

## Scarlett O'Hara – Interview with a different type of Southern Belle

*Although she was well into her dotage, flashes of the famous Scarlett O'Hara spirit were still evident as I began my questioning.*

"Tell me something about yourself Ms O'Hara" I began.

"My full name is Katie Scarlett O'Hara Hamilton Kennedy Butler. I was born in Georgia, Atlanta, on a large plantation called Tara. Our family was the envy of county! We had such a good life, a magnificent home, wonderful parties. I wore fabulous dresses and could have had the pick of any number of suitors. But that all changed after the dreadful war. God! that war - it took everything from us!"

"The Civil War was important surely?" I interjected.

She scoffed, "They weren't fighting for noble reasons. Men are like little boys – glorifying war like it is a game to prove their bravery.

Meanwhile women have to pretend to be weak and feeble. What nonsense! After the war we were destitute! What good does being delicate do when the fields are empty, and you have nothing?!" The only man who liked that I wasn't feeble was Rhett..."

"Rhett?" I asked.

"Rhett Butler," she sighed "He was handsome and charming, but he wasn't a patch on Ashley Wilkes, and he was certainly no gentleman! Rhett could see right through me and pursued me for years before I finally let him catch me!"

"I can't help thinking you were a feminist before your time" I remarked.

"If being a feminist means taking your future into your own hands, then that's me; if feminist means taking green curtains and making them into a fabulous green dress to snare a carpetbagger then that's me too.

I've been married three times and widowed twice but I'm not ashamed of the choices I made."

"Which of your husbands did you love most?" I ask even though I suspect I know the answer.

"Let me see... I married Charles Hamilton after my humiliation by Ashley Wilkes – that sap! Then there was poor Frank Kennedy who I married to save Tara. He was really my sister's beau, but we needed the security.

Now Rhett... he was different, I was "fond" of him, but after our daughter "Bonnie's, accident things were never the same between us. I didn't realise how much I loved him until it was too late".

"It must have been a terrible blow when he left?" I ask, "I remember you returned to your beloved Tara, but you were defiant and confident that Rhett would return to you."

"Let me tell you something..." she leans in close.

"When I scabbled in the dirt crazed with hunger, I vowed I would never be hungry again. And I didn't. Then, years later when Rhett left, I vowed that I would win him back..."

"And...?" I asked with anticipation.

She flashed her green eyes at me and with a sly smirk said: "What do you think?"