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## SUBMISSIONS

This periodical is only as substantial as the material it contains: therefore, we more than welcome any contributions that members of the academic community might wish to make. Articles we would be most interested in publishing include those addressing Romantic literary studies with an especial slant on book history, textual and bibliographical studies, the literary marketplace and the publishing world, and so forth. Papers of 5–8,000 words should be submitted by the beginning of April or October in order to make the next issue, if accepted. Any of the usual electronic formats (e.g. RTF, Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, HTML) are acceptable, either by post or e-mail. Submissions should be sent to Dr Anthony Mandal, Centre for Editorial and Intertextual Research, ENCAP, Cardiff University, PO Box 94, CARDIFF CF10 3XB, Wales (UK), [mandal@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:mandal@cardiff.ac.uk).

# ANNE KER (1766–1821)

## A Biographical and Bibliographical Study

*Rachel Howard*



### I

ENGLISH NOVELIST ANNE KER (PHILLIPS) was born in 1766 and published several works of popular fiction between the years of 1799 and 1817.<sup>1</sup> She was a commercial writer whose desire to sell aligns her with many other female writers of the time. Lacking the literary innovation or coherent morality to be praised by the reviewers or remembered today, the works of authors like Ker represent fiction as it both existed in and influenced its society, subsequently offering valuable insights in to that context. Ker is of additional biographical interest: she seems to have been a determined and outspoken character whose bold opinions on fiction contributed to contemporary debates about women's writing and reading. As becomes apparent through Ker's correspondence with the Royal Literary Fund, her life also exemplifies some of the hardships experienced by female authors of the Romantic period.

Anne Ker was the daughter of John Phillips, a native of Essex who trained as a builder before becoming a noteworthy surveyor of canals.<sup>2</sup> Phillips documented and disseminated his practical work in a series of popular reference books, beginning in the 1790s with *Crosby's Builder's New Price Book* (1790) and *A Treatise on Inland Navigation* (1792), and ending with *A General History of Inland Navigation, Foreign and Domestic* (1809). Phillips appears to have been a man deeply committed to his career and guided by an interest in the progressive potential of the construction of canals that affected his daughter in a number of ways. Ker would claim late in her life that her father's devotion to his work led to a series of expensive endeavours by which the family was left financially embarrassed. In addition, Phillips's perseverance, his visible and vocal participation in society, and his use of print as a means by which to publicise his beliefs, would have a powerful influence on his daughter's character and the way in which she would come to use writing.

By the time of her father's death on 1 December 1813, Anne Ker was thirty-seven and an experienced author. She had been assisted in her fictional output by the connections of the family into which she had married, which was headed by John Ker, the third Duke of Roxburgh, an avid book-collector associated with a number of Whig aristocrats.<sup>3</sup> Of this family and its circle of acquaintance, certain individuals seem to have been especially prominent in influencing Anne Ker's writing, such as Lady Jerningham, wife of the poet and dramatist

Lord Jerningham, the Princess of Wales, Lady Mary Ker, and Lady Gordon, who lived bitterly estranged from her husband.<sup>4</sup> These were some of the women upon whom Ker depended for subscription to her first and fourth novels during the early and vigorously productive years of her writing life from 1799 to 1804. In total, she wrote and published six novels: *The Heiress di Montalde; or, the Castle of Bezanto: A Novel* (1799), *Adeline St Julian; or, the Midnight Hour, a Novel* (1800), *Emmeline; or, the Happy Discovery, a Novel* (1801), *The Mysterious Count; or, Montville Castle. A Romance* (1803), *Modern Faults, a Novel, Founded on Facts* (1804), and *Edric, the Forester: Or, the Mysteries of the Haunted Chamber. An Historical Romance* (1817).

Ker experimented with a number of the genres circulating in the fertile and changing fictional landscape of the early 1800s. The first two of Ker's publications are recognisably Gothic in style and content. *The Heiress di Montalde* (1799) charts the fate of a persecuted heroine amidst a setting of Mediterranean landscapes, dilapidated castles, mysterious villains, and other tropes associated with the Gothic genre prevalent during the 1790s. *The Heiress di Montalde* is described in the *Critical Review* as another 'imitation in Mrs Radcliffe's manner', suggesting its alignment with the style of Gothic commonly authored by women. Owing to its use of suspense, and to its delineation of a supernatural occurrence that eventually finds a rational explanation, this novel may certainly be classed alongside the predominantly female-authored 'terror' branch of the Gothic popularised by Ann Radcliffe. In contrast, *Adeline St Julian* appears a year later and contains a great deal more violence than its predecessor: scenes of physical torture are conveyed whilst the perceived cruelty and irrationality of the Roman Catholic Church is strongly criticised. These inclusions align *Adeline* more with the male Gothic tradition associated with the evocation of horror rather than terror, exemplified in particular by M. G. Lewis's anti-Catholic and contemporaneously notorious novel, *The Monk* (1796). A number of parallels may be drawn between these two texts in order to illustrate their generic proximity. In *Adeline*, Elinor's pregnancy breaches the rules of the Church and leads to her horrific imprisonment at the hands of the offended nuns in a tiny cell. The father of her child dies unjustly and, though she herself is rescued, Elinor's remaining years are unhappy ones. The events of this subsidiary story echo those occurring in the inset story of Agnes in *The Monk*, and the descriptions used by Lewis and Ker—most notably with regard to the way in which Agnes and Elinor are discovered in an emaciated and deranged state—are also strikingly similar.

Ker's third novel *Emmeline* is set in England and marks the writer's departure in 1801 from the Gothic genre. Ker's turn away from such tales of excess and transgression reflects the wider trend in the wake of the Revolutionary decade towards more conservative, domestic fiction that depicted situations and characters more likely to exist in the young female reader's own life and surroundings. In similarity with Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801), one of the novels most important in popularising this style, *Emmeline* places a virtuous orphan girl under the care of a less than moral guardian. Like *Belinda*, *Emmeline* must

negotiate the trials of the fashionable world, such as the false friendship of a coquette and the lecherous advances of a libertine, before her virtue and strength are rewarded. With *Modern Faults* in 1804, Ker tries her hand at the yet more serious didactic genre that was an expanding facet of the contemporary literary landscape. This tale, in which a mistreated heroine endures her misfortunes with religious faith and strength, in many ways anticipates the moral and Evangelical fictions that would come to prominence in the 1810s with the publications of Hannah More and Mary Brunton. *Edric the Eorester* (1817), Ker's only work to appear in three volumes, was published over a decade after her last novel and contains a striking mixture of all of the genres previously used by Ker, being a combination of romance, Gothic, and didacticism. Importantly this novel is set in the time of William the Conqueror, and represents Ker's only attempt at the historical style of fiction that was increasingly popular in 1810s.

In keeping with her traversal of generic boundaries, Ker's novels are stylistically various too, making use of a number of distinct narrative techniques. The *Heiress di Montalde*, for example, is a retrospective account in the first person that also contains a layering of narrative histories recounted in the voices of other characters. *Modern Faults*, on the other hand, is a largely epistolary novel, whilst the remaining four texts use an omniscient narrator. This tendency towards fictional pastiche exhibits Ker's desire to take advantage of the plural state of the contemporary literary market, and in this way points towards her leading and most significant characteristic as a writer: her commercialism. Ker did not stand out for her use of a particular style, her artistic greatness, or her moral messages. Rather, like the majority of women novelists of her time, she wrote cheap and, in many ways, formulaic fiction. Owing to this normative status, Ker represents something of a gauge of what was habitually circulated and received amongst the readers of the Romantic period: a plurality of popular and changing fictional styles. Interestingly, a closer inspection of Ker's fiction reveals that the lack of adherence to any strict style, characteristic of such artistically or morally unremarkable writers as herself, seems simultaneously to have lent their novels a looseness of composition that enabled a surprising degree of moral ambiguity.

