

THE ONLY CORRECT
Wonderful
from
Re-Capture,



ACCOUNT OF THE
Escape
Newgate,
and

CONFESSIO N

Henry Williams alias Whitehead,

A noted Burglar, who escaped from the Condemned Cell, and after being absent nearly Five Weeks, was Re-Captured for another Burglary in Hampshire. To which is added a Copy of his

PETITION TO THE KING TO SPARE HIS LIFE.

HENRY WILLIAMS, alias WHITEHEAD, is a sweep by trade. On the 29th of January, 1830, he, accompanied by another bold villain like himself, went down to Exeter, where they arrived about 9 o'clock in the evening of the next day, and then secreted themselves in the hedges on the north side of the plain until 11 o'clock, when, thinking it time for business, they went cautiously along a path that led to farmer Jenkinson's dwelling house, and, by means of a water pipe that ran up the side of the house, which was about two story high, Williams climbed to the roof, when, going to the back, he got in at the parapet through the ostler's bed room window, who was fast asleep, and after pulling off his shoes, went down stairs and let his accomplice in at the front door. They took several articles, but they were far from finding any thing as they considered sufficient to recompence them for so long a journey; but however, to make up for it, for being done out of their 'swag' as they termed it, they divested themselves of their worn out apparel, and adorned their persons with a superior bit of cloth, which they discovered in some drawers, in the shape of two new suits of clothes. A reward of Fifty pounds was offered by the town council, but of no avail, and the world would never have known the robbers, had not Williams confessed to it at Hatton Garden, when he was in custody for robbing the School at Highbury, and for which he was tried at Newgate, and sentenced to death.

The manner in which Whitehead effected his escape was as follows.—Himself, and a man of the name of Sullivan, who was found guilty of cutting and maiming, were the only persons then under sentence of Death. A little after 6 o'clock on Friday evening, July 22, while Sullivan was in the cell assigned to capital convicts, Whitehead, in weep fashion, worked himself up the wall of the yard, in which he was permitted to walk for a time, by working with his hands, knees, and back, in one of the corners, and which is composed of the same rough stone as the side fronting the street, but the joints more indented; when arrived at the top, he descended to the turnkey's private yard, where, there was no one to molest him, and he proceeded into the lobby; here he had to surmount a great difficulty, but being possessed of very great presence of mind, he overhauled several boxes belonging to the turnkeys, where he found a fine circular saw, with which he cut in a few moments the hinges of the door, and by that means arrived at the outer wall, which he surmounted as before; he then climbed to the roofs of the houses in Warwick Lane, where he found a skylight open, this he preferred to a chimney, to which he would no doubt have resorted, had not such a tempting opportunity offered itself, and through which he popped, to the great astonishment of a female, who was sitting at needle-work, and who thought it was all over with her. 'Lord have mercy upon us,' cried she. 'Amen,' said Whitehead, 'for nobody will have mercy upon me, if you and he dont.' 'Oh dear! oh dear!' said she, still more terrified, 'where do you come from?' 'Why, from Newgate, to be sure!' said he, 'where else could I come from? and if I staid there, they'd hang me, that's all.' The woman started back, and Whitehead started forward, and soon found his way into the street.

A communication having reached the Lord Mayor, stating that Henry Williams, who made his escape from the Capital Convicts' yard in Newgate, had been apprehended and lodged in Winchester gaol for a Burglary at Leymington, in Hampshire, officers were sent down with a order from the Secretary of State, and he was accordingly brought back, and replaced in Newgate, where he made the following Confession to Mr. Cope, the Governor.

'I was led into bad company by drunkenness, and neglect of parents when young. I became a sweep, and associated with thieves, to whom I was useful in consequence of my knowledge of climbing. I once stole a child from Bethnalgreen Workhouse, and sold it to be made a sweep. I at one time, descended through a chimney into a sick gentleman's chamber, where, seeing a watch on the table, I took it up, and told the man I should come for him afterwards; I then went up the chimney again, and the poor invalid was so terrified, that he fainted away, and remained so for 4 hours.'

THE FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF HIS PETITION.

To the King's most excellent Majesty,

May it please your Majesty,—I, the undersigned, one of your unfortunate subjects, now incarcerated in Newgate under sentence of Death, was led into crime by neglect of my parents in my infancy, and not through any depraved will of my own. I humbly beseech your Majesty to have compassion on me, and look over my late attempt to escape the ends of justice; and, although I cannot expect such a depraved wretch as I am, who has so darily broken the laws of my country, and justly convicted, to receive a pardon, yet I most humbly crave your Royal mercy, to commute my sentence to Transportation; and wherever I am sent, I will answer to atone to God, and live a better life hereafter.—And, as in duty bound, your Majesty's Petitioner, will ever pray.

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD.

Newgate, Aug. 22, 1836.