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The Public Spectacle of Death: An Essay on Public Execution

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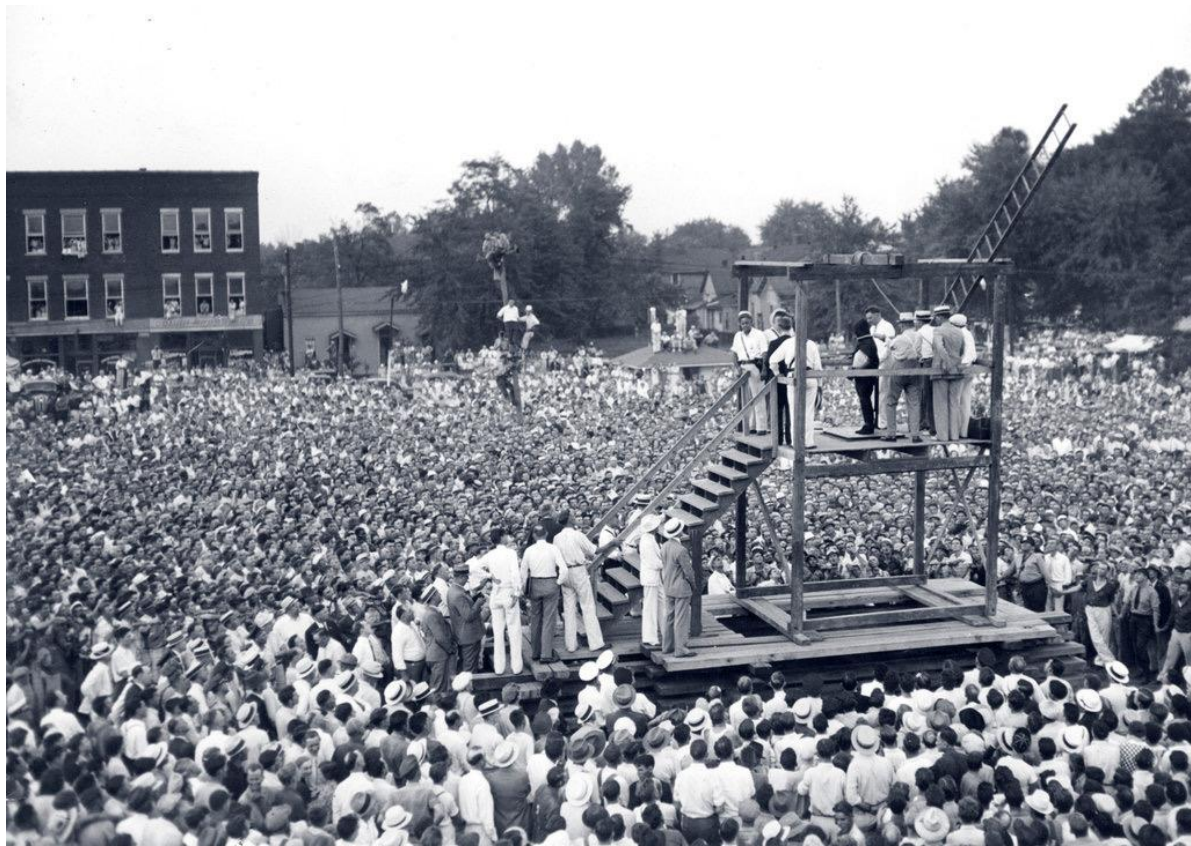


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History Capstone

The Public Spectacle of Death

An Essay on Public Execution



By

Jesse Stone McClanahan

Introduction

If the Government were to make a statement saying that they were bringing back public executions, for the worst types of criminals, think along the lines of rapists and murders, and to make sure that everyone knows about and has access to them, there will be huge amounts of media coverage and the Government will be broadcasting it live on public TV. What do you think would happen? You would probably hope that the majority of the country would be outraged and disgusted by the prospect and refuse to watch such horrible human rights violations, right? But what if the opposite happens, what if the day the first execution is set to take place hundreds of thousands are watching on TV or at the place of execution. What if the people watching treated the execution like a football game, tailgating, paying for box seats, and buying souvenirs to remember the day, is this even conceivable? In the past this is exactly what happened. The religious and state executions of the 14th to 16th centuries quickly became public spectacle but how and why? This essay seeks to show you a road map with examples to help us to understand the transition from a religious ritual to a sensationalized tailgating party that enamored thousands of our ancestors

Part 1: Examples of Pre-Spectacle Execution

There are not many recorded executions from the late medieval ages going into the 15th century. Many theorize that this is because during the times, public executions were part of the fabric of life, it was a normal occurrence to see an execution. Most of the executions followed the same script. And thus, the early records we do see, are from the times that the execution was weird or the when the condemned was someone important. Weird as in the condemned's

behavior did not meet the ordinary standards or script that the viewers had come to expect. According to Paul Friedman's book *Seeing Justice Done: The Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France* starting before the 16th century the majority of public executions were viewed as a religious ritual. In his book he says that we must resist calling the crowds that gathered for a public execution, around this time, spectators¹. Well, if they weren't spectators what were they? From the sources I have read they were there to participate. At this time the act of participation was not only to be a member of the audience, but to feel an emotional connection to the condemned. This would later change as public executions become more sensationalized and the transformation from ritual to spectacle takes place. However, let's first continue talking about the ritual.

The crowd gathers to work with the condemned who by custom was supposed to play the repentant sinner. If the condemned played their part, then the crowd would feel satisfied, they would go home feeling that they had done their good deed for the day. You can imagine someone of the time thinking that they just helped that person get to heaven. Think of these as a group effort or a communal healing process. Here's how a customary or traditional execution would take place; The condemned was led out from the cart to the scaffolding, along the way they were to repent for their sins, kissing the cross and pray for forgiveness, the next step would be for the crowd to pray and weep for the condemned asking God to spare their soul. After this the condemned would be allowed to make a final speech once again displaying their repentance. Of course, after this part the executioner *would do his job*. This is a very common

¹ Friedland, Paul. *Seeing Justice Done: the Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

theme in the 1400s and wont change till later. The 100 or so actual documented executions that we have from the 1400s, are mostly when the condemned did not play their part. The reason that these types of portrayals are the majority, is likely because these were, well, worth writing down. For instance, in the *Journal D'un Bourgeois De Paris*, there is an account from 1413 about the execution of Pierre des Essarts, the superintendent of finance to King Charles VI. Not only was the execution note worthy due to the importance of the character but also due to his behavior while on the way and on the scaffolding. Paraphrased from the journal; "The condemned never stopped laughing..., so that most people took him for a madman, all those who saw him wept so piteously that you will never hear of more tears shed for the death of a man, and he, all alone kept laughing..."² If the condemned had played their part, then there would have been less to narrate this to others as they likely have experienced it themselves during other executions. However, in this particular journal most of the executions go against the standards and in other words breaks the ritual. Another example from the *Journal D'un Bourgeois De Paris*, dated Tuesday, the 17th of February 1523. The gist is that the man who was condemned to death by decapitation was spared last minute by a man who carried a letter of remission from the King. "Arriving at the Place de Grève, he was delivered to two executioners... they put him on his hands and knees, to beg pardon of God and justice, and he was ready to receive death and he was surely expecting it... after which, came by horseback one of the servants of the chancellor who began to shout on a loud voice; "Stop, stop, here is the letter of remission from the king..." The condemned man immediately thanked God and kissed

² Tuetey, Alexandre. *Journal Dun Bourgeois De Paris (1405 - 1449)*. Slatkine Repr., 1975.

the scaffolding twice.³ The next example that I have for you is from the execution of Louis of Luxembourg, Count of Saint Pol. The entry is long and so I will save you some time and only talk about the very end, the first time we really see a large emphasis put on how the actual execution was done. But before I do that, you should know that the other executions that were documented at this time all put a very small amount detail into how the executioner completed the job. Instead, they all ended with the same phrase “ce qui fut fait” or the basically “the sentence was carried out”. Anyway, starting at the end “And then he got down on his knees where he was diligently blindfolded, and he was still speaking to God and to his confessors, and frequently kissing the cross. Petit Jehan (the executioner) seized his sword... with which he made the head fly off from the shoulders so quickly and so mortally that Saint Pol’s body fell to the ground at the same time as the head...”⁴ this is where I will stop quoting but it goes on a few more sentences and talks of how the head was then washed and then placed on the scaffolding, and it talks about the amount of people in attendance which the author says is around 200,000 although that number seems exaggerated. All these examples did not need to be narrated and written down however they were because the authors saw these events as completely out of the ordinary. This is the very beginning of the transformation from ritual to spectacle, however the effect it has on the change is very minimal.

Part 2: The Rise of Penal Voyeurism

In the 1520s a change occurs that will pave the way for the transformation from ritual to spectacle, the Protestant Reformation. A time where old ways of practicing Christianity were

³ Tuetey, Alexandre. *Journal Dun Bourgeois De Paris (1405 - 1449)*. Slatkine Repr., 1975.

⁴ Tuetey, Alexandre. *Journal Dun Bourgeois De Paris (1405 - 1449)*. Slatkine Repr., 1975.

contested by the new and a time full of executions of devout Christians by even more devout Christians or of Lutherans by Catholics. This change breaks from the traditional script, and changes how people look at public executions in the future.

To start let's discuss more about what I mean when I say these new executions break the script. Well looking back at the traditional execution, the condemned was supposed to play a part, that of a repentant sinner. But what happens when more and more people stop repenting and instead, begin to go to the headman's block or in most cases with heresy the burning stake with a smile on their faces. Well then, your script no longer works. People are expecting either repentance or unrepentant behavior but not joyful. In 1523 we see the first report of this behavior written in none other than the *Journal D'un Bourgeois De Paris*, normally what we see from this journal is less details about the actual execution itself and more about the before parts on the way to the scaffolding, however when these new types of criminals begin to sing *Te Deum Laudamus* with joy while literally being burned to death the journal changes and talks more in-depth about the *during* part. "Two of them were burned in a fire, and as they were being put into it, they joyfully sang *Te Deum Laudamus*, but the third repented."⁵ News of the joyful condemned passed very quickly from ear to ear and a sudden fixation on the behavior of the condemned Lutherans began. People wanted to know, were they going to repent and therefore resolidify the script or go joyfully to their deaths and remain unrepentant. This became a very politicalized topic for many of the times chroniclers especially when the executions of Lutherans spread to France. For example, two different pieces of work covering the same execution, that of a man named Louis Berquin, sentenced at first to perform

⁵ Tuetey, Alexandre. *Journal Dun Bourgeois De Paris* (1405 - 1449). Slatkine Repr., 1975.

an *amende honorable* for translating Luthers and Erasmus work to French. This means that he must publicly participate in a book burning of his own writings then only eat bread and drink water for the rest of his life. This man however in attempts to antagonize the authorities or possibly appeal his case ends up instead being sentenced to death by burning at a stake. The two reports we have of the event, one from the *Journal D'un Bourgeois De Paris* and another a work by Jean Crespin called the *Histoire des martyrs persécutés de mis a mort pour de la vérité de l'Évangile* both show very different accounts. *Journal D'un Bourgeois De Paris* covers more of the trial and case then it does the actual execution, this is in fact how we know that he was originally just sentenced to perform an amende honorable. "Friday the 16th of April 1529 after Easter, Louis Berquin... who because of his heresy was condemned to perform an amende honorable before the church of Norte Dame, and there to beg forgiveness of God and the Virgin Mary for the books that he produced and which he wanted to use against our faith, and from there he was to be lead to the Place de Grève, and put upon a scaffold... so that all could see him, and there before him a great fire made in order to burn all said books." This is the start of the *Journal D'un Bourgeois De Paris* . The end of the entry is less glamorous and ends in the dreaded "ce qui fut fait."⁶ As opposed to the entry by Jean Crespin that ends Berquins story, it shows us more about the actual execution then the trial and we actually get a very good view on the audiences' reaction. "Berquin, upon leaving the prison, gave no indication of a faint or troubled heart when the executioner read aloud the court order in a horrible voice, nor when he was led to the Place de Grève. Upon arrival, he spoke to the people; but there were few who would hear him so great the noise and tumult of those who had been posted there by the

⁶ Tuetey, Alexandre. *Journal Dun Bourgeois De Paris (1405 - 1449)*. Slatkine Repr., 1975.

