

Desperately Seeking Mary Anne Clarke: Scandal, Suppression, and Problems in Attribution

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In 1809, Mary Anne Clarke captured the public imagination when she sashayed into the House of Commons wearing a décolleté blue gown and a white muff. Her mission: to testify about her role in selling army commissions while she was the mistress of Frederick, Duke of York (1803–1806). Her testimony corroborated the arguments of the radical politician Colonel Wardle, who insisted that the establishment was full of corruption, and it led to the Duke of York's resignation from his post as commander-in-chief of the British forces. It also made her a celebrity, the object of numerous politicized prints and biographies. Clarke capitalized on that notoriety, threatening to publish her own *Memoirs* featuring letters from the Duke of York, whose rhapsodic epistles to his “darling” had been read aloud in the House of Commons. The scandal only grew when the Duke of York suppressed the publication of the *Memoirs* and Clarke engaged in subsequent lawsuits with her former ally Colonel Wardle, whom she exposed as a hypocrite. Additional publications followed, including one for which Clarke was convicted of libel.

“The Duke of York Affair,” as it is commonly known, has been examined in relation to patriotism, romantic radicalism, and scandal.² Biographers of the Duke of York routinely attend to Clarke's role in his career, and her life has also been chronicled in biographies and imagined in novels.³ Yet Clarke's own writings have

¹ This essay is a revised version of a paper presented at the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand 2010 conference, *To Deprave and Corrupt: Forbidden, Hidden, and Censored Books*, at the Wheeler Center for Books, Writing and Ideas. Research for this essay was conducted with the help of a faculty research grant from St. Lawrence University along with the assistance of many people whom the author wishes to thank: Mark McMurray, Paul Doty, and Michael Greenwald (St. Lawrence University); Sarah Schnuriger (Washington University, St. Louis); and Pamela Clark (Royal Archives, Windsor).

² Philip Harling, “The Duke of York Affair (1809) and the Complexities of War-Time Patriotism,” *The Historical Journal* 39, no. 4 (1996): 963–84; Peter Spence, *The Birth of Romantic Radicalism: War, Popular Politics and English Radical Reformism, 1800–1815* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), especially 109–35 and 161–97; Anna Clark, *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

³ Biographies of the Duke of York that discuss Clarke extensively include Morris Marples's *Wicked Uncles in Love* (London: Michael Joseph, 1972) and Leslie Carroll's *Royal Affairs: A Lusty Romp through the Extramarital Adventures that Rocked the British Monarchy* (New York: New American Library, 2008). The standard biography of Clarke is Paul Berry's *By Royal Appointment: A Biography of Mary Anne Clarke, Mistress of the Duke of York* (London: Femina, 1970). Clarke's life has also inspired two novels: F. W. Kenyon's *The Duke's Mistress: The Story of Mary Ann Clarke* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1969) and Daphne du Maurier's *Mary Anne: A Novel* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1954).

received relatively little analysis, despite Roger Sales's assertion that she "needs to be taken more seriously as a writer."⁴ Part of the problem is confusion about what she wrote. While scholars agree that Clarke penned *A Letter Addressed to the Right Honourable William Fitzgerald* (1813), they demonstrate less certainty about other works attributed to her. What, for instance, is the title of the memoirs from 1809? What happened to it? Is it the *Recollections* now in the National Archives? Who wrote the *Recollections*? Did Clarke co-author *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke* (1809) with her friend Elizabeth Taylor? Was Clarke's *The Rival Princes* ghost-written by the radical journalist Pierre McCallum? And in what order did Clarke write her works?

In this article, I argue that *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke* (1809) has been mistakenly attributed to Clarke. I also prove that Clarke was largely (though not solely) responsible for four related works: the suppressed *Memoirs* of 1809; *The Rival Princes* (1810); *A Letter* (1813); and *The Recollections* written in 1813. I trace their interconnected history of composition, publication, and suppression, suggesting how that history lays the foundation for reassessing Clarke's literary and political significance and for uncovering a network of politicians, publishers, and journalists whose secrets have obscured her writings for nearly two centuries.

Memoirs of Recent Circumstances

Clarke's first work, the *Memoirs*, was written and suppressed in 1809. The secrecy about its suppression has generated confusion about its timing, title, authorship, and fate. Many believe that Clarke first wrote *The Rival Princes* (1810), followed by her memoirs. In 1837 Edmund Henry Barker recorded this error in his collection of anecdotes, which was published in 1852.⁵ H. M. Stephens's original entry on Clarke in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1887) makes the same mistake.⁶ Subsequent twentieth-century historians, such as Sir Edward Abbott Parry and Jane Eliza Halsted, repeat this myth, which continues to be perpetuated by K. D. Reynolds in the latest edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography*.⁷

⁴ Roger Sales, *Jane Austen and Representations of Regency England* (London: Routledge, 1994), 237, note 28. Clarke is not mentioned, for instance, in Felicity Nussbaum's *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Lynda M. Thompson's *The "Scandalous Memoirists": Constantia Phillips, Laetitia Pilkington and the Shame of "Publick Fame"* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); or James Treadwell's *Autobiographical Writing and British Literature, 1783–1834* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁵ E. H. Barker, *Literary Anecdotes and Contemporary Reminiscences ...* 2 vols. (London: J. R. Smith, 1852), 1:88.

⁶ H. M. Stephens, "Clarke, Mary Anne (1776–1852)," *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Leslie Stephen, 1887, vol. 4 (New York: Macmillan, 1908), 437.

⁷ Sir Edward Abbott Parry, *Vagabonds All* (New York: Scribners, 1926), 41–42; Jane-Eliza Hasted, *Unsuccessful Ladies: An Intimate Account of the Aunts (Official and Unofficial) of the Late Queen Victoria*, 1950 (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 76; K. D. Reynolds, "Clarke, Mary Anne

The confusion may result from contemporary rumors of Clarke's later *Recollections* and from uncertainty over the titles of these works, both of which were alluded to generally as the "memoirs."

Indeed, many modern scholars conflate these texts. In an article in 1966, D. Pepys Whiteley discusses Clarke's threat to publish her memoirs and letters and then quotes from the *Recollections* in the National Archives, as if the two publications were one and the same.⁸ In 1974 J. R. Dinwiddy disputed this assumption, identifying passages in the *Recollections* referring to events from late 1812 and early 1813; the memoirs of 1809 were clearly, he proved, a separate text.⁹ Iain McCalman's *Radical Underworld* (1988) therefore discusses the two texts more cautiously, neither identifying the memoirs as the *Recollections* nor (given his focus) clarifying the exact title of the memoirs, the date of the *Recollections*, or their complicated history.¹⁰ Nevertheless, subsequent scholars—including Angus McLaren, Anna Clark, James Epstein, and Katherine Turner—have reverted to Whiteley's error, discussing the *Recollections* as the 1809 memoir.¹¹

These are distinct works, as evidenced from Clarke's previously unnoticed advertisement for the memoirs. The notice appeared in March 1809:

Mrs. CLARKE—In the Press, and in a few days will be published, in two Volumes small 8vo. accompanied by a correct Portrait, price 14s. in boards.

MEMOIRS of RECENT CIRCUMSTANCES ATTENDING MY OWN LIFE, interspersed with numerous Royal and other interesting Letters, never before published. By MARY ANNE CLARKE.—Printed for the Authoress, by T. Gillet, Crown-court, Fleet-street, of whom it is to be had, and of all Booksellers in Town and Country.¹²

While the *Memoirs* promises details about Clarke's life plus royal letters—the key selling point—the later text offers only scandalous anecdotes: *The Recollections*

(1776?–1852)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., January 2007), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5520>, accessed 11 September 2011. Although this author has made friendly suggestions that the entry be revised, it remains inaccurate.

⁸ D. Pepys Whiteley, "Who Was Mrs. Clarke?" *History Today* 16, no. 5 (1966): 304.

⁹ J. R. Dinwiddy, "The Unpublished Recollections of Mary Anne Clarke," *Notes and Queries* 21 (1974): 329.

¹⁰ Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries and Pornographers in London, 1795–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 41.

