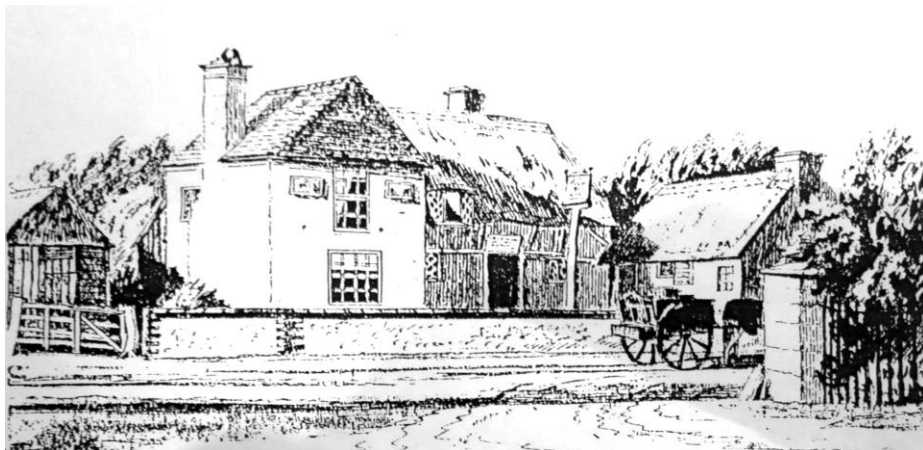


Rowlands Castle and the Smugglers

The Murders of William Galley and Daniel Chater

Extract from the *Hundred of Bosmere*



The White Hart Inn circa 1847. *Drawn by Charles Rogers Cotton.* The White Hart Inn was demolished to make way for the railway in the 1850s. The Castle Inn was built to replace it.



The location of the White Hart Inn

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Rowlands Castle and the Smugglers The Murders of William Galley and Daniel Chater

Extract from the *Hundred of Bosmere* by Walter Butler, 1817

Soon after the commencement of the 18th century smuggling increased along the sea coast to an alarming height: the smugglers committed great excesses, and, as they thought it no crime to rob their king or their country, they soon believed it was no sin to plunder and destroy their neighbour's property. The mischief they did met with no restraint, and no effectual check was opposed to their audacious proceedings.

The common people met with too much encouragement to resist the employment of smuggling: the master smugglers contracted for the goods either abroad, or with the owners of a cutter, and the teas and brandies were landed at a place and time appointed: the master smuggler hired a certain number of riders, who were paid a high price for each journey, and allowed all expences and half a bag of tea, and, as they sometimes made two or three journies a week, the profits of the rider were very considerable ; but the practice of drinking hard, the severity of the employment, and the hazard they constantly run, more than counterbalanced the advantages.

The smugglers generally made their appearance, loaded with goods on horseback, in a formidable troop, in different parts of the coast; and at Rowland's Castle, from its contiguity to almost impenetrable forests, they were harboured in perfect safety. It was at this place, and in its immediate neighbourhood, the following melancholy transaction took place, nearly seventy years since, but still fresh in the recollection of the old inhabitants, and which caused in the minds of every one the most lively interest:

In September, 1747, John Diamond, with other smugglers, went over to Guernsey, and purchased a quantity of tea; on their return, they were taken by a revenue cutter, and the tea was lodged in the custom house of Poole.

The smugglers incensed at meeting with this loss, a body of them, sixty in number, well-armed, assembled in Chalton Forest, and from thence proceeded in their enterprize; to accomplish which they agreed, that thirty should go

upon the attack, and the remaining thirty be placed as scouts upon the different roads, and give the alarm if necessary.

On the 6th October, during the night, they proceeded to Poole, thirty of the gang broke open the custom house, and carried away the tea. The next morning they returned with their booty through Fordingbridge, where crowds of people assembled to view the cavalcade. Amongst the spectators was Daniel Chater, a shoe-maker, known to John Diamond, who threw him a bag of tea as he passed along.

