 3 Jan. 1829. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 26 Jan. 1829. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. EWF, Journal, Brighton, 30 Jan. 1835. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)