



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 823862

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## **Satire and the Diffusion of Spa Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century**

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Published in *Literature & History* (2023, 32.2)

The eighteenth-century spa was an important Foucauldian heterotopic social space and functioned as a centre for the diffusion of the culture of sociability generally, as well as having its own particular manifestations with local variations and expressions.<sup>1</sup> This diffusion took place both in the physical space of the spa but also in the world of print through personal correspondence and a proliferating number of guidebooks in addition to a wide range of journalistic and literary writing. These created a textual existence for the spa outside of its physical existence that contributed to the diffusion of spa culture and sociability from its centres into peripheral locations.

In addition to guides, descriptions and journalistic reports, satires of spa experience enjoyed considerable popularity. Perhaps the best known and studied of these satires is Christopher Astley's *New Bath Guide* (first edition, 1766),<sup>2</sup> but lesser-known works provided satirical commentary on the peculiar environments and practices of sociability in spaces located more on the periphery of the spa world. Through a close reading of two such works, *Meine viertägigen Leiden im Bade zu Pymont* [My Four-Day Sufferings in the Spa of Pymont] (first edition, 1809) by G. C. Sponagel and *The Literary Picture Gallery and Admonitory Epistles to Visitors to Ballston Spa*, by Simeon Senex, Esquire (1808),<sup>3</sup> a little known work from New York whose authorship remains disputed but which may have been

written by Washington Irving, this article seeks to identify elements of commonality across different spa environments removed from what might be seen as the foundational tradition of Bath. It also aims to identify distinctive peculiarities that may be German in the case of Pymont or colonial-peripheral in the case of the Ballston Spa. The pattern, widely found, consisted of images relating to leisure and sociability in an urbane space – or one which sought to be such – but one which used medicinal spring water and was rooted in the rhythm of the natural world.<sup>4</sup> While inland spas nearly universally shared these same elements, the expressions of spa culture were hardly uniform, with regional or local conditions shaping the form it took in a given locale.

It is fair to say that the culture of the heterotopic spa in the long eighteenth century was a transnational phenomenon. While cultural flows may have tended to stream from more fashionable places to more regional or even provincial locales, this was a complex phenomenon rather than one of simple one-way importation and imitation. As Peter Borsay points out, the local leisure culture might, in a sense, ‘tip its cap at French and Italian models’, but at the same time this was ‘more a matter of gesture than substance’.<sup>5</sup> In fact, he argues, much of the culture that emerged in eighteenth-century Bath was a kind of native creation, working with fashionable elements from abroad to cater to the taste of a public accustomed to travel and to Continental refinement while also producing something uniquely and characteristically English in the process. Alfred Barbeau, commenting nostalgically at the beginning of the twentieth century on the heyday of Bath, emphasised that despite obvious similarities shared by spas across much of Europe, English watering places ‘had a special character of their own [...] one we shall look for in vain elsewhere’.<sup>6</sup> The same statement might be made regarding other locales. Indeed, the transnational culture of the spa, rooted in cosmopolitan trends, habitually found local expressions, with cultural flows simultaneously running in multiple directions. These flows, of course, ran across Europe between Bath and spas on the continent, but also from Europe to the colonies in North America, which by the early nineteenth century sought to have their own local centres of sophisticated leisure and sociability such as in the nascent spas of Ballston Spa and Saratoga Springs in New York.

As much as Bath may have imported fashionable trends from the continent, it too exerted power as a model, an influence that extended to other English watering places to places abroad. One potentially

