

THE  
LIFE  
OF  
**RICHARD TURPIN,**  
A MOST NOTORIOUS  
*HIGHWAYMAN.*

GIVING A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF ALL HIS

**Daring Robberies**  
And Burglaries.

His broiling a woman to make her discover her property.—Robbing a wealthy farmer at Charlton.—Robbery and brutal conduct to Mr. Lawrence Mr. Francis, and numerous others.—Rewards for his apprehension.—His disguises to evade being taken.—Robberies in company with King the Highwayman in Epping forest.—Shooting the Ranger's man near their cave.—His escape from the Butcher, likewise from Mr. Ives the King's huntsman, who pursued him with blood-hounds.—His apprehension, and committal to York Castle,

**Trial, Execution,**  
*BURIAL, &c.*

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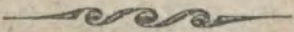
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RICHARD TURPIN.



**R**ICHARD TURPIN was born at Hampstead, in Essex, where his father followed the occupation of a Butcher, with a fair reputation; and after being the usual time at school, he was apprenticed to a Butcher in Whitechapel, but did not serve out his time, for he was discharged, for the brutality, and egregious impropriety of his conduct, which was much increased by the improper indulgence of his parents, in supplying him with money, which enabled him to cut a dash round the town among the blades of the road and turf, whose company he affected to keep.

His friends, thinking that marriage, and a settlement in life, would reclaim him, persuaded him to marry Hester Palmer, a young woman of good family, but he had not long been married, before he again returned to vice, and became acquainted with a gang of thieves, whose depredations alarmed the whole county of Essex, and the neighbourhood of London. His share of the spoil was not sufficient, it appears, to support his extravagance, for he

joined sheep-stealing to foot-pad robbery, and was at last obliged to fly his native place, for stealing a young heifer, which he sold.

Soon after, he stole two oxen from one farmer Giles, and drove them to a slaughter-house near Waltham abbey. Gile's servants came to this place in pursuit of them, where finding two carcasses, answering the description, they shrewdly suspected that Turpin was the owner, and having found the skins after a strict search, they had not the least doubt that they were the stolen cattle. A warrant was accordingly issued for his apprehension; but he soon had scent that the runners were after him, and got off in time to save himself. He escaped, just at the moment they were entering the door.

Finding his situation at Waltham Abbey rather perilous, he retreated into the Hundreds of Essex, where he found greater security; but as he could not live long without a fresh supply of money, he hit upon a new scheme to support himself, and that was to rob the smugglers he happened to meet on the road; but he took care not to attack a gang, only such solitary travellers as fell in his way, and then he did it with a colour of justice; for he constantly pretended to have a deputation from the customs, and so took their property in the king's name. He got tired of this kind of business after a while; and the retirement to which he was condemned, in this pursuit, not suiting the volatility of his disposition, he went in search of the gang with whom he had before connected himself, the principal part of whose depredations were committed upon Epping Forrest, and the adjacent part; but this business soon became an object of magisterial inquiry, he again returned to the solitude of the country, with some more of the gang, and they became notorious deer-stealers; and Turpin being a good shot, he sent many a good buck up to his connexions in London.

But this business like the former; not succeeding to their expectations, they determined to be house-breakers; and in this they were much encouraged by joining with Gregor's gang, as it was then called a company of desperadoes that made the Essex and adjacent roads very dangerous to travel. In these maurauding expeditions they made many desperate and successful attempts; one in particular at the house of Mr. Strype, an old man who kept a chandler shop at Watford, where they got a good booty; for they robbed the house of all the valuables in it, but did not give its possessors any personal violence, and this moderation was entirely owing to Turpin, who did not permit his comrades to proceed to abuse, that his own character might not be charged with unnecessary cruelty.

In one night's time, this gang robbed Chinkford and Barking churches of all the moveables left in the vestries, but the plate at both places, being placed in the respective churchwarden's possession, they got but an indifferent booty. Turpin eluded, with some of his companions, the search that was made after them; but three of them were taken. one turned evidence, and the other two were transported.

