

= Charlotte Stuart , Duchess of Albany =

Charlotte Stuart , styled Duchess of Albany ( 29 October 1753 ? 17 November 1789 ) was the illegitimate daughter of the Jacobite pretender Prince Charles Edward Stuart ( ' Bonnie Prince Charlie ' or the ' Young Pretender ' ) and his only child to survive infancy .

Her mother was Clementina Walkinshaw , who was mistress to the Prince from 1752 until 1760 . After years of abuse , Clementina left him , taking Charlotte with her . Charlotte spent most of her life in French convents , estranged from a father who refused to make any provision for her . Unable to marry , she herself became a mistress with illegitimate children , taking Ferdinand de Rohan , Archbishop of Bordeaux , as her lover .

She was finally reconciled with her father in 1784 , when he legitimised her and created her Duchess of Albany in the Jacobite Peerage . She left her own children with her mother , and became her father 's carer and companion in the last years of his life , before dying less than two years after him . Her three children were raised in anonymity ; however , as the only grandchildren of the pretender , they have been the subject of Jacobite interest since their lineage was uncovered in the 20th century .

= = Royal parentage = =

Charlotte Stuart was born on 29 October 1753 at Liège to Charles and his mistress Clementina Walkinshaw , whom he had met during the Jacobite rising of 1745 ( when he came to Scotland from France in an attempt to regain by force the thrones of England , Scotland and Ireland , which had been lost by his grandfather , James II and VII , in 1689 ) . Clementina ( 1720 ? 1802 ) was the youngest of the ten daughters of John Walkinshaw of Barrowhill ( 1671 ? 1731 ) . The Walkinshaws owned the lands of Barrowfield and Camlachie , and her father had become a wealthy Glasgow merchant ( founding the textile village of Calton ) . However , he was also an Episcopalian and a Jacobite who had fought for the Prince 's father in the rising of 1715 , been captured at the Battle of Sheriffmuir , before escaping from Stirling Castle and fleeing to Europe . In 1717 , he had been pardoned by the British Government and returned to Glasgow , where his youngest daughter was born probably at Camlachie . However , Clementina was largely educated on the Continent , and later converted to Roman Catholicism . In 1746 , she was living at the home of her uncle Sir Hugh Paterson at Bannockburn , near Stirling . The Prince came to Sir Hugh 's home in early January 1746 where he first met Clementina , and he returned later that month to be nursed by her from what appears to have been a cold . Given that she was living under her uncle 's protection , it is not thought the two were lovers at this time .

After the defeat of the Prince 's rebellion at Culloden in April 1746 , Charles fled Scotland for France . In the following years , he had a scandalous affair with his 22 @-@ year @-@ old first cousin Louise de Montbazon ( who was married to his close friend , and whom he deserted when she became pregnant ) and then with the Princess of Talmont , who was in her 40s . In 1752 , he heard that Clementina was at Dunkirk and in some financial difficulties , so he sent 50 louis d 'or to help her and then dispatched Sir Henry Goring to entreat her to come to Ghent and live with him as his mistress . Goring , who described Clementina as a " bad woman " , complained of being used as " no better than a pimp " , and shortly after left Charles 's employ . However , by November 1752 , Clementina was living with Charles , and was to remain as his mistress for the following eight years . The couple moved to Liège where Charlotte , their only child , was born on 29 October 1753 and baptised into the Roman Catholic faith at the church of Sainte Marie @-@ des @-@ Fonts .

= = Separation from father ( 1760 ? 1783 ) = =

The relationship between prince and mistress was disastrous . Charles was already a disillusioned , angry alcoholic when they began living together , and he became violent towards , and insanely possessive of , Clementina , treating her as a " submissive whipping post " . Often away from home on " jaunts " , he seldom referred to his daughter , and when he did , it was as " ye cheild " . During

a temporary move to Paris , the Prince 's lieutenants record ugly public arguments between the two , and that his drunkenness and temper were damaging his reputation . By 1760 , they were in Basel , and Clementina had had enough of Charles 's intoxication and their nomadic lifestyle . She contacted his staunchly Roman Catholic father , James Stuart ( ' the Old Pretender ' ) , and expressed a desire to secure a Catholic education for Charlotte and to retire to a convent . ( In 1750 , during an incognito visit to London , Charles had nominally disavowed Roman Catholicism for the Anglican Church . ) James agreed to pay her an annuity of 10 @, @ 000 livres and , in July 1760 , there is evidence to suggest he aided her escape from the watchful Charles , with the seven @-@ year @-@ old Charlotte , to the convent of the Nuns of the Visitation in Paris . She left a letter for Charles expressing her devotion to him but complaining she had had to flee in fear of her life . A furious Charles circulated descriptions of them both , but it was to no avail .

