

March 16, 1820

Enniskillen Assizes

On Monday the honorable Justice Fletcher opened the commission and the Crown Court the following gentlemen were sworn on the Grand Jury.

Lieutenant-General, the Honorable Sir Lowry Cole, foreman.

Hon. Colonel Creighton,
John Armstrong, Esq.
Edward Archdall, Esq.
John Richardson, Esq.
Hamilton Irvin, Esq.
Ald. Matthew West,
William Tennant, Esq.
John Richards, Esq.
Francis Hassard, Esq.
Charles Madden, Esq.
Andrew Nixon, Esq.

Richard Dane, Esq.
James K. Auchinleck, Esq.
Charles Faussett, Esq.
George Lendrum, Esq.
Montgomery Nixon, Esq.
Williams Scott, Esq.
Hugh Ovens, Esq.
John Weir, Esq.
John Crozier, Esq.
James Taylor, Esq.
James Denham, Esq.

His Lordship then addressed the Grand Jury, but in such a low tone of voice, but we were unable to hear his observations. We understood them to relate principally to the nature of the evidence to come before them in order to sustain the indictments, and on the necessity of magistrates summoning and examining strictly and impartially the parties concerned, before committing prisoners.

John Wilson, alias Johnston Carson, was then brought to the bar and indicted for burglary and robbery, in the house of Joseph Armstrong Drummuckawerran, [Drummacooin?] in the parish of Boho on the 27th of September 1817, to which prisoner pleaded guilty, and threw himself on the mercy of the Court and Grand Jury. The learned Judge, through humanity, directed him to consider, and if he thought proper, to withdraw his plea, for which he should be allowed two hours: otherwise, that nothing remained for the Court but to pronounce the awful sentence of the law. Prisoner then retired, and on being afterwards brought up, took the advantage of the leniency of the court, and pleaded not guilty. He was then ordered to stand prepared for trial next morning.

Nathaniel Corry was arraigned for a burglary and robbery in the house of the Rev. William Ovens, of Cosbytown, on the morning of Sunday the 4th of December last, and ordered to be ready for trial next morning. On Tuesday the

panel being called over, several jurors were objected to on the part of the prisoner; following were at last sworn.

Baptist Scott,	John Quinton,
Richard Ball,	Edward Gamble,
William Cue,	James Gamble,
Arthur Cue,	Robert Crawford,
John Irvine,	James Campbell,
Hugh Copeland,	George MacDonald

The Rev. William Ovens sworn and examined. Lives at Cosbytown in this county, and lived there in December last; was there on the 4th of December last; went to bed at the usual hour; was awoken between two and three in the morning by the opening of his room door; perceived a strange man with a candle and pistol; and afterwards two others holding a candle and pistol each; identifies Corry the prisoner as the second person who entered his room; ask what they wanted? They answered, "Don't be alarmed—we have come to get a little money"; they then proceeded to tie witness and Mrs. Ovens with a hank of yarn; prisoner held a pistol and a candle while another of the party tied them; they took some silver, and asked for more money; they also took two watches; prisoner took Mrs. Ovens's watch; the man who tied witness asked for more money; and was told all the money in the house was in the witness's pocket; prisoner and party insisted the money was not there; witness said he had it in his pocket before dinner; prisoner held a pistol to witness's head; he had no doubt of prisoner; the party went out, and returned several times; prisoner again presented a pistol, and insisted in a ferocious matter, using threats and oaths, that the money had been taken away; witness again assured prisoner and the party that the money was in his pocket before dinner; [here several of the articles taken were set forth, comprising two body coats, five sourtout-coats, two pairs of boots, a pair of small clothes, a snuff box, etc. The snuff box was got again; witness saw the breeches on prisoner in Derry gaol; prisoner changed his dress at witness's house; the party remained more than two hours at witness's house; the doors and windows were fastened that night in the usual way.

Cross examined by Mr. Rolleston—Went to bed at 11 o'clock; left maid-servants up; there were two maids in the house that night; don't know whether they opened the door after witness went to bed; it was the first time he was robbed; was not accustomed to alarm at night; first thing witness saw after being awoke was persons with pistols and candles; was cool and collected; his wife's fear alarmed witness something; heard of persons mistaken from alarm; but is quite certain of prisoner's identity; never saw prisoner before the robbery; counsel might not have same courage as witness on the occasion; was resigned to lose his life; the cocked pistol gave him some alarm; prisoner was

not disguised; recognized him in Derry gaol; the party came in to witness's room often, and seemed under no restraint; witness presumed the breeches produced were his, and the stockings also; mentioned they were new; went to Derry and saw prisoner; saw another prisoner with witness's coat; other prisoners were shown to have nothing belonging to witness.

