

## SUPREME COURT.

FRIDAY, APRIL 24.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against Cæsar and Prince, negroes.

The grand jury having found two bills of indictment for felonies, against the prisoners; Mr. Attorney General moved, that they might be brought to the bar, in order to be arraigned.

It was ordered, and they being brought, were arraigned accordingly, and severally pleaded, *not guilty*.

The King against John Hughson, Sarah, his wife, Margaret Sorubiero, alias Kerry.

The grand jury having found a bill of indictment for felony, against the defendants in custody, Mr. Attorney General moved, that they might be brought to the bar in order to be arraigned.

It was ordered, and the prisoners being brought, were arraigned accordingly, and severally pleaded, *not guilty*.

Ordered, that the trials of the two negroes, the Hughsons, and Kerry, do come on to-morrow morning.

Court adjourned till to-morrow morning, nine o'clock.

## SUPREME COURT.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25.

Present, the second justice.

The King against Cæsar and Prince, negroes.

The King against John Hughson, Sarah, his wife, Margaret Kerry.

Ordered, that the prisoners' trials be put off till Tuesday the 28th instant.

Court adjourned till Monday morning, nine o'clock.

## SUPREME COURT.

MONDAY, APRIL 27.

Present, the second justice.

His majesty's ordinance published in court for enlarging the present term to the last Tuesday in May next.

Court adjourned till to-morrow morning, ten o'clock.

SUPREME COURT.

TUESDAY, APRIL 28.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against Cæsar and Prince, negroes.

The King against John Hughson, Sarah, his wife, Margaret Kerry.

Upon motion of Mr. Attorney General, ordered, that the trials of the prisoners in both causes be put off till the first day of May.

Court adjourned till Friday, 1st May, ten o'clock in the morning.

The following letter, dated this day at New-York, was some time afterwards intercepted in New-Jersey, and sent up from a magistrate there to another here.

The original in female Dutch followeth, so much of it as is material to the present purpose.

“ Nieu York den 21 April 1741

“ Beminde Man Johannis Romme

“ Dit is om U bekent te maken dat ik U brief ontfangen heb by de bringer van deze en daer nyt verstaen dat gey van sins ben om weer na huis te komen myn beminde ik versoeck van U dat gy het best van U wegh maekt om varder te gaen en niet in Niu Yorck te komen en om U self niet bekent te maken waer gey ben voor John Husen die is van dese dagh zyn tryell te hebben enook zyn vrou en de mydt is king evidens tegen baye gar en zy het U naemook in kwetze gebrocht en ik ben bang det John Husen en zyn vrou gehangen sall worden by wat ik kan horen en de schout en bombeles soeken voor U over all want Fark neger die houdt zyn woort standen voor jou Brother Lucas is voor een jeure man gekosen en die hoort hoe het is So niet maer maer blyvende U eerwarde vrou Elezabet Romme tot ter doet toe.”

Thus translated :

“ Beloved Husband John Romme,

“ This is to acquaint you that I have received your letter by the bearer hereof and understand out of it that you intend to re-

turn home again my dear I desire of you that you make the best of your way to go further and not to come in New-York and not to make yourself known where you are for John Hughson is this day to have his tryal as also his wife and the servant maid is king evidence against both and she has brought your name likewise in question and I am afraid that John Hughson and his wife will be hanged by what I can hear and the sheriff and bumbailiffs seek for you every where Vaarck's negro(e) he keeps his word stedfast for you Brother Lucas is chosen one of the jurymen and he hears how it is So no more but remaining your respectful wife Elezabet Romme even till death."

Superscribed, for Mr. John Romme Q D G

## SUPREME COURT.

FRIDAY, MAY 1.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against Cæsar and Prince, negroes. On trial.

The jury called, and the prisoners making no challenge, the following persons were sworn, viz.

Roger French, John Groesbeek, John Richard, Abraham Kipp, George Witts, John Thurman, Patrick Jackson, Benjamin Moore, William Hamersley, John Lashier, Joshua Sleydall, John Shurmur.

These two negroes were arraigned on two indictments, the twenty fourth of April last : the one for their entering the dwelling house of Robert Hogg, of this city, merchant, on the first day of March then last past, with intent then and there to commit some felony ; and for feloniously stealing and carrying away then and there the goods and chattels of the said Robert Hogg, of the value of four pounds five shillings sterling, against the form of the statutes in such case made and provided, and against the peace of our sovereign lord the king, his crown and dignity.

The other for their entering the dwelling house of Abraham Meyers Cohen in this city, merchant, on the first day of March with intent then and there to commit some felony ; and for feloniously stealing and carrying away then and there the goods

and chattels of the said Abraham Meyers Cohen of the value of five pounds sterling, against the form of the statutes, &c. and against the king's peace, &c.

To each of which indictments they pleaded, *not guilty*.

The attorney general having opened both the indictments, he with Joseph Murray, Esq. of council for the king, proceeded to examine the witnesses, viz.

For the king, Mrs. Hogg, Mrs. Boswell, Christopher Wilson, Rachina Guerin, Mr. Robert Hogg, Mr. Robert Watts, Margaret Sorubiero, alias Kerry, Abraham Meyers Cohen, James Mills, Thomas Wenman, John Moore, Esq. Cornelius Brower, Anthony Ham, Mary Burton.

For the prisoners, Alderman Bancker, Alderman Johnson, John Auboyneau.

The prisoners upon their defence denied the charge against them. And,

The evidence being summed up, which was very strong and full, and the jury charged, they withdrew; and being returned, found them guilty of the indictments.

Ordered, that the trials of the Hughsons and Margaret Kerry, be put off until Wednesday the 6th inst.

Court adjourned until Monday morning, 4th May, at ten o'clock.

### SUNDAY, MAY 3.

Arthur Price, servant to captain Vincent Pearse, having been committed, upon a charge of stealing out of his master's house several goods belonging to the lieutenant governor, which had been removed thither for safe custody from the fire at the fort; he informed the under-sheriff, that he had had some discourse in the jail with Peggy, which he would communicate to a magistrate: the under-sheriff acquainted one of the judges therewith, and he examined Price in the evening, and the following deposition was taken.

*Deposition, No. 1.*—Arthur Price being duly sworn, saith,

1. "That about the beginning of last week, Peggy Carey, or Kerry, now in jail, came to the hole in the prison door, in which he is confined, and told him, she was very much afraid of those fellows (meaning the negroes, as he understood) telling or discovering something of her; but, said she, if they do, by God, I will

hang them every one ; but that she would not *forswear*(e) herself, unless they brought her in. Upon which the deponent asked her, Peggy, how *forswear* yourself? To which she answered, there is fourteen sworn. Upon which he further asked her, what, is it about Mr. Hogg's goods? And she replied, no, by G-d, about the fire. Upon which the deponent said to her, what, Peggy, were you a going to set the town on fire? And she made answer, she was not ; but said, by G-d, since I knew of it, they made me swear. Upon which the deponent asked her, was John and his wife in it? (meaning John Hughson and his wife.) And she answered, yes, by G-d, they were both sworn as well as the rest. Then the deponent asked her, if she was not afraid that the negroes would discover her? And she said no ; for Prince, Cuff and Cæsar, and Forck's (Vaarck's) negro, were all true-hearted fellows. Then he asked her, if Cæsar was not Forck's negro? And she answered, no, by G-d, it was the other ;(f) but what other she meant he did not know.

2. " That yesterday in the afternoon the said Peggy came to him again, and told him, she had no stomach to eat her victuals ; for that that bitch (meaning Hughson's maid(g) as he understood) has fetched me in, and made me as black as the rest, about the indigo, and Mr. Hogg's goods : but if they did hang the two poor fellows below (meaning Cæsar and Prince, as understood) they (meaning the rest of the negroes) would be revenged on them yet ; but if they sent them away, it was another case. Upon which this deponent said to Peggy, I don't doubt but they will endeavour to poison this girl that has sworn, (meaning Hughson's maid.) And Peggy replied, no, by G-d, I don't believe that ; but they will be revenged on them some other ways : And she further said to the deponent, for your life and soul of you, you son of a b—h, don't speak a word of what I have told you."

About this time, *i. e.* the beginning of this month, at Hackensack, in New-Jersey, eight miles from this city, the inhabitants of that place were alarmed about an hour before day, and presented with a most melancholy and affrighting scene ! no less than seven barns in that neighbourhood were all in flames ; and the fire had got such head, that all assistance was in vain ; for in a short time they were burnt down to the ground. Two negroes, the one belonging to Derick Van Hoorn, the other to Albert Van Voer-

(e) What she meant by forswearing herself, will be better guessed at hereafter.

(f) Bastian, alias Tom Peal, also belonging to Vaarck.

