

# EXECUTION

OF GILCHRIST.

Full, True, and Particular Account of the EXECUTION of GEORGE GILCHRIST, at the Head of Libberton's Wynd, on the Morning of the Third of August, 1831, for the Robbery of the Prince Regent's Edinburgh Coach, of Five Thousand Seven Hundred and Twelve Pounds Six Shillings, sterling, the property of the Commercial Bank,—together with an Account of the Confession of the wretched Criminal,—his Behaviour in the condemned cell,—his parting from his Wife and Friends,—and his behaviour in the Lock-up-house during the night before the Execution, and on the Scaffold,—the whole by an Eye Witness.

This morning, between eight and nine o'clock, this unhappy culprit, *George Gilchrist*, paid the last penalty of the law, by the forfeiture of his life, by the hands of the common executioner, and in presence of a great concourse of spectators, at the head of Libberton's Wynd,—another terrible example of the awful consequences of giving way to inordinate and unlawful desires,—for the pecuniary circumstances of the wretched man, before the perpetration of the crime, were sufficiently prosperous to place him far above the plea of want or necessity in extenuation of his crime.

The public is already aware, but it may be proper briefly to repeat that the trial of *George Gilchrist*, in conjunction with two of his alleged accomplices, viz., his brother, *William Gilchrist*, and *James Brown*, took place before the High Court of Justiciary on the 14th of last month, and that after a patient and laborious investigation, which lasted nearly twenty-six hours, the Jury unanimously found *George Gilchrist* guilty,—unanimously found the libel not proven against *William Gilchrist*,—and, by a plurality of voices only, found it not proven against *James Brown*.—*Brown*, however, has since fully confessed his participation in the robbery, by returning to the Commercial Bank nine hundred pounds of the stolen money, which had fallen to his share of the plunder,—an act which, whether it proceeded from a feeling of compunction and repentance, or from a desire to save the life of his less fortunate accomplice *George Gilchrist*, certainly in some measure redeems his previous guilt.—*George Gilchrist*, also in the hope of obtaining remission of the capital punishment, has returned upwards of four thousand pounds of the stolen money,—and it is understood that the Commercial Bank has recovered the whole amount of the money stolen, except something under the sum of three hundred pounds sterling. *Gilchrist* was convicted chiefly on the evidence of his accomplices, viz. *James Morrison*, an inkeeper in *Falkirk*, *Robert Simpson*, whom *Morrison* had inveigled into the conspiracy, and another man named *Campbell*. The Crown Office, however, had by the most laudable activity and perseverance succeeded in collecting such an array of other evidence as was sufficient to sustain that of the accomplices, and to bring to light the whole of the nefarious transaction. It accordingly appeared that *George Gilchrist* was the prime mover in all the circumstances of the robbery. He arrayed himself in female attire, and was one of the inside passengers in the coach. *Robert Simpson* accompanied him as the other inside passenger; and these two, being provided with proper implements broke through the frame work of the coach into the front boot; and having then prized open the tin box containing the treasure, effectually succeeded in carrying off money, in bank notes and gold, to the large amount of five thousand seven hundred and twelve pounds six shillings sterling!—*James Brown* was on the outside of the coach as an outside passenger, where he not only by means of a long and heavy chain, kept up so loud and jingling a noise as to prevent the noise made by his confederates within, while breaking into the boot, being heard,—but where he also received a signal from them as soon as the robbery was effected, and in consequence of which he desired the coachman to stop, and, with the appearance of friendly alacrity towards the coachman, alighted and let out his accomplices,—thus preventing any discovery of the disordered state of the coach being known until the coach reached *Uphall*. *Morrison* was originally intended to have been *Gilchrist's* companion in the inside of the coach; but he had not the courage to encounter the danger, and he engaged *Simpson* to take his place. *Campbell* had been engaged in taking the seats at the coach office; and he also watched to see that the bank box was actually deposited in the boot,—a fact which he communicated by signal to *Brown*, who in his turn communicated the same knowledge (also by signal) to *George Gilchrist* and *Simpson*, when the coach took them up.—Never was any robbery more skilfully planned or executed, and the perpetrators could never have been convicted but by the evidence of some of themselves. Indeed we have heard on authority on which we can place reliance that the robbery was planned originally by the famous *John Wilson*, and *Hamilton*, now under sentence of transportation for other crimes, and that it was carried into execution by *Gilchrist* only in consequence of his having been privy to their design.

In the condemned cell the conduct of *Gilchrist* was composed, penitent, and in other respects becoming his awful situation. He made a full confession of his crime and the justice of his sentence. His parting from his wife and some other friends was truly heart-rending. Last night he was removed from the jail to the Lock up House, where he spent the greater part of the night in devotions, assisted by the pious clergy, who rendered to him that last consolation of their holy office.

About eight o'clock this morning, the Magistrates and other legal attendants having arrived, the melancholy procession moved with the culprit to the scaffold, at the head of Libberton's Wynd, where, after a short time spent in prayer and in the singing of a psalm, the wretched man was in the usual manner lanced into eternity. After hanging the usual time the body was cut down, and was afterwards