MOLL CUTFURSE, a Pick-pocket
and Highwaywoman.

Mary Friz, otherwise call'd Moll Cutpurse, from her Original Profession of cutting
Rufes, was born in Barbican, near Alders-
gate-Broad, in the Year 1589. Her Father
was a Shoemaker; and though no remarkable
thing happened at her Nativity, such as the
merry Seetseholders pretend in Eclipses, and
other like Motions Above, or Tides, and
Wh... and great Fires, adjusted and
skil'd to the Calnitudes of Cown'd Heads; yet,
the She Politician, she was not much inferior
to Pope Joan; for in her Time, she was the
great Cabal and Oracle of the Mystery of diving
into Purses and Pockets, and was very well
ad, and skil'd too, in the Affairs of the
State among the great ones.

The Parents (as having no other
happiness) were very tender of this Daugh-
ter; but especially the Mother, according to
the Temper of that Sex, which is naturally
more indulgent than the Male; most affec-
tious she was to her in her Infancy, most
indulgent in her Youth, manifested espec-
ially in her Education, which was the strictest
and
and diligent in attendance, by reason of her boisterous and masculine spirit, which then shew'd it self, and soon after became predominant above all breeding and instruction. A very Tonrig or Rampscuttle she was, and delighted and sported only in boys' play and pastime, not minding or companying with the girls; many a bang and blow this Hoyting procur'd her, but she was not so to be tamed, or taken off from her rude inclinations; she could not endure that sedentary life of sewing or stitching; a sampler was as grievous to her as a winding-sheet, and on her needle, bodkin, and thimble, she could not think quietly, wishing them chang'd into sword and dagger for a bout at cudgels. Her head-geer and handkerchief (or what the fashion of those times were for girls to be drest in) were alike tedious to her, wearing them as needly as a dog would a Dobblet; and in cleanly, that the driven pot-hooks would have blush'd at the comparison. This perplex'd her friends, who had only this proverbs favourable to their hope, That an unlucky girl may make a good woman; but they liv'd not to the length of that expectation, dying in her minority, and leaving her to the swing and sway of her own unruly temper and disposition.

She would fight with boys, and courageously beat them; run, jump, leap, or hop with any of her contrary sex, or recreate herself with any other play whatsoever. She had
an Uncle, Brother to her Father, who was a Minister, and of him she stood in some Awe, but not so powerfully, as to restrain her in these Courses; so that seeing he could not effectually remedy that invertebrate Evil in her Manners, he trepanned her on Board a Merchant Ship lying at Gravesend, and bound for New-England, whither he design’d to have sent her, but having learn’d to Swim, she one Night jump’d Over-board, and swimm’d to Shore, and after that Escape, would never go near her Uncle again. Furthermore, it is to be serv’d, that Mercury was in Conjunction with, or rather in the House of Venus, at the Time of her Nativity; the former of which Planets is of a thievish, cheating, deceitful Influence, and the other hath Dominion over all Whores, Bawds, and Pimps, and, join’d with Mercury, over all Trepanners and He- des: She hath a more general Influence, than all the other Six Planets put together; for no Place nor Person is exempted from her, including alike both Sacred and Prophane; Nunneries and Monasteries, as well as the common Places of Prostitution; Cheapside and Cornhill, as well as Bloomsbury, or Covent-Garden. Under these benevolent and kind Stars, she grew up to some Maturity; she was now a lusty and sturdy Wench, and fit to put out to Service, having not a Competency of her own left her by her Friends to maintain her without Working; but as she was a great Libertine, she liv’d too much in common, to be inclos’d
inclos'd in the Limits of a private Domestic Life. A Quarter-Staff was fitter for her than a Distaff; Stave and Tail, instead of Spinning and Reeling. She would go to the Ale-house when she had made Shift for some little Stock and spend her Penny, and come into any one's Company, and club another 'till she had none left, and then she was fit for any Enterprise. Moreover, she had a natural Abhorrence to the tending of Children, to whom she ever had an Aversion in her Mind, equal to the Sterility and Barrenness in her Womb, never (to our best Information) being made a Mother.