fruitful place to look for such interactions is the spa of Pyrmont in northern Germany, which was among the most fashionable and cosmopolitan spas in German lands at the time, often fulfilling the role of an ersatz summer court for visiting princes.<sup>7</sup> Given Pyrmont's location in the Electorate of Waldeck fifty kilometres from the city of Hanover, it is unsurprising that there was a link between the House of Hanover and this particular watering town. Extending a practice begun when he was 'only' the Elector of Hanover, George I and to a lesser extent George II continued to summer at the spa in Pyrmont, bringing with them other members of the court. German sources make passing reference to the presence of the English, but British archival sources reveal frequent yet scattered evidence of a connection between England and the spa in Pyrmont. For example, the State Papers collections (series SP, in particular the Hanoverian government papers) at the National Archives in London contain numerous letters that were sent either to or from Pyrmont (for example, those by or for Lord Townsend).<sup>8</sup> While most deal with official state business, some make brief personal asides about taking the waters. Similar references can also be found in collections of published letters, suggesting that the Pyrmont waters were regarded as superior to those of Tunbridge Wells.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout much of the eighteenth century, but particularly in the years after the accession of George I, frequent announcements appeared in London newspapers regarding recent arrivals of Pyrmont water,<sup>10</sup> a chalybeate water believed to be of particular benefit when imbibed (unlike the waters of Bath, primarily used for bathing). Other published sources corroborate a link between the spa cultures of Britain and Pyrmont. Numerous guides and analyses of the Pyrmont waters appeared in English as early as 1717, evidencing the existence of a commercial as well as medical interest in these waters. Well-known travel writer Richard Pococke is known to have journeyed to Pyrmont in 1736 and was fascinated by its waters.<sup>11</sup> He also visited Bath at least once in 1750. Examples such as these suggest close links between the spa cultures of England and Pyrmont with visitors drawn by design rather than by accident to the town's natural resources, the then-famous, purportedly salubrious waters.

There is fragmentary evidence of an influence that flowed in the reverse direction in terms of Germans who were familiar with English spa practices and who drew comparisons (favourable and

not) between Bath and Pyrmont. Johanna Schopenhauer, in describing her travels in England, remarked that 'life in spas in England is much more regulated than in Germany: one knows precisely how every day is to be spent, and there is much less of the aimless drifting about like in Pyrmont or in Karlsbad'.<sup>12</sup> Others saw the greater freedom for unstructured leisure in German spas as a shortcoming. The jurist and writer Justus Möser, in a letter to the well-known spa physician of Pyrmont, Heinrich Matthias Marcard, lamented the absence of a Master of Ceremonies figure in Pyrmont who resembled Beau Nash at Bath and who would keep petty nobles from haughtily demonstrating their superiority over bourgeois visitors.<sup>13</sup> While some may have felt the need for a figure like Nash, it was not to become part of the Pyrmont experience. The Master of Ceremonies seems to have been a peculiarly English institution that could not be exported.<sup>14</sup>

For a substantial period during the eighteenth century, much of what was written about spas could be found in guidebooks and medical treatises. These books could appear in translation. A fine example is the guide to Pyrmont written by the spa physician Johann Philip Seip (who was also made a member of the Royal Society) and first published in 1717 in Germany. It subsequently appeared in an English translation in 1733.<sup>15</sup> However, like many English counterparts, these texts also tended to confine themselves to arguments regarding the efficacy of the waters and to guidelines for their proper use (including in bottled form). Later in the century, however, the nature of writing concerning the spas began to change. In addition to personal correspondence, works of fiction, travel accounts and journals as well as much more detailed guides began to appear. For example, Seip's 1717 medically oriented analysis of the chalybeate Pyrmont water and its purported benefits gave way to Marcard's *Beschreibung von Pyrmont* (Guide to Pyrmont), filled not only with guidelines for the use of the waters, but more importantly with notes about the history and natural attractions of the area. It first appeared in German in 1784, in French in 1785 and in an abridged English edition in 1788.<sup>16</sup> As Ute Lotz-Heumann has points out, the discourse that existed in addition to personal correspondence grew much more diverse: 'the reading public learned about life at the spa through a variety of functional and fictional genres', which grew rich enough to provide a basis of shared knowledge for the emergence of

