

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

<http://archives.dickinson.edu/>

Documents Online

Title: "Spirit of Britain" Section 12, by Montagu F. Modder

Date: circa 1950

Location: MC 2002.1

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

The Romantic Age



A

At the dawn of the Nineteenth century, King George III was still on the throne of England, and he was strangely popular with that element of English society of unenfranchised citizens which Edmund Burke called "the swinish multitude". With that multitude His Majesty hob-nobbed and was quite at home, partly because, in happy contrast to his immediate predecessors, George III was thoroughly English, good-natured, affable and easy of access. In character, habits and diet, says the historian Goldwin Smith, the king was a John Bull; his prejudices, notably his political feelings against the Catholics, were the prejudices of the masses. His domestic virtues had given His Majesty a popularity which his "malady" only increased.

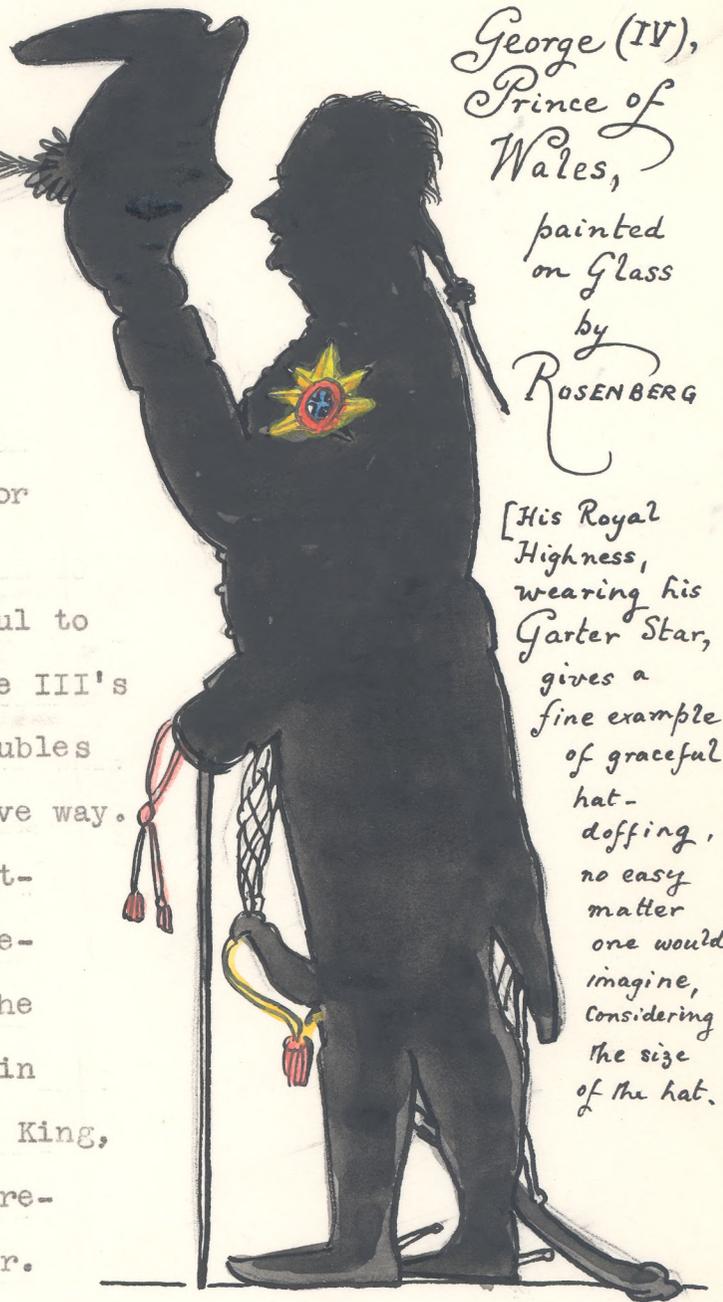
For some time, as every subject well knew, George III had a malady---brief attacks of delirium. In 1788, when there was a violent recurrence of the malady, a regency was appointed during the



sovereign's illness. The Prince of Wales acted as regent. In six months, the King recovered and resumed his interest in politics. The enthusiasm of the whole population was unbounded when His Majesty and Family went in Royal Procession to St. Paul's Cathedral to return thanks to the Almighty for the King's recovery.

