‘Tell me what you do and I shall tell you who you are.’ We are reminded of this saying when considering the personality of François Chèvremont, an enthusiastic collector, a scholar and the author of two works on Jean-Paul Marat. From 1845 onwards throughout fifty years of patient research, Chèvremont assembled the most important collection of documents relating to the ‘Friend of the People’. His works are highly regarded and yet we know almost nothing about this man, who was born in 1824 and died in 1907, who lived in Paris in the Avenue de Clichy, before moving to Lizy-sur-Ourcq in the department of Seine-et-Marne. His destiny is, therefore, especially connected with that of his work and his collection. It is with the fate of the latter that we shall be concerned here.

Around 1880 François Chèvremont, then almost sixty, was extremely worried about keeping his collection together; he therefore sent various French libraries a form letter worded as follows:

Fig. 1. Jean Paul Marat; frontispiece engraving from Les Chaînes de l’esclavage (1833). 645.a.4
Dear Sir,

For thirty years I have been collecting everything relating to J.-P. Marat. Apart from the complete set of the scientific, philosophical and political works of the scholar, philosopher and journalist, today this collection consists of:

1° The seven original folio placards
2° The plan for criminal legislation reprinted by Marat’s widow
3° A considerable number of brochures and documents all relating to Marat
4° An important collection of engravings and drawings
5° Two paintings, a miniature, some medallion portraits, two copper engravings one of which is by Copia etc. etc.

Altogether these documents and objects represent an authentic part of our national history. I would be very disappointed if, after so much research, worry and study, this collection were to be dispersed at auction and so to speak lost.

You, Sir, understand the situation better than anyone else; that is why I am asking you to help me find a public or private library which would be prepared to acquire this valuable collection and keep it together as a single entity.

Yours truly,
F. Chèvremont
J.-P. Marat’s bibliographer
Lizy-sur-Ourcq (Seine-et-Marne)

Paris, ... 1880³

We do not know the results of this appeal or even the names of the recipients. We learn, however, that in 1885, at the time of the sale of the famous collection of Marat’s newspaper L’Ami du Peuple annotated by Marat himself, the situation was so difficult that Chevremont stated publicly that the main French libraries refused, not just to buy the collection, but even to accept it as a donation.

At the beginning of 1885 the newspaper La Justice printed the following letter from Chevremont:

8 January 1885

Dear Sir,

In your article entitled ‘L’AMI DU PEUPLE, annotated by Marat’ published in your newspaper LA JUSTICE on Saturday 3 January, you say ‘that it would be most regrettable if this set were to leave France, since other almost complete sets have already gone to the United States and England.’

Whose fault is it, if not that of the curators of our public libraries?

Believe me, Sir, I am well qualified to speak about the matter, being in full possession of the facts. There are in France, in particular in Paris, a few complete sets of Marat’s newspaper more or less free of any false issues; but no public library has a complete set of Jean-Paul Marat’s scientific, and especially political works.

In view of this regrettable and scandalous gap, and wishing to keep in France and especially in Paris what I consider to be a unique part of our national history, I have offered my set to the most important public libraries in Paris which have remained indifferent to my disinterested offers.
There is a reason for such unpardonable indifference which is that our conservative librarians too easily forget, perhaps without realizing, their main function, because of their antipathy towards Marat the revolutionary.

Yours truly,
F. Chèvremont

Over the initials ‘G.G.’ La Justice was constrained to comment:

We hope that the honourable men in charge of the Musée and Bibliothèque de la Ville de Paris will be prepared to welcome M. Chèvremont’s justified complaint. It is not a question of historical judgements and political preferences, it is a question of documents. Marat’s work is too important not to have its place in the Revolutionary collections of the Musée Carnavalet.5

Chèvremont is making a serious accusation here which is borne out by the facts. Once Marat’s annotated set of L’Ami du Peuple had gone abroad, he became determined that his own set of documents, still without a home, should not be broken up. No doubt convinced that official French bitterness against Marat would always be an obstacle, he slowly came round to the idea of donating it to a foreign institution. In the spring of 1898 he approached the British Museum:
Dear Sir,

If you are prepared to accept it I should like to donate to the British Museum my rich and unique collection of Marat's bibliographer to which I should like to add two framed paintings. A short summary will show you its historical, bibliographical and artistic importance.