She generally went Dress'd in Man's Apparel; which puts me in Mind how Hercules, Nero, and Sardanapalus are laugh'd at and exploded, for their Effeminacy and degenerate Dissolutenesse in this extravagant Debauchery; the first is pourtrayed with a Distaff in his Hand; the other recorded to be marry'd as a Wife, and all the Conjugal and Marrimonial Rites perform'd at the Solemnity of the Marriage; and the other lacks the Luxury of a Pen, as loose as his Female Riots, to define them. These were all Monsters of Men, and have no Parallels either in Old or Modern Histories, 'till such Time as Moll Cutpurse approach'd their Examples; for her licentious Impudence hath quite outdone every Romance; for never was Woman so like her in her Cloaths. No doubt but Moll's Convers with her
her self, whose Disinviting Eyes and Look
sink inwards to her Breast, inform'd her of
her Defects, and that she was not made for
the Pleasure of Delight of Man; and therefore
since she could not be honour'd with him, she
would be honour'd by him in that Garb and
Manner of Rayment which he wore; for
when the first Entrance into a Competency of
Age, she would wear a Man's Habit, and
on her dying Day she would not leave it

Though she was so ugly in any Dress, as
ever to be wo'd nor sollicited by any Man,
it she never had the Green-Sickness, that
Epidemic Disease of Maidens, after they
have once past their Puberty; she did never
in Lime, Cloils, Oatmeal, Tobacco-Pipes,
Indies, or such like Trash; no Sighs, de-
er'd Losses, or Melancholy, clouded her vi-
uous Spirits, or repress'd her Jollity in the
least Thoughts and Despair of a Husband;
ne was troubled with none of those Longings
which poor Maidens are subject to: She had
the Power and Strength (if not the Will) to
command her own Pleasure of any Person of
sensible Ability of Body; and therefore she
needed not whine for it; as she was able to
eat a Fellow in a Compliance, without the
incidental Trouble of Intreaties.

Now as thinking what Course of Life
she should take her self to, she got ac-
quainted with some Fortune-tellers of the
sort, from whom learning some Snatch and
Relish
Relifh of that Cheat, by their insignifican
Schemes and Figure-flinging, she got a toler-
able good Livelihood; but her Incomes bein
not equivalent to her Expences, she enter-
er self into the Society of Divers, otherwil
call'd File-clyers, Cut-purses, or Pick-pockets
which People are a kind of Land-Pirates, tra-
ding altogether in other Mens Bottoms, for no
other Merchandize than Bullion, and Ready
Coin, and keep most of the great Fairs and
Marts in the World. In this unlawful Way
she got a vast deal of Money, but having been
very often in Old-Bridewell, the Counters
and Newgate, for her irregular Practices, and
burnt in the Hand Four Times, she left off this
petty Sort of Theft, and went on the Highway
committing many great Robberies, but all of
'em on the Round-Heads, or Rebels, that for-
mented the Civil War against King Charles the
First; against which Villains she had as great
an Antipathy, as an unhappy Man, that for
counterfeiting a Half Crown in those Rebelli-
ous Times, was executed at Tyburn, where he
said, That he was adjudged to die but for coun-
terfeiting a Half Crown; but those the
usurp'd the whole Crown, and hole away its
Revenue, and had counterfeited its Seal, we
above Justice, and escap'd unpunish'd.

A long Time had Moll Cutpurse rob'd on
the Road; but at last rob'ing General Fairfax
of 25l. Jacobus's on Hounslow Heath, whom
the shot through the Arm in opposing her, and
killing Two Horses on which a Couple of his
Servant...
a Pick-pocket, &c. 143

servants rid, a close Pursuit being nevertheless
made after her by some Parliamentarian Of-
ders quartering in the Town of Hounslow, to
whom Fairfax had told his Misfortune, her
horse failing her at Turnham-Green, they
were apprehended her, and carried her to
Vergate, after which she was condemn'd; but
found her Pardon, by giving her Adversary
Two Pounds. Now Moll being frighten'd by
his Distress, she left off going on the High-
way any more, and took a House within Two
Doors of the Globe-Tavern in Fleet-street,
ver against the Conduit, almost facing Shoem-
cars and Salisbury-Court, where the dispense'd
like among the wrangling Tankard-Bearers;
often exchanging their Burden of Water
for Burden of Beer, as far the lighter Car-
ge, though not so well portable, and for
nich Kinsmen she had the Command of
the Water-works, being Admireless of the
fells that fall on Folks Backs, (as they have
ups in China which fall over dry Land) and
made themselves in Kitchens.

