



Sir R. MANNINGHAM'S
DIARY
Concerning
MARY TOFT,
The pretended
RABBIT-BREEDER.



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Введение

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A N E X A C T

D I A R Y

Of what was observ'd during a

C L O S E A T T E N D A N C E
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M A R Y T O F T,

The pretended

R A B B E T - B R E E D E R
O F

Godalming in Surrey,

From *Monday Nov. 28,* to *Wednesday*
Dec. 7 following.

Together with

An Account of her Confession of the F R A U D.

By Sir *RICHARD MANNINGHAM*, Kt.
Fellow of the *Royal Society*, and of the *College*
of *Physicians, London.*

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A N E X A C T

D I A R Y

Of what was observ'd during a close Attendance upon *MARY TOFT*, the pretended *RABBET-BREEDER*, &c.



ON *Sunday* Evening the 27th of *November*, 1726. Mr. *St. Andrè*, Anatomist to His Majesty, having received an Express from Mr. *John Howard*, Surgeon and Man-Midwife in *Guilford*, giving him an Account that another Rabbet was then

then leaping in *Mary Toft*, sent me Notice of it by Letter about eleven of the Clock the same Night, desiring withal that I would keep at home, and he would call upon me some time that Night, in order to carry me with him to *Guilford*.

I sat up till two in the Morning waiting for him, and then sent my Servant to his House, desiring to be excused, for I was then going to Bed; my Servant return'd before I was got into Bed, and told me Mr. *St. Andrè* would be with me presently, and desired I would not go to Bed.

Accordingly, between three and four in the Morning, He and Mr. *Limborch*, a German Surgeon and Man-Midwife, came to my House; and Mr. *St. Andrè* told me he had been at *Kensington* since he wrote to
me,

me, and desired me to go immediately with him to *Guilford*; adding, that it was his Majesty's Pleasure that I should go and see this *Godalming* Woman so much talk'd of, and after a strict Examination to make my Report concerning her.

Immediately we set out together for *Guilford* about four in the Morning, and arrived there a little after twelve at Noon: We stopp'd at Mr. *Howard's* House, who being out of Town we went directly over the way to the House where *Mary Toft* (the Woman said to be delivered of seventeen Rabbits) then lodged.

I found her in Bed, and after asking her several Questions in the presence of Mr. *St. Andrè*, Mr. *Limborck*, and several Women and Midwives, I proceeded to examine her Breasts, wherein

wherein was a small Quantity of thin *Serous Matter* like *Milk*; I then felt her Belly all over very carefully, which was soft, and not much larger than ordinary, and by no means like a Woman with Child; the Right side of her Belly, indeed, was somewhat bigger than the Left, with a Hardness a-cross it, which when I press'd, she said it gave her Pain.

I afterwards diligently search'd the whole *Vagina*, and being well assured at that time all was clear from Imposture, I touch'd the *Os Uteri*, which was close and contracted in such manner that it would not receive so much as the point of a Bodkin into it's Orifice; the Neck of the *Uterus* was somewhat long; I then press'd against the *Uterus* with my Fingers opened in such a manner as to receive as much of the Body of the *Uterus* into my Hand

as possible, which seem'd to me to contain something of Substance in its Cavity.

While I was thus examining I applied my other Hand at different times to the several Parts of her Belly, whereby it seem'd to me that there was Substance, not only in the Cavity of the *Uterus*, but also along the right side of the Belly, which I then judg'd to be the *Fallopian Tube*; but feeling no Motion all this while, I enquir'd of the Women then present how long it was since the Rabbet leapt (as they term'd it) and whether they were of Opinion it was now dead; to which they answer'd, the last time it leapt was about one in the Morning.

I left her for that time, and did not visit her again till about five in the Afternoon, jointly with Mr. *John*

B

Howard

Howard her Surgeon, when I again examin'd her in like manner as before, and asking Mr. *John Howard*, whether he then thought the Rabbet was dead? He answer'd, he could not exactly tell, but had lately observ'd, if hot Clothes were apply'd, the Rabbet (if alive) would leap again; upon which I immediately ordered Clothes to be made very hot, and apply'd them myself to all her Belly, being very desirous to feel that leaping Motion they so much talk'd of. Upon applying of the first Cloth the Motion began, which they called the leaping up of the Rabbet; it was indeed a Motion like a sudden leaping of something within the right side of her Belly, where I had before felt that particular Hardness.

