

A TRUE  
RELATION

OF A BARBAROUS

**Bloody Murder,**

COMMITTED

By *PHILIP STANDSFIELD*

UPON THE

Person of Sir *James Standfield* his Father.

GIVING

An Account of the many inhumane Practices and unnatural Contrivances he used to bring about his wicked Purposes in compassing the Life of his said Father: And how, with the Assistance of his Confederates and Accomplices, he Murthered him in his Bed-Chamber, threw him into a River, and gave out he Drowned himself; seizing upon his Estate and Burying him privately: And by what means, the Body being again taken up, the Murther was discovered in all its Circumstances. For which and other notorious Crimes mention'd in this Book, he was Tryed, Condemned and Executed with the manner thereof, &c.

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*Written as a Caution to all graceless Persons.*

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This may be Printed, R. P.

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Printed for *J. Conyers* at the *Black P*  
Church in *Holborn,*

at *St. Andrews*

[1690]



A TRUE  
RELATION

OF A BARBAROUS  
Bloody Murder

COMMITTED  
By PHILIP STANFIELD

UPON THE  
Order of Sir James Stanfield his Father.

GIVING  
An Account of the manner in which the Practices and  
Usages of the Law were observed upon the whole  
of the Proceedings in this Case, his last Will  
and how with the Assistance of his Counselors and  
Attorneys, he Married him in his Bed-Chamber  
with his own Wife, and gave out by Printed  
Bill; leaving upon his Will, and buried in a  
Tomb, and by what means the Body being so taken up,  
Murder was discovered in all its Circumstances. For  
which and other notorious Crimes mentioned in this  
Book, he was Tryed, Condemned and Executed with  
the manner thereof &c.

Written as a Caution to all Criminals to follow

This may be Found, R. B.

Printed for F. Coyer at the Black  
Church in Helms





A TRUE  
RELATION  
OF A

Barbarous Bloody MURDER,  
COMMITTED

By *Phillip Standsfield*, upon the Person of  
*Sir James Standsfield* his Father, &c.

**A**fter a strict Enquiry into the Death of *Sir James Standsfield*, who was, some time past, found dead in a River adjoining to his House of *New Mills* near *Haddington*, on this side *Edenborough*, in the Kingdom of *Scotland*, apparent Symptoms of Murder appearing, and extraordinary Presumptions had, That *Philip Standsfield* his eldest Son was deeply concerned in it. After he had for that and other Crimes been committed to the *Talbooth*, the Assizes coming on, on the 6th. of *February* an Indictment was exhibited against him by the King's Advocate, consisting of three Articles, *viz.* That he the said *Philip Standsfield* had drank a Treasonable Health, 2. That he had cursed his Parent,



viz. his Father. 3. That he had complotted, contrived and brought to pass the Murther of his said Father; and being allowed Counsel to defend these Articles libelled against him, after a considerable Debate thereon on the part of the King, and the part of the Penal, the Court giving their Opinion, That the first Article was High-Treason, and the two others incurring the Pains of Death, according to the Laws of that Kingdom. The Court adjourned till Two of the Clock in the Afternoon of the day following, enjoyn- ing the Assizers or Jurors, empannelled to try the matter of Fact upon the said Indictment, in the penalty of 200 Marks, to make their personal Appearance in the said Court at the hour aforesaid, and the Prisoner remanded to the *Talbooth*.

On the 17th. of *February*, 1695. the Court being sat and the Assizers or Jurors sworn, the Witnesses were produced by the King's Advocate against the said *Philip Standsfield* the Prisoner, who being sworn as to the first Article was plainly proved by three Persons that he had not only drank the Health mentioned in Ale in the Kitchen at *New Mills* with other Healths of the like wicked Purport, but obliged others on their Knees to do the same; after that enjoyning them to secrecy, threatening them extremely if ever they revealed it: and being reproved by one for enterprising so great a Wickedness, he replied, *You Dog, what are you concerned, you do not understand to whom you speak?* &c.

