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The German Princess; or, Mary Carleton in Fact and Fiction

SEVERAL years ago Professor Ernest Bernbaum demonstrated that the numerous journalistic accounts of the activities of Mary Carleton, the self-styled 'German Princess' who was hanged at Tyburn in 1673, are of considerable importance in the development of the kind of realistic fiction later written by Defoe.¹ Bernbaum listed twenty works and editions of works relating to Mary, though of these he had seen only twelve. Certain that the remaining eight had once existed, he bracketed their titles. Six of the pieces he was unable to locate have since turned up in various libraries, including three at Harvard, of which two are not known elsewhere. In addition, five pamphlets totally unknown to Bernbaum have come to light, of which four are at Harvard, two of them in apparently unique copies.² This new material in no way invalidates Bernbaum's thesis; it does, however, help to solve some of the bibliographical and chronological problems that beset his study and to correct some of his unavoidable errors. I shall discuss the works about Mary in the order of their publication, insofar as that order can be established. But first a word about the lady herself.

Mary's origins, like those of most criminals, are somewhat dim. The publications about her are either so patently fictitious or so frankly vituperative that getting at the facts of her early life is difficult. John Carleton, her best-known victim and bitterest enemy, made extensive researches into her past; and, while his style is hardly that of the impartial biographer, he did document some of his statements with letters and excerpts from court records. He discovered that she was born at Canterbury, probably about 1635, the daughter of Thomas Moders, but was brought up in the household of Richard Ford, a Canterbury musician. Her first brush with the law occurred in 1660 when she was tried at Dover for having married Thomas Day, a surgeon of that city, while her first husband, a Canterbury shoemaker named Thomas Sted-

¹ *The Mary Carleton Narratives* (Cambridge, Mass., 1914).

² The subjoined Appendix lists all the known seventeenth-century works about Mary Carleton, distinguishes between those which Bernbaum had seen and those which he had not, and gives the present location of copies.

man who had gone to Dunkirk as a soldier, was still living. Saying that she had received word of Stedman's death, Mary pleaded not guilty to the charge of bigamy. She was released with a reprimand: the court merely ordered her either to produce proof of Stedman's death or to stop living with Day. There was also present at the trial a bricklayer, one Billing, who had brought with him a parson and a clerk as witnesses that he too had once married her, but for some reason his case was not even heard.³ Mary had a way with judges and juries. But she was also a recidivist, for in 1663 she again faced charges of bigamy. The events leading up to her second trial involved a double imposture so unlikely and so amusing that no apology need be made for relating them in some detail. Here is a ready-made plot for a costume novelist or a period dramatist.⁴

The story begins with Mary's arrival at Billingsgate on the Gravesend barge early in a morning during the last week of March, 1663.⁵ Although no one can say exactly where she was coming from, the accounts she later gave of the tribulations in Germany that drove her to seek refuge in England may be dismissed as pure fantasy. She seems to have had no notion of what she intended to do in London, but whatever she were to undertake she could be certain of success, since she had all the equipment an adventuress needs in any age: false jewelry, good clothes, a quick wit, and, if the frontispiece of her *Case* can be trusted, a very bold sort of beauty. With a parson whom she had picked up on the barge, she entered the Exchange Tavern in the Poultry, which was open early to allow some workmen to make repairs. Mr King, the proprietor, was counting farthings in the bar. He served his customers and then ejected the parson, whose conduct had become scandalously amorous. He soon succumbed to the lady's charm himself, and, seeing that she appeared weary, he invited her to stay at the Exchange. Mr and Mrs King, who seem to have been remarkably gullible innkeepers, believed Mary when she told them that she was

³ *The Ultimium Vale of John Carleton* (1663), pp. 14, 33-36.

⁴ The ensuing six paragraphs are based on the accounts in *An Historicall Narrative of the German Princess* (1663), pp. 7-13; *The Case of Madam Mary Carleton* (1663), sigs. C8v-E1; *The Replication . . . Written by John Carleton* (1663), pp. 1-8; and Carleton's *Ultimium Vale*, pp. 1-11, 20-40. The two first-mentioned works give Mary's version of the story, which does not agree in all points with Carleton's. Most of the discrepancies, however, are discussed in the text.

⁵ Bernbaum, following the *Historicall Narrative*, says that she arrived on the 31st; but Carleton, *Replication*, p. 3, remarks that he first met her on the 25th.

Henrietta Maria de Woolway, the nineteen-year-old daughter of an earl in Cologne who was trying to force her to marry an eighty-year old count. Agents, she said, were trailing her, and so the Kings agreed to protect her from them while she awaited the arrival of funds from her estates in Germany. According to Mary, they kept her a close prisoner and even paid two hundred pounds in hush money to a person who came to the inn making inquiries about a German noblewoman. Whether they paid this sum or not, there is no question that they regarded Mary as a very valuable windfall.

But what were they to do with her? At this point the double imposture begins. Mrs King had a brother John Carleton, a scrivener at the Middle Temple. He dined with his relatives when his business took him to the neighborhood of the Exchange. There he met Mary and listened to her anecdote about Charles II, who had complimented her on her moles and warts while he had been in exile in Germany. The next time Carleton called he arrived in a coach with two footmen who addressed him as 'My Lord.' Mrs King explained that he had been disguised on his former visit; and, when Mary asked whether his father were really an earl, she replied that he was indeed a person of great honor. Carleton later denied that he had pretended to be a lord and had courted her in a great equipage, yet he admitted that she had 'drolingly put a name on me, which with the title of (*My*) before it, she often called me,' and he made no mention of having disillusioned her. The distribution of innocence and guilt in such cases is a nice question. For both parties, the wish was probably father to the thought. Both appear to have been rabid social climbers, and the spectacle of their ascent up the half-sawed rungs is correspondingly rewarding to the onlooker. Carleton's loud howls when the ladder broke prove that he had been gulled, but possibly we insult Mary's intelligence by assuming that she had also been taken in, even at first. She may have been able to recognize an English lord, whereas her victims could have had little knowledge of German princesses, especially one who must be guarded from all other Germans.

