

STUART AND STUARDO: JAMES III AND HIS NEAPOLITAN COUSIN

by Edward Corp

King Charles II's first illegitimate son, the little-known Jacques de La Cloche, married a lady in Naples and had a posthumous son, born in 1669 and known as Don Giacomo Stuardo. Although his father was illegitimate and he himself a Catholic, Stuardo hoped that he might one day become King of England. The Glorious Revolution resulted in opposition between supporters of the Protestant Succession to the British thrones and supporters of the exiled Catholic Stuarts, James II and then his son James III. When the Protestant Queen Anne was succeeded by the unpopular Hanoverian George I in 1714, James III was still unmarried and had no children, so Stuardo hoped that James might recognize him as the Jacobite heir. When James married and had two sons, Stuardo hoped that his cousin would at least receive him as a Stuart prince. All his attempts to meet James III and secure recognition were unsuccessful, and he died disappointed and in poverty in about 1752. In the tercentenary of the Hanoverian Succession, enough archival information finally has emerged to provide a study of the life of this alternative claimant to the British thrones.

Il primo figlio illegittimo di re Charles II, il piccolo noto Jacques de La Cloche, sposò una donna in Napoli ed ebbe un figlio postumo, nato nel 1669 e noto come Don Giacomo Stuardo. Sebbene suo padre fosse illegittimo e lui stesso un cattolico, Stuardo sperava di diventare un giorno re d'Inghilterra. La Glorious Revolution fu il risultato dell'opposizione tra coloro che erano a favore della successione protestante ai troni britannici e coloro che erano a favore degli esiliati e cattolici Stuart, James II e poi suo figlio James III. Quando la successione alla regina Anne, protestante, toccò all'impopolare George I di Hannover nel 1714, James III era ancora celibe e non aveva figli. Per questa ragione Stuardo sperò che James potesse riconoscerlo come l'erede giacobita. Quando James si sposò ed ebbe due figli, Stuardo sperò che suo cugino lo riconoscesse almeno come un principe della dinastia Stuart. Tuttavia tutti i suoi tentativi di incontrare James III e di arrivare al riconoscimento andarono falliti e morì rammaricato e in povertà attorno al 1752. In occasione del tricentenario della successione hannoveriana sono finalmente tornate alla luce sufficienti informazioni archivistiche per permettere uno studio della vita di questo aspirante alternativo ai troni britannici.

It is now well over a hundred years since Archibald Francis Stuart, in an article entitled 'The Neapolitan Stuarts', published in the *English Historical Review*, argued that 'the story of Don Giacomo Stuardo, the second Neapolitan Pretender, is worthy of more investigation'.¹ Recent discoveries in the State Papers in London and the Stuart Papers at Windsor, as well as by Giovanni Tarantino in the National Library and parish registers of Naples, mean that we now have enough information to present the main outlines of Stuardo's story.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century it was believed that the first of King Charles II's many illegitimate children was James Scott, who was born in April

¹ A.F. Stuart, 'The Neapolitan Stuarts', *English Historical Review* 18 (July 1903), 470–4, at p. 473.

1649, publicly recognised by his father in 1662, and created Duke of Monmouth the following year. In 1862, however, documents were discovered in the archives of the Jesuits in Rome that revealed that Charles II had already fathered an illegitimate son about two and a half years earlier, in 1646. The documents were first published in English by Lord Acton in 1862,² and then in Italian and French in 1863–5.³ The newly-discovered royal bastard was called Jacques de La Cloche and, according to the documents, was acknowledged secretly as his son by Charles II in 1665 and 1667, and then received privately at court in 1668.

There must have been many royal bastards in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries about whom little or nothing is known. French monarchs such as Louis XIV and Louis XV, or English ones such as Charles II and James II, might well have fathered bastard children with servants of lowly status who were sent away from court to have their babies elsewhere, and of whom we have no record.⁴ It is the bastards who *were* recognized by their royal fathers, or born to mothers of some social standing, about whom we tend to have information. And it is this distinction that made the discovery of Jacques de La Cloche so interesting, and now makes the story of the latter's son Don Giacomo so unusual. Unlike other royal bastards who were openly recognized by their fathers, Jacques de La Cloche was only acknowledged secretly by Charles II, so that his very existence remained unknown to British historians until nearly 200 years after his death. And unlike other illegitimate royal grandchildren, those born to parents of obscure or lowly social status, Don Giacomo Stuardo was made aware by his mother of his royal ancestry, so that he spent much of his life attempting to be accepted, not just as a Stuart grandson, but actually as a royal prince.

In order to understand the significance of the short life of Stuardo's father, Jacques de La Cloche, we need to know that he entered the Jesuit novitiate of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale in Rome to train to be a priest in April 1668, and that

² J.E.E. Dalberg, Lord Acton, 'Secret history of Charles II', *The Home and Foreign Review* (July 1862), 146–74.

³ G. Boero, SJ, 'Historia della conversione all Chiesa Cattolica di Carlo II, Re d'Inghilterra, cavata da scritture autentiche ed originali', *La Civiltà Cattolica* 6 (1863), 385–96, 697–713; 7 (1864), 268–88, 415–24, 671–84; F. Dumas, 'Charles II, Roi d'Angleterre et son fils le P. Jacques Stuart', *Études Religieuses, Historiques, et Littéraires par des Pères de la Compagnie de Jésus*, nouvelle série 5 (1864), 454–73, 598–622; 6 (1865), 178–201. See also various articles in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1866: January, pp. 22–9; February, 226–7; April, 531–4; and July, 65–8.

⁴ See N. Mitford, *The Sun King* (London, 1966; revised edition 1983), 75: 'He [Louis XIV] had always been inclined to go to bed with any woman who was handy ... , but such passing fancies ... had never bothered anybody and the public knew nothing of them'. For the many bastards born to Louis XV, see N. Mitford, *Madame de Pompadour* (London, 1954; revised edition 1968), 188: 'his mistresses ... were pretty little lower-class girls who did their work with no fuss, made no demands on him, had no influential relations or angry husbands, who did not insist upon their children being ennobled and who were content to retire with a modest dowry'; and J. Barry, *Versailles, the Passions and Politics of an Era* (London, 1972), 277: 'Pregnant, they were ... given ... a dowry for marriage in the provinces'. For the English monarchs, see P. Beauclerk-Dewar and R. Powell, *Royal Bastards* (Stroud, 2008), 12: 'Over the centuries, most kings have had one or more mistresses and many begat children by them, most of whom ... were officially recognised'.

three and a half months later Charles II sent an extremely secret letter to Gianpaolo Oliva, the Father General of the Jesuits. In that letter, dated 3 August 1668, the king stated that he wished to convert secretly to Catholicism, but that he could not trust any of the priests in England. He therefore intended to ask his son to perform the necessary ceremony once he (La Cloche) had been ordained.⁵

At the beginning of 1669, however, La Cloche decided to leave the Jesuit novitiate and return to a secular life. He left Rome and moved to Naples, where he married the daughter of a minor nobleman. A few months later, in 1669, he died. His son, Don Giacomo Stuardo, was born posthumously later that same year. It so happened that the last months of La Cloche's life were documented in some letters sent to London by the English agent in Rome, who was unaware that La Cloche had been secretly acknowledged by the king and who therefore regarded him as an impostor.⁶ These letters were published by Lord Acton along with the Jesuit documents in 1862 (see n. 2). La Cloche's last months were documented also in the correspondence of Vincenzo Armani, who had been secretary to the Papal Nuncio in London. Armani's correspondence was published at Macerata in 1674, and came to light in 1890 thanks to the researches of William Mazière Brady.⁷ However, it was not until 1903 that the story of La Cloche's posthumous son Don Giacomo was discovered among the papers of Cardinal Luigi Gualterio in the British Museum.⁸

Although the story of Don Giacomo Stuardo attracted little attention at the time, beyond the comment by Stuart already mentioned, the short life of Jacques de La Cloche became the subject of several articles shortly before the First World War. Gordon Goodwin summarized what was known about him for the second edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography* in 1908,⁹ Andrew Lang devoted two articles to him in 1903 and 1909,¹⁰ followed by a third for the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in 1911.¹¹ And

⁵ Rome, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu [hereafter ARSI] Opp.NN 174/175, E/2/3, Charles II to Oliva, 3 August 1668. (The detailed reference is cited in G. Tarantino, 'Jacques de La Cloche: a Stuart Pretender in the seventeenth century', *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 73 (June–December 2004) [hereafter Tarantino], 434, n. 27.

⁶ National Archives, State Papers [hereafter NA SP] 85/10, various letters from Joseph Kent to Joseph Williamson, 30 March to 7 September 1669.