satire.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, spa culture and sociability produced a number of satires of varying quality. These offer important insights into national spa cultures and expressions of sociability within those spa cultures. While there is no direct evidence of it being a model for satires of life in Pymont or Ballston Spa, Christopher Anstey's *New Bath Guide* may have provided inspiration. A work of extraordinary wit and acuity of observation with at least fifteen editions published between 1766 and 1800 (and forty in total by the end of the nineteenth century), it was popular and widely read.<sup>18</sup> It is an intricate work consisting of a series of letters written in verse, containing satirical depictions of numerous characters, noble and ignoble, as well as a wide range of practices at the spa. Through the uninitiated, at times naïve eyes of members of the Blunderhead family on their first visit to the watering place, Anstey uses their voices and characters to great effect, rendering a rich portrait of spa life at mid-century. While the literary skill of their authors was hardly on the same level as Anstey's, the satires on Pymont and Ballston Spa share thematic aspects with the *New Bath Guide*. Each involves tales of what could occur when new, uninitiated guests arrived at a spa, satirising the sociable experience it offered in their respective locales shortly after 1800.

*Meine viertägigen Leiden im Bade zu Pymont* was published by the jurist and popular writer Georg Christian Sponagel in 1809 (with a second edition in 1814, and a reprint in 1824). Besides a second satirical work about the seaside resort town of Doberan, much of Sponagel's other work – poems and other various light entertainment pieces – has been lost.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, there seems to have been some appreciation of Sponagel among contemporary readers and critics as a writer of light works with a power of satirical observation. As one reviewer wrote in 1826, 'the author's gift of portrayal, [is] his talent: to interpret small everyday events comically, to bring out the ridiculous side of things and spice them up with satire [...] [and] he renders outstanding portraits'.<sup>20</sup>

In a distinct parallel with Anstey's Guide, Sponagel's Horatian satire resembles an epistolary novel, consisting of a series of letters written in succession to a friend back home at an undisclosed small-town location. They describe in a series of mishaps, misunderstandings and misadventures the protagonist's struggle with trying to follow his doctor's recommendation to rest and restore his health in Pymont – the ostensible purpose of a spa visit –

all the while facing the pitfalls of being an uninitiated neophyte who is unfamiliar with both the written and, more importantly, unwritten rules of life at the spa. Sponagel mixes his first-person prose narrative with interjections in verse to emphasise the importance of what the protagonist is experiencing, to raise the level of humour and to underscore the absurdity of the situation. Ultimately, the protagonist is delivered from his suffering by the intervention of an experienced friend, who is well-versed in the unstated but understood rules of sociability at the spa.

*The Literary Picture Gallery and Admonitory Epistles to the Visitors of Ballston-Spa* is a much less cohesive work, consisting of a collage of diverse impressions of life at Ballston Spa, which at the time of publication, 1808, was a small and recently established fashionable outpost of New York society centred on the then-famous Sans Souci hotel. Little is known about the author (or authors) of this work. While the gentle Horatian satirical tone and the use of humorous pseudonyms for the authors of the varied vignettes, poems and epistles are reminiscent of Washington Irving's *Salmagundi* (1807–1808), authorship has never been conclusively attributed.<sup>21</sup> The work is quite rare, with only one complete set known.<sup>22</sup> Its literary quality is rather uneven, but the diverse pieces contained in the collection provide a rare insight into the nascent culture of spa sociability at this early stage of its development before the advent of the railroad would usher in the transition to mass tourism in the nineteenth century. One other work considered here, properly attributed to Irving, offers a brief satirical look at fashion and style at Ballston and was published in *Salmagundi* in 1807. Otherwise, sources relating to American spas are sparse in this early period. They attracted more attention in later years, most famously perhaps by Henry James, but those observations belong to a different era and speak more to the spa's legacy than to this period of growth and early development.

One point regarding perspective and the limitations of these two works must be raised at the outset. In both Sponagel's epistolary novel and the varia in the *Admonitory Epistles*, the point of view remains a resolutely male one. Women do figure in the narratives, but often as stereotypical figures. In *Meine Viertägigen Leiden*, women largely appear in the guise of temptresses – when they stroll on the promenade and are mistaken by the protagonist for

countesses, but turn out to be prostitutes; or in the character of a maid who, after being discharged from service due to the protagonist's inept blundering about the hotel, becomes dependent on him and seeks to enter his service being quite willing to 'gladly put up with anything'.<sup>23</sup> There are also no efforts in the Admonitory Epistles to bring in the voices of women (something which Anstey did in his *New Bath Guide*). Instead the text stereotypically focusses on questions of fashion and appearance and of young women as being on a 'journey of business', namely that of finding a suitable husband.<sup>24</sup> Unlike Sponagel, however, the author(s) of the Admonitory Epistles do this in the context of lampooning a wide range of characters at Ballston, including men and their tendency to put on airs of being rather better than they actually were and, notably (in parallel with Anstey), who were themselves also quite fashion-conscious in their own way.