Whetted by forged letters from 'Wilhalme Breant,' Mary's German steward who alluded casually to the large sums being dispatched to her, Carleton wooed Mary passionately for the next three weeks. Mary never denied receiving these letters, but later explained them as 'meerly Cyphers, and under those terms of Moneys, &c. an account was given of another affair at home.' Carleton, always pretending that he was more

interested in her person than in her fortune, matched her lies by discoursing, according to Mary, of 'the delights and stateliness of his Lands and houses, the game of his Parks, the largeness of his stables.' He afterwards denied having made any such pretensions, though he did admit to having claimed 'a younger Brothers Portion . . . a Circumstance I thought material to try her fancy.' Throughout the narratives one finds considerable agreement about what was said and done; the quarrel almost always concerns the interpretation of actions and speeches and the degree of the pretension. For instance, both sides agree that Mary and Mrs King were soon addressing each other as 'cousin' and 'sister,' but they disagree on the question of who initiated these terms of address.

Matters came to a climax about Easter. Early in the week Mary had a sham fainting fit, during which she cried out for her governess and her German maid. On Thursday and Friday she visited Carleton's mother, who importuned her to save her son's life by marrying him. On Saturday she received two juicy letters that she had dictated to herself at a scrivener's: one from her 'steward' and the other from her 'governess,' who wrote that the Holy Roman emperor and the king of France were both raising a hue and cry for her. Mary said afterwards that Carleton had intercepted these letters; he insisted that she had exhibited them to him. At any rate, he saw them, and they drove him and his family to desperate measures. That evening, wearing all her jewels and a wedding dress that the tailor had just delivered, she resisted the combined demands of the Kings, Carleton's parents, and all their friends that she wed John. The siege was raised at midnight, but the next morning the clan again foregathered and in three coaches drove to the Church of St Bartholomew in Smithfield. Mary remarked naively that she thought they were going to hear the Easter music in St Paul's. Instead she found herself unexpectedly at her own third (or was it her fourth?) wedding. After a two-day honeymoon at Barnet, the couple returned to town and were married a second time with a license.

The imposture lasted only two weeks longer. The newlyweds set up housekeeping on an elaborate scale in Durham Yard, and Carleton gave out in the coffeehouses that he had married a huge fortune, as much as eight hundred pounds per annum. Later he grumbled that his expenses had been as 'high as her pretences.' Tradesmen flocked for their custom; the curious — among them Pepys — came to view the

bride and to go away speculating on her authenticity. Mary could afterwards boast that she had twice ridden in Lady Bludworth's coach in Hyde Park, her ladyship even giving her the place of honor on the right. Meanwhile, money not arriving out of Germany, Carleton began to wonder who was to pay all the bills, for by his standards Mary proved very extravagant. When some musicians gathered under their balcony early one morning to play them up, she flung so many coins that he had to chide her prodigality. He claimed afterwards that her stepfather, the Canterbury fiddler, had been the leader of the orchestra! He was further troubled by rumors that his wife was not a genuine princess. She quieted his fears with a monstrous lie, that if she had been a boy she should have been heir to the throne of Denmark. But Carleton's father, who had helped promote the match, was not so easily satisfied. He felt that it was time for some return from his investment, and he kept urging her to sign the papers he had had drawn up transferring all her property to his son. He might have saved his breath, for Mary's exposure was imminent. King, apparently prompted by the rumors, wrote to Dover for information about her. On 5 May he received an answer that led him to have her arrested on the following day.

At this point Mary's narrative becomes, understandably enough, vague; she merely says that she was called cheat and harlot, despoiled of her finery, and dragged from her lodgings by warrant. Carleton, however, is most circumstantial. He enumerates all the witnesses who came to confront her: a Dover landlady with whom she had lived while married to Day; the bridesmaid at the ceremony of her marriage with Day; a shoemaker who had labored with her first husband, Stedman; a woman who had once been a fellow lodger with her at the Feathers Tavern in Paternoster Row, where she had cheated a mercer of silks and satins and had almost married him. Most important, there appeared a Mrs Williams, the wife of a master of a Barbados ship, who identified Mary as a recent passenger on that ship. She further claimed that Mary had cheated her husband of fifty pounds and had subsequently been confined in Dover Castle. Although Mary seems to have retained enough aplomb to defy all these witnesses, she could not resist arrest. Her beauty, Carleton's anger, and the discrepancy between their actual condition and the state in which they had been living combined to make their case the talk of the town.

While Mary was still confined, first in the Gatehouse at Westminster

and then in Newgate, enterprising publishers and hack writers made capital of the scandal. Bernbaum discovered what seems to be the earliest mention of her in print, a burlesque report without the names of the principals in the factious news-pamphlet *The Man in the Moon* for 12 May, six days after her arrest. It ridiculed Carleton as 'some poor Clark' gulled by 'an Impudent piece of Mortality.'⁶ About the same time another scurrilous attack was made on the couple in a pamphlet, now lost, entitled *The Lawyers Clarke Trappan'd by the Crafty Whore of Canterbury*.⁷ Mary, who seems always to have welcomed publicity however unsavory, immediately authorized a hack to produce an answer that was called *A Vindication of a Distressed Lady*. A pamphlet now at Harvard and hitherto undescribed, the *Vindication* is important for two reasons: from it the contents of the lost libel can be reconstructed, and in it Mary began to fabricate her elaborate defense. The lost work had called her 'a Fiddlers daughter of *Canterbury*,' an extraction which she indignantly denies in the *Vindication*, though she is not yet ready to identify her 'Honourable Family.'⁸ It also had accused her of having married a fiddler of Dover and a shoemaker of Canterbury (the confusion is understandable), of having cheated a vintner of sixty pounds and a French merchant of rings and jewels, of having been confined to Newgate for these and other crimes, and finally of having escaped when about to be transported to Barbados. Instead of giving detailed answers to these charges, the *Vindication* gives Mary's version of the events leading to her arrest.

