

Moses & Temple

THE
CONFESSION
OF
JESSE STRANG,

WHO WAS CONVICTED OF THE MURDER OF

JOHN WHIPPLE,

*At a Special Court of Oyer and Terminer, held in and
for the County of Albany, on the fourth day of
August 1827.*

BEING A MINUTE RELATION OF ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED
WITH THE MURDER, AS RELATED BY HIM, AFTER HIS CONVICTION;
AND WHICH HE MOST SOLEMNLY AFFIRMED, CONTAINED
NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH.

MADE TO

C. PEPPER, ESQ.
One of his Counsel.

ALBANY:

PRINTED BY JOHN B. VAN STERNBERGH.

1827

Northern District of New-York. To wit:



BE it remembered, that on the thirteenth day of August, in the fifty-second year of the independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1827, Calvin Pepper, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit: "The Confessions of Jesse Strang, who was convicted of the murder of John Whipple, at a Special Court of Oyer and Tirminer, held in and for the County of Albany, on the fourth day of August, 1827. Being a minute relation of all the circumstances connected with the murder, as related by him after his conviction; and which he most solemnly affirmed, contained nothing but the truth. Made to C. Pepper, Esq one of his Counsel."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also, to the act entitled "An act supplementary to an act entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of Designing, Engraving, and Etching historical and other prints."

R. R. LANSING, Clerk

*Of the District Court of the United States, for the
Northern District of New-York.*

11640 - Law \$7

The following is a request from DANIEL STRANG, the father of JESSE STRANG, to have his Confession published.

I, DANIEL STRANG, the father of JESSE STRANG, convicted of the murder of JOHN WHIPPLE, do consent and request that Calvin Pepper, one of his counsel, prepare for the press, and publish, the entire confession of said JESSE, relative to said murder, and his acts and conduct from the time he came to live with Mr. Philip P. Van Rensselaer, until the time of his execution; omitting nothing relative to said murder, except such parts as, in the opinion of said Pepper, would be libelous and expose him and the Printer to the payment of damages, at the suit of some third person; and I do earnestly request that said Pepper publish nothing except what said JESSE shall sanction and declare to be true at the close of his life. And I do earnestly request of his keepers, that no other person be permitted to write any thing in his, the said JESSE's presence, relative to said murder, or to question him relative thereto, after this date, except such person or persons as said Pepper and said JESSE shall both request to be present.

DANIEL STRANG.

Albany, August 4th, 1827.

CONFESSION.



I, JESSE STRANG, being anxious to comply with the preceding request, of my revered and much respected father, and to give a fair, true, and just statement of all the circumstances which led to the murder of the late John Whipple ; and believing it to be my solemn duty to make a full and perfect disclosure of the same, with a view that this community, as well as the whole world, may be in possession of the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, I do hereby publish and declare the following statement to be a full, fair and just exposition of *all* the circumstances, under no less responsibility than of knowing that in a few days I must render an account for the truth thereof to that God, who will then sit in judgment on those deeds I have here done in the body.

About the first day of July, 1826, I put up at a public house in the city of Schenectady, having arrived there in a stage from the westward, calculating to leave that place for the town of Stillwater the next day. But on rising the next morning, I ascertained that my trunk had been taken, in the two o'clock stage, for Albany. I then concluded to take the eight o'clock morning stage for Albany, with a view to recover my trunk. I did not arrive at Albany until after ten o'clock in the morning, and there learned that my trunk had been put on board of a steam boat for New-York, which had already started. I requested some one at the stage-office to write down, to have it returned. A letter was accordingly written, and in the mean time I took board in South Market-street, at a grocery, a few doors north of the Watering-Place, and concluded to remain there until my trunk should be returned, and then leave the city. But after remaining three or four days, a mistake was made in sending up the wrong trunk. I then went to Greenbush and inquired for work, and while there, saw Mr. Otis Bates, who resided about sixty rods south of the residence of Mr. P. P. Van Rensselaer, at Cherry Hill, the fatal place at which I shot the unfortunate Whipple. I remained at Bates' two nights and one day. At this time my trunk having arrived, I went to Stillwater and Saratoga, and on or about the 15th of July, I returned to Bates' house,

whom I boarded with, and worked for, until the 27th day of August. Within this time, and I believe it was on the tenth day of August, about sun set, I saw Miss Maria Van Rensselaer the daughter of Mr. P. P. Van Rensselaer, in company with (as I then supposed) a sprightly, playful and giddy girl, in Bates' bar-room; and in presence of the family, Maria and myself, shoving Mr Bates about the room. At this time, I did not know the woman in company with Maria, and after retiring to bed, with Otis Bates jun. I asked him what sprightly girl that was below ? adding, "I should like to sleep with her ;" to which young Bates replied, " How do you know but you can, until after you have tried ; for I have." Such was the answer I distinctly understood young Bates to make ; although he has since denied to me, that he said he had slept with her, and has further stated that he never knew any thing amiss of her. In the conversation with young Bates, in bed, he informed me that the person I alluded to was not a *girl*, but a married woman, the wife of a Mr. Whipple ; to which I replied, she was a very sprightly married woman, and here the conversation ended. After this time, Mrs. Whipple, in company with Mr. Bates' daughter, once came to the barn where I was threshing, but nothing was said by me to them, or by them to me. On the 28th of August, 1826, I hired to Mr. P. P. Van Rensselaer for one month, for which he engaged to pay me ten dollars. His residence was at Cherry Hill, about one mile south of the capitol, in the city of Albany, on an eminence, about eight rods west of the road, in a large, three story, double house. The north half of the house was occupied by Mrs. Maria Van Rensselaer, an old lady, the mother of Mr. Philip P. Van Rensselaer, and by her son Killian, her daughter Maria Matilda, and a white servant girl, about ten years of age. Mr. Philip P. Van Rensselaer's family consisted of his wife, his son Abraham L. aged about 22 years, his daughter Maria, about 18 or 19 years of age, his daughter Elsie, about 11 years of age, his youngest daughter, about 8 years, a hired labourer, William Wilson, a black boy, Jack or George, 18 or 19 years of age, and a slave, Dinah Jackson, aged about fifty. On the day I went to live with Mr. P. P. Van Rensselaer, the unfortunate John Whipple and his wife were boarders in his family ; and on that, or the following day, they left there for Kingston, in the county of Ulster. They were absent about four weeks, when they returned. Within one or two

days after, Mr. Whipple left his wife in the family and returned again to Kingston. About a week after Mr. Whipple had left home, Miss Henrietta Patrick, a niece of Mr. Whipple's, came to the house, and remained so far an inmate with Mrs. Whipple as to lodge with her ; and in the day time usually went to the city to attend to her work as a tailoress. She continued to remain so for eight or ten days, and then remained with Mrs. Whipple constantly. About the middle of October the black boy of Mr. P. P. Van Rensselaer absconded. From the time of her return from Kingston, until on or about the 20th of October, no unusual or particular familiarity of any kind, had taken place between myself and Mrs. Whipple, nor did any thing occur that would authorise me to attempt it; but from my first seeing her, and until the last mentioned period, I experienced an increasing sensation of amorous desire ; and on that day, Miss Maria Van Rensselaer, Mrs. Whipple, Henrietta Patrick, Philip P. Van Rensselaer, Abraham L. Van Rensselaer, and myself, were in the orchard gathering nuts. On our return from gathering nuts, and in the evening of the same day, Mrs. Whipple commenced a familiar conversation with me, relative to the conduct and appearance of Henrietta and Maria, who had been out with us. It was this familiar conversation that induced me to entertain a slight hope that she was somewhat partial to me. And on the next, or the day after this, having taken dinner, and while standing three or four steps from the stoop, I was accosted by Mrs. Whipple, she then leaning against a post of the stoop, "*Doctor, I want you to write me a letter.*" From this request, I supposed she could not write, and merely wished me to write for her to some friend. But my answer was, "*What, I write you a letter !*" She answered, "*Yes : I hate to write the first one. I want you to consider well of it from this to the bush, and back again ; and I want you to write to-night.*" Upon which I left her, and did consider well all the way to the bush, at which place I was going to work with my team ; and did at first doubt in my mind, whether she did not intend to get me to write her a letter, and then show it to her husband, which would lead me into an unpleasant difficulty. But on reflecting on what had passed between myself and young Bates—her calling to look at me at the barn—her familiar conversation with me a short time before, in the kitchen, together with my amorous desires, all conspired to induce me to run the risk, and write to

her. Accordingly, next morning, in the kitchen, I wrote her a letter, of which the following is an exact copy to my best recollection :

