

PART THREE

C H A P T E R T W O

A Chapter of Enigmas

The Fisher story is above all the story of a 'ghost', and whether, if there was a ghost what part it played in the eventual disclosure of a fearsome crime. The way has now been cleared for an analysis of the historical evidence on the basis of documentation which was not available to a host of ^{earlier} fanciful writers or to serious students.

The testimony of Thomas Leathwick Robinson and Henry Hayden is impressive in sometimes unintentional ways. The former in particular shrinks from supporting the notion that there was any relation between Farley's supposed percipience and the revelation of the crime. Hayden, on the other hand believes the Farley story.

Disagreement with Farley's claim on the grounds that no official cognisance was taken of a supernatural element, so-called, does not do away with the problem. Andrew Lang cited a number of instances in which justice was done arising from the intrusion of such phenomena.

When Robinson wrote his letter to the Rev. Taylor, John Farley was still living in Campbell Town, prominent in business and holding a high police post. Taylor would not have tolerated any gratuitous misrepresentation of facts when so many ^{people} were at hand to challenge distortions. Taylor evidently chose Robinson as the writer of the narrative because of his association with the principals of the drama, if not also for his reserved and pragmatic outlook. On Robinson's part there would have been some hesitation in consciously distorting facts, whatever his private prejudices. The time had not arrived for professional theorizers, as Hayden hints, themselves inclined to scepticism, to utterly disparage Farley's claim and attribute to him a special type of villainy or soft-headedness.

One of the pronounced impressions created by Robinson is his aversion to the idea of a ghost. Obviously, he is fundamentalistic in outlook, capable of speaking of a 'hidden eye' watching events in Campbell Town to ensure that retributive justice should overtake

wrongdoers. He sees children as the agents of an unnamed Intelligence; but he is unable to countenance the working of that intelligence ~~working~~ through psychological means which wear an aura of magic and have the disapproval of an uninformed orthodoxy.

The simple fact of John's claiming that he had seen an apparition of Fisher made it 'evident he had that day drunk more than usual'. Thus Farley is presented at once as on the occasion an unreliable judge of his own impressions. And to bolster this preliminary denigration, ^{Robinson} reports that Farley had quarrelled with someone along the road from the inn where he had been imbibing, as evidence of his being over-excited. The shadowy figure of the man quarrelled with immediately vanishes from the story and is irrelevant.

Having accepted that Farley's judgment was impaired leaves ~~the~~ Robinson free to start rationalising to suit his own bias; yet a rather disturbing question crops up right at the start, for in the photocopying of the ^{original} Robinson version herein presented, page two, is brought out at the foot of the page what the writer had attempted to erase, almost certainly reading (under magnification), 'A friend who saw the ghost of Mr. ----', suggests that Robinson possibly was of two minds, one of them in accord with what most townsfolk believed, and the other ^{perhaps} rather harmonising with the ^{possible} vocational reservations of the gentleman he was addressing.

Robinson seizes from Farley's account something which might give his own exegesis a more logical cast, namely, that Farley had described the ghost as looking like 'dried leather'. How simple to derive from this strange detail the concept of Farley's having mistaken a sunburnt labouring man' sitting near at hand enjoying the alcoholic disputations of Farley and his crony, as a 'ghost'! There are three points to be considered: 1) Farley saw the apparition when he was alone, which has never been contested; 2) it was late at night and roads were not lighted; how then was the complexion of a hypothetical bystander to be distinguished even had it been moonlight, as having the ruddy colour of dried leather?; 3) Robinson frankly admits he had not been present at the same hotel on the night in question, and that later

opinion among those who were present was divided as to whether or to what degree Farley was 'tipsy' when he left homewards. If, as already hinted, Robinson in his text was deferring to what he may have supposed to be Rev. Richard Taylor's prepossessions, or whether he sincerely discountenanced the reality of the supposed phenomenon, the strain of his composition is sceptical. However, when he begins reporting, as one trained in presenting small facts, conflict arises between any possible personal prejudice capable of colouring the story and the impersonal event.

The sequence of happenings as they are said to have taken place along the road from the Harrow ('Patrick's place') at one end of the town to the other where Farley's route forked a little eastwards towards Appin, is historically important. Farley's way home lay, as Robinson says, 'past Worrall's house'. But before he should reach that point, he had to pass Fisher's farms, whose boundary to the north was quite close to the inn concerned. Robinson has it that 'thereabout' (near Worrall's house) Farley and his unknown companion quarrelled and parted, with Farley soon afterwards returning to the inn in great 'fright'.

