

THE GLORIOUS END OF AN INGLORIOUS LIFE

SARDIEL

THE

ROBINHOOD

OF

CEYLON



By



FR. P. A. J. B. ANTONINUS, O.M.I.

SARDIEL

The Robin Hood of Ceylon

by

Fr. P. A. J. B. Antoninus, O.M.I.

M. A., Ph. D. (Econ) Dip. Ad. Ed.

COLOMBO

1964

Imprimi Potest :

**Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Fernando, O.M.I.
Provincial.**

Colombo,

1. 5. 64.

CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
	Foreword	I
	Bibliography	II
i	Early Years of Sardiel	7
ii	Reckless Life of Sardiel	14
iii	The Outlaws in Uttuwankande Cave	21
iv	In the Gambling Den	26
v	Sardiel Eludes Arrest	31
vi	Tragedy at Sardiel's House	37
vii	Capture of Sardiel	42
viii	Trial of Sardiel	47
ix	The Repentance and Execution of Sardiel	62

FOREWORD

This little Booklet is released to the public on the first Centenary of the death of Sardiell, the Robinhood of Ceylon, who was executed on the 7th of May, 1864.

Much of the material for this work had been collected ten years ago. For the early life of Sardiell the author had to depend on oral evidence collected from distant relations of the hero and recorded traditions appearing in published sources denoted here by (PS).

The major part of his life was obtained from Documents in the Ceylon Archives which have not been published in full and is here denoted by (D) in the Bibliography.

As far as possible contemporary writers and eye-witnesses are here made to speak in their own words in order to make the narrative more living and to bring out the reactions of those who had actually seen or met Sardiell, the man who had defied Law and order and scuttled British might for several years.

I am grateful to Mr. S. Mottau who had helped me with the references to Documents in the Government Archives when he was Assistant Archivist in Nuwara Eliya.

I have to thank those writers, editors and publishers of the hitherto published works as appearing in the Bibliography given under Published Sources, for presuming to quote from their works.

Last but not the least, my thanks are due to those of my friends and acquaintances who have supplied the tradition connected with Sardiell, current in their villages or towns, and specially to Fr. W. B. Jerome Fernando the former Parish Priest of Uttuankanda for helping me to identify the various villages which Sardiell had visited.

I wish to thank "The Times of Ceylon" for serializing this story in their "Sunday Times" and for permitting me to publish it in their Press.

I also thank the Catholic Book Depot, Colombo, for undertaking the sale of these books.

P. A. J. B. ANTONINUS, O.M.I.

Bishop's House,
Chilaw.
7-5-64.

BIBLIOGRAPHY DOCUMENTS

D1 'OVERLAND OBSERVER'—

- (a) Sinhalese Bandit—28.1.1864.
- (b) Rumoured apprehension—7.3.1864.
- (c) The Bandit Sardiel—17.3.1864.
- (d) Just brought to Kandy—24.3.1864.
- (e) Sardiel and his A.D.C.—31.3.1864.
- (f) Sardiel—4.4.1864.
- (g) Trial of Sardiel—7.4.1864.
- (h) Reward to capture and Execution of Sardiel—9.5.1864.

D2 'CEYLON TIMES'—

- (a) Attempt to capture Sardiel—18.3.1864.
- (b) Sardiel captured at last—22.3.1864.
- (c) Trial of Sardiel at Kandy—8.4.1864.
- (d) Attempt to capture Sardiel—15.3.1864.

D3 'THE EXAMINER'—

- (a) The Bandit Sardiel—19.3.1864.
- (b) Capture of Sardiel—23.3.1864.
- (c) Kaigalle—26.3.1864.
- (d) Sardiel—2.4.1864.
- (e) Sardiel convicted of murder. Trial of Sardiel—6.4.1864.
- (f) Provincial news, Kandy—11.5.1864.

D4 LAK RIVIKIRANA (Sinhalese)—

- (a) A reward of £200—12.2.1864.
- (b) Bandit Sardiel—24.3.1864.
- (c) Trial of Sardiel—8.4.1864.
- (d) Trial of Sardiel—22.4.1864.

(e) Sardiel—6.5.1864.

(f) The Execution of Sardiel—13.5.1864.

D5 A.G.A. Kegalle's Diary—4.4.1864.

D6 Despatches to the Secretary of States No. 117 of 31st March, 1864.

D7 C.S.O. Correspondence files, 1864.

D8 Letter of W. E. T. Sharpe No. 435, 1 October, 1863.

D9 Report of Bemnuwatto Rata Mahatmaya 11th June, 1863.

D10 The Statement of Seambelapitiya Corale of Egodapotapattoo March 5th, 1864.

D11 The Asst. Agent's letter No. 181 of 4th May, 1864.

D12 Report of Bemnuwatto R.M. 7th April, 1864.

D13 Statement of Kappitipola Corale 6th April, 1864.

D14 Petition of Appuhamy, Gang Aratchy of Arunakay 22 February, 1864.

D15 Letter of the Puisne Judge, April 11th 1864.

D16 Notes of the trial of Sardiel taken by Justice Thomson, Kandy, April 4, 1864.

D17 Letter of the Queen's Advocate No. 118 of April 5, 1864.

D18 Proclamation in Government Gazette 20th February, 1864.

D19 The Indictment No. 96, 11th April, 1864.

D20 Report of Fr. Adriel Duffo, O.M.I. to Rome, May, 1864—published in Notices Necrologiques des O.M.I. No. 191 of 1899.

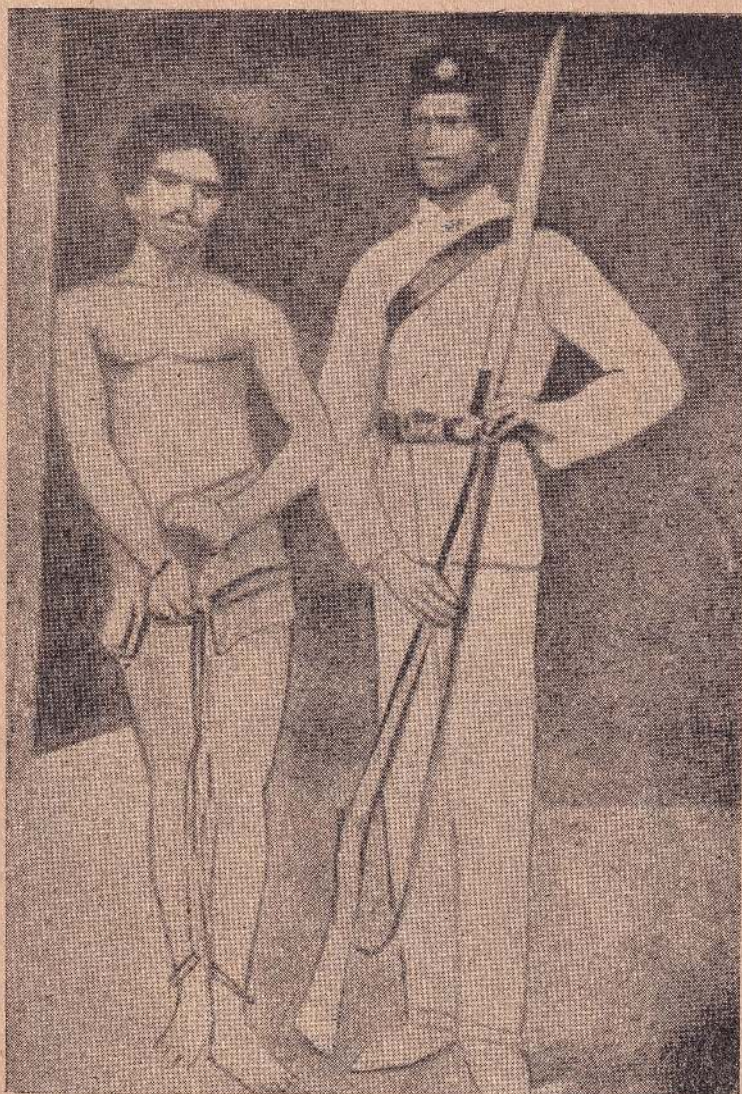
D21 Sketches of the Life of Mgr. De Mazenod, by Rev. Robert Cooke. Vol. 2, 1882.

PUBLISHED SOURCES

- PS1** Uthurwankande Sardieli Apoo by W. Marthelis Appuhamy in Sinhalese—Published by Sri Lankothaya Press, 1902.
- PS2** Cave's Ruined Cities, p. 27-30 published in 1896—4th Edtn., 1907.
- PS3** Sketches from Ceylon History by Mrs. H. H. Dulling, 1933.
- PS4** A History of the Ceylon Police, Vol. I by G. K. Pippet, 1938.
- PS5** Ceylon Beaten Track by W. T. Koble, 1940.
- PS6** The Man who subdued Sardieli by D. J. B. Kuruppu in Blue and White No. 18, November, 1922.
- PS7** D. B. U. Journal, Vol., 30, Part II.
- PS8** 'Sardieli's capture' in the Pahana Magazine in Sinhalese by Mr. K. B. Mahatunge, one of the Archivist Document repairers, June, 1952.
- PS9** SARDIEL by Nanthadeva Vijesackere and K. D. T. Lanarole in Sinhalese.
- PS10** Sardieli Dikirikawage, 5 pages handwritten by Nicholas Baas's son at Pamunugama, 1st November, 1953, in Sinhalese.
- PS11** 'Sardieli' a Sinhalese Film shown in Ceylon in 1954.
- PS12** Junior News—30.10.1954.
- PS13** Junior News—6.11.1954.
- PS14** Junior News—13.11.1954.
- PS15** Junior News—20.11.1954.
- PS16** Tradition retold by T. R. de Alwis—25.8.1953.
- PS17** Tradition retold by S. Don Joseph—11.10.1953.
- PS18** 'Sardieli' an article in the Police Magazine "OFF DUTY" (1947).
- PS19** How to see Ceylon by Mrs. R. H. Lock (1914).
- PS20** Ceylon by Ali Foad Toulba (1920).
- PS21** Sixty-four years in Ceylon by Fredorick Lewes (1926).
- PS22** Ceylon by Lord Holden (1938).
- PS23** The Conversion of Sardieli (in Sinhalese) by Fr. W. L. A. Don Peter.
- PS24** Police Files, Vols. I, II, III and IV.



Sardiel in Chains



Mammaley Marikar the Companion of Sardiel

Chapter One

EARLY YEARS OF SARDIEL

THE din of the battle had died down. The rebellion of 1817 was quelled. The Kandyan Province had been annexed by the British. The country was settling down to normal. Deekirikewage Adarsi Appu was an honest young man from Haldanduwana. He followed his father's profession. He was a tobacco trader. (PS4). He owned a cart and a pair of fine bulls. Those were the coffee days. Low country people flocked to the hills to make their fortune. Adarsi Appu ventured to sell his tobacco to the hill folk. On his way up and down he often used to stop at Mavanella. There he met a woman called Pichohami, whom he used to visit in the course of his business. This friendship ultimately led to their marriage. They decided to settle down at Molligoda, in Utuwankanda, near about the 55th. mile post (PS1).

It was here, while they were living happily, that Sardiel (1) their first child was born in the year 1832. (2) He was followed by four others—Pedru, Gabriel, Martha and Anthony. Martha was the only girl in the family. She died at an early age. (PS1 and PS10). Soon after the birth of Sardiel the family seem to have moved to their ancestral home at Haldanduwana. It was here that the other children are said to have been born. When Sardiel was old enough to attend school, he returned with his mother to Utuwankanda, where he was taken to a pansala at Beligamma, (3) and placed under the care of a Buddhist Monk for his education in Sinhalese (PS10). Sardiel's mother had a younger sister named Kulley, who later married one Baba Appoo who was an itinerant trader (D5).

Very little is known about the other members of his family. His father seems to have remained at Haldanduwana with the other children. To maintain his family he continued to get odd jobs as a carter. Once he took some Catholic pilgrims to St. Anne's Church, Talawila. There he had come to learn about the Catholic faith and was baptised during the big festival. (PS4). The children who were with him, also followed him and embraced the Catholic religion.

Peduru, the second in the family, was given in charge of a Roman Catholic priest at Chilaw. The priest found in the little boy the talents of an artist. He taught him painting and sculpture. He taught him to carve religious statues. When the Parish priest of Pamunugama wanted a statue carved for his church, Peduru was entrusted with that job. Peduru was staying with a Catholic family, while engaged in this task of carving out statues for the church at Pamunugama. Here he got interested in the daughter of his host, and subsequently married her and settled down at Pamunugama (PS17). Peduru had three children.—Nicholas, Mathesu and Anthony.

Nicholas followed his father's footsteps and became a Sculptor and was popularly known as Nicholas Baas. He died in 1953. One of his sons resembles Sardiel. He has supplied part of the information for the early life of Sardiel (PS10).

There is nothing of importance about Gabriel, the second brother of Sardiel. When he was young he left his family and came to Kadugannawa

sions. Sardiel pounced on him and gave him a good beating (PS10).

His troubles were not over. While studying at the Temple school he had quarrelled several times with an Abiththaya. Some of the Abiththayas had got together and had given him a thrashing one day. He would not leave the area till he paid them back in the same coin. He collected a few of his former friends and remained in ambush. When the Abiththayas came out they were set upon and beaten up by Sardiel's little gang.

The monk in charge of the abiththayas filed action against Sardiel for brutally assaulting the Abiththayas. This time he was sentenced to three months' hard labour in a cell for juvenile-offenders. (PSI).

Sardiel was only 14 when he left the Temple school at Iluk-goda. It was the age when youth becomes restless. He was now confined to a cold merciless cell. Thoughts of his former confinement came crowding in his mind. Two years ago those two days in that solitary cell looked two thousand years. Here he was for three months. His mind worked furiously. How he was itching to hit back. In his sleep he would shout out: "I will teach you," "I will rip your bowels out." During his waking hours he would plan an escape. He would scheme fantastic things.

The three months rolled by and Sardiel left behind the iron gate of the cell. Once again his friends rallied round him. His parents advised him not to join his evil companions.

Things were quiet for some time. Sardiel's friend Mohamadoo Maricar, popularly known as Mammaley Maricar, often stayed with his eldest sister Menacha-Menacha who was married to one Abdul Cader. They had a house at

Mawanella near the bridge. Mammaley Maricar had another younger sister called Asuma who later married one Samsuolebbe. (D11) Abdul Cader, too, had a brother called Drakmen Packeer and a sister who was married to one Babasara. (PS1).

One day when Cader's wife had gone to her garden at Kattukele to pluck some jak fruits with a servant of hers, Sardiel happened to pass that garden to get to his house. The servant who went up the tree let down a jak fruit with the aid of a rope. Menacha-Menacha untied the fruit from the rope and was busy examining the fruit. Sardiel who was passing by noticed Cader's wife bending down towards the fruit. He came stealthily behind her and, getting hold of the free end of the rope, tied it to that part of her saree which hung over her shoulders. The girl did not notice a thing. She was so engrossed with the fruit.

The second jak fruit began to descend rapidly. A sudden jerk to her saree brought the girl out of her reverie. For a moment she was furious, but hearing Sardiel laugh and seeing the mischievous look on his face she, too, joined in the laughter. From that moment they became friends. (PS1 and PS13).

A certain rich merchant, named Kattu Bawa, used to travel down to Utuwankanda from Kandy every month bringing with him all manner of wares, ranging from household goods to sarees, cosmetics and trinkets. He sold most of it for credit at exorbitant prices and when the villagers found it difficult to pay him, he took the produce from their little plantations and set it off against part of the debt. As a result, they were constantly in debt and very badly off. Although the villagers hated the sight of the man, there was

nothing to be done. But Sardiel thought he could do something about it.

He heard one day that Kattu Bawa had arrived and that he was staying in the house of Cader, a relative of his, for the night. Cader was away that day and Sardiel broke into Cader's house that night, tied Kattu Bawa up and scared the wits out of him.

He made him promise, at the point of a sharp knife, that he would hold his tongue and never again step into the village. He then took all Kattu Bawa's money and as much of his wares as he could conveniently carry. As a permanent reminder of his vow, Sardiel cut off half the merchant's moustache with the knife and then hurried away.

On the way out, he had a fleeting glimpse of Cader's wife, looking in wonder on the scene through the half-opened door of an adjoining room.

That very night Sardiel went to the houses of most of the poor people whom Kattu Bawa had fleeced, gave them each a portion of the money and some of the wares and asked them to keep silent about it.

In the morning the merchant had clipped the other half of his moustache and hastened to the Vidane to lodge a complaint that he had been robbed. The Vidane at once suspected Sardiel and had him brought before the complainant. Sardiel gave Kattu Bawa such a murderous look that the merchant "failed" to identify him. The trader quickly decided that it was not prudent for him to tarry any longer at Utuwankanda, especially because there was no sympathy from the villagers, so he hurriedly left for Kandy. (PS13)

There were several other exploits of a similar nature and in some of them Sardiel

managed to escape by a hair's breadth. Of course, all the villagers were aware as to who was at the bottom of the trouble, but, as they knew that Sardiel was doing it mainly for their benefit, they kept silent and were, in fact, grateful to him. (PS13).

Sardiel's father tried to correct him and advised him to give up his pranks and take to something useful. His father wanted to make him a carter and often took him along in his cart. But he was not interested in it. At times he became a positive nuisance to the father. So one day Sardiel disappeared from home. (PS9).

He had found his way to Colombo. There, Mammaley Maricar had already got a job in the barracks. To him he went and through his influence Sardiel also managed to become the boy of the Commander-in-chief in the barracks. (PS9). It was here that he came in contact with soldiers and weapons and learnt how to handle rifles and guns. Sardiel now started robbing cartridges, pistols and such articles and sent them quietly home through Mammaley Maricar. One day, while taking these articles, Mammaley was caught and was sacked from his employment in the barracks. (PS10).

Sardiel kept quiet for a time. One day he picked up a quarrel with a soldier and attempted to shoot him. He was seized and put in the lock-up. Here, in the dead of night, he bent the two iron bars of the door and got out of the cell. He crept into the officer's room, opened the safe and removed some valuable articles belonging to the officer. As he came out of the room some one noticed him and raised the alarm. Knowing every nook and corner of the barracks well, Sardiel fled through the back garden, climbed over the wall and

made his escape. Before dawn, he was well on the main road to Kandy. He caught up with some carts that were going lazily on the road. He hopped into one of them and slept a while. The carter knew his father well and so took good care of him. It is from him he learnt that his father was dead and that his mother was ill.

The following evening he reached home and assisted his mother in her illness. Next morning he went in search of some milk for his mother. He stood before the gate of a rich Mudalali's house and called for someone. The Mudalali came out, and inquired from him what he wanted. Sardiel replied: "Please give me some milk for my mother." The Mudalali got incensed. "Get out from here," he shouted. Sardiel pleaded with him again. The Mudalali took a stone and hurled it at Sardiel. The stone hit him on his head. It started bleeding. Sardiel wiped the blood off his head and with clenched fist he shouted: "I will teach you a lesson." Swearing vengeance on the rich he walked away.

