

It was This account appeared in the Chester Chronicle on April 17. 1812.

Horrid Murder at Hankelow !

The late Assizes throughout the kingdom, have disclosed some of the most sanguinary scenes of blood, that ever disgraced the criminal annals of the country. Happily our native county was exempt from such atrocities, and we hoped, after we had perused the disgusting narratives, it would long continue free from such enormities.- Our hopes, it grieves us to say, have been disappointed-the last week proving the period of a most unnatural butchery. Our duty to the public, compels us to lay the following tragedy before them, which must excite feelings of horror in the reader-the particulars we have from an esteemed friend.

“Between two and three o’clock in the morning of Sunday the 12th instant, Mr. Morrey’s servant women, who slept with his children in the room adjoining the parlour, where Mr. Morrey and his wife lay, being between sleeping and waking, was alarmed by two or three severe blows, which she heard given in her master’s room. She was much terrified, and got upon the floor. She directly after heard two groans on which she opened her chamber window to get through it, and as she was putting her head out of the window, she heard her door open, and turning her head round, saw her mistress come in with a lighted candle in her hand.- As her mistress came into the room, she put out the candle and laid hold of her, saying, she must not go out, as there was murder in the house and if she went through the window she would be sure to be murdered. In a few minutes afterwards, all being quiet her mistress sent her to call John Lomas, the servant man up. She found him, in his bed upstairs, apparently asleep. Having roused him, he got up and came down stairs-The servant woman then proposed to alarm the neighbours, and desired him to go out for that purpose. He was very much frightened and said he durst not go, but after some time he consented. They then went and called up Mr. Morrey’s brother and some other persons who, when they came to Mr. Morrey’s house, went into the bedroom and found him lying MURDERED on the floor, and *welting in his blood, having his throat cut through the windpipe to nearly the back of his neck, and the left temporal bone fractured in a shocking manner!* A large axe, which belonged to Mr. Morrey, covered with blood was lying under him. When day-light began to appear, one of the persons who had been called up, perceived blood on John Lomas’s nose, on one of his wrists and on his small-clothes which, creating suspicion of his guilt, the persons in the house began to examine the floors, from the bedroom of the deceased, to the stairs leading to the room where John Lomas slept, and found several drops of blood upon the floor, and on the stairs, and on going into his room, and examining the sheets of his bed, they found marks of blood upon them in the place where he lay when the woman servant called him up. It was about the same time discovered, that he had put on a clean shirt and being questioned where his dirty shirt was, he said that he then had it on, and that he had worn it all the week. He was desired to take off his coat and on the sleeves being turned inside out, there appeared stains of blood on the linings. He was afterwards desired to let them look into his box , which was locked in his bedroom, which he refused-They said they would break it open, and on going upstairs for this purpose, the wife of the deceased was discovered with his box open in her hands out of which she took something white and threw it amongst some old sacks in the room, which had before been examined. One of the persons present, immediately hastened to the spot and took up a shirt, the wristbands of

which, and three or four inches above them were stained with blood and quite wet with it. The shirt was shown to John Lomas who was in the room, and he was asked if it was his, he said it was.- A further search was afterwards made among the bags and a waistcoat, which John Lomas had worn all the week before, and which he had on when he went to bed at night, was found there with fresh blood upon it, both inside and outside, which also being shewn to him, he acknowledged to be his.

About ten o'clock in the morning on which the murder was committed, Edith Morrey, the wife of the deceased, was given to understand by the constable, that she was his prisoner and immediately afterwards she cut her throat with a razor, which she had concealed on her person, but timely surgical aid being obtained, the incision was sewed up, and she is in a fair way of recovery.- Another razor was found in a case in her pocket and an empty razor case, supposed to belong to the razor with which Mr. Morrey's throat was cut, was found in one of the pockets of John Lomas.-A razor, with fresh blood upon the heel of it, had also been found in a pit, at the bottom of a field behind the house of the deceased, the water of which was let off. Upon the facts above stated, and the full confession of the said John Lomas, A Coroner's Jury, impanelled on the occasion, unanimously found a verdict of WILFUL MURDER against him, and against Edith Morrey, the wife of the deceased, a verdict of *abetting, aiding, assisting, comforting, and maintaining the said John Lomas in the commission of the said Murder.* John Lomas has been committed for trial at our Castle, where the said Edith Morrey, who is in custody, will also be removed as soon as she is sufficiently recovered from the wound which she inflicted upon herself.