

THE COUNTESS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION: MADAME DU BARRY AND THE
1791 THEFT OF HER JEWELRY

Erik Braeden Lewis

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APPROVED:

Michael V. Leggiere, Major Professor
Marijn S. Kaplan, Minor Professor
Nancy L. Stockdale, Committee Member
Richard B. McCaslin, Chair of the
Department of History
Costas Tsatsoulis, Dean of the Toulouse
Graduate School

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Jeanne Bécu, an illegitimate child from the Vaucouleurs area in France, ascended the ranks of the *Ancien régime* to become the Countess du Barry and take her place as Royal Mistress of Louis XV. During her tenure as Royal Mistress, Jeanne amassed a jewel collection that rivaled all private collections. During the course of the French Revolution, more specifically the Reign of Terror, Jeanne was forced to hatch a plot to secure the remainder of her wealth as she lost a significant portion of her revenue on the night of 4 August 1789. To protect her wealth, Jeanne enlisted Nathaniel Parker Forth, a British spy, to help her plan a fake jewel theft at Louveciennes so that she could remove her economic capital from France while also reducing her total wealth and capital with the intent of reducing her tax payments. As a result of the theft, her jewelry was transported to London, where she would travel four times during the French Revolution on the pretext of recovering her jewelry. This thesis examines her actions while abroad during the Revolution and her culpability in the plot. While traveling to and from London, Jeanne was able to move information, money, and people out of France. Jeanne was arrested and charged with aiding the counter-revolution, for which the Revolutionary Tribunal sentenced her to death. Madame du Barry represented the extravagance and waste of Versailles and of Bourbon absolutism, and this symbolic representation of waste was what eventually inhibited Jeanne's success.

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Erik Braeden Lewis

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the reign of Louis XV, Jeanne Bécu, the Countess du Barry, was the last *maîtresse-en-titre*, or Royal Mistress, of the Kingdom of France during the *Ancien régime*, as Louis XVI never took a mistress.¹ She occupied the position of official mistress from 1769 until 1774; it was this “position which gave her privileges and powers of which she may not have been aware.”² These privileges included private apartments, a stipend, and the payment of previous gambling debts.³ Furthermore, as Royal Mistress, she could host meetings between the king and the ministers of his government in her apartments.⁴ Consequently, she gained the ability to influence the king in political matters, as will be seen with her involvement in the dismissal of Étienne François, the Duke de Choiseul.

More importantly, however, was her ability to secure a significant source of capital in the form of fine jewelry and land, which came with *châteaux* and manorial dues. A woman of humble background, Jeanne established her fortune on these material possessions. Her love for material possessions, which surmounted her self-love and joy for life, was central to the events that led to her demise. The desire to preserve her wealth and status entangled her in an international smuggling affair that ended with her execution during the Reign of Terror of the French Revolution.

¹ The historical consensus is that Louis XVI had multiple medical conditions such as phimosis and being hypogonadal. See Stephan A. Boorjian and Ryan N. Fogg, “The Sexual Dysfunction of Louis XVI: A Consequence of International Politics, Anatomy, or Naïveté?” *BJU International*, 106, no. 4 (August 2010): 457. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>.

² Joan Haslip, *Madame du Barry: The Wages of Beauty* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991), 37.

³ Jeanine Huas, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Tallandier, 2011), 85.

⁴ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 85.

On the night of 10-11 January 1791, the most precious diamonds, jewels, necklaces, and other pieces of jewelry in Madame du Barry's collection were stolen from her *château* at Louveciennes outside of Versailles while she was visiting Paris for the evening. This represents the story as the Countess wanted to tell it. Regardless, from the moment news of the theft diffused to the public, the infamous name of Madame du Barry, mistress to the previous king, was reintroduced to the memories of the French masses in the midst of revolution.

Due to the events at Versailles and Paris that ended the *Ancien régime*, and most specifically because of the abolishment of feudalism and manorialism on the night of 4 August 1789, du Barry had an obvious motive: reduce the value of her estate and therefore the amount of taxes she owed to the French government. However, motive does not mean guilt and an in-depth study is necessary to determine whether the theft was a genuinely misfortunate event or the result of a master scheme involving conspirators across the English Channel at a time when communication and movement were limited and monitored by the French government.

The theories as to what actually happened are as abundant as the number of jewels in Madame du Barry's collection. An approach lacking curiosity might suggest that Madame du Barry was a victim of a crime that just happened to be perpetrated against her in the most unfortunate of times and scenarios. Stanley Loomis, in *Du Barry: A Biography*, asserts that “[t]here cannot be the slightest doubt that Madame du Barry was the victim of an audacious robbery.”⁵ Loomis maintains that only the robbers, and most likely the Swiss Guard, Joseph Badoux, who was tasked with monitoring “the exterior of

⁵ Stanley Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1959), 237.

the *château*,” were involved in the theft.⁶ This implies that she was an innocent victim. More importantly, it suggests that during the trips to London that she took, du Barry refrained from breaking any French laws regarding contact and aid for the French *émigrés* in London.

A second school of thought tells a different narrative. Accordingly, Madame du Barry remained an innocent victim, while the theft was the master plan of Nathaniel Parker Forth, the mysterious British agent who hired Zamor, her Bengalese valet, and Badoux, the Swiss Guard charged with protecting her residence, as well as five thieves who committed the actual offense. According to this version, Forth planned the heist with the thieves and without Jeanne’s knowledge. In *Madame du Barry*, René de La Croix, the Duke de Castries, notes the habitual presence of Forth at Louveciennes, the existence of Forth’s own private police force, and Forth’s discovery of the jewelry’s location before the French police. Castries used the evidence of Forth’s chronic appearance in the progression of events surrounding the jewel theft as evidence to support his assertion that Forth was the one who orchestrated the theft.⁷ Furthermore, by placing full culpability on Forth for organizing the theft, Castries directly implies that du Barry was innocent, at least up to this point, of any conspiracy. In *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, Jacques Levron admits that it is impossible to refute the claim that the theft was planned by an insider. He argues that Madame du Barry’s response of having Badoux arrested is sufficient evidence that she was unaware of the plan and genuinely distraught by the

⁶ Lord Frederick Spencer Hamilton and others, eds., “In the Library: The Mystery of the Du Barry Diamonds,” *The Pall Mall Magazine*, no. 9 (May to August 1896): 308, https://books.google.com/books?id=BqPQAAAAMAAJ&lpg=PA308&ots=ej_5g3quM4&dq=Joseph%20Badou&pg=PA308#v=onepage&q=Joseph%20Badou&f=false.

⁷ René de La Croix, Duc de Castries, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Hachette, 1967), 231.

action.⁸ This would suggest that Forth, because of his knowledge of Louveciennes and acquaintance with du Barry's employees, devised the plan around her. Forth sought to entrap Jeanne and use her to transport funds and communication to and from London, which in turn frustrated the French government, his ultimate task. This theory completely ignores the fact that Jeanne had been trying to reduce her income, which was her ultimate goal at the time. While plausible, this argument begins to unravel in light of her actions in London. Furthermore, it is unlikely that Forth was able to rally Jeanne's employees without her knowledge. Consequently, neither du Barry nor Forth were cognizant of the theft planning, or both were the masterminds who orchestrated the plot.

A more tenable theory is that Madame du Barry and Forth planned this theft together. She desperately needed to reduce her income; he was to act as the British catalyst for unrest and commotion in France. Joan Haslip, in describing this situation, states: "There can be little doubt that Forth was an agent spying in France on behalf of the British government and assisting French royalists in escaping from the country. Madame du Barry and her jewels were a useful cover for underground activities...."⁹ Thus, both had a motive and the means to enact the scheme. This theory claims that du Barry and Forth utilized her employees at Louveciennes, as well as the thieves, and quite possibly even the jewelers and bankers in both France and Britain, in a master conspiracy against the French that was hatched by the British government. According to Agnes, Baroness de Stoeckl, in *Mistress of Versailles*, this plan ultimately resulted in du Barry providing funds for the royalist cause by aiding the British struggle against the French

⁸ Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961), 131, 134.

⁹ Joan Haslip, *Madame du Barry: The Wages of Beauty* (Grove Weidenfeld, New York, 1992), 161.

Revolutionary governments during the War of the First Coalition (1792-1797).¹⁰

Accordingly, the theft provided her a reason to file a claim with the French government to reduce her taxes. Then, with Forth's knowledge of the British legal system, she could reclaim her jewels at a later date.¹¹ Taking into consideration the fact that the jewels were so crucial for her to maintain her standard of living, it is unlikely that she would risk losing the majority of them. However, it is possible that Jeanne asserted that a different collection of jewels was stolen. This allowed her to retain the most expensive jewels of the collection while also alleging that some had been stolen.

A further question about du Barry's actions in London during the four trips she made to recover her jewelry arises from this theory. While it is the general consensus that she did conspire against the French Revolution by providing money and information to the *émigrés*, this was not her initial plan regarding the jewel theft.¹² Her only motive was to reduce the value of her estate and maintain possession of her treasures. At some point, most likely after the death of her lover, Louis-Hercule-Timoléon, the Duke de Brissac, she realized that life in France was no longer a safe option. Until this moment, it can be assumed that she had hoped that the turmoil would end and that she could safely return to France. However, in Edmond de Goncourt's *Madame du Barry*, he not only maintains that she was committing crimes against the Revolution, but that she would have relocated to London permanently had she been able to move the remainder of her possessions out of France.¹³ The inability to do this provides the most probable reason for her return to Louveciennes after her fourth voyage to London.

¹⁰ Agnes, Baroness de Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles* (London: John Murray, 1966), 150.

¹¹ Marion Ward, *Forth* (London: Phillimore & Co., 1982), 148.

¹² Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry* (Paris: Pygmalion, 2001), 166.

¹³ Edmond de Goncourt, *Madame du Barry* (London: Long John Limited, 1914), 255-56.

During the Revolution, Jeanne made the mortal decision to support the court of Louis XVI, which meant helping many of the same individuals who had always ridiculed her. This marked her attempt to gain the respect and adoration of those who might reconstitute the court, as they all believed that the powers of Europe would crush the Revolution and restore the Bourbons to their full authority; this did not happen. Curiously, as the royalist situation continued to deteriorate, Madame du Barry was one of the few who received permission to travel across the English Channel. More importantly, she possessed the economic capital to support the Counter-Revolution. Although du Barry was a former Royal Mistress who had obtained all of her wealth by the grace of the French crown, the Revolutionary government initially overlooked her and allowed her to work against it.

Once completed, the jewel theft allowed du Barry the ability and excuse to travel to and from London, as her jewels were recovered there. In the subsequent chain of events that continued to prolong her stays and require additional trips, she was able to adjust her plan from reducing her income and helping the *émigrés* to removing the remainder of her wealth from Louveciennes in order to transport it to London. This new plan, which had to be hastily commenced because the Revolutionary government sealed Louveciennes, was for her to move her possessions to London via Amsterdam. A Dutch detour became possible because of Jeanne's friendship with General George Augustus Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, who was serving with the British cavalry in the Netherlands.¹⁴ Madame du Barry had every intention of emigrating permanently by this point in time, but until she could do so, she remained in London for an extended period during her fourth and final trip.

¹⁴ André Castelot, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Perrin, 1989), 283-84.

It was also during this fourth voyage to London that her Parisian bankers, the Vandenyvers (Jean-Baptiste and his two sons, Edme-Jean-Baptiste and Antoine-Augustin), gave her an unlimited line of credit to be accessed while in London. It was with this line of credit that she advanced multiple sums to various *émigrés* and counter-revolutionaries, including Louis, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot, and Dominique de la Rochefoucauld, the Archbishop of Rouen.¹⁵ Reasons for this that will be considered in this thesis include the suggestions that these sums of money helped fund the revolt in the Vendée and provided funding for William Pitt the Younger, Prime Minister of Great Britain, to form the First Coalition.¹⁶

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the evidence surrounding the jewel theft and the Countess du Barry's subsequent journeys to London in order to judge her culpability in the trans-national conspiracy. In doing so, the research will demonstrate that Madame du Barry, with the aid of Nathaniel Parker Forth, planned and executed the theft on the night of 10-11 January 1791. As a motive, Madame du Barry sought the reduction of her capital value in an attempt to reduce her taxes. The motive for Forth to participate, as a British agent, was to support and influence the Counter-Revolution. He manipulated Jeanne, who was desperate to reduce her taxes, to participate in the orchestrated theft of her jewels, with their final destination being London. For the plan to be successful, they first had to convince a group of thieves to participate. Forth knew that in Britain, one could not be tried for a crime committed on foreign soil. Using this knowledge, he was able to convince the thieves to participate by having them relocate the jewelry to London immediately following the theft. Furthermore, Forth's knowledge of

¹⁵ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 256-58.

¹⁶ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 283-84.

the system meant he knew that Jeanne would have to travel to and from London to recover her jewels, a lengthy process.¹⁷ Therefore, simply because du Barry needed to reduce her taxes, Forth now had an agent who could travel across the English Channel and who could also move information, people, and money with little suspicion. Despite Forth's motives, du Barry was a willing participant.

Madame du Barry eventually regained her jewels, but instead of returning them to France, she left them in a London bank so that she would always have a reason to return.¹⁸ As this had been a legitimate excuse to depart from France the previous four times, leaving the jewelry in the bank provided reason to return if she ever needed an excuse. It was imperative that this excuse remained valid, as she required the ability to travel between France and Great Britain in order to secure her social status in the *Ancien régime*. That which started as a plot to reduce her capital assets resulted in her attempted emigration from France, removal of her possessions, and active campaigning against the Revolution.¹⁹

Chapter two will be dedicated to painting a biographical sketch of Madame du Barry. This will include her childhood, time at the Parc-aux-cerfs, tenure at Versailles, exile at the Pont-aux-dames, return to Louveciennes, and finally her death. The third chapter will provide a brief synopsis of the French Revolution including a chronology of its events as well as perspectives on its causes. This chapter will also explain the situation of the *émigrés* and how du Barry related to them. The fourth chapter is dedicated entirely to the theft of her jewelry. After an introduction of all the major characters involved in the plot, the next portion is the narrative of the night of the theft, followed by du Barry's

¹⁷ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 238; Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 158, 162; Ward, *Forth*, 148.

¹⁸ Henri Welschinger, *Les Bijoux de Mme Du Barry* (Paris 1898), 68.

¹⁹ Goncourt, *Madame du Barry*, 310.

immediate reactions. Further examination will attempt to deduce her level of compliance in the scheme by examining her actions during her four voyages to London. The fifth chapter is devoted to the interrogations and trial of Madame du Barry after her arrest during the Reign of Terror. The sixth and final chapter will serve as a conclusion. Furthermore, it will introduce the possibility that du Barry directly contributed to the funding of the First Coalition. This chapter will also close the story of the jewel theft and explain the outcome of the episode.

Research on this topic was based on reprinted archival material in the various sources and their appendices. Such sources include notes from the interrogations of Madame du Barry, trial records, birth certificates, passports, and vast amounts of correspondence to and from the Countess. This material in combination with limited references to Madame du Barry in memoirs provided a sufficient amount of primary sources to form and defend the thesis. Additional secondary sources on du Barry and her jewelry have also been evaluated for the argument of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

MADAME DU BARRY

From Courtesan to Countess

Although it is widely accepted that Jeanne Bécu was born to Anne Bécu, a single mother in the Vaucouleurs area, on 19 August 1743, mystery shrouds the identity of her father. The early twentieth-century French historian Claude Saint-André maintains that, “according to local tradition,” her father was a Frère Ange, of the local Picpus monastery, whose actual name was Jean-Jacques-Baptiste Gomard de Vaubernier.¹ The man listed as her father on the birth certificate she produced at her wedding to Guillaume, Count du Barry, was Gomard de Vaubernier, while on the original birth certificate she is listed as a natural child of Anne Bécu, meaning she was born out of wedlock.² In any event, the man who gave away Jeanne at the wedding ceremony identified himself as Frère Ange. At another point in his book when discussing the same wedding, Saint-André claims that “[t]he bride...was asserted to be the issue of marriage of Anne Bécu and Jean-Jacques Gomard de Vaubernier, an imaginary person [who was] supposed to have died in 1749.”³ Claiming that Gomard de Vaubernier was a separate man who had died allowed Frère Ange to walk his biological daughter down the aisle while at the same time avoiding any question of his honor or vows by means of having a child. Although Jeanne Bécu’s origins may be trivial, her illegitimate birth from the lower class later caused discontent

¹ Claude Saint-André, *A King’s favourite, Madame du Barry, and her times from hitherto unpublished documents with an introduction by Pierre de Nolhac*, translated from the French (Paris: Tallandier, 1909) 3, 24, <http://archive.org/details/kingsfavouritema00sainiala>. See André Castelot, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Perrin, 1989), 1; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 10.

² Birth Certificate for Jeanne Bécu, Original, quoted in Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 13; Birth Certificate for Jeanne Bécu, Modified, quoted in Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 13. See Appendix B.

³ Saint-André, *A King’s favourite*, 24.

among the court.⁴ A common woman gained the support and love of the king of France, and from this she attained influence over him, and thereby over the government of France. At a time when opposite factions in the court of Louis XV were vying for power, the common origins of Jeanne became contentious enough to be used as leverage by the court and the population at large. Any attempt to place Jeanne Bécu next to Louis XV as Royal Mistress had to start with a reinvention of her persona, beginning with her name.

In 1749, long before Jeanne became mistress to a king, her mother, Anne Bécu, sent her away at age six to receive a formal education. Although she learned to read and write during her nine-year stay at the Sainte-Aure youth convent, it was a strict upbringing.⁵ According to Saint-André,

She had to wear a coarse black veil, a band of cloth around her brow and the plainest of chemisettes; her frock was of white serge, and rough yellow shoes completed the uniform of the boarders. The regulations of this pious retreat were exceedingly strict, and no murmurs from the outside were allowed to penetrate its walls.⁶

Despite the fact that she matured in a rigid convent, her religious upbringing did not inhibit her from developing a healthy sexual personality. This heightened sexuality formed part of her character, and was present in the story of her life, regardless of which name she carried at the time.

After leaving Sainte-Aure in 1758, Jeanne, age fifteen, adopted the name Mademoiselle Lange. The surname Lange was derived from Frère Ange, as she was sometimes called *l'ange* (angel), as a child.⁷ During this point in her adolescence, Mademoiselle Lange found work as a *demoiselle de compagnie* (lady-in-waiting) to

⁴ Louis François Armand du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu, *Mémoires*, Vol. 2 (Paris:Firmin-Didot, 1868), 248. <http://www.openlibrary.org/books/OL25207831M> See Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 59.

⁵ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 11; Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 17.

⁶ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 5.

⁷ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 3.

Madame Élisabeth Dedelay de la Garde, widow of Pierre Dedelay de la Garde, *fermier général*, or tax collector, for the *Ancien régime* apparatus.⁸ Jeanne's tenure at this post was temporary, lasting two years until 1760, as she was accused of having affairs with both married sons of Madame de la Garde and was therefore relieved of her position.⁹

Jeanne next found work at the *parc-aux-cerfs*, literally stag park, an apartment close to Versailles that served as a brothel for the men of the aristocracy. Before examining this final transition in her life as a commoner before she took residence at Versailles, attention needs to be given to the manner in which Jeanne's biography has survived. With the exception of the time at Sainte-Aure and the 1791 Jewel Theft, every major event in Jeanne's life was marked and described in light of her sexual actions and adventures—illegitimate child, affair with the sons de la Garde, time at the *parc-aux-cerfs*, Royal Mistress, and the love affairs while at Louveciennes. Her sexuality is linked permanently to her identity. The narrative of her early years was written in a manner to highlight the disgust and contempt that the majority of the French had for her. Edmond de Goncourt, in reference to the events with Madame de la Garde's sons, calls her “a seductive young creature.”¹⁰ Joan Haslip, in *Madame du Barry: The Wages of Beauty*, emphasizes the two years that Jeanne spent at the residence of Madame Frédérique, a well-known Italian mistress, who had employed Anne Bécu as a cook. Haslip concludes that “[t]he two years spent in the luxurious home of a celebrated courtesan formed the tastes and character of the future Madame du Barry.”¹¹

⁸ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 27.

⁹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 15.

¹⁰ Goncourt, *Madame du Barry*, 16.

¹¹ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 2-3.

Mademoiselle Lange was the name she continued to use while in service at the *parc-aux-cerfs*. During this employment, she met a lawyer, Jean du Barry, who suggested that she take the name Mademoiselle de Vaubernier, as he thought it “had a more aristocratic ring about it.”¹² This was the name she bore when first introduced at Versailles. She kept this name until her marriage to Guillaume du Barry, when she became the Countess du Barry.¹³

The du Barry family traced its lineage to the Middle Ages—approximately 1400 CE.¹⁴ The family hailed from the Languedoc region of France and was able to trace its lineage to nobility through all four branches of ancestry; however, they were destitute.¹⁵ Therefore, the quest to earn a position and a pension became the ultimate goal of Jean du Barry. From this need originated his scheme to marry Jeanne Bécu to his brother, Guillaume, Count du Barry. Before she was married to Guillaume, however, she was briefly the lover of Jean, the *Roué*, meaning the vile.¹⁶

Each night, Louis XV’s valet, Dominique Guillaume Lebel, went to the *parc-aux-cerfs* to select the lady of the evening for the king. He made this selection from the women living in the residence at the expense of the French treasury, to which Lebel had access for such duties.¹⁷ Jean du Barry, brother of Count Guillaume, and popularly known as the *Roué* (the vile), was also a frequent patron of the establishment. He earned this nickname because “the whole of Paris knew that the greater part of his income came

¹² Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 43.

¹³ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 33.

¹⁴ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 21.

¹⁵ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 21.

¹⁶ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 26.

¹⁷ Albert Meyrac, *Louis XV: Ses Maîtresses, Le Parc aux Cerfs*, vol. 2 (Paris: Albin Michel), 266-67.
<http://www.babelio.com/livres/De-Voyer-DArgenson-Louis-XV-ses-maitresses-le-parc-aux-Cerfs/413153>.

from cardsharpping and women.”¹⁸ At the *parc-aux-cerfs*, Mademoiselle Lange caught the eye of both Lebel and Jean; this chance meeting altered the course of history. Jean du Barry and Lebel brought Mademoiselle Lange to Versailles; she was using the name Mademoiselle de Vaubernier.¹⁹ Although she was present at Versailles, it was not the same as a formal presentation, which is an official introduction to the court. For the moment, she had a perpetual presence at Versailles to be noticed by Louis XV. Eventually she caught the king’s eye. Christiane Gil, in *La Comtesse du Barry*, describes the manner in which Lebel arranged for Vaubernier to secretly enter the private chambers of Louis XV multiple times to pleasure to the king.²⁰ For the *Roué*’s plan to succeed, Louis XV had to be attracted to her. The following is a description provided by Madame Louise-Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun in her *Souvenirs*:

She [du Barry] was big without being too much so; she had some obesity; the throat a little heavy, but very pretty; her face was still charming; her traits regular and gracious; her hair was ash-colored and curly like a child’s; her complexion alone was beginning to mar her.²¹

This description, which should be taken as generally accurate because of Vigée-Lebrun’s training as an artist, was that of a woman who caught the eye of the king of France. Louis XV became so enamored with her, in fact, that he desired her to be the Royal Mistress. This proved problematic for although she went by the name “de Vaubernier,” she was not noble. Jean du Barry, through much negotiation, arranged for Jeanne to marry his brother Guillaume, the Count du Barry, rendering Jeanne the Countess du Barry in the process. This raised her status and would enable her to be

¹⁸ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 14.

¹⁹ Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 26.

²⁰ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 34-35.

²¹ Louise-Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Souvenirs*, vol. 1 (Paris: G. Charpentier & Co., 1881), 108-109, <http://archive.org/details/souvenirsdemadame01vige>.

presented to the court at Versailles.²² After Jeanne's establishment at Versailles, her narrative and Jean du Barry's diverge. Even though he distanced himself from Madame du Barry, because of his intrigue with her and with the monarchy, he was arrested in Toulouse and also sentenced to death during the Reign of Terror.²³

It was widely accepted by the court at Versailles that the marriage of Jeanne to Guillaume du Barry, on 1 September 1768 at the Church of Saint-Laurent, was arranged for her to obtain a noble title.²⁴ While the marriage was legal, it was not typical—she retained control of her life, affairs, and finances. James F. Traer, in *Marriage and the Family in Eighteenth-Century France*, described marriage under the *Ancien régime* as follows: “In the traditional marriage the husband and father exercised both legal and actual power over the person and property of his wife and children. He enjoyed the management of their property and the revenue that it produced.”²⁵ Furthermore, in 1772, the *Parlement* of Paris granted Jeanne a legal separation from Guillaume.²⁶ According to Traer, “a separation relieved the spouses of the obligation to live together, but it could never destroy the spiritual ties that bound them in marriage.”²⁷ Madame du Barry was legally allowed to live apart from her husband and maintain control of her personal affairs. Étienne-François, Duke de Choiseul and Minister of Foreign Affairs, recalled that Monsieur Louis Phélypeaux, Count de Saint-Florentin, once told him that “Madame du Barry was a girl whom du Barry, the *Roué* had made take his name...he said that she had married one of his bothers who nobody saw and that she was destined to carry his name

²² Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 34-35.

²³ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 269, 281.

²⁴ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 24; Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 36.

²⁵ James F. Traer, *Marriage and the Family in Eighteenth-Century France* (London: Cornell University Press, 1980), 15.

²⁶ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 66-67, 149.

²⁷ Traer, *Marriage and the Family*, 39.

and play a mute character in this farce.”²⁸ While this accurately portrayed the sentiments of Choiseul and much of the court, it also proves that Jean du Barry’s plan to place the Countess in the official position was well known. Furthermore, it supports the assertion that the marriage of Guillaume and Madame du Barry was purely political. Regardless, this marriage did not send him to the guillotine like his wife and his brother.²⁹ Perhaps the legal separation saved his life. While Royal Mistress, however, she did secure for him an appointment as colonel by earning him the *Croix de l'ordre de Saint-Louis*, which carried an annual pension of 300,000 *livres*.³⁰

In his *Mémoires*, Louis-François-Armand de Vignerot du Plessis, the Duke de Richelieu, explains how Choiseul believed that the “title of King’s Mistress is so important that it must only be filled by a lady of the high nobility,” and that Choiseul had originally suggested his sister, Béatrix de Choiseul-Stainville, the Duchess de Grammont.³¹ This was not to be; Louis XV had already developed an affinity for Madame du Barry, but one issue still remained unsettled. She had not been officially presented at Versailles as Madame du Barry, and because of this was unable, by tradition, to join the king in public and to fill the position of *maîtresse-en-titre*.

Madame du Barry at Versailles

Despite the adoration and affection Jeanne received from the king and her recent ascension to the nobility, the presentation of Madame du Barry to the French court

²⁸ Etienne-François, Duc de Choiseul, *Mémoires* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1904), 210-11, <http://www.archive.org/details/mmoiresduducdec02choigoog>”

²⁹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 281.

³⁰ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 148.

³¹ Louis François Armand du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu, *Mémoires*, vol. 2 (Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1868), 248, <http://www.openlibrary.org/books/OL25207831M>.

proved more difficult than expected, as all of the women of the court refused to present her for fear of damaging their own reputations, as she was a woman of the lower class, illegitimate by birth, and also rumored to be a prostitute. Stoeckl explains the solution:

At last Richelieu, who unbeknown to anyone had been trying to unearth a victim, discovered that a certain Comtesse de Béarn, an addict to gambling, was living in poverty and crippled with debts, which she was unable to meet. When she was asked if she would act as sponsor, she was delighted to accept. The sum she was to receive was 200,000 livres and the gown that she would wear on the occasion.³²

Madame du Barry's reputation at Versailles was already so damaged that the Countess de Béarn was the only solution to the problem. The fact that the king of France had to resort to such questionable behavior to get his favorite presented at court is both typical of his character and indicative of the disgust and disrespect for both du Barry and the king.

As it was, Louis XV remained the absolute monarch, and he had his precious du Barry presented at court. Originally, the Countess de Béarn was to present the Countess du Barry at court on 25 January 1769. Due to the murmuring and gossiping of the nobles at court, especially the ladies, Béarn succumbed to the pressure. Claiming that she had suffered a sprained ankle, Béarn was unable to attend court to present Madame du Barry.³³ Regardless, because of the need to settle her gambling debts, she remained committed to the plan.

Madame du Barry's reputation had followed her to court; many of the other female courtiers were disgusted by her mere presence, which placed further pressure on Béarn. The Duke de Richelieu, in his *Mémoires*, claimed that three-fourths of the court was against her presentation.³⁴ In his book *France Under Louis XV*, James Breck Perkins describes the French court of the eighteenth century as "a splendid existence...but the

³² Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 34-35.

³³ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 76; Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 32.

³⁴ Richelieu, *Mémoires*, 258.

formality of which had stiffened into rigidity.”³⁵ He continued, however, by noting that once established at Versailles, “[t]hose who were received at court there spent their lives.”³⁶ Perkins’s conclusion is too vague, however, as he has excluded any mention of those disgraced and exiled. Despite this rigidity, “Louis XV had discussed the affairs of state with his ministers in Mme de Pompadour’s rooms, and in her presence.”³⁷ It was because of the influence of the previous Royal Mistresses that those already established at court feared the arrival of Madame du Barry, another commoner ascending to the left hand of the king.

Finally, after delaying for three months, Béarn fulfilled her obligation to present du Barry to the court at Versailles. Siméon-Prosper Hardy, in his memoir *Mes Loisirs*, tells of the night that Madame du Barry was presented to the court:

The Countess du Barry was finally presented to His Majesty, to Mesdames, to the Dauphin and to the children of France by the Countess de Béarn; this presentation has been the topic of discussion for nearly six months, and for some time the scene seems to slow down around this news. This event created great murmuring in Paris as well as Versailles. Some people were delighted by interest in this news, but the majority were in dismay.³⁸

Béarn presented du Barry on 22 April 1769, which permitted Jeanne to assume her position as Royal Mistress.³⁹ The event itself caused anxiety for the king, as Jeanne arrived so late that Louis XV considered cancelling the entire presentation.⁴⁰ After being

³⁵ James Breck Perkins, *France Under Louis XV*, vol. 1 (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1897), 4.

³⁶ Perkins, *France Under Louis XV*, 4.

³⁷ Jacques Levron, *Daily Life at Versailles in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, translated by Claire Eliane Engel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 124.

³⁸ Siméon-Prosper Hardy, *Mes Loisirs: Journal d'événements tels qu'ils parviennent à ma connaissance (1764-1789)* (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Picard & Fils, 1912), 137, <http://archive.org/details/mesloisirs00hard>.

³⁹ Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 13.

⁴⁰ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 83.

held up by the hairstylist, she finally arrived.⁴¹ The Countess de Béarn entered first, followed by Madame du Barry, “covered in diamonds;” “all eyes were on her.”⁴²

The presentation of Madame du Barry did little to affect the attitude of the court or its general opinion. Although the Duke de Choiseul was her adversary at court, and therefore had reason to have a malicious opinion about her, his personal opinion was indicative of that of the court at this time. He explains that “M. [Jacques-Charles] de Fitz-James had her [Jeanne], as well as M. [Charles-Pierre-Maximilian Radix] de Sainte-Foiz; finally she was what the girls called amongst themselves a girl of the world, that is to say, a public girl [prostitute].”⁴³ It was the general opinion of the court that du Barry was a lady of low origins, low class, low merit, and low moral integrity. She was often the subject of gossip and slander at the court.

Jeanne Bécu, the Countess du Barry, was of a different nature than her predecessor. Jeanne-Antoinette-Poisson, the Marquise de Pompadour, unlike the other mistresses of Louis XV, desired power, which she did harness and wield. Her struggle for power was obvious to the public, and the means by which she achieved it so scandalous that the public gave her the full blame for defeat in the Seven Years War. They mocked her for this by comparing her to Joan of Arc. This juxtaposition tugged at French patriotism.⁴⁴ This suggests that the public admitted that Pompadour was in command, effectively a queen regnant, thus replacing Louis XV as leader. The effects of this on the idea of *un roi*, one of the tenets of Bourbon absolutism, were irreparable. Furthermore, a

⁴¹ Richelieu, *Mémoires*, 259.

⁴² Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 83.

⁴³ Etienne-François, Duc de Choiseul, *Mémoires* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1904), 208-10, <http://www.archive.org/details/mmoiresduducdec02choigoog>.

