

“Only the Amblyrnychus’: Maria Graham’s Scientific Editing of *Voyage of HMS Blonde* (1826/27)

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Recent research has begun to reassess women’s role, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as translators of scientific texts (see: Martin). Less attention has been paid, however, to another ostensibly “background” task they sometimes performed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century science, that of editor. Like translation, editorial work has traditionally been seen as a minor, somewhat inconsequential aspect of the production of scientific knowledge. It was of course precisely this subordinate status which legitimised women’s work in these roles, providing a culturally acceptable route to a public, and possibly professional, participation in science and print culture in an era when both spheres were strongly marked as masculine domains. Yet, as scholars are increasingly recognising, this dismissive attitude does not always accurately reflect the scientific acumen of the women who undertook these tasks, and the agency they were frequently able (or required) to exercise. Translators like Émilie du Châtelet and Mary Somerville – whose renderings of Newton and Laplace incorporated extensive elucidation of the difficult subject matter – are arguably not only facilitators of wider intellectual debate but also participants in that debate, helping to produce as well as mediate knowledge. One can make a similar case for the agency involved in the skilful editing of scientific papers. However, women’s activities in this regard remain under-researched, with the result that we have only a hazy idea of how many undertook such work across the period.

To shed more light on women’s editing of scientific material, I focus here on the travel writer Maria Graham, who in 1826 was commissioned by the publisher John Murray to produce an account of a recent naval expedition to Hawaii, based on journals kept by various participants in the voyage. It should be stressed that the 1824-25 voyage of HMS *Blonde* – captained by Lord Byron, cousin of the recently deceased poet – was not an exploratory mission. Since their “discovery” by James Cook in 1778, the Sandwich Islands, as the Hawaiian archipelago was then known, had been visited by several European and US ships; the *Blonde*’s mission was primarily a diplomatic one, that of carrying home the bodies of King Kamehameha II and Queen Kamamalu after both had died during a visit to England. Murray was not therefore commissioning an exploration narrative, in which scientific observations were the principal focus. Yet, like most naval voyages in this period, the *Blonde* carried a small scientific team comprising a naturalist, botanist and surveyor; part of Graham’s remit as editor was to collate and disseminate some of the new data generated by these scientifically trained travellers. This article will consider how Graham negotiated the scientific dimensions of her commission, to produce a text incorporating a wide range of natural-historical observations in its main narrative, along with two more specialist appendices summarizing key findings from Hawaii.

The scientific aspects of the published *Voyage of HMS Blonde to the Sandwich Islands* (dated 1826 on its title page, but in fact published in 1827, see: Olson, “Contribution”) eventually embroiled the volume, and Graham herself, in considerable controversy. Although there were few complaints about the volume’s

science at the time of publication, in the late nineteenth century the eminent Cambridge ornithologist Alfred Newton alleged that the findings of the *Blonde*'s naturalist, Andrew Bloxam, were presented in a clumsy and confusing fashion, and it is still generally assumed in zoological circles that Bloxam was badly served by the editor of the *Blonde* narrative. This allegation usually goes hand-in-hand with the assumption that Graham as a woman had no scientific expertise herself and so was ill-equipped to handle the scientific material in her sources. However, this was emphatically not the case. Graham had a keen interest and at least a basic competence in several branches of science, and she was well-connected in the contemporary science community. These contacts were utilized during the compilation of the published volume, making the episode interesting today for the light it sheds on the networks and geographies of metropolitan science in 1820s Britain, and also the difficulties women might face accessing key sites and institutions. Yet, if the published narrative's science was undoubtedly underpinned by such consultation, Graham was not merely a cipher in this process, or a conduit passively relaying the comments of experts. This is the assumption made by some recent commentators on the *Blonde*'s voyage, notably Storrs Olson in a series of otherwise exemplary articles on the expedition's natural history. But, as this article will show, Graham should be credited with a far more active role. Organising interviews with experts so as to corroborate and extend the scientific observations contained in her source materials, Graham arguably had to generate much of the scientific content of the published volume; certainly it fell to her to integrate multiple sources and commentaries into a final published text. This, in turn, makes Graham culpable for some of the problems undoubtedly attendant on the volume's science. Yet, later complaints on this score have generally been made without knowledge of the source materials at Graham's disposal, and predicated on anachronistic assumptions about the generic and scientific norms Graham was working to. Another interesting aspect of the episode, accordingly, is the insight it offers into the construction and organisation of travel accounts in the early nineteenth century, a period when many travelogues still sought to combine literary and scientific agendas.

Murray, Graham and the *Blonde* Commission

As well as conveying home the dead and surviving members of the Hawaiian entourage, HMS *Blonde*'s diplomatic mission was to strengthen British ties with the Sandwich Islands, at a time when both Russia and the USA were seeking to extend their influence in the region. Kamehameha had travelled to London to negotiate the establishment of a British Protectorate over Hawaii; returning Kamehameha's body, Captain Byron met with a council of chiefs and conferred this status on the islands. As official publisher to the Admiralty, John Murray's intention in producing an account of the expedition was presumably to publicise this new relationship and project a benevolent image of Britain's role on the international stage. No doubt he was also mindful of the immense popularity of the “voyages and travels” genre in this period, as well as the commercial potential of anything associated with the Byron family – the poet Byron, of course, having been one of Murray's star authors.

Murray's original plan was for Richard Bloxam, the *Blonde*'s chaplain (and Andrew Bloxam's brother), to produce a narrative based principally on his journal. However, Bloxam soon abandoned the project, departing instead for a post overseas. Murray therefore turned to his friend Maria Graham, offering her £100 to produce a publishable text.¹ Aged 41 in 1826, Graham was a well-established presence on the London literary and intellectual scene. Nominated by the *Monthly Magazine* in 1821

as one of twenty-four contemporary “women of genius,” Graham had authored a range of publications, but she was best known at this date for four travelogues describing visits to India, Italy, Brazil and Chile. Graham’s last two travelogues were co-published by Murray, who also frequently used Graham as an expert reviewer of “voyages and travels” manuscripts. At the time she was preparing the *Blonde* account, for example, Graham was assessing Dixon Denham’s *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa* (subsequently published in 1826). If it was no doubt this general expertise in travel writing that led Murray to use Graham for the *Blonde* account, he probably also felt that the narrative would appeal to her because of its subject matter. All Graham’s travelogues have a strong ethnographic and historiographic aspect, reflecting the Scottish Enlightenment ideas Graham had absorbed during a formative period spent in Edinburgh in the early 1800s. In her Chile and Brazil books, Graham depicted two nations at a key transitional juncture, as they threw off their colonial status to become independent countries. The Sandwich Islands represented another society undergoing rapid political, economic and cultural transition. This was a development of which Graham broadly approved, and she clearly envisages in the published narrative a rosy future in which Hawaii would advance into modernity under the benign tutelage of Great Britain. At the same time, however, the *Blonde* volume paints a largely sympathetic and respectful portrait of both past and present Hawaiian culture, in contrast to many contemporary missionary accounts, where the local population was often portrayed as inclined to sensuality and violence (see: *An Examination*).