The malady, however, it is pitiful to relate, returned in 1801, when George III's mind---shaken by the political troubles in Ireland, no doubt---once more gave way. Thereupon, William Pitt very patriotically and generously offered to renounce any intention of reviving the question of Catholic Emancipation in Ireland during the lifetime of the King, and---to cut a long story short---resigned his office as Prime Minister. Over the King's prejudices, which the masses seemed to support, not even the able and patriotic Pitt could prevail!

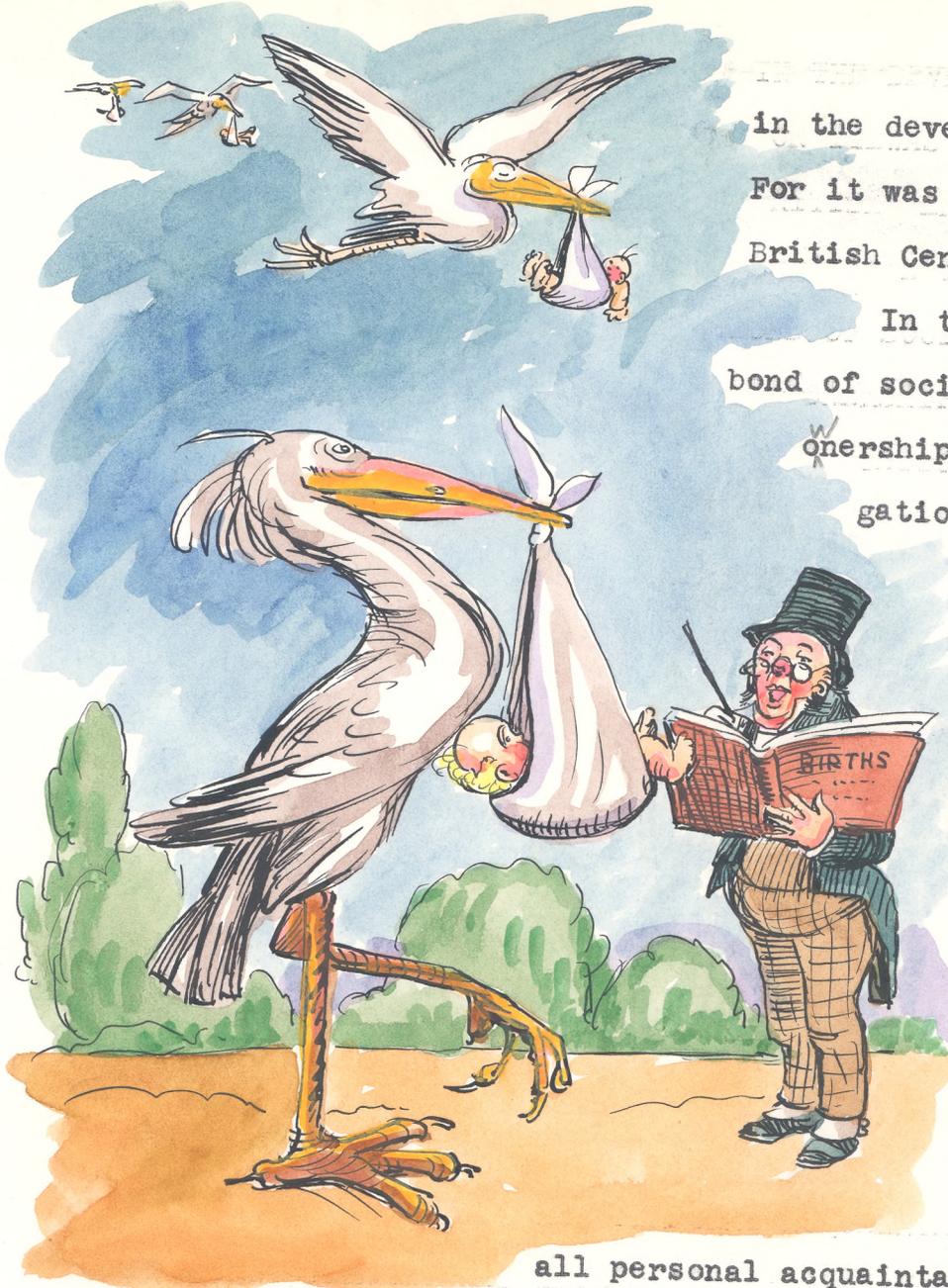
*George (IV),
Prince of
Wales,
painted
on Glass
by
ROSENBERG*



[His Royal Highness, wearing his Garter Star, gives a fine example of graceful hat-doffing, no easy matter one would imagine, considering the size of the hat.]