While there are numerous aspects of spa culture and sociability worthy of examination, a few stand out. The first area is the relation between nature and sociability, given that an important draw of the spa generally was its proximity to and use of both the landscape as well as the mineral waters and the belief in their salubrious properties in a locale that still offered many of the attractions of an urban environment. The second, taking place on the stage of the spa environment, relates to the matter of appearances and their effect on sociability and social position at the spa.

Excursions into the countryside may well be the most salient case of a sociable activity taking place in the natural environs of the spa. By the second half of the eighteenth century, discussion surrounding the beauty of the landscape surrounding a spa town had become an almost obligatory part of any guidebook, or similar publications, reflecting what was by then an important part of the experience. It should therefore come as no surprise that the countryside should also make an appearance in works of satire. Anstey satirised this to great effect in the opening letter of his work, in which Jenny Wonder hyperbolically waxes about the almost mythical beauty of the countryside surrounding Bath. In Sponagel's satire, meanwhile, the countryside features in two episodes. Far from being a source of wonder, these encounters are more closely associated with discomfort and social awkwardness. The first happens when, suffering from severe abdominal cramps after drinking too much

Pyrmont water, the protagonist decides on a trip to the neighbouring town of Hameln, and peering out in his misery from under a blanket in the coach, experiences his first therapeutic relief, which can be understood as primarily the result of escaping from feeling alien in the social landscape of Pyrmont. The second episode involves an opportunity for proper sociability. When at a confectioner's shop, he overhears a group of young visitors who were about to go on a country walk. It is clear that this activity is open to anyone who wishes to join, following the rules of the Brunnenfreiheit or 'spa freedom' in a manner suggestive of the unstructured openness on which Schopenhauer had remarked. Noticing him, they ask if he would like to join them, which he declines, saying that he is not at all interested, 'as that so-called spa freedom seemed highly suspicious to me'.<sup>25</sup> Instead, he prefers to try his own hand at attending the theatre or a ball, with disastrous results. In the Admonitory Epistles, there are brief references to excursions to the countryside, but these are more a means to satirise what might have been the adulation of the natural landscape, albeit far less skilfully achieved than in Anstey's text. One segment discusses how it can be far more beneficial to admire paintings than to travel to the landscape scene itself, which is complemented by another passage describing how carriage rides through the bare sandy hills to a disappointing lake provide a fine opportunity for getting fleeced by a liveryman, and little more – unexpected expenses being a common theme in all satires. In neither case do these excursions bring the desired result of a pleasant sociable activity, although in the case of Spongel the fault clearly lies in the suspiciousness of the protagonist, who by this point in his stay has grown quite wary, due to his constant inability to judge social situations in Pyrmont properly.

The element most directly linked to the spa is, obviously enough, water, whether the thermal spring water of inland spas or, later, the sea. Where for seaside resorts the connection and importance of the waters is rather self-evident, the significance of spring waters to inland spas, both in terms of a given locale's popularity and the sociability that took place there, is often overlooked or neglected. Especially in the eighteenth century, the therapeutic reputation of a spa's springs was clearly important, something actively promoted through scientific treatises about the salubrious effects of the waters.