In selecting Graham as editor of the *Blonde* narrative, Murray must have felt she was equipped to handle the natural historical information brought back by the *Blonde*. In voyage narratives of this type, recounting major, state-sponsored expeditions, the inclusion of scientific observations was, of course, partly a matter of disseminating and advancing knowledge. Yet this science also served a rhetorical, even propagandist purpose by seemingly demonstrating an enlightened, benevolent attitude towards the wider world. It is therefore unlikely that Murray would have entrusted the narrative to someone who might mishandle this aspect of the voyage. But as he well knew, science was another strong interest of Graham’s. In Edinburgh she had mixed with figures like the geologist John Playfair and the chemist John Leslie; in the 1820s, she was closely associated with Mary Somerville and Jane Marcet, two women at the heart of London’s scientific community who were themselves accomplished writers on science (Gotch 78-80, 166; and, on Somerville and Marcet, Secord). For her own part, Graham’s scientific interests found expression in a variety of activities. She was, for example, a keen collector of minerals and insects throughout her travels. The accumulation of such collections was in this period an important part of serious scientific endeavour, and the entomological material Graham gathered was significant enough, and suitably preserved, to be added after her death to the British Museum’s collection.² Graham’s mineralogical pursuits, meanwhile, were part of a wider interest in geology which dates from her Edinburgh friendship with Playfair and which saw Graham become in 1824 the first woman to publish a report in the leading British journal in the field, the *Transactions of the Geological Society* (Graham, “An Account”).

Botany was another lifelong interest of Graham’s, and from at least the time of her first Latin American travels in 1821-23 she was a conscientious collector of plants and seeds, passing samples on to both commercial nurseries and her brother-in-law Robert Graham, Professor of Botany at Edinburgh University. During a further visit to Brazil in 1824, she sent plant specimens and drawings to William Hooker, then

Professor of Botany at Glasgow and subsequently Director of Kew Gardens; this material is still archived at Kew, and Hooker acknowledged her abilities as a plant collector on several occasions in print, as well as naming two species after her (see: Hagglund; and, for the ongoing scientific significance of Graham’s samples, Lammers). She also collected zoological specimens in Brazil; one visitor to her cottage outside Rio de Janeiro recorded seeing an extensive collection of “the skins of snakes and of other species of reptile” (Geyer 14, my translation), and it was presumably during this trip that Graham acquired the Brazilian toucan she subsequently donated to the British Museum (G.R. Gray 5).

Beyond these two last details, there is no other evidence of Graham collecting reptile or bird specimens, and it is therefore difficult to gauge her expertise in herpetology or ornithology. But with regard to Graham’s botanical, geological and entomological pursuits, there is ample evidence to indicate not only a lifelong enthusiasm but also a high level of intellectual engagement and scientific competence in these fields. In print, Graham is often self-deprecating about her scientific abilities. Yet such disclaimers were well-nigh a rhetorical convention in this period for women writing on scientific matters; with Graham, as with many other women at this date, they should not always be accepted at face value. As I have argued elsewhere (“Earthquakes and Petticoats”), Graham’s 1824 earthquake report was informed by a good grasp of recent theoretical debates in geology. The association with Hooker similarly testifies to Graham’s botanical literacy, as does another important friendship established in the mid-1820s, that of Robert Brown. One of the leading botanists of the day, Brown had inherited Sir Joseph Banks’s library and herbarium on the latter’s death. This archive might be visited by anyone pursuing botanical enquiries and Graham was one such visitor. A journal entry from 1825, for example, records Graham spending “all the day at Brown’s drawing,” learning “methods of distinguishing male & female plants of the *Rafflesia* i.e. different fluting of the great centre receptacle: larger fluting male,” and discussing with “Dr Wollaston” – the chemist William Wollaston – the presence of “salts not vegetable fibre in the vine stalk on which the *Rafflesia* grows.”³ The same entry records a discussion of “Brown’s proposal for 3 names” which Graham “think[s] good & wd save the troublesome divisions of genera.” This suggests that Graham was familiar with Brown’s advocacy of the so-called “natural system” of classification devised by French botanist Antoine Laurent de Jussieu, in preference to the more rigid Linnaean system (Kelley 36-37). Although she did not use the natural system herself, this demonstrates Graham’s exposure to current theoretical debates in contemporary botany. Significantly, Brown remained a lifelong friend; even after Graham became housebound in the 1830s they continued to discuss botanical matters and exchange plant and fossil specimens. Graham, then, may not have been a great scientific authority or innovator, but several leading figures evidently credited her with at least a basic scientific competence and valued her as a co-worker, however humble, in their fields. Graham in turn was able to draw on the expertise and resources available to her through these contacts when preparing the *Blonde* volume – although she also had to negotiate the reluctance of some key institutions to help her.

Researching the *Blonde*’s Science

Graham took on the role of editor in late April or early May 1826. Her primary source was a manuscript account partially worked up by Richard Bloxam from both his own and his brother’s journals. Judging by the portion which survives, this was a chaotically organized document, with erratic page numbering, journal entries out of

sequence, and many observations presented as what Bloxam terms “casual remarks” (n.p.) not yet integrated into the main narrative.⁴ Graham also had access to the journal and drawings of the ship’s artist Robert Dampier, and to the field notes and possibly the journal of the naturalist Andrew Bloxam. Whether Graham was given these extra materials from the outset of the project, or whether they were supplied later at her request, is unclear. But Graham was evidently dissatisfied with Richard Bloxam’s text. Feeling she needed more information, she wrote to Murray in May, “Make Bloxham [*sic*] call on me – Make him go to Mr Byrons – in short urge them to collect all the materials in one point”; in June she was still requesting, “Pray let me have all & everything of the Sandwiches – for till all is collected I do but work in the dark.”⁵ Neither Richard nor Andrew Bloxam ever visited her, but Graham was able to organise interviews with several of the *Blonde*’s junior officers, as well as soliciting further information from Lord Byron and the *Blonde*’s surveyor Charles Malden. Two important documents, however, were never made available; the journal and field notes of the expedition’s botanist James Macrae were deposited with the Horticultural Society, which was evidently not disposed to help the project.

Although not engaged in an exploratory mission, the *Blonde* had visited the Galapagos Islands and Mauke in the Cook Islands and it had discovered and named Malden, now one of the Line Islands. In Hawaii, some general researches were made by Andrew Bloxam and Macrae, the latter undertook an ascent of the extinct volcano Mauna Kea, and both men participated in expeditions to the still active Kilauea (known to the British as Mount Peli). All these scientific enquiries receive some coverage in Graham’s two principal sources, the journals of Richard Bloxam and Robert Dampier, with the former’s written-up text at these junctures often incorporating some of the more specialised observations found in his brother Andrew’s journal (a source which, as noted earlier, Graham may also have been able to access directly). Additional sources of scientific information were Andrew Bloxam’s field notes, of which Graham received one of several written-up versions, and also the various specimens and samples brought back by Bloxam, comprising a barrel of geological and mineralogical materials, and two cases containing insects, shells, “marine subjects” and “one hundred specimens of birds, a great number from Chili [*sic*], the rest from the Sandwich and other islands in the Pacific” (A. Bloxam 92-93). Macrae had similarly brought back a substantial collection of botanical specimens, but like his journal and field notes, these were deposited with the Horticultural Society and not made available to Graham.