The *Vindication* was promptly answered by Carleton's *Replication*, an eight-page pamphlet in which he attempted to deal not only with Mary but also, according to the title-page, with his other detractors. Bernbaum, who had not seen the pamphlet, assumed that it was issued after the trial;⁹ but in his preface Carleton says, 'Neither shall I go about to vindicate my self much (for that the Law will do) or greatly to vilifie her.' 'I could pittie her rather than punish her,' he also remarks; 'and yet the Law must punish her.'¹⁰ After the law had failed him, he did vindicate himself and vilify her in his *Ultimum Vale*. But in the meantime he assumed the part of an injured philosopher. He

⁶ *The Man in the Moon, Discovering a World of Knavery* (1663), pp. 14-15.

⁷ Frank W. Chandler, *The Literature of Roguery* (Boston, 1907), I, 149, speaks of this pamphlet as though he had seen it.

⁸ *A Vindication of a Distressed Lady* (1663), p. 3.

⁹ *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 19.

¹⁰ *Replication*, pp. 2, 6.

begins the *Replication* on a lofty note: 'Marriage is my Theam, and I cannot but look at Happiness, and I think it is a very great Blessing, when the hand of Providence bestows on Mortals, a suitable conjunction of Vertuous and Good Conditions in Wed-lock, without which parity none can be really happy therein.'¹¹ And he continues in this pretentious vein, harping on his own righteousness, citing Adam and Menclaus as injured husbands whose cases parallel his own, and marveling at Mary's turpitude, though always in the most general terms.

Despite its unconvincing, pompous manner, Carleton's *Replication* was immediately stolen and reprinted under the misleading title *The Articles and Charge of Impeachment against the German Lady*. The *Articles* is an eight-page pamphlet, with only seventeen lines at the beginning and nine at the end that do not appear in the *Replication*. Though the title promises shocking revelations, the added material tells nothing new about the charge against Mary. The work as a whole, however, is interesting because it swells the list and thereby shows another printer and publisher turning the scandal to profit. G. Winnam, who is named on the title-page as the publisher, is known only from this pamphlet.¹² Such, then, were the publications before Mary's trial on 4 June 1663.

Mary's second trial for bigamy was a repetition of the first. She brazenly outfaced the single witness produced against her by Carleton and his father. He claimed to have been present at her marriage with Stedman, but it was his word against hers, and the chivalrous jury acquitted her while the spectators applauded. Carleton's failure to produce in court some of the people who had appeared at the time of Mary's exposure is puzzling. Billing, the bricklayer who had appeared at the earlier trial, did not even get into the courtroom this time. Now almost blind, he had gone to Newgate looking for Mary, but had been unable to identify her.¹³ There must have been several accounts of this trial published, but apparently only three are now known: *The Arraignment, Tryal and Examination of Mary Moders*, *The Great Tryall and Arraignment of the Late Distressed Lady*, and *A True Account of the Tryal of Mrs. Mary Carlton*. Bernbaum, who saw only the *Arraignment* and the *Great Tryall*, demonstrates that of the two the

¹¹ *Replication*, p. 3.

¹² Henry R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers . . . from 1641 to 1667* (London, 1907), p. 196.

¹³ *The Arraignment, Tryal and Examination of Mary Moders* (1663), p. 13.

former contains the more accurate report.¹⁴ The newly discovered *True Account* reproduces, probably with embellishments, Mary's eloquent plea that convinced the court of her innocence. In the list appended to this study I have bracketed the titles of two other pamphlets about the trial that were known to W. C. Hazlitt but that I cannot locate.¹⁵ One of them appears to be merely another copy of the *True Account* with a variant title-page.

Of considerably more interest than the reports of the trial are the subsequent works in which Carleton and Mary attacked each other and justified their actions to the public. There had been one round before the trial, Mary's *Vindication* and Carleton's *Replication*, but both combatants had been careful not to say anything in them that might injure their case still pending. Once cleared of the charge of bigamy, Mary immediately gratified her public by publishing her *Historicall Narrative*, the preface to which is dated 12 June, just six days after her acquittal. This booklet, clearly the work of a hack, contains first an introduction in the same lofty tone as Carleton's *Replication*, then a detailed narrative of her meeting with, courtship by, and marriage to Carleton, and finally an account of the trial. It closes with an appeal to the reader to make up his own mind about the facts therein related. The enraged Carleton seems to have started at once penning an answer, but before he could get it to the press he complained that he was 'encountred again with another execrable Volumne in Octavo, that goeth under her name, Entituled, *The Case of Madam Mary Carleton.*'¹⁶ Mary managed to have two defenses published before Carleton could open his mouth; her *Case* was registered on 26 June,¹⁷ eleven days before 7 July, the date of the 'Epistle' heading Carleton's *Ultimum Vale*. Bernbaum did not see a copy of the *Case*, though he knew of it and was able to reconstruct much of its contents from a later work based on it, *The Life and Character of Mrs. Mary Moders*, 1732.

