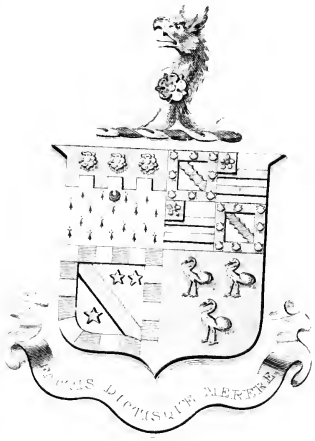

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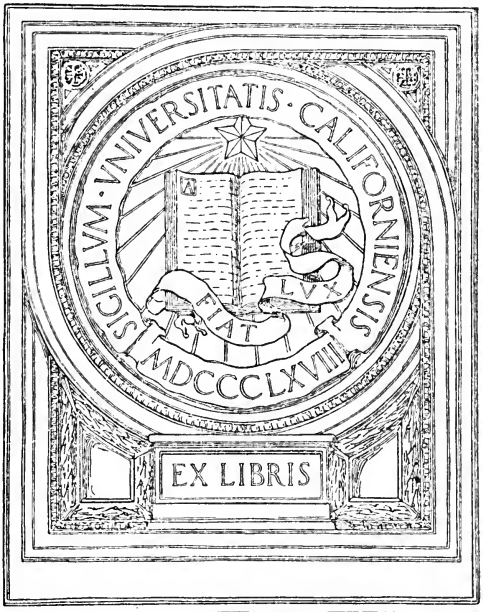
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A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT

OF THE

ATROCIOUS BURGLARY,

COMMITTED BY

ROBERT SAUNDERS,

(ALIAS WILLIAM SINCLAIR,)

AND THREE OTHERS,

AT THE

RECTORY HOUSE,

OF THE

REV. THOMAS JONES, A.M.

RADNAGE, BUCKS,

ON THE 20th OF NOVEMBER, 1827;

AND A

FULL REPORT OF THE TRIAL,

BEFORE

SIR WILLIAM GARROW, KNIGHT,

AT THE

Aylesbury Assizes, March 1, 1828,

With his Lordship's emphatic Address to the Jury, and other important information connected with the Trial and Execution of the Prisoner.

HIGH WYCOMBE: PRINTED BY J. W. BURNHAM.

ROBT SAUNDERS alias WILLM SINCLAIR.

When Taken.

ROB^T SAUNDERS *alias* WILL^M SINCLAIR.

When at the Bar.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

ATROCIOUS BURGLARY,

AT RADNAGE, BUCKS,

November 20, 1827.

RADNAGE is situated in the Hundred of Desborough, and is about six miles north west of High Wycombe, and bounded on the east by Bledlow, by West Wycombe and the liberty of Stoken Church on the south and south west, by Crowell to the west, and by Chinnor to the north.—The Rectory is pleasantly situated near the parish church, on a sloping upland, commanding an interesting view partly intercepted by gentle acclivities and rising hills, which combined, enlivens the solitary aspect of this rural spot, and adds cheerfulness to the surrounding scenery.—The Lawn in front of the Parsonage is tastefully laid out with ever-green shrubs and fir trees, which form an inimitable shade, and is every way calculated to render the sequestered situation truly inviting to the retired habits of a contemplative mind. The Premises being thus secluded, as it were, from the world, it would have been conceived the remotest object whereon the evil machinations of a corrupt mind could have been exercised for the perpetration of atrocious crime.

The Rev. THOMAS JONES, M.A. who is now in his seventy-seventh year, has resided in this county for upwards of fifty years, and is revered and esteemed by all who are honored with his acquaintance and friendship; he has been the Rector of the Parish for twenty-one years, and has resided at the Rectory, with his amiable lady, up to the present period in peaceful security, under the flattering hope that they should have no other than ordinary afflictions to cloud the evening of life—The depravity of the human mind left to the influence of satanic power, had, however, devised means to the contrary, which will appear from the following interesting facts: —About eleven o'clock in the evening of Wednesday the 20th of November, 1827, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, retired to bed. At two o'clock the next morning Mrs. Jones was suddenly disturbed by a noise, which induced her to alarm Mr. Jones; upon which he immediately got up, apprehending that it might arise from his having neglected to let fall the night bolt of his bed room door; on proceeding towards the door with the intention of satisfying himself, he found the noise was at the window, and which afterwards proved to arise from the operation of a centrebit; Mr. Jones tried the shutter and found it was not fastened, and instantly a man pushed it open and presented himself, with a black handkerchief covered over his face, and a white shirt over his clothes, having a large iron crow bar in his hand which he brandished over Mr. Jones's head, who seized hold of it and cried out "Thieves and Murder;" upon which the fellow, with horrid imprecations, threatened to beat his brains out if he made the least noise. Three others immediately followed him, all in a similar disguise. Mrs. Jones in her fright left her bed, and was about making her escape, but before she could reach her bed room door the man who entered second seized hold of her by the neck, and ordering her not to make a noise, forced something extremely nauseous into her mouth to prevent her speaking, and by threats of murder compelled her to return to her bed: In the meantime, the man who first entered the room forced Mr. Jones down at the foot of the bed, and threatened him with instant destruction if he made any noise, declaring "he would split his skull and dash his brains out instantly;" he then insisted upon Mr. Jones informing him where his money was, who becoming excessively alarmed and very faint pointed to his small clothes, the pockets of