DEAR ELSIE—I have seariesly considred on it as you requested of me yeasterday and I have concluded two compose a few lines two You and I thought that it was not my duty two right very freely not nowing Your object perhaps it is two get sum of my righting two show two your husband as you ar a marid woman, and If that is your intenshin It is my wish fore you two let me now it fore it is a thing that I skorn two make a distirbanse betwen you and your husband but If in the outhur hand It is out of pure offections I should be quite hapy for two have the information in your hand riting and I hope that you will not take any offen in my maner of riting two you as we ar pirfict strangers two each outhur, but hop that thoes few lines may find free exceptan with you and after I find out your motive I can right mour freely on the subject and as for my offections thay ar quite favorable I shall expect an answer from you If that is your motive, sow I remain your well whisher,

JOSEPH ORTON.

[This was written on the Sabbath day.]

The signature of "*Joseph Orton*," signed to the above letter, was the only name by which I was known at Bates' or at Mr. V. Rensselaer's, except the nick name of "*Doctor*," which was occasionally applied to me in consequence of my wearing spectacles ; and I never did own my true name, until after my imprisonment. At about ten o'clock in the morning of the day on which I wrote the above letter, I handed it to her in the kitchen, while she was standing near the stove. In a little more than half an hour, and certainly not exceeding three quarters of an hour after, she put into my hands, while I was in the kitchen, a letter of which the following is a true copy as nearly as I am now able to recollect.

"DEAR DOCTOR—It is true I am a married woman, and we are entire strangers to each other ; I had no evil design on you in requesting you to write to me. My motive is from pure love for you, excited when I first saw you. The first time I ever saw you, to be acquainted with you, I fell in love with your eyes ; nor have I, while you are absent, any comfort or happiness while thinking of you. And if I am a married woman, I ran away to get married,

and I can do so again. For some time past I have wanted to express my affection for you, but have been waiting in the hopes that you would broach the subject, and this was the reason of my asking you to write me a letter, hoping that you would express your feelings towards me ; and if your affections for me are as great as mine for you, you will never leave here without taking me with you. I hope you will write to me immediately, and let me know whether you have any affection for me. I have often expressed my opinion, that there was no such thing as love ; but I have now altered my opinion, and am satisfied of its influence, and that you are the only one I ever did love.

I remain your true and affectionate lover until death separates us.

ELSIE D. WHIPPLE."

This letter was superscribed—"To Mr. John Whipple, Kingston, Ulster county," but not sealed. After receiving this letter, I had no conversation with her, until after I wrote, and gave to her a letter—which I had written and prepared about 12 o'clock the same day, and which I wrote in the kitchen, in the presence of the family. And on being inquired of by some of the family to whom I was writing, I replied "to a friend in Ohio," but was careful not to permit any person present to have an opportunity to observe the contents. The substance of the letter was as follows : It was addressed to Mrs. Whipple, expressing my pleasure in ascertaining the object of her requesting me to write her a letter, and that she had so frankly assured me of her affection. I stated to her that the contents of her letter, now induced me to write to her more freely, and explaining and voluntarily avowing my affection for her ; and that if she could make up her mind, to leave her husband, and go with me, I would do all in my power to take care of and protect her, but that I did not know what she had seen in me that induced her to place her affections on me. This letter was closed by saying, "I remain your true and affectionate lover," and signed by the name of "Joseph Orton." It also contained a request to her that she should give me an answer ; it was folded, sealed, and superscribed to Mr. E. Husted, Lower Sandusky, "Sandusky County, State of Ohio." At about 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon, I had an opportunity of handing this letter to Mrs. Whipple in the kitchen unnoticed by any of the family ; and just before dark the same afternoon, while I was in the kitchen, Mrs. Whipple slipped another letter into my hand, unsealed, and also superscribed to John

Whipple, Kingston, Ulster county," in which she stated, that she had read the contents of my last letter ; that it was a circumstance of great pleasure to ascertain my affection for her ; that if I could name a place where it would be safe for us to go to, she would accompany me as soon as she could raise \$1200, to defray expenses &c. She cared not where the place named was; that she would go to the ends of the earth to have me. Before any other letters were exchanged between us, and I believe on the evening of the same day, in the kitchen, and in the absence of the family, we had a conversation to the following effect: She said she had always been desirous to keep house, and was anxious to keep a *public house*; and if she could procure \$1200, she thought it would furnish a public house well; to which I replied, that it was a business that I was unacquainted with, but that perhaps I could turn my hand to that as well as any thing. The next day at night I wrote another letter to her, in which I mentioned that it would be best for us to go to Montreal, and remain there a year, or until Whipple should become reconciled in his mind. That we would then go to Lower Sandusky, Ohio, and as that was a good place for business, we could keep tavern there, and that it would be necessary to be married by some fictitious names, as the marriage would be published and we found out.

After this, we frequently indulged in familiar conversations, and in keeping up an epistolary correspondence. Letters were sometimes written in the kitchen, sometimes in the barn—in the evenings and on Sundays; the whole principally confined to devising plans and means for raising money, and at last led to a distinct proposition from Mrs. Whipple, for me to forge a check on a Bank where he had kept his money, in the name of Whipple. At length she sent me written communications by little Elsie, which were in slips of paper *rolled up* and not directed, and I returned similar ones through the same channel. No money having been raised, or other means obtained which would enable us to elope; and desponding of being able to procure the means; and as it was altogether impossible for me to forge the check; on or about the 21st of November, 1826, she wrote me a letter, stating to me, that she wanted to lay some plan to take the life of Mr. Whipple, and the plan she suggested, was for me to go to Kingston and hire myself out to his partner, Mr. Stone, and get some of those Irishmen to do it, or

do it myself; and if I did conclude to do it, she would let me have one of his brace of Pistols. This was the first intimation that I ever received, either by letter or in conversation, that she wished Mr. Whipple *murdered*, (tho' she had expressed in several of her former letters, a wish that Whipple would die,) nor had I ever spoken, written or intimated, to her, any thing about taking his life. This last letter I answered, by one I wrote after the family had retired to bed, which I handed her the next morning, and in which I stated that her last letter had caused me such feelings, as were impossible for me to get over; that my affections for her was as great as any man's could be, but to take the life of Mr. Whipple, I should do no such thing; that my love had never been for her property, but for herself; and that before I could ever be guilty of the murder of Whipple, I would remain in the situation I was the remainder of my life. If she liked me well enough to have me, I would work myself to death, or work my hands off to support her rather than be guilty of taking the life of her innocent husband; and that if I could not obtain her without complying with her request, *that* would put an end to the subject. I had two motives for thus writing her, the one arose from an instinctive abhorrence, I could not help feeling, at the idea of taking life, and the other was to ascertain whether she was really serious in the suggestion, and would firmly adhere to it.

