

*TOUR
THROUGH
ENGLAND*

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Izabela Czartoryska
née Flemming

TOUR THROUGH ENGLAND

*Diary of Princess Izabela Czartoryska
from travels around England and Scotland
in 1790*

Edited with an introduction by Agnieszka Whelan
Translated by Agnieszka Whelan and Zdzisław Żygulski jun.



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On the cover

Alexander Roslin, *Portrait of Izabela Czartoryska, 1774*, Fundacja Książat Czartoryskich

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Professor Zdzisław Żygulski jun. in the courtyard of the Princes Czartoryski Museum in Cracow, 18 August 2006, fot. A. Grzybowski

In Memoriam Professor Zdzisław Żygulski jun.

Preface

Few Polish visitors to London in the eighteenth century could equal the status and recognition of Princess Izabela Czartoryska (1746–1835), the wife of Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski (1734–1823). Izabela was vastly rich, a cousin of the Polish king and the female face of the most important Polish political faction, called the Familia. She was a major personality in her own right on the social and political scene. A consummate animator of public spectacles, theatrical plays and a master choreographer of the patriotic gesture she relished the role of the engaged political activist promoting her family's goals and interests in a very public style.

Often on the move, she travelled the vast territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and visited the courts of Europe, so there would have been nothing unusual about her

spending a year in London with her eldest son Adam Jerzy at her side. However, 1790 was not the time for her to be away from Poland. The Great Sejm was in session, war seemed inevitable and the country's very survival was in doubt, and yet Princess Izabela was sent to England as a chaperone for the twenty-year-old Adam Jerzy (1770–1861), to ensure that he would complete his education, introduce himself as a future statesman to the world and start his public career on the right foot. This proved to be a year of veritable exile, away from all the developments back home. They anxiously watched the gathering storm, frustrated and constrained in their daily schedules. While Adam took intensive instruction in British constitutional law, Izabela went on excursions around London, acquired books and objects of historical interest and cultivated a few intimate female friend-

ships. The routine changed in June, when the mother and son made a tour of England and Scotland. This journey was meant to be the crowning finale of Adam's six-month study, a survey of industry, culture and natural scenery, and an introduction to the people responsible for the economic and cultural achievements of Britain. It was a prodigious expedition: the pair, accompanied by a small entourage, crisscrossed three thousand kilometres, from the southernmost Isle of Wight to Blair Atholl in the north and from Bristol in the west to Edinburgh in the east. They saw factories, gardens, cities, mines, prisons, waterfalls, universities and caves, lakes and agricultural wastelands. Both Izabela and Adam Jerzy kept diaries on the road. His no longer exists, hers, remarkably, survived wars and relocations of the archives and is now preserved in the Czartoryski Library in Cracow. The manuscript, still in its original red morocco binding with an embossed gold title in English *Tour through England*, is a unique record of the aesthetic experiences and foreign contacts. Everything about it is extraordinary when we consider what was to come: the creation of the cultural centre at the family seat at Puławy, the reversal of the Czartoryskis' fortunes and the loss of Polish independence.

Princess Izabela is remembered today primarily as the patron of poets and artists based

at Puławy and as the creator of Poland's first national museum there (1800). She placed her collections in two pavilions in her newly designed landscape garden (1790–1831). In its time Puławy was one of the most admired gardens in Poland. Until 1831, when Czartoryska was driven from there, her estate attracted visitors for lessons in the history of a country, which no longer enjoyed its own independent existence. Undoubtedly, for the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the Puławy estate provided a visual template for the resolution of private and communal feelings in the space of a natural garden.

In London, Princess Izabela had only started thinking about the garden in Puławy. Similarly, her collecting passion was just beginning to emerge. The tour around England and Scotland was therefore a pivotal opportunity to gather ideas and inspirations for the future.

The diary gives an insight into the extensive personal links between the Czartoryski family and a wide network of British industrialists, scientists and landowners. Adam Jerzy responded to the introductions with engaged curiosity. The encounters proved to be the meetings of kindred minds and were maintained and cultivated well past the initial visits.

In the lamentable absence of his notes, we need to think of this voyage as Izabela's journey.