The Chains of Slavery — A Philosophical [Essay] — De l'homme — An Essay on Glaets — An Enquiry — Sur le feu, l'électricité, la lumière — Un roman de coeur — Recherches physiques sur le feu — Découvertes sur la lumière — Recherches physiques sur l'électricité — Notions élémentaires d'optique — Mémoire sur l'électricité médicale — Les Charlatans modernes — Lettres de l'observateur Bon-Sens sur la catastrophe de Pilâtre de Rozier et Romain — Optique de Newton, traduction nouvelle — Mémoires académiques ou nouvelles découvertes sur la lumière — le Feu, l'Electricité, la Lumière translated from French into German — Eloge de Montesquieu — Offrande à la patrie et son Supplément — Dénunciation contre Necker et Nouvelle dénonciation contre Necker — La Constitution ou Projet de déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen — Plan de législation criminelle — The same work, translated into Spanish — Les Chaines de l'esclavage — Le Moniteur patriote, n° 1 and unique — Le Junius français, 13 numbers, complete — [Marat's Journal without the forged issues and other writings published under Marat's name, his title 'Friend of the People' and his printing-house]: Le Publiciste, L'Ami du Peuple, Le Journal de la République and bound in with the journal several very rare papers and reprints of several numbers. In a boxed volume (with the same binding) in the form of an indispensable supplement, 19 catalogued pieces — Marat, Index — Marat, Esprit politique — In a special box: seven placards, a large folio containing the political placards of Marat, l'Ami du Peuple... A first edition which is totally unique, to which has been added a copy of the extremely rare poster Marat, l'Ami du Peuple aux braves Parisiens of which the only known copy is in the British Museum.

In addition to these precious documents there are the third and fourth editions of Les Chaines de l'esclavage and the first edition of Marat's novel called Les Aventures du jeune comte Potowski (its actual title), and finally De la presbytie accidentelle republished by Georges Pilotelle.

Historical documents relating to J.-P. Marat

25 large 8° boxed volumes, with the same binding as the Oeuvres. N° 1 Simone and Albertine. 2 and 3 Forged writings. 4 and 5 Forged issues. 6 and 7 Documents on legislative, administrative and judicial matters. 8 and 9 Marat and his contemporaries. 10 to 14 Death of Marat. 15 to 20 Marat and the moderns. (20a, a supplementary box.) 21 and 22 Bibliography. 23 and 24 Isography (facsimiles of handwriting). In n° 25 four documents, two of which are unpublished.

Historical iconography and chalcography

In a large box, a curious collection of portraits of Marat, historical documents, allegories and caricatures. The whole collection is classified by genre according to my Marat, Index.

In the same box, a fine copper engraving by Copia after the drawing by Louis David, depicting Marat dying. Another copper engraving, done by photogravure, for a portrait of Marat for my Marat, Esprit politique.

Yours truly,
F. Chèvremont

47
Registered at the British Museum as item no. 683 on 4 March 1898, this letter bears
the words, ‘Mr Garnett to give an opinion’, which Garnett must have done quite
quickly, since on 24 March 1898 Chèvremont wrote again to the Museum:

Dear Sir,

Further to your letter of the 18th and in reply to your questions, in view of the importance of
the collection which I am presenting to the British Museum, I wish this collection, to which
nothing must be added or removed, to retain the title of the Collection of Marat’s bibliographer. And
if possible it should only be consulted in the Large Room, in view of the large number of loose
papers, both printed and manuscript.

