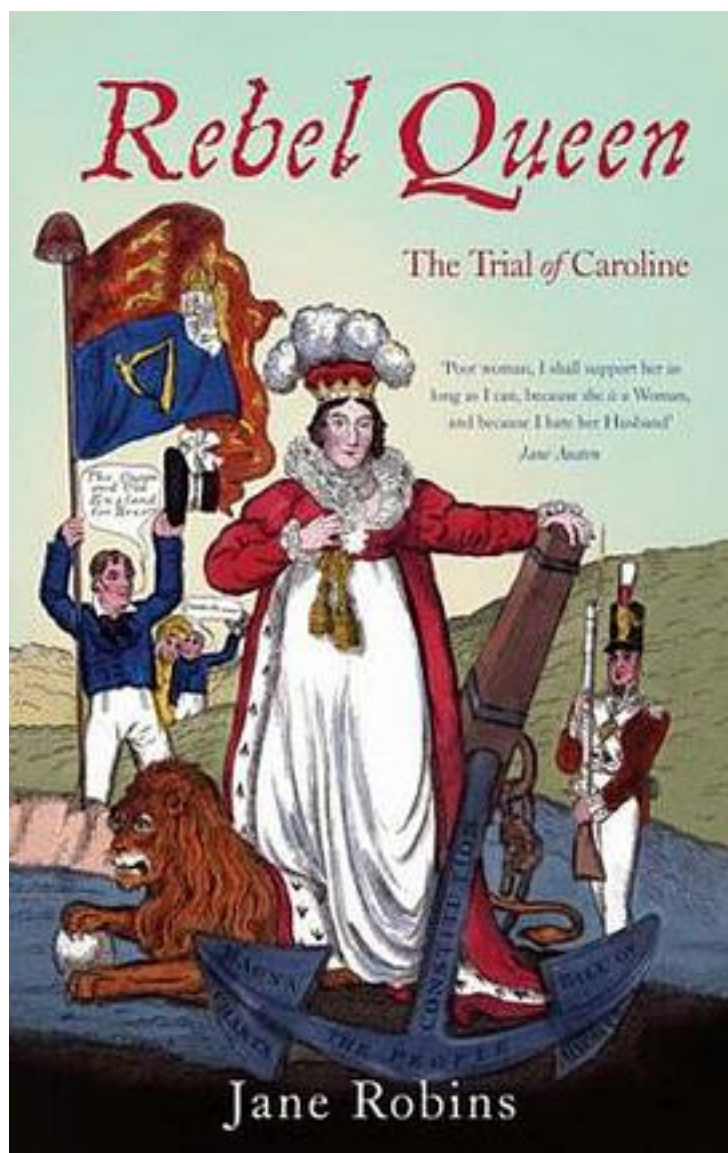


Rebel Queen



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It was Lady Jersey, the calculating mistress of the foppish George IV, who chose Caroline, Princess of Brunswick, to become George's wife. She selected a woman 'with indelicate manners... and not very inviting appearance', and George, who hadn't taken the precaution of meeting his wife before marrying her, was suitably disgusted. In 1797, just three years after their marriage, the couple separated with George writing to his wife 'our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other'. Caroline took him at his word and proceeded to live exactly as she pleased, departing for Europe and a life of scandalous associations and debauched parties. In doing so, she gained a reputation for being 'very fond of fucking'. Rumours of Caroline's lifestyle soon reached George and, although he was no stranger to indiscretion himself, he determined that she would never become Queen, especially once he acceded to the throne. To the shock of the nation, he demanded that Caroline, whose informal manner had long made her popular in England, face a trial for adultery. The voice of the popular press, raised in anger for the first time in Britain, roared in disapproval at her humiliation and Caroline's unlikely role as a heroine of Radical feeling was assured. Jane Robins re-creates this extraordinary morality tale in vivid and entertaining fashion, revealing a little-known story of surprising modernity that sheds new light on a revolution that might have been.

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