(g) Mary Burton.

heise, were suspected to have been guilty of this fact; the former having been seen coming out of one of the barns with a gun laden, who pretended on his being discovered, that he saw the person who had fired the barns, upon which his master ordered him to fire at him, and the negro thereupon immediately discharged his piece; but no blood was drawn from any mortal that could be discovered. The latter was found at his master's house loading a gun with two bullets, which he had in his hand ready to put in. Upon these and other presumptive circumstances and proofs, both negroes were apprehended, and in a few days tried, convicted, and burnt at a stake: the former confessed he had set fire to three of the barns; the latter would confess nothing; nor would either of them discover that any others were concerned with them in this villainy.

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SUPREME COURT.

MONDAY, MAY 4.

Present the second and third justices.

The court opened and adjourned till to-morrow afternoon 3 o'clock.

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SUPREME COURT,

TUESDAY, MAY 5.

Present, as before.

The court opened and adjourned till to-morrow morning 9 o'clock.

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SUPREME COURT.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against John Hughson, Sarah his wife, Margaret Sorubiero, alias Kerry, on trial.

The jury were called and the following jurors sworn, viz.— Henry Lawrence, William Hammersley, Sidney Breese, John Smith, Samuel Weaver, Patrick Jackson, John Shurmer, John Hastier, John Robins, Henry Vandewater, Aaron King, Alexander Ward.

Benjamin Peck and Joseph North, jurors challenged by the prisoners.

They were indicted for feloniously, &c. receiving on the third day of March then last past, divers stolen goods, knowing the same to have been stolen,<sup>(h)</sup> against the form of the statute, &c. and the king's peace, &c.

To which indictment they all pleaded, *not guilty*, upon their arraignment as before.

Council for the King, the Attorney General, and Joseph Murray, esq.

The Attorney General opened the indictment, and then he and Mr. Murray examined the witnesses against the criminals, viz.— Witnesses for the King—Robert Hogg, Mrs. Hogg, Rachina Guerin, Anthony Ham, constable, alderman Romme, Robert Watts, esq. Richard Nicholls, esq. James Mills, Mary Burton, alderman Moore, Thomas Wenman, constable, John Cruger, esq. mayor, alderman Johnson, William Jamison, esq.

The conviction of Cæsar and Prince read.

The examination of Hughson before the justices read.

Witnesses for the prisoners—John Nichols, capt. Lee, Peter Anderson, and his wife.

And the charge against them being fully proved; the evidence summed up; the arguments closed, and the jury charged, they withdrew; and being returned, found them all *guilty*.

Sarah Hughson, single woman, daughter of John Hughson and Sarah his wife, was this morning committed as one of the confederates in the conspiracy, being apprehended while the court was sitting.

Court adjourned till to-morrow morning ten o'clock.

Jack (Sleydall's negro) was this day committed on suspicion of putting fire to Mr. Murray's haystack.

(h) They received the goods of Cæsar and Prince, principal convicts.

## SUPREME COURT.

THURSDAY, MAY 7, A. M.

Present, the second and third justices. Court opened, and adjourned until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, P. M.

Present, as before. Court opened and adjourned until to-morrow morning, ten o'clock.

*Deposition taken before the judges.—No. 2.* Arthur Price being duly sworn, saith,

1. "That yesterday morning having discourse with Sarah, the daughter of John Hughson, about the fires which have lately happened in the town; she told him, that she had been with a fortune teller, who told her that in less than five weeks time, she would come to trouble, if she did not take good care of herself; but after that she would come to good fortune; then he inquired of her father's fortune; and she said, her father would be tried and condemned, but not hanged; but was to go over the water.

2. "That then, after some other discourse, the deponent told her, that some of the negroes who were concerned in the plot about the fires, had discovered; upon which she said, she did not know of any plot; and thereupon he told her, that they that were sworn in the plot, had discovered, and brought them every one in: upon which she coloured, and put her bonnet back, and changed colour several times, and asked him if he knew who it was and when he had heard it? and he told her, he had heard it by the by, and it was kept private: upon which she made a long stop; and then said, it must be either Holt's negro, or Todd's; for, said she, we were always afraid of them, and mistrusted them, though they were as bad as the rest, and were to have set their own master's houses on fire; and then she said, I wish that Todd had sent his black dog away, or sold him, when he was going to do it.<sup>(i)</sup>

3. "That then the deponent told her, sure you had better tell every thing that you know; for that may be of some service to your father; upon which she said no, for that they were doing all that they could to take his life away; and that she would sooner suffer death, and be hanged with her daddy (if he was to be hanged) than she would give them that satisfaction of telling or discovering any thing to them; or words to that effect:

(i) Dundee. Todd, it seems, did threaten, and was going to send this negro beyond sea last fall; so that her intelligence was right.



that she was to have gone up into the country (like a fool that she was that she did not go) but staid to see what would become of her mammy and daddy; but that now she would go up in the country, and that she would be hanged if ever they should get her in York again; but if they (meaning the people of this city, as he understood) had not better care of themselves, they would have a great deal more damage and danger in York, than they were aware of; and if they did hang her daddy, they had better do something else; and as to the fire at the fort, they did not set the saddle on the right horse.

4. "That on Monday last Peggy came to him, and bid him not discover any thing for his life, that she had told him; for if he did, by G-d she would cut his throat.

5. "The deponent further saith, that as to the expression made use of by Sarah Hughson, viz. As to the fire at the fort, they did not set the saddle on the right horse; the occasion of these words was, the deponents telling her, that they had been picking out of him what they could concerning the fire at the fort, and thought that he knew something of it; but he said to her, that he took God to be his judge, that he did not know any thing of it."<sup>(k)</sup>

Upon the information by this deposition, Dundee (Todd's negro) was apprehended and committed; but, upon examination, denied knowing any thing of the conspiracy.

The other negro was at this time gone with his master (Holt) a dancing master, to Jamaica, in the West-Indies, who thought it proper to remove from hence soon after the fire at the fort.

*Voluntary confession.*—Margaret Sarinberr, alias Keary, declares, "That she was several times at the house of John Romme, shoemaker, and tavern-keeper, and saw several meetings of the negroes from time to time; and in particular, in the month of December last past, she saw assembled there in or about ten or twelve in number, viz.—Cuff, belonging to Mr. Philipse; Brash, Mr. Jay's; Curacoa Dick, a negro man; Cæsar, Pintard's; Patrick, English's; a negro belonging to Mr. Breastead, in Pearl-street, (Jack) Cato, Alderman Moore's.

"The rest of the names that were in the combination, I cannot remember, or their master's names. They proposed, to

(k) Upon the supposition, that Arthur knew nothing of the secrets of the conspiracy before he came to jail, the reader may be apt to judge, that he acted with more than ordinary acuteness for one of his station, in pumping so much out of Peggy and Sarah, (Hughson's daughter) and their confidence in him, if he were a stranger to them, was somewhat extraordinary on the occasion.

burn the fort first, and afterwards the city ; and then steal, rob and carry away all the money and goods they could procure, and was to be carried to Romme's, and were to be joined by the country negroes ; and that they were to murder every one that had money.

“ The reason why I did not make this discovery before, Romme swore them all never to discover, and swore me too ; and I thought, I would wrong my own soul, if I discovered it. And that all the rest of the negroes in city and country were to meet in one night.

“ All the above I am ready to declare upon oath.” †

*Signed with her mark X*

This declaration was sent from the jail, by the under-sheriff, to one of the judges late this night.

The conviction of the two negroes, Cæsar and Prince, as principals in the two robberies ; and of Hughson, his wife, and Peggy herself, as accessaries in receiving the goods stolen ; alarmed her so, that she seemed now to think it high time to do something to recommend herself to mercy ; and this confession coming voluntarily from her, it gave hopes that she was in earnest, and would make some material discoveries.

## SUPREME COURT.

FRIDAY, MAY 8.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against Cæsar and Prince, negroes.

The prisoners having been capitally convicted on two several indictments for felony, and being brought to the bar, the court proceeded to give sentence ; which was passed by the second justice as followeth :

You, Cæsar and Prince, the grand jury having found two indictments against each of you, for feloniously stealing and taking away from Mr. Hogg, and Mr. Meyers Cohen, sundry goods of considerable value. To these indictments you severally pleaded *not guilty* ; and for your trials put yourselves upon God and the country ; which country having found you guilty, it now only remains for the court to pronounce that judgment which the law requires, and the nature of your crimes deserve.

† This confession was penned by a jail secretary.

“ But before I proceed to sentence, I must tell you, that you have been proceeded against in the same manner as any white man, guilty of your crimes, would have been. You had not only the liberty of sending for your witnesses ; asking them such questions as you thought proper ; but likewise making the best defence you could ; and as you have been convicted by twelve honest men upon their oaths, so the just judgment of God has at length overtaken you.