Notwithstanding his character was pretty well blazoned about, two months after, he had the audacity to present himself at Suson in Essex, where his wife lived, and here he also lived unnoticed for six months, but when his concealment was discovered, he made a quiet retreat by night, and nothing was heard of him until the robbery of Farmer Lawrence, when he joined with others called the Essex gang. the principal of whom were Ned Rust, Geo. Gregory, Fielder, Rose, and Wheeler. This Gregory was an old offender, and had robbed in conjunction with Dick Swift, both scholars of Jonathan Wild, who had but lately been hanged.

These followed deer-stealing in the daytime, but beginning to be too well known by the keepers, & not finding money come in so fast as they expected they formed themselves into a body, by Turpin's directions, and went round the country at night, and whatever house they knew had any valuables, they marked. Their method was, one to knock at the door, and the rest to rush in and plundered; & such was their impudence, that they were not always satisfied with the money, plate, watches, and rings they found, but even took away the household goods that suited them.

Somehow or other, Turpin became acquainted with the circumstances of an old woman who lived at Loughton, that always kept a great quantity of ready cash by her; whereupon he and the gang agreed to rob her, and when they came to the door, Wheeler knocked at it, and Turpin and the rest, forced their way into the house, blindfolded the eyes of the old woman and her maid, and tied the legs of her son, a well-grown lad to the bedstead, and proceeded to rob the house; but not at first finding the wished-for booty, they all set about a consultation what to do to get at it; for they were certain she must have a considerable sum concealed somewhere or other about the house. Turpin began to examine her where her money and effects were hid, telling her at the same time, that he knew she had money, and it was in vain to deny it, for have it they would. The old gentlewoman being very loath to part with her money, persisted in it that she had none, and would not declare any thing more of the matter; upon which some of the gang were inclined to believe her, and were sorry for their disappointment, but Turpin as strenuously insisted she had money, as she said that she had none, and at last, with horrid oaths and imprecations, swore he would put her on the fire. She continued



obstinate for all that, imagining that he meant only to threaten her; and so very fond was she of her darling gold, that she even suffered herself to be served as he had declared, and endured it for some time, till the anguish at last forced her to make a discovery, which when she had done, they took her off the grate, and robbed her of all they could find. Some persons talk of a much more larger sum, but it is certain they stole upwards of four hundred pounds, and decamped safely with the booty.

The next place they robbed was a farmer's at Ripple Side, near Barking, where the people of the house not coming to the door as soon as they wanted them, they broke it open. They first of all, according to their old scheme, gagged, tied, and blind-folded all they found in the place capable of opposing them; and then robbed the house of about 700*l.* which delighted Turpin so much, that he exclaimed "Aye that is the thing! That's your sort for the rag, (a cant term for money) if it would but last!" and they safely retired with their prize, which amounted to above 80*l.* a man. This robbery was committed in the beginning of the year 1726. This success so much flushed Turpin and his associates that several others joined them, in somuch, that they became a formidable crew and many times, when together, defied the legal authority of the magistrates; and their adroitness was such, that they escaped detection for many months.

Some time after they determined to attack the house of Mr. Mason, the keeper of Epping Forest, who was pitched upon to feel the effects of their resentment for his former vigilance in disturbing their poaching incursions into his district. But Turpin was not concerned in this affair; for he happened at that time to be at London, where drinking too freely, he forgot his appointment; but

the job was done without him by Rust, Rose and Fielder, who previously bound themselves together by oath not to leave a whole thing in the house. Fielder got over the wall, and broke in backward, when letting in his companions, they proceeded to their business. Mr. Mason was at home sitting up in his bed-room, with his father an aged gentleman. After using their usual means of tying their hands and feet, they asked the old man if he knew them; but answering he did not, they carried him into the kitchen, and put him under the dresser. Mr. Mason had a sack forced over his head, and tied round his waist; and in the flurry his little girl got out of bed, and without any clothes on, hid herself in the hog-sty. Turpin's absence from this expedition was a very unfortunate circumstance to the forest-keeper's family for they proceeded to greater length in their mischief than he would have permitted them had he been present, as he was always satisfied with the plunder. without adding cruelty to oppression. They now went up stairs, and broke every article of furniture in the house. The china and glass made a dreadful ringing, the chairs were piled upon the fire; looking-glasses, drawers, and tables, were beat to pieces with bed posts; while the beds and carpets were cut to pieces without remorse. This wanton havoc produced them but little, besides the brutal satisfaction of revenge; and they would have retired without a single guinea, had it not been, that in the general wreck of every thing. a china punch bowl was broke, that stood a little out of the way, upon a shelf, and out of it dropped 22 guineas which they picked up and retired with, after they had done as much mischief as they possibly could, and got safe off, no doubt, very well satisfied with the severe retaliation that they had made. They then took road to London; and coming through Whitechapel,