In many ways, Ker's texts are admissible spaces in which some fairly taboo subjects, such as that of the clandestine or unconventional marriage, are discussed. In *The Heiress di Montalde*, a secret marriage occurs between Sebastian and Adelaide that gains the narrator's, though not the characters' parents', approval. In the same novel the fact that Count di la Rofa is married, admittedly without his knowledge, to two women at once is glossed over as if unimportant. *Adeline St Julian* also sanctions the clandestine marriage and ensuing pregnancy of a woman to a member of the clergy. Like marriage, identity too is not stable in Ker's novels. The manifold instances of disguise and cross-dressing occurring throughout Ker's writing embody an attitude towards social characteristics which is at least liberal and engaged, if not radical and instructive. In *The Heiress di Montalde*, for example, Count Albani dresses as a woman in order to elicit a private interview with Victoria with a view to her seduction. Victo-

ria, however, is actually a man who has for some time been masquerading as a woman. Similarly Correlia, in *The Mysterious Count*, disguises herself as a priest in order to rescue Albert from a prison.

The representation of servants throughout Ker's *oeuvre* may be seen to culminate in a quite radical discourse on social class. A trope of much Gothic fiction sees serving-people identified by a foolish superstition, which, owing to some contrivance of plot, is corrected by their social superiors. Though in one instance Ker represents servants in this customary way, she may frequently be found to portray the lower classes as more rational and moral than their wealthier counterparts. The heroine of *Emmeline* delivers a bold, 'pretty lecture' espousing this notion when she states that 'virtue is not confined to people of rank' (II, 268). Emmeline is not alone amongst Ker's female characters for her independent and vocal nature. Rather, a number of Ker's heroines are involved in industry and commerce, and many live in a family or even a community devoid of men. Anne Ker's novels also explicitly thematise subjects to which those few of her contemporaries eminent for their literary value or consistently moral purpose make only euphemistic reference. For example Matilda in *The Mysterious Count* is open and remorseless with regard to her sexual promiscuity both before and after her marriage, whilst in *Modern Faults* Rosalie discusses the social ill of prostitution at length. What is perhaps most significant about these ambiguities and seeming non-conformities is the fact that they are present in otherwise unremarkable, typical texts. Ker's amalgamation of genres, themes, and styles substantiates the notion that her goal as a writer was popular appeal and commercial success. Her novels may therefore be taken to exemplify the kind written by the majority of female authors at this time. Lacking the artistic merit or coherent morality to be celebrated by the reviewers or remembered today, these were in fact the novels by which the genre would, by the average reader, have been recognised. The content of Ker's fiction reveals, then, that in a standard encounter with the novel the reader would have been presented with a degree of moral flexibility and a range of possible represented worlds.

In addition to reflecting the fictional context of which she was a part, Ker's novels are of considerable biographical import. In particular, the mode of transmission dominating Ker's *oeuvre* reveals something of this writer's lifestyle and character. The first point to note is that Ker lacked a consistent publisher for her fictions. One implication of this is that her career was somewhat unstable and precarious, and would have led Ker to adopt a certain inflexibility of character. In addition, the fact that she had to deal with a number of publishers rather than with a single concern would have meant that Ker, through her writing, occupied an independent and visible position in society. To clarify, a number of female authors of these years wrote consistently for large publishing houses such as the Minerva Press. Such publishers provided almost total mediation between the author and the public sphere, taking control of the presentation and dissemination of her novels and, in so doing, make the writer invisible.<sup>5</sup> Conversely Ker alternated between a number of publishers and printers, and so was able to use the preliminary space, normally governed by the publisher,

to make direct addresses to, and to engage with, her readership. The nature of Ker's presence in the text's preliminaries, or more expressly the uses to which she put this space, reveals a controversial instatement in the world of print. Her preliminaries disclose a relationship between Ker and her contemporary reviewers indicative of this woman's significant contribution to the wider Romantic-era struggle regarding the contested status of the female-authored novel.

Despite the fact that the novel was a considerable and largely female-authored genre during the years spanned by Ker's career, the male establishment of the reviewers held the authority to publicly name a text as either worthy or poor.<sup>6</sup> Of the novels in circulation, very few received the praise of the reviewers, and these tended to be works of an expressly conservative or religious inclination. Subsequently, the majority of novels—in other words the novel as most readers would have known it—were denied an identity concordant with their popularity. The politics of this situation are clear: the power wielded by the critics was the power of definition, the power to impose and to police a formulation of worthy, readable literature. Ker's novels were of the very kind despised by the reviewers, who certainly saw her as one of the mass of contemporary writers, 'another wretched imitat(or)' of current trends, as the *New London Review's* piece on *The Heiress di Montlade* puts it.<sup>7</sup> The power relation which the reviewers' participation in novelistic discourse aimed to uphold is certainly discernible in their attitude towards Ker. Patronising criticisms belittling her technical skill and competence as a writer are directed at Ker at every stage of her career. The *New London Review's* account of *The Heiress di Montalde* cites in particular Ker's use of language and 'confused' arrangement of plot as points for disapproval, whilst the reviewer of *Adeline* in the *Anti-Jacobin Review* advises Ker to 'peruse Dilworth, Dyche, Fenning, or some other of our minor grammarians'. Correspondingly, the reviewer of *Modern Faults* in the *Critical Review* says very little about the novel that is not an interpretation of how attractive or not Ker appears to be in her frontispiece portrait. The implication of this very common declaration of women's inferior writing ability is that 'our' grammarians, deserving of the authority which writing can confer, belong to the male establishment, with women writers being on foreign territory. The indication is that in the mainstream, dominant public discourse of which the reviews were a part, women writers' identities were prescribed to them by the male discourse within which they were marginalised.

The deeper fear felt by the critics, one suspects, however, and belied by their vitriolic tone, is that the fictions of Ker, and those of the multitude of female novelists with which she is aligned, in some way eluded and so threatened the male power to define asserted in the comments above. Plagiarism, a want of realism, the lack of a coherent overview, and the absence of a distinct moral message, are amongst the main criticisms of Ker. In these respects, the tendency which the critics name either immoral or 'bad' art is clearly the tendency to combine popular styles and values. The *Anti-Jacobin Review's* version of *Adeline* makes this explicit when it refers to Ker's intertextuality and ambiguous message as 'monstrous', a term suggesting an excess which cannot be incorporated

by the mainstream terminology. As there is nothing intrinsically base about such pastiche as a way of writing, the reason behind the reviewers' attempts to silence generically mixed texts can be seen to lie in the capacity of such works for independent self-definition. The role of the reviewers was to assert and to maintain the gendered power relations of society in which definitions are generated from the male discourse. The threat of novels such as Ker's would seem to be that they could exist and flourish outside the framework of the male reviewers and the masculine perspective.

The preliminaries constitute the space revealing the degree to which the author accepts and defers to the male standards. Consequently, Ker's prefatory material is decisive. Many prefaces addressed by women writers of Ker's era exhibit a deference to the opinions of the critics. Correspondingly many publishers encouraged their authors to write anonymously and to refrain from subscription, as the use of a full name on the title page and an open desire to sell were considered indecorous for a woman in this society. In her preliminaries, however, Anne Ker is both scathing and dismissive of the critics with whom many similarly situated authors sought to ingratiate themselves. As we have seen, Ker's first two novels were disparaged by the reviewers. Yet, rather than attempting to compensate for the negative impression created by these works, Ker's remarks in the preface to *Emmeline*, her third novel, exhibit a decided disregard the male-defined conventions of female authorship. In the 'Dedication to Lady Jerningham' (I, iii–iv), her sponsor, Ker aligns her fiction with the mass of other novels which have 'in general' met with a 'favorable reception' and so are, despite the critics' view, worthy.<sup>8</sup> This inflation of the importance of the general, mainly female, public, continues in the subsequent address 'To the Public' (I, v–viii). Here, Ker names the critics 'devouring watchmen' and derides the principles of the *Anti-Jacobin Review* as a 'well known shame'. She also argues that the critics are corrupt, being open to having their 'mouths crammed with a bribe'. She closes by criticising the gender bias that results in fiction known to be 'guided by the hand of a female' being certain to receive a negative review.