Similarly important was the skilled marketing of waters for consumption at the spa – or bottled at home to obtain some of their benefits outside the season.<sup>26</sup>

Indeed, the waters themselves and their role in the social scene appear in each of the satires in question, each of which reveals something of the approach to taking the waters in their respective spas. In Anstey, we read primarily about bathing in the spring pools, the somewhat risqué possibilities for observation with ladies and gentlemen bathing together as well as the rather dubious claims of physicians regarding the curative properties of the waters, though they oddly never apply them to themselves.<sup>27</sup> In Pymont and in Ballston, our satirists report quite correctly that the public aspect of taking the waters was confined to gathering in the morning under a columned pavilion at the spring, while bathing took place within private cabinets with an attendant.<sup>28</sup>

It is especially in this public space that Sponagel finds material for his humorous observations. The unnamed protagonist, on his first full day in Pymont, seeks with the best of intentions to take the waters correctly as his doctor back home had recommended. But misfortune befalls him not so much in the immediate effects of the waters themselves but in his ignorance of protocol. Observing another patron and drawing the wrong conclusion, he tips the attendant too great a sum for his services and then, wanting to get his money's worth, he drinks far too much of it (something he will come to regret later). He reveals his naïve admiration of the waters and for the emergence of a rainbow in the sunlit spray of the fountain; others begin to laugh at him, while one bystander seems to doubt his mental faculties, asking him with patronising concern where his chaperone is, foreshadowing the conclusion of the story.

In Ballston, the morning ritual of drinking the waters at the fountain is clearly part of daily practice, much as can be seen in Pymont. In his *Salmagundi* piece, 'Style, at Ballston', Irving addresses the fashion for drinking the waters, and in a moment of characteristic gentle wit illustrates how this ritual might have been more of a performative act rather than involving actual consumption. He describes how many ladies seemed to drink excessive quantities of the water in the morning but that to inquire about it was ill-advised: '[t]he most notorious water-drinkers, in particular, were continually holding forth on the surprising aptitude

with which the Ballston waters evaporated; and several gentlemen, who had the hardihood to question this female philosophy, were held in high displeasure'.<sup>29</sup>

While satirical to the point of absurdity, the point about appearances, even when drinking water at the springs in the morning, is an apt one. Throughout both satires appearances and the dangers involved in not being able to read them correctly are central. In the case of the Admonitory Epistles, the first and arguably most important item is a cautionary letter from one Simeon Sentex to his niece, the young Myra. He offers what he believes to be valuable advice for a young woman embarking on her first trip to Ballston Spa, presumably alone. It falls into two types, each directly concerned entirely with appearances. The first regards her own behaviour. It is imperative that she understand she would be under the close scrutiny of others, 'where the eye of the world is, moreover, furnished with a pair of spectacles, by which it sees people's faults with ten times its usual discernment', and thus she was to 'behave like a sober, discreet, dignified little gentlewoman, who had been brought up creditably and who had kept the best of company'.<sup>30</sup> In order to have a chance at the business at hand – finding a suitable match, as mentioned above – she must not laugh at all, but rather adopt a 'languid smile, which betokens an aimable disposition to be pleased [...] Languor is at all times bewitching and will become you amazingly'.<sup>31</sup> All excesses, especially in amusement, were to be strictly avoided.

The second type of advice concerns the appearances of others. She was to be cautious of men who, in seeking her attentions, would make themselves seem more interesting than they were. She must even look for the most subtle indications that a man was seeking to make himself out to be of a higher station than in fact he was, including 'if he signs his name with a smart flourish'.<sup>32</sup> Other parts of the collection describe in detail the various ways in which both men and women in Ballston would strike poses and put on airs. The most credible men as potential suitors would be the most dull and unappealing ones. To protect herself from potential rakes, she might consider attaching herself to a much older single woman, who would be well-versed in the unwritten rules of conduct and keep the wrong kind of men away. Finally, however, the letter ends with a twist: the uncle is well aware that Myra will find these rules ridiculous and

that reading them with her friends might bring them some amusement. He fully expects her to ignore them and expresses the hope that she will return home with many suitors.

