

The dissipated life led by the PRINCE OF WALES as he grew from a HANDSOME and accomplished youth to a corpulent and lecherous monarch is still well known today. In the 18th century newspapers and print sellers delighted in making his countless affairs and extravagant spending public knowledge. One of his most infamous affairs was with the actress MARY ROBINSON, protégée of both David Garrick and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and thought to be the most beautiful woman in England. The prince imagined himself as Florizel to her Perdita, in reference to the role that made her famous. After KING GEORGE III discovered that the prince had illegally married the Catholic Maria Fitzherbert in 1785, he was forced into what would become a notoriously unhappy marriage with his cousin, CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK.

The Prince of Wales describing himself to his first love, Mary Hamilton, at the age of 16.

Your brother is now approaching the bloom of youth. He is rather above normal size, his limbs well proportioned, and upon the whole is well made, though he has rather too great a penchant to grow fat. The features of his countenance are strong and manly, though they carry too much of an air of hauteur. His forehead is well shaped, his eyes, though none of the best, and although grey are passable ... His sentiments and thoughts are open and generous. He is above doing anything that is mean (too susceptible, even to believing people his friends, and placing too much confidence in them, from not yet having obtained a sufficient knowledge of the world or of its practices), grateful and friendly to an excess where he finds a real friend. His heart is good and tender if it is allowed to show its emotions ... Now for his vices, rather let us call them weaknesses. He is too subject to give vent to his passions of every kind, too subject to be in a passion, but he never bears malice or rancour in his heart. As for swearing, he has nearly cured himself of that vile habit. He is rather too fond of Wine and Women, to both which young men are apt to deliver themselves too much, but which he endeavours to check to the utmost of his power. But upon the whole, his Character is open, free and generous.

Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire on the Prince of Wales.

The Prince of Wales is rather tall and has a figure which though striking is not perfect. He is inclined to be too fat and looks too much like a woman in men's cloaths, but the gracefulness of his manner and his height certainly make him a pleasing figure. His face is very handsome and he is fond of dress even to a tawdry degree, which, young as he is, will soon wear off ... He is good-natur'd and rather extravagant ... But he certainly does not want for understanding, and his jokes sometimes have an appearance of wit. He appears to have an inclination to meddle with politicks, he loves being of consequence, and whether it is in intrigues of state or of gallantry he often thinks more is intended than really is.

The Prince of Wales on first seeing Mary Robinson in the role of Perdita.

I was delighted at the Play last Night, and was extremely moved by two scenes in it, especially as I was particularly interested in the appearance of the most beautiful Woman, that ever I beheld, who acted with such delicacy that she drew tears from my eyes, she perceived how much of my attention was taken up with

her, not only during her acting but when she was behind the Scenes, and contrived every little innocent art to captivate a heart but too susceptible of receiving every impression she attempted to give it, and Alas my Miranda my friend, she did but too well succeed, consider what is almost impossible, and allow what's next to impossibility for the lively and strong passions of a Young Man glowing with the utmost Warmth of desire, and yet feeling himself incapable of gratifying his darling. Her name is Robinson, on or off the stage for I have seen her both, she is I believe almost the greatest and most perfect beauty of her sex.

*The Prince on first meeting his intended wife,
Caroline of Brunswick*

*“Harris, I am not well; pray get me
a glass of brandy”*

*Caroline of Brunswick on first meeting
the Prince of Wales*

*“I think he's very fat and nothing like as
handsome as his portrait”*