

The Life And Adventures Of James Freney



**The Life And Adventures Of  
James Freney**

Written By  
**Himself**

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**CONTENTS**

Title Page .....	3
Introduction by W.M. Thackeray.....	4
Dedication .....	14
The Life and adventures of James Freney .....	15
Epilogue .....	59
Appendix: The Ballad of Bold Captain Freney. ....	60

**Title Page**

THE

Life and Adventures

OF

**JAMES FRENEY,**

COMMONLY CALLED

***CAPTAIN FRENEY:***

From the time of his first entering on the *Highway* in IRELAND, to the time of his *Surrender*.

*Being a Series of five years remarkable Adventures.*

=====  
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.  
=====

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1814

## Introduction by W.M. Thackeray

It is a comfort, meanwhile, to come on occasions on some of the good old stories and biographies. These books were evidently written before the useful had attained its present detestable popularity. There is nothing useful *here*, that's certain; and a man will be puzzled to extract a precise moral out of the *Adventures of Mr. James Freney*; or out of the legends in the *Hibernian Tales*; or out of the lamentable tragedy of the *Battle of Aughrim*, writ in most doleful Anglo-Irish verse. But, are we to reject all things that have not a moral tacked to them? 'Is there any moral shut within the bosom of the rose?' And yet, as the same noble poet sings (giving a smart slap to the utility people the while), 'useful applications lie in art and nature,' and every man may find a moral suited to his mind in them; or, if not a moral, an occasion for moralising.

Honest Freney's adventures (let us begin with history and historic tragedy, and leave fancy for future consideration), if they have a moral, have that dubious one which the poet admits may be elicited from a rose; and which every man may select according to his mind. And surely this is a far better and more comfortable system of moralising than that in the fable-books, where you are obliged to accept the story with the inevitable moral corollary that *will* stick close to it.

Whereas, in Freney's life, one man may see the evil of drinking, another the harm of horse-racing, another the danger attendant on early marriage, a fourth the exceeding inconvenience as well as hazard of the heroic highwayman's life—which a certain Ainsworth, in company with a certain Cruikshank, have represented as so poetic and brilliant, so prodigal of delightful adventure, so adorned with champagne, gold lace, and brocade.

And the best part of worthy Freney's tale is the noble *naïvete* and simplicity of the hero as he recounts his own adventures, and the utter unconsciousness that he is narrating anything wonderful. It is the way of all great men, who recite their great actions modestly, and as if they were matters of course; as indeed to them they are. A common tyro, having perpetrated a great deed, would be amazed and flurried at his own action; whereas I make no doubt the Duke of Wellington, after a great victory, took his tea and went to bed just as quietly as he would after a dull debate in the House of Lords. And so with Freney,—his great and charming characteristic is grave simplicity; he does his work; he knows his danger as well as another; but he goes through his fearful duty quite quietly and easily; and not with the least air of bravado, or the smallest notion that he is doing anything uncommon.

It is related of Carter, the Lion-King, that when he was a boy, and exceedingly fond of gingerbread-nuts, a relation gave him a parcel of those delicious cakes, which the child put in his pocket just as he was called on to go into a cage with a very large and roaring lion. He had to put his head into the forest-monarch's jaws, and leave it there for a considerable time, to the delight of thousands: as is even now the case; and the interest was so much the greater, as the child was exceedingly innocent, rosy-cheeked, and pretty. To have seen that little flaxen head bitten off by the lion would have been a far more pathetic spectacle than that of the decapitation of some grey-bearded, old, unromantic keeper, who had served out raw meat and stirred up the animals with the pole, any time these twenty years; and the interest rose in consequence.

While the little darling's head was thus enjawed, what was the astonishment of everybody to see him put his hand into his little pocket, take out a paper—from the

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

paper a gingerbread-nut—pop that gingerbread-nut into the lion's mouth, then into his own, and so finish at least two-pennyworth of nuts!

The excitement was delirious: the ladies, when he came out of Chancery, were for doing what the lion had not done, and eaten him up—with kisses. And the only remark the young hero made was, 'Uncle, them nuts wasn't so crisp as them I had t'other day.' He never thought of the danger,—he only thought of the nuts.

Thus it is with FRENEY. It is fine to mark his bravery, and to see how he cracks his simple philosophic nuts in the jaws of innumerable lions.

At the commencement of the last century, honest Freney's father was house-steward in the family of Joseph Robbins, Esq., of Ballyduff; and, marrying Alice Phelan, a maid-servant in the same family, had issue JAMES, the celebrated Irish hero. At a proper age James was put to school; but being a nimble, active lad, and his father's mistress taking a fancy to him, he was presently brought to Ballyduff, where she had a private tutor to instruct him, during the time which he could spare from his professional duty, which was that of pantry-boy in Mr. Robbins's establishment. At an early age he began to neglect his duty; and although his father, at the excellent Mrs. Robbins's suggestion, corrected him very severely, the bent of his genius was not to be warped by the rod, and he attended 'all the little country dances, diversions, and meetings, and became what is called a good dancer, his own natural inclinations hurrying him (as he finely says) into the contrary diversions.'

He was scarce twenty years old when he married (a frightful proof of the wicked recklessness of his former courses), and set up in trade in Waterford; where, however, matters went so ill with him, that he was speedily without money, and £50 in debt. He had, he says, not any way of paying the debt, except by selling his furniture or his *riding-mare*, to both of which measures he was averse; for where is the gentleman in Ireland that can do without a horse to ride? Mr. Freney and his riding-mare became soon famous, insomuch that a thief in gaol warned the magistrates of Kilkenny to beware of a *one-eyed man with a mare*.

These unhappy circumstances sent him on the highway to seek a maintenance, and his first exploit was to rob a gentleman of fifty pounds; then to attack another, against whom he 'had a *secret disgust*, because this gentleman had prevented his former master from giving him a suit of clothes!'

Urged by a noble resentment against this gentleman, Mr. Freney, in company with a friend by the name of Reddy, robbed the gentleman's house, taking therein £70 in money, which was honourably divided among the captors.

'We then,' continues Mr. Freney, 'quitted the house with the booty, and came to Thomastown; but not knowing how to dispose of the plate, left it with Reddy, who said he had a friend from whom he would get cash for it. In some time afterwards I asked him for the dividend of the cash he got for the plate, but all the satisfaction he gave me was, that it was lost, which occasioned me *to have my own opinion of him*.'

Mr. Freney then robbed Sir William Fownes' servant of £14, in such an artful manner that everybody believed the servant had himself secreted the money; and no doubt the rascal was turned adrift, and starved in consequence—a truly comic incident, and one that could be used so as to provoke a great deal of laughter, in an historical work of which our champion should be the hero.

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

The next enterprise of importance is that against the house of Colonel Palliser, which Freney thus picturesquely describes. Coming with one of his spies close up to the house, Mr. Freney watched the Colonel lighted to bed by a servant; and thus, as he cleverly says, could judge 'of the room the Colonel lay in.'

'Some time afterwards,' says Freney, 'I observed a light upstairs, by which I judged the servants were going to bed, and soon after observed that the candles were all quenched, by which I assured myself they were all gone to bed. I then came back to where the men were, and appointed Bulger, Motley, and Commons to go in along with me; but Commons answered that he never had been in any house before where there were arms; upon which I asked the coward what business he had there, and swore I would as soon shoot him as look at him, and at the same time cocked a pistol to his breast; but the rest of the men prevailed upon me to leave him at the back of the house, where he might run away when he thought proper.

I then asked Grace where did he choose to be posted; he answered "That he would go where I pleased to order him," for which I thanked him; we then immediately came up to the house, lighted our candles, put Houlahan at the back of the house, to prevent any person from coming out that way, and placed Hacket on my mare, well-armed, at the front; and I then broke one of the windows with a sledge, whereupon Bulger, Motley, Grace, and I got in; upon which I ordered Motley and Grace to go upstairs, and Bulger and I would stay below, where we thought the greatest danger would be; but I immediately, upon second consideration, for fear Motley or Grace should be daunted, desired Bulger to go up with them, and when he had fixed matters above, to come down, as I judged the Colonel lay below. I then went to the room where the Colonel was, and burst open the door; upon which he said, "Odds-wounds! who's there?" to which I answered, "A friend, Sir;" upon which he said, "You lie; by G—d, you are no friend of mine!" I then said that I was, and his relation also, and that if he viewed me close he would know me, and begged of him not to be angry; upon which I immediately seized a bullet-gun and case of pistols, which I observed hanging up in his room. I then quitted his room, and walked round the lower part of the house, thinking to meet some of the servants, whom I thought would strive to make their escape from the men who were above, and meeting none of them, I immediately returned to the Colonel's room; where I no sooner entered than he desired me to go out for a villain, and asked why I bred such disturbance in his house at that time of night; at the same time I snatched his breeches from under his head, wherein I got a small purse of gold, and said that abuse was not fit treatment for me who was his relation, and that it would hinder me of calling to see him again. I then demanded the key of his desk which stood in his room; he answered he had no key; upon which I said I had a very good key; at the same time giving it a stroke with the sledge, which burst it open, wherein I got a purse of ninety guineas, a four-pound piece, two moidores, some small gold, and a large glove, with twenty-eight guineas in silver.

'By this time Bulger and Motley came downstairs to me, after rifling the house above; we then observed a closet inside his room, which we soon entered, and got therein a basket wherein there was plate to the value of three hundred pounds.'

And so they took leave of Colonel Palliser, and rode away with their earnings.

The story, as here narrated, has that simplicity which is beyond the reach of all except the very highest art; and it is not high art certainly which Mr. Freney can be said to possess, but a noble nature rather, which leads him thus grandly to describe scenes

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

wherein he acted a great part. With what a gallant determination does he inform the coward Commons that he would shoot him '*as soon as look at him*'; and how dreadful he must have looked (with his one eye) as he uttered that sentiment! But he left him, he says, with a grim humour, at the back of the house, 'where he might run away when he thought proper.' The Duke of Wellington must have read Mr. Freney's history in his youth (his Grace's birthplace is not far from the scene of the other gallant Irishman's exploit), for the Duke acted in precisely a similar way by a Belgian Colonel at Waterloo.

It must be painful to great and successful commanders to think how their gallant comrades and lieutenants, partners of their toil, their feelings, and their fame, are separated from them by time, by death, by estrangement, nay sometimes by treason. Commons is off, disappearing noiseless into the deep night, whilst his comrades perform the work of danger; and Bulger,—BULGER, who in the above scene acts so gallant a part, and in whom Mr. Freney places so much confidence—actually went away to England, carrying off "some plate, some shirts, a gold watch, and a diamond ring" of the Captain's; and, though he returned to his native country, the valuables did not return with him, on which the Captain swore he would blow his brains out. As for poor Grace, he was hanged, much to his leader's sorrow, who says of him that he was 'the faithfullest of his spies.' Motley was sent to Naas gaol for the very robbery: and though Captain Freney does not mention his ultimate fate, 'tis probable he was hanged too. Indeed, the warrior's life is a hard one, and over misfortunes like these the feeling heart cannot but sigh.

But, putting out of the question the conduct and fate of the Captain's associates, let us look to his own behaviour as a leader. It is impossible not to admire his serenity, his dexterity, that dashing impetuosity in the moment of action, and that aquiline *coup d'œil* which belongs to but few generals. He it is who leads the assault, smashing in the window with a sledge; he bursts open the Colonel's door, who says (naturally enough), 'Odds-wounds! who's there?' 'A friend, Sir,' says Freney. 'You lie! by G—d, you are no friend of mine!' roars the military blasphemer. 'I then said that I was, *and his relation also*, and that if he viewed me close he would know me, and begged of him not to be angry: *upon which I immediately seized* a brace of pistols which I observed hanging up in his room.' That is something like presence of mind: none of your brutal braggadocio work, but neat, wary—nay, sportive bearing in the face of danger. And again, on the second visit to the Colonel's room, when the latter bids him 'go out for a villain, and not breed a disturbance,' what reply makes Freney? '*At the same time I snatched his breeches* from under his head.' A common man would never have thought of looking for them in such a place at all. The difficulty about the key he resolves in quite an Alexandrian manner; and, from the specimen we already have had of the Colonel's style of speaking, we may fancy how ferociously he lay in bed and swore, after Captain Freney and his friends had disappeared with the ninety guineas, the moidores, the four-pound piece, and the glove with twenty-eight guineas in silver.

As for the plate, he hid it in a wood; and then, being out of danger, he sat down and paid everybody his deserts. By the way, what a strange difference of opinion is there about a man's *deserts*! Here sits Captain Freney with a company of gentlemen, and awards them a handsome sum of money for an action which other people would have remunerated with a halter. Which are right? perhaps both: but at any rate it will be admitted that the Captain takes the humane view of the question.

The greatest enemy Captain Freney had was Counsellor Robbins, a son of his old patron, and one of the most determined thief-pursuers the country ever knew. But

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

though he was untiring in his efforts to capture (and of course to hang) Mr. Freney, and though the latter was strongly urged by his friends to blow the Counsellor's brains out; yet, to his immortal honour it is said he refused that temptation, agreeable as it was, declaring that he had eaten too much of that family's bread ever to take the life of one of them, and being besides quite aware that the Counsellor was only acting against him in a public capacity. He respected him, in fact, like an honourable though terrible adversary.

How deep a stratagem-inventor the Counsellor was, may be gathered from the following narration of one of his plans:—

'Counsellor Robbins finding his brother had not got intelligence that was sufficient to carry any reasonable foundation for apprehending us, walked out as if merely for exercise, till he met with a person whom he thought he could confide in, and desired the person to meet him at a private place appointed for that purpose, which they did; and he told that person he had a very good opinion of him, from the character received from his father of him, and from his own knowledge of him, and hoped that the person would then show him that such opinion was not ill founded. The person assuring the Counsellor he would do all in his power to serve and oblige him, the Counsellor told him how greatly he was concerned to hear the scandalous character that part of the country (which had formerly been an honest one) had lately fallen into. That it was said that a gang of robbers who disturbed the country lived thereabouts; the person told him he was afraid what he said was too true; and, on being asked whom he suspected, he named the same four persons Mr. Robbins had, but said he dare not, for fear of being murdered, be too inquisitive, and therefore could not say anything material; the Counsellor asked him if he knew where there was any private ale to be sold; and he said Moll Burke, who lived near the end of Mr. Robbins's avenue, had a barrel or half a barrel. The Counsellor then gave the person a moidore, and desired him to go to Thomastown and buy two or three gallons of whiskey, and bring it to Moll Burke's, and invite as many as he suspected to be either principals or accessories to take a drink, and make them drink very heartily, and when he found they were fuddled, and not sooner, to tell some of the hastiest, that some other had said some bad things of them, so as to provoke them to abuse and quarrel with each other; and then, probably, in their liquor and passion, they might make some discoveries of each other, as may enable the Counsellor to get some one of the gang to discover and accuse the rest.

'The person accordingly got the whisky and invited a good many to drink; but the Counsellor being then at his brother's, a few only went to Moll Burke's, the rest being afraid to venture while the Counsellor was in the neighbourhood; among those who met, there was one Moll Brophy, the wife of Mr. Robbins's smith, and one Edmund or Edward Stapleton, otherwise Gaul, who lived thereabouts; and when they had drank plentifully, the Counsellor's spy told Moll Brophy, Gaul had said she had gone astray with some persons or other; she then abused Gaul, and told him he was one of Freney's accomplices, for that he, Gaul, had told her he had seen Colonel Palliser's watch with Freney, and that Freney had told him, Gaul, that John Welsh and the two Graces had been with him at the robbery.

'The company on their quarrel broke up, and the next morning the spy met the Counsellor at the place appointed, at a distance from Mr. Robbins's house, to prevent suspicion, and there told the Counsellor what intelligence he had got; the Counsellor not being then a justice of the peace, got his brother to send for Moll Brophy to be examined; but when she came, she refused to be sworn or to give any evidence, and

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

thereupon the Counsellor had her tied and put on a car in order to be carried to jail on a *mittimus* from Mr. Robbins, for refusing to give evidence on behalf of the Crown. When she found she would really be sent to jail, she submitted to be sworn, and the Counsellor drew from her what she had said the night before, and something further, and desired her not to tell anybody what she had sworn.'

But if the Counsellor was acute, were there not others as clever as he? For when, in consequence of the information of Mrs. Brophy, some gentlemen who had been engaged in the burglarious enterprises in which Mr. Freney obtained so much honour, were seized and tried, Freney came forward with the best of arguments in their favour. Indeed, it is fine to see these two great spirits matched one against the other,—the Counsellor, with all the regular force of the country to back him—the Highway General, with but the wild resources of his gallant genius, and with cunning and bravery for his chief allies.

I lay by for a considerable time after, and concluded within myself to do no more mischief till after the assizes, when I would hear how it went with the men who were then in confinement. Some time before the assizes Counsellor Robbins came to Ballyduff, and told his brother that he believed Anderson and Welsh were guilty, and also said he would endeavour to have them both hanged, of which I was informed.

'Soon after, I went to the house of one George Roberts, who asked me if I had any regard for those fellows who were then confined (meaning Anderson and Welsh). I told him I had a regard for one of them: upon which he said, he had a friend who was a man of power and interest,—that he would save either of them, provided I would give him five guineas. I told him I would give him ten, and the first gold watch I could get; whereupon he said that it was of no use to speak to his friend without the money or value, for that he was a mercenary man; on which I told Roberts I had not so much money at that time, but that I would give him my watch as a pledge to give his friend. I then gave him my watch, and desired him to engage that I would pay the money which I promised to pay, or give value for it in plate, in two or three nights after; upon which he engaged that his friend would act the needful; when we appointed a night to meet, and we accordingly met; and Roberts told me that his friend agreed to save Anderson and Welsh from the gallows; whereupon I gave him a plate tankard, value £10, a large ladle, value £4, with some tablespoons; and the assizes of Kilkenny, in spring 1748, coming on soon after, Counsellor Robbins had Welsh transmitted from Naas to Kilkenny, in order to give evidence against Anderson and Welsh; and they were tried for Mrs. Mounford's robbery, on the evidence of John Welsh and others. The physic working well, six of the jury were for finding them guilty, and six more for acquitting them; and the other six finding them peremptory, and that they were resolved to starve the others into compliance, as they say they may do by law, were for their own sakes obliged to comply with them, and they were acquitted; on which Counsellor Robbins began to smoke the affair, and suspect the operation of gold dust, which was well applied for my comrades, and thereupon left the court in a rage, and swore he would for ever quit the country, since he found people were not satisfied with protecting and saving the rogues they had under themselves, but must also show that they could and would oblige others to have rogues under them whether they would or no.'

Here Counsellor Robbins certainly loses that greatness which has distinguished him in his former attack on Freney; the Counsellor is defeated and loses his temper. Like Napoleon, he is unequal to reverses, but in adverse fortune his presence of mind deserts him.

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

But what call had he to be in a passion at all? It may be very well for a man to be in a rage because he is disappointed of his prey: so is the hawk, when the dove escapes, in a rage; but let us reflect that, had Counsellor Robbins had his will, two honest fellows would have been hanged; and so let us be heartily thankful that he was disappointed, and that these men were acquitted by a jury of their countrymen. What right had the Counsellor, forsooth, to interfere with their verdict? Not against Irish juries at least does the old satire apply, 'And culprits hang that jurymen may dine.' At Naas, on the contrary, the jurymen starved in order that the culprits might be saved—a noble and humane act of self-denial.

In another case, stern justice, and the law of self-preservation, compelled Mr. Freney to take a very different course with respect to one of his ex-associates. In the former instance we have seen him pawning his watch, giving up tankard, tablespoons—all, for his suffering friends; here we have his method of dealing with traitors.

One of his friends, by the name of Anderson, was taken prisoner, and condemned to be hanged, which gave Mr. Freney, he says, 'a great shock'; but presently this Anderson's fears were worked upon by some traitors within the gaol, and—

'He then consented to discover; but I had a friend in gaol at the same time, one Patrick Healy, who daily insinuated to him that it was of no use or advantage to him to discover anything, as he received sentence of death; and that, after he had made a discovery, to leave him as he was, without troubling themselves about a reprieve. But notwithstanding, he told the gentleman that there was a man *blind of an eye, who had a bay mare*, that lived at the other side of Thomastown Bridge, *whom* he assured them would be very troublesome in that neighbourhood after his death. When Healy discovered what he told the gentleman, he one night took an opportunity, and made Dooling fuddled, and prevailed upon him to take his oath he never would give the least hint about me any more. He also told him the penalty that attended infringing upon his oath; but more especially as he was at that time near his end, which had the desired effect; for he never mentioned my name, nor even anything relative to me,' and so went out of the world repenting of his meditated treason.

What further exploits Mr. Freney performed may be learned by the curious in his history: they are all, it need scarcely be said, of a similar nature to that noble action which has already been described. His escapes from his enemies were marvellous; his courage in facing them equally great. He is attacked by whole 'armies,' through which he makes his way; wounded, he lies in the woods for days together with three bullets in his leg, and in this condition manages to escape several 'armies' that have been marched against him. He is supposed to be dead, or travelling on the Continent, and suddenly makes his appearance in his old haunts, advertising his arrival by robbing ten men on the highway in a single day: and, so terrible is his courage, or so popular his manners, that he describes scores of labourers looking on while his exploits were performed, and not affording the least aid to the roadside traveller whom he vanquished.

But numbers always prevail in the end; what could Leonidas himself do against an army? The gallant band of brothers led by Freney were so pursued by the indefatigable Robbins and his myrmidons, that there was no hope left for them, and the Captain saw that he must succumb.