“ I have great reason to believe, that the crimes you now stand convicted of, are not the least of those you have been concerned in ; for by your general characters you have been very wicked fellows, hardened sinners, and ripe, as well as ready, for the most enormous and daring enterprizes, especially you, Cæsar : and as the time you have yet to live is to be but very short, I earnestly advise and exhort both of you to employ it in the most diligent and best manner you can, by confessing your sins, repenting sincerely of them, and praying God of his infinite goodness to have mercy on your souls : and as God knows the secrets of your hearts, and cannot be cheated or imposed upon, so you must shortly give an account to him, and answer for all your actions ; and depend upon it, if you do not truly repent before you die, there is a hell to punish the wicked eternally.

“ And as it is not in your powers to make full restitution for the many injuries you have done the public ; so I advise both of you to do all that in you is, to prevent further mischiefs, by discovering such persons as have been concerned with you, in designing or endeavouring to burn this city, and to destroy its inhabitants. This I am fully persuaded is in your power to do if you will ; if so, and you do not make such discovery, be assured God Almighty will punish you for it, though we do not : therefore I advise you to consider this well, and I hope both of you will tell the truth.

“ And now, nothing further remains for me to say, but that you Cæsar, and you Prince, are to be taken hence to the place from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, and there you, and each of you, are to be hanged by the neck until you be dead. And I pray the Lord to have mercy on your souls.”

Ordered, that their execution be on Monday next, the eleventh day of this instant, between the hours of nine and one of the same day. And further ordered that after the execution of the said sentence, the body of Cæsar be hung in chains.

Court adjourned till Monday morning next ten o'clock.

Peggy was examined by the judges touching the matter of her confession delivered in writing last night, which she declared for truth; and for the greater solemnity was sworn to it, after having been seriously admonished not to dare to say any thing but the truth, or to accuse innocent persons: she was told, that we had dived so far into this mystery of iniquity already, that we could easily discern whether she prevaricated or not; and that if she did, she must not flatter herself with the hopes of being recommended to mercy; so that such disingenuous behaviour would but deceive herself, and make her case desperate, or words to that purpose: she put on the air of sincerity, as if disposed to make a discovery, but seemed to be under terrible apprehensions. What she said, corresponded with the scheme of the plot so far as we had got light into it, and in a great measure confirmed what Arthur Price said in his deposition, No. 1. before, with this difference, that she shifted the scene from John Hughson's to John Romme's, and protested that she did not know that the Hughsons were any wise privy to, or concerned in the conspiracy.

At this examination, she related a great many particulars, which for want of time, were not committed to writing; but her further examination deferred to the next day.

Romme at this time absconded; orders having been given for apprehending him long before, upon suspicion of his having received some of the goods stolen from Mr. Hogg's; and Peggy and her advisers might think as he was out of reach, she might safely shift the scene to his house: or this bloody scheme might have been brooding at both places, and with her knowledge; but one may be persuaded, from the course of the evidence, that Romme was apprized at least of the conspiracy carrying on at Hughson's.

Upon this examination, Romme's wife was apprehended and committed.

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#### SATURDAY, MAY 9.

Many hours were taken up in Peggy's examination yesterday and this day; which was committed to writing, as followeth.

*Examination taken before the judges, No. 1. Margaret Salingburgh, (l) alias Kerry, saith,*

(l) How she came by the name Sorubiero, by which she stands indicted we know not; she said she was married to one Salingburgh.

1. "That some time last fall she took lodgings with one Frank, a free negro, fronting the new battery, within this city, about three or four doors from the house of John Romme, shoemaker, and continued there till the beginning of February last, during which time she employed the said Romme in making shoes for her; and on that account became acquainted with him and his wife, and used often to go backwards and forwards to and from the said house; by which means she had the opportunity of seeing many negroes there at several different times, who used to resort thither to drink drams, punch and other strong liquors, the said Romme keeping a public house; and that often numbers of them have continued at the said Romme's house till two or three o'clock in the morning, to her knowledge, drinking, singing and playing at dice.

2. "That on or about the beginning of November last, on a Sunday evening, between the hours of 11 and 12, she (the examinant) being returning home to her said lodging, by the way of Whitehall, saw two negroes coming towards her with each of them a firkin upon their shoulders, and saw them turn into Romme's gate; and that presently after the same two negroes returned from the said Romme's house, and went by the examinant (who stood under Hunt's shed) at some distance towards the water side; and returned again by her, with each of them one firkin more upon each of their shoulders, and went with them also in at the said Romme's gate, and returned by the examinant a second time, and went towards the water side; and in the same manner made as many turns, till the examinant counted that the said negroes had carried into the said Romme's gate, sixteen of the said firkins: and the reason of the examinant's staying under the said Hunt's shed to observe the motions of the said negroes was, because she suspected them to be stolen goods.(m)

3. "That one evening, some time about Christmas last, about eight or nine o'clock, she was at the house of the said John Romme, where she saw in company, together with the said Romme and his wife, ten or eleven negroes, all in one room, and the said John Romme was observing to the negroes, how well the rich people at this place lived, and said, if they (meaning the negroes, as she understood) would be advised by him, they (including himself and the negroes as she understood) should have the money. To which Cuff (Mr. Philipse's negro) replied, how will you manage that? Well enough, said Romme, set them

(m) These firkins were said to have been stolen out of Joneau's storehouse.

all a light fire ; burn the houses of them that have the most money, and kill them all, as the negroes would have done their masters and mistresses formerly :<sup>(n)</sup> That he (Romme) should be captain over them (meaning the negroes, as the examinant understood) till they could get all their money, and then he (Romme) would be governor. To which Cuff said, they could not do it. Yes, says Romme, we'll do well enough ; we'll send into the country for the rest of the negroes to help, because he could write, and he knew several negroes in the country that could read. And he encouraged them, and said, he would stand by them, and that the sun would shine very bright by and by, and never fear, my lads : But that if it should happen that any thing should come out, he would make his escape, and go to North Carolina, Cape Fear, or somewhere thereabouts ; or into the Mohawks country, where he had lived before ; but besides, the D—l could not hurt him ; for he had a great many friends in town, and the best in the place would stand by him ; or the said Romme expressed himself in words to the effect before mentioned.

4. “ That during all the discourse of the said Romme to the negroes as above mentioned, she did not observe any of the said number of ten or eleven, to make any answer to Romme's discourse aforesaid, excepting Cuffee (Philipse's) Curracoa Dick, Pintard's Cæsar, Will (Weaver's, since dead) and Mr. Moore's Cato ; but Cuffee spoke the most, and said, ‘ The Devil take the failer ;’ though the other four seemed to be as forward for the plot as Cuff.

<sup>(n)</sup> There was a rising of the negroes in this city, in the year 1712. On the 7th of April, about one or two o'clock in the morning, the house of Peter Van Tilburgh was set on fire by the negroes, who being armed with guns, knives, &c. killed and wounded several white people as they were coming to assist in extinguishing the flames. Notice thereof being soon carried to the fort, his excellency governor Hunter, ordered a cannon to be fired from the ramparts, to alarm the town, and detached a party of soldiers to the fire ; at whose appearance those villains immediately fled, and made their way out of town as fast as they could, to hide themselves in the woods and swamps. In their flight they also killed and wounded several white people ; but being closely pursued, some concealed themselves in barns, and others sheltered in the swamps or woods ; which being surrounded and strictly guarded till the morning, many of them were then taken. Some finding no way for their escape, shot themselves. The end of it was, that after these foolish wretches had murdered eight or ten white people, and some of the confederates had been their own executioners, nineteen more of them were apprehended, brought upon their trials for a conspiracy to murder the people, &c. and were convicted and executed ; and several more that turned evidences were transported.

5. " That the other negroes that were present at the above discourse, whose persons or names she now remembers, were Patrick (English's,) Jack (Breasted's,) and Brash (Mr. Jay's.)

6. " That at the same meeting, there were several other negroes, which made up the number ten or eleven, whose names, or the names of their masters, she does not now remember ; but believes she should remember their faces again if she should see them.

7. " That at the same meeting, the said John Romme proposed to the said negroes present, ' To burn the fort first, and afterwards the city ; and then to steal and rob, and carry away all the money and goods they could procure ;' and that they should be brought to Romme's house, and he would take care to hide them away.

8. " That Romme said further, that if the fire did not succeed, and they could not compass their ends that way ; then he proposed to the negroes present, that they should steal all that they could from their masters ; then he would carry them to a strange country, and give them their liberty, and set them free. After this, Romme asked them, if it would do ? That is whether the negroes then present liked his proposals, (as she understood.) To which Cuff answered, ' There's great talking, and no cider ;' and so they broke up : And the negroes remaining at that time all departed ; some of them, to wit, Brash, Patrick, Jack, and the several other negroes (whose names the examinant cannot at all remember) having left the company about an hour before ; but Cuff, Curacoa Dick, Weaver's Will, Cato, and Pintard's Cæsar staid till the last.