At this point, mention should be made of one of the most important events in the history of the nation. For once, the opening of a century marks a real mile-stone



in the development of a people.
 For it was in 1801 that the first
 British Census was taken.

In the Middle Ages, the
 bond of society was found in local
 ownership and in mutual obli-
 gations. Everybody knew
 everybody else in
 the village. (The
 King was only a
 great landowner
 who lived far
 away). But now, the
 greater dimensions
 and complexity of
 modern life called
 into being a Body of
 People so large, that

all personal acquaintance even between all
 the important persons was impossible. Objective knowledge must be
 called into being as an agent of common feeling!
 Now, the workman no longer saw his master, and
 the spinner did not know the weaver. The
 manufacturer no longer counted
 his own goods. The merchant
 did not cross the ocean, but
 depended on reports from for-
 eign agents. Government, trade,
 education---all a complicated part of National life---must now

depend upon impersonal agencies. And the basis of this impersonal relationship is exhibited in the Census.



FROM THE GRAVE TO

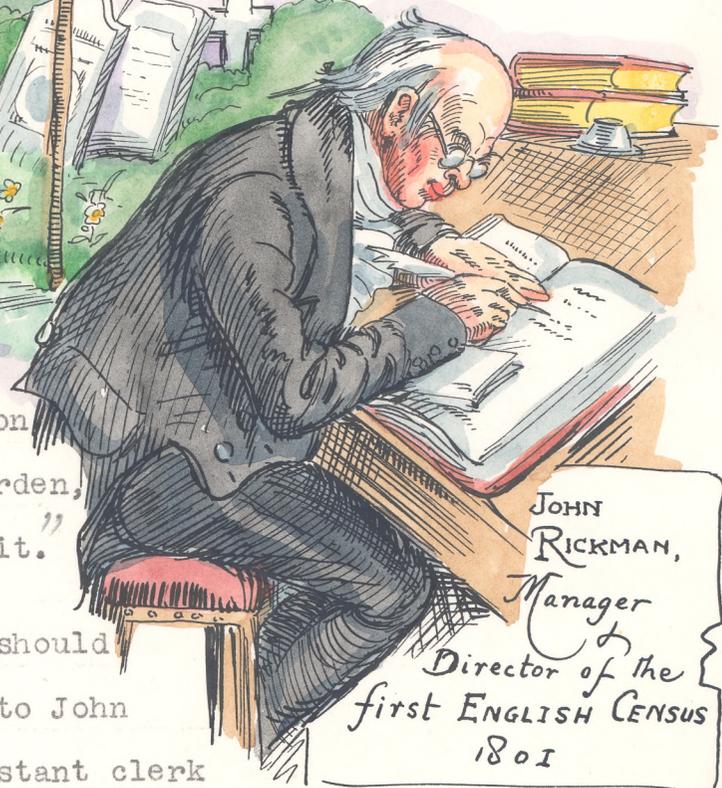
T

he Census is the tacit acknowledgment that every individual counts. The Census cannot allow the meanest being born to appear or disappear without the tribute of a modest record. In the Census gives every man, woman, and child a new value; for here at least, all are fellows, and all are equal!

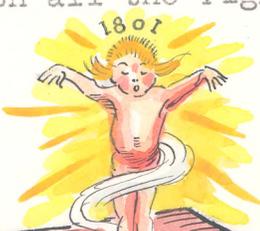


the unbureaucratic idea (slowly and painfully to be realized) that every child born on British soil has a claim upon the nation, and must in turn take, in proportion to his ability, a share in that burden, with all the rights attaching to it."

"Implicit in this bureaucratic invention of the Census," says the economist Perris, "was