More important than the distinct boldness of this attack on the critics, though, is Ker's simultaneous exclusion of them. By describing *Emmeline* as this 'wonderful, absurd, improbable, romantic, *something* which I have written', Ker is mocking the *Anti-Jacobin's* quibbling over the terms by which fiction ought to be identified. This mockery implies the inapplicability of the male critic's yardstick of values to the realm of the female-controlled novel, and in this way undermines the validity of their presence in the novel. Indeed, in her 'Address to the Public', Ker states that she writes 'in conformity to the pleasure of the times. It is to my patronizers, and to the generous public I appeal, and not to those contemptuous open-mouthed devouring critics'. The important people from whom to seek approval in the sphere of the production and consumption of the novel, then, are those providing the funding: the female sponsor and the female readership. Indeed, Ker's gesture of refusing to address either the 'Dedication' or 'To the Public' to the critics to whom she refers powerfully expresses

bypassing and exclusion of them from the definition of the novel. Throughout her writing career, Ker refuses to either solicit the approval of the critic or to express acquiescence to his definitions. The prefatory space reveals that Ker's principal goal was to sell. The fact that two of her novels contain full subscription lists in the preliminaries, that two contain advertisements for subsequent works, and that all list their preceding works, would have given further impetus to the impression made on the reader that the novels they were reading were commodities. A final and telling point to note in the context of Ker's preliminaries is that the opening of *Edric the Forester* contains an unusual poem, entitled 'A Ker-ish Trick', by Ker's husband John Ker. Perhaps aiming to elicit sympathy from the reader, this account of the family's misfortunes reveals the ease with which Ker, in contrast to contemporary views on decorum, was prepared to expose her private life. When considered together, Ker's preliminaries reveal her espousal of a theory of the novel as a commercial enterprise, creating a female space of amusement distinct from the male critics' view of worthy literature, that problematised the broader male social monopoly on definitions.

With the brightest and most prolific period of her writing career over, Ker's life altered greatly. Throughout her later years she suffered from financial hardships and debilitating illnesses to which her several appeals to the Royal Literary Fund, consisting in a correspondence of six applications over fourteen months, testify.<sup>9</sup> In the first of her pleas, dated 21 August 1820, Ker's complaint is that she is 'in want of bread to exist' due to undergoing 'unforeseen accidents in business' and 'that dreadful complaint the gout'. She goes on to state that her 'embarrassments and distress cannot be sufficiently explained by letter', but nonetheless appeals to 'the feeling hearts of the Gentlemen of this Benevolent Fund'. This representation of her dire circumstances earns Ker the payment of £5 for which, on 24 August 1820, she sends a letter of gratitude and a complimentary copy of her most recently published novel, *Edric the Forester* (1817). On 25 November 1820 a similar application is made by Ker: here, we learn of her intention to take up an offer of paid employment in the New Year, with the need to buy the clothes necessary for this position providing the main reason for the present request. The rejection of this entreaty, on the grounds that it comes too soon after her initial application, resulted, Ker would claim, in her having been unable to accept the previously mentioned teaching post. This provokes a further application on 2 January 1821. At this stage Ker is fifty-three years of age and argues that she lacks even 'the commonest necessities of life'. She is so afflicted with the gout that she is losing the use of her right hand, and to add to the hardship of the household her husband has also been ill with 'a very severe cold'. Closing this letter, Ker states that she will pray to God for 'a favourable response'. She receives £5 from the Fund, before applying again on 1 May 1821, complaining of an 'abscess in the breast, which the faculty thought a very singular case. The discharge was immense and reduced her to a deplorable state'. Owing to this illness, Ker had for some time been confined on medical advice to her house. Wanting sufficient funds, however, she had not been attended by a nurse. Receiving no response to this request,

Ker writes, on 12 June 1821, to remind the Fund of her previous letter and to press for a reply. Again obtaining no answer, she persists in writing one final petition on 27 October 1821, which is declined.

Whilst the content of these letters is informative with regard to the physical and financial circumstances of Ker's life at this point (or at least they indicate Ker's representation of her life), their tone and register also contribute to our understanding of Ker's character as worldly, astute, and bold. When writing of her debts and of having traded her furniture, Ker espouses a knowledge of, and competence in, discussing economic issues and practical problems which is at odds with contemporary formulations and concerns in which women of the middling rank ought to have been engaged. Additionally, in describing herself as 'stranded' and 'destitute of friends', Ker plays the role of the helpless female in order to elicit a protective, and hopefully generous, response from the men of the Fund, and in this displays a shrewd capacity to manipulate expected gender roles. This is clearly no more than a performance though: we see further evidence here of Ker's refusal to adhere to such formulations of femininity. In keeping with the unveiling of her identity palpable in the prefaces to her novels, Ker's letters to the Fund demonstrate a willingness to externalise her private life, of which her explicitly detailed disclosure of her breast abscess is a notable example. This period of asperity was experienced by Ker whilst living with her husband at 48 Wellington Street, Newington Causeway, Surrey, and led to her death, aged fifty-four, in 1821.

The fiction that Ker had written throughout her career was part of a body of works which, though denounced by reviewers and largely forgotten today, is nonetheless representative of the novel as it was experienced and engaged with by most women readers of the time. Ker's novels demonstrate that this reading material could be surprisingly questioning and unorthodox in parts, and in this way is worthy of study for its impact upon the reader, if not for its artistic value. We have also seen that Ker was one of a number of Romantic women writers to appeal to the Royal Literary Fund. Her financial hardships and talent for persuading the powerful to come to her aid offers some indication of the life led by many female authors, which, particularly as the period progressed and saw the edging out of women by male writers, was a hard one. On a more personal level, Ker was influenced by a passionate and determined father and connected with a circle of somewhat unorthodox aristocrats, and subsequently became an interesting character controversial for her projection of a public self that was at odds with the norm. Through her writing, she participated in and reflects to us today some of the debates about women's writing and reading that are so important in the history of the novel. Owing to her presence in this discourse, Ker came to occupy an unmasked and worldly position in the communal sphere of the literary market, from which she boldly advocated a view of novelistic discourse at this time as a commercial, female-centred activity.

## II

## BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ANNE KER'S NOVELS

All of the novels published by Anne Ker are listed in this bibliography, and have been viewed directly from the Corvey Microfiche Edition (CME). The entries below begin with the novel's date of publication and the author's name, with any parts of the name not present on the title page to the novel being given in square brackets. A transcription of the title page follows, omitting any epigraphs and volume specific details. The publisher's imprint is also omitted, as this appears on the subsequent line. The following segment of each entry records pagination, including details of illustrations and prefaces, format, and, where this information has been available, the price of the volume and the source from which this was deduced. The next line of the entry gives the library details of the copy examined (in this case the CME reference number), followed by catalogue entries given in the ECB, the ESTC for works up to 1800, or the NSTC for works 1801–70, and OCLC. Where no entry has been located in these sources for the relevant novels, the source appears preceded by a lower case 'x'. The final part of each entry is comprised of notes of interest followed by transcriptions of reviews.

## ABBREVIATIONS

adv.	advertisement.
CME	Corvey Microfiche Edition.
ECB	R. A. Peddie and Quintin Waddington (eds), <i>The English Catalogue of Books, 1801–1836</i> (London, 1914; New York: Kraus Reprint, 1963).
ESTC	<i>Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue</i> , CD-ROM (London, 1992).
n.s.	new series.
NSTC	<i>Nineteenth Century Short-Title Catalogue</i> , 61 vols (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Averro Publications, 1984–95); CD-ROM (Newcastle, 1996).
OCLC	OCLC Worldcat Database.
ser.	series.
unn.	unnumbered.

**I. THE HEIRESS DI MONTALDE; OR, THE CASTLE OF BEZANTO: A NOVEL. IN TWO VOLUMES. BY MRS. ANNE KER. DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION, TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS AUGUSTA SOPHIA.**

London: Printed for the Author; and sold by Earle and Hemet, Frith Street, Soho, 1799.

I vii, 232p, ill.; II 191p. 12mo. 7s sewed (adv.).

CME 3-628-45100-0; ESTC t116100; OCLC 13320508.

*Notes:* Frontispiece. Dedication to Her Royal Highness the Princess Augusta Sophia, pp. iv–vii, in which Ker, whilst expressing her gratitude to her patron for encouraging this ‘first production’, defines the function of the novel as being to ‘amuse’ a reader in the ‘leisure hour’. List of this novel’s 52 subscribers (2 pp. unnn.), many of whom are members of the aristocracy. Appeal for subscriptions for Ker’s next work, *Adeline St Julian; or, the Midnight Hour*, which is due to be published in November, 7s sewed, (1 p. unnn).