¹¹ Angus McLaren, *Sexual Blackmail: A Modern History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 33; Clark, *Scandal*, 386, note 136; James Epstein, "The Radical Underworld Goes Colonial: P. F. McCallum's *Travels in Trinidad*," chapter 9 in *Unrespectable Radicals? Popular Politics in the Age of Reform*, ed. Michael T. Davis and Paul A. Pickering (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 160; and Katherine Turner, Introduction to Mary Anne Clarke's *The Rival Princes*, in *Women's Court and Society Memoirs*, vol. 6., ed. Katherine Turner (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), 3, note 1.

¹² *The Morning Chronicle*, 17 March 1809. See also the advertisement in "List of New Publications," *The Belfast Monthly Magazine* 2 (March 1809): 224.

of *Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke: Exhibiting the Secret History of the Court of Saint James's, and of the Cabinet of Great Britain, for a Series of Years, and Containing Anecdotes and Biographical Sketches of Many Illustrious Personages, Communicated to her by H. R. H. the Duke of York*.¹³ Likewise, the portrait in the *Memoirs* distinguishes this work from the later *Recollections*. Here it is advertised as “correct” because most contemporary biographies contained generic or incorrect portraits of Clarke.¹⁴ The *Recollections*, on the other hand, has an engraving of the Duke of York. In addition, the *Memoirs* was a work in two volumes, yet a note on the cover of the suppressed *Recollections* warns, “This is the first of three vols.” Finally, the advertisement for the *Memoirs* proclaims Thomas Gillet as the printer, while the imprint of the later *Recollections* is excised.

The advertisement clearly states Clarke’s authorship, although her title also promises letters from the Duke of York, who can be seen as an (unwilling) precursory author. Harold Love defines a precursory author as “anyone whose function as a ‘source’ or ‘influence’ makes a substantial contribution to the shape and substance of the work.”¹⁵ The functions of “executive” and “revisionary” authorship were collaborative and more complex due to the political context: opposition leaders viewed Clarke and her information as tools in the fight against corruption.¹⁶ Clarke later said that “Major Dodd, Col. Wardle, and Mr. Glennie, suggested to me the *policy* of doing *every possible injury I could* to several of the first personages of the state. Accordingly Major Dodd began the work, in which I soon made great progress, through the zealous assistance of this party.”¹⁷ James Glennie added material out of “a wish to *mix up* the Duke of Kent’s *grievances*, with my narrative.”¹⁸ Her response indicates her criterion for authorizing the book’s content: “I therefore, *erased* it, and told Mr. Glennie, that I had made up my mind, that my publication should *not contain any subjects but those within my own knowledge*.”¹⁹

¹³ Mary Anne Clarke, *The Recollections of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke: Exhibiting the Secret History of the Court of Saint James's, and of the Cabinet of Great Britain, for a Series of Years, and Containing Anecdotes and Biographical Sketches of Many Illustrious Personages, Communicated to her by H. R. H. the Duke of York* (London: n.d.), The National Archives (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO) TS 11/120/329.

¹⁴ For instance, the anonymous *The Royal Concubine; or the Life and Memoirs of Mary Ann Clarke, from the Age of 12 Years, to the Present Time ...* (London: Henry Strahan, 1809), contains a portrait of another author, Charlotte Dacre, labeled “Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke The Royal Concubine.”

¹⁵ Harold Love, *Attributing Authorship: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 40.

¹⁶ For explanations of these functions, see Love, *Attributing Authorship*, 43–44, 46–49.

¹⁷ Mary Anne Clarke, *The Rival Princes, or a Faithful Narrative of Facts, Relating to Mrs. M. A. Clarke's Political Acquaintance with Colonel Wardle, Major Dodd, &c. &c. &c. Who Were Concerned in the Charges against The Duke of York; Together with a Variety of Authentic and Important Letters, and Curious and Interesting Anecdotes of Political Notoriety*, second ed., 2 vols. (London: C. Chapple, 1810), 2:230.

¹⁸ Clarke, *The Rival Princes*, 2:44.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2:45.

Outside this inner circle, opposition leaders such as Lord Folkestone asked to read and edit the text.²⁰ Clarke complains that Lord Folkestone and William Cobbett “endeavoured to make me an instrument of *political* convenience for the purpose of attacking any *object* that best suited the policy of the moment!”²¹ The journalist Pierre McCallum, who had introduced Clarke to Colonel Wardle, also played some role, although Clarke does not specify what. Certainly it was significant, for after the suppression of her *Memoirs*, Clarke and Treasury Solicitor H. C. Litchfield investigated rumors that McCallum planned to publish a copy of her book.²² McCallum’s anonymous co-author of *The Rival Queens* complains that Clarke “has had the impudence of taxing him with having *stolen* that property which she herself committed to him to do what he pleased with, so he would but assist her in wreaking her vengeance on the Duke of York, and which he returned to her.”²³ Finally, the opposition lawyer Charles Warren said that the Duke of York’s letters “were laid before him by counsel to advise whether they might be printed with safety to the publisher.”²⁴ Whether he advised any changes is unknown.

The explosive content of the *Memoirs*, especially the letters, led the Duke of York to pay Clarke to suppress it in April 1809. The history of that suppression is incomplete, leading to misinformation about the book’s fate and Clarke’s later writings. In *The Rival Princes*, Clarke says that the Earl of Moira initiated negotiations with the assistance of “a gentleman,” a man she never names and who has not been identified by previous scholars.²⁵ This “gentleman” was the journalist and drama critic Thomas Gilliland. He attracted the Prince of Wales’s attention in 1806 with *Diamond Cut Diamond*, a pamphlet defending the Prince against a publication by Nathaniel Jefferys and recording Lord Moira’s attempt to suppress Jefferys’s pamphlet.²⁶ The Prince of Wales rewarded Gilliland with 500 guineas and his patronage.²⁷ Lord Moira drew upon this loyalty when he invited Gilliland’s assistance in 1809. Gilliland subsequently approached Sir

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:142.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2:143.

²² Clarke, *The Rival Princes*, 2:50–57; James Asperne, letter to H. C. Litchfield, 11 May 1809, TNA: PRO TS 11/106.

²³ Pierre Franc McCallum, *The Rival Queens, or Which Is the Darling? Containing the Secret History of the Origin of the Late Investigation: In Answer to Mrs. Clarke’s “Rival Princes.” Partly Written by, and Compiled from the Authentic Letters and Papers of, the Late P. F. McCallum, Esq.* (London: Blacklock, 1810), 170.

²⁴ Thomas Creevey, *The Creevey Papers: A Selection from the Correspondence & Diaries of the Late Thomas Creevey, M.P.*, ed. Sir Herbert Maxwell (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1904), 113.

²⁵ Clarke, *The Rival Princes*, 2:238–39; Turner notes that the figure is unidentified in her editorial notes for *The Rival Princes* in *Women’s Court and Society Memoirs*, 6:567.

²⁶ Thomas Gilliland, *Diamond Cut Diamond* ... (London: C. Chapple, 1806). This was followed by Gilliland’s *The Diamond New Pointed* ... (London: C. Chapple, and T. Ostell, 1806).

²⁷ Barker, *Literary Anecdotes*, 1:89. Gilliland’s *The Dramatic Mirror* ..., 2 vols. (London: C. Chapple, 1808) was dedicated by permission to the Prince of Wales.

Richard Phillips, who had arranged Gillet's printing of the *Memoirs*. As Clarke explains, Gilliland mistakenly believed that Phillips, "(from the private report of the moment) had purchased my book, and for political reasons, got Mr. Gillet to become the publisher of it."²⁸ After meeting Clarke, Gilliland learned that Clarke owned the *Memoirs*, and he subsequently worked with her to negotiate the suppression. This account, given without Gilliland's name in *The Rival Princes*, is confirmed by an article in *The Scourge* and a conversation with Gilliland recorded by Edmund Barker.²⁹ Barker, a classical scholar known for his verbosity—"He could not bear to leave out anything he knew on a topic," observes one biographer—seems to have become acquainted with Gilliland while they were both imprisoned for debt.³⁰ Gilliland recalled his glory days serving the Prince Regent, and Barker noted it all down for his posthumously published *Literary Anecdotes and Contemporary Reminiscences of Professor Porson* (1852).