JOHN RICKMAN, Manager & Director of the first ENGLISH CENSUS 1801



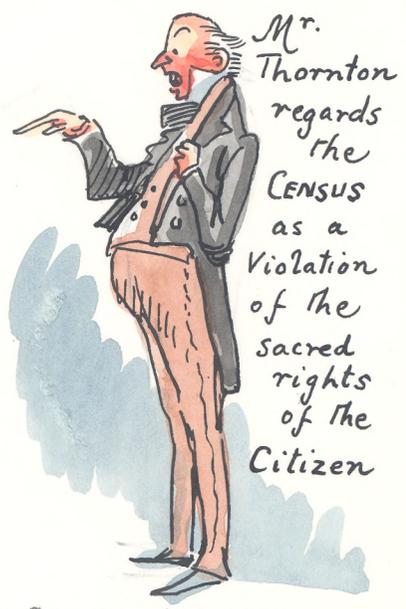
A

ll honor should be given to John Rickman, assistant clerk

of the House of Commons, who managed the first Census of England. A very imperfect beginning was made in 1801; Ireland, though just united

to Great Britain, was not included. The enumeration was attended by the usual hardships imposed upon a new venture. Mr. Thornton, M.P for

York declared that "this project is totally subversive of the last remains of English liberty", and that "an annual register of our people will acquaint our enemy (meaning Napoleon) with our weakness. But the parish schoolmasters in Scotland and the parish overseers in England carried on with the difficult task, while some of the population "looked upon the Census-taker as



Ominous", and "feared lest some Public Misfortune, or an Epidemic Distemper should follow the numbering"...

The first Census showed Great Britain with over nine million inhabitants. The growth in population was chiefly in the North---in the cities of Liverpool, Manchester, and Bradford, where a vast number of workers grew up around the coalfields. The most desolate parts of the island became alive with struggling humanity. Boys and girls throughout the land seemed to marry

KING GEORGE III, QUEEN CHARLOTTE, and their SIX DAUGHTERS

early and have large families. The Queen herself had given birth to nine sons and six daughters; and



Painted on Glass by Rought of Oxford.

it was no unusual thing to find fifteen and twenty children in a family---a rate which soon peopled the islands with amazing rapidity.



The Royal Household was---though a large one--- "the model of an Englishman's household". It was early, kindly, charitable, frugal, and orderly. According to Thackeray, "day after day was the same". At the same hour at night, the King kissed his daughters's cheeks, and the Princesses



King George the Third

aquatint by Stadler

1810

kissed their mother's hand; and Madame Thielke brought the royal night-cap. At the same hour, the equerries and women-in-waiting had their little dinner and cackled over their tea. The King had his backgammon or his evening concert. The Equerries yawned themselves



KING GEORGE III and QUEEN CHARLOTTE painted on Glass.



Charlotte Princess Royal 1766 - 1816.



Princess Augusta
1768 - 1840



Princess Elizabeth
1770 - 1840



Princess Sophia
1777 - 1848

to death in the anteroom. Or the King and his family walked on the slopes of the gardens at Windsor---the King holding his darling little Princess Amelia by the hand---and the people crowded round quite goodnaturedly to see the Royal Household pass by.

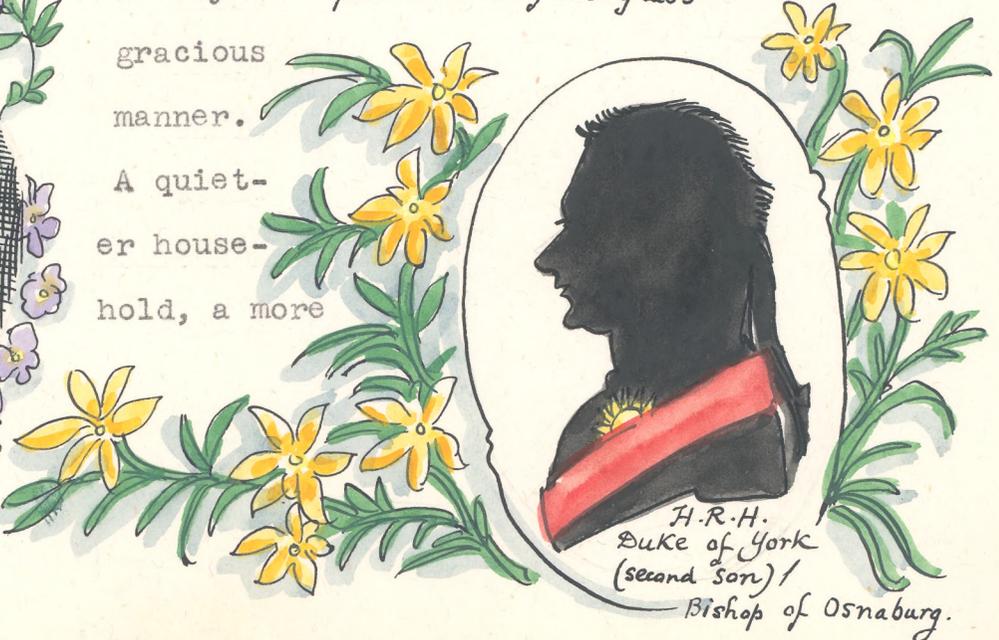
The concert over, the King never failed to take his enormous cocked hat off, and salute his band, and say, "Thank you, gentlemen!" in a very gracious manner.