With both written observations and physical specimens, Graham’s initial task was to identify and/or corroborate the data brought back by the *Blonde*. This required the cross-referencing of both observations and specimens with existing scholarship on the botany, zoology, geology and geography of the regions visited. Here many of the personal networks discussed above came into play, with Graham evidently going to some lengths to solicit the information she needed. The preface to the published volume, for example, thanks the “kindness and liberality of Mr Brown” for allowing access to “the books, printed and manuscript, in Sir Joseph Banks’s library” (vi). From later footnotes in the volume it seems the botanical sources consulted by Graham included Georg Forster’s *De Plantis Esculentis Insulorum Australis* (1786) and Daniel Solander’s account of the flora of the Pacific – the latter an unpublished, manuscript document only available at Brown’s.

With regard to geological and mineralogical observations, Graham could similarly draw on longstanding contacts in the contemporary scientific community. From surviving correspondence, we know that in mid-May, early in the editing

process, Graham arranged for Dampier’s drawings “to be considered [. . .] by at least one man of science whose opinions would be of use to a publication.”⁶ The identity of this advisor is not known, but his discussions with Graham probably centred on the depiction of the main crater of Kiluaea, this being the most scientifically interesting of Dampier’s images. Dissatisfied with Dampier’s prospect-view of the crater, Graham organised the drawing up of a plan, and insisted to Murray that this should be included as a more informative visual tool, a decision later applauded by one reviewer.⁷ Understanding the phenomena observed on Kiluaea also required reading in recent scholarly literature on volcanoes. Richard Bloxam recorded seeing “thin perfectly transparent volcanic glass – it is called the hair of the God – it is in threads” (n.p.); Andrew Bloxam’s journal describes the same material as resembling “thin transparent hairs like fine spun glass” (66). The published text seemingly merges these observations to produce “On many parts of the surface were scattered what the natives call Peli’s hair, and indeed it resembles hair or spun glass” (182). This is accompanied by a further explanatory gloss – “[it] is probably only the melted volcanic glass blown off by the wind while in a state of fusion” – and a footnote commenting that “a similar production is found on the volcano of Isle of Bourbon [modern-day Réunion in the Comoros].” The latter information was probably gleaned from Charles Daubeny’s newly published *Description of Active and Extinct Volcanoes* (1826), since Graham’s explanation of the cause of this phenomena echoes in its phrasing Daubeny’s discussion of similar volcanic activity on Réunion (Daubeny 273-74).

As well as explicating in this way the observations contained in her written sources, Graham also seems to have made her own inspection and assessment of some of the physical materials brought back by the *Blonde*. For example, the published *Blonde* narrative includes an account of Macrae’s expedition up the extinct Mauna Kea, in which neither Richard nor Andrew Bloxam participated although both report the ascent at second-hand. Graham’s rendering provides information not given in either Bloxam account; from the point-of-view frequently adopted in the narrative, she probably received this information from Lieutenant Talbot, one of the *Blonde*’s junior officers, who accompanied Macrae. The volume further specifies that “a few specimens [of lava] were brought away, and these present nothing essentially different from the porous lavas of Vesuvius; but their colour is generally blacker, though, in many instances, that of Mouna Keah [*sic*] is of a deep red” (173). None of Graham’s manuscript sources mention these specimens or make the comparison with the “porous lavas of Vesuvius”; the passage therefore probably alludes to samples brought back by Talbot which Graham then evaluated, either in discussion with her geological contacts or else by comparing them with her own mineralogical collection. (Graham, it should be noted, had visited Vesuvius in 1818).

Talbot is therefore also the likely source of a significant zoological specimen passed on to Graham. Before discussing this specimen, however, it should be noted that while Graham was never given access to the botanical specimens brought back by Macrae, she did endeavour to see for herself the various materials collected by Andrew Bloxam. A surviving letter to Charles König of the British Museum, sent a month into the editorial process on 9 June 1826, shows Graham requesting permission to see Bloxam’s specimens, which were now deposited at the British Museum (BM). According to the letter, John Children, Keeper of the BM’s Zoological Department, had previously called on Graham and taken from her Bloxam’s notes, promising in return that she could inspect the specimens. But, as Graham complains, when she duly visited the Museum on the appointed day “Mr Children had engaged himself

elsewhere & left me with Mr Grey [i.e. John Edward Gray, Assistant Keeper] who showed me only the Amblyrhynchus [marine iguana] & a few shells, telling me that the rest were locked up by Mr Children & I could not see them.”⁸ Graham therefore requests that she might visit the Museum again to see the rest of the material.

The letter thus shows Graham actively seeking to inspect Bloxam’s specimens, and indicates the effort required to achieve this. It further reveals that she managed to see many of the birds by visiting the establishment of John Leadbeater, a leading taxidermist of the day; evidently they were being mounted for display. However, Graham complains she has not seen the insects or minerals and so cannot tell “if these latter are different from what I have in my own little collection or that of the Missionary Society” – thereby giving evidence of her own entomological and mineralogical collecting, and her use of the Missionary Society’s collections. The letter also shows Graham supplying zoological specimens to the BM, since she informs König that “I sent to you by Mr Grey all the rest of the Wax insect - & I left with him for the Museum eight species of snake & two birds & afterwards sent another which you had not.” This cannot refer to material gathered during the *Blonde* voyage; rather, the snakes must be those seen in Graham’s cottage during her 1824-25 Brazil trip. This is also presumably how the Museum acquired the Brazilian toucan donated by Graham, along with two South American species of wax insect later described by John Gray in his volume *Specilegia Zoologica* (1828), where he acknowledges that they were “found by Mrs Graham” (7). However, one item in Graham’s possession definitely derived from the *Blonde*. Graham informs Children that she had “carried” to Leadbeater’s “a different species of Amblyrhynchus to compare it with that of the Museum”; from a footnote in the published *Blonde* narrative it seems she acquired this iguana specimen from “one of the lieutenants” (94) – possibly Fourth Lieutenant Talbot.

As she entreats König for access to Bloxam’s specimens, Graham’s letter exhibits some interesting shifts in tone. Initially, Graham cuts a humble, self-deprecating figure, declaring: “I do not pretend to any knowledge on these subjects & therefore I cannot interfere with anything any of the gentlemen of the Museum may wish to publish.” This disclaimer as to ignorance on natural-historical matters is belied later in the letter by the evidence of Graham’s own collection of entomological, mineralogical and zoological materials; however, the promise not to pre-empt publications by Museum staff may have some bearing on how information was subsequently presented in the published narrative. After this initial self-deprecation, however, Graham immediately tells König that “it would be disgraceful if the *Blonde*’s voyage would appear & any thing wrong or ignorant should be in it merely because the editor could not see what had been brought.” And she concludes:

Pray forgive this trouble. It proceeds from anxiety to have the very little it can be necessary for me to say on the subject of natural history correct. & when the French & even the Russians make such a parade of their science I should not like to see an English voyage reproachable with unnecessary ignorance.