*New London Review* 2 (Oct 1799), 388–89: ‘The Heiress de Montalde is a wretched imitation of Mrs. Radcliffe’s manner, but the black horror of the mysterious tale is not brightened by a single ray of that lady’s genius. The plot is confused, the incidents contemptible, and the language destitute of all characteristic propriety.

‘Mrs. Ann Ker possesses a particular knack of protracting attention, and whenever the reader expects to come to a knowledge of the event in relation, he is almost uniformly interrupted by some unlucky accident to which the monstrous fancy of the author gives birth.

‘To those who delight in details of Gothic castles, horrid dungeons, mouldering towers, haunted groves, silver moons, refulgent planets and spangled skies, The Heiress de Montalde can only prove interesting.’

2. **ADELIN ST. JULIAN; OR, THE MIDNIGHT HOUR, A NOVEL. IN TWO VOLUMES. BY MRS. ANNE KER, AUTHOR OF THE HEIRESS DI MONTALDE, &C.**

London: Printed by J. Bonsor, Salisbury Square; for J. and E. Kerby, Bond Street; and sold by T. Hurst, Paternoster Row, 1800.

I 225p, ill.; II 228p. 12mo. 7s sewed (adv.); 8s boards (*Monthly Review*).

CME 3-628-47994-0; ESTC t070733; OCLC 6853516.

*Notes:* Frontispiece of a ghost.

*Anti-Jacobin Review* 7 (1800), 201–02: ‘Why this performance is termed a *novel*, we are at a loss to determine: certainly not because it possesses any novelty; neither does the general acceptance of the word warrant its adoption in the present instance. According to the *modern* school, it falls under the denomination of ROMANCE; for, if *improbability* and *absurdity* constitute that species of writing, *Adeline St. Julian* is sufficiently *romantic*.

‘The story is *made up* from that sublime production, the *Castle Spectre*, and from Mr. Whaley’s tragedy of the Castle of Montval, with several incidents *freely* BORROWED from *Cervantes*; or, perhaps, at second-hand from his *Shakespearean* dramatiser, the author of the *Mountaineer*. Had we any influence with Mr Astley, the Amphitheatrical Manager; we would recommend Mrs. K. to his employment, as a kind of *journeywoman manufacturer* of ghosts, secret doors, &c. &c.

‘We are not vain enough to suppose that this lady writes with the intention of pleasing the Reviewers, yet we cannot refrain from offering a piece of friendly advice. Let her peruse Dilworth, Dyche, Fenning, or some other of our minor grammarians, with some little attention: it may prevent her from being perfectly unintelligible.’

*Critical Review* 2nd ser. 29 (May 1800), 116: ‘Many ladies, from the frequent persusal of novels, acquire a set of phrases which they know not how to

apply, and treasure up in their minds a variety of incidents, calculated to amuse or astonish. If they have been praised by illiterate and ill-judging friends for their talents at letter-writing, though their epistles may have no other recommendation than pertness or vivacity, they consider themselves as fully qualified to write a novel which may gratify even the most judicious readers. With a small share of invention or some common sense, and with still less knowledge of the arts of composition, they enter upon the task of adding to the stock of the circulating library. They manufacture a tale from former works of narrative invention, with some trifling or absurd alterations or additions, and advertise the produce of their futile labour as a new novel or romance. Mrs Anne Ker appears to have followed this example; for her tale *Adeline* is a wretched farrago, with no novelty of fable, no original delineation of character, and not even common accuracy of language. Deprecating as we do, such prostitution of the press, we advise this lady to relinquish the employment of writing for the public. Let the “Midnight Hour” be involved in congenial darkness; and let the pretensions of the “Heiress di Montalde” be confined to oblivion.’

*Monthly Review* n.s. 33 (Sep 1800), 103: ‘This performance shews that the writer, though she does not scruple to borrow, possesses fancy and invention; not indeed much restrained by attention to probabilities; nor is the style of the narrative always within the limits of grammar. We can however say that many of the novels, which we announce to the public, have afforded us less amusement. The representation of a ghost fronts the title page: (be not startled, gentle reader! it is no “goblin damned!”) whether it be a good resemblance or not, we leave to the more experienced novel reader to determine. It seems to be drawn from the life, and apparently is much better flesh and blood than the persons to whom it is supposed to appear.’

3. **EMMELINE; OR, THE HAPPY DISCOVERY; A NOVEL, IN TWO VOLUMES. BY ANNE KER, AUTHOR OF THE HEIRESS DI MONTALDE, ADELIN ST. JULIAN, &C.**

London: Printed by J. Bonsor, Salisbury Square. For J. and E. Kerby, Bond Street; and T. Hurst, Paternoster Row, 1801.

I viii, 271p; II 280p. 12mo. 8s (ECB).

CME 3-628-48003; ECB 186; NSTC K380; xOCLC.

*Notes:* Dedication to Lady Jerningham, vol. 1, pp. [iii]–iv, signed Anne Ker and dated 24 Feb 1801 (ECB dates first publication Apr 1801), in which Ker, though seemingly modest in tone, confidently defends her writing as a contribution to a literary market dominated by, and approving of, ‘productions of this nature’. Address ‘TO THE PUBLIC’, vol. 1, pp. [v]–viii, voicing Ker’s bold and controversial response to the hostility with which contemporary reviewers had received her previous two novels. Here Ker both attacks gender inequality and defends the commercial and female-controlled identity of the novel. For a transcription of these two preliminary statements, see Section IV.

4. **THE MYSTERIOUS COUNT; OR, MONTVILLE CASTLE. A ROMANCE, IN TWO VOLUMES. BY ANNE KER.**  
 London: Printed by D. N. Shury, Berwick Street, Soho, for the Author, and sold by Crosby and Co. Stationers' Court, Ludgate Street, 1803.  
 I iv, 232p; II 240p. 12mo. 7s (ECB).  
 CME 3-628-47997-5; ECB 403; xNSTC; xOCLC.  
*Notes:* Epigraph on title page. Vol. 1, pp. [iii]–iv list of the novel's 28 subscribers, including Lady Jertingham, to whom Ker's previous work, *Emmeline; or, the Happy Discovery* (1801), had been dedicated, and Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.
5. **MODERN FAULTS, A NOVEL, FOUNDED UPON FACTS. BY MRS. KER, AUTHOR OF "THE HEIRESS DI MONTALDE." &C. &C. &C. IN TWO VOLUMES.**  
 London: Printed by J. M'Gowen, Church Street, Blackfriars Road. For J. Ker, 34, Great Surrey Street, Black Friars Road; sold also by John Badcock, Paternoster Row, 1804.  
 I 228p, ill.; II 234p. 12mo. 6s boards (*Critical Review*); 7s (ECB).  
 CME 3-628-48016-7; ECB 320; xNSTC; xOCLC.  
*Notes:* Frontispiece portrait of 'Mrs Anne Ker'. The novel ends, Vol. 2, p. 234, with an advertisement, immediately following the text, for Ker's next novel, *Edric the Forester*, in 3 vols, which is to appear in December at 10s 6d. This novel, however, does not seem to have been published until many years later, with the earliest discovered edition published in 1817 (see next item).  
*Critical Review* 3rd ser. 3 (Sep 1804), 116: "Modern Faults"! Faults? It is thus, as we have said, that crimes are extenuated by words. The true title is Modern Villanies; yet the villain repents; and the tale is not, on the whole, without its interest. A real fault is the prefixing such an displeasing picture. Is it a likeness? It will not add to the value of the volume. Is it a caricature? The plate should have been destroyed, were it only in pity to those "who are as ladies wish to be who love their lords."'  
*London Journal* 3 (1804), 682: 'This is a sorry tame story. There is nothing like originality or acuteness of thought or expression. A rakish husband leaves his wife, and lives with another woman, till being duly convinced of his fault, he returns to his duty; and this, told in a heavy, dull manner, is the whole of the affair. But perhaps the authoress may answer nearly in the words of the razor seller to the bumpkin, "my book was not written to amuse but to sell."'
6. **EDRIC, THE FORESTER: OR, THE MYSTERIES OF THE HAUNTED CHAMBER. AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE, IN THREE VOLUMES. BY MRS. ANNE KER, OF HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ROXBURGH'S FAMILY, AUTHOR OF THE HEIRESS DI MONTALDE—ADELINE ST. JULIAN—EMMELINE, OR THE HAPPY DISCOVERY—MYSTERIOUS COUNT—AND MODERN FAULTS.**  
 London: Printed for the Author, by D. N. Shury, Berwick Street, Soho; and sold by T. Hughes, Ludgate Street, 1817.  
 I 214p; II 216p; III 216p. 12mo.  
 CME 3-628-47995-9; xECB; OCLC 13320499; xNSTC.