Soon after a proclamation of reward was issued for apprehending those concerned in breaking open the custom house; and Diamond being in custody at Chichester, on suspicion, Chater, in conversation with his neighbours, declared that he knew Diamond. The collector of the customs at Southampton, dispatched William Galley, a tidewaiter, and Daniel Chater, with a letter to William Battine, esq. a magistrate for Sussex, and surveyor general of the customs, to desire he would take the examination of Daniel Chater, to prove what he knew of the affair and the identity of Diamond's person.

In their way to Rowland's Castle, they called at the New Inn, at Leigh, and enquired the nearest road to Mr. Battine's house; they saw George Austin, John Austin, and Garnet, who said they were going the same way, and would shew them; about twelve o'clock at noon they arrived at the White Hart, at Rowland's Castle, kept by Elizabeth Payne, widow, who had two sons, both of them reputed smugglers; after calling for some rum, Mrs. Payne took George Austin aside, and told him she was afraid the two strangers were come with an intention to do some injury to the smugglers; he replied, he believed she need be under no such apprehension on that account, for they were carrying a letter to Mr. Battine, which he imagined was only about some common business. However, their having a letter increased her suspicion, upon which she sent one of her sons for William Jackson and William Carter; in the meantime Chater and Galley wished to go, and asked for their horses; but Mrs. Payne told them that the man was gone out with the key of the stable, and would soon return, though she had concealed the key till the arrival of Jackson and Carter. As soon as they came in, Mrs. Payne communicated to them her suspicions; and then advised George Austin to go away, telling him that, as

she respected him, he had better go, least he should come to some harm.

Mrs. Payne's other son finding there were grounds for suspicion, brought in William Steel, Samuel Downer, Edmund Richards, & Henry Sheerman, all belonging to the same gang. After having drank together, Jackson took Chater into the yard, enquired where Diamond was; Chater said, he believed he was in custody, and that he was going to appear against him, which he was sorry for, but could not help it. Galley soon after came into the yard for his companion, when Jackson abused him, and struck him in the face. Upon their return to the house, Galley and Chater became uneasy, and wished to go, but they were persuaded to stay and drink together, till they became intoxicated; and whilst they were asleep in another room, the letter was taken out of one of their pockets, and read in the kitchen, and the contents of it shewed a design to promote an information against some of their gang. At this instant, John Raiss, another of the gang, made his appearance; and at their consultation, Steel proposed to take them both to a well, at a short distance from the house, murder them, and throw them in. Another proposed to send them over to France. A third that they should be kept in some place of confinement, till the fate of Diamond was known, and inflict the same punishment upon them.

Galley and Chater were yet asleep, when Jackson commenced the scene of cruelty by getting upon the bed, and spurring their foreheads, whipping them with a horse whip, and forcing them into the kitchen, their faces covered with blood. They then put Galley and Chater on the same horse, and tied their legs together under the horse's belly. Steel led the horse, and the rest of the smugglers, except Raiss, who had left them, whipt them over the head, face, eyes, shoulders, or wherever they could injure them, and continued this terrible punishment till the poor sufferers, unable to bear the anguish of their repeated blows, rolled from side to side, and, at last, fell together with their heads under the horse's belly; and every step the horse made, he struck one or other of their heads with his feet. The smugglers again set them upright upon the horse, and continued the same cruelty, till they came to Dean, the horse going slowly, when they fell once more through excessive weakness; they were then separated, Galley was placed behind Steel, and Chater behind Downer, and whipped as before. It was then agreed to carry them to Harris'

well, in Lady Holt Park, and murder Galley; upon which they took him off the horse, and threatened to throw him into the well, when the unhappy man desired them to dispatch him at once, instead of which they put him upon a horse again, and whipped him over the downs till he fell off; he was then laid across the saddle before Downer, who devised new means of torture, and, being wearied with his struggles, threw him off the horse ; he was then placed astride, supported by one of the wretches, till he fell, apparently dead. They once more laid him upon a horse, with his face upon the horse's neck, and proceeded to the public house, at Rake, and compelled the landlord to point out the place where they had before lodged their goods. Carter then took a candle and lanthorn, borrowed a spade, and joined the rest, who were waiting; Downer, assisted by the landlord, dug a hole below the turnpike road, in Harting Combe, and in this hole they buried poor Galley. (*To commemorate the event, a neighbouring gentleman planted a sufficient number of firs, on the spot, to form the initials of his name.*)