⁴⁴ M. John Cardwell, *Arts and Arms: Literature, Politics and Patriotism During the Seven Years War*, (New York: Manchester University Press, 2004): 232-33.

majority of the population, as shown by Thomas E. Kaiser's research on the police in *Madame de Pompadour and the Theaters of Power*, believed that her grip on power was to remain unchallenged for the foreseeable future. From this assumption she became the symbol of despotism, that great fear about which Montesquieu had warned the public. As the symbol of despotism, Pompadour represented the end of the *Ancien régime* as she was the embodiment of the king's power dissolved.⁴⁵ Her power was unending, and "she became the channel of all favours [sic] that she could not retain for herself or her family."⁴⁶ The easiest way to secure Pompadour's blessing was to flatter her with compliments of beauty; oftentimes, loyal subjects offered their life in return for her graces.⁴⁷ She even retained the ultimate decision as to who received appointments and dismissals at court. Notably, she was protective of Étienne-François, the Duke de Choiseul, and secured for Voltaire a position as Historiographer of France. At the same time, she used her power to remove the Finance Minister, Philibert Orry, from both office and the grace of Louis XV. This entire situation made a mockery of the institution of absolute monarchy.⁴⁸

The Countess du Barry did not exercise the same political prowess as the Marquise de Pompadour. Conversely, one of her most notable political acts was the saving of a life. The Louësme family, man and wife, had been sentenced to death on the charge of being debtors, but when the officials came to arrest them, they killed the guard

⁴⁵ Thomas Kaiser, "Madame de Pompadour and the Theaters of Power," *Historical Studies* 19, no. 1 (Autumn 1996): 1026, 1038, 1040, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/286662>.

⁴⁶ Mouffle D'Angerville, *The Private Life of Louis XV* (London, John Lane, 1924), 183.

⁴⁷ E. J. F. Barbier, *Journal historique et anecdotique du règne de Louis XV*, vol. 4 (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1851): 44. <https://archive.org/details/journalhistoriqu04barb>; Lisa Jane Graham, *If the King Only Knew: Seditious Speech in the Reign of Louis XV* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 123.

⁴⁸ George Peabody Gooch, *Louis XV: The Monarchy in Decline* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1956), 143; Julian Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754-1774* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 55-56, 194-95.

in what they deemed a defensive measure to defend their home and property. Instead of allowing the family to be punished by death, du Barry convinced Louis XV to pardon them for their crimes.⁴⁹ This is an example of the manner in which du Barry meddled in state affairs. However, she did not act with the same frequency or intensity as Madame de Pompadour.

This act of kindness, unfortunately, could not cover the fact that Jeanne was depleting the French treasury. She enjoyed a monthly budget of 100,000 *livres* to spend on jewelry alone.⁵⁰ Madame du Barry so deeply desired jewelry that five jewelers were in her direct employ while she was Royal Mistress. They included Ange-Joseph Aubert, who was the official jeweler of the court and who assisted her in selling some of her jewelry years before the theft; Jacques Roëttier; François Leconte; Charles Boehmer; Louis-Philippe Demay; and Jean Joseph Rouen, the jeweler who set the majority of her stones into jewelry and who accompanied her to London on her first voyage to identify her jewelry.⁵¹ The jewelry collection that she amassed during her reign as Royal Mistress formed the foundation of her wealth and fortune for the remainder of her life after Versailles.

In addition to her jewelry, Jeanne received as a gift from Louis XV the *château* of Louveciennes. With this property came rents and incomes to support her, but its renovations and the cost of decorating it with artwork also became another waste of the state's revenue. Immediately upon receiving the property, and until the French government seized it during the Revolution, she continued improving the grounds.⁵² In

⁴⁹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 92-93; Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 54-55.

⁵⁰ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 136.

⁵¹ Michel Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, (Fribourg, Switzerland: Tallandier, 1988), 73.

⁵² Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 52.

addition to increased spending on renovations, she amassed a vast collection of books and purchased only the finest jewelry and linens.⁵³ During her time as Royal Mistress, it is estimated that she spent approximately 15,000,000 *livres*, including renovations on Louveciennes and her apartment at Versailles. This amount did not include the value of gifts from Louis. During this time, she also received her income from her manorial dues.⁵⁴

The Countess at Court

Despite the fact that Madame du Barry won the king's charm and graces, even he could not force his family to accept her as one of their own.⁵⁵ Marie-Antoinette, daughter of the Austrian Holy Roman Empress Maria-Theresa and wife of Louis, the *dauphin* (heir to the French throne), was du Barry's antagonist *par excellence* at Versailles. She disliked the countess and was not afraid to show her displeasure publicly by both her actions and lack thereof. A letter to her mother, presumably written in 1770, revealed the true sentiment of the future queen of France, as she described du Barry as "the most foolish and the most shameless creature that was ever imagined."⁵⁶ Eventually, after pressure from her mother, from Louis XV, and from her brother, Joseph II, Marie-Antoinette forced herself to comment to du Barry: "There are many people at Versailles today."⁵⁷ These few words from the future queen to du Barry pacified the moods of the court for the time being. While this did not begin a new friendship, peace ensued at Versailles.

⁵³ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 135.

⁵⁴ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 137.

⁵⁵ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 49.

⁵⁶ Marie-Antoinette to Maria Theresa, 1770, quoted in Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 71. See Appendix A.4.

⁵⁷ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 97.

Outside of the royal family, du Barry was in opposition to the Duke de Choiseul. The traditional narrative is that Choiseul was dismissed as a result of being in her bad graces.⁵⁸ While the countess may have been mischievous with regard to Choiseul, Gil contends that the majority of the tension between the two was caused by those in du Barry's orbit who had a vendetta against Choiseul—namely the Duke de Richelieu and Emmanuel-Armand de Richelieu, the Duke d'Aiguillon.⁵⁹ There are other factors to consider, mainly Louis XV's foreign policy at the time, when considering Choiseul's dismissal.⁶⁰ Regardless, on 5 June 1771, Louis XV replaced Choiseul with du Barry's friend, the Duke d'Aiguillon.⁶¹ Saint-André explains the situation of how Choiseul's decisions regarding Corsica resulted in his dismissal:

The Duke de Choiseul himself put the young woman in the way of her fortune. [Jean d]u Barry had ceded his interest in the Corsican commissariat to Madame Rançon [Anne] and her daughter [Jeanne], and for some time they enjoyed the benefit of it; but Monsieur de Choiseul's new regulations being likely to deprive them of it, they went to him to petition for its continuance, and it was on one of the many visits to Versailles that this entailed that Mademoiselle de Vaubernier first attracted the attention of Louis XV.⁶²

⁵⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 69.

⁵⁹ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 39.

⁶⁰ The Duke de Choiseul circumvented the authority of Louis XV by provoking the Spanish to declare war on the British for occupying the Falkland Islands. Because of the Family Compact between the kings of France and Spain, this involved France in the international conflict. In an effort to avert war, Louis XV removed the Duke de Choiseul. See H. M. Scott, "Religion and *Realpolitik*: The Duc de Choiseul, the Bourbon Family Compact, and the Attack on the Society of Jesus, 1758-1775," *The International History Review* 25, no. 1 (December 1, 2010): 42-43, 53, 59; Brendan Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy: From 1453 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 98; Julian Swann, "Politics: Louis XV," in *Old Regime France: 1648-1788*, edited by William Doyle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 220; Swann, *Politics*, 343-46.

⁶¹ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 45; Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 100.

⁶² Jean du Barry was able to profit when France acquired Corsica in 1768 because of his initial support of the military campaign. The revenues from his contract were given to Anne and Jeanne for their use. It was the decision of Choiseul that the Corsican commissariat, the governing body of the territory, no longer pay the revenues. Therefore, Anne and Jeanne came with Jean du Barry to Versailles to petition Choiseul for its reinstatement. Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 20-21. See Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 38; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 45-46.

From this anecdote comes a different account of how Jeanne met the king. By this time, Jean du Barry was already acquainted with Jeanne and her mother through Jeanne's service at the *parc-aux-cerfs*. Although Jean did not influence the Duke de Choiseul's decision to alter the revenue status, he found it advantageous. Jean ensured that Jeanne was present on each of the trips to Versailles that were taken in an attempt to petition the Duke de Choiseul to reinstate their revenues. According to Saint-André, this is how the king first noticed Jeanne.

After Madame du Barry settled at Versailles, it was necessary to establish a court of her own. Although not composed of members of the upper-echelon of the French nobility, Jeanne eventually assembled a collection of ladies. Due almost entirely to the financial influence of the Duke de Richelieu, du Barry eventually had in her ranks the Countess de Béarn; Anne-Marguerite-Gabrielle de Beauveau-Craon, the Maréchale de Mirepoix; and Maria-Caterina Brignole, the Duchess de Valentinois.⁶³ This small court along with the Dukes de Richelieu and d'Aiguillon, and Joseph-Marie, the Abbé Terray, were called the *Barriens*, a word derived from her last name. In opposition were the *anti-Barriens*, including Marie-Antoinette; the Duke de Choiseul; and Mesdames, the daughters of Louis XV: Élisabeth, the Duchess of Parma; Henriette; Marie-Louise; Adélaïde; Victoire; Sophie; Thérèse; and Louise. To avenge her treatment, Louis XV, on a holiday to Choisy, refused to invite Louise Honorine Crozat du Châtel, the Duchess of Choiseul and wife to the Duke of Choiseul; Béatrix de Choiseul-Stainville, the Duchess of Gramont and sister to the Duke of Choiseul; and Louise-Julie-Constance de Brionne,

⁶³ Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 41.

the mistress to the Duke of Choiseul.⁶⁴ Forced into a corner, Louis XV chose his mistress over his minister. His temperament on this subject never changed.

The Duke de Richelieu foresaw an era of Madame du Barry. Using her charm, beauty, and determination as evidence, he asserts, “it could only be imagined that Madame du Barry’s triumph would be for quite some time.”⁶⁵ Her tenure as Royal Mistress lasted from 22 April 1769 until 5 May 1774. Inevitably the friendship between du Barry and such an influential man at court was to her advantage. Loomis notes that Richelieu “became a powerful influence in the cause of the new Mistress.” The battle between Choiseul and du Barry had been fomenting for some time, and Richelieu “was able to neutralize the effects of Choiseul’s vile slanders,” which had been plaguing the countess’s reputation at Versailles. Furthermore, the nephew of the Duke de Richelieu, Emmanuel-Armand de Richelieu, the Duke d’Aiguillon, was one of du Barry’s closest friends at court. The Duke d’Aiguillon, who “so passionately loathe[d] Choiseul that he would have backed an ape for Mistress, had such been the king’s preference and the potential instrument of Choiseul’s downfall.”⁶⁶ No relationship ever forms that does not benefit both parties: du Barry chose a powerful set of allies at court—the Dukes d’Aiguillon and Richelieu—who could help defend her position. In turn, she helped secure their position by offering her favorable opinion of them to Louis XV. While du Barry was infamously a master of bedroom politics, in this instance she reigned supreme, as Louis XV eventually exiled Choiseul. Ironically, the Duke d’Aiguillon favored a strong monarchy, and became part of one that was not, as the very mistress he supported

⁶⁴ Agnes Stoeckl, Baroness de, *Mistress of Versailles: the Life of Madame du Barry* (London: John Murray, 1966), 43.

⁶⁵ Richelieu, *Mémoires*, 257.

⁶⁶ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 59.

became a reason for the further discredit and weakening of the monarchy itself. His close friendship with Jeanne, and his comportsment of a strong royalist sentiment, support the notion that du Barry was always attached to the monarchy and that the charge of counter-revolutionary sentiment later in her life is not only plausible but also probable.

The French Revolution loomed in the distant future, but at present du Barry's tenure at Versailles was nearing its conclusion. Louis XV began showing symptoms of smallpox on 27 April 1774, while he was with Jeanne at the Trianon during a temporary reprieve from court. The Trianon was a private residence near Versailles where, since the time of Louis XIV, the king went to escape the people and the rigid etiquette of court. Under Louis XV, the Trianon was temporarily the residence of the queen, Marie Leszczyńska, and then taken back by the king for his personal use.⁶⁷ Du Barry stayed with him through the entirety of his illness, even attempting to convince the others not to take him back to the main palace at Versailles so that he could remain at the Trianon to rest and recover peacefully.⁶⁸ Most likely she wanted the king to remain at the Trianon to keep her opponents ignorant of the illness out of fear of being sent away. Another possibility is that she genuinely thought isolation would be the best method of resolving the sickness. This is irrelevant, as her wishes were ignored. The king returned to Versailles on 28 April 1774.⁶⁹ Throughout his battle with smallpox, she remained with him until 4 May, when Louis XV was finally convinced that death was imminent. On 9

⁶⁷ G. Van der Kemp, *Versailles and the Trianons*, translated by Ethel Whitehorn (London: Nicholas Kaye, 1958), 223.

⁶⁸ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 110.

⁶⁹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 177-78.

May he exiled her to the Pont-aux-dames so that he could receive the sacraments from the priest and die with pious honor, which he did on 10 May 1774.⁷⁰

Life After Louis XV

The Pont-aux-dames, often considered the Bastille for women, served as a prison-like convent.⁷¹ Although Louis XV intended to save the image of the monarchy, this alone is not sufficient to explain du Barry's exile.⁷² It is possible that he was manipulated on his deathbed and persuaded to send her away by those preying on his feeble mind. This opinion is only shared by Haslip, who states that “[t]o save his immortal soul the cardinal had forced the dying king to dictate the *lettre de cachet* which sent the Comtesse du Barry as a prisoner of state to the abbey of Pont-aux-dames.”⁷³ Louis XV had a genuine adoration for the Countess; they enjoyed each other's company and she made him happy in his last years. He always defended her at court against the hate of the clergy and some of the high nobility. Joan Haslip, when writing about du Barry's banishment to the Pont-aux-dames, expressly described Marie-Antoinette's pleasure at du Barry being exiled.⁷⁴ In doing so, and despite her original claim, the possibility exists that Louis XV ordered du Barry into exile to protect her from Marie-Antoinette who had a known dislike for du Barry. Stanley Loomis offers the possibility that it was a “last-minute sacrifice to God;” however, he argued that it was more likely done to “spare Madame du Barry a worse fate” at the hands of the new queen.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 114; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 184.

⁷¹ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 114; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 183, 186.

⁷² D'angerville, *The Private Life of Louis XV*, 339.

⁷³ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 103.

⁷⁴ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 104-05.

⁷⁵ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 181.

While at the Pont-aux-dames, Jeanne was not allowed any contact with the outside world.⁷⁶ Despite this order, she was given express permission from Louis XVI to see her jeweler, Aubert, so that she could sell a portion of her jewels and settle her remaining accounts at court. She sold a large diamond worth 450,000 *livres* and a ruby necklace worth 150,000 *livres*.⁷⁷ Due to her immediate departure, she had been unable to settle the accounts with her “jewelers, goldsmiths, dressmakers and milliners” to whom she owed money; the court allowed this visit in order to settle her accounts.⁷⁸

At first, Jeanne had difficulty adjusting to the convent. “Her rooms in the remotest part of the convent were reached by a series of long dank corridors, rooms which were little better than cells, with a hard narrow bed....” This was a sharp contrast to life at Versailles. However, the Duke d'Aiguillon was able to secure for her “a wagon load of furniture [from her apartments at Versailles] and the permission to have another maid.”⁷⁹ During her residence, she was allowed to take walks outside, but only when accompanied by the nuns. Because of this interaction, and her natural charm, Jeanne made friends with some of the nuns, and her time at the Pont-aux-dames was relatively peaceful.⁸⁰ Later in her residence there, she received permission to purchase an estate as long as it was a considerable distance from Versailles and Paris. For this reason, she settled at Saint-Vrain in May of 1775.⁸¹ Although not comparable to Louveciennes, it was more comfortable than her previous living arrangements at the convent. During this time in her life, from June 1775 until October 1776, she behaved as a model subject. She participated in local

⁷⁶ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 187.

⁷⁷ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 122-23; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 190.

⁷⁸ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 185.

⁷⁹ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 106-07.

⁸⁰ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 214-15.

⁸¹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 195.

festivals and marriage ceremonies, invited local nobility to dine with her, and became godmother to all children born in Saint-Vrain.⁸² Furthermore, she distributed food and beverage to the local citizens in times of need and destitution.⁸³

Madame du Barry lived in relative peace at Saint-Vrain for two and a half years until Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, the Count de Maurepas, at last secured her full freedom.

Her perfect submission won from Louis XVI the decision that besides her personal property, valued at nearly two million [*livres*] in gold and jewels, Madame Du Barry should be allowed to retain her 40,000 *livres* income from the Nantes shops, her life-annuity of 105,000 *livres* from the Hôtel de Ville, and finally her use of Louveciennes and its artistic treasures.⁸⁴

Not only did this terminate her exile, she was now given permission to return to Louveciennes, her treasured residence. In addition to the *château*, her rents and incomes were also reinstated, which continued as a source of revenue until the night of 4 August when the National Assembly abolished manorial rights. Thus, Louis XVI returned to du Barry a significant portion of her wealth and possessions. Her good fortune did not last long, and changes to the tax structure during the Revolution would force Jeanne to make adjustments to her economic position—wealth, income, and expenses.

Following her return to Louveciennes, Madame du Barry continued her never-ending search for love. She had a brief affair with the Chevalier Charlemagne Fleuriot de Langle, about whom little is known.⁸⁵ She then involved herself in another amorous scandal. The Englishman Henry Seymour was but a brief love affair in the life of Madame du Barry. The two enjoyed their time together, but Jeanne became jealous of his

⁸² Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 124.

⁸³ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 196

⁸⁴ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 214.

⁸⁵ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 196.

wife, who in turn despised du Barry; this relationship did not endure.⁸⁶ Du Barry, at no other point in her life, had to share a lover once she had taken him as her own. She was accustomed to attention and being treated with the utmost pampering; she did not share well with others.

Disregarding the previous brief attempts at love, her most notorious love affair after Versailles was with Louis Hercule Timoléon de Cossé, the Duke de Brissac. She had first met him while she was living at Versailles. Their love affair, on the other hand, was a recent development. Castries offers an explanation for this: “He [Brissac] was not only one of the richest men and his collections were celebrated. To be the mistress of the Duke de Brissac, governor of Paris, it meant that Madame du Barry was in a considerable situation.”⁸⁷ This return to prominence was as close as she could get, given the current situation in France, to her former position at Versailles—the Duke de Brissac had money and power. He became involved with the theft of her jewelry, indirectly, because she was at his house the night it occurred. He did not live to see a resolution to the jewel theft. He was arrested and killed during the course of the Revolution for serving as the head of the King’s Guard.⁸⁸ On the night that the Duke de Brissac was killed, du Barry burned numerous papers and letters that she had in her possession, according to Henriette, one of her chambermaids.⁸⁹

The Duke de Brissac had a daughter, Adélaïde-Pauline-Rosalie de Cossé-Brissac, the Duchess de Mortemart, of whom du Barry had grown fond. Though the friendship between the countess and the duchess always appeared pure, Jeanne possessed an ulterior

⁸⁶ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 119, 123.

⁸⁷ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 211-13.

⁸⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 241, 246.

⁸⁹ Fouquier-Tinville Notes on Testimony, quoted in René de La Croix, Duc de Castries, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Hachette, 1967). See Appendix F.2.; Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 169.

motive. At the time of his death, the Duke de Brissac left a significant amount of money to du Barry in his will:

I give and bequeath to Madame du Barry, of Louveciennes, over and above what I already owe her, an annual rent and life annuity of 24,000 *livres*, free and exempt from all deductions, or else the usage and enjoyment during her lifetime of my lands at Rambaudière and Graffinière in Poitou, and the furniture therein, or else a sum of 300,000 *livres* paid once in silver, the entirety up to her.⁹⁰

This letter, containing his last will, offers a reason for this friendship, and later, the motive for du Barry's return to France when she should have remained in London. As the heir and executor of the Brissac estate, Jeanne devoted much energy to ensure the survival of the duchess. In return, the duchess ensured that du Barry received her settlement from the will.

After the death of the Duke de Brissac, the countess attempted love once more with Louis, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot. In a letter that he wrote to her on 7 September 1793, he mentioned that he had collected the paintings for her as she asked, and continued that "he kept one of the small ones."⁹¹ In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was common to carry a portrait of one's lover, a habit exhibited by the Duke de Rohan-Chabot. This trend can already be seen in Marie-Madeleine Pioche de la Vergne, Madame de La Fayette's *The Princess of Cleves*, a seventeenth-century novel. In this novel, the Duke de Nemours stole a picture of the Princess of Cleves, with whom he was enamored.⁹² Then, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot asked her to "come, *cher amour*, and spend two days here...give me a few moments of happiness," and closed with, "I kiss a

⁹⁰ Louis-Hercule-Timoléon de Cossé, Duke de Brissac, Final Will, 11 August 1792, quoted in Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry* (Paris: Pygmalion, 2001), 178. See Appendix A.4.

⁹¹ Duke de Rohan-Chabot to Du Barry to Madame du Barry, 7 September 1793, quoted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961), 212-14. See appendix A.2.

⁹² Marie-Madeleine Pioche de la Vergne, Madame de La Fayette, *The Princess of Cleves* (Project Gutenberg EBook, 2008), 147-48.

thousand times the most charming of ladies in the world.”⁹³ Charles Vatel agreed that they were intimate, saying that “one only writes that way to his mistress.”⁹⁴ It was this lover to whom du Barry sent 200,000 *livres* to be used, according to Michel Beurdelay in *Trois siècles de ventes publiques* and André Castelot in *Madame du Barry*, to support the war in the Vendée.⁹⁵

At the end of her life, Jeanne cried, begged, and pleaded to be allowed to live. While this anecdote about du Barry’s death seems an exaggeration, Vigée-Lebrun writes of its significance in a larger perspective:

She is the only woman, among so many women that these ugly days have seen perish, who could not decisively bear the characteristics of the scaffold; she screamed, she begged for mercy from the atrocious madness that surrounded her, and this madness stirred her until the point when the blade hastened to stop the torture. This here has always persuaded me that, if the victims of this time of abysmal memory had not had the noble pride to die with courage, the Terror would have ceased so much sooner.⁹⁶

Historians of Madame du Barry have taken time to introduce her moment at the scaffold as a sign of weakness. The rumor is that she implored, “*Encore un moment.*”⁹⁷ Vigée-Lebrun, a good friend of du Barry, countered with the above argument. Although perhaps solely writing in an attempt to defend what remained of her friend’s honor, Vigée-Lebrun argued that if more people had showed fear, passion, or any emotion while making the procession to death, the Reign of Terror’s duration might have been significantly shorter.

Jeanne Bécu, the illegitimate child from Vaucouleurs, transcended any expectation one might have had for her life. She received a Catholic education at the

⁹³ Duke de Rohan-Chabot to Du Barry to Madame du Barry, 7 September 1793, quoted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961), 212-14. See appendix A.2.

⁹⁴ Charles Vatel, *Histoire de Madame Du Barry*, Vol. 3 (Versailles, L. Bernard, 1883), 202.

<https://books.google.fr/books?id=I1ADAAAAYAAJ&hl=fr&pg=PP9#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

⁹⁵ Beurdelay, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 77; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266.

⁹⁶ Vigée-Lebrun, *Souvenirs*, 112-13.

⁹⁷ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 29.

convent at Sainte-Aure before returning to life in Paris. After leaving the convent, Jeanne became aware of the power she possessed as a result of her natural beauty. Although her sexual demeanor caused her to lose her post with Madame de la Garde, she soon discovered how to profit from such endeavors. Finding work at the *parc-aux-cerfs* and meeting Jean du Barry allowed her the opportunity to meet Louis XV, albeit initially as a means for Jean du Barry to profit from the situation. From this moment, Jeanne's life was drastically altered. She married Guillaume, the Count du Barry, gaining in the process the title of countess. This allowed her to be formally presented at Versailles and assume her position as Royal Mistress to Louis XV, a position that she enjoyed until his death in 1774. During her tenure, she amassed a fortune, including her jewel collection and her *château* at Louveciennes. After a brief exile at the Pont-aux-dames, a prison-like convent, she was able to regain her freedom and purchased a residence at Saint-Vrain. Eventually, Louis XVI allowed her to regain possession of Louveciennes and all of the rents and revenues that accompanied it. She lived in relative peace after returning to Louveciennes, even finding love again with the Duke de Brissac. Her peace, however, was temporary, as the French Revolution altered Jeanne's future. She was forced to take drastic measures to preserve her fortune throughout the course of the Revolution.

CHAPTER 3

MADAME DU BARRY AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Absolutism and the *Ancien régime*

The *Ancien régime* was the socio-political structure of France and most of Europe prior to the French Revolution; it was a system based on feudalism and manorialism ruled by a Divine Right monarch. Bourbon absolutism was the culmination of the centralization of power under French kings from Henri IV through Louis XVI over a period of two hundred years. Bourbon absolutism was founded on three parts, all of which had to remain intact for the proper functioning of the French governmental system. *Un roi, une foi, and une loi*, meaning one king, one faith, and one law, were these pillars, which combined to form the foundation of Bourbon absolutism.¹ One king implied that only one ruler existed: the Divine Right monarch who was chosen by God to lead his people. As God chose him, the king must be respected and obeyed by his people because his power was derived from God. One faith was the idea that all people of France were Catholic. As the ruler chosen by God, the king must honor God for this position by his behavior and leadership of the people within the Realm; what united these subjects was their religion and their obedience to God.² Finally, one law meant that the king had ultimate authority over the Realm, as he was the personification of law and rule; he was the father of his people. Louis XIV, who was famous for proclaiming *L'état, c'est moi*, consolidated this method of absolute power during his eventful reign.³

¹ Neely, *A Concise History*, 1-2.

² Graham, *If the King Only Knew*, 36.

³ Neely, *A Concise History*, 2.

Louis XIV left to his great-grandson, Louis XV, a government to be run by a strong leader who exerted control. Louis XV was not this king. He did, over time, allow the faltering of each component of Bourbon absolutism for which his ancestors had tediously labored.⁴ What resulted from this mismanagement of power and authority was that his successor, Louis XVI, did not have a framework of power in which to save France from social, political, and financial struggles, despite his wishes or intentions, thus making Louis XV one of the direct causes of the French Revolution.

Louis XV was a Divine Right monarch, and as such, nobody had the right to question his decisions or to judge his actions; his authority was, in theory, absolute. As king, Louis XV had a large circle of ministers, councilors, and advisors around him, each of whom offered their opinions to him. One of the major issues that plagued the French administration was that Louis XV did not have enough confidence to rule alone. His character did not allow him to remain firm in his decisions when none around him were in agreement.⁵ After Louis XV took personal control of the government in 1743, George Peabody Gooch, in *Louis XV: The Monarchy in Decline*, argues that this marked the beginning of the end of the *Ancien régime*, which disintegrated with the destruction of Bourbon absolutism.⁶ First, by basing his decisions on the suggestions of his lovers and his ministers, he was making policy based on the intellect or emotion of those around him rather than his own. Failing to assert authority over matters, it appeared that the centralization of power was beginning to dissipate from the person of the king. William Doyle, in his *Origins of the French Revolution*, argues that appearing to support one

⁴ Neely, *A Concise History*, 2; Graham, *If the King Only Knew*, 36.

⁵ Gooch, *Louis XV*, 111, 113; Jacques Levron, *Daily Life at Versailles in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, translated by Claire Eliane Engel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 122; Swann, *Politics*, 46-7.

⁶ Gooch, *Louis XV*, 93.

faction of his entourage and then turning on them while dealing with the other was Louis XV's method of keeping any one person from usurping more of his power than he allowed.⁷ Louis XV was unsuccessful at managing this balancing act because instead of allowing none to have power, he allowed all to have power. He reduced his own position to that of arbiter of the different factions within his government. Voltaire even described him as "a father occupied with separating fighting children."⁸ In a patrimonial society such as France, this implied that he had no control over his household and thereby his government.⁹ Therefore, to insinuate that his "children" were fighting and to imply that he had not raised them properly was to claim that Louis XV was not ruling as was expected, another blemish on his reputation and legacy. Thus, the repercussions of this policy were detrimental to the king, and it resulted in the discredit of the *un roi tenet* of Bourbon absolutism.

Further evidence to the fact that Louis XV did not respect religion arrived from the scandal that occurred while he was at Metz. While traveling in 1744 during the War of the Austrian Succession, Louis XV became seriously ill, and his death seemed imminent. It was so serious that the people of France showed tremendous concern with his well being, and the queen, Marie Leszczyńska, left Versailles to be with him.¹⁰ He was unable to receive the sacraments because he had been living in sin with his current mistress, Marie-Anne de Mailly, the Duchesse de Châteauroux; he dismissed her and was then given the sacraments. On the day following his confession, he was well again, and

⁷ William Doyle, *Origins of the French Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 56-7.

⁸ Voltaire, *Le Siècle de Louis XV*, (Paris, 1769), 181, <https://archive.org/details/sieclede louis xv 01/voltgoog>.

⁹ Gail Bossenga, "Origins of the French Revolution," *History Compass* 5, no. 4 (June 2007): 1300. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1478-0542.2007.00448.x/abstract>.

¹⁰ Perkins, *France Under Louis XV*, 285.

this was seen as an act of divine intervention because he made amends for his sins.¹¹ The populace received the news that he had dismissed his mistress with great joy, and public support for the king, especially in Paris and Versailles, was elevated.¹² He had taken responsibility and from then forward planned to lead as expected under the framework of *une foi, un roi, and une loi*. What had the possibility to save the reputation of Louis XV was merely a farce.¹³ Louis soon resumed his extramarital antics when he established Jeanne-Antoinette-Poisson, the Marquise de Pompadour, at Versailles as his new mistress. Returning to his previous demeanor fully discredited Louis in the eyes of his subjects.¹⁴ The church disgraced him, the upper echelons of society mocked him, and the commoners were ashamed and disgusted. He had tainted every facet of Bourbon absolutism with this decision. Moving forward, he continued to catalyze its disintegration.¹⁵ Concerning Louis's leadership, Voltaire said that "a nation will not long love a Prince who is not a *Grand Prince*." This was in direct reference to Louis XV, and Voltaire prophesized that the Bourbon monarchy was doomed under the leadership of such a king.¹⁶

While aware of public opinion, Louis never allowed it to alter his thought or decision-making processes.¹⁷ Such an attitude was rooted in the theory that as a Divine Right monarch he was able to do as he pleased. Yet what he failed to realize about public opinion was that, frequently, it mattered more to the crown's subjects as to who seemed

¹¹ Graham, *If the King Only Knew*, 63.

¹² Axelle Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France*, trans. by Rosemary Morris (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press: 1996), 105.

¹³ Graham, *If the King Only Knew*, 63.

¹⁴ Graham, *If the King Only Knew*, 65.

¹⁵ Mouffle D'Angerville, *The Private Life of Louis XV*, 133-34.

¹⁶ Voltaire, *Panegyrique de Louis XV*, Munich: Bavarian State Library, 1749, http://books.google.com/books/about/Panegyrique_de_Louis_XV.html?id=DIVAAAAAcAAJ.

¹⁷ Julian Swann, "The state and political culture" in *Old Regime France: 1648-1788*, edited by William Doyle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001): 166

to have control than who officially wielded power. Madame de Pompadour seized this power, and she became the target for disdain.¹⁸ As a result, “[a]round the Marquise de Pompadour there grew a seething hatred which engendered both pamphlets and ill-natured wordplay in public places, buildings and market-squares. Everyone spoke ill about her and Louis XV.”¹⁹

Louis left a monarchy in shambles, a depleted treasury, and subjects who did not trust the government. When Louis XVI ascended the throne upon the death of his grandfather, Louis XV, on 10 May 1774, he assumed control of a weakened monarchy. With financial troubles mounting, and lacking the ability to rectify the mistakes of his predecessor, Louis XVI summoned the Estates General. The spark that triggered the beginning of the end of the *Ancien régime*, the members of the Estates General assembled on 1 May 1789; this was their first time assembling since 1614.²⁰

Reasons for Revolution

Numerous volumes exist concerning the causes for the French Revolution.

Gottschalk notes,

When several antecedents have to be considered, no one of which is alone sufficient to explain the phenomenon and all of which play an inter-related or concurrent part, the phenomenon has multiple causes. All but the simplest forms of historical causal relationships show multiple causes, since single causes are insufficient to account for complex results.²¹

¹⁸ Kaiser, “Madame de Pompadour and the Theaters of Power,” 1026.

¹⁹ Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France*, translated by Rosemary Morris (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 159.

²⁰ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 223.

²¹ Louis Gottschalk, “Causes of Revolution,” *American Journal of Sociology* 50, no. 1 (July 1994): 1, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2770336>.

Considering this, for the scope of this thesis, only the reasons that relate to Madame du Barry will be addressed. During the time of the French Revolution, the crown was destitute; the Royal Treasury lacked funds and the means to acquire them. Christiane Gil suggests that the dilapidated treasury was a result of the level of Madame du Barry's spending while at Versailles. She reached this conclusion based on du Barry's expenses on jewelry, clothing, artwork, her *toilette*, and reparations on her apartments at Versailles as well as the *château* and *pavillon* at Louveciennes.²² However, her estimated spending was approximately 15,000,000 *livres*.²³ In comparison to the gravity of the crown's financial situation, this value is insignificant. According to Charles Alexandre de Calonne, Controller General of Finance, the French government faced a deficit of 100,000,000 *livres* for the year 1786. Furthermore, government loans from 1776-1786 were approximately 1,250,000,000 *livres*. Finally, the government was unable to borrow from its future tax revenue, as it had already borrowed 280,000,000 by 1787.²⁴ Despite Gil's misleading conclusion, her research retains merit. Madame du Barry represented the gross misuse of the crown's revenue. She was waste and corruption personified in the eyes of the French masses. Jeanne was not directly responsible for squandering the crown's finances, but she was the image of such decay.