The *Tour through England* is a record of her observations and impressions, ranging from small memory prompts to longer passages of developed reflections, diligently penned every day. However, what she does not write about is almost as interesting as what she does. There is no mention of the political situation in Poland, no trace of the anxieties troubling her throughout the journey, no indication of her serious bouts of depression, no explanations of the frequent arguments, and nothing that would allow us to know her as a person in the tradition of a personal memoir. To learn of the emotional turmoil of the Polish travellers we need to turn to the confidential passages in the letters Izabela wrote to her daughter Maria Wirtemberska and her friend Konstancja Dembowska. Clearly, Izabela did not consider her diary a private notebook to record a successful exposition of the self.

More troubling is the fact that the diary does not attempt to critique any of the serious problems caused by the rapid industrialization. For the first time the Poles experienced the wide-ranging changes brought by the industrial revolution and talked to the very people responsible for these transformations. There is no record of meetings about industrial ethics; nor do we hear of enclosures ever being mentioned in conversations with landowners,

despite the visible hardships. Similarly, there is no discussion of the campaign for the abolition of slavery, which was not only the most contested social and political issue of the day but also directly affected the very people the Poles befriended on the journey. One must remember, however, that Czartoryska travelled in a semi-official capacity as a princess, as the cousin of the Polish king, and a landowner equal to the British aristocracy. Her contacts with the British were primarily as the mother of the future statesman and a representative of Poland in a difficult time. While we can expect that her role elicited certain restraint in conversations, it is surprising to see it in the diary as well. It is evident that Czartoryska exercised a disciplined self-control. For her private views on these issues, we need to look to the letters addressed to her husband, but even then, some topics were reserved for private conversation.

In the end, the diary tells us less about England at the end of the eighteenth century than it does about Polish desires and aspirations at the last moment before the historic catastrophe. Three years later, Poland will undergo the Second Partition, followed by the Kościuszko Insurrection and the Third Partition in 1795. The Czartoryskis would not be able to implement ideas gathered in England and the fam-

ily's role in the improvements of the country would diminish significantly. By 1831, with the emigration of the aristocracy, it would disappear altogether. The journal is an echo of unfulfilled ambitions, a catalogue of lost opportunities.

Notes on editing

Czartoryska wrote the diary in French with some Polish and English phrases. The entries begin with a short mention of the trial of Warren Hastings on 6 June 1790 in London. The records of travels around England and Scotland start on 9 June 1790 and end on 28 August in London. The notes on the tour are written in ink (pages 1–95), they are followed by an introduction in pencil (pages 133–139), a list of names with comments in English (pages 165–169), five drawings and a page with preserved dried flowers (page 129). The incorrect notation of personal names and geographical locations has been amended and given in modern spelling. Similarly, the works of art mentioned in the text have been given modern titles and correct attribution. The original notation has been preserved only in the last section of the diary, in the list of places and individuals, which was written by Czartoryska in English.

Czartoryska entitled her diary the *Tour through England*, reflecting the eighteenth century custom of referring to the whole of Britain as England. The editor used both terms England and Britain in commentaries with an understanding that they both refer to the whole of the country.

Acknowledgments

Editing of Czartoryska's diary has been a journey of its own, during which I incurred a debt of gratitude to individuals and institutions. Above all, I am thankful to the late Professor Zdzisław Żygulski jun. It was my distinct privilege and pleasure to begin a collaboration with him on the translation of this diary and my deep regret that he did not live to see it completed. He was a scholar of unequalled curiosity and breadth of knowledge, a delightful companion in conversations and a generous friend. I will miss him.