We now return to the fate of Chater, who had been conveyed to the house of old Mills for his better security. During the remainder of the night and all the next day the gang continued at Rake, drinking, and consulting together how to act; they determined at length to return to their houses during the night, that their neighbours might not have any suspicion of what had been done, and on Wednesday evening following, they met at Rake, by appointment. In addition to those who murdered Galley, were John Cobby, William Hammond, Benjamin Tapner, Thomas Stringer, Daniel Perryer, John Miles, Thomas Willis, and Richard Mills; as soon as they were all assembled, and in the midst of the night, they renewed their consultation, coolly and sedately, as to the best method of dispatching Chater.

Richard Mills proposed, as Chater was chained first to a post, to load a gun with two or three bullets, lay it upon a stand with the muzzle levelled at his head, and having tied a string to the trigger, all pull together and share in his death; but this was considered as too expeditious a mode of ending his misery, having determined to prolong his life and increase his torments. The proposal being rejected, they determined to take Chater away from the custody of old Mills, and carry him to Harris' well, and throw him in, as the most effectual

method of concealing the transaction from the world.

During all this time unhappy Chater remained in the most deplorable situation, his mind full of horror, and his body smarting with pain from the blows and scourges he had received, and continually exposed to fresh cruelties.

The gang now proceeded to old Mills; as soon as they came there, Tapner, Cobby, and some others, went to the turf house, where Chater was confined, and, with oaths and imprecations, pulled out a large clasp knife, and bid him down on his knees, and say his prayers. Chater knelt as he had been directed; and, having offered up his prayers to the Throne of Mercy, ventured to inquire what they had done with Galley. Tapner instantly drew his knife aslant over his eyes and nose, with such violence, as almost to cut both his eyes out, and his nose quite through; and, in another phrenzy of wickedness, struck higher with his knife, and gashed his forehead, from whence the blood flowed in abundance.

By the desire of old Mills, they removed Chater from his horse, and proceeded towards the well. Tapner, more cruel than the rest, striking him across the face with his whip to make his wounds bleed afresh, and swore, that if Chater blooded his saddle, he would send his soul to hell.

By the time this dreadful group got to the well, it was the dead of the night, the well between 20 and 30 feet deep, paled round; as soon as they reached the well, they dismounted Chater, and Tapner taking a cord out of his pocket, made a noose, and fastened it round his neck, and bade him get over the pales, which he did with some difficulty. Tapner then tied the rope to the pales, and all of them forced him into the well, suspended by the rope; but expecting from his struggles that death would not soon release him, they pulled his legs out of the well, untied the cord, when his body fell head foremost into it.

They stood by the well some time, and everything being still and quiet, they heard him groan; they determined therefore to procure a ladder and go down, and dispatch him at once; having borrowed one, they tried to raise the ladder over the pales, but surprised and confused, their utmost efforts were ineffectual; they listened again, and heard him still groan; scarcely knowing

how to end his life, they threw in large logs of wood and great stones, and listening again, they found all was quiet.

To prevent suspicion they next destroyed the horse which Galley rode, and cut his hide into small bits, but Chater's had got away, and was returned to the owner. It was not long before this dark transaction was discovered; a proclamation of a great reward being offered, one of the persons who had been a witness to some of the past events, though not concerned in the murders, sent an anonymous letter to a person of distinction, intimating that the body of one of the unfortunate men was buried in the lands near Rake. Upon which a search was made, and the body of Galley was found, standing almost upright, with his hands covering his eyes. A second letter intimating that Steel was concerned in the murder, he was taken into custody, when he turned evidence, and made a full disclosure of all the circumstances. Some messengers were sent to Harris' well, where they found the body of Chater in a mangled state, his eyes starting out of his head, and the rope round his neck.