⁷ V. Armani, *Delle lettere del Signor Vincenzo Armani nobile d'Ugubbio, scritte a nome proprio, e divise in tre volumi* (Macerata, 1674), III, 198–210; W.M. Brady, 'The eldest natural son of Charles II', in *Anglo-Roman Papers* (London, 1890), 93–121. Brady had previously published 'Stuart Pretenders', *The Scottish Review* 10 (1885), 311–32.

⁸ British Library [hereafter BL] Add MSS 20646, fols 56–8; P. Sidney, 'The eldest son of Charles II', *The Westminster Review* (February 1903), 217–22; and P. Sidney, 'The Neapolitan Stuarts', *English Historical Review* 18 (October 1903), 718–19. See also above, n. 1.

⁹ G. Goodwin, 'James La Cloche', *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1908), XI, 371–2.

¹⁰ A. Lang, 'The mystery of James de la Cloche', in *The Valet's Tragedy and Other Stories* (London, 1903), 228–57; and 'The master hoaxer, James de la Cloche', *Fortnightly Review* (September 1909), 430–9.

¹¹ A. Lang, 'James de La Cloche', *Encyclopedia Britannica* (eleventh edition) (Cambridge/London, 1911), XVI, 50–1.

Arthur Stapylton Barnes attempted in 1912 to show that La Cloche was the man in the iron mask.¹² Further articles followed during the course of the twentieth century,¹³ culminating in the two most recent, both published by Giovanni Tarantino in 2004. The first appeared in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*;¹⁴ the second, much longer, in *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*.¹⁵ Tarantino was able to show that doubts about the authenticity of the letters in the Jesuit archives were almost certainly unfounded, and that some letters written by La Cloche himself, newly discovered in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, revealed how and why he had left Rome to live in Naples.

It is partly because we now have a good account of the life of Jacques de La Cloche that the time has come to tell the story of his son, who called himself Don Giacomo Stuardo. This has been made possible because of the chance survival of some letters written by Stuardo himself in the Royal Archives, of some letters written about him by Baron von Stosch in the National Archives,¹⁶ as well as a manifesto that Stuardo sent to Cardinal Luigi Gualterio (which Stuart referred to in 1903), and a longer version of that manifesto that Tarantino discovered in the National Library of Naples when researching the life of Jacques de La Cloche. These documents do not cover all of Stuardo's life, so some important gaps remain. Nevertheless, they do provide us with the main outlines of the story of Charles II's eldest grandson, who lived all his life in the Italian States, and whose very existence is even now unknown to most historians of the period.¹⁷ If Stuardo's story is unique in itself, it does at least illustrate the plight of the son of a royal bastard who was neither given public recognition nor condemned to live a life of obscurity. Stuardo's tragedy was that his father was both acknowledged (albeit secretly) by King Charles II and given documents that proved his high born birth. Stuardo had a claim that he was unable to ignore.

As far as we know, Stuardo spoke only Italian, and never learned either English or French. This might be one reason why so little is known about him today. No documents have emerged yet to show that he made any attempt to contact his

¹² A.S. Barnes, *The Man of the Mask* (London, 1912), 160–88. Barnes's arguments were refuted in J. Noone, *The Man behind the Iron Mask* (New York/Stroud, 1988; revised edition 1994), 205, 208–10.

¹³ Perhaps the most significant was by G.S.H.L. Washington, *King Charles II's Jesuit Son* (Cambridge, privately printed for the author, 1966; with completely revised editions in 1968 and 1979).

¹⁴ G. Tarantino, 'Jacques de La Cloche', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [hereafter ODNB] XXXII, 177–9.

¹⁵ Tarantino, 425–41.

¹⁶ These letters were first published in E. Corp, *The Stuarts in Italy, 1719–1766: a Royal Court in Permanent Exile* (Cambridge, 2011), appendix E, and the present article corrects some inaccuracies contained there.

¹⁷ His father Jacques de La Cloche is not mentioned in Beauclerk-Dewar and Powell, *Royal Bastards* (above, n. 4), even in the section entitled 'Stuart loose ends'. See also R. Clifton, 'Lucy Walter', ODNB LVII, 179; James Scott 'was the first of Charles II's many bastards'. P. Seaward, 'Charles II', ODNB XI, 122–45, made no mention of any bastard born before James Scott (p. 126).

Stuart relations in England, or the British and Irish Grand Tourists who visited the Italian States during his long life. He did, however, attempt to contact the exiled Stuart King James III after the latter moved his court to the Papal States in 1717, and there was a very good reason why he chose to do that. It concerned the succession to the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland.

As the eldest and senior grandson of Charles II, Stuardo seems to have harboured a desire to succeed to the thrones of his grandfather, despite his father's illegitimacy and despite the fact that he (Stuardo) was a Catholic. This might seem completely unrealistic to us today, but we need to imagine how Stuardo could have viewed his chances.

In a letter dated 4 August 1668, of which Stuardo was probably aware, Charles II had informed Jacques de La Cloche, then in Rome preparing to become a Jesuit, that:

should he ever decide to give up the religious life, he could one day claim titles higher than his younger and less nobly born brother James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, or even the Crown, if he and his brother died without children and if by then the English parliament no longer barred accession to the throne by a Catholic king.¹⁸

The only title higher than that of a duke was of course Prince of Wales, conferred on the heir to the throne. Charles II was well aware that anti-Catholic feeling in Parliament (and the country as a whole) made it politically difficult, if not impossible, at that time for a Catholic to inherit the throne, but he hoped that a policy of toleration, which he intended to introduce, might eventually change that. By 1669 Charles himself had no legitimate children, and it had become clear that Queen Catherine of Braganza would be unlikely to bear him any. James, Duke of York, had two young daughters but no son, and it was by no means certain that his daughters would outlive him. If neither Charles II nor his brother James were to have or leave legitimate children, then the next in line to inherit the throne would be Prince William of Orange and Princess Henriette Anne, married to the duc d'Orléans, both of them foreign. To prevent this happening the only option at that time for Charles II was to recognize his eldest bastard son as the Prince of Wales, and to persuade Parliament to accept him as heir-presumptive. However far-fetched this might appear, the fact remains that during the Exclusion Crisis of 1679–81 many people in Parliament *were* prepared to support the Duke of Monmouth as successor to Charles II, despite his illegitimacy.

A few months after receiving this letter, Jacques de La Cloche decided to give up a religious life to improve his prospects of becoming Prince of Wales, but his

¹⁸ ARSI Opp.NN 174/175, E/2/3, Charles II to La Cloche, 4 August 1668, as paraphrased in translation in Tarantino, 433. The key phrases in Lang's *Encyclopedia Britannica* article (above, n. 11) are translated as: 'you may claim higher titles from us than the Duke of Monmouth', and 'the Kingdoms belong to you, and parliament cannot legally oppose you, unless, as at present, they can only elect Protestant Kings'. In his earlier article of 1903 Lang had given this last phrase as 'unless Catholics are excluded from the succession' ('The mystery of James de la Cloche' (above, n. 10), 236).

death in 1669 put a stop to any chances of this happening. In his will, however, La Cloche referred to the possibility. He specifically asked Charles II to give his unborn child the 'Principato' of 'Gale' or of 'Monmus' or of some other province that he (or the Italian notary drawing up the will) wrongly believed was customarily conferred on the 'naturale' sons of the king.¹⁹

Don Giacomo Stuardo had a copy of his father's will, and might have had the original or a copy of the letter sent to his father by Charles II.²⁰ Under these circumstances it would have been perfectly reasonable for him to regard himself as a prince, and even to dream that he might one day become King of England.

It will of course be objected that in 1689 the Glorious Revolution and the Bill of Rights had excluded all Catholics from the throne, and that the failure of James's two daughters (Mary II and Anne) and William of Orange to have any living heirs had resulted in the Act of Settlement in 1701 and the Hanoverian Succession in 1714. Yet there were many people, the Jacobites, who remained loyal to the Catholic Stuarts rather than to the Protestant but distantly related George I of Hanover.

