



Sutton Mandeville

James Mitchell

Old Bailey, Friday, Sept. 16 –

James Mitchell was indicted for the willful murder of Mary Anne Welshman, by shooting her with a pistol, on the 4th of August last.

Mary Macey stated, that she was a dress-maker, at No. 24, MOUNT-STREET. The deceased lived with her as an assistant. She knew the prisoner very well; he visited the deceased in the character of a lover, under the name of Smith, and represented himself as the Purser of an Indiaman. But Miss Welshman's brother had heard something about him which induced him to suppose he was not a fit match for his sister, and persuaded her against admitting his addresses. On the night of the 4th of August he came to the house, and an altercation ensued between him and Miss Welshman. The witness, and Miss Welshman's sister, and a servant, were in the room; but they retired to another room, and they heard the altercation continue. He staid till near eleven at night. They heard him ask Miss Welshman to go out to supper, which she refused. He then desired that some salmon might be sent for, but she refused. At about eleven the witness and the others went down to supper, leaving Miss Welshman in the one-pair front room with the prisoner. In a few minutes they heard a violent scream, which was immediately followed by the reports of two pistols; they immediately ran up the stairs, when they found Miss Welshman lying on the floor bleeding; the prisoner was gone; the front window opened, and in the room they found his hat and two pistols.

Several other witnesses corroborated this testimony.

Foy, the Police Officer, searched the Prisoner's lodgings, and found a pair of pistol cases and a bullet mould, which corresponded with the pistol found.

Mr Bracher, a farmer, of Sutton Mandeville, near Salisbury, said that the Prisoner worked with him some years ago. Reading a description of the murderer in the papers, he thought he was the person, and as he had lately come down to his neighbourhood, and answered the description, he apprehended him.

Mitchell being called upon for his defence, spoke as follows:- "I had no intention of murdering Miss Welshman. I am certainly innocent of the charge. The hat found in her apartment did not belong to me. I lost mine in the fair in Hyde Park. The pistols were not mine. I have had none since I left Spain."

Mr Justice Heath - "Do you have any account of the events of that evening?"

Prisoner – "I did not behave to Miss Welshman in the manner imputed to me, nor did I ask her to send for supper for me; and well the witness at the bar knew it."

Mr Justice Heath - "How did you leave the house that night?"

Prisoner – "I went down stairs with my hat on, and passed out at the door at eleven o'clock, or a little before eleven. I have nothing else to say."

The Jury instantly returned a verdict of – *Guilty*. Sentence was passed on him by the Recorder, and he was ordered for execution on Monday.

(*Salisbury and Winchester Journal* – Monday 19 September, 1814)

EXECUTION – This morning James Mitchell, for the murder of Mary Ann Welchman, and Wm. H. Hollins, for killing Elizabeth Pilcher, were executed in the Old Bailey. When brought from their cells, Mitchell, who was dressed in black, looked pale, and maintained a deportment of sullen resignation; he did not say a word, nor betray the slightest symptom of feeling. Hollins was very tranquil, and on being disencumbered of his irons, addressed those around him in nearly the following words: "Here you see I stand a victim to passion and barbarity; my crime is great, and I acknowledge the justice of my sentence. But oh! the unfortunate girl! I loved, I adored her as one of my own; I have made contrition and prayed for forgiveness; I resign myself under an impression that Almighty God has heard my prayers, and will forgive me; may you and the world take warning by my example; and here I confess the justice of my fate. Receive my soul, O God!" At the last expression, his feelings overcame him, and he wept. Mitchell was firm and unconcerned until ushered to the fatal scaffold, when he became much agitated, and horror was strongly portrayed in his countenance. Hollins shook hands with the officers of justice, declared to Mr Frere, a Dissenting Minister who attended him, that he was quite comfortable and happy, and mounted the scaffold with firmness. The Clergymen in attendance prayed for them until the drop fell. Mitchell continued in the strongest convulsions for several minutes, and appeared to die very hard. At nine o'clock they were cut down, and given to the College of Surgeons for dissection.

(*Salisbury and Winchester Journal* – Monday 26 September, 1814)