which the ruffian ransacked, and shortly after his comrades had all entered the room, one of them returned outside; they then examined the drawers and handed their contents to the man who appeared to be stationed on the lawn to receive them. One of them took from the bed's head one gold and one metal watch, with two gold seals and a key. The ruffian alluded to demanded of Mrs. Jones where the plate chest was, she told him that a box containing plated articles was in a closet on the left hand side of the fire place, he then broke open the door and took the box out, and after examining the contents, and putting in some of Mrs. Jones's wearing apparel, carried it to the window and handed it to the one outside; he then insisted on knowing where the rest of Mr. Jones's money was, threatening him with instant destruction if he did not produce it, and added they should take his carriage and horses. Mr. Jones was now almost exhausted, but retained self-possession sufficiently to say, it was in a bureau in his dressing room, and offered to go and shew him, fearing if he did not, that Mrs. Jones and himself would be murdered. The villain then laid hold of Mr. Jones and they went along a passage to his dressing-room, where Mr. Jones pointed to the bureau and was about to open it, but before he could do so, the man forced it open and took out two purses which contained twenty-four or twenty-five sovereigns. On their return to the bedroom the same man addressed Mrs. Jones, and said d—n you, where are your jewels. Mrs. Jones replied that what little ornaments she had were in a box in a drawer, to which she pointed; two of them immediately opened it, at the same time taking two gold rings and a gold pin which were lying on the dressing table. While looking for the ornaments, an alarm appearing to have reached them they instantly put out all their lights and jumped out of the window, at which they had gained admittance.

Without detaining the reader further with the relation of facts communicated to the committing Magistrates, we shall at once proceed to lay before him the evidence produced in Court at the trial of Robert Saunders, alias William Sinclair, one of the burglars, which established the case in favour of the crown and justly fixed the awful doom of this unhappy man to expiate his offence by the forfeiture of his life on the scaffold,

THE

REPORT OF THE TRIAL, &c.

OF

ROBERT SAUNDERS,

AT THE

Aylesbury Assizes, March 1, 1828.

Mr. BARON GARROW arrived at Aylesbury at five o'clock on Thursday evening, February 28, and was met at the entrance of the town by Robert Harvey, Esq. the High Sheriff. His Lordship attended divine service the next morning, and heard an eloquent and impressive discourse from the Rev. Mr. Bold, who took for his text Romans xii. 5.

The Court was opened soon after twelve o'clock, when the following Gentlemen were sworn on the Grand Jury:—

The Most Noble the Marquis of Chandos, Foreman.

Sir J. Dashwood King, Bart.
Sir Thomas Digby Aubrey, Bart.
T. Tyringham Barnard, Esq.
Maurice Swabey, Esq.
James Grubb, Esq.
W. Selby Lowndes, Esq.
G. Grenville Pigott, Esq.
William Rickford, Esq.
William Hexter, Esq.
John Norris, Esq.
Terence O'Loghlin, Esq.
R. L. Watkin, Esq.
William Turner, Esq.
C. Doyley Stevenson, Esq.
Joseph Gray, Esq.
George Hepburn, Esq.
James Senior, Esq.
Thomas Dell, Esq.
W. Blake Eagles, Esq.

The learned Judge briefly addressed the Jury, observing, that the Gentlemen of whom it was composed, were so well acquainted with their duties, and so well gifted with every qualification necessary to the satisfactory performance of them, that it would be worse than a waste of time to detain them by any remarks; but if in the course of their investigation, any circumstance should arise on which they thought proper to consult him, he should be most happy to answer their enquiries.