He then went to the house of the Korale of the place. It was a building with a garden in front. He looked through the big gate. There was an elephant feeding in the shed behind. He scaled over the gate and passing the elephant came to the backyard. There was a servant feeding the dogs. He was feeding them with milk. There was another chembu full of milk. Sardiel begged a little milk from the

servant. The servant asked him to get out, else there would be trouble from his master. Finding the servant so rude, Sardiel forcibly took the chembu of milk and, giving a kick to the servant, dashed across the garden, jumped over the parapet wall and fled.

The servant raised the alarm. Sardiel was pursued by the household of the Korale and the dogs. Sardiel had, by now, gone home and was giving the milk to his mother. A constable arrived and arrested him. He was taken to the constable's house and put in the stocks. It was a crude form of punishment. His legs were passed through two holes and the upper plank locked over it by means of a padlock.

Sardiel remained in this position till late at night. When the lights were off, he reached out for a rope lying close by. He made a noose and aimed it at a crowbar stuck in the middle of a coconut heap. He dragged the crowbar and with it broke the lock. Releasing his legs, he made his escape. The alarm was raised. The dogs were unleashed. There was an organised hunt for him. He ran into the jungle and hid himself. The search proved fruitless, and the party returned home crestfallen. (PS11).

In both the notes and the article, (PS) denotes oral evidence or recorded traditions appearing in published sources, (D) denotes partly published documents in the Ceylon Archives.

ANNOTATIONS

(1) Mrs. H. H. Dulling has made the following erroneous remark: "Sardiel is stated to have had various mixtures of blood in his veins—one of his grand parents being partly European" (PS3) There is no proof for this statement.

(2) Marthelis gives 1835 as the year of birth of Sardiel. (PS1) So does G. K. Keble (PS5) But Pippet gives the year of Sardiel's birth as 1832 which is very probable (PS4).

(3) Beligammana Temple is near the 57th. mile post on the

Colombo—Kandy Road. It is just two miles from Uttuwankanda towards Kandy.

(4) Ilukgoda Temple is situat-

ed on the Mawanella—Rambukana Road. Most of the documents mention Ilukgoda as the place where Sardial received his early schooling.

Chapter Two

RECKLESS LIFE OF SARDIEL

Poor Sardiell. What could he do? He waited in the jungle till late in the evening and under the cover of night betook himself to the neighbouring village of Wellagalla on the bank of the Maha Oya where a kind family harboured him for the night. Next day he found employment as a boatman on the Ferry. One day, while ferrying the boat across the river, a Korale hailed the boat from a spot on the other bank of the river. Sardiell was not going to oblige. He rowed the boat away from the spot. His companions told him that it was the Korale and that if the boat was not taken to him, he would get all of them dismissed.

Sardiell finally consented to row the boat towards the Korale. The Korale got into the boat swearing fire and brimstone on those fellows who disregarded his order. He pitched into Sardiell and even slapped him. Sardiell waited for an opportunity. While the others were looking in front, Sardiell who was rowing the boat on the rear end, quietly pushed the Korale into the river and rowed quickly away. (PS11).

One day while Sardiell was on top of a tree along the bank of the river, he noticed two girls bathing close to the other bank. A few minutes later he observed a black object floating towards them. It was a crocodile. Sardiell jumped into the river and was swimming towards the crocodile. A struggle ensued. After a hard struggle Sardiell finally succeeded in killing the crocodile. One girl escaped. The other, Sirimali, was injured. The shouts and cries raised by the girls had by then brought a crowd and Sardiell with the help of some men carried the girl home.

The parents of Sirimali were very grateful to Sardiell and he was often invited to their

house. Here he fell in love with Sirimali.

One day while Sardiell was in Sirimali's house, the police accompanied by the Korale who was pushed into the river arrived. The police said they had come to arrest Sardiell. He asked them: "what for?" The police replied: "For pushing the Korale into the river." To which Sardiell countered: "There are no witnesses."

The boatmen who worked the ferry that day were then brought in as witnesses, Sardiell asked them "Did any of you see me push the Korale into the river". They all said that they did not.

At this, the chief constable of the police party pulled out a revolver and threatened Sardiell who laughed and told them "Just sit down. Just sit down. Why in such a mighty hurry", and calling to Sirimali's father he said: "Mama, give them some coffee." Sardiell now went close to the constable and in a twinkling snatched the revolver from the constable. Now it was his turn. He threatened to shoot anyone who came near him. The boatmen first ran away. Then the Korale and after him the policemen, one by one.

The father of Sirimali now felt it was unsafe to keep Sardiell in his house. The Korale was sure to wreak vengeance on his family. So he entreated Sardiell to leave his house. Sardiell however assuring him that nothing would happen to his family departed from there. (PS11).

On the night of the same day in pouring rain Sardiell made his way unnoticed to Mawanelle. He crept into Cader's house and hid behind the door. Cader had gone to Kandy two days earlier to meet a Natukotai-Chettiyar and had not yet returned. Cader's wife had gone to the well as usual to

wash her face and feet before retiring to bed. Sardiel quietly slipped into the room and covering himself with a blanket pretended to sleep on the bed. Cader's wife entered after her ablutions and got a shock when she noticed someone sleeping on the bed. It could not be her husband. He would never do a thing like that. She looked carefully. The man was laughing under the blanket. She at once recognised the voice of Sardiel. She asked him in an angry tone to leave the house at once. She begged him to go away. Sardiel laughingly retorted: "If you give me a cup of coffee I will leave the place."

Cader's wife finding no other method to send him away, went into the kitchen, lit a fire, boiled some water and strained a cup of coffee for him. Sardiel drank the cup of coffee and went out through the front door. As Cader's wife was fixing the last plank of the door, Sardiel kicked the plank. The plank fell on her and knocked her down unconscious. Sardiel carried her to her bed, poured water on her face and revived her. After that he slept on the verandah of the house and disappeared in the early hours of the morning (PS1).

Sardiel found Cader's house a safe refuge from the arm of the law. He used to come there often. He knew that Cader's wife could be trusted. She would never let him down. She harboured him, fed him and even gave him new sarongs and banyans.

Cader had returned by now from Kandy, with the Natukottai-Chettiyar. The Chettiyar was lodging in a house close to Cader's. He trusted Cader so well that he gave him the keys of his safe for safe keeping. Cader's wife knew in what drawer this bunch of keys was kept.

One day when Sardiel came to Cader's house, Cader's wife handed the keys of the safe to him. He was delighted. Why she had given him the keys he could not understand. Anyway that very night he entered the house where the Chettiyar was lodging. He came through the

back garden. As he stepped on to the outer verandah he trampled on the legs of the Chettiyar who was sleeping on a mat outside. It was pitch dark. The Chettiyar woke up and caught the leg of Sardiel with both hands. Sardiel pulled out his knife from his waist, and plunged it into the Chettiyar's stomach. Frightened at this his first murder, Sardiel fled to Ganetenne. (PS1).

Next morning the news of the murder spread like wild fire. The Headman arrested a number of suspects and placed them under police custody. In a day or two the headman had come to know that it was Sardiel who had murdered the Chettiyar. He went to the house of Sardiel and informed his mother. The mother gave the headman Rs. 50 00 as a bribe and asked him to hush up the affair. (PS1).

Sardiel now remembered what the priest at the Illukgoda Temple told him about the efficacy of that oil, and the magical properties it had. He had also heard that this oil was kept in the Temple at Badulla. This oil was called Heneraja Thailaya and was supposed to make anyone who used it immune to bullets.

Sardiel then went all the way to Badulla, but failed to persuade the priest (1) to sell him a little oil. So he stole the entire bottle and carried it away. He also acquired, in the same way from a Mosque in Batticaloa, Magic oil named Kalanganama which was said to make a person who used it invisible and also a talisman named Narasti Malawa from a temple in the Wann, which helped the wearer to win at gambling. (PS1 and PS13).

After the death of Sardiel's father, his mother Plohoahmy, tried to make ends meet by selling hoppers. Sardiel in the meanwhile collected his former friends Sirimalle, Mammaley Maricar, the brother of Cader's wife, Kirisonda, Ukhinda Samat and Nazardeen, and spent most of the time in gambling in secret places. (PS1).

One day they broke open the arrack godown at Aranayake, and seized the liquor and the guns. (PS1). It was actually Sardiel and Tambawitte Appuhamy who did it. They got £40. (D5).

Sardiel also broke into Molligoda Wallawwa and stole all valuable goods, among which was an expensive box. In order to keep it safe he hid it in a room at Penhamy Rentharale's house. Penhamy Rentharale however quietly stole the box and the goods and sent them to Moratuwa.

One day when Sardiel heard that Rentharale had gone to Moratuwa, he went in search of him there. But Rentharale he was told, had gone from there to Galle, and Sardiel returned to Uttuwankanda.

By selling the stolen arrack he made some money and he used to visit the room where he had kept the stolen goods. The watcher of that store room did not like Sardiel coming there often. He went one day and scolded Sardiel in his mother's house. Sardiel was not at home at that time. When he returned home that night, his mother told him how the watcher had come and scolded him in filth.

Enraged, Sardiel went with a friend named Nenu Vederale to the store room and stole all the money that was there at Rentharale's house. On the same night Sardiel and Tambawitte Appuhamy decided to go to St. Anne's Church, Talawila. It was the July festival. Both proceeded to Negombo and rested there in the house of the Vidanerale of Pillawatte.

Next morning when the watcher woke to find that the house was burgled, he informed the Police. The watcher went along with two policemen to Negombo in search of Sardiel. Finding that Sardiel was hiding at Pillawatte in a house, the Police promised the Vidane Rale to give him money if he would produce Sardiel. The Vidane Rale said he would try.

He went to the house where Sardiel was and asked him to go to a certain spot for gambling. Sardiel resented this and

began to fight with the Vidane Rale. Hearing this the Policemen rushed in. Sardiel stabbed two of the Policemen, one of whom fell dead while the other policeman died in hospital (2) (PS1).

But the Police account of this incident is different. Drahrman Pakier who went along with Juanis Mendis a police sergeant of Gannetenne to arrest Sardiel at Maddewella, i.e. at Pella-watte, in his evidence says: "It was 7 or 7.30 in the morning. Sardiel was lying on a mat in the outer verandah of a house near the tavern. It was Pasqual known to us as Panis Kapua who went and pointed out Sardiel to me and the Sergeant. It was Panis Kapua who roused the sleeping man. Panis touched him and said "There is a Sergeant with a warrant who wants you." Sardiel said "Is that the Sergeant's mother's warrant?" and stabbed him on the breast. As he was staggering, Sardiel held him up and stabbed him on the arm. The Sergeant and I were guarding at two doors. Sardiel also stabbed Migal who was with Panis Kapua. I and the Sergeant secured Sardiel. He then attempted to stab the Sergeant and when the Sergeant warded off the blow, the knife cut him on the back of his arm. We ultimately (3) took Sardiel to the Negombo court." (D 16).

It was in July 1862. Mr. John Selby was JP for the District of Negombo. He says in his evidence: "I recollect Sardiel being brought before me on a charge of stabbing Panis Kapua. I took proceedings against him, and committed him to the Supreme Court, on a charge of assault and stabbing. Panis Kapua afterwards died from the effects of the wounds. There were, I think, three wounds. Certainly two in the side." (D 16).

Sardiel was sent then to the Hulftsdorp Jail at Colombo. Tambawitte Appuhamy, his companion was also apprehended and taken before the JP of Negombo, who sent him to Kegalle from where he was released on bail. After that he left Kegalle. (D 5).

Sardiel was brought to the Hultscoorp jail on the 31st of July 1862 but before the date (4) of his trial before the Supreme Court, he escaped from jail on the 29th of November 1862. Here is what Mr. Lionel Bamphin who was jailor of the Hultscoorp jail at that time says: "Sardiel was brought and placed under my custody on the 31st of July 1862 under warrant of Commitment issued by Mr. Selby. Sardiel was kept in that jail. On the 29th of November, 1862, Sardiel was missing having escaped from jail and was never after brought back. (D 16)

Sardiel's mother Pichohamy now married Harmanis Appu and both were living at Uttuwankanda. (D 5) Sardiel escaped from Colombo jail and came to Uttuwankanda. The same night he went to Cader's house and waited to contact Cader's wife. Sardiel knew that Cader did not like his association with his wife. In fact he had warned him several times. That is why Sardiel did not want Cader to know of his return. But while Sardiel was getting into this house quietly, on this occasion, Cader awoke and Sardiel had to run away as fast as he could. While doing so he dislocated his leg.

The next day Cader met Sardiel and recommended him to become a Buddhist Monk as the country was getting hot for him. (D5). Sardiel replied "No one could take me without your knowledge" (D 5).

Sirimalle had now come to know where Sardiel was. In his evidence he says: "I went with Sardiel to Cader's house that evening and Sardiel took up his quarters there and we had some coffee, but after some discussion, it was thought better that Sardiel should live with me and that Cader should give notice, if any people came after him. So Sardiel came to my house. The next day Sardiel heard Cader was out and went to his house. Cader heard of it and got angry and betrayed him to Baba Sara." (D 5).

When Sardiel escaped from the Colombo Prison, a number of Malay policemen were sent to

arrest him. Sardiel now fled into the jungle. Only Cader's wife knew his hiding place. Knowing that this woman was taking food for Sardiel in the jungle Cader was trying to find out his hiding place. But he was unable to locate the exact spot.

One day Cader saying that he wanted to bathe in the River, went to the jungle and kept watch for his wife who was taking food for Sardiel. He had spotted the place. He came back home. When his wife asked him: "Why did you come without bathing?" He gave a lame excuse. Then saying that he had to go into the jungle to look after the cattle, Cader went out to meet Sardiel. He was anxious to get at him because the Malay police who came to arrest Sardiel had told him that they would give Rs. 50.00 if he produced Sardiel. Cader had accepted this offer.

Cader had told Baba Sara to bring the Malay Police to his house if he saw a branch placed in front of his house. That would be a sign that Sardiel was in. He knew that Sardiel was in the habit of visiting his house in the night and disappearing early in the morning. One night when Sardiel was in the house, Cader had placed a branch in front of his house and left his door open. As this was the signal for the arrest of Sardiel, the Malay Police guarded the house and captured Sardiel (PS 1).

They took him the same night to the Veyangoda Police Station (5) and rested there for the night. It is said that Cader and Sardiel's step father Harmanis also followed the party. Sardiel slowly whispered to his step father to bring a gallon of arrack. When the arrack was brought the Malay police gladly helped themselves to it. Being so tired they had taken an overdose and in a short time they all fell fast asleep. (D 5 and PS 1).

That was the moment for Sardiel. He quietly got out of the Police Station and running through the paddy fields, he hid himself in a pile of straw. As he was still handcuffed, he

went early morning to Jacob Annavi Rale's house and asked him to release him of the chains. (PS 1).

As soon as he was released Sardiel went to Uttuwankanda and hid in the house of Meynaber Vedarala about two miles this side of Arenake. (D 5). We shall now allow Sirimalie to tell us about the rest of the robberies. He says: "From this house they robbed Major Murray's bungalow. i.e. he, Vederala, Malhamy, and Corale of Meynawelle robbed the house, and Sardiel brought some of the property to my house. I was away from home and he hid a double-barrelled gun, a pistol, powder and shot in a large basket of Kurakkan that was in my room. After my return he showed it to me. The revolver was in pieces and he tried to put it together but could not. So he took it to a smith named Dingiri Naide who could not do it. But he got it done somehow. I know not from whom.

"I bought the gun from him for 20 rix dollars but some time after Sardiel lost at gambling and he sold the gun again to Gotta Rangkora, brother of Dolosbagey for £4. Rangkora afterwards told me that they nearly came to trouble; for an Aratchy seized the gun, but he got off by giving 10s. and at last he managed to license the gun. He said he got the license at Gampola. I saw 13 bank notes taken out and I changed 2 for him at the godown and got 3 rupees out of it. I got no more.

"After this time there was no robbery for some time. But they used to gamble at the house of one Erneygammana Appua. I used not to gamble. I never watched with the gun as reported.

"After this Lenohamy's house was robbed. I was present at that. Sardiel, Mamale Marikar and I did that. There was only £ 4 in money and we divided that. There was only an umbrella and a tortoise shell comb besides the money, no jewellery.

"Soon after this Sardiel and M. Marikar robbed the house of the Bengalee man and the property was brought to my house; I got a share for secreting the property. The property was for some time kept in Allis' home opposite to Sardiel's mother's until that was burnt down.

"I could never get Sardiel to confess to Simon Baas' robbery. But report says that he, M. Marikar and Samat did it. I never saw any of the gang. One night he, Christian and I were talking together and I left them and they were nearly taken. Again, shortly after my return, I complained to Sardiel that Gondewella Aratchy had behaved badly to me and he said I was no longer a companion to him and he would not assist me.

"Then came Samat's robbery and the robbery of Henry Anker at Otooankanda. I was not present at either of these. Samat and Bardeen Cader's brother robbed the Anker's house. Neither Bardeen nor Samat told me, but I heard it from Anker himself." (D5).

"On the 11th. of June 1863, Beminuwatte Rate Mahatmaya, who had been ordered by the Assistant Government Agent of Kegalle to inquire into these daring robberies, sent the following Report:—

"With reference to the Order No. 263 sent to me, I have been to Areneke on the 21st ultimo, and inquired into the robbery, which took place at Mr. Cowe's shop and further upon investigating from the Gan Aratchies of Areneke and Hakumuganere, the former stated that on the very night the robbery took place, a search was made for the robbery at Mr. Cowe's request, when a liquor bottle and other property of some value were found left at different places but the thieves had escaped. On that night some houses were searched under suspicious circumstances but no property was found and the latter Aratchie and others un-animously stated but privately

that the party concerned in the robbery was not from this neighbourhood. They were Sardiel of Utuankande and a Malay man together with several other villains who are now hidden elsewhere.

"It has been known that Sardiel, on occasion previous to this had robbed the bungalow of an Englishman, a bazaar of a moorman of Dippilla and whilst the godown of Utuankande was broken into and made away with property he was apprehended and committed to prison. When absconded therefrom, he was again apprehended and on being taken to Colombo Gaol to be imprisoned then he again escaped on the way. He is now taking his abode in this district committing these robberies. These villains do not stop more than a day in one place. Persons who met them informed us of the fact. It is said that they have with them a gun, two pistols, a poniard and several knives. No one will dare go near them to apprehend them for fear they will be murdered. If these villains were not apprehended even with some exertions on the part of the Government, many more subjects will be robbed of their things thus. And their lives will be

endangered and more the people of Tanipperoopatoo and others in Galbode Corle complained to me that this gang of robbers now hidden in the jungle do much injustice". (D9).

On the 23rd of April, 1863, Sardiel and Mamale Maricar were seen in a house which they appeared to have entered with burglarious intent. But they escaped their pursuers. (Dig).

On the 13th of September, 1863, a charge of burglary was preferred against Sardiel, Mamale Maricar and two others. (D17).