The Eyidence as to the first Article being fully proved, the Witnesses proceeded to the other two, upon which briefly it was sworn that Sir *James Standsfield* being about to go to *Smeitourn* with a Minister, the Prisoner demanded of the latter whether they were going, and being told, he said, *Devil let never a one of them come back again, Horse nor Man*: And that soon after being desired by a Servant to come to Dinner with his Father, he used many other Curses and Excerations towards him, further expressing himself, That he would not go near him, for his Father grinn'd upon him like a Sheeps-head in a Tongues, and at divers other times he had not only cursed him in such wicked expressions as I think not in this Paper fit to be mentioned, least they should create hor- rour and amazement in the very Relation of so monstrous a Wickedness, but likewise at sundry times sought his Life, assaulted him and fired Pistols at him, way-lay'd him, and used ma-



ny unnatural endeavours to destroy him, especially upon notice that he was about to disinherit him for his many Wickednesses and Debauchery, and to transfer his Estate upon *John Standsfield* his younger Son, and that one day his Mother fainting, she said upon her Recovery, O Philip, *you will shortly want your Mother*: to which he replied, his Father should be dead first, and then it should be well with her as long as he had it or to the like purpose, often declaring, he hoped in short time to be Laird of all, and then he would use some as they had used him, declaring at another time, That he had hated his Father this six or seven years, and could not abide to see him, often imprecating the Devil to Dam him, Rive him and Swell him, threatening likewise his Brothers Life, as his Mother her self confessed, so that Sir *James Standsfield* finding him incorrigible, and that although he had redeemed him out of sundry Prisons, and supplied him with great Sums of Money, in this and other Nations, he still grew worse, had accordingly resolved to disinherit him and was preparing Instruments for that purpose, and had declared to some Friends that he could have no comfort of his Life, by reason of his wicked Son, &c. which as is evident hasten'd the Prisoner to proceed to the Tragical finishing his Fathers days, for the *Friday* before the wicked Act, one *Janent Johnston* who was his Strumpet, held a conference with him in his Chamber, and about that time, or soon after, having cursed one of the Maid-Servants, she said, she thanked God he was not her Master: to which he replied, with an Oath that she knew not how soon he should be: On this, supposing Sir *James Standsfield* had made his Estate to his Son *John*, the Prisoner said, if he thought he had done it he would cut his Throat: but so it happened that on *Friday* the \_\_\_\_\_ of *November* last, he was seen very familiar or intimate with *Janent Johnston* and one *George Thomson* and his Wife, with whom he held as it were a close Consult, and that night his Father coming from *Edenborough* with one Mr. *John Bell* a Minister, he refused upon being sent for to see him or come to Prayers with him, expressing a detestation of his Father.

Bed-time being come, Sir *James* having seen the Minister into his Chamber went himself to Bed, lying customary alone, but the said Minister had not slept long before he was awaked, as he verily conjectured, by Cryes in the adjacent Apartment, and thereupon heard



several Voices or Whispering, which coming to the stairs, went down, as he conjectured, and so out at the Door as appeared by their lessening or loudening, upon which he rose to look out at the Window, but could not draw it up, yet he heard the voices move towards the River; when an hour after day *Philip Standsfield* came into his Chamber, and asked if Sir *James* was come thither, saying, he had been seeking him upon the Banks of the Water, and soon after News was brought that he was in the River, and that *Philip Standsfield* had stood looking upon him, as a Stranger came by, saying then, he knew it to be his Father, but did not think fit to be the first Discoverer, nor would he when he was taken up suffer him to be brought into the House, but caused him to be layed in a dark Out-house, saying, he should not be brought into the House, seeing he had dyed like a Beast; and although an Express came from *Edenbrough* to have the Corps searched if any occasion or suspicion required it, he caused them to be carried to *Morum* Church, and there to be privately, in a manner, Interred, having used *Janent Johnson* and other of his Accomplices, in the most part of the management of this matter. But upon more than ordinary suspicions of Murther, and that Sir *James* had not drowned himself, by reason the Body floated and no water appearing in it when took up, and that the Banks of the River had been much broken with treading, and the Cloaths in a manner not wet, the Body lying likewise upon the Face, a further Order was procured from *Edenborough* to take up the Corps and have them viewed, the News of the which so affrighted *Thomson* that he said he durst not work in the House, his Wife likewise declaring the like fear of being alone, as likewise did *Philip Standsfield*, so great a power has Guilt over the Conscience of the Guilty, &c.