On the following Saturday, Robert Saunders was brought up to be arraigned on an indictment, charging him with having on the night of the 20th of November last, with three other men, at present unknown, burglariously broken and entered the dwelling house of the Rev. Thomas Jones, Clerk, in the Parish of Radnage, and stolen therefrom one gold watch and seals, of the value of ten pounds; one silver watch, two gold seals, and one gold key, of the value of eight pounds; two gold mourning rings and a small gold pin, of the value of two pounds; twenty-four sovereigns; and a box containing various articles of silver and plated goods, the property of the said Thomas Jones.

The case had excited an intense and extensive interest throughout the county, and the Court was crowded to excess. The prisoner, whose age is stated to be twenty-two, was decently attired in a suit of black, as mourning, we understand, for one of his sisters. He wore irons, in consequence of his recent attempt to escape from prison. His air and manner were rather those of a respectable mechanic than of a gentleman's servant, which he was stated to be. When committed to gaol he had very bushy whiskers, but these had been

shaved off, and his appearance was more juvenile than might have been expected, considering his age. His countenance exhibited no ferocious or daring feature, and was rather of the Creole than the Jewish character, which, till his whiskers had been removed, he was supposed to have inherited. When he entered the dock he surveyed the Court, from which his Lordship had, for a few minutes, retired, with a lively and attentive eye. Having pleaded not Guilty, he stood steadily at the bar to await his trial, which forthwith commenced.

Mr. Robinson, in opening the case for the prosecution, expressed his solicitude that the Jury should give it their closest attention, as it was not only a matter of deep interest to the public, but of the last importance to the prisoner. The learned Gentleman then proceeded to detail the facts at considerable length, as they afterwards appeared in evidence.

Mr. Sydney Taylor, counsel for the prisoner, interposed for the purpose of requesting the opposite counsel to confine himself closely to a statement of the facts.

Mr. Robinson, having concluded his address, called the prosecutor, the Rev. Mr. Jones, who is a venerable old Gentleman, in the full and perfect possession of all his faculties, notwithstanding it appeared in his evidence he is so far advanced in years.

The Rev. Thomas Jones sworn—Mr. Jones, in answer to a question, having stated that he was in his seventy-seventh year, proceeded in his statement thus:—I resided, on the 20th of November last, at my parsonage house, at Radnage; the parsonage and the church stand entirely detached from the village; there is a public road or lane used by carts occasionally, but it is a very retired,

sequestered situation. I went to bed on the 19th of November, about our usual time, eleven o'clock. I have inside shutters for both windows of the bed room, and bars to the shutters; the window next to the bed is usually fastened, but on this night it was not fastened. I heard the clock strike two on Wednesday morning. Mrs. Jones addressed me, and said, "I hear a noise in the room, somewhat more than that of a mouse." I replied, "I think you are nervous, because I forgot the night bolt." I got up to drop it, when I heard a noise at the window. I was not alarmed, but thought it necessary to ascertain the cause, and put my finger to the shutter. On opening the shutter the first object that presented itself was a ruffian, with a white frock, with a black face, and an iron bar in his hand, threatening my life, if I made any resistance. He rested one hand on the window sill, while with the other hand he was brandishing the iron bar over my head. Notwithstanding the threat I made an alarm, crying, "Thieves! Murder!" on which the ruffian entered the room and forced me back. In an instant of time, this one was followed by three other ruffians, similarly habited, with blackened faces and white frocks. I experienced as great a horror as ever paralyzed the human frame. I seized, notwithstanding, the iron bar held by the ruffian, but seizing it by the taper end he wrested it from me. On this he ordered me to go to bed, and pushed me violently against the bed, on which I fell. I then saw that Mrs. Jones had left her bed, and was advancing to the bed-room door, which she had nearly gained, when one of the ruffians followed her, and grasped her neck behind, severely pressing it; applying to her mouth, at the same time, some substance very disgusting and

prickling, to stop her speech. She went to bed, and I heard her address the ruffian to spare the life of her husband, for I was left at the foot of the bed, while one of the ruffians took out of my coat pocket a pocket book, and other things. When this was done, he demanded where the plate was. I pointed, and he forced open a door near the fire place, and took out a white box. The box was forced open by one of the ruffians, who examined it rather superficially, and returned the articles into the box. He then carried it to the window, which was still open, and delivered it to some body outside. Some of the persons had broken open the wardrobe, and one with a horrible oath threatened that if I did not show him where my money was he would split my skull. I went with him and shewed him the bureau where the money was. He opened the bureau with a crow bar, and took out of a drawer twenty-four sovereigns, which, with three taken out of my clothes made twenty-seven.—The ruffians had a brilliant light from two lanthorns; and there was also my own light in the room. After having emptied the sovereigns into his pocket, he forced open another drawer in which there was nothing he chose to take. He then addressed himself to Mrs. Jones, and asked her where her jewel box was.—I forgot to mention that while he rifled the pockets of my clothes, he took down two watches.—In the midst of the confusion the lights were in a moment put out, and the men went out of the window. I then sprung forcibly, a watchman's rattle out of the window, and presently afterwards heard some voices in the lawn. I said to Mrs. Jones, "I have been premature, the robbers are coming again;" but I soon found that the voices proceeded from people coming to my rescue.