On the 11th of November, 1863, information was given to the magistrate of Kegalle that Sardiel had been seen near that place and had said that the Police will never be able to take him. On this Mr. Sharpe the Acting Asst. Govt. Agent at Kegalle issued another warrant for his apprehension. (D1g).

On the 23rd of November, the same year, Mamale Maricar and another were charged for coming to a person's premises with burglarious intent, and when pursued, they threatened to stab the owner of the house. It was reported that they were armed with a gun threatening to resist the efforts made to arrest them. (D17).

ANNOTATIONS

1. W. Marthelis Appuhamy says that Sardiel "shot the chief Priest and took the oil away. (PS1).

2. This account given by Marthelis is probably from hearsay. The correct account of this incident is given by the Police.

3 "Sardiel was secured only after he had been knocked senseless by a blow on the head delivered by the headman with a rice pounder" says Pippet (PS 4).

4. According to the Queen's Advocate Mr. Richard F. Mor-

gan: "Sardiel was taken up however and committed for trial before the Supreme Court on a charge of assault and wounding. Some delay took place in trying him on this charge owing to the inability of the wounded man to come to Colombo to give evidence and the probability that he would die from the effects of his wound, which actually took place some little time afterwards." (D 17).

5. Pippet's account of this incident differs slightly, possibly written from the Police an-

gle. He says: "Sardiel was re-arrested by the Village Constable. He was remanded to fiscal's custody and when he was being brought down to Colombo on the 19th. of December escorted by a police constable and two Fiscal's peons, he contrived to escape again. For some unexplained reason the Fiscal's peons who were in charge of the party refused to stop for the night at Mahara Police Station and halted instead at a cattle Gala near the 7th mile post on the Kandy Road. When

the Constable was asleep on the Verandah and the others were cooking their night meal, Sardiel seized the opportunity, to slip into the jungle with his handcuffs still on and make his escape" (PS 4).

According to the Queen's Advocate, Mr. Richard F. Morgan: "Sardiel was re-captured in December and brought to Kegalle. From Kegalle he was ordered to be sent to Colombo, but when he was within two miles of Colombo, he again made his escape (D 17 and D 18).

Chapter Three

THE OUTLAWS IN UTTUWANKANDE CAVE

THINGS were getting pretty hot for Sardiel. The village Constable Babu Sara was dismissed for letting Sardiel escape. A reward of only £5 was offered by the Government for the recapture of Sardiel. (PS4).

Sardiel's exploits came to be known far and wide throughout the land. His career of robbery made him a wanted man in every police station in the neighbourhood. Finding that things were getting too hot for him, he made a safe and secret hiding place for himself upon the rock of Uttuwankanda, which to this day is called Sardiel's Rock (1).

This Sardiel's Rock is five miles east of Kegalle. If you look out of a railway carriage window as you pass Polgahawela on your way to Kandy you will see in the distance a rock which rises clear of the country. This rock which looks like a broken giant chimney is Sardiel's Rock. To reach the top one has to walk through a line of huts buried deep under the shade of fruit trees. There are many coffee trees among them, covered with green and scarlet berries. With the help of a couple of logs placed there by former climbers, one could scale the huge boulder that lies upon the summit.

Then if you climb down from the summit and go along the steep grass-covered slope that runs round the foot of the rock, you come to the mouth of a large cave, hidden away behind a screen of trees and long grass. At some remote time a huge mass of stone seems to have fallen away from the lower face of the rock and formed the cave of Uttuwankanda. This fallen rock lies before the mouth of the cave and helps to conceal the entrance from any-

one coming up the hill towards it.

This cave is large enough to hold about 20 men and its walls are blackened with smoke. The floor is covered with earth dug out of a narrow tunnel running into the hill side. It is related that a man had once been digging up there every night for months looking for Sardiel's treasure. But he could not find it. Instead he found only a cobra. It is said that a big cobra guards the treasure and so no one can find it or take it away. (PS5).

There is some brickwork under this fallen piece of rock. The cave used to be the dwelling place of a Buddhist priest before the roof fell in and made a new cave. (PS5).

Now it was to this hidden stronghold buried at that time in thick jungle that Sardiel and his band of outlaws retreated. There were about half a dozen of them, all desperate men, wanted by the police for various crimes, and bound together only by common dread of those who would drag them away to imprisonment or the gallows. Round them on the rocks lay the curious collections of fire-arms, old muzzle-loading guns of all sizes and a number of pistols.

From the narrow ledge at the top of the rock, Sardiel could see the yellow road running away southward from Mawanella village and the gray strip of the Kandy-Colombo Road appearing and disappearing in and out among the green stretch of trees and paddy fields. He could get an hour's notice of the coming of a coach upon the road from either direction from this high watch-tower.

From this wild rock he would go down to the main road to tie

ropes across the road to hold up the Royal Mail (2) Coach and relieve the passengers of their valuables and the guard of the mails. The coachmen began to carry arms to protect the coaches, but, it is said that their arms often found their way into the cave, so that coaches could only travel with a guard of rifle-men. The name of Sardiel soon became a terror in the whole neighbourhood. (PS5 and PS4).

Contractors taking goods to Kandy and outlying stations by cart sought the protection of armed escorts through the 'occupied area', and even then on occasions were attacked and the guns and ammunition stolen. Terrified passengers related harrowing stories about the daring deeds of Sardiel and his men that the whole Island began to ring with the fame of the outlaw. (PS3 and PS4).

In July 1863 it was found necessary to open a police station at Aranayaka to protect the traffic on the Dolosbage road and in November to increase the strength of the stations at Hingula and Kegalle, "in order that constant patrols might be kept up to protect persons and property".

On the 4th of December the chief Superintendent wrote: "From all information I have received, I am of opinion that it will be a most difficult matter to make this gang amenable to justice without loss of life", and recommended that the reward be increased to £20. The next day he applied for 12 stands of arms and ammunitions for the force sent to apprehend Sardiel on the ground that it was impossible for the police "effectively to act against an armed body without proper arms".

The officer administering the Government, Major General Terence O'Brien did not approve of this and said that he did not consider it desirable to arm the police, for he believed "that a police force so armed would have no chance of apprehending the accused".

Macartney, the Superintendent, replied that if the police could not be armed "a party of the Ceylon Rifles might at least be sent to support the police". "It is" he wrote "impossible to expect an unarmed police body to act effectively against an armed body of ruffians prepared to fight to the last".

He was informed that a party of the Rifle Regiment could not be allowed for this service. Instead he was asked to select Malays of his own force, and promise them a liberal reward if successful. (PS4).

While the Police were devising means to capture him Sardiel had gone to Galegedera and there one day he murdered an Arab who came to sell horses, and snatched from him Rs. 500 all that the Arab had in his person. (PS1).

From there Sardiel went to Kurunegala and one night disguising himself as a lady went to the French Theatre and sat among the ladies. He carved his name and date on the chair on which he sat to show that he sat on it on that day. (PS1).

He was also in the habit of watching the route taken by coffee estate owners during pay days.

One day he had drawn some ropes across the Railway line and stopped the train that was transporting horses. He burgled the compartments. (PS1). On numerous other occasions Sardiel and his gang scrambled on to morning trains and tossed out bags of rice and other foodstuffs which were later gathered up by poor villagers and quickly carried away. (PS15).

As he had been constantly plundering money along the Rambukkana-Polgahawala railway, the railway officials offered Rs 100 for any person who captured Sardiel.

The Government was growing more and more alarmed as Sardiel's audacity increased and detachments of police were sent out periodically to storm

the Rock fortress, but all attempts to capture him failed.

Sardiel was not perturbed. Soon afterwards he went to Kandy in disguise and on the Sinhalese New Year's day, he took part in a game of 'Pora Pol' on the esplanade and on the night of the same day sat next to a police sergeant through a 'Nadagam' performance. On the way out he picked the sergeant's purse from his pocket, put inside it a note of greeting 'from Sardiel', and sent it addressed to the sergeant, to the Police Station. (PS 15)

One day Sardiel decided to go to Kandy for an entertainment. Fearing that he might be recognised, he dressed himself up as a woman, in conspicuous clothes, and walked through the town to his place of amusement. On the way he took care to cast shy eyes on the constables he met on the road. Next morning a lady's saree was delivered in a parcel at the Police Station with Sardiel's best wishes. (PS 5)

On another occasion when he returned from Kandy disguised as a woman, he met a constable and actually fell into conversation with him. Later the constable got a gift of the dress worn by Sardiel. (PS 9)

Sardiel once ambushed the Royal Mail and seized a bag of money. When he learnt that it was the Railway labourers' pay packet he had taken, he quickly distributed the money among the labourers saying it was a bonus from the Government which had suddenly realised it was grossly underpaying them. (PS 15)

Sardiel never harassed the poor or women. In fact in the neighbouring villages the poor and the down trodden (PS 9) received help from him. He became a hero in their eyes.

Sardiel's name had by now become a legend and people shuddered at the mention of it. Once having stolen a small hackery and bull from one village he drove till he entered

another village, through which he passed. While he drove the name 'Sardiel' was passed round and men women and children ran into the closest huts and locked themselves in. One young man thinking he would be safe climbed a coconut tree. Unfortunately for this young man, when he saw Sardiel coming closer to the tree on which he was, fear gripped him and he fell and was knocked unconscious at the foot of the tree. The village looked deserted. An old woman came out crying:— "Aiyu my son", and was lifting the young man when Sardiel approached her and asked what had happened. She with tears rolling in her eyes said: "We were afraid of you. My son through fear of you climbed this coconut tree and has now fallen down."

"Why are you people afraid of me," Sardiel shouted and calling to Mammaley Maricar who came on foot after him, asked him to lift the young man into the cart and ordered him to take him to the nearest dispensary in the village. The mother followed her son on foot.

Sardiel now shouted to the people to come out of their houses and not to be afraid of him. "I am the friend of the poor," he said. Then from a hut emerged the servant of the Korale who had refused him milk years ago. He came out smiling and asked the others to come out. A big crowd gathered round Sardiel shouts of "Sardiel Jayawawa" "Sardiel Jayawewa". Sardiel pulled out from his waist some silver coins and threw them over the crowd which scrambled to get at the coins. More shouts of "Sardiel Jayawewa" rent the air. When Sardiel left that village, the servant of the Korale joined his gang. (PS 11)

Mr. W. E. T. Sharpe was acting Assistant Government Agent at Kegalle. He had come to know that no action was taken by the Aratchies to apprehend Sardiel and so on the 1st of October 1863 he sent

the letter of suspension order through Beminuwatte Rate-Mahatmaya:—

"I do hereby command you to give notice to Gondville Aratchila and Kondenia Gan Aratchila that I have suspended them from their offices because they are not endeavouring to get hold of Sardiel tho' even the two weeks time granted to them had been past and also on account of your information that tho' it is in their power to get hold of that man, they are not trying to do it." (D8)

Here is what Beminuwatte Rate Mahatmaya wrote in his report:

"As soon as I received official information that Sardiel was at large I, Ellawella Rate Mahatmaya and Siambelapitiya Korale promised to give reward of £25 to any party apprehending Sardiel and his gang.

"I further beg to state that myself, the Headmen and people of my district were constantly on the move from village to village where Sardiel was supposed to be concealing himself; and on one occasion we with the assistance of Parencoor Rate Mahatmaya surrounded Sardiel and two of his followers of the village of Parenegama but the latter took up their guns and threatened to shoot. Upon which the people ran away for fear of their lives and the robbers escaped. This was in August last.

"I also beg to state that whenever I received orders from Kegalle Cutchery I lost no time in sending for the Corales and Aratchies and directing them to use their best endeavours to effect a capture of the robbers and warned them that they would run the risk of losing their offices, if the robbers continued at large; and I also caused due publicity to be given to all orders received from your Honour's predecessor (Mr. Sharpe) by causing written notices to be circulated.

"These notices respectively bear the date October 17 and November 2nd. 1863. I beg

further to state that upon my representation that Gondeawelle Aratchila and Kondenia Aratchila were not active enough in securing Sardiel who was then to be found in the villages, over which they held office, they were suspended from office. In corroboration of this fact I beg to annex translation of a letter sent to me by Mr Sharpe No. 435 of 1st. October 1863" (D 5).

Hend Appoo of Angwaram who had been asked by the Aratchy to be on the watch for Sardiel says:—"I knew that Sardiel, Sirmale and M. Maricar were in the habit of going to fish in the Maha Oya and one day when I saw them going I ran and told the Aratchy and he told me to keep guard, whilst he ran and collected some men I did so and whilst I was watching Allis of Angwaram ran up and spoke to Sardiel in an excited manner. And they left their fishing and all ran off, so that I had to go back and tell the Aratchy it was no use. (D 11)

"Don Gabriel Tennekoon, who was once a school master and was now dealing in timber says: 'About four or five months ago as I was returning home from Rankodewelle. I saw Sardiel holding the hair of Cader's wife and dragging her on the road and striking her, just opposite the house where she and Cader lived. I asked Sardiel why he was so treating her and he said: This woman is always hanging after me and bothering me' and I know that she was always with Sardiel.

"Once Ammoolpury was working at my house as a Silver-smith. Whilst he was thus engaged, Sardiel came up to my door and in a loud tone called away Appoo. The next morning he came back again I turned him out and told him never to come to my house, and since that time I have seen him twice going in the company of Sirmale and Sardiel with a gun on his shoulder, once a little below the 55th mile post coming up the road. Jovan Appoo was with me, and the next time I saw him at

Nicholas Appoo's house I was by myself sitting in the outer verandah of my own house. I also know and I saw myself Sirimale and Sardiel sitting in the house of one Allis some two and a half months ago. Allis lived in an unoccupied house in one of my gardens. On seeing this I asked Allis to quit the premises and he did

so. He is now a tenant of Cader's and lives in the house Cader used to occupy.

"Sardiel used to walk about Otoankande just the same as I do, except that he was armed. He used to get arrack if ever he wanted it, or buy anything in the Bazaar or shops and he was just as free to go where he liked as I am". (D11).

ANNOTATIONS

(1) Sardiel Rock was also known as Castle Rock, for it was like the Rhine Castle from a distance (PS19).

(2) There was no railway to Kandy. The Royal Mail Coach

took the Mail and passengers. The Coach used to leave Kandy on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 6 a.m. and arrive in Colombo between 4 and 5 p.m. Each passenger had to pay £ 2-10-0 as fare. (PS21).



Uttuwankande Hill

Chapter Four

IN THE GAMBLING DEN

THE Police were still after Sardiel. Sardiel built a temporary wall in front of his cave at Utuwankanda, to protect himself. He levelled the floor of the cave to have more resting place for him and his companions in exile. He did not care for much comfort, but just what was necessary to keep his life going (PS9).

He stored provisions for a month and now and then augmented his supplies with plundered goods from the contractors' carts. Sardiel's mother and Cader's wife never failed to visit him and give him food and warm clothing (D5).

Close to this cave was another party of looters who had already joined Sardiel and acknowledged him as their leader and were always obedient to him. (PS9) Leaving two men to watch, the others spent most of their time gambling. Sardiel preferred not to wear the talisman while indulging in it. There were times when luck deserted him and he lost all his money. When this happened he would come to the nearest house and borrow some money and return to the game. Sooner or later the money was returned with substantial interest

Often Sardiel would go out to a wayside boutique and gamble (1). One day he had lost all his money and was rushing off to borrow some when he met an old man. He was a stranger to that place. Sardiel stopped him and asked him for all the money he was carrying. The stranger began to weep. When Sardiel told him who he was, the old man at the dreaded name of Sardiel confessed between sobs that he was a poor carpenter from Moratuwa who had been earning his living in Gampola. He had saved five hundred rupees,

which was all the wealth he had. He was taking it home as a dowry for his daughter.

Sardiel listened patiently but took all the money from the man and asked him to come to the spot the next day after dusk. The man went weeping to the village and recounted to the Vidane what had happened. The Vidane knowing that Sardiel never broke his word advised the old man to do as he was told.

Next day Sardiel met the old man with a smile and gave him back the five hundred rupees saying: "Your daughter must be a lucky girl, for I have won a considerable sum of money". Then handing another cloth bag containing another five hundred Rupees to the old man he laughingly said: "Here old man is five hundred rupees more. It is my contribution towards your daughter's wedding feast." Then calling his lieutenant Mammale Maricar, Sardiel ordered him to escort the carpenter to his home in Moratuwa. The old man shed tears of joy and thanking him profusely left for his home with Mammale. (PS 14) and (PS 5).

A few miles from Utuwankanda was a coffee plantation which belonged to an Englishman. The planter who resided on the estate was a kind and generous man and was liked and respected by the villagers of the area.

One afternoon, the planter was disturbed at his siesta by a slight noise and was surprised on looking up to find a young barebodied man standing a few feet away from the divan, with a gun in his hand.

The planter was puzzled, but asked the intruder in a stern voice what he was doing there.

The man replied that he was Sardiel and had come to ask a favour; "I need Rs. 131/- immediately" he said. "Will you please lend me the sum Sir." The planter got interested. He had heard so much about the man; but this was the first time he had seen him. He took the wallet out of his trouser pocket, counted out the money and handed it over. Then he asked Sardiel why he wanted only Rs. 131/-, why that specific sum. Sardiel replied that he had borrowed that amount from a poor villager and had gambled it all away. He had promised to return the money that day, but as he would not be able to raise the amount for a day or two he had come to the planter for help.

As Sardiel thanked the planter and walked out, he picked up the planter's rifle which stood in the corner of the verandah remarking; "please don't misunderstand me, Sir it is not you that I mistrust but your servant, I will return this along with the money in two days".

As soon as Sardiel had left, the servants came to their master and the head Appu told him excitedly: "Master doing unwise thing. Big rogue this Sardiel. Master should have handed him to the police."

The planter then told them the story of Robinhood and said that Sardiel was very similar to him. The servants were impressed by the story but thought that their master had rifle.

Two days later, a tough looking man walked up to the planter's bungalow and handed him a large heavy parcel saluted and departed without a word. The planter opened the parcel and within it he found his rifle, rolled up in a huge leopard skin. There was also a 'thalagoya' skin purse and in it was the sum of money which Sardiel had borrowed.

The planter was very pleased and looked at his servants who had gathered round him. He

was amused to see their discomfort, but knew that from that day they would see their countryman Sardiel, in a new light. (PS14).

Four miles from Kaduganna-wa lived a Ceylonese planter called Mr. Silva. He was a generous man and loved his labourers. He was in the habit of going to Kandy to bring money to pay his men. One day he missed the coach and had to come walking. He was alone and was carrying a small bag containing Rs. 3,000. As the Police were in Utuwankanda he was not afraid.

As he left Utuwankanda it was very late at night and he walked as fast as he could. Suddenly he noticed someone coming behind him. In a few minutes the stranger caught him up. They soon fell into conversation. They talked of various subjects and as they approached Kadugannawa Mr. Silva invited his companion to come to his house. The invitation was accepted. Mr. Silva offered his guest some refreshments and drinks. His guest relished them and as he was about to take leave he called Mr. Silva aside and told him: "Sir, you may not know me. I am Utuwankanda Sardiel Appu. I have heard that you are a very generous man. I knew that you were bringing a large sum of money to pay your men. My men were about the place. I did not want them to molest you. So I accompanied you safe to your home. Hereafter when you carry money it is not advisable to go alone walking at so late hours.