The description of events conveys that Farley saw his ghost after he passed Worrall's house and was perceived as being near or upon the rail of the bridge (according to later stories); but actually, Robinson's text simply says 'at' the bridge. At ~~the~~^{the} time there was no bridge beyond Worrall's house. Research shows that not until a considerable time later was anything resembling a bridge erected at that point in the road where in wet weather water ran from the higher land of the town area across the government road into Worrall's farm. It was shallow and insignificant a depression in the road and did not until later erosion, require any culvert to be provided. As an indication of the negligible nature of this depression, refer to the statement that where Fisher was found buried was ploughed land in which wheat had been sown, but was liable during rainy weather to collect puddles. Besides, wheat is intolerant of wet conditions. If Farley had his experience beyond Worrall's house -- well on his way home --

HENRY HAYDEN, who witnessed discovery of Fisher's body, as an old man.

it is ridiculous to suppose Farley, having received a shock of such severity that he would presently collapse, would essay the relatively long journey back to the inn instead of continuing homewards or stop at Worrall's crowded house.

Hayden's version is the more precise and plausible. He says that Farley saw the apparition when he was passing Fisher's farm, a quarter of a mile from the inn. This distance accords with the position of a tiny fresh water spring which crosses the government road and flows into Fisher's farm, reputedly the only potable supply thereabouts, and consequently very valuable. The stream certainly would have been protected by some sort of 'bridge' -- probably logs. Naturally, local residents would have been inclined to call it a 'bridge'. Undoubtedly it had been so known since earlier owners of Fisher's farm had taken the trouble to conserve the asset. Robinson's assertion, 'at' the bridge in this context is unobjectionable; moreover, there was no other bridge. [This is ^{not} the position as accepted by Fisher watchers of Campbell Town today.] Farley's arrival at the inn still in the thrall of terror has the clearer ring of truth if his return began from Fisher's 'bridge' so much closer to the Harrow.

When it comes to relating in time Farley's vision and the actual discovery of the body of Fisher, neither version is explicit. Robinson feels he is on firm ground in reporting that the discovery resulted from action by some boys; but at the same time he avoids giving an orderly sequence of the elements of that action. Obviously, if the discovery by the boys of the bloodstained fence, followed immediately by the finding of the body of Fisher, had taken place before Farley claimed to have seen the ghost, the seer would have exposed himself to unmerciful derision for the rest of his life; he would ever afterward have been discredited. For a man who had the respect of the community, was a voluntary police constable and thus obliged to act and speak with circumspection, his claim would have mere foolishness. Nothing was to be gained from masquerading as a seer of ghosts and acting out a scene of terror ~~which~~ ^{if} all and sundry knew of the crime already.

Farley's constabulary work had established him as a man of will

and courage who had with others subdued the unruly elements of the district. His doughtiness permitted him to walk abroad at night (tipsy or not) where at each step he could be the prey of vengeful miscreants. A man of such calibre would not be given to outlandish fancies; nor would he be easily frightened.

If the nature^s of Fisher's injuries had already become known through the discovery by the schoolboys, what point could John Farley hope to make by repeatedly describing them to neighbours, and of picturing the ghost of Fisher as having the aspect of ~~dirted~~ leather, a most curious description, since the victim had been thoroughly well-known to Farley as a fair-complexioned person, who was said to be on the high seas!

As the texts are more closely studied it becomes impossible to escape the conclusion that Farley reported his percipience of the ghost of Frederick Fisher an appreciable time before even the bloodstained fence was seen. Robinson faced a dilemma in that a degree of the shock suffered by Farley was due to his belief, in common with many others, that Fisher had really fled the country. But the schoolmaster waves away this uncomfortable circumstance by concluding,

. . . Be this as it may, the body was not found until
at the suggestion of ^{old} Mr. Warby the Blacks were sent for.

The effect of these words is ^{to emphasise} that Farley's ghost had already become a topic of discussion; for, he goes on,

. . . many opinions was the consequence of this affair. Many thought it must be a ghost, yet some thought it strange that an injured spirit should appear only to the half tipsy man.

Hayden's story, looked at again, records that Farley's story

. . . surprised the neighbours, who, together with the authorities, interviewed him on the matter, of which he was very positive . . . He gave a minute account of the appearance . . . gashes in his [Fisher's] skull, and particularly that in his shoulder, he described as horrible to look at . . .