Here the Museum staff are firmly reminded that national pride is at stake in the publication, with Graham’s comments conveying the larger geo-political context to the scientific observations contained in the published account, and their rhetorical value in this context.

It is unclear whether the BM eventually granted Graham access to the rest of Bloxam’s specimens. The preface to the published volume thanks the staff “for some facts” relevant to the volume’s “notices concerning natural history,” and suggests that Graham was allowed “to inspect the specimens of natural history deposited in the Museum” (v). Yet it is impossible to ascertain, from either internal or contextual evidence, whether this alludes to anything more than the conversation with John Gray mentioned in the letter to König. Of course, even a single meeting would probably have been immensely useful for Graham. For example, in the published account’s description of the marine iguanas of the Galapagos Islands, a footnote identifies the species as “*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*” and adds:

described by Bell from a specimen brought to Europe by Mr Bullock among his Mexican curiosities. Mr B. did not state the spot where it was found: probably on the Pacific shore. (92)

As with the explication of the phenomenon of “Peli’s hair,” in this note we again see Graham implicitly referencing a very recent scientific text, Thomas Bell’s 1825 *Zoological Journal* article “On a New Genus of Iguanidae,” in which the name *Amblyrhynchus cristatus* was first proposed for the marine iguana. Given the general scientific competence sketched above, it is quite feasible Graham found this article herself; however, if she did not already know of it, Gray would surely have mentioned it during their meeting. How far Gray’s assistance extended beyond such general discussions, however, is debatable. Storrs Olson, assuming that Graham had no scientific expertise of her own, suggests that all the natural historical information in the published *Blonde* narrative derives directly from Gray. But this is almost certainly overstating matters. There is no reference in the correspondence with Murray of anyone else being involved in the composition process in this way (although Graham does indicate that she is being sent material for some of the appendices). The comments on natural history in the main body of the narrative are so woven into the text that it is unlikely Gray, or anyone else, supplied them verbatim for insertion; they must at the least reflect Graham’s writing up of discussions with Gray and other experts. Possibly Gray supplied some footnotes; he may also have produced the appendix which gives a more specialized summary of Andrew Bloxam’s findings. But it is equally feasible – and in the case of the footnotes, probably more likely – that Graham produced much of this material herself. Yet, even if Gray did provide more substantial assistance to the project, we should recognise the efforts made by Graham to bring this about: cajoling the BM for information, seeking to inspect the *Blonde* specimens herself, supplying the BM with new material, and not least, transporting around London a sizeable stuffed iguana, which according to the published footnote measured almost three and a half feet in length.

Editing/Authoring the Published Text

Having collated the scientific material outlined above, Graham had to decide what information to include in the published volume, and how to present it. Here she would have been mindful of the multiple agendas required of contemporary travel writing. The genre was expected in this period to serve practical and intellectual functions even as it interested and entertained more casual readers (see: Jarvis). A publication like the *Blonde* narrative would ideally assist future navigators, merchants, speculators and policy-makers in their dealings with the Sandwich Islands, whilst also providing scholars, scientists and theorists with useful observations across a range of

disciplines. Yet, because of this mixed audience, its language and discourse had to remain readable and engaging, pitched more at the general reader driven by curiosity than at specialists in the scholarly fields it touched upon. The convention had therefore emerged, even in narratives recounting voyages and expeditions of full-blown exploration, of relegating more detailed and specialized observations to appendices at the end (Thompson, *Travel Writing* 72-86). Simultaneously, it was not expected that all the data gathered by a traveller or expedition would appear in the published narrative of the journey. More extensive and detailed field notes – for example, the full set of coordinates, compass bearings and measurements generated by surveyors for cartographical purposes – were often circulated in manuscript to other specialists and key institutions, sometimes giving rise to subsequent journal articles and similar publications. Editing/authoring the *Blonde* narrative, then, required of Graham a complex juggling act, as she balanced the need to supply useful and intellectually significant information with the need to remain accessible and interesting to all readers.

With regard to her main source, Richard Bloxam’s partially worked-up manuscript, Graham evidently felt required to reduce the chaplain’s prolix style. Bloxam is fond of ponderous circumlocutions and classical allusions; birds become “the various feathered race,” falling asleep is sinking “into the silent arms of Morpheus” (n.p.). There is much detail about fairly inconsequential personal experiences, whilst landscape descriptions frequently become vague rhapsodies on the picturesque. Graham accordingly often condenses Bloxam, producing an account that is simultaneously more economical and more focused on providing information. Compare, for example, the following passages describing the *Blonde*’s arrival at Maui. Bloxam writes:

At daylight we could distantly perceive the lofty summits of Mauna Kea (Mouna Keah) topping the clouds and its heights entirely covered with snow, this majestic mountain is said to rise 16,000 feet above the level of the sea. We were also in sight of the Island of Maui and stood round it with a fresh breeze from the Eastward. To arrive at the anchorage of Lahaina it is necessary to keep to Windward of the island and thereby you are almost obliged to circumnavigate it. Throughout this day we coasted along it at the distance of 8 or 9 miles. The land is very high and appears framed by two mountains which are connected by a neck of land which gives it the appearance of two distinct islands. The Eastern peninsula is well wooded and enlivened by numerous huts. We also remarked several beautiful cascades descending precipitately in foaming torrents from the lofty rocks directly into the sea. These as we advanced produced a very novel effect and together with the high rocky and picturesque scenery and the broad valleys and deep ravines formed all together a beautiful landscape, in which the grand and [space left here for word to be added] were happily blended together. In the afternoon, having gone round three fourths of the island, when we were nearing the village of Lahaina and had rounded the last point, we were suddenly becalmed under the high land, and diminished our rate of sailing from 11 and 12 knots to two! – We are now (VI o’cl. pm): close in shore and Lahaina appears far more beautiful than any place we have hitherto seen on these islands – The whole district which stretches nearly three miles along the sea side appears covered with luxuriant groves not only of the cocoa nut and Bread tree [~~the only ones we have hitherto~~ but

of the Kou (*cordia Sebastianiana*) one of the most beautiful of ornamental trees. The Banana, Paper Mulberry and Sugar Cane seem most abundant and extend almost to the beach against which a fine surf is constantly rolling. (n.p.)