Another reason directly related to the financial crisis of the crown—and France in general—was the relationship between Louis XV and the *Parlement de Paris*. To accurately trace the destruction of Bourbon absolutism, one must take into account the attitude that Louis XV had towards the *Parlement de Paris* and the other *parlements* throughout the Realm. The time between 1749-1771 consisted of the highpoint of the

²² Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 79.

²³ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 137.

²⁴ John Egret, *The French Prerevolution 1787-1788* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 1.

power of the *Parlement de Paris*, an unintended result of the king's need for money. Louis XV, even as the King of France and Navarre, was unable to counter this power; issues between the king and the *parlements* effectively destroyed every aspect of *un roi, une foi, une loi*. Swann concludes, "When the government and the Parlement of Paris refused to play by the old rules, the *Ancien régime* collapsed."²⁵ After the two lost respect for each other, cooperation became impossible; consequently, the *Parlement de Paris* made a public battle of each issue between it and the crown, especially matters concerning taxation and religion. In 1750, the *Parlement de Paris* began using the tactic of inviting the princes and peers of the realm to attend its meetings to intimidate the king—in hindsight, a malfeasant precedent to revive. It showed the opponents of the *Ancien régime*, especially the *philosophes* and Enlightenment thinkers, that it was acceptable to criticize the opinions and actions of the king. While the *parlements* did have the right to use *remonstrances*, the word of the king was final; the magistrates had difficulty accepting this traditionally accepted notion, and Louis XV had difficulty maintaining control.²⁶

Taxation was an issue of major contention between the *Parlement de Paris* and Louis XV. During the Seven Years War, 1756-1763, the king needed to raise taxes to support the war effort. The magistrates of the *Parlements* countered his authority by obstructing the registration of new tax laws.²⁷ Paul H. Beik, in *A Judgement of the Old Régime*, wrote of an incident in August and September of 1763 between Louis and the *Parlements*. Louis demanded an increase in taxation to alleviate suffering amongst his

²⁵ Swann, *Politics*, 74.

²⁶ Doyle, *Origins of the French Revolution*, 71; Swann, *Politics*, 74, 81.

²⁷ Paul H. Beik, *A Judgment of the Old Régime: Being a survey by the Parlement of Provence of French economic and fiscal policies at the close of the Seven Years War* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1967), 48.

subjects, and the *Parlements* used their right of *remonstrance*. Beik quotes the king as saying “It is my business and mine alone to decide whether the financial aid which I demand is real and absolute.” Despite Louis’s initial insistence on receiving these funds, he succumbed to pressure from the *Parlements* and withdrew his demands.²⁸

Furthermore, in a *lettre patent* from May 1762, it is evident that the king had had difficulty with the *Parlements* and continued with his failed attempts to enforce laws without backlash from the *Parlements*.²⁹ His actions hindered not only the power of the crown but the image and idea that he still maintained control. Without being able to organize funds during the time of war, he was neither a good leader, a good father to his people, nor an effective military commander; continuing in this manner further eroded the idea of *un roi*. Swann argues that Louis XV, in order to preserve what remained of his power and authority, had to enforce the tax by whatever means necessary.³⁰ He was unable to resist the clergy and the *Parlements* simultaneously, and thus he again allowed them to dictate matters to him instead of the opposite. In each instance that Louis had the opportunity to save the credibility of the monarchy and enforce what authority remained to him under Bourbon absolutism, he failed.

Despite the typical narrative that Louis was unmotivated by anything other than hunting or copulating, Gail Bossenga, in “Origins of the French Revolution,” explains the multiple factors and events that Louis confronted as king, thereby defending his reign:

During Louis XV's reign, radical rhetoric about national rights pioneered by a handful of determined Jansenists became incorporated into the routine

²⁸ Beik, *A Judgement of the Old Régime*, 49-50.

²⁹ Louis XV, “Lettres patentes: concernant l'abonnement du don gratuit du bourg de Fromeries”, (May 22, 1762), Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Droit, économie, politique, F-21166 (16), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8601409z>

³⁰ Julian Swann, “Politics: Louis XV,” in *Old Regime France: 1648-1788*, ed. William Doyle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 207-08.

parlementary language; war finance increased the influence of the parlements which approved loan packages and new taxes; ministers were willing to impugn the reputation of the king for their own advance; courtiers plied the king with mistresses in an attempt to gain influence; and Maupeou's restructuring of the parlements opened up a 'Pandora's box' of constitutional theories. The events and controversies surrounding Louis XV, who 'never ruled', thereby seriously weakened the institution of monarchy.³¹

According to Bossenga, therefore, Louis XV's reign has been misinterpreted. It was not his lack of effort but an overwhelming series of unfortunate events that caused his failure as a leader.

Simultaneous to his problems with the realm, Louis had difficulty with Madame du Barry, at least in terms of her expenses. The countess loved the finer things so much that her spending as Royal Mistress had a negative impact on the French treasury. From this trouble came a clever solution. Her spending on jewelry was significant enough to cause fear amongst the populace. Donald M. G. Sutherland, in *The French Revolution and Empire: The Quest for a Civic Order*, claimed that "Mme du Barry was seen as so grasping and domineering that she was blamed for a grain shortage in Paris in 1770, a shortage that was allegedly designed to allow Louis XV to rake in mega profits to buy her fantastic jewellery and magnificent coaches."³² Along with the Abbé Joseph-Marie Terray, Louis devised a plan for du Barry to receive fifteen to twenty million *livres* worth of diamonds in exchange for foregoing any further spending on jewelry.³³ While not specifically mentioned, it is most likely that they planned for this jewelry to be distributed to her in installments, as trouble involving the treasury meant that it would

³¹ Bossenga, "Origins of the French Revolution," 1302.

³² Donald M. G. Sutherland, *The French Revolution and Empire: The Quest for a Civic Order* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 12.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=DuwHSN9QTroC&lpg=PA12&dq=Louis%20XVI%20and%20Marie%20Antoinette%20hated%20because%20he%20did%20not%20take%20a%20mistress&pg=PA12#v=onepage&q=Louis%20XVI%20and%20Marie%20Antoinette%20hated%20because%20he%20did%20not%20take%20a%20mistress&f=false>.

³³ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 82-83.

have been difficult to acquire the funds for a large purchase. Du Barry never learned how to control her spending, which, in turn, led to the demise of this plan. Despite having a monthly allowance, she was never able to cover her bills at the end of each month; she was forever in debt.³⁴

In addition to his mistress's spending, the sexual affairs of the king were always a subject of gossip and conversation amongst the French masses, be it those in the court who had something to gain, or those who were poor and starving and saw in these mistresses a waste of government money and attention.³⁵ Affairs with Royal Mistresses were scandalous because they were extramarital relationships, which immediately negated the legitimacy of *une foi* as it was outside what the Catholic faith permitted, despite its perpetual occurrence.³⁶ Taking a mistress from outside the nobility further discredited the king's image and authority. *Maîtresse-en-titre* was a position typically reserved for women of the upper nobility, as it was effectively a position of state. As the mistresses began to accrue more power, it appeared that the king was submissive, both sexually and politically, to women of undignified backgrounds.³⁷ This was the case with both the Marquise de Pompadour and the Countess du Barry, who both gained their titles from very specific circumstances and were not born into the nobility—du Barry received hers by marrying Count Guillaume, and Pompadour when Louis XV purchased for her the marquisate of Pompadour.³⁸ In stark contrast to the era of Louis XV, Louis XVI did

³⁴ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 138.

³⁵ Graham, *If the King Only Knew*, 57-59, 86-87.

³⁶ Jeffrey Merrick, "Sexual Politics and Public Order in Late Eighteenth-Century France: The Mémoires Secrets and the Correspondance Secrète," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1, no. 1 (July 1990): 78, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3704461>.

³⁷ Kaiser, "Madame de Pompadour and the Theaters of Power," 1042; Merrick, "Sexual Politics and Public Order," 77.

³⁸ Colin Jones, *Madame de Pompadour: Images of a Mistress* (London: National Gallery Co. Ltd., 2002), 31; Gil, *La comtesse du Barry*, 36.

not take a Royal Mistress. According to Sutherland, this left only the queen, Marie-Antoinette, to serve as the recipient of discontent and subject of gossip among the masses. She was “the most hated consort,” and the “rhetorical devices of sexual excess and irresistible seduction that had been applied to Mme de Pompadour were next applied to her.”³⁹ Marie-Antoinette was the queen of France, and the masses directed all of their anger, which previously had been directed at the mistresses, to her. Attacking a member of the royal family had the underlying tone of disrespect for the establishment.

Rapid Renovation

On the night of 4 August 1789, under the National Constituent Assembly, the system of manorialism ended in France. Members of the nobility who served in the Assembly volunteered to abolish these privileges as a means of compromise. As a result of the night of 4 August 1789, du Barry, like other members of the aristocracy, had a substantial reduction in her income.⁴⁰ This reduction meant that Jeanne, always a lady hard pressed to pay her bills, now had to either find a new source of income or reduce her spending—neither of which were in her nature. Because of this predicament, she decided, with Nathaniel Parker Forth, to plan the jewel theft. If her capital was missing, then the government did not have the ability to tax her for it, providing the motive for the hoax.

Another issue that directly related to the Revolution and taxation was the attempted flight from Paris of Louis XVI and his immediate family. One result of the flight to Varennes was that all *émigrés* were ordered to return to France within one month or be forced to pay triple their taxes. Many of the early *émigrés* returned to France out of

³⁹ Sutherland, *The French Revolution and Empire: The Quest for a Civic Order*, 12.

⁴⁰ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 228.

fear of becoming destitute.⁴¹ In hindsight, the *émigrés* should have stayed outside of France or consolidated their possessions upon arrival in France to escape again from the country. Madame du Barry organized this as her final plan, concocted with Forth, in which she planned to take her belongings through Amsterdam, but she was sent to the scaffold before she could execute it properly.⁴²

Furthermore, on 20 April 1792, France declared war on Austria. A result of this war was the development of fear among the revolutionaries, as the *émigrés* had been pushing for foreign military assistance to halt the Revolution. Because of this, and the growing number of Frenchmen who had emigrated, the French government passed stricter laws concerning the *émigrés*. The Law of Suspects, promulgated on 17 September 1793, ordered the arrest of each person who showed signs of loyalty to the *Ancien régime*. It was after the French government enacted this law that George Greive, the revolutionary who listed the charges against du Barry, was able to succeed in petitioning for her arrest.⁴³

In addition to the trouble stirring in France that caught the attention of the other European monarchs, the execution of Louis XVI—regicide in France—was the final link in a chain of events leading to continental war against France. Locally, however, his death sparked a time of mourning amongst the *émigrés*. The Spanish Embassy in London held funerary services for the deceased monarch, to which Madame du Barry was seen wearing a black dress as a sign of mourning. Jean Baptiste Blache, the spy who followed

⁴¹ Kristie Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution: Émigrés in London, 1789-1802* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 21.

⁴² Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 283.

⁴³ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 215-16.

du Barry, reported this action to Greive. He then used this action as evidence of her support for the monarchy and the counter-revolution.⁴⁴

The National Convention, cognizant of the general opinion among the courts of Europe and the fact that it had just executed Louis XVI, decided proactively to declare war on Great Britain on 1 February 1793. In response to this, Prime Minister William Pitt actively petitioned the courts of Europe to join him against Revolutionary France.⁴⁵ Simultaneously, du Barry furnished the sum of 200,000 *livres* to the Bishop of Rouen, the same sum that she adamantly denied dispersing during her investigation.⁴⁶ At the time of the war declaration, *émigrés* were living in London as well as along the French border on the continent. The commencement of war between most of Europe and Revolutionary France must have given the *émigrés* hope for a return to their previous lives.

The War in the Vendée, 1793-1796, was a counter-revolutionary uprising in the western part of France. Louis-Antoine, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot, was from this area and was also a known intimate of Madame du Barry. Directly before this uprising, she loaned him, from London, an amount of 200,000 *livres*, which was paid for by her bankers, the Vandenyvers, and distributed to Rohan-Chabot.⁴⁷ Although the same amount, this was an independent transaction from that sent to the Bishop of Rouen. Rohan-Chabot claimed that this money was to secure safe passage for himself back to France, but its actual purpose was to fund the revolt that was exploding in the Vendée.⁴⁸ Historians, including Jacques Levron, call the War in the Vendée an instant uprising

⁴⁴ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 260; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266, 284.

⁴⁵ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 287; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 260.

⁴⁶ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 283-84.

⁴⁷ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 287.

⁴⁸ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 182; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266.

immediately following the execution of Louis XVI.⁴⁹ However, the Vendée was also an extremely pious region of France, and the struggle between the clergy and the Revolutionary governments began at the onset of the Revolution. According to Sylvia Neely, the War in the Vendée was “sparked by conscription,” and was due to “economic hardship, attacks on their religion, domination by city people who promoted the Revolution and bought up *biens nationaux*, and the execution of the king.”⁵⁰ Tension had been growing in the Vendée throughout the early stages of the Revolution. Charles Tilly, in his book *The Vendée*, supports the idea that the War in the Vendée was a culmination of tension, stating that “[a]lthough observers were astonished at the rapidity, force, and apparent spontaneity of the uprising, it was the climax of four years of growing tension.”⁵¹ Those in western France who were aware of this tension began preparing for an uprising; regicide was the catalyst.

Elsewhere in France, the Revolution was taking a drastic turn. The Reign of Terror lasted from the time when the Jacobins defeated the Girondins—who they accused of aligning with the crown—in a power play in 1793 until the death of Robespierre 28 July 1794.⁵² It was during this period that the French Revolution claimed the majority of its victims. Because of the fear mongering led by Robespierre, any citizen who was still related to the *Ancien régime* was likely to lose his head. Within the realm of speculation, had the Reign of Terror never existed, it is possible to conclude that Greive might not have been able to justify placing the seals on Louveciennes. Without the sealing of her residence at Louveciennes, Jeanne had no reason to return from London. Regardless, she

⁴⁹ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 192.

⁵⁰ Neely, *A Concise History of the French Revolution*, 177-78.

⁵¹ Charles Tilly, *The Vendée* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), 2.

⁵² Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 274; Neely, *A Concise History of the French Revolution*, 167.

returned to begin enacting her plan to remove the rest of her economic capital from the country.

Émigrés

Of the suggested 130,000 to 150,000 French who fled France, one of the more prominent *émigrés* was Charles-Alexandre de Colonne.⁵³ He had served as the Comptroller-General under Louis XVI, but, outside of France, he was the “*de facto* prime minister to the *émigré* princes.”⁵⁴ Calonne was a man in a position of authority in the *Ancien régime*, and he established a base against the Revolution while in political exile. Furthermore, in London, “another gathering spot was at Picadilly, at Madame de Colonne’s house; she [was] the wife of the former Minister of Finances under Louis XVI. Deduce from there that Madame du Barry was implicated in the counter-revolutionary measures.”⁵⁵ Beurdelay claims that because Madame du Barry was in constant contact with Madame de Colonne, this implicated the former in the conspiracy against the French Revolution as both women desired a return to the lifestyle of the *Ancien régime*.

With the fall of the *Ancien régime*, members of the French aristocracy were forced to leave France and work in other courts of Europe or in *émigré* circles. According to Kirsty Carpenter,

Many artisans, makers of watches, fashion accessories and other fine goods by virtue of working for and among the aristocracy also shared royalist or counter-revolutionary sympathies which made them suspect. A couple of the most striking examples are Elizabeth Vigée Le Brun and Rose Bertin, the first an acclaimed painter, the second the *modiste* or fashion designer of Marie Antoinette, who

⁵³ Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, 39.

⁵⁴ Simon Burrows, “The *émigrés* and conspiracy in the French Revolution, 1789-00,” in *Conspiracy in the French Revolution*, eds. Peter R. Campbell, Thomas E. Kaiser, and Marisa Linton (New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 159.

⁵⁵ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 76.

made her fortune among the *émigré* elite. For these reasons, the social predominance of the nobility in London is difficult to ignore.⁵⁶

The “social predominance of the nobility in London” assured that du Barry, in her four trips to London, frequented their circles, as she was one of Vigée-Lebrun’s good friends. By visiting the *émigrés*, it can be assumed that their conversations, at least partially, contained discourse on the Revolution. Because of this contact and conversation, it is logical to assume that Madame du Barry was among those who wished for the end of the Revolution and the return of the *Ancien régime*. With Vigée-Lebrun; Rose Bertin; Cécile Marguerite Guinot de Monconseil, Madame de la Tour du Pin; and Madame du Barry, one can easily envision the formation of a French court in London.⁵⁷

While abroad, the *émigrés* were concerned about their lives, possessions, and futures, but as the Revolution progressed, they had to become resigned to the fact that they were never going to return to France. In her work on the *émigrés*, Carpenter best describes the situation and sentiment of this group of foreigners in London:

It can be argued that the most significant contribution the *émigrés* made to the Counter-Revolution was the image they presented to the British government and public at a crucial point in the crisis. Whatever their shortcomings, they were united in their support for the French monarchy and for the government of the *Ancien régime*, which was overturned on 10 August 1792. The image was one of sadness, hardship, distress and stoic determination to endure. Driven from their own country through their refusal to be coerced into submission to a form of government they found abhorrent, the *émigrés* were people of principle. They found themselves in exile, short of money and of all the other comforts of life, but they had their self-respect, and there was nothing the British admired more.⁵⁸

According to Carpenter, the mere presence of the *émigrés* in London sufficed to show the British government that they were serious about returning home. Such drive and determination in part influenced the decision of the British government to actively work

⁵⁶ Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, 10.

⁵⁷ Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, 9.

⁵⁸ Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, 35.

at restoring the French monarchy. From this presence in London comes the possibility of du Barry's involvement in supporting the First Coalition. She provided support in the form of economic capital to the *émigrés* in London long enough for the British government to realize that they needed both financial and military assistance to survive.⁵⁹

The *émigrés* who remained on the continent began organizing and conspiring against the Revolution. According to Simon Burrows, “*Émigré* malevolence seems evident almost from the moment the king’s youngest brother, [Charles-Philippe,] the comte d’Artois, fled abroad with his mistress and cronies in July 1789. Over the next three years he attempted to negotiate foreign intervention and gathered an army in the Rhineland.”⁶⁰ During the three years from 1789-1792, the momentum was with the British, including the French Royalists and *émigrés*. Because of this momentum, and the deteriorating condition within France, Charles William Ferdinand, the Duke of Brunswick and commander in chief of an invading Prussian army, issued “The Proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, 1792,” in which he stated that he was defending “the rights of the German princes in Alsace and Lorraine,” that he aimed “to put an end to the anarchy in the interior of France,” and “to reestablish legal power, to restore to the king the security and the liberty of which he is now deprived.” He concluded that, “The city of Paris and all its inhabitants without distinction shall be required to submit at once and without delay to the king,” and that if “their [the royal family’s] safety and their liberty be not immediately assured” that “the rebels guilty of the said outrages” will

⁵⁹ Saint-André, *A King’s favourite*, 287; Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 150.

⁶⁰ Burrows, “The *émigrés* and conspiracy in the French Revolution, 1789-00,” 150.

receive “the punishment that they merit.”⁶¹ As a result, the drive and determination of the Revolutionary army increased. On 20 September 1792, the French Revolutionary army stopped and “demoralized” the Prussian army at the battle of Valmy.⁶² Even though this was a crucial turning point for the revolutionaries, du Barry did not lose hope. According to Marion Ward,

When Mme. Du Barry left France [for London] in October 1792 she might secretly have hoped that while she was away the Duke of Brunswick’s army would, in spite of the defeat at Valmy, eventually reach Paris and liberate the royal family, enabling her to return, with her jewels, to a Paris that once again recognized the Bourbons.⁶³

Madame du Barry’s wishes were never realized. As it was, she remained in London until 3 March 1793, when she learned that Louveciennes had been sealed by the government.⁶⁴

In addition to the start of large-scale war, the *émigrés*, because of their responsive actions abroad following emigration, left no option to the French Revolutionary governments but to declare them enemies of the state and sentence them to death.

Burrows states that “[b]y transmuting *émigré* activists into agents of Pitt and [Prince Frederick Josias of Saxe-]Coburg[-Saalfeld], war confirmed their status as traitors. No longer protagonists in a purely domestic dispute, the *émigrés* were now perceived as active servants of the foreign enemy.”⁶⁵ The *émigrés* were actively working against the Revolutionary governments; concurrently, du Barry began to frequent London with the pretext of recovering her stolen jewelry. Madame du Barry was in constant contact with

⁶¹ Charles William Ferdinand, the Duke of Brunswick, “The Proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, 1792,” quoted in J. H. Robinson, editor, *Readings in European History* 2 vols. (Boston: Ginn, 1902, 2: 443-45). <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/bruns.html>.

⁶² Christopher Hibbert, *The Days of the French Revolution* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1981), 179.

⁶³ Marion Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1967), 121.

⁶⁴ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 267.

⁶⁵ Burrows, “The *émigrés* and conspiracy in the French Revolution, 1789-00,” 156.

the *émigrés* whilst in London;⁶⁶ this served as evidence that she, along with the *émigrés*, conspired against the Revolution. Her two transactions of 200,000 *livres* underlined her guilt, as she sent the funds to known counter-revolutionaries.⁶⁷

Furthermore, Carpenter claims that “[b]etween 1793 and 1814 the British government...provided the most comprehensive financial backing for the overthrow of the Republic of any European power, and was the only country to offer financial aid to the refugees.”⁶⁸ Traditionally, the British and French were rivals, but at this point it was more important to the British to preserve the institution of the French monarchy. Great Britain, with Austria, Prussia, Spain, Portugal, Sardinia, and Naples, formed the First Coalition to contain and to obliterate the French Revolution. The British government decided to undertake extreme measures to weaken, and more importantly, overthrow the Revolutionary government and reestablish the monarchy.

Finally, even though Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette were vicious to du Barry while she lived at Versailles, because of her adoration for Louis XV, she always had “love and loyalty for the crown.”⁶⁹ Participation in the French monarchy had given her everything that she ever desired; she owed her livelihood to its existence. She, with most other nobles, hoped that the chaos caused by the Revolution was temporary; that in the end, peace was going to be restored; they were wrong.⁷⁰ As a result of this gross miscalculation, du Barry received an opportunity to reinvent her reputation amongst all those who had slandered her. She resolved to help as many of those abroad as she could, both personally and financially, and this was her demise. Her actions in attempting to

⁶⁶ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 167.

⁶⁷ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266.

⁶⁸ Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, 15.

⁶⁹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 265.

⁷⁰ Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 121.

restore her reputation while in London resulted in her losing her life during the Reign of Terror. Her ambitions were high, and she took every possible measure to be successful in her endeavor.

CHAPTER 4
MISTRESS OF MISFORTUNE

The theft of Madame du Barry's jewel collection enabled her to travel to and from London on the pretext of their recovery. Her capacity to transverse the English Channel during the French Revolution permitted her to move large sums of money as well as her personal possessions and wealth out of France when such action was illegal. For her to gain this privilege, it was necessary to stage a complicated robbery in which her enormous jewelry collection was stolen from her *château* at Louveciennes. This plot required full cooperation and excellent planning at each step. To successfully enact this plot, Jeanne and Forth chose to utilize the help of their friends, as well as her employees.

Major Characters

From within Jeanne's residence at Louveciennes emerged a group of discontented, Zamor, Badoux, and Salanave, who defected from du Barry to the cause of the Revolution. Du Barry purchased Zamor as a child; he served as her valet for most of his adult life, but he also served as her pet. She dressed him like a doll, and on other occasions walked him like a dog.¹ It is most likely because of this degradation that he defected from du Barry to join with George Greive against her.

Zamor, present the night of the theft, received the charge of watching the jewels that remained at Louveciennes. He failed to carry out his task of sleeping in the bedroom to guard her jewels.² This is because Madame du Barry had employed him in her hoax.

¹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 270-71.

² Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 53.

For the plan to be successful, she instructed him to vacate the post that night.

Furthermore, after his defection from du Barry's service, he joined with Greive and divulged to him the details of how du Barry planned the theft in order to reduce her taxes.³ According to Zamor, at least during his testimony, Madame du Barry had originated and instigated the plan of the jewel theft.⁴

Also present at Louveciennes the night of the theft was the young man Badoux, a member of the Swiss Guard. He was originally garrisoned at Courbevoie before Jeanne hired him to work for her at Louveciennes.⁵ One week before the theft, Badoux went to meet with a stranger to the Louveciennes area.⁶ At this meeting, Badoux divulged the plan that du Barry and Forth had crafted. Most likely this stranger was Jean-Baptiste Levet, one of the thieves, a claim supported by Jacques Saint Victor in *Madame du Barry, un nom de scandale*.⁷ Badoux and Levet orchestrated their actions for the night of the theft; Badoux provided the connection that links du Barry and Forth to the jewel thieves. Badoux's charge was to help organize the plan that du Barry and Forth created. On the night of the theft, Badoux left his post to drink with locals at a bar.⁸ He departed at Jeanne's request, as she needed Louveciennes to be unguarded for the success of the theft. Jeanne eventually had to have him arrested, however, in an attempt to conceal her role. Badoux was first acquitted of all charges by the tribunal of Versailles, and was then acquitted by his regiment of all charges of malfeasance pertaining to du Barry's jewel theft.⁹ He was acquitted; the military affirmed that he did nothing wrong. Badoux's

³ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 193.

⁴ Fouquier-Tinville, Notes on Testimony. See Appendix F.2.; Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 259.

⁵ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 256.

⁶ Jacques de Saint Victor, *Madame du Barry: Un nom de scandale* (Paris: Perrin, 2002), 256.

⁷ Saint Victor, *Madame du Barry*, 256.

⁸ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 236.

⁹ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 167; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 160-61.

acquittal for the charges of deserting his post meant that Jeanne commanded his absence, therefore supporting the theory of her perpetual involvement with the theft.

The most mischievous character in the theft was Nathaniel Parker Forth. Forth was a British agent whose main goal was to incite commotion in France, especially among the counter-revolutionaries, in an attempt to keep France weak relative to Great Britain. A letter from the secretary of the French Ambassador to London, Anne-César, Marquis de la Luzerne, to Louis XVI, notes that the “recent tumults in France are looked upon with approval here,” suggesting that the British preferred a weakened France. But, in the same letter, he mentions that “Forth, who has already been in France, at the opening of the States-General, and who spent a fortnight in London, disappeared a few days ago.”¹⁰ Not only did Forth cross habitually between the two countries, he attended important government meetings, such as the Estates-General. Furthermore, Luzerne continued, if “Monsieur Forth is there too, he is certainly concerned in the intrigue. He always takes these subordinate parts, and is all the more to be feared because he does not lack ability.”¹¹ This proved that the French government had knowledge of both Forth’s presence and ambition. In addition to this, Forth employed a private intelligence service, making its information available to smugglers and embezzlers.¹² Forth was a questionable businessman by trade, which supports the claim that he was helping du Barry smuggle her jewelry—and later the rest of her fortune—out of France. Forth was a willing participant in du Barry’s scheme who caused trouble, incited—eventually—counter-

¹⁰ Marquis de la Luzerne to Louis XVI, letter, 8 June 1789, quoted in Saint-André, *A King’s favourite*, 259-60, <http://archive.org/details/kingsfavouritema00sainiala>. See Appendix A.4.

¹¹ Luzerne to Louis XVI, 259-60. See Appendix A.4.

¹² Ward, *Forth*, 6.

revolutionary measures and made some money along the way.¹³ His chance arrived following the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789. After this tumultuous event, Forth began assisting Royalists who wished to escape with their belongings; he performed this service “on behalf of the British government.”¹⁴ This was Forth’s primary objective at the moment, as the British government hoped that with the *émigrés* came large amounts of capital. As only some of the *émigrés* were able to escape with their fortunes, the results were mixed, but it did cause enough commotion that the Revolutionary governments took legal actions against those who left France.¹⁵

Forth was a good horseman, and it was because of this equestrian knowledge that he became acquainted with Charles Philippe, the Count d’Artois and brother of Louis XVI. From this friendship he was introduced to Louis-Phillipe-Joseph, Duke de Chartres, later Duke d’Orléans, later Philippe Égalité. Forth originally served as his factotum, and from this employment they developed a close friendship.¹⁶ Because of their friendship, Forth aided him in obtaining a passport for an employee who could prepare a residence for the duke in London.¹⁷ Furthermore, the duke was “upset that he did not have in any of his houses an apartment” for Forth.¹⁸ Another connection between the characters around du Barry was Henry Seymour, one of du Barry’s temporary lovers while she lived at Louveciennes. Like Forth, Seymour was fond of the equestrian lifestyle, and it was through Seymour that du Barry met Forth.¹⁹ On the contrary, however, Marion Ward

¹³ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 141.

¹⁴ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 161.

¹⁵ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 215-16.

¹⁶ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 74; Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 156; Ward, *Forth*, 26-7.

¹⁷ Louis Philippe Joseph d’Orléans to Nathaniel Parker Forth, 16 May 1780, in *Lettres de L.-P.-J. d’Orléans, duc de Chartres à Nathaniel Parker Forth (1778-1785)*, Louis Philippe Joseph d’Orléans and Amédée Britsch, (Paris: Société d’Histoire Diplomatique, 1926), 5. See Appendix A.3.

¹⁸ Louis Philippe Joseph d’Orléans to Nathaniel Parker Forth, 12 February 1782, 8. See Appendix A.3.

¹⁹ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 158.

claims that the two, du Barry and Forth, met at Lady Barrymore's residence while playing cards.²⁰ Hereafter, Forth was a regular at Louveciennes.²¹ Regardless of how and where they met, du Barry and Forth became close acquaintances. Given his charge to foment counter-revolutionary measures, and seeing her need to secure her wealth, Forth found the perfect opportunity to both make a fortune and start trouble in France.

When Forth was not causing trouble, he was temporarily the British Special Envoy to Jean-Frédéric-Phélypeaux, the Count de Maurepas. At other times, he had facilitated loans for George Augustus Frederick, the Prince of Wales from the Duke d'Orléans. These were high- volume loans, with intricate payment and rescheduling terms.²² Forth had the knowledge and the ability to move large sums of money across the continent, and this action was habitual for him.²³ In du Barry's case, he was smuggling, with her assistance, her wealth out of France.

Du Barry first met Forth in the early 1780s. From that moment, they remained in contact. She charged him with selling her jewelry in Amsterdam prior to the theft. He was unsuccessful in this transaction as he was unable to sell the totality of the jewelry for the price that Madame du Barry wanted.²⁴ Du Barry attempted this in order to reduce her capital with the intended result of reducing her taxes. After Forth realized that jewels, even on a foreign market, were not selling at the level at which they should, he and du Barry devised the jewel theft hoax.

Despite the fact that she was unable to sell a majority of her jewelry, of which she had amassed at least 2,000,000 *livres* worth from 1768-1774, she did sell small portions

²⁰ Ward, *Forth*, 54.

²¹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 231.

²² Ward, *Forth*, 12, 122-25.

²³ Ward, *Forth*, 71, 124.

²⁴ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 74; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 229; Ward, *Forth*, 147,

of her treasure. In 1774, while at the Pont-aux-dames, she sold a large diamond worth 450,000 *livres* to Ange-Joseph Aubert, and in 1798, through her bankers the Vandenyvers, she was able to sell 133,000 *livres* worth of jewelry in Amsterdam.²⁵ Even with these sales, she still possessed an enormous collection of jewelry and diamonds. This attempted sale also established the trend of liquidating her jewelry in order to settle debts or maintain her current lifestyle. Given that the market was flooded with the sale of jewelry by many of the *émigrés*, this soon proved to be futile. However, her actions established both motive and precedence. Madame du Barry knew that the majority of her fortune lay in her jewelry. Despite her eternal attachment to her material possessions, in order to emigrate under the radar, she had to liquidate her most expensive jewels to secure the success of her endeavor.

Throughout the Revolution, Madame du Barry had Forth as her personal detective and translator. Although in the pay of Prime Minister William Pitt and an agent of the British government, London did not trust Forth.²⁶ Because of this close connection to the British government, it is possible that du Barry could have funneled all types of information to and from the royal courts. She also had motive. In a letter from a Charles Dupin, she learned of a rumor that a pamphlet, newly written, was destined for the Assembly with the intention of “cancelling [her] income and returning it to the state.”²⁷ Dupin wrote this letter to her on the same day that the Bastille fell to the Paris masses. Due to the events in Paris, du Barry had a legitimate cause to worry about securing her fortune, especially her jewelry. In the end, her communication with the British

²⁵ M. Klein, “Les diamants de madame du Barry,” in *Madame Du Barry: De Versailles à Louveciennes* (Paris, Flammarion, 1992), 141; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 233.

