

WILTSHIRE MACHINE BREAKERS

The Story of the 1830 Riots

Volume I: The Riots and Trials

Cover Illustration shows a Hand Bill that was circulated in the Devizes, Pewsey and Marlborough area in November 1830. (TNA – HO52/11 f19)



1. Saturday Night

(Reproduced with permission of The Museum of English Rural Life from *The Farm – A New Account of Rural Toils and Produce*)

**Wiltshire Machine Breakers
Volume I: The Riots & Trials**

Jill Chambers

Published by
Jill Chambers
42 Kesteven Road
Stamford
Lincolnshire
PE9 1SU

Copyright © Jill Chambers 2009

ISBN 1-903049-07- 5

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the author.

CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	6
Acknowledgements	7
List of Abbreviations	8
Introduction	9

PART I: The Riots

8 th November – 21 st November 1830	21
Monday, 22 nd November 1830	32
Tuesday, 23 rd November 1830	48
Wednesday, 24 th November 1830	72
Thursday, 25 th November 1830	96
26 th – 28 th November 1830	115
29 th – 30 th November 1830	146
1 st – 31 st December 1830	167

Part II: The Trials

Saturday, 1 st January 1831	223
Monday, 3 rd January 1831	251
Tuesday, 4 th January 1831	277
Wednesday, 5 th January 1831	306
Thursday, 6 th January 1831	338
Friday, 7 th January 1831	365
Saturday, 8 th January 1831	389
Monday 10 th January 1831	423
January – December 1831	

Part III: AFTER THE SPECIAL COMMISSION

January – June 1831	449
July – December 1831	490
Lent Assizes, March 1832	500
Bibliography	505
Index of Places	510
Index of Names	519

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Saturday Night	2
2. The Rick Burners	27
3. Special Constables Sworn at Marlborough	36
4. Thrashing by Hand	44
5. Labourers of Wiltshire	47
6. Alton Barnes Rectory	60
7. Alton Barnes Church	61
8. The Farm at Alton Barnes	63
9. A Message to the Labourers	75
10. A Meeting at Warminster Town Hall	83
11. Warrant against Thomas Light etc	90
12. Barrett, Exall & Andrewes' Trashing Machine	92
13. The Riot Act	97
14. Muster Roll of the Hindon Troop	103
15. Description of Farmer Alford	106
16. The King's Proclamation	116
17. Organization of Special Constables	119
18. Warrant for the Apprehension of John Ford	120
19. Disposition of the Wilts Yeomanry Cavalry	135
20. A Country Market	142
21. Resolution to Advance Labourers' Wages	157
22. Meeting at the Goddard Arms, Swindon	161
23. Meeting at Marlborough Town Hall	180
24. John Benett Esq.	199
25. Arrangements for the Special Commission	203
26. Wiltshire Special Assizes	215
27. Calendar of Prisoners	236
28. Results of the Trials up to 6 th January 1831	337
29. Convict Hulk <i>York</i>	454
30. Wiltshire Prisoners on board the <i>York</i> Hulk	458
31. List of Prisoners recommended for Mercy	463
32. Report of the Arrival of the convict Ship <i>Eliza</i>	480

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the following people, without whose help much of this work would have been impossible to compile: the staff at the following offices, The National Archives, Kew; the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, Chippenham, the Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucester, the Newspaper Library, Colindale; the British Library; The Buckinghamshire Archives at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, Aylesbury, and the staff of the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading. I must also say a special word of thanks to Professor G B Sharman of Youngtown, Tasmania, for his continued interest and help with research into the lives of the men after transportation, the late Roma Draper for all her help while compiling the first edition of *Wiltshire Machine Breakers*, and David Hatherell for the information on Job Hatherell's trial

In putting together this account of the disturbances and trials in Wiltshire I have relied on reports that appeared in the local and national newspapers at the time, Home Office Papers held at The National Archives, and the transcripts of some of the trials in the Estate and family papers of the Sotherton-Estcourt Archives, which are held at Gloucestershire Archives. In instances where the same mob, or different parts of the same mob, committed several offences it has not always been possible to decide in which order the events took place. In cases where the evidence differs I have had to draw my own conclusions and these might not always have been correct. Similarly in cases where first names or the spelling of surnames differ in the various reports I have had to decide which one I think is correct and, hopefully keep to the same spelling throughout. The spellings of the parish names are as they appear in the documents. Every effort has been made to check the facts but it is almost inevitable that errors will be found. I would like to apologise in advance for any that appear and for any wrong conclusions I have drawn and will welcome any corrections, amendments and additions. I hope that nothing I have written will cause distress or embarrassment to anyone concerned.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AONSW	Archives Office of New South Wales, Sydney.
AOTAS	Archives Office of Tasmania, Hobart.
BA	Buckinghamshire Archives, Aylesbury
GA	Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucester
HRO	Hampshire Record Office
NSW	New South Wales
TNA	The National Archives
VDL	Van Diemen's Land, now Tasmania
WSA	Wiltshire & Swindon Archives, Chippenham

TNA CLASS LIST ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	Admiralty
ASSI	Clerk of Assize
CO	Colonial Office
HO	Home Office
PC	Privy Counsel
PCOM	Prison Commissioners
T	Treasury

INTRODUCTION

In 1813, Thomas Davis, steward to the Marquis of Bath, produced a report on agriculture in Wiltshire. It included a description of the labourers of the county.

It is a melancholy fact that ... the labourers of many parts of this county and of the SE district in particular, may truly said to be at this time in a wretched condition. The dearness of provisions, the scarcity of fuel, and above all the failure of the spinning work for the women and children have put it almost out of the power of the village poor to live by their industry. The farmers complain, and with reason, that the labourers do less work than formerly, when in fact the labourers are not able to work as they did at a time when they lived better. ¹

The living conditions of the Wiltshire labourer did not improve in the years following the Davis report as William Cobbett found when he made his journey down the Valley of the Avon in August 1826.

In taking my leave of this beautiful vale I have to express my deep shame, as an Englishman, at beholding the general extreme poverty of those who cause this vale to produce such quantities of food and raiment. This is, I verily believe it, the worst used labouring people upon the face of the earth. Dogs and hogs and horses are treated with more civility; and as to food and lodgings, how gladly would the labourer change with them! This state of things never can continue many years! By some means or another there must be an end to it; and my firm belief is, that that end will be dreadful. ²

Cobbett's predictions were to prove correct. Four years later the labourers of Wiltshire, along with those of the other counties in southern England, rose up in protest over their

¹ Davis, Thomas, *General View of the Agriculture of Wiltshire*. 1813 ed., p212

² Cobbett, William, *Rural Rides*. London 1830. Penguin ed. 1967, p320

poor living conditions, low wages and the introduction of the thrashing machines.

It was in the autumn of 1830 that the agricultural labourers, mainly those in the southern half of England, rose up against their masters in an effort to better the lives of themselves and their families. By the beginning of 1831, instead of the improved working and living conditions they had hoped for, many families found themselves worse off, with the breadwinner confined to prison or worse still on board the hulks awaiting transportation to either New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land, as Tasmania was then called, and many of those left behind described as 'on the parish.'

The riots seem to have been caused by a number of factors the main ones being, poor living conditions, low wages, at least three years of poor harvests, that of 1829 being followed by a very severe winter which caused further distress to the farm labourer and his family, the last straw in some areas appears to have been the introduction of the thrashing machine, machines that were seen by the labourer as taking away his winter employment. It was the thrashing machine that was to become the main target for destruction during the disturbances.

The first thrashing machine was destroyed at Lower Hardres in Kent on 28th August 1830, but before this happened there had been several cases of arson reported and a threatening letter had been received at Mildenhall in Suffolk as early as February 1830. The trouble spread north and west from Kent reaching a peak in mid November by which time most counties south of a line from Norfolk in the east to Worcestershire in the west had been involved in one way or another. Threatening or 'Swing' letters (so called as many of them were signed by the mythical 'Captain Swing') were however received as far west as Herefordshire and incidence of arson occurred as far north as Carlisle.

The disturbances took a variety of forms. 'Swing' letters were sent to farmers and manufacturers threatening the destruction of their property if they failed to remove the machinery or raise the wages. Stacks and barns were fired, and there were riotous assemblies with demands being made for higher wages and reductions in the tithes. Attacks were made on workhouses and overseers. In Hampshire the workhouses at Selborne and Headley were attacked. At

Brede in Sussex a group of labourers loaded Mr Abel, an unpopular assistant overseer, into the parish cart and wheeled him across the parish boundary where he was unceremoniously dumped. Thrashing machines were not the only machinery to be attacked. At Hungerford in Berkshire machinery and wrought iron were destroyed at an iron foundry belonging to Richard Gibbons. In Buckinghamshire attacks were made on the recently installed machinery at several paper mills along a three-mile stretch of river between Loudwater and Chepping Wycombe. Paper mills were also attacked at Colthrop, in Berkshire, and Lyng and Taverham in Norfolk. Also in Norfolk machinery was destroyed at Robert Calver's sawmill at Catton and the mill itself was set alight. At Wilton in Wiltshire a large mob led by 18-year-old John Jennings caused around £300 worth of damage at John Brasher's woollen cloth factory. Machinery valued at £2,000 was demolished at Tasker's Waterloo Foundry at Upper Clatford near Andover in Hampshire, while at Fordingbridge in the same county it was East Mill, Samuel Thompson's sacking factory and William Shepherd's thrashing machine factory at Stuckton that bore the brunt of the labourers' anger. There were riots involving some Kidderminster carpet weavers, and workers at Redditch in Worcestershire destroyed needle-stamps and presses, but it is not certain that these were directly related to the labourer's movement. In many instances of machine breaking, particularly in Berkshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire, the mob made demands for money, beer or food in return for what they termed 'their services'. Many of those involved in this were to be charged with robbery when they came to trial.

The disturbances spread rapidly from one county to the next, taking less than a week to reach Wiltshire from Sussex. The organisation of the movement was almost entirely on a local level with leaders or 'Captains' being chosen from the community. Men like 'Captain' Charles Davis who led the mob that destroyed Robert Pile's property at Alton Barnes in Wiltshire, and Oxfordshire man Thomas Hollis, known as 'the King', who led the rioters at Heythorp. At Kintbury in Berkshire the mob had three leaders, William Oakley and Francis Norris who were both transported and William Winterbourn who was executed. There were however

some leaders who worked outside their own areas the most notorious being 'Captain' or 'Lord Hunt' (real name James Thomas Cooper), who led a number of riots in Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset. He was executed at Winchester on 15th January 1831. In most instances however bands of men from one village travelled around the farms and hamlets in their area gathering men, demanding higher wages, destroying machinery and in some cases levying money, as they went. News of what was happening passed quickly from one village to the next and it was not long before another band of men with similar grievances were making their way around their area. In many counties the trouble was short lived, for example, the riots reached Hampshire around the 10th November and were virtually all over by the 26th of the same month.

It was the contagious aspect of the riots that alarmed the authorities, although they were rather slow to react at first. Some troops were dispatched to troubled areas but the Government left it to the rural magistrates to deal with the problem as they saw fit. When the new Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne, took office in November 1830, it was seen that this was not enough. The Yeomanry were mobilized, special constables were sworn in and landowners organised their own forces made up of tenants and servants. By the end of December 1830, the main wave of rioting was virtually all over and almost, 2,000 men and women had been rounded up and were awaiting trial. The Government considered that the magistrates in Kent, who had already tried some of the rioters, were being too lenient and a Special Commission was set up to deal with those in what were considered to be the counties where damage had been most pronounced, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Dorset. Those left were dealt with at the Assize Courts or Quarter Sessions. The trials did not bring an immediate end to the disturbances. Riots and demonstrations continued into 1831, with several thrashing machines being broken and, if anything, the number of cases of arson reported continued to grow after this time.

Almost before the trials were over petitions were organised by individuals and the inhabitants of numerous towns and villages throughout the country in an attempt to save those sentenced to death and to put in a plea for a

reduction in the sentence of the others. In some cases the petitions had the desired effect but 19 men were executed, including four from Kent, over 600 were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment and around 500 were sentenced to transportation for either life, 14 or 7 years.

Their exile began with the move from goal to the prison hulks, for the majority of these men that meant a journey to Portsmouth and the hulk *York*. For many the stay on the *York* was short, in the case of many of those who sailed on the *Eliza* no more than a day or two was spent on the *York*, by the 6th February, 1831, 244 men were on board the *Eliza* bound for Tasmania and by April, 1831, most of the remaining prisoners were also on their way, either on the *Eleanor* that sailed for New South Wales or the *Proteus* that carried 112 men to Tasmania, 98 of them having been convicted of machine breaking or connected crimes. These particular ships took between 111 and 126 days to reach their destination. Not all of those sentenced to transportation actually sailed, some got no further than the prison hulks. Several more men and two women were to follow the three main ships, arriving alone or in twos and threes over the next few years making them one of the largest groups to be transported as a result of what was possibly the worst ever disturbances in rural England.

The majority of the men were farm labourers, most of those from Wiltshire being classed as 'Ploughmen', like Samuel Harford, James House and Joseph Pinchin. John Dandridge and Thomas Bowles were papermakers, as were many of the other men from Buckinghamshire, there were also a few blacksmiths like John Tongs and George Carter both from Hampshire, and Edmund White and George Smith from Wiltshire. More unusual occupations included James Pumphrey, a road surveyor from Hampshire, Thomas Whatley a carpet weaver from Wiltshire; another Wiltshire man was blacksmith Maurice Pope who was also a prizefighter. In some cases more than one member of the same family was transported. On board the *Eleanor* alone were William Sims and his two sons William and Daniel, four Shergolds from Wiltshire, cousins George and Henry and brothers George and John. Other brothers who were transported were Joseph and Matthias Alexander, Robert and Shadrach Blake, George and James Toomer, from

Wiltshire, Joseph and Robert Mason, Charles and John Bulpitt, Isaac and James Manns all from Hampshire, Charles and John Horton from Berkshire, and Adam and James Thorne, from Dorset. As well as brothers, fathers and cousins, there were also brothers-in-law among the men.

The two women sentenced to transportation were Elizabeth Studham, from Kent, who arrived at Hobart on the *Mary* in October, 1831 and Elizabeth Parker who was sentenced to transportation for seven years for breaking a thrashing machine at Tetbury in Gloucestershire but received a free pardon and was discharged in July, 1831. She came up for trial again at the Gloucester Assizes held on 28th March 1832, charged with stealing money from the person of Daniel Cole. She was found guilty and sentenced to transportation for life and sailed on the *Frances Charlotte* arriving in Hobart in January 1833.

The voyages of the ships that carried the 'machine breakers' seem to have been fairly routine, but there is some indication that the prisoners were given limited privileges. It was normal practice for convicts to be handcuffed together and secured by leg irons while exercising on the deck. Thomas Logan, the surgeon on the *Proteus*, notes in his journal that the prisoners in his charge had their irons removed.

‘Most of them were from the country, farm labourers, a few of them were artisans. Generally they had the sturdy build of labouring men. Their awkwardness and stiffness were such that I became desirous of removing the embarrassment which their irons too evidently occasioned – not to speak of the danger of accidents to which they exposed themselves. They were accordingly all removed before leaving Portsmouth; nor did subsequence experience teach me that this act of consideration and beneficence had exceeded the limits of just prudence.’³

On arrival in Australia the men were kept on board until all their details had been taken. This having been done they were then brought ashore. From a letter written by

³ TNA – ADM101/62/6, Surgeon’s Journal, *Proteus*.

Robert Mason, of Hampshire, on his arrival in Sydney we are told that the men on the *Eleanor* 'were permitted to come on shore in our own clothes, a great indulgence and considered an extraordinary thing by the people.' ⁴

In the same letter we learn that the men were taken from the ship to the barracks where they were inspected by the secretary ' and then put into a backyard with orders not to correspond with those who were sent here for CRIMES. The character that our Cap^t and Doc^t gave us excellent and the people of Sydney considered us downright honest men a valuable qualification here. ⁵

In 1831 the assignment system was still in operation and after being brought ashore the men were assigned either to government service or to individual settlers.

More than half the men transported were married with families at the time of the riots and after they had been in Australia a year or two a few of them applied to the Governor for permission to have their family brought out at government expenses. One of these was William Bartlett who applied and was given permission to have his wife and three children sent out from Heytesbury in Wiltshire. Other men had their families brought out at their own expense after they were free and some, not all of them bachelors, married in Australia and made new lives for themselves. Peter Withers wrote several times to his wife in Wiltshire asking her to join him in Tasmania. He heard nothing from her until 1844, by which time he had married again. In his reply, dated 20th October, 1844, he tells her of this. 'I now that to care that I am married is a hard trial for you to bare but it is no good to tell you a lye i sent a great many Leters Before i took a wife so not earing from you an i being a young man i thought it a Proper thing to Look a partner wich would be a comfort to me in my Bondage.... so we must not think about coming together again.' ⁶

Even before the *Eliza* sailed efforts were underway in Parliament to try and obtain freedom for the men, but it was to be three years before Governor Arthur was directed to

⁴ HRO 9M74/1; A M Colson, *The Revolt of the Hampshire Agricultural Labourers and its Causes, 1812-1831*. **NOTE:** See *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II: The Rioters* for transcripts of these letter.

⁵ HRO 9M74/1; A M Colson, *The Revolt of the Hampshire Agricultural Labourers and its Causes, 1812-1831*.

⁶ AOTAS - Withers Letters.

release the first 'machine breaker'. This was John Boyes who received a Free Pardon in June, 1834. He had been a farmer at Owslebury in Hampshire at the time of the riots and once pardoned he returned there and continued to farm until his death in 1856. In August, 1835, 264 'machine breakers' were pardoned and more were pardoned in the years that followed. By the mid 1840's the majority of the men had received their freedom, either by way of a Conditional or Absolute Pardon or a Certificate of Freedom. The only ones excluded were those who had been convicted of colonial offences. Men like Joseph Arney, of Fordingbridge in Hampshire, who was transported to Norfolk Island for cattle stealing in 1836, and Isaac Cole, from Wiltshire, who was not allowed a pardon in 1836, due to his colonial offences. On the whole the 'Swing' prisoners were fairly well behaved. The conduct records for the *Eliza* and *Proteus* men show only minor offences in the main, most relating to drunkenness or the neglect of duty. Although the offences appear minor the punishments may seem rather harsh to us. George Shergold, from Stapleford in Wiltshire, who arrived on the *Eleanor* was sentenced to a total of 150 lashes. On the 7th November 1833 he received 50 lashes for absconding; in January 1836 he received 100 lashes and was returned to Government for neglect of duty; and in March 1836 he was sentenced to an iron gang for 9 months for repeatedly absconding.⁷

Those men who had received a Certificate of Freedom on the expiry of their sentence or an Absolute Pardon, were free to return to England if they wished or could afford to do so, some did, as we have already seen with the cases of John Boyes. I have so far found several instances of men making their way back to England where they were reunited with their families after an absence in some cases of nearly ten years. John Tongs was another Hampshire man who returned to his family in Michelmersh, but by 1842 he was back in Hobart again, this time as a free migrant and accompanied by his family. It is known that several Wiltshire men also returned home, men like Thomas Light, and John and Samuel Barrett. (See *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II; The Rioters*) For the vast majority of the

⁷ AONSW – 4/1123.1

men though there was to be no return to England. Like Peter Withers, most stayed on in Australia and made new lives for themselves, working as labourers, tradesmen, farmers and innkeepers. Some made their way to Victoria during the Gold Rush, others after much hard work, prospered, a prosperity they might not have achieved had they remained in England.

Perhaps the petition received by the Home Office in 1847 shows that the passage of time had done little to ease the feeling of loss felt by the families at home. It was from Elizabeth Cheater of Breamore in Hampshire, whose son William had been sentenced to transportation for life at the Special Assizes in Wiltshire, in December, 1830. She begs that her son be allowed to visit England in order that she can see him again before she dies. A negative answer was sent to this plea.

In this, and other volumes in the series, I am trying to piece together the events in each effected area and find out something about those who were involved. It is in no way an attempt to discover the causes of the uprising as these have been well covered in *Captain Swing*, by E.J.Hobsbawm and George Rudé and *The Village Labourer* by J.L. & Barbara Hammond. The information on the 'Rioters' included in Volume II, is by no means the complete story, further research will, I know, bring more information to light, and the search goes on. Over the last few years I have been contacted by a number of the descendants of those involved and I am indebted to them for all the details they have passed on to me on their particular ancestor and for putting me in touch with other descendants. It would seem that a number of those transported maintained contact with their former shipmates. Some acted as witnesses at fellow shipmates weddings, others purchased property together as in the case of William North and Robert Blake, these two also married sisters as did Isaac Manns and Daniel Hancock. Just before I published the first edition of *Hampshire Machine Breakers* I heard from a descendant of Isaac Manns who told me that when his son married in 1975 the bride and groom were unaware that 144 years earlier they both had an ancestor who had been accused of machine breaking and had sailed for New South Wales on

board the *Eleanor*, Isaac Manns having been tried in Hampshire and Thomas Radburn in Berkshire.

PART I: The Riots

Why, Boys! What's the matter? Why all this ado?
Are you mad, to kick up such a hollabaloo?
Will burning machinery make the mill go?
Or burning your corn fill your belly? Oh, no!
Though the times are but bad, you will render them worse;
By refusing to work you but cut your own purse.
Home, home, Boys! And mind your own business; for
shame!

(From – A New Song To an Old Tune – GA - D1571/X60)

8th – 21st November 1830

8th - 21st November 1830

Monday, 8th November

At four o'clock this morning, a wheat rick, the property of Mr Miles, of Maddington, was discovered to be on fire.

There was also a fire at the property of Mr John Thomas Smith, of Wanborough, and a straw rick was destroyed. It is believed that both these incidents were the act of some incendiary. ¹

Wednesday, 10th November

Edmund Haines has been committed to Fisherton Gaol, charged with wilfully and maliciously setting fire to a quantity of straw, the property of John Thomas Smith, at Wanborough. ²

Friday, 12th November

Mr Slade, a very respectable yeoman, at Codford St Peter, has received a threatening letter. The letter reads: -

Mr Slade and Mr Raxworthy eye have taken the opportunity to you these few laynes to you to inform you that eye was standing by at the george gate war and i heard them say that they wood do for Slade and Clag and raxworthy they wood set fire to raxworthy stables and Slade's wheat in the ground and his hay rick, which he has made this is eight or 9 mens words eye herd them say with my own years that there wood be a great deal of disturbance in this place before winter is over there was 9 men kissed the book to bind the oath they made all together they have bought two or three blunder busses they have bound the oath as this if one do flinch they will cut the bugger in pises if he don't stand to his words as was passed with them all Mr Chandler did pay them like a man and we will not do Him any harm whatever but for raxworthy and Slade shall be life or death with many of us for we are all

¹ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – A1/125/57 p14

² Salisbury & Winchester Journal, Monday 15 November 1830

8th – 21st November 1830

*willing to work fore we shall look plundering daily as
we do for life and for destruction will come like a thief in
the night when every thing is still and calm and quiet
our first atemp will be for raxworthy house*

*Mr Chandler is a good master in every respect and pay
his money when it is due he is a honest man in his pay
and god will prosper him in every thing for ever*

*Blood for Blood
are pay*

William Mussell alias Olding has been apprehended, and committed to Fisherton Gaol, on suspicion of having sent this letter to Mr Slade. Colonel a' Court has made a search of Mussell's house and in his prayer book found handwriting that distinctly corresponds with the writing of the anonymous letter. ³

Monday, 15th November.

Between one and two o'clock this morning Richard White of Knook was awoken by a cry of 'Fire!'. On getting up he found a peas rick, in the middle of the rick yard, was in a blaze. The fire spread to a barley rick and an oat rick, which were totally destroyed. A bean rick was partially destroyed. It is understood that an individual is in custody, on suspicion of having been the incendiary.

The Heytesbury fire engines arrived on the scene and the labourers helped to work them and assisted to put out the fire. The property is insured with the Salamander Fire Office and the farming stock has been insured for about four years. ⁴

Mr a'Court wrote to Sir Robert Peel today to tell him that William Mussell alias Olding, has been taken into custody, on suspicion of having written the threatening letter to Mr Slade and of starting the fire on Mr White's premises at Knook, but he is afraid that he will be unable to produce enough evidence to prove the case.

*Heytesbury House
15 Nov. 1830*

Sir,

³ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, Monday 22 November 1830; TNA – HO52/11 folios 11-12

⁴ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, Monday 22 November 1830

8th – 21st November 1830

It is my painful duty to inform you that last night three ricks were wilfully set on fire in the adjoining Parish of Knook and totally destroyed. The accompanying depositions will point out the nature of the loss; and the grounds there are for strongly suspecting one William Mussel alias Olding of being the incendiary; tho' I much fear I shall not be able to produce sufficient evidence to bring the charge home.

I enclose a threatening letter received by a very respectable yeoman residing at Codford St Peter in this County, alluded to in the depositions. – Since apprehending the said Mussel alias Olding I have carefully searched his house; and in his bible and prayer book I find hand writing distinctly corresponding with the writing of the anonymous letter. Thus far then I hope to establish a charge against the prisoner under the 4. Geo: 4 c 54 and shall commit him for trial under that Act even should I fail in obtaining further proof against him.

I should not have troubled you in the present occasion had I not feared that exaggerated reports might rear office your office attributing the calamity to political incendiaries. I am thoroughly convinced that this is not the case. I am satisfied that it has arisen from a spirit of revenge in an individual of very bad character – in the hope probably of obtaining easier work and higher wages. ⁵

Wednesday, 17th November.

A rick of bean haulm has burnt this evening, at Easton near Pewsey. ⁶

Thursday, 18th November.

A barn filled with hurdles, belonging to Mr Ford, of Collingbourne, was burnt this evening. A reward of £200 has been offered for the apprehension of the incendiary. ⁷

Property on a farm at Ludgershall was also destroyed. ⁸

⁵ TNA – HO52/11 folios 13-14. **NOTE:** For transcriptions of the Depositions see *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II*

⁶ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, Monday 22 November 1830

⁷ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, Monday 22 November 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p73

⁸ *Captain Swing*, Hobsbawm & Rudé; TNA – HO52/11 f19

8th – 21st November 1830

Friday, 19th November.

The Salisbury magistrates have received intelligence that there is to be an attack on the iron works belonging to Mr Figs. They applied for assistance of the Salisbury Troop of Yeoman Cavalry. In the afternoon the men composing this troop assembled under Lieutenant Peniston, who commanded in the absence of Lord Arundell, and Cornet Henry Everett. Mr Peniston sent to Captain Wyndham to ask for assistance of the Hindon troop. The Warminster troop, under Captain Long; the Swindon troop, under Captain Goddard; and the Marlborough troop, under Lieutenant T Ward, assembled today at their respective headquarters, by order of the High Sheriff, and the Chippenham, Devizes, Melksham and Malmesbury troops, under Captain Phipps, who commanded as senior officer, assembled at Devizes. ⁹

This evening Mr Richard Webb, of Melchet, wrote to Lieutenant Peniston to tell him of the proceedings of the rioters in his area.

The mischief and destruction of property we were regretting the other day seems coming home. Young Box, of Broughton, is just come over to inform me that five ill-looking fellows were at Broughton this afternoon, who said the party that were at Whitchurch and Collingbourne (at the former place of Mr Twynham's premises were set on fire, at the latter Mr Ford's) were now at Wherwell, and meant to be at Broughton, which is about five miles off, tomorrow morning, and, as far as I can learn, these fellows appear to be sent on as scouts to collect information, and to ascertain if there be any force to opposed them. They talked very violently, and appeared like tradesmen's journeymen. It was a great pity that they were not taken hold of. They divided at Broughton, two taking the direction of Wherwell. They stated their force at 300. I believe the labourers of Broughton, Tytherley, and near to, to be well-disposed, but the temptations held out by the mob may influence many to follow them. An advance of wages is held out

⁹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p72

as the first thing they will have, and the same inducement is held out to all trades. I shall know in the morning if the mob came on to Broughton, and will write to you by coach if they do. If they do so they will scour the country, and take Salisbury most probably on their way. I am told they were particular in inquiring to whom the different places and properties belonged. The fellows went to the public-houses and beershops, and Box's information is from men with whom they talked of what had been done, and what was intended to be. It is probable very many stories may be in Salisbury, but I think what I have stated is about correct, and knowing your anxiety for the preservation of peace and good order, I send for your information to prevent rather than cause alarm. ¹⁰

During the night fire destroyed all the wheat, barley, beans and oats belonging to Mr Fowler of Oare, near Pewsey. Had it not been for the exertions of several respectable people of Pewsey, Mr Pontin's house and farm buildings would have shared a similar fate. One of them placed the engine between Mr Pontin's property, which was in imminent danger, and the fire. It has to be said that the labourers of Oare, instead of assisting to put out the fire appeared to take pleasure in the situation, and with the exception of a very few, were laying about enjoying the scene. It was found necessary to place 12 Pewsey men to guard the water pipes after it was found that one of them had been cut. One of those fighting the fire has stated the belief that if it had not been for the Pewsey men there would not have been a house left standing in Oare and it is believed that the fire was the work of the labourers of the village. As soon as the fire was put out those watching were heard muttering threats against other farmers and one of them, Charles Kimmer, told Mr Edmonds to his face, that his property would be the next to go. This fellow was instantly taken into custody and is now in prison. He was apparently active in endeavouring to intimidate the Pewsey men and in throwing, and encouraging his companions to

¹⁰ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p73 & p74

8th – 21st November 1830

throw, brickbats at the heads of those putting out the fire. He is also accused of knocking James Self off a rick into the fire. Damage to property is put at around £400 and was partly insured.

The distress at Oare and Wilcot is certainly very great, much more so than at Pewsey. ¹¹

J Pleydell Bouverie has given the following description of the two men who are suspected of have caused the fires in the Pewsey area.

It is strongly suspected, that of the FIRES in the Neighbourhood of PEWSEY have been caused by TWO MEN, who have been seen near the Spot either a short time before, or immediately after their breaking out. They have been making enquiries of Shepherds and Labourers respecting the Situations of Farms, and different Circumstances relating to them.

One is about 40 years of Age, rides a long-legged, light-carcassed, sorrel-coloured Horse, what is vulgarly called a Blood Horse, with a Switch Tail; wears Knee-caps or Overalls, sometimes has a Drab Great Coat; generally is seen riding fast through Villages and Towns, with something different from a common riding Stick, with which he is constantly striking the Horse's Off-Shoulder.

The other rides a Black Horse, of the same long-legged Description: they are dressed and look like Farmers. It is supposed that the thing which is carried in the Hand is an Air Gun, from which a small Shell is thrown, which ignites after a certain time. ¹²

Saturday, 20th November.

At about half past eight this evening a fire was discovered on the premises of Mr Simpkins, of Stanton St Bernard, and almost immediately afterwards barns and outbuildings belonging to Mr Henry Mills of the same place were found to be on fire. The whole of the labourers from the neighbouring farms rendered every assistance to extinguish the flames, which they ultimately were able to do.

¹¹ Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830 & 13 January 1831; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

¹² TNA HO52/11 f5 (handwritten by J Pleydell Bouverie) & f76 (printed copy)

8th – 21st November 1830

Astonishingly, while they were busy keeping these fires under control a third fire was discovered in another barn belonging to Mr Mills, and which, with its contents, was entirely consumed. ¹³



2. The Rick-burners

(Reproduced by permission of The British Library from *The Genuine Life of Mr Francis Swing*)

Between eight o'clock and nine o'clock this evening a fire was started at South Park Farm, Ludgershall, and a barn, stable and cart house were destroyed. A cottage, occupied by Robert Chandler and his family was also set on fire. ¹⁴

A meeting was held at the Town Hall at Marlborough today and it was decided that a subscription be entered into for the purpose of offering rewards for the apprehension and conviction of the persons who are destroying property by burning or otherwise and the following resolutions were made.

¹³ *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 25 November 1830; TNA – HO52/11 f19

¹⁴ *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 7 February 1831

MARLBOROUGH, NOV. 20, 1830

At a very numerous Meeting, in consequence of the following notice in writing this day given, “A Public Meeting will be held at the Town Hall, this day at three o’clock – the Mayor in the Chair – Farmers and others interested in Agriculture are requested to attend.”

JOHN GARDNER, Esq. Mayor, in the Chair

Resolved unanimously, on the motion of Mr W R Brown, seconded by Mr Iveson, that a Subscription be entered into for the purpose of offering Rewards for the apprehension and conviction of persons destroying Property, by burning or otherwise.

A Subscription was immediately entered into by the persons present amounting to about £400.

Resolved unanimously, - That the committee be empowered to appropriate any part of the fund for defraying such expenses of guarding Property, or for other measures of protection or prevention, as they may think fit.

That a Copy of the Subscription List be left at the Printing Office of Mesdms. Emberlin and Harold, for additional signatures.

That this Meeting be adjourned to Tuesday the 23rd instant; and that a further Meeting be then held at the Town Hall, at Marlborough, at three o’clock in the afternoon.

JOHN GARDNER, Chairman.

The Mayor having left the Chair – Resolved unanimously, - That the Thanks of this meeting be given to him for his readiness in granting the use of the Town Hall, and for the able manner in which he has conducted the business of this meeting. ¹⁵

Sunday, 21st November.

Mr Henry Mills, of Stanton St Bernard, who had lost a barn and its contents in a fire yesterday, destroyed his own thrashing machine today. He, and the neighbouring farmers

¹⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

who also destroyed their thrashing machines, were afraid that if they did not do so their property would be attacked by the lawless mobs. ¹⁶

A mob of between 40 and 60 people, many armed with large sticks, arrived at the farm of William Fulbrook, at Hippinescombe, at about four o'clock this afternoon. The ringleader, William Mills, asked Thomas Fulbrook, Mr Fulbrook's son, if they had any thrashing machines on the premises. When Thomas Fulbrook told him that it was nothing to do with them what they had on the farm. He was warned that if it had not been taken down by the morning they would be back with three or four hundred people to do the job themselves. Mills then said they must have something to drink. Fulbrook told his father this and William Fulbrook gave them a sovereign.

When some of the mob headed for the machine Mills said, 'Don't go there.' ¹⁷

At about half past ten this evening a fire broke out in the rick yard of Mr Henry Selfe, of Countess Farm, Amesbury. At first it seemed as if the whole premises would be lost. Fortunately the fire was almost immediately discovered and the alarm was raised. The inhabitants, of all classes, instantly flocked to the scene to render assistance. The wind was also in their favour and continued to blow the sparks away from the other ricks. A small pea rick and a hay rick were destroyed. Praise must be given to all those present for the great exertion they showed in tackling the flames.

The fire was undoubtedly the work of an incendiary, William Jacob, one of those who assisted to put out the fire, reported seeing two strange men come from the rick yard earlier this evening. They were dressed in snuff-coloured clothes and he saw them heading towards the turnpike gate. A search was made for the men but they were not found. ¹⁸

¹⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; TNA – HO52/11 f19

¹⁷ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

¹⁸ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

8th – 21st November 1830

Two ricks were also destroyed by fire at Winterslow. ¹⁹

Fires were also seen at Everley, Chute and Lake Farm. There was also another attempt made to set fire to Mr Mill's property at Stanton St Bernard. Mr Mills, along with a number of other farmers in the area, is busily employed in removing, and in many cases, destroying their thrashing machines in the hope that this will prevent attacks on their property. ²⁰

A thrashing machine, the property of Joseph Perry, of Allington, in the parish of All Cannings was destroyed by a mob today. James Lane, William Marsh and John Rose were recognised among the mob. ²¹

The following letter was sent to Mr Cobb this evening by Mr James Judd, of Newton Tony. ²²

*Newtontony Sunday eng
Nov 21 1830*

Dear Cobb,

I have sent my son to you to have your advice respecting a mob which has assembled this evening about 5 o'clock, they are mostly from adjoining parishes from Cholderton Wallop and I understand there has been several (from) Wallop today trying to excite our people to riot but I believe there are but few but what is very well contented in this parish they have broken the pales to pieces in front (of my house) and threatened to destroy my property and not content with that they attacked me and my son with large sticks and I received several blows from them but thank God not to hurt me much. They also threatened to be here tomorrow with 5 or 600, now if such is the case I am (at) a loss to know what to do or how to act – My opinion is that unless we have the Cavalry or some troops to put a stop to it the consequences will be very bad – I therefore request you if possible to send the Cavalry so as it may be put a stop to, I know some of the persons that struck

¹⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f15 - 16

²⁰ Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; TNA – HO52/11 f19

²¹ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

²² Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 413/23

8th – 21st November 1830

me and also threatened to murder me – I therefore request your advice how to act towards them.

My son will inform you more of the particulars – I trust you will do what you can and I beg you will not delay it a moment. With best respects to Mrs Cobb and family believe me to remain most truly yours

I am etc

J^{ms} Judd

To Jas Cobb Esqre

Solicitor

Clerk to the Magistrates of the Salisbury Division ²³

On receiving the letter Mr Cobb wrote to Mr Duke, enclosing a copy of Mr Judd's letter.

Salisbury November 21 1830

Sir,

I lose not a moment in communicating to you a Letter I have just received from Mr Judd of Newtontoney. I have shown it to Mr Wyndham and he thinks it will be advisable that a meeting of some of the Magistrates should take place early in the morning. I have written to Mr Fort and hope to see you and him here early to meet Mr Wyndham.

I am dear Sir

Your very faithful servant

James Cobb ²⁴

²³ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter to James Cobb. **NOTE:** The words in brackets have been added to the copy letter.

²⁴ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter to Mr Duke, 21 November 1830

Monday, 22nd November 1830

Monday, 22nd November 1830

The number of mobs at work in the county increased today, and they proceeded in different bodies through various parishes, destroying every thrashing machine in their way. They were armed with sledgehammers, axes, saws, club sticks, and other weapons. Nearly 200 of them went to the house of Sir Edward Poore. He was not at home and the gardener met the men. He remonstrated with them and told them that only Lady Poore and the children were at home and that Lady Poore was ill in bed. The labourers remained quietly in the lane until the gardener had seen her Ladyship. She sent them five pounds and they dispersed peaceably. It is also reported that they extorted money from Mrs Polhill. They later went to *The Poore Arms*, at Charlton, where they spent the greater part of the money on beer. ¹

At eight o'clock this morning a mob, of between 40 and 50 people, arrived at the house of James Judd, at Newton Tony. They told him they had come to break his thrashing machines. Mr Judd managed to dissuade them from this action and they left his premises. However, they returned again between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. They marched in two deep, with William and John Olden at their head, and demanded money and beer. They told Mr Judd that if he did not agree to their demands they would destroy his thrashing machine.

'If you will disperse, go back to your work and protect our property should others come to destroy it, I will give you beer and money, and anything else within reason,' Mr Judd told them.

'Then d- me, you would give us anything!' said John Olden.

When Mr Judd said he would not, Olden replied, 'Then we'll go and break your machines to pieces.'

Mr Judd locked his barn doors and put the key in his pocket. This did not deter the mob. They broke open the

¹ Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830; The Times, 30 November 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p81

Monday, 22nd November 1830

doors and within five minutes the thrashing machines were in pieces. William Holmes, John Olden and William Elton took it in turns to hit the machines with an axe. Henry Thornton and John Sheppard were also seen in the barn.

Mr Wyndham rode up whilst the machines were being broken and cautioned the men.

This evening Mr Judd was followed by a number of the men who visited his farm. He promised to give them a sovereign if they would quietly go to their work. ²

A letter was written from Salisbury to Sir Francis Freeling today to report that fires had occurred in the Salisbury area, and that some farmers near the town had received threatening letters.

*Post Office Salisbury
Nov^r 22 1830*

Sir,

I consider it my duty to communicate to you the agitated state in which this part of the country is, in consequence of the disorderly conduct of the poorer order of the people in the neighbourhood of Andover, and the fear that property will be destroyed by fire, here as well as there.

Several fires have taken place near that town and last night two ricks were burned at Amesbury and two at Winterslow both places about eight miles from Salisbury.

Threatening letters have been sent to some of the farmers near this town.

P.S. Since writing this, the Magistrates have thought it right to issue hand bills one of which I inclose. ³

The Overseers of Enford held a meeting in the vestry this morning to discuss the labourer's wages. When they heard of the meeting the labourers began to gather in the churchyard. When they were asked what they wanted someone said, 'We want two shillings a day.'

'And what more?' asked one of the Overseers.

'A gallon loaf and six pence, as it was in the paper,' came the reply.

² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials & The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

³ TNA – HO52/11 f15 & 16

Monday, 22nd November 1830

This was agreed to and the Overseers then recommended that the men return to their work. One of the labourers called out, 'But first we must break all the machines!'

The crowd left the churchyard and headed up the street towards the thrashing machine workshop of Jonathan Smallbones. Mr Smallbones estimated the number to be between 80 and 100. They destroyed one entire machine and many parts of other machines. James Hale, Arthur Hillier and Charles Beckley were recognised among the mob. Hale was seen breaking several cast iron wheels with a sledgehammer. ⁴

From Mr Smallbones workshop they went to the farm of Mr William Sweetapple where they broke a thrashing machine. William Hillier was one of the most active in the destruction of the machine. ⁵

By the time they reached the farm of Mr Charles Stagg, in the parish of Netheravon, they numbered around 100. Mr Stagg had already had his thrashing machine moved out of the rick yard and some parts of it had been broken as it was taken down. The mob destroyed the remaining parts of the machine. Mr Stagg agreed to give the labourers two shillings a day before they went to Netheravon.

It was about half past two in the afternoon when the mob arrived at the farm of Mr Thomas Jenner, also at Netheravon. They now numbered around 200. They used iron bars and sledge-hammers to break his thrashing machine. The broken pieces were then thrown out of the barn into the yard. Mr Jenner recognised John Eyres, James Keel, William Hillier, Enoch Leach, David Ranger and James Romaine, among the mob. ⁶

A mob attacked the premises of Mr Thomas Gaby, at Figheldean, and destroyed machinery used in the

⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁶ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Monday, 22nd November 1830

manufacture of woollen cloth. Isaac Miller, Thomas Piggott and John Romain were recognised among the mob. ⁷

A large mob visited the farm of William Ferris, at Wilcot. They asked what wages he would give and when Mr Ferris would not say some one in the mob said, 'D – m, make him,' and pointed to the thrashing machine. Mr Ferris stood at the barn door and said they had better not touch the machine as he was determined to protect it. He threatened to shoot the first man that entered the barn. Stones were thrown and a cast iron wheel on the outside of the barn was broken. Having destroyed the machine the mob went to the house of Mr Ferris and demanded beer and money. A gentleman came into the yard and in an attempt to induce the mob to go away he gave them two shillings and six pence. David Bartlett and John Hiscock were recognised among the mob. ⁸

The area around Ramsbury has been in a very disturbed state today. Among the places visited by the mob was the mill of John Sheppard. Mr Sheppard has a thrashing machine, which was about 20 yards from the mill, and this was destroyed by the mob. Thomas Channon and William Woodley claim to have seen Joseph Liddiard and Mathias and Joseph Alexander among the mob. Both men say that Mathias Alexander was very active in breaking the machine. ⁹

Thrashing machines were also destroyed at the farms of David George at Axford, Thomas Osmond, and James Jones, at Ramsbury. A chaff-cutting machine, the property of John Rowland, was also destroyed in the area.

They then proceeded to the Houses of the High Sheriff, Mr Pearce, Mr Craven and others demanding money and provisions which from their numbers and the time of night, it being quite dark, the occupiers were obliged to give. ¹⁰

⁷ The Times, 7 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 January 1831

⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

¹⁰ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Mr Burbidge, 25 November 1830

Monday, 22nd November 1830

A 1 1111

DUKE'S ARMS INN

MARLBOROUGH,
NOVEMBER 22nd, 1830,
FULWAR CRAVEN, Esq. in the Chair,

Resolved, that all the Gentlemen present shall be forthwith sworn in SPECIAL CONSTABLES.

T. B. M. BASKERVILLE, Esq. <i>Rockley</i>	Mr. WM. NEATE <i>Overton</i>	
H. J. SMITH, Esq. <i>Marlborough</i>	Mr. WM. TANNER <i>Blackwell</i>	
Mr. GOODMAN <i>Fyfield</i>	Mr. JOHN CANNING <i>Ogbourn St. George</i>	
Mr. STRATTON <i>Shao</i>	Mr. WEAVER <i>Wick</i>	
Mr. MATTHEWS <i>Kennet</i>	Mr. ROBERT CANNING <i>Whitefield</i>	
Mr. STRATTON, Jun. <i>Shao</i>	Mr. JAMES KEMM <i>Aoebury</i>	
Mr. BROWN <i>Chiseldon</i>	Mr. CORNELIUS CANNING <i>Ogborne</i>	
Mr. WENTWORTH <i>Beckhampton</i>	Mr. R. CHURCH <i>Lodge, near Aldbourn</i>	
Mr. WHITE <i>Manton</i>	Mr. JESSE HILLIER <i>Granham</i>	
Mr. JOSEPH WHITE <i>Castle Inn</i>	Mr. THOMAS HILLIER <i>Savernake</i>	

Resolved, that a Subscription be forthwith entered into by the persons now present, unanimously agreed to.

Moved by Mr. Craven, that we do have Watchmen to guard our premises while the Peace of the Country continues, and we recommend to our neighbours to do the same; seconded by Baskerville, and resolved unanimously.

Moved by the Chairman, that application be immediately made to Bow-Street, for one of the officers to assist in investigating the causes of the late Fires in the Neighbourhood; seconded by Mr. Baskerville, and resolved unanimously.

Moved by the Chairman, that a Reward be offered for the conviction of the person or persons who set fire to Mr. Fowler's Premises at Oare; and the sum of £200 being named, it was agreed unanimously that that sum should be offered.

Resolved, that the Secretary for the Home Department, the Lord Lieutenant, of the County, and the High-Sheriff of the County be written to, and requested immediately to send Troops into the neighbourhood, by Mr. Craven, as our Chairman.

Moved by the Chairman, that a Reward of £200 be given on the Conviction of any person or persons, who shall set Fire to any Premises, Barns, or Ricks, in the Neighbourhood where we are residing. Carried unanimously.

Resolved, that 2,000 copies of these resolutions be printed, one half by Mr. Lucy, and the other half by Mrs. Emberlin.

Resolved, that this Meeting be adjourned to this place to-morrow, at half-past three o'Clock in the Afternoon.

It was resolved, that the thanks of this Meeting be due to Fulwar Craven, Esq. for his conduct in the chair.

Printed by EMBERLIN & HAROLD, Stamp-Office, Marlborough.

3. Special Constables sworn at Marlborough (Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12)

A meeting was held at the *Duke's Arms*, in Marlborough today and a number of gentlemen were sworn in as special constables. A number of resolutions were also

Monday, 22nd November 1830

moved including the offer of a reward of £200 for the conviction of the person or persons who set fire to Mr Fowler's premises at Oare.

Mr Fulwar Craven wrote to the Home Office to report on the resolutions passed at this meeting and to request that troops be immediately sent to the area.

Committee Room
Marlborough
Nov. 22 1830

My Lord,

I have been all the morning in conjunction with my Brother Magistrates tranquillizing a riotous mob that have been destroying all the machinery in the neighbourhood, we have partly succeeded but how long they may remain so it is not for me to say.

Since then I have been presiding at a large meeting of yeoman & others – and one of the resolution proposed & carried was, that I was deputed to write to you to request that Troops may be immediately sent into the place I am sorry to say there have been several fires in the neighbourhood within the last five days.

A great number of special Constables have been sworn in, but my Brother magistrates agree with me in thinking that they are not sufficient to preserve the peace.

I think Government must now see the folly of having discharged so many of the Yeomanry. ¹¹

A mob visited the farm of Mr Edward Vaisey, at Mildenhall, today. Robert Vivash was recognised among them and was seen to be very active in the destruction of Mr Vaisey's thrashing machine.

This afternoon several day coaches were stopped near Froxfield. Money was demanded from passengers, and in most cases it was obtained, although it is reported that no violence was used towards them. ¹²

¹¹ TNA – HO52/11 f7

¹² Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

Monday, 22nd November 1830

Mr John Brown, of Froxfield, was forced to hand over two sovereigns to a mob that visited his premises today. The same mob also visited the farm of Mr Robert Bishop Osmond. When they asked for money Mr Osmond handed over a sovereign to Richard Woodward who had been selected by the mob to receive any money for them. ¹³

A meeting of the inhabitants of the parishes of Orcheston St George and St Mary, Maddington, Shrewton and Rollstone was held today. Some excellent resolutions were adopted. They were to discontinue the use of thrashing machines; to advance the pay of the agricultural labourer to two shillings a week; to enter into a subscription to supply the poor with coal for three months at six pence a bushel; offer a reward of £200 on conviction of any incendiary setting fire to any ricks, barns or other buildings, in any of the above parishes; and for the establishment of a nightly watch. ¹⁴

The Marlborough Troop of yeomanry Cavalry were sent for at 1 o'clock this afternoon. Part of the troop was needed at Chute Lodge, Andover and the remainder at Conholt Park, near Andover. The troop assembled, and arrived at these places, 17 miles from Marlborough, at 7 o'clock this evening, but the mob had dispersed before their arrival. After having destroyed much property, the rioters had proceeded to Andover, where they were met by some special constables, their progress was arrested and several taken prisoner. The troop, on being informed of these events, returned to Marlborough. ¹⁵

The first symptoms of alarm began to be felt in the Swindon area today and in the course of the day a great number of farmers and other respectable people from Wroughton, Wanborough and adjoining parishes, went

¹³ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE** – This man appears as **William Woodward** in The Times and the Gazette, as **Charles Woodward** in the Journal, but as **Richard Woodward alias Batchelor** in the Gaol Calendar and ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

¹⁴ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830. **NOTE:** Rollstone appears as Rolleston in the report

¹⁵ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p87

Monday, 22nd November 1830

before the Magistrates at Swindon and were sworn in as special constables. During the general discussions which took place at this time it was decided that however deserving of consideration the condition of the labouring class might be, their tumultuous proceedings ought to be repressed and any demands resisted, before any increase wages should be given. ¹⁶

It was about noon when they arrived at the farm of Mr William Randall, in the parish of Great Bedwin, where they broke two thrashing machines, a winnowing machine, a chaff-cutting machine, a hay making machine and two sowing machines, almost all the pieces of broken machinery were carried away by the mob. Some of the mob got into the house and demanded victuals and money. One of them, Charles Pizzie, is reported to have demanded ten shillings, which he said Mr Randall owed him. The man is said to have threatened to knock Mr Randall's brains out if he did not get the money. Mr Randall handed over ten shillings and gave the mob food and drink. The mob left but returned shortly after and Pizzie is said to have demanded more money, and to have threatened to split Mr Randall's head open and to come in the night and set fire to his house if Mr Randall did not give him the money. When Pizzie repeated his threats and held an iron bar up to Mr Randall's head, in a menacing manner, Mr Randall borrowed half a sovereign from one of his servants and gave it to Pizzie. ¹⁷

Mr John Lewis, who lives at Wilton in the parish of Great Bedwin, was also visited by the mob, now numbering around 150. He has a thrashing machine, belonging to Mr Zebulon Carter, on his premises. The mob beat the ironwork of the machine to pieces and destroyed the boards and stage. Mr Lewis saw John Cole break the stage of the machine with the bludgeon he carried. Samuel Howith was forced to hand over some money to the mob. ¹⁸

¹⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830

¹⁷ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831 & The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

¹⁸ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

Monday, 22nd November 1830

At about three o'clock this afternoon a mob of around 100 people arrive at the farm of Mr William Lockhart, at Buttermere. They divided into three groups, one going to the house, one to the barn and the third group to the other barn. At the house Moses Jessett, Mr Lockhart's bailiff, met them. Job Waldron appeared to be the leader of the mob he asked Mr Jessett for victuals. When Mr Jessett refused to give them any Waldron told him, 'We must have victuals or money. Others have given money we expect it from you also.'

Mr Jessett heard the people outside the house call out, 'Money or fire,' but still he refused to give them anything.

Waldron said, 'We have no wish to hurt you but we have had money from other people and we must have it from you too.' Two machines had been broken by the mob outside and Mr Jessett feared they might do further mischief to Mr Lockhart's premises so he gave Waldron half a sovereign.

Having received the money Waldron called to the mob, 'Come on and do no more mischief.' The mob then left the premises. ¹⁹

Mr Tanner, a farmer at Tidcombe, had taken down his thrashing machine and placed it near the road where it could be seen by any passing mob. He hoped the sight of the machine would satisfy the mob and save his buildings from an arson attack. Other machines had been broken in the area and eventually the mob of around 300 arrived at the farm and broke the thrashing machine to pieces. As it was being broken Daniel Collins asked Mr Tanner where his chaff cutter was. Collins was seen helping to break this machine. ²⁰

Sarah Meaton, of Collingbourne Ducis, was forced to hand over a shilling to the mob. ²¹

¹⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

²⁰ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

²¹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Crown Minute Book. **NOTE:** This lady is named as Sarah **Maton** in the Gaol Calendar

Monday, 22nd November 1830

The Magistrates of the City of Salisbury put out a poster this morning to let it be known that they would in attendance at the Council House, in the City, at half past three this afternoon in order to enrol the inhabitants as special constables. ²²

At around four o'clock this afternoon 10 to 12 people returned to William Fulbrook's farm, at Hippenscombe, and asked his son, Thomas Fulbrook, if the machines had been broken, Mr Fulbrook said that they were and the men went out to the barn to look. They then asked for victuals and drink. When Mr Fulbrook said that he would not give them any, one of the mob, Shadrach Blake, said, 'You had better give them us. Give us a shilling.'

Mr Fulbrook still refused Blake said, 'If you do not you will be sorry, we will be back with a mob before four o'clock in the morning and burn your house down.'

When they said they would break the doors down Mr Fulbrook told them that if any of them came in he would shoot them. They began beating the palings and Mr Fulbrook took up his gun and pointed it at them. They then went away.

It was between eight and nine o'clock in the evening when a mob of around 300 people returned to Mr Fulbrook's. They broke the doors and windows, which had been fastened against them, and about 20 people got into the house through the broken windows. Shadrach Blake, William Holt, and Thomas Vivash, were recognised amongst these. Henry Rawlings took a lanthorn from Isaac Crane, which he took into the yard so the men could see to break the thrashing machine. William Hooper was in the barn and saw Daniel North, Samuel North, William North, Charles Wild, and Harvey Hayes, all striking the machine in an attempt to break it. When the mob left it was found that a tea caddy, two tea ladles and a linen tablecloth that had been on the table in one of the rooms was missing. ²³

²² TNA – HO52/11 f17

²³ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Monday, 22nd November 1830

Charles Martin led the mob that visited Melchet Park today. They told William Windsor that they had come to break the thrashing machine and wanted four pounds for doing so. Martin said, 'No more mischief will be done after the machine is broken.'

Mr Windsor handed over the four sovereigns to Martin and said, 'Come along my lads and I will have the first blow at the machine.'²⁴

William Bell was standing in his garden, in Downton, at about half past six this evening when he heard a noise coming from Mr Read's premises. He went to investigate and found between 15 and 20 people there. They had taken out Mr Read's thrashing machine. When Bell asked them, what they were going to do they said they were going to burn the machine. Bell said, 'You had better not or you will get yourself in trouble. The constable has already been sent for.'

Barnabas Hutchinson said, 'I do not care for the constable. D – n and b – r the eyes of the constable, or of any other person who comes to interrupt us. We'll throw them on the fire.'

As Bell watched he saw Charles Bennett setting fire to the machine, assisted by Charles Waters who was placing wood and straw and other dry material they had collected on the tinder, and Barnabas Hutchinson blowing on the tinder to get the fire going.

James Read arrived on the scene to find Bennett, Hutchinson and Waters standing by the fire on which his thrashing machine was burning and asked them why they had set the machine on fire. Hutchinson replied, 'Because I had a mind to.'

Mr Read and his men put the fire out and as they walked away they were pelted with stones. After they had gone the mob set the machine on fire again and it was burnt to pieces.²⁵

When a mob arrived at the farm of James Shelley, of Downton today and called for the thrashing machine. None of the mob had brought a sledgehammer with them. A man

²⁴ The Times, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Monday, 22nd November 1830

named Patton said, 'I have a sledge hammer and anybody who cares to can go and get it.' Silas Webb, a young boy that had come with the mob, went the quarter of a mile to Patton's house and came back with it over his shoulder. By the time he returned the mob had moved on. Eliza, the daughter of Mr Shelley, saw Webb strike the wheel with the sledghammer and break it. ²⁶

A thrashing machine, the property of Mr Joseph Whicher, of West Dean was destroyed by a mob. Stephen Forder, James Northover and Thomas Tubb were all seen with the mob at Mr Whicher's. ²⁷

At about nine o'clock this evening around 100 people, all from the parish of Whiteparish, came to the farm of Richard Webb. Mr Webb had ordered his machine to be put out into a field. The mob went there and broke it to pieces. James Tegby and William Young, who both work for Mr Webb, saw Charles Chandler breaking the wheel with a sledghammer. William Collins had an axe and was chopping at the spokes, while William Hayter was chopping the bar of the machine. ²⁸

A hurried letter was sent to Mr Cobb this evening.

Dear Sir,

Not a man is allowed to go to work here or in the adjoining places the mob from a 100 to 1 150 are now at Mr John Cusse's at Upper Winterbourne, are then going to Mr B (Blakey?) & then coming to me my machine is taken entirely down & up into the field in a cart to be shot out on the ground where they may do as they will with if they think it worth while to walk as far. Their cry is for 12^s/ p week and ... to ... Mr J Cusse has told them if other people give it he must do the same & I propose to give them the same am^t. This is the best and all the information I can give you, they ask for Beer & have it given them at the different Farms where they call. I do not ... the party from the Plough at Idmiston have yet

²⁶ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁷ TNA – ASSI24/18, Crown Minute Book

²⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Monday, 22nd November 1830

joined them or there must be a much greater number far as I have been informed many were there all night.

In haste

Y^{rs} truly

(Unable to read signature, possibly Charles Blake?)

Quarter to

Nine o'clock

They propose coming on the Salisbury. ²⁹



4. Thrashing by hand

(Reproduced with permission of The Museum of English Rural Life from *The Farm – A New Account of Rural Toils and Produce*)

At about half past seven this evening a party of between 100 and 150 people arrived at the house of Mr Charles Blake, at Idmiston. Mr Blake has a thrashing machine but he had already taken down part of it and drawn it out into a field. The mob had been around a number of farms in the area pressing men to join them.

²⁹ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter to James Cobb

Monday, 22nd November 1830

James Stevens who works for Mr William Cusse was thrashing in the barn when he was pressed.

When they first arrived at Mr Blake's they told him that they had come to break his thrashing machine but if he would give them money and beer they would go away peaceably, without doing any harm to his property. Mr Blake gave them 10 shillings and some beer but this did not satisfy them and they demanded the keys to his barn. When he refused to give them the keys they said they would force open the doors and they went in and beat the machine to pieces. He hoped to prevent them from breaking the chaff cutting machine that was in the yard but Aaron Sheppard held an axe over his head and said, 'D -m your eyes, get out of my way, or I'll hew you to pieces.' William Cusse pulled Mr Blake out of the way.

Having broken the machines in the yard the mob then moved off to the field where they destroyed the machine Mr Blake had put out there and another machine in a barn in the field. ³⁰

During the night several labourers from the surrounding villages arrived in Upavon. They forced the landlord of the public house to get out of his bed and supply them with beer. They drank the beer, broke the cups and then broke the windows in the public house, and a number of other houses in the village. Before departing they extorted money from several people. So great was the terror they inspired, that not the slightest resistance was offered. ³¹

Mr Thomas B Smith wrote from the Post Office at Devizes to report on the acts of incendiaries in Wiltshire over the last week.

*Post Office Devizes
Nov 22 1830*

Sir,

With reference to instructions N^o 19. I send you the following particulars, which as they authentic, may be of

³⁰ GA – D1571/X64 – Minutes of Trials & The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter to Mr Cobb

³¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

Monday, 22nd November 1830

some service to one of the London Prints, if not of sufficient importance to be transmitted to His Majesty's Secretary of State.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your mo: obed: Serv^t

Thos B Smith

We are sorry to learn that the Itinerant Incendiaries have commenced their diabolical work in the County of Wilts.

On Thursday night some Farm buildings at Collingborne and Ludgershall were destroyed, on Friday several stacks of Corn etc belonging to Mr Fowler of Oare, met the same fate, on Saturday night, the Barns, Out buildings etc of Mr Henry Mills and Mr Simpkins of Stanton St Bernard, were set on Fire, and on Sunday night, Fires were seen at Everley, Chute, Lake Farm, and another place near Amesbury (particulars of which have not yet been collected), and a second attempt was also made on Mr H Mills's property at Stanton.

As a proof that these are the works of Incendiaries, who travel the Country for the purpose, and who are well skilled in their demoniacal acts, we are informed in every instance where Fires have occurred in Wilts, the Agricultural Labourers have voluntarily rendered their most active and valuable services, and in some cases have most loudly expressed their abhorrence of such malicious acts.

The Farmers in the neighbourhood of Devizes are busily employed in removing and in very many instances totally destroying their Thrashing Machines, and we have great pleasure in stating that the neighbouring Magistrates have been actively engaged in preserving the public peace, and that the most respectable Inhabitants and Tradesmen of the Town and the Vicinity have enrolled themselves, and are sworn to act as special Constables, and all appear disposed to use their most strenuous efforts to discover the Villains who have so wilfully, mischievously, and maliciously destroyed the property of their Neighbours.

A few Labourers out of employ have this day, (Monday) assembled in some adjoining Villages, to assist in taking down such Machines as are not already rendered useless, but up to this moment, they have done so, without shewing the least tendency to riot or disorder.

Monday, 22nd November 1830

A Hand Bill of which the annexed is a copy has been extensively circulated, and we trust with good effect in the populous neighbourhood of Devizes, Pewsey and Marlboro'.³²

**LABOURERS
OF
WILTSHIRE.**

Beware of Men who are going about the Country to make you do what you will soon be sorry for.—The times are bad,

But will burning Corn make your situation more comfortable or give you Bread?

If you have reason to complain, tell your Employers so like men, AND THEY WILL no doubt DO WHAT THEY CAN TO MAKE YOUR SITUATION MORE COMFORTABLE.

Burning the Corn will not injure the Farmers, because it is Insured; but, remember that you and your families will be in great danger of Starving for the want of it before another Harvest.

Even HIGH WAGES will be of no USE to you when there is no CORN to make BREAD!!!

Your sincere Well-wisher.

SMITH, PRINTER, DEVIZES.

5. Labourers of Wiltshire
(TNA – HO52/11 f19)

³² TNA – HO52/11 f19

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Between two and three o'clock this morning two men arrived at the farm of Mr William Robbins, at Chirton. They told Mr Robbins that they had come to break his thrashing machine. Mr Robbins had already had his thrashing machine taken out of the barn as there had been several fires in the area, and he told the men that he would not let them, or any other two men, break his machine. John Young, one of the men, sent the other man to get more help. He returned with a mob and the machine was broken. As the mob left they told Mr Robbins that he was lucky to get off with only his machine being broken. ¹

This morning a mob of between 100 and 150 people, armed with sticks, arrived at the house of Mr George Hills Danford Nunn, a surgeon living in Whiteparish. One of the mob, Aaron Stone, demanded money. Mr Nunn handed over a sovereign. Henry Lane was also in the mob and he carried a horn which he blew after Mr Nunn had handed the money to Stone. ²

The Magistrates acting for the Division of Devizes met today, and made the following resolutions.

We, the undersigned MAGISTRATES acting for the DIVISION of DEVIZES, having learned with utmost concern, that acts of Lawless violence have taken place in several Parishes in our Neighbourhood, do HEREBY GIVE NOTICE,

That it is our determination to use the utmost powers, which the law has placed in our hands, to suppress Outrage, and protect Property; and we hereby caution all persons to abstain from joining tumultuous bodies, and require them to lend their assistance towards supporting good order and peace.

With respect to the grievances which are alleged as a cause or excuse for disturbances, we declare, that when quiet and order have been established, and not

¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

² The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

till then, we will apply ourselves to enquire into, and remedy, those grievances, and particularly to adopt the best means in our power, to secure a just and proper amount of wages to labourers.

We hereby offer a REWARD of £200 to be given on conviction of any and every person, or persons, who shall SET FIRE to any PREMISES, or Ricks, or other Property in this county.

EDWARD POORE
T G BUCKNALL ESTCOURT
WADHAM LOCKE
THOMAS SCOTT
T H S BUCKNALL ESTCOURT
ERNLE WARRINER
WILLIAM HEALD LUDLOW
G WATSON TAYLOR.

Tuesday, 23rd November, 1830. ³

The citizens of Salisbury were considerably excited by the information that a party of rioters, were advancing along the London Road towards the city. These were the men who had previously destroyed the property at Collingbourne, and whose scouts had visited Broughton, as described in Mr Webb's letter of Friday 19th November. It appears that the two men who had separated from them went to Downton and Whaddon, with the intention of making a simultaneous movement on Salisbury with any men they could collect in this area. On hearing this news a message, asking for assistance, was immediately sent off to the Hindon Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry.

The mob stopped at Bishop Down Farm, the property of Mr Colbourne, and destroyed all his machinery. Now armed with bludgeons, iron bars, and portions of the machinery they had broken to pieces, they resumed their march on Salisbury, with the intention of destroying the iron foundry of Mr Figes. On the advise of the magistrates the inhabitants shut up their shops, and Special Constables were sworn in at the Council House.

Placing himself at the head of a few hastily collected Special Constables, and supported by a detachment of the

³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Salisbury Troop of Yeomanry, Mr Wyndham, of the College, met the mob at the entrance of the town.

An appeal to disperse was made to the mob, but as this had little effect the Riot Act was read and the Special Constables tried to disperse them. When this tactic failed the Yeomanry charged. A number of rioters had moved up onto higher ground and from there they threw stones at the Yeomanry and a number were wounded. Lieutenant Peniston took a number of men onto the top ridge and forced the mob onto the road where the constables rushed in and the mob fled in every direction. In all 22 rioters were taken into custody and the troop returned with them to Salisbury. Seventeen of the prisoners have been committed to the County Goal for further examination.

Despite the dispersal of the mob earlier today, many bad characters still continued to wander about, and the Salisbury Troop had to patrol the streets all day in order to prevent them from assembling again in any numbers. A dismounted guard of ten men, with carbines, was posted at the Council House where the Magistrates of the city and the county were assembled to give their directions for the preservation of the peace of their respective districts. The remainder of the men, with their horses bridled and saddled in quarters, held themselves in readiness to mount at a minute's notice. The whole of the Salisbury Troop were under arms during the night, and it has been arranged that the Hindon Troop, who arrived in Salisbury under the command of Captain Wyndham of Dinton, late this afternoon, will relieve them tomorrow morning. Lord Arundell arrived in Salisbury this evening.

The Special Constables, in immense force, aided by many of the most respectable citizens, were under the directions of Mr Brodie; and it is impossible to speak too highly of the zeal and alacrity with which they discharged their respective duties. The prompt manner in which the more riotous part of the mob were seized and put into confinement produced an entire dispersion before the evening, on the approach of which the public houses were

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

completely cleared, and the night passed without any further disturbance. ⁴

As a result of the trouble in Salisbury today the Mr Hodding, the acting Town Clerk, at the request of the Mayor and the City Magistrates, wrote to the Secretary of State to request that military aid be sent to the city.

The Mayor and Magistrates of the City of New Sarum beg to inform the Secretary of State for the Home Department that this City and Neighbourhood has been a scene of most disgraceful Riot and Tumult and that it is absolutely necessary that some Military be sent for their Protection they have applied at Andover and Winchester for Soldiers which applications have been refused

*Matt Thos Hodding
Acting Town Clerk*

*Salisbury
Nov. 23 1830* ⁵

A letter was also sent from Salisbury to Sir Francis Freeling, briefly reporting the events of the day.

*Post Office Salisbury
Three o'clock P.M.
Nov 23 1830*

Sir,

With reference to my letter of yesterday I am sorry to inform you that a mob of many hundreds of Farmers labourers have during the early part of this morning destroyed all the thrashing machines round this city – it was expected that they would arrive here about one o'clock – the Magistrates with a number of Special Constables and the Salisbury Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry went to the outside of this town to meet them – they have succeeded in keeping them out by persuasion and conciliatory measures, but not until some few heads had been broken there object here is an Iron Foundry, the proprietor of which has had two or three threatening letters sent him – it is feared outrages will be committed during the night – the shops are shut and business suspended.

⁴ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p74 & p75; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

⁵ TNA – HO52/11/ f25

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Half past eight o'clock

The town is tolerably quiet – the Magistrates and Constables are very active, and the Hindon Troop of Yeomanry is just marched in. A Linen Factory at Fordingbridge has been destroyed and a Woollen Factory at Milford about a mile from here this afternoon – and another at Harnham is threatened. ⁶

A most unfortunate incident took place in Salisbury this evening. Whilst the Salisbury Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry was drawn up on foot before the Council Chamber, the pistol of one of the privates in the troop went off by accident, and the contents of it were unfortunately lodged in the body of Sergeant John Mackrell, who, it is reported, is not yet out of danger. ⁷

It has been reported that a man, mounted on a remarkably fine dark bay blood horse, rode into the village of All Cannings at about two o'clock this afternoon. After riding round some of the wheat ricks belonging to Mr Charles Hitchcock, he proceeded at a moderate pace on the road to Devizes. As it happened Mr Hitchcock was driving in his open carriage through his farmyard and saw the stranger. His suspicion being aroused he hailed the stranger and made signs to him. This apparently alarmed the man who put his horse into a gallop and took a desperate leap over a hedge and a ditch in order to escape pursuit. Mr Hitchcock saw him take the road leading to Patney before he lost sight of him. The man was apparently about 30 years old. Farmers are advised to keep a look out for strangers in their area, as it seems their object is to throw certain combustible balls into the ricks and cause their entire destruction. ⁸

The mob that was so active in the Great Bedwin area yesterday had gathered again by 8 o'clock this morning. William Barnes the elder, a farmer at Shalbourne, had already taken down his thrashing machine but when the

⁶ TNA – HO52/11 f21 & 22

⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Journal, 25 November 1830; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

mob, of around 800 people, arrived at his farm they destroyed the pieces of the machine. Shadrach and Robert Blake were recognised among the mob. The latter was seen to put the brass spindle box into his pocket and he took it away with him when the mob left. The mob also demanded money and Mr Barnes handed over a sovereign and some other money. ⁹

Mr George Phillips handed over money, to the mob that visited his farm at Shalbourne. They had threatened to destroy his house if they did not get the money. James and Robert Baker were recognised among the mob. ¹⁰

The same mob also destroyed thrashing machines belonging to Anthony Kingston and William Baverstock and forced John Butcher to give them some money. William Holt, Silas Wilde and Thomas Brind were recognised among the rioters.

There were also disturbances in the parish of Ham, where another thrashing machine, the property of Anthony Kingston, was destroyed. Thomas Preston was recognised among those breaking the machine. ¹¹

A mob has been levying money in the Burbage area. They received half a sovereign from Mr William Westbury and one shilling and six pence from Mary Pye. Job Blundy was recognised among the mob. ¹²

Mr Thomas Gale of Burbage was visited today by a mob of between 150 and 200. Mr Gale had taken down his thrashing machine, intending to put it back again when the trouble was over. Mr Gale recognised Robert Fribbens, William Baker, Charles Skitrell, and Henry Broadway among the mob. He saw Skitrell carrying a large piece of the machine out of the barn, which he took out into the road, threw it down and broke it. George Gale, who was on the premises, saw Baker, put a number of iron nuts into his pocket. Mr Gale was forced to hand over two half crowns. ¹³

⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

¹⁰ ASSI 24/18, Crown Minute Book; The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

¹¹ The Times, 10 January 1831; Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

¹² The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

¹³ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials. **NOTE.** In the document **Skitrell** appears as **Skitterell**

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Two thrashing machines were destroyed at Milton, one belonging to Mr Edmond Somerset and the other to Mr Richard Litten.¹⁴

When the mob reached the house of Miss Elizabeth Penruddock, at Fifield in the parish of Milton, they numbered between 400 and 500. They told her they had come to break any machines she had. Miss Penruddock told them that she was not a farmer but would give them 5/- if they would go away. They demanded two sovereigns and one of the men, Robert Blundy, climbed up onto the wall level with the window Miss Penruddock was at. He knocked the ornament from the wall and threatened to throw down the others. Someone else in the mob threatened to knock down the chimneys and beat in the windows. A second man climbed onto the wall and said, 'We don't stand shilly shally here, my lady.'

Miss Penruddock grew alarmed and handed over some money. Having received the money the men climbed down from the wall and the mob went off up Fifield Street.¹⁵

It was at about 8 o'clock this morning that a mob began to gather in the parish of Ogbourne St Andrew. There were between 40 and 50 of them altogether, a number of them with axes, hammers and bill hooks. One of the men, Peter Withers, had gone to John Chum's smithy and taken away one of the blacksmith's hand hammers. At around half past ten the mob headed towards John Canning's Farm at Rockley.

Mr Baskerville, one of the County's magistrates met the mob at Mr Canning's. He had heard of the presence of the mob area and before going out to meet them he had sent an urgent request for the assistance of the Marlborough Troop, requesting them to meet him at Rockley.

Mr Baskerville found fifty or sixty men assembled, and while he was remonstrating with them others joined them, bringing the number to around one hundred.

¹⁴ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

¹⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 7 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

He advised them to go home peaceably, telling them that by gathering together they were rendering themselves liable to transportation. Some in the crowd called out, 'We don't care a d - n for the magistrates. There may be only 40 or 50 of us here at present but there are 1,300 or 1,400 over the hill waiting to join us.'

'I don't mind if there are 14,000 over the hill,' said Mr Baskerville, 'I will not allow breaking of the machines in my presence, not if I can help it.'

Mr Oliver Codrington rode up at this point. He told the mob that he was a special constable and advised them to go peaceably and quietly to their homes. The mob surrounded Mr Codrington and Mr Baskerville. Peter Withers stepped forward, with a sledgehammer saying, 'By G-d we'll have blood or money.'

'I'll have you,' said Mr Baskerville. He caught hold of Withers but he managed to get away. Mr Baskerville produced a gun and Withers retreated. Mr Baskerville ordered him to stop, but seeing him run on Mr Baskerville called to Mr Codrington to pursue Withers, which he did and got him up against a wall, seizing him by the collar. Seeing one of their number in trouble the mob attacked Mr Codrington and he received several blows to his head and body. Hitting out to right and left with his crop Mr Baskerville rode through the mob to try and reach Mr Codrington. He managed to catch hold of Withers, but was struck from behind. His horse bolted and he was thrown to the ground. Mr Codrington was also thrown from his horse and fell backwards across a wall, his head on one side and his legs on the other. Some reports said that Withers had thrown his hammer at Mr Codrington, which struck him in the face and knocked him off his horse. When Mr Baskerville reached him he found that Mr Codrington was bleeding profusely from a wound to his head and was quite insensible. Mr Baskerville took Mr Codrington to his house, which was a few hundred yards away.

On seeing the Yeomen approach, accompanied by a number of farmers, the mob withdrew a short distance. The Troop overtook the mob on the Downs. Withers, and seven others that Mr Baskerville pointed out to them were

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

arrested. They made no resistance and the remainder of the mob dispersed quietly.

The mob went on to Temple Farm, in the parish of Ogbourne St Andrew, where they destroyed a thrashing machine and forced Mr John Canning to hand over five shillings. ¹⁶

Having dispersed the mob at Rockley the Marlborough troop proceeded to Fifield, near Pewsey, where they heard that a mob of around 1000 people had assembled, armed in a similar manner to those at Rockley. These men at first refused to disperse, and maintained a defiant demeanour. It appeared that they had only been collected together a short time before the arrival of the troop and had not actually done any damage as yet. However the persuasions of the magistrates, Mr Williams and Mr Baskerville, and the firm demeanour of the Yeomanry, prevailed, and they were persuaded to disperse peaceably on condition that no further action would be taken against them for having assembled. The troop then returned to Marlborough. ¹⁷

Early this morning a mob arrived at the farm of Mr John Langford, at Wanborough, and broke his thrashing machine. Later today a second mob broke the remaining parts of the machine. Having broken the machine they came up to the house and asked for victuals and drink. When Mr Langford told them that he would not give them anything they said, 'We will have some, or some money to buy some.'

John Reeves, who had a stone-hammer in his hand, said, 'We will have some money or we will break the door down.' He had a handkerchief around his hat, which he said he had dipped in blood. Mr Langford gave them half a crown and they went away. ¹⁸

At the house of William Prince, in Wanborough, they demanded money and threatened to break everything in the house, if he did not give it to them. Mr Prince handed over five shillings. Henry Tombs, John Reeves, John Orchard

¹⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p87; TNA – ASSI 24/18, Crown Minute Book; GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

¹⁷ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p87 & p88

¹⁸ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

and Thomas Lawrence were recognised among the mob at Mr Prince's.¹⁹

When the mob arrived at the house of Mr James Spicer, at Wanborough, they carried a tricolour flag and said that they were machine breakers. Mr Spicer had already broken his machine. The mob insisted that he gave them two sovereigns.

'Are you firemen?' asked Mr Spicer. 'If you are I would sooner die on the spot than give you anything.'

They assured him that they were only machine breakers, but said that they must have a sovereign for every machine that they broke. Mr Spicer handed over two sovereigns.

The same mob broke two thrashing machines belonging to Mr John Wells and Mr Thomas Baker, both of Wanborough.²⁰

Between 11 o'clock and 12 o'clock this morning John Mace was out ploughing his master's field, in the parish of Liddington, when six men approached him. Their leader, David Heath, told Mace he must go with them. When Mace said that he was unwilling to go Heath said, 'We are fighting for bread if you do not choose to go we will have a leg or an arm, that is our rule.'

Mace accompanied the men down to the farm, which was owned by Mr Joseph Brind and Mr Bryan Bewley. Mr Peter Dore, the bailiff, who occupies the farm house, met them. Heath asked Mr Dore if they had a thrashing machine and was told that it had already been taken down and put out in the meadow. Heath led the men to the meadow. Mr Dore followed and watched as they broke the machine. Heath was using an iron bar to break it. As this was going on Joseph Watts, with eight or ten others came up and asked what they had done and was told, 'We have done our job.'

Watts, who carried a stick with a piece of iron in, and the other men helped to destroy the remaining parts of the machine. Having completed their job they demanded money.

¹⁹ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

²⁰ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Mr Dore told them that he did not have any but would send for Mr Brind. The mob then broke the chaff-cutting machine. Watts said that if they did not get any money a mob of 700 people would come. Mr Dore handed over a sovereign and the men left the farm.

The Swindon troop received an express from Devizes requesting their attendance at that town. The troop was immediately called out, but from the reports that were brought in of the disturbed state of their own neighbourhood, the magistrate decided that it was advisable that the troop remain at Swindon to offer protection to its own district. They remained assembled and under arms until about 4 o'clock this afternoon when news was brought in of the large mob assembled at Liddington, about three miles from Swindon. On receiving this news all those men who had been sworn in as special constables yesterday immediately mounted their horses and prepared to co-operate with the Yeomanry, under the command of Captain Goddard. Lord Radnor happened to arrive in the town about this time, on his way to Longford Castle. He not only offered his services as a magistrate, but also offered to lead the horsemen, and he proceeded with them to the scene of the disturbance. They caught up with the rioters at Wanborough by which time, as has already been reported, they had demolished several machines and demanded money and victuals in both Wanborough and Liddington. Lord Radnor remonstrated with the men and was told by one of their leaders, 'We shall first destroy all the machines and then we will not work for less than two shillings a day.' Together the Yeomanry and horsemen dispersed the mob wounding some and capturing others. ²¹

At around 12 o'clock a mob arrived at Mr John Goodman's farm at Easton. He had taken down his machine before the mob came, but this did not prevent them from breaking it to pieces. James Spragnell recognised John Townsend among the mob, and saw him break a wheel. ²²

²¹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p86; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830 & 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²² GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

The mob also visited the farm of Stephen Culley where they broke a thrashing machine and demanded and received two sovereigns for their work. Richard Matthews and John Hayward were recognised among the mob. ²³

Men have been going around farms and villages in the All Cannings, Patney and Manningford area, persuading men to join them in their demands for higher wages and the destruction of all thrashing machines.

At Manningford, Stephen Bullock was forced to join the increasing mob, after being told by James Burden that if he did not he would knock his brains out with a sledge hammer. The various mobs met up at the *Rose and Crown* at Woodborough at about midday, by which time their numbers had risen to between 200 and 300 and Charles Davis had made himself their leader. Having refreshed themselves with bread, cheese and beer they headed for Mr John Clift's farm at Woodborough, arriving there shortly after 12 o'clock. Many of the mob had armed themselves with sledge hammers, bars of iron or hammers. They told Mr Clift that they were there to break his machines and they demanded money. Mr Clift gave Laban Stone two half crowns. Stone and six others were about 20 yards ahead of the rest of the mob. Having received the money they broke open two barns and destroyed a haymaking machine, a chaff-cutting machine and a thrashing machine. After the machines were broken Mr Clift went up to his house and some of the mob followed him. They surrounded the windows, held up their hammers and demanded more money. Charles Davis, James Burden, Isaac Roberts and Laban Stone were among those around the house. Mrs Ann Clift gave them two half crowns and a five shilling piece, but the mob did not go away. They were still not satisfied and insisted on having more. Mrs Clift gave them a half sovereign. ²⁴

At Manningford Abbots the mob were met by Sir Edward Poore. He rode among them telling them of the

²³ ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

²⁴ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

impropriety of their conduct in destroying property, which they seemed bent on doing. He recommended them to disperse. 'I assure you that if it is within my power to redress grievances I will use my utmost endeavour to do so,' he assured them. 'I will mediate between you and the farmers, or landlords or magistrates. I am satisfied that your wages ought to be raised and I will do my utmost to obtain for you a more adequate compensation for your labour. You can either come to my house tomorrow or I will meet you at Pewsey to discuss the subject of your wages.'

The men agreed to meet him in Pewsey tomorrow. Sir Edward gave them a sovereign and believed he had persuaded them to return peaceably to their homes.

Unfortunately, however, they proceeded across the country to Alton, where they broke two thrashing machines belonging to Mr Miller, and one belonging to Mr Neate, before destroying that of Mr Robert Pile.²⁵



6. Alton Barnes Rectory

²⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830; The Times, 30 November 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p81

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

At about two o'clock two half drunken men knocked on the door of the rectory at Alton Barnes and asked the Reverend Augustus William Hare for money and announced that another 200 people were following close behind them. Mr Hare refused to give them anything and when they went down to Mr Pile's farm he followed them, after persuading his wife to stay inside and lock and bolt all the doors and windows. Mrs Hare had just gone upstairs when she heard a loud knocking on the door and when the banging continued she went to the drawing room window and spoke to the men outside. They told her that they meant no harm but they wanted money. Mrs Hare refused to give them any and went away but the knocking continued and she heard threats that the doors and windows would be broken so she took out some shillings and threw them out to the mob who having collected them up went on to Mr Pile's.



7. Alton Barnes Church

In hope of summoning some assistance Mr Hare rang the church bell. None of the labourers came, but the

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

churchyard was soon filled with women and children. Mr Pile had already taken down his thrashing machine but the mob were determined to destroy it and about 50 of them went into the rick yard while the others waited in the lane. While the machine was being broken Mr Hare was talking to Charles Davis, James Love and another man. They told him that they had talked with a magistrate this morning and he had told them that they were breaking no laws by destroying thrashing machines. Davis said, 'We would not burn any property and if we meet with any incendiaries we will deliver them up to the magistrates hanging is too good for them. We only wish that every man can live by his labour.'

Mr Pile had gone to Marlborough Fair early this morning, only his mother and sister were at home. News reached Mr Pile in Marlborough that mobs were gathering in the area of Alton Barnes and he returned home with all speed. He arrived to find a mob armed with hammers, sledges, bars of iron and bludgeons, standing in the lane and others in his yard throwing out bits of his thrashing machine as it was broken by those inside. He galloped into the yard and drew a pistol from his pocket. With oaths and threats he told them if they did not leave his premises he would fire on them. Some of the men began to leave the shed and Mr Pile fired the pistol over their heads. On hearing the shots others ran through the barn and Mr Hare ran to the house and fetched Mr Pile's double barrelled shot gun, which he passed over the wall to him. Mr Pile dismounted and followed the men into the rick yard. He called out to them asking what it was that had induced them to break his machine, 'What harm have I ever done you?' he asked.

'You have done us no harm,' answered some of the mob. 'We've nothing to say against you, Mr Pile. We are breaking all machines, yours along with all others.'

Mr Pile advanced to within three or four yards of the men, one barrel of his shot gun cocked. Suddenly the men surrounded him and in their attempt to wrest the gun from him one barrel went off, and the pistol was knocked from his other hand, James Love broke the stock of the gun against a tree and Gifford North broke the barrel with a

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

sledge hammer. Several blows struck Mr Pile and someone was heard to shout, 'Kill the d-d son of a bitch.' Mr Pile tried to make his way back to his house but was knocked to the ground. Stephen Bullock, who had been in Mr Pile's employment, came to assistance. He called to Charles Davis to help him and Davis kept the mob off as best he could. Despite Davis's assistance Mr Pile and Bullock continued to be struck by the mob, both by fists and weapons. ²⁶

Having got Mr Pile into the house Bullock asked Mr Pile's mother to lock the door and pull down the blinds. Miss Mary Pile took her brother upstairs where she saw to his wounds. His head was bleeding and his arm had been broken.



8. The Farm at Alton Barnes, taken from the Churchyard

The mob then attempted to break into the house. John Romain threw an iron hammer through one of the windows and hit Mrs Pile on the hip. James Burden hit a large

²⁶ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p81

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

window with a sledgehammer, breaking the frame and the glass. At the same time the rattling of glass was heard at the back of the house. The back door was broken open a number of the mob forced their way in. Sets of china, a clock and other items of furniture were broken. Miss Pile offered them £5 if they would leave the house but was told, 'That is not enough, we won't take it.' They also refused £8 but accepted £10 she took from her purse and gave to Gifford North.

Shortly after receiving the money they left the house and headed across the fields to Alton Priors. They were back at Alton Barnes within half an hour and the Crowe's machine that had been put out in a field, was broken. They then headed off towards Stanton St Bernard threatening to return in the night and burn the ricks and barns. ²⁷

Mr Brown, of Horton heard of the trouble at Alton Barnes and hurried to Devizes to alert the Magistrates. The Devizes, Chippenham and Melksham troop of Yeomanry, under Captain Warriner, were in the Alton area by six o'clock and they followed the mob through Stanton to Woodborough. They surprised several of the rioters in the public house at Woodborough apparently making merry with the money they had collected. As the Yeomanry entered the house a blow was aimed at Mr Scott, but it was warded off and after some resistance 28 prisoners were taken. As the troop passed through Chirton with their prisoners an attempt was made by a few of the scattered rabble to rescue them. The result was that they too were captured and they have now all been committed to the Old Bridewell at Devizes. ²⁸

Mr Thomas B Smith wrote to the Home Office today to inform them of the trouble that had occurred in the Pewsey and Devizes area yesterday evening and today.

*Post Office, Devizes
Nov 23rd 1830*

²⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830 & 13 January 1831; The Times, 8 January 1831 & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; Memorials of a Quiet Life Volume I, Augustus J C Hare

²⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p81

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Sir,

At a time of public excitement such as the present, I consider it an incumbent duty to forward such Particulars as may come within my knowledge.

In my Letter of yesterday I stated that some unemployed Labourers had began breaking Machines on that evening a disposition to riot or discord but I regret to state that as evening advanced they began to shew symptoms of dread riot, extorting Money from every Person at whose house they thought proper to call. In fact the neighbourhood for Miles around this, was last night watched by Gentlemen well mounted on Horse back, and reports having reached late last night that an organized Mob intended to pay this Town a visit necessary precautions were taken by our active and zealous Magistrates.

The Yeomanry were called out and some of the Troops assembled here at 7 o'clock this Morning and advanced under Arms 'till about Four this afternoon, when an express arrived for their assistance at a Village near Pewsey called Alton, where the Mob had entirely demolished a Farm House, and had murdered the occupier.

Three Troops immediately left, headed by T Scott and E Warrener Esqrs. Two Magistrates for this Division on Horseback, but as yet (15 past 7) nothing has been heard from that Quarter.

Another Mob were this day surrounded at Marlbro' and some of their Ringleaders captured by the Marlbro' Troop of Yeomanry, Six of whom have been just lodged in our Bridewell here.

I enclose Resolution adopted by the Magistrates of this Division to-day, and which it is ardently to be hoped will be attended with beneficial effects

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obed. Servant

Tho^s B Smith

Up to this time (30 past 7) all is perfectly quiet in the Town and immediate neighbourhood, all classes of Society are voluntarily offering themselves to be sworn in as Special Constables. ²⁹

²⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f23

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Thrashing machines belonging to George Winter, John Cook and Michael Cook, at Pewsey, were also destroyed today. ³⁰

A large mob went to the farm of Thomas Langford, at Wroughton. Having broken his thrashing machine they went to his house and demanded money. One of the mob, Joseph Watts, held a grub-axe over Mr Langford's head in a threatening manner and several voices cried out, 'Give it to Watts, he is our captain, and receives the money.'

Mr Langford gave Watts a sovereign. He was also obliged to give them two buckets of beer.

John Thorne, David and Worthy Gee and Jeremiah New were all recognised among the mob. ³¹

A mob has been active in the Aldbourne area today. They visited the farms of Mr George Church and Mr Richard Church. At the first farm the thrashing machine was destroyed and money was demanded. A half sovereign and four half crowns were handed over. The money belonged to Mr Church, his servant Thomas Brind and Mr Smith. David Baker, George Durman and John Vokins were recognised at this farm.

A thrashing machine was also broken at the farm of Richard Church. While the machine was being broken William Taylor, one of the mob, asked Mr Church for a sovereign for their trouble, 'I have assisted in putting up several machines,' said Taylor. 'And we will be paid for everyone that is broken. If you do not give us a sovereign we will break your windows.'

Mr Church complained of the hardship of this but the mob insisted that they must be paid. When Mr Church asked who he should give the money to they called for Durman. When he did not come they pointed to Thomas Goddard saying, 'You must give it to this gentleman on horseback he is a good fellow and we will protect him.'

³⁰ The Times, 10 January 1831

³¹ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Thomas Goddard is a tanner and lives at Ramsbury. He had ridden out when he heard that there was trouble in the area. He hoped his presence might prevent the mob from doing mischief. Having received the money Goddard passed it on the Durman.

At Mr William Deadman's premises the mob demanded money and Mr Deadman was forced to hand over one sovereign. He was able to identify George Durman as the person who received the money from him. ³²

Thrashing machines belonging to Mr Broome Witts, Mr Thomas Gould and John Brown, all of Aldbourne, were destroyed today. ³³

Between three o'clock and four o'clock this afternoon a mob of around 30 people arrived at the house of Mr Samuel Watts, at Wootton Rivers. Mary Hodding and James Tucker Mr Watt's housekeeper and serving man opened the door. Maurice Pope, who appeared to be the leader of the mob, asked for their master and said they wanted victuals, drink and money. Mary Hodding said she would not give them food or drink but handed over two half crowns. Pope said, 'We must have two sovereigns.'

'How can you expect a sovereign from a man whose work is done,' said Mary Hodding. 'My master is a pensioner under Lord Ailesbury.'

On hearing this Pope said that they would take 10/-. Another 5/- was handed over. Pope shook hands and then called the mob to come away. ³⁴

At about 4 o'clock this afternoon a mob of 80 or more people visited the lonely farm of Robert Lyne at South Savernake. Maurice Pope appeared to be the leader of the mob and asked Mr Lyne where his thrashing machine was. Mr Lyne told that it was already broken but the mob was not satisfied with this and while Mr Lyne took Pope to see the machine, the rest of the mob went to Mr Lyne's house.

³² The Times, 6 January 1831, The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

³³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

³⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 7 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Having shown Pope the broken thrashing machine Mr Lyne asked him if he was satisfied, to which Pope replied, 'No, we must have a sovereign.' When Mr Lyne asked why, Pope said, 'We have had it everywhere else and we must have it here.'

When the two men got back to the house the mob were there. Robert Blundy seemed to be in charge and Mr Lyne asked him what they wanted. 'Beer and a sovereign,' replied Blundy.

'I won't give you money, but if you are civil I will give you beer,' said Mr Lyne. He then ordered that some beer be brought to the mob. After the beer had been given Mr Lyne asked Pope if they were now satisfied. 'No, we must have the sovereign,' both Pope and Blundy said.

Fearing that the mob might do him some injury Mr Lyne handed over the money. ³⁵

A mob visited the farm of Mr William Perry, at Homington and broke his thrashing machine. They then demanded money and beer from him and he handed over a sovereign. James Lush, James Toomer and George Toomer were all very active in the mob.

It has also been reported that the premises of Mr Hodding of Odstock and Mr Forward of Bemerton have been visited by mobs. ³⁶

Mr Jesse Rumbold, a farmer at Broad Chalke, was in such a state of alarm this evening at the prospect of the mob attacking his premises that he ordered his men to take down his thrashing machine. The water wheel has been placed under the water and the cast iron parts concealed in a field. The roof was accidentally broken as it was being taken down. ³⁷

Between six and seven o'clock this evening a fire was discovered in a stubble rick at Chisledon, the property of Mr John Brown. Although there can be no doubt that this was the work of an incendiary it is generally believed to have

³⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

³⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

³⁷ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

been the act of a stranger rather than any of the labourers in the parish, as Mr Brown is well known for his kind and benevolent disposition. No other damage was done. ³⁸

Mr Saunders, of Market Lavington, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Home Department today to complain of the neglect of Government in not sending assistance to help towards suppressing the disturbances in Wiltshire.

Market Lavington Nov^r 23 1830

Nothing but dire necessity should have driven me to trouble you in the present troublesome times – but there appears to me such a shameful neglect in defending the Persons and Property of his Majesty's subjects in Wiltshire that it is time for some one to speak out – for the Government must defend us by Military force or we must form ourselves into a Military band to defend ourselves – and the latter mode must of course bring on a civil war attended possibly with almost extermination.

(The case is thus?) – as far as regards our own neighbourhood, a few men in Hampshire began destroying thrashing Machines – no check or resistance appears to be offered to their doing it Nearly all the Wiltshire Farmers were willing to destroy or set aside their Machines – But nothing but the destruction of all Machines will now satisfy the lower order of People – and one is now burning within 300 yards of my House done by the owners servants who are now (...?) over it – and all is literally done by a few men that might have been desisted or destroyed by twenty Dragoons – These rioters have gone through Hampshire & Wiltshire and destroyed what they please, and robbed whom they please nearly without Magisterial or Military interference.

This neighbourhood I considered to have been in the best possible state – there is not a person of influence disaffected to the Government or that would not have rendered his assistance to any Magistrate or any Military that had interfered for protection; in short had we known that we should have been left unprotected by the Government we would have arranged ourselves for defence.

³⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Bradford & Burt, 24 November 1830

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

The die is now cast Master must be against servant and servant against Master for the next age – and the fault is entirely with the Magistracy that collects the taxes from the people and leave them undefended.

With about 3 Squadrons of Horse and 4 Companies of foot soldiers sent into Wilts every thing in my opinion might have been kept in perfect peace.

Let me entreat of you or your successor to lay aside your fears and act like men (...?) common sense and courage – The Government have the means in their hands of defending all his Majesty's subjects – dealt temperately and firmly – suffer not the lawless banditti to rob or plunder whom they please any longer – Almost every man as an Englishman is willing to do his duty – if the Government acts had perform their part – but if no protection is to be afforded to property by the Government let us be told so – and then we shall do the best we can for ourselves.

Thus far I had written when I was interrupted by Mr Estcourt M P for Oxford University who kindly called on me and he has sworn in 45 Special Constables at Mr Langton's.

On review I see I have written rather too warmly but I have no time for correction, I hope you will pardon any expressions that may seem expressed too strong

I am R^t Hon Sir

Yr most Obedient servant

A Saunders

*To Right Honorable Secretary of State
for the Home Department ³⁹*

A mob of around 18 or 20 people visited the farm of John Waldron, at Ramsbury, today. Two of the mob, John Ward and William Huntley, demanded a sovereign and when Mr Waldron said that he had no money they said they would have any amount that he had and told him to go and get 20 shillings. They said they would not go without money and some in the mob said they would break his windows if he did not give them something. Fearing what they might do he handed over half a sovereign. ⁴⁰

³⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f26-27

⁴⁰ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Tuesday, 23rd November 1830

Two men arrived at the house of Mr John Osmond, at Ramsbury, at around midnight. One of them, John Pounds, had been very active as a machine breaker during the day. The only people in the house at the time were Mr Osmond's young son and daughter and a servant. The men demanded beer, bread and cheese, and this was given to them. ⁴¹

Between midnight and one o'clock Mr William Smith of Quid Hill Farm in the parish of Cricklade heard that a mob was in the area. In the hope of saving his barn he had his thrashing machine taken out into the court and then went to warn his neighbours. When Mr Smith returned he found a mob of between 40 and 50 people in his premises and his thrashing machine was broken to pieces. Henry Speck, who was in Mr Smith's service, had a lanthorn and was pulled first one way then the another by the mob so that they could see the machine they were breaking. He recognised William Kibblewhite and David Heath among the mob. Having broken the machine the mob came to Mr Smith's house and asked for beer, which Mr Smith gave them. Robert Barrett, one of the mob, came up to Mr Smith and said, 'Here is your health Master Smith and I hope your landlord will lower your rents.' ⁴²

⁴¹ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁴² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Just after midnight Mr Bartlett Pinniger, of Coombe Bissett, heard that a mob was in the area and heading his way. He assembled as many of his men as he could, around 20 or 30 altogether, and armed himself with a brace of pistols. By one o'clock he was at his yard gate waiting for the mob when Mr Fleetwood, a neighbouring farmer, arrived with seven or eight of his own men. The mob had already visited Mr Fleetwood's premises and were close on his heels. When they arrived Mr Pinniger told them that he would not give them any money but they were welcome to break his thrashing machine, which was in a field at the back of the house. The mob told Mr Pinniger that they had been given leave to break the machines and would have two sovereigns for doing so. Mr Pinniger then pointed the pistols at the mob and said, 'I will shoot the first man that comes on.'

'Fire away,' called some one in the mob. 'You can not kill more than one of us.'

'You have had your turn long enough, but we will have ours,' said James Toomer, and he struck the lanthorn from Mr Fleetwood's hand. At this point the mob, who had armed themselves with sticks and iron bars, pushed forward, got through the gate and drove Mr Pinniger and his men back towards the house. Mr Pinniger attempted to fire his pistols, but they both misfired.

Seeing that a number of his men were injured, and that further resistance was useless, Mr Pinniger handed over two sovereigns. Having received the money the mob went round to the back of the house and broke the thrashing machine before leaving.¹

Around midnight John Dumbleton, a servant to Timothy Rumbold, a farmer who lives in West Grimstead, was watching his master's premises when he heard a noise and then heard William Rogers calling people to get up. He went to Mr Rumbold and together they went down into the village where a mob of around 50 people had gathered, some

¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 7 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831

of them armed with big sticks. Among them Mr Rumbold recognised Henry Herrington, William Rogers, William Luffman and Thomas Gange. He asked them what they were going to do and Rogers replied, 'We're going to destroy your thrashing machine. We have been at it all day and all night and we are determined to destroy all before we have done.'

Mr Rumbold told them that if they left it he would get his men to take it down in the morning, but he could not persuade them to agree to this.

Having destroyed the machine, which was out in a field, the mob then demanded straw so they could burn it. At first Mr Rumbold refused to let them have any but he was then told that if he did not send for some they would burn the rest of it. He sent for the straw and the machine was burnt. The mob then insisted on having money for their work and were not happy when Mr Rumbold promised to send them a sovereign the next day. Thomas Light, who rents a cottage from Mr Rumbold, said that he would pay the sovereign and deduct it from his rent. The mob then demanded cider and beer, and Mr Rumbold sent down to his house for some. Some one in the mob suggested that they go to Mr Rumbold's house and get bread and cheese, but they did not go.

Between two o'clock and three o'clock this morning Maria Rogers saw the men who had broken Mr Rumbold's machine in the village. She heard them banging and shouting at the door of William Cook, who keeps the public house. They threatened to break open the door if he did not let them in. After a while the door was opened and the men went in. They told Cook that if he did not draw them some beer they would draw it themselves. ²

Shortly after midnight a mob arrived at the farm of William Gray at Plaitford. Some of them were armed with sticks and they said they wanted Mr Gray to go with them. Stones were thrown and some windows broken. They came to the house again at 2 o'clock, and again at 6 o'clock in the morning. On this occasion Mr Gray pointed a gun out of the

² GA – D1571/X64; The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** The prosecutor is named as Mr **Rumbold** in GA – D1571/X64 & The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, and as Mr **Rumboll** in The Times & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, and as Timothy Rumboll in the 1851 Census for Manor Farm.

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

window and threatened to shoot them. After that they went away telling Mr Gray. 'You will go with us by and by.' The mob returned to Mr Gray's again at noon, by which time they numbered between 200 and 300. Some of the people came into the house and Mr Gray was pulled down the stairs and forced to go along with them. He was able to recognise Isaac Roberts and John Martin. Roberts is his indoor servant and Martin had worked for him first before Michaelmas.

About 30 men and boys visited the farm of James Cox, at Plaitford. They were armed with hammers and axes and destroyed Mr Cox's chaff-cutting machine before going off to join the rest of the mob. Joseph Hutchins recognised Michael Hood, a wheelwright, amongst the men breaking the machine. ³

At around one o'clock this morning a mob of between 60 and 70 people arrived at the farm of George Budden, at South Damerham. William Crook and Charles Francis Vincent, Mr Budden's bailiff and one of his servants, met them at the gate. One of the mob stepped forward and said, 'My name is William Cheater, I am foreman of the mob and I don't care who knows it. We hear you have money to give us rather than have any mischief done.' A number of the mob raised their sticks at this point.

Having heard what other mobs were doing about the country and fearful of his master's property Mr Crook handed over 10 sovereigns. Cheater counted them, one by one, put them in his pocket and said to Mr Crook, 'It is all right, when the rest of the mob come up tell them that we have gone to *The Compass* public house and that you have given us 10 sovereigns.

When the rest of the mob arrived Mr Crook told them what Cheater had said and they headed off towards *The Compass*, taking Charles Vincent with them.

It was just after midnight when James Scammell, also of Damerham was called up and warned that a mob was in the area. He was in front of his house when the mob arrived at around two o'clock. They demanded money, saying that if they did not get ten shillings they would break his windows.

³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

TO THE

Honest English Labourer in Husbandry.

A most false and lying hand-bill has been sent over the country far and wide, for the purpose of exciting the spirit of robbery, containing a list of Noblemen, Bishops, and what are called "unproductive gentlemen," with a statement of the incomes possessed by them, as if these incomes were wrung from the labouring poor. To shew the lies, in the first place, an archdeacon is set down for TWO THOUSAND POUNDS a year!! whereas the *few* clergymen in this station of the church, have not *one hundred pounds* a year, and this paid not from any laymen, but by the clergy themselves! You may guess of the other lies by this.

Landed estates of all noblemen and gentlemen are reckoned at five times their value, and their possessors classed with those who receive PENSIONS from GOVERNMENT, which is another lie.

BRITONS! *you talk* of liberty! the GREAT CHARTER of your LIBERTIES, was wrung from the hand of the King, King John, by the forefathers of THESE NOBLEMEN, when the country was indeed *enslaved!* It was such noblemen and "unproductive gentlemen," as they are villainously called, who secured the act of toleration under King William III, that every one might worship God according to his conscience.

To say that distress is created by persons high or low enjoying *their own property* honestly bought or inherited, is a lie, a hellish lie!

The landed estates of the bishops have been in their possession *before* William the conqueror, and no lord or squire in the land has so *ancient* or *clear* a title.

They possessed their lands when not one of the families who have purchased or inherit land in the country since, were so much as heard of.

9. A Message to the Labourers

(Gloucestershire Archives – D1571/X60)

When Mr Scammell said that he could not afford to give them any money some of the men began to beat the palings he was standing against. Mr Scammell asked who he should give the money to and when one of the mob stepped forward, he gave him four half crowns. Mr

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Scammell has since identified the man as William Cheater. Having received the money the mob went off *The Compass* public house. They returned to Mr Scammell's about half an hour later. They had come to burn his winnowing machine, which was in the yard. Cheater persuaded them to take the machine out into the road and burn it there. ⁴

At about half past three this morning Christopher Ingram, a gentleman living near the village of Stapleford, was woken by the noise and shouts of a number of people coming up the shrubbery which leads to his house. The moon was going down, but the night was not dark and on looking out of his window Mr Ingram saw people coming to his door, at which they began to knock so violently that one of the panels split. Mr Ingram called out and asked what they wanted. John and George Shergold both shouted back, 'Come down, and open your door, and give us some bread and cheese and cider.'

Mr Ingram recognised both the men and told them that on no account would he open his door to them at such an unreasonable hour of the night. The two Shergolds then demand some money. George Shergold turned round to the mob and said, 'Now for the windows boys.'

The mob immediately made a great noise under the windows and shouted out to Mr Ingram, 'Fire and destruction to you.'

Mr Ingram told the men that he would give them five shillings if they would go away.

George Shergold beat his bludgeon on the ground three times and said, 'Silence! Silence! I am your captain, he's going to give us some money.'

Mr Ingram then put five shillings into some paper and threw it from his window. It landed a little to the right of the mob. John Shergold was heard to say. 'We can't find the money, go and get some light.'

Mr Ingram handed out a glass lantern to one of the men and after a short while John Shergold shouted again, 'I've got it! I've got it!'

⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Mr Ingram asked them how much they had got and they told him it was five shillings.

George Shergold beat his bludgeon three times on the ground again, and then the mob went away. ⁵

The same mob was seen at Winterbourne Stoke, where they broke a thrashing machine belonging to W G Hayter Esquire. John Shergold, George Shergold, and John Day were recognised among the mob. ⁶

When Colonel a'Court arrived at Stapleford, on his way to Salisbury, he was informed that a mob was collecting at Shrewton and thought it was advisable to follow them. He asked Christopher Ingram to write to the Reverend Mr Duke at Salisbury and inform him of his movements. ⁷

Mr Thomas B Smith wrote to the Home Office again today to correct the mistake he had made in his letter the previous day, reporting the death of Mr Pile.

*Post Office, Devizes
Nov^r 24 1830*

Sir,

Referring to my Letter of last night I beg to correct an error therein.

At the time I wrote it, it was generally reported that Mr Pile (the Farmer whom the Mob attacked at Alton) was dead – this I am pleased to say is not the case, but I regret to add that he was so barbarously beaten as to be left as dead, but this day he is better than could be expected, and it is to be hoped he will recover. His house is stripped of all its Furniture, which, with the Marble chimney pieces etc were totally demolished and a quantity of plate stolen, besides a £10 Note which was extorted from Mr P's Mother.

The Troops of Yeomanry which left this (added yesterday) last night returned about 11 with 32 of the Mob in Custody which were all safely lodged in the Old Bridewell of this Town. These were captured at a Village nr Alton called Woodborough.

Some of the Civil power accompanied by a detachment of the Yeomanry left about 12 today with Warrants to

⁵ The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁶ The Times, 5 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁷ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, letter from Christopher Ingram, 24 November 1830

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

apprehend several others against whom distinct acts of Riot and Extortion had been sworn. Three or four of these have also been captured and safely lodged in Custody. Several of the Prisoners have been guilty of such acts, as it is probable that the forfeit of their lives will be the (remedy?)

The remainder of the detachment of the Yeomanry are just now (7 o'clock) returned with the principal Ring - leaders who are safely lodged in the New Gaol.

This Town and its neighbourhood may now be considered perfectly tranquil pray God it may continue so.

A Meeting of the inhabitants was held this Morning at the Town hall where some excellent Resolutions were adopted, Copies of which I will forward you to-morrow as they are not yet issued from the Press.

Mr T.G. Bucknall Estcourt, as a Magistrate of this Division accompanied the Detachment above alluded to, and it is from his valuable information, that I am able to communicate these particulars.

I have the honor to be Sir,

Your mo: obed: Servt

Thos B Smith

Mr Cliff's Farm of Woodborough was attempted to be fired last night the Ball did not explode, and was picked up in the Rick yard to day and brought to the Magistrates, and is lodged in the Sheriff's Office.

Another detachment of Yeomanry is just now (8 o'clock) gone to the Village of Wedhampton for to guard two desperate Characters who are now there in Custody. ⁸

At the request of the Mayor and the City Magistrates, Mr Hodding, the acting Town Clerk, wrote again to the Secretary of State apologising for the fact that the letter written yesterday, requesting military aid, had arrived too late to be put into the Mail Bag. He reported that the rioting in the area still continued despite the fact that nearly 40 people had been apprehended and committed by the Wiltshire Yeomanry. He praised the actions of the Yeomanry but stressed that it was still necessary that regular troops be sent to the area.

⁸ TNA – HO52/11 f28-29. **NOTE:** Mr Cliff appears as **Mr John Clift**, Farmer, in both the 1841 & 1851 census for Woodborough

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Salisbury November 24 1830

My Lord

I am directed by the Mayor and Magistrates of the City of New Sarum to acquaint your Lordship that in great haste as the Mail was leaving last Evening they communicated to your Lordship intelligence of very serious Riots in the City and Neighbourhood and requested that Military may be supplied. It not having been sent in time for it to be put into the Mail Bag your Lordship might possibly not have received it. The rioting in the neighbourhood still continues altho' it has been met both by the County and the City Magistrates, with the greatest firmness and nearly forty persons have been apprehended and committed. The greatest praise is due to the two Troops Wiltshire Yeomanry, for their efficient exertions but it will be absolutely necessary that they have support from the regular forces – the Mayor and Magistrates regret that they have received several applications for aid from Neighbouring Parishes which they were unable to supply in consequence of the small number of their Yeomanry

I have the honor to be

My Lord

Your Lordships obed^t h^{ble}

Servant

Matt Thos Hodding

Acting Town Clerk⁹

Having arrived in Salisbury this morning Lieutenant Colonel Baker has established his headquarters here. ¹⁰

The Swindon Troop paraded at 8 o'clock this morning, under the command of Lieutenant John Calley, Captain Goddard being disabled by gout from taking command. It had been reported that a large mob had collected at Aldbourne and the troop marched off towards this place. No sooner had they set out and they were told to proceed instead to the parishes of Draycot, Chisledon, Wroughton and Burdrop, where they were told rioters were attacking machinery. A large body of horsemen, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Vilett, joined the Yeomanry. The rioters caught sight

⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f32

¹⁰ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p75

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

of the Yeomanry as they approached Wroughton and fled. The farmers pursued them on horseback and many of them were identified and captured.

When the Swindon troop arrived at Richard Reeves' farm at Draycot Foliat three men were coming out of the rick yard, which adjoins the meadow. Mr Reeves had taken his thrashing machine to pieces and put the pieces in a nearby meadow. Mr Reeves was not at home and his sister Miss Jane Reeves, had opened the door to them. They begged for victuals and drink, in a very civil way. She gave them some food, but no drink, and they left the house. About a quarter of an hour after she had given the men the food Miss Reeves saw them in the meadow breaking the machine.

On seeing the Troop the three ran away over the footbridge, pursued by Sergeant William Parsons and Private George Killard. One of the men dropped a sledgehammer on the bridge. The three men who have been identified as John Clark, William Bridges and Charles Hall, were soon overtaken and captured.

Eight prisoners in all were captured. They have taken before the Magistrates, sitting at Swindon, examined and fully committed. A very turbulent spirit prevailed in Swindon all day and it seemed likely that an attempt would be made to rescue the prisoners. It is believed that the presence of the troop during the examination of the prisoners together with their escort on the removal of the prisoners through Wroughton, to the prison at Devizes, prevented any such attempt. ¹¹

Mess^{ers} Bradford and Burt wrote to Mr Cobb to inform him of the events in the Swindon area.

Sir,

In pursuance of a letter rec^{ed} from the Clerk of the Peace we beg to inform you that a very large number of persons consisting principally of Agricultural Labourers are assembled round the neighbourhood and go in large bodies from Farm to Farm to destroy Thrashing Machines. The Swindon Troop of

¹¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p86; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Cavalry however were yesterday and today in active Service assisted by the Farmers generally & are adopting the best means to disperse the Assemblages.

We regret to add that considerable alarm was excited here last night on perceiving a fire at some distance. It proved to be near the village of Chisledon but fortunately it was only a large stubble Rick belonging to Mr John Brown of that place, but there is no doubt that it was wilfully set on fire. No other damage was done.

