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## A LATE ARRIVAL AT MOTHER WOOD'S

George Cruikshank, June 1820

Hand-coloured etching by George Cruikshank, published by Mr George Humphrey. The scene depicts Caroline of Brunswick, the estranged wife of the newly ascended King George IV, saluting and addressing an adoring crowd from the balcony of Alderman Wood's residence in South Audley Street, London. Alderman Woods was a low-born hop merchant who's investments in a colouring agent for porter had supplied him with the means to further career in Radical politics. He achieved an almost unprecedented two-term mayoralty of the City of London where his opposition to the governments repressive domestic legislation and condemnation of the Peterloo massacre, as well as his perceived upstart vulgarity, made him a hate-figure for Tories and Loyalists. His Whig-Radicalism continued into his term as MP for the City of London and when, in 1820 he saw the chance to embarrass the King and his adherents by the return of his absent and unloved wife, he took it boldly. Woods persuaded Caroline of Brunswick to terminate the discreet ongoing negotiations for a settlement she had been engaged in with the King and instead return, splendidly and publicly, to the capital to assert her claim to be rightful Queen of England. Alderman Woods arranged for Caroline to be conveyed in an open carriage through the heart of London to his house on South Audley Street where she became the unlikely figure-head of Radical Whiggery in the metropolis. The diarist Charles Greville noted of the procession to the house on the 6th of June 1820: "*The Queen arrived in London yesterday at seven o'clock... She travelled in an open landau, Alderman Wood sitting by her side and Lady Anne Hamilton and another woman opposite. Everybody was disgusted at the vulgarity of Wood in sitting in the place of honour, while the Duke of Hamilton's sister was sitting backwards in the carriage*". Caroline would spend the next two months at South Audley Street where the the great and the good of British radicalism paid her court amidst the crowds outside South Audley Street.

DIMENSIONS: 35.56cm (14") High, 45.72cm (18") Wide

PRICE: £350

STOCK CODE: A083