As regards the portfolio containing the collection of engravings and drawings, would you be
so good as to send it to the Department of Prints and Drawings, with the same title of the
Collection of Marat’s bibliographer. As for the 2 framed oil paintings, the one measuring 30 cm
by 38 cm shows Marat writing his journal in his cellar. 1793 (An original with no copy.) The
other, measuring 52 cm by 58 cm, shows Marat in his study. 1793 (An original of which the
Musée historique de la Ville de Paris has only a mediocre copy.) I hope that you will send these
two paintings to a museum in London as a donation from Marat’s bibliographer. If you require
any further information I shall be happy to provide it.

Yours truly,

F. Chèvremont

In possession of this information, the Librarian was able to report as follows to the
Trustees at their meeting on 2 April 1898:

The Principal Librarian laid before the Board a report by Mr Garnett, 22nd March, upon an
offer by Mons. F. Chèvremont to present to the Trustees his collection of works by, and relating
to J.-P. Marat, comprising:
a) Printed books, pamphlets, placards, etc.
b) Manuscripts
c) Engravings
d) Two oil paintings;
the donations to be kept separate and labelled ‘collection du bibliographe de Marat’.

Letters from M. Chèvremont, 2nd and 24th March, were submitted by the Principal Librarian,
who stated that he was in correspondence with the donor with regard to the practicability of
separating the manuscripts, if numerous, from the printed books. The Trustees authorised the
acceptance of the proposed donation, subject to M. Chèvremont’s consent being obtained to the
distribution, if necessary, of the different sections of the collection among the departments of the
Museum.

The correspondence between Chèvremont and the Principal Librarian had two problems
to resolve: that of the paintings, and that of the manuscripts and printed books (the
separation of the prints and drawings having already been agreed to by Chèvremont). On
29 March Maunde Thompson had written, ‘You are no doubt aware that we divide our
collections into departments, and that printed books are placed in the Library and all
written papers and documents in the Dept. of MSS. I should therefore wish to ask
whether you would have any objection to this separation of books and MSS. of your collection. Of course if the MSS. consist of only comparatively small numbers they might be kept with the books, but if they are numerous, the Trustees would no doubt wish them to be placed in the Department of MSS.' To this, Chèvremont replied on 3 April 1898:

Dear Sir,

A few letters of correspondence, a few others here and there and five or six unpublished literary reviews concerning Marat and signed by his bibliographer, that is what I mean by manuscripts. In fact, it amounts to very little and they would lose a lot of their interest if they were separated from the other documents. I should therefore be most grateful if they could all be kept together.

In the hope that the Directors of the British Museum will appreciate a collection which, as far as I know, is quite unique from a bibliographical point of view.

Yours faithfully,
F. Chèvremont

Chèvremont's conciliatory tone suggests that he was trying to overcome any possible problems. Not wishing to delay any longer a process which he had started almost ten years earlier, he now decided to precipitate events by announcing the dispatch of his collection. At the time of sending the following letter, the most that he had received was an encouraging word from the Principal Librarian, but no official decision had been reached by the Trustees.

23 April 1898

Dear Sir,

Next Tuesday the 26th inst. I shall send off my collection of books, documents and engravings by rail to the British Museum. As it is of historical interest to keep the few manuscript pages scattered here and there I would prefer that they remain in their allotted place. With regard to the two paintings, I have decided to send them elsewhere.

Please convey to Mr Thompson my sincere thanks for the part he has played in this matter. If it is not too much to ask, I should be grateful if he could let me know in due course if the contents of the box have arrived in good condition.

Yours sincerely,
F. Chèvremont

Chèvremont seems fairly confident about the successful outcome of the project, the origins of which no doubt go back to his visits to the British Museum where he had copied out various documents which were unavailable in France. He was not without acquaintances in England, above all his friend the French exile Georges Pilotelle with whom he had stayed while in London. Chèvremont later gave him the two oil paintings mentioned above, as Belfort Bax points out in a note in his Marat, the People's Friend. On the arrival of the parcels in London, the Museum librarians drew up a list of their impressive new acquisitions:

The collection offered to the Trustees by Monsieur Chèvremont consists of
1. Fifty-six books and pamphlets by or attributed to Marat. Of these, twenty-five are not in the Library.