*We are Sir
Yours truly
Bradford & Burt*

Swindon

24th Nov. 1830

P.S. Since writing the above, Eleven Prisoners ¹²

A mob, estimated to be between 200 and 300 strong, have been very active in the Broad Chalke area today and several farms have been visited.

Jesse Rumbold, the Broad Chalke farmer who took down his thrashing machine yesterday evening, heard that a mob was in his area and afraid that the water wheel would be found and set on fire he had it removed from under the water and broken to pieces. When the mob arrived they went out into the field and destroyed all that remained of the machine. Then James Lush demanded two sovereigns for their work, Mr Rumbold handed a sovereign to George Stratton. He also recognised George Coombs and Jeremiah and Uriah West among the mob.

At John Self's they demanded money saying that Mr Self must give them two sovereigns as he had two machines. Afraid that they would set the place on fire he handed over the money to Levi Brown.

At Mr Young's farm, also in Broad Chalke, they beat a thrashing machine to pieces, drank Mr Young's cider and demanded a sovereign from Alfred Morris who was there. When Mr Morris told them that he had no money they said he must go home and get some. One of the mob, James Lane, accompanied Mr Morris to his house, which was

¹² Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Bradford & Burt, 24 November 1830

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

about a quarter of a mile away, and Mr Morris gave him the sovereign. ¹³

The same mob also went to the farm of John Rebbeck, at Ebbesbourne Wake, arriving there at about three o'clock in the afternoon. Levi Brown appeared to be their leader. They destroyed a chaff-cutting machine and then went up to Mr Rebbeck's house to demand money. When Mr Rebbeck refused to give them any some of the men held their sticks up and said that they would make him. He handed over two sovereigns to Brown. ¹⁴

At the farm of Thomas Blandford, at Fifield Bavant, near Chalke, they destroyed a thrashing machine and a chaff-cutting machine. It would appear that all of the men in the mob were from adjoining parishes and that none of the labourers of Fifield took any part in this outrage. James Case and Abraham Morgan were recognised among the mob. ¹⁵

At about half past eleven this morning the Devizes troop of Yeomanry scoured the villages of Alton, Allington and Manningford in search of the rioters who had been active in the area yesterday. Among those captured were John Rose, who has recently returned from transportation, and Charles Davis, who the mob had called 'Captain' at Mr Pile's. Davis had been wounded by a shot from one of Mr Pile's pistols. ¹⁶

As a result of the disturbed state of the neighbourhood a public meeting was held at the Town Hall in Warminster today. The Magistrates of the division and most of the respectable inhabitants of the town and many from the neighbourhood attended the meeting. The Marquis of Bath, having been called to the chair, opened the business of the day with much feeling, lamenting the occasion of the meeting, and recommending adoption of such means as the emergency required. A series of resolutions were

¹³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

¹⁴ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials

¹⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trails & The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

¹⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

unanimously agreed to, a numerous body, almost all the respectable inhabitants of the town and neighbouring parishes volunteered their services and were sworn in as special constables. A committee was nominated, which immediately proceeded to organise the civil force to act, if necessary, along side the detachment of the Wiltshire Yeomanry quartered in the town, under the command of Captain Long.¹⁷

A
A MEETING
OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD
OF WARMINSTER,
Held at the Town-Hall, on Wednesday the 24th November, 1830,
The Most Honorable the Marquess of Bath,
IN THE CHAIR,---

IT WAS RESOLVED—

1. THAT this Meeting do in its first Resolution express unfeigned sympathy for the privations and sufferings which the circumstances of the times have imposed on many of the working classes of Society,—and do declare their readiness to concur in such measures as shall be thought conducive to their relief.
2. THAT as the best possible means of promoting the safety of all classes of society, and the comforts of the poor in particular, the persons present at this Meeting do declare their determination to stand by each other, in defence of themselves and their neighbours; and to protect property of every kind from secret injury or open violence; and to resist every demand made on them by persons illegally combined.
3. THAT in order to suppress the attempts of Incendiaries and others, to injure property, and produce confusion in this neighbourhood, it is expedient that the respectable Inhabitants, and some of the working classes of good character, in each parish, should be sworn in as *Special Constables*, to be ready for quelling any disturbance; and to use their utmost endeavours to apprehend all persons guilty of committing depredations of any kind whatsoever.
4. THAT for this purpose parties be formed in these districts,—with regulations for a general communication,—so as to ensure a full effective force in every case of emergency.
5. THAT a liberal remuneration for information or assistance be made to all persons who are unable to afford such services gratuitously.
6. THAT all influential persons do enter into Subscriptions to defray such expenses and to carry these resolutions into effect, under the direction of a Committee; to be named and to consist of the Magistrates of the Division, the Ministers and Churchwardens of the Town, and such Gentlemen as will give their attendance, of whom seven or more be empowered to act.

BATH,
CHAIRMAN.

THAT the thanks of this Meeting be given to THE MARQUESS OF BATH, for his conduct in the Chair, and for his anxiety on all occasions to promote the peace and prosperity of the Town and Neighbourhood of Warminster.

At the conclusion of the Meeting, a very large body of Gentlemen and Persons who volunteered were sworn in as Special Constables.

VARDY, PRINTER, WARMINSTER.

10. A Meeting at Warminster Town Hall (Gloucestershire Archives – D1571/X60)

¹⁷ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830; TNA – HO52/11 f44 & 47

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Captain Long and the Warminster troop were ordered to Westbury to quell the mob that was busy destroying machines in the area. He at once marched with his troop and the mob was dispersed without too much difficulty. ¹⁸

Between 12 o'clock and 1 o'clock this afternoon a mob of between 300 or 400 people marched on Quidhampton Mill, at Fugglestone St Peter, near Wilton, a factory for the manufacture of woollen cloth, belonging to William Nash. Many of the mob had armed themselves with large club sticks.

When Josiah Pitt, a workman at the mill, saw the mob coming he fastened the door, but they burst it open. He recognised John Ford among the mob, although he was not originally part of the mob. Ford, who had worked at the factory, was also recognised by another of Mr Nash's workmen, Samuel Dowding, who saw him going over the bridge after the mob arrived and breaking the factory windows with the stick he had in his hand. When the mob got into the factory he saw Ford beat a machine, called a tucker and saw him come out three or four times with part of the machinery, which he threw into the millpond, at least ten other people were doing the same thing. The mob threatened to throw Dowding into the pond if he did not stand aside. A number of machines were destroyed, some so badly that Mr Nash says it is not worth repairing them. ¹⁹

A meeting was held in the Town Hall in Devizes today, the object being to form an association, for the protection of property and the maintenance of peace in the Borough, and the three adjoining parishes. A number of resolutions were proposed, and unanimously agreed to, and nearly all the respectable inhabitants of the borough, tendered their services, in purse and person, to aid in suppressing illegal assemblies, as long as the disturbed state of the peasantry rendered such services necessary. The promptness with which this association has been formed, and the respectability and zealous determination of its members,

¹⁸ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p82

¹⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Times, 5 January 1831. **NOTE:** Although the owner of the factory is named as **William Nash**, he appears in other document as **William Naish**.

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

cannot fail to produce a very decided effect in the neighbourhood, and it is hoped, will act as an example to other parts of the country where outrages have been committed, under the cover of distress.

Mr Estcourt declared, 'It is the determination of the magistrates, to put down, by every means, which the law entrusts to our power, the disorderly and unprincipled assemblages of men, who departing from a fair and temperate statement of their grievances, seek only to gratify the evil passions of revenge; - who destroyed the property of their immediate and unoffending employers, under fallacious hope of forcing their acquiescence in terms, which, although just and fair, if so enforced, only aggravate the distress complained of. Force should be used in all cases where force is necessary. The weak and the timid should be protected from demands of money and liquors, as have occurred in many instances, urged with threats and enforced by terror; and which can be considered in no other light than direct robbery. No alleged grievance can for one moment be listened to, until those who make them have returned to perfect quiet and good order. As to those who have committed the diabolical acts of incendiaries, I will not for an instance allow myself to believe that the peasantry, or any other inhabitants of this county, can have been parties to outrages so wicked and detestable, but which in their effects, by destroying corn, will produce scarcity, and materially increase the prices, and thus grievously afflict the poor. These resolves, if decisively acted upon, must be of immediate effect. To yield to a mob, is to reward disorder - to increase demands, not satisfy them. When quiet has been completely restored, the magistrates will no doubt redeem their pledge, by endeavouring to mitigate, in every possible way, the distress of the industrious labourer, and securing for him an amount of wages which will ensure him an honest maintenance.'²⁰

BOROUGH OF DEVIZES.

At a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Inhabitants of this Borough, held in the TOWN HALL, on Wednesday the 24th day of November, 1830

²⁰ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

JOHN BAYLEY, Esq. Mayor, in the Chair.

This Meeting highly approving of the measures that have been taken by the Mayor for the preservation of the public peace, and the protection of persons and property; and being most desirous, in every way, that may be found expedient to assist in promoting the same, do unanimously resolve as follows, viz: -

- 1 - That a Subscription be immediately entered into, for the purpose of defraying all such expences as may be incurred in the maintenance of such Horse and Foot Patrol, Special Constables, and additional Watchmen in this Borough, and the immediate Vicinity thereof, as the exigency of the moment may require.
- 2 - That this Meeting pledge themselves, individually and collectively, to aid the civil power with their personal assistance and influence, when it shall be by the Mayor and Magistrates required.
- 3 - That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Magistrates of the County, acting for this Division, for their zeal and activity in taking prompt measures for the preservation of the peace of this neighbourhood, and for the excellent resolutions which they have published.
- 4 - That the unanimous thanks of this Meeting be given to Capt. Phipps, Capt. Locke, Capt. Starky, and Capt. Lord Andover, and the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Privates of the Chippenham, Devizes, Melksham and Malmesbury Troops of the Wiltshire Yeomanry Cavalry assembled at this place, and to the Undersheriff of the County, for the promptitude, energy and skill, manifested by them. That the thanks of this Meeting be also given to the Special Constables for their active and able assistance ever since their appointment, and in particular last night.
- 5 - That a Committee be appointed to assist the Mayor and Magistrates in organizing the necessary Horse and Foot Patrol and Special Constables, for the preservation of the Public Peace, and in adjusting the expences incurred thereby; and that

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

the following gentlemen, together with the Constables of the Borough, (of whom 3 shall be a quorum,) do constitute such Committee:

Mr HUGHES	Mr CROCKETT
Mr SALMON	Mr ANSTIE
Mr ELLIOTT	Mr SAUNDERS
Mr TYLEE	Capt. TAYLER
Mr EVERETT	Mr WALL
Mr TUGWELL	Mr BULLOCK
Mr RANDALL	

6 – That the forgoing resolutions be printed in the Devizes Gazette, and also printed and circulated by Hand Bills
JOHN BAYLEY, Mayor

It is also unanimously resolved, on the motion of Mr Armstrong, seconded by Mr Elliott, that the thanks of the Meeting be given to the Mayor, as well as for calling this Meeting, and for his conduct in the Chair; as also for the prompt and active measures which he took, and the excellent arrangements made on his receiving informations of the outrages which have been committed in the neighbourhood. ²¹

At seven o'clock this morning the Marlborough Troop were sent to Aldbourne. The Reverend Mr Williams, Mr Baskerville, Mr T Calley, Reverend Dr Meyrick, Mr Fulwar Craven, and about 200 mounted farmers from the neighbourhood accompanied them. It had been expected that the mob that had assembled in the area on the two previous days, destroying a great quantity of agricultural machinery, and extorting money, would gather again today. This mob, hearing of the approach of the Yeomanry, promptly dispersed. A considerable number were apprehended. Twelve were captured at Aldbourne, and twenty at Ramsbury. They were all taken to Marlborough.

This afternoon an insignificant mob was dispersed or taken into custody at Chiseldon, where they broke a machine belonging to Mr Dyke, after the party returned from Ramsbury. ²²

²¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

²² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p88 & 89; Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Mr Burbidge, 25 November 1830

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

It has been reported that one of those captured was Thomas Goddard, a currier and tanner from Ramsbury, who acted as one of the ringleaders yesterday, and was said to have carried a tri-coloured flag. He managed to elude his pursuers for some time, but was apparently discovered in his home, hiding under a heap of leather. The Marlborough troop also dispersed a mob of 300 or 400 near Milton. They captured the leaders and they were taken to Marlborough, along with Goddard and the other prisoners from Ramsbury and Aldbourne.²³

Between two o'clock and four o'clock this afternoon a mob of around 500 people arrived at John Brasher's Crow Lane Mill, at Wilton. The mill manufactures woollen cloth. John Jennings was at the head of the mob, many of them armed with sticks. Samuel Brasher, the son of the mill owner, asked Jennings what he was going to do.

'We're going to break the machines to pieces in order to make more work for the poor people,' replied Jennings.

Mr Brasher told him that all this would do was throw more poor people out of employment. Jennings paid no attention to this reasoning and as he, and the rest of the mob, forced their way into the mill, he said, 'Get out of the way, or I will break you to pieces.'

Once inside the factory the mob broke the windows and much of the machinery, throwing the broken pieces out of the windows. George Shergold was seen in the gig-house, using the stick he carried to break the machinery. Henry Shergold, carried the handle of a brush, and was seen throwing part of the machine out of a window. Thomas Whatley, James Down, and Isaac Cole were seen in different parts of the mill, breaking the engines. William Francis had found an axe on the premises and he used it to beat the machines. The mob, were on the premises for about an hour. When they had gone five engines had been beaten to pieces and much of the machinery so broken as not to be worth repairing. Mr Brasher has estimated the damage to be around £500.²⁴

²³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 29 November 1831

²⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Four men went to the house of John Hayward, at Ebbesbourne Wake, and threatened that unless he gave them money, they would bring a mob to his house and knock it about. Mr Hayward handed over two sovereigns. He recognised two of the men, John Burrough and William Hibberd, who were quite tipsy. ²⁵

At two o'clock this afternoon news reached Salisbury that a mob was gathering at Alderbury. Lord Radnor and Mr Fort went out to meet them, in the hope that they could persuade them to disperse peaceable. They also sent a request asking for the assistance of the Yeomanry. Colonel Baker at once issued an order for twenty five men from each of the Hindon and Salisbury Troop to parade and march to Alderbury. The Salisbury men were at dinner at the *Three Swans* when this order was given, and were turned out, formed, told off, and on the march within seven minutes from the time the order was given. Colonel Baker decided to take the whole of the Hindon Troop instead of men from both, and accordingly proceeded, at the head of the Troop to Alderbury where they found a large mob gathered in the village. They had been busy destroying machines in the area, including one belonging to William Stanford, valued at £10, and had stopped at Alderbury to collect their forces before marching on Salisbury. They had been to the house of Henry Rumbold, at Alderbury, and demanded money. Mr Rumbold gave them four half crowns. They also demanded money from Thomas Wolferstan. When the Yeomanry arrived the leaders of the mob were in the public house deciding what to do. Lord Radnor and Mr Fort, who had attempted to persuade them to disperse, were waiting on the Salisbury Road when the troop came up. The Yeomanry surrounded the house and enabled the constables to secure twelve prisoners. The rest were allowed to disperse to their homes, which they did without any further disturbance. The prisoners were bound, loaded on a wagon and conveyed to the County Gaol at Salisbury under the escort of the Hindon troop, who arrived back in Salisbury at about five o'clock.

²⁵ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

WILTS to wit. **The Jurors** for our Lord the King upon their Oath present that *Thomas Light*
late of the Parish of *Salisbury* in the County of Wilts Labourer *William Cook* late of the same place
Carpenter and Henry Herrington late of the same place Labourer

on the *Twenty fourth* day of *November* in the first Year of the Reign of our Lord the new King with Force and Arms at the Parish aforesaid
in the County aforesaid a certain Threshing Machine of the value of *Ten* Pounds of and belonging to one *William Stanford*
then and there being found unlawfully maliciously and feloniously did out break and destroy Against the form of the Statute in such case made and provided and Against the
Peace of our said Lord the King his Crown and Dignity. And the Jurors aforesaid upon their Oath aforesaid further present that the said *Thomas Light*
William Cook and Henry Herrington

on the said *Twenty fourth* day of *November* in the first Year of the Reign aforesaid with Force and Arms at the Parish aforesaid in the
County aforesaid a certain other Threshing Machine of the value of *Ten* Pounds of and belonging to one *William Stanford*
then and there being found unlawfully maliciously and feloniously did damage with intent then and there the said last mentioned Threshing Machine feloniously to destroy
Against the form of the Statute in such case made and provided and Against the Peace of our said Lord the King his Crown and Dignity. And the Jurors aforesaid upon
their Oath aforesaid do further present that the said *Thomas Light William Cook and Henry Herrington*

on the same Day and in the Year aforesaid with Force and Arms at the Parish aforesaid in the said County a certain Threshing Machine of the value of *Ten* Pounds
of and belonging to one *William Stanford* then and there unlawfully maliciously and feloniously did damage with intent then and there feloniously
to render the same useless Against the form of the Statute in such case made and provided and Against the Peace of our said Lord the King his Crown and Dignity.

11. Warrant against Thomas Light, William Cook and Henry Herrington (Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12)

Colonel Baker, on his return to Salisbury at 5 o'clock, found a messenger waiting for him with a letter from Mr Eyre Coote, of West Park, in the parish of Rockbourne, in Hampshire, asking for immediate assistance, as a large number of men were reported to be advancing to attack his house. The Salisbury Troop was at once turned out and marched off under Lord Arundell. On their arrival they found that the rioters had already attacked the place, but that Mr Coote and a number of gentlemen, and their servants, who had come to his assistance had beaten them off, taking 11 prisoners. Lord Arundell then decided to return to Salisbury. Mr Coote told him that the rioters were still lurking about in the woods, and that they had expressed their firm intention of pulling down his house sooner or later, adding that he and his friends were worn out with watching and anxiety, having had no sleep for three nights, Lieutenant Peniston and 12 men were left as a guard, with orders to return to Salisbury in the morning if no further attack seemed imminent. Lord Arundell and the

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

rest of the troop left at 10 o'clock, taking the prisoners with them. ²⁶

Sir Edward Poore went to Pewsey today, expecting, as had been arranged yesterday, to meet the labourers of all the surrounding villages. There was not, however, a labourer assembled from any of these places. It would appear that they were so well satisfied that the worthy baronet would mediate fairly between them and their employers. Sir Edward, on this occasion, proposed what he considered to be a fair remuneration, at the present price of bread; and those who were present cheered him, and dispersed quietly to their labour. ²⁷

Machinery used in the manufacture of silk, together with other machinery used in the manufacture of woollen cloth, the property of Charles Nicholson, was destroyed at Barford St Martin today.

Joseph Read was forced to hand over a sovereign to the mob at Barford St Martin. The money was the property of Ono Shipman. ²⁸

A mob has been active in the Highworth area today. They gathered at Highworth workhouse, where they broke windows and took the parish wagon. They ran through the town with the wagon and it was eventually broken to pieces. Joseph Giles recognised Thomas Edgeworth among the mob. ²⁹

At the farm of George Moore Edwards they broke a thrashing machine. Joseph Skinner was at the farm and saw Robert Barrett, Robert Willoughby and George Ball among the mob. Ball was breaking the machine, Barrett was looking around to make sure all the iron parts were broken, and Robert Willoughby was hitting the ironwork with a stick. After breaking the machine the mob went up to the

²⁶ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p75 & p76 & p77

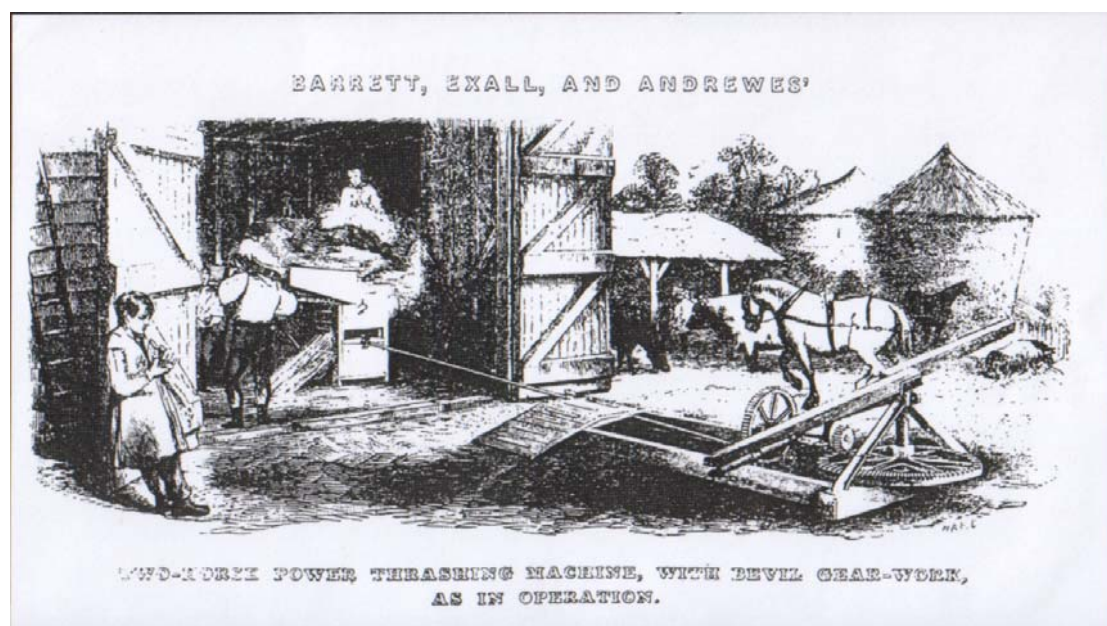
²⁷ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

²⁸ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

house and had some beer. They then headed for Mr Smith's farm, at Witham.



12. Barrett, Exall, and Andrews' Two Horse Power Thrashing Machine

(Reproduced by permission of
The Museum of English Rural Life)

Thomas Smith arrived home at Common Farm, in the parish of Highworth at about half past six this evening and found his thrashing machine and a chaff-cutting machine had been broken. William Rodbourne and William Midwinter were seen beating the thrashing machine with big sticks, by Mr Pedley, a neighbour of Mr Smith's. Mr Pedley heard Midwinter say, 'Let us set fire to it.'

'How can you think of such a thing, when my premises and those of Mr Smith are so near,' asked Mr Pedley. Midwinter immediately said that there would be no fire.

John Milson saw two labourers he recognised among the mob, Thomas Smith and James Moulding, they both had sledgehammers. Milson saw Smith beating the great wheel of the thrashing machine to pieces and breaking the chaff-cutting machine. The mob left Mr Smith's farm and broke a machine belonging to Mr Wyld, the magistrate.

The same mob was at Maggot's Mill where a thrashing machine was broken. Joseph Giles recognised Aminadab Smith among the mob at the mill. ³⁰

At about nine o'clock they arrived at the farm of William Henry Richards. Joseph Giles heard the noise and went to see what was happening. He saw the mob, which he estimated to number around 1000, breaking the thrashing machine to pieces. Giles recognised Thomas Edgeworth among the mob, he was carrying a big stick, which he used to break the machine. Francis Barnes, ploughboy to Mr Richards, saw Edgeworth using a piece of iron to break the machine. ³¹

It was around midnight when the mob of around 50, arrived at the farm of William Smith, at Highworth. Aminadab Smith, Robert Stokes and Robert Willoughby were recognised among the mob. As they were going towards the house, Thomas Smith, the brother of William Smith, called to them, 'Act like men, go and break the machine, but don't go up to the house, and you will have some beer.'

When they heard this, the mob went away from the house and broke the thrashing machine. ³²

Between six and seven o'clock this evening a mob of around 40 or 50 people arrived at Gore Farm, the premises of Richard Shewry, at Hannington. Gabriel Selwood, who works for Mr Shewry, saw the mob coming from Mr Humphrey's premises. The thrashing machine had already been taken down on Mr Shewry orders, but the mob, who were armed with sticks and hammers, broke it to pieces. Selwood saw William Legg near the machine, John Legg had a hammer and Thomas Legg was busy breaking the machine. When they had finished they gave a 'Halloo', and called out 'Drink! Drink!'. They were given some beer. ³³

³⁰ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

³¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** In the Gaol Calendar and GA – D1571/X64 – Minutes of Trials - the farmer is named as **William Henry Ricketts**, in TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book he is named as **William Henry Richards**.

³² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

³³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Thomas Jefferies, of Hannington, was woken up between nine and ten o'clock this evening and told that there was a mob outside his house. There were about 26 people there. 'There is no law tonight,' they told him, and demanded beer or money. Richard Ponting, one of the mob, said, 'I hope the farmers will have their rents lowered and we will have our wages raised.'

Henry Coleman's chaff-cutting machine was broken by the same mob. ³⁴

The mob then went to the premises of Mrs Elizabeth Montgomery, at Hannington. She is a widow, her husband having been one of the county magistrates. Between 12 o'clock and one o'clock in the night a loud knocking at the kitchen door awoke the household. Henry Strange, Mrs Montgomery's manservant, went to the window, and saw the mob. They told him that they had been to all the houses in the parish, breaking machines, and had been given either beer or money. Strange sent a maid to tell Mrs Montgomery what was happening but the girl was so frightened that she could not speak. Being afraid that the mob would do some mischief Strange gave them two shillings and six pence. William Legg, caught the money in his hat. They thanked him and went away. ³⁵

At ten o'clock this evening a mob began to gather in Heytesbury. Colonel a' Court spoke to them and warned of the illegality of their proceedings. The mob dispersed without causing any trouble.

Mr Tugwell, the under sheriff, Mr Tribe, Mr Tylee junior, Mr Joseph Crockett, Mr Potter, Mr R and Mr W Clark, Mr E Parsons and several other young gentlemen, have every night since Sunday, patrolled the neighbourhood of Devizes on horseback. A subscription has been entered into to defray the necessary expenses. ³⁶

³⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This man appears as Richard **Panting** in ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books and GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials - and as Richard **Ponting** in the Gaol Calendar.

³⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

³⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

Wednesday, 24th November 1830

Mr Johnson, wrote to Mr Estcourt, from Tilshead today to tell him that the inhabitants of the village had formed themselves into a night watch, and ask if he could attend there tomorrow in order that some of them could be sworn in Special Constables.

Vicarage, Tilshead, near Devizes

24th Nov^r 1830

Sir,

The inhabitants of this village having formed themselves into a nightly watch – and feeling alarmed at the prospect of a general rising amongst the labouring class – request most respectfully that, if convenient to you, they may be sworn in special constables for the preservation of the public peace.

Your presence here for that purpose tomorrow will be esteemed a favour by Sir,

Your's most respectfully

J.H.Johnson ³⁷

³⁷ GA – D1571/X/64, Swing Riot Papers from Sotherton Estcourt Archives

Thursday, 25th November 1830

Thursday, 25th November 1830

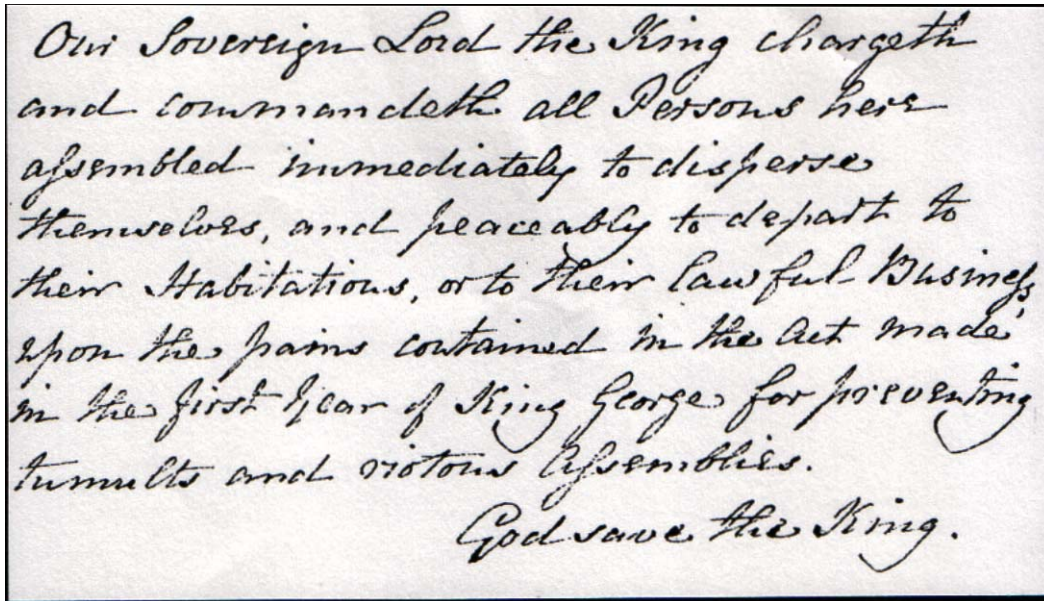
At five o'clock this morning Mrs Mary Packer, of Martens House in Stanton Fitzwarren, was woken by a noise at her door. She called out to her son and a servant, James Bigley, to assist her. By the time Mrs Packer and James Bigley got down stairs the catch had been forced from the door. Bigley opened the door and was alarmed to find around 100 people in the yard. Someone asked him for a light, which he got for them. They took it to a little close, a short distance from the house, where the machine was, and proceeded to break it. Having broken the machine some of the mob came to the house and one of them, Robert Barrett, asked for money. Mrs Packer gave him a sovereign and the mob left the premises. ¹

As no further disturbance had occurred at West Park, the home of Mr Eyre Coote, in the parish of Rockbourne, in Hampshire, Lieutenant Peniston and the 12 men of the Salisbury Troop who had been left last night by Lord Arundell to guard the property, left early this morning, arriving at their headquarters at Salisbury at 9 o'clock. The horses of this division had not been unsaddled, nor the men unbooted, from eleven o'clock on Tuesday till nine o'clock this morning. ²

It would seem that the warning given by Colonel a'Court last night was not heeded as a mob began to gather again at Heytesbury at about seven o'clock this morning. When Colonel a'Court arrived on the scene shortly after seven o'clock there were already 80 or 90 people standing in a dense mass and many others were assembling loosely about them and he was able to recognise William Bartlett, William Munday, Joseph Beminster, Joseph Hunt and Samuel Harford, who he had spoken to on the previous evening. He endeavoured to dissuade them from assembling but when this had no effect he read the Riot Act.

¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

² The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p77; Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830



Our Sovereign Lord the King chargeth
and commaundeth all Persons here
assembled immediately to disperse
themselves, and peaceably to depart to
their Habitations, or to their lawful Business,
upon the pains contained in the Act made
in the first Year of King George for preventing
Tumults and riotous Assemblies.
God save the King.

13. The Riot Act

(Gloucestershire Archives – D1571/X63)

It was about nine o'clock before the mob moved out of Heytesbury. They told Colonel a'Court that they were going to Knook to have the cider that farmer Parham had promised them, Colonel a'Court left them at Knook as they told him that they would keep the peace and separate after they had drunk their cider.

It was about two hours later the Colonel a'Court received the news that the mob had not separated and were on the Corton road. Having sent to Warminster for the assistance of the Yeomanry Troop and the Special Constables, and told them to meet him at Corton, he set out for that place himself and met up with mob at a turn of the road leading to Corton. They now numbered around 300 and when he arrived they were deciding which road they would take. Many of them had armed themselves with sticks, hammers, axes and other weapons. Some of them carried the parts of broken thrashing machines. Colonel a'Court noticed that there was a great change in the temper of the mob from that which they had shown in the morning. He begged them to desist and told that he would mark everyone that was there. The more he spoke the more they hooted and having made their decision they took the road to Mr Ambrose Patient's farm, arriving there at about 12 o'clock. William Bartlett appeared to be their leader. He

Thursday, 25th November 1830

cheered them on and gave the commands, which were passed on by William Munday. Colonel a'Court followed the mob to Mr Patient's.

Mr Patient had two thrashing machines, but had taken both of them down and, in common with many other farmers, had left the parts of one near his house, so that all those seeing it would know that he was no longer using the machines.

Mr Patient asked them what reason they had for wanting to break the thrashing machines as they could see that he had already dismantled them. They would give him no reason, but one of the men, Samuel Harford, said that he had come to break the machine, and break it he would. He asked Mr Patient where the cylinder was.

'It is with the rest of the machine,' answered Mr Patient. 'But I advise you not to break it. If you do you will repent it.'

They ignored Mr Patient's warning and Colonel a'Court's presence, and proceeded to break up the pieces of the dismantled machines.

When he saw that they were determined to break the machine Mr Patient returned to his house where he had left his wife and children. Having completed their destruction the mob followed him to the house and demanded beer and cider, which at first he refused to give them. They told him that they had been given half a hogs-head of cider by another farmer whose machine they had broken and that they must have the same from him.

The Colonel pushed his horse through the mob to Mr Patient and warned him at his peril, not to give them any cider. Mr Patient said that he was forced to do so.

Colonel a'Court followed the mob to another farm where they broke another machine and when he left them he heard them say that they would go to Sutton, which was about a mile and a half from the place that they were then.

The Warminster Troop, along with the Special Constables, eventually managed to meet up with the mob. When the mob saw them approaching many of them crossed the river in the hope of getting away. They then dammed up a portion of the stream and made it very difficult for the troop to get at them. After some dodging about in the water

Thursday, 25th November 1830

meadows, in the course of which all the yeomen got wet through, 21 of the rioters were captured, and Colonel a'Court ordered them to be taken to Devizes and said that he would send there to ask that an escort meet them at Erlestoke. By this time the river had risen considerably due to the dam the rioters had made at Codford and Captain Long found it impossible to re-cross the river and had to march round by way of Warminster. On arriving near the town at about 5 o'clock he found the turnpike gates closed against them and a number of the rioters drawn up to resist his march, and to attempt to rescue the prisoners. These men had escaped at Heytesbury, and by hastening along the other side of the river reached Warminster before Captain Long and his party. Stones and other missiles were thrown at the troop, but they were eventually able to force their way through and went on to Erlestoke. Finding no one waiting for him there Captain Long sent his prisoners on with an escort of a sergeant and 12 men, while he returned to Warminster where he found things so threatening that he applied for further assistance from Devizes.

At least two other rioters were taken later in their own homes by Colonel.³

Late this afternoon Colonel a'Court wrote to ask for assistance from Salisbury.

Heytesbury House
Nov^r 25 1830
5 P.M.

Sir,

From the very disturbed state of this neighbourhood I am induced to request that you would spare half a troop of Yeomanry from the Salisbury detachment to aid the civil power here.

So determined were the mob today in their work of destruction at Knook, Upton & Corton, that I called for the assistance of the Warminster Troop & accompanied by a body of Special Constables, we were fortunate enough to disperse the assemblage without bloodshed & to capture 21 of the rioters who are now on their road to Devizes Gaol.

³ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p83; The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831 & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; TNA – HO52/11 f42

Thursday, 25th November 1830

Capt Long at my request will spare me a dozen men tonight in consequence of information rec^d of all the pitchforks at Corton having been stolen within these few hours. He cannot however continue this indulgence from his very weak troop beyond tonight. Let me beg of you to reinforce him if you possibly can immediately.

I am Sir

Y^r ob^t Ser^t

C A a'Court

My Lord

I should think Col A'Court quite safe for the Evening and that it would be unnecessary to send any of the Yeomanry.

Most truly

My Lord

?

Thursday Evening ⁴

George Strode also wrote to Sir Francis Freeling to report the events in the Warminster area.

P.O. Warminster

Nov^r 25 1830

Sir,

I think it proper to inform you that this neighbourhood has been in a state of alarm for some days past, in consequence of ... having occurred at Salisbury, Devizes etc, but no actual outrage has happened till this morning, when a Body of persons assembled at Knook near Heytesbury and destroyed the thrashing machines of a Mr ?, Mr Parham and others. The Warminster Troop of Yeomanry who have been on duty here since Tuesday when sent for and have succeeded in taking sixteen of the Rioters who are being conveyed to Devizes Prison.

I enclose a list of Resolutions etc showing the precautionary steps which have been taken and which I hope will have the desired effect.

I am

Sir, Your most ob^t Ser^t

Geo Strode

Sir Francis Freeling Bar^t ⁵

⁴ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12 – Letter from Col a'Court, 25 November 1830, with additional note, by another hand, in pencil

At about seven o'clock this morning news was brought to Mr Benett at Pythouse, by his bailiff, James Jay the younger, that a large number of people had assembled in the parish of Tisbury, about three miles away from Pythouse. Shortly after 9 o'clock, having made due enquiry as to the truth of this information, he rode out, together with his steward, Arthur Legge and a servant, Thomas Ball.

They met up with around 400 people at the limekiln in the parish of Fonthill Gifford, about half a mile from the parish of Hindon. Many of the men had armed themselves, most carried sticks, but a few had hatchets or hammers. Charles Jerrard and his son, also called Charles, appeared to be the leaders. Both men carried sticks and the younger man wore a coloured sash across his body. Mr Benett spoke to the older man first, telling him that he was sorry to see him at the head of such a riotous assembly, and went on to warn him of the great danger he was placing himself in by his actions. To the younger Jerrard he said, 'I am sorry to see you with that sash on. I entreat you to get into the rear, for an example will be made of some of you, and I should be sorry to see so young a man as you in a sad scrape.' He added, 'Young man that sash will hang you.' To which Jerrard replied, 'I don't care about hanging, I don't care.'

Mr Benett asked them what their complaint was and was told that they intended breaking all the thrashing machines in the county and that they wanted wages of two shillings a day. This seemed to be the general cry from the men.

Mr Benett told them that he had just come from London and carried a proclamation from the King that he offered to read to them. They would not let him but he went on to explain that a reward of £50 was being offered to anyone who could give information that resulted in the detection of a machine breaker and £500 for the discovery of anyone who had set fire to property.

'We don't burn. We have nothing to do with fires,' was their immediate cry.

'I am convinced that you don't,' said Mr Benett, and went on to point out that because of the proclamation they would not be able to trust each other. 'For any man by

⁵ TNA – HO52/11 f42

Thursday, 25th November 1830

informing against 10 of you will obtain £500.' He asked them to go home and preserve their own lives and the peace of the district.

They did not listen to him and formed themselves into three groups and made their way to Mr Candy's farm at Fonthill Gifford where they broke the drum of a thrashing machine, which had been taken down, and they attacked a blacksmith's shop. At Lawn Farm, in the same parish, James Lampard had taken down his machine and placed it out in a field near the Inn. This machine was also broken, together with the horse house and part of the barn from which the machine had been taken.

James Snow saw Thomas Vinen beating down the stones under the posts of the horse house in order to knock it down. Snow also saw Thomas Phillips helping to destroy the horse house. ⁶

Mr Benett addressed the mob again while they were at Lawn Farm, entreating them to desist, but refusing to comply with their demands for an increase in wages, nor would he agree to the destruction of his own thrashing machine. Mr Benett left the mob there and went to his own premises at Pythouse Farm, where he had a thrashing machine. Six horses work this machine and part of the machine was housed in a barn.

Mr Benett had not been there long before the mob arrived. He rode out of the farmyard to meet them, 'You break open these barns at your peril; they are locked. I would resist you if I could, but I cannot, but mind, you break the machines without my consent, and at your peril.'

They forced their way into the barn, broke the machine and began to pull off part of the roof. Mr Benett had been sat on his horse watching them for about 10 minutes when suddenly the men stopped. A stone was thrown and it hit Mr Benett between the eyes. His head fell forward and his hat fell off. His face was covered in blood that gushed from his nose. More stones were thrown after him as his horse carried him out into the lane where it got caught up with a team of his own carthorses. Mr Legge, Mr Benett's steward, was also hit in the face by a stone.

⁶ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 413/23

Thursday, 25th November 1830

MUSTER ROLL OF THE HINDON TROOP.														
First Troop of the Third Squadron.														
THOMAS GROVE, Esq. MAJOR and CAPTAIN, Fern.														
JOHN BENETT, Esq. FIRST LIEUTENANT, Pyl-House.														
JOHN KELLOW BRACHER, Esq. SECOND LIEUTENANT, Chicklade.														
CORNET, (Vacant.)														
Mr. H. SPENCER, QUARTER-MASTER, Fonthill.														
No.	NAMES.	Residence.	Under Arms.	Sick.	Ab. with Leave.	Absent without Leave.	HORSES.	No.	NAMES.	Residence.	Under Arms.	Sick.	Ab. with Leave.	Absent without Leave.
	Mr. W. Goddard, <i>Serjt.</i> & Horse	Fern						41	Lush, John and Horse	Berwic St. John				
2	R. Hawkins, <i>do.</i> Do.	Donhead						42	Maidment, Samuel Do.	Donhead				
3	John Lane, <i>do.</i> Do.	Berwic St. John						43	Martin, Thomas Do.	Fovant				
4	John Locke, <i>do.</i> Do.	Wiley						44	Mills, Charles Do.	Donhead				
5	John King, <i>Corporal</i> Do.	Donhead						45	Monday, John Do.	Donhead				
6	Wm. Fitcher, <i>do.</i> Do.	Fovant						46	Nicholson, William Do.	Barford				
7	Tho. Alford, <i>do.</i> Do.	Sherrington						47	Peters, John Do.	West Stower				
8	Ed. Haskell, <i>Trump.</i> Do.	Donhead						48	Phillips, Henry Do.	Boynton				
9	Geo. Burt, <i>Farrier</i> Do.	Berwic St. John						49	Phillips, Thomas Do.	Semley				
10	Burratt, Richard Do.	Donhead						50	Pond, John Do.	Sedghill				
11	Biles, Benjamin Do.	Handley						51	Randall, George Do.	Guston				
12	Bracher, Henry Do.	Chicks Grove						52	Rossiter, William Do.	Munkton Dev.				
13	Bracher, Edward Do.	Tisbury						53	Rowden, William Do.	Fovant				
14	Candy, Robert Do.	Chicklade						54	Rowden, John Do.	Ditto				
15	Cantelo, James Do.	Tisbury						55	Sanger, William Do.	East Knoyle				
16	Churchill, Wm. John Do.	Boynton						56	Sharp, James Do.	Donhead				
17	Cooe, Charles Do.	Bread Chalk						57	Sharp, John Do.	Ditto				
18	Croome, James Do.	Dinton						58	Shepherd, Wm. H. Do.	West Knoyle				
19	Dewey, Thomas Do.	Donhead						59	Sidford, John Do.	Barford				
20	Dewey, Edward Do.	Ditto						60	Snelgrove, J. Do.	Fonthill				
21	Douty, William Do.	Dinton						61	Stringfellow, Geo. Do.	Wardour				
22	Elliott, George Do.	Wardour						62	Trim, Joseph Do.	Tisbury				
23	Evans, John Bird Do.	Hindon						63	Turner, William Do.	Ansty				
24	Everett, John Do.	Tisbury						64	Wilkins, Stephen Do.	Donhead				
25	Fleming, William Do.	Wiley						65	Wooldridge, George Do.	Ditto				
26	Folliott, Jonathan Do.	East Knoyle						66						
27	Foot, Robert Do.	Ludwell						67						
28	Green, John Do.	Barford						68						
29	Hardinge, William Do.	Berwic St. Leon						69						
30	Haskell, Francis Do.	Donhead						70						
31	Haskell, William Do.	Maiden Brad.						71						
32	Horder, William Do.	Donhead						72						
33	Jay, James Do.	Tisbury						73						
34	Kail, John Do.	Donhead						74						
35	King, James Do.	East Knoyle						75						
36	King, Henry Do.	Semley						76						
37	King, William Do.	Tisbury						77						
38	King, Henry Do.	Ditto						78						
39	Lush, John Do.	Burcombe						79						
40	Lush, Joseph Do.	Donhead						80						

**14. Muster Roll of the Hindon Troop of Wiltshire
Yeomanry Cavalry**
(Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 413/23)

Thursday, 25th November 1830

From Pythouse Farm the mob moved to Linley Farm, also owned by Mr Benett. They arrived there at about three o'clock in the afternoon and demolished more machinery, including a large water driven thrashing machine before continuing their march to Tisbury.

At Linley Farm James Snow saw Charles Jerrard the elder using an axe to destroy the thrashing machine. He also recognised John Targett, actively engaged among the rioters.⁷

The Hindon Troop of the Yeomanry Cavalry had been at their headquarters in Salisbury when, shortly after nine o'clock this morning, a farmer had arrived from Hindon to report that a serious disturbance was anticipated in that district.

In consequence of this information the Hindon Troop, accompanied by Mr Wadham Wyndham as Magistrate, marched out of Salisbury, at half past ten heading westward, towards Dinton and Tisbury. Whilst at Dinton they were informed that the mob had already destroyed a number of machines in the neighbourhood, and were heading for Pythouse. Despite the Troop proceeding to Pythouse with all possible speed they were too late to prevent the machinery at Pythouse, and at Linley Farm, from being destroyed. The Troop caught up with the mob just as they recommenced their march up the hill on the way to Tisbury. The road at this point passed through a cutting, and on the top of the bank on either side was a plantation, with a bank, and post and rails round it.

On seeing the Yeomanry the rioters cheered in defiance and a number of them made their way up into the plantation and began pelting the troops with stones. The troop divided into two bodies, one going around behind to attack them from the upper side. The skirmish had been going on for about half an hour before the Yeomanry opened fire on the men in the plantation. The mob, armed with axes, sledge hammers, pick axes and bits of broken machinery, engaged the Yeomanry in hand to hand fighting for about twenty minutes before they broke and fled in all directions, pursued by the Yeoman, who cut them down without mercy. One man, John Harding, was shot dead on

⁷ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 413/23 & 1553/12, Letter dated Shaftesbury 26 November 1830

Thursday, 25th November 1830

the spot, many others were severally wounded and 25 were taken prisoner. None of the Yeomen were killed, but Captain Wyndham was wounded in the face and head and many of the troopers were badly cut and bruised, as also were their horses. A wagon and a cart were procured to carry the prisoners to Fisherton Gaol. One of the wagon drivers was John Brickle, who worked as a carter for Mr Benett. The whole troop escorted the prisoners to Fonthill Park, Corporal John King, with a detachment of 15 men, returned to Pythouse where they mounted a guard all night. The remainder of the troop went on to Barford. From information they received when they arrived here it was thought necessary to send Sergeant Goddard and nine men back to Mr King's, at Chilmark. (This detachment was to remain there until order was generally restored, being relieved on occasion by fresh men from Salisbury.) The remainder of the troop escorted the prisoners to Fisherton Gaol, arriving at around midnight. Those prisoners that were badly injured were taken to the infirmary and the others were lodged in the gaol. The troop having delivered their charges, returned to their headquarters at Salisbury. ⁸

Among those taken to the infirmary is one man with a cut across the back of his hand, which separated the muscles; another 3 fingers off his left hand and 2 off his right; another with a piece of his scull cut off (it is thought this man will not survive); another with a severe cut across one of his elbows; another had his head cut open. Fisherton Gaol now contains 78 prisoners for rioting, besides others for felony etc, all amounting to 120. A party of Lancers guards it. ⁹

It has been reported that one of the leaders of the Tisbury mob was Samuel Alford, a farmer and a tenant of the Earl of Arundell. A warrant has been put out for him but he has apparently absconded. ¹⁰

⁸ Details of the events in the Tisbury area can be found in The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830, 3 & 10 January 1831; The Times, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

⁹ The Times, 30 November 1830

¹⁰ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830. **NOTE:** In his account of the riot **William Turner** names this man as **Joseph Alford**; **Lt Colonel Mair** names him as **Richard Alford**, but he is named as **Samuel Alford** by **Lord Arundell** who interceded on his behalf. See under Miscellaneous Rioters in Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II: The Rioters

Thursday, 25th November 1830

Description of Richard Alford ⁴⁵⁸
Farmer, and tenant of the Earl of Brunel;
He occupied at Salisbury in the County of
Wilt. a farm called Withersled, is
about fifty years of age, about five feet,
nine inches in height, full faced, round
nose, stout, and weighs about sixteen stone,
hair rather grey, waddles in his gait, and
tears out his toes very much.

The above man rents from Lord
Brunel about 200 £ a year, independently
of which he is a person of some substance;
Has been absent from his farm since Friday
or Saturday last. Is supposed to have his
cattle in the neighbourhood of Riswood in Hampshire
and was concerned in the late riots in the
County of Wilt.

Nov. 26. 1830.
Salisbury

W. H. W. W. W.
W. H. W. W. W.
This man is a defector.

15. Description of Farmer Alford ¹¹
(TNA – HO40/27 f376)

Between seven and eight o'clock this morning James Cheverell, who works for Mr Dally at Rudge, heard the sound of a horn and went to see what was happening. He met up with three other men, Charles Martin, Robert Obourne and William Scott and together they were forced to join the gathering mob. They accompanied the mob, many of whom had armed themselves with sticks, to Down Farm, in the parish of Fonthill Bishop, the property of Henry King Esquire, which is occupied by Mr Henry Self. Yesterday Mr Self had taken down his thrashing machine, because of the fires there had been in the area, only the stage of the machine remained intact, the other parts had been put in

¹¹ This document gives the name **Richard Alford**, it should be **Samuel Alford** – See under Miscellaneous Rioters in Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II: The Rioters

Thursday, 25th November 1830

the barn. The mob arrived at the farm at about 10 o'clock. John Penny opened the barn doors and the mob got in and began to break the machine. The parts were then thrown out and the men outside beat them to pieces.

Mr Self saw James Blandford in his yard beating down part of the barn with a sledgehammer and Thomas Topp using a cart line to pull down the part of the barn in which the machine had stood.

The mob was at Down Farm for about 20 minutes and from there they went to *Beckford Arms* where they had something to eat and drink. They then joined up with the main part of the mob at Lawn Farm. ¹²

The following notice appeared in today's edition of the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*. ¹³

DEVIZES, DEVIZES GREEN, etc

All persons willing to take upon themselves the duty of SPECIAL CONSTABLES (either on horseback or on foot), for the preservation of the Peace, are requested to apply immediately at the Town Clerks Office, for the purpose of being enrolled and sworn.

W.W. SALMON, Town Clerk

Thursday, 25th November, 1830

The same newspaper noted that nearly the whole of the inhabitants of Devizes and its neighbourhood are now associated and armed – members are hourly offering their services to join the Yeomanry Cavalry – the Recorder, Mr Estcourt, has also offered to Lord Andover, who commands the Malmesbury Troop, to be again enrolled as a Member of the Troop to which he formerly belonged. Encouraged and supported by his Majesty's Proclamation, it is believed the inhabitants are strong enough, and heartily determined, to put down all lawless forces. ¹⁴

Thomas B Smith reported that all was tranquil in Devizes and the immediate neighbourhood.

¹² Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 413/23; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; brief accounts also appear in The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

¹³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

¹⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 25 November 1830

Thursday, 25th November 1830

Post Office Devizes
Nov 25 1830

Sir,

I have much pleasure in stating that this Town and the immediate neighbourhood continue tranquil thanks to the zeal, courage activity & perseverance, of our Magistracy ably assisted by the Wiltshire Yeomanry.

I send Copies of Resolutions passed here yesterday, and also of the King's Proclamation some Hundred of which have been already distributed.

The Subscriptions List has already some very liberal Contributions amongst others The Recorder, Justice, and Borough Members stand conspicuous.

I am Sir

Your most obed^t. Serv^t

Thos B Smith ¹⁵

A mob has been active in the Lyneham area today. Thrashing machines belonging to John Crook and James Large have been destroyed. ¹⁶

A thrashing machine, the property of James Tyler, was destroyed at Latton today. James Shurmer and Abraham Knight, were recognised among the mob. ¹⁷

Early this morning Lieutenant Calley, at the head of the Swindon Troop, marched from Swindon to Stratton, Sevenhampton, and Highworth, where there was a great disturbance. Around mid day nearly 200 farmers, on horseback, also arrived at Highworth. They were headed by the magistrate Mr Thomas Calley and Mr H N Goddard. Mr Calley read the King's proclamation, in a very emphatic manner, as he had previously done on passing through Swindon. The whole body of horsemen then proceeded to Hannington, Cricklade, and other places and they succeeded in taking twelve of the ringleaders of the various mobs that had been active in the neighbourhood. The Swindon Troop remained under orders the whole of the day.

¹⁵ TNA – HO52/11 f35

¹⁶ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

¹⁷ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. James **Shurmer** appears as James **Shermor** in The Salisbury & Winchester Journal

Thursday, 25th November 1830

The prisoners were escorted to Swindon where they were fully committed by the Magistrates. Great credit is due to Mr Calley, for being the first to rouse the farmers to resistance, instead of yielding with timidity, and for the spirit he infused into them when assembled. ¹⁸

At 3 o'clock this afternoon the Magistrates of the Swindon District wrote to the Home Office to request that military aid be sent to the area, which was in a state of alarm as a result of the large assemblage of labourers gathered.

We the undersigned being Magistrates of the County of Wilts acting in and for the Division of Swindon hereby represent to you that the Town and Parish of Highworth in this Division, and its vicinity is in a state of great tumult and alarm from large assemblage of ill disposed persons, and that in our opinion some military force is necessary to be there to overawe the mob – that the Swindon Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry having been on active Duty for three days are incapable of attending there, and moreover cannot be spared from their own Town and neighbourhood – and that therefore we request that such force as you can spare may be forwarded to Highworth immediately. The Line of march will be through this Town.

Thomas Vilett

E Goddard

Swindon

25th Nov^r 1830

3 o'clock p.m. ¹⁹

This afternoon Mr Burbidge wrote to Mr Cobb from Marlborough to inform him of the disturbances in the area.

Marlbro Nov^r 25th 1830

Thursday Afternoon

Sir,

In pursuance of the Letter received from the Clerk of the Peace requesting Mr Woodman to report the State of his district I beg to inform you that a great number of persons

¹⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p86; Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Bradford & Burt, 27 November 1830

¹⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f84

Thursday, 25th November 1830

consisting of Journeymen mechanics and Labourers in husbandry have for the last four or five days been assembled in different parts of this neighbourhood going from farm to farm destroying thrashing machines. On Monday last the rioters met in large force and broke nearly every thrashing machine in Ramsbury, Axford, Mildenhall & Chilton: they proceeded to the Houses of the High Sheriff, Mr Pearce, Mr Craven and others demanding money and provisions which from their numbers and the time of night, (it being quite dark) the occupiers were obliged to give. The next day there was a large assemblage at Mr Baskerville's residence at Rockley near this place threatening to do great mischief there, but which was prevented by the timely arrival of the Yeomanry accompanied by the Farmers on horseback who were fortunately at Marlboro' attending the fair there on that day. I regret to add that Mr Codrington the Brother of the commander of the Yeomanry was so severely beaten as to be rendered insensible for some time, but I understand that he is now in a fair way of recovery. Mr Baskerville had a heavy blow on the arm which was not broken as reported. Wednesday morning the Yeomanry and about 200 Gentlemen on horseback proceeded to Aldbourne where it was expected they would encounter a large Concourse of rioters, but finding they were not there, the Gentlemen went to different houses there, and took into Custody many who had been most active in the destruction of machinery. They then made their route to Ramsbury and adopted the same course. Today the Yeomanry and Gentlemen are gone in pursuit of several of the principal offenders, but from the best Information that can be now obtained there is no tumultuous assemblage in the immediate neighbourhood. Many rioters have been taken into Custody and there now remain in Marlbro' Jail 50 persons for examination, - having been fully committed to Devizes on the 23rd Inst. and in the Interim a great number have been reprimanded and discharged, the Magistrates considering there was not sufficient evidence to warrant their detention. I am glad to say there have been no fires in this division.

I am Sir

Your Most Obedt Servt

Burbidge

*for Mr Woodman, Clerk
to the Magistrates for*

Thursday, 25th November 1830

*the Division of Marlbro’
& Ramsbury* ²⁰

The men of Donhead St Mary, Donhead St Andrew and Semley gathered today. Mr Thomas Grove addressed them. He allowed them to burn his machines and then they returned peaceably to their homes. ²¹

A mob of between 50 and 60 people gathered in the parish of Handley, in Dorset, and from there they went to Brindmore Farm in the parish of Berwick St John. Mr Woolridge the occupier of the farm had taken down his thrashing machine before the mob arrived. He had burnt some of the inside parts and removed the stage and the legs and hidden them and he had put the iron parts out in a field. When the mob arrived at the farm they demanded victuals and then they went out to the field where they used sledgehammers and large sticks to destroy the iron parts of the thrashing machine. ²²

From Brindmore Farm the mob moved on to the village of Tollard Royal and the farm of Lord Rivers where they destroyed the iron parts of a thrashing machine, a winnowing machine and a chaff-cutting machine.

From there they went to the farm of Charles Lane, also in the village of Tollard Royal. When Mr Lane remonstrated with the mob one of them, Joseph Chubb, came up to him with a large piece of iron, and threatened to beat his brains out if he interfered with them further. The mob then broke Mr Lane’s thrashing machine and chaff cutting machine and burnt the pieces. They then went to one of Mr Lane’s barns about half a mile away. Where they threw out and destroyed a winnowing machine that Mr Lane had borrowed from a neighbouring farmer. ²³

The last farm this mob visited was Ashgrove Farm in the parish of Donhead St Mary, occupied by Mr Jasper Cox. They broke his thrashing machine and between six and

²⁰ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Mr Burbidge, 25 November 1830

²¹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p80

²² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

²³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Thursday, 25th November 1830

seven o'clock in the evening they went to Mr Cox's house and demanded money, saying that they would have it by fair means or foul. Mr Cox handed over five shillings. ²⁴

J H Casson, vicar of Mere wrote the Secretary of State today to suggest that a detachment of military be sent to the area to quell the mobs before it was too late.

Vicarage Mere Wilts
Nov^r 25 1830

My Lord

As Sec^y of State for the H.D. I beg to represent to y^r L^p the imperative necessity of the adoption of prompt & decisive measures for the preservation of the peace in this part of the Country – A body of men consisting of 700 is traversing the country in a westerly direction destroying all machinery & insisting on supplies of food & Cash. When lives are lost & injury done it will be too late to resort to means which should have been timely adopted – Detachments of military to meet & quell those who commit overt acts should be sent over the whole of this district.

I am my Lord

Y^r L^p's most obdt^t S^t

J H Casson ²⁵

The Marlborough Troop, attended by the magistrates, marched through the villages of Bedwin, Shalbourne and Burbage today, and arrested the other ringleaders in the disturbances of the previous two days. There were no further riots in the area today. ²⁶

Lord Hill wrote to Lord Melbourne today to tell him that he had, in accordance with his request, sent two officers to areas in Wiltshire that are at present, or are likely to become seats of disturbance. Colonel Brotherton will travel to Warminster this evening, and Lt Colonel Mair travelled by last night's Mail to Salisbury.

²⁴ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁵ TNA – HO51/11 f48

²⁶ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89

Thursday, 25th November 1830

Horse Guards
25 November 1830

My Lord,

I have had the honor to receive Your Lordship's Letter of the 24th Inst requesting that I will select such Officers as I may think proper to be sent to certain parts of the Country, which are at present or are likely to become the seats of Disturbance and Disorder, for the purpose of advising with the Justices of the Peace and other Magistrates under the new and trying circumstances in which the tumults and Riots have placed them.

In reply I have the honour to inform Your Lordship that having fixed upon Colonel Brotherton and Lt Col. Mair for this duty, the latter was able to proceed by the Mail of last Evening to Salisbury, and the former will set out this Night for Warminster.

I have ordered that both be furnished with a copy of Your Lordship's Letter to me, and I have desired them to pay the strictest attention to the object which His Majesty's Government have in view in employing Officers of the Army on the important and delicate service for which they are sent into the Disturbed Districts.

I have the honour to be
My Lord,

*Your Lordship's most obedient
Humble Servant
J Hill ²⁷*

Lieutenant Colonel Mair arrived in Salisbury today. He has been sent by the government to supervise the movement of troops and to see that peace returns to the area. He wrote to the Home Office today, enclosing depositions in the case against George Toomer, who had been active in the riot at Odstock. ²⁸

Mr C Blake, of Trowbridge, wrote to Sir Robert Peel outlining his plan for the detection of the incendiaries.

²⁷ TNA – HO52/11 f36 – 37

²⁸ TNA – HO52/11 f38 – 41. **NOTE:** See *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II: The Rioters* for a full transcript of the Depositions.

Thursday, 25th November 1830

Trowbridge Wilts
Nov^r 25 1830

Sir,

An idea has occurred to me today, which I have thought likely if acted upon with vigilance to had (sic) to the detection of the parties concerned in those diabolical acts which are so frequently committed in different parts of the country. I mean the Fires.

The idea I mean is this. If a person who were well acquainted with the Inhabitants of the neighbourhood where these Fires are taking place or likely to take place were placed inside the post office in such a situation as to be able to see every person who put any letter in, and the direction of each letter immediately examined the person so stationed may easily by the name of the party to whom the letter was addressed and probably by suspicion of the party who put it in watch the person and if the letter afterwards proved to be one of the kind generally sent the party by being watched may easily be apprehended or so watched as to lead to the discovery of the parties concerned. I think if this plan were acted upon with vigilance it would lead to some discovery.

I have thought it my duty to transmit to you this Idea hoping you will not be offended with an humble individual for taking the liberty of addressing you

I remain Sir

Your humble and

Ob^t Serv^t

C Blake

P.S. I will thank you to keep my name a secret if you should think the suggestion worth acting on and it should had to my important results.

The person could be kept at night as well as day. ²⁹

²⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f46 -47

26th November – 28th November 1830

Friday, 26th November

At 7 o'clock this morning the Swindon Troop received a message asking for their assistance and marched, under the command of Captain Goddard, to Cricklade St Sampson where a mob had assembled. The special constables had also been called out, and one of them, William Poulton, had taken Robert Howard into custody and was assaulted by Thomas Ockwell who made an attempt to rescue the prisoner. ¹

The troop remained in attendance until the civil power had taken several prisoners. Samuel Buckland, Joseph Cully, John Drew, John Giles, William Giles, William Goddard, Thomas Hicks, Thomas Kilminster, Edward Ricks, and Robert Shurmer were among those taken. ²

While at Cricklade Captain Goddard received a message from Mr Barker, of Fairford in Gloucestershire, asking for the assistance of his troop at that town, as a large mob of people had assembled there and they had no force to oppose them. After consulting one of the magistrates from Gloucestershire Captain Goddard asked his men if they would comply with the requisition, and although they were not enrolled to act outside their own county they agreed to go. The troop marched to Fairford and succeeded in dispersing a mob of upwards of 200 rioters. They then returned to their headquarters. ³

Early this morning Captain Phipps sent forty men, under Lord Andover, to Warminster as a result of the request for assistance made by Captain Long yesterday. ⁴

A large body of volunteer horsemen from Swindon and the vicinity, assembled at Wroughton today. They were

¹ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; TNA - ASSI24/18

² The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p86

⁴ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p83

26th November – 28th November 1830

headed by Mr J Codrington and proceeded to Winterbourne Bassett and Cliffe Pypard, where the rioters were reported to be. On the way they fell in with the Marlborough troop of Yeomanry Cavalry commanded by Cornet Robert Codrington and accompanied by magistrates Mr Baskerville and Mr Goddard, they proceeded to Cliffe Pypard together.

PROCLAMATION

WILLIAM R.

WHEREAS great Multitudes of lawless and disorderly Persons have for some time passed assembled themselves together, in a riotous and tumultuous manner, in the Counties of Wilts, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hants, and Berks; and, for the Purposes of compelling their Employers to comply with certain Regulations prescribe d by themselves, with respect to the Wages to be paid for their Labour, have had Recourse to Measures of Force and Violence, and have actually committed various acts of Outrage in different parts of the Counties above mentioned, whereby the Property of many of our good Subjects has in several instances been wholly destroyed, and their Lives and Properties are still greatly endangered; We, therefore, being duly sensible of the mischievous Consequences which must inevitably ensue, as well to the Peace of the Kingdom, as to the Lives and Properties of Our Subjects, from such wicked and illegal Practices, if they go unpunished; and being firmly resolved to cause the Laws to be put in execution, for the punishment of such Offenders, have thought fit, by the Advice of Our Privy Council, to issue this Proclamation, hereby strictly commanding all Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs, Under Sheriffs, and all other Civil Officers whatsoever, within the said Counties of Wilts, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hants, and Berks, that they do use their utmost Endeavours to discover, apprehend, and bring to Justice, the Persons concerned in the riotous Proceedings above mentioned.

And, as a further Incentive to discover the said Offenders, We do hereby promise and declare, That any Person or Persons who shall discover and apprehend, or cause to be discovered and apprehended, the Authors, Abettors, or Perpetrators, of any of the Outrages above mentioned, so that they or any of them may be duly convicted thereof, shall be entitled to the sum of

FIFTY POUNDS

for each and every Person who shall be so convicted, and shall also receive Our most gracious PARDON for the said Offence, in case the Person making such Discovery as aforesaid, shall be liable to be prosecuted for the same.

And whereas certain wicked Incendiaries have secretly, by Fire, in many Parts of the said Counties, destroyed the Corn, Hay, Buildings, and other Property of Our Subjects, We do hereby promise and declare, That any Person or Persons who shall discover and apprehend, or cause to be discovered and apprehended, the Authors of the said Fires, so that they or any of them may be duly convicted thereof, shall be entitled to the sum of

500 POUNDS

for each person who shall be so convicted, and shall also receive Our most gracious PARDON, (except the actual Perpetrator of any of the said Fires), in case the Person making such Discovery, shall be liable to be prosecuted for the same.

And the Lords Commissioners of Our Treasury are hereby required to make payment accordingly of the said Rewards.

Given at Our Court at St. James's, this Twenty-third Day of November, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty, in the First Year of Our Reign.

God Save the King.

16. The King's Proclamation
(Gloucester Archives – D1517/X60)

It had been reported to the Marlborough troop that a mob of around 200 people had assembled and intended to rescue some prisoners who had been captured yesterday. As it turned out the prisoners had been taken to Devizes very early this morning and the mob, when they heard this dispersed, before the Yeoman arrived. Mr Codrington read the King's Proclamation and then the horsemen proceeded towards Bincknoll in search of other rioters. On the way they met up with a party of horsemen, headed by Mr Thomas Calley and Mr H N Goddard. The two parties then separated, Mr Goddard's party proceeding through the villages to the east of Wootton Bassett and the other party, accompanied by the Marlborough troop, went through Hilmarton and Lyneham. They apprehended a number of labourers who were pointed out as having taken part in the disturbances. Between four and five o'clock this afternoon the two parties met up again just outside Wootton Bassett and together they entered the town followed by the Marlborough troop. They drew up in the centre of the town and Mr Baskerville read the King's Proclamation. The troop marched back to Marlborough and the town has since remained quiet.⁵

On his arrival at Marlborough Colonel Brotherton consulted a local magistrate and the Reverend Mr Williams, as to the necessity of the troop of the 3rd Dragoon Guards remaining in the town. They both agreed they were no longer needed and would be more properly stationed at Trowbridge. Colonel Brotherton wrote to Lord Fitzroy Somerset to report his findings.

Marlbro' Thursday (sic) morning 26 Nov 1830

My Lord,

I write / as I may not arrive at Warminster in time for the post.

Early this morning I consulted both a local magistrate, the mayor of the place & a county one, The Revd Mr Williams as to the necessity of the troop of the 3rd Dr Gds remaining

⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89; Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, letter from Bradford & Burt, 27 November 1830

26th November – 28th November 1830

here – they both agreed that it was not wanted & that it would be more properly stationed at Trowbridge.

The officer in command, Captain Todd was also of the same opinion. I have therefore given him the route for the latter place.

Although I had no discretionary power as to directing him on any other point - yet the inclosed seemed, at first, to require immediate attention.

However on further enquiry it appeared that there was no urgent necessity for complying with the requisition, as more favourable accounts arrived during the night from that quarter.

There seems to have been a good deal of energy displayed here by the Magistracy, Yeomanry etc during the last two days with the best effect, for the farmers themselves are gaining courage & were hot in the pursuit of the rabble to which before they so tamely yielded.

I am proceeding immediately to Warminster.

P.S. Mr Williams is the person who apprehended the man of the 76th the other day & he tells now that he has since seen an artilleryman making himself conspicuous amongst the mob, but could not get at him. If soldiers make such use of furloughs, perhaps at such a moment it would be as well to recall them.

On the same principle, if things become worse, I should like to see the pensioners assembled in some way or other & partially, without perhaps embodying them regularly for, to a certainty, if not thus disposed of, they would be amongst the mob.

Pray excuse my presuming to give an opinion on this point but as two soldiers have already been observed by one Magistrate to be actively engaged amongst the masses the conclusion is that there are many more.

Mr Richard Hyatt, of Burbage has received a notice, which says that unless he takes down his thrashing machine his whole premises will be burnt down. He has had the machine taken down and the pieces put out into a field. ⁶

At a meeting held at the Council House, Salisbury today a Plan for the organization of Special Constables was

⁶ TNA – HO52/11 f80 &81

drawn up and it was recommended that the Magistrates of the different districts adopt a similar plan. The recommendation was forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.⁷

It is recommended to the different Magistrates to organise Special Constables on a Plan similar to the one below.

IT is hoped that some two Magistrates will proceed together to the different Places in their own respective Neighbourhoods, and swear in such Special Constables as may be willing to undertake that Office; and if they do not find Volunteers in sufficient numbers, in their opinion, to secure the Peace, that they will, without delay, call in some five Householders, who may be of opinion that there is danger of Riot, to make Oath of the same; after which they are authorized by Law to compel Persons to be sworn.

It is proposed that in each Place they should select one or two Men, as Leaders, to whom the different Constables may address themselves in the first instance; and that some one Person should be selected from the whole of each Division as pointed out below, who may superintend the whole, to whom the Leaders of the different Parishes may communicate, if any Disturbance should arise, and who will use their discretion, not only in calling out the whole or such portions of the Force under their command, as they may judge necessary, but also in communicating with the Magistrates at Salisbury or the nearest Place where Troops may be stationed, if they find it necessary to apply for the Military.

It is likewise recommended, that in each Division the Leaders shall divide their whole Force into three, four, or more Sections, according to their numbers, and distinguish them by the Letters A, B, C, &c., each Man bearing the Letter of his Section; and that, in order to avoid harassing the Men unnecessarily, each Section shall take its turn of Duty, for 8, 12, or 24 hours, as may be thought advisable; that they shall keep Watch both Day and Night; but that the others shall be ready to answer any call for Assistance that may be made upon them.

It is suggested, that the different Parishes should be classed according to the Form given below; and the Magistrates have named, as Leader for each Division, such Person as has occurred to them as likely to be willing to undertake the task: however, they leave the choice of that Person to the Magistrates on the spot, with the request that they would immediately communicate to the Magistrates at Salisbury the Name of the Person they have selected.

[*N.B.*—The inclosed was forwarded from the Secretary of State, and strongly recommended for imitation.]

Hamington	} <i>B. Pinnegar.</i>	Millford	} <i>Cooc.</i>
Coombe		Laverstoke	
Bishopstone		Ford	
Ditchampton	} <i>Thring.</i>	Nunton	} <i>H. Hedding.</i>
Wilton		Osstock	
Burcombe	} <i>Nicholson.</i>	Bodenham	
Barford		Orcheston St. George	
Chilhampton		Orcheston St. Mary	} <i>Rolls.</i>
South Newton	} <i>Trenchbridge.</i>	Shrewton	
Great Wishford		Maddington	
Stoford		Rolston	
Stapleford		Stratford	} <i>Jants or Waters.</i>
Steeple Langford	} <i>Robert Pinckney.</i>	Little Darnford	
Berwick St. James		Lower Woodford	
Winterborne Earb		Lake	} <i>Philip Pinckney.</i>
Winterborne Dantsey	} <i>Henry Munday.</i>	Woodford	
Winterborne Gunner		Upper Woodford	
Porton		Wilsford	} <i>Robert Pinckney.</i>
Idmiston		Amosbury	
Beacombe		N. and S. Daurerham	} <i>Waters.</i>
Allington	} <i>Judd.</i>	Martin	
Newton Toney		Tidpit	
Cholderton		Toyd Farm	
Fisherton	} <i>Forward.</i>	Alderbury	} <i>Hariott.</i>
Bemerton		East & West Grimstead	
Quidhampton		Whaddon	
West Harnham	} <i>Bell.</i>	Whiteparish	} <i>Fox.</i>
Netherhampton		Plaitford	
		Bramshaw	
		Downton	<i>C. Shackburgh, Esq.</i>

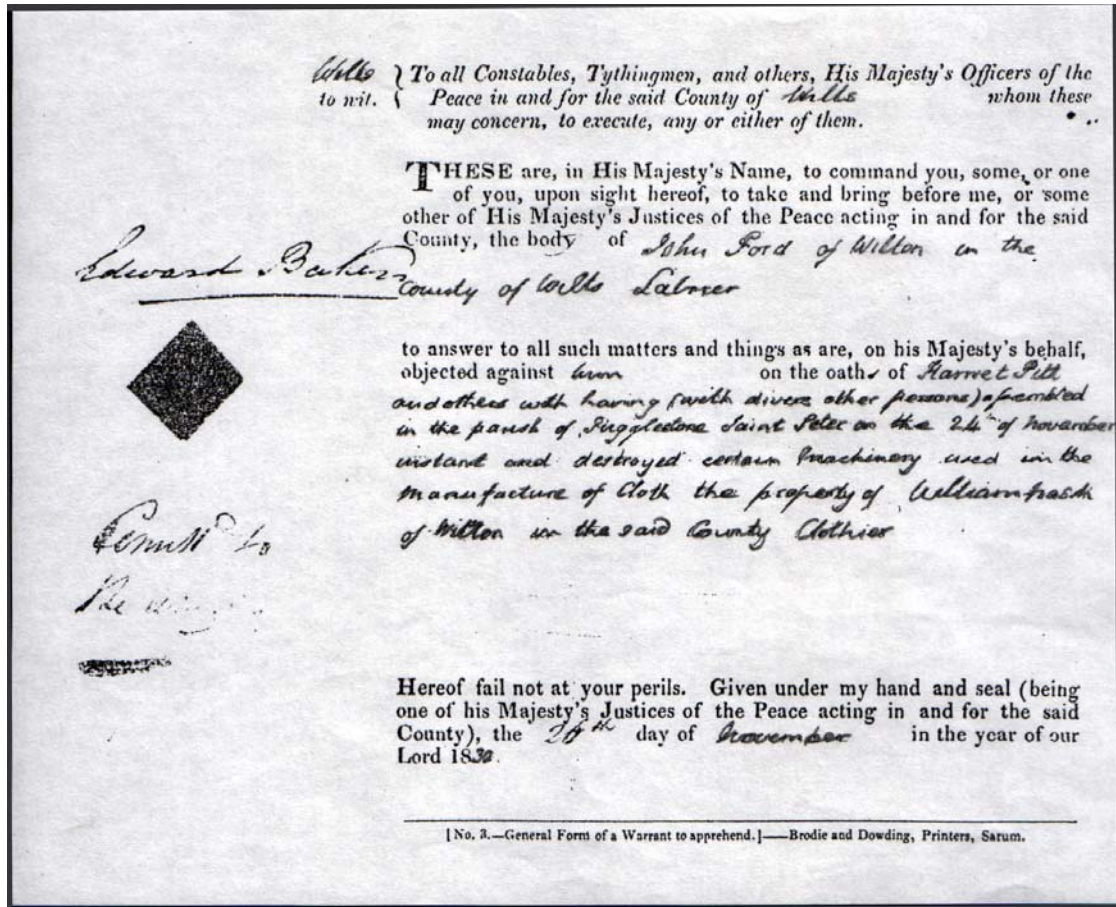
COUNCIL-HOUSE, SALISBURY, Nov. 26, 1830.

17. Organization of Special Constables (Gloucestershire Archives – D1571/X60)

A warrant was issued today for the apprehension of John Ford. He is believed to have been one of the men involved in the destruction of the machinery at William Naish's cloth manufactory on the 24th November last.

⁷ Gloucestershire Archives – D1571/X60

26th November – 28th November 1830



18. A Warrant for the Apprehension of John Ford (Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12)

On his arrival at Heytesbury Colonel Brotherton wrote again to Lord Fitzroy Somerset to report on the state of affairs in Wiltshire.

Heytesbury – near Warminster
Friday 26th

N^o2.

My Lord,

Having arrived here so late, owing to the delay requisite both at Marlboro' & Devizes, I have time only to report my arrival.

Colonel A'Court has written fully to Lord Lansdowne. There seems a pretty well founded apprehension that some attempt will be made on Warminster tomorrow, unless disconcerted by the preparations, which appear to me, from the cursory observation I have been enabled to make, quite adequate to repel any such attempt.

26th November – 28th November 1830

The discomfiture which the mob have experienced in two or three instances within these two days will I think deter them from hazarding anything like a serious attack, but in the event of their venturing on it – I do not see a possibility of their succeeding if common firmness is shewn & I think there is no reason to doubt this – There seems a great degree of zeal & activity prevalent here.

I have not time to say more but will write in detail tomorrow. ⁸

Colonel a'Court wrote to Lord Melbourne today to report that he had taken up a suspicious character in Heytesbury. The man calls himself Richard Brunton, and says he is a native of Yarm near Stockton upon Tees in Yorkshire.

*Heytesbury House
November 26 1830*

My Lord,

I mentioned to your Lordship in a private letter this morning that I had taken up a suspicious character in this place. I enclose upon a separate sheet his account of himself.

He is about 5.11. Inches high – good looking – stoops a little – has a strong northern dialect – was dressed respectably in long trousers – a neat waistcoat – fine linen & a Jacket or rather Coatie made of Camlet or fine fustian – His whole appearance very decent.

He arrived at a public house in this place shortly after our encounter with the mob; & from the circumstance of his spending his money very freely and treating many people who are known to have been in the mob, & of whom he professed to know nothing. He was reported to me as a suspicious character. I personally visited the public house after night fall & had the man brought to me in a private room. He made very little difficulty in allowing my special constables to search him & as nothing of any moment was found upon him & as he had but a few shillings in his possession & appeared very open & candid, I expressed regret at having put him to any inconvenience & immediately liberated him.

⁸ TNA – HO52/11f77 - 79

26th November – 28th November 1830

Some hours afterwards, the special constable patrol, not knowing that I had examined the man, but seeing him talking to another very suspicious person with whom he was proposing to share his bed – took both into custody & brought them to my house. The companion I found out to be a desperate character – the very man who attacked Mr Hayter's premises & against whom I had already issued a warrant for his apprehension. My suspicions being now aroused I ordered the man to be detained and placed under the charge of some steady persons, until I could examine him more closely. I went to him at daylight & found him in his bed – which afforded me a better opportunity of minutely searching his dress etc. I took his examination, which I enclose; & on carefully examining the scrapes of paper found in his pockets, I perceived that he must have travelled precisely in the time & at the time of all the riots from Andover westward. He had many Inn bills about him & some of them in which Dinners are charged 5/- Beds 6/- etc. He accounts for this by stating that these were his master's bills & not his.

He appears to have spent in a few hours as much as 23 shillings in treating total strangers. He was seen, before he was apprehended, both to read & write; & was very frequently called out of the house by strange people – to one of whom he gave the letter which he had written.

Under these circumstances I sent to Mr Hayter requesting the advice and assistance of Mr Vicary the Bow Street officer. He considered the case as very suspicious. His not accounting for his keys & not recollecting where he slept at Salisbury – his happening to be in all the places at the very time that confusion ensued – his waste of money & having so little with him – all these circumstances have induced Mr Vicary to proceed with the keys to Salisbury to endeavour to trace his baggage. It seem the man is no stranger in London, but is not personally known to Mr Vicary.

I have written to Captain Blackwood to ascertain the truth of the statement as regards him. I have also written to Mr Eyre Coote at New Park earnestly requesting him to go himself to Hanley & to endeavour to trace out the baggage which I suspect must be concealed there. I have also sent to a

26th November – 28th November 1830

Linen draper at Bath, in whose warehouse is a young man to whom he says he was directed to introduce himself.

It is singular that during the night he knew all that had passed at Hindon during the day – even before I did.

That he is connected in some way with the disturbances – his company & behaviour show; if we succeed in seeing his boxes much I think may be discovered. In the mean time I shall of course detain him in custody. I should add that there are different marks on his linen – but he says he is not aware of the circumstances as he can neither read nor write.

May I beg, my Lord, that this statement may be forwarded to the Home department, with the request that the Secretary of State may direct what further steps should be taken in the business.

I have the honor to be

My Lord

Your Lordship's

most obedient

humble servant

C.A. a'Court⁹

Mr Minty wrote, from Salisbury, to Sir Francis Freeling to report the disturbances at Pythouse.¹⁰

Post Office Salisbury Nov 26 1830

Sir,

I am happy to state that this City continues quiet, but am sorry to inform you of a most violent assault yesterday in the residence of John Bennett Esq. M.P. for the County (Pyt House near Hindon) – the mob was met by the Hindon Troop of Yeomanry and a regular battle took place, the Cavalry were obliged to fire and then to use there sabres two of the mob were killed many wounded and thirty seven prisoners are now in our Jail.

I am sorry to add that Mr Bennett is very much bruised and the Captain of the Troop Mr Wyndham is severely beaten in the face.

I hear that the disturbances are still spreading in Dorsetshire.

⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f61 – 62 & 65. **NOTE:** For the Examination of Richard Brunton and other documents see *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II*

¹⁰ It seems likely that this was Alexander Minty, who is named Post Master at Salisbury in the 1830 Directory, and appears as such in the 1841 Census.

26th November – 28th November 1830

A most gallant resistance was made on Tuesday by Mr Coote M.P. at West Park near Fordingbridge, he with eight of his keepers, dispersed a mob of five hundred who attacked his house – wounded six, killed one and took nine prisoners.

Scarcely a Gentleman or Farmer has been passed over, all have been obliged to comply with their demands or have their houses demolished.

I hope the worst is passed here – I shall not fail to write daily until we are quiet

I am Sir

Your obedient Servant

A (H?) Minty

To Sir Francis Freeling Bart

5 o'clock P.M.

I have just received by Express a letter from Dorchester to the Mayor of Salisbury requesting troops may be sent there immediately or he cannot tell what the consequences will be – all the neighbourhood is in a state of insurrection.

$\frac{1}{2}$ past 7

An Express is just gone to Winchester for assistance to be sent to Dorchester from the Mayor of Salisbury.

A troop of the Lancers and another of the Yeomanry are gone from hence to Chilmark near Hindon as the rioters are determined to demolish a Mr King's premises there as they say his son shot one of the men at Pyt House yesterday consequently no assistance can be sent from here to Dorchester.

8 o'clock

The Hindon Mail Cart is just arrived – all is quiet at Chilmark as he came through – The Troops had surrounded Mr King's home.

$\frac{1}{4}$ past nine

All is quiet on the road between this and Warminster – Troops are there holding themselves in readiness. ¹¹

A troop of the 9th Lancers, under Captain Shaw, has been sent from Bristol to Hindon to assist the Yeomanry. Captain Wyndham of the Hindon troop has returned to Hindon and the Salisbury troop, having sent a detachment of 12 men under the quartermaster to Chilmark, remain at

¹¹ TNA – HO52/11 f56-58

26th November – 28th November 1830

Salisbury. This afternoon a sergeant and six men were sent to Newton Tony, at the request of the magistrates, and have arrested four men. ¹²

Lieutenant Colonel Mair wrote to the Home Office today enclosing a plan of the Police for the City of Salisbury. He also pointed out that he thought that sitting Magistrates were necessary in the small Towns and that it would be necessary to appoint a Special Commission to try the prisoners.

Salisbury. 26th Nov. 1830

My Lord,

The enclosed plan is now in force which I proposed yesterday to the City Magistrates and will effectually preserve the peace. The same shall be done in the principal Towns of this County.

A party of the Yeomanry brought in from Hindon last night about 25 prisoners, after an affray and some firing on the mob in number stated from 4 to 700. Several of the mob were severely wounded, but only one Officer of Yeomanry hurt. The mob have not been seen with fire arms.

In consequence of information I have despatched 2 officers and 20 Lancers to Hindon permanently and two parties of a few men to protect farmers threatened to be attacked.

The Military force now in the County is ample /having two troops of Lancers in addition to the Yeomanry./

Some measures must be adopted to make examples immediately of the worst offenders. We are in hopes to night to secure a daring leader.

The Jail here has 70 prisoners – Devizes and Marlbro' both full – I have suggested to get rid of as many as possible and only detain the ringleaders.

The Magistrates concur most cheerfully in my suggestions and act on them with promptitude.

I submit to your Lordship the necessity of a Special Commission. I have been urged to send Troops into Somersetshire and Dorsetshire but have decidedly refused. It would only tend to cause alarm in Districts as yet not

¹² The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p81

26th November – 28th November 1830

disturbed, tho' I cannot conceal that it is spreading slowly westward.

We want sitting Magistrates in the small Towns – one to be always on the spot.

Lord Bath has acceded to my plan of placing the Yeomanry under their Lt Col. and we shall proceed with effect.

Mair

Lt Col.

Not having an idle moment must plead for my disjointed Reports.

The small farmers if they do not aid evidently are glad to see the labourers at work – fancying it will tend to their benefit – lowering of tythes etc

Plan of Police for the City

That the Special Constables shall be subdivided into Districts of 100 or 50 men to each, classing them according to the vicinity of their Habitations.

That a Head Constable be appointed to each Division who shall make himself acquainted with the Residences of his Division, call them out when wanting, and from him they will receive instructions.

That each Division be lettered A.B.C. etc and each Constable bear a number.

That one Division be considered each night as the one for any special Duty that may be required, and from this the Constables be selected if the whole should not be deemed requisite.¹³

Luke Cole, a farmer at Estcourt, in the parish of Long Newnton, had a hired thrashing machine on his property. He became alarmed by the disturbances in the area and removed it, placing it by the side of the Turnpike Road where it could be easily seen. Shortly after about 20 or 30 men arrived at his farm and burned the machine. They then tried to persuade the labourers of Newnton to join them

¹³ TNA – HO52/11 f49 – 51. **NOTE:** For a full account of Mair's plan see *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II* taken from TNA – HO40/27 f367 – 371.

before returning to Tetbury, in Gloucestershire where they extorted money and beer from several inhabitants.

By the time they reached Tetbury they numbered around 200 and having armed themselves with large sticks and hammers, they proceeded towards Beverstone where they destroyed two thrashing machines, a hay rake and a haymaking machine. They broke a thrashing machine at Chavanage, in the parish of Horsley, belonging to William Hart, one at Colley Farm, the property of Mr Essex, one at Mr Saunder's farm at Upton Grove, and another thrashing machine, together with a hay-making machine at Richard Kilminster's farm at Cherrington. When darkness fell they headed for *Trouble House Inn* on Tetbury Common, where they called for beer, bread and cheese. When told that the soldiers were coming Thomas Bishop, one of the rioters, is reported to have said, 'be d...d if we care for soldiers, for they won't hurt us.' The Tetbury Magistrates had sent to Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge for help, and 2 detachments of Dragoons soon arrived on the scene along with some special constables, led by Thomas Kingscote. The Inn was surrounded and a number of the rioters were apprehended in a room at the back and escorted to Horsley Gaol by the soldiers. ¹⁴

The Marlborough Magistrates wrote to the Home Secretary today to report that peace has been restored in their district.

Marlbro' Nov^r 26th

My Lord

As we wrote to your Lordship, informing you of the disturbed state of the District in which we act as Magistrates, & requested military aid, we hasten to let you know, that in consequence of the prompt & spirited conduct of the few Yeomanry we have left, backed up by every man of property, & Farmer in the neighbourhood, we have succeeded in restoring Peace & Order. As the wages of the Labourers have been raised, & many of the Ring-leaders in the different villages are in custody, we have no fear at present of any further tumult.

¹⁴ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter dated Malmesbury, 27 November 1830; TNA – T1/4193 – Claims for Rewards, Gloucestershire.

26th November – 28th November 1830

We cannot conclude without thanking yr Lordship for your ready compliance with our wishes in sending us military aid – the Troop of the 3rd Dragoon Guards, which came to Marlbro' on Wednesday, have, this day, returned to Trowbridge – We have the honour to be my Lord, your Lordship's obedient, humble Servants

*Fulwar Craven Magistrates
E H Williams in the
E. G Meyrick Marlbro' District ¹⁵*

Saturday, 27th November

Mr Robert Hyatt, of Burbage, who took down his thrashing machine after receiving threats to burn his property, was visited by a mob today. They destroyed the machine parts Mr Hyatt had put out in a field. John Perry was recognised amongst the mob and was seen striking the machine. Having destroyed the pieces the mob demanded victuals and drink. ¹⁶

The Marlborough troop accompanied magistrates through Pewsey, Milton, Wootton, Easton, Burbage and other places and assisted in the apprehension of some of the most daring rioters who had been involved in the disturbances in the area. ¹⁷

John Gardner, the Mayor of Marlborough, wrote the Home Office today to report on the measures taken to preserve the tranquillity of the area. ¹⁸

Mess^{ers} Bradford and Burt wrote to Mr Cobb to inform him that tranquillity had been restored in the Swindon area.
Sir,

We have the pleasure to be able to make a favourable report of the state of this Town and neighbourhood. Perfect order and tranquillity seem restored here and in the

¹⁵ TNA – HO51/11 f55

¹⁶ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE:** This farmer is named as **Mr Hyatt** in these two newspapers, as **John Hyatt** in the Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831 and **Robert Highett** in ASSI24/18/3 & the Gaol Calendar; John Highett, a farmer, age 30 is living at Eastsand Burbage at the time of the 1841 census.

¹⁷ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89

¹⁸ TNA – HO52/11 f87

26th November – 28th November 1830

neighbouring Parishes. On Thursday the Town of Highworth was in a disturbed state, but the Swindon Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry and a very large body of Farmers on horseback went there and apprehended some of the worst characters, and the Town has since been quiet. Cricklade also was in a similar state, but the same course of proceeding has had a similar effect there.

Yesterday a very large body of Farmers on horseback assembled near Wroughton & Broad Hinton and were afterwards joined by the Marlborough Troop of Cavalry, and headed by three Magistrates went through the villages of Winterbourne, Cliffe Pypard, Hilmarton, & Lyneham, and thence to the Town of Wootton Bassett, and in every place the King's proclamation was read, and we are of opinion it has produced a good effect. The Farmers in this neighbourhood have met these disturbances with great spirit and vigour, instead of yielding as in some places with timidity.

We are happy to add that no fire has occurred in this Division since our last report, but last night a fire was seen from this place in some part of Gloucestershire.

*We are, Sir,
Yours truly
Bradford & Burt*

Swindon

*27th Nov. 1830*¹⁹

The Swindon Troop paraded at 10 o'clock this morning, and remained under arms the whole of the day, all remained quiet.²⁰

The Swindon Magistrates wrote to Lord Melbourne today to request that some regular troops be sent into the neighbourhood of Swindon or Highworth.

Swindon. 27 Nov 1830

My Lord,

We the undersigned Magistrates of the county of Wilts acting for the Division of Swindon beg leave to state that in consequence of the Swindon Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry having been called out to assist the Civil authorities in quelling the Disturbances in this District we trust Your

¹⁹ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, letter from Bradford & Burt, 27 November 1830

²⁰ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p86

26th November – 28th November 1830

Lordship will represent the circumstances to the consideration of His Majesty's Government.

We beg leave further to state that the Troop was ordered to assemble by a letter received from the Under Sheriff for the County of Wilts on Tuesday the 23rd instant and has acted under our direction ever since and been most effective in their services, having taken a great number of prisoners who are committed for Trial: but this being a very populous District we do not consider the Force we have sufficient, as the Yeomanry has been much harassed. We have therefore to request some regular Troops may be sent into the neighbourhood of Swindon or Highworth to support the Civil power.

*We have the Honor to be,
My Lord
Your Lordship's most
Obedient Humble Servants
Fra. Warneford
James Wyld
Thomas Vilett
T. H. Ripley*

*To the Right Honourable
Viscount Melbourne
Secretary of State for the
Home Department ²¹*

The inquest on the body of John Harding, the man who was shot during the riot at Pythouse, was opened today by Mr Whitmarsh and adjourned until Monday. It will be held at Tisbury. ²²

Lieutenant Colonel Baker transferred his head quarters to Devizes this evening. On his arrival he found Captain Phipps with the Devizes, Melksham, Malmesbury, and Chippenham troops in quarters. Captain Phipps reported that nothing of consequence had occurred since Captain Warriner had dispersed the rioters at Manningtree, and that the troops had been occupied daily in bringing in prisoners. Colonel Baker ordered half of the Devizes troop to

²¹ TNA – HO52/11 f85

²² Jackson's Oxford Journal, 11 December 1830

26th November – 28th November 1830

remain on picket, with their horses saddled and ready to turn out at a moment's notice.²³

Thomas B Smith wrote, from Devizes, to the Home Office to report that, as far as he was able to ascertain, the County was now perfectly tranquil.

Post Office, Devizes
Nov. 27. 1830

Dr Sir,

Our very worthy Magistrate and Neighbour, Mr Bucknall Estcourt, having communicated to me this evening that he had documents of much importance which he wished to have conveyed to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, per Mail, I thought it the most advisable and safe measure to make up a special London bag for that purpose, and I take the opportunity of explaining the object to you.

I also beg to state that at present, the whole of this extensive County is, as far as I can learn from the most diligent enquiries, made by me in the highest quarter, perfectly tranquil.

This desirable object had been attained by the unanimity, zeal and activity of the Inhabitants of the County, who to check the turbulence and outrages of a misguided and infatuated Mob, have under the direction of our zealous intelligent and discreet Magistrates formed themselves into Associations to repel Men whose objects appeared to be to excite discontent, and to plunder those who were well disposed.

The tranquillity has been restored, I regret to add that it has not been obtained without loss of life – four or five of the most turbulent have, I hear, fallen victims to their folly in the Neighbourhood of Hindon, a Town in the South-west part of the County and near the Seat of John Benett Esq^r. one of our worthy County Members, and who, in defending his House and Property, against the Mob, has been seriously wounded. This latter event, has I assure you caused sincere regret throughout the County, as he is a Gentleman very much respected by his Constituents.

It is absolutely out of my power to describe to you how indefatigable the Magistrates in this division have been for

²³ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p82 & p83

26th November – 28th November 1830

the past week. Some of them have been in constant attendance, night and day at the Bell Inn, swearing Special Constables receiving Despatches, devising the most effectual methods to check the growing evil, making arrangements for the security of the Prisoners, (nearly 150 being in safe Custody in our two Devizes Gaols) and assisting the Officers of the Wilts Yeomanry with their personal attendance and advice and I must not omit to state how much we are indebted to the Officers, non commissioned Officers and Privates, of the Devizes, Melksham, Chippenham and Malmesbury Troop of the Yeomanry, whose personal courage, coolness, and forbearance could not be excelled.

Would to God, measures similar to those adopted hereabouts, had been adopted in Kent, then I am quite sure the Inhabitants of this hitherto peaceable County would not have witnesses the appalling and distressing scenes, which have occurred within it, during the past week.

I have, I fear expressed myself too warmly on this subject, if I have I am quite sure your kindness will excuse me.

Allow me to have the honor of subscribing myself

Dr Sir

Your mo. Obed. Serv^t

Thos B Smith ²⁴

Lieutenant Colonel Mair sent an account of the state of his District and the arrangements he had made for ensuring the public peace.

Salisbury 27 Nov. 1830

My Lord,

Things are gradually becoming tranquil and (Hindon?) where the affray took place on Thursday night with the Yeomanry is perfectly quiet, I shall leave the 20 men of the 9th Lancers there for a few days, and have with Col (Baker?), who has set out for Devizes made a new disposition /which I enclose/ of the Yeomanry, requesting him to fix on that place as H^d Q^{rs} being most central.

In consequence of an express from the Mayor of Dorchester last night requesting Military assistance, I judged it proper to forwarded (sic) it to Sir Colin Campbell, who

²⁴ TNA- HO52/11 f92-93

26th November – 28th November 1830

ordered a Troop of Lancers, they have gone and will be there tomorrow morning – I do not see the necessity, as I have ascertained that all was quiet at 5 in the afternoon along the whole line of road from Dorchester to this – Lord Digby on his way from Town called on me – I pointed out the system that had been adopted here with success, gave him the plan and resolutions and suggested the propriety of doing the same in Dorsetshire – advocating to demand Military Aid except on well authenticated grounds, and as reports and false alarms were flying about – that even reports should be well sighted by persons of judgement – Lord Loughborough has arrived with a Troop from Andover, leaving a small party there – I shall keep (them?) here, tho' I am still of opinion that the Yeomanry force would have been sufficient.

I have visited the Jail by (persuasion?) of the Magistrates and alone, convinced the Prisoners of the illegality of their acts, the desire of their employers to assist them, but not from compulsion, the seem (...?) in these (...?) - that their crime was capital, and that if some should be allowed on bail to return to their families by leniency of the Magistrates, hoped they would evince by their loyal, industrious & peaceable conduct that they might be depended on – those who had taken active parts could be selected & committed. They did not defend their conduct penitent. I have therefore deemed it my duty to suggest to the Magistrates that some of the ringleaders should be detained and the others admitted to bail or in case of any good previous conduct on their own recognizances – Thus clearing out a portion as the Jail is becoming too crowded and Magistrates are in consequence disposed to follow this – a kind of Paymaster or rather distributor of money, illegally obtained is now under examination and will be committed.

I must now beg leave to lay before your Lordship the actual state of the peasantry in this County, I have never failed to support strenuous resistance to demands made by mobs. The general average of wages paid to able bodied men has been 7/- per week – even as low as 6/- and this is allowed by all the Gentlemen landowners and Farmers, and I have taken every means to obtain information from all, not to be a fair remuneration for labouring men, even without families – The Farmers have in most cases increased this to

26th November – 28th November 1830

9/- and 10/- but the remedy to be effectual must come as a measure of the Legislature or as advise from some one high in Authority as your Lordship, whose situation would carry weight with all classes – I am aware of the difficulty of fixing a general rate – much future mischief may be thus prevented. The acts of the rioters have been directed to destroying threshing machinery and seeking a fair remuneration – no act of personal violence has been offered except to Mr Benett, the member, who farms largely and very properly resisted demands made by the mob. His praiseworthy determination has met support as I have left him 25 men to protect his property.

I am now, as all is quiet, urging conciliatory measure, that the people should (singly?) apply to their employers and be encouraged to do so and Lord Arundell (Comdg?) a Troop, has at my wish set off for his residence to use his influence with his tenantry to abstain from violence and place confidence in the means that may be adopted to relieve their distress – He takes interest in those ... him and will produce a salutary effect – but Baker will pursue the same course and similar advice will be sent to the Country Gentlemen.

I am still of opinion that the Yeomanry Cavalry would have been sufficient – The leaders of the assault on Mr Benett have been secured. This was requisite – not a single disturbance has occurred in Salisbury since my arrival and I have the satisfaction of knowing that all I have suggested has met with the full concurrence of both County and City Magistrates. The great object is to guard against needless alarms.

I have by wish of the Magistrates attended a meeting called for the purpose of paying certain special Constables and have succeeded in making them abandon the design, as injurious and only adding to rates etc calling on the respectable inhabitants to volunteer their services and permitting the mechanics to return to their work, tho' keeping them to their oath, without requiring other service except in case of need/ of which there is no probability/.

I trust that I shall be excused from entering into this lengthy detail, but my only object is to put Government in possession of facts for which I can vouch, and to show that I have not failed to impress on all the necessity of an efficient

26th November – 28th November 1830

Civil Power to repress disorder, without which they cannot reasonably expect such assistance that Government may be enabled and will readily afford to assist their thus ...ted efforts for the preservation of their property and that of the Public peace.

J W Mair

Lt Colonel

I have requested Mr Matthias Hodding the future Town Clerk to call on your Lordship as personal information may be desirable ²⁵

91

Disposition of Wilts Yeom^y Cavalry.

<i>Salisbury Troop</i>	<i>— 44</i>	<i>— Salisbury</i>
<i>Hendons</i>	<i>— 48</i>	<i>— Hendons</i>
<i>Deerzeys</i>	<i>— 50</i>	} <i>Deerzeys, 14th Reg^t</i>
<i>Chiffenham</i>	<i>— 30</i>	
<i>Warrminster</i>	<i>— 50</i>	<i>— Warrminster</i>
<i>Malmsbury</i>	<i>— 20</i>	<i>— Malmsbury</i>
<i>Melsham</i>	<i>— 20</i>	<i>— Melsham</i>
<i>Marlboro</i>	<i>— 40</i>	<i>— Marlboro</i>
<i>Lucentons</i>	<i>— 20</i>	<i>— Lucentons</i>

These people act best in their own neighbourhood -

J W Mair
W. Mair

27th Nov. 1830
Salisbury

19. Disposition of the Wilts Yeomanry Cavalry
(TNA – HO52/11 f91)

²⁵ TNA – HO52/11 f89 - 90

26th November – 28th November 1830

At around 11 o'clock this evening fire was discovered, issuing from four different places, at the farm of Mr Dark, of Broughton Gifford near Melksham. Two ricks, containing about 40 tons of hay, a wheat stubble rick, containing about six loads, six cow cribs, and a large cowshed were destroyed. The property was situated about a quarter of a mile from Mr Dark's house. The fire spread so rapidly there is scarcely any part left unconsumed. An estimate of the damage has been put at about £200. Mr Dark is insured. It has been suggested that the offender is known, and the act arose from personal malice towards Mr Dark, but that there is not sufficient evidence against the perpetrator to issue a warrant against him. It is hoped that the reward offered by His Majesty's Proclamation and an additional reward offered by both the Landlord and the tenant will help the discovery of the offender. ²⁶

E W L Popham, the High Sheriff, wrote to the Magistrates at Salisbury to tell them that the Clerks of Magistrates had received a request that no more prisoners be committed to the Devizes Prison as it was already overcrowded.

Littlecote Nov^r 27 1830

Gentⁿ,

In consequence of a letter sent to the Clerk of the Magistrates in this division, requesting that no more prisoners may be committed to the Devizes Prison for minor offences. I am instructed to write to ask if it would be advisable to write to the Secretary of State to mention how full our prisons are, that the Government may take such immediate steps towards delivering us of some part of the burthen earlier than will be the case, if they remain until the next assizes in March. There are a great number of Prisoners in the Jail at Marlborough more than it can possibly accommodate and the Magistrates inform me, that in all probability many, perhaps thirty, will at the examinations close be forwarded to Devizes, the number they cannot exactly guess, it may even be greater.

I have the Honor to be

²⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; TNA – HO52/11 f113; Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Elijah Bush, 28 November 1830 & Letter dated Bradford 1st December 1830

26th November – 28th November 1830

Gentⁿ,
your obedient
Humble Servant
E W L. Popham
Sheriff

To the Magistrates
at Salisbury ²⁷

Sunday, 28th November

Mr Bush, of Trowbridge, wrote to Mr Cobb to report on the fire at Broughton Gifford, and the tranquil state of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Trowbridge Nov^r 28 1830

Sir

I am requested to report to you for the Information of the Magistrates of your Division that up to this time everything remains quiet and peaceable in this Town and the immediate neighbourhood and there has been no occasion for calling out the Troop of Dragoons stationed here except in the last night when a Fire took place at Broughton near Melksham about 4 miles from hence & some Ricks of Hay belonging to Farmer Dark were burnt. They were supposed to be set on Fire by an Incendiary.

Mr Waldron went to Broughton accompanied by Captⁿ Todd & a part of the Troop but upon their arrival there were no persons to apprehend and the fire was nearly at an end. I am not aware that any other property has been burnt in this neighbourhood & there seems reason to hope that the Town will remain tranquil the Manufacturers being at present pretty generally well employed

I am Sir
Your obed^t Ser^t
Elijah Bush ²⁸

The troops at Devizes were ordered to parade in field day order at 9 o'clock this morning, but not to turn out till the trumpet sounded. ²⁹

²⁷ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from E W S Popham, 27 November 1830

²⁸ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from Elijah Bush, 28 November 1830

²⁹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p83

26th November – 28th November 1830

Mr Bucknall Estcourt wrote to Lord Melbourne to report that all was quite and to suggest that the planned Special Commission should perhaps be extended to Devizes after completing its work in Salisbury.

Devizes Nov^r 28th 1830

My dear Sir,

I beg to thank you for your satisfactory information as to the intention of Government immediately to issue a Special Commission for the Trial of the delinquents in Custody, and which may be apprehended, and that Mr Tallents is already engaged in arranging cases for Trial at Winchester, the same will be required in Wiltshire; and as Salisbury is so far removed from the central part of the County in ..., and in the Northern parts so many Prisoners have been taken; and Riots, and depredations committed; it might be worthy of consideration whether the Commission after having finished at Winchester and Salisbury should not be removed on to this place, the accommodation to be afforded is certainly not so good as at Salisbury, but I doubt not that it may be made quite adequate to all that may be required, and in the event of any Execution every thing is well prepared and has been in one instance used.

I have great satisfaction in stating that all in this neighbourhood remains still quiet; there was a fire about ten miles from here last night, which destroyed some Hay Ricks, but further particulars I know not.

Believe me my dear Sir

Yours very sincerely

T G Bucknall Estcourt

Since writing the above I have communicated with one of the leading Authority's on this Town who has not the least doubt that ample accommodation can be afforded in this Town for the Judges. ³⁰

All day the Swindon Troop has remained under orders ready to be called out at a moment's notice. ³¹

³⁰ TNA – HO52/11 f104-105

³¹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p86

26th November – 28th November 1830

Colonel a'Court wrote to Lord Melbourne today to report that two suspicious characters have been seen in the neighbourhood of Heytesbury.

*Heytesbury House
Nov^r 28. 1830*

My Lord,

I have no doubt Your Lordship has already received a copy of the accompanying paper which was transmitted to me today. My object in forwarding it, is to acquaint Your Lordship, that two men, answering the description, passed briskly thro' Heytesbury in the dusk about four days ago. When out of the Town they closely interrogated a labourer as to the different farms & farmers in the neighbourhood – what resident Gentry and whether the magistrates were on the alert or not? They then struck off the high road towards Latton, where in order to avoid the Turnpike gate, they trespassed thro' the private grounds of a lady living there. I regret exceedingly that I did not hear of them 'till two days after they had passed this place. I have no doubt they are gone to the westward, & I have in consequence sent on information in every direction.

It occurs to me however, My Lord, that if there be any Police Officers in Dorset & Somerset, they should have directions to have a good look out at the several Toll-bars. The apprehension of these men might possibly lead to important disclosures.

*I have the honor to be
My Lord
Your Lordship's
Most obedient
humble servant
C.A. a'Court*

The Viscount Melbourne ³²

The Marlborough Troop performed no duty today. ³³

Lieutenant Thomas R Ward, of the Marlborough of Yeomanry Cavalry, wrote to Lord Melbourne today to tell

³² TNA – HO52/11 f59 - 60

³³ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89

26th November – 28th November 1830

him that Mr Hunt had been at Warminster. And is reported to have said that “Mr Swing” would be with them shortly.

Marlborough 28 Nov 1830

My Lord,

I am at this place with a Troop of Wilts Yeomanry of which, during the absence of Lord Bruce, I have the Command.

During our progress through a part of this country yesterday, a letter was put into my hands, from Mr T Goodman of Warminster to his mother at Oare near Pewsey, which stated that Mr Hunt had been at Warminster & had called on one of his retailers of blacking & that when he left him he said “they should have Mr Swing with them before the week was out.”

Whether your Lordship will think it worth while to make an enquiry into this my duty to make you acquainted with the circumstance, knowing Mr Goodman to be a person on whose account the most perfect reliance may be placed.

My usual residence is in Pewsey, at Englefield Green, where I have the honor to act as a Magistrate & as I understand directions as to the (dispersal?) of the Constabulary force have been issued from the Home Office I beg to state to your Lordship the plan I recommend to be adopted in that neighbourhood before I left home.

We appointed 150 Special Constables & have given them black staves numbered from 1 to 150. We have likewise 15 superior men to whom we have given red staves, numbered from 1 to 15. Each of the red staves takes charges of ten black staves, the bearers of which are selected from the immediate neighbourhood of the bearer of the red staff, to whom the custody of the black staves are entrusted until wanted for use. By this arrangement we avoid the improper use of the black staves – they are always under the eye of the red staff, with whom only they are directed to act, and in case of alarm they are easily assembled, by applying only to the 15 red men, each of whom is directed to assemble his ten men & to proceed to the appointed place of rendezvous.

I beg to apologize for troubling your Lordship with this letter, but the plan above alluded to having been thought a very good one, & having occasion to write to you on the other subject I took the liberty of mentioning it.

26th November – 28th November 1830

I am happy to express my belief that this immediate district is in a state of perfect tranquillity & I cannot omit the opportunity of expressing to your Lordship my entire approbation of the conduct of the men under my command whose exertions during a tedious week have been unremitting, and whose forbearance is beyond all praise.

*I have the honor to be
My Lord
Your Lordship's most
Obedt humble servant
Thos R Ward
Lieut Marlbro Troop
Wilts Yeomanry Cavalry ³⁴*

Mr Matcham, of Newhouse near Downton, wrote to Lord Melbourne today to assure him he would continue to perform his duty as a Magistrate, and assist in any way he could to repress the disturbances.

*Newhouse n^r. Downton Wilts
Nov^r 28th 1830*

My Lord,

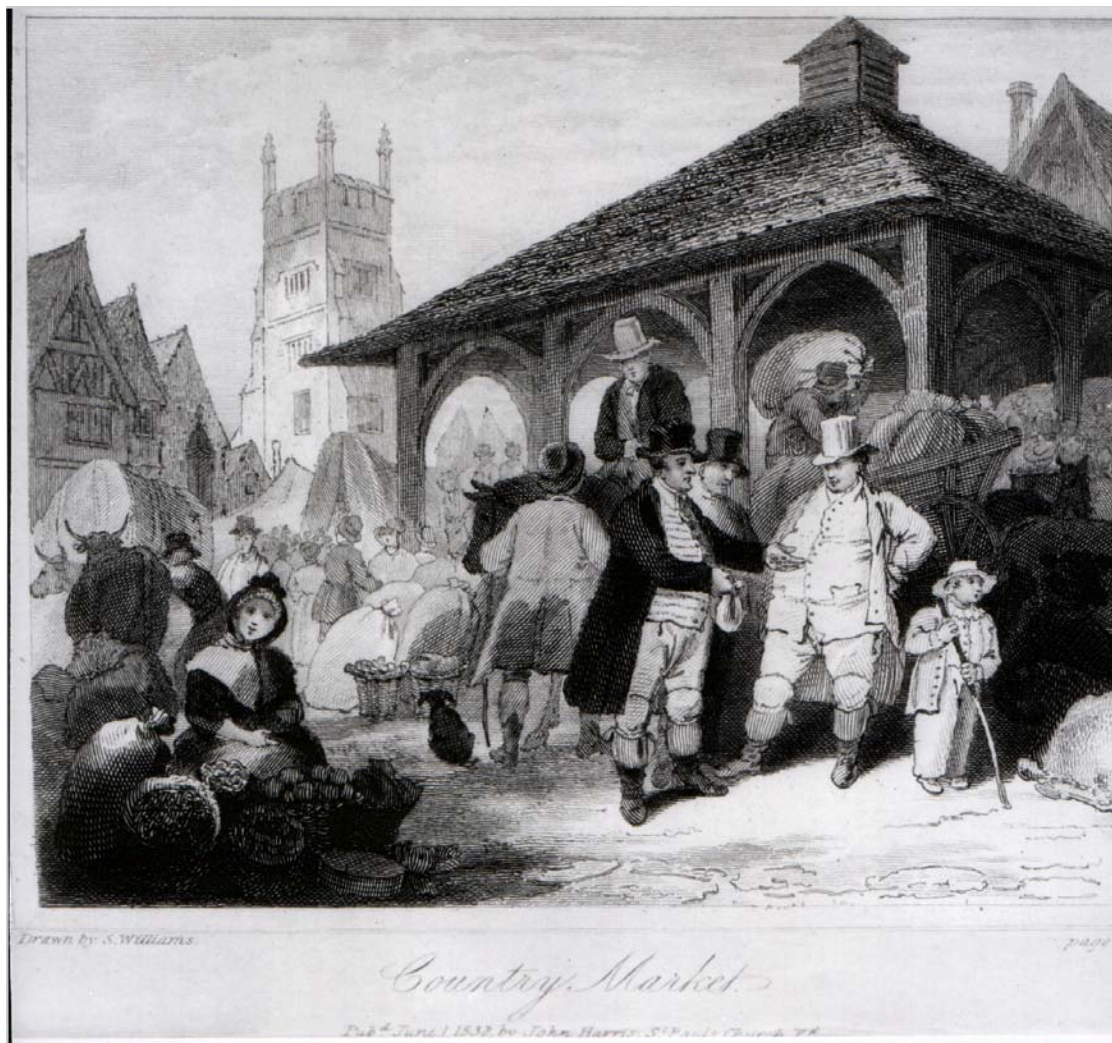
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's circular letter of the 25th inst^t & beg to assure you that no attention or personal exertions shall be wanting on my part as a Magistrate, to assist in repressing the disturbances which at present distract the country. Large bodies of special constables under the direction of gentlemen of property have been sworne (sic) in by myself & a neighbouring Magistrate in this & the adjoining parish, & I shall continue to pursue the same plan, with those in the neighbourhood, Altho' great excesses have been committed in this part of the country, yet I am persuaded that the actual perpetrators of them bear a very small proportion of the numbers collected together – many labourers forcibly taken from their work are now returned & the principal culprits are daily apprehended. It w^d only delay y^r Lordship to mention more particular circumstances which have occurred in this division, knowing that they have been communicated to you by Lord Radnor, whose exertions & advice have materially assisted those Magistrates within the reach of personal

³⁴ TNA – HO52/11 f96 - 98

26th November – 28th November 1830

communication. I can only repeat my readiness to execute with decision whatever service within the line of my duty, may be required & to give the best consideration wh^h my humble means of information will admit, to any suggestion that may be made for the restoration of order & tranquillity in the County.