Sorbonnists... so that the voice of this sainted martyr of the lord was not heard on the threshold of his death. His Sorbonnic enemies not sated by the cruel punishment of this noble personage, stirred upon the little children to scream in the streets the Berquin was a heretic: so great was the rage of these supporters of satan..."⁷ Clearly there are some major differences in how the two people wrote the entries. With the examples that I have giving so far it is easy to see a trend from ritual to something that is more novel. This period is extremely important to the transformation to spectacle because it is the first time we see people viewing executions in this new detached way. They are not there to participate but to just see what will happen and what the condemned might say or do. This is said to be the start for Penal Voyeurism.

Part 3: Penal Voyeurism and The Diary of Felix Platter

We now enter the middle of the 1500s with a basic understanding of the transformation taking place, we may not however fully understand yet what it is meant by penal voyeurism. To help us get a better grasp on what is meant by that term we will use the Diary of a man named Felix Platter. In 1552, Felix Platter came to southern France to the town of Montpellier to study at a prestigious medical school. While there he wrote detailed notes of his life and many times he writes about Executions. It is during this time that we really start to understand what it

⁷ Goulart, Simon, et al. Histoire Des Martyrs Persecutez Et Mis a Mort Pour La verité De LEvangile, Depuis Le Temps Des Apostres Jusques à Present. Comprinse En Douze Livres, Contenant Les Actes Memorables Du Seigneur En linfirmité Des Siens: Non Seulement Contre Les Efforts Du Monde, Mais Aussi Contre Diverses Sortes Dassaux & Heresies Monstrueuses, En Plusieurs Provinces De LEurope, Notamment à Rome, En Espagne, & Es Pays Bas. Les Prefaces Monstrent Une Conformite De Lestat Des Eglises De Ce Dernier Siecle, Avec Celui De La Primitive Eglise De Jesus Christ. Reveuë, & Augmentee En Ceste Edition, Des Deux Derniers Livres, Item De Plusieurs Histoires, & Choses Remarquables Es Precedens. Avec Deux Indces, Lun Des Principaux Points De La Vraye Et Fausse Religion, Amplement Traitez, Soustenus, Ou Refutez: Lautre, Contenant Les Noms Des Martyrs Mentionnez En Ceste Histoire. Par Paul Marceau., 1608.

means to be a spectator at these things rather than a participant. You see, Platter begins to show a more detailed almost clinical view of regular executions. The written records that we have covered previously have all followed a certain trend, either the condemned is of great note and that's why we see a record of it, or the death was strange, the example of the Lutherans going to joyfully to death or the man who would not stop laughing. But Platters diary talks of regular run of the mill executions, murders, thieves, rapists, and none that are mentioned for their great renowned. Read the quote I am about to produce and think about how Platter is talking about it. "Behind the town trumpeters, marched the criminal, accompanied by monks. He was a handsome young man, accomplice in a murder. He was led to a scaffold erected in front of the city hall; there two pieces of hollowed wood had been prepared in the shape of Saint Andrew's cross, upon which they were going to break his extremities. The condemned stood, recounting everything he has done in the from of a rhyme. It was very well delivered and in finishing he added to the crowd: "Pray to Holy Mary so that she may beg her son to take me to paradise." The executioner undressed him, attached his arms and legs to the cross... after this he took a heavy iron bar, called a messa, with a bit of an edge on one side and beat his arms and legs."⁸ See how he talks of the execution as if he were not there in the crowd, as if he were somewhere else and with an emotional detachment. He is not a participant here instead he is merely a spectator. He never says how tragic the death was or even tell us that the crowd wept. Something extremely different is the brutality that he writes down we don't just see the traditional "ce qui fut fait," at the end. This is not the only time on of his entry's tells of an execution that takes place where he is a spectator, even more important thought is that he

⁸ Felix Platter, Private Diary, date unknown

mentions that he is also not the only one spectating. In July 1555 he writes that after having dinner with a well-renowned doctor, “after which the doctor took me to a house where there are many ladies as well as gentlemen, and from which I watched the Execution.”⁹ This is some of the most important information that we have from this time period regarding penal voyeurism. These people that he describes and ladies and gentlemen, are not participants, they are instead spectators, watching from the comfort of their homes behind a window and without empathy for the condemned, without deriving meaning from the death as others in crowd are still doing.

Part 4: Broadside Advertisements, The Journal of L’Estoile, and Rosset’s *Histoires Tragiques*

The last part of the transformation is the sensationalism that follows the emergence of people like Felix Platter. As more and more are becoming spectators and less are participants a new wave of media is seen, from broadsides to books. The new sensationalized view of death quickly becomes a best seller. To begin we will look at another journal, this time of a French man named Pierre de L’Estoile. Over the the course of 40 years or so 1574 to 1611 we get an idea of this mans changing taste for executions. He like many who wrote at the time started by writing about executions of Lutherans and their punishments but slowly we see him write about normal executions, no longer did the condemned need to be Protestant to catch his interest, he even begins to write in the first person what he saw rather than what the crowd was seeing. “Monday the 24th of April, the provost-Marshall of Sens was hanged at the place de

⁹ Felix Platter, Private Diary, July, 1555

Grève. The reading aloud of his court sentence, which I heard, carried the words: “For theft, murder, the rape of women and girls and other execrable crimes and excesses in great number perpetrated by him.” He was also charged with having stolen from the brother of the first President, which he denied assuredly... on the way to the Grève he cursed the Premier President, wising that laud that he go to the Devil, adding the ugly contribution unworthy of a Christian who is going to his death: “Fuck him!” A phrase he repeated several times.”¹⁰

Another way that we can be completely sure that the times were changing is the emergence of Broad­sides. In 1574, Broad­sides or Canards as they were called in France, had begin to be used to divulge horrible details of scandalous true crimes and criminals, and the public loved it. It would in fact spawn a later book, in the same manner of ‘true crime’ style but more on that later. Interestingly enough the trial and proceedings of the condemned were completely private to the public in olden day France, and so the only part that they saw were the executions. So when Canards began giving specific details of the trials to the citizens the true crime aspect began to unfold. The execution portion of them quickly became loved as well and seen as a drama and acted as last act for the criminal. The first example that we see in France of these Canards which I am unfortunately not able to provide to you. But I do have some from the UK that I will put at the end of the paper to help show what they would have been like. Anyway, the first to surface in France was about a woman who killed her two children, then her husband. The reasoning she gave for this was because he gambled too much. The title was “Bloody, Cruel and Amazing Story.” As time passes, we begin to see them evolve into full length short stories. And keep in mind that these are all based on real events. In 1603

¹⁰ Pierre de L’Estoile, Journal Entries, 1574 to 1611

there is a trial for a brother and sister for incest; the broadside goes like this. "The lady, addressing her brother, said, let us die, my brother. We have deserved it. And let us pray to God that he shows us mercy." And thus, with contrition in their hearts and confession on their lips, they were made to participants in the sacrament of penance; and afterwards were conveyed in the tumbrel from there to the theater of execution, where those who were present offered their prayers and most of their tears at the sight of such piteous spectacle in which their tender youth and beauty moved even the hardest of hearts to pity." The execution of the sister then takes place, and we see what the account of the brother. "The gentleman, kneeling down on the disgusting wet floor of the scaffold, steaming with the blood of his sister... begged his confessor to go and console his poor father, which after having been promised to him, without being blindfolded, praying to God, he bid fall upon his neck the swift blade that he received with great steadfastness." Paul Friedman talked about in his book, after the execution portion of these Canards are over, they had a section that would assure that justice was being done and bring people back to reality. It is easy to see how you could lose yourself in these sensational short stories and after reading many like this feel like maybe these people shouldn't have been executed. This is the ending for the one about the brother and sister. "The atrocity of such enormous crimes made everyone admire the wisdom of the gentlemen parliament, and above all the constancy and integrity of our good king who, having been supplicated and begged many times to pardon them or commute their sentence, stayed firm." Many of these broadsides are mirrored in L'Estoile's journal both of which we saw the trend to focus more on the mood and behavior of the condemned. This is not surprising that L'Estoile was an avid consumer of these Canards.

