

THE
HISTORY

OF

MOLL FLANDERS,

WHO

WAS BORN IN NEWGATE,

and, during a life of continued varieties
for threescore years,

Was twelve years a Whore,

Five times a wife, whereof once to her

OWN BROTHER,

Twelve years a Thief,

Was eighteen times in Bridewell,

Forty times in other prisons,

Fifteen times whipt at the cart's tail,

Four times burned in the hand—Once con-
demned for life,

Eight years transported to Virginia,

And at last grew rich,—lived honest,

AND DIED A PENITENT.

EDINBURCH:

Printed for the Booksellers.

1822.

HISTORY

MOLL FLANNERS

WHO

WAS BORN IN NEW-YORK

and lived a life of continued virtuosity

for upwards of

thirty years a widow

she lived a most virtuous life to her

own satisfaction

For her virtuous life

she is celebrated in the

history of the city

and is now in the

possession of the

author of this

work and is now

AND SOLD A PENNANT

EDMUND

of the

THE
HISTORY

OF

MOLL FLANDERS.

THE most remarkable account that I can give of my parents is, that my father was hanged for felony, and my mother transported for the same, after she was delivered of me in Newgate: from whence I was taken by some

gypsies whom I remember, and left me at Colchester in Essex; where the magistrates taking compassion on me, put me to a nurse; with whom I lived thirteen years, till such time as she died, and then being fancied by a rich gentle-



woman for my nice needle-work, I shared in the education of her daughters in learning to dance, speak French, and playing upon music, these qualifications together with my beauty, caused my lady's eldest son to pretend love to me and at last with his alluring speeches and powerful gold, his melting kisses and affectionate promises that he would

marry me as soon as he came to age,
 he prevailed upon me to surrender my
 virginity up to him, and to use me
 whensoever he pleased; but scarce a
 year had expired before that his young-
 est brother pretended love also, in such
 an open and honest manner, insomuch
 that all the family took notice of it.
 How I should make a wife to him, and
 at the same time be a whore to the
 eldest brother, I could not tell without
 being ruined; as loving the former to
 extremity, being withchild by him, but
 in short, there happening such disputes
 between the two brothers, it had like to
 have driven me from the family, but
 the eldest brother consented I should
 marry the youngest, as not caring to
 marry me himself, behold, I privately
 wedded him, who the first night he
 came so drunk to my bed, that I easily
 persuaded him he had done what his
 eldest brother had done before him.

In two years after he died, leaving
 me with two children, who were taken
 care of by his parents, and having then
 a tolerable good fortune in my own
 hands, I married a Draper, who soon
 was forced from me for debt into France
 which obliged me to a lodging inn.

the Mint, where, in a widow's habit I took upon me the name of Mrs. Flan-



ders. Here I was courted as a mistress by several lewd men, but all these I scorned, and it was my good fortune to marry a gentleman whose state was in Virginia, and whom I deceived by pretending to him I was a greater fortune than I really was. But indeed he

proved a very good husband, and prevailed with me to go over with him into Virginia, where I was kindly received by my husband's mother. But here I found that our family was of the Newgate train, she shewing me where she was burnt in the hand, bidding me not wonder? for that mayor D—— was an eminent pick-pocket, Justice B—— was a shop-lifter, and Tom W—— who had so narrowly escaped the rubbing post was there become an excellent dissenting preacher.

Here I lived about three years without having children, but not without an inward remorse, as knowing my second husband was not dead. And this set me upon returning again into England, teasing my spouse for that purpose, who wanted to know very much the true cause of it. But I told his mother who came to pump me, that her story she had told me of his being transported, confirmed me in the belief she was my mother, who was delivered of me in Newgate, and by which means she was saved from the gallows. This very much surprized her, but dreading the thoughts of having another child by my husband, I was

forced to disclose the matter to excuse my coldness to him in my embraces. Upon hearing this he fell into so deep a melancholy, that twice he attempted to hang himself but was prevented; and it was with very much difficulty before I could obtain leave to return to England from him, which I did in the month of August, after eighty years continuance in that country, landing at Milford Haven in Wales, and in nine weeks arrived at London.