Mr. Silva was very pleased and thanked him very much and told him that if ever he needed help he should not hesitate to come to him. Sardiel departed. A few months afterwards Sardiel was forced to take shelter in Mr. Silva's house (2) when he was hunted by the Police. Mr. Silva looked after him and kept him hidden in a far corner of his estate for several months till Sardiel went back to his gang. (PS16).

In January 1864, an increased reward of £100 was offered to any person or persons giving information leading to the arrest of Sardiel and rewards of £20 were promised for information leading to the arrest of any of his four accomplices whose names were Hawadiya, Baya, Mammaley Maricar and Samat. (PS4). This Proclamation was issued on the 13th of January 1864. (D 17) and appeared in the Govt. Gazette dated 20 February 1864.

PROCLAMATION

Two hundred Pounds reward NOTICE

Whereas it has been represented to Government that Sardiel, Hawadiya, Baya, Mohamadoo Marcan and Samat who have either escaped from justice or are evading warrants issued for their apprehension on various charges and are all in the District of Tumpalata between Utuwankande and Arenake, form with others a gang of robbers headed by the said Sardiel.

A REWARD OF ONE HUNDRED POUNDS is hereby offered to any person or persons who shall give such information as shall lead to the apprehension of the said Sardiel or who shall deliver him to any Justice of the Peace in this Island

A REWARD OF TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS is also offered to any person or persons who shall give such information as shall lead to the apprehension of each of the other persons abovementioned or shall deliver them or any of them to any Justice of Peace in this Island.

By His Honour's Command
W. C. GIBSON.

Col. Secy.
Colonial Secretary's Office,
Colombo. 13. January, 1864.

RM'S REPORT

Along with this Proclamation (D 18), the Headmen were also requested to have a close watch on these men who were wanted.

Beminuwatte was Rate Mahatmeya of Galboda and Kirigoda Korles. He was first in 1824 appointed Vidane of the Royal Villages Gumlapitiya, Rahrale and Waragoda in 1834 he was appointed Mohandiram over several other Royal villages. He became Peremene Arachy of Galboda Korle in 1837, and in 1844 he was appointed Corale of Ganiepattoo in Galboda Corle. Within a year he was appointed Corle of Waddepattoo in addition to his former duties. In 1850 he became acting Corale of Tumpalate pattoo in addition to Waddepattoo. Division Officer of Tumpalate Pattoo also Deputy Coroner of Three and Four Corles. In 1854 he rose to the rank of Rate Mahatmeya of Pakenecoor Corle and in 1862 he was appointed Rate Mahatmeya of Galboda and Kirigoda Korles. (39 note).

Beminuwatte R. M. sent his men to shadow Sardiel and to whatever village he went. Here is his report. "Sardiel, Mamale Maricar Samat and Gonduville Sirimala these four combining together walked about armed with dangerous weapons such as Double-barrelled guns, revolvers of five or six barrels, Poniards, Knives and Cracklings. Having armed with these weapons, house breaking and gambling were practised by them, their relatives having lived along the road at intervals from Mawanelle to Uttuwankane assisted the said four individuals as well as many other rascals of Tanepenae pattu as soon as these who were in the habit of assisting Sardiel and his comrades come to know of any step taken to arrest Sardiel; even a talk in respect of his apprehension, they inform of it to Sardiel and his said comrades to escape from such measures; and they were always watching to see what party is endeavouring to know the apprehension of Sardiel, and the men of probity that live both in Uttuwankande as well as other village in Tamepperu Pattoo having hidden them properly kept quiet through fear of Sardiel.

"They frightened the villagers stating that should any be found acting against Sardiel and his comrades or relatives, that they will be shot dead; and there is no headman living nearer than two miles to Uttuankande in order to look to this state of things. Whenever a Headman or a Policeman inquires as to where Sardiel is to be found, which only was once in a week or two, some say 'did not see in a month' Some say 'I saw him about a week since'. Others say 'I saw him only yesterday or day before yesterday but not this day' and so on and not only that he could not be arrested by any headman on account of his having always arms, but keeps off when ever he knew that a headman or policeman is coming to his quarter and when he knew the danger is past he comes out of his hiding place and walks away to the house of his relations and friends situated along the road, nay to the town and go down of Uttuankande in search of beverage and that on all these occasions he is well armed and accompanied by his retinue though the inhabitants on such occasions meet them, no one would make attempt to arrest through fear, but they generally inform the Headman on such occasions and by the time the Headmen arrive they retreat to their places of safety such as to another village Pattu or District but they never continue in such places more than a day or two.

"The names of the Districts, Pattus and Villages to which Sardiel is supposed to have repaired for safety are these namely:—

Taneperu Pattu:

1. Genidewille.
2. Damogoella.
3. Thalagama.
4. Wegamelle.
5. Ilukgoda.
6. Halbunkaduwa.
7. Nerripomua.
8. Dewagamploa.
9. Welligalea.

"The blockheads of these villages found Sardiel and his comrades and assisted them,

whenever such a thing comes to the notice of a man of good character they move to another village Besides which they frequented the following villages for gambling:—

EGODA PATU PATTOO

1. Diwela; 2. Galatara; 3. Linke; 4. Pallagama.

TAMPALATA PATTU

1. Ambelakamle; 2. Menawa; 3. Galbokka.

MEVE PATTU

1. Alutnuwara; 2. Muruto - wala.

GALBODE PATTU

1. Modawatuwe; 2. Kempitt Kande; 3. Gangoda; 4. Kudegomowe.

"The districts which he frequented out of this jurisdiction are these:—1. Tumpane; 2. Uduwara; 3. Paranapattiya; 4. Nawalapitiya; 5. Polgahawele; 6. Negombo; 7. Gampola; 8. Colombo; 9. Kandy.

"In these above Districts he had not lived more than a day or two, even that, in disguise; also in the interval visiting Utu-wankande, such a visit having come to the notice once, an attempt was made to capture him. But he made his escape to his usual place of safety. His forms of disguise are on one occasion as a Malayan, at another time dressed as a Policeman, at another as a low country man, at another as a Kandyan Banda, at another as a Burgher and such like. He is only recognised by thieves and other blockheads; but not by Headmen and persons of probity He is known to these only by name and in fact many had never seen him before but when arrested.

"Sardiel had been to Coffee Estates too to gamble with coolies and to see if the bungallows could be robbed, which the owners of Estates were quite ignorant.

"In this way he has spent his days at Utuwankande too, without being known to any man who was not friend of his. He became often absent in the said villages. Sardiel had not remained more than a day or two in one place. This is the manner in which, Sardiel and his comrades spent their days but not lived always in Utuwankande. Should these be inquired into, it would be obvious.

"Subsequently a Proclamation having been issued that any who apprehends Sardiel would obtain a reward of £100, he never went to other districts, supposing that such a move would effect his capture and confined to Tunappena Pattmalane. It is also said that after Sardiel had been captured, he had secreted himself under an arch of a bridge on the high Road." (D 12).

ANNOTATIONS

(1) "There is a large Bo-tree near Utuwankande where Sardiel and others used to gamble." (D 11).

(2) This house can be seen today. A large rambling building with 12 rooms.



The Cave at the Hill

Chapter Five

SARDIEL ELUDES ARREST

THE Colombo Overland Observer of January 28th, 1864 published the following note about the 'Sinhalese Bandit' written by a correspondent:—

"Sardiel, a jail bird, and his 24 followers have created a great sensation at Kaigalle. They have committed the most daring acts of rapine and bloodshed. The Police, it is said, are afraid to face them, as they are well armed and prepared for eventualities. I hear that the chief, Sardiel, has the impudence to write letters to the chief Superintendent of Police.

"The traffic on the Kandy Road appears to be somewhat interrupted as rumours have reached the cartmen that plunder is the order of the day. I hear that the Government having taken the matter into consideration have offered a reward of £200 for their apprehension. If this little spark is not put down in time we may soon have another serious flame in the Kandian Districts. The surest way to put a stop to these depredations is to send a company of the Ceylon Rifles Regiment to surround the Bandits and bring them to speedy justice". (DI a)

The Government was getting more and more alarmed and as Sardiel's exploits increased detachments of Police were sent periodically to storm the Rock Fortress but all attempts to capture him failed. Once a party of the Police got ready to climb the Rock. The neighbouring villagers heard about it and they too followed the Police party. Sardiel and his companions were in the cave playing cards. An old villager came running to the cave and gave information about the police raid. They all took their

guns and ran out and hid themselves behind rocks. The Police party moved in silence till they saw the cave. Then the constable gave a signal for the party to stop. Suddenly they saw Sardiel running towards them. The people in the party were trembling, frightened. Sardiel came running like a madman and immediately they saw a puff of white smoke among the boulders and then a crack of a shot echoed up the hill. The Police returned the shot and then came a volley of shots from behind the rocks in different directions. Two policemen rolled upon the grassy slope. (PS5; PS9 and PS11)—*Most of these authors believed that the two who were shot were son and father and that both died. But that is not correct. This incident is confused with another that will be related in the next chapter.*

The Colombo Overland Observer of 11th February, 1864, had the following under the caption "BANDITS ON THE KANDY ROAD".

"Naples is being cleared of banditti, and even in Mexico the French are at least doing the country the good of shooting some robbers for the encouragement of others. But here in Ceylon it seems, our great Coffee Highway is to be infested with a gang of bandits, while our police fear to cope with them and the arms of our military are rusting. The credit of the 'Officer Administering Government' who is a military man, is decidedly involved in the nuisance being abated". (Dic).

Major - General Terence O'Brien was the Officer Administering the Government from 1st December, 1863, while Sir Charles MacCarthy was

Governor of Ceylon from October 1860 (cf Fifty Years in Ceylon by Skinner).

W. C. Gibson was the Colonial Secretary. It was he who signed the Proclamation promising Two Hundred Pounds Reward for the apprehension of Sardiel and his four companions. The Government felt that there was no need to release the Military as the reward promised was attractive enough for the Police, the Headmen and the citizens.

Tikri Banda Keppitipola was Corale of Ganneawe in Galbode Pattu in Galbode Corle Four Korles. He was appointed in 1861. In his report he writes:—

"I had received a description of Sardiel with a notice offering a reward of £100 for his apprehension which notice I put it in a conspicuous place at Poduhuerrea in my division and collected all the petty Headmen under me and gave them strict orders to take the necessary steps to apprehend him and give me immediate information if he were found in any Division. I know Sardiel only by name but he had not been known to me personally; he was always said to have been in Egodepatto of which the Corale is Syanbelapitiya Korale and over the people of which I have no influence.

"Sardiel was roving in that Division and his vigilance as far as I came to understand had enabled him to be at large. I cannot take upon myself to say that Sardiel had been at Uttuankandy and in its neighbourhood to be seen by people publicly, as Uttuankandy is not in my Division. I am not able to say from whom Sardiel had received aid and assistance to remain at large. I had been watchful with the petty Headmen and people of my Division during day and night." (D13)

Ukkinda the school mate of Sardiel was now living in Bokkawelle. He wrote:— "On the 14th of February I first came down and it was on the 15th I agreed with the A.G.A. to try and catch him. On that day I went back to Sardiel and found him at home. I told him a warrant was against me and agreed to join him. In the evening we went away and walked in the jungle. At noon we came to the Jak Tree at the back of the house where rice was brought us, by the mother. In the afternoon he sent me to his house first and told me he would follow. I came to the house but they did not come that night. The next morning I was going to look for them, when they arrived. They said they had slept in an unoccupied house that night and had no rice. We had coffee and remained. Sardiel had a swollen face and was very cross. He desired me and Maricar to go to Hendapoo's house and get a pair of black trousers, a white jacket, two pounds of shots and added something privately to M. Maricar about a gun and he also told me to take a bottle of arrack to Hendapoo. So we went. Hendapoo was not at home. The boy said he was gone to Asmalidiwe. So M. Maricar said: "We came for our things." The boy said he could not give any without Hendapoo's leave. So at last the boy went out a little in the jungle near the compound and brought a basket and took out the things and handed out the things. There was an old woman and Hendoorale's mother at home, also. I gave the boy a drink of arrack, but did not leave it. Then we came home and I shortly after, left and came to give information." (D5)

On the 19th of February, 1864, Head Constable Amat of Uttuankanda received information of the place where Sardiel was hiding and searched the house with a party of policemen. Sardiel

was away, but seven loaded single barrel guns, two pistols, a bag of balls and two canisters of powder were seized. From there the party went and searched the house of Sirimale who was known to be a friend of Sardiel. Here they found a bunch of 50 keys all of different sizes. (PS4)

On the 21st. of February 1864 the Magistrate of Kegalle searched the house of Sardiel's mother Pitchohamy. She was popularly known as Pitchi. Her house was near the 55th mile post on the Kandy Road about 50 yards from the present Roman Catholic church. But the magistrate found nothing in Pitchi's house. (PS 4).

The Chief Superintendent Macartney requested that the Government Agents should be intimated to call upon all their Headmen and their assistants to join in a general search and not to cease pursuing this lawless gang until it was hunted down.

On the 3rd of March the Colonial Secretary W. C. Gibson, while intimating to Macartney that the Government Agents had been informed of his request, said that the Officer Administering the Government, Major-General Terence O'Brien, was much vexed at the inability of the Police to arrest Sardiel.

"In his Honour's opinion," he wrote, "it is highly discreditable to the Police (assisted as they can always be by the legitimate employment of the military) that the present state of things should be for a moment tolerated." (PS 4).

Of course the Police were not able to understand what the Officer Administering the Government actually meant by the 'legitimate employment of the Military' as there were no soldiers at that time in the Kegalle District. Macartney must have been fuming within himself.

Either through love or fear, Sardiel's companions seem to have been faithful to him for a long time. But after the Proclamation the pursuit became so hot that they were all forced to

disperse. Occasionally they would meet and were often seen as Pimehappoo of Mawanella affirmed "walking about Otooankande and Mawanella just like any of us but if they saw any influential man or a Headman they used to bolt. I have never seen any Headman near them I never said nor even heard of a Headman conniving at any of their acts. Konendena Aratchi used to try and ask me to give him information of his whereabouts, that he might take him. But I could not know. . . . I have seen all these men in Pitchi's house, with Harmanis and Pitchi and others present. I have seen them all present as I was passing and repassing with my cart. I am employed by the Government under the Contractors but I could not leave my cart to give information. He does not stop living in any one place". (D 11)

Beminuwatte Rate Mahatmaya writing about the steps taken by him towards the Capture of Sardiel and his gang says:—

"I beg also to submit the following explanation as to how Sardiel managed to continue at large in spite of our efforts to apprehend him. He had his relatives at Utuankande to wit his mother his aunt, his step father and several others. And again he was assisted by the relatives of Mamle Maricar with whose elder sister, Sardiel was living at the time. This woman's husband was one Cader who also greatly assisted him. The house and boutiques of these people are scattered in and about the Village of Utuankande on either side of the high road, so that if any attempt was made from any direction to apprehend Sardiel, the movements of those trying to take him were closely watched by the people and Sardiel was warned in time, so that it is impossible to catch or even approach him.

"Besides this, the villagers and neighbours, who live in constant dread of Sardiel and his followers and also his relatives and friends who are all leagued together would give no information about Sardiel's

movements or his whereabouts but on the contrary they indirectly assisted him thro' fear of losing their lives at his hands.

"Sardiel was said to be daily seen at Utuankande, but for the reasons above stated it was impossible to apprehend him".....

"In January 1864 Government offered a reward of £100 for his capture. But since Sardiel never left Utuankande, as his friends and relatives were there and he had therefore less chance of being taken. Being thus always of one place we had no means of soon approaching him. I live about four miles from Sardiel's house and Seambelapitiya Corale about two miles, so that our movements and plans were known to Sardiel and his friends, even before we could carry them out." Here is what the Corale had to say in defence of the steps he had taken to apprehend Sardiel and his companions:

"I received a warrant No. 2169 on the 21st of September last (1863) and under it I searched the houses of Caspen, Seene Tamby and Nagawelle Kema Lebbe in which some stolen articles were found which with the owners of these houses who were said to have been associates of Sardiel, were sent to Keigalle and they were committed for trial before the Supreme Court where they were tried and convicted. The undersigned having received information that Sardiel, Mamale Maricar, Sirimale and some of their companions armed with guns and other weapons were in concealment in the jungle. The complainants in the above case No. 2169 presented several petitions, presented to His Honour the Officer Administering the Government, to the Government

"On receiving information that Sirimale, Nedegedere Modiansey and Gondere Elle Modelihamy were harbouring Sardiel and his friends, I tried my best to find them out and take

them to the Court Catchery. I had no order to seize them. But all my efforts proved fruitless as my movements were made known to them by their friends and on this occasion I threatened to get Seambelapitiya Corale dismissed if he did not use his exertions in apprehending Sardiel, his gang and those who harboured them.

"In addition to this, on the 16th of February last, I collected a large number of people and proceeded to Uttuankande and having called all the villagers and boutique keepers together informed them that if I received information that any of them were harbouring Sardiel or any of his gang, I would apprehend and take them to Kegalle.

"Mr. Sharpe the late Assistant Agent is fully aware that I did take these measures to apprehend those who harboured them.

Of course Beminuwatte Rate Mahatmeya could afford to threaten the dismissal of Siyambalapitiya Corale. This Corale was appointed Corale of Egodapota Pattoo in Galbode Corale in 1841 and in 1852 he was made Corale of Usedepattoo in addition to the former and in 1861 Tamippeopattoo was added. Now listen to what this Siyambalapitiya, had to say: "the Agent at Colombo and the Queen's Advocate stating the above fact and praying to cause steps to be taken for the apprehension of the robbers but no measures appear to have been adopted in consequence of these petitions. Yet the undersigned had sent for about ten moor men who have connection with the complainants in the case No. 2169, from Malwane, in Colombo, and exerted with their assistance for eight days to seize the robbers, yet they have not been able to discover them. Having been unsuccessful in his endeavours, the undersigned got the assistance of the Police at Arenakey and was watching with them for Sardiel and his companions for two days together, both days and night at a house near the arrack godown at Otooankande

where they were said to have been in the habit of resorting to, but they did not come there those days. Afterwards the undersigned and the Police were at watch near the house of Harmanis Appoo and Hendrik Appoo at Otooankande for three days together but they could not have been seen. Afterwards having received information that the robbers were gambling at Willigalle near Otooankande and befriending myself with the three persons. Daswake Kanua, Dodantele Isan Appoo and Niko Appoo who are gamblers, paid them £5 and promised to pay them £10 more for apprehending the robbers and the undersigned and Ellawa Rate Mahatmeva followed them who however returned to say that the robbers had already gone away.