Part 5: The Spectators

So in the 1500s we see the rise of two types of spectators, the type like Platters, clinically detached, and emotionless and those like L'Estoile who show an insatiable hunger for sensationalistic, theater like accounts of crime, criminals, and executions. This second type of spectator is the one that I am wanting to focus on. That brings us to our last movement of the transformation. The year is 1614, and there is new best-seller in France, the title, *Les Histoires tragiques se nostrils temps*. Written and published by François de Rosset. This book features titillating short stories based on real life incidents that had recently taken place. Rosset's semi-fictional book was created with one thought in mind. To bring pleasure to the reader. Quoting directly from Friedman's *Seeing Justice Done: The Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France*. "People read these accounts of rape, murder, and incest in order to be titillated, and remorseful... Rosset undoubtedly took liberties with his stories, his ultimate aim to please his readers rather than to provide an accurate account of what had actually transpired."¹¹ This line from Friedman's book is extremely important. We are no longer seeing accounts of executions to inform readers, it's now to titillate and please them. This is a huge evolution that took almost two decades to complete but now we are here in the time of spectacle over ritual. For an example I will quote some of the book. If you thought that the broadside account of the sister and brother was sensationalized, then read this one. A bit of a preface, Rosset did many stories usually based off actual events that happened a few years or a few months before, because of this some of the events take place in a faraway land or the characters names changed so not to

¹¹ Friedland, Paul. *Seeing Justice Done: the Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

upset any still living noble relatives of the recently condemned. For example, what we are about to see in Rosset's account of the executions of the brother and sister in 1603. "The execution took place at the place de Grève. Never had one seen so many people flock to such a spectacle. The square was so filled that one practically suffocated. The windows and rooftops were filled. The first who appeared on this stage of infamy was Doralice who showed such courage and resolution that everyone admired her steadfastness. All those in attendance could not prevent their eyes from shedding tears for this beauty. So beautiful was she that one finds very few on earth who are comparable. One might have said, as she ascended the scaffold, that she was going to perform in a portend tragedy and not a real one: never once did she change color. After having glanced from one side to the other, she raised her eyes to heaven and then, her hands joined together, she prayed aloud for God's mercy."¹² Rosset tells us that this scene was so moving that even the executioner "could not himself help from crying along with all the spectators." That is just the account from the sister. I will spare you the brothers for now. This is the new trend that we will see indefinitely until of course public executions stop, that is for another paper, however. I will leave you with a quote from Edmund Burke's writing, *On the Sublime and Beautiful*. "Choose a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy we have; appoint the most favorite actors; spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations, unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting, and music; and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining

¹² Belleforest François de, and Bandello .. Histoires Tragiques. B. Rigaud, 1594.

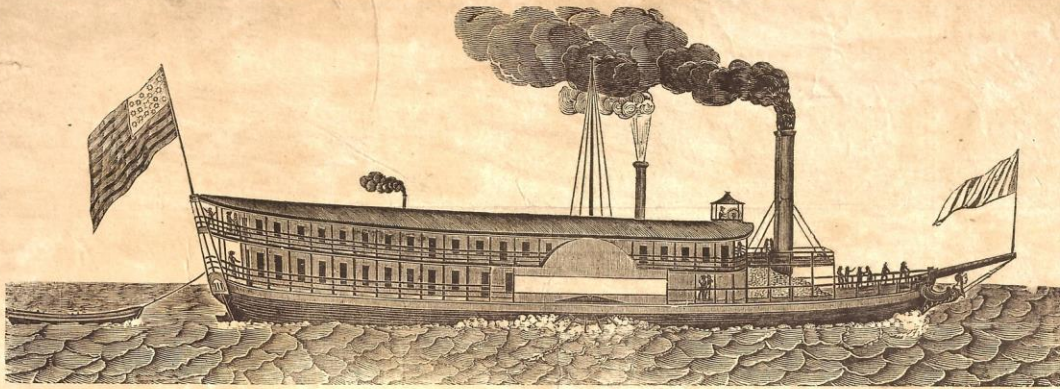
square; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy.”¹³

Part 6: An Example Close to Home

We have made it through our transformation, we know what we need to know to provide someone who reads this with the basic understanding of why executions became such extraordinary displays of public spectacle. For that reason, this next to part of my paper and research is merely here because it hits extremely close to home for many of us including me. It drew me in the moment I set eyes on it and led me down a path of discovery. Let’s talk about when that first time was. We had taken a class trip to the Missouri Historical Society Library; at the time my paper was going to be something contemporary and about global studies. However, upon discussing with a employee there my interest in the change from ritual to spectacle he provided me with this Broadside from 1841 used to advertise for a steamboat that was located in Alton, Illinois.

¹³ Burke, Edmund. *Sublime And Beautiful*. BiblioBytes, 2000.

1841
FOR SAINT LOUIS!



The Regular Steam Packet
EAGLE!

THE undersigned, having chartered the above Steam-boat, for the purpose of accommodating all the citizens of ALTON, and the vicinity, who may wish to see the

Four Negroes Executed,

At St. Louis, on **FRIDAY NEXT**, would inform the public that the Boat will leave this place at **SEVEN o'clock, A. M.**, and St. Louis at about **FOUR, P. M.**, so as to reach home the same evening.

The Boat will be repaired and fitted up for the occasion; and every attention will be paid to the comfort of Passengers.

FARE FOR THE TRIP TO ST. LOUIS & BACK
ONLY \$1 50 !!!

The Negroes are to be hung on the point of *Duncan's Island*, just below St. Louis. The Boat will drop alongside, so that **ALL CAN SEE WITHOUT DIFFICULTY.**

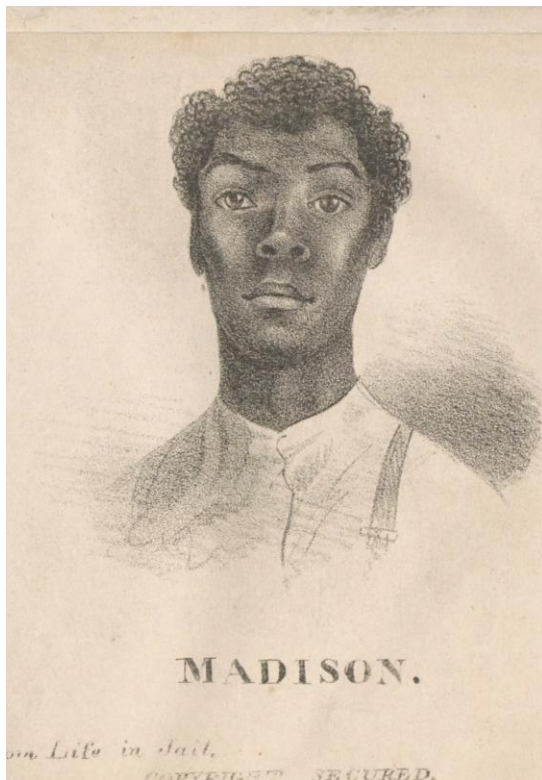
For Passage, apply to

**W. A. Wentworth,
P. M. Pinckard.**

ALTON, JULY 7, 1841

You can probably see what caught my eye first. “Four Negros Executed...” Then my eyes wondered to, “fare for the trip to St. Louis and back is only \$1.50.” Upon further reading we see things like “the boat will drop alongside, so that all can see without difficulty,” and “the boat will be repaired and fitted up for the occasion; and every attention will be paid to the comfort of the passengers.”

This was not something I thought I would ever see in St. Louis. Know you may think that this is where the story ends, but remember our paper is about media like books and things sensationalizing executions to make people feel remorseful, sympathetic, and maybe even joyful so of course I had to know more. Who were these Four men that people were going to see die in 1841 from a steamboat, in “comfort”, docked “so that all can see without difficulty?”

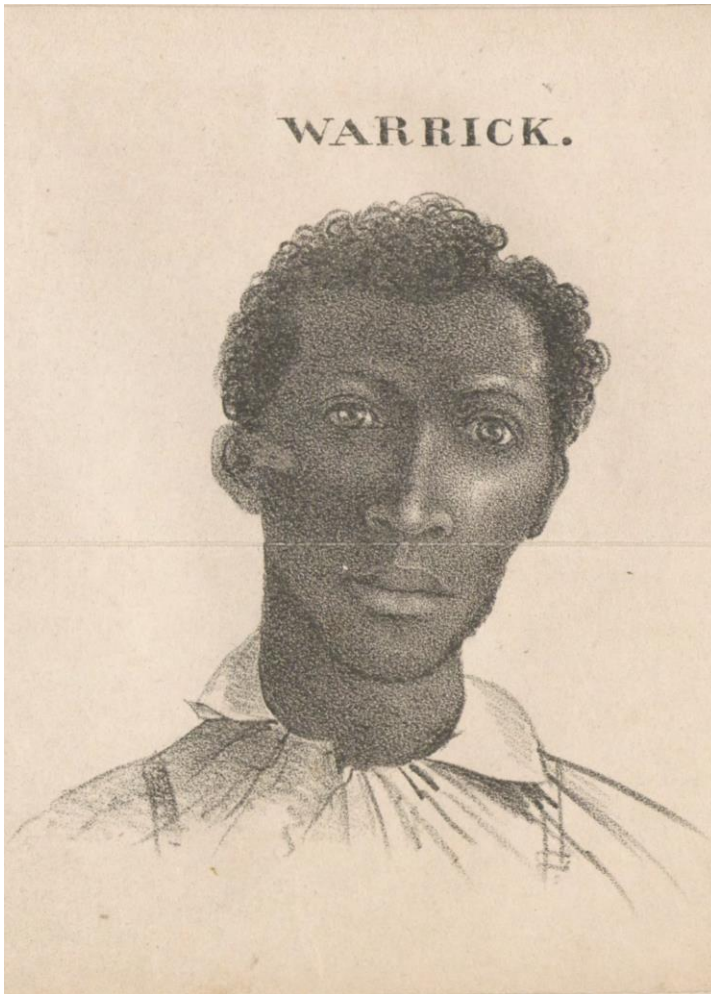


Well let me introduce you.

This man is Madison Henderson, a slave. He was originally from New Orleans but eventually made his way to Saint Louis, he’s not sure the exact year of his birth but he believes that he is around 34 or 35. His life is an interesting one, as we don’t really see the first-person view of a slave that’s job early on was to help his master in petty and large crimes. Madison discusses in length how he and his master would steal other slaves and resell them. His later life was

that of a petty criminal. He made his living by robbing houses, and stores wherever he went and trading what he stole up and down the river.