met Turpin, with whom they went to the Bun-house; in the Rope fields, where they shared their booty with him, which proves the old adage, viz. there is honour amongst thieves, though they had not taken any active share in the execution of the villany.

The booties they had succesively made themselves master of, had not in the least abated their ardour in the pursuit of more; for, like the miser, the spendthrift felon is never satisfied, but the more he gets, the more he lavishes, and though he does not secure any thing for a rainy day, takes every opportunity to get more, or, as some of the iraternity have been heard to say, they often rob "to keep their hands in"

The next robbery they committed, was about seven or eight o' clock in the evening. Rust, Turpin, Fielder, Walker, and three others, came to the house of Mr. Saunders, a wealthy farmer at Charlton, in Kent, and knocked at the door, inquired if Mr. Saunders was at home. Being answered that he was, and the door opened, they all rushed in & went directly to the parlour, where Mr. Saunders, his Wife, and some friends, were at cards: they desired them not to be frightened; for they would not hurt their persons, if they sat still and made no disturbance. The first thing they laid hands on was a silver snuff-box, which lay upon the table before them, and having secured the rest of the company, obliged Mr. Saunders to go about the house with them, and open his closets, boxes, and escrutoir, whence they took upwards of one hundred pounds in money, and all the plate in the house, a velvet hood, mantle, and other things. Whilst this was doing, the servant maid got loose, ran up stairs, barred herself in one of the rooms and called out of the window for assistance, in hopes of alarming the neighbourhood; but one of the rogues ran up stairs after her, and with a poker broke open the



door, brought her down again, bound her, and all the rest of the family ; then they rifled the house of every thing of value ; and finding in their search some bottles of wine, a bottle of brandy, and some mince pies, they obliged the company to drink a glass of brandy each . Mrs. Saunders fainted with the fright, they got her a glass of water, and putting some liquor into it, gave it to her, and were very careful to recover her. They staid a considerable time in the house after feasting and packing up their booty, and when they departed, they declared, that if any of the family gave the least alarm within two hours, or advertised the marks of the plate they had stolen, they would return and murder them at a future time. This robbery was concerted at Woolich, whence they proceeded to put their design into execution, and when they effected it, they crossed the water and brought their goods to an empty house in Ratcliffe highway, and there they deposited their plunder and divided the proceeds.

They next proceeded into Surry, where Turpin Rust, Fielder, Swift, and Walker, robbed Mr. Sheldon's house, a lone building near Croydon Church, where they arrived about seven o' clock at night.

They began their operations here, by securing the Coachman in the stable, whom they bound and locked securely in. His master being in an out-house, and hearing strange voices in the yard, was proceeding that way to learn the cause, when he was met by Turpin and Walker, who seizing him, compelled him to shew them the way into the house which, when they had got into, they secured each of the doors, and confined of the family into one room, and set a guard on it within and without. Mr. Sheldon's man unluckily coming to the door from abroad, was first knocked down, and then dragged into the passage and tied, while they ran-

sacked the house. But they were very much disappointed, for they found but little cash, and no plate. From Mr. Sheldon's person, they took eleven guineas, two of which Turpin returned to him, begging pardon for what they had done, and wishing him a good night.

Notwithstanding the situation in which they had left the people here, they had the temerity and assurance to go to the half-moon Tavern at Croydon where they each regaled themselves with a glass of spirits, and changed one of the guineas they had so recently taken from Mr. Sheldon. In their way out one of them let fall a diamond pin of great value in the passage, which was found by the servant girl and returned to the owner. The business being completed they came to the Black-Horse in the Broadway Westminster, near which Rust and Rose lodged with one Fletcher the notorious Nan Turner of Folders Lane memory, who secreted herself here from the pursuit of justice, for the murder of a fellow lodger of her own sort. Here they concerted another robbery, of which Rose and Fielder, were for that time the captains.