*Notes:* Prefatory poem in vol. 1 (1 p. unnn.), consisting of 14 pairs of rhyming couplets, by J. Ker, Anne Ker's husband, entitled 'A Ker-ish Trick'. A version was later published in 1841, as part of William Hazlitt's *Romanticist and Novelist's Library* (NSTC 2K4083).

*Gentleman's Magazine* 2nd ser. 88 (supplement for July–Dec 1818), 617: 'Of the credulity which might prevail when "Edric the Forester" is represented to have run his career, in the days of William the Conqueror, we have not now to determine: but, in the more enlightened period of the nineteenth century, the Reader will require something like probability in the construction of a narrative, however ingeniously his fancy may be arrested by the imprisonment of Knights and Damsels in the turrets of a Castle, or by the effects of supernatural appearances, or a guilty conscience.'

*Monthly Review* n.s. 36 (June 1818), 213–14: 'A total want of grammatical accuracy is among the least faults of this paltry performance: its moral is not more applicable to common life than that of Jack the Giant Killer, showing that ogres and murderers will certainly be punished; and we should prefer the vagaries of that nursery-story to the mawkish absurdities of the present tale. "*The ladies Ellen and Elgiva, for that were their names,*" are confined in dungeons, because "*it was not Lord Fitzosric's intentions to marry,*" and they are released by Lady Jane, who had imprisoned herself during thirteen years in a haunted room, and performed the part of a ghost from pure good will, though she constantly possessed the means of escaping, and of claiming a noble fortune!'

### III

#### PLOT SYNOPSES

##### *The Heiress di Montalde; or, the Castle of Bezanto* (1799)

This first of Anne Ker's Gothic novels consists of the first-person retrospective account of an elderly English woman named Anne. Anne tells the story of a tour of Southern Europe undertaken many years ago by herself, her young Italian friend Palmira, and Palmira's husband Count di la Rofa. The story opens as Count di la Rofa suddenly and mysteriously returns to his home, the Castle of Bezanto, leaving Anne and Palmira to travel alone with a newly hired servant named Victoria. The three women meet with Palmira's lecherous brother in law, Count Albani, who disguises himself as a woman in order to trick Victoria into meeting alone with him. Victoria, seemingly much distressed by this attention, seeks a secret conversation with Palmira by which the latter is left greatly shocked. In order to explain the import of Victoria's revelation to Anne, Palmira provides an account of her own history. Many years ago Palmira had fallen in love with the Marquis Sebastian di St Beralti who was, much to Palmira's disappointment, married to Adelaide di Solanto. This marriage, however, had taken place in secret. When her father discovered the couple's deception he sent Adelaide to the same convent to which Palmira, heartbroken and disillusioned, had also retired. Here Adelaide died after giving birth to Sebastian's child. Soon after Palmira decided against becoming a nun and returned home.

Some time passed before Sebastian fell in love with Palmira. Palmira's father, however, was angry at his daughter's flightiness, and so forced her to marry his friend, Count di la Rofa. This takes Palmira's history up to the present conversation with Victoria concerning Count Albani and the disclosure that Victoria is actually Sebastian in disguise, come to persuade Palmira to run away with him. Palmira has refused Sebastian's entreaties, owing her to her loyalty to the Count. Palmira and Anne subsequently leave Sebastian and join Count di la Rofa at the Castle of Bezanto. Bezanto is rumoured to be haunted, and Anne, searching for evidence to disprove this, finds not a spirit but Count di la Rofa's beloved wife, Zephyrine, whom the Count, at the time of his marriage to Palmira and owing to a plot against him, believed to be dead. Palmira is told of this situation and, wishing the Count and Zephyrine happiness, agrees to arrangements for the annulment of her marriage. She returns to her home in order to take possession of the estates of her parents, who she learns have recently died. Palmira hears that Sebastian has been murdered, and that his spirit haunts the woods near her home. Anne discovers, however, that Sebastian is still alive, and encourages him to propose to Palmira. She accepts, and the couple live with Sebastian's daughter, the young Adelaide. Here Anne ends her retrospect, describing herself in the present as an old woman with a family of her own.

*Adeline St Julian; or, the Midnight Hour* (1800)

*Adeline St Julian* is Anne Ker's second Gothic novel and is set in the 1630s. Alphonso de Semonville hears a mysterious singer, rumoured to be a spirit, in the forest of St Amans near Languedoc in the French Provinces. After falling and injuring himself he awakes in the secret home of the singer, a young woman named Adeline, and her guardian, Madame Sophia Belmont. Sophia tells Alphonso that Adeline is the only remaining child of the Count and Countess of St Julian, who died under suspicious circumstances, with their property, the Castle of St Clair, falling into the possession of their relative Delarfonne. Suspecting Delarfonne of the murder of the St Julians, Madame Belmont ran away with Adeline to the home in the forest of St Amans in which Alphonso finds himself. Alphonso falls in love with Adeline, yet is intended by his father to marry Elinor de Montmorenci, a woman whom he esteems but cannot love. Elinor herself is pregnant and married without her family's knowledge to Henry de Castelle, a clergyman of the Roman Catholic Church. Henry has been framed for certain crimes by his rival Dampiere and the Cardinal Richelieu. By consequence he is on trial for using supernatural powers in order to seduce women. Alphonso and Elinor conspire to delay the marriage planned by their fathers. At this point, though, Adeline, Alphonso, and Elinor, are abducted.

Alphonso is informed that he is being held at the will of Delarfonne, though he is kept in ignorance of the reason, and remains imprisoned for some time in a Dominican Monastery. Tortured by the monks and offered the choice of taking Holy Orders or being killed, Alphonso declares that he would rather die than lead a monastic life, and manages to escape from his cell before further torture is carried out. On trying to find a route out of the Monastery he comes across Elinor who, emaciated almost beyond recognition and confined to a tiny cell not big enough to allow movement, has been tortured for her relationship with Henry de Castelle. The pair escape, and Elinor flees to England. Alphonso remains to seek Adeline. He meets with Eustace, an old and trustworthy servant of the Castle of St Clair, who informs him that Adeline is held at the Castle and that her father is still alive. Eustace proves to be an invaluable

guide, escorting Alphonso to the Castle where he meets Count St. Julian. The Count tells of his persecution at the time of his wife's murder and Adeline's flight, and states that Delarfonne is wholly to blame. He also talks of the years he has spent by consequence in exile as a slave in Tunisia, before he made his fortune in the East Indies and returned to France for revenge. The authorities are informed of Delarfonne's crimes and he is arrested. The Count reclaims his title and Adeline, having been rescued, marries Alphonso. Henry de Castelle, however, is executed on 18 August 1634, despite being proven innocent by the nuns testifying to the fact that he was framed, whilst the villain Delarfonne commits suicide before being brought to justice. Elinor, who we are told has been living in a depressed state, only returns to France in safety after her persecutors, Dampiere and Cardinal Richelieu, have died of natural causes.

*Emmeline; or, the Happy Discovery* (1801)

In contrast to the Gothic setting of its predecessors, the minefield negotiated by the vulnerable heroine of *Emmeline* is the fashionable English society of the early 1800s. As a child Emmeline was intended by her dying parents to be taken by a servant to live with relatives in England. However, this servant abandons his charge in the forest of Amiens in France, where she is found and subsequently taken in by the benevolent English couple, Mr and Mrs Wilson. Emmeline spends thirteen happy years with the Wilsons in a village near Oxford before both husband and wife die, leaving Emmeline with some property and a guardian, Sir Charles Freemore, with whom she goes to live at Auburn Hall. After a short time here, however, both Sir Charles and his son Alfred fall in love with Emmeline. Throughout the novel Sir Charles makes advances towards Emmeline, which she states reveal the 'tyrannic power' (1, 126) wielded by male guardians over vulnerable wards. Emmeline frankly tells Alfred that she loves him, and so will never marry his father. In the midst of this problematic situation at Auburn Hall, Emmeline travels to London with her new acquaintance and supposed friend, the vain, fashionable coquette and rich heiress, Charlotte Oakley.