He reasoned, however, with himself (with his usual keen logic), and said:—

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

'My men must fall,—the world is too strong for us, and, to-day or to-morrow,—it matters scarcely when they must yield. They will be hanged for a certainty, and thus will disappear the noblest company of knights the world has ever seen.

'But as they will certainly be hanged, and no power of mine can save them, is it necessary that I should follow them too to the tree; and will James Bulger's fate be a whit more agreeable to him, because James Freney dangles at his side? To suppose so, would be to admit that he was actuated by a savage feeling of revenge, which I know belongs not to his generous nature.'

In a word, Mr. Freney resolved to turn king's evidence; for though he swore (in a communication with the implacable Robbins) that he would rather die than betray Bulger, yet when the Counsellor stated that he must then die, Freney says, 'I promised to submit, and *understood that Bulger should be set.*'

Accordingly some days afterwards (although the Captain carefully avoids mentioning that he had met his friends with any such intentions as those indicated in the last paragraph) he and Mr. Bulger came together: and, strangely enough, it was agreed that the one was to sleep while the other kept watch; and, while thus employed, the enemy came upon them. But let Freney describe for himself the last passages of his history:—

'We then went to Welsh's house, with a view not to make any delay there; but, taking a glass extraordinary after supper, Bulger fell asleep. Welsh, in the meantime, told me his house was the safest place I could get in that neighbourhood, and while I remained there I would be very safe, provided that no person knew of my coming there (I had not acquainted him that Breen knew of my coming that way). I told Welsh that, as Bulger was asleep, I would not go to bed till morning: upon which Welsh and I stayed up all night, and in the morning Welsh said that he and his wife had a call to Callan, it being market-day. About nine o'clock I went and awoke Bulger, desiring him to get up and guard me whilst I slept, as I guarded him all night; he said he would, and then I went to bed charging him to watch close, for fear we should be surprised. I put my blunderbuss and two cases of pistols under my head, and soon fell fast asleep. In two hours after, the servant-girl of the house, seeing an enemy coming into the yard, ran up to the room where we were, and said that there were an hundred men coming into the yard; upon which Bulger immediately awoke me, and, taking up my blunderbuss, he fired a shot towards the door, which wounded Mr. Burgess, one of the sheriffs of Kilkenny, of which wound he died. They concluded to set the house on fire about us, which they accordingly did; upon which I took my fusee in one hand, and a pistol in the other, and Bulger did the like, and as we came out of the door, we fired on both sides, imagining it to be the best method of dispersing the enemy, who were on both sides of the door. We got through them, but they fired after us, and as Bulger was leaping over a ditch he received a shot in the small of the leg, which rendered him incapable of running; but, getting into a field, where I had the ditch between me and the enemy, I still walked slowly with Bulger, till I thought the enemy were within shot of the ditch, and then wheeled back to the ditch and presented my fusee at them; they all drew back and went for their horses to ride round, as the field was wide and open, and without cover except the ditch. When I discovered their intention I stood in the middle of the field, and one of the gentlemen's servants (there were fourteen in number) rode foremost towards me; upon which I told the son of a coward I believed he had no more than five pounds a year from his master, and that I would put him in such a condition that his master would not maintain him afterwards. To which he answered that he had

no view of doing us any harm, but that he was commanded by his master to ride so near us; and then immediately rode back to the enemy, who were coming towards him. They rode almost within shot of us, and I observed they intended to surround us in the field, and prevent me from having any recourse to the ditch again. Bulger was at this time so bad with the wound, that he could not go one step without leaning on my shoulder. At length, seeing the enemy coming within shot of me, I laid down my fusee and stripped off my coat and waistcoat, and running towards them, cried out, "You sons of cowards, come on, and I will blow your brains out;" on which they returned back, and then I walked easy to the place where I left my clothes, and put them on, and Bulger and I walked leisurely some distance farther. The enemy came a second time, and I occasioned them to draw back as before, and then we walked to Lord Dysart's deer-park wall. I got up the wall and helped Bulger up. The enemy, who still pursued us, though not within shot, seeing us on the wall, one of them fired a random shot at us to no purpose. We got safe over the wall, and went from thence into my Lord Dysart's wood, where Bulger said he would remain, thinking it a safe place; but I told him he would be safer anywhere else, for the army of Kilkenny and Callan would be soon about the wood, and that he would be taken if he stayed there. Besides, as I was very averse to betraying him at all, I could not bear the thoughts of his being taken in my company by any party but Lord Carrick's. I then brought him about half a mile beyond the wood, and left him there in a brake of briars, and looking towards the wood I saw it surrounded by the army. There was a cabin near that place where I fixed Bulger: he said he would go to it at night, and he would send for some of his friends to take care of him. It was then almost two o'clock, and we were four hours going to that place, which was about two miles from Welsh's house. Imagining that there were spies fixed on all the fords and by-roads between that place and the mountain, I went towards the bounds of the county Tipperary, where I arrived about nightfall, and going to a cabin, I asked whether there was any drink sold near that place? The man of the house said there was not; and as I was very much fatigued, I sat down, and there refreshed myself with what the cabin afforded. I then begged of the man to sell me a pair of his brogues and stockings, as I was then barefooted, which he accordingly did. I quitted the house, went through Kinsheenhah and Poulacoppal, and having so many thorns in my feet, I was obliged to go barefooted, and went to Sleedelagh, and through the mountains, till I came within four miles of Waterford, and going into a cabin, the man of the house took eighteen thorns out of the soles of my feet, and I remained in and about that place for some time after.

'In the meantime a friend of mine was told that it was impossible for me to escape death, for Bulger had turned against me, and that his friends and Stack were resolved upon my life; but the person who told my friend so, also said, that if my friend would set Bulger and Breen, I might get a pardon through the Earl of Carrick's means and Counsellor Robbins's interest. My friend said that he *was sure I would not consent to such a thing, but the best way was to do it unknown to me*; and my friend accordingly set Bulger, who was taken by the Earl of Carrick and his party, and Mr. Fitzgerald, and six of Counsellor Robbins's soldiers, and committed to Kilkenny jail. He was three days in jail before I heard he was taken, being at that time twenty miles distant from the neighbourhood; nor did I hear from him or see him since I left him near Lord Dysart's wood, *till a friend came and told me it was to preserve my life and to fulfil my articles that Bulger was taken.*'

\* \* \* \* \*

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

'Finding I was suspected, I withdrew to a neighbouring wood and concealed myself there till night, and then went to Ballyduff to Mr. Fitzgerald and surrendered myself to him, till I could write to my Lord Carrick, which I did immediately, and gave him an account of what I escaped, or that I would have gone to Ballylynch and surrendered myself there to him, and begged his lordship to send a guard for me to conduct me to his house, which he did, and I remained there for a few days.

'He then sent me to Kilkenny jail; and at the summer assizes following, James Bulger, Patrick Hacket, otherwise Bristeen, Martin Millea, John Stack, Felix Donnelly, Edmund Kenny, and James Larrassy were tried, convicted, and executed; and at spring assizes following, George Roberts was tried for receiving Colonel Palliser's gold watch, knowing it to be stolen, but was acquitted on account of exceptions taken to my pardon, which prevented my giving evidence. At the following assizes, when I had got a new pardon, Roberts was again tried for receiving the tankard, ladle, and silver spoons from me, knowing them to be stolen, and was convicted and executed. At the same assizes, John Reddy, my instructor, and Martin Millea were also tried, convicted, and executed.'

And so they were all hanged: James Bulger, Patrick Hacket or Bristeen, Martin Millea, John Stack and Felix Donnelly, and Edmund Kenny and James Larrassy, with Roberts, who received the Colonel's watch, the tankard, ladle, and the silver spoons, were all convicted and all executed. Their names drop naturally into blank verse. It is hard upon poor George Roberts too: for the watch he received was no doubt in the very inexpressibles which the Captain himself took from the Colonel's head.

As for the Captain himself, he says that, on going out of jail, Counsellor Robbins and Lord Carrick proposed a subscription for him—in which, strangely, the gentlemen of the county would not join, and so that scheme came to nothing; and so he published his memoirs in order to get himself a little money. Many a man has taken up the pen under similar circumstances of necessity.

But what became of Captain Freney afterwards does not appear. Was he an honest man ever after? Was he hanged for subsequent misdemeanours? It matters little to him now; though, perhaps, one cannot help feeling a little wish that the latter fate may have befallen him.

Whatever his death was, however, the history of his life has been one of the most popular books ever known in this country. It formed the class-book in those rustic universities which are now rapidly disappearing from among the hedges of Ireland. And lest any English reader should, on account of its lowness, quarrel with the introduction here of this strange picture of wild courage and daring, let him be reconciled by the moral at the end, which, in the persons of Bulger and the rest, hangs at the beam before Kilkenny jail.

From *The Irish Sketch-Book*, 1843

## Dedication

TO SOMERSET HAMILTON BUTLER, EARL OF CARRICK.

MY LORD, As I owe my life to your Lordship, by whose interest and intercession I obtained his MAJESTY's most gracious pardon, I am in duty bound to dedicate the following account of my past life to your Lordship, and your own well-known zeal to serve your country, for which the grand jury of the county of Kilkenny, in the most public manner, at the close of their presentments, returned you on behalf of the county, their most sincere thanks, entitle you to a preference, before all others, to the patronage of this account of my past life, in which I have avoided as much as could, enlarging on the pains and expenses your Lordship was at, in abolishing that notion and scheme of protection, which had for too many years prevailed in the county of Kilkenny, and was the real source from whence the practice of horse, cow, and sheep stealing, and house-breaking sprang, and continued so long in that country; for while the many honest and well-meaning men, either through indolence or backwardness, suffer a few who regard only their own profit, and not the welfare of their neighbours, or the public; to make use of indirect means to screen and save the guilty; your Lordship's zeal and resolution has roused up others to imitate your example, and to concur in preventing such pernicious schemes from taking effect as formerly. This is a truth so well-known and allowed of, that anything I could say to prove it might look ridiculous, and I fear to offend your Lordship, who choose to do good merely for the sake of doing good, without any notion or desire of ostentation, or being rewarded on that account; both which I am sensible you have too great a soul not to despise. I shall for the welfare and happiness of your Lordship, and your family, who am your Lordship's,

Most Obedient,  
Most Humble  
And thankful servant  
JAMES FRENEY.

## The Life and adventures of James Freney

My father John Freney was about forty-six years ago taken into the service of Joseph Robbins, then of Ballyduff, in the county of Kilkenny, Esq. the father of the present George, and counsellor Joseph Robbins. He was then a young boy, but behaving very diligently, honestly, and soberly, Mr. Robbins, his master, had him instructed by his gardener in such a manner, so as to understand what was fit and necessary for planting and taking care of those things, which from a country kitchen-garden were necessary for supplying a gentleman's house, in a useful and plentiful manner; and Mr Robbins finding my father continue very sober, diligent and honest, he had him then instructed how to make malt, and do many other things necessary and convenient about a country gentleman's house.

My father's behaviour still recommended him to the favour of his master, and my father married Alice Phelan, then a servant maid in Mr Robbin's house, where she continued till she proved with child, and then she went to her father's, who lived at Inishtioge, near Ballyduff, and there I was born. My father's continued good behaviour drew on him the confidence of his master, in such a manner, hat his master made him his land-bailiff or steward, and trusted him with the superintendence of all his country business, which he thought fell under my father's capacity; and from his continued sober and diligent conduct and behaviour, old Mr. Robbins had such an opinion of him, that a little before his death he recommended him to his eldest son George Robbins, Esq. as a person his son might safely confide in, and old Mr. Robbins dying at the beginning of December 1784, his son George Robbins, on the recommendation of his father, and on his own knowledge and observation of my father's behaviour, continued him in his family in the same holding, and with the same freedom and allowances which my father had enjoyed under him, Mr. Robbins; and my father's behaviour under George Robbins, Esq. having greatly ingratiated him to his master and mistress. Mrs. Robbins made my father take me from a country school, which I daily went to, and brought me into her house at Ballyduff, where she had me instructed by a country school-master, whom she paid for coming thither frequently for chat purpose; but I generally attended as a pantry-boy, and at table, and being very active and nimble, my mistress grew fonder of me. She was very strict in keeping me to my duty, but as I grew up, I became more careless, and attending all the little country dances, diversions and meetings, I became what is among them deemed a good dancer; and my own natural inclination hurrying me into the contrary diversions too frequently, so as to neglect giving proper attendance to my service, in my master's family. My master who was very easy in his temper and withal very infirm, so as to be obliged to use crutches generally, directed my father to correct me which he frequently did, and sometimes so very severely, that my good-natured master frequently scolded him for being over-severe to me, but my father told him, that I was so much bent on pursuing my pleasures, that I never would come to any good, unless I was kept more closely confined to some business, which would not allow me the same time and opportunities of pursuing my idle diversions, which I had in my master's family, and he proposed to bind me an apprentice to some tradesman; but as I was very handy and ready in my place, as servant and butler, my mistress, unwilling to part with me, told my father that she would put me to a trade herself; but as I too frequently absented myself from my service, to follow my pleasure, she in some time after asked me whether I was willing to be bound apprentice, which I positively refused, being of an idle disposition, and delighted in nothing but hurling, horse-racing, gaming, dancing, and such like diversions. But my mistress who kept me more to my duty than

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

I knew my master would, dying in December 1724, I then gloried in being my own master, not regarding the wholesome advice of Mr. Robbins, or my father.

I then married, and with the fortune I got with my wife, and what I had myself, I set up public business in Waterford; in spite of several gentleman of the city, who opposed me saying, I had no right, as not being free of the city. I then was eleven times summoned to the hall before I took the least notice of any summons. I then appeared upon the twelfth summons, and one of the gentlemen, then present, said, I had no right to apply to the hall, but my petition, as I took so little notice of the many summonses sent me before. I, not regarding what the gentleman said, walked up among the midst of the gentlemen, and asked them would any of them take a bottle, up on which one stood up and asked me who put that in my head? I turned about taking particular notice of the gentleman, and walked out without making him an answer, but took care to meet him near the quay soon afterwards, and brought him to an account for being so particular in asking me questions and told him if I was not mistaken, I had often seen him go over the Ferry and that I did not despair of meeting him in a part of the county of Kilkenny, where I was sure I could get satisfaction from him, upon which he insisted on my taking a bottle with him, and swore he was prompted to say so by another, otherwise he would not say it, and assured me of his friendship and interest. In eight or ten days I was again summoned eight times before I appeared, and then appeared at the hall, where the gentlemen then present, unanimously asked me, why I did not become free of the city before I opened house, to which I replied, that I thought my wife had a better right to set up in the town than any of them who opposed me. They then answered, that I should pay them immediately for my freedom, or they would rifle my house, I then walked out of the hall, and meeting a neighbour, I told him I would maim the first man that would disturb my house, and that wherever I met a single man of them, I would use him ill; and as I understood some time afterwards they were informed of my intent, therefore they did not come to the house.

I then quitted Waterford, vowing revenge on their threats and menaces to me, and came to Thomastown in the county of Kilkenny, where I remained till my money was quite out, and I was fifty pounds in debt. Nor had I any ways or means to pay the debt or any part of it, except by selling my furniture or riding mare, my creditors were daily drawing upon me, and I putting them off with faint excuses and promises; until at length one John Ready, who had formerly been one of the robbers, commonly known by the name of the Kellymount Gang, but who had been pardoned for making some discoveries, who was then a neighbour of mine, told me, that there was a fair at hand, and that there was a number of drovers to be there; who, he said, would have a great deal of cash; and told me, that my only remedy to extricate myself from my creditors, was to make to the highway, and that he would get three or four men to assist me, and desired me to meet him next night at Gowran, which I according did.

He brought with him one Felix Donnelly, and Richard Dooling, Donnelly refused, but Dooling consented to go. Accordingly he and I went, and we were not long on the road that day, before we overtook a strange gentleman whom I immediately approached and bid him, stand and deliver. Whereupon he attempted to make his escape, and said, that was no usage for a gentleman, on the King's road of a Sabbath day; but I little regarding what he said, obliged him immediately to give me fifty pounds, out of which I returned him one pound thirteen shillings and ten pence, to bear his expenses, as he said he had a great way to travel. I then rode across the country and returned to Thomastown, and delayed the gentleman's money towards the discharge of my debts. I still remained at Thomastown, till I had spent what I had left of the

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

gentleman's money, after paying part of my debts, by sporting and frequenting taverns, and going to hurlings, races and cock-fights.

I then had recourse to John Reddy, & told him I had a secret disgust to a gentleman, one Mr. Collier, a clergyman, who prevented my former master Mr. Robbins, from giving me a suit of clothes, to which Reddy answered, that he and I would go and borrow as much money from him, as would buy two suits of clothes for me, and we accordingly concluded upon a night: to put that design in execution, and I went to Mr. Collier's house near Rashercon, accompanied by Reddy, and Richard Dooling, aforesaid, where after blackening our faces and lighting our candles broad, Reddy desiring Dooling and me to take a sledge, which he brought from a neighbouring forge, and to break open a sash window; but I answered Reddy and said, he had the best right to go in, being experienced; to which he replied that he would, but that he was afraid of being known. I then whispered Dooling, and told him, I imagined Reddy was a coward, and that we ought not to trust him as sentry, as he objected to the going in: then called Reddy to reach the candles to Dooling, who was within, and when he came near the window, I took fast hold of him by the fork, and threw him headlong into the window, and desired him to go to the street door and open it for me, and that I would go in and help him and Dooling to settle the house. He then let me in, and I immediately went to Mrs. Collier's room along with Reddy, after posting Dooling sentry upon a gentleman, who lay in the house (Mr. Collier being from home,) I no sooner entered Mrs. Collier's room, than I observed one of the sash windows raised up, by which I judged that some person had gone out of the window, and I said, the nest was there, but the birds were flown. Upon which I run into the orchard, and observed Mrs. Collier at a considerable distance, making all possible speed towards the neighbouring houses at Rosbercon; but I soon overtook her and obliged her to come back. Reddy intended throwing her into the window she went out of; but I taking pity upon her, brought her in through the street door, to the room where a gentleman lay, whom I there discovered to be her son-in-law; and she entreated me to let her go to bed to him, which I consented to; and assured her she should meet with no ill-treatment. I then demanded her money, plate and watch, all which she delivered, except the watch, which she said Mr. Collier had taken with him, together with seventy pounds, which she said he brought from Waterford the night before, and had about him.

We then quitted the house with the booty, and came to Thomastown; I not knowing how to dispose of the plate, left the disposal of it to Reddy, who said he had a friend, from whom he would get cash for it. In some time afterwards, I asked Reddy for my dividend of the cash he got for the plate, but all the satisfaction he gave me, was, that it was lost, which occasioned me to suspect he was too sharp for me.

In the year 1745, it was currently reported in and about Thomastown, and all the neighbourhood, that one William Joyce, of Inistioge, had lost a quart bottle full of gold, which, as it was said, was found by a servant boy of his, in a heap of malt; which report reached my ear, and soon after, I heard that the servant had returned the money, upon which I applied to John Reddy, and informed him that the cash was then in Joyce's house, and desired him to procure me two strangers to assist me to rob Joyce, which he immediately consented to, but did not procure them before three days were expired; in which time I heard that the money was sent to Waterford, but was diffident thereof, therefore concluded to know the certainty. When the two men came, who were the aforesaid Donnelly and Dooling, in conjunction with whom and one John Anderson and Joseph Walsh, who lived in the service of my master, but whom I corrupted, and procured to go with us, went to the town of Inistioge, late at night, and immediately

broke open the door; upon which Mr. Joyce asked who was there? We all answered friends, and immediately asked him where was the gold that was in dispute between him and his boys. Mrs. Joyce answered, she had not one penny; for that the Kellymount gang had taken it all from her. But not minding such an excuse, we made a close search, and found in Mr. Joyce's chest of drawers, forty guineas, with some plate: and also got a large quantity of halfpence in a bag, which we imagined at first to be gold, but afterwards found ourselves mistaken. We then departed from Inistioge, and I came directly to Thomastown; and each of the rest to his respective place of abode. In two or three days afterwards, I was going through Inistioge, and thought proper to go see Mrs. Joyce, whom I assured I was heartily sorry for the loss I heard she lately sustained; for which she returned me most unfeigned thanks, and vowed she was not at all diffident of my good nature; and told me 'twas not her money that was taken, but that old fool's money (pointing to her husband) who always dreaded the name of a tory. I then parted Mrs. Joyce, but not before I took a friendly farewell.

Soon after I learned, that Sir Wm. Fownes sent a servant of his to Kilkenny, to bring home cash for a bill of one hundred pounds; which servant was my own school-fellow for seven years, and could not devise what way to get the money from him undiscovered, till at length I applied to one John Welsh, who was a cotter under Mr. Robbins, and whom I imagined to be fit for my purpose; I was not mistaken; for I no sooner discovered my intention to him, than he readily consented to assist me, I then desired Welsh to meet me at Thomastown bridge about sunset; as I judged Sir William's man would not come by till it was duskish. I then invited two or three honest neighbours to drink with me, that if Sir William's man should happen to know me, the cause might be the plainer on my side; I also sat in a window fronting the road, so that it was impossible for him to go by unknown to me. When it was duskish I made an excuse to my company, and told them I had a call to my own house, and would be back with them in a little time. I then went about five or six hundred yards beyond the town, and was not there two minutes before Sir William's man came by, I intended changing my clothes, but his sudden approach prevented me. When he came within five or six yards of me, he asked who was there? To which I made no reply, imagining he would know my voice; but when he came within reach of me; I seized him and dragged him off his horse and pinioned him in such a manner, that he could not stir, and took from him fourteen pounds only, instead of the hundred pounds which I expected. I then made all possible speed back to my company (but look care to hide the money for fear of a search.) I stayed drinking with my company till twelve o'clock that night. In some short time after I met John Reddy, who was very anxious to know from me, whether I knew of the robbery committed on Sir William's servant; I utterly denied I did. Reddy then said, as did the neighbours also, that they believed he had lost no money, but that he kept it himself.