On my return from work that evening, she handed me a letter in the kitchen, the substance of which was, that she regretted that she had hurt my feelings as much as it appeared she had, and that the reason why she had made the application to me was, that she thought that I was as resolute a man as Mr. — and that if my affection for her was as great as I had pretended it was, I would have consented to it for the sake of her and her property, to live above board, and without work. That she had no affection for Mr. — and that she was confident that he had none for her, and that all he wanted was her property—but he was willing, *for that*, to take the life of Mr. Whipple; but as I had refused to do it, she had concluded to remain as we had before, and endeavor to obtain means to run away and leave Mr. Whipple; but that she could not bear the thoughts of leaving all her property with Whipple to spend with another woman. For more than a month after this we continued our intimacy both by private conversations and letters, interchanged al-

most every evening and morning; having myself no leisure for writing, except evenings after my labor was finished, and on Sundays.

From this time until on or about the first of February following, nothing was distinctly said by her about killing Mr. Whipple, except that she frequently stated in her letters and in private conversation, that she wished Whipple would die, or get killed by some of the laborers on the canal.

Some time in the fore part of January Mr. Whipple returned from Kingston, and after being at home until the first of February, Mrs Whipple called on me in the kitchen, no one to my recollection then being present, and said to me, "I have no other friend on earth but you, and how natural it is for me to run to you whenever I have any difficulty; *for John has struck me,*" (which fact I never could learn was seen or known by any of the family, and I never saw him abuse or ill treat her, but always treated her in the kindest manner) to which I replied, "sha'nt I waylay and kill him?" She said "Yes." I then said, "I cannot." She then said "If you are so faint hearted, you must consent to get some poison and I will do it myself; and if you won't consent to get the poison for me I will take my own life, for I won't bare his abuse any longer." I then again refused to purchase any poison; but she continued for several days to urge me to get the poison; and one evening came into the kitchen with a bowl of milk in her hand, and said, "John has just come from town and wants this; and if you had consented to have got the poison, how easy it would be for me just to put it in and never be suspected."

In about one week after she first mentioned the subject of poison, I stated in a letter I wrote to, and handed her, that "rather than bring poison to the house, for fear that some accident might take place, if she would procure me \$300, I would go to Montreal and get some one to come and take his life." This proposition was the frequent subject of our conversations and letters.

On or about the 18th day of February, Mrs. Whipple was taken sick with the small pox, and was confined to her bed about one week, but before the 10th of March used to visit and frequent the kitchen as formerly: And while she was confined Miss Amanda Hill of Vermont, and Mrs. Groesbeeck of Albany, attended her; and they used to bring letters from her to me, and take letters

from me to her, as testified on the trial, by Mrs. Groesbeeck ; and here it is proper to state, that every letter I received from her I burned or destroyed immediately after receiving it, and never kept a line from her over one day ; and she assured me that she also was particular to destroy all my writing which she received, and which I believe she did.

About the first of March she informed me that it was impossible for her to raise so much money without Mr Whipple's knowing it; as she could get it no where else but at Mr. Fobes', and then John would certainly find it out. I then consented and agreed to purchase the poison, and went immediately up town, in south Pearl-street, to a druggist's shop, opposite Crosby's Hotel, and stated to him that I wanted sixpence worth of *Arsenic* for the purpose of killing rats, which was delivered me, and I returned home and kept it in my pocket until the next morning, and then gave Mrs. Whipple about a tea spoon full of it in a piece of paper and hid the remainder in the upper loft of the barn. This parcel blew down on some old papers beneath, and was found a few days after by Abraham L. Van Rensselaer, who gave it to Mr. Whipple, who afterwards took it to Doctor Wing, as I was informed, and asked him what it was ; and Doctor Wing replied he could not tell without examination what it was—it might be plaster of Paris.

About the 10th of March, about noon, as I was going into the kitchen, Mrs. Whipple came to me and said "What have I done?" "I have given Mr. Whipple some poison in his tea! He came from town to take dinner. Aunt Caty was gone and I had a fine chance." [Previous to this, Philip P. Van Rensselaer, the husband of Catherine, (familiarily called in the family Aunt Caty) to wit, on the 17th of February, died suddenly. His death was at the time rationally accounted for by his physicians. But as many have suspected and even charged me with the murder of Mr. Van Rensselaer, I do now most solemnly protest and declare, in the presence of that God who will shortly judge me, that I am *innocent* of the deed. Nor do I know or believe he was murdered by any one.] In the conversation on the stoop, the same afternoon, before we had heard from Mr. Whipple, we mutually *pledged ourselves to each other, under the most solemn oaths, that if he should die neither should inform against the other. But if either was found out and convicted, the other would make a confession of the crime, and be hung and die together.*

Mr. Whipple returned again in the evening, and, on the morning following, Mrs. Whipple informed me that Mr. Whipple had made no complaint; but from a fear that it would have the expected effect, she had thrown the remainder of the arsenic into the fire, to avoid being discovered. After this fruitless attempt, and being now destitute of any poison, on or about the 12th or 13th of March, I went into a druggist's shop a little south of the post-office, in North Market-street. In asking for arsenic at this place, I stated to the attendant that I had bought some a little while before, at a store in S. Pearl-street, to kill rats with, but it did not have the desired effect, and that I believed the reason was, that it was not good for any thing and that I did not wish to get any unless it was genuine. He replied they had sold a good deal of it, had never heard any complaint, and that he believed it was genuine. I then purchased 6d. worth of him and took it home. The next morning I took out about a tea-spoonful of it, put it in three pieces of paper, and folding them in a letter I had written the preceding evening, delivered the whole to her in the kitchen. The residue of the arsenic I at first concealed between a rafter and the roof of the barn. Two or three days after this, as I was on the hay-garret and observed the paper containing it was not so secreted, but what it might be easily discovered; I took it down and concealed it under the box of a straw cutting machine—which machine, within a very few days after, was sold by Abraham L. Van Rensselaer to a Mr. Haggdorn a gardener on the island, and taken away while I was absent. And after my confession in gaol I requested of my counsel to go and examine the machine to see if the arsenic was still there; but he returned and informed me that he had made the examination with Mr. Haggdorn, but could find none, and they had concluded that it must have been lost in removing the machine, or at a blacksmith's shop, where it had been taken to be repaired. About a week after I had delivered to her the three small parcels of arsenic, as I have above stated, she came into the kitchen to wash a small coffee cup, and whispered to me and said, "I have given him one of the *papers* of poison in some sulphur," and enquired of me whether I thought it would operate in sulphur. I told her I thought it would be more likely to operate in sulphur than any other way, as it would be more generally circulated through the system. I then asked her if any one else had taken some of it? she said "No. I mixed it in after all the rest had taken, and he took the last." The

next morning, before breakfast, she told me that Mr. Whipple refused to take sulphur on that morning, because the sulphur he had taken the morning before had cramped his stomach, and made him sick. She told me that she made him believe that it had the same effect on her. The morning after she came into the kitchen and told me as follows : “ I have given John some more of the poison
 “ in sulphur. After we had all taken, I mixed it for him and he took
 “ what he wanted of it; he then called little Abraham to him, and
 “ made him take a spoonful, and likewise made me take a spoon-
 “ ful : I held my hand to my mouth and turned round and spit it out
 “ unnoticed. I dared not say any thing to prevent his making little
 “ Abraham take it, if it killed him ; if I had, he would have mistrus-
 “ ted me. What shall I give Abraham to prevent its operating up-
 “ on him ?” To which I replied, she must give him *salt* ; and she then left me and went to a salt barrel which stood in an open cellar, back of the kitchen, where there were three or four barrels standing in the cellar, and when she got there she turned around and asked me, “ which is the salt barrel ?” and I went and got a lump of salt and gave it to her. Little Abraham, the person above alluded to, is the only child of John and Elsie D. Whipple, and at the time of my first coming into the family, he was said to be with a sister of his father’s, in Vermont, and had, on or about the first of December, returned to his mother, and continued with her at Cherry Hill until the time of my imprisonment. And I do most solemnly declare, that in no conversation had with his mother, or in any communication from her, did she ever assent or in any way speak of taking his life ; but her warmest affections appeared to be centered in him and his welfare : and one great inducement held out by her for the murder of her husband was, that if he lived she would be compelled to leave her child, in which case it would be like burying him. And I do most solemnly call my God to witness that I speak the truth when I say, that I never did, in any manner, attempt or desire that his life should be taken, or mention such an idea to his mother or to any other person.