In the *Recollections*, Clarke says that she declined the debt-ridden Lord Moira's offers, "well knowing that Lord Moira's bonds were no better than my own."³¹ Subsequently, she dealt with Lord Chichester, promising to deliver all of her notes and letters respecting the royal family and not to publish any anecdotes that had come to her knowledge from the Duke.³² The contract specifies additional details, from the printer's obligations to the burning of Clarke's manuscript:

I also promise that the printer shall enter into an engagement, binding himself in a penalty, that he has delivered up every manuscript which he may have been entrusted with respecting the intended publication, and he shall make oath that he has done so; and that he shall on oath deliver all such parts of the said work as may have been printed.

I further consent that, on failure of my complying with the several stipulations above stated, that the annuity agreed to be paid to myself for my life, and to my daughters after my decease, shall become absolutely forfeited. I will deliver up all the letters, but the manuscript, and all that is printed thereof, shall be burnt before any person appointed for that purpose.

²⁸ Clarke, *The Rival Princes*, 2:239.

²⁹ "Sir Richard Phillips, Knight," *The Scourge; or Monthly Expositor, of Imposture and Folly*, 1 (May 1811): 407–409; Barker, *Literary Anecdotes*, 1:89.

³⁰ Christopher Stray, "Barker, Edmund Henry (1788–1839)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2008), accessed 18 October 2011. Barker's account seems reliable given that the other information communicated by Gilliland can be verified independently. For instance, Gilliland said that the Prince Regent award him a pension of £400, an assertion confirmed by a draft of the contract in the Royal Archives: "H. R. H. the Prince Regent to Thomas Gilliland Esq., Draft Grant of an Annuity of £400" (June 1817), Royal Archives, RA GEO/MAIN/30431-G. Permission to use this material is kindly granted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

³¹ Clarke, *Recollections*, xxiii.

³² *Ibid.*, x–xiii.

I also promise to keep no copy or copies of any of the Duke of York's letters, or of the manuscript, or any part thereof.³³

In return, Clarke accepted £7,000—changed two days later, on 3 April 1809 to £10,000—plus an annuity of £400, to be continued to her daughters after her death.³⁴ The printer, Thomas Gillet, was indemnified with £1500. In addition to these terms, Clarke argued that there was “a parole engagement—a sort of agreement of too tender and delicate a nature to bear the touch of the pen—the guaranty of which was the HONOUR of the party pledged to the fulfillment of its conditions.”³⁵ Dinwiddy speculates that this agreement concerned her son, a speculation confirmed by contemporary sources.³⁶ Although not the Duke's child, the boy had become a favorite of the Duke, who had promised to provide for him.³⁷ In addition, Clarke says, “Conformably to the spirit of my part of the engagement, I not only did not throw any obstacle in the way of his Royal Highness's resumption of power and consequence, but, *at his desire*, I diverted the tide of popular indignation against those who had been instrumental in exciting it against him.”³⁸

What happened to the *Memoirs*? Contemporaries speculated wildly. Thomas Rowlandson's satirical print *Burning the Books* (1809) portrays Clarke overseeing the process of destroying the printed copies. In fact, the 18,000 copies of the *Memoirs* were burned under the supervision of the Duke's lawyer, Mr. Lowten.³⁹ Of those copies, 3000 were destroyed by Thomas Gilliland.⁴⁰ However, the Duke's letters plus one copy of the *Memoirs* were entrusted to the Earl of Chichester. Several contemporary sources—including Hewson Clarke, John Joseph Stockdale, and *The Aberdeen Journal*—observed that the reason for saving one copy plus the papers was to prevent Clarke from later attempting to publish the book, since the Duke of York would own the copyright.⁴¹ The preservation of this copy in 1809 may have inspired rumors that it is the *Recollections* in the National Archives. However, Clarke's biographer, Paul Berry, determined that the copy of the *Memoirs* plus the

³³ *Ibid.*, xiii–xv.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, xv.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, xvii.

³⁶ Dinwiddy, “Unpublished Recollections,” 330; Joseph Farington, entry for 9 April 1809, *The Farington Diary*, ed. James Greig, vol. 5 (New York: George H. Doran, 1925), 139; “Mrs. Clarke,” *The Aberdeen Journal*, 19 April 1809.

³⁷ Following the end of their affair, Clarke reminded the Duke of this promise in a letter dated 19 June 1808. See Berry, *By Royal Appointment*, 62–63.

³⁸ Clarke, *Recollections*, xxvi–xxvii (emphasis Clarke's).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

⁴⁰ Barker, *Literary Anecdotes*, 1:89; Hewson Clarke, Esq., *An Impartial History of the Naval, Military and Political Events in Europe* . . . 2 vols. (Bunday, Suffolk: Brightly and Childs, 1815), 2:105.

⁴¹ Hewson Clarke, *An Impartial History*, 2:105; John Joseph Stockdale, *Stockdale's Budget* 11 (21 February 1827): 81; “Mrs. Clarke,” *The Aberdeen Journal*, 19 April 1809.

letters passed to the Earl's son, the third Earl of Chichester, who burned them 25 May 1863.⁴²

Over the next two decades, rumors circulated that copies had been purloined.⁴³ One month after the suppression, Pierre McCallum threatened to publish the *Memoirs* with additional materials. James Asperne found a notice for it posted at Blacklock's in early May, and on 30 May *The Morning Chronicle* published an advertisement for a book—also to be sold by Blacklock and Chapple—beginning, “The R—l Letters and Mrs. Clarke's Memoirs are not lost to the Public.”⁴⁴ This book never appeared, nor did John Joseph Stockdale follow through on his promise to publish it in 1827.⁴⁵ Likewise, William Pope claimed to have papers and letters related to the Duke of York affair, but they never emerged.⁴⁶ However, the second edition of W. Clarke's *The Authentic and Impartial Life of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke* was advertised as containing “many additional Royal Love Letters, Amorous Anecdotes, Secret Intrigues, &c. &c. communicated to the Author by a Friend, supposed to be Part of those destined to the Flames, written by herself.”⁴⁷ The text does include anecdotes purportedly from Mary Anne Clarke's suppressed *Memoirs*.⁴⁸ There is no evidence that “W. Clarke” was a relative of Clarke or anything other than a pseudonym. However, given W. Clarke's defense of Sir Richard Phillips, he may have been someone close to Phillips, who had seen the *Memoirs*, so it is possible that this memoir reflects some of Clarke's original content.

Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke

The Authentic and Impartial Life of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke was only one of many biographies of Clarke published in 1809. Among them is the more famous *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, which was advertised on 20 April as to be published “in a few days.”⁴⁹ A second edition was advertised the following

⁴² Berry, *By Royal Appointment*, 222.

⁴³ Thomas Rowlandson, *Burning the Books* (London: Thomas Tegg, 21 April 1809); M. Jones, “Letter to the Editor,” *The Morning Chronicle*, 25 March 1813.

⁴⁴ James Asperne, letter to H. C. Litchfield; *The Morning Chronicle*, 30 May 1809.

⁴⁵ Stockdale, *Stockdale's Budget* 11 (21 February 1827): 81.

⁴⁶ William Pope, *The Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke. A Narrative of the Case of William Pope ...* (London: W. Pope, 1825).

⁴⁷ The second edition was advertised in *The Derby Mercury* 4 May 1809 and published 6 May 1809.