2. A set of ‘L’Ami du Peuple’ bound in eleven volumes, with two additional volumes of ‘Faux numéros’.
   The Museum possesses a complete set of the newspaper but has only a few of the false numbers bound with the rest of the set.

3. Portfolio containing seven placards issued by Marat. None of these are in the British Museum, which however possesses one placard not in M. Chèvremont’s collection.

4. Twenty-two volumes containing
   (a) 200 books and pamphlets relating to Marat, about 70 of which are not in the British Museum.
   (b) a collection of manuscripts, notes, letters, copies of documents, newspaper cuttings, etc relating to Marat and Simonne Evrard.

5. Portfolio containing about 300 engravings, photographs, etc which might be transferred to the Print Department, if it is considered desirable to do so.

Garnett’s report of 7 May was read at a meeting of the Museum’s Trustees on 14 May 1898. The Trustees approved the acquisition, endorsed its division between the
Department of Printed Books and the Department of Prints and Drawings, and directed that their thanks be given to the donor. Chèvremont had attained his object of preserving the essential unity of his collection. However, his wish that the printed books and manuscripts should not be consigned to separate departments of the Museum has had one unfortunate side effect. Although Chèvremont’s notes in his copies of Marat’s printed works are recorded in the General Catalogue of Printed Books, his own manuscript works have gone uncatalogued. A summary of the most important of these is therefore given in an Appendix to this article.

THE CLASSIFICATION AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION

The collection sent by Chèvremont included both bound and ‘boxed’ volumes, the latter containing the different working files. The method of classification followed by the British Museum, namely binding the boxed volumes as real volumes: MARAT 1 to MARAT 26, has preserved the original order of the collection. Chèvremont’s classification system stemmed directly from his research. He grouped items under headings according to the lines of inquiry on which he was engaged. More than a century later this allows us to understand Chèvremont’s progress after fifty years’ work on Marat.

The collection is above all a complete collection of the Works of Jean-Paul Marat, which is unequalled anywhere even today. Secondly, and even more important, the collection gives a detailed account of Marat’s presence in nineteenth-century newspapers, pamphlets and books. Chèvremont has followed the classification laid down in his Marat, Index du bibliophile ..., which is undoubtedly the best catalogue of the British Library collection. It is a catalogue raisonné, in which one must on the one hand check the items which Chèvremont was unable to acquire and, on the other, add those which he discovered between 1876 and 1898. Thirdly, the collection contains the manuscripts of several unpublished bibliographical articles by Chèvremont himself. His intimate knowledge of the writings of the Friend of the People has never been matched. We shall include this aspect of his work in our next edition of Chèvremont’s Articles et inédits. Finally, the many unclassifiable documents, press cuttings, reviews, manuscript letters, extracts of works and posters reflect Marat’s presence in the cultural life of nineteenth-century France. Three events in particular come to mind: the opening in 1847 at the Théâtre de l’Odéon of Ponsard’s Charlotte Corday, which was the subject of controversy and demonstrations; the exhibitions of David’s ‘Marat assassiné’ and the court case between Napoleon III and the painter’s grandson in which Chèvremont intervened as an expert on the side of Louis-Jules David; and Marat’s statue, the work of the sculptor Jean Baffier. Greeted as a masterpiece by the critics at the opening of the 1883 salon, at the same time it was the object of many spiteful attacks and was to spend twenty years being moved from square to square. It was later melted down by the Germans. If one adds to the collection the items from the British Library’s own holdings then it is clear that the British Library has the largest collection in the world of printed material relating to Marat.
Chevremont’s efforts have produced not merely a random assemblage but what is, in
effect, a collection raisonné. Historical tradition, which Chevremont had often criticized
on account of its flagrant inaccuracies concerning Marat, took its revenge by dismissing
him as an enlightened amateur, collector or even disciple bent on rehabilitating Marat’s
image. However, Chevremont’s work as exemplified by his Marat, Index or Marat,
Esprit politique supposes a rather different attitude. Going through his numerous files we
see the extent to which Marat’s bibliographer uses all the possible resources of historical
criticism.