When James II died in France in 1701 he was succeeded as the Stuart king-in-exile by his son James III. The latter, however, was still young and unmarried. He had a younger sister, Princess Louise Marie, but if neither of them were to have children, then the Jacobite claim would pass to the Duchess of Savoy (daughter of the duchesse d'Orléans), who was the niece of both Charles II and James II, and therefore Stuardo's first cousin once removed. As the Duchess could hardly be expected to leave her husband in Turin and move to London to become Queen of England, Stuardo could let himself believe that he might one day succeed to the thrones — if only he could obtain public recognition from, and be received by, James III. And when James was obliged to leave France in 1717 and move his court to the Papal States, Stuardo realized that he might now have a chance to secure the public recognition that he so much wanted and that his father had been denied. Princess Louise Marie had died unmarried in 1712, Queen Anne had died in 1714, and the Duchess of Savoy was now Queen of Sicily, so even less likely to move to London. James III, meanwhile, was still unmarried and in delicate health. If James were now to die without having an heir, then the situation envisaged by Charles II would have come about: both Charles and his brother James II would have died, and they would have left no living children. By a convenient coincidence of timing, in July 1714 Louis XIV issued an edict in France declaring that his two officially recognized bastard sons might inherit the throne in default of legitimate male heirs, and he followed this in May 1715 with a declaration giving them the title of 'princes du sang'. Don Giacomo Stuardo, as the eldest illegitimate grandson of Charles II, therefore might have hoped to be acknowledged as a prince and to become

¹⁹ Archivio di Stato di Roma, Misc Famiglia: Stuart b.172, fascicolo 3 (ten and a half pages at the end of the volume).

²⁰ Stuardo stated that in 1743 he had in his possession various documents regarding his identity, including 'a privilege of Charles II' that had been given to his father. See below, p. 237.

the Jacobite claimant. This, then, was the background to Stuardo's first approach to the Jacobite court.²¹

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In July 1718, when he was at Urbino, James III was surprised to receive a letter written by an Italian who claimed to be the legitimate son of a bastard son of Charles II, and who called himself 'Principe Giacomo Stuardo'. The letter had been given by Stuardo to the Genoese Prince Vincenzo Giustiniani, who had passed it on to the Cardinal Protector of England, Filippo Gualterio, who in turn had sent it on to James III at Urbino. Enclosed with the letter was a portrait of the man who was claiming to be James's first cousin once removed. Neither the letter nor the portrait apparently has survived.

It was perfectly well known that Charles II had sired numerous bastard children, and indeed James III had known some of them personally when he was growing up at Saint-Germain-en-Laye.²² Stuardo, however, claimed that his father was actually the first of all of Charles II's children, having been born in Jersey in 1646, more than two years before the Duke of Monmouth. As many of Charles II's bastard children had been recognized and given titles, we may assume that Stuardo hoped to be acknowledged by James III as his cousin, which would have been of enormous benefit to him in Italian society. In the short term he was asking James for financial support, but he believed that recognition would open up the possibility of his becoming the Jacobite claimant to the English throne. We do not know if he actually mentioned that possibility, but if he did he probably would have been regarded as a mad man.

When James III received this surprising letter in the remote city of Urbino he was in no position to discover whether Stuardo was genuine or merely an impostor. James was still unmarried and had no wish to introduce further complications to his dynastic isolation, particularly by acknowledging any bastard born (like Monmouth) before Charles II's marriage to Catherine of Braganza. He therefore instructed David Nairne, his secretary of the closet, to return both the letter and the portrait:

I am sending back to Your Excellency the letter from the man who calls himself Principe Stuardo and who declares himself to be the son of a bastard child of King Charles II of England. What he claims is not impossible, but the King knows nothing about him and does not wish to get involved in the matter. It appears from the letter that the man is lacking in both intelligence and money, and that he and Bayard display similar traits of madness. Therefore when Your Excellency returns the letter and the portrait of the so-called Stuardo to Prince Giustiniani, would he thank the latter on behalf of His Majesty for the discretion

²¹ For the Jacobite succession during these years, see E. Corp, 'The court of Turin and the English succession, 1712–1720', in P. Bianchi and K. Wolfe (eds), *Turin and the British in the Age of the Grand Tour (British School at Rome Studies)* (Cambridge, forthcoming). For the edict of July 1714 and the declaration of May 1715, see F. Bluche, *Louis XIV* (Paris, 1986), 872.

²² Anne, Countess of Sussex; Lady Barbara Fitzroy, a Benedictine nun at Pontoise; and Charles Lennox, 1st Duke of Richmond.

he has shown in not wishing to get involved with this man without clarifying the matter with His Majesty. Having done so, let the Prince do for this unfortunate adventurer whatever he in his kindness may think fit, but His Majesty has no further interest in the case.²³

Whether or not James III gave the matter any further thought it is impossible to say. But if he had chosen to do so, particularly after he had settled in Rome at the end of the following year, he could have discovered that Giacomo Stuardo was the legitimate son of Jacques de La Cloche. The evidence, as already noted, was contained in the archives of the Jesuits in Rome, in the archives of the Barberini family (now in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana), as well as in the published letters of Armanni.²⁴

By 1719 the information about Jacques de La Cloche was 50 years old, and one might object that people could hardly be expected to have known secrets locked away in the Jesuit and Barberini family archives. Yet the existence in Italy of an unknown bastard son of Charles II was of such obvious interest that there is no reason why it should not have been known and handed down by a few members of the Society of Jesus or by the most senior members of the Barberini family. As we have seen, James III did not want to get involved, but if he *had* wanted to enquire about the origins of Stuardo, then or later, he might well have been able to discover the truth.

The Jesuit archives in particular contained a certificate in French given to La Cloche by Charles II recognizing him as ‘our natural son James Stuart’, to be called ‘De La Cloche du Bourg de Jersey’; a deed of settlement in French signed by Charles II giving La Cloche a pension; and a testimonial in Latin in which Queen Christina of Sweden stated that she knew that La Cloche was the natural son of Charles II. In addition, there was one letter from Charles II to La Cloche and four to Gianpaolo Oliva, the Father General of the Jesuits, in which the king also recognized La Cloche as his son, and gave him the name Henri de Rohan as a temporary alias.²⁵ There is no reason why these documents should not have been seen by Michelangelo Tamburini, the Father General from 1706

²³ BL Add MSS 31261, fol. 164, Nairne to F. Gualterio, 21 July 1718: ‘Je renvoye a V.E. la lettre de ce pretendu Prince Stuardo, qui se dit fils d’un batard de Charles 2 Roy d’Ang.re. La chose n’est pas impossible, mais le Roy ne le connoit pas ni ne veut pas s’en mesler. Il paroît par sa lettre qu’il est doublement pauvre et de l’esprit et de bien, et que Bayard et luy ont a peu près un meme caractere de folie, au reste V.E. est prié en rendant la lettre et le portrait du dit Stuard au Prince Giustiniani, de le remercier au nom de S.M. de l’attention qu’il a eu a ne vouloir point se mêler de cet homme sans en donner avis a S.M.. Après cela ce Prince pourra faire pour ce pauvre avanturier par charité ce qu’il jugera a propos, mais le Roy ne s’y interesse point’. Gualterio’s letter to Nairne of 16 July 1718 had also enclosed a letter from someone named Bayard (BL Add MSS 20302, fol. 59).

²⁴ The detailed references are all given in Tarantino, 431–5.

²⁵ ARSI Opp.NN 174/175, E/2/3, certificate of 27 September 1665; deed of settlement, 7 February 1667; testimonial of 29 July 1667; letter of Charles II to La Cloche, 4 August 1668; letters of Charles II to Oliva, 3 and 29 August, undated, and 18 November 1668. This is written on the assumption that all these documents were already in the Jesuit archives. It is possible that the certificate, the deed, and/or the letter to La Cloche were still in the possession of Stuardo at this time. See above, n. 18.

to 1730, who originated from Modena, where he had served as private theologian to James III's uncle.

La Cloche had become a novice at the Iesu in Rome in April 1668, but the following January had gone to Naples and returned to a secular life. In February 1669 he married Teresa Corona in Naples Cathedral, describing himself in the register as 'Giacomo Enrico de Boveri [=Bourg?] Roano Stuardo'.²⁶ Shortly afterwards he was arrested by the Viceroy of Naples because he had so much money and so many jewels that he was suspected of being a counterfeiter. He was released after he sent two letters to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, the Dean of the College of Cardinals, begging him to ask Gianpaolo Oliva to vouch for his identity.²⁷

In June 1669, by which time his wife was pregnant, La Cloche travelled to France to see his mother. He apparently returned shortly afterwards with a considerable amount of money, though in very poor health. On 24 August he made his will in Naples, and died two days later. He was buried in the church of the convent of San Francesco di Paola, outside Porta Capuana.²⁸ In his will he stated that he was the son of Charles II and 'Dona Maria Stuarda della Famiglia delli Baroni di S. Marzo' — a lady whose identity no one has been able to establish.²⁹ According to Charles II himself she was 'a young lady of a family among the most distinguished in our Kingdoms',³⁰ and Stuardo would later describe her as 'Maria Errichetta Stuardo', an apparent reference to the king's mother (Henrietta Maria) but more realistically to his sister (Henriette Anne), the duchesse d'Orléans, who was only two years old when La Cloche was born!³¹

²⁶ Tarantino, 434. The date of the marriage is taken from his will (see below, n. 29). The scandal that this caused must have been well known at the time among the Jesuits in Rome. Francis Sanders, who served as confessor to James II and James III at Saint-Germain, entered the English College in Rome in January 1669, which was the precise time that Jacques de La Cloche left the novitiate, went to Naples and was arrested by the Viceroy. Sanders remained in Rome and was received into the Society of Jesus by Oliva in 1674 (E. Corp, 'Father Francis Sanders', *ODNB* XLVIII, 863).