I am grateful to Professor Richard Butterwick Pawlikowski for very many stimulating debates, which have greatly enlarged and clarified my understanding of the times. His wisdom, knowledge, and generosity of spirit have been inspirational in my research into the life and times of Izabela Czartoryska. My thanks go also to Ewa Czepielowa, Curator of the

Prints and Drawings Department of the Czartoryski Museum, Bożena Chmiel and Barbara König, who kindly searched for the visual material for the book. Dr. Lawrence Keppie from the Hunterian Museum identified many items mentioned by Czartoryska, Dr. John Patterson from Magdalene College Cambridge paid detailed attention to Czartoryska's search for antiquities. I am grateful to the staff of the Czartoryski Library, the British Library, the Cambridge University Library, the British Museum, and the National Gallery in Dublin. My special thanks go to Professor Teresa

Grzybkowska, who spearheaded the publication of the diary, and to Professor Jerzy Malinowski, editor of the series, for his commitment and diligence in bringing this project to conclusion. Financial support from the Association of American University Women is gratefully acknowledged. Lastly, none of this would have been possible without my family, who were willing to trek with me the beauties of England in the footsteps of Princess Izabela, and without my husband's endless patience and inspiration.

Agnieszka Whelan,
Lanzhou, July 2015

In search of delightful prospects, industry and good government

Agnieszka Whelan

It has to be said from the start that Princess Izabela Czartoryska did not want to go to England. She considered her journey an exile, and wrote to her daughter Maria with desperation: 'Everything is ready for my journey. I am hoping irrationally for something to happen, so that I would stay. Nothing makes sense. I do not want to go on this voyage.'¹ In the introduction to the *Diary through England*, she rationalizes her attitude: 'I have never been greatly fond of travelling. My first journey was prompted by idle curiosity and a vague desire for change. This first time was

enough to dishearten me. But circumstances and the needs of my children have forced me to take to the road again.' Ostensibly, she was to accompany the nineteen-year-old Adam Jerzy to complete his education in England, the country synonymous with constitutional liberty and industrial progress. Adam Kazimierz had devised a detailed and rigorous program of study for his son, with the specific instruction that the young man would learn everything that could be useful to his native land. His father reminded Adam Jerzy that in time he would be 'repaying his debt to the position to which he was born.'²

¹ Izabela Czartoryska to Maria Wirtemberska (afterwards: I.Cz. to M.W.), Vienna, 17 May 1789, Czartoryski Library 6137, (afterwards: B.Cz.).

² Zofia Gołębiewska, *W kręgu Czartoryskich: upływy angielskie w Pałacach na przełomie XVIII i XIX wie-*

However, the timing of this educational voyage was not accidental and the news of Izabela's departure electrified the gossiping classes.³ The departure coincided with the early months of the Great Sejm 1788–1792. The whole of Warsaw knew of Izabela's intense involvement in the debates of the Sejm, albeit from the gallery, and her highly vocal attempts to influence the delegates. Her patriotic theatricals were famous and her public promotion of the national costume as a uniform for the army was the (satirical) talk of the town. Four thousand spectators piled into the Kasiński Garden to see her address the virtues of Stanisław Małachowski, Marshal of the Sejm, on his name day.⁴ It was largely due to her tireless campaigning that Adam Kazimierz had regained his parliamentary seat in 1788. Following the disastrous election of 1786 Izabela had vigorously energized the leaders of the opposition to the king and had emerged as one of their principal activists. She was adept

at coaxing large numbers of the local nobility to their side. At the same time she cultivated international contacts, visiting the courts of Vienna and Paris in 1787.⁵ In July 1788 she singlehandedly hosted a summit of the opposition leaders in her family residence at Puławy in the absence of Adam Kazimierz, who was in Prussia trying to rally support.⁶ Together with the other main personalities of the opposition—Szczęsny Potocki, Stanisław Kostka Potocki, Branicki and Crown Field Hetman Rzewuski—she plotted a confederacy and planned a secret organization, called by them the Quattuorvirate, the purpose of which was to rally votes for the opposition. She would have a substantial role in it, albeit in her husband's shadow. She staged for the opposition supporters a play *The Spartan Mother*, partly of her own making, where she successfully styled herself as the patriotic mother and a moral force propelling the country to heroic

³ She even met with Marie-Antoinette in the Petit Trianon, primarily to deliver to her letters from Joseph II. In Paris she visited her son Adam Jerzy, who was staying with his aunt Izabela Lubomirska. She also gave birth there to her youngest daughter Cecylia Beydale, the only child not claimed by Adam Kazimierz as his own.

