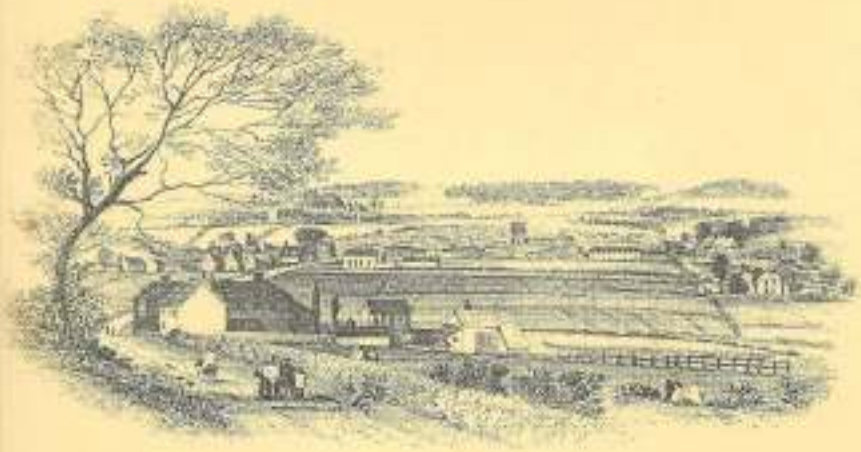

BERKSHIRE
to
BOTANY BAY

Norman Fox

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The 1830 Labourers' Revolt in Berkshire.

Its Causes and Consequences.

Norman E. Fox.

B.A. Hons. (Reading).

Published by:

Littlefield Publishing (H.M & M.D.Weideli)
35 Bartlemy Road
Newbury
Berkshire RG14 6LD
England

ISBN 0 9526661 0 3

Dedicated to the memory of

"Captain" William Smith

(alias Winterbourn) -

The very first of the "Victims of Whiggery",

hanged 11th January, 1831. -

and to all those who have suffered in the continuing struggle

to achieve the Right to Work at a decent wage.

The headstone on the opposite page William Winterbourn's grave, which was erected by the Rev. F.C.Fowle, Vicar of Kintbury, who, in a belated act of atonement, arranged for Winterbourn's body to be brought to Kintbury church yard and buried there.

Cover Illustrations

Permission to use the illustration of "Newbury from the South", which one source gives as "c. 1830", was kindly given by Mr. Tony Higgott, Curator of Newbury District Museum.

Permission to use the drawing of Sydney, which is dated some time in the decade prior to the arrival of the Berkshire men, was kindly given by Ms. Jennifer Broomhead, Copyright and Permissions Librarian, of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My interest in the Threshing Machine Riots of 1830 is a long-standing one having been aroused first by reading "The Village Labourer", by J.L. and B.Hammond, in the late 1940s. It was not, however, until the publication of "Captain Swing", by E.J.Hobsbawm and G.Rudé, in 1969, that I began any serious research into the events which occurred in Berkshire, and even then confined myself mainly to the Kintbury/Hungerford area. Only later was I able to visit Australia where I learnt a great deal about what happened to the Berkshire men transported. Though less than 10% of those transported for their part in "The Last Labourers' Revolt" their experiences (which included examples of the well-recorded brutality of convict floggings and time in the chain-gangs, as well as examples of those who "came good", i.e. prospered sufficiently to appear on the property based Electoral Rolls) were sufficiently varied as to give in miniature the story of the rest.

I was greatly encouraged by the advice and constructive criticism of Professor E.L. Jones. I should like to thank him and all those archivists of the Public Record Office, London, the Berkshire Record Office, Reading, the Wiltshire Record Office, Trowbridge, the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and the State Archives Office of Tasmania, Hobart, and the librarians of Newbury Public Library, the Reading Reference Library, the Bodleian Library, the British Museum Library and the Reading University Institute of Agricultural History, and many others who assisted me. In particular I must mention

Ms. Robyn Flynn, of the Mitchell Library, Sydney.
Ms. Mary Macrae, of the Tasmanian State Archives Office,Hobart.
Mr. Rex Cross, of the Queenbeyan Historical Society, and
Mr. Arthur Street, of the Nepean Family History Society.
Mrs Pamela Bates of 1, Spencer Road, Newbury for information
concerning CHARLES MILLSON.

For much of the material in Chapter 8 I am greatly indebted to C.Bateson ("The Convict Ships") and to A.M. Coulson (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of London,1937.)

Finally I should like to express my gratitude to the numerous writers of local histories, in both Berkshire and Australia, and the officers of many local history societies, without whose help many problems of persons, places and periods would have remained unsolved.

Norman Fox, Newbury, Berks.

INTRODUCTION

Though the lives of more than one hundred men and their families from South-west Berkshire alone were seriously affected by the events with which this study is concerned, the threshing machine riots over the whole of Berkshire receive mention in only four (not wholly accurate) sentences in the Victoria County History. This omission or under-emphasis is general, for what the Hammond's called *The Last Labourers' Revolt* has rarely been given more than a passing reference in most histories of the period. This is not a valid judgement on its importance, but merely a reflection of the narrow attitudes of most historians. Even Walter Money, in his excellent "History of Newbury", devotes less than three pages to these events and most of this consists of a local newspaper's report of the round-up of the rioters, though, to be fair, we know that he later became sufficiently interested in the aims and aspirations of those involved in them to write a series of articles in the "Newbury Weekly News" in 1898. Unfortunately, these pieces are not so well based on genuine research as is his larger work. Written in a *popular* style these articles, though very interesting and readable, contain the sort of error which Money would not have allowed to creep into his more scholarly works.

As far as the national scene is concerned the revolt began on the first day of June, 1830, when the ricks of an Orpington farmer were set ablaze. In any ordinary year this might not have been worthy of notice for rick-burning was a common enough occurrence, but this was no ordinary year. In the same month, on the 26th, George IV died and brought an era to an end. The excitement of the election which automatically followed was heightened by the news of revolutions in France and Belgium. There was an air of expectancy about. During the very severe winter of 1829-30 there were frequent displays of *The Northern Lights* which alarmed the country folk who believed them to be a warning of some awful calamity. On the other hand great hopes were placed in the new king and in the new parliament. Local gossip had it that the new monarch was on the side of the working people. It was firmly believed that he desired the destruction of the hated threshing machines and a large increase in farm workers' wages.

During the election campaign the voices calling for the immediate reform of parliament had increased in number and volume. There was great excitement; the number of meetings, petitions and addresses multiplied. As a result of the election the Whig leader, Lord Grey, could claim that his *party* had obtained an additional 50 votes in the House of Commons. However, the Tory government, led by the Duke of Wellington, somewhat precariously maintained itself in office, but not for long.

The meetings in favour of Parliamentary Reform continued to be held after the election. Many artisans and labourers believed that their lot would be improved once parliament was reformed. In Sutton Scotney for example there were regular meetings, and a petition calling on the king to reform parliament was drawn up and signed by 186 labourers and their allies. However, the hopes of those who believed in Parliamentary Reform as a panacea for all ills received a severe set back on 2nd November when the Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington, made a reactionary speech in which he stated bluntly not only that he was not prepared to bring forward any reforming measure himself, but that he would always feel it to be his duty to resist such a measure when proposed by others.

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The Duke's declared resistance to Reform brought about his own and his government's downfall. On the 15th of November the government was defeated by 29 votes. Although this was on a minor measure the Duke was persuaded to resign because he could not be certain that a similar result would not follow the much more important debate on Brougham's Reform Bill which was scheduled for the following day. On the 22nd of November the members of the first wholly Whig Government for nearly half a century kissed hands and received their seals of office.

These national events, apparently far removed from the common-place lives of the agricultural workers of southern England, were to have a radical effect upon "the even tenour of their ways". It is not without significance that, whereas the revolt began in Kent in the first week of June, the main rioting did not begin in Surrey until the 3rd of November, the day following the Duke's "backs to the wall" speech; the Hampshire labourers did not move until the 11th; while Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Wiltshire remained unaffected until the 15th.

By late Autumn the *Swing* movement - if disparate events so haphazard,often unorganised and spontaneous, can be dignified as such - had spread as far westwards as Gloucestershire and Somerset. Before it petered out or was suppressed not a county south of a line drawn from the Wash to the Bristol Channel had remained unaffected ; nearly 400 threshing machines had been reported destroyed, and nearly 2,000 labourers had been prosecuted. Many of those who were found guilty received savage sentences ; 19 were executed and nearly 500 transported, many for "the term of their natural lives".

The present study is concerned mainly with the activities and the fate of farm workers and their allies in that small corner of S.W. Berkshire with its vertices at Newbury, Great Shefford and Shalbourne (at that time part of Berkshire). The main centres were Kintbury and Hungerford. At one time it was estimated that the combined Kintbury and Hungerford *mob* numbered between four and five hundred. (One local big-wig, in a letter to the Home Secretary, stated that it was nearly 1,000.). 133 persons were arrested. Of these 63 were discharged on their own recognizances, and a further 25 acquitted. Of the 45 found guilty : one was hanged, 20 sentenced to various terms of transportation, and 24 to terms of imprisonment with hard labour.

The members of the Special Commission which tried these men seem to have had a particular animus towards the men from Kintbury. This may well have been due to the fact that one of the lay members was Charles Dundas, M.P., of Barton Court, who was referred to by the local labourers as *the King of Kintbury*. Because *Robbery and Machine breaking* were capital offences, 15 men from this parish and 11 from Hungerford had *Death* recorded against their names. (Although many farm workers in other parts of Berkshire must have been equally guilty of these charges only ONE other Berkshire man was so dealt with.). Of the eleven Hungerford men : two were transported, one died in the hulks, while nine were sentenced to terms of imprisonment none greater than 18 months. Of the 15 Kintbury men on the other hand, one was hanged and twelve transported, only two of the fifteen escaping with a period in Reading gaol. Of the 10 men in the whole of Berkshire sentenced to transportation for *Life*, 9 were Kintbury men.

There were many causes of the riots some of which have been mentioned already, for example, the political excitement generated by the election which followed the death of George IV, the news of successful revolutions in France and Belgium, and the Iron Duke's public refusal to consider measures for the reform of parliament. Other causes suggested by contemporaries were : the publication of *violent tracts* (e.g. Cobbett's "Twopenny Trash"); "seditious preachers" ; "evil-disposed persons who worked upon an ill-paid and discontented peasantry who, for want of regular employment during the winter months were in the habit of spending their time in those rural pests, the beer shops" ; and "the contagious example of neighbouring districts". However, there is no doubt but that the most important causes were starvation wages and irregular employment.

At the Berkshire Quarter Sessions of January, 1830, the Chairman, Charles Dundas, referred to "the cruel pressure on the poor by the illiberality of masters and parishes in beating down wages and reducing parochial relief so low as to leave them scarcely sufficient to maintain even their existence.".

Both starvation wages and unemployment were in part due to the fact that c.1816 agriculture passed from prosperity to extreme depression, but the former were depressed even further by the pauperising effect of the "Speenhamland System" of subsidising wages out of the Poor Rate, while the latter was made worse by the extension of the use of threshing machines during and after the Napoleonic Wars. According to Professor E.L. Jones "the conjunction of a growing population with little alternative to agricultural work and the introduction of the threshing machine .... resulted in chronic winter unemployment and distress in southern England during the early nineteenth century." The situation may be summed up in the words of Professor N.Gash, "The significant change after Waterloo was the deliberate throwing of men on the parish for the four or five winter months, during which, because of the use of threshing machines, there was no work available. Before 1815 the parish rate supplemented wages ; after it supplanted them for over a third of the year."

On the other hand Dr. S.MacDonald argues in the Agricultural History Review (XXIII,I, 1975) that the threshing machine was not the major cause of the labourers' dissatisfaction but merely "a focal point" for it , because the "massive suspicion" with which the threshing machine was approached had led to its "virtual rejection ---- by most of England", except the far north. In support of this thesis he points out that "the Swing Rioters could find but 390 threshing machines in twenty-one counties upon which to vent their wrath.". Of course it would be a convincing demonstration of the correctness of Dr. MacDonald's opinion if it could be shown that less than twenty machines existed in each of these twenty-one *Swing* counties. However, this is one of those cases where an average figure is most mis-leading. What is much more important is the distribution of these nearly 400 machines. 56% of them were destroyed in only three counties (Berkshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire), and 97 (or one quarter) were destroyed in Wiltshire alone. Local research reveals that, in the 40 square miles south and west of a line Newbury/Shefford, the labourers and their allies destroyed about 40 machines, while those of the Thatcham district boasted that they had destroyed "33 machines in as many hours". These numbers are of such a magnitude as to refute Dr.

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MacDonald's view that the threshing machine had been rejected by the farmers of central southern England, however true it may be as far as other areas are concerned.

According to Hobsbawm and Rudé, in their classic study of the riots in "Captain Swing", there is insufficient evidence to prove one way or another whether there had been an abnormal increase in the number of machines in use in the period immediately preceding the riots. Yet it cannot be insignificant that the labourers of S.W. Berkshire and the adjacent county of Wilts were (unlike their fellow rioters in other counties whose activities were many and various) single-minded in their concentration upon the destruction of threshing machines. Of the nearly 400 machines which Hobsbawm and Rudé noted as having been destroyed over all the "Swing" counties, 135, or more than a third, were destroyed in Wiltshire and S.W. Berkshire alone. An important cause of this difference between central southern England and the rest of the "Swing" counties lies in the enterprise of a Wiltshire farmer-mechanic named Rider who, in the Spring of 1829, had invented a threshing machine the price of which was advertised in the Salisbury and Winchester Journal, 20 April,1829, as "between £8 and £10". Such a low price must have made it possible for even the least well-off farmer to acquire one. Certainly the labourers of Wiltshire and adjacent counties were fully aware of its implications. "They regarded it as certain to produce starvation and want amongst them and their families". One contemporary, a Reading man, ascribed the disturbances in Berkshire almost exclusively to the wide-spread use of threshing machines. Thus the farm workers of central southern England had no illusions as to the role of the threshing machine ; it was a major cause of their distress rather than merely a focal point for it.

Two consecutive harsh winters - that of 1829 was stated by one contemporary to have been the worst for a hundred years - had strung up the hitherto docile and submissive labourers to a pitch of angry defiance. "We will do anything", said some of the first rioters, "rather than encounter such a winter as the last.". It needed only some local act of injustice to spark off the train of events which led its participants almost inevitably to the gallows or to Botany Bay.

CHAPTER 1

DISTRESS AND CONSEQUENT DESPAIR.

(THE CAUSES OF THE REVOLT.)

BEER, CONTAGION AND DRAB GREAT COATS.

According to Mr. William Mount of Wasing House, Aldermaston, the "ill-paid discontented peasantry ------ were in the habit of spending their time in those rural pests, the beer shops", and the Overseer of the Poor and the Surveyor of the Roads of Thatcham were of the opinion that the labourers were excited "by reading violent publications in beer shops.".(1)

Private houses licensed to sell beer were, in 1830, a new phenomenon. They had come into existence on the passing of the Beer Act on 10th October, little more than a month before the commencement of the riots in Berkshire. There is no doubt that such houses provided meeting places for the farm workers at which they could openly discuss their problems and possible methods of solving them. They were probably more popular than inns or public houses in some areas, because they were less likely to be frequented by those in authority. "In the beer shops the constable was immediately a marked person.". (2) In the six weeks between the date on which the Beer Act came into force and November 24th, by which time the riots had reached as far west as Somerset, the latter county had been "covered in Beer Houses. The labourers now congregate in these receptacles of disorder.".(3)

An assembly of Berkshire magistrates in Quarter Sessions at Newbury, on April 6th, 1831, declared that they had "no hesitation in stating it to be their opinion ---- that the Beer Houses opened under the Act are ruinous to the labouring classes, and the resort of idle and vicious persons -- during the late riots in this county the parties engaged in them assembled and prepared their plans of outrage and plunder in various obscure Beer Houses.". (4) However - the opinion of the Berkshire magistrates notwithstanding - the appearance of Beer Houses,obscure or otherwise, was certainly not a factor contributing to the riots in south-west Berkshire.

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The Kintbury rioters seem to have been well- provided for by mine host of the long-established *Blue Ball* Inn , in spite of the fact that it was also the resort of the local Churchwardens and the Overseers of the Poor. * According to W. Money, "several of the more active politicians", who had, for some time prior to the riots, "openly expressed their determination of righting the poor man's wrongs", had been provided with a little parlour at the *Blue Ball* Inn, Kintbury. At this meeting place they "often remained in close and private conclave" until long after midnight. That the matters discussed were of grave importance could not be doubted inasmuch as they "deliberated over tankards rarely replenished" and "never once required to be supplied with pipes and tobacco.". (5) (For confirmation see evidence of the Constable, William Annetts, in Chapter 2)

Mr. G.H.Cherry, J.P., of Denford House near Hungerford, considered one of "the proximate causes of the riots to have been the contagious example of neighbouring districts.", (1) and the Deputy Lieutenant of Berkshire, Frederick Page, held that "The success of the revolt in favour of wages in other counties" was "the exciting cause" of the riots in Berkshire.(6) The revolt seems at first to have been confined within the borders of Kent and Sussex, but, by the middle of October, Surrey had become infected, and the first signs of the revolt were noticed in Hampshire and the eastern half of Berkshire on November 10th. On the fifteenth "the labourers of Thatcham parish began to assemble at an early hour for the purpose of inducing their employers to raise their wages.". (7)

That the local farm workers were aware of the rioting taking place elsewhere is confirmed by the evidence given to the Special Commission by the grand-daughter of the Hungerford Workhouse Keeper. She stated that when Joseph Tuck (one of those later transported for his part in the rioting) was being given his weekly poor relief payment on November 20th (the day before the riots began at Kintbury and Hungerford) he said that there were a great many riots in several places, that there would be one there very shortly, and that a great many thought so. Eliza Gibbs said that she heard him say that he wished "the mob would come and set the bloody work-house on fire.". (8)

*See the following entries in the Kintbury Overseers Accounts Books - "expenses at the *Blue Ball* Inn - making a rate and other parish business", March,1827 ; and "Dinners at the *Blue Ball*, £5.0s.0d.", March 1828.

On the same day that Tuck gave vent to his anger, the contagion spread to Speen, where the unemployed demanded a rise in wages and went from farm to farm to organise support. (9) On the following day, the 21st., the rioting began at Kintbury, and, later on the same day, or very early on the Monday morning, at Hungerford. Concurrently the labourers of the area around Ashmansworth, on the border of Berkshire and Hampshire, rose and compelled the rector of East Woodhay, the Rev. Hodgson, to pay them two sovereigns. On Tuesday, November 23rd., there would appear to have occurred a degree of planned co-operation between the farm workers of the two counties.

According to Mr. Henry Hippesley of Lambourn Place, Lambourn, the rioters "were encouraged by many who were not in distress themselves.". * (1) Itinerant rabble rousers were reported as being seen in several counties. In Dorset it was strongly suspected that most of the fires were caused by two men. One, who was about forty years of age, rode a long-legged, light carcassed, sorrell-coloured horse (vulgarly called a blood horse) with a Switch Tail, and wore Knee-caps or overalls, or, alternatively a Drab Great Coat. The other rode a Black Horse, of the same long-legged description. They were dressed and looked like farmers.(10) This description was published in a public notice issued from Blandford.

* Mr. Hippesley's evidence may have referred to the high proportion of artisans who were involved in the local riots. One quarter of those from this area who were found guilty of offences arising out of the riots were artisans.

FRANCIS NORRIS, the treasurer of the Kintbury congregation, was a master bricklayer; the only entries against his name in the accounts of the Kintbury Overseers of the Poor were for payments to "Mr. Norris". The Avington "Parish Book for the Poor" includes two payments of £7.5s.4¾. and £2.6s.0d. on 24th October,1818, to Francis Norris ; the first entry refers to the purchase of bricks, which suggests that Norris was paid for laying them. (11)

WILLIAM OAKLEY, the most outspoken member of the Kintbury deputation which confronted the local J.P.s at the Hungerford Town Hall meeting, was a "wheelwright or blacksmith"; his grandmother, for whom he worked, owned an iron foundry. DANIEL BATES, another member of the five-man deputation was a carpenter/ wheelwright. Another, EDMUND STEEL, was a "tradesman". WILLIAM SMITH (alias Winterbourn), the captain of the Kintbury company, was stated by some witnesses to be a blacksmith and by others to be a bricklayer, but most evidence suggests that he alone of the five leaders was a labourer, though one "of the better sort".

Where the rumours originated is unclear, but the story of well-dressed gentlemen either on horse-back or driving a gig was a widespread one. The Reading Mercury even reported the arrest, in Clare, Suffolk, of *Captain Swing* himself ; he "was driving a gig". However, the arrested man proved to be "a man of considerable property" who was "distinguished as an itinerant preacher.". As no such reports emanated from south-west Berkshire we can conclude that the presence of itinerant rabble rousers was not one of the causes of the riots in this area.

Even if the artisan leaders had not yet experienced the depth of deprivation to which their labourer comrades had been depressed, there is no doubt that the reason they made common cause with them was that they too were

finding it hard to make ends meet. As early as 1821 the distress owing to unemployment among the Berkshire agricultural population had developed to the point where tradesmen and artisans were also being affected. "Many of those at present (1821) receiving relief are tradesmen ---- (e.g.) two blacksmiths, two tailors, two shoe-makers (etc.)". (Mr. Job Lousley, farmer, of Blewbury, Berks. Rpt.of the S.C. on the State of Agriculture,1821.). The growth of iron foundries such as Gibbons of Hungerford, Austins of Wantage and Taskers of Andover led "Many blacksmiths (to view) with distrust the inroads (made) on their trade by the improvement in cast-iron mechanism.". (12) Hence it is not surprising that these establishments also came under attack when the farm workers took it into their heads to destroy every single threshing machine (or parts thereof) on which they could lay their hands.

VIOLENT TRACTS AND SEDITIOUS PREACHERS.

Though , according to a Berkshire clergyman, there was "very little reading of tracts and newspapers among the poor" , who took "no concern in any politics beyond the village" (1) ,and Edwin Chadwick held that it was clearly proved that the sentiments circulating orally were much more dangerous than any circulated in print (13), there is considerable evidence which supports Mr. Henry Hippesley, of Lambourn Place, who blamed "violent tracts and seditious preachers" for the unrest among the labourers.(1)

In some places, public houses or inns were used as evening schools where those who were able read extracts from, for example, Cobbett's "Political Register", or, more likely, his "Twopenny Trash" (or"Politics for the Poor"). This certainly happened in central Hampshire. William Winkworth, a shoemaker and former constable, of Micheldever, was said to have read Cobbett's "Register" aloud to "a small party of Hampshire bumpkins" on Saturday nights. (9), while "Two brothers, Joseph and Robert Mason, who lived at Bullington, regularly took in the *Register* and read it aloud to twenty or thirty villagers." (14) That such sessions took place at the *Blue Ball*, Kintbury, is highly likely ; more than 50% of those from the area sentenced to transportation at the Special Assizes could read, and Cobbett was a "household word" in the area.

Given that this kind of political education did take place it is not surprising that the labourers' minds were excited or their emotions aroused, for (although Cobbett was acquitted of any responsibility for inciting the labourers to violent action) perusal of his writings provides many examples of rhetoric calculated to do exactly that.

Lord Carnarvon of Highclere, north Hampshire, wrote to the Home Secretary in February, 1831, stating that Cobbett's papers were distributed all over the neighbourhood and had undoubtedly caused the incendiary spirit. (15) According to another contemporary he (Cobbett) "was a household word " in the district around Newbury "which he often visited and where he addressed political meetings.". (16) One such meeting was held at the *George and Pelican* Inn at Speenhamland, on Thursday, October 17th, 1822, where Cobbett "addressed an audience of over 200 persons; the doors and windows were besieged by the admirers of a man, who, whatever his faults may have been, deserved to be ranked as one of the boldest and purest of English politicians.".(17) His speech included the following :-

> "The labourer has the first claim to the crop which the land produces for it is he that makes the crop --- Crime does not apply itself to acts necessary to the preservation of life. God, nature, and the laws have said, that man shall not die of want in the midst of plenty.". (18)

No wonder the labourers of 1830 acted as if their actions were wholly moral and legal.

The "Political Register" for October 23rd, 1830, included a report of Cobbett's speech at Battle in which he refers to "the burning in the county of Kent --- which it would be folly to suppose will, unless a remedy be applied, either cease, or be confined, to that county. To expect it to be confined in the end to the county of Kent is nonsense. As winter approaches it will spread, and violence and terror will prevail throughout the greater part of England.". To Cobbett it was understandable if "honest and industrious labourers who were fed and clothed worse than the felons in the hulks" acted in the way they did when :

> "This formerly happy England is now in much the state that France was before the Revolution of 1789.".

He emphasised that the revolution had begun "not amongst the *rabble* (the working people of Paris) but amongst the quiet and dispersed labourers in the fields and vineyards" and that their motto or signal was :-

"War to the houses of the rich ; Peace to the cottage."

In the same issue of the "Register" Cobbett referred to what he had told the Duke of Wellington when he became Prime Minister in January, 1828. "The time is at hand when it will become a choice of labourers, certain death from starvation, or the chance of death by rope or gun, and, be assured, my Lord Duke, that Englishmen will prefer the latter. Think, then, betimes, of the consequence of parish after parish combined till there be half a county in commotion.". (Cobbett's emphases.)

Whatever contribution the "Political Register" may have made towards inciting revolt, its price, made artificially high by the Stamp Duty, must have restricted its effectiveness. In July, 1830, to avoid the duty, Cobbett decided to publish the "comment" section of the "Register" separately as "Twopenny Trash" (or "Politics for the Poor"). The fifth issue of the new tract, issued in November, 1830, includes a letter addressed to "The Working People in England". In this letter, although he refers to arson as an abominable crime rightly punishable by death, Cobbett writes that "The great and general cause (of these *unnatural crimes*) is the extreme poverty of the people; or in other words the starving state in which they are. The natural consequence is discontent; that leads to resentment. No man can suffer what he deems a wrong without feeling anger against somebody ..... that anger will vent itself in acts, whenever he finds himself able to act. Though he might not get redress by such action, he gets revenge.". In the same issue he refers to the drastic fall in the labourers' living standards, and compares the diet provided by the Berkshire Jail Regulations (which stated that "If the surgeon thinks it necessary the Working Prisoners may be allowed Meat and Broth on Week Days.") with the potato based diet of most labourers. He urged Sir Francis Burdett, "thou Berkshire magistrate", to take note of this comparison.

In the next (VIth) issue of "Twopenny Trash", dated 21st November, Cobbett, in addressing the Farmers of Kent, quoted from the speech he had made in Newbury in 1822 (see page 10). He concluded his remarks to the Kent farmers by exhorting them to make common cause with their labourers in obtaining the removal of the causes of the latter's sufferings. "Put not your trust in terror or in force ; to the Englishman who is reduced to potatoes to sustain life, there are no terrors even in the prospect of death. The only remedy is to give the labourer a sufficiency of good food and of good raiment ; there is no other.".

Cobbett was also responsible for helping to spread the news of the July Revolutions in France and Belgium. The "Register" contains much material referring to these events in admiring terms, and, in the third issue of "Twopenny Trash", published in September, 1830, he addressed "The Working People of England and Scotland" as follows :-

"My Friends, ... the condition of mankind depends wholly on their own conduct, and especially on that of the working people." He was determined that they should "be well-informed of the causes which have produced the recent glorious events at Paris. The great deed was there performed by the working people; and by the working people here, must finally be produced those salutary effects which every good man wishes to be produced.".

Other newspapers such as the "Dispatch", "which had a considerable circulation among the worst [sic] class of newspaper readers", and the "Sunday Times", which was responsible for "the politics which they (the farm workers) imbibed at beer houses.", (1) magnified the news from France and kept their readers fully informed of agitation elsewhere.

Although, in July, 1831, Cobbett was acquitted of the charge of inciting the labourers to riot, he later boasted (19) that it was his "History of the Protestant Reformation" and his "The Poor Man's Friend", which "made the *Swing* men, these thrashers, hedgers, ditchers, ploughmen, mowers and reapers understand" a great deal. The former, published in 1826, was Cobbett's "favourite" and "most learned" work, in which he contrasted the contemporary misery of the labourer with "the plenty in which the whole of the people lived" prior to the Reformation. His objective in publishing it was to show "how that event had impoverished and degraded the main body of the people" in England and Ireland.

A new edition of "The Poor Man's Friend", sub-titled "A Defence of the Rights of those who do the Work and Fight the Battles", was published only one month prior to the riots in Berkshire. Into this work, writes one of Cobbett's biographers, "he poured all his scorn for the Government and its measures, and all his enthusiasm for pre-Reformation England, which was the richest, most powerful, and most admired country in Europe,.... famed for many things, but especially for its good living." (20)

Although no documentary evidence exists to prove that Cobbett's publications were read by members of the Kintbury *congregation* the fact that more than 50% of those from this area who were transported could read, and that more than one third of them were artisans or labourers "of the better sort", suggests that it is highly likely that they were. If they were it is understandable if his readers were encouraged to take the law into their own hands ; that many of them, faced with the choice of "certain death from starvation or the chance of death by the rope", decided to risk the latter. The more politically conscious of them may well have seen the July Revolution in Paris as an example to follow. If they believed what Cobbett had written about it, that "the great deed was there performed by the working people", they may also have reached the conclusion that the right to work at a living wage could be achieved only by their own efforts.

GAME LAWS.

DISTRESS AND CONSEQUENT DESPAIR

The fact that "Kintbury and Hungerford (were) seated near great game reserves" resulted in "not a little indignation being expressed by the labourers there against the severity of the Game Laws and the frequent commitments to gaol.". (21) Cobbett campaigned vigorously against these laws which tended to make criminals of otherwise law-abiding labourers. They were designed to restrict the right to hunt or to kill game to the aristocracy, and were, according to one authority, the only oppressive part of the feudal system remaining on the statute book. (22) Whereas the penalties for most crimes had been modified in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, those for breach of the Game Laws had become even harsher.

In 1803 it was enacted that any person who threatened to use a gun or a knife "with intent to obstruct, resist or prevent the lawful arrest" of themselves or their accomplices should "suffer death as a felon".(14) It was not necessary to kill or even to wound a game-keeper in order to suffer the extreme penalty, the threat alone was sufficient. In 1816 any unarmed person discovered in any forest,chase or park with a net for poaching, could be transported for seven years. It was only by the efforts of the reformer Romilly that, in the following year, a clause was added making it necessary for the person so discovered to be armed with an offensive weapon (though this might have been merely a stout stick) before the sentence of transportation could be imposed.

As late as 1828 if three men were found in a wood, but only one carried a gun or bludgeon, all three were liable to be transported for 14 years. (14)

In the pre-enclosure era the local labourers had no doubt been accustomed to augment their meagre diet by the occasional rabbit, hare or even a game bird. With open fields and commons the law was difficult to enforce. The erection of hedges, fences or even walls after enclosure made it much easier to catch the poacher. The frequent commitments to gaol under these laws caused strong comment among the labourers of S.W. Berks. One of the Kintbury delegation at the Hungerford Town Hall meeting with the local magistrates, William Oakley, is reported to have referred in violent terms to "Old Fowle", the Vicar of Kintbury, who, he claimed, "kept Reading Gaol well supplied with prisoners" and had "£2 apiece for them.". (23) That the local labourers had good grounds for their dislike of the Rev. Fowle is indicated by the following selection of committals for breaches of the Game Laws against his name in the Berkshire Quarter Sessions Order Books. (3)

> 20th October,1818 - Thomas Buckeridge, labourer, of Hungerford and Thomas Aldridge, of Great Bedwyn.
> 20th April,1819 - John Hughes, labourer, of Hungerford.
> 11th January,1820 - Thomas Mason, labourer, of Kintbury
> 17th October,1820 - George Jessett, labourer, of Hungerford.

Between 1820 and 1826 in Berkshire alone 111 persons were convicted under the Game Laws. (13) On the 7th of May, 1823, Henry Brougham, in presenting Cobbett's petition against the proposed Sale of Game Bill to the House

of Commons, said that the Calendar for the next Quarter Session in Berkshire contained the names of 77 persons then in the Bridewell of whom 22 (*) were charged with poaching; of these 22, 9 had been committed by clergymen J.P.s. (24) Cobbett himself observed that wherever he went he found the clergy "better known as J.P.s. than as clergymen.".(13)

As a form of protection against game-keepers and magistrates the poachers in many areas formed themselves into disciplined bands of the kind described by Harriet Martineau in one of her Poor Law tracts. (22) Where such existed they no doubt provided both the leadership and the hard core of the local "congregations". It is certainly due to such men that many of the forays against threshing machines etc. were executed with almost military precision. "The daylight marches on the high road were as regular and orderly as those of an army.".(5)

The rioters in many areas displayed such a strong sense of common purpose, and appeared to be so well organised, that there seemed grounds for suspecting, as some ministers including Sir Robert Peel suspected, that there was "some ulterior object in view beyond the redress of local grievances" (22), and that what was occurring throughout the whole of southern England was indeed a nationally directed movement with revolutionary objectives. In fact the military officers, sent by the new Whig government to pacify Berkshire and adjacent counties, reported that, as far as these counties were concerned, "the insurrectionary movement was directed by no plan or system, but merely actuated by the spontaneous feeling of the peasantry,and quite at random." (25)

GENUINE DISTRESS OR MERE EMBARRASSMENT. (**)

While the condition of agricultural workers in England prior to the Agricultural Revolution was not as idyllic as some romantic historians have suggested, there is
no doubt that this condition radically worsened during the hundred years between 1750 and 1850. It was during this period that much of the commons and waste which had escaped earlier enclosure, together with many of the still open-fields,

* Twice the national average for 1827-30, during which 1/7th of criminal convictions were convictions under the Game Laws.
** "Economic distress is an embarrassment" - Lord Castleragh to the Duke of Wellington, 31st March, 1817.

were enclosed.(*) The effect which these enclosures had on local farm workers
was, according to W.Money, "real, substantial and durable - they tended to depress the poor, and by depriving them of the right of commonage threw them on the parish.". (5) The cottage industry, which had hitherto supplemented a farm worker's wages or provided alternate employment, was dying if it was not dead. By 1815 the
famous woollen industry at Newbury was virtually extinct, and the manufacture of serge at Hungerford and of silk at Kintbury was steadily declining. (26)

DISTRESS AND CONSEQUENT DESPAIR

As Professor Gash put it, "With the passing of the commons, small holdings and cottage industries the peasant became a labourer, a worker on a farm. The old complex peasant society was broken down to a common level, that of landless labourers having but one form of employment and dependent for that on one class.". (13) "The greatest misfortune of our labourers", wrote a Froxfield farmer only a few days prior to the outbreak of the riots in south-west Berkshire, "is the loss of the small portions of land their fathers once held - their chief stay in the worst of times.". (7)

Though some yearly hiring continued well into the 19th century - e.g. the Labour Book of Gooseacre Farm, Radley, includes the following entry for 10th October,1825 : "J.Grimes. Hired at Abingdon Fair for 51 weeks at 7s.0d. per week and £3.10s.0d. over.". (27) - the agricultural labourer of the south of England was rapidly becoming, like the factory worker of the north, a day or weekly worker. "His tenure was the *cash nexus* which could be broken at any time by a few hours notice." Any security he might have depended solely on the needs or the humanity of his master. (13)

The prosperity which many farmers had come to enjoy during the period of the Napoleonic wars had deepened the gulf between them and their employees. They had become used to a much higher, middle class, standard of living which had shattered the harmony of mutual interests.

* Kintbury, Inkpen, Hampstead Marshall and Enborne Enclosure Acts,1809-10. Hungerford Enclosure Act, ,1810-11.

One symptom of this class division was the decease of the practice whereby single labourers "lived in". The previously mentioned Froxfield farmer, a Mr. John Brown, argued that one of the important factors which contributed to the farm worker's depressed state was "the dismissal from the farmer's house and table of the usual number of farm labourers, who were then in the enjoyment of good, plain, wholesome food, with a good bed to refresh their weary limbs." Augustus Hare, includes in his "Memorials of a Quiet Life", a letter by his mother, dated 17th December, 1830, quoting a Wiltshire neighbour as saying, "that in his father's time the single labourers all lived in the house (and) took their meals with the family". "Why", asked Cobbett in 1825, "do not farmers now feed and lodge their work people as they did formerly ? Because they cannot keep them upon so little as they give them in wages." (28)

Two farmers giving evidence before the Select Committee on Agriculture in 1823 stated that the system of farmers "having labourers living in their houses ... has gone very much out of practice".(Mr. R.Hughes of Woodford, near Salisbury.) "The custom of having labourers *live in* has become disused as there are very few such labourers". (J.Comely, Compton, near Winchester.)

It was the enclosures, the decease of "living in" and "other combined circumstances" which, wrote Mr. Brown of Froxfield, had "severed the bond of union between the farmer and his servant, and the tie which ought to exist between them is totally destroyed.". (7)

The introduction of the Speenhamland "System" further depressed the already low standard of life of the average farm worker. The winter of 1794/5 was a period of "great distress among the poor of Speen" (29) and the latter year was one of acute distress over the whole country; according to Sir. F.Eden there was hardly a county in which riots did not break out. (30) In July a market day at Newbury was interrupted by the news that a mob of poor persons was gathering "to obtain by force some relief respecting the present high price of provisions." (31)

The miserable state of the Berkshire labourers was discussed at the Quarter Sessions held at Newbury on 14th April. 1795. Charles Dundas, M.P., of Barton Court, Kintbury, argued the necessity of increasing their wages at least to subsistence level instead of leaving them to resort to the parish officers for the support of their families, as was the case when they worked for a shilling a day. He quoted the relevant Acts of Elizabeth and James I. which empowered magistrates to fix wages. Impressed by his arguments the court decided to convene a special meeting solely to consider action under these Acts.

> The advertisement for this meeting stated -
>
> At the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace for this County held at Newbury on Tuesday, the 14th inst., the Court, having taken into consideration the great Inequality of Labourers' Wages, and the insufficiency of the same for the necessary support of an industrious man

> and his family ; ... do (in pursuance of the Acts of Parliament, enabling them and requiring them to do so ...) earnestly request the attendance of ... all the magistrates of this County, at a meeting to be held at the Pelican Inn, in Speenhamland, on Wednesday the sixth day of May next, ... for the purpose of consulting together with such discreet persons as they shall think meet, and they will then ... proceed to limit, direct, and appoint the wages of day labourers.". (32)

The magistrates and other "discreet persons" to the number of eighteen, seven of whom were clergymen, having duly assembled, rapidly and unanimously resolved "that the present state of the poor does require further assistance than has generally been given them.". The method by which this assistance was to be given was neither so rapidly nor so unanimously resolved. Details of the discussion have not, unfortunately, survived, but, whatever the arguments, the meeting, instead of regulating wages, passed the following fateful resolution:-

"That it is not expedient for the Magistrates to grant assistance by regulating the wages of Day Labourers" but "That they will in their several divisions make the following calculations for the relief of all poor and industrious men and their families, who, to the satisfaction of the Justices of their parish, shall endeavour (as far as they can) for their own support and maintenance." (33)

Then followed details of what became known as the "Speenhamland Allowances" or the "Speenhamland System"

"When the gallon loaf of Second Flour, weighing 8lb.11ozs, shall cost 1s. then every poor and industrious man shall have for his own support 3s. weekly either produced by his own or his family's labour, OR AN ALLOWANCE FROM THE POOR RATE, and for the support of his wife or every other of his family, 1s.6d. .... and so in proportion, as the price of bread rise or falls (that is to say) 3d. to the man, and 1d. to every other of the family, on every 1d.which the loaf rise is above 1s."