²⁷ Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Barberini Latini 8620, fols 184–5, Jacques de La Cloche to Francesco Barberini, 6 and 10 April 1669, printed in Tarantino, 439–41.

²⁸ NA SP 85/10/fol. 114, Kent to Williamson, 7 September 1669.

²⁹ Naples, National Library MS.XI.E.14, fols 32–6, 'Testamento di D. Giacomo Stuardo figliuolo naturale di Carlo II re della Gran Bretagna' (cited in Tarantino, 436, n. 37). There is a copy in Archivio di Stato di Roma, Misc Famiglia: Stuart b.172, fascicolo 3 (ten and a half pages at the end of the volume). The Italian original and an English translation were sent to London by the English agent at Rome: NA SP 85/10/fol. 114, Kent to Williamson, 7 September 1669. An English translation of the will was later published in T. Duffus Hardy, *Report to the Right Hon. Master of the Rolls upon the Documents in the Archives and Public Libraries of Venice* (London, 1866), 87–90.

³⁰ ARSI Opp.NN 174/175, E/2/3, Charles II to Oliva, 3 August 1668; NA SP 85/10/fol. 111, Kent to Williamson, 7 September 1669.

³¹ See the family tree in BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 57v, which Stuardo stated was based partly on 'Vincenzo Armani di Eugubio tom. 3'. He was obviously muddled about the Stuart family or he would not have needed to consult Armani's published correspondence.

Even if James III remained unaware of these facts, he might easily have discovered information about La Cloche's son Giacomo Stuardo, who was born posthumously in Naples on 10 December 1669.³² According to Stuardo himself, his father had left him considerable wealth, including 'due palazzi siti uno a S. Giovanni a Carbonara et l'altro a Capua, dirimpetto alli Gesuiti', and 500,000 'denaro di ducati' that had been transmitted from London and deposited in the Bank of Naples.³³ The first part of his life seems to have been uneventful, and he recorded years later that he lived 'secretly in Naples': 'he grew up in the city of Naples under various disguises because of the need to live incognito for about 40 years, when on the arrival of the Imperial troops in Naples the said prince was forced to leave'.³⁴

We are not told why Stuardo, by then 38 years old, had to leave Naples when the Imperial troops of Emperor Joseph I occupied the city but, given his background, we can easily speculate why this might have been. He presumably must have been pro-French and anti-Habsburg, which might explain his living 'incognito' while the Spanish Habsburgs ruled Naples. The accession of a Bourbon prince as King Philip V of Spain in 1700 then would have completely changed the situation for him, and perhaps encouraged him to make clear his Stuart descent and his Jacobite and Bourbon loyalties. At any rate he was in Rome by 10 September 1708, when his portrait was drawn by Pier Leone Ghezzi (Fig. 1). It carries the following interesting inscription, written by Ghezzi himself: 'Portrait of the Englishman nicknamed *La Reginella* who claimed to be King James Stuart of England'.³⁵ It is odd that this Neapolitan who spoke no English should have been described as an 'Inglese', but the inscription makes it clear that Stuardo was no longer living 'occulto' or 'incognito', and now made no secret of his claim to be a grandson of Charles II.

It is not known where Stuardo lived in Rome, but three years later, in September 1711, when he was 41, he married Donna Lucia Minelli della Riccia. Then, like his father, he was arrested and imprisoned (in the *carceri nuove*). The charge was that he was an impostor, pretending to be a grandson of Charles II. The trial apparently extended over an entire year (1711–12), and

³² Parish church of Santa Sofia in San Giovanni a Carbonara, Libro III de' Battezzati, fol. 254. (The reference is cited in Tarantino, 437, n. 40.)

³³ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58r, 'Manifesto, in cui si mostra l'identità e real nascita del Principe D. Giacomo postumo Stuardo, Nipote di Carlo II. Rè della Gran Bretagna', 7 January 1750 [hereafter 'Manifesto']. His father's will refers to 180,000 *scudi*, with no mention of property (see above, n. 29). The money was said to be in the hands of Charles II, who would make an annual payment to La Cloche's posthumous child.

³⁴ BL Add MSS 20646, fols 57v–58r, 'Manifesto': 'vivere occulto in Napoli': 'è cresciuto nella città di Napoli sotto varie forme per la necessità di vivere incognito per lo spazio di anni 40 in circa, nel qual tempo sopraggiunte in Napoli le arme Cesaree, il detto principe fu forzato partire'.

³⁵ Vienna, Albertina Museum, inv. 1259, 24.8 × 17.8 cm: 'Ritratto dell'Inglese per soprannome La Reginella che si fingeva essere Il Rè Giacomo Stuardi d'Inghilterra'. Don Giacomo Stuardo's mother had apparently been referred to as 'La Reginella' (NA SP 85/10/fol. 34, Kent to Williamson, 13 April 1669, quoted in Tarantino, 435).



Fig. 1. Pier Leone Ghezzi, *Don Giacomo Stuardo*, drawing, 24.8 × 17.8 cm (1708). Vienna, Albertina Museum, inv. 1259. © Albertina, Vienna (www.albertina.at). (Reproduced by permission of the Albertina Museum, Vienna.)

perhaps involved a consultation of the Jesuit archives. Eventually he was recognized as the legitimate posthumous son of Principe Don Giacomo Enrico, natural son of Charles II, ‘declared and acknowledged as such by a solemn diploma of his Holiness [Pope Clement XI], as evidenced by the said trial’. Following on from this legal success, Stuardo recorded, ‘at the same time another trial [was] held for the same posthumous Prince D. Giacomo in the tribunal of the Archbishop of Naples’, where he was also recognized as genuine and given certificates to authenticate his claim to be a ‘principe’.³⁶

With these certificates Stuardo decided to leave Rome and travel north — with or without his wife, about whom we have no further information. In 1715, now aged 45, he went to Venice, Vienna, Milan and Genoa, and he stated that in each city he was received as a grandson of Charles II and given the privileges appropriate to his rank. His absence from Naples, however, seems to have counted against him. Either now, or perhaps later, his two palazzi were occupied by (or even given to) other people ‘with no legal justification, given the absence from Naples of the posthumous Principe D. Giacomo, which happened in 1708’. At the same time, his money in the Bank of Naples seems to have been frozen.³⁷

It was perhaps in Genoa that Stuardo was introduced to Prince Vincenzo Giustiniani. If Stuardo had indeed lost his property and money he might well have regarded the arrival of James III and the Jacobite court in 1717 as a heaven-sent opportunity, and this would explain why David Nairne described him to Cardinal Gualterio in July 1718 as ‘lacking in both intelligence and money’.³⁸ Be that as it may, certain facts about Stuardo were public knowledge already by the time James III settled permanently in Rome in October 1719.

We do not know if James III now took any interest in Stuardo, and we only have a few documents that mention him during the 1720s and 1730s. There are some letters from him in the Archivio di Stato di Milano filed as ‘suppliche e lettere di Giacomo Stuardo al Governatore di Milano, al Segretario di guerra Maderno e a diversi personaggi d’alto rango’, dated 1722–3.³⁹ There is also ‘an account of the honour paid to him in Germany which was printed in Cologne on 6 February 1724’.⁴⁰ We then get a much more significant document, because on 30 March 1726 Stuardo obtained a certificate in Latin from Francesco Pignatelli, the Cardinal Archbishop of Naples, acknowledging that

³⁶ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58r, ‘Manifesto’: ‘per tale dichiarato, e riconosciuto per mezzo d’un magnifico diploma della Santità sua [Pope Clement XI], come costa dal sudetto processo’; ‘nel tempo stesso costruito altro processo per lo medesimo Principe D. Giacomo postumo nella Curia Arcivescovile di Napoli’.

³⁷ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58r, ‘Manifesto’: ‘senza niuno appoggio di ragione, attenta l’assenza da Napoli, del Principe D. Giacomo Postumo, che fu nel 1708’. The palazzo in Naples was occupied by ‘Sig. Cav. di Casa Piscicelli’, and the one at Capua by ‘Signori Gentilomini di Boccardi’.

³⁸ See above, p. 227.

³⁹ Archivio di Stato di Milano, Atti di Governo, Potenze Estere, cart 51 (Inghilterra 1549–1763). There are copies of these documents in NA PRO 31/2/fols 37–55, as part of the Bliss Transcripts.