Cross-examined by Mr. Taylor.—I cannot identify the prisoner as one of the party. I could perhaps if he were disguised as I then saw him. They threatened to beat out my brains and to split my skull, but offered me no personal violence, for I conceded to every thing they required of me.

The white box which had been handed out of the window, and had been left on the lawn by the robbers in their hasty retreat, was then produced, and its contents, consisting, among other articles, of those specified in the indictment, were then identified.

Mrs. Jones was then called, and examined briefly as to what Mr. Jones had stated. According to her recollection, he had stated all the circumstances correctly. When questioned as to the treatment she had experienced, she said that something disagreeable was put to her mouth, nauseous and unpleasant.

Susannah Payne was the next witness.—She recollected the night her master's house was broken open; she slept in an adjoining room, and heard a great noise and cry of murder; she then got up, bolted the door of her room, and got out of the window [about twelve feet high] and went down the lawn upwards of two hundred yards to Franklin's, her master's coachman. Her master's ground has pailing round it; went through the gate and found it open.

When this witness had concluded her evidence his Lordship addressed her and said "I cannot allow you to leave this place without expressing my sense of your good sense, discretion and courage. They are most praiseworthy, and you will have the pleasing recollection, to the last moment of your life, of having been the instrument of saving the valuable lives of your master and mistress. Though

of the weakest sex, you have been a host against a whole gang of house breakers."

Thomas Clarke, next called, recollected the night his master's house was broke open. When called up, he got a gun and went to Mr. Jones's, Franklin went also, he found the gate open, saw a man standing on Mr. Jones's premises and said, "You rascal I'll shoot you through the body in a moment." He turned, in an instant, up the lawn, towards Mr. Jones's house crying "Bring the pistols! bring the pistols!" I saw a ladder set up against the window of the bed room, and saw two men in white shirts, jumping from the window. The same instant this man, the prisoner, met him with a bludgeon, struck his gun which he held over his head, ten or a dozen blows, as hard as he could strike, so as to bend the barrel of the gun; no words had passed; prisoner had struck witness "such an ugly blow" under the arm that witness dropped his gun and grasped him round the body and got him down. Franklin then came to his assistance. The prisoner's bludgeon was fastened to his arm with a string twisted round his wrist, so that he could not strike when down. Prisoner was seven or eight feet from his master's door when he met him,—between the verandah and the ladder. Prisoner had no hat on at the time; there was a hat picked up after he was secured and brought to him. He said it was not his; his name he said, was Robert Saunders, and he asked if his name was in it. The hat, on being tried, fitted the prisoner.

To the Court—Prisoner was never out of his hands from the time he came up.

To Mr. Sydney Taylor—Prisoner struck him first. He did not present his gun at prisoner or threaten him.

Wm. Franklin went up with Clarke that night; saw him struggling with a person; that person was the prisoner; picked up a box near the yew tree, near the gate; the box was packed up as now produced.

To the Court—Clarke had got his arms round prisoner's body; prisoner had a bludgeon. [The bludgeon, a formidable weapon, was then produced.]

James Rixon, stated that on the morning of the 21st of November, he found a bag on Mr. Jones's premises.—(The bag with its contents was produced; and out of it was taken, and exhibited, first, a bottle with some kind of liquor; then a large bunch of skeleton keys; a piece of *melt*; centre bits—dark lanterns, &c.)

Elizabeth Griffin, said, her father keeps a public house at Loudwater, three miles from High Wycombe, recollects her father directing her attention to two persons on the evening before the robbery; believes the prisoner to be one of them, though dressed differently then; he had on a light coat; recollects they had a bag with handles of leather; believes the bag produced to be the same; had taken it up, but did not quite *weight* it, only slided it a little way.

To Mr. Sydney Taylor.—Does not swear positively that prisoner is the same person, nor even to the bag.

Richard Hailey,—Chief Constable of High Wycombe, examined Mr. Jones's premises the morning after the robbery; the doors were fastened outwards with a string and a piece of Laburnum—took possession of a shirt he found.

