



# REMARKABLE TRIALS OF ALL COUNTRIES;

PARTICULARLY OF THE

UNITED STATES, GREAT BRITAIN, IRELAND  
AND FRANCE:

WITH NOTES AND SPEECHES OF COUNSEL.

CONTAINING

THRILLING NARRATIVES OF FACT FROM THE COURT-ROOM,

ALSO

HISTORICAL REMINISCENCES OF WONDERFUL EVENTS.

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COMPILED BY

THOMAS DUNPHY,

OF THE NEW YORK BAR,

AND

THOMAS J. CUMMINS,

OF THE NEW YORK PRESS.

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**Fred B. Rothman & Co.**

LITTLETON, COLORADO

1981

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THOMAS DUNPHY AND THOMAS J. CUMMINS,  
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## PREFACE.

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THE present work is intended to supply a deficiency which has long been felt in American literature. A collection of celebrated trials, published at such a price that they can be reached by all, must prove invaluable not only to the legal profession, but to the public generally. We have seen with what genuine interest the advent of a well-written romance is received among us, but in this volume we have compiled and culled out, not fictitious gems to please the fancy, but stern realities taken from the court-room—histories of crime and its deplorable results. Each trial is a work of wonderful interest in itself. Added to most of them are the speeches of counsel, eloquent, learned, and famous. In the trial of Francois Benjamin Courvoisier for the murder of Lord William Russell in London, we give the speech of Mr. Charles Phillips, who defended the prisoner for his life. This speech created at the time a vast amount of speculation and criticism throughout Great Britain, in consequence of the knowledge which Mr. Phillips possessed of his client's guilt when delivering his masterly effort.

The Helen Jewett and Colt cases are remembered by many of the old citizens of New York. Their barbarity, and the extraordinary circumstances which surrounded them, caused the greatest excitement in the public mind at that period.

The other cases in this volume will be found equally interesting, and it is not necessary to here allude to them at any length. If errors occur, the public must look back for redress to the chroniclers of the periods in which those trials took place.

THOMAS DUNPHY.

THOMAS J. CUMMINS.



# REMARKABLE TRIALS.

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CHARLOTTE MARIANE D'ARMANS CORDAY.

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THE ASSASSINATION OF MARAT (LEADING SPIRIT OF THE FRENCH  
REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF 1793,) BY CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

LAMARTINE'S HISTORY OF THE LIFE, TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF  
THE FRENCH HEROINE.

THE history, trial, and execution of Charlotte Corday is known almost to every reader; her early secluded life; her devotion to liberty; her determination to strike at what she believed to be the cause of the sufferings of France—the carrying out of her project unaided, unassisted by a single human being—the courage and determination exhibited in stabbing Marat—her arrest—her trial—her remarkable beauty, and lofty bearing on her way to the guillotine—her execution—group together a character the most remarkable and prominent which figured in that small party, who, “cast by Providence into the very centre of the greatest drama of modern times, comprised in themselves the ideas, the passions, the faults, the virtues of their epoch; and whose life and political acts formed, as we may say, the nucleus of the French Revolution, and who perished by the same blood which crushed the destinies of their country.”

This young French heroine was born at St. Saturnin des Lignarets, in the department of Orne, July 28, 1768; guillotined at Paris, July 17, 1793. Her bearing on the scaffold sent a thrill even through the hearts of her executioners. A young German enthusiast, Adam Lux, a deputy from the city of Mentz, on witnessing the execution, conceived a romantic passion for her, and when her head fell, he cried, with a voice hoarse with emotion, “She is greater than

## REMARKABLE TRIALS.

Brutus." He wrote a pamphlet, suggesting that a statue with such an inscription should be erected to her memory. He was arrested and guillotined. André Chénier, who had paid a glowing poetical homage to her heroism, shared the same fate before a year had elapsed. When Vergniaud was informed of Charlotte's death, he exclaimed, "She has killed us, but she teaches us how to die."

Her history, trial, and execution, so beautifully and vividly described by Lamartine, we give as follows:—

Whilst Paris, France, the leaders and the armies of the factions were preparing to rend the republic to atoms, the shadow of a grand idea was flitting over the mind of a young girl, which was to disconcert events and men, by throwing the arm and the life of a female athwart the destiny of the Revolution. It would seem as though Providence deigned to mark out the greatness of the deed by the weakness of the hand, and took pleasure in contrasting two species of fanaticism in bodily conflict—the one beneath the hideous guise of popular vengeance, in the person of Marat; the other under the heavenly charm of love of country, in a Jeanne d'Arc of liberty; each, notwithstanding, ending, through their mistaken zeal, in murder, and thus unfortunately presenting themselves before posterity, not as an end, but as a means—not by the aspect, but the hand—not by the mind, but by blood!

In a large and thronged street which traverses the city of Caen, the capital of Normandy, at that time the focus of the Girondist insurrection, there stood at the bottom of a courtyard an ancient habitation, with grey walls, stained by the weather and dilapidated by time. This building was styled *le Grand Manoir*. A fountain with stone brim, covered with moss, occupied one angle of the courtyard. A narrow low door, whose fluted lintels uniting in an arch over the top, exposed the worn steps of a winding staircase which led to the upper story. Two windows, with their small octagon panes of glass held in leadwork, feebly lighted the staircase and the empty chambers. The misty daylight in this antique and obscure abode impressed on it the character of vagueness, mystery, and melancholy, which the human fancy likes to see spread as a shroud over the cradle of deep thoughts and the abodes of strongly imaginative minds. Here resided, at the commencement of 1793, a granddaughter of the great French tragedy writer, Pierre Corneille. Poets and heroes are of the same race. There is between them



no other difference than that which exists between idea and fact. The one does what the other conceives, but the thought is wholly the same. Women are naturally as enthusiastic as the one, and as courageous as the other. Poetry, heroism, and love inherit the same blood.

This house belonged to a poor woman, a widow, childless, aged, and infirm—a Madame de Bretteville. With her had lived for some years a young female relative, whom she had adopted and brought up, in order to comfort her old age and relieve her from utter isolation. This girl was then in her twenty-fourth year. Her serious but fine features, grave yet very beautiful, seemed to have received the imprint of this dull abode and sequestered existence. There was in her something not of this earth. The inhabitants of the district who saw her walking out with her aged aunt on Sundays in order to go to church, or caught a glimpse of her through the doorway, reading for hours at a time in the courtyard, seated in the sunshine at the brink of the fountain, relate that their admiration of her was mingled with *prestige* and respect, arising from that strength of mind which, beaming forth, intimidates the vulgar eye; or that deep feeling of the soul imprinted on her features; or that presentiment of a tragic destiny which, anticipating the event, stamps its mark upon the brow.

This young creature was tall, without exceeding the usual height of the high statured and well proportioned women of Normandy. Natural grace and dignity, like the rhythm of poetry, displayed itself in her steps and action. The ardor of the south mingled itself in her complexion with the high color of the women of the north. Her hair seemed black when fastened in a large mass around her head, or arranged in clusters on each side of her brows. It seemed gold colored at the points of the tresses, like the ear of corn, deeper and more lustrous than the wheat-stalk in the sunlight. Her eyes, large and expanding almost to her temples, were of a color variable like the wave of ocean, which borrows its tint from the shadow or the day beam—blue when she reflected, almost black when called into animated play. Long eye-lashes, blacker than her hair, gave the appearance of great depth to her glance. Her nose, which united with her brow by an almost imperceptible curve, was slightly expanded near the middle. Her Grecian mouth dis-