²⁶ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 237; Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 157.

²⁷ Mr. Dupin to Madame du Barry, 14 July 1789, quoted in Baroness de Agnes Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles: the Life of Madame du Barry* (London: John Murray, 1966), 118-19. See Appendix A.2.

government provided sufficient grounds for capital punishment. This in conjunction with her moving large sums to notorious members of the counter-revolution was evidence of her guilt.

George Greive harbored a defined hatred for du Barry. Marion Ward, in her book *Forth*, gave the following description of Greive:

George Grieve, small mis-shapen and immensely strong, was an Englishman, the son of an Alnwick attorney. Educated at Eton, and later for a time a clerk in Thellusson's London bank, he now described himself as a prime anarchist, and subvertor of despotism in two hemispheres. He had canvassed for [John] Wilkes[, MP], befriended [Jean-Paul] Marat when he lived in England, supported the cause of American independence, and claimed acquaintance with [George] Washington and [Benjamin] Franklin.²⁸

As his motive for working for the Revolution and for detesting du Barry, Greive claimed that he hated everything about despotism and monarchy.²⁹ It was Greive's meticulous research and investigation that resulted in the plethora of evidence against du Barry being produced at the Revolutionary Tribunal. Greive's findings, as well as the mood in Paris during the Reign of Terror, resulted in her death sentence.

In order to prepare for the upcoming changes in France, du Barry met the Vandenyvers in 1790 when the elder Vandenyver, Jean-Baptiste, was asked "to help manage her affairs by Joseph Durvey, a former member of the Court Bank."³⁰ After the fall of the Bastille, those amongst the highest echelon of society were preparing for possible emigration. Despite being hopeful that the Revolution was going to cease or calm, the aristocracy desired, at all costs, to protect its wealth, status, and privileges.³¹ Du

²⁸ Ward, *Forth*, 154.

²⁹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 254.

³⁰ Interrogation of Vandenyver, Father, 1 November 1793, quoted in Charles Vatel, *Histoire de Madame du Barry* (Paris: L. Bernard, 1883). See Appendix D.2.

³¹ Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 121.

Barry's recent acquaintance with the Vandyvers provided her the means to move her fortune should she need to take such a step.

While in London, Madame du Barry continued living the affluent lifestyle to which she had become accustomed. In order to fund her extravagant lifestyle, du Barry drew against an unlimited line of credit at the London bank of Messrs. P. Simon and J. Hankey; this line of credit was extended to Jeanne for the fourth journey to London by her bankers in France, the Vandyvers, who by this time were suspected of smuggling large sums of money out of France.³² It is unlikely that any banker, regardless of revolutionary sentiment, offered an unlimited line of credit to any source thought to be a risk for non-repayment. Therefore, on what capital was this credit based? By the time of the final voyage, a British court had ruled that the stolen jewels belonged to her but were under seal awaiting the settlement of the reward.³³ That the Vandyvers allowed her to move such large sums of money is evidence that she had either used her jewels as collateral, or, even more likely, had moved sums of money that never belonged to her in the first place under the guise of a line of credit.

As stated earlier, Jean Joseph Rouen was one of Madame du Barry's jewelers during her time at Versailles. After the theft, he helped her compile the list of missing jewelry. It was during the meeting between Rouen and Jeanne immediately after the jewel theft that Rouen appraised the value of the missing jewelry at 1,500,000 *livres*.³⁴ However, the jewels that were auctioned by Christie's in 1795 only gained approximately

³² Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 263; Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 183; Castlot, *Madame du Barry*, 245; See Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 240 and Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 166, who claims that she had this line of credit starting at the second voyage. Regardless of whether it was available to her on the second and third trips, she only utilized this option on the fourth trip, as far as the evidence shows.

³³ Castlot, *Madame du Barry*, 266-67.

³⁴ Klein, "Les diamants de madame du Barry," 141.

13,412 £, equivalent to 178,832 *livres* at the time.³⁵ Such a large disparity invites speculation. The first potential explanation is that she was able to remove and sell as needed her jewels while in London. However, selling jewelry frequently causes somebody to notice. Neither Blache nor the interrogators ever mentioned that she liquidated her jewelry in London; therefore, it can be assumed that she did not follow this course of action. Furthermore, she did not have access to her jewels until the issue regarding the reward had been decided. Because of this, it is more likely that only a small portion of jewelry and diamonds were stolen at the beginning; this allowed du Barry to physically retain the majority of her capital—and her most valuable jewelry—while claiming that most of her wealth had disappeared in the theft. Accepting this means that du Barry had moved her most valuable possessions prior to the night of the theft and that she allowed only a small portion of her jewelry to be taken. She was then able to produce the massive list of missing jewelry, as it was not at Louveciennes. Her action regarding the stolen capital assets the claim that her motive to be a part of the conspiracy was for the ultimate goal of reducing her net worth on paper while retaining her wealth in private.

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In retrospect, this crime only happened because of the precision and planning of each person involved. With a hint of sarcasm, Haslip describes how easy of a task this was to accomplish:

The open window with the ladder left against the wall; the servant who had failed to carry out her orders to sleep in a room adjoining her bedroom; above all the defection of the Swiss Guard, who had been persuaded to leave his post to go and drink in the village—all added up to a combination of events which enabled a

³⁵ Beurdelay, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 77.

gang of thieves to carry out an audacious robbery without arousing the slightest suspicion in a house full of sleeping servants.³⁶

Madame du Barry passed the night at the Duke de Brissac's house in Paris, as he was hosting a celebration. Jean-Baptiste Levet, one of the henchmen, kept watch in the garden at Louveciennes, while Joseph Abraham, another, acted as the lookout. Likewise, the other thieves, Simon Joseph, Joseph Harris, and Jacob Moyses, went into her room to take the jewels. They ascended to her second floor window by use of a ladder left in the garden, and from there they removed her jewelry from a cabinet and porcelain chamber.³⁷ Had any one of these variables been altered by the slightest degree, the entire plan might have faltered. It is more than coincidence that each person given a charge that night failed in his task. That the event—the theft itself— even happened was the greatest piece of evidence to the fact that it was planned. It required that Forth and du Barry prepare for every detail, and every means to make it look as though the theft was genuine.

First, the Swiss Guard was absent from his post. Harris later admitted in his statement that Badoux was involved with them, the thieves, the night of the theft.³⁸ He knew that du Barry was gone that night, and because of her absence, his only charge was to guard the jewels. He was not at his post as instructed. He knew that by leaving his post, he allowed the thieves to enter the residence. It was du Barry's instruction to leave the room despite pretending to be told to watch the room. That which looked like a simple mistake actually made the false-theft story believable. In addition to this, Zamor, who had been instructed to sleep in her bedroom to guard the jewels decided to sleep in

³⁶ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 153.

³⁷ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 229-31; Marion Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1967), 62-63; Charles Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry* (Paris: L. Bernard, 1883), 139; Saint-Victor, *Madame du Barry, un nom de scandale* (Paris: Perrin, 2002), 255.

³⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 237.

another location; this, too, was part of the plan. Thus, both who were instructed to guard the jewels decided on the same night to disobey orders.

The gang of thieves consisted of five people: Simon Joseph; Jacob Moyses; Joseph Abraham, each a Jew of German descent; Joseph Harris, an Englishman; and Jean-Baptiste Levet, a Frenchman.³⁹ The latter two featured in the most prominent roles in the aftermath of the theft. It was Harris who eventually confessed to the theft after they were arrested in London; Levet maintained through the entire endeavor that he had legally acquired the jewelry. This resulted in a pending claim in court that forced du Barry to remain in London for an extended period.

Gil, in *La comtesse du Barry*, supports the idea that Jeanne planned the theft by explaining that “the thieves made such easy work of the theft that they must have been comfortable at Louveciennes or have been well informed.”⁴⁰ They not only knew that du Barry was absent for the evening, but they knew the precise location of her room, and furthermore, the exact location of all of her most precious stones and jewels, all of which were ready for the intruders to steal.⁴¹ The ease of this theft was evidence that she planned and enacted it with precaution and detail.

Immediately after departing from Louveciennes, the thieves took the necessary precautions to cover their tracks. According to Beurdeley, “in order to make the jewelry unrecognizable, their first goal was to shatter them and to remove the stones.”⁴²

Unsurprisingly, this was the natural course of action for any thief—a means to remove

³⁹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 238; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 229-232; Saint Victor, *Madame du Barry, un nom de scandale*, 255; Ward *The Dubarry Inheritance*, 62-63; Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry*, 139. Ward called Simon Joseph by the name Joseph Amon, while Castelot, Castries, Saint Victor, etc. identified him as Simon Joseph.

⁴⁰ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 163.

⁴¹ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 131.

⁴² Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 75. See Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 63; Saint Victor, *Madame du Barry, un nom de scandale*, 257.

evidence of guilt—ultimately, by doing so, they destroyed the chance that the jewels could be *positively* identified without question. For this scheme to work properly, du Barry must have been cognizant from the beginning that the stolen jewelry was going to be destroyed in the process. These jewels were the crux of her existence; she did not let the most precious ones out of her sight. Therefore, the jewelry that she allowed the thieves to remove from Louveciennes could not have been her most valuable jewels—the ones that she claimed were stolen. She allowed the theft of inferior jewels so that she could claim a loss for the better jewels, even though she had already removed them from the premises.

Madame du Barry, with the assistance of her jeweler Rouen, issued a pamphlet, *2000 louis à gagner*, which contained a detailed list of the jewelry that the thieves stole from Louveciennes. Contained in this pamphlet was a copious amount of jewelry, and to print it at this point in the course of the French Revolution was, quite possibly, the worst calculation of the entire hoax. She released to the public evidence of how much she possessed at a time when most were starving. The list included:

one ring with a squared white diamond weighing 3.5 grains, mounted in a cage...one pair of round buttons containing one emerald, one sapphire, one yellow diamond, and one ruby all surrounded by stones, weighing a total of 4 grains...two bracelets together, containing 24 stones, weighing around 15 or 16 grains each...one cross of 16 stones weighing 8 to 10 grains each...one portrait of Louis XV, painted by Massé, surrounded by a border of gold, with laurel leaves, said portrait is 5 to 6 inches tall...furthermore, 40 small diamonds weighing one karat each...a white stone weighing 29 grains...and a button with a very big stone, rose colored, weighing 36 to 40 grains, mounted in a button of glue.⁴³

⁴³ One grain equals 53.115 milligrams. Jeanne Bécu Du Barry, Comtesse. “Deux mille louis à gagner. Diamans et bijoux perdus.” A list of the jewelry stolen from Du Barry. 1791. Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Réserve des livres rares, RES ATLAS-Z-46 (13), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k856894k>. See Appendix H.1.

What is listed is only a fraction of what she listed on the pamphlet of stolen jewelry. Castelot estimates that this—what she claimed missing on the pamphlet—amounted to three-fourths of her entire jewelry collection.⁴⁴ The uncalculated risk of displaying this exorbitant amount of wealth resulted in Madame du Barry's return to the forefront of the financial crisis and, therefore, the French Revolution. Reemerging in the spotlight reestablished Jeanne as the symbol of the waste and extravagance of Versailles and of Bourbon absolutism. That she returned to the center of the intrigue at Paris and Versailles allowed her actions to be visible to the Revolutionary government. Therefore, because of her overt reminder of affluence, her subsequent actions—especially those taken in London—were heavily scrutinized. That she decided to release the pamphlet was a gross miscalculation, as the population now comprehended the extent of royal spending on du Barry. In the midst of a crisis where the people were lacking food and funds, this added insult to injury. Furthermore, with such a detailed list as that provided after the theft, it remains within the realm of possibility that the list was prepared in advance so that she knew exactly what to claim missing, what to have hidden, and what to have in her current possession when she reported the theft. Rouen likely maintained records of what he had sold Jeanne. However, the detailed accuracy, as well as the length of the pamphlet, suggests that the list was compiled prior to the actual theft.

After defacing the stolen jewelry, the thieves' next task was to remove it from France so that they were not caught with her jewelry in their possession.⁴⁵ Arriving in London with their newly acquired merchandise, the thieves attempted to sell it to the British jeweler Simon Lion, who recognized the jewels because of the pamphlet that du

⁴⁴ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 234.

⁴⁵ Saint Victor, *Madame du Barry, un nom de scandale*, 257.

Barry had issued regarding the missing jewels.⁴⁶ He purchased a small amount of them and scheduled a meeting for the following day with the band of thieves. In the interim, Lion contacted Forth for his assistance. Lion was aware of the fact that Forth had previously acted as the agent selling du Barry's jewelry. Lion also notified the authorities in London about his discovery. When Lion met with the thieves the following day, the thieves were arrested. Forth and Lion decided that the jewels were to be placed under seal at the bank of Ranson, Morland, and Hammers, where Forth had been a regular customer for many years.⁴⁷

Du Barry and Forth had succeeded in all aspects up to this moment. The arrest was a continuation of the scheme as planned. Being trained in the Irish Bar, Forth knew that none of the thieves could be prosecuted in England for a crime committed outside of the country.⁴⁸ His knowledge of the law explains how he and du Barry were able to convince the thieves to allow themselves to be arrested—that, and most likely a formidable financial reward. This also explained the forthcoming confession from Harris, as he had nothing to fear by admitting his guilt. Presumably, once the thieves conceded that the jewels belonged to du Barry, she would be able to reclaim them, and the thieves would be released. Although she regained possession of her jewelry, it was not of all the jewelry that she claimed was missing. She could have returned to France with her jewels, maintaining that the majority were never recovered. Thus, her capital, on paper, would have been drastically reduced, while she maintained possession of the most valuable jewels that she had already hidden elsewhere. Levet, instead of admitting guilt and releasing the jewels, asserted that he had acquired them legally and enacted a counter

⁴⁶ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 158; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 239.

⁴⁷ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 232; Ward, *Forth*, 149-50; Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 71, 79-81.

⁴⁸ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 162; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 244.

claim in court against du Barry.⁴⁹ She did not anticipate that one of the thieves would become overcome with greed—the jewels were worth a significant amount, perhaps more than the sum that she was paying them. Forth, however, was most likely responsible for suggesting that Levet claim the jewels in an attempt to prolong the process.

The Lady Goes to London

Following the discovery of her jewelry in London, and upon receiving Forth's notice by mail, du Barry departed on 4 February 1791 for the first of four voyages to London in the quest to recover her missing jewelry. Madame du Barry arrived at London on 16 February 1791. Travelling with her were François Denis, Chevalier d'Escourt; one *femme de chambre* (a chambermaid); two lackeys; one *valet de chambre* (manservant); and Jean Joseph Rouen, her jeweler. The party resided on Jermyn Street while in London.⁵⁰ Simultaneous with her arrival, but unbeknown to her, Blache, a French spy charged with following du Barry and monitoring her whereabouts, had also arrived. He continually noted the contact that she made with the *émigrés* and the British nobles. To cover, he posed as a French teacher among the British aristocracy.⁵¹

During this first excursion, du Barry and Rouen were shown the seized jewelry; Rouen made a positive identification of the jewels and confirmed that the jewels belonged to du Barry. Yet she did not gain possession of the jewels, as they were returned to Ranson, Morland, and Hammers Bank on Pall Mall Street.⁵²

⁴⁹ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 162.

⁵⁰ Interrogation of Madame du Barry, 30 October 1793, quoted in Gil 221-28. See Appendix D.1; See Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 232.

⁵¹ Goncourt, *Madame du Barry*, 259; Gil, *La comtesse du Barry*, 165; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 242.

⁵² Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 160; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 241, 245; Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 83-84.

It was during this time that the thief Harris made the confession about being a part of a plan hatched by du Barry and Forth. He made his confession to John Boydell, the lord-mayor of London.⁵³ At the same time, his cohort, Levet, claimed that he had legally purchased the jewels in France.⁵⁴ This was a matter for the court to decide; the British judiciary was not able to hear the case until the opening of the spring session.⁵⁵ By convincing Levet to make the counter-claim, and thereby extending the timeline for recovering the jewelry, Forth succeeded at prolonging the endeavor. This enabled him to incite more discontent amongst the French aristocracy, as his and Jeanne's presence among *émigrés* was nearing perpetuity. Finally, Forth was a trained attorney; he knew the reaction of the legal system, so it must have been on his suggestion that the two thieves counter each other so as to prolong the process in London. Prolonging the endeavor permitted du Barry to make another trip from Paris to London on the pretext of finally recovering her jewels. As du Barry was able to transport her wealth and also information for the *émigrés*, by extending the process, Forth ensured that he continued to aid in fomenting the counter-revolution.

Curiously, in the time between Madame du Barry's first and second trips to London, Forth lodged with the Duke de Brissac, Madame du Barry's lover, at his residence in Paris. Blache noted this, and supplied this knowledge to Greive when they later united to make a case against the countess.⁵⁶ Forth continued his work with du Barry, overtly as her translator and agent, covertly as her co-smuggler. He stayed at the residence of her lover, who may have already aided her by moving jewelry before staging

⁵³ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 142.

⁵⁴ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 166.

⁵⁵ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 160.

⁵⁶ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 161.

the theft, but this is purely speculation. She and her lover, Brissac, were both in frequent contact with an English double agent, and, as with most of her actions since the beginning of the Revolution, this would be used as evidence against her at the Revolutionary Tribunal.

For the second trip to London, she secured a passport on 3 April 1791 in Paris. Armand Marc, Count de Montmorin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs under Louis XVI, signed this passport.⁵⁷ Accompanying her were the Chevalier d'Escourt, Rouen, two women, one valet, and two couriers.⁵⁸ Her second London excursion started with her arrival on 8 April and ended with her return to France on 21 May 1791. This voyage lasted a total of six weeks. During this trip, she resided at Margaret Street near Oxford Circus.⁵⁹

On the second voyage, du Barry continued to live like a French noble. She never refrained from publicly showing her adoration for the lifestyle to which she had grown accustomed. While at Margaret Street,

She [wa]s at all the parties, dance[d] at Vauxhill, visit[ed] the Ranelagh Gardens, dine[d] at Richmond with the Prince de Galles at the Duke of Queensbury's residence, went to the Villa Sans Souci, ran by Mrs. Robert, granddaughter of the Duke of Lancaster and future Countess of Buckinghamshire.⁶⁰

London was a popular location for the *émigrés*. While Jeanne was there, she behaved as though she were still at Versailles, following the rigid rules of etiquette. Du Barry's prominence at the time, due to the jewel theft, resulted in other *émigrés* centering around her. Her knowledge of events in France and about the *émigrés*'s friends and relatives who

⁵⁷ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 244.

⁵⁸ French Passport for Madame du Barry (3 April 1791), quoted in Edmond de Goncourt, *Madame du Barry* (London: John Long Limited, 1914), 243. See Appendix C.1; Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

⁵⁹ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 75; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 235.

⁶⁰ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 76.

remained in France explains her popularity in London. Inevitably, their conversations centered on events in France and how they could alter the Revolution.⁶¹ Madame du Barry was able to travel between France and Great Britain, she had a legal reason for leaving France, she sympathized with the *émigrés*, and she had motive and ability to act as intermediary for the communications of the French aristocracy.

Furthermore, Madame du Barry, who was a “major gambler,” was known to hold “gaming events at her home which were very much frequented by the French *émigrés*.”⁶² Now, instead of accepting invitations out of courtesy, she actively pursued relationships with the *émigrés* and hosted parties for them. While this does not prove conspiracy, it provided the motive and the means. Moreover, she maintained contact with the British aristocracy as well, including William Douglas, duke of Queensbury and Prime Minister William Pitt. Jeanne was also presented to king George III, marking her official entrance to the world of the British nobility.⁶³ In addition, this is evidence of a possible attempt by du Barry to build relations in the foreign court should the time come when she might have to relocate.

As noted, Harris, one of the thieves, had confessed to the theft, but the other four maintained that they had legally acquired the jewelry in question. During the second voyage, Madame du Barry was also rumored to have asked Levet to drop his claim so that she could regain her jewels; in return, she would drop the charges against him.⁶⁴ Rather, it is more likely that she spoke with him to ensure that he continued the charade, as the lengthy court process allowed her to continue to travel between the two countries.

⁶¹ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 285; Ward, *Forth*, 80.

⁶² Beurdelay, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 76.

⁶³ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 248; Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 167, 190.

⁶⁴ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 166-67.

By this point, she had gained prominence in London, and was able to aid those stranded there, thereby ameliorating her reputation. In addition to what Forth had to gain for Great Britain by smuggling wealth out of France, du Barry now also had a motive, as she could attempt to gain importance in the French aristocracy, a desire she never realized.

Ultimately, the thieves were released from jail, and Levet filed suit against Simon Lion and Forth, claiming that they were illegally withholding his property—a claim based on his supposed legal purchase of the jewelry.⁶⁵ Haslip poses a question about this suit that must be answered before proceeding. “How was it that an apparently penniless thief, with no connections in England other than Harris and his brother, a second-hand iron dealer in Petticoat Lane, could find the money to embark on an expensive course of litigation?”⁶⁶ The answer was that Forth, through du Barry, funded the action against du Barry. This, at first, seems counterintuitive, except that the cost of litigation was relatively inexpensive compared to that which she had hoped to gain by reducing her taxes, all due to her loss of a significant source of capital.

Madame du Barry arrived back in France from her second voyage to London on 21 May 1791, “[b]ut the courier who forty-eight hours later woke her in the middle of the night to tell her that her presence was urgently needed in London brought letters which had nothing to do with her jewels. The French royal family was planning to escape and was desperately short of funds.”⁶⁷ Haslip claimed that du Barry was needed in London so that she could transfer funds to the royal family. In her book, *Madame du Barry: The Wages of Beauty*, she fails to validate her claim.

⁶⁵ Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 87.

⁶⁶ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 162.

⁶⁷ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 162-63.

Regardless, Madame du Barry and her party left for London again on 23 May 1791 to make their third of four voyages. This time it was Rouen; Louise-Diane-Françoise de Clermont-Gallerande, the Duchesse de Brancas; one *femme de chambre* (chambermaid); the Chevalier d'Escourt; two courriers; one valet; and one gardener who accompanied her.⁶⁸ Evidence exists that during the fourth trip she disguised Louise-Félicité de Brehan de Plélo, the Duchess d'Aiguillon, as a *femme de chambre*, so it is possible that she did the same on the third, either with the ladies, or with this suspicious gardener, especially as he was only part of their party for a portion of the journey. She could have disguised a lady as her *femme de chambre* again, or perhaps her gardener was a male noble in disguise. Jeanne commenced this third journey only a couple of days after returning to Louveciennes, where she received notice upon her arrival that she must immediately return to London for legal proceedings.⁶⁹ In contrast to Haslip's claim, however, it is more likely that the jewel theft was the cover for this trip. Such a short amount of time between arrival and notification appears suspicious. It seemed that she only made this journey to France in order to claim that it was always her intention to return to France. She attempted to return this time only to be immediately called back to London under the guise of reclaiming her jewelry. Such a short stay in France indicates that she had returned either to gather people, information, or funds with which to return immediately to London.

Furthermore, she had left London so that upon her return she could establish herself at a more prominent location. "In order to make her third trip more enjoyable, Jeanne rented a house near Berkeley Square, employed domestics, purchased a carriage

⁶⁸ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

⁶⁹ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 167.

and horses.”⁷⁰ Extravagant planning suggests that she intended to live in London indefinitely. Her behavior appeared suspicious, and Blache remained ever-present to monitor her movements and activity. The evidence suggesting that she was an *émigré* continued to mount. However, during this third trip to London, du Barry passed her time shopping, especially for household decorations to send back to Louveciennes. She made these purchases with the express reasoning of them being evidence to the fact that she always intended to return to France.⁷¹

Concerning the recovery of her jewelry, this third voyage was ultimately a failure. Jeanne departed London on 25 August 1792 without possession of her jewelry.⁷² However, this does not negate the fact that the court had already ruled that she was the legal owner of the jewelry.⁷³ It is at this point that much contention arises over the actions of Madame du Barry. Considering that she was only waiting for the settlement of the reward, which was an insignificant sum compared to the value of her jewels, she could have simply paid the 2,000 *louis* and returned to France with her jewels.⁷⁴ She decided against this option, leaving open the option to return to London when she desired, on the pretext of finally claiming her jewelry. This was evidence that most likely the stolen jewelry was not the collection that she claimed, but a smaller collection, which she sacrificed for the sake of the hoax. She had her collection of most-precious jewels already safely hidden. After they returned to France, du Barry and Forth presented copies of the judicial paperwork from London to the French authorities.⁷⁵ The paperwork was meant to

⁷⁰ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 167.

⁷¹ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 165-66.

⁷² Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 169.

⁷³ Ward, *Forth*, 153.

⁷⁴ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 200.

⁷⁵ Levron. *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 152.

serve as evidence of her progress in London; it was documentation on file with the French government so that she could once again leave France when needed.

Jeanne's Final Voyage

As this trip sealed her fate as an *émigré*, curiosity surrounds the reason for her return. According to Stanley Loomis, it was not necessary for her to go to London a fourth time, as all of the official business could have been taken care of by an attorney. He suggests that she was there because she was in desperate need to come in contact with Pauline, the Duchess of Mortemart, who, as the daughter of the Duke de Brissac, was able to ensure that du Barry received the money that Brissac guaranteed her.⁷⁶ This is a plausible excuse because du Barry would need the income from the Brissac estate if she was forced to remain living in London. Furthermore, du Barry's remaining jewels were not easily converted from capital to currency as jewels had recently flooded the market; thus the reason for the jewel theft hoax. It is arguable then, that du Barry was establishing herself in London.

In addition to dealing with her jewelry and establishing herself in the British court, du Barry, travelling between France and Great Britain, acted as a human trafficker. As noted, on the fourth voyage, the Duchess d'Aiguillon accompanied du Barry as her chambermaid, as she was unable to procure a passport for herself. Also with her on this journey was one courier and one valet.⁷⁷ Not only had du Barry decided to smuggle her wealth out of France, but she was also actively participating in tracking humans, with the

⁷⁶ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 254-55.

⁷⁷ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 255; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 248; Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1. Fouquier-Tinville, Notes on Testimony. See Appendix F.2.

Duchess d'Aiguillon a known example.⁷⁸ She was illegally sneaking the French aristocracy out of the country! With the audacity to sneak other aristocrats through the checkpoints in France and then across an international border, enacting a plan to do the same with her jewelry, by comparison, was not that difficult.

In addition to the Duchess d'Aiguillon, du Barry arrived on 14 October 1792 with the Duchess de Brancas and the Chevalier de la Bondie, who was the nephew of the Chevalier d'Escourt. Upon reaching her residence on Burton Street, Pauline, the Duchess de Mortemart, joined her.⁷⁹ In addition to her travelling companions who were members of the French aristocracy, Jeanne visited Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord; François Claude Amour, the Marquis de Bouillé; Louis, the Count de Narbonne-Lara; Louis August le Tonnelier, the Baron de Breteuil; Charles, the Count de Rohan-Soubise; Antoine François Bertrand de Molleville; Marie-Anne Gabrielle Josephe Xavier, Princess de Henin; and Louis Étienne d'Orléans, the Abbey de Saint-Phare.⁸⁰

The main reason for her return was that Simon Lion, the British jeweler, had made a claim for the reward, as it was he who reported to Forth that the jewelry had been found. This was the justification that Madame du Barry produced as her excuse for making the fourth trip to London, because she had to manage the legal proceedings regarding the reward for the jewelry.⁸¹ The reward had to be paid and settled before Jeanne could take possession of her missing jewelry. With relative ease, du Barry could have paid the reward, collected her remaining jewelry, and returned to France, but that

⁷⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 248.

⁷⁹ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 185; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 267.

⁸⁰ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 264; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 187.

⁸¹ Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry* 182-83; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 261; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 183-84, 192.

foiled the larger plan, so she allowed her jewelry to remain in the bank so she could continue her operations.

Before the trial opened, Forth instructed du Barry to tell Rouen, the jeweler, not to make the journey to London for this court proceeding. He claimed that he had been assured “that the presence of Rouen can only harm her,” and that “if Rouen arrives, do not receive him, but send him to [Forth].”⁸² Forth reasoned that Rouen’s presence promoted the closure of the trial, which was counter to Forth’s objective. Forth aimed to further prolong the trial so that he could continue manipulating du Barry and the jewel theft as a means of removing French nobility—and more importantly their wealth—from France.

According to Henri Welschinger, the jewels were released to Madame du Barry on 22 February 1793 following the court proceedings and her payment to Simon Lion of 1000 *louis*, and she left her jewels on deposit in the bank by choice.⁸³ This meant that she could have left for France with her jewelry at the end of the fourth voyage had she only settled the fees; leaving them there by choice was a means to secure an excuse to return once again to London. As the jewels remained in the bank, she was able to continue to tell the French government that she needed to return to London for legal matters.

It was also during the fourth trip that she decided to use the unlimited line of credit; it seems at least probable that she had access to this as early as the second trip.⁸⁴ It is possible that she did not need access to extra money until the fourth voyage, and that

⁸² Nathaniel Parker Forth to Madame du Barry, 3 February 1793, quoted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961), 193-94. See Appendix A.2. See Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 250; Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 122.

⁸³ Welschinger, *Les bijoux de Mme Du Barry*, 68, 80-81; See Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry*, 188; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 260; Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266-67; Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 249.

⁸⁴ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 162.

this was why she did not draw against the account until then. Another idea is that, because of the court ruling that the jewels belonged to her and that she could access them after paying the reward, she then had the legitimate capital which could act as collateral to secure the line of credit.⁸⁵ Finally, it is also possible that none of the money funneled through this account was ever du Barry's, but that instead it was money that she smuggled for the Vandenyvers, her bankers; they were known to move large sums of money out of France.⁸⁶ Able to travel between the two countries, and under the guise of covering her expenses, Jeanne managed to transfer two sums of 200,000 *livres*, among others, from France through London to fund counter-revolutionary activity.⁸⁷ If this is the case, then the jewel theft was used as the cover to move the money.

She admitted in her interrogation that she only used the unlimited credit from the Vandenyvers during her fourth voyage to London. The line of credit they extended her passed through the London bank of Pierre Thélusson.⁸⁸ She was then authorized to use it as she decided. It is during this final voyage that she released the two sums of 200,000 *livres* each, which were destined for the counter-revolutionaries, Louis, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot and Dominique de la Rochefoucauld, the Archbishop of Rouen.⁸⁹

While in London during this fourth visit, the most devastating news of all—so terrible it altered the course of the jewel theft—reached Madame du Barry on 27 February 1793. The Committee of General Safety, under the advice and suggestion of Greive, had placed the seals on Louveciennes and declared that du Barry was an

⁸⁵ Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 83-84.

⁸⁶ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 182.

⁸⁷ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266.

⁸⁸ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1. Interrogation of Vandeynver Father. See Appendix D.2.

⁸⁹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266.

émigré.⁹⁰ This changed the course of events because a majority of her possessions still remained, buried, at Louveciennes, as she had not yet *fully* emigrated from France. While she had the most cherished jewels hidden away, there were still endless treasures of artwork, jewelry, kitchenware, and other valuables and monies located on the grounds of Louveciennes.⁹¹ Because of this, du Barry fatally decided to return to France to protest the charges and regain possession of her residence and goods.

She had taken, in her mind, the necessary precautions to avoid this, as she wrote to the committees and municipalities in France explaining her plans to them; she had not yet regained possession of her jewels from the banks and considered this sufficient evidence for repeated journeys to London. Prime Minister Pitt begged her not to return to France—either because they had become good friends or, more logically, he was afraid to lose the person most able to cross the English Channel at this moment in time—because he possibly knew something of which she was unaware: she never again returned from France.⁹² On 3 March 1793, du Barry departed London for the final time.⁹³

After the court proceedings in London, William Douglas, Lord Queensbury, gave du Barry documentation stating that she would be able to recover her diamonds in May of 1793.⁹⁴ Du Barry used this as evidence of progress in her court proceedings—a reason to return to London as soon as possible. She had to rush back to Louveciennes so that she could remove the seals and finally gather the last of her most important belongings.⁹⁵ If

⁹⁰ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 189.

⁹¹ Ultimate Declaration of Madame du Barry, 8 December 1793, quoted in Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry (Paris, Pygmalion, 2001)*.

⁹² Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 190; Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 151; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 195.

⁹³ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 268.

⁹⁴ Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry*, 188.

⁹⁵ British Passport for Madame du Barry, 1 March 1793, quoted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961), 192. See Appendix C.2.

she did not make this return trip to France, her belongings would be seized, and she might never have been able to recover them. Jeanne's plan of emigration was expedited. Du Barry had her friend, Lord Queensbury, sign the paperwork. That he did this for her further supports the idea that she was using the British aristocracy to complete counter-revolutionary actions. In return the British were helping du Barry continue the jewel theft facade. Goncourt affirms this theory, stating that the Duke of Queensbury signed the only documents that had suggested that du Barry must return to London. Queensbury was actively working with King George III against the French Revolution.⁹⁶ He was more than willing to provide the necessary documents to secure her ability to return to London and continue her counter-revolutionary endeavors.