9. " That she well remembers, that Cuff, Curacoa Dick, Weaver's Will, Pintard's Cæsar, and Mr. Moore's Cato ; and also Auboyneau's Prince, and Vaarck's Cæsar, used much to frequent that house in the evenings, and to stay often late in the night, drinking and playing at dice ; but she never heard any discourse amongst them concerning burning the fort, or setting fire to the town, but the time above mentioned.

10. " That immediately after the negroes broke up the meeting before mentioned, the said John Romme insisted upon this examinant's being sworn to secrecy, that she would not discover any thing that she knew had passed in his house, either relating to the butter, or the fire, or discourse at the said meeting, which she accordingly was and kissed a book ; what book it was, knows not.

11. " That Romme's wife was by, all or most part of the time, during the meeting and discourse aforesaid ; and when

Romme insisted that this examinant should be sworn as aforesaid, as well as his wife; for the said Romme declared, they were both sworn to secrecy, and all the negroes; but the examinant saith, that the said Romme's wife did not at all join in any of the discourse before mentioned."

Elizabeth Romme, wife of John Romme, was sent for and examined concerning what Peggy had declared to have passed at her house.

*Examination.*—1. She denied, "That she knew any thing at all about the conspiracy for firing the fort and the town, and murdering the people.

2. "Denied there were ever such companies of negroes met at her house as Peggy declared.

3. "She confessed there had been some firkins of butter brought thither about the time mentioned by Peggy; but said that they were received by her husband, and she knew nothing of them.

4. "Denied she had ever heard or knew of any oath of secrecy imposed by her husband; or administered by him to her or Peggy, or any other person whatsoever, with regard to secrecy concerning the stolen butter, or any other goods, or concerning the conspiracy.

5. "Confessed, that a negro (the father of Mr. Philipse's Cuffee) kept game-fowls at their house, and used to come there to bring them victuals, but never used to stay long. Confessed that he was there about Christmas last. And

6. "That the last winter Cuff's father brought them sticks of wood now and then, and she believed he had them out of his master's yard.

7. "Confessed, that negroes used to come to their house to drink drams, but never used to stay; that Cæsar (Vaarck's negro) used to come morning and evening often; Auboyneau's Prince sometimes; Mr. Moore's Cato once or twice, and not oftener, as she remembered; never saw Breasted, the latter's negro, there at all; nor Mr. Jay's Brash; nor Patrick, (English's negro) but had seen Bastian (Vaarck's negro) there, and Mr. Pintard's Cæsar; but never saw above three negroes at a time there, and that very seldom; and that when there were three, they were always Cuffee, (Philipse's) Cæsar (Vaarck's) and Prince (Auboyneau's.)"

This afternoon orders were given for apprehending the several negroes mentioned by Peggy, to have been present at Romme's, at the time she said Romme and the negroes were talking of the conspiracy; those of them whom she knew by name, and were not before committed, were soon found and brought to jail.



In the evening the judges came to the city-hall, and sent for Peggy, and had the several negroes brought one by one, and passed in review before her, viz. Patrick (English's) Cato (col. Moore's) Curacoa Dick, Cæsar, (alderman Pintard's) Brash (Mr. Jay's) and Jack (Breasted's) and she distinguished them every one, called them by their names, and declared, those were at the above mentioned meeting.

These negroes were each of them separately examined, and denied being at any such meeting, or that they knew any thing of the conspiracy.

At first, Cork (English's negro) was brought by mistake instead of Patrick, and Peggy declared, he was not English's negro which she meant; Cork was unfortunately of a countenance somewhat ill-favoured, naturally of a suspicious look, and reckoned withal to be unlucky too; his being sent for before the magistrates in such a perilous season, might be thought sufficient to alarm the most innocent of them, and occasion the appearance of their being under some terrible apprehensions; but it was much otherwise with Cork; and notwithstanding the disadvantage of his natural aspect, upon his being interrogated concerning the conspiracy, he shewed such a cheerful, open, honest smile upon his countenance (none of your fictitious hypocritical grins) that every one that was by, and observed it (and there were several in the room) jumped in the same observation and opinion, that they never saw the fellow look so handsome: Such an efficacy have truth and innocence, that they even reflect beauty upon deformity!

On the contrary, Patrick's visage betrayed his guilt: those who are used to negroes may have experienced, that some of them, when charged with any piece of villainy they have been detected in, have an odd knack or (it is hard what to call or how to describe it) way of turning their eyes inwards, as it were, as if shocked at the consciousness of their own perfidy; their looks, at the same time, discovering all the symptoms of the most inveterate malice and resentment: this was Patrick's appearance, and such his behaviour upon examination, as served to induce one's credit to what Peggy had declared; so far at least, that he was present at a meeting when the conspiracy was talked of, and was one of the persons consenting to act a part in that infernal scheme; so that he was committed to jail, and the rest of them, whom Peggy declared, as they were produced, to be the persons she meant.

These negroes, impeached by Peggy, and committed upon her information, and which had passed in review before her, were likewise shewn to Mary Burton, who declared, that she

did not remember, that ever she saw any of them at Hughson's, which seemed to add strength to what Peggy had declared in her examination, that this villainous scheme was carrying on at Romme's as well as Hughson's.

*Deposition taken before one of the judges.*—Abigail Earle, being sworn, deposeth, “that just before the going in of the afternoon church, on the same Sunday that coals were found in Mr. Murray's haystack,<sup>(o)</sup> she saw three negro men coming up the Broadway; that she was then looking out of her window up one pair of stairs in the house where Mr. Williams now lives; and as they passed under the window, she heard one of them say, viz. *Fire, fire, scorch, scorch, A LITTLE, damn it, BY AND BY!* and then threw up his hands and laughed. That after the said negroes were gone by she went into Mrs. George's house<sup>(p)</sup> and told her what she had heard: and about an hour after, when church was out, she saw the same negroes coming down the Broadway; and then shewed Mrs. George the negro that had spoke the aforesaid words: whereupon Mrs. George said, that is Mr. Walter's Quaco.”

Lydia George being sworn, deposed, “that she heard the above written deposition of Abigail Earle read, and knows that all therein mentioned, which any ways relates to her the deponent, is true.”

Upon these depositions Quaco was recommitted this evening.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 10.

A young negro fellow of Mrs. Carpenter's had given some information, that Sarah (Niblet's negro wench) had told him that Sawney, alias Sandy (Niblet's negro boy of about 16 or 17 years of age) had been concerned in setting the fort on fire; that he had likewise set Muchado's house, next door to his master's, on fire; and had also thrown fire over alderman Bancker's fence into his yard. This negro fellow was sent for, and likewise Sarah (Niblet's) and he declared before one of the judges and others, to Sarah's face, to the same purpose. The wench seemed to be under great terror, and trembled much; but nothing could be got out of her more than a peremptory denial that she had ever said any such things to the above negro.

Sarah was committed.

(o) Sunday, April 5.

(p) Which was the next door.

Sandy had then lately been sent away by his master to Albany in order to be sold ; but orders were immediately sent to bring him back.

Niblet the master was sent for, and examined as to the characters of these servants ; but he said, *he knew no harm of them.*

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## SUPREME COURT.

MONDAY, MAY 11.

Present, the second justice.

*Ordered*, that the gibbet on which the body of the negro Cæsar is to be hanged in chains, be fixed on the island near the powder-house.

Court adjourned till Monday morning, ten o'clock.

Cæsar and Prince were executed this day at the gallows, according to sentence. They died very stubbornly, without confessing any thing about the conspiracy ; and denied they knew any thing of it to the last. The body of Cæsar was accordingly hung in chains.

These two negroes bore the characters of very wicked idle fellows ; had before been detected in some robberies, for which they had been publickly chastised at the whipping-post, and were persons of most obstinate and untractable tempers ; so that there was no expectation of drawing any thing from them which would make for the discovery of the conspiracy, though there seemed good reason to conclude, as well from their characters as what had been charged upon them by information from others, that they were two principal ringleaders in it amongst the blacks. It was thought proper to execute them for the robbery, and not wait for the bringing them to a trial for the conspiracy, though the proof against them was strong and clear concerning their guilt as to that also ; and it was imagined, that as stealing and plundering was a principal part of the hellish scheme in agitation, amongst the inferior sort of these infernal confederates, this earnest of example and punishment might break the knot, and induce some of them to unfold this mystery of iniquity, in hopes thereby to recommend themselves to mercy, and it is probable, that with some it had this effect.

SUPREME COURT.

TUESDAY, MAY 12.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against John Hughson, and Sarah, his wife.

The prisoners, John Hughson and Sarah is wife, having been indicted for conspiring, confederating and combining with divers negroes and others, to burn the city of New-York, and also to kill and destroy the inhabitants thereof, were set to the bar and arraigned on the said indictment; and thereupon pleaded, *not guilty*.