The next morning after administering the poison, she told me that it had had no effect, that she could learn, upon her husband or her child. About the last of March, I applied to Dinah Jackson, the slave, and asked her what she would ask to poison Whipple ; and inquired whether she would do it for \$500 : to which inquiry

she made little or no reply ; but on the next morning, for a short time after, I again asked her if she had made up her mind to poison Mr. Whipple, when she answered, " No, that I won't. I "won't send my soul to hell for all the world. If I should do it, I should never take any comfort after it." Between the first and second application to Dinah to poison Mr. Whipple, I came to the city and went to Mr. Meigs' druggist store, in South Market-street, and asked for 6*d.* worth of *arsenic*. They told me they did not sell less than a shilling's worth. I purchased it, together with one of the smallest phials they had in the shop. A small portion of this I gave to Mrs. Whipple on my return home in the evening, which she afterwards informed me she had dissolved in the phial I gave her, but that she never got an opportunity to make use of it. The remainder I concealed behind a brace in the back tool-house, where it remained, as I have been informed, until it was found by the gaoler, coroner and my counsel, pursuant to my directions, after my confession.

On or about the first of April, Mr. Whipple spoke of going to Vermont, and said he should go in the morning stage, which would start between two and three o'clock ; and on the evening preceding, *she requested me to take one of his pistols, and if I did not like to take that, to take an axe or a club and waylay him at the foot of Sedgwick's Hill, (which is on the turnpike about fifty rods north of the house) to which I replied, " I would think of it."* And on the next morning after he was gone, she came into the kitchen and enquired of me why I did not go. I told her the reason was, that I was fearful that before starting and in coming through the kitchen, he might call to me and enquire something about the wood lot, and if I should not be present to answer, and he should be killed, I should be the first person suspected. On the first Sunday in April, she wrote a letter in my presence, (Whipple being yet absent) to a man I had never seen, in which was set forth several inducements, and concluded by offering a reward of \$300, if the person to whom it was directed would in any way kill Mr. John Whipple, and stated that the money should be deposited in a letter in the post office, in Albany ; the letter was not signed, but written in her own hand, and partially indited by me. This letter afterwards, in my presence, was burnt by her. On the same Sabbath day, we informed together, (she writing it) a letter offering a like reward di-

killing Whipple, intended to be directed to a Mr. Ladd, whom we had been informed once had a dispute and lawsuit with Whipple; but as neither of us knew his Christian name the letter was not sealed or directed, but retained by her; and on the next day I called at the house of Mr. Bates, where he had boarded a part of the preceding winter, to ascertain his Christian name, and whether he, Ladd, could *read writing*. Young Bates, of whom I made the enquiry, could not recollect his Christian name. This letter was not signed, or intended to be signed; but in it was stated, that money would be left at the post office, as in the former case. This letter I never saw afterwards, but she informed me she had destroyed it.

On the first Thursday in April, as I believe, George Wilson, the hired man, with whom I usually slept, being absent, Mrs. Whipple and I mutually agreed, that she should come down from her chamber and come to my bed room, and lodge with me. Early the next morning, I went into her room with wood to make a fire, as was my usual custom. This time I went in my stockings, saw her in bed with her husband's niece, Henrietta Patrick, who appeared to be asleep, but Mrs. Whipple was awake and she shortly after silently, got out of bed, came to me, and in a whisper, asked me to go into the hall. She informed me that the reason she had not come to my bed the night before was, that Maria had bolted the little door which was necessary to pass through to get into my room. We then went from the hall into an unoccupied room in the north part of the house, in the same story where she slept and there the first criminal intercourse ensued that ever took place between us. In three or four days after this, Mr. Whipple returned from Vermont, and remained at home until the 13th of April; and about 10 o'clock in the morning of that day left home for Kingston. In the evening of the same day, in pursuance of a former agreement with her, I went to a livery stable, kept by Charles Conklin, in South Ferry-street, and engaged a horse and carriage of him to take a ride to Troy, the next day at 4 o'clock. In the morning of the 14th, I spoke to my employer, Abraham L. Van Rensselaer, with whom, since the death of his father, P. P. Van Rensselaer, I had engaged to work for an indefinite time at fifty cents a day, whom I informed, that I was going to Troy, to get five hundred dollars,

which had been left in the Troy Bank for me, and which sum I wished to take on to Ohio in part payment for a lot of land, as I had frequently told him and others in the family that I owned 300 acres of land there, although a laborer. I mentioned to him that my business might perhaps detain me until the next morning. I left Cherry Hill about 10 o'clock in the morning, and loitered about the city until a little before 4 o'clock in the afternoon. At about 2 o'clock, I saw Mrs. Whipple on the stoop of the Columbian Hotel, kept by Mr. Fobes, and which hotel is the property of Mrs. Whipple. From the stoop she walked up South Market-street; I passed through several streets and at last met her at the junction of Beaver and South Market-streets, and on the side-walk we agreed to meet each other at Mrs. Getty Sanford's, in Patroon-street. A little before 4 o'clock in the afternoon, I called again at the livery stable for a horse and gig, but no gig being at home, I concluded to take a one horse wagon, and as there were strong indications of a storm, I asked Mr. Conklin for, and obtained the loan of an umbrella. I got into the waggon and drove to Mrs. Sanford's where I took Mrs. Whipple from the stoop; then drove up the Troy road as far, as opposite the mansion of the honorable Stephen Van Rensselaer, where we turned to the left and went about seven miles to the turnpike leading from *Schenectady to Troy*, at a place called the Four Corners. It was now about sun set, and having commenced raining quite hard, we got out of the wagon and went into a public house, which I have since learned was kept by a Mr. Yearsley, ordered my horse to be fed with hay, and took something to drink. After remaining nearly half an hour, and the rain having nearly subsided, we started again and travelled westward on the turnpike, towards Schenectady; and after travelling, as I supposed, about two miles, it became quite dark, and there arose from the west a very heavy thunder cloud, accompanied with vivid lightning, and soon commenced raining, which compelled us to turn about and make all speed in our power to the tavern of a Mr. Hills, which we had passed, and which was about 1 1-2 miles west of Yearsley's. We went into the house, and I bespoke lodging for the night. My own clothing, as well as Mrs. Whipple's, and more particularly her bonnet, being very considerably drenched by the rain. I called for supper, and Mrs. Whipple made a foolish excuse for our arriving in the rain at night without baggage, by

stating that we resided in Schenectady, and were on our way to Albany to take the steam boat for New-York, early the next morning. That we had sent our baggage, on the Albany and Schenectady turnpike by stage, and had been delayed until late in the afternoon from starting ourselves, in consequence of having a sick child, and then, instead of taking the direct route, had come this round-about way for Albany. Which story, Mr. Hills, on my trial, testified I had told him, in the same manner that Mrs. Whipple had told some of the females of the family. After supper we retired to bed, and lodged in the same bed, as man and wife. We arose next morning and got ready to start just at sun rise, and leaving Yearsley's tavern to the left, returned, on the Shaker Road, so called, direct to Albany, coming out by the Patroon's at the same place we left the Troy road, on going out, drove to the corner of North Market and Patroon streets, where Mrs. Whipple got out of the waggon and went, as she has since said, to Mrs. Sanford's, where I first took her into the waggon. I drove directly to the livery stable, left the horse and waggon, paid the hire of it out of money received in change for a five dollar Albany bill, which Mrs. Whipple gave to me on the morning of the 14th, which she said she took from *Mr. Whipple's pocket book that morning*, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the route, and I arrived at Cherry Hill, at about 8 o'clock in the morning. On coming from labour to my dinner at about 12 o'clock, I saw Mrs. Whipple, and privately asked her what time she got home, and she informed me at about 11 o'clock. In our conversation during this ride, we mutually agreed, that inasmuch as Mr. Whipple had left Cherry Hill and gone to Kingston, that she should go to Mr. Fobes', the tenant, and take up one hundred dollars, and with that start for Montreal—myself to leave Cherry-Hill first, for a few days, and keep concealed, and then return and privately take her off.