In her Time Tobacco being grown a great
deal, she was mighty taken with the Pa-
nce of Smoaking, because of its Singularity;
that no Woman ever smoak'd before her,
ough a great many of her Sex since have
now'd her Example. But now (as I hinted
fore) Moll being quite fear'd from Thieving
self, she turn'd Fence, that is to say, a Buyer
of stolen Goods, by which Occupation she got
great deal of Money. In her House she set
up
MOLL CUTPURSE,

up a kind of Brokery, or a distinct Factory, Jewels, Rings and Watches, which had been pinch'd or stolen any manner of way, at a ver to great Distances from any Person, might properly enough be call'd the Insurance Office for such Merchandize; for the Loss were sure, upon Composition, to recover the Goods again, and the Pyrates were sure to have a good Ransom, and the so much in the Goods for Brokage, without any more Danger; the Hue-and-Cry being always directed to her, the Discovery of the Goods, not the Take. Once a Gentleman that had lost his Watch by the busy Fingers of a Pick-pocket, came very anxiously to Moll, enquiring if she could help him to it again; she demanded of him the Marks and Signs thereof, with the Time and where he lost it, or by what Crossway or other Accident. He replied, That coming thro' Shoe-Lane, there was a Quarrel between two Men; one of which he afterwards heard was a Graftier, whom they had set in Smithfield, having seen him receive the Sum of 200 Pounds or thereabouts, in Gold; and it being a Hazardous and great Purchase, the choicest and most excellent of the Art were assembled to this Master-piece. There was one Bat Ruff, as he was since inform'd, who was the Butt and observing the Man held his Hand in his Pocket where his Gold was, just in the middle of the Lane, whither they догged him, overthrew the Barrell trimming at an Ale-house Door, while one behind the Graftier push'd him over, and—
a Pick-pocket, &c.

...withal threw down Bar, who was ready for the Fall. Betwixt these two, presently arose a Quarrel; the Pick-pocket demanding Satisfaction, while his Comrades interposing, after two or three Blows in Favour of the Countryman, who had drawn his Hands out of his Pocket to defend himself, soon drew out his Treasure; and while he was looking on the Scoffe, some of them had lent him a Hand too, and finger'd out his Watch. Moll smil'd at the Adventure, and told him, He should hear farther of it within a Day or two at the farthest. When the Gentleman coming again, and understanding by his Discourse, that he would not lose it for twice its Value, because it was given him by a particular Friend, the Squee'd 20 Guineas out of him before he could obtain his Watch.

Moll, who was always accounted by her Neighbours to be an Hermaphrodite, but at her Death was found otherwise, had not lived long in Fleet-street, before she became acquainted with a new sort of Thieves, call'd Heavers, whose Employment was stealing Shop-Books from Drapers or Mercers, or other rich Traders; which bringing to her, she, for some considerable Profit for herself, got them a Quantum俊量 for restoring them again to the Losers. While the thus reign'd free from the Danger of the Common Law, an Apparator, set on an Advocacy of hers, cited her to appear in the Court of Arches, where was an Action brought against her for wearing insairable and wanton Apparel. She was advised
by her Proctor to demur to the Jurisdiction of
the Court, as for a Crime, if such, not cogni-
zable there or elsewhere; but he did it to spin
out the Cause, and get her Money; for in the
End, she was there sentenced to stand and do
Penance in a White Sheet at St. Paul’s-Croft
during Morning-Sermon on a Sunday. They
might as soon have shamed a Black Dog as
Moll, with any kind of such Punishment; for
a Halfpenny she would have travel’d through all
the Market-Towns in England with her peni-
tential Habit, and been as proud of it as the
Citizen who rode to his Friends in the Country
in his Livery-Gown and Hood. Besides, many
of the Spectators had little Cause to sport
themselves then at the Sight; for some of her
Emissaries, without any Regard to the Sacred
ness of the Place, spoil’d a good many Cloaths
by cutting part of their Cloaks and Gowns
and sending them Home as naked behind a
Æsop’s Crow, when every Bird took its own
Feather from her.