By Order of the Meeting
W.Budd, Deputy Clerk of the Peace.

This meant that, where the wages of a man and his family were below the above scale, his wages would be subsidised by "an allowance from the poor rate".

On the very same day as the Speenhamland meeting the Mayor of Basingstoke chaired a "respectable meeting" which recommended what Charles Dundas had hoped that the Berkshire magistrates would recommend namely, that a labourer's wages should be regulated on a sliding scale in accordance with the price of wheat, without any reference to subsidies from parish relief. (34)

Had Dundas's views prevailed at Speenhamland it is certain that much of the hardship, heartbreak and tragedy of the decades which followed would have been avoided. As it turned out, however, the decision of the Berkshire magistrates was to be a tragic one for, by agreeing to subsidise wages out of the Poor Rate on a clearly defined scale, they were to be responsible for the pauperisation of agricultural workers not only in Berkshire but throughout almost the whole of England. The method of relief recommended at Speenhamland was one which magistrates elsewhere found it convenient to adopt. The allowance system spread like a fever, especially in the South and Midlands. Though it was resisted in the northern counties , by the 1830s most of these had succumbed; the only counties to stand out were Northumberland and Durham. (14)

The Napoleonic Wars, by creating a labour shortage and an increase in the demand for home-produced corn (with the consequent rise in price), led to pressures for mechanisation and higher wages. "During the times of war, when the demand for labour was great, working men received as wages in this neighbourhood (around Newbury) about two shillings a day. At seasons of extraordinary pressure (e.g. harvest time) they might earn three and sometimes even four shillings, in addition to many advantages (e.g. flour, milk and fuel) either as gifts or at a greatly reduced cost." (5) Walter Money, understandably, does not give his source. Even if this were true such earnings would have been the exception rather than the rule. Generally wages did not keep pace with the much greater increase in prices of essentials such as bread.

An entry in a contemporary diary for 5th June, 1800, records that the price of bread "rose 2d. on the gallon, making the gallon loaf 2s.7½d." (35) If we accept the Speenhamland allowances as a subsistence standard then a married man with two young children should have received 17s.3d. in wages or in assistance from the Poor Rate. Another entry in the diary for the same day suggests that the local labourers' wages were so much below this level as to require drastic action. "Several working men of Woodhay, Thatcham and adjoining parishes assembled themselves together to raise their wages. The sociations (sic) of Newbury and Thatcham went and dispersed them at Thatcham and at Husbon (Hurstbourne Tarrant) in Hampshire." The Reading Mercury of 16th June reported that the "several" amounted to three or four hundred, and that the Hampshire men "declared their resolution to continue in a body till assurances were given of their demands being complied with."

The tendency for the pauperisation of the agricultural labourers, which had been given such a great impetus by the wide-spread application of the Speenhamland System, was further increased by mechanisation and by the slump which came with the end of the war in 1815. The significant change after Waterloo was the deliberate throwing of men on the parish for the four or five winter months during which, because of the increasing use of threshing machines, there was no work available. "Before 1815 the parish rate supplemented wages ; after it supplanted them for over a third of the year." (13) The Kintbury Overseers Accounts Books record only 78 paupers in 1795; in 1817 it was 255.

DISTRESS AND CONSEQUENT DESPAIR

According to Lord Ernle the period 1814-1816 saw the farming industry pass from prosperity to extreme depression. (36) The economic blizzard which was to come was preceded by a very harsh winter. On 21st January, 1814, "people walked from one side of the Thames to the other below Caversham Bridge", Reading. The deep frost lasted with very little intermission for three whole months. One contemporary, who could not have foreseen how much worse the economic situation was to become, wrote, "This will be a winter to be remembered by many people for years to come from the excessive price of almost every article in life." The first six weeks of the frost saw an almost complete stagnation of trade - "Bricklayers, shoemakers, weavers and almost all trades stopt. It was not until the 17th March that the labourer in husbandry could again resume his daily task." (37)

In the year of Waterloo. 1815, a new Corn Law prohibited the entry of foreign corn duty free except when the price was more than 80s. per quarter. There were riots in many parts of the country. On 15th March, 1815, "The 12th Light Dragoons arrived (in Reading) by forced marches from Dorsetshire bringing with them a report from Basingstoke that this town was half destroyed by the (anti-Corn Law) mob." At the Autumn Hiring Fair in Reading "nearly 500 agricultural servants ... came to be hired, but not many of them were hired. The situation of the farmer now is but little better than that of his servant. All classes of the community are in a miserable state; all complain; almost all have occasion for complaint. The land-holder cannot get his rents; the farmer cannot support his family; the tradesman cannot sell his goods; the workman is thrown out of work." (37) The already very bad situation was worsened by the demobilisation of large numbers of soldiers and sailors, e.g. the Berks Militia.(38)

It is from the winter of 1815-1816 onwards that the Kintbury Overseers were expending large sums on "wages" for "Grubbing" (*) at Winding Wood or Orpenham Copse, or for work "on the roads". In 1815-16, 19 men and boys were employed on "grubbing", and 14 were working on "gravel" or "on the roads". In 1816-17, £125.7s.6d. was paid for "Grubbing at Orpenham", and £101.17s.2d. for "Planting Potatoes at Orpenham Copse." In 1818-19, 58 men were either "Grubbing at Winding Wood" at a cost to the rate-payers of £130.12s.6½d., or "Planting Potatoes at Winding Wood" at a cost of £161.16s.3½d. Some men were also employed in 1818 on constructing new buildings at the Workhouse; the labour cost of this project amounted to £77.1s.10d.

From 1818 it was the continuous policy of farmers to cut down expenses as much as possible. "The most rigid and most vicious economy of all" was "in the employment of labour". Though they might complain of the crushing burden of tithes and high rents, and grumble against parson and landlord, "they found it more practical and convenient to economise on their men's wages." (13)

Even low wages and regular periods of unemployment might have been bearable given a liberal interpretation of the Poor Law and the application of the full Speenhamland rate of relief. There exists plenty of evidence that the latter was not adhered to, and, from 1819 onwards, the operation of Sturgess Bourne's Select

* Cutting down trees etc., and digging out the roots for ploughing and sowing.

Vestry Act, led, in many parishes, to a more stringent application of the long-established distinction between the "deserving" and the "undeserving" poor. The first two clauses of this Act state, inter alia, that the Overseers "shall take into consideration the character and the conduct of the poor person to be relieved, and shall be at liberty to distinguish between the deserving, and the idle, extravagant and profligate poor", and they were "required to conform to the directions of the select vestry, and shall not give any further or other relief or allowance to the poor than such as shall be ordered by the select vestry". (29)

According to Mr. Frederick Page, of Goldwell Park, Speen, the concerns of that parish were conducted in accordance with the principles of the above- mentioned Act from the Easter of 1819 (i.e. as soon as possible after that act had become law) with the following results. "The individual character of each poor person" was "discovered and registered for the information of future vestries and parish officers.". While "the inclemency of the winter of 1819-20 and the want of labour (i.e. unemployment) in the last two winters (1820-21 and 1821-22) ... appealed to the private charity and exertion of opulent individuals residing in the parish beyond the legal claim under the poor-rates, the information constantly registered in the books of the Select Vestry" made it possible to discriminate "in such distribution of the necessities of life, or provisions of labour (work) as the several circumstances rendered necessary." (29) In other words, the dossiers compiled by the Select Vestry made it much easier to discriminate between the forelock touching labourer, and the bad bolshevik.

The result listed last by Mr. Page was certainly not considered by him, and "by many other persons", to be the least important benefit of the new "mode of administration - the sums expended on the poor have been materially reduced. The average expenditure of the last three years (1819-1822) was one fourth less than the average of the four years preceding" although there was, over the same period, a "one third increase in population.". (29)

In October, 1826, the Deputy Clerk of the Peace for Newbury, Mr. W.Budd, wrote to William Cobbett's son ,James, as follows : "Arthur Young, in 1771, allowed for a man. his wife and three children 13s.1d. a week. By the Berkshire Magistrate's table, made in 1795, the allowance was, for such a family, 11s. Now it is 8s." (All figures according to 1826 prices.) (39)

The accounts of the Kintbury Overseers for the period 1820-1824 are incomplete so it is not possible to compare the fate of the Kintbury paupers with those of Speen or Newbury. "Grubbing" continued throughout the winter of 1826-27, and that of 1827-28 caused the Overseers to purchase and distribute over 450 gallons of bread to "the Roadmen".

The *Sunday Times*, 17th August, 1828, reported that "The farmers, generally, throughout the Southern and Western districts of the kingdom, predict great scarcity, in consequence of the late incessant heavy rains, and consequently a great increase in the price of bread .... . The general persuasion is that the present will turn out to be just such a year

as 1816." It did; by the Spring of 1829 the distress in the country was frightful ; millions were starving. (40) On 24th January there were 40 able-bodied Kintbury men "Out of Work". By the 26th of May the number of unemployed had risen to 49 (Out of 185 families chiefly employed in agriculture), and it was not until late June that the number fell below 25.

In its issue of 7th November, 1829, the *Berkshire Chronicle* commented : "We regret exceedingly to state that the most lamentable accounts continue to be received by us from all parts of this once happy and flourishing agricultural district. If the present state of most alarming depression continues - and at present we see no likelihood of the slightest amelioration - the results before Christmas will be inevitably dreadful. Stock of every description is worse than a drug on the market ; the latter may be sold but for the former there are absolutely no purchasers, even at a declension from last year's prices of from 30 to 50 %." The Salisbury and Winchester Journal" of 16th November, stated : "The fact is that two thirds of the landholders in this part of the country (the Vale of Berks), as well as in the adjacent divisions of Hants, Wilts and Oxford,are insolvent.".

In a subsequent issue (21st November) the *Berkshire Chronicle* reported that "Fifteen farmers of Berkshire who held farms in the most fertile parts of the county, have lately relinquished them for the purpose of emigrating with their families to Van Diemen's Land, because, after paying their rent, they found it difficult to exist on what remains from their industry and labour." If farmers found it difficult what of their workers ? It is one of the ironies of history that, just one year before more than forty Berkshire farm workers were to be forcibly transported to the other side of the world because of their clumsy attempts to improve their economic condition, fifteen Berkshire farmers should voluntarily emigrate to the same part of the world in the hope of improving theirs.
On the 18th January, 1830, Thomas Goodlake, with thirty years experience as a Berkshire magistrate behind him, wrote to the Home Secretary as follows : "I am sorry to say that they (the unemployed labourers during the winter season) are now becoming very numerous in almost every parish in the county - the present mode of treating them leads to distress and consequent despair, to a total want of industry in some that are married and have families ... and to petty thefts and crimes in others." (13) On the same date the *Reading Mercury* published a report of his speech before the Epiphany Quarter Sessions. "It was unquestionable", he said, "that the poor were in a miserable state and he feared that it was too generally the practice to beat them down so low, as well in wages as in parochial assistance, as to leave them scarcely sufficient to maintain even their existence. In some places he grieved to hear that the weekly payment to single men had been as low as 2s.8d., a sum totally inadequate for their support.". The chairman, Charles Dundas, in his address to the Grand Jury, "expressed the belief that the alarming increase in crime throughout the county was largely due to the cruel pressure on the poor by the illiberality of masters and parishes.".

What the winter of 1829-30 meant for the farm workers of Kintbury is indicated by the expenditure of the Overseers of the Poor, between the 12th December and 20th March, of £216.14s.8d., on "Labour at the Cops (sic) and at the Wood.". For the very first time the Overseers Accounts Books included an entry against the name of William Smith (alias Winterbourn) - the date, 21st November, 1829, exactly one year prior to the outbreak of the

riots in Kintbury. On 19th January Smith was again constrained to apply to the Overseers for relief. When a man of his spirit and independence was forced to seek parish relief we may be reasonably certain that he and his family were, literally, starving.

The third poor summer in a row produced a "very considerable deficiency in the crops," (41) which must have put many a labourer on the parish very early in the Autumn of 1830, with an even smaller hoard of harvest money than usual to eke out the winter dole. In September, 1830, according to the *Reading Mercury*, a gallon loaf cost 1s.7d at Newbury and 1s.6d. at Hungerford. If the Speenhamland Scale is considered to be an acceptable minimum, a married Hungerford labourer with two young children should have received the equivalent of 10s.6d. per week. With current wages of 7s.0d. per week it will readily be seen that, even when working, he would need to resort to the Overseers of the Poor if he and his family were not to starve. In fact the Speenhamland Scale was not applied ; the average amount of relief granted in Berkshire in 1830 to an unemployed labourer in the circumstances described was 5s.3d., (13) just a half of what the Scale stated to be the absolute minimum to maintain existence.

That the unemployment position was even worse than usual at this time is indicated by the calling of a Special Meeting of the Hungerford Standing Committee for Poor Law Matters on 20th October, 1830, "to consult on the best plan to employ the poor out of work.". The consultations did not produce any radical plan for the solution of this problem. All that came out of the meeting was an offer from Mr.Willes, of Hungerford Park, "to employ 10 men for a month and give employment to others to grub hedgerows.". (8)

As far as food was concerned the farm workers would have been better off in Reading Gaol. In the fifth issue of his *Politics for the Poor*, published in the same month as the riots began in Berkshire, Cobbett unfavourably compared the potato based diet of most farm workers with that provided under the Berkshire Jail Regulations. (see Page 12) That Cobbett was not distorting the facts is confirmed by the following entry in the Berkshire Quarter Sessions Order Book for 25th October, 1825 :

> "The Gaol Diet is much better than that which the Farming Labourer is accustomed to at Home." In spite of the authorities efforts to "render the Gaol a place of punishment rather than a desirable residence" the Gaol Regulations provided "comfort and convenience" superior to "the Want and Privation of a Labourer's Life in the County." So superior was it "that many prisoners still regarded the Gaol without repugnance, especially during the Winter season.". (42)

According to calculations made by Edwin Chadwick, in a Report to the Poor Law Commissioners (1834) the official food scale for a convict was such that he would consume nearly three times as many ounces of solid food per week as would a free employed agricultural labourer. (13). Joseph Carter, a Hampshire rioter, who, though sentenced to transportation, actually served only two years and one day in the Portsmouth hulks, wished "every poor,

hard-working man in this parish were as well fed with meat, and myself with them, as I wor in the hulk. The worst of the food was better than I can get in Sutton Scotney.". (43)

WICKED MEN AND THEIR INFERNAL MACHINES.

For the agricultural labourers the introduction of the threshing machine was an unqualified tragedy for it left them, or threatened to leave them, totally dependent on parish relief for the hardest part of the year ; it is not, therefore, surprising that the threshing machine became the symbol of their misery. The reason why the threatening letters were signed "Swing" was, according to Halevy, that this word was used to denote the swinging stick of the flail used in hand threshing. (The flail was, basically, two sticks joined by a flexible knot, the part which was used to strike the straw to shake out the grain being known as the SWINGEL.) (44)

It was about 100 years before the events with which this book is concerned that the celebrated Jethro Tull endeavoured to banish the flail from the barn. Like many pioneers his neighbours loaded him with execration. The tradition of the district around Tull's Prosperous Farm near Hungerford was still (in 1830) that he was "wicked enough to construct a machine which, by working a set of sticks, beat out the corn without manual labour.". In 1732 Michael Menzies patented a machine for thrashing grain, but, though a committee appointed by the Society of Improvers in Scotland reported that "in their opinion it would be of great use to farmers", "the honour of having perfected the threshing machine beyond question belongs" to Andrew Meikle (1785). (45)

Yet, until the Napoleonic wars , the use of such machines spread very slowly. In 1794, W.Pearce, in his review of agriculture in Berkshire, made no reference to threshing machines. (46) The spread of the machinery which the labourers of 1830 regarded as the most important cause of their distress was largely a development of the abnormal situation existing between 1800 and 1813. (13) The purpose of the mechanisation undertaken during the war years (a period of labour shortage) was probably not so much to reduce the cost of labour, nor to supplant the human factor in the farm economy but to supplement it. Threshing was undoubtedly one of the heaviest items in the farmer's wages book, but more important, when labour was scarce and prices high, was the proportion of labour it required. On an arable farm employing ten labourers it was estimated that three would be engaged in threshing for at least ten months of the year. (13)

The following examples indicate how important a part threshing played in the farm economy, and in the lives (and wages) of farm labourers. A Labour Book of Gooseacre Farm, Radley, near Abingdon,shows entries for threshing from 20th October (1821) through to 20th July (1821) when the entries against the same labourers' names began to refer to reaping and mowing ; entries for threshing recommence on 12th October,1822. (27) An Accounts Book for a farm at Sibford Ferris includes entries for wages paid for threshing throughout the year, from 11th February,1810 to 13th January,1811. (47)

From the beginning of the 19th century the use of threshing machines became much more common, so that, by 1809, it could be said by Pearce's successor that "within the last two or three years a considerable number of threshing machines on different principles, and of different powers, have been erected in Berkshire".(26) Mavor

noted the existence of such machines at farms in East and West Ilsley, East Garston, Chievely and Thatcham, but an advertisement in the *Reading Mercury* for 30th May, 1808 -

Threshing and Winnowing machines by William Baker, near the Corn Market,Newbury -

suggests the possibility that these machines may have been more wide-spread in West Berkshire than he believed. *A Topographical and Statistical Description of the County of Berks* (first published in 1802) states that "The old winnowing machine is now nearly discarded having been replaced principally by those of Mr. Baker.", while an entry in *Reading Seventy Years Ago* for 22nd November, 1814, states that "the threshing machine has now almost superseded the use of the flail.". (37) However, the cost of these machines (between £250 and £3,000) must have limited the rate at which the flail was being superseded.

In 1813 Vancouver noted that some machines had been erected on the Isle of Wight at a cost of less than £80, and that 2-3 h.p. machines costing between £80 and £120 were "getting into much use in the valley of the Avon.". (48) Even at these prices such machines were beyond the reach of the average farmer. The invention of a portable threshing machine by Robert Ransome around 1800 made the more general use of machines a possibility, but for some considerable time it remained just that. It was not until the late 1820's that they became common even in Ransome's own county of Suffolk. In that county it was not unusual "for an industrious labourer who may have saved £30 or £40 to own one, which is moved from place to place on two wheels, and worked, when fixed, by three or four horses.". (49) Evidence for the existence of such entrepreneurial activity in Berkshire can be found in the reports of the trials which took place following the 1830 riots. A certain Gabriel Lamb of the Aldermaston area "obtained a livelihood by working" a portable threshing machine. (50) According to J.A.Ransome many of these portable machines were made "by persons who possess little claim to any mechanical knowledge, and who, purchasing the unfitted castings, by the help of village artisans, produce an imitation of those which are considered good.". (45)

At first sight it may seem surprising that, during the 1830 riots, such artisans (blacksmiths, wheelwrights and carpenters) made common cause with the labourers to whose distress their own technical skill had contributed. A partial explanation may be found in the fact that, as early as 1821, tradesmen and artisans in the agricultural districts were being adversely affected by the prevailing economic depression, (51) but the most important reason was the growth of relatively large-scale iron-works such as Taskers of Andover, Austins of Wantage and Gibbons of Hungerford, in the period immediately preceding the riots. The distrust with which the local blacksmiths viewed the inroads that the production of cast-iron mechanisms was making in their trade has been noted earlier. The competition of these "factories" caused a fall in the demand for local labour and forced down the wages of these skilled and semi-skilled workmen so that they found themselves "enjoying" a standard of living not much, if anything, better than their labourer comrades. It was this which explains their enthusiastic participation in the destruction of iron goods made and stored at such works. E.g. Thomas Goodlake, J.P., in a letter to the Home

Secretary, refers to the breaking of "some Thrashing and Haymaking machines" at "an Iron Founders in the town of Wantage." (52) Another letter in the Home Office records, dated 20th November, 1830, states that the pretext for the attack on Tasker's Iron Foundry, near Andover, was that the proprietor had been in the habit of manufacturing iron work for threshing machines. (53) That Richard Gibbons of Bridge Street, Hungerford, had been doing likewise is confirmed by the list of broken goods which includes "threshing machine wheels". At one stage in the riots the Kintbury "congregation", having been informed "that there were threshing machines at two different engine makers in Newbury", made their way towards Newbury with the intention of destroying them also.

That some of the threshing machines in the Kintbury area were of the cheaper, portable, kind is confirmed in a letter written by the vicar of the parish, the Rev.Fowle, to the chief magistrate and M.P. for the district, Mr. Charles Dundas, informing him of what had happened at Kintbury early on Monday, 22nd of November. (see Chapter 2.)

It has been argued earlier in this chapter that the mechanisation which took place during the boom years was intended to supplement rather than to supplant human labour. However, in the slump after 1815 there was a strong incentive to introduce machinery to speed up the process of getting the wheat to market. The higher prices which usually prevailed immediately following the harvest may well have produced sufficient profit in periods of general economic depression to have made the difference between solvency and bankruptcy. In addition some farmers believed that they could more than recoup the cost of the machinery from the reduction in the labour costs which such machines made possible. Thus, by 1817, the Lords Committee on the Poor Laws was being told that "many labourers are thrown out of employment in consequence of threshing machines." In some areas "rather than have a number of men in the parish existing entirely on parish relief, the parish authorities arranged with the farmers to pay part of the wages of the men who were given work threshing in the barn with a flail, and it was for this reason that the flail became known as the *poverty stick* ". (44)

Though hand threshing was not a task which the labourers found either easy or satisfying - All those who had experience of threshing with the flail agree that it was monotonous and gruelling work." (44) An old Suffolk farm worker (still alive in 1956) had no two thoughts about it : "Threshing was real, down-right slavery." (54) - it was certainly remunerative. In fact, compared with the normal rate of pay, it was princely. The labourers of Gooseacre Farm, Radley, for example, were paid, in 1821, at the rate of 3s.6d. per quarter of wheat. (27) If we assume, following Mavor, that one labourer could thresh one quarter of wheat in one day (*), then a hard working man could have earnt a guinea in a working week of 72 hours, which was treble the general labouring rate of 7s.0d. per week. Thus the increasing use of
machinery not only put the farm workers "on the parish" during the worst part of the year, it also deprived them of the traditional means of supplementing their meagre incomes.

It is, therefore, understandable that the labourers regarded these "infernal" machines as the symbol of their misery. What is more difficult to understand is why they rose in 1830 rather than in any other year of economic distress, especially if,

* G.E.Evans records the claim of one man to have "knocked out something like three and a half coombs (i.e.1¾ quarters) a day." (54)

as has been suggested earlier, the use of threshing machines had become fairly wide-spread in this area very soon after the end of the Napoleonic wars. This may be partially explained by factors other than machines (e.g. the example of labourers elsewhere and of the French workers in Paris ; the political excitement aroused by the death of George IV and the consequent election ; even the weather), but the ferocious determination of local labourers to destroy all those on which they could lay their hands requires some other explanation.

This may be found in the fact that, early in 1829, a Mr. Rider "residing at the Wallop Estates, Westbury (Wilts)" had invented a portable threshing machine the cost of which was advertised as "between £8 and £10". (55) This announcement was said to have caused a great deal of comment among the labourers of Wiltshire and adjacent counties. They regarded the machine as certain to produce want and starvation amongst them and their families. It was in their opinion "an infernal machine". The man who invented it, the farmer who purchased or used one, and the man who took charge of it were a trio of "rascals" who deserved no consideration at the hands of "honest men". (56)

At this price the use of such machines would have spread more rapidly and more widely than at any other time. While we cannot be absolutely certain that this had occurred we can say with certainty that the number of machines recorded as destroyed in the rioting in Wiltshire and adjacent areas is such, when compared with the rest of the "Swing" counties, as to suggest that this was highly probable. Of the nearly 400 machines recorded as destroyed in the twenty- one counties involved in the revolt, 217 (or 56%) were destroyed in only three counties (i.e. Hampshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire), while 36% were destroyed in Wiltshire and West Berkshire alone. (9) At least 37 (and possibly as many as 45) were destroyed in the very small area with which this study is mainly concerned (i.e. an area roughly demarcated by a triangle with its vertices at Newbury, Great Shefford and Shalbourne -at this time part of Berkshire - but excluding the villages of the
Lambourn valley.). If we assume that, however vigorously and persistently the local labourers set about their self-imposed task of destroying every single one of the hated machines, they nonetheless failed to achieve their objective completely, then the density of machines in existence in this area immediately prior to the rioting must have been in excess of 1 per square mile.

DISTRESS AND CONSEQUENT DESPAIR

WILD GEESE AND NORTHERN LIGHTS.

The summer of 1828 was only the first of three consecutive cold, wet summers. Mr. R. Hughes, of Woodford, near Salisbury, giving evidence to the Select Committee on Agriculture in 1833 stated, "We had three wet seasons in succession, in 1828, 1829 and 1830.". J.M.Stratton commented that in 1828 there was "a wet summer with a disappointing harvest.... The rains of early July were exceptionally violent, causing considerable flooding. Hay was washed away and cornfields laid flat.". (57) In a farm diary of Sulham Estate, near Pangbourne, an entry for 2nd October, 1829, states - "Frequent and almost incessant rains- scarcely two days together without them. The harvest has lasted the unusual time of upwards of eight weeks. Very little of the corn got in in good order.". (58) J.M. Stratton commented that 1829 was "Another very wet summer with a poor harvest. Only four fine days between June 16th and September 20th. Considerable snowfall on October 6th and 7th.". (57) A farmer of Nether Wallop wrote in his diary for 1830, "The summer this year also very wet, being the third cold, wet summer in succession." He also recorded that the winter of 1829-30 was the severest that he could remember. There was "hard frost with a great quantity of snow on the ground from the middle of December to the middle of February, large flocks of wild geese being seen daily.". (59) J.M. Stratton confirms this ; "There were blizzards in mid-January and severe frosts in February.". (57) "There were frequent displays of the *Northern Lights* which alarmed the country people who believed them to be a warning of some awful calamity.". (60)

Three poor harvests in a row (with the consequent loss of the traditional extra wages), and two harsh winters in between (that of 1829/30 was said to be the worst for nearly a hundred years (61)) had strung up many farm workers to a pitch of angry defiance. The prospect of a third bad winter was too much - "They would do anything," said some of the earliest of the 1830 rioters in the Dover district, "rather than encounter such a winter as the last.". (14)

CONCLUSION.

There is no evidence that the local labourers were aroused by itinerant rabble rousers or that they took advantage of the new Beer Houses in which to plot unheard and unobserved. They were certainly aware of what was going on elsewhere, and the gradual spread of the rioting from Kent westwards supports the view that the rioting was contagious. The fact that Cobbett was a "household word" in the neighbourhood of Newbury and that many of the local leaders were literate suggests that it is highly likely that the inflammatory nature of much of his writing played no unimportant part in arousing the hitherto quiescent workers of the district to action. The timing of the revolt in central southern England cannot be unconnected with the Duke of Wellington's reactionary speech of 2nd November. This had undoubtedly persuaded many farm workers to ditch those moderate leaders who argued that Parliamentary Reform was the panacea for all ills, in favour of those who believed in more direct measures.

The two most important causes of the riots were, however, the distress caused by totally inadequate wages or parish relief, and the unemployment caused in large measure by the use of threshing machines. It is true that the former had become a permanent part of the farm worker's existence, but three wet summers interspersed by two harsh winters (the last one the worst for nearly a hundred years) had stretched the hitherto docile labourers to breaking point. The last straw was the invention of an extremely cheap threshing machine.

One contemporary ascribed the disturbances in Berkshire almost solely to the increasing use of such machines. "The agricultural labourers took it into their heads that the introduction of machinery for threshing etc., was the cause of keeping down their wages and of lessening the amount of labour.".(62)

When all these explosive elements - starvation wages, regular periods of unemployment made worse by the spread of cheap threshing machines, abnormally harsh weather conditions, the loss of hope in democratic measures, and the example of successful risings elsewhere - were brought together, it needed only some small local injustice to set off the chain of events which led its participants, almost inevitably, to the gallows or to Botany Bay.

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CHAPTER 2

NOW IS OUR TIME

The immediate cause of the revolt in and around Kintbury was the committal to the Blind House, or Cage, late on Sunday afternoon, 21st November, of a beggar who, having been refused relief by the current Overseer, Mr. Hogan Smith, had used threatening language. (1) News of this petty act of injustice led many more to join the small group which had already assembled to discuss the exploits of their fellow workers of the neighbouring parish of Speen during the previous day, and who were debating the wisdom of following their example. According to the *Berkshire Chronicle* the crowd, led by one Jacob Gater, broke into the Cage and released the prisoner, who was promptly re-arrested and returned to the lock-up. This increased the crowd's anger, and, once again led by Gater, they released the vagrant a second time and then proceeded to destroy the Cage. (2) *The Times* report stated that the action was initiated by Francis Norris who "attempted to release the beggar but, being prevented by the constable, collected a few others and broke open the cage.".(3) While it is true that Norris later took a leading role in the rioting, being appointed "treasurer", other evidence suggests the *Chronicle's* account may have been more accurate than that of the *Times*. With nine others Gater was indicted for "conspiring to riot and for riotous assembly on the 21st November", but he, alone, was found guilty, presumably because, on that occasion, he was the leader. Having successfully acted to rectify one small injustice those assembled were encouraged to turn their attention to those objects which they considered to be the cause of much of their own distress and despair, the hated threshing machines.

By the Sunday evening the crowd had grown to about two hundred strong.(4) The first farm to be subject to their attentions was Wallingtons, owned by Mr. Cuthbert Johnson. According to the Rev. Fowle, Vicar of Kintbury, the crowd demanded and received £2 from Mr. Johnson.(5) As, according to other evidence, "it was one of the congregation's rules to have or to demand £2 for each machine destroyed as payment for the work involved," (6) it is reasonable to assume that Mr. Johnson's threshing machine was in fact destroyed. The next place to be visited was Mr. John Steven's farm, Anvilles, which was reached around midnight. Steven's servant, Nicholas Dobson, stated that one of those who broke his master's threshing machine was William Winterbourn (7), who had been chosen as "Captain".

Between the hours of twelve midnight and one a.m. a large number of persons assembled at the farm house of Richard Goddard, of Templeton. Francis Norris, who had been elected "treasurer of the congregation", demanded a light in order to be able to see to break some machines in the barn. Having obtained one from his carter's house Farmer Goddard handed it to Norris who, followed by a large section of the crowd, went into the barn and proceeded to break the threshing machine with a long piece of iron which he was carrying. As he was breaking the drum he said, "This is a hard job, Winterbourn", to which Winterbourn replied, "Never mind Frank, when you are

tired I am ready to take your place.".(4) According to another report some members of the crowd also broke Mr. Goddard's flails and every plough on the farm, got into the house, took what provisions and beer they could find and demanded the customary two sovereigns. (8) Before leaving others demanded bread and cheese which Mr. Goddard gave them. (4) Apparently the leaders had not yet imposed the degree of discipline which other observers reported as being typical of the Kintbury "congregation's" progress.

From Templeton the crowd proceeded to Inglewood, the property of Captain Dunn. His servant, William Chapman, testified that very early on Monday, 22nd November, two to three hundred persons came to break his master's threshing machine ; William Winterbourn, William Oakley, George Holmes and William Westall were present in the "mob". (7) According to the Rev. Fowle the Kintbury congregation concluded its nocturnal marauding by a visit to Mr. Alderman's farm close to the village. Although there is no positive evidence that Mr. Alderman's threshing machine was destroyed, he was charged the customary £2.

The Kintbury men had little or no rest that night as they were known to be active before the break of day. As early as 4 a.m. they roused the Rev. Fowle who, having consulted with Thomas Harrison, the bailiff of Mr. Charles Dundas, M.P.,of Barton Court, Kintbury, arranged for Mr. Dundas's threshing machines to be brought to the centre of the village where they were destroyed. Mr. Thomas Owen, of Clapton Farm, was also permitted to bring his machine to be demolished there.

The Vicar, who seems to have been kept well-informed of the labourers' movements, recorded that it was their intention to proceed to Hungerford Park, the property of Mr. John Willes, J.P., by way of Titcomb, with the further objective of reaching North Hidden, one of John Pearce's farms well to the north of the Bath Road. (5) In fact other evidence suggests that they did not proceed directly to Titcomb,but first made their way to the residence of Joseph and Elizabeth Randall on the road to Newbury. Here one or two of the usually well- disciplined Kintbury party appear to have got out of hand. When it arrived there at "a quarter before five" in the morning, several members of the crowd demanded victuals, drink or money, and, because Mr. Randall was not quick enough in responding to their demands, "Joseph Nicholas threw a stick and broke a window." He used such force that he not only broke the glass of the window, but thrust the frame, sash and shutters into the room.(7) William Winterbourn stopped Nicholas from breaking any more windows, and restrained Alfred Darling from breaking the door. When they were about to break the window he is reported as having said, "Stop ! Stop ! Give the man time." He twice told them to stop and to refrain from injuring the house, but advised Joseph Randall to give the money to prevent any further damage being done. Mr. Randall's evidence reveals the generally peaceful attitude of the leading rioters, and how they considered that they had right on their side, and believed that they were acting in a constitutional way. "Steel was there ; he was quiet. Carter said in a civil way, You had better not stand out as the others have given something. Westall was also there and said, *We must hold a vestry on this*.." (9) Randall's sister, Elizabeth, stated that she gave the men a sovereign through the window which had been broken. One of them threw it down saying that it was too little remuneration for the hard work involved in breaking the machines, but "another took it up, called for Captain

Winterbourn, and delivered the sovereign into his hands. Winterbourn then said, *We will take half-price here because he has stood like a man. We have done some damage and that must be paid for.* " (7)

The Kintbury men then went to the farm of Thomas Litten, of Hamstead Holt. Mr. Litten stated that between 5 and 6 o'clock on the morning of Monday, 22nd November, the mob came, demanded the key to his barn, and broke his threshing machine. William Winterbourn and another man entered the house and demanded money. He "gave Winterbourn an order upon Mr. Heath of the *Blue Ball* public house for 20 shillings worth of liquor." The party outside had threatened to break the windows if he did not give them the money. (7)

Mr. Frederick Webb of Titcomb testified that at about 8.a.m. on Monday 22nd November the mob came to his house and demanded money. William Winterbourn, holding up a sledge-hammer, had threatened, "If you don't give me a sovereign, I will spill blood in your house." (It was no doubt this typical example of working-class bluster which persuaded the prosecution to include this among those charges on which a capital conviction was sought.) Alfred and Thomas Darling, William Carter, William Oakley, James Randall, William Sims and Edmund Steel were among those who stood behind Winterbourn when he uttered this threat, and it was Oakley and Steel who first broke the machines and the ploughs. William Alexander, also of Titcomb, supported Mr. Webb's testimony and added that "Mrs. Webb fetched a sovereign and gave it to Winterbourn." (7)

From Titcomb the Kintbury men made their way towards Denford, calling en route at Hungerford Park, the estate of Mr. John Willes, whose ploughs were destroyed. (4) Mr. George Cherry, J.P., of Denford House had his threshing machine broken and had to pay the usual two sovereigns for the pleasure. A short while later he was accosted by another party which demanded £1, which they were given. When the re-formed congregation passed Denford House again they offered to return the £1. Their explanation was that they had approached the house in small groups because they had heard that Mrs. Cherry was unwell. (1) According to another report Mrs. Cherry was lying-in with her seventh child. (10) The united Kintbury congregation reached Denford about ten o'clock and it was near there that they joined forces with the men of Hungerford.

Before uniting with the Kintbury party, the Hungerford group had been breaking threshing machines mainly at farms to the north of the Bath Road. Contemporary documents give much less detailed information about the Hungerford labourers than about their comrades from Kintbury ; especially lacking are references to times. It would appear, however, that the first farm to suffer at their hands was one south of the town ; that of Mr. William Barnes at Sanham Green. Charles Holdaway and his partner William Phillips were making their way from Hungerford Park to Sanham Green when, on passing Farmer Barnes's yard, they saw John Aldridge, an apprentice blacksmith, and George Whiting, a farm labourer, breaking a threshing machine. Aldridge, who had a sledge-hammer, was breaking the iron wheels, while Whiting was splitting the wooden frame with a hatchet. Holdaway alleged that he heard Aldridge say, "Damn him ! That's a good one. I've done him." Aldridge was also reported as having said, "I should like to down with all foundries." (7) (This declaration supports the view expressed earlier that the competition of

foundries such as Gibbons of Hungerford had depressed the standard of living of artisans such as blacksmiths to a level not much, if anything, better than their labourer comrades.) The farmer's son, Henry, claimed that Aldridge had asked him for the key to his father's barn so that they could break the remaining part of the threshing machine. On his request being refused Aldridge was alleged to have said, "Be damned if I don't break in", but in fact he went away with the rest of the party without doing further damage, to continue the work of destruction at farms in the Newtown area to the north of the town.

Mr. Barnes, senior, was at Mr. Winkworth's farm at Hidden when the rioters arrived. He had ridden over to Newtown with several other persons to prevent mischief being done there, but the crowd was too numerous. He "saw George Whiting active in the mob and saw him beat and break the drum of the threshing machine,which was eventually broken in pieces. There were about 100 persons in the mob most of whom were armed with weapons.". (7)

Mr. Crompton's Three Acre Farm was the labourers' next objective. After they had had some bread and cheese there they moved off by the blowing of a horn, saying as they went that they would break all the machines. They proceeded next to Mr. Beasley's farm where they broke his threshing machine. Mr. Barnes said that he saw Aldridge, using a sledge-hammer, and Whiting, using a bludgeon, break one of the wheels. (7) According to Capt. Lidderdale, late adjutant of the Hungerford Troop of the 1st. Berks Regiment of Yeomanry Cavalry, the Hungerford labourers also broke the machines of two other Newtown farmers, Mr. Little and Mr. Parsons. (8)

Having apparently concluded their business in this area the Hungerford men made their way to Denford where they met with their Kintbury comrades. W. Money states that the junction was made according to a pre-concerted arrangement, the agreed meeting-place being "by the yew-tree at Denford Bottom." From there the combined body * marched on to Mr. Hayter's at Denford Farm, from which, having smashed all the machinery they could find, they advanced on Hungerford." (11)

"About ¾ mile from Hungerford on the London Road" (7) they were met by about a dozen mounted gentlemen led by Mr. John Willes of Hungerford Park. The party included the previously mentioned Mr. Barnes, Mr. Pearce and Capt. Lidderdale. Also in the party were General Popham of Littlecote, Mr. George Cundell of Hungerford, and Mr. John Hill of Standen. Alongside Mr. Willes rode a Mr. Annings whose windows received the attention of the crowd later in the morning.