Sir William's servant then gave information against one of the neighbours whom he said, he verily believed was the person that robbed him; but the neighbours in general insisted, that the man he charged was honest, and I knowing him to be so, used my endeavours to influence some of the neighbours, with whom I had a particular acquaintance, to bail the man.

I lay by for some time after, till Felix Donnelly aforesaid, one of my spies, informed me that one Mr. Anderson of Dumbell, in the Co. of Kilkenny, who was a hearth-money collector, had lately received four hundred pounds, which he said that he had in the house, and was positive thereof, having such sure intelligence. And further said, that if he went with me that night, he would be known; therefore desired me to get

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

some other person in his place, as he was sure he would be suspected for that robbery. I then told him he might secure himself as well as he could, for that I could get men exclusive of him to aid and assist me in robbing Mr. Anderson, and that I did not want his assistance. I then told him, that John Reddy, Richard Dooling, and John Motley should be my accomplices, and that I would also apply to John Reddy, to get me two more; and upon application to Reddy he told me, he knew no person so fit for my purpose, as one James Bulger, who was near relation of Richard Dooling's, and an experienced sheep-stealer, and believed he would make a very fit hand if he was employed. We then appointed a night, to meet at eleven o'clock, and conclude the matter, at a remarkable place, near Mr. Anderson's house, and we accordingly met and agreed upon robbing the house, *nem.con.* We then lighted our candle on the outside of the house, and finding the house to be very strong, we attacked several windows with proper utensils for the purpose, to baffle the people within, whom we apprehended to be upon their guard, so that they could not judge which window we intended to get in at. At length we imagined delays were dangerous, and broke open a window by a stratagem, which was as follows: I planted Motley on one side, and Reddy at the other side of the house, with directions to make a prodigious noise at the window of each side. During which time, Bulger, Dooling and I got in; and we no sooner entered, than we knocked down two men who were posted as sentries to guard the house. Mrs. Anderson at the same time stood at some distance from them encouraging them, but to no purpose, for we soon made ourselves masters of the house, and rifled it of what was most considerable, which was plate and some money; bur as I understood afterwards, Mrs. Anderson had a purse of gold, which she took an opportunity of dropping in a tub of water, which was the gold my spy had got an account of. I then quitted the house with reluctance, having missed so considerable a booty, and came to Thomastown and each of the rest to their respective places of abode.

Soon after Mr. Robbins of Ballyduff, sent for me, and advised me to quit Thomastown, saying, it was a place of no trade or business, and to send my wife to him as housekeeper, and send my child to my father's, at which I did not seem at all overjoyed, but said, that in compliance to his advice and directions I would do so, but in fact was inwardly pleased to be then at my full liberty to take a fling where I pleased.

Mr. Robbins then spoke to his sister to prevail upon me to go and live in the house with him as his own servant, but I refused her. He then sent to her a second time, in his own name, and the reason I then assigned for refusing was, that as my wife was in the house before, if any extraordinary extravagance happened, it might be imputed to me, upon which she answered, that her brother would never forgive me if I did not go. I at length consented to go live in Mr. Robbins's house, but at the same time told Mr. Robbin's sister, that I chose to go abroad, being inwardly in dread that the facts I committed would come to light; she assigned several circumstances and reasons why I should do better at home, as also, set forth the expenses and other inconveniences that attend travelling in a strange country. I then urged the former Mrs. Robbins (my good benefactress's) death, and that I could not well withstand the sight of any other woman in her place, in that house, Mr. Robbins being then married to a second wife. Upon which she assured me that the then Mrs. Robbins expressed a great deal of friendship for me, as I lived so long in the family, and believed she would be very kind to me. I answered, that if she was not kind to me, I would stay but a short time with her, and that I also should have keeping for a mare (I then had) in Mr. Robbin's stable along with his own horses, for that if I wanted to go about my own business, I did not choose to ride any of his horses; at the same time well knowing within myself, the truth of my

mare, and that I did not imagine he had a horse so fit for my purpose. She then told me I should not only have that besides my wages, but several other benefits not mentioned to me. Upon which I went to the house, where I had not been long, before I discovered, that Mr. Robbins's chief motives for hiring me, was, that as there was such a disturbance then in the country, and that he was not only well assured of my honesty but of my courage, that I would be a great means to defend his house from any attempt that could be made on it. During which time, Dooling, Donnelly and Motley, aforesaid, together with one John Miles and Peter ——, robbed one Edward Pendergast, a tenant of Lord Carrick's about the latter end of the year 1745, of the sum of forty pounds or thereabouts, whose house (by what I learned) was opened to them by a girl, a relation of Donnelly's, who resorted the house. Upon which Lord Carrick's steward wrote to him to Dublin, that his tenant was robbed. In answer to which, my Lord Carrick desired him to spare no cost in apprehending Dooling, or any other suspected person in that neighbourhood; upon which my Lord's steward employed spies about the neighbourhood to find out Dooling, and others whom he suspected, and also prepared men and arms.

On a Sunday in the afternoon, my then master, Mr. Robbins, desired me to prepare myself to go the next morning to Carrick, to buy a hogshead of wine and other necessaries for his house; and the same evening I fell sick, but notwithstanding I got up early on Monday morning and set out for Carrick, where finding myself still unwell, I took half a pint of brandy at Carrick, and went to the wine merchant, and paid for the wine and other articles, and sent them home by the carman. I then fell in to drink punch with a couple of friends, and then fell to claret, and about sunset left Carrick, and came to Mr. Cooke's at Castletown (who was a relation of my new mistress's) where I was well used that night; and the next morning overtook the carman at Knocktopher, and finding myself still ill, I alighted and drank drams of brandy and beer to excess, thinking thereby to get rid of my disorder.

I then came home to Mr. Robbins and produced my receipts from the wine merchant and was at the same time very ill; and told Mr. Robbins I would go home to my father's till I got rid of my disorder; to which Mrs. Robbins, who was then present, answered that I should not quit the house, and that she would send for a physician for me; and immediately ordered whey to be made for me, and a nurse-tender to take care of me. The smallpox appeared through my skin the next morning, upon which the physician was sent for, who in a short time despaired of my recovery, as did also all people who saw me; but one man to whom I was very prejudicial, by bringing men to hurl on a piece of ground of his that he intended for a meadow: said there was no danger of me, as I had the old proverb of my side.

In the meantime, Dooling being closely pursued sought me in several places, not knowing I was ill, till he was informed thereof, by one Anderson, of whom he enquired for me and when Anderson told him of my present condition, he burst into tears, and said he was a dead man, as I was not up to direct him to some of my places of rendezvous for protection. And immediately went into the neighbourhood of Burnchurch and Kells, where he had not long remained before he was taken by my Lord Carrick's men, and sent to Kilkenny gaol. I being so dangerously ill at this time that Anderson and Welsh, two of my gang were loath to tell me that he was taken, for fear of raising my disorder to a greater height; but Walsh agreed to go to Kilkenny to Dooling, which he accordingly did, and begged of him not to make mention of a dying man's name (meaning me) for that if he had a mind to turn King's evidence to save his own life, he believed he could bring in a good many exclusive of me; (Dooling not knowing at the same time that Welsh was one of my party.) To which Dooling answered

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

that he would suffer death sooner than mention my name, for that he loved me above all men living; and desired Welsh not to inform me of his confinement, till I was in a state of recovery which he hoped would be before the assizes. I then recovered, and was told by Anderson and Welsh of Dooling's confinement; which gave me a shock, and I immediately remitted him money by Anderson; as I would not send Welsh a second time to him, the better to avoid suspicion, I still fed him with money till his trial was over, and that he was condemned to die, at Lent Assizes 1746; at which time I learned, that several gentlemen promised to join getting him a reprieve, provided he would discover his accomplices in the several robberies he was in.

He then consented to discover, but I had a friend in gaol at the same time, one Patrick Healy, who daily insinuated to him, that it was of no use or advantage to him to discover anything, as he received sentence of death; and that after he had made a discovery to leave him as he was, without troubling themselves about a reprieve. But notwithstanding he told the gentlemen, that there was a man blind of an eye, who had a bay mare, that lived at the other side of Thomastown bridge, whom he assured them would be very troublesome in that neighbourhood after his death. When Healy discovered that he told the gentleman, he one night took an opportunity; and made Dooling fuddled, and prevailed upon him to take his oath he never would give the least hint about me anymore. He also represented to him the penalty that attended infringing upon his oath; but more especially, as he was at that time near his end, which had the desired effect; for he never mentioned my name, nor even anything relative to me. I lay by for a considerable time, after, and in the meantime, Miles and Peter Donnelly, aforesaid, who were concerned with Dooling, in the robbery committed on my Lord's steward, went off to England, and John Reddy was at this time taken up, on suspicion of stealing a horse and some cows from his sister-in-law, with whom Bulger was company, for which Reddy was sent to Kilkenny gaol. All the gentlemen in the neighbourhood said they believed Ready was chief in all or most of the robberies committed in and about the neighbourhood, which Reddy's wife informed me of, but told me that if she had 5 guineas to give a certain friend of hers, he would get her husband out of gaol. I told her that if that would extricate him, I'd either give her the money or the value of it in plate, which she said would do as well. Upon which I gave her a plate watch, a snuff-box, and a pound weight of plate; and told her at the same time, I had an affair on foot which would convince the gentlemen in the neighbourhood that her husband was innocent of the facts, for which he was suspected. In some time after, there came a gentleman to Mr. Robbins's, with two servants, who were for three days importuning me and a gardener of Mr. Robbins's, to go to Thomastown to drink, which I at length consented to, and they saddled their master's horses for the gardener and me, and we accordingly rode to Thomastown, where we no sooner came, then I went to a friend's house of mine who was then in bed but soon let me in, and gave me the key of the cellar to get drink for me and my company, as he could not attend us himself, being unwell, but he desired I might keep an account of what drink we had; we had about eight shillings' worth of liquor. The gentleman's servants thought the charge too great, and said, they would not pay so much, upon which I went to the landlord and told him, I would be no longer troubled about his reckoning, but that I would pay my part of it and quit the house; and upon my return down stairs from the landlord, I was attacked by the two servants, who struck me, one of them holding my finger in his mouth, and the gardener holding the candle for them, until he observed that I cut one of them with a piece of a board which happened in my way, and oblige them to go back to the room they were in before, in order to settle the reckoning; but upon examining their pockets, they had but one shilling and sixpence among them, which occasioned

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

me to suspect they came there to sconce the house; therefore advised the landlord to keep one of their master's horses till he was paid, which he accordingly did. In the meantime, the gardener and one of the servants stole away, and left him that I cut, behind; so I was obliged to help him home to Mr. Robbins's. I then imagined that Mr. Robbins would discharge me, so I took an opportunity of giving up my accounts to one of the servants, before Mr. Robbins was up in the morning, and quitted his service.

I then concluded to rob one Mrs Mountfort, at Derrynahinch, in the county of Kilkenny, as much to convince the neighbours that Reddy was innocent (who was then confined) as for the sake of her money, and sent for John Anderson, Jos. Welsh, John Motley, James Bulger, and John Welsh, and desired they would meet me on a certain night and place that I appointed for that purpose. They did not all come the night appointed; as Bulger in his way happened to get into an alehouse to drink, where he was not long before one Owen Donnelly, a jobber, rode up to the door, and called for a quart of ale: whom Bulger spied, and dogged to a private place, after he quitted the house, and robbed him of a small sum, and rode off to the house of one Kinehan in Burnchurch, which he frequented; from whence he sent me word he could not come so speedily as I expected, but was with me soon after.

I then took a tour to Waterford, accompanied by Bulger and Joseph Welsh, where we remained for three days thinking to get a set made upon some house, but could find no place where we thought we could with safety break into; upon which we returned to the county of Kilkenny. I then sent Bulger for Motley, and some others of my gang, in order to put my scheme of robbing Mrs Montfort in execution. We soon met, and when we came to a hill near her house, being in Dec. 1746, we lighted our candles and blackened our faces. I then sent Motley, Bulger, Joseph Welsh and John Anderson to the back of the house, in order to break in, as I was too well known by the servants to go in myself, where they broke open a window with a sledge, and robbed the house of plate and money to the value of two hundred pounds. I then carried the booty to Ballyduff and lodged it with John Anderson and Joseph Welsh, then servants to Mr. Robbins, which they took special care to lodge underground, in Mr. Robbins's pigeon house, where it remained for a considerable time after.

There was such an alarm round the whole country at this time that most of the gentlemen had fixed watches on their houses at night. Soon after, Felix Donnelly and James Donnelly, two of my gang, were taken up, on suspicion for Mrs. Montfort's robbery, as they were fellows of infamous character, though not concerned in it; which I no sooner heard, than I was under very great apprehensions that they would inform against me, as they dropped some suspicious words of me, by telling a person who was speaking to them, that he would soon hear that the robberies were committed by some persons near him, which when I heard, I declared I never would employ one of the Donnellys afterwards, but for want of information against them, they were acquitted.

In some time after Bulger came to pay me a visit, and we concluded to take to the high road, and were three days on the Ross road, but met with no prey worth mentioning. And in a short time after, we met with one Thomas Houlahan and one Patrick Hacket, otherwise called Bristeen, who were experienced sheep stealers, and particular acquaintances of Bulger's who saluted Bulger kindly, and asked him how he was: To which he replied, that he would do well enough if he had a little more money; and asked them how they fared, for that he had not seen them a long time. They answered, they removed to the county of Wexford, but that they were uneasy to know how their correspondents in that country were (meaning the country of Kilkenny;) and

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

further said; that there was plenty of money in the country they came from. They also informed him, that there was a gentleman, one Colonel Palliser, who had a great deal of money and plate, which they heard he kept in his house, I was during the time of their discourse some distance from them; upon which Bulger came up to me, and told me, that the persons I saw him talking to, were friends of his, for whose honesty and integrity he would, engage, and then related the whole information they gave him of Colonel Palliser's plate. Upon which I agreed we should rob the Colonel, and came up to Hacket and Houlahan, and saluted them kindly, and soon concluded upon a night to put our design of robbing the Colonel in execution. I then asked them if they know the inside of the house, and how many servants were in it? But they said not, but that they knew the way to it, and no more. I soon said, that as we did not know how many were in the house, that we should take the more men with us. Upon which I immediately sent Bulger to Kinehan's to Burnchurch, to enquire of him where John Motley was. He then returned with Motley and one Commons. I had also one Matthew Grace another cotter under Mr. Robbins, whom I had corrupted, and prepared for the purpose, and then Bulger, Motley, Grace, Commons, Houlahan, and Hacket, (who were our spies) and I sent to Ballycoughsoust, in the county of Kilkenny, which was the place at which we intended to settle and advise which way to effect our design, and expedite our journey. Upon which I concluded that two only should go in at a time, for fear, if we went in a body, we might be suspected. But we had a long debate, each man refusing to carry the arms for fear of being suspected going over the ferry. But at length I contrived it so, that I got a bag and put the arms into it, which were three cases of pistols, and rolled hay, about them, and then Grace agreed to carry them in the bag, as if he was going to Ross market, which he accordingly did, and got to the house in which I appointed to meet him undiscovered. When I came over the ferry, I went to the house appointed, where my companions were stationed two in a company, the better to avoid suspicion, and they did not seem to know each other. I then asked the landlady had she a stable for my mare? she said she had: upon which I went to the stable to see whether there was hay and litter for my mare but found it was very dirty, of which I told the landlady, that I would send my mare down to Mr. Brahan's as I was known there, and could get her out any hour, without any room for suspicion. I then took care to go into the next room to my companions, and called the landlord to drink with me, and finding the proper time for our departure at hand, I walked out into the kitchen where Grace was, and spoke to him as follows: "But is not this Grace! How long are you here? How are all the neighbours? What business have you here?" To which he answered, they were all well, and that he came with some things to market. In a little time I found an opportunity, and gave Grace the whisper to desire the rest to go on two by two, a part of the road, and that one of the spies should go down to Brahan's under pretence of taking care of my mare, and that the other spy should go with my companions to direct them. When it was duskish, I went down to Brahan's, called for a bottle of wine, and soon after desired the hostler to draw out my mare, for that I intended to go a little further. I soon mounted with my spy behind me, and had not rode far before I overtook the rest of my companions; we then joined company till we got near Mr. Palliser's house, where I fixed the men in a safe place, and took one of the spies down towards the house, and came so near to the house as to see the light of the candles. I then took a survey of the front of the house and rooms, that by the quenching of the candles, I might the better judge where the Colonel and his men lay.

I waited for some time near the house fronting the rooms, and in a short time, saw one of the Colonel's servants lighting him to bed, and therefore judged what part of the house the Colonel lay in. Some time afterwards, I observed a light above stairs,

by which I judged the servants were going to bed, and soon after observed that the candles were all quenched, by which I assured myself, they were all gone to bed. I then came back to where the men were, and appointed Bulger, Motley and Commons, to go in along with me, but Commons answered, that he had never been in any house before, where there were arms; upon which I asked the son of a whore, what business he had there, and swore I would as soon shoot him as look at him, and at the same time cocked a pistol to his breast, but the rest of the men prevailed upon me to leave him at the back of the house, where he might run away when he thought proper.

I then asked Grace where did he choose to be posted, he answered that he would go where I pleased to order him, for which I thanked him, we then immediately came up to the house, lighted our candles and [placed] Houlahan at the back of the house, to prevent any person from coming out that way, and placed Hacket on my mare, well armed, at the front, and I then broke one of the windows with a sledge, whereupon Bulger, Motely, Grace and I, got in, upon which I ordered Motley and Grace to go upstairs, and Bulger and I would stay below, where we thought the greatest danger would be, but I immediately upon second consideration for fear Motley or Grace should be daunted, desired Bulger to go up with them, and when he had fixed matters above, to come down, as I judged the Colonel lay below. I then went to the room where the Colonel was, & burst open the door upon which he said, "Odds-wounds, who's there?" to which I answered, "a friend Sir," upon which he said, "you lie, by G-d, you are no friend of mine;" I then said that I was, and his relation also, and that if he viewed me close he would know me, and begged of him not to be angry; upon which I immediately seized a bullet-gun and case of pistols, which I observed hanging up in his room. I then quitted his room, and walked round the lower part of the house, thinking to meet some of the servants, whom I thought would strive to make their escape from the men who were above, and meeting none of them, I immediately returned to the Colonel's room, where I no sooner entered, then he desired me to go out for a villain and asked why I bred such disturbance in his house at that time of night; at the same time I snatched his breeches from under his head, wherein I got a small purse of gold and said, that abuse was not fit treatment for me, who was his relation, and that it would hinder me of calling to see him again; I then demanded the key of his desk, which stood in his room; he answered he had no key, upon which I said, I had a very good key, at the same time giving the desk a stroke with the sledge which burst it open, wherein I got a purse of ninety guineas, a four pound piece, two moidores, some small gold, and a large glove, with 28 guineas in silver.

By this time, Bulger and Motley came down stairs to me, after rifling the house above, we then observed a closet inside his room, which we soon entered, and got therein a basket, wherein there was plate to the value of three hundred pounds.

There happened to be a wedding near the Colonel's house that night, from whence there was a man and a woman coming at the same time we were in the house, whom Hacket spied and pursued, but to no purpose: upon which, Hacket informed me thereof, at which I told him I admired that as there were three of them abroad, that they would let them escape, and said I would pay them according to their behaviour; I then considering that they might raise the country took my leave of Mr. Palliser, telling him that I forgave him the abuse he gave me, and was his humble servant.

We then quitted the house, and came back again to Ross, where we arrived a little before day, and concluded we could not get over the ferry there with safety, so took the road towards Graigue and never stopped till we came to Polmounty wood,

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

within two miles of Graigue, and it was then clear day. I then sat down and paid every man to his deserts, I then gave them directions to divide themselves that they should not go any way through the country; upon which Motley said, that he and Common would go through the country as if with a view of buying pigs; I hid the arms in the wood, after I sent all the men away but Grace, whom I showed where I hid them, that he might know where to find them when I should have occasion, then I left the wood alone, and rode to Graigue, where I breakfasted heartily, and rested for some time. From thence I went to Ballyduff and remained there that night at one Brophy's, Mr. Robbin's smith's house, whose wife sold private drink, and hearing there was to be a race at Thomastown, I went the next morning to see the diversion, but hearing it was postponed, I returned to Ballyduff and stayed at my father's where I had my mare in keeping, as I intended her to run for a saddle. The day appointed for the race I came to Thomastown, and when the race was over, I fell into company with some gentlemen, with whom I sat up drinking till two o'clock the next morning. The next day, one of the gentleman who was in company told Mr. Robbins how profuse I was in spending my money to which Mr. Robbins replied, that I would never do any good, and that neither he or my father could get any good of me, as my mind was entirely turned to horse-racing, hunting, and gaming; he also told my wife, that if she would decline having any more to do with me (as I was going headlong to the devil) he would do for her while she lived. I hearing this, was in a great passion, and said, I would quit the kingdom, upon which I sent Grace to Polmouny wood for the arms I hid, that I might put them in order for my journey; he went for them with John Welsh, but did not know how to bring them undiscovered. They at length contrived to cut some birch and hid the pistols therein, which they brought home as if designed for brooms. I then went to Grace's house, and desired him to take special care of the arms till he saw me again, which he promised to do; I then quitted that country and went to Cork, where I remained for five weeks, during which time, part of the linen that was taken from Mrs. Mountford, was found in Mr. Robbins's hay-loft, where Welsh and Anderson hid it (by Mr. Robbins's herdsman) which occasioned him to suspect thieves or harbourers lived near him, and said he would make a strict search to discover them. My wife hearing of the search that was intended, gave Welsh and Anderson, a gold watch, a diamond ring, some gold rings, and some plate, that I gave her, and desired Welsh and Anderson, to put them out of the way; she then sent a boy, the brother of Grace, to Cork, to inform me that part of Mrs. Mountford's robbery was discovered, and found hid about Mr. Robbins's house, and that I was suspected for it.

