

English summary to Fortid og Nutid

Peter Henningsen

The Patriots in Lyngby. A Small Tale About Acts So Noble And Unselfish That It Is Hardly To Be Believed. North Zealand 1807

In August 1807 the British occupied Zealand, and in September they subjected Copenhagen to a devastating bombardment. The British feared that Napoleon would assume control of the country and use the substantial Danish navy in the struggle against Great Britain. They therefore determined on a pre-emptive strike in order to appropriate the navy for themselves. The British fielded a massive army and navy against Denmark, and Zealand was occupied in a matter of days. But an army requires supplies, and a huge logistical task had to be completed, before the British troops could prepare for battle. In Lyngby, north of Copenhagen, they received unexpected assistance from the local rector, who voluntarily undertook to supply the British army in the entire northern part of Copenhagen County. "Treason" was the opinion of some. "An example of patriotism and love of one's country" was the opinion of others. Judge for yourself!

Rune Windfeld

The Princess In Prison. Investigation Of A Female Swindler At The Time Of King Christian VII

On 6th October 1769 a royal warrant was issued for the appointment of a committee to look into a most unusual case. As commissioners were chosen three of the most experienced and trusted civil servants of the realm; nothing less would suffice in such a delicate matter. Their brief was to examine a woman who called herself Anna Sophia Magdalena Friderica Ulrica von Koppelou. They were to find out who she really was, and where she came from, and they were to prove that her allegations were false. For several years this woman had sent petitions to the King as well as to high-ranking civil servants, in which she claimed to be an illegitimate daughter of Christian VI and thus a great-aunt of the reigning, absolute monarch, Christian VII.

In reality, the woman was a professional swindler, who for many years had lived by travelling far and wide in Norway and Denmark, defrauding people of their money by posing as noble. When she claimed to be of royal descent, however, she went one step too far and finished up by being locked away in Møn's prison for 33 years.

The article describes the imaginative tales of this charlatan and the somewhat more prosaic story that was revealed by the committee's investigations.