Margaret Kerry was also included in this indictment; but she being in a disposition, as it was thought at that time, for making a discovery, it was judged proper to postpone her arraignment.

Court adjourned to Friday the 15th instant, ten o'clock in the morning.

Arthur Price having been found by experience to be very adroit at pumping out the secrets of the conspirators, in the two instances of Peggy and Sarah Hughson the daughter, before set forth; the under-sheriff was ordered to put Cuffee (Mr. Philipse's negro) into the same cell with him, and to give them a tankard of punch now and then, in order to cheer up their spirits, and make them more sociable. These directions were accordingly observed, and produced the desired effects; and one of the judges being acquainted that Arthur had something to communicate he went up this morning in order to examine him.

*Deposition taken before one of the judges, No. 3.*—Arthur Price being duly sworn, saith, I. "That having discourse on Saturday night last, with Cuffee, a negro slave belonging to Mr. Philipse, he the said Cuffee, amongst other discourse, said, that he was one of the Geneva club(p) that was sworn; but being

(h) There was a confederacy of negroes, of which Cæsar (Vaarck's) and Prince (Auboyneau's) both hanged yesterday, and Cuffee (Mr. Philipse's) were the heads and ringleaders; who robbed, pilfered and stole whenever they had an opportunity: and it happened about five or six years ago, a cellar of one Baker, a tavern-keeper in this city, had one night been broken open, and robbed of some Geneva; many of the parties concerned were detected, viz. several negroes, of which Cæsar and Prince were two principals; and all that were discovered were chastised at the public whipping-post. From thence it may be supposed they became distinguished among each other by the name of the *Geneva Club*; for they used frequently to be junketting together at nights with Cuff, upon the produce of the spoils of their pilfering. But it came out upon the

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overcome with sleep, he did not go to their meeting at that time : that Cuffee asked the deponent what could be the reason that Peggy was called down so often?(g) The deponent replied, he thought Peggy was discovering the plot about the fire ; that he had heard she had discovered about the fire at the fort ; Cuffee replied, she could not do that unless she forswore herself, he knew ; for that he that had done that was sworn after she (Peggy) was in prison ; he (Cuffee) left his master's house in the evening, and went along the wharves to the Fly-Market, and waited there till one Quack came out of his master's house ; they two then went to the house of John Hughson, where they met nobody but John Hughson, his wife, and daughter Sarah ; that they (the two negroes) called for a tankard of punch ; that Hughson swore Quack three times ; that they only drank out their punch, and then went down to the Fly. That this deponent then said, I believe I know this Quack, and that he lived with a butcher ; Cuffee replied, no ; he doth not live with a butcher, but he lived with a painter, who lived within a few doors of a butcher ; which painter's name he understood to be Roosevelt, according to the best of his remembrance.

2. " That Cuffee told him, that Quack was married to a negro wench who is cook to the fort, to the governor as he understood ; that they were all to meet at Hughson's the Sunday after Quack was sworn ; but some came and some did not. That the deponent, upon some farther discourse, asked Cuffee how Quack could do it ? (meaning the setting fire to the house in the fort) Cuffee answered, he could not tell how he did it ; but that Quack was to do it, and did do it.

3. " That Cuffee said, they were to meet and have a club at John Hughson's in the Easter hollidays, but that the d—d constables hindered them.

4. " That he asked Cuffee, whether he did not think that the firing would be found out ; he replied, no, by G—d, he did not think it ever would.

examination of these negroes, that they had before that time the impudence to assume the style and title of *Free Masons*, in imitation of a society here ; which was looked upon to be a gross affront to the provincial grand master and gentlemen of the fraternity at that time, and was very ill accepted ; however, from this time the negroes may be supposed to have declined their pretensions to this title ; for we heard nothing more of them afterwards under that stile. But it is probable that most of this Geneva Club that were sworn (as Cuff said) were of the conspiracy ; and it is likely that by the swearing, Cuff meant, sworn of the conspiracy.

(g) She had been frequently sent for to be examined.

5. "That he further asked Cuffee, if he was not afraid, that the two negroes who were to be executed on Monday, would discover (the affair about the firing of the fort and town meaning) Cuffee answered, he was not afraid of that; for that he was sure they would be burnt to ashes before they would discover it; he would lay his life on it.

6. "That yesterday the deponent having some further discourse with Cuffee, he said, he wondered why they only took up the Long Bridge boys, and did not take up those of the Smith's Fly; for he believed, if the truth was known, they (the Smith's Fly negroes meaning) were as much concerned as they (of the Long Bridge meaning.)"

Upon this deposition, Quack (Roosevelt's) was apprehended and committed; who was one of the *Smith's Fly Boys*, as Cuff called them.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 13.

This being the day appointed by the lieutenant governor's proclamation, issued the tenth of April last, to be observed throughout the province, as a day of public fasting and humiliation, the same was reverently and decently observed, particularly in this city, by persons of all persuasions; the shops were all shut up, and persons of all ranks resorted to their respective places of divine worship, and seemed deeply affected with a sense of the calamities with which we had of late been visited: his most gracious majesty, for the vindicating the honour of his crown, having declared war against the king of Spain, the visitation which the province underwent with the severity of the cold weather the last winter, which reduced many families to extremity and want, by the loss of their cattle, &c. the many houses and dwellings that had been fired about our ears, without any discovery of the cause or occasion of them, which had put us into the utmost consternation: all these distresses succeeding upon the heels of each other, were surely most likely to awaken us to our duty, and a due sense of our demerits.

*Deposition before the judges, No. 2.*—Mary Burton, being duly sworn, deposed, 1. "That a day or two after she was examined before the grand jury, she was coming by Vaarck's door in the Broad-street of this city, and saw a negro of the said Vaarck's, who (now at the time of her examination being produced) called himself by the name of Bastian, but used to be



called by the negroes, Tom Peal, who asked the deponent, whether she had discovered any thing about the fires? To which the deponent answered no. To which he replied, *d—n you, it was not best for you, for fear you should be burnt in the next.*

2. "That Quaco(r) the negro man now produced to her, she has often seen at Hughson's door along with Philipse's Cuff, Cæsar, (Vaarck's) and Prince (Auboyneau's) but never saw Quaco within Hughson's house, as she remembers.

3. "That she has seen Jack (Sleydall's, the tallow-chandler) very often at Hughson's house, and believes he was very well acquainted with Hughson's eldest daughter Sarah; but does not remember she ever saw him there at the times of the meetings of the negroes, when they talked about fires; but from the kindness shewn to him by Hughson, his wife, and daughter aforesaid, she had great reason to think he was in their secrets.

4. "That she hath often times seen many negroes at Hughson's house, she believes thirty together, especially on a Sunday; many of them playing at dice, whose faces she could remember if she saw them; and she believes there were thirty of them concerned in the conspiracy about the fires; and some country negroes, particularly one Jamaica.

5. "That Hughson and his wife, and Peggy, and Sarah Hughson the daughter, used, at the meetings of the negroes, to be the forwardest of any of them in talking about fires, (that is to say) that they would burn the fort; then they would go to the Fly(s) and burn the whole town, and destroy all the people; to which all the negroes present were consenting; and by name Cuff,(t) Cæsar and Prince,(u) Albany, Tom Peal, alias Bastian, amongst the rest.

6. "That she knows Hughson and his family, and John Romme were very intimately acquainted, and the latter used frequently to be at Hughson's house, where they used to retire to a private room, where Peggy afterwards lay in, and used to have a great deal of discourse together; but when the deponent overheard them, they were talking Dutch; but Romme used to tell Hughson, he was afraid of the deponent. To which Hughson replied, he need not be afraid of her, for that she was bound to him, and she dared not tell; for if she did he would murder her: And afterwards Romme would be more free before the deponent.

7. "That she knows Jonneau (Vaarck's negro) and has seen him at Hughson's house a drinking with other negroes; but don't

(r) Roosevelt's.

(t) Philipse's.

(s) Towards the east end of the town.

(u) Vaarck's and Auboyneau's.

remember he was present at any time of the discourse about the fires, or killing the white people."

Jonneau, Albany and Bastian were immediately apprehended and committed.

THURSDAY, MAY 14.

This day Sandy alias Sawney (Niblet's negro boy) was brought down from Albany, and committed to jail.