The three polemics written by Mary's hack are among the most interesting and amusing of all the Mary Carleton narratives. The *Vindication* reads like the summary of a novel, as indeed it is, since after the trial Mary had it expanded into the *Narrative*; the *Narrative*,

¹⁴ *Mary Carleton Narratives*, pp. 27-31.

¹⁵ *Third and Final Series of Bibliographical Collections and Notes on Early English Literature* (London, 1887), p. 30.

¹⁶ *Ultimum Vale*, p. 41.

¹⁷ *A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers; from 1640-1708 A.D.* (London, 1913-14), II, 324.

in turn, was woven into the *Case*, a work which is largely fictional. As the story grew, it acquired concrete detail, more attention to motivation of the characters, dialogue — in short, many of the elements of fiction. Carleton's pamphlets are dull and whining in comparison. A note of wearied resignation is detectable in them. 'I cannot imagine,' he complains with more indignation than knowledge of the after life, 'whose Wife she will be at the Resurrection.'¹⁸ Carleton wrote merely to set the record straight, while she sought to advertise herself; and although he wrote last, she manages to have the last word. To Carleton's insulting remark that 'a full Narrative of [her] innumerable cursed actions would fill a Volumn of the best part of 500 quires'¹⁹ she was ready with the smug reply, 'To deceive the deceiver, is no deceit.'²⁰

The dirty linen displayed in these narratives did not go unobserved in that censorious and satirical age. Two lampoons on the antics of Carleton and Mary survive from the period after the trial: *Vercingetorixa* and *The Westminster Wedding*. Bernbaum saw neither of them, though he encountered a reference to the latter in *The Life and Character of Mrs. Mary Moders*, in which Mary is made to mention 'the Ribaldry of some pitiful Poetry, intitled *A Westminster Wedding*.'²¹ When he came across some burlesque lines quoted in Francis Kirkman's *The Counterfeit Lady*, he assumed that they were part of the *Wedding*.²² The 194 lines that Kirkman quoted, however, are from *Vercingetorixa*, a crude libel consisting of more than 500 hudi-brastic couplets, written, according to the title-page, by 'F. B. Gent.' The rarity of *Vercingetorixa* is its chief claim to our attention. It relates the adventures of Carleton and Mary down to the discovery of the imposture and concludes with a promise of more to come:

But stay, my Muse, now hand is in,
Ore Boots and Shooes; thou'lt never lin,
Though thou be grown as dull and weary
As Sculler at the Laboring Ferry;
So cease at present, and let end,
For this time working feet befriend,
Till second part in *Canto* quaint

¹⁸ *Ultimum Vale*, p. 32.

¹⁹ *Ultimum Vale*, p. 37.

²⁰ *Case*, sig. CIIv.

²¹ *The Life and Character of Mrs. Mary Moders* (1732), p. 70, quoting from a work that Bernbaum did not see, *Mary's Case*, sig. G5v.

²² *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 18.

Shall write of Princess close restraint;
 How long in prison she did stay,
 And who for Liberty made way;
 How she was brought 'fore Learned Bench,
 And treated like her self, (not Wench)
 And how she in most learned guise
 Defence did make, (to those are wise)
 Pleading her Cause like fluent *Cato*,
 Or Advocate with a bald Pate-o;
 And was with great applause acquitted,
 And Father, Son, and all out-witted.
 This shall be sung in the next Part,
 As second course to cheer your heart.²³

Since the foregoing is a representative example of F. B.'s wit, the loss of the promised sequel, if it was ever written, is hardly to be regretted.

Of equally slight literary value is the other lampoon, *The Westminster Wedding*. It is a broadside ballad, the unique exemplar of which is preserved in the Douce Collection and has been reprinted in *The Roxburghe Ballads*.²⁴ It is made up of eight four-line stanzas, to be sung to the well-known tune of *The Spanish Lady*.

The chronological position of the *Wedding* and *Vercingetorixa* in my list is by no means certain. Neither was registered, but their contents show that they were both published after the trial. We can say definitely that the *Wedding* came out before the *Case* because the latter refers to it by title as 'the Ribaldry of some pitiful Poetry,'²⁵ but whether it appeared before or after the *Historicall Narrative* cannot be determined. Probably they were published about the same time, immediately after the trial. The final stanza of the *Wedding* refers to the feud Carleton and Mary had been carrying on in print, but it could be alluding to the earlier *Vindication* and *Replication*. From a bit of internal evidence *Vercingetorixa* can be shown also to have preceded the *Case*, though its position in the list with respect to the *Wedding* and the *Historicall Narrative* is not clear. The lampoon made a lewd play on Mary's alias; it insisted that she had given her name as '*Vulva*, from *de Vulva* born.'²⁶ Mary's press agent thought it necessary to comment on this libel. He has her say, 'By this time they had obtained my Name

²³ *Vercingetorixa* (1663), sig. G1.

²⁴ Ed. Joseph W. Ebsworth, VII (Hertford, 1893), 230.

²⁵ *Case*, sig. G5v.

²⁶ *Vercingetorixa*, sig. C1v.

from me, viz. *Maria de Wolway*, which passage also hath suffered by another leuder Imposture, and allusory sound of *De Vulva*: in the language of which I am better versed, then to pick out no civiler and eleganter impress.' ²⁷ Her cause would have been better served had Mary's hack left this matter in decent obscurity.