In Pymont, Sponagel's protagonist has no such guide but arrives naïvely on his own. In his case, it is his inability to understand the unwritten rules of conduct that leads to his misfortunes, and a thread of status anxiety runs throughout the entire narrative. Even on his arrival, he feels compelled to sign his name deceptively with a small, tell-tale letter 'v' before his surname (short for von, which would indicate a noble status he did not possess), and episodes that involve mistaking the status of others and finding himself in over his head socially speaking drive the entire narrative. Even the published rules of the spa, once he finds them posted in his hotel, are of no use to him as they are so vaguely stated as simply to provide a source of greater consternation. For example, he is deeply concerned that only people who are respectable in appearance are allowed on the promenade, but also notes that a number of liverymen – who, like all servants, were not permitted there – are better dressed than he is. Being unaware lands him in his final predicament. He has a final stab at engaging in proper spa sociability by attending a ball after finding an invitation pinned to his hotel door. Yet, misunderstanding the coded invitation, he does not realise that instead of a ball, he has found his way to a high-stakes game of Faro, and, in trying first to keep up appearance of knowing his way around this noble pastime nearly loses everything he owns. It is only at that moment that his better-versed friend intervenes to rescue him.

In both satires, appearances clearly matter and are often intentionally deceptive. Each, however, takes place within a different social setting with a different understanding of the freedom of behaviour in the spa. All this means that posturing is also different. The Admonitory Epistles notes that in the ostensibly egalitarian society of a young United States, the majority of visitors putting on airs of being of higher status and generally wealthier than they were. But their manners would often betray their lack of refinement, no matter what boosters of the spa might say. In Pymont, the spontaneous freedom that Schopenhauer found somewhat lacking in English spas also came with its own difficulties. Without a Master of Ceremonies to regulate and maintain a certain discipline, there were ample opportunities for

misunderstandings and social faux pas which, as Möser suggested, could cause considerable discomfort to middle-class guests anxious to belong.

This is not to suggest that sociability at spas in the absence of a Beau Nash-like figure was a complete free-for-all. The hierarchical society at Pymont, still governed by a strong sense of place in the (ständische) order, and yet confused by the blurring of the strict boundaries characteristic of the spa, provided rich material for satire of a naïf out of their element, an experience with which many of Sponagel's readers could surely identify. Ballston, on the other hand, seems to suggest a heterotopia in which, with the strict hierarchies of birth reduced (though certainly not eliminated entirely), the importance of posturing and discernment were elevated to a degree of importance greater still than in the spas of Europe.

This brief examination of spa culture in two locations somewhat peripheral to the spa world (at least to the spa world commonly addressed in scholarship in English) suggests that spa culture was a complex, transnational phenomenon with both common elements and practices as well as local ways of developing and expressing these. Many of these commonalities can be understood under the notion of the blurred boundaries of a heterotopia. The strictures of social conventions might be modified or suspended, yet not abolished entirely, and replaced with a set of rules specific to the spa, which required guidance to navigate. Similarly, the binary between nature and culture was a diffuse one, as one might even say that the existence of the spa itself was reliant on the natural environs, and many of its cultural practices and rituals were deeply intertwined with nature. Against that backdrop, regional or local spa cultures developed, yet with awareness of developments in other places and countries. Travel by individuals, some quite prominent, and literature in many forms helped to spread awareness of the practices of spa culture internationally, supporting the flow of ideas between centres.

## Notes

1. See M. Foucault and J. Miskowiec, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, 16:1 (1986), 22–7. For spas as heterotopic spaces, see A. Köhler, 'Pymont von verschiedenen Seiten betretend: Zum literarischen Umgang mit der Heterotopie Badeort um 1800',

*Publications of the English Goethe Society*, 84:1 (2015), 48–62; J. Steward. ‘The Role of Inland Spas as Sites of Transnational Cultural Exchange in the Production of European Leisure Culture (1750–1850)’, in P. Borsay, J. H. Furnée (eds), *Leisure Cultures in Urban Europe, c. 1700–1870: A Transnational Perspective* (Manchester, 2016), pp. 224–59; U. Lotz-Heumann, *The German Spa in the Long Eighteenth Century* (New York and London, 2022).