Sometime after I went to Bath, where making my circumstances known, my landlady lodged and boarded me at a very cheap rate, till the spring, when I was courted by a gentleman who had a wife distempered in the head, and I received several presents from him, as a hundred guineas at one time, & fifty at another, for taking care of him in an illness. In short I found him my best friend, taking several journies with him, till at length, he got me with child, and was delivered of a fine boy, going by the name of Sir Walter Cleave's Lady. From Bath we returned to Hammer-smith, near London. Six years I lived with this gentleman, by whom I had

three children till at length he fell sick in a house he had taken for his wife and family at Bloomsbury. But upon his recovery I found that I was slighted, no doubt through remorse of conscience. Yet he sent me a letter with a bank note of fifty pounds, promising he would take care of my little boy, but wanting to get the other fifty pounds of him, I signed a general release, which put an end to this affair.

But it was not long before it was my fortune to get an acquaintance with a clerk belonging to the bank, whose wife having made him a cuckold by keeping company with an officer of the army, and after that with an apprentice belonging to a Draper. I had like to have become his bride, promising on that account to get a divorce from his other wife.

But whilst this was doing, going down into Lancashire, and being imagined to be a fortune of fifteen thousand pounds, I was married to an Irish gentleman, by a Romish Clergyman; but he finding that I had no such effects, as I like a false woman had represented unto him, nor he any estate more than

what he spent in his equipage in courting me.

Hetherefore lent me as much money as would bear my charges up to London, discharged me from the marriage left a letter for me upon the table, and went away the next morning. But after he had discharged his servants he returned at night to my joy, and accompanied me as far as to Dunstable, where we afterward parted after mutual instruction had passed for our future course of life.

At London I lodged at an old midwife's, as being big with child, where (as I had given directions) a letter was sent to me out of Lancashire; which had been directed there by the clerk of the bank; who told me he had obtained a decree against his wife, and he was at my service. I returned an immediate answer under a cover that I would be in town the latter end of the year. And indeed after having opened the matter to the midwife, and being delivered of a fine boy, which, with much difficulty, I allowed her to dispose of, I went so

Stone in Lancashire, and so taking coach, writ a letter to my clerk to meet



me at Brickhill; there is a short time he prevailed with me to marry him.

The next day from the window of the inn, I beheld my Lancashire husband with two others pass by: when soon after they were all three pursued as highwaymen; but returning safely with my husband to town, I lived with him exceeding happy for the space of five years, by whom I had two children. Afterwards I rewarded my midwife for her fidelity to me. But my husband's clerk robbing him, it flung him into such a grief, that it immediately ended

his life, which entirely destroyed all my happiness.

Soon after this being reduced to very great extremity, I was tempted to steal a small bundle out of an apothecary's shop in Leadenhall street, in which I found a suit of child-bed linen, finelace a silver mug and spoons, threeshillings, and other matters. The next thing which I did, I inveigled a little child away, from whom I took its gold necklace, but though I had it in a private place, I would not kill or hurt it and put it in the way home again. Another time I took out of a shop at Stephney, two rings, one a diamond ring and the other a plain one: and as I was once in Lombard-street, a thief being pursued, dropped a piece of Silk which I made off with, and afterwards disposed of to good advantage, and not as thieves commonly do for a song. Another time I stole a silver tankard out of an alehouse, which I afterwards sold to a pawn-broker, who greatly encouraged me in such things. She shortly afterwards helped me to a mistress, who made me more expert in the thieving art; but not more forru-

nate: for first she herself, with another of her scholars, were apprehended, and committed to Newgate, for stealing two pieces of cambric from a linen-draper in Cheapside. Both of them were condemned to die, but only our scholar was executed; for the other came off with what they call a circuit pardon from the judge.