"Afterwards the undersigned applied to the ——— who was at Ambannitiva for assistance to seize the robbers and that gentleman and about ten persons with a Sergeant Major surrounded Sardiel's house at Anguarane in the night and surrounded and searched it for Sardiel, but he was not then in. Thus the undersigned Ellawella Rate Mahatmeva and Beminuwatte Rate Mahatmeva made it generally known that they would pay £25 to any one who would seize and take Sardiel into custody. Yet no one came forward to apprehend him.

"In March last the undersigned and Kondeniya Gang Aratchy and Meagastile Gang Aratchy were at watch at Kondeniya for two days together but could not find either Sardiel or his companion. While thus presenting the search for Sardiel the undersigned received information that he and other robbers were at Arenakey, Asubalecamole Gampeke, Hanspatoo, Galbode patos Demille and Kenerallapitiya and though every possible enquiry was made yet they were not found there, nor the undersigned received

any such information as to enable the undersigned to know where they were to be found" (D10).

In February 1864 Mr. Frederick Richard Saunders succeeded Mr. Sharpe as Assistant Government Agent at Kegalle. Mr. Sharpe had been disappointed at inefficiency of the Headmen who were unable to apprehend Sardiel nor any of his companions. He had given orders for the dismissal of Appuhamy the Gang Aratchy of Arenakay in whose division Sardiel and his gang lived.

So on the 22nd. of February 1864. Appuhamy Aratchy sent a petition to Mr Saunders who was now the Assistant Government Agent at Kegalle:

To

F. R. Saunders, Esqr.,
Assistant Govt. Agent,
Kaigalle.

The humble Petition of Appuhamy Gang Aratchy of Arenakay Respectfully sheweth.

That Your Honour's Petitioner begs leave to bring to Your Honour information that he was given to understand that he has been recommended for dismissal from the office of Gang Aratchy, on a supposed charge preferred against him by some of his enemies of sheltering Sardiel the notorious thief and his gang in the villages over which he is Gang Aratchy.

That he humbly denies the charge and prays that an enquiry be made from the Headmen and other respectable people of the District as to the truth of the said charge.

For which act of justice, Petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray.

(Appuhamy).

Keigalle, 22. February,
Sgd. A. Buhm (D14).

Mr. Saunders merely wrote on it: "Recommended by Mr. Sharpe and approved by the Govt. Agent. I cannot interfere."

Sgd. F. R. Saunders. (D14).

It is easy to understand why the Headmen were afraid to approach Sardiel and his gang. Ukkinda in his evidence says: "A year ago Sivambelapitiya Corale met Sardiel and asked him why he was angry with him. Sardiel replied 'I will take care of myself. You take care of yourself' ". (D11).

"Before the Proclamation" says Drakmen Packeer the brother of Cader, "one Nicholas Appoo told me that Sivambelapitiya Corale was going in his hackery along the road and Sardiel ran after him saying 'Stop whilst I rip open your big belly' and so they drove

away as hard as they could." (D11).

"Sardiel was not afraid of any one. Everyone used to run away from him, for they were afraid. After the Proclamation one night I saw Sardiel Sirimale and others close to the brandy shop in Otooankande but I was afraid and ran away. I often saw them in the Brandy Shop. I have seen him drinking" continued Dramen Packeer (D11)

Thus the deeds of robbery and violence perpetrated by Sardiel and his companions spread terror through several districts of Ceylon.

Chapter Six

TRAGEDY AT SARDIEL'S HOUSE

THINGS were getting pretty hot Sardiel's companions dropped out one by one till there were only two left. On the 9th of March 1864 Hawadiya one of the gang, surrendered (PS4). Samat was already in prison (1) (D11). Simirale could not be relied on. So Sardiel was left now with Mamale Maricar, the younger brother of Cader's wife. He was his only faithful companion to the end. His mother Pitche and Cader's wife never failed to send them food.

Soon after Hawadiya had surrendered, having been informed that Sardiel was at Kadigonomy, Bemnuwatte Rate Mahatmeya along with Keppitipola Korale Napuge Gang Aratchy proceeded there "and made due enquiries but was informed that Sardiel had left that place the day before" (D5).

On Thursday the 17th. of March 1864, Sergeant Amat received information that Sardiel and Mamale Maricar were in Sardiel's mother's house at Utuwankanda, which bordered on the high road from Colombo to Kandy. The Police had instructions to surround any house to which Sardiel or any of his companions might repair, and report the same at once to the Justice of Peace. So Sergeant Amat taking along with him Sergeant Mutusamy, Sergeant Theik Pakir Mohamadoe and two other policemen, Abdeen and Barken Naslar went to Utuwankanda and Baba Sara also came along with his men. Baba Sara collected a number of villagers along with Drackman Pakeer, Nasaodeen and Philip Peries and went towards Sardiel's mother's house. It was 7 p.m. and fast getting dark, when the Police party surrounded the house.

Amat placed Sergeant Mutusamy and Sergeant Theik Pakir Mohamadoe at the door while the people were standing on the road opposite the house. Then Sardiel's mother came out to the verandah and was leaning with her hands behind at the entrance of the house. Seeing the Police she raised the alarm by saying, "Harmanis, the house is surrounded. What is this?" The lights were immediately extinguished. She called again "Harmanis Appoo, what are you doing?" Then Harmanis Appoo, the step father of Sardiel came out. Both Harmanis Appoo and Pitche left the house and went into the cattle shed. There was a servant girl called Ukkoohamy with them at that time. She too hearing some noise ran and hid herself in the cattle shed that stood behind the house.

Sardiel and Mamale Maricar who had come there that evening, finding they were surrounded made a loop hole in the wall of the house and through it Sardiel fired a volley from his double-barreled gun into the crowd. George Van Haught, a special constable who had been reprimanded for lack of zeal in hunting down the outlaws, and who was now standing recklessly in front of the crowd, was the first to fall. He was killed instantly. Mamale Maricar shot through the window and Sergeant Mutusamy was seriously wounded on the right shoulder and the back. Along with them three others were wounded. They were the two volunteers Nasaodeen and Drackman Pakier who got a wound behind his ear, and a boy who received a wound in the eye (D16).

Christian Appoo, the local arrack renter, who was in the crowd, hearing that his step

son, George Van Haught, had been killed, rushed forward out of the crowd, gun in hand, and seeing his step son lying dead, shouted out: "You fellow. You have killed my son unjustly. Come out, and kill me also". Then he fired a shot at the door of the house. Another shot was fired from the house and Christian Appoo fell rolling beside his step son. Christian Appoo was then carried to his house where he died in a few hours. He got the shot through his abdomen (D16 and PS4).

George Van Haught was actually the son of the only two Proctors of Uttuwankanda Court. After the death of his father George Van Haught he must have been brought up by Christian Appoo (PS4).

Sergeant Theik Pakier Mahamadoe was standing leaning against the wall. He noticed a hole in the wall. He says: "A mat was hung up to conceal the hole. It was a small hole through which the gun was forced through....Muttusamy was fired at through the window....I ducked myself and went out....I took two stones and threw them at the door. I said: "You have made holes in the wall and shot people unjustly. If you are a proper man come out". Sardiel then replied from inside: "If you are a proper Malay come before me".... After this I went to see Muttusamy carried to a boutique. Mr. Saunders did not come that night. Men were placed to watch all round and the military came next morning" (D16).

But this is what Mr. Saunders the Asst. Govt. Agent has to say:—

"I was at dinner on the 17th when a wounded man came to me and gave certain information upon which I went to Uttuwankanda. I started at 30 minutes to ten. I found that two men were dead, one severely wounded and two slightly. I held a Coroner's inquest on the next day. The men killed were George Van Haught and

Christian Appoo. Muttusamy was not in a fit state to be removed...."I surrounded a house where these men (Sardiel and Mamale Maricar) were said to be. That very night (17th). I applied to Kandy for the Military and the night coach from Colombo brought some men" (D16).

Sardiel and Mamale Maricar had in the confusion that followed the shooting escaped into the jungle. Sardiel's house was ordered to be razed to the ground.

The news of this double murder caused consternation in the minds of the people. On the very next day on the 18th of March 1864, a report was sent to the Colombo Overland Observer, which carried the following account under the heading:—
"THE BANDIT SARDIEL"
The story ran this:—

"A day behind the Fair' was the taunt once flung at a public body in Ceylon by a former Governor, for not earlier opposing an obnoxious measure. A day behind the Fair' will now be asked for a whole community in reference to the delay of efficient action by the present Government against the above bandit.

"Passing Uttuwankanda, this evening and seeing a crowd opposite the house of the Village Constable among whom were the acting Police Magistrate of Kegalle and the Superintendent of Police. I dismounted to inquire the cause. Why, to my horror I learned that last evening of five policemen and some others who had surrounded the house of this redoubted villain with the view to his capture, six were shot — two of whom died almost immediately — the other four being wounded.

"Among the party was a suspended Policeman. Their orders from the Police Magistrate of Kegalle were to surround the house and report to him without taking

further action till he came to the spot — which he would do most probably with armed men. The silence imposed however, for some cause was kept—very likely with an assembling crowd this was impossible—and a parley took place with the inmates of the house. Meantime from a hole in the wall Sardiel taking deadly aim at his pursuers fired one, two, three, four, five, shots. The result was as above stated; six persons were hit — two mortally, the others severely. The suspended Policeman was one of the killed—but for which unfortunate accident, the poor fellow might have been accused of giving the rascal the hint that he was pursued. But it is evident from the result that he was no friend of the Bandit.

***Note by the Editor: We hear he was suspended for omitting efforts to capture Sardiel on the plea that he was unarmed. Ed. C.C. O.)**

"This poor man after being shot had only proceeded a few yards when he fell dead on the high road—lay there till the magistrate arrived. The coach from Kandy passing in the meantime was stopped by the dead body lying across the road. The Police and their friends were entering unarmed and soon got tired of being targets for this murderous villain's too certain aim. Those who remained therefore, returned, leaving him master of the position. The affair must have taken place about 8 O'clock as the coach would have been passing about half past eight. No time could have been lost by either the Police Magistrate or the Superintendent of Police. Mr. Saunders from Kegalle 7 miles distance was on the spot about half past ten, and Mr. MacCartney who was in Kandy and would likely have got word during the night, was there early in the morning. A pursuit was started

on his arrival by the headmen with any number of followers: but although Sardiel had been seen this morning three hours before they started—and was believed to be in a certain chena, they returned at 5 o'clock to tell that they were baffled, and had found no trace of the fugitive. This morning an armed party of Rifles arrived from Colombo unmistakably 'a day behind the Fair'.

"A writer in your 'Overland' issue of the 1st instant suggested that Government should proclaim Sardiel an Outlaw and send an armed force sufficient to capture him dead or alive. Had this advice been sooner acted upon, we should not now have had to deplore this unnecessary and helpless waste of life—a sacrifice it is to be feared due more to red tape than to duty. It appears according to the present Police Ordinance, the Police of Gannatanne Station four miles distant on the road to Colombo had no jurisdiction at Utuwankanda where this notable free booter carried on his depredations.

"It is further stated that months ago the Chief Superintendent of Police had asked the Government to arm his officers or afford a party of Rifles to protect them in their effort to capture Sardiel, both of which requests were declined; and if this was so, a heavy responsibility rests upon them. But 'revenons a nos moutons' — as the inefficient honorary officers of Government—a sheepish looking headman and his followers were reporting to the Magistrate their uselessness, a coffin was carried past, containing the corpse of one of the murdered men and to their honour be it spoken, the Police Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police followed the body to the grave. It was a sad spectacle, and I left the spot with the melancholy reflection, that

prompter and more efficient measures might have saved those poor men from being so helplessly and mercilessly slaughtered. As well might an infant be sent to capture a lion in his den as unarmed men against such a desperate villain who has for months been known to go about armed to the teeth.

"Another idea suggests itself here, viz that it is hardly possible for this desperado to have carried on his malpractices so long in this public thoroughfare—the one street of which Utuwankada consists—without the inhabitants knowing his whereabouts or being in league with him.

"His father, mother wife and daughters are in custody and the house is pulled down, but who is to blame for the murder of the innocent?" (D1c)

Note that this correspondent does not know that Sardiel had a step father called Harmanis Appoo. He had no wife though Drackman Pakler in his evidence stated that as Sardiel was frequenting Cader's wife, he "and some of his relations got him married to another woman, but he could not separate himself from this woman and he gave up the other" (D11). Evidently Sardiel had no children. Sardiel had an aunt called Kulle and a servant girl called Ukkoohamy.

The Editor of the 'Colombo Overland Observer' adds:—

"It appears that Mr. Saunders was not actually in command of the expedition; but surely after the proofs of utter recklessness and disregard of the value of human life, given by Sardiel, unarmed persons ought not to have been sent even to watch him. From a letter received this morning from Kandy we quote the following: "I understand that Sardiel picked off his men by firing through a hole in the wall of his cottage, which has been since razed to the ground. I trust that Rifles will do their work well. The native officer, I am told, is a

first rate man and much is expected from his exertions. No rain".

"As Ensign Quarry commanded the party of Rifles detached from Colombo we may hope speedily to hear that short work has been made of the blood-thirsty wretch, who, having so long ago, placed himself beyond the pale of the law, ought at once to have been dealt with as an outlaw.

"There are some people so sentimentally merciful that they would hesitate to shoot down even a wretch like Sardiel. But when it becomes a question between the loss of a felon's forfeit life, and danger to lives of numbers of well-conducted members of society, we hold that it becomes a religious duty to destroy the felon. We should like to know what the morbidly merciful think of the position of the Christian Scriptures which represent the ruler as bearing the sword—and not bearing it in vain? We should like also to know what Major General O'Brien and his timid advisers now think of themselves and of the responsibilities they have incurred. Personally and as Public Journalists we are guiltless of all responsibility for the innocent blood which has been shed. On the 11th. of February (1864), more than 5 weeks ago we thus wrote on the subject:—

'BANDIT ON THE KANDY ROAD'

'Naples is being cleared of Banditi, and even in Mexico the French are, at least, doing the country the good of shooting some robbers for the encouragement of others. But here in Ceylon it seems, our great Coffee Highway is to be infested with a gang of bandits, while our Police fear to cope with them and the arms of our Military are rusting. The credit of the Officer Administering the Government, who is a Military man, is decidedly involved in the nuisance being abated'.

"No doubt General O'Brien was told that it would never do to employ the Military until the ordinance Civil Force had proved insufficient for the capture of this desperado. Even when they were at length allowed to arm the Police failed to capture him, and from that moment the employment of the Military became the first duty of those to whom protection of life and property in this Colony is entrusted. The duty was not promptly fulfilled and we see the consequences in the deliberate slaughter of several innocent persons by the spared bandit. Of course the families of the murdered people will be provided for; but that will be merely a duty performed by Government at the expense of a community having good reasons to complain of the undecided policy which has led to consequences so disastrous" (D1c).

The Ceylon 'Times' too carried a similar account under the heading "Attempt to capture Sardiel" which appeared on the 18th of March 1864. (D2a) The "Examiner" had an account of the 'Bandit Sardiel' on the 19th. of March 1864. (D3a) It is worth while doubting the slightly varied version of this incident as given by the 'Ceylon Times' of the 22.3.1864.

"When the Police arrived.... but Sardiel who appears to be as cunning as he is courageous, tried to bring them within the reach by a ruse de guerre.

Keeping a sharp look out himself, he persuaded some women there in the house to get up a conversation with the Policemen, and when the men drew nearer, talking and oblivious of the danger which they were being led; but presently a bright barrel appeared at a hole in the wall and five shots from Sardiel's hand brought down as many of the poor fellows. Two of them died almost immediately.

"Sardiel did not wait to be caught like a badger in his hole by Mr. Saunders and his party. He betook himself to the jungle that he so often before proved his safety in similar straits. This was about 8 O'clock on the evening. Mr Saunders arrived about two hours later and the early morning brought Mr. MacCartney from Kandy. A pursuit was then organised and continued all day, but although so short a time had intervened between it and the disappearance of the pursued, no trace of him could be discovered. We are told his house was burnt or pulled down and an old man and woman found on the premises were taken charge of by the Police.

"The news of this outrage was quickly spread about and as the hut from which he had fired, faced the main road, the passengers by the down Coach, to Colombo declined to pass it and accordingly the Coach retraced its way to Kandy, but returned to the scene with more Riflemen" (D 2 b).

ANNOTATION

- (1) It was Drackman Pakier who seized Samat and was given the reward of £25 (D16).

Chapter Seven

CAPTURE OF SARDIEL

ON the morning of Friday the 18th of March, 1864, a party of soldiers came from Kandy. Mr. Saunders with the soldiers and a party of volunteers and villagers surrounded all the houses in which it was supposed that the murderers had taken refuge. The chief Superintendent himself arrived with a party of Police from Kandy and in the company of the Assistant Govt. Agent, Mr. Saunders, combed the entire jungle in the vicinity but without success.

Orders were sent to the Rate Mahatmeyas of the Four Corles to come immediately with as many men as they could muster. Siyambelapitiya Corale, accompanied Mr. Saunders and party "to Mawanella and surrounding the house of Cader till morning, took into custody Cader, his wife, his sister and her husband, and also Harmanis Appoc the step father of Sardiel, Pitchie, Sardiel's mother" and Ukkoochamy and "sent them to Uttuankande under escort." (D10)

On receipt of a telegram that in the attempt to apprehend Sardiel two men had been shot dead, "His Honour the Major General convened a meeting at the Queen's House last evening (18th March, 1864) which was attended by the Queen's Advocate and the Government Agents of the Western and North Western Provinces. It was settled as a result of their deliberations, that the Military should co-operate with the Civil authorities in the matter and that immediate orders should be issued to the various Headmen in and about Uttuankande district to beat the entire country with a view to drive Sardiel and his gang

within the narrowest possible limits and thereby facilitate their capture.

"Ensign Quarry and eight men of the Rifles were despatched from Colombo to Keigalle this morning and the Commandant of Kandy has been requested by the Major General to send on eight men in charge of a Native Officer. A constable and fifteen police^s men have been sent from Colombo to Uttuankande." (D3a)

Kappitipole Corale of Ganneawe hastened with his 500 men to meet Mr. Saunders. He says in a letter to Mr. Saunders:—"In obedience to the order No. 16 dated 19th March, 1864, I received, directing me to appear before you at Otoankande with 500 men armed with fire arms and other weapons, I and these men met you on the way and having accompanied you and others every effort was made to apprehend Sardiel but he was not to be found." (D13)

Beminuwatte Rate Mahatmeya also writes "On the 19th of March, having collected about 400 men at your Honour's orders I, assisted by Mr. Macartney, and others caused search to be made in various parts of the District." (D5)

In the afternoon the search party was strengthened by the arrival of the Ceylon Rifles that had been despatched from Colombo. Over 1,000 villagers had assembled and the jungles were again searched, but without success. It was then rumoured that Sardiel and Mamale Maricar had escaped in the direction of Matale. The Assistant Government Agent, Mr. Saunders,

then made arrangements to have 3,000 men at Tumpalata Galboda and Kinigoda Corles out on Monday the 21st of March, 1864, morning, and returned to Kegalle where he ordered the Headmen of Belligal Corie to collect 4,000 men and beat up the jungle from Kegalle towards Uttuankande. After increasing the reward for the apprehension of Sardiel to £150 on his own initiative, the Chief Superintendent, Mr. Macartney returned to Colombo. The Governor was surprised at Macartney's return to Colombo at this critical moment and he was severely reprimanded for this conduct. Macartney however tried to excuse himself by saying that the Police had received credible information that Sardiel had left the Kegalle District and had gone to Matale. (PS4)

During the search on the 19th news came that two moormen who had been prowling about in the jungle had been shot by Sardiel, who had evidently mistaken them for spies. (PS5)

Sirimale, one of Sardiel's companions, began to get cold feet. He thought it would be useless to defy the law any longer and hearing that there was a reward of £150 for the capture of Sardiel now sought means to betray his friend. He was perhaps the only one who knew better than other people where to look for his former chief.

