

Joseph Marjerison, 1123, Marion

Marcia Watson

A BURGLAR'S NEST DISCOVERED. During the winter months of the past two years, frequent complaints have been made to the police of robberies of dwellings. These robberies were generally effected on Sunday evenings, while the families were at a place of worship. The efforts of the police to discover the thieves were vain. Officers of the Detective force have been out for nights together, "on the watch," in strange and unfrequented paths, and have travelled hundreds of miles, in search of missing property, but never having got on the right scent, all these efforts were futile. What the most careful investigation failed to unravel, accident has revealed. Mr. James Hird, of Hall Lane, Bowling, with his wife, was returning home along the fields from Shipley, about eight o'clock on Sunday evening last, In the way, he met two young men. One of them, whose name was William Rhodes, was engaged knocking the ashes of tobacco from a meerschaum pipe. He recognised the article as one which was stolen from his house in January last, and he went and asked permission to examine it. On examining the pipe, Hird instantly identified it as his property, and accordingly made an intimation to Rhodes to that effect. Rhodes replied that he had "brought the pipe from London last summer," but, after much ado, consented to hand over the pipe to its owner, requesting him to "make no more to do about it!" Hird passed on; telling him that he could make no promise on that score. [It may simplify the narrative if we state here the circumstances under which Hird lost this pipe. On Saturday evening, the 20th of January, Hird and his wife locked up their house, and came to Bradford. In their absence the house was entered, by means of skeleton keys, and robbed of two waistcoats, two handkerchiefs, a meerschaum pipe, and eleven sovereigns.] Hird subsequently proceeded towards the Police Station, and, meeting Sergeant Carter in the road, he told him what had occurred. Accompanied by this officer, he returned towards Spink well, where Rhodes had stated he resided; and in the way, they encountered Rhodes, who came up to Hird, apologized for having told him that the pipe came from London, and confessed that he had got it from his brother-in-law, James Margerison, but alleged that he knew nothing of its origin or previous possession. [It may help to explain the narrative if we state here, that Rhodes married a daughter of a woman named Sarah Margerison, and that he lived with his mother-in-law and her family, consisting of two sons, at a house at Spinkwell.]

Shortly afterwards, Messrs. Leveratt, Field, and Shuttleworth repaired to this house, and searched it through; bringing away a large quantity of property, that was subsequently identified by a number of persons, whose premises had been robbed during the last 18 months. They also seized a bundle of skeleton keys, two chisels (one of them used for cutting iron), two jemmies, and several old files (used no doubt to file down any old key, and so to adjust it to a strange lock). We present below a list of those robberies in which the stolen property we found among this booty, and identified previously to the investigation before the magistrates, premising that several other parties have identified other property which has been stolen from their houses in a similar manner. Hird identified two waistcoats and a handkerchief as his property. The officers also took several of the house- hold into custody, viz., Sarah Margerison (who said that she was the mistress of the house, but alleged, as her sons also declared, that she had no knowledge of the stolen property); her two sons, Joseph and James Margerison; and her son-in-law, William Rhodes (but the last named was marched to the lock-up on coming up to Carter and Hird).

On Tuesday, the prisoners (who had been remanded on Monday) were brought up before the magistrates at the Borough Court; the magistrates on the bench being Aldermen Milligan, Smith, and Cheesebrough. Mr. Lees appeared for the prosecution, and Mr. Terry for the prisoner, Rhodes. The circumstances of the apprehension of the prisoners were sworn to by the respective officers already named; and it further appeared from their testimony that Rhodes bore a good character, and is a member of a respectable family. Hird identified several articles stolen from his house on Saturday evening, the 20th of January. Two or three parties also identified some of the property produced.

The dwelling of Mr. John Wright, of Westgrove Street, was entered on the evening of the 31st of December last, the prosecutor and his wife being out; and robbed of a silver watch, a neck chain, some rings and brooches, and more than five pounds in money. Mr. Wright and his wife identified the watch and articles of jewelry amongst the property produced, as found at the prisoners' house.