These robberies had hitherto been carried on on foot, with only the occasional assistance of a hackney coach; but now they aspired to appear on horse-back, for which purpose, they hired horses at the old leaping bar in high Holborn, whence they set out about two o'clock and arrived at the Queens head, near Stanmore, at five, where they staid to regale themselves. It was by this means that Wood the master of the house, had so good an opportunity of observing the horses, as to remember the same again, when he saw it afterwards in King Street, Bloomsbury, where they were taken. About five o'clock they went from Wood's the Queen's Head to Stanmore, and staid there from six until about seven o'clock; and then all went

away together for Mr. Lawrence's, which was about a mile from thence, where they arrived about half an hour after seven. Mr. Lawrence had just before been paying off some workmen, which were discharged, and gone from the house.

On their arrival at Mr. Lawrence they alighted from their horses at the outer gate; and Fielder getting over the hatch into the sheep-yard, met with Mr. Lawrence's boy putting up some sheep. They seized and presented a pistol to him. Fielder saying he would shoot him if he offered to cry out; and then took the boy's garters and tied his hands, inquiring what servants Mr. Lawrence kept, and who was in the house, which they obliged him to tell them. They told him they would not hurt him, but that he must go to the door with them; and when they knocked at it, if any body within should ask who it was, that the boy was to answer and bid them open the door to let him in and they would give him some money. Accordingly they led the boy to the door, but he was so terrified that he had no power to speak; whereupon Gregory knocked at the door, and called out Mr. Lawrence, the man servant apprehending it to be some of the neighbours only, opened the door, upon which they all rushed in with pistols in their hands crying out, *D—n your blood, how long have you lived here?* and immediately seizing Mr. Lawrence and his man, threw a cloath over their faces, and then took the boy, and led him into the next room, with his hands tied, demanded of him what fire-arms Mr. Lawrence had in his house; and being told there was none but an old gun, they went and fetched that, and broke it to pieces; then took Mr. Lawrence's man, bound his hands, led him into the room where the boy was, and made him sit down there; and also bound Mr. Lawrence. Purpin cut down his breeches; and they fell to rifling his

pockets, out of which they took one guinea, and a Portugal piece of thirty six shillings, about fifteen shillings in silver, and his keys. They said that money was not enough that they must have more, and drove Mr. Lawrence up stairs, where coming to a closet, although they had taken the key from Mr. Lawrence before and had it in their custody, yet they broke open the door, and took out from thence two guineas; ten shillings in silver, a silver cup, thirteen silver spoons, two gold rings, and what they could find; and in their search meeting with a bottle of elder wine, they obliged the servants to drink twice of it. Dorothy Street, the maid-servant, being in the back house churning, and hearing a noise, suspected they were thieves who were got into the house; and in order to save herself, she put out the candle; but they rushed in upon her, tied her hands, and then brought her into the room where the other servants were; they then rifled the house of all they could get, linen, table cloths, napkins, shirts, and the sheets from off the beds; and tread the beds under feet, to discover if any money was concealed therein. Suspecting there was more money in the house, they brought Mr. Lawrence down again, and threatened to cut his throat; and Rose put a knife to it, as if he intended to do it, to make him confess what money was in the house. One of them took a chopping-bill, and threatened to cut off his leg. They then broke his head with their pistols, and dragged him about by the hair of the head. Another of them took a kettle of water off the fire, and flung it upon him; but it did no other harm than wetting him, by reason the maid had just before taking out the greatest part of the boiling water, and filled it again with cold. After this they dragged him about again swearing they would "do for him," if he did not immediately inform them where the rest

of his money was hid. They then proceeded to make a farther search; and Gregory, who acted as chief in this affair, swore to the maid, that if she would tell or show him where the money was hid, he would give her something charming fine to wear; to which she replied, she could not inform him of any. This did not in the least satisfy him, for he forced her up stairs, where he acted in great violence, and, after bolting the door, swore he would shoot her, if she offered to cry out, telling her it would be better for her master's family, if she did so; or he would go to her master's son's house, the next adjoining, and strip it of every thing; for he said he knew the master was from home. Not being able to get any thing out of her, he tied her fast to the bed-posts, and left her; not forgetting to threaten her with his immediate return, if she made the least disturbance,