For the bibliographer, each item added to the collection is a new file open to historical
investigation. In particular, one appreciates Chevremont’s remarks about the attribution
of works to Marat, a problem complicated by the impressive quantity of forged writings
and issues of Marat’s newspaper. One also notes the attention paid to the reputation of
the Friend of the People and to the nature of his particular role in the Revolution. These
two factors in their turn raise the central question of Marat’s legacy. Chevremont
attempted to refute some of Marat’s detractors – Lamartine, Michelet, Chéron de
Villiers – but also opposed the ideological vision which, adhering to the ‘golden legend’,
makes Marat an immediate, if sometimes rather naïve, precursor of socialism and
communism. Chevremont is convinced that Marat’s achievement in the Revolution
constituted a monument of national history which he considers his duty to rescue from the
shadow in which official historians were keeping it for purely ideological reasons. This
preoccupation was what led him to the title of ‘Marat’s bibliographer’.

THE LACASSAGNE COLLECTION

Apart from that in the British Library, there exists another significant Marat collection.
Known as the ‘Professor Lacassagne Collection’, this was bequeathed by the latter in
1921 to the Bibliothèque municipale in Lyons. It is generally thought that Lacassagne,
founder of the important school of criminal anthropology at Lyons, patiently collected
all this material on Marat because of his interest in this ‘violent, even murderous’
character, and also because of his spectacular end. Indeed, he published an article on
Marat’s assassination. However, the originator of the Lacassagne Collection proves
once again to be François Chevremont, for it had formerly belonged to his close friend
Georges Pilotelle.

Pilotelle has already been mentioned in the context of Chèvremont’s visit to London
when Chèvremont stayed at his house, Louvain Villa, at 16, Belsize Road, Swiss Cottage.
Condemned to death after the fall of the Paris Commune, Georges Raoul Eugène
Labadie, known by his artist’s name of Pilotelle, had been Director of the Ecole des
Beaux-Arts in Paris. Surprisingly none of the biographical entries about him in
dictionaries of painters and sculptors mentions his role in historical research. His
importance here rests on his discovery of Marat’s eighth placard, which he published in
collaboration with Chèvremont, and of the two medical tracts, written by Marat in
London in 1775–6, the second of which he translated. He then engaged on an extended
Parallèle

de
Charlotte Robespierre,

Simonne Evrard, née Marat.

Albertine Marat.

Dédié

à Mademoiselle Georges Pilotelle,

par

son très-respectueux

F. Chèremont.

le bibliographe de Marat.

19 février 1893.
study of Marat’s stay in England. This work, Marat en Angleterre, was never finished but an article on the subject was published in the Chronique médicale, which in 1900 and 1902 announced the forthcoming appearance of the work. However, after the publication in the same review of a final note by Pilotelle on the death of one of Marat’s great-grandnephews, we lose all trace of him.

When Chèvremont decided in 1898 to donate his collection to the British Museum he carefully copied a large number of his manuscripts for Pilotelle, whom he called ‘Marat’s new bibliographer’. He also gave him his two oil paintings and works of which he had two copies. But Chèvremont’s gift to Pilotelle must have consisted of more than these few pamphlets, for in December 1902 Pilotelle sold 123 volumes at Sotheby’s. However, his collection was later in the possession of the collector Henri Bourdin who offered it for sale and transferred a manuscript catalogue of it to Lacassagne on 18 March 1906.