However, this Penance did not reclaim her
for she still went in Mens Apparel, very de-
cently dress’d; nor were the Ornaments of her
House less curious and pleasing in Pictures, that
in the Delight of Looking-Glasses, so that she
could see her Sweet self all over in any Part of
her Rooms. This gave Occasion to Folks to
say, that she used magical Glasses, wherein she
could shew the Querists who referred to her
for Information, them that stole their Goods,
as likewhile to others, curious to know the
Shape.
Shapes and Features of their Husbands that should be, the very true and perfect Idea of them, as is very credibly reported of your African Savages; and we have a Tradition of it in the Story of Jane Shore's Husband, who, like the like Glasses, saw the unchaste Embrace of his Wife and Edward IV. One Night late, Moll going home almost drunk from the Devil Tavern, she tumbled over a great Black Sow that was routting on a Dumghill near the Kennel; but getting up again in a sad dirty Pickle, she drove her to her House, where finding her full of Pigs, she made her a Dutch to awful her Passion, and the next Morning she brought her 11 curious Pigs, which Moll and her Companions made shift to eat; and then she turn'd the Sow out of Doors, who presently repair'd to her old Master, a Bunykin hjfington, who with Wonder receiv'd her again; and having given her some Grains, turn'd her out of his Gates, watching what Count she would take, and intending to have Satisfaction for his Pigs wherefoever he should find her to have laid them. The Sow naturally mindful of her squeaking Brood, went directly to Moll's Door, and there kept a lamented Noise to be admitted. This was Evidence enough for the Fellow, that there his Son had lain her Belly; when knocking, and having Entrance, he tells Moll a Tale of a Sow and her Litter. She replied, he's mad; he swore he knows his Sow's Meaning by her grunting, and that he would give her Sawce to her
her Pigs. Goodman Coxcomb, quoth Moll, come in, and see if ths House looks like a Hogs-flye; when going into all her Rooms, and seeing how neat and clean they were kept, he was convinc'd that the Litter was not laid there, and went home cursing his Sow.

To get Money, Moll would not stick out too to bawd for either Men or Women, insomuch that her House became a double Temple for Priapus and Venus, frequented by Votaries of both Sorts, who being generous to her Labour, their Desires were favourably accommodated with Expedition; whilst she linger'd with others, delaying their Impatience, by laying before them the difficult, but certain Attainment of their Wishes, which serv'd as a Spur to the Dulness of their Purses; for the Lady Pecunia and she kept the same Pace, but still in the End she did the Feat. Moll having a great Antipathy against the Rump-Parliament, he lit on a Fellow very dextrous for imitating Peoples Hands, with him she communicated her Thoughts, and they concurr'd to forge and counterfeit their Commissioners and Treasurers Hands to the respective Receivers and Collectors, to pay the Sums of Money they had in their Hands without Delay, to such as he in his counterfeited Orders appointed: So that wherefore he had Intelligence of any great Sum in the Country, they were sure to能达到 the Market. This Cheat lasted for half a Year, till it was found out at Guildhall, and such a politic Course taken, that no Warrants would
pa's among themselves to avoid Cozenage. But when the Government was seiz'd and usurp'd by that Arch-Traitor Oliver Cromwell, they began this Trade afresh, it being very easy to imitate his single Sign Manual, as that ambitious Usurper would have it stil'd; by which Means her Man also drew good Sums of Money out of the Customs and Excise; nay, out of the Exchequer itself, till Oliver was forced to use a private Mark, to make his Credit authentic among his own Villains.