He then returned to the boy, and enquired whether his master's son would return that night; and being informed he would, he said that he also would go there, and see the house. Upon this, two of them took the boy out to the place; but, on further consideration, they did not attempt any thing there that night. Upon their return, they rummaged every thing in then house; In a chest which belonged to Mr. Lawrence's youngest son, they turned out £201. and packed up the linen, and withdrew, threatening to return again in half an hour, and kill every one they should find loose. So saying, they locked them all in the parlour, took the keys of the back and front door and threw them down the privy, which was in the area.

Some of the goods were lost by the way; for they were in such haste to get off, that they looked back for nothing; and some were afterwards found in Field Lane, and others in Chice Lane and Safforn Hill; where the gang mostly resided, and where



some were taken. Turpin by this robbery got but little; for out of 271. they got in the whole, he distributed among them all but three guineas and six shillings and sixpence.

Such frequent robberies, and the particulars of this atrocious one, being represented to the king, a proclamation was issued for the apprehension of the offenders, and a pardon and £50. was offered to any of the party who would impeach his accomplices. This however had no effect; for they continued their depredations with more systematical ingenuity, and at such distances that none could be aware of their approach. The success they met with elated their spirits, and encouraged them to bid defiance to the executive laws of the country.

In the mouth of danger, and in the midst of alarm, which their audacities had occasioned, Turpin and his gang were as careless as they were heedless. The White Hart, at the upper end of Drury Lane, was their constant place of rendezvous. Here they planned their nightly visits, and here they divided their spoil, and spent the property they unlawfully acquired. The gang all this time consisted of a great number, from the bold adventurer on horseback, to the pitiful stripper of children's cloaths.

These transactions alarmed the whole country, nobody thinking themselves safe: upon which Mr. Thomson, one of king's forest-keepers, went to the Duke of Newcastle's office, and obtained his Majesty's promise of a reward of one hundred pounds for whoever should apprehend any of them. This made them more shy than they were before; but, however, they could not conceal themselves entirely, and they still frequented their old haunts; when some of the justices' men hearing that a number of them usualely met at an alehouse in an alley in Westminster, they went thither, where finding Turpin, Fielder, Rose and Wheeler, after a short

conflict with cutlashes three at last were secured, but not till one Bob Berry, a cork-cuter, had his arm dangerously cut across a little below the elbow. During this scuffle Turpin made his escape out of a window, and getting a horse run away immediately. Wheeler turned evidence, and two of the others were hanged in chains.

This affair broke up the gang. Turpin being now left to himself, had more prudence than to follow house robbing immediately after, particularly as he was so well known; and having some money in his pocket, he took a resolution to be concerned with no other gang, but to act entirely on his own bottom. With this view he set off to Cambridge which he judged to be the best place, as he was not known in that part of the country.

Near Alton he met with an odd encounter, which got him the best companion he ever had, as he often declared. King, the highwayman, as he was returning from this place for London, being well dressed and mounted, Turpin seeing him have the appearance of a substantial gentleman, rode up to him and thinking him a fair mark, bade him stand, and deliver, and thereupon producing his pistols, King fell a-laughing, and said, "What, dog rob dog? Come, Come Brother Turpin, If you don't know me, I know you, and would be very glad of your company." After a mutual communication of circumstances, they agreed to keep company, and divide good or ill fortune, as the trumps might turn up. In fact, King was true to him to the last, and this was for more than three years, when King met his fate by a ball on the road.

