



Crime and Punishment

Durrington

Robert Birch was charged with stabbing Mary Ann Johnson, at Durrington, on the 5th July.

It appeared that the woman went to a public house at Durrington between one and two o'clock, where she saw the prisoner sitting on some grass near the door. He asked her to partake of some cider he was drinking, which she refused. He then wanted her to treat him with a pint; but this she also refused to do, and left him. She had not, however, gone many paces, when he jumped up, ran after her, and stabbed her with a knife in the forehead. She instantly fell down senseless, and upon recovering herself, found blood flowing down her forehead in a stream.- Jas. Whitley, who was standing near, and had seen all that had occurred, asked the prisoner if he was not ashamed of himself? - Prisoner, who was rather intoxicated, replied not at all. His defence was that the woman had abused him and spat in his face.- He was found guilty of an assault, and sentenced to be imprisoned for 12 calendar months with hard labour.

(Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette, Thursday 18th July, 1850)