The Corps being taken up in *Morum* Church, two Chyrurgeons were appointed to view it, who making an Incision about the Neck, &c. found in one part under the Ear much stagnated or clotted Blood, and that the Joynts had been distended; also by the blackness of the Face many Symptoms of Strangling appeared, finding at the same time no water in the Stomach or Bowels, with many other Observations; upon which they concluded him to be murdered before he was thrown into the Water, as did the Colledge of Physicians at *Edenborough* upon the Report of the several Symptoms and



Circumstances made to them by the Chyrurgions, and the Consult of Chyrurgions did the like. And what further happened was exceeding remarkable, in which the finger of God, to discover more plainly the Murtherer visibly, appeared was, that a Speech being made, after the Wounds were sewed up, that some of Sir *James's* nearest Relations should take him up off the place where he lay and lift him into his Coffin, the Son, *viz. Philip Standsfield*, attempting toraise the left side of the head and shoulders, whilst one Mr. *Ross* reared the other side, the Blood sprung out upon *Philip Standsfield's* Hand, at which wiping it upon his Coat and struck with terror and remorse, he cryed out, *Lord have mercy upon me*, and so retired to a Pew, where the Chyrurgion ordered him some Treacle-water to prevent his Swooning away.

It was further given in Evidence, but not upon Oath, by *Thomson's* Son, a little Youth, That the night Sir *James* was Murthered his Father and Mother were absent from the Bed, wherein himself likewise lay at the Feet, rising and going abroad at an unusual hour, *Peter Standsfield* and *Janent Johnston* having been there a little before, and being so risen and gone out a considerable time, his Mother came in softly first, and a while after his Father, not locking the Door but setting a Chair against it, because it made a noise when locked; and being both in Bed and supposing him asleep, because he made no Answer when they called, they fell to discoursing the matter, the Father saying, the Deed was done, and that *Philip Standsfield* guarded the Chamber-door with a drawn Sword and a cock'd Pistol, and that he never thought a Man would have dyed so soon; adding, that they carried him out towards the Water-side and tyed a stone about his Neck, and leaving him there, returned to a little Kilne, where they consulted whether they should cast him into the River with the stone or without, and at last, that it might better be taken for a drowning himself, it was concluded he should be cast in without the stone, and accordingly it was done, &c. And a little Girl, the Daughter of *Janent Johnston*, declared that her Mother was out at that time; and when she came home about Two in the Morning, her Father, in harsh Terms, demanded where she had been so long, to which she replied, where she had been, the Deed was done, and so went to Bed.

This being the substance of the Evidence and Circumstances in a brief



brief method, and the Prisoner by himself or Counsel having offered nothing material in his own defence, and being by the whole Country known to be a very notorious Person, though no Education in his younger years were wanting to better qualifie him, the Assizers or Jurors, after the King's Advocate had summoned up the Evidence, found him guilty of the Indictment, upon the three Articles therein mentioned, *viz.* Of Treason. The Curling his Father and Accession to the Murder of his said Father.

Being found Guilty, he was sentenced to be carried on the 15th. of February to the Market-Cross of *Edenborough*, and there to be hanged on a Gibbet till dead, between the hours of Two and Four in the Afternoon, his Tongue to be cut out and burnt upon a publick Scaffold, his Right hand to be cut off and affixed on the Eastern part of *Haddington*, and his Body to be hanged in Chains at *Gallowile*; and it was further Ordered, That his name, fame, memory and honours be extinct, his Arms to be Riven and taken out of the Books of Arms, so that his Posterity may never have place, or be able hereafter to possess or enjoy any honours, offices, titles or dignities within the Realm for time coming, and all his lands, goods, chattels, &c. to be forfeit to the King; and accordingly this Sentence was put in Execution, he, as he had all along done, appearing obdurate to the last.

And now who can but relent at what has been related! and may it stand as a Sea mark to warn bold and daring Sinners from running on in a course of Impiety, least by indulging themselves by degrees they at length become slaves to the Enemy of mankind, and he who was a Murthérer from the beginning prompt them on to such horrid Impieties as may deservedly bring upon them the like shamefull and disgracefull end; who, had he kept to his duty and filial obedience, answering the Education that was given him, and made suitable returns for the affection and tenderness of an Indulgent Father, who failed not to supply him with whatever he found convenient or necessary, he might have escaped this Doom and Punishment; and have flourished in Peace and Tranquility, but for not observing it you see his Days are cut off from the Land, and he has left an Infamy upon his Remembrance to all posterity.

FINIS.

Med. Hist.  
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