They met with various fortunes; but being both too well known to remain long in one place, and as no house that knew them would receive them in it they formed the resolution of making themselves a cave, covered with bays and earth, and for that

purpose pitched upon a convenient place, enclosed with a thicket, situated on the Waltham side of Epping, near the sign of the royal oak. Here they excavated, and covered with thicket-wood, and quickset, a place large enough to receive them, and their horses: and while they lay quietly concealed themselves, could, thro' several holes, discover the passengers as they went along the road; and as they thought proper, would issue out, and rob them in such a bold and daring stile, that they were more admired than blamed. The very higglers on the road did not always escape their requisitions, but they were mostly repaid again; whilst those who went armed, lost their pieces, were wounded and robbed of all they carried about them. Turpin's wife was their messenger, went to the market for victuals for them, supplied them with linen, and frequently remained there a whole week together.

In this place Turpin lived, eat, drank, and lay, for the space of six years, during the first three of which he was enlivened by the drollery of his companion Tom King, who was a fellow of infinite humour for telling stories, and of unshaken resolution in attack or defence.

These forest partners frequently issued from their cell like the thieves from the cave in Gil Blas, and take a ride out, in quest of plunder. King and he once riding towards Bungay, in Suffolk, met two young market women, who had just received a considerable sum of money for corn. King proposed to rob them, but Turpin dissuaded him from it, alleging for a reason, that they were so pretty inoffensive girls, and he would not be concerned in it. King swore he would rob them, and accordingly did so, against Turpin's consent, which occasioned a dispute between them.

It would be an endless task to relate every particular robbery they committed while in connection

together in this fastness of the forest; for it is generally known, at that time there was no regular police, established by government as is now; and the improved state of the roads, together, make it impossible for such daring disturbers of the peace to remain any length of time in one place.

The mail having been robbed upon Stamford hill the bag, and most of the letters, were found scattered about near that part of the forest, which was supposed to be the abode of Turpin and his associate: for several circumstances had occurred, to make it a probable event that he might be found thereabouts; besides, the Woodford stage-coachman who knew him perfectly well, as well as his colleague King, had often been heard to say, that if any person would give him arms and a hundred pounds, dead or alive he would give some account of Turpin; but his time was not yet arrived, although he had so long been the terror and talk of the country round London, as well as at remote distances.

Turpin and King next stopped a person of very decent appearance, near Hackney, and demanded his money: but the gentleman burst into tears, said he was in circumstances of distress, and possessed only eighteen pence; on which, instead of robbing him they made him a present of half-a-crown, proof that sentiments of humanity may not be utterly banished even from the bosom of a thief. On their return to town they robbed a man of fourteen shillings, and then went to their old place of retreat.

Turpin had gone on for a long while in a most notorious and defying way, and the reward for apprehending him had induced many to attempt it. Amongst the rest was the ranger Thomson's man in company with a higgler. Turpin was unarmed standing alone, and not knowing the man, took him for one poaching for hares, and told him he

would get no hares near that thicket. "No" says says the fellow, "but I have got a Turpin," and presented his gun at him, commanded him to surrender. Turpin stood talking with him, and receding back to his cave, laid hold of his carbine, and shot him dead, at which the higgler made off. The man's death obliged Turpin to make off precipitately; so he went farther into the country in search of King; and sent his wife a letter to meet him at a public-house in Hertford, who accordingly went, with two of Squire H—'s servants. She waited for him about half an hour, and when he came to the house, he asked for her by a fictitious name, left on purpose. He soon found she was there, and going to her through the kitchen, he saw a butcher to whom he owed five pounds: the butcher taking him aside, "come Dick," says he, "it would be of great service." Turpin replied, his wife was in the next room, and she had money, and he would get some of her, and pay him presently. The butcher apprised two or three who were present who he was, and that he would get his five pounds first, and then take him, But Turpin instead of going to his wife, jumped out of the window, took horse, and went away immediately, without seeing her, while the butcher waited some time in expectation of receiving his five pounds.

After this he still kept about the forest, till he was harassed almost to death, for he did not dare go near his old place of safety, the cave, which was ransacked as soon as discovered after his shooting the keepers man; and when they found his habitation out, it contained two shirts in a cloth bag, five pair of stockings, various shoes and boots, some few utensils to cook with, a quantity of shot, flints and powder, the remains of a bottle of wine, and some ham and pieces of bacon; so that, being driven from place to place, he skulked about the



outskirts of the woods, and was once very near taken; when Mr. Ivcs, the king's huntsman, took out dry-footed hounds to find him; but perceiving them at a distance, before they had got scent of him, he got up a tree, and saw them go underneath him, without noticing his retreat; upon which he at last took the resolution of going down into Yorkshire.