I cannot but reflect upon one crime I did in taking from the hands of a gentlewoman, a bundle of plate when her house was on fire, and conveying it to my own house, and so very fortunate was I in escaping, that I became exceeding remarkable among the thieves for none was great as Moll Flanders; but at length being threatned to be impeached by some in Newgate, I clothed myself in a man's habit though a smooth face (otherwise personal and tall enough) might soon have betrayed me. Who being discovered as he was stealing some goods was taken, and I happily escaped: I had something after this, the happiness of seeing him hanged.

My name was as well known at the Old Baily, as a remarkable traitor is at the secretary's office. But being now an excellent pick-pocket, as well as a strumpet, I took from a cull, after I had made him drunk, his gold watch, with his silk purse of gold, fine perriwig, sword and snuff-box: and leaping out of the coach (which stood still to let another coach pass by) I left my fool to mourn his disaster. This success made me follow the whoring again, but finding the profit of it too small to support me, I returned again to the old trade of shop-lifting.

And one time as I was going along the street through Covent-Garden, there was a cry of stop thief, stop thief; a mercer's shop having been robbed, and I secured as the transgressor, and most haughtily insulted by the mercer and his servants. In a little time they got the right thief, who was much in the same habit as mine. But for this affront I got an hundred and fifty pounds; so that all this, with my other substance, might have maintain'd me, but I hav-

ing got an itch of thieving, could in no manner leave it off.

I had an opportunity of commencing a coiner, but that was such a beggarly and yet so dangerous a business, that I would never embark in it. Nor could I ever yet be brought into the society of house-breakers. No person could be more dextrous in stealing gold watches than I from the ladies' sides, either at the park, playhouse, or at church. I was also very dextrous in gaming, and at one time cleared 73 guineas. The uncommon success I had, made me go into the country, where at Cambridge, Sturbridge fair, and at New Market, I expertly performed the same pranks over again; and at Ipswich I rob'd a Dutchman of a portmanteau, by pretending to be his wife in an inn, and in which was a very large quantity of gold and silver.

But afterwards coming up to London and venturing boldly into a fine silversmith's shop, while none were there, I was perceived by a shop-keeper over the way: but as I had a glance of him

so I meddled with nothing, and a justice of the peace coming by, being called, cleared me with flying colours.

Another time, going into a sempstress' shop in Cheapside, and cheapening half a dozen of very good holland shifts, I doubted the length of them; upon which the sempstress slipt one of the smocks upon her, which gave me the advantage to pin it with two or three pins to her petticoat, and taking up the rest with other pieces of muslin, ran away out of the shop. The sempstress endeavouring then to pull off her smock, pulled up her clouts, and running after, cryed, Stop thief, stop thief, with all she had exposed to the public; who taking her for a mad woman, I got clear off with my booty, and the sempstress was bantered to her dying day, besides losing to the value of fifty pounds worth of muslin.

But after happening to steal some brocaded silk from a mercer's shop, I was apprehended, and being carried before a justice, was committed to Newgate, the place of my nativity, where it

is impossible for me to express the horrors of a disconsolate mind.

Here the wretches triumphed over me. What, said they, is Mrs. Flanders come to Newgate, what, Mrs. Mary, and after plain Moll Flanders. But I was forced to content myself with this piece of Newgate poetry,

If I swing by this string,
I shall hear the bell* ring,
And there's an end of poor Moll.

Here I got into blessed acquaintance, whose company soon made me as hardened as themselves; and where to my amazement, I beheld among them my former Lancashire husband, and whose misfortune she placed upon my account. Here my old tutoress had done what she could for me to make up the matter with my prosecutors; for she endeavoured, tho' to no purpose, to hinder the jury from finding the bill of indictment against me. At the sessions I had pleaded not guilty, but was found

*St. Sepulchre's.

guilty of felony, and so received sentence of death accordingly.

So concerned was my poor governess that having repented herself of all her sins, she sent me a minister also,



who represented to me these four important truths, death, judgement, heaven and hell. When the dead warrant came down, he visited me as before; the next day I heard the dismal toll of St Sepulchre's bell, and then was in-

formed of my reprieve, the unexpected joy made me immediately fall into a terrible swoon.