Not only were her actions with Forth damning, they were being recorded and annotated at every moment. She could not have known, but the French government's spy, Jean-Baptiste Blache, watched her with scrutiny for the remainder of her life. Shortly after her return to France after the fourth voyage, the British deported Blache from Great Britain. Upon returning to France, he received a commission as an agent of the Committee of General Security, which directed the French police during the Reign of Terror, and worked with George Greive to make a case against du Barry.⁹⁷ This united Greive, the man who hated du Barry more than any other, with Blache, the man who had meticulously monitored her since the outbreak of the Revolution; the two exchanged knowledge, and Greive gained access to all the essential information needed to charge du Barry with fifteen counts of what? at the Revolutionary Tribunal.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Goncourt, *Madame du Barry*, 310.

⁹⁷ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 192-93.

⁹⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 256.

Du Barry continued to behave in a manner that was used as evidence at her forthcoming trial. She delivered to Marie Louise Joseph de Nettine, Madame de Calonne, in London a letter from Charles-Claude Flahaut de la Billaderie, Count d'Angiviller, who was in Paris.⁹⁹ This is evidence that she was acting as a communication agent between the two countries. This action was enough to send anybody to the guillotine during the height of the Terror, and Madame du Barry proved no exception. According to the rule of law during the Terror, this was sufficient evidence for the death penalty.

Jeanne had executed her plan well enough to accomplish her goals. She successfully had her jewelry stolen and transported to London where it was recovered and sealed in the bank. She had been able to make four separate voyages to London, in which she was able to transport information, money, and French nobles, out of France during the Revolution. She had established residency in London without any issues from the French government. Then, the seals were placed on Louveciennes—an event for which she never planned. This forced Jeanne to alter her strategy, as she still needed to remove the rest of her treasure from the property and transport it safely to London. Du Barry miscalculated what was to happen to her when she returned and immediately found reason for concern.

⁹⁹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 235.

CHAPTER 5

MADAME DU BARRY ON TRIAL

Jeanne departed London on 3 March 1793 and arrived in Calais, France two days later with an expired passport. The countess overstayed her journey by four months.¹ Du Barry remained in Calais until she secured another passport, dated 17 March 1793, allowing her to travel to Louveciennes.² As her château at Louveciennes had been sealed, she wrote a letter on 27 March 1793 to the administrators of the district of Louveciennes, in which she claimed to be “very astonished” at being “treated like an *émigré*” considering that “all of France is informed about the theft committed against her.”³ After this, she regained Louveciennes. Through the course of the next three months, she received visits from the Princess Rozalia Lubormirsksa; François Denis, the Chevalier d’Escourt; Marie Henriette Dorothee d’Orléans-Rothelin, the Princess de Rohan-Rohan-Rochefort; and Louis Antoine, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot, which mean that she effectively continued to maintain relationships with known members of the aristocracy and counter-revolution. Greive and Blache noted her behavior and again pressed the Department of the Seine-et-Oise for the arrest of du Barry.⁴

¹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 268; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 195.

² French Passport for Madame du Barry, 17 March 1793, quoted in Charles Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry* (Paris: L. Bernard, 1883). Appendix C.3.

³ Jeanne Bécu, Comtesse du Barry, Letter to the Administrators of the District of Versailles, 27 March 1793, quoted in Jeanine Huas, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Tallandier, 2011).

⁴ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 252.

Madame du Barry Arrested

Madame du Barry bore the responsibility for her actions regarding the theft; it cost her her life. However, excluding her own culpability, George Greive was the man most responsible for her final arrest and execution. Greive had been working with Blache, the spy; Zamor, her former *valet*; and Salanave, her former cook; along with the Revolutionary Tribunal against the countess.⁵ Greive collected an excess of thirty signatures from the residents of Louveciennes, who by signing declared that she was a counter-revolutionary. After Greive presented these to the Committee of General Security, he arrested Jeanne on 1 July 1793. Louveciennes was again sealed, and the National Guard escorted du Barry to Versailles.⁶ After pleading with members of the Committee, she offered in her defense the claim that she sent 200,000 *livres* to the Vendée to stop the uprising—even though she sent the money well before the War in the Vendée started—as her main defense of patriotism and civism.⁷ Another petition containing fifty-nine signatures was presented in her defense; this was accompanied by testimony from Citizen Claude Nicolas Ledoux, mayor of Louveciennes.⁸ The Committee released her and allowed her to return to Louveciennes, which was opened on 9 August 1793.⁹ It had found “not one legitimate charge against the citizen du Barry or those attached to her service.”¹⁰ She was, for the time being, cleared of conspiring against the Revolution.¹¹ Her exoneration was temporary, and it must be noted that this happened before the Reign of Terror. The laws changed rapidly during the Terror, but her demeanor

⁵ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 274.

⁶ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 194-95.

⁷ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 194-95.

⁸ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 206, 208.

⁹ Declaration of Committee of General Safety 9 August 1793, quoted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961). See Appendix G.2. See Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 258.

¹⁰ Declaration of the Committee of General Safety. 9 August 1793.

¹¹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 274; Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 194-95.

did not.¹² Although temporarily unsuccessful at confining du Barry to prison, Greive only had to wait until the Reign of Terror to once again place her in custody. In the interim, she held an open table policy at her residence for the aristocracy of both sexes. Greive again pressed for Jeanne's arrest because of her actions after returning to Louveciennes in combination with the reports from Blache about her similar behavior while in London.¹³ She continued to live in the world of the *noblesse*.

The Committee issued the final arrest warrant for Madame du Barry on 21 September 1793 with orders to take her to Paris to Saint-Pélagie, a former convent converted to a prison during the Revolution.¹⁴ With this warrant, she was arrested as a "suspect of incivism and aristocracy."¹⁵ When Greive arrived to take her into custody, Madame du Barry "r[an] up the stairs to the second floor attempting to destroy and hide compromising papers" in order to hinder Greive's investigation.¹⁶ He annotated each of the letters that he found, and this formed the basis for the charges that he levied against her. At the time of the arrest, the seals were again affixed to Louveciennes.¹⁷

After confining Madame du Barry to jail, the Committee of General Security granted Greive and Salanave the "necessary powers to break the seals at Louveciennes, of whose treasures they made the inventory."¹⁸ As du Barry's antagonists, they had the utmost hatred for her, and now they had access to all that she coveted. In addition, Zamor

¹² The most important change was the Law of Suspects (17 September 1793), which ordered the arrest of anybody known or suspected of acting against the Revolution. See Hibbert, *The Days of the French Revolution*, 223-24; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 215-16.

¹³ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 269, 271.

¹⁴ Arrest Warrant for Madame du Barry by the Comité de sûreté général, 21 September 1793, quoted in René de La Croix, Duc de Castries, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Hachette, 1967). See Appendix E. See Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 259; Gil, *Madame du Barry*, 197.

¹⁵ Arrest Warrant for Madame du Barry, 21 September 1793. See Appendix E.

¹⁶ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 275-76. See Levron, *Le destin du Madame du Barry*, 217.

¹⁷ Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 303-04; Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles*, 156-57.

¹⁸ Saint-André mistakenly called this the Committee of Public Safety. Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 305; Levron, *Madame du Barry*, 283-85; Saint-André, *A King's favourite*, 303.

joined the counter-du Barry faction. Zamor and Salanave were both formerly employed by du Barry, but since her first arrest, she fired Salanave and Zamor left her.¹⁹ It is likely that as they were doing inventory with Greive, a “common thief,” they retained for themselves a portion of du Barry’s treasure.²⁰ In order to complete the search and take the inventory, Greive lived alone at Louveciennes for six months.²¹ Furthermore,

Greive took possession of the papers that had escaped destruction and were found in the furniture or in the drawers. He made abstracts of them, annotated and compared them, and thus put together the most weighty [sic] collection of incriminating evidence. Never was trial better prepared or more ardently prosecuted! The man knew everything about her.²²

It had been his goal to destroy Madame du Barry, and now Greive had all the evidence that he needed to build a case of counter-revolution and scandal that proved a sufficient argument for prosecutor Antoine Quentin Fouquier-Tinville to use to convict the countess.

Jeanne was arrested and convicted. In her Ultimate Declaration, she revealed the abundance of wealth that remained at Louveciennes. What follows is a sample of the remaining treasure hidden there, including: “...one small container of fifteen or sixteen diamonds of five to six grains each...one container of small rubies...one pair of golden rings, garnished with pearls...1,240 *double louis*...”²² Representing only a fraction of the lengthy declaration, the amount of wealth remaining at Louveciennes was a significant remainder of her economic capital. Her hidden capital, in the form of jewelry, such as her “two ear chains, each containing nine or ten stones;” precious metals, in the form of

¹⁹ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 198, 211.

²⁰ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 267.

²¹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 22-23; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 222-23; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 266.

²² Ultimate Declaration of Madame du Barry, 8 December 1793, quoted in Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry* (Paris: Pygmalion, 2001). See Appendix G.4.

“1,531 *louis d’or*, golden louis, worth twenty-five *livres* each;” and service ware, like her “golden teapot” or her “dozen silver casserole dishes and sixty-four silver plates” were all left behind to be reclaimed by the French Republic.²³ Her hidden possessions were the sole reason that Jeanne rushed back to Louveciennes after learning that the Committee had sealed her property.²⁴ She had overstayed her passport hoping that nobody would notice or question her absence due to the general knowledge of her jewel theft. As a consequence, she almost lost possession of all that she owned in France. After she returned and had the seals removed, she immediately began making plans with Forth to get as much of the remainder of her possessions safely out of France via Amsterdam.²⁵ After safely smuggling her wealth to the Netherlands, she planned to then have it transported to London.

One final possibility for her return to France related to the daughter of her late lover the Duke de Brissac. Christiane Gil claims that according to legend, Madame du Barry was offered the chance to escape from Saint-Pélagie with the help of an Irish priest. Jeanne was said to have asked the priest if he had the ability to save two people, to which he replied that he could save only one. Consequently, she instructed him to save Pauline, the Duchess de Mortemart, in her place.²⁶ Although most likely an invention, as argued by Jeanine Huas, if it were true, it meant that du Barry believed that she was soon to be freed from prison.²⁷ Jacques Levron argued that the explanation was that a financial risk was involved. The duchess was the executor of Brissac’s estate; du Barry, if she did save

²³ Ultimate Declaration of Madame du Barry, 8 December 1793. See Appendix G.4.

²⁴ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 268.

²⁵ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 283-84.

²⁶ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 200. See Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 230.

²⁷ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 310-11.

Mortemart, only did so in order to receive her income, a “very useful” amount of 300,000 *livres* that Brissac had promised her.²⁸

Interrogation and Trial

After her arrest, Madame du Barry went through an intense interrogation concerning her life, time as Royal Mistress, actions at Louveciennes, and most importantly, the jewel theft and conspiracy against the Revolution.²⁹ The interrogators first attacked the legitimacy of her passports and her reasoning for overstaying her allowed travel dates. When asked why she had not obtained the passports for the fourth journey from the same source as the first three, she responded that she was refused by Charles-François Lebrun, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, so she obtained one from the Department of Louveciennes and left with only this passport.³⁰ Because an office of the central government had refused her permission to travel, Jeanne should have viewed this as a sign that she should not have departed France. She had no reason to assume that she was able to avoid being considered an *émigré* once she left France. She carried a passport from her local government; this permitted her to travel to London, but it did not provide a sufficient defense against the Revolutionary Tribunal’s accusations.

The interrogators then questioned her knowledge of the newly passed laws that required all French citizens to return to France or be condemned as *émigrés*. According to Caroline Weber, in *Terror and Its Discontents: Suspect Words in Revolutionary France*, “Pursuant to this law [Law of Suspects, 17 September 1793], individuals could not only be arrested and killed for proven counterrevolutionary activities; they could also be

²⁸ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 231.

²⁹ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

³⁰ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

executed for *potentially* counterrevolutionary beliefs....”³¹ Du Barry replied in the interrogation that she was “aware of the laws” but that they “did not pertain to her” as she had secured a passport.³² Not only did she obtain her passport from the local municipality and not the national government, but she also overstayed her permitted time. Thus, Jeanne had blatantly disregarded the laws and demands of the official government so that she could conduct her personal affairs, notably the jewel theft that served as a cover for her smuggling operation. The interrogators then proceeded to ask why she had remained in “enemy territory” after France declared war against the king of England.³³ In her response, she maintained that “her case was almost finished” and that “she lengthened her stay as to avoid a future trip for the trial.”³⁴ The overt claim for the trip was to recover her jewelry. In actuality, she stayed in London to aid the counterrevolution.

A large portion of the interrogation also consisted of questions related to the two separate sums of 200,000 *livres*. She dispersed one of the sums to Louis-Antoine, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot, who was her lover during this final stage in her life. Because of their established relationship, the prosecution maintained that they were participating in counterrevolutionary measures, such as supplying funds to support the War in the Vendée—the 200,000 *livres* that she sent him were for this specific cause. Du Barry released the other sum of 200,000 *livres* to Dominique de la Rochefoucauld, the Bishop of Rouen.³⁵ As he was a member of the clergy who clung to the *Ancien régime*, his counterrevolutionary opinion can be inferred. Therefore, the money that she sent him

³¹ Caroline Weber, *Terror and Its Discontents: Suspect Words in Revolutionary France* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 80.

³² Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

³³ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

³⁴ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

³⁵ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 284.

must have been used to support the clergy who had not taken the oath to the Civil Constitution.³⁶ The interrogators questioned her about both sums, and they provided her with evidence—a letter written to her by the Vandenyvers—attesting to the fact that she released two equal sums from her account. Despite the fact that this letter proved that she had authorized the money transfers, she admitted only to authorizing the transfer to Louis-Antoine, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot, denying the one to the Bishop of Rouen. Jeanne asserted, “It can only be the one loaned to Rohan-Chabot and I persist in saying that he is the only person to whom I loaned 200,000 *livres*.”³⁷ The countess admitted to this sum hoping that she could explain it in context of the War in the Vendée. Du Barry wanted the interrogators to believe that she sent the money to stop the insurrection; however, the money was sent to support the uprising.³⁸

The interrogation continued laboriously as the prosecution questioned du Barry about the letters written to her from the General Adam Philippe, the Count de Custine; Marie Henriette Dorothee d’Orléans-Rothelin, the Princess de Rohan-Rochefort; Adélaïde Pauline Rosalie de Cossé-Brissac, the Duchess de Mortemart; and Princess Rozalia Lubomirska.³⁹ As she was questioned about each, she acknowledged their existence and responded “calmly and precisely.”⁴⁰ She made an attempt not to divulge any more information than necessary. Her actions suggested that she had the intention of appearing cooperative, while actively working to save her name and life. Regardless, the

³⁶ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 256.

³⁷ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

³⁸ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 182.

³⁹ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

⁴⁰ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 308.

letters were proof that she was facilitating communication between the *émigrés* and those remaining in France.⁴¹

Next in the interrogation process, du Barry answered questions about her interactions with the *émigrés* in London. When asked if she had contact with any of the *émigrés* in London, she replied, “I have seen some French people who were in London and whom I knew. It was difficult for me to close my door to them.”⁴² She admitted to breaking French law while in London; this statement alone was enough to condemn her to death, as she admitted to hosting and entertaining the *émigrés*. This statement is also evidence of her demeanor and attitude. She replied with vague, somewhat ambiguous statements in an attempt to conceal her guilt. Continuing the interrogation, the prosecution asked: “Have you given or had money given to the *émigrés* refuged in London?” “I have not given them any money, except for the English lady who owes me 134 *guinées*.”⁴³ Contrary to her claim, Levron argued that she had given loans to at least ten *émigrés*, including forty-six *guinées* to Rohan-Soubise and another of the same value to Mortemart, although none of these were large sums.⁴⁴

The government ordered Madame du Barry’s transfer on 3 December 1793 to the Conciergerie, which was the holding prison for those awaiting trial at the Palais de Justice and for those in the process of being sent to the guillotine. The queen, Marie Antoinette, also had been detained there prior to her execution on 16 October 1793. Likewise, Madame du Barry was held there for three days until her trial started on 6

⁴¹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 246.

⁴² Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

⁴³ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

⁴⁴ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 189.

December 1793.⁴⁵ On 19 November 1793, before her transfer, Jeanne wrote a letter to Fouquier-Tinville asserting that “she never emigrated nor even had the intention,” “never furnished money to the *émigrés*,” and “never conducted illegal correspondence with the *émigrés*.”⁴⁶ The countess had written him a letter containing lies, but it continued to demonstrate that du Barry thought her connections gave her *carte blanche*, a privilege she had not enjoyed since being the Royal Mistress. Jeanne had always been able to write to the appropriate officials and employ her friends in order to fulfill her needs and desires. In this instance, the former *maîtresse-en-titre* was not successful.

Her trial, like others during the Terror, was a spectacle; her fate had already been sealed. In regards to those sentenced, Christopher Hibbert states that “they defended themselves so skillfully that [Jacques] Hébert angrily complained, ‘Need there be so much ceremony about shortening the lives of wretches already condemned by the people?’”⁴⁷ Such was the case for Madame du Barry. René-François Dumas presided over her trial with four assistant judges; witnesses were George Greive; Jean-Baptiste Blache; Zamor; Salanave; and François Denis, the Chevalier d’Escourt; the lawyer defending Madame du Barry was Claude François Chaveau-Lagarde, who had been the attorney for Marie-Antoinette who had just recently lost her own head to the guillotine.⁴⁸ This correlation should have been indicative of her future, but Jeanne did not concede. In a letter to her *femme de chambre*, Henriette, she asked her to send her “news about who

⁴⁵ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 203; Hibbert, *The Days of the French Revolution*, 173.

⁴⁶ Madame du Barry to Fouquier Tinville, 19 November 1793 quoted in Castelot, *Madame du Barry*. See Appendix A.1.

⁴⁷ Hibbert, *The Days of the French Revolution*, 222.

⁴⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 269; Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 234; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 295.

stayed and the seals placed on Louvecienne.”⁴⁹ She requested information as to whether “the people of Louvecienne had started a petition for her.”⁵⁰ Her question was a result of the actions of the citizens of Louveciennes during her previous arrest, as over fifty of them had signed a petition supporting her civism and loyalty.⁵¹ Du Barry asked Henriette to send her “one bonnet, some of her shirts, some tissues, and bed sheets.”⁵² This letter implies that Madame du Barry had no intention of dying. She was preparing for her stay in jail, but she was also concerned with her possessions outside. Had she been resigned to dying, she might not have taken the effort to prepare for her future.

Just days after her transfer, the trial began. At the opening of the trial, Greive laid out his charges against her as follows:

1. Madame du Barry enjoyed a huge preference from the Crown, and even after her disgrace, she was linked to those who are enemies of the Revolution.
2. She continued her liaisons with said enemies of the Revolution.
3. She maintained a correspondence with the *émigrés*.
4. She gave them money for the counter-revolution.
5. She always discounted the counter-revolution.
6. She supported counter-revolutionary comments against the Revolution and against Paris.
7. In London, she was dressed in mourning for the tyrant, and she only frequented *émigrés* and enemies of France.
8. She always detested the Revolution, spread a counter-revolutionary attitude, encouraged the antagonists of the Revolution, and protected royalists.
9. She always favored counter-revolutionaries and persecuted the patriots.
10. She always favored foreign enemies of the Revolution.
11. She dilapidated the wealth of the state.
12. She wanted to reduce her wealth because of the awakened political attention on the scandal of her counter-revolutionary actions.
13. The mysterious theft gave her the pretext to make frequent voyages to London from which it seems that both Courts had profited by having her pass information without being considered an *émigré*.

⁴⁹ Jeanne Bécu Du Barry, Comtesse to Henriette, 22 September – 2 October (?) 1793, quoted in Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*. See Appendix A.1.

⁵⁰ Jeanne Bécu Du Barry, Comtesse to Henriette. See Appendix A.1.

⁵¹ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 195.

⁵² Jeanne Bécu Du Barry, Comtesse to Henriette. See Appendix A.1.

14. She was always considered an *émigré* by the district.
15. She lied about her fortune.⁵³

Each charge alone was sufficient to render a guilty verdict. It was impossible for her to escape the guillotine.

Considering the Charges

For the first of her three journeys, Madame du Barry acquired her passports from the Municipality of Paris and Armand Marc Aurelle, the Count de Montmorin Saint-Hérem, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. For the fourth trip, her passport came from only the Municipality of Louveciennes as referred by the Department of Seine-et-Oise.⁵⁴ Pierre Henri Hélène Marie Lebrun's career started under the direction of René Nicolas Charles Augustin de Maupeou, who was du Barry's friend. According to Levron, she helped Lebrun secure this position.⁵⁵ For this reason, Lebrun provided her with his assistance. In a letter from Lebrun to Jeanne on 21 September 1792, he informed her that her "passports had just finally returned to him from the municipality, observed and perfectly in order."⁵⁶ Du Barry, always prepared to cover her tracks, noticed a problem with her passports. She wrote back to Lebrun on 2 October 1792, fearing that "as it is not mentioned in neither your letter nor my passport of my trip to London, or my unfortunate trial requiring my presence, I fear experiencing difficulties on my journey."⁵⁷ Madame du Barry alluded to the possibility that she could have been considered an *émigré*, as well as

⁵³ Charges Against Madame du Barry, 6 December 1793, quoted in Castries, *Madame du Barry* (Paris: Hachette, 1967). See Appendix F.1.

⁵⁴ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

⁵⁵ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 184.

⁵⁶ François Charles Lebrun to Madame du Barry, 21 September 1792, quoted in Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*. See Appendix A.2.

⁵⁷ Du Barry to Lebrun, 2 October 1792, quoted in Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*. See Appendix A.1.

the possibility of her goods, especially Louveciennes, being sealed and seized by the Revolutionary government. Furthermore, in this same letter, du Barry expressed fear that the government “could see [her] having emigrated and put, then, the seals on her residence.”⁵⁸ She knew that she was leaving France for an extended period of time on a passport that would not stand the scrutiny of the Tribunal; she was indeed emigrating and attempting to disguise the fact. She had every reason to fear, but this fear did not stop her from leaving.

Du Barry returned from London after her fourth voyage with an expired passport, and for this she was held in Calais until she received permission to continue from the officials in Paris. In the new passport she received in Calais, she claimed to be 40 years old, when in fact she was 49 years old.⁵⁹ More importantly, this passport proved that she arrived back to France almost six months after the allotted time that she was given to stay in London. This is further evidence that she had in fact emigrated and had only returned to unseal and collect her possessions at Louveciennes.

The question surrounding Madame du Barry for the majority of her trial concerned her status as a citizen or an *émigré*. Throughout her various voyages to London, she took multiple precautions to ensure that she was not condemned as an *émigré*. The following is a letter Jeanne wrote to Ledoux, the Minister of Louveciennes, in 1792, before departing on her fourth voyage. She wrote this letter to affirm her status as a French citizen:

Since I have the honor to live under your watch, you have wanted, sir, to recognize that on all occasions I have given the wages of my civism and my respect for the law; I boast that by the same spirit of justice, you would well

⁵⁸ Du Barry to Lebrun. See Appendix A.1.

⁵⁹ French Passport for Madame du Barry, 17 March 1793, quoted in Charles Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry* (Paris: L. Bernard, 1883). See Appendix C.3.

receive the present declaration that I do not go to London at all to abandon my country and my regular residence, but that I am forced to take myself to London in order to finish there a trial from which depends the recovery or my precious effects which you know were stolen from me and which compose the principal part of my fortune as well as the only collateral that my creditors have. I declare at the same time that I am taking the utmost caution to return to France as soon as my case is finished.⁶⁰

While an attempt to preemptively counter the Committee, this letter is evidence of her guilt. She took much precaution to hide the fact that she had emigrated. By putting forward such an effort to defend her citizenship status, she appeared guilty. Jeanne du Barry again tried to use her charm and kindness to protect her position and prowess. She had hoped that by providing this statement prior to departing she would be safe from any prosecution.

Madame du Barry had always been a lady of charm and because of this had always been able to talk herself out of any situation. Jeanne's letter to the minister was evidence of her continued efforts to cover her tracks by taking every means possible. Her efforts were unsuccessful, and her actions proved that the countess was an *émigré*. While in London, du Barry lived as an aristocrat, mingling with members of both the French and British nobility, and gambling and shopping with them. When his own subjects murdered the king of France, Jeanne mourned with all of the *émigrés* in London at the Spanish Embassy—Catholic and Bourbon in nature, as the king of Spain, Charles IV, was a member of the Bourbon family. Jeanne's interactions and demeanor proved that she was not yet willing to depart from the life of the *Ancien régime*. More than acting as an agent of communication, the countess was part of their world. Jeanne built a new life around her that would secure her future; that is what the countess had done multiple times

⁶⁰ Jeanne Bécu, Comtesse du Barry to the Minister of Louveciennes, 1792, quoted in Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*. See Appendix A.1.

throughout her life. Du Barry could not have known that Jean-Baptiste Blache, the French spy, was following her every move. It is because of him that the Revolutionary Tribunal, the mechanism of conviction during the Reign of Terror, knew of her behavior in London.

Madame du Barry was an *émigré*. Despite multiple attempts to convince the Committee of General Security that she had not emigrated and had every plan to return to France after the termination of her legal issues in London, Jeanne was never able to prove her innocence. The former Royal Mistress explored every possible avenue to extend the lawsuit in London as long as possible, hoping that with the conclusion of the Revolution she could return with her possessions before having to answer for all of these crimes.

Despite the overwhelming evidence, Christiane Gil, in *La Comtesse du Barry*, maintains du Barry's innocence regarding the theft, but admitted that once involved, she was in fact an agent of the counter-revolution.⁶¹ However, according to Jacques Levron in *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, the theft may or may not have been planned by Jeanne, but Forth certainly seized the opportunity that was presented to him. From this point, Forth used du Barry's situation to his advantage as a means of keeping a line of communication open, providing a motive for his presence in France during the Revolution, and to incite counter-revolutionary measures among the *émigrés*.⁶² Stanley Loomis, in *Du Barry: A Biography*, contends that the popular opinion at the time of the theft was that the jewels "were stolen by arrangement,"⁶³ an accusation echoed by Charles Vatel, who asserts that "the thieves probably had knowledge from the interior [of

⁶¹ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 202.

⁶² Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 223.

⁶³ Loomis *Du Barry: A Biography*, 236.

her household].”⁶⁴ Such an accusation implicated Madame du Barry as at least a knowledgeable accomplice in the plan to reduce her income by means of faking a jewel theft. Because the thieves knew exactly where the jewelry was located, and disrupted nothing in the residence but the jewels, Jacques de Saint Victor, in *Madame du Barry, un nom de scandale*, concludes that the theft was organized and planned from the inside.⁶⁵

Du Barry’s major biographers have been unable to come to a consensus regarding this latter stage of her life. Jeanine Huas, for example, admits that the loan to Rohan-Chabot “has invoked diverse reactions among historians,” and that most “assured that it [the money] was destined to aid the insurrection in the Vendée.” She supports this claim by arguing that “the uprising in the West started two months later.”⁶⁶ Michel Beurdeley, in *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, asserts that the money sent to Rohan-Chabot had no other motive than to aid in the counter-revolution in the Vendée.⁶⁷ This theory becomes more relevant when one considers the testimony of the Chevalier d’Escourt. When being questioned, he attempted to disguise the transaction to Rohan-Chabot by saying that it was he who had delivered the money to Rohan-Chabot by mistake. His inability to provide a logical story led to his arrest and sent him to the guillotine for conspiracy.⁶⁸ His inability to explain the large sums of money further convinced the Tribunal of Jeanne’s guilt. However, Huas adds the possibility that du Barry loaned the money either to “help an aged man” or “because he [Rohan-Chabot] had been a close friend of Brissac.”⁶⁹ This theory is negated, however, by the fact that du Barry and Rohan-Chabot were lovers.

⁶⁴ Vatel, *Histoire de Madame Du Barry*, Vol. 3, 140.

⁶⁵ Saint Victor, *Madame du Barry, un nom de scandale*, 256.

⁶⁶ Huas *Madame du Barry*, 295.

⁶⁷ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 77.

⁶⁸ Fouquier-Tinville. See Appendix F.2. See Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 299; Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 204; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 294.

⁶⁹ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 295.

Excluding the most likely possibility that she loaned the money to help support the war in the Vendée, any other reason could only have been to support her lover, the Duke de Rohan-Chabot.

In the cross-examination of the Vandenyvers, the father, Jean-Baptiste, admitted that he had furnished du Barry with the aforementioned lines of credit, albeit limited to 500 to 1000 *livres* sterling for each trip.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the father could not explain the two sums of 200,000 *livres*; he released both, but du Barry claims that she only knew of one. The interrogators showed him a letter that he had written to du Barry recognizing that this sum was for the Bishop of Rouen; he was awaiting only her certification to release the funds, which he did at a later date.⁷¹ The Vandenyvers and du Barry were unable to correlate their testimonies. It is possible that the money that was transferred—the two sums of 200,000 *livres*—was not even Madame du Barry's money, but that she was acting only as a conduit for the funds. This explained why she had to borrow money from Forth instead of using this account to fund her sudden voyage back to France when she heard the devastating news of the sealing of Louveciennes.⁷²

Jean-Baptiste Vandenyver had to answer as to why he continued to fund du Barry in London even though the law strictly forbade aid to *émigrés*. He said that “[they] constantly funded all her dispenses that she charged them with paying, including her last trip, having nothing in our hands opposing this.”⁷³ His argument was that he had not broken the law because he had not received express knowledge that du Barry was, in fact, an *émigré*. In addition, Jean-Baptiste Vandenyver, the father, claims that it was not he,

⁷⁰ Interrogation of Vandenyver, Father. See Appendix D.2.

⁷¹ Interrogation of Vandenyver, Father. See Appendix D.2. See Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 227; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 287.

⁷² Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 186.

⁷³ Interrogation of Vandenyver, Father. See Appendix D.2.

but one of his sons, who sent the letter authorizing du Barry with the unlimited line of credit. He knew about this because of a letter he received from them.⁷⁴ This claim is supported in a letter from Edme-Jean-Baptiste and Antoine-Auguste, the Vandenyver brothers, to Philippe Simond and John Hankey, their correspondents at Pierre Thélluson's Bank in London. They wrote, "We pray you also furnish to Madame du Barry all the money that she might ask of you...."⁷⁵ This documented communication proved, at least, that Jeanne and the Vandenyvers were moving large sums of money to support the counter-revolution. Not only did this show Jeanne's guilt against the charges of conspiracy against the Revolution and aiding the *émigrés*, this letter proved the Vandenyvers' participation in the scheming against the Revolution. During the Reign of Terror, aristocrats were executed for merely being noble.⁷⁶ Madame du Barry and the Vandenyvers left a paper trail of their involvement.

Nobody had a chance during the Terror; all were guilty upon arrest. Du Barry and the Vandenyvers were no exception. The Revolutionary Tribunal affirmed that du Barry and the Vandenyvers had been in contact with "enemies of the state," of "traveling abroad to provide money and intelligence to said enemies."⁷⁷ Because of this contact, they were all convicted of being the "planners and the accomplices of these machinations and intelligences," and they were "condemned to death."⁷⁸

On the day of her scheduled execution, 8 December 1793, Madame du Barry, desperate to live, made one final attempt to wrestle her life from the grips of the

⁷⁴ Interrogation of Vandenyver, Father. See Appendix D.2.

⁷⁵ Vandenyver Brothers and Company to P. Simond and J. Hankey, quoted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961). See Appendix A.4.

⁷⁶ Hibbert, *The Days of the French Revolution*, 223-29.

⁷⁷ Sentence for Madame du Barry and the Vandenyvers, quoted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1961). See Appendix G.3.

⁷⁸ Sentence for Madame du Barry and the Vandenyvers. See Appendix G.3.

Revolutionary Tribunal, the executioner, and the guillotine. At the Conciergerie, du Barry met with François-Joseph Denizot, the judge of the Revolutionary Tribunal; Claude Royer, filling in for the public prosecutor; Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, a governmental clerk; and Citizen [Balthazar Constance] Dangé, Chief of Police. Through the course of the meeting, du Barry, in eleven revelations, listed her hidden treasures that remained buried around the grounds of Louveciennes. “In the location where the gardening tools are stored, in front of the cooler, are found buried the following: ...one tea service set made of gold...a large coffee service set....” From the second revelation, “In a wastebasket buried in the same location...1,501 *louis d’or* of 25 *livres* each; one diamond necklace...three rings, one with white diamonds, one with rubies and white diamonds, one with an emerald and white diamonds...one picture of Louis XV set in a golden box.”⁷⁹ For each confession, she recalled the exact location and the exact contents, to the most miniscule of details, of every item buried or hidden around Louveciennes. Jeanne was willing to give up all that she had acquired in order to save her life.

