

THE CHEVALIER D'EON (1728-1810) – TRANSGENDER FREEMASON

The 18th century was an age of wars and social changes. In Europe, it was also the time that marked the birth of the “Age of Reason” which inspired the French Revolution. London was a European Capital city which shockingly and generously also provided entertainment of a sophisticated and extraordinary sexual nature.



PICTURE 2 – The Turks Head.

Georgian London hosted many warehouses, “Bagnios”, flagellation brothels and homosexual clubs called “Molly houses”. These were dwellings where young men, or “mollies”, dressed as women and assumed effeminate voices and mannerisms. They addressed each other as “my dear” and sold unnatural sex to wealthy male patrons.

The Molly Houses were frequented, by both intellectuals and rascals; they were mostly inner city inns but parties were also held in private houses, the most famous being “Mother Clap’s” in Holborn. It catered, every night, for up to 40 mollies!

Margaret Clap (died 1726), better known as Mother Clap, ran a coffee house from 1724 to 1726 in Holborn short distance from the City of London and primarily frequented by homosexual men. She was part of the gay subculture of early 18th-century. At the time sodomy in England was a crime under The Buggery Act 1533, punishable by a fine, imprisonment, or the death penalty. Her legacy is perhaps a well-known saying “A dose of the Clap!”

England’s society was renowned to be one of the most tolerant in Europe and it was one where cross-dressing and homosexuality was not just exclusive to the wealthy gentry.

THE HELL FIRE CLUBS

In the 18th century there were a number of clubs in Britain which engaged in violent and sometimes murderous pranks. Drinking and whoring were regular activities for their members.



PICTURE 3 – The Rose Tavern – By William Hogarth.

Frequented by Aristocrats and Politicians and often they also enlisted Freemasons. Indeed it is reported that none other than the Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge from 1722/23 – the Duke of Wharton – had co-founded the first Hell Fire Club in 1719.

After Wharton’s Club was closed down by Walpole’s government, Proclamation against “obscene” associations in 1721, the Duke set up a “Schemers Club” in 1724. The latter being another assembly of mischievous men who proclaimed themselves dedicated to the “advancement of flirtation”.

But the most well-known of the Hell Fire Clubs was the one called “The Order of St. Francis” which was founded around 1740s by Sir Francis Dashwood, a member of Parliament as well as a Freemason.



PICTURE 4 – The Hell Fire Caves.

It met initially in a disused Cistercian Abbey in the village of Medmenham (Buckinghamshire) but later moved to some caves situated above the village of West Wycombe (Buckinghamshire), not far from the Estate of the Dashwoods.

Secret meetings and week-end parties were held in the underground labyrinth of caves which led to a chamber called the Inner Temple, situated directly beneath the local Church of St. Lawrence where mass is still being celebrated on Sundays to these days. Some of those “Franciscans” were notable Freemasons like John Wilkes, William Hogarth, Benjamin Franklin and our intriguing Chevalier D’Eon.

The sexual games, orgies and perverted acts that went on in those underground vaults must have appealed to the ambiguous genre of the Chevalier who later had the boldness to claim that he had joined Freemasonry only for chivalric reasons!

It is therefore not surprising to find in such scenario that sexually and morally deviated individuals, after they had come to visit England, were unwilling to return home.

The Chevalier D’Eon, who is the main focus of this lecture, was a French diplomat who, whilst living in London, was allowed to join the Freemasons, albeit for all the wrong reasons.

PICTURE 5 – The Chevalier D’Eon.



Charles-Geneviève-Louis-Auguste-André-Timothée d'Éon de Beaumont, (5 October 1728 – 21 May 1810), usually known as the Chevalier d'Éon, was a Diplomat, Spy, Freemason and Soldier.

Born in Tonnere, Burgundy, on 5th October 1728, D'Eon was baptised with a string of mixed male and females names: Charles Genevieve Louis Auguste Andre' Timothee de Beaumont. It was almost as if his life had been sealed with ambiguity from birth! His father Louis was a penniless Lawyer and his mother – Francoise de Chevanson came from a noble family and stood to inherit a large estate at the birth of a male heir from her union.

For unknown reasons, Francoise, dressed up Charles-Genevieve as a girl and kept calling him Marie for the first seven years of his life, after which Louis took charge of the child and started treating him as a boy. Charles-Genevieve was a clever child, who at twelve, was sent to the College Mazarin in Paris, where he received an education that included the Classics and where he learned to hold himself against the bullies who would target him for his girlish appearance.