⁴⁰ Tarantino, 438.

he, Principe Don Giacomo Stuardo, aged 56, was the posthumous son of Don Jacopo Enrico de Bove [sic] Stuardo, ‘Filius Naturalis Caroli Secundi Regis Angliae’, and Donna Teresa Corona of Naples.⁴¹

Pignatelli does not seem to have consulted James III before he produced this important certificate, and we have no information about what researches he ordered before doing so. The timing is interesting, because it coincided with the separation of James III and Queen Clementina, which had divided Roman opinion.⁴² The imperial or Habsburg faction among the cardinals, which included Pignatelli, sided with the queen against the king, and the imperial ambassador in Rome, Cardinal Juan Alvaro Cienfuegos, was a Jesuit who might have had access to the documents within the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu. It is possible that James III was unaware of the certificate, or that he simply took no interest in the subject. Two and a half months later Pignatelli became the Dean of the College of Cardinals, so a certificate from him was bound to carry considerable weight.

In October 1726 James III, who by then had two sons to ensure the Jacobite succession, went to live in Bologna, and while he was there Stuardo obtained official copies of his certificate in Naples.⁴³ James did not return to Rome until February 1729. Then, in June 1731 he went on a visit to Naples and stayed with Cardinal Pignatelli, whom he described as ‘a mighty good man’ who ‘expressed a dale of affection for me’.⁴⁴ If, therefore, James was not already aware that Stuardo was his cousin, this visit would have been an occasion when he easily might have been told.

It seems that Stuardo was by this time living in Genoa,⁴⁵ and on 8 May 1736 he sent a letter from there to James III asking to be allowed to visit him in Rome:

It is imperative for me to enter the presence of Your Majesty through the means of my letter and the attached certificate by Monsignore D. Ferdinando de Signoribus,⁴⁶ a truly religious man, who has defended my cause. Not only to have the consolatory chance to show You all my devotion and love, that I feel because of our common lineage, but also because I am in the extreme need of asking You to help me, poor and unhappy Prince, who has had to face bad Fortune despite the superiority of my lineage and the strength of my soul. I implore You, as a proof of the mercy You have towards a Prince so close to You through lineage, to send me an answer, not only as a consolation for my pains, but to glorify my Stuart blood.

⁴¹ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 57r.

⁴² Corp, *The Stuarts in Italy* (above, n. 16), 28–31 and chapter 8.

⁴³ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 57r. The copies were dated 16 and 17 November 1727.

⁴⁴ Royal Archives at Windsor Castle [hereafter RA] SP 146/141, James III to Inverness, 4 July 1731.

⁴⁵ According to Brady (‘The eldest natural son of Charles II’ (above n. 7)) and Barnes (*The Man of the Mask* (above, n. 12)), Cardinal Pignatelli sent a letter on Stuardo’s behalf to the Archbishop of Genoa in 1734, so we may assume that he was living in that city by then. (I am grateful to Giovanni Tarantino for this observation.)

⁴⁶ Ferdinando de Signoribus de Segni was a *votante* of the *Tribunale della Segnatura di Giustizia*. (I am grateful to Giovanni Tarantino for this information as well.)

He must have seen Lord Inverness, who lived at Avignon, but who had just returned to Rome (perhaps via Genoa) for a visit of three months, because he adds:

I am sure that Milord Inbernes [sic] has already presented to You my concerns and explained my pitiful condition, succeeding in this way in awakening Your natural compassion. And I hope that God will put in Your heart compassionate feelings towards me and that Your merciful answer will arrive soon to comfort me.

He finished the letter by ‘wishing Your Majesty the happiest and rightest thoughts and at the same time an endless happiness’.⁴⁷ James presumably must have discussed this letter with Inverness. He decided that he would not let Stuardo visit him, but there is evidence that he might now have taken an interest in his cousin.

In 1734 the Spanish had reconquered Naples, expelled the imperial troops of Charles VI, and granted the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies to Philip V’s son, Charles of Parma. In 1736, when Stuardo sent his letter, the 2nd Duke of Berwick was serving as the Spanish ambassador in Naples. Berwick was a very close friend of James III, but he was also the son of the latter’s half-brother. So he was himself the legitimate son of a bastard son of James II, a man with an identical background to Stuardo, though with a very different fortune. In November 1736 he stayed for a few weeks with James III at Albano, and from February to April 1737 he stayed with him at the Palazzo del Re in Rome for three months.⁴⁸ Might the two men have discussed their cousin together? It is possible, even probable. Some years later (in 1752) the fathers of the convent of San Francesco di Paola, outside Porta Capuana at Naples, testified that by order of the ‘Sagra Congregazione di Roma’ they had exhumed ‘in this church of ours the body, or corpse, of Principe Giacomo Errico Stuardo son of King Charles the Second King of England’. They added: ‘The Duke of Berwick in the company of Count Giacomo Stella, general agent of the posthumous Principe Stuardo, came to this church of ours, as they said, that they had come to see where the King of England’s son was buried’. In the presence of ‘many religious, and a number of lay persons’, the coffin was opened and the corpse examined: ‘beneath his head they found a vial and inside there was a small piece of paper on which was written ‘Giacomo Errico son of the King of England’, and they placed it in another urn, and returned him to his grave’. After this discovery, made in company with Stuardo’s ‘Agente Generale’, the Duke of Berwick told the fathers of the convent ‘that he wished to celebrate a solemn funeral’. This, according to the notary who recorded the testimony of the fathers, was ‘nell’anno 1736, o

⁴⁷ RA SP 187/42, Stuardo to James III, 8 May 1736. (Translated from the Italian by the archivists at Windsor Castle.) Lord Inverness served as Secretary of State to James III until 1727, when he retired. He lived in Avignon from 1731 until his death in 1740, but visited Rome in 1736.

⁴⁸ Corp, *The Stuarts in Italy* (above, n. 16), 255, 320.

1737',⁴⁹ precisely the years when Berwick stayed with James III at Albano and in Rome. Unless the exhumation was done against the wishes of James III, which is unlikely, we may conclude that by this time Stuardo had been accepted as a genuine grandson of Charles II.

Despite this, James III had no wish to meet or to help Stuardo, and the Duke of Berwick died in Naples in 1738. So Stuardo wrote again from Genoa on 15 August 1739: 'As I was always proud to descend from Your Majesty's lineage, so I have Your aggrandisement at heart and I would give my life to protect it. The worst mishap I ever had was that I never succeeded in finding a shelter under the charitable shadow of Your patronage'. Stuardo added that he had been in contact with the Duke of Ormonde who, like Inverness, lived in Avignon:

The Duke of Ormonde is now helping me to enjoy this extremely important advantage; from him I received the attached letters for Your Majesty and for the Prince of Wales, Your first son. I hope that thanks to his honourable intercession You will be so clement to protect and defend me. Furthermore I hope that in consequence of Your pity God's mercy will bless You and Your sons. If I have the chance humbly to present myself to You, I will explain the deepest feelings of my heart.⁵⁰

It was probably around this time that Stuardo sent to James III an engraving by Girolamo Rossi of Caterina Fieschi Adorna, whom he described as 'amantissima mia Protettrice', and whom he hoped would persuade James III to send him a reply to his letter.⁵¹ Attached to the engraving in the Stuart Papers there is the following undated prayer:

My most benign protectress, ever since the Lord God granted me the grace to know you, and revere you in this your triumphant homeland, it has pleased you with your protection and patronage always to help me and especially to grant my wishes; once again from the bottom of my heart I beseech you to grant me your most efficacious protection and sustain me on earth and in Heaven also inasmuch as I was born the grandson of Charles II King of England, and cousin of King James III. Because of this infallible truth I will acknowledge through you

⁴⁹ *Manifesto in cui si dimostra la identità e real nascita del Principe D. Giacomo Stuardo, figlio postumo del Principe Giacomo Errico Stuardo, e nipote di Carlo II. Re della Gran Bretagna* (Naples, 1752), 43–4. (This *Manifesto*, cited in Tarantino, 437, n. 38, is longer than the earlier one of 1750 in BL Add MSS 20646): 'in questa nostra Chiesa il Corpo, ò vero Cadavere del Principe Giacomo Errico Stuardo figlio del Rè Carlo Secondo Rè d'Inghilterra'; 'Capitati in questa nostra Chiesa il Signor Duca di Bervicche in compagnia del Signor Conte Giacomo Stella Agente Generale del Signor Principe Postomo Stuardo, come dissero, che erano venuti à vedere dove stava sepoltro il figlio del Rè d'Inghilterra'; 'molti Religiosi, e quantità di persone secolari'; 'lo ritrovarono sotto il Capo una Carrafina, e dentro vi era un pezzetto di carta scritto, dove diceva Giacomo Errico figlio del Rè d'Inghilterra, e la posero in altra urna, e lo ritornarono ad infossare'; 'di voler fare le funebri funerali'.