Mr. James Sherriff, Governor of the County Gaol, stated the time he had had the prisoner in his custody; on the 14th of December, inquired of

the prisoner if he had any letter on him; prisoner said he had none, witness saw a handkerchief in his side pocket and said if he did not deliver it, he would search him, he then produced a quantity of papers and tried to tear them to pieces: witness seized them and has since joined them and has them here—(The papers were then produced.) In answer to a question from the Court, witness said he had never seen the prisoner write.

Mr. Sydney Taylor contended that there was then no evidence that the papers were of the prisoner's writing, and that they were not admissible evidence on this issue, unless proved to be his.

The Court ruled that the papers were admissable under the circumstances in which they were found and readable in evidence.

The letter of which the following is a copy was then read:—

"Aylesbury

"Dear Friend—With pleasure I wright to you, to inform you that I quite whell, and hope this whill find you the same. A good oppertunity presented itself for me to get a letter sent withought the Governer seeing of it by a right man from Lynn that is here for a hors. That I know hies whife comming to see him I dount make myself known to him or any of the prisorners I act quite the flat and they dount know what to make of mee.—I got him to wright my larst latter as it had to come threw the Governer's hands I tould them that I came from Norwitch my Father and Mother liv'd just out of N, he wors a wheelwright and I wors apprentist at Lynn to a cabinnet maker to a man named Brown, but he was dead and I ave been working at diferant parts of the cuntry since I left Lynn in 1823. I did not satisfy them whare I have work'd since I left, thinking it would giv you a good opertunity to bring sombody forward to give me a caracter, saying, thay hav known me to be a respectable cabinet-maker, and have Been in the habit of making tea caddys on my own account and selling them, in the county I accountid for myself the same as I put in the letter for Miss Smith, if you could bring a friend to say I slept at Oxford the night before it would be harlf the battle, if thay say I left the afternoon that I wors took at night on my road for Norfolk. Dear Friend I hope you will oblige me in one thing, that is, let the consequense be

what it will I hope you not let any of my friends now of it as I can dye without their knowing as with it, for the sake of my poor mother, for if she wors to now of it I think it would be the cause of hir death as I ham hir faverite son. Doant let no one now my *molerker* (melancholy situation) always keep it a secreet I hope you will send me a ship's-liver as my appertite is increased I am always eating please to send me a Dutch cheas and some mutton from the *chovey*. Send me a pare of my stockings and a pare of shoes that are at Mr. W. and no other cloathes as I shall by tryd in these I whar taking in The *Duckets* (duplicate) of my watch I left in a little red book on the mantle peace. I hope you will take care of it and if any thing searious should happin to me, it's my wish that Mr. Wheeler (supposed a lodging-house keeper of Windsor) should have it, as I promist him he to have it when I died, doant put the letters in so near Town, as I toald them I had never work d in Town. Please to give my respects to the monstus (monstrous) fine Gentleman and tell him that I have had the Landlord from the George, Beaconsfield, to see me, but having my hair cut and whiskers *tipt* on account of my head being servarely cut, and prison dress on I doant know if he recollected me; he asked me if I knew him, I told him I never saw him before, nor never wors at Beaconsfield in my life he did not say he knew me while I wors preasant, but two days after he wors gon the Governer had me out and *bounst* me that I wors there with has he said, a sertin person of this county I sayd wors a misstake altoogether, so that I have not haird anithing further of it, but I'd have the monstus fine gentleman take care of himself, not that I think thay could do eany thing if thay wors to see him, but it's as whell not to giv a charnce away. I hav had one of the *coppers* (officers) from Bow Street, the first Sunday to pay his respects to me, and wanted to *bounce* me that he knew me, but found it no use to *bounce* me; I beleave he said he did not know me. before he left our county house I hav had thee pleasure of seeing near all the *beaks* of this country; they all tould me if I did not tell of the outhers I wor shure to be *topt*. I tould them I knew nerthing about it; so thay have left of cumming, and thay doant know what to think of it; no one as come to say thay have seen me except the publican. I doant know what he said, either do I care much, as he now northing (knows nothing) of me. Give my respects to your Lady and the monstus (monstrous) fine Lady, and tell them I hope I shall liv to se them again. P.S. to Give Mrs. W. the P With My best Respects Remember me to G. And Mr. W. And Except The same Your Self I remain Your sincere Friend And Whell wisher.