Next, I introduce you to Amos Alfred Warrick. A free man born in Newbern, North Carolina on March 31st 1815. Currently a man of 26. In his early life he very rebellious and wanted to travel



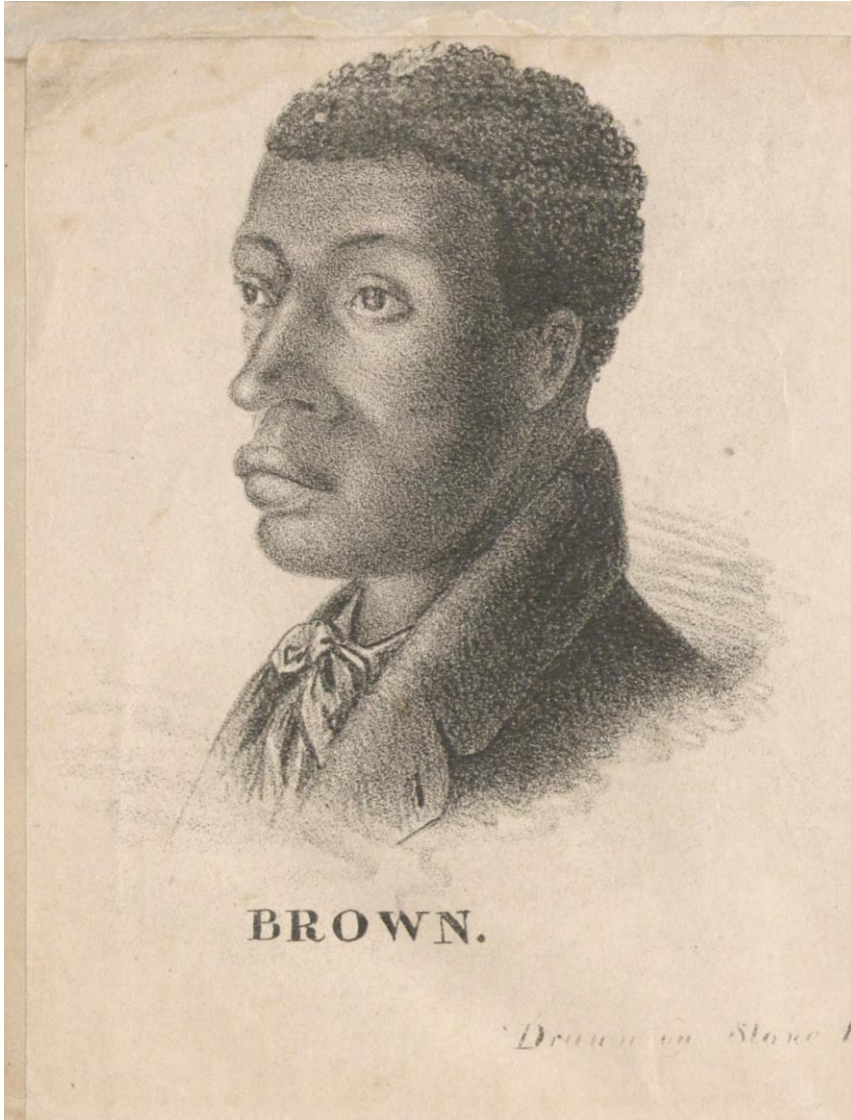
the world, so the first chance he got to travel he took. He was a servant to a wealthy man that traveled a lot. When the man got married and his new wife who hated Warrick, asked if they could sell him into slavery he obliged. He ended up owned by a French man in New Orleans for some time, but Amos Warrick is not about to sit around and wait for emancipation to free him. He instead decides that he is going to leave and that's literally what he does. He packs his bag says goodbye to his master

and signs on to the nearest boat. His next few years of life take him from New York to Ohio and back to New Orleans. Until he gets to Saint Louis and as far as I can tell commits a little bit of desertion, the boat that he signed on with was planning on sailing to a port somewhere in China and Amos did not want to go sail to China.



The next man we meet is James W. Seward. Another freeman, this time from Whitestown, Oneida county, New York. Born June 26th 1813. Currently 28 years old. His early life is a bit like Amos's except instead of running away from his family we see him embracing what they want him to do, getting an education, work to better society and so on. That is until he realizes he has special talent for counterfeiting and forging

bank notes and money. He then spends some time with a Stepbrother who teaches him to enjoy the pleasures of life, ladies, drinking and especially gambling. He moves from place to place after that, gambling and counterfeiting his way to Saint Louis where he beings doing robberies instead.



Finally, we meet, Charlie Brown.

A freeman born in South Carolina on August 20th 1814 or 1815. Currently 25 or 26.

Charlies early life is not talked about much, instead he likes to talk about his life in Cincinnati Ohio. Around the age of 17 he enrolled at Oberlin College and soon found himself as a member of the Ohio State Anti-Slavery Society. He knew that he would go to the slave states and while there he wanted to

“help his fellow colored people

escape and gain there freedom.” Over his career he believes it is possible that he helped more than 100 people escape slavery. He confesses to committing petty crimes while he is away from home in Cincinnati, one more major crime we see is that of a murder he committed. He was worried a man that he was helping escape slavery was getting cold feet and that he would expose him and two other slaves he had with him, so he says he pushed him off a steamboat into the wheel. Later upon his arrival in Saint Louis, he starts to commit burglaries and arson.

In no way can these men's lives be summed up in the paragraphs that I have just written. There is much that we don't know and never will. You can see a reoccurring theme from the end of the short introductions, that is they all ended up in St. Louis and ending up doing small burglaries and thefts, many of which were done together.

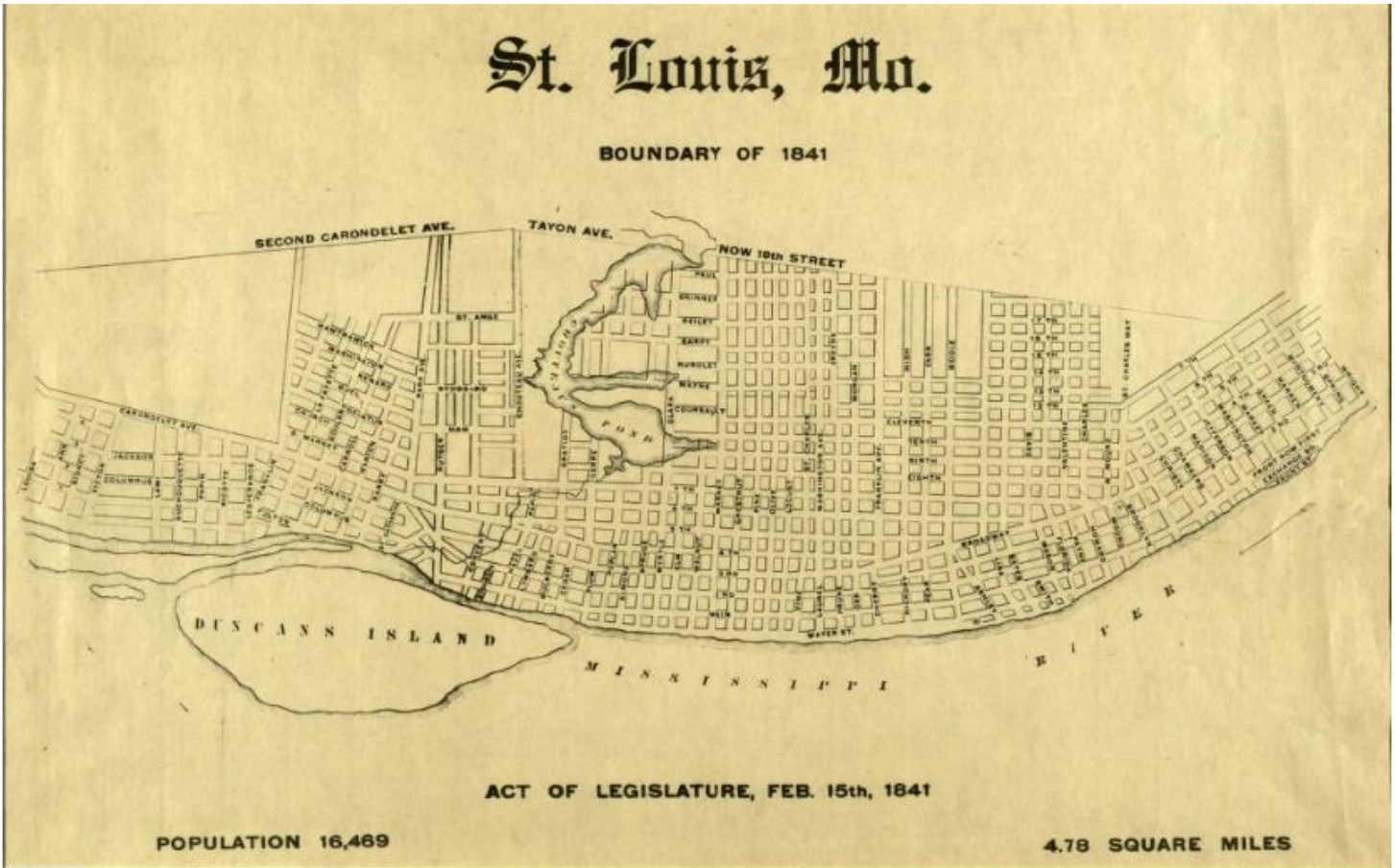
On the night of April 12, 1841 the group of men attempted to rob the Collier and Pettus Counting House, a bank on the corner of water street and pine, and now the location of the Arch. While trying to rob the bank, they murdered two men and burnt the bank to the ground. According to confessions at least one murder we know for sure had been premeditated. One by one the men the were caught and then condemned to hang for what they had done.

One might wonder how it is possible to know about these men's lives before the crime, well there was a book written and published before there execution. This was called *Trials and confessions of Madison Henderson, alias Blanchard, Alfred Amos Warrick, James W. Seward, and Charles Brown, murderers of Jesse Baker and Jacob Weaver : as given by themselves and likeness of each, taken in jail shortly after their arrest.*¹⁴ Not only is this the trials and confession of each man it so much more, It is a story of there lives leading all the way up till their end. It is their final statement to the world and their repentance.

This book was sold all along the river, from New Orleans to Cincinnati. Due to the huge amount of new paper attention that the crime had received, massive amounts of people read this book and possibly felt sympathetic or that justice was being done. This book and the other media coverage of the time sensationalized this event. People from all over, up and down the

¹⁴ Henderson, Madison, et al. *Trials and Confessions of Madison Henderson, Alias Blanchard, Alfred Amos Warrick, James W. Seward, and Charles Brown, Murderers of Jesse Baker and Jacob Weaver : as given by Themselves and Likeness of Each, Taken in Jail Shortly after Their Arrest.* Chambers & Knapp, 1841.

Mississippi river came to see this execution. Still can't believe that in 1841 St. Louisans and other Americans were enamored by a public execution. Well listen to this, the population of St. Louis in 1841 was 16,469 people. It was reported that more than 20,000 people attended their execution. That's more then 75%.



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1315

TRIALS AND CONFESSIONS

OF

**Madison Henderson, alias Blanchard,
Alfred Amos Warrick, James W.
Seward, and Charles Brown,**

MURDERERS OF

JESSE BAKER AND JACOB WEAVER,

AS GIVEN BY THEMSELVES; AND A

LIKENESS OF EACH,

Taken in jail shortly after their arrest.

*Entered according to an act of Congress in the District
Court of Missouri.*

SAINT LOUIS:

Printed by Chambers & Knapp—Republican office.

1841.

THE TRIAL of PATRICK CARROLL,
 WITH PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO HIS
EXECUTION
 THIS MORNING, IN FRONT OF THE JAIL AT MAIDSTONE,
 FOR THE
Wilful Murder of Mrs. Browning.



ON Monday morning, April 27, 1835, the town of Woolwich was thrown into a state of the greatest alarm, in consequence of a corporal of marines having murdered Mrs. Elizabeth Browning, landlady of the Britannia public house, by stabbing her to death with his bayonet. He was immediately taken into custody, and examined before the magistrates. On the Wednesday following, a Coroner's inquest was held on the body of the unfortunate woman, when the Jury returned a Verdict of Wilful Murder against Patrick Carroll, and he was committed to Newgate.