Warrants were immediately issued, and several of the gang taken in a short time. John Raiss voluntarily surrendered himself, and was admitted as evidence.

A special commission was granted to sir Michael Foster, knt. and other of the judges, to hold an assize, at Chichester, on 16th January, 174⁸/₉, for the trial of the delinquents, who, after having made a poor defence, were found guilty of murder, and five of the principals hung in chains. Jackson died soon after his condemnation; the terror of being hung in chains hastened his death. A printed paper was found carefully sewed up in a linen purse, containing the following words:—

Sancti tres Reges,
Gaspar, Melchior, Balthasar,
Orate pro nobis nunc et in hora
Mortis nostræ.

Three Holy Kings,
Gaspar, Melchior, Balthasar,
pray for us now and in the hour of our death.

Ces Billets ont touché aux trois testes de S. S. Roys a Cologne. Ils sont pour des voyageurs contre les malheurs de chemins, maux de teste, mal-caduque, fievres, sorcellerie, toute de malefice, mort subite.

‘These papers are impressed three times with the mark of S. S. Royas of Cologne. They are intended for travellers, against the dangers of travelling, epilepsy, fevers, witchcraft, all kinds of spells, and sudden death.’

The illiterate or semi-literate people often have an awe of the written word *per se*, which must be increased when the words are religious. It is not surprising therefore that written religious formulae were used as protective and healing amulets worn on the body [...] an example from *Patheway to Health* (1664), referring to the cult of the Three Kings of Cologne, indicates the continuing popularity of Latin charms of medieval origin in later Protestant England.

Stephen Wilson, *The Magical Universe: every day ritual and magic in Pre-Modern Europe*, Hambledon and London, 2000, pp. 368-9.

A FULL AND
GENUINE HISTORY
OF THE INHUMAN AND
UNPARALLELED MURDERS
OF
MR. WILLIAM GALLEY,
A CUSTOM-HOUSE OFFICER, AND
MR. DANIEL CHATER,
A SHOEMAKER,
BY FOURTEEN
NOTORIOUS SMUGGLERS,
WITH THE
TRIALS AND EXECUTION
OF SEVEN OF THE BLOODY CRIMINALS,
AT CHICHESTER.

Also the Trials of John Mills, and Henry Sheerman; with an account of the wicked lives of the said Henry Sheerman, Lawrence and Thomas Kemp, Robert Fuller, and Jockey Brown, condemned at East Grinstead.

With the Trials at large of Thomas Kingsmill and other Smugglers for Breaking Open the Custom House at Poole.

To the whole is added a Sermon preached in the Cathedral Church of Chichester, at a Special Assize held there, by William Ashburnham, M.A. late Bishop of the Diocese.

WRITTEN BY A GENTLEMEN OF CHICHESTER.

THE SEVENTH EDITION,

Illustrated with Seven Plates, descriptive of the Barbarous Cruelties.