This becomes in the published volume:

At daylight this morning, while the snowy peak of Maouna [*sic*] Keah was still visible, we discovered the double-hilled Maui, and coasted along it almost all day, that we might reach the harbour of Lahaina, which is the most populous and fertile district of the Island. The eastern part appears very beautiful; the slopes are well wooded, and there are broad valleys, and deep ravines, and lofty rocks, from which several streams fall in broken cascades directly into the sea, and the whole is enlivened by numerous huts and plantations. About six P.M. we anchored close to the shore in Lahaina bay, lat. 21° N. Long. 156° 5' W. It was very beautiful: groups of trees grow down close to the sea, and many of them, by the novelty and beauty of their foliage, delighted us: there was the bread fruit* mingled with the cocoa nut†; the elegant and useful kou‡; the banana§; the wauti ¶, of which native cloth is made; the ohia** and the sugar cane; all in gay and rich confusion, approaching very closely to the white surf which breaks constantly on the beach. (103-04)

Here Graham has halved the word count whilst retaining most of the essential information and adding further details from other informants. “Mouna” (the contemporary English variant of modern-day “Mauna”) is misspelt, but this is probably a typesetter’s error, since the right spelling is used elsewhere. More significantly in the present context, Graham uses the *Blonde’s* arrival at Maui to introduce more of the island’s key plant species than Bloxam mentions, supplementing her main text with footnotes which give their Latin names and in two cases some further information:

**Artocarpus*. †*Cocos nucifera*. ‡*Cordia Orientalis*. §*Musa Paraisaica*, several varieties; among the rest one very small, which the natives dry (there is one similar in Guzerat). ¶ *Brousonettia papyrifera*.
** Ohia, *Eugenia Malaccensis*, or jumbo of the East Indies.

These notes are probably not aimed at more advanced scientific readers, who would no doubt have been familiar with common Hawaiian plant species. As discussed, however, travel writing attracted a broad audience, encompassing readers with a casual interest in science, others with an ethnographic or philosophical interest in the resources available to the Hawaiians, and others again with an eye on commercial possibilities associated with those resources. Graham’s notes are pitched at these readers, yet are nevertheless informed by her own modest scientific researches, most notably in the identification of the “kou” plant. Here Bloxam’s adoption of Georg Forster’s 1786 nomenclature (“*cordia sebastianiana*”) is adjusted by Graham to “*cordia orientalis*,” reflecting Robert Brown’s renaming of the species in his *Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae et Insulae Van Dieman* (1810).

The volume’s second main source, Robert Dampier’s journal, received similar treatment from Graham. Dampier is frequently as longwinded and meandering as

Bloxam, being prone to laboured witticisms and extended classical allusions. Graham often takes the gist of these imaginative sallies but greatly condenses them. Describing the marine iguanas of the Galapagos, for example, Dampier writes: “These, of all the animals I ever saw, strike me as the most disgusting: indeed, if ever Satan felt inclined to become a tenant of some hideous and appropriate form upon earth, I certainly would recommend one of these devilish looking Monsters to his consideration” (22). This becomes in the published narrative the observation that the “sea-guanas” are “the ugliest living creature we ever beheld. They are like the alligator, but with a more hideous head, and of a dirty sooty black colour, and sat on the black lava rocks like so many imps of darkness” (92). Here, Graham enlivens her text with Dampier’s diabolical allusion, creating in “imps of darkness” a phrase that Charles Darwin would later recall when he visited the Galapagos (Keynes 605). Yet she increases the informational content of the description, and at this juncture also inserts the footnote discussed earlier, referencing Bell’s 1825 article and identifying the species as *Amblyrhynchus cristatus*.⁹

In these passages, it is easy to assess the nature and logic of Graham’s adjustment of her sources. At other junctures, Graham follows one or other of her principal sources closely, with much less editing than in the examples above; in other passages again, she makes a more complex synthesis of the multiple sources available to her, to the extent that Graham is often better regarded as a ghost-writer rather than merely an editor. In these synoptic passages, it is sometimes impossible to determine where Graham acquired her information, since we are now lacking not only the various verbal reports she solicited but also significant portions of her manuscript sources. Consequently, it is difficult to understand why Graham made some of her editorial/authorial interventions, and to assess the accuracy of the composite text she ultimately produced. However, a few editorial agendas can be perceived. Graham certainly foregrounds more emphatically than any of her manuscript sources the supposedly baleful influence exercised in Hawaii by American missionaries – a focus that later caused controversy. Elsewhere she seems to make a point of emphasizing female agency and heroism; in comparison with her sources, for example, Graham’s account of the Kiluaea ascent allots more space to, and speaks more honorifically of, the feat performed by the Hawaiian queen Kapiolani, a Christian convert who ventured into the volcano’s crater to disprove the existence of the old pagan gods.

Beyond this, however, it is not easy to reach an overall verdict on Graham’s handling of her various source materials; a point worth stressing because the implicit allegation in some later attacks on the published volume is that Graham as editor significantly distorted the journals she was initially provided with, and so greatly diminished their value. But this is not a fair judgement on Graham’s account as a whole. The juggling of multiple informants and the rather rushed nature of the project certainly produced some slips and errors; the dating of activities in the Galapagos islands, for example, seems to be out by a day from the dating used in Dampier and Andrew Bloxam’s diaries. Yet Graham’s two main sources – Richard Bloxam’s worked-up account and Dampier’s journal – were both, by the generic standards of the day, problematic documents in need of significant revision before they were publishable. Arguably, moreover, many of the synoptic, composite sections are very effective; Graham’s rendering of the Kiluaea expedition, for example, incorporates much more ethnographic and scientific information than any of the extant source documents, yet remains coherent and highly readable. Yet, whatever judgement one passes on Graham’s final text, it is clear that her principal aim with regard to both Richard Bloxam and Dampier’s accounts was to strip out their more “literary”

aspects, and their sentimental and picturesque effusions, to produce a more intellectually substantive text – an agenda that perhaps runs counter to how we might expect a female editor to handle a travelogue in this period. To this end, moreover, Graham also prefaced the narrative of the *Blonde*'s voyage with a substantial 75-page account of Hawaiian history from first contact down to the present day. She had offered similar historical overviews prior to the travel narratives in her Brazil and Chile books; in all three cases these initial “framing” sections are wholly Graham's own work, although based on extensive reading of prior travel accounts and current historiography relating to each region.

With regard to the volume's scientific observations, Graham sought not only to foreground more emphatically but also to extend in various ways the information contained in her sources. As discussed already, Graham used a range of often very up-to-date publications to confirm and explicate the phenomena recorded by the *Blonde*: Daubeny's 1826 book on volcanoes, Bell's 1825 article on the marine iguana. The published text consequently incorporates an element of comparative commentary for the most part lacking in the source material. Thus the link is made between “Peli's hair” on Kiluaea and the same phenomenon in the Comoros Islands, while elsewhere the discussion of the ascent of Kiluaea is supplemented by observations about one of the Hawaiian volcanoes not visited during the *Blonde* voyage – information gleaned, it is acknowledged, from Vancouver's *Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific* (1798) and the missionary William Ellis' *Narrative of an 1823 Tour through Hawai'i* (1826). If these comparisons derive from Graham's scientific reading (or from discussions with scientific experts), others seem drawn from her own experience and extensive travels. Thus the lava samples from Mauna Keah are compared with those on Vesuvius, whilst the footnotes reproduced above link the Hawaiian species of banana to that found in Gujerat, and note that the “Ohia” plant is the “jumbo of the East Indies.”