Carroll was a native of Ballaboy, in Ireland, and was 31 years of age. He formerly belonged to the 7th regiment of Fusiliers, where he served his time out; he then joined the Marines, and was promoted a Corporal in consequence of his good behaviour.

THE TRIAL

Of Carroll took place at the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, on Friday, May 15th. before Mr. Justice Park, Mr. Justice Littledale, and the Recorder. Mr. Bofkin counsel for the prosecution, and Mr. Payne defended the prisoner.

Elizabeth Blake was the first witness called—she stated—I am a lodger at the Britannia public-house. On the morning in question, about ten o'clock, Corporal Carroll came in. Mrs. Browning was at the bar, and the prisoner asked her if she would speak, she said she would not, nor to any such brute, after what he called her last night. He again repeated the request, which she refused, when he went into the bar. In about ten minutes afterwards I heard a scream, and when I reached the bar, I saw the prisoner with his bayonet in his hand, and saw him stab the deceased several times. I ran to the guard-room of the barracks, for assistance, and when I returned, Mrs. Browning was lying dead in Mr Owen's arms in the bar. She stated that the prisoner quarrelled with the deceased, because he had not been invited to drink tea with her the preceding evening.

Mrs. Tomkins, mother of the deceased, corroborated the particulars relative to the striking and stabbing of her unfortunate daughter.

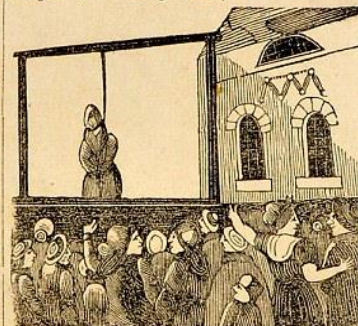
William Owen was the next witness sworn; he said—On the morning of 27th April last about ten o'clock, I was in the Britannia public house, where I saw the prisoner; he was stabbing away at every body with his bayonet, and I saw him stab Mrs. Browning two or three times with it. As soon as I could get at Mrs. Browning, she was nearly dead. I picked her up and she died in my arms. I have seen him strike the deceased, and he ill-used her once or twice before.

William Chillenden deposed—I apprehended the prisoner at the Britannia public house, at Woolwich, on the 27th of April last. On asking who committed the act, the prisoner said, "I am the man that has done it—I stabbed her." I then took him to the station-house, and returned to the Britannia, and in one of the chambers I saw the body of the deceased, it was lying on a sofa undressed; there were five distinct stabs on her bosom, three wounds on the right breast, and two on the left. I received the bayonet now produced, from the deceased's mother: it was very bloody. I observed some marks of blood on the prisoner's face, and also upon his fingers, when I took him into custody.

Henry Parkin, surgeon to the Marine Infirmary, on being sworn, said that on hearing of the affair, he went to the Britannia, and examined the body of the deceased, and found five wounds upon the chest, one of which under the left arm appeared to have been fatal. He said the wounds were doubtless inflicted with a bayonet.

Mr. Justice Park having summed up, the Jury

returned the fatal Verdict of GUILTY, when the Recorder passed sentence, that the prisoner be taken to the jail at Maidstone, in Kent, and there hung on the following Monday.



PATRICK CARROLL'S LAMENTATION.

DRAW near awhile, good people all,
 A warning take by my downfall;
 I can assure both high and low,
 Jealousy has proved my overthrow.
 (Chorus.)—Then I pray a warning take by me,
 Think of the Woolwich Tragedy!

In Woolwich as may plain be seen,
 I did belong to the Marines,
 And never thought my fate would be,
 To die upon the fatal tree.

On the twenty-seventh of April last,—
 That awful day is gone and past!—
 When I to the Britannia went,
 I being then on murder bent,
 My victim there I did behold,
 And I did then in blood so cold,
 In malice, envy, and in strife,
 Unconscious take away her life.

In fury I the bayonet drew
 And ran her body through and through;
 I saw her fall upon the floor,
 And weller in her crimson gore!

At length to Newgate I was sent,
 Where for the same I did repent;
 And day and night aloud did cry—
 O Lord, receive my soul on high!
 At length run out my worldly glass,
 For I was tried, condemned and cast,
 To die upon the next Monday morn,
 Exposed, a gaze to public scorn.

O, how could I so cruel be,
 To frame that awful tragedy;
 To lay that innocent woman low,
 And on her to compassion show.

Good people all be warned by me,
 Shun every thought of Jealousy,
 Which now has caused my dreadful end,
 Oh, Lord! receive my soul! Amen.

JOHN MORGAN.



Mrs. ELIZABETH BROWNING.

Was thirty-eight years of age, and on examining her body, no less than seventeen bayonet wounds were discernable. Her remains were interred on Monday, May 4th. in Woolwich church yard, in the same grave with her husband. The coffin, which was made of elm and covered with black cloth, had the following inscription on the plate:



ELIZABETH BROWNING, aged 38 years
 Died April 27, 1835.

The Father's Crime; or Fatal Curiosity.

AN AFFECTING AND TRUE HISTORY

OF

The Unnatural Murder

OF

JAMES ANDREW MACAULEY, a Young Sailor,

For his Wealth, and who proved, on the Morning after the Fatal Deed, to be
the MURDERER'S LONG-LOST and ONLY SON!



SOME time since, there lived a man named Macauley, at Pearyn in Cornwall, who had been blessed with an ample possession and fruitful issue; unhappy only in a younger son, who, taking liberty from his father's bounty, joined with a crew like himself, who, weary of the land, went roving to sea, and, in a small vessel, southward made priz of all whom they could master; and so increased in wealth, number and strength, that as they were cruising in the Straits they ventured upon a Turkish man of war, where they got great booty; but their powder by mischance taking fire, our hero, trusting to his skilful swimming, got to shore upon the Isle of Rhodes, with the best of his jewels about him; where he offered some of them for sale to a Jew, who knew them to be the governor's of Algiers, when he was apprehended, & condemned to the galleys as a pirate along with other Christians, who with him slew some of their officers, and released themselves. Macauley got safe on board an English ship, and arrived in London, where, from the experience he had in surgery, he was engaged by a surgeon, who after a while sent him to the East Indies: there, by his talent he got much money; when he resolved to return to his native town in Cornwall. Being absent fifteen years he learned his father was much reduced in circumstances, and in debt.

His sister he finds married to a mercer, a meaneer match than her birth promised. To her he first appeared as a poor sailor, but after awhile privately reveals himself to her, shewing her what

jewels and gold he had concealed in a belt about him; and concluded that the next day he intended to appear to his parents, yet he kept his disguise, till she and her husband should come thither, to make their common joy complete.

Being come to his parents, his humble behaviour, suitable to his poor suit of clothes, melted the old couple into so much compassion, as to give him shelter during the cold season, under their roof; and, by degrees, his stories of his travels and sufferings, told with much passion to the aged people, made him their guest so long by the kitchen fire, that the husband bade them good night, and went to bed. Soon after this, his true stories working compassion in the weaker vessel, she wept, and so did he; but withal, he, taking pity on her tears, comforted her with a piece of gold, which gave her assurance that he deserved a lodging, which she afforded him; and being in bed, he shewed her his wealth, which was girded about him, which he told her was sufficient to relieve her husband's wants, and to spare for himself; and so being weary, he fell asleep.

The old woman being tempted with the golden bait that she had received, and greedily thirsting after the enjoyment of the rest, she went to her husband, and awakening him, presented him with the news, and her contrivance what further to do; and, though with horrid apprehensions he at first refused, yet her pewing eloquence (Eve's enchantment) moved him at last to consent, and to rise to be master of that wealth, by murdering

the owner thereof, by stabbing him; this he accordingly did, and then covered the body with clothes, till opportunity served for carrying it away.

The early morning hastens the sister to her father's house, where with signs of great joy, she enquired for a young sailor that should lodge there last night. The old folks at first denied that they had seen any such, till she told them that he was her brother, and lost brother, which she knew assuredly, by a scar upon his arm, cut with a sword in his youth, and they had determined to meet there that morning, and be happy.

The father hearing this, hastily runs up into the room, and finding the mark, as his daughter had told them, with horrid regret for this monstrous murder of his own son, with the same knife wherewith he killed him, he cut his own throat, and threw himself over the mangled body of his murdered boy! The mother, soon after, going up to consult with her husband what to do, in a strange manner beholding them both weltering in their blood, wild and aghast finding the instrument of death at hand, immediately rips herself open.

The daughter, wondering at their delay in returning, seeks about for them, whom she found too soon; and with the sad sight of this bloody scene, being overcome with horror and amazement for this deluge of destruction, she sunk down and shortly after died of a broken heart. Such was the fatal end of this wretched family.

COPY OF VERSES.

ALL you who have children dear,
Now hear this tale of woe,
And the history of this sad tragedy,
I now to you will show.

A happy pair who at Pearyn did live,
Had a son who went to sea,
After fifteen years absence he return'd,
His parents for to see.

He to their cot in disguise did go,
To ask shelter from the cold,
And ere he laid him down to sleep,
Shew'd all his wealth and gold.

The mother to the father went,
In anxious breathless haste,
To tell of the treasures she had seen
Around the stranger's waist.

The father then, by Satan led,
Stab'd his poor boy to the heart,
And stole the cur's'd gold away,
Which soon caus'd his heart to smart.

And scarce ere the parents both
Had seen the morrow's light,
Their daughter came with joy to ask,
Of the sailor who slept there last night.

She said it was her brother James,
Who to sea long time had rovd,
Now home had come to share his wealth
With those he dearly lov'd.

O, when they found the murder'd youth,
Was their long-lost darling boy,
Most frightful horrors seiz'd their minds,
And bitterly did they cry.

The guilty pair then slew themselves,
When their murder'd son they espied,
And the broken-hearted daughter,
Sunk on the ground and died!

THE LIFE, TRIAL, AND Execution of R. Blakesley For the MURDER OF Mr. JAMES BURDON.

COPY OF VERSES.