CHICHESTER:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY WILLIAM MASON,

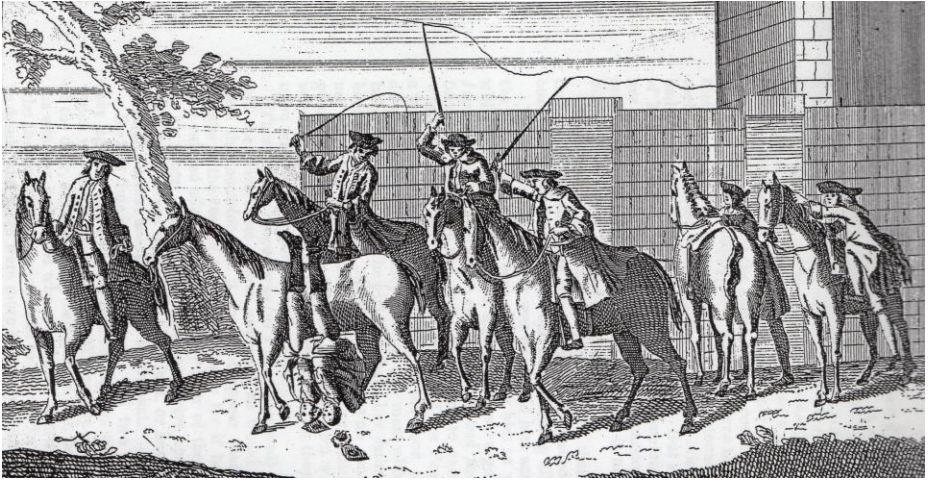
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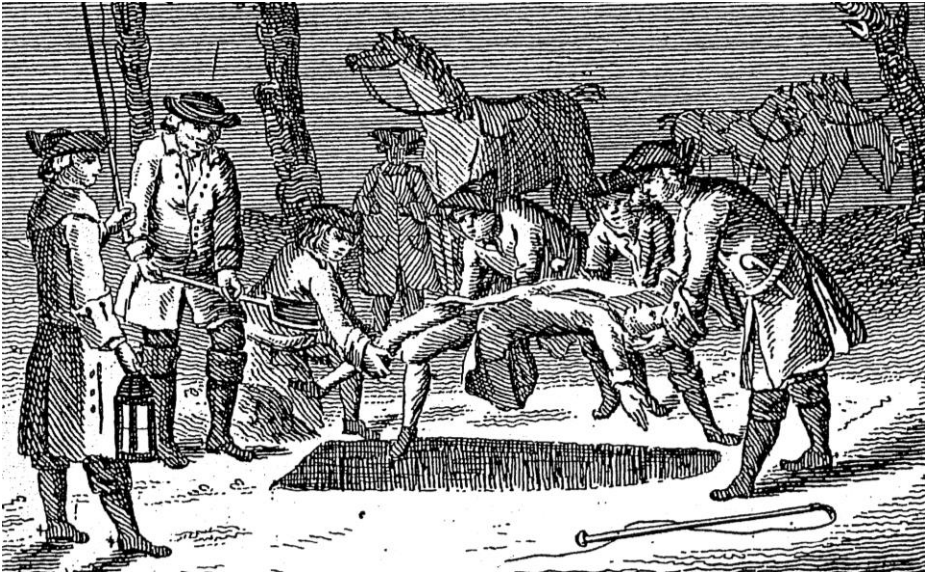
Representation of Smugglers breaking open ye KING'S Custom House at Poole.



Mr. Galley and Mr. Chater put by ye Smugglers on one horse near Rowland Castle. A. Steele who was Admitted a Kings Evidence. B. Little. Harry C. Jackson, D. Carter. E. Downer. F. Richards. 1. Mr Galley. 2. Mr Chater.



Galley & Chater falling off their Horse at Woodash, drags their Heads on the Ground. while the Horse kicks them as he goes: the Smugglers still continuing their brutish Usage.



The unfortunate William Galley put by the Smugglers into the Ground & as generally believed before he was quite DEAD.



William Galley brought across a horse to a Sand Pit where a deep Hole is Dug to Bury him in.



Chater, Chained in ye Turff House at Old Mills's Cobby, kicking him, & Tapner, cutting him Cross Eyes & Nose, while he is saying the Lord's Prayer, several of ye other smugglers standing by.



Chater hanging at the Well in LADY HOLT Park. The Bloody Villains standing by.



The Bloody Smugglers flinging down Stones after they had flung his Dead Body into the Well.



The Smugglers' Stone

Near this place was buried the body of William Jackson, a proscribed smuggler, who, upon a special commission of oyer and terminer, held at Chichester on the 16th day of January, 1748/9, was, with William Carter, attained for the murder of William Galley, a Customs-House officer, and who likewise was together with Benjamin Tapner, John Cobby, John Hammond, Richard Mills the elder and Richard Mills the younger, attained for the murder of Daniel Chater. But, dying within a few hours of the sentence of death was pronounced upon him, he thereby escaped the punishment which the heinousness of his complicated crimes deserved, and which were the next day most justly inflicted upon his accomplices.