*Deposition* before the judges—No. 3.—Mary Burton deposed, 1. "That at the time when she saw the meetings of the several negroes at Hughson's house, as mentioned in the deponent's deposition of yesterday, the said Hughson said, *they were all sworn*, (meaning the negroes and all the white people present, as she understood) that is, Hughson himself, his wife, and daughter Sarah, and Peggy, and she understood by Hughson, that the purport of the oath was, *that they were not to discover the secrets about firing the fort, the houses at the fly, and the whole town; and about murdering the white people*: and Hughson said to the negroes present, which were Cuff, Cæsar and Prince; *now you must take care, for you are all sworn*; and the deponent at the time saw a bible (as she took it to be) in Hughson's hand; and when the deponent came into the room, he laid it upon the table: and then Cæsar spoke to the deponent, and cautioned her not to tell; and Hughson made answer, that she dared not; and Cuff said, *d—n his bl—d, if he would tell of any, if he was burnt*; and so said the other two negroes; and so said Hughson, his wife, their daughter Sarah, and Peggy.

2. "That Hughson asked Cæsar if he could get any others (meaning the negroes) to help them? Cæsar answered, he could get enough, who dared not but go if he spoke.

3. "That she saw Cæsar pay Hughson twelve pounds in eight shilling Spanish pieces, as Hughson said, after counting them; which was paid him, in order to buy guns; and that Hughson afterwards went abroad with his boat, and was absent three days, or thereabouts, and brought back with him seven or eight guns, three pistols and four swords, which were hid away under the boards in the garret floor in Hughson's house."

*Examination*, before the judges, No. 2.—Margaret Salingburgh, alias Kerry, saith,

1. "That about a fortnight after she came to lodge at Hughson's house (she believes it was about the beginning of February)

John Romme came there, when Hughson was gone into the woods to cut fire-wood; but Hughson's wife being at home Romme entered into conversation with her, when the examinant was present; and she heard him say to her (after calling for a mug of punch, and after observing how hard the winter was) that he did not know how it was with them; and though he had money enough himself; yet he could not buy wood for it; but that he had a parcel of good children (meaning the negroes, as she understood) who brought him wood almost every night, or words to that purpose; so that he had done well enough hitherto. And the examinant saith, that the reason why she understood the said Romme to mean the negroes by the words, *good children*, was, because she herself several times saw Cuff (Mr. Philipse's) and Cæsar (Vaarck's) and sometimes Cuff's brother, and the white boy called Yorkshire<sup>(w)</sup> bring wood there a-nights: That Hughson's wife answered, that it was poor enough with them; that he (Romme) was a gentleman, and could live without work: to which Romme said, that if Hughson would join with him, and take a quantity of fifty or sixty firkins of butter in; meaning, as the deponent understood, into Hughson's house, to conceal them; for, Romme said, it was too hard for him to conceal such a quantity; but that Hughson, in his large house, might much easier make away with them, and conceal them. To which Hughson's wife said, she did not know, but she believed her husband would not have any hand in it: oh! says Romme, I want to talk to him myself; for that he knew how circumstances were with them: by and by towards the evening he would come again and talk to him; for that he wanted a load of wood.

2. "That she was afterwards informed by Hughson himself, that Romme was returning to Hughson's house in the evening, and met Hughson with a sleigh load of wood in the street, which Hughson carried down to Romme's house.

3. "That at the time of Romme's discoursing with Hughson's wife about receiving butter as aforesaid, he further said, that as to butter, the weather was so hard, and the ground so frozen, that he did not know how to hide them away; and as no vessels could go out, he could not ship them off; and he believed gammon would do better; that his brother was going to Carolina, and that he could stow them in his cabin, when there could not be room to stow there fifty or sixty firkins of butter. And by the discourse, the deponent understood that Romme proposed to get the butter and gammons both from the weigh-house, or some of the storehouses thereabouts.

(w) Christopher Wilson.

4. "That she had at several times seen goods of several kinds brought to Romme's house, that she suspected to have been stolen: and that after the oath of secrecy taken by the deponent, and mentioned in a former examination, the said Romme would talk freely to her about such stolen goods as she happened to see brought to his house; and Romme's wife used to help receive such stolen goods, and used to conceal them away."

From what had hitherto come to light concerning this mystery of iniquity, it was scarce to be doubted but Peggy had it in her power to unfold a great deal more of it, as she lodged at Hughson's; which, from the course of the other evidence, was the principal place the conspirators resorted to for holding their consultations: and though what Peggy had already disclosed seemed to merit something, yet it was not altogether satisfactory; and it was thought proper she should be arraigned upon the indictment for the conspiracy, upon the supposition that this step might probably be a means of bringing her to a resolution of making a full discovery of what she knew.

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SUPREME COURT.

FRIDAY, MAY 15.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against Margaret Kerry, and others.

The prisoner, Kerry, being brought to the bar and arraigned on an indictment for a conspiracy, &c. pleaded *not guilty*.

Ordered, that her trial, together with Hughson and his wife, be on Wednesday next.

Note. This was the same indictment upon which Hughson and his wife were arraigned the twelfth instant.

Court adjourned till Tuesday next, the 19th inst. at ten o'clock in the morning.

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SATURDAY, MAY 16.

The examination of Sarah Hughson, the daughter, was deferred thus long, in expectation that Arthur Price might succeed further in drawing more secrets concerning the conspiracy from

her, as he had before done from Peggy, and the negro Cuffee; but Price being often sent for, it was apprehended they began to suspect him, for after Quack (Roosevelt's) was brought to jail, none of the three before mentioned would hold any discourse with him: and this being understood to be the case, Sarah was sent for, and interrogated upon the matter of the conspiracy in general, and particularly as to what passed between her and Arthur Price, as set forth in his deposition of the 7th inst. but she positively denied that she knew any thing of the conspiracy, though part of the conversation she confessed, as followeth.

*Examination*, before one of the judges, No. 1.—Sarah Hughson, single woman, acknowledges “she had some discourse with Arthur Price soon after she came into jail. That she talked to him about some conversation passed between her and a fortune-teller, who said to her, that her father would escape narrowly with his life, if he did escape at all; and that if he did escape, he would go over the water.”

Owens “that Price said to her, that if she knew any thing about the fires, that she had better tell it: to which she answered, if she knew any thing she would tell the truth.”

As soon as the examination was taken, Arthur Price was sent for to confront with her; and he told all that had passed between him and Sarah, agreeable almost word for word with his deposition of the 7th inst. and most of which she had denied very positively before he was brought into the room; and after all, when Price vouched the thing to her face, she did but faintly contradict what he said: and it being proposed to her to ask him any questions, she answered she had no questions to ask him, but at length denied in gross all that Price had charged upon her, which any ways related to the fires. The high-sheriff being present, he perused Price's deposition whilst he was telling his story before Sarah; and he declared Price had repeated the substance very exactly, and almost word for word.

*Deposition*, before one of the judges, No. 4.—Arthur Price being duly sworn, saith,

1. “That Cuffee (Philipse's negro) told him, that he knew he was to suffer death, and wondered why they did not bring him to his trial, for he was sure he was to go the same way the other two went.(x)

2. “That after Quack (mentioned in this deponent's examination of the 12th inst.) was committed, Cuffee never mentioned

(x) Meaning Cæsar and Prince hanged, as may be supposed.

any thing concerning the former discourse, but read sometimes, and cried much."

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MONDAY, MAY 18.

A few days ago John Romme was stopped and secured by a magistrate at Brunswick, in New-Jersey, which he very prudently did, and notified to a magistrate of this city; whereupon Romme was sent for, and this day committed to our jail.

Romme, upon examination, also confessed, as his wife had done before, that some firkins of butter had been brought by the negroes into his house; and he was even with his wife, saying, they were received by her, that he had no hand in it; and he also positively denied that he knew any thing of the plot, and that any such discourse had passed at his house, as before declared by Peggy in her examinations. He was remanded, and examined several times afterwards; but not a word would he own about the conspiracy.

Then Romme's wife was sent for down again to be farther examined: but nothing more could be got out of her. But in the course of her examination some hints having dropped, that her husband had acknowledged the negroes brought the butter to their house, but that he knew nothing of it, and said it was received by her; she being remanded to her prison, and going by her husband's apartment, and he putting his head out of the wicket, she civilly saluted him with a smart slap on the chops.

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SUPREME COURT.

TUESDAY, MAY 19.

Present, the third justice.

The court opened and adjourned till Thursday morning 10 o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20.

*Examination,* before one of the judges—No. 3.—Margaret Salingburgh saith,

1. "That as to the butter brought by the negroes to Romme's house, as mentioned in one of her former examinations; that Cæsar was one of the negroes that brought the butter, as Romme informed her himself; and that about a week before, she herself heard Romme making a bargain with Cæsar to get him as much butter as he could, and he would give him fifteen shillings a firkin for it; but Cæsar insisted on Twenty.

2. "That the next day she was asking Romme who those negroes were that brought the butter in the night before? and he answered, Cæsar, but the other he did not know; for that it was dark, and he did not care to light a candle for fear of being discovered.

3. "That Romme said, he lay abed, and that his wife was up and saw the butter put in the yard; and that after the negroes were gone, he himself got up and stowed it away under the wood in an old house in the yard.