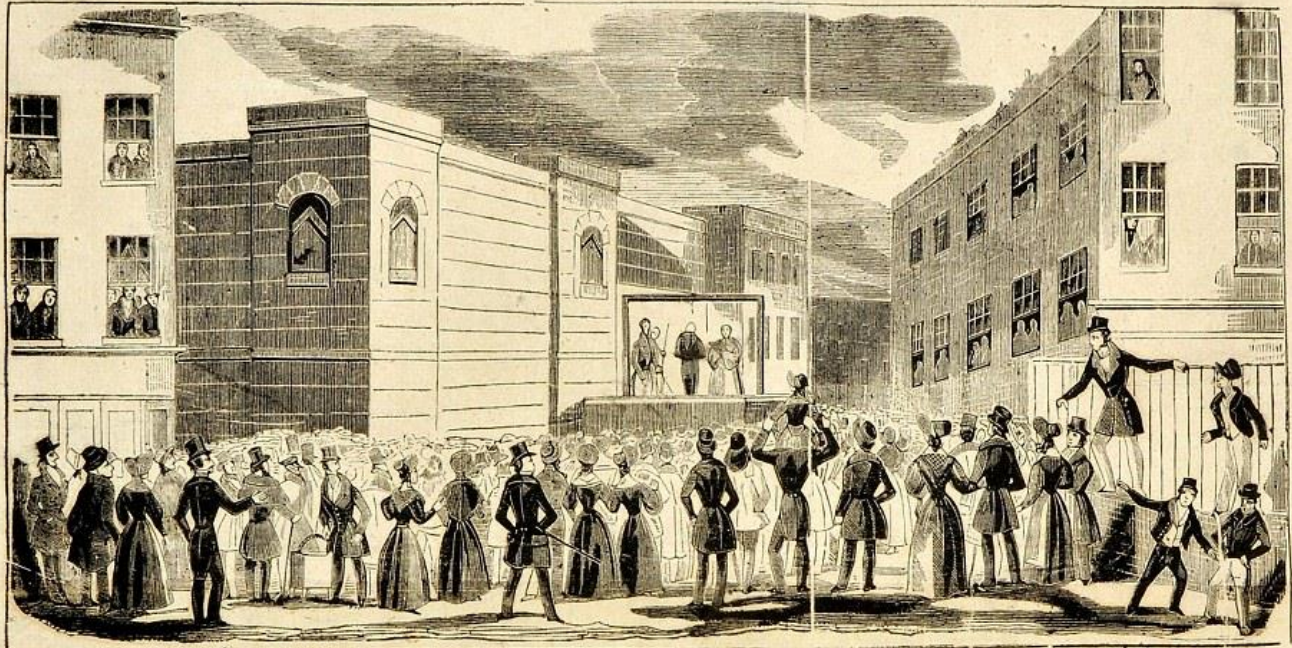
HEROLD, once more the fatal drop
At Newgate descends appear.
Stop, Paanages, I pray you stop,
The mortal tale to hear—
Exposed to scorn and public gaze,
(Oh, hear it with a shak.)
Plea man, at night, in prime of days,
Poor Blakesley was condemn'd to die.

Keep silent, while I have not
The cruel, barbarous deed;
Each feeling heart to rend,
At the King's Head, in Eastcheap,
And with a deadly knife,
More dreadful, than the fatal wound,
And took his life in a life,
'Twas passion did not guide,
And cause this fatal crime,
For which he saw his neck his fate,
And suffer'd in his pain.

Poor Burdon in his blood did lie,
Robb'd of his precious life,
His poor wife he murder'd with,
Then threw away the knife,
When from the bar he was removed,
Condemn'd to die in scorn,
He wrote a letter to his wife,
Last Saturday at morn,
Entreating she would come with speed
To his most dismal cell,
But she would not forgive the deed,
Nor take his last farewell.

His father and sisters came to see;
Their pardon he did crave;
His hand, at parting, they did squeeze,
And freely him forgave.
My wife I should like to see once more
No father with love I
Thus to prepare for the dreadful hour
Which now approaches nigh.

When on the fatal drop he stood,
He to the crowd thus spake—
My friends, by my sad end this day
I pray a warning take,
The drop then fell, and shut the scene,
And we no more can say;
But God all hearts will reveal
Upon the Judgment day.



Newgate, this morning, 8 o'clock.

At an early hour this morning the sheriffs, with their usual attendants, arrived at the prison, and proceeded to the condemned cell, where they found the reverend ordinary engaged in prayer with the miserable criminal, Blakesley. After the usual formalities had been observed, of demanding the delivery of the body of the prisoner into their custody, Blakesley was conducted to the press-room, where his irons were struck off. The executioner, with his assistants, then commenced pinning his arms, which operation they skilfully and quickly despatched. During these awful preparations he sighed deeply, but uttered not a word. At a quarter before eight, all the arrangements having been completed, the bell of the prison commenced tolling, and the melancholy procession was formed. The reverend ordinary, preceding the culprit on his way to the fatal drop, began reading, in a distinct tone, the burial service for the dead. No sound, if we except the deep sighs of the unhappy man, interrupted the clergyman as the procession moved along the subterranean passage. On arriving at the steps leading to the scaffold, he turned round, and tremulously thanked the sheriffs and Mr. Cope, the worthy governor of the prison, for their kind attentions to him during his confinement. Then, firmly, but with a slow motion, he ascended the scaffold, on reaching which he was placed in the necessary position. Whilst the executioner was adjusting the fatal apparatus of death, which was done in an incredibly short space of time, Blakesley was deeply absorbed in prayer. The executioner, having drawn the cap over his face, retired from the scaffold, and, on the signal being given, the bolt was withdrawn, and the unhappy man was launched into eternity. A few convulsive struggles were per-

ceptible, and he ceased to exist. After languishing the usual time, the body was cut down, and conveyed into the prison.

On Thursday morning an attempt at assassination was made by this desperate man. It appears that one of his keepers, named Jeremiah Herbert, was conducting him to an adjoining closet; in the passage thereto there happened to be a candlestick left upon a shelf. This Blakesley suddenly and firmly grasped, and with it inflicted a most desperate wound upon the poor man's skull. His fellow-keeper, hearing assistance called, hastened to the spot, when a severe contest ensued before he was secured. The report coming to the ears of Mr. Cope, the governor of Newgate, he immediately ordered a stretcher to be put on him. Herbert was conveyed to an infirmary, where he lies in a very precarious state. He is reported to be a very humane man.

Lord ABINGER and Mr. Baron GURNEY took their seats on the bench at about 10 o'clock, and shortly after Robert Blakesley was brought in.

Mr. PAYNE, on the indictment having been read, stated the case to the jury, after which the following witnesses were called.

Edward Bristow—I am a City policeman. The prisoner went with me to Mr. Burdon's, and said, "I have come to demand my wife." Burdon said,

"You had better go about your business." The prisoner said, "You hear that, Bristow."



Robert Blakesley, taken at the Bar.

George Harrold, a hair-dresser, of 18, Lincolns-street.—The prisoner came into my shop about half-past seven o'clock, on September 21. He said he was going to take out a warrant against Mr. Burdon for detaining his property. He said it was a hard thing to be kept from his wife and his property. He also said that he had been to Mr. Burdon's, with a policeman, to demand his wife, and that Burdon said his wife was not there, and he did not know where she was. It was, he said, enough to drive any man mad. I asked him if he was lamely injured. He replied that he was, and that he had lived with his wife on the most affectionate terms during the short time he was with her. He said in the

course of the conversation, "that if he had had any thing in his hand he would have shot him." (Burdon)

William Bradburn, of the City police.—I know the prisoner's name him about half-past nine on the 21st Sept. He spoke to me, and told me he had been demanding his wife from Mr. Burdon, and they were going to push him out of the house. We passed a butcher's shop at the time, and seeing a knife, the prisoner said "If I had had that in my hand I should have used it." I replied, "Nonsense!" His rejoinder was, "By G— I think I should." He told me he had not been in bed all night. I saw him again about six o'clock in the evening; he accused me in Finchurch-street, and asked me if I was going to "stand" half-a-pint of porter. I said, "Yes, come on," and gave him some. He said he was going to see his old woman by-and-bye. I sat with him for two hours, but I don't know that anything occurred afterwards.

Mr. G. PAYNE then rose to address the jury for the prisoner. He said the facts of the case were too clear for his learned friend or himself to attempt to combat. But there was one point to which he called their particular attention, and that was, that there were circumstances detailed in evidence against the prisoner, which made it appear that he could scarcely be in his right mind. The manner in which he had wandered about the whole night, and then gone up to the police—the persons whom he should otherwise most have shunned—certainly made it appear that he was not in his right mind. The circumstances, too, of the prisoner's separation from his wife, to whom it was shown that he had been affectionately attached, were such as might be

reasonably supposed to derange a mind already naturally weak. It was clear, from the fact of his having mistaken what the deceased said to him when he went to demand his wife, that his mind was in a very excited state. He had supposed that Burdon had said that he knew nothing of his wife; while it appeared that what he said was, that he knew nothing of him, (Blakesley.) Was it the act of a sane man, to go and tell a policeman that if he had had a certain knife in his hand, he thought, from the provocation he had received, he should have used it? Was it, he asked, the act of a sane man contemplating a murder, to go and tell the police of his intentions? Moreover, if he had been perfectly in his senses, was it likely that he should have stabbed the wife of his bosom, whose very bereavement had maddened him? No! But they knew that it was a characteristic of madness first to attack and to injure those very persons who were most beloved and most cherished. It was a most awful thing that a man's life should be taken for an act for which he was not accountable. Let them, the gentlemen of the jury, bear this in mind, and if they had a doubt on the subject, it would be their duty to give the prisoner the benefit of it.

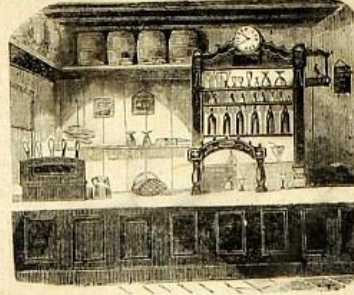
Mr. James Blakesley, the father of the prisoner, was then called, and stated that his son was, when a child at the age of four or five years, attacked with illness which paralyzed his limbs in such a manner that he would sometimes fall down, and remain in that state for several hours. I considered that this illness affected his mind; that he was weak and foolish. He would not do what he was bid. He appeared sometimes to be clearly gone. He went to school at the age of eight, and I was subsequently sent for by the schoolmaster, who said he was unlike other boys.

Lord ABINGER then summed up in a most able manner, calling the attention of the jury to the deliberation with which the prisoner had acted, and leaving it to the jury to say whether the prisoner's actions proved him to be insane or not; though he thought not. He spoke feelingly of the painful situation in which Mr. Blakesley, sen., was placed; but said that his evidence did not prove the prisoner insane.

The jury then retired, and, after an absence of about 20 minutes, returned a verdict of *GUILTY*.



A View of Mr. Burdon's House.



The Bar at Mr. Burdon's House.

PAUL & Co., Printers, 2 & 3, Monmouth Court, Seven Dials.

Executed the 11th April 1836

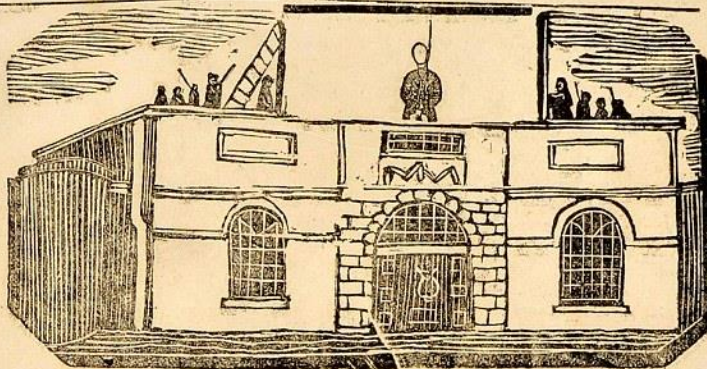
LIFE, TRIAL, and AWFUL. EXECUTION, OF WILLIAM HARLEY, FOR THE CHIPSTEAD BURGLARY

A Copy of a Letter.