" Thay thought I had no money when i left that account for my being out, thay took me from the house to Wycome be fore the old beak, And the old gorger Appeard And stated what he lorst;

the damd old beak Wanted him to *Buff* (swear) to me and he lookd me in the *mug* (face), and said he could not swear to Me being one of the men that wors in the room but marely as a matter of oppinion he thaught I Wors on the Ladder but that he could not Swear to, the two youkells (countrymen) come forward and said On the Lawn thay took me, but could not swear I came out of the house, i tould them tnat i wors on tramp from Oxford to Norwich as i stated in Miss Smythes Letter, thay comitted me thinking i Must Know sumthing a bout it, i have seen. The papers and thay repsent (represent) it quite different To what thay swore to be fore the Magestrate Its the oppinion of good Judges i shall git of if i Have a Lawer and counsellor witch I hope you will not neglect gitting for me as my Neck is in Chancery, if it should be my lot to be topt I shall take it like a Man and I hope you will be have the same to me i hope you will have good luck buy them, that i may not be lorst For the want of a friend to come and speak As to my carecter (character) or a pound or two as if thay find me guilty, I am Shure of being *topt* (hung) I have not the least doubt of it. Dear Friends doan (don't) make your selves the least oneasy (uneasy) About me, as you will find me the same on the day i dye as I wors the Day when i was took. I shall never now eany more then what I stated be fore the old beak. I hope you will Not but (put) your Selve out of the whay, as you May depend on My doing as i would be done un to.

" Dear Dick doant Neglect me on my tryel in trying to send me up A good Carecter.

" Be particular in sending of the stockings that W. S. (the initials of Wm. Sinclair) is on them, as it wors on the Flanel Shirt but I Doant think it woas noticed."

" Dear Dick—Just as I finished the inclosd, I receivd your kind parsel, and am much oblige to you; it came quite unexpected with all the things safe and the half sovering you sent before I receivd save before with ten shilings now, and am much oblige to you. What made me take the liberty of Writing to you in this way I thought I might not have another opertunity to git one out without the Governor seeing of it. Try and get Mr. Wheeler to come and say he have nown me three or four yeares, as Cabinnet maker, loged at his house at difarant times and left Windsor for Kiderminster a month before I wors took, onless you can think of eaney thing better if you receivd this letter safe, make a spot of ink on the top of my next letter. Go and arsk a Lawer's oppinion of it, as thay carnt *buff* (swear) to me. Good buy for the present.

" I carnt git this out till Sunday morning, and I have got the snuff box safe."

"Dear Dick---I think if the monstus (monstrous) fine Gentleman wors to go to Mr. P'.s, at No.---, and say he came from me as he wors living Seward with a Gentleman whare I wors a Shooting with a yonng Gentleman at Bury St. Edmonds, in Suffolk, And wish him to send me the tea-caddy I ordered, as I wish to make it a preasant to a young Lady, and I will pay for it When I come to Town. Give my kind lov to my Sisters, and tell them I am quite well, as I tould the Turnke I had one at my Sweathearts, and he wanted me to send for it."

Not Addressed.

Mr. Baron Garrow to Mr. Sheriff.—Has a Bow-street officer been to see the prisoner since he has been in your custody?

There has, my Lord.

Had the prisoner a cut on his head when he came into the gaol?

He had; and he shaved off his hair and whiskers.

Can you tell what he means by a *beak?*

I think he means the committing Magistrate.

To Mr. Jones.—Did you look the prisoner in the face when you were before the Magistrates?

I think I did, when I was asked if I could recognise him.

To Mr. Sheriff.—Has a publican at Beaconsfield been to visit the prisoner?

Yes, a person of that description came and saw him in my presence.

The case for the prosecution being closed, the prisoner was asked if he had any thing to say in his defence, but declined to say any thing.

To speak to his character, Captain Williams was called, who said, I have known the prisoner ever since the 21st of July, 1824; he then entered into my service, and left me in July, 1827. His conduct, during that time, was very good, so much so, that every thing was entrusted to his care—plate, money, and every other article. He had two sisters, who lived with me, and who conducted

themselves in the same irreproachable way. Before he came into my service, he was in the service of the late Lord Mountcharles. He was almost proverbial whilst in my service for speaking the truth, and owning any little faults he had committed.

Cross-examined.—He was in my service by the name of William Sinclair.