This project was under consideration until about the 20th of April—at which time she expressed herself that she could not bear the idea of going off and leaving her little son; and expecting Mr. Whipple to return daily, about this time, she proposed to me to *wait until he should return, and, with one of his pistols, shoot him in the house, through the window.* I made answer, “I had never fired a pistol in my life, and should be as likely to kill any one else of the family as him.

She then asked me what I could do it with, I made answer, with nothing less than a two barreled Rifle; she then requested me to go to town and enquire the price of a two barreled Rifle. On, or about the 20th April, I went to Moore's, a gunsmith, living in Beaver street, and inquired the price of a double barreled Rifle, which he then shewed me, for which he asked \$60. I also examined two single barreled Rifles, the price of one was \$35, the other \$25; I then returned, and the same evening, Mrs. Whipple being in the kitchen with the rest of the family, asked me if I had been to town, I told her I had—she asked me if I had inquired the price of socks, I said yes, she then asked me what the price was, I answered, "*sixty cents*," she replied, "*that's very dear*," I answered, that was the lowest, and that the best kind was a *hundred and twenty cents*. Within one or two days after, she wrote to me, stating that she would endeavor to get thirty dollars of Daniel Winne, a merchant, and the residue of Mr. Fobes. It was about this time that I reported, for the first time in the family, that I had seen one or more persons lurking about the house and yards at a late hour in the night, and that I believed they were there for no good. On or about the last of April, I informed her that it was not sure that I could kill Mr. Whipple on his return, but that I thought I might do it with a single barreled Rifle I could purchase for \$25. On or about the 2nd day of May, she handed me a twenty dollar bill and a five dollar bill, which she informed me she had procured at Fobes's, and on the next evening, I went to Mr. Fay's, a gunsmith in Beaver street, and purchased of him a Rifle for \$15, and passed to him the same twenty dollar bill she gave me, which left in my hands ten dollars. I received of Mr. Fay, a three dollar bill and a two dollar bill, in change for the twenty dollar bill, the two dollar bill I got changed the same evening, at March's Grocery, in South Pearl-street, in a purchase of some sugar toys for the children. The next day about four o'clock in the afternoon, I gave Mrs. Whipple the same five dollar bill she first gave me, and the one dollar bill I received from March, and two shillings in change: and immediately thereafter, she gave the same five and one dollar bills to Henrietta Patrick, to go to town and buy two yards of lace, I retaining the three dollar bill I received from Fay, together with the balance of change I received from March. On stopping at March's, I hid the Rifle outdoors at the end of the house; and on

going from there home, at about ten o'clock, I was careful to conceal it by hiding it in the loft of the necessary, and placing it entirely out of view, before I went into the house. After thus securing the Rifle, I went into the kitchen, when Mrs. Whipple asked me if I had been to town, I told her I had, she asked me if I had bought me a *pair of socks*, I told her I had, "what was the price," she enquired, I told her I was ashamed to tell her, but the same evening, a little while after, having a convenient opportunity, I told her the price of the RIFLE was \$16 ; She asked me if any one had seen it, I told her no ; she then enquired where I had put it, I told her overhead in the necessary.

On the evening of the 4th I composed and wrote a letter to Mrs. Whipple, in which I stated, as all things were ready, if she said so, I would proceed no farther ; but little did I expect that she or myself would stop there, having proceeded so far in our wicked designs. On Sunday morning the 6th of May, I spoke to her in the kitchen, and informed her that the gun, pointing to one then hanging over the door, with which I had shot a dog for Abraham, a few nights before, kicked. She replied, "how do you know but what the one you got will," I told her, "I did not know but it would." She then told me, "I must try it ;" that there was a man in New-Brunswick shot at another, through the window, and the ball glanced and did not hit him, and this may be the cause of your missing John, and you "may kill somebody else." Soon after, she brought to me a pane of window glass and handed it to me before the family, and directed me to set it in the window, to replace one that had been broken by Henrietta Patrick. I tried it and informed her it was one size too small, which was the case. This pane I left upon the sill of the same window, but by her directions, I went afterwards and found under my pillow, *two other panes of glass*, in all respects, corresponding with the one she handed me in the kitchen. I then told her I had no powder, but the balls I could whittle. She then informed me she knew where there was some, and went into the bed-room of *William Willson*. [George Willson, his brother, who had formerly slept with me, having left there on or about the 6th of April, and William Willson having at all times occupied a bed-room separate from mine] and got a powder horn down, she called to me and said, "*here is the powder horn*," I then went in and turned out some, into a piece of paper, and put the

powder horn back in the place where she directed me. She also enquired of me where I intended to try the *experiment*, that she might come to the place if I was not in, when she returned from church. She then dressed for church, and while she was engaged in dressing, I whittled, from a piece of lead taken out of the stock of a mounted riding whip *three bullets*; this she saw me doing before she went to church, and Abraham saw me have the lead, as he testified in court. She then left home for church, in company with the most of the family. Soon after they had gone to church, I took the two panes of glass and placed them under my vest, went into the necessary and took the Rifle, and went south-west about eighty rods, into a piece of woods; there loaded the Rifle, set a pane of glass on an old pine stump, went back about two rods from the stump, bringing myself in a direction to take aim through the glass at a small white blossom, which I had placed on a yellow pine tree, standing about one rod from the stump. This pane of glass, stood perpendicular and at right angles with the line of the ball; then placing myself on my knees, and holding the Rifle at arms length without any rest, I fired, and hit the mark. I then took *two* of the largest pieces of the pane through which I had fired, and placed them together *double*, set them on the same stump, so as to make an angle of about *forty-five degrees* with the line of the ball. I then placed another blossom as a mark on the same tree, about an inch and a half lower than the first mark, and then went about four rods from the stump, which, from the descent of the ground, brought me about two or three feet lower than where I stood when I first fired and standing erect, with the Rifle at arms length, I fired through the double glass, and the ball hit within about half an inch of the mark. I then placed the other pane of glass on the stump at about the same angle as I had the double glass, and raising the mark about one foot above the first mark on the tree, I then went back as many as seven rods from the stump, being about the distance that I supposed it was, from the barn loft to the window of the room in which Mr. Whipple lodged: at which place I had calculated to shoot him, I stood and fired as before through the glass, and the ball hit within about one inch of the mark. I then returned to the barn, secreted the Rifle between the ceiling and siding in the stable, and then went into the kitchen; the family had returned from

church a few minutes before. Immediately after I went into the kitchen, Mrs. Whipple asked me if I had tried the Rifle, I told her I had ; she then asked me if it kicked. I told her no, and she added, "did the balls glance," I told her that in shooting as far as from the barn to the house, it did not vary more than an inch. She then asked me if she could see the Rifle, I told her I would put it where she could see it, and I went immediately and placed the Rifle inside the stable against the door post, left the door unfastened, went into the house and told her where she could see it. She then left the kitchen and was gone out two or three minutes, and on her return I asked her if she had seen it, she said she had—I asked her if she touched it, she said no, and asked me if it was loaded, I told her no, and I then informed her my lead was all gone. I then went to the barn and placed it again where I had before secreted it. After dinner I whittled another ball from the remainder of the lead of which I had made the three first, but the lead was so small that it would not make one large enough, to fill the Rifle. With this ball, I loaded the Rifle in the afternoon and left the Rifle in the same place where it was before secreted.