When an admirer of Charlotte's in London, the Earl of Bellville, tells the heiress that he prefers Emmeline's beauty and character above all others, Charlotte jealously resolves to hate Emmeline and to seek revenge. With this in mind she pretends to have seen Alfred courting another young lady to whom he is rumoured to be engaged. This lie fails to convince Emmeline, though, and she is soon reconciled with Alfred. Refusing to relinquish her goal, Charlotte also hatches a plot to force Emmeline into the clutches of the dissipated and fashionable libertine, Lord Harkland. Posing as Emmeline, Charlotte writes a series of letters to Harkland in which she agrees to be his mistress and encourages him to 'kidnap' her in order to take her to his home, Morfe Castle. Entirely fooled by this hoax, Harkland has the plan put in to effect, and Emmeline finds herself at Morfe Castle. Realising the 'treacherous contrivance of her once valued friend' (1, 264), however, she explains the circumstances of the deception to Harkland, and also delivers 'a very pretty lecture' (1, 269) to him concerning the immorality of the rich and comparative positive morality of the poor. This leads Harkland to realise the errors of his behaviour and, releasing Emmeline, to reform his ways. At this point, Emmeline uncovers her mysterious parentage. It transpires that, being of the family of Mandeville, she will inherit substantial property. At the close of the novel Emmeline marries Alfred and forgives Charlotte, who has been punished and repents.

*The Mysterious Count; or, Montville Castle* (1803)

Anne Ker's *Mysterious Count* opens as the male protagonist Albert, the beloved son of the Duke de Limousin, leaves the family home of the Castle of Alembert in France in order to pursue a military career under the instruction of General Dumetz. The General is unfairly dismissed from the army and bitterly leaves France in disrepute in 1760. At this point Albert returns to France and discovers that during his absence his father has grown extremely close to Count Beranger. Albert is wary of the Count's character, but is in love with his daughter, Correlia. Intending his daughter for a richer suitor, however, and so wishing to prevent her potential union with Albert, the Count takes Limousin and Albert to stay with his friend, the Baron de Solignac, and his daughter Matilda, a beautiful but 'self conceit[ed] coquette' (1, 15). Matilda's father dies during the party's stay, leaving his daughter one of the richest heiresses in France. Matilda wishes to marry Albert and tells him this frankly and without invitation. By way of refusal, Albert tells Matilda of his love for Correlia. Subsequently left without hope of obtaining him, Matilda soon marries his father, the Duke de Limousin. Matilda's scorn at Albert's rejection and Count Beranger's desire to rid Correlia of Albert's presence lead this pair to unite in a plot to turn Limousin against his son. Having convinced Limousin that Albert has attempted to seduce Matilda, Limousin disinherits his son and vows never to see him again.

With the prospect of a union with Correlia thus ruled out, and ignorant of the lies behind his father's anger, Albert determines to flee to Italy but, on encountering a battle in Poland, comes to the rescue of Alzeyda, a woman strongly resembling Correlia. On taking her to her home, Albert discovers her step-father and guardian to be General Dumetz. After some time spent with the General, his wife, and Alzeyda, Albert resolves to find and be reconciled with his own father, and so returns to France with Alzeyda, whom he soon after marries. In Albert's absence Matilda has proven her involvement in a premarital relationship by giving birth just six months after her marriage. The Duke, bitter at failing to see his wife's motives for their hasty marriage, and disgusted at her lack of repentance, has gone to Paris to stay with the Count and Correlia. Albert arrives shortly afterwards, but is denied several interviews with his father. He is arrested owing to the contrivances of the Count, who also captures Alzeyda in a bid to make her his mistress. Correlia discovers the plot and, dressed as a priest, rescues Albert from the prison and helps him to locate and save Alzeyda. Through having questioned Alzeyda, the Count comes to realise that he is her father and, inspired by the love he once felt for her dead mother, he tells her honestly of his plot to divide the Duke and Albert. The Duke and Albert are subsequently reunited, before Alzeyda dies of a sudden illness. Some time after, Albert marries Correlia.

*Modern Faults* (1804)

This largely epistolary novel is moral and didactic in tone, yet simultaneously vocal on habitually censored subjects. Rosalie, the Countess de Clerimont, is the heroine of the novel, and a woman mistreated by an unworthy husband. The tale opens at midnight and during a severe storm, as Rosalie flees from her home, the Castle of Luneville, with her children Selina, aged four and a half, Frederic, aged two and a half, and a nurse and good friend named Margaret. Finding a secluded and secret home in the forest of St Amiens, Rosalie renames herself Irza, her son Henry, and her daughter Astasia. Rosalie manages, by sending Margaret to and from her old home, to exchange letters with her friend, Frederica de Villeroy, in the correspondence which comprises the novel

and which begins with an explanation of the history behind Rosalie's sudden disappearance from Luneville. Rosalie recounts her husband's affair with a servant, Nicolina, 'a young hussy' (I, 77), whom he loved and kept as a mistress in a nearby villa. As well as relating these circumstances as motivating her flight, Rosalie frankly condemns the 'gaudy and merry exterior' (I, 80) covering the dissipated, immoral sphere of fashionable society from which she needed to escape. A friend of the Count, the Duke —, declared that he loved Rosalie and, in a period of her husband's absence, threatened to kidnap her, providing her with a further reason for leaving her home.

Revealing the letter to be a space in this society for women's bold discussion of publicly taboo subjects, Rosalie makes reference to the social ill of prostitution when criticising the social condition. Condemning 'those infamous houses which are a pest to society' (I, 39), Rosalie nonetheless expresses some sympathy for the desperate 'wretches [...] to be procured for money' who inhabit these brothels. Through this correspondence with her friend Rosalie learns that the Count repents his sins and no longer sees Nicolina. After some time passes, Rosalie's children discover a man injured near their secret home who, it transpires, is the Count. Rosalie, eager to detect such a change in her husband's character as has been suggested by Frederica, conceals her face from him. We learn that Nicolina had married Captain Delamonte and that the Count, awakened to his faults, regretted his behaviour towards his wife and, believing her to be dead, is tormented by guilt. He falls in love with Rosalie, believing her to be Irza, and she reveals her true identity to him. The novel ends with Rosalie, the Count, and their children returning to Luneville reconciled, and Nicolina, deserted by Delamonte, dying in a poor house.

*Edric, the Forester: Or, the Mysteries of the Haunted Chamber* (1817)

This last of Anne Ker's publications, and the most generically mixed, is a historical, three part novel, featuring a return to the Gothic style and elements of the didactic-domestic novel. In the time of William the Conqueror, Edric, a forester raised from his station to the rank of General in the King's army, must attempt to defeat his enemy, Lord Fitzosric, and take possession of St Egbert's Castle. Whilst marching towards the Castle, Fitzosric is injured and stumbles in to the cottage of a beautiful mother and daughter named Ellen and Elgiva, who we are told are thirty-six and seventeen years of age respectively. Fitzosric is assisted and subsequently becomes enchanted by the pair, and begins to plot ways in which he might capture both women in order to have them as mistresses. Fitzosric leaves their cottage to fight the battle of Shrewsbury against Edric who, it transpires, is engaged to Elgiva. Fitzosric loses the battle and returns to the cottage. Deceiving Ellen and Elgiva into believing that they are in danger, Fitzosric tricks them in to accompanying him to his Castle.

At the Castle the two women speak to a servant, Agatha, who tells them that Lady Jane, the dead wife of Fitzosric, haunts the Castle. We learn at this stage of Fitzosric's multiple dissipations, including his kidnapping of the daughters of local villagers in the past. His great mistreatment of Lady Jane, we are also told, has led to this woman's unsettled spirit's torment of Fitzosric. Fitzosric attempts multiple tactics, promising everything from marriage to death to seduce both Ellen and Elgiva but is thwarted at every turn by apparently being hounded by the voice of his wife's ghost. Yet the women soon discover that the voice in fact belongs to the living Lady Jane who has confined herself in the Castle in order to torture Fitzosric. The women escape and

expose Fitzoscric. At the close of the novel it is revealed that Edric is actually the heir to Castle St Egbert, separated at birth from his family, and he marries Elgiva.