Whereupon I sent the boy back, and desired her to send me a further account, if any she heard, and also to send me the gold watch and diamond ring, for that I would immediately go over to France. I waited three weeks in Cork, expecting the boy with the watch and ring; and finding he did not come I dealt in some goods for the Bristol fair, (the better to avoid suspicion) with which I set off to England, and remained between Bristol and Bath for two months, where I passed for an Irish merchant; upon which some merchants in Bristol told me they would willingly hold a correspondence with me and send me what goods I wanted to Dublin, as I told them I lived there. I also told them this would not be the last time of my being in Bristol, and that when I came again, I would regulate matters with them, relative to the correspondence proposed. Soon after I received a letter in England from some friends of mine in the county of Kilkenny. wherein they set forth that there was no proof against any person of Mrs. Mountford's robbery, and they could make no hand of it, and further said, that if I came home, and pleaded innocence I might get over it.

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

Whereupon I came home and publicly asked who dare assume impeaching my character, which was undoubted. Some of the neighbours then advised me to avoid making myself public and not to go near Mr. Robbins's; upon which I insisted I would, and that I did not care a farthing for what any, man in that country could do, as I was convinced of my innocence, upon which I went immediately to Mr. Robbins's house and asked to know up on what account he could have the least suspicion of me, for that I behaved to him as a true and faithful servant, and for a further instance of my innocence, said that none of the neighbours with whom I had the least dealings, could safely say anything that could in any measure affect my character.

I then appeared as public as ever in the neighbourhood, by which the neighbours concluded I was wrongfully suspected. Soon after I took my leave of my friends, and said, that I would go to England, and follow some business there whereby I might get an honest livelihood, and accordingly went to Dublin, where I bought some goods for the Bristol market, and again took shipping for Bristol where I remained until I sold my goods, and bought some for the Dublin market, with which, I returned to Dublin, and there disposed of them, I then went to the county of Kilkenny, imagining that the former suspicion of me was quite forgot, but found that I was more suspected than before, which as I since heard, was occasioned in the following manner.

Counsellor Robbins, after Summer circuit 1747, was told by some gentlemen in the county of Tipperary, that the gang of robbers who did so much mischief, were from and about his brother's estate in the county of Kilkenny, which gave him great concern, as that part of the country had been before reckoned an honest part of the country, and that if it became otherwise, it was owing to his brother's infirmities, and easiness of temper, he then declared he would go directly to his brother's and endeavour all he could to discover who were the rogues, and apprehend and convict them. He accordingly went to his brother's and told him what he had heard, and desired to know from him, whom he suspected; his brother told him he suspected me chiefly, as he heard I spent much more money than 'twas possible for me to get by any honest method, and that he also suspected Thomas and Matthew Grace, two brothers, cottiers under him, and John Welsh, another cottier under him, for he heard they used to be from their houses some nights, and no one could tell on what account.

Counsellor Robbins finding his brother had not got intelligence that was sufficient to carry any reasonable foundation for apprehending us, walked out as if merely for exercise, till he met with a person whom he thought he could confide in, and desired the person to meet him at a private place appointed for that purpose, which they did, and he told that person he had a very good opinion of him, from the character received from his father of him, and from his own knowledge of him, and hoped that the person would then show him that such opinion was not ill-founded. The person assuring the counsellor he would do all in his power to serve and oblige him, the counsellor told him how greatly he was concerned to hear the scandalous character that part of the country (which had formerly been an honest one) had lately fallen into. That it was said the gang of robbers who disturbed the country lived thereabouts; the person told him he was afraid what he said was too true; and on being asked whom he suspected, he named the same four persons Mr. Robbins had, but said, he dare not for fear of being murdered, be too inquisitive, and therefore could not say anything material; the counsellor asked him, if he knew where there was any private ale to be sold; and he said Moll Burke who lived near the end of Mr. Robbins's avenue had a barrel or half a barrel. The counsellor then gave the person a moidore, and desired him to go to Thomastown and buy two or three gallons of whiskey, and bring it to Moll

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

Burke's, and invite as many as he suspected to be either principals, or accessories, to take a drink, and make them drink very heartily, and when he found they were fuddled, and not sooner, to tell some of the hastiest, that some other had said some bad thing of them, so as to provoke them to abuse and quarrel with each other, and then probably in their liquor and passion they might make some discoveries of each other, as may enable the counsellor to get some one of the gang to discover of, and accuse the rest.

The person accordingly got the whiskey, and invited a good many to drink, but the counsellor being then at his brother's, a few only went to Moll Burke's, the rest being afraid to venture while the counsellor was in the neighbourhood; among those who met, there was one Moll Brophy, the wife of Mr. Robbin's smith, and one Edmund or Edward Stapleton, otherwise Gaul, who lived thereabouts; and when they had drank plentifully, this counsellor's spy told Moll Brophy, Gaul had said she had whored with some persons or other; she then abused Gaul, and told him he was one of Freney's accomplices, for that he Gaul, had told her he had seen Colonel Palliser's watch with Freney, and that Freney had told him, Gaul, that John Walsh and the two Graces had been with him at the robbery. The company on their quarrel broke up, and the next morning the spy met the counsellor at the place appointed, at a distance from Mr. Robbin's house, to prevent suspicion, and there told the counsellor what intelligence he had got; the counsellor not being then a Justice of the Peace, got his brother to send for Moll Brophy to be examined; but when she came, she refused to be sworn or to give any evidence, and thereupon the counsellor had her tied and put on a car in order to be carried to gaol on a *mittimus* from Mr. Robbins, for refusing to give evidence on behalf of the Crown. When she found she would really be sent to gaol, she submitted to be sworn, and the counsellor drew from her what she had said the night before, and something further, and desired her not to tell anybody what she had sworn. He immediately afterwards had Gaul arrested on his brother's warrant, and offered him his interest and assistance to serve him, if he would discover of the gang thereabouts, but Gaul pleaded innocence, and denied his having ever seen a gold watch with me. Someone having called the counsellor and his brother out into another room, they left Gaul in custody with John Anderson, Mr. Robbin's then servant, who was not then suspected by the counsellor or his brother, and Anderson let Gaul run away. The counsellor then sent for some of the neighbours to dine with him, and told them his intent, and immediately after dinner, when the horses were at the door, he called John Anderson into his bed-chamber, where he had several firelocks and bayonets, and told Anderson he was then going to apprehend Freney, Welsh, and the two Graces, and observing some change in Anderson's countenance thereon, he asked Anderson if he had been drawn in by Freney, to join him in any robbery, and if he had, and would become an approver, and discover all he knew, the counsellor would do all he could to have his life saved. Anderson recovered himself and pleaded entire innocence, and seeming zeal to apprehend all suspected persons, and thereon the Counsellor gave him a loaded firelock and bayonet, and went immediately to the door where the counsellor and his party mounted; but John Anderson found some opportunity of letting Joseph Welsh, his brother servant and accomplice, know the errand they were going on, and Welsh by some short cut gave notice to the persons intended to be apprehended before the counsellor and his party could surround their houses, they got to a neighbouring hill, from whence they saw the strict search made for them. This convinced me that the counsellor had made some discoveries, but I knew none that was sufficient to convict me, as I found Anderson and Welsh were not suspected, and had not made any discoveries; but as I was satisfied that as the counsellor had once put his hand to the affair, he would spare no expense or labour to come at what he wanted, and therefore,

I was afraid that if Welsh or either of the Graces were apprehended by him, they might squeak, and become approvers to convict me, I therefore desired the Graces and Welsh to meet me the next night at Burnchurch, which they accordingly did. I then told them, that if I could learn where there was any money that I would get them twenty pounds apiece, provided they would quit that country and go to Connaught, which they promised to do on my getting them the money. Welsh said that they would go to the county of Kildare, where he was well acquainted, and where there was a great many rich farmers, and that they would set a house there for me, in order to get the money; he went accordingly, accompanied by Thomas Grace, a brother of Patrick's, where they remained for 12 or 14 days, and then returned with an account that there was one Mr. Archbold, who had a fine house in the county of Kildare, in which they believed there was a great deal of money, I then asked them what authority they had to suspect that there was money in it; they said that where they worked for a few days in that neighbourhood, they heard it said that there was both money and plate in it, and that they saw Mr. Archbold himself, who was a jolly, well-looking man, which they said, denoted his having something considerable in his house.

Whereupon I agreed to pay Mr. Archbold one of my acceptable visits, and accordingly sent for my friends Bulger, Motley and one Thomas Fitzgerald, and appointed them to go two by two, and to meet me at nightfall, at a particular place near Castledermot, being in the beginning of October, 1742, where we accordingly met, and at first concluded to rob Mr. Archbold that night, but upon second consideration we found it necessary to postpone it till the next night, and appointed two others of our friends. Welsh and Grace to prepare a sledge, which was a most material implement in our trade against the night following; which they soon did, as Mr. Vulcan never refused us this favour when we applied for it. We met the next night, and accordingly advanced to Mr. Archbold's house, but for the conveniency of our retreat, left our horses tied together in a dyke near Castledermot. I then went round the house to see if any of the family were up, and also to learn which was the convenientest place to get in, upon which I heard some of them cough, by which I judged they were not asleep, therefore came back to my companions (who stood a little distance from the house) and told them it was too soon to begin the attack. In some time after when I thought the family were all asleep, I appointed Bulger, Motley, Fitzgerald and Welsh to go into the house with me, as I thought there could not be less than five within, the house being so large, and resolved to give them man for man, in case of opposition. I also appointed Grace to watch abroad, and then by the help of the sledge broke open a window, and got in, as did also Bulger and the rest of my corps, appointed for that purpose, and soon found out the menservants in bed in the same room. I left Welsh to guard them, and sent Motley and Bulger through another part of the house. Fitzgerald and I went upstairs; we all made a great noise, the more to terrify the people of the house. I soon discovered Mr. Archbold's room, into which I entered, but found he was not there, upon which I asked Mrs. Archbold where he was, who replied that he went from home in the morning to pay a gentleman two hundred pounds. I desired her to put on her clothes immediately, and to show me the house, but she entreated me not to disturb her, and told me there was a cousin of hers above stairs who would show me any part of the house I chose to see, and begged of me to desire the men whose faces were blackened, to quit her sight, as she was so much affrighted; on which I desired them to leave the room, and told her she should not be used ill, for I would not have any poor gentlewoman miscarry by my means nor would I choose to miscarry myself, therefore I addressed the good lady with a great deal of civility, and represented to her that we were young fellows that intended going to France, and insisted she would deliver what money she had in the house; upon

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

which she said she had not one penny but what was in a desk which stood hard by, and then gave me the key of the desk, wherein I got to the value of four hundred pounds in money and plate. Then I sent Fitzgerald and Welsh with the plate to the place where our horses were, and remained in the house for some time after; and then set out after them; but when we came to the place where we left our horses we could not find them, they being strayed and the night being very dark, we were put to our shifts what to do with the plate. We at length found a horse in a field near us, I then desired them all to make haste home, except one, to go two by two as they came, and that I would venture the carriage of the plate, and desired Fitzgerald to stay with me for company, which Bulger hearing, said, that as he came along with me he would go home with me, where upon they departed two by two, as I ordered them. I fixed the plate which was in a bag, under me and Bulger behind me, so rode to Carlow where Bulger alighted. It being then clear day, and the people being up in the town, I was afraid of being discovered, and the plate was joggling in the bag as I rode through the street, but passed without being noticed. I turned over Carlow bridge, and took the mountain road to Old Leighlin, and came in upon the turnpike road between Kellymount and Gowran; when I came within two miles of Gowran, I met a boy riding up to me very hard, after he had passed me a little way, he turned back and asked me from whence I came, I answered from Dublin, then he asked me, did I hear of the accident that happened in the county of Kildare last night, I told him I did not, and desired him to inform me of it, upon which, he told me that there was a gentleman robbed, and that there were two of the robbers taken, to which, I said, the d——I mend them, for an honest man could not live in the neighbourhood, the country was overrun with robbers; he also informed me, that a party of people who came in pursuit of them, were gone to Gowran, and that there was another party of them coming on the road, when he galloped away, and when he was out of sight, I turned off the road, and rode towards Low Grange; by the way I spied a large quickset hedge and a large brake of briars on one side of it, in which I hid the bag of plate, and then turned off from Low Grange to the mountains, where I could see the pursuers going along the flat country; when I got to the mountain, I then alighted, and walked a piece on the mountain with Bulger, who was all this time in my company, and coming to a place where there were people herding cattle, I asked them some questions, saying, there were some heifers of my property, stole from the county of Tipperary, and desired to know if they could give me any intelligence of them, and then went through their cattle, taking sharp notice of them, as if I suspected some of my own to be among them. We remained till night on the mountain, where we were almost famished with hunger, and hearing of an ale-house being near, we went to it, but the landlady suspecting me for a gauger, denied she had any drink, upon which we took our way towards Maddingstown, and from thence across the River Nore, and to the neighbourhood of Burnchurch, where we remained eight days in great distress. Hearing that there was to be a pattern at Danesfort we sent Motley and Grace word not to go there, for that we dreaded they would be taken, but contrary to our direction, Motley went there, where he was taken by Captain Patrick Wemys and sent to Kilkenny gaol. Fitzgerald who was also at the pattern, quitted it, and went about a mile distant to an ale-house, but he was pursued and also apprehended and immediately sent to Kilkenny gaol.

In some time after, Bulger and I went for the plate, and brought it to a sand-pit near Burnchurch, and whilst we were dividing it, some gentlemen who were out hunting, happened to ride near us, upon which we prepared ourselves to attack the gentlemen, expecting they would come up to us, but it happened they rode by without seeing us, whereupon we sat down and divided the plate and money; I then told Bulger

we could not do less than send Motley and Fitzgerald who were in confinement their dividend of the money, upon which he said, if I would give him their proportion, he had a friend that would deliver it to them in the gaol, upon which I gave him the money, and told him that I would go and bury my part of the plate near Ballyduff, upon which I set off and came to Ballyduff, about four o'clock in the morning, and hid the plate in a bush; then I went to my wife, and told her where I lodged it, and desired her to watch it till my return, which would be that night; and also desired her to sell what household goods she had, for that there was a ship ready to carry us both to the Isle of Man, that the Captain was my fast friend, upon which I rode off, and she soon after removed the plate into my father's potato garden. My father going after night-fall, across the potato garden, espying the ground fresh dug, where she hid the plate, went and thrust a stick he had in his hand, down into the hole where he discovered the plate; whereupon he carried it immediately and privately to Mr. Robbins's and told both him and his brother the counsellor, who came to his brother's that evening, how and where he got it.

When I returned at night, my wife told me the plate was gone, and the next day I heard that Mr. Robbins sent a guard with it to Kilkenny, and soon after, Thomas Grace who was in Carlow gaol, made some discoveries, on which John Anderson and Joseph Welsh were apprehended, and soon after I was informed that John Welsh had made very full discoveries to Counsellor Robbins in Naas gaol, and was turned King's evidence against me and my companions and desired that I might be closely sought for about Gowran and Burnchurch, saying, that if I was not there, I was gone to Cork, and from thence to England. I soon informed Bulger of what happened, and also how I lost the plate, and at the same time asked him to assist me one day in robbing on the road, and that afterwards he and I would go to England, which he consented to, and appointed a place near Burnchurch, where we were to meet in two days after. I went to the place at the hour appointed, but Bulger was not there. In a few days after, I heard that he took some shirts of mine from a house, where I left them to be washed, which caused me to suspect he would quit the country, but what I was most concerned for was, that he had a gold watch, a diamond ring, and some plate of mine. Soon after I was informed that he did not give John Motley and Fitzgerald their proportion of the money which I gave him for that purpose, whereupon I swore if I should meet him, I would blow his brains out, and searched a day and a night for him to no purpose, and soon after heard that he went to England with one Kenny a sailor, and that he carried what plate he had with him, and also my watch and ring, before mentioned, upon which I went to Burnchurch, and enquired of one John Kinehan, to which house Bulger and I resorted, whether Bulger took my watch and ring as I was informed. Kinehan told me that there was a certain gentleman who came to his house in pursuit of Bulger, and said that he heard Bulger had a gold watch, and swore that if Bulger did not send him the watch, he would pursue him night and day. I lay by for some time after, and at length concluded to take to the highway alone.

John Welsh, before mentioned, who was confined in Naas gaol, sent word to Counsellor Robbins in Dublin, that if he would use his interest in getting his pardon, he would discover all his accomplices in each robbery he was in, and also give informations against them, which Mr. Robbins promised to do, provided he would fulfil what he said: upon which Counsellor Robbins, in his road from Dublin to the country, called at Naas, and applied to Thomas Grace, who at the first made some insignificant discoveries, and finding Grace only prevaricated, and told several untruths, he would not have any more to do with him as a discoverer, but sent for John Walsh, who made very full discoveries, which he confirmed by many circumstances, that the counsellor

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

knew of, and among others accused Anderson and Walsh, who had been before committed to Kilkenny gaol, by Mr. Robbins their master, on what Grace had discovered to the sovereign of Carlow, and soon after, Morley and Fitzgerald were transmitted to Naas. In some time afterwards, John Walsh who had concealed the discoveries he made to Counsellor Robbins and Thomas Grace, sent me a messenger from Naas, to go to them, that I could extricate them from gaol by cutting a wooden bolt which they said was to one of the windows of the gaol, upon which, I immediately judged that they intended I should be their companion in gaol, for in fact it was a scheme to have me taken. I therefore told the messenger I hoped they would excuse me. I then concluded upon making up a new gang, which I soon effected, amongst whom was Hacket, aforesaid, who was a notable spy, and had learned that there was one Mr. Drought in the Queen's county, whom if I went to visit, Hacket assured me would reward me for my trouble in going to see him, upon which I desired that Houlahan, Hacket, Breen and Quigly, might meet me at a place appointed, in order to see what method we should take to discover the force of Mr. Drought's house, but in the meantime, one Kelly, who was one of my spies, came and informed me that there was one Mr. Laffin from Kilkenny, who went to Ross for two hundred and fifty pounds, and that he would return to Kilkenny with the money the next day, on which I desired my men to meet me the next night at Burnchurch, but kept Houlahan along with me, to assist me in robbing Mr. Laffin. I went upon the road the next morning, and waited till Mr. Laffin was coming by, whom I stopped and robbed. I delayed him for two hours, and told him if he would wait till evening, I would return him his money and watch, which I took from him, but he chose to go away, on which, I took his horse from him, but told him that he should soon have him again. He then went directly to Thomastown, where he met Arthur Bush, Esq. to whom he related what befell him, whereupon Mr. Bush raised a party of men in Thomastown and went from thence to Mr. Robbins's, and told him the story, who also sent another party of men to the mountains in pursuit of me, In the meantime, I rode round the mountain and came to Thomastown that night, and tied Mr. Laffin's horse near the constable's; which made the gentlemen who went in pursuit of me, to say I was making game of them, as I was at home before themselves. I then lay by for a considerable time after, and concluded within myself to do no more mischief till after the assizes, when I would hear how it went with the men who were then in confinement. Some time before the assizes, Counsellor Robbins came to Ballyduff, and told his brother that he believed Anderson and Welsh were guilty, and also said he would endeavour to have them both hanged, of which I was informed.

Soon after I went to the house of one George Roberts, who asked me if I had any regard for these fellows who were then confined, (meaning Anderson and Welsh) I told him I had a regard for one of them; upon which he said, he had a friend who was a man of power and interest, that would save either of them, provided I would give him five guineas, I told him I would give him ten, and the first gold watch I could get, whereupon he said that it was of no use to speak to his friend, without the money or value, for that he was a mercenary man; on which I told Roberts, I had not so much money at that time, but that I would give him my watch as a pledge to give his friend. I then gave him my watch, and desired him to engage that I would pay the money which I promised to pay, or give value for it in plate, in two or three nights after, upon which he engaged that his friend would act the needful, when we appointed a night to meet, and we accordingly met, and Roberts told me that his friend agreed to save Anderson and Welsh from the gallows, whereupon I gave him a plate tankard, value ten pounds, a large ladle value four pounds, with some tablespoons, and the assizes of Kilkenny, in Spring 1748, coming on soon after, Counsellor Robbins had Welsh transmitted from

Naas to Kilkenny, in order to give evidence against Anderson and Welsh; and they were tried for Mrs. Mountford's robbery, on the evidence of John Welsh and others; the physic working well, six of the jury were for finding them guilty, and six more for acquitting them, and the other six finding them peremptory, and that they were resolved to starve the others into compliance, as they say they may do by law, were for their own sakes obliged to comply with them, and they were acquitted; on which Counsellor Robbins began to smoke the affair, and suspect the operation of gold dust, which was well applied for my comrades, and thereupon left the court in a rage, and swore he would forever quit the country, since he found people were not satisfied with protecting and saving the rogues they had under themselves, but must also show that they could and would oblige others to have rogues under them whether they would or no.