Daniel Mountain sworn: is servant to Dr. Ovens; and was in his service in December last; saw prisoner in Derry gaol, helped to take off small-clothes from prisoner, [small-clothes here produced]; has no doubt there were those made for him; they were in his master's office; had no particular mark on them; but had others off the same piece.

Cross-examined—the small-clothes were since worn more than a month, and had no particular mark on them.

By the court—has no doubt but the small clothes were his.

John M'Caully sworn—is a tailor; worked for Dr. Ovens in the beginning of last winter [here witness examined the breeches minutely] he had seen them before; he cut them and his boy made them for Daniel Mountain, and they were sent to Dr. Oven's place.

Cross examined by Mr. Rolleston—would scarcely know what he had cut out; would not hang a man for having made those breeches; made them for Daniel Mountain; would know what he made; it is not positive of all the clothes he made during his life; swears not to all he made, but swears to the breeches produced; would take pains of the work for Mr. Ovens; knows the small clothes by a particular salvage on a part of the lining.

Mrs. Ovens sworn—is wife to the Rev. Mr. Ovens; recollects the night of the robbery was sleeping and awoken; saw persons in the room each with a candle and a pistol [identifies prisoner]. Prisoner was the second person who entered the room and put a pistol to Mr. Ovens face; witness was tied; lost many articles, her watch was taken from the drawer of a looking glass in the room; the party remained in the house two hours.

Cross-examined by Mr. Lipton—it was 2 o'clock when she was awoken. Was never in a house while robbery was being committed before; was alarmed; three persons came into the room; her alarm was increased by a pistol being put to her husband's head; never saw prisoner before the robbery; was not mistaken respecting him; although in some instances circumstances might lead to a mistake.

By the Court—has not the least doubt of prisoner.

By a juror — saw prisoner among others, and knew him.

DEFENCE:

Hugh Ovens, Esq. sworn. — is nephew to the Rev. Mr. Ovens; went with his uncle to Derry; saw a man named Mackay; his uncle did not say MacKay was Corry; did not say in witness's hearing that any other was Corry—Here the case closed.

The learned Judge summed up the evidence and commented on it at some length; stating, that the burglary and felony have been established by entering the house and stealing the goods there out, but left it to the jury, to consider the nature of the evidence—that the verdict was to be theirs, not his—the jury retired for about five minutes and returned a verdict of guilty.

Johnston Carson for the robbery etc. of Joseph Armstrong.

Joseph Armstrong sworn—lives in this county and did live in it on the 27th of September 1817; when to bed that night some minutes after 7 o'clock; has reason to recollect the hour, having had a good watch, and wound it going to bed; heard a man coming to the door, who called out to witness to show him the way to a house in the neighborhood; witness directed his son who had been sitting at the fire with witness's brother to do so; but before he (witness's son) had time to open the door, it was drove open by force; witness's son fell by the bursting in of the door; and number of persons entered, who knocked down and abused all in the house, and tied them with cord; his brother since died, witness thinks from the beating he received; witness was cut on the head as he was rising from bed; was dragged from his bed and tied, they were thrown on top of each other; the robbers lit three candles; they then threw witness into bed and tied them by the neck to the bed-head with a hair cord; they tied his son to the foot of a large chest; and left his (witness's) brother tied on the floor; there was sufficient light to know the prisoner as there was a lighted candle left at witness's bed head; [identifies prisoner]; one of the party attempted to break open the chest, but failed; prisoner got a grape [sic] and forced it opened; prisoner took witness's watch and said, "Armstrong, this is the last time you'll see your watch"; they took a silk hat, a suit of clothes, 5 gallons of whiskey and some rum; prisoner called to his comrades and said, with an oath, what a chest he had got with Armstrong; prisoner put on witness's boots and said they would fit him nicely; he (prisoner) drank and walked about saying "don't they fit me well?" They (the party) gathered all up in the floor; prisoner put witness's saddle on a stool, sat on at and sang, and said it was a pity to leave it behind; prisoner was very merry; the party went to the fire and were likely to dispute about a guinea; they took 13 1/2 guineas, a seven shilling piece and some silver; prisoner said they ought not to contest with him, and spoke as if he was a master of the gang; they took all the money in the house but a 5d. piece which witness supposed they dropped; they took the blankets under which he lay; but afterwards returned them saying there would not take witness's bloody blankets; witness bled greatly, having got a severe cut in the head; witness lost other goods; lost in all to the amount of £52 8s. 0d. and upwards, exclusive of his clothes; when the party were going away he begged they would put him out of pain by shooting him, as he thought he would smother in his blood; prisoner turned him in the bed and said he would now lie easier; prisoner got a