## IV

## TRANSCRIPTIONS OF ANNE KER'S PREFATORY MATERIAL

1. *The Heiress di Montalde; or, the Castle of Bezanto* (1799), dedication, pp. iv–vii.

## DEDICATION

TO  
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS  
THE PRINCESS  
AUGUSTA SOPHIA

MADAM,

IMBOLDENED by your Royal Highness's gracious permission, which honour I shall ever remember with every sentiment of gratitude, and *which* transcends my warmest acknowledgments, I now presume to present the following pages, being a first production, and flatter myself they will not prove unworthy your Royal Highness's approbation. Happy should I feel myself, if they found a leisure hour of your Royal Highness's time, wherein they are fortunate to amuse: trusting the innate goodness peculiar to your Royal Highness will look with candour on those defects, which I am not presumptuous enough to imagine them free from; and I beg leave to wish your Royal Highness every felicity and blessing this world can afford.

I am,  
YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS'S  
Most obedient  
And most dutiful humble servant,  
ANNE KER

2. *Emmeline; or, the Happy Discovery* (1801), dedication, pp. [iii]–iv.

## DEDICATION

TO  
LADY JERNINGHAM

MADAM,

THE favorable reception which productions of this nature have in general met with, encourage me to hope, that the following pages, honored with your Ladyship's patronage and approbation, will have the good fortune to please equal to my first production.

Flattered with your Ladyship's praise, I hesitate not to say it much increases my gratitude, and feel unable to express the happiness I experience, and the sense I have of your Ladyship's con-

descension, to pass so kindly over the errors, which I am not bold enough to imagine, this novel is free from; by which, I am inclined to hope, the novel of EMMELINE is superior to my expectation.

Happy should I feel myself if the abilities of my pen were an offering worthy to present to a lady of your amiable character. Small, indeed, are the acknowledgments I can make for favors so generously conferred; yet, I trust, your Ladyship will believe me grateful and happy in the opportunity of thus publicly declaring with what profound respect,

I am,  
Your Ladyship's most obliged,  
And most obedient Servant.

Feb. 24, 1801.

ANNE KER.

3. *Emmeline; or, the Happy Discovery* (1801), address to the public, pp. [v]–viii.

*TO THE PUBLIC.*

Having read the criticism on my last novel, (romance, or whatever appellation the Reviewers please to give it) I feel it a duty incumbent on me, to state in reply, a few words, though few it must be;—for me to pretend to write against such an hoard of enemies would be an endless labour; and particularly so, when known that the pen is guided by the hand of a female. Were I the only person who wrote in the romantic manner, they are pleased to stile absurd, I own I should feel unhappy; but I could state, at least, more than an hundred late productions, which are equally as absurd as my own, though I'll touch not on the string of others. Yet, I hope and trust, that, whatever lines were dictated by my pen, those devouring watchmen will do me the justice to allow they have been in the cause of virtue; devoid of those indelicate, and, in many instances, indecent descriptions, that fill the pages in the present day, of which I should be ashamed to be the author. I return my sincere thanks to those malevolent Reviewers, who have thought it worth their notice to speak on my little performances in the manner they have. And though had, not least in my estimation, the Conductors of the Anti-Jacobin Review, whose principles, to a civilized nation, are a well known shame; to confuse them as such, I beg to say, that, *Adeline St. Julian* was written full four years past, and put into the hands of a bookseller in August 1799; consequently, could not be extracted from the works they have thought proper to state; but it appears to me, and every person who, to oblige me, have perused their astonishing criticism, that they are racking their imagination to find out a somebody that has wrote *somehow* or *somewhere* similar in *some respect*, to this wonderful, absurd, improbable, romantic *something* which I have written.

The Reviewers may be assured I have not the vanity of wishing to please them in my writings; but I write in conformity to the pleasure of the times. It is to my patronizers, and to the generous public I appeal, and not to those contemptuous open-mouthed devouring critics, who would, in all probability, have declared (had their mouths been

crammed with a bribe) that Adeline St. Julian was the wonder of the age; as they were not, what else could I expect?—But the apprehension of what they may say shall never check my absurd pen, so long as I find the encouragement of the indulgent public; to whom I beg to return my sincere thanks, and hope for their future favors.

4. *Edric, the Forester: Or, the Mysteries of the Haunted Chamber* (1817), prefatory poem, 1 p. unnn.

*A Ker-ish Trick*

There is a man on Scottish ground,  
 Caus'd me to lose two hundred pounds  
 Surely how could such things be?  
 Why, in promising to provide for me!  
 And though in me there was no pride,  
 In fine grand coach I once did ride;  
 And for my fare for four miles round,  
 It cost me just two hundred pound;  
 Now could I find HIS *number* out,  
 Although my wife has got the gout,  
 She says, on crutches she would stride,  
 And travel o'er the country wide,  
 To summons for such imposition,  
 Or try by way of a *petition*,  
 But lawyers say we were not right—  
 It should have been in black and white,  
 So Ker was left by side the Tweed,  
 And Sawney drove away with speed. Fleurs—  
 I envy not that pretty place,  
 Although I am one of the race;  
 But from my heart I wish I'd seen  
 A man live there from *Little Dean*.  
 And why so wish?  
 Because, some say,  
 He'd not have sent me empty away.  
 Now if there's left a Ker in Linton,  
 Who at these lines should take a hint on,  
 Or noble Scot that's fat or taper,  
 May cure J. Ker with HASE's paper.

J. KER

5. *The Heiress di Montalde; or, the Castle of Bezanto* (1799), subscription list.

Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester, three sets  
 His Grace the Duke of Roxburgh  
 Her Grace the Duchess of Gordon  
 The Right Honorable the Countess of Cardigan  
 ..... Countess of Euston

.....Countess of Ely  
 .....Countess of Harrington  
 Lady Charlotte Bruce  
 Lady Mary Ker  
 Lady Fermanagh  
 Mrs. Bonfoy  
 Mr. Cook  
 Mrs. Clark  
 Mrs. Clutterbuck  
 Mrs. Denton  
 Mr. Edmonds  
 Miss Edwards  
 Mrs. Evans  
 Mrs. Graham  
 Miss Grant  
 Miss Gray  
 Mr. Hadwen  
 Miss Hawkins  
 Mr. Jervis  
 Mrs. Johnstone  
 Mrs. Main  
 Mrs. McFail  
 Miss Mills  
 Mrs. Neville  
 Mr. Parker  
 Mrs. Pickett  
 Mrs. Poole  
 Miss Porter  
 Miss Phillips  
 Miss Sanders  
 Mrs. Sanderson  
 Mr. Scott  
 Mrs. Skynner  
 Miss Smith  
 Mrs. Stevens  
 Mr. Stevens  
 Mrs. Tucker, two sets  
 Miss Thompson  
 Mrs. Tomlins  
 Mrs. Turner  
 Miss Wells  
 Mrs. Westwood  
 Mrs. Wheeler  
 Miss Wheeler  
 Mr. Wilson  
 Miss Williams

6. *The Mysterious Count; or, Montville Castle. A Romance* (1803), subscription list.

Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales  
 Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester  
 Her Royal Highness the Princess Sophia of Gloucester  
 Her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire  
 Her Grace the Duchess of Grafton  
 Right Honorable Lady Caroline Damer  
 Right Honorable the Countess of Euston  
 ..... the Countess Fitzwilliam  
 ..... the Countess of Harrington  
 ..... Lady Mary Ker  
 ..... the Countess of Lucan  
 Lady Jerningham, 3 sets  
 Honorable Mrs. Anson  
 Honorable Mrs. Anne  
 Mr. Anson  
 Mrs. Anson  
 Mrs. Byng  
 Miss Barlow  
 Mrs. Clark  
 Mrs. Denton  
 Mr. Henorini  
 Mr. Macklin  
 Mr. Morris  
 Mr. Owen  
 Miss Scott  
 Miss Eliza Young  
 Mrs. Webster  
 Miss Webster.