The Grand Jury, who were in the Grand Jury box, and saw and observed what passed, sent to Counsellor Robbins to come to them, which he did, and they told him they thanked him for his honest though fruitless endeavours, and assured him they resented the acquittal as much as he could, and desired to know from him, whether they could do anything to show their resentment on such a scandalous occasion; the counsellor to find out who was at the bottom of this transaction, desired they would present Anderson and Walsh, as vagabonds, and try who would appear and be security for them, but this plot being smoked, and their acquittal having alarmed the whole country; it would be too glaring for anyone to appear on their behalf, and so their friends would not appear for them; therefore they, not being able to get security, were transported. A general association was then entered into by the gentlemen of the county, to support and stand by each other, and give rewards for discoveries, apprehending, and convicting of rogues and their abettors, and thereupon Counsellor Robbins and J. Walsh were transmitted back to Naas, to be evidence against Thomas Fitzgerald, Thomas Grace, and John Motley, then in Naas gaol for the robbery of Mr. Archbold, and went thither himself to prosecute, and had them convicted; and had Bulger, myself, and some others, against whom John Walsh gave information, presented both at Kilkenny and Naas, in order to be proclaimed, which was soon after done.

In some time after this I took to the turnpike road near Burnchurch, where I robbed seven different men in a day; but finding them to be dealers, I scrupled keeping their money, so returned it. I charged my spy, Hacket, never to make a report of any but of gentlemen who made a good appearance and figure. I remained in and about that road for a considerable time; at length finding I could make no hand there, as the gentlemen who came the road never carry any money about them. I then quitted that road, and betook myself to the mountain road; and the fair day of Thomastown being nigh, I expected to meet some drovers going to the fair, but missing of them I came to the crossroad, where I had intelligence from my spy that there was one Bulger a drover, who had one hundred pounds at the fair, and only bought four cows; and immediately after another spy came and told me, that there was an officer's lady who waited in Kilkenny till the fair-day of Thomastown, imagining that there would be so many people the road that day, that she might the safer travel, he also told me, that she had a great deal of money in a trunk which she had in the chair in which she travelled, and that she was then within a quarter of a mile of me, accompanied by a servant well-armed. Upon which I sent immediately for my horse called Beefsteaks, and desired the messenger, who was one of my party, to tie the horse at a little distance from the road, and that when he observed me draw near the chair, to cry out, shoot them, the more to terrify the servant, who was armed, which he accordingly did, and I immediately advanced towards the servant with a musket cocked; desiring him to give his arms to

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

my man who stood behind or that I (in my usual compliments on such occasions) would blow his brains out. He immediately surrendered them as I ordered; and I then demanded my lady's purse, & also desired to see what was in the trunk. She gave me her purse, which being very heavy, I imagined it was gold, but found no money in the trunk. There were about thirty labourers at a distance, who seeing the action imagined it was a quarrel, and immediately came up in their shirts, upon which I mounted my horse and rode up to them, swearing, I would blow their brains out too, if they offered to spoil my sport, and they all answered, that if they imagined I was there, they would not quit their work, and therefore withdrew. Soon after there came up a great many of the fair people, but I desired them to stand off, telling them I meant no harm to them, upon which they wished me success, and went off. I finding no money in the trunk, was about taking my leave of the lady, but she begged of me to give her as much money as would defray her expenses to Duncannon, I told her I would, and at the same time drew out the purse, in which I found only two guineas and a half with some silver, I told her, I would not divide so small a sum with her; and said that I thought it all too little to defray her expenses to Dun cannon, and returned her the money, saying, that I had a particular liking to a carbine which her servant had, but as her husband was not with her, I would not deprive her of it, for I was always very civil to the ladies. I then turned off the road, and went to another road where I expected to meet my friend the drover; but he passed whilst I was engaged in robbing the lady, and escaped the favours I intended him.

I remained in and about that neighbourhood, for a considerable time, but met with no booty worth mentioning; till at length, I heard that there was one Mr. Anderson collecting hearth-money in the neighbourhood. Upon which I sent one of my spies abroad, desiring him to inform me, when Mr. Anderson came within two or three miles of Grange. My useful friend the spy soon returned, with an account that Mr. Anderson had sixty guineas about him, that he had lodged in Inistioge a day or two before; and that he was informed Mr. Anderson would deposit the sixty guineas with what money he had that day collected in Grange, and that he was to come there that night. In some time afterwards I espied Mr. Anderson at a mile's distance, collecting at a country village on the mountain, with two constables and his clerk; whereupon my spy, Matthew Grace desired to be admitted along with me, but not having the second horse, I told him I chose to run the risk of robbing Mr. Anderson alone, rather than fatigue Beefsteaks, by carrying him behind me, and desired him to remain there a little while and he would see me playing with Anderson and his attendants on the side of the hill. I rode towards the hill, but Mr. Anderson spied me coming, whereupon he rode with speed towards the constables and his clerk, who were some distance from him; but I soon overtook him, and at the same time told him, that he was much overseen to think of escaping from me with that old white horse he rode. He said that his reason for riding so hard was, for fear I should rob him before the constables and his clerk would see me. I then spoke to him, sayings "zounds, deliver and don't be arguing cases," for I always hate quibbles and long arguments in my profession; he then said he would; but as he had an eye to business as well as myself, he begged of me to suffer the constables to reckon the money, that they might make affidavit how much I had taken from him, otherwise it might be of ill consequence to him, it being the kings money. Moreover, he said, he was afraid he would lose his place. Whilst the constables were reckoning the money, he told me he had nothing belonging to himself but his watch, which he offered to make me a present of, but I told him as it was his own I would not deprive him of it. Then he told me he would rather lose as much money of his own than the King's money. I told him, that I believed His Majesty had pick-pockets enough before,

therefore I would not deprive him of his money, upon which I returned it, and rode away

In some time after, one Martin Millea, an able farmer at Jerpoint, sent a messenger in search of me, to inform me that there was a man in Kilkenny. who was receiver to some gentleman in Dublin, and who had a sum of two thousand pounds; but when I came to Millea's house, he told me, 'twas too late, and that the man was gone to Dublin with the money; and desired me to remain in the house for some time, and that he hoped soon to hear where there was a booty. Accordingly I remained for some time in his house, but could not hear of anything considerable. We at length concluded that the readiest way of getting money, was to rob the Waterford merchants of some goods, which we heard they sent for to Dublin; and I judged by what accounts I had from him, that there could not be less than three thousand pounds worth of goods.

In the meantime I concluded upon robbing the post-boy of the mail, wherein I suspected there were bank-notes, and intended to send a friend to receive the money, to Dublin; before there could be an express sent to the bank to stop the notes; for which purpose I intended to have one horse at Leighlinbridge, one at Castledermot, and another at Kill. I then quitted Millea's house, and went further into the mountain, leaving my horse, Beefsteaks, in the neighbourhood, in order that he should be fit for me upon my next expedition, but he soon after died of the staggers. The death of Beefsteaks was soon rumoured about the country, upon which many of the gentlemen went in pursuit of me, thinking to find me in some place, to which they thought I resorted. Having lost Beefsteaks, I ordered Matthew Grace and Edmund Nash, two of my gang, to go to Felix Donnelly, to Gowran, and to desire him to send me a bay gelding belonging to Mr. Bayly; Donnelly told them that the gelding was at Ballytober, but that there was a black mare belonging to Mr. Bayly, which he believed would serve me till the horse was brought back, and that he would send me word, upon which they brought me the mare.

About this time the fair of Kells was at hand, and I was informed that Bulger the drover, aforesaid, was to be there. Upon which I came upon the road the fair day, where I waited from six in the morning till about 12, but did not see him; I told Nash my spy, who was with me, that if Bulger intended going to the fair, that he would come by before that time, that I would ride on before him to his house, and take a nap of sleep, which I accordingly did, but did not sleep long, before Nash brought me word that there was a Quaker gone by, and that if I did not hasten he would reach Thomastown before I could overtake him. I desired him to saddle my mare, and that I would pursue him immediately. I accordingly pursued him, and soon overtook him, desiring him to stand and deliver. Why drew out of his pocket some gold and silver, amongst which was a thimble. I asked him what he was, he said a tailor. I then asked him what the D——I sent him in my way, charging him not to discover that ever I attempted robbing him; and at the same time gave him his money and thimble, saying, I would rob nobody but a man.

In some time afterwards I went to Burnchurch, where I met Hacket, Breen, Houlahan, Stock and Brenan, who told me that there was one Mr. Driscoll, near Kilkenny, whom they assured me had a great deal of money and plate in his house. We concluded to rob Mr. Driscoll the Friday night following, and I promised to be with them early on Friday morning, and desired Hacket to have candles and all other necessaries ready. I accordingly came at the appointed time accompanied by Matthew Grace, and asked Kinnehan if he saw any of the men, he said he did not, and that he admired what delayed them. Then Kinnehan, Grace and I walked into a grove near

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

Kinnehan's house, where we imagined they might be and soon after, I observed them coming towards the grove all armed. I immediately suspected that they had robbed Mr. Driscoll; whereupon I told Grace, if he would assist me that we would disarm them and take the money they robbed from Driscoll's house from them; Grace swore he would join me while he had life. I armed him well, and we both went directly towards them, desiring them to surrender their arms, or that they were dead men. They immediately delivered me their arms, and also the value of two hundred pounds in plate, watches, and money. They then begged of me to hearken to reason, and informed me that one of the spies came and told them that the plate and money was to be removed on Friday, and that if they did not go on Thursday night they would miss of it, and they all swore they never would be guilty of the like again, and desired me to take what I pleased of the booty; but I took no part of it only a watch. I then ordered Grace to go towards Grange, and to remain about that place, till I had further occasion for him. I then went towards Gowran with Houlahan, where Houlahan was informed, that one Mr. Mash came to Thomastown to receive rent, which would amount to two hundred pounds. Houlahan went to a friend of his to desire him to set Mr. Mash for us; and whilst Houlahan was away, I was told by a friend of mine, that Houlahan had a barrel of drink, which he intended to invite me to drink share of, with a view that I should be taken in the house, but that he did not intend inviting me, till he had got part of Mr. Mash's money, I told my friend, that I would not seem to know anything of the matter, till after he had robbed Mr. Mash, and then that I would give Houlahan a great beating instead of his dividend of the money, and never converse with him after. I was also informed, by a friend, that there was one James Welsh, who was one of my gang, also intended to betray me. Houlahan returned with an account that his friend assured him that Mr. Mash was to leave Thomastown that night, and the best place to meet him was between Dunmore and Ballyragget. Upon which we set out from Gowran to Kilkenny, and from thence to Dunmore and waited between Dunmore and Ballyragget till two o'clock, expecting Mr. Mash's coming by; but not meeting him, Houlahan invited me to go drink share of a barrel of ale, but I told him I would not, well knowing his design, and said he should come along with me towards Burnchurch, which he consented to, and we went accordingly towards Burnchurch. I there quitted him, telling him at the same time, that I was informed he intended setting me, and that if I was certain of it, I would treat him accordingly. I then went again to Martin Millea's house, where I remained for two days; and from thence I went to the house of James Nash, my spy, upon which he desired me to take a nap, and I charged him to watch the Ross road, but not to send me upon so trifling an errand as he did before.

About eleven o'clock, Nash awoke me, telling me, that there was a gentleman just riding by, swearing he had a wig as big as a sieve, and that he believed he was a foreigner. I pursued the gentleman, and coming up to him, asked him did he not hear that there was a French privateer upon that road. He said he heard something of it, but imagined it to be on the Waterford road. I then told him it was possible for a privateer to sail from Waterford to that place, and then demanded his money, which he readily delivered, being about eight pounds. I then intended taking his horse, but upon second consideration, I not only left him his horse, but also gave him money to defray his expenses to the end of his journey, and immediately rode back to Nash's house, and desired him and Grace, to go again to Felix Donnelly to Gowran, and desire him to send me Mr. Bayly's bay gelding if he was come home, that I did not think the mare fit for my purpose, and that I would send her back, if he sent the horse. Donnelly then told them that the horse was not come home from Ballytober.

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

As Grace and Nash were returning from Gowran, they saw the Waterford cars aforesaid, loaded, coming into Thomastown: upon which they hastened to Nash's house where I waited expecting their return, and told me that the goods lay in Thomastown that night. I desired them to go in search of one James Whelan, a cotter, who lived at Mullin-an-angle, that he might assist him in taking care of the goods which were on the cars. They immediately found out Whelan, and also prepared two horses, to carry off as much of the goods as we thought proper, and which were most valuable. The next morning we went to Castleblaney, on the mountain road; I ordered the three men to lie in the heath on the mountain, and that I would ride about the road; to know whether it was populous. I saw five ploughs at a distance from the road; upon which I rode up and desired the ploughmen to take no notice of anything that might happen that day or that I would blow their brains out; they answered that they had their own work to do and that they would mind nothing else. I then fixed a spy on the road, and lay down in the heath. Soon after the spy came to me, and said, the cars were within a quarter of a mile of me. I then ordered Grace to go a distance behind the cars, with a case of pistols; and when I saw them come through the village of Castleblaney, where the road turned into the mountain, I immediately rode up to them, and bid them stand, or I would blow their brains out, which they at first refused to do, but soon after complied, and drove the horses from off the road, as I ordered them; I then told them, that as I could not get money from gentlemen to support me, that I must have value; upon which I intended rifling the goods, but afterwards concluded up on taking the whole, whereupon I told the carmen, that if the owners of the goods did not send me one hundred and fifty pounds as a ransom, they never should see a pennyworth of them. I then whispered Grace, and desired that he, Whelan, and Ed. Nash, might drive four of the cars towards the lands of Kilmackshane, and when he had left the cars there, to meet me at Powerswood road, and that I would detain the carmen with me, and the five cars which remained, till they had got out of sight. Then I turned off a contrary way into the mountain, with the five cars, which I compelled the carmen to drive, in order to deceive them in the way the other four cars were drove. At the same time I took notice of one of the carmen, and discovered him to be one Toby Lewis, whom the gentlemen of the neighbourhood employed as a spy after me. I asked him did he remember when Mr. Robbins sent for him to go in pursuit of me? He then excused himself, swearing that he was compelled to do so; I said that should not excuse him; and presenting my musket at him, desired him to call on Mr. Robbins, or any other gentleman who employed him as a spy, to come to his assistance, and also desired him to prepare himself for another world. He then begged of me to go and kill his wife and five children, for I might as well kill them as himself. I then told him he might thank his wife and children for the preservation of his life. He thanked me for sparing his life, swearing that no man on earth should influence him to be guilty of setting or spying for the future.

In a little time after, several of the people who were cutting turf on the mountain gathered together and came in a body towards me but I desired them to stand off, and take no notice of what happened, or I would fire among them, upon which they immediately withdrew. I then drove across the mountain, where I was told there was an ale-house, intending to give the carmen a barrel of ale: but finding there was no drink there, I compelled the carmen to drive towards the lands of Powerswood, but by the way one of the cars overturned, which I was obliged to leave behind on the mountain.

When I came to Powerswood land, it was drawing towards night, and not meeting Grace or Nash, I obliged the carmen to throw some of the heavy goods from off the cars; and one of the carmen said there was a box laden with wire belonging to a

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

poor pedlar in Kilkenny, which he begged I would not take, upon which I consented to give it to him, which I afterwards repented when I was assured there were three hundred and sixty guineas with some plate and rings in it, belonging to a jeweller who lived in Waterford. I then ordered one of the carmen to go back and take care of the car which overturned, desiring him to drive it to Waterford, and bid the merchants send me one hundred and fifty pounds as a ransom, and they should have their goods back again, and ordered the rest of the carmen to go to a cabin which was near, and remain there till the next morning, which they accordingly did. After the men departed I drove the cars a little distance further, and then rode to the lands of Kilmackshane to know how Grace and Nash had fixed the four cars before mentioned. When I came there, I saw them opening the goods and disputing about them. I ordered them to fix the goods again upon the cars, and drive them beyond Ballychoughsoust into the mountain, it being then nightfall, but finding that place inconvenient, we drove to Bohillogh-lands, where there were some heath and furze cut in a valley, where we unloaded the cars, and covered the goods with the heath and furze. I thought there they would be safe, as I expected that the Waterford merchants would now come in search of them and me, I ordered the men to drive the cars about a mile and a half from the place where we hid the goods, and to find out other cars to drive them a mile or two backwards and across in order to deceive the pursuers. It was then break of day, and I went to Knockaroura, which was about half a mile from the place the goods were hid, and it was then clear day, which prevented my going to Powerswood lands for the remainder of the goods, I told my men I would take a nap of sleep, and finding a cleft in the mountain, I lay down there with my musket under my head. I had not long slept, before Nash's mother came and awoke me, saying she had prepared a breakfast for me, and prevailed upon me to go with her to her house at Ballychoughsoust. I was not long there before my spy Nash informed me that the neighbourhood was surrounded by the militia and merchants of Waterford, who came in pursuit of me and the goods; he also said that they had spies fixed about Powerswood hill, where they found the goods I had left there, and spies upon Knockaroura, and upon the hills of Inistioge, and at several other places round the neighbourhood where they suspected that I was, swearing, if they could get one sight of me they would take me dead or alive; upon which Nash's mother insisted upon my staying at her house, but I swore I would by no means stay, for that I was sure they would search all the cabins in the neighbourhood for me.

I then quitted the house and went towards Inistioge, where I thought to get over the River Nore, and go off towards the county Carlow, but seeing spies upon all the hills round me, it was impossible for me to get off without being seen by some of them. In a little time I met a neighbour coming up from Inistioge who I begged to go and try if I could get into The Black Castle undiscovered, telling him that the pursuers were within three fields of me upon the lands of Kilmacshane. He accordingly went as I directed, but whilst he was away, I imagined that he might betray me, as I judged there would be a great sum of money offered for any intelligence of me that day, therefore I turned off the road and laid myself in a brake of briars which was on one side of a narrow road leading from Inistioge, there I fell fast asleep, but not before I charged a case of pistols and a musket, which I had with me.

In some time after one of the carmen coming up from Inistioge, heard me snoring in the brake, and immediately went to the pursuers and told them he would tell them where I was if they gave him a reward, upon which they promised him five pounds, and gave him two shillings and eightpence earnest. He immediately brought them to the place with about fifty armed men, amongst whom were eighteen of the

Waterford militia grenadiers, as I have been told; they divided themselves into two parties, one before and another behind me in the narrow road; three of them advanced towards the brake, to which the carman pointed, and fired all together. The noise of the shots awoke me, but finding I was not hurted, I did not stir, I heard Forster say that the D——l a one was in the brake, upon which I imagined they would go off, but Forster advancing further towards the brake, said there was a pig or a dog in it, up on which I fired a shot at him and shot him through the palm of the hand and wrist. The parties above and below me gave way, and Forster was sent wounded to Inistioge. They sent to Sir William Fownes for men and ammunition to take me, saying I was dead in the brake. Sir William said, as I have heard, that he knew no occasion they could have for men and ammunition to take a dead man; but notwithstanding he sent them both men and ammunition. During this time I lay under their fire, which was above two hours and a half; they, firing four at a time from each party; their balls several times grazed my head and side. I still presented my musket at then, and missed fire several times. When Sir William's men came up, his groom rode up to the brake, and in leaping over it, the horse's hind legs tore it open, and at the same time I presented a pistol at him, but holding it up straight the fire could not come at the pan; they all cried out saying, pull him out by the legs, he is dead, and advanced within pistol shot of me, and one of them fired upon me. I immediately cocked the pistol and shot him across the back of the hand and knuckles with a single ball; he cried out that he was killed, but Sir William's coachman made answer, that though he was killed he could run pretty fast. I then primed my musket afresh, resolving to go out amongst them, expecting nothing but death, and was resolved to die and not to be taken alive; upon which I ran out with my musket presented, crying out, "Ye sons of whores I'll blow your brains out;" and then wheeled about. They all gave way both right and left, except Sir William's groom, who was charging his pistols. I ran up to him, presenting my musket within two feet of his body, who turned his back upon me, that he should not see me kill him, but again missed fire, upon which I threw the musket out of my hand, and leaped over a quickset hedge which was near me, and ran across a field where I met another large quickset hedge thick with briars, and turned down the hedge which shaded me from the sight of the pursuers; then I came to a valley, where I found a horse spancelled. I then mounted the horse and rode over the River Nore, and went into a wood called Lakingorra, where I had arms and ammunition: and imagining I would be pursued there, prepared myself for another attack. 'Twas then about two o'clock in the afternoon, and rained very hard, which prevented any further pursuit after me that day, for the pursuers returned to Inistioge.

Grace, who was all this time in the neighbourhood, heard that I was killed; he swore that the goods should die with me, intending to set the furze and heath in which the goods were hid, on fire. I lay that night at Dobbin's mill, within a musket shot of the wood; and sent a spy to know which way the pursuers would take next morning, who brought me word, that by the best account he could get, the pursuers intended going in search of my goods the next morning.