What is most important and most suspicious about this Ultimate Declaration is the last section immediately preceding the signatures.

Having read the declarations here above, said here to contain the truth and that she has not one other thing to declare; adding that if it would be the pleasure of the Revolutionary Tribunal, she will write to London, and without any difficulty, will recover the objects related to the theft, by paying the fees related to the trial.⁸⁰

As the jewels were already ruled hers, on 22 February 1793, they could have been released to her. At that moment, she only had to pay the fees and rewards. Now, in her last moment, she admitted that she was able to recover them at will.⁸¹ She chose to leave

⁷⁹ Ultimate Declaration of Madame du Barry. See Appendix G.4.

⁸⁰ Ultimate Declaration of Madame du Barry. See Appendix G.4.

⁸¹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 266.

them in London and return to France. Then, she admitted to the Tribunal that she could access them and have them returned. In a desperate attempt to save her life, she inadvertently admitted guilt to a plan that, in all actuality, had been very close to succeeding.

The final declaration of Madame du Barry was never given to any member of the Committee of General Security as she intended. Instead, after making this declaration, she was immediately transported to the guillotine.⁸² With death eminent, Jeanne was desperate. To save her life, the former Royal Mistress was willing to part with all of her possessions. Her attempt was futile and only served to further her guilt as declared by the Revolutionary Tribunal. She had admitted to hiding her possessions from the French government with the intention of removing her wealth from France. Jeanne was unable to bargain for her life.

⁸² Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 205; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 300.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The End of an Era

Jeanne Bécu started her life as the illegitimate child of Anne Bécu, a woman of little merit. Her father was most likely Jean-Baptiste Gomard de Vaubernier, better known as Frère Ange. She received her education at Sainte-Aure, a youth convent. According to Jeanine Huas, the goal of this community was “the education of the young girls, formed by Christian piety.”¹ Sainte-Aure was a strict community, but nothing remains of the type or style of education as “they [documents] were without a doubt burned during the course of the Revolution.”² After a short time as a lady in waiting to Madame de la Garde, a hairdresser, she then relocated to the *parc-aux-cerfs*, where she worked as a lady of the evening. She rose to the highest level of prominence as the *maîtresse-en-titre* of Louis XV. During this reign, she amassed a jewel collection to rival any other private collection. In addition to this, she squandered the state’s resources on said jewels as well as clothing, artwork, and renovations to apartments and properties, especially at Versailles and at Louveciennes.

Her life changed drastically after the death of Louis XV. She was temporarily ordered to return to a convent, the *Pont-aux-dames*, which was a prison-type residence.³ After du Barry returned to the crown’s favor, Louis XVI reinstated her possession of Louveciennes as well as the manorial dues and rents she could collect. However, she was not allowed to live at Louveciennes as it was too close, within ten leagues, to Versailles.

¹ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 20.

² Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 20-21.

³ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 119.

In the interim, she resided at Saint-Vrain, a small *château*, but she lived in freedom. In October 1776, Louis XVI granted Madame du Barry her full freedom, due to her “discrete conduct” and “absolute submission to the orders of His Majesty”—she thus returned to Louveciennes.⁴

As a result of events during the French Revolution, most notably the night of 4 August 1789, Jeanne became desperate to protect that which she had spent her entire life acquiring.⁵ The most pressing matter was her wealth, and the taxes that she had to pay thereupon. Initially, she needed to concoct a scheme that would, at least on paper, reduce her wealth.⁶ In order to complete this task, du Barry decided to create a fake jewel theft, with Nathaniel Parker Forth, so that she could both reduce her income by claiming that her assets were missing but at the same time retain possession of her most precious jewelry by already having removed them from Louveciennes.⁷

During her four journeys to London, under the guise of recovering her jewelry, she maintained close contact with the French *émigrés* living in the city, such as Charles-Alexandre, the Count of Calonne; Louis August le Tonnelier, the Baron de Breteuil; Antoine François Bertrand de Molleville; Thomas Louis César Lambert, the Marquis de Frondeville; and Charles, the Count de Rohan-Soubise, as well as members of the British aristocracy, such as William Douglas, the Duke of Queensbury. She frequented their residences and hosted them at hers for dinners and gaming. She aided aristocrats who sought to escape France during the Terror, notably the Duchess d’Aiguillon, and she even

⁴ Levron, *Madame du Barry*, 119-20.

⁵ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 228.

⁶ Saint-André, *A King’s favourite*, 252.

⁷ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 223.

conspired with the foreign enemy against the Revolution.⁸ Her relations with Forth and Pitt were evidence to the fact that she was working closely with the British. She was able to transfer money and information, all of which aided the cause of stopping the Revolution and restoring the Bourbons to power.

Furthermore, Jeanne supplied two separate sums of 200,000 *livres*, one to the Duke de Rohan-Chabot, her lover at the time, to support the uprising in the Vendée; and the other to the Bishop of Rouen to help support the clergy who were living in London as they had not taken the oath to the constitution to make themselves civil clergy.⁹ She was unable, in her interrogation, to successfully defend these transactions.¹⁰ To add to her guilt, Jean-Baptiste Vandenyver, her banker, admitted to releasing the sums on her order. She was an active supporter of the counter-revolution and could not hide this fact.

After her execution on 8 December 1793, the state confiscated her possessions that remained in France, including her *château* at Louveciennes. The total estimated value of Madame du Barry's assets that the state confiscated was approximately 1,000,000 *livres* at that time.¹¹ The French government did not gain access to the jewelry that remained in the bank in London. The British court ordered that it be auctioned to settle her remaining accounts.¹² James Christie of Christie's Auction House in Pall Mall auctioned the remainder of the jewels at Ransom, Morland, and Hammers on Thursday 19 February 1795 at 12:30 pm.¹³ The majority of the purchasers were London jewelers.¹⁴

⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 248.

⁹ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 266.

¹⁰ Interrogation of Madame du Barry. See Appendix D.1.

¹¹ Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, 243-44

¹² Ward, *Forth*, 159.

¹³ Christie's Auction House, 1795, *A Catalogue of a most Capital and superb Assemblage of Valuable Jewels, Of most singular Excellence, Beauty, and Perfection, Late the Property of Madame la Comtesse Dubarry, Deceased*, Catalogue, Christie's Archives, Christie's Auction House, London. See Appendix H.2. See Michel Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, (Fribourg, Switzerland: Tallandier, 1988).

At this auction, Nathaniel Jeffreys bought a total of 10,000 £ of her jewelry, including: 900 £ for a square-cut stone; as well as four solitaire diamonds; nine stones totaling 365 £; two dropped diamonds for 140 £, and one group of twenty-three diamonds for 248 £. Other purchasers bought jewelry as follows: one ensemble of diamonds for 1763 £ 15 s 6 d; one group of 212 pearls for 216 £ 14 s, as well as various others.¹⁵ The total amount gained from the auction was 13,412 £ 9 s 3 d (approximately 178,832 *livres* 16 *sous* 8 *deniers*).¹⁶

History has yet to decide whether or not this was the same jewelry that was stolen, and if so, how much of the jewelry recovered could be matched to the original list of stolen jewels. Aside from a few pieces, it was impossible to positively identify any of the remaining jewelry as that which had been stolen. However, to make the theft appear real, Jeanne had to sacrifice some of her high-caliber treasure so that it could be recognized. Forth purchased “a gold étui case enameled in green”—it was one of the few pieces that could be affirmatively linked back to her, and it was his personal memento of the scheme that cost the life of his friend du Barry, brought his name to prominence, and, quite possibly secured his fortune and well being for the future.¹⁷ Most likely, she hid her “stolen” jewelry with Forth, as he was her friend, partner, and confidant. As she allowed him, effectively, to manage her estate during the French Revolution, a level of trust existed between the two. If she did leave her jewelry hidden with him, it most likely went to his residence in London, leaving France through the border with the Austrian Netherlands and then being taken to London via Amsterdam. Marion Ward explains, in

¹⁴ Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 152-53.

¹⁵ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 72-73.

¹⁶ One British pound equals twenty-five French *livres*. Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 77-78; Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 153.

¹⁷ Ward, *The DuBarry Inheritance*, 153.

Forth, how during the course of the Revolution, “anyone with valuables of any kind was anxious to move them out of the country at once.” Because of the anxiety, some Frenchmen were attempting to move their possessions. Ward notes that “[i]n one convent near Lille, on the border between France and the Austrian Netherlands, Forth saw more than £350,000 in sterling and gold packed into casks ready to be moved at once.”¹⁸ Forth, a clever businessman, saw from this a way to smuggle. Therefore, to take Madame du Barry’s jewelry in the same manner supported the idea that he was guarding her treasure. Furthermore, the jewelry that she reported missing in *2000 louis à gagner* could not have been left in her possession; she was planning to report it stolen and therefore had to conceal it elsewhere. Also, because of the importance of her jewelry, it is unlikely that she allowed her most expensive jewelry to disappear. Therefore, she had to hide the best jewelry while sacrificing some lesser jewelry in order to make the plan seem legitimate while also securing her wealth—the most important issue of the theft.

Offering a counterclaim to the idea that she hid her jewelry is Henri Welschinger, who in *Les Bijoux de Mme Du Barry* argues that “the diamonds had been sold immediately after the conclusion of the trial.”¹⁹ His claim insinuated that Madame du Barry acquired and immediately sold her jewelry. Such a claim supported the argument that she was an *émigré*, as she had no reason to return to London the fourth time. Welschinger argues that du Barry willingly chose to use the jewels as a pretense to emigrate from France. Goncourt confirms this theory, as he stated that “she would have gladly moved to England had she been able to get all of her goods and belongings out of

¹⁸ Ward, *Forth*, 124

¹⁹ Welschinger, *Les Bijoux de Mme Du Barry*, 82.

France.”²⁰ Remaining in London until the time was appropriate, she planned to return in order to gather the rest of her possessions, but the sealing of Louveciennes foiled her plan.²¹

According to Beurdeley, the proceeds from the auction were not sufficient enough to cover all of the claims against her estate. The low price gained at Christie’s auction, in comparison the approximated 1.5 to 2 million *livres* worth of jewelry that she reported stolen in the pamphlet, suggested that these were not the same jewels.²² Furthermore, with the majority of her jewelry unaccounted for, it became more likely that Forth did have possession of her jewels.

However, another possibility exists as to where du Barry hid her jewelry. Given her intimate relationship with the Duke de Brissac, perhaps they were with the Duchess de Mortemart, his daughter, as the two ladies were good friends.²³ Assuming this to be true provided a motive for du Barry to maintain the friendship with Mortemart after the death of Brissac. Furthermore, this allowed the possibility of the legend of the Irish priest attempting to rescue du Barry, who in turn saved the Duchess de Mortemart.²⁴ If the duchess had du Barry’s jewelry, then it was imperative that the duchess live.

However, as argued above, it was most likely that Forth had already taken her jewelry to London for concealment. As he had her possessions at the time of her death, he maintained possession thereafter. He moved them for her through Amsterdam to his London property. Castelot quotes Greive as saying, “Found at her house was a massive

²⁰ Goncourt, *Madame du Barry*, 255-56.

²¹ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 259.

²² Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 77-78; Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 240.

²³ Huas, *Madame du Barry*, 291.

²⁴ Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, 200.

amount of things ready to go to the Netherlands.”²⁵ Forth already had possession of these jewels throughout the entirety of the event. Jeanne’s immediate plan, after regaining Louveciennes, was to begin preparing for a move the remainder of her wealth. She did not plan to remain in France; returning to her new home in London with her treasure was the highest priority.

A second possibility is that the jewels under sequester, once ruled to be du Barry’s property during the third voyage, were used as collateral; this provided sound reasoning for the Vandenyvers to give her an unlimited line of credit, as all she had to do at that moment was pay the reward.²⁶ However, this does not take into account the fact that the jewelry in sequester did not equal the amount of money that the Vandenyvers fronted her. Because of this discrepancy, it is more likely that she was using this account as a cover to move money to fund the counter-revolution—this was not her money.

Another theory, held by Haslip, is that du Barry had access to the jewels and was selling them as needed to fund her routine expenses as well as shopping and other expenses while in London. Haslip’s claim offered a reason as to why the total of the jewelry at auction was so low.²⁷ Due to her need for money, withdrawing jewelry with such a frequency might have alerted those around her. It is highly unlikely that she was able to do this in a routine manner without catching notice of the company around her and without leaving a paper trail or any sort of evidence to support this claim. Blache, who was specifically assigned to follow her during his surveillance of the *émigrés*,

²⁵ Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, 283.

²⁶ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 260.

²⁷ Haslip, *Madame du Barry*, 166.

observed her every move. Blache then reported all of du Barry's actions to Greive and the Revolutionary Tribunal.²⁸

Further supporting the claim that the Vandenyvers were using du Barry to move money that was not hers was the fact that the amount earned from the auction was much less than anticipated. The jewelry in the bank could not have covered the amount of money moved through the account that the Vandenyvers authorized for du Barry. From the proceeds of the auction, nobody with a claim on the estate was reimbursed in full what they were owed. Rose Bertin, dressmaker to the royal family, received 499 £ 9 s 10 d; the firm of Daguerre and Ligneraux was given 36 £ 11 s; Jean Jacques Gallet, the Marquis de Mondragon, received 1874 £ 11 s 5 d plus interest of 609 £ 3 d; and Paul Henri Barbara, the Marquis de Boissésou, was awarded 1428 £ 4 s 1 d plus interest of 535 £ 8 s 1 d.²⁹

Furthermore, in 1829, the French reopened an investigation into the 1791 jewel theft. They pressed the issue in London, and a letter from the French Consul in England revealed that:

A trial of this sort could not have taken place in England at that time (allowing that the theft had been committed in France) and the jurisdiction of English law was limited to crimes committed on the soil of Great Britain. Therefore if there was no prosecution of the alleged thieves, there could have been neither sequester nor deposit of the diamonds.³⁰

From this letter, it is evident that the jewels that du Barry had in the bank were left there of her own accord. This supports the claim that she was selling her jewels in London as

²⁸ Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 233.

²⁹ Beurdeley, *Trois siècles de ventes publiques*, 77; Ward, *Forth*, 159.

³⁰ French Consul in England to the High Court at Versailles, 24 July 1829, quoted in Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*. See Appendix D.4.

needed.³¹ Or, she could have removed the majority of them after she arrived in London; this would have allowed her to leave a small amount in the bank to serve as evidence that she was still dispossessed of her jewelry. Further supporting this claim was the idea that she never allowed much of her wealth to disappear. Moreover, she was able to hide her jewelry in London as she pleased. This, however, does not mean that the jewels on deposit were the same jewels reported stolen.

Du Barry in Context

Du Barry was the example *par excellence* of the extravagance of royal spending, including the finest jewelry, books for her library, stipends for friends and family, and her regular monthly spending.³² What went missing was just a portion of her wealth, but during the Revolution this sufficed to incite hate. Despite her bad reputation, she did not cause the Revolution. However, Madame du Barry symbolized all that was wrong with the *Ancien régime*. She represented the waste of Versailles in the form of spending and the failure of Bourbon absolutism, as a commoner from Vaucouleurs was able to obtain all that she desired at the expense of the French people. To add insult to injury to the starving French population, du Barry had the audacity—or the naivety—to enact this theft when the population had the most hatred for the nobility. She planned her hoax well at the micro level, but she failed to consider the macro level of the Revolution, and how it directly affected her life. She was unaware that the changing political tide in Paris was going to prevent her from successfully executing her plan.

³¹ Loomis, *Du Barry: A Biography*, 259.

³² Castries, *Madame du Barry*, 135-38.

Perhaps the most curious piece of evidence that exists is Forth's declaration to the French officials about the theft. It contains nothing new to the narrative of the story, but it changes its conclusion. It is in this statement that Forth told French officials how the theft happened, he explained to them what Harris admitted in London, and he provided the most intricate details.³³ Forth was Jeanne's translator and agent. Considering this, one must question the existence of the theft. It is quite possible that the thieves never appeared at Louveciennes. When Badoux, the Swiss Guard, left to go meet who was presumably Harris or Levet just weeks before the robbery, Badoux could have given the jewels to him at this moment and saved the effort of the night.

Regardless, because of du Barry's need to reduce her taxable wealth, she employed Forth to plan and enact with her a scheme to reduce her assets. At her behest, Forth rigged the entire situation! He convinced du Barry to partake in the scheme, knowing that the jewels were going to become entangled in the British legal process. This drove down her estate's value as a majority of her most valuable jewels were missing. Again, it is quite possible that she still had the best jewels and she only sacrificed the lesser jewels with very few distinctive markings to make sure that certain ones were recognizable. At the auction in London, Forth bought one of the few things he knew to actually be hers from the theft. Furthermore, after the plan was enacted, it was he who kept the jewelry entangled in London. If his sole mission was to cause counter-revolutionary discord, he succeeded, as he was there to encourage du Barry to continue aiding the *émigrés* and to continue acting as a smuggler of wealth, persons, and information. Her determination and his encouragement led to a tragic end. Madame du

³³ Declaration of Nathaniel Parker Forth. Quoted in Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*. See Appendix G.1.

Barry did not survive the Revolution, nor did the entirety of her jewel collection. Her malfeasance cost her both her fortune and her life.

Appendix A: Letters and Correspondence

Appendix A.1: Letters from Madame du Barry

Reprinted in:

Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 185-86

To Lebrun

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire et mes passeports. Je suis sensiblement touchée des soins que vous vous êtes donnés pour les faire viser. Mais, comme il n'est pas fait mention dans votre lettre, ni dans mon passeport, de mon voyage à Londres, où mon malheureux procès nécessite ma présence, je craindrais d'éprouver des difficultés pour mon passage. Et d'ailleurs ma municipalité, ne me voyant pas autorisée à voyager en pays étranger, pourrait me regarder comme ayant émigré et mettre les scellés chez moi. J'ose donc espérer, Monsieur, de votre obligeance et du désir que vous m'avez témoigné de m'être utile, que vous voudrez bien m'éclairer là-dessus. Je crois qu'un mot de votre main pourrait lever toutes les difficultés et m'éviterait les désagréments que je pourrais essuyer.

Je vous prie, Monsieur, d'être persuadé de la vive reconnaissance avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être votre très humble et très obéissante servante.

Du Barry, Louveciennes, ce 2 octobre

Reprinted in:

Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, p. 185

To the Municipality of Louveciennes 1792

Depuis que j'ai le bonheur de vivre sous vos yeux, vous avez bien voulu, messieurs, reconnaître qu'en toute occasion j'avais donné des gages de mon civisme et de mon respect pour les lois ; je me flatte que par le même esprit de justice, vous voudriez bien recevoir la présente déclaration par laquelle je ne presse point en Angleterre pour abandonner ma patrie et ma résidence ordinaire, mais que je suis forcée de me rendre à Londres pour y terminer un procès duquel dépend le recouvrement des effets précieux que vous savez qui m'ont été volés et qui composent la principale partie de ma fortune ainsi que le seul gage qu'aient mes créanciers. Je déclare en même temps que je prends l'engagement le plus formel de rentrer en France aussitôt que mon procès sera terminé.

Reprinted in:
Jeanine Huas, *Madame du Barry*, p. 300-01

To the Administrators of the District of Versailles
27 March 1793

Citoyens administrateurs,

La citoyenne de Vaubernier du Barry est très étonnée qu'après toutes les preuves qu'elle vous a fournies des raisons qui l'ont forcée d'aller en Angleterre vous l'avez traitée comme émigré. Avant son départ, elle vous a communiqué la déclaration qu'elle a faite à sa municipalité, vous l'avez enregistrée dans vos bureaux. Vous savez que c'est le quatrième voyage qu'elle est obligée de faire, toujours pour le même motif. Elle espère que vous voudriez bien faire lever les scellés qui ont été apposés chez elle, contre toute justice, puisque la loi n'a jamais défendu de sortir du royaume à ceux que des affaires particulières et pressantes appellent en pays étranger. Toute la France est instruite du vol qui lui a été fait dans la nuit du 10 au 11 janvier 1791, que ses voleurs ont été arrêtés à Londres, qu'elle y a eu une procédure suivie dont le dernier jugement n'a été rendu que le 28 février, ainsi que l'atteste le certificat ci-joint....

Reprinted in:
Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 220

To Henriette, a *femme de chambre*
Between 22 September and 2 October 1793

Donnez-moi des nouvelles de ceux qui sont restés, si on a mis les scellés partout chez moi, si les habitants ont fait une pétition pour me réclamer. Qu'elle me monte un bonnet de linon, qu'elle m'envoie de mes chemises, des mouchoirs et des fichus, et tout ce qu'elle pourra envoyer, et que la femme de charge m'envoie une douzaine de serviettes d'office, et aussi des serviettes pour la toilette, des draps de lit.

Henriette verra le juge de paix de Marly, pour qu'il fasse faire mon certificat de résidence. Il faudra me l'envoyer pour que je le signe et je le renverrai pour qu'on le fasse signer aux neuf témoins. Si elle n'a pas le temps de me monter un bonnet blanc, qu'elle en envoie un de couleur, et des détails de ce qui se passe dans la maison, si elle est bien gardée.

Henriette parlera de moi aux habitants qui s'y intéressent, leur dira que je me porte assez bien.

Reprinted in:
André Castelot, *Madame du Barry*, p. 294

To Fouquier-Tinville 19 November 1793

Citoyen Accusateur public

J'espère que tu voudras bien, dans l'examen impartial que tu feras de l'affaire malheureuse que Greive et consorts m'ont suscitée au tribunal, ne voir en moi que la victime d'une intrigue pour me perdre.

Je n'ai jamais émigré, je n'en ai même jamais eu l'intention. L'emploi que j'ai fait des 200 000 livres qu'Escoure a placées pour moi chez le citoyen Rohan doit le prouver jusqu'à l'évidence aux yeux les plus prévenus.

Je n'ai jamais fourni d'argent aux émigrés, je n'ai jamais entretenu de correspondance criminelle avec eux ; et, si les circonstances m'ont engagée à voir, soit à Londres, soit en France, ou des personnes de la Cour ou des personnes qui ne marchaient pas dans le sens de la Révolution, j'espère bien, citoyen Accusateur public, que tu sauras, dans la justice et l'équité de ton cœur, apprécier les circonstances où je me suis toujours trouvée et mes liaisons connues et forcées avec le citoyen Brissac, dont la correspondance est sous vos yeux.

Je compte sur ta justice ; tu peux compter sur la reconnaissance éternelle de ta concitoyenne.

Vaubernier Dubarry

Appendix A.2: Letters to Madame du Barry

Reprinted in:

Agnes Stoeckl, *Mistress of Versailles: the Life of Madame du Barry*, p. 118-19

From Mr. Dupin 14 July 1789

Madame la Comtesse,

A few days ago I learned that a pamphlet was being printed concerning you. By bribing a young man of the Press with a small sum of money, I managed to obtain the first pages of this pamphlet, which I am enclosing. The whole thing seems to be a tissue of lies, but it is apparent that the author intends to distribute these leaflets to all members of the Assemblée, with a view to cancelling your income and returning it to the State. In this moment of lunacy such a happening could suffice to drive the populace to commit crimes which are horrifying.

Mr. Dupin
Hôtel Lamoureux, Rue Verte, Paris

Reprinted in:

Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 185

From Lebrun 21 September 1792

An IV de la Liberté et de l'Égalité.

J'ai l'honneur de vous prévenir, Madame, que vos passeports viennent enfin de me revenir de la municipalité, visés et parfaitement en règle. Je vous prie de vouloir bien envoyer une personne de confiance pour les prendre. J'ai cru qu'il était nécessaire de prendre cette précaution pour éviter qu'ils ne tombassent en d'autres mains. Je suis bien fâché des retards que vous avez éprouvés, mais vous devez être convaincue qu'ils ne proviennent pas de mon fait.

Le Ministre des Affaires étrangères
Lebrun

Reprinted in:
Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 193-94

From Nathaniel Parker Forth 3 February 1793

Madame,

J'ai remis à M. Sleigh les 300 livres que vous m'avez envoyées et il m'a dit alors que lord Kenyon a fixé le 14 du courant pour le jugement de votre procès. M. Sleigh m'a encore confirmé que la présence de Roüen, comme témoin, ne peut que vous nuire et que, par conséquent, nous ne l'appellerons pas, surtout comme Sleigh a reçu une lettre de M. Trochereau qui donne de bonnes raisons pourquoi Roüen lui a dit à plusieurs reprises qu'il ne pourrait pas se trouver à Londres.

Si Roüen arrive, faites quelque prétexte pour ne pas le recevoir et dites-lui d'aller me parler (en même temps il ne faut pas l'offusquer). Je me charge de lui parler, car selon ce que M. Trouchereau me marque, il est capable de tout.

En tout temps et en toutes occasions, je vous prie de compter sur le zèle et l'attachement, Madame, de votre dévoué serviteur.

N. Parker Forth
Ce dimanche 3 février

Reprinted in:
Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 212-14

From the Duke de Rohan-Chabot
7 September 1793

Je vous envoie, ma chère et tendre amie, le tableau que vous avez désiré; triste et funeste présent, mais que je sens autant que vous-même que vous avez dû désirer. Dans une telle situation que la nôtre, avec de si grands sujets de peines et de malheurs, c'est un aliment à notre mélancolie que nous cherchons et qui nous convient au-delà de tout.

J'ai envoyé chercher les trois portraits de vous qui étaient chez lui; ils sont ici j'ai gardé un des petits c'est l'original de celui qui est habillé avec une chemise ou peignoir blanc, et coiffé d'un chapeau avec une plume. Le second est une copie de celui-là dont la tête est finie, mais l'habillement n'est que esquissé; ils ne sont encadrés ni l'un ni l'autre. Le grand de Mme Le Brun est délicieux, d'une ressemblance ravissante, il est parlant et d'un agrément infini, mais vraiment j'aurais cru trop indiscret de le choisir, et celui que je garde est si agréable, si ressemblant et si piquant, que j'en suis extrêmement content et transporté du bonheur de le posséder.

Celui commencé par Letellier n'est que crayonné et la tête n'est à peine qu'une ébauche qui pourra devenir ressemblante. Je l'ai fait reporter chez le peintre. Quant à votre grand portrait et à la copie de celui que je garde, dites-moi, chère amie, si vous voulez que je vous les envoie, ou si je dois les faire reporter où ils étaient, enfin quelle destination voulez-vous en faire. Je ne désire plus qu'en avoir un que je puisse porter sur moi et qui ne me quitte jamais.

Venez donc, cher amour, passer deux jours ici; venez dîner chez moi avec qui vous choisirez; donnez-moi quelques instants de bonheur; il n'en est plus qu'avec vous; répondez-moi sur tout ce que je vous demande, venez voir un amant qui vous aime au-delà de tout, par-dessus tout jusqu'au dernier moment de sa vie. Je baise mille fois la plus charmante des femmes qu'il y ait au monde et dont le cœur si noble et si bon mérite un attachement éternel.

Appendix A.3. Louis-Phillipe-Joseph d'Orléans to Nathaniel Parker Forth

Reprinted in:

Orléans, Louis Philippe Joseph, and Amédée Britsch. *Lettres de L.-P.-J. d'Orléans, duc de Chartres à Nathaniel Parker Forth (1778-1785)*, p. 5,8

A Paris, ce 16 mai 1780,

J'espère que vous avez déjà reçu, Monsieur, tous mes remerciements de la charmante petite créature que vous m'avez envoyée. J'espère que j'en aurai bientôt d'autres à vous faire, car je désirerais bien que vous pussiez faire obtenir un passeport à Jean Singleton que j'ai envoyé en Angleterre me chercher quatre juments de course pour qu'il pût revenir aussitôt qu'il les aura achetées et par Calais, sur un bâtiment parlementaire. Si cela était possible, j'en aurai facilement un de notre Cour. Si vous pouvez me le faire avoir de la vôtre, je vous en serai bien obligé

Vous pourrez peut-être fort facilement me faire gagner un pari dont il a été fort question aujourd'hui à dîner et qui n'a pas été terminé. On a pris pour juge le Club de Newmarket....

A Paris, ce 12 février [1782],

Je serai certainement charmé, Monsieur, de vous voir à Paris. Je n'ai dans ce moment-ci rien à vous demander d'Angleterre. Je vous serai seulement bien obligé si vous pouvez me rapporter, le *Dessin de la plus grande gravure* parce que je voudrais y changer une des figures, l'une de mes filles étant morte et ne désirant par conséquent plus avoir son portrait, je voudrais voir s'il est possible de mettre autre chose à la place. Si cela ne se peut pas, je vous prierai de dire que j'y renonce absolument

Je suis bien fâché de n'avoir dans aucune de mes maisons un appartement à vous proposer, j'espère que vous vous logerez près du Palais-Royal et que je vous verrai souvent. Vous pouvez être sûr que je ne parlerai point de votre arrivée. Je vous prie, Monsieur, d'être persuadé du plaisir que j'aurai à vous voir et à vous être utile dans ce pays-ci.

Appendix A.4: Various Letters

Reprinted in:
Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, p. 71

Marie-Antoinette to Maria-Theresa 1770

Madame, ma très chère mère,

Le roi a mille bontés pour moi et je l'aime tendrement ; mais c'est faire pitié la faiblesse qu'il a pour Mme du Barry qui est la plus sotté et la plus impertinente créature qu'il soit imaginable. Elle a joué tous les soirs avec nous à Marly ; elle s'est trouvée deux fois à côté de moi, mais elle ne m'a point parlé et je n'ai point tâché justement de lier conversation avec elle ; mais, quand il le fallait, je lui ai pourtant parlé.

Reprinted in:
Claude Saint-André, *A King's favourite, Madame du Barry, and her time from hitherto unpublished documents*, p. 259-60

Letter sent to Louis XVI from the secretary of Marquis de la Luzerne, French
Ambassador to London 8 June 1789

The recent tumults in France are looked on with approval here, and further insurrection is hoped for. The Sieur Forth, who has already been in France, at the opening of the States-General, and who spent a fortnight in London, disappeared a few days ago, and is said to be in the country. England does not set much store by a few thousand pounds sterling for bribing an incendiary or so, by indirect means. If there are any people of that description in France and Monsieur Forth is there too, he is certainly concerned in the intrigue. He always takes these subordinate parts, and is all the more to be feared because he does not lack ability.

Reprinted in:
Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 148

Vandenyver Brothers and Company to P. Simond and J. Hankey
2 April 1791

Messieurs, la présente vous sera remise par Madame la Comtesse du Barry qui va partir pour votre ville pour suivre une affaire dont la notoriété publique vous a sans doute instruits. Nous vous prions très instamment, Messieurs, de lui rendre tous les services et bons offices qui dépendront de vous ; nous les regarderons comme reçus par nous-mêmes et vous en aurons la plus grande obligation.

Nous vous prions aussi de fournir à Madame la Comtesse du Barry tout l'argent qu'elle pourra vous demander sur ses reconnaissances, pour notre compte et de vous en prévaloir sur nous par appoint.

Nous avons l'honneur d'être avec considération, vos très humble serviteurs: Vandenyver frères et Compagnie.”

Reprinted in:
Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, p. 178

Duc de Brissac, Final Will 11 August 1792

Je donne et lègue à Mme du Barry, de Louveciennes, outre et par-dessus ce que je lui dois, une rente annuelle et viagère de 24 000 livres, quitte et exempte de toute retenue, ou bien l'usufruit et jouissance pendant sa vie de ma terre de la Rambaudière et la Graffinière, en Poitou, et des meubles qui en dépendent, ou bien une somme de 300 000 livres une fois payée en argent, le tout à son choix. Je la prie d'accepter de faible gage de mes sentiments et de ma reconnaissance, dont je lui suis d'autant plus redevable que j'ai été la cause involontaire de la perte de ses diamants. Je prie ma fille de le lui faire accepter, ma volonté étant qu'aucun de mes autres legs ne soit délivré avant que celui-ci ne soit entièrement accompli.

Ecrit et signé de ma main, à Orléans, ce 11 août 1792 Louis-Hercule-Timoléon de Cossé-Brissac

Reprinted in:
Stanley Loomis, *DuBarry: A Biography*, p. 259

Letter sent to the High Court at Versailles from the French Consul in England
24 July 1829

I answer your letter respecting the theft of Madame du Barry's diamonds. The heirs of this lady have been concerning themselves with this matter for some time, contending that the thieves were arrested in London where they were tried and that the jewelry had been sold and the proceeds from the sale had been deposited either with Ranson, the Bank of England or the Chancellery. I am very much surprised that their claim has no other basis than the alleged trial of the thieves in London and the sequester of her jewelry which was the consequence of this trial. A trial of this sort could not have taken place in England at that time (allowing that the theft had been committed in France) and the jurisdiction of English law was limited to crimes committed on the soil of Great Britain. Therefore if there was no prosecution of the alleged thieves, there could have been neither sequester nor deposit of the diamonds.