⁴ Jerzy Michalski, 'Sejmiki poselskie 1788 roku,' in: *Studia historyczne z XVIII i XIX wieku*, ed. by Jerzy Michalski (Warsaw: Stentor, 2007), vol. 1, pp. 217–284.

battles and victories.⁷ The crowd was her element; she was skilled at influencing throngs of followers and at manipulating their patriotic feelings to her family's political advantage.

Now however, just when all the parliamentary excitement had begun, this politically engaged woman was asked to leave for England. Her presence had obviously become a burden. As the session of the Sejm progressed, the opposition coalition rapidly fragmented and alliances shifted. Izabela's ardent agitation and pro-Prussian enthusiasm led the king to suspect that she was planning to place her daughter and son-in-law on the Polish throne, after he had been eliminated.⁸ By the spring of 1789 it seemed that Izabela's divisive theatricality lost Adam Kazimierz more support than it gained.⁹ In May 1789, as the first feel-

ers were made between the opposition leaders and the monarch, Czartoryski decided to discreetly remove both his wife and his son from the scene: her as a liability, him as an easy target for political wrangling in the unstable situation.¹⁰ She was unwilling, but did as her husband wished. Over the following year abroad, she repeatedly asked to come back, but did not return until her husband agreed.

As could be expected though, Izabela frequently voiced her disappointment at having to leave a drama in which she had such an intense emotional involvement. She feared that in England she would be 'of no interest to anyone,' far from all that gives interest to life.¹¹ Still, she considered her absence a necessary development, even as a sacrifice on her part in the interest of the country.¹² She deferred to her husband's judgment. 'I swear to you,' she wrote to her confidante Konstancja

⁷ The most comprehensive account of the performance of *Matka Spartanka* is given in Alina Aleksandrowicz, 'Sejm Czteroletni i Konstytucja 3 Maja w kręgu Puław,' in: *Rok monarchii konstytucyjnej. Pięćmiennictwo polskie lat 1791–1792 wobec Konstytucji 3 Maja*, ed. by Teresa Kostkiewiczowa (Warsaw: PAN, 1992), pp. 195–249.

⁸ Jerzy Michalski, 'Opozycja magnacka i jej cele w początkach Sejmu Czteroletniego,' in: *Sejm Czteroletni i jego tradycje*, ed. by Jerzy Kowecki (Warsaw: PWN, 1991), vol. 1, pp. 50–62.

⁹ See Edmund Rabowicz, *Zagadki Sejmu Czteroletniego* (Warsaw: Kancelaria Sejmu, 1996). An anonymous

mous satire accused her of inflaming the nation to reveal with her and for her.

¹⁰ Emanuel Rostworowski, *Ostatni król Rzeczypospolitej. Geneza i upadek Rzeczypospolitej* (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1966), pp. 168–173; Richard Butterwick, *Polska Rewolucja a Kościół katolicki*, trans. Marek Ugniewski (Cracow: Arcana, 2012), pp. 460–463.

¹¹ I.Cz. to M.W., Vienna, 6 October (1789), B.Cz. 6137.

¹² I.Cz. to M.W., n.d., Middleton, B.Cz. 6137.

Dembowska from England, 'that there is not a single thing in the world that I would not do for my husband [back home], but perhaps there are circumstances or ideas which make my husband prefer that I should be absent.'¹³ She obviously suspected the true reason for her exile, but it was never spoken about between husband and wife. Their son Adam Jerzy was equally eager to return to Poland to join the armed forces at home; he even completed his studies in an exemplary manner specifically to please his father. In August 1790 Adam Kazimierz relented, allowed his wife to return, but forbade his son to come before the elections for the 1790 Sejm were over. Concerned about her son's resentment towards his father, Izabela decided to stay in England and smooth the strained relationship between 'the two people she loved most.' In her own words,

¹³ Konstancja Dembowska née Narbutt grew up in Powązki as a companion to Izabela's children. Konstancja accompanied Maria to Belgard and Treptow in Pomerania in the first year of Maria's marriage. Konstancja and her husband Józef Dembowski settled near Puławy in Pożóg and then in 1798 Bronice and Klementowice. Leon Dembowski, *Moje wspomnienia* (Petersburg: K. Grendyszyński, 1898), vol. 1 pp. 9–14. Jan Zbigniew Pacholński, 'Dembowski Józef, in *Pol-ski słownik biograficzny* (Cracow: PAN, 1939–1946), 5, pp. 92–93. I.Cz. to K.D., Manchester, 17 August (1790), B.Cz. 6107.