*I have the honor to be my Lord
Your Lordship's obedt Sert
Geo: Matcham ³⁵*



20. A Country Market

Reproduced with permission of
The Museum of English Rural Life
The Farm – A New Account of Rural Toils and Produce

³⁵ TNA – HO52/11 f99

26th November – 28th November 1830

George Strode, the Post Master at Warminster, wrote to Sir Francis Freeling today to report on the disturbances in the area.

P.O. Warminster

Sir,

Since I wrote you on Thursday last nothing of consequence has occurred here; yesterday being our market day, it was expected that we should have been visited by the surrounding Labourers and an additional Troop of yeomanry was waiting for them, but the day passed off quietly. In the afternoon of Thursday a severe conflict took place near Pyt House between a large body of Machine Breakers and the Hindon Troop of Yeomanry when one of the Rioters was killed on the spot, many severely wounded and twenty seven made Prisoners and sent to Salisbury Gaol, another was found dead in an adjoining Plantation on Friday and it is reported that one of the Prisoners is since dead of his wounds. I hope the worst is now past, but should any thing of consequence take place I will inform you I am

Sir

Yours most sin^{ely}

Geo Strode

Sir Francis Freeling Bart ³⁶

On his arrival at Warminster Colonel Brotherton wrote to Lord Melbourne to report that he considered the accounts of the state of the County greatly exaggerated, as he could find nothing formidable in the mobs, which are readily dispersed.

Warminster

November 28th 1830

My Lord,

In consequence of the delay at Marlboro' & Devizes I arrived here on Friday too late to do more than report my arrival to the Horse Guards.

At the former place I found there no longer existed a necessity for retaining the troop of cavalry which had come from Trowbridge & sent it back, as a bad spirit was represented to prevail there.

³⁶ TNA – HO52/11 f95

26th November – 28th November 1830

At the Devizes I communicated with the magistrates & more particularly, as your Lordship desired, with Mr Estcourt. The vicinity was considered in a state to admit of one troop of it's Yeomanry being spared to be sent to Warminster, where it deemed more required.

On arriving at this place I found the magistracy assembled & in expectation of some attack, but with sufficient preparation, in my opinion, to avert any risk: And the security of this line of country was rendered more complete by the arrival of a detachment of Lancers & yeomanry at Hindon towards night; so much so that, in accordance with the magistrates I considered the Devizes troop might return there, which it accordingly did.

The gaols being full is naturally a subject of uneasiness to the magistrates, who apprehend a rescue. Gaols, in general, are from their isolated position defensible & secure from any attempts of a mob, but one at the Devizes in the centre of the town, contiguous to private dwellings, is very insecure in this respect. The prisoners held removed to the other prison.

Last night & this day, when the magistrates confidently expected some attempts to be made, hours passed away perfectly tranquil & if I may hazard an opinion after so short a time I should say, generally that things are taking a decided turn for the better. The spirit of insurrection is checked & subdued by the negative measures in which it has been dealt with in a few instances & a compliance in many with the demands of the labourers. (The?) but in this light, I will venture to report that it only requires common firmness in individuals & a small military force, judiciously posted, (but not scattered over an extent of country by way of protection to private property) to couch the insurrection wherever it may appear in the shape it has hitherto assumed.

I consider this particular district to be thus secured for the present.

*I have the honor to remain
Your Lordship's most faithful
Humble servant
F. Brotherton
Colonel*

26th November – 28th November 1830

P.S. I am just returned from Hindon where all is quiet, tho' alarming reports continue in circulation, such as the secret fabrication of Pikes & muskets & balls etc: I believe without any foundation: not even small groups of peasantry are to be seen & the utmost tranquillity prevails. A fire occurred in this neighbourhood last night at Melksham. ³⁷

At midnight Mr Scott, the sitting magistrate, received information of intended trouble in the Devizes area in the morning and went to the quarters of Lieutenant Colonel Baker to communicate this information and to ask for further military assistance. Colonel Baker sent off the following letter to Captain Long, at Warminster:-

Various information has reached the magistrates in this neighbourhood within the last two hours of intended risings to-morrow morning at Bromhead, Ushant, Christian Malford, and the adjacent parishes, for the avowed purpose of destroying machinery, and of liberating the prisoners in confinement here. It is supposed the whole are acting in concert. I have therefore to request that you will, immediately on receipt of this consult Colonel Brotherton, and forthwith dispatch to headquarters the whole, or such part as he may think can be spared with safety. I have ordered the Chippenham troop to march at daylight to Christian Malford to aid the civil power. ³⁸

³⁷ TNA – HO52/11 f100-103

³⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p83 & p84

29th November – 30th November 1830

29th November – 30th November 1831

Monday, 29th November 1830

As well as sending a letter for assistance to Captain Long at Warminster, a request for assistance was also sent to Salisbury by Colonel Baker. The Hindon troop were ordered to Devizes by Colonel Mair, and on arriving within six miles of the town found that the reports of trouble had been greatly exaggerated. An orderly, sent by Colonel Baker, met them and they returned to Hindon. Captain Phipps marched at daybreak to Chippenham. Information, having been given on oath, that the labourers intended to attack the prisons in Devizes, an express was sent to Warminster. Captain Long, had only received Colonel Baker's letter at three o'clock this morning but within three quarters of an hour the whole troop, under his command, were mounted and in marching order. They marched in to Devizes at seven o'clock. Colonel Brotherton ordered detachments from the Hindon troop and the 9th Lancers to replace him at Warminster. The Malmesbury troop under Lord Andover, was sent to Chippenham to support Captain Phipps. The intending rioters became aware of the Yeomanry's presence in the area and the expected disturbance did not take place. Both troops returned to headquarters this evening. ¹

Nearly the whole of the inhabitants of Devizes and its neighbourhood are associated and armed. Members are hourly offering their services to join the Yeomanry Cavalry. The Recorder, Mr Estcourt, has also offered to Lord Andover, who commands the Malmesbury Troop, to be again enrolled as a Member of the troop to which he formerly belonged. ²

Colonel Brotherton wrote to Lord Melbourne to tell him that he believed that the reports of the riots in the area were greatly exaggerated and that gentlemen should defend their own houses.

¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830; The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p84

² The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

29th November – 30th November 1830

Devizes 29th November 1830

My Lord,

At the conclusion of my letter of yesterday I stated to your Lordship that the country was more agitated by false reports & unfounded alarm than real danger. The events of this day have proved this.

I received at Warminster, in the middle of the night, the most alarming intelligence from a magistrates here/not Mr Estcourt/ stating that a general rising was expected in the morning for the rescue of the prisoners in the gaol. But as alarming as this communication was, it gave me some satisfaction, feeling confident, as I did, of the result of any conflict, I made arrangements to concentrate on this point, in due time, a force sufficient not only to prevent or merely suppress any insurrection that could occur, but equal to making the salutary example that is so much wanting. In this point of view therefore it is perhaps to be regretted that the intelligence proved unfounded.

These false alarms, My Lord, not only agitate the public mind but harass the very small military force we have, exceedingly & to no purpose whatever.

As to the apprehended rescue from the gaol, it can only be imaginary for in my opinion it is quite a fortress & tho' constructed with a view only to internal defence, it is a strong work externally & would (bid?) defiance to the efforts of any mob, however armed, except with artillery. I have examined & organized a little plan of defence for it & I consider that no further uneasiness need be entertained on this point.

I stated yesterday my opinion that to post the small we have judiciously, the protection of private property must yield to the paramount consideration of prompt assembly on essential points & having the whole perfectly disposable within a certain circumference. This, with a single exception, has been effected. I really conceive My Lord that gentlemen should defend their own houses against such despicable mobs. Every house is a strong post capable of repulsing them if defended with common firmness. I should hasten with alacrity to the relief of any party so attacked, but that a valuable proportion of so small a force should be locked up for the defence of any private dwellings, particularly cavalry, is not wise at such a moment. The case I allude to is that of

29th November – 30th November 1830

Pyt House, in this county where twenty mounted yeomanry have been stationed for some days. Today I felt myself obliged under the circumstances we were placed in, to move this detachment 3 miles distant from Pitt House to replace what we had taken from Hindon.

I (... .tion?) their case, as an exception for were it otherwise, the little force we have here instead of being sufficient would be uselessly frittered away.

I am returning to Warminster but Mr Estcourt & the other magistrates here seem to wish I were stationed here, as perhaps a more central point.

Notwithstanding the alert of today I still think matters receding.

*I have the honor to remain
Your Lordship's very faithfully
T W Brotherton
Colonel*

To The Viscount Melbourne

5 P.M. All quiet ³

Mr Estcourt wrote from Devizes to report that tranquillity continued in the area, and that an advance of wages had been recommended.

Devizes. Nov^r 29 1830

My Dear Lord,

I have the pleasure again to be able to report to your Lordship a continuance of tranquillity: in two neighbouring Parishes the Labourers have assembled to obtain an advance of wages but in the most peaceable manner and with expectations more moderate than might have been anticipated. Those of Bromham appearing only to require an advance to 8/- and those of Urchfont to 9/-, I say "appearing" because I donot find that in either case was the question directly put them, however I consider the whole transactions of the day are by no means having interrupted our general state of tranquillity; and the impression we Magistrates who issued the Hand Bill protesting against submitting to the outrageous applicating have considered it our duty to day to issue another, stating that the quiet & peaceable state of our Division justifies in redeeming our

³ TNA – HO52/11 f117 - 120

29th November – 30th November 1830

previous pledge, and that we recommend a general advance of wages to such an extent as that each able bodied labourer should receive for his full labour 10/- per week – this we find to be the wages recommended in the south of this county by the Magistrates, and agreed to be given in Pewsey and in many other parts – In the first instance some of the Occupiers of Land will not like it, but when they find that the additional expense of Labour must ultimately fall upon the Landlord in reduction of Rents, we hope that they will all agree to give it; with regard to the Labourers of Parishes where they would have taken 8/- or 9/- per week we consider that they would have remained satisfied only until they discovered that in other Parishes they rec^d 10/- & which could not be at any very distant period.

Colonel Brotherton has been here to day having come from Warminster in consequence of a call for Troops to Chippenham having rendered it necessary to send from hence to Warminster for further assistance to guard these full Prisons in lieu of the Detachment so sent into the North; this circumstance has proved the inconvenience of stationing Col. Brotherton at Warminster which is so far from the Central parts of the for had he been here to see the nature of the requisition it is more than probable that he might have met the difficulty without so much disagreement of the forces as has occurred; this is the Central Point, this is the most important to guard since here are the Prisons, to this place all applications come from the North of the County, and this place is immediately attached to the manufacturing Districts I therefore must take the liberty to state to your Lordship with great deference, that it is the opinion of myself that the greatest advantages would accrue from Colonel Brotherton being stationed at this Place & I shall therefore by this days Post write to Lord Melbourne to make the request and we trust that your Lordship (record?) our application.

It has been ascertained in many instances Persons whose losses have been very considerable have manifested something like a disinclination to prosecute from fear that the expenses of the Prosecution will wholly or at least in part fall upon them, we are in some apprehension that in many instances evidence may be lost & in others that Prosecutions will be abandoned unless the Government will at once

29th November – 30th November 1830

declare a readiness, at the Expense of the Public to pay the whole cost of these Prosecutions; I therefore trust that your Lordship will see the necessity of recommending to the Government to adopt this determination and without loss of time to make it known to us. I am not aware that I have anything further to communicate tonight – but I must beg to apologize to your Lordship for the miserable composition of my letters which are invariably written under the presence of much Business, & in the midst of a large assembly of Magistrates, Yeoman etc

I have taken the liberty to inclose to your Lordship a Copy of our this Days Hand Bill & of the practical opinion of a Friend of mine in the northern parts of this County.

I have the Honor to be

My dear Lord

Your faithful & obliged

T G Bucknall Estcourt ⁴

As promised in the above letter Mr Estcourt also wrote to Lord Melbourne to ask if the Government would defray the whole expense of the Prosecutions.

Devizes Nov^r 29th 1830

My Lord,

This being a point of so much importance both on account of the central position and as containing the two Prisons in which the large Body of the Rioters that have been taken have been confined; I take the liberty of representing to your Lordship at the instance of my Brother Magistrates and in concordance with my own opinion that the greatest advantage to the service would accrue from the removal of Colonel Brotherton from Warminster to this Place, and from his continuing to be stationed at this place instead of the former; & we trust that your Lordship will acquiesce to this suggestion, and if so that his removal take place at the earliest moment.

It has been stated that instances have occurred of Persons who have suffered by the Rioters, manifesting a disinclination to give information lest in prosecuting hereafter the Expenses will wholly or at least in part fall upon them; under this impression we entertain fear that some cases may

⁴ TNA – HO52/11 f106-109

29th November – 30th November 1830

be altogether abandoned unless the Government shall determine to pay the whole expense of these Prosecutions, at the charge of the Public, & therefore with great deference we beg to urge Your Lordship to recommend that the Government shall undertake the whole expense of the Prosecutions, and that such determination shall be communicated to us and generally through this County without delay.

I have further to suggest to Your Lordship that the immediate presence at this Place if an able legal Adviser of the Crown to superintend the collection of Evidence & to select Cases for Prosecution would be of infinite advantage, the more particularly as at the present moment under the influence of the alarm most information may be obtained with skill that hereafter might be suppressed.

I have the Honor to be

My Lord

Your most obedient Servant

T G Bucknall Estcourt

I have omitted to state that all remains quiet in this neighbourhood. ⁵

Mr Thomas Burrough Smith, the Post Master at Devizes, wrote a letter reporting on the tranquillity of his neighbourhood.

*Post Office, Devizes
Nov. 29 1830*

Dear Sir,

I take the earliest opportunity of sending you some Bills just issued by our Magistrates, which will convince you of the continued tranquillity of the Neighbourhood.

I am sorry to say that the whole County is not quite as free from riot and disorder – some Hay Ricks and Farm Buildings were set on fire at Broughton Gifford near Bradford on Saturday night, and I hear a riotous disposition has shewn itself in the North western part of the County, particulars of which you will probably be informed of, by the Postmaster of that neighbourhood. I have the honor to be

Your mo. Obed. Servt

T B Smith ⁶

⁵ TNA – HO52/11 f110 –111

⁶ TNA – HO52/11 f113

29th November – 30th November 1830

At nine o'clock this morning Captain Wyndham reported that he had captured Richard Pitman, of Hindon, one of the leaders in the attack on Pythouse. Pitman had apparently put up quite a struggle. This evening Captain Wyndham succeeded in taking five more prisoners, at Tisbury. ⁷

The inquest on the body of John Harding was re-opened at Tisbury today. The deceased was the unfortunate person who lost his life in the affray near Pythouse. On this occasion, the Hindon Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry, commanded by Captain Wyndham, were headed by Wadham Wyndham Esquire. It appears from the evidence that when the yeomanry caught up with the rioters, who were armed with clubs, axes, crowbars, sledge-hammers and other deadly weapons, at Pythouse, the misguided men jeered them saying, "Come on", and stones were immediately hurled at them from all directions. The yeomanry had sustained this attack for some time with great forbearance. At length they were ordered to charge and take prisoners, the resistance still continuing, the cavalry fired in self-defence. A respectable witness said that he was a spectator of the scene, and saw one of the mob holding on to the reins of one of the cavalry horses with his left hand whilst striking the rider with a club stick, that he held in the other hand, he continued the attack for about five minutes; at length the latter drew his pistol, and shot the assailant, who died shortly afterwards. The same witness deposed that the brother of Harding, the deceased, came up to him, told him that his brother was dead, and had pointed to within a short distance of the spot where he had seen the man fall. The jury after long and patient investigation brought in a verdict of 'Justifiable Homicide'. In consequence of this verdict the coroner, considering the case to be one that entailed the same consequences as an act 'felo de se', felt that he could not grant a warrant for the burial of the deceased. However painful the duty, which devolved on him, in thus adding to the sorrow of the

⁷ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p82

29th November – 30th November 1830

surviving relatives, the law, appeared to him to be too clear to admit any alternative. ⁸

Captain Goddard, of the Swindon Troop, wrote to Lieutenant and Assistant Adjutant Peniston today to give him a return of the present strength of his troop together with an account of the duties they had performed during the last week.

Swindon, Nov. 29, 1830. To Lieutenant and Assistant-Adjutant Peniston.

Sir.- In compliance with yours of the 27th inst., I have forwarded a return of the present strength of my troop, together with a detailed account of the duties performed by them during the present week:-

It is almost unnecessary to add that the resistance shown by the rioters on every occasion has been contemptible in the highest degree.

I should not, at the same time, be doing justice to the behaviour of the troop if I did not express my perfect satisfaction at their conduct in every instance, and the zeal and promptitude which they have evinced in the present disordered state of the neighbourhood, and I have every reason to believe that it has been the means of restoring tranquillity. I have, therefore, not felt it necessary to continue them on permanent duty, but to be ready whenever their services are required.

The Swindon Troop paraded at 10 o'clock this morning, and remained under arms all day, all was quiet. ⁹

The Marlborough Troop performed no duty today. The men remained in their own homes ready to turn out if required. ¹⁰

Lieutenant Ward, Commanding Officer of the Marlborough Troop, wrote to Lieutenant and Assistant Adjutant Peniston today to give him a return of the Troop

⁸ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 6 December 1830; Jackson's Oxford Journal, 11 December 1830. **NOTE:** The coroner must have had a change of heart as **John Harding** was buried at Tisbury on 29 November 1830, the entry reads, 'shot in an affray'.

⁹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p85 & p86. **NOTE:** The daily duties of the Swindon troop reported in this letter appear in the main text under the appropriate date

¹⁰ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89

29th November – 30th November 1830

and a statement of the services performed during the last week.

My dear Sir,- I enclose you returns of the Marlborough troop for the last week, and likewise a statement of their services, and in doing this I cannot omit to convey to you the assurances I received from all quarters of the services they have rendered to this neighbourhood in completely checking the spirit of insubordination that had manifested itself in so formidable a degree in the early part of the week.

I should not be doing justice to the Marlborough troop if I did not express to you my entire approbation of their conduct, and assure you that during the whole week of tedious and important service they have assembled with an alacrity and cheerfulness that does them the greatest credit, and that their firmness and determined conduct in the putting down the mobs, accompanied as it was with the most extreme patience and forbearance, was beyond all praise.

The troop has been on regular duty ever since Monday last. They are discharged this evening, but with orders to assemble again on Wednesday, but for how long will depend on the state of the neighbourhood.

I was myself unable for lameness to attend till Friday, having broken one of the tendons of my leg, and I am compelled to return to Englefield Green to-morrow, but Mr Codrington will remain with the troop, and, in the event of any important service, I shall be prepared to join it at a moment's notice. I assure you I believe this neighbourhood to have been saved by the appearance of the Cavalry, and the courage and support they have given to the magistrates and the farmers.¹¹

(The following information appears at the end of the statement of duties of the Marlborough troop).

The mob in several cases threatened blood or money, and in almost all had extorted money from those whose machines they had destroyed.

It appears that in almost all instances the most prominent of the mob were artisans, and not the agricultural population.

¹¹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p87. **NOTE:** The daily duties of the Marlborough troop reported in this letter appear in the main text under the appropriate date

29th November – 30th November 1830

About one hundred and fifty prisoners have been apprehended in this neighbourhood. (Signed) S.R. Ward, Lieutenant, Commanding Marlborough Troop W.Y.C. ¹²

The officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, of the Marlborough Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry, dined together this evening, at the *Queen Caroline Inn*, in the town. The landlord, Mr William Morse, trumpeter of the troop, provided an excellent dinner and the evening was spent in the most delightful conviviality. ¹³

Cornet Everett reports that he has relieved the detachment at Chilmark with fresh men, and forwards a state of the troop, showing one sergeant and thirty-one men for duty at Salisbury, two sergeants sick, and two men absent (these two had left Salisbury some time before the riots).

This evening, Sir Colin Campbell, the general commanding the district, arrived in Salisbury. ¹⁴

William Turner, of Gaston Farm, wrote to the Governor of Fisherton Gaol on behalf of Robert Scot.

Tisbury Nov^r 29th 1830

Gentilman

I rote to inform you of the Character of Robert Scot he have been a Labourer at Gaston Farm 12 or 14 years and a very Honest Servant he was at work in the field and the mob forced him to join them and sent the horses home by the boy

Gentilman I ham Your humble

Servant William Turner

Gaston Farm

To the Governor

Of Fisherton Gaol

Wilts ¹⁵

A mob of around 200 assembled at Christian Malford today, three magistrates of the Chippenham Division, Paul Methuen, Thomas Clutterbuck and Walter Coleman met

¹² The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89

¹³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830

¹⁴ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p82

¹⁵ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter from William Turner, 29 November 1830

29th November – 30th November 1830

them. When they asked the men what they wanted, they replied 'An increase of wages, to enable us to provide for our families without applying to the parish relief'.

They also demanded that the clergyman should lower his tithes, and the landlords their rent, so as to enable the farmers to pay them ten shillings a week in the winter and twelve shillings in the summer. The clergyman promised to meet the landed proprietors, and to reduce his tithes in the same proportion as the rent was lowered. The magistrate promised the men that they should have the wages they desired. On hearing this, the men gave three cheers and dispersed quietly. No act of outrage was committed, measures being taken to quell any disposition to riot as it appeared. ¹⁶

A mob gathered at Poulton today and a riot followed. Robert Miller was recognised among the mob. ¹⁷

A warrant has been issued for the arrest of a man named Beach, of Damerham, who headed the rioters involved in machine breaking in the parish of Tollard Royal. He was the man who received the money extorted from the farmers, but it is believed that he has absconded. ¹⁸

In most parts of the country it has been agreed to make a considerable rise in the labourers' wages. That this ought to have been done long ago, no one can deny. In determining their amount, the following circumstances ought to be taken into consideration: - Wages should rise and fall with the price of bread and corn, All able-bodied men, whether married or single, are in justice entitled to the same pay, which should be sufficient to support the average number in each family, whatever that may be. Single men would then have it in their power to save a small sum of money before they were married. After this rise, it should be clearly understood that no allowances shall be made in future for any children of marriages contracted subsequent

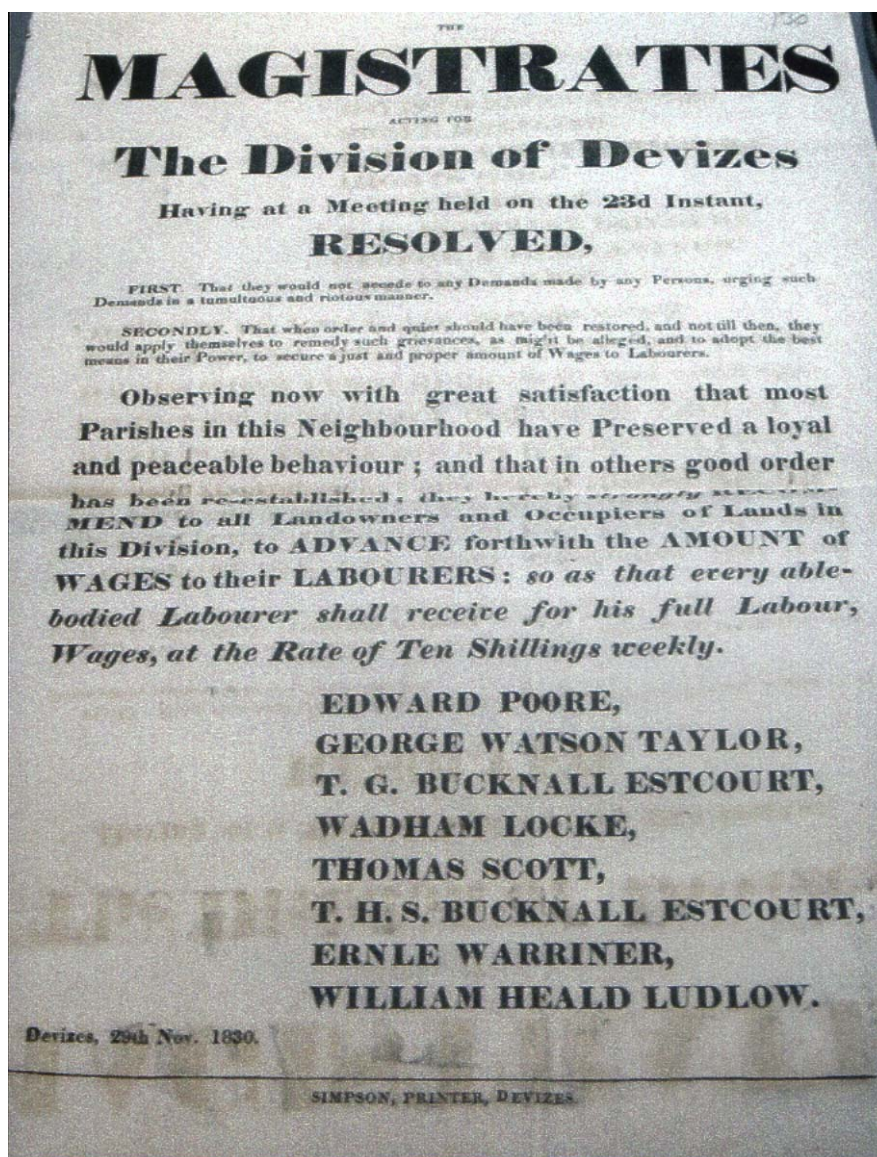
¹⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830

¹⁷ TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

¹⁸ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12, Letter dated St (Giles?) House, 29 November 1830

29th November – 30th November 1830

to this advance, which would at once put a stop to such improvident marriages as are now not infrequent. ¹⁹



21. A Resolution to Advance the Labourers' Wages (TNA - HO52/11 f130)

The following notice appeared in today's issue of the Salisbury and Winchester Journal: -

Mr Selfe, of Countess Farm, Amesbury, wishes to take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging the sympathy and unwearied exertions of his Friends and Neighbours,

¹⁹ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

29th November – 30th November 1830

of all classes, at the FIRE on his premises on Sunday evening, and begs to return them all his warmest thanks.

AMESBURY, Nov.25, 1803. ²⁰

A notice appeared in the same paper warning the Labourers to beware of men who were going about the country encouraging them to burn their employers' property. It was signed by "A Sincere Will-Wisher. ²¹

The same notice appeared in today's issue of the Salisbury and Winchester Journal: -

Labourers, - BEWARE of MEN

Who are going about the country to make you do what you will soon be sorry for.- The times are bad but **BURNING CORN WILL NOT GIVE YOU BREAD.** – If you have reason to complain, tell your Employers so, like men, and they must do what they can to make your situation more comfortable.

Burning the corn will not injure the Farmers, because it is insured; but, remember, that you and your Families will be in great danger of starving for want of it before another Harvest.

YOUR SINCERE WELL WISHER ²²

During the last week the following people have been committed to Fisherton Gaol: - Isaac Cole, William Lewis, Thomas Whatley, John Jennings, William Jacobs, William Francis, Henry and George Shergold and James Down, charged with being concerned in destroying Mr Brasher's mill and machinery at Wilton. George Toomer, charged with having stolen two sledge hammers, from Edward Witt, at Odstock, and threatening to set fire to his dwelling house. Daniel Payney charged with having stolen a wether sheep, from Thomas Daniell and John Pearce at Dilton. John Day, and John and George Shergold, charged with riotous and disorderly conduct in the parish of Winterbourne Stoke. Isaac Miller, of Netheravon, charged with having tumultuously assembled with others at the above place, and

²⁰ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

²¹ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830; A printed copy of this notice appears in TNA – HO52/11 f19

²² *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 29 November 1830

29th November – 30th November 1830

damaged the dwelling house of James Stagg, obtaining beer and other things by means of intimidation, and threatening to set fire to his house. Henry Gray, of Netherhampton, charged with having broken into an outhouse in the parish, with intent to steal ducks, the property of Thomas Drake. John Ford, of Quidhampton, charged with destroying machinery, in that parish, belonging to William Naish. ²³

It is highly creditable to the parishes of Steeple Ashton and West Ashton that the entire population came voluntarily forward, and offered their services as special constables during the disturbed state of the country.

Not a single labourer throughout the whole of the parish of Bishop Canning took part in the disturbances in their area last week. As a result the farmers of the neighbourhood have voluntarily and unanimously agreed to raise their wages. ²⁴

Lord Arundell wrote the following letter to Lieutenant Peniston to acquaint him with the events in the Tisbury area.

Dear Sir, - You are probably aware by this time that Colonel Mair, thinking my presence at home might tend to calm the ferment existing in Tisbury, requested me on Saturday to go home, and return hither this morning. I obeyed his wishes. I yesterday saw Mr Benett; he has recovered his bruises, but surrounded by eighteen men of the Hindon troop, seemed to me in a considerable state of excitement and alarm. He complained much that none of the people, farmers or gentry, would come to his assistance: a small party of twenty, farmers and others of Fonthill and Tisbury, went to him afterwards, and were sworn in as special constables. I announced in our chapel my wish that the people should be sworn in, and at three o'clock p.m., Mr Thomas Grove and myself administered the oaths to two hundred men of Ansty, Hatch, and Tisbury, formed them into squads, and gave them leaders. Nothing can exceed the good feeling of the people towards me. I am sorry to say no good will to my poor neighbour. The mob who attacked him were composed of men

²³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 29 November 1830

²⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830

29th November – 30th November 1830

from Swallowcliff, Tisbury, and the Fonthills, and would have desisted on Mr Benett's persuasions had they not been persuaded to the contrary by the Hindon men after he had addressed the former. Mr B. is now actively engaged in taking up prisoners, and in sending them in under detachments every hour. All this may be necessary, but I fear may lead to bad consequences. Col. Mair is of my opinion, and has gone off to Pyt House.

I have still a party of fourteen under Quarter-Master Browne at Chilmark, whom Colonel Mair requests should remain there till further orders. My absence and yours from Salisbury will account to Lieutenant Baker for an officer not having been sent to Chilmark with this detachment.

*I know not what to say upon the conduct of the Hindon troop. It is a delicate question, and until I see the ground on which they fought I cannot help fancying they might have taken more prisoners by drawing the mob out, and not charging them when they did; mixed as they were with the people they could not do otherwise than wound those they did. I found at home two men not taken, one with a slice off his head, and another with his left hand cut off. I have heard of many others. What frets me most is to find poor Alford has absconded from the warrant. It grieves me much, for I am sure he is a benevolent, well-intentioned man. You may communicate this letter to Lieutenant Colonel Baker if you think proper, and he wishes to see it.- Yours very truly,
ARUNDELL.*

Postscript.- Young Lambert is making himself very obnoxious. Benett comes in with his witnesses on Wednesday. The men of the Donheads and Semley assembled, and on the same day (Thursday the 25th) were addressed by Mr Grove, who allowed them to burn his machines, and returned home peaceably; so much for conciliation. ²⁵

A meeting of the Magistrates, gentry, farmers and others was held at the *Goddard Arms* in Swindon today. A number of proposals for suppressing any riotous or tumultuous assembly were resolved.

²⁵ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p79 & p80

SWINDON.

AT A
NUMEROUS MEETING
OF
Magistrates, Gentry, Farmers, and Others,
HELD AT THE
GODDARD ARMS INN, IN SWINDON.
On **MONDAY, the 29th of NOVEMBER, 1830.**

IT WAS PROPOSED AND RESOLVED:—

That for the purpose of suppressing riotous and tumultuous Assemblies and for the protection of property, mutual co-operation and assistance shall be given in all cases of emergency.

That the several Parishes and Places under-mentioned shall be divided into Sections, and that the Constabulary force of the respective Sections shall be placed under the several persons whose names appear below, so that a large body of Constables may, in a few hours, be brought to one point.

That for the purpose of communicating authentic information of the state of the several Parishes and Places to the Magistracy of the Division of Swindon, the Heads of each Section shall every morning before nine o'clock, report the state of their several Sections to Messrs. BRADFORD and BURT, Clerks to the Magistrates, at their Office at Swindon.

That in case of any riot or disturbance breaking out in any of the under-mentioned Places, the Heads of the Section where such riot or disturbance shall occur, shall as quickly as possible give information thereof to the Heads of the other Sections, who shall thereupon call together the Special Constables, and the whole Constabulary, shall then assemble under the direction of their Heads or Leaders, to act in the suppression of such Riot or Disturbance,

Sections.	Heads of Sections.	Sections.	Heads of Sections.
Swindon	Mr. William Farmer .. John H. Sheppard .. William Dunford .. Wm. B. Axford .. C. I. F. Axford	Wroughton Elvema Overton Salthrop	Messrs. Robert Hughes and S. B. Fickett Mr. Richard Evans .. John Washbourn .. Giles Edmonds
Bishopstone Little Hinton	Messrs. Peter Dove and Peter Knight .. Thomas Anger, Richard Coster, and George Edwards	Lydiard Tregear Lydiard Millicent	Messrs. John Dove, Stephen Matthews, and Henry Everleigh .. Benjamin Bewley and Thomas Plummer
Upper Wankborough	Messrs. Peter Dove and Peter Knight .. Thomas Anger, Richard Coster, and George Edwards .. Thomas Atherton, Francis Hewer, and Thomas Langford	Rodborne Haydon Merton Blunden St. Andrew	Messrs. James Butler and William Handy .. Richard Tuckey & Edward Francombe .. Henry James and Thomas Withshire .. Richard Edmonds and William Bolton
Lower Wankborough Stratton St. Margaret Upper Stratton	Messrs. William Parker, William Prince, and George Deacon .. John Jones and William Hall Mr. Ralph Withers, jun.	Cricklade Cheworth Wiltmill	Messrs. William Poulton, Robert Jordan, Nevil Cuss, James Buckland, and John Slater, jun. .. Thomas Blandford & William Smith
Childeston Draycott Liddington	Rev. H. G. Dyke, and Messrs. John Brown, Andrew Baden, & Thomas Avenell Mr. Thomas Neale Messrs. Joseph Brind, George Brind, and Harry Reeves		

N. B.—It is not necessary that Constables should wait for the arrival of a Magistrate before they proceed to suppress Riot or Tumult.

J. RICKETTS PRINTER, HIGHWORTH.

22. A Meeting at The Goddard Arms, Swindon
(Gloucestershire Archives – D1571/DX60)

Thomas Calley wrote to the Home Office today to apply for a Judge or Sergeant to be sent to Marlborough and other towns to examine the prisoners now held in the gaols for their part in the riots. He also asks whether Government will assist in the prosecutions.

Marlboro' Jail
Monday 29 Nov. 1830.

My Lord,

It is the opinion of all the Magistrates now assembled at Marlbro' & employed in examining the numerous cases

29th November – 30th November 1830

brought before them; that the atrocities of most of the Prisoners are of a nature to require that a Judge or Sergeant should be forthwith sent down to Marlbro' & other towns where the Prisoners are stationed, to examine & try them; as their general conduct has far surpassed any acts done in Kent or elsewhere our County Jails are full and also all the Prisons in each place. We also unanimously are of opinion that it would be better for a Judge or Sergeant to act in this emergency in preference to County Magistrates as capital cases generally prevail.

And by holding the Commission in each town will not only save much trouble & expense, but greatly expedite the business.

We also wish to be informed whether Government will assist in the prosecutions; and appoint a person to conduct them, in such case we should try to recommend a Professional Gentleman (our acting Clerk).

I have the Honor to be my Lord with the highest respect

Your obedient Humble

Servant

Thomas Calley

Chairman ²⁶

This evening a small number of labourers gathered at Winkfield, near Bradford on Avon, where a thrashing machine was destroyed. Another was destroyed at the village of Winsley.

The Clothiers in the area consider that their machinery might also be in danger as the weavers, and others, are known to be very hostile to the new improvements which dispense with so much hard labour. ²⁷

Mr Minty wrote from Salisbury to Sir Francis Freeling to report that the town and neighbourhood continued quiet and enclosed a description on two people who are supposed to have done a great deal of mischief in the area. ²⁸

²⁶ TNA – HO52/11 f122 -123

²⁷ TNA – HO52/11 f137

²⁸ TNA – HO52/11 f114

29th November – 30th November 1830

Major General Campbell wrote a reply to Lord Melbourne request for troops to be sent to Bristol, saying that he would send a detachment of Cavalry to Bristol as soon as possible.

Salisbury Nov^r 29 1830

My Lord,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date. I regret that I am unable to detach any Cavalry at this moment towards Bristol, as those at my disposal have been much harassed of late and are now moving at the requisition of the Magistrates of this, and the County of Dorset. However, as things appear to be getting much more quiet in these Counties, and if any reports of tomorrow confirm the same, I think that on the following day I shall be enabled to detach a Force to Bristol and its vicinity, but I must not move them too quickly, as the horses are a good deal fatigued and require shoeing.

I will have the honor of reporting to your Lordship, the instant I can spare them and put them in motion.

I have the honor to be

Your Lordship's

Most obdt & humble Servant

C Campbell

Major General

I shall return to my Head Quarters at Winchester, on Wednesday morning early. ²⁹

Tuesday, 30th November 1830

Determined to protect their property, 60 of the inhabitants of Corsham have already enrolled as horsemen, nearly all are young, active men. When a sudden call was received today 38 of them were on their road to act with the yeomanry, within an hour of their assistance being requested. Fortunately there was no occasion for any interference of constable or soldier. Ten of these gentlemen assemble every evening between 6 and 7 o'clock. They start at different directions and meet at one point. They return at 11 o'clock, when the foot patrol takes their places. They

²⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f115 -116

29th November – 30th November 1830

start again at 12 o'clock, and remain out until 4 or 6 o'clock in the morning. ³⁰

The Marlborough Troop performed no duty today. The men remained in their own homes ready to turn out if required. ³¹

As all remained quiet, the Swindon Troop was dismissed today, the members of it being warned to be in readiness to turn out at a moment's notice. ³²

The following document relating to the disturbances in Wiltshire has been circulated throughout the county, by order of the magistrates: -

We, the undersigned magistrates, acting for the division of Devizes, having learned with the utmost concern that acts of lawless violence have taken place in several parishes in our neighbourhood, do hereby give notice, that it is our determination to use the utmost powers which the law has placed in our hands to suppress outrage and protect property; and we hereby caution all persons to abstain from joining tumultuous bodies, and require them to lend their assistance towards supporting good order and peace. We declare that we will not, under any circumstances, accede to any demands which may be made by persons, or bodies of persons, having arms in their hands, or urging such demands in a tumultuous and disorderly manner. With respect to the grievances which are alleged as a cause or excuse for disturbances, we declare, that when order and quiet have been established, and not till then, we will apply ourselves to inquire into, and remedy, those grievances, and particularly to adopt the best means in our power to secure a just and proper amount of wages to labourers. At the same time we recommend to all possessors of property in our neighbourhood, the following measures for their own protection and that of

³⁰ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830

³¹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89

³² The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p86

29th November – 30th November 1830

their neighbours, - viz., that the principal inhabitants of every parish should unite for the purpose of patrolling every night throughout their respective parishes; that such patrols shall act by twos and threes, so that no patrol should consist of only one individual only; and that the most steady and well disposed of labourers should be selected in sufficient numbers, and appointed to watch property of every description, and be paid at the rate of 1s. each man, for every six hours he may watch. We hereby offer a reward of £200 to be given on conviction of any and every person or persons who shall set fire to any premises or ricks, or other property, in this county. (Here follows the signatures of the Magistrates.) ³³

Colonel a'Court wrote a letter to Lord Melbourne, disapproving of the conduct of the Magistrates in raising the rate of wages to the labourers.

*Heytesbury House
Nov^r 30. 1830*

My Lord,

I am very grateful for the great assistance which your Lordship is so good as to offer me from the London Police, but my communication of yesterday's date will have put your Lordship in possession of the (histories?) which have induced me to release my very very suspicious prisoner.

The state of this part of the County is now such that I see no occasion for depriving the police officers of their efficient officers – but should any thing occur to render their assistance, I will not hesitate to say so.

So little do I apprehend of further tumult in this district, that I this day declared to Colonel Brotherton that I saw no necessity for continuing the Yeomanry Cavalry at Warminster, with any reference to the state of the population there, at the same time that I consider the place as a very important military station just at this moment, viewing it as I do as the neutral ground between the agricultural and manufacturing districts.

If any thing could disturb the Peace of Warminster district, I know nothing, My Lord, more calculated to lead to

³³ The Times, 30 November 1830

29th November – 30th November 1830

such a result than the accompanying proclamation of the Magistrates of Devizes – issued at a moment when Troops were ordered by forced marches in that place to defend the prisons against a supposed rescue – interfering in the most direct manner with the price of labor. I contend, My Lord, that Magistrates, as such, have no such power. As landowners & individuals their recommendation would have been most reasonable. It is only when such a proclamation issues from the constituted authorities that it becomes dangerous. The district of Salisbury, Pewsey & Devizes have now adopted the scale recommended at Andover. How wisely, the disturbances in this County will testify – and I presume, (without proclamation) the farmers must adopt it near Warminster. If so, can it be expected that the labourers in Dorset, Somerset & Devon will be satisfied with their present wages?

I feel, My Lord, so warmly on the subject of Magistrates interference in the price of labour, that I fear I have gone too far in drawing Your Lordship's attention to the probable consequence of the Act of Gentlemen who have always stood so high in the estimation of the County. My anxiety to preserve the Peace of the County must plead my apology.

I remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient

humble servant

C A a'Court ³⁴

³⁴ TNA – HO52/11 f127 - 129

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Wednesday, 1st December

Today the examination of the prisoners captured in the affray at Mr Benett's, Pythouse and other farms in the area, on the 25th of November, took place at the Town Hall in Salisbury, before the Earl of Radnor, Lord Arundell, and other magistrates. Mr Benett was present, directing the prosecution. Twenty-nine prisoners were brought forward, most of them farmers' men; six more, who were severely wounded, are reserved for examination tomorrow. The result is, that 11 are committed for trial by the Special Commission, which is expected next or the succeeding week; nine were discharged, and nine were ordered to find bail, or are released on their own recognizances.

The examination disclosed authentic proof that the affray was of the most desperate character. It appears that most of the rioters were, (at least the major part of the prisoners are) of Tisbury parish. They assembled there and about Fonthill, and arming themselves with very large sledge-hammers, iron crows, and bludgeons, (which were produced before the magistrates); they proceeded to the demolition of the thrashing machines in the neighbourhood, with the sheds and apparatus appertaining to them. They were regularly marshalled, assembled by the sound of the horn, and commanded by two men, distinguished by sashes or worsted cravats tied round the middle. The chief leaders are named Jerrard and Harding, labouring men of bad character; the latter is the individual who was shot; the former has for the present escaped. When the troop of yeomanry came up with the rioters, (who were about 250 in number, swelled by a number of spectators and idlers to 500), the latter prepared for a regular resistance. They took post in the plantations, where the cavalry could not penetrate, from whence they occasionally debouched, hurling stones, brickbats, and other missiles, whereby several of the yeomanry received contusions, and Captain Wyndham, the commander, a severe cut on the cheek. The battle was maintained with resolution on both sides for a considerable space of time. Many of the rioters were severely

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

hurt; some of those in custody have their heads slashed, and their arms and sides much lacerated. One of them was cut down twice, and returned to the attack. A good many shots were fired, but only one took effect. Mr Benett was struck, and his face exhibits the signs in a black eye and a lacerated nose. His bailiff, Mr Jay, a powerful man, who is likewise overseer, was beset in the plantation, and would have fared ill but for the arrival of the Yeomanry. His head is badly cut. In short, the number of bandaged and plastered heads, shades over the cheeks and eyes, and other symptoms amongst the persons present in court, attested the severity of the affray.

Many of the prisoners received excellent characters from their masters and others. One of them, (a mason, named Abery), upon being asked if any person could speak in his favour, appealed to Lord Arundell. His Lordship said he knew the man, who had worked for him last year; that he was a very industrious fellow, and he was sorry to see him there. He added, that he was the very person who, when Salisbury Cathedral was repaired, was hauled up to the top in a basket.

Others not only received good characters from their masters, for whom they had worked many years, but the latter cheerfully came forward as their sureties. Mr Benett himself testified to the character of one or two, and applied for their release.

Some of the men declared they had been forced to join the mob, by threats; one said that Jerrard and Harding seized him by the collar, and threatened to beat out his brains if he refused to go with them.

No proof was adduced of their being connected with the incendiaries, except a statement of one of the witnesses, that he heard one man in the mob say to another, "Keep the matches in your pocket."

Almost all the men are married, and no doubt have probably families; but the first of them to who the inquiry was addressed having declared that he had nine children, the question was not repeated. No question was asked as to their object, nor any invitation offered to them to state their grievances.

After the liberation of the discharged men, a reporter for *The Times*, inquired of several of them their motive for joining the mob, impressing upon them, at the same time, the folly and danger of their conduct. They replied that the farmers were at the bottom of it; that they gave the men beer, and urged them to excesses. The reporter would not have thought this statement worthy of record, but that Mr Benett, in the course of the examination, distinctly referred to one farmer, by name, as having encouraged the men to these acts of disorder.

Prior to the discharge of the uncommitted prisoners, Lord Radnor addressed the whole of them in an impressive manner, pointing out, in plain language, the illegality of their conduct, observing that those who might be convicted would be guilty of rebellion, and would certainly, unless the Royal mercy interposed, suffer death as traitors; and remarking that whatever were the grievances they might labour under, they ought to be brought under the notice of the magistrates in a legal and peaceable manner, when they would be sure of being redressed. The noble lord's observations seemed to make a great impression upon the men, who declared they would never join a mob again. ¹

Alexander Minty wrote to Sir Francis Freeling to give a favourable account of the state of the country around Salisbury.

*Post Office Salisbury
Dec^r 1. 1830*

Sir,

I am glad to be enabled still to give you a favourable account of the state of these parts of the county the excitement occasioned by the late riots is considerably abated – of course we have constantly, various reports brought but I believe they are all without foundation, yet I am inclined to think that in the neighbourhood of Hindon and Pyt House the spirit of discontent is still here – Mr Benett certainly is not popular, and as the affray between the mob and the Yeomanry Cavalry, was in defence of his property, it will be some time before it is forgotten – a person by the name of Alford of some respectability, who took an active part with

¹ The Times, 3 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

the rioters, having learnt that he was known has decamped and is supposed to be in London.

It is reported that there are disturbances in Bristol amongst the colliers, but I can learn nothing authentic – I almost fear it, from having received a Letter last night from the Mayor of Bristol enclosing one to Lord Loughborough or Sir Colin Campbell which I delivered immediately, and this morning a troop of Lancers marched from this place for Bath – this evening I received by express a letter from Sir Colin Campbell from Winchester enclosing one for the commanding Officer here, which he stated to be a route, and also three others, for the Commanding Officers at Warminster, Blandford and Hindon, all of which I conclude were the same, these were forwarded as he (directed?) by Expresses.

I have the honor to be Sir

Your obedient humble servant

A Minty

To Sir Francis Freeling Bart ²

Lieutenant Colonel Baker arrived at Salisbury at 7 o'clock this evening, and notified Colonel Mair of his arrival, and sent him the reports he had received from officers in command of the several detachments. He also issued the following orders today.

Lieutenant Colonel Baker, anxious to avoid harassing the troops unnecessarily by keeping them in quarters a moment longer than the public service seems to require, being of opinion that tranquillity is so far restored throughout the country as to make their continuance on duty no longer necessary, has suggested to the civil power the propriety of allowing the troops to return to their respective homes. Having received the sanction of the magistrates to this effect, Colonel Baker requests the Captains of troops in quarters at Devizes to parade at their earliest convenience, and march their troops to their several destinations, but not dismiss them without the strictest orders to keep themselves in readiness, at the shortest notice, in case their services are required. Lieutenant Colonel Baker cannot allow the troops to separate without expressing the high sense he entertains of the promptitude and alacrity with which they assembled for

² TNA – HO52/11 f139 –140 – Letter from A Minty, dated 1 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

their duty, and the exemplary manner in which they performed it. The Devizes troop remains on duty, under command of Lieutenant Locke, who is about to transfer his headquarters to Salisbury. ³

John Bush wrote from Bradford to report on the fire on a farm at nearby Broughton Gifford.

Bradford Dec^r 1st 1830

Dear Sir,

We have hitherto been in a state of tranquillity & no outrage of any kind has been committed within the Hundred of Bradford arising from Popular Commotion but on Saturday Night two Ricks of Hay a stubble stack & Cowshed adjoining near Broughton Gifford in this Hundred were destroyed by fire I made a personal Investigation of the Circumstances attending it & have no doubt that it proceeded wholly from personal malice to the Tenant of the Land & was wholly unconnected with the General system farther than the occurrences in other parts of the County may have given the Party by whom the offence was committed though we have not Evidence sufficient to Warrant Magisterial Interference but we are in hopes that the Reward offered by his Majesty's Proclamation & the additional Reward offered both by the Landlord & tenant may induce a discovery of the offender.

I am dear sir

Yours truly

John Bush ⁴

The Marlborough Troop reassembled today according to orders previously given, and was directed to attend the magistrates through Burbage and the Collingbournes, these areas not being considered in a state of perfect security, but no mobs assembled. ⁵

A strong detachment of the 9th Lancers, about 120, left Salisbury this morning for Bristol, where, it is said,

³ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p85

⁴ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12 – Letter from John Bush, dated 1st December 1830; **NOTE:** a **John Bush**, Attorney & Salamander Fire Office Agent is listed in the 1830 edition of Pigot's Directory at Church Street, Bradford on Avon.

⁵ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

disturbances have broken out. The Hindon troop of yeomanry continues on duty. ⁶

Thursday, 2nd December

Today the Marlborough Troop was dismissed by the magistrates, but requested to hold themselves in readiness in case of their services being required.

Colonel Baker issued a regimental order at Salisbury, directing the Hindon and Salisbury troops to remain at their respective headquarters until further orders. ⁷

The following extract from a letter received from a highly respected Magistrate, and one of the principal landholders in the county of Wiltshire, appeared in today's edition of the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*.

Wherever I have been, I find the fears of the farmers very predominant in every discussion relative to the payment of labourers – that their landlords will not come down in their rents, so as to enable them (the farmers) to do justice to those they employ. I am sure this must be a mistake, without even giving landlords credit for any better feelings than their own interests (which I think would generally be a very unfair way of estimating them). I cannot, however, but strongly advise every landed proprietor to meet the present attempt to create disunion (for an attempt there certainly is), by assuring their tenants without delay, in a clear and candid manner, that whatever may be the state of the property, or the distresses of the times, when the amount of the labourers' wages is once agreed upon, they will honestly and fairly meet the disposition of their tenants to do justice to their labourers, by a REDUCTION of RENT, should such reduction be necessary. I am satisfied that this is their intention; and I hope they will lose no time in promulgating it. ⁸

The Magistrates acting for the Division of Marlborough addressed the following vote of thanks to the men of the Marlborough Troop of Yeomanry. The notice will be inserted in next edition of the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*.

⁶ The Times, 3 December 1830

⁷ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p89 & p90

⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Gaol, Marlborough,
Dec. 2, 1830

Sir,

The Magistrates acting in and for the Division of *Marlborough*, cannot allow the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the Marlborough Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry, to return to their homes, without returning their most grateful thanks for their soldier like and energetic conduct during the period they have been called out on permanent duty. In these sentiments, they are fully confident the whole neighbourhood joins them. – So long as men like these, with property at stake, come forward as they have done, there will be little to fear from the lawless conduct of a misguided mob.

We are, Gentlemen,

Your very obedient servants,

FULWAR CRAVEN

T.B.M. BASKERVILLE

E.G. MEYRICK

E.H.G. WILLIAMS

THOMAS CALLEY.

To Lieut. WARD, or officer commanding
Marlborough Troop, Wilts Yeomanry ⁹

A Special Commission has been issued for the trial of the rioters, but neither the day on which, nor the place where, it is to be held, has been named yet. It is supposed that the capital offences will be tried at Salisbury before a Judge and the minor ones before the Magistrate at Devizes. There are now 280 prisoners in Devizes House of Correction, 100 of who are charged with riots. There are also 30 rioters confined in the Old Bridewell at Devizes. The Magistrates are very anxious that there should be as early a gaol delivery as possible. ¹⁰

Mr Thomas Calley wrote to the Secretary of State for the Home Office today to urge Government to hold the

⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

¹⁰ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Special Commission for the County at Marlborough, as well as Salisbury and Devizes.

My Lord,

From the letter I have received of the 30th of November, I do not conceive that your Lordship can be aware of the nature of the County of Wilts. Our County is so extensive and so inconveniently situated as to the distance from the various Towns where prisoners are stationed and the Principal Town, namely Salisbury, where the Assizes are held that the expense & inconvenience which must occur to Evidences and Prosecutors in the various cases, will be most formidable if they are obliged to go so great a distance as to Salisbury and Devizes.

The Magistrates now assembled do request that your Lordship and His Majesty's Government will sincerely take the case into consideration and save as much as possible the County of Wilts from the inconvenience and Expense which they must bear if they are obliged to traverse so extensive a County as Wilts from end to end. Possibly your Lordship is not aware that from the extreme point of Wilts to the Town where Judges meet is no less than Fifty Miles and across Salisbury Plain, where no Road at all exists, and at this time of the year the inconvenience is consequently greatly increased.

There is no Jail in the County which can possibly contain the whole number of prisoners and no Town which can accommodate Magistrates Prosecutors and Evidences. In the small Prison at Marlborough there are now no fewer than 120 prisoners, and more over Magistrates cannot in these troubled times leave their respective districts with safety.

Hoping these matters may be taken into your consideration, I subscribe myself with respect,

My Lord,

Your obedient humble servant

Thomas Calley

Chairman

Jail

Marlborough

December 2. 1830 ¹¹

¹¹ TNA – HO52/11 f141

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

It has been reported in today's edition of the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette* that letters have been sent to several individuals at Chippenham, threatening to burn their houses. A vast number of letters have also been reported to have been dropt about the streets, calling the people to remember Brussels, and promising an aid of 900 men on Wednesday. ¹²

The gentlemen of Devizes, who formed themselves into a horse patrol, have continued their exertions every night for the last week. Eight of the gentlemen patrolling the neighbourhood from 6 until 12 o'clock, and eight others from 12 o'clock until 5 o'clock. The gentlemen forming the foot patrol also continue on duty. ¹³

Mr A Awdry, of Seend, has recently reduced his tithes 7½ per cent. The tithes of that parish are now as low as at any period within recollection. ¹⁴

The six prisoners, who were wounded in the conflict at Pythouse, are to be re-examined today. ¹⁵

The Justices of the Peace, acting for the Trowbridge Division, will meet at the *Woolpack Inn*, Trowbridge, at 11 o'clock tomorrow. Householder's residents in the Division are requested to attend and enrol themselves as special constables, as occasion may require. ¹⁶

Colonel a'Court wrote to Lord Melbourne today with a further report of the two suspicious people who have been reported to have been travelling about the country.

Heytesbury House
Decr 2. 1830

My Lord,

I enclose a letter from the Mayor of Bath, which confirms my previous information that the two suspicious horsemen reported to your Lordship on a former occasion, have returned

¹² The *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 2 December 1830

¹³ The *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 2 December 1830

¹⁴ The *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 2 December 1830

¹⁵ The *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 2 December 1830

¹⁶ TNA – HO52/11 f151

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

from the Westward. They were in Westbury on Monday Evening last.

The (extent?) of this journey appears to have been Wellington.

A vast quantity of handbills, describing their persons have been forwarded by me to the West^d; and should have been in the hands of the Magistracy of Wellington nearly at the time, that the men made their appearance there.

I know nothing more of them than that they passed thro' Heytesbury making every possible enquiry as to the situation & extent of farms – the efficiency of the Magistracy etc. The Handbills which I have circulated /in the shape of letters to avoid unnecessary alarm/ are merely reprints of the Pewsey handbills.

From what I can collect, I am inclined to think they must now be in Berkshire, if not still (being?) in the neighbourhood of Trowbridge & Westbury.

I have written to Lord Radnor on the subject.

I have the satisfaction to be able to report that every thing appears to be perfectly quiet in this neighbourhood – so far as regards the feelings of the peasantry.

In this district we shall I trust be able to effect, what we must all have in view, the melioration of the condition of the poor, without creating any unpleasant misunderstanding between the landlords & tenants. The recommendation however of the Devizes Magistrates is already producing the effects which that anticipated.

A petition signed by 200 yeoman (Mr Walter Long Comm^g the Warminster Troop of Yeomanry informs me) is to be presented to the Devizes Magistrates this day – declaring their inability to comply with the recommendation, and calling upon Landlords to declare what sacrifices they may be willing to make to meet the Magistrates wishes. It is not I fear, to the price of labor, so incautiously fixed by the Magistrates, that they object, so much as to their illegal interference on the subject.

I content myself with simply repeating thus much to your Lordship; - not doubting but that very many letters will be addressed to your Lordship detailing whatever may have occurred today at Devizes on the subject. ¹⁷

¹⁷ TNA – HO52/11 f131 - 132

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

The following letter, written on the 1st December, from the Mayor of Bath was enclosed in Colonel a'Court's letter to Lord Melbourne.

Bath 1st Dec^r 1830

Dear Sir,

The Post of last Evening brought me the following addition to the particulars communicated by you respecting the two suspected horsemen –

“A person stopped at the White Hart at Wellington on Friday Night, nearly answering the description, riding a dark horse and leading a sorrel horse with saddle bags; which led horse had a sand mark in his of fore foot. He went eastward.”

Our officers have learned to day that a Person with horses answering this description passed from the Westward into Bath yesterday. I have not been able to trace them further.

Yrs respectfully

J Davis

Mayor of Bath ¹⁸

Friday, 3rd December

A meeting of farmers and landowners was held at Kington Langley today, to consider the propriety of raising the wages of the labourers. When the labourers heard what the object of the meeting was they began to gather at the church. The farmers were surprised to find almost every labourer in the parish as they came out of the vestry. Mr Atherton, of Calne, asked for a pledge from the labourers that they would commit no outrages. This promise having been given Mr Atherton addressed the labourers and informed them of the farmer's intention to raise their wages and of his intention to lower their rents, and their potato ground one penny. This announcement was received with cheers and shouts of 'Atherton for ever!' ¹⁹

Mr M Hodding wrote to the Home Office today to enquire if the Government would be undertaking the prosecution of the rioters, or if it would be up the

¹⁸ TNA – HO52/11 f133

¹⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

individuals whose property had been attacked to conduct their own case.

Salisbury Dec 3. 1830

My Lord,

Being professionally employed by two Gentlemen in this neighbourhood who had depredations committed on their Property by persons assembled in a riotous manner, I am anxious to know whether the Prosecution will be undertaken by His Majesty's Government or whether the persons injured are expected to conduct their own case. I apply at the request of Mr Richard Webb of Melchet Park and Mr Henry Hodding of Odstock both of whom have taken the Ringleaders of the respective Mobs. Your Lordship has already received Copies of the Depositions in the latter case and if it be wished a Copy of the Information in the former shall be forwarded.

I have the honor to be

My Lord

*Your Lordships very
obed^t hble Ser^t*

*Matt ... Hodding*²⁰

The owners and occupiers of land of the parish of Melksham have called a meeting at the General School Room in the town, to be held on Monday, 6th December. On hearing that sixteen threatening letter had been sent to farmers in the parish and that a large number of labourers were expected to gather on that day, John Awdry and J L Phillips, Justices of the Peace for the County, wrote to the Commanding Officer of the District asking for some troops to be sent to the town in order to keep the peace.

*Melksham
3rd Dec 1830*

My Lord

We beg to send on the other side a Copy of a Letter to the Commanding Officer of this District and we request that your Lordship will give directions that the force required to preserve the Peace in this Town on Monday next may be in attendance, if your Lordship should be of opinion from the

²⁰ TNA – HO52/11 f147

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

facts stated that the presence of such a force should be necessary

*We have the honor to be
Your Lordships
Most obed^t Servants
John Awdry
J L Phillips*

*P.S. Under the urgency of the Case & from the shortness of time previous to the meeting, the enclosed letter was addressed to the Commanding Officer
To the Secretary of State
for the Home Department*

*(COPY)
Melksham
3rd Dec^r 1830*

Sir

Information having been given on Oath before us two of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Wilts that sixteen Threatening Letters have been sent through the Melksham Post Office to Farmers in this Parish and it being also stated to us on Oath by the Overseers of this Parish that they think that a large body of Labourers will be collected together at a Meeting of the Landowners & Occupiers which is convened for Monday next. We do for the preservation of the Public Peace on that occasion require the presence of some Troop under your command to act under the direction of the Magistrates of this Division by 9 o'clock in the morning of Monday the 6th December Instant

*We have the honor to be
Sir
Your mo(st) obed^t Serv^{ts}
John Awdry
J L Phillipps*

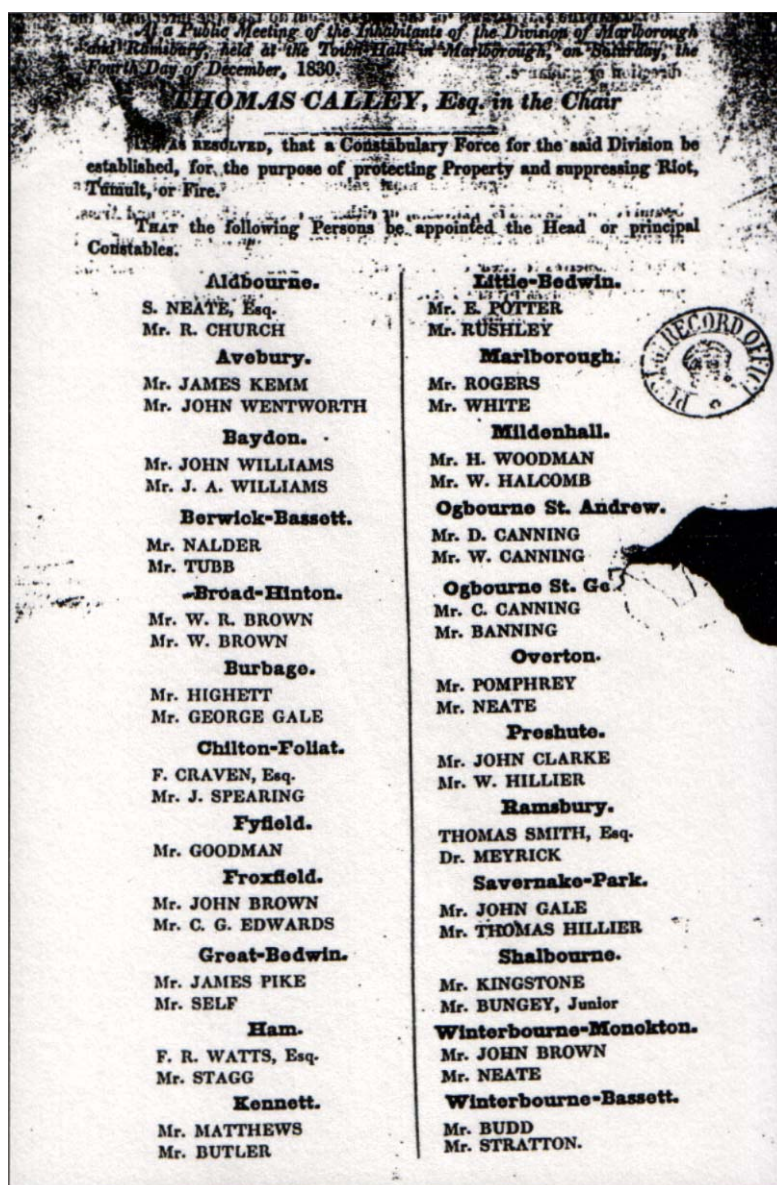
*To Colonel Brotherton
or other Commanding Officer
of the District
Salisbury or Devizes ²¹*

²¹ TNA – HO52/11 f153-154

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Saturday, 4th December

At a public meeting of the inhabitants of the Division of Marlborough and Ramsbury, held at the Marlborough Town Hall today, it was resolved that a Constabulary Force for the Division be established. ²²



23. A Meeting at Marlborough Town Hall (TNA – HO52/11 f160)

At mid day today about 50 tenants of Mr Watson Taylor met at Erlestoke House. Mr Watson Taylor told them

²² TNA – HO52/11 f160

that as he had decided that it was desirable to recommend an advance of wages to agricultural labourers he had called this meeting of his tenantry, to consult them on the best means of meeting the present crisis, with due regard being made to the just claims of the landlord, the welfare of the tenant and the comfort of the labourer. He wished it to be understood that in recommending ten shillings a week, as a scale of wages, the Magistrate did not intend that it should be necessarily be made in money. It was obvious to every one, that in some cases where nine shillings were given, with house rent and perhaps some potato ground, with other advantages in addition. The nine shillings were more than equivalent to the ten without these advantages. Mr Taylor Watson told his tenants that he had come to the conclusion that it would be better at once to remit so much of the rent as would enable his tenants to meet their increased expenses and was therefore willing to make an abatement of 20 per cent, as long as it was remembered that this was not to be put into the pocket of the farmer but to be used in promoting the comfort of the labourer. Mr Watson Taylor also referred to the expected alteration in the Game Laws, which would legalise the sale of game and he stated that it was his full intention, after the present season, to give up the preservation of game on his estates, except in the woods, and to grant full permission for his tenants, with their friends, to sport over their respective occupations.

When Mr Watson Taylor had concluded the Hall resounded with unanimous and grateful acknowledgements and after drinking his health, they all left, deeply impressed with the kind consideration of their landlord. ²³

Monday, 6th December

The Swindon and Salisbury troops have remained at their respective headquarters, as ordered by Colonel Baker on the 2nd December, and have paraded each day for drill. Today, Lieutenant Colonel Baker, having consulted with the magistrates, and received their agreement, is of the opinion that the services of the troops can be safely dispensed with, and has issued the following order:-

²³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

The commanding officers of the Salisbury and Hindon troops are requested to dismiss their men at any time this day best suited to their convenience. Lieutenant Colonel Baker at the same time returns his warmest thanks for the zeal and good conduct they have uniformly displayed throughout the late tedious and harassing duties, and requests they will hold themselves in readiness to turn out for active service at the shortest notice. ²⁴

A meeting of the owners and occupiers of land in the parish of Melksham was held at the General School Room, in Melksham today, Paul Methuen Esquire was in the chair.

On the motion of W. Heald Ludlow, esquire, seconded by Walter Long, esquire, the following resolutions were agreed to; viz.

That the increased population of this Parish has not only reduced the prices of Labour in an unequal proportion with reference to the reduced price of the necessaries of life, but has also so far augmented the number of labourers, that during this season of the year, many labourers are left without employment.

That the present state of Wages is in some instances too low; and that therefore, from the insufficiency of wages on the one hand, and the want of labour on the other, very many become in a greater or lesser degree dependent on parochial relief.

That for the purpose of improving the condition of the Labourers, it is desirable, in the first instance, to reduce the number requiring parochial relief, rather than the amount of the poor rates; and that to effect such object, it is expedient to allow the able and industrious Labourer an adequate amount of wages, and to extend every source of employment within our power for the benefit of the labourers now employed.

That such measures cannot at this time be carried into effect, unless every landowner and proprietor within the parish, will, according to the proportion of his property therein, so far assist and make such allowance to the tenant and occupier, as will indemnify him on the one hand against any

²⁴ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p90

increased expenditure, arising either from an advance of wages, or the employment of additional labourers, and secure to the labourers on the other hand, the full benefit of such allowance.

That in order to attain these objects, we recommend and agree that every landowner or proprietor should repay or allow to his tenant the amount of wages which he may have expended in the employment of the labourers between the 1st of Nov. and the 1st of March, beyond the number usually employed by him, in the ordinary management or cultivation of his Farm: provided he produces vouchers whereby it shall appear that such extra labourers have been employed in improvements on the property so occupied; and that such vouchers be countersigned by the Overseer of the poor, certifying that the men so employed belonged to the parish, and that during that time they received nothing from the poor's rate.

PAUL METHUEN
WALTER LONG
T. BRUGES
A. AWDRY
T. HEATHCOTE
W. HEALD LUDLOW
J.L. PHILLIPS
JOHN AWDRY
JOHN FOWLER
J.H. ARNOLD

In addressing the meeting Mr Methuen said, 'I hope there is no landlord so mean, so base, so wicked, as to wish to retain the labourers in their present degraded condition. I wish it to be known from one end of the county to the other that I will meet the times, my property will not be a consideration. I wish to see the degraded pauper restored to the rank of an industrious, independent labourer. I hope the county will surmount its difficulties and that we will realise that the state to which we should have been restored about 15 years since, after an arduous and expensive war, a state of peace and plenty.'²⁵

²⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

William Cheater, a respectable looking man, was placed at the bar, at Marlborough Street, charged as a ringleader of a mob that destroyed a number of thrashing machines in the Salisbury area. It had appeared that the prisoner, who was known as the leader of the mob, had evaded all endeavours to apprehend him by the Salisbury constables and had absconded from that neighbourhood and a reward of £50 was offered for his apprehension. Sir C Earle, a magistrate of Salisbury, suspected that he had gone to London, and sent notice to a person there who was acquainted with the prisoner, and told him that if he fell in with Cheater to take him in to custody. A few days ago a labouring man met the prisoner, in company with two others, dressed in smock frocks, and they got into conversation with them, saying that they wanted a bed. He agreed to take him to his own house. The prisoner had been staying with him a day or two, when he was met and recognised by the man acquainted with him, who immediately took him into custody. In his defence the prisoner said, 'I could not help what I did, for if I had not acted as I did the mob would have broken my head.' The prisoner was remanded until tomorrow when he will be delivered up to a person authorised to take him to Salisbury. ²⁶

Thrashers working for Mr Grant at Marston, struck for wages of ten shillings a week today. The men told Mr Grant that the magistrates had ordered that sum to be paid to them and that they would not work unless it was. Mr Grant had been in the habit of paying his men eight shillings a week, and their beer, which was equal to another shilling, and they had previously been contented with this. Mr Grant told his thrashers that they were welcome to go where they could get better wages if they wished and within an hour they were back at their work again. ²⁷

At a meeting of farmers and others was held at Market Lavington today. The meeting had been called to consider by what means the occupiers of land shall be enabled to

²⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

²⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

comply with the recommendation of the Magistrates of the district, to advance the pay of the agricultural poor. Mr A.E. Saunders was in the chair and the following resolutions were made.

1. That it appears to this Meeting that it be desirable to better the condition of the Labouring Poor, provided it can be done on a firm basis; but that the occupiers of land, from being subject to high rents, and tithes, and poor rates, and taxes, are totally disqualified to pay their labourers high wages, or to comply with the recommendations of the Magistrates, unless they be assisted by the proprietors of land and tithes.

2. That when the tenants first rented their land and tithes, they considered that the weekly pay of their labourers was the price of a bushel of wheat; consequently, the labourers pay has been generally regulated thereby for a great number of years; but the aforesaid recommendation adds 25 per cent. to that price; it therefore now appears to be desirable that the farmer immediately apply to the land owner and tithe owner, to render such assistance as shall enable the tenants to comply with the recommendation of the Magistrates.

3. That with a view of forwarding the object of this Meeting, it is recommended that every exertion should be used by all gentlemen, clergymen, and others to give employment to the poor. Also that the poor in every parish who are in regular employ, should have small allotments of land to grow their own vegetables on; and that in those parishes where there is a superabundance of labourers, and where the soil is adapted for spade cultivation, allotments of land, consisting of one Acre, or more, should be let to the industrious poor at reasonable prices. That this Meeting consider that if all the foregoing resolutions be carried into effect, and every man in his respective station do his duty – the poor man's state will be improved, and through the blessing of a kind Providence, peace and order will be restored to our neighbourhood.

4. That the foregoing resolutions be published in the *Devizes Gazette*, and the *Salisbury Journal*, and also be printed in letters and hand bills for circulation in the

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

neighbourhood, and be sent to all the land owners whose tenants shall approve of this Meeting.

The thanks of the Meeting were given to the Rev. Mr Caswell, Vicar of West Lavington, who attended the meeting, and who expressed his willingness to comply with the wish of his tenants, and to reduce his rent 25 per cent. ²⁸

Lord Arundell wrote to Lord Melbourne today to explain his concern over a warrant that was out for Samuel Alford, for the part he is supposed to have taken in the Tisbury riots. Mr Alford has absconded but Lord Arundell believes him to be innocent of the charges against him. ²⁹

The following men were committed to Fisherton Gaol during this week.

Thomas Topp, charged with riotous conduct, breaking machines, assaulting John Benett esquire, by striking him with a stone, and other offences; Isaac Miller, charged with rioting and breaking machinery at Figheldean and elsewhere on the 23rd ult; James Lane of Broad Chalke, charged with riotous conduct, breaking thrashing machines at Broad Chalke and Odstock, and with extorting money from divers persons by threats and intimidation; Elias Kiddle, Joseph Chubb, Thomas New, William Pottle, Levi Millard, and William Every, charged with riotously and feloniously breaking thrashing machines at Tollard Royal; Stephen Withers, charged with burglary in the house of William Down, at Melksham; John Ford, charged with riotously destroying the machinery of William Naish, at Quidhampton; Abraham Jacob, (otherwise Abraham Lucas) charged with having feloniously endeavoured to obtain money from Thomas Wolferstan, at Alderbury, by threats and menaces; Samuel Hatcher, William Cook, Thomas Light, William Rogers junior, and Abraham Lucas (otherwise Jacob, all of Alderbury, charged with riotous conduct, breaking thrashing machines, and extorting money by threats and menaces, at the above place; Henry Lane and Aaron Stone, of Whiteparish, charged with riotously

²⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

²⁹ TNA – HO52/11 f162-164. **NOTE:** For a full transcript of this letter see *Miscellaneous Rioters in Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II: The Rioters*.

assembling and extorting money at the above place; Henry Thornton, William Olden, William Elton, and William Holmes, of Newtontoney, charged with destroying the thrashing machines of James Judd; James Case and Abraham Morgan, of Bishopstone, charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine and a chaff machine, the property of Thomas Blandford; Levi Brown, charged with destroying a chaff-cutting machine and extorting money by threats and menaces, at Broad Chalke; James Lush, George Stratton, and George Coombs, of Broad Chalke, charged with riotously breaking a thrashing machine, extorting money by threats and menaces, and other acts of violence, at the above place; Thomas Piggott, chimney sweeper, charged with having committed various acts of outrage at Netheravon; William Prince, charged with stealing wearing apparel at Whiteparish; Charles Bennett, Barnabas Hutchinson, and Charles Waters, of Bodenham, charged with maliciously destroying the thrashing machine of John Read; James and William Jeffery, charged with riotous conduct at Fugglestone St Peter; John Ford (alias Henwood) and William Mullins, of Barford St Martin, charged with extorting and demanding money at the above place; James Mould, Andrew Moxam, Samuel Banstone, Richard Pittman, Thomas Abree, Thomas Vinen, and Samuel Eyres, for riotously breaking the thrashing machines of John Benett esquire, at Tisbury; William Sanger, Thomas Rixon, William Gray, James Mould, Samuel Barrett, and James Blandford, for breaking the thrashing machines of John Benett esquire at Tisbury, and for assaulting the Hindon troop of Yeomanry Cavalry, whilst on duty; James Toomer of Homington, and John Lush, of Bishopstone, charged with having destroyed the thrashing machine of William and Charles King Perry, at Homington; Charles Martin, charged with having tumultuously assembled with other at Melchet Park, destroyed a hay making and a chaff cutting machine, and extorted money by threats and menaces; William Luffman, Henry Herrington, and Thomas Gange, charged with having riotously assembled and broken a thrashing machine, at West Grimstead, the property of Timothy Rumbold; George Green and Charles Lane, charged with having destroyed

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

thrashing, chaff, and winnowing machines at Tollard Royal, the property of Lord Rivers and Mr Lane. ³⁰

It was reported in today's edition of *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal* that Mr Baron Vaughan, Mr Justice James Parke, and Mr Justice Alderson, the Judges named in the Special Commissions, have appointed the commission for Hampshire to be opened on Saturday, the 18th inst. at Winchester; and for Wilts, on Monday, the 27th inst. at Salisbury. The delay in the opening of these Commissions is said to be owing to the time required for summoning Juries, and other necessary preliminary forms. ³¹

Tuesday, 7th December

Magistrates in the neighbourhood of Devizes have recommended that the farmers advance the amount of wages they pay their labourers. This recommendation appears to have been misunderstood by the labourers as they seem to imagine that it is now compulsory for the farmer to give ten shillings a week to every able bodied man, and where this rate of wages has not been complied with, the labourers, in several instances, have refused to work.

At a Petty Sessions held in Devizes today, Mr Grant of Marston, stated, that during a period of five years in which he had resided in that tithing, he had not received a single complaint from any of his labourers, until Monday last, when his thrashers struck for ten shillings a week, saying the Magistrates, had ordered that sum to be paid to them, and that they would not work unless it was. He had been in the habit of paying them eight shillings a week, and their beer, which was equal to another shilling, and with this they had previously been contented.

Mr T Estcourt and Mr Edmondstone said, that the Magistrates had no intention of interfering between the farmer and the labourer; they had no power, indeed; and if they had, it would be far from their inclination. They recommended ten shillings a week wages, conceiving that

³⁰ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 6 December 1830. **NOTE:** In this report **Levi Millard** is named as Levi M'Cloud and **Thomas Vinen** (Vining) is named as Thomas Niming

³¹ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 6 December 1830

was a fair remuneration for the labour of an able bodied man.

Sir Edward Poore said, 'In these eventful times, it behoves everyone to put his shoulder to the wheel. What is calculated to benefit the labourer, benefited the farmer, the landlord, and the country generally. Where the landlord and the tenant went hand in hand, there is no difficulty but what they might overcome, no good but what they might accomplish. It is impossible that the Magistrates who signed the recommendation alluded to, could influence any but their own tenants with regard to the amount of wages to be given to labourers, but, having made a certain reduction in rent, they would decidedly compel their tenants to give the wages recommended. I would advise farmers generally to offer a liberal rate of wages, and in such cases, if the labourers refused to work, to discharge them at once; after which, if they applied to a Magistrate, they might rely upon it, they would be refused all parish relief.'³²

Several labourers who had been in the employ of Mr Butler of Bromham, had struck for an advance in wages yesterday and as their terms had not been acceded to they came to the Petty Sessions, held in Devizes, to complain to the Magistrates that Mr Butler would not give them more than seven shillings a week. Mr Estcourt, in the kindest manner, pointed out to the men that they would discredit their character by striking and advised them that for whatever rate of wages they laboured, to perform their contract, and not to neglect their work, even if they received only five shillings a week, and then, if they applied to the Magistrates, the Magistrates would do all in their power for their relief.

The men, most of whom have large families, said that every other farmer in the parish had advanced the wages of their labourers and it was very hard that they should only receive seven shillings a week, while others were receiving ten shillings. One of the men Paul Weston, who has a wife and seven children, said, 'I have been employed at wheat sowing, at only three shillings and sixpence an acre, and at this rate I can scarcely earn seven shillings a week. It is

³² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

impossible that men in these circumstances can go on contentedly with their work.’

Mr Estcourt took great pains to impress on the men that it was out of the power of the Magistrates to compel Mr Butler to give them ten shillings and week. He again strenuously advised them to perform the work they had to do and continue with Mr Butler until a better place came along. It was also suggested to them that Mr Butler had put off advancing the wages of his labourers, until he knew whether his landlord would make a reduction in his rent. Mr C Butler, who was promised, at the request of the Magistrates, to see his brother and endeavour to effect some arrangement. ³³

Mr Scott, one of the county Magistrates, has been engaged during Saturday, yesterday and today, in taking examinations relating to the Woodborough rioters. The result is, that 11 of them have been fully committed, to take their trial for capital offences. The remainder have been admitted to bail. ³⁴

Thursday, 9th December

Joseph Strugnell and John Sheppard have been committed to Fisherton Gaol. Strugnell is charged with breaking into the dwelling house of Hezekiah Mower at Stert, and stealing two rein, certain silver, and clothes, and Sheppard is charged with having assembled with other persons, and destroyed one thrashing machine, and one hand thrashing machine, the property of James Judd at Newtontoney. ³⁵

T H S B Estcourt, esq. M P., cornet of the Devizes Troop of Wiltshire Yeomanry, has invited the officers, non commissioned officers, and privates, of his troop, to a dinner tomorrow at Bishop’s Cannings. A day of much conviviality is anticipated. ³⁶

³³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

³⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

³⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

³⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

The following notice appeared in today's edition of the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*.

To George Watson Taylor, Esq.

Sir,

We the undersigned Tenants, feel ourselves called upon, thus publicly, to express our sentiments of obligation, for your liberal and generous conduct, in so promptly remitting 20 per cent on our rentals; in order that we may be enabled to give that increased rate of wages to our labourers, which their necessities demand.

We beg respectfully to assure you, that your liberality shall not be abused by us; but, that we will use our utmost exertions to promote the comfort and welfare of those we employ.

Joseph Tanner
Elizabeth Parsons
John T Compton
John Munday
Jacob Newman
James Dowse
John Coleman
John Parham
James Payne
Jane Hussey
Benjamin Scott
Levi Raymond
William Edwards
Robert Edwards
James Giddings
Richard Tinker
John Giddings
William Smith
Robert Smith
John Parnell
Abel Hampton
M Haines
Jonathan Grant
William Grant
M Butcher
Alexander Selby ³⁷

John Crook Pepler
William Price
James Watts
Humphrey White
John Scammell
William Taylor
J Humphris
John Howell
Thomas White
William Chapman
Daniel Butler
Mark Butler
Jonas Oram
Henry Slade
George White
Samuel Mitchell
Thomas White
Gracious Ashley
Charles Scammell
William White
Charles Hewer
Thomas Alexander
Paul Sainsbury
George Davis
William Lyne

³⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

The following information, received from a highly respected, but un-named, quarter, appeared in today's edition of the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*.

We can assure the public, from the best authority, that the accounts of Mr Thomas Goddard's conduct are generally exaggerated; he was much respected in the village of Ramsbury, where he resided, and is known to have been a good son, and an affectionate husband and brother. ³⁸

A circular has been address by the Home Secretary to the Magistracy of the various counties, dictating a discontinuance of all yielding to threat or intimidation, either as respects the recommendation of a uniform rate of wages or the non-employment of thrashing machines, which, it is justly observed, are as much under the protection of the law an any other piece of machinery. Allowing for existing difficulties and the embarrassment, which they naturally produce, Magistrates, under the conviction that everything possible will be done by His Majesty's Government to alleviate the suffering of the peasantry, are called upon to act with energy and firmness in resistance of all injurious and unreasonable demands, and to defend the rights of property against menace and violence of every description. ³⁹

E G Meyrick Esquire, of Ramsbury, wrote to the Government today expressing his great disappointment that his request to Lord Melbourne for the Special Commission to be held at Devizes had not been considered.

Ramsbury. Dec^r 9th

Sir,

I have this morning been favored with a copy of Lord Melbourne's letter, informing me that it is impossible that the Commission for the Trial of the late Rioters can be held at Devizes – I lament this determination from my heart, & should be wanting in my duty if I did not represent to you the great disappointment & dissatisfaction which it has occasioned to the Yeomanry in my neighbourhood – the loss they have already experienced from the destruction of their

³⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

³⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

various machines, is great; & they think it very hard to be dragged from their homes, at the most inclement season of the year, across a dreadful Plain, over which there is no road, & which is barely practicable to a Carriage, during the summer months.

It is true that the Peasantry are, at present tranquil, but that tranquillity is caused by fear alone, & there is no farmer in my neighbourhood, who does not nightly keep watch, from dread of fire – I leave you to Judge, what the feelings of the farmers will be, if they are forced to attend at Salisbury, (a distance of thirty miles) accompanied too, by their most trusty men, as witnesses – A journey to London, is nothing to us, when compared to a journey to Salisbury.

I would also humbly submit to the consideration of the Government, whether it would be safe, to summon at the same time, to a distant part of the County, the High Sheriff, the Magistrates, & the Yeomanry.

In the neighbouring County of Berks, the Assizes are held both at Reading & Abingdon; if the same indulgence could in this instance, be extended to Wiltshire, we should be truly grateful.

*I have the honor to be, Sir, yr obedient humble servant
E G Meyrick ⁴⁰*

It was reported in today's edition of *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette* that the Commission for the trial of the rioters in Wiltshire is to be held in Salisbury on Monday the 27th December. The Magistrates of this division used every effort to have the commission extended to Devizes, for the trial of those who have been committed to the prisons in this town, and to that in Marlborough, which would save an immense expense to the county at large, and the greatest inconvenience to the north of the county in particular. It is understood that there would have been no objection to this course, but there would not be sufficient time, after the commission had terminated in Salisbury, to have it held in Devizes, prior to the General Quarter Sessions. These Sessions are to be held in the first week in January. ⁴¹

⁴⁰ TNA – HO52/11 f167

⁴¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

It has also been reported that at the commencement of the late disturbances 28 respectable people of the Chapelry of Seend were sworn in as special constables before Thomas Bruges esquire, and 35 enrolled themselves as a night patrol, six being on duty every night. It is also noted that the labourers of Seend have been perfectly quiet and orderly during the whole time. ⁴²

Friday, 10th December 1830

The following report, from the Salisbury Correspondent, appeared in today's edition of *The Times*.

WILTSHIRE

[From a Correspondent.]

SALISBURY. – This city and its vicinity are, at present, more free from agitation than usual. The rioters were driven back on their approach by the Yeomanry. The farmers in the market place were called on to assist, but they are said to have declined to interfere. The labourers are at work on the roads at 10s. per week, and more work is doing in the fields than usual at this season. A meeting was held at Wilton on Wednesday, when it was agreed to give up the night watch as being no longer requisite. The labourers say they understand that the wages are again to be lowered after the trial of the rioters. At Hindon the people seem all unoccupied. The cavalry troop was dismissed yesterday. Some rioters have been taken today, and Mr Benett is gone to examine them to Mr Wyndham's at Dinton. The disturbances seem to have broken out at Sisbury (*sic*) with 14 quarrymen, who were employed, they say, at 3 ½ per day wages; and ascribing the low price to the thrashing being now effected by machines, and thus occasioning a great excess of labourers, they set about breaking the machines; to which, they say, the farmers expressed no objection, until they came to Mr Benett's, when the affray with the Windsor (*sic*) troops commenced.

The wages of labour are certainly exceedingly low in this district, and the education of the poor is much less attended to than in many parts of the country. The farmers' labourers whom you meet on the roads, and in the barns by

⁴² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 December 1830

the roadside, seem to think that a great service has been done to their order by the late disturbance.

In most places the price of labour has been advanced, but at Fonthill some thrashers are still working at 7s. per week. A labourer, with his wife and children, receives only this as wages, and his wife and children are allowed by a scale in proportion to their age. A girl of 19 receives 1s. per week, and a boy of nine, 9d. Fine healthy boys of 14 and 16 are strolling about without occupation, and they say that when in work they cannot get more than 18d. per week. The mill at Fonthill has been unoccupied for nearly two years, and very few people indeed are employed about the grounds. Indeed the whole place seems fast sinking into ruin. The cottages are fast decaying, and the broken windows indicate the extreme poverty of the once prosperous and happy peasantry of Mr Beckford. The land being, for the most part, let to tenants at will, is far from being well cultivated, and it is rarely that the poor are allowed more land than a very small slip of garden ground. The machines are all broken in this neighbourhood, but there do not appear to have been any fires.

The change of ministers seems to have excited great hopes in the minds of the farmers and tradesmen, who all say that both rent and tithes must be reduced, as well as taxation. For the last they look with confidence to the ministers, and the two first they hope for and insist upon as indispensable for the landowners and clergy. ⁴³

A warrant has been issued for the arrest of Silas Webb, of Downton, who is charged on the oath of James Shelley, with having taken part in the destruction of his thrashing machine on the 23rd November last. ⁴⁴

Saturday, 11th December

Today the Magistrates of the Malmesbury Division issued the following leaflet on the subject of labourer's wages and poor relief.

⁴³ The Times, 10 December 1830

⁴⁴ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives 1553/12 – Warrant issued by Geo. Matcham 10th November 1830.
NOTE: See *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II* for full transcript

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

MALMESBURY, DEC. 11, 1830

The **MAGISTRATES** of the **DIVISION** of **MALMSBURY** were anxious, before giving any opinion on the subject of wages to the labourers, and relief to the poor, to elicit the best information in their power on those subjects; and they are led to believe, that from the excitement of the moment, promises have been made which neither have been nor can be performed; and they also find, that the wages of able bodied labourers have not on an average for many years past, exceeded 9s. per week, without beer, or 8s. per week with beer, during the winter months: and considering the present low price of the necessary articles of life, those rates of wages are such as the able-bodied labourer might have reason to expect, and should be content with. The great difficulty the Magistrates are under, is respecting those men, women, and children, for whom their parishes cannot find labour: in those cases, all that the Magistrates can do, is to order them such relief from their respective parishes as will accord with the several cases, and the power of the Magistrates. At the same time, they strongly recommend the Gentlemen, Overseers, and Farmers, to use their utmost exertion in obtaining employment for the labourers, and as far as it may be practicable, granting small allotments of land, at a moderate rent, for gardens, &c. from a conviction that it might greatly ameliorate their condition, and meet the wishes of the honest and industrious.

PHILIP WATKINS, PRINTER, CIRENCESTER ⁴⁵

Three ricks of hay were last night destroyed by fire at Coate, about three miles from Devizes. One of them was the property of Mr Giddings, the other two belonging to Mr Wild.

There is no doubt of these being the acts of incendiaries.

On the same night another fire was reported in the neighbourhood of Market Lavington. ⁴⁶

John Slatter, Thomas Jenner, James Tyler, Robert Forder, and William Poulton, farmers in Cricklade and

⁴⁵ TNA – HO52/11 f185

⁴⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 16 December 1830; TNA – HO52/11 f177 - 178 & f186

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Latton, wrote to Lord Melbourne today requesting that a Special Commission to try the rioters in the northern part of the County be held either at Marlborough or Devizes.

To the Right Hon^{ble} Lord Melbourne

We the undersigned Farmer's residing in the parishes of Cricklade and Latton in the County of Wilts beg most respectfully to inform your Lordship that twelve prisoners have been committed to the Old Bridewell Devizes in the said County for riotously assembling in the said parishes and braking divers machines our property and that we are severally bound over to prosecute the said prisoners That understanding a Commission has issued for holding a Special Sessions at Salisbury on the 27th Instant for the trial of all the prisoners committed for the like offences in the said County beg to draw your Lordships attention to the great distance (50 miles) from the residences of us the undersigned to Salisbury and the consequent Inconvenience Expense and delay (and some degree of danger at this season of the year owing to the bad state of the roads over Salisbury Plain) that must necessarily attend the prosecution of prisoners committed from this part of the County amounting to upwards of thirty.

That as the Town of Marlborough is only distant from this part of the County twenty miles and Devizes only thirty we most humbly suggest to your Lordship the extreme propriety of holding a Special Sessions for the Trial of such of the prisoners as are committed from the Northern part of the County at either of those Towns not only because such an arrangement would be a (hurdle?) with great personal convenience to the prosecutors their witnesses and all other parties concerned but that because (in our opinion) the same would greatly facilitate the Administration of Justice, and should your Lordship be pleased on due consideration to order a Commission to be issued for holding such Special Sessions at either of the above Towns which we confidently hope for we shall (as in Duty bound we ought to) ever feel most grateful.

*John Slatter Tho^s Jenner
James Tyler Robert Forder
Will^m Poulton ⁴⁷*

⁴⁷ TNA – HO52/11 f171 &171

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Monday, 13th December

The following prisoners have been committed to Fisherton Gaol during the last week:- John Sheppard, charged with having assembled with other persons, and destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of James Judd of Newton Tony; Edmund White, of Tisbury, blacksmith, charged with having riotously assembled with others, in the farm yard of John Benett Esq, and destroyed a thrashing machine and other farm implements; William Cheater, of Downton, for having, with others, riotously and tumultuously assembled, demanded money of George Masters at Damerham South, maliciously destroyed a thrashing machine the property of John Waters, and been guilty of other outrages. ⁴⁸

Wednesday, 15th December 1830

Today's edition of *The Times* carried the following letter from John Benett.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir, - The report of your Salisbury correspondent in *The Times* of the 10th inst., as far as it relates to the parishes of Tisbury and Fonthill, is a tissue of misrepresentation.

"The disturbances" did not originate at Tisbury, but at Ansty; nor with "14," or any number of "quarry-men." The quarry-men work by measure, and may earn sufficient wages, the price for breaking of hard and soft stone mixed being 6d. per yard; the men working in two sets, the first using the heavy hammers, breaking the stone down to a certain size at 3d. per yard, and the second using the light hammer to finish it, at 3d. per yard – together 6d. per yard finished.

It is not true that "the farmers expressed no objection to the breaking of their machines till they came to Mr Benett's;" nor did any "affray" commence with any "Windsor troops" there, though the Hindon troop of yeomanry cavalry there put a stop to the riot.

⁴⁸ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 13 December 183



24. John Benett Esq.

From a print at the *Benett Arms*, Semley

It is not true that “the education of the poor is much less attended to in this district than in many parts of the country,” there being no less than six schools for the education of the poor, either endowed or supported by voluntary contributions, in the parish of Tisbury alone.

“The farmers’ labourers” have not obtained any advantage here by rioting, nor do they generally “think” or say they have.

The cloth mill at Fonthill has never been worked, except for a very short time, and then by men from a

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

distance, who have now gone back to their homes, so that no injury has yet been done by this factory to the parish.

Neither of the parishes of Fonthill can be truly said to be “sinking into ruin,” nor is the land in either parish ill cultivated.

The poor have all gardens, and, in general, as much land as could be useful to them; and they can all rent land for potatoes, ploughed and prepared for the crop.

These and other errors in the statement of your correspondent at Salisbury are proofs that he is indeed one of those who pick up information, as he says himself, “from those whom he meets on the roads, and in the barns by the road side.” And do you think, Sir, information so collected should, without more severe scrutiny, be sent forth to the public under your sanction? I have not time to correspond with editors of papers, or to correct the mis-statements which I often observe in yours and some other prints; but those to which I have alluded are so calculated to make an erroneous and mischievous impression, that I, who have resided in the parish of Tisbury all my life, and have been an acting magistrate for upwards of 30 years in this division, feel it a duty due to my neighbours and myself to give this contradiction to such unfounded and unjust assertions. Relying on your candour for the assertion of this letter in your paper, I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Pythouse, Dec. 11

JOHN BENETT. ⁴⁹

Edward Ings wrote to James Cobb, the solicitor for the Government at Salisbury, to report on the number of prisoners now held in the Devizes gaols.

Dear Sir

I write today in part reply to your Letter and the Magistrates will consider the several points and enable me to give you a further reply tomorrow.

The number of Prisoners at present committed for Trial on charges of riot & machine breaking, in the two prisons at Devizes, is 123, and when the Prisoners come here from Marlborough Gaol it will require three days to convey them to Salisbury, with all the conveyances that can be procured – but it is at present impossible to say what number must

⁴⁹ The Times, 15 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

necessarily be sent to Sarum because it is understood that Mr Tallents will only select certain principal cases for Trial under the Special Commission, leaving many for Trial at the next Devizes Sessions, in which case it will of course be improper to send to Sarum those who must come back here again for Trial – perhaps you will be good enough to name this point to Mr Tallents and say the Magistrates of this Division will feel obliged by the earliest communication as to the cases to be selected for trial at Salisbury – Mr Estcourt is not acting as Vice Lord Lieutenant nor is there any such appointment in this County – I believe the High Sheriff has the Power of directing an Escort of Military to convey the Prisoners and there is some intention of employing Regular Troops for this purpose, instead of troubling the Yeomanry again.

I am Dr Sir

Yours truly

Edwd Ings

*Devizes 15th December 1830*⁵⁰

Shortly after Mr Ings had written the above letter the Magistrates of Devizes received the following letter from the Captains of the Devizes & Chippenham Troops of Yeomanry Cavalry.

*To the Magistrates of the
Division of Devizes*

Devizes 15 Decemr 1830

Gentⁿ.

In reply to your application for the assistance of the yeomanry Cavalry to Escort the prisoners from this place to Salisbury previous to their taking their Trial We beg to say that the Yeomanry will at all times be ready to attend to your directions but as we understand four troops of Lancers are now quartered in Bath we beg to suggest that if they are employed in this duty it will be a saving of Expense to Government and will prevent the inconvenience which will be occasioned to the Yeomanry from not being present at the Market on Thursday next which many of the members of that Corps are anxious to do having been prevented from attending several Market days in consequence of their being on duty in this Town

⁵⁰ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12 – Letter from Edward Ings, dated 15th December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

We have the honor to be

Gent

Your Obed^t Serv^{ts}

Wad: Locke

Chas Lewis Phipps

Captⁿ Devizes Troop

Captⁿ Wilts Y^y C^y

Mr Ings wrote another letter to James Cobb, enclosing a copy of the above letter.

Dear Sir,

Since writing my other letter to you the Magistrates have received a letter (of which I send you copy) signed by the Captains of the Devizes and Chippenham Troops of the Yeomanry Cavalry – The Magistrates desire me to forward it to you to be communicated to Colonel Mair.

I am

Dear Sir

in haste

yours truly

Edw^d Ings

Devizes 15th Dec^r 1830

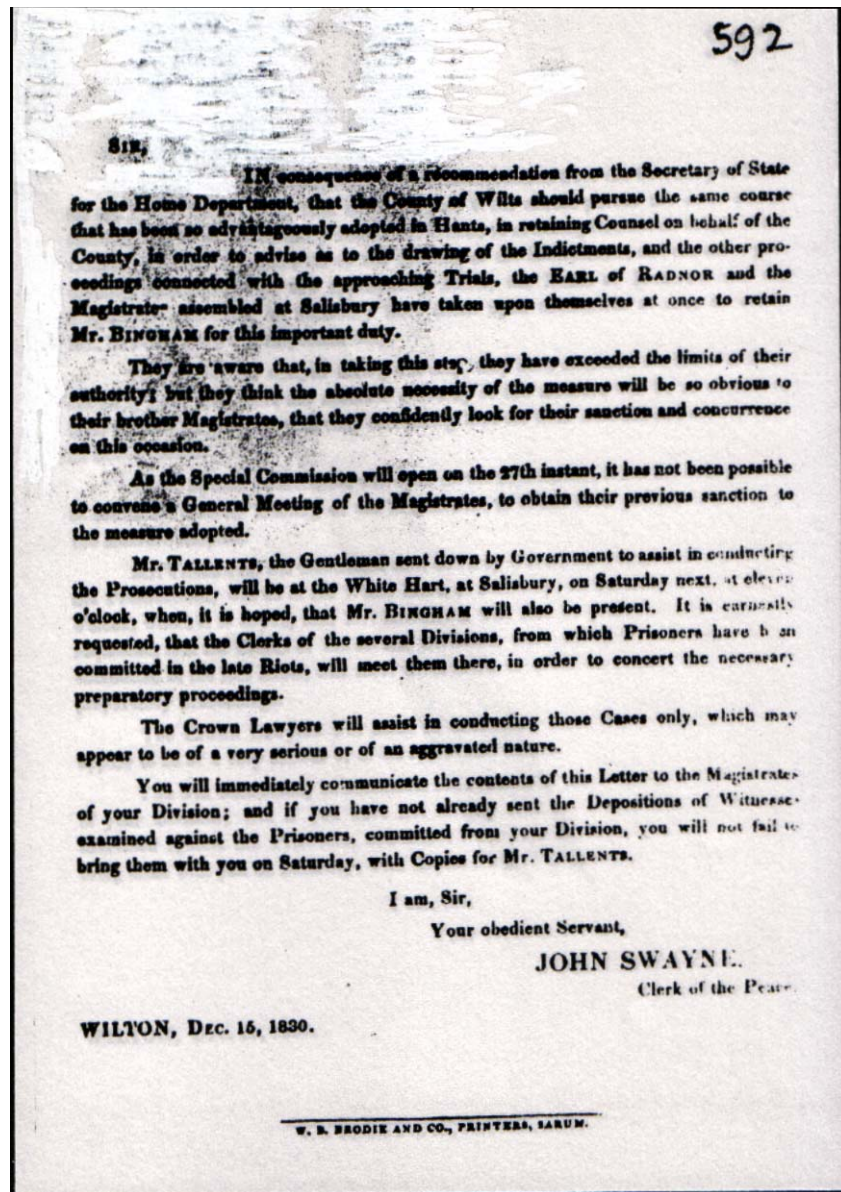
It seems to be the general wish to employ the Regular Cavalry on this occasion. ⁵¹

Thursday, 16th December 1830

When Lord Churchill visited his manor of West Lavington, a short while ago, several poor persons of the parish waited on his Lordship, to thank him on their own account and that of others, for having granted them allotments of land to be cultivated by spade husbandry. His Lordship was highly pleased by the gratitude they showed and admitted them most graciously. It is now about six years since Lord Churchill allotted a portion of land for the use of the poor, and to which his Lordship has recently made an addition, which brings the whole to about 70 acres, all very good land, and conveniently situated. Great praise is also due to C R Henderson esquire, Lord Churchill's agent, for recommending this measure to his Lordship, and for the great care and trouble he has taken in apportioning the land, and to the honour of the poor it must be added, that they are punctual to the appointed hour in paying their rents, and that none of them have disgraced

⁵¹ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12 – Letter from Edward Ings, dated 15th December 1830

themselves in the late riots. It is hoped that other landlords and agents will follow this example. ⁵²



25. Arrangements for the Special Commission (TNA – HO40/27 f592)

Today's edition of *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette* carried the following report.

It is with pleasure we learn that the woollen trade, which has for a long time been suspended, is about to be revived in Chippenham. The very convenient and compact factories at Waterford, in that

⁵² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 16 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

vicinity, have been taken by Mr Rawlins, of Frome, will commence active operations on the 1st of January next. By this measure considerable numbers of industrious persons, who have long depended on the parish for support, will have it in their power to obtain for themselves an honest livelihood; while the farmers and tradesmen will be proportionally benefited by the reduction of the poor rates, which at present press so heavily upon them. ⁵³

Saturday, 18th December

The Government has sent Mr Edward Tallents, a legal gentleman, to Salisbury, for the purpose of arranging the prosecutions resulting from the recent disturbances in the county of Wiltshire. They are to be tried under a Special Commission, which is to be opened at Salisbury on the 27th December. It is supposed that the Government will prosecute the greater part of the cases, so that the expenses will fall on the country at large. Colonel Mair has also been in Salisbury by the direction of the Government, to make some arrangements as to escorting the prisoners to and from Devizes and Marlborough gaols, and also for the protection of witnesses, should they require any. There are 123 prisoners, fully committed for trial, in the Devizes gaols, several in the Bridewell at Marlborough and nearly 80 in Fisherton Gaol. The Nisi Prius Court is preparing for the reception of the three Judges, who will occupy the same bench. It is supposed that every disturbed district, whence prisoners have been committed, will be separately placed, and the numbers included in the same indictment, which will expedite the business of the assizes, which would otherwise be protracted to a considerable length. The County Sessions, which were to be have commenced on the first Tuesday in January, will be adjourned until the middle of February, to meet the convenience of Barristers, who will be engaged in London during “Term”. ⁵⁴

During the night three ricks, belonging to Mr Polhill, Lieutenant of the Devizes Troop of Yeomanry, were set on

⁵³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 16 December 1830

⁵⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 16 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

fire on his farm at Charlton. One of them, a bean rick containing the produce of 11 acres, was totally consumed, and the other two a wheat and a hay rick, were almost completely destroyed. There is no doubt that this was the act of an incendiary, although no suspicion has yet rested on any individual. It is reported that Mr Polhill has been so kind to his labourers and dependants as to deprive even the most evil disposed of all reason for committal of such an act. ⁵⁵

Sunday, 19th December 1830

Between 7 and 8 o'clock this evening, as Mr John Jenner of Charlcot, near Bremhill, was passing through Bowood Park, the residence of the Marquis of Lansdowne, when two footpads, armed with a gun and a bludgeon, attacked him. One of them seized Mr Jenner by the collar whilst the other rifled his pocket of nine sovereigns, with which they escaped. ⁵⁶

Thomas Smith wrote to Sir Francis Freeling to report the fire that had taken place on Lieutenant Polhill's property last night.

*Post Office Devizes
Dec 19 1830*

Sir,

I am much concerned to state that the diabolical acts of the Incendiaries have not yet ceased in the Neighbourhood. During last night Three Ricks, one of Beans, the produce of Eleven Acres, the one of Wheat and one of Hay, the property of Lieut Polhill of the Devizes troop of Yeomanry, were set on Fire.

These Ricks were in detached parts of the Estate in the Parish of Charlton, the adjoining Parish to Rushall.

The Bean rick was wholly destroyed, the other two are not entirely so.

Thos B Smith ⁵⁷

⁵⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830; TNA – HO52/11 f187

⁵⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830

⁵⁷ TNA – HO52/11 f187

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Monday, 20th December

The following prisoners have been committed to Fisherton Gaol during the last week:- Charles Jerrard, the younger, and William Snook, for destroying a thrashing machine and part of a barn, the property of John Benett Esq, at Pythouse Farm Tisbury; Silas Webb, for destroying a thrashing machine, at Downton, the property of James Shelley; Michael Hood, for rioting and destroying the property of James Cocks, at Plaitford; Thomas Porter, Aaron Sheppard, James Stevens, George Burbage and Henry Dicketts, for riotously assembling at Idmiston on the 22nd, and destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Charles Blake; John Barrett, for destroying a thrashing machine and other farm implements at Tisbury; James Hale and James Beckley (otherwise Giddings), for breaking a thrashing machine at Enford on the 22nd.⁵⁸

The following letters were published in today's edition of the *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*.

To the Editor of the Salisbury & Winchester Journal

Sir – During the time of the unfortunate riots at Tisbury, I and my brothers thought it prudent so far to accede to the demands of the mob, as to express our willingness to advance the price of our Labourers' wages to two shillings a day. By doing this we had not only incurred the displeasure of some of our neighbours, but they have not hesitated to impute to our conduct *dishonourable* and *sinister* motives. To vindicate our characters from a charge so falsely imputed to us, I feel it my duty, through the medium of your widely extended Journal, to lay before the public the following statement of the facts: -

Some labourers after they had left Tisbury, on their route to Fonthill, I was informed, by persons whose veracity I did not doubt, that several persons, who style themselves principal inhabitants of the parish, had been endeavouring to excite the minds of those deluded people against our persons and property, telling them, amongst other things, "*that we sold bread three pence a loaf dearer than it was sold for at Salisbury; and urging them to go down to the Mill, and force them to fall the bread.*" Such doctrine as this was

⁵⁸ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 20 December 1830. NOTE: James Hale appears as James Hall

likely to be eagerly swallowed by the mob, and many of them expressed their determination, on their return, to make an attack on the Mill, as they had been advised. We could not hear these things without alarm, and, of course, considered it our duty to do all in our power to allay their fury, and to counteract the machinations of their base instigators. Accordingly, having heard that their demand was twelve shillings a week, and the destruction of machinery, we posted, about five o'clock in the evening, in several parts of the parish, the following notice: - We, the undersigned, having been informed that some persons have tried to excite the minds of the poor against our property, do hereby declare, that we have no machinery in our possession calculated to perform any kind of manual labour, and that we are willing to give to every able-bodied man in our employ the sum of two shillings per day.

MAT. COMBES
W. COMBS
N. COMBS

Nov. 25, 1830.

But, contrary to the advice of these excitors, our persons and property received no injury. Seeing that their first plan had failed, they had recourse to another, which was, to *insinuate that we were secret encouragers of the rioters*, - of which (can you believe it?) the above notice was held proof, - alleging that it was put up on the *morning* of the riot, and designed to make the farmers comply with the demands of the mob; whereas it was not written till *candlelight in the evening*. Thus you will see, that they brought forward, in order to criminate us, the very measure which they, by their diabolical instigations, had forced us to adopt. What language is there sufficient to characterize the turpitude, the villainy of such malignant libellers! Had we, as it is reported some of our accusers did - had we given the mob (unsolicited) money or cider in the morning, with a promise of more in the evening: - had we been found amongst them, instigating them to fresh acts of violence; - had we, after they had demolished one thrashing machine, told them, "Now you have begun, go through with it - leave not one standing;" - had we done any of these things, then should we expect to be accused as aiders and abettors in the riots:

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

but having done none of these things, to be branded with such opprobrious appellations is unjust in the extreme.

As to the charge of selling bread above the Salisbury price, I have only to say, that, to the best of my recollection, we never sold a loaf of bread in our lives. Flour (which every one knows, is a marketable commodity, as much as wheat or barley) we sell; but no *servant we employ, no baker, or any other person*, is obliged to buy it of us; so that the only inducement to do this is, that we sell it as *cheap* and as *good* as any other miller. The price we charged for it then, as well as now, was, and is the same as Mr Ball's of the Town Mill, Salisbury, and of other millers in the neighbourhood. I would not, by this, wish to be understood as throwing the odium from ourselves to the Tisbury bakers. On the contrary, I know that their profits are no more than they are fairly entitled to, and *less* than they are allowed by Act of Parliament.

Thus, Sir, I have given, as clearly as I am able, a *true* statement of the case, and I challenge my enemies to disprove it if they can; or to prove that I, at any period of my life, have acted inconsistent with the character of an honest and peaceable, though humble citizen.

I am Sir, your obedient Servant
MAT COMBES.

TISBURY MILL, Dec. 13, 1830 ⁵⁹

Tuesday, 21st December

Mr John Rowland, of Axford Farm near Ramsbury, has received a letter threatening to burn down his farm and kill him if he swears against any one in prison. His servant found the letter in one of Mr Rowland's meadows. The letter reads:-

Mr Rowland, haxford farm

Hiff you goes to sware against or a man in prison you have here burnt down to ground and thy bluddy head chopt off

Mr Rowland, Axford Farm

⁵⁹ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 20 December 1839

The labourers of Stanton, who promptly assisted to put out the fire on the premises of Mr Mills a few weeks ago, and by whose praiseworthy exertions a great part of the buildings were saved, today received the sum of £12 10 shillings to be distributed amongst them. Mr Crocket gave £5 on behalf of the Norwich Union Insurance Office, there was £2 10 shillings from the Mutual Insurance, and £5 was given by Lord Pembroke, the landlord. No doubt these men will be comparing their position with that of those waiting in gaol for their trial. ⁶⁰

Shaftesbury, in Dorset, being near Hindon, had been much alarmed by the riots there, and being grateful for the protection afforded them by the Wiltshire Yeomanry Cavalry, the Corporation of Shaftesbury resolved that a vote of thanks be granted to them. The vote, as follows, was forwarded by Mr James Cox, Mayor, to the Marquis of Bath:-

At a meeting of the Corporation of Shaftesbury, held on the 21st December, 1830,

It is proposed by Mr Edward Buckland and unanimously agreed to, that the thanks of this Corporation be presented to the Wiltshire Regiment of Yeomanry for the noble and spirited conduct in Suppressing the late riots, and particularly to the officers, non-commissioned officers and privates of the Hindon troop, and the Mayor is respectfully requested to convey to the proper authorities the sense the Corporation entertain of their essential service. ⁶¹

The Magistrates of the Swindon and Marlborough Division wrote to Lord Melbourne today in order to bring to his attention the contribution made by the spirited exertions of Lieutenant Hopewell Budd of the Royal Navy, in helping to pacify the county.