⁴⁸ W. Clarke, *The Authentic and Impartial Life of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, including Numerous Royal and Other Original Letters, and Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons, which Have Escaped Suppression. With a Compendious View of the Whole Proceedings, Illustrative of the Late Important Investigation of the Conduct of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, &c. &c. And a Curious and Original Poem*, second ed. (London: T. Kelly, 1809), 95–111.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke, in which is Pourtrayed the Secret History and Intrigues of Many Characters in the First Circles of Fashion and High Life; and Containing the Whole of Her Correspondence during the Time she Lived under the Protection of*

month.⁵⁰ This memoir's declarative author was Elizabeth Taylor, an intimate friend of Clarke who had testified in the House of Commons in support of Clarke's narrative about the Duke of York.⁵¹ Taylor's testimony jeopardized her own livelihood, for most of the students were promptly withdrawn from her boarding school by parents concerned about her moral character. Taylor's cause was championed by opposition leaders, including William Cobbett, who raised a public subscription for her.⁵² This political association may explain why she put her name to this opposition memoir, which is also often attributed to Mary Anne Clarke. Numerous libraries, from the Bodleian to the New York Public Library, catalogue Clarke as co-author or contributor,⁵³ and the attribution has gained enough currency to seep into more popular media.⁵⁴ Even Clarke's latest editor, Katherine Turner, says that "the book seems almost to have been co-written by MAC," and also that it "was probably written with Clarke's connivance, [and] provided another outlet for Clarke's thwarted revelations of scandal in high places."⁵⁵ It would be easy to assume that Clarke aided her friend by acting as a precursory author, offering secret information about herself or the Duke of York. However, there is no external evidence for this attribution, and internal evidence contradicts it.

The text pretends to no special information from Clarke, whose middle name is consistently misspelled, or even from Taylor, who is referred to in the third person.⁵⁶ Instead the *Authentic Memoirs* relies on previously published reports and biographies of Clarke, including *Memoirs of the Celebrated Mrs. Mary Ann Clarke, from the Age of Fifteen to the Present Time* and *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke,*

His Royal Highness the Duke of York, the Gallant Duke's Love Letters, and other Interesting Papers Never before Published (London: Thomas Tegg, 1809); *Caledonian Mercury*, 20 April 1809.

⁵⁰ *The Derby Mercury*, 18 May 1809.

⁵¹ Berry, *By Royal Appointment*, 113–119.

⁵² William Cobbett raised the subscript for Taylor from March through May of 1809. See William Cobbett, *Political Register* 15 (1809), 412–14, 656; *The Morning Chronicle*, 15 March 1809.

⁵³ Many libraries list Clarke as "co-author," "added author," or "additional author": the Bodleian Library for one of its copies [Vet. A6 e.763]; the New York Public Library for both the first edition [AN (Clarke) (Taylor, E. Authentic memoirs of Mrs. Clarke)] and second edition [Pforz (Taylor, E./Authentic) 1809]; the New York University Bobst Special Collections [Fables Collection, Brit Non-Circulating]; Michigan State University Special Collections [DA506.A72 T3 1809]; and McMaster University's Mills Library [DA 506 .A72 T3]. Other libraries list Clarke as "contributor": the Lilly Library at Indiana University [DA506.A72 T24 1809] and the National Library of Ireland [Joly Collection, J92].

⁵⁴ "Mary Anne Clarke," *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Anne_Clarke, accessed 10 September 2011. The author(s) of the "Legacy and Writings" section of this entry are unknown.

⁵⁵ Turner, editorial notes for and Introduction to Mary Anne Clarke's *The Rival Princes*, in *Women's Court and Society Memoirs*, 6:556, 6:1.

⁵⁶ At this point, Clarke spelled her middle name with an "e": Anne. Taylor is referred to in the third person on pages 31 and 84.

from *Her Infancy to the Present Time*.⁵⁷ Taylor's *Memoirs* is a mosaic of such texts, borrowing their substance and shape while insisting on a radical slant. The evidence of the investigation, Taylor argues, proves that there is corruption and "there has been a conspiracy not only against the army, but the Constitution of England." The "Guardian Angel" exposing this corruption and purging "the *Augean Stable*" is none other than Colonel Wardle.⁵⁸ Taylor's interpretation, however, depends on the information gleaned from earlier texts that present a similar narrative, a narrative of dubious origins.⁵⁹

We can trace this dependence—without affirming the truth of the narrative itself—starting with information on Clarke's background. Like previous biographers, Taylor stresses Clarke's humble origins in Bowl-and-Pin Alley, the daughter of a Mr. Thompson. He soon died, and her mother married a Mr. Farquhar, a composer.⁶⁰ The son of the overseer of the printing house, Mr. Day, fancied Mary Anne and sent her to a boarding school at Ham for two years so that she would become more polished. She returned no longer fond of Day, which caused their separation.⁶¹ Her family subsequently moved to Black Raven Passage, Cursitor Street, Holborn, where she charmed the neighbors with her spirit and beauty.⁶² Clarke then had a liaison with a pawnbroker, using seduction to obtain more money than her goods were worth.⁶³

Clarke then married Joseph Clarke. Like many others, Taylor presents Clarke's situation sympathetically, stressing that her husband's bankruptcy and dissolute behavior forced Clarke and her children to leave.⁶⁴ To support her family, Clarke embarked on a series of liaisons with another pawnbroker, a barrister, Sir Charles Milner, and Sir James B—ll before a brief stint on the stage.⁶⁵ The earlier *Memoirs of the Celebrated Mrs. Mary Ann Clarke* places Clarke's theatrical career before her

⁵⁷ *Memoirs of the Celebrated Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, from the Age of Fifteen Years to the Present Time; including Appropriate Remarks on Her Conduct towards the Duke of York* (London: C. Chapple, 1809) was advertised 23 February 1809 in *The Morning Chronicle*. The third edition, used here, is dated 28 February 1809 and was advertised in *The Morning Chronicle* 8 March 1809. *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke, from Her Infancy to the Present Time. Likewise, a Faithful Account of Mr. Wardle's Charges Relative to His Royal Highness the Duke of York; together with The Minutes of Evidence Complete, as Taken in the House of Commons. From Authentic Documents* (London: C. Chapple; J. Blacklock; Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, 1809) was advertised 25 March 1809 in *Jackson's Oxford Journal*.

⁵⁸ Taylor, *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, 94.

⁵⁹ Most of the memoirs about Clarke were published anonymously, with a select few published under pseudonyms (e.g., "W. Clarke," "Sam Satiricus").

⁶⁰ *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, iv; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 7–8.

⁶¹ *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, v; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 9.

⁶² *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, v; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 11.

⁶³ *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, v; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 15.

⁶⁴ *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, vii; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 24–25.

⁶⁵ *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, vii–viii; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 21, 27–29.

marriage, but it is clearly the root of this anecdote. The *Memoirs of the Celebrated Mrs. Mary Ann Clarke* describes Clarke as playing Portia and emphasizes especially her speech on “Mercy,” summaries elaborated on in the later *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, Taylor’s memoirs, and others.⁶⁶ Clarke’s performance attracted more admirers, including Lord B., Mr. Ogilvie, and Mr. M-l-y, who had a tryst with Clarke at the Royal Oak Tavern in an old press-bed (a fold-up bed made for one person—the enthusiastic couple could not wait!).⁶⁷ This lurid anecdote is followed by her liaison with Mr. Dowler and finally the Duke of York, though like previous biographers, Taylor does not reveal how Clarke became the Duke of York’s mistress.⁶⁸ Taylor also acknowledges the extravagance of their lifestyle at Gloucester Place.⁶⁹ Like some, Taylor portrays Clarke as unfaithful to her royal lover.⁷⁰ This was all old information.

Taylor’s memoir then introduces select political arguments and evidence from the testimony in the House of Commons. For instance, Taylor incorporates 41 numbered letters from Clarke to Colonel Sandon plus letters from the Duke of York, including two *billets-doux* and his missive, copied by the Army Agent Charles Greenwood, informing Clarke of his resolution to separate from her.⁷¹ All of this material was published in previous books, such as W. Clarke’s *Authentic and Impartial Life of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke*.⁷² In short, Taylor’s memoir presents nothing new that would indicate Clarke’s involvement in its authorship.

In fact, Clarke’s participation is disproved by the plagiarism of a section about the suppression of her *Memoirs*—a passage with information that Clarke later vehemently disputed. The passage is lifted almost verbatim from W. Clarke’s *The Authentic and Impartial Life of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke*:

Mrs. Clarke called on Sir Richard Phillips for the purpose of making some arrangements respecting the publication of her Memoirs. Sir Richard Phillips

⁶⁶ *Memoirs of the Celebrated Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke*, 8; *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, ix; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 29.

