



Convict Transport Ship Surrey (Surrey)

Assault and Robbery

Salisbury Assizes Thursday

James Panting was indicted for having feloniously assaulted and robbed Thomas Banning of four sovereigns, his property, on the 6th of August last, at Highworth.

The prosecutor stated, that the prisoner and another man, of the name of John Russ, who had escaped from custody, had at various periods extorted from him divers sums of money, amounting to nine pounds, by threatening to accuse him of an infamous crime. He at length mentioned the subject to a friend, and the prisoner was taken into custody.

John Prince stated, that the prosecutor sent for him on the 16th of August last, and told him what had occurred between him and the prisoner, who came again in the evening, and, in his, the witness's hearing, demanded more money, saying that in case of a refusal, he would make known to the world which he was almost ashamed to mention.

It appeared on the cross-examination, that the prosecutor had made no mention of the prisoner's demands on him to any person until the 16th of August, although he admitted that the first offence was committed on the 26th of June, stating, as a reason, that he hardly knew what to do, and dreaded being charged with such a crime, until, at length, worn out with the oppression under which he was labouring, and not knowing where it would end, he was induced to mention it to the witness Prince.

His Lordship, having summed up at considerable length, the Jury returned a verdict of Guilty.

His Lordship said, that he should pause before he passed sentence. He would not say what would be the punishment until he had slept on it, and consulted his Learned Brother on the subject. No man was more disposed to show mercy than he was; but he was bound to recollect, that he had a duty to perform to the public, which must be protected from such dreadful crimes as the one of which the prisoner at the bar had been convicted.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal, 14 March 1831

OPC Note:

James Panting was transported to New South Wales on "Surrey", 15 July 1831.