Appendix B: Birth Certificates

Reprinted in:
Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, p. 13

Original Birth Certificate

Le dix-neuvième d'août mil sept cent quarante-trois est née et a été baptisée le même jour Jeanne, fille naturelle d'Anne Bécu dite Cantigny, et a eu pour parrain Joseph Demange et pour marraine Jeanne Birabin qui ont signé avec nous.

signé L. Gahon, vicaire de Vaucouleurs, Joseph Demange, Jeanne Birabin

Birth Certificate for Marriage to Guillaume du Barry

Jeanne, fille de Jean-Jacques Gomard de Vaubernier et Anne Bécu, est née le dix-neuf août mil-sept-cent-quarante-six, a été baptisée le même jour et a eu pour parrain Joseph de Mange et pour marraine Jeanne de Birabin.

Appendix C: Passports

Appendix C.1: Leaving France 3 April 1791

Reprinted in:
Edmond Goncourt, *Madame du Barry*, p 243

IN THE KING’S NAME.

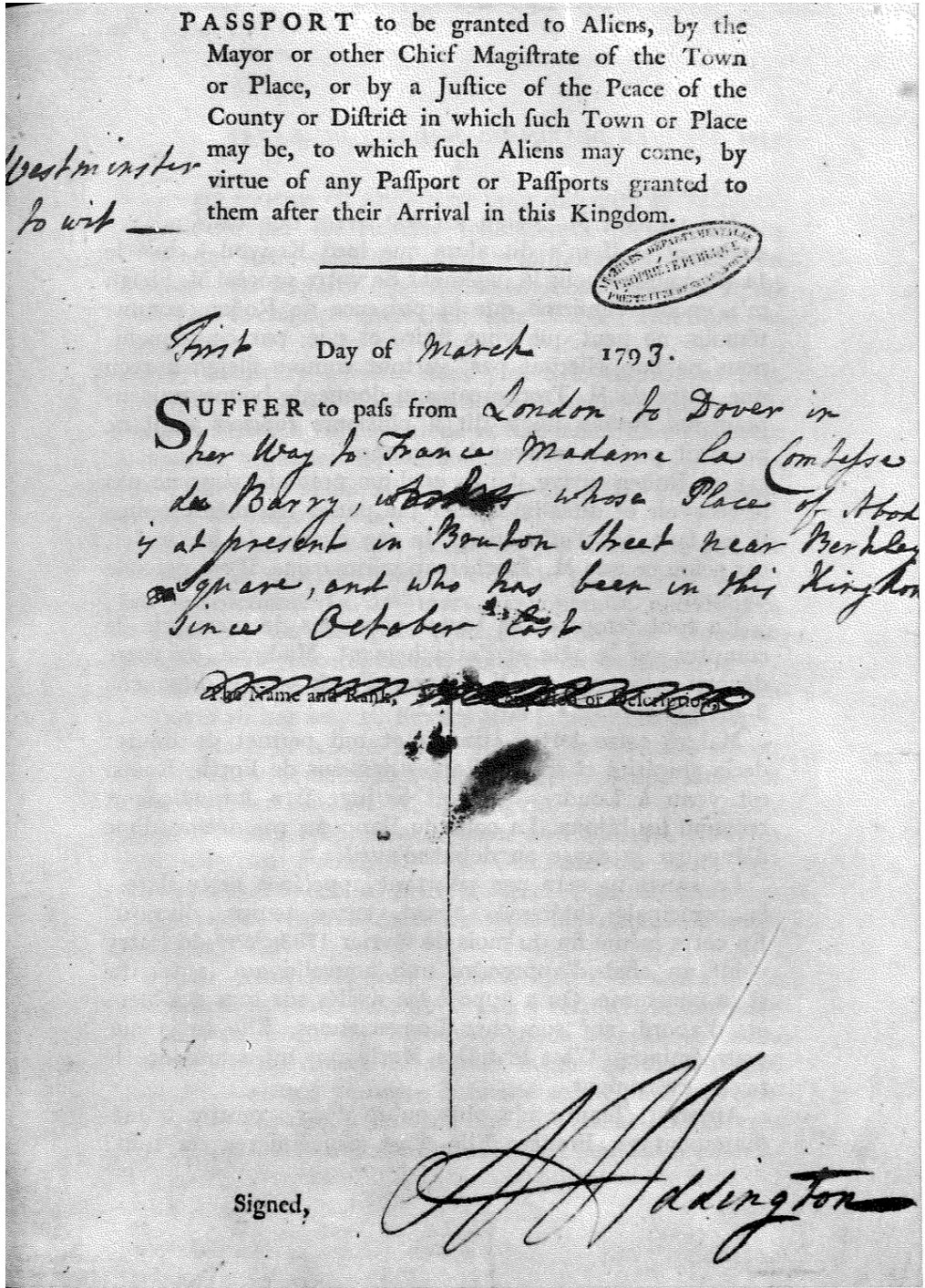
To all officers, civil and military, charged with watching over and maintaining public order in the different departments of the Kingdom and to all others whom it may concern: Greeting. We command you and order that you have to let pass freely the Dame du Barry going to London with the S. d’Escours, Knight of S., Rouen, jeweler, two women and a valet and two couriers. Without placing or allowing to be placed in her way any obstacle, the present passport to be valid only for three months.

LOUIS

Given at Paris, April 3rd, 1791

Appendix C.2: Leaving London 1 March 1793

Reprinted in:
Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 192



Appendix C.3: Returning to France 17 March 1793

Reprinted in:

Charles Vatel, *Histoire de madame du Barry*, p. 189

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Au nom de la loi

Département du Pas-de-Calais, district et municipalité de Calais.

(N. 4829.)

Laissez passer la citoyenne Devaubergnier Dubarri, Française, domiciliée à Louveciennes, municipalité de Louveciennes, district de Versailles, département de Seine-et-Oise.

Agée de quarante ans.

Taille de cinq pieds un pouce.

Cheveux blond (*sic*)

Sourcils châtain.

Yeux bleux (*sic*).

Nez bien fait.

Bouche moyenne.

Menton rond.

Front ordinaire.

Visage ovale et plein.

Et prêtez-lui aide et assistance, etc....

Délivré en la maison commune de Calais, le 17 mars 1793. L'an IIe de la République, et ont signés (*sic*) Reisenhal, officier municipal, Tellier;

Roullier, secrétaire commis greffier, qui a signé pour le présent et Devaubergnier Dubarri.”

Appendix D: Interrogations

Appendix D.1: Interrogation of Madame du Barry
30 October 1793

Reprinted in:
Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, p. 221-28

Du 99 du 2e mois de l'an II de la République française une et indivisible.

Les représentants du peuple, membres du Comité de Sûreté générale, en vertu des pouvoirs à eux délégués par le Comité ce jour d'hier se sont rendus dans la maison d'arrêt de Sainte-Pélagie où étant et ayant fait comparaître par devant eux la nommée Dubarry, lui ont fait subir l'interrogatoire suivant :

D- Comment vous appelez-vous ?

R- Jeanne Vaubernier Dubarry, âgée de 42 ans, demeurant habituellement à Luciennes dans une maison qui appartient tant à moi qu'à la nation.

D- Avez-vous fait à Londres divers voyages ?

R- J'en ai fait quatre.

D- Quels étaient les motifs de ces différents voyages et à quelle époque les avez-vous faits ?

R- C'est pour un vol de diamants et autres effets qui m'a été fait dans la nuit du 10 au 11 janvier 1791. Mon premier voyage a eu lieu le 17 février suivant, le second le 4 avril de la même année, le troisième dans la courant du mois de juin suivant et le quatrième en octobre de l'année 1792.

D- Avec qui avez-vous fait la route de Paris à Londres dans vos divers voyages ?

R- Le premier avec M. Escourt et une femme de chambre, deux laquais, un valet de chambre et le nommé Rouen, joaillier à Paris ; le second avec les mêmes personnes, le troisième de même à l'exception du jardinier qui ne s'y est rendu que durant l'intervalle du séjour et le quatrième avec un valet de chambre, une femme de chambre et un laquais.

D- A qui avez-vous durant votre voyage laissé dans votre demeure la conduite de vos affaires ?

R- Mes affaires qui n'étaient que domestiques ont été confiées à un valet de chambre nommé Morin.

D- Par qui receviez-vous à Londres l'argent dont vous pouviez avoir besoin pour l'entretien et la conduite de votre procès ?

R- Par le citoyen Vandenyver, banquier à Paris, rue Vivienne, qui m'avait donné une lettre de crédit sur Thélusson, banquier à Londres, et c'est dans mon dernier voyage que j'ai fait usage de cette lettre de crédit.

D- Votre procès est-il jugé ?

R- Mon procès a été jugé le 27 février de la dernière année qui était le dernier jour du terme.

D- Dans les derniers voyages que vous avez faits à Londres avez-vous pris des passeports ?

R- Oui.

D- De qui avez-vous pris le dernier ?

R- De la municipalité de Louveciennes, visé par le département de Seine-et-Oise. J'avais obtenu les autres de la municipalité de Paris et du ministre des Affaires étrangères Montmorin.

D- Avez-vous, dans votre dernier voyage, réclamé du ministre des Affaires étrangères un passeport ?

R- Oui, mais il me l'a refusé. Alors je me suis adressée à ma municipalité ainsi que M. Lebrun me l'avait indiqué et je n'en ai obtenu un passeport qui a été visé par le directoire de Versailles et le département de Seine-et-Oise et je suis partie avec ce seul passeport.

D- Le temps que vous deviez passer à Londres n'était-il pas limité dans votre passeport ?

R_ Le temps n'était pas limité et ne pouvait pas l'être raisonnablement puisqu'il s'agissait d'un procès.

D- Pendant le temps que vous étiez à Londres, il est émané de la Convention nationale divers décrets qui obligeaient tous les Français sortis de la République depuis une certaine époque d'y rentrer sous peine d'être réputés émigrés et d'être traités comme tels. En avez-vous eu connaissance ?

R- J'ai eu connaissance des décrets mais je n'ai pas cru qu'ils puissent me regarder, étant sortie pour une cause connue et avec un passeport.

D- Des personnes qui s'intéressaient à vous vous ont écrit pour vous engager à rentrer en France afin d'éviter la peine que vous pouviez encourir, vu les derniers décrets rendus contre les personnes qui étaient lors de la République. Pourquoi avoir négligé ces avis ?

R- Je ne me rappelle pas d'avoir reçu aucune lettre contenant un pareil avis; si j'en eusse reçu, j'y aurai déféré.

A l'instant nous avons exhibé une lettre par laquelle le citoyen Vandenyver écrivait le 19 novembre 1792 à la répondante pour la prévenir que <<les décrets de la Convention nationale étaient très fulminants contre ce qu'il appelle les sujets absents que l'on qualifiait d'émigrés>>. La répondante en reconnaissant la présente lettre a excipé de la phrase suivante :

<<Cependant je pense que vous ne pouvez pas être regardée comme telle, attendu les passeports dont vous êtes munie et qu'il est notoire que le voyage n'a pas d'autre but que le procès qui est connu généralement.>>

Sur cette phrase la répondante a fondé le motif qui l'a déterminée à prolonger son séjour à Londres jusqu'à la fin du jugement de son procès qui a été jugé le 27 février étant partie de Londres le 2 mars.

Et de suite nous avons paraphé la dite lettre avec la répondante qui a signé avec nous.

D- Pendant votre séjour à Londres la guerre a été déclarée entre la République française et le roi de Grande-Bretagne. Comment dans cette circonstance n'avez-vous pas quitté le territoire ennemi ?

R- Que la guerre a été déclarée peu de temps avant son départ et que son procès était à la veille d'être terminé, elle a prolongé son séjour afin de s'épargner un nouveau voyage pour le jugement de son procès.

D- Pendant que vous étiez à Londres ne s'est-il présenté de votre part au commencement de cette année un particulier chez un banquier qui avait un dépôt d'argent considérable qui vous appartenait ? Ce particulier n'a-t-il pas annoncé au banquier que votre intention était de prêter une somme de 200 000 livres qui serait hypothéquée sur des biens-fonds ?

R- J'ai effectivement chargé M. Encours de se rendre chez M. Vandenyver pour y prendre les 200 000 livres que j'avais chez ce banquier pour les remettre autant qu'il m'en souviendrait à mon notaire afin de les prêter à M. Rohan-Chabot qui avait des offices à rembourser sur ses terres.

D- N'avez-vous pas chargé ce même Encours de retirer chez Vandenyver une pareille somme de 200 000 livres qui a été réellement retirée, déposée chez un notaire pour être prêtée à toute autre personne que Rohan-Chabot ?

R- Non, c'est la même somme.

D- N'avez-vous pas prêté, à la même époque, par l'intermédiaire de Vandenyver, une somme de 200 000 livres à l'évêque de Rouen ?

R- Non, ce ne peut être que celle prêtée à Rohan-Chabot et je persiste à dire que c'est à cette seule personne que j'ai prêté 200 000 livres.

Et de suite, nous avons présenté à la répondante une lettre à elle écrite, pendant son séjour à Londres en date du 27 janvier 1793 par Vandenyver où on lit ce qui suit :

<<C'est dans ces circonstances qu'un citoyen est venu nous dire que votre intention était que vous lui fourniriez une somme de 200 000 livres pour les prêter à l'évêque de Rouen par des biens-fonds et qu'il faudrait les payer cette semaine.

Nous lui avons répondu que cette somme était prête ; mais qu'il était nécessaire que vous nous autorisiez et donniez ordre positif par une lettre de faire ce paiement pour votre compte et qu'en attendant, si cela était nécessaire, nous déposerions ces 200 000 livres chez le notaire de M. l'Evêque.>>

La répondante après avoir lu et relu cette lettre ci-dessus a persisté à soutenir qu'elle ne connaît rien à cet article de la lettre et qu'elle n'a prêté une somme de 200 000 livres qu'à Rohan-Chabot.

Et de suite nous avons paraphé la dite lettre avec la répondante qui a signé avec nous.

D- Avez-vous connu le général Custine ?

R- Je l'ai connu comme toutes les personnes qui allaient à la Cour lorsque j'y étais, mais je ne l'ai pas connu particulièrement, je ne crois pas même lui avoir parlé.

D- Connaissez-vous le fils du général Custine ?

R- Je ne le connais pas plus que le père.

A l'instant nous lui avons représenté les copies de deux lettres écrites par Custine en date des 13 et 24 février 1793 à Berlin. Et nous avons demandé à la répondante comment il se faisait que ces deux pièces se soient trouvées parmi les papiers.

R- J'étais logée dans l'hôtel de Brissac avant l'époque du mois de juin dernier ; en écrivant un jour sur un bureau, j'emportai par mégarde ces deux lettres dont j'ignore le contenu et m'en étant aperçue en rentrant chez moi, je les ai mises dans un secrétaire sans en avoir jamais pris lecture.

Ensuite nous les avons paraphées avec la répondante qui a signé avec nous.

D- Quelle est la personne qui vous a écrit le 13 du mois de mai dernier cette lettre signée RRR ?

R- C'est la ci-devant princesse Rohan-Rohan-Rochefort.

D- Quel est le particulier qu'elle vous a mené et qu'elle vous annonce sous le nom de *coadjuteur en habit, déchu de ses espérances chimériques* ou qui le sont devenues du moins *de par la nation et qui, comme dit Clémentine, nous dénichent* ?

R- C'est son fils Jules qui était ou devrait être coadjuteur de Strasbourg.

D- L'avez-vous vu ?

R- Oui.

D- De qui est la lettre qui vous a été écrite de la Meillerie le 9 avril 1793 ?

R- Cette lettre est de la marquise de Mortemart qui écrit de la Meillerie, terre appartenant à sa mère.

D- Quelle est cette amie à laquelle vous avez fait passer de la part de la ci-devant marquise de Mortemart ce billet ?

R- C'est la belle-sœur de madame de Mortemart qui porte le même nom et qui était à Londres et que je crois depuis le mois de novembre à Calais sous le nom de Mortimer.

D- Quel est cet ami dont il est parlé dans la lettre qui a été chargée par celle qui l'a écrite de vous faire des remerciements ?

R- Je n'ai point vu d'ami.

D- De qui est cette lettre qui vous est adressée en date du 5 juin ?

R- Elle est de madame de Mortemart qui me l'a écrite d'Aix-la-Chapelle.

D- Quel est ce monsieur dont le nom est en blanc ?

R- C'est le mari de Mme de Mortemart.

D- Quel est le nom qui est effacé au verso de la même lettre ? Est-ce vous qui l'avez effacé et pourquoi ?

R- J'ignore quel est ce nom et ce n'est pas moi qui l'ai effacé.

D- Quelle est cette personne sûre à Paris par qui cette lettre vous est parvenue ?
Comment lui avait-elle été adressée pour vous la remettre ?

R- J'ignore par quelle voie elle est parvenue.

Et de suite la dite lettre a été par nous paraphée avec la répondante qui a signé avec nous.

D- Qui est la personne qui vous a écrit une lettre datée de dimanche matin ?

R- C'est une princesse polonaise, nommée Lubormirska qui me l'a écrite à ce que je crois, dans le courant d'avril de la présente année, de Paris.

D- Y a-t-il longtemps qu'elle est en France ? Et savez-vous dans quel lieu elle se trouve en ce moment ?

R- J'ignore depuis quelle époque et le lieu qu'elle habite actuellement.

D- L'avez-vous vue chez vous et dans quel temps ?

R- Je l'ai vue plusieurs fois d'abord en 1789 et ensuite en juin de la présente année. Je crois qu'elle reste du côté de Chaillot, elle logeait autrefois dans le palais Salm.

D- Quelle explication pouvez-vous donner sur le sens de cette lettre ?

R- Je ne puis vous en donner aucune, attendu que ce n'est pas moi qui l'ai écrite. Si je l'avais écrite, je vous expliquerais le sens dans lequel je l'aurais fait.

D- De qui est la lettre datée du Val, ce dimanche 28 août ?

R- Elle est du maréchal de Beauvau. Je la crois de très ancienne date, c'est à dire de 1791.

D- Quel est cet Anglais dont il est fait mention dans la lettre ? Qui pouvait faire passer des lettres ?

R- C'est le nommé Forth qui avait découvert le vol de mes diamants et m'avait ramenée en France le 25 août 1793.

Et de suite nous avons paraphé ladite lettre avec la répondante qui a signé avec nous.

D- Qui vous a écrit à la date du 3 avril ?

R- C'est M. Dangerviller, directeur des Bâtiments du Roi, qui me l'a écrite en 1791.

D- A qui était destinée la lettre qui vous priait de vous charger en vous disant : il n'y a point d'adresse mais Mme la Comtesse sait à qui elle doit la remettre ?

R- Cette lettre était pour Mme de Calonne à qui elle n'a point été remise parce que j'ai oublié.

Et de suite nous avons paraphé ladite lettre avec la répondante qui a signé avec nous.

D- Dans les divers voyages que vous avez faits à Londres, avez-vous eu des rapports particuliers avec les émigrés français que se trouvaient dans cette ville ?

R- J'ai vu quelques Français qui étaient à Londres et que j'avais connus. Il m'était difficile de leur fermer ma porte.

D- Quels sont ceux que vous avez vus plus particulièrement ?

R- M. de Crussol, M. de Poix, M. de Cahouet, M. de Calonne. Je n'ai vu ce dernier que le jour de mon arrivée, attendu qu'il est parti le lendemain. Je voyais également les femmes de ces MM. ainsi que M. d'Aiguillon que j'ai vu une seule fois. Je fréquentais plus particulièrement les Anglais.

D- Avez-vous donné ou fait donner de l'argent aux émigrés réfugiés à Londres ?

R- Je ne leur ai fait donner aucun argent ; mais il m'était dû par une Anglaise 134 guinées depuis mon second voyage à Londres et durant le dernier voyage que j'y fait, j'ai chargé Mme de Crussol de s'en faire payer si elle pouvait et elle m'a donné un reçu de cinquante louis attendu que la totalité de la somme était destinée pour deux personnes.

D- Quelle est cette autre personne ?

R- C'est l'évêque de Lambéz qui était à Londres où je crois qu'il a été déporté. J'ajoute que mon intention a toujours été d'être remboursée.

D- Quel est le nom de cet évêque ?

R- Blor de Chavigny.

D- Comment était stipulé le reçu qui vous a été fait par Mme de Crussol de cinquante louis ?

R- Je ne me rappelle pas. J'ai perdu le reçu ; je ne sais pas où je puis l'avoir mis.

D- Donnez-nous l'explication d'un compte tenu par vous et d'après lequel vous avez distribué beaucoup de guinées à diverses personnes à Londres, telles que les nommés Pauline, Henriette, Fortuné, M. Melines et Frondeville.

R- La nommée Pauline est Mme de Mortemart, la nommée Henriette est ma femme de chambre, le nommé Fortuné est anglais. Frondeville est le président du Parlement de Rouen. Les sommes que j'ai comptées à Mme de Mortemart étaient pour des effets dont j'avais besoin ; celles distribuées à Henriette, ma femme de chambre, avaient le même objet ; Melines qui était chargé de la poursuite de mon procès avait fait des avances que j'avais dû rembourser ; les nommés Fortuné et Frondeville étaient chargés de jouer pour mon compte ; je leur ai attribué à l'un 22 guinées et à l'autre 25 qui m'ont été rendues.

D- Avez-vous vu en France le nommé Frondeville ?

R- Je l'ai vu une seule fois, ayant été amené chez moi par M. Lavopalière et c'était dans le temps de l'Assemblée constituant dont Frondeville était membre.

D- Connaissez-vous un abbé nommé La Roche ?

R- Je connais un abbé Fontenilles qui est venu plusieurs fois chez moi et qui y a fait, en différentes fois, plusieurs séjours, lui ayant donné un appartement séparé dans ma maison, en reconnaissance des soins que sa tante avait eus pour moi durant mon séjour au Pont-aux-Dames où j'avais été exilée. Mais je ne l'ai pas revu depuis le mois de septembre de l'année dernière, ignorant ce qu'il était devenu depuis cette époque.

De quoi nous avons dressé le présent procès-verbal que nous avons signé avec la nommée Dubarry, le dit procès-verbal contenant trois feuilles au bas desquelles nous avons signé : Dubarry, Jagot, Voulland.”

Appendix D.2: Interrogation of Jean-Baptiste Vandenyver, Father
1 November 1793

Reprinted in:
Charles Vatel, *Histoire de Madame du Barry*, p. 233-39

Convention Nationale. Comité De Sureté Générale.
Du 11 brumaire an II de la République.

Nous représentants du peuple, membres du Comité de sûreté générale, etc., en vertu des pouvoirs à nous délégués par ledit Comité, le jour d'hier, nous étant rendus dans la maison d'arrêt dite de La Force, nous avons fait appeler le nommé Vandenyver, auquel nous avons fait l'interrogatoire suivant:

D. Quel est votre nom, votre âge, votre demeure et votre profession ?

R. Je m'appelle J.-B. Vandenyver, âgé de soixante-six ans, demeurant à Paris, rue Vivienne, ci-devant négociant.

D. Connaissez-vous la nommée Dubarry et depuis quelle époque ?

R. Je la connais depuis environ trois ans.

D. Quelle espèce de relation avez-vous eu avec elle, et depuis quelle époque et à quelle occasion ?

R. Je l'ai connue comme je l'ai dit, depuis environ trois ans, sur la recommandation du citoyen Durvey, ci-devant receveur général de banque de la Cour, celui-ci, voulant se débarrasser des affaires de madame Dubarry, me pria de vouloir bien m'en charger.

D. Ayant fait connaissance depuis environ trois ou quatre ans de la Dubarry, ne lui avez-vous pas fourni ou fait fournir les fonds dont elle a pu avoir besoin dans les divers voyages qu'elle a fait à Londres ?

R. N'ayant pas voulu me charger de faire des avances à la citoyenne du Barry sans avoir par devant moi une sûreté réelle et légale, le citoyen Durvey m'offrit de me remettre et me remit en effet, autant que je puis me rappeler, 180 actions de la Caisse d'escompte pour nantissement par acte reçu par Duclos - Dufrenoy, notaire à Paris. Il fut stipulé dans l'acte que je pourrais vendre lesdites actions au fur et à mesure des avances que je serais dans le cas de faire. En conséquence, j'ai remis une lettre de crédit que je crois être de 500 livres au moins, de 1,000 livres sterlings au plus pour le premier voyage que la Dubarry a fait à Londres pour raison d'un vol de diamants qui lui avait été fait, et dont les auteurs s'étaient réfugiés à Londres où ils avoient été arrêtés, ne pouvant pas me rappeler l'époque de ce premier voyage que je ne puis fixer.

J'ai de plus remis à la Dubarry, dans le deuxième et le dernier voyage qu'elle a fait, une lettre de crédit de 500 livres sterling pour fournir aux frais de son procès qui n'a pas été jugé, attendu que la Dubarry a été obligé de partir précipitamment de Londres, sur la nouvelle qu'elle reçut que les scellés avoient été apposés dans sa maison à Lucienne, parce qu'on la réputait émigrée. Observant le répondant que s'il n'avait pas eu la connaissance parfaite qu'elle allait expressément à Londres pour son procès, il n'aurait jamais pris sur lui de lui donner aucune lettre de crédit, observant enfin le répondant que, quoiqu'il ait traité de vive voix et correspondu personnellement avec la du Barry, ce n'est pas lui qui a fait les affaires de comptabilité, mais bien la maison de commerce qu'il avait cédé à ses fils depuis trois ans.

D. Sur quelle maison de Londres avez-vous fourni les lettres de crédit dont vous venez de parler ?

R. Sur Pierre Thelusson et fils et Compagnie.

D. Vous venez de dire que si vous n'aviez pas eu connaissance que la Dubarry allait à Londres à la suite du procès qui était notoire vous ne lui auriez pas fourni les lettres de crédit dont il s'agit, je vous observe que la notoriété du procès et que vous deviez vous assurer si la du Barry était autorisée à faire le voyage de Londres et si elle était munie de passeports prescrits par la loi.

R. Je ne pense pas que je fusse obligé de m'assurer si la Dubarry avait les passeports prescrits par la loi; mais je me rappelle de lui en avoir parlé par manière de conversation, et qu'elle m'a répondu en avoir obtenu de Lebrun, ministre des affaires étrangères.

D. La Dubarry en vous parlant du passeport qu'elle disait avoir obtenu du ministre Lebrun vous a-t-elle dit que le temps qu'elle pouvait passer à Londres était limité par le passeport ?

R. Elle ne me l'a pas dit, il n'en a pas été question.

D. N'avez-vous pas écrit à la Dubarry pendant son dernier voyage à Londres pour l'informer des décrets émanés de la Convention nationale, contre les individus absents de la République ?

R. Je crois lui avoir écrit deux ou trois lettres durant son premier ou second voyage, il est possible que je lui aye parlé de ces décrets par forme d'avertissement. Mais je ne m'en rappelle pas n'ayant pas tenu copie de mes lettres pour certifier le fait.

Aussitôt nous avons représenté au répondant une lettre signée de lui, datée de Paris, 19 novembre 1792 qu'il a reconnu avoir écrite à la Dubarry et dans laquelle se trouvent ces notes.

« Les décrets de la Convention sont fulminants contre les « sujets absents qu'on qualifie tous d'émigrés, cependant « je pense que vous pouvez point être regardée comme « telle, attendu les passeports dont vous êtes munie et qu'il « est notoire que le motif du voyage n'a eu d'autre but que « le procès qui est généralement connu. »

Le répondant ayant pris lecture de ladite lettre, nous l'avons paraphé avec le répondant qui a signé avec nous.

D. Depuis cette lettre écrite, vous et votre maison de commerce avez-vous continué de fournir des fonds à la Dubarry ?

R. Nous avons constamment fourni à toutes les dépenses qu'elle nous a chargé de payer, surtout depuis son dernier retour, n'y ayant entre nos mains aucune opposition que de la part de quelques-uns de ses créanciers qui ont été acquittés par nous.

D. Depuis cette lettre écrite avez-vous envoyé des fonds à la Dubarry à Londres ?

R. Si son second voyage est depuis la lettre écrite, je conviens lui avoir remis pour ce fait une lettre de crédit, mais je ne me rappelle pas quelle somme.

D. Outre cette lettre de crédit, avez-vous fait passer à la Dubarry d'autres fonds à Londres ?

R. Mes fils ont écrit depuis l'époque de la lettre ci-dessus du 19 novembre 1792 à Thélusson, que si la Dubarry avait besoin de plus forte somme que celle de la lettre de crédit, il était autorisé de faire les avances à l'effet de pourvoir aux frais de son procès, mais quant à moi, je n'ai donné aucun ordre.

D. Savez-vous si en conséquence de la lettre écrite par vos fils, il a été payé des sommes avancées par Thélusson, au-dessus de la valeur de la lettre de crédit ?

R. Je sais qu'il a été fourni des fonds au-dessus de la lettre de crédit mais j'en ignore la quotité.

D. Comment avez-vous pu fournir des fonds à la Dubarry, ou laisser fournir par votre maison, après la lettre que vous lui aviez écrite le 19 novembre 1792 où vous lui parliez des décrets fulminants contre ce que vous appelés les sujets absents qu'on qualifie, dites-vous, tous d'émigrés ?

R. Je lui ai fourni des fonds, parce que je ne la regardais pas comme émigrée, et que je me suis servi de ces expressions que pour hâter son retour, ayant ouï

dire que les biens des émigrés seraient confisqués, et croyant avoir ouï dire que les scellés avaient été apposés dans sa maison.

D. Quelle réponse avez-vous reçu de la Dubarry à votre lettre du 17 novembre 1792 ?

R. Je ne me rappelle pas d'en avoir reçu aucune.

D. Avez-vous réglé vos comptes avec la Dubarry et les avez-vous apurés?

R. Le dernier compte courant lui a été fourni, à ce que je crois, dans le mois de juillet 1793, duquel il résulte que la Dubarry était créancière d'environ 30,000 livres, dont elle a disposé depuis cette époque, et même de 4,000 livres de plus dont mes fils sont créanciers ; lesquelles 4,000 livres ont été demandées par elle à l'effet de payer, à ce qu'elle a dit, ses impositions, dont elle devait m'en envoyer les quittances nécessaires à être produites au payeur de ses rentes, et je sais que ces 4,000 livres lui ont été comptées le jour même de son arrestation.

D. Connaissez-vous un nommé Descours ou Escours attaché à madame Dubarry, et quelle relation avez-vous eu avec lui ?

R. Je crois connaître un homme de ce nom pour avoir été peut-être chez moi, recevoir à la caisse de mes fils l'argent qu'il venait prendre par ordre de la Dubarry.

D. Dans le dernier voyage de la Dubarry à Londres, n'est-il pas venu chez vous un particulier de sa part vous prévenir que l'intention de cette femme était de placer une somme de 200,000 livres, ce particulier ne vous a-t-il pas assigné la personne chez laquelle ce placement devait avoir lieu ?

R. Je conviens qu'il est venu chez moi un particulier dont j'ignore le nom, pour m'informer que la Dubarry lui avait écrit de venir prendre à la caisse une somme de 200,000 livres pour être placés par privilège sur des biens-fonds qu'une de ses connaissances venait d'acquérir, que je lui répondis qu'une lettre écrite à lui par la Dubarry ne suffisait pas pour recevoir ce paiement et qu'il devait se procurer une lettre d'ordre *ad hoc* pour pouvoir lui faire ledit paiement, que quinze jours ou trois semaines après ce même particulier s'est présenté avec un billet d'ordre de la Dubarry, à la présentation duquel lesdites 200,000 livres lui ont été comptées, mais que ce particulier ne lui a point désigné la personne chez laquelle le placement devait avoir lieu.

D. N'avez-vous pas écrit à ce sujet à la Dubarry?

R. Je n'en suis pas sûr, mais il peut se faire que je lui ai écrit pour lui témoigner ma surprise de ce qu'elle ne m'avait pas écrit directement pour m'en

prévenir.

D. N'avez-vous pas déposé cette somme chez un notaire pour être à la disposition de la personne à qui elle était destinée?

R. Non, la somme ayant été comptée sur un mandat donné par mes fils à ce particulier, sur la Caisse d'escompte.

D. D'où provenaient ces 200,000 livres que vous aviez entre vos mains pour le compte de la Dubarry?

R. Elles provenaient de la vente de ses actions sur la Caisse d'escompte.

Aussitôt nous lui avons représenté une lettre signée de lui, écrite le 7 janvier 1793, à madame Dubarry à Londres où l'on lit ce qui suit :

« C'est dans ces circonstances qu'un citoyen est venu nous dire que votre intention était que nous lui fournîmes une somme de 200,000 livres pour les prêter à l'évêque de Rouen par hypothèque sur des biens-fonds et qu'il faudrait les payer cette semaine. Nous lui avons répondu que la somme était prête, mais qu'il était nécessaire que vous nous autorisiez et donniez un ordre positif par une lettre de faire ce paiement pour votre compte et qu'en attendant , si cela était nécessaire, nous déposerions les 200,000 francs chez le notaire de M. l'évêque. »

Le répondant ayant pris lecture de la lettre l'a avouée et reconnue pour être de lui, il a observé que dans des précédents interrogatoires il a dit qu'il croyait qu'il avait été question d'un évêque de Rouen, mais que ne se rappelant pas positivement du fait, il n'a pas voulu dans cette incertitude en faire sa déclaration dont nous voulions faire mention en disant que son incertitude était telle qu'il craignait de compromettre quelqu'un.

