

vestry of the church, where he engraved on the lid the arms of the Shipway family, with the name "John Shipway, March 9, 1628." According to the forged entry in the register relating to the burial, the date fixed was 1625, so that Davies lapsed into one of the few mistakes he made during his investigations.

*The Recorder*: From the depositions I observe that the defendant not only tampers with the outside of the coffin, but he inspects the contents and tells Colonel Shipway that his ancestor must have been a very fine man—at least 6ft. 2in. in height.

*Mr. Mathews*: Yes; it was a gross exhibition of irreverence and callousness, for the lid was the only thing useful for the prisoner's purpose. He seems not to have cared so long as he accomplished his object of getting money. In the removal of the leaden coffin an aged labourer, named Webster, was fatally injured. At the inquest the coroner, Dr. E. M. Grace, inquired of the prisoner, who tendered himself as a witness, as to his right to tamper with the graves, and his explanation was that he had authority from the Home Office to do what he had done. This was untrue, and untrue to Davies's knowledge. At the Rectory there had been kept in the stable an old chest, and prisoner presented this to Colonel Shipway, after engraving on the hasp the words, "Ye gifte of I. S.," together with a certificate setting forth that the article was genuine. In the course of his operations the defendant engaged the services of a photographer at Bristol, and Colonel Shipway had to pay the bill. In January, 1897, he was at the Worcester District Probate Registry, and whilst there he professed to have found an all-important piece of evidence, proving conclusively the ownership of Beverston Castle. This was a will, purporting to be that of John James Shipway, dated January 14, 1490, which set forth that Beverston Castle had come into the hands of the Shipways under a grant of Richard I. This will was a complete forgery, and when such a document was placed under the notice of Colonel Shipway no one could blame him for being deceived by such clever imposture. Another forgery was that in respect of a will purporting to have been made by Grace Shipway, in 1537. Prisoner had not only forged these wills, but in two of six cases he had made away with real wills in order to substitute