The Motions were various, sometimes with very strong Throws cross
the

the Belly, especially on the right side, at other times with sudden Jerks and Risings, and tremulous Motions and Pantings, like the strong Pulsations of the Heart; and as I sat on the Bed in Company with five or six Women, it would sometimes shake us all very strongly: The whole appeared to me very different from any convulsive or hysteric Motion I had ever met with before.

We then left the Woman, and Mr. *Howard* parted from us, Mr. *St. André*, Mr. *Limborch*, and myself went to the *White-hart-Inn*; but within less than an hour Mr. *John Howard* brought us, wrapt in a Paper, a piece of Membrane, which he said he had just taken from the Woman, and shew'd it us. I told him he ought to have sent for me, that I might have taken it away myself,

being' come down for that Purpose: To which he reply'd, 'twas true, but he believ'd there was more to come, which I should take away before I return'd to *London*, or to that effect. Upon examining the Membrane which he brought, it appear'd to me like a piece of Bladder, but he insisted it was a part of the *Chorion*, and that he had more of it at home: Upon which I walked with him to his House to see the Rabbits and Membranes which he said he had taken from the Woman and preserved in Spirits of Wine.

Mr. *John Howard* ask'd me to go with him and see one of his Patients who was very ill; adding, he believ'd it would be some time before any more Membranes would come; and having left Orders to be sent for so soon as the Woman's Pains came on, we forth-

with

with went thither, and from thence to Mr. *Castle's* at the *Priory*, where we met Mr. *Thomas Howard*, his Brother, and several Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood.

About eight in the Evening a Messenger came to us from the Woman and told us she was in Pain: We went immediately, and I found her sitting in a great Chair by the Fire-side; I ask'd her if she was then in Pain, she answer'd, no, but that she had some sharp Pains just before I came in: I then touch'd her, and in the *Vagina* perceiv'd with my Forefinger and Thumb somewhat like a piece of Skin; but being willing to know whether it came out of the *Uterus*, I pass'd my Finger on one side the said piece of Skin in the *Vagina* to find if there was any part of that Skin or Membrane yet remaining within the

Uterus,

Uterus; but perceiving the *Os Uteri* close, as before, and in the same Form as I left it last, I presently took out what lay in the *Vagina*, and upon examining it, confess I was much surpriz'd, it appearing to me so like a piece of Hog's Bladder, that I was not able to form any other Judgment of it, as I then told Mr. *Howard*, Mr. *St. Andrè*, Mr. *Limborch*, and all that were there present, assuring them that it was my Opinion that Membrane never came out of the *Uterus*.

The Woman, *Mary Toft*, from whom I had taken it, seem'd much concern'd at what I said, and cry'd. I ask'd her the Reason of her crying, to which she gave me no Answer, but the Women about her said, it was because she supposed I thought her a Cheat.

I asked

I asked for a Hog's Bladder, and they presently brought one fresh blown up, which it seems they had in the House :: This added to my Jealousy. Then I compared the Membrane which I took from the Woman with the Hog's Bladder, and could perceive no Difference but in the Thickness, in which the Bladder something exceeded the Membrane; they had both the same strong *urinous* Smell peculiar to a Hog's Bladder. I still insisted I should not be satisfied as to that Affair, unless I received out of the *Uterus* itself a piece of Membrane of the same kind with *that* I had already taken from the *Vagina*.

Mr. *John Howard* and Mr. *St. André* bid me have a little Patience and I should soon be fully satisfied. I still urg'd the Similitude of the Membrane

brane to a Hog's Bladder, requiring them to tell me what they themselves thought it did most resemble? Both of them agreed, nothing look'd more like a Hog's Bladder than it did; and Mr. *St. André* added, that had he not actually deliver'd the Woman of part of a Rabbit from the very *Uterus* itself, this Circumstance would also induce him to believe the whole a Fraud.

The same Evening *Mary Toft* had several Pains like Labour-pains while I sat before her, which I believe was full three Hours, and I was all that time in expectation of receiving something from her *Uterus*; the Pains were sometimes very pressing, and the *Os Uteri* seem'd to prepare for opening, but they went off again suddenly.

When

When we return'd from the Woman to the *White Hart*, I told them again, that the more I considered the thing, the more strongly I was convinced, that the Membrane I took from the Woman had never been in the *Uterus*, but was really a piece of Hog's Bladder artfully conveyed into the *Vagina*.