Mr. Willes attempted to negotiate with this very large body but, according to Capt. Lidderdale, the attempt to speak civilly to the crowd was met with violence, Mr. Willes being attacked with "bludgings". It may be true that two of the Kintbury men
struck the valiant captain's horse which thereupon bolted and ran off with him, (8) but Mr. Willes's own testimony suggests that though some members of the mob

* Estimates of the number vary from 500 to 1,000. The higher figure was given by Mr. John Pearce, of Chilton House, who was given to exaggeration.

were carrying what might be called offensive weapons, they had no intention of assaulting persons. He states that they treated him kindly, and that one of them led
his horse by the bridle. Observing Edmund Steel, one of the leaders, with a hatchet in his hand, he said, "My friend, that is a deadly weapon you have. It could split a man's skull." To which Steel replied, "Depend upon it, sir, it shall never injure yours.". (12)

Neither Mr. Willes's friendly conversation, nor his invitation to them to appoint a deputation to attend a meeting with himself and other magistrates in Hungerford Town Hall later in the morning, reduced the labourers' hostility towards the hated threshing machines and all those concerned with the construction or use of them. On reaching the outskirts of the town some of them broke the windows of the house belonging to Mr. Annings, a tanner. (13) Thomas Major, surgeon, of Hungerford, testified that about 11 o'clock he was on his horse in Charnham Street when he saw David Garlick try to open the door of Mr. Anning's house, opposite the *White Hart Inn*. Having failed to open the door Garlick tried to open the yard gates with a bludgeon. This was the signal for others to break the windows. (4) *

From Charnham Street the crowd made their way to the High Street. Most of them had passed Richard Gibbons' iron foundry in Bridge Street when "one man called the mob back." (4) A wine merchant, appropriately named Viner, "stood in the middle of the gateway of the foundry to prevent them entering," and turned back six or seven by saying that "there was no threshing machine ever made there."(7) ** But one man halloed out, "Hark forward ! Go at it ! Break the iron to pieces.", and about three or four hundred (sic) of them broke through the gateway." (6) Charles Kent, an employee of Richard Gibbons, tried to prevent one of the mob from breaking a cast-iron pan, but the rioter said, " I'll break that pan and knock thy brains out." (7) By the time the crowd withdrew from the foundry they had demolished virtually everything in the yard. *** Having completed their work of destruction they claimed the usual two sovereigns which Mr. Viner gave to them.
Gibbons' employees, Charles Kent and Thomas Clements, and the aforesaid Mr. Viner, between them identified nearly twenty of the rioters. The list included the

* Professor E.L. Jones has suggested that the labourers' animosity towards Mr. Annings was because he made the endless belts used on threshing machines.
** According to Mr. Frederick Page, of Speen, Richard Gibbon was also "a machine maker." (1)
*** Richard Gibbons' claim for compensation amounted to £261.8s.6d., and the list of goods broken included "threshing machine wheels." (6)

names of six Kintbury men, five of whom were later to swear that "They were never on the premises in their lives". It is quite possible that they were telling the truth and that the attack on the foundry was a purely Hungerford affair, for those who swore to their presence in the foundry yard were Hungerford men.

Unlike a large number of other persons who successfully claimed compensation or reward under the proclamation issued by the new Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne, poor Mr. Gibbons' claim was rejected though it was larger than

most. (see note *** page 40) Failure to extract money from the Treasury led him to try the local Quarter Sessions Court, but the Berkshire gentlemen who presided over the court on 3rd. April, 1831, proved no less hard-hearted and decided to make no order in his favour. (15)

A short while after the affray at Gibbons' iron foundry, Mr. Willes, the senior Hungerford magistrate, persuaded the two parties to select five men each to represent them and to place their views before the gentlemen assembled within the Town Hall. The deputations entered the hall together, but were treated with separately. The Hungerford deputation (consisting of George Rosier, Charles Smith, John Aldridge, Richard Aldridge and Thomas Liddiard) was faced by four magistrates, Willes, Pearce, Atherton and Kitson, who were supported by sixteen other gentlemen. The Hungerford men asked that until Lady Day the wage of a married man with three children should be 12s. per week, that all threshing machines should be destroyed, and that house rents should be reduced. Mr. Pearce, on behalf of his fellow farmers, agreed that wages would be raised, but as to house rents he could say nothing ; they should arrange with their landlords respecting that. Their first point having been conceded, and some vague promises made as to the second, the Hungerford delegation quietly withdrew from the hall. (16)

Mr. Willes then went across the room to where the Kintbury delegation were standing in unconcealed scorn, and privately asked them to put away their weapons. (17) According to Mr.J. Pearce, J.P., M.P., who was given to exaggerated statements, "Five more desperate characters than the Kintbury deputies (William Winterbourn, William Oakley, Daniel Bates, Edmund Steel and one other - probably Francis Norris, the "treasurer") could not be produced. They came forward and
declared that the Hungerford deputies were fools, that the power was in their hands, that the concessions were made from fear, and announced, with horrid imprecations,
that they would have their own terms and would not agree to those which had been proposed.".(18)
William Oakley (who appears to have been chosen as chief spokesman in spite of his later representation that he had been forced to go with the mob) is reported to have addressed the assembled magistrates in the kind of language they had never heard in their lives before, and were unlikely ever to hear again. "You have not such damned flats (i.e. persons easily duped) to deal with now as you had before ; we will have 2 shillings a day till Lady Day, and 2s.6d. afterwards for labourers, and 3s.6d. for tradesmen, and as we are here we will have £5 before we leave the place or we will be damned if we do not smash it, and down with the Town altogether.". A consciousness of a wider social justice and a fundamental hostility towards the ruling class, together with a sense of working class solidarity, was displayed by Oakley when he addressed Mr. Pearce in the following words, "You gentlemen have been living upon all the good things for the last ten years. We have suffered enough and now is our time and be damned if we will not have it. You and the rest of the gentlemen only speak to us now because you are afraid.". (19)

Daniel Bates and William Winterbourn then conversed with Mr. Willes. The latter said that if they were not given what they asked they would break everything in the town, and, turning to Bates, said, "Brother we have lived

together and we will die together. If we don't have it directly here goes - we'll have blood and down with the bloody place.". Bates, striking his sledge- hammer on the floor with great violence, replied, "We will have it.". (19)

A Mr. Osmond then gently laid his hand on Winterbourn's shoulder meaning to speak to him, but Winterbourn reacted by saying that he would knock down the first man that laid hands on him. Bates then flourished his hammer over Mr. Willes's head. The magistrate said. "If you kill me, you only shorten the days of an old man." Another J.P., Mr. Joseph Atherton, fearing that all their lives were in danger, and having a brace of pistols in his pocket, put his hand on one of them and got it ready to use in case Bates actually struck Mr. Willes. (9)

The gentry then conferred among themselves but not for long for their conference was rudely interrupted by Oakley who shouted, "Damn it ! Look sharp ! We are not going to stay here all day. Out with the money. Don't think that you are going to lay your heads together to commit us to prison for the sake of £2 apiece, like Old Fowle (the Vicar of Kintbury) who kept Reading Gaol well supplied with prisoners while he could have £2 apiece for them. If it had not been for that he would have been in the workhouse long ago. We have been served in that way long enough, and now we are come to see ourselves righted." (7) The magistrates eventually acceded to the demands of the Kintbury deputies, and Mr. Willes gave each of them a sovereign, and also gave the Hungerford men £5 as it would have been unjust to treat them worse than their more unruly neighbours.

From what occurred later in the day it would appear that the mild nature of the Hungerford delegation was not matched by the temper of the Hungerford mob for, between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon, some hundreds of them were making a great deal of noise outside Miss Harriet Allen's house. They demanded money and bread and cheese. Her brother dropped about thirty shillings worth of silver and some bread and cheese out of an upstairs window. Upon repeated clamorous demands money was thrown out on three more occasions. Miss Allen said that she saw Charles Smith, of Hungerford, taking an active part in the riot. (4) It was also reported that the *Regulator* and *Star* coaches from Bath to London were molested by a rabble of several hundreds. (20) They were stopped, the panels and glasses broken, and money extorted from the passengers.(1) Not all of the Kintbury men could have returned to the village with the main body for one of them, George Gaby, who, according to one prosecution witness, was "a very bad character" and had thrown " a hammer through a coach window and hit a gentleman." (7)

About three o'clock in the afternoon four men, including James Wilkins of Hungerford, demanded money from Richard Compton, Esq., of Eddington. One of the men is reported to have said that "they would bring 700 men if he did not give them money.", so Mr. Compton gave them one shilling each. (4) Some time after 4 p.m. the threshing machine of one of the J.P.s present at the Town Hall meeting received the attention of the Hungerford rioters. According to a Hungerford butcher, John Fisher, he was forced to go along with them for about two miles, the objective being "to knock Mr. Osmond's threshing machine to pieces." (4) During the evening of Monday three separate parties pestered the miller of Chilton , Mr. Child, who gave them 5s.0d., 2s.6d., and 1s.6d. respectively. The third group did not arrive until about 10.30 p.m. Armed with sticks and limbs of trees they demanded two

sovereigns. and threatened that if he did not pay up they would break or burn down his house. Mr. Child gave them the one shilling and sixpence which, strangely, appeared to satisfy them. (4)

One small party of Hungerford men continued their operations into the small hours of Tuesday morning. About 1 a.m. Thomas Liddiard,farmer, of the parish of Lambourn, was in bed with his wife when he heard a great noise and, on looking out of the bed-room window, saw a mob of people, with David Hawkins of Hungerford in front of the crowd with a sledge-hammer in his hand. Hawkins demanded two sovereigns for breaking his, Liddiard's, threshing machine, saying, "We have two sovereigns for each threshing machine." The farmer gave Hawkins the £2. (4) An hour or so later. about 3 a.m., Charles Spanswick, also of the parish of Lambourn, was awakened by someone beating the front door of his house. He was asked if he had a threshing machine, and when he said that he had they demanded a light for "it was very dark". He gave them a light and they then broke his machine to pieces. When the work of destruction was finished David Hawkins demanded the customary two sovereigns. At first the farmer refused to pay, whereupon one of the crowd shouted, "Damn him ! Knock out his brains !" Even when Hawkins flourished his bludgeon Spanswick continued to temporise saying that he could not afford two, but would give them one sovereign. Hawkins then said, "We have had two all along for breaking the machines, and, damn ye, we will have two now." The farmer eventually handed over the two sovereigns to Hawkins, and provided the other members of the party with beer.(4)

The Kintbury men, who appear to have been not only more militant but more responsive to discipline than their Hungerford comrades, also seem to have had some semblance of organisation for "they made themselves into an organised body, appointing a leader (William Winterbourn), a treasurer (Francis Norris), etc." (21) In a letter to the Home Secretary a Deputy Lieutenant for Berkshire, Mr. Frederick Page, of Speen, recorded several incidents which suggest that the Kintbury leaders exercised firm discipline under extremely difficult circumstances. For example, when a few members of the "congregation" took it into their heads to rob a poor woman selling rabbits, they were ordered to restore the rabbits to their owner, and when one member of the Kintbury party stole an umbrella, from a farmer who had regaled them with bread and cheese, he was thrown into the canal as a punishment. (1)

Following the events in the Hungerford Town Hall most of the Kintbury men wended their way back to the village, but before they dispersed to their homes some of them had a long-standing score to settle with Mr. Charles Dundas's gamekeeper, William Clarkson. * Between 3 and 4 o'clock on Monday afternoon 150 to 200 of them visited the gamekeeper's house. William Sims said they wanted money, and

* The Quarter Session Rolls for Michaelmas, 1821, refer to W.Winterbourn and F. Norris being bound over to keep the peace, especially towards W. Clarkson.

money they would have. When asked how much would satisfy them he replied, " £5 and no less." On Clarkson saying that he had very little money, Sims said that "It ought to be £10 or down goes your house." The gamekeeper then said that he would fetch what money he had in the house. He returned with £2 in silver, and handed it to a bystander, a substantial landowner named Hogsflesh. * Mr. Hogsflesh called for the "foreman" and when Francis Norris came up the money was put into his hand. Several members of the crowd asked how much there was, and Clarkson announced, "£2, which is all the money I have." This caused much murmuring among the throng and after another verbal exchange with the gamekeeper William Sims said in conclusion, "Kintbury is in mourning for your blood. Mr. Dundas shall be no longer *King of Kintbury* ". In an attempt to pacify them Mr. Hogsflesh wrote out a note of hand addressed to Freebody, the landlord of the *Red Lion* (now the *Dundas Arms*) public house, to let the party have 20s. worth of beer and gave that also to Francis Norris.

Not long after the confrontation with Clarkson the Kintbury men were approached by Job Hanson, a respectable stone-mason of Newbury, who was also a Wesleyan Methodist district preacher. As he was well-known to and respected by many of the labourers present he was able to gain their confidence. He promised to be their spokesman with the magistrate, and thus induced them to parley with the Rev. F.C.Fowle, Vicar of Kintbury, who had hitherto been fearful of meeting them. (7) The conference took place and the Rev. Fowle told them that as far as was in his power he would endeavour to persuade the local farmers to accede to the terms agreed at the Hungerford Town Hall meeting. On hearing this the men gave three cheers and expressed themselves perfectly satisfied, though they insisted that their
wages must be paid in money only and not partly in bread. The reverend gentleman, not wishing to bring back angry feelings by refusing, promised to recommend this also. In return the labourers agreed to return to work on the following day. (1 and 5) Had they kept their part of the agreement it is just possible that they might have avoided the drastic punishments which were later meted out to them.

Between 6 and 7 o'clock in the evening the following little scene was enacted in the *Blue Ball* Inn. William Annetts, constable, heard William Winterbourn, who "was in liquor and very hoarse" demand money of Thomas Harrison, Mr. Dundas's bailiff. Winterbourn said that Harrison had not paid as much as other people, and

* Mr. Hogsflesh was a founder member of "The West Berks Association for the Protection of Property and the Prosecution of Felons." (1835)

the bailiff was persuaded to hand over £3. According to the constable Winterbourn was not the only rioter in the inn at the time ; "there were more in another room." (6) In spite of his position Harrison must have been pressed into joining the "congregation" when it recommenced its activities on the following morning, because his name appears on the list of persons arrested, but whose involvement was only sufficient to warrant them being bound over to keep the peace. Annetts too must have changed his loyalties for, in the autumn of 1821, he had, in the company of William Winterbourn and Francis Norris, been fined and bound over to keep the peace, especially towards Harrison. (15)

Later that evening a deputation arrived from some neighbouring villages to try to induce the Kintbury men to re-assemble the next day, to join forces with their comrades in these villages and to accomplish there a similar work of destruction. (5) That they were so persuaded many of them were to rue for many a long day thereafter.

From the events of the following day we can deduce that the villages referred to in the previous paragraph were Inkpen and West Woodhay, the labourers of which had also congregated on the Sunday evening. Between 9 and 10 p.m. Thomas Goodfellow, of West Woodhay, accompanied by a large number of others, attacked and destroyed the threshing machine belonging to Mr. Hayward of (Sadler's Farm ?) Inkpen. (6 & 7) Whether they continued their attacks on other farms during the daylight hours of Monday is not known, but they were certainly active in the evening. About 7 p.m. Goodfellow, assisted by Robert Gibbs, with about fifty others looking on, destroyed a threshing machine owned by Thomas Ward of Great Farm, West Woodhay. According to Mr. Ward he was approached by Cornelius Bennett who said, " Well, Mr. Ward, we have done the work ; now for the money.", and demanded £2. At first Ward refused to hand over the money, and Bennett then said, " It is a hard case for you, but it is going all through England." When the farmer pointed out that Bennett's companion, Henry Honey, being a maltster, could have no interest in threshing machines one of the rioters shouted out, " We are all brothers ! " The mob hurrahed when Ward finally handed over the money, and went away. (6 & 7) Later that same evening. about 10 o'clock, 60 or 70 persons arrived at Matthew Batten's house (*Inleaze*, Kintbury, according to Register of Electors, 1832.) to break his machine, but he had taken it to the meadow. Between 20 and 30 persons, including Thomas Goodfellow, began breaking it. Having finished their work of destruction the crowd demanded a sovereign. Mr. Batten asked who the "Captain" was and, when Bennett said " I am. ", gave him the money. The crowd then made a great noise, blew horns, and moved off. (6 & 7)

TUESDAY, 23rd NOVEMBER.

After their long spell of activity, which lasted well into the small hours of Tuesday morning, most of the Hungerford labourers seem to have run out of steam, and to have remained quiescent for the rest of the day. Towards the end of the afternoon, however, five of the more determined, or more enterprising, of them seem to have decided on a further foray to the north of the Bath Road.

Thomas Owen, of Clapton Farm, was returning home that afternoon when he was met by one of his servants who had come to look for him. On arriving at his home he saw five men about the premises. He asked them what they wanted, and they said, "One shilling each.". Alarmed at the fright which his wife had received, and by their statement that a company of 700 was nearby, he gave them half a crown. (4) Alexander Delamere, Mr. Owen's head servant, stated that among the five men were Charles Green, Joseph Smith and George Sturgess. Green was armed with an iron bar, the others with sticks. Sturgess and Green both demanded money, and the former, when the front door was opened, would have forced himself into the house, had not he (Delamere) restrained him. (6)

According to three servants of Mr. William Lovelock, of Orpenham Farm, the same five men came to their master's house between 4 and 5 p.m. Smith inquired if there was anyone at home. On being told that there was not he and Green said they would have something or they would break the house open. One of the servants brought them something to drink, but, on finding it was only small beer, they threw it away and demanded bread and cheese. When this demand was not acquiesced in Green threatened to blow a horn to call a mob of 800 who would come and unroof the house, take what there was, and set fire to the premises. He and Smith also threatened to break the windows of the house, whereupon they were given what they had asked for. (4)

Robert Brind, bailiff of Mr. Richard Harben, farmer, of Wickfield, described how this same small group approached him saying that they had broken his master's machine and were come for £2. When he refused to give them the money they threatened to call up their gang which was 500 strong. However, when he persisted in his refusal to hand over the money, they left without carrying out their threat. (6) Proceeding to another farm called Oakhanger they broke the threshing machine there. Brind, who had accompanied them, was again pressed to pay them £2. He asked them who employed them, and they answered that it was their congregation's rules to have £2 a machine, that the mob was coming, and that if the £2 was not paid they would break every window in the house. Brind eventually gave them 8s. which was all he had. (6)

Much later that same evening a group of men from the Lambourn valley went to John Hawkin's farm, at Welford, broke his threshing machine and demanded the usual payment of two sovereigns. (25) Though most of the rioters of the Lambourn area were tried at Abingdon, four of this party - Isaac Burton, a tailor of Shefford, Jason Greenway, William Waving and James Deacon - were tried with the Kintbury and Hungerford men at Reading. The first three were sentenced to seven years transportation but the last received the very light sentence of twelve months imprisonment. The only other Lambourn man to be transported was their leader, Thomas Mackrell.

The Kintbury men who, on the preceding evening, had been persuaded by a deputation from Inkpen and West Woodhay not to return to work on the Tuesday morning, began the new day by demanding money from William Squires, the owner of the local silk factory. Between 8 and 9 o'clock William Winterbourn, George Dobson and Alfred Darling demanded £5. Squires saved his machinery from destruction by consenting to pay 40s. in silver, and to give them two promissory notes for 10s. for beer at the *Red Lion* and *Blue Ball* public houses. (6)

That the labourers should include the silk factory in their itinerary is understandable for the conditions which prevailed there were no better than those which existed in some cotton mills before the passing of effective Factory Acts. In 1906 there were "still some few persons living who had worked in this factory when children." Their recollections of it were not pleasant. "They worked thirteen hours a day for six days a week and earned one shilling. Thrashings with a leather strap from a brutal overseer" were frequent. "Little girls from seven years of age were employed there." (22) Such experiences had made the women of Kintbury no less militant than their men-folk. On this, the third day of the rioting, "the females of Kintbury assembled and by threats induced some of the shop-keepers to give them some provisions, and a travelling tea-dealer to give them a quantity of tea." (1)

About an hour after the meeting with the factory owner a party of about 15 men, amongst whom were Alfred Darling and Henry Gater, went to the house of John Cousins, a farmer and Overseer of the Poor of the parish of Kintbury. Darling said they would have money and threatened to use the sledge-hammer which he carried if they were not given it. Mr. Cousins handed eight half-crowns to his wife who passed them on to one of the party.(6)

In order to fulfil the engagement which they had entered into with their comrades in adjoining villages the main party then moved off in the direction of Inkpen. On the way they pulled down a "foundry" which may well have been the one owned by Mary Harper, William Oakley's grandmother.

About ten o'clock the servants of the owner of West Woodhay House, the Rev. John Sloper, ran to inform him of the destruction of the foundry and that the Kintbury mob was advancing over his fields. To the Rev. Sloper the party appeared to be about 300 strong, and was headed by Francis Norris, who was carrying a flag, and Daniel Bates, both of Kintbury.

The following conversation then ensued between the reverend gentleman and Norris :-

J.S. " What do you want ?"
F.N. " £6 for the machines. " *
J.S. " But I paid £6 to another party last night."
F.N. " We will have the money because it was the wrong party."
J.S. " I haven't as much as 6d. in my pocket."
F.N. " We will have the money or you will have your
premises pulled down about your ears."
J.S. " But I really haven't any money. Will you
take a note of hand ?"

Receiving an affirmative answer the Rev. Sloper went into the house to write out the note. When he returned with it a few minutes later he found that his stable- yard gates had been forced and that many members of the mob were actually in the yard.

* From this we can presume that the Rev. Sloper owned three threshing machines, which is most probable as he owned the whole of the parish of West Woodhay.

As he opened the house door two of them rushed in declaring they would have beer, bread and cheese. According to his own account the reverend gentleman seized the two men by the throat, pushed them out of the house, made his servants lock the door, and said that there he would make his stand. *A short while later, however, the mob seeming to have calmed down, he ventured out and gave the note, which read,

" I promise to pay for Mr. Ward and myself the sum of
six pounds to Francis Norris of Kintbury."

to Daniel Bates. The mob were mollified by this and, according to one source, went quietly away to Captain Butler's house, Holt Lodge. (4 & 7)

However, having left West Woodhay House, the congregation appears to have divided into two groups one of which deviated towards the Crown and Garter, Inkpen, in order to obtain some refreshment, for it was there that one party was seen, about mid-day, by the Rev. John Thomas, curate of Inkpen. He was riding across Inkpen Great Common when he came upon a large number of persons around the public house. A boy with an iron implement saw him and demanded money. The Rev.Thomas asked who their leader was. Francis Norris was called for and demanded £2, ** which was handed over without demur because, although he was not a cultivator of land and possessed no threshing or other agricultural machine, the curate was afraid that they might injure his unprotected property. (4 & 7) The Rev. Thomas did, however, complain to Norris of the violent manner in which the boy had stopped him. At which the latter replied, "We will murder him for that." The reverend gentleman took this working-class bluster literally and exclaimed, "For God's sake do not !" Other members of the crowd "very much blamed" the boy for his conduct and said that he would certainly be punished.(24)

Meanwhile the other, more committed, group had continued in the direction of Newbury which was the major objective. At 11 a.m. when Farmer Ruddock, of Kintbury Holt, was ploughing his fields, William Winterbourn and Alfred Darling
came up to him carrying sledge-hammers which they used to break the ploughs ; in doing so they frightened the horses. When the ploughs had been broken Winterbourn

* This is wholly credible. He was eventually defrocked "because he took to persuading his congregation to come to church with the aid of a shot-gun."(23)

** Norris's indictment states " four pounds in various coins."

demanded money. He refused the 5s. which the farmer first offered him,and when the offer was increased to 10s. he said that this was no use either. The farmer then sent a boy to the house to obtain another 10s. from his wife. While these transactions were taking place about six or seven other labourers were standing watching. (6)

Before noon Winterbourn, who was "with Barlow Page and several others", demanded £2 of Anthony Heath of Enborne * , who gave him £1. Between twelve and one o'clock the same two men, but this time "with a large mob", demanded money of Stephen Collier of Hamstead Marshall, who also gave Winterbourn £1. Continuing towards Newbury the congregation broke two more threshing machines. Robert Page gave William Carter instructions how to break that belonging to Farmer
James Franklin. The farmer paid the customary £2, but not before Page had threatened that if he didn't there would be more coming who would make him. Joseph Stanbrook, of Enborne Farm, was in Franklin's yard at the time (i.e. between 1 and 2 p.m.) and they demanded £2 of him. Mr. Stanbrook having no money with him was allowed to proceed homewards, the mob before him. On reaching his farm his threshing machine was broken by Page and Carter who had sledge-hammers with which to undertake their task of destruction. Having completed the task they repeated their demand for £2, and the farmer gave them the money. (6)

Between these last two incidents the crowd diverted itself with more refreshment, this time at the *Craven Arms*, for, about one o'clock, between "two and three hundred persons, who had just left the alehouse " were observed by George Gray, Clerk to the Justices, Newbury. (25) That it was the intention of the Kintbury men and their allies to proceed to Newbury in order to destroy machines at two different "engine makers" in the town appears to have been no secret. George Gray had been informed of this project earlier in the day, and "immediately took steps to call together as many horsemen as he could to be in readiness to act, and, after communicating his fears to the mayor of Newbury, went on horse-back to Enborne to ascertain the truth of the information he had received." (25) Having observed the mob, who were on their way to the house of the Rev. Johnson, Rector of Enborne, he returned to Newbury to inform the Mayor, having left Mr. Charles Slocock behind to keep check on the mob's movement. Meanwhile the Mayor had collected the Special Constables for the borough. (25)

* The Register of Electors,1832, states - Kintbury Holt, Hamstead Marshall.

However, having reached the vicinity of Enborne Church the congregation, instead of continuing along the road directly to Newbury, turned aside to enter the Earl of Craven's Hamstead Marshall estate. Had they not been so diverted the outcome of the revolt may have been quite different. "The apprehension of this caused considerable alarm in the town." The farm workers would certainly have found allies in the borough - "three shoemakers from Newbury had joined the mob at Hamstead Marshall" - and a junction with the depressed artisans and the large number of unemployed poor of Newbury * might have posed problems for the posse

which was being organised to round them up. On the afternoon of Tuesday the posse would not have had the assistance of the grenadiers and lancers which, on the following day, helped to make the arrest of the dispersed and dis-spirited rioters relatively easy.

On entering Hamstead Park about 3 o'clock they were soon confronted by Lord Craven and a group of friends. John Ilott, Lord Craven's steward, stated that they "went a short distance up the avenue and met 5 or 6 men in advance of the main body" of about 150 persons. On reaching "the main body Lord Craven asked to see their leader, whereupon a person (Francis Norris) stepped forward carrying a sort of flag on a long stick." William Winterbourn was standing near Norris and appeared to be one of the leaders. William Oakley, Westall and Darling were also present. (6) "Lord Craven then asked them what they wanted and several voices called out, "We want relief ! We are starving !" (26) At first Lord Craven refused to give them anything. In fact, according to one report, he "was prepared to resist by force every illegal and violent demand, and had collected fire-arms and stationed watches for this purpose." (27) Lord Craven's own account declared that his resolution to defend his property was weakened "by the kindly intended interference of a particular friend, a clergyman." (28) This was a Mr. Johnson, the Vicar of Enborne, who had suggested "that if his Lordship would consent to give them £10
they ought to be thankful and go away quietly." When the noble lord eventually decided to give the money the mob "gave three cheers and went away."(26)

* Between "28th March,1829, and 25th March, 1830, the sum of £530.10s.5d. was paid as wages out of the poor-rate to able-bodied men by way of relief, a great part of which represented unproductive labour." [W.Money, N.W.N., 6th January, 1898] "During the riots, many of the inhabitants (of Newbury and Reading) were under strong apprehensions of the rising of the very people amongst whom the poor-rates are so profusely distributed." [Rpt. the R.C. on the Poor Law.1834.]

An account of the Hamstead Park confrontation , passed on by oral tradition, was given to a Newbury Weekly News reporter, by a Mr. George Langford who recounted some "vivid stories of the happenings at Kintbury", which were told him by his father, William Langford, who was fifteen years old at the time of the riots.. According to this version Lord Craven was besieged in his own house which the rioters threatened to set fire to. Only when the Earl, having assembled his staff on the roof of the house, threatened to use fire-arms on them did they beat a retreat. (29)

Having been given the money the congregation progressed through the park to the farm of one of Lord Craven's tenants, William Webb of Marsh Benham. When they reached Webb's farm, about 4 o'clock, they discovered two of his employees actually using a threshing machine. (7) One of them, William Culley, stated that he saw Alfred Darling strike the machine with a sledge-hammer, being assisted by Daniel Bates, William Brazier (alias Pearson), Richard Nutley, John Carter and George Liddiard. Culley added that Charles Marshall (or Moppett), and Timothy May were also in the barn. (7) According to Farmer Webb's account of the incident, he was approached by Francis Norris who was still carrying a flag and who demanded the customary £2. Mr. Webb borrowed a sovereign from a

bystander, a Hamstead Marshal builder named George Sims. Sims added that Robert Page was also present and assisted in breaking the machine. (6)

For some reason. possibly the lateness of the hour, the congregation, or its leaders, decided to postpone the advance on Newbury, and to return to Kintbury, which they reached just ahead of the posse of special constables and other mounted men which had been sent from Newbury to arrest them. When this posse reached Hamstead Marshall park Lord Craven's friends and servants "rushed forth on foot to support them notwithstanding official remonstrances against the propriety of this proceeding". (27) The objection to the speedy pursuit of the rioters came from "the senior magistrate and clergyman of the parish at which these misguided people principally reside." (i.e. the Rev F.C. Fowle). (27) Because of the vicar's remonstrance it was agreed "to proceed slowly to enable him to hasten forward, and to return with an account of the rioters." (27) Due to their slow pace it was dark before the posse reached Kintbury, and, the rioters having dispersed to their homes, they returned to Newbury and spent much of the night endeavouring to learn the names of the rioters. (25)

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(4) Berks. R.O. D/EPg.01/4.
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(26) P.R.O. T.S. 11/849.
(27) Letter to "The Times", 30th November,1830.- signed Charles Langdon.
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CHAPTER 3

SEVERITY IS THE ONLY REMEDY

The activities of the farm workers in the Thatcham and Aldermaston areas during the week preceding the events described in the previous chapter caused many a shiver in ruling-class hearts. A joint letter from W.Mount, Esq., of Wasing House and the Rev. Cove of Brimpton includes the first request for troops. "The magistrates of this division met yesterday, but find themselves unable to cope with the danger owing to the formidable and threatening bearing of the mob who will burn down any farmer's or other person's property that may attempt to interfere. We hope under the circumstances you will be kind enough to order some troops to be sent as soon as possible to Newbury from whence they can move as circumstances may require." (1) On the same day,however, the Rev. Cove, at the head of a large body of special constables and tradesmen, met the mob head-on at Brimpton Common. The Riot Act was read and a "battle" ensued, at the end of which 11 rioters were arrested and taken to Reading Gaol. (2) The reverend gentleman must have sent off another missive to the Home Office because his efforts were commented upon in the Home Secretary's reply to the above - mentioned letter. "Sir Robert (Peel) is anxious to render every assistance to the magistrates for the preservation of the public peace but at the present moment it would be inconvenient to despatch any force of cavalry to Newbury. (He) hopes from the accounts received this morning from Mr. Cove that the mob (having been) successfully opposed..... will not renew their aggression." (3) The Home Secretary's hopes were realised in the Thatcham area, but not elsewhere. By this time North Hampshire was aroused and. on the 21st November, "four troops of the 9th Light Dragoons (were on the) march.... from Hounslow upon Andover." (4)

In the meanwhile, on Saturday, 20th November, the labourers of Speen had collected in a body at the same time as the Select Vestry was meeting to discuss their grievances. The Vestry decided that wages should be raised to 10s. a week for unmarried as well as for married labourers, plus the price of a gallon loaf for each child after the second. (5) Farmers and magistrates who had flocked into Newbury that morning rode in a body to meet the rioters. Having met them they began to parley. Thanks to the prompt and resolute leadership of the Vicar of Speen, the Rev. Henry Majendie, "who spoke in a very firm and manly manner", (6) a repetition of the Brimpton affray was avoided. The Vicar informed the crowd of the Vestry's decision and, according to a letter written by Mr. Frederick Page, of Goldwell Park, Speen, assured them "that every attention would be paid to their wants during the ensuing winter." (5)

Mr. Page concluded his letter to the Home Secretary by stating that "The conduct of the labourers was almost without exception marked by forbearance and civility. They only expressed a sense of the sufferings and privations they had endured and disavowed any intention of provoking riot or disorder." (5) Even when the revolt spread to the west of Newbury and the men of Kintbury and Hungerford began breaking machines, Mr. Page thought "the general spirit of the labourers in the neighbourhood is good (and) they have no feeling of ill-will towards their landlords, or imbibed any ideas hostile to good government." So sure was he that, providing those in authority were

prepared to recognise the justice of the labourers' demands, and to concede some of them, the revolt could be "quieted without force" that he decided "to prevent any soldiers being sent here" for "everything will soon be tranquil." (5)

Mr. Page's quiet confidence was not shared by J.Pearce, Esq, M.P., of Chilton Lodge, who informed the Home Secretary that the whole of the neighbourhood of Hungerford was "entirely at the mercy of the most riotous and disaffected mobs little short of a thousand each", which could not be controlled because of the lack of sufficient force. "We are entirely under the domination of the mob of, in many instances, the most violent kind." It was in vain to lament, he wrote, that the Yeomanry had been disbanded. Had it not been it could have easily controlled the insurrection. As it was they relied on the government for effective protection. (7) Mr. Pearce tended to exaggerate.

As a result of information provided by another M.P., Mr. Palmer, who also exaggerated the revolutionary nature of the revolt, Lord Abingdon expressed his "strongest conviction" that unless an efficient military force is immediately sent to Reading for the purpose of acting decidedly and effectively it will be impossible to preserve the peace of the county." (8) The receipt of this plea for troops led Sir Robert Peel to contact the Officer Commanding the Horse Guards, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, who sent orders to Windsor "for the immediate march of two companies of the Grenadier Guards to Reading", the officer in charge being instructed to report himself to the magistrates and to obey "such orders as he shall receive from them.". (9)

Mr. Charles Dundas, M.P., who was residing at his London home in Pimlico when the riots began near his country house at Barton Court, Kintbury, was informed of these events by the Rev. F.C.Fowle and Capt. Lidderdale, adjutant of the late Berks Yeomanry, and had, in response to a plea from the latter, also submitted a requisition for troops*. As a result of this request one company of the Grenadier Guards was ordered from Reading to Newbury, and a detachment of the 9th Light Dragoons was directed to proceed on the following morning (Tuesday, 23rd November) from Kensington to Reading and thence, the day after, to Newbury. (9)

The change of government, which coincided with the main outbreaks in Berkshire ** caused a change of policy ; not, as might have been expected from a *liberal* government, towards a policy of conciliation and concession, but by a much more resolute intervention in the suppression of disturbances. The Tory Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, had been reluctant to use the army; in fact he had not asked for the despatch of troops into the south-eastern counties (where the first threshing machine had been broken as early as 28th August) until the 11th November. Though it is true that he was appalled at the leniency displayed at the East Kent Assizes by Sir Edward Knatchbull, who discharged the first machine breakers with a caution and a three-day prison sentence (10), there is no evidence that he had any intention of applying draconian measures.

The new Prime Minister, Lord Grey, belonged to the right wing of the Whig party and described himself as "aristocratic both by position and nature, with a predilection for old institutions." Nonetheless he was committed to

some measure of Parliamentary Reform, which was still linked in many minds with the wild fancies and terrors associated with revolutionary Jacobinism. The new king, William IV, was no enthusiast for reform, and Lord Grey feared that the slightest threat of disorder would cause him to withdraw even the modest degree of support which he was prepared to give to the government's programme. All the circumstances made it easy for Grey and his colleagues to slip into a policy of violence and repression. They breathed an atmosphere of panic, and they dreaded the recoil of that panic on their reformist schemes. Nonetheless they were *liberals*, and Cobbett could not believe the rumours that the new government intended to put down the riots with severe measures. He thought that men such as Grey, with his "humane disposition", Holland, "who never gave his consent to an act of cruelty", and Allsop, "who had never dipped his hand in blood", could, unlike many of their Tory predecessors, be trusted to be lenient and merciful; if any record could justify confidence it was theirs. (11)

* "Your presence is very much wanted here. It is the wish of everyone that you should apply to the Secretary of War to send us some dragoons immediately."
** The Duke of Wellington resigned on the 15th, but the new ministers did not take over until the 22nd November.

Cobbett's confidence proved to be unjustified. On 27th November Lord Grey said that it was the new government's "determined resolution, wherever outrages are perpetrated or excesses committed, to suppress them with severity and vigour." Although the government commiserated with the labourers' situation they were resolved not to connive at their excesses. (A sentiment which prompted exclamations of approval from their lordships.) The Prime Minister continued, "Severity is, in the first instance, the only remedy which can be applied to such disorders with success." (At which their lordships again cheered.)

The influences opposed to moderation were very strong and there was little, at least in the places that mattered, to counteract them. According to the Hammonds, the labourers were to find no support in the House of Commons even from those who were regarded as extreme radicals. Hobhouse's *Diary* contains not a solitary expression of pity or concern for them, and Sir Francis Burdett was all for dragooning the discontented counties and placing them under martial law. Even Lord Radnor, a friend of Cobbett, sat on the Wiltshire Special Commission without making any protest that has come down to posterity. (11)

The new Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne, was certainly no radical, neither was he as *liberal* as some of his cabinet colleagues; he was in fact "the most conservative of the Whigs." (12) He was also a member of a new and not particularly stable *Reform* ministry, which was determined to demonstrate that this did not mean that it had any intention of being "soft" on the "law and order" issue. His determination in the defence of the rights of private property was such that, in the autumn following the revolt, he introduced in the House of Lords a bill which, if it had become law, would have allowed property owners who obtained a licence from two J.P.s to use the murderous man-traps and spring-guns to protect their property.

Within twenty-four hours of taking over at the Home Office (i.e.23rd November) he issued a proclamation offering rewards of up to £500 for anyone bringing rioters or incendiaries to justice, and on the 25th he sent off a circular

letter (13) to magistrates instructing them to act more energetically. A later circular sharply rebuked those magistrates who had approved uniform wage increases, and who had recommended the discontinuance of the use of threshing machines. "These machines", wrote Lord Melbourne, "are as much entitled to the Protection of the Law as any other Description of Property and.... the course which has been taken of prescribing or recommending the discontinuance of them, is, in fact, to connive at, or rather to assist in the Establishment of a Tyranny of the most oppressive Character." The noble lord considered that it was his duty "to recommend in the strongest manner, that for the future all ..... Magistrates will oppose a firm resistance to all demands of the Nature above described, more especially when accompanied with Violence and Menace; and that they will deem it their duty to maintain and uphold the Rights of Property of every description against Violence and Aggression." (10) Thus the decision of the Speen Vestry, and of other groups of J.P.s and farmers in south-west Berkshire, and the firm but conciliatory lead taken by the Rev. Henry Majendie and the Rev. F.C. Fowle was denounced as highly irregular and to be deplored.