⁶⁷ *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, ix–x; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 30–31. *Memoirs of the Celebrated Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke* includes the liaison with M-l-y at the Royal Oak but dates the affairs with Lord B. and Mr. O. later. Berry discusses the press-bed anecdote in *By Royal Appointment*, 28.

⁶⁸ *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, xii–xiii, xvi; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 32–42, 44.

⁶⁹ *Memoirs of the Celebrated Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke*, 17–18; *Authentic and Interesting Memoirs*, xvii–xviii; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 45–46.

⁷⁰ *The Royal Concubine*, 24; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 40.

⁷¹ Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 87–117, 52–56, 163–64.

⁷² See W. Clarke’s first edition of *Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, including Numerous Original Letters and Anecdotes of Persons Deeply Interested, Never before Published. With a Compendious View of the Whole Proceedings, Both Public and Private, Illustrative of the Late Important Investigation of the Conduct of His Royal Highness The Duke of York, &c. &c.* (London: T. Kelly, 1809), 87–117, 29–31, and 55. The first edition was advertised as to be published 8 April (see, for instance, *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser*, 30 March 1809). It was clearly prior to Taylor’s memoir.

declined to publish the work, for several reasons of a private and political nature; perhaps, not choosing to expose himself to public notice, as the publisher of a work which is likely to create much political interest, at least while the novelty of the thing lasts. The unqualified, and, we trust, unjust reproaches, to which Sir Richard Phillips has of late been exposed, have doubtless taught him some useful lessons of caution and reserve. Though Sir Richard Phillips declined to become the purchaser of Mrs. Clarke's MS., he promised to recommend her to a publisher who would treat her justly and liberally. At the same time, Sir Richard told Mrs. Clarke, he conceived, if she could obtain the arrears of her annuity from the Duke, and a legal settlement for the payment of it in future, together with the payment of all debts contracted during her late connection with His Royal Highness, it would much better answer her purpose to suppress the publication altogether. To this reasonable proposition Mrs. Clarke immediately consented. But a difficulty arose as to the means of making this known to such persons as had it in their power to carry the plan into execution. Sir Richard accordingly agreed to open the business to a certain noble lord, to whom he made known the plan of accommodation.⁷³

Clarke refuted this summary of Phillips's role, insisting that she refused to sell him her manuscript and that he interfered in negotiations to suppress her *Memoirs*.⁷⁴

In short, there is no evidence that Clarke helped Taylor to plagiarize biographies of her own life, nor is there any rationale for why she would have authorized such misinformation about Phillips's connection with her *Memoirs*. This is therefore another example of an "indiscriminate attribution" that impedes research.⁷⁵ In this case, the misattribution means that scholars have assumed that Taylor's work is "the most reliable" of the contemporary biographies of Clarke.⁷⁶ In fact, it is no more reliable than its sources, and it is driven by the opposition's agenda of discrediting the Duke of York rather than objectively portraying Clarke, whose political usefulness was at an end. Within weeks of the second edition of Taylor's *Memoirs*, the former allies were feuding. Clarke accused Colonel Wardle of renegeing on his promise to compensate her financially for her testimony, a promise that included refurbishing her home. The dispute created a new scandal that undermined the radical agenda and led Clarke to write her next book.

The Rival Princes

In June 1810, Clarke published *The Rival Princes; or, a Faithful Narrative of Facts, Relating to Mrs. M. A. Clarke's Political Acquaintance with Colonel Wardle, Major Dodd, &c. &c. &c. Who Were Concerned in the Charges against The Duke of*

⁷³ W. Clarke, *The Authentic and Impartial Life of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke*, first ed., 91–92; Taylor, *Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke*, 200–201.

⁷⁴ Clarke, *The Rival Princes*, 2:231, 2:237–48.

⁷⁵ Patrick Spedding, *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2004), 17.

⁷⁶ Katherine Turner, General Introduction to Part II of *Women's Court and Society Memoirs*, vol. 5, ed. Katherine Turner (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), xix, note 8.

York; Together with a Variety of Authentic and Important Letters, and Curious and Interesting Anecdotes of Several Persons of Political Notoriety. Her publisher was not the pro-opposition Gillet, who had printed her *Memoirs*, but Clement Chapple, whose publications included some loyalist works. A second edition quickly followed and provided the basis for editions published in New York (1810) and Paris (1813).⁷⁷

Clarke's authorship of this book aroused speculation from the start. The anonymous author of a counter-publication, *The Rival Dukes* (1810), snidely refers to "Mrs. Clarke's editor (for we understand that she herself cannot write a sentence of English)."⁷⁸ In 1926, Sir Edward Abbott Parry also argued that *The Rival Princes* "was certainly not written by the lady without assistance."⁷⁹ In 1988, Iain McCalman identified her ghostwriter as Pierre McCallum, a claim repeated by K. D. Reynolds.⁸⁰ More recently, Katherine Turner has rejected this attribution, smartly observing that McCallum was unlikely to have written a book in which he is so harshly ridiculed.⁸¹ In addition, McCallum also began a counter-narrative that was finished after his death and published as *The Rival Queens, or Which Is the Darling? ... In Answer to Mrs. Clarke's "Rival Princes."*⁸² McCallum's vicious attack on Clarke in *The Rival Queens* weighs heavily against his involvement in *The Rival Princes*.

Although McCallum was not Clarke's ghost-writer, Parry and McCalman rightly argue that Clarke had assistance with this work. Her previously unidentified collaborator was the writer who had helped arrange the suppression of her *Memoirs*: Thomas Gilliland.⁸³ The first piece of external evidence for this claim arises from the unnamed co-author of *The Rival Queens* (1810), who refers to "Mary Anne Clarke, or Doctor Metcalfe, or Mr. Gilleland [*sic*], or whoever assisted her to compile her

⁷⁷ Clarke updated *The Rival Princes* in late June, and by early July newspapers were reporting on the second edition. See, for instance, *The Morning Chronicle*, 2 July 1810. The editions were Mary Anne Clarke, *The Rival Princes; or, A Faithful Narrative of Facts, Relating to Mrs. M. A. Clarke's Political Acquaintance with Colonel Wardle, Major Dodd, &c. &c. &c., Who Were Concerned in the Charges against the Duke of York; together with a Variety of Authentic and Important Letters, and Curious and Interesting Anecdotes of Several Persons of Political Notoriety*, two vols. in one (New York: David Longworth, 1810); and Mary Anne Clarke, *Les Princes Rivaux, or Mémoires de Mistress Mary-Anne Clarke, Favourite du Duc d'York, écrits par elle-même; où l'Auteur dévoile le secret des Intrigues du Duc de Kent contre le Duc d'York son Frère, etc.*, trans. Jean Francois Dauxion Lavaysse (Paris: Chez F. Buisson, 1813).

⁷⁸ *The Rival Dukes; or, Who is the Dupe? ...* (London: M. Jones, 1810), 164.

⁷⁹ Parry, *Vagabonds All*, 41.

⁸⁰ Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld*, 38–39; Reynolds, "Clarke, Mary Anne."

⁸¹ Turner, Introduction to Mary Anne Clarke's *The Rival Princes*, 6:2.

⁸² For the rivalry between the texts, see *The Morning Chronicle*, 23 June 1810.