2. C. Anstey, *The New Bath Guide*, ed. A. Cossic-Péricarpin (Bern, 2010).
3. G. C. Sponagel, *Meine viertägigen Leiden im Bade zu Pyrmont* (1809; Pyrmont, 1824), available online at the Hathi Trust, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hn6a4p>; S. Senex [W. Irving?], *Literary Picture Gallery, and Admonitory Epistles to the Visitors of Ballston-Spa* (Ballston Spa, 1808). I would like to acknowledge the kind and generous help of Elizabeth Sudduth, Associate Dean for Special Collections at the University of South Carolina Libraries in Columbia, South Carolina, for scanning this rare item. Incomplete sets are held by, for example, the American Antiquarian Society and the Boston Athenaeum.
4. Sophie Vasset, in her recent study of British spas, correctly points out how research on spas has generally underestimated the healing element of spa visits, writing that ‘[t]he association of spas with pleasure gardens and early tourism may have resulted in some neglect of the genuine physical distress of spa visitors and the partial relief that the sick seemed to obtain from the water treatment’. Seeking in part to counter this tendency to discount curing as an excuse for pleasure, the first two chapters of her monograph are rightly devoted to medical treatment using mineral waters in spas. S. Vasset, *Murky Waters: British Spas in Eighteenth-Century Medicine and Literature* (Manchester, 2022).
5. P. Borsay, ‘Georgian Bath: A Transnational Culture’, in P. Borsay and J. H. Furnée (eds), *Leisure Cultures in Urban Europe, c. 1700–1870: A Transnational Perspective* (Manchester, 2016), p. 95.
6. A. Barbeau, *Life and Letters at Bath in the XVIIIth Century* (London and New York, 1904), p. 308.
7. R. Kuhnert, *Urbanität auf dem Lande: Badereisen nach Pyrmont im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1984).
8. An example might be a letter dated June 1725 at Kew, from Sophia, Countess of Lippe and Buckenbourg to Lord Charles Townshend, then in Hanover, which begins with a reference to

the ‘bon effect des Eaux de Pyrmont’, The National Archives, London, State Papers collections, SP43/128, or a letter from Lord Townshend in Pyrmont to the Duke of Bolton from July of that same year, reporting that ‘[t]he King drinks the Waters; is in perfect health and extreme good humour and I hope we shall bring his Majesty home at least, as he was when he left St. James’s’ (SP43/126, Part 1). Other asides and brief discussions of the waters can be found in other items of correspondence in SP43/126 and 128.

9. See for example P. D. Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, letter of 30 March 1759, Letters to his Son, 1759–65, Project Gutenberg eBook, available at <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3359/pg3359.html>.
10. See, for example, *Stamford Mercury*, 5 July 1722, announcing the arrival of Pyrmont water in London, or the *Newcastle Courant* of 14 May 1743, announcing a ‘Fresh parcel of Pyrmont Water’, available through the *British Newspaper Archive*, available at <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>.
11. J. J. Cartwright (ed.), *The Travels through England of Dr. Richard Pococke, Successively Bishop of Meath and of Ossory during 1750, 1751, and later years* (Westminster, 1889), vol. 2, p. 67; a much richer account is contained in the manuscripts held by the British Library, London, MS 22985 vol. VIII, 1736–37, which was evidently not thought particularly interesting to editors of published collections of Pococke’s letters and journals.
12. J. Schopenhauer, *Reise durch England und Schottland* (Leipzig, 1826), vol. 2, pp. 22–3, available online at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, <https://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/details/bsb11300347>
13. Letter from J. Möser to Matthias Marcard, 1784, in J. Möser, W. F. Sheldon, H.R. Jarck, T. Penners and G. Wagner, *Briefwechsel* (Hannover, 1992), p. 659, quoted in U. Lotz-Heumann, *The German Spa in the Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 248.
14. Such fragments of evidence clearly point to contacts and exchanges between Pyrmont and Bath at the very least, and they were undoubtedly not limited to these two locales. At the same time, the limited scope of the information supplied by these sources constitutes a substantial research problem. Finding sufficient documentary evidence or first-hand accounts that would provide greater insight into the parallels and peculiarities of the culture of spa sociability in each of these places requires detective work and sometimes a bit of luck. The evidence that