If the authorities possessed all the facts of Fisher's having been murdered by discovery of the body itself, what interest could they have had in Farley's story of the apparition? Any slight suspicion that Farley's description of the injuries could be evidence of his personal involvement in the crime, should have led to his arrest. But, in fact, as it will soon be abundantly clear, when Farley spoke first of his terrible experience, the likelihood of Fisher's having been murdered had been entertained by only a few people. In general it was taken that he had fled to England as Worrall had said. Farley was not ^{yet} under any suspicion and could not have been because his story had not yet been substantiated by the physical discovery of the body. Farley was not arrested, and indeed he never figured in any magisterial inquiry of a formal kind, at any rate.

In August, Daniel Cooper, owing to Worrall's conduct with the Fisher assets and his showing of obviously forged receipt for the purchase by him of Fisher's horses, contrived to have Hammond tell Worrall a suspicion was abroad that Fisher had been murdered. On the face of it, the foregoing development seemed to be independent of anything else.

Solicitor James Norton (the Younger) recalled in 1892 that his father, of the same name, whose clients included Fisher, Cooper, Farley and other principals in the case, waited for some weeks after hearing the story of the apparition before writing to the Attorney General (Saxe Bannister) which he did on September 11.⁺

Now September 11th was exactly six weeks and two days before the the bloodstained rails were discovered by the schoolboys. 'Some weeks' may be from two to six weeks before Norton acted, which only extends the period between the ghost percipience and the revelation of murder.

If the doubters should still not be satisfied, another glance at the disparaging Thomas Leathwick Robinson's opus might be effective. Farley's use of the terms 'like dried leather' to impart something of the visual impression he received struck the schoolmaster forcibly,

⁺The Norton firm survives to the present day. Several years ago, this writer came to understand that its archives still held Fisher material. *Direct male descendants of James Norton (elder) live at Wulcha, N.S.W.*

although it cannot have been Farley's sole descriptive term. Henry Hayden's more detailed account of the wounds may have had a common origin in the experient's various attempts to convey to questioners the impressment he received at the creek crossing.

For the literal-minded Robinson, 'like dried leather' admitted of no broad interpretation. Thus, when the body of Fisher was eventually uncovered, he sombrely noted that the colouration of the corpse did not at all correspond to the ruddy complexion of the alleged apparition, as though this discrepancy finally did away with Farley's claim. Rather the contrary: while it exemplified the contrast between a mental event and a physical event in a way quite unintelligible to all who at the time could not dream of the future science of parapsychology, it was proof out of Robinson's own mouth that Farley's ghost had been seen and described long before the crime was uncovered. It defies reason to suppose Robinson was reading back into ~~the~~ long past events what was really so agreeable to his bias. He had better not ^{have} mentioned the words 'like dried leather' if he was uneasy about Farley's percipience. For the words could have no sense for him: they belong in the lore of a study which had not been organised yet. But the immediacy of Robinson's reaction comes across: he has in all this bewildering affair, a datum. And it does him no good; it betrays him.

Henry Hayden's reminiscence provides a new complication for some people, as unpalatable as that of the apparition, which, although it has 'gone away' cannot be explained away! Henry's contribution is the dream sequence experienced by John Rixon. In this respect, T.L. Robinson may have thought some discretion was called for. Having wrestled with the problem of an apparition, from which his fundamentalistic soul recoiled, he was little inclined to set a precedent (as a schoolmaster!) by surrendering to the challenge of what must have seemed to anyone, prophetic dreaming by a minor. He ignores it. Hayden, at the heart of the juvenile world of Campbell Town supplies the deficiency, unhampered by adult bias.

It is no consolation to the sceptics that superficially the murder was exposed by a chance discovery. Nothing of the sort hap-

pened. Rixon and his companions were accustomed to crossing the paddocks of both farms. Possibly they used one track by ~~habit~~ ^{habit} -- the one (leading from the government road) which ran along the party fence, on Fisher's farm side, which was also used by Worrall and the workmen wishing to work in Fisher's acres. During the space of four months the boys had done this. Since the government offer of a substantial reward for information concerning the fate or whereabouts ^{of Fisher}, the farms had been over-run by innumerable people and possibly the police themselves, without avail. But because he had dreamed two nights in succession of a portion of fencing which he thought he recognised, near which he saw Fisher being murdered, Rixon felt impelled to cross the paddocks once more in search of the fence section of which he had dreamed.