There remains to be mentioned only one other publication about Mary in 1663, a crude comedy by Thomas Porter called *A Witty Combat*. Bernbaum, who says everything necessary about this play, explained the statement on the title-page that it was 'Acted by Persons of Quality in Whitson-week' (7-13 June 1663) as merely an ironical reference to Carleton and Mary; he felt that had it been acted during Whitsuntide some mention of it would have been made in the *Case* and the *Ultimum Vale*, both published after June 13.²⁸ This argument seems convincing, though there is just a chance that Mary's ghost writer was referring to the play in the *Case* when he tried to dispel some rumors about her, among others that she intended to become an actress.²⁹

Mary was to carry on scandalously for another ten years, but there is nothing in her subsequent career so interesting as the Carleton episode. Immediately after her trial she took lodgings in Fuller's Rents, where many of the beau monde visited her.³⁰ Understandably enough, her gestures toward reconciliation with Carleton came to nothing; he was impervious to her offers of the 'Westphalia Hams' running in her forests and the 'Baccharach grapes' ripening in her vineyards.³¹ Once he encountered her on the street, and, knowing that her attempts to retrieve her jewels from his father had failed, he asked her how she lived so high. She allegedly replied that she 'was cryed up for a Wit, and by her Wit Coaxed her Visitors and so got money enough.'³² She must have had friends and perhaps accomplices: the scrivener who had forged her letters, for instance, or the woman who had testified about the bricklayer at her trial. We know that in the following year she finally dropped her pretenses. She then acted somewhat unsuccessfully in a production of Porter's comedy, now renamed *The German Prin-*

²⁷ *Case*, sigs. C11v-C12.

²⁸ *Mary Carleton Narratives*, pp. 25-26.

²⁹ *Case*, sig. G6v.

³⁰ *Case*, sigs. F10, A3.

³¹ *Case*, sig. G9.

³² *Ultimum Vale*, p. 39.

cess.³² Bernbaum observes that this play recalls the Elizabethan practice of dramatizing sensational contemporary events. But it also may be an early instance of a not uncommon modern phenomenon, the appearance as 'entertainers' of notorious persons, such as acquitted hatchet murderers or those who have undergone radical surgery.

For her life between 1664 and 1673 we have to rely chiefly on the publications in the latter year, when Mary again made noise in the world. Only one pamphlet is known from this interval, *News from Jamaica*, 1671.³³ Mary had been transported to Jamaica in February, 1671, for theft; the *News* purports to be a letter 'to her fellow Collegiates and Friends in New-Gate' describing her reception in the colony. Its tone is satirical, and what it has to say of her activities is vague. For these reasons I suspect that it was a journalistic hoax originating in England rather than in Jamaica. In 1672 Mary slunk back to England, and in December of that year she was arrested for stealing pieces of silver plate. She pleaded guilty, received the comforts of religion, and died on the gallows in January, 1673. And once more she provided good copy for the popular press.

The publications during Mary's second brief period of notoriety inextricably mingle fact and fiction; hence they furnish the main evidence for Bernbaum's contention that the writing of novels gained great impetus from the attempts of journalists to tell Mary's complete story. Bernbaum had available four works about Mary published in 1673, but he could also postulate the existence and reconstruct the contents of three others, whose titles he placed in brackets.³⁴ Two of these lost works have since turned up, and in addition a hitherto undescribed pamphlet, as well as a variant issue of one of the works available to Bernbaum. Copies of all but one of these additions to the list are at Harvard, one of them apparently unique, as inspection of the Appendix will show.

The first printer to publicize Mary's inglorious end was probably Philip Brooksby, who issued a short biography called *Memories of the Life of the Famous Madam Charlton* and a satirical broadside in verse,

³² *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 26.

³³ A copy, offered for sale while this article was in proof, is now in the New York Public Library. The work had previously been known only from Hazlitt, though its text had been available in the reprinting in *The Memoires of Mary Carleton* (1673), pp. 55-64.

³⁴ *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 11.

Some Luck Some Wit, based on the *Memories*. Bernbaum's statement that the *Memories* was published 'probably in December, 1672'⁸⁶ is puzzling, for the work itself mentions her death sentence on 17 January 1672/3,⁸⁷ though it does not fulfill the promise on the title-page to describe her death. It must have come out during the five days between her sentence and her execution. The impulse to fictionalize Mary's life even before her death appears in the account the *Memories* gives of the Carleton episode; for instance, it has her arriving at the Exchange Tavern accompanied by a maid. The description of the trial for bigamy is also garbled. In addition to remaking this old material, the *Memories* gave the public three new anecdotes about tricks Mary had played on a tailor in France, a jeweler in Holland, and an apothecary in England. *Some Luck Some Wit* alludes to the same three pranks and mentions a fourth, the gulling of a linner. From now on most of the accretions to Mary's legend take the form of anecdotes describing her high jinks. It is of course impossible to vouch for their truth.

One of the newly discovered pamphlets, *An Exact and True Relation of . . . Mary Carleton*, is probably coeval with the two works just discussed. After a moralizing introduction it gives what seems to be the only accurate account extant of Mary's last trial. On her first day in court she pleaded guilty to the charge of returning from transportation, but hinted that extenuating circumstances might cause the court to forgive her. When asked to be more specific, she replied that she desired time — presumably to concoct a story. The next day she divulged an improbable tale about a mutiny she had forestalled on the way out to Jamaica, an act which, she said, put her 'so much in favour with the Master of the Ship and the Governour of Jamaica . . . that she was set at liberty to go where she pleased.'⁸⁸ The court was not impressed, and when several indictments for robbery were brought in, it quickly passed sentence. Having pleaded her belly in vain, she was taken to Newgate to await execution. The *Relation* ends with an anecdote describing how Mary had once cheated a watchmaker.

Two publications followed hard on Mary's execution, 22 January: *An Elegie on the Famous and Renowned Lady* and *The Deportment and Carriage of the German Princess*. The former is a mock-heroic

⁸⁶ *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 33.

