

EXECUTION.

A Particular Account of the Execution of John Baird and Andrew Hardie, who were Hanged and Beheaded at Stirling, on Friday the 8th day of September, 1820, convicted of High Treason.

STIRLING, 8TH SEPTEMBER, 1820.

This day, at one o'clock, the Sheriff's Depute and Substitute of the county of Stirling, accompanied by the Magistrates, and preceded by the Town and Sheriff Officers, went in procession from the Town-House to the Castle, to receive the prisoners at the Castle Gate. They were met by the Lieut. Governor, General Graham, when the Sheriff demanded the two prisoners, HARDIE and BAIRD. The gates were thrown open, and a strong party of the 13th Regiment under the immediate command of Colonel Sir William Williams, marched out and formed two lines, one on each side of the road. A squadron of the 7th Dragoon Guards were already drawn up outside the Castle Gate, and when the prisoners arrived, formed outside the Insantry, and also *in front* and rear of the procession. The prisoners, who were decently dressed in black clothes, with weepers and crape, attended by the three Ministers of the Established Church, viz: Dr Wright, Dr. Small and Mr Bruce, now came out of the Castle, and mounted the Hurdle with a firm and undaunted step. The decapitator took his seat immediately behind them, clad in a dark cloak and veiled with black crape, holding up his weighty axe in the same appalling manner in which he held it at Glasgow. They bowed to the crowd all around, and particularly to the Lieut. Governor and Fort Major. The Sheriff and Magistrates took their position immediately behind the small party of cavalry which cleared the street. The Ministers were placed at the sides of the hurdle, which was guarded by two Sheriff Officers. A strong detachment of the 13th marched along, and the rear was guarded by a few Cavalry. When the procession began to move (which was at a slow pace) the prisoners sung the last hymn in a very audible and distinct manner, and continued to do so, except in the narrow part of the Castle Wynd, till they arrived at the Prison, in front of which the Scaffold was erected. Hardie looked up and smiled—Baird surveyed the dreadful apparatus with earnestness, but composure. Both the prisoners, but especially Hardie, looked eagerly and keenly at their veiled companion, but did not address him. The procession, after arriving at the front of the Prison, halted; the troops drew up, formed three sides of a square around the Scaffold; the prisoners, with the Magistrates and Ministers, proceeded to the Court-house, where nearly an hour was spent in devotional exercises. Dr. Wright first read the 51st Psalm, and prayed—Dr. Small next read from the 7th to the 13th verse of the same Psalm, which the prisoners sung with much devotion, Hardie giving on the line and leading the singing. Dr. Small afterwards prayed—The Rev. Mr. Bruce then gave out the 30th Psalm, which was sung in like manner; and the devotions were concluded by another prayer from Dr. Wright. The arms of the prisoners were then pinioned, and after each had got a glass of wine, they were conducted to the Scaffold. It was prepared with all the insignia of death. On each side was placed the coffins with the block for decapitation, the floor was covered with saw-dust. The prisoners then went on the platform at a quarter before three o'clock. On their appearance the crowd set up a faint

cheer. Baird then addressed the *crowd* in a very appropriate manner, and begged them to read and study their Bibles as the Word of God; he made no interference to the course which brought him and his unfortunate companion to the situation in which they were now placed. Hardie then addressed the audience, but was not so distinctly as Baird; he said, "I die a martyr to the cause of truth and justice." The Crowd gave a faint cheer, and immediately, as if in a panic, they fled towards the cross streets and closes. The ropes were now affixed to the prisoners and to the traverse beam, after which Mr. Bruce prayed very serenely, and at twenty minutes to three o'clock they were launched into eternity. They hardly exhibited any struggle. After hanging 25 minutes, their bodies were taken down by the sheriff Officers, and placed on their respective coffins with their heads on a block, and their faces downwards. When the necks were bared, the decapitator came forward, and was assailed by the crowd with hisses, yells, and cries of "Murder." He appeared to be the same person who officiated at Glasgow, but he completely lost his former firmness and dexterity. He set the neck of Hardie's corpse with his right hand, raised his ponderous hatchet, hesitated, lowered it, adjusted the crape on his face, and raised it again, and after two powerful strokes, a third slight touch was necessary to sever some of the adhering fibres and skin. He then held up the gory head in his right hand, and exclaimed, "This is the head of a traitor." He next turned round to the corpse of Baird, and took his aim apparently with less trepidation: the first stroke the axe cut the neck slightly and stuck fast in the wood, but the second severed the head from the body. He then held it up also, streaming with blood, and made the same proclamation, "This is the head of a traitor" and retired. The mangled bodies were then taken inside the Jail, and the crowd instantly dispersed.

HARDIE, though born in Auchinairn, was educated in Glasgow. He was bred a weaver. He served in the Berwick Militia upwards of five years, and was discharged immediately after the battle of Waterloo. He came home to his loom, and became a member of: the "Castle street Union Society," but never bore any office. The society was given up before the end of December. Upon the 4th April he was informed that there was to be a great meeting that night at Germiston, he went to the place, but found only 30 or 40 men. They never separated till they were all seized at Bonnymuir. He was 27 years of age; and has left two youngers, a sister, and an aged mother.

BAIRD was born in the parish of Cumbernauld, and bred a weaver. He enlisted into the 95th Regiment, and belonged to it more than 7 years. He was in Spain with Moore. When he was discharged, he settled at Condorrat, and wrought at his trade till the beginning of April, when he was taken in arms at Bonnymuir.-- He was 31 years of age, and unmarried. He has left two brothers and an aged father to lament his death.

JAMESCLELIAND, who was to have been executed along with Baird and Hardie, has received a respite for one month.

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