As a memorial to posterity, and as a warning to this and succeeding generations, this stone is erected.

A.D. 1749

(The stone is by the roadside in Broyle Road near to the barracks where were quartered the Guards and Dragoons who oversaw the executions on Thursday, 19th January, 1749, the day after sentencing. In English law, oyer and terminer is a partial translation of the Anglo-French *oyer et terminer* which literally means 'to hear and to determine')

THE SMUGGLERS

A Tale

At the commencement of the latter half of the last century, and immediately after Byng's unhappy failure off Minorca, Ralph Rogers and Peter Crasler, two young men, natives of Hayling Island, once more visited this peaceful spot in the fond expectation of finding their much loved and never-forgotten home, after having passed many an eventful year, and experienced many a hardship together, as seamen, on board one of His Majesty's ships, then just returned from a foreign station. A singular fatality attended them both. Parents and near kindred were all gone; the unsparing hand of death had swept them all away, some in the fullness of age, and others in the greenness of youth; and their home—that only solace in the hour of toil and peril, the endearing remembrance of which had been unction to their wearied and troubled spirits whilst bending beneath the lash of the task-master and the frown of despotism—was in the hands of strangers, and refused them a shelter. Such of their more distant kindred as survived, looked upon them with eyes of suspicion, and disowned consanguinity. None would entertain the remotest recollection of them, save one innocent maiden, who, previous to Ralph's departure, had, in modest simplicity, plighted her troth with him. To the dwelling of Jane Pitt, therefore, Ralph's steps instinctively wandered; and from her kindness, and from the frank and hearty welcome of her parents, his generous heart soon learned to forget its grievous disappointment, and to infuse some portion of its altered feeling into that of his brother adventurer.

At this time smuggling was carried on to an immense height on the southern shores of Britain: large gangs of daring and outrageous characters violated the laws at mid-day, and set the constituted authorities for its suppression at defiance. It was no uncommon occurrence for the "gauger" and his military assistants to be dragged from their posts, and, under horrible threats of prompt and fearful vengeance, compelled to assist in performing that which they were

employed to prevent. Government, too, weakened by the distractions of its counsels, and the struggles of party, had lost the energy requisite to cope with these depredators on its resources; change in their favour; and they now found a hearty and cheerful welcome, where, on the former occasion, they had experienced nothing but harshness and rude incivility.

Soon after their arrival, Ralph rewarded the affection of Jane Pitt; and Peter, more out of compliment to them than for any other reason, also "changed his condition". For a time all was gaiety and pleasure; but when the novelty of living on shore had somewhat abated, and they began to feel the cares and wants attendant on their new situation, they found it necessary to look about them for employment. No great variety of choice awaited their decision; and even if there had, the little ability they possessed would not have allowed them to engage in any other than the one they had so lately followed. From necessity, therefore, more than choice, they once more resumed illicit trading, and very soon became known to all the neighbourhood as confirmed and established smugglers.

Success at first attended both their endeavours, but a twelvemonth had scarcely elapsed before the fickleness of fortune became painfully apparent to poor Peter. Loss after loss followed close upon each other, and a few months convinced him that he was ruined beyond redemption.

It was at this period that government discovered the inefficacy of her measures for the suppression of smuggling, and that her late offer of an amnesty to those smugglers who should enter into the naval sendee, had rather augmented the practice, than decreased it. As a last resource, therefore, the plan was adopted of offering a large reward and permanent employment, in a civil capacity, to such as should discover their lawless associates, and the means by which the system of smuggling was pursued with such unparalleled success.

Peter Crasler found himself a husband and a father, with no means of fulfilling these duties; without resources for his present support, or hope for the future; and encumbered by a heavy debt (incurred indeed for contraband articles, but which must be discharged before he could proceed further in his career) from which he never could hope, by fair

means, to extricate himself. On the other hand, government had offered him the opportunity of retrieving his fortunes, a permanent and safe employment, and quick and efficient means of discharging the debt which oppressed him. His situation was without hope and friendless, and the temptation strong, besides, he himself had no security against the treachery of his accomplices, and surely, he thought, surrounded as he was by want and danger, there could be no harm in performing an act, which the law had made a duty, and his own distress a moral necessity. His decision was soon made, for his wants were powerful and pressing: his offer was as promptly accepted and immediate relief granted, accompanied by instructions to make all the observations he could, and to attend at the custom-house in London on a day named.