pot, took cream and put it on the fire, and when boiling, put meal in it and feasted; the rest took some cold meat and loaf of bread which he had in the house for his son, who was recovering from the small pox; the party ordered them not to rise, or they would be shot; witness heard others outside. Witness was here questioned by the prisoner as to his knowledge of him in Derry gaol and answered that he knew him perfectly, although he was greatly failed—that he was remarkable—ay, as the weather-cock on the steeple.

Prisoner —You said you were out of bed and you were not out of bed at all. Witness replied he was rising out of bed when he was knocked down.

Thomas Armstrong sworn and examined—was in his father's house with his uncle on the night of the robbery; his uncle died since; they were tied and abused; the party remained for five hours in the house; the party lit candles, and he saw them; [identifies prisoner] the first time he saw prisoner since the robbery was on Saturday last in the gaol; he knew him among others there.

The case for the prosecution here closed, and no defense being offered, the learned Judge recapitulated the evidence. The jury after a few minutes consultation returned a verdict of Guilty.

To be continued.

[No continuation found in subsequent papers.--Ed.]

[News article, appearing on
March 30, 1820]

This day, *Daniel Corry* and *Johnston Carson*, two of the persons convicted at our Assizes, are to atone with their lives to the offended laws of the country. A more awful lesson than the appearance of those unfortunate man presents, is rarely to be met. Not many weeks ago the terror of almost an entire province, they are now the objects of universal commiseration. Bathed in tears, and imploring pardon of that divine being, whose laws they lately spurned, and his power they condemned, they afford an example sufficient to penetrate the most obdurate and unreflecting. The Reverend Mr. Johnston has been unremitting in his attention, and unwearied in his endeavors to prepare them for the awful event which is about to take place, and it is gratifying to learn, that in administering that spiritual comfort which the Divine Religion of our Blessed Redeemer affords, he has succeeded in bringing them to a state of true repentance, and we trust, there is this day, that "joy in heaven" which the Gospel teaches us to believe.

[News article, appearing on
April 6, 1820]

EXECUTION—On Thursday last, Johnston Carson and Nathaniel Corry, underwent the awful sentence of the law in front of the gaol of this town. Both met their fate with becoming piety and resignation. Carson made no public declaration, but Corry with great firmness addressed the assembled multitude, acknowledging the justice of his sentence, and confessing his participation in the robberies of the Rev. Mr. daniel of Lifford, Mr. M'Gurk of County Derry, Mr. Cutherbertson near Strabane, Mr. Nelson near Newtownlimavady; and the stealing of two horses from a gentleman near Dungannon.

James Rainey is to suffer this day; but the sentence of William Corry has been commuted to transportation for life.

April 6, 1820

MARRIAGES

On the 24th ult. in the Church of Aughavea, Mr. Robert L. Carter of Maguiresbridge, to Miss Dunne, of Hollyview, near that town.

Thomas Hartley, Esq., of Ballyjamesduff to Miss Elizabeth Waddle, eldest daughter of Alexander Waddle, Esq., of Cloverhill near Ballybay.

DEATHS

In Churchill, yesterday, greatly regretted, Mr. Patrick Dundas.

[News articles, appearing on
April 13, 1820]

James Rainy, brother to one of the unfortunate men who lately suffered at Derry, was executed here on Thursday last. He acknowledged his guilt, and appeared to be impressed with a sense of his past transgressions. The gaoler of this town, with his wonted humanity, raised a subscription at the request of the unhappy man and his afflicted wife, in order to have his remains conveyed to the place of internment in the neighborhood of Caledon. On arriving at Fivemiletown in the evening, a most disgraceful scene took place. The corpse, at the instigation of Andrew Corry, whose brother was executed on that day se'n night for the same offense, was brought to the door of Mr. William Glen, through whose praiseworthy exertions Rainey had been apprehended, and language of the most taunting kind used to Mr. Glen by Corry and some of his reprobate companions. The ruffians however, rendered themselves more

contemptible by their infamous conduct, and excited a feeling of disgust towards them in all who were spectators. They mistake much, if they think by such means to deter honest and upright man from their duty to society. Corry, we understand, was apprehended on the Saturday following for picking pockets, but escaped from the constable who was conveying him to Omagh gaol.