No details are known of the transactions between Pilotelle and Bourdin on the one hand and between Bourdin and Lacassagne on the other. Pilotelle may well have been anxious that his Marat collection should be repatriated, and it seems possible that he used Bourdin, a reputed collector who was soon to become a bookseller, to prepare the way for the return to France of the works of an outlaw of the Revolution aided by an outlaw of the Commune. In any case, the presence in the Lacassagne Collection of works in Chèvremont’s characteristic binding, copies of his manuscripts addressed to Pilotelle, as well as four placards of Marat which partly duplicate the British Museum collection, is positive proof of Chèvremont’s central role in the formation of this collection.

If we except the fate of Marat en Angleterre of which no trace has been found, the two ‘bibliographers of Marat’, François Chèvremont and Georges Pilotelle, despite their isolation and their disregard by subsequent Marat scholars, have nevertheless succeeded in their attempt to bequeath their entire collections to posterity. In this year above all, which is the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Marat’s birth and the two hundredth of his death, historians of the Revolutionary Era can only be grateful for their achievement.

APPENDIX

A summary list of François Chèvremont’s manuscripts in the British Library, with pressmarks

1. Correspondence with M. Goupil-Louvigny, 1866–1867. 645.a.30 (file 9)
2. Comparison between Charlotte Robespierre and Simonne Evrard, Marat’s widow, and Albertine Marat, 1898. 645.a.30 (file 13)
4. ‘Erreurs et supercheries littéraires’, the manuscript continuation of an article in the Revue des sciences et des lettres. 645.a.51
5. The Marat legend according to his detractors. 16 pp. 645.a.51
6. Corrections to the *Marat inconnu* of Dr Cabanes, 1891. 25 pp. 645.a.51, 645.a.30 (file 12)
7. ‘Marat, philosophe spiritualiste’, 1897. 20 pp. 645.a.51
8. Refutation of Dr Robinet’s libels against Marat in his *Condorcet*, 1897. 30 pp. 645.a.51
9. The manuscript of Chèvremondt’s presentation of Marat’s placards. 13 pp. 645.a.54 (6)
10. Articles for the journal *Le Bibliophile français*, 1862. Altogether there are thirteen articles in manuscript of which only two were published. 645.a.54
11. A set of Marat’s political works belonging to his widow. A bibliographical journal. The manuscript of the text published as an appendix to Bougeart’s *Marat* and in Chèvremondt’s *Index*. 14 pp. 645.a.54
12. Corrections to Alfred Bougeart’s *Marat, l’Ami du Peuple*. 645.a.55
14. A critical article on Michelet’s *Histoire de la Révolution française*. 100 pp. 645.a.55

I wish gratefully to thank Grace Dempsey for assistance in my research for this article and for undertaking its translation.

1 At the beginning of *Marat, Index du bibliophile*... Chèvremondt tells with great feeling the story of the scholarly career of a workman. ‘My first steps in this career date from 1845; I was then about twenty-one years old... One day on my way to work I spotted on a second-hand bookstall *Discours et opinions sur le procès de Louis XVI, Les Chaînes de l’esclavage*, and several large untidy piles of books... I wanted to buy them all, but had only six francs...’

2 For the works of Chèvremondt, see his bibliographical appendix to A. Bougeart, *Marat, l’Ami du peuple* (Paris, 1865), and his own works: *Marat, Index du bibliophile*... (Paris, 1876) and *Marat, Esprit politique* (Paris, 1880), as well as his re-edition of *Les Plaçards de Marat* (1877, 1892). We hope to devote a forthcoming number of our *Chantiers Marat* to his unpublished works and articles scattered in newspapers and bibliographical journals.