His absence was soon observed by his companions, for suspicion ever attaches itself to the poor and unfortunate as well as to the guilty; and his wife, being boisterously and roughly urged by Ralph Rogers and other smugglers, acknowledged her husband's apostacy. Consternation seized them all, for the knowledge Peter possessed forboded universal ruin. Ralph, in the bitterness of his rage, denounced him a villain, and swore eternal enmity against him, and prompt revenge. He renewed these threatening expressions in his cooler moments, and from the uncontrollable passion he evinced at the mention of Peter's name, and the reserve and gloomy silence he observed on other occasions, it was generally supposed that he meditated some signal act of vengeance. Poor Jane, who could in most matters soothe him into tameness and quietude, found her usual influence gone, and her endeavours to soften him met only by increased rage and vows of animosity; nothing daunted, however, by want of success, she resolved to renew her exertions upon every fitting occasion, and to keep a strict and guarded eye upon her husband's every action.

When the panic which had seized the smugglers upon the news of Peter's defection had somewhat subsided, they began to take measures for counteracting the effects which were naturally to be expected from it. With this view they emptied all the caverns on the south beach of the

Island, and disposed of their commodities at as great a distance from home as safety would warrant. Having made everything secure, they suppressed their smuggling operations until the approaching storm was blown over, when they hoped to be enabled to resume them with greater safety.

Two months had now elapsed since Peter Crasler had left the Island, and the last quarter of an October moon warned the smugglers that the time of year best adapted for their pursuits was rapidly passing away unattended by the usual advantages. Peter knew the use made of the season likewise, and suddenly, in the dusk of the evening, made his appearance in the Island, attended by six dragoons. After giving his party directions to proceed onwards, and wait his arrival at that part of the road in the south parish where the two branches leading from the beach first meet, he hastily and alone sought his home; and in the embraces of his wife and child derived a momentary and sincere delight. Tears, the constant companions of true affection, fell in copious streams from his eyes as he returned their caresses and thought of the character he had assumed to protect them: he devoutly blessed them in the fullness of his overflowing heart, and promising a speedy return, left them to join his companions; not, however, before his wife had informed him of the resentment of Ralph Rogers, and warned him to be careful of his presence.

The arrival of Peter and his dragoons was quickly spread through the Island, and their advance southward construed into a design to examine the caverns. Jane Rogers was one of the first made acquainted with this intelligence, and her mind became instantly oppressed by the most dreadful forebodings. Ralph had left home for Rowland's Castle, three miles to the north of Havant, early in the afternoon, and she began to hope that the sudden visit of Peter and the soldiers was unknown to him. She quickly, however, abandoned this hope when she thought how utterly impossible it was for such a body of men to advance through the heart of a smuggling country, with declared intentions of hostility, without tidings of their presence being instantaneously communicated

over every part of it. She resolved, therefore, since she anticipated the most fatal consequences from a meeting between her husband and Peter, to do all in her power to prevent one; and as she knew not where to find the former, she determined to seek the latter, and to invoke him by the remembrance of their former friendship, and the obligations he was under to her and her parents in the hour of his distress, to avoid the sight of his former friend and companion, but now implacable enemy. With this view, poor Jane left the infant which smiled at her breast to the care of a neighbour, and sought her silent and solitary way to the shore, where from the information she had received, she was taught to believe that Peter had already arrived. As her dwelling stood in the north-east part of the Island, and no part of her way lay near the road, she had no opportunity of either making inquiry for her husband, or extending her information as to the advance of Peter and his party. Impelled forward, however, by her fears, she advanced at a rapid pace, and soon found herself at the caverns, the supposed object of search. Here all was silent, save when the hollow moaning of the night blast, and the sullen fury of the advancing wave, venting itself in surly murmurs on the shore, broke upon her attentive and listening ear. Should she remain, or proceed farther? Whilst she hesitated in agonizing uncertainty, the advance of lights from the westward determined her to stay beside the cavern belonging to her husband until their approach. There she stood, her eyeballs stretched to watch their motions, her mind totally absorbed by their fitful glare, and dead to every other object around.