OUTRAGE—On the night of Monday the 27th ult., the Stable and Cow-house of John M’Crea of Clonaweel, near Pettigo, a most industrious and honest farmer, was maliciously set on fire and consumed, together with a mare and sixteen cows. Four other cows were rescued from the flames, but so well injured that there is little hope of their recovery. The most active inquiry has been made by several Gentlemen of the neighbourhood, but as yet nothing has been discovered to lead to the detection of the vile incendiaries.

On Saturday morning a man was found dead on the lands of Esker, within a mile of the town of Dromore in the county of Tyrone. He had on when found, the uniform of the Donegal Militia. His black handkerchief and foraging cap were lying beside him, also a penknife covered with blood. His name, we understand, was M’Shee, and that he was a Sergeant on the Staff, of the Donegal Regiment. The poor man, we learn, was occasionally subject to derangement, and that he left Ballyshannon the day before without leave, supposed to be under the influence of that melancholy disease. After wandering about until nearly exhausted, it is conjectured that he put a period to his existence by cutting his throat, no marks of violence appearing on any part of his body.

May 18, 1820

Three persons were committed to the gaol of this town last week for killing and carrying off sheep the property of the Rev. William Ovens, from lands in the neighbourhood of Garrison.

June 15, 1820

STOLEN

Out of my stable in Pettigo on the Night of Sunday the 4th of June inst.,
A BAY HORSE

With his Two hind Feet and One Fore Foot White. Whoever will give such private information as may lead to the discovery of said Horse, will receive TWO GUINEAS REWARD, or for the Horse and prosecuting the Thief or Thieves to conviction, the sum of TEN POUNDS.

John Robinson

Pettigo, June 5, 1820.

June 20, 1820

NOTICE

Those who have subscribed to the **REWARD** for apprehending and convicting the persons concerned in the **ROBBERY** of the Rev. Wm. Ovens, are requested to meet at the *Town Hall, Enniskillen*, at One O'clock, on Tuesday, the 27th instant, for the purpose of investigating the different claims made upon the fund, and of considering the method to be adopted of raising such portion of the same as may appear necessary.
Enniskillen, June 20th, 1820.

July 27, 1820

Enniskillen Assizes

On Friday, about 3 o'clock the of honorable Justice Fletcher arrived in town, and shortly afterwards opened the commission in the Crown Court, when the following gentlemen were sworn on the Grand Jury:

Henry Brooke Esq., foreman.	Richard Dane
Gerard Irvine,	James A. Auchinleck
John Armstrong,	John Tredennick
Edward Archdall ,	Montgomery Nixon
John Richardson,	George Lendrum
William Tennent	Charles Irvine
Hamilton Irvine	Joseph Maguire
John Brien	James Taylor
Andrew Nixon	Charles Archdall
Charles Madden	James Hall , and
	George Willis, Esqrs.

The judge then addressed them briefly on the nature of the evidence necessary to sustain the Bills which were to come before them. They were, he remarked, in that department of their duty in the nature of petit-jurors, with the advantage of greater information and talented director judgment, and therefore more competent to decide on the criminality of the cases to be submitted to their investigation. By examining witnesses strictly they would be enabled to dismiss such frivolous cases as were unworthy of occupying the attention of the Court, and thereby afforded sufficient time to the more important affairs to be tried. His Lordship then in reference to the light state of the calendar, made some remarks on the nature of the punishment to be awarded to the crime to presented, which in general was likely to be nothing more than confinement for different periods, and which, in most instances tended to corrupt more then improve the morals of the culprits, thereby defeating the object to the laws in imposing such a description of punishment. This, he said, was generally owing to the want of sufficient room in the prisons of this country, to afford the proper classification of prisoners, an object which should be particularly attended to. It was of importance, too, that instruction and employment should be afforded when it was practicable. His Lordship seemed most fatigued, and spoke so low that we could with difficulty hear him.

The business in the Crown Court was quite unimportant; the following are the only convictions:

George Benson, for picking pockets, to be imprisoned for six months and solitary confinement, and fed on bread and water.

Francis Patton, otherwise Patty, for having stolen cows in his possession to be imprisoned three months.

James Brown, for having stolen boards in his possession, to be imprisoned three months.

Patrick Fitzgerald, for stealing pigs, to be transported for seven years.

James McMahon, for having forged notes in his possession, to be transported for fourteen years.

Thomas Fraser, for picking pockets, to be transported for seven years.