Mrs. Whipple did not go with the family to church in the afternoon, but remained at home, and we met in the garden, and from there went into the barn, where, for the *last time*, we indulged ourselves in *illicit intercourse*. About ten o'clock in the evening, after I had retired to bed, Mr. Whipple came home from New-York, to which place he went from Kingston. The next morning Mrs. Whipple came down into the kitchen, bringing with her a black vest which he had purchased in New-York, and said to me, "last night was a good time to have killed John, if we had only known he was coming home." I answered her, that "it was not, for William Wilson had been to see his brother at Hart's, and that he came home but a few moments before Mr. Whipple did, and brought a saddle with him, and that he then went to take the horse home to Mr. Chase's, of whom he hired it, and returned again, soon after Mr. Whipple came home." She then left the kitchen, and in a few minutes returned again, bringing a ball in her hand. She said to me "Mr. Whipple is loading his pistol to save his own life ; I have taken the last ball he had left; for you to kill him with.—*What a Wicked creature*

"I am," and then handed the ball to me. I put it into my pocket, and in a few minutes after Mr. Whipple came into the kitchen and said to me, "Joseph, what does all this mean, about those men being about the house, at so late an hour in the night; perhaps they are after me for the sake of my money; they may get me, but they wont get much money. Joseph, why dont you shoot them." I told him we had a gun hanging over the door, prepared for that purpose. I then said "Mr. Whipple, you generally come home in the night, and I might possibly make a mistake and shoot you." He said, "When I come home in the night, I come directly into the house. I dont lurk about it." "Joseph do you shoot them in the legs, and if you cant shoot them in the legs shoot them in the head, so that you can get a chance to shake hands with them, and see who they are." Some conversation then passed between us about my going to Kingston to work for him, but no bargain was made. After breakfast I went into the field to work, and remained there until twelve o'clock. I then returned to the barn, fed the horses, and went into the kitchen, and Mrs. Whipple being there, whispered to me, and enquired whether I had prepared the piece with the ball she had given me. I answered no, but shall do it this afternoon. I then, before eating dinner, went to the stable, took the rifle, went south-west near to the burying ground, about forty yards from the house, and discharged the rifle into a yellow pine bush, about six inches in diameter, and then returned to the stable *and loaded the Rifle with the same ball she gave me*; but before loading I was compelled to lessen the ball by whittling it, and having no *patch*, forced the ball down without one, using but a small charge of powder; took out the old flint and put in a new one, which I got in the hay loft, where there were a number more, and where had been a large quantity of cannon ball, bomb-shells, fire-rockets &c. The gun thus loaded and prepared, I replaced where it was before, and then returned to the house and took my dinner. After dinner I went to a blacksmith's shop and got some staples and ketches made, and went to the house formerly occupied by Bates, and put them on the doors of the house. I took a lock off the bar-room door and brought it home to repair; sat down in the kitchen and took it apart. While thus engaged Mrs. Whipple came and

sat down by me, and enquired if I had prepared the *piece* with the ball she gave me. I told her I had. She asked me to tell her the place from which I intended to shoot him. I informed her from the hay garret if I could, if not then from the back shed. *She agreed to roll up the window curtain.* I then requested her to let me have her over-shoes. She told me they were so small I could not get them on. I then told her I must have a pair of socks, *which she agreed to give me*—having received a pair from her before, in the presence of some of the family, and which were the same socks I had on when arrested. She told me she would put another pair of socks under my pillow. She enquired, what I intended to do with the gun after shooting. I told her it would be a good plan to throw it into the well or the river. Having finished repairing the lock, I went to the barn to get the horses, and led them to the well to water them; and while standing there she called to me from the hall in the third story, to know if she should throw the socks out of the window, into the yard. I said she must put them where she had agreed to, under my pillow, for I could not get them in the yard, without being discovered. She then told me that her aunt Maria Matilda had told her that John talked of going to the next door [*The north part of the house occupied by the old lady,*] to spend the evening, and asked if it would make any difference. I said that if he went to the next door she must hang an old shoe on a stick that I would set against the kitchen stoop. She then said John is a little sick and perhaps he may go to bed. I told her if he did, she must hang a white cloth on the same stick. All this conversation passed between us while I was standing by the well and she at the window in the hall, of the third story of the house. The family in consequence of its raining a little at the time, being all in the house. A little before this time, and at the time I was last in the kitchen, she put into my hand a few lines, written with a lead pencil, which she got of Abraham L. Van Rensselaer, as testified by him; in which she directed me to throw the gun as far as I possibly could, if any of the family should come out.

After concluding the conversation at the well, I led the horses to the stable and fed them and returned into the house. I then asked Miss Patrick if she could make me a pair of pantaloons that week.

as I had concluded to go to Kingston to work for Mr. Whipple; she said she could not. I then told her I should go up town that evening, and get them. At this time, Mr. Whipple returned to the house from the city, and said to me, "Joseph, if you see any of these men about the house be sure to shoot them;" he then left the room, and Abraham came in, and asked me what would be good for the horse that had been kicked that afternoon; I told him there was nothing better to be had than oil of spike, he then told me I must get sixpence worth, if I was going to town; he gave me the sixpence and I asked the wench for a phial to put it in; she gave me a phial. I then went into my bedroom, put on my pea-coat, and looked *and found the socks, or half stockings, under my pillow, took them and put them into one of my pea coat pockets.*

I then started for town, it being nearly dark, when in the city, I went directly to Sheldon & Sykes's store in South Market-street, being about one mile from Cherry Hill; of them I purchased the cloth and trimmings for a pair of pantaloons, in pay for which I delivered them the three dollar bill received in change from Mr. Fay. While at the store of Sheldon & Sykes, and in selecting among other articles, the buttons for my pantaloons, I told them I wanted black wood buttons, they shewed me some, the holes of which were not drilled entirely through, and we went to work with pins to bore them through, with some we succeeded, some we split, and at last, after spending a considerable time at this, I concluded to take horn buttons. I then requested them to look over my account, and spent some time in talking about that, and in conversation about a sixpenny piece, which had been cut in two and tied together with a thread; thus idling away my own time and the time of the clerk, until sometime after he had closed the windows, and when I left there I believe it to have been about twenty minutes past 9 o'clock. From there I went to Meigs's Druggist store, purchased the sixpence worth of oil of spike, then called in at a taylor's shop, and enquired if I could get my pantaloons cut, and being answered that I could not, on account of its being so late, I hurried and run from there down South Market-street, turned into Church-street, to Ferry-street, then up Ferry street to South Pearl street, down South Pearl street, to the city line down the front court yard at Cherry Hill. I went to the south-east kitchen window, looked in and saw Mrs. Whipple sitting in the corner

smoking, Maria Van Rensselaer, Henrietta Patrick and the wench sitting about the fire. From there I went to the kitchen stoop, to see if any signal had been placed on the stick which I had put there, just before I went to town. It was a small stick of wood about four feet long; I found no signal on it. I then went to the south-west corner of the house, looked through the window, saw the widow, Catharine Van Rensselaer, sitting in her bedroom, as I believe, sewing. I then went into the barn, went up into the hayloft, from which place I could see some person sitting in Mr. Whipple's room, but could not distinguish who it was. I then went into the stable and got the Rifle; then went to the north-west corner of the lot, by a board fence under the hill, below some cherry trees, which is about ten rods from the house; I there pulled off my boots and socks, put my socks into the boots, and put on the socks which I had taken from under my pillow; pulled off my pea coat, &c. wrapped my bundle in it, laid that, together with my boots, in a corner by the side of the fence; then went into the west court yard, laid the Rifle down, and took a wood box standing by the fence, and moved it to the north-west corner of the back shed, the box being about four feet high: (the shed is situated on the westside of the house, and attached to it; is about eight feet wide and twenty long, commencing about fifteen feet from the north end of the house, and extending south, to the north casing of the window, through which I shot Whipple. The eave trough is about eight feet from the ground,) I then went and took up the Rifle, went to the box, got upon it by the aid of the Rifle, laid the Rifle in the eaves trough, put one hand on the eave trough, the other on the roof, and one foot on an iron hook nailed just above the box and jumped upon the roof. I then walked to the south end of the shed, looked through the window; (a small part of the curtain being rolled up,) and saw Mr. Whipple sitting on the west side of a small table diagonally from the window, a cross the room, and southerly from the window, and Abraham L. Van Rensselaer sitting opposite, and east from him, across the table, and in a low rocking chair. Whipple was sitting eight or nine feet from the window. This position was such that I supposed I could shoot Whipple without endangering the life of Abraham. I then returned and took up the Rifle and went back to the window, opened the pan of the lock, took a paper I had previously put over the

