

The second last Speech of *Mort Collins*, who was execute at Glasgow on Wednesday the seventh of Novr. 1792, for the murder of John Panton, giving an account of his behaviour in prison and on the scaffold. To which is added the copy of a letter wrote with his own hand to a friend. Also, the copy of a letter he received from *Capt. Cook*, while under sentence of death.

30

The unfortunate *Mort Collins*, some days before his execution, seemed to be much agitated in his mind, crying out at times so as to be heard through the streets; on Monday morning he received the sacrament from a priest of the Roman profession, he was attended on Tuesday night and Wednesday Morning by some friends of that persuasion. — About two o'clock, the Magistrates accompanied by the Revd. Dr. Taylor, who attended at their request went into the Court-hall, where the prisoner was seated, holding in his hand the Roman Catholic service book for prisoners, from which he immediately began to read, with seeming devotion; the prayers for prisoners going to, and at, the place of execution. After these were ended, Dr. Taylor took the opportunity of saying, that if it was not disagreeable, he wished to speak with him a little, and to join in prayer: to this *Collins* replied, that "your prayers may be very good, but I do not know any prayers except those of my own communion, and by them I chuse to abide." He then read the Apostles Creed, and the devotional exercises annexed to it in the Service Book, on faith, hope, charity, patience, and resignation. After again declining to join in prayer with the Minister present, he read, a second time, the prayers for prisoners going to, and at the place of execution. He then bowed respectfully to the Magistrates; still declining any conversation. Having drank a glass of wine, he walked to the scaffold much agitated; where he spent some time in reading prayers. He then ascended the platform, and having taken farewell of the executioner, he read for some time on a book, afterwards his cap was put over his face, which he put up several times and called for the innerkeeper of the tolbooth to take farewell of him, and soon after he gave the signal when he was launched into eternity a little after three o'clock, in the presence of a great concourse of spectators; and having hung the usual time, he was cut down, and the body delivered to the Professor of Anatomy for dissection, agreeably to the sentence of the Court. He was born in the County of Clare, Ireland, and only twenty-two years of age.

Copy of a letter from *COLLENS* to a friend,

Glasgow Tolbooth, 24th Octob, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

"I received your letter, which gives me a deal of pleasure to hear you are all well; my dear friends, you may be sure that I intend to make the best use of my time that I possibly can, and with the assistance of God, I hope to die in peace with God and the world, I am now visited by some of my own profession, which gives me much pleasure and relief, and in a short time I expect to have the benefit of some Clergy of my own profession, which will make me quite

happy in my present miserable state, for nothing can give me greater pleasure than to die in the religion I was brought up to. As for writing to my parents, I know not what to think of it; my dear friends, the shock of it will be unsupportable to them, who loved me with such unbounded tenderness, it can never be born by them; the distraction it will cause in them, I am afraid, will end their days. If possible, I should wish them never to hear of it, my dear friends, it is not my horrid destiny that afflicts my troubled soul, but the unsupportable horror that will seize my dear parents, that grieves me to the heart; my dear friends, how different will be the account that I must be forced to send them from the last account they received from me, that was a pleasing account which gave them much delight, but how horrid will this account of my ignominious death be to them, they will hear it. O how happy would I be if they never would hear of it, but it will be known to them sometime. O blessed be the name of God that has supported me since I have fallen by these cruel wretches* but it seems it has been my lot to have fallen.

May he be a support to my afflicted parents my dear friends, I will wait till those Revd. Clergy come, and advise with them, for they know best what to do in it. Dear sir, I should be glad to see you and your wife, and Molly before I die, it would give me much pleasure: when ever you come, I suppose there will be no hinderance to your seeing me. You will tell Molly to send them shirts to us as soon as possible, for the shirts we have on are very dirty."

I am,
your unfortunate
MORT COLLINS.

Copy of a Letter from *Captain Cook*.

Edinburgh Castle, the 30th of Octob. 1792.

COLLINS,

"I received your letter, and it gives me great pleasure to find you so calm and resigned in the midst of your present misfortunes; and whatever your destiny may be, I trust with the blessing of God, you will be enabled to meet it with firmness and resignation to the divine will. I have done every thing in my power for you, but cannot say how my exertions will end. I hope you have every possible comfort and nourishment afforded you that your present unhappy situation will admit. Put your whole trust and confidence in the tender mercies of Almighty God, and by so doing (tho' in prison) you will find yourself light and easy; and be assured that every happiness may attend you, is the prayer and sincere wish of"

W. COOK.

* This expression seems to be Ambiguous whom he refers to.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND
-5th AU-
1952