I then desired the spy to watch them well, and let me know at night, if they found out the goods, and also to desire Grace to come to me. Grace came to me that night with n account, one Welsh from Bally-chough-soust had discovered the goods, and that he took away a large chest of green tea; he was also informed that some of the men who worked in Sir William's wood had taken part of the goods, and that the country people were also rifling them. Grace and I concluded to call upon Nash, and watch the goods that night, which we accordingly did, though I was at the same time convinced, that Nash and his brother rifled a great part of the goods. We discovered where Welsh hid

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

the chest of tea, and I ordered Grace and Nash to get a horse and carry the chest with some other valuable goods, and hide them in a brake of briars, near the ditch of Martin Millea's garden, where I would meet them. Then I rode off to Martin Millea's house. Grace and Nash brought the goods to the place appointed; then I sent Grace to watch the remainder of the goods; and also to know if the Waterford merchants intended paying a ransom for the goods: soon after Grace parted me, he was told by one Nicholas Kelly that the merchants were at Powerswood, and that they sent him word to find me out if he could, and desired I would meet them upon honour that night; Grace came back immediately to Martin Millea's house, and told me what the merchants said. I ordered him to go back to Kelly, and bid him go directly, and tell the merchants, that I would meet them but if they had any arms, be it at their own peril; and also tell them, that I would send a messenger to direct them to the place I would meet them at, which Kelly informed them of. I accordingly sent Grace to Powerswood; the gentlemen swore they had no arms; that it was contrary to their will and directions, that I was pursued by the rest of the gentlemen. Grace came along with them to the place where I was, and when I saw them coming near me, I rode up to them with a fusee in my hand, and had a case of pistols slung to my belt, and asked them why they sent so many in pursuit of me? to which they answered, they were not the means of it, but those were headstrong men, who thought to do great matters, and hoping I would not be angry, as we met upon honour; I said I could not, and I would as soon hurt myself as them, but at the same time desired them if they had a mind to get the goods to pay a ransom immediately, for that I could not stay, having a great way to ride that night. I demanded one hundred pounds, for what part of the goods were in my possession. They said they had not so much money at that time, and prevailed upon me to take what money they had, which was about 50 pounds, on which I sent Grace to show them where the goods were, wishing them good luck.

I then rode off to Martin Millea's house, and remained there for some time, and was informed that Mr. Robbins of Ballyduff, and Sir William Fownes had several spies about the neighbourhood, in order to set me, upon which I quitted Millea's house, and went to Burnchurch. I remained there about three days, and then went to Ballycoughsoust to Nash's house. And meeting Grace there I gave him my mare in order to put her to grass, telling him I would stay about the place for two or three days, and desired him to bring her back in that time; that he would hear of me at Nash's house or at Kelly's; in the meantime I told Nash I wanted a horse to go a little way off, he went with me, and we got a black horse belonging to some of the neighbours. I told Nash I would be with him the night following, and rode off to Martin Millea's, house, who lent me a bald face gelding and at my return the next night towards Nash's house, I was waylaid by Nash and a party employed by Sir William Fownes and Mr. Robbins to take or kill me. And coming near the house, Nash asked me who was there? and changing my voice, answered in Irish, and said, that it was a hard case that a man could not go home to his own house at night, without being questioned by rogues, with which I said that country abounded, and rode off undiscovered: at the same time, not imagining Nash was the person that spoke to me, but thought that they were spies. I then rode to Kelly's house, and stayed there that night and the next morning sent Kelly back with the horse, desiring him to leave him on the lands of Jerpoint. I then went towards Nash's house, and met Nash by the way, who asked me why I did not come to the house last night, I told them I believed there were spies out, telling him what happened the night before, upon which he said, that it was he that spoke to me, and was waiting for me all night, but was not sure that I was the person answered, as I rode a different horse, and also altered my voice. He then wanted me to go home with him, but I refused, and desired

him to go to Grace, and bring my mare, for that I wanted to go some distance off, which he promised to do. I remained about the place, expecting my mare, and was soon after informed that Nash and Grace, were at the pattern of Mullinakill, in the mountain, selling part of the Waterford goods at low prices to the pedlars and hawkers, who were at the pattern; and I was positively told, that Grace and Nash had distributed a deal of the goods amongst their friends. In some time after Grace sent the mare by Nash, being afraid to come himself, as he stayed away longer than I ordered him.

In the morning when I was going away, Nash asked me if I would return to his house that night, I told him I would, but at the same time did not intend it, as I had a suspicion of him. I then rode off towards Burnchurch, and by the way meeting with Martin Millea, sent to Thomastown for some claret, and we sat drinking till it was near day, and then thinking it an unseasonable time to go to Millea's house, I turned back towards Nash's house, forgetting the suspicion I had of Nash; and he well knowing the road I was to come back had the enemy planted on both sides of a narrow road, which was near his own house. When I came up, they fired upon me from both sides of the road, and my hat was knocked off by one of the balls, another grazed the calf of my left leg, and I received two in my right thigh; but notwithstanding I got through their fire, and alighted a little distance beyond them, and turned about desiring the sons of whores to appear, as they were entrenched on both sides of the road, but they would not. I then imagining that they were coming close to me along the ditch mounted my mare and rode about a quarter of a mile across the country, and then alighted, and took the bridle and saddle from off the mare, and walked (though lame) to Kilmacshane, where I got a horse and swam over the River Nore, and got to a wood called Lockingorrah, where I stayed that day, and meeting a boy in the wood, I told him if he would catch a horse for me, which was some distance from me in the wood, I would reward him for it, which he did; and after nightfall I rode in great pain to Millea's house, and went to Millea's room window, and giving a signal that was between us, he immediately let me in, prepared a bed for me, and also gave me some brandy, with which I washed my wounds.

We then concluded to send to Thomastown for one Perry who had some knowledge of surgery; whom we imagined would not betray us. We accordingly sent for him, and when he saw the wounds, he said they were beyond his skill, and advised us to send to Kilkenny for a surgeon, to lay open my thigh to get the balls out, which we agreed to do, and to prevent the surgeon's knowing who I was, we contrived a stratagem, which was that I should put on a chequer shirt, and a silk handkerchief, and that Millea should tell him I was a sailor, who was lately aboard of a man-of-war, and hearing that there was a great reward offered for taking Freney, I came to take him, and meeting him one day, he shot me through the thigh. Millea went to Kilkenny and soon returned with a surgeon, and came with him to my bed-side. The surgeon, after probing my wounds, said he could not get out the balls without laying open my thigh; I desired he would lay it open. He then laid open one of the wounds and got one of the balls out, and laying open the second wound he could not find the second ball, it was so far sunk in the flesh by riding and walking; he then dressed the wounds and was for going away, but left directions how the wounds should be dressed till his return, which would be in three days after. Millea accompanied him to Thomastown, and begged of him not to mention his business at his house, for fear Freney should hear that the sailor was entertained by him, for he would burn his house, or do him some harm; the surgeon promised he would not.

Then Millea came back, and in two days after he sent Perry to Kilkenny with a fee to the surgeon, desiring him not to come till he was sent for, but send directions by

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

Perry how the wounds should be dressed, but Perry staying out late, caused a suspicion in me, and I immediately sent to Phelan and Grace, desiring them to prepare a boat to carry me down the river, and bring it to Denn's Wood, where I would meet them, I then got a horse, from Millea, and made a shift to ride to Denn's Wood, where the boat waited for me; and from whence I went down the river in the boat to Brown's-Barn, and went to Maneiry house, where I remained two days, and there received drugs and the surgeon's directions for dressing my wounds.

In the meantime, Nash and his brother went to my wife, and with tears in their eyes, asked her if she heard from me, or how I was? She told them she heard I was dead, and immediately sent a messenger to me to know if I would be satisfied they should know where I was. I sent her word back that she should by no means tell them, for that I was satisfied they sold me; she told them she did not hear from me since I was wounded, but that she verily believed I was dead. I then ordered Grace and Phelan to get the boat ready, for I would quit that place and go further down the river, which I accordingly did, and went to Clonnemuck Wood, where I remained 5 days and dressed my wounds myself, but in the meantime had Phelan as a spy to watch Sir William Fownes and Counsellor Robbins who were daily in pursuit of me, with several men armed, and desired Phelan to send a horse for me in five days' time, and that I believed the enemy would give over the pursuit by that time. Phelan brought the horse as I had ordered, and informed me, that I may with safety go to his house, provided I did not remain long there: and also told me, that he believed my best friends were turned spies after me. The night after I came down the river, there were spies fixed upon all the fords between Thomastown and Inistioge, upon which I crossed the River Nore in a boat with Phelan and went to his house, where we no sooner arrived, than Phelan's wife told me, that the two Nashes were there enquiring about me, and asked her could she give any account of me? She said she could not, but believed I was dead. I remained there that night, and the next day told Phelan I would quit that side of the country, which I accordingly did, and went that night to Millea's where I stayed a day and a night, and went from thence to Burnchurch, and stayed till I was pretty well recovered, though still lame. I borrowed a horse to go as far as Jerpoint, and a boy along with me by whom I sent back the horse, and walked to Millea's house, who was rejoiced to see me so well recovered. I asked Millea was that part of the country quiet and whether my enemies gave over all thoughts of taking me? To which he answered, that I never would have any quietness in that country, while Counsellor Robbins was in it; and told me, at the same time, that Lord Carrick and the Earl of Bessborough had spies after me and had joined the Robbinses: He was for advising me to blow the Counsellor's brains out who was so inquisitive after me; that it would be a means of preventing any further pursuit. I told him my heart would not admit me to do so, as I ate so much bread in his family; and further said, it was my own fault, for that if I behaved honest I was convinced he would rather promote my interest than be in any means prejudicial to me. Upon which I told Millea I would go further into the mountains towards Graigue that night to get more intelligence, and that I would set off a little before sunset, but he desired that I would not go till he returned, for that he would go that moment, and would bring me a further account about the spies and the enemies. I agreed to stay till he came back; Millea returned about eight of the clock at night, and brought with him one Connor, a school-master, from Thomastown, whom he fixed by the fireside in his kitchen, on purpose to delay me, as he knew I would not stir out of the room for fear of being discovered by Connor, there being no passage to the street-door, but through the kitchen. Millea coming in we drank a bottle of wine, and he insisted I should stay and take another bottle, and eat share of a cold shoulder of mutton. I begged to be excused,

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

saying, that I believed the fords were set, and that there were spies out, and I should have gone away before that time. He then said that he would send Connor up to the parlour, that I might go out undiscovered. In the meantime supper came in, and I begged of him to lend me his bay horse, which he consented to do, and sent a boy away, desiring him, unknown to me, to bring a heavy grey mare belonging to his father, and accordingly the messenger came with the mare, saying the bay horse could not be found.

I had not at this time the least suspicion of Millea, though in fact he betrayed me, for when he parted me in the morning he went to Mr. Arthur Bushe, and agreed with him to set me for a sum of money, of which sum Mr. Bushe, as I am told gave him sixteen guineas. I was impatient to go, and told Millea that I admired he would detain me so long. He then told me the mare was ready, it being then ten of the clock, which was the hour that Mr. Bushe and his men were to come, and the signal between Millea and him was that Millea should put a candle lighting in his back parlour window, when I was just going. I took my leave of Millea, and he ordered his servant maid to show me where the mare was waiting for me. When I came to the street-door, I said some men standing at the end of Millea's father's house, I asked the girl who the men were? She said she could not tell, but believed they were some of the tenants. I then desired her to go and see who they were; she accordingly did and brought me word they were some of the tenants. I said 'twas an odd time for tenants to come to their master's house, at ten of the clock at night.

I then rode off, but did not go above an hundred yards, when one of the enemy fired, and shot the mare under me. Then I alighted, and falling upon one knee, I cocked a blunderbuss, thinking that some of them would appear, and none of them appearing I went under the cover of some ditches towards Thomastown, and waited for two hours at the end of two roads, where I thought the enemy would come by; but not seeing them I imagined they went over some of the fords. Then I went to Mullinakill, to Phelan's house wherein I did not think it safe to lie, therefore I went into a corn field near the house, where I stayed till night, and then went with Phelan to Colnamuck wood, imagining that it was impossible for me to remain with safety in that country, concluded to quit the kingdom, and wrote a letter, desiring Phelan to carry it to Waterford, and to enquire for a friend of mine who was a captain of a ship, and at that time lay in the harbour of Waterford and bring me an immediate answer: which he accordingly did: the ship being ready to sail. My friend desired that I would the next night meet him at the rock called the White Horse, and that he would bring the ship's boat for me, which he accordingly did, and there met my friend, who assured me, that he would take me with safety out of the kingdom. At the same time I was armed with a fusee, a blunderbuss and a case of pistols, resolving if the captain intended otherwise than he said, to blow his brains out. I soon got aboard the ship, and the captain that he heard some of the country people, who came to market say, that it was Martin Millea that betrayed me; and also of the signal between him and Mr. Bushe: till then I never had suspicion of Millea. The captain contrived a place under deck for me, where I remained undiscovered, and promised to leave me in the Isle of Man, from whence I intended going to France.

There was a great hurricane and storm when we came within some leagues of the Isle of Man, which took away our foremast, and by great fortune we got safe into the harbour of Dublin, we came up George's Quay. One night the sailors going out to drink, I went ashore with the captain, and afterwards came abroad publicly before the men. I told the men that I was a merchant who was in debt, that I was bound for the Isle of Man, and desired them not to make mention of any such person being there, and also

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

that I was afraid to appear by day for fear of my creditors, which I said was the case of many an honest man; at the same time I sent for some drink for the men. I remained there for ten days, but the captain came one night and told me that it was rumoured he had some person incog on board his ship, upon which I desired him to hire a hackney chaise to carry two to Kilkenny, and go to Plunket Street, and buy me a suit of women's clothes, and a cloak and cap, and that I would put my own clothes in a bag with the blunderbuss and pistols, and would throw the fuzee overboard, it being too long. The chaise came the next morning before it was day, I was ready dressed in women's clothes, and the captain handed me into the chaise as if his wife, and accompanied me in the chaise.

We then set off, and when we came to Kill, the chaise-boy said he would halt there. When the captain went out of the chaise, he forgot to hand me out, but the landlord coming up to me said "Madam, I'll hand you out," upon which I laid my hand upon his shoulder, and leaped out of the chaise and pretended I hurt my ankle, for I stooped till I got into the house, to prevent the landlord from seeing my face.

We ordered something for breakfast, and I sent the captain out to the kitchen desiring him to make the chaise-boy drink heartily, that we might prevent him from halting at Kilcullen. When we came near Kilcullen I desired the captain to tell the chaise-boy, that I was a woman that he was running away with and was well known at Kilcullen, that he might not stop there. The captain gave him half a crown. The boy had oats in the chaise box, and when we came four or five miles beyond Kilcullen, he fed his horses at a cabin, and drove to Carlow. When we came near Carlow, it was night, then the Captain and I alighted; I took the bag out of the chaise and went into a ditch, out of the chaise-boy's sight, where I put on my own clothes, and put the woman's clothes into the bag, which the captain put into the chaise-box and desired the boy to drive on before him, for that he intended leaving me at a private lodging that night. He accordingly drove away, and the captain and I walked till I got into the streets of Carlow, where I took my leave of him, thanking him for his integrity to me. I then walked through the streets of Carlow, with my blunderbuss under my coat, and went to Gowran, where I remained that night with Felix Donnelly, and the next day went to the neighbourhood of Burnchurch, where I met Hacket, alias Bristeen, and Breen, and desired them to go and set some house for me, or to learn where there was money. I was informed by them that the enemy was quite harassed searching for me every day, since I left the country, and that one person said I was killed, another said I was buried in the banks of the River Nore, and others of them searched several churchyards, where they thought I was buried.

In some time after I was told that Grace, Phelan and the two Nashes were making up a gang to rob the mountain farmers, upon which I sent Grace word that I was in the neighbourhood, and desired that he would not rob the mountain farmers; that I would be with him in a fortnight's time; therefore Grace told Nash that I was to be with him soon, not suspecting that he would betray either him or me.

Soon after I was told 'twas rumoured about that I was to be in the neighbourhood of Grange, upon which the spies were out in that country, all which I had information of; and also, that the enemy were out every night, expecting I would go that way, but I was resolved to deceive them; therefore remained in and about the neighbourhood of Burnchurch.

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

Some time after I was informed that Matthew Grace, Phelan and one Richard Millea were set by Nash, and taken by Counsellor Robbins and his party, and a party of Sir William Fownes, and sent to Kilkenny gaol, in the following manner.

Counsellor Robbins told Nash and Kelly who were spies for him, that he was satisfied they were both imposing on and deceiving him, for that on their false discoveries, they had made him and the neighbours, who always attended, ride several hundred miles at different times, in hopes of apprehending some of the gang, whom they pretended they had set for him, but all to no purpose, and therefore as he intended to set off soon for Dublin, he would before he went send them both to gaol, for that he had evidence enough to convict them both. They told him they could not give any account of me, having heard I had left the kingdom; but they would set Matthew Grace and Phelan for him, as soon as they could persuade them that there was money in some farmer's house in the neighbourhood, whom they might rob, and he should have notice of the time and place so as to apprehend them. And accordingly Counsellor Robbins had money lodged at a farmer's house and contrived it would be known it was there, and then Matthew Grace, Phelan and Edmund Nash, brother to James Nash, prevailed on one Richard Millea, who had not been before concerned in any robbery, to join them. A night was fixed, which Counsellor Robbins had notice of, and that the party was to meet, in order to settle matters, either at the house of James Nash, or Nicholas Kelly, who were two spies. Sir William Fownes also had notice of it, and he and Counsellor Robbins had their respective parties for the purpose; and after nightfall on the 22nd or 23rd of October, 1748, Counsellor Robbins ordered one party into Nash's potato garden near his house, headed by Mr. Hayden of Balycoughsoust, to lie in the trenches quiet till they came to the house, and the other party headed by Mr. Nixon of Brown's Barn, and Mr. Fitzgerald to Kelly's potato garden in like manner; but as he could not bear lying on the ground himself, without endangering his life by the cold, he and Charteris sat under a quickset ditch, halfway between both houses, ready to go to either according as the signal as given.

When the house was surrounded, Matthew Grace, Phelan and Richard Millea, on their journey stole horses to carry them thither and about twelve at night got to Nash's, on which the party without giving the signal attacked the house, and Mr. Hayden entered, but Phelan got a pitchfork, and stabbed at those who were following, at which they fired at him with a blunderbuss, which shattered one of his knees in so terrible a manner, that he died in about thirty hours. Counsellor Robbins the next morning sent them to gaol, and at next assizes prosecuted Grace and Millea, for the horses, they had stole, which he had secured the night he took them, and they were both convicted and executed. The loss of Grace and Phelan gave me great concern, as they were faithful and honest spies.

I lay by for some time after, and Bristeen came back, and said he believed that Mr. Butler who lived in the Barony of Iverk had money. I said I would go and provide men to attack his house, if he was sure that there was a good quantity of money in it; he said he heard that in that neighbourhood Mr. Butler certainly had a great deal of money; up on which, I told him I would send him word when I had the men ready.

I soon got one Brass, Houlahan and Quigly, and sent word to Hacket and Breen who soon came. We went immediately to Luffany to Mr. Butler's, and Brass, Houlahan, Hacket and I got into the house. There were two men lying in the parlour guarding the house with two muskets, one of them attempting to reach one of the muskets I knocked him down, and took the two muskets, and fixed one of my men to guard them. I then

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

went to Mr. Butler's room, and desired him immediately to dress himself, and to show me where his money was; upon which he put on his clothes, and went to his desk, which he opened, and said that he had sent his money to Waterford; on account of the disturbances in the neighbourhood. I then asked him why he sent my share there? How could he imagine that those men of mine could be supported without money. He answered that if he expected me, he would have kept some in the house for me. I saw three snuff boxes in the desk, which I took, but he said that one of them belonged to his daughter. I then asked him where she was? He said in Waterford, upon which, I returned it, bidding him to give my compliments to his daughter and that I would not deprive her of it. Afterwards finding some plate I took it and divided it among the men, saying it was too little for their trouble.

Mr. Butler begged of me to order the men away, as they were blackened, and called a servant of his to get some drink for us. I told him we would take a draught of his drink, but we did not intend to delay. I asked him to lend me a pair of horses, to which he willingly consented, and at the same time told me, that the two snuff-boxes were presents that were sent him from France, and he would not lose them for any consideration. I then ordered Hackett, who had the boxes, to return them to Mr. Butler, which he accordingly did, and then I took my leave of Mr. Butler, and came to the house of James Kane, a noted sheep-stealer, who lived in the neighbourhood of Burnchurch, and there remained for some time, and soon after went to the county of Tipperary, to rob one Watson a Quaker, whom as Bristeen informed me, had sold seven score of bullocks and two hundred wethers, and he was sure Watson had the price of them in his house, and coming opposite to the house, I observed light in a room above stairs, where I judged Mr. Watson lay. Whereupon I sent Bristeen to look about the house for a ladder, intending to get in at Mr. Watson's room window, but he could not find one, I then desired him to prepare the lights, for that it was time to begin our work, which he accordingly did. As we were going up to the house, I heard Breen whispering one of the men, saying that he heard that Mr. Watson had scythes fixed by pulleys over the doors and windows of his house, upon which I turned about, and desired the son of a whore not to daunt the men, or that I would blow his brains out.