My Lord,

At this time when individual exertions firm and good example to others do so much to preserve the public peace, we cannot, as Magistrates, refrain from performing a pleasant part of our duty, in stating to your Lordship that the

⁶⁰ The Devises & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830

⁶¹ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p90

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

unwearied and extraordinary Gallantry and spirited exertions of Lieutenant Hopewell Budd of the Royal Navy, have contributed in no slight degree to present pacific state of the County of Wilts. The whole of the Labourers of Winterbourne Bassett, the Parish in which his Farm lies, & amounting to seventy in number, were prevailed upon by him to come forward without an exception. This example, set by Lieutenant Budd and his Labourers, enabled the adjoining Parishes to resist with greater effect the operation of the riotous and disaffected. The Lieutenant afterwards acted with a Body of Horsemen and Yeomanry, in riding from place to place wherever an assemblage of Rioters was to be dispersed, and assisted in taking several of the most mischievous. We request your Lordship to excuse the liberty we have taken of recommending Lieutenant Budd to your Lordships Notice.

And have the honor to be

My Lord

Your Lordships Most Obed^t Servants

Marlborough 21st December 1830

T B M Baskerville

E. G Meyrick

E Goddard

Thos: Hyde Ripley

Thomas Vilett

Fra. Warneford

A Goddard

Fulwar Craven

H Nelson Goddard

Magistrates of the Swindon and

Marlborough Division

The Viscount Melbourne

Secretary of State for the Home Department ⁶²

Wednesday, 22nd December

At around seven o'clock this morning Thomas Watts, a keeper to Lord Ailesbury, was on his way to fetch some wood from the forest, when he saw a piece of paper lying by the arch of the of the bridge near Woodman's mill, in the parish of Mildenhall. There was writing on the paper but

⁶² TNA – HO52/11 f197-198

Watts could not read and put the paper in his pocket. Later that morning he showed it to a person named Waite who told him that the letter was for Mr Henry Woodman. Watt's gave the letter to Mr Woodman at about 10 o'clock this morning. The letter proved to be in a similar vein to that received yesterday evening by Mr John Rowland, of Axford Farm. The writer threatened to burn down Mr Woodman's property if he swore against anyone in prison. A third letter carrying, similar threats, has been received by Mr Edward Vaisey, of Mildenhall. All three men have warrants out in connection with the destruction of their property during the recent disturbances in the area.

Mr Rowland believes the writing is that of a neighbour of his, Mr Isaac Looker. Mr T Smith, a special constable at Ramsbury, was given a warrant to search Mr Looker's property. When Mr Smith and Mr Taunton, a Bow-street officer, searched the house they found a blank piece of paper in Mr Looker's bureau which matched the paper that the three letters were written on. There is a peculiar irregularity in the edges of the paper and the pieces fit exactly into each other. Also the watermark is divided, one part is on the blank sheet and the other on the letter received by Mr Rowland. Mr Looker denies writing any of the letters. ⁶³

Gifford, alias Jervis North, the person charged with having extorted money from Miss Pile at Woodborough, and for whose discovery an active search has for some time been made without success, was yesterday apprehended by Hutchins one of our police officers, in a chalk pit below Blandford, while at work with 50 men. North was well known to the man who accompanied Hutchins, and on his being pointed out Hutchins rushed onto North and seized him by the collar with one hand, held a pistol to his head with the other and threatened to shoot him if he made the least resistance. North submitted to having the irons put on him and was taken to Devizes where he was examined before the Magistrates. ⁶⁴

⁶³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁶⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

Henry King sent a letter to Mr Cobb, enclosing the Deposition of Michael Bradly against Thomas Topp.

Chilmark Dec^r 22nd 1830

Dear Sir,

I enclose you the Deposition of Mich^l Bradly against Thos Top for breaking a Thrashing Machine, & I beg to observe that this is not the same Machine as the one he is already indicted for breaking.

I shall be obliged to you to prefer a separate indictment against him for this offence.

I hope this will be a case in which Government will prosecute

Believe me

My dear Sir

Yours Sincerely

*Henry King*⁶⁵

The Mayor and Justices of Salisbury have issued the following arrangements for the trials of the prisoners at the coming Special Assizes.

SPECIAL COMMISSION

The Mayor and Justices beg to apprise their Fellow Citizens, that the **SPECIAL COMMISSION**, for the Trial of the Prisoners concerned in the late Riots, will be opened on Monday next, the 27th inst., and that all the **SPECIAL CONSTABLES** will be expected to render their **ASSISTANCE** in preserving the Peace of the City, and securing all proper facilities for the Judges, Sheriff, Counsel and others, during the progress of the Commission.

The **SPECIAL CONSTABLES** are desired to assemble on Monday next, at one o'clock precisely, in their several Divisions, at the following stations:

- Division A, at the White Horse Inn, Castle Street.
B, at the Black Horse Inn.
C, at the Cheese Market.
D, at the Goat Inn.
E, at the White Hart Inn.
F, at the Radnor Arms.
G, at the Red Lion Inn.

⁶⁵ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12 – letter from Henry King , dated 22nd December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

By order of the Mayor and Justices
Salisbury, December 22nd, 1830.

Matt. Thos Hodding, TOWN CLERK ⁶⁶

Thursday, 23rd December

Although many hundred inhabitants had been sworn Special Constables previous to the arrival of Colonel Mair at Salisbury, no regular organization had been resorted to, and consequently much confusion prevailed, to remedy which, districts were formed, under the direction of leaders. On the first appearance of disorder in the night, a portion of the inhabitants mustered at the place appointed in the most prompt manner, without confusion, and in a short time the rioters were dispersed, several of them being taken; since which no instance of tumult has occurred. By indefatigable perseverance Colonel Mair has already succeeded in establishing an efficient constabulary force in Bristol, Exeter, Dorchester, Blandford, and other considerable places in the West of England, in some of which the principal inhabitants have expressed a wish to resort to this method as a permanent nightly watch and ward. ⁶⁷

John Benett, of Pythouse has been busy collecting evidence against the rioters who destroyed machines in the Tisbury area, including his own.

My Lord,

I sent you a deposition of John Uphill taken before Mr Wyndham against Thomas Burt who was committed yesterday for aiding in the destruction of my machinery at Pythouse. I have another evidence to confirm this exactly as to the same Burt. This is a (...?) of bad character.

Also the Deposition of Thomas Ball against John Burton who surrendered himself yesterday and is committed by myself. I shall also have other evidence against this man who is a Ringleader, for breaking Lampard's machine & the Horse House at Lawn Farm. Tell me (which?) in the morning of Tuesday you (...?) have any witnesses in attendance I shall

⁶⁶ Salisbury & Winchester Journal., 27th December 1830

⁶⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830. **NOTE:** For full details of Colonel Mair's plan for the proposed City Police for Salisbury see *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II*

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

*be at Salisbury late Sunday night at Mr Wyndham the
College,*

I am yours truly

John Benett

Pythouse 23 Decr 1830 ⁶⁸

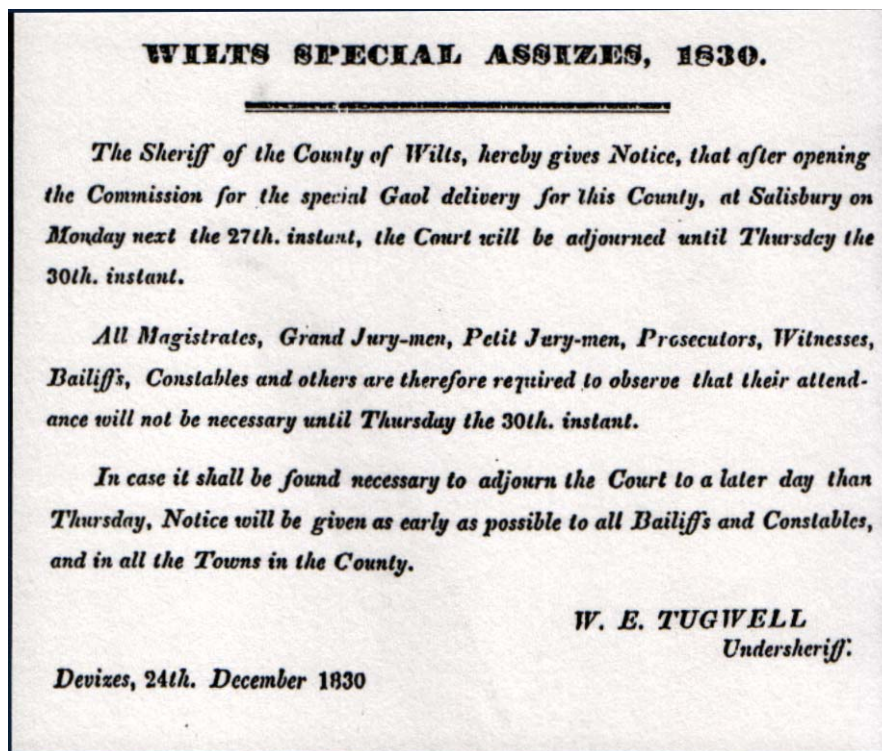
The following prisoners were committed to Fisherton Gaol during the last week:- John Shergold, George Shergold and John Day, charged with breaking certain thrashing machines belonging to W Goodenough Hayter Esquire at Winterbourne Stoke; the two Shergolds are also charged with having robbed Christopher Ingram of five shillings, at Stapleford; John Burroughs and William Hibberd, charge with robbing John Hayward of two sovereigns at Ebbesbourne Wake; Burroughs is also charged with having robbed Thomas Blandford of two sovereigns at Fifield; William Hayter, Charles Chandler, William Collins, charged with having assembled with other persons, and destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Richard Webb Esq, at Whiteparish; Arthur Hillier, charged with having assembled with other persons, and destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Jonathan Smallbones, at Enford, also having destroyed part of a thrashing machine, and an apple machine, the property of Jonathan Smallbones, at Enford; John Burton, charged with riotous assembly on the 25th November and breaking a thrashing machine at Fonthill Gifford and Tisbury; Thomas Burt, charged with destroying a thrashing machine and part of a barn at Pythouse Farm, Tisbury, on the 25th; and Stephen Forder, James Northover, and Thomas Tubb, charged with destroying a thrashing machine on the 22nd, at West Dean, the property of Joseph Whicher; John Targett, Jeremiah Topp, Charles Martin, Robert Obourne, William Scott, charged with destroying a thrashing machine on the 25th, the property of Mr Self, of Down Farm, Fonthill Gifford.

The following people were committed at the Old Bridewell at Devizes during the last week. Mary Martin, Mary Parker, Mary Lamb, John Newcombe, Richard Townsend, Edward Cruse and George Butt, charged with having riotously assembled at Long Newnton and with

⁶⁸ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 413/23 – Letter from John Benett, dated 23 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

setting fire to a thrashing machine, the property of Luke Cole.⁶⁹



26. Wiltshire Special Assizes

(Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12)

The Judges named in the Special Commission are expected to arrive at Salisbury at about three o'clock on Monday 27th December. They will be met and escorted into the city by the High Sheriff and Under Sheriff, with javelin men. It is also understood that a large body of special constables and many gentlemen of rank and influence in the county will also attend and form a cavalcade. After opening the Commission, the Court will adjourn until Tuesday morning, for the dispatch of business. His Majesty's Government, with a view to the preservation of peace and good order, and to assist in escorting the prisoners, has directed troops of regular Dragoons to be on duty in Salisbury and the neighbourhood during the Assizes. Some troops of the Wiltshire Yeomanry Cavalry will also assist in escorting the prisoners from the different

⁶⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830; Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 27 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

gaols. It is hoped that these preparation will prevent the possibility of any serious disturbance during the trials. ⁷⁰

It has been reported this week that some of the gentry and clergy in the neighbourhood of Devizes have reduced their rents and tithes. Among them are, Paul Methuen, esquire, of Corsham House, 20 per cent, on his last year's rents; the Reverend T A Methuen, rector of All Cannings, 25 per cent at his last tithe audit; the Reverend Mr Innes, rector of Hilperton, 20 per cent on his half year's tithes due at Michaelmas, 1830; the Reverend Mr Musgrave, of Compton Bassett, 15 per cent; and the very Reverend Archdeacon MacDonald, whose tithes were previously very low, 10 per cent. ⁷¹

The non-commissioned officers and privates of the Devizes Troop of yeomanry Cavalry, have this week presented their captain, Wadham Locke, esquire, of Rowdeford House, with a superbly chased silver vase, bearing the following inscription: -

Presented to Wadham Locke, esq. Captain of the Devizes Troop of Wiltshire Yeomanry Cavalry, by the non-commissioned officers and privates, as a testimony of their admiration of his prompt and soldier-like conduct since he has commanded the troop; particularly during the disturbances in Nov. 1830. ⁷²

Monday, 27th December

Mr Sergeant Wilde, who has come from Winchester, opened the Commission for the Special Assizes for the County of Wiltshire at 3 o'clock today. The Court, after the usual formalities had been gone through, was adjourned until 10 o'clock next Friday.

The calendar now contains to names of upwards of 300 prisoners, and is daily increasing.

Great alterations had been made in the Courts in order to accommodate the Judges and other Commissioners. Some curtains have been put up to screen their Lordships

⁷⁰ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830

⁷¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830

⁷² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 23 December 1830

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

from the draught occasioned by the number of doors which open into the courts, but no fireplaces or stoves had been put in either court, as might have been expected at this time of year.

The day fixed for the opening of the Commission for Dorset is the 10th January, but it is feared that the business for this County will not be completed by then. ⁷³

Mr Ono Shipman, of Barford St Martin, wrote to James Cobb to tell him that he would not be appearing against the men accused of destroying his property. The letter was forward immediately to Mr Wyndham Esquire.

Dr Sir,

I have to acknowledge the Rec^t of your Letter of the 24th Instant and feel surprised that you should have prepared a case for one not being Instructed by one so to do. I am in the Association. The men were not Taken up by my Direction my servant appeared against them By Desire of others tho the alleged offence was said to be committed at my house. I think there is Great Reason to apprehend that the Evidence on my part If persisted in would prove Defective and there are many other Indictments against them and I am not Bound to prosecute Therefore I Beg to Inform you that I shall not appear against them at this Assize.

I remain Dr Sir

With every Respect yours Truly

O Shipman

*P.S. At the time before stated
I was Extremely Ill and not
able to get out Being under
the care of a Medical man
therefore I cannot speak to what took place out of Doors
Barford St Martin Dec^r (27th?) 1830 ⁷⁴*

Thursday, 30th December

Today a meeting of the magistrates of the county, at which the Marquis of Lansdowne presided, was held in Salisbury, and the following resolutions carried unanimously:-

⁷³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831

⁷⁴ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – 1553/12 – Letter from O Shipman

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

That the thanks of this meeting be passed to the Yeomanry Cavalry of the county of Wilts, and to Colonel Baker, the officer who commanded them on the occasion, for their exemplary conduct, unwearied zeal, and admirable temper uniformly displayed by them during the late unfortunate disturbances. ⁷⁵

Friday, 31st December

Mr Baron Vaughan, Mr Justice J Parke and Mr Justice Alderson, arrived in Salisbury at about quarter to two. They were attended by the High Sheriff and about a hundred of the Yeoman and Gentry of the County, on horseback, and the carriages of several of the Nobility closed the procession. At the entrance to the city, they were met by the Mayor and Corporation, in eight carriages, who preceded the Learned Judges on their way to the Cathedral. The streets were lined on both sides by 400 of the special constables of the city. At the cathedral they were met by the Dean, Cannons, and other dignitaries. An admirable sermon was preached by the Sheriff's Chaplain, the reverend Mr Kitson, from 1 Peter, ii, 16, 'As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.' The Learned Judges afterwards returned to their lodgings. ⁷⁶

The Court was adjourned again until tomorrow morning. The calendar of prisoners is very heavy. There are upwards of 300 prisoners for trial. Of these nearly nine out of twelve are charged with the destruction of machinery, chiefly thrashing machines and other machines used in agriculture. There are several charged with riotously assembling and obtaining money by threats and menace and there are a considerable number for riotously and unlawfully assembling, without any other offence being charged. There are some charged with resistance to the magistrates in the execution of their duty, some for rescue and some with attacking the Hindon Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry. There are several charged with pulling down a house, one with setting fire to a thrashing machine and one with sending letters, threatening to set fire to houses, in

⁷⁵ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p92. **Note:** Lord Melbourne's letter to Lord Lansdowne, of 24th January 1831, gives the date of this meeting as the 31st December 1830

⁷⁶ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831

case the party written to should give evidence at the trials. The person charged with this offence is a farmer. There is this distinction between many of the cases of destruction of machinery in this county and those which were tried at Winchester, where there were few instances of attempts at personal violence, while in many of those to be tried here the conduct of the mobs was marked with violent personal outrage. From the serious nature of some of the charges, it is not likely that the business of the commission will terminate before this day next week, if so soon. Today the three Judges will sit together, but on Monday they will sit in two courts, in the same manner as at Winchester. The Council-chamber, in which the Court meets today, is one of the least convenient which can be imagined – for grand jury, for prisoners, witnesses, and indeed, most of the parties having occasion to attend it. The places allotted for the prisoners, for there is no dock, are the seats behind the counsel, and much inconvenience as well as delay will be felt from this during the progress of the commission.

The arrangements for preserving order outside are admirable, and the reporters have had as much attention paid to their accommodation as the narrow limits of the court can admit. ⁷⁷

⁷⁷ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

Wednesday 1st – Friday 31st December 1830

PART II : THE TRIALS

Their sentence some deserve to get, and laws were made to
be
Preservers of the public peace, and of society;
But great distress and want of work, starvation, and
disease,
Make inmates for the prison-house, and transports for the
seas.

(From *The Sound of History, Songs & Social Comment*, by
Roy Palmer)

Saturday, 1st January 1831

Saturday, 1ST January 1831

At a little before 10 o'clock this morning the Judges entered the Court. They were accompanied by the High Sheriff, E W L Popham Esq; the Marquis of Lansdowne, who is the Lord Lieutenant of the County; the Earl of Radnor, dressed in his state robe as the Recorder of this city and T G B Estcourt Esq. Colonel Mair, who has been so actively and efficiently engaged in arranging the constabulary force of this and the adjoining counties, was also in attendance. The attendance of the Magistrates considering the number on the roll in this county was not very numerous. Only 36 answered to their names when called over. This is probably due to the fact that many of them are also magistrates for Hampshire and Berkshire. Of the former many are only just released from their attendance at Winchester and many of those for Berkshire are at present engaged at Reading.

After the usual formalities had been gone through the following Grand Jury was sworn in: -

John Benett Esq, MP, Foremen	Henry Biggs Esq.
Sir J D Astley, Bart. MP	George Eyre, Esq.
Sir Edward Poore, Bart.	William Fowle, Esq.
Sir E Antrobus, Bart.	William H Ludlow, Esq.
Wadham Wyndham, Esq, MP	George P Scrope, Esq.
Robert Gordon, Esq. MP	F Craven, Esq.
Paul Methuen, Esq.	George Monkland, Esq.
George W Wroughton, Esq.	E Warriner, Esq
William Wyndham, Esq.	
Alexander Powell, Esq.	George Matcham, Esq.
Charles Wyndham, Esq.	Ambrose Hussey, Esq.
Thomas Grove, jun, Esq.	T B M Baskerville, Esq.

The proclamation against the vice and immorality having been read, Mr Justice Parke proceeded to deliver the charge to the Grand Jury. ¹

‘Gentlemen of the Grand Inquest, I am most happy to see so numerous and highly respectable a body of the gentry

¹ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

Saturday, 1st January 1831

of this county now assembled, in order to perform the duties of grand jurors, which devolve upon you in consequence of His Majesty's special commission, by which I and those with whom I have the honour to be associated, are empowered at this unusual season of the year to administer criminal justice in this place. The occasion which has called for this extraordinary exercise of the Royal Authority cannot but be most painful to every one who wishes well to the peace and happiness of the country in which we live, and none of us can be insensible of the necessity, or doubt the wisdom, of the measures which the King has been advised to adopt, for the purpose of affording an earlier investigation of these numerous offences which have of late so unhappily occurred in this county, than the ordinary course of the law affords. We have seen a spirit of insubordination and tumult has prevailed in many parts of the kingdom to an extent perhaps, without parallel within the memory of any person who hears me. It has displayed itself in numerous instances, in open acts of violence and outrage against property of several persons, by great assemblages of people, in a state nearly amounting to actual rebellion. In others, large quantities of agricultural produce have been secretly consumed by fire, originating either in a malignant spirit against individuals, or a general hostility to the higher classes of society. The magistrates have in some places been insulted, and their personal safety endangered. Robberies have been openly committed by tumultuous bodies of the working classes, and the result of these wicked proceedings has been, that the peaceable and well disposed have suffered great losses, and an unusual degree of anxiety and alarm has taken possession of men's minds, even in those parts of the kingdom that have been exempt from more immediate danger. It is said that these disturbances have been occasioned by the distress of the time, which presses on the inferior orders of society. In part, no doubt, they have been. Poverty and want, it appears, have been impossible altogether to exclude from the most prosperous communities with which we are acquainted. In our own, the richest and most industrious where, though the source of public and private charity are more abundant than in other nations, the laws have provided a very large, but unhappily

Saturday, 1st January 1831

an insufficient, fund for the support of the indigent and necessitous, the evil of penury extensively prevails, and perhaps it has been enhanced by the improper administration of the law which was intended for its extinction, and which, together with the difference in the payment of wages of single men and those with families, has been converted into a source of mischief by the encouragement of early and improvident marriages. I am sure it is not necessary for me to express the confidence I feel that you and all you who are placed in a superior station will not merely feel, for the distress where it exists, the kindness and sympathy of fellow creatures and fellow Christians, but will use every effort to alleviate, the misery of the poor, and remove the cause of it, which those are bound to make on whom Providence has bestowed wealth and power, and consequent responsibility and trust. I have said that the disorders are in part to be attributed to the distress of some portion of the lower orders, and I have said so because it is too apparent from what we have seen in executing our duty in another place, that the spirit of disorder has not been confined to those who are distressed, but a great many persons have engaged in the commission of these acts of outrage and disorder in the adjoining county. Whose wages were such as to place them far above the reach of want, and who, from the nature of their occupation could have no supposed interest, for none can have a real interest, in accomplishing the principal objects of their criminal proceedings. Blacksmiths, carpenters, artisans, men who were in a somewhat superior condition of life, and occupiers of land, have been the foremost in the destruction of thrashing machinery and in the violent and often felonious acts which the mob, in pursuit of that purpose, have so often committed, Though distress, therefore, may have had some share in producing the calamities, I fear that persons have not been wanting who, for the worst purposes, have availed themselves of its existence and exaggerated its severity, to promote general discontent and dissatisfaction; and endeavoured by the most mischievous and inflammatory acts to destroy that bond of mutual interest and goodwill which ought, for the happiness of all to unite the higher and lower classes of the

Saturday, 1st January 1831

community, and with the aid of which liberty and property have so long flourished in this country; and to stimulate the ignorant to excesses which must in the end be more ruinous to themselves than those against whom they have been excited. I would observe, also, that there is great reason to think, from the experiences we have had in another county, where agricultural labourers have been guilty of great outrages, that the farmers themselves in some instances, excited those misguided persons with a view of obtaining, by means of terror they created a reduction of their rents and tithes; thus, for their own interested purposes, encouraging those over whom they should have exercised the care and control of masters or superiors to excesses which, in some instances, have exposed them to the dreadful peril of the law. Such conduct, when discovered, ought not to be passed over with impunity; and if there are any persons in this county who have been guilty of such base and criminal acts, they ought to learn that they are, at all events, punishable for a misdemeanour, by means of an indictment for conspiracy, and liable as principal felons if they take a more active part, an event which has actually occurred in one of the recent trials at Winchester. Gentlemen, it is under the circumstances to which I referred that His Majesty had been pleased to anticipate the period for the exercise of the ordinary criminal judicature of the realm in this and other places; and whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the origin of the prevalent spirit of mischief, or as to the means of removing some of the causes which the efforts of individuals, or the wisdom of Parliament may provide, all must agree that the present remedy is to be found in the law of the land. The state of disorder in which this country has been placed is one in which no civilized nation, which boasts the form of a government, could long tolerate; and we, who have a wise system of laws, matured and improved by experience, must take care that they are respected and obeyed. It is for the purpose of performing our respective duties in administering the laws, that we are met in this place. You, gentlemen, will proceed, I am sure, in the same manner as if you were assembled at the ordinary periods of the year to discharge the function of grand inquest of this; you will forget, whilst you are acting in that character, every

thing that has passed and is passing out of doors; you will consider each case which is laid before you for preliminary inquiry with calmness and deliberation, notwithstanding the anxiety and alarm which may prevail elsewhere. You will look to the evidence, and to the evidence only, and decide according to the best of your judgment, without prejudice, without favour, without fear. In discharging my share of the duties that belong to us on this occasion, I know not that I can perform it more usefully than by stating to you publicly, more for the information of others than yourselves, what the law of the realm is with reference to those crimes which have been of so frequent occurrence in this and the neighbouring counties. Many of those misguided persons who have committed some of the outrages which have taken place, though they must have known that they were guilty of great offences against the peace and welfare of society and of great violation of the law, have, perhaps, not exactly known the dreadful state of responsibility which they incurred. It is fit that the nature of these crimes and the penalties that the law annexes to them, should be as clearly explained and as generally understood as possible.'

Mr Justice Parke went on to explain the various crimes that would be put before them. 'The crime of arson is one of the worst of these offences; it is one of the deepest moral die – an offence against society of the greatest magnitude – easy of perpetration, difficult of detection, and most alarming and destructive in its effects, and justly punished by loss of life. At common law, the malicious and voluntary burning of the dwelling house of another, or a barn with corn in it, was felony; and certain ancient statutes made this offence, and that of burning ricks or stacks of corn, grain, or hay, in the night, or in particular counties, punishable with death. And now, by a statute passed in the 7th and 8th year of His late Majesty's reign, which re-enacts a similar provision of the 9th George I., the law on this subject is simple, and at once clearly defined. The 2nd section constitutes it a capital offence unlawfully and maliciously to set fire to any church or chapel, or any chapel for religious worship of Dissenters, duly registered, or to any house, stable, coach house, hop-oast, barn, or granary, or to any building or erection used in carrying on any trade or manufacture, or any branch

Saturday, 1st January 1831

thereof, whether the same or any of them respectively shall be in the possession of the offender, or in the possession of any other person, with intent thereby to injure or defraud any person. The 19th section renders it also a capital offence to set fire to any stack of corn, grain, pulse, straw, hay, or wood; and the latter part of the same section subjects any person who shall unlawfully and maliciously set fire to any crops of corn, grain, or pulse, whether standing or cut down, or any part of a wood, coppice, or plantation of trees, or to any heath, gorse, furze, or fern, wheresoever growing, to transportation for 7 years, or to imprisonment for any time not exceeding two years, according to the discretion of the court before whom the offender shall be tried; and by the 25th section it is provided, that as to all the malicious offences in that act mentioned, the punishment shall equally apply, and be enforced, whether the offence shall be committed from malice conceived against the owner of the property on which the offence shall be committed or otherwise. The law, therefore, is distinct and clear; that the offence of burning barns, stacks, and other property, is punishable with death, at whatever time of the day or night it is committed. And is equally so whether it arises from mere malice – that is, a wicked disposition – or a hostile feeling against a particular individual. None can doubt the wisdom of this severe law, and its execution where the guilty shall be detected and convicted, will deter others from the commission of so dreadful an offence; and though there are many incendiaries whose atrocious acts are at present involved in mystery and obscurity, I trust the time will arrive ere long, as it generally does in cases of crime, when the guilt will be revealed and punished. The same act of Parliament which I have referred to – the 7th and 8th Geo. IV. Cap.30. – Contains the salutary provisions against riots of a particular character and description. But by the common law, all unlawful assemblies by great numbers of people, with such circumstances of terror as are calculated to excite alarm and to endanger the public peace, are prohibited, and wisely prohibited, although they proceed to no act of destruction, or injury of persons or property. Such assemblies are most dangerous, and acquire additional strength the longer they continue together: their numbers

increase, their passions are inflamed, they grow bold as they proceed, and the example of the more ardent and daring gives the rule of conduct to the rest, and when once they have violated the law, they are easily led on the acts of further aggression, and at last betrayed into the commission of the most atrocious crimes. None, therefore, can join in such assemblies without incurring the risk of some punishment for that simple act. And they incur the risk of the greater by being hurried on by the contagion of example to the perpetration of the worst offences. It is against the violence of such riotous assemblies that the statutes to which I referred, protects, by the penalty of death, houses and other property. It provides, "that if any persons riotously and tumultuously assembled together to the disturbance of the public peace, shall unlawfully and with force demolish, pull down, or destroy, or begin to demolish, pull down, or destroy, any church or chapel, or any chapel for the religious worship of Dissenters duly registered, or any house, stable, coach-house, out-house, warehouse, office, shop, mill, malt-house, hop-oast, barn, or granary, or any building or erection used in carrying on any trade, or manufacture, or any branch thereof, or any steam-engine, every such offender shall be guilty of felony, and, on conviction, suffer death." The same act contains clauses imposing less severe punishment upon the destruction of machinery otherwise than by a riotous assembly of persons. By the third section, the cutting, breaking, or destroying, or damaging with intent to destroy or render useless, any loom, machine or engine in silk, woollen, linen, or cotton manufactures, is made a felony, punishable with transportation for life, or for any term not less than seven years, or imprisonment for any space of time not exceeding four years, or with whipping (in the case of a male); and by another clause, hard labour or solitary confinement may be added. The offence of destroying or injuring other machinery is provided for by the fourth section of the same statute, which makes a felony punishable with transportation for seven years, or by imprisonment for any period less than two (under the discretionary addition of whipping, hard labour, or solitary imprisonment), if any person shall unlawfully and maliciously cut, break or destroy, or damage

Saturday, 1st January 1831

with the intent to destroy, or render useless, any thrashing machine, or any machine or engine, whether fixed or moveable, prepared for or employed in any manufacture except that of silk. The use of machinery is one of the great sources of our national wealth and prosperity, and whilst it is highly beneficial to the community to which we belong, it is far from being injurious even to those individuals with whose employment it may at first sight appear to interfere. The cheapness of production which is caused by the machines increases the demand for the manufactured articles, and that increased demand causes a further demand for labour; and for evidence of the truth of this proposition, we have only to refer to the great manufacturing districts of this kingdom, in which during the present century the improvements in machinery almost exceed belief, and yet the means of employment, and the numbers employed, have in the same districts almost kept pace with those improvements. The thrashing machines increase the produce of the sheaves, and diminish the expense of production of that most important necessary of life, bread-corn. The arguments against its use would apply as well, and have actually, by some uninformed persons, as appeared on a recent trial before us, been applied to the use of the scythe, and might be to any other implement by which manual labour is shortened or rendered more effective; and if the labourer in agriculture could be allowed to put down these machines, how could the same privilege be refused to the artisan? And thus clothes and every other necessary of life would become dearer, and if all were to exercise their supposed rights, and all machinery were destroyed, the labouring classes of this country would be the first to suffer the most dreadful distress, as the woollen, linen, or cotton articles would be increased in price much beyond their reach. By another clause in the statute, which I have before mentioned, express malice against any particular individual is not required to constitute this offence; and I may also add, that thrashing machines, in the opinions of the Judges upon this commission, are equally under the protection of the law, whether, at the time of the destruction or injury, they are in the course of employment in their entire state, or have been taken into separate pieces

from apprehension of danger or any other cause with the intention of putting them together for use. By these enactments the legislature has endeavoured to protect machinery of almost all descriptions from the attack of violent and ungovernable mobs, or ignorant and misguided individuals. The wisdom of these laws no one can doubt, or that if such outrages were not repressed, the whole community would sink into the lowest state of civilization. But though these are undoubted truths, the less instructed part of the people are blind to them, and as this most valuable property is exposed to great risk from their ignorance and their passions, its safety is to be found in that protection which the law has provided, and which it must give to machinery as well as every other species of property. If that law ceases to be administered with due firmness, and men look to it in vain for the security of their rights, our wealth and power will soon be at an end, and our capital and industry would be transferred to some more peaceful country, whose laws are more respected or better enforced. The 7th and 8th of Geo. IV., to which I have been referring, whilst it is in effect continues, with some alterations, and enlarges the provisions of the riot act. 1 Geo. I., stat, 2, cap. 5, relating to the demolition of buildings leaves in full force the clauses, which makes it a capital offence for 12 persons, or more, being unlawfully, riotously, and tumultuously assembled together, to remain or continue so assembled, for the space of one hour after proclamation made in the King's name to disperse and depart peaceably to their habitations. It also continues in operation the provisions which authorize the seizure of such persons, and which constitute it a capital offence wilfully or knowingly to obstruct or in any manner to oppose, hinder, or hurt any person beginning or going to make proclamation, whereby such proclamation is prevented from being made; and all those who have a knowledge of such hindrance, and continue together for one hour to the number of 12 or more, are made criminal to the same extent as if the proclamation had been made. This surely is a measure of wise precaution, calculated to suppress mischief in its origin, and prevent those dreadful acts which are the ordinary results of a riotous and tumultuous assembly.

Saturday, 1st January 1831

Many persons have fallen into the error of supposing that because the law allows one hour for the dispersion of a mob to which the proclamation has been read by the magistrate, that during that period the civil power and the magistracy are disarmed, and that they are bound to remain quiet and passive. The language of the act does not warrant any such construction, nor could such have been the intention of the legislature. The civil authorities are left in possession of all the powers with which the law had previously invested them. All peace officers may, and ought to do all that in them lies towards the suppression of such meetings, and may command others to assist them; and by the common law also, any private person may lawfully endeavour to appease such disturbances, by staying the person engaged from executing their purpose, and by stopping others who are coming to join them, and all persons, even a private individual, may do anything, using force, even to the last extremity, to prevent the commission of a felony. Whilst I am on this subject, I cannot avoid drawing your attention to an act which provides a great additional security of the public peace. The 1st Geo. IV., chap.37, empowers two justices, on information on oath, of five respectable householders, to add to any extent to the numbers of peace officers, by making special constables in cases of apprehended tumult, riot, or felony. This species of constitutional force has been rendered most effective in the county which we have just quitted, and I have reason to believe that it has been equally so in this, by an admirable arrangement, which, if acted upon with regularity and perseverance, will prove a most important means of preserving the public peace, and of preventing criminal outrage of every kind; and it should be known, that whilst his duty to his country requires from every individual selected to fill this office by the magistrates, a willing obedience to their order, the law secures his compliance, by making him liable to fine or imprisonment in case of refusal. The next class of offences to which I shall draw your attention is that of robbery from the person – a crime which of date has been prevalent in these parts of the kingdom. The legal definition of robbery is the taking away from the person, or in the presence of another, against his will, his

Saturday, 1st January 1831

personal property, of any value, by violence, or putting in fear. Actual violence is not necessary, nor is it necessary that the robber should with his own hand have taken the property from the person robbed. It is enough if he obtains it by means of terror which he has excited for that purpose; and though the money be delivered by the prosecutor himself, it is as much in the eye of the law a taking by a thief, as if he himself had taken it out of the pockets of the party robbed; nor does it make any difference if the money was *asked* as a gift or *loan*, or under any other colourable pretence. The offence is committed, if in truth the money was extorted by putting the other party in fear. This maybe done by such menaces, by word or gesture – such circumstances of terror as in ordinary experience create an apprehension of danger in a reasonable man, and induce him to part with his property in order to avoid it. The apprehension may be of danger towards the person, the family, the habitation, the property of the prosecutor, or that with which he is entrusted; or such fear of peril as a large body of men armed with offensive weapons, and apparently resolved on mischief, would excite, although no particular threat was used, or injury designated, by them at the time. If terror of this nature be created by any person in order to induce another to part with his money, and he does so under the influence of that terror, this constitutes the offence, and all who are present, aiding and assisting, by act, word, or gesture, or are present merely, provided they are of the same party, engaged in the same design with the person who committed the robbery, and intending that it should be committed, are as guilty as the man by whom the offence was perpetrated. This offence, by the same statute of which I have made such frequent mention, is punishable by death. An assault, with an intent to rob, a demand, with menaces or force, of property from another with intent to steal, is also made a felony, punishable by transportation for life, or for a term not less than seven years, and imprisonment not exceeding four years. For the application of these laws I am afraid you will have much occasion during the course of your present labours; so many instances have occurred of large bodies of men traversing the county, and demanding or extorting money by threat or

Saturday, 1st January 1831

by the appearance of force, many perhaps not knowing the extent of their legal responsibility. I have also to mention another, and I fear not infrequent offence – that of sending threatening letters. The 4th of Geo. IV. Cap.54, sec.3 mitigating the severity of an older statute, makes it a felony liable to the punishment of transportation for life, or for a term not less than seven years, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding four years, to send letters threatening to kill, murder, or to burn or destroy houses, outhouses, barns, stacks of corn, grain, hay, or straw. The 7th and 8th Geo. IV., cap.29, make it felony, punishable with transportation for the same period, but imprisonment for a less, to send a letter demanding, without reasonable or probable cause, any chattel, money, or other valuable security; accusing, or threatening to accuse, any one of those crimes therein mentioned with a view of extortion. I will add, also, that at common law it is a serious misdemeanour, punishable by fine or imprisonment, to send threatening letters of any description to grand jurymen, petty jurymen, or witnesses, in order to influence them in the discharge of their respective duties. It may be found in the course of these proceedings that letters have been sent to witnesses and jurors containing such threats as are mentioned in one of these statutes, with the wicked object of preventing the course of public justice. Should such a case be submitted to your consideration, you will, I am sure, investigate it with all the calmness and forbearance in your power; but do your duty in prosecuting this or any other offence with firmness and impartiality. I am equally sure that those jurors who have the more important duty to execute or finally deciding, according to their conscience, on the guilt or innocence of the accused, and the witnesses who are bound to tell the truth at all hazards, will do theirs with a due regard to the great interests of the public, and the solemn sanction of their oaths. It is in the just, firm, and faithful discharge of such duty, that the safety of the community, in an equal degree depends, and the wisest and best system of laws would be ineffectual to preserve our lives, liberties, and properties, unless we can depend upon the truth of witnesses, the impartiality of jurors, and the courage of both. I have now stated to you all the provisions of the

Saturday, 1st January 1831

common and statute law which appear to me to be applicable to the present occasion. I believe that in the law will be found ample provision for the repression of all offences, and the security of the peace and good order of the community, if its powers for the prevention, as well as the punishment of crime, be duly executed, and backed by the example and influence of better classes. But unless the duties of those who are invested with authority by their offices, or derive it from their rank and station, be firmly and vigorously performed, the law speaks in vain. We have had occasion to know, that in some parts of the southern districts of England even magistrates have yielded to the first appearance of danger from tumultuous assemblies, and, by prematurely complying with their demands, have taught them to believe that every thing may be accomplished by force. It is easy to see that such examples of weakness would soon be followed by other acts of violence and still greater demands, and it would leave to those who must at last check a course so dangerous to the community, the painful necessity of repressing it by more numerous and severe punishments. On the other hand, our experience of what has occurred in an adjoining county, - our knowledge of what has taken place in this, - assures us how much can be accomplished by the early and courageous opposition of good magistrates to violence and outrage. Gentlemen, I feel assured that by the effect of the example which the justice of the country will make in the cases of those unhappy criminals who have been already convicted, - by the punishment of others who may appear to deserve it, - by your resolute, active, and determined exertions in the repression of crime, either as magistrates or private gentlemen, - by your patient and kind attention to the removal of its causes, co-operating with the loyalty, good sense, and right feeling of the great majority of the people of England,- the peace of our country will, ere long, with the blessing of Providence, be placed upon a secure footing, and the people preserved in their obedience to the law.’²

² The above speech by Mr Justice Parke appears in *The Times*, 3 January 1831, shortened versions of the same speech appear in the *Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 3 January 1831 & the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831

County of Wilts.

A Calendar of the Prisoners
 IN THE
COUNTY GAOL OF FISHERTON ANGER,
 FOR TRIAL AT
The Special Commission of Assize,
 HOLDEN AT THE
Council House, of New Sarum,
 ON MONDAY DECEMBER 27th. 1830,
 BEFORE
The Hon. Sir John Vaughan, Knight,
(One of the Barons of the Exchequer)
The Hon. Sir James Parke, Knight,
(One of the Justices of the Court of King's Bench)
The Hon. Sir Edward Hall Alderson, Knight,
(One of the Justices of the Court of Common Pleas.)
The Most Noble the Lord Lieutenant of the County,
The Right Hon. William, Earl of Radnor,
And T. G. B. Estcourt, Esq.

Edward William Leyborne Popham, Esq. High Sheriff

INDEX TO PRISONERS FOR TRIAL.

Abree, Thomas	60	Baker, Robert	147	Down, James	4
Andrews, John	207	Baker, James	148	Dickett, Henry	73
Alexander, Mathias	218	Blake, Shadrach	155	Drew, John	79
Alexander, Joseph	219	Blake, Robert	156	Dobson, George	90
Alexander, Ambrose	224	Bartlett, David	163	Durman, George	151
Amor, Shadrach	232	Blundy, Robert	166	Dunford, Stephen	172
Alexander, Edward	234	Burden, James	177	Davis, Charles	183
Bennett, Charles	32	Bartlett, William	190	Doughty, William	190
Brown, Levy	38	Bemister, Joseph	198	Dann, John	205
Banstone, Samuel	48	Beven, William	195	Dix, Thomas	208
Blanford, James	67	Baker, William	241	Every, William	24
Barret, Samuel	68	Broadway, Henry	243	Elton, William	30
Barrett, John	68	Cole, Isaac	5	Eyres, Samuel	62
Burhage, George	72	Cook, William	14	Edgeworth, Thomas	122
Birchall, James	86	Chubb, Joseph	20	Eyles, Aaron	211
Bowerton, Charles	96	Coombs, George	37	Francis, William	10
Buckland, Samuel	100	Case, James	39	Ford, John	18
Barrett, Robert	103	Cheuter, William	67	Ford, John	41
Baker, David	107	Culley, Joseph	78	Fox, Henry	162
Bridgeman, George	109	Coleman, George	88	Farley, William	196
Bridges, William	111	Clarke, John	112	Farley, Thomas	202
Ball, George	121	Chunn, William	114	Gray, William	55
Baily, William	132	Cole, John	216	Gange, Thomas	62
Blundy, Job	142	Cross, William	223	Green, George	63
Brind, Thomas	144	Cole, Thomas	240	Giles, William	81
Bowly, Charles	146	Collins, Daniel	244	Goddard, William	83

27. Calendar of Prisoners

(Gloucestershire Archives – D1571/X64)

The grand Jury then retired and several bills were sent up to them.

The following Jury was sworn.³

Aaron Blackmore	Edward Brice	John Elliott
James Bond	John Cook	James Green
James Boucher	George Cook	William Hall

³ TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 1st January 1831

George Buckpitt

William Edwards

William Hill

After an absence of about three quarters of an hour they returned a true bill against 23 men, for destroying a thrashing machine belonging to John Benett Esq., at Pythouse Farm in the parish of Tisbury, on 25th November last. Only 17 of the men are in custody and they were placed at the bar as follows:- James Blandford, aged 28, Samuel Barrett, 30, Richard Pitman, 29, James Mould of Tisbury, 23, Samuel Banstone, 41, Thomas Vinen, 19, James Mould of Hatch, 39, Thomas Topp, 20, Samuel Eyres, 30, Thomas Rixon, 45, Edmund White, 20, John Barrett, 24, Charles Jerrard the younger, 20, William Snook, 22, Thomas Burt, John Targett the younger, and Andrew Moxam, 23. The prisoners all pleaded 'not guilty'.⁴

The Attorney General, in addressing the jury, informed them that the case which he was then going to submit to their consideration, was one which involved no difficulty, either as to its importance or to the guilt of the prisoners. He went on to point out the absurdity of the notion that machinery, which facilitated the means of procuring subsistence, could be injurious to the lower classes, and after dilating on the necessity of protecting machinery from the violence of those who considered it detrimental to the interests of those who lived by manual labour.

The Attorney General continued, 'The 17 prisoners at the bar formed but a small part of a numerous crowd which assembled near Hindon on the 25th November and which after its assembly, proceeded to acts of outrage and cruelty, which will necessarily come in the evidence before you, though they are not connected with the subject matter of the present indictment. You are aware that Mr John Benett, your respected and respectable representative, is a gentleman who cultivates his land with great care. It will appear from the evidence which it will be my duty to lay before you, that Mr Benett having received information in London of events which were going to take place in this

⁴ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831. **NOTE:** The spelling of the men's names varies slightly in the different papers and the Minute Book – **Ayres/Eyres; Burt/Birt; Moxham/Moxam/Moxom; Rixon/Rixen; Vinen/Vining & Target/Targett** (only The Salisbury & Winchester Journal refers to him as 'the younger'), this newspaper also refers to **Charles Jerrard** as John Jerrard

Saturday, 1st January 1831

county, thought it right to leave London, and to return to Pythouse, in this county, where he conceived his influence might be more successfully exerted for the maintenance of public peace. He arrived at his seat at Pythouse, at 4 o'clock of the morning of Wednesday the 24th of November. At 8 o'clock he was called up by the information that a riotous and tumultuous mob was assembling in his neighbourhood. He went out in consequence, and found large numbers of labourers assembling. He addressed them on the subject of their alleged grievances, and in reply they told him, without reserve, that they were going to destroy all the thrashing machines in that neighbourhood. Mr Benett, with great kindness and consideration, warned them of the consequences of the offences which they were going to commit; but in despite of his warnings, they proceeded first to Fonthill Gifford, and afterwards returned to Pythouse farm to execute their blind vengeance on machinery. On their return to accomplish that object, he again remonstrated with them upon the implication and wickedness of their conduct. He told them that he would have resisted them to the teeth had he had sufficient force to render the chance of successful resistance probable; but he added, that as he had no force capable of withstanding their violence at that moment, armed as they were with sticks, and bludgeons, and iron fragments of machinery, he should not make a vain attempt at resistance, but should leave them to their own peril to enter upon his premises and destroy his machinery. Undeterred by this notice, they proceeded to break in pieces all the thrashing machinery which they found upon Mr Benett's premises. Whilst they were busily engaged in this work of destruction, Mr Benett, who had ridden into the midst of the rioters, suddenly received a volley of stones in his face, which covered him instantly with blood, and were very likely to have produced his death. Fortunately for the prisoners, that result did not follow; for if it had, every person who had then been in the mob must have answered with his life for the life which would then have been lost. It will be necessary for me to give evidence of this outrage upon this trial, in order to show the common object with which these rioters were assembled. It is not for the more serious part of the offence which was

committed, that the prisoners at the bar will now be called upon to answer, yet it is probable that the riot, in which all these prisoners had joined, will be made the subject of further investigation, if not with regard to the prisoners now before the jury, at least with regard to such members of the mob as had been more riotously and criminally engaged.’

The Attorney General then proceeded to call his witnesses to support this indictment. ⁵

Mr Benett was called and examined by Mr Sergeant Wilde. ‘I reside at Pythouse, in the parish of Tisbury. I was in the county of Wilts on the 25th of November. In consequence of information which I received, I left my house about 9 or 10 o’clock in the morning of that day. I rode out and met upwards of 400 persons coming from the town of Hindon at a lime kiln in Fonthill Gifford, about 3 miles from Pythouse. I had then ridden about three miles from my own house. They carried hatchets, hammers, very large sticks, and weapons of different descriptions. The sticks were general, the axes were confined to 40 or 50 persons. I met Charles Jerrard the elder, who is not in custody; he wore a party-coloured sash across his body, and carried a very large stick. Charles Jerrard the younger was similarly equipped. I spoke to them both. I inquired of the mob their object. I spoke first to the elder Jerrard. He had often been before me as a magistrate. I spoke to him with firmness and good temper, and as loudly as I could speak. I told him that I was very sorry to see him at the head of such a riotous assembly, and warned him that he was placing himself in greater danger than any that he had ever been before. I spoke then to the younger Jerrard. I said to him, “I am sorry to see you with that sash on. I entreat you to get into the rear, for an example will be made of some of you, and I should be sorry to see so young a man as you in a sad scrape.” I said to him, “Young man, that sash will hang you.” He came up with a large stick to my horse, and said to me, “I don’t care about hanging – I don’t care.” I then asked them what they complained of? They told me that they were going to break all the thrashing machines in the county, and that they would have 2s. a day as wages. That was the general cry of the whole party; more than 100 persons said

⁵ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

Saturday, 1st January 1831

it. I told them that I had just come from London – that a proclamation from the King had come out only a day before. I offered to read it to them, but they would not let me. I explained its nature. I told them that it offered a reward of £50 for every man detected in breaking a machine, and £500 for the discovery of any person who should set fire to property. They said, “We don’t burn – we have nothing to do with the fires.” I replied that I was quite convinced that they did not, and I really feel that conviction. I then pointed out to them that they could not trust each other, “For any man,” I said, “By informing against 10 of you will obtain at once £500.” I told them that if they would go home and preserve their own lives and the peace of the district, I would take care, as far as depended on me, that they should procure by their good conduct all that others might obtain by their misconduct. The first body then left me, and went to their work of destruction. The mob passed me in three divisions. I spoke to each of them. When they passed me, I followed them. They stopped at Mr Candy’s farm, in Fonthill Gifford. They rushed into a blacksmith’s shop; but before that, I saw them break Mr Candy’s thrashing machine to pieces. I rode alongside the mob for a mile and a half, until they came to Mr Lampard’s house, at Lawn Farm. In consequence of something that occurred there, I went to my own premises at Pythouse Farm. The mob, consisting of 500 persons, afterwards came to me there. I can only identify Blandford as being present with the mob at Pythouse Farm. I had observed him breaking machines before, at Mr Lampard’s farm. I had a thrashing machine at Pythouse Farm, six horses work it. Part of it is in barn and part of it is out. I rode out of the farmyard to meet the mob. I told them that my force was not sufficient to resist them, but that I would punish them if they broke into any premises. I told them, “You break open these barns at your peril, they are locked. I would resist you if I could, I cannot, but mind, you break the machines without my consent, and at your peril.” All who were near my premises must have heard what I said. They then forced their way into the barn. They broke the machine, which was both inside and outside of it, and began to pull off part of the roof. I remained about ten minutes with them, sitting on my horse. All of a sudden the

Saturday, 1st January 1831

whole party stopped, that surprised me, and immediately afterwards I received a blow on my head, which deprived me of sense for a short time. How it was given me, whether by stick or stone, I cannot say of my own knowledge. When I recovered, I found myself about 50 yards off my yard in the lane, entangled in a team of my own cart horses. My horse had carried me out of the yard into that lane, and would have carried me home, if he had not been stopped. I then found stones coming in every direction at me from the mob. I was with that mob for three hours. During that time I saw them break machines at three places before they came to my barn.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Smith, Mr Benett replied, 'I believe that at my farm three out of every four men present were actually engaged in destroying the machinery and barn. I think that when I was at the limekiln I could have got 80 men away, but for two men, who compelled others to go on by violence. This was in the rear of the mob, near Hindon. Any man could have got away that liked. Two men put sticks at the back of those that were reluctant, and pushed them on. They insulted me most grossly, for they saw that I was making an impression upon the mob, and they wished to get them away from me. At one time the mob cheered me. I asked them whether they had any objection to me personally. They said that they had not. They told me that they would not hurt a hair of my head, but they would break all the thrashing machines. And mine among the rest.'

On being questioned by Mr G Earle, Mr Benett said, 'I never heard Mr Lampard say any thing to countenance the breaking of his machine, and he could not have said any such thing that morning without me hearing it, for I was close by his side all the time. There was a vestry at Tisbury that afternoon. I came down from London to attend it, and the mob told me that they knew it, and that it was their intention to stop their proceedings.'

On being re-examined by the Court, Mr Benett replied, 'I don't recollect seeing James Mould of Hatch there. I saw

Saturday, 1st January 1831

Samuel Barrett there, but did not know his name then. I saw John Barrett also in the crowd. ⁶

John Brickle, carter to Mr Benett, was called to give evidence and said, 'In November last I was working at Lawn Quarry for Mr Benett. The Quarry is about three quarters of a mile from Mr Benett's machine. A large mob came up, I saw Charles Jerrard junior with a sash on and James Blandford was also there. I saw John Barrett, William Snook, Samuel Eyres, James Mould, the grocer of Hatch, Thomas Topp, Thomas Vinen and Andrew Moxam with the mob. I was driving a team of six horses at the time. The mob told me to hitch off. They took one horse off and I took the others. They forced me to go with them to Mr Benett's farm. I saw some of the mob pick up stones from the quarry and put them in their pockets. I know Snook well and he was there. I could not say that the men I named entered Mr Benett's farm but I saw them on the road and close up to the farm gate.'

On being cross-examined Brickle admitted that he had seen several people forced to join the mob as they went along the road. 'I spoke to Blandford on the road. I did not see any of the prisoners at the bar among the people that were forced along.'

James Mould, of Hatch, questioned Brickle, and he replied. 'When I first saw you, you were near Thring, who was reasoning the case for the people. I saw you at Lawn Farm with the mob. I did not see you do anything. You did not throw any stones. The nearest that I saw you to the farm gate was a quarter of a mile.'⁷

In his evidence John Jay said, 'I got to Pythouse farm at 12 o'clock. I saw about 500 people come there. Amongst those I saw was James Mould of Hatch, he had a hatchet in his hand. He was near the barn door and was forcing out a piece of wood which connected the horse house and the machine with the barn, it fell shortly afterwards. Thomas

⁶ A full account of Mr Benett's evidence appears in *The Times*, 3 January 1831. Some of the information also appears in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831, only a brief account appears in *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 3 January 1831. Details can also be found in GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials

⁷ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials. This witness is named as **John Brickell** in *The Times*, 3 January 1831, **John Bricknell** in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831, and John **Brigell** in *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 3 January 1831. For his own account of *The Battle of Pythouse* see *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II; The Rioters*;

Saturday, 1st January 1831

Vinen was there. He was at the lower part of the horse wheel, throwing down a wall, he had a pickaxe I believe. James Mould of Tisbury was there, he had a stick in his hand and was near the horse wheel. I did not see him do anything, others were beating down the machinery. I saw Charles Jerrard, the younger. He had a sash on and he was very active in breaking down the machine on the outside of the wheel. When the mob went the thrashing machine was all destroyed.’

On being questioned by James Mould of Hatch, Jay replied, ‘I saw you force the piece of wood out. You laughed, and appeared to be pleased with your work.’⁸

James Jay, the younger was called and said, ‘I am the brother of the last witness and Bailiff to Mr Benett. I was at Pythouse Farm when the mob came. I saw them breaking the thrashing machine. I saw Samuel Banstone striking the wheel of the machine with some instrument. I saw William Snook come in with a stick over his shoulder. He came in the first rank. I did not see Mr Benett struck but I saw his face streaming with blood, in consequence, I supposed, of the stones thrown at him. I also saw the head of Legge, Mr Benett’s steward laid open by a stone. My own head was broken that day but not at this place.’⁹

Thomas Ball, coachman to Mr Benett, said, ‘I was present at the breaking of the machine. I know William Snook very well, I have known him many years. I saw him on the road with the mob four or five times during the day. There were four or five who first entered and Snook was the right hand man in the first rank as they entered Pythouse farmyard, he carried a stick. When Mr Benett asked if they had come to beat down the machine Snook replied that they had and walked into the wheel house. I know Thomas Topp. I saw him at Pythouse Farm, he was the first that went into the wheelhouse and he had a road hammer in his hand, but I did not see him do anything with it. I saw Topp throw a stone which I believe struck Mr Benett, it was the first stone thrown.’

⁸ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials

⁹ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials

Saturday, 1st January 1831

Here Ball produced the stone. It was a flint with a yellow coating, and from its size it was judged to weigh about two pounds.

Ball continued with his evidence. 'The stone hit Mr Benett on the face, between the eye and the nose. As soon as it hit him, Mr Benett's head fell upon his neck, his hat fell off his head, and his face was covered with the blood which gushed from his nose. I saw the hat and the stone fall together. I endeavoured to get the hat but the mob prevented me. I then pointed my finger at Topp, as much as to say, it was you that did it. Topp made a dart for me and struck me with a sledge hammer. Fortunately he only hit me with the handle of it on my ear and he followed me across the yard. James Blandford and James Mould of Tisbury were in the mob.'¹⁰

John Uphill identified Thomas Burt, James Blandford, Samuel Banstone, John Barrett, William Snook, and Thomas Vinen, as being active in the destruction of the machine. He did not see Thomas Topp touch anything. He saw Burt cutting a piece of timber with an axe, on the roof of the wheel house. Blandford was inside the barn, beating part of the machine. Vinen was pulling down part of a wall with a pick axe.

He was cross examined by Blandford, 'Did you not say when the mob entered the yard, "That's it my lads; down with it my lads; I should like to see it down." Is that not what you said?'

Uphill replied, 'I said no such thing. Why should I? The reason is against it, my master Mr Benett, was near me, and had set me to watch those who came into the yard.'

'John! John! You are a false swearer,' called Blandford.

Topp and another prisoner stated that these were the very words spoken by Uphill, and offered to swear to them if the Court would permit it.¹¹

George Turner, one of Mr Benett's labourers, who had been beaten by the mob, identified John Barrett. He also saw Samuel Barrett and William Snook there. Turner produced a club, which had been taken from one of the

¹⁰ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; GA – D1571/X64 – Minutes of Trials

¹¹ The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831

prisoners. It was about five feet long and about two inches in diameter, and there was a knob at the end, as large as a man's double fist. A man would require two hands to raise it. ¹²

Charles Wilkins was called and said, 'I am a blacksmith, I was at Pythouse Farm with the mob. I saw Pitman there breaking the machine. I saw Thomas Topp in the yard at Pythouse Farm and John Barrett was there but I did not see him do anything, but the mob were breaking the machine.' ¹³

William Wood said, 'I saw James Blandford at Pythouse Farm, he was beating in the top of the machine with a large hammer. I had known him before. I saw Samuel Eyres there. He was near Blandford and similarly employed with a hammer. Thomas Rixon was also busy with those who were breaking the machine. Banstone was near but I did not see him doing anything. I heard some of the mob say to the others to keep the matches ready in their pockets. None of the prisoners were present when this was said.' ¹⁴

The next witness was John Jukes who said, 'I was at Pythouse Farm when the machine was destroyed. I saw Charles Jerrard junior striking the machine with an axe and saw others at the same work. I know Samuel Banstone, but I do not recollect seeing him there. I saw Thomas Topp and also Charles Jerrard junior, who threw a stone at me for not joining the mob. He had a sash on.' ¹⁵

John Wilkins said, 'I saw Edmund White at Pythouse, he is a blacksmith. He had a hammer and was beating a cast iron roller, a large part of the mob had gone before White struck the roller. There might have been about 100 remaining. There were some of those left after the others had gone. I never saw which way White went after breaking of the roller.' ¹⁶

¹² The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831. **Note:** This witness was named as **John Turner** in GA - D1571/X64 Minutes of the Trials, but Mr Estcourt says that he was not in Court when this evidence was given

¹³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831; GA - D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials

¹⁴ The Times, 3 January 1831 - here he is named as **William Woods**; GA - D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials; This man is named as **William Wards** in The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831

¹⁵ GA - D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials - named as **John Jukes**; The Times, 3 January 1831 - named as **John Dukes**

¹⁶ GA - D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials; The Times, 3 January 1831

Saturday, 1st January 1831

The Court here intimated that unless the prisoner could be shown to come with the original mob, or have been there while the mob was breaking the thrashing machine, it would not be sufficient to bring the crime home to White, though what he did might furnish a case of very strong suspicion against him.

James Snow identified John Targett as having been engaged in tearing the thatch off the horse house, while the mob was breaking the machine. ¹⁷

Noah Dogrell said, 'I saw Mr Benett at Pythouse Farm. He said "So you have come to destroy machines.", Some of them said yes. The mob would not let me stay, they said I was a spy. I saw Samuel Banstone there, he had a stick in his right hand and three big stones in his left hand. I saw Andrew Moxam there and Thomas Topp. He had a stone hammer in his hand. I know Charles Jerrard junior, he was there with a sash on. I saw Thomas Burt there. Burt is a sawyer. He is sometimes a sawyer and sometimes a labourer. I did not see any stick or stone in his hand. I did not see him do anything.' ¹⁸

John Dogrell, the brother of the last witness, was also called. He said, 'I know Burt, I saw him on the horse house at Pythouse Farm, he was chopping, with an axe, at the timber which connected the house with the barn. Other people were breaking the machinery at the same time. I saw Thomas Vinen destroy the wall of the horse house and I saw Andrew Moxam in the yard when the wheelhouse fell down. He then waved his hat and halloed. Charles Jerrard was present and when Rixon went away he had a piece of the machinery in his hand.' ¹⁹

James Green said that he saw Samuel Banstone throw a stone at Mr Benett, it passed near him. ²⁰

The last witness was Joseph Trim who said, 'On the 25th November I saw the mob destroy the machine. I saw Thomas Vinen beating down the wall that bore the beam of the horse house. He had in his hand a very heavy sledge. The mob was there breaking the machinery.' ²¹

¹⁷ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials; The Times, 3 January 1831

¹⁸ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials; The Times, 3 January 1831

¹⁹ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials; The Times, 3 January 1831

²⁰ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials; The Times, 3 January 1831

²¹ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials; The Times, 3 January 1831

Saturday, 1st January 1831

Mr Baron Vaughan then spoke to the Jury. ‘Gentlemen of the Jury, the prisoner White has not been proved to have been present at the breaking of the machine, and therefore he cannot be considered as implicated under this indictment.’²²

Mr Baron Vaughan then called upon the other prisoners for their defence.²³

James Blandford. – ‘I am very sorry, my Lords that I was there, but I was forced to go.’

Samuel Barrett. – ‘I have got nothing to say. I was there, but did nothing. That is all.’

Richard Pitman. – I was in Hindon street at work that day, when the mob came and took me away, and I was obliged to go.’

James Mould, of Tisbury. – I am very sorry, Sir, to think that I was there.’

Samuel Banstone. – ‘James Jay the witness who swore against me, was not on the ground at the time he said he saw me there. He was with the Squire on the road, and was not on the ground at the time.’

Thomas Vinen. – I am very sorry that I was there. There was a great number of farmers there in the morning encouraging the people to go on, and if they did not give them that encouragement, or if they had told them not to go on, I do not believe they would have done any harm, or gone about it. I am very sorry that I was there, but it was my first offence of any kind.’

James Mould, of Hatch. – ‘I was not with the mob when the people were going about breaking the machines. I was at Hindon market for about half an hour. Then I went towards home, and on my way I went and saw what the mob had done; but I had neither stick nor stone, nor weapon of any kind, and took no part in the business. When I went into the house that the mob had broken, a stick fell upon my head but I did nothing.’

Thomas Topp. – ‘I was not within half a mile of Pythouse when the machines were broken, and did not see Mr Benett.’

²² The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831

²³ What the prisoners said in their own defence and what those called to speak on behalf of the prisoners said, can be found in - GA - D1571/X64 Minutes of the Trials & The Times, 3 January 1831

Saturday, 1st January 1831

James Mould, of Hatch, again addressed the Court. – ‘When I was coming up I met a man who was bringing away Mr Benett’s hat. I could not have taken part in that, and I was not there when any damage was done.’

Samuel Eyres. – ‘I was not there, and what that man swore against me is as false as the Lord is true.’

Thomas Rixon. – ‘I had no hammer or sledge of any kind in my hand. I never did anything all day.’

Edmund White was not called on by the Court for any defence, as they thought no case was made out against him.

John Barrett. – ‘I was pressed by the mob and was obliged to go.’

Charles Jerrard, junior. – ‘The mob came to my house that morning before I was out of bed, and they swore they would pull me out if I did not go. The sash the witnesses spoke of was a handkerchief that I tied round my waist as I was very warm. Very sorry I was there.’

William Snook. – ‘I am very sorry I was in the case. The mob knocked at my door early in the morning, and said they would break it if I did not get up and go with them. I did go, against my will, but I did nothing.’

Thomas Burt. – ‘My Lord, I found work very hard to find in Fonthill, my own parish, for the last three years, and having a wife and three children to support, I was glad to go to work where ever I could get it. I got some work at a place four miles from my house. I was going there that morning, before day, when I met a mob. I got inside the hedge, intending to keep out of the way, but some of them saw me, and called out to me to join them. I wanted to get away, but they said if I did not go with them they would kill me, so I was obliged to go. I tried to escape, but they would not let me. It is a hard case for me, my lord, I was glad to get work, though I could only earn seven shillings a week, and it cost me one shilling a week for iron, so that I only had six shillings a week to support five persons.’

John Targett. – ‘I am very sorry that I was there. If I had been employed I should not have left my own Parish. I was at work upon the turnpike road when the mob came and forced me away. I have a wife and eight children, and had no intention of doing anything that would injure any person. I was in the mob, but I took no part.’

Andrew Moxam. – ‘I am sorry that I was there, but I was going on an errand for my master when I met the mob, and they made me go, but as soon as I could I got away. I met one of my children, and took it home. I have a wife and three children. I hope my Lord will consider me. I was never before my Lord before this, nor yet in a prison.’

James Targett was called to speak of the character of Richard Pitman. ‘I have lived in Hindon and know Pitman. I was in Hindon at about 12 o’clock on the 25th November last and saw Pitman in the street. His wife came to call him to dinner, but some men swore that he would go along with them. I saw them pushing him down the street. He was at work in the street and using a road hammer. A man caught hold of him and forced him to go with him and three or four others. He did not go willingly, Hindon is about two miles from Pythouse. I do not know who forced him to go.’²⁴

Mr Lambert, a gentleman who knows James Mould, of Hatch spoke on his behalf. ‘I live in Tisbury, and often employed Mould as a carrier and found him an honest and sober and quiet man. I have known him for 15 years. He is a jobber in pigs and cheese I have heard he has a house of his own.’

‘The house is sold,’ interrupted Mould. ‘I am not worth £5.’

Lord Arundell, who was on the bench, also gave James Mould, of Hatch, a good character. ‘I have known Mould for some years. When he was a labourer he worked for me. I know nothing against his character. I believe he is very poor. He had a wife and six children, but since his commitment his family have been afflicted with typhus fever, and he has lost one or two children. They were in great distress, and I believe have nothing to live on but what they get at my house.’

Augustine King spoke on behalf of William Snook. ‘Snook has worked for me many years past. He has always behaved well, as an honest and peaceable man. He is unmarried and lives with his father in Tisbury.’ He handed in a written character.²⁵

²⁴ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials ; The Times, 3 January 1831 names this man as **John Targett**

²⁵ The character witness statement of **Augustine King**, and those that follow him only appear in GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials

Saturday, 1st January 1831

John Wilkins spoke in favour of Thomas Vinen. 'I never heard anything against his character. He has worked for my father for two years and lives near us.'

John Wilkins also spoke in favour of James Mould of Tisbury.

John Benett spoke in favour of Andrew Moxam. 'Moxam is an excellent and industrious labourer.'

A blind man spoke in Thomas Burt's favour. 'On the 22nd December I was at Chicksgrove the day Burt was taken. My sister tells me he is a sober, honest man.'

James Cuff spoke in favour of Thomas Rixon. 'He has worked for me for five years and has always behaved very well in my service, and is a quiet man. I sent him out to his work at eight o'clock in the morning.'

William Jeffery spoke of Charles Jerrard. 'I have known Jerrard for three months and he behaved very honestly.'

Mr Baron Vaughan then proceeded to sum up, and after pointing out the state of the law as applying to this offence, he detailed the evidence as it applied to each prisoner, calling on the jury as he concluded the evidence applying to each successively, to consider the case of that prisoner before he went further.

At the conclusion the Jury returned their verdict, finding Samuel Banstone, John Barrett, Samuel Barrett, James Blandford, Thomas Burt, Samuel Eyres, Charles Jerrard junior, James Mould, Grocer and Jobber of Hatch, James Mould, of Tisbury, Richard Pitman, Thomas Rixon, William Snook, a very good labourer, John Targett, Thomas Topp, Thomas Vinen *guilty*. Edmund White and Andrew Moxam were found *not guilty*.

On inquiry it was found that all the prisoners were agricultural labourers, except White, who is a blacksmith, Rixon who is a carter and Burt, who is a sawyer, although he denied this in very strong terms.

This trial occupied the Court until a quarter past nine this evening. The Court was then adjourned until one o'clock on Monday morning. ²⁶

²⁶ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials; The Times, 3 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 3 January 1831

Monday, 3rd January 1831

The Court opened at 9 o'clock this morning. Mr Baron Vaughan, Mr Justice Parke, Mr Justice Alderson, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earl of Radnor and T G B Estcourt Esq sat in the Nisi Prius Court.

The following Jury was sworn. ¹

George Cook	James Green	John Hill
William Edwards	James Bond	John Garlick
John Elliott	Henry Garlick	David Goddard
William Hall	Thomas Pinnell	Stephen Howell

In the first case of the day in the Court 17 year old John Ford was indicted for riotously assembling, with others, at Fugglestone St Peter, on the 24th November last and destroying carding and other machines used in the manufacture of woollen cloth, belonging to William Naish, at Quidhampton. ²

The Attorney General in stating the case to the Jury observed, 'This is a capital offence', and it is important that every subject has a right to resist such assemblies with any force, and if death should ensue, by any of the rioters falling, such a death is justifiable, but if any parties resisting them are killed, this would amount to murder, and all who joined in such assemblies would be equally responsible with the leaders.'

Samuel Dowding was called and on being examined by Mr Sergeant Wilde stated, ' I work at Quidhampton Mill, near Wilton, a factory for the manufacture of woollen cloth. I was there on the 24th November. The prisoner had worked at the factory and was there on that day. Between 12 and one in the daytime, around 300 or 400 people came to the mill. The prisoner did not originally form part of the mob. I saw him go over the bridge after the mob had arrived. He broke some windows with a stick he had in his hand. When the mob got into the factory I saw Ford beat a machine, called a tucker. I saw him come out three or four times with part of the machinery, which he threw into the millpond. He

¹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

² **NOTE:** Although the owner of the mill is given as **William Nash** in all the documents recording this case he is known to appear as **William Naish** in other records

Monday, 3rd January 1831

kept this up for about half an hour. There were about ten other people similarly employed. When the mob had gone I found the machinery broken all to pieces, it had been in good order before the mob came. Most of the mob had sticks in their hands. They told me that if I did not stand aside they would fling me into the pond. I think the prisoner was standing near enough to hear the threats, that is I suppose he was, but I cannot swear he was.'

Josiah Pitt, a workman at the mill, was called and said, 'I saw the mob coming and fastened the door, but they burst it open. I saw the prisoner outside breaking windows. I did not see him inside.'

Harriet Pitt, who lives at the mill said, 'I saw the prisoner come downstairs with part of one of the machines. He threw it into the millpond. He had previously worked at the factory. After throwing the machine into the water he went again into the factory.'

Mr William Naish, the owner of the mill corroborated the evidence of the other witnesses saying that he had heard a lot of noise outside the mill and saw about 200 people, most of whom had large club sticks in their hands. 'The machines were broken and some entirely destroyed and not worth repairing.'

This closed the case for the prosecution.

Ford said nothing in his own defence neither did he call any witnesses to give him a good character.

Mr Justice Parke summed up the case and the Jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. The Court ordered the sentence of death to be recorded against him.

The prisoner was then ordered up for judgement and Mr Justice Parke addressed him saying, 'Prisoner, you will understand that by ordering a sentence of death to be recorded, we consider your case as worthy of the Royal Mercy. It is only in consideration of your tender years that we have come to this determination, for your offence is of great magnitude, and serious importance to the vital interests of society. People must be taught that they cannot commit acts of this description with impunity. You have been clearly proved to have been one of the mob who were at Mr Naish's factory and to have been one of the most active in the destruction which it effected. It has also been

Monday, 3rd January 1831

proved that you were in the habit of working there, so that you ought rather to have protected not destroyed the property of your employer. Your case would have been visited with the extreme penalty of the law but for your tender years. Looking, however, at your youth, we hope that we shall not be considered to be abandoning our duty in recommending you as a fit subject for the mercy of the Crown. But you must understand, that if our recommendations be attended to, it will be on the condition that you are removed from this country for the whole of your natural life.'

The prisoner's age is given as 17, but he does not look more than 14 or 15 years old. He was removed from the dock, apparently greatly affected. ³

Isaac Cole, 18, James Down, 29, William Francis, 21, William Jacobs, 31, John Jennings, 18, William Lewis, 30, George Shergold, 25, Henry Shergold, 30, and Thomas Whatley, 17, were then put to the bar, charged with having riotously assembled on the 24th November and destroyed a mill, engines and machinery belonging to John Brasher, at Wilton. The prisoners pleaded *not guilty*.

The Attorney General stated the case for the prosecution and called several witnesses to support it.

The first witness was Samuel Brasher who said, 'I am the son of John Brasher who is the proprietor of Crow Lane Mill, which is a manufactory for woollen cloth. Between two and four o'clock on the 24th November a mob of around 500 people, armed with sticks and other weapons, came down to the mill. John Jennings was at the front of the mob. He forced his way into the factory and as he was going in I asked him what he was going to do. He told me he was going to beat the machinery to pieces in order to make more work for the poor people. I told him that it was useless to do that, as all it would do was to throw people out of employment. He paid no attention to what I said but went on in telling me to get out of his way or he would break me to pieces. I then saw him break our windows and one of our carding engines with a large iron bar, which he had found in

³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Times, 5 January 1831

Monday, 3rd January 1831

the factory. The machinery was so broken as not to be worth repairing. I saw George Shergold in the gig-house. He had a stick in his hand and was breaking the machinery there. I also saw Henry Shergold, he had the handle of a brush in his hand and was hurling part of the machine into the water, it was broken. Thomas Whatley, James Down, Isaac Cole and William Francis were all actively engaged in different parts of the premises, breaking our engines. William Francis cut the machinery with an axe which he had found on the premises, and which he carried away with him. I did not see Jacobs or Lewis there. The mob stayed on our premises for an hour. After they were gone I found five engines beaten to pieces, three Scribbling and two Carding, so broken as not to be worth repairing.' Mr Brasher put an estimate of £500 on the damage done to the mill and went on to describe this damage in great detail, this included two tuckers, part of a water wheel, five Spinning Jennies, three or 4 Reels, thrown out of the windows, the shearing frames and the Gig.

Henry Jones was called and said, 'On the 24th November I saw the mob at the Mill. I saw George Shergold in the loft breaking to pieces the Shearing Frames. I saw William Lewis down stairs with the crowd, pulling things about which had been thrown out of the windows, shearing frames and other parts of machinery. I have known William Lewis several years, he is a labourer in agriculture.'

Charles Viney, a shoemaker at Wilton, said. 'I was within 20 yards of the Mill. I saw George Shergold and John Jennings throwing machinery out of the windows. I also saw William Jacobs there, he was at the lower end of the mill but I didn't see anything in his hand, nor did I see him doing anything he was just standing there alone.'

George Brasher, another of John Brasher's sons, appeared and was able to confirm the evidence of his brother and the other witness and said, 'I saw John Jennings on the 24th November, between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when the mob was there. He was at the head of the mob. I saw him throwing machinery out of the windows. I saw George Shergold was close to Jennings and doing the same. James Down was breaking an engine in the

Monday, 3rd January 1831

machine shop and Henry Shergold was outside the Factory breaking machinery.'

The prisoner Jennings cross-examined this witness at some length, showing great shrewdness. When Mr Brasher said that he had taken particular notice of his activities at the mill, Jennings replied, 'You would swear to anything, you would swear that black was white. I am on trial here for my life, not to be sworn falsely against, and I must, if possible, prevent the Jury from believing you.'

The case for the prosecution was closed and the prisoners were called up for their defence.

John Jennings said, 'I think that the last two witnesses have sworn false against me. I have had much more sworn against me that is false than is true. There is no person in that mill who has not sworn false against me, no one can tell how much.'

George Shergold said, 'The last two witnesses have sworn more that is false than is true against me and they will find some day that they didn't know the value of an oath.'

Henry Shergold stated, 'When I was committed to prison the last witness, George Brasher, and his brother swore that they could not say anything against me. I was not at the factory till all was nearly over. I was in the lane, and was pressed into the factory by the mob. I never broke anything whilst there.'

Mr Justice Alderson asked, 'Have you any witnesses to character?'

Shergold replied, 'No. I did not think it worth while to get any as I expected nothing would be sworn against me.'

Thomas Whatley accused the witnesses who had spoken against him of swearing falsely and added that he had been pressed to join the mob.

James Down said, 'The mob threatened to push me into the water before I had anything to do with them. Fifty men came and took me out of the barn in which I was working. They told me that I must go. James Rogers will give witness to my character.'

All Isaac Cole said was. 'The witnesses swore false against me. I was threatened and forced to go with the mob.'

Monday, 3rd January 1831

‘I was afraid for my life if I did not go,’ said William Francis. ‘I don’t know who threatened me, but I was threatened with death if I did not go.’

William Lewis said. ‘I was pressed and obliged to go. I have no witness to speak for me.’

William Jacobs put in a written defence, which he declared to be his own composition and in his own handwriting. In it he said that he had never been at any bar, nor before the bench of magistrates before and that he hoped their Lordships would be favourable to him for the sake of his wife and children. He had been at work when the mob pressed him. Several times he had refused to go with them and they had said that they would throw him into the river if he did not go with them. If the Court would be favourable to him, he would never be engaged in such a transaction again.

The Attorney General said, ‘Mr Swain, the gentlemen who had conduct of this prosecution, has made enquiries into the truth of Jacobs’ story, and has now every reason to believe it correct. He is a man of excellent character and I have no objection to a verdict of acquittal being recorded against Jacobs.’

Witnesses were called to speak of the character of the prisoners. Farmer James Rogers gave James Down an excellent character as a quiet, honest and peaceable man. ‘Down has worked for me for eight years and during that time he has borne a good character. He is a thrasher and has a wife but no children.

William Francis received a good character from William Taylor. ‘I have known William Francis for two years, he has worked for him for one year. He is a quiet honest man and a good servant.’

William Hiring who was called for Lewis said. ‘I have known Lewis for 10 or 12 years and he has worked for me most of that time. He is a very good labourer but at times he is not exactly so quiet as I could wish him to be.’

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the evidence and the Jury *acquitted* William Jacobs and returned a verdict of *guilty* against John Jennings, George Shergold, Henry Shergold, Thomas Whatley, James Down, Isaac Cole,

Monday, 3rd January 1831

William Francis, and William Lewis, recommending Lewis to mercy. ⁴

At the conclusion of this trial John Benett Esq., the foreman of the Grand Jury, came to the bench and addressed the Court. 'Mr Justice James Parke, as the Foreman of the Grand Jury, I have a most pleasing duty to perform, which is to read a paper which the Grand Jury have written which I will now do.' He then proceeded to read the paper. 'The Grand Jury beg leave to present their thanks to Mr Justice Parke for his able charge delivered on Saturday. Thinking that such a clear exposition of the law would at this time be highly useful to all orders of the community, they request his Lordship will allow them to have it printed.' Mr Benett concluded by stating that he cordially concurred with his fellows, both in the vote of thanks and in the request, which they presented to his Lordship.

Mr Justice Parke bowed to Mr Benett and it is believed he acceded to the request. ⁵

The next case was then called and John Day, 22, George Shergold, 28, and John Shergold, 22, were placed at the bar charged with having extorted 5s from Christopher Ingram, of Stapleford on the 24th November. The prisoners all pleaded *not guilty*. ⁶

The Attorney General opened the case for the prosecution.

Mr Christopher Ingram, the prosecutor in this case, is a gentleman who lives near the village of Stapleford. 'At about half past eight in the morning of Wednesday, the 24th of November, I was awakened by the noise and shouts of a number of people coming up the shrubbery that leads to my house. Though the moon was going down, the night was not dark. I saw them go to my door, at which they began to knock so violently as to split one of the panels. I knew the

⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1830; The Times, 5 January 1831, the ages of the prisoners are as they are given in The Times

⁵ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1830; The Times, 5 January 1831

⁶ The ages of the prisoners are as they appear in The Times, 5 January 1831

Monday, 3rd January 1831

two Shergolds before this transaction, and when I asked the mob what they wanted they both cried out, "Come down, open your door and give us some bread and cheese and cider." I told them that on no account would I open my door to them at such an unreasonable hour of the night. The two Shergolds then demand some money. George Shergold turned round to the mob and said, "Now for the windows boys." The mob immediately made a great noise under the windows and shouted out to me, "Fire and destruction to you." I then told them he would give them five shillings. George Shergold then beat his bludgeon on the ground three times and said, "Silence! Silence! I am your captain, he's going to give us some money." I put five shillings into a paper and flung it from my window a little to the right of the mob. John Shergold said to some of his companions, "We can't find the money, go and get some light." As they were moving off, I offered to accommodate them with a light, and handed out a glass lantern to one of the party. After they got the lantern, they looked for the money. John Shergold picked it up saying, "I've got it, I've got it." I asked them how much money they had got, and they said "5s." George Shergold then beat his bludgeon again on the ground, and the mob walked away. I have a wife and six children, but all my children, save the youngest, were then away from home. I would not have parted with my money had I not been afraid the mob would do some injury to me or to my family, or pull down or set fire to my house, which is thatched.'

Mr Ingram could not identify the prisoner Day as having been one of the mob who came to his house, but his presence was sworn to by two accomplices, who had accompanied the mob both before and after they had visited Mr Ingram's house. It was also proved that, when the prisoners were taken into custody, they all resisted the officers, John Shergold very strenuously.

The prisoners said nothing in their defence but Thomas Blanchard, a parish clerk, gave the prisoner Day a good character.

Mr Baron Vaughan summed up the case and the Jury returned a verdict of *guilty* against the two Shergolds, but *acquitted* Day.

Monday, 3rd January 1831

It appears from the evidence that George and John Shergold are both thrashers. George Shergold was in the service of the East India Company and had been to China as a mariner. His appearance is very rakish. His conduct, and that of his brother, were marked with extreme levity during the trial.

Mr Baron Vaughan desired the two prisoners to be taken away, assuring them that their case required consideration, as the punishment would undoubtedly be severe. ⁷

The same John Day was then indicted for destroying a thrashing machine belonging to W G Hayter Esq. and others, at Winterbourne Stoke on the 24th November.

The Attorney General understood that Day had always borne a very good character, up until the time of this affair, and it was not, therefore his intention to offer any evidence against him. A verdict of acquittal was accordingly taken on the indictment.

Mr Baron Vaughan then addressed Day. 'Prisoner, I hope you will appreciate the lenity of the Crown in not offering any evidence against you, for I cannot help entertaining more than a suspicion of your conduct in the last case. It is owing to the Lenity of the Crown, that you have not been put on trial for another offence. Let this be a warning to you, should you get into a difficulty of this sort again, you will then be visited, if you are found guilty with exemplary punishment.'

The prisoner was then discharged. ⁸

William Bartlett, 30, Joseph Beminster, 26, William Beven, 30, William Farley, 27, Samuel Harford, 22, James House, 23, Joseph Hunt, 20, William Munday, 38, Henry Potticary, 30, William Smith, 33, Richard Whatley, 40, and James Wheeler, 25, were then put to the bar charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Ambrose Patient the younger, at Corton in the parish of

⁷ The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁸ The Times, 5 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Monday, 3rd January 1831

Boyton, on the 25th November. The prisoners pleaded *not guilty*.⁹

The Attorney General opened the case to the Jury and stated the particulars of the offence with which the prisoners were charged, and said, 'I will also take the opportunity to pay tribute to Colonel a'Court, who upon this occasion conducted himself as a civil magistrate with a patience, a firmness, a resolution, and a consistency, which entitled him to the thanks of his country. On being informed of the course which these misguided men intended to pursue, Colonel a'Court did all he could by way of warning and advice, to prevent them from getting into the scrape in which they were involved. In consequence of his arguments he thought at one time that they had separated, but unfortunately other counsels prevailed with them, and they proceeded to commit the outrages for which they are now put on trial. When Colonel a'Court heard of their misconduct he went with a body of special constables, and such other forces as he could muster, and captured the prisoners in the very commission of the offences for which they are now to be tried.'

The Attorney General then detailed the outlines of the case, and proceeded to call his witnesses to substantiate the case.

The first witness, Ambrose Patient, was called. On being examined by Mr Coleridge he said, 'I reside at Corton, in the parish of Boyton. On the 25th of November I had two thrashing machines on my estate, but I had them taken down. One of them was placed near my house. I could have put them together again, if I had pleased. At about 12 o'clock on the 25th November, 300 people, armed with sticks, hammers, axes and other weapons, came to my house. Several of them had parts of a thrashing machine in their hands. I saw all the prisoners, except Bartlett, in the mob. Most of them are agricultural labourers. When they came to my house, I went and met them. I knew that they wanted to break my machine, and asked what reason they had for doing so. They gave me no reason. Harford said that he had come to break it, and break it he would. He asked me where the cylinder was. I said that it was with the rest of

⁹ The ages of the prisoners are as they appear in *The Times*, 5 January 1831

Monday, 3rd January 1831

the machine. I advised them not to break the machine. I told them that if they did break it, they would repent it. They did not mind this, and broke it all to pieces. It was so broken it can't be repaired. I saw Wheeler very active with a coal hammer, he was beating the machine. I saw all the rest of the prisoners, save Bartlett, crowding so thick about the machine, that I could not distinguish what each was doing. When I found that they were determined to break the machine I went to my house, where I had left my wife and children. They came after me to my house and demanded beer and cider. I refused to give them any for some considerable time, but afterwards I gave them some, for my wife and children were much frightened. They said that they had half a hogshead of cider from another farmer, whose machine they had broken, and they must have it from me. I said that was no reason why I should give them any. Whilst they were talking with me Colonel a'Court came up.'

On being cross examined by Mr Ball, who was acting for the prisoner Wheeler, Mr Patient answered, 'There was some part of the machine broken by my men when they took it down. The side-boards were destroyed. All the boards of the original machine would not be in it when put together again. It could not have been worked without more boards being added.'

On being re-examined Mr Patient replied, 'We could have worked the machine without these boards, but not so effectively.'

Mr Ball submitted, that upon this evidence the present indictment could not be maintained. 'The act of Parliament says that if any person should unlawfully and maliciously cut, break or destroy or damage, with intent to render useless, any thrashing machine, every such offender should be guilty of felony and so on. Now your Lordships had properly decided at Winchester that if a machine were taken to pieces, and if those pieces could afterwards be so arranged as to form a thrashing machine again, the breaking of those pieces in a separate state was the breaking of this thrashing machine. Now here it is in evidence that the detached pieces of this thrashing machine could not be joined together again, so as to form a thrashing machine it would be necessary to add to them the side

Monday, 3rd January 1831

boards as connecting links between the different parts of the machine. I therefore deny that the parts of the machinery destroyed by the prisoners formed a thrashing machine: and if so, the *corpus delicti* in this case has no existence, and the indictment can not be sustained.'

The Court over ruled this objection. They were of the opinion that as the machine could be worked without the boards, though not so effectively, it was still a thrashing machine, and that the indictment was therefore sustainable.

Mr Patient was then cross examined again by Mr Ball and said, 'I did not know that these men were in great distress, I believe that they were not.'

Mr Ball then proceeded to enquire into the amount of wages received by the labourers but he was stopped by the Court and informed that in a case of this description such evidence was scarcely regular. They would, however, hear any consideration of that kind hereafter.

William Morgan was then called to give evidence. 'I am a farmer at Heytesbury. I followed the mob from that place to Corton. I saw the mob as they were coming to Mr Patient's. I can identify Whatley, House Bartlett, Bevan, Beminster, Hunt and Harford as being among the mob. I saw Hunt and Harford dragging a man by the collar, and calling upon him to come along. I saw Henry Potticary very active about the machine. I saw the mob start for Heytesbury. Bartlett, Munday, Beminster, Whatley, House, Bevan, Farley and Smith were with them, but not Harford, Hunt or Potticary.'

On being examined by Mr Coleridge, Colonel Charles Ashe a'Court said, 'I am a magistrate for this county. I remember a mob assembling at Heytesbury on the morning of the 25th of November. I read the proclamation in the Riot Act to them, and when I had concluded it I saw that it was then about twenty five minutes past seven. At that time there were only about 80 or 90 persons, standing in a dense mass. There were other persons assembled loosely about them. I saw in that mob, Bartlett, Munday, Beminster, Whatley, House, Harford, Hunt, and Farley. I think Bevan was there, but I am not certain. Not only on that morning, but on the previous night, at 10 o'clock, I had spoken to these people on the illegality of their proceedings. I spoke to

Monday, 3rd January 1831

Bartlett, Munday, and Beminster, on the previous evening, also to Hunt and Harford. I warned them of the illegality of their conduct. It was an hour and a half after I had read the proclamation in the morning that the mob started from Heytesbury. They went to Knook, to get, as they said, some cider from a farmer of the name of Parham, who had promised them some. From something they said, I doubted their intentions, and followed them. Knook is about one and a half miles from the place of their assembly. I left them at Knook, because they promised that they would keep the peace, and separate after drinking their cider. In consequence of information I afterwards received, I went to Corton. I got there at a quarter before 12. I found the mob at a turn of the road leading to Corton. They were then consulting which turn they should take. They took the road to Mr Patient's farm. I saw Bartlett there, taking the lead in the party. He cheered them on, and gave the word of command. I am not sure whether he had any thing in his hand at first, but afterwards he had a club, which he held up in a menacing manner. I saw Munday, repeating the word of command after Bartlett, and acting with great violence. Beminster was there, and very noisy. At this time there was a great change in the temper of the mob from that which they had exhibited in the morning. I begged them to desist. I told them that I would mark every man. The more I spoke the more they hooted. I went with them to Patient's and told them that I was there on purpose to mark them. They did not mind me, but formed a crowd round the machine. It was broken in a minute, evidently by persons who understood the trade. I should think by blacksmiths and carpenters. On breaking it, they said that it was the seventh machine they had broken. I heard something said at that time about cider. I pushed my horse as well as I could through the mob, and told Mr Patient at his peril not to give them any. He said that he was forced to do so. I then followed the mob to another farm. They broke a machine there, but they broke it so quickly that at the time I did not know that it was broken. I then turn round to go away. The mob then cheered. I turned round and I saw them raise their sticks. I pushed my horse back into them, and marked Bartlett as one of the men who so raised a stick. I can

Monday, 3rd January 1831

identify all the prisoners as having been present at this second farm. William Smith was there. I was much shocked at seeing him. He is a labourer of my own. I saw him with a billhook. I then left the mob. I heard them say that they would go to Sutton, which is about a mile and a half from the place where they then were. I had sent for the Yeomanry Cavalry and the special constables to meet me at a certain point. The cavalry and special constables took all the prisoners but two. I took the other two afterwards, when I noticed them in their own houses. The river was much swollen, but when the cavalry came, the mob took to the river to get out of their way.'

On being cross examined Mr a'Court replied. 'There was not a man in the mob intoxicated.'

Mrs Dowdle, a servant to Mr John Ingram, proved that Wheeler had called at her master's house on the 24th November to borrow a coal hammer. 'I told Wheeler that as my master was not at home he could not have it. He said he would break into the house if I did not give it to him.'

On being cross-examined she admitted that Wheeler had often borrowed the hammer before.

Robert Raxworthy and John Fox were able to confirm Mrs Dowdle's testimony.

In their defence many of the prisoners said that Farmer Parham had told them that if they would come and break his machine on the 25th November, he would give them half a hogshead of cider, and if that was not enough, he would give them more. They went to Farmer Parham's and got the cider and the cider got into their heads. That is how they came to be placed at the bar now.

Whatley said, 'I was getting up on the morning in question, when some people came to me and told me that they were out to get their wages raised. I went with them.'

Harford protested that he had taken no part in the transaction.

Whatley received an excellent character. Colonel a'Court and two other gentlemen spoke highly of the character of Beven and Farley, as did Raxworthy, and others, of the character of Farley.

Mr Justice Parke, in summing up the case, told the Jury that they must dismiss from their consideration what

Monday, 3rd January 1831

the prisoners had said about Farmer Parham giving them a drink. Firstly because there is no evidence to this fact; and secondly, because it would not alter the case against the prisoners even if it were so. Inquiry should however be made into the circumstances, and if it were found that any individual had been found wicked enough to give the prisoners drink with intent to excite them to mischievous designs, that person upon conviction, would meet with exemplary punishment.

The Jury returned a verdict of *guilty* against all the prisoners, but recommended Beven and Farley to mercy, on account of the excellence of their characters.

This was the last case in the Nisi Prius Court, and the Court rose at half past seven. ¹⁰

At one o'clock Mr Justice Alderson and T G B Estcourt left the Nisi Prius Court and took their seats in the Crown Court. The following Jury were sworn: -

James Cheyney	John Cusse	Thomas Beavis
Schrene White	John Butt	George Buckfield
John James Holloway	Joseph Buxton	James Boucher
Robert Futcher	James Ingram	James Wells ¹¹

The first case was called and Thomas Abree, 23, John Barrett, 24, James Blandford, 28, James Mould of Tisbury, 23, Richard Pitman, 29, and Edmund White, 20, were put to the bar charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of John Benett Esq. at Linley Farm in the parish of Tisbury, on the 25th November. All prisoners, with the exception of Abree, had been tried on Saturday, and all except White, had been found guilty of a similar offence at another of Mr Benett's farms. ¹²

¹⁰ The most detailed account of this case can be found in *The Times*, 5 January 1831, shorter version can be found in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831 & *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831

¹¹ TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

¹² The ages of the prisoners are as they appear in *The Times*, 5 January 1831; the farm is named as Lindley Farm in *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831; the Minute Book notes – *Charles Jerrard and John Targett at large*

Monday, 3rd January 1831

Mr Sergeant Wilde, in stating the case to the Jury, dwelt in strong terms on the delusion under which people who engaged in the destruction of machinery laboured. He observed that the introduction of machinery into this country had enabled it to manufacture various articles, and supply them to those countries to which formerly the English had themselves been obliged to apply for them. The use of machinery had consequently tended to cause an increase of labour.

John Jay was called and said, 'My father is a farmer at Tisbury. I was at Linley Farm at about three o'clock in the afternoon of the 25th November when the mob of around 700 or 800 men and women came there. They proceeded to break the machinery. I saw James Blandford and Tomas Abree there. Abree had a pick or a prong in his hand, with which he was beating part of the machinery. They were coming from Linley Farm when I saw Blandford. I don't know whether he had anything in his hand. I asked Abree where the mob was going and he said that they were going to Pythouse again to have a bit of a row, or a little bit of a start. I'm not sure which. I did not see Blandford before the machine was broke. I know nothing against Edmund White'

'You have sworn falsely,' exclaimed Blandford. 'As have a great many others. I was never near the barn, you never saw me there.'

William Woods was called. 'I was at Linley Farm, I saw 5 or 600 people there. I saw them break the thrashing machine. John Barrett was beating the machine with a stick.'

The stick was produced, it was about five feet long, six inches in circumference and weighs about six or seven pounds.

'Thomas Abree was also there,' he continued. 'He was beating the iron part of the machine with a prong handle. I saw James Blandford beating the machine, I believe with a sledge.'

Blandford interrupted again. 'You never saw me, I do know, there were a number of frocks like mine. You must have had very good eyes to have seen me. I was not in the barn at the time you mention, and if you did see me, you must have seen through the barn. As long as you say what's

Monday, 3rd January 1831

true I won't deny you, but when you don't. I'll tell you so, as long as I have hair on my head.'

'I saw Richard Pitman in the barn', continued Woods. 'He was near the machine. I do not know whether or not he had anything in his hand.'

'Lord, your soul is gone man', said Pitman

Charles Wilkins was called and said, 'I saw James Mould at Linley Farm, he had a small stick in his hand and he was beating part of the machine with it. James Blandford was also there. He had a large sledge hammer in his hand and he was beating down some of the wheels.'

Mould addressed the witness. 'You speak falsely, I'll kiss the book a hundred time to it.'

Thomas Jay produced an iron bar which he said Edmund White, who is a blacksmith, had in his hand. 'The bar had been kept inside the barn, in the hatch, and never moved from there', he said.

In his evidence John Wilkins said, 'I saw Edmund White at Pythouse with a large sledge hammer. He was beating a machine. The men then left and went towards Linley.'

John Ford said. 'I saw Thomas Abree whilst the mob were breaking the machine.'

George Turner said, 'Whilst the mob were breaking the machine at Pythouse, I saw Abree near the barn

None of the men made any defence, except Mould, who said, 'I was pressed by the mob and obliged to go with them.'

Witnesses were then called to speak of the character of the prisoners. Lord Arundell gave Abree an excellent character. 'I have known Abree for about 12 years, and employed him for much of that time. He is a very honest, quiet, steady, sober and industrious man and very regular in his attendance at chapel. He is a common mason.'

His Lordship also gave a good character to White saying, 'I have known White for 5 years. He was a good boy in my school. White is a blacksmith, but he works a good deal as a labourer.'

Several other respectable individuals gave the prisoners White and Abree a good character. White was

Monday, 3rd January 1831

described as an industrious man, who supported his father and his family.

John Snow has known Abree for 23 or 24 years and has always thought him a quite, sober, steady man.

William Jeffery, bailiff to Lord Arundell said, 'I have known Abree for 12 or 14 years and have always considered him a harmless, well disposed man, He worked at Wardour in the summer and earned 10/- a week.'

William Lambert has known Abree for 8 or 9 years and always thought him a peaceable, sober and industrious man.

Matthew Coombes has known White from his birth and said that he had always borne a good character as an industrious young man.

John Gray has known White since he was born and said, 'He is an honest, sober and quiet man. He is single and provides for his father and family.'

John Williams spoke for James Mould. 'I have always thought James Mould a man of good character. He worked for my father 12 months ago.'

Henry Bristow, the overseer in John Barrett's parish, gave Barrett a good character. He described him as very poor, with only 5/- a week for himself, his wife and a child.

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the evidence and the Jury brought a verdict of *guilty* against all the prisoners, but recommended Edmund White, Thomas Abree, James Mould and John Barrett to mercy. ¹³

Mr Justice Alderson, who had retired from the Court for a short time while the Jury were deliberating, on his return addressed the gaoler. 'I understand that the prisoners have been placed at the bar with handcuffs on. This is very improper. When placed upon his trial a prisoner should be perfectly free.'

The gaoler replied that they had been brought up in such a hurry that they had no time to take the handcuffs off.

Mr Justice Alderson hoped he would not have to complain again.

¹³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 5 January 1731; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Monday, 3rd January 1831

It should be observed here that the hands of the prisoners were not restrained, only a part of the handcuff remaining on one wrist. ¹⁴

The next case was called and William Cook, Thomas Gange (otherwise John Gange), Henry Herrington, Thomas Light, William Luffman and William Rogers the younger, were placed at the bar charged with destroying and burning a thrashing machine, the property of Timothy Rumbold, at West Grimstead, on the 24th November.

Mr Sergeant Wilde opened the case and called the first witness, Timothy Rumbold, the farmer whose machine had been destroyed.

'I am a farmer at West Grimstead', said Mr Rumbold. 'On the 23rd November, at 12 o'clock at night I saw a mob at my premises. The prisoners were armed with axes, sledges, and sticks. They said they had been out all day and all night breaking machines, and they would not stop until none were left. I saw Henry Herrington, William Luffman, William Rogers and Thomas Gange in the mob. Herrington is a Carrier. William Luffman is a Woodman. I asked what they were going to do and they said they came to break my machine. William Rogers said so. They had large stakes in their hand. The machine was broken to pieces and all those I have mentioned were there at the time the machine was broken. I also William Cook there, he was not actively engaged. The mob was about 50 in number. After the machine was broken they said they were determined to burn it. I said they should not burn it. They said they were determined to get straw and burn it. Herrington was the first to propose getting the straw and burning the machine. Someone said that if I did not bring straw they would set fire to the rest of it. I then sent for straw and the machine was burnt. Some of the prisoners, Herrington, Luffman, and Gange, who are from Whiteparish, said that I should give them a sovereign. I said I would send it to them the next day. I know Thomas Light, he rents a cottage from me. I saw him on my premises before the destruction of the machine was completed. He was present when they asked for money,

¹⁴ The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Monday, 3rd January 1831

he said he would pay the sovereign and deduct it from his rent. I was compelled to assent to this. One of the men insisted that they should have cider and beer, and I sent to my house for this. It was Light who suggested that they go to my house and have bread and cheese. I said they should not go, and Herrington said that as they had got a sovereign it was enough. I never saw Thomas Gange before that night. I particularly marked Gange as he wished to fight one of my men.'

On being cross-examined Mr Rumbold replied, 'When I saw the mob first, Cook and Light were not with them. The mob was calling them up. Cook was not taken up in the first instance, but I was informed afterwards that Cook had been the instigator of the others and had lent them his tools. Cook is a carpenter. No I never had a dispute with Cook about a bill, nor did I ever threaten to have him transported.'

In reply to the questions, from the prisoner William Luffman, Mr Rumbold said, 'I did not say to the men they were welcome to break the machine, or that if they did not break it, my men would break it in the morning. I did say that they had better leave it alone till morning when my men would break it. I said so in order to get rid of the mob. I had no intention of breaking it at the time.'

John Mussell was then called to give evidence and said. 'Mr Rumbold called me up on the night when the machine was destroyed. Mr Rumbold asked them not to disturb all the people in the parish, but if they were determined to destroy the machine to go and do it. Herrington proposed to the people to go and destroy it and pointed to the parts to be destroyed. There was a lanthorn in the field and I heard Herrington say that he was determined to burn the machine. I saw William Cook there he is a carpenter. Some of the mob went to his home and had victuals and drink there. Herrington said that there was no law for breaking machines. William Rogers was there he seemed very tipsy. He did not touch the machine he was making himself very foolish. Thomas Light was there, but I did not see him there until after the fire was lighted. Thomas Gange was there. It was near 12 at night and before the mob came to the village the Master had told us that we

Monday, 3rd January 1831

were to take the machine to pieces in the morning. I did not see Cook take an active part at the fire.'

On being cross examined Mussell admitted that he had drunk some beer and was told by the prisoner Luffman that he ought to be considered as bad as the rest.

John Dumbleton was called and said, 'I am a servant of Mr Rumbold's. I watched his premises on the 23rd November. I heard a noise in the night and heard William Roger's voice calling people to get up. I spoke to the mob. I saw Rogers and Thomas Gange at William Cook's house. The mob told me that they were going to destroy the machine. I said that if they would stop till tomorrow we would do it for ourselves. They said no to this. Henry Herrington, William Luffman, William Cook, Thomas Gange, and William Rogers were all there. Luffman tried to take the bar from me. I saw Thomas Light at the fire. Rogers was very tipsy. 'Cut away, Mike,' said Herrington, who had a stick.'

Luffman interrupted here, 'Do you mean to say that we could burn iron?'

'I cannot say. I did not say so,' replied Dumbleton.

'Do you mean to say that I went there to steal it.' asked Luffman.

I don't know,' said Dumbleton. 'I only came here to speak what I saw, and I have done so.'

The prisoners were then called upon for their defence. Light declined to say anything.

William Rogers said, 'This is my first offence, my Lord, that I have ever committed, and I was much in drink on that evening.'

Gange and Herrington both said that they would leave it to their counsel.

Mr Rumbold was recalled by the Court and said, 'Rogers appeared to be much intoxicated. He had worked for me for many years. When I first saw him he was breaking the machine with a sledge hammer.'

In his own defence William Luffman said, 'My Lord, I was pressed into it, and was made to go, as I was returning home from a public house with Herrington and Gange. There were 30 or 40 men who stopped us, and said that if we did not go with them, they would beat out our brains. To

Monday, 3rd January 1831

avoid that, we joined them. I joined them, at all events, on my own part, without any intention of doing any harm. The beer was sent out, and I did not hear anyone ask for it. I am sure, my Lord, I had no intention of breaking any machine. Mr Rumbold said that if we did not do it, he would in the morning. I have a wife and seven small children, and I hope your Lordship will be as favourable to me, as you can. What was done, was done through ignorance.'

Mr Roe then called Maria Rogers to speak for William Cook. She said, 'I live at West Grimstead, near to Cook, who I have known for some time. I remember the night when the mob came to our village. I got up in consequence of the noise. The mob went to Cook's door, which was shut. They called for Cook, wanting him to come down and open the door. Cook keeps a public house. He refused to open the door, and they said that if he did not open it they would beat it down. After a while the door was opened, and the mob went in. I went only as far as the door at that moment although I did go in afterwards. The mob said that if he did not draw them some beer they would draw it for themselves, but if he would draw it then there should be not anything the matter. This was between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning'

Mr William Musgrave said, 'I have known Cook for five or six years, and I should say he is a sober, honest and quiet man. He deals at my shop. I am a druggist.'

Mr William Witcher also spoke for Cook saying, 'I live at West Dean. Cook worked for me. I have known him seven or eight years. He has been employed by me to take down a thrashing machine. I sent for him to do it on the 22nd November.'

On being cross examined by the Court Mr Witcher said, 'That machine has been broken by the mob. The prisoner was there, but he did not assist them. It was on the day on which he was engaged to take the machine down.'

Two witnesses were called to speak for the prisoner Light. Sarah Light said that she had known Light since he was a child and that he had always borne an excellent character.

Monday, 3rd January 1831

William Cook said, 'Light is my neighbour and a very honest man. I never knew him to be concerned in riots before.'

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the case and the Jury found all the prisoners *guilty*, but recommended Light, Rogers, and Cook to mercy.

Mr Rumbold recommended Luffman for mercy, as he had always borne a good character, and supported a wife and children by his industry. ¹⁵

The next case was called and Charles Martin, John Penny, Robert Obourne, William Scott, John Targett, Jeremiah Topp and Thomas Topp were placed at the bar. They were charged with breaking and destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Mr Henry Self, at Down Farm in the parish of Fonthill Bishop on the 25th November last.

The case against the prisoners was stated and Michael Bradley, the first witness was called, 'I live at Chilmark. On the morning of the 25th November last I was at work in the plantation near Down Farm, which is occupied by Mr Self. At about 10 o'clock that morning I saw about 50 people come towards the barn. They had tools in their hands. John Penny opened the door from the inside and the mob then got in and began to break the machines. Afterwards the parts were thrown out and they all beat it to pieces. Thomas Topp was chopping it with an axe. He called me to help, and said that every man that did not help should die, as they pressed everyone. Jeremiah Topp was breaking the machine with an iron bar. Targett was beating it with a stick and William Scott was beating it. Charles Martin and Robert Obourne had an axe between them and they used it in turns to beat the machine.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Williams, Bradley said, 'I told different people of it when I went home. I know Mr Self. He lives 2½ miles from me. I did not go to him and tell him of it. I told Mr King, my master, of it and told him the names of the prisoners. I never saw a paper offering a

¹⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** The prosecutor is named as Mr **Rumbold** in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials & The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, and as Mr **Rumboll** in The Times & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal

Monday, 3rd January 1831

reward for the apprehension of the persons who had broken the machine. I saw Charles Martin at the barn, at work breaking the machine, as well as Scott and Obourne. Scott, I think, was the first man who used the axe. I was a witness once against men for stealing sheep. I swore positively to them but they were acquitted.'

The prisoners were then called for their defence. Jeremiah Topp, Martin and Scott all said that they were not there. Obourne denied having an axe in his hand and Penny said that he only had a hedge stake. Targett said that he had been working 2½ miles away from the spot.

Thomas Topp said, 'I was not within 3 miles of the place.'

Mr Williams, on the part of Martin, Scott and Obourne called James Cheverell who said, 'I work at a pottery. I remember the mob going to Mr Self's on the 25th November. I heard a horn blown and went to see what was the matter. I know Charles Martin, I was with him when he first joined the mob, together with Scott and Obourne. We went to see what the matter was and the mob forced us to go with them, by pulling us with them. Scott, Martin and Obourne had nothing in their hands when they joined the mob. We first went to Mr Self's. I saw what was done. Scott, Obourne and Martin were at that time about a quarter of a mile from the mob. Scott and Obourne had a small walking stick in their hands, but Martin had nothing. I was on the Down till the mob left the barn, where they had broken a thrashing machine. Martin, Obourne and Scott did not go near the barn all the time. I have worked with these men for five years.'¹⁶

In reply to the cross examination of Mr Sergeant Wilde Cheverell said, 'They are steady and industrious men. They have worked for one master for the last five years. I have known them all my life and have lived within a quarter of a mile of them all that time. I have worked in the potteries for five years. I work for Mr Dally. I don't know where he is. The pottery is at Rudge. There had been no trouble near us until the 25th. Mr Self's was about three or four miles from where we first joined the mob, they compelled us to go with them. We were left about a quarter of a mile from the machine, but

¹⁶ This witness is named as **James Chiverell** in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trial

Monday, 3rd January 1831

we did not think of running away. We stood there for about a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes. Then we went down to Self's house from there to *The Beckford Arms*, where I ate and drank with the other three men. There might have been another 20 men there. The mob then went to Lawn Farm, then Pythouse and then to Tisbury. I went part of the way to Linley Farm, and then 10 or 12 of us went back to Tisbury. We were pressed between seven and eight in the morning and I did not leave the mob until three in the afternoon. I live by myself. I am near 20 years old. I lodge at Mr Dally's, at Rudge. I sleep in his stable and eat my victuals in his home. My friends live at Tisbury. I do not know that the prisoners were ever in prison before.'

Thomas Bishop was then called and said, 'I live at Frome in Somersetshire. I am a baker and a Sheriff's Officer. I know Michael Bradley and I would not believe him on his oath.'

On being cross examined Mr Bishop said, 'I have known Bradley up and down for five years. When a man will take parties up for sheep stealing, and afterwards go to their friends and offer not to appear against them if they would give him £10 to buy himself a horse and cart. I would not believe such a man on his oath. I heard this offer made in a public house. Tarwell, a horse dealer of Shaftsbury, Bradley and myself were present, with others that I do not know. I have another reason for not believing him. When I heard this, I went and gave this evidence for the persons who had been accused of sheep stealing and Steed, the prosecutor, then said he would not believe Bradley on his oath, as it was on Bradley's evidence alone that he prosecuted the sheep stealers and he desired that a bill be preferred against Bradley for perjury. I am bound bailiff to the Sheriff, and have been so for five years.'

Bradley was recalled and stated, 'It is not true what Bishop says; he was the man who made me the offer of £10. I received a note, which I showed to the Magistrates, and they recommended me to go to *The Pack Horse* public house. I would not believe him on his oath.'

Mr Dowding, the Deputy Governor of the gaol was called. 'I remember Charles Martin being convicted of felony at the Spring Assizes in 1826. He was sentenced to 2

Monday, 3rd January 1831

months imprisonment. Obourne was convicted of felony in 1826 and sentenced to six months imprisonment, with hard labour.’

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the case and the Jury *acquitted* the prisoners. ¹⁷

The Court then adjourned to the Nisi Prius Court at a quarter past eight, and will re-open tomorrow, Tuesday 4th January at 9 o’clock. ¹⁸

¹⁷ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trial; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; brief accounts also appear in The Times, 5 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

¹⁸ The Times, 5 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Tuesday, 4TH January 1831

Mr Baron Vaughan, Mr Justice Parke, Mr Justice Alderson, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earl of Radnor, and T G B Estcourt Esquire took their seats on the bench in the Nisi Court at nine o'clock this morning. Soon afterwards the prisoners, who had already been convicted, were brought up to receive their sentence.

Samuel Banstone, Samuel Barrett, John Barrett, Thomas Burt, James Blandford, Samuel Eyres, Charles Jerrard, James Mould of Tisbury, James Mould of Hatch, Richard Pitman, Thomas Rixon, William Snook, John Targett, Thomas Topp, Thomas Vinen and Edmund White were placed at the bar. Most of the prisoners had been convicted of the attack on Mr Benett's machine at Pythouse. White was acquitted of that charge, but has since been found guilty of a similar offence. Blandford has been twice convicted at this commission of machine breaking.

Mr Baron Vaughan addressed the prisoners saying, 'You have been severally convicted of breaking a thrashing machine and the law in its wisdom thought fit to give its special protection to this species of property by appointing the punishment of transportation for seven years on its destruction. I have no hesitation in saying that had the outrages, which have taken place in this and the adjoining counties been anticipated, the punishment would have been more severe. These outrages were of a premeditated and aggravated nature, and called for the utmost severity of the law. Besides the crime of destroying machinery you have been guilty of a degree of personal violence, which has well nigh placed your lives in jeopardy, by having risked that of the gentleman on whom you made the attack. You therefore might think yourselves fortunate that you do not stand in a situation in which your lives have been forfeited to the law. I am aware that many of you are agricultural labourers and it has been suggested that you are suffering great distress, but to suppose that this distress has been aggravated by the use of machinery is a most gross delusion. Everybody knows that the times are not favourable, but people must submit to the visitations of Providence. I can only hope that

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

the fate which awaits you and the other prisoners, will be a warning to other persons in your condition of life.'