4. "That Cæsar told Romme, in her presence, that they had got the butter from a Frenchman's near the Long Bridge, and that he thought it belonged to a countryman, who had left it in the said Frenchman's storehouse till it could be sold, or shipped off in the spring; or words to that effect.

5. "That the cloth coat Romme has now upon his back, with a cape to it, was stolen by Cæsar from a countryman's boat near Hughson's, as she heard Cæsar tell Romme; and heard both Romme and Cæsar say, that Romme gave Cæsar ten shillings for it.

6. "That Cæsar and Prince had stolen twenty pieces of eight out of Ellis' boat, and a speckled new shirt and a pair of new stockings, which were brought by them directly to Romme's house, and the money they delivered into Romme's hands, and they told Romme, in her hearing, where they had got it, and two pieces of eight a-piece they gave to Romme, and the rest they were to leave in his hands to drink out."

For the greater solemnity of the matter, Peggy also swore to and signed her three several examinations.

The history of Peggy's, contained in her three examinations, corresponds so exactly as to the persons of, and charges against such negroes, mentioned by others, which she brings in question, and also with the matter and circumstances of the conspiracy, which the reader may hereafter perceive from the whole current

of depositions and examinations of whites and blacks, that one may be very apt to conclude, she only shifted the scene, and laid it in a wrong place.

Peggy very well knew that Romme had fled the country upon the inquiry about the robbery at Hogg's; and probably that finding her own life in jeopardy concerning that felony, as well as the conspiracy, which she now was sensible had got air, and was like to be detected, and partly by her own frank talk and openness with her fellow-prisoner, Price; she might therefore think it high time to provide for her own safety, if she could do it so cheap as by amusing us with a narrative of the plot; which, though real and true in other respects, nevertheless she charged the confederacy and consultations about it to have been held solely at Romme's, as to the knowledge she had concerning it; and so screened the other confederates, Hughson, his wife and family, at whose house principally these miscreants associated; though what she declared might be true as to both places, and there seems to be too much reason to mistrust it was so; yet she absolutely denied to the last, that she had ever heard any such discourse at Hughson's, though frequently interrogated very strictly to that purpose, and admonished in the most solemn manner to declare the whole truth, if she intended to do herself any service, or induce the judges to recommend her as an object deserving of mercy.

However, though there was little reason to think that Peggy had told all she knew of the matter, yet that what she said was, in the main, true, there seemed no doubt, as said before, from the correspondence between her story and that of the other evidences, so far as they had discovered with relation to the conspiracy; the only question was, whether it was carried on at Romme's as well as Hughson's? From her lodging and intimacy with the Hughsons, she might be inclined to favour them, and lay the scene at Romme's only, who was then thought to be out of reach, and so make a merit of a fallacious sort of discovery. But we had great hopes, that if she should be convicted upon the indictment for the conspiracy, she would come to a resolution to make an ingenuous confession in order to save herself; and with this expectation, and considering what she had confessed already, the judges were induced to recommend her to the lieutenant governor for a pardon, on this condition nevertheless, that it should not pass the seal till she should be thought amply to have merited it.

And a pardon was accordingly prepared for her, ready to pass the seal when it should be sent for by the judges.



## SUPREME COURT.

THURSDAY, MAY 21.

Present the second and third justices.

The court opened and adjourned till to-morrow morning, 10 o'clock.

## SUPREME COURT.

FRIDAY, MAY 22, A. M.

Present, the second justice. Court opened, and adjourned until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, P. M.

Present, as before. Court opened and adjourned until to-morrow morning, ten o'clock.

The grand jury having been informed that Sawney, Niblet's negro boy, was brought to town and committed upon suspicion of being a confederate in the conspiracy, they requested the court that he might be brought before them; which being accordingly done; upon interrogation Sawney denied he knew any thing of the fires, or any conspiracy concerning them. The grand jury for a long time argued with him, to persuade him to speak the truth; being convinced from the evidence of Mrs. Carpenter's negro,<sup>(y)</sup> who already had been examined by them, that he could give some account of the fires: They told him if he would speak the truth, the governor would pardon him, though he had been concerned in them; and this was the time for him to save his life by making a free and ingenuous confession; or in words to this purpose. He answered, that the time before<sup>(z)</sup> after that the negroes told all they knew, then the white people hanged them. The grand jury assured him, that it was false; for that the negroes which confessed the truth and made a discovery, were certainly pardoned, and shipped off: [which was the truth]—and upon this assurance he began to open, and gave the following evidence.

*Examination of Sawney (Niblet's negro) before the grand jury, No. 1.—He said,*

1. " That about three weeks before the fire at the fort, Quack

(y) A young negro man not accused of the conspiracy.

(z) Hinting at the conspiracy in 1712, before noted on Peggy's examination and confession, No. 1, 2th May.

(Mr. Roosevelt's negro) asked him to assist him to set the fort on fire ; and that he answered no, he would not run the risk of being hanged ; but that he might to go hell and be d—d.

2. " That he heard the said Quack and Mr. Philipse's Cuffee say, they would set fire to Mr. Philipse's storehouse.

3. " That Cuffee said, d—n him, that hang him or burn him, he would set fire to the town.

4. " That William (capt. Lush's Spanish negro) told him, that if they did not send him over to his own country, he would run the city.

5. " That Curracoa Dick said, he would set fire to Mr. Van Zant's storehouse ; and that he was to be a captain.

6. " That Juan (capt. Sarly's negro) said, he would set fire or help to set fire to Hilton's house ; and was to be captain of the fly company.

7. " That Francis (capt. Bosch's negro) threw fire into Mr. Bancker's yard, and told him so.

8. " That Anthony (Mr. Peter Delancey's negro Spaniard) said, he would burn his master's house.

9. " That Augustine (M'Mullen's Spanish negro) said, he would burn his master's house ; and was to have been an officer.

10. " That Jack and an old man(a) (Gerardus Comfort's) said, they would set fire to their master's house, and assist in their designs.

11. " That Cuffee (Gomez's) said, he would burn his master's house ; and was to have been an officer in the fly company ; said so to a country fellow, and he heard him.

12. " That just by Coenties-market he heard Patrick (English's negro) and Cato (col. Moore's) say, they would set fire to their master's houses.

13. " That Fortune (Wilkins') was to set fire to his master's house.

14. " Sawney being asked what the negroes proposed by rising and doing all this mischief ? He answered, ' that their design was to kill all the gentlemen, and take their wives ;' and that Quack(b) and Cuffee (Philipse's) were particular persons that talked so.

15. " That while he was in jail, Francis (capt. Bosch's) said, he would kill him if he told any thing ; and that when Mr. Mills came for him,(c) several negroes winked as he came out.

(a) Cook.

(b) Roosevelt's.

(c) To bring him down to be examined.

16. Being asked if Quack (Mr. Walter's negro) was knowing or concerned in the affair? he answered, no, though he was always cursing the white people.

17. Being asked if he had much acquaintance with Danby, the governor's negro, and if he knew any thing? he answered, ' he had very little; and he believed not.'

18. " That Cæsar (Vaarck's) that was hanged, was concerned, and was to have been captain of the Long Bridge company.(d)

19. " That about a fortnight before the fire at the fort, at Comfort's house, he overheard Jack and the old man (Cook) in company with four other negroes he did not know, talk about the rising of the negroes; and Jack said, that there was not enough of them, and he would stay longer, or to that purpose."

Fortune (Wilkins's negro) was apprehended, examined and committed.

*The examination of Fortune, the negro of John Wilkins, before the grand jury, No. 1.—He said,*

1. " That Quack, the negro of John Roosevelt, about a week or ten days before the fort was burnt, desired him the examinant, to take a walk with him (being Sunday afternoon) and that he went with him into the common; where Quack left him a little while, and went down into the swamp, near the powder-house, where he gathered something, and soon returned to him again.

(d) It seems that the conspirators had divided the city, as it were, into two districts, and the confederates in each were distinguished by the denominations of the *Fly Boys*, and the *Long Bridge Boys*; being remarkable places, the one towards the east, and the other towards the west end of the town. This may be drawn from Cuffee's confession to Arthur Price, set forth in his deposition, 12th May, No. 3. § 6. And in these districts, it should seem, were several companies; for several of the officers were appointed captains, and others, as appears not only by this, but several other examinations, as well as depositions; and this seems to strengthen the evidence given by Peggy in her examinations, that the conspirators held their cabals at Romme's as well as Hughson's; the former being more convenient for the *Long Bridge Boys*, as Hughson's for the *Smith's Fly Boys*, for the mustering the companies, with regard to the respective distances from their homes. And if Peggy told the truth as to Romme, these were the two lodges in the two districts (as may be concluded from the course of the evidence) where the conspirators met; though the ringleaders, or heads of the negroes, such as Cæsar (Vaarck's) Prince (Auboyneau's) and Cuffee (Phillipse's) might resort to both places, for transacting those deeds of darkness and inhumanity, in combination with the most flagitious, degenerated, and abandoned, and scum and dregs of the white people, and others of the worse hearts, if possible, because of abler heads, who entitled themselves to be ten times more the children of *Belial*, than the negroes themselves.