⁵⁰ RA SP 216/140, Stuardo to James III, 15 August 1739. Translated from the Italian by the archivists at Windsor Castle. Ormonde's letters to James III and Prince Charles have not survived in the Stuart Papers. The Duke of Ormonde had joined James III in exile in 1715. After living in Spain from 1718 to 1732, he settled in Avignon, where he remained until his death in 1745.

⁵¹ RA SP Box/125, engraving by Girolamo Rossi of 'B. Catharina Flisca Vidua Adurna Januensis'. The reference is to Caterina Fieschi Adorna of Genoa, who was canonized in 1737. Alessandro Maineri's *Vita di Santa Caterina Fieschi Adorna di Genova* was published in Genoa during the same year. See F. de Martinoir, *Catherine de Gênes, ou la joie du purgatoire* (Paris, 1995), 175.

the justice that the King must render me, in his magnanimous heart replying to my letter enclosed when through your intercession he is inspired by the Holy Spirit (may it preserve him).⁵²

Neither Stuardo's letter, nor the letters from Ormonde, nor this prayer appear to have succeeded in persuading James III to receive Stuardo.

Stuardo does seem, however, to have had a lasting influence on the family of the Duke of Berwick. The documents do not reveal if the 2nd Duke had been accompanied by his wife (Catalina Ventura y Colòn de Portugal)⁵³ or his son⁵⁴ when he visited the tomb of Jacques de La Cloche, but a few years later the 3rd Duke of Berwick adopted the name Stuardo instead of FitzJames. The Dowager Duchess of Berwick (second wife of the 1st Duke and mother of his children in France) complained to James III in March 1745:

the Duc de Berwick has taken the name of Stuard[o] and to see the saime family cald by too different naines seemes most extraordinary ... I see in public papers Dom Stuardo Portugal which I am told is my grandson. I don't wonder at ther taking the name of ther mother as an heiresse ..., but to change names ... is very nice and choking to my mind.⁵⁵

She asked the king to write to the Duke of Berwick to insist that he keep the name FitzJames. James III replied:

I really dont see what I can do to rectify what you with reason disapprove in relation to the [2nd] Duke of Berwick's children taking the name of Stuardo. I never call them but by their own name myself, and I remember that in some Bull or Bref granted by the Pope to the Grand Prior [Pedro FitzJames de Alcantara, brother of the 3rd Duke], he would have been called Stuardo if I had not prevented it. It is certainly not their name.

James then suggested that the duchess write 'friendly and freely' to her step-grandson, the 3rd Duke, 'on this subject ... letting him know that I am of your opinion'.⁵⁶ She presumably did write, because the family has ever since been known as FitzJames-Stuardo.⁵⁷

⁵² 'Amantissima mia Protettrice, da che il Sig.re Iddio fecemi la grazia di conoscerui, e venerarui in questa vostra Dominante Patria, vi à piaciuto con la vostra difesa, e gran Patrocinio di sempre assistermi, et esaudire specialmente i miei voti; nuovamente di tutto cuore vi supplico à proseguirmi più che mai la vostra efficacissima Protectione, e sostenermi in terra, et in cielo anche qual nacqui nipote di Carlo II: Rè d'Inghilterra, e Cugino del Rè Giacomo III. In forza di questa infallibile verità, riconoscerò altre si da voi la giustizia dovrà farmi il Reggio, a magnanimo di lui cuore in rispondere all'acclusa mia lettera quanto le ispirera per intercessione vostra lo spirito santo, qui conservet eum. Amen. Giacomo Stuardo.' Although the wording of the last sentence is a little unclear, it seems that Stuardo was promising, in the event of his obtaining the protection of James III, to give the credit for persuading the king to Saint Catherine of Genoa.

⁵³ The Duchess died in 1739, one year after her husband.

⁵⁴ The 2nd Duke of Berwick's son (the 3rd Duke) lived in Rome for most of the time from 1737 to 1742, at first at the Collegio Clementino, and then for two and a half years with James III in the Palazzo del Re (Corp, *The Stuarts in Italy* (above, n. 16), 255).

⁵⁵ RA SP 263/82, Dowager Duchess of Berwick to James III, 14 March 1745.

⁵⁶ RA SP 264/17, James III to Dowager Duchess of Berwick, 6 April 1745.

⁵⁷ At a later date the family adopted the spelling Stuart instead of Stuardo.

We now come to the final phase of Don Giacomo Stuardo's life. In 1743, by which time he was 73 years old, Stuardo decided to return to Naples — presumably from Genoa.⁵⁸ One reason for his decision to return was that Naples was now ruled by a son of Philip V of Spain: '(by the grace of God) the forces of the Spanish monarchy had already returned some time since'. In order to reach Naples he had to travel via Rome, where of course James III had been living for most of the time since 1719, and when he arrived there, calling himself Principe Giacomo Stuardo, he was immediately arrested as an impostor. As he himself recalled: 'he arrived in Rome on 11 November 1743, when he was once again arrested with all his retinue, and taken to the *carceri nuove* as an impostor and false prince'.⁵⁹

Liborio Michilli, the *giudice criminale del Governo di Roma*, seized all his possessions and confiscated all the 'writings and documents regarding the identity and authentic royal birth of the prince' — including the certificate of 1726 from Pignatelli, certificates Stuardo had received from Venice and Genoa, 'a privilege of Charles II' that had been given to his father, and 'many other papers, and correspondence, Royal Seals, and orders'. If we assume that all these documents were genuine, we are nevertheless surprised to discover that Stuardo claimed that he was a Knight of the Order of the Thistle, which had been revived by James II in 1687 and which was regarded by the exiled Jacobites as a very great honour, in the gift of James III. The objects confiscated from Stuardo included, 'packages which are declared to belong to the said posthumous Principe D. Giacomo, Knight of the Order of St Andrew of Scotland'.⁶⁰ This must have damned Stuardo in the eyes of both the Roman authorities and James III.

⁵⁸ In 1742 and 1743 Ghezzi, who had drawn Stuardo's portrait in 1708, was employed by James III to decorate his bedchamber in the Palazzo del Re (Corp, *The Stuarts in Italy* (above, n. 16), 322).

⁵⁹ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58r, 'Manifesto': '(per la Dio grazia) già da qualche tempo erano ritornate le Armi della Monarchia di Spagna'; 'ripassò per Roma nel 1743 all 11 di Novembre, in cui fu nuovamente arrestato con tutto il suo corteggio, e condotto nelle carceri nuove, come impostore, e falso Principe'. Baron von Stosch reported to London that an adventurer had arrived in Rome calling himself Principe Giacomo Stuardo and that he had been arrested on the orders of the Pope. He added a week later that the adventurer was a Neapolitan, and that his name was apparently Giacomo Origo (NA SP 98/46/fols 262, 264, Stosch to Newcastle, 23 and 30 November 1743). The manifesto of 1752 referred to in n. 49 states incorrectly that Stuardo returned to Rome in 1742 and remained there until 1743. The letters of Stosch confirm that the manifesto of 1750 is correct in stating that he returned in 1743 and remained there until 1744. (I am very grateful to Giovanni Tarantino for pointing out this discrepancy between the two manifestos.)

⁶⁰ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58r, 'Manifesto': 'scritture, e documenti spettantino all'identita, e Real nascità di detto Principe autenticati'; 'un privilegio di Carlo II', 'molte altre scritture, e lettere di corrispondenza, Sigilli Reali, ed ordini'; 'colli quali venghono dichiarati dal detto Principe D. Giacomo postumo Cavaliere dell'Ordine di S. Andrea di Scozia'. Stosch reported that Stuardo had a large family tree, some large seals bearing the Stuart coat of arms, some patents, a counterfeit Order of the Garter [sic], and various documents on which he based his claim, and that they were all confiscated (NA SP 98/46/fol. 268, Stosch to Newcastle, 7 December 1743; NA SP 98/49/fol. 35, Stosch to Newcastle, 3 March 1744).

Stuardo remained in prison for three months and thirteen days, until 24 February 1744. During that time he had copies of his certificates sent to Rome from Genoa, and these were accepted as genuine by Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga, the Papal Secretary of State and a friend of James III. He was then released without a trial:

without ever having been examined, he was brought to court to hear his sentence by order of His Holiness [Pope Benedict XIV], which was to be exiled from all the territories of the Papal States, deprived of the Order of St Andrew as an impostor and counterfeiter; for which reason, in the presence of the ministers and agents, he was made to strip to his shirt, and dressed from head to toe in the clothes of a beggar sent on purpose by that court.