= = = Appeals from France = = =

For the next twelve years , Clementina and Charlotte continued to live in various French convents , supported by the 10 @, @ 000 livre pension granted by James Stuart . Charles never forgave Clementina for depriving him of " ye cheild " , and stubbornly refused to pay anything for their support . On 1 January 1766 James died , but Charles , ( now considering himself de jure Charles III of Scotland , England and Ireland ) still refused to make any provision for the two , forcing Clementina , now styling herself " Countess Alberstroff " , to appeal to his brother Cardinal Henry Stuart for assistance . Henry gave them an allowance of 5 @, @ 000 livres , but in return extracted a statement from Clementina that she had never been married to Charles ? a statement she later tried to retract . This lower amount forced them to find cheaper lodgings in the convent of Notre Dame at Meaux @-@ en @-@ Brie .

In 1772 , the Prince , then aged fifty @-@ one , married the nineteen @-@ year @-@ old Princess Louise of Stolberg @-@ Gedern ( who was only a year older than Charlotte ) . Charlotte , now in penury , had consistently been writing to her father for some time , and she now desperately entreated him to legitimise her , provide support , and bring her to Rome before an heir could be born . In April 1772 , Charlotte wrote a touching , yet pleading , letter to " mon Augusta Papa " which was sent via Principal Gordon of the Scots College in Rome . Charles relented and offered to bring Charlotte to Rome ( he was now resident in the Palazzo Muti ? the residence of the Stuarts @-@ in @-@ exile ) , but only on condition she would leave her mother behind in France . This she loyally refused to do , and Charles , in fury , broke off all discussions .

= = = Mistress of an Archbishop = = =

Towards the end of 1772 , Clementina and Charlotte unexpectedly arrived in Rome to press their desperate cause in person . ( The trip pushed Clementina further into debt . ) However , the Prince reacted angrily , refusing even to see them , forcing their helpless return to France , from where Charlotte 's pleading letters continued . Three years later , Charlotte , now in her twenty @-@ second year and already in poor health , ( she was apparently suffering from a liver ailment shared by the Stuarts ) decided her only option was to marry as soon as possible . Charles , however , refused to give permission either for her to marry or to take the veil , and she was left awaiting his royal pleasure .

Lacking legitimacy or permission , Charlotte was unable to marry . Thus , she otherwise sought a protector and provider . Probably unbeknown to Charles , she became the mistress of Ferdinand Maximilien Mériadec de Rohan , Archbishop of Bordeaux and Cambrai . Ferdinand de Rohan ? related by blood to the house of Stuart as well as Bourbon and Lorraine ? was also unable to marry legitimately , having entered the Church as a younger son of a noble house . By him , she had three children : two daughters , Marie Victoire and Charlotte , and finally a son , Charles Edward . Her children were kept secret , and remained largely unknown until the 20th century . When Charlotte eventually left France for Florence , she entrusted the children ? and she was only just recovering from her son 's birth ? to the care of her mother , and it appears that few , and certainly not her

father , knew of their existence .

= = Reconciliation = =

Only after his childless marriage to Louise was over , and Charles had fallen seriously ill , did he take an interest in Charlotte . She was now thirty , and she had not seen her father since she was seven . On 23 March 1783 , he altered his will to make her his heir and , a week later , signed an act of legitimisation . This act , recognising her as his natural daughter and entitling her to succeed to his private estate , was sent to Louis XVI of France . Henry Stuart , however , contested the legitimisation as being irregular and confusing to the succession . Louis XVI eventually did confirm the act and register it with the Parlement of Paris , but not until 6 September 1787 .

In July 1784 , having granted Louise a legal separation , Charles summoned Charlotte to Florence , where he was now resident and , in November , installed her in the Palazzo Guadagni as Duchess of Albany , styling her " Her Royal Highness " ? and appointing her to the Order of the Thistle . Nevertheless , being illegitimate at birth , Charlotte still had no right of succession to the Stuart claim to the British throne . However , by this stage , the claims were of little value . European rulers had long since ceased to take Charles seriously . Even Pope Pius VI was refusing to recognise his royal title , and the famous Casanova had wittily called him the " pretender @-@ in @-@ vain " . He was reduced to styling himself the ' Count d 'Albany ' .