In the centre of the farms with a sliprail opening on both sides of the right angle formed by the party fence and the crop fence, as later described by Robinson, Rixon saw the blood-splashed rails. This was the direct cause of the discovery of the murder; but it was not the paramount factor. The present writer's view is that in his frequent comings and goings across the farms, Rixon recorded subliminally the presence of the bloodstains. He did not become conscious of them. Likewise all the people searching for clues did not see the blood-stained fence although they passed it closely. The farmworkers did not see it. Rixon's subliminal recording of it-- a common type of percipience of the utmost clinical respectability -- eventually linked itself in dream form with the boy's imaging of an attack upon Frederick Fisher, no doubt stimulated by overhearing the controversy among adults, not only about Farley's seeing of an apparition, but about the growing suspicion that Fisher might have been murdered.

The apparitional element did not enter the dream; the boy constructed the murder from the current stories. The section of fence seen in the dream seems to have dominated Rixon, so that he felt he must test the dream for which he had been ridiculed. One component of the dream -- the weapon -- was doubtless a 'rationalisation'; but the prime evocation of the dream was one

pictorial aspect of the Farley percipience, for an apparition as such would be incomprehensible to the boy. He was imaging a murder, merely. By this means the subliminal percipience of the bloodstained fence was drawn into consciousness. Then John Rixon simply had to go to a section of fence which he knew.

It could be said that the link between the dream and the discovery is tenuous; but had there been no furore about the ghost bringing merely from its terrible, injured aspect the powerful notion that it portended a violent crime, the subliminal percipience by Rixon may for his part, have never reached consciousness. No one else had a similar dream so far as is known. In time, of course, accident would have played a part in discovery of the blood-spattered rails; but by then the killer may have eluded the penalty of his crime.

The foregoing is not to be taken as asserting that there is of purpose an intention by the agent of the apparition in such a case, to bring about retribution on the wrongdoer. The phenomena are spontaneous ~~and~~ ^{but} seem to have the effect of being purposeful.

B L O O D I S S O B R I G H T

Nothing among all the circumstances in this remarkable case is more startling than the fact that after Worrall bludgeoned his neighbour to death with tremendous ferocity, though with speed and self-possession, ^{he} paid not the least attention to what evidence of his awful crime he had left behind.

It was as though his mind had become completely blank to all except concealment of the body and the attainment of the object of the atrocity. Having killed Fisher he re-appeared in his farm house, and in the words of Nathaniel Cole, 'took a light'. All the men were by then back from the Harrow inn, and it appears that Worrall and Fisher ^{had} left the house 'about the same time' (Jane Hopkins) just

before the men returned. Worrall's return and taking a light excited no curiosity. Some questions need to be asked. By what ruse did Worrall induce Fisher to go with him to the very centre of the combined farms? Whatever it was, no one else in the house had any knowledge of it, so Worrall must have importuned Fisher in the isolated room where he had been making his toilet after drawing in the bricks. In his gallows confession, Worrall claimed that they were going to get some rum. Why did they go away from the direction in which the Harrow lay? Did Worrall lead Fisher that way by deceit to avoid meeting the other men who had gone to the Harrow? Did the vague rumour of there being a broken fence needing urgent attention arise as a speculation from these circumstances? None of the unfortunates involved ever uttered a word which would ascribe a reason for Worrall and Fisher going to the spot where the killing happened; had the farm workers known of a broken fence they must have felt compelled to mention it. No one did.

Whatever the state of the light, Worrall achieved what he set out to do, quickly and thoroughly to a point, and without the aid of a light. Why did he return to the farm house and take a light? To remove the body to temporary concealment needed no light -- nor would he have been able to carry a lantern, which it must have been -- so there had to be a clear and imperative reason. This writer figures that Worrall needed a light, first to ascertain that Frederick was dead, and then to search his body for the money he believed or knew he carried upon him. We can return to the matter of the money later. Now having searched the body, his economical soul commanded him to take off the dead man's boots! Fisher would not have crossed the farm barefoot on a very cold night after washing himself. He wore his jacket, indicating that it was chilly. But the body was found barefoot, the boots having ^{later} been sold by Worrall to one of the men for eight shillings. ~~████████████████████~~

Much has been made of an attempt to burn out the bloodstains on the fence. Robinson was deceived into believing it; so were the authorities. However, it is inconceivable that Worrall, ^{if he had been} ~~being~~ aware of ~~the~~ bloodstains sprayed copiously over the several rails so that he ^{would} ~~must~~ go to the trouble to try to char them out, ^{then} leave the whole ^{supposedly}

only minutely affected in one spot and never again during the ensuing four months take steps to eradicate the accusing timbers. When beheld by Thomas Leathwick Robinson ^{even} after exposure to rain, wind, frost and blazing sunshine for so long, that phlegmatic individual could only feel shocked by the spectacle.