He was taken to the coast, put in a *feluca*, and sent by sea to Naples, where he arrived on 27 February. Fortunately for Stuardo, his relations came to his rescue, took him back to their house and looked after him.⁶¹

Stuardo now set about recovering both his identity and the property he had lost since his departure from Naples in 1708. Pignatelli had been succeeded as archbishop by the pro-Spanish Cardinal Giuseppe Spinelli, and in 1744 Luigi Gualterio (nephew of Cardinal Filippo Gualterio) arrived as the new Papal Nuncio. Stuardo hoped that these two men would help him.

On 3 December 1745 the Curia Archiepiscopale of Naples gave Stuardo an officially authorized copy of the certificate he had obtained from Cardinal Pignatelli in 1726. He then approached the Bishop of Cajazza, who was Archbishop Spinelli's vicar-general. On 10 April 1747 the bishop gave Stuardo a document recommending him to the charity of everyone in the archdiocese of Naples as 'grandson of Charles the Second King of England, a follower of the Catholic faith and a zealous observer of our holy doctrine, for which he has suffered and did suffer so many travails'.⁶² In the following year he obtained a notarial certificate that: 'the said individual testified that he had visited the greatest courts of Europe, that is Rome, the courts of Germany, the Venetian Republic, the court of Genoa, and now Naples'.⁶³ He was now ready to take his case to court.

⁶¹ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58r, 'Manifesto': 'senza essere stato mai esaminato, fu presentato in Tribunale, e d'ordine della S.S. [Pope Benedict XIV] le fu intimata la sentenza, che fu l'esilio da tutto lo Stato Ecclesiastico, privato dell' Ordine di S. Andrea come impostore, e falsario, per il che alla presenza de' Ministri, e sbirri fu fatto spogliare fino della camicia, e rivestito da capo a piedi di un'abito mandato a bella posta da quella Corte'. Stuardo had a cousin named Donna Lucrezia Orsino, contessa di Oppido, who had married Signor Galeotti. It was his Orsino and Galeotti relations who helped him. Stosch reported that at first the Roman authorities were embarrassed because they did not know on what grounds they could legally punish Stuardo (NA SP 98/46/fol. 268, Stosch to Newcastle, 7 December 1743). According to him, they considered keeping Stuardo permanently in prison, and then decided to banish him from the Papal States (NA SP 98/49/fols 16, 18, 35, Stosch to Newcastle, 4 and 11 January, 3 March 1744).

⁶² BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 57r: 'nipote di Carlo Secondo re d'Inghilterra di professione cattolica e zelantissimo della nostra santa religione per cui ha sofferto e sofferse tanti travagli'.

⁶³ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 57r: 'il sudetto personaggio referito, come si è ritrovato nelle maggiore Corti d'Europa, cioè Roma, le corti della Germania, la Repubblica di Venezia, e quella di Genova, ed ora in Napoli'.

Employing an advocate named Don Francesco d'Amici,⁶⁴ Stuardo prepared a 'Manifesto in which proof is provided of the identity and royal birth of Principe D. Giacomo Stuardo, posthumous son of Principe Giacomo Errico Stuardo and grandson of Charles II King of Great Britain'. This manifesto was printed and dated 7 January 1750, and contains a brief and highly selective account of Stuardo's life.⁶⁵ It explains who Stuardo's parents were and identifies the people who had known him before he left Naples in 1708. It mentions his marriage in 1711, and his first arrest and imprisonment in Rome. After a brief reference to his travels in 1715, it then jumps on to 1743, when Stuardo returned to Rome, was arrested a second time, and had all his papers confiscated by the government of Rome. These, the manifesto points out, were now, 'in the hands of Judge Liborio Michilli', and should therefore be examined as evidence. It then specifies the 'assets left by the *Serenissimo* Principe D. Giacomo Errico Stuardo in this Kingdom of Naples', which were the two palazzi (in Naples and at Capua) and the money deposited in the Bank of Naples, all of which he now claimed. The case was brought before the archbishop's court by Stuardo 'free because poor'.⁶⁶

The trial, of which we have no details, lasted a year, and judgment was given on 15 December 1750, five days after Stuardo's 81st birthday. He was granted probate of his father's will, and ordered 'to be granted possession of all the property of his supposed father'.⁶⁷ His advocate made the following comment:

this prince of whom we speak, we may say that it is a manifest miracle of Heaven that sustains him on earth to the greater glory of Holy Mother Catholic Church in Rome in the midst of so many travails and infinite calamities that if he had been a giant at this time he would be dust, we can only say that he will serve as a mirror to be admired by all literary men capable of understanding this well-founded document, and what is related above is entirely established by the Government of Rome.⁶⁸

If James III was aware of this trial it is unlikely that he took any interest in it. Perhaps James's second son, Prince Henry, Cardinal Duke of York since 1747, might have followed the fortunes of his second cousin. Either way, obtaining

⁶⁴ La Cloche's mother-in-law was Annucchia d'Amici (or d'Amicij), so Stuardo's advocate was presumably his cousin. (For Stuardo's maternal grandmother's name, see Tarantino, 434.)

⁶⁵ BL Add MSS 20646, fols 57v–58r: 'Manifesto in cui si dimostra la identità e real nascita del Principe D. Giacomo Stuardo, figlio postumo del Principe Giacomo Errico Stuardo, e nipote di Carlo II Re della Gran Bretagna'.

⁶⁶ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58v, 'Manifesto': 'in potere di Liborio Michil [sic: Michilli] Giudice, Luogotenente del Governo di Roma'; 'beni lasciati dal Serenissimo Principe D. Giacomo Errico Stuardo in questo Regno di Napoli'; 'gratis come povero'.

⁶⁷ 'Immitti in possessionem omnium bonorum dicti eius patris'.

⁶⁸ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 58v, attestation of Don Francesco d'Amici, 15 December 1750: 'questo Principe, che si riferisce si puol dire, chè evidente miracolo del Cielo, che lo sostiene in Terra per maggior esaltazione della S. Madre Chiesa Cattolica Romana frà mezzo à tanti travagli, ed infinite disgrazie che se fusse stato uno Gigante sarebbe à quest'ora in polve, non si puol dire altro, che servira per specchio d'ammirazione à tutti gli' huomini Letterati, e capaci d'intendere questa fondata Scrittura, e quanto stà di sopra riferito, à pieno costa nel Governo di Roma'.

judgment was one thing; having it enforced seems to have been much more difficult, and nothing had been achieved more than a year later. On 10 March 1752 the 82-year old Stuardo decided to approach Luigi Gualterio. Having reminded him that his uncle had been Cardinal Protector of England, Stuardo wrote:

I would think that you are well enough apprised of a poor prince accompanied by infinite calamities and reduced to begging for bread; not for this does one lose the rank of prince, saying with the Holy Gospel that poverty does not destroy nobility, and with your profound learning and saintly mind you will judge my conduct, as it has been judged by all the courts of Europe where I have been, and by this sovereign monarch [Charles, King of Naples] (whom may God forever make happy) who commanded the tribunal of the G [rand] C[ourt] of the *Vicaria* by his royal despatch to do me justice and declare me sole heir of the royal Stuart blood of England, and all this was not of my doing, but of Jesus Christ, who desired to show the whole world a wandering prince; for this reason I confide in your valid patronage so that he will remember our present plight. I reverently kiss your saintly hands.⁶⁹

Stuardo attached to this letter a printed pamphlet covering four folio pages, containing copies of the Pignatelli certificate of 1726, the recommendation of the Bishop of Cajazza of 1747, and a (slightly muddled) family tree showing his descent from Charles II and stating that ‘Charles married into the house of Braganza, and had no issue, but in his youth with Maria Henrietta Stuart [had] a son, Jacques Bourg Rohan Stuart, an illegitimate son’.⁷⁰ It also included his manifesto of January 1750, together with the judgment of December of that year.⁷¹ Unfortunately there is no indication with these papers as to how they were received by Gualterio.

There is only one more document concerning the elderly Stuardo. During 1752 a longer version of his ‘Manifesto’ was published in Naples.⁷² The additional information contained within it included the 1724 publication in Cologne of the honour paid to him in Germany, and the exhumation of his father’s body

⁶⁹ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 56, Stuardo to Luigi Gualterio, ‘Da Casa’, 10 March 1752: ‘Io crederei che sarà sufficientemente informata d’un povero Principe accompagnato con assedio d’Infinite disgrazie, è ridotto a mendicar pane; non per questo si perde il Principato, dicendo così il Santo Evangelo, quod Paupertas non tollatur Nobilitatem, e colla dilei profonda dottrina, e santa mente giudicherà la mia condotta, come e stata giudicata da tutte le Corti d’Europa dove li siamo in caminati, e da questo sovrano Monarcha (che iddio sempre felicit) col suo real dispaccio comandò al Tribunale della G.C. della Vicaria che mi si fusse spedito di giustifizia, e dichiarato erede universale del Regio sangue Stuardo d’Inghilterra, e tutto sio non è stata opera mia, ma di Giesucristo, che ave volsuto far vedere al mondo tutto un Principe Ramingo; Pertanto non difficulto del dilei valido Patrocinio, acciò li soverra nelle nostre presente urgenze che si ritroviamo resto con baciarle riverentemente le sacri mani’.