His Lordship concluded by sentencing James Blandford, who had acted as ringleader, to 14 years transportation and each of the other prisoners to seven years transportation, with the exception of Samuel Eyres and John Targett, who were both sentenced to 12 months imprisonment in the House of Correction, where they are to be kept at hard labour. ¹

Thomas Abree, William Cook, Thomas Gange, Henry Herrington, Thomas Light, William Luffman, and William Rogers, who were convicted last night before Mr Justice Alderson of breaking a thrashing machine, and afterwards of setting the fragments of it on fire, were next put to the bar to receive sentence.

Mr Justice Alderson addressed the prisoners, 'You were convicted before me yesterday of breaking and destroying a thrashing machine, a crime which must be put down by the strong arm of the law. Your cases were accompanied with every species of aggravation. Your offence was committed when all honest people were in bed. At a late hour of the night persons were called up and the neighbourhood disturbed. You were not satisfied with destroying the machine, but you compelled the farmer and proprietor to give you straw, that you might burn it. You got drink and money and then you impudently said that you would go to his house for bread and cheese. What punishment, under such circumstances, can be too severe? Most of you were in better circumstances than the general class of persons charged with this offence. Some of you have wives and children, but you should have remembered them when you were about to commit the offence. Wives and children are pledges to the state of good behaviour, those pledges have been broken. The sorrow and affliction that will fall upon your families is a portion of your punishment, you will be separated from them. The sentence upon all of you is that you be transported for seven years.' All the

¹ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

prisoners were then removed, many of them sobbing aloud as they left the Court. ²

Another set of prisoners, comprising of William Bartlett, Joseph Beminster, William Beven, William Farley, Samuel Harford, James House, Joseph Hunt, William Munday, Henry Potticary, William Smith, Richard Whatley and James Wheeler, were put to the bar, they had all been convicted of machine breaking.

After a suitable address from Mr Justice Parke, they were all sentenced to seven years transportation, with the exception of Whatley, Farley and Beven, who were condemned, the first to 12 months, the second to six months and the third to three months imprisonment, with hard labour in the House of Correction. There were many extenuating circumstances in the cases of the last named prisoners, which had induced the Court to mitigate their punishment. ³

Sentencing having been completed, for the moment, Mr Justice Alderson and T G B Estcourt left the Nisi Prius Court to go to the Crown Court.

The following Jury was sworn. ⁴

John Hill	James Green	John Garlick
William Edwards	William Hall	William Brindley
James Bond	David Goddard	Henry Garlick
Francis Ewer	Stephen Howell	
Thomas Bailey Pinnell		

In the first case in the Nisi Prius Court Charles Martin, age 30, was put to the bar, charged with assaulting William Windsor and extorting four sovereigns from him at Melchet Park on the 22nd November last.

William Windsor, the prosecutor was called and stated that the prisoner appeared to have been the leader of the mob that had come to Melchet Park on the night in

² The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

³ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** In The Times **William Munday** is named as **William Moody**, and the sentencing comes after that of **Thomas Abree** etc

⁴ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3 Minute Book

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

question. Martin had demanded £4, which, through fear of violence, Mr Windsor had handed over. Martin had said that no more mischief would be done after the machine was broken.

In his cross examination by Mr Halcombe asked, 'Did you not say that you would willingly give the money they asked for if they would let you have the first blow at the machine.

Mr Windsor replied, 'I did not make that offer, but when I found the mob were determined to break the machine, I did say that I would show them where it was and have the first blow. I did this because I was in fear of the mob.'

Mr Baron Vaughan said that he would not press the case against the prisoner, but would consent to an acquittal.

The prisoner was accordingly *acquitted* and Mr Baron Vaughan advised him to be more cautious in the future. 'You have had a very narrow escape.'

Mr Justice Parke observed, that in a case which was tried last night an intimation was thrown out that encouragement had been given to the mob to break the machines by the farmers. The Judges have since then made inquiry into that case, and found that there was no grounds whatever for believing that any encouragement had been given. The farmer, in that case, gave the mob cider, but it was under the influence of intimidation.

The Attorney General said that the law officers of the Crown had made similar inquiries, but had not been able to trace any case of encouragement of this kind by the farmers.⁵

The next case was called and John Burrough, 43, and William Hibberd, 32, were placed at the bar. They were charged with robbing William Hayward of two sovereigns. It appears that the prisoners, accompanied by two other men, came to the house of the prosecutor, at Ebbesbourne Wake, on the 24th November. They threatened that, unless he gave

⁵ The most detailed account of this case appears in *The Times*, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831; *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831. His age is that given in *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal* & the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

them money, they would bring the mob to his house and knock it about. The evidence of Mr Hayward and his son clearly substantiated the charge.

The prisoners, in their defence, said that they had been forced to join the mob and had been out with them all night and were quite tipsy. They expressed their regret at what had happened and said that it was their first offence. Both prisoners received a good character. The Jury found them *guilty*. Mr Justice Parke ordered a sentence of death to be recorded against them. In his address to them he said that they might entertain the hope that their lives would be spared. 'But you must not expect that any further mitigation will take place in your sentence. You will not be allowed to remain in this country.'

There was another indictment against William Hibberd for breaking thrashing machines, but it was not pressed. ⁶

David Baker, 29, George Durman, 25, and John Vokins were indicted for robbing Mr Church of 10s and four half crowns, on the 23rd November at Aldbourne. ⁷

The prisoners were acquitted in consequence of the indictment being wrong. It seemed that part of the money belonged to Mr Church, another part belonged to Thomas Brind his servant, and the rest to a Mr Smith. The indictment also stated that 10s and four half crowns had been taken, where as the prisoners had obtained a half sovereign and four half crowns.

The same prisoners were then indicted for breaking a thrashing machine belonging to Mr Church. The case was clearly proved by Thomas Brind and the Jury found them *guilty*.

Mr Justice Parke, after averting to the narrow escape that they had had under the previous indictment for a

⁶ The most detailed account of this case appears in *The Times*, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831; *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831. Ages are as they appear in *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal* & the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*

⁷ In *The Times*, 6 January 1831 **George Durman** is named as George **Derman** and **John Vokins** as **John Vauckings**; in the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831 they appear as **George Dedman** and **John Vokings**. The ages are as they appear in *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal* & the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*. No age is given in either newspaper for **John Vokins**

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

capital offence, sentenced each of them to transportation for seven years. ⁸

In the next case Henry Lane, 21, and Aaron Stone, 36, were indicted for extorting money from George Hiles Danford Nunn, of Whiteparish, on the 23rd November. ⁹

Mr Nunn, a surgeon living in Whiteparish was called and said, 'On the morning of the day in question a mob of 100 or 150 people came to my house. They were armed with sticks, but were behaving peaceably. They demanded money, and from fear I gave it to them. Stone was the person who demanded it. Lane was not near the door at the time, he was 10 or 12 yards away. He had a trumpet or horn, which he blew about ten minutes after I gave Stone the money. I could not say if he was aware of the money given to Stone. I asked Stone if a sovereign would do him, and he said it would.'

Mr Nunn's son was able to corroborate most of this testimony but differed in that he said that Lane, who had a trumpet in his hand, must have heard Stone's demand for the money. About 10 minutes after the money was handed over Lane blew the trumpet.

In his defence Stone said that they were persuaded by two gentlemen of the parish to go out and collect as much money as they could.

In his summing up the Judge pointed this discrepancy in the evidence of Mr Nunn and his son and told the Jury to give the prisoner Lane the benefit of any doubt this might create in their minds as to him.

The Jury *acquitted* Lane and found Stone *guilty*.

There was another incident, for robbery against Stone, but it was not pressed and the Court ordered a sentence of death to be recorded against him.

⁸ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831 & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831 both give **Henry Lane's** age as 21, the Gazette gives **Aaron Stone's** age as 36 and The Journal as 38. The Times names the prosecutor as **Henry Nun**, The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette as **George Hiles Danford Nunn**, as does the Gaol Calendar, and The Salisbury & Winchester Journal as **George Hill Durnsford Nunn**

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Mr Baron Vaughan explained the sentence to him and gave him reason to hope his life would be spared, but that he must not expect to remain in this country. ¹⁰

Thomas Goddard and William Taylor were then put to the bar. They were charged with robbing Richard Church of a sovereign, on the 23rd November, at Aldbourne.

It appeared from the evidence of Mr Church that on the day in question, the prisoners, who formed part of a mob engaged in breaking thrashing machines, came to his farm. After the mob had broken his thrashing machine Taylor asked for a sovereign for their trouble. Mr Church complained of the hardship of this but they would have it. So he asked them whom he should give the money to and they called for a person names Durman. When Durman did not answer they said, "You must give it to this gentleman on horseback", pointing to the prisoner Goddard, and added "He is a good fellow and we will protect him". Goddard is a tanner, and Taylor is a sawyer.

William Coleman, who according to his own account, had gone with the mob to see what they were doing, corroborated the evidence of the former witness. 'Taylor said that he would have a sovereign for each machine that he broke and that he would not take any farmer's word, and that there was not a gentleman in the land whose word was to be believed but one, and that was King William.' According to Coleman, Taylor had also said that there would be bloody work done and that he would have blood for supper.

In his defence Goddard said, 'I had no bad intentions. I went with the mob, thinking there might be some dissipated men among them. I went with them, supposing that I might be the means of saving some of the property. I considered my own property very precarious and was much agitated. I never did any mischief and my motives were pure. When Mr Church gave me the sovereign I passed it to Durman.'

He appealed to Mr Church who, he said, had known him for 20 or 25 years.

¹⁰ The most detailed account of this case appears in *The Times*, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831; *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

It is believed that Goddard is in good business as a tanner and is said to be worth £1,000, which sum is in the hands of his banker.

In his defence Taylor said, 'I asked Mr Church for a sovereign before the machine was broken. After that was done I told Mr Church to give the money to Goddard. Mr Church then said that he hoped the men would not do him any more harm and I assured him that they would not.'

Mr Church was then recalled and stated that Goddard's property was about three miles from his parish.

Taylor then stated, 'William Coleman was mistaken in saying that I used the words "We'll have blood for supper". What I did say was that we would have bread for supper. I had been two days without much food. I have a wife and family and was distressed from the want of sufficient work.'

A witness was called for Goddard, who stated that he saw him go with the mob for the purpose of getting them away without doing any harm.

Several witnesses were called who gave Goddard a most excellent character.

Liddiard, a servant of Mr Rowland of Ramsbury, said, 'Goddard did everything in his power to induce the mob to act peaceably and to disperse. The mob got hold of him and said that he should be their leader and demand a sovereign, for they could not get it. Goddard said that if he had a sovereign about him he would give it to them if they would go away quietly.'

The Reverend Dr Meyrick, vicar of Ramsbury, said, 'I have known Goddard 10 years, He has always been a good son, a good husband and a good father. He is very industrious and a quiet man, well to do in the world.'

Mr Justice Parke summed up the case in great detail and the Jury, after about half an hours deliberation found both the prisoners *guilty* but recommended them to mercy. Sentencing was deferred and the prisoners were immediately removed from the bar. ¹¹

¹¹ The most detailed account of this case appears in *The Times*, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831; *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

In the next case David Gee, 16, Worthy Gee, 18, Jeremiah New, 16, John Thorne, 22, and Joseph Watts, 28, were indicted for robbing Thomas Langford of one sovereign, at Wroughton, on the 23rd November. ¹²

Thomas Langford stated that the prisoners were part of a large mob that had come to his farm on the 23rd November and destroyed his thrashing machine. 'Watts held a grub axe over my head in a threatening manner and demanded money for having broken the machine. Several voices cried out, "Give it to Watts, he is our Captain and receives the money". I paid the money into Watt's hand. I saw four of the prisoners engaged in breaking my machine.'

On being cross examined Mr Langford answered, 'I never said I was sorry that I did not know they were coming, or that if I had I would have given them a dance. All I said was that as they had a flag I was surprised that they did not have a drum. I was obliged to give them two buckets of beer.'

Another witness corroborated this statement and was able to identify all the prisoners as being among the mob, but said that he had not heard Mr Langford say anything about a drum.

John Thorne said that the prosecutor told them that if he had expected them he would have had a drum. The other prisoners confined themselves to a general denial of this guilt, either in breaking the machine or demanding money.

The Jury found them all *guilty* and recommended all of them, except Watts, to mercy, in consequence of their youth.

There were other indictments against these men, for robbery and breaking machines. Sentencing was deferred. ¹³

In the last case to be heard today in this Court, Thomas Lawrence, 19, John Reeves, 20, and Henry Tombs, 21, were indicted for robbing John Langford, at Wanborough, of half a crown, on the 23rd November last.

¹² **John Thorne** is named as **John Thorn** in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831, and **David Gee**'s age is given as 19 in these two newspapers

¹³ The most detailed account of this case appears in The Times, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

In his evidence John Langford said, 'On the 23rd November a mob came to my house and broke my thrashing machine. After they had left a second mob came and broke the remaining parts of the machine. They came up to the house and said that they would have some victuals and drink. When I said that I would not give them anything, they said that they would have some or money to buy some. Reeves said that he would have some money or he would break down the door. All the prisoners were with the mob. Reeves had a stone hammer in his hand. A great number of the mob had hammers and sledges, and some had cast iron on sticks. I gave Reeves half a crown as I was alarmed. The prisoners were all very much in liquor. Reeves had a handkerchief round his hat, which he said he had dipped in blood, and it was stiff. As soon as the man knocked on the door I ordered him away, and he walked out of the yard immediately.'

William Johnson confirmed this testimony.

Mr Justice Parke said that if the law were pushed to the extreme it would probably be possible to prove that there had been a robbery, but that the safer course, perhaps, was to acquit the prisoners. The prisoners were then *acquitted*.

The same prisoners were then charged with breaking John Langford's thrashing machine, but as it appeared from the evidence that the machine was broken before they came up, they were therefore *acquitted* of this charge too.¹⁴

The Court adjourned at half past six, and will open again at 9 o'clock tomorrow.

Mr Justice Alderson and T G B Estcourt Esq sat in the Crown Court.

The following Jurymen were sworn.¹⁵

James Boucher	John Butt	Matthias Carter
Schrene White	James Wells	James Ingram
John James Holloway	Jacob Vines	Samuel Twiney
George Buckpitt	John Talbot	James Gunston

¹⁴ The Times, 6 January 1831, a shorter accounts appear in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831, but it is not reported in The Salisbury & Winchester Journal

¹⁵ TNA – ASSI 24/8/3, Minute Book

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

In the first case William Elton the younger, 23, William Holmes, 27, John Olden, 28, William Olden, 33, John Sheppard, 20, and Henry Thornton, 37, were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, on the 22nd November last, the property of James Judd, at Newton Tony. ¹⁶

The prosecutor, James Judd, was called. 'I am a farmer at Newton Toney. A mob had come to my house at about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 22nd November. All the prisoners were in the mob. On this occasion I was able to persuade them to go away without doing anything, although one of the prisoners, John Sheppard, was very anxious to have the thrashing machine broken. At about half past three the same afternoon they came again, and again all the prisoners were there. There were about 70 or 80 people altogether, many of them with sticks in their hands. They marched in two deep, John Olden was the leading man and had a stick. William Olden, Sheppard, Elton and Holmes all had sticks, but I am not certain if Henry Thornton had a stick. When they came they demanded money or beer and said that if I did not give it they would destroy my thrashing machine. I agreed to give them beer, money or anything else within reason if they would disperse, return to their work and protect our property if others came to destroy it. They would not agree to this and said they would break the machine. John Olden in particular said so. He said then "D – you, you won't give me any?" I said I would not so he said, "Then we will go and break the machine." The machine was in the barn and I had locked the door and put the key in my pocket. When I told them the machine was locked up in the barn they said they would break it open. In less than five minutes I heard the noise of breaking. I went around and saw them doing it. William Holmes had an axe and was beating the machine. John Olden and William Elton beat also with the same axe. I saw Thornton and Sheppard in the barn. Holmes was standing by whist the machine was broken. William Wyndham came whilst they were breaking it and he cautioned them. He was there on his horse for five minutes or more. Both my machines were broken'

¹⁶ **John Sheppard** appears as **John Shepherd** in the Minute Book. **NOTE: John Olden's** age is give as 50 in the newspaper accounts, and The Times says the attack took place on the 24th November, the Gazette & the Journal have the date as the 23rd November and the Minutes of the Trials give the date as the 22nd November

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Mr Smith, the counsel for the prisoners, cross-examined Mr Judd. He wanted to show that certain landowners in the parish of Newton Tony had instigated the labourers to these outrages.

Mr Justice Alderson objected to this saying, 'Such an inquiry is not material to this issue. You ought to confine your inquiries to the issue before you, which is the guilt or innocence of the prisoners. If it is rendered necessary by the verdict of the Jury, prisoners' counsel will have the opportunity of laying the circumstances, to which he was then averting, before the Court in mitigation of punishment. The course, which you are pursuing, is open to this objection, that it is trying individuals, who are not present to defend themselves, upon charges of a very grave and serious description. Yesterday we had a case of this kind before us. The character and conduct of a particular farmer was deeply impugned upon a cross-examination. Upon inquiry it was found that the farmer had been acting under the impulse of fear. He had, consequently, laboured under a very wrong imputation all the day. The Court will be glad to hear the facts to which Mr Smith is alluding, when properly authenticated, in mitigation of punishment.'

On being cross-examined Mr Judd admitted that he had sent the mob a sovereign after they had dispersed, and when there was no disturbance among them. He said that his reason for doing so was, that they had followed him that evening, again with their importunities, and that he had promised to give them that sum if they would go quietly to work next morning, and he had therefore felt bound to keep the promise which he had made to them.

Mr Judd, junior, corroborated the testimony of his father and was able to identify all the prisoners as having been present. He had seen William and John Olden, Elton and Holmes beating the machine with sticks and an axe, which they took in turns to use. Thornton and Sheppard had helped to take the machine out of the barn. 'All went away after breaking the machine,' he concluded.

Only Thornton and Elton said anything in their own defence. They both admitted their presence with the mob but Elton said that all he had done was put away some

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

wires. Thornton said that he had put aside the winnowing machine and prevented it from being broken.

Mr Judd said that the winnowing machine had not been broken.

The Reverend Mr Price, vicar of Newton Tony, was called as a character witness. He said, 'I have known John Olden for 20 years, and until a few months ago I have always considered him to be a peaceable and sober man. William Olden is rather addicted to drinking but not accustomed to breaking the peace. I have known William Elton for many years and he has always conducted himself in a decent, orderly way. Until lately I always knew John Sheppard as a decent man. I can say nothing of Henry Thornton.'

Mr William Blatch, who lives in the adjoining parish, was called and said, 'I have known John Olden for six or seven years, he occasionally worked for me and has always behaved well towards me. William Olden has always conducted himself well towards me.'

The learned Judge summed up the case and the Jury returned a verdict of *guilty* against all the prisoners. They were immediately ordered up for judgement. Mr Justice Alderson addressed the men, saying, 'Prisoners, this is one of the worst offences which we have yet tried, for the breaking of thrashing machines. You first went in the morning to Mr Judd's premises. You had then time given to you to reflect, and went away without accomplishing your purpose. You then came a second time, in the afternoon, and though the farmer told you that he had put down his thrashing machine, and did not intend to use it, you determined to take it away from him, and to break it to pieces. Your first demand, however, upon this occasion, was money. If that demand had been complied with, you would have been punished with death, a punishment, which has been, or will be, inflicted in other places for aggravated offences of this description. It is important that you should know, and that others should know, that by the very demand of money, you committed a crime which rendered you liable to the punishment of transportation for life. When Mr Judd refused to give you money, you proceeded to destroy his machine. But even then a time for reflection was

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

given you; for a magistrate came up and cautioned you of the illegality of your proceedings. Still you went on. Under these circumstances, what is to be done, except to show you and the rest of the country that outrages like these cannot be committed with impunity? To protect the property of the farmer, to enable him to carry on his concerns in such a manner as he may deem most profitable, and to enable individuals to apply their capital to land with advantages as well as safety to themselves, I feel that I should be guilty of a great dereliction of my duty, if I did not visit you with the severest punishment of the law. The sentence of the Court is, that you be transported for the space of seven years beyond the seas. I am extremely sorry that it should be our duty to pass such a severe sentence upon you. You will be removed from your families, friends, and connexions, owing to that spirit of insubordination which it is necessary to put down, and which, if it be not put down by the strong arm of the law, will soon extend itself to crimes of still greater magnitude.'

The prisoners were then removed from the bar, and as he left John Olden said, with great levity, 'Thank you, my Lord.'¹⁷

George Burbage, 24, Henry Dicketts, 19, Thomas Porter, 18, Aaron Sheppard, 40, and James Stevens, 25, were put to the bar and charged with having riotously and tumultuously assembled and destroyed a thrashing machine the property of Charles Blake, of Idmiston on the 22nd November last.¹⁸

Mr Charles Blake, the prosecutor was called. 'I live at Idmiston. A mob came to my house at half past seven on the evening of the 22nd November. There were between 100 and 150 of them. I had previously taken down part of my thrashing machine and drew it up into my field in consequence of the alarms. I asked the mob what they wanted, they said to break machines and demanded money.

¹⁷ The most detailed account of this case appears in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials & The Times, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

¹⁸ **Aaron Sheppard** appears as **Aaron Shepherd** in the Minute Book and The Times, 6 January 1831; **Thomas Porter** appears as **Thomas Parker** in both The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

They said if I gave them money they would go peaceably. I gave them 10 shillings and some beer. They then demanded the key of the barn. I refused to give it so they said they would break down the door. They went to the barn and began beating on it. I then went to the barn and unlocked it and they beat the machine to pieces. I was going to protect the chaff cutter but Sheppard held an axe over my head and said, "D...n your eyes, get out of the way or I'll hew you to pieces." William Cass then pulled me out of the way. I saw all the prisoners in the barn, which is 150 yards from my home. The mob then went to a field and destroyed a machine and another machine in a barn in the field.'

John Cass was called and said, 'I was at Blake's on the 22nd November. I saw Aaron Sheppard and Thomas Porter in the barn, breaking the machine and James Stevens breaking the chaff cutter in the yard. I saw Dicketts and Burbage in front of Mr Blake's house. They went away in a body towards the field.'

William Cass took the stand, 'I am the father of John Cass, the last witness. I have known the prisoner Stevens for two years. I have always considered him a sober, quiet man. The mob had been at my house, at the time Stevens was thrashing in my barn.'

John Cass was re-called and said, 'I knew Sheppard before and I am quite confident he held the axe over Blake's head. Stevens had left off work half an hour before the mob came.'

George Barnes, a bricklayer, spoke in favour of Henry Dicketts, saying that he had always been a steady, quiet man.

The Jury found all the prisoners *guilty*. Mr Justice Alderson then proceeded to pass sentence upon them. 'You, Thomas Porter, you, Aaron Sheppard, you, Henry Dicketts, your case leaves the Court without any doubt. You, Aaron Sheppard have been convicted of this offence, after making a brutal threat to the prosecutor, which might, but for the interposition of those around you, have terminated in murder. You also made a demand for money from the prosecutor, and in consequence of your mode of demanding it, you received it, - you were therefore guilty of an offence, which, in the eye of the law, amounts almost to robbery, if

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

indeed it were not beyond all question a robbery. It is not to be tolerated that men like you should go about with mobs, and demand money of those you know to be defenceless. How can any of the true men of this realm enjoy the privacy and tranquillity of his home in safety, if he is to be assaulted after nightfall by riotous and tumultuous mobs, and told that they will not go away unless their demands for money are complied with? Even after you had made your demand on the prosecutor, you did not keep faith with him. You said that if he gave you money you would not break his machine; and yet, afterwards, when you received his money, you went and broke it. I hope that this will be a warning to others not to comply with such demands when they are made upon them; for they may depend upon it that those who make them will, after they are complied with, go on to the accomplishment of the mischief which they originally contemplated. I hope that the circumstances which have transpired in this case will be a warning, which will teach them to resist in the first instance – for resistance is the only way to secure for them quiet possession of their property. As to you, Aaron Sheppard, I can give you no hope of remaining in this country. You, Thomas Porter, are a shepherd, and you Henry Dicketts, are a bricklayers labourer. You had nothing to do with thrashing machines. They do not interfere with your labour, and you could not, even in the darkness of your ignorance, suppose that their destruction would do you any good. You will now find, that though you might triumph for a short time, the arm of the law is too strong for you. I hope that your fate will be a warning to others. You will leave the country, all of you; you will see your friends and relations no more; for though you will be transported for seven years only, it is not likely that, at the expiration of that term, you will find yourself in a situation to return. You will be in a distant land at the expiration of your sentence. The land, which you have disgraced, will see you no more; the friends with whom you are connected will be parted from you forever in this world. It is a melancholy and painful duty that I have discharged in passing sentence upon you; but it is a duty, which we owe to the public, and discharge it we must. The sentence of the Court is that you, Thomas Porter; you Aaron Sheppard; and

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

you, Henry Dicketts, be transported beyond the seas to such places as His Majesty, by and with the advice of His Majesty's Privy Council, shall think proper, and you will find that this sentence will shortly be carried into effect. As to you James Stevens and George Burbage, though we may not inflict upon you the punishment of transportation, yours is still a very bad offence. You will not, therefore be allowed to get off without a considerable imprisonment. You have both a good character given you. You are both thrashers, and you might, in the perversion of your understanding, think that these machines are detrimental to you. Be assured that your labour cannot be ultimately hurt by the employment of these machines. If they are profitable to the farmer, they will also be profitable ultimately to the labourer, though they may for a time injure him. If they are not profitable for the farmer, he will soon cease to employ them. The sentence on you, George Burbage, is, that you be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for the space of two years, and on you, James Stevens, it is mitigated on account of the good character which you received, and which Burbage did not, to imprisonment with hard labour for the space of one year.'

The prisoners were then removed from the bar. ¹⁹

James Case, 47, and Abraham Morgan, 28, were then put to the bar charged with having riotously and tumultuously assembled and broken to pieces a thrashing machine and a chaff cutting machine, the property of Thomas Blandford, of Fifield Bavant, near Chalk, on the 24th November last.

When called for his evidence Thomas Blandford said, 'James Case is a labourer.'

In his evidence Aaron Blandford, the brother of the prosecutor, said, 'I saw the mob in the barn breaking the machines. Both the prisoners were there and were actively employed.'

It appeared from the evidence given in the course of the trial, that the prisoners did not belong to the parish of

¹⁹ The most detailed account of this case appears in GA – D1571/X64 – Minutes of Trials & The Times, 6 January 1831, shorter accounts appear in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Fifield, but to an adjoining parish, and that the labourers of Fifield had taken no share in these outrages.

The Jury found both the prisoners *guilty*.

In their own defence both Case and Morgan said that they had been forced to go with the mob.

Mr Justice Alderson, in sentencing the prisoners commented on the heinousness of their conduct, in leaving their own parish to commit outrages in another, where the people were all satisfied and contented. 'It is not to be tolerated that lawless individuals should traverse the country, and mingle with the well disposed, to excite them into acts of tumult and sedition. You have broken two thrashing machines two chaff-cutting machines and one winnowing machine. You treated the farmer as if he had been placed out of the protection of the law. Your case, therefore, requires the severest sentence of the law. Under the circumstances of your case, I will sentence you to seven years transportation. I am confident that if the Legislature could have known what was to happen in this county, it would have enabled the Court to pass and even more severe sentence upon offences of this description.'

The prisoners were removed from the bar.²⁰

Charles Chandler, 21, William Collins, 30, and William Hayter, 28, were put to the bar and charged with having, on the 22nd November, riotously and tumultuously assembled and destroyed a thrashing machine at Cowesfield Farm, in the parish of Whiteparish, the property of Richard Webb.

Two of Mr Webb's servants, James Tegby and William Young told the Court that a mob of around 100 people, all belonging to Whiteparish, had come to the farm at about 9 o'clock in the evening. They got the thrashing machine and broke it.

In his evidence James Tegby said, 'The prisoners were all with the mob. I knew all them all before. The machine had been out in a field on the master's orders. I saw William Hayter chopping the machine. Chandler broke the wheel with an axe and Collins was chopping the machine with an axe. The machine was broken to pieces and then burnt.'

²⁰ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trails & The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

William Young said, 'I saw Charles Chandler working at the wheel. I saw William Hayter chopping at the bar and William Collins chopping the spokes. The machine was entirely broken by the party.'

The prisoners cross-examined the two witnesses. They said that they were intoxicated at the time the machine was broken and therefore incapable of knowing what they were doing. They said that Squire Bristowe had sent down three or four buckets of his best beer for them to drink. The Court made an enquiry as to whether or not this had been done, but this came to no definite result, although it did excite considerable interest in the Court.

In his defence Hayter said, 'I was pressed by the mob. All the labourers are against me because I am often travelling at night, when I have the opportunity of seeing offences, and I have sometimes informed against them when I have found them to be eating turnips and committing similar offences. They were determined to implicate me in their guilt when they rose against the machines. They met me in the street and threatened that if I did not go along with them, they would break the wheels, which I use in my trade as a clockmaker. I had seen the mob drag people in the dirt if they refused to go along with them and I was afraid they would do the same to me, so I joined them. I can call a witness to prove this, but he is a prisoner like me, of the name of Charles Martin.'

William Collins said, 'I was forced to go and I'm very sorry that I went.'

Charles Chandler also said that he had been forced to go. 'I saw a man who had refused to go much ill treated and I was threatened to be similarly treated. Mr Webb gave us leave to destroy his machine. Squire Wynne, a gentleman who was staying at Squire Bristowe's, was there when the machine was broken. He told us to fire the machine for if we then threw cold water on the cast iron, when it grew warm it would fly all to pieces and save us much trouble. Squire Wynne then sent a man to Squire Bristowe's with a note and we got three or four buckets of Squire Bristowe's strong beer.'

Charles Martin, whom Hayter had called as a witness, had been acquitted in the other Court and was called.

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Before being examined Mr Justice Alderson cautioned him not to answer any questions, which might implicate him. Martin said, 'I know Hayter. I saw him on that day. I was standing with Hayter in the street. It was about 7 o'clock in the evening. The mob came up to him and said. "Hayter, you'll go with us, and get your tools, and help us to beat it to pieces," I cannot say that Hayter was pressed.'

Witnesses were called who gave Chandler an excellent character. He is an agricultural labourer, as is Collins.

Mr Justice Alderson, in summing up the evidence, left it to the Jury to consider whether there had been pressure upon the prisoner Hayter. To render that pressure a defence to this charge, it must be continued without intermission up to the time when the offence was committed. 'Is the prisoner's story consistent with the evidence, which represents him as chopping the machine with an axe, and taking the most active part in the destruction of the machine? You will have to decide this point, and give such verdict as the circumstances of the case seem to require.'

The Jury returned a verdict of *guilty* against all the prisoners.

Mr Justice Alderson then addressed the prisoners. 'Prisoners, you have all taken an active part in this outrage. There is a difference however, arising out of the difference of your situation. You William Hayter, are a clockmaker. One is sorry to see a person, who has apparently received a better education, in such a situation as yours. It renders, however, your conduct more inexcusable. You had nothing to do with thrashing machines. What assignable motive, but and improper one, could you have for joining the mob for their destruction? You, therefore, must be removed from your native country. The cases of the two other prisoners admit of greater compassion, and one of them had received a most exemplary character. It is, therefore not the intention of the Court to pass upon them the severest punishment of the law. The Court wishes to mark the distinction which it makes at present between those who are, and those who are not, engaged in agricultural pursuits. This distinction is made at present; but it is important to have it understood that it will be made no more. It is made from a feeling of compassion towards the agricultural labourer, - from the

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

knowledge that there is a possibility that they may have been acting sincerely, though erroneously, in pursuance of what they deemed their interests, - and from the impression of some of them being in distress, might look upon the thrashing machine as a cause of that distress, and upon the destruction of them as a means of alleviating it. Let it, however, I repeat, be distinctly understood by all who hear me that the distinction that is taken now will be taken no more. If these offences are persisted in, all classes of people who partake in them will be punished with equal severity. The sentence of the Court on William Hayter who embarked on this offence without any apparent or pretended reason for it, is that he be transported beyond the seas for the space of seven years. On account of the good character, which Charles Chandler has received in open court, the sentence upon him is mitigated to imprisonment for one year in the House of Correction. William Collins has only put in written testimonials of character; but they are most excellent. The sentence upon him is, that he be imprisoned in the House of Correction for 18 calendar months.'

The prisoners were removed from the bar. ²¹

Thomas Light and William Cook were found *not guilty* of assaulting and robbing Henry Rumbold at Alderbury on the 24th November of 4 half crowns as no evidence was given. ²²

In the next case William Midwinter, 28, James Moulding, 24, William Rodbourne, 19, William Selwood, 20, and Thomas Smith, 30, were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Thomas Smith, of Highworth, on the 24th November. ²³

William Pedley was called and said, 'I was heading home on the evening of the 24th November. It was about half past six. I saw Selwood, Rodbourne and Midwinter beating the machine to pieces with a large stick. Midwinter said, 'Let us set it on fire.'" I asked him how he could think about

²¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²² TNA – ASSI24/18/3 Minute Book; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

²³ **James Moulding** appears as James **Moulden** in the Crown Minute Book & **William Rodbourne** appears as William **Rodborne**, in The Times 6 January 1831 he appears as William **Rodburne**

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

doing such a thing when my premises and those of Mr Smith were so near by. Midwinter then said that it would not be done. They then went to another farm where I saw Smith and Moulding with the mob. I never before heard anything against the prisoners, and I have known them for many years.'

'Thank you, Mr Pedley,' said all the prisoners.

Thomas Smith, the prosecutor said, 'I came home and found the thrashing machine broken. I have known Selwood since he was a child and have always considered him a man of good character, and I had the highest opinion of him. He had worked for me until Michaelmas. I could scarcely believe it when I learnt that Selwood had been among the mob.'

John Milson was also called to give evidence.

The prisoners were then called for their defence. Selwood said, 'I was pressed by the mob, they told me that the farmers had given them leave to break the machines, or I would not have gone.'

Rodbourne and Midwinter gave a similar defence. The Jury *acquitted* Moulding and Smith, as no case was made against them, but found a verdict of *guilty* against the other prisoners expressing the hope that his Lordship would be merciful to them.

The Justice Alderson repeated the wish of the Court to be as lenient as possible to persons who might have been misled.

He sentenced Rodbourne and Midwinter each to one years imprisonment and Selwood, on account of his excellent character, was given six months imprisonment. ²⁴

Stephen Forder, James Northover and Thomas Tubb were found *not guilty* of destroying a thrashing machine at West Dean on the 22nd November last, the property of Joseph Whicher. ²⁵

²⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁵ TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Silas Webb, an 18 year old youth, was convicted of having with others, destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of James Shelley, at Downton.

In her evidence Eliza Shelley, the daughter of the prosecutor said, 'Nobody had brought a sledgehammer but a man named Patton said he had a sledgehammer and anybody might have it. Webb went a quarter of a mile away to get it and came back with it over his shoulder. I did not see him near the wheel until the mob had been gone for a quarter of an hour. I saw nobody but the prisoner strike the wheel and he broke it.'

The prisoner received an excellent character and his master said that he would willingly take him again in to his service. James Chambers said, 'I have known the prisoner all his life, and he has always borne the very best of characters.'²⁶

Webb was found *guilty* and the Jury begged to recommend him to mercy, on account of the excellent character he had received.

Mr Justice Alderson said that to commit a young lad like the prisoner to a common prison would be to condemn him to moral ruin. He would not pass sentence upon him immediately, but would order him to be brought up again in the course of the afternoon.

Shortly after, the Governor of the House of Correction came into the Court. Mr Justice Alderson immediately asked him whether he could keep this boy apart from the other prisoners.

The Governor said that whilst the boy was at work, he had no means of preventing his communication with the other prisoners, but he could keep the boy apart from them when he was not at work.

Mr Justice Alderson said, 'It would be advisable to keep all these prisoners apart from the ordinary inmates of the House of Correction, for they are not in the condition of the ordinary felons.'

The Governor replied, 'My Lord, I am afraid that such a classification is at present not practicable.'

The prisoner was ordered to be taken away, and to be brought up again at a future period of these proceedings.

²⁶ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Mr Rowe who had evinced considerable ingenuity in cross examining the prosecutor's daughter, wished to impress on his Lordship's mind, the circumstances of Webb's master being willing to take him again into his service. ²⁷

In the next case Joseph Alexander, Mathias Alexander and Joseph Liddiard were indicted for having destroyed a thrashing machine at Ramsbury on the 22nd November, the property of John Sheppard.

Thomas Channon was called and said, 'I saw Mathias Alexander active in beating the machinery of the mill. I also saw Joseph Alexander and Joseph Liddiard there. The machine was destroyed.'

In his evidence William Woodley said, 'I was at John Sheppard's mill on the 22nd November. I know the three prisoners. They came with the mob to where the machine was. I saw Mathias Alexander active in breaking the machine with some weapon. I also saw Joseph Alexander and Joseph Liddiard there. The machine was lying on the ground about 20 yards from the mill.'

The prisoners were then called upon for their own defence. Joseph Alexander and Joseph Liddiard both said that they were not there. Mathias Alexander said, 'I was not breaking the machine.'

A witness called to speak in Liddiard's favour, said that he had known Liddiard for less than two years but said that he had heard of his very good character.

All three prisoners were found *guilty*. ²⁸

Maurice Pope and Robert Blundy were indicted for robbing Robert Lyne of South Severnake, of one sovereign on the 23rd of November.

Robert Lyne was called and said, 'I live at South Severnake and at about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 23rd November a mob, of about 80 or more people, came to my house. Mine is a lone farm. I know both the prisoners and they were both there. The mob went on to my house

²⁷ The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devises & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This case does not appear to have been reported in any of the newspapers

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

and I went and showed Pope the machine, which was broken. I asked Pope if he was satisfied now and he said that they must have a sovereign. When I asked why he said that they had had it everywhere else and must have it here also. I went back to the house, where the mob was, with Blundy at their head. When I asked Blundy what he wanted he answered, "Beer and a sovereign. "I said that I would not give them any money but that if they were civil I would give them beer. I ordered some beer to be brought. After I had given them beer I asked Pope if they were now satisfied, he replied that they were not and that they must have the sovereign. Blundy would not be satisfied until he had again asked Pope for a sovereign. I gave it to him for fear of further injury. Pope is a master blacksmith and Blundy is a labourer.'

The Judge interposed here. He did not believe that any threat had been made, he therefore advised an acquittal.

A verdict of *not guilty* was passed on both prisoners. ²⁹

Charles Bennett, 24, Barnabas Hutchinson, 19, and Charles Waters, 24, were all indicted for having broken and burnt a thrashing machine the property of James Read, of Downton. All the prisoners pleaded *not guilty*. ³⁰

The prosecutor, James Read, was called and said, 'I saw the three prisoners in my grounds on 22nd November last. I found them standing by a fire in which my thrashing machine was burning. About 200 yards from the three prisoners another 17 people were standing. When my men and I put out the fire we were pelted with stones. I believe, though I cannot say for certain, that it was the prisoners who threw the stones. When we went away the machine was set on fire again. I knew all the prisoners before. I saw some of them move their arms but I cannot say which. I don't know their characters as they have never worked for me.'

In his evidence William Bell told the Court. 'At half past six in the evening of the 22nd November last I was standing in my garden, which is near Mr Read's field. I heard a noise and saw about 15 people, more or less. I saw

²⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This case does not appear to have been reported in any of the newspapers

³⁰ Charles Bennett's age is give as 21 in The Times, 6 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Mr Read's thrashing machine placed on a fire. I saw Bennett lighting it. Waters was assisting him in placing wood and straw, and other dry substances, which they collected on the tinder. Barnabas Hutchinson was assisting in blowing the tinder. When I asked them what they were going to do they said that they were going to burn the machine. I said that they had better not, as they would get themselves in trouble. I told them that a constable had already been sent for to take them. Hutchinson said that he did not care for the constable, adding that if the constable or any one else tried to stop them they would be thrown on the fire.'

The prisoners were called on for their own defence. Bennett and Hutchinson both said that they would leave it to their Counsel. Charles Waters said, 'I was not near the place.'

Philip Shide was called and said, 'I have known Bennett for some years. He is a labourer and I believe he has been a gentleman's servant. He worked for me last harvest.'

The Earl of Radnor was called, but said that he knew nothing of Charles Waters and nothing favourable of either Hutchinson or Bennett, except that they were labourers on his grounds at the time of the outrage.

The Jury found all three men *guilty*, and Mr Justice Alderson ordered them to be taken from the bar.

Mr Read informed the Court that as Bennett was being taken from the bar he had said, 'I'll shake you some day on your road home.'

Mr Justice Alderson told Mr Read not to be alarmed as it was likely that the prisoner would be removed from the country and would not have the opportunity of doing anything.

The Deputy Governor of the prison assured the Court that the prisoners had not said anything. 'I was nearer the prisoners than the prosecutor was and I did not hear the words. Mr Read must be mistaken.'

Mr Read insisted that he had not been mistaken. 'As he left the bar the prisoner whispered the words into my ear.'³¹

³¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

Robert Barrett, 26, David Heath, 23, and William Kibblewhite, 20, were placed at the bar charged with having broken a thrashing machine, the property of William Smith, of Cricklade, on the 23rd November.

William Smith was called and said, 'I live at Quid Hill Farm. On the night of the 22nd November, between twelve o'clock and one o'clock, there was an alarm. I went and warned my neighbours. After I returned to my farm a mob came, there were about 40 or 50 of them and they broke my machine to pieces. I had carried my machine out of my barn before the mob came. I hoped to save my barn by doing this. After breaking the machine the mob came to my house for beer. Robert Barrett was there and there were a good many others around in the court. Robert Barrett came in and said, "Here is your health Master Smith and I hope your landlord will lower your rents". When I went out in the morning I found my machine broken to pieces.'

Henry Speck was called and said, 'I was in the service of William Smith in November. I remember the mob coming to the farm that night. There were a good many others with Kibblewhite, breaking the machine. I had a lanthorn in my hand and the mob pulled me one way and another to see how to break the machine.'

The prisoners were then called for their defence. Barrett said nothing. Kibblewhite said, 'I have nothing to say, nothing to say or admit.'

David Heath said, 'I was forced to go.'

Barrett was *acquitted* and Heath and Kibblewhite were found *guilty* and sentenced to seven years transportation.³²

Thomas Smith, 30, and James Moulding, 24, who had earlier been acquitted of destroying a thrashing machine belonging to Thomas Smith of Highworth, were again put to the bar charged with a similar offence.

Mr Pedley was called and said, 'I live near Mr Smith and on the 24th November I was at Corman Farm. I saw both the prisoners there. There were many other people there breaking the machine. I saw the prisoners getting over

³² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

a gate into the paddock. I stayed whilst the machine was being broken. I saw it was quite destroyed.’

John Milsom was called and said, ‘I was at Smith’s Farm on the 24th November. I saw both the prisoners there. They both had sledges. Smith was breaking the great wheel to pieces. Smith persuaded the mob to leave the chaff cutter.’

The prisoners were then called for their defence. Moulding said nothing. Smith said, ‘I had nothing in my hand.’

Thomas Smith the prosecutor was called, he said, ‘The prisoners have worked for me. I never knew anything against either of them and would be happy to take them into my service again.’

Smith and Moulding were both found *guilty* and sentenced to one years imprisonment in the House of Correction, with hard labour. ³³

In the last case of the day in the Crown Court Job Waldron was indicted for robbing Moses Jessett of half a sovereign, the property of John Ingram Lockhart, of Sherfield English.

Moses Jessett was called to give evidence. ‘I am Bailiff to Mr Lockhart. I live at Buttermere. A mob came to Mr Lockhart’s on the 22nd November last, at about three o’clock in the afternoon. The prisoner had a club stick. There were around 100 people in the mob and about 30 of them came into the house. The prisoner was among these and he asked for victuals. I refused and he then said that they must have it or money. When I refused again Waldron said that others had given money and that he expected it from me. I heard the people outside cry, “Money or fire”. The prisoner was with me when I heard this. He said that he did not wish to hurt me but they had had money off the other people and must have it from me. I feared they would do mischief to Mr Lockhart’s premises and gave a half sovereign. After the prisoner had got the money I desired him to walk away. Two machines had been broken whilst the prisoner was in the house. The mob had divided into three parts. One came to

³³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

the house, one went to the barn and one to the other barn. After I had given the money Waldron called the mob to come on and do no more mischief. The prisoner was a stranger to me. He was in my company for about 10 minutes or quarter of an hour.'

The prisoner was called for his defence and said, 'I have nothing more to say.'

The Jury found Waldron *guilty*, but recommended him to mercy. A judgement of death was recorded against him. ³⁴

The Court adjourned to the Nisi Prius Court at a quarter before seven o'clock and will reopen tomorrow, Wednesday 5th January, at 9 o'clock.

³⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 6 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** This man is named as **John Waldron** in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials & The Times, 6 January 1831, his age is given as 35 in all three newspapers but as 38 in the Gaol Calendar

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

At nine o'clock this morning Mr Baron Vaughan, Mr Justice Parke and the Earl of Radnor took their seats in the Nisi Prius Court. And the following Jury was sworn. ¹

John Hill	William Edwards	Stephen House
Thomas Pinnell	James Bond	James Cheyney
Henry Garlick	James Green	John Cusse
John Garlick	David Goddard	Thomas Hutchins

The first case was called and James Burden, 36, Charles Cook, 27, Charles Davis, 31, Thomas Gilbert, 26, Thomas Goddard, Thomas Hiscocks, 26, James Lane, 36, James Love, otherwise James Luff, 26, Joseph Marchment, James Mullins, 19, Gifford North, 25, Isaac Pavell, 20, William Rivers, 35, John Romain, 30, Henry Rose, 19, John Rose, 25, and George Smith, otherwise George Ewens, 20, were put to the bar and indicted for riotously assembling together, and beginning to demolish the house of Robert Pile, at Alton Barnes, on the 23rd November. The prisoners pleaded *not guilty*. ²

The Attorney General opened the case to the Jury. 'I am sure it will be unnecessary to apologise to you for the length of time that will be occupied in considering this case, and I am sure that you will give your attention to a case which effects the lives of so great a number of men as you now see in the dock. They are charged with having begun to demolish the dwelling of Robert Pile, with intent to destroy it and if they are found guilty of the charge, they will all face the death penalty. I call your particular attention to the importance of the present case, for no case could show in a more impressive light the manner in which one violation of the law lead to another, and how a series of illegal acts each increasing in atrocity, naturally sprung out of the first transgression. Mr Pile, the prosecutor in this case, is a farmer at Alton Barnes, a village about half way between Devizes and Marlborough. On the 23rd of November he had

¹ TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

² The ages of the men are as given in The Times, 7 January 1831. **NOTE: Robert Pile** the prosecutor, appears as **Robert Pyle** in the report in The Times

been at Marlborough Fair, and on his return, about 3 o'clock in the day, to his own house, he discovered a large and outrageous mob assembled before it, and busily engaged in destroying his thrashing machines. That mob was conducting itself with so much violence upon his premises, that he felt himself bound not to permit its continuance, and in consequence Mr Pile remonstrated with them on their misconduct. As the mob paid no attention to his remonstrances, Mr Pile brought out fire-arms for the defence of himself and his property. First of all he produced a pistol; and there could be no doubt, that any man or set of men who persevered in an unlawful act, which any one of the King's subjects had the right to resist, was answerable for all the consequences which might result from that resistance. If the aggressor resisted, and was killed by the true man, the true man committed nothing more than justifiable homicide; if, however, the aggressor killed the true man, he was guilty of the crime of murder. Now, though every man might have the right to resist an illegal aggressor, it was a right, which no man would exercise without regret and previous warning, if the life of another were likely to be sacrificed by it. Mr Pile therefore fired his pistol off into the air, over the heads of the mob, in the hope that it would intimidate them in their progress; but so far was it from producing that effect, that it exasperated them to deeds of greater violence. The clergyman of the parish, who happened to be on Mr Pile's premises, seeing the manner in which the mob were going on, placed in Mr Pile's hand his double-barrelled gun, and with that gun in his hand Mr Pile was conversing with the mob, when a number of them sprung suddenly upon him, and wrested it from his hands. They then exhibited themselves in a character very inconsistent with that which Englishmen are proud of claiming as their own peculiar and distinguishing character, for though he was now a single and unarmed individual, they assaulted him in the most cruel and outrageous manner, and brought his life into the greatest danger. This was not the full extent of their misconduct; for finding that Mr Pile was not yet subdued by their violence, they began to speak of going to the house in which his aged mother and his two sisters were residing. They set up a cry that they

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

would go to his house, and proceed instantly to its destruction. In pursuance of the threat, they assaulted his house in its most vulnerable parts – its doors, its windows, and its window frames. Though it was not laid prostrate, he thought that the jury would not be able to entertain a doubt that they had begun to demolish with intent to destroy it. The intent to destroy it would be proved by the expressions of several of the prisoners. The jury would inquire in the first place whether on this occasion the intention to destroy had existed; and in the next place, as to the cause which prevented its completion; for if the prisoners had full power to demolish the house, and did not proceed to complete the demolition of it, it might be said that there was no such intention on their part. The reason for their desisting would appear distinctly, and would form one of the most disgraceful features of their conduct. When they were proceeding in their career of violence, Miss Pile asked one of the rioters what would stop them. He replied money. A parley took place between them. Miss Pile gave them a £10 note, and then, but not till then, they desisted from their violence. Thus it would appear that their stopping in the work of destruction was no proof that they had not once entertained the intention to destroy the house. I will prove this case partly by the evidence of Mr Pile, and partly by the evidence of an accomplice. You will weigh the evidence of this accomplice dispassionately, and not reject it as altogether unworthy of belief, when I inform you that it is owing to his active interference that Mr Pile's life was saved. This is the outline of the case. I do not intend to enter further into the particulars of it. I hope that you, the jury, will give the closest attention to it. I hope that on the one hand, you will not pronounce a verdict of guilty against any of the prisoners where you have the slightest doubt of guilt; and that on the other, you will not seek to acquire the praise of mock humanity, by acquitting the prisoners in cases where you have no doubt of their guilt.'

The first witness was the prosecutor, Robert Pile, who on being examined by Mr Coleridge said, 'In November last, I lived on my farm at Alton Barnes. I had a thrashing machine on it. On the 23rd November I was at Marlborough Fair. I returned to my house about 2 or 3 o'clock, and found

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

a mob of 100 in my bartons, and 100 more about my gates. My bartons are close to my dwelling house. The mob was at that time breaking my thrashing machine, which was partly within and partly without the barn. My house is in a village, but stands alone. Most of the mob were armed with hammers, sledges, bars of iron, pieces of iron, and bludgeons. Some of them were throwing out fragments of the thrashing machine, which others had broken. I had received information that the mob were going to break my machine, and had left Marlborough in consequence. I galloped into the yard, drew a pistol from my pocket, and told them, with an oath, that if they did not leave my premises, I would fire upon them. Some of them then began to leave the shed, as I fired my pistol off over their heads. Others stood still. When I fired the pistol, some of them ran through the barn. I went to my house and called for my double-barrelled gun. I know Mr Hare, the clergyman of our parish. He brought me the gun from my house. I had left the gun loaded with shot, not with ball. I had dismounted before this. At the time I was in the barton I was alone. Mr Hare handed me my gun over the garden wall. On receiving the gun, I went to the barn, and told them that if they did not leave it, I would fire upon them. Immediately they ran out of the barn – I followed them into the rick barton, in which 6 wheat ricks, 1 barley rick, 2 oat ricks, 2 bean ricks, and several hay ricks were standing. When I was there, I called out to them, and asked them to tell me what had induced them to come and destroy my property. I also asked whether I had done them any harm. A great many of the mob called out, “No – you have done us no harm; - we’ve nothing to say against you, Mr Pile; but we thought we might as well break your thrashing machine, as we had broken those of others.” This answer induced me to go to them in the rick yard. I had levelled my gun at them at first, when I threatened to shoot them, but I afterwards pointed it downwards, not expecting any ill treatment from them. I approached within three or four yards of them. At that time one barrel was cocked. The hammer of the other was down, and therefore could not go off. A great many of the mob then surrounded me, and wrested my gun suddenly from me. In doing so, the barrel accidentally went off. I was not aware that anybody

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

was hurt by the discharge. My hand was not upon the trigger. Indeed, I do not know how it went off; I was surprised at it going off, for it was a gun of a new construction, with a safety spring to prevent it from going off when it was passed through hedges. At that time I had a little double-barrelled pistol in my hand, of which I had discharged one barrel. The other barrel could not have gone off without a little screw to prime it. That pistol was knocked out of my hand, and thus, as my gun was wrested from me, I had no other weapon. My reason for following them into the rick yard was to prevent them from setting fire to my ricks. I should suppose that about 10 men sprang upon me, and wrested my gun from me; 80 or 90 persons were then in the rick yard. After they had got my gun, they began to strike me. At that time I recollect seeing James Lane. He struck me with his fist, by the side of my ear, and said, "Kill the d - d son of a bitch". I also saw John Rose, Henry Rose, Thomas Gilbert, Stephen Bullock and Charles Davis there. Within 10 minutes after I saw the prisoners at the rick barn, something took place at my house, but before I mention that, I must state that Stephen Bullock protected me from personal violence, and persuaded the mob not to kill me.'

A question was put to Mr Pile, relative to a violent declaration made by Lane against the witness.

Mr Halcombe submitted the question could not be put. As this was a charge against the prisoners for beginning to demolish the house of the prosecutor, the declaration of any one of them, which showed the existence of violent personal hostility against the prosecutor, could not bear upon it. No declaration, which showed strong personal dislike against the prosecutor could operate to show that there was any intention to demolish his house. If the prisoner who made that declaration, were put upon his trial for an assault upon the prosecutor, that declaration would be admissible as evidence of his intention to assault, but under the present charge it ought not to be admitted, as it was likely to aggravate the minds of the Jury against all the prisoners.

Mr Baron Vaughan replied, 'it is a part of the 'res gesta', and therefore this declaration may be received as evidence. The Jury will, however, only give such weight to it as it may appear to them to deserve.'

Mr Justice Parke said, 'This declaration would not be evidence if it were irrelevant to the conduct of the prisoners in this transaction; but it is impossible to say that it is irrelevant, and therefore I think the evidence is admissible.'

Mr Pile then continued with his evidence. 'I saw John Rose and Henry Rose, and Charles Davis present, and taking part in the violence with which I was treated. Charles Davis said, "You tried to shoot me, and now be d - d to you, I'll do for you." At that time I defended myself as well as I could with my hands, and endeavoured to get to my barn, which is on the road to my house. Just at that time Bullock came up to me. I succeeded in getting back to my house by his assistance. I was followed by a great number of persons all the way in, who beat and kicked me as I was down on the ground. I was knocked once down fairly, and more than once I staggered down owing to the blows, which I received. The mob abused me all the way in. Some of them said, "Split the d - d son of a bitch's scull," but I can't say which of them said so. My arm is now in a sling in consequence of its being broken that day by a blow. I was struck with a bar of iron on my arm as I was defending my head. I think that my arm was then broken, but I did not know that it was broken till I got into the house. My family at that time consisted of my mother and my three sisters. They were all at home. As soon as I got in, I locked the door. I then found that I could not use my left arm. My head was bleeding very much. Two of my sisters took me upstairs and bound my head up with a handkerchief. Immediately afterwards I heard hammering on the door and a breaking of the windows. I heard the mob say at the same time, if they have not killed him, be d - d if they would not. This induced me to come downstairs again, for I did not know what they might do to my mother and sisters. When I came down again, the back door, by which I had entered, and which was of elm an inch thick, was broken open. Sledges had knocked off the lock. I found the frames of the windows broken in as well as the glass. The house was filled by the mob. I saw several of the prisoners in the house. I saw James Lane, Charles Davis, George Smith, Thomas Hiscocks and William Rivers, whom I then identified. I knew all but Rivers before. As soon as I saw Rivers in prison, I

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

was quite sure that he was one of the persons whom I saw in the house. When I came down they were abusing me. One of them broke the looking glass in the passage; but at the time they offered me no violence. My three sisters were there. Stephen Bullock was at that time endeavouring to get them out of the house, and I heard some of them say that they had got £10. Immediately afterwards they left my house. The declaration that they had got £10 was said so loudly, that although I was in another room I heard it.'

Mr Pile was cross examined by Mr Halcombe, who was acting for the prisoner George Smith, and he replied, 'I am certain that Smith was in the house. I don't know whether he had any weapon, but several of the prisoners had sledge hammers in the hall. I know the *Rose and Crown* at Woodborough. A person who had to come from Woodborough to my house would pass along the road that passes my front door. My house is near the church. I do not know whether the mob came from Woodborough or not. I know Joseph Parry the younger, a farmer of Allington. I know Samuel Smith, a miller. I did not see either of those persons at my house at that time. Nobody came into my hall out of curiosity that day, on hearing of the outrage. The church bell was rung in an unusual manner – and it attracted a number of women and children to the spot; they stayed in the field; they did not come into the house. I have known Smith for many years. He is a blacksmith by profession. I do not know that he is a rat catcher. He has never been employed on my farm. He lives four miles from it. The farm at Alton is my property; it does not belong to my mother. The house I live in is on lease from College, Oxford. My farm consists of 600 acres. I received information the day before that the mob would come to break machines. I did not expect that they would come to my house that day – for I had heard that they intended to meet from the different villages at Marlborough. I had sent some sheep to the fair – and I was going there, and did not know what might happen, I loaded my pistol to defend myself. I had no bullets, but I cut a piece of lead with a knife, and put it in each barrel.'

Mr Pile was then cross examined by Mr Williams, for the prisoners James Love, James Lane, Rose and Thomas

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

Hiscocks, and he replied, 'I had been apprehending some rioters that morning at Rockley Temple. I rode in a great hurry and was rather angry at finding the rioters destroying the machinery. The mob were not civil when I first arrived. After I fired the pistol over the heads of the mob, I called for my gun, and Mr Hare then gave me it. Bullock and I went together to my house, after, the mob had well beaten me. I locked the door, and the mob followed me, and broke it open. I saw Lane and Hiscocks at the house. I do not know that Love was there.'

When questioned by the Court Mr Pile replied, 'Nobody but Bullock protected me.'

The Reverend Augustus William Hare was questioned by Mr Bingham and said, 'I am the rector of Alton Barnes, and was at the premises of Mr Pile on the 23rd of November last. I saw a mob of 50 persons in the rick barton, besides those who were in the lane.'

Mr Halcombe rose at this point and said that he objected to the appearance of his learned friend Mr Bingham in the present case. 'I have communicated with my learned friend Mr Bingham, and find that he appears in this case not for the Crown, but under a general retainer from the magistracy of the county. This is a circumstance, which has created general conversation at the bar. I object to the appearance of Mr Bingham in this case.'

The Attorney General said, that rather than waste the time of the Court by any argument on so idle a point, he would request Mr Bingham at once to retire.

Mr Halcombe said, 'As I have made the objection, I hope the Court will not allow it to be thus summarily disposed of. I am far from imputing blame to the magistracy of the county; but nothing could be worse than the effect of having one gentleman retained on their behalf. All the prosecutions were in the hands of the clerks of the magistrates; and so all the counsel of the circuit -'

The Attorney General interrupted. 'This is not for the honour of any of us.'

The Court intimated their surprise at the nature of this objection.

'Then, my Lord, I will not say another word,' said Mr Halcombe.

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

Mr Baron Vaughan begged the Attorney general not to suppose that in acquiescing in his suggestion that Mr Bingham should not appear they intended to give any judgement that he ought not to appear.

‘I have no wish to prevent a discussion on this point, if Mr Halcombe challenges it,’ said the Attorney General. But I cannot think on what grounds he raises his objection.’

‘I cannot see how any person can have a right to inquire from whose pocket the fee of any counsel comes,’ said Mr Justice Parke. ‘If the Attorney General chooses to admit any counsel to assist him, I don’t know that any person has the right to ask whether he has a fee or not, or from whose pocket that fee comes.’

Mr Halcombe assured the Court that it was from no personal feeling that he interfered on the present occasion.

The Attorney General said, ‘Though I yield nothing on the point of right or principle, I will request my learned friend Mr Bingham to retire from this prosecution.’

Mr Halcombe did not wish his learned friend Mr Bingham to retire, especially as it might put the counsel for the Crown to some inconvenience. His object was answered in calling the attention of the Court and the magistracy to this subject.

‘I beg that it may be distinctly understood that this application does not come from me, and that I am no party to it,’ said Mr Williams. ‘I hope also that my learned friend Mr Bingham will not retire.’

It was then agreed that Mr Bingham should not retire. The examination of the Reverend Mr Hare continued.

‘All the persons of whom I have just spoken were employed in breaking the machines, save three individuals who were talking to me. Charles Davis was talking to me. He said that before they had bread and water, but now they had plenty of bread and cheese and strong beer. He asked me for something, but not in a threatening manner. After the mob had been there half an hour, Mr Pile rode into the yard. The first thing he did was to swear at the men; he rode to the side of the yard opposite me, and fired his pistol, as I should think, high. The intention of Mr Pile was to fire at them, but higher than would hit any of them. Not knowing that his pistol was double-barrelled, I brought him his gun,

which was double-barrelled, and which I ascertained to be loaded. I believe that he called on me to bring him his gun; when he got it, he seemed to consider for a moment or two, and then he set off at a run towards the barn. Shortly after I heard the report of one barrel of a gun. I then heard something, which lead me to suppose that Mr Pile was being maltreated. I ran, in consequence, into the adjoining field, which communicates with the rick yard, and then, seeing what was going on I called out "Don't murder the man". I saw Mr Pile apparently staggering away from the barn, and leaning upon somebody. Menaces were used towards myself. I saw no more - as the menaces were such as obliged me to retire. I feel it my duty to say, that, in consequence of the long conversation I had with Davis and two other men, I believe that they were acting under the misapprehension of some advice which they had heard that morning from a magistrate, and that they fancied that they were not breaking the law. They told me that they would not burn the property, that they would discover the incendiaries if they could, and deliver them up to justice; and that hanging was too good for them. They said that they only wished that every man should live by his labour. I think Love was one of the two men with Davis. They told me the next day the name of the magistrate who had given them the advice which they had misapprehended.'

Miss Mary Pile was then examined by the Attorney General, and said, 'I am the sister of the prosecutor, and live with him at Alton Farm. I recollect seeing a number of persons come on the 23rd of November to Alton Farm. I recollect my brother coming home. I did not see my brother in a scuffle with the mob. I saw Stephen Bullock assisting him, and other persons beating him.'

At this point a chair was brought for Miss Pile to sit on as she was not very well.

'When he came in I took him to his bedroom,' she continued. 'He appeared to have suffered much. His head was bleeding, and his arm was broken. After he had got into the house, the mob came too. The mob threatened to demolish the house. They said, "We'll beat in the windows, and break down the house." Many voices uttered that threat. They began to break the windows; they destroyed 11

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

different windows, glass and frames both. Some of them were casement windows, and others sash windows. A great many of the bars in the casement windows were removed; but I do not know how many. The bars, which were of iron, were broken, both on the ground floor and on the first floor. A great number of the men entered the house, and proceeded to break sets of china, a clock, and other articles of furniture. Whilst they were doing this mischief, one of the mob told me that they were determined to enter and to kill my brother. This was whilst they were out of the house. They came in by the back door. They asked me if I would give them some money to desist; but that was before they entered our house. I gave them no answer at that time. They then said, "We will now break the windows and beat open the door." I then left them. They said again, "You had better give us money, or we'll break the house down." I am quite sure they used the expression, "We'll break the house down," after they had entered. I then offered them £5, as they had begun to break the window frames. They said, "That's not enough, we won't take it." I then offered them £8; that also was refused. I then took from my purse a £10 note, and said, "Here's £10." I gave it in to Gifford North's hands. The mischief did not last five minutes after I had given them the £10 note. Shortly afterwards they left the house. I know Charles Davis. I saw him on that day in the entrance hall. I know James Lane. I saw him in the entrance hall, but did not hear him say or do anything. I saw George Smith in the kitchen. I don't recollect that any of the persons whose names I have mentioned had any weapons.'

On being cross-examined by the Court she said, 'I am quite sure that they spoke of breaking the house as well as the furniture. They used this expression at the door by which they entered.'

Mr Halcombe then cross-examined her and she replied, 'The mob broke two locks to get into the house. I had very considerable alarm for my brother's safety, and that alarm induced me to give them the money. I was not so much afraid for the house as for my brother's life. I knew Smith for several years before. My sister was with me in the kitchen when I gave the money. None of our servants were in the house at the time. I was alone in the kitchen when

the mob first came. They did not offer me any violence. The church bell was rung before the mob began to do any mischief. Mr Hare ordered the bell to be rung. This made other people collect around my brother's house, partly from the road and partly from the meadow.'

'Rivers was close to Gifford North in the kitchen when I gave Gifford North the money, and also when Gifford North demanded it,' she replied to further questioning by the Court. 'Lane was not near enough to have heard the demand for money.'

Mr Williams then questioned her and she replied, 'After they had got into the house they broke one of the kitchen windows. They did not offer to go up stairs.'

Miss Pile was then questioned by the Court again, 'Is that your deposition before the magistrates?'

'Yes.'

'Just look at it and refresh your memory. Did you say anything about beating down the house before the magistrates?'

'No. I was not asked the question.'

'Are you sure that the words of which you told us today were used, notwithstanding your omission before the magistrates?'

'Yes, I am quite sure they were used.'

Miss Jane Pile was then called and examined by the Attorney General. She confirmed the testimony of the previous witnesses.

She was cross-examined by Mr Halcombe who hoped to prove that the mob had said that they would break into the house and not that they would break down the house. Miss Pile insisted that they had said that they would break down the house.

James Powell was then called. 'I am a servant in Mr Pile's employ. I was not at Mr Pile's house until the machine was broken to pieces. I arrived after Mr Pile had been brought bleeding into the house. I saw Burden breaking the windows. I heard him say, "It is life for life, and I will have blood for supper". He said that when all but three or four persons were gone. When I got to the house, Mr Pile was down stairs, and at the desire of Miss Pile, I persuaded the mob to leave the house. I heard nothing about money. I saw

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

Thomas Gilbert and Thomas Goddard both outside the house, but neither of them were doing anything.'

Edward Dodd was called and said, 'I was near Mr Pile's house on the 23rd November last. I saw the mob come and break the thrashing machines. I saw Gifford North there with a sledge hammer. I saw Love there also. I saw the mob attack Mr Pile and knock him down. I afterwards heard a gun go off. I saw Love break the stock of Mr Pile's gun against a tree, and Gifford North break the barrel with a sledge hammer. I then saw the mob go to Mr Pile's house. Some of them said that they would go and down with the house. I am sure that I heard those words said, but I cannot swear who said it. Gifford North was then present with his sledge hammer. I saw North about an hour afterwards in Woodborough street. He then showed me a £10 note. He told me he could not read. I told him what it was. He then said, "It is just right I as was first that went into the house, or else I should not have had the money." I saw the mob break the door and the windows.'

Stephen Bullock was then examined by the Attorney General. 'I am a sawyer. I know James Burden. I first saw him at Manningford on the 23rd November. He threatened to knock out my brains with a sledge hammer if I did not go with him. We went to the *Rose and Crown* at Woodborough, at about 12 o'clock. There we saw a mob of nearly 300 persons. Charles Davis was its leader. He said, that I must go with them to break machines, as I had partaken of their bread, cheese and beer. I told him that I thought we had better bide away. I went, however, with them. We went to Mr Pile's house. The machine was partly broken when I got there. I saw Mr Pile gallop into the yard. I heard the report of a gun or a pistol. After I heard the gun go off, I went to see who fired it, and saw three men struggling with Mr Pile, I led him to his house. I saw the blow given him on the neck by Joseph Marchment, this knocked him down. Marchment immediately said, "D -n his blood, kill the son of a b -h." Mr Pile stood up again, and then staggered a little distance. I saw Charles Cook and Isaac Pavell beat Mr Pile. I was not near them, but I saw them beating Mr Pile, I leaped over some pales and ran to Mr Pile's assistance. I got him against a rick, and then I saw Williams Rivers strike him several

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

severe blows. I received several blows myself in defending him. The mob followed him into the house. Cook, Pavell, Rivers and Marchment were with them. I applied to Charles Davis to assist Mr Pile, and Charles Davis kept the mob off him as much as he could. After I spoke to Davis I saw Mr Pile's arm broken. I saw Pavell afterwards lift up an iron bar to strike Mr Pile, he said that he would break Pile's b - y head. I caught that blow on my hand and arm. I afterwards got Mr Pile into the house. I desired his mother to lock the door and put the blinds down. I saw John Romain fling an iron hammer through one of the windows of Mr Pile's house. It struck Mrs Pile on the hip. I saw James Burden hit the large window with a sledge hammer. It beat in the frame and broke the glass. At the same time I heard the glass rattle at the back of the house. I did not hear any declaration from the mob of what they would do. I saw James Mullins in the house, and shortly afterwards I heard Miss Pile scream out. I heard one of the mob demand money, but I don't know who it was. They said they would not quit the house until Mr or Mrs Pile had given them some money. I never heard them speak of doing anything to the house. I heard Mrs or Miss Pile say, that she would give £5, if the mob would quit the house. The mob replied, that that sum was not enough. There was directly afterwards a hallo among the mob that £10 was given. Directly afterwards they began to draw out of the house. I was then in the house in front of a large clock in the kitchen or hall. I saw the mob break some of the furniture in that room. Marchment and Davis were in the house. Davis had nothing in his hand. I heard him desire the mob to go out of the house, both before and after they got the money. I saw Charles Cook with a large stick in his hand in the entrance hall. He was hitting a chair with a stick. I saw Isaac Pavell with a large iron bar in his hand. He came into the hall with it, but I did not see him use it. I saw Rivers standing near the front door, he had nothing in his hand, but he stamped a chair to pieces with his foot. I saw James Lane in Mr Pile's house standing close to Mrs and Miss Pile, at the time the money was asked for. I did not hear him say anything. James Lane said that day he was one of the captains of the mob. I did not see James Mullins do anything but take some hocks of

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

bacon. From first to last they might have been 10 minutes or quarter of an hour in the house. There was much noise and confusion during the time.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Halcombe, Bullock said, 'I was pressed by the mob. I cannot say whether others were pressed or not. I do not know whether they would have hurt any pressed men who had attempted to get away. We had broken a machine at Mr Clift's before. I did not see any money received there. But I heard that some was received. I believe that they went to Mr Pile's to break machines, The mob did not pull down any house anywhere. There was no force at Mr Pile's house to prevent them from pulling it down. I saw no pickaxes among them; but they had weapons with which they could have pulled a house down.'

He was cross-examined by Mr Williams and said, 'I joined the mob at 10 o'clock that morning. They had only broken one machine. I never heard them say a word about breaking the house down. I never heard them say that they would pull it down. I led Mr Pile to the front door of his house, and he went in by that door. The people in front of the house were crying out that Mr Pile was handy, that he had been nearly killed.'

Bullock persisted very resolutely in this statement.

Mr Pile was recalled and said, 'I went in at the back door opposite the pump.'

'I have heard what Mr Pile said, but I am quite sure that we entered the house at the front door,' said Bullock.

The Attorney General said that he did not know whether the Court would allow him to interpose at this late period of the case. 'I am not going to offer any explanation of the evidence, or make any comment upon it, which it might perhaps admit. I merely want to say that, upon the whole, having now heard the case from the beginning to its present stage, and having become better acquainted with it from the evidence of the witnesses than I could have been from the perusal of written documents, I am inclined to think that the intent of the mob to demolish the house has not been satisfactorily made out against the prisoners.'

'Then you do not wish to press a case which is by no means clear against the prisoners generally?' asked Mr Baron Vaughan. 'There may be a probability that some of

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

the mob had the intention charged against them in this indictment; but even that probability rests not so much on their acts as on their expressions in a state of irritation.'

Mr Justice Parke thought that although there might be some evidence against two or three individuals, there was complete failure in the evidence to establish any common purpose against the prisoners.

Mr Baron Vaughan stated, 'The Attorney General has displayed great candour in admitting that this case is too equivocal to be pressed on our consideration, when the lives of men are in jeopardy. I therefore abstain from offering further evidence against the prisoners, and leave the Jury the task of acquitting them.'

The Jury *acquitted* all the prisoners and they were removed from the bar. They are, however to be tried for robbing Mrs Pile of a £10 note. ³

Frederick Down was then put to the bar and charged with having, on the 24th November last, at Wilton, riotously and feloniously demolishing machinery employed in the manufacture of woollen cloth, the property of John Brasher. He was found *not guilty*.

Isaac Miller, Thomas Piggott and John Romain were then placed at the bar, charged with having, on the 22nd November, riotously assembled and destroyed certain machinery used in the manufacture of woollen cloth, the property of Thomas Gaby, of Figheldean. The evidence in this case was conclusive and the Jury found the prisoners *guilty*. ⁴

George Durman, 25, was indicted for assaulting William Deadman and obtaining a sovereign from him. The prisoner, in his defence, said that he was not the man who asked for the money, and that the prosecutor was a false-

³ The most detailed account of this trial is in *The Times*, 7 January 1831; shorter versions can also be found in *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831; *Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette*, 10 January 1831

⁴ *The Times*, 7 January 1831; *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 January 1831; *Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette*, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** *The Times* refers to this man as **John Roman**, and in the *Devizes & in the Wiltshire Gazette & Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette* he is referred to as - **Romain**

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

swearing man. The Jury found the prisoner *guilty*. He was not tried on another indictment. ⁵

William Hillman was *acquitted* of the charge of having robbed Thomas Gale of two half crowns, his property, at Burbage on the 23rd November.

He was also *acquitted* of robbing Thomas Gale of one sovereign, his property, at Great Bedwin on the 22nd November.

He was then indicted for breaking and destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Edmond Somerset at Milton on the 23rd November last. He pleaded *guilty*. The Court sentenced him to seven years transportation. ⁶

Richard Woodward was placed at the bar, charged with having, on the 22nd November, at Froxfield, by threats and menaces, obtained from John Brown, two sovereigns, his property. The learned Judge said that the evidence against him was not conclusive, and the prisoner was therefore *acquitted*. ⁷

The Court rose at 7 o'clock and was adjourned until Thursday 6th January at 9 o'clock.

Mr Justice Alderson and T G B Estcourt Esq took their seats in the Crown Court at 9 o'clock this morning, and the following Jury was sworn. ⁸

John Tubb	John Durnford	Stephen Bell
Stephen Short	William Atkins	Joseph Whicher
Joseph Bell	Joseph Sweetapple	Josiah Ball
John Baker	James Forward	George Bowns

⁵ The Times, 7 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 January 1831

⁶ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books; The Times, 7 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 January 1831

⁷ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 January 1831

⁸ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3 Minute Books

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

Silas Webb, aged 17, convicted of breaking machinery, and who, in consequence of his good character and youth, had been recommended for mercy by the Jury, was put to the bar to receive judgement.

Mr Justice Alderson addressed the prisoner, 'In consequence of your previous good character, and of the humane recommendation of the jury, the Court has taken your case into consideration, and believing that you were led by the influence of others, we are disposed to deal very leniently with you. The sentence of the Court, therefore, is that you should be imprisoned in the house of correction and kept to hard labour, for the space of three months.'⁹

Mathias Alexander, Joseph Alexander and Joseph Liddiard were next put to the bar. They were convicted yesterday of having destroyed a thrashing machine.

Mr Justice Alderson said, 'The case of these prisoners was very different to that of Silas Webb. They belong to a class of persons who have not even the vain pretence that these machines could affect them in any manner. One was a carpenter, another a blacksmith and the third a woodman. Such outrages by any party must be put down, but the law would visit the strictest severity on such persons as the prisoners, who it was proved had taken part in these outrages. The sentence of the Court on each of you is, that you will be transported, to such place beyond the sea, as His Majesty shall direct, for the term of seven years.'¹⁰

Charles Bennett, Charles Waters and Barnabas Hutchinson, who had also been convicted of machine breaking yesterday, were then placed at the bar. They were briefly addresses by the learned Judge on the nature of their offence, and then sentenced each to seven years transportation.¹¹

Isaac Looker was then put to the bar charged with having sent John Rowland a letter threatening to burn his

⁹ The Times, 7 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 January 1831

¹⁰ The Times, 7 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831; Salisbury & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 January 1831

¹¹ The Times, 7 January 1831

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

farms and murder him if he gave evidence against any of the prisoners in gaol.

The prisoner, who is stated in the calendar to be 54 years of age, is a respectable looking man, and, it is understood, he is a person of very good circumstances.

Mr Sergeant Wilde stated the case to the Jury. 'This is a most serious and important charge, as it affects the interests of the public and also the interests of the prisoner. It was an attempt to interfere with the due administration of the justice of the country, by threatening a party who it was known was bound over to prosecute parties for some of the outrages by which the country had been disturbed. An Offence of this nature, so pregnant with consequences highly injurious to society, the Jury will not be surprised to find, has been marked by the legislature as one which should be visited with great severity. By statute 4 Geo. IV, it was enacted, that "if any person shall knowingly and wilfully send or deliver any letter or writing, with or without any name or signature subscribed thereto, or with a fictitious name or signature, threatening to kill or murder any of His Majesty's subjects, or to burn or destroy his or their houses, outhouses, barns, stacks of corn or grain, hay or straw, or shall procure, counsel, aid, or abet the commission of the said offence, or of any of them, or shall forcibly rescue any person lawfully in custody of any officer or other person for any such offence, every person so offending being thereof lawfully convicted, shall be adjudged guilty of felony, and shall be liable, at the discretion of the Court, to be transported beyond the seas for life, or for such term, not less than seven years, as the Court shall adjudge, or to be imprisoned only, or to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour in the common gaol, or house of correction, for any term not exceeding seven years." By this the jury would see the serious light in which this offence was viewed by the legislature. With respect to the evidence against the prisoner, it would appear that a servant of Mr Rowland, one of the witnesses, picked up a letter addressed to his master, left on his farm, and delivered it to him. The learned Judge will tell you that, in point of law, it would be a sending, within the meaning of the act, to have it dropped in some place from which it was probable it would reach him. It is

not necessary that the prisoner should have been seen dropping it. If it should appear that it is the handwriting of the prisoner, the jury will judge how far it is possible that it was sent by him, or with his knowledge and consent. To bring this home to the prisoner, it will appear that the party to whom it was sent had commenced a prosecution against a nephew of the prisoner for breaking a thrashing machine. It will appear that two other letters were received by other parties; and on examination it will be apparent that the whole of these pieces had formed part of one sheet, - and that the remaining part of that sheet was found in the prisoner's bureau; the water mark of the sheet had been divided, and one part of it was on the paper which will be put in evidence, and the other on that which was found in the possession of the prisoner. These are strong facts, and it will be for the prisoner to explain them to the jury.'

The contents of the second and third letters are not to be given in evidence, as not belonging to the case now before the Court, other than the fitting of the pieces to each other, as part of the same sheet, and that they are in the same handwriting, but it is understood that they are to the same effect, and threatened the parties to whom they were addressed, if they prosecuted any person then in gaol.

After further observations on the nature of the case, and the evidence by which it was to be supported, Mr Sergeant Wilde proceeded to call his evidence.

A servant of Mr Rowland proved that he had found the note in one of his master's meadows and had given it to his master.

Mr Rowland produced the letter. It was in the same state as when he had first received it from his servant.

Mr T Smith was called. 'I live in Ramsbury. I was sworn a special constable in November last. I went in that character along with Taunton, the Bow Street officer, to the house of the prisoner, having received a warrant to search his premises, where I found this blank piece of paper, which I have no doubt is part of the same sheet of paper on which the letter is written. It was in his bureau. There was a peculiar irregularity in the edge of each, and the three pieces fit exactly into each other. At the time I searched the house, I had those three letters in my possession, and I

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

should say they formed part of the sheet found in the possession of the prisoner, as the rough edges of the parts fit into each other. The blank paper is also part of the same sheet. The watermark is divided, one part of it is on the blank piece, the other on the letter. The prisoner said the bureau was his, and that he kept his papers there. It was not locked. The bureau was in the kitchen, where the family ate.'

Philip Watts was called and was handed the letters, 'I reside at Axford. I know the prisoner. I have often seen him write. I have no doubt these papers are his writing. The other two pieces are also his writing.'

On being cross-examined he said, 'It is four or five years since I saw him write. I have lived near the prisoner for a long time. We have not been friends for three or four years. We have not spoken to each other for three or four years. We had a dispute about some grounds belonging to the Marquis of Ailesbury. I should not be sorry or glad at the result of this trial.'

Mr Woodman said, 'I know the prisoner. I was acquainted with his handwriting six or seven years ago, but not since.' The letters were handed to him. 'I believe these to be his handwriting. I received those letters from Mr Watts.'

On being cross-examined he replied, 'I have not been in the habit of speaking to the prisoner for the last five or six years. I don't know the cause. He did not speak to me. I can't say why.'

He was then re-examined and said, 'I never had any quarrel or difference with him.'

Edward Vaisey was then called and said, 'I have known the prisoner a long time. I have seen him write. I have not seen him write since 1824. I have had many bills and letters of his, and have some of his writing in my possession now.' The letters were then handed to the witness. 'I know this handwriting, it is that of the prisoner. I received one of these papers while a nephew of the prisoner's was in custody, on a charge by me of breaking a thrashing machine. It was about the 21st of December.'

On being cross-examined he replied, 'I have not spoken much to the prisoner. I have never had much of a quarrel with him. I have not spoken to him for a twelvemonth.'

He was then re-examined and said, 'He cut a road through a meadow of mine about three years ago, which had been stopped up 16 years before. I don't think we have spoken since.'

Mr Smith was recalled and a ledger and other books belonging to the prisoner were put in. These books the prisoner acknowledge before a magistrate to be his, and for the greater part, are in his handwriting.

The letter to Mr Rowland was then put in and read. It was in these words: -

"Mr Rowland, Haxford Farm, - Hif you goes to sware against or a man in prison, you have here farm burnt down to ground, and thy bluddy head chopped off."

Mr Carter was called and said, 'I am a painter, residing at Marlborough. I know the prisoner, but have no acquaintance with him. I saw him at *The Angel Inn*, at Marlborough, on the 23rd November. There was great excitement in the town, and many machines broken in the neighbourhood. I can only speak as to the general purport of his conversation. He said his house was in the way where the mob came. The mob had passed his house several times, and done him no injury, and he thought they were right in going about to get higher wages, and reduced rent and tithes, and he thought that the magistrates and cavalry who should disturb the mob would be the parties breaking the peace; that if the people were let alone, they would do what they had to do quietly and disperse. He also said something about the cavalry going out, and hoping they might not come home as well as they went out.'

On being cross-examined he replied, 'This was about six or eight in the evening. The prisoner might have been drinking, but did not seem so.'

Joseph Rogers was also at *The Angel* on the day mentioned by the last witness.

This was the case for the prosecution.

The prisoner said that he was wholly innocent, and several witnesses were called to speak in his defence.

William Tully said, 'I have know the prisoner 25 years. I have often seen him write. I saw him write as lately as March last.' The letter to Mr Rowland was handed to him. 'That is not the prisoner's handwriting, nor like it. I have no

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

doubt it is not his handwriting.' The other papers were handed to the witness, 'I don't think these papers are his handwriting.' The prisoner's ledgers were handed to the witness. 'I believe this to be his handwriting. The letters now produced are in a better hand than the prisoner's.'

George Edwards was called and said, 'I am vestry clerk of the parish of Wimborne. I have known the prisoner 11 years. I have seen him write and know his handwriting. I have seen him write within this year or two.' The letter to Mr Rowland was handed to the witness. 'From what I have seen of his writing, I don't think that is the prisoner's handwriting.'

On being cross-examined he replied, 'I have been a schoolmaster. I don't think this is the prisoner's handwriting. His is a systematic round hand, but this is angular and pointed. The character of the writing is very different from his.'

Robert Evely said, 'I have had dealings with the prisoner for 11 years. I have seen him write five or six weeks successively, at market.' The letter to Mr Rowland was handed to him. 'This is not his handwriting, and nothing like it. This is much better than his.' Another paper was handed to the witness, 'This is not the prisoner's writing, it is not so good as his.'

On being cross-examined he replied, 'The prisoner frequents my house when he comes to Marlborough on market days. I have seen him write a hundred times. The last time I saw him write was about five or six weeks ago. I have not seen any of his writing since he has been in custody.'

John Bristow White said, 'I have seen the prisoner write, and know his writing.' The letter to Mr Rowland was handed to him. 'This is not the handwriting of the prisoner. It is much heavier handwriting. I think the prisoner's writing is better.'

John Lewington said, 'I am a labourer. I live at Axford. I have seen the prisoner write very often. This is not the prisoner's writing.'

The witness was then asked whether he could write, and was told to write the prisoner's name. With some

difficulty he wrote the name "Isaac", but in such a scrawl that Isaac himself could not know it.

On being cross-examined Lewington replied, 'I am a labourer in the service of the prisoner, and have been so for nine years. I was taken up for some of the riots, but was let go again the next day. I was bound over to keep the peace for 12 months.'

John Chandler said, 'I live at Burbage. I have known the prisoner at the bar for 20 years. I have seen him write many times. That letter is not his handwriting.'

On being cross-examined Chandler said, 'I am a little hard of hearing.'

Mr Sergeant Wilde asked, 'Were you at Farmer Gale's lately?' To which the prisoner replied, 'Yes.'

'Were there many in your party?'

'You need not answer that, if you do not like,' advised Mr Everett.

The question was asked several times but the witness remained as heedless and unmoved as a statue.

Benjamin Hallick said, 'I have know the prisoner 20 years and have seen him write. The paper is not in the prisoner's handwriting. I often wrote in his book in his absence.'

The book was handed to the witness, but he could not find any of his own writing in it.

Richard Stratton said, 'I have known the prisoner for several years, and have often seen him write. This paper is not his handwriting.'

Thomas Fox said, 'I am a shoemaker, and live at Ramsbury. I have seen the prisoner write several times. The paper is not his handwriting.'

George Alexander, a maltster and victualler said, 'I have known the prisoner 15 years, and have often seen him write. This paper is not his handwriting.'

Another witness, who was in the frequent habit of going to the prisoner's house, stated that the bureau, in which the paper was found was always open, and other people in the house had access to it.

Mr Justice Alderson, in summing up, called the attention of the Jury to the fact of the fitting of the pieces of paper sent to some of the witnesses with that found in the

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

bureau of the prisoner. 'The evidence at both sides the Jury would weigh, as the opinions of those who gave it; but in weighing the merits of these opinions, the Jury will be greatly assisted by the internal and extrinsic evidence in the case. This is the fitting of the several pieces of paper, and of these it would be for the Jury to consider that the prisoner had given no explanation.'

The Jury, after a short consultation, returned a verdict of *guilty*.

Mr Justice Alderson then addressed the prisoner. 'Prisoner, the Jury have found you guilty on evidence that must satisfy every reasonable man that -'

'My Lord, I am innocent,' protested the prisoner. 'I never touched the paper. I never wrote a line of it. My Lord, I am innocent.'

Mr Justice Alderson continued, 'You have been found guilty of a crime, which is certainly not mitigated by your denial, after such evidence, a crime which strikes at the very root of society, by tending to obstruct the due administration of justice.'

The prisoner again interrupted his Lordship. 'My Lord, I declare I am innocent, I never wrote this paper. I never put my hand to it. The desk in which the piece of blank paper was found was open to five or six persons in the house, as well as myself. My Lord, the law may find me guilty, but it cannot make me so. I now declare solemnly, that I am innocent of this crime.' The prisoner delivered these remarks with strong emphasis, and spoke under the influence of strong feeling. At the last part of his remark he laid his hand on the bar with considerable force.

The learned Judge then proceeded, 'I cannot attend to these assertions, for we all know that a man who can be guilty of such an offence as that of which you have been convicted, will not hesitate to deny it as you now do. The offence is one, which in a person in your condition, ought to be visited with the severest punishment, and in undergoing that punishment you will not have the sympathy of any of those whom you will leave behind you in this country. You will be sent to a country where you will find very few worse than yourself.'

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

The prisoner again solemnly protested that he was innocent.

His Lordship proceeded, 'I would rather trust to such evidence as has been given in your case than on the most solemn declaration even on the scaffold, for we know that they are persisted in by men in whose case, from all that has come before the Court, there can be no doubt whatever, and sitting to administer justice, I must not be deterred by your repeated denials from doing my duty in passing on you the sentence of the law. At one time the crime of which you have been found guilty was punishable with death, and I do not know if that law were still in force, I should not feel it my duty in your case to allow it to take its course. I must say, that of those who go from this country in consequence of the events of which this and other counties have been disturbed, you will have the least of the sympathy of those whom you leave behind. The sentence of the Court is, that you Isaac Looker be transported to such a place beyond the seas as His Majesty shall direct, for the term of your natural life.'

The prisoner was then removed from the bar, evidently greatly affected by this sentence.

The Jury now obtained permission to leave the Court for a time to get some refreshment, and the Judge also retired.

During their absence, a young man, apparently about 17 or 18 years old, the son of the prisoner, was brought to the table by the solicitor who had conducted the defence. He there acknowledged that he wrote the letters, and not his father. A piece of paper was then given to him, and he wrote from memory a copy of the letter sent to Mr Rowland. When compared with the original, there could be no doubt that the handwriting was the same. The copy was not a verbatim transcript of the original, but there was very little difference, and in all the words badly spelt in the original, the same spelling was adhered to in the copy. He was then shown the original and told to copy it, which he did verbatim. The handwriting in both was exactly similar.

On return of the learned Judge to Court, the facts were made known to him, and Mr Everett, the counsel for Looker,

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

laid the copies of the letters before him. The Court was also informed, that the son had acknowledged that he wrote the letters, and that he had done so in order to save his cousins, who had been accused of breaking machines.

His Lordship expressed his surprise that these facts had not been brought forward at the trial or at least before he had passed sentence. He could not account for it, and without meaning to impute that it was some he must say that it looked like a trick. 'However, I will have all the facts laid before me, and will give them due consideration, for though the application came late, yet it never was too late to do what was right.'

His Lordship, after a short time, and while the Jury were deliberating on the next case, again called the attention of Mr Everett, to the subject, and said, 'I will require an affidavit, setting forth why it was that the son had not been called on at the trial, and also that the father was altogether ignorant at that time that his son wrote or sent the letter, for it makes no difference in his case, if he knew and consented to it being sent. I will require the most satisfactory evidence on this head, because, though I did not see the force of it at the time, the prisoner laid great stress on the declaration that he had never signed or touched the paper. His not having touched it would make no difference in his case, if he was consenting to its being written and sent by another.'¹²

James Lush, 40, James Lane, 23, George Toomer, 36, and James Toomer, 35, were put to the bar, charged with assaulting and robbing William Perry at Homington, on the 23rd November, of one sovereign. No case was proved against Lane and he was therefore *acquitted*. Lush, George Toomer and James Toomer, were found *guilty*.¹³

¹² The most detailed account of this trial appears in *The Times*, 7 January 1831, unfortunately the evidence and cross-examination of the witness **Joseph Rogers** is faded and cannot be read. Short versions of the trial appear in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6th January 1831 & *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal* 10 January 1831, in the latter paper the witness **Carter** is named as **Curtis**.

¹³ *The Times*, 7 January 1831; *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 6th January 1831; *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal* 10 January 1831. **NOTE: James Toomer** is named as **James Turner** in the *Gazette*

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

James Lush and George Toomer were again placed at the bar, charged with assaulting and robbing Bartlett Pinniger at Coombe Bisset, on the 24th November, of two sovereigns, his property.

Mr Pinniger was called and said, 'I live at Coombe Bissett. At about half passed 12 at night I heard that a mob had assembled and intended to come to my house. I went home and assembled as many persons as I could. I got together 20 or 30 men. I had a brace of pistols. At one o'clock in the morning I went to my yard gates, a neighbour, Fleetwood, came with a lanthorn in his hand, with the mob close at his heels. Fleetwood, and 7 or 8 of his men, came into my yard. When the mob came up I said I would give them no money. They said they had leave to break the machines. I told them they were welcome to go and break the thrashing machine, which was in the field at the back of the house. They said they would have a sovereign, a number of them said so. I presented the pistols and said I would shoot them. They then got through the gate and drove us back to the house. I called my men out and went out with them with a lanthorn in my hand. When the mob struck the lanthorn and put it out I attempted to fire, but the pistol misfired. Several of my men had their heads broken. I then found it useless to resist and gave up my two sovereigns. I don't know who took the money. Several people came round but I cannot identify the prisoners. The mob then went away and broke the machine.'

William Hillier was called and said, 'In November last I was in the service of Mr Pinniger. I saw the coming of the mob, I was just outside the yard. Some of the mob demanded money. I saw them in the yard, Mr Pinniger refused to give them money. They drove him, and us, back to the door of the house. I received a blow and was insensible. I did not hear anything said by the prisoners. They might have been 10 minutes on the premises. I am sure that both the prisoners were there. It was a darkish morning. I did not see either of the prisoners strike any blow.'

William Baker then took the stand. 'I am a blacksmith at Coombe. I was at Fleetwood's premises and followed the mob from there to Pinniger's. I got there just before the mob

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

got there. I saw James Toomer at Fleetwood's and at Pinniger's. During the scuffle I was chiefly between Fleetwood and Pinniger. I saw Toomer strike the lanthorn. It was neither dark nor light. Toomer said to Fleetwood, "You have had your turn, now we will have ours." I saw Lush with Pinniger, pushing the mob forward, but cannot say what he had in his hand. I saw Pinniger give money to them. I do not know who.'

The prisoner Lush then asked, 'Is there any punishment for a witness who takes a false oath?'

Certainly there is,' replied Mr Justice Alderson.

'Then Baker is the man,' said Lush.

Baker asserted that he had spoken the truth.

Lush grasped the bars of the front of the dock and said, 'I wish my hands might never come off these bars if the witness has not sworn falsely. He is a scandalous man to wish to take a poor fellow's life away in this manner.'

John Smith was called and said, 'I was in Pinniger's service and remember the mob coming. I saw Toomer knock the lanthorn out of Pinniger's hand. Lush was the man who said, "D – your eyes, push on." The scuffle lasted about five minutes.'

The prisoners were called for their defence. Lush said, 'As I was in turnpike road I heard Pinniger say, "I will bore a hole through you." I heard someone tell him to bore away as he could not kill more than one.'

James Toomer declined to say anything, but Mr Naish spoke in his favour, saying that he had known him for 10 or 12 years and that he had always done his work well and been civil.'

Mr Hotham spoke in favour of both men saying, 'I am a farmer. Lush has worked for me, he has done his work well. I know nothing of his general character. Both prisoners have worked for me and behaved very civilly.'

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the case, and the Jury found both the prisoners *guilty*.¹⁴

¹⁴ The most detailed account of this trial appears in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials, shorter version appear in The Times, 7 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

Maurice Pope, 41, was then placed in the dock, indicted for feloniously assaulting and robbing Mary Hodding, at Wootton Rivers, on the 23rd November last, of two half crowns, her property.

Mary Hodding was the first witness. 'I live, as housekeeper, with Samuel Watts, who is 89 next April. It is a lone house. On the 23rd November last a number of people came to my master's home. There were about 30 of them. The prisoner was there. He came up first to the door with the mob and asked for Master. He said he wanted victuals, drink, and money. I told them I would not give them victuals or drink, but I gave him two sovereigns. I said, "How can you expect a sovereign from a man whose work is done and is a Pensioners under Lord Ailesbury?" The prisoner then said he would take ten shillings, and I gave him the other five shillings. The prisoner shook hands with Mr Watts and then called the mob to come away. There were more in the distance, how many I know not. I gave the last 5/- from fear, a great many had sticks, but I cannot be positive whether the prisoner had.'

James Tucker was called. 'I was a serving man to Samuel Watts. On the 23rd of last November, at around three or four in the afternoon, about 30 people came to the door. I saw the prisoner there. He came up to the door and asked for the Master. Mary Hodding gave them two half crowns and they said they must have two sovereigns. She said that they shan't have no sovereign here. I then heard someone say, "D - m your bloody eyes, what have you to do with it," when she refused to give them two sovereigns.'

The case was clearly proved against the prisoner and the Jury found him *guilty*. A judgement of 'Death' was recorded against him. He was not tried on another account for robbery. ¹⁵

The prisoner is well known in the London ring as a prize fighter. ¹⁶

¹⁵ The most detailed account of this trial appears in GA - D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials, shorter version appear in The Times, 7 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831

¹⁶ The Times, 7 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

In the last case of the day Robert Blundy, age 28, was charged with assaulting and robbing Elizabeth Penruddock, at Milton, on the 23rd November, of one sovereign.

Miss Penruddock was called to give evidence. 'I live in the parish of Milton. On the 23rd November last a large mob came to the house. One of the mob got up on the wall of the premises and threw down an ornament, I think it was accidentally, but he threatened to throw down another. There were around 400 or 500 people there. They first demanded to break any machines and I told them that I was not a farmer. I said that I would give them 5/- if they would go away. They demanded two sovereigns and threatened to knock down the chimneys of the house and repeated the menace to beat the windows. It was said in a very loud tone of voice. They had crowbars, hatchets and pickaxes I became alarmed and then a second man got on the wall and said, "We don't stand shilly shally here my lady." The man who said this was standing on the wall, level with me. I then became alarmed and gave the sovereign to this man.'

Stephen Guildford was then called. 'I live at Mr Pike's. I was at Miss Penruddock's when the mob came along, and a man said, "You had better go or they will beat your brains". I went with them and saw Blundy on the wall. Miss Penruddock stood crying at the window and she gave the prisoner five shillings, he was then standing on the wall. He then came off the wall and the mob went away, up Fifield Street and I went across a meadow. I was about a yard from the wall. I did not see anything of a sovereign.'

Miss Penruddock was recalled. 'I gave 5/- to a man on the wall. There were two men on the wall and both were on the wall when I gave the sovereign.'

Stephen Guildford was recalled. 'I did see two men on the wall, but I did not see the other man go up to Miss Penruddock. I did not see Miss Penruddock give a sovereign to anybody.'

As the evidence against the prisoner was inconclusive the Jury acquitted him. ¹⁷

¹⁷ The most detailed account of this trial appears in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials, shorter version appear in The Times, 7 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** The Times names this prisoner as **Robert Oddy**.


Wednesday, 5th January 1831

The Court rose at 7 o'clock and adjourned to the Nisi Prius Court.

630 585

Wills

Results of Trials up to the rising of the courts on 5th January 1831



PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

	<i>Convictions</i>	<i>Acquittals</i>
<i>For riotously destroying Machinery</i>	11	1
<i>For robbery</i>	17	8
<i>For destroying Threshing Machines</i>	64	13
<i>Riotously beginning to demolish a House (Piles—)</i>	—	17
<i>Sending a threatening Letter</i>	1	—
	103	39

Result of Trials on 6th January 1831.—

	<i>Convictions</i>	<i>Acquittals</i>
<i>For wounding with intent to murder</i>	—	17
<i>For Robbery</i>	2	16
<i>For Burglary</i>	1	2
<i>For destroying Threshing Machinery</i>	20	7
<i>For an assault</i>	1	—

Note— 12 of the 16 persons acquitted for Robbery are comprised in the 17 acquitted yesterday for riotously beginning to demolish Mr. Piles' house— and in the 17 acquitted of wounding with intent to murder.

28. Results of Trials up to 6th January 1831

(TNA – HO40/27 f630)

Thursday, 6th January 1831

Thursday, 6th January 1831

The trials here proceed but slowly, as far as the number tried is compared with those that remain for trial. This does not arise from the fault of any party here, for nothing can exceed the exertions of the learned Judges to preside, and indeed of all who are officially concerned in carrying on the proceedings, but it happens that in many instances several bills have been found against the same parties for distinct offences at different times and places, and as has been the case, acquittal take place, which would not in Scotland be verdicts of 'not guilty' but of 'not proven'. It is found necessary for the purpose of public justice, to put the parties on their trial on some of the other bills, which have been found against them. Thus it happens that the same parties are tried twice or thrice over. This of course has the same effect as if the calendar was numerically much heavier than it really is. Considering the number which still remain to be tried, we do not think it at all probable that the business of the commission can terminate here on Saturday, or even on Monday next, unless large numbers should consent to plead guilty, or that the legal advisors of the Crown here should deem it advisable to drop a considerable number of indictments, by refraining from offering evidence in support of them.

It is impossible for any person who has witnessed these trials, and was present also at those in Hampshire, not to be struck by the great difference in the appearance, manner, and character of the accused in this County, from those of the prisoners in Hampshire. In appearance the men here, for the greater part, are much more hardy and athletic, in manner they are much bolder and in character, judging from the much more frequent instances of personal violence in the mobs that were out machine breaking here, than were known in Hampshire. The prisoners here turn to the witnesses against them with a bold and confident air, cross-examine them and contradict their answers, with a confidence and want of common courtesy, in terms, of which comparatively few instances occurred in the neighbouring county. But in both counties we were struck

with one trait common to the great mass of the accused in each, a very low state of moral intelligence. There were very few of the questions put, or the defence made, where the parties were not assisted by counsel, which did not involve an admission of the crime, of which, in almost the same breath, they were declaring them selves to be innocent of. There has not been any inquiry into the means of instruction amongst the poorer classes of this county, or of those in Hampshire, but judging from what has been seen at the trials, it would seem to be very limited. Those whose duty it is to make instruction available to the poorer classes would seem to be grossly remiss in the discharge of this important trust.

The Court opened at nine o'clock this morning and Mr Baron Vaughan and Mr Justice Parke took their seats in the Nisi Prius Court and the following Jury were sworn. ¹

James Cheyney	James Compton	Thomas M....
James Pavey	David Goddard	John Stillard
James Green	Rob ^t Green	John Sutton
Thomas Griffin	James Ingram	Thomas King

James Burden, Charles Cook, Charles Davis, Thomas Gilbert, Thomas Hiscocks, James Lane, James Luff, otherwise James Love, Joseph Marchment, Gifford North, Isaac Pavell, William Rivers, John Romain, Henry Rose and John Rose were charged with maliciously cutting and wounding Robert Pile with pieces of iron and hammers, with intent to murder him, on the 23rd November at Alton Barnes.

The Attorney General stated the circumstances of the case as detailed by the witnesses. Mr Williams and Mr Halcombe appeared for the prisoners.

Mr Halcombe rose. 'In this case, my Lords, as counsel for one of the prisoners, I beg, before I repeat the objection I made yesterday, which I refrained from proceeding with because it was considered inconvenient...'

'I think my Lords, that it is equally inconvenient now,' interrupted the Attorney General. 'I will put an end to it by again requesting my friend Mr Bingham to retire.'

¹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

Thursday, 6th January 1831

Mr Halcombe continued, 'I beg to say, that I rise under considerable pain to...'

'How are we to know that Mr Bingham will appear?' interrupted Mr Baron Vaughan.

'Why my Lord, his name is endorsed on the briefs and I was yesterday told that I was bound to know he was in the case for that reason,' replied Mr Halcombe.

'If that is the objection,' said the Attorney General, 'I, my Lords, must object to it, on the point of order. I have requested my learned friend Mr Bingham not to act.'

Mr Baron Vaughan said, 'I should say, that it is a matter of private discussion rather than for the consideration of the Court.'

Mr Halcombe continued to argue the point for some considerable time. The two Judges brought it to an end when Mr Justice Parke said, 'There do not appear to be any materials or ground for the interruption. We have Mr Attorney here for the Crown, so that the removal of any other gentleman could make no difference as regards bringing on the case.'

'When a case of such a serious nature as this is before the Court, it is not proper that the attention, either of the Jury or the Court, should be diverted from it in this manner.' Added Mr Baron Vaughan.

'I yield at once to your Lordships,' said Mr Halcombe, and let the matter go.

Mr Robert Pile was then called, his arm was in a sling. 'I am a farmer living at Alton Barnes. I was at Marlborough Fair on the 23rd of November, and had gone armed with a small pocket pistol, which was loaded. In consequence of what I heard I went home, where I arrived between 2 and 3 o'clock, and found a great number of men, who were breaking my thrashing machine, and throwing the pieces out of doors. I was on horseback. When I went into the yard, I said, "God d – you, what do you do here? If you don't leave my premises directly I will fire on you." I took out my pistol and shot it off over their heads, to intimidate them. If I had intended to have shot them, I could easily have done so. When I fired the pistol some of the men were breaking the machine. I next got off my horse, and leaving it in the barn, called for my double-barrel gun, which was given to me by

Thursday, 6th January 1831

the rector of the parish. I was aware that my gun was loaded. I went to the barn and found it nearly filled with the mob. They were breaking my fan-tackling belonging to a winnowing machine. Most of the men had bludgeons and sledges. As I was going into the barn I told them, cocking my gun at them, that if they did not leave I would shoot them. Some of them then ran out at the other door into the rick yard. I followed them into the rick yard. I asked them what reason they had for breaking my machine, and what harm I had done any of them. My hand at this time was before the lock of the gun. Some of them called out, "None at all, Mr Pile; we have nothing at all to say against you, but we come to break your machine as well as others." I cannot tell who said this. I was about 50 or 60 yards from them when this was said. I heard it perfectly. I was induced, on hearing this, to advance towards them, because I did not think they meant me any harm, and eight or ten of them came to meet me; and within a few yards I met them, when, all of a sudden, they wrested the gun from me. I had just told them that they had better leave. They surrounded me, and before I had any opportunity of preventing them, they got the gun from me, and, just as they had obtained possession of it, one of the barrels went off. I am not aware that any man was hurt by it. I consider that it was accidental. There was a lock for safety, which I suppose they must have, in the struggle, pushed up. I cannot say that any of the prisoners were with those who advanced on me. The main body came, and began to beat me; the others were, I believe, breaking my gun. Some of the prisoners were those who were beating me.

'Mr Attorney, can you go on with this case? Can you show, because this does not, that these men went with the intention of committing this assault with which you charge them?'

'My Lords this case is attended with such circumstances of outrage, that I feel it my duty to investigate it to the very bottom,' replied the Attorney General. 'My facts, my Lords, are very strong, and, I submit, are of such a nature as to warrant my desire to let them go to the Jury.'

Thursday, 6th January 1831

The examination resumed. 'James Lane was the first person who struck me. The blow was behind my ear, and made me stagger. John Rose hit me. Not one man struck me who did not make use of some expression, as either, "Murder or kill the d - d son of a b -!" Henry Rose hit me likewise with a piece of iron. Thomas Gilbert struck me on the head with some sort of weapon. Lane knocked my hat off first, and the other men hit me on the bare head with pieces of iron. Directly after Gilbert had struck me, some one in the crowd struck me with a square bar of iron, with a hole in it, which knocked me down, then I received a great many blows, but from whom I could not tell. I got up and staggered against a straw rick, when Charles Davis came up to me and said, "God d - your blood, you tried to shoot me, and now I'll do for you." I had only fired off the pistol, and about 10 minutes had elapsed from that time to this. He then put his hand into my cravat, and tried to strangle me, and struck me a violent blow on the body. He completely twisted the handkerchief tight. Stephen Bullock came up and said, "Don't murder Mr Pile." He led me through the barn to the house, the mob beating and kicking me all the time. I was knocked down again, and Bullock assisted me up. When I got to the house I was covered in blood. My arm was broken with a blow from a stick or piece of iron. When I got up stairs, and my sisters were tying my arm up, I heard the mob say out loud, "If we have not killed him already, I'll be d -d if we will not do it yet." Joseph Marchment was in the rick barton, but I did not see him do anything. I saw Thomas Hiscocks in the house when I came down stairs, about five minute afterwards. William Rivers was also in the house, and George Smith was there.'

On being cross-examined Mr Pile said said, 'I had heard, on that day, that a mob was going to break my machine, and in consequence I armed myself. I galloped into the yard. I fired off the pistol over their heads to intimidate them. The prisoners might have been in such a situation as to have heard what I said, and to have seen me fire off the pistol. The pistol was double barrellled, but one barrel was not primed. After I had got my gun, I stood at the door of the barn for about a minute, but I did not keep my gun levelled all the time, as they began to leave the barn. I followed them

into the barton, where the struggle took place. They told me that they meant no harm to me, but that they had broken my machine as well as others. I could not see the prisoners when the expression was made use of in the house, of "If we have not killed him already, I'll be d - d if we don't yet." The gun was loaded with rabbit shot.'

The Reverend Mr Hare was called. 'I am the minister of the parish of Alton Barnes. I saw the mob at Mr Pile's. I remember Mr Pile galloping into the yard. The pistol was fired towards the men, but high over their heads. Fearing that the men might turn and beat Mr Pile, I ran and got his gun, which I gave him that he might defend himself. Some time after I heard the report of a gun, and I ran along a field at the side of the yard, crying out to them not to murder Mr Pile. I was afterwards obliged to run away to save myself, as two sticks were held over me by some of the mob.'

Stephen Bullock, who had been compelled to join the mob, was then called. I saw Marchmont strike Mr Pile on the back of his head with a long iron bar, which he called his weather glass. When he knocked him down he cried out, "D - his blood, kill the son of a b - ." I saw Cook beat Mr Pile when he was down.' He then went on to repeat his testimony of yesterday.

On being cross-examined he admitted that he did not think that the mob would have used the violence had not the pistol been fired at them, and that Charles Davis had blood running down his face in Mr Pile's court, which he said had been caused by a shot from a gun.

Mr Justice Parke then addressed the Attorney General, 'Mr Attorney General, after this evidence, would you now think it right to take the opinion of the Jury?'

'Certainly, my Lord, these facts are entirely new to me,' replied the Attorney General.

The prisoners were *acquitted*.²

'My Lords, we shall now indict some of these same prisoners for robbery,' said the Attorney General. 'As Mr

² The most detailed account of this trial is found in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 13 January 1831, shorter accounts are in *The Times*, 8 January 1831 & *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831

Thursday, 6th January 1831

Bingham is with us for the prosecution, I should wish Mr Halcombe, if he has any objection to state it now.'

'I hope we shall hear no more of the matter,' commented Mr Justice Parke.

'My Lords, any intimation which may fall from your Lordships I shall at all times bow to. I shall not, therefore, say another word upon the subject,' said Mr Halcombe.

A few minutes later Mr Halcombe again rose and said, 'My learned friend has challenged me, my Lords, to explain the grounds of my objection. He wishes me to state them. I had intended not to mention the subject again, but I am driven to it.'

'If you have any motion to make, we will hear it,' said Mr Baron Vaughan, 'But I do not see any occasion for it; there is no imputation that Mr Bingham has been improperly acting. Do you appear as *amicus curiae*?'

Mr Halcombe began to reply, 'My Lord –'

'What is your motion?' interrupted Mr Justice Parke.

'My Lords, ' replied Mr Halcombe, 'My first motion to the Court is, that Mr Bingham does retire from the present prosecution, he not being counsel for the Crown; and then-.'

Mr Justice Parke again interrupted him. 'Have you any precedent for it?'

'My Lord, everybody must know that I am not doing this as personal to my friend Mr Bingham,' replied Mr Halcombe.

'I think we have heard quite enough of the matter,' said Mr Justice Parke.

'The fact is, he is counsel for the Crown,' said the Attorney General.

'I do not know in what light he is here, but as for the Crown,' said Mr Baron Vaughan.

Here the matter dropped and the trials continued. ³

James Burden, Charles Cook, Charles Davis, George Smith otherwise George Ewens, Thomas Hiscocks, James Lane, Joseph Marchmont, Gifford North, Isaac Pavell, William Rivers, John Romaine, Henry Rose and John Rose were indicted for having, on the 22nd November at Alton

³ The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Thursday, 6th January 1831

Barnes, feloniously robbed Miss Mary Pile of one Bank Note, value £10, her property. ⁴

The prisoners were part of the mob concerned in the attack on Mr Pile's premises. It appeared from the evidence of Mr Pile that while he was up stairs, having his arm tied up, he heard an exclamation from several voices, to the effect, that, "if they had not already killed him, they'd be d – d if they would not do so then."