Lord Melbourne's attitude towards the riots and to the labourers involved in them may be judged by the contents of two letters which he wrote to local J.P.s. On 24th November he expressed the hope that John Pearce, Esq. M.P., of Chilton Lodge, and other "magistrates, with the Civil and Military Force at their disposal, will be enabled to suppress these disturbances and bring the persons concerned in them to Justice." (14) On the following day, having received a garbled version of the tactics adopted by the Vicar of Kintbury, the Rev. Fowle, he wrote to the Vicar stating that he (Melbourne) conceived it "his duty to suggest to,(you) that such a course (of conciliation and concession) might rather tend to excite than to delay irritation and disorder." (15) This unjust reprimand prompted the vicar to reply that he had agreed to advocate "a rise in wages only on the express condition that the labourers separated, behaved peaceably, and returned to their work, but not otherwise, " (16)

The Home Secretary's reprimand of the Rev. Fowle aroused considerable class solidarity; there followed a spate of letters to the Home Secretary all of them taking up the cudgels on the Vicar's behalf. Charles Dundas, M.P., considered that the Rev. Fowle had been most unfairly represented to His Lordship; "no one could have behaved with greater propriety than Mr. Fowle, who was a most able, attentive and active magistrate." (17) John Pearce, M.P., stated that the Rev. Fowle was "one of our oldest, most intelligent and active magistrates" whose feelings had been sorely wounded by the "unworthy information" which had been conveyed to His Lordship. "There was not a magistrate in the kingdom who deserved (the reprimand) less." (18)

Lord Melbourne had interpreted various reports he had received as meaning that the Vicar of Kintbury had persuaded Mr. Hogan Smith and Lord Craven each to hand over £10 to the congregation's treasurer in order to pacify the mob. The former stated that there was not the least foundation in that report, (19) while Lord Craven, though admitting that his resolution to defend his property by force had been weakened "by the kindly interference of a particular friend, a clergyman," stated that the circumstances occurred before Mr. Fowle's arrival and without his knowledge." (20) Twenty-one of the Vicar's most prominent parishioners also signed a petition to the Home Secretary in which they paid tribute to their Vicar's "well-timed firmness" and to "his endeavours to quiet the

disturbances." They expressed their deep obligation to him "for preventing the destruction of (their) property until the rioters could be effectively restrained." (21)

The fact that the chief magistrate of the area, and an M.P. for the county, Charles Dundas, and one of the biggest landowners, Lord Craven, were supporters of the new government and, presumably, wished to ensure the success of its policies, was an important factor in determining the means and methods used to put down the disturbances in south-west Berkshire. Elsewhere in Berkshire public peace had been restored either by the promise of some improvement in wages and a tacit agreement not to re-introduce the hated threshing machines, or, at the worst, the reading of the Riot Act and the arrest of the few who refused to disperse ; there was every indication that such methods would have sufficed in this part of the county also. In the event a substantial force of the civil and military power was drawn together and used not simply to over-awe the labourers into submission but to arrest well over a hundred of them.

It cannot be argued that either the Kintbury or the Hungerford "mobs" had committed such terrible acts of violence upon persons or property that something more drastic than a firm but conciliatory approach was needed. Although there were a great many blustering threats, which anyone who knew anything of the farm workers' psychology would not have taken literally, not one person was physically harmed -

> "Though great threats were used yet in no instance were these brown arm'd sons of labour guilty of personal violence to anyone." (22)

and, except for the breaking of a few windows, property, other than agricultural machinery, was hardly touched, and not a single rick was burned. A contemporary was later to write that "a couple of dozen constables could have suppressed the movement at once." In other parts of the county he continued "the military were not required to act", the rioters being "taken into custody by the civil power without any personal injury being sustained by anyone." (23)

The kind of operation undertaken by the forces of law and order in the Kintbury area on Wednesday, 24th November, was a direct consequence of the political allegiance of "Colonel" Dundas, and of Lord Craven, who was "politically allied to Lord John Russell", (24) who, "even more than Grey was the arch-Whig of the 19th century." (12) It was important that "Reform" should not in practice be seen to be equated with weakness in the face of any threat to property, and, what was even more important, that it should not be considered to be the prelude to anarchy. Thus the "liberal" Dundas who, in 1795, had shown such sympathy with the labourers' condition as to call for the implementation of a minimum wage, and who more recently (at the January, 1830, Quarter Sessions) had commented on "the cruel pressure on the poor by the illiberality of masters and parishes in beating down the wages and reducing parochial relief which was so low as scarcely to afford the means of existence" (25) was constrained by party and class loyalty to lead "the chase" through Berkshire into Hampshire. The hunt's quarry were half-starved labourers who had somehow summoned up a desperate courage to enable them to stand up against the pernicious

pauperising policy of "Speenhamland" and the "laissez faire" economics which permitted machines to reduce even further a pitifully poor livelihood, and to demand the right to work at reasonable wages.

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(6) Ibid ditto 22nd November, 1830
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(8) Ibid Lord Abingdon to Home Secretary, 20th November, 1830.
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(10) H & R op. cit.
(11) J.L. & B. Hammond op. cit.
(12) Sir L. Woodward, "The Age of Reform".
(13) Berks R.O. copy of circular to Mr. Willes of Hungerford Park.
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(15) Ibid Lord Melbourne to Rev. F.C. Fowle., 25th November, 1830.
(16) P.R.O. H.O. 52-6 Rev. F.C. Fowle to Lord Melbourne, 27nd November, 1830.
(17) Ibid Charles Dundas to ditto 26th November, 1830.
(18) Ibid J. Pearce to ditto 28th November, 1830.
(19) Ibid Mr. Hogan Smith to ditto 26th November, 1830.
(20) Ibid Lord Craven to ditto undated possibly 27/11
(21) Ibid Various to ditto undated
(22) W. Money, N.W.N., January, 1898.

CHAPTER 4

A CHASE THRO' THE COUNTRY

In a letter to the Home Secretary describing the events of Wednesday, 24th November, Mr. Charles Dundas, refers to a "good day's sport" (1), and one written by Mr. Frederick Page, of Speen, includes a description of "a chase thro' the country in pursuit of those who had participated in the riots. "(It) was headed by Charles Dundas and Lord Craven who were accompanied by near 300 horsemen." (2) They were supported by a detachment of Grenadier Guards, under the command of Capt. Anderson and Lieut. Reynoldson, which had reached Newbury about nine o'clock in coaches from Basingstoke, and a troop of Lancers (9th Light Dragoons) commanded by Lieut. Vezey which arrived from Reading at about 10 a.m.

At 11 o'clock an Order was issued by the High Sheriff, Mr John Walter (the proprietor of *The Times* newspaper) for every inhabitant of Newbury who could muster on horseback to repair to the Market Place at 12 noon, there to await further orders. (3) At the appointed time a numerous body of horsemen put in an appearance and were drawn up in line, the members of the disbanded Newbury and Donnington Troop of Yeomanry having the post of honour. The order to "form fours" having been given and promptly obeyed the cavalcade, headed by a number of magistrates, the Mayor of Newbury, Mr. Satchell, Lieutenant and Cornet Slocock and the ex N.C.O.s of the yeomanry, proceeded to Speenhamland to join another company of horsemen assembled at the *George and Pelican* Inn. Thus reinforced they advanced at a trot to Gravel Hill, Stockcross. (4)

Mr. Dundas, who had communicated with Lord Craven and his party and agreed to meet them on the Bath Road at the 59th milestone from London (i.e. at the Marsh Benham - Wickham cross-roads, near Furze Hill), had left instructions with the Deputy Lieutenant, Mr. Page, that the Guards should be sent forward in three coaches as soon as he sent word. Mr. Page received the order to despatch the Guards at about 1.30 p.m. (2)

The attitude of Charles Dundas and his associates is accurately caught by the reporter of a *local journal* in his use of military terms and metaphors. "The position of the enemy having been carefully reconnoitred, a Council of War was held and the plan of operations communicated to the different divisions of the force by Col. Dundas. The attack commenced by detachments of horse advancing to the south and west sides of Kintbury, to cut off the rioters main avenues of escape, while the main body of horsemen, special constables and Grenadier Guards took up a position in front (to the north) and on the east side of the village." (4)

When Lord Craven and the mounted constables reached Kintbury they were informed by the son of the vicar that everything was quiet. He expressed the opinion that there should not be any attempt to arrest the rioters. (5) His advice, which, if followed, would have restored peace without the large scale arrest of Kintbury men, was ignored,and the planned military operations continued with. "The astonished malcontents, finding themselves

barred from escape, sought temporary refuge in the public houses, stables and any cottage or outhouse where they could conceal themselves,and some in fact succeeded in reaching the neighbouring villages and hamlets." (4)

There then followed a "flushing out" operation. Colonel Dundas, having heard that several of the rioters were at the *Red Lion* (now the *Dundas Arms*) advanced with a party of troopers and captured one of the ringleaders, William Westall, and three others, (3) who were immediately escorted to the prisoners' guard formed by the Grenadiers and the other disengaged portion of the force.(4) The *Blue Ball* Inn, which was "the chief depot" of the rioters was then surrounded, and many others were captured without resistance. Some of the "hunters" could not have been very thorough for one man, Josiah Truman, was later to boast that he had avoided capture by hiding in the copper of the *Blue Ball* (6). He showed his gratitude for his good fortune by later identifying two of his erstwhile comrades, Thomas Arnold and James Casbourn, as having been "in the mob". Such disloyalty was unusual ; so incensed were most of the inhabitants of Kintbury at the day's events, and so strong were the local and class sympathies for the rioters, that no Constable of the place was prepared to act in that capacity, and Colonel Dundas had to prevail upon the officer of the Guards to leave six of his men for the protection (!) of the village the following night.(5)

Having obtained a good haul at Kintbury the posse continued to Inkpen with good effect, and, though it was by then a moonlit night (1) to East Woodhay, where, in the *Axe and Compass*, they arrested one of the leaders named Martin, who was about six feet tall. (The convict records state that he was, in fact, 5"9½".) Another rendezvous was the *Crown* at Highclere ; here several more rioters were apprehended though not without "some scuffling". The men taken were placed in and on coaches and carts which had been pressed into service for that purpose, and taken to Newbury which was reached at about eight o'clock in the evening. (3)
According to Mr. Frederick Page "between 40 and 50" of the rioters from in and around Kintbury were brought to Newbury guarded by the Grenadiers (2), while the Clerk to the Newbury Justices, George Gray, stated that "54 riotous persons" were arrested by those horsemen who had continued to the Woodhays and Highclere, and also conveyed to Newbury (7). These numbers together support W. Money's statement that "about 100 persons were removed to Newbury and confined in the Mansion House for the night." (4) The first group of arrested men included three shoemakers from Newbury who had joined the Kintbury congregation at Hamstead Marshall, and who were taken by a patrol of special constables (2), but did not include two of the leading rioters, Francis Norris and Cornelius Bennett,who evaded arrest for some considerable time. Most of the second group were Hampshire men who were later transferred to and tried at Winchester.

Charles Dundas, in his report to the Home Secretary, expressed some concern at the possibility that Lord Melbourne might not approve of the action which he had taken outside the limits of his jurisdiction. (1) He need not have worried, for a reply from His Lordship's secretary expressed "in the strongest possible terms" his (Melbourne's) "approbation" of Dundas's conduct. The secretary added, "His Lordship highly commends, rather than disapproves, your having done so." (i.e. of having pursued the rioters into Hampshire and of arresting Hampshire men.) (8). The Home Secretary was also highly appreciative of the services of the gentlemen who had accompanied Mr. Dundas

and Lord Craven. ((8) The gentlemen concerned, who had had a "good day's sport", must have been very pleased to receive the appreciation of such an august personage as the Home Secretary, but no doubt they were even more pleased to receive more concrete evidence of his appreciation in their shares of the £600 reward money.(7)

The final tally of prisoners dealt with by the magistrates at Newbury was 108. (7) Of course it was necessary to separate the foolish sheep from the subversive goats. In his report to the Home Secretary Charles Dundas stated that, in taking depositions, he had divided the prisoners into three classes :-

(i) those who had extorted money
(ii) those who had broken machines, and
(iii) those who were present in the mob but who were not proved to have committed a felony. (9)

As a result of the magistrates' inquiries 66 of the prisoners were bound over to keep the peace, the other 42 being transferred to Reading Gaol to be tried by the Special Commission. (7) In the event the number from the Kintbury-Woodhay area tried at Reading came to 46. In addition to the three who temporarily escaped arrest (Bennett, May and Norris) one other poor fellow from Kintbury, James Annetts, was arrested later and committed to Reading Gaol by the octogenarian Dundas, who, in spite of his age, appears not to have been too exhausted by his exploits during "the chase". (9)

The Hungerford rioters were arrested without the assistance of the military. According to a letter in the Home Office records "About 300 (!) of the principal inhabitants of the parish and neighbourhood were sworn in as Special Constables, and agreed to watch nights as watchmen. and patrol for five miles round, some on horseback and some on foot."(10) They succeeded in arresting five of the leaders on the night of 24th November, and at least sixteen more during the 25th. After some other arrests and some prisoners had been bound over to keep the peace, 24 were eventually remanded to the Special Assize at Reading.

SOME WHO (TEMPORARILY) GOT AWAY.

Not all of the rioters were prepared to give themselves up without some attempt to avoid capture. Two or three of them gave the hunters a real run for their money. One of these was the "treasurer" of the Kintbury congregation, Francis Norris.

Four stalwart yeomen of the newly formed "Association", Thomas Hutchins, butcher, Stephen Major (the son of the local surgeon of that name), Thomas Smith, of Chilton, and James Little, farmer, of Newtown, started out on horseback on the morning of Thursday, 25th November, to search for Norris who, they had been informed, was the leader of the Kintbury "mob". All four went first to Shefford, a distance of five miles. In their search of this village

they came to the *Swan* Public House, where they were informed that Norris had entered the inn about eight o'clock of the previous evening, had called for a pint of beer,but had left without drinking it.

Several other horsemen having joined the original quartet they then proceeded to East Garston where they learnt that their quarry had been seen to leave the village about 7 a.m. A search of the village of Eastbury proving fruitless they continued to Lambourn where, in one of the two public houses which they searched, they obtained information to the effect that the hare had been sighted near Inholmes that morning. A Beer House at Baydon produced the same information but, as they were leaving the village, they were told that Norris had gone to Aldbourne. On reaching Aldbourne the party carefully approached and surrounded a Beer House kept by Martin Palmer. Thomas Hutchins relates how he alighted from his horse, entered the house and, seeing Norris there, rather melodramatically said, "Norris! You are my prisoner." Norris, having said that he had no intention of resisting arrest, permitted himself to be taken into custody, brought back to Hungerford, and charged before Mr. Willes, the magistrate. (11)

In a letter which the Home Secretary wrote to Mr. Willes on 3rd December, Lord Melbourne expressed "His approbation of the meritorious exertions of Hutchins and his party in apprehending one of the most prominent and active ring leaders." (12) Hutchins claimed the £50 reward offered in Lord Melbourne's proclamation of 23rd November, but only received a quarter of the amount claimed, because the other members of the original quartet were given their due share. However, the butcher got his full pound of flesh for the arrest of another rioter, John Cope. (7)

Thomas Ward, whose threshing machine was broken by a party led by Cornelius Bennett, who also demanded and received the customary £2, was no doubt angered to learn that Bennett had slipped through the net spread by Colonel Dundas and his men. So, accompanied by Charles Batten, another West Woodhay farmer (probably the son of the Matthew Batten whose machine was broken by the same party on the same evening), he went in pursuit of Bennett, who had fled in the general direction of Reading. The chase continued for 19 miles when Bennett was sighted beyond Theale. There they contacted one of Batten's relations (James Batten, yeoman, of North Street, Englefield) and despatched him to apprehend the runaway, as they were certain to be recognised by him. The Englefield yeoman, assisted by Charles Webb, shop-keeper and Constable, succeeded in finding and arresting Bennett. Having done so they handed him over to the two West Woodhay men, who conveyed him to Newbury Gaol. (7) The £50 bounty was shared as follows:-

Thomas Ward and Charles Batten, £15 each and
James Batten and Charles Webb, £10 each.

It is doubtful if Ward considered his share to be sufficient compensation for the effort involved, and for the loss of his threshing machine and £2.

One Hungerford labourer, who avoided capture for 24 hours after the main round-up, was David Hawkins, one of the Hungerford men who continued machine breaking on the day following the Town Hall meeting. Information provided by Thomas Clements eventually led to his arrest. Following the receipt of Clements' information, Henry Cundell, another Hungerford butcher, and William Ranger, yeoman, set out on horseback on the morning of the 25th November. They crossed the common, continued through Mr. Willes' estate, Hungerford Park, and on to Mr. Richard Goddard's farm at Templeton. From there they proceeded to Cuthbert Johnson's Wallingtons estate, and, passing through Kintbury, continued to Inkpen. There they found Hawkins hiding in the cottage of a relative where they seized him and took him back to Hungerford with them. On more than one occasion in the years which followed Hawkins would have rued the decision to lie low in Inkpen rather than to make good his escape further afield. He was the only one of the Berkshire men transported to experience the full horrors of the system, being subjected to three floggings within the space of fifteen months.

In their claim for a reward Cundell and Ranger submitted that, in their efforts to arrest Hawkins, they had travelled "about twenty-five miles", an exaggeration which makes one doubt the truth of their other statement that since the machine breaking began they had had only "two hours sleep for six successive nights". As some compensation for their efforts they received £20 each, while the informer, Thomas Clements, received £10. (7) Clements received a few more pieces of silver (£25) for betraying Timothy May of Inkpen, who was involved in the destruction of Richard Gibbons' iron goods. Perhaps the likeness to the twelfth apostle is a little unfair, for Clements was Gibbons' employee and no doubt believed that his loyalty lay with his employer rather than his class. May remained at liberty for much longer than any except those who evaded arrest altogether for it was not until Saturday, 27th November, that William Stratton, also of Inkpen, obtained a warrant for his arrest from Mr. Fulwar Craven, J.P., of Chilton Foliat. As soon as he had obtained the warrant Stratton went in search of May, but had to go only two miles before he found him and "took him to Newbury on the same day." Stratton was well paid for his efforts which netted him a reward of £25. (7)

Thomas Willoughby, of Hungerford, took the opportunity provided by the disturbances to pay off some old scores. He seems to have had a deep personal grudge against Mr. Stevens of Anvilles Farm, and against Mr. Washbourne of Standen. About 4 o'clock on the afternoon of Monday, 22nd November, he went alone to the latter's house where he demanded a shilling and threatened to bring the mob if he did not get it. At first Mr. Washbourne refused to accede to the demand, but eventually gave Willoughby some bread, cheese and beer in addition to the shilling. (11) According to the farmer's testimony he heard Willoughby declare as he left the house that he would be damned if he did not kill John Stevens. Presumably the latter was warned for he asked George Cundell, a Hungerford butcher, to come and stay at Anvilles to protect him from Willoughby's threatened vengeance. When, about six o'clock that evening, Willoughby arrived at the front of Steven's house and demanded food, drink and money, Cundell decided that attack was the best method of defence. He hit Willoughby, knocked him down, and after a struggle eventually

had him escorted off the premises by some of Steven's workers. As he was being led away Willoughby declared that he owed Stevens a grudge, that the mob was coming, and that he would "have blood for supper." (11)

When it was learnt that Willougby had fled the town George Cundell and Alfred Atherton searched several places for him. At length they heard that he was in the neighbourhood of Ramsbury. The two bounty hunters went to Ramsbury and after searching for some time eventually found Willoughby and took him back to Hungerford with them. Here he was taken before the magistrates. It would appear that, in spite of the violent nature of his threats, the magistrates considered Willoughby to be only a minor threat to the peace of the community ; only the lack of £50 or of someone to stand surety for this amount, prevented him from returning home a free man. (11) As it was he was committed to Reading Gaol and tried at the Special Assizes where, on the information of Charles Kent, an employee of Richard Gibbons (7), he was convicted of "Riotously breaking machinery", a capital offence for which he had "Death" recorded against his name, though this sentence was respited to 18 months hard labour. (13)

Several of the members of the newly formed association for the protection of property in Hungerford were rewarded (amounts given in brackets) for their part in the arrest of David Garlick and George Rosier, of Hungerford. The former was arrested with some difficulty by John Cook (£12), the warrant for his arrest having been issued on the basis of information provided by Thomas Major (£5), and John Barton , John Canning , Edward Liddiard and Charles Lambourn, who each received £4. On the testimony of Thomas Viner and Charles Kent (£21) Garlick was found guilty of destroying machinery. It was information provided by Viner (£25) and Kent which led to the arrest of George Rosier by George Cundell (£7), Alfred Atherton (£7) and John Stevens (£7). (7) No doubt the financial reward would have sufficed to quieten the consciences of these brave yeomen if the sentence of death which was passed on both Garlick and Rosier had in fact been carried out.

Abraham Nobbs, a bookbinder, received £50 for the very little time and effort involved in the arrest of Joseph Tuck. He saw the latter in the centre of Hungerford on Thursday, 25th November, but when he went to arrest him Tuck ran away and hid himself in the yard of the *White Lion* (sic) public house. Nobbs followed and succeeded in arresting him and taking him before the magistrate.(7) Tuck, who , during the affray at Gibbons' iron foundry had purloined an iron bar which he tried to sell to a local blacksmith, had plenty of time during which to regret his failure to put a greater distance between himself and his pursuer, for he was one of the dozen or so unfortunates from the area who were transported, in his case for seven years.

John Cook and Daniel Allen unsuccessfully petitioned the Treasury for a reward for the arrest of Israel Pullen in spite of their plea that they had only "succeeded in apprehending him... after considerable labour and fatigue." The hard-hearted Treasury official may well have succumbed to this plea had it not been accompanied by a solicitor's letter which stated that "they were merely sent with a summons to Pullen, at his lodgings in Hungerford, to attend the magistrates in the town, which he did. In these circumstances I submit that these persons were not entitled to the reward." (7) Cook and Allen may have been aggrieved but no more so than Pullen, who was a shoemaker and

claimed that he had been forced to go with the mob, which had threatened to "pull his house about his ears" if he did not join them. (14)

Having rounded up the rioters those in authority were determined that they should be punished for their audacity in taking the law into their own hands. As early as the 26th of November the Clerk of the Peace for Newbury, W. Budd, had written to the Home Secretary giving notice that it was the intention of the Berkshire magistrates to hold "a General Sessions of the Peace at Reading on Tuesday, 7th December, for Trial of the persons who have been committed for breaking threshing machines and for rioting." On the following day, however, warrants were issued by the Home Office for Special Commissions to sit in Hants, Berks and Wilts for that purpose. Afraid that some of the rioters might escape punishment because of leniency on the part of the Attorney-General or his representative the Berkshire magistrates held a Special Meeting at Newbury at which they resolved "that in all cases in which the Government shall not prosecute offenders, it is the opinion of this meeting that the Clerks of the Petty Sessions should conduct the prosecutions, the indictments being prepared by counsel."(11) The government was not at all put out by the zeal shown by the Berkshire J.P.s and informed them that it was hoped to be able to provide them with the assistance of "a professional gentleman", a Mr. Tallents. However, Mr. Tallents was to be fully engaged in similar business at Salisbury, and his place at Reading was taken by Mr. Maule, Solicitor to the Treasury. (11 and 15)

If the local magistrates genuinely suspected the government of being likely to lack energy in prosecuting the rioters they could not have read, or placed little faith in, the report of the Lord Chancellor's speech on 2nd December. Lord Brougham pompously declared that "Within a few days from the time I am addressing your lordships, the sword of Justice shall be unsheathed to smite with a firm and vigorous hand the rebel against the law." (16) Little more than a fortnight later these supporters of tough measures against the rioters were to be appalled at the ferocity of some of the sentences handed down by the senior judge of the Special Commission at Reading.

REFERENCES. CHAPTER 4.

(1) P.R.O. H.O. 52-6. Charles Dundas to Home Secretary, 24th November, 1830
(2) ibid Frederick Page to ditto
(3) Reading Mercury, 29th November, 1830.
(4) W. Money, "The History of Newbury".
(5) P.R.O. H.O. 52-6. Frederick Page to Home Secretary, 25th November,1830.
(6) M. Bowen, "A Short History of Kintbury."
(7) P.R.O. T. 1-4193.
(8) P.R.O. H.O. 41-8. Lord Melbourne to Charles Dundas.
(9) Reading Mercury, 20th December,1830.
(10) P.R.O. H.O. 52-6. F. Westall to Sir R. Freeling, 25th November,1830.
(11) Berks R.O. D/EPg.01/4.
(12) P.R.O. H.O. 41/8
(13) P.R.O. H.O. 27-41. and H.O. 8-27.
(14) Reading Mercury, 3rd January, 1831.
(15) Reading Mercury, 13th December, 1830.

(16) J.L. & B. Hammond, op.cit.

CHAPTER 5

NO FRIEND IN HEAVEN

Before those committed could be tried by the Special Commission they first had to be conveyed from Newbury to Reading. "Harrowing and heart-rending was the scene that took place when the vans that were to convey the main body of the prisoners drew up in the Market Place." A troop of Lancers and the Yeomanry, with sabres drawn, were "the imposing military escort responsible for seeing the prisoners safely lodged in the county gaol." The men were brought out in batches while "Women fought their way through the surging throng praying for a parting word with their husbands or relatives before they took leave of them perhaps for ever." A particularly distressing sight was witnessed when "a poor woman with eight children and an infant at the breast rushed forward to press the manacled hands of her husband as he took his seat in one of the vehicles.". Newbury has not witnessed a sadder procession through its ancient streets. (1)

The first of the two Berkshire Commissions to try the rioters was opened at Reading on Monday,27th December. The judges appointed to the commission were Sir James Alan Park, Sir John Patteson and Sir William Bolland. It must have given Baron Bolland much satisfaction to preside over such an important trial in the town in which he was educated and of which he had once been Recorder. The two lay commissioners were the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Abingdon, and one of the county M.P.s, Mr. Charles Dundas, of Barton Court, Kintbury. (2)

One hundred and thirty eight persons were to be prosecuted at this Special Assize. mostly on indictments of machine breaking or robbery ; there was only one indictment for arson and one for sending a threatening letter (NOT signed "Captain Swing") and in both cases the prosecution withdrew its case. Almost exactly a half (70) came from the south-western corner of the county. Most were very young, only 18 being forty or over; three quarters of those from the Kintbury/Hungerford area were under 35 years of age. The average age of the Kintbury men convicted was thirty. 55% of the prisoners were illiterate ; only 25 could both read and write, while 37 more could read only. (1 and 2) Of the 35 convicted who could read 60% (21) came from west of Newbury.(3)

Though the commission was formally opened shortly before noon on the 27th it was immediately adjourned in order that the commissioners could attend Divine Service. They returned at two o'clock when Mr. Justice Park began his address to the Grand Jury, in which he repudiated with indignation the "impudent and base slander that the upper ranks of society cared little for the wants and privations of the poor." (2) He would no doubt have approved of what his colleague, Mr. Justice Taunton, had said at Lewes Assizes - that there were persons who exaggerated the labourers' distress, raised up barriers between the different classes and who represented the rich as the oppressors of the poor ; and that only lack of knowledge or deliberate mis-representation could depict the gentry of England "as not sympathizing in their distress, and as not anxious to relieve their burdens and to promote their welfare and happiness."(4) Judge Park certainly believed that the distress had been exaggerated, but that, even if it was in fact as bad as some commentators had suggested, it would, in the normal course of things, "Be mitigated or relieved by the

powerful and the affluent either of high or middling rank." His Lordship also referred to "this our happy land which, for its benevolence, charity and boundless humanity has been the admiration of the world." (2)

The Berkshire labourers had little to hope for from a man who held such opinions. As the law stood there was not much doubt about their guilt ; there was equally no doubt what sentence was applicable in most cases; their only hope was that their distress, which had been made worse "by the illiberality of masters and parishes," (5) would be recognised and accepted as mitigating circumstances, on the basis of which justice might be tempered with "heaven's distinguishing mark", mercy. (6) When, like his fellow judges elsewhere, Mr. Justice Park refused to admit evidence about wages or distress, even this slight hope vanished. The approach of the judges who sat on the Special Commissions was summed up neatly by one of their number, Mr. Justice Alderson, at Dorchester - "We do not come here to inquire into grievances. We come here to decide the Law." (4) His Lordship preached a special homily on the duties incumbent upon the gentry, who were urged to go home and educate their poorer neighbours and to improve their conditions. The conditions to which he referred were not, as might have been expected in the circumstances, material, but moral. Poverty, and the misery attendant on it, said His Lordship, though inseparable from the state of the human race, "would no doubt be greatly mitigated if a spirit of prudence were more generally diffused among the people, and if they understood more fully and practised better their civil, moral and religious duties.". (4)

Unfortunately for them the agricultural labourers had arrived at the precipitate conclusion that neither a spirit of prudence nor more regular attendance at church would transform 7s. (or less) a week into a living wage. By arrogating to themselves the power of redressing their own wrongs they had in most cases risked the forfeiture of their lives. Recent consolidating Acts of Parliament (of 1827 and 1828) had made it a capital offence

(i) to riotously or tumultuously assemble for the purpose of destroying machinery, or

(ii) to rob any person of any chattel, money or valuable security.

Judge Park took up nearly the whole of the afternoon of the first day of the commission in addressing the Grand Jury. There was just sufficient time left to deal with one particularly pitiful case. "As soon as the learned Judge had concluded his charge, the Grand Jury retired, and returned in a few minutes with a true bill against Charles Symonds for rape. The prisoner was brought into court in a state of the most fearful and outrageous madness. He was put upon his trial *pro-forma* ; a jury was hastily sworn, and without hesitation returned a verdict of 'insanity' and the unhappy prisoner was instantly conveyed out of court." (2)

Normally on the evening of the first day of an Assize the judges invited the Grand Jury and the local magistrates to dinner, but, being anxious to free the administration of justice "from the slightest appearance of partiality in the eyes of the lower classes", they decided, after consulting with and obtaining the approval of the Lord Chancellor,

Brougham, and the Home Secretary, Melbourne, not to extend such an invitation on this occasion. The composition of the Grand Jury - 1 baronet,2 knights, 3 M.P.s, 1 Major-General and 16 "esquires" - and of the Commission itself, was hardly likely to reinforce any slight appearance of impartiality which the omission of the dinner invitation might have created.(2) There had also been some difficulty in finding satisfactory petty jurors. All farmers were challenged by defence counsel and matters were at a deadlock until the judges ordered the bystanders to be empanelled. (4)

The first two cases dealt with on the first effective day of the assize "arose out of the assembling on 22nd November of two mobs from Kintbury and Hungerford who united at the latter place and proceeded to the destruction, of Mr. Gibbons' iron foundry and afterwards to the Town Hall of Hungerford where Mr. Willes, a magistrate, and several gentlemen were met and, by threats and violence, were induced to part with five sovereigns," (7) The four men indicted for robbing Mr. Willes were Daniel Bates, William Oakley, William Smith (alias Winterbourn) and Edmund Steel, all members of the five-man Kintbury deputation. "Oakley, a young man of about twenty-five.... was somewhat better dressed than is usual among members of the class of working tradesmen." One reporter described him as " a pale, sinister looking person," and the same phrase was used to describe Winterbourn. (*) Both Winterbourn and Oakley, whose bold language, full of class hostility, probably marked him out for exemplary punishment, were found guilty of the capital charge of robbery. Bates, who also had a verdict of guilty recorded against his name, was recommended to mercy. In view of the extremely violent and threatening stance which he adopted during the confrontation in the Town Hall this leniency can only have been due to an extremely good character reference. (See Judge Park's homily on passing sentence.)

An analysis of the verdicts where mercy was recommended suggests that only in those cases where local gentry were prepared to give evidence of good character was this moderation shown. Fairly obviously any labourer, such as Winterbourn, who had demonstrated a spirit of independence in the past was unlikely to be favoured in this way. Steel's acquittal of the charge of robbery was almost certainly due to the evidence proffered by Mr. Willes himself in which he drew attention to Steel's emphatic comment that the hatchet he was carrying would never be used to harm the venerable magistrate.

An interesting omission from the reports of the Hungerford Town Hall negotiations is the name of Francis Norris, treasurer and second-in command of the Kintbury "congregation". although one report does refer to the Kintbury delegation as consisting of the four men charged with robbing Mr. Willes "and one other". Neither was Norris one of the Kintbury men charged with assisting in the destruction of Mr. Gibbons' machinery. He was, however, indicted on the Tuesday on two other charges, one of breaking a threshing machine, the property of Richard Goddard, at midnight on 21st/22nd of November. and another of robbing the Rev. J.G. Thomas of two sovereigns. Norris was found guilty of breaking machinery, but was acquitted of the more serious one of robbery. This was in line with the general policy of the prosecution which was to offer no evidence in cases of robbery thus avoiding death sentences, but was contrary to the approach usually adopted towards men from the Kintbury area.

(*) According to the more objective convict records Oakley's complexion was described, like those of most of his comrades, as "ruddy".

Seventeen men were charged with "tumultuously demolishing machinery" at Richard Gibbons' foundry, on Monday, 22nd November. They included seven from Kintbury - Daniel Bates, David Garlick, Timothy May, William Oakley, Edmund Steel, James Watts and William Winterbourn. All but one were sworn as being present though five of the Kintbury men, Bates, May, Oakley, Steel and Winterbourn said that "they were never on the premises in their lives.". This may have been a true claim for those who confirmed their presence at the foundry were Hungerford men and it is feasible that they were not known to them.

The jury, however, thought otherwise and all five were found guilty as were ten of the remaining twelve. Two Hungerford men, Charles Smith and William Haynes, were acquitted, the latter because he "was not seen to assist in the work of destruction", but Israel Pullen's plea that he had been forced to go with the mob fell on deaf ears. The other prisoners had nothing to say. Two other Hungerford men, Charles Rosier and Thomas Willoughby, were later charged with the same offence. Both were found guilty, though the latter was recommended to mercy. The business of the first full day of the special assize was concluded by a case of machine breaking by a Bradfield labourer.

According to Mr. George Maule, the legal adviser to the Home Office, the whole of Wednesday was occupied in trying 25 machine breakers from the Aldermaston area. The twenty-five cases arose out of "an insurrection which took place on the 18th and 19th November, covering many parishes in this neighbourhood, viz., Bradfield, Beenham, Aldermaston, Wasing, Woolhampton and Brimpton. The mob assembled on the evening of the first day and were out all night collecting members and going from farm to farm breaking threshing machines and levying contributions for having done so upon the owners and other inhabitants. This was continued the next day until the afternoon when the mob was met and dispersed at Brimpton and many of the ring-leaders secured and committed.". (7) Seventeen of the twenty-five were found guilty of breaking a threshing machine belonging to Mr. Kenwick Hickman. The same men were also indicted for assaulting Mr. Hickman and forcibly taking two half-crowns from his person. Mr. Gurney,for the prosecution, said that he would offer no evidence in support of the latter indictment, and, in the absence of such evidence, it would no doubt be the jury's pleasing duty to acquit the prisoners. Mr. Justice Park commended the judicious and lenient course adopted by the gentlemen who were engaged for the Crown, and the prisoners were acquitted of the capital charge of robbery.

The first case dealt with on the morning of Thursday involved six men from the Hungerford area (John Aldridge, Elijah Baker, James Grant, David Hawkins, John Jennaway and George Whiting), and seven others from in and around Lambourn who were indicted and found guilty of breaking threshing machines. The second group were also indicted for robbery and assault of Mr. John Hawkins of Welford, but no evidence was offered. Most members of the Lambourn "mob", which was led by a shepherd, Thomas Mackrell, were tried at Abingdon. This included three of this latter group. Of the other four, three, Isaac Burton, Jason Greenway and William Waving, were later sentenced at Reading to seven years transportation, while the fourth, James Deacon, was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment with hard labour.

NO FRIEND IN HEAVEN

Daniel Bates, Alfred Darling, John Gater, George Liddiard, Richard Nutley and William Pearson (alias Brazier), all of Kintbury, were found guilty of breaking a threshing machine belonging to William Webb, also of Kintbury, but were recommended to mercy because they had used no violence.

Five men from the Thatcham area and six from the eastern part of the county were also indicted for breaking threshing machines ; two of the former and all six of the latter were found guilty. The case of the last six is worth noting in view of the attitude adopted later by the prosecution towards Kintbury men. In her evidence "Martha Davis, an old and infirm woman, said that, on Saturday, 20th November, she and her son's wife, who had been lately put to bed, the husband of the latter who was attending her, a nurse, and a little girl were in the house. About ten or eleven at night she was alarmed by the strokes of a sledge-hammer on the kitchen window. She went to the bedroom window to see what was the matter. She saw six men and immediately afterwards they had broken in the back door. She asked what they wanted and they said that they were 40 sworn men come out of Kent, and they were going to drive the country before them. They demanded victuals and drink, and asked her if she would have her ricks and buildings set on fire about her ears, or her threshing machine broken. She desired them to break the machine in 500 pieces if they liked but for God's sake not to harm the staff of life. One had a sledge-hammer and another a sword or cutlass which he flourished about. They had victuals and drink out at the window, but they still kept thumping at the door, and finally broke it." Her son Thomas said that one of those present said that "they were going to break all the machines round, for they were to regulate the country for six months." (2)

The prosecuting counsel, Mr. Gurney, observed that this case was attended with greater ferocity than those which had hitherto occupied the attention of the jury, and it was entirely owing to forbearance that the prisoners were not placed at the bar under a capital charge. Addressing the prisoners Mr. Justice Park said that had it not been for the remarkably lenient course pursued by those who conducted the prosecutions they would all have stood at the bar under indictments which, if proved, would have subjected them to the forfeiture of their lives. Mr. Gurney added that he and his learned coadjutors had anxiously considered the cases of many of the prisoners and it would not admit of a doubt that in most cases where persons were charged with robbery capital convictions would follow. They had, however, pursued in this and many instances the milder course and submitted to verdicts of acquittal on the capital charge, when the parties had been convicted of the minor offence. He concluded on an ominous note ; Justice would not admit them to follow this course in every instance.

On Friday, the fourth effective day of the assize, the first case to be heard was that against six men from the Aldermaston area who were indicted for destroying the machine of one Gabriel Lamb, "who obtained a livelihood by working the machine" for others. He had sent his machine, a portable one, for safety to a neighbour's farm where the mob came and destroyed it. Only one man was found guilty, Mr. Gurney offering no evidence in the cases of the other five.

The second case heard on the Friday concerned two Kintbury men, Robert Page and William Carter, who were found guilty of breaking a threshing machine belonging to Joseph Stanbrook of Enborne, but who were acquitted of robbing Mr. Stanbrook of two sovereigns. If we except the rather special case arising out of the Hungerford Town Hall confrontation, the policy of the Crown prosecutor of refraining from pressing the more serious charge of robbery had been applied indiscriminately to all, irrespective of the part of the county from which they came.