priming to keep it dry, shut the pan, cocked the Rifle, and put the muzzle close to the sash, at the north lowermost pane of glass, standing erect, and Abraham's face then being out of my sight, I took deliberate aim, immediately under his left arm, and fired with as much composure as if I had shot at a deer. *Oh, Lord! can so terrible a sinner be forgiven?* I instantly heard Mr. Whipple exclaim, "Oh Lord," and I retreated three or four steps towards the north end of the shed, when I accidentally slipped, flung my rifle, and fell from the roof on to the ground. I instantly sprang onto my feet and made the ejaculation, "Thank God I am not hurt!" took up my Rifle, went out of the north gate of the west courtyard, ran down the hill towards the north-west corner of the lot, where I had left my coat, bundle, and boots, flung the gun over the fence, which stuck into the ground by the muzzle, threw my coat, bundle, and boots over the fence.

All this happened according to my best calculation and belief, within ten or fifteen minutes, at the most, from the time I left Sheldon and Sykes' store; and I have been informed that Messrs. Sheldon and Sykes' clerk had said that in his opinion, it was as late as half past nine, when I left their store; which would bring it to the precise time that the family supposed Mr. Whipple was murdered. After throwing my things over the fence, as I have above stated, I jumped over, took the gun, coat, bundle and boots, and ran north, on the west side of a board fence, about twenty-five rods, to the corner of the lot; then threw over the gun, coat, bundle and boots, jumped over the fence, took up the articles I had thrown over, and ran west on the north side of of a board fence, about twenty rods to the corner of the lot at the woods—then got over a pole fence, turned north about four rods to a ravine—there I ran the rifle into sandy mud, which had been washed down the ravine—I stamped it on the breech, and gathered a small quantity of leaves and strewed them over it. I then went across the ravine, pulled off my socks, laid them by my side, put on my other socks and boots, and my pea coat; took up my bundle under my arm, and went about two rods; when I recollected that I had left my muddy socks on the ground. I then returned and picked them up—and again ran back a north-west course through the woods, about eight or ten rods; got over a brush and pole fence; thence crossed over the point of a hill, in an open field; went down to the bottom

of a large ravine, which is about ten rods north of the brush fence, and in the bottom of the ravine, in the mud and water, I stamped down the socks I wore when I committed the murder. I then turned north out of the ravine and came to a board fence which is about 12 or 15 rods from the ravine; the board fence runs east and west, on the south side of a road that runs east and west, and at right angles with South Pearl street, or rather the Bethlehem turnpike, which is a continuation of South Pearl-street. I here jumped over the fence into the road, at a place about sixty rods west of where said road joins the Bethlehem turnpike, leading to Cherry Hill. I crossed the road and got into a lot on the north side of the road, then turned north-east and went about thirty rods; then got into a lot that joins the turnpike, and went about thirty rods. Then crept through a fence into a lot north, went about twenty-five rods a north-east course, to the corner of a stable standing about eight rods west of Pearl-street, and about one fourth of a mile north of Cherry Hill. When I got to the stable, I saw people going over the hill down the turnpike, towards Cherry Hill. I immediately got into the turnpike and followed, being then about twenty rods in the rear of them. When I came up to the front court yard there were three or four men standing by the gate, and one or two by the stoop, trying to get into the house at the front door which was not yet opened. The wench immediately opened the door and asked "Is that you, Doctor?" I answered, "Yes:" she said, "Come in—Mr. Whipple is shot." I immediately went in, threw my bundle down and went up to the head of the stairs where Mr. Whipple lay in the hall north and adjoining to the room where I shot him. And Abraham L. Van Rensselaer did testify on my trial that his first suspicion, that I was guilty of the murder, was occasioned by my immediately *turning pale* when I here first saw the body. The body lay at the head of the stairs, his feet and legs projecting about a foot over the steps. I was then requested by Abraham to take his gun and go round the house and see if I could discover any one about the house; I went immediately, in company with Robert Milligan, a neighbor, into the kitchen, took the gun and went to the south west corner of the house; there Milligan said to me, "It is of no use, there is nobody about the house at this time." We then returned into the kitchen, put up the gun, and I pulled off my pea coat, and then

went to the head of the stairs in the second story, where Mrs. Catharine Van Rensselaer requested me to go out and unfasten her window shutters, that the windows might be safely closed. I went and did so, and then returned to where the body lay, at which time a physician had arrived. The physician said he was dead. I was sent to town by Abraham L. Van Rensselaer to get Mr. Fredenrich, a coroner; he not being at home, I went to Crosby's hotel and enquired for Fredenrich, and the bar keeper said he thought it probable he was in the theatre, and I asked him if he would go in and see; he went into the theatre, returned and told me he had not found Mr. Fredenrich, but that he had found another coroner (Mr. Thomas L. Pemberton) who would go immediately down. Having also been requested by some one of the family to give notice of the murder to Mr. Fobes, I went from Crosby's there, did the errand, and went home. On my return I was summoned and sworn as one of the coroner's inquest, and after all the jurors were sworn, the corpse was taken up by some others of the jurors and carried into the front room of the second story, where the body was undressed and the wound discovered. It was then concluded to adjourn the inquest until 9 o'clock the next morning, for further examination. Soon after this I went into old Mrs. Van Rensselaer's room, where I saw Mrs. Whipple for the first time after the murder, but no conversation passed between us, nor did we have any that night.

The next morning I was sent after Doctor Wing, to come down and assist in extracting the ball, and I undertook to give him a particular account of the persons lurking about the house, and my suspicions that Whipple had been murdered by some laborers on the canal (as he testified in court). The ball was extracted, and I was sworn as a witness before my fellow jurors, and no doubt excited the suspicion of the coroner by reason of showing so much zeal to fix the guilt upon strangers, and my indifference in not wishing to see the ball, after it had been extracted, (as he testified on my trial.) We returned a verdict, that the death was occasioned by John Whipple's being shot by some person to the jurors unknown. About 1 o'clock in the afternoon, while I was sitting on a bench in the kitchen, Mrs. Whipple came to me and asked me if I had secured *that piece*? I told her yes. She then asked me what I had done with the socks? I told her I had

taken care of them. Soon after this conversation, I was sent for and examined on oath, at the Police Office, and was particularly questioned, relative to the persons I had reported to have seen lurking about the house. I told the police officer, that I had met a man with a gun on his shoulder, going up town, in Pearl-street ; which fact I stated, because I had been told that when Killian Van Rensselaer (who was the first person that left Cherry Hill, after the murder) had taken his gun with him, and had not learned that he had left the gun at the grocery store of Mr. Milligan, who lives south of the city in the town of Bethlehem, (which fact, as I have since been informed, was afterwardsse certainly by the police.) After being detained for a considerable time on this examination, I was discharged ; and have since been informed that the clerk of Messrs Sheldon & Sykes confirmed my story ; that it was not possible for me to have gone from their store at the time I did, and have arrived at Cherry Hill, before the murder.