The house of Mr. W. Whitehead, of Victoria Street, was entered, in the absence of the family, during the evening of Sunday the 28th of January last, and, amongst other property stolen, were two handkerchiefs, and several brooches and rings, which, being now produced, were identified by Mr. Whitehead as his property. The magistrates ordered the depositions to be taken in these cases; and the depositions having accordingly been taken in the cases of Messrs. Hird, Wright, and Whitehead, the two prisoners. Joseph and James Margerison, were committed to York Castle for trial at the next assizes; and Wm. Rhodes was committed for trial at the sessions on a charge of stealing the merschaum pipe; but the old woman, Sarah Margerison, was discharged, there being no satisfactory evidence to show that she had a guilty knowledge of these felonious transactions of her sons. [This woman is a pauper in receipt of relief from the Bradford Board.]

The two Margerisons, now committed, did not seem at all abashed at their position, but manifested considerable impudence and hardihood. They did not deny the offence, but oftentimes boldly made admissions of their guilt; and on one occasion, while Shuttleworth was explaining to the bench the uses of the file, and the jemmies in the mystery of picking locks and house-breaking, one of them, in a significant and good-humoured laugh, declared that " none knew better than Shuttleworth the purposes of those file, and jemmies !"

The following list connects the two prisoners, Margerisons, with a long series of robberies, and, as we have said, since this list was presented to the magistrates, several other parties have identified other property which was brought away:

January 16, 1848.— Mrs. Snowden's house. High Street; watch, gold seal, purse, buckle, gilt brooch, shawl pin, chain, the property stolen; and buckle and gold seal recovered and identified.

January 30, 1848.— Mr. Wardman's. Chapel Lane; twelve silver tea spoons, 10s., and several card views in Scotland, the property stolen; and views in Scotland recovered and identified.

January 30, 1848.— Mr. Hainsworth's, Leeds Road; three silver tea spoons, one salt spoon, and 6s., the property stolen; three silver tea spoons and one salt spoon recovered and identified.

November 12, 1848.— Mr. Carter's, Manchester Road; £1, 18s., five brooches, 2 lbs. of tea, and purse, the property stolen; and five brooches and purse recovered and identified.

November 26, 1848.— Mr. Sagar's, Preston Place; two watches and a purse containing £3. 10s. the property stolen; and the purse recovered and identified.

November 26, 1848.— Mr. Riley's, Preston Place; four yards of cloth and a bottle of brandy, the property stolen; and the cloth recovered and identified.

December 31, 1848.— Mr. Wright's, Westgrove Street; watch, neck chain, gold eye glass, two gold rings, and silver guard chain, the property stolen; and watch, neck chain, eye glass, and two gold rings recovered and identified.

January 20, 1849.— Mr. Hird's, Hall Lane; merschaum pipe, two vests, and eleven sovereigns, the property stolen; and the pipe vests, and neckerchief recovered and identified.

January 28, 1849.— Mr. Whitehead's, Victoria Street, Mannigbam Lane; two table spoons, sugar tongs, three brooches, two rings, and three handkerchiefs, the property stolen; and sugar tongs, brooches, rings, spoons, and handkerchiefs recovered and identified.

January 13, 1849.— Mr. Wilkinson's, Vicar Lane; razor strop and two handkerchiefs, the property stolen; and razor strop and two handkerchiefs recovered and identified.

February 10, 1849.— Mr. Oddy's, Hall Lane; bunch of keys, half sovereign, and brooch, the property stolen; and the bunch of keys recovered and identified.

February 11, 1849.— Mr. Pilling's, West End Buildings; two handkerchiefs and measuring tape, the property stolen; and the tape recovered and identified.

April 21, 1849.— Mrs. Bollans's, East Street: beef, flour, and razors, the property stolen; and the flour bag and razors recovered and identified.

March 18, 1849.— Mr5. Firth's, Manchester Road; gold brooch, two parses, and 7s. 6d. the property stolen; and gold brooch and two purses recovered and identified.

Bradford Observer - Thursday 07 June 1849, p8

Yorkshire Summer Assizes,

MAGISTRATES' ROOM.
SATURDAY, July 21.—Before Mr. WATSON, Q.C.
JAMES MARGERISON, 37, and JOSEPH MARGERISON, 27, were convicted of two burglaries, at Bradford.
Mr. BLANSHARD stated that there were fifteen cases against the prisoners, and the Magistrates sent four for trial, but evidence was only offered in the above two.—James was sentenced to be transported for ten years, and Joseph for seven years.

Sheffield Independent - Saturday 28 July 1849, p3

James Margerison was sent to Tasmania per *Oriental Queen*, departed Plymouth on 4 November 1852