We then came up to the house and lit our candles; I fixed Houlahan and Breen at each side of the house and coming up to a window broke it open with a sledge, and afterwards broke open a door, which was between me and the staircase, and when I went up two steps of the stairs, I turned about asking the men what detained them? Mr. Watson hearing the noise, arose, and came to the stair-head; when he saw me at the stair-foot with a candle in my hand, he having a musket charged with swan shot fired at me but missed me, upon which I fired a random shot at him not having a full view of him, and shot off a piece of the bannister of the stairs near him, and fired five shots running at him by guess, desiring Brass to charge for me. I swore I would blow his brains out, and set his house on fire, I then imagined him to be opposite the stair-head window, so went out with a musket belonging to Mr. Watson, which I got in the house, and a pistol that Brass over-charged being in a hurry, and firing the pistol at Mr. Watson, through the window, it burst, and the barrel flying out of the stock, it grazed my jaw and cheek, taking a piece of the skin off, the stock remaining in my hand.

By this time the neighbours hearing the shots, alarmed the neighbourhood, and the town of Killinaule being near us we imagined that the inhabitants there and the neighbourhood would soon surround us. I concluded that a good retreat was better than a bad battle, so we rode across the country, and came on the turnpike road above Ballymack in the county of Kilkenny, it was then clear day. I then desired Houlahan,

Bristeen, Breen and Quigly, to go to Burnchurch wood, telling them, that Brass and I would stand on the high road, that day, as I found my mare was in good spirits, and that if I met with no prey that day, I would go to Keane's house that night. Brass and I stood the highway all day, but to no purpose, and I remained about that neighbourhood for some time after. The men soon afterwards dispersed about the country; but Hackett and I stood the Kells road and one day meeting Mr. Jolly, from Kilkenny, I bid him stand and deliver, but he had no money except some silver, which I took from him with his watch which I afterwards returned, charging him not to mention that I met him, and still remaining on that road, I soon met a gentleman whom I also bid to stand and deliver; he told me, that all the money he had was two guineas and a half, having laid out a good deal of money in buying wool, and also said he had a charge of children; and was only endeavouring for bread for them, and likewise said he lived in Carrick, upon which I told him, I would not prejudice a dealing man and returned him his money, but charged him not to tell that he met me on the road, but to say it was on the Castleblaney road.

I then told Hackett, that we would meet better fare on the turn-pike road, and we accordingly went there, where we had not long remained before Hackett spied one Fitzpatrick and one Hayden with two more, three of whom were wool buyers from Carrick; when they came within shot of me, Hackett, who was behind me gave me the signal, crying out Shoot them! I immediately presented a musket at them, swearing I would blow their brains out, and then obliged them to alight and lead their horses from off the high-road into the narrow road leading to Burnchurch, and compelled them to sit down at a distance from each other. I stood at a little way from them, and desired Hackett to go up to them, commanding them to give him their money, and swearing that if any of them attempted to prevent him from searching their pockets I would blow his brains out. Upon which Fitzpatrick said, that he did not think I would prejudice him. I then asked him who he was, and what was his name, he answered, that his name was Fitzpatrick, that he lived in Carrick, then I recollected when I was in Carrick, he behaved very civil to me, and told him that if he made himself known to me before, I would not have given him the least trouble. I desired Hackett to desist, and asked Mr. Fitzpatrick where he and his company were going; he answered, they were going to Mr. Bluden's to buy his wool. I told them that if he and his companions had a thousand pounds, I would not deprive them of one penny, for which he thanked me kindly, and so rode off.

I remained in that neighbourhood for some time after, and went from thence to one Millea's house in the neighbourhood of Grange, and from thence I sent for his wife, and asked her what accounts she had for me from the mountains on the other side of the Nore; she told me that the neighbourhood abounded mostly with spies, who were sent out by Sir William Fownes, the Robbins's, the Earl of Carrick, the Earl of Rosborough, Col. Mortes and all their interests; I desired her to go to Kelly's house, and remain a while there to learn some accounts from Kelly; she soon returned, and said that the best accounts she could get: Counsellor Robbins had several spies after me in the neighbourhood, which were Kelly, Corcoran, James Nash, Patrick Welsh, Phelan and one Fling, who watched all night and were fixed in several different parts of the neighbourhood, where they thought I would resort to; she also told me, that Counsellor Robbins summoned eighty of his own and his brother's tenants, who were all sworn separately, (so that one did not know the tenor of the other's oath) to give him all the intelligence they could hear or learn of me, and he promised anyone of them a reward of three hundred pounds, who would set me in a house or show him where I was; she further told me, that the method the spies had to find me out was that they were up very

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

early, looking about the neighbourhood to find out either the track of my mare or myself, they having the length and breadth of my shoe, upon which I got a large pair of brogue-maker's pumps, and wore them in that neighbourhood; sometimes I appeared well mounted in that neighbourhood about sunset, which occasioned the spies to imagine I was about the place, and then went to the enemy who used to be in pursuit of me for a fortnight, without the least intelligence of me, as I always rode ten or twelve miles distant from the neighbourhood. Some time I would appear before the spies, who immediately went and informed the enemy, that I rode towards the mountain, and that they could track my horse, for I rode easy till got out of their sight, and then rode across the heath where they could not track me, and so constantly got clear from them, the enemy pursuing me to no purpose.

I frequently baffled them in this manner to harass the spies, but some time after Houlahan, Breen, Bristeen, and I came to the house of Patrick Welsh, who was one of Mr. Robbin's spies, and broke open the door after night-fall, and immediately seized him; I put a knife to his ear swearing I would cut it off, and compelled him to lay his leg on a stool, taking a hatchet in my hand, swore I would cut it off, telling him I was a good surgeon, and would give him a trade whereby, he might get his bread easier than by labouring work. He begged of me not to cut off his leg, for he had worked several days for me; upon which Houlahan came up, and asked me was I playing with the son of a whore, and at the same time fired a shot by Welsh's ear, at which he bounced off the stool and fell into the fire. The men said that they did not come all the way to be trifling with the thief, and that they would kill him instantly, but he begged of me to spare his life for that time, and he would swear solemnly before the congregation at mass that he never would be a spy again for Mr. Robbins or any other person, upon which I forgave him.

The next day Welsh told Mr. Robbins that he intended to go and swear before the congregation; upon which Mr. Robbins sent for the priest and gave him a charge to prevent Welsh, and also charged the priest to curse any person who would entertain me. My men when they heard that, said, that it was no pity that I should be sold, as I did not make an example of Welsh. I desired my men to meet me in some time after at Burnchurch, they went towards Gowran, and I went towards Grange. The enemy at that time employed beggars about the country to get intelligence of me. In some time after I went to Burnchurch, where I was informed by Keenahan that Bulger was returned from England, and that he was in the neighbourhood; I told him I did not care where he was, for he had used me ill; Keenahan said, that he was in a very low condition, that he was in England, and that he had a very narrow escape, and Keenahan prevailed on me to be reconciled to Bulger, and sent for him.

When Bulger came, I asked him what he did with my watch, he said he was obliged to give it and several other valuable things to a gentleman without whose interest he could not remain in that neighbourhood. Then I sent Bristeen to the Queen's County to learn whether the gentlemen were under any apprehensions, or whether a Mr. Drought had money in his house; Bristeen soon returned with an account, that he heard that Mr. Drought had sold a parcel of fat bullocks and some fat wethers, and had lately returned from Dublin with the price of them, upon which Bulger, Breen, Bristeen and I, went to the Queen's county to pay Mr. Drought a visit, and not being acquainted with the house, we came there before the family went to bed, to be the better judges what part of the house Mr. Drought lay in, and by the putting out of the candles I judged he lay above stairs. We remained there till we imagined the people of the house were all asleep, and then came up to the house, and lighted our candles; I desired Breen to go to

the back of the house, and Bulger, Bristeen and I would go in. I broke open the parlour window with a sledge, and we got into the parlour where we found two fusees; we then went to the hall, where there were 3 men servants in bed, and one of them attempting to make some resistance was knocked down. I left Bulger to guard them, Hacket and I went upstairs to Mr. Drought's room, who was getting up. I laid hold of him, and insisted he would tell me how many men there was in the house, he told me there was not a man but three; who lay in the hall. We rifled the house of money and plate, to the value of 100l., and then quitting the house we made the best of our way to Burnchurch, where we did not arrive till eleven o'clock the next day, and coming to Burnchurch wood, we divided the booty, and went to Keenahan's house that night.

I remained in and about that neighbourhood for some time, and my wife came and told me that Kelly was the chief of the spies after me; I bid her go to Kelly's house and tell him I had a great deal of confidence in him, and that I intended committing a robbery soon after, and as soon as I effected it, I would call upon her at his house, and on her telling him so, he would undoubtedly bring the enemy to watch me at the time she pretended I should come there; and as it was then winter time, they would be quite harassed by waiting for me by night. I also desired her to persuade him any time he should be impatient for my coming, that I would be there in a day or two, and that something extraordinary had happened me, or that I would be there. She accordingly did as I desired, and all the time she was there she understood the enemy were about his house, and seeing Kelly going out frequently at night, of which she informed me by a friend.

I bid her insist that I would be there, upon which she fed his hopes that I would be at his house soon, Kelly oft times admired at my delay; however, she kept him in expectation of seeing me for two months, during which time the enemy were almost perished, and began to suspect Kelly was my friend, that he was making game of them; upon which he said that he believed he was made game of himself, for he actually intended I should be taken; but they were still dubious of him. Kelly then pretended to my wife, that the gentlemen of the neighbourhood said they would have him taken up for entertaining her in his house. She answered she would not have stayed so long, but he pressed her so much; besides she had better friends than him to entertain her, telling him at the same time, that she despaired of ever seeing me, as I did not come or send to her before that time, and she really believed I was dead or gone to foreign countries; and at the same time quitted his house, and immediately after came to me with an account how she served Kelly.

Hacket and Breen were spying all this time, and could get no account of any booty worthy my notice; some time after as Hacket, Butler and I were walking one evening in a field near the ditch of Kells road, and hearing the noise of a chaise and some horsemen coming along the road, I desired Hacket to go see if they had any portmanteaus, and if they had, we would rob them; Hacket brought word that there were three ladies, two gentlemen, and two servants, one of the two gentlemen was Doctor Vesey of Tuam; we immediately leaped out on the road, crying out, Zounds, stand and deliver! Immediately they stopped, and each of them gave me a small purse; I then handed the Doctor out of the chaise, and asked him had he no more money than what was in the purse, he said upon his priesthood he had not. I asked the servants how they lived on the road, they said very well. I then told Mr. Vesey, that I did not think that there was money enough in all their purses to bear their expenses to Tuam; he told me that there was one Mr. Cooke of Castletown would give him money to defray his charges to Tuam. In the meantime there was a gentleman a tutor from Kilkenny with

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

whom Mr. Baker's son was in company riding towards me, whom I immediately approached and compelled him and Mr. Baker's son to alight and join company with Mr. Vesey and the ladies.

At this time Bulger and Bristeen began to rifle the portmanteau, which the ladies observing asked me, did not I give my honour, that none of their clothes should be touched; upon which I ordered Bulger and Bristeen to desist, and at the same time returned the purses, saying that in regard to his knowledge of Mr. Cooke, who was a worthy gentleman, I would not deprive him of his money, then I took my leave of them, upon which, Bulger and Hacket, both said, that they knew no reason why they should run the risk of their lives for nothing, I answered, that it was not worthwhile to take such a trifle. We then went to Keane's house, and were resolved in a little time after to take to the turnpike road.

In a few nights after, Bulger and I walked to an ale-house, and called for a quart of ale at the door, at which time I asked the boy that brought it, was there any plover in that neighbourhood, pretending I came from Kilkenny to fowl. Stack, who was at this time in the house, hearing my voice, came out telling me that the people of the house had some knowledge of me, and that I had better go in, which I accordingly did; Stack told me that he was obliged to fly, on account of some plate that was sold to a pedlar, which was part of Mr. Driscoll's robbery, and that he had no friend but me; that if I was not willing to entertain him any longer in my gang, to get him five pounds, and he would go immediately to England and follow his trade (being a shoemaker.) I told him if he would set a gentleman on the road for me, I would give him five pounds, provided he would go to England as he said. Stack told us that he had a friend, one Philip M'Guire, who lived at Dean's Fort, who kept an ale-house, and he would give us good entertainment, on which we concluded to meet him there the next night; we resorted that house night and day for a considerable time, watching to see some passengers going that way, but meeting with none, we went to the turnpike road at seven o'clock in the morning, where we waited in sight of the road till three in the afternoon, and hearing Mr. Butler's coach going by, we would not stop it, and concluded to wait for strangers.

At this time Bulger was asleep, but awaking told me he dreamed that the sole of his shoe fell off, which he said was a bad omen, and desired me to quit the road that day; I told him it was too early in the day, and that I would not leave that place until I had done something remarkable in the neighbourhood. In a little time after I perceived two gentlemen and a servant riding up, and the gentlemen armed, I then desired Stack to go behind them on the road, and that when he saw me come up to the gentlemen to cry Put fire! and desired Bulger to follow me. I threw my riding coat over my shoulders, with my blunderbuss under my arm, and a fuzee in my hand, as if I was fowling, and leaped out on the road; the servant who was foremost thought to pass me, on which I fired a shot before the horse, and with the other hand presented my blunderbuss at the gentlemen (who were Messrs. Barrett and Franklin) swearing if they did not immediately put up their horses and arms I would blow their brains out, whereupon they quitted both, then Mr. Barrett said, I was not Freney, for he would not use gentlemen in so rough a manner. I told him I would use people so who carried arms against me. He swore that it was not against me he carried arms, but for fear any person should attempt to rob him in my name, swearing he did not intend to make the least resistance against me. I then desired him to tell any gentleman of his acquaintance whom he should meet riding that way armed against me, that he would meet with the like usage. Bulger and Stack imagined me to be killed, thinking it was one of the gentlemen that fired the shot, and did not come up till they were convinced I had got

the better of the gentlemen; then they came running up: I compelled the gentlemen to go from off the road into a lonesome place, saying it was time for me to reckon their money; upon which they delivered me their watches and money. Stack said, Mr. Franklin had more money in his house, but I told the son of a whore, he did not come in time to know what he had, desiring him to hold his tongue, and mind the horses, and carry away the portmanteau, for I would keep Mr. Barret's horse. I detained the gentlemen till night-fall, telling them if any other passengers came by they should have fellow-sufferers, but seeing no one coming, I kept one of the horses, to carry the portmanteau, and also kept Mr. Barret's pistols. Mr. Barret requested a pair of gold locket buttons belonging to his wife, which were in the purse I took from him, upon which I returned him the buttons, saying I would not deprive him of anything belonging to her; he also told me there were papers of consequence in his portmanteau, and he would send me ten guineas to ransom them to any place I pleased to appoint; I told him I would not appoint any place, but when he had sent the money to that neighbourhood, I would be informed of it if I was twenty miles distant, and would return his horse, portmanteau, and papers on receipt of the ten guineas, upon which we parted good friends. Bulger, Stack, and I went to Burnchurch grove, and divided the spoil. I told Bulger, Stack and I would carry the portmanteau to the mountain and hide it, desiring them if any came from Mr. Barret, to send me word to the mountains and I would come immediately to him. I then went to the house of John Brien whom I asked could I remain in his house till night; he said he was afraid to let me into his house, there being so many spies about that place, and said he would instantly go and inform the Lord Carrick that he saw me. I desired him to go to the D——I and rode away, and hid the portmanteau in a brake near Brien's house, and afterwards met a friend, whom I told where I hid it, and desired him to bury it in a sand pit. As I was riding across the mountains, Phelan who was one of the spies, saw me, and immediately went and told the enemy, saying, that he took measure of the horse's track, and could distinguish among an hundred tracks. I was suspicious at this time I would be pursued, therefore rode a great way ahead, and afterwards turned round another way to baffle the enemy if they were even in pursuit. It growing late, I went to the house of a school-master, whom I was informed sold drink on the mountains, and told him I came from the county Wexford to fowl, and that I met a gentleman an acquaintance of mine to whom I gave what fowl I had killed, and wished I had part of them that time. As I was hungry I got some mutton chops and ale in the house, and told the landlord that I would go to Ross that night, on which I rode towards Inistioge, and getting over the River Nore, I went to the mountains of Graigue.

I remained there or some time, and was informed that there was, one Ivory and Headon, and several other spies after me, in that neighbourhood; therefore I quitted that place and went to the neighbourhood of Burnchurch, to enquire of Bulger and Stack, whom I soon met; Bulger, Stack and I went to Philip M'Guire's house, to the neighbourhood of Dean's-Fort, from thence Bulger and I went to Keane's; promising to meet Stack the next night, where the four roads parted at Garvine. We accordingly met, and from thence again to Philip M'Guire's house, where we supped and had a bowl of punch; whenever I came to that house I gave the boy half a crown to watch abroad unknown to Philip, charging him to give me notice if he saw any people coming near the house; Philip at this time betrayed me to a Mr. Blunt in Kilkenny, and whilst I was in the house, sent a messenger to Kilkenny to inform Mr. Blunt I was at that time in the house, and desired him to bring a party of men to take me immediately. Mr. Blunt came accordingly, accompanied by fourteen men armed. In the meantime Philip coming into the room, I laid my hand on his forehead, and looking straight in his face, said he may

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

be a very honest man, but he looked suspicious. Some time after, Bulger went towards the street door, and the boy who was abroad on the watch came in, and said there was a number of men coming up to the house which he believed were enemies, on which I immediately arose, and took up Bulger's and my own arms, which Philip seeing, he said he would go to the door, but I would not let him go, saying I would go along with him, and Philip and I going to the door, there were four shots fired at our going out, one of which shot off Philip's arm. I then observed a shot fired from the end of the house out of the haggard, and then imagining that as the shot fired from that part, it was the safest place for me to face, to which I accordingly did, and running to the haggard wall to leap over it, my breeches bursted behind, which occasioned me to throw away a blunderbuss and a case of pistols, and was obliged to put one of my hands behind to hold up my breeches, the enemy fired three shots at me as I was going over the wall, but I escaped them all, as also did Stack, who was with me, and got safe into the haggard, and from thence into a fallow field. Bulger stayed all this time in the kitchen, intending to get out undiscovered, finding the enemy so intent upon firing at me abroad, and at length finding I made my escape, he ventured out; but there were some shots fired at him, and one of the balls grazed the back of his neck, which did him no harm. In the meantime I pulled off my breeches and whistled, wondering where Bulger was, upon which the enemy rode off, and Bulger got off a contrary way; Stack and I went at towards Tullamaine near Callan, to a friend of Stack's, whose name was Welsh, and from thence we sent Welsh to Keenahan's to Burnchurch to enquire about Bulger, to know the reason why he parted us. Bulger came to us and said he did not know which way we went, I then asked him why he did not come up when he heard the shots fired; he said that he imagined Stack and I were taken, and he thought his presence could be of no use to us.

We remained there for some time and I went from thence to the mountains, promising to meet Bulger and Stack at Welsh's house in 10 days after, or that they should hear from me if I did not come in person. I remained for two or three days in the mountains in the neighbourhood of Mung, at one Ryan's house, and came from that to Carrigmourna hill, and intended getting over the River Nore, and going further into the mountains. I saw several of the army of Kilkenny searching Grenane wood for me, and was informed that they were brought in pursuit of me by Mr. Arthur Bush, I immediately rode to the top of Brandon hill, where I could see them at two miles distance all round me, where I thought myself safe, as I could be in the county of Carlow before the enemy could be at the top of the hill. I saw a man at a distance who called out to me to know if I could give him any intelligence of a horse that strayed from him. I answered and said, that I could if he came nearer to me, and desired him to come to me, and that I would give him the best account I could of him; he accordingly came and I told him if he went to the top of the hill he could see his horse, if it was anywhere within two miles round him; he said he was there before, upon which I said, if he was he should go there again, telling him at the same time who I was, and that I was pursued, and if the pursuers met him they might force him to tell he saw me. I insisted that he would remain with me on the top of the hill till we saw whether the enemy came that way or not, I would reward him for his trouble, which he consented to, and we remained on the top of the hill till nightfall.

I stayed in and about Brandon Hill till I got intelligence that the army were gone back to Kilkenny, from thence I went to Tullamain to Welsh's house, and there remained for some time with Bulger and Stack, from thence, Bulger, Stack and I went towards Callan, where I had intelligence that there was a man who had a letter for me, enquiring me at several places in the neighbourhood, whom I immediately judged to be spy, who

in fact was one, and was sent by Counsellor Robbins and Colonel Morris, thinking by that means to find out what part of the neighbourhood I was in. Some time after, I was informed there were spies from Kilkenny, and that my Lord Carrick had several spies after me, upon which I kept wide of that part of the neighbourhood, where I was told the spies were fixed, and hearing there was a gentleman receiving rent in Grace's parish, Bulger said he had a friend in that neighbourhood, who would set the gentleman. We got horses, and the night being cold, stormy and wet, Stack despaired of ever getting the better of that night's fatigue.