The main case considered on the Friday was the first exception. It involved seven Kintbury men (William Carter, Alfred Darling, Joseph Nicholas, Thomas Radbourn, Edmund Steel. William Westall and William Winterbourn) charged with assaulting Joseph Randall and robbing him of one sovereign. "Mr. Gurney said that it had been observed that they had been in most instances contented to proceed on the minor charge, but it would be impossible in this instance to accede to that course, the enormity of the case rendering it imperative to proceed on the capital charge." (2) It is inexplicable, except on the basis suggested later, why this particular case was chosen as the exception to the policy of leniency on the capital charge. Its "enormity" was certainly no greater, and the leadership much more moderate, than in the case of those labourers who had violently attacked the house of an infirm old lady and forced her to provide them with food and drink, while one of them flourished a sword or cutlass and others, by persistent battering, broke down the door. Though it must be admitted that, in the Randall episode, some members of the Kintbury "congregation", which usually acted as an orderly and disciplined group, had threatened to get out of hand, the evidence of Joseph Randall and his sister Elizabeth brings out quite clearly that they were restrained more than once by the resolute but moderate leadership of the "Captain", William Winterbourne. (See Chapter 2.) Darling, who was found guilty of attempted rape while a convict in Australia, may well have had violent criminal tendencies, and, though we have no other evidence to support this, it may be that this was also true of Nicholas, but even if the "enormity" of both men had been such as to warrant the decision to proceed with the prosecution on the capital charge against them , there would appear to be no reason for pressing the same charge against the remaining five men other than that the counsel for the Crown and the members of the commission (which included "the King of Kintbury", Charles Dundas) were determined to make an example of the Kintbury men.

"The Times" was later to comment that the Berkshire Commission was a "merciful contrast" to those which sat at Winchester and Salisbury. (9) This contrast may be true in general, but it was certainly not true of the punishment meted out to the men of Kintbury. The "uneven severity of the law" as demonstrated by the different commissions was remarked by the "Brighton Gazette" (9) ; this unevenness was also demonstrated over the period during which the Reading Commission sat. That there was a definite tendency to "throw the book" at some of the Kintbury men is supported by the outcome of subsequent cases.

James Annetts, Charles Bates, Alfred Darling, Francis Norris, William Page and William Simms. all of Kintbury, were charged with robbing Dundas's game- keeper, William Clarkson, of 40s. Annetts alone was acquitted. The other five

had "Death" recorded against their names ; Bates only being recommended to mercy because of his previous good character.

Five more Kintbury men, Thomas Darling, William Oakley, James Randall, Edmund Steel and William Winterbourn, were indicted for robbing Frederick Webb of one sovereign. "Mr. Gurney observed that as it was probable that the mob had gone to the prosecutor's with another object than that of robbery, namely with a view to destroy threshing machines, and as Darling and Randall had not been connected with the robbery, he would not press a conviction against them." (2) These two were acquitted but the other three were found guilty.

Why this case, any more than the Randall one, was chosen as an exception to the general policy of leniency it is difficult to determine. Admittedly, according to Farmer Webb's testimony, Winterbourn had used language which might have been considered by some to be violent. Webb affirmed that Winterbourn, holding up a sledge-hammer, had said, "If you don't give me a sovereign, I will spill blood in your house.", but this kind of language was typical of working- class bluster which was never intended to be, and by a fellow worker would not have been taken, literally.

The records contain several examples of such exaggerated use of language. A Wantage man, William Champion, threatened the "specials" in the following uncompromising terms ; "Blast my eyes, I will smash the bloody bugger's heads, six at a time." (9) A Wiltshire shoemaker, William Wilmott, was accused of having followed James Blackridge into the *Bell* at Ramsbury, where he took off his coat and said, "Damn you ! I am come here to make you a head shorter. There are five more who would do it at the *Castle* ". (10) The Stanford Dingley "congregation" was reported as having shouted out "Blood for breakfast !" and as having threatened that anyone who failed to join them "should have his head chopped off." (11)

Hobsbawm and Rudé, in their extensive study of the "Swing" riots, stress that verbal violence was rarely matched with commensurate violence to persons ; in fact not a single life was lost in the whole course of the revolt as a result of action taken by any of the rioters. (9) The Home Office legal adviser, George Maule, reporting to Lord Melbourne's secretary on the trials at Reading, stated that, "None of the cases of robbery have been attended with personal violence, though in two or three there have been menaces to the person and violence done to the house.".(7) As W. Money so poetically expressed it -

"Though great threats were used in no instance were those brown
arm'd sons of labour guilty of personal violence to any one." (12)

That the violent language of the labourers was largely discounted by those more closely in touch with them, namely the local magistrates, is indicated by the treatment of Thomas Willoughby of Hungerford, who had publicly threatened to take the life of John Stevens of Anvilles Farm. He is reported as having said that he owed Stevens a

grudge, that the mob was coming, and that he "would have blood for supper." (10) At one stage only the lack of £50 or of someone to stand surety for this amount prevented Willoughby from going scot-free.

Even Judge Park eventually had his eyes opened "to the true perspective of the rhetorical language that had assumed such terrifying importance" to himself at Reading and to his fellow judges sitting on other special commissions. During the trial of the remainder of the Berkshire men at Abingdon, he was impressed by the reaction of the mob to a display of firmness on the part of a Mrs. Charlotte Slade, wife of an Aston Tirrold farmer. When asked for beer she answered, "Not a drop !", and when asked why she refused to give it said, "I cannot give beer to encourage riot." When the leader of the mob, named Bennett, asked her if she would be afraid or daunted if her premises should be set on fire, she admitted that she would be, but added that she did not suppose that they intended any such thing. The result of this dialogue was that Bennett and his followers went home without beer, and without giving any further trouble. (4)

Judge Park's change of attitude was also reflected in the sentence which he passed at Abingdon on a young labourer named Richard Kempster. When arrested Kempster was carrying a red flag and exclaimed, "Be damned if I don't wish it was a revolution, and that all was afire together." (6) As the Hammonds point out such language would have called forth a grave homily from the judges of the Hampshire Commission on the necessity of cutting such a man off for ever from his kind.(4) If Master Kempster had been tried by the same judge at Reading he might have considered himself lucky if he had been sentenced to transportation for life. In the event he received a sentence of only twelve months imprisonment.

To return to the case out of which this digression arose - that of the indictment of William Winterbourn etc. for having robbed Frederick Webb of one sovereign. Winterbourn said nothing in his defence, but Oakley, as always, was much more voluble. Though "he had nothing to say about Mr. Webb's business" (2), he said that he lived with his grandmother at Kintbury where they had a foundry ; the mob destroyed all he had and forced him to go with them. (His presence among the Kintbury delegation at the Hungerford Town Hall, and his outspokenness at that time, which was the day preceding that on which his grandmother's foundry was attacked, hardly supports this claim.) Oakley produced a petition signed by several respectable persons in his favour, and he even anticipated Cobbett's tactic (at his trial in the following summer) by calling one of the lay members of the commission, Mr. Charles Dundas, the "King of Kintbury", to the witness stand. Mr. Dundas confirmed that Oakley did work for his grandmother, but said that he could not say from his own personal knowledge that their foundry had been destroyed. This was unfortunate for Oakley because the judge's comments suggest that had it been otherwise he would have been acquitted. He, Steel and Winterbourn were found guilty of the capital charge of robbery, though only Winterbourn was refused a recommendation to mercy.

The uneven treatment meted out to the prisoners from different areas was further demonstrated in the last case dealt with on the Friday. Cornelius Bennett, "Captain" of the West Woodhay "mob", together with a blacksmith,

Thomas Goodfellow, were indicted on two charges, one of breaking Matthew Batten's threshing machine, and another of robbing his person. They were found guilty of the minor charge but, unlike their Kintbury comrades, were acquitted on the capital one. The leniency shown in this case is all the more remarkable because it provided a clear example of perjury on someone's part. "Several working people deposed that they heard Batten invite the mob to destroy his machine, and said he would give them two sovereigns for their trouble as he wished to annoy his landlord." (4) This, said Batten, was a conspiracy against him and denied saying what he was alleged to have said ; his denial was supported by the testimony of his son. Apparently the judge assumed that the perjury had been committed by the farm workers (though no case was brought against them) for he referred to this "scandalous attempt to blacken the character of a respectable farmer; 'It pleased God, however, that the atrocious attempt had failed.'" (10)

The first case dealt with on the Saturday morning also involved Bennett who was indicted on three more charges of robbery. In two cases no evidence was offered, and the third case was abandoned, though the evidence provided in contemporary documents appears strong enough to have convicted him.

John Aldridge and George Whiting, both of Hungerford, were next found guilty of breaking a threshing machine belonging to William Barnes of Sanham Farm, and Charles Rosier and Thomas Willoughby, also of Hungerford, were found guilty of participating in the destruction of machinery at Richard Gibbons' iron foundry. Willoughby was later indicted on three charges of robbery for which no evidence was offered. Again documentary evidence (e.g. threats upon the life of a farmer, and a statement on oath that he had threatened to set fire to another farmer's premises and to murder him (10)) suggests that, had he been a Kintbury man, he would have been found guilty on a capital charge. Three other Hungerford men, Charles Green, Joseph Smith and George Sturgess were charged with breaking two threshing machines ; one the property of Richard Harben of Welford, and another at Oakhanger Farm. Smith and Green were found guilty, but Sturgess was acquitted.

A Benham labourer, William White, was next charged with breaking a machine belonging to John Porter, and with violently assaulting and robbing him of 10s. White was found guilty of the former charge, but the discrimination against the Kintbury men was once again emphasised when the second charge was withdrawn.

The rest of Saturday was taken up with the cases of a group of men from the Yattendon area, who must have roamed far afield in search of machines to break for their indictment include breaking machines at Basildon and Streatley. Five of this group were also arraigned on two indictments which combined machine breaking with robbery, but, no evidence being offered, the jury were directed to acquit them. It was 6.30 p.m. when the commission finally adjourned.

The proceedings recommenced on the Monday morning with a group of eleven indictments of felonious assault and robbery committed in various parts of the county. Of the eleven men concerned one was from Aldermaston, six

from the Lambourn valley, one from Inkpen (John Burgess), one from Hungerford (James Wilkins) and two (Barlow Page and George Dopson) from Kintbury. Three other Kintbury men were arraigned at the same time for destroying threshing machines. All fourteen men being placed in the dock together, Mr. Gurney, counsel for the prosecution, addressing the jury, said that he had now arrived at that stage of the proceedings at which he found that he could, consistently with his duty to the country and to the government, abstain from any more prosecutions for felony. It would appear that a bargain had been struck between the opposing counsels, for there exists a hand-written note which states that it was -

> "Proposed on the part of the prisoners" that the Crown would offer no further evidence as to those already convicted; that those in the dock were "to be discharged on recognizances to be of good behaviour for one year"; and that those not yet tried were "to plead guilty on condition of their lives being spared." (11)

The prisoners at the bar were then acquitted and discharged upon entering into the appropriate recognizances to keep the peace.

Ten more Kintbury men - Thomas Arnold, John Carter, John Casbourn, Thomas Edwards, George Gaby, Henry Gater, Jacob Gater, Peter Knight, William Randall and Jonathan Sandford - were next indicted for conspiracy to riot and for riotous assembly on the 21st November. Mr. Gurney offered evidence against Jacob Gater only, probably because it was he who led the attack on the Kintbury lock- up or Cage, which was the spark which ignited the revolt in the Kintbury area ; all of the others were acquitted.

The last two cases tried were those of riot against an Aldermaston man, and of robbery against Frederick Gater of Kintbury. No evidence was offered on either of these charges and both men were acquitted.

The work of the prosecution having been completed Mr. Rigby. chief of the defending counsel, made an impassioned plea for clemency. He began by quoting from a speech made to the Berkshire Quarter Sessions in the previous January by one of the lay members of the commission, Mr. Charles Dundas. Mr. Dundas had "expressed his belief that the alarming increase in crime was largely due to the cruel pressure on the poor by the illiberality of masters and parishes in beating down the wages and reducing the parochial relief which was so low as scarcely to afford them the means of existence." Mr. Rigby also referred to the representations which Mr. Dundas and other gentlemen of the county had made at that time to the Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington, as to the general distressed state which pervaded all classes of people. "If these representations had been attended to at the time", declared Mr. Rigby, "what misery would have been prevented. Berkshire gentlemen would have been spared the shocking spectacle of so many unfortunate fellow creatures at the criminal Bar." (6)

"It has been said", Mr. Rigby continued, "that some of the persons who perpetrated these outrages were artisans who had not the excuse of poverty or low wages." He argued that these men would have been devoid of feeling if they had been able to contemplate their neighbours, their relatives and their associates "who were starving and whose penniless families were without food" without wishing to do something to alleviate their distress. While approval could not be given to the way they had set out to do this, surely understanding of the nobility of their motives would call forth moderation in any condemnation of them. "I trust", he concluded, "that mercy will be extended to all ; that public policy will not require any victims on the scaffold ; and that the severity of justice will yield to soft-eyed compassion, for *mercy was ever Heaven's distinguishing mark, and he who has it not has no friend there.*" (6)

Like Cobbett's trust in the members of the new "liberal" government, Mr. Rigby's trust in the compassion of the members of the special commission was misplaced. The legal adviser to the Home Office, Mr. George Maules, in his daily report, wrote that though he was "not able to state whether any or how many would be left for execution", he hazarded a guess, from what had passed in court, "that two or three would probably be in that unhappy condition". He added that he had passed on the Home Office views respecting imprisonment to Mr. Justice Park, who had said that "he was obliged by the communication... and would communicate it to his Brother Judges, but... he seemed to doubt whether these were the sort of convicts adapted to the penitentiary." (7)

The Commissioners entered the court at ten o'clock on the morning of the final day of the Special Assize, and Mr. Justice Park immediately proceeded to pass sentence on those prisoners who had been convicted. The first two prisoners to be sentenced had been guilty of riotous assembly ; Jacob Gater, of Kintbury, was sentenced to nine months imprisonment with hard labour, but Thomas Dance, of Hungerford, had his sentence increased to twelve months because he was the elder and one who ought to have known better.

When the next group of prisoners from the Yattendon area had been disposed of, two more Hungerford men, Charles Green and Joseph Smith were placed in the dock. Both had been found guilty of feloniously breaking threshing machines and were sentenced to transportation for seven years. Smith who, according to one newspaper report, was suffering severely from rheumatism, had to be helped into and out of the dock. His ill-health - he was later to have to endure the pain and discomfort of a hernia - was to prevent the transportation order being carried out. Instead Smith was to linger on for six long years in the hulks at Portsmouth until he died there in January, 1837. (13 and 14)

Eight more machine breakers were next placed at the bar. Of these three were from Kintbury : George Holmes, whose youth and good character outweighed the fact that he was a blacksmith, and William White, a labourer, were sentenced to twelve months hard labour, while Robert Page, a carpenter, was sentenced to be transported for seven years. The next three were from West Woodhay :

Robert Gibbs was sentenced to twelve months hard labour, while Cornelius Bennett and Thomas Goodfellow, who had taken a more prominent part, received sentences of seven and fourteen years transportation respectively. The last two of this group of eight were from Hungerford : George Whiting, against whom there were two convictions, was nonetheless sentenced to only eighteen months hard labour because "he had not taken a very active part in the proceedings", while John Aldridge, a blacksmith who had, found himself sentenced to seven years transportation.

The next group of eight prisoners to be sentenced was divided into equal parties, one from the Lambourn valley, the other from Kintbury. Three of the former (Isaac Burton, Jason Greenway and William Waving) were sentenced to serve seven years transportation. The judge commented that Burton, as a tailor, had no pretence for mixing in these transactions but a desire for mischief ; he had demanded money and the offence was aggravated by being committed at night. Though it was true that Greenway was a labourer he, in addition to demanding money at night, had used threatening language. The fourth man from the Lambourn area, James Deacon, had committed no excess beyond the guilt of joining in such outrages consequently he would be given the much lighter sentence of twelve months hard labour. Three of the Kintbury party (John Gater, Richard Nutley and William Pearson) were sentenced to twelve months hard labour because all three were agricultural labourers, had committed only one offence, and there were no circumstances of aggravation. The fourth member of the group, George Liddiard, had his sentence increased to 18 months because he was a blacksmith.

All but three of the nine men next placed in the dock were from Bradfield. Elijah Baker, James Grant and John Jennaway were from the Hungerford area. Mr. Justice Park was happy to announce to all of them that, in the judgement of the court, their cases were favourable and that it was not necessary for the ends of justice that any of them should be sent out of the country. As a labourer who had received a good character Grant was sentenced to only six months hard labour, but both Baker and Jennaway, who had not, were sentenced to twelve months. The prisoners left the dock considerably affected by the learned judge's address, particularly Jennaway who was a very young lad.

The twenty-six men who made up the next three groups arraigned at the bar were all from the south-western corner of the county; all of them had a sentence of "Death" recorded against their names. Seven of the first group of eight were from Hungerford - William Chitter, John Cope, John Field, David Garlick, David Hawkins, Israel Pullen and George Rosier. Mr. Justice Park told all eight prisoners that they had each been convicted, and many of them in more instances than one, of offences that had forfeited their lives to the offended laws of their country. He added that though he meant to recommend them to mercy as far as the sparing of their lives was concerned, with respect to some of them it was only after deep and painful consideration that the court had come to this decision.

The eighth man, Daniel Bates, of Kintbury, was singled out for a lengthy homily by the learned judge. His crimes were of a very deep dye and the Court assured him that the scale had long been balancing as to whether death should not be the almost immediate consequence of them. Nothing had saved him but the strong recommendation

of the jury in one case, the very good character which he had received in another, and, as the Court must add, his own demeanour at the bar on the first day of the trial. His conduct in his domestic relations had produced a very strong impression upon it ; not that kindness to a widowed mother alone would have influenced its decision. However, the tenderness of disposition in him which that fact evinced, coupled with other things, had induced the court to interfere in his case. His Majesty would be recommended to spare the lives of all the prisoners at the bar, but what terms might be imposed upon them in commutation of the awful punishment of death it was not for the Court to say; in all probability many of those in the dock must leave the country never to return. Sentence of death was then recorded by the Registrar in the usual manner.

"Death" was also recorded against the names of Joseph Nicholas of Kintbury for robbery, and against Timothy May, Edmund Steel and James Watt, also of Kintbury, and Jeremiah Dobson, Charles Rosier, Joseph Tuck and Thomas Willoughby, of Hungerford, for breaking fixed machinery. As the prisoners were quitting the dock Steel paused and said, "I never received any money and Page knows that it was so," which remark called forth from Judge Park the comment that his was a very bad case and the Court had anxiously considered whether it was not deserving of death.

The final group of seven prisoners to have a sentence of death recorded against their names were all from Kintbury ; they were Charles Bates, William Carter, Francis Norris, William Page, Thomas Radbourn, William Sims and William Westall. Addressing the prisoners Mr. Justice Park said that the Court, desirous not to carry the effusion of human blood farther than the interests of justice absolutely demanded, had determined to recommend them also to the mercy of the Crown. On what terms that mercy would be granted he would not presume to say; he could only observe that, with the exception of Bates, those who advised His Majesty would say that they had unfitted themselves by their offences to be allowed ever again to enjoy the blessings of this happy land.

The last act of the drama confirmed the accuracy of Mr. Maule's prediction of how events would turn out, and showed also how mis-placed was Mr. Rigby's trust in the "soft-eyed compassion" of the Court ; public policy did require that there should be some sacrificial victims placed on justice's altar, the scaffold. Those chosen to pay the ultimate penalty were, of course, Kintbury men, Alfred Darling, William Oakley and William Winterbourn. Addressing Oakley, Mr. Justice Park said that he had been foremost in the robbery of the Hungerford magistrates, and had taken an active part in other such acts. In the former case he and his companions had been armed with dangerous weapons and when asked to lay them aside had refused to do so in a menacing manner, accompanying that refusal with oaths.

"As for you," said the judge, turning to William Winterbourn, "you took an alarming part in some of these outrages as leader of the mob. You acted as captain of the band, dictated what was to be done, and received money or not according to your will and pleasure. In each of the indictments upon which you have been convicted, you have borne an active and prominent part." (6) Having made the point that Oakley, being a carpenter had no business or

pretence to mix himself up in these transactions, and that Darling, being a blacksmith by trade, had no concern in them, and could not have had a shadow of a right to take the part he did, the learned judge, "who was considerably affected", proceeded to pass the sentence of death upon all three of them in the usual form, but named no day or place of execution.

Winterbourn and Darling wept while hearing the sentence, but Oakley appeared little, if at all, affected ; he shook his head and, on quitting the dock, spoke to a person standing at the table near which he passed.

Thus concluded the proceedings under the Special Commission, which one who was present described "as far beyond acting tragedy as truth is beyond
fiction." (1)

On the same evening that the Reading Special Commission concluded its business a public dinner, attended by some fifty of the most substantial men of property in the Reading area, was interrupted by the intrusion of two Quakers, who reported that they had been informed that the judges had ordered that the execution of the three condemned men should take place within the next five days, which was a much shorter period of time than they would have been allowed if they had been murderers. This announcement aroused much indignation among those present, and it was agreed that one of their number, W.S. Darter, should seek the advice and assistance of Mr. Monck, of Coley Park. (15)

Some little time later the delegate returned from his mission with letters of introduction to the Earl of Abingdon and Lord Amesbury (sic ; actually Mr. Charles Dundas, who had not then been elevated to the peerage). After further discussion it was agreed that Mr. Darter and a companion should immediately take the post-chaise to Abingdon, where he was to obtain an interview with the judges and try to persuade them to issue instructions at least to delay the executions. Although their journey was made as expeditiously as possible, because the post- boys were in the closest sympathy with their objective, they arrived too late to interview the judges. Instead they presented their letters of introduction to the aforementioned peers, who provided them with further letters to the judges themselves.

Having learnt at what hour it was their lordships intention to rise, they waited on them at breakfast time. On being informed of the purpose of their visit Baron Bolland said, "Before we left Reading we gave the most anxious consideration to these cases, and we selected only three of the worst offenders for capital punishment." Any hopes the intermediaries may have had of succeeding in their objective were dashed when Baron Park interposed and, with emphasis, said, "If His Majesty allows these fellows to escape I would recommend him to open all the gaols in the kingdom." (15) To the argument that no personal violence was sustained by anyone, Baron Park warmly replied, "They held bludgeons over people's heads." Strong pleas for some secondary punishment were met with a blank refusal, their lordships stating that having passed sentence what happened afterwards was no concern of theirs.

Lord Melbourne was the proper person to whom they should apply. Having failed in their task the two delegates left, convinced that Baron Park was determined, if possible, that the executions should take place. (15)

Within thirty-six hours of the sentences of death without recommendation to mercy having been passed on Winterbourn and his two comrades, a petition had been signed by 15,000 persons in the Reading area. The signatures included those of several magistrates who were firmly of the opinion that hanging "instead of repressing crime, promotes insensibility and frequently, by exciting sympathy for the sufferer, diminishes the abhorrence of his guilt." They argued that there were a variety of circumstances which supported the call for the infliction of a punishment short of death ; Among these were the following :-

> that the offence for which the prisoners had been convicted was one which in the common opinion of uneducated men was not considered as capital, and though ignorance of the law might be no legal defence, in all moral feeling it must and ought to have great weight ;
>
> that, although by the evidence produced at the trials the prisoners had used great threats, in no instance were they guilty of personal violence to anyone ;
>
> and that, if the lives of these men were spared, the feelings of the lower classes were more likely to be conciliated, and the peace of the county placed on a sure foundation. (6)

Another petition, signed by 950 persons from the Newbury area, was headed by the signature of the Mayor, Mr. J. Satchell, and included the signatures of many persons whose property had been injured and who had otherwise suffered by the conduct of the prisoners. Petitions, equally numerous and respectably signed, were received from Hungerford, Henley etc. (6) The campaign for clemency was supported by petitions drawn up in parts of the country unaffected by the labourers' revolt, e.g. the Birmingham Political Union, chairman Thomas Attwood, submitted a petition to the King on behalf of the prisoners convicted by the special commissions.

J.S. Monck, Esq., of Coley Park, and James Wheble, Esq., of Woodley Lodge, who had earlier shown their sympathy for the prisoners in the county gaol in a concrete manner by donations of money,(16) waited on the Secretary of State and lay all the local petitions before him. Mr. Monck reported that Lord Melbourne had received them very kindly and had listened to them very patiently for half an hour. "He promised that the petitions should be presented both to the King and to the Queen and that time should be allowed for the reception and for the due consideration of them". Mr. Monck though not without hope hardly dared entertain much. (6)

Mr. Monck's extremely cautious optimism was to be justified by events, but not before a second deputation, consisting of the High Sheriff of Berkshire, John Walter, Esq., (the proprietor of "The Times" newspaper) and the Rev. D. Williams, chaplain of Reading Gaol, who were determined to make another effort to have the death sentences commuted, had waited on Lord Melbourne at the Home Office. They met His Lordship just before the meeting of the Privy Council which was to be held on the afternoon of Sunday, the 9th of January. The Council decided on a respite for Oakley and Darling during His Majesty's pleasure, but for Winterbourn there was to be no reprieve. (17)

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(2) Reading Mercury. 3rd January, 1831.
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(4) J.L. & B. Hammond, op.cit.
(5) Berks R.O., Q.S. Order Books.
(6) Reading Mercury. 10th January,1831.
(7) P.R.O. H.O. 40-27
(8) P.R.O. T.S. 11-851.
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(12) W. Money, Newbury Weekly News, 6th January, 1898.
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(16) Reading Mercury, 20th December, 1830.
(17) Reading Mercury, 17th January, 1831.

CHAPTER 6

EACH IN HIS SEPARATE HELL

The Privy Council's compromise between the stern demands of the country's offended laws and the dictates of humanity was hailed with more rejoicing by the intercessors than it was by those for whom they had interceded. The latter had already composed their minds to accept the fate which awaited them with fortitude and without the least indication of fear. It was not surprising that Oakley and Darling received, almost with indifference, the news that the execution of their sentence was respited. They found no pleasure in it if it meant only that their lives were to be spared for a few days or a few weeks ; if this was so they indicated that they would far rather die with their still doomed companion.

The respite arrived at the gaol on the evening of Monday the 10th of January, and was immediately communicated to Oakley and Darling, but it was not until the next morning, the morning of the execution, that Winterbourn learnt that he was to suffer alone. He bore this additional trial in a manly and becoming manner. He expressed himself glad that his companions were to be spared and did not regret that mercy had been denied him ; on the contrary he continued to declare that he was prepared and willing to die. His wife was lying dangerously ill with typhus and he had been informed of her condition which was considered to be hopeless. One of his last wishes was that she might die before he suffered. (1)

There was no special treatment for a man condemned to death for a crime other than murder. He was, of course, in solitary confinement, though his friends had access to him "at seasonable times". His diet was the prison allowance only. For exercise he was allowed "to walk a short time every day in the yard attached to his cell." (2) So, like Wilde's guardsman, "it was there, he took the air, beneath the leaden sky."

The hour appointed for the last sad ceremony which the ill-starred man had to undergo was 12 o'clock. Shortly before that hour he came out of the chapel, pinioned, and attended by officers of the prison who were to lead him to the scaffold. His large muscular frame seemed cramped, probably from the position of his arms and the tightness of the bands by which he was pinioned. He walked firmly but his cheek was pallid, his eyes glazed, and the prayers which he uttered, though fervently and audibly expressed, broke from quivering lips.(1)

As was usual at that time the scaffold was erected at the top of the gaol. Winterbourn ascended the steep flight of steps without assistance and with a steady step. Reaching the platform at the top he submitted himself to the hands of the executioner. As the prison clock finished striking twelve the drop fell, and, after a short struggle (1), thus died the very first "Victim of Whiggery". As the correspondent of "The Times" put it, "Life had not dealt so tenderly with him for death at last to hold much bitterness."

Someone who was present at the execution later described the scene in the following words :

> "I was about nine years old at the time and in common with an immense crowd I went to see the execution. The gallows was on the west wall of the gaol, facing the ruins of Reading Abbey; people climbed the rocks and portions of the old walls so as to get a good view. I watched till I saw the officials etc., on the scaffold and Winterbourn standing under the beam. He looked a strong, heavy man, and wore a velveteen jacket. I looked till I saw a white cap pulled over his face, then I could look no longer. I got behind other people and looked on the ground. After about a minute a suppressed groan ran through the crowd and I knew it was over. The groan had scarcely ceased when a lot of fellows, selling what they claimed was a printed copy of Winterbourn's dying speech and confession, began shouting their wares. I remember reading this print which stated that Winterbourn had admitted that his sentence was just." (4)

Lord Melbourne and his colleagues of the "liberal" government were no doubt relieved to receive the report from the Mayor of Reading that the execution had passed "without tumult or extraordinary excitement." (5)

Meanwhile the condemned man's comrades had been otherwise occupied. Darling had expressed gratitude for the mercy which had been extended to him, and expressed the hope that, by the blessing of the Almighty, he should be enabled to follow the good advice given to him by the worthy chaplain of the gaol. (6) That this conversion was not a permanent one is shown by his subsequent conduct in the convict settlements of New South Wales.

Between the time when sentence of death had been passed on him and that when he was informed that a respite had been granted, Oakley had shown some pretence of religious feeling. However, when it became clear that he was not to lose his life, he "became as hardened and vicious as ever, throwing off all pretence at religious feeling which he had before assumed." Oakley must have been a very good actor for he not only deceived the good chaplain, he successfully hood-winked all observers into believing that he had resigned himself to his fate. (6) In fact it would appear that he had long been meditating upon a plan of escape, and had endeavoured to gain the support of other convicts in this enterprise.

The plan he proposed, and which was entered into by several others, was to seize the Governor, Turnkey and Chaplain while in chapel, secure the alarm, and take their own clothes. Assuming that no further difficulties remained to be overcome, they were then to make their escape. The prisoners in different parts of the gaol who agreed with and were prepared to take part in the scheme were to shake hands in chapel on the morning previous to carrying their plan into effect. (6) According to the reporter of the *Reading Mercury*, this preliminary signal was given on the morning of the day before the executions were to take place. That this was so is doubtful as it would have meant that the escape would have been attempted on the actual day of the executions, and, unless procedures were then different from those which applied when Oscar Wilde was an inmate of the same gaol, "there is no

chapel on the day on which they hang a man." (7) Even if this was not true in 1831, or it was not known to Oakley, he would have been most naive if he had believed that he, due for execution at noon, would have been present at the chapel service on that same morning. According to Wilde, "they kept us close," (7) during the period preceding an execution, and the 1825 Gaol Regulations state that "During an execution all the prisoners of the gaol shall be confined in their separate cells so as to be excluded from the sight thereof." (2)

However, though there may be some doubt as to exactly when the escape plan was to be put into effect, confirmation that such a plan existed is given in a Report of the Visiting Magistrates, who were "sorry to report that a conspiracy had been formed, chiefly among the prisoners engaged in the late disturbances, to rise upon the Turnkeys in the Chapel during Divine Service, to overpower them and to effect their escape." (8) The reason why Oakley's plan was not put into operation was that the authorities "had timely notice of it and took precautions ...by limiting the number admitted to the Chapel." (8) The timely information was provided by an informer, a fellow convict, William Appleby, who had been convicted of horse-stealing at the March Assizes, 1830, where he had been sentenced to two years imprisonment. (8) The thwarting of his first plan of escape did not deter Oakley from devising another ; on the journey to the hulks he tried to persuade his fellow prisoners to sway the caravan over. (6)

On the same day that the news of reprieves for Oakley and Darling had been received at Reading, the Deputy Lieutenant, Mr. Frederick Page, and the Hungerford magistrates, had separately written to the Home Secretary requesting that the wives and children of those who were to be transported might be allowed to join them ; to both requests the Home Office returned a decided negative.(9) On the 18th January, at the Berkshire Quarter Sessions, the Marquis of Downshire moved that the permission of H.M. Government be sought for the wives and children of the convicts sentenced to transportation to join them. As the chief objection appeared to be the expense to the public purse, it was also proposed that a sum of money be raised by subscription in the county for the purpose. The Marquis, as Chairman, and J.Pearce, M.P., (and a Hungerford J.P.) were requested to proceed in this matter. They did so proceed but with no more success than their predecessors.

The rioters who were to be transported remained in the County Gaol until Thursday. 27th January, when twenty-three of the 45 Berkshire rioters so sentenced were taken by caravan to Gosport where they were taken aboard the "York" hulk. This group included nine men -

Daniel Bates, David Hawkins, Francis Norris, Edmund Steel,
Thomas Goodfellow, Joseph Nicholas, William Page,
William Sims and William Westall -

from the south-western corner of the county, all of whom were "lifers", except Goodfellow who had been sentenced to 14 years.

The remaining twenty-two, together with two other "transports" unconnected with the riots, were similarly transferred on the following Monday, 31st January. This group included -

> William Oakley and Alfred Darling who, having only narrowly escaped hanging, were "lifers", and nine "seven year" men, Cornelius Bennett, William Carter, Timothy May, Robert Page and Thomas Radbourn from the Kintbury area , and John Aldridge, Charles Green, Joseph Tuck and Joseph Smith from Hungerford. (6)

Twenty-four men from south-west Berks remained in the County Gaol when the "transports" had left. Their names (together with the periods of hard labour to which they had been sentenced in brackets) were as follows :-

Jacob Gater (9 months); Charles Bates, John Gater, Robert Gibbs, George Holmes, Richard Nutley, William Pearson and William White (12 months); and George Liddiard and James Watts (18 months) all of Kintbury : and William Chitter and James Grant (6 months); Elijah Baker, John Cope, Thomas Dance, Jeremiah Dobson, John Jennaway and David Garlick (12 months); and John Field, Israel Pullen, Charles Rosier, George Rosier, George Whiting and Thomas Willoughby (18 months) from Hungerford.

The County Gaol which was to be their domicile for some time was relatively new, having been built in 1793 on lines suggested by the well-known prison reformer, John Howard. (10) It was originally intended to accommodate only forty prisoners. By 1830, however, it had been enlarged to enable it to "receive a hundred and twenty-four", though, as the same writer remarked, "At times of excitement and riot as many as two hundred and fifty have been contained within its walls, but with very great inconvenience." (11)

In spite of its relative newness "severe criticisms were passed at the Midsummer Sessions (of 1840) upon the harsh administration and insanitary conditions (then) prevailing," (12) and, in 1842, it was condemned by the Inspectors of Prisons as "a stigma and detriment to the county." The inspectors also stated that it answered "none of the purposes for which it was established, i.e. the deterring, correcting and reclaiming of offenders." (13) The county magistrates at the next Quarter Sessions decided to rebuild and the existing gaol was opened at the end of 1844. (14)

Unless prevented by sickness, prisoners sentenced to hard labour were employed every week-day, except for Christmas Day, Good Friday, and other officially prescribed days of fasting and thanksgiving. (2) Reading Gaol was one of the first to introduce the tread-wheel, and parties of fashionable ladies and gentlemen considered it an entertaining diversion to watch the prisoners at their futile task of climbing at the rate of 13,000 feet in a day of ten hours.(15) Only those declared fit by the gaol surgeon were put upon this sisyphean task.

Every convicted person had to "attend Divine Service on Sundays and other days, unless prevented by illness or other reasonable cause." On Sundays it was the Keeper's responsibility to "take care that every prisoner appeared in Chapel ... fresh shaved and in clean linen." (2)

Next to the inculcation of godliness and the proper discipline of the body, cleanliness was an important aspect of prison life. Apart from the initial warm bath, and such other means of cleansing as the circumstances demanded, the prisoners were provided with "a proper supply of water with convenient places to wash" together with "an adequate allowance of soap,towels and combs; the towels to be delivered clean, at least twice every week". Shirts and other clothing were washed and also delivered clean once a week. The men were to shave at least twice a week, razors being provided to those without. (2)

Like certain religious the convicts' long day was broken up into precise periods, the change-over from one occupation to another being "signified by the ringing of a bell". At the first bell-ringing (the time of which varied according to the period of the year, i.e.

> at six o'clock during the months of April-September; at half past six during the months October-March; and not later than seven o'clock during the months November-February) the convicts rose, stripped their beds and placed their bedding in accordance with the instructions from the Keeper, washed and breakfasted. At the second bell they were "conducted to their respective places in the Chapel." At the conclusion of Divine Service they were put to work. The actual working day of those sentenced to hard labour was ten hours in summer and eight hours in winter.

To this must be added one hour for dinner and a period of air and exercise; "as much as may be deemed proper for the preservation of their health." A convict could receive visitors between the hours of twelve noon and two p.m. ; the number of such visitors in one day was not to exceed three, and they could stay for only half an hour. "At a quarter of an hour before sunset throughout the year" the prisoners retired to their night or lodging cells. Each male convict was supposed to be lodged "either in a separate cell,or in a cell with not less than two other prisoners", and was to be provided with "a separate bedstead, a straw-filled mattress, two blankets, a coverlet and a sig-pan." The coverlets and blankets were to be washed every three months. (2)

"Every prisoner maintained at the expense of the county was allowed a sufficient quantity of bread and water, and any other coarse but wholesome food, as directed by order of the Justices in Session; or such other food as was judged necessary and ordered by the surgeon.". In fact, providing they conducted themselves in a quiet and orderly manner, to the satisfaction of the Keeper, they received "daily, in addition to the usual allowance of food, such an allowance as the Visiting Justices might direct." (2) According to two quite different writers these men were, in respect of food at least, better off than their comrades who had retained their freedom.

In the fifth issue of his "Politics for the Poor" (published in the same month that the rioting occurred in Berkshire) William Cobbett unfavourably compared the potato based diet of most agricultural labourers with that provided by the Berkshire Jail Regulations, which stated that "If the Surgeon thinks it necessary the Working Prisoners may be allowed Meat and Broth on Week Days." Less than two years after the riots Edwin Chadwick included in his Report to the Poor Law Commissioners certain statistics which he had collected, one of which is particularly relevant for making a comparison between the condition of a free labourer and his imprisoned comrades. It was given in terms of ounces of solid food consumed per week.

a transported prisoner	330 ounces
a convicted prisoner	239 do
a soldier	168 do
an able-bodied pauper	151 do
an independent agricultural labourer	122 do (3)

In spite of being provided with shelter, clothing and such palatial fare at the County's expense, the convicted rioters appear to have been singularly lacking in gratitude, for Mr. Bully, the Gaol Surgeon. in his report dated, 28th June, 1831, stated "that more discontent has existed in the prison since the admission of the County Rioters than he recollects to have seen for twenty or thirty years before." (16) Neither the savage sentences meted out to their transported comrades, nor the terrible fate suffered by their leader, William Winterbourn, appears to have completely cowed them; these harsh examples had not yet made them into the ox-like Hodges which, according to some writers and commentators, their descendants were to become.

REFERENCES. CHAPTER 6.

(1) Reading Mercury, 17th January, 1831.
(2) Rules and Regulations for the Government of Reading Gaol (1825)
(3) quoted by N. Gash, op.cit.
(4) Letter printed in the Newbury Weekly News, 24th February, 1898.
(5) P.R.O. H.O. 52-12.
(6) Reading Mercury, 7th February, 1831.
(7) Oscar Wilde, "The Ballad of Reading Gaol".
(8) Berks R.O. Quarter Sessions Order Book, 5th April, 1831.
(9) P.R.O. H.O. 40-27.
(10) Rev. J.M. Guilding, "Notable Events" (1895).
(11) _____ Doran, "The History etc. of Reading" (1835).
(12) Reading Mercury, 4th July, 1840.
(13) ditto 18th January, 1842.
(14) ditto 19th October, 1844.
(15) ditto 23rd December, 1822.
(16) Berks R.O. Quarter Sessions Order Book, June,1831.