My Dear Father,

I now take this opportunity of writing to you, being the last time I can ever put Pen to Paper to address you, I assure you I am a sincere penitent, & did you but know my feelings in being placed in such an awful situation, you cannot fail to drop a tear of Pity for your unfortunate son, I am like a flower cut down in full bloom, let my fate be a warning to all mankind,

Adieu for ever,—Wm, Harley.



AT HORSEMONGER LANE GOAL.

On Wednesday March 30th. at Kingston, *James Hills*, *Wm Harley*, and *William Fisher*, alias *Curly Bill*, labourers of ruffianly appearance, were indicted for burglariously breaking and entering Mint House, the dwelling house of Mary Ann Long, at Chipstead on the night of the 2nd. of September last, and stealing various articles her property.—Mrs Mary Ann Long, called in and examined by Mr, Clarkson, “I am 66 years of age, a widow, and reside my sister, Mrs Scholefield, at Mint House, Chipstead, which is a lone house situated between Gatton and Reigate; on the night of the 2nd of Sept. last, I, Mrs. Scholefield, her son, (Mr Rankin) and a female servant, were the only inmates; we retired to bed after having seen that all the premises were properly fastened; I slept with my sister & about ten minutes past one in the morning I awoke by hearing the dog, which was kept in the yard, barking violently; I got up and opened the bed room window and thinking that some persons were about the premises, I halloed out that they had better keep out of the way, or I would put a bullet into their stomach which was not a very pleasant thing; I did so to intimidate them, and then went to bed; & shortly after I heard a noise and again got up, on going to the window, I saw a man trying to get in, he had smashed the pane & was armed with a stake, I seized hold of the stake and tried to wrest it from him, but he was too strong for me, and struck me a violent blow on the head, inflicting a wound of an inch and a half in length: he also struck me on the shoulder and hand, of which I lost the use of for some time. I then called to my nephew, Mr Rankin, and he came armed with a cutlas, he made a cut at the man, but the night being very dark, and there being a railing at the window, he missed him and the man went away. I then lit 3 or 4 candles, and went down stairs for my nephew's gun. I brought it up, but re-

collecting I had left the powder and ammunition, I again went down for it, and lock'd the pantry door after me, I return up stairs, and my nephew loaded the gun. At about half or three quarters of an hour after war is, we heard a great noise outside the house, and the pannel of the door was smashed in. We heard the voices of six or seven men who entered the house; they remained down stairs 3 quarters of an hour. I slept in a room at the end of the passage, and my nephew's bed room was opposite.

We placed ourselves in the passage, we then heard one of them say “Now we'll go up stairs, I heard what I supposed to be a man crawling on his hands and knees. Mrs. Scholefield seemed much alarmed, and cried out for mercy, the men said give us 50l. or 30l. or 20l. I told them that all my money was in the bank, and my plate in the bankers One of the men said “I'll murder you” and another man said “I'll murder you all”, they then forced in the pannel of the door, and a man at the bottom of the stairs said, “Go it my boys”, Mr. Rankin, dropt on his knees & fired, the men fell back, and the candle went out he shot Hills on the right breast, he could have shot him in the head, but did not like, after which they all went away We then proceeded down stairs, my nephew and I proceeded down stairs, he arm'd with the gun and I the cutlas we fastened up the door as well as we could, and then went into the parlor, & found the men had drank 2 bottles of wine, and foud the cores of 14 apples. they had taken away the watch, some cruet frames and other articles.

The watch was sold to Anne Murrel, who keeps the Spotted Dog, at Turnam green, for 4s. 6d. and some beer,

After the witnesses being examined Mr. Justice Vanghan summing up the evidence finding Hill and Harley guilty DEATH, and acquitted Fisher after a few moments prayer he were launched into Eternity.

Good people all in Surry,
Now do listen unto me,
Those few lines I do unfold
Of the Chipstead Burglary.
On the Second of September.
Those men was fully bent,
To rob and Plunder the mint house,
It was their whole intent.

In the dead of night the dog did bark
The widow Long, jumpt out of bed,
She then threw the window up,
She being full of dread,
To see those Ruffians round her house,
To them she did then say,
If you don't be off we'll fire at you,
And take your lives away.

Down to the Kitchen she did go,
For the fire arms all in haste
Their lives being in danger.
They had no time to waste,
But in her haste she forgot,
The powder and the ball,
The Captain, to fire was determined,
And cause their downfall.

Then they broke into the parlo
Where they had a treat,
They regaled themselves with wine,
And some apples they did eat.
Mrs. Scholefield heard them on the stairs
For mercy she did call
and if you don't give us £50,
We'll surely murder you all,

Oh! then the Captain quite resolute
His musket then he aim'd
He fired at Hills and wounded him.
For which he was not to blame,
They run away and left him,
Their hearts was fill'd with fear,
They sold the watch for 4s 6d,
And a little beer.

When in horsemonger Lane Goal,
Those 2 wretched men did cry (he lay
The Lord have mercy on my soul,
Alas I am doom to die,
A warning take by my fate,
As plainly you may see,
On monday morning I did die.
Upon a fatal tree,

Carpue, Printer, 3 Old Montague Street, Near Whiteenapel,

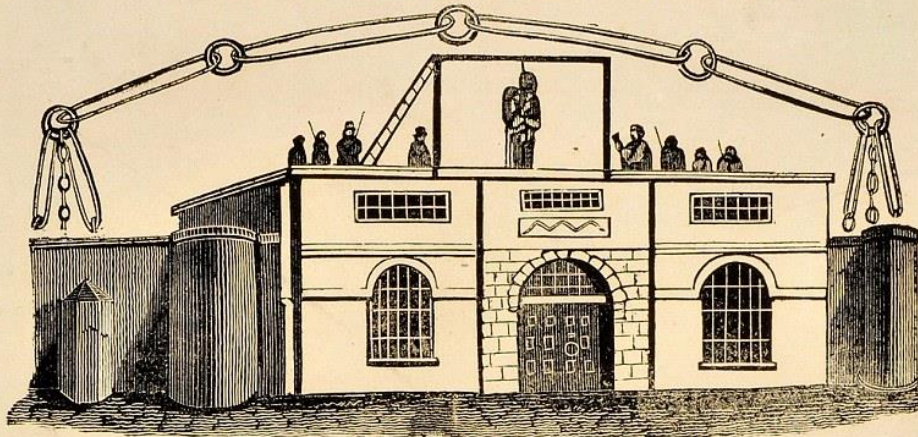
THE

TRIAL AND EXECUTION

OF

HENRY HUGHES,

WHO SUFFERED DEATH THIS MORNING,



**AT THE COUNTY GOAL, HORSEMONGER LANE, SOUTHWARK,
For Violating EMMA COCK, a Girl only 8 Years old.**

APPREHENSION OF HUGHES.

ON Monday, March 3, 1834, the inhabitants of Norwood and its vicinity, were thrown into the utmost horror, on learning that a most diabolical outrage had been committed in Penge Wood, on a child named Emma Cock, only eight years old; and a young man, named Henry Hughes, was, on the representation of two lads, and other concurring circumstances, apprehended on the same day by Bedser, a constable, and taken before S. Elyard, esq., at Streatham, who, upon hearing the evidence, committed him to Horsemonger-lane goal, until the following Saturday, March 8th, the child being too ill to attend. Hughes was accordingly brought up on that day before S. Elyard, esq. and the Rev. J. Progle, at Streatham Common; when after a lengthened examination, the delinquent was fully committed to Horsemonger Lane, to take his trial at the ensuing Surrey assizes; and Wednesday, March 20th was the day appointed for

HIS TRIAL,

At Kingston, before Mr. Justice Gaselee. The court was crowded almost to suffocation.

Mr. Adolphus stated the case for the prosecution, and called the following witnesses in support of the charge:—

Emma Cock, the child on whom the barbarous offence had been committed, was the first witness called, and her infantine appearance, after the detail of the horrible circumstances connected with the case, created a thrill of horror in the breast of every person (the prisoner himself, perhaps, not excepted) in the crowded Court. A chair was placed in the witness-box, so that she might stand on it to be heard by the Court and Jury; and the clearness and precision with which she gave her testimony astonished all present. She was examined by Mr. Adolphus, and stated that she remembered going out after dinner, on the 3d March, with her little sister and an infant her mother had to nurse. They went towards Mr. Raymond's to gather flowers, and she carried the child. The prisoner, whom she had known before from his living some time next door to her father and mother, came up to them, and asked her, "What she was doing?" She said she was gathering flowers. He then said, "If you come with me I'll show you where you can get a lapful!" He then took the child out of her arms, and put it down beside her sister, and took her up in his arms, and carried her down the Common, nearly as far as the New Road. While he was carrying her, she asked him to put her down, as she said she could walk. He took her into Penge Wood, and laid her down near a tree, which had bushes about it. [The witness then minutely detailed the prisoner's brutal treatment towards her, and which is wholly unfit for publication.] While on the ground she attempted to scream out, but he prevented her by placing his hand on her mouth. The prisoner also drew a knife out of his pocket, and told her if she did not do as he desired he would cut her. She felt dreadfully hurt as if cut, and bled a great deal. The prisoner was dressed at the time in a flannel jacket, cord breeches, and wore a black hat. He (the prisoner) had a black dog with him at the time. The dog came close to her while on the ground. When the prisoner got up from her he ran away towards Mr. Wood's cottage. Just as he went, she saw Bedser's boy, who came to her, and assisted her up, and she told him the prisoner had been with her. She also saw young Raynor, who took her and the children home to her father's house. On getting home she told Mrs. Bower what had happened, and that the prisoner had been with her. She was then very ill, and was put to bed. On the same evening, the prisoner was brought up stairs into her room by Mr. Bedser, the constable, and she at once said he was the man who had been with her, and had taken her into the wood. The pri-

soner made no reply but hung down his head. She had been ill for several days after.

Mrs. Mary Cook, mother of the last witness, said that her daughter, who had just been examined, was eight years of age on the 8th of last month. This witness described the state in which she found her daughter when brought home to her on the evening of the 3d of last March.

Augustus Bedser, a youth of 15 years of age, said that on Monday, the 3d of last month, he went into Penge-wood, to look after his father's horse, when he heard the cries of children, and saw the prisoner, whom he had known for two or three years, with Emma Cock. [The witness here described the situation of the parties at the time.] He saw the prisoner get up and run away towards the top of the Wood. His dress was undone when he got up, and he was adjusting it as he went along. Saw the prisoner's dog near the spot, and it went away with him.