It is difficult now to gauge how far these comparisons constituted a meaningful contribution to contemporary scientific debates in geology, botany and other fields; in focusing on “Peli's hair,” for example, one suspects Graham is being drawn merely to the more “curious” and intriguing phenomena recorded by the *Blonde*. Yet, contemporary travel writing was of course meant to engage its audience with such curiosities, even as it posted notice of more significant scientific findings; moreover, many of Graham's comparisons – for example, knowing that Hawaiian Ohia was the “jumbo” plant found in Asia – probably had a practical usefulness for some readers. But whatever precise purpose they served, and to whatever extent they drew upon discussions with more expert specialists, these numerous points of comparison and connection show Graham actively coordinating and synthesizing diverse sources so as to increase the informational content of the published volume.

There is, moreover, at least one occasion where Graham seems to make her own small but not insignificant contribution to contemporary scientific knowledge and debate. As discussed earlier, the published volume's main narrative follows the generic norms of contemporary travel writing by incorporating only a modicum of scientific information and deploying specialist technical terms sparingly; a more detailed summary of Andrew Bloxam's findings in Hawaii is then presented in an appendix. However, an exception is made to this generic decorum when discussing the iguana specimen brought back by Talbot. Described in the main text as the “brown sea-guana” of Albemarle Island, a footnote contrasts this specimen with Bell's *Amblyrhynchus cristatus*, the black marine iguana of Narborough Island. Here we read that “at first the editor supposed [the brown iguana] might be the female of the black

one, but on comparison the two animals appear so different as to induce the belief that they are different species” (92). The note then gives detailed measurements for the specimen and identifies its distinguishing features, which included a crest of “thick round spines, of not near the height of those on the black one, and only extending to the back of the blade bones” (in contrast to the black marine iguana’s crest of “sharp flat scales, issuing like those of the alligator, and continuing quite to the end of the tail”); and on the head and face “thick, pentangular, [and] embossed” scales, less spiky than the equivalent on the black species.

The footnote is right to identify this brown specimen as a separate species, although it is in fact a land-based rather than marine variant of iguana. John Gray later formally named this new species *Amblyrhynchus subcristatus* (although it is now identified as *Conolophus subcristatus*). Olson has therefore recently claimed that the footnote in the *Blonde* narrative was “unquestionably written” (“Early Scientific History” 146) by Gray, who is assumed to be the source of the volume’s natural historical information. But, as Olson acknowledges, Gray’s 1831 “Description of a New Species of Amblyrhynchus,” in the *Zoological Miscellany*, records a different, much smaller specimen than that described in the *Blonde* footnote. One accordingly wonders why, if Gray was also the author of the footnote, he did not simply re-use his earlier description, or at least make reference back to it; one might also ask why different phraseology is used when describing the new species’ key distinguishing features. Given the epistolary evidence cited above, which shows that the note refers to an iguana available to Graham but not necessarily to Gray – we do not know if he ever saw Talbot’s specimen – the simplest explanation is that both the description and the proposal of a new species in the *Blonde* narrative indeed derive from “the editor” Graham, as stated in the note. Of course, her documented meeting with Gray, when the latter showed her the *Amblyrhynchus* in the possession of the BM, no doubt involved discussion of what details to observe and record. Yet it was then probably Graham herself who proposed in print a new species, revealing in the process an informed and discriminating eye as she described its distinguishing features.

Ruffled Feathers: Graham and the Ornithologists

In addition to the scientific information incorporated into the main body of the published *Blonde* narrative, two of the final volume’s four appendices offered more detailed scientific observations. Appendix 4 is an “Extract from Lieutenant Malden’s Official Account of the Sandwich Islands,” in which the *Blonde*’s surveyor provides navigational advice for ships visiting the archipelago; although written by Malden, it seems likely from surviving correspondence that this was solicited by Graham, partly to bulk out the volume.¹⁰ More significantly, Appendix 3 offers a transcription of some of Andrew Bloxam’s field notes from Hawaii, consisting principally of an identification (and sometimes description) of the bird species observed, along with more cursory remarks about the archipelago’s insects, fish and geology. It was this transcription of Bloxam’s notes which precipitated later complaints about the volume’s science. These began in 1892, when Alfred Newton scathingly reviewed the existing literature on Hawaiian ornithology. The *Blonde*’s appendix he described as “unworthy of its reputed author” (i.e. Andrew Bloxam), further adding, apparently as an explanation for the volume’s supposed inadequacies, that “the book was edited by a lady (as I have been informed) who had nothing but his notes to guide her” (Newton 466). Pronouncing the published text “a disgrace to all concerned,” Newton alleged that it “introduced so much confusion as to mislead many subsequent writers.” However, he does not elaborate on the exact nature of its errors.

Olson’s meticulous reconstruction of the *Blonde*’s natural historical researches suggests that Newton’s defence of Bloxam and castigation of Graham’s involvement in the project is misguided and chauvinistic. As Olson shows, whilst from the vantage point of modern or indeed 1890s ornithology the appendix certainly contains several errors of identification and nomenclature, many simply represent the more provisional state of knowledge in the 1820s and the ongoing reorganisation of taxonomic categories; for example, the presentation of a supposed new species, *Fringilla sandwichensis*, when in fact the two specimens collected by Bloxam are now known to be juveniles of a species already listed in the appendix (“Contribution of the Voyage” 16). Where the appendix contains straightforward blunders – for example, by presenting the Ruddy Turnstone, a frequent visitor to British shores, as an apparently new species – Olson demonstrates that this was Bloxam’s original error, with the compiler of the appendix being at fault only insofar as they did not recognise and correct the oversight here. Similarly, the failure to recognise the juvenile specimens was again Bloxam’s original “mistake”; in this and most other regards, the appendix does not introduce errors but simply reproduces the slips of a man Olson has shown to be a somewhat half-hearted and under-informed ornithologist.

Olson does, however, suggest that the compiler of the appendix is at fault for omitting some of Bloxam’s detailed descriptions of Hawaiian bird species. This is a valid accusation, yet the appendix at least follows a consistent and comprehensible, if perhaps overly economical, procedure in this regard. The only ornithological text Bloxam had with him on the voyage was William Turton’s 1806 translation of Johann Friedrich Gmelin’s extended edition of Linnaeus’s *Systema Naturae*. When a specimen he collected seemed to correspond with a species in Gmelin, Bloxam recorded the apparent match in the headings of his field notes, before providing his own detailed description. Where a match is made in this way, the appendix cites the identification but does not reprint Bloxam’s description, presumably assuming that the Gmelin description will suffice; as stated in the preamble, “the description of most of the birds which have been described by former naturalists are omitted” (248). Correspondingly, when Bloxam could find no apparent match in the existing ornithological literature, the appendix includes his description of a seemingly new species, and does so very faithfully, with occasional small adjustments of vocabulary and diction which do not materially affect the account. The appendix, it should be noted, is clearly flagged as a somewhat provisional document; in places there are gaps in the subheadings prefaced to each species description, some indicating that a bird’s indigenous name is not known, others seeming to suggest that while the bird matches a species described in Gmelin, it now needs to be recategorised taxonomically and renamed.

