

# Crime So Monstrous: A True Story of Murder, Madness, and Inequality

By Ruth Scurr

In 1752, Mary Blandy, a young woman from Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, was hanged for poisoning her father. Her case captivated the nation, and her trial became one of the most notorious of the 18th century.

Mary Blandy was born in 1720, the daughter of a wealthy attorney. She was a beautiful and intelligent young woman, but she was also headstrong and rebellious. In 1746, she fell in love with a Scottish army officer named Captain William Henry Cranston. Cranston was a charming and handsome man, but he was also a gambler and a drunkard. Mary's father, Francis Blandy, disapproved of the relationship, and he forbade Mary from seeing Cranston.



## A Crime So Monstrous: Face-to-Face with Modern-Day Slavery by E. Benjamin Skinner

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2890 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 354 pages



Despite her father's disapproval, Mary and Cranston continued to meet in secret. In 1748, Mary became pregnant with Cranston's child. When her father found out, he was furious. He disowned Mary and threw her out of the house.

Mary was desperate. She had no money and no way to support herself or her unborn child. She turned to Cranston for help, but he refused to marry her or provide for her. In a fit of desperation, Mary decided to poison her father.

On August 11, 1751, Mary visited her father at his home. She brought with her a bowl of soup that she had laced with arsenic. Francis Blandy ate the soup and died within hours.

Mary was arrested and charged with murder. Her trial began on April 3, 1752. The prosecution presented a strong case against her, and Mary was found guilty. She was sentenced to death by hanging.

Mary Blandy was hanged on April 6, 1752. She was just 31 years old.

The case of Mary Blandy is a fascinating and complex one. It is a story of love, betrayal, and murder. It is also a story of social inequality and the oppression of women.

In her book, **Crime So Monstrous**, Ruth Scurr tells the story of Mary Blandy with great skill and compassion. Scurr draws on a wealth of primary sources, including Mary's own letters and the trial transcripts, to reconstruct the events leading up to the murder. She also explores the social and psychological forces that drove Mary to commit such a heinous crime.

**Crime So Monstrous** is a gripping and meticulously researched account of one of the most notorious crimes of the 18th century. It is a book that will fascinate and disturb readers in equal measure.

### Praise for Crime So Monstrous

"A gripping and meticulously researched account of a fascinating and complex case." - **The Guardian**

"A masterful work of scholarship and storytelling." - **The Telegraph**

"A must-read for anyone interested in true crime, social history, or the psychology of violence." - **The Independent**



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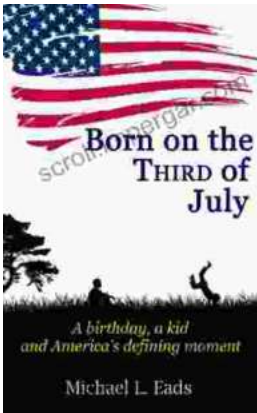
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