So on Sunday the 20th March, 1864, Sirimale decided to contact Sardiel and Mamale Maricar. It was late at night. He slipped into the jungle and was lucky enough to spot the hiding place of these two fugitives. He met them at Keringideniya close to the Maha Oya River. He went up to the two outlaws and spoke to them. He told them that all the Four Corles were to be ordered out on Monday, March 21st and that there was no chance for any one to hide even in a

tree. He advised them to go and hide themselves in the loft of Cader's house, at Mawanelle.

Sardiel did not appear to be in any way perturbed. But Mamale Maricar asked Sirimale how many of those who had been shot at on the 17th were dead. Sirimale told him that two were dead. George Van Haught and his step father Christian-Appoo. Mamale then remarked: "What could we do? We were obliged to shoot who ever came forward." (PS5)

On Monday the 21st morning, Beminuwatte Rate Mahatmeya, as ordered by Mr. Saunders, collected about 1,000 men and brought them to Uttuankande. (D5) Kappitipole Corale had also come to Uttuankande as ordered "with the Aratchies and people on the 21st of March with provisions for three days and with fire arms and other weapons." (D13) On Monday collecting all these "some four to five thousand men" Mr. Saunders searched the jungle again. (D16)

Sirimale had now surrendered himself to the Authorities and volunteered to point out the place Sardiel and Mamale Maricar were absconding. (D3b)

On the same morning (1) of the 21st of March, 1864, when Serjeant Mahat and Constable Sabhan of the Kandy Police were walking up the road from Uttuankande towards Kandy with some villagers, Sirimale, the traitor, came up and whispered to them that Sardiel and Mamale Maricar were hiding in the house (2) of Cader at Mawanelle. Now let us allow Mahat, the Police Serjeant to tell us the story:—

"On the 20th I went and told Mr. Saunders that I had sent a spy to look for Sardiel. I went (on the 21st) in search of the spy Ookoowa. Four of

us went at first—myself, Sabhan, Hadji and Usoop. I and Sabhan were from the police. I met Sirimale opposite the Godown (arrack Shop) at Uttuankande. I knew that he was one of Sardiel's party. We went to Mawenelle. I saw Ookoowa there. Then Usoop told us that there were two holes made in Cader's house. Let us go and see. It was a tiled house. I examined the holes. Then I found a doorway covered with cadjans.

"We got into the back verandah through the unfinished doorway. I went in first and all the five followed. There was a window. I directed Usoop to open it. I looked up at the loft (after removing the cadjans and finding nothing below) and told Sirimale to get up and peep. He raised himself on a beam. I heard footsteps in the loft. Sirimale said 'there he is'—jumped down and ran away. All the others ran away except myself and Sabhan. I and Sabhan stood close to the cross wall and stood there with our guns. I saw Sardiel stooping and peeping over us. He was looking down in order to take aim, looking up and down towards the window. I then shot him on his buttocks. He fell down on the loft.

"Then Sabhan shouted: 'Don't shoot any more. The Kandy Police have got the day. Let us seize him alive'. Hadji and Usoop went out into the road. Then Tamby (Mamale Maricar) came to the edge of the loft and shot Sabhan and he fell dead on my feet. Then Hadji again ran away. Again another shot was fired but the cap snapped. I then stood near the door way, keeping watch and sent Usoop to Mr. Saunders and the soldiers... It was about half past seven in the morning." (D16).

Mr. Saunders and a party of the Rifles under Mr. Quarry arrived post haste at the spot. At this time the firing from

the house had wounded a villager, and the coach coming from Kandy was stopped, and as this house of Cader faced the main road, the passengers were unwilling to proceed and so they got down and remained on the far side of the Mawanelle bridge, well out of gun shot range (PS5).

Mr. Saunders ordered the driver of the coach to return to Kandy and bring reinforcements. (PS4) Ensign Quarry of the Ceylon Rifles begged to be allowed to storm the house with four picked Volunteers, but Mr. Saunders was determined that there should, if possible, be no further loss of life and he would not allow an attack to be made. Serjeant Mahat came out of the house where he had done his duty bravely in preventing the escape of Sardiel and his lieutenant Mamale Maricar. The place was surrounded on all sides. (PS5).

We shall now allow Mr. Saunders to continue the story:—"Early morning I got information which led me to Cader's house. I found the house was already surrounded by Sinhalese men. I tried to ascertain the exact state of affairs. But reports were contradictory. The Rifle men came up and we divided into parties and surrounded the house. I saw Mahat who informed me that one man was lying dead in the house shot by Mahamado Marikar. I then directed the house next, to be set on fire. The front of the house was boarded and had openings between the boards. The men could not enter without being exposed to fire from inside. Mr. Quarry took charge of the burning and I and three men went round behind a cart to break the boards if necessary by shooting at them.

"I saw Baba Sara and he was coming to me when a shot from the house knocked him over. We continued the burning. I think one or two shots were fired from the roof of the house and people thought

they had committed suicide. We continued to fire the house. I then requested Mohandram to point out to the people inside the impossibility of their escape. A man was found who volunteered to do this. I found that this man is said to be a lunatic, but I then thought he was insane. He is not a lunatic, but he is an idiot. He behaved very sanely on the occasion. He first asked them whether they would allow him to come up. And on being assured in the affirmative, he went up. He then called on them to surrender and pointed out that all hope of escape was lost and said that I would protect them from the Police and Military. They then said that they would surrender if I would personally come and arrest them. This I declined to do until they handed out their arms. Which after some little time they did. I then went in and arrested (3) them. They handed-out (4) two double barrelled guns, one single barrelled gun, a revolver and a crease, another single barrelled pistol was found. One of the double barrelled guns belonged to Sabhan." (D16).

As Mr. Saunders went forward and arrested them, Sardiel showed anger when he saw Sirimale among the crowd. He is said to have called out to him: "You made us commit murder by being a spy. I wish I had shot you instead of the others." (PS5).

Sardiel and Mamale "were both tied by the hands and feet, and put into a family bandy with a single military soldier and driven to Kandy by Mr. Saunders" (D1d) "The Colombo Coach on its way to Kandy brought the information that the brigands had been captured and that they were being led under military escort from Mawanella. A rush was made towards Peradeniya and large crowds of people gathered along the road to witness the bringing in of the murderers. It was between five and six in the evening when

Mr. Saunders with the captured men entered Kandy. Sardiel who was wounded and quite disabled was handcuffed and bound to the American waggon, with Mr. Saunders beside him, while behind were a soldier and the moorman (Mamale) carefully secured. Behind this came a string of carriages which had gone as far as Peradeniya and Gattembe in order to accompany, the notorious brigand to Kandy. (D1d).

The Kandy correspondent writing to the 'Overland Observer' on the night of the 21st March 1864 continues: "Our little town was in a state of great excitement when it was known that Sardiel was being driven in by Mr. Saunders. A dense crowd awaited his arrival at King's Street and the Jail, and very great difficulty was found in clearing the way for the carriages. Sardiel is by no means such a ferocious-looking person as the public were led to expect. He is slenderly built and does not appear to possess any great physical strength. Mr. Saunders drove up to the gate of the Jail and Sardiel who was unable to walk in consequence of the wounds he had received, was carried in. From that moment, crowds of eager visitors were at the door, begging to be allowed to have a look at the captured man. Ladies and gentlemen were seen going in and out until a late hour and even up till yesterday. Sardiel attracted large numbers of the curious." (D1d) "An account of Sardiel's arrival at Kandy, estimate the crowd opposite the Jail watching the arrival of Sardiel at 3,000" (D1d). However Sardiel and his companion were "safely lodged in Goal" and a "strict watch is kept on both who are heavily ironed" wrote another correspondent from Kandy on the same day. Sardiel has two wounds one on the arm and another on the hip, from small Shots." (D1d).

Correspondents from Kandy and Kegalle sent at that time

shocking pictures of the mode in which lawless violence had been not only tolerated but encouraged by native officials and by others. Here let us listen to what the correspondent from Kegalle had to say:—"In the recent capture of Sardiel are involved various questions, directly implicating the whole of the Kegalle Native officials:— "1. Sardiel will and can prove (but of course his evidence is legally inadmissible) that for the last two years he has been encouraged, supported and maintained in his 'free-booting' career by some officials.

2. Sardiel will and can prove that most of his legitimate earnings went to a certain house (Native Official again) not quite 100 miles from Kegalle; and that on the last Christmas day he had the honour of dining with a person (Native Official again) who has been promoted.

3. Sardiel will and can prove that he was often in the habit of going to the Kegalle Court, and that at least during the last 18 months he used to go out 'unmasked'. There has not been any native pingkam, comedy or theatrical exhibition that he has not attended in or about the District of the Four Korales." (DId).

This correspondent further maliciously adds: "He had, I am informed a variety of wives, Malabar, Singhalese, Kandyan etc. and it seems that he was a 'privileged man' in this Department.

"It is the Government of Sir Charles McCarty", the correspondent continues, "that now 'stinks' in the nostrils of all. A timid policy—a desire to please all parties—to avoid collision with any—enjoys his otium—have been at the root of all these evils....

"As far as the Police, the less said, the better. It is an Institution which really may be termed 'a necessary evil'. Saunders deserved great praise for the pluck he has shown. He it was who brought the matter to a crisis. There was no vacillation so far as he was concerned. I cannot speak too well of him" (DId).

The Editor of the 'Overland Observer' bitterly complained that "the greatly varying and in some cases absolutely contradictory accounts given in the columns of our contemporaries and in letters to ourselves, afford a new proof of the difficulty of writing authentic history." (DId).

ANNOTATIONS

(1) Pippet erroneously make it at 6.30 p.m. (PS 4) So does Keble (PS 5).

(2) Cader's house had a loft which did not extend along the whole building, but only over part of it (DI g).

(3) Pippet says that the right arm of Sardiel is said to

have been fractured by a blow which Saunders struck Sardiel with his cane before his arrest (PS 4).

(4) It is said that while Sardiel handed the guns to the man he remarked that "had he not been disabled, he would not have been so easily caught" (D3.C).

Chapter Eight

THE TRIAL OF SARDIEL

SARDIEL was to be tried on the 14th of April, 1864. There was some difficulty about identifying him till Mr. Lumpers, the Colombo gaoler was summoned to prove his identity. (D.I.f).

The news communicated from Kandy on April 5th, 1864 states: "The first session of the Supreme Court for the present year, which adjourned on the 22nd. ultimo, resumed its sittings yesterday. It was well known that Sardiel the Kaigalle bandit would like his trial along with his associate Marmale Maricar, and the re-opening of the assizes was therefore looked forward to with great interest by the residents of Kandy as well as of the neighbouring districts. From an early hour, crowds of villagers were seen entering the town from the direction of Matella, Kaigalle and Gampola and before ten the assemblage near the Court House had increased so considerably that it was found difficult to make one's way through the crowd.

"Sardiel and his accomplice were removed from gaol at about ten o'clock surrounded by a guard composed of armed English soldiers. Sardiel who was still weak and suffering from the effects of his recent wounds, was carried on a chair by prisoners. He was however heavily ironed. The moorman walked behind, with guards on either side. The irons which were attached to his limbs hardly permitted him to make his way through the streets and it was clear that the distance between the gaol and the Court was accomplished by him with great difficulty. Crowds of people lined the streets through which

the prisoners passed, the crowds accompanying them until the Court was reached, all anxious to have a glimpse of the man who had gained such an unenviable notoriety.

"The court house was thronged with Europeans, Burghers and natives. A little after half-past ten, there was hardly room for a person to move about, though the officials had not all arrived at the place yet.

"When Mr. Justice Thomson took his seat on the bench, which was at eleven precisely, there was in the building a crowd such as was never before seen there. The passage on each side of the bench and in fact every part of the house was densely crowded, while outside, the natives who had collected since morning, formed a mass, which occupied the whole yard.

"The Judge found that it was impossible to do any business while such a number of people were around. Nothing could be heard, and the jurors when called could not make their way into the box. The Judge therefore ordered the Court to be cleared, and a large portion of those who had congratulated themselves on having secured fine positions were indiscriminately turned out by the Fiscal's officers. The noise outside still continued, and prevented the hearing of anything that was said within. It was therefore found necessary to have all the court yard cleared, and a body of police were sent to disperse the assemblage. This was done with great difficulty and constables were stationed near the Maligawae and other places with orders not to allow a single person, Europeans or natives to enter the yard. Silence being restored in Court, the proceedings commenced

"In reply to a question from His Lordship, Mr. Morgan stated that the case of the Queen Vs. Sardiel and Mamalej Marikar on a charge of Murder would be taken up.

"An English-speaking Jury was called. Messrs. C. Ebert, J. G. Ginger and Goonetilleke were challenged by the prosecution. The prisoners who were undefended had no challenges to make. The Jury ultimately stood thus:

G. D. B. Harrison—Foreman.
2. A. Gotteler, 3. F. Gray, 4. J. A. Ebert, 5. G. Fonseka, 6. T. C. Hutton, 7. P. Hoffman, 8. J. C. De Alwis, 9. G. W. Angley, 10. A. M. Galloway, 11. C. Hoffman, 12. H. A. Fermer, 13. J. Christoffelsz.

"The indictment charged the prisoners with the murder of Sahban on the 21st of March 1864.

"Plea—Not Guilty.

"Mr. Advocate Dimuwille was asked by His Lordship to undertake the defence of the prisoners—which he however begged to decline.

"Mr. Advocate Purcell and Mr. J. Van Langenburg were then assigned to defend the two men.

"An application was made by Mr. Purcell at this stage of the proceedings to remove the irons which were on the two prisoners, as they could not stand or even sit with any convenience. As the guard was strong enough to prevent any escape, even if such a step was meditated, His Lordship directed that the chains be removed. About half-an-hour after, Mr. Purcell drew the attention of the judge to the circumstance that the chains had not yet been taken away, as directed by His Lordships. On enquiry, the Fiscal stated that the chains could not be taken off the prisoners as they were actually forged on them. The men were therefore obliged to have these encumbrances on them during the whole trial. A chair was placed inside the dock for the first prisoner, Sardiel.

"The Queen's Advocate then opened the case in a very lucid speech, giving a clear account

of the facts he expected to be able to establish. We shall here proceed to give a condensed account of the material points referred to by him in the course of his address.

"The two prisoners now placed at the bar were charged with the wilful murder of Sahban. This crime was committed by them whilst resisting certain officers of justice, who were attempting to apprehend them for several offences which they stood charged at the time. Though these prisoners were not indicted for any of the offences committed previously, still it was necessary for the purpose of the case to draw the attention of the jury to the circumstances which preceded the murder of Sahban. In 1862 a warrant was issued against Sardiel on a charge of theft. He left the district where the theft was committed and ran away into the jungle where he was pursued by the officers of justice. A man of the name of Pasquel undertook to point out Sardiel, and a party of men headed by a constable proceeded to Negombo where he was then said to be living. He was seen at a place called Maddewelle and whilst an attempt was made to seize him, he stabbed Pasquel very severely and after some time he (Pasquel) died from the effects of the wounds. Sardiel was however apprehended and ultimately locked up in the Hulftsdorp gaol at Colombo.

"On the 19th of November, 1862, he made his escape from this gaol, but was re-captured in December and brought to Keigalle. From Keigalle he was ordered to be sent to Colombo, but when he was within two miles of Colombo, he again made his escape.

"From this time until the 21st of March, 1864, he was at large. In addition to the warrant already referred to, a number of others were after him. An affidavit was sworn against Sardiel and two others soon after this, charging them with burglary. On the 11th of November, 1863, information was

given to the Magistrate of Keigalle that Sardiel had been seen near that place and had said that the Police will never be able to take him. On this Mr. Sharpe issued another warrant for his apprehension. On the 23rd of April, Sardiel and the second prisoner were seen in a house which they appeared to have entered with a burglarious intent. But they escaped their pursuers at this time too. On the 30th of December, Mr. Sharpe issued another warrant against Sardiel for escape.

"On the 12th of January, 1864, a proclamation was made by the Government offering a reward of £100 for his apprehension. On the 17th of March information was received that the prisoners were at the house of Sardiel's mother which borders the high road at Ootoomankande. Several policemen surrounded the house and concerted what steps they were to take to accomplish their object of seizing him. Two of the policemen, George Van Haught and Muttusamy fell severely wounded, the first fatally while the second was now in such a state that he could not with any safety be brought to the court House to give evidence. Shortly after Van Haught's father, a very old man, came running forward exclaiming, 'As you have killed my son, kill me also.' He was instantly shot down and within two hours expired. The prisoner then made his escape. This was the first time he offered any positive resistance to the police; and this justified the calling of the Military by the energetic officer of the district.

"In the morning of the 21st March, information was given that Sardiel was in the house of one Kader at Mawenella. This house has a loft, which does not extend along the whole building, but only over a part of it. Mahat, Sahban, Usoop, Hadji, Sirimalla and Ukkina went into the house. They lifted Sirimalla up the loft as there was no stair case, and exclaiming, 'There he is' ran out with Uuuka. Sardiel then came forward with a gun ready to fire.

Mahat losing no time discharged his piece and Sardiel fell back wounded. The second accused, Mamaley Maricar then came forward and shot Sahban who fell down dead.

"The magistrate and the military arrived after this, and the house was threatened to be set on fire, upon which Sardiel surrendered." (Dlg.)

The correspondent from Kandy here gives his own observations: "The circumstances which the Queen's Advocate had adverted to would enable the jury to understand the reason which prompted the commission of the last murder. The prisoners were not tried for the murder on the 17th, nor for the previous felonies. But it was necessary that all this should be proved, before going to the crime for which they were at this time indicted.

"There were three questions which it would be necessary for the jury to give their attention to:

1st. Was the arrest attempted by Mahat and others on the 21st unlawful

2nd. If lawful, were proper means used by them in their attempt to seize Sardiel

3rd. Did the prisoners in resisting their arrest, occasion the death of Sahban?