He cultivated the art of fencing in which he later excelled and which became the principal passion of his life. He was blond, of medium height and slim but with unusually developed breasts and with a pair of small feminine hands and feet. A good orator, fluent in foreign languages, excellent in the art of fencing and blessed with an exceptional memory, Charles-Genevieve possessed all the abilities that make a good diplomat and an excellent spy. He had blue eyes, a high pitched voice and youthful and fresh-faced complexion. The latter characteristic being rather rare in an age when the populations were vexed by smallpox, venereal diseases and illnesses of other kind and also suffered from the side effects of the dangerous pot-pourri of chemicals used in 'makeup' products. Charles-Genevieve left college in August 1748, and soon he was brought to the attention of King Louis XV who recruited him in his personal secret service called "Le Secret du Roi". It was a private network of spies who answered solely to the King.

During the 1740s, there appear to have been Lodges which were attached to regular ones (i.e. for men only) but which allowed women, although those admitted were mainly wives or relatives of Freemasons.



PICTURE 6 – ADOPTIVE LODGES – La Candeur.

The lodges were called Lodges of Adoption. In 1774 they fell under the jurisdiction of The Grand Orient of France. The system had four degrees:

- 1.Apprentie, or Female Apprentice.
- 2.Compagnonne, or Journeywoman.
- 3.Maîtresse, or Mistress.
- 4.Parfaite Maçonne, or Perfect Masoness.

The idea of women Freemasons spread widely in Europe, but the practice never established itself either in England or in America, it flourished in France at the start of the French Revolution. Even Napoleon's wife Josephine presided over one of those Lodges of Adoption in Strasburg in 1805.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN RUSSIA

Since 1684, Russia had been co-jointly ruled by Peter the Great and his brother Ivan V. After the death of the former, his brother became the sole sovereign of all Russia in 1696. The latter also met his maker in February 1725.

It was Anna Ivanovna, Duchesse of Courtland and second daughter of Ivan V – who became Empress of Russia over the head of her cousin Elizabeth Petrovna.

Elizabeth was the young daughter of Peter – who had been the real artificer of Russia's greatness – and thought she was the rightful heir to the throne.

When she discovered in 1740 that she was again going to be overlooked by Anna's choice of heir in Ivan de Brunswick, she begun to plot. A year later, aided by two hundred faithful grenadiers, Elizabeth stormed the Royal Palace and declared herself Empress of all Russia.

Meanwhile in France, Louis XV was being concerned by the fate of Poland, the Country of birth of his Queen, on whose throne he was hoping to place his cousin the Prince de Conde and thus take that geopolitical area away from Russia's control.

Elizabeth had always been an admirer of France and liked its Ambassador, Mons. De La Chetardie. But when the pro-England Chancellor, Alexis Bestucheff, intercepted a letter in which De La Chetardie criticised Elizabeth, all

Frenchmen were barred from Court. The way things were shaping up in Europe, Russia had to be prevented from aligning itself with England or it would have become too strong an adversary. It was imperative that France retained someone at the Court of Saint Petersburg who would report back on any political and military development; but after Bestucheff's exclusion order, only French females were allowed in the presence of the Tsarina. This was a setback for France's intelligence but not for King Louis XV whose next move proved to be a stroke of genius!

PICTURE 7 – Charles-Genevieve or Lea de Beaumont.



Fully aware of the physiognomies and brilliant social skills of Charles-Genevieve, the King sent him on a mission to Russia in a female role, to play the part of the clever and flirting Lea de Beaumont.

D'Eon won the trust of the frail forty-six years old Tsarina and persuaded her to write a letter to her cousin King Louis XV in which she promised to continue supporting France.

That accomplished, D'Eon returned to Paris and personally delivered that letter to Louis XV, expecting some recompense in return. But the King ignored him and, instead, sent him straight back to St. Petersburg to continue the negotiations.

Except that this time Charles-Genevieve D'Eon was to play the part of Lea de Beaumont's own brother as the Secretary to the French Ambassador!

D'Eon's permanence in Russia lasted a total of four years and required a number of return trips to Paris together with a long and extenuating game of cross-dressing; He had to appear as Lea de Beaumont when she attended Court, and himself when reporting matters to the French Ambassador. His last trip from St Petersburg to Paris took place in 1760. He was feeling exhausted and with his health weakened by his repeated extenuating journeys and the stressful game of spying, fell seriously ill with smallpox just outside Paris.