That a Stuart restoration was now less than unlikely did not prevent the Prince presenting Charlotte as the next generation of the cause . He had medals struck for her , bearing the figure of Hope , the map of England , and the Stuart arms with legends such as " Spes Tamen Est Una " ( there is one hope ) . He also had her idealised in art ; the Scottish artist Gavin Hamilton was commissioned to draw her in chalk in the neo @-@ classical style , whilst Hugh Douglas Hamilton painted a flattering portrait in a tiara .

= = = Companion to her father = = =

When Charlotte arrived to live with her father in 1784 , he was an ailing alcoholic . She found his physical state disgusting , and he was suffering from mental degeneration and using a litter for travel . He did , however , introduce Charlotte into society , allowing her to wear his mother 's famous Sobieska jewellery . She continually , and unsuccessfully , sought gifts of jewels or money from her close @-@ fisted father ; but this was probably largely out of a concern for the welfare of her mother and children . Within a month of arriving at Florence , she did manage to persuade her father to provide at last for Clementina . By this time , Charlotte was also in poor health , suffering from an ailment that would result in her death from " obstruction of the liver " just two years after her father . Indeed , shortly after she arrived in Florence , a protruding growth forced her to have clothes altered . Charlotte sorely missed her mother ( whom she vainly hoped Charles would allow to come to Rome ) and her children , writing to her mother as many as 100 times in a single year ; she also feared that Rohan would take another lover ; all this is revealed in her dispirited letters home , as she awaited Charles 's death .

= = = Final months = = =

In December 1785 , she enlisted the help of Henry Stuart to get Charles back to the Palazzo Muti in Rome . There , Charlotte remained her father 's carer and companion and did her best to make his life bearable until he died of a stroke two years later ( 31 January 1788 ) . Her sacrifice for him was considerable ? she was torn between an evident affection for her father and her mother and three children left behind in Paris .

Charlotte survived her father by only twenty @-@ two months and never saw her children again . On 9 October 1789 , she arrived at the Palazzo Vizzani Sanguinetti ( now Palazzo Ranuzzi ) in Bologna , the home of her friend the Marchesa Giulia Lambertini @-@ Bovio . She died there at age 36 of liver cancer ( 17 November 1789 ) . In her will , written just three days before her death ,

Charlotte left her mother , Clementina , a sum of 50 @,@ 000 livres and an annuity of a further 15 @,@ 000 . However , it was two years before Henry Stuart , her executor , and now considered by Jacobites to be King Henry IX , would release the money . Indeed , he only agreed to do this when Clementina signed a " quittance " renouncing , on behalf of herself and her descendants , any further claim on the estate . Charlotte was buried in the Church of San Biagio , near where she died . When the church was pulled down by the French in 1797 , Charlotte 's remains were moved to the Oratorio della Santissima Trinità . When it closed in 1961 , her monument ( and possibly her remains ) were moved to the nearby Chiesa della Santissima Trinità .

= = Legacy = =

For many years , Charlotte 's three children remained unknown to history , and it was believed that the direct line of James II and Mary of Modena ended with the death of Henry in 1807 . However , in the 1950s , research by the historians Alasdair and Hetty Tayler revealed the existence of two daughters and a son . Historian George Sherburn then discovered the letters from Charlotte to her mother , from which he wrote his biography of Charles Edward .

= = = Children = = =

It appears that Clementina lived on in Fribourg , Switzerland , until her death in 1802 and that it was she who reared Charlotte 's children in deliberate anonymity . Their identities were concealed by a variety of aliases and ruses , not even being mentioned in Charlotte 's detailed will . The will makes reference only to Clementina and to Charlotte 's desire that Clementina might be able to provide for " her necessitous relations " . The reason these children remained secret can be explained by the fact that the relationship between Rohan , the Archbishop , and Charlotte , who had been forbidden to marry , was highly illicit and would have been scandalous . Marie Victoire Adelaide ( born 1779 ) and Charlotte Maximilienne Amélie ( born 1780 ) were thought to have been placed in the care of Thomas Coutts , the London banker , and a distant relative of the Walkinshaws . They remained in anonymity and were believed to have been simply absorbed into English society .