"From what the Queen's Advocate had already said it was clear that the arrest was lawful. There were a number of warrants after Sardiel. Policemen are authorized to seize people upon warrants as well as where suspicions exist. And they have the protection of Law. If in the discharge of their duty, they are resisted and death ensues the offenders are guilty of wilful murder.

"Further the Law requires all offenders to yield themselves up to Justice, and if they resist and any officer is killed, they are guilty of wilful murder. Sardiel was aware that warrants were after him. He knew that the Government had

published a Proclamation offering a reward of £100 for his apprehension. He was well aware that the Police were after him; for on the 17th when his house was surrounded he said; 'Ye sons of whores, you are always coming to catch me; I shall settle seven or eight of you tonight'. It was equally clear that proper means were resorted to for Sardiel's apprehension. Not until the 17th, of March was any positive resistance made by the prisoners. The resistance then offered by them rendered force on the other side quite necessary and it will be proved further that Mahat did not fire on the 21st until he saw Sardiel approaching with a gun.

"The Queen's Advocate did not refer very particularly to the third point as that was to be proved by witnesses. At the close of his able speech, he called some 12 or 13 witnesses on the part of the Crown" (D'g).

As a matter of fact twenty witnesses were called. (D'g).

Evidence:

1. Paulus Perera: Interpreter of the court of Kegalle for four years.

"I recollect a warrant being issued against Sardiel on a charge of theft: It bears the signature of Mr. Mooyart. (Warrant shown) Mr. Mooyart was Justice of Peace for the district of Kaigalle. (warrant read). I am aware that Sardiel is the first prisoner. I recollect Sardiel being apprehended and brought after his escape from Hulftsdorp Jall. He was sent to Colombo in charge of peons. I am aware that he again made his escape. The peons were tried for allowing the escape at Kaigalle. This is the record No. 18,409. He was out at large till the 21st. March 1864, from that time. In the meanwhile other affidavits were sworn against him in that Court. This is one of them by Salman Bass upon which a warrant was ordered. This affidavit is

against the two prisoners and others and the warrants were ordered after them (Affidavit read) Sardiel, Samat, Mammalley Markar and Sirimalle charged with having committed burglary on the 10th, September 1863, and carrying away jewellery and money (warrant read) —against Sardiel, Samat, Mammalley and Sirimalle. Two of these men are now the prisoners.

"On the 11th, of December, 1862, another Affidavit came before the court. That was sworn before Mr. Van Houston and an order was made by Mr. Sharpe ordering warrants.

"On the 23rd, of November 1863, an Affidavit was sworn against the second prisoner and Samat upon which a warrant was ordered and issued. (Affidavit and Warrant read)."

"On the 30th, of December, another warrant was ordered by Mr. Sharpe against Sardiel.

"I am aware of a proclamation being issued for the apprehension of Sardiel and others. The proclamation was published throughout the district. (Gazette put in, containing Proclamation) (Proclamation also put in). Gazette dated 20th. February 1864, was shown.

"Sardiel's mother has a house in Kaigalle. Sardiel has no house; but Mammalley Marikar has one. He is now living in his mother's house.

2. William Edward Sharpe; was Justice of Peace for the District of Kaigalle. All warrants issued were signed by him except those signed by Mr. Mooyart.

"I received a bundle of Proclamations from the Colombo Office by post. I circulated them throughout the district", Cross-examined by Mr. Purcell, he said: "I heard the Proclamation read. I never saw Sardiel in Court, If I knew that the two prisoners were in a house armed I should have hesitated to go in with a stick"

3. James Swan, an Assistant Colonial Secretary, said that the Proclamation was issued by Government signed by Mr. Gibson, Colonial Secretary, who by virtue of his office signed all public documents. It was ordered to be printed by the Governor and Executive Council. The rewards for Samat's and Hawadies' capture were paid. That for Sardiel's apprehension has not yet been paid.

4. R. A. Beekmeyer, a clerk to Justice of Peace at Kaigalle for 12 years in Kaigalle, was directed to make search for proceedings containing warrants, issued by Mr. Mooyart. He could not find them. Six months before the almyrah was broken open and some cases stolen away. This was duly reported to Government. At that time Sardiel's mother stood charged with theft, and a lamp found in her possession was left in Court by the magistrate. The almyrah broken open was that in which some of the stolen property was kept. The first prisoner has no house in Utuankande.

5. Raman Packier:

I recollect going with Juanis Mendis, Police Sergeant of Gannetenne to arrest Sardiel at Negombo. I saw Sardiel at Polawatte. I knew Pasquel who was stabbed and afterwards died from the wounds. He was known to us as Paniscapua. He went and pointed out Sardiel to me and the sergeant. Sardiel was then in a house near the tavern. Panis touched him and said "There is a sergeant with a warrant who wants you". Sardiel said "Is that the sergeant's mother's warrant?" and stabbed him in the breast. As he was staggering, Sardiel held him up and stabbed him in the arm. The sergeant and I were guarding at two doors. Sardiel also stabbed Migal who was with Paniscapua. I and the sergeant secured Sardiel. He then attempted to stab the sergeant and when the sergeant warded off the blow, the knife cut him on the back of his arm. We ultimately took Sardiel to the Negombo Court. All this was at seven or half-past seven in the

morning. Sardiel was lying on a mat in the outer verandah. It was Paniscapua who roused the sleeping man.

6. John Seiby (In July 1862 he was Justice of Peace of Negombo):

I recollect Sardiel being brought before me on a charge of stabbing Pasquel. I took proceedings against him as J.P. and committed him for trial before the Supreme Court on a charge of assault and stabbing. Pasquel afterwards died from the effect of the wounds. He had three wounds I think, but certainly two. (Record of the original proceedings was produced) and the commitment read.

Cross-examined by Mr. Purcell:

"I have to ask you the same question that I asked Mr. Sharpe if you knew that the two prisoners were in a hut armed would you go in unassisted to take them?"

Answer: "I would not. If I could not do it I would call in the Military."

(His Lordship observed that the question put to Mr. Sharpe was whether he would have gone into the house to take the two prisoners with a stick Mr. Purcell replied: "Exactly. My Lord, but I thought Mr. Seiby could do it without the stick" (Roars of laughter).

7. Lionel Lampers:

I am Jailor of Hulstorp Jail at Colombo. Sardiel was in my custody. He was brought into custody on the 31st of July 1862 under warrant of commitment issued by Mr. Seiby. Sardiel was kept in that Jail. On the 21st of November, 1862, Sardiel was missing, having escaped from Jail and was never after brought back. He was not informed before his escape that the man he stabbed had died.

9. Simon Bass:

I recollect Sardiel having made his escape from Colombo Jail. I was then Constable of

Uttuankande. I apprehended him after that escape. I took him to Kaigalle and delivered him to the Justice of the Peace.

Cross-examined he said: I arrested him at Kader's house in Angwarena near Sardiel's house. That is the house of Sardiel's mother.

9. Simon Bass:

On the 15th of September, 1863 I swore an affidavit against the two prisoners before the Justice of Peace at Kaigalle charging them with burglary. That burglary was committed on the 10th of September, 1863. The warrant was issued by the Rattamahatmeya. He was not apprehended on that charge. I was present when the warrant was handed to the peon to be given to the Rattamahatmeya. I did not go to the search.

10. Don Gabriel Tennekoon:

On the 23rd of November, 1863, I swore an affidavit against the prisoners and Sardiel before the Justice of Peace of Kaigalle, upon which the warrant was issued directed to Baba Sara.

I was present on those days when search was made for them. They were not apprehended on that warrant. On the 17th of March I know that information was received that prisoners were at a house in Oolookankande. Ahmet asked me to join him in apprehending them. I went with others. I went to Sardiel's mother's house. I did not enter the house. I stationed myself near the back wall. I heard whatever was said inside. I recognised Sardiel's voice. I knew him very well. (He was a gambler and I was told that he was a burglar). I heard Sardiel say:—"These whore's sons are always coming to catch me. I shall kill seven or eight of them tonight." I have known Sardiel from his infancy (I know him since he had a bad character). I also heard the sound of the gun loaded. The sound I heard was of the ramrod going into the barrel. Two minutes after I heard two shots fired, one after the other. When the two shots

were fired I thought it was not safe to remain where I was and hearing a voice on the road I went there. On the road I saw George Van Haught lying dead. I also saw Muttusamy lying down wounded. He was severely wounded. Two others were also wounded. Muttusamy had wounds on his back. he said: "Oh my family have children; remove, remove me from this place and take me somewhere."

A boy named Nasoordeen was wounded in his eye. Pakier had shot wounds behind his ear.

After the firing of the shots Christian came running. Christian was step-father to Van Haught. He was a very old man. They were all living near. Van Haught had come there very recently. Christian has a large family, including three daughters. Christian came and seeing Van Haught dead exclaimed: "You have killed my son unjustly, come out". I then heard two shots fired off at once. Christian was carried away wounded. He was wounded in the abdomen and was covered with blood. He was carried home. In two hours he died. I remained with the corpse until the arrival of the Magistrate from Kaigalle. I saw nothing of the prisoners.

Cross-examined he said: The house where all this happened is the prisoner's mother's house. I was a schoolmaster and I am now trading in timber. I have lands. I did not put a claim for the £200. I had heard of the reward and saw the Proclamation. Every man who was shot had taken an active part in attempting to take Sardiel dead or alive.

Re-examined Don Gabriel Tennekoon said: When I said dead or alive, I only spoke of my impression. The Proclamation was generally known. At the time the guns were fired Van Haught was doing nothing. They were standing on the high road opposite the house.

Examined by Judge he said: Van Haught was not armed when he went there. There were no guns. They were only

watching. When Christian came there, he had no gun with him. When he was carried away I did not see a gun near the place...I had a club.

11. Willam Dias:

I am medical assistant at Kaigalle. Muttusamy Police Sergeant is in my charge. He is not in a fit state to be brought here. He is unfit to travel. He was severely wounded about a fortnight ago. He was shot on the right shoulder. He is in a critical state now.

(Cross examined by the Judge) he said: One of the wounds was caused by a bullet. I saw the men who were killed. One was killed with shot. That was Christian. I saw the men who were wounded. They have received shot wounds.

12. Ukoo Hamy (a small girl, servant of Sardiel's mother):

I recollect there was a quarrel at Sardiel's mother's house, where men were shot. I was then living there; but during the disturbance I had gone away. When I left the home Harmanis and Pitche were in. Pitche is Sardiel's mother, Harmanis is her husband, Sardiel's step-father. Nobody came there that day. I am quite sure of that. Sardiel came there. Tamby came with Sardiel. They came there towards the evening and they remained there till night. They did not order rice. They stayed there. Nobody else came there that night. I heard a noise and saw people coming round. At that time I didn't know whether Tamby was asleep or not. I don't remember Sardiel waking Tamby. I was not in the house then. I left the house when people came. Harmanis and Pitche were not there at the time of the disturbance. When they saw people gathering they went away. They went to where the cattle-shed was. The cattle-shed is Pitche's. I, Pitche and Harmanis went there. I heard reports of guns; but didn't know from where. I

didn't know of the Kaigalle magistrate coming there afterwards. We remained all night in the shed, Pitche, Harmanis and I.

Examined by the judge she said: "When I was in the house there were only four persons in. When I, Harmanis and Pitche went out, there were only Sardiel and Tamby. We cannot see the house from the cattle-shed."

Cross examined by Mr. Purcell she said: "I told you I heard reports of guns but didn't know from where."

Questioned: "Did the army come there?" His Lordship made some observations about the term used to which Mr. Purcell replied, "Oh My Lord, She is very much Irish in that way." "The army had not come there then. I saw the army on the road but don't know from where they came."

Examined by the Jury, she replied: "Before the time of disturbance I had been for eight days I did not see Sardiel's mother's house. Before that there was another Ukkoo Hamy in the house. During the eight days I did not see Sardiel coming in and out. He quarrelled and left the house for some seven or eight months; I did not see Sardiel nor Tamby before that night of the disturbance. I am a servant of theirs".

Examined by Judge she said: "That every now and then Sardiel and Tamby came there. During that day some people came there to drink coffee and went away. Ukkinda came there with two men. I did not see Ukkinda bring shot and powder. I didn't know whether he had any in his pocket. I had not seen anyone bring powder and shot. When the house was surrounded I didn't know what Tamby was doing. I didn't know whether he was asleep. I did not hear Sardiel speak to him. There were two double-barrelled guns in the house. I didn't know whom they belonged to. I didn't know whether they were loaded."

Examined by the Jury she said: "I did not see the prisoners using the guns. I did not hear them telling about Police arresting them."

13. Draman Pakier:

I recollect the disturbance when Van Haught was killed. I was near when it took place. I was sent for by Kiry Hamy Aratchy and Nassoordeen. Baba Sara sent them to call me. I went there and stood about ten fathoms from the prisoner's house on the high road. George Van Haught, Muttu Samy Nassoordeen, Philip Peiris and others were there. None of us got into the house. I went and stood about ten fathoms from the house and as soon as I heard from Ahmet that the house was surrounded, I ran up. Then I saw Sardiel's mother leaning with her hands behind on the post at the entrance into the house. I heard her say: "Harmanis Appoo what are you doing? Harmanis come out" Saying this, she went into the drain. She left the house, Harmanis also came out. I did not see Ukku Hamy. These two went out. No sooner had they come out I heard a gun. I think a double-barrelled gun fired off at once. I felt giddy and put my hand behind my ear and found I was bleeding. Then I saw Van Haught down and Muttu Samy down. Nassoordeen came to me and told me that he was wounded in the eye. As I was going to the magistrate, I met Christian coming. I was present on the 21st when the prisoners were captured.

Cross-examined by Mr. Purcell: "Who are you?" he answered: "I am a man. I am an overseer on the Kotmamalei road. I cannot say how far my house is from Sardiel's. I have not measured it. It is about six miles according to my calculation. I came there to have a cheque cashed at a Chetty's. I captured Samat and got £25. I want to refuse £100 if it is offered to me. I had a gun. I believe it is double-barrelled. Such a gun would send two

shots. I felt my ear wounded after I heard the shot."

Draman Pakier's evidence was followed by a Sergeant Sheik Pakier Mahat who was the fourteenth of the twenty witnesses to be called at the trial.

14. Sergeant Sheik Pakier Mahat:

I received information on the 17th of March about Sardiel. I and two other policemen went in the direction of his house. Ahmet Pakeer, Abdeen, Bechi Naser and Muttu Samy — the five of us went. When we came there, others joined us. Ahmet placed me and another in the doorway. Some were standing on the road opposite the house. Then Sardiel's mother said: "Harmanis, the house is surrounded. What is this?" Saying this she went out.

I did not see anyone follow her. I did not see the little girl. While I was standing a mat hit my head. I turned round and saw a hole in the wall. The mat was placed to conceal the hole. The mat I saw was being moved. I pulled the mat down and saw the hole. The hole had not been made recently. It was a small hole. The gun was fixed through that hole. I didn't know by whom. It was dark inside. I heard one shot at first. Two or three who were standing disappeared. I did not move from my place. Another gun was fired through the window where Muttu Samy was a little earlier. Muttu Samy then disappeared. I stooped and went out. After I got out I saw someone lying down. That was Van Haught dead. I saw Muttu Samy wounded. Van Haught's step-father came and said: "You have shot my son. Shoot me also". That was Christian.

Before Christian came, Mam-maley Maricar came out. I am sure that was the second prisoner. It was after he left the house that Christian Appoo was killed. Christian said "You killed my son. Kill me." He was shot.

When I saw this I took two stones and struck the door. I told him "You have made holes in the wall and shot people unjustly. If you are a proper man come out." Then I heard him say: "If you are a proper Malay come before me." I did not recognise the voice. Then I went to see Muttu Samy who was lying in a boutique. I and the head constable went to tend him and another went to see Mr. Saunders. I don't know what became of the man inside. Mr. Saunders did come that night and a search was made all over for Sardiel. Men were placed to watch all round and the Military were sent for. They came the next morning.

Cross-examined, he said: "All this occurred on the 17th of March. I did not know it was St. Patrick's day. Our people don't keep St. Patrick's Day. I am still a Sergeant, in Colombo. I came from Colombo. Sardiel's mother came and said the house is surrounded. She did not say anything more than that. She did not say that armed men surrounded the house.

We were not armed. We were not sent to kill Sardiel. We had no arms whatever. I had no kris. I am not a pugilist; but if anyone comes before me I shall meet him. I told the persons inside to come out so that I may see who they were as a matter of curiosity. I did hear of the reward.

15. William Nicholas Appoc—a boutique keeper:

When people were collected at Sardiel's house. I was present. I heard Pakier telling him "If you are a man, come out." I heard the man inside saying: "If you are a Malay man stay there". I recognised the voice. It was Sardiel's.

I am a boutique keeper. I sell hoppers, cakes and straw (a laugh) I do not sell ale (laughter). If I had received the reward, the hoppers and straw would have been exchanged for cakes and ale (laughter). I went there with people who called me.

16. Jusey Peris:

I was present on the 17th of March when people surrounded Sardiel's house. After the firing I heard Packier say to the person inside: "If you are a strong man, come out." In reply the person inside said: "Very well wait till I come." I did not hear anything about a Malay. I was a sick man. I heard a voice from inside. It was Sardiel's voice. He did not come out of the house. I saw Christian Appoc shot. Before Christian was shot, Mammaley came out and ran away. Mammaley is the second prisoner.

Cross-examined, he said: "I knew Sardiel for seven or eight years. I live in Ootocankande. He lives in Angwarene. His mother has a house in Angwarene. He lived there about seven or eight years. The moon-man lives in Kaigalle and Ootocankande, his residence is in Mawanella."

17. Mahat—Police Sergeant:

I knew of the attempt made to capture Sardiel on the 17th of March. Afterwards the Military came in and a search was made for him. On the morning of the 20th, I received information about Sardiel's whereabouts. Acting on that information I went first and informed Mr. Saunders of it. I also told him I had sent a spy to that place and that he had not yet returned and that I must go in search of him. I did go in search of him. He was Ukkua, 1, Sabhan, Hadjie and Uscop went. Two of us were policemen. We met Sirimalia opposite the ar-rack go-down at Ootocankande.

After ascertaining certain facts from Sirimalia, I took him with me. I was aware that he was one of Sardiel's party. We went to Mawanella. We saw Ukkua at Mawanella and I took him with us. Uscop told us, there are two holes made on the back of Kader's house, let us go and see. That house is on the high road close to the bridge. It is a tiled house. We went there. I examined the holes. I came round. I found a large hole in the wall which was covered with heaps of cadjans. I removed the cadjans and got in.

18. Mr. Thwartes was here called in and sworn. He said:

I was employed to make a plan of the house where Sardiel was captured. This is the plan. The place where he entered was shown to me. (The witness proved this and other places and surveys proved also the position of the loft etc).