⁸³ Like Clarke's biographers and critics, Gilliland's biographer in the ODNB omits this information: John Wells, "Gilliland, Thomas (fl. 1804–1816)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10747>, accessed 12 September 2011.

two royal duodecimo volumes of *catch-flat*.⁸⁴ In 1811 *The Scourge*, which details Gilliland's work in helping to suppress Clarke's *Memoirs*, further hints, "Mr. G. has, for some reason best known to himself, concealed many circumstances of this affair, in the account published by him."⁸⁵ Gilliland published no *acknowledged* account. Later Gilliland told Barker that he had not only helped buy up and burn Clarke's *Memoirs* but had written *The Rival Princes*.⁸⁶ A catalogue of second-hand books published in 1858 also identifies Gilliland's role in a note following the entry on *The Rival Princes*: "This very curious exposure, which contains anecdotes of many persons of political notoriety, was compiled by Gilliland."⁸⁷

While Gilliland clearly assisted Clarke with *The Rival Princes* (1810), her collaborator for a planned continuation remains unidentified. News of this sequel, unnoticed by modern scholars, circulated in January 1811: "Mrs. MARY ANNE CLARKE is preparing for the press, further particulars of her conduct in recent transactions."⁸⁸ By March, however, Clarke had given up the plan due to her partner's defection:

Mrs. Clarke has, it is said, been employed for some time past in selecting materials for an additional volume to the *Rival Princes*, but, *unfortunately* for the public, the person who was preparing these *authentic* documents for the press, has unexpectedly taken a trip, "the Lord only knows where," with the choice articles in his pocket, and fifty guineas in his purse, advanced by the Lady, upon account of the literary service to be performed.⁸⁹

The promised volume was never published.

This new information about *The Rival Princes* raises questions of literary and political significance. To what extent did Gilliland shape the content and style of *The Rival Princes*? Did Clarke intend for the third volume to follow through on threats from the first two volumes, where she claimed to hold in reserve further anecdotes and evidence against the Duke of Kent?⁹⁰ Did Gilliland's patron, the Prince of Wales, know of or encourage his assistance to Clarke? Was Gilliland's assistance a way of helping Clarke fulfill her part of the agreement to turn the tide of popular opinion against the Duke of York's enemies?⁹¹ These mysteries await future study.

⁸⁴ McCallum, *The Rival Queens*, 149.

⁸⁵ "Sir Richard Phillips, Knight," *The Scourge; or Monthly Expositor, of Imposture and Folly*, 1 (May 1811), 408.

⁸⁶ Barker, *Literary Anecdotes*, 1:89.

⁸⁷ *Willis's Prices Current. A Catalogue of Superior Second-Hand Books Ancient and Modern ...* (London: Willis & Sotheran, 1858), 12 (entry 364).

⁸⁸ "Literary and Philosophical Intelligence," *The Monthly Magazine*, No. 207 (1 January 1811): 555.

⁸⁹ "The Mirror of Fashion," *The Morning Chronicle*, 22 March 1811.

⁹⁰ Clarke, *The Rival Princes*, 2:44, 2:155, 2:306–307.

⁹¹ Clarke, *Recollections*, xxvi–xxvii (emphasis Clarke's).

A Letter Addressed to the Right Honourable William Fitzgerald

Less obscurity surrounds Clarke's *A Letter Addressed to the Right Honourable William Fitzgerald* (1813). No one has disputed Clarke's authorship or her later imprisonment for it. Rumors about this pamphlet and Fitzgerald's attempt to suppress it circulated in March 1813, when *The Scourge* included a short article about her threat "to publish a packet of letters! from the pen of the Hon. Wm. F—g—d, the I—sh Ch—nc—r of the E—q—r. The business is not yet ripe before the public." Fitzgerald, the article continued, had applied to "Mr. C—, a very worthy magistrate," who replied that he could not interfere.⁹² Clarke's pamphlet was published in late March or early April, since the journalist William Jerdan sent Fitzgerald a copy and a letter expressing his outrage, a letter to which Fitzgerald responded 7 April.⁹³ Clarke later said that the pamphlet had little circulation, but the Attorney General argued that she promoted it aggressively and had advertised a second edition.⁹⁴ No second edition appeared. Clarke was subsequently indicted and arrested for libel in August 1813. She pleaded guilty in December, and in February 1814, she was sentenced to nine months in the Marshalsea Prison.⁹⁵

The indictment and sentencing were highly publicized, partly due to Clarke's allegations that Fitzgerald had seduced the wife of an intimate friend and then given her an abortifacient.⁹⁶ More importantly, Clarke's pamphlet threatened further publications related to the Duke of York, who she said had written her a letter promising to provide for her son. She had given this letter to Fitzgerald's father "as a friend and trustee." When she asked him to return it, he replied, "*I have destroyed it.*"⁹⁷ Clarke connects this betrayal with William Fitzgerald's accumulation of lucrative government positions, including Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer. She therefore exposes Fitzgerald's crimes and warns that she will not sit quietly when promises are broken: "For the benefit, therefore, of all whom it may concern, I here announce my intention of submitting to the public, in a very short time, two or three volumes, which may be followed by others as opportunity shall suit or circumstances require."⁹⁸ Contemporaries took her seriously, as evident in articles and prints from March 1813 to February 1814 that allude to renewed hostilities with the Duke of York.⁹⁹

⁹² *The Scourge*, 5 (March 1813): 250–51.

⁹³ William Jerdan, *The Autobiography of William Jerdan . . .*, vol. 1 (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue, & Co., 1852), 169, 170. Jerdan, the editor of *The Satirist*, was outraged that its publisher, J. Williams, had also published Clarke's pamphlet against Fitzgerald.

⁹⁴ "Court of King's Bench. The King v. Mary Anne Clarke," *The Morning Chronicle*, 8 February 1814.

⁹⁵ *The Ipswich Journal*, 28 August 1813; Jerdan, 1:190; *Leeds Mercury*, 11 December 1813; and *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, 13 December 1813.

⁹⁶ Clarke, *Letter*, 44.

⁹⁷ Clarke, *Letter*, 14 (her emphasis).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁹ On 24 March 1813, *The British Press* alluded to her in "The Court of Public Opinion," which

The establishment responded aggressively. In sentencing Clarke, Mr. Justice Le Blanc noted that this case “particularly rendered it necessary that the Defendant should be restrained, since she held out a threat that she possessed materials for three or four further libelous volumes.” He therefore hoped that imprisonment would teach Clarke to amend her life and retract her threats.¹⁰⁰ The court also warned those who had and would aid Clarke by sentencing the printer, William Mitchell, to four months in the Marshalsea.¹⁰¹ The Marshalsea was notoriously unsanitary, and Clarke complained about her mistreatment there.¹⁰² Such measures attest to the political danger posed by Clarke, a menace that has been treated as hypothetical by all modern scholars except for J. R. Dinwiddy. In fact, *A Letter to the Right Honourable William Fitzgerald* was merely the prelude to Clarke’s last book: *The Recollections*.

The Recollections

Since at least 1966, when D. Pepys Whitely published “Who was Mrs. Clarke?,” scholars have been aware of *The Recollections of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke: Exhibiting the Secret History of the Court of St. James’s*, which is usually conflated with the *Memoirs* of 1809. However, the *Recollections* is still omitted from many accounts of Clarke and the Duke of York affair, probably because it was never published or explicitly advertised.¹⁰³ A copy of volume one survives in the Treasury Solicitor’s papers in the National Archives at Kew. In addition, an autograph manuscript exists and was sold within a larger lot at Sotheby’s in July 1930.¹⁰⁴ Dinwiddy discovered that it was bought by Clarke’s great-grandson Sir Gerald du Maurier, who passed it on to his daughter Daphne du Maurier.¹⁰⁵

included a list of “trials,” including “Mary Ann Clarke v. the D— of Y— (a second indictment).” Reprinted in *The Spirit of the Public Journals for 1813*, 17 (London: James Ridgway, 1814), 80. See also *The R-g-ncy. Park* (plate) and “The Sphinx,” both from *The Scourge*, 6 (September 1813), especially 185 and 187; and George Cruikshank’s *Bel-voir Frolics or Punch’s Christening*, in *Meteor* No. 4 (February 1814), where Mary Anne appears as a parson’s clerk.

¹⁰⁰ “Court of King’s Bench. The King v. Mary Anne Clarke,” *The Morning Chronicle*, 8 February 1814.