CHAPTER 7

AFTERMATH

The scythe of Whig justice having removed the hardiest and the best from the farming communities, the aftermath included many families shattered by the loss of the winner of what little bread they had had. Of the 45 men who were sentenced (or had had their sentences reduced) to transportation 24 were married ; between them they had 78 children. To many it was no new experience to have to rely on parish relief because their husbands or fathers had for a decade or more been unemployed for at least part of every year. In some areas, when that other weapon of Whig policy, the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, was put into effect, out-relief (the equivalent of unemployment benefit) was stopped, and those who were unable to survive without support from the community were "offered the house", i.e.were given no alternative but to enter that Bastille of the Poor, the Workhouse.

Although it was the men of the Kintbury/Hungerford area who were most harshly treated by the Special Commission (nearly a half of the Berkshire men transported came from this part of the county as did the only one executed.), their dependents were, in the main, treated relatively generously.

One woman who was left without even the small shred of hope which the wives of other leading rioters had of ever seeing their husbands again, was the widow of the very first "Victim of Whiggery", William Winterbourn, the "captain" of the Kintbury "congregation". While awaiting execution Winterbourn had learnt that his wife was seriously ill with typhus. He expressed the hope that she would die before she had to be informed of his fate. His hope was not realised for entries in the Kintbury Overseers Accounts refer to relief given to "Winterbourn's wife" after the date of his execution. From the issue of "two loaves and 2s.0d." a week (1) it would appear that she had been left with two children to provide for. Later entries for "Winterbourn's child" suggest that one of these had died in the interim. Not many years later she must have re-married for an entry in the minutes of the Hungerford Union, dated 22nd July,1835, states

> "Widow Winterbourn's child - her present husband to maintain." but the Guardians must have had fairly rapid second thoughts because the entry for the following week states "Winterbourn's child to be paid 1s.0d. a week and arrears.".

While those who had been transported were eating the bitter bread of banishment, those they were forced to leave behind had to exist on a pauper's dole. Increases in the amount of relief granted to the wives of William Page and Edmund Steele, in June 1831, suggest that these unfortunate women were pregnant during their husband's trial and transportation to the other side of the world. Mrs. Page and her baby must have died soon afterwards for later entries in the Overseers Disbursements books refer to "William Page's boy". William's brother, Robert, had left behind a wife and three children. To sustain herself and her fatherless family Mrs. Robert Page received each week, from 15th January,1831, four gallon loaves and three shillings.

According to the convict records Edmund Steele was the father of eight children. By 1835, however, some of these must have died or become independent of their mother, for, on 22nd July of that year, Maria Steele was receiving relief for only two children. The wife of Thomas Radbourn, another Kintbury man, had been left alone to fend for herself and five children on a parish dole of five gallon loaves and four shillings per week. Although married with two children (2) of his own Timothy May seems to have accepted responsibility for a third, illegitimate, child. Entries in the Kintbury Overseer's Accounts from 11th December,1830, onwards refer always to "Timothy May's child", and one for July,1835, in the minutes of the Hungerford Union states

> "May's child's pay to be discontinued and 1s.0d. to be paid for her (the mother of May's illegitimate child) legitimate child.".

Joseph Smith, a labourer of Hungerford, had been forced to apply for parish relief in every year since at least 1822. While he was languishing in the "York" hulk his wife, Sarah, had to cope with a family of five children. In March, 1831, and in the December of that year, the Hungerford Overseers generously allowed her a pair of shoes for each of her two sons. In July, 1835, she was receiving relief for "her boy" only. That the sentence imposed on her husband had not in fact been carried out, and that he had not been transported with his comrades, was to be of little consolation to Sarah Smith, for he remained in the hulks until he died there in January,1837.

Charles Green's wife, Sarah, was more fortunate than her namesake. She had been left with only one child to provide for. In January, 1833, she was being allowed 5s.0d. a week, and in November of the same year the Guardians generously authorised the issue of "a loaf for herself and one child from St. Michael's last". Sarah Green was the only one of the transported rioters' wives to see her husband again. In the same month that Sarah Smith's husband died in the hulks, January, 1837, Sarah Green sailed in the "John II" to join her husband in New South Wales.

Although a third Hungerford man, David Hawkins, had been in receipt of parish relief for some years prior to the riots, no evidence has been found to show that his wife, Prudence, received any assistance from the parish overseers after 27th November, 1830, though it is certain that she had been left with at least four children to look after. (According to the convict records Hawkins was the father of five children. If this is correct his wife must have

been in the same unfortunate condition as Maria Steele at the time their husbands were taken from them.). A possible explanation is that Prudence Hawkins had moved away from the area, because the Hungerford Guardians continued paying relief to John Aldridge's wife, Rachel, and her three children, at the rate of two loaves and 2s.0d. per week.

Because her husband had failed in his attempt to evade arrest, due to the pertinacity of his pursuer, Farmer Matthew Batten, Mrs. Bennett found herself in the unenviable position of being the sole provider for a six-months old baby and two other children under six years of age. On 22nd July, 1835, the Hungerford Guardians ordered the payment of

"10s.0d. for clothes for the eldest child and 3s.0d. per week for the other two children."

As an alternative Mrs. Bennett was to be "offered the house". This did not mean that she could have a rent-free house to live in, but that, if she found it impossible to keep herself and her family on such a pitiful rate of relief, she could enter the Workhouse where, under the beneficent regulations of the Poor Law Commissioners, she would have been separated from her children.

For a short period after the riots all the wives of the Hungerford men transported or imprisoned received help with the payment of their rents. On 13th April, 1831, a Special Meeting of the Hungerford Vestry was held "to consider an application by the wives of the men transported and imprisoned for crimes committed during the riots in November last". It was agreed at the meeting "that the rents of the said persons be paid from 1st December, 1830, to 31st March, 1831, inclusive.".

The Minutes of the Select Vestry of Thatcham show that the Overseers of the Poor of the parish did their best to pass the responsibility for the dependents of transported men on to some other parish. The wife of Thomas Hicks, the leader of the Thatcham rioters, was encouraged to move to Cirencester after her husband was transported. On 21st February, 1831, she was lent 5s.0d. to help towards her travelling expenses. A fortnight later, in response to a request from George Lane, Overseer of the Poor of Cirencester, his Thatcham colleague, Mr. Cave, was instructed to pay Hannah Hicks 2s.6d. per week. About a year later rumours must have been circulating in the parish to the effect that Hannah Hicks was pregnant. On 6th February, 1832, the Select Vestry instructed Mr. Austen to ascertain if the information which they had received was true. Mr. Austen's inquiries must have confirmed the rumour because, on 19th March the Select Vestry agreed that no more money should be paid to Thomas Hicks's family on account of Hannah Hicks's misconduct, and that the Overseer of the Parish of Cirencester should be informed of this decision and of the cause of it.The Select Vestry's lack of charity did not deter Hannah Hicks from returning to Thatcham; the Berkshire Quarter Sessions Order Book for 1833 shows that, on 12th March, she was convicted of being "an idle and disorderly person.".

Daniel Hancock's wife, Ann, was also assisted to leave Thatcham. On 24th January, 1831, Ann Hancock was granted temporary relief of 5s.0d., and the Select Vestry also agreed that the parish should pay the expenses of her trip to relations at Penn in Buckinghamshire. She must have returned to Thatcham before two years had elapsed because an entry dated 15th April, 1833, states that she should "go to prison as soon as a certificate can be obtained from Mr. Arrowsmith (the local medical officer) pronouncing her to be in a fit state" to travel. A fortnight later it was agreed that this resolution should be enforced. She could not have committed any grave crime, nor been imprisoned for very long, because, six months later, she was granted the price of a gallon loaf a week for her child. Perhaps her "crime" was that of producing an illegitimate child, for another order of the Select Vestry, dated 31st March, 1834, allowed her "13s.3½d. to support her bastard child the coming quarter.". The same order also granted her "10s.0d. to enable her to return to her father in Winslow Moreton at Penn near Beckonsfield (sic), Bucks.". Ann Hancock must have died soon after because her husband was granted permission to marry in 1839. The Bucks Record Office was unable to find an entry in the Winslow Moreton parish registers to confirm this.

According to the convict records Thomas Hanson had left behind his wife, Mary, with three children - George, aged 5 years, Thomas, aged 3 years and Eliza a one year old - to feed and fend for. Not very long after her husband had been transported to the other side of the world, Mary Hanson must have sought , or been offered, solace or support from another man for, according to the admissions register of the Bradfield Union Workhouse, she was, in February, 1836, the mother of four children, including a four-year old named Moses. At the time she sought entrance to the Workhouse she was again pregnant. The admissions register states baldly, "Husband transported during (sic) the Riot of 1830. Mother of bastard since, and now with child.". However, in spite of her fallen status Mary Hanson and the children were "very neat and clean" and her behaviour "in the House" was good, though she was, not surprisingly, "continually fretting". After less than a month in the Workhouse she was discharged "at her own request" in order that she might go to live with her grandfather.".

On 1st February, 1836, the Bradfield Union Workhouse admitted two children surnamed Milsom ; Richard, aged 7 and Martha, aged 9. It is fairly certain that these are the children of Charles Millson, who, according to the convict records was married with two children, a boy and a girl. The register notes that their father was "transported in 1831" and that their mother was "living with another man by whom she has had a child, and deserted Richard and Martha.". Martha Millson may have been unfaithful to her spouse, but from what transpired it is clear that she was not guilty of wilfully deserting her children. Only one week after they had been admitted Martha herself turned up at the door of the workhouse "expecting (hoping might have been a better word) to be allowed something for her children rather than keep her in.". Her attempt to avoid the dreaded House failed, and on 8th February she was herself admitted. The register states "Husband transported. Mother of paupers 95 and 96 (i.e. Richard and Martha). Has another child, a bastard." She stood it for just over five weeks and then asked to leave "For fear of leaving her Work till she lost her place altogether.". The discharge register records that the family was "Clean and decent"; that their behaviour in the House was "Good"; and that they were "very industrious".

AFTERMATH

Richard Milson was to survive the hardships of his childhood, and, in 1857 he arrived in N.S.W. on the "John and Lucy" in order to join his father in Aberdeen.

Priscilla West was five years old when her father was transported. Between that time and November, 1838, when she was admitted to the Bradfield Workhouse, she had lost her mother as well. The register notes, "Father transported for Rioting and Machine Breaking in 1830.", and, laconically, "Mother dead". Fortunately Priscilla, who was "Clean and well- behaved", had a fairy godfather in the shape of an uncle "who promised to maintain her.". Less than two months after being admitted to the workhouse, on 20th January, 1839, she was "Taken out by her uncle at Dorchester.".

So much for the banished rioters' dependants. Was the lot of those who had avoided transportation improved as a result of the revolt, or were the draconian punishments meted out to their comrades suffered in vain ?

The negotiations which took place between representatives of the farm workers and a group of local magistrates at Hungerford Town Hall, on Monday, 22nd November, have been described in a previous section. "The terms required and acceded to were 12s.0d. a week for a man, wife and 3 children, and the price of a gallon loaf for every child above three.". (3) Settlements as to the rate of wages were entered into during the same day "between the farmers and labourers in the several parishes of Welford, Boxford, Chieveley, Frilsham and Hampstead Norris.". (4) In the two most disturbed districts of the county, the Newbury and Abingdon divisions, the magistrates made a formal and explicit recommendation of a higher rate of wages. (5) "In Newbury the rate was fixed at 10s.0d. per week plus 1 gallon loaf for each child above two..". (6) The East Woodhay Vestry met during the evening of the 22nd and it was agreed that the farmers should increase the wages of the labourers to 12s.0d. a week ; to assist them to do this it was also agreed that the Vicar, the Rev. I.D. Hodgson, should return 15% of his tithes. (7)

Time alone was to show whether these agreements negotiated under stress would be kept, or whether, once the threat of the revolt had been removed and the ring-leaders severely punished, the labourers' employers would revert to their old ways and rates of wages. Several days after the highly successful round-up of the rioters in the Kintbury-Hungerford area a local correspondent could write, "We have not come to any determination as yet to what the Farmers' labourers shall be paid per day, but suppose it to be 20d.". (8)

On 3rd December, 1830, the Hungerford Vestry held a Special Meeting at which, inter alia, the following resolutions were agreed to -

> (1) That 10s.0d. per week be given to an able-bodied man, for which he is to maintain his wife and 2 children, and a Gallon Loaf to be allowed him for every child above two incapable of work.

(2) That 8s.0d. per week be given to an able-bodied single man above 20 years of age.

The list of signatories reads like a roll-call of those local J.P.s and farmers whose property had received such rough treatment during the recent riots. The list included the following names -

J.Atherton, J.Willes, Wm.Osmond, Thomas Viner, Wm.Anning, Wm.Barnes,
Richard Beasley, G.B.Cundell, J.Little, W.Parsons, and J.Stevens.

On the 5th December, John Pearce, M.P., of Chilton Lodge, Hungerford, lamented that the labourers should have obtained an increase in wages by such violent means, but admitted that such was the total want of feeling of the farmers towards the common labourers that he feared they would never have got it without ; their crying wants would never have reached the unfeeling hearts of local employers otherwise.In most of the purely agricultural villages labourers were paid only 7s.0d. per week, and in none were they paid more than 8s.0d. By common consent they were now to receive 10s.0d. He concluded by saying that he had never seen so much happiness as had been produced by the change ; the people were well satisfied with the "expectation of a reasonable rise in wages" and were "as respectful in their demeanour as. to their credit, they are accustomed to be in this part of the county.".(9)

We should take the deep concern which Mr. Pearce showed for the labourers in this letter with the proverbial pinch of salt. As a director of the Van Diemenn's Land Company he had , with indecent haste, sought to turn the misfortunes of the farm workers to the profit of his company. Even before the judges of the Special Commission had handed down their sentences he had written to the appropriate authorities requesting that a number of the Hungerford men should be "assigned" to the company's estates in Australasia. So eager was he to obtain the services of certain men that he included in his list the names of eight men who, in the event, were not transported. We can be reasonably certain that the demonstration of concern for the plight of the farm workers was a case of "crocodile tears", for he was the owner of several large farms and the employer of not a few labourers. No evidence exists to suggest that they were paid wages in excess of the 7s.0d. a week which he so rightly deplored. If in fact they were better off than their less fortunate brothers elsewhere we must conclude that Mr. Pearce's public relations were poor, because, according to the Rev. F.C.Fowle, Vicar of Kintbury, one of his farms at North Hidden was included in the planned itinerary of the Kintbury "congregation". North Hidden being situated well to the north of the Bath Road, and a long walk from their village, the Kintbury men must have had a good reason for including it among their objectives.

In his reply to the query asked by the Poor Law Commissioners in 1834, Mr.William Mount, of Wasing House, Aldermaston, stated that a consequence of the riots was that "The wages of a labourer with a family were, in most instances, raised to 10s.0d. per week, and a single man in proportion."(*) According to Mr Henry Hippesley, of Lambourn Place, however, the rise in wages was only temporary; whereas in 1832 the wages of a married man

were 10s.0d. a week the general weekly rate in 1833 was 9s.0d. (*) Even if this was so it was still a big increase on the rate prevailing in 1830.

Nevertheless, in Kintbury in 1833, wages still required supplementing out of the rates if the labourers and their families were not to fall below the mere subsistence level. "Generally every labourer with more than 3 children has an allowance from the parish.An allowance begins on the birth of a fourth child.".(*) Like the Speenhamland Scale the allowances were at a rate based on the price of bread -

> 2 gallon loaves to the father and 1 gallon loaf to his wife and to each child per week when there were more than three children incapable of work. (*)

Thus, though the relatively high wage rates agreed to during and immediately following the riots were not always and everywhere adhered to, wages were not cut back to the totally unacceptable level of 1830. The promise not to re-introduce the hated threshing machines also appears to have been kept to some extent - certainly they "did not return on the old (pre-riot) scale.". (10) Scarcely 1% of the 1830 number of machines were in use in 1833. (11) This much, even if little, the revolt achieved.

* Appdx to the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, 1834. See also "Wages were raised following the 1830 disturbances." J.Comely of Compton, nr Winchester, and "Wages increased immediately following the riots.", R.Hughes, Woodford, nr Salisbury.(Rept S.C Agriculture,1833.)

As the Right to Work has yet (1993) to be realised it should be no surprise that it was not achieved by the farm workers of the 1830s. Those who were unemployed, and this was, during the winter months, a very large percentage of the able-bodied men and boys, continued to suffer hardship. "From November to March there are always a large number of surplus labourers. The number has grown over the last three or four years. I never remember it greater than in the present period (1833).". (11) In a letter written by a relative of Charles Dundas, and dated 26th October, 1834, it was stated that in "this part of Berks and Wilts a large agricultural population are constantly thrown on the parishes from November until April or May.".(12)

In February, 1831, there were 44 men and boys out of work in Kintbury. This number included several who had been involved in the riots. The following winter of 1831-2 was for many no better than the previous three. A large number of men and boys were engaged in "grubbing" and in working "on the roads". In December and January £69.16s.6d. was expended by the Kintbury Overseers on "grubbing" on the South Side of the parish, while a further £45.10s.0d. was expended in like manner in the north. £32.14s.6d. was also paid out in "Wages" to those employed "on the roads". Even as late as April 14th there were 40 men and boys out of work.

Between October 1832 and February 1833 the Kintbury Overseers distributed relief to unemployed labourers in the form of over 1,000 gallon loaves and cash payments totalling £45.17s.7d. During the same period of the

following winter the Bread Bill came to nearly 3,500 gallon loaves, though this included relief to the sick and infirm as well the unemployed.

In November, 1834, a new method of occupying the unemployed poor was tried out at Kintbury. The Overseers Accounts Book for that month includes the following entry :-

"Labour- TRENCHING"

for which the workers received a novel form of "wages". They were recompensed for their labour at the rate of so many lbs. of bread and so many ozs. of cheese per pole. For example, in the week ending 22nd November, 1834 -

> William Woodley and his son dug a trench or trenches 9 poles in length for which they were "paid" 38½lbs. of bread and 84 ozs. of cheese together with a small monetary addition of 2s.5d.

In the months of December to February the unemployed were back "on the roads", though the novel method of remuneration continued. The total expenditure of the Overseers on the unemployed in the months of December and January were 421½ gallons of bread, 240 lbs. of cheese, and £6.19s.11d.

An interesting entry occurs in the accounts for January, 1835, which shows that at least one of those involved in the riots had prospered sufficiently to have become a creditor rather than a debtor of the Kintbury Overseers.

"10th January, 1835. Barlow Page's Bill for Repairs. £2.3s.10d."

The still inadequate rate of wages and the persistence of unemployment in the winter months, would no doubt have resulted in further rioting if the majority of the farm workers had not been stunned into submission by the draconian sentences meted out by the Special Commission. Not that they were all docile. True, the judges of the Special Commission had seen to it that the bolder spirits among them, the natural leaders of future revolts, had been separated like wheat from the chaff of their weaker, more amenable, comrades, but there yet remained some who were prepared to take action as a protest against what they held to be an unnatural and unjust society.

The old tactics of 1830 (i.e. the open perambulation of the villages, drawing support from a wide area, and the public destruction of machinery) were, generally, discarded. The new tactic was the secret, nocturnal, destruction of property, and the new weapon was - what the "Captain Swing" of the threatening letters had always stood for - FIRE !

Even while the trials following the revolt were proceeding local farmers were harassed by arsonists. George Maules, the Treasury Solicitor at the Reading Commission, writing to Lord Melbourne's secretary on 30th December, 1830, wrote, "I understand there were two fires at Kintbury the night before last supposed to have been committed in consequence of what is passing here.". (13) Lord Melbourne himself was addressed by Sir James Fellows of Adbury

House, near Newbury, - "about 6 p.m. on the 20th (of January, 1831) a most alarming and destructive fire broke out on my premises which entirely destroyed two barns.". Sir James also referred to "Threatening letters" and fires on the 28th of December, following the Special Assizes at Winchester. (14) Lord Melbourne showed concrete sympathy for Sir James' losses, which were apparently due to the fact that he "had discharged with vigour and firmness his magisterial duty in quelling the disturbances, and in the examination and committal of the persons engaged in (the recent) outrages.". On behalf of the government he "offered a reward of £500 and a free pardon to any accomplice on the conviction of the incendiary." Sir James added another £100 to strengthen the incentive to some local Judas to come forward ; but the Reading Mercury regretted to have to report that "as yet (14th February) no discovery has been made sufficient to lead to the apprehension of the offender.".(15)

On the evening of the 4th February, 1831, " a fire was discovered on the premises of Mr. Brunsden of Burghclere ; it broke out between the barn and the stable and, in a short time, both of these buildings, together with the dwelling house, were completely consumed." The Mercury reporter added, laconically, "Mr. Brunsden was overseer of the parish.", which was, of course, sufficient explanation of the motive. Lord Melbourne thought fit to offer another, though much smaller, reward and pardon to any accomplice for the discovery of the perpetrator of this crime also, but, once again, class loyalty, or community pressure, outweighed the temptation of the reward, for the person, or persons, responsible were not betrayed. (16)

Only the damp state of the straw foiled an attempt to fire a wheat- rick belonging to Mr. Richard Gough of Newbury, but, on the evening of the 19th February, 1831, "between six and seven o'clock a fire destroyed a granary, stables, out-buildings, a labourer's cottage and a wheat-rick, the property of Mr. Halcomb, near Hungerford. The conflagration was visible for more than thirty miles around; certainly it could be seen by the inhabitants of Newbury.". (17)

Two attempts were made in February and March, 1831, to set fire to the property of Mr. Richard Tyrell, a farmer of Steventon, Berks. The second attempt was successful, "nearly the whole of this valuable property being destroyed. The fire was seen at Twyford, near Reading, a distance of about twenty-five miles." (18 and 19).

There was even one unsuccessful solo attempt to destroy a threshing machine. Among those committed to the County Gaol on Saturday, 5th March, 1831, was a certain Richard Critchfield, who had been arrested and committed by Robert Hopkins, Esq., of Basildon, whose machine he had tried to destroy. (19) In the same month the labourers of Ramsbury, Wilts, went on strike, and were on the point of repeating the old procedure of marching round the villages to recruit support when they were dispersed by the yeomanry. (20)

However, until the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 incited a renewal of activity, these were the last sparks of a conflagration which at one point had convulsed the whole of England south of a line drawn from the Wash to the Bristol Channel.

BERKSHIRE TO BOTANY BAY

In the area around Hungerford, where the borders of Berkshire, Wiltshire and Hampshire meet, not a few labourers and their wives turned to the consolation of religion. Prior to November, 1830, when the revolt in this part of the country commenced, the people of these parts had resisted the missionary endeavours of Methodist preachers such as Thomas Russell. Russell visited Ramsbury, "which was a great centre of Satan".", on 31st March, 1830. (21) About 300 assembled but the great majority came merely to annoy him, and for twelve months the opposition was so fierce that it was difficult to hold meetings at all. (22) At Hurstbourne Tarrant the cry of many of the inhabitants was "The Church and King ! No Ranters here !"(22), while at Kintbury in October, 1830, "there were no results.". (21)

Less than a year later, however, the situation was quite different. The human soil, having been harrowed by the pitiless instruments of Whig justice, and most of the hardened sinners plucked up like undesirable weeds and transplanted on the other side of the world, was now much more fertile. The Ramsbury congregation had "100 members", at Hurstbourne there were "good congregations", and at Ashmansworth "some of the people wept under the word.". At Kintbury there was "a crowded congregation" and, which was not surprising in view of the terrible punishments which had only recently been inflicted on the community, "tears flowed."

But the moving hand of Fate had already recorded the history of the times and their piety could not "lure it back to cancel half a Line, nor all (their) tears wash out a Word of it.".

REFERENCES for Chapter 7.

(1) Unless otherwise stated the sources for the information in this chapter are the Overseers Accounts Books for Kintbury and Hungerford.
(2) CON. 31-39.
(3) H.O. 52-6. Rev. Fowle to C. Dundas, 22nd November, 1830.
(4) Ibid. Frederick Page to the Home Secretary, 22nd November,1830.
(5) N. GASH. op.cit.
(6) Ibid. Quoted from "The Times", 23rd November,1830.
(7) H.O. 52-6. Rev. Hodgson to C.Hodgson,Esq., 23rd November,1830.
(8) Ibid. J.Westall to Sir P.Freeling, 28th November,1830.
(9) Ibid. John Pearce to Lord Melbourne, 5th December,1830.
(10) H & R., "Captain Swing".
(11) Rept. Select Cttee.on Agric.,1833. Mr.Robert Hughes, Woodford, Wilts.
(12) H.O. 52-24.
(13) H.O. 40-27.
(14) H.O. 52-12.
(15) Reading Mercury. 14th February,1831.
(16) Ibid. 7th February,1831.
(17) Ibid. 21st February,1831.
(18) Ibid. 28th February,1831.
(19) Ibid. 7th March,1831.

(20) Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 7th March,1831. (Quoted by H & R.)
(21) Thomas Russell's Journal. (Quoted by H & R.)
(22) J.Petty, "History of the Methodist Connexion."

CHAPTER 8

THE HULKS AND THE CONVICT SHIPS

THE "YORK" HULK.

The rioters who had been sentenced to (or had had their sentences commuted to) transportation were kept in the County Gaol or the Bridewell, Abingdon, until arrangements had been completed for their transfer to the hulks. On the 27th January eight of those sentenced to penal servitude in the colonies "for the term of their natural lives" and fifteen sentenced to "14 years" were transferred by caravan to Gosport and from there taken aboard the "York" hulk. On the following Monday, the 31st, the two Kintbury men who had only narrowly escaped hanging, one "14 year" man and seventeen "7 year" men were similarly transferred, to be followed later by a Hungerford man, Joseph Smith, who was reported to be suffering from rheumatism, and Thomas Mackrell, who was tried at Abingdon.

"Lags away !", was the cry which warned the "transports" that the time had come for them to be taken to the hulks. They were placed in large vans which usually accommodated twenty-five men. Before setting off the convicts were properly secured, i.e. they were hand-cuffed, heavily ironed and chained together and to the van's sides. (1)(These security precautions did not prevent William Oakley from "conducting himself very ill on the road to the hulk"; during the journey he "tried to persuade the other convicts to sway the caravan over".). (2) Even if, as was usual, the van was driven at a brisk pace continuously, except for the needful changing of horses, it was unlikely to have arrived at the dock-yard gates until the following afternoon. (1)

The hulks were old wooden warships which, when their fighting days were over, were used as floating prisons. They were originally (c.1777) intended for temporary use only, but, the on-shore prisons being permanently full to overflowing, they remained in use for over seventy years. By the end of the eighteenth century they were generally recognised to be , in the words of a London magistrate, "seminaries of profligacy and vice.". (3) The "York", to which the Berkshire men were assigned, was an old 90-gun line-of-battle ship, sold to the Convict Establishment in 1820 and destined to serve as a floating prison for the rest of her days. On her three decks she housed on the average about five hundred prisoners, in addition to the officers and guards who occupied the quarter-deck and stern cabins. (3)

On their arrival the convicts would have been paraded on the quarter- deck where they were mustered and received by the captain. Their prison irons were then removed and handed over to the jail authorities who departed as the convicts were taken to the forecastle.There every man was forced to strip and to take a thorough bath, after which each was issued with an outfit consisting of a coarse grey jacket, waistcoat and trousers, a round-crowned broad-brimmed felt hat, and a pair of heavily nailed shoes.The hulk's barber having shaved and cropped the convict's heads. each man was double-ironed and taken on deck to receive a hammock, two blankets and a straw

palliasse. (1) A guard then marched the laden and fettered prisoners below deck where they were usually greeted with roars of ironic welcome from the convicts already incarcerated there.

The lower decks were divided into sections by means of iron palisading, with lamps hanging at regular intervals, and these sections were sub-divided by wooden partitions into a score or so compartments, each of which housed from 15 to 20 convicts. Newcomers were allotted to the lowest deck where the air was foulest, and bilge water occasionally slopped through the cracks in the floor boards. Weaklings were congregated on the middle deck, usually the most crowded of the three. Those who had served the greater part of their sentence without being transported were accommodated in the upper deck, the most airy and consequently the most healthy and pleasant. (3) On these decks the convicts existed when not at work and slept at night. Never were they free from the chain between ankle and waist, which was one of the badges of their state, and which clanked and rattled with their every movement. Their bodies, their clothes, their beds and the very walls of the hulk itself were infested with vermin.(4)

The food, according to Joseph Carter, a Hampshire rioter who, though sentenced to seven years transportation, actually served only two years and a day in the Portsmouth hulks, was "not always good alike, and not always bad alike.". There was often a considerable difference "according as to who might have the contract", which was for supplying meat or bread etc., for a period of six months. "We had four ounces of the best of biscuit a day. We had oatmeal too, and pea-soup, and we had garden vegetables that we bought with the money we worked for. We had fourteen ounces of meat, four times a week. During one six-month contract the meat was beautiful. That man always gave good meat when he had the contract. We had plenty of victuals; the only thing was the bread which was mostly always bad 'cause one man, who had great favour, had the contract all the time I was there. I wishes every poor hard-working man in this parish were as well fed with meat, and myself with them, as I wor in the hulk,". (5)

It was not always as good as Carter described it. Another inmate of a hulk had this to say about the food. "I woke to a consciousness of a most pungent and offensive smell, and, glancing over the sides of my hammock, saw that most of my penmates were up and gathered around a tub - known as a 'kid' - into which they were dipping spoons. My mess-mates told me that this was breakfast and that I had best hurry if I wished to have any. The ingredients of the foul-stenched mess were a very coarse barley, and the tough meat which was the convict's allowance on alternate days, boiled together until it became the malodorous tacky mess in the tub. ....The dietary on the hulk, apart from this so-called soup, was a portion of cheese of the utmost indigestibility three days a week. On the days when meat was not allowed, breakfast and supper consisted of a pint of coarse barley plain-boiled in water, and in addition each man was given one pound of black bread, with a pint of sour vinegar, mis-called table beer.".(1)

In view of the conditions and the diet it is not surprising that sickness- and especially scrofula, consumption and scurvy - was never absent, and epidemics of cholera etc., swept like irresistible waves over the hulks.(3) Work of some kind was provided for all the convicts, a certain number being detailed in cleaning the hulk, cooking, and as

servants to the officers. The rest were sent each day to labour in the dock-yard in gangs of 16 to 20 men under the direction of a guard or foreman; they laboured from 7 a.m. until sunset, and were fed on victuals of the worst kind, both the weight and the measure being deficient. (3)

The foreman of each gang was usually a veteran sailor of the Royal Navy , who was apt to visit upon the convicts the same kind of tyranny to which he had been subjected aboard H.M. ships. Some lessening of the tyranny might occasionally be purchased by the price of drinks obtainable at the local `taps'. (1) According to J.H.Vaux, the guards were generally "of the lowest class of human being, brutal by nature and rendered tyrannical and cruel by the consciousness of the power they possessed.". No one else was likely to take on the job for the wages were not more than those paid to a London day-labourer. They invariably carried a ponderous stick with which, without the smallest provocation, they would fell an unfortunate convict to the ground, and frequently repeat their blows long after the poor sufferer was insensible. (6) Punishments were frequent and arbitrary, ranging from a reduction in rations, or an increase in the weight of irons, to a flogging of unspeakable severity. (3)

Fortunately for the Berkshire men they did not long have to endure the conditions described above. "Shortly after their arrival" four of them "were put aboard the *Eliza* to make up her complement of 200.". (7) At least one of those who remained in the hulk was on board the 'Eleanor' as early as 3rd February, and all but one were embarked by February 10th. (8)

When the time came for the convicts to be transferred to the transport ship they were supposed to be stripped, washed, shaved, close-cropped, and issued with two new suits before being embarked, "but it was not uncommon for them to be put aboard the convict ships in a filthy state.". (9) The regulation dress was two jackets and waistcoats of blue cloth or Kersey; two pairs of duck trousers; three check or coarse linen shirts; flannel under-clothing; a woollen cap and a pair of shoes. "The clothing was often of such poor quality that it was usually worn out by the time Australia was reached.". (9)

The convicts selected for the draft were paraded on the quarter-deck for examination by the surgeon-superintendent of the transport. The few sickly men (e.g. Joseph Smith, who suffered from a hernia, and who languished in the hulk until he died there on 19th January,1837) (10) were rejected.The approved men were newly double-ironed and put aboard a lighter and taken to the convict ship at anchor in Spithead.

THE CONVICT SHIP "ELEANOR".

The vessels which conveyed the convicts to Australia were ordinary British merchantmen. (11) No vessel was specially designed and built as a convict ship, and, although many made numerous voyages with prisoners, not one remained exclusively in the convict service. The chartering of transports was always by tender, and, though it was the practice to charter the vessel which could be hired at the lowest rate per ton, no tender was accepted unless the

vessel had been inspected by the naval authorities, and had been certified as sea-worthy and well found. These inspections were generally very thorough and the authorities insisted upon a reasonably high standard of sea-worthiness. Occasionally a ship rotten in hull and equipment may have been chartered, but that such vessels were few in number is demonstrated by the fact that, during the continuance of transportation, when losses in other ships were heavy, no convict ship foundered on the way to Australia.

The East Indiamen, the largest class of merchantmen, were strong, fine ships; no expense was spared in their building and only the finest materials were used; those constructed in Indian yards (and the two ships which transported the Berkshire men were both Indian built) were built of the best teak. They were well cared for which could not be said for the rest of the ships in the Merchant Navy, which, due to lack of government supervision, were often neglected and ill-found. All ships were placed in one of four grades, the first and second class grades being 'A' and 'E'. All 'A' ships were automatically down-graded to the 'E' grade at the end of 10 or 12 years; the latter period if they were Thames built, the former period if they were built in other British yards. Convict ships invariably belonged to the 'A' or 'E' classes and were always designated 'A1' or 'E1', the numeral signifying that they were well found in equipment.

Unlike the rest of the British Merchant Marine "the personnel of which was drawn from the very dregs of society" and which, in the 1820s and 1830s, had reached its lowest ebb, the East Indiamen were capably officered and well-manned. Discipline was maintained in these ships which, in the "use of the lash, was as pitiless as that of the Royal Navy. They were smart in appearance, and as smartly handled as the men-of-war.".

The prison, in which the convicts spent well over 80% of their time, was situated in the 'tween decks. One such prison "was fifty feet long and fifty feet wide, and ran the full height of the 'tween decks, viz. about five feet ten inches high.". (12) Surgeon Superintendent Cunningham, writing of the convict ships of the 1820s, stated that there were "two rows of sleeping berths one above the other, which extended on each side of the between decks, each berth being six feet square and calculated to hold four convicts, everyone thus possessing 18 inches of space to sleep in.". This the worthy doctor considered to be "an ample space". In the 1830s, however, according to George Loveless, the leader of the "Tolpuddle Martyrs", each berth was "about five feet six inches square" and that this minute space "was all that was allowed for six men to occupy day and night". (13) Marcus Clarke gives a similar area but points out that "the necessities of stowage ... deprived them of six inches, and even under that pressure, twelve men were compelled to sleep on the floor.".(12)

The fore and aft main hatchways were secured with strong wooden stanchions thickly studded with broad-headed nails so that the structure was practically proof against being cut. (14) In each of the hatchways was a door, with three padlocks, to let the convicts out and in, and to secure them at night. The prisoners had no access to the hold through the prison; a ladder was placed in each hatchway for them to go up and down by, but it was pulled on deck at night. "On the aft side, next to the soldiers' berths, was a trap door, like the stoke-hole of a furnace. At first sight

this appeared to be contrived for the humane purpose of ventilation, but a second glance dispelled this weak conclusion. The opening was just large enough to admit the muzzle of a small howitzer secured on the deck below. In case of mutiny the soldiers could sweep the prison from end to end with grape-shot.". (12)

In the forepart of the ship was the hospital. This was separated from the prison proper by a bulkhead having two doors with locks to keep out intruders. Another bulkhead divided the prison itself into two sections, the smaller one being used to confine the boy convicts, who were thus cut off from contact with the older men.

Despite improvements in design introduced in 1817, the prison quarters were dark and gloomy and utterly foul, the ventilation being very bad. The stench of the prison, crowded with perspiring humanity, was indescribable. Even those prisoners who were inured to the fetid atmosphere of the insanitary gaols and hulks must have found it well nigh unbearable, particularly in the tropics.

The official scale of rations was adequate and the food was generally of a good quality - better than that furnished for the army and navy - but the convicts were often cheated of their due proportion, and sometimes half-starved. From the outset the scale was based on the allowances in the Royal Navy, but was two-thirds of the naval ration. Because six convicts shared between them the rations normally allowed for four sailors on H.M. ships, it was known in the transport service as the "Six upon Four". (14)

Surgeon-Superintendent Peter Cunningham, writing in the 1820s, asserted that the rations were both good and abundant, "¾ lb. of biscuit being the daily allowance of bread, while each day the convicts sat down to dinner of either beef, pork or plum-pudding, having pea-soup four times a week, and a pot of gruel with sugar or butter in it every morning.". When the ship had been at sea three weeks each man was "served with an ounce of lime-juice and the same of sugar daily, to guard against scurvy, while two gallons of good Spanish red wine and 140 gallons of water were put on board for issuing to each likewise - three to four gills of wine, and three quarts of water, being the general daily allowance.". (11) Another trades unionist from Tolpuddle, John Standfield, found this mouth-watering cruise prospectus to be a false one, unlikely to satisfy the Trades Description Act, for "the rations ... were of the worst quality, and very deficient in quantity, owing to the peculations indulged in by those officers whose duty it was to attend to that department.". Another convict noted that "the food, such as it was, was plentiful", but it was "mainly salt tack". He also confirmed the issue "on alternate days" of "a small portion of wine or lime-juices.". (14)

Except under a humane captain and surgeon-superintendent the prisoners were ironed to ring bolts. They were normally allowed on deck for exercise for two periods of two hours each day, but while there they presented a degrading sight. Ironed to one another by clanking chains they shuffled dispiritedly round and round the deck to the jingle of their own irons, with the scarlet-coated sentries closely watching them. Punishments were brutal and harsh and, until their infliction was made the joint responsibility of the master and the surgeon, they were frequently vicarious and unjust. (11)

THE HULKS AND THE CONVICT SHIPS

The vessels which transported the men from Berkshire to the other side of the world were the "Eleanor" and the "Eliza". (16) Both were built in Indian yards, the former being a barque of 301 tons, and the latter a ship of 538 tons. Though Bateson's list gives no grade for the "Eleanor", we may be reasonably certain that it was "A1", but soon, because built in 1821, to be reclassified as "E1", which was also the classification of the "Eliza", an older vessel, built in 1806. (11) Aboard the "Eliza", bound for Van Diemen's Land, were three men from Kintbury and one from Hungerford. Most (40) of the Berkshire men were transported to N.S.W. on the "Eleanor". (16) Because the journal of Dr. John Stephenson, the Surgeon-Superintendent of the "Eleanor" has survived, as have letters written by the highly articulate Mason brothers of the Bullington district of Hampshire, it is possible to construct an account of the voyage of this ship.