When we came to Bulger's friend, he informed us, that the gentleman was not come the neighbourhood, upon which we turned back to the neighbourhood of Burnchurch, Stack swore he would rather work years at his trade, than undergo the fatigue of such another night. We soon after met Hacket, who said, he would not venture to stay any longer in that country, as there were so many spies, that it was impossible for him to escape them, and said that he would to some remote part of the kingdom, and take a house and garden, and work labouring work, but that he would fix himself in a neighbourhood where there were a good many rich gentlemen and Quakers, and would set some of them for us, and when he had done so, would return, which he said would be in three or four months. I then told Hacket that he had better stay, and that we would go to some town where we would get some money, for there was none to be had in the country, but he would by no means consent, whereupon he departed. Soon after I was told that Thos. Houlahan went to the North in order to take shipping for New England, and was there taken, and was also informed that James Wholahan and Caleb Brass took shipping and went to Newfoundland, and had further information that one Margaret Brown gave examinations against Martin Millea, John Fitzgerald, two brothers of the Gauls, and one Power, upon which they were all taken and committed to Kilkenny gaol. In some time after Breen came and told us that there was one Edward Forgill in the town of Kilkenny whom his spy assured him had three hundred pounds in his house, upon which we went to the town of Kilkenny in the dead time of the night, well armed, and coming to the house, we lighted our candles, and breaking open a window with a sledge, I sent Stack and Breen into the house giving them a charge to behave courageous that night. Bulger and I stood sentry, and finding that Breen and Stack did not do their business effectually, I sent Bulger in, who was not long in the house before they got fifty guineas with some plate and rings. We quitted the house and went to Wind Gap road, and from thence to Leddistown, where we got over the River Nore in a boat, and went from thence to Gill's Lough; to the house of one Keane, where we divided the booty; some time after I was informed that Stack would betray me, whereupon I gave him 20 pounds, a silver watch, and a new suit of clothes, desiring him to go to England, and do for himself, in which he went as far as Dublin, then spent the money, and returned again to the county of Kilkenny, where he was encouraged by the gentlemen, to set Bulger and me. He told the gentlemen, that he would not prejudice Bulger, as he was a near relation of his, but that if I would admit him into my company he would take an opportunity of shooting me when I was asleep. He often attempted to set me, but to no purpose, as I went out of that neighbourhood.

In the meantime Kenny returned from England, and was not long at home, before he went with Stack and Bulger to the widow Doyle's house at Desart, and robbed her of a blunderbuss, some guns and pistols, and in a little time after Stack was taken and sent to Kilkenny gaol. Soon after I sent a messenger to Welsh, to Tullaherin, to send me some accounts from that neighbourhood, who sent word that Stack was taken, and desired me not to come in to that country, for that all Stack's friends were striving

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

to set me, thinking thereby, that Stack would be saved and they were daily insinuating Bulger to betray me, and also sent me word that Bulger's friend and two w——s which he kept, were constantly advising him, to sell me, saying that by so doing he would get his pardon, and they would send to set Hacket, and have him taken, by which means Stack would be pardoned. Welsh also sent me word not to go nigh Burnchurch, but that if I had an inclination I might come privately to his house, and remain there undiscovered.

Sometime after, Bulger, Breen, and Kenny, went to Tullamaine to Welsh's house, and asked him could he give any tidings of me? Welsh answered, they had a better right to know where I was than he, upon which they said they were at a great loss for a man as they were going to rob one Kenny of Callan; at length they prevailed on Welsh to go with them to rob Mr. Kenny, whom they robbed of a small sum, and returned to Welsh's bouse. Some time after Kenny was taken in the neighbourhood of Burnchurch, and committed to Kilkenny gaol, which made me apprehensive, that Kenny would discover of Welsh, and that Welsh to extricate himself might set me; therefore I kept from his house, nor did I hold any correspondence with him for a considerable time after; in the meantime the Earl of Bessborough and Colonel Morris sent me word that if I would set Bulger and Breen, and surrender myself to them, they would get me a pardon, I sent them back word, that I would never surrender on those terms, for I would not set Bulger, and that I would surrender myself upon no other terms than with a proviso, at first, to give Bulger and Breen, public notice, to quit the kingdom. They sent me word back again to meet them upon honour, in a grove near the Earl's house. I accordingly went to the grove, at ten of the clock at night, accompanied by one Kelly, whom I sent into the house to let his lordship know I waited on him, but he brought me word that my Lord was in bed, and that Colonel Morris went away before night, upon which I rode away.

Counsellor Robbins having very soon afterwards come to the country from Dublin, being the spring, 1748-9, I procured to be sent to him the following articles, which I undertook to perform if he would get me pardoned.

First, that I would discover of a man who then received, and for many years received stolen plate, and plate taken at robberies, and would convict him.

Secondly, I would discover of a justice of peace's servant, who by his master's permission corresponded with me on very particular terms, and received from me, for the use of his master, one silver tankard, one silver ladle, and three silver spoons.

Thirdly, I would convict Martin Millea.

Fourthly, I would convict a notorious robber.

Fifthly, I would keep the country clear for the future,

Sixthly, I would put him in a method of convicting Tim Doyle, a noted cow-stealer, and receiver of stolen goods.

Counsellor Robbins on reading them said, they would not; and that unless I submitted to perform the two following articles which he wrote at the foot of the former ones, he would spare no pains or expense to take me. The two added articles were as follows:

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

First, The rest of the gang, viz. Jas. Bulger, Patrick Hacket, alias Bristeen, both already proclaimed, Breen, who was to be proclaimed the 10th of June next, & Kenny the sailor, commonly called the yellow sailor; must be set, so as to be apprehended.

Secondly, The chief and most noted harbourers of the gang, or persons proclaimed must be also detected, and proper evidence for convicting them be made known, so as they may be forthcoming.

When those additional articles were brought to me, I declared I would not submit to them as they stood, and sent him word so, by the person who had leave to go between us. He sent me word he would not spare any of them, and would take such steps as he thought proper to do their business and mine too.

I knew his temper and resolution too well to hope or expect he would desist from what he had determined on; and therefore as he was in a very few days to set out for the Munster circuit, I sent the messenger to him to tell him I would submit to all, but the betraying of Bulger, and that I chose rather to die myself than to betray him. The Counsellor told the messenger that was a matter he was well assured by his spies, that Bulger had at several times proposed to waylay and murder him, who first began the hot pursuit after them, and had spirited up all the neighbours to join in the pursuit, and therefore nothing but the murdering of him would intimidate the rest from persisting in their pursuits, which he heard I always opposed being done, therefore he chose to give me the preference of being saved rather than Bulger, who he assured the messenger, was then in treaty with Captain Wemys and others to betray me. I still refused to comply, and the counsellor went the circuit, but desired his friends and spies to be on the watch for me as he was satisfied, I and my party would more readily venture into that part of the country when he was absent, than when he was present; but I took care not to go near that part unless it were to ride suddenly through it well armed.

On the counsellor's return from circuit, I sent again to him, to let him know, that if he released me from the betraying of Bulger, I would do other services which would make amends for that, but he would not; and then being informed that he was to set off for Dublin, on the eighth of April, 1749, I resolved to submit to his terms, if he still continued inflexible, and on the messenger's endeavouring to prevail on him, he grew angry, and bid the messenger take care of herself after twenty-four hours, for he would leave his warrant for apprehending and committing her, and be angry with these he entrusted in his absence, if they did not apprehend me, her and the rest. On which the messenger promised him I should submit, and undertook that Bulger should be set for him or his party as well as the rest. He told the messenger he would not make any promise as I was proclaimed, without the leave and consent of government, whom he would wait on the next Monday morning, and if they consented he would write to him again in the country to inform me of it, and to correspond with me on getting the articles fulfilled.

Accordingly the Counsellor went to Dublin, and related what he had done to Lord Carrick who was then in Dublin, and they both on Monday morning the 10th April, waited on the Lord Justices, and laid the before mentioned written articles before them, which they approved of, and consented to grant me my pardon on my fulfilling the articles; and the Lords Justices at the same time enjoined Lord Carrick, and Counsellor Robbins, to keep the affair a secret from everybody, lest it might take wind, and disable me from having having the others taken before I surrendered. They promised the Lord's

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

Justices not to communicate it to anyone but Mr. Fitzgerald the Counsellor's agent, who was to correspond with me privately, and was also enjoined to keep it quite secret.

The counsellor the next post wrote Mr. Fitzgerald an account of what passed, and that Lord Carrick and he were enjoined to secrecy, and promised his not disclosing it to anybody. Mr. Fitzgerald sent for me, and we met privately; I promised to perform, and sincerely intended it, except the betraying of Bulger, which I own I thought to avoid doing. Mr. Fitzgerald and I agreed, that the best scheme to do the work quickly, would be to fix on robbing some house, and give Mr. Fitzgerald notice of the night, that he might be ready with fifteen disbanded soldiers, whom Counsellor Robbins had a little before planted out on his estate, to surprize us all together in the house we proposed to rob. Some time after I went to find out Bulger and Breen, whom I met in Clonmore, near Kilkenny, and there we remained that day at a friend's house of Breen's. But not thinking ourselves safe there, we parted Breen, telling him that he would see us in two or three days after at Welsh's house, and at our parting, Breen told us, he would soon quit that neighbourhood, saying, he would go fifty miles off, and take a house where he said Bulger and I could remain with safety, and desired us to send him word if Hacket was come back and he would go and live near Hacket's, where we could live with pleasure between the two houses, I answered, that it was a good thought, and when Hacket came I would send him word, reposing as I pretended, a great deal of confidence in him.

Then Bulger desired that I would go with him to the neighbourhood of Burnchurch but I denied going, being under some apprehensions of him, on what Counsellor Robbins told the messenger who went between us, upon which we concluded going towards Callan. At this time Breen sent off a messenger to Kilkenny, to inform Mr. Evans, the Mayor, that he had Bulger and Freney set, as he had before agreed with the Mayor to do, and for a certainty of what he said, he sent a gold watch of mine, which he had by a messenger.

As Bulger and I walked along the turnpike road, the enemy were planted before us; as Breen well knew the road we would take, but did not appear to us, imagining they had better wait till they had got us into a house, as they were convinced that Breen knew our haunts. The enemy fixed a man on the road before us, who pretended to be drunk, but I no sooner saw him than I told Bulger he was a spy, and I went into a ditch for fear he should see what arms I had, and sent Bulger a piece of the way with him; he often swore that we should drink with him, saying, he was a butcher, thinking thereby to get us to an alehouse, that the enemy might the readier take us; but quitted him and went to Tullamain, as I was unwilling that any but Lord Carrick's party should take any of the gang, as his Lordship had applied to government on my behalf; and, on the way, told Bulger that we had no right to go to Welsh's house, as Kenny was in gaol, and knew our haunts, and further that Welsh might be in dread of Kenny's discovering he was a party in the robbery of Mr. Kenny of Callan, on that account Welsh might betray us. Bulger said, we had no occasion to stay long at Welsh's, for he had a friend within 3 miles of Welsh's house, who would entertain us, and there remain with safety.

We then went to Welsh's house with a view not to make any delay there, but taking a glass extraordinary after supper, Bulger fell asleep. Welsh in the meantime told me, his house was the safest place I could get in that neighbourhood, and while I remained there I would be very safe, provided that no person knew of my coming there, (I had not acquainted him that Breen knew of my coming that way) I told Welsh, that as Bulger was asleep, I would not go to bed till morning, upon which Welsh and I stayed

up all night, and in the morning Welsh said, that he and his wife had a call to Callan, it being market-day. About nine o'clock, I went and awoke Bulger, desiring him to get up and guard me whilst I slept, as I guarded him all night, he said he would, and then I went to bed, charging him to watch close, for fear we should be surprised. I put my blunderbuss and two cases of pistols under my head, and soon fell fast asleep. In two hours after the servant girl of the house seeing an enemy coming into the yard, ran up to the room where we were, and said that there were an hundred men coming into the yard, upon which Bulger immediately awoke me, and taking up my blunderbuss he fired a shot towards the door, which wounded Mr. Burgess, one of the sheriffs of Kilkenny, of which wound he died. They concluded to set the house on fire about us, which they accordingly did; upon which I took my fuzee in one hand, and a pistol in the other, and Bulger did the like, and as we came out of the door we fired on both sides, imagining it to be the best method of dispersing the enemy who were on both sides of the door. We got through them, but they fired after us, and as Bulger was leaping over a ditch, he received a shot on the small of the leg, which rendered him incapable of running; but getting into a field, where I had the ditch between me and the enemy, I still walked slowly with Bulger, till I thought the enemy were within shot of the ditch, and then wheeled back to the ditch, and presented my fuzee at them; they all drew back and went for their horses to ride round, as the field was wide and open, and without cover except the ditch. When I discovered their intention I stood in the middle of the field, and one of the gentlemen's servants, (there were fourteen in number) rode foremost towards me upon which I told the son of a whore, I believed he had no more than five pounds a year from his master, and that I would put him in such a condition, that his master would not maintain him afterwards, to which he answered, that he had no view of doing us any harm, but that he was commanded by his master to ride so near us; and then immediately rode back to the enemy, who were coming towards him. They rode almost within shot of us, and I observed they intended to surround us in the field, and prevent me from having recourse to the ditch again. Bulger was at this time so bad with the wound that he could not go one step without leaning on my shoulder. At length seeing the enemy coming within shot of me, I laid down my fuzee, and stripped off my coat and waistcoat, and running towards them, cried out, you sons of whores, come on, and I will blow your brains out, on which they returned back, and then I walked easy to the place where I left my clothes, and put them on, and Bulger and I walked leisurely some distance farther.

The enemy came a second time, and I occasioned them to draw back as before, and then we walked to Lord Dysart's deer-park wall. I got up the wall and helped Bulger up, the enemy, who still pursued us, though not within shot, seeing us on the wall, one of them fired a random shot at us to no purpose. We got safe over the wall, and went from thence into my Lord Dysart's wood, where Bulger said he would remain, thinking it a safe place, but I told him he would be safer anywhere else, for the army of Kilkenny and Callan would be soon about the wood, and that he would be taken if he stayed there. Besides as I was very averse to betraying him at all, I could not bear the thought of his being taken in my company by any party but Lord Carrick's. I then brought him about half a mile beyond the wood, and left him there in a brake of briars, and looking towards the wood, I saw it surrounded by army. There was a cabin near that place, where I fixed Bulger; he said he would go to it a night, and he would send for some of his friends to take care of him. It was then almost two o'clock, and we were four hours going to that place, which was about 2 miles from Welsh's house. Imagining that there were spies fixed on all the fords and bye-roads between that place and the mountain, I went towards the bounds of the county Tipperary, where I arrived at nightfall, and going to a cabin, I

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

asked whether there was any drink sold near that place? The man of the house said there was not; and as I was very much fatigued, I sat down, and there refreshed myself, with what the cabin afforded. I then begged of the man to sell me a pair of his brogues and stockings as I was then bare footed, which he accordingly did. I quitted the house, went through Kinsheenah and Poulacoppal, and having so many thorns in my feet, I was obliged to go barefooted, and went to Sledelagh, and through the Welsh mountains, till I came within four miles of Waterford, and going into a cabin, the man of the house took 18 thorns out of the soles of my feet and I remained in and about that place for some time after.

In the meantime a friend of mine was told, that it was impossible for me to escape death, for Bulger had turned against me, and that his friends and Stack's were resolved upon my life; but the person who told my friend so, also said, that if my friend would set Bulger and Breen, I might get a pardon through the Earl of Carrick's means and Counsellor Robbins's interest. My friend said, that he was sure I would not consent to such a thing, but the best way was to do it unknown to me, and my friend accordingly set Bulger, who was taken by the Earl of Carrick and his party, and Mr. Fitzgerald, & six of Counsellor Robbins's soldiers, and committed to Kilkenny gaol; he was three days in gaol before I heard he was taken, being at that time twenty miles distant from the neighbourhood, nor did I hear from him, or see him since I left him near Lord Dysart's wood, till a friend came and told me that it was to preserve my life and to fulfil my articles, that Bulger was taken.

Soon after my messenger found out, that Hacket, alias Bristeen, lived near Berriakane, and told Lord Carrick so, who sent and had him apprehended, and brought to Kilkenny gaol. The unfortunate killing Mr. Burgess, defeated the execution of the scheme agreed on by Mr. Fitzgerald and me, and the government refused for some time to pardon me, but on being told my scheme, and that I was then contriving to bring it to perfection, and that Bulger had fired against my will, for I desired him to surrender, they again desired Lord Carrick, and Counsellor Robbins to proceed in it, and then Bulger and Bristeen were set and taken, and so were Martin Millea, Felix Donnelly, Edmond Kenny, and James Lavesay. I found I began to be suspected of having betrayed some of my party, and that many of their friends were endeavouring to have me set, others to take me, or to have me killed, and therefore I had better surrender myself. Lord Carrick sent me word, there was a party going out to take or kill me and had applied to him for ammunition for that purpose, and desired me to take care of myself, till I could come and surrender myself to him.

I set out in order to go to him, but was informed, that I was set in Kelly's house, by Nash's wife who went for a party to Thomastown, wo were coming with a horse and car with an intent to carry my corpse. I therefore withdrew to a neighbouring wood, and concealed myself there till night, and then went to Ballyduff to Mr. Fitzgerald, and surrendered myself to him, till I could write to my Lord Carrick, which I did immediately, and give him an account of what I escaped in that I would have gone to Ballilync and surrendered myself there to him, and begged his lordship to send a guard for me, to conduct me to his house, which he did, and remained there for a few days, He then sent me to Kilkenny gaol, and at the summer assizes following, James Bulger, Patrick Hacket, otherwise Bristeen, Martin Millea, John Stack, Felix Donnelly, Edmond Kenny, and James Larassey, were tried, convicted, and executed; and at Spring assizes following, George Roberts was tried for receiving Colonel Palliser's gold watch knowing it to be stolen, but was acquitted, on account of exceptions taken to my pardon, which prevented my giving evidence. At the following assizes, when I had got a new

## The Life And Adventures Of James Freney

pardon, Roberts was again tried for receiving the tankard, ladle, and silver spoons from me, knowing them to be stolen, and was convicted and executed. It the same assizes, John Reddy, my instructor, and Michel Millea, were also tried, convicted, and executed.

Then Lord Carrick and Counsellor Robbins, in order to enable me with my family to quit the kingdom, proposed a subscription to be set on foot, in order to raise a sum of money for that purpose, and it accordingly was; but the gentlemen of the country refused to contribute, and therefore that scheme came to nothing.

Therefore to enable me to quit a kingdom which is tired of me, and which I do not choose to live in, if I can avoid it, I have been advised to try if the publication of my past life will enable me to take myself and family to some foreign country, and to earn our bread in some industrious way, and hope the services done my native country by Lord Carrick's spirit and resolution, roused up by my means, will make amends for my former transgressions.

**FINIS**

## Epilogue

*From Journal of the Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society, Vol. 1, 1856-57, page 59.*

After Freney's pardon, unlike most persons of his class, he never relapsed into a course of dishonesty. Having been unable to procure the means of emigrating, Lord Carrick's influence procured for him a small public office, that of a tide-waiter at the port of New Ross, and he always maintained a character for integrity and propriety in that situation. He lived to so good an age, that many people still alive remember to have seen him in their childhood; and, so far from any stigma being considered to rest on his character, he was rather viewed as a celebrity, and his conversation courted and encouraged by people of the better class of society. His grave, in the churchyard at Inistioge, is pointed out as an object of interest by the peasantry of the locality, but is unmarked by a gravestone.

O'Keeffe, the dramatist, tells us that he met Freney whilst he was acting with a theatrical company in Kilkenny, and thus describes him:—

"One day, I was, with some others, taking a repast in a tavern there [Kilkenny], when a little man walked in; he was elderly, and had but one eye. Some person asked him to take a glass; he did so. This man was the once remarkable and, indeed, notorious, bold Captain F—— of whom were made ballad-songs. He was the audacious and resolute leader of the Rapparees. When a General with a troop of horse went to take him prisoner, Captain F—— called out, and said he would surrender, if the General would ride up to him alone; the other complied; the Captain placed his pistol to the General's breast, and took from him his purse and watch, in view of the whole troop of soldiers. His companions suffered by the law, but the Captain himself was made county keeper, and was of great use in preventing those outrages, of which he himself was once the most daring ringleader and perpetrator."—*Recollections of the Life of John O'Keeffe*, vol. i. p. 213.

## Appendix: The Ballad of Bold Captain Freney.

One morning as, I being free from care,  
I rode abroad to take the air,  
'Twas my fortune for to spy  
A jolly Quaker riding by;

CHORUS:

And it's oh, bold Captain Freney!  
Oh, bold Freney, oh!

Said the Quaker—"I'm very glad  
That I have met with such a lad;  
There is a robber on the way,  
Bold Captain Freney, I hear them say."

"Captain Freney I disregard,  
Although about me I carry my charge;\*  
Because I being so cunning and cute,  
It's where I hide it's within my boot."

Says the Quaker—"It is a friend  
His secret unto me would lend;  
I'll tell you now where my gold does lie—  
I have it sewed beneath my thigh."

As we rode down towards Thomastown,  
Bold Freney bid me to 'light down.  
"Kind Sir, your breeches you must resign;  
Come, quick, strip off, and put on mine,  
[CHORUS:] For I am bold Captain Freney," &c.

Says the Quaker, "I did not think  
That you'd play me such a roguish trick  
As my breeches I must resign,  
I think you are no friend of mine."

As we rode a little on the way,  
We met a tailor dressed most gay;  
I boldly bid him for to stand,  
Thinking he was some gentleman.

Upon his pockets I laid hold—  
The first thing I got was a purse of gold;  
The next thing I found, which did me surprise,  
Was a needle, thimble, and chalk likewise.

"Your dirty trifle I disdain."  
With that I returned his gold again.  
"I'll rob no tailor if I can—  
I'd rather ten times rob a man."

It's time for me to look about;  
There's a proclamation just gone out;  
There's fifty pounds bid on my head,  
To bring me in alive or dead.