⁸⁷ *Memories of the Life of the Famous Madam Charlton* (1673), p. 16.

⁸⁸ *An Exact and True Relation* (1673), p. 6.

funeral poem in twenty-three couplets printed on a single folio sheet; it chides death for having slain her, observes ironically that even princesses are subject to fate, and so on. The Harvard copy of the latter work, an eight-page prose pamphlet, seems to be unique. Bernbaum did not see it, and his reconstruction of its contents contains one or two errors.³⁹ It does not, for instance, include a dialogue between Mary and a theological gentleman on the welfare of her soul. It is merely a straightforward account of her remorseful conduct in prison and her edifying remarks on the scaffold. Mary's sister, who came to comfort her last hours, is mentioned in print for the first time.

The *Deportment* contains an advertisement on its final page: 'You may very speedily expect more at large The *Memoirs of the German Princess*, with an exact Narrative of her Life and Death, Etc.' This work was issued by Nathaniel Brook, the publisher of the *Deportment*, as *The Memoires of Mary Carleton*. Its preface is signed 'J. G.' Whoever he was, J. G. was a compiler and an editor rather than an author. The first fifty pages of his work is a *réchauffé* of Mary's ten-year-old *Case* sprinkled with Latin quotations, inkhorn terms, and feeble jokes. The tone is doubtless meant to be satirical. Then J. G. gives over ten pages to reprinting the *News from Jamaica*. He next draws on the *Exact and True Relation* for the account of the mutiny that Mary allegedly thwarted. There follow two hitherto unprinted anecdotes describing how she cheated an Anglo-Dutchman of some money and pilfered some plate from a landlady. J. G. next embellishes the story told of the apothecary in the *Memories* and that of the watchmaker in the *Relation*. His account of her arrest, however, seems to be new material; he says that the keeper of the Marshalsea accidentally discovered her while he was searching for another criminal. In telling of her trial at the Old Bailey he also manages to add some new matter, for the most part examples of her witticisms at the expense of some respectable ladies who reproached her for her immorality. Finally, J. G. reprints in an expanded form the *Deportment and Carriage*. To it he adds a dialogue Mary supposedly held with a pious gentleman and several details about the priest who accompanied her to the scaffold. The material thus compiled is awkwardly linked by transitional passages supplied by J. G. himself. But whatever his faults as a technician, his impulses were similar to those of a novelist. He attempted to put

³⁹ *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 34.

together a continuous, well-motivated narrative to entertain and instruct his readers.

Less successful than J. G. was the anonymous author of another fictional biography, *The Life and Character of Mrs. Mary Moders*, already mentioned, which is for the most part a mere reprint of the *Case*.⁴⁰ This work was extremely useful to Bernbaum, but its value is not so great now that the original *Case* has come to light. It exists only in a second edition dated 1732, when interest in Mary briefly revived because London gossip would have it that the lord mayor of that year was her bastard son.⁴¹ In addition to the *Case* it contains a six-page 'Appendix' recounting for the first time some incidents from the years 1664 to 1671. We learn that John Carleton eventually became the proprietor of a coffee house, and that after leaving the stage Mary became the mistress first of old Mr Chamberlain and then of young Mr Woodson and milked them both dry. Two familiar anecdotes, the gulling of the watchmaker and the apothecary, are told with some new twists, and there are several other amusing exploits hitherto undescribed. But the 'Appendix,' as Bernbaum points out, is succinct journalism rather than fiction, however much fabrication it may contain.

A novel is the only kind of work that can possibly do justice to a life as full of sensational incidents and at the same time as beclouded with deceit and imposture as Mary's. Only in a novel will Mary become believable. John Carleton despaired of telling the truth about her, and he knew her when her career still had ten years to run. There is no truth in her, though there are several potential novels. Unfortunately no journalist of the stature of Defoe was then writing; the nearest approach to a Defoe was Francis Kirkman, whose narrative *The Counterfeit Lady*, 1673, is the last work to be considered here. Bernbaum's careful analysis of this book shows that, whatever the crudities of its technique, it is fiction in intention, form, and content — a conclusion with which no one who has read all the Mary Carleton narratives can quarrel. *The Counterfeit Lady* was republished in 1679; Bernbaum worked from this edition, which, he concluded, 'need not be regarded as essentially different from the first.'⁴² He conjectured

⁴⁰ It omits from the *Case* two paragraphs on sig. B3v and all the material from sigs. G6 to G10.

⁴¹ *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 104.

⁴² *Mary Carleton Narratives*, p. 101.

rightly that the word 'corrected' on the title-page of the second edition is meaningless.

More ink and paper were devoted to Mary Carleton than to any other non-political malefactor in the seventeenth century. Not until the days of Jonathan Wild was an ordinary criminal given so much attention by the press. Mary's exploits lived on into the eighteenth century in such works as *The History of the Lives of the Most Noted Highwaymen, Foot-pads, House-breakers, Shop-lifts, and Cheats, of Both Sexes*, 1714, a collection by 'Captain Alexander Smith' that was frequently reprinted, and the anonymous *Lives and Adventures of the German Princess, Mary Read, Anne Bonny, Joan Philips, Madam Churchill, Betty Ireland, and Anne Hereford*, 1755. These works tell us nothing new about Mary; on the other hand, her luster is not dimmed by her appearance in a gallery with other rogues. Her story remains one of the best in all the annals of knavery.