## V

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF ANNE KER'S CORRESPONDENCE  
WITH THE ROYAL LITERARY FUND

Each of the following letters are addressed 48 Wellington Street, Newington Causeway, Surrey.

1. *The following entreaty, dated August 21 1820, earned Ker a donation of £5, for which she sent a copy of 'Edric the Forester', on 24 August 1820, to express her gratitude.*

To The Gentlemen of The Literary Fund  
The Humble Petition of Anne Ker

Sheweth

That Anne Ker, Daughter of Mr. John Phillips, Author of a very Extensive History of Inland Navigation published about the year 1791, to complete which [illegible] expended a very handsome competency, and left his family much embarrassed. He also for several years was the Author of The Builders Price Book, published by Crosby till the death of Mr Phillips Dec 1 1813. Anne Ker his daughter the petitioner is Authoress of several works which have been highly approved by the Public. The Heiress di Montalde in 2 vols—dedicated by the late Queen's express permission to the Princess Augusta—Adeline St. Julian 2 vol—Emmeline 2 vols—Mysterious Count 2 vols—Modern Faults 2 vols and Edric the Forester 3 vols. The petitioner is through the most unforeseen accidents and losses in business, together with the misfortune of being frequently afflicted with that dreadful complaint the Gout, from which she is now recovering, advancing in years, being nearly 54—and driven to the severest distress, humbly implores the assistance of the Literary Fund, considering herself an object of their charity being the daughter of a very respectable Author of useful publications, and herself the Author of the amusing and virtuous—. Her embarrassments and distress cannot be sufficiently explained by letter but trusts to the feeling hearts of the Gentlemen of this Benevolent Institution, to relieve her from some of her misfortunes, having lately sold all her furniture and the money expended, and at this time nearly in want of bread to exist—

And your petitioner in duty bound shall ever pray

Anne Ker

2. *Dated 25 November 1820. This request was denied, on the grounds that it followed to soon from Ker's last application.*

To The Gentlemen of The Literary Fund  
The Humble Petition of Anne Ker

Sheweth—

That your petitioner applied to your Benevolent Institution last July—And you [illegible] £5 which your petitioner received by the hand of Mr. H[illegible] which bounty was a most reasonable relief—And now your petitioner is extremely sorry to state that necessity compels her once more, to take the liberty of laying her distressed situation before you, humbly trusting, you will not withhold your assistance, as your petitioner is at present entirely out of employ, and has been for a length of time. Your petitioner hopes that by the turn of the New Year her affairs will mend as she is then promised some employment; the prospect is of that nature as to ensure her a decent living—but being short of clothes, if she cannot find a friend to assist her it will prevent her from embracing so good an offer. Humbly relying on your consideration, she rests her case—

And your petitioner in duty bound will ever pray

Anne Ker.

3. *Dated 2 January 1821. Ker was granted £5 for this application.*  
To The Gentlemen of The Literary Fund  
The Humble Petition of Anne Ker

*Sheweth*

That your petitioner is daughter of the late Mr. John Phillips, author of the History of Inland Navigation and herself author of The Heiress di Montalde, Edric the Forester &c, and is now under the most pressing necessity of applying to your Benevolent Institution, being at this season dreadfully distressed, unknowing how to provide the common necessities of life and clothing. That your petitioner received in the month of August £5 by the hand of Mr. H[illegible], which you had kindly voted to her and which was of such service that she shall ever remember it with grateful thanks.—That your petitioner being still involved in distress, had an opportunity of engaging with a lady as assistant in a school in the country, where she hoped to find a comfortable home for a time but for want of decent clothes could not engage. Thus circumstanced, your petitioner took the liberty of laying her situation before you on the 25. of November, but not having received any answer, trusts your goodness will take her case into consideration, as the lady has engaged another, because your petitioner could give no answer. Now Gentlemen, her only hope rests that you will grant some assistance to struggle through this dreadful season, being oppressed with poverty, age, and the Gout, which now greatly afflicts her right hand. To increase her distress, her husband was taken ill yesterday, with a very severe cold, and she is destitute of the means for support of him.—Thus distressed, she prays God for a favorable answer to this petition—and trusts it will be the last time of her even being a trouble to you.

And your petitioner in duty bound will ever pray

Anne Ker.

4. *Dated 1 May 1821. Ker received no response to this request.*

To The Gentlemen of The Literary Fund  
The Humble Petition of Anne Ker

*Sheweth*

That your petitioner four days after receiving your last bounty, was attacked in so violent a manner with Gout, and the fever so raged, as to cause an abscess in the breast, which the faculty thought a very singular case. The discharge was immense and reduced her to a deplorable state of weakness,—your petitioner was attended from the Surrey Dispensary by Dr. Davies and Mr. H. Greenhead and for want of money could afford no nurse, having a kind and good husband he was obliged (much to his praise) to be nurse and servant, and thank God through his good attention, your petitioner is once more restored, though still very weak and low, for want of the necessary supports to establish health, coming out of so dangerous an illness.—This calamity being attended with extra expense continues her in a state of great distress, and once more obliges your petitioner to part with nearly all that belonged to them, during that afflicting period.—And her illness disabling her of giving any assistance to her husband for support being so afflicted in the hands.—This unforeseen misfortune obliges her once more humbly to solicit the kind aid of your Benevolent Institution, which she prays God to bless and prosper for favors already received.—

And your petitioner is in duty bound will ever pray

Anne Ker.

5. *The following letter, dated 12 June 1821, was marked 'no motion passed' by the Fund. Ker again received no response.*

To the Gentlemen of The Literary Fund Society  
Gentlemen,

Having read of your Anniversary Dinner induces me to hope it will [illegible] of your extending your Benevolence towards me, as it should to your judgement appear, according to my last petition to your worthy Institution, in the beginning of May last, and I beg you to refer to that for the statement of my case which I humbly trust your goodness will take into consideration,

Your most obliged

And obedient servant, Anne Ker.

6. *The following entreaty, Ker's last to the fund, dated 27 October 1821, was declined.*

To the Gentlemen of the Literary Fund Society—  
The Humble Petition of Anne Ker—

Sheweth—

That your petitioner, author of *Edric the Forester &c.* and daughter of John Phillips author of the *History of Inland Navigation*, acknowledges with heartfelt gratitude your benevolent gift of last January 13th, which was of great service during her long and severe illness of the Gout. That providence has enabled your petitioner since then to contend with many difficulties, but as the Winter advanced the little she procured by industry has ceased, and is now driven to various necessities, which she is unable to explain in the small limits of this petition, and has no prospect of relief till the end of March. Thus destitute of friends she once more humbly solicits your benevolent aid, to enable her to struggle through this Winter, being in great hopes, with God's assistance to trouble you no more. At present your petitioner is labouring under many distresses as she incurred a few small debts which a sudden disappointment has made her unable to discharge, and humbly prays you will grant her some relief—

And your petitioner is in duty bound shall ever pray,

Anne Ker. 

## NOTES

1. Virginia Blain, Isobel Grundy, and Patricia Clements (eds), *The Feminist Companion to Literature in English* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 608–09.
2. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, *The Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921–22). The entry for John Phillips, on p. 1093, gives a brief biography of Phillips and description of his work.
3. The title page to *Edric the Forester* describes Anne Ker as being 'OF HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ROXBURGH'S FAMILY'. The *DNB* entry for John Ker, Duke of Roxburgh, on p. 51, describes his interests and connections.
4. For the list of subscribers to Ker's novels see Section IV. Biographical entries for these subscribers appear in the *DNB*.
4. See Dorothy Blakey, *The Minerva Press, 1790–1820* (London: OUP, 1939), ch. v, which details the preferred modes of presentation for novels printed by the Minerva Press.
5. Peter Garside, 'The English Novel in the Romantic Era: Consolidation and Dispersal', in *The English Novel, 1770–1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, general eds Peter Garside, James Raven, Rainer Schöwerling, 2 vols (Oxford: OUP, 2000), II, 40.
6. For transcriptions of the reviews mentioned here, see the Notes to the bibliographical entries, Section II.
7. For transcriptions of Ker's Prefaces see Section IV.
8. Archives of the Royal Literary Fund, 1790–1918, 145 reels (London: World Microfilms, 1982–83), Reel 12 (Case 424). Transcriptions in Section V.

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