The doctor recorded that, "By the 10th of February the whole of the convicts , numbering 140, were embarked, but, the number being too great for the ship's prisons, 7 cases were returned to the "York". The number of women was increased to 6, and that of the children to 10, which, including the ship's company, made the total number on board 205". However, by the time the ship left Spithead on the 19th of February, the number had been reduced to 203, one woman and one seaman having been left behind. (17)

According to Joseph Mason, the sea during the first night in the Channel "was rough and most of the men were sick". They took "a farewell look at the hills of Cornwall on the 22nd" and "saw many ships but no more land until the 12th March when they saw two islands, namely Porto Santo and Medeira (sic)". Towards the end of the month they passed by "two more islands named St.Antonio and Bravo (Boa Vista of the Cape Verde Islands ?)". "On Easter Sunday we met an American ship , the *City of New York* .... the captain of which took many letters", including those from the Mason brothers. The *Eleanor* crossed the Equator on Robert's birthday, and no more land was seen until, on 27th April, they sighted "the rocks and mountains around the Cape of Good Hope. About noon the ship cast anchor in Simon's Bay." (8) Apart from the first day out from Portsmouth "the weather ... had been, in general, very favourable, the heat at no time rising above 84". (17)

The stay in port was longer than was usual because the master of the *Eleanor*, Capt. Robert Cook, had been instructed to take on board three convicts condemned in the colony. The delay made possible the taking on board of fresh beef and vegetables of "which the people had a liberal allowance" while in port. It also meant that "every mess was able to take to sea a small stock of soft bread, potatoes, onions etc.". This unusual diet was the main reason for "the excellent condition in which the prisoners were disembarked".(17)

The ship left the Cape on 3rd May and met "rather rough and contrary winds for about 10 days". On the 30th two islands named Amsterdam and St.Paul's were sighted, but no more land was seen until they reached the straits between Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) and the mainland of Australia on 21st June. (18)

The weather on this part of the voyage was very changeable. "Gales of wind, succeeded by light airs with dense fogs and small rain frequently took place". Even so there was more often than not "strong breezes with clear cold weather.". This "was a fortunate circumstance as the vessel was very laboursome and shipped such quantities of water that it was frequently necessary, even in a fresh breeze, to have the hatches battened down for two or three days together, leaving only sufficient space for one person to pass up or down", a situation which cannot have improved the condition of the prisoners herded below deck. However, there was, overall, "a greater proportion of fine weather than was normal on such a voyage", and this was the second reason for the excellent state of the prisoners' physical condition. "The fine weather", wrote the doctor, "was more efficacious", in maintaining a high standard of health than the attention which he gave "to cleanliness, dryness and ventilation, and, as far as could be done, the constant occupation of the prisoners.". (17)

The *Eleanor* kept close to the coast-line of New South Wales until, about noon on the 25th of June, the lighthouse on the South Head at the entrance to Port Jackson was sighted. Capt. Cook immediately hoisted a Pilot Flag, but, owing to a calm setting in, the ship did not cast anchor in Sydney Cove until about nine o'clock in the evening. (18)

On the morning of the 26th of June, which was a Sunday, those who were allowed on deck would have had their first sight of Sydney and of the country in which they were more than likely to have to spend the rest of their lives. The outlook must have been a forbidding one, "without charm or beauty. Sandy bays fringed by stunted trees opened far inland between harsh, rocky headlands, with dense forests of gloomy green covering the background". It would have appeared "as a primeval, uncultivated region, bare of any evidence of the softer, tamer results of the work of man. The embattled fort (Fort Macquarie) at the entrance to Sydney Cove, and the straggling row of cottages which stretched along the high ground", which was that part of Sydney known as "the Rocks", must have seemed "an unpretentious specimen of civilisation in the raw". The town of Sydney itself consisted of "narrow straggling streets lined with one-storey houses scarcely more than large huts, with half a dozen decent residences, and a few miserable cottages appearing through the trees on the north shore of the harbour. There was not a patch of cultivated land to be seen from the ship even thus close inshore". (14) According to Robert Mason, however, it was a "pretty town", which, the sailors told him, was "much like Algiers"; the houses were "mostly of stone and face one of the prettiest bays in the world." (18)

The day following their arrival the Colonial Secretary, the Chief Superintendent of Convicts and other officials would have come on board. Each man was called and full particulars taken of his name, age, religion, birthplace, trade and so on, all of which were entered in a register together with a minute description of his personal appearance. When such formalities had been concluded and the officials had departed, a more general class of visitor was allowed on board; some of this group were just curious for news of the old country, some had come to greet expected relatives, while others were there to enquire whether there were any skilled workmen or tradesmen among the convicts whom they might have assigned to them. (14)

Although "the Military Guard was relieved on July 1st" the convicts remained on board until the 11th when all of them "were disembarked in an excellent state of health". The doctor noted that "No set of convicts under similar circumstances ever suffered less from disease". (17) The names of only 11 convicts appeared on the general list of sick, and of these "several might with great propriety have been omitted". Two men from south- west Berkshire appear on this list. They are :-

3rd February - Joseph Tuck, aged 21, Rheumatism - Discharged.
8th July - William Oakley, aged 24, Bowel complaint - do. (17)

Normally before being paraded preparatory to going ashore the convicts were issued with a new suit of clothing, that with which they had been issued in England being of such poor quality that, by the time they reached New South Wales, it was worn out. According to Robert Mason an exception was made of the "Swing" men who were permitted to disembark in their own clothes, which was "a great indulgence and considered an extraordinary thing by the people of Sydney" by whom they (the "Swing" men) were held to be "down-right honest men." (18)

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CHAPTER 9

"BOTANY BAY"

Botany Bay is a much maligned place. In folklore and songs it is synonymous with the worst type of convict settlement to which prisoners from this country were transported. In fact, although it was here that Captain Cook sheltered during his voyage of discovery, and on the basis of his experience where it was intended that the first ship-load of convicts transported to Australia should settle, it was found to be unsuitable, and no convict settlement ever existed at Botany Bay itself. In the event the first convicts were landed at a small cove in Port Jackson, a few miles to the north.

Robert Mason wrote that "At its entrance", Port Jackson, or Sydney Harbour, "is not more than ¾ of a mile wide, but then spreads to near 7 miles square surrounded by rising ground. In it are many islands of from one to four acres covered with trees and shrubs green at all seasons of the year. The harbour is safe and good and ships of 600 tons can come so close as to require nothing but a plank to board them.". One contemporary report of Sydney itself describes it as consisting of "narrow straggling streets lined with one-storey houses scarcely more than large huts, with half a dozen decent residences, and a few miserable cottages appearing through the trees on the north shore of the harbour. There was not a patch of cultivated land to be seen from the ship even thus close inshore.". Robert Mason, however, described it as "a pretty town", which, the sailors told him, was "much like Algiers"; the houses "are mostly of stone and face one of the prettiest bays in the world.".

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After the final parade on the "Eleanor" the convicts were broken up into divisions and rowed ashore to a spot near to the site of the present Sydney Opera House. They were then marched, four abreast, through the Domain to the large convict barracks in Hyde Park, where, after another formal parade, they were dismissed to their quarters. Robert Mason wrote that they were instructed to refrain from communication with those who had been transported for more obviously criminal offences. This was good advice for their barrack-mates would have been a motley crew of old hands. A few of these would have been eager for news of home, but most would have had but one objective, to pilfer as much as they could from the "new chums", many of whom would have been dexterously robbed by bed-time. John Standfield, one of the Tolpuddle trades unionists, was later to remark that, if possible, the men he met in the convict barracks at Sydney "were worse than any others with which he had been associated.". Fortunately they did not have to remain long in the barracks before being assigned to their new masters. Joseph

Mason, for example, was taken in a boat to Mr.Hannibal Macarthur's place, at Paramatta, on the 15th July, only four days later.

If the plans of John Pearce,Esq., of Chilton Lodge, Hungerford, and his fellow directors of the Van Diemen's Land Company, had been realised three Hungerford men, John Aldridge, Charles Green and Joseph Tuck would have been assigned rapidly to the company's estates. The Secretary for the Colonies had not been as co-operative as Mr. Pearce and his colleagues had hoped, and the company's request for the services of these men was politely but firmly turned down. (In fact Mr.Pearce, who was one of the chief magistrates involved in the confrontation with the deputations of the Hungerford and Kintbury labourers, had wrongly anticipated the course which the trial of the rioters would take by including in his list of men the company wished to have assigned to them, seven or eight men who, in the event, were not transported.).

The Sydney Herald of the 18th July,1831, was of the opinion that "The machine breakers,being fine, healthy men, and two thirds of them agriculturists, will be a valuable acquisition to the colony.". It reported that the "Swing" men had "innocently expressed the hope that they would not be placed along with house-breakers, pickpockets etc.". The Herald reporter understood that "the Government has very considerably investigated the characters of the persons to whom (they) are to be assigned and only given them to such as are respectable.". This report proved to be well-founded for the majority of the Berkshire men seem to have been assigned to substantial property owners and eminent public figures. In this they were more fortunate than the general run of convicts for, being more closely subject to public scrutiny, they were less likely to be treated badly.

About a quarter of them were assigned to substantial citizens of Sydney itself. For example, GEORGE ARLETT, a member of the Thatcham "congregation" arrested by the special constables led by the Rev.Cove on Brimpton Common, was assigned to the earliest and most important of Sydney merchants, Robert Campbell. Campbell's warehouses (some of which are still standing today) held, in 1804, goods worth £50,000. He largely initiated the colony's sealing industry, and Governor Bligh (of 'Bounty' fame) turned to him for advice and support, and "always found him to be just and humane and a gentleman-like merchant."

As Naval Officer Campbell was responsible for action to impound the illegally imported spirit stills of John Macarthur. It was not surprising that, when Bligh was deposed as a result of the Macarthur led "Rum Rebellion", Campbell was arrested and deprived of his official positions; it was equally to be expected that he should be among the first to be reinstated by Governor Macquarie. It was Governor Macquarie who set Campbell on the road to becoming a large scale land-owner, with a grant of 1,500 acres in the Bathurst district in 1818. During the latter half of the 1820s he acquired much land in the Limestone Plains District (around modern Canberra), and, by 1833, when his wife died, he had consolidated holdings of some 20,000 acres. By the time GEORGE ARLETT was granted an Absolute Pardon on 23rd March, 1837, the aging Robert Campbell had relegated much of his business activities to his sons, and spent more time on his Duntroon estate where he died on 15th April, 1846.

ALFRED DARLING, of Kintbury, was one of the "two most desperate characters" against whom the chairman of the Van Diemen's Land Company warned the company's agents. He, and William Oakley, the other "desperate character", had been "left for execution", and only the efforts of those who organised petitions, arranged deputations to the King and the Home Secretary, and otherwise campaigned for clemency on their behalf, prevented the sentence being carried out. On his arrival in Sydney Darling was assigned to Thomas Inglis, a citizen of that town. One source lists Inglis as a bootmaker, but he must have been a craftsman of some standing because, according to the 1832 Directory of New South Wales, he was an "Agent of the Australian Agricultural Company" and a fairly substantial landowner. A few months after Darling had been assigned to him, in September, 1831, Inglis applied for and was granted 1,280 acres south-west of "The Oaks", Picton, where he built a substantial residence which he called "Craigend". It was this place which, on June 8th, 1840, was "stuck up" by bush rangers. Though Darling was still assigned to Inglis as late as December,1837, it is not certain if he was still in Sydney or had been transferred to "Craigend". If he had moved he may well have met another Berkshire man, James Burgess, who, as constable, is reported to have had some success in his efforts to arrest bushrangers in the Picton area.
Darling was one of the few "Swing" men to have committed serious crimes while serving their term in the colony, being sentenced to "twelve months in the chain gang for attempted rape.". It is understandable, therefore, that, when the Government was eventually persuaded to issue pardons to the "Swing" men, he was one of only six whose records were considered such that they were deemed "unworthy of indulgence". Nevertheless, in February, 1845, he was eventually awarded a "Conditional" Pardon, which meant that, though he was free to move about the colony, he could not return to England even if he wished to.

In 1831 and 1837 JASON GREENWAY, of Welford, was working for James Underwood, Sydney's first distiller, whose distillery was situated in the South Head district of Sydney. Being a carter it would not be too great a stretch of the imagination to picture young Jason in charge of a brewer's dray. His Certificate of Freedom is dated, 30th December,1837, and at first he seems to have put his freedom to good use for the 1843 N.S.W. Directory lists a Jasson(sic) Greenway as of Albert Place, Surry Hills, Sydney, which was between Underwood's distillery and the centre of the town; the 1842/3 Electoral Roll lists him as a householder of the same address. While he worked for James Underwood he is almost certain to have been treated reasonably for Underwood was himself an ex-convict. He was traditionally supposed to have been transported in the First Fleet in 1788, but one authority suggests that it is possible that he arrived in the "Admiral Barrington" in October 1791. Underwood, whose three-storey flat-roofed brick and stone house was one of the top half dozen residences in the whole of Sydney, retired to England in December, 1842. What effect this move had on Greenway is not clear, but his name is omitted from the Electoral Roll of 1843/4. Were it not for an entry in the Sydney Directory of 1844/5, of a Jason Greenway as a quarryman residing in the Paddington district of Sydney, which is not very far from the Surry Hills, it could be surmised that he had returned to England with his old master.

The early pioneering days in Australia were not lacking in women of courage and determination. One of these was Mrs. Janet Templeton, the widow of a Glasgow banker and mother of nine children. In spite of her situation she decided to emigrate. On 27th August,1830, she left Greenock with her large family on the brig "Czar", and landed in Sydney early in February, 1831, just a few months prior to the arrival, of the "Eleanor". She took up residence in Concord, a parish in the hundred of Sydney, and it was to this place that EDWARD HARRIS of Thatcham was assigned. Mrs. Templeton remained in Concord until, in 1835, she purchased land on which she built a house which she called "Roseneath". She lived here until 1842 when she moved to her farm of 2,560 acres near Goulburn. Having obtained an Absolute Pardon in March,1837, Edward Harris would appear to have used his free state to stay near the city rather than to venture into the interior with his erstwhile mistress. The Electoral Lists of 1858-60 include an Edward Harris residing in the Infirmary district.

WILLIAM SIMS of Kintbury, was assigned to A.K.McKenzie, a Scottish banker and landowner who arrived in N.S.W. in December,1822, and eventually acquired an estate of over 5,000 acres in the Bathurst district which he called "Dochairn". In 1837 McKenzie retired to Parramatta. It is reasonable to assume that Sims accompanied him, but, having been granted a Conditional Pardon on the 13th October, then changed masters, for the Convict Muster Roll of December,1837, lists him as working for a Thomas Forster of Hunter's Hill, a parish in the hundred of Parramatta. Dr. Forster was the son-in-law of Gregory Blaxland who was a member of the party which eventually found a way across the Blue Mountains. Sims, a bricklayer, plasterer and slater, was granted an Absolute Pardon in May,1838, but he seems to have preferred to remain in the colony and practise his craft. A Post Office Directory of 1867 lists a William Sims, bricklayer, of Ryde which, at one time, was a "beautiful village" in the parish of Hunter's Hill. A petition, dated May, 1870, requesting the formation of a Municipality of Ryde has the signature of a William Sims attached to it. It is quite possible that this is the Kintbury Sims for he could both read and write, though he would have been 72 years old in 1870.

JOSEPH TUCK was an unemployed groom of Hungerford. During the destruction of Richard Gibbons' iron foundry, in which he played a prominent part, Tuck had purloined an iron bar which he later tried to sell to a local blacksmith. For these and similar offences he was lucky to have the sentence of "death" recorded against his name commuted to seven years transportation. It is possible that the reverend gentleman to whom he was assigned may have brought him to see the error of his ways. The Rev. Charles Dickinson had only recently been appointed as incumbent of the Hunter's Hill parish church at Kissing Point, in the Ryde district of Sydney. He did not hold this position for long because less than a year after Tuck received his Certificate of Freedom, in May, 1838, he died.

The Hammonds called the events of 1830 "The Last Labourers' Revolt", but many artisans (carpenters, wheelwrights and blacksmiths etc.) were involved, and were often among the leaders of the various "congregations".
JOHN ALDRIDGE of Hungerford was one such artisan. It was his sledge- hammer which helped to destroy many of the local threshing machines. For his part in the riots Aldridge was sentenced to seven years transportation. He is the only one of the Berkshire "Swing" men whose 1831 assignment has not been discovered. However, from his

Ticket of Leave stub, dated 30th April, 1835, we learn that by this time he was residing in Liverpool which was not many miles beyond the boundary of the hundred of Sydney and on the Great Southern Road to Campbelltown. He was still residing in that district on 18th December, 1839 when he was granted his Certificate of Freedom. Though the librarian of Liverpool Public Library was most helpful no further information concerning Aldridge could be found.

CHAPTER 10

GREEN PASTURES

The rolling hills beyond the first settlement at Sydney Cove stood unexplored for a decade after 1788. However, as early as May of that year the entire stock of the settlement's cattle - two bulls and four cows - escaped to the bush. Their whereabouts remained undiscovered until, in 1795, some aborigines reported that many cattle (later, confirmatory, reports said 60) were to be seen grazing on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, subsequently called the Nepean. From henceforward the area was known as the Cow Pastures. By 1802 the number of cattle had increased tenfold; an expedition in search of a way across the Blue Mountains reported seeing several herds near the site of Douglas Park. Three years later John Macarthur was granted 5,000 acres in the district by Lord Camden, Secretary for the Colonies; this was subsequently increased to 10,000 acres, the whole estate being named Camden Park. Eventually all of the Cow Pastures land was granted to Macarthur and his sons.

John Macarthur was one of the outstanding colonists of the first four decades of settlement. The great improvements which he made in the breed of Australian sheep practically created the trade in Australian wool , though more recent research has suggested that others played equally important roles. His first land grant of 300 acres at Parramatta was called Elizabeth Farm after his wife. It was to this part of the Macarthur estates, for which Macarthur's son James was then responsible, that THOMAS MACKRELL, the leader of the Lambourn rioters, and the only one of those tried at Abingdon to be transported, was assigned. A hurdle-maker and sheep shearer he would have been a useful acquisition by the Macarthurs, though it would appear from a list of their workers that he was first employed as a reaper. The December,1837, Muster Roll of Convicts lists him as assigned to Messrs Macarthur at Camden; by this time John Macarthur's enterprises and estates had been inherited by his sons James and William. Although Mackrell obtained an Absolute Pardon on 25th March, 1838, he must have remained in the employ of the Macarthurs as a free labourer for another "List of Men for Work, 12th October, 1840." includes his name , but by this time he was being more usefully employed as a shearer.

One of the few men of the Kintbury district to avoid arrest by the posse led by Colonel Dundas and Lord Craven was TIMOTHY MAY of Inkpen. May retained his freedom longer than any except those who avoided arrest altogether. Like Mackrell, May was assigned to James Macarthur, but to his Cabramatta farm near Liverpool. May's Ticket of Leave, of July,1835, shows that he had by this time been transferred to Camden, where he remained until at least December,1837. He obtained a Certificate of Freedom on 3rd March,1838, and, unless he died meanwhile, appears to have used his new- found freedom to seek employment elsewhere, for the 1840 list of Macarthur employees does not include his name.

According to Mrs Fulton Matthews, who travelled widely in the district in the 1830s, Campbelltown and the country between it and the Nepean was "very picturesque and beautiful". It must have made some of the "Swing" men even more homesick for it was "undulating and extensively cultivated like the Wiltshire Downs of England.". One of these

would have been JAMES SIMMONDS, a farm labourer of the Binfield district of Berkshire, who was sentenced to 7 years transportation for his part in the attack on Martha Davis's house. He was assigned to William Bradbury, one of the earliest settlers in Campbelltown, which was founded by Governor Macquarie himself on 1st December,1820. When Macquarie paid a farewell visit to the town in January,1822, he observed Bradbury building a two-storied brick house to serve as an inn on his farm at the southern end of the town. Bradbury invited the governor to name the farm, and Macquarie returned the compliment by calling it Bradbury Park. One of Bradbury's tenants , named Worrall, was indirectly responsible for the story of "Fisher's Ghost", of which there are many versions, including one published in Volume 7 of Charles Dickens' "Household Words.".

Another resident of Campbelltown was Alexander Chisolm to whom WILLIAM HAWKINS of Thatcham was assigned. Hawkins remained in the district until October,1836, when he received an Absolute Pardon. He used his freedom to move further into the interior; the Muster Roll of December,1837, lists him as residing in Sutton Forest.

ROBERT PAGE, a skilled carpenter of Kintbury, would have been a useful asset to his master who was a miller of the name of Larkins residing in the district of Airds (the original name of Campbelltown). Page remained in the district at least until December, 1837. He was one of some two dozen "Swing" men who, by some fantastic bureaucratic error, had the issue of their pardons delayed. By the time he obtained his Certificate of Freedom in May, 1848, he had moved to Bungonia.

At Campbelltown the Great Southern Road divided, the main route continuing towards Stonequarry, later called Picton, and on to Queanbeyan, while the minor branch led to Appin and on to Lake Illawarra. Mrs. Matthews noted that the view toward Appin had a "decidedly English character" which may have been some consolation to WILLIAM CARTER as he trudged along the way to Marshall Mount, the estate of Henry Osborne to whom he had been assigned. Carter, a bricklayer of the Kintbury area of Berkshire, had been convicted of "Robbery" and had "Death" recorded against his name, but had had the sentence commuted to 7 years transportation. Henry Osborne had himself been in N.S.W. for little more than two years, arriving on 9th May, 1829. He quickly obtained a grant of 2,560 acres and "the right to twenty or thirty free labourers". Osborne owned many properties in the Illawarra/ Wollongong area, but his chief residence was "Marshall Mount" about four miles from the present town of Dapto. By 1834 Osborne was on the list of magistrates of the Illawarra District, but there is no record of Carter having been brought before him, though he may well have been one of those who signed Carter's Ticket of Leave in June 1836. Carter became wholly free on 17th March, 1838, when he was issued with his Certificate of Freedom.

When Surveyor James Mehan was given the task of marking out John Macarthur's first grant in the Cow Pastures he was instructed by the Governor to provide for a road to Stonequarry Creek, later called Picton. The Police Magistrate for the Stonequarry district was Major H.C. Antill who was "one of the most philanthropic members of Macquarie's government." JAMES BURGESS, one of the Aldermaston rioters, was most fortunate in being assigned to Major Antill. As a magistrate the major was painstaking and, unlike most of his fellows, was even accused of showing

undue sympathy towards the convict servants who were brought before him. He was well known for his earnest religious outlook which included a strict Sabbatarianism. Until the 1850s there was no place of worship in the Picton area "but the major read prayers twice every Sunday.". According to the Sydney Gazette of 26th April, 1832, it was "the custom of the Major to improve the position of his dependants by every practicable means and to promote marriage amongst them.". To those who obtained their liberty from his service he afforded every assistance to become settlers including the granting of leases of small divisions of land. It was certainly due to Major Antill that James Burgess became , of all things, the local constable, in which capacity he was successful in capturing several bush rangers who operated in the neighbourhood of Picton between 1836 and 1840. It was also no doubt due to the major's earnest encouragement that Burgess married Jane Dillon, aged 27 years, on 13th December, 1836, because a son, Thomas,was born to James and Jane Burgess on 29th May, 1837 !

According to Major Antill's son, Mrs.Burgess was still alive in 1896 having borne at least two more sons. The Post Office Directories for 1872 to 1877 lists Henry, Thomas and William Burgess, all labourers, all of "Jarvisfield" which was the name of the Antill's estate. R.A.Antill also states that, in 1843, "the wages prevailing in the district were £20 per annum plus rations ," a rate which compares very favourably with what the Burgesses would have received in similar circumstances in England.

Not very far from "Jarvisfield" lay the Park Hall (later renamed "Nepean Towers") estate of Sir Thomas Mitchell, Surveyor-General of New South Wales from 1831 to 1845. It was here that CHARLES GREEN, a Hungerford labourer, spent many fruitful years. Initially, however, he was assigned to John Buckland, a farmer of Hoare Town Farm, on the banks of the Nepean River, in the district of Camden. Green's "Ticket of Leave", dated 26th December,1836, states that he was "allowed to reside" in this district. He should have been among the earliest of the "Swing" men to receive a Free Pardon but, like Robert Page, he was unfortunate to have been in the group which, by some bureaucratic oversight on the part of some Whitehall clerk, had its release warrants left blank. It must have been a real consolation to Green that his application to have his family come out to him was one of the few to be favourably received. In May, 1837, on the "John II", his wife Sarah and their one child travelled out to join him. It was not until some nine years later that his Absolute Pardon eventually came through; his Certificate of Freedom is dated 20th May,1846. At some time during those nine years he must have suffered another blow in the death of his wife; on 31st August. 1846, Charles Green, widower, married Rose Cunningham, in St.Peter's Church, Campbelltown. He must have been convinced of the wisdom of St.Paul's advice,because,on 1st May,1851, he married Elizabeth Henness, spinster, in the same church. This union proved very fruitful for the parish registers of St. Peter's, Campbelltown, lists, between December,1852, and June 1871, seven children of Charles and Elizabeth Green. The Post Office Directories of 1867 and 1875/7 list a Charles Green, labourer, of Douglas Park, which was the area in which Nepean Towers was located.

DANIEL HANCOCK, of the Aldermaston district of Berkshire, was assigned to K.M.Campbell in the County of Argyle , which is beyond the southern boundary of the county of Camden. On 31st May,1835, Hancock was granted a

Ticket of Leave by the magistrates of the Bungonia bench. The Convict Muster Roll of December,1837, records that he was then residing at Inverary (Park). Though granted an Absolute Pardon on 23rd March,1837, he did not receive his formal Certificate of Freedom until 2nd March,1839. The register of applications for permission to marry has an entry in August of that year for a Daniel Hancock, aged 32 and stated to be "free". This could well be the Berkshire man of the same name for he was 24 in 1831 and was free by this time. (If it is the same man his first wife, Ann, who was in receipt of poor relief as late as 1834, must have died in the interim.). He applied to marry Margaret Ridding, aged 22, and herself a convict who had arrived on the transport "Sir Charles Forbes". His application was approved and they were married by the Rev.John Vincent of Sutton Forest which, though in the county of Camden, is not many miles from Inverary. Since writing the above I have received the following information from Mrs. K. Gaut, whose uncle, Mr. Kevin Hancock, of Caloundra, Queensland, is a direct descendant of a Daniel Hancock. This man married Ann Henley on the 11th of November, 1840, at Berrima, Sutton Forest.

One Berkshire man it has been possible to trace right through to his death in 1886 is ISAAC BURTON, a tailor of Shefford, Berks, who had been sentenced to 7 years transportation for breaking threshing machines. On his arrival in N.S.W. he was assigned to a Mr. John McLaren, of Bridge Street, Sydney, but he must have changed masters or McLaren must have moved because, in 1835, Burton was granted a Ticket of Leave by the Bungonia bench which allowed him to reside in the Argyle district which is more than one hundred miles from Sydney. The 1837 Muster Roll states that he was then residing in the Yass district, in the county of Murray.

In 1839, by which time he was a free man, he applied to marry a free spinster,Elizabeth White, aged 28 years. The application was approved and they were married by the Rev.E.Smith of Queanbeyan near the present capital, Canberra. Three children, John, Henry and Margaret resulted from the marriage. Margaret married William Gabriel, son of Queanbeyan's first chemist. The Post Office Directories of 1867 through to 1881/2 lists Burton as "tailor" of Queanbeyan. On 12th April,1884,Isaac's wife died. They were not long separated for Isaac himself died on 20th February, 1886. He was buried at Queanbeyan's Riverside Cemetery, which was unfortunate because this cemetery has been destroyed by floods. According to Mr. Rex Cross, Research Officer of the local Historical Society, there are no descendants of the name of Burton living in the Queanbeyan district.

CHAPTER 11

BEYOND THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

In the year following the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 a Captain Tench reached the foothills of the Blue Mountains, but it took twenty-four years before an expedition succeeded in finding a way over this formidable barrier. It was not until the 29th of May, 1813, that Gregory Blaxland, William Charles Wentworth and Lieutenant Lawson, from a vantage point on Mount York, saw the mighty Kamimbla valley below them.

Laid out by Surveyor-General George Evans and built under the direction of a Devizes man, Captain William Cox, the first road over these mountains has been described as one of the most remarkable engineering feats in the history of Australia. Cox selected thirty convicts,"well inclined hardy men", and with a guard of eight soldiers began the road at Emu Plains on 18th July,1814. By early November the working party had reached the summit of Mount York, a distance of 47 miles. Within six months of starting the construction the road to Bathurst had been completed, a total distance of 101 miles.

It was to the captain's son Henry that THOMAS HICKS, the leader of the Aldermaston labourers, and sentenced to 14 years, was assigned. Henry Cox's main estate was "Glenmore", Mulgoa, near Penrith, and it was to this place that Hicks was sent in 1831. An 1837 map of Bathurst shows several substantial plots of land owned by Henry Cox and his father. From the Convict Muster Rolls of December,1837, it would appear that by this time Hicks had been moved to one of these properties. Soon after, on 8th May,1838, Hicks was granted an Absolute Pardon which meant that he was free to move anywhere including returning to England if he wished and had the fare. It would seem, however, that he had decided to settle down in the colony for Mr.Arthur Street, of the Nepean Family History Society, has discovered that Hicks married a local girl, Agnes Weavers. Though the date of this marriage was not given it must have been after 1833 because his wife, Hannah, was still alive in March of that year.

The main route across the Blue Mountains was via Springwood, Katoomba and Mount Victoria. An alternative traversed the northern part of the range via Mount Tomah. A farm of 2,560 acres near Mount Tomah was worked by
G.M. Bowen,J.P., to whom THOMAS HANSON, a top sawyer of the Yattendon district of Berkshire was assigned. Bowen would have proved to be a just but firm master. He was a man of commanding appearance, highly intelligent, morally upright and deeply religious in an unorthodox way. In the 1830s he publicly repudiated orthodox Christianity, a stand which, considering the time and the place, points to independence of mind and much courage. Bowen confessed to his own "egotism and arrogance", and even when extending an olive branch tended to hold it like a club! On 13th October, 1837, Thomas Hanson was awarded a Conditional Pardon, otherwise little is known about him.

The other "most desperate" character against whom the chairman of the Van Diemen's Land Company warned the company's agents was WILLIAM OAKLEY. On his arrival in New South Wales Oakley was assigned to one of the well- known families of the Bathurst district, the Rankens. In 1822 George Ranken had obtained a grant of 2,000 acres in the Jedburgh district of Bathurst which he called "Kelloshiel". In the 1830s he enlarged his estate by buying "Saltram", and, by 1836, he held nearly 6,000 acres in and around Bathurst. In 1837, with the help of a government subsidy, he chartered the "Minerva" in order to import a number of agricultural labourers and mechanics. Oakley, who was a skilled wheelwright, would have been very useful to his master, and it is evident that he was still serving the Rankens in December, 1837. He must have behaved himself in their service because, on 8th May,1838, he was granted an Absolute Pardon, which meant that when George Ranken retired to England he could have accompanied him. He did not do so for, according to Mr. Arthur Street of Penrith,N.S.W., he "died 1846, aged 40.".

THOMAS RADBOURN had used much threatening language during the riots. If he had behaved like this in Bathurst he would have found himself in serious trouble for, unlike most of the Berkshire men who seem to have been fortunate in their masters, he was not so lucky, being assigned to the Resident Magistrate of the Bathurst District, Thomas Evernden. who was given to having convicts flogged for the slightest offence. A young convict named Entwhistle, against whom there was no bad mark and who was due for his "ticket of leave", was bathing near the ford of the River Macquarie when Governor Darling and his party, which included ladies, passed by. Entwhistle was haled before the magistrate, who was Thomas Radbourn's master, Thomas Evernden, sentenced to a flogging and had his ticket of leave cancelled. All this in spite of the fact that not one of the ladies of the governor's party had observed the incident. The outcome of this act of injustice was that Entwhistle turned bush ranger and was involved in a series of raids and killings. No doubt Radbourn, who obtained his own Ticket of Leave on 31st March,1835, took advantage of it to find some other more humanitarian master, though a note on his Certificate of Freedom, dated 7th August,1839, indicates that he was still in the Bathurst district at this time.

GEORGE WILLIAMS , alias "Staffordshire Jack", a farm labourer of the Thatcham district of Berkshire, was assigned to William Lee of Bathurst. Lee had an interesting history. He was the child of a convict named Sarah Smith who was described as the wife of William Pantoney, also a convict.In 1818, under the name of Lee, and recommended by the road engineer, William Cox, as a suitable person, he was one of the first to obtain a grant of 134 acres of land at Kelso. Williams was still in Lee's employ in December,1837,and in May,1838, he was awarded an Absolute Pardon. The 1881/2 N.S.W. Directory lists a George Williams as of Piper Street, Bathurst.

The "captain" of the West Woodhay rioters, CORNELIUS BENNETT , was not arrested without a great deal of effort on the part of a farmer,Thomas Ward, whose machine he had helped to destroy. On his arrival in N.S.W.he was assigned to a Bathurst J.P., W.A.Steele, but a Ticket of Leave, dated 28th February, 1835, was signed by a magistrate of the Brisbane Water bench, and gave him permission "to reside in the district of Brisbane Water.". A Muster of Convicts shows that he was still in this area in December,1837. Six years later, on 7th February,1843, he obtained

his Certificate of Freedom. The 1867 N.S.W. Post Office Directory lists a Bennett, labourer, of Jones's Island, not very far from Brisbane Water.

CHAPTER 12

THE VALLEY OF THE HUNTER

The fertile flats of the Hunter and its tributaries the Patterson and Williams rivers are among the richest alluvial tracts in the world, and, consequently, it is the most highly productive rural area in New South Wales. Fat cattle, dairy produce, wool and thoroughbred horses are its chief products. It is, in addition, the oldest commercial grape-growing area in Australia, and its wines are justly famous. A geographical dictionary of 1848 waxes lyrical about "the park-like scenery of the Hunter.". The same dictionary continues, "but nothing in the colony of New South Wales, if taken as a whole, can compare with *Segenhoe*.". This estate, in the Upper Hunter valley near Scone, belonged to Thomas Potter Macqueen, who would have found most useful the skills of CHARLES MILLSON, a "carpenter complete" of Stanford Dingley, who was assigned to him.

Thomas Potter Macqueen, who was M.P. for Bedfordshire from 1826 to 1830, had obtained the promise of a grant of 20,000 acres of land from the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, which was confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Earl Bathurst, in May,1824. Macqueen purchased and equipped two vessels one of which, the "Hugh Crawford", was reputed to be one of the fastest sailing ships in the world. He used these ships to transport free labourers and mechanics, stock, equipment and stores to New South Wales; the total cost of this expedition was said to have been in the region of £8,000. Macqueen appointed Peter MacIntyre as overseer with authority to select the site and to develop it. Between 1825 and 1838 Macqueen spent at least £42,000 on plant, stock and improvements at *Segenhoe* where he employed 160 convicts in addition to the free workmen already mentioned. When Milson arrived on the site in 1831 the estate was being managed by H.C.Sempill, who had replaced MacIntyre in 1830.

It was not until July,1834, that Macqueen himself arrived in the colony. Having a town house in the then fashionable Darlinghurst suburb of Sydney, and being a conspicuous figure in colonial society, it is doubtful if he spent a great deal of his time in the personal management of his Hunter estate. In any case he did not stay long in the colony; early in 1838 he sold up and returned to England. Though Charles Millson obtained an Absolute Pardon in March, 1837, he did not follow his master, having,on 7th November,1837, married Annie M. Lyons by whom he had three more children ; Sarah Anne, b. 1838, ; William Charles, b.1842 ; and Edwin Lewis, b.1844 ; all at Aberdeen, N.S.W. Millson must have prospered because he put in a bid for land in the new township, and, in 1857, his son by his first marriage, Henry Richard Millson, arrived in the colony to join him in Aberdeen. Charles Millson died 20th March, 1874, and was buried at Tor(r)yburn,
while Henry Richard Millson died at Merriwa on 19th September, 1891.

Not many miles from *Segenhoe* was the estate of George Forbes, a brother of Chief Justice Forbes. A grant of 5,000 acres near Muswellbrook, his estate was called *Edinglassie*. It was to George Forbes that WILLIAM WAVING, a

shepherd from Welford or Shefford, was assigned in 1831. Waving was still in this district in December, 1837, but, on 21st October,1839, the grant of a Certificate of Freedom would have allowed him to move elsewhere.

A young blacksmith of West Woodhay, THOMAS GOODFELLOW, sentenced to 14 years transportation, was assigned, in 1831, to a Mr. James Glennie of Patrick Plains. This was a town in the centre of the Hunter valley whose name was changed to Singleton. Goodfellow was still with the same master in March,1837, when he received an Absolute Pardon.

On the 22nd November, 1844, an address of thanks to Edward Denny Day, on his resignation as Commissioner of the Court of Requests, from the inhabitants of Patricks Plains (Singleton), includes the signature, in excellent copper-plate hand writing, of one Thomas Goodfellow; the record of the Berkshire man of the same name shows that he could both read and write. His inclusion among the signatories suggests that he must have prospered, as does the inclusion of his name on Electoral Lists of 1858- 60 for a place called Anambah. This place is near West Maitland, which is also in the Hunter valley but nearer the coast than Singleton.

W.Burnett who arrived in Singleton in 1862 states that there were four blacksmiths in the town but Goodfellow was not one of them. This, together with the Anambah lists, supports the view that he had moved from Singleton in the late 1850s. The 1867-1877 Post Office Directories list a Thomas Goodfellow (no occupation given) of 3, Valentine Lane, Sydney. As he would have been in his sixties it is possible that he had retired there.His name is omitted from the 1879 directory but by then he would have completed his allotted span of three-score years and ten.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS and WILLIAM WESTALL, labourers, of Kintbury, were both involved in different ways in what may be called "the Randall affair". (see Chapters 2 and 5.) Both, being from Kintbury, had "Death" recorded against their names, though this sentence was, in the event, commuted to transportation for "Life".

On his arrival in Sydney NICHOLAS was assigned to Andrew Lang whose 1,000 acre estate, called "Dunmore", was in the valley of the Patterson, a tributary of the Hunter. Nicholas was still at "Dunmore" in December,1837, but he may well have moved when, in the following May, he was granted an Absolute Pardon.

WILLIAM WESTALL was assigned to a Mr. Johnston of Patricks Plains, the original name of the town of Singleton. It is possible, but by no means certain, that this Mr.Johnston was the Abraham Johnston who had a grant of 300 acres south of the western part of the Wollun (or Wollum) Hills which were situated "near the confluence of the Goulburn and Hunter rivers.". Westall's Ticket of Leave, dated 10th October,1835, was authorised by the Merton bench, and Merton was a town similarly situated.Although he received an Absolute Pardon on 13th October, 1837, he was still with Mr.Johnston in December of the year.