she sacrificed her own happiness for her duty as a mother and a wife.¹⁴

There is nothing like Poland: The prelude to the tour

Izabela, Adam Jerzy and their small entourage left Poland on 26 September 1789. They travelled with Major Sebastian Orłowski, the former tutor of Adam Jerzy, the librarian Franciszek Kozłowski, a maid Konstancja, and Kazio, Izabela's favourite young Cossack servant. A melancholy mood descended almost immediately and Izabela acutely longed to be back at home. They travelled through Vienna, Switzerland and Paris reaching London on 10 January 1790.¹⁵ Czartoryska very quickly set up a routine for herself, taking English, music and embroidery lessons.¹⁶ She visited residences on the Thames, Twickenham and Richmond, engaged James Savage

¹⁴ I.Cz. to K.D., 24 August (1790), B.Cz. 6107.

¹⁵ On the Swiss part of the journey see: Alina Aleksandrowicz, 'Izabela Czartoryska szlakiem bohaterów „Nowej Heloizy”, *Siècle de Rousseau et sa postérité: mélanges offerts à Ewa Rządowska* (1998).

¹⁶ John Walker gave English lessons. The Puławy library contains three books by Walker on the English language and elocution, purchased by Adam Kazimierz and Adam Jerzy. On her purchases see: Gołębiowska, *W kręgu Czartoryskich*, pp. 55–56.

as a gardener for Pulawy, followed theatrical events, visited art auctions, bookshops and Boydell's Shakespeare art gallery in Pall Mall.¹⁷ Invitations to balls flowed in and Izabela was definitely in demand, but she found the society 'devastatingly boring, cold and monotonous.' In her own house at Dover Street she did away with formality and introduced an atmosphere of Polish affability, but even her imaginative receptions did nothing to diminish her misery:

I feel sad here, the climate contributes to the feeling and my imagination does nothing to diminish my melancholy. If *amour propre* would suffice I would be satisfied here, but, my dear friend, it is a long time since this thing held any joy for me and really my heart is dead among all of it here. When people say the most flattering things to me my imagination goes to Warsaw and to Pulawy.¹⁸

She suffered continuous headaches, lost weight and fell into one long depression. As early as April Czartoryska formed judgments on the British character; in common with many visitors, she maligned the weather and the manners:

¹⁷ For the most detailed account of Czartoryska's stay in England see: Gołbiewska, *W kręgu Czartoryskich*.

¹⁸ I.Cz. to M.W., 9 February (1790), B.Cz. 6137.

I can't get used to it here, not because I am blind to the beauties and charms of this country. On the contrary, I see them and admire them, but there are two things which I will never be able to accustom myself to: the climate and the people. One is humid to the extreme and the other is unspeakably cold, one is bad for my health, the other is damaging to my soul.¹⁹

Her critique extended to the whole way of life of the British aristocracy:

We, the others, lack some of these [advantages] but we have more joy in life, more gaiety, a much better climate and above all happiness in everything, happiness which shows itself in our character and sense of humour. Here boredom haunts the temperament, the lack of gaiety is very common, but once again Providence makes use of its secret [ways] and the English do not realize that they are often bored. He gives them the national pride to believe that all is well as it is.²⁰

She felt herself a stranger in a foreign land and addressed herself as an 'other,' even though this was her third stay in England. The previous two took place in 1768–69 and 1772–

¹⁹ I.Cz. to K.D., London, 3 April 1790, B.Cz. 6107. I.Cz. to M.W., 26 March 1790, 10–11 October, London, B.Cz. 6137.

²⁰ I.Cz. to K.D., London, 25 May 1790, London, B.Cz. 6107.



