



Trial of James Taylor For Murder

At Salisbury Assizes March 1841

James Taylor was indicted for the wilful murder of his wife Hannah Taylor, at Tockenham, by shooting her with a gun.

The facts of the crime will be in the recollection of our readers. It would seem that on Monday, the 29th of June, the wife of the prisoner eloped with a railway-man, and that the prisoner was very much exasperated, and declared, that he would fetch his wife home, and kill her. He went in pursuit, and on Thursday he brought his wife home. They spent the evening together, and seemed very good friends. They slept together that night, and the next morning the prisoner told a neighbour, that if she saw "Jack" about, with whom his wife had eloped, and did not tell him, he would shoot her. The neighbour shortly afterwards saw "Jack" in a field adjoining, and told the prisoner, who soon after loaded his gun in the kitchen, where his wife and her mother and sister were sitting. The mother and sister left the room for a minute, and heard the prisoner say, "It's no use who lives; it's your fault." And immediately a gun was discharged. They went into the room, and found it full of smoke, and the wife of the prisoner lying dead on the floor. The prisoner was standing at the table, attempting to cut his own throat with a knife. Upon being taken into custody, he said that he had killed his dear wife: that he meant to do it, and had intended to kill himself, his child and all, if he had had the heart to do it.

Mr. Justice Erskine having summed up, the jury found the prisoner guilty, but recommended him to mercy.

His Lordship said he could only forward that to the proper quarter, and then sentenced the prisoner to death.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal, Monday, 8 March 1841

OPC Note:-

The Prisoner was hanged at Salisbury on 16th March 1841