Upon this, very warm Disputes arose amongst us, and Mr. *St. André* urged it was not more surprizing, than that Rabbits should come from her *Uterus*; adding, that he was convinced of *that Truth* by examining the Rabbit he had taken from her *Uterus*; which at the same time had the exact external Appearance of Animals, like such Creatures as must inevitably undergo the Changes that happen to adult Animals by Food and

Air ; and that they carried within them the strongest Marks of *Foetus's*, even by such Parts as cannot exist in an Adult, and without which a *Foetus* cannot possibly be suppos'd to live, or to that effect. This he thought prov'd, in the strongest Terms possible, that these Animals were of a particular kind, and not bred in a natural way, saying, Why therefore might not this Membrane which looks like a Hog's Bladder, come also out of the *Uterus*? from whence he verily believed that it did, and that it might be part of the *Chorion* ; to which Mr. *Howard* and Mr. *Limborch* assented.

After this Dispute, and at their joint Desire, I determin'd to make no publick Mention of this Affair till I had seen the Event of the whole Transaction, or had fresh Reason to suspect
a Fraud,

a Fraud, lest by such an Alarm I should rather obstruct than forward the finding out the Truth: I then mark'd the Membrane which I took from the *Vagina*, by cutting a small part of it, which I brought with me to *London*.

Tuesday the 29th, we brought *Mary Toft* to *London* with us, and lodg'd her at Mr. *Lacy's* Bagnio in *Leicester Fields*: I sat up with her all that Night; she often had the Motion on the Right side of her Belly, and sometimes very strongly.

Wednesday the 30th, the Motion was more faint, and she pass'd the Night tolerably well. Some time that Day I told Dr. *Douglafs* what I had observ'd at *Guilford*, and took out of my Pocket-Book the piece of Membrane which I called a piece of Hog's

Bladder, and shew'd it him, and ask'd his Opinion; he said it look'd like a piece of Hog's Bladder, and added, Surely this must be a Cheat, or to that effect: The same Day I told the Story of the Hog's Bladder to his Grace the Duke of *Richmond*, Duke of *Montague*, Lord *Baltimore*, and Mr. *Molyneux*, but did not declare it publickly for the Reasons I have given.

Thursday the 1st Instant, about ten in the Morning, the Motion was very languid, and having intermitted for a while, she was seiz'd with Pains like those of Labour: I then prepared, as before at *Guilford*, to deliver her; and having diligently search'd the *Vagina*, I found it clear, and received a Pain or two, which were strong and exactly like Labour-Pains: Upon this I desired Dr. *Douglafs*, who was then present, that

that *he* would please likewise to examine her, and openly declare his Opinion, which he did, and in the hearing of several Persons of Distinction, profess'd that he found the *Vagina* clear, and was of Opinion the Pains were of the same Nature with Labour-Pains. I then took my Place again, and received more Pains of the like Nature, and perceiv'd the *Os Uteri* to spread a little and grow softer, her Face also flush'd and her Pulse was rais'd, as it always was whenever she had those Pains upon her.

After some time the Motion on the right side of her Belly, which they call'd the leaping up of the Rabbet, begun again, and those Pains like Labour-Pains went suddenly off; her Pulse soon became calm as before, and the flushing of her Face disappeared; she pass'd

pass'd the remainder of the Day indifferently well, having for the most part the Motion on the right side of her Belly, which I never observ'd had any Influence on her Pulse; her Diet was Beef, Rabbet, Red-Herring, and such like: That Night she slept very well.

Friday the 2d Instant, she had the Motion the greatest part of the Day, towards Evening it increased extreamly, insomuch that she fell into violent Convulsions, which I never before observ'd in her, with frequent Contractions of her Fingers, rolling of her Eyes, and great Risings in her Stomach and Belly: During the Fit she would often make a whining Noise, and at Intervals be more than ordinary faint. She continued in her Fit near two Hours, for some Minutes I could scarcely

scarcely

scarcely perceive she had any Pulse; when she came out of her Fit, she perceived herself very weak for some time, and when I ask'd if she remembred she had been in a Fit, she answer'd, No; she rested well that Night.

On *Saturday* the 3d in the Morning she was brisk, and all that Day had the Motion by Intervals; towards Evening she had another Convulsion Fit, though not so violent as the former; this Night she was very restless, and sometimes convulsed, had a Difficulty in making Water, and the Motion in her Belly was very little.

On *Sunday* the 4th Instant, about Eleven of the Clock in the Morning, Dr. *Douglafs* and my self did carefully examine her Belly, when we perceived a Swelling a little above the *Os Pubis*

Pubis, such as we had never felt there before, it was long, and, as we apprehended in the Cavity of the *Uterus*, which we observ'd had little or no Motion, this we could not account for; we each of us examined the *Vagina*, and found it clear as before, the *Os Uteri* soft and spread, as on *Thursday* last, but something more relax'd.

