

**THE SECRET
HISTORY OF
BETTY IRELAND**

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The Secret History of Betty Ireland by Anonymous

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Read Flanders Moll, the German Princess scan,
Then Match our Irish Betty if you can ;
In Wit and Vice she did 'em both excel,
And may be justly call'd a NONPAREIL.

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ABSTRACT OF CONTENTS.



- An interesting Account of her unfortunate Marriage at the Age of Fourteen.
- Her Absconding from her Husband, and turning Prostitute.
- Her being Carted for a Bawd.
- Her Revenge on one of the Justices.
- Her Intrigues with a Jew, whom she caused to be arrested for £300.
- Her Marriage to Three Brothers within Seven Days, without the knowledge of each other.
- Her being robbed on Epping Forest.
- Her intriguing with Will, an Irishman, a well known *Sharper*, with an Account of his Death in *Newgate*.
- Her associating with Shoplifters, and being taken in the Fact; and the Stratagem she used to escape a Prosecution; together with many other interesting Anecdotes, &c, &c., well worth the perusal of the Curious.

THE
SECRET HISTORY
OF
BETTY IRELAND.

IT *is a good family*, says an old Proverb, *which has neither whore nor rogue in it* ; for the sake therefore of the person from whom *Betty Ireland* is descended, I have avoided to make mention of her surname ; in the room of which I have substituted that of the country wherein she was born.

Her grandfather was Physician to King Charles the Second, from whom he received the honor of knighthood ; and while he attended that monarch in his exile, he married a German lady, whose fine house, and a very large town of which she was sole mistress, were unhappily reduced to ashes in the space of twelve hours. Nevertheless, her dowry, at the time of her marriage, amounted to upwards of ten thousand pounds, besides plate and jewels ; and coming to England with her husband at the restoration, they did not continue long in this Kingdom, but went into Ireland, where they left behind them four sons and two daughters, and made a handsome provision for each of them.

The youngest was a captain of horse, at the revolution, and attended King William in the wars of Ireland. Betty was the second daughter, and had been bred up under her grandmother, whose too indulgent nature she abused. As she was well shaped, had a fine mein, a large share of wit and sense, so she was wonderfully beautiful; to which were added the advantages of the best education. She had scarce arrived to her fourteenth year, when she became the reigning toast of all the city; crowds of lovers constantly attended her wherever she went, and at last a match was proposed between her and the Earl of M—: but he being old enough to be her grandfather, she could not be persuaded to comply, though he offered to settle a jointure upon her of a thousand pounds a year.

Her young blood began to circulate briskly, and having a strong inclination to be made a wife, and resolving to choose a husband, who was not many years older than herself, she unfortunately flung herself away upon a tradesman, who, by the contrivance and assistance of her maid, palmed himself upon her for a gentleman of a good family and a large estate.

She quickly conceived, and in due time brought forth a daughter; she was cast off by her relations, and despised by those who admired her before. And her husband, being balked in his expectations of a large fortune, used her (as she often declared), very roughly, and induced her at last to act on the stage, which business he then followed.

Her friends, judging rightly what would be the conse-

quence of this scene of life, and what a disgrace it was to them, made application to the master of the play house, who, at their request, discarded her from being an actress. Had they applied themselves sooner, they might probably have prevented what afterwards befel her; for as most gentlemen are fond of a young creature, upon her first appearance at a theatre, so Mr. M——, a gentleman of good address and fortune, found out an opportunity to seduce her, and kept company with her in private for the space of two years.

She was delivered of a second daughter, but her husband could not be induced to believe that he was the father, and thereupon an uneasiness arising between them, and their jars continually increasing, she communicated her design to her new lover, who, providing handsome lodgings for her in a village two miles distant from Dublin, received her into his arms the night that she eloped from her husband.

Here she lived for the space of twelve months, and wanted nothing that love or money could supply her with; her lover doated on her, and she had art and cunning enough to make him believe she was as fond of him, always pretending to be uneasy when he went away from her, and telling him how pensive and melancholy she sat during his absence.

In a short time she informed him of her pregnant state, at which he professed great satisfaction, and the next time he returned to her, presented her with a rich piece of silk for a gown and petticoat, a gold watch, and a diamond

ring, assuring her, that if she should be delivered of a boy, he would settle three hundred pounds a year upon him for ever, and give her five hundred guineas.

Nature gratified both their desires, and the child was named Richard, after the father, who faithfully performed his promise to both, and left the deed of settlement in the mother's hands, to whose care and management he left his spurious son.

Betty growing weary of leading a retired life in the spring of her age, placed her child out to nurse, and took lodgings in Dublin, unknown to her kind keeper, for whom she sent a message the night she came into them. He was much surprised at this sudden change, and not thinking it proper to be seen with her in public, went to one of his acquaintance who had been privy to their intrigues, and desired her to let Betty know the reason of his not going to her that night, and how uneasy he was at the false step she had taken in coming to town; however, he would dine with her the next day at the Ring in Ring's End.

This message nettled Betty at first, but upon the remonstrances of her confidant, she was appeased, and they both lay together.

The next day about noon they went to the place appointed, where they met the gentleman, whose countenance was not altogether so pleasant as usual; nor did he receive Betty with his accustomed ardour. She looked upon this as a mark of contempt, or a slight at best, and could not refrain from bursting into tears.