Miss Pile was called and said, 'I was in the hall at the time the exclamation was made. The mob also said to me that they would kill my brother and they would beat down the house as well, if I did not give them money. Finding that the mob were determined on having money, and getting at my brother, I offered them £5 if they would desist from their purpose. They refused that sum, so I offered £8, which they likewise refused, saying that it was not enough. I then found that £10 would satisfy them, and therefore went up stairs to get that sum, and brought down a £10 Bank Note, which I gave to Gifford North. The other people debated then whether it was a £10 note or not. After some consideration they left the premises. I can identify North, Lane, Davis, John Rose, Henry Rose, Rivers and George Smith, as being the most active of the mob, and as having been in the house, and having taken an active part in the robbery

A labourer who was acquainted with North, but who did not join the mob, proved that North, after the business was over had told him that Miss Pile had given him a £10 note. He also said that North had told him that he was the first to go into Mr Pile's house and that Miss Pile had given the money to him to get rid of them.

Several other witnesses were able to corroborate the testimony of Miss Pile and identify the prisoners as having been present. They were also able to prove that the mob had got into the house by breaking open the door.

During the course of the trial Mr Halcombe submitted that there was not satisfactory proof as to the description of the note, and therefore there was no case to go to the Jury. The Court overruled this objection.

⁴ The Times, 8 January 1831 & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831 names prisoners **George Smith** otherwise **Ewens** as two separate people, **George Smith** & **George Ewens**

Thursday, 6th January 1831

The prisoners were then called on for their own defence.

Davis said, 'I did not go into the house for money. I went to protect Mr Pile, as I had done before. I told the mob, before any money was asked for, to leave the house.'

John Rose said, 'I did not go into the house, and the witnesses who swore to seeing me there have sworn falsely as regards me.'

George Smith said that he was not in the house and had a witness to prove it.

Mr Williams and Mr Halcombe called several witnesses to speak for some of the prisoners. Their testimony, however, was not such as to render them any great assistance.

Mr Baron Vaughan addressed the Attorney General. 'Mr Attorney, there is no evidence which touches Joseph Marchmont, Charles Cook, Isaac Pavell, James Burden, Thomas Hiscocks or John Romaine, there is no case against them.'

After a little consideration and an examination of the evidence the Attorney General said, 'My Lords, I must consent the acquittal of these parties.'

They were then *acquitted* and removed from the bar.

Mr Baron Vaughan then summed up the evidence, as it affected the seven prisoners who remained, Gifford North, James Lane, John Rose, Henry Rose, Charles Davis, George Smith, alias Ewens, and William Rivers. His Lordship pointed out those parts which proved that North had received the money from Miss Pile, of his having shown it to two of the witnesses some time afterwards, and of his having said to one of them that he had been the first to go into the house. 'That he got the note in consequence of his guilt, there can be no doubt, if you believe the evidence. The Jury should now consider the degree of guilt which attaches to the other six prisoners. There are, in some cases, circumstances of mitigation particularly in the case of Davis. To justify your finding these men guilty, you must be satisfied that they had gone to the house of the prosecutor with the intention of extorting money.'

Thursday, 6th January 1831

The Jury found Gifford North *guilty*, and *acquitted* the other prisoners. ⁵

The Court adjourned at seven o'clock this evening, and will reopen at 9 o'clock on Friday 7th January.

Mr Justice Alderson and Mr T G B Estcourt Esq sat in the Crown Court, and the following Jury were sworn. ⁶

John Tubb	Josiah Whicher	John Baker
Stephen Short	James Forward	John Durnford
Joseph Bell	George Bowns	Josiah Ball
William Atkins	Joseph Sweetapple	Stephen Bell

Mr Justice Alderson said, in reference to the case of Looker, that he thought it right, in consequence of the statement made in Court yesterday, that he should be tried on a second indictment, when he would have the opportunity of producing his son or any other person in evidence. He would not try the case himself, it would come before one of his learned brothers in the other Court. ⁷

In the first case of the day Aminadab Smith, 35, Robert Stokes, 30, and Robert Willoughby, 28, were put to the bar, charged with destroying a thrashing machine, at Highworth on the 24th November, the property of William Smith.

Thomas Smith was called, 'I am the son of William Smith of Highworth. The prisoners were part of a large mob that came to my father's house at about 12 o'clock at night. Aminadab Smith was there when the mob were breaking the machine. They were breaking the machine with sledgehammers. There were about 50 people present, all three prisoners were there. I knew them very well. We had a lantern.'

Giles, a young lad was called to give evidence. 'I was at Smith's on the 24th November. It was night, but lightish. There was a large mob beating the machine. It was broke to

⁵ The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁶ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

⁷ The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Thursday, 6th January 1831

pieces with sledges. I saw Aminadab Smith at Maggott's Mill and I saw him at Mr Smith's. He was doing nothing, but was close to the machine when they were breaking it. I also saw Willoughby close to the machine, he had a stick in his hand. I did not see Stokes at Mr Smith's. Aminadab Smith had a great stick in his hand, They were going towards the house when Thomas Smith, the brother of William Smith, told them that they should go and break the machine and behave like men and they would have some beer. On hearing this the mob went up and broke the machine.'

The Court considered that Thomas Smith's words amounted to permission to break the machine and therefore they could not bring home a crime of felony against the prisoners. They were therefore *acquitted*.⁸

Joseph Chubb, otherwise Harvey, 32, William Every, 32, Thomas Foot, 30, George Green, 28, Elias Kiddle, 18, Charles Lane, 18, Levi Millard, 26, Thomas New, 24, William Pottle, 25, Samuel Rymond, and Elias Thorn, 22, were put to the bar charged with having riotously and tumultuously destroyed a thrashing machine, at Tollard Royal on the 25th November, the property of Charles Lane.⁹

Charles Lane, the prosecutor, was called. 'I saw Kiddle, Chubb, Pottle, Millard, Every, Lane, Green and Foot at Lord Rivers. They said they were going to destroy the machine. Kettle and Charles Lane were both beating the machine. Chubb threatened to beat out my brains and demanded beer. I said I would not give them any. George Green put a piece of the machine in the fire. William Every was very busy beating the machine, as was Levi Millard. William Pottle and Thomas New were both busy at the machine. I do not think I saw Thomas Foot before, he was there also, so were Elias Thorn and Samuel Rymond.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Smith he said, 'I did not know Every before.'

He was cross-examined by Mr Rowe and answered, 'The rate of wages in Tollard Royal was seven shillings. Lane

⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. Brief accounts also appear in *The Times*, 8 January 1831; *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 13 January 1831; *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831

⁹ The ages of the prisoners are as they appear in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 13 January 1831; *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal*, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** In *The Gazette* and *The Journal* **Elias Kettle** is named as **Elias Kiddle**, and in *The Times* **Samuel Rymond** is named as **Samuel Riemond**

Thursday, 6th January 1831

and Pottle have worked for me. Pottle was a very quiet and steady man, I have known him for six years. Lane was a shepherd boy to me.'

Thomas Ferris was then called. 'I am a blacksmith at Tollard Royal. I saw the mob at Lane's. They went into the meadow and broke the machine with sticks, bars of iron and sledges. I saw Kiddle. Lane, Green, Millard, Pottle, New, Foot, Thorn, and Rymond there. For some of the time I was talking with Mr Lane.'

John Bennett was called. 'I am a carter to Mr Lane. I saw the mob. I saw them beating the machine. Lane, Green and Every were doing nothing, Pottle, Millard and New were breaking the machine. I saw Rymond bringing a light.'

The prisoners said nothing in their own defence but several witnesses were called to speak in their favour.

Mr Compton, who lives at Tollard Royal said, 'I have known William Pottle for two or three years, he has worked for me and has a very good character. Pottle was thrashing for me when this happened. I have known Green for years. I never heard anything against him.'

Mr Moyle, who lives near Tollard Royal, said, 'Pottle has been a tenant of mine for two years. I have never heard anything against him. I live close to him. I know George Green, he lives one and a half miles from me. I believe him to be a quiet, honest man.'

Mr Bennett, who lives at Tollard Royal said, 'I have known Pottle all my life. He has always borne a good character, a sober, honest, industrious and quiet man. I know Green, he lives close by, and he is a woodman. He has a very good character. I never knew him in any disturbance before.'

Charles Lane, the prosecutor, spoke in favour of Levi Millard. 'He is a quiet, honest, sober man. I never knew him in any row before.'

Mr Bennett said, 'I have known Millard for five or six years. He bears a good character.'

Mr Morgan also spoke in favour of Millard. 'I have known Millard all my life. He bears a very good character. I believe he was brought into it by others.'

Mr Moyle said, 'Thorn and Rymond are labourers of mine, they are quiet, honest men.'

Thursday, 6th January 1831

Charles House said, 'I have know Millard nine or ten years. He has always borne a very good character.'

The learned Judge, having summed up the case asked the Jury to record their verdict against Elias Kiddle. This having been done Mr Follett brought forward evidence to prove that Kiddle had been convicted at Dorchester, of stealing bees belonging to Mr Potticary, and sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.

The Judge summed up the whole of the case and the Jury found all the prisoners *guilty*, recommending to mercy those who had been given a good character. ¹⁰

Joseph Chubb, otherwise Harvey, and Thomas Foot were again indicted for destroying a thrashing machine, at Berwick St John on the 25th November, the property of George Woolridge. Elias Kiddle, Levi Millard, Charles Lane, William Every, William Pottle, Elias Thorne and Samuel Rymond were not tried in this indictment, having all been convicted already.

This was another act committed by the same mob that had destroyed Mr Lane's machine.

In his testimony Mr Woolridge said, 'The mob came to my house and some of them, in the presence of Foot, demanded victuals. The machine was party destroyed by me before the mob came. I had burnt some of the inside parts. Legs support the machine. These I burnt and the stage. Some parts I hid and have now. I took the iron parts into the field.'

Edward Parsons was called and said, 'Mr Woolridge has a thrashing machine. Both the prisoners were with the mob destroying the iron parts of the machine. There were 25 or 26 people in the mob. I did not see either of the prisoners do anything. One of them had a small stick in his hand. They came first to my farmhouse. When they came I was in the barn thrashing. They came to the barn where I was and forced me away. I went to the machine with them. After destroying the machine they went away. I saw some of the

¹⁰ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials has the most detailed account of this trial, shorter versions appear in The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Thursday, 6th January 1831

mob force Foot forward. I did not see anybody force Chubb on.'

Another witness was Henry Parsons. 'I am carter to Mr Woolridge. The mob came and broke the machine. I saw Chubb there, he was up against the handle of the machine. Other people were breaking the machine. Chubb was amongst the mob. They were occupied for about a quarter of an hour. I saw him with the mob after on the Down, about a quarter of a mile from the machine. I saw Chubb with the mob in Cox's yard. They were breaking a winnowing machine. Afterwards I saw the mob at Mr Lane's. I then went home.'

Mr Lane said that he had seen both prisoners on his premises at the time when his machine was broken.

The Jury found both the prisoners *guilty*.¹¹

In the course of this trial a question arose as to how far the stage, used with the machine, constituted part of it, so that if the owner had voluntarily destroyed the stage, the remainder could be said to be an entire and perfect machine.

Mr Woolridge admitted that he had taken down the wooden stage on which the man stood who fed the machine, and he had also taken away the legs. The question then was, whether in this state it could be called a thrashing machine? From the examination of one of the witnesses, it appeared that the machine could not be conveniently worked without the stage, but that a chair or table, or a number of sheaves of corn, would do for a stage as well as that which had been taken away. It could also be worked without legs.

Under these circumstances the Court held that the machine, in this state was entire, and within the meaning of the act.

Elias Kiddle, Thomas New, William Pottle, William Every, George Green, Charles Lane, Thomas Foot, Samuel Rymond, Joseph Chubb, Levi Millard and Elias Thorn were

¹¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials gives the most detailed account of the trial, shorter version appear in The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** The minutes of the trial name the prosecutor as **Mr Woolwich**, all 3 newspapers name him as **George Woolridge**

Thursday, 6th January 1831

then placed before the bar again, charged with robbing Jasper Cox of two half crowns, at Donhead St Mary, on the 25th November.

Mr Sergeant Wilde said, 'As the prisoners have already been convicted of the minor offence, the Counsel for the Crown feels that the ends of justice have been sufficiently answered, without offering any evidence on this charge.'

No evidence being offered they were accordingly *acquitted*. The same prisoners were not charged on another indictment for felony. ¹²

William Bridges, John Cook and Charles Hall were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, at Draycot Foliat, on the 24th November, the property of Richard Reeves.

Mr Smith stated the case to the Jury, and called Miss Jane Reeves. 'I am the sister of Richard Reeves. I was at my brother's house on 24th November last. I saw the prisoners there, they begged for victuals in a civil way. They had victuals but no beer. I saw them all breaking the thrashing machine. William Bridges was there and the other two and no body else. I sent for the Cavalry and they were taken. The machine was not broken before, but it had been taken to pieces.'

William Parsons was called and stated, 'I am a Sergeant in the Yeomanry. Miss Reeves sent us for. When we arrived we saw the men coming out of the rick yard, which adjoins the meadow. They ran away when they saw us and we pursued and took them.'

George Killard, a Private in the same troop said, 'I assisted Sergeant Parsons. The men ran over the foot bridge and I followed them and as they were going over the bridges one of them dropped a sledge.'

In their defence the prisoners said that the machine was broken before they got there. The only redeeming quality in the case was that there was no mob.

The Jury found the three prisoners *guilty*. ¹³

¹² TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

¹³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Thursday, 6th January 1831

David Heath, 20, and Joseph Watts, 28 were indicted for destroying a thrashing machine, at Liddington on the 23rd November, the property of Joseph Brind and Bryan Bewley.

Peter Dore, bailiff to the prosecutors, was called and said, 'I occupy a farm at Liddington. Brind and Bewley are joint occupiers of the farm. Heath was the leading man, he had an iron bar which he used to beat the machine. I heard Watts call and ask them what they had done and they said they had done their job. Part of the machine was broken before Watts came, and part before they asked for money. They then broke a chaff cutting machine and then proceeded to brake the frame of the thrashing machine and took a grub axe from the barn and broke it. They got some money after breaking the machine.'

John Mace was called and said, 'I was in my master's field at the plough, when I first saw the mob. They came and David Heath said that I must go with him. I told them that I was unwilling to go. They said they were fighting for bread and if I did not choose to go they would have a leg or an arm, for that was their rule. We went to my master's thrashing machine. Heath had a bar. Watts was there but had nothing in his hand.'

Heath denied having used the words attributed to him, but to the rest he would say nothing.

Watts when asked if he had anything to say to the Jury replied, 'No, my Lord, I've got nothing to say to 'em. I don't know any of 'em.'

The Jury found both the prisoners *guilty*.

Mr Dore was then re-called and stated that when the machine was broken, the prisoners went to him and demanded money and said that if they did not get it, a mob of 100 people would come up. He gave them the money.

The prisoners were called up for judgement. Mr Justice Alderson addressed them. 'You might thank the lenity of the prosecutor that you are not tried on the capital charge of robbery, by which it is probable that your lives might have

Thursday, 6th January 1831

been forfeited. The sentence of the Court on each of you is that you are transported for seven years.’¹⁴

Charles Kimmer, 24, was put to the bar charged with assaulting James Self, at Wilcot on the 19th November.

James Self was called and said, ‘I was at farmer Fowler’s premises, at Wilcot, at about 7 or 8 o’clock in the evening of the 19th November. Several ricks were on fire, and I got upon a barley rick to endeavour to extinguish it. I saw the prisoner there and I saw him fling two brickbats at the people plying the engines. He then came to me and knocked me off the rick into the fire with a large bar of iron He struck me just about the crown. I had a hat on. There were six ricks on fire, and the house and premises were in great danger. The prisoner lives at Oare, no more than 80 yards from the premises.’

The prisoner was found *guilty*.¹⁵

Jeremiah West, Uriah West and George Coombs were indicted for destroying a thrashing machine, at Broad Chalke on the 24th November, the property of Jesse Rumbold.

Jesse Rumbold was called. ‘A mob of 300 came. I saw the mob go up to my field. I saw Jeremiah West go up. The other two were there immediately. They beat to pieces what was not before injured. The roof over the drum was injured in taking it down it was accidental. I broke the water wheel the night before the mob came. On Monday it was in a perfect state, on that day I beat to pieces the water wheel.’

The prisoners were *acquitted*, on the grounds that this was not a thrashing machine at the time it was broken.¹⁶

George Stratton, 18, was indicted for robbing Jesse Rumbold on the 24th November at Broad Chalke, of one

¹⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE.** The Minutes of the Trials names the prosecutor **Bewdley** not **Bewley**

¹⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

¹⁶ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

Thursday, 6th January 1831

sovereign. James Lush was not tried on this indictment having already been capitally convicted.

Jesse Rumbold stated, 'When the mob came to my house on the 24th November, Stratton was with a person named Lush, who demanded two sovereigns from me. I gave Stratton a sovereign because I was afraid they might do me some harm.'

Mr Justice Alderson charged the Jury, saying, that as no proof of threat or menace had been given, no case of capital felony had been made out. The Jury *acquitted* the prisoner. ¹⁷

Charles Beckley, otherwise Giddings, 20, James Hale, 28, and Arthur Hillier, 22, were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, at Enford on the 22nd November, the property of Jonathan Smallbones.

Mr Smallbones was called and said, 'I am a maker of thrashing machines. A large mob came to my premises on the 22nd November and the three prisoners were with them. They had a sledge hammer and destroyed one entire machine and many parts of the other machines. A mob from 80 to 100 came on that day, and the prisoners were amongst them. Hale had a sledge hammer, I saw him beating cast iron wheels, which were broken, but I did not see the others doing anything. The machine and the other parts were entirely destroyed.'

In his defence James Hale said, 'Smallbones seemed well pleased when we broke it.'

James Styning was called and said, 'I have known Hale and Hillier for many years. I have heard that Hale is a good labourer.'

The prisoners were found *guilty*. The Court called them up for judgement and sentenced each of them to seven years transportation. ¹⁸

¹⁷ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

¹⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** The Times names **James Hale** as **James Hall**.

Thursday, 6th January 1831

Levi Brown, 37, was put to the bar and charged with robbing Mr John Selfe of two sovereigns, at Broad Chalke on the 24th November.

In his evidence Mr Selfe said, 'A mob of around 250 people, armed with sledgehammers and sticks, came to my house. One of them demanded two sovereigns. I cannot say whether or not the prisoner was near enough to hear what passed. They said they would have two sovereigns from me because I had two machines. I gave Brown the two sovereigns. I was afraid that they might set fire to my property.'

Brown was *acquitted* as it was decided that the prosecutor had not been put under sufficient intimidation to warrant him handing over any money.¹⁹

Levi Brown was then indicted for destroying a chaff-cutting machine, the property of John Rebbeck, at Ebbesbourne Wake on the 24th November, and with obtaining two sovereigns from him.

Mr Rebbeck was called and said, 'I live at Ebbesbourne Wake. The mob came to my house and the prisoner was at the head of them. They broke my chaff-cutting machine then Brown asked me for two sovereigns. Some of the mob held up sticks. When I said that I would not give them any money many of the mob said that they would make me. I gave the money to them from fear of what they might do. This occurred about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The moment they came to the door the prisoner demanded money. They broke my chaff machine.'

In his defence Brown said, 'I never demanded the money, but I took it.'

Mr Stevens was called to speak on behalf of Brown. 'I live at Broad Chalke and I have known the prisoner since he was 16. For the greater part of his life he has worked for me. He has always shown himself to be an honest man.'²⁰

The Jury found the prisoner *guilty*, and the learned Judge ordered a sentence of death to be recorded against him. 'Although I feel it my duty to recommend you to the

¹⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

²⁰ GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials

Thursday, 6th January 1831

mercy of the Crown so as to save your life, yet you must not hope to remain in this country, you will be sent out of it for the rest of your life. You have been convicted of one robbery, and from the nature of the evidence in the other case, though the evidence was not strong enough to bring home your guilt by legal proof, there can be little doubt that you went there for the purpose of robbing and acted as leader of the mob.’²¹

James Lane, who had already been tried and convicted of breaking machines, was put to the bar again. This time he was charged with robbing Alfred Morris of a sovereign at Broad Chalke, on the 24th November.

Alfred Morris was called. ‘I live at Broad Chalke. I met up with a mob on the 24th November. I saw them beat a machine to pieces. They had sticks, bars of iron and sledge hammers. They came to Mr Young’s, where I was. The prisoner was with them. They said they must have a sovereign from me, 8 or 10 said so. I told them that I had not got one with me, upon which they said that I must go home and get one. The prisoner was close by when they spoke. I went home and got a sovereign and gave it to the prisoner, he came to my house with me. The mob was about a quarter of a mile away. They were drinking cider at Mr Young’s.’

Mr Justice Alderson stopped the case, as the evidence was not sufficient. The prosecutor should not have parted with the money so readily. The prisoner was *acquitted*.²²

William Cheater, 28, was indicted for feloniously robbing James Scammell, at Damerham on the 24th November, of four half crowns.

Mr Scammell was called, ‘The prisoner was one of a large mob that came to my house, at two o’clock on the morning of the 24th November, and demanded money from me. I was called up about 12 o’clock at night. I was up in consequence of the alarm. They wanted 10 shillings. Cheater was near enough to hear the mob demand the

²¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

²² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

Thursday, 6th January 1831

money. I said that I was a poor man and I could very ill afford it. Some said they must have it or they would beat in the windows. Some of them then hit the pales I was standing against, but not very hard. I was alarmed at what they might do and took out 10 shillings I asked who was to take the money. Cheater came forward and I gave it to him, four half crowns, as I was afraid they would break my windows, or do some other harm. The prisoner interfered with the mob, and prevented them from setting fire to the machine in the yard, and said that it should be removed into the road. If it had been set fire to in the yard there would have been a great deal of damage done, as the yard had a great deal of straw in it, and it was close to the buildings and house.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Rowe, Mr Scammell said, 'It was a very dark night. I never saw the prisoner before that night. I saw Cheater immediately after the mob came up. There was nobody else in the mob that I could identify. There was only a wicket between me and the prisoner when I gave him the money.'

Mr Scammell was then re-examined by Mr Bingham and answered, 'I saw him again about half an hour after I gave him the money, and he then had a light.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Rowe, Mr Scammell said, 'There were about 30 or 40 people around me at the time. It was dark and I could not swear to anyone except the prisoner. I did not say that I would not know some of them if I saw them. The prisoner had a sort of plush waistcoat, but I could not swear as to whether he had a hat or a cap on.'

Mr Scammell was then re-examined by Mr Bingham and answered, 'I saw the prisoner about half an hour after, by the light of a winnowing machine of mine which the mob had set fire to. The mob went away to *The Compass* public house after they had got the money. They came back about half an hour later, and destroyed and burnt my winnowing machine.'

Henry White was called to give some evidence and said, 'I saw the mob which had been at Mr Scammell's when they went back there from the public house. I saw Mr Scammell's winnowing machine burnt. The prisoner set fire

Thursday, 6th January 1831

to it. They were at Mr Scammell's twice, the second time at 4 o'clock in the morning. I was examined at Fordingbridge and the examination was taken in writing.'

White's deposition was put in and read. White was then asked what sort of waistcoat the prisoner had been wearing and replied, 'It was a dark waistcoat, with a white stripe. I am certain the outside one was not a red plush one. I am sure it was the prisoner.'

Mr Scammell was re-called and stated that when the mob were burning the machine the prisoner interfered, and but for him it was probable that the whole place would have been burnt. 'The mob wanted to set fire to it near my premises, and Cheater made them take it out into the open field and burn it there.'

Sir Charles Hulse was called to speak in favour of the prisoner. 'I know the prisoner very well. He has been in my service for two and a half years. He has borne an extremely good character. I have found him perfectly honest and have never found him other than perfectly quiet. I was not present on the 23rd and 24th November. He was in a better situation than the others and has not been discharged from my service.'

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the case and the Jury found him *not guilty*.²³

William Cheater was again put to the bar and charged with having assaulted William Crook, the servant of Mr George Budden, put him in fear, and with robbing him of ten sovereigns, the property of the said George Budden, at Damerham South on the 24th November last.

Mr Crook was called, 'I am bailiff to Mr Budden of Damerham. On the 24th November last I was at Mr Budden's house I had been alarmed when I heard that a mob was in the area. At about one o'clock in the morning they came. There were about 60 people in the mob. I don't know that the prisoner was one of them. They said that they had heard that I had money to give to them, rather than have any mischief done.'

²³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

Thursday, 6th January 1831

Charles Francis Vincent was then examined by Mr Sergeant Wilde and said, 'I am a servant to Mr Budden. I was at my master's farm at Damerham, on the morning of the 24th November last. Between 1 and 2 o'clock on that morning a mob of about 60 or 70 people came up to the gate. On hearing the mob Crook and I went to the gate. They soon came up. I saw the prisoner there, he said, "My name is William Cheater, I am foreman of the mob, and I do not care who knows it." They carried sticks or iron bars in their hands and raised them over Mr Crook's head. Crook gave the money to the prisoner. It was mentioned by the mob that they had received 10 sovereigns. Cheater told Crook to tell the other part of the mob when they came up, that he and his party had gone to *The Compass Inn*, and that Crook had given them 10 sovereigns. They laid hold of me by the arm and pressed me to go with them to *The Compass*. I got away as soon as I could and returned home.'

Vincent was cross-examined by Mr Rowe and replied, 'I was as close as possible to Cheater and took particular notice of him because he said that he was foreman of the mob. There was some moonlight, the moon was not gone down and the light of the moon came sideways across his face. I don't know that I ever saw the prisoner before that night. He wore a dark waistcoat with fustian sleeves to it. I saw him get the 10 sovereigns from William Crook, he took them one by one and as he put them into his pocket he said, "It's all right." There was light enough to see the difference between a sovereign and a shilling.'

William Crook was re-called and examined by Mr Bingham. 'When the mob came they demanded money, knowing that I had some,' said Mr Crook. 'They held up sticks and said that they would have it. I asked who was their headman and who I was to give it to. They said William Cheater was the headman and I gave the money to him. I gave it because many of them demanded it and I gave it to prevent mischief. They held sticks over my head a very short time before I gave the money.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Rowe, Mr Crook said, 'I cannot say I was in great fear but I thought it likely that personal violence would be shown towards me. They said

Thursday, 6th January 1831

that they would have money or they would destroy the premises.’

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the case and the Jury without hesitation found the prisoner *guilty*.

There were two other indictments against Cheater. ²⁴

Shadrach Blake, 21, William Holt, 19, and Thomas Vivash, 22, were put to the bar next. They were charged with breaking into the house of William Fulbrook, at Hippenscombe on the 22nd November, and stealing a tea caddy, his property.

Mr Sergeant Wilde, in stating the case to the Jury, said, ‘This indictment arises out of the disturbances which have lately visited this county, and will add another instance to the many which the experience of the Jury has been supplied in this commission, of the gradual progress in crime made by persons, assembled at first only for the destruction of machinery. It would appear that a number of persons, who had met for the avowed purpose of destroying thrashing machines, went to the house of the prosecutor, in the afternoon, and demanded – first, victuals and drink; and then, a small sum of money. They were refused both, and the son of the prosecutor having declared that he would fire on the first man who entered, and having taken up his gun for that purpose, the parties retired, but came again at a late hour in large numbers, and broke into the house by beating in the doors and windows, and having got in, they plundered it of several articles, amongst other things of a tea caddy, which was found secreted in a house where it would be proved that one of the prisoners lodged. The three prisoners will be fully identified as having been conspicuous in this outrage.’ ²⁵

Thomas Fulbrook was called and examined by Mr Bingham. ‘I was at Hippenscombe on the 22nd November last. I saw Vivash and Blake who came to our house at about 5 o’clock in the afternoon. There were about 10 or 12 others with them. It is my father’s house. Vivash asked for some victuals and drink. I said I had none, and would not

²⁴ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

²⁵ The Times, 8 January 1831

Thursday, 6th January 1831

give any. Blake said, "You will wish you had give me a shilling, if you don't give me something I will come with a mob before 4 tomorrow morning and burn the house down." They then said they would break the doors, and I said, if any of them came in, I would shoot them, and I took my gun and pointed it at them. They then began hitting the palings and I took up my gun and cocked it. I told them that if they did not leave I would shoot them. They then went away. They came again between 8 and 9 o'clock in the evening to the number of 300 or 400. They beat violently on the doors and the windows. They beat in the panels of the doors and windows and got in. Several people came into the house and after they had gone I missed some articles, the tea caddy and two ladles for taking out tea and a linen tablecloth. The house is the property of my father, William Fulbrook, so were the articles taken.'²⁶

Isaac Grace was called and examined by Mr Sergeant Wilde. 'I work for Mr Fulbrook and I remember the night when the mob came. Men got in through the window. I saw Blake get in through the windows. Blake took the tablecloth, there was something on it but I know not what. Holt got in at the window. I saw him drink some beer. There were about 20 people in the house. The family were going to supper and the cloth and all that was on it were taken away by the mob. The mob numbered between 200 and 300 in all.'

Joseph Barber, a young lad of about nine years old was called and said, 'I was not in service of Fulbrook on the 22nd. I saw the prisoner Vivash get in at the window after he had broken it with a stick. I saw him draw some beer. There were 200 or 300 breaking things about the house, in the barn and all about.'

The little boy gave his evidence in a very shrewd, clear, and intelligent manner.

'Did you see me?' the prisoner Vivash asked the boy.

Yes, I saw you get in at the window,' replied the lad.

It is false!' said Vivash. 'Mr Fulbrook could not get a man to swear against me, so he has got this boy.'

Thomas Hill, who was a special constable, produced the tea caddy and said, 'I searched Blake's home on the 25th

²⁶ The Times attributes the threat, to return with a mob before 4 in the morning, to **Robert Vivash**, the other papers and The Minutes of the Trials say it was **Shadrach Blake** that used these words.

Thursday, 6th January 1831

November and found the tea caddy now produced. It was under the bedding of the bed belonging to Mary Vivash. Blake lodged in her house.'

Mary Vivash was called and said, 'Blake lodged at my house. Hill came to my house and searched a bed in which I slept. I never put it there. Blake brought the tea caddy here. Nobody else could have brought it. I did not know it was there until I saw it found. There were four of us slept in the same room, but we put up a partition. There was Blake and his wife and my daughter and I.'

Thomas Fulbrook was re-called and was able to identify the tea caddy as his father's property.

Edmund Thatcher was called. 'I am an innkeeper at Great Bedwin. On the 22nd November Blake was with others under my window and I heard him say that they had not left a square of glass at Fulbrook's house and that the old fellow was served out nicely. Blake asked for beer on the Tuesday and I refused it. He said that he had two shillings for his work that day, but that he had done no work. Blake ordered them all to be in readiness next morning.'²⁷

In his defence Blake said, 'When we went to Fulbrook's in the day time we asked if his machines was pulled down. He said that they were and we went to the barn to look. He told us that if we did not go away he would blow our brains out. We went away. I was not there at night.'

Vivash and Holt made a similar defence.

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the case and the Jury found Shadrach Blake *guilty* and *acquitted* Robert Vivash and William Holt.²⁸

In the last case of the day Robert Blake, 25, was indicted for destroying a thrashing machine, at Shalbourne on the 23rd November, the property of William Barnes and others, Executors of John Barnes. Shadrach Blake was not tried on this indictment, having already been capitally convicted.

The prosecutor, William Barnes, was called. 'I saw the prisoner strike the machine and it was totally destroyed.

²⁷ The Times, refers to this witness as Mr Bedwin

²⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** In the Minutes of the Trials **Robert Vivash** is named as **Robert Viveash**.

Thursday, 6th January 1831

The prisoner put some of the brass work into his pocket and took it away with him. 'There were about 300 in the mob and Blake was very active amongst them. He is a shoemaker.'

John Westmacott said, 'On the 23rd November a mob came to Mr Barnes house. The thrashing machine had been taken down but was in a perfect state. The prisoner was with the mob. I saw him strike the machine with a bar of iron and I saw him put a piece of brass, the spindle box, in his pocket. There were nearly 300 in the mob. The prisoner was one of the most active.'

Blake said that what the witness had sworn was false. The Jury found Blake *guilty*, and he was sentenced to transportation for seven years.

Mr Justice Alderson addressed Blake saying, 'While anyone might leave his purse with safety with the other unfortunate men, you, prisoner, will leave this country as a complete felon for you have been found guilty of stealing a piece of brass.'²⁹

The Court adjourned to the Nisi Prius Court at seven o'clock this evening, and will reopen tomorrow, Friday 7th January, at 9 o'clock.

²⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. The Times, 8 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

Friday, 7th January 1831

Mr Baron Vaughan and Mr Justice Alderson sat in the Nisi Prius Court today, and the following Jury was sworn. ¹

Stephen Bell	James Pavey	John King
James Cheyney	Robert Green	Abraham Newham
James Compton	James Ingram	George Williams
Thomas Griffin	John Millard	John Sutton

In the first case Charles Davis, 31, James Love otherwise James Luff, John Harvey, the younger, and Job Hailstone were indicted for having on the 23rd November at Alton Barnes destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Robert Pile.

Mr Pile again repeated the evidence he had given in the previous trials relating to the attack on his property and himself. He told the Court that the prisoners Harvey, Davis and Hailstone were all actively engaged in the destruction of the machine. 'I have nothing to say against Luff, and I suppose the Grand Jury must have mistaken him for Lane, against whom they had ignored the bill, but whom I had sworn positively against.'

Love was therefore *acquitted*.

On being cross-examined by the Court Mr Pile said, 'Davis put his hand on my neck cloth and tried to strangle me.'

In his evidence Mr Clift said that his machine had been broken before Mr Pile's, on the same day. 'Davis, who was called the Captain, assisted in breaking it.'

He was cross-examined by Mr Williams and said, 'Hailstone has always borne a good character. I have known him for 10 or 12 years.'

Stephen Bullock told the Court how he had seen Davis with the mob at both Mr Clift's and Mr Pile's. On being cross-examined he said, 'Davis tried to protect Mr Pile. I did not see Hailstone at Mr Pile's. I heard Davis say that they would break Mr Pile's machine and make him pay for it.'

¹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Friday, 7th January 1831

The prisoners were then called for their own defence. Davis said, 'I am very sorry I was so foolish as to go about breaking machines.'

Harvey said nothing in his defence. Hailstone said that he was not on the ground, and never had a hammer.

Mr Pile expressed his regret at having to appear against Harvey and Hailstone. 'I am certain that they would not have destroyed my machine, if they had not been misled. They are both good workmen and I have never heard anything against either of them. I beg to recommend them to mercy.'

Mr Baron Vaughan summed up the case and the Jury found the prisoners *guilty*, but recommended Harvey and Hailstone to mercy. ²

James Burden, 36, Charles Davis, 31, Stephen Dunford, 21, James Gardener, alias Edmund, 22, Thomas Goddard, 20, Harry King, 22, Edward Lake, 29, James Lane, 36, John Pinchin, 26, Isaac Roberts, 22, George Smith, otherwise George Ewens, Laban Stone, 22, and Thomas Wells were put to the bar, charged with robbing John Clift of one sovereign and other monies, his property, on the 23rd November at Woodborough.

The Attorney general stated the case.

Mr Clift was called. 'I was visited by a large mob on the 23rd November. At 12 o'clock there were about 200, most of them had sledges, bars of iron, and hammers. Roberts was there, but I did not see him do anything. John Pinchin, Harry King Stephen Dunford, James Gardener, Charles Davis, James Burden and Laban Stone were there. They said they had come to break the machines. They said they would break my machines if I did not give them money. I gave Laban Stone two half crowns. The rest of the mob were in sight. They broke a hay-making machine. They broke open two barns, and broke a chaff-cutting machine to pieces, and also a thrashing machine. After they broke my machines I went up to the house and they followed. My wife was in the house. I saw Davis, Burden, Roberts, Lane and Stone there. The mob surrounded the windows, and these

² The Times, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831.

Friday, 7th January 1831

men were among them. They held up their hammers and said they wanted more money and my wife gave them two half crowns and a five shilling piece in my presence, but I do not know who received it. The mob did not go away. They demanded money again. Davis was there then. They said they were not satisfied, and held up their hammers. My wife gave them half a sovereign in my presence.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Halcombe and Mr Ball, Mr Clift said, 'I did not see Gardener with the mob when the machines were broken, nor when the second money was given.'

Ann Clift, the wife of the prosecutor, corroborated this testimony and stated that Davis had acted as captain.

John Martin, a gardener employed at Mr Clift's was also able to confirm this evidence and identified Pinchin, Davis, Smith, Burden, Goddard and Wells as having formed part of the mob.

William Robbins was called and was able to identify Lake and Gardener as having been in the mob.

Stephen Bullock said, 'I was present when the machines were broken. Davis and Lane called themselves 'Captains'. Laban Stone was there.'

The prisoners were then called for their defence. Wells and Stone had nothing to say. George Smith left it to his Counsel. Roberts, Pinchin, Goddard and Burden all said that they were pressed by the mob.

Davis said, 'I am sorry I was with the mob, but I did not do anything. Laban Stone was not there.'

Mr Justice Alderson summed up the case and the Jury found Charles Davis and Laban Stone *guilty*, and *acquitted* all the others. ³

Isaac Roberts, John Pinchin, Harry King, Edward Lake, James Gardener, Thomas Goddard, Robert Romaine, James Lane, Stephen Dunford, James Burden, George Smith, otherwise George Ewens, and Thomas Wells, were then indicted for destroying a thrashing machine, the property of John Clift, on the 23rd November at Woodborough.

³ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

This was another case involving the same mob as in the last case and the evidence was very similar.

Stephen Bullock, who acknowledged that he was with the mob, and that he assisted in breaking the machine, said that said the prisoners were in the mob and actively engaged.

Mr Baron Vaughan summed up the case and the Jury found Isaac Roberts, John Pinchin, James Burden, George Smith, Thomas Wells and James Lane *guilty*, and Goddard, Robert Romaine, Harry King, Stephen Dunford, Edward Lake and James Gardener, *not guilty*.⁴

James Lane, 36, William Marsh and John Rose, 23, were indicted for destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Joseph Perry, on the 21st November at All Cannings.

The evidence was conclusive and the Jury, without hesitation, found the prisoners *guilty*.⁵

Isaac Roberts, John Pinchin, James Lane, James Burden, George Smith, Thomas Wells, William Marsh and John Rose were placed at the bar to receive their judgement.

Mr Baron Vaughan sentenced them all to seven years transportation, for breaking thrashing machines, with and additional seven years for James Lane, to commence at the expiration of the first seven years.⁶

A judgement of death was recorded against Charles Davis, Laban Stone and Gifford North, for robbery.⁷

Peter Withers, 23, was then put to the bar charged with feloniously cutting and wounding Oliver Calley Codrington, with a hammer, with intent to murder him, on the 23rd November, at Ogbourne St Andrew.

⁴ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁵ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁶ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁷ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

The Attorney General stated the case and called Mr Baskerville, a magistrate of the county. I was at Rockley on the 23rd November and saw between 40 and 50 people assembled together. I rode up to them, and I advised them to go home peaceably as they were rendering themselves liable to transportation. They said they did not care a d – n for the magistrates, for though there were only 40 or 50 then, there were 1,300 or 1,400 waiting to join them. I told them I did not care if there were 14,000, I would not allow them to break machines in my presence. Mr Codrington then rode up and said he was a special constable, and advised them to go home peaceably and quietly. They then surrounded Mr Codrington and myself. We were trying to keep them back. Withers then came up close to my horse, and said, “by G – d we will have blood or money.” I then said, “I’ll have you,” and laid hold of him, but he got away. I produced a pistol, and desired him to stop, as my prisoner. He ran and I called to Mr Codrington to pursue him, which he did, and got him against the wall, and upon him seizing Withers, a number of the mob attacked him. I then put my pistol in my pocket, took up my whip, rode at the mob, and dispersed them. I seized Withers again, and received several blows from behind, the mob being there. The arm with which I held Withers was struck useless by my side. My horse then rushed forward about twenty yards clear of the mob, and I fell to the ground. Mr Codrington was on horseback when he first came up. The blows that I received caused me to fall from my horse. When I was on the ground, I saw Mr Codrington lying across the wall on his back, with his head on one side and his legs on the other, as if he were killed. I immediately ran to him, and found him bleeding very much from the head, and insensible. He was taken to my house, where he stayed from Tuesday until the Saturday, suffering from the effects of the blows. My house is a few hundred yards from the place. I rode to Marlborough, which is about two miles off, for assistance. The prisoner was apprehended at Temple Down that same morning.’

On being cross-examined by Mr Ball, Mr Baskerville said, ‘I did not say, “d – m your eyes, if you or any of you, come near me or my horse, I’ll blow your brains out.” The

Friday, 7th January 1831

magistrates took down my deposition, I was not sitting on the bench as one of them. I was sworn. I was present when the prisoner was committed. The mob was going towards Mr Canning's. I rode to meet the mob with Mr Canning. Some of the mob were on the road leading to Mr Canning's farm and some on the Down. The expression Withers made use of was "By God, we'll have blood or money". He was very riotous, and the first to push by me with a blacksmith's hammer on his shoulder. In the first instance I advised them all to go away. I had not produced my pistol when Withers made use of the expression. I rode through the mob, hitting right and left with the butt end of my whip, to extricate Mr Codrington, who was surrounded and attacked by the mob. The mob said that they were going to break machines, and were going in the direction of Mr Canning's. I did not hear them say Mr Canning had requested them to break his machines.'

Mr Ball asked Mr Baskerville to repeat Withers expression relating to blood and money.

Mr Baron Vaughan interrupted, 'Mr Ball, we have had the expression three times, but of course, if you wish it, we must hear it again.'

Mr Baskerville repeated the expression, precisely as before.

Mr Ball then asked how it was that he did not see Mr Codrington fall.

To which the witness replied, 'Because I had fallen, and was on the ground myself.'

Mr Justice Alderson said, 'The witness has already told us this. It would appear that Mr Ball has not heard the examination.'

'This is an important case', replied Mr Ball. 'I hope I am not taking up the time of the Court unnecessarily.'

'It is taking up the time of the Court when a question is asked six or seven times over, ' replied Mr Justice Alderson.

Mr Oliver Calley Codrington was then called. 'I went to Rockley on the 23rd November. I was sworn in as a special constable the night before, along with five others. I was not appointed in writing. I was on horseback. The mare I was on stood 15 hands and a half, and was rather spirited. I had a

Friday, 7th January 1831

hunting whip with a bone hook on the end. I joined Mr Baskerville and Mr Canning near the latter's house. There were about 40 or 50 people following us. I counted 40 myself. I did not know any of the men. I saw Mr Baskerville, with a pistol in his hand, pursuing a man. I had no arms at all. The fellow passed me and Mr Baskerville told me to pursue him and said he had demanded money, or some such words. I got the man against the wall and seized him by the collar. I received several very severe blows on my head and body, and I suppose my horse did also, as she started away, which left Withers at his liberty. I remember pulling my horse and attempting to pursue the same man. I recollect nothing further. When I recovered which was about two hours later, I found myself in Mr Baskerville's house, and a surgeon bleeding me. The principal blows were over my right eye and nose. When I came to my senses my face and clothes were covered all over with blood. There is a scar now, of an inch and a half long, down the right side of my nose. The surgeon came again that day and until the Saturday following. I think I was bled a second time, when I was put to bed. I was compelled to keep to my bed for two or three days. The surgeon lives in Marlborough.'

On being cross-examined, by Mr Ball, Mr Codrington replied, 'I dare say the surgeon is in Marlborough now.'

Benjamin North was called and said, 'I recollect the 23rd November. I was in the mob at Rockley. There were nearly 200 there. It was about half past ten. Withers was there. He conducted himself very well as far as I know. I did not hear him say anything but I saw him throw the blacksmith's hammer at Mr Codrington, which knocked him off his horse onto a wall, backwards. A minute afterwards I saw blood on his head and face. The hammer struck him on the right side of the head. I did not go nearer to him than eight yards. I do not know that the blood was over plentiful.'

Mr Baskerville was re-called and said, 'When I first saw Mr Codrington after he was knocked off his horse, his face was very bloody, and his eye appeared out, but on going to him the blood ran down my great coat. There was a cut over his eye and down his nose, and his eye was closed.'

Friday, 7th January 1831

Mr Codrington was re-called and said, 'I received several blows to my head and face. I could not say whether the skin was broken before the last blow.'

John Chumm was called and stated, 'I am a blacksmith. I saw Withers at about eight o'clock in the morning of the 23rd November, he came to my smithy. He took a hand hammer, such as is used on the anvil, not a sledge, it weighed about five pounds. It was sharp at one end, and smooth at the other.'

Benjamin Hollick said, 'I was at Rockley on the 23rd November. There were about 200 persons there. Peter Withers was among them. I saw Withers fling the hammer, which hit Mr Codrington. He had thrown it before at Mr Baskerville, and missed him. He then picked up the hammer, and flung it at Mr Codrington, whose horse was just rising to jump over the wall. The prisoner was in Mr Canning's yard. I saw the hammer strike Mr Codrington, I was about 40 yards off.'

The witness was asked to point out the distance in the Court, and pointed out about 10 yards.

'When the hammer hit him,' continued Hollick, 'the horse threw him onto the wall and he fell upon his back. Blood came from his mouth and nose. The horse kicked the wall down and he fell backwards on it. The wall was made of rough stones. I did not see that his head come into contact with the wall. When the horse struggled to get over it pulled it down, and Mr Codrington fell on that part which the horse had kicked down. It was lower where he fell than the two sides.'

William Canning was called and said, 'I am a farmer at Rockley, and was with Mr Baskerville and Mr Codrington on the 23rd November. Some of the mob had large hammers and axes, such as the carpenters drive the spokes with. Withers was there. I did not see Mr Codrington struck, but saw him lying across the wall. His head was hanging off the wall. I did not see Withers come up when Mr Codrington was on the wall. About ten minutes afterwards Withers said to me that he would hit 40 such men as Mr Codrington.'

The witness was requested to state the words used by the prisoner.

Friday, 7th January 1831

‘One of his comrades asked him why he had hit Mr Codrington and Withers answered “D – m my eyes, I would hit 40 such b – s.” About half an hour later my thrashing machine was broken.’

Withers, when called upon for his defence, said that he left it to his counsel, but did say that Mr Baskerville and Mr Codrington had both struck him over the head with their whips.

Mr Codrington was recalled and said, ‘I am not aware that I struck him, but I seized him with my right hand and my whip was in that hand.’

Mr Baskerville said, ‘I cannot say, but I might have hit him when I rode up to assist Mr Codrington. I was hitting right and left.’

Mr Baron Vaughan, after explaining to the Jury the difference of the laws as they related to murder and manslaughter, said, ‘Mr Codrington was perfectly justified in attempting to apprehend the prisoner, as he was called on to do so by Mr Baskerville, who is a magistrate. It did not signify whether he was a constable or a private gentleman.’

Mr Baron Vaughan then went over the evidence, and commented upon the different points that bore strongly upon the case.

The Jury found the prisoner *guilty* of assaulting Mr Codrington, with intent to do him some grievous bodily harm, and to prevent his own lawful apprehension.

Mr Baron Vaughan said that they would take their time to consider their judgement. ⁸

The Court adjourned at eight o’clock, and will reopen tomorrow, Saturday 8th January, at 9 o’clock.

Mr Justice Parke and T G B Estcourt Esq took their seats in the Crown Court at nine o’clock this morning. The following members of the Jury were sworn in. ⁹

John Hale	James Green	George Edwards
Thomas Harwood	William Moyle	Thomas Sealy

⁸ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁹ TNA - ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Friday, 7th January 1831

Robert Futcher
David Goddard

John Lush
W^m Henry Richards

Robert Hyatt
Matthew Coombs

Joseph Watts and David Heath were found *not guilty* of destroying a thrashing machine at Liddington on the 23rd November, the property of Peter Dore. ¹⁰

Juryman Matthew Coombs was exchanged for Richard Williams before the next case was called. ¹¹

John Eyres, James Keel, William Hillier, Enoch Leach, David Ranger and James Romaine were indicted for having destroyed a thrashing machine at Netheravon on the 22nd November, the property of Thomas Jenner. ¹²

Thomas Jenner told the Court how the mob, of around 100 people, came to his farm at about half past two on the afternoon of the 22nd November. 'Amongst the mob I saw John Eyres, with an iron bar. They threw parts of the machine out of the barn and Keel was breaking them. I also saw Romaine, he had a sledge with which he was breaking the machine. Enoch Leach was sometimes using the same sledge to break the pieces. William Hillier was there, but he was doing nothing. I did not notice him while the machine was being broken in the barn. The mob offered me no personal violence. Their sole object was to destroy the machine. The prisoners are agricultural labourers, except Romaine who is a bricklayer's labourer. Leach lives in Netheravon, they all live there, except Hillier and Romaine.'

Charles Stagg was called and said, 'I was at Jenner's. I saw Ranger breaking the machine with a sledge. James Romaine was also there. Hillier was with the mob at my father's on the same day. They went immediately from my father's to Jenner's.'

James Stagg said, 'I live at Enford. On the 22nd November I saw Eyres and Hillier with the mob at my father's, they were breaking the machine. We agreed to give the labourers two shillings a day before they went to

¹⁰ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

¹¹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

¹² The Newspaper reports all name the prisoner **James Keel** as **David Keal**, he is named as **James Keel** in the Gaol Calendar and the Minute Books

Netheravon. Eyres has always had constant employment. The wages before were seven shillings.’

Witnesses were called to speak in favour of the prisoners.

A farmer gave Eyres a good character for the last seven years. He said that he had known Eyres since his birth. On cross-examination he said that he had heard that the prisoner had been in prison before. ‘I am a Dissenting Minister as well as a farmer. The prisoner is not one of my flock, but I have seen him attending my congregation. I have heard that he was in custody for felony.’

Mr Justice Parke spoke to this witness. ‘You should be more careful in coming to give a person a character, which you wish to limit to seven years. This will not do, it bears the appearance of an imposition.’

Mr Jenner said, ‘Leach is a very honest steady man.’

His Lordship then summed up the case and the Jury found John Eyres, Enoch Leach, David Ranger, James Romaine, and James Keel *guilty* and *acquitted* William Hillier.¹³

William Hillier and David Ranger were again put to the bar, charged with breaking a thrashing machine, the property of Charles Stagg, senior, at Netheravon on the 22nd November. Enoch Leach was not tried on this indictment.¹⁴

Charles Stagg, senior was called and said, ‘I live at Netheravon. On the 22nd November a mob of about 100 people came. David Ranger was there. My thrashing machine had been moved out into the rick yard. The mob destroyed it. Ranger said that all my machines should go. I said that there were plenty without but he repeated that they should all go. I did not see Ranger strike the machine. The mob all went after the machine was destroyed.’

On cross-examination Mr Stagg admitted that he had taken his machine to pieces and in doing so some parts of it were broken and it would have been difficult to put it together again.

¹³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

¹⁴ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

Friday, 7th January 1831

The prisoners were *acquitted* as it appeared from the evidence that the machine was already broken, beyond repair, when the mob arrived. ¹⁵

William Hillier was put before the bar for a third time. He was indicted for breaking a thrashing machine, at Enford, on the 22nd November, the property of William Sweetapple.

Mr Sweetapple told the Court that the prisoner was one of the mob that came to his farm on the 22nd November. 'He was one of the most active in the destruction of my machine.'

In his defence Hillier said, 'I was pressed by the mob, and never broke Mr Sweetapple's machine. The farmers themselves desired the mob to go round and break all the machines in the parish.'

Mr Lilford said, 'I do not know anything of the farmers meeting in the church yard or of their giving consent to the breaking of machines.'

Mr Sweetapple said that he was at the meeting to ask the mob what they wanted. 'They said they wanted two shillings a day and we agreed to give it to them. They said that they would go on and break all machines. The mob were in the church yard for about a quarter of an hour.'

Mr Stagg said, 'I was in the churchyard. The mob said that they wanted two shillings a day and one of the overseers asked what else they wanted and was told that they wanted a gallon loaf and sixpence as it had said in the paper. We agreed to this. We then recommended them all to go to work. John Eyres said that they would break all the machines. No consent was given by the farmers.'

Mary Oram said, 'The prisoner lived four miles off. I was walking with him when the mob forced him to go with them. They collared him and he went with them. He had nothing in his hand.'

James Hillier was called, 'I am brother to the prisoner. The farmers all drew out their machine. On Sunday night Farmer William Martin told me and another man that he had put his machine out and that any person might break it to pieces. George White and Isaac Hill were present.'

¹⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

Mr Thomas Martin was then called. He denied that his father had given leave for his machine to be broken. 'I know the mob was persuaded not to break the machine to pieces. Our ricks were burnt near 12 months ago. Our machines were drawn out because we heard that where machines had been drawn out there were no fires.'

Mr Sweetapple also stated that there had been a fire on his premises last January.

William Eyres said, 'On Sunday evening a man came into the Parish and made alarm that all machines were to be taken down and destroyed to prevent fires. It was done in fright.'

Mr Justice Parke summed up the case and the Jury found the prisoner *guilty*.

Hillier said, 'It is a very wrong thing that I should suffer for doing what the farmers had given us consent to do.'

To which Mr Justice Parke observed, 'If the farmers had given their consent it was pretty clear why they had done so. It was to escape a greater evil and a more serious loss.'¹⁶

Thomas Topp, 20, and Henry Obourne were indicted for destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Henry Self, in the parish of Fonthill Bishop on the 25th November. James Blandford was not tried on this count as he has already been capitally convicted.¹⁷

Mr Self told the court, 'There was no part of the thrashing machine in the barn except the stage, when the mob came. My reason for removing the machine was on account of the fires there had been. I believe the breaking of the machine on taking it down was accidental.'

As the machine had been rendered useless by the owner, before it was broken by the mob, Topp and Obourne were *not guilty* of the destruction, and the Jury, on the direction of Mr Justice Parke, *acquitted* the prisoners.¹⁸

¹⁶ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

¹⁷ TNA - ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

¹⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

On the application of Mr Missing and Mr Rowe, two prisoners, West and Obourne, were discharged, there being no other indictments against them. ¹⁹

At this point one of the Jurymen said that he hoped his Lordship would excuse his sitting any longer as he had some business to do that was of the utmost importance. The Court was considering this application when the Juryman said that as he had no property in the county he ought not to be kept.

Mr Justice Parke said, 'If you have no property in this county, you ought not to sit.'

Mr Sergeant Wilde said, 'I had expressed some fear when I found that fresh names had been added to the panel this morning.'

Mr Justice Parke told the Juryman that he must certainly quit the box and said that the qualifications of the jurymen ought to be inquired into. The following Jury was then sworn in.

John Tubb	Robert Futcher	Josiah Whicker
John Durnford	James Green	Joseph Ball
John Hale	David Goddard	James Thatcher
Thomas Harwood	Joseph Sweetapple	James Tyler ²⁰

Robert Barrett, 26, was then put to the bar and charged with robbing Mary Packer at Stanton Fitzwarren, on the 25th November, of one sovereign, the property of Richard Packer.

James Bigley was called and said, 'I am servant to Richard Packer. At five o'clock, on the morning of the 25th November, a mob came to Martens House. They broke the catch off the outer door of the house. I was alarmed and came down and opened the door. I saw many people in the Court, nearly 100. They asked me for a light and I got it. They took it to the machine that was in a little close, a short distance from the house. They broke the machine. I saw Robert Barrett. He asked for money, but I do not recollect what he said. He asked for a sovereign. Mrs Packer was

¹⁹ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁰ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

present all the time. Barrett obtained the sovereign from Mrs Packer. As he went out of the door he said, "Bob Barrett has got a sovereign". There were three people who came in and it was one of these three that broke the door.'

Mrs Packer said, 'I am the wife of Richard Packer. On the 25th November last a mob came. I was alarmed at the noise at the door. I called a servant and my son but before they could get up the mob had forced the door. When I first came down nobody was in the house, they were out breaking the machines. They came in quietly and the prisoner was one of them. He spoke to me and said he wanted money. I fetched a sovereign and gave it to him. He used no threat. The mob was not making any riot, only calling to those inside. I did not hear from Barrett anything that induced me to think that there would be a fire if I refused to give the sovereign. Fear induced me to give the money. Mr Packer was upstairs, he is very aged.'

Mr Justice Parke said that he did not think that there was sufficient evidence to prove that the money had been given under that degree of fear, which was required by the law. Barrett was therefore found *not guilty*.²¹

Robert Barrett was again put to the bar, together with Robert Willoughby and George Ball, charged with destroying a thrashing machine at Highworth, on the 24th November, the property of George Moore Edwards.

Joseph Skinner was called and said, 'I saw George Ball breaking machines. Robert Barrett was looking round to see that the iron was broken. Robert Willoughby had a stick and hit the ironwork of the machine. After the mob had finished at Mr Edwards' they went up and had some beer, then they went away and broke a machine belonging to Mr Smith, at Witham. They also broke a machine at Mr Wyld's, the magistrate.'

Robert Barrett is a Horse Jockey, Robert Willoughby a Carpenter and George Ball a Labourer.

Mr Edwards was called to give evidence on the character of Willoughby and Ball, but said that he knew nothing particular of either of them.

²¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

The prisoners were all found *guilty*, and Mr Justice Parke immediately sentenced them each to seven years transportation. ²²

Robert Vivash was then put to the bar charged with destroying a thrashing machine at Mildenhall, on the 22nd November, the property of Edward Vaisey.

Mr Vaisey was called and said, 'Vivash is a bricklayer. He was with the mob and assisted, although he did not strike the first blow. He was labouring hard in the destruction of the machine.'

Vivash had nothing to say in his own defence.

The Jury found the prisoner *guilty*, and he was sentenced to seven years transportation.

Isaac Looker, who was convicted the day before yesterday, and sentenced to transportation for life for sending a threatening letter, was again put to the bar, charged with sending a letter to Henry Woodman, threatening to burn his farm if Mr Woodman gave evidence against any of the prisoners confined in gaol. In a second count he was charged with having aided and abetted in the sending of the above letter.

When the names of the Jury who had tried the prisoner on the former occasion had been called over, Mr Justice Parke said that, as they were acquainted with the facts connected with the charges, it would be better that they should retire, and another Jury be sworn in. It had been found necessary to adopt this course, in consequence of the occurrence that took place immediately after the conviction of the prisoner at the former trial, when the prisoner's son had come forward and confessed that he had written the letter in question. ²³

The following Jury was then sworn in.

John Hale	David Goddard	Ambrose Willis
Thomas Harwood	James Tyler	Charles Edwards
Robert Futcher	Thomas Sealy	John Jeffery

²² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

²³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

W^m H^y Richards

Henry Coleman

James Green ²⁴

Mr Sergeant Wilde, in stating the case to the Jury, observed, that in consequence of what had occurred since the last conviction of the prisoner, it was deemed advisable to put him on trial again for a similar offence. ²⁵

In this indictment the prisoner is charged with having written the letter, and in another count he is charged with aiding and abetting in the writing and sending of the letter.

Much of the evidence given in this case is the same as that given in Wednesday's trial. Three letters, on small pieces of paper, were sent to Mr Vaisey, Mr Woodman, and Mr Rowland, all of whom had charges against some of the prisoner's nephews. The letters threatened each of them with the burning of his house, and with having his head chopped off, if he gave evidence against any person in prison. The prisoner having been suspected as the writer, was taken into custody, and on searching his house, there was found in his bureau a piece of blank paper, which fitted with the three pieces sent to the parties above named, and had evidently formed part of the same sheet. The watermark was divided in the separation of the pieces, and the letter S. was cut in two, but by placing one of the notes in question close to the piece of blank paper, the letter S was complete.

The three notes were sworn to as the handwriting of the prisoner.

Thomas Watts was called and said, 'I live near Woodman. At about seven o'clock, on the morning of the 22nd December, I picked up a letter by the cart house, near the prosecutor's farmyard. The letter was beside the road and the dwelling house is beside the farmyard. I gave the letter to Woodman about three hours after I found it. I kept it in my pocket until I gave it to Woodman. I cannot read. I have known prisoner for about 12 years. I am keeper to Lord Ailesbury. I never had a quarrel with the prisoner. I know of no quarrel between the prisoner and Lord Ailesbury's tenants. I was going to fetch wood from the forest. Many other people frequent the road. I showed the

²⁴ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Books

²⁵ Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

paper to a person named Waite before I gave it to Woodman.'

Henry Woodman took the stand. 'I am a farmer in the parish of Mildenhall. Shortly before Christmas day, on Wednesday the 22nd December, I received a letter from Thomas Watts. He had found it on the road, near the house. I know the prisoner; he lives not half a mile from me. I had a warrant out against his nephew for breaking machines. I had it out about a fortnight before. I have never had any transactions with the prisoner for the last six or seven years. I think the last time was in 1823 or 1824. The last transaction existed 6 or 7 years ago. I recollect his handwriting. I believe it to be the prisoner's handwriting,' he said after being handed the letter and some Bills. I am strengthened in the supposition from comparing it with his Bills. I am a tenant of Lord Ailesbury. The last time I saw the Prisoner write was 1823 or 1824. I never saw him write anything but his name.'

Mr Vaisey was then called and said, 'I know the prisoner. I prosecuted a nephew of his. On 22nd December I was in prosecution of Robert Vivash, the prisoner's nephew, at the time when Woodman received the letter. I believe the prisoner wrote the paper and at the same time a letter was sent to me. I believe all these papers put in are the writing of the prisoner. The prisoner and I have not been good friends for 3 or 4 years. I have not seen him write since 1824. I then settled a bill with him. It might be 1823 since I have seen him write anything but his name. I compared the writing that I received with his bills and other writings. The prisoner had measured for me and used to put it down in writing and I settled with him on the faith of it.'

Mr John Rowland said, 'I live at Axford farm. On Tuesday the 21st December I received the paper now produced. I believe it to be in the prisoner's hand writing.' He went on to repeat the evidence he had given in the previous case against Looker.

Philip Watts also repeated the evidence he had given at the former trial, saying, 'I know Isaac Looker's handwriting. I looked at the paper and compared it to his hand writing. The prisoner has 3 sons, I know Edward Looker.'

Friday, 7th January 1831

Mr James Smith took the stand. 'I live at Ramsbury Manor and have been acting as special constable and went to the prisoners house to search his papers. In answer to a question I put to him the prisoner said that his papers were in the bureau and he asked to be present while his house was searched. I searched the bureau and in it I found the paper now produced. The edges of the letter addressed to Mr Woodman correspond with irregularities in the paper that was found in the bureau and the letters form part of the same paper. There were some papers found upstairs, some of the papers found were the prisoners and some were his sons. He said that the greater part, if not all, the writing in the books was his. The bureau was not locked. When we went in there were two of Looker's sons present and two other men. They were all sitting round the fire and meat was roasting for dinner. The papers I found were not all in the same hand writing and no other blank paper was found at the time of the search, only that produced here. Upon one book being produced Looker said that it was his son Edward's. I asked the boy if it was his and he said yes.'

William Carter, a painter of Marlborough, repeated his former evidence, and the same objection was again raised as to the declaration of the prisoner to which Carter added, 'I do not recollect particularly the strong language that the prisoner used respecting the yeomanry, he was the only one who expressed himself favourable to the mob.'

John Vaisey, one of the Yeomanry, who said he knew Isaac Looker, repeated his former evidence and added, 'The prisoner said that he wished the mob would come into Town and cut of the heads of the Yeomanry. He seemed the same as usual.'

Joseph Rogers, who was also at the *Angel Inn*, was called and repeated his former evidence.

Richard Mortimer took the stand, 'I am not in the service of Mr Vaisey. I found the paper on the yard of Vaisey and gave it to him. I do not recollect Christmas day.'

The letter was put in and read.

"Mr Woodman hif you goes to sware against or a man in prison you shall have your farm burnt down to ground

Friday, 7th January 1831

*& look out yourself or hels you shall have your bluddy hed and guts cut out.”*²⁶

This closed the case for the prosecution.

Mr Missing, who with Mr Everett, conducted the prisoner's defence, submitted that there was not sufficient proof of the sending of the letter to warrant the case being sent to the Jury.²⁷

Mr Justice Parke overruled the objection. 'Assuming, for the sake of argument at present, that the writing is that of the prisoner, there is evidence of the sending. The letters were addressed to the parties who eventually received them.'

Isaac Looker was then called for his defence and said, 'I am quite innocent of the charge. My bureau is seldom locked, and was open to my sons and servants, and others of the family. I was taken into custody three quarters of a mile from my house and I ordered my servants to open every door and drawer. Vaisey has borne me malice for 13 years. He injured me greatly in my business in consequence of some dispute we had about a road and I lost £500, and I have lived upon bad terms with Woodman.'

There were then called the same witnesses who were examined on the trial on Wednesday. They gave the same testimony saying the papers were not in the handwriting of the prisoner.

William Tully said, 'I live near Bath. I have known the prisoner 25 years, The last time I saw him write was in March last.'

George Edwards add, 'I have been superannuated in Excise and I am Vestry Clerk of Newbury. I know Edward Looker, the son, and I think that these papers are the son's handwriting. I taught him to write. He has left me two years now. I had mentioned that I thought the writing was Edward's. I was sworn to tell the whole truth. I have seen the prisoner write in the Market Room and the boy's hand did not resemble his father. The father usually formed his "D" by making a Bow to them, the son carries them further round.'

²⁶ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

²⁷ The rest of the case against **Isaac Looker** can also be found in The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Friday, 7th January 1831

Robert Eveleigh said, 'I keep *The King's Arms* at Marlborough. I never saw Isaac Looker write.' He looked at some Bills, two of which he believed to be Looker's and one not. In fact Looker wrote all three.

Robert Bristow White said, 'I know Looker, Woodman's letter was not written by him. I have had many of his Bills, but never saw him write out more than two. I have seen him write in his order book often.'

George Alexander said, 'I live at Ramsbury. I have known the prisoner for 15 years, I have seen him write 100 times.'

George Dixon said, 'I live at Ramsbury, about 3 miles from the prisoner. The prisoner's three sons, Laban, Edward and Isaac, live with him and had access to the bureau. I also had access to it, and I had seeds given to me from it by the prisoner's sons and his housekeeper. I never knew it to be locked. I do not know Edward Looker's handwriting.'

Edward Looker, the prisoner's son, was then put into the box and examined by Mr Everett. He was first cautioned by the Judge, and told that he need not answer any question that might incriminate him.

'I am the son of the prisoner,' he said. 'I am 18 years old, I live with my father, and did so in December last. I can write.'

The letter addressed to Woodman was then handed to the witness. 'I wrote it on the 21st December. I was at home and sat at the bureau, it is always kept open.' He looked at the letter addressed to Vaisey and said, 'I wrote it in the 21st December.' After looking at the letter addressed to Rowland he said, 'I wrote it at the same time. Isaac was present, and Laban, also George Vivash was present, nobody else was there. My father was not at home. He left home at six that morning. He went to Draycot to sell some wood. Draycot is about 10 or 12 miles off. My father did not return until ten at night. I borrowed the sheet I wrote on at my uncle's. It was only one sheet and I did not use the whole of it and put the remainder in my father's bureau. When my father came home I did not tell him what I had done. I went that night and dropped the three letters near the house of the people to whom they were directed. The first, that to Woodman, I dropped near the arch of the bridge, near Woodman's mill.

Friday, 7th January 1831

The second, to Vaisey, I dropped about a stride from his yard gate, and the third, to Rowlands, I dropped near his farm, between two gates. The next day I told my brother Isaac that I had dropped the letters, but I never told my father a word about it.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Sergeant Wilde, he said, 'I had some cousins in custody then, Robert Vivash and George Coleman. They had been in gaol for about a week, one of them was at Devizes and the other at Marlborough. The uncle from whom I borrowed the paper is Coleman's father. He lives quite close to my father. I never heard Father talk about his nephews being in prison and I never heard my father mention anything about the Assizes but I heard both my brothers tell him of it. I had not seen my cousins. I had not heard who took them up, but I knew they were in trouble for mobbing and breaking machinery belonging to Woodman and Vaisey. Father and my cousins were good friends. My cousins were not talked about at home. I don't know that I did hear my father and uncle talk about this affair. I don't know that I talked to my father about it. I don't recollect that I heard my father talk about it. I might but I don't recollect it. I never heard him speak of it. I knew that he knew that my cousins were in prison. I heard my brothers Isaac and Laban speak about it to my father. I heard my father say it was a bad job. When I went out in the morning to work I seldom came back until night. On the 20th and 21st I was at home I was at home. I was drawing barley from the field to the barn. It was seven or eight o'clock in the evening of the 21st that I wrote the letters. I heard people say that it would get my cousins off if threatening letters were written and I did it without thought of the consequence. I mentioned it to my uncle and brother before I wrote it. I do not recollect ever saying much to my father about it. We talked about how they would be punished and how they would get off. I mean how they would get off in punishment. My father said as how they would be transported. I cannot recollect when I had the conversation with my father. I swear I never said anything to my father about Mr Rowland or Mr Woodman appearing against my cousins. I told nobody about writing the letter except my brother and he not until after I wrote them. I

Friday, 7th January 1831

borrowed the sheet of paper on the 21st just before I wrote the letters. There was no paper in my father's house, but what was written upon so I got the paper from my uncle. My Aunt gave the paper to me, my Uncle sat by the fire. I did not say what I wanted it for. My father did not know it before he went to Marlborough. I never heard that a Bow-street officer had come about the letters until he searched the house. Martin never told me of it. I have written Bills for Father two or three years. My uncle did not know that I had written the letters until after Father was taken up. It was my uncle who first told my father that I had written the letters, that was when he was in prison, and I told Uncle after Father was taken up. About a week ago I told Mr Day, my father's lawyer, this was whilst Father was in Marlborough Prison. I meant to write in my common hand, I did not intent to disguise it, but I had a bad pen. I did not give it a thought whether it would be known or not.'

On being re-examined he said, 'The table where my brothers sat was near the fire and the bureau on the other side of the room. Nobody sitting at the table could see what I wrote at the bureau.'

On being questioned by the Court, Looker replied, 'My brothers saw me dry the letters by the fire. Isaac asked me what it was, Laban knew before. My aunt gave me the paper, but I did not tell her what it was for. My uncle and my brother Laban were present when my aunt gave me the paper. I asked only for a sheet of paper to write upon. Laban knew the contents of the letter just before I wrote it, but I did not tell Isaac till the next day. Laban knew it after I borrowed the paper and before I wrote the letter. Going down Axford Street I heard people talking about threatening letters. I do not know them, there were two or three. It was two or three days before I wrote the letters. They were there and I do not recollect who they were. Father came home about 10 o'clock on the 21st. I dropped the letters about nine at night.'

At this stage of the proceedings the young man was directed by the Judge to write from recollection a letter similar to that written to Woodman. This he did and it was handed to the Judge and it bore a strong resemblance to that received by Mr Woodman.

Friday, 7th January 1831

Mr Christopher Day was called and said, 'I am solicitor for the defendant Isaac Looker. On the 28th December last Edward Looker informed me that he had written the letters. At this time his father was in prison.'

On being cross-examined by the Court Mr Day replied, 'I do not recollect that the name of Edward Looker was mentioned as having access to the bureau, nor was it proved that in the father's house sons lived who were grown up and capable of writing.'

Mr Missing was about to call another witness, when Mr Justice Parke interrupted him. 'There is no necessity for calling any other evidence. There can be no doubt that the facts as they have come out in this and the former trial, were so strong a *prima facie* case against the prisoner that the public prosecutors would not have been justified if they had not brought the case forward. The testimony of the son is clear enough. He has stated that not only did he write the letters but he dropped them. Could you have anything plainer? He has said that his father never knew that he had written the letters until after he had been put in prison. The case of the Prosecutor has now been satisfactorily answered, and if the Jury believe the evidence of the son, there is no reason whatever to think that the prisoner had any guilty knowledge of the sending of the letter.'

The Jury returned a verdict of *not guilty* against Isaac Looker.

Mr Justice Parke, with reference to the conviction which had taken place on the former trial, said that no time should be lost in making proper representation to the Secretary of State for the Home department, who would, of course, take care that justice was done and the prisoner pardoned. The prisoner, Isaac Looker, was then removed from the bar and Edward Looker, was ordered to be detained, and a bill of indictment was ordered to be preferred against him for the same offence, on his sworn admission before the Court.²⁸

At 8 o'clock the Court adjourned to the Nisi Prius Court, it will reopen tomorrow, Saturday the 8th January at 9 o'clock.

²⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of the Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

The Court was opened at nine o'clock this morning. Despite the late hour to which the sitting in both court rooms have been protracted every night, there still remain the cases of 120 prisoners to be disposed of this morning. In order, if possible, to get through the calendar by Monday, it has been arranged that this morning the third Judge will sit in the Grand Jury Room to hear some of the cases. Mr Justice Alderson will leave the Nisi Prius Court at around 10 o'clock for this purpose. ¹

Mr Justice Parke took his seat in the Crown Court, and the following Jury was sworn. ²

Thomas Harwood	Samuel Lawes	Charles Cheater
J ⁿ James Holloway	John Butt	Tho ^s Brownjohn
John King	John Springford	Henry Humby
George Bowns	James Wells	John Andrews

In the first case today William Mills was put to the bar, charged with robbing William Fulbrook of one sovereign, at Hippenscombe on the 21st November last.

William Fulbrook was called. 'I live at Hippenscombe. A mob came to my house on the 21st November last. There were about 60 of them and they were armed with very large sticks. They demanded beer and money and there was a good deal of noise. I know William Mills. I saw him at my house, he was the ringleader of the mob. He demanded a pound and said he must have it. I gave him a pound. I do not think he came into the house.'

On being cross-examined Mr Fulbrook said, 'I did not know Mills before he came with the mob. He asked for beer first. This was at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I should not have given any money if I had not been threatened.'

Thomas Fulbrook, son of the prosecutor, was called. 'I was present when the mob came, there were about 60 of

¹ The Times, 10th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10th January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 18313

² TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

them and they were armed with large sticks. I know the prisoner and I asked what he wanted. He asked if we had machines and I told him that it was nothing to him, to which he replied that if we had not taken them down before tomorrow night he would come with 300 or 400 people to take them down. He then said he must have something to drink. I then told my father of it and Mills said he must have a sovereign, and my father gave it to him. Mills said that if they did not have a sovereign they would go to work and do mischief. I told my father of it and then father gave the sovereign.'

William Fulbrook, the brother of the last witness, gave similar evidence.

The next witness was Hooper, who said, 'I did not hear the prisoner say what he would do if he did not get a sovereign. I heard the prisoner say to some of the mob who were going towards the machine, "Don't go there". He only had a walking stick in his hand.'

In his own defence Mills said, 'What is sworn is false. There were 45 of us and they were going to destroy the machine and I begged them not to. Fulbrook said that he would give us a sovereign if we would go away quiet.'

Witnesses were called to speak of the prisoner's character.

The Reverend Henry Elstone said, 'I am the curate of Chute and I have known the prisoner for more than 20 years. He has always borne a most excellent character.'

Henry Cowesfield said, 'I have known the prisoner for seven years. He is as honest and peaceable a man as any in the Parish.'

Charles Dales said, 'I am an auctioneer. I have known the prisoner for six or seven years. He is very honest, industrious and peaceable.'

Mr Justice Parke summed up the case and the Jury found Mills *not guilty*.³

William Legg, aged 28, John Legg, aged 18, and Thomas Legg, age 21, were then put to the bar and charged with destroying a thrashing machine at Hannington, on the

³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE.** In the Minutes of the Trials **Fulbrook** appears as **Fullbrook**

24th November, the property of Richard Shewry and Thomas Shewry, of Gore Farm, Hannington.

It appeared from the evidence that on the evening of the 24th November, the three prisoners, with around 40 or 50 others, came to Mr Shewry's premises, at Hannington, and broke his thrashing machine, which had been previously taken to pieces.

Gabriel Selwood was called to give evidence and said, 'I am a labourer. Mr Shewry is my master. When I first saw the mob they were going from Humphrey's to my master's. Mr Shewry was not there. The machine had been taken to pieces by master's order, and was in such a state that it could be put together again. William Legg was near the machine, John Legg had a hammer and Thomas Legg was busy breaking the machine. They gave a "Halloo" and called "Drink! Drink!" This was between six and seven in the evening. There was drink given to them. They were not very noisy. They were in court two or three years ago for house breaking.'

On being cross-examined Selwood said, 'I first saw William Legg passing in the field with the mob, many of the mob had sticks, and some had hammers.'

'You showed us the machine and helped us to break it', interrupted William Legg.

'I did not take the mob to where the machine was,' replied Selwood. 'I never touched the wheel of the machine. I did not tell them that the chaff machine was hid in the coppice, because it was not.'

As Selwood moved from the witness box William Legg exclaimed, 'Confounded rascal! To knock it all to pieces himself, and then to come and give evidence against us,'⁴

Richard Shewry was called and said, 'I live at Hannington. The mob came to my premises on the 24th November last. They came and demanded beer. I saw Thomas and William Legg there. I don't know who asked for beer.'

On being cross examined Mr Shewry replied, 'The machine was capable of being put together again.'

None of the prisoners said anything in their own defence. The Jury *acquitted* William Legg, but found his two

⁴ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

brothers *guilty*. John and Thomas Legg are labourers and threshers. ⁵

The same three prisoners, John Legg, Thomas Legg and William Legg, were then charged with robbing Henry Strange, manservant to Mrs Montgomery, of one half crown, at Hannington on the 24th November.

From the evidence it appeared that on the night of the 24th November, the three prisoners, with 40 or 50 other persons, came to the house of Mrs Montgomery, the widow of a magistrate of the county, and made a violent knocking at her kitchen door.

Henry Strange, Mrs Montgomery's manservant, was called and said, 'We had no thrashing machine on the premises. Between 12 o'clock and one o'clock at night I was awoken by a violent noise at the kitchen door. I went to the window and saw a mob of 40 or 50 people. They said that they had been breaking machines and had been to all the houses in the parish and had been given money and beer. I sent a maid to my mistress but she was so frightened that she could not speak. Being afraid that they would do some mischief I gave the 2/6^d out of the window. From the window I could distinguish all the prisoners. William Legg held up his hat for the money as I threw it out of the window.'

'It is false,' said cried William Legg. 'I was not there.'

On being cross examined Strange said, 'I could see them at the kitchen door. They made a great noise. All the family were alarmed. Four of us got up, but the mistress did not get up. I gave 2/6^d for fear that they would do mischief. They then thanked me and went away. They behaved very civilly. I had known the prisoners for nearly six years and I am certain they were all present.'

The Jury found all the prisoners *guilty* and a sentence of death was recorded against them. ⁶

Thomas Edgeworth was put to the bar next. He was charged with destroying a thrashing machine at Highworth

⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁶ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

on the 24th November, the property of William Henry Richards. George Ball was not tried on this indictment. ⁷

Joseph Giles was called and said, 'A mob came to the house of Mr Richards at about 9 o'clock on the 24th November. I heard the mob and went with them to see what they did. I saw Edgeworth with the mob. He has a great stick in his hand and he beat Mr Ricketts machine with the stick. The machine was destroyed. It was together when the mob came. I saw the prisoner with a piece of iron in his hand, it was part of the machine. The mob consisted of around 1000 people.'

When asked how long he had known the prisoner, Giles replied, 'I have known him for four or five years.'

Francis Barnes was then called, and said, 'I am a ploughboy at Mr Richards and I remember the mob. I was with them. I saw the prisoner breaking the machine with a piece of iron. The machine was quite broken.'

In his defence Edgeworth said, 'None of the witnesses know me. I have a nephew called Thomas Edgeworth.'

The Jury found the prisoner *guilty* and he was sentenced to three months imprisonment in the House of Correction, with hard labour. ⁸

Edward Looker, aged 18, was placed at the bar, upon an indictment, charging him with sending a threatening letter to Henry Woodman, at Mildenhall on the 22nd December. The prisoner pleaded *guilty*.

Mr Missing then rose, on behalf of the prisoner, to mention his sincere regret at what had occurred, and his unfeigned penitence for the offence he had committed.

Mr Missing continued, 'I have to request that your Lordship, in consequence of the youth of the prisoner, of his ignorance of the consequence of his proceeding, and of his never entertaining any idea of carrying his threat into execution, and of his notion that such a letter might be useful to some of his relatives who were imprisoned upon similar charges to those which your Lordship has been recently trying, to visit his offence with as mitigated a

⁷ TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book – Here the prosecutor is named as **William Henry Richards**. **NOTE:** In the Gaol Calendar and GA – D1571/X64 – Minutes of Trials - the prosecutor is named as **William Henry Ricketts**

⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This case is not reported in any of the papers

Saturday, 8th January 1831

punishment as your discretion will allow. I am induced to hope that my application will meet with the greater success, as it is seconded by the request of the attorney general on behalf of the Crown.’⁹

Mr Justice Parke then proceeded to pass sentence on the prisoner. ‘You have been advised to plead guilty to an indictment which charges you with having addressed a threatening letter to Henry Woodman. I think that you have been rightly advised to do so, for, from what I know of the circumstances which transpired on a former trial, it would have been impossible for you to have made any satisfactory defence against the charge of having sent a threatening letter to Henry Woodman, in which you threatened, that if he should give evidence against certain individuals, you would cause his farm to be burnt down, and himself to be murdered, and threatened it too in very coarse and violent terms.’

‘My Lord, I am very sorry for what I have done. I meant no harm,’ said Looker.

Mr Justice Parke continued. ‘Looking at this indictment, which charges you with an offence of a very serious nature, I cannot refrain from observing, that in consequence of another trial, the Court is acquainted with all the circumstances which induced you to commit that offence. The Court knows the view with which this letter was sent to the prosecutor, Mr Woodman, and to two other individuals. Your offence is an offence of the greatest magnitude. It was only at a very recent period that the law respecting was mitigated as not to affect your life. By a statute passed in the reign of George I. Offences of this kind were punished by death; but by a more recent statute, if any man sends a letter to another, threatening to burn his property, or to murder him, or to intimidate him into a certain line of action, he is punishable, on conviction thereof, by transportation for life, or by imprisonment at the discretion of the Court, for a period not exceeding the term of 7 years. There can be no question, I repeat, as to the enormity of your offence. It is a most serious offence against the interests of society; for it alarms and disturbs those who

⁹ The above, and Mr Justice Parke’s speech is reported in *The Times*, 19 January 1831 & *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

are the victims of it, it agitates them and their connexions with fear, which are the more distressing, because they have no palpable foundation; and we find that under their operation men of the strongest nerves are disquieted and terrified. When we find that the object of those who write these menacing letters is not confined to the spreading of alarm, but extends to the perversion of justice, to the deterring individuals from performing the duty which they owe to the public, and to the preventing of witnesses from giving their evidence freely and impartially on approaching trials, their crime assumes a much more heinous appearance; for it is in vain we have good laws if those laws are prevented from being carried into effect; and their being carried into effects depends upon the constancy and firmness of prosecutors, witnesses, and jurors. Your object, Edward Looker, was to terrify the prosecutor, Mr Woodman, and two other individuals from giving evidence against your relations. Such an offence cuts at the very root of society, and therefore your offence is greater than if you had sent to those persons a threatening letter without attaching any conditions to it. It is impossible for the Court to overlook your conduct, or to visit it with a slight sentence. We have been told that you were ignorant of the magnitude of the crime which you were committing, and that you did not even know that you were violating the law. You might not know the extent of punishment to which you were exposing yourself, but it is impossible to believe that you did not know the extent of your crime. Your education must, indeed, have been neglected, if you did not know you were committing a crime in threatening to burn a man's property at a period when so much alarm exists about fires, and to murder him at a period when we have seen so many acts of lawless violence perpetrated. You must have been aware that in making such threats you were guilty of a serious offence. I have taken into consideration, and the Court has also taken into its consideration, for I have consulted the other Judges with whom I have the honour to be associated, as to your sentence, I have taken, I say, into consideration the various circumstances in mitigation of punishment which have been urged in your behalf. Among those circumstances, one is your extreme youth. That is a

Saturday, 8th January 1831

circumstance to which I have attended, and therefore I shall not pass upon you the extreme sentence of the law. I have also taken into my consideration the favourable recommendation to mercy, which you have received from his Majesty's Attorney General. We owe, however, a duty to the public, and we are bound to take care that crimes be repressed, when their inevitable tendency is to obstruct the course of justice. We should therefore be wanting in our duty if we inflicted a light punishment on your offence. We shall not visit it with the same sentence as was passed upon the offence of your father, when he was convicted upon evidence which satisfied the learned judge and jury which tried him of his guilt, for then evidence was kept back from both, in the hope of saving you as well as your father from punishment. The Court was then obliged to act upon defective evidence, for there was no information given to it that you were living in the same house with your father and were able to write. I do not know how it was that that information was not given. On another trial for the same species of offence, your father was acquitted on your evidence, convinced as it was by the evidence of your school master, and of the acquittal in that case he will have the benefit in the case on which he was convicted, for I shall take care that a statement of the circumstances is forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by which he will be exempted from punishment. You have come forward, Edward Looker, later than you ought, to avow yourself the author of these letters. You must therefore hear the punishment due for them, for proceedings of this nature must be put to an end to. I am glad that, notwithstanding your menaces, all the prosecutors to whom you addressed then have come forward to discharge their duty to the public. All parties ought to do the same. Persons in their situations, and persons in still higher situations, and even the Judges themselves, have not been exempt from threats of a similar description. They treated such menaces, however, with the contempt which they deserved. I hope that all persons will do the same; but that is rather a hope on my part than an expectation. Considering the circumstances of mitigation which have been urged in your case, the Court is not

Saturday, 8th January 1831

inclined to press the law against you with extreme severity, but I shall not be satisfied with inflicting upon you a slight punishment. The sentence of the Court is, that you will be transported for the space of 7 years to such a parts beyond the seas as his Majesty, by and with the advice of his Privy Council, shall direct. I trust that this will be a warning to others, and that we shall have no further attempts of this kind. If we have, the punishment will be still more severe.'

Before being taken from the bar Looker was asked by a gentleman, whether he had told his father what he had done. He replied that he had not. 'If I had my father would have turned me out of doors.'

Richard Panting was then put to the bar and charged with riot at Hannington, on the 24th November. William Legg, John Legg and Thomas Legg were not tried on this count, having already had a sentence of death recorded against them.¹⁰

It would appear from the evidence that a mob had assembled in Hannington and demanded beer. They threatened to damage machinery if their demands were not met.

Henry Coleman was called. 'I live at Hannington. On the 24th November a mob assembled and came to my house. They broke a chaff-cutting machine and behaved in a riotous manner. The prisoner was there.'

Thomas Jefferies said, 'I was at Hannington on the 24th November. I saw the prisoner with the mob. It was between nine and ten in the evening. Between 9 and 10 o'clock in the evening I was awoken up out of my bed, a girl came and woke me. They were very noisy and said that there was no law for that night. The prisoner said he would have money or beer, or they would pull the cow house down. There were about 26 of them there.'

In his defence Panting said, 'I said that I hoped that the farmers would have their rents lowered and that we would have our wages raised.'

¹⁰ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book. **NOTE:** This man appears as Richard **Panting** in ASSI 24/18/3 and GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials - and as Richard **Ponting** in the Gaol Calendar. This case does not appear in any of the papers

Saturday, 8th January 1831

The Jury found the prisoner *guilty*, and he was sentenced to three months imprisonment in the House of Correction, with hard labour. ¹¹

Robert Stokes and Aminadab Smith were then charged with riot, at Highworth on the 24th November. They are also charged with having broken a thrashing machine, the property of William Smith at Highworth. ¹²

Giles, one of the witnesses called, said, 'I remember the mob and I saw Smith with them at Highworth Workhouse. They had large sticks and hammers. They ran all down the Town with the parish wagon. Edgeworth was the first man who touched it and he said that they should lay upon it, and the wagon was broken to pieces. I did not see the prisoners at the time the wagon was drawn down the Town. I saw Smith ay Maggot Mill where a thrashing machine was broken.'

Frances Barnes was called but gave no evidence against the prisoners and they were found *not guilty*. ¹³

Michael Hood and Joseph Martin were then put to the bar charged with riot at Plaitford, on the 24th November. ¹⁴

James Cox was called and said, 'I live at Plaitford. The prisoners came and said that they were there to destroy the chaff cutter. There was a very large mob.'

When called for his evidence, John Hutchins said, 'I remember the large mob at Plaitford. I was at Cox's farm. They broke the chaff cutter. They had hammers and axes. Hood is a wheelwright. There were about 30 altogether, boys and all. After destroying the chaff cutter they went and joined another mob.'

The prisoners were then called for their defence. Martin said nothing. Hood said, 'I was not there.'

The Jury found both the prisoners *guilty*, and they were sentenced to 12 months imprisonment in the House of Correction, with hard labour. ¹⁵

¹¹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

¹² TNA - ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; GA – D1571/X64 - Gaol Calendar

¹³ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This case does not appear in any of the newspapers

¹⁴ TNA – ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

¹⁵ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This case does not appear in any of the newspapers

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Andrew Moxam, John Burton and George Mould, were charged with destroying a thrashing machine at Tisbury, on the 25th November, the property of James Lampard. They were found *not guilty*.¹⁶

John Burton was put to the bar again and confessed to the charge of riot at Fonthill Gifford on the 25th November last. He was allowed to enter into recognizance in £100 to keep the peace, and surety of £100.¹⁷

Isaac Roberts and John Martin were then put to the bar and charged with riot and assault on William Gray, at Plaitford on the 24th November last.¹⁸

William Gray was called and said, 'I am a farmer at Plaitford. The mob came during the night, at around 12 o'clock, and again at two, and again at 6 o'clock in the morning of the 24th November. They said that I should go with them. They had sticks. I put out a gun and threatened to shoot them. After that they went away and told me that I would go with them by and by. They came again at about 12 noon. I saw both the prisoners at 6 in the morning and at 12 noon. The 2 or 300 people that came then had sticks. Some of the people pulled me down stairs and said I should go with them. Eight or ten people came into the house. I saw Martin and Roberts throw stones at me about 12 o'clock at night. The mob threatened to kill me if I did not come down. Both the prisoners said that I should go with them. Roberts was my indoor servant. Martin worked for me first before Michaelmas.'

Mary Ann Jarrett was called and said, 'I live at farmer Gray's. I am his wife's daughter. I was out of the house at the time and I saw both the prisoners there. I saw them in the middle of the day. I was at school on that day and Mistress let us out at mid-day. I could see the garden from where I stood, and I saw Martin throw stones and break

¹⁶ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book. **NOTE:** This case is not reported in any of the newspapers or in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. Appears as **Andrew Moxham** in the Gaol Calendar & as **Andrew Moxam** in the Crown Minute Books

¹⁷ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book. **NOTE:** This case is not reported in any of the newspapers or in GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials.

¹⁸ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book.

Saturday, 8th January 1831

windows. I had known him for three years. The usual time we leave school is 12 o'clock.'

Thomas Biddlecombe said, 'I am a labourer, of Landford. I was coming along the road near Gray's house and I saw Martin in the road. He did nothing whilst I was there. The garden was between the house and the road. I saw nobody break windows. They had already been broken.'

In his evidence Mussel said, 'I was in the lane. I was with the mob. I saw both the prisoners. I saw the windows broken and neither prisoner was doing anything. I stood in the road, neither prisoner was in the garden. I went away before all the mob. I saw the prisoners come away just behind me.'

When cross examined, Mussel replied, 'I was with the mob for a great part of the day.'

The prisoners were both found *guilty* and sentenced to 12 months imprisonment in the House of Correction, with hard labour, and had to enter into recognizance in £50, to keep the peace for two years. ¹⁹

James Kimmer and John Wilde were found *guilty* of destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Richard Litten, at Milton on the 23rd November, and were both sentenced to 7 years transportation. They were not tried on another indictment for felony. ²⁰

John Young, otherwise John Sutton was then put to the bar charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of William Robbins, at Chirton on the 23rd November. ²¹

In his evidence William Robbins said, 'Between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning a mob came and destroyed my machine. I took my machine out of the barn in consequence of the fires that had taken place. I told Young that neither he, nor two men, shall break my machine. Young told the other man to go and get more help, and told me that I might think my self well off if I got off with only my machine being broken.'

¹⁹ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials

²⁰ TNA ASSI 24/18/3, Minutes Book. **NOTE:** This case is not reported in any of the newspapers & in GRO – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials it simply gives the verdict – Transported for 7 years.

²¹ TNA ASSI 24/18/3, Minutes Book.

Saturday, 8th January 1831

On being cross examined Mr Robbins said, 'William Light was at my premises and saw the prisoner break my machine.'

In his own defence Young said, 'It is all false.'

The Jury found him *guilty*, and he was sentenced to 7 years transportation. ²²

As no evidence was offered, James Birchell was *acquitted* on a charge of destroying a thrashing machine, the property of John Crook, at Lyneham on the 25th November. ²³

Thomas Hart was similarly *acquitted*, on a charge of destroying a thrashing machine, the property of James Large at Lyneham on the 25th November last. ²⁴

Charles Pizzie, aged 24, was then put to the bar and charged with having robbed William Randall of four half crowns, at Great Bedwin on the 22nd November. ²⁵

It appeared from the evidence that the prisoner went to the house of the prosecutor, with a mob of 40 or 50 people, to demand 10s, which he falsely asserted Mr Randall owed him.

In his evidence Mr Randall said, 'I live at Great Bedwin. On the 22nd November last, at about 12 noon, a mob came to my premises. I saw the prisoner there. Before they left my house they broke two thrashing machines, a winnowing machine, a chaff cutter, a hay making machine, and two sowing machines, and carried almost the whole away. Some of the mob got into part of my house and demanded victuals and money. The prisoner first said I owed him ten shillings and that he would have it, there was no pretence for making such a claim. I would not give him ten shillings. I got through them and fastened the door. They then hammered on it and cried out, "Victuals or Money!" I left them in the washhouse and went into the

²² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This case is not reported in any of the newspapers

²³ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This trial is not reported in any of the newspapers

²⁴ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE:** This trial is not reported in any of the newspapers

²⁵ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

dwelling part of the house. The prisoner said that I should give him money or he would have the ten shillings. He had a long iron bar up to my chin in a menacing attitude. I said I would not give it to him and he then raised the bar and said, “D – m thee Randall if you do not give me money I will slit thy head and that shall not be all, I will set thy house on fire”. They then said they would have money, and hammered at the door so that I thought they would break it in. I do not know who took the money, but the prisoner stood hard by. He said that repeatedly. The prisoner and four or five others stood close to the door. I gave 10 shillings at one time and a half sovereign at the other.’

Mary Choles was called and said, ‘I was at Randall’s on the 23rd November. I saw the prisoner amongst the mob. I heard the prisoner say if Mr Randall did not give half a sovereign he would split his head and set his house on fire.’

William Randall was re-called, and said, ‘I gave the money through fear. I did not expect to live a moment longer. The prisoner is a labourer and had been in my employ. The mob would not have been so bad if it had not been for the prisoner.’

Pizzie was called for his own defence and said, ‘When we went to Randall’s house it was about one o’clock. One of the mob asked him for money and he gave 10 shillings. Then I asked him for the 10 shillings he owed me and he said he would give it to me by and by. Randall appears against me out of spite.’

Mr Randall was called again and said, ‘There has been a little dispute between us since he left my service.’

Mr Justice Parke summed up the evidence and commentated on the atrocious conduct of the prisoner.

The Jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. No sentence was passed at this time. ²⁶

William Huntly and John Ward were charged with having robbed John Waldron of one half crown, at Ramsbury on the 23rd November. ²⁷

²⁶ The majority of this information comes from GA – D1571/X64 Minutes of Trials, it is also reported in The Times, 10 January 1831 & The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

²⁷ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

In his evidence John Waldron said, 'I remember the mob at my house. Huntly said he must have a sovereign. He used no threat. Ward also said he must have a sovereign. I said I had none. He said he would have any amount as I had and desired me to go and get 20 shillings. Ward asked for the money first. He insisted upon money and said he would not go without it. There were present about 18 or 20 people. Some of them threatened to break the windows. One man had a hatchet. The demand was made on the outside of the house. I gave the money because I was afraid they would break my windows.'

The prosecution was withdrawn, the evidence being considered insufficient to substantiate the charge and the prisoners were *acquitted*.²⁸

Robert Phillimore was *acquitted* on a charge of robbing Sarah Meaton of one shilling, at Collingbourne Ducis on the 22nd December last, as no evidence was offered.²⁹

Richard Lee was similarly *acquitted* on a charge of robbing John Canning of five shillings, at Temple Farm, in the parish of Ogbourne St Andrew on the 23rd November last.³⁰

Robert Fribbens, William Baker, Charles Skitrell and Henry Broadway were then put to the bar and charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Thomas Gale, at Burbage on the 23rd November. William Hillman was not tried on this charge.³¹

Thomas Gale was called and said, 'I live at Burbage. A mob of 200 came to my premises. Robert Fribbens was near my machine. Part of the mob carried the machine into the road. William Baker was there and Charles Skitrell. I saw him carrying a large piece of the machine out of the barn, that piece was not broken. He took it into the road and dashed it down. I saw Henry Broadway, he was in the barn close to the machine. I had a little of the machine taken

²⁸ GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

²⁹ TNA – ASSI –24/18/3, Minute Book. The prosecutor is named as Sarah **Maton** in the Gaol Calendar

³⁰ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

³¹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

down. I pulled as little down as I could help, intending to put it up again. The day before I saw Baker going out of Randall's yard with a piece of machinery on his shoulder, and when I saw him at my house I knew him to be the same man.'

George Gale was called and said, 'I was at Thomas Gale's premises. I saw the mob they numbered about 150 persons. The prisoner, Baker, had a number of iron nuts, which he put in his pocket. I saw Fribbens but I did not see him do anything.'

Edmund Neale said, 'I was at Gales. I was there whilst the machine was being destroyed. I saw Henry Broadway working with a sledgehammer. Fribbens was tearing up woodwork with iron bars. I saw Baker and Skitrell there.'

The prisoners were then called on for their defence.

Charles Skitrell said, 'I was dragged into the mob and when I got to where the machine was being destroyed they made me take a bar.'

Broadway said, 'I was there but I had nothing in my hand.'

William Skitterell was called to speak on Broadway's defence. 'Broadway is a hard labouring man. He thrashed last year for Henry Cox.'

Mr Justice Parke summed up the evidence and the Jury found the prisoners *guilty*, and a sentence of 7 years transportation was passed on them all. Baker is a blacksmith, Skitrell a labourer, Broadway a woodman, and Fribbens a brickmaker. ³²

Fribbens and Broadway were not tried on a separate indictment for felony. ³³

John Townsend was then put to the bar and charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of John Goodman, at Easton on the 23rd November. ³⁴

James Spragnell was called and said, 'I live at Easton. The mob came there on the 23rd November, armed with sundry weapons. The prisoner was there, I was present

³² GA – D1571/X64, Minutes of Trials. **NOTE.** In the Minutes of Trials **Skitrell** appears as **Skitterell**

³³ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

³⁴ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

when they broke Mr Goodman's machine and saw him break a wheel. Prisoner was a well digger. It took place at 12 o'clock. I knew the prisoner before.'

John Goodman said, 'I live at Easton. On the 23rd November I had a machine broken. It was perfect before they came.'

In his own defence Townsend said, 'I was not there, not within 200 yards. I had no weapon in my hands.'

The Jury found the prisoner *guilty*, and he was sentenced to 12 months hard labour. ³⁵

David Bartlett and John Hiscock were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of William Ferris, at Wilcot on the 22nd November. ³⁶

In his evidence William Ferris said, 'A large mob came to my farm. When they came to me they demanded to know what wages I should give. I said I shall not say. Some of the mob said "D - m, make him". Hiscock said "Go on", and pointed to the machine. I told them that they had better not touch it as I was determined to prosecute them. I had a barn there. The machine was whole when they came. I stood at the barn and threatened to shoot the first man that entered the barn. I saw the prisoner throw stones and break the cast iron wheel on the outside of the barn. The prisoners are both labourers. They did me no personal violence. They came to my house afterwards and demanded beer and money. A gentleman came into my yard, and to induce them to go away he gave them two shillings and sixpence.'

The prisoners had nothing to say in their own defence. The Jury found them both *guilty* and they were sentenced to seven years transportation. ³⁷

Daniel Collins was then charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Edward Tanner, at Tidcombe, on the 22nd November. ³⁸

Mr Taylor was called and said, 'I live at Tidcombe. I was at Mr Tanner's on the 22nd November when a mob of

³⁵ GA - D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

³⁶ TNA - ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

³⁷ GA - D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

³⁸ TNA - ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

around 300 came. The machine had been taken down carefully and they broke it all to pieces. It was taken down to prevent the building being burnt. We could have put it up again. I did not see the prisoner strike the machine. As it was broken the prisoner came and said, "Where is your chaff machine?" On the same day other machines were broken in that neighbourhood. I knew the prisoner before. The prisoner helped break the chaff machine. The machinery had been removed and placed near the road to be seen, in order that the mob might be satisfied and not burn the buildings.'

When asked for his defence, the Collins said, 'I have nothing to say.'

The Jury found Collins *guilty* and he was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment in the House of Correction, with hard labour. ³⁹

John Cole was then put to the bar and charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Zebulon Carter, at Great Bedwin on the 22nd November. ⁴⁰

John Lewis was called and said, 'I live at Wilton in the parish of Great Bedwin. On the 22nd November a mob came to my premises, about 150 of them. I saw them fetching out Mr Carter's machine. I was sworn in Special Constable a few hours before. I saw John Cole there. He struck the boards, which other people were bringing out. I have no doubt it was the prisoner for I have known him 30 years. The ironwork was beat to pieces; it was beat to pieces before Cole came up. It was the stage, which he struck. When I got through the mob I saw John Cole coming up with a bludgeon.'

As there was no evidence of the prisoner having been there when the machine was destroyed he was *acquitted*. ⁴¹

Henry Rawlings was charged with breaking and entering the dwelling house of William Fulbrook, at Hipplescombe on the 22nd November last, and stealing a lantern. ⁴²

³⁹ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

⁴⁰ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

⁴¹ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

⁴² TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Thomas Fulbrook was called and said, 'I live at Hippenscombe. I saw a large mob on the 22nd November, at about 8 o'clock in the evening. My father's thrashing machine was destroyed.'

Joseph Barber was called and said, 'On the 22nd November I saw the mob breaking into Fulbrook's house. They broke in at the kitchen window with a great stake. The prisoner went through the window after it was broken. I have known him for five or six years.'

Thomas Fulbrook said, 'Before the mob came I locked the doors and bolted the window shutters, all of which were beaten down.'

Isaac Crane said, 'The prisoner took a lantern from me. When the machine was being destroyed he took it to the other men. A lantern was left.'

As there was no evidence of rioting with any felonious intent in taking the lantern the prisoner was *acquitted*.⁴³

In the last case in this Court Daniel North, Samuel North, William North, Charles Wild and Harvey Hayes were charged with destroying a thrashing machine the property of William Fulbrook, at Hippenscombe on the 22nd November.⁴⁴

William Hooper was called and said, 'I was at Chute on the 22nd November and saw the mob go to William Fulbrook's house. I saw the three North's, Harvey Hayes and Charles Wild strike the machine. The machine was, some of it, broke to pieces.'

William Fulbrook junior said, 'I was at Hippenscombe and saw all the prisoners come from the direction of the barn to our house.'

No witnesses were called to speak in defence of the prisoners and the Jury found them all *guilty*. The three North's were sentenced to 7 years transportation; Charles Wild was sentenced to 12 months and Harvey Hayes to six months imprisonment in the House of Correction, both with hard labour.⁴⁵

The Court adjourned to the Nisi Prius Court.

⁴³ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

⁴⁴ TNA - ASSI 24/18/3 - Minute Book

⁴⁵ GA – D1571/X64 - Minutes of Trials

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Mr Justice Alderson left the Nisi Prius Court at about 10 o'clock this morning and took his seat in the Council Chamber, and the following Jury were sworn.

John Hale	George Williams	William Osmond
John Goulding	Elias Saph	Richard Read
William Moore	Joseph Jellyman	George Forder
Richard Williams	Moses Sims	William Brown ⁴⁶

In the first case before Mr Justice Alderson, Stephen Moon, Richard Groves and Joseph Pinchin were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of George Winter, at Pewsey on the 23rd November. All three were *acquitted* of the charge. ⁴⁷

Joseph Pinchin was again put to the bar, along with Shadrach Amor, William Hibberd, and John, Moon, charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of John Cook, at Pewsey on the 23rd November.

The evidence in this case was quite conclusive, and the prisoners were all found *guilty*. ⁴⁸

Richard Groves and Stephen Moon were again placed at the bar and charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Michael Cook, at Pewsey. They were both found *guilty*.

Thomas Ockwell was indicted for assaulting William Poulton, a special constable in execution of his duty, at Cricklade St Sampson on the 26th November.

The evidence not being sufficient to justify a conviction, the Jury, under the direction of the learned Judge, *acquitted* the prisoner. ⁴⁹

Thomas Ockwell was again put to the bar, along with Samuel Buckland, Joseph Cully, John Drew, John Giles,

⁴⁶ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3 - Minute Book

⁴⁷ This case, and all those heard before Mr Justice Alderson, are only reported briefly, giving charge and sentence only, in the following papers – The Times, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; the charges in all cases are taken from TNA – ASSI24/18/3 - Minute Book

⁴⁸ The Times, 10 January 1831

⁴⁹ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

William Giles, William Goddard, Thomas Hicks, Thomas Kilminster, Edward Ricks, and Robert Shurmer, charged with riot, at Cricklade St Sampson on the 25th November last.

They all pleaded *guilty* to the indictment and were discharged upon entering into their own recognizance of £50 each, to keep the peace for two years, and to appear and receive Judgement when called upon. ⁵⁰

Ambrose Alexander, aged 29, was charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of James Jones, at Lambourn on the 22nd November.

The Jury, not deeming the evidence sufficiently clear, he was *acquitted*. ⁵¹

Ambrose Alexander was then *acquitted* of a similar charge. This time, of having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Richard Church, at Aldbourne, on the 23rd November. ⁵²

James Shurmer, 23, and Abraham Knight, 29, were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of James Tyler, at Latton on the 25th November. ⁵³

The Jury found the prisoners *guilty*, but recommended Shurmer to mercy, in consequence of his brother proving him to have been pressed by the mob, he was sentenced to six months imprisonment, and hard labour. The Court sentenced Knight to 7 years transportation. ⁵⁴

William Goddard and Joseph Burch were then sworn in as Jurymen. They replaced John Hale and George Williams. ⁵⁵

⁵⁰ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁵¹ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** The newspapers, and the Gaol Calendar, all have this event having taken place **at Lambourn**, according to the Minute Book it took place at **Ramsbury**

⁵² TNA – ASSI 24/18.3, Minute Book. **NOTE:** According to the Salisbury & Winchester Journal & the Gaol Calendar, this event took place at Ramsbury

⁵³ James **Shurmer** appears as James **Shermor** in The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁵⁴ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁵⁵ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Thomas Tarrant, 23, George Sloper, 21, and John Lovelock, 25, indicted for having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Edmond Somerset, at Milton on the 23rd November, were *acquitted*.⁵⁶

Thomas Palmer, 31, was found *guilty* of having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Broome Witts, at Aldbourne on the 23rd November.⁵⁷

James Liddiard, 24, was charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of John Brown, at Aldbourne on the 23rd November last. The Jury found him *not guilty* and he was *acquitted*.⁵⁸

John Lovelock, pleaded *guilty* to an indictment of riot at Milton on the 23rd November last.⁵⁹

Thomas Kimber, 27, was charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of David George, at Axford on the 22nd November. The Jury found him *guilty*.⁶⁰

Henry Fox and William Cross were charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Thomas Osmond, at Ramsbury on the 22nd November. They were both found *not guilty*.⁶¹

Edward Pearce was *acquitted* of robbing Saint John Hewitt, at Great Bedwin on the 22nd November.⁶²

⁵⁶ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁵⁷ The prosecutor appears as **Broome Witts** in the Minute Book, as **Broome Wetts** in the Gaol Calendar, The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, and The Times, and as **Broome Watts** in the Salisbury & Winchester Journal

⁵⁸ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁵⁹ **NOTE:** This man is named as **Thomas Lovelock** in all three newspaper reports

⁶⁰ **NOTE:** The Crown Minute Book says the event took place at **Ramsbury**

⁶¹ This case does not appear in any of the newspapers

⁶² **NOTE:** The prosecutor in this case appears as **Samuel John Hewitt** in the Crown Minute Books, there is, however, a **St John Hewitt**, age 50, Farmer, at Sudden Park Farm, West Grafton, Gt Bedwin at the time of the 1841 Census – TNA HO107/1180/1 f56 p11

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Silas Wild and William Holt were charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Anthony Kingston, at Shalbourne on the 23rd November.

Both men were found *guilty*. Silas Wild was sentenced to 1 year in the House of Correction, with hard labour. Judgement was reserved on Holt, as there was another indictment against him.

William Holt was then put to the bar again, together with Thomas Brind, charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of William Baverstock, at Shalbourne on the 23rd November.

Both prisoners were found *guilty* and were sentenced to 7 years transportation. ⁶³

Thomas Brind was then *acquitted* of a charge of robbing John Butcher, at Shalbourne on the 23rd November.

William Cross and Henry Fox were indicted for a riot at Ramsbury on the 22nd November last. Fox pleaded *guilty* and was discharged on his own recognizance in £50 to keep the peace for two years, and to appear and receive Judgement when called upon. The case was proved against Cross. The Jury found him *guilty*. He was sentenced to imprisonment for one year, in the House of Correction, with hard labour. ⁶⁴

Robert Miller was convicted of riot at Poulton, on the 29th November. He was sentenced to imprisonment for six months in the House of Correction, with hard labour. ⁶⁵

James Tucker, Robert Talmage and James Liddiard, were charged with having riotously assembled, with divers others, at Ramsbury on the 22nd November last. The Jury found Tucker *guilty* and he was sentenced to six months

⁶³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁶⁴ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁶⁵ This man is named as **Robert Millerd** in ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

imprisonment in the House of Correction. Talmage and Liddiard were found *not guilty*.⁶⁶

In the last case before Mr Justice Alderson, Thomas Preston was charged with having destroyed a thrashing machine, the property of Anthony Kingston, at Ham on the 23rd November. The Jury found the prisoner *guilty* and he was sentenced to nine months imprisonment in the House of Correction, with hard labour.⁶⁷

The Court adjourned at half past six and Mr Justice Alderson, together with Mr Parke, entered the Nisi Prius Court.

Mr Baron Vaughan and Mr Justice Alderson took their seats in the Nisi Prius Court, and the following Jury was sworn.⁶⁸

James Cheyney	Thomas Simper	Henry Fanstone
James Ingram	William Baker	Sidney Hopgood
Joseph Bell	Joseph Chubb	William Webb
James Saunders	Benjamin Mussell	George Hooper

In the first case John Ford, alias John Henwood, was charged with having riotously assembled at Barford St Martin on the 24th November, and feloniously with force demolishing machinery used in the manufacture of silk, and other machinery. He was found *guilty* of breaking machinery but not *guilty* of riotous assembly.⁶⁹

Joseph Watts, who had been convicted of destroying machinery and robbery, was put to the bar and informed by Mr Baron Vaughan, 'A judgement of death has been recorded against you, and you will leave this country, never to return.'⁷⁰

⁶⁶ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁶⁷ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁶⁸ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

⁶⁹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

⁷⁰ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE** - This information is not reported in the other papers

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Richard Woodward, otherwise Richard Batchelor, was next put to the bar and charged with having robbed William Bishop Osmond of a sovereign at Froxfield on the 22nd November. ⁷¹

The Attorney General said that a bill had been ignored against this man for breaking a thrashing machine; but from the account he had got of him, he had decided that public justice would be sufficiently answered by allowing him to plead guilty to the larceny. 'In fact it is the former respectability of his character which has led this prisoner to his present situation. Having been induced to go with the mob, he was selected by the crowd to receive the money, as he was considered the most honest and trustworthy of them all.'

Woodward received a most excellent character, and some respectable individuals had come 50 miles to this commission to give him a character.

The prisoner was allowed to plead *guilty* to the larceny and after being admonished by the Court to take warning by the great lenity now shown to him, he was sentenced to three months imprisonment and hard labour in the House of Correction. The prisoner was in tears the whole time he stood at the bar. ⁷²

Joseph Liddiard was found not guilty, and *acquitted* of having robbed Richard Church of one sovereign, his property, at Aldbourne on the 23rd November. ⁷³

James Baker and Robert Baker were then put to the bar and charged with robbing George Phillips of 10 shillings, and other monies, his property, at Shalbourne, on the 23rd November.

