



The Lives of the English Rakes

Fergus Linnane

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Rake (n) 'a dissolute man, esp. one in fashionable society; rou' The English rake strides through the pages of romantic fiction, impossibly handsome, cynical and dangerous, a gambler, a deadly swordsman leaving a trail of broken hearts and slain rivals in his wake. The reality was if anything more intriguing. Some were poets and playwrights of genius - including the Earl of Rochester, author of some of the most tender and most obscene lyrics in the language. Others, such as Colonel Charteris 'Rape-master General', personified depravity. This unique and fascinating book charts the exploits the English rake, beginning in the Restoration Era with the hedonistic Charles II and his licentious courtiers, and following the flowering and then final decline of the rake during the Victorian era. Along the way you learn about England's most reckless libertines and discover how the Hell-fire Club lived up to its reputation for debauchery and satanic blasphemy. You'll become intimately acquainted with those who have the dubious accolade of being the biggest rogues, lechers and profligates in history.

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