

## Charles II and the women who bore his children



Charles met **Lucy Walter** in 1648 while in exile and, in 1649, she gave birth to his first child, **James Scott**, later **Duke of Monmouth**. Charles was forced to kidnap his son when Lucy fell into a life of dissipation. She died in Paris of syphilis before Charles was restored to his Throne.



**Barbara Villiers** was married to Roger Palmer when she became Charles's mistress in 1660. She bore six children, five of whom were acknowledged by Charles: three boys and two girls. The identity of the father of her youngest child, a daughter, is uncertain but may have been John Churchill. She later became Countess of Castlemaine and later Duchess of Cleveland.



Charles encountered **Moll Davis**, a popular singer, dancer and comedienne in about 1667. She had a daughter by Charles, Mary Tudor, the following year but was sent packing shortly after that with a pension of £1,000 a year.



**Nell Gwynn** first met Charles at the Duke's House Theatre in 1668. He was enchanted by the unaffected girl and they became lovers. Nell was totally committed to the King and Charles never tired of her. Nell gave him two more sons, Charles Beauclerk (who later became the Duke of St Albans) and James Beauclerk.



**Louise de Kéroualle** was Maid of Honour to Charles's sister, Minette, and Charles fell for her in 1670 on a visit to England. She became his official mistress in 1671. The following year, she gave birth to **Charles Lennox**, later Duke of Richmond. Louise herself was created Duchess of Portsmouth.

**Elizabeth Killigrew** (mother of **Charlotte Jemima**).

**Catherine Pegge** (mother of **Charles, Earl of Plymouth**, known as "Don Carlo").

### Some of the mistresses of Charles II:

Winifred Wells – one of the Queen's Maids of Honour

Mrs Jane Roberts – the daughter of a clergyman

Mrs Knight – a famous singer

Mary Killigrew – the widowed Countess of Falmouth

Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare

### CATHARINE OF BRAGANZA, THE WIFE OF CHARLES II



**Catharine of Braganza**, the daughter of the King of Portugal, married Charles II in 1662. The marriage failed to produce an heir but they remained close friends. After the death of Charles II in February 1685, Catharine returned to Portugal, where she died in 1705.

### LADY FRANCES STEWART



**Frances Stewart**, with helmet and trident, was engraved as Britannia, to preside over British coinage for three centuries. Of all Charles II's loves, she is the only one believed to have consistently refused his advances.

Source: [www.okima.com](http://www.okima.com)

## 10 Things You Didn't Know About Charles II and his Reign

1. Commissioned by Charles II, Frances Stewart's portrait was immortalised as the symbol for Britannia, complete with helmet and trident, and was used on British coinage for three centuries until decimalisation in 1971.

2. Barbara Villiers, Charles II's greediest mistress, was given St James's Park and Green Park in London to add to her fortune. She tried to add Phoenix Park in Dublin to this list but was prevented from doing so by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

3. The Dutch gave Charles II one of their New World territories (New Amsterdam). Charles renamed it New York, after his brother, the Duke of York.

4. Charles II was responsible for the foundation of the Royal Greenwich Observatory in 1675. Designed by Christopher Wren, it was established to provide navigational information to sailors.

5. The Royal Hospital for war veterans at Chelsea was founded by Charles II. It was Nell Gwynn who campaigned for a hospital for war veterans after coming across an old soldier begging in the street. The building was designed by Christopher Wren and the foundation stone was laid in 1682 by the King himself.

6. Queen Catharine was responsible for popularising tea-drinking in England. When she first arrived in Portsmouth on 13 May 1662, she asked for a cup of tea. This baffled the English as the drink was barely known at this time; the national beverage was ale.

7. On Charles's Restoration, cultural life blossomed after years of Puritan repression, and actresses appeared on the professional stage for the first time in the history of English theatre. This, like many others, was an innovation brought from France by Charles's returning courtiers.

8. Pubs across England called The Black Boy are generally named after Charles. It was an early

nickname for him (coined by his mother) because of the darkness of his skin and eyes.

9. Charleston in South Carolina was named after Charles II. In April 1670, colonists landed on the Western bank of the Ashley River, five miles from the sea, and named the settlement Charles Town in his honour.

10. Charles is often credited with popularising both Champagne-drinking and yachting in England. His first racing yacht was called *Jamie* after his illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth, and his last was called *Fubbs*, his nickname for his mistress, Louise de K eroualle. Fubbs is an old English word for chubby.