3 This letter was published in 1911–12 in the *Revue des curiosités révolutionnaires* by Paul Giraud under the title ‘Le Bibliographe de Marat’ and with the following commentary: ‘The Thermidorian reaction did not entirely abolish the cult of the Friend of the People. Thinely disguised examples of it reappeared under Louis-Philippe. The proceedings of the 1830 government against the tailor and Marat editor Constant Hilbey have remained just as famous as those ordered against the Robespierre supporter Laponneraye. Finally, more recently, we have seen F. Chèvremondt, with the same enthusiasm and pious, tender care, perpetuate the cult of Marat and continue his rehabilitation. We know what his contribution to contemporary historical research has been. His collection of documents, some of them extremely rare, were of enormous help to him. After a lifetime spent collecting them, F. Chèvremondt was obliged in his old age to look for a buyer for all these riches which had left him in straitened circumstances. It was for this reason that he had printed the following circular to send to collectors and to French and foreign libraries. It may be useful to consider this short leaflet which can be added to the bibliography of the Friend of the People.’

Giraud ended the article as follows: ‘We know that in France whenever it is a question of buying fragments of illegible charters or cartloads of mouldy rotted parchments head librarians always find the money they need. But it is another matter when it is a question of saving what is known as “modern papers” in the scornful words of the gentlemen of the Ecole des Chartes. Who gives a damn about these useless
papers. As they do not go back as far as Philippe le Bel they cannot of course be of any interest. The poor bibliographer of Marat became bitter and disillusioned by his experience of these people. He was told to look elsewhere for a buyer. That is why scholars now have to make the journey to the British Museum in London if by any chance their research should lead them to an investigation of the life of the man who was banned from the Panthéon in 1794 and from the libraries of republican France a hundred years later.’

4 See, on this subject, Ch. Goetz and J. De Cock, *Marat corrigé par lui-même* (Brussels: Pôle Nord, 1990). This corrected edition of Marat’s newspaper now at the Bibliothèque nationale is one of the main tools for establishing the text of Marat’s *Oeuvres Politiques* (Brussels: Pôle Nord, 1989- ).

5 *La Justice*, 9 Jan. 1885.

6 We are grateful to Mrs Grace Dempsey of the British Library’s French Section and to Julian Conway of its Department of Manuscripts for access to Chèvremont’s letters. They are kept in the British Museum register of correspondence DH 4/72.

7 Copies of material from the Trustees’ Committee Minutes were made by Mrs Cathy Marsh of the British Museum, Central Archives. I wish also to acknowledge the valuable assistance received from Miss Janet Wallace, the British Museum Archivist, who found and transcribed the Museum’s copy of Maunde Thompson’s letter of 29 Mar. 1898 (Letter Books (General), vol. viii, f. 93). British Museum copyright material is printed by kind permission of the Trustees.

8 Richard Garnett’s report to the Trustees is with Chèvremont’s letters in DH 4/72. It bears the reference ‘COM 2 APR. 98’ in the top right-hand corner and corresponds to the minutes of this meeting. It reads: ‘Mr. Garnett has the honour to report to the Trustees that an offer has been received from Monsieur F. Chèvremont, author of several works on J. P. Marat, to present his collection of works by and relating to J. P. Marat to the Trustees. Although the Library already possesses a large collection of the literature of Marat, there are among the works offered by Monsieur Chèvremont several books, pamphlets and placards which are not included in the existing collection and which add considerably to its value. Monsieur Chèvremont proposes to add to his gift two paintings. If, as seems probable, these are oil paintings, they cannot be housed in the British Museum and in this case Mr. Garnett proposes that the pictures be declined while the remainder of the collection, consisting of books, pamphlets, broadsides and engravings be accepted by the Trustees. If however the paintings should be watercolour sketches or the like, he would recommend that they be accepted with the remainder of the collection.

Monsieur Chèvremont attaches no conditions to his valuable presentation, but would the Trustees be pleased to accept the collection, there will be no difficulty in arranging the whole of it in the Gallery which is already occupied by the large collection of pamphlets and books of the French Revolutionary period.’

9 (London, 1900).