The King realized it was time to withdraw the character of Lea Beaumont and he retired Charles-Genevieve from his private spy network. The cross-dressing game had been going on for too long and now that D'Eon had been struck by an illness that would have, no matter how superficially, scarred his face and body for life, the risk of detection had increased exponentially.

PICTURE 8 – Captain of Dragoons.



Louis appointed D'Eon captain of his elite troops, the Dragoons, and sent him to fight in the Seven Years War raging in Europe.

D'Eon's detractors were hoping that the effeminate but brilliant individual, would have found life difficult on the battlefields and in the camps. Hopefully he could have been killed or he would evaded the responsibilities and rigors of military action by fleeing abroad to live incognito. But despite all expectations Charles-Genevieve distinguished himself in battle.

It was the year 1761. This time King Louis rewarded D'Eon with a handsome sum of money and retired him from the Dragoons. D'Eon's military career was over. But political European events

had begun to take a different turn! D'Éon appeared publicly as a man and pursued masculine occupations for 49 years, although during that time d'Éon successfully infiltrated the court of Empress Elizabeth of Russia by presenting as a woman.

In his memoirs, the monarch sent him with the Chevalier Douglas, Alexandre-Pierre de Mackensie-Douglas, Baron de Kildin, a Scottish Jacobite in French service, on a secret mission to Russia in order to meet Empress Elizabeth and conspire with the pro-French faction against the Habsburg monarchy.

At that time the English and French were at odds, and the English were attempting to deny the French access to the Empress by allowing only women and children to cross the border into Russia.

D'Éon later claimed having to pass convincingly as a woman or risk being executed by the English upon discovery and therefore travelled disguised as the lady *Lia de Beaumont*, and served as a maid of honour to the Empress.

Eventually, Chevalier Douglas became French ambassador to Russia, and D'Éon was secretary to the embassy in Saint Petersburg from 1756 to 1760, serving Douglas and his successor. D'Éon returned to France in October 1760, and was granted a pension of 2,000 livres as reward for service in Russia.

In May 1761, D'Éon became a Captain of Dragoons under the Maréchal de Broglie and fought in the later stages of the Seven Years' War. After Empress Elizabeth died in January 1762, D'Éon was considered for further service in

Russia, but instead was appointed secretary to the Duc de Nivernais, awarded 1,000 livres, and sent to London to draft the peace treaty that formally ended the Seven Years' War.

IN LONDON

By the year 1762 France was bankrupt and had lost most of its colonies to the English who were ruled by the Hanoverian King George III. Elisabeth of Russia had died and had been succeeded by Peter of Holstein who reversed all her policies and allegiances.

Louis XV wanted to have peace and in order to know England's intentions with regards to the negotiations he sent D'Eon to London as the Secretary of the French Ambassador, the Duke de Nivernais. Both men arrived in September of 1762.

According to D'Eon, His Majesty's undersecretary Mr Wood – who was said to be very fond of the wine from Burgundy – naively accepted the Duke's invitation to dine at the French Embassy one night.

By now, the dinner at the French Embassy, to which even the cross-dresser D'Eon took part, appears as some excuse licentious games to take place, albeit it was undoubtedly accompanied by some good food and an uninterrupted flow of Bourgogne wine.

D'Eon recorded in his memoirs that whilst the *meal* was being *consumed*, he noticed in Mr Wood's diplomatic bag an official document of great importance and taking advantage of the situation in which the inebriated English diplomat and the Duke were engaged, he copied the missive and dispatched it to Versailles on the following morning.

That document detailed the way England intended to conduct the peace negotiations and it proved to be of an extraordinary importance for France.

King Louis XV this time rewarded D'Eon with a life annuity and invested him with the Cross of Saint-Louis which gave the right to call himself "Chevalier", the equivalent of "Sir".

After the treaty of Paris was signed in 1763, the King appointed the aristocrat de Guerchy as the new France Ambassador to London. D'Eon was sent to London with the title of Ministre Plenipotentiary, to manage the Embassy whilst awaiting the arrival of the Comte de Guerchy.

The treaty was signed in Paris on 10 February 1763, and d'Éon was awarded a further 6,000 livres, and received the Order of Saint-Louis on 30 March 1763, becoming Chevalier d'Éon.

Back in London, D'Éon became Chargé d'affaires in April 1763, essentially interim ambassador, when the Duc de Nivernais returned to Paris in July. D'Éon used this position also to spy for the king.

D'Éon collected information for a potential invasion—a clumsy initiative of Louis XV, of which Louis's own ministers were unaware—assisting a French agent, Louis François Carlet de la Rozière, who was surveying the British coastal defences.