A quieter household, a more

Queen Charlotte
with a pet dog
by Walter Jorden



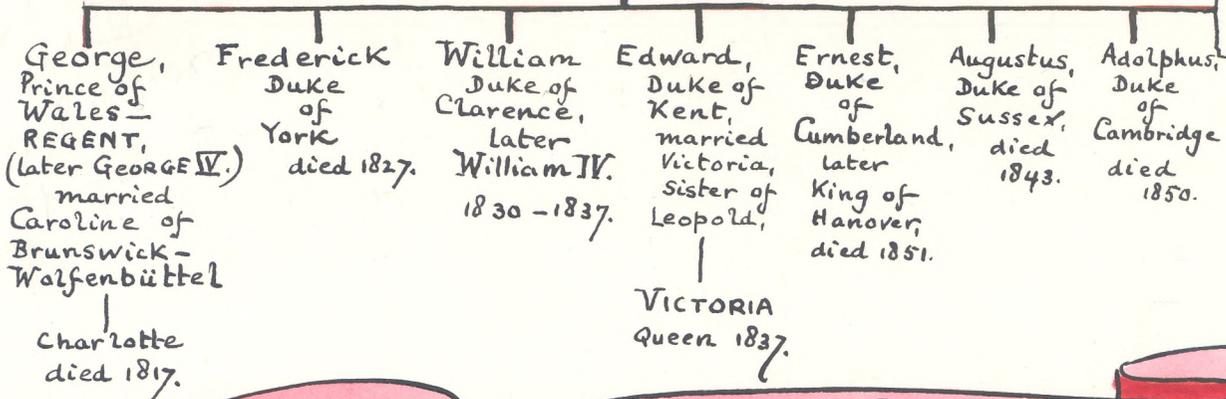
Painted on flat Glass



H.R.H.
Duke of York
(second son) /
Bishop of Osnaburg.

George III (1760-1820) married Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

and Six Daughters



The Family of GEORGE III

prosaic life than this of Kew or Windsor cannot be imagined.

His Majesty had a large family. There were ^{nine} seven sons and ^{six} five daughters (but none of the twelve ^{who grow up to manhood & womanhood} had legitimate offspring!) Two of the daughters were married and childless; three were unmarried. (The historian Howard Robinson reminds us that, in order that the virtues of the Hanoverian line should not be lost to an England that certainly was unappreciative, some ducal marriages became imperative. Accordingly, the Dukes of Clarence, Cambridge, and Kent married German princesses in 1818. In the next year, there was born to the Duke of Kent a daughter who was named Victoria. To her the throne was to come in 1847, after her uncles, the Prince Regent and the Duke of Clarence, had reigned and died childless).