2. " That when Quack came back, the examinant asked him what he had got? To which Quack replied, he would not tell him; but asked him the examinant to go with his to the fort, and he would give him some punch, and see him wife; that accordingly they went to the fort, though the examinant says, that he did not go very willingly.

3. " That when they came to the fort, Quack carried him into the kitchen, where he kept him till it began to grow dark, and then the examinant told Quack, that he must be going, for that the watch would take him up; to which Quack answered, that there was no danger of that.

4. " That Quack gave him no punch, but asked him to drink a dram, which the examinant refused; and so they both came from the fort, keeping company till they came by the house of captain Pearse, where they parted; the examinant returning through Beaver-street, and Quack (as the examinant believed) went back to the fort.

5. " That what is above recited was all that passed between them at their first meeting, on Sunday afternoon; but that two or three days after, Quack met him at the pump near the great slip, but nothing was said or passed between them remarkable.

6. " That about three days after that he met with Quack again, near the house of Mrs. Carpenter, at which place he (Quack) asked him why he was in such haste when he was last at the fort? to which the examinant answered as before, that he was afraid of the watch; to which Quack replied again, that there was no fear of that, and invited him to come and see him again at the fort, but the examinant refused, saying that he had promised him punch before and gave him none.

7. " That about two days before the fort was burnt, he met with Quack again, near the house of Mrs. Rickets, where he told the examinant, that in a few days there would be great alterations in the fort; on which the examinant asked him what alterations? to which Quack answered, that the fort would be burnt: the examinant on that asked him who would do it? Quack replied, you may ask Niblet's negro, and he will tell you. That he did ask Niblet's negro who was to burn the fort? to which he answered, Quack, himself, and Cuffee (Gomez's) they would do it.

8. " That next day after the fire, the examinant met Sandy (Niblet's) who said to him, we have done the business; and the same day he met Quack, who likewise said to him, the business is done; that when Quack told him that the business was done, he asked him what business? to which Quack answered, the

fort is burnt; do you not remember that I told you, there would be a great alteration in the fort? and that he told him at the same time, that he (Quack) Niblet's Sandy, and Gomez's Cuffee had done it."

9. Being further interrogated whether he knew of any other negroes concerned in burning the fort, besides those above named? he answered, "that he knew not of any but Sandy, Quack and Cuffee."

10. Being further asked, if he knew any person concerned in setting fire to any of the houses in the town? he answered, "No."

Jamaica (Ellis's negro, a fiddler) apprehended and committed.

## SUPREME COURT.

SATURDAY, MAY 23.

Present, the second justice.

The court opened and adjourned till Monday morning, 10 o'clock.

*Examination*, of Fortune (Wilkins's) before the grand jury—  
No. 2.

*Memorandum*.—The examination foregoing was read over distinctly to the negro Fortune who acknowledged it to be agreeable to the evidence which he gave yesterday.

1. "The examination being continued, the examinant was asked (since he had time to recollect) whether he did not remember some others concerned in the late fires, besides Quack, Sandy, and Cuffee?(e) If he did, it was expected he should name them, without any regard to persons, be they white men or negroes; he answered in the negative; only that Sandy told him a day or two before his master sent him to prison, that his master was going to send him to Albany; on which the examinant asked him for what? to which Sandy replied, I set fire to the house three times, but my master discovered and extinguished it, and therefore is resolved to send me away.

2. "That on Sunday, the day before the storehouse of Mr. Philipse was set on fire in New-street, being sent towards the evening by his master, on an errand to their apprentice boy, who lived in the Broadway, he went by way of New-street,

(e) Gomez's.

where he saw Cuffee (Mr. Philipse's negro man) and spoke with him, who said that he was going to one of his master's store-houses, on which they parted; and he went to the Broadway, and tarried there till it was duskish: that he returned the same way, and as he came by the house of Captain Phoenix, at the corner of New-street, he saw Cuffee, and two negroes more at some small distance from him, but being dark, who they were knew not.

3. "That he spoke with Cuffee, and asked him what he did there so late? to which Cuffee made answer, that he waited there for his master, who wanted something out of the store-house, and that he was to come and bring the key with him, on which they parted: but he believes one of the two negroes was a Spaniard, because when he left Cuffee, he heard one of them call to him, *venez a qui seignior*.

4. "The question being asked the examinant, whether he was acquainted with Hughson and his family? he answered, that he had been frequently asked by Cæsar, Prince, and Cuffee (Philipse's) to go there, but never did go, but was told that they had a dance there every other night.

5. "Being asked if he ever went to Romme's house, or knew what negroes frequently resorted thither? he answered, that he never went there himself, nor was he acquainted with those that did."

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SUNDAY, MAY 24.

This evening Will, or Gill (Lush's) and Cuffee (Gomez's) negroes were committed.

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SUPREME COURT.

MONDAY, MAY 25.

Present, the second and third justices.

Court opened and adjourned till to-morrow morning, ten o'clock.

*Examination of Sawney, or Sandy, before the grand jury—*  
No. 2.—He said,

1. "That going by Comfort's one Sunday evening, about a month before the fort was set on fire, Jack called him in, where were about twenty negroes, of which he only knew the said Jack and the old man (Comfort's negroes) Fortune (Vanderspiegle's) Cæsar (Peck's) Cato (Cowley's) Sarah, Burk's negro wench, and the only negro woman there.

2. "That upon his coming into the room, they gave him drink, and then asked him to burn houses; and he not giving a ready answer, Sarah swore at him, and the negroes did also; and with knives in their hands, that they frightened him, and he was afraid they would kill him; and upon it, he promised he would, and would burn the Slip-Market, and soon after he went home.

3. "That he saw in his master's yard, Mr. Machado's negro wench called Diana, put fire in the shingles of Mr. Machado's house; and on his telling of it, and saying that it might be laid on him, she gave him four shillings to hold his tongue.

4. "That Sarah and Fortune (Vanderspiegle's) were to have set fire to the meal market.

5. "That at their meeting at Comfort's house, they swore to be true to one another, on the oath, *that God Almighty would strike them dead with the first thunder.*

6. That being asked, if he used Hughson's and Romme's houses with the other negroes, he said, "he never was at either of their houses." And who told him of what he had related? he answered, "that Jack did, and of the Spanish negroes who were concerned." Also, that if he did assist in setting the fort on fire? he answered, "no; only before it, Quack did ask him to help him, and he gave the answer before mentioned, and that then Quack said he would do it.

7. "That Diana (Mr. Machado's negro) in a passion, because her mistress was angry with her, *took her own young child from her breast, and laid it in the cold, that it froze to death.*"

Cæsar (Peck's) Cato (Cowley's) Sarah (Burk's) Fortune (Vanderspiegle's) committed.

*Examination of Sarah, (Mrs. Burk's negro wench) before the grand jury—No. 1.—*After abundance of questions upon Sawney's evidence, she said, "she knew nothing of the matter; evaded about her being at Comfort's house;" but on confronting Sawney with her, and Peck's Cæsar, she at last said, "that Sawney had, at the pump in the neighbourhood, said, supposing his master had been angry with him, G—d d—n all the white people; that if he had it in his power, he would set them all on fire."

SUPREME COURT.

TUESDAY, MAY 26.

Present, the second and third justices.

An ordinance published for enlarging the term to the last Tuesday in June next.

Court adjourned till four o'clock in the afternoon, P. M.

Present, the second justice.

The court opened and adjourned till Thursday, 28th instant, ten o'clock in the morning.

Jack and Cook (Comfort's negroes) apprehended and committed.

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SUPREME COURT.

THURSDAY, MAY 28.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against (Roosevelt's) Quack, and (Philipse's) Cuffee.

These negroes were arraigned upon two indictments, for a conspiracy to burn the town, and murder the inhabitants; and for two actual burnings, the house in the fort, and Mr. Philipse's storehouse; whereto they pleaded *not guilty*.

Ordered, their trials be on to-morrow morning ten o'clock.

Court adjourned till to-morrow morning ten o'clock.

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SUPREME COURT.

FRIDAY, MAY 29.

Present, the second and third justices.

The King against (Roosevelt's) Quack, and (Philipse's) Cuffee, negroes, on trial upon two indictments.

The prisoners brought to the bar. Jury called and sworn, viz. Samuel Weaver, John Shurmer, John Lashier, Charles Arding, George Witts, Thomas Bohenna, Daniel Bonett, John Robins. (f)

(f) The panel being mislaid, no more of the jurors could be re-collected.