Upon the arrival of the new ambassador, the Comte de Guerchy in October 1763, D'Éon was demoted to the rank of secretary and humiliated by the Count. The Comte de Guerchy was from Burgundy like D'Eon and a wealthy nobleman. He would later describe Guerchy as an individual: "timid in war, brave in peace, ignorant in the City, tricky at Court, generous with other people's money but stingy with his own". The two men never got on well together and became mortal enemies. D'Éon complained, and decided to disobey orders to return to France. In a letter to the King, D'Éon claimed that the new ambassador had tried to drug him at a dinner at the ambassador's residence in Monmouth House in Soho Square.

PICTURE 9 – Charles Genevieve and Lea de Beaumont.



Both Charles-Genevieve and his imaginary sister Lea de Beaumont soon became regular and welcomed visitors at Court although, for obvious reasons, they never made an appearance together. D'Eon spent long evenings in the company of Queen Charlotte as her French reader and always wore the Cross of Saint-Louis on his female dresses. He also organised galas at the French Embassy, bought expensive wines, had servants. In short, he lived on a grand scale.

He worked zealously and at all hours of day and night. He did so only for the love and interest of France, often at the cost of his own health; but when he fell in debt by 20,000 livres and asked the French Ministry for a refund, his letters went unanswered.

In contrast to his salary, Guerchy's emoluments as Ambassador had been set at 150,000 livres a year plus another 50,000 for gratuities. For D'Eon this represented an injustice and an insult he continued spending lavishly. Except that he would no longer use his own money, but that from the French Embassy's chest.

When Louis XV officially wrote to George III to inform him that D'Eon was being removed from his diplomatic post – which to D'Eon meant the loss of his title and privileges and that de Guerchy was to take charge of the Embassy's affairs, he realised that, for his safety, he needed to double play. He left his apartment at the Embassy and retired to a house in Dover Street with all his secret and important correspondence, refusing to return to France as he had been ordered. He never accepted that he had de facto been “deposed” as Ministre Plenopontentiary. That bore a royal stamp but not the King's original signature and D'Eon considered it to be a fake for as long as he lived. He believed that the document had been forged by Guerchy. One day, whilst Guerchy was away, D'Eon had dined at the Embassy and had fallen ill for two lengthy weeks. He believed that an attempt to poison him had been perpetrated and when he discovered that his locksmith had taken an impression of the locks of his Dover Street residence, he suspected that kidnapping was also on the cards.

In a letter to King Louis XV D'Eon wrote:

“Subsequently I discovered that M. Guerchy caused opium – if nothing worse – to be put in my wine, calculating that after dinner I should fall into a heavy sleep onto a couch and instead of my being carried home, I should be carried down to the Thames where probably there was a boat waiting ready to abduct me”.

For the next six year D'Eon went to live at 38 Brewer Street, Golden Square and kept his secret documents locked up in the basement, constantly guarded by some faithful grenadiers who had fought with him in the Dragoons. He mined the rooms and he kept a lamp burning day and night to show that the premises were constantly occupied. When the King of France wrote to George III to ask him to seize those papers from D'Eon, he openly complained of his treatment to a number of his influential friends. But he decided to retaliate.

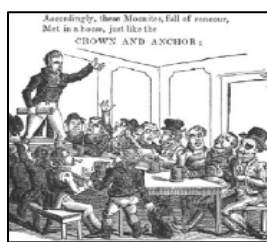
He gathered all his secret documents and correspondence – minus France's plans to invade England, of course – and published them in a book which he called “Lettre , memoires et negociations particulieres”. It became a best seller in Europe and made the Chevalier famous. For different reasons, D'Eon accused Guerchy of attempted poisoning and Guerchy accused D'Eon of libel – they both began litigation in Court and both lost.

But whereas Guerchy was able to call upon his diplomatic indemnity and carry on with his official duties, it cost D'Eon an exile from France of fifteen years.

This breach of diplomatic discretion was scandalous to the point of being unheard of, but d'Éon had not yet published everything (the King's secret invasion documents and those relative to the Secret du Roi were kept back as "insurance").

The British government declined a French request to extradite d'Éon, and the 2,000 livres pension that had been granted in 1760 was stopped in February 1764.

PICTURE 10 – The Crown and Anchor Tavern.



Whilst he lived in London, D'Eon was initiated into Freemasonry in May of either 1766 or 1768.