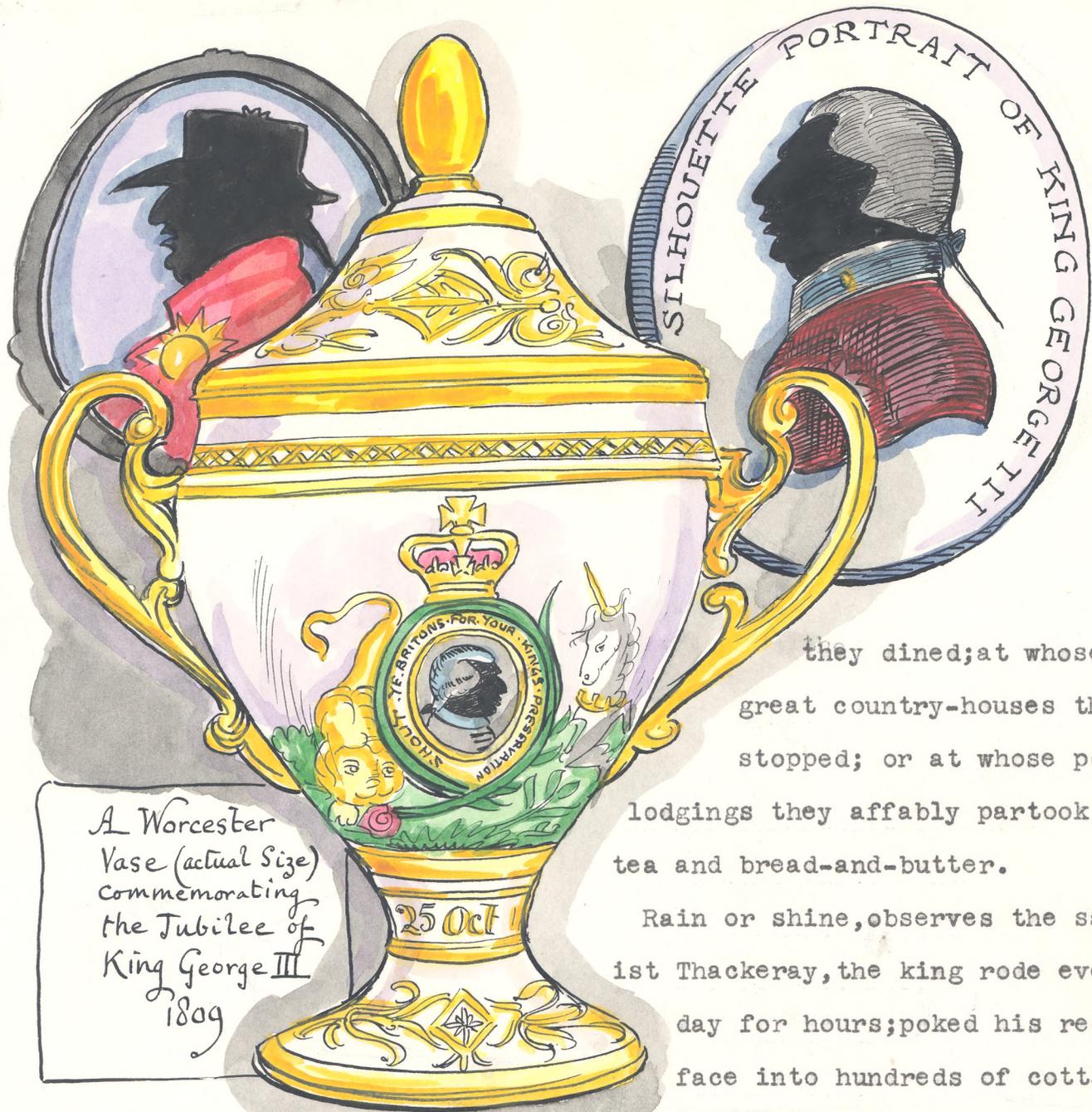


The King's Second Son

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF YORK

Their Majesties were very sociable potentates. The Court Chronicler tells of numerous visits which George III and Queen Charlotte paid to their subjects, gentle and simple; with whom

6
888
892



A Worcester Vase (actual size) commemorating the Jubilee of King George III 1809

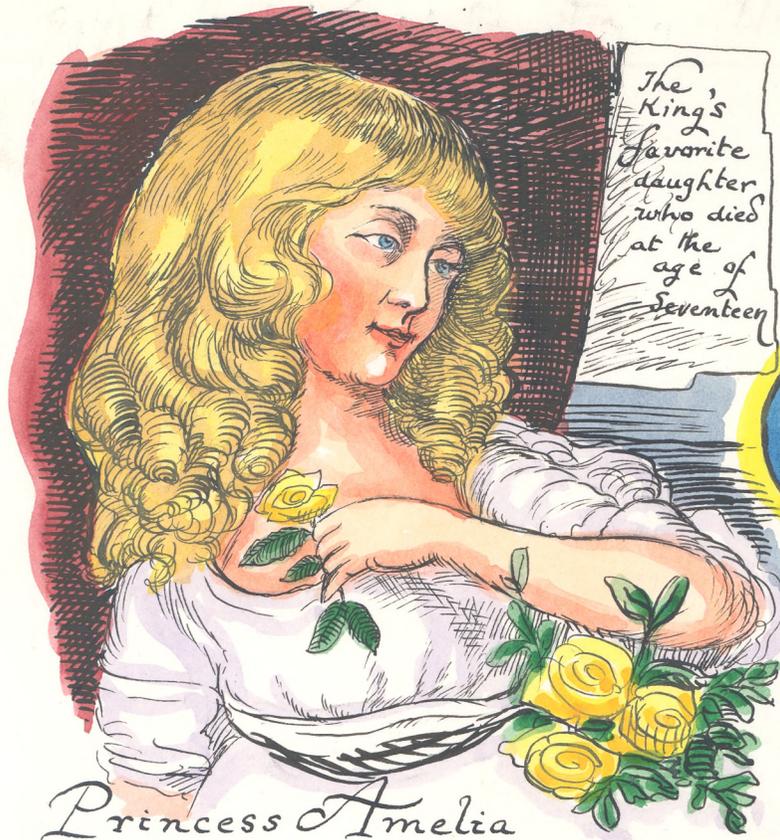
they dined; at whose great country-houses they stopped; or at whose poorer lodgings they affably partook of tea and bread-and-butter.