⁷⁰ BL Add MSS 20646, fol. 57v: ‘si accasò Carlo II con la casa Braganza, non ebbe prole, mà in gioventù con Maria Errichetta Stuardo un maschio di Giacomo Boveveri Roano Stuardo figlio naturale’. See above, n. 31.

⁷¹ BL Add MSS 20646, fols 57r–58v.

⁷² See above, n. 49. As already explained in n. 59, this manifesto of 1752 gave the dates of Stuardo’s return to Rome as 1742–3 instead of 1743–4.

in 1737 or 1738. The new *Manifesto* also stated that Stuardo had been reduced to living in poverty in Naples since his release from prison in Rome in 1744.⁷³ After that there is silence. Perhaps Stuardo died later that year; perhaps he lived on in Naples for a little longer, the record of his death not having emerged yet from the Neapolitan parish registers.

In conclusion, there can be no doubt that Stuardo was the legitimate posthumous son of Jacques de La Cloche, and little doubt that his father really was a bastard of Charles II. It is the women in the story who remain mysterious. We know that Stuardo's wife was Donna Lucia Minelli della Riccia, and that his mother was Teresa Corona, but we know nothing about them. Stuardo and his wife did apparently have a son, but we do not know if his mother ever remarried, and we do not even know when the two women died. More important, we do not know the identity of Stuardo's paternal grandmother, and it seems fairly clear that even Stuardo himself had no idea who she really was. All he did was to repeat what he had been told by his mother, who herself had to rely on what she had been told by La Cloche during the short period (January to August 1669) that she had known him. No historian has been able to identify 'Maria Stuardo della famiglia delli Baroni di San Marzo',⁷⁴ and Stuardo evidently failed to contact any of his relations other than James III. La Cloche himself stated that his mother died in France in 1668 or 1669, and was 'of His Ma'tie Royall Family, which nearness and greatness of Blood was the cause ... that his Ma'tie would never acknowledge him [publicly] for his Sonn'.⁷⁵ And of course it was from Stuardo's grandmother as well as his grandfather that he obtained his surname.

On the evidence available to us we are likely to feel considerable sympathy for the unfortunate Don Giacomo Stuardo, and especially if we compare his life with those of the other grandchildren of Charles II, his first cousins. But the trouble is that there are gaps in his life story, beginning with his first 38 years in Naples, and continuing with his time in Rome and Genoa, and finally in Naples again. How did he pass his time; what did he do? Our knowledge comes from relatively few documents, some of them prepared by Stuardo himself in pursuit of the recognition he craved. Why, for example, did Ghezzi refer to him as 'La Reginella'? Was it simply because his mother had been called that?⁷⁶ Was it because he lived in the Via Reginella in Rome beside the Palazzo Costaguti, near the Campo dei Fiori? Or was it because he was regarded as effeminate? Or was there some other reason? We do not know. Ghezzi's portrait perhaps makes Stuardo look a little simple, and we are reminded of Nairne's comment that he

⁷³ Tarantino, 438.

⁷⁴ Tarantino, 436.

⁷⁵ NA SP 85/10/fol. 111, Kent to Williamson, 7 September 1669 (quoted in Tarantino, 435). If La Cloche's mother was really a member of the Stuart royal family then he would have been conceived from an incestuous relationship. But in fact there were no possible Stuart princesses of the appropriate age during the mid-1640s.

⁷⁶ See above, n. 35.

was ‘lacking in ... intelligence’.⁷⁷ Might either of those be a reason why Stuardo failed to achieve any recognition from James III? Stuardo must have genuinely believed that he was the grandson of Charles II. But why did he pretend to be a Knight of the Order of the Thistle, which he obviously was not?⁷⁸ These questions remain unanswered.

What, we might ask, would have been the result if James III had openly acknowledged Stuardo as a grandson of Charles II, and consequently as his own first cousin once removed? He could hardly have given him a household appointment at the exiled court, particularly if he was simple-minded. Nor could he have afforded to grant him a generous pension. Also, the births of James III’s two sons in 1720 and 1725 had put an end to Stuardo’s hopes of one day becoming King of England. Yet the fact of recognition and the knowledge that he had been received by James III would in themselves have improved enormously Stuardo’s prospects and standing in Italian society. So we are forced to question the motives of James III in refusing all Stuardo’s humble pleas for help.

At first sight it might look as though James III was unnecessarily unkind in rejecting Stuardo’s overtures. But in fact James had very good reasons for behaving as he did. The first concerns the ‘warming pan myth’. Doubts had been cast over his own legitimacy by Whig propaganda, with his enemies referring to him as the ‘pretended’ Prince of Wales in the sense of being a fraud, rather than in the neutral sense of being a claimant. It would not have been helpful to the Jacobite cause to present his enemies with the opportunity to bracket together two Stuart pretenders, one claiming to be the son of James II, the other — on the face of it extremely improbably — a grandson of Charles II, and both of them Catholics living in Italy. Nothing would have been gained, and much might have been lost.

It would have been necessary also to explain how this Neapolitan calling himself Don Giacomo Stuardo could possibly have been a grandson of Charles II. To do that would have involved identifying Jacques de La Cloche. Yet that would have been dangerous for the Stuart reputation, because Charles II had intended that La Cloche, training for the priesthood in Rome, should return to London and receive him into the Catholic Church.⁷⁹ The only documents that proved that La Cloche was Charles II’s son also contained that incriminating information. The last thing that James III wanted was to damn the entire Stuart dynasty in the eyes of Hanoverian England by revealing that not even Charles II had been trustworthy. Don Giacomo Stuardo was in effect a victim of circumstances beyond his control and quite possibly beyond his comprehension.

⁷⁷ See above, p. 227.

⁷⁸ In his 1752 manifesto Stuardo says that his father (La Cloche) had received from Charles II ‘la potestà’, extended to his sons and heirs, to create Knights of the Royal Order of St Andrew of Scotland. Yet the order was not revived until 1687, after the death of Charles II. (I am grateful to Giovanni Tarantino for this information about the 1752 manifesto.)

⁷⁹ Tarantino, 433.

If the story of Stuardo demonstrates the inherently difficult position of the offspring of a royal bastard of intermediate status — acknowledged secretly but not publicly —, it also reveals the vulnerability of a king in exile. Even Charles II had not been willing to acknowledge publicly his first bastard son, born many years before his marriage to Catherine of Braganza. James III, dependent on papal hospitality, was not in a position to associate himself with a man who all too easily could be dismissed as no more than a Neapolitan adventurer. And Stuardo, brought up in the Kingdom of Naples where the tradition of noble titles was very different to that in England, undermined his own case by describing himself as a prince and by implying, even if unintentionally, that his father was the son of an incestuous relationship between Charles II and his own sister Henriette.⁸⁰ From James III's point of view, Stuardo was simply an embarrassment.

There is no reason, however, to doubt that Stuardo was a grandson of Charles II, or that James III believed him to be his own cousin.⁸¹ For a short time, from 1714 to 1720, Stuardo had reason to hope that, if publicly recognized by James III, he might become the Jacobite heir-presumptive. Thereafter he hoped that recognition would benefit him both financially and socially. Above all, he hoped that it would result in his status being acknowledged everywhere to be that of a *principe*, which he firmly believed himself to be. Unless he were given a Jacobite dukedom or earldom, or some lesser peerage, then in English terms he was no more than Mr Stuart or Signor Stuardo. Acceptance in Italy as a prince or *principe*, on the other hand, could be achieved by simple recognition, without requiring any specific territorial title. This is what he so badly wanted, and this is what he was never granted.⁸²

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⁸⁰ See above, nn. 31 and 75.

⁸¹ There is a file of papers concerning the inheritance of James's son Cardinal York in 1807 that contains a copy of the will drawn up by Jacques de La Cloche in 1669. Whether the copy had been obtained by James III or his son, as seems likely, or whether it was put in the file by someone else at a later date, is unknown. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Misc Famiglia: Stuart b.172, fascicolo 3: above, n. 29.

⁸² I am very grateful to Professor Claire Catalini for her invaluable help with some of the Italian translations.