It is not known who produced this transcription of Bloxam’s notes. For Olson, the author must be John Gray, supposedly the source of all the volume’s natural historical information. If this is the case, of course, any problems with the appendix cannot be blamed on Graham, but arguably indicate again that she was poorly served by the BM. However, given both the general scientific competence outlined earlier and the fact that the appendix is essentially just a copy of text supplied by Bloxam, it is feasible that Graham produced it herself. This might explain why she fails to spot that Bloxam’s *Tringa Oahuensis* is in fact the Ruddy Turnstone, a mistake that one hopes Gray would have identified, and also why Gray subsequently redescribed and renamed some of the birds in 1829 and 1831. Whoever transcribed the appendix, however, the key point in the present context is that it is by no means as disastrous as some later commentators have implied. The editorial principles on which it was

compiled led to the omission of some data since deemed significant, yet there is a legitimate logic as to why this information was not passed on. Where there are outright mistakes, these are largely the fault of Bloxam rather than the copyist.

Another accusation against the published appendix is that it only focuses on Hawaiian birds and does not include detailed descriptions of several new bird species which the main narrative records as discovered on Malden Island and Mauke. These included a type of pelican “which we named *Pelicanus Candida*” and a tern “which we have called *Sterna Maldensis*” (205); and on Mauke, an “extremely beautiful” dove “which we named *Columba Byronensis*” and a kingfisher “called by us *Alcedo Mautiensis*” (213). Without a proper description of each species, however, these names are, as Olson puts it, “absolute *nomina nuda*” (“Early Account” 200), and in an early article he reprints Bloxam’s more detailed field notes on these species as testimony to “Mrs Graham’s editorial deficiencies” (“Early Account” 199). Again, however, familiarity with the materials at Graham’s disposal would suggest this is too harsh a verdict. The passages in the main narrative where these birds are mentioned are almost certainly taken from her principal source, Richard Bloxam’s worked-up manuscript, which frequently incorporates reflections on natural history that derive from Andrew. The section dealing with Mauke and Malden Island is now missing, so we cannot judge to what extent, if any, Graham is modifying Richard’s text; however, on the basis of her emendations elsewhere, it is unlikely that Graham removed substantive information from her source. As to why these new species are not properly described in Appendix 3, consultation of the Andrew Bloxam manuscript material at the Natural History Museum (NHM) suggests that Graham (or whoever transcribed the appendix) probably never saw the naturalist’s more detailed descriptions. The NHM holds multiple versions of Bloxam’s notes, evidently written for different recipients and all varying slightly in the information they provide.¹¹ Graham saw only one version, in the form of a “little book” which, according to the König letter, she passed on to the BM. There are several possible candidates for this “book” in the NHM archive, although from the way the *Blonde*’s appendix shares variations of phrasing with several of the extant documents it is likely the compiler was working from yet another transcription which now does not survive. But, in the versions which most closely match the text of the published appendix, there are no detailed descriptions of the new birds from Mauke and Malden Islands, though it is recorded that specimens were brought home. It seems likely, therefore, that these descriptions were also missing from the version of Bloxam’s notes that formed the basis of the published appendix.

The published *Blonde* volume, then, undoubtedly omits ornithological information that later specialists have deemed significant, and contains a variety of what are now known to be ornithological errors. However, Graham cannot be singled out as the principal or even major cause of these omissions and errors; if blame must be assigned, Andrew Bloxam is probably the biggest culprit. This is not to say Graham is entirely faultless. As with her handling of other aspects of the *Blonde*’s science there are certainly some slips or contradictions for which she bears responsibility. For example, in Bloxam’s notes, and consequently in the appendix, the Hawaiian “Hehivi” bird is identified as *Nectarina coccinea* and matched to Linnaeus’s *Certhia coccinis*. In the main body of the narrative, however, it is identified in a footnote (7) as *Drepanis vestiarius* and matched to *Certhia vestiarius* in John Latham’s *General Synopsis of Birds* (1781-1801). Even if it was Gray who was chiefly responsible for all the ornithological information in the volume, as Olson assumes, Graham as editor should have spotted and clarified this apparent

discrepancy. Alternatively, Graham introduced the confusion – although if she was the originator of the *Drepanis* identification it is again worth noting the efforts she went to and her consultation of another important reference work as she tried to organise the *Blonde*’s science.

Whoever we regard as culpable in this and other instances, perhaps the key point is that the volume as a whole was probably not, by the standards of the day, especially sloppy or inaccurate in either its ornithology or its natural history more generally. Both Newton and Olson compile ample evidence of other texts and scientists in this period displaying what now seems a distinct lack of scholarly rigour. But it needs to be recognised that later scientific protocols about species description and the avoidance of so-called *nomina nuda* were not so powerfully in force in the early nineteenth century. As James Secord has argued, this was a scientific culture in which print publication was not yet regarded as the key means of disseminating and marking “ownership” of new discoveries. Important information often circulated in manuscript, private correspondence and even conversation; witness one of the reference works Graham consulted at Robert Brown’s, Solander’s unpublished *Florilegium*. In this context, it was more common than it would later be for new species to be announced and sometimes named in voyage narratives and similar publications without being fully described; more detailed information then circulated by other means or was published later. Graham had after all promised Charles König, in the letter discussed above, that she would not pre-empt any publications by BM staff. Her expectation may well have been, therefore, that Gray or others would in due course publish proper ornithological descriptions, as indeed was done for some of the species collected by Bloxam, whilst in the interim those with a more pressing interest in the Mauke and Malden specimens could contact the BM.

Conclusion

When published in 1827, *Voyage of HMS Blonde* received lukewarm reviews from the main British periodicals. The consensus was that the voyage produced some interesting observations but did not warrant a substantial quarto edition, since it did not add significantly to the information contained in William Ellis’s 1826 account of Hawaii (see: *Monthly Review*; *Quarterly Review*; *Eclectic Review*; *Literary Gazette*). In the American press, however, the response was decidedly hostile, due to the narrative’s disparaging comments about the influence of US missionaries in the islands (see: *North American Review*; *Christian Advocate*; *Christian Spectator*), and a pamphlet was swiftly published refuting the volume’s apparent allegations (see: *An Examination*). In these pro-missionary ripostes, Graham is frequently targeted as the source of the negative comments, and in a further effort to discredit the volume her editorial efforts generally are rebuked as error-strewn and over-reliant to the point of plagiarism on Ellis’s account. These attacks have since been cited by some commentators on the *Blonde*’s science, to suggest that Graham’s handling of the volume was universally criticized at the time of publication (Macrae [Editor’s Foreward] 1; Olson, “Early Account” 198). Yet, this ignores the pro-missionary agenda behind these early caricatures of Graham as an incompetent editor. It should also be stressed that if the major British journals were unimpressed with what the *Quarterly* termed the “meagre narrative” (420) arising from the voyage, they made no complaint about Graham’s role as editor; indeed, the *Monthly* and *Quarterly* praised various aspects of her contribution. And the only negative comments in these journals specifically about the volume’s science was the *Monthly*’s complaint that the ‘notices concerning natural history’ were “very scanty” (71); conversely, several of the non-

partisan reviews pay an implicit compliment to the volume's natural history by printing lengthy extracts about the Galapagos islands, the ascent of Kiluaea, and Mauke.