Charlotte 's son , Charles Edward , born in Paris in 1784 , followed a different path . Calling himself ' Count Roehenstart ' ( Rohan + Stuart ) , he was educated by his father 's family in Germany , became an officer in the Russian army , and a general in the Austrian service . He travelled widely ? visiting India , America , and the West Indies ? before coming to England and Scotland . He told such tall tales of his origins and adventures that few believed his claims to royal descent . Indeed , it was not until the 20th century that historian George Sherburn established that he was indeed who he had claimed to be . He died in Scotland in 1854 as the result of a coach accident near Stirling Castle and was buried at Dunkeld Cathedral , where his grave can still be seen . He married twice but had no issue .

Occasionally , it has been suggested that Prince Charles married Clementina Walkinshaw , and thus that Charlotte was legitimate and could legally claim to be her father 's successor . However , there are no records to substantiate this claim , and the affidavit signed by Clementina on 9 March 1767 explicitly disavows the idea . Further , Charles 's initial disavowal of Charlotte speaks against her legitimacy .

It was generally believed that Charlotte 's daughters also died without issue . However , according to Peter Pininski 's research , Charlotte 's elder daughter , Marie Victoire , did have issue . Pininski 's 2002 book suggested that Jules @-@ Hercule , Prince de Guéméné and Duke of Montbazou , elder brother of Ferdinand de Rohan ( and aide de camp to Henry Stuart in 1745 ) recognised Charlotte 's offspring as his own ? thus giving her status in that tight family . The book claimed that in 1793 , at the outbreak of the French revolution , the Rohan family scattered ; and Marie Victoire de Rohan went to relatives in Poland . There , she met and married Paul Anthony Louis Bertrand de Nikorowicz , a Polish nobleman and son of a banker . They had a son , Antime , before she was widowed four years later . ( She later remarried twice : first to James d 'Auvergne , a British naval captain , who died after 14 months , and then finally to Jean de Pauw , a French army officer . )

Antime was to have a son , Charles , and a daughter , Julia @-@ Thérèse , who married Count Leonard Pininski and became Peter Pininski 's great @-@ great @-@ grandmother . Pininski 's evidence for his thesis has been described as " often indirect , if not elliptical " ; the Rohans were a large family , and it is easy to confuse its many members . A former chairman of the Royal Stuart Society , however , stated that Pininski 's evidence seemed " genuine " , and genealogist Hugh Massingberd described it as " painstakingly researched ... proof to surely the most sceptical pedant 's satisfaction " .

Pininski 's hypothesis has since been disputed by Marie @-@ Louise Backhurst in a 2013 article . Backhurst contends that the Charlotte 's second daughter , who was always called Victoire Adelaide , was married firstly at St Roch , Paris , in 1804 to a military doctor in the service of Napoleon , Pierre Joseph Marie de St Ursin ( 1763 ? 1818 ) . By de St Ursin she was the mother of Theodore Marie de St Ursin who was born in Paris about 1809 ? 10 and who was still resident in Paris in 1823 , although his history has not been found . His mother married again in 1823 to one Corbet James D 'Auvergne , although her place and date of death have not been found . Backhurst examined Madame Nikorowicz 's baptism , marriage and death , and gives her name as Marie Victoire de Thorigny , and Backhurst suggests that she was more likely to have been the illegitimate daughter of Jules , Prince de Rohan , brother of Ferdinand and thus a first cousin to Victoire Adelaide . Pininski argues that Backhurst 's interpretation is based on a destroyed document that was " reconstituted " seventy years later and that no document confirms the birth of Marie Victoire 's son , whereas Pininski 's publications provide original archival documents and fully describe the context .

= = = In Jacobite folklore = = =

Charlotte Stuart 's story did not take long to enter into the Jacobite folklore . The Scots poet , Robert Burns ( 1759 ? 96 ) , a near contemporary , wrote a number of works celebrating the tragic romanticism of the Jacobite cause . Amongst them was The Bonnie Lass of Albanie , a lament to Charlotte Stuart probably written at the time of her death . Indeed , evidence from an unpublished collection of letters from Burns to Robert Ainslie reveals the Poet 's fascination with Charlotte , in that he considered naming one of his own illegitimate children Charlotte after her .

= = Ancestors = =

Genealogy of Charlotte Stuart in three generations