After this I was put on board in order for transportation with several other victims, as they called us, where we endured great hardships, as the first night lying upon the bare boards, but afterwards were allowed the liberty of little cabins if we had any clothes to lay in them. That night the ship fell down



into a place which they call busy Hole, from whence I sent a letter by the boatswain, who came on shore, to my go-

erness, and to my poor Lancashire husband. The next day my governess sent me a sea bed and a chest ; in one drawer of which, was my money ; and gave me an answer to that which I sent to my husband, who hoped tho' he could not go with me in the same ship, yet to see me in Virginia, but by intercession, he was afterwards put on board with us, where my money furnished us with good accomadation. So we took likewise several materials with us for the work of planting: and so we sailed from the Downs the 13th of April, and arrived safely on the coast of Virginia, where I soon perceived my own son and my brother his father whom I had made my husband twenty years ago; but my mother had been dead some time before having left a considerable plantation to me and my heirs.

Many were the ways I pondered on to get from the sight of my family in these wretched circumstances ; since I could not bear the sight of my child, my brother and husband, who lived near that place I had taken for my settlement ; and upon this very account

we moved with all our effects into Maryland, after a long and unpleasant voyage, where we bought us two servants, an English woman and a Negro man; then a piece of ground of fifty acres & built a decent house thereon. And indeed, our affairs went on very prosperously so that we looked upon one another with pleasure; and then I obtained my husband's consent to go to Virginia & to discover myself to my brother. When I landed I writ a letter to him, telling him of several particular affairs, which letter came into his son's hand, who asking the messenger where the gentleman was that wrote it, he came to me, which was about seven miles off, attended by two servants on horseback, and coming to me, kissed me, saying, dear mother are you alive? and then he fell to weeping.

He told me that his father was quite superannuated, and beside himself, which made him conceal the letter from him, that the plantation which my mother had left me, was in his possession; so for the produce of it he gave a hundred pounds, engaging to be my trustee and faithful steward. Indeed in all his

actions he proved a most dutiful child, allotting servants to wait upon me, and treating me with as great splendor as if I had been a sovereign princess. I presented him with a gold watch, and taking my leave of him, after I had acquainted him that I intended to marry a gentleman who came over with me, I set sail in a sloop my son had provided, and came safe to my own plantations again, bringing over with me three saddles, some hogs, two cows, and a great many other things.

When I had related all this very good fortune to my husband, he lifted up his hands in an extacy of joy, and gave thanks to heaven for this sudden and so happy a change. Soon after this, arrived a cargo from England, which my governess had sent me, with three women servants; which made my husband amazed, especially when I assured him that they were paid for. How, says he, was I deceived when I married a wife in Lancashire I think I married a fortune, and a good fortune too.

I had taken care to buy those things for my husband, which I knew he took a delight to wear : as two good long wigs, two silver hilted swords, three or four side fowling pieces, a fine saddle with holsters and pistols very handsome with a scarlet cloak ; and in one word every thing I could think on that might possibly oblige him and to make him appear (as he really was) a very fine gentleman, I must not omit informing my readers that one of the wenches my governess had sent he happened to come double, having been got with child by one of the seamen in the ship, as she owned afterwards, before the ship got as far as Gravesend : so she brought us a fine boy about seven months after our landing.

After my brother's (or former husband's) death, my son visited us where my dear husband made him most exceeding welcome ; and truly no person could be blessed with a more dutiful child. In this happy manner we lived for the space of 20 years, resolving to spend the remainder of our days in a sincere penitence for our wicked lives we had lived. And this we shall do

by our extensive charity, and liberal hospitality to all men.

Thus far we have given an account of Moll Flanders: To which we shall add that we have an account from Virginia that she died lately, having prepared for that change, with the greatest piety and devotion: And as she perceived her dissolution to draw near, she bequeathed several legacies for charitable uses: and dying her funeral was performed with great solemnity, being interred in St. Mary's church in Virginia.

FINIS.