Mr. Baron Garrow, in commenting upon the evidence, said, that this was one of the most important cases that had for some time come under his observation. The writer of those letters (whoever he was) in his allusion to the probable termination of his trial, had taken not an incorrect view of the situation in which the prisoner stood. He mentioned this to show the deep importance of the inquiry the Jury had to make, as it respected the life of the prisoner on the one hand, and the security of His Majesty's subjects on the other. The facts of the case were in a very narrow compass. His Lordship here briefly recapitulated the evidence of Mr. Jones, and that of Franklin and Rixon, and said that all the parties engaged in the robbery were equally guilty in the eye of the law—the man who stood at the gate participating fully in the crime with those who entered the house. "I don't know (continued his Lordship) what others may feel on this matter, but I will say that it has pleased the Almighty to give to Mr. and Mrs. Jones, a good and affectionate servant, who, though weak in body, is strong in courage, and who, under Providence, was probably the humble instrument of saving both their lives. She slept in a room adjoining her master and mistress, to which there was a communication by a door, and by another door she could have gone to other parts of the house. It is evident, therefore, she could have

escaped had she been so disposed; but instead of doing this, she let herself down from the window, almost in a state of nudity, and at the risk of her own life and limbs, and ran to call assistance. The persons whom she roused came to the house and saw four men, three of whom ran away; but the other, the prisoner, stood his ground and used a bludgeon, which was made more dangerous by being twisted round his hand with string, to prevent his being taken, and he was never out of sight of Franklin until he was secured. He would here, for the sake of argument, put the evidence of Elizabeth Griffin aside, and ask if the Jury could entertain any doubt that the prisoner was one of the party engaged in robbing Mr. Jones's house. Her testimony, however, was of some importance; she said that she saw two men at her father's house, which is not many miles from Radnage, on the day immediately preceding the robbery; that her father directed her attention towards them; and one of them resembled the prisoner, and they had a bag with them like the one which the Jury had seen in Court. There was, besides, another piece of evidence which he should point out to them. It was the rule of the prison that no correspondence should take place between the prisoners and their friends without its having been first inspected by the governor of the gaol; the intercourse was properly restrained, because the persons committed would otherwise have an opportunity of forming plans both for their own escape, and for new robberies. Mr. Sherriff, suspecting that the prisoner had infringed upon this salutary regulation, asked him for the letters he had in his pocket. He denied having any papers about him, and upon being told that he would be searched, he pulled some paper from his pocket and tore it. His Lord-

ship then read parts of the letters, which, as the whole of them are given in another place, it is unnecessary to repeat, and concluded by desiring the Jury not to forget that the prisoner had received a good character, and if they had any doubt, after the evidence they had heard, to give him the full benefit of it; on the other hand, he was bound to say, that if the circumstances were such that they could not reasonably entertain a doubt, and it should be remembered that the prisoner was seen near the ladder, and not lost sight of until he was apprehended, then they would consider only what was due to justice, and necessary for the safety of the community, and find him guilty.

The Jury then retired, and after a very short consultation, returned a verdict of Guilty.

The JUDGE then addressed him with a solemnity of voice and manner adapted to the occasion, as follows:—Unhappy young man, that punishment is about to overtake you which is so truly described in the paper that has been read; and it becomes my painful duty to prepare you for that dreadful fate which is anticipated in it. It is impossible, consistently with the safety of the public, not to make of you an example to evil doers, by letting the law take its course. Your's is a case in which no mitigation of punishment can take place. The law has delegated to the Sovereign the prerogative of mercy—it has delegated to those entrusted with its administration the power of recommending the offender to mercy; but such is the nature of your crime, that after listening to its detail, no Judge could approach the throne of his Sovereign with such a recommendation, unless he had become insensible to his duties. You went to Mr. Jones's house in the dead of the night to plunder; you barricadoed him in and made a prison of that which

ought to have been his castle; you committed your crime under the cover of darkness, thinking that before day had dawned, you could return and mix with society without detection. This aged and respectable couple were disturbed in the night, robbed of their property, threatened with death, and only preserved, through Providence, by their valuable and intrepid maid servant. Your companions in crime resorted not to acts of greater violence than were necessary to keep quiet those whom they were plundering; and when persons came to assist them they ran away, but you attacked them with that deadly weapon which has been produced here this day, which might have been used with fatal effect; and you showed a disposition so to employ it, had it not pleased God, for the protection of the innocent and virtuous, to defeat your design. I have now to exhort you to employ the few moments that are left you to penitence and prayer, forgetting things that are temporal, and looking forward to things eternal, for when the sun has risen a few times more you will have ceased to live. You will do well to forget your boasted courage—you will do well to look alone to the cross of the Saviour, and petition there for that mercy which you must not expect here. The best use you can make of the few moments that are left you is to employ them in humble penitence, petitioning for pardon at the throne of the Almighty. I shall now turn you over to those pious and benevolent persons who will assist you in preparing for a future state. His Lordship concluded by passing sentence of death upon him in the usual form.