But Worrall neither saw nor thought of the welter of blood he had showered over the fence, so engrossed he was with the object of plundering the dead man of everything of value, and then removing the body quickly to concealment. The magnitude of his stupidity is exemplified in his inaction during the many weeks which followed, in which inquiries after the whereabouts of Fisher became pressing. Not even when he himself began to be harried by Hammond and Daniel Cooper did his mind traverse the possibility of his having left clues to his deed. Nor did his dull wits stir when at the offer of a reward for information as to Fisher's whereabouts, the two farms swarmed with people seeking signs of a body. It was to Worrall as though the killing had never happened; and certain it is he banished it from mind completely - so completely that nothing seemed able to evoke it.

This moronic incapacity to perceive in simple terms causes and effects characterised a number of the Cheshire man's actions; but some of those around him were simpletons, too. Constable Burke, for example, hastily construed ^{a trivial} mark of burning on the fence rails as prima facie an attempt to eradicate ^{copious} incriminating bloodstains. This was echoed by others and eventually became integrated in the story as one of the facts.

But if, as we see, Worrall was utterly unconscious of the blood stains, he would not have set out intentionally to burn the fence. So the burn mark - if it did not already exist - was caused by accident. It seems feasible that when carrying away Fisher's body to hiding some way off in the ^{Low Bowing} Creek bed, the lantern was left behind. In any case, Worrall would scarcely have been able to carry the body and a lantern too. Nor, if he had even thought of it, would the illumination of his gruesome exploit have been safe. If Worrall took half an hour to conceal the body, the lantern, doubtless left below the bottom rail could

TOWN HALL, Campbell Town (1965) rear of which stands upon
site of Worrall (Bradbury) cottage in Fisher's day.

WHERE FISHER'S FARMHOUSE ONCE STOOD; Queen Street, Campbell Town,
1965.

have ignited the timber with the heat from its chimney and produced a limited area of charring. When retrieving the lantern Worrall, obsessed by other matters, would pay little or no heed to the burn. *Indeed, the light might by then have been extinguished.*

The enormity of his carelessness would have struck Worrall ^{only} when he received news ~~of~~ of Rixon's discovery of the bloodstained fence, followed by the unearthing of Fisher's body. That he was so informed cannot be doubted, since he voluntarily sought leave to be brought before the Bench. Having been rudely apprised of his frightening oversight on the night of June 17th, Worrall, the inveterate weaver of fantasies embarked upon his magnum opus, a puerile and blackhearted alibi implicating the innocent workmen, in order to account for the blood-stained fence. While long practised in fantasy, this meek and obliging drudge had never become expert -- at least to the extent of giving verisimilitude to his design by the inclusion of a thread of logic.

In his Declaration he set out the brutal mode of killing, removal of Fisher's body on the back of another man -- borrowings from his own acts -- culminating in the tracking of bloodstains across the wheatfield to the actual murder spot, as he knew it to be. The over-elaborations in the declaration indicate Worrall's mentality, and are manifest not only in his motivation but in his intricate fabrications as to the manner of the killing and the weapon involved.

T.L. Robinson's text is worded in such a way as to appear to support what was to eventually become the accepted motive for Worrall's crime. This motive, repeated in careless and documented versions of the Fisher story, generally makes out that Worrall murdered Fisher rather than give up the property which the latter had made over to him when Fisher was hurried off to Sydney following the assault on William Brooker. There is no documentary support for the theory. Ten months elapsed between Fisher's return from Sydney after the Brooker case and Fisher was in full possession of his property. Worrall admitted to magistrates T, Reddall and Richard Brooks on September 30th, 1826 that while Fisher was in Sydney Gaol he acted only as caretaker and was not left as agent for the property.

From the fact that the neighbours were observed to be on friendly terms at all times after they became associated through the Brooker incident, the motive for Worrall's crime must be supposed to have been other than what legend says. If there had been resentment by Worrall of Fisher's having had an investigation of the former's management of his farm during the prison term awaiting the trial for assault, there had been ample time for it to evaporate. Worrall knew that his own motives in trying to secure the deeds of Fisher's farm did not recommend him as a trustworthy friend. Silence and a habitual show of amiability only could smooth over an awkward situation.