C. F. MAIN⁴³

APPENDIX

The list that follows is restricted to seventeenth-century works devoted exclusively to Mary Carleton; it omits publications that merely mention her, such as the brief account in one issue of *The Man in the Moon* and the reference to her in *The German Princess Revived: or, The London Jilt: Being a True Account of the Life and Death of Jenney Voss*, 1684. One asterisk before a title indicates a work that Bernbaum knew about but could not find, and two asterisks a work hitherto undescribed. The note after each title gives the present location of copies of the work. In locating these publications, I have relied heavily on Donald Wing's *Short-Title Catalogue of Books . . . 1641-1700*. The bracketed titles are of works that have not yet come to light; two of these are described in W. C. Hazlitt, *Third and Final Series of Bibliographical Collections and Notes on Early English Literature* (1887), p. 30, and the onetime existence of the others is postulated from works that are known. The listing is as closely as possible in order of publication.

[The Lawyers Clarke Trappan'd by the Crafty Whore of Canterbury.]

This work is known from the following pamphlet.

** A Vindication of a Distressed Lady. In Answer to a Pernitious, Scandalous, Libellous Pamphlet; Intituled, The Lawyers Clarke Trappan'd by the Crafty Whore of Canterbury. London, Printed 1663.

Wing V 463B. Harvard.

⁴³ Acknowledgment is hereby gratefully made of funds provided by the Research Council of Rutgers University for the purchase of photographic reproductions of the works described in this article.

* *The Replication, or Certain Vindictory Depositions, Occasioned by Way of Answer, to the Various Aspersions, and False Reports of Ignorant and Malicious Tongues, and the Printed Sheets and Pamphlets of Base Detractors, Concerning the Late Acted Cheat. Written by John Carleton of the Middle Temple London, Gent. Printed by the Authors Appointment in the Year, 1663.*

Wing C 585A. Harvard, Newberry.

***The Articles and Charge of Impeachment against the German Lady, Prisoner in the Gate-House, to Be Exhibited According to the Records of the City of Canterbury, in Order to Her Trial at the Sessions-House in the Old Bailey. With the Confession of the Witnesses and Her Father in Law, Touching Her Strange Pranks and Unheard of Designs. As Also a True Narrative of Her Proceedings since the 25th Day of March Last, to the Time of the Contract of Marriage, betwixt This Rare Inchantress, and That Worthy Gentleman Mr. Carlton. London, Printed for G. Winnam, 1663.*

Harvard.

The Arraignment, Tryal and Examination of Mary Moders, Otherwise Stedman, Now Carleton, (Stiled, the German Princess) at the Sessions-House in the Old Bayly, Being Brought Prisoner from the Gate-House Westminster, for Having Two Husbands; Viz. Tho. Stedman of Canterbury Shoemaker, and John Carleton of London, Gent. Who upon a Full Hearing Was Acquitted by the Jury on Thursday, June 4. 1663. Taken More Largely, by Special Appointment. London: Printed for N. Brook, at the Angel in Cornhil, near the Royal Exchange. 1663.

Wing A 3764. Bodleian, British Museum.

The Great Tryall and Arraignment of the Late Distressed Lady, Otherwise Called the Late Germain Princess. Being Brought to Her Tryal in the Old-Bayley, on Thursday Last the 4th Instant of This Month of June, before the Right Honourable, the Lord Mayor, the Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas, the Right Worshipfull, the Court of Aldermen, and All the Rest Belonging to That Most Honourable Bench. The Tenure of Her Indictment, of Having Two Husbands, and Her Answer to the Same. Also the Several Witnesses Which Came In against Her, with Her Absolute Confutation upon Each of Their Evidences by Her Acute Wit and Impregnable Reasons, Whereby She Was Acquitted by Publique Proclamation. The Manner Ye May Read as Followeth. London, Printed for W. Gilbertson. 1663.

Wing G 1758. British Museum.

***A True Account of the Tryal of Mrs. Mary Carlton, at the Sessions in the Old-Bayly, Thursday the 4th of June, 1663. She Being Indicted by the Name of Mary Mauders Alias Stedman. Published for Her Vindication, at Her Own Request. London. Printed for Charls Moulton, 1663.*

Bodleian.

[A True Account of the Tryal of Mrs Mary Carlton, at the Sessions in the

Old-Bayly, Thursday the 4th of June, 1663. She Being Indicted by the Name of Mary Mauders Alias Stedman. Sometimes Supposed by Mr Carlton and Others, to Be a Princess of Germany. Published for Her Vindication, at Her Own Request. London. Printed for Charls Moulton, 1663.]

Hazlitt.

[The Tryall of Mis. Mary Carleton, (formerly the German Lady, Henereta Maria de Woolva) at the Old Baily, Thursday Morning June the 4: between Eight and Eleven of the Clock: Wherein You Have the Substance of All That Was Said . . . With the Verdict Given Thereupon. London, Printed in the Year, 1663.]

Hazlitt.

An Historicall Narrative of the German Princess, Containing All Material Passages, from Her First Arrivall at Graves-End, the 30th of March Last Past, untill She Was Discharged from Her Imprisonment, June the Sixth Instant. Wherein Also Is Mentioned, Sundry Private Matters, between Mr. John Carlton, and Others, and the Said Princess; Not Yet Published. Together with a Brief and Notable Story, of Billing the Brick-Layer, One of Her Pretended Husbands, Coming to New-Gate, and Demanding of the Keeper Her Deliverance, on Monday the Eighth Instant. Written by Her Self, for the Satisfaction of the World, at the Request of Divers Persons of Honour. London, Printed for Charles Moulton, 1663.

Wing H 2106. British Museum, Harvard.

*The Westminster Wedding; or, Carlton's Epithalamium. To the Tune of, The Spanish Lady. [text] London, Printed for S. B. 1663.

Preserved in the Douce Collection, II.253 verso. Reprinted in *The Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. Joseph W. Ebsworth, VII (Hertford, 1893), 230.