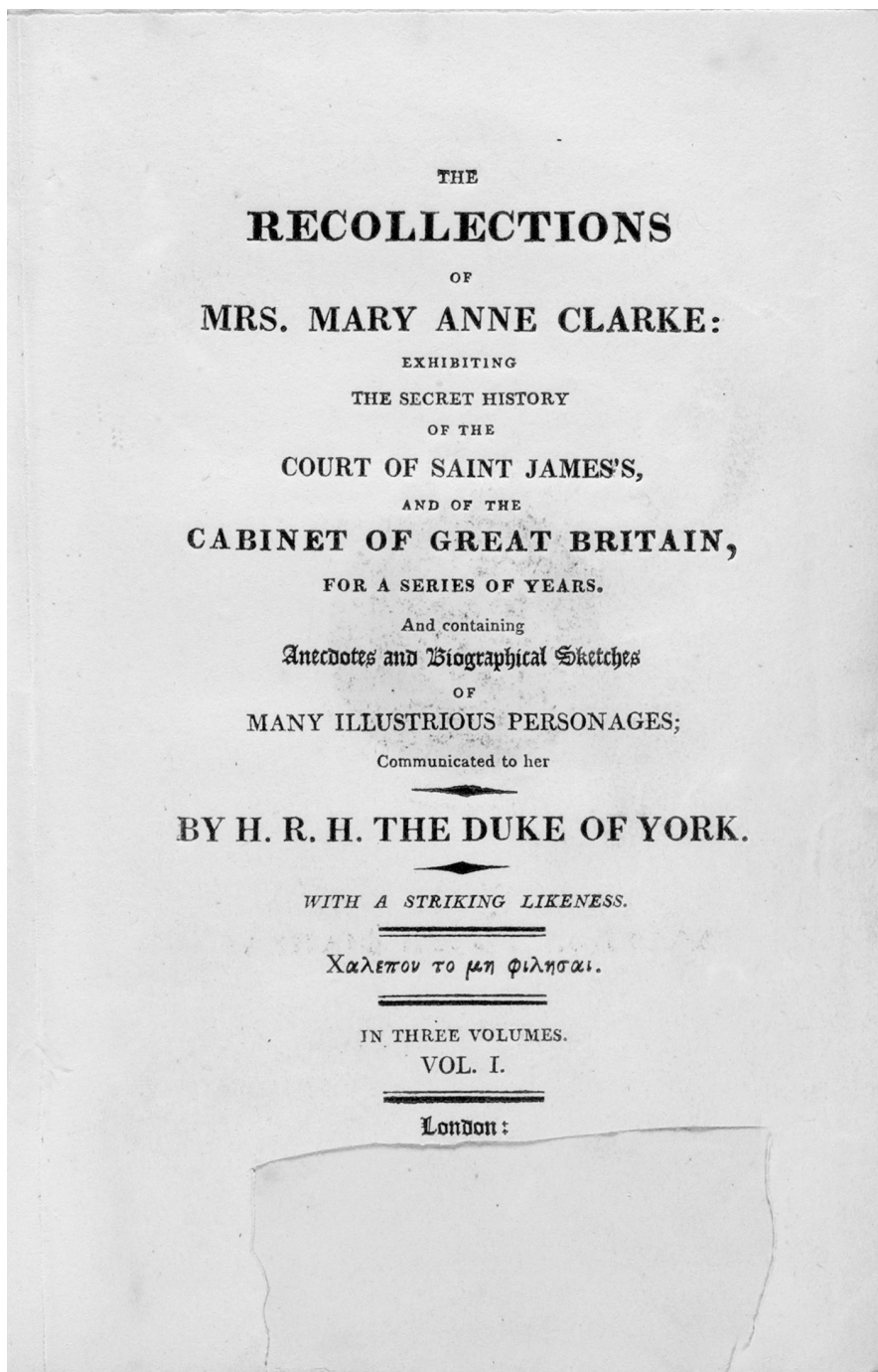
¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Berry, *By Royal Appointment*, 215–16; “Mrs. M. A. Clarke,” *The Examiner*, 3 July 1814.

¹⁰³ Sources that do not acknowledge the existence of the *Recollections* include Morris Marples, *Wicked Uncles in Love* (1972); Barbara Penny Kanner, *Women in Context: Two Hundred Years of British Women Autobiographers* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1997); Leslie Carroll, *Royal Affairs* (2008); K. D. Reynolds, “Clarke, Mary Anne.”

¹⁰⁴ Berry, *By Royal Appointment*, 222–23.

¹⁰⁵ Dinwiddy, “Unpublished Recollections,” 328–29. The lot from Sotheby’s was previously sold by Anderson Galleries in 1916 on behalf of the collector William Keeney Bixby. Unfortunately, Bixby’s correspondence, now at Washington University in St. Louis, contains no information about provenance (email from Sarah Schnuriger, 8 July 2011).



*Figure 1: Title page of Clarke's Recollections.
Used with permission from the National Archives (TS 11/120/329).*

Confusion about the *Recollections* has resulted in mistakes about its authorship, with some scholars suggesting that it was written by Pierre McCallum.¹⁰⁶ While McCallum, who died in 1810, could have played no role in the *Recollections*, Clarke did seek assistance. In his *Autobiography*, John Galt claims that Clarke told him “she had been advised to consult me about a publication of her life.” He visited her on Sunday, 18 April 1813. She brought him “an armful” of papers, which he read. He declined to help but “advised her strongly to suppress the book, and get what money she wanted in any other expedient way. The result was the suppression of her memoirs.”¹⁰⁷ While Clarke did not identify Galt or anyone else as a collaborator, the title page of her *Recollections* implicates the Duke of York as a precursory author, stressing that the content was “Communicated to her by H. R. H. the Duke of York.” The last phrase—“By H. R. H. The Duke of York”—is displayed prominently, in large type, where one would typically expect to find the author’s name (see figure 1). In this context, the frontispiece engraving of the Duke by Robert Cooper—the “striking likeness” promised on the title page—functions almost as an author portrait.

The portrait of the Duke of York enabled government officials to trace the printer, whose name has been excised and who has been unidentified by previous scholars. The Treasury Solicitor’s papers include an undated, unsigned summary of an interview:

That he engraved the Portrait of the Duke from a box with a Greek encription set in Gold, the English of which was “A present for my Darling.”

That he was informed by the Person who employed him if he wanted any more information he must apply to Gillet.

That he had no doubt and in fact he was certain that Gillet had the printing of the book.

That he understood from the person who employed him that the Book was not to be published but given away—

That he could have known who employed him but wishing not to have his name brought in question he declined making any enquiries.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Epstein, “The Radical Underworld,” 160; Turner, *Women’s Court and Society Memoirs*, 6:549. The error may result from conflating *The Recollections* with the *Memoirs* or misreading McCalman, who refers to McCallum as the ghostwriter of Clarke’s *Rival Princes*.

¹⁰⁷ John Galt, *Autobiography*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Key & Biddle, 1834), 1:169, 1:170. Galt does not mention the exact date, but he does say that Clarke tracked him down and asked him to call upon her the weekend before his wedding. Since he married Tuesday, 20 April 1813, that would place their initial meeting and his visit to her house on 17 April and 18 April 1813.

¹⁰⁸ Undated, unsigned note, TNA: PRO TS 11/106.