- does exist tends to be sparse and, even when taken as a whole, insufficient for drawing too many conclusions
15. J. P. Seip, *A Brief and Distinct Account of the Mineral Waters of Pymont [...] Extracted from a Treatise on This Subject Publish'd some Time Ago, in the German Language, by the Learned Dr. John Philip Seippius [...] By George Turner, M.D.* (London, 1733). A second edition appeared in 1734 and others later in the century until it was eventually replaced by Marcard's work. Seip's original German edition, *Neue Beschreibung der Pymontischen Gesund-Brun[n] en* (Hanover, 1717), was also published in several editions, including a 1719 reprint and a 1750 reissue. A second volume, *Pymontsche Krancken-Geschichte*, dedicated to patient case studies appeared in 1737.
  16. H. M. Marcard, *Bescheibung von Pymont* (Leipzig, 1784); *Description de Pymont* (Leipzig, 1785); *A Short Description of Pymont* (London, 1788).
  17. Lotz-Heumann, *The German Spa in the Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 11, 58.
  18. A. Cossic-Péricarpin, Introduction to *The New Bath Guide* by Anstey, pp. 70–5.
  19. G. C. Sponagel, *Des Veters Feldzug in die Seebäder Doberan. Parodie auf Schillers Glocke: Das Lied vom Wächter* (Hannover, 1826); 'Georg Christian Sponagel', obituary in *Neuer Nekrolog der Deutschen* 8,1. 1830 (1832) (Weimar, 1832), p. 188, available online at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, <http://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/title/6051442/ft/bsb10070857?page=240>
  20. *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände, Intelligenz-Blatt* No. 23, 1826, p. 90. The full passage reads: 'Wer des Verfassers "Leiden in Pymont" kennt, unter durch den leichten Humor, mit welchem sie erzählt wurden, sich die Grillen eines Tags verscheuchte, der wird rasch auch nach diesem neuen Werkchen der heiteren Laune greifen. Des Verfassers Darstellungsgabe, sein Talent: kleine Tagesbegebenheiten komisch aufzufassen, die lächerliche Seite herauszukehren, sie mit Satyre zu würzen, ist den Freunden seiner Muse zu bekannt, als daß solche einer Empfehlung noch bedürfte. Außerdem portraitirt wer gar trefflich, und mancher Leser begegnet vielleicht überrascht alten Bekannten.' Available online at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, <https://api.digitale-sammlungen.de/iiif/presentation/v2/bsb10531692/canvas/937/view>

21. C. D. Warner, *Washington Irving* (Boston, 1885), p. 51, available online at the Hathi Trust <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000114590379>
22. The one known complete set is held by the University of South Carolina libraries in Columbia, South Carolina. Other partial holdings are found at the American Antiquarian Society (which in the bibliographical entry in WorldCat lists Irving as an author), and the Boston Athenaeum.
23. Sponagel, *Meine viertägigen Leiden im Bade zu Pyrmont*, p. 173. Orig.: 'Ich will mir gern Alles gefallen lassen'.
24. Senex, *Literary Picture Gallery*, vol. 1, p. 4.
25. Sponagel, *Meine viertägigen Leiden im Bade zu Pyrmont*, p. 233. Orig.: 'weil mir schon die so benannte Brunnenfreyheit höchst verdächtig vorkam'.
26. The waters of Pyrmont and Saratoga are fine examples of this but English spas were also part of this phenomenon. For an interesting discussion of the rise and fall of Epsom and the link to the reputation of its waters, see A. Sakula, 'The Waters of Epsom Spa', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians*, 16.2 (1982), pp. 124–8.
27. Anstey, *The New Bath Guide*, Letter VI.
28. It should be noted that open basins were common in German spas throughout the seventeenth century but were replaced by the 'drinking cure' and bathing in private over the eighteenth.
29. W. Irving, 'Style at Ballston', in *Salmagundi; or, The Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, esq.* [pseud.] and others (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2005, digital reproduction of the print edition, New York, 1860), p. 322, available online through the University of Michigan Libraries: <http://name.umdl.umich.edu/ACB0546.0001.001>
30. Senex, *Literary Picture Gallery*, vol. 1, p. 4.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 7.