After 74 Years of Age, Moll being grown crazy in her Body, and discontented in Mind, she yielded to the next Dissent upon that approach'd her, which was the Dropsy, a Disease which had such strange and terrible Symptoms, that she thought she was possess'd, and that the Devil was got within her Doublet. Her Belly, from a wither'd, dry'd, wrinkled Piece of Skin, was grown to the titest, roundest Globe of Flesh, that ever any beauteous young Lady sattled with, to the Ostentation of her Fertility, and the Generosity of her Nature. However, there was no Blood that was generative in her Womb, but only that destructive of the Grape, which by her Excesses was now turn'd into Water, so that the tympany'd Skin thereof sound'd like a Conduit-Door. If we anato-
mize her any further, we must say her Legs represent a couple of Mill-posts; and her Head was so cramp'd with Cloaths, that she look'd like Mother Shipton.
It may well be expected, that considering what a deal of Money she got by her wicked Practices, she might make a Will; but yet of 5000 Pounds which she had once by her in Gold, she had not above 100 Pounds left her latterly, which she thought too little to give to the charitable Uses of building Hospitals and Alms-houses. The Money that might have been design'd that Way, as it came from the Devil, so it return'd to the Devil again in the Rump's Exchequer and Treasury at Haberdashers and Goldsmiths-Hall. Yet, to preserve something of her Memory, and not leave it to the Courtefy of an Executor, she anticipated her Funeral Expences; for it being the Fashion of those Times to give Rings, to the undoing of the Confectioners, who liv'd altogether by the Dead and the New-born, she distributed some that she had by her, (but of far greater Value than your pitiful hollow Ware of 6 or 7 Shillings a piece, that a Juggler would show to new Tricks with) among her chief Companions and Friends.

These Rings (like Princes Jewels) were notable ones, and had their particular Names likewise, as the Bartholomew, the Ludgate, the Exchange, and so forth, deriving their Appellations from the Places whence they were stolen. They needed no Admonition of a Deaths Head, nor the Motto, Memento mori, for they were the Wages and Monuments of their thieving Masters and Mistresses who were interr'd at Tyburn, and she hoped her Friends would
would wear them both for her sake and theirs. In short, she made no Will at all; because she had had it so long before to no better Purpose; and that if she had had her Desert, she should have had an Executioner instead of an Executor. Out of the 100 Pounds which she had bequeathed, she disposed of 30 Pounds to her three Maids which she kept, and charged them to occupy it the best way they could; for that and some of her Arts in which they had had Time to be expert, would be beyond the Advantage of their Spinning and Reeling, and would be the better them in Repair, and promote them to Weavers, Shearmen, Hiers and Taylors. The rest of her Personal Estate in Money, Moveables, and Household-Goods, she bequeathed to her Kinsman Frith, a Master of a Ship dwelling at Redriff, whom she advised not to make any Ventures therewith, but stay at Home and be drunk, rather than go to Sea and behoof'd with them. And now the Time of her Distillation drawing near, she desired to be bury'd with her Breech upwards, that she might be as posthumous in her Death, as she had been all along in her infamous Life. When she was dead, she was interr'd in St. Bridget's Churchyard, having a fair Marble-stone put over her Grave, on which was cut the following Epitaph, compos'd by the ingenious Mr. Minor, but destroy'd in the great Conflagration of London.
Here lies under this same Marble,
Dust, for Time's last Sieve to garble,
Dust, to perplex a Sadducee,
Whether it rise a He or She,
Or two in one, a single Pair,
Nature's Sport, and now her Care:
For how she'll cloath it at last Day,
Unless she sight it all away;
Or where she'll place it, none can tell,
Some middle Place 'twixt Heav'n and Hel;
And well'tis Purgatory's found,
Else she must hide her under Ground.
These Reliques do deserve the Doom,
That Cheat of Mahomet's fine Tomb;
For no Communion she had,
Nor sorted with the Good or Bad;
That when the World shall be calcin'd,
And the mix'd Mass of human Kind
Shall separe by that melting Fire,
She'll stand alone, and none come nigh her.
Reader, here she lies till then,
When truly you'll see her aget.