It was proved that both men were very active in the mob, which came to the prosecutor's house and threatened to destroy it unless they got money. They obtained 15 shillings. Both prisoners were given excellent characters up

⁷¹ TNA – ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book

⁷² The Times, 10th January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10th January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE** – This man appears as **William Woodward** in The Times and the Gazette, as **Charles Woodward** in the Journal, but as **Richard Woodward alias Batchelor** in the Gaol Calendar and ASSI 24/18/3

⁷³ TNA - ASSI24/18/3, Minute Book

Saturday, 8th January 1831

to this time, but the gentlemen who gave them this character stated that they were both very active in the mob. They were the leaders, particularly James, but for him there would have been no riot at Shalbourne.

Both the prisoners begged the witnesses to say a good word for them, and the Court to have mercy on them for the sake of their wives and families. One of the witnesses put in an account of the money collected on that day, the 23rd, by the mob in two parishes, it exceeded £22.

The two men were found *guilty*, and a sentence of death was recorded against them. Mr Baron Vaughan said, 'Your lives will be spared. What further mitigation of your punishment might be made I cannot, at present, state.'⁷⁴

Charles Lee, Richard Lee, William Bailey, Thomas Hawkins, George Hawkins, Aaron Eyles, and John Moore, were next put to the bar, charged with having riotously assembled at Ogbourne St Andrew on the 23rd November and assaulting Oliver Calley Codrington.

The Attorney General addressed Mr Baron Vaughan, 'My Lord, in this case I think that enough will be done to satisfy public justice, if the prisoners plead guilty, and if they do it is not my intention to press for judgement upon them. The Crown will be satisfied if they enter into their recognizances to appear in judgement when called upon. That will not be if, in the meantime, they conduct themselves peaceably. In taking this course, I wish to have it known that I am induced to do so by the earnest request of Mr Baskerville and Mr Codrington that mercy shall be extended to these prisoners, a humane course for which those gentlemen deserve great credit. At the same time it cannot be too strongly impressed on these men, and others in their condition, that for the offence for which they stand charged, every one of them is liable, if convicted, to the same punishment as the unfortunate man Withers, already convicted. The prisoners must understand, that the offences of which they stand charged are of a most serious nature, and call for a most severe punishment, but the magistrates whose names I have mentioned, and other gentlemen in the

⁷⁴ ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

commission of the peace of this county, are anxious that mercy should be extended to these men, in the hope that they are now convinced of the serious offences they have been led into, and that they will not commit similar outrages in the future.'

The prisoners then all pleaded *guilty*.

Mr Baron Vaughan then addressed them. 'Prisoners, I am not surprised at the readiness you all show to withdraw your plea of *not guilty*, and to enter a plea of *guilty*, but the only doubt I have entertained is, whether in the discharge of my duty here I ought to be party to this compromise. You certainly owe much to the lenity of the Crown, to the great humanity of the Attorney general, and the magistrates whose lives were risked on this occasion. I must say to you, that though yours might not have been the hands that threw the hammer on that occasion, yet if you were convicted of having been present and of having taken an active part in this riot, you would have been as equally liable to capital punishment as the man Withers, over who sentence of death now hangs, and who possible may be left to undergo the severest punishment of the law, but upon this I will not enter now, and shall have occasion to avert to it hereafter. You ought all to be sincerely grateful to those gentlemen whose lives were endangered by the conduct of you and others, for the great mercy which they are so anxious should be extended to you, and I trust your future conduct will be such as to show that this mercy has not been misplaced. You will now retire, after entering into recognizances of £50 each, to come for judgement if called upon. If you conduct yourself peaceably, you will not be called up for judgement, but if you engage in any such mobs in future, not only will your present recognizances be forfeited, but you will be visited with a very heavy punishment.'⁷⁵

The prisoners appeared very grateful for the lenity shown to them. They entered into recognizances and were removed, except for Thomas Hawkins, against whom an indictment of destroying a thrashing machine, the property of William Canning, at Ogbourne St Andrew, on the 23rd

⁷⁵ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

November, remained, he was *acquitted* as no evidence was offered in this case. ⁷⁶

Richard Matthews and John Hayward were found *guilty* of destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Stephen Culley, at Easton, on the 23rd November last. There was another indictment against Richard Matthews charging him with having robbed James Culley of two sovereigns, his property, also at Easton on the 23rd November, but this was not pressed. They were each sentenced to seven years transportation. ⁷⁷

Henry Tombs, John Reeves, John Orchard and Thomas Lawrence, were then put to the bar and charged with having robbed William Prince of five shillings, at Wanborough, on the 23rd November last. Jeremiah New and Joseph Watts, who were also indicted for this offence, were not tried, having already been capitally convicted at a former trial. ⁷⁸

The prisoners, along with a large mob, went to the house of Mr Prince and demanded money. They told him that if he did not give them the money they would break everything in the house. Mr Prince gave them half a sovereign.

The Jury found Tombs, Reeves and Orchard, *guilty*, and *acquitted* Lawrence.

There were several other indictments against these men for robbery and machine breaking. Mr Baron Vaughan ordered a sentence of death to be recorded against them, and intimated to them that the sparing of their lives would be the only mitigation of punishment of which he could hold out any hope to them. Their cases were very bad ones, and deserved severe punishment. ⁷⁹

⁷⁶ ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; The Times, 10 January 1831

⁷⁷ ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE:** In the Journal **Richard Matthews** is named as **John Matthews**

⁷⁸ ASSI 24/18.3, Minute Book

⁷⁹ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831.

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Thomas Lawrence was then put to the bar again, charged with having robbed James Spicer of 2 sovereigns, his property, at Wanborough on the 23rd November.

It appeared that the prisoner, along with a large mob, went to the house of the prosecutor. They carried a tricolour flag and said they were machine breakers. Mr Spicer told them that he had saved them the trouble as he had already broken his machine, but they insisted they must have two sovereigns. Mr Spicer asked if there were “firemen”, saying that if they were he would sooner die on the spot than give them anything. They said they were not, they were only machine breakers, and they must have a sovereign for every one they broke. Mr Spicer gave them two sovereigns. Lawrence was seen to be very active in the mob. He was found *guilty*, and a sentence of death was recorded against him and he was told that he must not expect to be allowed to remain in the country.

The prisoner had the appearance of a gipsy and it has been reported that his father was transported about two years ago. ⁸⁰

Charles Bowerton was then put to the bar and charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of John Wells, at Wanborough on the 23rd November last. John Orchard, Thomas Lawrence and Henry Tombs were not tried on this indictment, having already been capitally convicted.

The prisoner was one of the “machine mobs”, and was proved to have taken a very active part in the destruction of the machine in question. The Jury found him *guilty*, he was given a good character. He is an agricultural labourer, married with one child. Before the riots he was earning 7s a week. ⁸¹

Mr Baron Vaughan spoke to the prisoner, ‘As this is your only offence, and was not accompanied with robbery, and as you had very low wages, which probably might have been the reason why you were so easily led into this crime, for which, however, you should know that no rule of wages, however low, afforded an excuse. The Court, considering also your previous good character, has sentenced you to

⁸⁰ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁸¹ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

three months imprisonment, with hard labour, in the House of Correction.’⁸²

At one o’clock Mr Benett, accompanied by several other members of the Grand Jury, came into the Court, and having delivered the last bill said, ‘My Lord, I have received a note from Mr Tomline, stating that there are no other bills to be sent up to us, and as we have disposed of all the business which has come before us, we hope your Lordship will give us leave to return to our homes.’

Mr Baron Vaughan replied, ‘Gentlemen, I am glad that you have at last arrived at the probable end of your labours. I have not been inattentive to the very zealous and diligent manner in which you have discharged the important duties which you have been called to perform at this unusual season. I hope that your labours here, and by the manner in which justice has been administered, you may on your return to your homes find that peace, of which the country has for a time been deprived. I am not at liberty to dismiss you at present, but you may return to your homes, and I am in the hope that you will not be again called upon. This commission extends to the 1st February, lest a renewal of any of the unfortunate events which have so lately disturbed the country should require us to protract our labours to that period; but there is, as I have said, reason to believe that your attendance will not be again required, and I have therefore to congratulate you on the probable termination of your labours, and to thank you for the great attention you have paid to the important business brought before you.’

The Grand Jury then retired.⁸³

Charles Bowley was then put to the bar and charged with having robbed William Barnes, the elder, of 1 sovereign and other monies, his property, at Shalbourne on the 23rd November.

It was proved that the prisoner was part of the mob that had gone about levying money in the area. It appears that this was his first, and only, offence. He was given a

⁸² The Times, 10 January 1831

⁸³ The Times, 10 January 1831; The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

most excellent character by the prosecutor and from the clergyman of his parish. He was found *guilty* and a sentence of death was recorded against him. Mr Baron Vaughan told the Court that he should feel it his duty to recommend Bowley to the Crown for a considerable mitigation of his sentence. ⁸⁴

Job Blundy was then charged with having robbed William Westbury of half a sovereign, his property, at Burbage on the 23rd November. He was also charged with having, on the same day and at the same place, robbed Mary Pye of one shilling and one sixpence, her property. He was *acquitted* of both charges for want of sufficient evidence to prove that the money had been taken by force. ⁸⁵

John Pounds, a very young man, was next put to the bar and charged with having, on the 23rd November at Ramsbury, robbed John Osmond of one gallon loaf, value 6d, and other goods, his property.

The prisoner, who it was proved had been very active as a machine breaker, came to the house where the son of the prosecutor lived. The son, a young lad, stated, that the prisoner, with another man, came to the house at midnight, and insisted on having beer, and bread and cheese, or he would have blood for supper. The witness and his sister, a young woman, slept in the house. There was only one servant in the house with them at the time.

Pounds was found *guilty* and a sentence of death was recorded against him. The Court intimated that, beyond the sparing of his life, no further mitigation of his punishment could be made. ⁸⁶

⁸⁴ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE:** This man appears as **Thomas Bowley** in both of these newspapers but as **Charles Bowley** in the Gaol Calendar, the Criminal Register, ASSI 24/18/3, Minute Book & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁸⁵ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁸⁶ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Abraham Jacob was *acquitted* of the charge of assault, with intent to rob, Thomas Wolferstan, at Alderbury on the 24th November last. ⁸⁷

William Jeffery and James Jeffery were then put to the bar and charged with a riot at Fugglestone St Peter, on the 24th November last. The Jury *acquitted* James Jeffery and found William Jeffery *guilty*. Mr Baron Vaughan sentenced William Jeffery to six months imprisonment, with hard labour. ⁸⁸

James Ford and William Mullins were charged with robbing Joseph Read of one sovereign, the property of Ono Shipman, at Barford St Martin on the 24th November last. John Ford was found *guilty* and a sentence of death was recorded against him. Mullins was found *not guilty*. ⁸⁹

George Dobson and William Wilmot were charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Thomas Baker, at Shalbourne on the 23rd November. Both men were *acquitted*, no evidence being offered against them. ⁹⁰

John Newcombe the Younger, Richard Townsend and George Butt were put to the bar and charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Luke Cole, at Estcourt in the parish of Long Newnton, the 26th November last.

It was proved that the prisoners met up with the boy, in whose care the machine was, as he took it home to his master. They broke it to pieces. No evidence was offered against Butt and he was *acquitted*. Newcombe and Townsend were found *guilty*. Newcombe, it seems, is a tailor, and he was sentenced to seven years transportation.

⁸⁷ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE:** This man appears as **Abraham Lucas** in the newspaper reports, as **Abraham Jacob** in the Minute Book and as **Abraham Lucas (alias Jacob)** in the Gaol Calendar and Criminal Register

⁸⁸ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE:** The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831 says the riot took place at **Quidhampton**. **James Jeffery** does not appear in the Gaol Calendar

⁸⁹ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁹⁰ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

Townsend, a young man, was given a very good character. He was sentenced to three months imprisonment. ⁹¹

John Perry was indicted for breaking a thrashing machine, the property of Robert Hyatt, at Burbage on the 27th November.

The Court was told that the prosecutor had received a note, which said that unless he took down his machine his whole premises would be burnt down. He took the machine down and put it out in a field. The next day the mob came and destroyed it. The prisoner was amongst the mob and was seen striking the machine. The mob also demanded and received victuals and drink. Perry was found *guilty*. He had been found guilty of poaching seven or eight times before and was sentenced to seven years transportation. ⁹²

William Durham was charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Thomas Gould, at Aldbourne on the 23rd November last. The prisoner is a blacksmith. He was found *guilty* and the Court sentenced him to seven years transportation. ⁹³

Daniel Hall was charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of Luke Cole, at Estcourt in the parish of Long Newnton on the 26th November. He was *acquitted*, no evidence being offered against him. ⁹⁴

John Willoughby, George Sheppard and George Hoare were put to the bar charged with a riot at Ham on the 23rd November last. No evidence was offered and they were all *acquitted*. ⁹⁵

George Coleman, Matthias Dixon and George Smith were charged with riotously assembling at Ramsbury on the 22nd November last, to disturb the public peace, and with

⁹¹ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁹² The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831. **NOTE:** The prosecutor is named as **Mr Hyatt** in these two newspapers, as **John Hyatt** in the Salisbury & Winchester Journal 10 January 1831 and **Robert Highett** in ASSI24/18 & the Gaol Calendar

⁹³ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831; Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831. **NOTE:** **William Durham** does not appear in the Gaol Calendar

⁹⁴ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831; TNA - ASSI 24/18/3 – Minute Book

⁹⁵ The Times, 10 January 1831; Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

Saturday, 8th January 1831

destroying a chaff-cutting machine the property of John Rowland.

The prisoners were among a mob of around 150 people who came to the house of the prosecutor on the 22nd November last. They destroyed a chaff-cutting machine, a machine not protected by the act, which makes the destruction of a thrashing machine a felony liable to transportation for seven years. Two of the prisoners, Coleman and Smith, were seen to be active on the occasion. In the course of the trial it appeared that the prisoners, along with the mob, had broken a thrashing machine. The Judge held that the misdemeanour merged in the felony, and the prisoners were *acquitted* of the charge. Mr Baron Vaughan told the men that if they did not conduct themselves well they might, at any time be indicted for breaking the thrashing machine. ⁹⁶

This was the last case in this Court and Mr Baron Vaughan thanked the Jury for their great attention to the important business brought before them, and told them that they were discharged.

At this moment, 7 o'clock, the two other learned Judges, having disposed of the cases before them in the Crown Court and the Grand Jury Room, came into Court and the Court was adjourned until half past eight on Monday morning, when the sentences will be passed. ⁹⁷

⁹⁶ The Times, 10 January 1831

⁹⁷ The Times, 10 January 1831; Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Monday, 10th January 1831

The Court opened at half past eight this morning, to pass judgement upon the different prisoner who had been convicted of felony, and who are still to be sentenced during the present assize. The moment the doors were opened the galleries and the body of the court were crowded to excess. Several ladies were present. ¹

At nine o'clock Mr Baron Vaughan, Mr Justice Parke, Mr Justice Alderson, Lord Radnor, and T G B Estcourt Esquire, took their seats in the Nisi Prius Court.

Immediately after their Lordships had taken their seats, the following prisoners were placed at the bar: -

Elias Kiddle, Charles Lane, Joseph Chubb, George Green, William Every, Levi Millard. William Pottle, Thomas New, Thomas Foot, Elias Thorn, Samuel Rymond, William Bridges, John Clarke, Charles Hall, Charles Kimmer, John Harvey, Job Hailstone, Shadrach Amor, William Hibberd, John Moon, Joseph Pinchin, Richard Groves, Stephen Moon, Thomas Palmer, Thomas Kimber, and James Tucker, all of whom had been convicted of breaking thrashing machines. They were asked by the Clerk of Assize whether they had any reason to urge why sentence according to law should not be passed upon them. No answer having been returned Mr Justice Alderson proceeded to pass sentence upon them. ²

'Elias Kiddle, Charles Lane, Joseph Chubb, George Green, William Every, Levi Millard. William Pottle, Thomas New, Thomas Foot, Elias Thorn, Samuel Rymond, you were tried before me for having riotously and feloniously destroyed thrashing machines, the property of Mr Charles Lane, at Tollard Royal. As some aggravation of your offence, I must state that you, Elias Kiddle, have been previously convicted of felony, and have received sentence. Yours therefore, is an offence after a previous conviction. You, Joseph Chubb, have been convicted twice of breaking

¹ The majority of the information comes from The Times, 12 January 1831, with some additional information from The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831 & The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 17 January 1831, this is shown in the footnotes.

² NOTE: Samuel Rymond appears as Samuel Rymore in the account in The Times, 12 January 1831

Monday, 10th January 1831

thrashing machines; and on breaking the thrashing machine of Mr Lane, were proved to have said, that you would beat out his brains with a bar of iron, if he did not stand out of your way. That is a greater aggravation of your offence even than the previous conviction of Elias Kiddle; for personal violence is a species of offence which the Court is determined to visit with the greatest severity. You, Charles Lane, have been convicted twice of breaking thrashing machines. So have you Levi Millard, you whose trade and occupation is that of blacksmith. So, too, have you, Thomas Foot. The sentence of the Court on you, Joseph Chubb, is, that for your first offence you be transported to such place beyond the seas as His Majesty, by and with the advice of his Privy Council, shall direct, for the space of 7 years: and that for your second offence you be further transported for another period of 7 years, to be computed from the termination of the first period; so that, in point of fact, you will transported for 14 years. As to you, Elias Kiddle, Charles Lane, Levi Millard, and Thomas Foot, the sentence of the Court is, that you be transported severally for the space of 7 years. As to you, William Every, Elias Thorne, Thomas New, and Samuel Rymond, who are all agricultural labourers, and against whom no particular circumstance, either in aggravation or mitigation of punishment, is proved, the sentence of the Court is, that you be imprisoned in the House of Correction, and kept to hard labour, for the space of 12 months. As to you, George Green and William Pottle, who have both received excellent characters, though the character of William Pottle has been more strongly spoken to than the character of George Green, and that may be considered as the reason for the difference in your doom, the sentence of the Court is, that you George Green be imprisoned in the House of Correction for the space of 9, and you William Pottle for the space of 6, calendar months. As to you William Bridges, John Clarke, and Charles Hall, you were convicted of the same offence as the above named prisoners, on the premises of Mr Reeves. You were the only persons who visited his premises, and there was not any mob with you. The sentence upon you is, that you be severally imprisoned in the House of Correction, and kept to hard labour, for the space of 6 calendar months. Shadrach

Monday, 10th January 1831

Amor, William Hibberd, Joseph Pinchin, John Moon, Richard Groves, and Stephen Moon, you have all been convicted twice of this offence; and it being clear that all of you were largely engaged in outrages of this description, the Court is obliged to pass upon you its severest sentence. There is no circumstance of mitigation to be found in either your conduct or your character. If I could have found any such circumstance in your case, I might probably have hesitated before I passed upon you the severest sentence of the law: but on inquiry I find that not one of you bears the best of characters. You have been repeatedly before the magistrates of this County; you have been accused of offences, many of which are of a heinous character; and not one of you stands well in point of character. On the contrary, your characters are bad. Under all these circumstances, not mitigation of the sentence of the law can be expected in your case, especially when it is recollected that the number of offences committed by the mob of which you formed a part was very great. The sentence upon you is, that you be severally transported for the space of 7 years. As to you, Thomas Palmer and Thomas Kimber, who have each received a good character, the sentence is, that you be imprisoned and kept to hard labour, you, Thomas Kimber, for 12 months, and you, Thomas Palmer, for 9 months. There are now only two cases left for consideration, and those are yours, James Tucker, and yours Charles Kimmer. You Charles Kimmer have been convicted of a misdemeanour in attending a riotous and illegal assembly. It appears that you were a sort of delegate from one parish, and that you went with that representative authority into another parish, for the purpose of exciting the well-disposed inhabitants to acts of tumult and outrage. Your offence is of a very serious description, but, at the same time, it receives some mitigation from the circumstances of the mob, of which you were the collector, not having proceeded to any acts of violence. The sentence on you James Tucker, is, that you be imprisoned in the House of Correction, and kept to hard labour, for the space of 6 calendar months. As to you Charles Kimmer, I am sorry to say that you have been convicted of an assault under circumstances of a very aggravated character indeed. There was in the parish in

Monday, 10th January 1831

which you resided a fire, which raged so violently as to endanger the safety of six or seven ricks. The prosecutor, as every good subject ought to do, exerted himself actively to save the property of his neighbour from destruction. Whilst he was engaged in that laudable design, you and some of the mob with you were observed to throw large brickbats against those persons who were most strenuous in their efforts to extinguish the flames. Even at the moment when the prosecutor was on top of the rick, endeavouring to check the progress of the fire, you were seen to go up after him, to strike him on the back of the neck with an iron bar, which you had in your hands, and to knock him down in such a direction as made him fall into the flames. An assault of a worse description can scarcely be imagined. The prosecutor might have perished in the flames into which you felled him. Had that been the case, your life would have been forfeited, and justly forfeited, to the laws of your country. The Court cannot fail to observe, that from the depositions taken before the magistrates, it is quite clear that you admitted, on your own examination before the magistrates, and also subsequently to the constable who had you in custody, that you knew who it was that had fired those ricks. Whether you were yourself engaged in that guilty design, your own conscience can best tell. The circumstances of your conduct are such as to excite strong suspicion against you, for a person who flings brick-bats at the men who are working the engines, and who employs violence against the person who is most active in putting out the fire, and who says publicly that he knows who lighted the fire, must either have fired the rick himself, or had a guilty privity of the incendiary who did. Your own conscience will tell you whether you have or have not deserved death for the mischief that was then done. With that, however, I have nothing at present to do. You are convicted of an assault of a most aggravated description, and the only reason why I have alluded to these your admissions is, that the public may know the reason why your sentence is so severe. The sentence upon you is, that you be imprisoned for 15 calendar months in the House of Correction for this county, and be kept to hard labour. As for you John Harvey junior, and you, Job Hailstone, who were tried before my brother

Monday, 10th January 1831

Vaughan, there are mitigating circumstances in your case, and the sentence upon you is, that you be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for the space of 6 calendar months.'

The prisoners were then removed from the dock, and another batch was brought up, among whom it is known that two, Peter Withers and James Lush, are to be condemned to death.

The scene is distressing beyond all description. The three rows of benches, which have been reserved for the prisoners, are filled with 26 men in the prime of life, all convicted of capital felonies. At the extreme right of the first row is standing a lad of the name of Jennings, then James Lush, and next to him Peter Withers. The lad Jennings, who has a strange mixture of low cunning and impudence in his countenance, seems deeply moved by his situation. He sheds tears in great abundance from the moment he enters to the moment he leaves the court. James Lush, who is near him, is still more dreadfully affected. He is a tall athletic square-built man, and is dressed in a carter's frock, over which he wears a shaggy great coat. His appearance from the first moment he is placed at the bar is ghastly to a degree. He looks round him vacantly for some time, heaves several deep groans, staggers backwards a little, and at last bursts into copious floods of tears.

While the learned Judges consulted together Lush appeared to be in an agony of grief, and other men sobbed aloud. After some little time had elapsed, Peter Withers and James Lush were ordered to be placed in front of the other prisoners.³

When Mr Bishop, the Clerk of the Assize, asked Peter Withers and James Lush, what they had to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon them, Mr Henry Ball, as counsel for Withers, rose and addressed the Court. He said he appeared before their Lordships on behalf of the prisoner, to move that his judgement be respited until the opinion of the Judges could be obtained on the point as to whether the evidence given in the case was sufficient to maintain the indictment. The indictment has charged the prisoner with having stabbed, cut, or wounded the prosecutor, Mr Calley Codrington, by throwing a hammer at

³ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 17 January 1831

Monday, 10th January 1831

his head. This was laid in the first count as with intent to kill, and in the second with intent to maim, disable, or disfigure, or to do him some grievous bodily harm, and with intent to prevent the arrest and detention of himself, he being charged at the moment with the commission of a felony. On the first count, as the Court are aware, the jury acquitted the prisoner, but on the second he was found guilty. The indictment, your Lordships know, was framed on an act of Parliament lately passed, the 9th Geo. IV., entitled "An act to consolidate and amend the statutes in England relating to offences against the person." Mr Ball went on to describe the intricacies of the act in great detail. He ended by stating the reasons why this application had not been made at the trial. They were, in substance, that the prisoner had been originally committed for a riot; and he did not know, until just before his trial, that he was to be given in charge for a capital offence. 'The brief which I received was for defence for a riot, and not for a capital felony; and it was only by the humane kindness of the Attorney General, who allowed me to look at his brief, that I was aware of all the facts to be alleged against my client. Under these circumstances, I hope the Court will receive my motion for a respite of execution, which I put as a matter of favour, and not as a matter of right to be drawn into a precedent.'

Mr Baron Vaughan replied, 'The patient attention with which the Court has heard the objection of the learned counsel must satisfy the prisoner of the disposition of the Court to open every ear to any suggestion which could be made in his behalf, by which, consistently with our duty, we might mitigate the extreme punishment of the law. The learned counsel has displayed much ingenuity in the objection, and his duty to his client called upon him to urge any point that he thought might be available for him. But it is the opinion of my learned brothers, and in that opinion I concur, that there is no ground for the objection in law. The act is, no doubt, highly penal, and must be construed strictly by looking to the meaning and object of the former act.'

The learned Judges consulted together for a short time, after which Mr Baron Vaughan said, 'After giving consideration to the subject, we think it better, under all the

Monday, 10th January 1831

circumstances, that the prisoner should have the benefit of the objection, so as to get the opinion of all the Judges upon it. We do this because the act is new; and a doubt has been cast by a learned Judge, in another place, upon the construction of this part of the act. It is fair, therefore, that the prisoner should have the benefit of the opinion of all the Judges on the subject.'

Mr Justice Alderson said, 'The point was raised, in the first instance, before Lord Chief Justice Tindal, at Lancaster, and that learned Judge was of opinion that the objection was good. I do not concur in that view of the law; but still I think, that as the doubt has been expressed, it is better that the point should have the fullest consideration of the Judges.'

Mr Justice Parke added, 'I think the objection very fairly made; and though I concur with my learned brother, Mr Justice Alderson, in his view of the law and to the point, I agree that the question should be reserved for the decision of all the Judges.'

'In the case at Lancaster before Lord Chief Justice Tindal I defended the prisoner, and he was acquitted on that objection,' said Mr Justice Alderson.

The objection was then held valid, and the Court ordered, that when sentence was passed, judgement should be respited until the opinions of all the Judges should be taken on it.

At this point the three learned Judges put on their black caps and the other two Commissioners their hats, and Mr Baron Vaughan addressed the prisoners. ⁴

'Prisoners at the bar, in obedience to the authority of this commission, which has so long engaged the time and attention of this county, the time is now arrived when it becomes our duty to award the punishment which the law attaches to your respective crimes, and I hope it is the last time we shall have occasion to meet for this melancholy duty. I now address myself more particularly to you Peter Withers and you James Lush. You, Peter Withers, have been convicted of having assaulted, with intent to do him grievous bodily harm, Mr Calley Codrington, and also with intent to rescue yourself from his custody, he having taken

⁴ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 17 January 1831

Monday, 10th January 1831

you into lawful custody as a felon; and you, James Lush, have been convicted of the robbery of Mr Pinniger at Coombe Bisset, under circumstances of very great aggravation. I address myself in the first instance to you, Peter Withers. Your counsel has done for you every thing which could be done under the law as it applies to your case, and though the Court has thought it proper that an opportunity should be given of bringing the question raised by your counsel for the opinion of the whole of the judges, it is my duty to tell you, that in my own opinion, and those of the learned judges with whom I am associated, you ought to lay no stress on that reservation of your case, or to found upon it any hopes that mercy can be extended to you to the saving of your life. It is only necessary to look at the act of Parliament to see that you have done sufficient to bring you within the operation of that act and rendered yourself liable to the punishment of death. Your crime is one of the deepest dye. The jury, it is true, found you guilty only of the assault, with intent to do the prosecutor some grievous bodily harm. That you were acquitted of the assault with intent to murder can make no difference in your case, as the offence of which you were found guilty brings you equally within the penalty of the law; and in considering whether the law should be allowed to take its course on you, it becomes important to look at the whole circumstances of your conduct.'

His Lordship went on to read the clauses in the act, then continued. 'Now it appears that on the 23rd of November a mob of persons to the number of 40 or 50 were assembled with the avowed purpose of committing a felony – that is, of breaking thrashing machines. You were one of the leaders at the head of that mob. A magistrate, aware of the intentions which that mob had avowed, went to them for the purpose of endeavouring to prevent the commission of a felony. On all occasions the law is anxious to extent its protection to those whose duty it is to enforce it, and most particularly when in the act of exercising that important duty. Thus there was double protection thrown round the person of the magistrate on that occasion. A magistrate went to you to stay the guilty purpose of you and your companions, yet you not only persisted in unlawfully continuing together after you were properly commanded to

Monday, 10th January 1831

disperse, but you used language, in speaking of the magistracy, and in contempt of the authority which had a right to control you, which I will not pollute my lips by repeating. You not only defied the authority of the magistrate, but, in answer to his command to you to disperse, some of you replied, that you would have blood or money. This demand of money, you should have known, was another felony, which subjects every person convicted of it to transportation for life. Thus, as we see is unfortunately the case in those unlawful and tumultuous assembles, you proceed from the commission of one felony to another, and end in the commission of a third, which, if it had had the effect of taking away the life of that magistrate on whose person the violent outrage was committed, must have inevitably led to the forfeiture of the life of every one who was present and had taken any share in, or in any way sanctioned, that outrage. The magistrate, with a spirit and determination which became him in the execution of the law, on hearing the words that you would have blood or money, said, "Then I will have you: you are my prisoner;" and proceeded to lay hold of you and take you into custody, as he was not only authorized, but bound to do; on which you extricated from him, and, assisted by your guilty companions, you rescued yourself from legal custody, and thus added another crime to those you has already committed, and immediately commenced a most brutal attack on the gentleman who was required, as a special constable, to assist in preventing the commission of a felony. A point was raised on your trial, that proof of the appointment of Mr Codrington as a special constable was necessary to maintain the charge, but the Court held that such proof was wholly unnecessary, and it is right that you all – that the public generally – should know, that in a case of this kind, or of an unlawful assembly refusing to disperse, an appointment as a special constable is not necessary to authorize a man to act in dispersing that assembly. Every person is armed with such authority, and is also bound to exercise it to preserve the peace and to prevent the commission of felony. Mr Codrington, on this occasion, was acting by the order of the magistrate given on the spur of the moment; but in resistance to his authority,

Monday, 10th January 1831

you, with a hammer which you had over your shoulder, - for what purpose the avowed object with which you and your guilty companions had set out was but too apparent, - opposed yourself to the legal order of the magistrate to disperse. The hammer was thrown at Mr Baskerville, and he fortunately escaped from the blow; but the same hammer is picked up by you and thrown at Mr Codrington, and struck him senseless from his horse. It is impossible to believe, that any man throwing a hammer, weighing 5lb., in this manner, could have been actuated by any but a guilty intention; for no person could have calculated that a blow of a weapon of that kind, aimed with deadly force, could be otherwise than fatal. If such crimes as this were suffered to escape with impunity, there would be an end at once of the peace and security of society. Providentially for the gentleman who was the object of that brutal attack, it was not fatal, but those who recollect the account given in evidence, and the description of the immediate effect of the blow - that it struck the side of this gentleman's head, and at once covered his clothes with his blood - that it knocked him senseless from his horse, in which state he remained two hours, - any person, I repeat, who attended to these circumstances as they came out on the trial, must be convinced that the person by whom the blow was inflicted must have the intention to kill or maim. It was suggested on the trial that the injury sustained by Mr Codrington was occasioned by his having fallen on a wall, but the evidence leaves no doubt that you were the person by whom the injury was inflicted, and it is owing to the mercy of God that that gentleman's life was spared, and that you have not his murder to answer for along with your other crimes. This is a brief outline of the case, and under these circumstances you now appear before this Court convicted on the clearest evidence of this heinous offence; and while on our hearts mercy may be engraven, as it is engraven on that of His Majesty, who, in his compact with the people, swore to execute justice with mercy, yet, in the discharge of our duty, in the name of His Majesty, whose unworthy representatives we are, we must dispense mercy with judgement - for mercy of an indiscriminate kind would, in effect, be a denial of justice to the people. In cases of crimes, accompanied with

Monday, 10th January 1831

circumstances of great aggravation, it would be injustice to the public at large to let the criminal escape the severest punishment of the law; and if ever there was a case of great aggravation, it is that of which you stand convicted. The magistrate is the officer of the law often called to enforce it on most important occasions, and if the law is not strong enough to protect him in that duty, why then we live under no law at all, but under anarchy and misrule. A magistrate and a special constable, who were acting to enforce the law, now call upon the law to vindicate itself; and that vindication must be made in making an example of you, unhappy man, to deter others from the like guilty course.'

At this point the face of Withers underwent another change, which showed, if possible, an additional intensity of mental anguish.

Mr Baron Vaughan continued, 'There seems to be some impression, that unless the attack on an individual is made with some deadly weapon, those concerned are not liable to capital punishment; but it should be made known to all persons, that if the same injury were inflicted by a blow of a stone, all and every person forming a part of the riotous assembly is equally guilty as he whose hand may have thrown it, and all are alike liable to the punishment of death. A case of this kind occurred in this commission, and all the parties engaged in that transaction owe it to the great lenity of the prosecutors that their lives have not been forfeited. I repeat, for the information of many who hear me, and of others who will hear of what is now passing, that all persons engaged in an unlawful assembly of this kind, and who, after being ordered to disperse, refuse to do so, and resist their own apprehension, or that of others, are liable, on conviction, to suffer death as felons. To you, Withers, I repeat, that as the present is a new act, and as some doubts have been entertained elsewhere on the point raised in your case, the Court is desirous that the point should be referred to the opinion of all the Judges; but I must once more impress on you not to entertain a hope that it will avail you in the mitigation of that sentence which I am about to pronounce on you. With respect to you, James Lush, you have been convicted of a robbery committed on Mr Bartlett Pinniger, and that robbery, I must say, is one of the most

Monday, 10th January 1831

atrocious cases of robbery which has come before us at these special assizes.'

Here the business of the Court was obliged to be suspended for some minutes in consequence of the deplorable state of mind and body to which both the prisoners were reduced. After assistance had been rendered to them Mr Baron Vaughan proceeded. 'Whatever our private feelings on the painful subject may be, we have now a sterner duty to perform. It is melancholy, most melancholy, to see men in your condition, in the prime of life and youthful vigour, cut off from society on account of their transgressions. But society has claims upon us that cannot be resisted. The laws must be enforced and obeyed. Riotous and tumultuous assemblies must be put down, and those who join in them must, if they proceed to outrages of an aggravated description, be visited with the severest punishment, which human tribunals can award. The object of the law is not the punishment of the individual; its wish is to operate by example; its hope is, that punishment may be extended to few, but the terror of punishment to many; and it is from necessity alone that we are compelled to let the law take its course in cases which, like yours, are of an aggravated description. It appears, James Lush, that on the day – no, I must not say on the day, but in the very dead of night – of the 23rd of November, at nearly 1 o'clock in the morning, you were traversing the country with 80 or 100 of your guilty associates, confederated not merely for the purpose of disturbing the peace of the county, and of breaking thrashing machines, but also for the purpose of committing robbery with personal violence. At that hour, when all persons are in bed, you went to the house of Mr Pinniger; you called upon him to come forth; and you took a most active part in making him obey that call. And here I beg that it may be recollected, that in the numerous offences which have come before us under this commission, and which have terminated in the conviction of the offenders, we have had great difficulty in selecting such cases as appeared to us to be most fitting for punishment. It would have been easy to pronounce the sentence of death on many other individuals besides the prisoners who are now before us.'

Monday, 10th January 1831

This sentence produced a great sensation among the prisoners in the dock – many of them were agitated to tears.

‘But in the hope that one example may serve to deter others from committing similar offences, and that others may learn from the events of this day, that similar offences will not be pardoned in future, we think that their lives may be spared,’ continued Mr Baron Vaughan. We are under the painful necessity, however, of selecting you for punishment.’

‘It never were me, my Lord, that did this,’ said Lush without looking up.

‘You were, in the language of one of the witnesses against you, the forerunner of the mob,’ went on Mr Baron Vaughan. ‘You were foremost in its acts of aggression. You used the most violent imprecations to accomplish the objects, which you had in view. You made the demand for money, and when you made it, you proceeded to extort it under circumstances, which add peculiar aggravation to your guilt. Mr Pinniger, feeling himself called upon to defend his house against the violence of your nocturnal attack, and being less careful of his personal safety than of his thrashing machine, presented a pistol at the mob by which you were accompanied. On his presenting this pistol, which he had a right to present – ay, and even to fire at you – he was told to recollect that a pistol could be fired but once; that it might kill one man, but that when it once was fired, the mob would be certain to break in upon him. They did break in upon him, and then, before Mr Pinniger committed any act of violence, he was grossly insulted and cruelly beaten by you and your comrades. I lay my finger upon that circumstance as one out of many causes, which have induced the Court to select you as a sacrifice to the offended justice of your country. It is, - because there was in your case a riotous and tumultuous assembly, - a breaking of thrashing machines, - a robbery at night, - an assault on a person, - a demolition, or attempted demolition, of the house, - a servant rendered insensible by your violence, - various blows and wounds given to the inmates of the house, - that we have selected you as a fit person to be made an example of; and I verily believe, that had not Mr Pinniger produced the money which you demanded, the guilt of yourself and your associates would have terminated

Monday, 10th January 1831

in nothing but the effusion of blood, and the destruction of human life. Your career of crime was stopped only because the prosecutor, from a reluctance to shed blood, did not do that which the law would have authorized him to do, in resisting you to the last extremity. To prevent the effusion of blood he parted with his money; and then, but not till then, the affray ceased, in which you had involved yourself. Your case is therefore a case of uncommon aggravation. Under these circumstances, it is my painful duty to pass the dreadful sentence of the law on you both, and to implore you, Peter Withers, and you, James Lush, - and I speak particular to you, Peter Withers, and warn you to reflect that the objection which your counsel has taken on your behalf, may be, and indeed is likely to be of no avail - to prepare forthwith for the awful change which you must soon undergo. In cases like yours it is impossible for us to extend to you any hope of mercy, and therefore the kindest thing which we can do is implore you, as you set value on your immortal souls, immediately on retiring from this court, with humiliation, penitence, and prayer, - fervent, earnest, and incessant prayer, - to supplicate the throne of grace for peace, reconciliation, pardon, and remission of your sins. Be assured that the gates of mercy here are closed against you, and closed against you for ever: and therefore I entreat you to apply for mercy from above, where alone it can be extended to you, and where alone justice and mercy are reconciled together. The Court, before it pronounces upon you the sentence of the law, must again express its hope that you will ask forgiveness of your sins from Heaven, and make a full confession of them here upon earth without loss of time. The Court has now only the awful sentence of the law to pass upon you, and that sentence is, that you, Peter Withers, and that you, James Lush, be severally taken hence to the place from whence you came, and thence to a place of execution, and that you be there hanged by the neck until you are dead, and the Lord God Almighty have mercy on your guilty souls!

Lush, from the moment of his appearing at the bar, was very much affected, and from the time of the Judges putting on their caps, until the conclusion of the sentencing

Monday, 10th January 1831

he had leant down his head and supported himself upon the back of the seat reserved for the attorneys, which is immediately before him. With his head buried in his hands, and his huge body extended over the seat in such a position as to be at right angles with his legs, he remained during the whole time of his sentence and of the motion which preceded it, never once looking up at the Court, and continually uttering the most deep and heart-rending groans. Some conception of the mortal agony, which he endured, may be formed from the heaving of his back, which more than once absolutely undulated like a wave. It seemed as if his backbone was perfectly flexible and could move either inwards or outwards from the rigidity of its unusual position. At times he rocked about in convulsive agitation, pushing his body backwards and forwards with great velocity. Though his head was covered with his hands, the tears, which he kept shedding, were seen continually oozing in large drops through his long bony fingers. At one period, before the passing of the sentence, Jennings fell in a paroxysm of grief against his side, and shortly after Lush himself seemed to be all but fainting. His emotion was such that the eyes of the whole court were cast upon him. On first entering the court Peter Withers seemed buoyed up with the hope that the legal objection taken to the indictment, with great ingenuity, by his counsel, Mr Ball, would save him from undergoing the last penalty of the law. That was until Mr Baron Vaughan intimated to him that he thought it would avail him little, then his appearance became, if possible, more afflicted even than that of the prisoner Lush. Withers is ordinarily a man of sanguine hue and temperament, and though of no great stature, is apparently a strong and active man. As soon as the Judges put on the black cap to pass the fatal sentence of the law, the pale ashy semblance of death stole over his countenance, his lips become livid as those of a corpse, his cheeks fell in, as if there is no jaw to sustain them, his eyes quivered with extraordinary rapidity for some minutes, then turned upwards, so that nothing but the whites were visible, and at last he closed them, as if he wished to exclude from his sight some fearful vision which passed before them. Drops of cold sweat rolled in torrents down his face,

Monday, 10th January 1831

betraying the intense agony of which he was the victim. At last, he could stand up against his suffering no longer, but sank half fainting on the bench. It was quite evident that during a great part of the dreadful sentence, which had been passed upon him, he had neither eyes nor ears for any thing that passed in Court. His spirit was completely broken and for a moment he fainted away. He recovered, however, without assistance, and the vacant glance that he flung around as he awoke to the melancholy consciousness of his fate was too appalling to be soon forgotten. He then began to open and compress the fingers of his hands with great vehemence, but suddenly stopped and placed his left hand to his throat, and touched his neckerchief as if he was even then suffering under the sense of suffocation. By the direction of the Learned Judge, an officer went to his assistance; a glass of water was handed to him, and he drank it off to the last drop, with the most feverish avidity. Nothing could be more truly wretched and lamentable than the spectacle of despair, which he exhibited to the Court and to his fellow prisoners. Mr Baron Vaughan proceeded with the sentence, and it was found necessary to give him a wine glass full of *sal volatile* and water; this appeared to revive him, and at the close of the address of the learned judge, he was leaning his elbows on the back of the seat before him, with his hands raised in mute supplication to the Court for mercy. Whilst the sentence was passed on Lush, his sighs and groans were most affecting. He repeatedly sobbed out "have mercy upon us," and evinced the magnitude of his terrors by the most piteous ejaculations. Nothing could be more wretched than his condition except that of his partner in misery. Both appeared to have lost all command over their feelings, their energies were paralysed, and every spark of courage extinguished within them. Such a total prostration of the mental faculties by fear, and such a terrible exhibition of anguish and despair, was surely never before witnessed in any court of justice. All present were moved by it. Mr Justice Parke and Mr Justice Alderson could not refrain from tears. The rough athletic farmers who were seated in the jury box were equally affected, and among the women not a dry eye was to be found in the court.

Monday, 10th January 1831

Withers was heard to sob out, 'Lord have mercy upon us!' as they were removed from the bar. Lush said, 'It was other people that did it, and not me, my Lord.'

All seems relieved as the unhappy men were removed out of court, literally staggering under the weight of the sentence that had been inflicted upon them.

James Toomer, who had also been convicted of robbery, was then asked in the usual form, whether he could assign any reason why sentence of death should not be recorded against him. No answer being given, Mr Baron Vaughan proceeded to pass sentence upon him.

'The Court has had great difficulty in prevailing upon itself to let sentence of death be recorded against you, for you must be aware that the circumstance of allowing sentence of death to be recorded against you is sufficient to inspire you with hope that your life will be spared. We have looked over the report of your trial with great anxiety, to see whether any distinction could be reasonably drawn between your case and the case of the unhappy men who have just been taken from the bar. We believe that you are not what a witness has called the forerunner of a mob; and in the anxious hope that one example will be sufficient to deter others from the great offence of which you have been guilty, we have determined to recommend your life to be saved, for we think that public justice may be satisfied without demanding a second example. Recollect, however, that your escape with life is a very narrow one, and that it is rendered still more difficult by passing circumstances; for even now, whilst this commission is still holding its sittings in this county, there are indications of the continuance of outrage within it, which almost render it necessary to make further examples.'

It is assumed that the learned Judge alluded to the three fires which took place last night on the road between Salisbury and Blandford, and of which intelligence was brought to Salisbury by the coachman of one of the Exeter coaches.

Mr Baron Vaughan continued, 'I hope that the lenity with which the law is administered, as proved by our selection of one case for capital punishment out of so many

Monday, 10th January 1831

which have deserved it, will impress every feeling mind with the conviction that we desire to spare the effusion of human blood. There is a necessity – and a very painful necessity it is – to make an example; but we hope that one example will suffice. If you have any good feeling about you, you will be grateful to Providence for the merciful deliverance with which it has been graciously pleased to visit you, and you will show your gratitude by dedicating the remainder of your life to pursuits very different from those of your past life, and by becoming a more respectable member of society. Your sentence will not be mitigated to less than transportation for life; and for that mitigation you ought to be grateful for ever.’

Toomer was then removed from the bar. Just as he was leaving the court, Mr Baron Vaughan addressed him, and said, ‘There was another reason why we had difficulty in recommending you to mercy. There was another conviction against you for this offence. There were two convictions against Lush; and that is the reason why he, and not you, is selected to suffer.’

The prisoner was then removed from the bar.

John Jennings, the lad who was so much affected on entering the court, George Shergold, Henry Shergold, Thomas Whatley, James Down, Isaac Cole, William Francis, William Lewis, Isaac Miller, Thomas Piggott, and James Romain, who had all been convicted of riotously and tumultuously destroying machinery, were then put to the bar to receive sentence according to the law.⁵

Jennings addressed the Court in deep tribulation. ‘I am but a youth, my Lords; pray remember that.’

Mr Baron Vaughan addressed the prisoners. ‘Prisoners you have been convicted severally of great and grievous offences; and the circumstances to which you, Jennings, have alluded has weighed with the Court in recommending His Majesty to spare your life. I have been some time in coming to the conclusion that it can be done with safety to the country. It has been proved that, young as you are, you were the ringleader of a mob, which destroyed the

⁵ **NOTE:** James Down and Isaac Cole are named as James Batt and John Cole in the report in The Times, 12 January 1831

Monday, 10th January 1831

machinery on the premises of Mr Brasher. When it is recollected how much machinery is used in all the transactions of life, - how valuable it is as property, - how certain the destruction of it is to throw out of employment all the workmen of the factory in which it is used, - and how inevitably it produces the distress of them and other families, it is difficult to conceive a greater offence than that which you have committed, and the law, in visiting such an offence with capital punishment, has, in my opinion, acted wisely. Looking to the consideration of your tender years, and thinking that you may have been ill-advised by those who ought to have taught you better, the Court has been prevailed upon not to push the law against you to the last extremity. The same observations that I have made to you apply to others of the prisoners. It does not appear that any person of mature age has been a ringleader in these outrages: if it had appeared that any person of mature age had been a ringleader, that person would have experienced no mercy from the Court. You must not expect, any of you, any further remission of your sentence. Your lives will be spared; but nothing further will be done for you. Machinery to the value of £800 has been destroyed, and great distress has been created in consequence among many industrious and hard-working families. You will therefore understand, that all of you are to be transported for the term of your natural lives.'

Immediately on the conclusion of this sentence, a number of women, who were seated in court behind the prisoners, set up a dreadful shriek of lamentation. Some of them rushed forwards to shake hands with the prisoners, and more than one voice was heard to exclaim, "Farewell! I shall never see you more."

By some mistake Isaac Miller, Thomas Piggott, and James Romain were led out of the dock with the other prisoner. As he was passing the Judge, Piggott entreated their lordships to permit him to take his child with him abroad, or, if they could not do that, to recommend the parish authorities to take care of it. It was only eight months old, and its mother had died in childbirth. When he was gone, it would have neither kith nor kin to look after it.

Monday, 10th January 1831

‘You ought to have thought of your child before you engaged in these outrage,’ replied Mr Baron Vaughan. ‘Unfortunately, the Court has not the power to do that for you which you now request.’

This appeal to public sympathy produced a great effect in Court; and it is fervently hoped that in this case some effort will be made by those in authority to prevent the separation of this unfortunate and guiltless child from its only surviving natural protector.

Mr Baron Vaughan then asked what the name of the prisoner was who had just addressed him. Being informed, he said, ‘I have not passed sentence upon either Piggott, or Miller, or Romain. They must therefore be replaced at the bar.’

As soon as they had returned to their station, he addressed them in the following terms, ‘Prisoners, you were convicted of tumultuously and riotously assembling to demolish, and the jury properly found that you had begun to demolish the machinery on the premises of Mr Gaby, at Figheldean. The sentence of death will be recorded in this instance, - firstly, because it was in evidence that the machinery had not been used for some time; and secondly, because it appeared to be of slight value, and its destruction had thrown no person out of employment. Let it not be supposed, however, that I mean on that account to say that machinery is not entitled to the protection of the law when it is of small value. Whether its value be great or small, it is equally entitled to protection. As there appear to have been no circumstances of aggravation in your case, we have determined to recommend the Crown to spare your lives. You must expect no further mitigation of your punishment. You will leave the country for life, and will have no further mercy extended towards you.’

The prisoners were then removed from the bar. Piggott, as he passed the Judges said, ‘God help my poor babe, she has now no one else to protect her!’

Charles Pizzie, George Shergold, John Shergold, Thomas Goddard, William Taylor, John Thorn, David Gee, Jeremiah New, Worthy Gee, George Durman, George Toomer, and William Cheater, who had all been convicted of

Monday, 10th January 1831

robbery, were then asked why sentence of death should not be recorded against them. ⁶

Goddard alone made answer, he said, 'My Lords, I am not guilty.'

Mr Baron Vaughan addressed the prisoners, saying, 'Prisoners, you have each and all of you been convicted of robbery, some under circumstances of greater and some under circumstances of less aggravation. There are shades of difference in your guilt, and therefore there will be a difference in your punishment. Instead of being transported for life, you will be transported for periods, which in no case will be shorter than seven years. I cannot allow you, Thomas Goddard, to depart from the bar without stating, that though it is clear that you were the ringleader of your party, we are willing to hope that you continued with them longer than you otherwise would have done, under a notion that your presence might prevent personal violence. Yet, as considerable encouragement was given to the mob by your presence and aid, it is impossible that we can avoid inflicting upon you severe punishment. You must be transported for seven years. As to you George and John Shergold, you must expect no further remission of your sentence. Sentence of death will be recorded against you, but you will have nothing but your lives saved. The other cases will be looked into, but your punishment will not be mitigated to less than seven years transportation.'

The prisoners were then removed.

Shadrach Blake, who had been convicted of burglary, was then sentenced to transportation for life, and told that he must not expect any remission of his sentence. William Taylor was told that he might expect a remission of his sentence to transportation for seven years.

Mr Baron Vaughan ended the days proceeding by thanking the constabulary force of the town. 'I do not know who is the head of the constabulary force in the town of Salisbury, or else I would take the opportunity of returning him the thanks of the Court. I can only say, that that

⁶ NOTE: Jeremiah New, George Durman, and George Toomer are named as Jeremiah Moon, George Dunn and G Tewmore in the report in The Times, 12 January 1831

Monday, 10th January 1831

constabulary force was well arranged, and excellently disciplined, and has used its best efforts for the preservation of the public peace. The members of it were most respectable in their appearance, and I am glad to see the establishment of a force, which was so conducive to the maintenance of public tranquillity. It ought to be understood that in times like these every man is bound to give, and, if he refused to give, can be compelled to yield, his assistance to this force. The Court is obliged to this force for the services, which it has rendered during the abode of the Commission at Salisbury. It has conducted itself with great propriety, and of great benefit to the community.'

With this address of thanks the business of the special commission for Wiltshire concluded at half past 11 o'clock. Mr Baron Vaughan and Mr Justice Alderson immediately started for Dorchester, where they are expected to open the commission at half past 3 o'clock this afternoon. Mr Justice Parke returned to London.

The whole proceedings of this day in court have been of the most afflicting and distressing nature. But the laceration of the feelings did not end with the proceedings in court. Outside the court the scene was heartbreaking beyond everything. A mass of women, anxiously waiting for a glance of their condemned relatives, were standing, bathed in tears, supported by men who looked as though they had hearts that nothing could daunt, but which had given way to feelings of their better nature, and in endeavouring to support the women, they themselves could not but betray their grief and were actually shedding tears of pity and affliction. The car for the removal of the prisoners was at the back entrance to the courthouse. At length the cell door was opened, and the unfortunate prisoners appeared, chained together. As the men came out, their wives, their mothers, their sisters, and their children, clasped them in their arms with an agonising grip. Many of the men gave way and wept like children. They no longer attempted to stifle their feelings, nature had begun to play with every force and the heart was broken. The weeping and wailing of the different parties, as they pressed the hands of the convicts as they stepped into the car, was truly heart-rending. It required every effort on the part of their attendants to get them into

Monday, 10th January 1831

the car, and at last the door was closed. Then the exclamations of regret and of farewell could be heard, and many a female hand was forced through the bars to take a last grasp of him who was now about to leave for ever those who were dear to him, and to whom he was as dear.

A woman made her way through the crowd and addressed one of the men who had just received a sentence of transportation, she said, 'W -, your wife is confined.'

'Is she?' replied the poor fellow, the tears bursting from him.

'Yes, ' rejoined his informant, 'and she is dead, and the baby is dead too.'

At this moment the car moved off and nothing was now heard but the deepest lamentations, and the kind words of sobbing men, endeavouring to console their more afflicted friends. ⁷

Never before has such a distressing spectacle been seen, and it is hoped that now that the tranquillity of the country has been restored that nothing like it will ever be seen again.

The two men who were capitally convicted, Peter Withers and James Lush, are ordered for execution on the 25th of January. ⁸

⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 January 1831

⁸ The Times, 12 January 1831

Monday, 10th January 1831

PART III : AFTER THE SPECIAL COMMISSION

The assizes they are over now, the Judge is gone away,
But many aching hearts are left within the town today:
Tho' crime is bad, yet poverty's made many one to be
A transport from his native land, and across the raging sea.

(From *The Sound of History, Songs & Social Comment*,
by Roy Palmer)

January – June 1831

January – June 1831

Tuesday, 4th January 1831

A barn, containing 15 sacks of barley, a stable, a tool house, and a number of ricks of hay, the property of the Reverend George Edmondstone of Potterne, were wilfully set on fire this evening. The Devizes engines were on the spot as early as the distance would admit; and all classes of the village and neighbourhood used their endeavours to stop the progress of the flames, but not before the above property was consumed. At present suspicion does not attach to any particular individual. Mr Edmondstone was heard to exclaim, 'I did not know that I had an enemy in the world.'¹

Wednesday, 5th January 1831

Another fire, evidently the work of an incendiary, occurred between 10 and 11 o'clock this evening, at the *Black Dog Inn*, West Lavington. A faggot rick and outbuildings, with a considerable quantity of beer, were destroyed. This fire is even more to be regretted, as the proprietor of the premises is a widow, who had been recently left with a family, and the loss is thought to be around £100. Fortunately for her, however, the whole was insured in the Norwich Union Fire Office. Great credit is due to the inhabitants of the village, who rendered every assistance on this occasion.²

Friday, 7th January 1831

A good deal of alarm was excited this evening by the appearance of the Northern Lights, which illuminated the heavens for a considerable distance between Salisbury and Dorchester, and for some time gave the same appearance as would have been exhibited by the reflection of a fire. For several hours they were moving from east to west, every moment exhibiting the most beautiful changes of light, and at each appearance mingling into one mass of crimson, obscured by an apparently deep cloud, and yet, through which, the crimson could be distinctly seen, and even the stars shining, though not with their usual lustre. Finally,

¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 6 January 1831

January – June 1831

the whole as it were, melted away, leaving the firmament uncommonly clear and cloudless, studded with stars, more than ordinarily brilliant and seemingly breaking in greater clusters than usual. ³

Monday, 10th January 1831

This evening a fearful light in the sky alarmed the inhabitants of Warminster. This was at first attributed to the Aurora Borealis, in consequence of their frequent appearance of late. On this occasion, however, it proved to be a tremendous blaze in the yard of Parsonage Farm at Upton Lovell, in the occupation of Mr John Raxworthy. Two barns, together with a stack of wheat and another of barley, were entirely consumed. To the honour of the inhabitants of Warminster, and especially of the labouring classes, who proceeded to the fire in great numbers, every exertion was made to reach the place, with the town fire engine, in time to be of service, but owing to the distance, some six miles, the destruction was effected before their arrival. The premises were completely destroyed. The estimated quantity of grain in the barn and ricks has been put at about 140 quarters of barley and 60 sacks of wheat, all of prime quality, the whole of which, together with the premises, are insured. The wind, which during the blaze was blowing quite a gale from the north west, carried large masses of fire to a great distance, but fortunately in a direction that took it away from the adjacent buildings. It is believed that the fire was deliberately started and a reward of £100, in addition to the £500 offered by His Majesty's government, has been offered to the discovery of the incendiary. ⁴

Tuesday, 11th January 1831

Mrs Ann Chandler, of Church Farm in the parish of Pewsey, received a letter today, which threatened that her house would be burnt down if she did not send £10, by return. The letter arrived by the general post boy this morning, and reads as follows: -

³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

Guildford, 10th January 1831

Madam, - I request that you will send me by return of post, £10, or else your house shall be levelled with the ground very shortly, as I know you can well afford to spare that sum for a short time, until I can have effects to pay it back. Keep this secret, or it will be worse for you, as I have spys in your neighbourhood. You may send your letter to me, addressed to X.Y.Z. Nag's Head, James Street, Covent Garden,

SWING

Mrs Chandler does not recognise the handwriting and has no idea who might have sent it. ⁵

It has been reported that an anonymous letter, addressed to the Judges presiding over the Special Commission at Salisbury, was picked up in Court. This letter stated that the writer, with 60 others, had resolved to break into the Judges lodgings at midnight, and murder their Lordships, should they condemn anyone to death. The threat also extended to two active and respected Magistrates. ⁶

Sometime in the night, between 12 o'clock and 1 o'clock, a cart house was wilfully set on fire and consumed. It was the property of Mr Robert Canning, a highly respectable farm of Ogbourne St Andrew, near Marlborough. The incendiary could not have made his escape by more than a few minutes, as the bailiff was on the spot before the flames had made much progress, but it was only with difficulty that the other buildings were saved. Thanks to exertions of the men, and a plentiful supply of water. At one time the stable was also on fire, and the fright of the poor horses was pitiable. Thankfully they were eventually rescued and the fire extinguished, before it caused too much damage. ⁷

⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 20 January 1831; The Times, 10 March 1831

⁶ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 10 January 1831

⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 13 January 1831

January – June 1831

Friday, 14th January 1831

Ten men were apprehended at Potterne today, on suspicion of being concerned in setting fire to some outhouses belonging to the Reverend Edmondstone of that place. Seven of them have since been discharged; the remaining three are committed for further examination. ⁸

Sunday, 16th January 1831

A rick of stubble, belonging to Mr Beake of Oadle Park Farm, near Cliffe Pypard, was discovered to be on fire this evening. Whilst the people were engaged in extinguishing the fire, flames burst forth, accompanied by a hissing sound from the lower part of an outbuilding, which was a short distance from the rick. It is supposed that some chemical preparation, which after being exposed to the damp or air for a certain time will ignite, was used to carry into effect the wicked intentions of the incendiary; but fortunately the fire was quickly arrested and the damage sustained was but a trifling amount. The property was insured. ⁹

Lord Lansdowne, as Lord Lieutenant of the County, wrote to the King, enclosing the resolution, unanimously carried by the magistrates of the county at the meeting held on the 30th December, together with some complimentary remarks. ¹⁰

Monday, 17th January 1831

William Jacob was committed to Fisherton Gaol today, for further examination. He is charged with having set fire to a pea rick and a hay rick, the property of Henry Selfe, at Amesbury, on the 21st of November last. ¹¹

Wednesday, 19th January 1831

The twelve Judges met today to consider the case of the convict Peter Withers. Mr Henry Ball has made an application for a respite of judgement against Withers, on the grounds that the wounds in this case did not come

⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 20 January 1831

⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 January 1831

¹⁰ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p92. **Note:** Lord Melbourne's letter to Lord Lansdowne, of 24th January 1831, gives the date of this meeting as the 31st December 1830

¹¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 January 1831

within the statute. Their Lordships deliberated in their private room and the result is that, in their opinion, the objection is not a good one, and the law must take its course. Every endeavour is still being made to save the lives of the two men who are now under sentence of death for offences committed during the late riots. ¹²

A deputation from the City of Salisbury, consisting of the Reverend Mr Greenly of the Church of England; the Reverend Messrs Good and Saffrey, Dissenting Ministers, and James Whitmarsh, esq., attended at the Home Office today with a Petition to His Majesty, signed by upwards of 2,000 most respectable persons, including the Mayor, the Canons residentiary, and the Clergy of the cathedral, with the exception of a very few individuals, praying that mercy might be extended to the unhappy men condemned to die in that city on Tuesday next. The Under Secretary of State listened with great attention to their humane representation, and promised the petition would be laid before the King without delay. ¹³

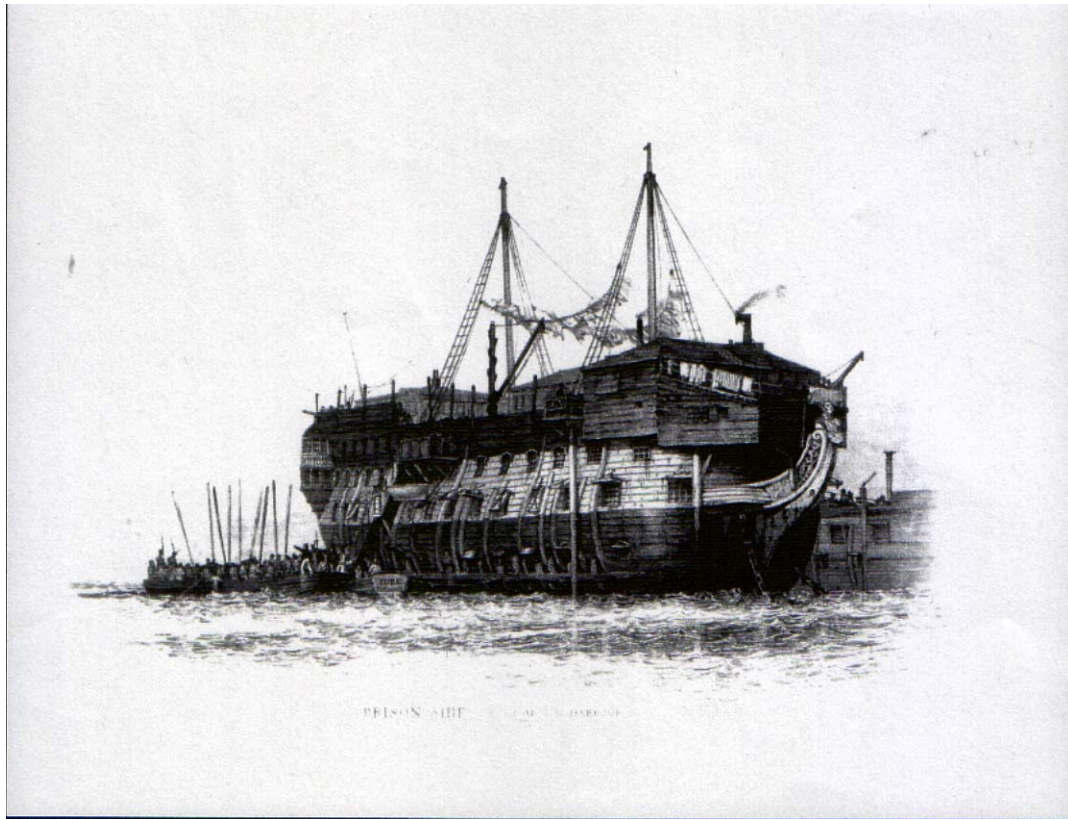
Two vans, each drawn by six horses, started from Fisherton this morning, heading for Portsmouth, carrying 36 of the men convicted of machine breaking. They are Thomas Abree, David Baker, Samuel Banstone alias Macey, John Barrett, Samuel Barrett, William Bartlett, Joseph Beminster, James Blandford, Thomas Burt, Joseph Chubb, William Cook, Thomas Gange alias John Gange, Samuel Harford, Henry Herrington, James House, Joseph Hunt, Charles Jerrard junior, James Lane, Thomas Light, James Mould (age 23), James Mould (age 39), William Munday, John Olden, Richard Pitman, Henry Potticary, Thomas Rixon, William Rogers junior, John Sheppard, William Smith, William Snook, Henry Thornton, Thomas Topp, Thomas Vinen; John Vokins, James Wheeler, and Edmund White. ¹⁴

¹² The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 24 January 1831

¹³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 20 January 1831

¹⁴ TNA – HO9/9; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 20 January 1831

January – June 1831



29. Convict Hulk York

(From *Fifty Plates of Shipping & Craft*)

Thursday, 20th January 1831

A man has been arrested in connection with the threatening letter sent to Mrs Chandler, of Church Farm, Pewsey. The man, John Alexander, was arrested when he arrived at the *Nag's Head*, in Covent Garden, and asked if a letter addressed to X.Y.Z. had been delivered there.

It would seem that when Mrs Chandler received the letter, which threatened that her house would be burnt to the ground unless she sent £10 in a letter addressed to X.Y.Z. at the *Nag's Head*, James Street, Covent Garden, she immediately forwarded it to Bow Street Office. Sir R Birnie said that a £10 note should be enclosed in a letter, and left at the house, and ordered Dodd, an active officer of the establishment, to wait there and secure any individual who might inquire for the letter. It had previously been ascertained that a man, accompanied by a recruiting Sergeant of Dragoons, had asked if any letter to that address had arrived. This morning he called again, and being told such a letter had been received, with 2s 3d to pay

for postage, he went away, not having so much money about him. At about 3 o'clock this afternoon he went again, accompanied by the Sergeant, by whom he had been enlisted, and who lent him the money, and paid the amount of postage, and received the letter. He was then secured by Dodd, and taken to Bow Street. Dodd detailed the whole of the transaction as far as he was concerned; and W Clarke, Sergeant of the 14th Light Dragoons, said he had enlisted the prisoner, who in the morning asked him to lend 5s. as a letter containing money had arrived from the country, and he had not sufficient to pay the postage. He did so and on receiving the letter, he told the Sergeant, "It was all right." The prisoner, upon being asked if he wished to say anything in explanation of the charge, denied all knowledge of the letter, and added, that he should say nothing at present. He was then asked to sign his name, which he did, and the handwriting was deemed to be precisely similar to that in which the letter signed, "Swing" was written.

The prisoner has been remanded until Monday next, to give time for the attendance of Mrs Chandler, and other witnesses from Wiltshire. He has been taken to the Cold Bath Fields House of Correction. There is good reason for believing that the prisoner has been deeply implicated in the burnings and destruction of property, which has taken place in Wiltshire. ¹⁵

It was reported in today's edition of *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette* that a man named William Merrett, who was the means of apprehending Gifford North, the principal ringleader in the outrages committed at Alton Barnes, in this county, has obtained from Government the promised reward of £50. It will be remembered that this sum was offered, by His Majesty's Proclamation, to any one who would apprehend, or cause to be apprehended, and of the abettors or perpetrators of the outrages, which so disgraced this and other counties, for every person so convicted. The Magistrates of this District laid the above case before Government, and the money was immediately remitted. The Magistrates have this week made an application for a similar reward for Stephen Bullock, who was the means of

¹⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 20 January 1831

January – June 1831

preserving the life of Mr Pile, and through whose information several who took part in the violence committed on that gentleman's premises, were apprehended and convicted. Any one giving information that might lead to the conviction of an incendiary is still entitled to His Majesty's reward of £500, and a free pardon. ¹⁶

Friday, 21st January 1831

Another group of convicts left Fisherton for Portsmouth this morning. They are, Joseph Alexander, Mathias Alexander, George Ball, Robert Barrett, Charles Beckley alias Giddings, Charles Bennett, Robert Blake, James Burden, James Case, Henry Dicketts, William Elton junior, James Hale, William Hayter, David Heath (age 23), David Heath (age 20), Arthur Hillier, William Hillman, William Holmes, Barnabas Hutchinson, William Kibblewhite, Joseph Liddiard, William Marsh, John Moon, Abraham Morgan, John Pinchin, Thomas Porter, Isaac Roberts, John Rose, Aaron Shepherd, George Smith alias Ewens, Robert Vivash, Charles Waters, Thomas Wells, and Robert Willoughby. ¹⁷

Monday, 24th January 1831

The following report appeared in today's edition of The Salisbury & Winchester Journal.

[From our London Correspondent]

The Condemned Convict Withers. – The Twelve Judges met two days ago, to consider the case of this unfortunate man. It will be fresh in the minds of your readers that an application was made by Mr Henry Ball for a respite of the judgement against the convict, on the ground of the wound in this case not being within the statute. The argument took place immediately before the sentence was passed, and was a very ingenious one. The learned Judges did not now hear Counsel again upon it, considering that nothing more could be added to the argument, which was advanced at Salisbury. Their Lordships therefore deliberated in their private room; and the result has been, that, in the opinion of the Judges the objection is not a good one, and that the law must take its course. Every endeavour is still being

¹⁶ The Devises & Wiltshire Gazette, 20 January 1831

¹⁷ TNA – HO9/9

made here to save the lives of those who are now under sentence of death for offences committed during the late riots; and I trust that all persons in your neighbourhood have so conducted themselves since the Special Commission, as to give those in authority good reason for believing that the example already made has had its effect, and that mercy may now be extended, without violating that justice which the country loudly called for, and to which we all look for the protection of our lives and property. Many have found fault with the sentences under the late Commission, and say they have been too severe; but let those persons place themselves in the situation of those who were attacked, or let them calmly read through the masses of evidence given on the trials, and weigh such evidence well, and I question much whether they would retain the opinion they now hold. What, I would ask, must have been the feelings of Mr Pile and his family? Is it to be allowed that a number of persons shall assemble together, and break machines, and when a pistol is fired over their heads by the proprietor of them, that they shall attack him with bludgeons and iron bars – break his arm – endeavour to pull down his house, and only desist upon £10 being given them? Is this, I say, to be borne, and in a country which boasts of its freedom, and wherein every man's house is considered to be his castle? The laws of the country say such things shall not be – to them we must apply for help; and on their being faithfully administered depends our safety. To put a stop to such unlawful acts, an example must be made. Two persons have already suffered, and we may rest assured, that, if it is thought to be consistent with the public safety (for that is what should be thought of), a further sacrifice will not be enforced. In my opinion, the future fate of many of those under sentence of transportation will greatly depend on the conduct of the peasantry generally. If they show that they have been sufficiently warned already, it is not, I think, improbable, that some measure may be adopted, to ameliorate the condition of the banished; but if, on the contrary, they resort to fresh outrages, all hope of that kind will be vain, and further examples of the heaviest kind will follow. ¹⁸

¹⁸ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 24 January 1831

January - June 1831

Names	Age	Place where taken	Convicts	Number of years
116 Lt. Howard Junr	22	Windsor, New Brunswick	27 Dec 1830	7 yrs 22 Jan 31
117 Lt. Brock	22			20 Jan 31
118 Lt. Brent	24			
119 Lt. Brett	30			
120 Lt. Munday	38			
121 Lt. Beaumont	24			
122 Lt. Hays	23			
123 Lt. Taylor	22			
124 Lt. West	20			
125 Lt. Pollock	30			
126 Lt. Wheeler	25			
127 Lt. Smith	33			
128 Lt. White	20			
129 Lt. Abernethy	32			22 Jan 31
130 Lt. Spalding	18			20 Jan 31
131 Lt. Rogers Junr	18			
132 Lt. Hartington	40			
133 Lt. Sprague ab. h. Gange	20			
134 Lt. Cook	38			
135 Capt. Baker	29			
136 Lt. Dickens	20			
137 Lt. Alden	28			
138 Lt. Hampton	37			
139 Lt. Shephard	20			
140 Lt. Fisherton				
141 Lt. (Hon) Junr	25	Windsor, New Brunswick	27 Dec 1830	7 yrs 22 Jan 31
142 Lt. Alden	27			22 Jan 31
143 Lt. Foster	18			22 Jan 31
144 Lt. Shephard	40			
145 Lt. Nicholls	19			
146 Lt. Case	17			
147 Lt. Morgan	25			
148 Lt. Hayler	28			
149 Mathias Curran	18			
150 Lt. Alexander	25			
151 Lt. Siddian	24			
152 Lt. Bennett	24			
153 Thomas Hutchinson	19			
154 Lt. Waters	24			
155 Lt. Kibblewhite	20			
156 Lt. Heath	23			
157 Lt. Pittman	30			
158 Lt. Heath	20			
159 Lt. Hale	28			
160 Lt. Patten	22			
161 Lt. Beckley & Giddings	20			

30. Wiltshire Prisoners on board the York Hulk (TNA - HO9/9)

The convicts, James Lush and Peter Withers, who were ordered for execution tomorrow, have been respited during his Majesty's pleasure. It is impossible to describe the feelings of the prisoners when the glad news was given to them. Lush declared that he had bidden a last adieu to this world, and had fully prepared himself for the awful change

he was about to undergo. He acknowledged that he had been a great sinner; but, raising his hands to Heaven, he prayed that the blessing of God might be with him, and that trusting in the mercies of the Redeemer, and assisted by the consolations of the Holy Spirit, he might hereafter lead a life dedicated to the worship of that God who had so mercifully delivered him in this the hour of his extremist need, and thus show himself not altogether unworthy of the great blessing which he had received. Withers, who had also prepared himself for the awful moment of his dissolution, returned thanks to God with uplifted hands, and uttered a fervent prayer to the Father of Mercies, that his future life might be dedicated to his service, as a token of his sincere gratitude. ¹⁹

John Alexander, the prisoner who was remanded at Bow Street last Thursday, suspected of sending a threatening letter to Mrs Chandler of Church Farm, Pewsey, was today brought before Sir R Birnie and Mr Mallard, in order to be fully examined.

Mr Wooler defended the prisoner, and a professional gentleman appeared for the prosecution.

Mrs Chandler was then called forward, and stated, that on Tuesday last, the 11th instant, the letter now produced was handed to her by one of her servants, who stated that it came by post. On receiving it, she was advised to go to the postmaster at Marlborough, and having consulted with that person and a Mr Lewis, she was advised to write a letter enclosing a shilling, and directed it to X.Y.Z., Nag's Head, James Street, Covent Garden, till called for. She did not recognise the handwriting of the letter to her, signed "Swing."

Caroline Dear, a little girl in the service of Mrs Chandler, proved, that on Tuesday morning, the 11th instant, she received from the general post boy the letter now produced, addressed to her mistress, and paid 9d. postage for it. She handed the letter to her mistress immediately after she had received it.

¹⁹ The Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 24 January 1831; The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 January 1831

January – June 1831

Mr Matthew Loe, of No. 27, Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, deposed that he was in the service, as commission agent, of Messrs Henry Barnett and William Avery, silk merchants, of No. 10 Catenton Street, City. The prisoner had lived as porter with the same firm for 6 or 7 years, and left his situation some time in last November. The letter now produced, signed “Swing,” was written, to the best of his belief, by the prisoner.

John Alexander was fully committed and will appear at the next Assize in Wiltshire. ²⁰

Wednesday, 26th January 1831

Sufficient evidence has been put before the magistrates to fully commit Isaac Nash to Fisherton Gaol, for trial at the next Assize. Nash was one of the three men who were committed for further examination last week, on suspicion of setting fire to a barn and some outhouses, the property of the Reverend George Edmondstone, at Potterne on Tuesday the 4th January. ²¹

A second man, Thomas Hill, has been bound over to appear against Nash, and a third man, George Pearce, has been admitted to bail, to appear when called upon. It is understood, that on the morning previous to the fire, the Reverend Mr Edmondstone attended the Magistrates meeting in Devizes, and whilst the Reverend gentleman was engaged on other business, his brother Magistrates decided a dispute between some labourers of Potterne, and, it is believed, the overseers or paymasters of that parish. The decision, however, gave great dissatisfaction to the labourers, who shortly afterwards assembled at a public house, where some of them were heard to declare they would have revenge on the Reverend Mr Edmondstone; Nash was the loudest and most violent in his threats. This coupled with other circumstances which came out on the examination, induced the Magistrates to commit him. ²²

Today Lord Lansdowne, Lord Lieutenant of the County, wrote to Mr S Foote, the Clerk of the Peace for the county,

²⁰ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 20 January 1831

²¹ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 7th February 1831

²² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 January 1831. **NOTE:** Pearce is named as Parse in this report

enclosing the letter he had received from Lord Melbourne, in reply to the letter sent, last month, to the King by Lord Lansdowne, praising the conduct of the Yeomanry Cavalry.

Whitehall, 24th January, 1831

My Lord, - Having lost no time in submitting to his Majesty your Lordship's letter of the 16th instant, together with a copy of the resolutions passed at a numerous meeting of the magistrates at Salisbury on the 31st December last, I am commanded by his Majesty to acquaint your Lordship that he has received this report and testimonial with great satisfaction, and your Lordship is desired to express the same to Colonel Baker and the Corps under his command; and I am further commanded to signify to you that, as a mark of the sense his Majesty entertains of the exemplary conduct, unwearied zeal and admirable temper uniformly displayed by this Corps during the late unfortunate disturbances, it is his Majesty's pleasure that this Corps should be styled the "Royal" Wiltshire Regiment of Yeomanry Cavalry, which command your Lordship will be pleased to communicate. I cannot omit this opportunity of adding, from myself, that estimating most highly the services rendered by the Wilts Yeomanry Cavalry, I have great satisfaction in conveying to them, through your Lordship, these testimonies of his Majesty's approbation. ²³

This morning 33 of the rioters, sentenced to seven years transportation at the late Special Assize, were removed from Fisherton Gaol and taken to the hulk *York*, at Gosport. Among them was young Edward Looker, who confessed to writing a threatening letter, after his father had been found guilty of the offence. The others are, Shadrach Amor, William Baker, David Bartlett, Thomas Brind, Henry Broadway, William Durham, John Eyres, Thomas Foot, Robert Fribbens, Richard Groves, John Hayward, William Hibberd, William Hillier, John Hiscock, William Holt, Elias Kiddle, James Kimmer, Abraham Knight, Charles Lane, Richard Matthews, Levi Millard, Stephen Moon, John Newcombe, Daniel North, Samuel North, William North,

²³ The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p92 & p93

January – June 1831

John Perry, Joseph Pinchin, David Ranger, Charles Skitrell, John Wilde, and John Young alias Sutton. ²⁴

Thursday, 27th January 1831

A copy of the petition sent to Lord Melbourne by Henry Hunt, on behalf of the prisoners James Lush and Peter Withers who have been sentenced to death for their part in the late riots, appeared in today's copy of the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*. ²⁵

Friday, 4th February 1831

William Jacob, of Amesbury, charged with having wilfully and maliciously set fire to a pea rick, the property of Henry Selfe, of the same place, on the 21st November last; and Henry Wilkins, of Chute, charged with having, in the company of many others, set fire to and burnt a cottage in the occupation of Robert Chandler, of Ludgershall, on the 20th November last, were both committed to Fisherton gaol today. ²⁶

Sunday, 6th February 1831

The convict transport ship *Eliza* sailed for Van Diemen's Land from Portsmouth today. She carries 224 machine breakers, including 101 men from Wiltshire. ²⁷

Monday, 7th February 1831

This morning 34 convicts, against whom a sentence of death was recorded at the late Special Assizes, were removed from Fisherton gaol and put on board the hulk *York* at Gosport. Maurice Pope, the celebrated Wiltshire pugilist, is amongst the number. The others are, Shadrach Blake, William Cheater, Isaac Cole, Charles Davis, James Down, George Durman, John Ford, William Francis, John Jennings, Thomas Lawrence, William Lewis, Gifford North, Charles Pizzie, John Pounds, George Shergold of Wilton, George Shergold of Stapleford, Henry Shergold, John Shergold, Laban Stone, James Toomer, Joseph Watts, and

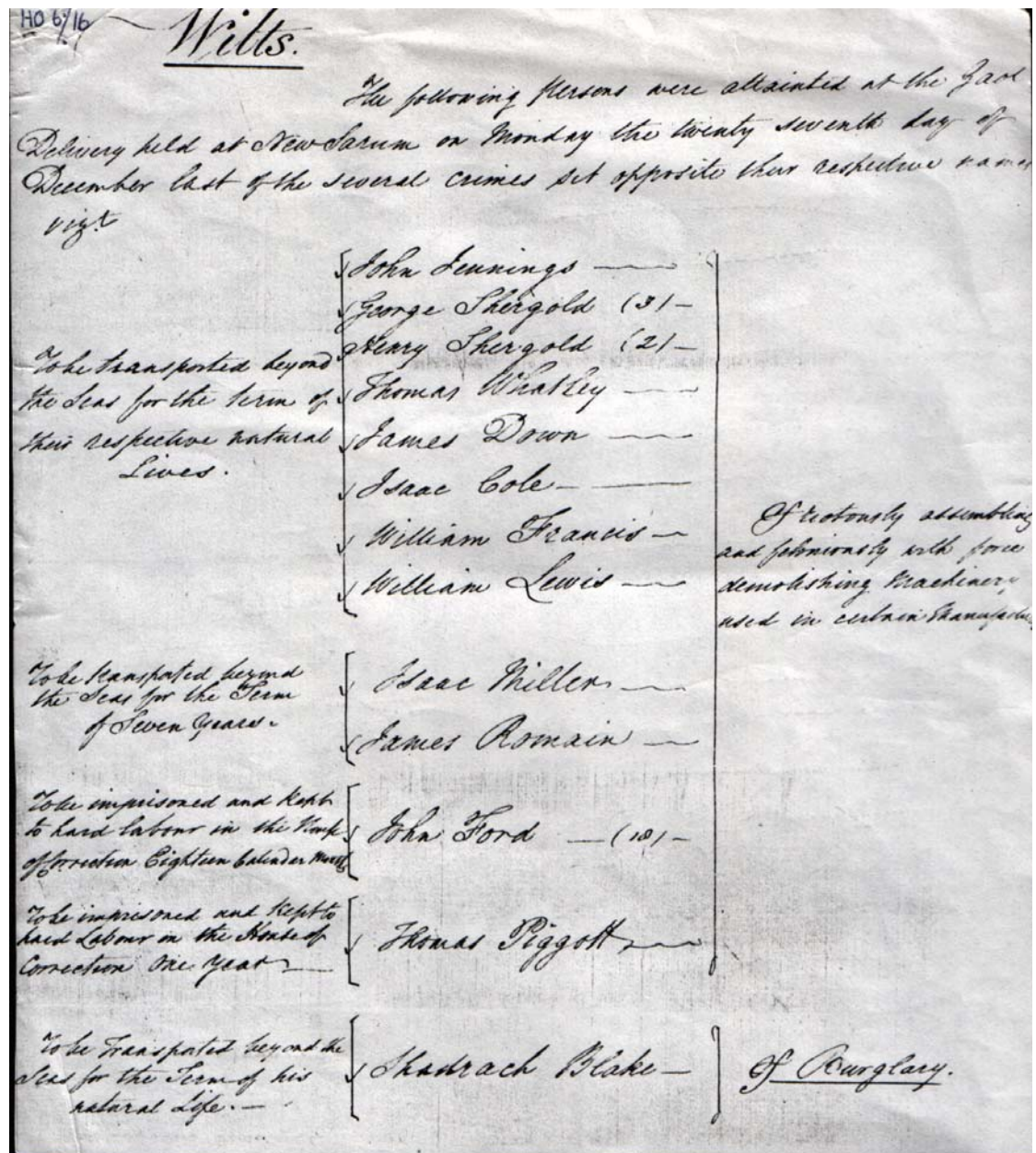
²⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 January 1831; TNA – HO9/9

²⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 January 1831. **NOTE:** A transcript of this petition can be found in *Wiltshire Machine Breakers Volume II: The Rioters*

²⁶ Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 7 February 1831

²⁷ *The Convict Ships* – Charles Bateson

Thomas Whatley, whose sentences have been commuted to transportation for life; Robert Baker, Levi Brown, John Burrough, William Hibberd, William Legg, John Orchard, John Reeves, Aaron Stone, Henry Tombs, and Job Waldron, whose sentences have been commuted to transportation for 14 years; and James Romain, whose sentence has been commuted to transportation for 7 years. ²⁸



31. List of Prisoners Recommended for Mercy
(TNA – HO6/16)

²⁸ The Devises & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 March 1831; TNA - HO9/9

January – June 1831

Thursday, 10th February 1831

Another group of rioters left Fisherton today for the hulk York at Portsmouth, including the two men, Peter Withers and James Lush, whose death sentence had been commuted to transportation for life. The other men are, James Baker, David Gee, Worthy Gee, Thomas Goddard, John Legg, Thomas Legg, Isaac Miller, Jeremiah New, William Taylor, James Thorne, and George Toomer. ²⁹

Saturday, 19th February 1831

The convict ship *Eleanor* sailed from Spithead for New South Wales today. All 133 men on board having been involved in the late riots, among them are 35 men from Wiltshire. The rest of the men are from Dorset, Hampshire, with four from Berkshire, and one man from Kent. ³⁰

Saturday, 26th February 1831?

At about 2 o'clock this afternoon, a most awful fire took place at Chitterne, about six miles from Warminster, at a farm the property of Paul Methuen, Esq., the present High Sheriff of the county, and occupied by a widow named Wallis. It broke out in the rick-barton, and when first discovered, at the lower part of the barley rick, close to a large barn full of unthrashed barley, as a woman described it, "she could take it up in her apron." The wind was high at the time, and in a very short period, before any effectual assistance could be obtained, the fire had spread to the barn, and a large range of stables, a large cart shed full of wagons and carts, two wheat ricks, and another large barley-rick, and a double hay-rick; a house on the opposite side of the turnpike road, and a cottage, also caught fire, and were consumed, together with almost every article of furniture. The flames began to spread through the farm yard, which was littered with sheep; the yard was fenced by a thatched mud wall; an engine was sent for from Heytesbury, about three miles off, and proved very efficient in stopping the flames from spreading. There was another farm to leeward of the fire, and, had not the thatch been pulled off the wall, and parts of the buildings belonging to

²⁹ TNA – HO9/9

³⁰ TNA ADM101/23/1 - Journal of the Convict Ship *Eleanor*

the adjoining farm been kept wet by the engine, all that part of the village, with a public house and many cottages, would have been consumed. One large wheat-rick, which stood only five yards to windward of the two, which were burnt, was preserved by great exertion. At present the opinion is, that it arose from accident, as boys are in the habit of shooting sparrows there, and a gun was heard in the rick-barton a short time before the fire, and the labouring classes of this parish are described as having been quiet and orderly during the late disturbances. The time of day when it happened seems to favour the surmise that the fire was purely accidental. The stock is insured to a certain amount. ³¹

Wednesday, 2nd March 1831

Today the Marlborough Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry was again called on to suppress a mob that had assembled at Ramsbury, which they accomplished without any difficulty, taking three of the ringleaders prisoners. It turned out afterwards that the Magistrate, Mr Baskerville, had only sent for the Ramsbury troop of Volunteer Cavalry, but the messenger had called out the Yeomanry by mistake. ³²

Monday, 7th March 1831

The Wiltshire Assizes opened this morning. Mr Justice Park sat in the Crown Court and Mr Justice Taunton in the Nisi Prius Court.

The following gentlemen were sworn on the Grand Jury:-

R H B Hale	James Roles
Wad. Locke	J H Jacob
Thomas Scott	F T Ederton
John Fuller	Jos. Everett
Fulwar Craven	O C Codrington
Thomas Bolton	C W Everett
Wm. Temple	A Goddard
George Forte	W B Brodie
Daniel Eyre	A B Lambert

³¹ The Times, 1 March 1831

³² The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire, p96

Mr Justice Parke then proceeded to charge the Grand Jury, and went very fully into the law as it related to arson, and to sending threatening letters. His Lordship then made some observations on men who, by their speeches and writings, had endeavoured to instil into the minds of the public, that the poor were oppressed by the rich. 'This is not only the way to set the poor against the rich, but it might have a tendency to set the rich against the poor. It is, however, a gross falsehood. There was no gentleman who did not know and feel the anxious concern of every good man to alleviate the distresses of the poor.'

His Lordship went on to allude to the practice of paying a portion of the labourers' wages from the poor rates. He also deprecated the system of paying the labourers at alehouses, as it frequently tempted them to take home only a portion of their wages to their families. He concluded by calling on the Grand Jury, by precept, as well as by their own bright example, to promote morality and religion.³³

The first case was called and George Whale and Thomas Whale were put to the bar and charged with having, on the 27th day of August last, stolen 4 sheep, the property of John Henly, at Calne, and James Whale stood charged with having received the skins thereof knowing them to have been stolen,

John Henly, the prosecutor, proved the loss of the sheep on the day in question, and having obtained a search warrant, found their skins buried in the garden of the prisoner, James Whale, who stated that 4 sheep had been brought to his house by the other two prisoners, and he had given them leave to kill them at his house, if they had come by them honestly.

A skin was produced, and identified as having belonged to one of the sheep stolen, and which was found buried in the garden of the prisoner James Whale.

The prisoner, George Whale, in his defence, said, that on returning from Marlborough he met a man with 4 sheep, who said he wished to sell them; and that he the prisoner bought them.

³³ The above information, and details of the following trials can be found in *The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*, 10 March 1831

The other prisoners made no defence.

A witness, named Spackman, gave the prisoners a good character.

Mr Justice Parke summed up, and the Jury found George Whale *guilty*, Thomas Whale *not guilty*, and James Whale *guilty* of receiving the skins, knowing them to have been stolen.

Mr Justice Parke addressed the prisoner George Whale, and informed him that his case was one he should think proper to submit to his Majesty's clemency. Judgement of death was recorded against George Whale. James Whale was sentenced to 14 years transportation.

William Jacob was then put to the bar and indicted for having, on the 21st November last, at the parish of Amesbury, set fire to a stack of grain, the property of Henry Self, with intent to do him injury. The prisoner pleaded not guilty. Mr Jeremy for the prisoner, made an objection to the form of the indictment, which was overruled by the Court. Mr Missing stated the case to the Jury, as detailed in the evidence.

Richard Barnes, who lives in Amesbury, was called. 'I am a labourer of Mr Self's. I live about 120 yards from Mr Self. I know the prisoner at the bar I live close by him. I remember the night on which the fire happened in Mr Self's rick yard, on the 27th November last. I returned home at about 9 o'clock, the prisoner came home at the same time and went in to his own house. The prisoner came to my house afterwards and began talking about what had happened in the neighbourhood, breaking machines and such like. He stayed at my house for about 25 minutes, during which time he lighted a pipe of tobacco and went away smoking. At about a quarter before eleven the prisoner called me up, saying that the ricks in Mr Self's yard were on fire. I saw the prisoner some time afterwards, when a second fire had taken place, he told me that he understood that he was to be taken up on account of the fire, and said that he did not care if three or four more were taken up with him.'

Mr Hodding was present when the prisoner was examined before the magistrates. The depositions were not

January – June 1831

taken down in writing. The prisoner said that he had seen the fire from the corner of his house.

Richard Barnes was re-examined. 'I did not see the fire, but the reflection. I know the situation of the corner of the prisoner's house. The flames could be seen from there.'

Barnes was then cross-examined by Mr Jeremy, but nothing of consequence was elicited, other than that he believed that Jacob had always borne a good character.

Reuben Hewitt then took the stand. 'I live in Amesbury. I recollect the fire in November last. At about a quarter past ten on the night in question I was in the keeper's walk, about 200 yards distant when the fire happened. At first it appeared to be about the size of a lantern, it gradually increased and I saw the smoke. I hurried to my master's house and gave the alarm. About five or six minutes after I first saw the fire I saw Barnes running towards the town for help, and I went with him to get assistance.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Jeremy, Hewitt replied, 'I saw the prisoner in the water, filling buckets to extinguish the fire. I saw him the next morning carrying back his goods which had been removed from his house the night before, for safety, in consequence of it being in danger from the fire.'

William Hayes, keeper to Sir Edmund Antrobus, confirmed the testimony of the last witness. 'I saw Jacob at the fire, giving assistance. He said it was a bad job, and that he had seen two strange men come out of the stack yard that evening, dressed in snuff coloured clothes, and they went towards the turnpike gate. I went in search of the men but did not find them.'

In his evidence William Chissell said, 'I am carter to Mr Self. On the night in question, at about a quarter before eleven, William Jacob came and called me up. He told me to get up and take the horses out as the farm was on fire. I got up immediately and looked out, but I could see neither light nor fire.'

On being cross-examined by the Court, Chissell replied, 'Jacob would have seen the fire sooner than I would, because of the wind.'

Henry Self was called, and said, 'I was called by the prisoner on the night in question, at about a quarter before eleven. A rick of mine was on fire, on the side opposite to the prisoner's house. Jacob told me that he had seen two strange men about the yard that evening.'

When called, Sarah Wright said, 'On the evening before the fire Jacob told me that a mob was coming to Amesbury, and that half the town would be burnt.'

Harriet Radnor confirmed the testimony of this last witness, but added that she thought the prisoner was only quizzing her.

This was the case for the prosecution.

His Lordship, Mr Justice Parke, then summed up the evidence in very minute detail, commenting on its bearing as he proceeded.

The Jury found the prisoner *not guilty*.

The Court was then adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Tuesday, 8th March 1831

In the Crown Court, before Mr Justice Parke.

Robert Kibblewhite was charged with having on the 9th September last, stolen a bay gelding, belonging to James May of Purton.

It appears from the evidence that the prosecutor missed the horse from his field on the morning of the 10th September last, and in consequence of information he received, he went to Guildford and found it in the possession of Mr Wilkie, who had purchased it from a person named Ferris, to whom the prisoner had sold it. The prisoner not giving a satisfactory account how he came by it, and no witnesses appearing for the defence, the jury found him *guilty*.³⁴

Elijah Little and Charles Smith, were indicted for breaking open the dwelling house of James Cockrell, and stealing two pair of boots and other articles, his property, at Westbury.

³⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 March 1831

January – June 1831

Part of the stolen property was found on the person of the prisoners, together with a bunch of picklocks, and a phosphorous box in the hat of the prisoner Little; and it also appeared, that the prisoners were out on the night in question. Another part of the stolen property was found in a field adjoining, together with some old shoes, which were proved to belong to the prisoners. Both prisoners were found *guilty*. His Lordship sentenced to be each transported for seven years.

Elijah Little was again placed at the bar, and convicted of having stolen several picklocks from the shop of Henry Lucas, at Trowbridge. His Lordship sentenced him to be transported for a further period of seven years. ³⁵

Joseph Wilkins was charged with having, on the 19th of February, sent a threatening letter to Joseph Poulton, a farmer, residing near Castle Eaton. The prisoner is a labourer in the same place. The writing charged was a sort of letters patent addressed to all the farmers of Castle Eaton, and was in the following words:- "*Better wages for the labouring class, or a damned good fire.*" Those words were written on a scrap of open paper, which was thrown into a garden adjoining a cottage occupied by one of Mr Poulton's servants, who brought it to his master. The evidence by which it was endeavoured to connect the prisoner with the paper was entirely circumstantial, and of a very slight and unsatisfactory nature. Mr Poulton deposed to his hand writing, in consequence of having seen him once put his name to a parchment petition, which was addressed to parliament, and which prayed for reform. On hearing this part of the evidence, the learned Judge said it was perfectly shocking that persons like the prisoner, who was a very clownish, ignorant man, should intermeddle in such affairs.

Mr Rogers, took some technical objections in the prisoner's behalf, to the case against him, but the Jury rendered the discussion to the objections unnecessary, by *acquitting* the prisoner. ³⁶

John Slater was acquitted of the charge of having stolen a quantity of plate, the property of the Reverend

³⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 March 1831

³⁶ The Times, 10 March 1831

George Hume, it being stated by Mr Smith, that he could not press the case, the only evidence being that which had been obtained by promises.

Nehemiah Jeffrys was found *guilty* of breaking into the house of Eli Rawlings, at Seend, and stealing seven sovereigns. He was sentenced to seven years transportation.

Jonathan Stone, charged with destroying a thrashing machine on the 23rd November last, was *acquitted*, in consequence of no prosecutor appearing.

Henry Potter was found *guilty* of stealing a pony, the property of Robert Pearce. A sentence of death was recorded against him. His Lordship intimated that he would make the proper representation to his Majesty on the prisoner's behalf.

John Alexander, aged 35, brought from Newgate by *Habeas Corpus*, was put to the bar upon an indictment, which charged him with having feloniously sent a letter to Ann Chandler, of Church Farm, Pewsey, Wilts, for the purpose of extorting from her by menaces the sum of £10. Mr Bingham stated the case.³⁷

Caroline Dear was called, and said, 'I was living with Mrs Chandler last January. I recognise the letter produced. I received it from the general post boy.'

Mrs Chandler was called and said, 'I live at Pewsey and I recognise the letter now produced. It was given to me by Caroline Dear, the last witness. When I received it I went to the Post Master at Pewsey, and he advised me to put a shilling in a piece of paper and direct it as requested. This was the letter the Post Master sent. The prisoner is a great nephew of my first husband.'

William Clarke, a sergeant in the 14th Light Dragoons said, 'We were quartered at Westminster in January last. The prisoner came to me on the 12th of that month, and enlisted on the following day. The prisoner told me that he expected a money letter from an aunt or friend in the country, to come to the *Nag's Head* in James Street, Covent

³⁷ The majority of the information on this case can be found in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 March 1831, it is also reported briefly in The Times, 10 March 1831

January – June 1831

Garden. At the prisoner's request I walked to the *Nag's Head* with him, he said that the letter had not arrived. The next day he said that the letter had arrived, and that he had no money to release it. He asked me to lend him the money, which he would repay, he said it was a treble letter. At the prisoner's request I accompanied him to the house, and went into the parlour. I lent him two half crowns. The prisoner went out and returned with the letter, which he put into his left hand trouser pocket, he said it was all right.'

John Manker, landlord of the *Nag's Head*, was called and said, 'The prisoner came to the *Nags Head* on the 13th January and enquired if a letter had been left for X.Y.Z. I told him that such a letter was there, and the letter now produced is the same. The prisoner told me that he did not have the money to pay for the postage, but said that he would go and borrow it from a friend. He later returned and put down half a crown. I gave him three pence change and the letter. The prisoner then went into the parlour. Dodd was in the house at the time.'

When called William Dodd said, 'I am one of the gaolers of Bow Street. In consequence of instructions I had received, I went to the *Nag's Head* on the 13th January. I saw the letter given to the prisoner who then went into the parlour. I followed him and I heard him tell the Sergeant that he had got the letter and rammed it into his left hand trouser pocket. I then told him that he was my prisoner. As I was taking him to Bow Street he said that he knew what it was all about but that he would say nothing.'

Matthew Lowe, a traveller to Varnish & Co, Catenton Street, stated, 'The prisoner quitted our employ in November. He worked with us for six or seven years as a superior porter. I have frequently seen him write.' The witness looked at the letter and said, 'I believe this to be his handwriting. The word "Swing" is different to his usual way of writing.'

On being cross-examined Lowe replied, 'I never saw him write a letter.'

The letter was then put in and read.

Guildford, Jan 10th, 1831

Madam. - I request that you will send me, by return of post, £10, or else your house shall be levelled with the ground very

shortly, as I know that you can well afford to spare that sum for a short time, until I have effects to pay it back. Keep this secret, or it will be the worse for you, as I have spies in your neighbourhood. You may send your letter to me, addressed to X.Y.Z. Nag's Head, James-street, Covent-garden, London.

SWING

In his defence Alexander said, 'I met a gentleman who asked me if I would go and look for a letter which he expected to be sent to him, addressed to X.Y.Z. I went and asked but the letter was not there. I met the gentleman afterwards and he asked me to call again the next day. I did so and was told that the letter was there but I could not pay the postage. I went to the sergeant as has been stated. I received the letter and was then taken in to custody.'

Mr Justice Parke summed up the case and went through the evidence in great detail. The Jury returned a verdict of *guilty*.

His Lordship then addressed the prisoner, 'It is impossible to allow such practices as these, which are of the worst description, to continue. They must be put a stop to. The sentence of the Court is therefore that you should be transported for life.'

Judgement of death was recorded against Mary Smith, who was convicted of breaking into the dwelling house of Stephen May, and stealing various articles of wearing apparel, his property.

Judgement of death was also recorded against James Glead, for a similar offence.

The Court was then adjourned until nine o'clock tomorrow morning.

Wednesday, 9th March 1831

Henry Wilkins was put to the bar and charged with having, in company with several other persons, riotously assembling together, and feloniously setting fire to and burning down a cottage or dwelling house, the property of William Peachey, at Ludgershall, on the 20th November. ³⁸

³⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 March 1831

Mr Missing, having stated the case, called the first witness.

Henry Barnes, the son of John Barnes, who lives at Choddesden Farm, said, 'In consequence of some information I had received on the 20th November last, I went to South Park Farm in the parish of Ludgershall at about 9 o'clock. The barn, stable, and cart house were on fire when I arrived. Around 70 to 100 people were already assembled there. There was a cottage about 20 or 25 yards distant from the cart house. A man named Robert Chandler lived there. I remained on the farm for about 20 minutes. When I left the fire had not communicated to the cottage. It was still evening when I left. The buildings were quite destroyed. The farm is rented from William Peachey.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Role, Barnes said, 'It was rather a dark night, the people assembled at the fire were not attempting to extinguish it. I did not see them do any mischief.'

Thomas Smith was called and said, 'I am a labourer and live at Ludgershall. On the night of the 20th November last I went to bed at about 8 o'clock and was called up soon after by my father. I went to the fire at South Park. There were about 100 people there. The barn, cart house and stable, were burning. The cottage was not then on fire. The prisoner at the bar was there, I have known him a long time. He had on a blue frock and a fur cap. I saw him take up some thatch and he put it on the mud wall, which adjoins the cottage. The wall was thatched; he placed it close under the eaves of the house. He then went and got more straw and set fire to it. I was about three yards from him. Someone came and brushed the straw off. I afterwards saw the prisoner bring the hinge of the door from the barn and take it into the cottage. One end was red hot and he had twisted some straw around the other end. I saw several other people go into the house with him. He had been in the cottage for about a quarter of an hour when I observed the fire up stairs in the house. The fire increased and the cottage was entirely consumed. The fire burnt through the roof.'

Robert Spicer corroborated Smith's evidence.

In his evidence Richard Hooper said, ‘I went to South Park on the evening of the fire. I saw the prisoner at the bar there. He was dressed in a blue frock and a fur cap. I saw him take up a fire-brand and take some paper from his pocket and put round it. He carried it towards the cottage. It was about two hours before the cottage was on fire.’

John Baden stated, ‘I went to the fire on the night in question, and assisted Chandler in removing his goods. I carried out two of his children. I saw a man in a blue frock and a furry cap there. I saw him take some straw and lay it on the wall close to the house. I saw him take some lighted straw and lay it on the other. Robert Chandler knocked it off with a stick. I saw the prisoner take a bar, red hot, on a stick, and carry it towards the cottage. In about a quarter of an hour afterwards I saw a light through the cottage window. I then saw smoke through the thatch, and soon after the whole house was in flames.’

Harriet Gibbs was called and said, ‘I recollect, on the 21st November last, a mob coming to my husband’s house at about 9 o’clock at night. Elizabeth Hopgood was with me. My husband was from home. About 20 people came into the house; the prisoner at the bar was amongst them. He had on a blue frock. He remained behind with another man after the rest had departed. They sat down in the chimney corner and began talking about fires. There was a fire at Chute, two and a half miles off, at the time. Hopgood and I went out to look at it. I asked the men if they had fired anything before they came there. The prisoner said that they had not set anything on fire then but that a fire or two didn’t matter. They said that they were at a fire the night before, at Mr Barnes at Choddesden. I asked them what they had burnt there. “A barn, a barn full of oats, a new wagon, a cart house and two rollers”, said the prisoner. I then asked him if they had burnt a dwelling house. The prisoner said that it was not a dwelling house but a cottage. He said that they had flung fire brands on the house to try to catch it, but they could not. He said that he went inside the cottage, pulled something down and lighted it. I am quite sure that the prisoner at the bar is the man who said this. He stayed at my house about three quarters of an hour and then went away.’

January – June 1831

Thomas Gibbs, a labourer of Vernhams Dean was called, and said, 'I am the son of the last witness. I heard the prisoner say, "If Vernhams' farmers do not lug out pretty well before morning I will serve them the same as I did at Choddesden, I will set it all in a flame". The prisoner then said that he had thrown fire brands on the thatch of the cottage but could not get it to light, he then said that he had gone in doors and bored a hole through the ceiling and put a light through it and it had burnt away a good one.'

In his defence the prisoner, 'When I was examined by Sir Lucius Curtis, the magistrate, he said that he knew North to be the man who had set fire to the cottage. One of the witnesses has given his evidence from spite towards me. I am innocent of the charge brought against me.'

The Jury found the prisoner *guilty*. He was removed from the bar and will be called upon later to receive sentence.

The Grand Jury then came into Court, and announced that they had concluded their business. His Lordship said that he was pleased to discharge them, and thanked them for the service they had rendered the county.

Isaac Nash was then put to the bar and charged with having maliciously set fire to a barn, the property of the Reverend George Edmondstone, of Potterne. Mr Smith stated the case to the Jury.

Thomas Hill was called and said, 'I live at Potterne. I know the prisoner at the bar. I recollect going to Devizes on the 4th January at about half past five. I met the prisoner on my way there. George Pearce, William Hampton, George Briant, John Bond, and George Long, were with him. They appeared to be dissatisfied with Mr Edmondstone and Mr James. They said that they had been to the justice meeting, and had it not been for these two they would have got more money. The prisoner said that Mr Edmondstone was very much against him and said that 5s 9d a week would be enough. The prisoner and George Pearce returned to town with me, and Pearce met his father. The prisoner and I then went on and stopped by the gate of the *Elm Tree*. Nash then said that Mr Edmondstone had been very much against him, adding, "This night there shall be a bonfire". He said

that he would set Mr Edmondstone's premises on fire that night, before he would go to bed. He said that he didn't care if he was taken and hitched up directly. We were then joined by Pearce and went down the town. We afterwards met at the *Nag's Head* and had some beer. A man named Stevens was there, whom I asked to drink. We afterwards returned to Potterne together and parted there at about half past nine. During the walk home nothing was said but when we separated, Nash said to Pearce that if he liked he would go with him. I saw Nash the next morning and he said, "It has been a main fire last night, hasn't it Thomas?" I saw Nash on the 12th January, near Potterne, and he said, "I hope, Thomas, you won't tell anything I said to you that night". I saw him some days later, after he had been taken up and he again asked me not to say anything as he had never done me any harm.'

On being cross-examined by Mr Jeremy, Hill said, 'I had left Potterne for Warminster. I was in danger at Potterne. I had been in custody. I am a pauper. I have purchased the new clothes I have on between one and two months ago. I did not go to tell Mr Edmondstone of the prisoner's intention to set fire to his premises. I did not tax the prisoner with having committed it, when I saw him the next morning. I did not mention what had occurred the evening before the fire until 10 or 11 days afterwards. I was kept in custody for nine days. The fire took place 10 or 11 days before I was taken up. I never said that if there were two more such fires it would set us all alive and that it wouldn't better till it was. I never said that they wanted one at the high brick house behind the church. I was always very cautious what I did say. I had a conversation with John and Thomas Franklin the morning after the fire. I did not say that I did not believe anyone in the parish did it, but that those who went about doing the others, did this. I saw John Franklin after I had been released, and he did not remind me of what I had said, but asked who has been swearing against Isaac Nash? Someone said, "Thomas Hill". Franklin said, "Why Thomas, I heard you say you did not believe it was any man in Potterne". I said that neither he, nor any man in Potterne, had ever heard me say so. I know Elizabeth Underwood, a man named Baily, a shoemaker,

lodged with her. I recollect, the morning after the fire, taking a pair of shoes to be mended. I did not say to her that if they took up Nash and others for the fire, they must take them down, for I didn't believe they knew anything about it. I never said anything about the matter until I heard of the reward of £750 being offered.'

George Tilly was called, and said, 'I am a tenant of the Reverend Mr Edmondstone. I live at Potterne, about 50 yards distant from the buildings that were burnt. I saw the fire at about 10 o'clock on that evening. It was burning very rapidly.'

On being cross-examined he said, 'I have known the prisoner for several years. He lives with his mother and sister. I never heard anything against him or his family; he has always borne a good character. I saw the prisoner at the fire; he was very active in endeavouring to extinguish it. He continued in the parish after the fire, and went about his usual work.'

This closed the case for the prosecution. His Lordship did not consider that a case had been made out and the Jury immediately *acquitted* the prisoner. ³⁹

Henry Wilkins was again placed at the bar to receive the judgement of the Court. His Lordship, having put on the black cap, proceeded to pass the awful sentence of the law, holding out no hope that mercy would be extended to him. His Lordship, during his address, was considerably affected, and it produced a similar impression on all who heard it. ⁴⁰

Thomas Day was found *guilty* of breaking open the house of Robert Lawrence, of Corsham, and stealing nine yards of Irish cloth, and other articles. A sentence of Death was recorded against him.

The same sentence was passed on John Whale, who had been found *guilty* of stealing a wether sheep, the property of Robert Lawrence, of Corsham. The sheep was traced to the house of the prisoner, and the skin and the

³⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 March 1831

⁴⁰ The report of this sentence and the following cases all appear in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 March 1831

carcase were found hanging up. The prisoner was discovered some days after, concealed in a chimney.

Stephen Withers was found *guilty* of stealing a pan of butter, at Melksham, having previously been convicted of felony, he was sentenced to seven years transportation.

A sentence of death was recoded against John Salmon, who was found *guilty* of stealing a sheep, the property of William Edgell, at Trowbridge.

George Chapman was found guilty of embezzling £20, the property of his master, Mr Crees of Maiden Bradley. In consequence of his previous good character, and of Mr Crees's willingness to take him into his service again, he was sentenced to imprisonment for one month.

No Bill was found against Edmund Haines and William Mussell, alias Olding. Haines had been charged on the oaths of John Thomas Smith and others, with having wilfully and maliciously set fire to a quantity of straw or haulm, the property of the said John Thomas Smith, at Wanborough, in November last year; and Mussell had been charged on the oaths of James Slade and others, with having feloniously sent by the post a certain letter in writing, threatening to kill and murder the said James Slade and James Raxworthy, and to burn and destroy the corn and hay of the said James Slade, and the house and stables of the said James Raxworthy, at Codford St Peter. ⁴¹

Tuesday, 22nd March 1831

Henry Wilkins, convicted at the late Assizes of setting fire to a cottage at Ludgershall, was executed in front of Fisherton Gaol today. During the last three years this man has led a most dissolute and wicked life, and, like most others who arrive at an ignominious end, the origin is to be found in a total neglect of the Sabbath, which from his confession, appears to have been passed in the alehouse instead of the church. For some days after his trial, he persisted in his declaration of innocence, observing, that he

⁴¹ Wiltshire & Swindon Archives – A1/125/57; TNA – HO27/43

January – June 1831

was about to suffer for the act of another man. The case, however, was too clearly proved at the trial to cause any doubt. The pious exhortations of the chaplain at length induced him to confess that he was the person who set the cottage on fire. After this his mind was more at ease, and he appeared penitent. He was executed at 12 o'clock, but being a strong, muscular man; he did not die without a great struggle. After hanging the usual time his body was taken down, and given to his mother and brothers for burial. ⁴²

Thursday, 24th March 1831

Jane Lea, alias Jane North, was committed to Fisherton Gaol, charged with having set fire to a stubble rick, the property of Martha Harris, her mistress, at Highworth. ⁴³

82

REPORT of the ARRIVAL at the Port of Hobart Town of the Convict Ship *Eliza* May 29. 1831

From whence.	<i>Portsmouth</i>	PASSENGERS.			
		For Van Diemen's Land.		For New South Wales.	
When sailed.	<i>6th Feb^y</i>	Cabin Passengers.	Steerage Passengers.	Cabin Passengers.	Steerage Passengers.
State of health.	<i>Good</i>	<i>D. W. Anderson Surg. Super^r</i> <i>Capt. Moore Royal Marines</i> <i>1 Lt. & 10 2 Serg^t 2 Corp^s</i> <i>135 Privates</i> <i>of the Royal Marines as Guard</i>			
Master.	<i>John S. Groves</i>				
Owners.	<i>J. P. Urban</i>				
Tons.	<i>539</i>				
Guns.	<i>6</i>				
Register.	<i>British</i>				
Build.	<i>India</i>				
Crew.	<i>42</i>				
Convicts.	<i>224</i> Male <i>..</i> Female.				
Cargo.					
General remarks	<i>The vessel is on demurrage from the day she has entered the Port</i>				

32. Report of the arrival of the Convict Ship *Eliza* (AOTAS - CSO 1/524/11376)

⁴² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 24 March 1831

⁴³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 24 March 1831

Thursday, 14th April 1831

The convict ship *Proteus* sailed from Portsmouth heading for Van Diemen's Land. On board are 112 men, most of them were involved in the machine breaking riots last year. Among them are 14 men from Wiltshire.