**Vercingetorixa: or, The Germane Princess Reduc'd to an English Habit. By F. B. Gent. Why Vercingetorix We Give unto This Book for Name, Know, German Princess Doth Derive as By-blow from the Same. London: Printed in the Year MDCLXIII.

Wing B 65. Bodleian, British Museum, Harvard, Huntington, Newberry.

*The Case of Madam Mary Carleton, Lately Stiled the German Princess, Truely Stated: with an Historical Relation of Her Birth, Education, and Fortunes; in an Appeal to His Illustrious Highness Prince Rupert. By the Said Mary Carleton. [Latin quotation] London, Printed for Sam: Speed at the Rainbow in Fleetstreet, and Hen: Marsh at the Princes Arms in Chancery-Lane. MDCLXIII.

Harvard.

The Ultimam Vale of John Carleton, of the Middle Temple London, Gent. Being a True Description of the Passages of That Grand Impostor, Late

a Pretended Germane — Lady. [Latin quotation] Published by the Order and Appointment of the Aforesaid Right Worthy and Ingenious Author Mr. John Carleton. London, Printed for J. Jones, 1663.

Wing C 586. Bodleian, British Museum, National Library of Scotland, Harvard.

A Witty Combat: or, The Female Victor. A Trage-Comedy. As It Was Acted by Persons of Quality in Whitson-Week with Great Applause. Written by T. P. Gent. London, Printed for Tho. Roberts, and Are to Be Sold at the Royal-Exchange, Fleet-Street, and Westminster-Hall, 1663.

Wing P 2998. Bodleian, British Museum, Victoria and Albert, Worcester College (Oxford), Folger, Harvard, Huntington, Library of Congress, Newberry, Yale.

*News from Jamaica in a Letter from Port Royal Written by the Germane Princess to Her Fellow Collegiates and Friends in New-Gate. London, Printed by Peter Lillierap, for Philip Brigs, Living in Mer-maid Court near Amen Corner in Pater Noster Row, 1671.

New York Public Library.

Memories of the Life of the Famous Madam Charlton; Commonly Stiled the German Princess. Setting Forth the Whole Series of Her Actions, with All Their Intrigues, and Subtile Contrivances from Her Cradle to the Fatal Period of Her Raign at Tiburn. Being an Account of Her Penitent Behaviour, in Her Abstaining from Food and Rest, in the Prison of Newgate, from the Time of Her Condemnation, to Her Execution, January 23. 1672. Taken from Her Own Relation, Whilst She Was Prisoner in the Marshalses, and Other Certain Information. With Her Nativity Astrologically Handled, and an Epitaph on Her Tomb. London; Printed for Phillip Brooksby, Next Door to the Ball in West-Smith-Field, near the Hospital-Gate. 1673.

Wing M 1700. Bodleian, British Museum, London Guildhall, Harvard, Huntington. Harvard and Newberry have another copy, apparently Wing M 1670, which is identical with the foregoing except that the first line of the title begins: [**] Memoirs of the Life and Death of the Famous . . .

Some Luck Some Wit, Being a Sonnet upon the Merry Life and Untimely Death of Mistriss Mary Carlton, Commonly Called the German Princess. To a New Tune, Called The German Princess Adieu. [text] London Printed for Philip Brooksby near the Hospital-Gate in West-Smith-Field.

Wing S 4516. British Museum.

**An Exact and True Relation of the Examination, Tryal, and Condemnation of the German Princess, Otherwise Cal'd, Mary Carlton, at Justice-Hall in the Old Bailey, January 17: 1672. Also, an Account of the Pretended Treachery Which She Was to Discover to the Bench; and the Reason of Her Return from Jemeca. London, Printed for R. O. 1672.

Wing E 3619. Harvard, Newberry, Yale.

An Elegie on the Famous and Renowned Lady, for Eloquence and Wit,

Madam Mary Carlton, Otherwise Styled, the German Princess. [text] London: Printed for Samuel Speed, 1673.

Wing E 417. British Museum.

*The Deportment and Carriage of the German Princess, Immediately before Her Execution: and Her Last Speech at Tyburn: Being on Wednesday the 22th of January, 1672. London, Printed for Nath. Brooke at the Angel in Cornhill, near the Royal-Exchange. 1672.

Wing D 1077A. Harvard.

The Memoires of Mary Carleton, Commonly Stiled, the German Princess. Being a Narrative of Her Life and Death Interwoven with Many Strange and Pleasant Passages, from the Time of Her Birth to Her Execution at Tyburn, Being the 22th. of January 1672/3. With Her Behaviour in Prison, Her Last Speech, Burial & Epitaph. [Latin quotation] London, Printed for Nath. Brooke, at the Angel in Cornhill near the Royal Exchange; and Dorman Newman, at the Kings-Arms in the Poultry, 1673.

British Museum.

[The Life and Character of Mrs. Mary Moders, Alias Mary Stedman, Alias Mary Carleton, Alias Mary — the Famous German Princess . . . 1673.]

The publication of this work in 1673 is assumed from the second edition of 1732.

*The Counterfeit Lady Unveiled. Being a Full Account of the Birth, Life, Most Remarkable Actions, and Untimely Death of Mary Carleton, Known by the Name of the German Princess. London, Printed for Peter Parker, at the Leg and Star, Over against the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, 1673.

Wing K 7. Bodleian, Huntington.

The Counterfeit Lady Unveiled. Being a Full Account of the Birth, Life, Most Remarkable Actions, and Untimely Death of That Famous Cheat Mary Carleton Known by the Name of the German Princess. The Second Edition Corrected. London. Printed for Peter Parker, at the Leg and Star, Over against the Royal Exchange in Cornhil, 1679.

British Museum.

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