



## Joseph Plank, Deserter, Burglar & Poacher

About midday on Tuesday last, while the family were at work in the fields, a fellow broke into the house of James King (a carter in the employ of Mr. Giddings) at Roundway, near this town, and stole every article of the wearing apparel of his two sons. He was seen leaving the house by a woman named Stretch, who immediately gave an alarm. He was pursued, and apprehended in an adjoining coppice, where he was separating the different articles. It appeared that he effected his entrance into the house through one of the windows and had left his own hat, (after tearing it in such a manner that it could not be recognized, in order to prevent suspicion) on the premises, and when discovered he had on a hat belonging to one of the sons of King, with two waistcoats stuffed in it. When before Mr. Estcourt, he peremptorily refused to give his name; Mr. Gregory, the keeper of the Old Bridewell, discovered him to be Joseph Plank, a deserter, and for whose apprehension a reward had been offered in the "Hue and Cry". Warrants had also been issued for his apprehension for a recent burglary at Beechingstoke, in company with a person named Gifford Russ, who is now at large. Besides the property belonging to King, the prisoner also had tied up, a smock frock, a fustian jacket, and a bag (containing some bread and cheese and two knives) which very probably belong to some labouring man, and were laid in a hedge, while he was reaping. Fives wires for catching hares, were also found on the person of Plank; who, we understood, among other qualifications for New South Wales, is a first rate poacher.

**Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette 23 August 1827**

### **WILTS LENT ASSIZES**

Joseph Plank was convicted of stealing a quantity of wearing apparel on the 22nd of Aug. from the house of James King, of Roundway, in the parish of Bishop's Cannings. The family had all gone out to their daily labour; the prisoner took advantage of this circumstance, and committed the offence. He was observed coming from the house, was followed, apprehended, taken before Mr. Estcourt, and committed in the space of two hours. Sentence of Death recorded.

**Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette 13 March 1828**

Five of the prisoners who received sentence of death at our last assizes, have had their sentences commuted to imprisonment in the House of Correction. Joseph Plank, and James Sutton, for a burglary; the former two years, and the latter 12 months of imprisonment.

**Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette 5 June 1828**