He joined the London based French speaking “Loge de l'Immortalite de l'Ordre” also known as the “Lodge of Immortality No. 376”, which met at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand.

The records show that he served the office of Junior Warden in the year 1769-70.

He joined the Order because he was searching for a safe haven from a society that was pushing him to a reclusive life but also to seek protection from France's repeated plots to have him killed or kidnapped.

He always mentioned the Craft in a most flattering manner and there are many portraits of him dressed in female attire, wearing both the mason's apron and Cross of Saint Louis.

The lodge was constituted under the Moderns Grand Lodge and originally established for European Masons in London by a French exile called Jean de Vignoles. The lodge appears not to have survived internal feuding between the French and German members and thus it and D'Éon's relationship with Freemasonry was closed.

However, D'Éon secured the sympathy of the British public: the mob jeered Guerchy in public, and threw stones at his residence. Guerchy was recalled to France, and in July 1766 Louis XV granted D'Éon a pension (possibly a pay-off for his silence).

D'Eon continued to work as a spy, but lived in political exile. His possession of the King's secret letters provided protection against further actions, but could not return to France.

Despite the fact that D'Éon habitually wore a dragoon's uniform, rumours circulated in London that d'Éon was actually a woman. A betting pool was started on the London Stock Exchange about D'Éon's true sex. D'Éon was

invited to join, but declined, saying that an examination would be dishonouring, whatever the result. After a year without progress, the wager was abandoned.

Following the death of Louis XV in 1774, the *secret du roi* was abolished, and D'Éon tried to negotiate a return from exile.

The writer Pierre de Beaumarchais represented the French government in the negotiations. The resulting treaty permitted D'Éon to return to France and retain the ministerial pension, but required the correspondence regarding the *secret du roi*.

Madame Campan writes in her memoirs: "This eccentric being had long solicited permission to return to France; but it was necessary to find a way of sparing the family he had offended the insult they would see in his return; he was therefore made to resume the costume of that sex to which in France everything is pardoned. The desire to see his native land once more determined him to submit to the condition, but he revenged himself by combining the long train of his gown and the three deep ruffles on his sleeves with the attitude and conversation of a grenadier, which made him very disagreeable company."

The Chevalier d'Éon claimed to have been assigned female at birth, and demanded recognition by the government as such. D'Éon claimed to have been raised as a boy because Louis d'Éon de Beaumont could only inherit from his in-laws if he had a son. The English Freemasons never forgot D'Eon and allowed him to remain a member even after he had been legally declared a woman.

There is evidence that the Master of the London Lodge of the Nine Sisters, established in Paris in 1776, who enlisted famous English and foreign respectful characters, invited HER (him) to celebrate the departure to the Grand Lodge above of a one of their Brothers.



PICTURE 11 – Benjamin Franklin.

The Lodge – La Loge des Neuf Soeurs (Nine Sisters) had many famous members and could be the subject of a lecture on its own. For example, the Master in 1779 to 1781 was Benjamin Franklin. Another 'Famous' member was Dr. Joseph Ignace Guillotin. Franklin became a member of the lodge in 1778, relishing the opportunity to study Masonry alongside many of Europe's great minds. By the time he arrived in France, Franklin had already spent decades participating in the fraternity back in America. He first became a Mason in 1731 at the young age of 17 when he was initiated into the Philadelphia Masonic Lodge. Within a few short years, he became Grand Master of Pennsylvania in 1734 and served as Secretary of John's Lodge from 1735 to 1738.



Few figures in the history of the United States and American fraternalism are as revered as Brother Benjamin Franklin. A prolific writer, inventor, and revolutionary, he embodied the core tenets of Freemasonry.

A key element in Franklin's success petitioning France for help during the war was La Loge des Neuf Soeurs, a prominent Masonic Lodge of

the Grand Orient de France.

Established in Paris in 1776, its name referred to the nine Muses, the daughters of Mnemosyne/Memory. The Muses held positions of significance in French culture, for they represented the arts and sciences in Greek mythology.

When he joined The Lodge of Nine Sisters in 1778, he entered a community that included some of the world's greatest minds. This position opened the door for him to promote the ideals behind American Revolution This factor not only increased French support for the war but had implications for the French Revolution several years later.

RETURN TO FRANCE

Following the death of Louis XV, D'Eon was recalled to France by his successor Louis XVI who was anxious to gather back all those secret and dangerous documents that he had been guarding in London, as well as removing for good, the character of Lea de Beaumont.

