

At the June, 1666, Provincial Court, Thomas Morrice of Herring Creek of Anne Arundel County was tried for the murder of Francis Cheater, a laborer, whom he had killed at the plantation of Mr. Samuel Chew of Herring Creek. He pleaded not guilty and asked for a jury trial. The jury, of which Thomas Hynson was foreman, found him "guilty of Manslaughter". He thereupon "prayed his Clergy, Which the Co^{rt} allowed was burnt in the hand, and bound to appeare at the next Provin^{all} Co^{rt} in the meane time to be of his good behaviour". The evidence showed that Morrice had struck Cheater twenty blows with a cudgel valued at twopence and had also kicked him upon his privy members from which he had died ten days later (pp. 110-111).

A woman charged with infanticide either came perilously near being hanged, or for all we know may actually have been executed. Joane Colledge of Mattapan-y-Sewell, Calvert County, spinster, was brought before the December, 1669, Provincial Court. Here she was indicted and tried for assaulting and killing a girl infant to which she had just given birth. She pleaded not guilty and "putt herself upon the Country". John Morecroft, the attorney-general, acted as prosecutor. After six witnesses were heard "and the said Joane Colledge being required to make her defense thereunto being heard likewise", the jury, of which Thomas Cosden was foreman, brought in a verdict of "guilty of murder". The court, after suspending sentence for a day "until further advised concerning the premises before judgment be passed", sentenced her to be hanged. Three of the women who had testified as witnesses, together with four other women, "and sundry other persons exhibited to the Court on the behalfe of the said Joane Colledge a Petition for the suspending of the execution of the said Joane Colledge untill such tyme as his L^{öpp} the Lord Proprietary's further Will and pleasure whould be knoene touching the granting of her pardon. Whereupon the Court Ordered that the Prisoner Joane Colledge should be reprieved till the eighteenth day of October next". Governor Charles Calvert was on a visit to England at this time and the court doubtless was awaiting his return (pp. 598-599). As no further reference to Joane appears in the following years, we are left in some uncertainty as to whether she was pardoned by the Governor on his return, or was hanged at the expiration of her reprieve, October 18, 1671. Her name does not appear in the records of the Court of Chancery among those pardoned by the Governor.

Another case of infanticide has features of human interest. Jane Crisp (Crips), a Talbot County spinster, was tried before a jury at the October, 1666, session, charged with having exposed to the cold and thus killed an infant to which she had just given birth. Tried before a jury, she was found not guilty (pp. 123-4), but, as was usual, was ordered to pay to the sheriff of Talbot County his charges at the rate of thirty pounds of tobacco a day and other charges (p. 153). Her case had previously come before the Talbot County court at the June, 1666, session and had been referred to the Provincial Court. A witness declared that Jane Crisp "was delivered of A Child withoutt doores in the plantation and shee would nott bee knowne that shee had A Child, butt deponant went and fetched A Midwife, and Two women