He took a large house at Brough, near market Cave in Yorkshire, from whence to Welton he carried on an extensive trade in horses, selling and exchanging; and at the time of the races he is said to have realized about one thousand pounds, which enabled him now to keep the first company stirring in those parts. On one of these occasional visits to Brough, he met the celebrated Dicky Dickson, the humorous governor of Scarborough Spa, to whom he sold a horse, which four years afterwards was claimed by Squire Moore as his property, he having lost it off the marshes in Lincolnshire.

He went again to Long Sutton in Lincolnshire, where the people, he thought, would not know him; and as he abounded in money, he purposed to himself to commence a dealer in horses. In his way thither he met a man on horseback, with a large box before him; and, upon enquiry, he found him to be a mountbank travelling the country for the public good and his own. After a short introduction, Turpin proposed to keep him company, which was no sooner mentioned than agreed upon; and at the first stop they made, Turpin undertook the part of distributing the bills which in a few hours brought a number of persons round him. The next being market day, and seeing a number of good horses at the inn where he put up at, he made free with one, leaving his own in the same stall. His partner's leather sack, hanging conveniently by the fireside, he turned out all the doctor's compositions, and filled it from the box of a jew pedlar, with which

he decamped, without being perceived. He disposed of his horse at Long Sutton for ready money, to a young farmer, and found another credulous enough to let him have one upon security of the hardware and goods of which he robbed the jew.

Soon after this he met a young woman in a neat dress sitting under a tree that grew on the road side, and being in a melancholy posture, he was very importunate to know the occasion of her being in that situation. The young woman after returning him thanks for his civility assured him she was only resting herself from her fatigue, being going on foot to her father's house, not far distant. Upon hearing this, Turpin dismounted, and requested her to take his place, and sit upon the saddle, which she declined. However, at the next inn, he borrowed a pillion, and got up before her; and in that manner they reached the village where the young woman's father dwelt. He called upon her next day, and was well entertained by the family; and putting himself forward as a horse dealer, travelling upon business, procured himself the credit of two good draught horses, which he soon sold but forgot to pay for them. His temerity could now only be equalled by his impudence. His depredations were now the talk of the whole kingdom. His activity and success were equal; and although a reward of two hundred pounds was offered by his Majesty, with a free pardon to any of his accomplices, it failed of bringing him up; and the newspapers continually reported fresh feats of his felonies. This proclamation and reward appeared in the Gazette of June 14, 1737, as may be seen in the London Magazine for the year, vol. 6th. page 335.

He could never thoroughly leave off visiting his old haunts; for the afore-mentioned Magazine mentions a robbery committed by him singly upon a gentleman in his own chaise at Holloway, from whom

he took a considerable sum. The gentleman observed to him, when he attacked him first, that he had reigned long enough, and ought to leave of thieving; to which he replied, "Pray, Sir, don't you seem to mind it: my time is not now; nor you the man to take me: but tip me the cole or ill —." He then rode off, and passed two gentlemen's servants, with led horses, showing his pistols. Turpin had been frequently known to levy contributions at the back of Islington, and in a few hours to rob in a distant county.

It was remarkable, that, for such a course of time as from the date of the king's reward of two hundred pounds for his apprehension, he should still go on with his depredations with the most audacious impunity, insomuch that it affected the national character in the eyes of foreigners, who could not help remarking, that the native bravery of the English was supine in bringing such a daring offender to justice. In fact, his feats of equestrian agility were so surprising, and his identity so uncertain, that to these circumstances alone may be ascribed his long evasion from the iron hand of the law.