Fig. 1.
Portrait of Izabela
Czartoryska, by Maria
Cecilia Cosway, oil on
canvas, 1790, Fundacja
Książąt Czartoryskich

1774. Czartoryska continually noted that there is 'nothing like Poland,' where happiness is 'a measure of enjoyment and gaiety, sweet intimacy, natural ease, and what one might call the secret of good company.'²¹ These prejudicial judgments would have been well re-

²¹ I.Cz. to K.D., London, 4 June 1790, B.Cz. 6107.

ceived back home. Letters, after all, were read and re-read in diverse company, and therefore reaffirmed her self-styling as a patriot and her allegiances in Poland. Retreating from the world of London society, she attached herself to Lady Duncannon, sister of the Duchess of Devonshire, renewed her friendship with Frances Jersey, and formed a new bond with the artist Maria Cosway.²² Cosway painted a portrait of Izabela, an unusual work for her *oeuvre*, simplified to the point of austerity but at the same time having a quality of a delicate miniature (Figure 1).

We need to note that she formed the negative assessment of the London society before

²² She spent most of her time between the London houses of the latter two. I.Cz. to M.W., London, 4 January 1790, 9 January 1790, London, B.Cz. 6137. Frances, Countess Jersey, wife of George Bussy the 4th Earl Jersey, was soon to involve herself in a scandalous affair with the Prince of Wales. See: Violet Powell, *Margaret, Countess of Jersey: a biography* (London: Heinemann, 1978). Cosway was a close friend of Izabela Lubomirska. On the connections between Cosway and Lubomirska in Paris see: Gerald Barnett, *Richard and Maria Cosway: a biography* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1995), pp. 100–104. On Lubomirska's salon activities in Paris over her stays there see: Bożenna Majewska-Maszkowska, 'Mecenat Artystyczny Izabeli z Czartoryskich Lubomirskiej, 1736–1816' *Studia z Historii Sztuki* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1976), pp. 22–23, 64–65.

she embarked on the tour around England and Scotland in June 1790. Her attitude to the British and the stress of waiting for Adam Kazimierz's decision must have coloured the touring dynamics. At one point her homesickness even resulted in a fever when staying in Liverpool. She was so ill that she could not recognize faces or names, and then all her companions 'agreed that she should return to Poland.'²³ Other emotional crises followed on 17 August and 24 August in South Yorkshire, after the final decision to keep Adam Jerzy in England.²⁴ Nevertheless, despite the emotional strain, this was an extraordinary journey, leading to new perspectives and reassessments of old views.

On the road

The small company of travellers left London on 9 June 1790. Izabela and Adam Jerzy were accompanied by two tutors, Sebastian Orłowski and Simon L'Huillier, and by Richard d'Oraison, Adam Kazimierz's correspondent.

²³ I.Cz. to K.D., Liverpool, 6 July (1790), B.Cz. 6107.

²⁴ I.Cz. to K.D., Manchester, 17 August (1790), B.Cz. 6107.

Izabela had left with high expectations. Her family of Anglophiles encouraged her in the view that everything progressive, desirable and inspirational awaited her on the planned tour of the country. She wrote of this opportunity just before the journey:

I am leaving to see the country and its charming prospects where its affluence is the fruit of industry, industry is the fruit of freedom and freedom is the fruit of the government. I will see delightful landscapes, where Nature spreads herself in all her beauty.²⁵

The association of charming prospects with freedom and liberal government reflected the views not only of Adam Kazimierz—but by 1790 that connection had taken a firm root in English and French travel writing.²⁶ There was no reason for Czartoryska to expect anything else but the diffusion of ethical values onto the landscape.

²⁵ Agnieszka Whelan, 'Czuła dusza w krajobrazie postępu. Dziennik podróży Izabeli Czartoryskiej po Anglii i Szkocji', in *Ogród puławski w czasach księżny Izabeli oraz perspektywy jego zachowania przy zmianie funkcji* (Puławy: FWHOP, IUNG, 1999), pp. 36–54.

²⁶ For the association of gardens with liberty and national characteristics see H. J. Mullenbrock, 'The "Englishness" of the English landscape garden and the genetic role of literature: a reassessment', *Journal of Garden History*, 8 (1988), pp. 97–103.



Fig. 2.
Map of the roads of Great Britain, W. Faden,
1790, 2nd edition, with Czartoryska's journey
marked in red