

Press Coverage of the Beldi Hill Trial

12 April 1771. *Public Advertiser*; Issue 11348

COUNTRY NEWS

York, April 9. We hear from Swaledale in this County, that on Wednesday the 27th about 40 men, under an apparent Agency, riotously assembled and broke up the weir, setting the water off from Mr Smith's smelt mill at Raygill near Reeth, and violently assaulted Mr Smith's Agents and workmen, and entirely laid the mill useless. In consequence of the above riotous proceeding by a set of vagrants who have no property and could find no bed, 12 of them were apprehended and committed to the House of Correction at Richmond, by Justice Fielding of Starforth.

02 May 1771. *London Evening Post*; Issue 6770

COUNTRY NEWS

York, April 30. The riotous proceedings in Swaledale are not yet at an end. Yesterday night a number of lawless vagrants again assembled and destroyed the water-race of Mr Smith's smelt mill at Raygill, near Reeth; which had been only repaired the evening before and set to work by Mr Smith's servants. The smelt mill, called Spout Gill, in Swaledale, in the occupation of Mess. Scot and Metcalf was like-wise laid entirely useless by a new gang of banditti, employed for the vile purpose of doing Mr Smith all the injuries that can possibly be thought of. By the above riotous proceedings, Mr Smith has not a corn or smelt mill left fit for service within his extensive royalties.

11 May 1771. *Bingley's Journal or Universal Gazette (1771)*; Issue 50

COUNTRY NEWS

Newcastle, May 11. We are informed by a person from Swaledale that last Saturday night, a number of the banditti, which are there very properly styled *Black Boys* and had the week before destroyed all Mr Smith's mill races, assembled in the night, threw down and turned over several hayricks (in this scarce season for fodder) to the great loss of the peaceable inhabitants of that country; one of which hayricks, belonged to an agent of Mr Smiths, was rolled down into a steep gill and thrown into the water, which makes it appear that those Black Banditti, like the White Boys in Ireland, are encouraged under hand.

25 May 1771. *Westminster Journal and London Political Miscellany*; Issue 1369

They write from Swaledale, that the banditti still continue to destroy Mr Smith's water-course, at Raygill Smelt-mill, as often as his workmen open the same to carry on their work. Which is the more remarkable as they have suffered judgment to pass by default in an action brought against them by Mr Smith, in order for trying at the next York Assizes, whether such violence's upon his property could be justified by their idle pretence of making trials for lead mines.

27 June 1771. *Middlesex Journal or Chronicle of Liberty*; Issue 350

COUNTRY NEWS

York, June 25. We hear from Swaledale that the water-race belonging to Mr Smith's corn-mill at Gunnerside was again repaired on the 12th instant, which was no sooner perfected than the black boys immediately assembled, and destroyed it with their usual brutality.