In widening their attack by alleging Graham's general editorial incompetence, the pro-missionary lobby was no doubt driven at one level simply by chauvinism; like Newton seventy years later, several writers clearly take it for granted that a woman would probably bungle this role. Yet, in flagging up Graham's editorial interventions, these hostile commentators were also deliberately targeting a weak spot, something that many contemporaries would undoubtedly have perceived as a problem with the published volume. After the furore surrounding the similarly synoptic narrative of the first Cook voyage, in which the editor John Hawkesworth had merged the journals of Cook, Joseph Banks and others, the generic expectation for "voyages and travels" was that these texts should provide fairly unmediated, unadulterated access to the original eye-witness account of a single, identifiable traveller; this made it easier to corroborate and contextualize observations (see: Maclaren; Rennie 95-108). In practice, such apparent first-hand immediacy was always something of an illusion, since travellers usually wrote up and reorganized their narratives retrospectively, with editors often assisting in this process (see: Maclaren; Fulford, Lee and Kitson 93-94). But the controversy over the *Blonde* narrative's depiction of missionaries threw a spotlight on what was usually an obscured part of the production of contemporary travel writing, revealing in the process an account that had received far more editorial shaping than was customary.

This disclosure evidently discomfited contemporary readers; some British journals, for example, changed their stance on the volume after learning of the extent of Graham's editorial intervention. Yet, it does not follow that Graham was herself inadequate as an editor. Faced with problematic source material and a lack of cooperation in some quarters, notably at the Horticultural Society but also possibly at the BM, Graham arguably did a conscientious and fairly competent job both of editing the *Blonde* narrative as a whole, and more specifically of organising and presenting the expedition's scientific observations. There are undoubtedly some problems with the volume's science; some (but not the majority) of these problems are introduced by Graham, in the course of what seems to have been a rather rushed project. However, these slips and contradictions need to be set against the considerable efforts Graham made to make the volume more scientifically accurate and useful. The final volume contains, in both its main text and apparatus, an abundance of interwoven glosses, explanations and comparisons not found in any of Graham's source documents. In some cases these further reflections derive from discussions with experts, but we should not ignore or understate Graham's role in generating and mediating the information thus provided. And much of this scientific apparatus was undoubtedly generated by Graham herself, who displayed in the process considerable competency across a range of disciplinary fields.

Those fields, it should further be noted, embraced more than just the scientific disciplines. Scholarly discussion of the *Voyage of the Blonde* has focused mostly on its science, yet it needs to be kept in mind that Graham's agenda in the volume was chiefly historical and ethnographic, and to some degree political, as she produced a synthesizing account of Hawaiian culture that by contemporary standards was remarkably respectful and appreciative of that society. However, the main narrative's combination of both scientific and literary discourses (understanding "literary" here to mean not "fictitious" but encompassing history, cultural analysis and the discussion of literature and art) are probably another reason why commentators from the late

nineteenth century onwards have sometimes looked askance at the volume’s science. By that date, the scientific disciplines had become more professionalised and specialised, leading in turn to publications with narrower focus and more densely technical discussion (developments which also made science less accessible to women). *Voyage of the Blonde*, however, was produced in a period which did not perceive any great schism between science and what we would now class as the humanities. This is reflected in the multiple, often overlapping intellectual networks in which Graham operated, which embraced not only the scientists discussed earlier but also leading historians like James Mackintosh, Henry Hallam and John Charles Leonard de Sismondi and artists like Thomas Lawrence and Charles Eastlake – all figures Graham associated regularly with, over the course of her adult life, at key social hubs like Mary Somerville’s home, John Murray’s house in Albemarle Street and in due course the salon she herself presided over in the 1830s. And travel writing was, in the early nineteenth century, perhaps pre-eminently the genre meant to combine and integrate these diverse fields, interweaving them not only to cater to a diverse readership but also to produce a more complete picture of another society. By the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, the breadth of topics covered, and the accessibility of style, arguably made the science in many of these accounts seem somewhat dilettante – especially when they were written by women, who by this later date were for the most part firmly relegated to the position of scientific “amateurs.”

Returning to Graham’s handling of the *Blonde* volume’s science, the episode as a whole demonstrates the agency and active role sometimes required of women as they edited scientific observations and papers. Such women editors – like many women translators of scientific material across the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – are accordingly misrepresented when dismissed merely as subsidiary “handmaidens” to male intellectual endeavour. Rather than simply facilitating the transfer of scientific knowledge, they might to some extent be collaborators and co-authors in the production of that knowledge – although the full extent to which they contributed to scientific debate in this way cannot be gauged until we have further research into the careers of Sarah Bowdich, Mary Horner Lyell, Charlotte Murchison and other women known or thought to have had a hand in editing work by male scientists and explorers.

Notes

Thanks to Kathleen L. Skinner of the University of Texas at Austin, whose excellent undergraduate dissertation on Graham and the *Blonde* greatly helped me orientate myself with regard to the extensive source material; to Professor Robert Rothman of the Rochester Institute of Technology for insights into iguanas and zoological taxonomy; and to Alison Martin for general guidance and advice.

1. For Graham’s fee, see her letter to Murray of 17 May 1826, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 12604 f. 52.
2. See the British Museum’s *List of the Specimens of Homopterous Insects* (1851) 336 and *List of the Specimens of Lepidopterous Insects* (1856) 38, for examples of insects collected by Graham and later donated to the BM by her second husband, Augustus Wall Callcott.
3. MS. Eng. d 2274. Bodleian Library.
4. Richard Bloxam’s manuscript is held at the National Library of Australia, Canberra, and is available as microfilm MFM G 1-289.
5. Acc. 12604, ff. 48, 62. NLS.
6. Acc. 12604, f. 51. NLS. Emphasis in the original.
7. Acc. 12604, ff. 63, 63a. NLS; *Eclectic Review* 300.
8. Add. 32441 f.11. Brit. Lib.
9. The portion of Richard Bloxam’s manuscript describing the Galapagos has not survived. It should be acknowledged, therefore, that the *Blonde*’s chaplain may be the source of “imps of darkness”. However, since Graham at several junctures takes the essence of Dampier’s witticisms and renders them more economically, it seems more likely that she coined the phrase.
10. For evidence of Graham receiving material for the appendices, see: Acc. 12604, f. 65. NLS.
11. The material is archived at the NHM as MSS/BLO.

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