

with which she alleviated the fatigues and inconveniences of / This Tour." She goes entirely unmentioned in the *MT* itself.

The Prince of Wales's patronage gave a late boost to the subscription and Dibdin seems to have been quite overwhelmed by it. Indeed, the royalist sentiments in the *MT* represent another aspect of this remarkable book's transformative significance in his career, for Dibdin had previously felt very differently about the House of Hanover. The major royal event during the period he published *The Devil* was the death of Princess Amelia, George III's aunt and the last surviving child of George II, on 31 October 1786. *The Devil* includes a complaint that "THE papers, and indeed the whole town [are] at this time absurdly full of the death of the Princess Amelia," and offers, as an antidote, a humorous "Impromptu":

AMELIA in the ground doth lie,  
And black of course is worn in common;  
Hard that so many men must dye!  
In compliment to one old woman.<sup>21</sup>

This was probably, though not certainly, written by Dibdin, who in either case was happy to print it, as his only comment on the Princess's death. After the *MT*, such sentiments disappear from his writing, and on the contrary he went out of his way to celebrate royal events, as for example with his *Ode in Honour of the Nuptials of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales* (1795). In the wake of the French Revolution, Dibdin's popular brand of royalism, diffused through dozens of songs, did much to shore up loyalist feeling in England.

The publication of the *MT* was set for 12 May. On 26 April, Dibdin and Gales claimed they had "nearly five Hundred" subscribers, some of whom had subscribed for multiple copies, and that the subscription would close on 1 May.<sup>22</sup> By the time Gales printed the list of "Subscribers' Names," 557 copies were accounted for, though my own amended copy of the *MT*, seemingly used by Gales as a sort of reference copy, shows that a few subscribers had withdrawn, or been wrongly recorded in the first place. Dibdin intended to take the remaining copies to India. When the volume appeared on 12 May, an "Advertisement" at the front written by Dibdin—occupying the final leaves of the Winchester manuscript—claimed there had been a late surge of interest, with "nearly two hundred" extra copies subscribed for; Dibdin was accordingly extending the subscription to 12 June, after which a "second edition" would be printed by John Preston in London (Gales having "a prior engagement"). This may in part have been marketing hype, for I have found no evidence that any second edition was actually produced. A balanced reading of the evidence would suggest that the book was probably oversubscribed, but not to such an extent that it made sense to print a new edition. Nevertheless, despite his tendency to grumble, it seems that both the musical tour and the volume he wrote about it succeeded beyond Dibdin's expectations.

21. *The Devil* (London, 1786–87), 128 (No. VIII).

22. "Musical Tour," *Sheffield Register*, 26 April 1788, [2].