

**Biographical catalogue of the portraits  
at Weston, the seat of the Earl of  
Bradford (IA gri  
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No. 11.

MISTRESS MARY, OR MOLL DAVIES.

*Golden brown satin gown.*

BY SIR PETER LELY.

In the reign of Charles the Second, she was a member of the Duke of York's troop of comedians, and one of the four female actresses who boarded at Sir William Davenant's house. She was on the stage as early as 1664, in which year she appeared in 'The Stepmother,' and afterwards as Celia in 'The Rivals,' an adaptation by Davenant of the 'Two Noble Kinsmen.' Pepys makes frequent mention of her, and was a great admirer of her talent. He even pits her against Nell Gwynne: 'Little Mistress Davies danced a jig at the end of the play in boy's clothes, far superior to Nelly's performance in the same character.' It is true he calls her an impertinent slut, but that did not prevent the King from losing his heart, and my lady Castlemaine from being very jealous, seeing Charles's eyes were fixed all the time of the play on Mistress Moll. But what especially fascinated his Merry Majesty were the wild, mad, melodious songs she sang, and her wonderful grace and arch demeanour in dancing. Charles bought and furnished a house for her, and made her

a present of a ring which cost £600, a large sum in those days. He had a daughter by her, called Mary Tudor, who was born in 1673, and married a son of Sir Francis Ratcliffe, afterwards Earl of Derwentwater.

*No. 13.*

PORTRAIT. UNKNOWN.

BY SIR ANTONIO MORE.



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