10 Although the majority of the items have been catalogued and appear in the British Library *General Catalogue*, we suggest nevertheless that the collection itself should be entered both under ‘MARAT’ and under ‘CHEVREMONT’, with the main entry under the latter: ‘Collection of documents and manuscripts relating to Jean-Paul Marat, called the *Collection of Marat’s bibliographer. 69 volumes. 645.a.1-55, 1899.r.33*’.

11 Readers are referred to this Index for an idea of the richness of the bibliographer’s collection.

12 To be published in the *Chantiers Marat* (Brussels: Pôle Nord). For a summary list of Chèvremont’s manuscripts in the collection, see the Appendix to this article.

13 The bibliographer’s collection includes two letters about this from Louis-Jules David to Chèvremont.

14 Louis Gottschalk takes the same view in the opening lines of his *Jean-Paul Marat. A study in radicalism* (Chicago, 1924). It should be added that given the way in which Croker collected the French Revolution tracts, they are particularly rich in material close to the Paris revolutionary movement and therefore to Marat. See Audrey Brodhurst’s excellent article, ‘The French Revolution Collections in the British Library’, *B.L.J.*, ii (1976), pp. 138-58. The bookseller Collin, Croker’s acknowledged agent, who introduced him to Albertine Marat, is mentioned several times in *L’Ami du Peuple* as holding complete sets of the journal: ‘sets of *L’Ami du Peuple* from no. 1 to no. 400 are available at the
Imprimerie de Henri IV, place Dauphine and at M. Collin's shop (bookseller at the Louvre to the Académie des sciences)' (L'Ami du Peuple, 20, 21, 22 Mar. 1791).


17 The most recent biographical information on Pilotelle is in Marcus Osterwalder’s Dictionnaire des illustrateurs (Neuchâtel, 1989), p. 833: ‘Poitiers, 17 February 1845 – London, 29 June 1918. French cartoonist. Son of the deputy mayor of Poitiers, he worked for several republican opposition newspapers and founded a newspaper, La Caricature politique which appeared twice weekly. The first issue is dated 8 February 1871. After taking part in the Paris Commune of 1871 he had to seek refuge in London where he did drawings for a fashion magazine and exhibited etchings at the Royal Academy. In 1879 he published an album of engravings and cartoons entitled “Avant, pendant et après la Commune, by Pilotelle, former director of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, former special commissioner of the Commune, condemned to death by the 3rd Council of Versailles assassins”.


19 Subsequently Le Gaulois, Notes and Queries (5 Dec. 1903) and Le Charivari announced the sale of the collection to an American millionaire and even the death of Pilotelle. He reacted in the Chronique médicale of Jan. 1904, stating ‘I disposed of my duplicates some time ago for two thousand francs, not one hundred thousand, to a little dressmaker who collects books in his spare time.’

20 A letter from H. Bourdin to A. Lacassagne, 18 Mar. 1906; Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, MS. 5300 bis.


22 We have been unable to find any information either at the Bibliothèque municipale in Lyons or from Prof. Lacassagne’s family about the date of the transaction, which must have taken place between Bourdin’s letter to Lacassagne (1906), mentioned above, and the donation of the collection to the Bibliothèque municipale in Lyons (1921).

23 The 23 page leaflet described in the catalogue of the Lacassagne Marat Collection under the title ‘Notes diverses … sous le titre factice et anonyme de Jean-Paul Marat en Angleterre’ (427330) was indeed written by Pilotelle but represents only a few working notes, not the work which Pilotelle had been announcing since 1899. Not wishing to cast doubt on Pilotelle’s advertisements, I prefer to continue the search for the manuscript of this work.

24 Louis Gottschalk, op. cit., is probably the only one of Marat’s biographers to have fully realized the extent of Chèvremont’s work. That is perhaps why he gave up his original idea of an in depth study of political radicalism in favour of a biographical survey. G. Walter, Marat (Paris, 1933) and J. Massin, Marat (Paris, 1960) were simply not aware of the bibliographer’s collection.
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