He dumbfounded France by deciding to blackmail the King. He declared he would not give up any of those sensitive documents, among which were the plans to invade England unless His Majesty paid him an enormous sum of money and promised to protect him from his enemies.

Louis XVI wanted to stop waging wars and heal the financial state of his Kingdom, so in 1775 he sent his top secret agent, Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaunarchais, to negotiate.

An agreement was reached whereby, when back on France soil, D'Eon would have been publicly and legally declared a woman and be in receipt of a sum of money large enough to pay off all his debts and to provide a comfortable living.

At the age of forty seven, with a pension and a debt free status, D'Eon deemed himself to live the rest of his life as an individual of the opposite sex; but at least he could again attend the French Court and be allowed in the company of the Queen Marie Antoinette.

Indeed the Queen even helped Charles-Genevieve with the choice of a female wardrobe, his wigs and make up. D'Eon lived in Versailles for many years and whilst there he wrote his autobiography: "*La vie militaire, politique et privee de Mademoiselle*".

However when France joined the American War of Independence against the English, D'Eon's love for the military life resurfaced and he wrote to the French Minister for permission to re-enter service.

He was immediately arrested and put into a dungeon from where he was released only after he solemnly promised never to wear male clothes again, abandon Versailles and return to his home in Tonnerre, Burgundy, to live with his mother.

The King, noting Charles-Genevieve's restlessness and unwillingness to settle down in an anonymous life, decided to send him back to England to continue the work of gathering and returning to France his compromising documents. This time, however, D'Eon never returned to France. It was the dawn of the French Revolution and he did not share those ideals, nor would anyone who saw all of his friends guillotined by the Jacobins!

Furthermore, the Revolution deprived him of his annuity and he had to spend seven months in prison for debts.

Returning to London in 1785 as Lea de Beaumont and was never to dress as a man again. He had made his final choice of gender at the wrong time of his life, when his voice had turned deep and cavernous and his mannerism vulgar and noisy. King Louis XVI and his court complied with his demand, but required in turn that d'Éon dress appropriately in women's clothing, although d'Éon was allowed to continue to wear the insignia of the Order of Saint-Louis.

When the king's offer included funds for a new wardrobe of women's clothes, d'Éon agreed. In 1777, after fourteen months of negotiation, D'Éon returned to France and as punishment was banished to Tonnerre. In 1779, d'Éon published a book of memoirs: *La Vie Militaire, politique, et privée de Mademoiselle d'Éon*.

The pension that Louis XV had granted was ended by the French Revolution, and D'Éon had to sell personal possessions, including books and jewellery. The family's properties in Tonnerre were confiscated by the revolutionary government. In 1792, D'Éon sent a letter to the French National Assembly offering to lead a division of female soldiers against the Habsburgs, but the offer was rebuffed.

HIS LATER YEARS

D'Eon supported his income whilst living in London by challenging men at duel for monetary prizes. On April 9th 1787, at Charlton House, Lea Beaumont confronted a French sword champion twenty years his younger and won.

The publicity he gained from that event enabled him to set up a successful fencing Academy which toured the Country and performed in packed public halls.

Life was again good to him until on a tragic day at Southampton in August 1796, an opponent wounded him and made him bedridden for two long years. D'Eon never recovered from that mishap and spent the last years of his life in misery and poverty, sharing a house with a Mrs Mary Cole, an admiral's widow he had met in 1795.

In 1804, d'Éon was sent to a debtors' prison for five months, and signed a contract for a biography to be written by Thomas William Plummer, which was never published. D'Éon became paralyzed following a fall, and spent a final four years bedridden, dying in poverty in London on 21 May 1810 at the age of 81.

PICTURE 12 – Chevalier D'Eon Post Mortem.

The surgeon who examined d'Éon's body attested in their post-mortem certificate, that the Chevalier had "male organs in every respect perfectly formed," while at the same time displaying feminine characteristics.



A couple of characteristics described in the certificate were "unusual roundness in the formation of limbs," as well as "breast remarkably full".

"The body presented unusual roundness in the formation of the limbs; the appearance of a beard was very slight, and hair of so light a colour as to be scarcely perceptible was on the arms, legs and chest. The throat was by no means masculine; shoulders square and good; breast remarkably full; arms, hands, fingers those of a stout female....and she has a cock".

D'Éon's body was buried in the churchyard of St Pancras Old Church, and his remaining possessions were sold by Christie's in 1813. D'Éon's grave is listed on the Burdett-Coutts Memorial there as one of the important graves lost.

End.

Any Questions?