Ralph Rogers had returned from Rowland's Castle earlier than was expected, and was "homewards wending his weary way" when Peter Crasler and his party passed him at a brisk trot, on the road between Havant and Langstone. Ralph soon guessed the purport of their visit, and, burning with revenge, internally vowed to wreak his vengeance, at all hazard, upon the apostate Peter. Arrived at Langstone, he found that the tide had for a time interrupted their progress. Here he endeavoured to procure a gun, but not being successful, he took boat and reached the Island; where, under pretence of shooting wild fowl (for the season was

remarkably severe), he borrowed, at the first house he came to, a heavy mud-stock, a species of musket capable of doing great execution at a long distance, which he amply loaded with heavy slugs. He had been here but a very short time before the heavy trampling of horses warned him of the approach of his foes: having ascertained the way they were advancing, he exerted his speed, and kept before them until they halted, at the meeting of the branch roads, for the arrival of Peter. Here he could restrain his impetuosity no longer; veiling himself under the darkness of the evening, he boldly advanced up to the mounted body of men, with the fixed determination of shooting Peter upon the spot. Happily for the latter he had not yet arrived, The surprise and intensity displayed by Ralph on discovering his absence, awakened the suspicions of the Serjeant of the party, who, observing his agitated and threatening motions, and seeing him armed with a powerful and destructive engine, ordered two of his men to seize and detain him. Ralph evaded the command, by clearing the adjoining hedge on the left, and escaping in the gloom over the neighbouring fields. He did not proceed, however, out of the sound of the horses, but after recovering himself from the surprise he at first naturally felt, on being so near an arrest, cautiously retraced his steps, and still remaining under cover of the darkness, anxiously and silently awaited the future operations of his enemies.

At this juncture the horsemen were joined by Peter, to whom, with an oath of admiration at Ralph's agility, they carelessly mentioned his sudden and singular appearance as that of some mad smuggler. They now moved forward, taking the left-hand road, and soon arrived on the beach. As all was darkness, and no object presented itself to guide them along the shore, they halted for a moment and procured a light, from materials provided for the purpose, which they communicated to two flambeaux, and then slowly and heavily advanced over the shingle in the south-east direction. .

Ralph, whose anger had been considerably increased by the attempt made to arrest him, had dogged them from the first moment of their advance. Keeping within the fields to the left of the road, he was enabled

distinctly to hear their conversation; and having satisfied himself that Peter was now one of the party, and that their intention was to search the caverns, he diverged a little to the south-east and increased his speed, so as to arrive on the beach before them. Having cleared the last hedge, which divides the enclosures from the shore, he ran eastward, close besides the fields until he came parallel to his own subterraneous recess. Here he paused to observe their ulterior motions. He saw the lights moving slowly in a compact body along the strand; and his every faculty at once became overpowered with a keen and burning desire of vengeance. He advances to take them in flank, and sees the object of his bitter revenge in advance, on foot, shrouded in the shades of night, near the mouth of his cavern, apparently pointing it out to his followers! Now is the moment of vengeance he can accomplish his purpose and escape pursuit! Pull of these blood-thirsty emotions, he raised the deadly weapon to his shoulder, and, taking unerring aim, with savage joy, pulls the fatal trigger! Oh, God—a loud and terrific shriek conveys to his horror-stricken and bewildered ear the dreadful truth—the life blood of poor Jane Rogers is poured out by the hands of her infuriated husband—and frail mortality is once again taught the often repeated, and in this instance, fearful lesson, to beware of the influence of passion, and pause on the actions which its headlong impulses dictate.

Taken from Charles John Longcroft's *Hundred of Bosmere*, 1857



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