Mrs. Amelia Bower deposed to the state in which she found the prosecutrix, on her returning to her father's house. Mr. William Street, a surgeon, at Norwood, said that he had been called on to attend the prosecutrix, on the evening of the 3d of March. She was much terrified when first he saw her, and her arms were much scratched, and her mouth had evidently the appearance of being severely pressed with the hand. Mr. Street here minutely described the excessive injuries on other parts of her person, which might have been produced by a blunt knife, the finger, or other instrument.

Mr. Stephen Wood said that he rented a cottage on Penge Wood, and employed the prisoner. On the day in question he was at work in his shed with another man named Lunn. They went to dinner about twelve o'clock, and Lunn returned about two, but the prisoner did not come back for some time afterwards. He, the prisoner, returned about five minutes before Bedser came and apprehended him.

James Bedser deposed that he was a constable belonging to the Croydon police. On the evening of the 3d March, in consequence of information which he received from the father of the prosecutrix, he went in search of the prisoner and found him crouched up in some bushes in Penge-wood, a short distance from the place where he was employed, and took him before the prosecutrix, who at once recognized him as the person who had injured him.

This closed the case for the prosecution.

The prisoner, when asked what he had to say, replied nothing; but wished his witnesses to be called.

Stephen Lunn said the prisoner had not been out of his sight ten minutes the whole of the day; but, on cross-examination, admitted he had never made this statement to any person since the prisoner's apprehension, or on his examination before the magistrates, though it might be so important to his case.

Two other witnesses saw the prisoner and Lunn dining together at the White Hart.

The learned Judge summed up the evidence at great length, and with his usual perspicuity, and the Jury, after consulting in the box for a considerable time, retired to consider their verdict. After being absent for upwards of an hour, they returned into Court, and pronounced a Verdict of GUILTY.

THE SENTENCE.

Mr. Justice Gaselee put on his black cap, and in a most solemn and impressive manner passed sentence of death on the prisoner. It was impossible, he said, for him, from the revolting nature of the offence of which he had been found guilty, to hold out the slightest hope of a remission of his sentence; and he would therefore exhort to devote the few hours he had to remain in this life in prayer and repentance.

The prisoner, who was a stout and rather mild-looking young man, on hearing the verdict of the Jury, became deadly pale, and at the conclusion of the Judge's address would have fallen to the ground, had he not been caught in the arms of one of the turnkeys in attendance, who carried him away, and his groans as they led him from the dock, could be heard for some time in court.

But on, in some measure, overcoming the bitter poignancy of his feelings, he made

THE CONFESSION

That he had committed the dreadful crime, but at the same time most solemnly declared that he never used any knife, or pulled out a knife on the occasion.

At length, the awful warrant came to the prison, for HIS EXECUTION

To take place this morning, April 6, 1834. He was obliged to be supported under the gallows, by two men being reduced to such a pitiable state of exhaustion. In fact it was with the greatest difficulty the executioner could affix the fatal rope; and then he appeared perfectly lifeless: while waiting for the falling of the drop, it was found necessary, to prevent the unhappy sufferer from falling on his knees, to hold him, until he was launched into eternity! when he struggled violently. He was a tall good-looking man; and was dressed in a kind of fustian jacket, and trowsers; his age was 23. Although he declared to his brothers he was innocent, yet on the day before he suffered, he requested a fellow prisoner to write to his parents for him to acknowledge his guilt.

Copy of Verses.

NO guilty deed like this, before
E'er saw the light of day;
Unequal'd in the list of crimes,
For savage cruelty.

'Twas on the third day of last March,
Pretty Emma left her home,
To gather sweet flowers in the wood,
When Hughes 'spied her alone.

His frightful deeds he then did plan,
To gratify his lust,
And worse than murder this dear child—
A crime sure doubly curst!

And after violating her,
He ran with all his might;
But that Great Power who each act sees,
Did bring the deed to light.

To Justice, Hughes was quickly brought,
And to the prison sent,
To prepare for his trial-day,
When soon he did repent.

When before Judge and Jury brought,
His guilt each one did see;
They sentence'd him to die a death,
Most ignominiously!

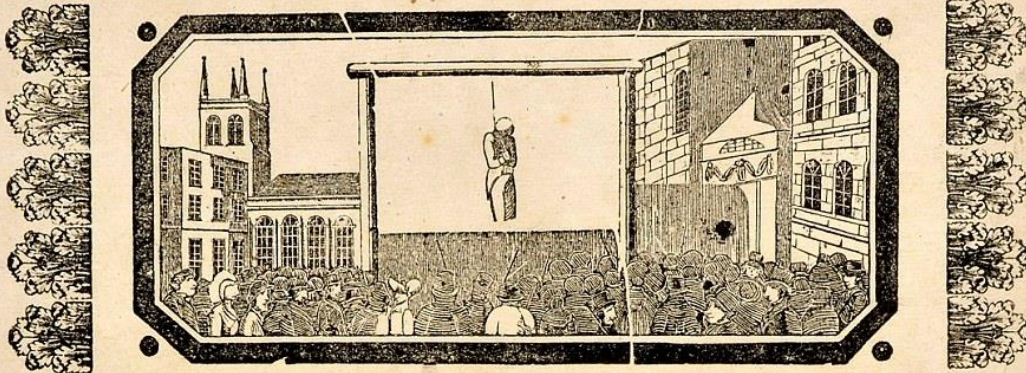
As a timely warning to all men,
To curb their passions vile;
Or else like Hughes they'll soon repent,
If guilty of such crime.

G. Smeaton, Printer, 74, Tooley Street.

CONFESSION & EXECUTION

OF J. TAWELL,

Who was Executed on Friday at Aylesbury, for the Murder of Sarah Hart,



THE EXECUTION.

At break of day this morning, Friday, March 28, workmen commenced putting up the scaffold, which consists merely of some slender upright pieces of timber, with a cross beam and chains in front, to form a kind of railing. From seven o'clock the crowd began to increase very rapidly—shoals of persons, principally far labourers, in their smock frocks and "Jun Crow" hats, coming in from all points. At a quarter before eight, a significant movement among the mob, shewed that the wretched man was about to appear on the scaffold. The wretched man trembled violently as he stepped upon the platform under the drop, and appeared scarcely able to stand upright. The night cap was tentatively placed over his face, and as soon as this was done he knelt down and prayed for about the space of one minute, apparently with great fervency. He was then helped to rise, and the rope having been lashed to the beam, the drop fell, and the arms, legs, and body of the wretched man became greatly convulsed.

After hanging for about an hour the body was taken down, and at once buried, before the body could be cold, in a grave dug two days ago within the precincts of the jail.

CONFESSION.

It appears that the prisoner had written his confession some days ago, acknowledging that he had poisoned Sarah Hart, and that he was also guilty of having made the attempt upon her life in September last, as suggested by evidence for the prosecution at his recent trial. He declared in this statement (of which he had made a revised copy at 5 o'clock on Friday morning) that he was led to the commission of the crime from the fear that his connection with Sarah Hart might reach the ears of his wife. This confession he intrusted to the Rev. Mr. Cox, with a request that the contents of it should not be made public. He said that he had however, no objection to the purport of his confession being made known.

THE TRIAL.

On Wednesday, March 12, John Tawell, was tried at Aylesbury, for the wilful murder of Sarah Hart, by administering prussic acid to her, on the evening of Wednesday, January 1, 1845.

Mary Anne Ashley, who resides in the next house to the deceased, stated:—Between 6 and 7 o'clock on Wednesday evening, Jan. 1st, I heard a noise resembling stifled screams, proceeding from the house of Mrs. Hart, which continued for more than a minute. I took a candle in my hand, and, on going to the house, I heard the door shut, and I saw a man dressed like a Quaker, come along the path from the house. While he was opening the gate, leading into the high road,

asked him what was the matter with my neighbour. He made no reply, but proceeded through the gate into the road, and in the direction of Slough. About two hours before I saw the same person at the house. On entering the room of the deceased I found her lying on her back on the floor, with her clothes nearly up to her knees, and the stocking on her left leg nearly down and torn. The cap was off her head, it was on the ground by the side of her.

Mr. Henry Montague Champneys stated:—I am a surgeon I live at Salt-hill. On Wednesday evening, January 1, about seven o'clock, I was called to see Mrs. Hart, by a woman, who rang violently at my bell. She asked me to come immediately to a woman who had fallen down, and told me to go Bath Place. I ran as fast as I could to the house, and found the deceased lying on the ground. Her eyes were fixed, and I knelt down and felt her pulse, and I fancied I felt three beats. I then saw deceased was dead. I made a post-mortem examination of the body. Mr. Norblad and myself analyzed the contents of the stomach, and found it to contain prussic acid and some salt nearly allied to it.

Mr. Baron Parke having summed up the evidence addressed the jury and urged them to return a verdict consistent with the evidence. The Jury returned a verdict of "GUILTY."

The Judge having put on the black cap, then proceeded to address the prisoner previous to passing sentence, he said, John Tawell you have been unanimously found guilty by the Jury of a most barbarous and cruel murder committed on one who looked up to you as a protector and benefactor, and we can fancy we see you now mixing the poison which was to take away the life of this unsuspecting female, and which you done while disguised in the garb of a virtuous, upright, and honest race of men. All that remains now, is to pass the sentence of the law which is that you be taken from here to the place from whence you came and from thence to the place of execution there to be hung by the neck until you are dead and may the Lord have mercy on your soul!

Grim Death to me I see approaching.

Hark! how dismal sounds the knell,
Saying, Tawell be preparing.

You must bid this world farewell;
You slayed that poor & innocent woman
At Salt-hill we are aware,
So you must pay your life a forfeit.

At Aylesbury, in Buckinghamshire.
Tens of thousands are approaching,
What a dreadful sight to see,
Oh! did I ever think that I,
Should die upon the fatal tree.

Many years in wealth and grandeur.

At Berkhamstead, I might have lived,
If to the advice of Satan,

I myself did not way give;
To mix the fatal deadly poison,
On! what tortures rack my breast,
And since I did administer the same,
My mind has took no rest.

Adieu my wife your hopes are blighted,
My folly when too late I see,
Must I be a wretched murderer,
Doom'd to die upon a tree,

Farewell to you and you dear daughter

May you every blessing have,
When my aged bones are mouldering,
In the still and silent grave.

There's another thing that does perplex me
Nothing can my mind alloy,
When I think of that little innocent,
Dear, and darling boy;
May he never know his father
Died a death of such disgrace,
Oh! may the devils I have committed,
Ne'er be thrown in his dear face.

BIRT, Printer, 39, Great St. Andrew Street, Seven Dials, London.