He had been at Suson, and drank deep at the Cock there. Early in the morning he set off, and robbed a gentleman of fifty guineas and a valuable watch, in the environs of London. Apprehensive of being known and pursued, he spurred his horse on and took the northern road and, astonishing to relate, reached York the same evening, and was noticed playing at the bowls in the bowling-green with several gentlemen there, which circumstance saved him from the hands of justice for that time. The gentleman he robbed knew him to be Turpin and caused him to be pursued and taken at York:— he afterwards swore to him, and the horse he rode on, which was the identical one he arrived upon

in that city ; but on being in the stable, and his rider at play, and all in the space of four and twenty hours, his *alibi* was admitted ; for the magistrates at York could not believe it possible for one horse to cover the ground, being upwards of one hundred miles, in so short a space. He is reported, upon this occasion, to have used his horse to raw beef upon the bit in his mouth. Some go so far as to say he always rode with fowls' guts tied round it. Be this so or not, it was a race that equalled, if not surpassed, the first achievements of turf velocity.

Notwithstanding the dreadful scenes of robbery (and sometimes cruelty) in which Turpin was engaged, he gave several proofs of his possessing a heart capable of feeling for the distresses of a fellow creature, and a spirit of generosity. He once met a country dealer coming up to market on the Essex road, whom he commanded to stop, and deliver his money. The poor man told him he had but fifteen shillings and sixpence, which he said was his all, and if it was taken from him he should be reduced to absolute want. Turpin, whose finances were quite exhausted, answered, there was no time to be lost ; his money he must have ; but at the same time, desired him to be in a certain part of Newgate Street on a particular hour next day, with his hat in his hand : and if any person walked by and dropped any thing into his hat, to take no notice, but go immediately about his business. The man accordingly took his station at the time appointed, and had not been there more than half an hour, before he felt something fall into his hat, and upon opening the small packet, to his great joy, he found it to contain ten guineas.

Justice though slow, overtook him at last. One of the farmers in Essex, from whom he had stolen a horse, traced the robbery to him, and having followed him into Yorkshire, caused him to be ap-

prehended and examined before a magistrate. He was then fully committed to York Castle for trial.

On the rumour that the noted Turpin was a prisoner in York Castle, persons flocked from all parts of the country to take a view of him, and debates ran very high whither he was the real Turpin or not. Among others who visited him, was a fellow who pretended to be well acquainted with the famous Turpin, having rode several miles with him hunting. After regarding him a considerable time with looks of great attention, he told the keeper he would bet him *half-a-guinea* he was not Turpin's horse-stealer; on which the prisoner, whispering to a turnkey, said, "Lay him, Jack, and I'll go you a'ives."

When he was on his trial, his case seemed much to affect the hearers. He had two trials, upon both of which he was convicted upon the fullest evidence. During his abode in the castle, the turnkeys are said to have made more than an hundred pounds by showing him, and selling him and his visitors liquors.

He was tried at the York assizes, on 22d. March, 1638, before, the Hon. Sir Wm. Chapple, Knt.—His guilt was clearly proved, and Sentence of death was recorded against him.

He wrote to his father upon being convicted, to use his interest to get him off for transportation; but his fate was at hand; his notoriety caused application to be ineffectual.

The morning before Turpin's execution, he gave l. 19s. among five men, who were to follow the cart as mourners, with hatbands and gloves, and gave gloves and hatbands to several persons more. He also left a gold ring, and two pair of shoes and clogs, to a married woman at brough, that he was acquainted with, though he at the same time acknowledged he had a wife and child of his own.



He was carried in a cart to the place of execution on Saturday, April 7th, 1739, with John Stea condemned also for horse-stealing. He behaved himself with amazing assurance, and bowed to the spectators as he passed. It was remarkable that as he mounted the ladder, his right leg trembled on which he stamped it down with an air, and with undaunted courage looked round about him; and after speaking near half an hour to the topsman, threw himself off the ladder, and expired in about five minutes.

His corpse was brought back from the gallows about three in the afternoon, and lodged at the Blue Boar, in Castlegate, till ten the next morning, when it was buried in a neat coffin in St. George's church-yard, with this inscription R. The grave was dug very deep; and the person whom he appointed his mourners, took all possible care to secure the body: notwithstanding which some persons were discovered moving off with it having taken it up, The mob having got scent where it was carried to, and suspecting it was to be anatomized went to a garden in which it was deposited, and brought away the body through the streets of the city, in a sort of triumph almost naked being only laid on a board, covered with straw, and carried on four mens' shoulders, and buried in the same grave, having first filled the coffin with slake lime. He confessed to the hangman, that he was thirty three years of age.