Saunders, whilst standing at the bar, showed a callosity of feeling almost wonderful in so young a man, and ate an orange when it was concluded. Once only he seemed affected; it was when that

part of the letter found on him was read, which alluded to his being the favourite son of his mother, and requesting that his situation might be concealed from her. When he was removed from the dock, however, we are happy to hear his assumed firmness immediately forsook him, and that he fell on his knees, and besought pardon for his sins of that Almighty Being who alone can grant it.

It is important to state that the unhappy Prisoner, since his conviction, has acknowledged the justice of his sentence. He has confessed that he was the third person who entered Mr. Jones's bed chamber, and that the blow he received on the head was unintentionally inflicted by one of his comrades, when in the confused act of making his escape. He has likewise evinced that spirit of humility, and it is hoped that unfeigned repentance which was truly becoming, and perfectly consistent with his unfortunate situation. The self-command and apparent indifference manifested by him during his trial, were by no means accompanied with hardness of heart. It is somewhat worthy of remark and regret, that he was the son of a respectable mechanic in the neighbourhood of Lynn, in the County of Norfolk, whom he has left, together with an excellent mother, to bewail his untimely end. He has borne an unexceptionable character from those in whose service he was employed. He had been out of a situation about four months previous to his apprehension, during which period he became acquainted with his three comrades, who assuring him that they could put him in a way of getting a better living than could be procured by servitude, induced him to join them, and was thus led to commit the fatal crime for which he has suffered.

Friday, the 21st of March, Instant, being the day appointed for his execution, he was attended by the High Sherriff of the County, the Rev. Mr. Stattam, and the proper officers; and after having taken an affectionate leave of the prisoners, he walked in procession, with a firm step, from the Gaol to the Town Hall, where he received the Sacrament, with the most serious devotion, at the

hands of the Rev. Gentleman. He then repeated the confessions already given to the reader, and in addition thereto, made a full confession of his having, in connection with his comrades, on the 26th day of September last, broken open the Club box at the Black Boy Public House, in High Wycombe, of which the Letter subjoined will afford the reader further interesting particulars.

Copy of a Letter from the Chief Turnkey at Aylesbury Gaol, to Mr. John Brown, Black Boy, High Wycombe.

Aylesbury, March 21, 1828.

SIR,

According to your request I have obtained from the unfortunate Saunders, after having repeatedly pressed him upon the subject of the robbery, that he with ——— and two others, did break open the Club box, and that he received Six Pounds as his part of the booty, and that he never had any communication whatever with Ann Webb, on this or any other subject; and he likewise stated his reason for not making a disclosure of the facts to the Rev. Dr. Scobell, to be his reluctance to develope any thing of importance to any other person than those who attended him while under condemnation, which disclosure he did make, and most solemnly assert in the presence of the Minister.

Therefore I do hereby certify, that the statement I have now made as to Saunders being implicated, with other persons, in the breaking open and robbing of the Club box, was made by Saunders, who has forfeited his life to the laws of the country.

I am,

Your's, Respectfully,

T. COLLINS,

Chief Turnkey, Aylesbury Gaol.

He was then attended by the Clergyman to the place of execution in front of the County Hall, when, on surveying it he became dreadfully agitated and dispossessed of that firmness and apparent courage he had just manifested, insomuch that he was under the necessity of being supported by one of the officers in attendance.

While the rope was being adjusted he appeared in the exercise of fervent prayer. The clock having struck Eight, the drop fell, and thus this unhappy man was hurried into the presence of his offended Creator.

Since our former pages were put to press the following information has been received:—

The Rev. Thomas Jones, Rector of Radnage, has been resident in this County fifty-two years, ever since he left Oxford, and was presented to his Living in 1805, when he vacated his Rectory of Naunton, in Worcestershire, which he held twenty-two years, with his Vicarage of Ilmer, in this County, and resided at Dinton. He is now the Father of the Church in the County and Archdeaconry of Bucks.

Description of the Plate.

For an illustration of the Plate it may not be altogether uninteresting to the reader to state, that the ruffians entered at the Gate, near the large yew tree; they then placed a ladder (which they had procured from a neighbouring farm house) against the window of Mr. Jones's bed-chamber, by which they effected an entrance: the other window which is open is the one from which the maid-servant leaped—escaped through the same gate, and procured assistance. Between the ladder and the viranda the contest took place with Clarke and the Prisoner, as is detailed in the evidence.

J. W. Burnham, Printer, High Wycombe.