In the ten months which had passed during which their association had been continuous, the pressures on Fisher and Worrall had changed. The Darling regime depressed the economic prospects for Worrall and troubled him in proportion to his passion for independence after hard earlier years.

Only possession of cash reserves could guarantee Worrall security and survival of the evil results of the Darling policies. And he was aware, and had made known perhaps, Fisher's habit of carrying his money on his person, though in his Declaration he rationalised the habit as being due to his own negligence in sometimes leaving open the door of the room in which the money was usually kept in a box.

Worrall knew what deals Fisher put through and the pecuniary results of them. The extent of his obsession with Fisher's holdings of cash is marked as early as July 8th, exactly three weeks after he had killed Fisher, when he gratuitously informed James Coddington that Fisher had fled the country with '£300 in his pocket'. The theft of money is a theme which recurs, although no one challenges him; and apparently no one endeavours to check on his assertions. No £300 was reported found when the body of Fisher was unearthed. Why was this figure mentioned by Worrall? It is the present writer's belief that in a curious way Worrall was creating an alibi for something he had himself done -- that he had stolen such an amount from Fisher's body.

JOHN FARLEY'S GRAVE, St. Peter's churchyard, Campbell Town.

In most accepted version of the Fisher legend, the murder weapon has been accepted as being either an axe or tomahawk - perhaps indicating that such weapons were of the handiest and most prevalent kind. Yet no independent evidence shows either of them was employed. Surgeon Patrick Hill's description of the wounds upon Fisher rules out attack by axe or tomahawk. The wounds were mostly about an inch long and an inch deep, each of them lethal. The contusions suggest another kind of implement. By insisting upon his innocence, Worrall avoided disclosing the nature of the weapon, and only in his lying Declaration did he name a possible bludgeon -- the post rammer, then only to claim that it had been used by others.

Yet, the prosecutor, Mr. Moore, suddenly names 'a stick of the value of two pence' as the murder weapon. Hitherto there had been no hint of it; no witness had suggested such a thing, and the accused himself had been silent. What could a stick valued at two pence have represented? More than likely the value was that of a sliprail, about ten feet long and probably about five inches in diameter, making it far too unwieldy for the purpose of attacking a man in the dark, particularly an individual as tough and nimble as Fisher must have been. It was not the kind of weapon which would produce on the skull wounds of the dimensions officially described. One blow accurately delivered would have sufficed to smash the skull.

Until a very short time before he was to hang - may be an hour, Worrall maintaining his innocence could not have spoken of a weapon. Only when he finally broke down did he speak of a 'paling' which accidentally struck Fisher when aimed at a horse. For Worrall, a 'paling' would ~~have~~ meant a sliprail rather than what is nowadays understood as a paling. The fences depicted by Robinson's detailed drawing of the scene of the murder are of post and rails, with sliprails for the openings. Conventional palings could have had no place at the spot shown.

Apart from other inconsistencies in the final confession Worrall, true to his mentality, fabricates a fantasy in which he employs the weapon suggested by the Prosecutor. Moore had put it in his mind, so

he used it as a godsend, for by it he might be able to ~~depart~~ this world without leaving it as the image of black infamy. He valued the good will of people, yearned to be liked, and at this moment it was all he could hope for. In the shadow of imminent death his queer mentality went to work upon the Prosecutor's fortuitous guesswork: but again that trait which forced him to try to hide the £300 so assiduously that he only revealed it, asserted itself. To make the 'stick' or 'paling' work, there had to be a setting, a reason as it were. He says no word about being at the fatal spot with Fisher for the purpose of repairing a fence or in order to look at horses. It is quite simple a design. He and Fisher are on their way to get some rum, and he has with him a bottle.

To give the gist of Rev. William Cowper's reiteration of what Worrall confessed,

. . . they were going together with a bottle to get some rum, and in passing the paddock, discovered there was a horse there. Worrall said he jumped over on one side of the horse and Fisher on the other, leaving the bottle outside; that then he had seized part of the paling . . .

During the 1800s purely utilitarian bottles were ideal in shape, thickness of the glass, crushing weight and durability for use as bludgeons. The awful potentiality of that bottle had to be concealed by the (too pointed) claim that it was out of reach! Why mention the bottle at all if it was unimportant? Postrammer or bottle? Certainly not a 'stick of the value of two pence' !

Reprise of T.L.Robinson's concluding words on the Worrall gallows confession:

. . . but on comparing this with the wounds in Fisher's head and all other circumstances connected with the case, I never heard any one say they thought it might be true.