About Three in the Afternoon, the Pains, like Labour Pains, came on again: I touch'd her as before, and Dr. *Douglafs*, Dr. *Mowbray*, Mr. *Limborch* the German Surgeon and Man Midwife, who were then present, did the same; and we agreed, that the Nature of the Pains were such, and so violent, as we apprehended something would soon issue from the *Uterus*; and this we declared in the
hearing

hearing of many Persons of Distinction, who were then present: And I well remember, the Room being very full, I desired if there was any Person present willing to examine her, that they would do it then while her Pains were upon her. Accordingly, several Persons did examine her, and declared to the same Purpose: After having received several Pains, they, together with the other Symptoms of approaching Labour, vanished on the sudden, as formerly.

In the Evening, *Thomas Howard*, Porter to Mr. *Lacy's Bagnio*, made an Information against *Mary Toft*, before Sir *Thomas Clarges*, Bart. one of His Majesty's Justices of Peace, concerning a Rabbet she had clandestinely procured by his Assistance; upon which she was taken into Custody, and

D

strictly

strictly examined by Sir *Thomas*: She very obstinately denied all the Porter had sworn; but her Sister, who nurs'd her, being examined to the said Fact upon Oath, acknowledged the procuring the Rabbet in a clandestine manner; but that it was not designed for the Use we suspected, but for eating only.

Soon after *Mary Toft* confess'd she had procured the Rabbet, according to the Porter's Deposition, but that it was her Intention to eat it, she having *long'd* for it, and most obstinately persisted that she was still big with a Rabbet.

The same Evening I examined her again, and her *Uterus* appear'd to me to contain something of Substance in it; whereupon I earnestly press'd Sir *Thomas Clarges* that she might not be
sent

sent to Prison that Night, being still apprehensive there might something come from her *Uterus* in a little time; and, as the Fraud was not fully detected, I judg'd it might prove of very ill Consequence to remove her till the whole was found out.

On *Monday* the 5th, I gave my Opinion to Sir *Thomas*, concerning *Mary Toft*; and, lest he should commit her to Prison, I spoke to several Persons of Distinction, and that Day wrote to the Honourable Mr. *Molyneux* to assist me in that Affair, well knowing how industrious they had always been, in endeavouring to find out this supposed Fraud; for I believ'd a sudden Commitment of her to Prison, before the Cheat did manifestly appear, would be a means of preventing

a Discovery : The Copy of my said Letter is as follows.

To the Hon. Mr. MOLYNEUX.

Dear Sir,

“ **I** Have, since I left you, very
“ maturely considered what you
“ said this Morning, and the Con-
“ tents of the Letter frank’d by
“ Lord *Onslow*, which you also shew-
“ ed us, importing a Discovery of a
“ Fraud in the Affair in the Coun-
“ try ; and adding, *that*, to what
“ happen’d to my self at *Guildford*,
“ in relation to my taking away from
“ the *Vagina* of *Mary Toft* the *Godat-*
“ *ting* Woman, what I call the Piece
“ of Hog’s Bladder, and the Deposi-
“ tion about the Rabbet last *Sunday*
“ Night, which I heard *Thomas*
“ *Howard*,

“ *Howard*, the Porter of *Lacy’s*
 “ *Bagnio*, make before Sir *Thomas*
 “ *Clarges*, in the Presence of several
 “ Persons of Quality, and the Unna-
 “ turalness of the Production, sup-
 “ posed to have been; all this, I say,
 “ laid together, is to me such Evi-
 “ dence of *Roguary*, as makes me
 “ strongly believe the whole to be a
 “ Fraud. Therefore, that our En-
 “ deavours fully to detect the Cheat
 “ may prove most effectual, and the
 “ unnatural Imposture may most clear-
 “ ly appear to the Publick, I think
 “ *Mary Toft* should by no means be
 “ sent to Prison, till the Truth comes
 “ out; but that she should rather be
 “ kept, and most strictly watched in
 “ some private House, where all Per-
 “ sons, those of the Faculty especial-
 “ ly, may have free and convenient
 “ Access

“ Access to her, which a Prison will
“ not so well afford, till the Matter be
“ as plainly and fully detected as
“ possible; for which Purpose, I will
“ wait upon Sir *Thomas Clarges* to
“ take Measures accordingly; and, if
“ you will give Leave, will call on
“ you as I come from him, to ac-
“ quaint you with our Resolutions.

I am,

S I R,

Dec. 6,
1726.