Rain or shine, observes the satirist Thackeray, the king rode every day for hours; poked his red face into hundreds of cottages round about, and showed that

shovel hat and Windsor uniform to farmers, to pig-boys, to old women making apple-dumplings; to all sorts of people, about whom many tales are told. When Haroun Alraschid visits a subject incog., the latter is sure to be very much the better for the Calif's magnificence. Old George showed no such royal splendor. He used to give a guinea sometimes; sometimes feel in his pockets and find he had no money. Often asked a hundred questions,



The King's favorite daughter who died at the age of seventeen



Princess Amelia

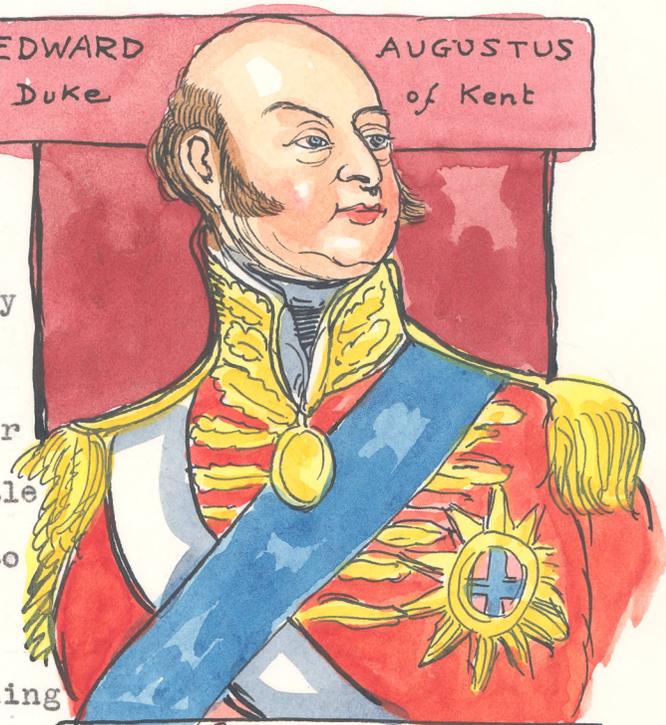
about the number of the subject's family, about his oats and beans, about the rent he paid for his cottage and land, and ride on.

Of all the figures in that large family group which surrounds King George and his Queen, the prettiest ("I think so too", says Thackeray) is the father's darling, the Princess Amelia, pathetic for her beauty,

her sweetness, her early death. This was his favorite amongst all his children. Of his sons, he loved the Duke of York best.

But the dullness of the old king's court stupefied the Duke of York and the other big sons of George III. They scared equerries and ladies, frightened the modest little circle, with their coarse spirits and loud talk. Of little comfort, indeed, were the king's sons to the king.

EDWARD Duke AUGUSTUS of Kent



But while we have been prattling about old George's household, we have been neglecting matters of state.

The fourth son of King George III, 1767-1820

In 1800, the Acts of Union were passed whereby, in 1801, the first Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland met



at Westminster.
 Twenty-eight Irish peers, chosen for life, were added to the British House of Lords, and one-hundred Irish representatives joined the House of Commons.

In its political aspect, the Union of the Irish and English parliaments was equal. It followed generally the analogy of the Union with Scotland. Ireland got her share of the representation both

in the Commons, on the mixed basis of population and property, and in the Lords. However, with regard to the church, the example of the treaty of union with Scotland was followed with a fatal difference. The two established churches were combined as the United Church of England and Ireland. But the pledges to the Irish Catholics were ignored, and their grievances (with those of the Protestant Dissenters) remained unremedied.