This note concerns the engraving of the Duke at the front of the *Recollections*—not the *Memoirs*, which was published with a portrait of Clarke. The engraving of the Duke does have a Greek inscription, which is also printed on the title page and translates as the first half of the Anacreontic dilemma: “The one whom it was difficult not to love.” (The other half is “but whom it was difficult to be with.”) The new quotation was more appropriate for Clarke’s volatile relationship with the Duke.¹⁰⁹ It seems likely, therefore, that Gillet also printed the *Recollections*, especially given rumors of his continued association with Clarke after 1809 and Gillet’s endeavors to prevent the suppression of the original *Memoirs*.¹¹⁰

The date of the *Recollections* is also missing, although J. R. Dinwiddy observes that “the volume appears from internal evidence to have been written, or at least begun, in the early months of 1813.” This evidence includes remarks about the Duchess of Leeds, who was appointed Princess Charlotte’s governess after Lady de Clifford resigned at the end of 1812, and an allusion to Mr. Conant, the Police Magistrate, inquiring about copies of *The Book* “last week only, the latter end of January.”¹¹¹ Dinwiddy concludes that “The reference is clearly to January 1813, as in the spring of that year *The Book* became public property when it was printed in *Cobbett’s Political Register*.”¹¹² Since Clarke consulted Galt, showing him her papers in April of 1813, we may also conclude that the composition was finished after that. Certainly the final book contained outdated information, although Clarke also said that it contained “the substance, the very sting” of the *Memoirs*.¹¹³

When was it suppressed? Dinwiddy links the *Recollections* with the libel indictment and sentencing (1813–14), noting that the *Letter* focuses on the Fitzgeralds’ destruction of the Duke of York’s letter promising to care for Clarke’s son. The *Recollections* returns to this issue in the introduction, which reviews the contract—oral as well as written—for suppressing the original *Memoirs*: “That agreement contained reciprocal obligations; they, on their part, have wantonly and dishonourably violated it, and its conditions are now no longer binding upon *me*.” Now, Clarke says, “they have *driven* me upon this resource” of publishing to care for her family.¹¹⁴ Dinwiddy observes that the *Recollections* achieved Clarke’s objective of securing her son’s future, since several weeks into Clarke’s prison sentence, he was appointed (without purchase) to a cornetcy in the 17th Lancers. According to Dinwiddy’s narrative, Clarke was finally silenced: “On her release Mrs. Clarke departed for France, where she resided until her death in 1852.”¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ Many thanks to Michael Greenwald for this translation.

¹¹⁰ “Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke,” *The Scourge*, 1 (February 1811), 134; and “The Printer of Combustibles,” *The Scourge*, 1 (May 1811): 363.

¹¹¹ Clarke, *Recollections*, 96.

¹¹² Dinwiddy, “The Unpublished Recollections,” 329.

¹¹³ Clarke, *Recollections*, iv.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, v, v–vi.

¹¹⁵ Dinwiddy, “The Unpublished Recollections,” 330.

The Duke's "darling," however, was made of sterner stuff, and the *Recollections* continued to plague the royal family after Clarke left the Marshalsea Prison. For although Clarke sailed to Dieppe in late 1814, she soon returned.¹¹⁶ In October 1815 she was reported to have "resided for some time near Margate, with her daughters." When her creditors discovered her there, they mistakenly arrested her daughter, and Clarke fled to France.¹¹⁷ Clarke returned again in 1816, as indicated by several news reports related to legal issues, including her rent for a house in Grosvenor Square and her robbery by a servant, whom she reported at Bow Street.¹¹⁸ At this time, rumors of her *Recollections* also circulated. The March 1816 issue of *The Scourge* includes a satire on the Prince Regent, "The Pall-Mall Apollo," in which Clarke crashes a grand feast. Angered that she was not invited,

she threw on the table
A bundle of scrolls—crying, "read them for sport,"
There's the "*FAMILY SECRETS*," for use of the COURT. The
scramble was great; ev'ery soul seiz'd a part,
All eager to learn the grand lesson by heart.

The scenario (which does not include the famed letters of the *Memoirs*) evokes Clarke's *Recollections*, with its focus on *The Secret History of the Court of Saint James's* and its fifteen-page list of "Dramatis Personae." A footnote explains: "It is much to be regretted that the grand *ledger of courtly delinquency* has not been rendered public, as in such case there is little doubt, from the choice samples already extant, but one general burst of national indignation would manifest itself, to the overthrow of existing abuses."¹¹⁹

The threat was apparently reinforced a month later, for the cover of the *Recollections* has a hand-written note: "This is the first of three vols.... 20/4/16," or 20 April 1816. The most likely date for its suppression, then, is 1816, which fits Galt's summary of events: "afterwards, if I recollect right, she went to some watering place, and subsequently abroad."¹²⁰ If the suppression had happened in late 1813 or early 1814, as Dinwiddy implies, "watering place" could only be a euphemism for "prison." Instead, the watering place was Leamington Spa, where Clarke and her daughters socialized in 1817.¹²¹ Clarke was reported as embarking

¹¹⁶ Clarke's departure was reported in "London, Monday—October 14," in *Caledonian Mercury*, 17 November 1814.

¹¹⁷ "Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke," *The Morning Chronicle*, 4 October 1815.

¹¹⁸ See *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 6 July 1816; *The Ipswich Journal*, 30 November 1816; "Court of Common Pleas—Dec. 5, Sittings after Term, before Lord Chief Justice Gibbs, Mrs. M. A. Clarke v. Davis," *The Morning Chronicle*, 7 December 1816; *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 7 December 1816.

¹¹⁹ "The Pall-Mall Apollo," *The Scourge; or, Literary, Theatrical, and Miscellaneous Magazine*, 11 (March 1816): 184 (emphasis original).

¹²⁰ Galt, *The Autobiography*, 1:170.

¹²¹ Epigram on Clarke and Captain E., *Caledonian Mercury*, 11 August 1817; *Caledonian Mercury*, 3 November 1817.

for Havre-de-Grace in August of 1818, and thereafter she seems to have resided mostly abroad, with occasional trips to England.¹²²

The details of suppressing the *Recollections* have not survived. However, it is possible that Gilliland reprised his role with the *Memoirs*. Barker writes:

Mary Ann Clarke wrote a book called *The Rival Princes*, which bore her name indeed, but was written by Mr. Gilliland; there was, afterwards, another book put forth by her, and Mr. G., who however did not write it, was employed to buy up the work; he was commissioned and gave her £10,000 with a Pension of £400 a year to herself, to be continued to two daughters in succession.¹²³

The financial settlement clearly alludes to the *Memoirs*. However, the chronology of Gilliland buying up the work *after* the *Rival Princes* suggests the possibility that he helped suppress the *Recollections*, which may have become conflated with the *Memoirs* due to their similar content. Certainly Gilliland earned the Prince Regent's gratitude again in 1816, when he began receiving payments of an annuity of £400.¹²⁴ The pension was formalized with a contract in June 1817 noting that "this said Royal Highness hath for several years employed the said Thomas Gilliland in and about his affairs and concerns." The agreement warns, however, that "the said Annuity shall be void and cease to be payable if it shall appear that the said Thomas Gilliland has withheld and not delivered to Charles Greenwood Esq any part of the papers which were heretofore delivered or agreed to be delivered into the custody of Edward Waters Esq."¹²⁵ Greenwood was the Army Agent who had advised the Duke of York in 1806 on ending his affair with Clarke, and his firm, Cox and Greenwood, assumed payment of Clarke's annuity following the Duke of York's death.¹²⁶ These facts may assist future scholars in discovering Gilliland's exact services for the Prince Regent, particularly in relation to Clarke.

In the meantime, this new information about Clarke's books lays the foundation for reassessing her life, writings, and political significance. While modern scholars have dismissed her as irrelevant after 1810, Clarke remained a celebrity, a woman whose potential power is most evident in *The R-g-ncy. Park* (1813). This satirical

¹²² *The Morning Chronicle*, 25 August 1818. Clarke returned to visit London the following year (*The Morning Chronicle*, 3 September 1819) and was reported several years later to have resided in Brighton "for the last two or three months" (*Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser*, 12 August 1824). Two years later, reports also place her as having "landed on the 16th from France" (*The Examiner*, 24 September 1826).

¹²³ Barker, *Literary Anecdotes*, 1:89.

¹²⁴ Pamela Clark, Registrar, Royal Archives, letter to author, 17 August 2011.

¹²⁵ "H. R. H. the Prince Regent to Thomas Gilliland Esq., Draft Grant of an Annuity of £400" (June 1817), 1, 5–6, Royal Archives, RA GEO/MAIN/30431-G. Permission to quote this material is kindly granted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

¹²⁶ Berry, *By Royal Appointment*, 50, 222.

print features Clarke as a sphinx clutching the Duke, a tiny penguin, in one paw. In the accompanying poem “The Sphinx,” she lies in wait: “This animal though now *perdue*, / Keeps ne’ertheless her game in view, / A tale, good reader, she could tell / Would ring through *Old Buck’s Park* a knell.”¹²⁷ By identifying Clarke’s writings, we can recover her tale, too.

¹²⁷ See note 99 for *The R-g-ncy. Park* and “The Sphinx,” 187.

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