



Burglary of Salisbury Silversmith's Shop

On Thursday night the shop of Mr. Bennett, silversmith, in the Market Place, Salisbury, was broken into, and plundered of upwards of 80 watches, a quantity of jewellery, gold trinkets, &c. to the value of £?. Mr. B. on the discovery of the robbery, set off for London, to give information at Bow Street; when R. Limerick went in pursuit of the robbers and discovered a suspected person, named Nat Smith alias Britton.

He underwent an examination before Mr. Read, but was discharged, there being no proof against him. Two men named Jones and Francis, were then put to the bar, when G. Sadler, driver of the Taunton coach stated, that the prisoners were outside passengers in his vehicle, and he having been informed of robbery in Salisbury, from several circumstances suspected the prisoners to be robbers, and in consequence, when he got to Egham, caused them to be taken into custody, secured their baggage. He also produced a silver watch dropped from Francis, when he was being searched. A pistol, loaded, was found upon each prisoner.

W. D. Manning, jnr. of Little Houghton, near Northampton, said that he was a passenger on the coach, and near Sutton, between 11 and 12 o'clock on Friday night, the two prisoners got together on the outside, previous to which observed they came from under a hedge with their bundles, which caused him to watch them. He observed one of them with a buff-coloured bag, which placed the top of the coach, and he assisted the coachman in taking the bundles, which the prisoners placed upon the coach as their baggage. He was present when they were taken into custody and searched at Egham, and saw a phosphorus-box taken from Francis, and a pistol from each of them. When the coach got between Kensington and Knightsbridge, the prisoners, who were then in charge of a constable, jumped off and endeavoured to escape jumping over a pale and running across a meadow, but they were pursued by himself and several others, and again secured.

George Dodd, a constable of Egham, who had them in charge there, confirmed the above testimony, and said the yellow bag, found upon the prisoners, contained gold seals and other articles of jewellery. John Rivett, the Officer, said, upon the prisoners being brought to the Office, he found on Francis some gun-powder, several balls, a flint and pistol bag, and in the pocket of Jones, a small bag containing seven gold watches and six gold chains. Mr. Bennett said, the silver which dropped from Francis, the seven gold watches and six gold chains, found upon him by Rivett, the 65 gold watches produced by Manning, the seals, 155 gold chains, brooch, and other articles of jewellery, found in the luggage of the prisoners, are his property, and were stolen from his shop. The coachman also produced 38 watches, which he found in the prisoner's luggage, which were also identified by Mr. Bennett.

The prisoners appeared very indifferent to their situation, and were fully committed for trial. It is supposed Mr. Bennett has recovered the whole of his property, but he cannot ascertain it to a certainty. Jones was also charged by H. Atkinson with being a returned transport from Sheerness hulks, he having apprehended him on the 8th of April, 1800, and at the Maidstone Assizes, in the same year, he was convicted by the name of Hughes, with another man of the name of Charles Rolls, for breaking open the shop of Mr. Perceval, in Woolwich, and stealing to a considerable amount.

Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser, Tuesday, 7 August 1810

The four following capital convicts received sentence of death, viz. Thomas Jones, alias Hughes, aged 23, and Richard Francis, aged 25, for burglary in the shop of Mr. Bennett, silversmith and jeweller, in the Market Place of Salisbury, and stealing therefrom gold and silver watches, rings, chains, seals.

Hampshire Chronicle, Monday, 13 August 1810

Thomas Jones and Richard Francis were executed on the drop erected in the court of the county gaol, at Salisbury, on Tuesday last.

Hampshire Chronicle, Monday, 27 August 1810