Your most humble Servant,

R. MANNINGHAM.

After

After some Difficulty, I prevailed with Sir *Thomas Clarges* to let her remain in the Custody of the *High Constable* of *Westminster*, at Mr. *Lacy's* Bagnio, till the Cheat should be found out, or at least for a few Days longer; to which he agreed.

On *Tuesday* the 6th, Sir *Thomas* threaten'd her severely, and began to appear the most properest Physician in her Case, and his Remedies took Place, and seem'd to promise a perfect Cure; for we heard no more of her former Labour-like Pains.

I urged her very much to confess the Truth; and told her, I believ'd her to be an Impostor, and that she was differently form'd from other Women, having some peculiar way of conveying Pieces of Rabbits into her *Uterus*, and of imposing upon the
World

World by her Motions and Pains, and therefore I resolved to try a very painful Experiment upon her, and was accordingly prepared for that Purpose; whereas if she would ingeniously confess the whole Truth, I would speak to several of the Nobility in her Behalf, some of whom then present promised her their good Offices on the like Condition.

I assured her also there was no Time left for Delay; and if she would not confess, I should immediately proceed to the Operation.

These Threats made great Impressions upon her, and being withal in a most particular manner exhorted by his Grace the Duke of *Montague*; Lord *Beltimore*, Dr. *Douglafs*, and myself, to make a free and open Confession, before it should be done by
any

any other Person in the Country, and to avoid so terrible an Operation; she at last begg'd very heartily to be let alone till the next Morning, and if she did not then confess, I might proceed as I pleas'd.

Accordingly on *Wednesday December 7*, in the Morning, in the Presence of the two Noblemen before mentioned, Dr. *Douglafs* and myself, she began her Confession of the Fraud; and in her Confession she own'd, That upon her miscarrying she was seiz'd with violent Floodings, and the Womb was then as she thought open as if she had been just deliver'd of a full-grown Child, she did verily believe one of her wicked Accomplices did then convey into her Womb part of the Monster (as she

calls it) being the Claws and Body of a Cat, and the Head of a Rabbet; this put her to much Pain: After that time she believed nothing was ever put into her Womb, but into the Passage only, by the Advice of a Woman Accomplice whom she has not yet nam'd, and who told her she had now no Occasion to work for her Living as formerly, for she would put her into a Way of getting a very good Livelihood, and promised continually to supply her with Rabbets, and should therefore expect part of the Gain, or to that effect. *Mary Toft* asked what way that was. The Woman told her she must put up her Body so many pieces of Rabbets as would make up the Number of Rabbets which a Doe Rabbet usually kindles

kindles at one time, otherwise she would be suspected. *Mary Toft* asked how many that was; the Woman told her, sometimes thirteen.

From that time *Mary Toft* did often, by the Assistance of that Woman, convey Parts of Rabbets into her Body, 'till at last she could do it by herself, as she had an Opportunity, and that she did continue so to do.

Now, by the constant Irritation of those extraneous Bodies, thus artfully convey'd into her *Vagina*, the whole *Uterus* suffer'd much, and became larger in Bulk than it ought to be in its natural State; and the Bones, and other Parts of those Rabbets, so convey'd into the *Vagina*, did often offend the Neck of the *Uterus*, which, to-

gether with artful Management of her self, did occasion those violent bearing-down Pains, which came on by Intervals, and very exactly counterfeited the true Labour-Pains. The Motions of her Belly were partly Artifice, and partly real Convulsions; for I have often observ'd some of the Motions in her soundest Sleep, and even since she has confess'd the Fraud, part of her Motions being involuntary.

Mary Toft owned there was nothing in her Passage, when I examined her, only that time when I took the Piece of Bladder from her, which she had put into her Body a little before I came to her, on *Monday* the 28th of *November*, 1726. about Eight in

the

the Evening ; and ever since that Time she was afraid to put any thing into her Body, because I had often told her, if I found twenty Rabbits at times in her Body, it would go for nothing with me ; for I should never be convinced, unless I did take some Parts of Rabbits from out of the very Womb it self, which I was very well assured could never be put there by Art.

Dr. *Douglafs*, who was so kind as to write down her Confession from her own Mouth, will I hope shortly oblige the World with it at large, when she has discover'd the whole.

Thus have I given a full and faithful Account of every material thing which occurred to me during my constant

stant Attendance upon *Mary Toft* from *Monday*, the 28th of *November*, 1726, to *December* the 7th following, which I thought my self obliged to communicate to the World, as well for their Satisfaction, as the Justification of my own Conduct.

Decemb. 8.
1726,

R. Manningham.

F I N I S.