I had no particular conversation with Mrs. Whipple, except in the presence of the family, until about four o'clock in the afternoon of the next day ; when Mrs. Whipple said to me, in the kitchen, "*they suspect you and me, and talk of taking us up ;*" and immediately thereafter Abraham L. Van Rensselaer came and called me out of the kitchen, and I was informed that I was wanted at the Police, and was taken to the Police Office, and kept there some time, and then committed to prison, without further examination, that day. After which I was several times examined, by the public officers ; and at first told them many falsehoods relative to my journey on the 14th of April, but at length confessed that I had been out and lodged with Mrs. Whipple as man and wife ; but not until they had shewn me her affidavit, in which, they stated, she had sworn to the same fact ; and Mr. Fay and his journeyman having called to see me in gaol. I was then fully committed on the charge, of the murder, and about this time I sent for J. V. N. Yates, Esq, as counsel for me, and to him I first disclosed my true name *Jesse Strang*, my place of birth and parentage, and gave to him, as a reason for leaving my wife about two years before, and going to the sstat of Ohio, and changing my name, was, that I had suspicion of my wife's fidelity to my bed, which last circumstance I do now most solemnly declare was false, and that I never had any reason to suspect her chastity. Mr. Yates having declined to act as my

counsel, I soon after employed Calvin Pepper, Esq., as one of my counsel and to him I early made a full confession of my guilt, and urgently requested him to go to the ravine, and remove the Rifle, as I was apprehensive that it might be found, or become exposed on the surface of the ground, by cattle walking over it. About this time my revered father and step-mother visited me, to whom I denied my guilt, and requested them, to employ additional counsel to aid in my defence on the trial. They both stated, that no money should be wanting to enable me to defend myself, if I was innocent, as I had represented to them; and it was then concluded that my father should endeavor to obtain the assistance of the Honorable Thomas J. Oakley, Esquire, of Poughkeepsie. In a short time after, Mr. Pepper informed me that he had received a letter from Mr. Oakley, and that he had consented to aid in my defence.

Thus, things remained until the meeting of the Grand Jury, at the Albany General Sessions, on the second Tuesday in June, and having been visited by them in a body, and by several of them individually, and having also been informed, that they had found a bill against me, that the proof of my guilt was manifest, and that Mrs. Whipple herself had testified enough against me to convict me, and feeling conscious of my own guilt, and much reduced in bodily strength and mind; in the fore part of the evening of Thursday, I felt as though my body would burst. About ten o'clock, I sent for Mr. Becker, the gaoler, and informed him, of the state of my feelings, and confessed to him that I was guilty, *and that Mrs. Whipple was the foundation of the whole of it.* I then informed him as nearly as I could, where I had concealed the Rifle, arsenic, socks and where the glass, and balls with which I had tried the experiment, could be found. He called again to see me, early on Friday morning, and informed me, that he had been down during the night, and made search for the Rifle, but could not find it. I then told him, that perhaps it had been removed by Mr. Pepper, and requested that he might be sent for. About 8 o'clock, Mr. Pepper, Mr. Becker, and the Coroner, (Mr. Pemberton,) came into my room, and I told Mr. Pepper, in their presence, that I had thought it my duty to confess my crime, and requested him to go with the gaoler and coroner, and get the Rifle, arsenic, socks and glass. They withdrew, and in about one hour, Mr. Becker returned and informed me that he had found the Rifle and arsenic, but was unable

to find the socks, and between ten and eleven o'clock, I was conducted by the police constables to Cherry Hill, and in presence of a large number of people, went into the woods, and shewed them the fragments of glass lying by the stump, and in my presence the three balls were cut out of the pine tree. I went from this place to the ravine, where the Rifle had been found, and from thence to the deep ravine, in the field, as near as I could possibly recollect where I had concealed the socks; I continued there for some time, while several persons were making search to find them, and on my being taken away, it was stated that a more thorough search would be made; and I much regret that the socks have not as yet, to my knowledge, been discovered. On the evening of the same day, Mrs. Whipple was committed to gaol, and lodged in a room in the same story with myself, two rooms intervening between us. And before my trial, she several times came to my room, in which I was chained to the floor, and talked with me, by laying down at the bottom of my door. She generally reprimanded me for making a confession, and said if I had held my tongue, both could have got clear. She was enabled to do this by persuading the gaoler, occasionally, to let her door stand open, for the purpose of admitting a free circulation of air, on particularly warm days—there being an open hall from her door to mine, although there were two substantial doors to be broken open before we could either make our escape, if in the hall.

For some time afterward, I felt very anxious that her guilt should be made as manifest as my own; and do freely and candidly admit, that I falsely stated to the District Attorney, that I should be able to produce one or more of her *original letters*; and for that purpose, having pen, ink, and paper in the room, did, for some length of time, endeavour to imitate her hand writing, but at the same time to write nothing more than what she had in fact written in some of her letters to me, which I had destroyed: and finding that I could not accomplish this act of imitating her hand, and which I afterwards frankly told the District Attorney, I then made a copy of the letter, I wrote to her on the evening of the 4th of May, and desired Mr. Pepper to take the same and throw it into the vault of the back-house, at Cherry Hill; and that I would request the District Attorney to cause the vault to be search-

ed, where that letter would be found, and be supposed to have been flung there by Mrs. Whipple. Mr. P. took the same without any remarks.

On the next day, the District attorney and Mr. Pepper came in to my room, and the District Attorney, in an earnest, solemn, and emphatic manner, told me that I must not think of testifying against Mrs. Whipple, with the least hope or expectation of ever being pardoned, or receiving any favor whatever; that he, the District Attorney, knew I was guilty, that I must be convicted, and that I ought to die, and that he would be the last person to recommend me to any mercy whatever. I soon after concluded to stand trial and to have, if possible, my confessions rejected.— But here I acknowledge that my zeal for the conviction of Mrs. Whipple, at that time, was in the hopes, that if she should be convicted with me, the powerful influence of her friends and my own, might induce the Governor to commute our punishments; and that I as well as she, might escape a public execution. And I do now solemnly state, and declare, that I heartily rejoice that the court excluded me from being called upon the stand, as a witness against Mrs. Whipple, fearing that I might, in consequence of my great zeal, have testified too strongly against her; and again have added to my other enormous sins the crime of perjury, [although I did not so intend to do.]

And for the love I once entertained for her, I do rejoice that she has been acquitted. And I do most fervently pray, that she will devote the remainder of her life, to sincere contrition and repentance, and that she may, above all things, enjoy everlasting peace, consolation and happiness in heaven. And where, relying solely on the atonement and sacrifice of a bleeding Saviour, I pray the God of all grace, in his abundant mercy, to admit my poor soul, and that it may not be doomed to everlasting torments; which I now most sincerely believe will, and ought to be, the fate of the finally impenitent.

And I do most humbly confess, that, for twelve years past, and until the time of my confession, I believed there was a God and Saviour; yet that God had decreed and directed all things; and that he would not punish any of his creatures (no matter what sins they may have committed here,) in the world of spirits.

And now I bid a solemn farewell to Mrs. Whipple, my accomplice in crime, in the pathetic and admonitory language of the poet, as communicated in the "Boston Spectator and Ladies Album."

JESSE STRANG.

—◆—
"TO MRS. WHIPPLE.

Thou art a lost one—weep, aye weep,
For none should weep for thee;
Thy sleep will be a fitful sleep,
One of deep agony.

And when thou wakest, thou wilt wake
To horrors which the guilty shake.

Crime—black, unhallowed, uncaused crime,
Steeps with its guilt thy brow;
The lava, from the mount of Time,
Scathes in its course, thee now.

Wake beauteous one and strive to be,
Worthy thine angel symmetry.

Go—shed thy tears upon that grave,
Which on thy husband presses,
Reflect upon that love he gave,
Then tear thy raven tresses.

Kneel then I pray to ONE who died,
To save thy soul of passioned pride.

Repentance may in after years
Redeem thy soul from sin;
An ocean of a sinner's tears
Must wash thee pure again.

Haste, guilty one, to that bright stream
Lit up by heaven's redeeming gleam."