Saturday, 28th May 1831

Four farmers in the parish of West Lavington have reduced the wages of their labourers from nine shillings to eight shillings. ⁴⁴

Sunday, 29th May 1831

The convict ship *Eliza* arrived in Hobart Town today, after a voyage lasting 112 days. All 224 convicts on board have survived the voyage.

Monday, 30th May 1831

Mr Burnett wrote from the Colonial Secretary's Office to the Principal Superintendent of Convicts to report that 25 of the convicts who had recently arrived in Hobart on board the *Eliza* had been assigned to the Van Diemen's Land Company. ⁴⁵

*Colonial Secretary's Office
30th May 1831*

Sir,

The Secretary of State having been pleased to approve of Fifty of the Convicts, recently sentenced to transportation being assigned as servants to the Van Diemen's Land Company, I am directed to acquaint you, that Twenty Five of those arrived by the "Eliza" are to be appropriated, and the remaining Twenty Five from the next Convict Ship which may reach Hobart Town.

The Company have expressed a wish to select for their service the men named in the accompanying List, which, however, the Secretary of State has not acquiesced. You will, therefore, exercise your own discretion in nominating such men for the Company as you think may with propriety be assigned to them with reference to the just claims of the Letters; and The Lieutenant Governor thinks the most

⁴⁴ The Devises & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 June 1831

⁴⁵ Mitchell Library, Sydney – Reel CY1278 frames 357-361

January – June 1831

desirable arrangement, perhaps, will be to give the Company at least Twenty of the men their List, from the "Eliza", and the like number from the next vessel it appearing that all those selected have not yet arrived.

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your Very obedient

Humble Servant

? Burnett

***A List of Persons sentenced to be transported
and recommended by John Pearse Esq^{re} M.P.
because their families reside in his
neighbourhood, tried at***

<i>N^o</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>
	<u><i>Salisbury</i></u>	
<i>1</i>	<i>David Gee</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Worthy Gee</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>Jeremiah New</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>Joseph Watts</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>Thomas Lawrence</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>John Thorne</i>	<i>23</i>
	<i>From Ramsbury, tried at</i> <u><i>Salisbury</i></u>	
<i>7</i>	<i>Joseph Liddiard</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>~ Alexander (Joseph)</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>9</i>	<i>Mathias Alexander</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>~ Pounds (John)</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>11</i>	<i>William Taylor</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>12</i>	<i>David Heath</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>13</i>	<i>Edward Looker</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>14</i>	<i>~ Vivash (Robert)</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>15</i>	<i>John Vaukins</i>	<i>21</i>

About 50 able-bodied labourers, in the employ of four farmers of the parish of West Lavington, refused to work today, in consequence of their employers, on the previous Saturday, reducing their wages from nine shillings to eight per week. The men came in a body to Devizes this morning, to appeal to the Magistrates, but unfortunately every

magistrate of the Division, with the exception of one, was away from home. ⁴⁶

Tuesday, 31st May 1831

Early this morning the West Lavington labourers were in Devizes again. At noon the Magistrates, Mr Scott and Mr Ludlow, who had been sitting in Petty Sessions, sent for one of the labourers to state their case. Accordingly a stout, brawny man, who conducted himself with the greatest propriety, soon made his appearance. He stated that his master, and other farmers in West Lavington, had for some time past paid their labourers nine shillings a week, but on Saturday last, without any previous notice, they refused to give more than eight shillings for the week's work, which they said was to be the future rate of wages. The labourers felt dissatisfied and refused to work. For himself, the man said, 'I have a wife and seven children, and the reduction of one shilling out of nine, is a hardship not easily to be borne.'

The man went on the speak of the general kindness of his master, Mr Sainsbury, and also of the overseer. 'I will leave it to any labourer with whom, or to any master for whom, I have ever worked to say whether I do not labour hard and far harder, from the beginning to the end of the year. I never take into the field more than a bit of dry bread for my dinner, and at this moment there is not the smallest quantity of victuals in my house. Notwithstanding that I, and my fellow labourers, are greatly dissatisfied, we wish to act peaceably. We would be content with nine shillings a week, and I trust that through the Magistrates the farmers will be induced to continue this rate of wages.'

The Magistrates, for their part, said that they had no power to interfere and recommended that the men return to their work and take task work instead of day work.

'This will not be better as the wages for all description of work have been lowered,' said the labourer.

A gentleman who was present, observed that the farmers the men complained of, had been obliged to lower the wages of their labourers in consequence of their landlord, Lord Churchill, having increased the rents of his

⁴⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 June 1831

January – June 1831

tenants at West Lavington by 10 per cent. It was also stated that the produce of the farms of these tenants during the last year, did not by some considerable sum, pay the rental, and that they had expected a reduction instead of an advance in rent.

The labourer observed, 'The fact is that Lord Churchill took off ten per cent at a former audit, in order that his tenants might increase the wages of the labourers from seven shillings to ten shillings a week, but as the tenants had not done this his Lordship has again laid on the ten per cent.'

It has since been reported, by a very respectable farmer, that the advance the farmers did make in the wages of their labourers, more than counterbalanced the reduction his Lordship had made in his rentals, and it seems impossible that the farmers can, for any length of time, pay even eight shillings a week, without some considerable abatement in rent. ⁴⁷

The following letter, relating to the convict ship *Eliza*, was written to the Colonial Secretary from Hobart Town.

Sir,

I have to solicit the favour of His Excellency the Lieut Governor to allow the Transport Ship "Eliza" to be discharged at this Port, having no Stores on board for H.M. Government at Sydney and the Master Mr J S Groves is willing to pay for the passage of the Troops to Sydney. The "Renown" Merchant vessel is on the point of sailing for Port Jackson and has excellent accommodation for passengers, so that no inconvenience will arise to the Troops. ⁴⁸

Wednesday, 1st June 1831

It has been reported that the West Lavington labourers returned quietly to their work this morning. ⁴⁹

The Principal Superintendent, Josiah Spode, wrote the following letter to the Colonial Secretary.

⁴⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 June 1831

⁴⁸ AOTAS CSO1/524/11376

⁴⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 June 1831

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose the proposed appropriation list of the Convicts per “Eliza”, and I beg leave to state with reference to your letter of the 30th ult acquainting me of the Secretary of State having approved of a certain number of these men being assigned to the Van Diemen’s Land Company, and also stating that twenty five of the men recently convicted per “Eliza” are to be so appropriated; that I have not been able to give that number from those selected by Mr Price & Mr Cripps, without manifest injustices to the settlers at large - I have therefore appropriated to the company ten of their selected men & fifteen of the others.

It is necessary for me to state also that finding nearly the whole of them in the ship “Ploughmen”, I have appropriated only one man to each service/except in a very few particular instances, such as having lost men by Tickets of Leave/ in order more equitably to distribute such useful labour.

The whole of the Mechanics/except Blksmiths, who are assigned/ are marked for the Public Works, but with the intention of adding them to the Loan Gang for the use of the interior settlers. The distribution of the men as I propose is thus,

<i>Assigned</i>	<i>192</i>
<i>Loan gang</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Unappropriated</i>	<i><u>2</u></i>
	<i>224 Total</i> ⁵⁰

Saturday, 4th June 1831

Extensive farm buildings, the property of Mr George Neate, of Monkton, were this evening wilfully reduced to ashes. The farm, comprising of nearly twelve hundred acres, has perhaps the most extensive range of farm buildings in Wiltshire, these were erected at a cost of nearly £1000. The fire started between 10 and 12 o'clock this evening, and a large number of agricultural implements used on the farm, together with a quantity of wheat, oats and beans, have been destroyed. It is thought that the wretch who accomplished this work of destruction, must have been

⁵⁰ AOTAS CS01/524/11376

watching for the family to retire to bed. Miss Neate, it appears, usually retires last and her room fronts the rick yard. Within 10 minutes of her candle being extinguished, the alarm was given, and with such rapidity did the flames spread, that before an hour had elapsed, the whole of the above property was consumed. Mr Neate's son was the first to discover the fire. Without waiting to put on a single article of dress, he hastened to release nine valuable horses, which were in the yard, and seven others, which were in a stable adjoining where the fire was then raging. The heat at this time was intense, and five minutes later, every one of the horses would have been consumed. The poor animals darted with fury through the yard, Mr Neate junior having taken the precaution of throwing open the gates. The buildings, comprising of three barns, a 120 foot cattle shed, a wagon house etc., formed three parts of a square. Immediately behind them were three large straw ricks, adjoining each other. About 20 foot distant, to the west, stood an immense wheat rick, supposed to contain 150 sacks, and at an equal distance to the north, and adjoining Monkton church yard, were an oat and a bean rick. It would appear that the incendiary had set fire to the centre straw rick, and the whole was, in a very few minutes, one entire blaze. The flames rose to a height that illuminated the horizon for a considerable distance and attracted people from Devizes, 10 miles away, to the spot. Some of the embers were carried as far as Kennett. It was altogether a most awful scene. After the fire had made considerable progress it was remembered that two calves were in a shed that was on fire. One of Mr Neate's sons, together with two other men, at risk to their own lives, rescued them. A moment later the roof fell in. The cries of a sow and her eight young ones, confined in one of the buildings, were piercing beyond description. An attempt was made to release them, but it was ineffectual, and all perished. The door of the poultry house was opened with difficulty. Some of the fowls flew into the flames and were immediately consumed, while a number of others were scorched to death. It was only with great exertion that the church and Mr Neate's house, which is in front of the farm buildings, were saved. Luckily there was scarcely a breath of wind at the time, or the property of Mr Brown, and indeed

the whole village might have also been consumed. An engine was brought from Avebury, as quickly as the distance would allow, and played with effect on the church. Mr Budd attended from Winterbourne, with nearly all his labourers, and helped to prevent the fire from spreading further. Mr Brown, with all the neighbouring farmers, and their labourers, gave their utmost exertions. At present suspicion, as to who could have started the fire, does not rest on any particular individual. During the riots in November, Mr Neate took down his thrashing machine. At the earnest entreaties of his labourers, however, the machine was recently erected again, and some of the men who would have otherwise been employed in thrashing, have for several weeks been earning 3s a day at bean hoeing. For a considerable period it would seem that not a single able-bodied labourer in the parish has been out of employment. Indeed, Mr Neate, has been obliged to hire several men from other parishes. The wages he gives are as high as in most parishes, 9s a week, and he is considered to be a kind and considerate master so it is difficult to guess what the motive was that prompted such a terrible act. The farm belongs to General Popham, who is considered by Mr Neate to be a very liberal landlord. ⁵¹

Sunday, 5th June 1831

Nearly one thousand people, from different parts of the county, visited the scene of last night's fire at Monkton. Among the articles in the buildings that were destroyed were a gig, three wagons, a cart, and a thrashing machine. Pieces of iron, which had formed part of their material, showed where each had stood. Also destroyed were 39 sacks of thrashed wheat, a quantity of un-thrashed wheat, a large quantity of beans, which together with a rick, was nearly the entire produce of 32 acres. Fortunately all the property is insured with the Sun Fire Office. The amount of damage done is thought to be between £2,000 and £3,000. A wheat rick and two straw ricks, which stood a little further to the west, were, by great exertion, saved. ⁵²

⁵¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 June 1831

⁵² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 June 1831

Thursday, 9th June 1831

The following report, relating to the recent strike by the labourers of West Lavington, appeared in today's edition of the *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette*.

It is quite true, that the labourers' wages have been reduced from 9s to 8s a week; but, so as to set off such a reduction, they are allowed a liberal supply of beer. But it is not true that the wages were reduced without any previous intimation, a week's notice of his intention to do so, having been given by each farmer to his respective labourers. It has always been at the option of the West Lavington labourers, to take task work, if they pleased; and in this way their earnings might have been much greater than by day-work. – Neither is it true, that Lord Churchill too off 10 per cent. on a former audit, in order that his tenants might rise the wages of their labourers from 7s to 10s a week; and that as the tenants had not done this, his lordship laid on the 10 per cent. as stated by the man with 7 children. To contradict this statement, it is sufficient to state the fact, that his Lordship's audit, at which the said 10 per cent. was taken off, was held six weeks before the late disturbances commenced; it is evident, therefore, that this drawback could not have been made by his Lordship on that account. No understanding was ever entered into between Lord Churchill and his tenants, that they should advance the price of labour to 10s per week; nor have they ever had any conference on this subject, either with his Lordship, or his agent. The advance made by the farmers at the aforementioned period, from 7s to 9s per week, was a voluntary one, - at least, it was a boon conceded to the labourers at the recommendation of the magistrates. This gratuity of 2s per week – for so it may be called – to every labourer more than counterbalanced the abatement which his Lordship made on his rentals; and should not the current of the times run more in favour of the farmers, the wages of the labourers must, of necessity, be shortly reduced to the former scale.

Our correspondent adds – for the future, it is the determination of the farmers of West Lavington, to attend to no recommendation, from whatever quarter it may emanate, as to the adjustment of their labourer's wages; but to be guided in this respect, by times and circumstances, and the dictates of reason and common sense. ⁵³

Saturday, 11th June 1831

Robert Jefferies, of Dauntsey, received a letter today, which threatened that his hay and corn would be burnt and his cows hamstrung if he employed outcomers to work on his farm. A lad named Savory found the letter in his garden. He gave the letter to his father who in turn gave it to Mr Jefferies. ⁵⁴

Saturday, 25th June 1831

The convict ship, *Eleanor*, arrived at Port Jackson today, after a voyage lasting 126 days. The ship made a stop at the Cape where 3 more convicts were embarked. All the prisoners survived the voyage. ⁵⁵

⁵³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 9 June 1831

⁵⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 21 July 1831

⁵⁵ The Convict Ships – Charles Bateson

July - December 1831

Saturday, 9th July 1831

The following letter was sent from the Principal Superintendent's Office, in Hobart, to the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

In reply to your Memorandum of this date respecting the conduct generally (of?) the men transported by the Eliza, I have the honour to report for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, that the Convicts by that ship have behaved in a most exemplary manner since their landing and that none of those in Town have been convicted of the most trifling offence to the present day and a circumstance unprecedented in my experience of the colony.

Note added 25th July 1831

Desire the Colonial Surgeon to report whether any of the men by the Eliza have been received into the hospital, and if so, what have been the causes of their complaints, and what has been their conduct in hospital. ¹

Thursday, 14th July 1831

The Commission for the holding of the Wiltshire Summer Assizes at Salisbury was read this evening. ²

Friday, 15th July – Monday, 18th July 1831

This morning Sir W E Taunton and Sir E H Alderson attended divine service at the Cathedral and at about two o'clock both Courts were opened. Mr Justice Taunton presiding in the Crown Court and Mr Justice Alderson in the Nisi Prius Court. ³

The following gentlemen composed the Grand Jury.

Sir E Poore, bart, Foreman.

Thos. Calley

A B Lambert

Ernle Warriner

John Lediard Phillips

Wm Wyndham

J E A Starky

Alex Powell

Wm Hughes

Walter Long

Chas Wyndham

¹ AOTAS CSO1/ 524/11376

² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 21 July 1831

³ Information on the Summer Assizes has not been fully transcribed, a more complete report of the trials can be found in The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 21 July 1831

George Eyre
Wm Heald Ludlow
E F Seagram
Fulwar Craven
Thos Scott
Wm Fowler

Thos Grove, junior
Wm Wyndham, junior
Geo Powlett Scrope
John Davis
George Moore
John Gordon

His Lordship charged the Grand Jury in a very brief address and True Bills were found in the following cases.

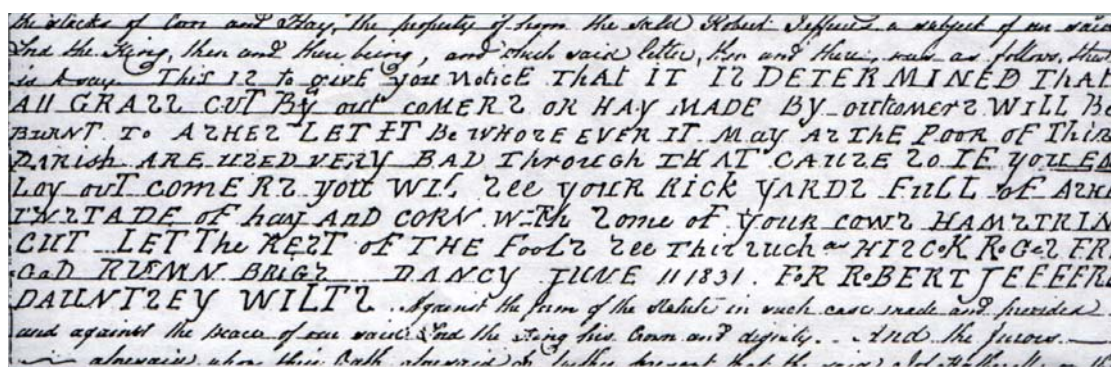
George Rose, James Jeffereys, and Jemima Chapman, were found *guilty* of a highway robbery, committed in Devizes on the night of the 30th June, on the person of James Noad.

A sentence of *Death* was recorded against all three prisoners.

Each of the prisoners, previously to the committal of this offence, had borne an extremely bad character. Jefferys had been at the bar at Salisbury two years ago, and Jemima Chapman, whose course of profligacy and crime has been quickly run, is said to be well born and to have been respectably educated.

Job Hatherell, aged 23, was charged with having sent a letter to Mr Robert Jefferies, residing in the parish of Dauntsey, threatening to burn his hay and corn, and to hamstring his cows; his threat also included the destruction of similar property belonging to other farmers in the neighbourhood.

A youth, named Savory, found the letter in his father's garden, which adjoins the public road, and placing it in his father's hands, it was by him conveyed to the prosecutor. Through the agency of Mr Macey, the village schoolmaster, it was discovered that the half sheet of paper on which it was written, had been purchased by the prisoner at the shop of Mrs Heath; and it was deposed by Miss Mary Heath, the shopkeeper's daughter, that the half sheet had been cut by her, at the time of sale, from a sheet, the reserved half of which being produced before the Jury, was found to agree in form, size, quality, and water-mark, with that which bore the letter, more especially in the indentations occasioned by their separation.



The sticks of corn and hay, the property of whom the said Robert Jefferies a subject of our said
and the King, then and there being, and which said letter, he and there, was as follows, that
in a way. This is to give you notice THAT IT IS DETERMINED THAT
ALL GRASS CUT BY OUTCOMERS OR HAY MADE BY OUTCOMERS WILL BE
BURNT TO ASHES LET IT BE WHOSE EVER IT MAY AS THE POOR OF THIS
PARISH ARE USED VERY BAD THROUGH THAT CAUSE SO IF YOU EMPLOY
OUTCOMERS YOU WILL SEE YOUR RICK YARDS FULL OF ASHES
INSTEAD OF HAY AND CORN WITH SOME OF YOUR COWS HAMSTRINGS
CUT LET THE REST OF THE FOOLS SEE THIS SUCH AS HISCOCK ROGERS FREGAD
GAD RUMIN BRIGS DANCY JUNE 11 1831. FOR ROBERT JEFFERIES
DAUNTSY WILTS. Against the form of the Statute in such case made and provided
and against the peace of our said and the King his crown and dignity. And the Jurors
always when they both answered the Jurors present that the same and the same.

33. A Copy of the Letter Received by Robert Jefferies (TNA – ASSI25/22/12)

This letter, read to the Court, was written in a clumsy mixture of ordinary running-hand and the capital letters used in print; it was as follows: -

For Robert Jefferies, Dauntsy, Wilts. This is to give you notice, that it is determined that all grass cut by outcomers, or hay made by outcomers, will be burnt to ashes, let it be whosoever it may, as the poor of this parish are used very bad, tho' that cause, so if you employ outcomers, you will see your rick yards full of ashes, instade of hay and corn, with some of your cows' ham strings cut Let the rest of the fools see this, such as Hiscock, Rogers, Fregad, Rumin, Brigs. Dancy, June 11th, 1831.

A labourer, named James Scull, deposed to a conversation with the prisoner, held a short time previous to the receipt of the letter by Mr Jefferies, in which he complained of “outcomers” being employed instead of their own native poor, and threatened “that the farmers should shortly hear something that would make *their hair curl*,”

In his evidence Mr Macey said that when in custody Hatherell offered “to tell all about it”, provided money was given to him. This was or course refused. Hatherell admitted that the letter had been written “under his roof”, but vehemently added that “James Scull was the man who wrote it.”

In his defence Hatherell said, ‘I did not write the letter. Mr Jefferies told me, before I was taken up, that he believed James Scull to be the writer of the letter and offered me ten guineas if I would swear to that effect.’

Mr Jefferies was re-called and positively denied the truth of this assertion.

Mr Justice Taunton then summed up the case, commenting on the evidence at considerable length, and instructing the Jury that it was not necessary to prove that the prisoner had written the letter or delivered it with his own hand, or had sent it by any of the usual modes of conveyance; but that it would be sufficient for the prisoner's conviction if they could satisfy themselves that he had caused it to be written or sent, or had dropped it with the intention that it should reach the person to whom it was directed. An accidental dropping of the letter, would not of course, constitute the offence. The Jury immediately found the prisoner *guilty*.

His Lordship in passing sentence, observed, 'The crime of which you have been, in my opinion, most justly convicted, displays a black, wicked, and malicious heart, and I consider that any person who could be guilty of writing such an atrocious letter as the one in question, would not for a moment hesitate in carrying the threats therein contained into execution, whenever the opportunity offered. There are no extenuating circumstances in the your case, and I consider it my bounden duty to inflict upon you the heaviest punishment the law allows.' His Lordship then ordered Hatherell to be transported for the term of his natural life.

William Mucklewin, age 58, was *acquitted* of the charge of having fired a pistol, loaded with ball, at John West, at Colerne on the 8th June last, on the grounds of insanity. His Lordship ordered him to be kept in custody until His Majesty's pleasure respecting him was known.

Sarah Wheeler, a decent looking woman, aged 44, was charged with having, on the 2nd April last. Maliciously and feloniously set fire to certain out buildings, belonging to the premises in which she resided, the same being the property of James Slade, at Codford St Peter, and rented from him by the overseers of the poor.

The prisoner and her husband, with other paupers, inhabited the premises provided for them by the parish

authorities. On the day in question, about 11 o'clock in the morning, she was observed to carry a flaming stick from the house to the outbuildings and return without it. This, however, did not appear to have taken effect, for in a few minutes she was seen again to pass from the house to the outbuildings, bearing a similar fiery brand, and exclaiming that she would try it again, and in about five minutes after she left the place, flames were observed to break through the thatch. By the prompt interference of Ambrose Head, a pauper, assisted by the prisoner's husband, the flames were shortly extinguished. Head and the husband then went to their dinners, leaving word with a lad, the brother of Head, to call them if anything again should occur. Shortly after their departure, the prisoner again issued forth with a lighted stick, and carried it into the outhouse, which in a few minutes was again on fire. The lad instantly summoned his brother and the husband, and by their timely assistance the flames were again happily put out, without doing further injury than consuming part of the thatch. The prisoner, when apprehended, said to the constable who had her in charge, that he had better keep her fast, for if she was at liberty she would attempt it again, and that she did it on account of the sulky disposition of her husband, and because the overseers would not see her righted. The prisoner, previous to this unfortunate transaction, had invariably borne a most excellent character, and it was stated that her husband's conduct towards her was such as to drive her to acts of reckless desperation. His Lordship said, that such a plea was not the least excuse for her committing the crime with which she was charged, if she and her husband lived unhappily together, it was no reason that she should wantonly set fire to other people's property. The learned Judge having summed up, the Jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. On hearing the sentence, the prisoner fell upon her knees, and bursting into tears, prayed for mercy. The witnesses for the prosecution, including the overseers of the parish, were about to speak in her behalf, stating that the unfortunate woman had been grossly ill-treated by her husband, when his Lordship interfered, and told them that circumstances had nothing to do with a case like the present. The prisoner had been convicted of a most

atrocious offence; he must pause before he passed sentence, as her case required his most serious consideration. His Lordship then ordered her to be brought up for judgement on Monday. The prisoner was then removed from the bar, apparently greatly affected at her awful situation.

When brought up, on Monday, for judgement, his Lordship observed, 'I have but few words to say to you. You have been convicted of a capital offence, in expiation of which it is usual, and public justice requires it, that the law should be allowed to take its full course. I have deliberated on your case, and have come to the conclusion that the circumstances urged in mitigation of this crime have not the least weight, there is nothing extenuating in them. However, the offence of which you have been guilty was not attended with any aggravating circumstances; it was not committed in the dead of night, the time generally selected for the perpetration of this crime, and it did not appear that you entertained any malice against the owners of the property. From the frequent attempts you made to commit the crime, when you must have been aware that you were observed, I am induced to suppose that you must have acted from a naturally perverse temper. Taking these circumstances into consideration, I think I am justified in saying that your life will be spared, but on what condition I am not at present at liberty to declare; though the probability is, from the dangerous and wicked disposition you have evinced, that you will be sent out of the kingdom for the rest of your life.'

Jane Lea, age 16, a good looking girl, but with rather a vacant expression of countenance, was indicted for having, at Highworth, maliciously and unlawfully set fire to some bean stubbles, with intent to destroy a stack of wood adjoining, the property of her mistress, Martha Harris.

Martha Harris was called, and said, 'The prisoner was in my service on the 19th March last, on which day, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, she came running into the house exclaiming – "Mistress! Mistress! For God's sake run, the stubbles are on fire." I was much alarmed, and went out into the yard. The stubbles were in a blaze and I seized a pail of water and extinguished the fire. The prisoner was also very actively assisting me in putting to fire

out. There was a stack of wood within a few yards of the stubble heap, to which the fire might have communicated, had it not been extinguished. The prisoner is a good servant, and has lived with me for about eight months.'

Sarah Smith deposed that she saw the prisoner proceeding towards the stubble.

Charles Davis said that he saw the prisoner stooping over the stubble heap just before the fire broke out.

William Darby, who had charge of the prisoner previous to her committal, stated, 'Without any threat or inducement held out to her, the prisoner confessed to me that she had taken some fire from the brewhouse, and placed it on the stubbles, covering it over, and when she saw the fire blaze out, she was so much frightened, that she went immediately and called her mistress, and assisted to put it out.'

Mr Jeremy, in a very able speech, addressed the Jury for the prisoner, contending that the indictment could not be sustained, there being no proof that the prisoner set fire to the stubbles intending to destroy the wood stack, and the case might have been disposed of in a summary manner by the Magistrates, by fine and imprisonment, the same being under the value of £5.

In summing up, Mr Justice Taunton, declared that he was at a loss to account for any motive the prisoner could have had for committing the crime; there certainly was no proof of a malicious intent. The Jury returned a verdict of *not guilty*.

His Lordship admonished her to be cautious how she again set anything on fire, adding, 'The Jury has come to a very merciful decision respecting you, and if I might be allowed to say, perhaps, one that I consider is not only merciful but a very proper one.'

A sentence of death was recorded against James Sparks, who was found *guilty* of breaking into, and stealing sundry articles from the dwelling house of Thomas Taylor, of Steeple Ashton. Edward Andrews was *acquitted* of the same charge.

The following prisoners were sentenced to death, for various crimes, at these Assizes: - Thomas King, Thomas

Weaving, Robert Phillips, Joshua Field, James Bourne, John Paddock, Joseph Meek, and Joseph Gray.

A sentence of death was recorded against the following men: - Thomas Barnes, George Waldron, Robert Stevens, and William Dix.

The following prisoners were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment: - James Gray, 12 months; William Mason, 6 months hard labour; Thomas Norris, 6 months hard labour and to be once privately whipped; Thomas Mallard, 6 months hard labour; Richard Thomas, 4 months hard labour.

Wednesday, 3rd August, 1831

The convict ship, *Proteus*, arrived in Hobart today, all the convicts on board survived the voyage. ⁴

Sunday, 28th August 1831

At about 9 o'clock this evening a stack was discovered to be in flames at Down Farm, in the parish of Broad Chalk, the property of Mr Jesse Rumbold. It is believed that the fire was started by some incendiary, in resentment at Mr Rumbold having erected a thrashing machine on his premises. ⁵

Monday, 29th August 1831

It was noon today before the fire at Mr Rumbold's farm at Broad Chalk was extinguished. ⁶

Saturday, 22nd October 1831

A rick of hay, belonging to Mr Pike at Charlton, about seven miles from Devizes, was wilfully set on fire this evening, and entirely consumed. It was worth nearly £200. ⁷

Monday, 31st October 1831

On hearing of the riots in Bristol, a mob, consisting principally of boys, assembled at Trowbridge this evening,

⁴ The Convict Ships – Charles Bateson

⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 1 September 1831

⁶ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 1 September 1831

⁷ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 27 October 1831

July – December 1831

and showed a disposition to mischief. They broke the public lamps and an immense number of windows, but the respectable inhabitants of the town prevented them from further outrages. ⁸

Tuesday, 1st November 1831

The principal manufacturers of Trowbridge issued a hand bill today, in which in which they said that they would discharge anyone in their employ who was found to have been engaged in any disturbance. This appears to have had the desired effect and peace has returned to the town. ⁹

Wednesday, 2nd November 1831

During the night a rick of hay and an outhouse, the property of Mr Leonard, of Potterne near Devizes, was set on fire by an incendiary, and entirely consumed. ¹⁰

Thursday, 3rd November 1831

This evening a large straw rick, belonging to Mr Richard Tuckey, of Stratton near Swindon, was maliciously set on fire, and entirely consumed. If it had not been for the praiseworthy exertions of a number of people attracted to the spot the fire would have spread to the adjoining corn ricks, and the damage would have been even greater. The value of the property destroyed amounts to about £100. ¹¹

Saturday, 5th November 1831

Some wretches set fire to a barn, the property of Mrs Elizabeth Bradford, of Swindon, and also a hay rick, the property of Mr Ambrose Goddard, both of which were entirely destroyed. It has also been reported that a rick belonging to Mr Strange, also of Swindon, has also been wilfully destroyed by fire. ¹²

Thursday, 24th November 1831

John Ellison and Peter Vines have been fully committed for trial, charged on the oaths of several people,

⁸ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 3 November 1831

⁹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 3 November 1831

¹⁰ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 3 November 1831

¹¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 November 1831

¹² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 10 November 1831

and on their own confession, with having, on the 5th November last, wilfully set fire to a rick of stubble, belonging to Ambrose Goddard Esquire, and to a cow house, belonging to Mrs Elizabeth Bradford, of Swindon. ¹³

Sunday, 4th December 1831

A cart house, with a wagon inside, and some hay, were discovered to be on fire this evening, the whole of which was consumed. There is no doubt that the fire was the work of an incendiary. The property belongs to Mrs Barton, a widow living near Monks, in the parish of Corsham. ¹⁴

Thursday, 15th December 1831

Thomas Stanley has been committed to Fisherton Gaol, charged on his own voluntary confession, with having on the 5th of November last, in company with Peter Vines and John Ellison who have been committed previously, of wilfully set on fire a stubble rick belonging to Mr Goddard, and a stall belonging to Mrs Bradford, of Swindon. ¹⁵

¹³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 24 November 1831

¹⁴ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 8 December 1831

¹⁵ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 15 December 1831

Lent Assizes, March 1832

Wednesday, 7th March 1832

Jacob Wiltshire was charged with sending a letter to Harry Hitchcock, threatening to burn the farms of the said Harry Hitchcock, and of John Grant, John Alexander and John Simper, and to kill them at Manningford Bere.

Robert Peel was called and said, 'I picked up the letter, which, on seeing it was directed to Mr Hitchcock, I took it to his house and delivered it to Ann Banly.'

Ann Banly said, 'I was in the service of Mr Hitchcock, and gave the letter I received from Robert Peel to Jane Martin.'

Jane Martin was called, and said, 'I received a letter for my master from my fellow servant, which I broke open.'

'What!' exclaimed the Judge, 'Break open your master's letters! Well, the curiosity of woman almost exceeds belief! Go on.'

'I broke it open and read it, and then gave it to my mistress', continued Jane Martin.

Harry Hitchcock was called, and said, 'I live at Manningford; my wife brought me the letter; I read and marked it while I lay in bed.'

John Deadman, constable of Pewsey, took the stand, 'I searched the prisoner's house; and during the time the prisoner came in; I told him I should take him into custody. His mother, in his presence, gave me a key, and said it was the key of his box. On searching the box I found a piece of paper, which exactly correspond with the half sheet on which the letter was written. The letter, which is now in fragments, was torn before the magistrates, Sir John Astley and the Reverend Mr Williams. Sir John had been reading it and laid it on the table, when the prisoner made a leap, and though one hand was bolted, seized the letter, tore it, and endeavoured to crumble the pieces between his hands. I and another person wrested it from him, and having collected the fragments, we fitted them and they corresponded exactly.'

A little sparring here took place between Mr Bingham for the prosecutor, and Mr Smith, for the prisoner, while Mr Dowding endeavoured to preserve the fragments.

‘Don’t you touch them, jailor’, said the Judge, ‘There is too much jealousy about this letter.’

Mr Smith, having gained possession of the letter, said, ‘Now my Lord I’ll show it to the Jury, and -’

‘No!’ interrupted his Lordship, ‘If you please Mr Smith, I’ll save you the trouble, and show it myself. Really, gentlemen,’ said his Lordship, smiling, ‘You get into such habits at Quarter Sessions, that your conduct will not do for the Assizes.’

This seemed to put the contending parties into a good humour. His Lordship pointed out to the Jury the coincidence of the pieces. Mr John Grant, and Mr White, the solicitor, did the same; while the Reverend Mr Williams gave evidence of the way in which the letter was originally mutilated. The evidence of the woman, who had sold the sheet of paper to the prisoner a day or two before, concluded the case.

The prisoner’s mother came to prove that he could not write, to which the Judge said that it was not necessary, the sending of the letter was sufficient.

The Jury found Wiltshire *guilty*, and he was sentenced to 14 years transportation. ¹

Thursday, 8th March 1832

Mr Justice Parke sat in the Crown Court and Thomas Stanley, age 20, John Ellison, age 23, and Peter Vines, age 19, were put to the bar charged with having wilfully set fire to a rick of straw, the property of Ambrose Goddard, Esq., of Swindon, on the 5th November last.

The Statute of 7 and 8 Geo. IV. C. 30. s. 17. declares it to be a felony, “if any person shall unlawfully and maliciously set fire to any stack of corn, grain, pulse, straw, hay or wood.” The prisoners were indicted under this Statute, but it was submitted to the Court by the Counsel of Ellison and Stanley, that “stubble was not straw” within the meaning of the Statute. The Learned Judge appeared to acquiesce, and then referred to some private notes of a case, tried on another circuit, during the last Summer Assizes, in which the person there charged had been indicted for setting fire to some “stubble or haulm” and was found

¹ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 8 March 1832

Lent Assizes, 8th March 1832

guilty, but the Judges, on a deliberation on the case after the circuit, adjudged that “stubble or haulm” was not comprehended in the word “straw,” and therefore not within the protection of the Statute. The convict in that case was therefore discharged.

Mr Bingham, for the prisoners, said he could not distinguish the present case from that which the learned Judge had mentioned, Mr Justice Parke thereupon directed the Jury to *acquit* the prisoners.

[In the report of this trial in other papers, it has been stated that the acquittal of the prisoners was owing to a defect in the indictment; but this was not the fact; it was owing (as may be seen above) to a defect in the Act of Parliament itself, or to the Judges decision upon it. The judges, it appears, have determined, that the term “straw” used in the Act, does not extend to “stubble.”]

The same three prisoners John Ellison, Thomas Stanley, and Peter Vines, were then tried on a charge of setting fire to a cow house, belonging to Mrs Elizabeth Bradford at Swindon, on the same night.

In this case, the Counsel for the prisoners, submitted that as the Statute refers only to any house, stable, coach house, outhouse, warehouse, etc. etc. but does not mention “cow houses, or buildings of a like description,” the charge was not within the meaning of the Act, the term “outhouses,” importing such buildings only as are within the curtilage of the dwelling-house, and not generally all buildings.

The Mr Justice Parke said he could not take upon himself alone to decide the objection; but would make a note of it, and permit the trial to go on, reserving the point for the opinion of the other Judges, if the prisoners should be convicted. The trial then proceeded.

Stanley, who had been apprehended first on a different charge, having seen at the Magistrates Office, a placard offering a reward for information against the incendiaries, and holding out hopes of a free pardon to an accomplice who should make a discovery, confessed that he himself had been in company with the two other prisoners on the night in question; that one of them proposed to have a blaze, to which the other consented; that they lighted their pipes for

that purpose at a public house, but when they went out of the public house he left them, and went home – the other two having then gone to set fire to the rick mentioned in the preceding indictment, and also to burn the cow house. In consequence of this information, Vines and Ellison were apprehended, and on being brought before the Magistrates, they confessed their guilt. Stanley was *acquitted*, Vines and Ellison were found *guilty*.

The Judge, who had previously declared it to be the determination of all the Judges to carry into effect the extreme penalty of the law on all persons who should be convicted of the heinous crime of Arson, then said, ‘As I have strong opinion in favour of the validity of the objection, I will defer passing sentence until the next Assizes. If in the mean time, the other Judges hold the objection to be valid, I will apply for a free pardon, so that the prisoners might be discharged. If not sentence will be passed at the next Assizes.’²

Henry Dowdle, aged 62, was then put to the bar and charged with having set fire to a hayrick, the property of John Raxworthy, the elder, at Upton Lovell, on the 14th of November last.

The only evidence against the prisoner was that of a man named Woods, who prevaricated so grossly, and whose statements appeared so destitute of truth, that his Lordship stopped the case and directed the Jury to acquit the prisoner, saying, ‘God forbid any Jury should be called upon to convict a man on the testimony of such a worthless perjured character as this witness has proved to be.’³

Saturday, 10th March 1832

The Judges left Salisbury, on route to Dorchester, at about 1 o’clock today, and the Commission there will be opened this evening. Many of the rioters, during the disturbances, which ensued at the late election for Dorset, are in the calendar for trial, and the business in both courts is expected to prove unusually heavy.⁴

² The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 15 March 1832; The Times, 10 March 1832

³ The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 15 March 1832; The Times, 10 March 1832

⁴ The Times, 12 March 1832

Lent Assizes, 8th March 1832

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Manuscript Sources

1. The National Archives, Kew

Admiralty

ADM101/23/1 – Surgeon’s Journal, *Eleanor*

ADM101/62/6 – Surgeon’s Journal, *Proteus*

Assizes

ASSI 24/18/3 – Western Circuit Minute Book, Special Commission, 1830 –31, Hampshire, Wiltshire & Dorset

ASSI 25/22/12 – Western Circuit Indictment Files, Wiltshire Summer 1831

Home Office

HO6/16 – Judges’ & Records Returns, 1831

HO9/9 – Convict Hulks Moored at Portsmouth, Registers of Prisoners

HO27/43 – Criminal Registers

HO40/27 - Disturbance Correspondence

HO52/11 - Municipal & Provincial Correspondence, 1830

HO52/15 - Municipal & Provincial Correspondence, 1831

HO107/1180/1 – 1841 Census, Great Bedwin

Treasury

T1/4193 – Claims for Rewards, Gloucestershire Bundle

T1/4194 – Claims for Rewards, Wiltshire Bundle

2. Gloucestershire Archives

Sotherton - Escourt Archives – Swing Riot Papers

- D1571/X60 – Handbills, verse, proclamations and notices of meetings concerning conditions of labourers and peace keeping in Wiltshire & Sussex
- D1571/X63 – Letters & printed circulars concerning machine-breaking riots, 1830
- D1571/X64 - Minutes of the Trials

3. Hampshire Record Office

9M74/1 – A M Colson, *The Revolt of the Hampshire Agricultural Labourers and its Causes*, 1812 – 1831.

4. Wiltshire & Swindon Archives

A1/1256/57 – Calendar of Prisoners, 1831
413/23
1553/12

5. Archives Office of New South Wales

4/1123.1

6. Mitchell Library, Sydney

Reel CY1278, frames 357-361

7. Archives Office of Tasmania

Withers Letters
CS0 1/524/11376

Newspapers, 1830-1832

The Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette

- 25th November 1830
- 2nd December 1830
- 9th December 1830
- 16th December 1830
- 23rd December 1830
- 6th January 1831
- 13th January 1831
- 20th January 1831
- 27th January 1831
- 10th March 1831
- 23rd March 1831
- 2nd June 1831
- 9th June 1831
- 21st July 1831
- 1st September 1831
- 27th October 1831
- 3rd November 1831
- 24th November 1831
- 10th November 1831
- 8th December 1831
- 15th December 1831
- 8th March 1832
- 15th March 1832

The Salisbury & Winchester Journal

- 15th November 1830
- 22nd November 1830
- 29th November 1830
- 6th December 1830
- 13th December 1830
- 20th December 1830
- 27th December 1830
- 3rd January 1831
- 10th January 1831
- 17th January 1831
- 24th January 1831
- 7th February 1831

The Times

- 30th November 1830
- 3rd December 1830
- 15th December 1830
- 3rd January 1831
- 5th January 1831
- 6th January 1831
- 7th January 1831
- 8th January 1831
- 10th January 1831
- 12th January 1831
- 1st March 1831
- 10th March 1831
- 10th March 1832
- 12th March 1832

Jackson's Oxford Journal

- 11th December 1830

Secondary Sources

Contemporary Pamphlets, British Library, London

J E N Molesworth, *The Rick-burners*. (1830)

Look before you leap. (Basingstoke, 1830)

The Genuine Life of Mr Francis Swing

The life and history of Swing the Kent rick-burner. (London, 1830)

Books

Anstis, Ralph, Warren James and the Dean Forest Riots, (Sutton, 1986)

Archer John E, By a Flash and a Scare. (Clarendon Press, 1990)

Archer, John E, Social Unrest and Popular Protest in England, 1780-1840. (Cambridge University Press, 2000)

Armstrong Alan, Farmworkers, A Social & Economic History, 1770-1980.

Bateson Charles, The Convict Ships 1787 - 1863. (Library of Australian History 1983)

Brown, Richard, Change and Continuity in British Society, 1800-1850. (Cambridge University Press, 1987)

Campbell Charles, The Intolerable Hulks (Heritage Books Inc, 1994)

Charlesworth, A, (ed.) An Atlas of Rural Protest in Britain, 1548-1900. (Croom Helm, 1983)

Cobbett William, Rural Rides. (Penguin Edition, 1983)

Davis, Thomas, General View of the Agriculture of Wiltshire. (1813 edition)

Dyck Ian, William Cobbett & Rural Popular Culture. (Cambridge University Press, 1992)

Emsley Clive, Policing and its Context, 1750-1870. (The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1983)

Guide to Convict Records in the Archives Office of NSW. (2nd Edition, 1981)

Graham Henry, The Annals of the Yeomanry Cavalry of Wiltshire (Liverpool 1886)

Hammond J L & Barbara, The Village Labourer. (Longman, 1978)

Hare Augustus J C, Memorials of a Quiet Life Volume I

Hawkins S H, 1829, E W Cook; Fifty Plates of Shipping & Craft.

Hobsbawn E J & George Rudé, Captain Swing. (Peregrine Books, 1985)

Hopkins, Harry, The Long Affray: The Poaching Wars in Britain: 1760-1914. (Papermac, 1986)

House Barbara, The Machine Breakers, James and Abraham House and the Blackmoor Vale Riots 1830. (2000)

Holland Michael, (Edited by), *Swing Unmasked*. (FACHRS Publications 2005)

Hudson W H, *Hampshire Days*. (Barry Shirlock, 1973)

Hughes Robert, *The Fatal Shore*. (Collins Harvill, 1987)

Johnson W Branch, *The English Prison Hulks*. (Phillimore, 1970)

Kent David & Townsend Norma, *The Convicts of the Eleanor*. (The Merlin Press, 2002)

Kent David & Townsend Norma, *Joseph Mason: Assigned Convict 1831-1837*. (Melbourne University Press, 1996)

Mingay G E, *The Unquiet Countryside*. (Routledge, 1989)

Palmer Roy, *The Painful Plough*. (Cambridge University Press, 1973)

Palmer Roy, *The Sound of History, Songs & Social Comment*. (Pimlico, 1988)

Reay Barry, *The Last Rising of the Agricultural Labours*. (Clarendon Press, 1990)

Rudé George, *Captain Swing and VDL*. (Tasmanian Hist. Res. Assoc. Papers & Proceedings, XII, 1964, pp6-24)

Rudé George, *Protest & Punishment*. (The Clarendon Press, 1978)

Rule John & Roger Wells, *Crime, Protest and Popular Politics in Southern England, 1740-1850*. (The Hambledon Press, 1997)

Somerville Alexander, *The Whistler at the Plough*. (The Merlin Press, 1989)

Stapleton, Barry, *Conflict and Community in Southern England*. (Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1992)

Stevenson John, *Popular Disturbances in England 1700-1832*. (Longman, 1992)

Taylor Jefferys, *The Farm: A New Account of Rural Toils and Produce*. (London, 1832)

INDEX OF PLACES

All places are in Wiltshire unless otherwise stated. Inns and Public House appear in italics. Some places appear as they were spelt in the documents and spellings have since changed. E.g. Newton Tony may appear as Newtontoney.

Abingdon, Berkshire, 193
Aldbourne, 66, 67, 87, 88, 110, 281, 283, 409, 410, 413, 421
Alderbury, 89, 90, 186, 297, 420
All Cannings, 30, 52, 59, 216, 368
Allington (All Cannings), 30, 82, 312
Alton, 60, 65, 77, 82
Alton Barnes, 11, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 306, 308, 312, 313, 339, 340, 344, 365, 455
Alton Farm, 315
Alton Priors, 64
Amesbury, 29, 33, 46, 452, 462, 467, 468, 469
Andover, Hampshire, 33, 38, 166
Angel Inn, Marlborough, 327, 383
Ansty, 159, 198
Aldbourne, 79
Ashgrove Farm, Donhead St Mary, 111
Avebury, 487
Axford, 35, 110, 326, 328, 410
Axford Farm, 208, 211, 382

Barford, 105
Barford St Martin, 91, 187, 217, 412, 420
Bath, Somerset, 123, 170, 177, 201
Beckford Arms, 107, 275
Bedwin, 112
Bell Inn, Devizes, 132
Bemerton, 68
Berwick St John, 111, 350
Bincknoll, 117
Bishop Canning, 159, 190
Bishopstone, 187
Black Dog Inn, West Lavington, 449
Blandford, Dorset, 170, 211
Bodenham, 187

Bowood Park, 205
Boyton, 260
Bradford (on Avon), 171
Breamore, Hampshire, 17
Brede, Sussex, 11
Brindmore Farm, Berwick St John, 111
Bristol, 124, 163, 170, 171, 497
Broad Chalke, 68, 81, 186, 187, 354, 356, 357, 497
Broad Hinton, 129
Bromham, 148, 189
Bromhead, 145
Broughton, Hampshire, 24, 25, 49
Broughton Gifford, 136, 137, 151, 171
Burbage, 53, 112, 118, 128, 171, 322, 329, 403, 419, 421
Burdrop, 79
Buttermere, 40, 304

Calne, 177, 466
Carlisle, 10
Castle Eaton, 470
Catton, Norfolk, 11
Charlcot, 205
Charlton, 32, 205, 497
Chavanage, Horsley, Gloucestershire, 127
Chepping Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, 11
Cherrington, Gloucestershire, 127
Chicksgrove, 250
Chilmark, 105, 124, 155, 160, 212, 273
Chilton, 110
Chippenham, 146, 149, 175, 203
Chirton, 48, 64, 400
Chisledon, 68, 79, 81, 87
Chitterne, 464
Choddesden, 476
Choddesden Farm, 474, 475
Cholderton, 30
Christian Malford, 145, 155
Church Farm, Pewsey, 450, 454, 459, 471
Chute, 30, 46, 390, 407, 462, 475
Chute Lodge, Andover, 38
Cliffe Pypard, 116, 129, 452
Coate, 196

Colerne, 493
 Colley Farm, Gloucestershire, 127
 Codford, 99
 Codford St Peter, 21, 23, 479, 493
 Collingbourne, 23, 24, 46, 49, 171
 Collingbourne Ducis, 40, 403
 Colthrop, Berkshire, 11
 Common Farm, Highworth, 92
Compass, South Damerham, 74, 76, 358, 360
 Compton Bassett, 216
 Conholt Park, Hampshire, 38
 Coombe Bissett, 72, 333, 430
 Corman Farm, Highworth, 303
 Corsham, 163, 478, 499
 Corsham House, 216
 Corton, 97, 99, 259, 260, 262, 263
 Countess Farm, Amesbury, 29, 157
 Cowesfield Farm, Whiteparish, 294
 Cricklade, 71, 108, 129, 196, 197, 303
 Cricklade St Sampson, 115, 408, 409
 Crow Lane Mill, Wilton, 88, 253

Damerham, 156, 198, 357, 359, 360
 Dauntsey, 489, 491, 492
 Devizes, 45, 47, 48, 58, 64, 77, 80, 84, 85, 94, 99, 107, 108,
 117, 125, 131, 132, 136, 137, 138, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148,
 150, 151, 164, 166, 170, 173, 174, 175, 176, 188, 189, 192,
 193, 197, 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 214, 386, 482, 483, 491
 Dilton, 158
 Dinton, 104, 194
 Donhead St Andrew, 111, 160
 Donhead St Mary, 111, 160, 352
 Dorchester, Dorset, 124, 132, 133, 503
 Down Farm, Broad Chalke, 497
 Down Farm, Fonthill Bishop, 106, 107, 214, 273
 Downton, 42, 49, 141, 195, 198, 206, 301
 Draycot, 79, 385
 Draycot Foliat, 80, 352
Dukes Arms, Marlborough, 35
 Dursley, Gloucestershire, 127

Easton (near Pewsey), 23

Easton, 58, 128, 404, 405, 416
Eastsand, Burbage, 128n
Ebbesbourne Wake, 82, 89, 214, 280, 356
Elm Tree Inn, 476
Enford, 33, 206, 214, 355, 374, 376
Englefield Green, Pewsey, 140, 154
Erlestoke, 99
Erlestoke House, 180
Estcourt, Long Newnton, 126, 420, 421
Everley, 30, 46

Fairford, Gloucestershire, 115
Fifield (parish of Milton), 54
Fifield, (near Pewsey), 56
Fifield Bavant, 82, 293, 294
Figheldean, 34, 186, 321, 442
Fisherton Gaol, 21, 22, 105
Fonthill, 159, 167, 195, 198, 199, 206
Fonthill Bishop, 106, 160, 377
Fonthill Gifford, 101, 102, 160, 214, 238, 239, 240, 273, 399
Fordingbridge, Hampshire, 11, 16, 52
Frome, Somerset, 204, 275
Froxfield, 37, 38, 322, 413
Fugglestone St Peter, 84, 187, 251, 420
Fyfield, see Fifield

Gaston farm, Tisbury, 155
Goddard Arms, Swindon, 160, 161
Gore Farm, Hannington, 93, 391
Great Bedwin, 39, 52, 322, 363, 401, 406, 410

Ham, 53, 412, 421
Handley, Dorset, 111
Hannington, 93, 94, 108, 390, 392, 397
Harnham, 52
Hatch, 159, 241, 242
Headley, Hampshire, 10
Heytesbury, 15, 22, 94, 96, 97, 120, 139, 176, 262, 263
Heytesbury House, 99, 121, 139, 165, 175
Heythorp, Oxfordshire, 11

Highworth, 91, 92, 108, 109, 128, 129, 130, 297, 303, 347,
379, 392, 398, 480, 495
Hilmarton, 117, 129
Hilperton, 216
Hindon, 101, 104, 123, 124, 125, 131, 132, 145, 146, 148,
160, 169, 170, 194, 237, 239, 241, 247, 249
Hippenscombe, 29, 41, 361, 389, 406, 407
Homington, 68, 187, 332
Horsley, Gloucestershire, 127
Horton, 64
Hungerford, Berkshire, 11

Idmiston, 43, 44, 206, 290

Kidderminster, Worcestershire, 11
King's Arms, Marlborough, 385
Kington Langley, 177
Kintbury, Berkshire, 11
Knook, 22, 23, 97, 99, 263

Lake Farm, 30, 46
Lambourn, 409, 409n
Latton, 108, 197, 409
Lawn Farm, Fonthill Gifford, 102, 107, 213, 240, 242, 275
Liddington, 57, 58, 353, 374
Linley Farm, Tisbury, 104, 265, 266, 267, 275
Littlecote, 136
Longford Castle, 58
Long Newnton, 126, 214, 420, 421
Loudwater, Buckinghamshire, 11
Lower Hardres, Kent, 10
Ludgershall, 23, 27, 46, 462, 473, 474, 479
Lyneham, 108, 117, 129, 401
Lyng, Norfolk, 11

Maddington, 21, 38
Maggot's Mill, Highworth, 93, 348, 398
Maiden Bradley, 479
Malmesbury, 195, 196
Manningford, 59, 82, 318
Manningford Abbots, 59
Manningford Bere, 500

Manningtree, 130
 Manor Farm, West Grimstead, 73n
 Market Lavington, 69, 184, 196
 Marlborough, 27, 28, 35, 36, 37, 38, 47, 56, 62, 87, 88,
 109, 117, 125, 127, 128, 136, 140, 161, 162, 172, 173, 174,
 180, 193, 197, 200, 204, 307, 308, 328, 371, 383, 386, 387,
 459, 466
 Marston, 184, 188
 Martens House, Stanton Fitzwarren, 96, 378
 Melchet, 24
 Melchet Park, 42, 178, 187, 279
 Melksham, 145, 178, 179, 182, 186, 479
 Mere, 112
 Michelmersh, Hampshire, 16
 Mildenhall, 37, 110, 210, 211, 380, 382, 393
 Mildenhall, Suffolk, 10
 Milford, 52
 Milton, 54, 88, 128, 322, 336, 400, 410
 Monks, parish of Corsham, 499
 Monkton, 485, 487

Nag's Head, Covent Garden, 451, 454, 459, 471, 472, 473
 Netheravon, 34, 158, 187, 374, 375
 Netherhampton, 159
 Newhouse, 141
 New Sarum, 79
 Newton Tony, 30, 31, 32, 125, 187, 190, 198, 287, 288, 289

Oadle Park Farm, Cliffe Pypard, 452
 Oare (near Pewsey), 25, 26, 37, 46
 Odstock, 68, 113, 158, 178, 186
 Ogbourne St Andrew, 54, 56, 368, 403, 414, 415, 451
 Orcheston St George, 38
 Owslebury, Hampshire, 16

Pack Horse Inn, 275
 Parsonage Farm, Upton Lovell, 450
 Patney, 52, 59
 Pewsey, 25, 26, 47, 60, 64, 66, 91, 128, 140, 149, 166, 176,
 408, 450, 454, 471, 500
 Plaitford, 73, 74, 206, 398, 399
Plough, Idmiston, 43

Poore Arms, Charlton, 32
Potterne, 449, 452, 460, 476, 477, 478, 498
Poulton, 156, 411
Purton, 469
Pythouse, Tisbury, 101, 104, 124, 130, 143, 148, 152, 160,
167, 169, 200, 213, 214, 238, 239, 242, 247, 249, 267, 275
Pythouse Farm, Tisbury, 102, 104, 206, 214, 237, 240, 243,
245, 246

Queen Caroline Inn, Marlborough, 155
Quidhampton, 159, 186, 251, 420n
Quidhampton Mill, 84
Quid Hill Farm, Cricklade, 71, 303

Ramsbury, 35, 67, 70, 71, 87, 88, 110, 180, 192, 211, 284,
300, 325, 385, 402, 409n, 410, 411, 419, 421, 465
Ramsbury Manor, 383
Reading, Berkshire, 193
Redditch, Worcestershire, 11
Rockbourne, Hampshire, 90, 96
Rockley, 54, 56, 110, 369, 370, 371, 372
Rockley Temple, 313
Rollstone, 38, 38n
Rose and Crown, Woodborough, 59, 312, 318
Rowdeford House, 216
Rudge, 106, 274, 275

Salisbury, 24, 31, 33, 41, 44, 49, 50, 51, 52, 77, 79, 89, 90,
96, 105, 112, 113, 118, 123, 124, 132, 134, 155, 162, 163,
166, 167, 169, 170, 171, 174, 178, 193, 194, 197, 200, 204,
213, 215, 217, 218, 451, 503
Savernake, 67
Seend, 175, 194, 471
Selborne, Hampshire, 10
Semley, 111, 160, 199
Sevenhampton, 108
Shaftesbury, Dorset, 209
Shalbourne, 52, 53, 112, 363, 411, 413, 414, 418
Sherfield English, 304
Shrewton, 38
South Damerham, 74
South Park Farm, Ludgershall, 27, 474, 475

South Savernake, 300
Stanton, 209
Stanton Fitzwarren, 96, 378
Stanton St Bernard, 26, 28, 30, 46, 64
Stapleford, 16, 76, 214, 257
Steeple Ashton, 496
Stert, 190
Stratton, 108, 498
Steeple Ashton, 159
Stuckton, Hampshire, 11
Sutton, 98, 264
Swallowcliff, 160
Swindon, 38, 58, 80, 81, 108, 109, 115, 128, 129, 130, 160,
161, 498, 499, 501, 502

Taverham, Norfolk, 11
Temple Farm, Ogbourne St Andrew, 56, 403
Tetbury, Gloucestershire, 14, 127
Tetbury Common, Gloucestershire, 127
Tidcombe, 40, 405
Tilshead, 95
Tisbury, 101, 104, 105, 130, 152, 152, 159, 160, 167, 187,
198, 199, 200, 206, 213, 214, 237, 249, 265, 266, 275, 399
Tisbury Mill, 208
Tollard Royal, 111, 156, 186, 188, 348, 349, 423
Trouble House Inn, Tetbury Common, Gloucestershire, 127
Trowbridge, 113, 114, 128, 137, 143, 175, 176, 470, 479,
497, 498

Upavon, 45
Upper Clatford, Hampshire, 11
Upper Winterbourne, 43
Upton, 99
Upton Grove farm, Gloucestershire, 127
Upton Lovell, 450, 503
Urchfont, 148
Ushant, 145

Vernhams Dean, Hampshire, 476

Wallop, Hampshire, 30
Wanborough, 21, 38, 56, 57, 58, 285, 416, 417, 479

Wardour, 268
Warminster, 82, 83, 99, 112, 113, 115, 120, 124, 140, 143,
146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 165, 166, 170, 477
Wedhampton, 78
Wellington, Somerset, 176, 177
West Ashton, 159
Westbury, 84, 176, 469
West Dean, 43, 214, 273, 298
West Grimstead, 72, 187, 269, 272
West Lavington, 202, 449, 482, 483, 484, 488, 489
West Park, Rockbourne, Hampshire, 90, 96, 124
Whaddon, 49
Wherwell, Hampshire, 24
Whitchurch, Hampshire, 24
White Hart, Wellington, 177
Whiteparish, 43, 48, 186, 187, 214, 269, 282, 294
Wilcot, 26, 35, 354, 405
Wilton, 11, 88, 158, 194, 253, 321
Wilton (Parish of Great Bedwin), 39
Winchester, Hampshire, 163, 170, 188, 216, 226, 261
Winkfield, 162
Winsley, 162
Winterbourne, 129
Winterbourne Bassett, 116, 210
Winterbourne Stoke, 77, 158, 214, 259
Winterslow, 29, 33
Witham, 92, 379
Woodborough, 59, 64, 78, 78n; 190, 211, 312, 366, 367
Woolpack Inn, Trowbridge, 175
Wootton, 128
Wootton Bassett, 117, 129
Wootton Rivers, 67, 335
Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, 127
Wroughton, 38, 66, 79, 80, 115, 129, 285

Yarm, Yorkshire, 121

INDEX OF NAMES

People with the same forename are indexed together with no distinction shown between them. Sometimes a name may appear more than once on a page this is not shown in the index. People with an alias may appear in the index under both names. An 'n' next to the page number indicates that the name appears in the footnotes, i.e. 91n.

ABEL, Mr, 11
ABERY: (see ABREE); Thomas, 168, 187
ABREE, Thomas, 265, 266, 267, 268, 278, 453
A'COURT, Colonel Charles A, 22, 77, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 120, 121, 123, 139, 165, 166, 175, 177, 260, 261, 264
AILESBURY, Lord, 67, 210, 326, 335, 381, 382
ALDERSON:, Mr Justice Sir Edward Hall, 188, 218, 251, 256, 265, 268, 276, 277, 278, 279, 286, 288, 289, 291, 294, 296, 298, 299, 302, 322, 323, 329, 330, 334, 347, 353, 355, 357, 359, 361, 363, 364, 365, 370, 389, 408, 408n, 412, 423, 429, 438, 444, 490
ALEXANDER: Ambrose, 409; George, 329, 385; John, 454, 459, 460, 471-473, 500; Joseph, 13, 35, 300, 323, 456, 482; Mathias, 13, 35, 300, 323, 456, 482; Thomas, 191
ALFORD: Joseph, 105n; Richard, 105n, 106n; Samuel, 105, 105n, 106n, 160, 169, 186
AMOR, Shadrach, 408, 423, 425, 461
ANDOVER, Lord, 86, 115, 146
ANDREWS: Edward, 496; John, 389
ANSTIE, Mr, 87
ANTROBUS, Sir Edmund, 223, 468
ARMSTRONG, Mr, 87
ARNEY, Joseph, 16
ARTHUR, Governor, 15
ARNOLD, J H, 183
ARUNDELL, Lord, 24, 50, 90, 96, 105, 105n; 134, 159, 160, 167, 168, 186, 249, 267, 268
ASHLEY, Gracious, 191
ASTLEY: Sir John, 500; Sir J D, 223
ATHERTON, Mr, 177
ATKINS, William, 322, 347
AVERY, William, 460
AWDRY: Mr A, 175, 183; John, 178, 179, 183

BADEN, John, 475
BAKER: Lieutenant Colonel, 79, 89, 90, 130, 134, 145, 146, 160, 170, 172, 181, 182, 218; David, 66, 281, 453; James, 53, 413, 464; John, 322, 347; Robert, 53, 413, 463; Thomas, 57, 420; William, 53, 333, 334, 403, 404, 412, 461
BAILEY, William, 414
BAILY, -, 477
BALL: Mr, 261, 262, 367, 369, 370, 371, 428, 437; George, 91, 379, 393, 456; Henry, 427, 452, 456; Joseph, 378; Josiah, 322, 347; Thomas, 101, 213, 243, 244
BANLY, Ann, 500
BANSTONE, Samuel, 187, 237, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 250, 277, 453
BARBER, Joseph, 362, 407
BARKER, Mr, 115
BARNES: Mr, 364; Francis, 93, 393, 398; George, 291; Henry, 474; John, 363, 474, 475; Richard, 467, 468; Thomas, 497; William, 52, 53, 363, 418
BARNETT, Mr Henry, 460
BARRETT: John, 16, 206, 237, 242, 244, 245, 248, 250, 265, 266, 268, 277, 453; Robert, 71, 91, 96, 303, 378, 379, 456; Samuel, 16, 187, 237, 242, 244, 247, 250, 277, 453
BARTLETT: David, 35, 405, 461; William, 15, 96, 97, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 279, 453
BARTON, Mrs, 499
BASKERVILLE, Mr, 54, 55, 56, 87, 110, 116, 117, 173, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 414, 432, 465; T B M, 210, 223
BATCHELOR, Richard, 38n, 413 (see WOODWARD)
BATH, Marquis of, 9, 82, 126, 209
BAVERSTOCK, William, 53, 411
BAYLEY, John, 86, 87
BEACH, -, 156
BEAKE, Mr, 452
BEAMINSTER, see BEMINSTER
BEAVIS, Thomas, 265
BECKFORD, Mr, 195
BECKLEY, Charles, 34, 206, 255, 456
BELL: Joseph, 322, 347, 412; Stephen, 322, 347, 365; William, 42, 301
BEMINSTER, Joseph, 96, 259, 262, 263, 279, 453

BENETT, Mr John, 101, 104, 105, 123, 131, 134, 159, 160, 167, 168, 169, 186, 187, 194, 198, 199, 200, 206, 213, 214, 223, 237, 238, 239, 241, 243, 244, 246, 247, 248, 250, 257, 265, 277, 418
BENNETT: Mr, 349; Charles, 42, 187, 301, 302, 323, 456; John, 349
BEVEN, William, 259, 262, 264, 265, 279
BEWLEY, Bryan, 57, 353, 354n
BIDDLECOMBE, Thomas, 400
BIGGS, Henry, 223
BIGLEY, James, 96, 378
BINGHAM, Mr, 313, 314, 339, 340, 344, 358, 360, 361, 471, 500, 502
BIRCHELL, James, 401
BIRNIE, Sir R, 454, 459
BISHOP: Mr, 427; Thomas, 127, 275
BLACKMORE, Aaron, 236
BLACKWOOD, Captain, 122
BLAKE: Mr C, 113, 114; Charles, 44, 45, 206, 290, 291; Robert, 13, 17, 53, 363, 364, 456; Shadrach, 13, 41, 53, 361, 362, 362n, 363, 364, 443, 462
BLAKEY, Mr B, 43
BLANCHARD, Thomas, 258
BLANDFORD: Aaron, 293; James, 107, 187, 237, 242, 245, 247, 250, 265, 266, 267, 277, 278, 377, 453; Thomas, 82, 187, 214, 244, 293
BLATCH, William, 289
BLUNDY: Job, 53, 419; Robert, 54, 68, 300, 301, 336, 336n
BOLTON, Thomas, 465
BOND: James, 236, 251, 279, 306; John, 476
BOUCHER, James, 236, 265, 286
BOURNE, James, 497
BOUVERIE, J Pleydell, 26
BOWERTON, Charles, 417
BOWLES, Thomas, 13
BOWLEY, Charles, 418, 419, 419n
BOWNS, George, 322, 347, 389
BOX, Mr, 24, 25
BOYES, John, 16
BRADFORD: Mr, 80, 81, 128, 129; Elizabeth, 498, 499, 502
BRADLEY, Michael, 212, 273, 275

BRASHER: Mr, 158, 254, 255, 441; George, 254, 255; John, 11, 88, 253, 254, 321; Samuel, 88, 253
 BRIANT, George, 476
 BRICE, Edward, 236
 BRICKLE, John, 105, 242, 242n
 BRIDGES, William, 80, 352, 423, 424
 BRIND: Joseph, 57, 58, 353; Thomas, 53, 66, 281, 411, 461
 BRINDLEY, William, 279
 BRISTOW(E): Mr, 295; Henry, 268
 BROADWAY, Henry, 53, 403, 404, 461
 BRODIE: Mr, 50; W B, 465
 BROTHERTON, Colonel, 112, 113, 117, 120, 143, 144, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 165, 179
 BROWN: Mr, 64, 486, 487; Levi, 81, 82, 187, 356; John, 38, 67, 68, 69, 81, 322, 410, 463; Mr W R, 28; William, 408
 BROWNJOHN, Thomas, 389
 BROWNE, Quarter-Master, 160
 BRUCE, Lord, 140
 BRUGES, Thomas, 183, 194
 BRUNTON, Richard, 121, 123
 BUCKFIELD, George, 265
 BUCKLAND: Mr Edward, 209, 210; Samuel, 115, 408
 BUCKPITT, George, 237, 286
 BUDD: Mr, 487; Lieutenant, Hopewell, 209
 BUDDEN, George, 74, 359, 360
 BULLOCK: Mr, 87; Stephen, 59, 63, 310, 311, 312, 313, 315, 318, 320, 342, 343, 365, 367, 368, 455
 BULPITT: Charles, 14
 BURBAGE, George, 206, 290, 291, 293
 BURBIDGE, Mr, 87n, 109, 110
 BURCH, Joseph, 409
 BURDEN, James, 59, 63, 306, 317, 318, 319, 339, 344, 346, 366, 367, 368, 456
 BURNETT, Mr, 481, 482
 BURROUGH, John, 89, 214, 280, 463
 BURT: Mr, 80, 81, 128, 129; Thomas, 213, 214, 237, 244, 246, 248, 250, 277, 453
 BURTON, John, 213, 214, 399
 BUSH: Elijah, 136n; 137; John, 171
 BUTCHER: John, 53, 411; M, 191
 BUTLER: Mr, 189, 190; Mr C, 190; Daniel, 191; Mark, 191
 BUTT: George, 214, 420; John, 265, 286, 389

BUXTON, Joseph, 265

CALLEY: Lieutenant John, 79, 108; Mr T, 87, 109; Mr Thomas, 108, 117, 161, 162, 173, 174, 490

CALVER, Robert, 11

CAMPBELL, Sir Colin, 132, 155, 163, 170

CANDY, Mr, 102, 240

CANNING: Mr 370, 371, 372; John, 54, 56, 403; Robert, 451; William, 372, 415

CARTER: Mr, 327; George, 13; Matthias, 286; William, 383; Zebulon, 39, 406

CASE, James, 82, 187, 293, 294, 456

CASS: John, 291; William, 45, 291

CASSON, J H, 112

CASWELL, Reverend Mr, 186

CHAMBERS, James, 299

CHANDLER: Mr, 21, 22; Mr Ann, 450, 451, 454, 455, 459, 471; Charles, 43, 214, 294, 295, 296, 297; John, 329; Robert, 27, 462, 474, 475

CHANNON, Thomas, 35, 300

CHAPMAN: George, 479; Jemima, 491; William, 191

CHEATER: Charles, 389; Elizabeth, 17; William, 17, 74, 76; 184, 198, 357, 358, 359, 360, 442, 462

CHEVERELL, James, 106, 274

CHEYNEY, James, 265, 305, 339, 365, 412

CHISSELL, William, 468

CHIVERELL, James, 274n

CHOLES, Mary, 402

CHUBB, Joseph, 111, 186, 348, 350, 351, 412, 423, 424, 453

CHUM(M), John, 54, 372

CHURCH: Mr, 281, 284; George, 66; Richard, 66, 283, 409, 413

CHURCHILL, Lord, 202, 483, 484, 488

CLARK: John, 80, 423, 424; Mr R, 94; Mr W, 94

CLARKE, Sergeant William, 455, 471

CLIFF, Mr, 78, 78n (see CLIFT)

CLIFT: Mr, 320, 365; Ann, 59, 367; John, 59, 78n, 366, 367

CLUTTERBUCK, Thomas, 155

COBB: Mr, 80, 109, 128, 137, 212; Mrs, 31, 43; Mr James, 30, 31, 200, 202, 217

COBBETT, William, 9

COCKRELL, James, 469
COCKS, James, 206
CODRINGTON: Mr, 110, 117, 154; Mr J, 116; Oliver Calley, 55, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 414, 427, 429, 431, 432, 465; Cornet Robert, 116
COLBOURNE, Mr, 49
COLE: Daniel, 14; Isaac, 16, 88, 158, 253, 254, 255, 256, 440, 440n, 462; John, 39, 406; Luke, 126, 215, 420, 421
COLEMAN: George, 385, 421, 422; Henry, 94, 397; John, 191; Walter, 155; William, 283, 284
COLERIDGE, Mr, 260, 262, 308
COLLINS: Daniel, 40, 405, 406; William, 43, 214, 294, 295, 297
COMBES: M, 207, 208; N, 207; W, 207
COMPTON: Mr, 349; James, 339, 365; John T, 191
COOK: Charles, 306, 318, 319, 339, 343, 344, 346; George, 236, 251; John, 66, 236, 352, 408; Michael, 66, 408; William, 73, 90, 186, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 278, 453
COOMBS: George, 81, 187, 354; Matthew, 268, 374
COOPER, James Thomas, 12
COOTE, Mr Eyre, 90, 96, 122, 124
COWESFIELD, Henry, 390
COX: Mr, 351; Henry, 404; James, 74, 209, 398; Jasper, 111, 112, 352
CRANE, Isaac, 41, 407
CRAVEN: Mr, 35, 110; Fulwar, 37, 87, 128, 173, 210, 223, 465, 491
CREES, Mr, 479
CRIPPS, Mr, 485
CROCKET, Mr, 87, 94
CROOK: John, 108, 401; William, 74, 359, 360
CROSS, William, 410, 411
CROWE, -, 64
CRUSE, Edward, 214
CUFF, James, 250
CULLEY: James, 416; Stephen, 59, 416
CULLY, Joseph, 115, 408
CURTIS, Sir Lucius, 476
CUSSE: John, 43, 265, 306; William, 45

DALES, Charles, 390
DALLY, Mr, 106, 274, 275
DANDRIDGE, John, 13
DANIELL, Thomas, 158
DARBY, William, 496
DARK, Mr, 136, 137
DAVIS: Charles, 11, 59, 62, 63, 82, 306, 310, 311, 314, 315, 316, 318, 319, 339, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 365, 366, 367, 368, 462, 496; George, 191; J, 177; Thomas, 9
DAY: Mr Christopher, 387, 388; John, 77, 158, 214, 257, 258, 259; Thomas, 478
DEADMAN: John, 500; William, 67, 321
DEAR, Caroline, 459, 471
DICKETTS, Henry, 206, 290, 291, 292, 293, 456
DIX, William, 497
DIXON: George, 385; Matthias, 421
DOBSON, George, 420
DODD: -, 454, 455; Edward, 318; William, 472
DOGRELL: John, 246; Noah, 246
DORE, Peter, 57, 58, 353, 374
DOWDING: Mr, 275, 500; Samuel, 84, 251
DOWDLE: Mrs, 264; Henry, 503
DOWN: Frederick, 321; James, 88, 158, 253, 254, 255, 256, 440, 440n, 462; William, 186
DOWSE, James, 191
DRAKE, Thomas, 159
DREW, John, 115, 408
DUKE: Mr, 3; Reverend Mr, 77
DUKES, John, 245n
DUMBLETON, John, 72, 271
DURHAM, William, 421, 461
DURMAN, George, 66, 67, 281, 281n, 283, 321, 442, 443n, 462
DUNFORD, Stephen, 366, 367, 368
DURNFORD: John, 322, 347, 378
DYKE, Mr, 87

EARLE: Sir C, 184; Mr G, 241
EDERTON, F T, 465
EDGELL, William, 479
EDGEWORTH, Thomas, 91, 93, 392, 393, 398
EDMONDS, Mr, 25

EDMONDSTONE: Mr, 188; Reverend Mr George, 449, 452, 460, 476, 477, 478
 EDWARDS: Charles, 380; George, 328, 373, 384; George Moore, 91, 379; Robert, 191; William, 191, 237, 251, 279, 306
 ELLIOTT: Mr, 87; John, 236, 251
 ELLISON, John, 498, 499, 501, 502, 503
 ELSTONE, Reverend Henry, 390
 ELTON, William, 33, 187, 287, 288, 289, 456
 ESSEX. Mr, 127
 ESTCOURT: Mr, 70, 85, 95, 107, 144, 146, 148, 188, 189, 190, 201; Mr Bucknall, 131; T G Bucknall, 49, 78, 138, 150, 151, 223, 223, 251, 265, 277, 279, 286, 322, 373, 423; T G S Bucknall, 49; T H S B, 190
 EVELEIGH, Robert, 385
 EVELY, Robert, 328
 EVERETT: Mr, 87, 329, 331, 332, 384, 385; C W, 465; Cornet Henry, 24, 155; Joseph, 465
 EVERY, William, 186, 348, 349, 350, 351, 423, 424
 EWER, Francis, 279
 EWENS, George, see George SMITH
 EYLES, Aaron, 414
 EYRE: Daniel, 465; George, 223, 491
 EYRES: John, 34, 374, 375, 376, 461; Samuel, 187, 237, 242, 245, 248, 250, 277, 278; William, 377

 FANSTONE, Henry, 412
 FARLEY, William, 259, 262, 264, 265, 279
 FERRIS: -, 469; Thomas, 349; William, 35, 405
 FIELD, Joshua, 497
 FIGES, Mr, 24, 49
 FLEETWOOD, Mr, 72, 333, 334
 FOLLETT, Mr, 350
 FOOT, Thomas, 348, 349, 350, 351, 423, 424, 461
 FOOTE, Mr S, 460
 FORD: Mr, 23, 24; James, 420; John, 84, 119, 120, 159, 187, 251, 252, 267; John (alias HENWOOD), 412, 462
 FORDER: Robert, 196, 197; Stephen, 43, 214, 298
 FORT, Mr, 31, 89
 FORTE, George, 465
 FORWARD: Mr, 68; George, 408; James, 322, 347
 FOWLE, William, 223

FOWLER: Mr, 25, 37, 46; John, 183, William, 491
 FOX: Henry, 410, 411; John, 264; Thomas, 329
 FRANCIS, William, 88, 158, 253, 254, 256, 257, 440, 462
 FRANKLIN: John, 477; Thomas, 477
 FREELING, Sir Francis, 33, 51, 100, 123, 143, 162, 169, 170, 205
 FRIBBENS, Robert, 53, 403, 404, 461
 FULBROOK: Thomas, 29, 41, 361, 363, 389, 407; William, 29, 41, 361, 362, 389, 390, 406, 407
 FULLER, John, 465
 FUTCHER, Robert, 265, 374, 378, 380

GABY, Thomas, 34, 321, 442
 GALE: Mr, 329; George, 53, 404; Thomas, 53, 322, 403, 404
 GANGE, Thomas (John), 73, 187, 269, 270, 271, 278, 453
 GARDENER, James (alias Edmund), 366, 367, 368
 GARDNER, John, 28, 128
 GARLICK: Henry, 251, 279, 306; John, 251, 279, 306
 GEE: David, 66, 285, 285n, 442, 464, 482; Worthy, 66, 285, 442, 464, 482
 GEORGE, David, 35, 410
 GERRARD: see JERRARD
 GIBBONS, Richard, 11
 GIBBS: Harriet, 475; Thomas, 476
 GIDDINGS: (see BECKLEY also): Mr, 196; James, 191; John, 191
 GILBERT, Thomas, 306, 310, 318, 339, 342
 GILES: -, 347, 398; John, 115, 408; Joseph, 91, 93, 393; William, 115, 409
 GLEED, James, 473
 GODDARD: Captain, 24, 58, 79, 115, 153; Sergeant, 105; Mr, 116; A, 210, 465; Ambrose, 498, 499, 501; David, 251, 279, 306, 339, 374, 378, 380; Mr E, 109, 210; Mr H N, 108, 117, 210; Thomas, 67, 88, 192, 283, 284, 306, 318, 366, 367, 368, 442, 464; William, 115, 409
 GOOD, Reverend Mr, 453
 GOODMAN: John, 58, 404, 405; Mr T, 140
 GORDON: John, 491; Robert, 223
 GOULD, Thomas, 67, 421
 GOULDING, John, 408
 GRACE, Isaac, 362

GRANT: Mr, 184, 188; John, 500; Jonathan, 191; William, 191
 GRAY: Henry, 159; James, 497; John, 268, 501; Joseph, 497; William, 73, 74, 187, 399, 400
 GREEN: George, 187, 348, 349, 351, 423, 424; James, 236, 246, 251, 279, 306, 339, 373, 378; Robert, 365; Thomas, 339
 GREENLY, Reverend Mr, 453
 GRIFFIN, Thomas, 339, 365
 GROVE: Mr, 159, 160; Thomas, 111, 223, 491
 GROVES: Mr J S, 484; Richard, 408, 423, 425, 461
 GUILDFORD, Stephen, 336
 GUNSTON, James, 286

HAILSTONE, Job, 365, 366, 423, 426
 HAINES: Edmund, 479; M, 191
 HALCOMBE, Mr, 280, 310, 312, 313, 314, 316, 320, 339, 340, 344, 345, 346, 367
 HALE, James, 34, 206, 206n, 355, 355n, 456; John, 373, 378, 380, 408, 409; R H B, 465
 HALL: Charles, 80, 352, 423, 424; Daniel, 421; William, 236, 251, 279
 HALLICK, Benjamin, 329
 HAMPTON: Abel, 191; William, 476
 HANCOCK, Daniel, 17
 HARDING, John, 104, 130, 152, 153, 167, 168
 HARE: Mr, 309, 317; Mrs, 61; Augustus J C, 64n; Reverend William Augustus, 61, 62, 313, 314, 343
 HARFORD, Samuel, 13, 96, 98, 259, 260, 262, 263, 264, 279, 453
 HARRIS, Martha, 480, 495
 HARWOOD, Thomas, 373, 378, 380, 389
 HART: Thomas, 401; William, 127
 HARVEY, John, 365, 366, 423, 426
 HATCHER, Samuel, 186
 HATHERELL, Job, 491-493
 HAWKINS: George, 414; Thomas, 414, 415
 HAYES: Harvey, 41, 407; William, 467
 HAYTER: Mr, 122; William, 4, 214, 294, 295, 296, 297, 456; W Goodenough, 77, 214, 259
 HAYWARD: John, 59, 89, 214, 416, 461; William, 280, 281
 HEAD, Ambrose, 494

HEATH: Mrs, 491; David, 57, 71, 303, 374, 456, 482; Mary, 491
HEATHCOTE, T, 183
HENDERSON, C R, 202
HENLY, John, 466
HERRINGTON, Henry, 73, 90, 187, 269, 270, 271, 278, 453
HEWER, Charles, 191
HEWITT: Saint John, 410, 410n; Reuben, 468
HIBBERD: William, 89, 214, 280, 281, 408, 423, 425, 461, 463
HICKS, Thomas, 115, 409
HIGHETT: John, 128n; Robert, 128n
HILL: Lord, 112; J, 113; Isaac, 376; John, 251, 279, 306; Thomas, 362, 460, 476-478; William, 237
HILLIER: Arthur, 34, 214, 355, 456; James, 376; William, 34, 333, 374, 375, 376, 377, 461
HILLMAN, William, 322, 403, 456
HITCHCOCK: Charles, 52; Harry, 500
HIRING, William, 256
HISCOCK(S): John, 35, 405, 461; Thomas, 306, 311, 313, 339, 342, 344, 346
HOARE, George, 421
HODDING: Mr, 68, 467; Henry, 178; Mr M, 177; Matthew Thomas, 51, 78, 79, 213; Matthias, 135, 178; Mary, 67, 335
HOLLICK, Benjamin, 372
HOLLIS, Thomas, 11
HOLLOWAY, John James, 265, 286, 389
HOLMES, William, 33, 187, 287, 288, 456
HOLT, William, 41, 53, 361, 363, 411, 461
HOOD, Michael, 74, 206, 398
HOOPER: -, 390; George, 412; Richard, 475; William, 41, 407
HOPGOOD: Elizabeth, 475; Sidney, 412
HORTON: Charles, 14; John, 14
HOTHAM, Mr, 334
HOUSE: Charles, 350; James, 13, 259, 262, 279, 306, 453
HOWARD, Robert, 115
HOWELL: John, 191; Stephen, 251, 279
HOWITH, Samuel, 39
HUGHES: Mr, 87; William, 490
HULSE, Sir Charles, 359
HUMBY, Henry, 389

HUME, Reverend George, 471
HUMPHREY, Mr, 93, 391
HUMPHRIS, J, 191
HUNT: Mr, 140; Henry, 462; Joseph, 96, 259, 262, 263, 279, 453
HUNTLEY, William, 70, 402, 403
HUSSEY: Ambrose, 223; Jane, 191
HUTCHINS: -, 211; John, 398; Joseph, 74; Thomas, 306
HUTCHINSON, Barnabas, 42, 187, 301, 302, 323, 456
HYATT (see HIGHETT also): Mr, 128, 128n; John, 128n; Richard, 118; Robert, 128, 374, 421, 421n

INGRAM: Christopher, 76, 77, 77n, 214, 257, 258; James, 265, 286, 339, 365, 412; John, 264
INGS, Edward, 200, 201, 202
INNES, Reverend Mr, 216
IVESON, Mr, 28

JACOB(S): Abraham, 186, 420, 420n; J H, 465; William, 29, 158, 253, 253, 254, 256, 452, 462, 467, 468, 469
JAMES, Mr, 476
JARRETT, Mary Ann, 399
JAY: Mr, 168; James, 101, 243, 247; John, 242, 243, 266; Thomas, 267
JEFFEREYS, James, 491
JEFFERIES: Robert, 489, 491, 492, 493; Thomas, 94, 397
JEFFERY: James, 187, 420, 420n; John, 380; William, 187, 250, 268, 420
JEFFRYS, Nehemiah, 471
JELLYMAN, Joseph, 408
JENNER: John, 205; Thomas, 34, 196, 197, 374, 375
JENNINGS, John, 11, 88, 158, 253, 254, 255, 256, 427, 437, 440, 462
JEREMY, Mr, 467, 468, 477, 496
JERRARD, Charles, 101, 104, 167, 168, 206, 237, 239, 242, 243, 245, 246, 248, 250, 277, 453
JESSETT, Moses, 40, 304
JOHNSON: Mr J H, 95; William, 286
JONES: Henry, 254; James, 35, 409
JUDD, James, 30, 31, 32, 33, 187, 190, 198, 287, 288, 289
JUKES, John, 245

KEEL, James, 34, 374, 374n, 375
KETTLE, see KIDDLE
KIBBLEWHITE: Robert, 469; William, 71, 303, 456
KIDDLE, Elias, 186, 348, 348n, 349, 350, 351, 423, 424, 461
KILLARD, Private George, 80, 352
KILMINSTER: Richard, 127; Thomas, 115, 409
KIMBER, Thomas, 410, 423, 425
KIMMER: Charles, 25, 353, 423, 425; James, 400, 461
KING: Mr, 105, 124, 273; Augustine, 249, 249n; Corporal John, 105, 365, 389; Harry, 367, 368; Henry, 106, 212, 366; Thomas, 339, 496
KINGSCOTE, Thomas, 127
KINGSTON, Anthony, 53, 411, 412
KITSON, Mr, 218
KNIGHT, Abraham, 108, 409, 461

LAKE, Edward, 366, 367, 368
LAMB, Mary, 214
LAMBERT: Mr, 160, 249; A B, 465, 490; William, 268
LAMPARD, James, 102, 213, 240, 241, 398
LANE: Mr, 188, 351; Charles, 111, 187, 348, 349, 350, 351, 423, 424, 461; Henry, 48, 186, 282, 282n; James, 30, 81, 186, 306, 311, 312, 313, 316, 317, 319, 332, 339, 342, 344, 345, 346, 357, 366, 367, 368, 453
LANGFORD; John, 56, 285, 286; Thomas, 66, 285
LANGTON, Mr, 70
LANSDOWNE, Lord, 120, 223, 205, 217, 218n, 223, 251, 277, 452, 460, 461
LARGE, James, 108, 401
LAWES, Samuel, 389
LAWRENCE: Robert, 478; Thomas, 57, 285, 416, 417, 462, 482
LEA, Jane (alias NORTH), 480, 495
LEACH, Enoch, 34, 374, 375
LEE: Charles, 414; Richard, 403, 414
LEGG: John, 93, 390, 391, 392, 397, 464; Thomas, 93, 390, 391, 392, 397, 464; William, 93, 94, 390, 391, 392, 397, 463
LEGGE, Arthur, 101, 102, 243
LEONARD, Mr, 498
LEWINGTON, John, 328, 329

LEWIS: Mr, 459; John, 39, 406; William, 158, 253, 254, 256, 257, 440, 462
 LIDDIARD: -, 284; James, 410, 411, 412; Joseph, 35, 300, 323, 413, 456, 482
 LIGHT: Sarah, 272; Thomas, 16, 90, 186, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 278, 297, 453; William, 401
 LILFORD, Mr, 376
 LITTEN, Richard, 400
 LITTLE, Elijah, 469, 470
 LOCKE: Captain, 86; Lieutenant, 171; Wadham, 49, 202, 216
 LOCKHART: John Ingram, 304; William, 40
 LOE: see LOWE also: Matthew, 460
 LOGAN, Thomas, 14
 LONG, Captain, 24, 83, 84, 99, 115, 145, 146; George, 476; Mr Walter, 176, 182, 183, 490
 LOOKER: Edward, 382, 383, 384, 385-388, 393-397, 461, 482; Isaac, 211, 323-331, 347, 380, 382, 383, 384, 384n, 385, 387, 388; Laban, 385, 387
 LOUGHBOROUGH, Lord, 170
 LOVE, James, 62, 306, 312, 313, 315, 318, 339
 LOVELOCK, John, 410, 410n
 LOWE: see LOE also: Matthew, 472
 LUCAS: Abraham, 186; Henry, 470
 LUDLOW: Mr, 483; William Heald, 49, 182, 183, 223, 491
 LUFF: see LOVE
 LUFFMAN, William, 73, 187, 269, 270, 271, 273, 278
 LUSH: James, 68, 81, 187, 332, 333, 334, 355, 427, 429, 433, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 445, 458, 462, 464; John, 187, 374
 LYNE: Robert, 67, 68, 300; William, 191

MacDONALD, Archdeacon, 216
 MACE, John, 57, 353
 MACEY, Mr, 491, 492
 MACKRELL, John, 52
 MAIR, Lt Colonel, 105, 112, 113, 125, 126, 132, 135, 146, 159, 160, 202, 204, 213, 213n, 223
 MALLARD: Mr, 459; Thomas, 497
 MANKER, John, 472
 MANNS, Isaac, 14, 17, 18; James, 14

MARCHMENT, Joseph, 306, 318, 319, 339, 342, 343, 344, 346
 MARSH, William, 30, 368, 456
 MARTIN: Mr, 387; Charles, 42, 43, 106, 187, 214, 273, 274, 275, 279, 280, 295, 296; Jane, 500; John, 74, 367, 399, 400; Joseph, 398; Mary, 214; Thomas, 377; William, 376
 MASON: Joseph, 14; Robert, 14, 15; William, 497
 MASTERS, George, 198
 MATCHAM, Mr George, 141, 142, 223
 MATTHEWS, Richard, 59, 416, 416n, 461
 MATON, Sarah, 40n, 403n
 MAY: James, 469; Stephen, 473
 MEATON, Sarah, 40, 403
 MEEK, Joseph, 497
 MELBOURNE, Lord, 12, 112, 121, 129, 138, 139, 143, 146, 148, 149, 150, 163, 175, 177, 186, 192, 209, 210, 218n, 452n, 461, 462
 MERRETT, William, 455
 METHUEN: Paul, 155, 182, 183, 216, 223, 464; T A, 216
 MEYRICK: Reverend Dr, 87; E G, 128, 173, 192, 193, 210, 284
 MIDWINTER, William, 92, 297, 298
 MILLARD: Levi, 186, 188n; 348, 349, 350, 351, 423, 424, 461; John, 365
 MILLER: Mr, 60; Isaac, 35, 158, 186, 321, 440, 441, 442, 464; Robert, 156, 411, 411n
 MILLS: Mr, 209; Henry, 26, 27, 28, 30, 46; William, 29, 389, 390
 MILSON, John, 92, 298, 304
 MINTY, Mr, 123, 124, 162; Alexander, 123n; 169, 170
 MISSING, Mr, 378, 384, 388, 393, 467, 474
 MITCHELL, Samuel, 191
 MONKLAND, George, 223
 MONTGOMERY, Mrs Elizabeth, 94, 392
 MOON: John, 408, 423, 425, 456; Stephen, 408, 423, 425, 461
 MOORE: George, 491; John, 414; William, 408
 MORGAN: Mr, 349; Abraham, 82, 187, 293, 294, 456; William, 262
 MORRIS, Alfred, 81, 82, 357
 MORSE, William, 155
 MORTIMER, Richard, 383

MOULD: George, 399; James, 187, 237, 241, 242, 243, 244, 247, 248, 249, 250, 265, 267, 268, 277, 453
 MOULDEN: see MOULDING
 MOULDING, James, 92, 297, 297n, 298, 303, 304
 MOWER, Hezekiah, 190
 MOXAM, Andrew, 187, 237, 242, 246, 249, 250, 399, 399n
 MOYLE: Mr, 349; William, 373
 MUCKLEWIN, William, 493
 MULLINS: James, 306, 319; William, 187, 420
 MUNDAY: John, 191; William, 96, 98, 259, 262, 263, 279, 279n, 453
 MUSGRAVE, William, 272
 MUSGROVE, Reverend Mr, 216
 MUSSELL: -, 400; Benjamin, 412; John, 270, 271; William (alias OLDING), 22, 23, 479

 NAISH (see NASH also): Mr, 334; William, 84n; 119, 159, 186, 251, 251n, 252
 NASH: Isaac, 460, 476-478; William, 84, 84n, 251
 NEALE, Edmund, 404
 NEATE: Miss, 486; Mr, 60, 486, 487; George, 485
 NEW: Jeremiah, 66, 285, 416, 442, 443n, 464, 482; Thomas, 186, 348, 349, 351, 423, 424
 NEWCOMBE, John, 214, 420, 461
 NEWHAM, Abraham, 365
 NEWMAN, Jacob, 191
 NICHOLSON, Charles, 91
 NOAD, James, 491
 NORRIS: Francis, 11; Thomas, 497
 NORTH: Benjamin, 371; Daniel, 41, 407, 461; Gifford, 62, 64, 211, 306, 317, 318, 339, 344, 345, 346, 347, 368, 455, 462; Jane (alias LEA), 480; Samuel, 41, 407, 461; William, 17, 41, 407, 461
 NORTHOVER, James, 43, 214, 298
 NUNN, George Hills Danford, 48, 282, 282n

 OAKLEY, William, 11
 OBOURNE: -, 378; Henry, 377; Robert, 106, 214, 273, 274, 276
 OCKWELL, Thomas, 115, 408
 OLDEN: John, 32, 33, 287, 287n, 288, 289, 290, 453; William, 32, 187, 287, 288, 289

OLDING: see MUSSELL also
 ORAM: Jonas, 191; Mary, 376
 ORCHARD, John, 56, 416, 417, 463
 OSMOND: John, 71, 419; Robert Bishop, 38; Thomas, 35, 410; William, 408; William Bishop, 413

 PACKER: Mrs Mary, 96, 378, 379; Richard, 378, 379
 PADDOCK, John, 497
 PALMER, Thomas, 410, 423, 425
 PANTING, Richard, 94n, 397, 397n
 PARHAM: Mr, 97, 100, 263, 264, 265; John, 191
 PARKE, Mr Justice, 188, 218, 223, 227, 235n; 251, 252, 257, 264, 277, 279, 281, 284, 286, 311, 314, 321, 340, 343, 344, 375, 377, 378, 379, 380, 384, 388, 390, 394, 394n, 402, 404, 412, 423, 429, 438, 444, 465, 466, 467, 469, 473, 501, 502
 PARKER: Elizabeth, 14; Mary, 214
 PARNELL, John, 191
 PARRY, Joseph, 312
 PARSONS; Mr E, 94; Edward, 350; Elizabeth, 191; Henry, 351; Sergeant William, 80, 352
 PATIENT, Ambrose, 97, 98, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263
 PATTON, Mr, 43, 299
 PAVELL, Isaac, 306, 318, 319, 339, 344, 346
 PAVEY, James, 339, 365
 PAYNE, James, 191
 PAYNEY, Daniel, 158
 PEACHEY, William, 473
 PEARCE: Mr, 35, 110; Edward, 410; George, 460, 476, 477; John, 158; Robert, 471
 PEDLEY: Mr, 92, 303; William, 297, 298
 PEEL: Robert, 500; Sir Robert, 22, 113
 PEMBROKE, Lord, 209
 PENISTON, Lieutenant, 24, 50, 90, 96, 153, 159
 PENNY, John, 107, 273
 PENRUDDOCK, Miss Elizabeth, 54, 336
 PEPLER, John Crook, 191
 PERRY: Charles King, 187; John, 128, 421, 462; Joseph, 30, 368; William, 68, 187, 332
 PHILLIMORE, Robert, 403
 PHILLIPS: George, 53, 413; J L, 178, 179, 183; John Lediard, 490; Robert, 497; Thomas, 102

PHIPPS, Captain Charles Lewis, 24, 86, 115, 130, 146, 202
 PIGGOTT, Thomas, 35, 187, 321, 440, 441, 442
 PIKE, Mr, 336, 497
 PILE: Miss, 211, 308, 319, 346; Mrs, 63, 77, 319, 321; Miss Jane, 317; Miss Mary, 63, 64, 315, 317, 345; Robert, 11, 60, 61, 62, 63, 77, 82, 306, 306n, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 317, 318, 319, 320, 339, 340-342, 345, 346, 365, 366, 455, 457
 PINCHIN: John, 366, 367, 368, 456; Joseph, 13, 408, 423, 425, 462
 PINNELL, Thomas, 251, 279, 306
 PINNIGER, Mr Bartlett, 72, 333, 334, 430, 433, 434, 435
 PITMAN, Richard, 152, 187, 237, 245, 247, 249, 250, 265, 267, 277, 453
 PITT: Harriet, 252; Josiah, 84, 252
 PIZZIE, Charles, 39, 401, 402, 442, 462
 POLHILL: Mr, 204; 205; Mrs, 32
 PONTIN, Mr, 25
 PONTING, Richard, 94, 94n, 397, 397n
 POORE: Lady, 32; Sir Edward, 32, 49, 59, 60, 91, 189, 223, 490
 POPE, Maurice, 13, 67, 68, 300, 301, 335, 462
 POPHAM, E W L, 136, 137, 223
 PORTER, Thomas, 206, 290, 290n, 291, 292, 456
 POTTER: Mr, 94; Henry, 471
 POTTICARY: Mr, 350; Henry, 259, 262, 279, 453
 POTTLE, William, 186, 348, 349, 350, 351, 423, 424
 POULTON: Joseph, 470; William, 115, 196, 197, 408
 POUNDS, John, 71, 419, 462, 482
 POWELL: (see PAVELL also): Alexander, 223, 490; James, 317
 PRESTON, Thomas, 53, 412
 PRICE: Mr, 485; Reverend Mr, 289; William, 191, 416
 PRINCE, William, 56, 57, 187
 PUMPHREY, James, 13
 PYE, Mary, 53, 419

 RADBURN, Thomas, 18
 RADNOR: Harriet, 469; Lord, 58, 89, 141, 167, 169, 176, 223, 251, 277, 302, 423
 RANDALL: Mr, 87, 404; William, 39, 401, 402
 RANGER, David, 34, 374, 375, 462

RAWLINGS: Eli, 471; Henry, 41, 406
 RAWLINS, Mr, 204
 RAXWORTHY: Mr, 21, 22; James, 479; John, 450, 503;
 Robert, 264
 RAYMOND, Levi, 191
 READ: James, 42, 301, 302; John, 187; Joseph, 91, 420;
 Richard, 408
 REBBECK, John, 82, 356
 REEVES: Mr, 424; Jane, 80, 352; John, 56, 285, 286, 416,
 463; Richard, 80, 352
 RICHARDS, William Henry, 93, 93n, 374, 393, 393n
 RICKETTS, William Henry, 93n, 393n
 RICKS, Edward, 115, 409
 RIPLEY, Thomas Hyde, 130, 210
 RIVERS: Lord, 111, 188, 348; William, 306, 311, 317, 318,
 319, 339, 342, 344, 345, 346
 RIXON, Thomas, 187, 237, 245, 246, 248, 250, 277, 453
 ROBBINS, William, 48, 367, 400, 401
 ROBERTS, Isaac, 59, 74, 366, 367, 368, 399, 456
 RODBOURNE, William, 92, 297, 297n, 298
 ROE, Mr, 272
 ROGERS: Mr, 470; James, 256; Joseph, 327, 383; Maria,
 73, 272; William, 72, 73, 186, 269, 270, 271, 273, 278, 453
 ROLE, Mr, 474
 ROLES, James, 465
 ROMAIN(E): James, 34, 374, 375, 440, 441, 442, 463; John,
 35, 63, 306, 319, 321, 321n; 339, 344, 346; Robert, 367,
 368
 ROSE: George, 491; Henry, 306, 310, 311, 339, 342, 344,
 345, 346; John, 30, 82, 306, 310, 311, 339, 342, 344, 345,
 346, 368, 456
 ROWE, Mr, 300, 348, 358, 360
 ROWLAND: Mr, 284, 327, 328, 331; John, 35, 208, 211,
 323, 324, 325, 381, 382, 385, 386, 422
 RUMBOLD: Henry, 89, 297; Jesse, 68, 81, 354, 355, 497;
 Timothy, 72, 73, 187, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 273n
 RUMBOLL, (see RUMBOLD), Timothy, 73n, 273n
 RYMOND, Samuel, 348, 348n, 349, 350, 351, 423, 423n
 424

 SAFFREY, Reverend Mr, 453
 SAINSBURY: Mr, 483; Paul, 191

SALMON: Mr, 87; John, 479; Mr W W, 107
 SANGER, William, 187
 SAPH, Elias, 408
 SAUNDERS: Mr, 87, 127; Mr A, 69, 70; Mr A E, 185; James, 412
 SAVORY, -, 489, 491
 SCAMMELL: Mr, 357, 358, 359; Charles, 191; James, 74, 75, 76; John, 191
 SCOTT: Mr, 145, 190, 483; Benjamin, 191; Robert, 155, 214; Mr T, 64, 65; Thomas, 49, 465, 491; William, 106, 273, 274
 SCROPE, George Powlett, 223, 491
 SCULL, James, 492
 SEAGRAM, E F, 491
 SEALY, Thomas, 373, 380
 SELBY, Alexander, 191
 SELF(E): Mr, 157, 214; Henry, 29, 106, 107, 273, 274, 275, 354, 377, 452, 462, 467, 469; James, 26; John, 81, 356
 SELWOOD: Gabriel, 93, 391; William, 297, 297
 SHELLEY: Eliza, 43, 299; James, 42, 195, 206, 299
 SHEPHERD, William, 11
 SHEPPARD: Aaron, 45, 206, 290, 290n, 291, 292, 456; George, 421; John, 33, 35, 190, 198, 287, 287n, 288, 289, 300, 453
 SHERGOLD: George, 13, 16, 76, 77, 88, 158, 214, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 440, 442, 443, 462; Henry, 13, 88, 158, 253, 254, 255, 256, 440, 462; John, 13, 76, 77, 158, 214, 257, 258, 259, 442, 443, 462
 SHERMOR, James, 108
 SHEWRY: Richard, 93, 391; Thomas, 391
 SHIDE, Philip, 302
 SHIPMAN, Ono, 91, 217, 420
 SHORT, Stephen, 322, 347
 SHURMER: James, 108, 108n, 409, 409n; Robert, 115, 409
 SIMPER: John, 500; Thomas, 412
 SIMPKINS, Mr, 26, 46
 SIMS: Daniel, 13; Moses, 408; William, 13
 SKINNER, Joseph, 91, 379
 SKITRELL, Charles, 53, 403, 404, 404n, 462
 SKITTERELL: see SKITRELL also; William, 404
 SLADE: Mr, 21, 22; Henry, 191; James, 479, 493
 SLATER, John, 470

SLATTER, John, 196, 197
 SLOPER, George, 410
 SMALLBONES, Jonathan, 34, 214, 355
 SMITH: Mr, 66, 92, 241, 281, 288, 327, 348, 352, 379, 471, 478, 500; Aminadab, 93, 347, 348, 398; George, 13, 306, 311, 312, 316, 342, 344, 345, 345n, 346, 366, 367, 368, 421, 422, 456; Charles, 469; James, 383; John, 334; John Thomas, 479; Mary, 473; Robert, 191; Mr T, 211, 325; Samuel, 312; Sarah, 496; Thomas, 92, 93, 297, 298, 303, 304, 347, 348, 474; Thomas B, 45, 46, 64, 65, 77, 78, 107, 108, 131, 132, 151, 205; William, 71, 93, 191, 259, 262, 264, 279, 303, 347, 348, 398, 453
 SNOOK, William, 206, 237, 242, 243, 244, 248, 250, 277, 453
 SNOW: James, 102, 104, 246; John, 268
 SOMERSET: Edmond, 54, 322, 410; Lord Fitzroy, 120
 SPACKMAN, -, 467
 SPARKS, James, 496
 SPECK, Henry, 71, 303
 SPICER: James, 57, 417; Robert, 474
 SPODE, Josiah, 484
 SPRAGNELL, James, 58, 404
 SPRINGFORD, John, 389
 STAGG: Charles, 34, 374, 375, 376; James, 159
 STANFORD, William, 89, 90
 STARKY, Captain John, 86; J E F, 490
 STANLEY, Thomas, 499, 501, 502, 503
 STEED, Mr, 275
 STEVENS: Mr, 356; James, 45, 206, 290, 291, 293; Robert, 497
 STILLARD, John, 339
 STRANGE: Mr, 498; Henry, 392
 STRODE, George, 100, 143
 STOKES, Robert, 93, 347, 348, 398
 STONE: Aaron, 48, 186, 282, 282n, 463; Jonathan, 471; Laban, 59, 366, 367, 368, 462
 STRANGE, Henry, 94
 STRATTON: George, 81, 187, 354, 355; Richard, 329
 STRUGNELL, Joseph, 190
 STUDHAM, Elizabeth, 14
 STYNING, James, 355
 SWAIN, Mr, 256

SWEETAPPLE: Joseph, 322, 347, 378; William, 34, 376, 377

TALBOT, John, 286

TALLENTS, Mr, 138, 201, 204

TALMAGE, Robert, 411, 412

TANNER: Mr, 40; Edward, 405

TARGETT: James, 249; John, 104, 214, 237, 246, 248, 250, 273, 277, 278

TARRANT, Thomas, 420

TARWELL, -, 275

TASKER, Mr, 11

TAUNTON: Mr, 211, 325; Mr Justice, 465, 490, 493, 496

TAYLER, Captain, 87

TAYLOR: Mr, 405; Mr Watson, 180, 181; George Watson, 49, 191; Thomas, 496; William, 66, 191, 256, 283, 284, 442, 464, 482

TEGBY, James, 43, 294

TEMPLE, William, 465

THATCHER: Edmund, 363, James, 378

THOMAS, Richard, 497

THOMPSON, Samuel, 11

THORN(E): Adam, 14; Elias, 348, 349, 350, 351, 423, 424; James, 14, 285, 285n, 464; John, 66, 442, 482

THORNTON, Henry, 33, 187, 287, 288, 289, 453

THRING, -, 242

TILLY, George, 478

TINDAL, Lord Chief Justice, 429

TINKER, Richard

TODD, Captain, 118, 137

TOMBS, Henry, 56, 285, 416, 417, 463

TOMLINE, Mr, 418

TOOMER: George, 13, 68, 113, 158, 332, 333, 334, 442, 443n, 464; James, 13, 68, 72, 187, 332, 332n; 439, 440, 462

TONGS, John, 13, 16

TOPP: Jeremiah, 214, 273, 274; Thomas, 107, 186, 212, 237, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 250, 273, 274, 277, 377, 453

TOWNSEND: John, 58, 404, 405; Richard, 214, 420, 421

TRIBE, Mr, 94

TRIM, Joseph, 246

TUBB: John, 322, 347, 378; Thomas, 43, 214, 298
TUCKER, James, 67, 335, 411, 423, 425
TUCKEY, Richard, 498
TUGWELL, Mr, 87, 94
TULLY, William, 327, 384
TURNER: George, 244, 267; John, 245n; William, 105n; 155
TWINEY, Samuel, 286
TYLEE, Mr, 87, 94
TYLER, James, 196, 197, 378, 380, 409
TWYNHAM, Mr, 24

UNDERWOOD, Elizabeth, 477
UPHILL, John, 213, 244

VAISEY: Edward, 37, 211, 326, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384,
385, 386; John, 383
VAUGHAN, Mr Baron, 188, 218, 247, 250, 251, 258, 259,
277, 280, 283, 310, 314, 320, 321, 340, 344, 346, 366, 368,
370, 373, 412, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 422, 423,
427, 428, 429, 433, 434, 435, 437, 438, 439, 440, 442, 443,
444
VAUKINS, John, 482; see VOKINS also
VICARY, Mr, 122
VILETT: Lieutenant Colonel, 79; Thomas, 109, 130, 210
VINCENT, Charles Francis, 74, 360
VINEN, Thomas, 102, 187, 188n, 237, 242, 243, 244, 246,
247, 250, 277, 453
VINES: Jacob, 286; Peter, 498, 499, 501, 502, 503
VINEY, Charles, 254
VIVASH: Mary, 363; George, 385; Robert, 37, 380, 382, 385,
456, 482; Thomas, 41, 361, 362, 362n, 363, 363n
VOCKINGS: see VOKINS
VOKINS, John, 66, 281, 281n, 453

WAITE, -, 382
WALDRON: Mr, 137; George, 497; Job, 40, 304, 305, 305n,
463; John, 70, 402, 403
WALL, Mr, 87
WARD: John, 70, 402, 403; Lieutenant Thomas R, 24, 139,
141, 153, 173
WARDS, William, 24n
WARNEFORD, F, 130, 210

WARRINER: Captain E, 64, 65, 130, 223; Ernle, 49, 490
 WATERS: Charles, 42, 187, 301, 302, 323, 456; John, 198
 WATTS: James, 191; Joseph, 57, 58, 66, 285, 353, 374,
 412, 416, 462, 482; Philip, 326, 382; Samuel, 67, 335;
 Thomas, 210, 381, 382
 WEAVING, Thomas, 497
 WEBB: Mr, 49, 295; Richard, 24, 43, 178, 214, 294; Silas,
 43, 195, 206, 299, 300, 323; William, 412
 WELLS: James, 265, 286; John, 57, 417; Thomas, 366, 367,
 368, 456
 WEST: -, 378; Jeremiah, 81, 354; John, 493; Uriah, 81, 354
 WESTBURY, William, 53, 419
 WESTMACOTT, John, 364
 WESTON, Paul, 189
 WHALE: George, 466, 467; James, 466, 467; John, 478;
 Thomas, 466, 467
 WHATLEY: Richard, 259, 262, 264, 279; Thomas, 88, 158,
 253, 254, 255, 256, 440, 462
 WHEELER: James, 259, 261, 264, 279, 453; Sarah, 493
 WHICHER, Joseph, 43, 214, 298, 322
 WHITE: Mr, 501; Edmund, 13, 198, 237, 245, 247, 248,
 250, 265, 266, 267, 268, 277, 453; George, 191, 376;
 Henry, 358, 359; Humphrey, 191; John Bristow, 328;
 Richard, 22; Robert Bristow, 385; Schrene, 286; Thomas,
 191; William, 191
 WHITMARSH: Mr, 130; James, 453
 WILD(E): Mr, 196; Mr Sergeant, 216, 239, 251, 266, 269,
 274, 324, 325, 329, 352, 360, 361, 362, 378, 381, 386;
 Charles, 41, 407; John, 400, 462; Silas, 53, 411
 WILKIE, Mr, 469
 WILKINS: Charles, 245, 267; Henry, 462, 473-476, 478,
 479; John, 245, 250, 267; Joseph, 470
 WILLIAMS: Mr, 56, 273, 274, 312, 314, 317, 320, 339, 346,
 365; Reverend Mr, 87, 117, 118, 500, 501; E H G, 173;
 George, 365, 408, 409; John, 268; Richard, 374, 408
 WILLIS, Ambrose, 380
 WILLOUGHBY: John, 421; Robert, 91, 93, 347, 379, 456
 WILMOT, William, 420
 WILTSHIRE, Jacob, 500
 WINDSOR, William, 42, 279, 280
 WINTER, George, 66, 408
 WINTERBOURN, William, 11

WITCHER, William, 272
WITHERS: Peter, 15, 17, 55, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 414, 415, 427, 429, 430, 433, 436, 437, 439, 445, 452, 456, 458, 459, 462, 464; Stephen, 186, 479
WITT, Edward, 158
WITTS, Mr Broome, 67, 410, 410n
WOLFERSTAN, Thomas, 89, 186, 420
WOOD(S), William, 245, 245n, 266, 267
WOODLEY, William, 35, 300
WOODMAN: Mr, 109, 110, 210, 326; Henry, 211, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 393, 394, 395
WOODWARD: Charles, 38n; Richard, 38, 322, 413, 413n; William, 38n
WOOLER, Mr, 459
WOOLRIDGE: Mr, 111; George, 350, 351
WRIGHT, Sarah, 469
WROUGHTON, George W, 223
WYLD: Mr, 92, 379; James, 130
WYNDHAM: Captain, 24, 50, 105, 123, 124, 152, 167; Mr, 31, 33, 50, 194, 214, 217; Charles, 223, 490; Mr Wadham, 104, 152, 223; William, 223, 287, 490
WYNNE, Mr, 295

YOUNG: Mr, 81, 357; John alias John SUTTON), 48, 400, 401, 462; William, 43, 294, 295