Two men involved in the attack on Martha Davis's farm house at Binfield, CHARLES HORTON and JOHN WHEELER, were assigned respectively to two brothers, George and Morris Townshend. George Townshend had a vineyard called "Trevallyn", about three miles from Gresford on the River Patterson, while Morris had a farm near Wollombi.Both Horton and Wheeler obtained Absolute Pardons early in 1837, but no more is known about them.

LUKE BROWN of the Thatcham area was initially assigned to Lieutenant Lachlan MacAlister, the Resident Police Magistrate for the district of Argyle, and Commanding Officer of the 2nd Division of the Mounted Police of the Goulburn Plains area. Brown did not remain long in this part of the colony for the 1837 Muster Roll of Convicts states that he was then employed by a Mr.Airds of Maitland, which is in the Lower Hunter Valley. On 23rd of March of that year Brown had obtained an Absolute Pardon. As a man with experience in dealing with horses he may well have used his freedom to obtain employment on one of the many horse studs in this district.

On his arrival in Sydney EDMUND VICCUS of Yattendon was assigned to a William Sharpe, residing on the North Shore of Port Jackson, i.e. that opposite to Sydney itself. By December,1837, he had moved to Maitland where he was employed by Capt. Emmanuel Hungerford, owner of a 2,000 acre farm on Fishery Creek, called "Lochdon.". He may well have made this move of his own volition for, on 23rd March of that year, he had been granted an Absolute Pardon.

CHAPTER 13

VAN DIEMEN'S LAND

Shortly after their arrival at Portsmouth, Daniel Bates, David Hawkins, Francis Norris and Edmund Steele "were put aboard the Eliza to make up her complement of 200". They were greatly affected on being parted from their companions. The emotion which they showed might have been more intense had they realised that their comrades were to be transported to New South Wales while the *Eliza* was bound for Van Diemen's Land which had an even worse reputation.

The master of the *Eliza* a ship of some 540 tons and built in 1806, was Capt.J.S.Groves and the Surgeon-Superintendent was William Anderson. They sailed from Portsmouth on 6th February,1831, and took 112 days over the voyage to Hobart which was reached on May 29th. Before casting anchor in Sullivan's Cove the *Eliza* would have sailed thirty to forty miles up the River Derwent. Coming up the river from the west "hills rise in regular succession above each other covered with trees of various descriptions such as stringy bark, honeysuckle, box, cherry, black, brown and silver wattle, blue, red and white gum, oak, peppermint, pine, cedar etc.".

The convicts usually remained on board the transport ship for a week or more, during which time the local magistrates "came on board to take the dimensions etc. of the prisoners who were not allowed to leave the ship until they and it had been cleared by the Port Health Officer.".

The Berkshire men probably disembarked at a jetty on what had once been Hunter's Island, but which, for some time before 1831, had been connected with the mainland by a long stone causeway. One of the most prominent landmarks to which their attention would have been drawn was a promontory called Macquarie Point, on which was a lumber-yard where the government employed convict labour. The point was named after a previous governor of the island as was Macquarie Harbour which, until it was abandoned and the prisoners transferred to Port Arthur, was probably the worst of the penal hells to which convicts who committed further offences on the island were sentenced.

On disembarking Norris and his comrades would have been marched to the new convict barracks. One of the first important buildings they would have passed on their way was St.David's Church. Beyond the church was the Supreme Court House, close by which was the Female House of Correction. At the intersection with Murray Street stood the Gaol, and, rising above its substantial walls, was the grimly significant black painted beams of the scaffold. Standing at the entrance to Davey Street was another building of much importance in the convict's scheme of things, the Military Barracks ; the military force available for the use of the governor numbered, in 1830, nearly 1,000. Passing through the Market Place into Campbell Street the prisoners would have been halted before their own barracks. Once inside they were "marshalled in the yard for the inspection of the governor" who examined every man. After the muster they were assigned for service. The government had the first choice of the best

workmen, for public works such as road and bridge building. Government officers had the next best, while the remainder were allocated to farmers or other private employers.

According to the evidence which Governor-General Arthur gave before the Molesworth Committee on Transportation some of the *Eliza* men "died almost immediately from disease apparently induced by despair" and a "great many of them died later due to despair and a deep sense of shame and desperation.". The Berkshire men were either shameless or made, both psychologically and physically, of sterner stuff ; certainly all four were still alive in 1835.

Three of these men were from Kintbury and the fourth from Hungerford. Francis Norris was the "treasurer" of the Kintbury "congregation" , and Daniel Bates and Edmund Steele were members of the five-man delegation which represented the Kintbury men before the local magistrates assembled in Hungerford Town Hall. Why the Hungerford man, David Hawkins, was selected to make up the complement of the *Eliza* is not clear as he was certainly not one of the leaders ; such bad luck was to be his lot for many years to come.

He and Norris were two of the very small number of the rioters who avoided arrest during the round-up by the posse led by Charles Dundas and Lord Craven. Norris led his pursuers a merry dance before being arrested in an Aldbourne beer-house kept by one Martin Palmer. Hawkins, who had taken refuge in a relative's cottage in Inkpen , was betrayed by an employee of Richard Gibbons whose Hungerford iron foundry had been attacked by the combined Kintbury/Hungerford "mob". On more than one occasion during his sojourn in Van Diemen's Land Hawkins was to rue his decision to lie low in Inkpen instead of making good his escape by going further afield.

According to George Loveless, the leader of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, it mattered little whether the convicts were assigned to work for the government or as servants to colonists. He had found the conditions on the government farm extremely arduous, and of the private employers he had this to say, "Some few get kind masters, who consider their prisoners are men, possessed of natural feelings similar to other men, and treat them accordingly. But the greater part are so situated that, bad as government usage is, they are far worse off; treated like dogs, worked from the dawn of morning till the close of day, often half-naked and all but starved.". If an assigned man complained of his treatment or failed to perform some impossible task which his master had given him, the latter could, and often did, have him arrested and taken before a magistrate, himself quite probably a settler. To list "the multitude of offences, mistakes or errors to which the prisoner is frequently liable and for which a charge may be brought against him, would tire the patience and disgust the feelings.". The "charges are often brought against them without any foundation whatever" and the form of punishment was all too often to be "married to the three sisters", i.e. to be tied to a triangle and flogged.

In keeping with the ill-luck which seems to have dogged him, one of those who experienced this kind of treatment was the unfortunate DAVID HAWKINS ,whose name appears often in the account books of the Hungerford

Overseers of the Poor in the years preceding the riots, and who had been parted from his wife and five children, was assigned to a Mr.Horton (probably the J.Horton who, in 1834, was the Overseer of the Engineer's Department and, in 1835, Superintendent of the government quarry) who turned out to be the kind of master described by Loveless.

In spite of his "good character and connexions" Hawkins was subjected to three floggings in the space of fifteen months. On 10th December,1833, he received 50 lashes for "insolence and disobedience"; on 22nd July,1834, a further 50 lashes for "assault and disorderly conduct"; and on 10th March,1835, he was sentenced to 25 lashes for "disobedience and insolent language to his master.". George Loveless was an eye-witness of more than one such flogging and he reported that before the victim had received twenty lashes he saw "their flesh fly from their backs into the air.". On 24th April, 1837, Hawkins' sufferings were terminated by the grant of a Free Pardon which gave him the opportunity to put as great a distance as he wished between himself and his sadistic task-master.

EDMUND STEELE, a 42-year old married man from Kintbury, had been sentenced to be separated from his wife, Maria, and their eight children "for the term of his natural life." On his arrival in the colony he was assigned to Robert Taylor, the eldest son of George Taylor who had emigrated to Van Diemen's Land in 1822. George Taylor obtained an 800 acre land grant on the Macquarie River which he named "Valleyfield". His three sons were each granted 700 acres to the south of their father's estate. George Taylor had died before the "Swing" men arrived in the colony and Robert, as eldest son, inherited "Valleyfield". Prior to inheriting his father's estate Robert had acquired an additional 2,500 acres and several town allotments in Perth and Campbelltown. Apart from the fact that he received a Free Pardon on 24th April,1837, nothing more is known about Steele's fate.

FRANCIS NORRIS was engaged on "Public Works" which might well have been a euphemism for working in chains on the road construction gangs, but which, in his case, meant the fairly "cushy" job of Watchman in the Prisoners' Barracks, Hobart, a position he was still holding in November, 1838. Prior to this, on 24th February,1836, Norris, who was a widower, submitted an application for permission to marry Ann Drury, a free spinster, and, permission having been granted by the Colonial Secretary, they were married in Holy Trinity Church, Hobart, on 4th April,1836. (No children were recorded in the Baptismal registers of either of the two early Hobart churches up to 1843.). In April,1838, Norris was granted a Conditional Pardon, which meant that, though he was free to go anywhere in the colony, he could not return to England even if he wished to.

In December,1840, Norris was convicted of larceny and sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour. The latter meant labouring in the chain gang constructing the road between Hobart and Glenorch. Some books dealing with convict life tell some horrific stories of conditions in the chain gangs.The sober evidence of Sir Richard Bourke, a former governor of New South Wales, is no less horrifying. He stated "that the condition of the convicts in the chain gangs was one of great privation and unhappiness.They are locked up from sunset to sunrise in caravans or boxes which held from 20 to 28 men, but in which the whole number can neither stand upright nor sit down at the same time (except with their legs at right angles to their bodies), and which, in some instances, do not allow

more than 18 inches in width for each individual to lie upon on the bare boards. They are kept to work under strict military guard during the day, and are liable to flagellation for trifling offences such as an exhibition of obstinacy, insolence and the like ....".

DANIEL BATES, a young carpenter/wheelwright of Kintbury, was singled out by the judge of the Special Commission which tried the machine breakers at Reading, for a lengthy homily. The judge is reported as having said that his crimes were of a very deep dye and the Court assured him that the scale had long been balancing as to whether death should not be the almost immediate consequence of them. Only the good character which he had received and the strong recommendation for mercy made by the jury saved him. This strong recommendation to mercy meant that Bates was eventually sentenced to transportation "for the term of his natural Life."

It may have been some small consolation to his widowed mother that Bates seems to have prospered in the land of his banishment, though not without becoming involved in some somewhat romantic escapades. He had, like Norris, been assigned to "Public Works" in which, being a craftsman, he was probably engaged on useful rather than purely penal tasks. On October 22nd, 1833, however, he was brought before the magistrate who reprimanded him for being "out after hours". That he may have spent this time with a female convict is suggested by the events which followed. Just a year later, on 6th October, 1834, he applied for permission to marry a female convict named Mary Ann Stringer. This application was not sent on to the Colonial Secretary until March of the following year, because in January we find him being found guilty of "holding communication with a female prisoner". For this offence he was sentenced to three months hard labour at his trade, but this sentence was cancelled by the Governor "in consequence of his general good conduct". His Excellency must also have granted the application for permission to marry for, on 6th April,1835, Daniel Bates married his Mary Ann in Holy Trinity Church, Hobart. Two years later , on 24th April,1837, Bates gained his freedom. As this pardon was an absolute one he could have returned to England. It would seem that he preferred to settle down in the colony and work at his trade.

The 1842 and 1843 Census returns list a Daniel Bates, wheelwright, residing in the former year in Murray Street, Hobart, and in 1843 at Brown's River, Kingston, a few miles south-west of Hobart. The 1856 Electoral Roll for the Brown's River District lists a Daniel Bates as a freeholder, as do the Valuation Rolls for 1858. 1861 and 1862. The Hobart Town Gazette (an official publication) lists him as the proprietor of a cottage and land (of 1¼ acres) valued at £18 per annum. The same publication for 10th November, 1874, lists him as residing in the same cottage but someone else is named as the proprietor. His name is omitted altogether from the Gazette of 1875. As, by this time, he would have reached the biblical "three score years and ten", it is not unreasonable to assume that Daniel Bates had at last left this life having almost certainly had a better one than if he had not been transported.

Solomon Allen, the leader of the group which attacked the house of an infirm old woman, Martha Davies of Binstead, and , one waving a cutlass, broke down the door, was sentenced to fourteen years transportation. (For acts of violence which were much less intimidating a rioter from the Kintbury area would have been lucky to have

had a death sentence commuted to transportation for life.). The assignment register lists Allen as having been assigned to "R.W.Loane, Sydney", but Loane was a restless man who did not settle anywhere for long. He had arrived at Hobart in 1809 in his own ship, but, in 1813, he was operating as a merchant in Sydney.

A few years later he was back in Hobart where he built an imposing residence in Macquarie Street. In 1825 he left this in the charge of his house-keeper who was said to have been his mistress, and returned to Sydney. On 18th January,1833, he left Sydney for the last time and sailed for Hobart on the "Duckenfield" ; on this trip he was accompanied by Allen. While Allen was on the island he was convicted of five minor misdemeanours. They must have been very minor otherwise it is unlikely that he would have been granted an Absolute Pardon, on 8th May, 1838. The following year R.W.Loane and his wife left the colony and returned to England. It is possible that Allen accompanied his erstwhile master on this voyage also, but no firm evidence has been found to confirm this.

POSTSCRIPT

Nearly all the "Swing" men who were transported to New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land were eventually granted Absolute Pardons which meant that they were fully free men and, if they so wished and had the fare, could have returned to England. What little positive evidence exists suggest that very few of them took advantage of this freedom.

W.H.Hudson in the chapters on the Wiltshire riots and their consequences in his "A Shepherd's Life" (1910) states that "Very few, as far as I can make out, not more than one in five or six , ever returned.". Hobsbawm and Rudé in their classic study of the threshing machine riots, "Captain Swing", state that even this proportion is an exaggeration. They could find evidence of only two. "William Francis, a Wiltshire ploughman sailed (or was due to sail) with his employer Major Thomas Livingstone, the Solicitor-General of New South Wales, to England in the *Duchess of Northumberland*, in February, 1837.". John Tongs, a blacksmith of Timsbury near Romsey, Hants, returned to England shortly after obtaining his pardon in 1836, but "reappeared in Hobart in January, 1843, as a free immigrant with his wife, daughter and three sons.".

Governor Arthur told the Molesworth Committee (on Transportation) in 1837 that "very few indeed (of the convicts *of the better sort*) seek to return to England.". On an earlier occasion he had reported to the Colonial Office that, of 102 men to whom he had issued pardons between 1826 and 1833, only eight had left for England.

In 1898 W.H.Money (author of the "History of Newbury") wrote that he had heard "of one of the Kintbury party who returned to his native village *quite a gentleman* in order to take his wife and children back with him.". Money adds that this man eventually became the "owner of three extensive farms, and acquired a considerable, if not very large, fortune.". Money gives no name and does not quote the source of his information and thus it cannot be checked. When, in 1931, a Mr. George Langford recounted to a Newbury Weekly News reporter some "vivid stories of the happenings at Kintbury" which were told to him by his father, William Langford, who was fifteen years old at the time of the riots, he made no reference to the return of any one of those who had been transported.

Yet confirmation of the return of some of those transported is available in odd documents in obscure places. In the Wiltshire Record Office there is a copy of a letter by "W.T.", published in the Salisbury and Winchester Journal. The document is undated but its date can be estimated by the correspondent's statement that "63 years have passed - I was then a boy of nine summers.", which would give it a date of c.1893, though he is referring to something which happened some ten years earlier than the date of his letter. The writer relates how "after the manner of Falstaff" he was indulging in alcoholic refreshment at the local inn "when a stranger .. stood at the open door. I looked and was the first to speak saying *You are the brother of Joseph Viney ?*". (A Thomas Viney was involved in the destruction of machines at Pyt House, and was 19 years old when transported.). He must have been nearly 70 years old when he returned "after an enforced absence of nearly fifty years.".

POSTSCRIPT

A letter written by Joseph Mason, one of the leaders of the rioters of the Bullington area of Hampshire, is held in the Berkshire Record Office (D/EWd Z1). Though this letter is undated it was obviously written in 1838 because he writes "being now after an absence of seven years again seated by an English fireside". He had taken advantage of a free pardon and the financial support of people at home - he learnt in November, 1836, "that my fare would be paid by a subscription raised by friends in the neighbourhood where I had lived" - to return to England. Though the letter gives no definite date of departure from N.S.W., or the name of the ship, there is a reference to "the beginning of April", and to the "William Bryan".

According to Lucy E.Hodgson in her short "History of East Woodhay", "One of these (rioters who were transported), named Cooper, contrived to get home, and lived for many years after in a thatched cottage at Ball Hill (near Newbury) where Mrs. Canning now (1932) lives.". (A James Cooper of Burghclere was sentenced to 7 years transportation for "demanding money" during the rioting in north-east Hampshire.).

In No.XXIX of a series of "Antiquarian, Scientific and Historical Notes of Berkshire.", reprinted from the Reading Observer of 1885, 'Historicus' relates how "about 1855" he was on the road to St. Mary Bourne when he observed "an aged man ... tall and erect and habited in a coarse white canvas suit. ... It was old Sims, who had been convicted of mobbing and who had returned after a lengthy period from penal servitude. He was, I believe, the only one who ever came back. I knew him afterwards until the time of his death, and he was always a civil, well-behaved man.". A William Sims had "death" recorded against his name for the "Robbery" of a Mr.Easton, Vicar of St. Mary Bourne, but this sentence was commuted to transportation for "Life". Confirmation of his return can be found in the Parish Register of Burials in which there is an entry for "William Sims, aged, 88 years, buried 10th December, 1862.". The William Sims who was transported was 54 years old when he left England early in 1831. According to the convict records he was the father of the Berkshire man of the same name. (*)

The same series of articles in the Reading Observer includes several by "Octogenarian" (W.S.Darter.) writing about "Reading : 70 Years Ago.". Alderman Darter gives a very clear account of his participation in the attempts which were made to have the death sentences passed on the three Kintbury leaders, William Winterbourn, William Oakley and Alfred Darling, commuted. In concluding his account of the riots in Berkshire he states "I am not aware that any one of these convicts ever returned to their homes or their country." As far as the men from Berkshire are concerned this seems to be a correct assessment, though it is of course possible that evidence to the contrary may yet be discovered. (**)

(*) Miss J. Chambers, for her book "The Hampshire Machine Breakers", has searched the Hampshire censuses for 1841 and 1851, and discovered several other Hampshire men who returned to England. A similar, time-consuming, trawl through the Berkshire censuses might prove equally fruitful.

(**) If any reader knows of, or has heard of any one else who has, any information, however vague, concerning any one of these men who returned I should be most grateful if they would contact me.

BERKSHIRE TO BOTANY BAY

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF PERSONS TRIED BY THE BERKSHIRE SPECIAL COMMISSIONS (DECEMBER 1830 - JANUARY 1831)

	READING	ABINGDON	BERKSHIRE	S.W. BERKS ONLY
DEATH RECORDED	26	1	27	26 (15) *
EXECUTED	1	-	1	1 (1)
TRANSPORTION	44	1	45	20 (13)
for LIFE	10	-	10	10 (9)
for 14 Years	16	1	17	1 (-)
for 7 Years	18	-	18	9 (4)
IMPRISONMENT				
18 months	13	3	16	8 (2)
12 months	22	10	32 13 (6)	
9 months	1	9	10	1 (1)
6 months	6	5	11	2 (-)
3 months	1	5	6	-
2 months	-	4	4	-
14 days	-	1	1	-
DISCHARGED or ACQUITTED.	50	9	59	25 (18)
TOTALS	138	47	185	70 (41)

* Kintbury numbers in brackets.

TABLE 2. **SOUTH-WEST BERKSHIRE ONLY.**

	DEATH RECORDED	EXECUTED	TRANSPORTED	IMPRISONED	ACQUITTED	TOTAL
KINTBURY	15	1	13	9	18	41
HUNGERFORD	11	-	5*	14	5	24
WEST WOODHAY	-	-	2	1	1	4
INKPEN	-	-	-	-	1	1
TOTALS	26	1	20*	24	25	70

* One Hungerford man, Joseph Smith, was not in fact transported - he remained in the Portsmouth hulks until he died there on 19th January,1837.

TABLE 3. PERSONS FROM S.W. BERKS TRIED AT SPECIAL ASSIZE, READING.

NAME INDICTMENTS	SENTENCE IMPOSED.	
William SMITH (alias WINTERBOURN)	(Robbery (13). (D.T.M.(3);D.F.M.(1)	(D) Executed
John ALDRIDGE	D.T.M. (2) Trans. N.S.W.- 7 years.	
Daniel BATES	(Robbery (2) (D.T.M. (1); D.F.M. (1)	(D)Trans. V.D.L. - LIFE.
Cornelius BENNETT	Robbery (3); D.T.M. (1)	Trans. N.S.W. - 7 years.
Isaac BURTON	D.T.M. (1) ditto	
William CARTER	Robbery (4) (D)Trans. N.S.W.- 7 years.	
Alfred DARLING	Robbery (7); D.T.M. (4)	(D)Trans. N.S.W. - LIFE.
Charles GREEN	D.T.M. (2); F.D.F. (1)	Trans. N.S.W. - 7 years
Jason GREENWAY	D.T.M. (1) ditto	
Thomas GOODFELLOW	Robbery (2); D.T.M. (4)	Trans. N.S.W. - 14 years.
David HAWKINS	(Robbery (1); D.T.M.(1) (D.F.M. (1); R.A. (1)	(D)Trans. V.D.L. - LIFE.
Timothy MAY	D.F.M. (1) (D)Trans. N.S.W.- 7 years.	
Joseph NICHOLAS	Robbery (1) (D)Trans. N.S.W. - LIFE.	
Francis NORRIS	Robbery (6); D.T.M. (2)	(D)Trans. V.D.L. - LIFE.
William OAKLEY	Robbery (3) (D)Trans. N.S.W. - LIFE.	
Robert PAGE	Robbery (2) Trans. N.S.W. - 7 years.	
William PAGE	Robbery (1) (D)Trans. N.S.W. - LIFE.	
Thomas RADBOURN	Robbery (3) (D)Trans. N.S.W.- 7 years.	
William SIMS	Robbery (2) (D)Trans. N.S.W. - LIFE.	

TABLE 3 Continued

Joseph SMITH	D.T.M. (2); F.D.F. (1)	7 years trans.- died in hulks - 19th January,1837.
Edmund STEEL	Robbery (3); D.F.M. (1)	(D)Trans. V.D.L. - LIFE.
Joseph TUCK	D.F.M. (1)	(D)Trans. N.S.W.- 7 years.
William WAVING	D.T.M. (1)	Trans. N.S.W. - 7 years.
William WESTALL	Robbery (2)	(D)Trans. N.S.W. - LIFE
Elijah BAKER	D.T.M. (1)	12 months Hard Labour
Charles BATES	(Robbery (1); R.A. (1) (D.M.W.T. (1)	(D)12 months Hard Labour.
William CHITTER	D.F.M. (1); R.A. (1)	(D) 6 months Hard Labour.
John COPE	D.F.M. (1);	(D)12 months Hard Labour.
Thomas DANCE	Breaking windows.	12 months Hard Labour.
Jeremiah DOBSON	D.F.M.	(D)12 months Hard Labour.
John FIELDD.F.M.		ditto
Jacob GATER	R.A.	9 months Hard Labour.
John GATER	D.T.M. (1)	12 months Hard Labour.
Robert GIBBS	D.T.M. (1)	ditto
James GRANT	D.T.M. (1)	6 months Hard Labour.
George HOLMES	R.A.	12 months Hard Labour.
John JENNAWAY	Robbery (1); D.T.M. (1)	ditto
George LIDDIARD	D.T.M. (1)	18 months Hard Labour.
Richard NUTLEY	D.T.M. (1)	12 months Hard Labour.
William PEARSON (alias BRAZIER)	Robbery (1); D.T.M. (2)	ditto

TABLE 3 Continued

Israel PULLEN	D.F.M. (1); R.A.	(D)18 months Hard Labour.
Charles ROSIER	D.F.M. (1)	ditto
George ROSIER	D.F.M. (1)	ditto
James WATTS	D.F.M. (1)	ditto
William WHITE	D.T.M. (1)	12 months Hard Labour.
George WHITING	D.T.M. (2)	18 months Hard Labour.
Thomas WILLOUGHBY	D.F.M. (1)	(D)18 months Hard Labour.
David GARLICK or (YARLICK)	D.F.M. (1)	(D)12 months Hard Labour.

(D) - DEATH recorded
D.T.M. - Destroying Threshing Machines.
D.F.M. - Destroying Fixed Machinery (Robert Gibbon's Iron Foundry.)
D.M.W.T. - Destroying Machinery wih threats.
F.D.F. - Forcibly demanding food.
R.A. - Riotous Assembly.

TABLE 4.

PERSONS FROM S.W. BERKS WITH "DEATH" RECORDED AGAINST THEIR NAMES.

NAME	PLACE OF ORIGIN	CAPITAL CONVICTION	SENTENCE
William SMITH (alias WINTERBOURN)	Kintbury	(2), (3), (4), (5)	Hanged.
Charles BATES	Kintbury	(1)	12 months H.L.
Daniel BATES	Kintbury	(4), (5)	Transported (L)
William CARTER	Kintbury	(2), (3)	Transported (7)
William CHITTER	Hungerford (5)	6 months H.L.	
John COPE	Hungerford (5)	12 months H.L.	
Alfred DARLING	Kintbury	(1), (2)	Transported (L)
Jeremiah DOBSON	Hungerford (5)	12 months H.L.	
John FIELD	Hungerford (5)	12 months H.L.	
David HAWKINS	Hungerford (5)	Transported (L)	
Timothy MAY	Kintbury	(5)	Transported (7)
Joseph NICHOLAS	Kintbury	(2)	Transported (L)
Francis NORRIS	Kintbury	(1)	Transported (L)
William OAKLEY	Kintbury	(3), (4)	Transported)L)
William PAGE	Kintbury	(1)	Transported (L)
Israel PULLEN	Hungerford (5)	18 months H.L.	
Thomas RADBOURN	Kintbury	(3)	Transported (7)
Charles ROSIER	Hungerford (5)	18 months H.L.	
George ROSIER	Hungerford (5)	18 months H.L.	
William SIMS	Kintbury	(1), (3)	Transported (L)
Edmund STEEL	Kintbury	(2), (3), (4), (5)	Transported (L)
Joseph TUCK	Hungerford (5)	Transported (7)	
James WATTS	Kintbury	(5)	18 months H.L.
William WESTALL	Kintbury	(2)	Transported (L)
Thomas WILLOUGHBY	Hungerford (5)	18 months H.L.	
David GARLICK (or YARLICK)	Hungerford (5)	12 months H.L.	

The CAPITAL OFFENCES for which the prosecution sought and obtained convictions were :-

(1) Robbing William Clarkson of TWO POUNDS
(2) Robbing Joseph Randall of ONE POUND
(3) Robbing Frederick Webb of ONE POUND
(4) Robbing John Willes, Esq., of FIVE SOVEREIGNS
(5) Destroying machinery belonging to Richard Gibbons of Hungerford.

(L) - Transported for LIFE
(7) - Transported for SEVEN YEARS
H.L. - Hard Labour.

TABLE 5.

PERSONS FROM S.W. BERKS TRIED AT THE SPECIAL ASSIZE BUT ACQUITTED.

James ANNETTS	
Anthony EDWARDS	
Peter KNIGHT	
Thomas ARNOLD	
Thomas EDWARDS	
Barlow PAGE.	
James BENNETT	
Edward EVERETT	(H)
James RANDALL	
John BURGESS	(I)
George GABY	
William RANDALL	
John CARTER	
Frederick GATER	
Jonathan SANDFORD	
John CASBOURN	
Henry GATER	
Charles SMITH	(H)
William COX	
William HAYNES	(H)
George STURGESS	(H)
Thomas DARLING	
Henry HONEY	(W.W.)
James WILKINS	(H)
George DOPSON	

E - Enborne ;H - Hungerford ;HM - Hamstead Marshall ;I - Inkpen ;
W.W. - West Woodhay ;otherwise from Kintbury.

TABLE 6

PERSONS FROM S.W. BERKS ARRESTED BUT NOT COMMITTED FOR TRIAL(DISCHARGED UNDER THEIR OWN OR OTHER RECOGNIZENCES).

Daniel AIRES
James ARNOLD
John ARNOLD
Charles BAKER (I)
Charles BAXEY (I)
George BENNETT
Stephen BIRCH
William BIRD
----- BOULTING
William BREADMAN
Stephen BUTLER
Thomas BUTLER
William CLEMENTS
Henry COOK
William COOK
Charles COX
Isaac COX
Thomas DOBSON (H)
John EDMONDS
Dennis GIBBS (I)
Charles GILBERT
Thomas GILES
James GOATLEY
George GREEN
James GREEN
Charles GROVE
JohnGROVE (HM)
James HAMBLIN (I)
John HAMBLIN
Thomas HARRISON
Charles HEPBURN
Richard HIBBERT (E)
Henry HOLDEN (I)
William HUNTLEY
Jacob JEFFREYS
Thomas JEFFREYS
John JORDAN (I)
Thomas LEADER
Richard LEADER
William LEADER
Charles MARSHALL
Thomas MATTHEWS
Robert MATTINGLEY
Henry NORMAN (H)
James PAGE
George PALMER
James PALMER
Robert PALMER
John RADBOURN (I)
Charles SIMS
Benjamin SMART
Henry SMART
Thomas SMITH
John STRATFORD
Thomas STURGESS
Charles TAYLOR (I)
John TIDBURY
Isaac UNDERWOOD (I)
William WAIT
George WESTALL
Henry WHEATLAND
John WHEELER
Jeosophat YORK (H)

E - Enborne ;H - Hungerford ;HM - Hamstead Marshall ;I - Inkpen ;
W.W. - West Woodhay ;otherwise from Kintbury.

TABLE 7

AGE, MARITAL STATUS, LITERACY and OCCUPATION OF THOSE TRANSPORTED.

(1) From S.W. Berks.

John ALDRIDGE (H)	36	M(6)	____	blacksmith
Daniel BATES	25	S	R & W	carpenter, wheelwright
Cornelius BENNETT(W.W.)	34	M(3)	R	farm labourer(p,r,milks)
Isaac BURTON (Sh)	24	S	R & W	tailor, 9 years.
William CARTER	30	M(2)	R	bricklayer, baker
Alfred DARLING	22	M	R	labourer (spadesman,r)
Charles GREEN (H)	27	M(1)	R	labourer (p,r,s)
Jason GREENWAY (We)	19	S	R	carter
Thomas GOODFELLOW(W.W)	24	M(1)	R & W	blacksmith and farrier
David HAWKINS (H)	39	M(5)	____	farm labourer
Timothy MAY	24	M(2)	R	f. lab.(p,r,s,milks,shears)
Joseph NICHOLAS	29	M(1)	____	labourer (road & pondmaker)
Francis NORRIS	41	Widower	R	Master bricklayer
William OAKLEY	24	S	R & W	carpenter, wheelwright
Robert PAGE	32	M(3)	R	carpenter, 15 years.
William PAGE	39	M(2)	____	brickmaker,sawyer,spadesman
Thomas RADBOURN	29	M(5)	R	shepherd, (milks, mows)
William SIMS	33	S	R & W	bricklayer,plasterer,slater
Edmund STEEL	41	M(8)	R & W	ploughman and maltster
Joseph TUCK (H)	29	Widower	R & W	groom and porter
William WAVING (We)	35	M(2)	R	shepherd,shears,mows,reaps
William WESTALL	20	S	R	gardener, brickmaker

(2) From rest of Berkshire.

Solomon ALLEN	35	M(5)	R	milks, p,r,s
George ARLETT	24	M(1)	____	maltster, milks,p,r
Luke BROWN	24	S	R	ostler, reaps, mows
James BURGESS	21	S	R	farm labourer, milks, reaps
Joseph EDNEY	25	M(3)	____	shepherd, milks,p,r
Daniel HANCOCK	24	M	R	papermaker, groom, reaps
Thomas HANSON	27	M(3)	R	Top sawyer
Edward HARRIS	25	Widower	R	ploughs, milks, reaps
William HAWKINS	42	M2	R&W	roadmaker, reaps
Thomas HICKS	23	M(3)	____	horsebreaker, butcher
Charles HORTON	23	S	R	farm labourer,reaps, milks
John HORTON	21	S	R	ploughs, reaps
Thomas MACKRELL	43	M(7)	R & W	hurdlemaker,shears,reaps
Charles MILSON	28	M(2)	R & W	Carpenter complete
John NASH	20	S	R	shepherd,milks, mows,p,r

TABLE 7 Continued

James SIMONDS	27	S	R	ploughs, reaps, milks, mows
William SIMONDS	27	M(5)	R	ploughs, milks, reaps,sows.
Ednund VICCUS	21	S	R	herdsman, milks
James WEST	32	M(3)	____	ploughs, milks, reaps
John WHEELER	25	S	R	farm labourer, milks, reaps
George WILLIAMS	21	S	R	farm labourer,milks, reaps
Stephen WILLIAMS	20	S	____	spadesman, reaps, milks

M=married(No.of children in brackets); S=single; R=can read ; W=can write
p=ploughs; r=reaps; s=sows. All in (1) from KINTBURY except - H=Hungerford;
W.W.= West Woodhay; Sh = Shefford; We = Welford.

BERKSHIRE TO BOTANY BAY

SOURCES

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

(1) Home Office Papers.

H.O. 8/27 and 51	Sworn list of convicts in hulks and prisons.
10/32-35	Muster of prisoners (N.S.W. 1837).
10/50	Muster of prisoners (V.D.L. 1835).
11/8	Transportation Registers.
19/5 - 7	Register of petitions for pardons, 1830-1837.
27/39 & 41	Persons convicted, with indictments and sentences.
36/22	Requests - H.O. to Treasury - for payment.
40/27	Government agents reports,incl.Treasury Solicitor.
41/8	Correspondence - Home Secretary to local J.P.s etc.
52/6,7,11,12,24	Correspondence - J.P.s etc. to Home Secretary.

(2) Treasury Papers

T.S. 11/849-851	Treasury Solicitor's Papers relating to the Berkshire Special Commissionetc.
T.1/4193-4	Correspondence - mainly concerned with claims for rewards for arresting rioters or compensation.

(3) Admiralty Papers.

ADM 101/23	Convict ship journals.

MITCHELL LIBRARY, SYDNEY.

Convict Records - 4-4104; 4-4491 & 2; 4-4341 & 2; 4-4350.
Tasmanian Papers - 26(A 10596-6)

ARCHIVES OFFICE OF TASMANIA, HOBART.

Convict Records - CON 18-6; CON 31-4, 20, 33 & 39.

BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE.

Papers relating to the 1830 riots (W.Hall, Solicitor, Hungerford.)
Overseers Accounts Books (Kintbury, Hungerford, Avington.)
Hungerford Union Minute Books.
Quarter Sessions Order Books.
Register of Electors, Berkshire, 1832.
Farm Diary - Sulham Estate.

SOURCES continued

BODLEIAN LIBRARY.

Professor N. Gash - unpublished M.A. thesis on 1830 riots,Berkshire.
W.H.P. Okeden - Proc. Dorset Natural Hist. & Arch. Society, Vol III.
W. Cobbett - Political Register ; Twopenny Trash.
G. Rudé - "Captain Swing in N.S.W."(Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand, April, 1965.)
Reports of Sel. Cttees. on the State of Agriculture (1821 & 1833); and on the Sale of Beer and Drunkenness (1833 & 1834).
Report of the Poor Law Commissioners (1834).

NATIONAL REGISTER OF ARCHIVES.

J.S. Sharland - "The Labourers' Revolt in West Berkshire." (N.R.A., Berks Committee, Occasional Bulletin, No. 2, October, 1953.)

READING UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

BER 13/3-2 Labour Book, Gooseacre Farm, Radley.
BER 27/4-1 Notes for a History of the Craven Family - R.Craven.
HAN 11/2-1 Farm Diary, Nether Wallop.
OXF 20/1-1 Farm Accounts Book, Sibford Ferris.

R.U. INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL HISTORY.

J.C. Loudon - "Encyclopedia of Agriculture" (1831).
J.A. Ransome - "The Implements of Agriculture" (1834)
W. Mavor - "A General View of Agriculture in Berkshire" (1809)
W. Pearce - "A General Viewof Agriculture in Berkshire" (1794)
C. Vancouver - "A General View of Agriculture in Hampshire" (1813)

READING PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The Reading Mercury and the Berkshire Chronicle.
Rules and Regulations for the Government of Reading Gaol, 1825.
Anon - "Reading 70 Years Ago" (1887).
M. Bowen - "A Short History of Kintbury".
W.S. Darter -"Reminiscences of Reading ; by an Octogenarian" (1885).
-. Doran - "The History etc. of Reading" (1835).
Rev. J.M. Guilding - "Notable Events etc." (1895).
Lucy E. Hodgson - "History of East Woodhay".
F. Page - "The Principles of the English Poor Law" (1822).
The Diary of S. Purdue, Parish Clerk, Newbury (c. 1800).
A. Somerville - "The Whistler at the Plough".
E. Thoyts - "History of the Royal Berks Militia.".

SOURCES continued

BOOKS and NEWSPAPERS CONSULTED.

Newbury Weekly News
Reading Mercury
Berkshire Chronicle;
Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette
Salisbury & Winchester Journal.
C.H. Bateson -"The Convict Ships"
M.Clarke - "His Natural Life".
W.Cobbett - "Rural Rides"
T. Creevey - "The Creevy Papers" (ed. J.Gore.)
Sir F.M.Eden-"The State of the Poor";
Lord Ernle- "English Farming : Past & Present.".
C.Evans - "Ask the Fellows Who Cut the Hay"; "The Farm and the Village"
J.L. & B. Hammond - "The Village Labourer";
E.Hobsbawm & G.Rudé-- "Captain Swing".
E.Longford - "Wellington: Pillar of State";
Anon - "Adventures of Ralph Rashleigh".
G.Loveless - "The Victims of Whiggery";
W.Money - "History of Newbury" and Newbury Weekly News, Jan. & Feb.,1898.
(T.U.C. 1934) - "The Martyrs of Tolpuddle";
E.P. Thompson - "The Making of the English Working Class";
Sir L. Woodward - "The Age of Reform.".
M.J. Pearl - "W.Cobbett: A Bibliography."
J. Petty - "The History of the Methodist Connexion.".

BERKSHIRE TO BOTANY BAY

AMENDMENTS NECESSARY TO TEXT OFB TO BB ON WORD PERFECT 3½" FLOPPY DISC.

Intro.page 4. line 14. delete bracket & insert comma after 1829.
Chap.1. page 1. para 4. line 6. single inverted comma afterBall'.
12. para 5. line 5. delete third e from preceeding.
19. 2.2. delete = & insert / between 1829/30.
Chap.3. page 3. para 2. line 2. delete third e from whereever.
3.5.2. delete comma.
Chap.5. page 6.1. last line. men.
2. line 3. insert comma aftertrue,
8.4.2. William.
10.2.6. distress.
Chap.6. page 5. line 14 delete last n from lodgingn
para 4. line 3. agricultural.
6.. 6. out.
10. insert comma after commentators,
Chap.7. page 1. para 4. insert " at beginning of line 4.
REFERENCES at end of Chapter 7 - delete 14 , insert 7.
Chap.13put first appearance of each convict's name in CAPITALS.

ISBN 0 9526661 0 3