Et de suite nous avons paraphé ladite lettre que nous avons signée avec le répondant.

Depuis la lecture et parape de la lettre, le répondant nous observe que le même particulier lui dit que ces fonds dévoient être déposés chez un notaire et que c'était pour lui prouver que nous n'avions pas besoin de temps pour les procurer et que nous étions prêts à en faire le dépôt s'il était nécessaire.

D. Savez-vous quel était le nom de cet évêque de Rouen?

R. Je ne me souviens pas si le particulier me l'a nommé.

De tout quoi nous avons dressé le présent procès-verbal dont il a été donné lecture au citoyen Vandenyver lequel a déclaré que ses réponses contiennent vérité, y a persisté et signé avec nous, à quoi il s'est opposé, le renvoi approuvé avant les signatures.

Jagot, Vandenyver père, Voulland.

Appendix E: Arrest Warrant for Madame du Barry

From the *Comité de sûreté général*
21 September 1793

La femme nommée Dubarry, demeurant à Louveciennes, serait conduite à la maison de Sainte-Pélagie à Paris, pour y être détenue par mesure de sûreté générale, comme suspecte d'incivisme et d'aristocratie. Les scellés seront mis sur ses effets, perquisition sera faite de ses papiers ; ceux qui seront suspects seront apportés au Comité de sûreté générale. Commet pour l'exécution le citoyen Greive qui, au surplus, fera arrêter et conduire à Paris, pour être fermées, par mesure de sûreté générale, dans la maison de La Force, toutes les personnes qui se trouveraient à Louveciennes, chez ladite Dubarry, au moment de l'exécution du présent arrêté.

Appendix F: Trial Documents

Appendix F.1: Charges Against Madame du Barry
6 December 1793

Reprinted in:
René de La Croix, Duc de Castries, *Madame du Barry*, p. 263-64

1. Mme du Barry a joui d'une grande faveur auprès de la Couronne et, même après sa disgrâce, elle a été liée avec ceux qui sont les ennemis de la révolution.
2. Elle a continué ses liaisons avec eux depuis la révolution.
3. Elle a entretenu une correspondance avec les émigrés.
4. Elle a fourni de l'argent pour la contre-révolution.
5. Elle a toujours escompté la contre-révolution.
6. Elle a tenu des propos contre-révolutionnaires contre la révolution et contre Paris.
7. Elle a porté le deuil du tyran à Londres où elle n'a fréquenté que des émigrés et les ennemis de la France.
8. Elle a toujours détesté la révolution, propagé l'esprit contre-révolutionnaire, encouragé les détracteurs de la révolution et protégé les royalistes.
9. Elle a toujours favorisé les contre-révolutionnaires et persécuté les patriotes.
10. Elle a toujours favorisé les ennemis extérieurs.
11. Elle a dilapidé les trésors de l'État.
12. Elle a cherché à soustraire ces trésors en voyant l'attention politique éveillée sur le compte de son fait scandaleux de sa conduite contre-révolutionnaire.
13. Le vol mystérieux lui a servi de prétexte pour faire de fréquents voyages à Londres dont il paraît que les deux cours ont profité pour faire passer des renseignements sans être dans le cas d'émigration.
14. Elle a toujours été considérée come émigrée par le district.
15. Elle a tenu des allégations mensongères relatives à sa fortune

Appendix F.2: Fouquier-Tinville's Notes on Testimony

Reprinted in:

René de La Croix, Duc de Castries, *Madame du Barry*, p. 263-64

Greive: she bought the support of the locals at Louveciennes with her money; she conspired with Brissac against the revolution; the theft was fake so she could travel to London

Blache: she bought a house for Bouillé; shared information with Calonne; smuggled the duchesse d'Aiguillon out as her *femme de chambre*

Le chevalier d'Escourre: admitted to being the intermediary for the 200,000 *livres* from du Barry through the Vandenyvers to Rohan-Chabot

Salanave: Dubs smuggled the duchesse de Brancas to London

Zamor: states that the theft was planned from the beginning

Henriette Couture: Dubz burned numerous letters and other papers the night that Brissac's head was thrown through the window.

Nicolas Fournier: She took 6,000 *livres* sterling

Appendix G: Declarations

Appendix G.1: Declaration of Nathaniel Parker Forth to French Officials

Reprinted in:

Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 156-57

Harris—c'est le voleur qui avait avoué—ajouta que ce qui l'avait principalement rassuré, c'était l'assurance que lui avait donnée Levet (un des autres membres de la bande) que Madame du Barry coucherait ce soir-là à Paris où elle devait mener plusieurs de ses domestiques, fait que lui-même (Harris) avait vérifié à Paris, et de plus, que le soldat suisse chargé de faire la patrouille était gagné; qu'ils étaient convenus de deux coups de sifflet dont un de la part de lui Levet et l'autre de la part dudit nommé Badoux, que ce devait être le signal du moment où Badoux s'éloignerait de peur de les effaroucher ; qu'effectivement, ayant entendu les deux coups de sifflet, les voleurs sont entrés dans le jardin et, de là, dans le château, où ils sont restés jusqu'au moment où on les a avertis par deux autres coups de sifflet, signal convenu pour sortir de l'appartement...

Appendix G.2: Declaration of the Committee of General Safety

Reprinted in:

Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 210-11

9 August 1793

Le Comité

Délibérant sur la pétition présentée par la citoyenne du Barry à la Convention nationale, et renvoyée audit Comité pour y faire droit, par décret du 5 juillet dernier.

Vu les informations et procès-verbaux dressés tant par les commissaires du département de Seine-et-Oise que par ceux du district de Versailles en date du 1er, 7 et 13 juillet derniers.

Considérant qu'il résulte des dites informations et procès-verbaux qu'il n'y a aucun reproche fondé à faire ni contre la citoyenne du Barry, ni contre les personnes attachées à son service.

Qu'il y a plus de cinquante habitants de la commune de Louveciennes qui ont déposé en faveur de ladite du Barry.

Arrête que la citoyenne de Barry sera remise en liberté, ainsi que ses domestiques et gens à ses gages qui auraient pu être arrêtés, soit à Louveciennes ou dans l'étendue du département de Seine-et-Oise, suivant l'indication qui en sera faite par ladite citoyenne du Barry.

Le Comité arrête également que la citoyenne du Barry, ensemble ses propriétés, resteront sous la sauvegarde immédiate du département de Seine-et-Oise et sous la surveillance des officiers municipaux de Louveciennes, conformément aux lois qui protègent la sûreté des personnes et le respect dû aux propriétés

Appendix G.3: Sentence for Du Barry and the Vandenyvers

Reprinted in Jacques Levron, *Le destin de Madame du Barry*, p. 239

Attendu qu'il est constant qu'il a été pratiqué des machinations et entretenu des intelligences avec les ennemis de l'État et leurs agents, pour les engager à commettre des hostilités, leur indiquer et favoriser les moyens de les entreprendre et diriger contre la France, notamment en faisant à l'étranger, sous des prétextes préparés, divers voyages pour concerter ces plans hostiles avec ses ennemis, en leur fournissant à eux, ou à leurs agents, des secours en argent;

Que Jeanne Vaubernier, femme Du Barry, demeurant à Luciennes, ci-devant courtisane, est convaincue d'être l'un des auteurs ou complices de ces machinations et intelligences;

Que Jean-Baptiste Vandenyver, banquier hollandais, domicilié à Paris, Edme-Jean-Baptiste Vandenyver, banquier à Paris et Antoine-Augustin Vandenyver, banquier à Paris, sont convaincus d'être les complices de ces machinations et intelligences;

Oùï l'accusateur public en ses conclusions sur l'application de la loi;

Condamne ladite Jeanne Vaubernier, femme Du Barry, lesdits J.-B. Vandenyver, E.-J.-B. Vandenyver et A.-A. Vandenyver à la peine de mort.

Appendix G.4: Ultimate Declaration of Madame du Barry
8 December 1793

Reprinted in:
Christiane Gil, *La Comtesse du Barry*, p. 229

Cejourd'hui 18 frimaire, l'an second de la République française, une et indivisible, dix heures du matin ; sur ce qui nous a été annoncé que Jeanne Vaubernier, femme du Barry, avait des déclarations importantes à faire ;

Nous, François-Joseph Denisot, juge au tribunal révolutionnaire ; assisté de Claude Royer, substitut de l'accusateur public près ledit tribunal, et de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, commis greffier, nous nous sommes transportés en la maison de justice de la Conciergerie, où nous avons trouvé le citoyen Dangé, administrateur de police, et la dite Jeanne Vaubernier, femme du Barry, laquelle nous a dit:

1e Que dans l'endroit où l'on resserre les instruments du jardinage, en face de sa glacière, à Luciennes, se trouve enterré un nécessaire d'or, composé d'un plateau de porcelaine, monté en or un théière en or, une bouilloire, un réchaud à l'esprit-de-vin, un pot au lait, une grande cafetière, une écuelle sous couvert et son assiette, trois petites cuillères, une petite passoire à théière, cent jetons à ses armes et au chiffres D. B. ; le tout d'or et d'un travail très précieux ; observant que les manches des dits sont en jaspe sanguin et montés en or.

2e Dans une boîte en corbeille enterrée dans le même endroit, quinze cent trente et un louis d'or de vingt-quatre livres chaque ; une chaîne de diamants avec ses deux glands et la clef montée à jour ; deux chaînes d'oreille, composée chacune de neuf ou dix pierres, celles de devant fort grosses ; trois anneaux, un de diamants blancs, un en rubis et **and** diamants blancs, un en émeraude et diamants blancs ; une très belle pierre gravée, montée avec chaînes d'or pour collier ; deux colliers de corail, dont l'un monté en or ; un collier de perles fines ; des chaînes d'oreille aussi en perles fines ; un collier de perles d'or et deux ou trois chaînes d'or pour cou; un portrait de Louis XV entouré d'un cadre d'or.

3e Dans une petite boîte de sapin, remise à l'épouse de nommé Déliant, frotteur, demeurant à Luciennes, une montre à répétition enrichie de diamants ; un petit paquet de quatorze or seize diamants de 5 à 6 grains chaque ; un paquet de petits rubis ; deux petits diamants plats, pour monter en bagues ; un autre portrait de Louis XV, dans un laboratoire, monté et plaqué en or ; un petit enfant en forme de tirelire, en or émaillé bleu ; seize demi-guinées neuves et deux guinées enveloppées dans du papier ; une paire d'éperons d'or avec des chiffres appartenant à feu M. de Brissac ; une petite boîte de carton renfermée dans celle ci-dessus, dans laquelle est une chaîne en émeraude en diamants, dont un grand pesant 30 grains ; les glands de laquelle chaîne se trouvent dans la boîte énoncée au deuxième article ; observant que dans l'article deuxième ou troisième il se trouve un crayon d'or enrichi de diamants ; une boîte pareillement remise à la femme

Déliant, rendant un moutardier d'or, un petit plateau et deux gobelets d'or, et plusieurs autres objets qui ne reviennent pas à sa mémoire ; deux caves remplies de flacons de cristal de roche, dont l'une lui appartient et l'autre à feu Brissac ; lesdits flacons garnis en or ; un autre gobelet de cristal avec un couvercle d'or, appartenant audit feu Brissac ; une petite écuelle de vermeil avec son plateau.

4e Un coffre de velours bleu garni en argent doré, placé sous un escalier, dans une chambre formant garde-robe, à côté de celle qu'elle occupait, dans lequel coffre il y a une douzaine de couverts d'or armoriés, quatre cuillères à sucre, deux cuillères à olives, une cuillère à punch, le tout d'or ; un étui renfermant douze cuillères à café en or, plusieurs portraits de femmes ; deux cachets d'or, dont un de bureau et un petit ; trois médailles représentant le pont de Neuilly, la seconde l'Ecole de chirurgie et la troisième l'Hôtel des Monnaies ; deux autres médailles représentant les mariages des ci-devant princes, aussi en or : une très grande médaille d'or appartenant au feu Brissac et quelques autres effets qu'elle ne peut désigner ; plus deux poignards turcs montés en rubis et autres pierres.

5e Dans la chambre à côté de celle à coucher, servant de passage, dans la commode, une paire de boucles en or, garnies de perles, une petite boîte d'or unie ; une boîte d'écaïlle blonde montée en or, avec le portrait d'une religieuse ; un bouchon de glaçon d'or émaillé en bleu, avec un gros diamant.

6e Dans une commode, dans la chambre à coucher, un pot à eau et sa cuvette de cristal de roche garnie en or ; deux coupes de jaspe sanguin montées en or ; un bracelet antique monté en or, composé de différentes pierres ; un gobelet de cristal de roche et caranges et le plateau, le tout monté en or ; vingt et une ou vingt-deux bagues de différentes pierres gravées, montées en or ; une boîte montée en cage d'or, avec le portrait de l'épouse de Brissac ; un portrait de la fille de ce dernier, monté en or ; un autre de son frère ; une boîte d'écaïlle blonde montée en or, avec une très belle pierre blanche gravée, où est le portrait de Brissac et de la déclarante ; une boîte en jaspe montée en or, émaillée ; une autre boîte de nacre et de perles, montée en or ; un portrait en émail de la grand-mère de Brissac ; deux tasses d'or avec leurs manches de corail et quelques autres objets appartenant à Brissac.

7e Dans la cave à usage ordinaire, sous l'escalier, un grand seau, neuf douzaines et sept assiettes, dix-huit flambeaux, dont trois à deux branches ; une douzaine de casseroles ; une grande et une petite marmite, le tout en argent ; dix-neuf grandes cloches d'argent ; soixante-quatre plats aussi d'argent, et autres objets d'argenterie dont l'état est chez elle.

8e Plusieurs figures de différentes espèces et en bronze une partie doit être dans un des bosquets près le pavillon ; une autre au-dessus du pavillon ; le tout légèrement couvert de terre.

9e Dans le jardin de Morin, valet de chambre, se trouvent cachés onze sacs de 1240 double louis rapportés de Londres à son dernier voyage ; une boîte d'écaïlle montée en or, sur laquelle est le portrait de Marie-Antoinette fait par Sauvage, dans laquelle se

trouvent une médaille d'or et quelques autres objets qui sont à la connaissance de Morin, qui a été chargé par elle de cacher tous lesdits objets contenus dans le présent article.

10e Observe qu'elle a en dépôt chez Morlan, A. Moncelet et Randon et compagnie, banquiers à Palmers, à Londres, tous les articles relatifs au vol, excepté ceux soulignés en marge et portés en l'imprimé de la récompense promise pour la découverte du vol en général, lequel a été paraphé per elle et par nous, ainsi que par le citoyen Dangé.

11e Qu'elle a confié au citoyen Montrouy une seringue d'argent et trois canons aussi d'argent, une petite demi-lune pliante en or ; une bague nommée *atriades* ; un portrait de Brissac ; deux couteaux à ôter la poudre, à lames d'or, avec deux petits cercles de diamants et manches et un petit cachet d'or avec une émeraude ; observant qu'elle a reçu dudit Montrouy deux cents cinquante ou trois cents livres à titre de prêt, ainsi que le coucher dont elle a fait usage pendant sa détention jusqu'à ce jour.

Lecture faite des déclarations ci-dessus, a dit icelle contenir vérité et n'avoir autre chose à déclarer ; ajoutant que si c'est le bon plaisir du tribunal ; elle écrira à Londres, et que sans difficulté, elle recouvrera les objets concernant son vol, en payant toutefois les frais qu'a occasionnés le procès ; et a signé avec nous, Denisot, juge, Royer, substitut de l'accusateur public ; Jeanne Vaubernier du Barry ; Dangé, administrateur de police ; Tavernier, commis greffier.

Appendix H: Pamphlets and Catalogues

DEUX MILLE LOUIS
A. GAGNER,
DIAMANS ET BIJOUX
P E R D U S.

IL a été volé chez Madame DU BARY, au Château de Louvecienne, dit Lucienne, près Marly, dans la nuit du 10 au 11 Janvier 1791, les Diamans & Bijoux ci-après :

Une bague d'un brillant blanc, carré long, pesant environ 35 grains, montée en cage.

Une dite d'un brillant, pesant environ 50 grains.

Une dite d'un brillant, de 26 à 28 grains.

Une dite d'un saphir, carré long, avec un amour, gravé dessus, & deux brillans sur le corps.

Un baguier en roussette verte, renfermant 20 à 25 bagues, dont une d'une grosse émeraude pendeloque, montée à jour, pesant environ 36 grains, d'une belle couleur, mais très-jardineuse, ayant beaucoup de dessous; une d'une onix, représentant le portrait de Louis XIV, dont les cheveux & les moustaches sont en fardoine; une d'un César de deux couleurs; une d'une émeraude carré long, pesant environ 20 grains; une d'un brillant brun puce, pesant 14 à 16 grains; une d'un onix, représentant Bachus, &c.

S U R L E P A P I E R.

Un brillant blanc, pesant 29 grains.

gros brillant au bout, pesant environ 12 grains, tenant sur le tout par une visse.

Une paire de boutons de manches, d'une émeraude, d'un saphir, d'un diamant jaune & d'un rubis; le tout entouré de brillans de grosseur de pierres de 4 grains.

Un bouton d'un très-gros brillant, couleur de rose, pesant 36 à 40 grains, monté en bouton de colle.

Deux grandes bandes de cordon de montre, composé de 16 chaînons à trois pierres, dont une grande émeraude, & deux brillans de 3 & 4 grains, de chaque côté, & 3 autres petites bandes de deux chaînons chaque, pareils à ceux ci-dessus.

Une barette d'un très-gros brillant, caré-long, pesant environ 60 grains, avec trois grosses émeraudes dessous, pesant 8 à 10 grains, avec deux brillans aux deux côtés, pesant un grain chaque, montés à jour; il est à observer que cette barette n'est pas polie.

Une bague d'un brillant d'environ 26 grains, montée à jour, avec des brillans sur le corps.

Deux girandoles d'or, formant flambeaux, montées sur

Un dit, pesant 25 grains.
 Un dit, pesant 25 grains.
 Un dit, forme pendeloque, pesant 28 grains.
 Un dit, rond, pesant 23 grains.
 Un dit, *idem*, pesant 25 grains.
 Un dit, pesant 24 grains.
 Un dit, qualité inférieure, carré long, pesant 23 grains.
 Trois dit, *idem*, pesant chacun 23 grains 1/2.
 Un brillant en épingle, forme longue, pesant 30 grains.
 Un brillant, *idem*, forme losange, pesant 33 grains.
 Deux brillants très-beaux, en boutons d'oreilles, pesant chacun 50 grains.
 Deux bracelets ensemble, de 24 brillants, pesant environ 15 à 16 grains chaque.
 Une rose, montée à jour, de 528 brillants blancs, dont un gros au milieu, cristallin, pesant 24 grains environ.
 Un colier de 24 beaux brillants, montés en chatons à jour de 15 à 20 grains chaque.
 Huit parties de rubans en bouillons chacune, de 21 brillants à jour, chaque brillant pesant depuis quatre grains jusqu'à huit grains.
 Une paire de boucles de foulard, de 84 brillants, pesant 77 karats 1/4.
 Une croix de 16 gros brillants, pesant 8 à 10 grains chaque.
 64 chatons, pesant depuis 6 jusqu'à 10 grains.
 Une belle paire de girandoles, en gros brillants, de la valeur de 12000 livres.
 Une bourse à argent en soie bleue, avec ses coulans, ses glands & leurs franges, le tout en petits brillants, montés à jour.
 Un esclavage à double rang de perles, avec sa chute; le tout d'environ 200 perles, pesant 4 à 5 grains chaque.
 Un gros brillant au haut de la chute, pesant 25 à 26 grains, & au bas, un gland à franges & son nœud; le tout en brillants montés à jour.
 Une paire de bracelets de 6 rangs de perles, pesant 4 à 5 grains chaque; le fond du bracelet est une émeraude, surmontée d'un chiffre en diamants, formé en deux L pour l'un, & d'un D & B pour l'autre.
 Et deux cadénats de 4 brillants, pesant 8 à 10 grains.
 Un rang de 104 perles enfilées, pesant 4 à 5 grains chaque.
 Un portrait de Louis XV, peint par Massé, entouré d'une bordure d'or, à feuilles de laurier; ledit portrait de 5 à 6 pouces de haut.
 Un autre portrait de Louis XV, peint par le même, plus petit, dans un médaillon d'or.
 Une montre d'or, simple, de Romilly.
 Un étui d'or à curedent, émaillé en vert, avec un très-

deux futs de colonne d'or, émaillées en lapis, surmontées de deux tourterelles d'argent, des carquois & des flèches, faites par Durand.

Un étui d'or émaillé en vert, au bout duquel est une petite montre faite par Romilly, entourée de quatre cercles de diamants, & de l'autre des armoiries.

Deux autres étuis d'or, l'un émaillé en rubans bleus, & l'autre en émaux de couleurs & paysages.

17 diamants démontés de toutes formes, pesant depuis 25 jusqu'à 30 grains chacun, dont une pendeloque montée, pesant 36 grains.

Deux autres barrières de bracelets, détachées également de quatre diamants chacune, pesant le même poids ci-contre.

64 chatons dans un seul fil, formant colier, pesant 8

9 & 10 grains chacun en diamant, montés à jour.

Deux boucles d'oreilles de coques de perles, avec deux diamants au bout.

Un autre portrait de Louis XIV, de Petitot, un autre de feu MONSIEUR, tous les deux en émail, ainsi qu'un portrait de femme également de Petitot.

Une écritoire de vieux laque superue, enrichie d'or & formant nécessaire, tous les ustensiles en or.

Deux souvenirs, l'un en laque rouge, & l'autre en laque fond or, à figures, l'un monté en or & l'autre monté en or émaillé.

Deux petits flambeaux d'argent de toilette perlés & armoriés.

Une boîte de cristal de roche, couverte d'une double boîte, travaillée à jour.

Pieces d'or Portugaises, guinées & demie guinées d'Espagne, une dite des Noailles, des Louis XV, frappées à-peu-près dans cette forme, dans chaque angle de cette piece sont des fleurs-de-lis, une de M. Bignon, de M. de la Michaudiere & de M. de Caumartin, aux armes de la Ville, une de la régence.

Plus, 40 petits diamants, pesant un karat chaque.

Deux lorgnettes, l'une émaillée en bleu, l'autre émaillée en rouge, avec le portrait du feu Roi, toutes deux montées en or.

Un souvenir en émail bleu, avec des peintures en grisaille, représentant, d'un côté, une offrande, & de l'autre côté, une jardinière, avec un petit chien à longues oreilles.

Un reliquaire d'un pouce environ, d'un or très-pur, émaillé en noir & blanc, une petite croix montée dessus assez gothiquement, & une perle fine de la grosseur d'un pois au bas.

Et plusieurs autres bijoux en très-grand prix.]

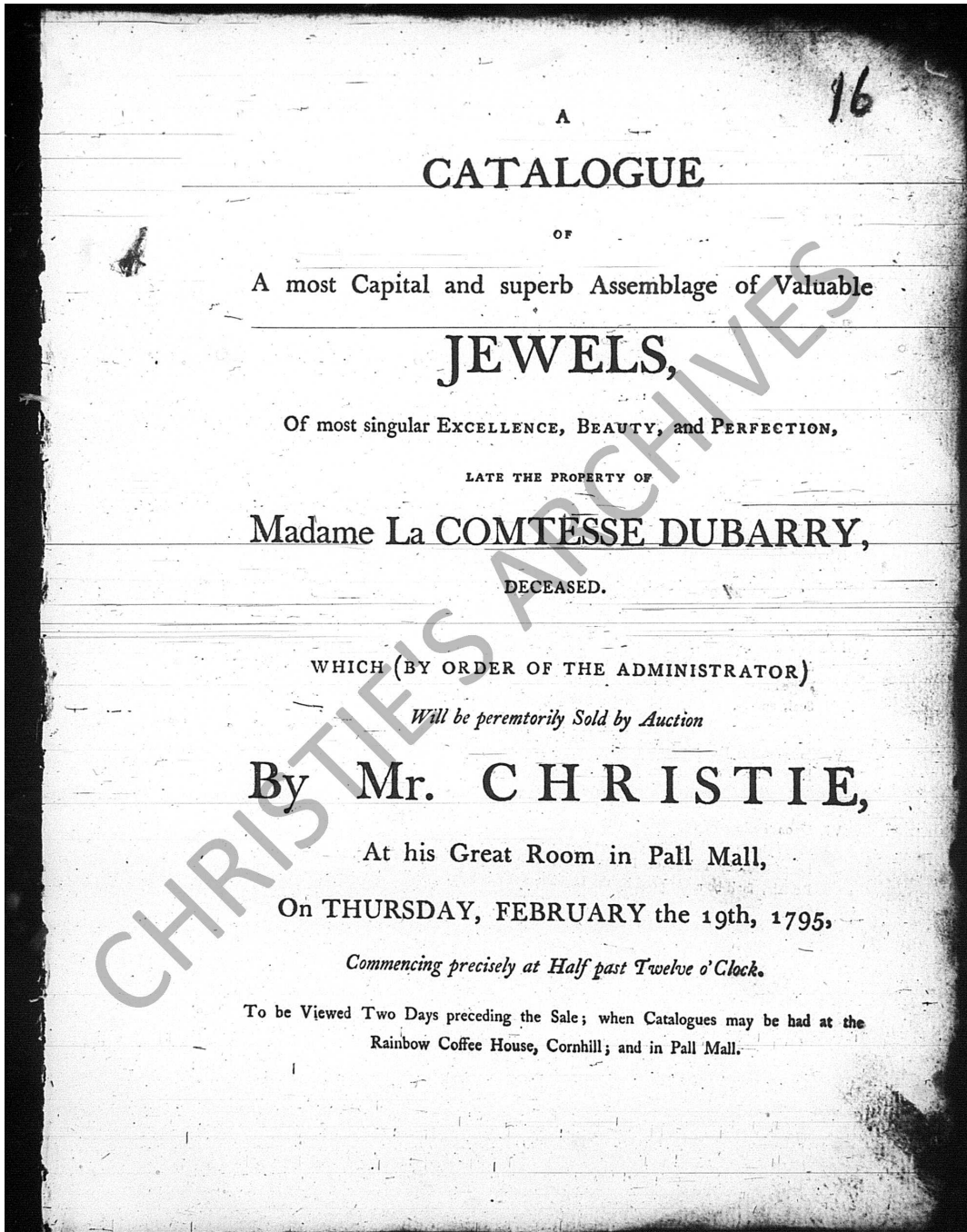
S'adresser à Louvecienne, près Marly, chez Madame du BARRI, & à Paris, chez M. ROUEN, Notaire, rue des Petits-Champs, & à M. ROUEN, Marchand Orfèvre-Joyaillier, rue Saint Louis au Palais, & au Clerc du Bureau, rue des Orfèvres.

Récompense honnête & proportionnée aux objets que l'on rapportera.

De l'Imprimerie de la Veuve DELAGUETTE, rue de la Vieille Draperie.



Christie's Archives



CONDITIONS OF SALE.

- I. **T**HE highest Bidder to be the Buyer; and if any Dispute arise between Two or more Bidders, the Lot so disputed shall be put up again and re-fold.
- II. No Person to advance less than 1s. Above Five Pounds, 2s. 6d. and so on in Proportion.
- III. The Purchasers to give in their Names and Places of Abode, if required, and to pay down 20l. per Cent. in Part of Payment of the Purchase Money; in Default of which, the Lot or Lots so purchased, to be immediately put up again, and re-fold.
- IV. The Purchaser is to take his Lot or Lots away at his own Expence, within Two Months from the Day of Sale, putting his Seal on the Lot or Lots, which are to be lodged in the House of Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Hammerly, under the Purchasers Seal, and to be delivered from said Banking House on the Payment of the Remainder.
- V. To prevent Inconveniences that frequently attend long and open Accounts, the Remainder of the Purchase Money to be absolutely paid on or before the Delivery.
- VI. Upon Failure of complying with the above Conditions, the Money deposited in Part of Payment shall be forfeited; all Lots uncleared within the Time aforesaid, shall be re-fold, by Public or Private Sale; and the Deficiency (if any) attending such Re-sale, shall be made good by the Defaulters at this Sale.

A Catalogue, &c.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY the 19th, 1795.

IT is presumed the contents of this catalogue are a display of the most peculiar selection, in the superlative file, that was ever offered to the public; as it was not only a selection from the ROYAL CABINET, but from every CABINET, both public and private, in the kingdom of FRANCE: and which, by order of the ADMINISTRATOR, will be tendered to the public and sold without the least reserve whatever.

- 1 SIX most capital rows of beautiful pearls, perfectly round, beautifully matched, of the first water, containing 212 in number, at per pearl 1 oz. 6dwts. ogr.
- | | | | | | |
|--|-----|---|---|----|----|
| 2 Six ditto, equally beautiful, containing | 212 | — | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| 3 Six ditto | — | — | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 Six ditto | — | — | 0 | 19 | 18 |
| 5 Six ditto | — | — | 0 | 17 | 18 |
- 6 Three remarkable fine brilliants, weight 9 carats, full
- | | | | |
|--------------|---|-------|---------------|
| 7 Two ditto | — | Ditto | 6 ditto, full |
| 8 Two ditto | — | Ditto | 6 ditto, full |
| 9 Two ditto | — | Ditto | 5 ditto, full |
| 10 Two ditto | — | Ditto | 5 ditto, full |
| 11 Two ditto | — | Ditto | 5 ditto, full |
| 12 Two ditto | — | Ditto | 18½ grains |
- 13 Thirty-seven loose brilliants, 33 carats, at per carat
- 14 Forty ditto — 33 carats, at ditto
- 15 Twenty-one ditto — 16 carats
- 16 Ditto — 13 ditto
- 17 Twenty ditto — 12 ditto
- 18 Twenty ditto — 10½ ditto
- 19 One capital single-stone spread brilliant of the first water — 29½ grains
- 20 One ditto, a match to the preceding — 28½ grains, bare
- 21 Twenty-three loose brilliants of the first water, 31 carats, at per carat
- | | | |
|-----------------|---|--------------------|
| 22 Twenty ditto | — | 27 ditto, at ditto |
| 23 Ditto | — | 27½ ditto |
| 24 Ditto | — | 27½ ditto, full |
- 25 One capital pink brilliant — 38 grains, full
- 26 One oval white ditto — 50 grains, bare
- 27 Four fine round brilliants — 14½ carats

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(4)

28	One capital square brilliant, fine spread stone	40 grains
29	Ditto	41 grains, full
30	One large drop	29 grains, full
31	Two large ditto	49 grains
32	Two short drops	8½ carats
33	Nine brilliants, various	10½ carats
34	One fine large brilliant, spread stone	30 grains
35	Ditto	34 grains
36	Ditto	28 grains
37	Ditto	29 grains, bare
38	Ditto	23 grains, bare
39	Ditto	24 grains
40	Ditto	31½ grains, bare
41	Ditto	26½ grains, bare
42	Ditto	25 grains
43	Ditto	24 grains
44	Ditto	20½ grains
45	Ditto	23 grains
46	Ditto	23 grains, bare
47	Ditto	23 grains
48	Two drops	33½ grains, bare
49	One ditto, brown	18 grains
50	Ten loose brilliants	26½ carats
51	Six hundred and sixty small fine loose brilliants	36½ carats
52	One hundred and 11 ditto	54½ carats
53	Six large fine spread brilliants	Weight 19 carats
54	Ditto	Ditto 19½ carats
55	Ditto	19 carats, bare
56	Ditto	19½ carats
57	Two hundred and ninety brilliants	70½ carats
58	Thirty-eight ditto	66½ carats
59	Forty ditto	33 carats
60	Forty-three brilliants	33 carats, bare
61	A parcel of 136 brilliants	16 carats
62	Three rings, viz. 2 emeralds, and 1 sapphire, with diamonds, and 5 small rubies, unset	
63	A cameo ring, head in onyx, set with diamonds, a head of Louis XV. a bacchanalian, antique, and 3 more rings	
64	A gold toothpick case and a part of ditto, with some roses, unset and a small movement of a watch	
65	A pair of sleeve buttons, (1 of the coloured stones wanting), and fundry settings	

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