Mahat (resuming):

I removed the cadjan and got into the back verandah. I went first and the rest followed. When we got there, I directed Usoop to open the window. I looked up at the loft and told Sirimalla to get over the beam and peep. Sirimalla did so. I heard a loud noise upstairs. A noise of people running. Sirimalla said: "Here he is", and ran away. Sirimalla, Usoop, Hadjie and Ukkua ran away. I and Sabhan were alone inside. I and Sabhan stood near the cross wall with our guns. After some time we saw Sardiel coming stooping with a gun and looking for us. He came forward to take aim. I then shot him on his buttocks. He was turning towards the window, thinking there might be some people there. The place was a little dark then. When I fired, Sardiel fell down on the loft. Sabhan then told me: "Don't shoot any more. The Kandy police have got the day. Let us seize him alive."

At this time Hadjie and Usoop came in. Then the second prisoner shot Sabhan and he fell dead at my feet. As soon as Sabhan fell down, Usoop and Hadjie again ran off. Again another shot was fired by the second prisoner but the cap snapped. Then I slipped out with my revolver and sent Usoop for Mr. Saunders to bring the soldiers. Then the soldiers and Mr. Saunders came. Afterwards the house was set on fire and Sardiel was secured.

Cross-examined, he said: This was about seven or half-past seven in the morning. It was not dark. I don't know whether that first accused lives in that house. On that day he was there. We were armed. I had a gun and a revolver. Sabhan had the revolver first but I took it from him

afterwards. I went not to kill him but to catch him alive. I shot him first as I saw him coming to shoot me. I did not intend to kill him but to wound him. My gun had shots, some large shots. Sabhan said "Kandy Police" because he was so glad. No firearms were discharged until I fired, but they came to fire at me. I was the first to shoot. I had no warrant. What is the use of a warrant when I had Mr. Saunder's permission, and I am a Police Sergeant? I did not announce the reason for my visit. I did not have this uniform on. I wore plain clothes—a sarong cloth, a shirt and this belt.

Examined by the Judge, he said: It was reported to me that Sardiel was concerned in the murder of two men previously and I saw the corpses also. I mean that the whole country was alert. I knew a hue and cry was after Sardiel. More than 5,000 people were searching for him.

19. Mohamadoo Usoop:

I went with the last witness, Sabhan and others on the 21st of March to Mawanella bridge to apprehend Sardiel. I got into the house. We surrounded and examined the house. We went in. Sabhan, Hadjie, Sirimalla, Mahat, Ukkua and I went in. When we went in we opened the window and after removing the cadjan we searched and found nothing. We directed Sirimalla to mind the loft. Sirimalla said he could not do so without a ladder. We said anyhow you just jump up, leap over the beam and see. He did so. He said: "Here he is". jumped down and ran away. We heard the noise of people running on the loft. Then I and Hadjie watched the doorway.

We thought it safer to remain outside than inside (laughter). Sabhan and Mahat were inside near the wall, looking up. We saw Mahat shooting. Until Mahat shot we did not see anyone. We could see Mahat. We heard him calling out: "He is fallen; let us go and seize him" They also said; "The Kandy Police have

got the day". We went in and saw Mammaley shooting. He came to the edge of the loft. He shot Sabhan, and Sabhan fell dead. Then I and Hadjie came out and kept watch. Mahat remained. Immediately afterwards, Mahat came out. As I was coming I met some Sinhalese people. I kept them on watch and went to Ootoankande and gave the information.

Cross-examined, he said: All this took place not in Sardiel's house, but in Kader's house. It started with Mahat firing at the first prisoner.

20. Frederick Richard Saunders:

I am Justice of Peace for the District of Kalgalle. I came there in the month of February. I then knew that warrants were out for the apprehension of Sardiel and a Proclamation was published offering a large reward for his apprehension. The prisoner was well known in the District. I knew that the Police were searching for him. I took steps myself. It was not till the 17th of March that the party made any resistance. I had heard of a murder committed by them in the village, but after inquiry found that it was not true.

I was at dinner on the 17th when a wounded man came to me and gave certain information; upon which I went to Ootuankande. I started at 30 minutes to 10 o'clock. I found that two men were dead; one severely wounded and two slightly. I held a Coroner's inquest on the next day. The men killed were George Van Hought and Christian Appoo. Muttu Samy was severely wounded and Draman Packier and Nassurdeen slightly wounded. I knew that Muttu Samy was not in a fit state to be removed. I saw him last morning. I myself made search for the two prisoners. I surrounded a house where these men were said to be. That very night (17th) I applied to Kandy for the Military. Next morning a

party of soldiers came from Kandy and the night coach from Colombo brought some men. I was in the jungle on Saturday where Mr. Quarry found me. I had about 600 men with me on Saturday, and on Monday some four or five thousand men.

Early on Monday I got information which led me to Kader's house. I found the house was already surrounded by Sinhalese men. I tried to ascertain the exact state of affairs. But reports were contradictory. The riflemen came up and we divided into parties and surrounded the house. I saw Mahat who informed me that one man was lying dead in the house, shot by Mohamedo Markar. I then directed the house to be set on fire. The front of the house was boarded and had openings between the boards. The men could not enter without being exposed to fire from inside. Mr. Quarry took charge of the burning and I and three men went round behind a cart to break the boards if necessary by shooting at them.

I saw Baba Sara. He was coming to me when a shot from the house knocked him over. We continued the burning. I think one or two shots were fired from the roof of the house and people thought they had committed suicide. We continued to burn the house. I then requested Mohandram to point out to the people inside the impossibility of their escape. A man was found who volunteered to do this. I found out that this man is said to be a lunatic; but I thought he was sane. He is not a lunatic, but he is an idiot.

However, he behaved very sanely on the occasion. He first asked them whether they would allow him to come up and on being answered in the affirmative, he went up. He then called on them to surrender and pointed

out that all hope of escape was lost and said that I would protect them from the police and military. They then said they would surrender if I would personally come and arrest them. This I declined to do until they handed out their arms; which after some time they did. I then went in and arrested them. They handed out two double-barrelled guns and one single-barrelled gun, a revolver and a kris; another single-barrelled pistol was found. One of the double-barrelled guns belonged to Sabhan. They handed out arms (arms produced). They have been in custody ever since.

Cross-examined: The men appeared frightened of being shot at by the soldiers. They put themselves under my protection. The message was then taken by the same man.

Mr. Purcell, advocate, addressed the jury in defence of the two prisoners. He reminded them at the outset of the grave duty which they had to discharge in the present case, where one word from them would send two of their fellow-creatures to the gallows. The defence set up by the learned advocate was that homicide was justifiable; that the men had come to apprehend the prisoners, unauthorised by law, and that they made use of their guns. Mr. Purcell begged the jury not to be influenced by the reports which appeared in the Press against these unfortunate men—reports which the learned counsel characterised as "infamous." He had himself read accounts of "The Kaigalle Bandit" which appeared in the newspapers and had believed these people to be really guilty of charges so recklessly made against them, but since he had heard the evidence adduced his opinion had undergone a complete change. It was the duty of the jury to find the prisoners guilty or not guilty upon the testimony of the witnesses who had been called and not from what they had heard or read out of court.

Mr. Purcell then proceeded to dwell upon the several points which, in his opinion, went to justify the homicide which the prisoners were charged with.

Mahat—Police Sergeant—was recalled:

"I am a policeman of the Kandy District and was sent on special service to Kaigalle."

His Lordship, before reading over the evidence, explained the law bearing upon the case and quoted several authorities on the subject. The charge occupied some time and was characterised by that vigorous impartiality and clearness for which Mr. Justice Thomson is so distinguished. We regret that we are not able at present to notice the chief points in the minute and elaborate summing up of the learned judge. The whole evidence was read over to the jury before they retired.

At five in the evening the jury returned to court with a verdict of "guilty" against the two accused.

The prisoners were then asked the usual question: What they had to say why sentence should not be passed upon them according to the law.

Sardiel replied: "How can I be guilty of this murder when I did not commit it? Who saw me shoot the man?"

Mamaley Markar said: "I did not commit this murder."

His Lordship then proceeded to pass Sentence of Death upon the prisoners and delivered an impressive address which was listened to with great attention by the crowded court. The two men were, at its close, sentenced to be hanged—at the expiration of one calendar month from the day of trial, at the common place of execution in Kandy.

Sardiel once interrupted the address of the judge by asking of what charge he was found guilty, there being so many against him.

He, as well as his accomplice, however, appeared quite unconcerned about the results of the trial and received their sentence without the least display of emotion. We have never seen such indifference as was displayed by these two men on hearing His Lordship's address to them.

The prisoners were removed from court which immediately adjourned till the next day.

Sardiel was again placed on a chair and carried to the gaol surrounded by a guard of English soldiers, while the Moor-man, as before, went on foot with the same difficulty as when he was brought to the court.

A crowd quite as large as that which gathered in the morning was in waiting for Sardiel along the Esplanade and the streets through which the procession had to pass. It is certainly surprising that no accident occurred, while such a mass of people were crowding into every place whence a last glimpse could be had of the prisoner.

In the corner of the Esplanade near the Library, the procession halted for a few seconds in order to enable the Governor (who was there in his coach) to have a look at Sardiel.

The windows in the houses along Church Street were full of people and up to the door of the gaol, nothing was to be seen but a sea of human heads. Sardiel appeared to be enjoying the sight more than the spectators with much apparent interest. The manner in which he was taken—on a high chair—allowed everyone to have a fine view of him. Near the gaol he said something to the men who were standing on the wall, which we could not hear owing to the noise and the distance between us.

Sardiel was then taken inside the prison whence he will once again issue on the fourth proximo, the day on which the sen-

tence of the Law will be carried out.

Kandy 9th. April 1864. (D1 g)

On the 5th of April 1864, the prosecuting Queen's Advocate Richard F. Morgan had sent the following Report to the Colonial Secretary (D17)

Sir,

I have the honour to report for the information of His Honour the Officer Administering the Government that the case against Sardiel and Mamanay Markar for murder terminated yesterday in a verdict of conviction against both.

2. As the murder in question was committed by the prisoners whilst resisting the officers of Justice who were attempting to arrest them, it became necessary to prove the different charges brought against them from time to time and processes issued against them it appears that on the 7th May, 1862 the first prisoner and four others were charged with theft. When being arrested on this charge he stabbed a man who pointed him out to the Sergeant. He was taken up however and committed for trial before the Supreme Court on a charge of assault and wounding. Some delay took place in trying him on this charge owing to the inability of the wounded man to come to Colombo to give evidence and the probability that he would die from the effects of his wound, which actually took place some little time afterwards. Sardiel then became liable to be tried for murder but he effected his escape on the 29th March 1862.

He was again apprehended early in December but on the 14th of that month he again made his escape whilst being removed to Colombo. From that time till the 21st March last he remained at large evading the processes that were issued against him.

3. On the 15th September 1863 a charge of burglary was preferred against him, the second prisoner and two others, and on the 23rd November 1863

the second prisoner and another for coming to a person's premises with a burglarious intent, and when pursued, threatening to stab the owner of the house. It was reported by the Police that they were armed and going about with a gang threatening to resist the efforts made to arrest them; but the above were the only charges preferred against the prisoners.

4. On his escape originally the usual fine was offered for his apprehension, but this being found insufficient, and in view of the reports made by the Police a Proclamation was issued on the 13th January 1864 offering £100 for the apprehension of Sardiel and £25 for the apprehension of four others of his gang of whom the second prisoner was one.

5. On the 17th March information was received that the prisoners were in the house of Sardiel's mother at Ofocankandy which borders on the high road from Colombo to Kandy. The Police had instructions to surround any house to which the prisoners might repair and report the same at once to the Justice of Peace. But some men incautiously went close to the house and were fired at from within. The result was that two men were killed and three wounded, one of them severely.

6. This, it will be noticed, was the first positive act of resistance offered to the Police—the first time force was used to prevent the execution of warrants out against the prisoners. As it was necessary promptly to vindicate the Authority of the Law, and the civil force within his reach for such purpose was obviously insufficient, the Justice of Peace applied for aid, and a party of Ceylon Rifles in numbers under Ensign Quarry were sent down without delay.

7. The country was called out and people employed to beat the jungle and search elsewhere for the men. On the morning of the 21st, Police Sergeant Mahat, Police Constable Sabhan and four others entered the house of

one Abdul Cader which also borders on the high road and made search therein. The two prisoners were in concealment on a loft; the first tried to shoot the pursuers but was himself shot by Police Sergeant Mahat on the buttocks; the second prisoner succeeded however in firing at Police Constable Sabhan who fell dead. The Military who were close by came up by this time and the house was surrounded. The prisoners made some slight resistance but, finding that all hopes of escape been gone, in a short while surrendered themselves.

8. The above facts were proved by the Prosecution. The prisoners by their Counsel contended that they were acting in self defence, but the Judge and Jury took a different view of their case and the latter returned a verdict of wilful murder. Sentence of Death was at once passed.

9. I am happy to say that nothing transpired in the course of the evidence adduced at the Trial, or the preliminary inquiry made by the Justice to justify the belief that the prisoners and their accomplices were supported by the inhabitants of the District or had their sympathy.

Four or five determined ruffians, some of them under Judicial sentence, and all whose previous lives had exposed them to serious charges were banded together and going about armed, and committed petty depredations. Having friends and relatives they were to some extent supported and protected; fear of them and a feeling of unconcern and indifference to what would elsewhere be deemed the demands of Justice deterred the inhabitants from bestirring themselves to secure the apprehension of the offenders; but sympathy with the prisoners and their lawlessness, the inhabitants had none.

And I believe that they rejoice as sincerely as we do at what has taken place. Several facts that have come to my knowledge are indicative of this, but

none more significantly than that the Prisoners did not retain Counsel to defend them at their trial. From what passed there and was reported before, it is clear that they and their friends expected an acquittal as they were under the erroneous idea that evidence that a particular person was seen firing the shot which caused death was necessary, and a case of death under the circumstances which attended the one in question, presents generally contestable points touching the legality of Warrants, the means of enforcing them, the knowledge of the prisoners that the pursuers were coming to arrest them and had authority to do so, etc.

But they, nevertheless, had no counsel and this though a fortnight had elapsed between their capture and trial. The Court, however, in view of the importance of the case, and at the request of the prisoners, assigned Counsel to them at the Trial.

10. The conduct of the local headmen is open to serious exceptions. It would appear that the prisoners used to visit Sardiel's mother's house and a tavern close by, and had diligent efforts been made, they ought to have been in all probability arrested long ago. The headmen are open to the imputation either of connivance with the prisoners or of culpable negligence, and in either case their conduct should be noticed as an example to others. When I

visited the locality on Friday last, several of the inhabitants of the hamlet came to me and complained of the conduct of the headmen. One of them stated that when the Corale of the village was once charged with making no efforts to arrest Sardiel, he replied: "That is not our work, but the work of the Police force; we have civil duties to perform." This indicates that here as in other places where regular Police forces are being quartered, there is a growing feeling of jealousy towards them on the part of the local headmen or Village Police. The existence of two separate bodies whose respective duties and jurisdictions are well-defined only divides the responsibility and impairs the efficiency of both.

11. It is perhaps no part of my duty to point out to the individuals who distinguished themselves in the apprehension of the criminals, but having referred to the shortcomings of the local headmen, I cannot conclude this report without bringing to His Honour's notice the conduct of Police Sergeant Mahat and Police Constable Sabhan whose zeal and bravery are deserving of all praise.

The latter lost his life in his efforts to apprehend the prisoners, leaving his family unprovided for.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your most Obedient Servant,
(Sgd.) Richard F. Morgan.

Chapter Nine

REPENTENCE AND THE EXECUTION OF SARDIEL

SARDIEL and his companion Mammaley Marikar had to languish in prison for a month. The only outside visitors they had were the various religious chaplains. The doctor who attended on the broken arm of Sardiel also paid them a call.

Accustomed to the scorn and abhorrence of all who had at first approached him, Sardiel, to his surprise, discovered that even he could be loved and sympathized with.

The Rev. Fr. Adriel Duffo, O.M.I. was then the Catholic Chaplain to the Prison in Kandy. He was born in 1827 in the diocese of Tarbes in France and as an Oblate Missionary he had landed in Galle in the year 1851. Having worked in Colombo he was sent to Kandy in 1860 of (D 20).

In a report sent to Rome in 1864, Fr. Duffo tells us the story of Sardiel's life in prison. This is what he wrote:

"From a period of a month and a half, that is to say, from the 21st of March till he (Sardiel) was imprisoned in Kandy until the 7th of May, the day of his execution, Fr. Perrard and myself visited him every day regularly; at first we refrained from speaking to him about religion or if we did say anything it was only indirectly. We wanted to win him over, under pretext of distracting him a little, we gave him a few books—the life of the Saints, a little Catechism and an abridged history of the Old and New Testament and a little treatise on the virtues and the four last ends.

"By way of conversation we asked him afterwards to analyse what he had read and tell us what impression it had made on him. He had more than an ordinary grasp of things and we were surprised at the facility with which he was

able to summarize his readings. We had already visited him for 8 days when an Anabaptist minister (Rev. Mr. Waldock) came to minister to him. He left him a copy of the Gospel of St. John, but Sardiel gave it back to him the next day saying that the books that we had given him were sufficient for the moment. Nevertheless the minister was not deterred from paying him daily visits. These daily visits only irritated Sardiel. The reply of Sardiel did not leave us anything to doubt on this respect. I will add also if at times, before going to visit, we omitted to go and say prayers to Our Lady, we found him in bad dispositions, taking up a tone of mockery and not appearing to appreciate our visits, except in so far as they procured some distractions for him.

"We had often met the Protestant Minister coming out of his cell just as we were going in. We wanted to finish the matter so we told Sardiel he must choose between the Minister and us. Without that our priestly honour will not allow us to compromise. He will have to make an avowal one way or the other, and that we could not come to see him anymore.

"This embarrassed him. Nevertheless after a moment Grace triumphed in his heart; he promised that he would like to dismiss him. He kept his word which nevertheless did not prevent this Minister from continuing his visits, without taking notice of his repeated requests asking him not to come to see him. There were at times violent scenes—Sardiel complained to the Governor of the Prison. But as it was a Protestant Minister who was involved, they were afraid to take action—to inform the Government Agent.

"Sardiel did not make any attempt to complain. He was afraid to prejudice his cause, lest they prevent any minister coming to see him. He waited patiently therefore thus contending every day to dispute with the minister. "Why do you come to see me" he said to him. "You have your wife and child—go and preach to them. Leave me alone."

"One day Sardiel learnt his prayers. The Minister arrived and told him it was hardly necessary—that good works were of no avail—that belief in Jesus Christ and an act of Contrition were sufficient. That the good thief on the cross had never been baptized but nevertheless had gone to heaven."

"Formerly", replied Sardiel, "I surrounded myself with fire arms and guns and swords to defend myself. Now with my feet and hands chained I have another enemy whom I have to defend myself against—that is the devil. For that reason I learn my prayers. Has Our Lord Jesus Christ not given us this example? Did He not pray and did He not attach a value to good works and has He not promised to give heaven to him who gave a glass of water in his name?"

"We had advised him very often to make the sign of the Cross. We told him of the marvellous efficacy of this act. "Well then" said he, "when the Minister arrives I will make the sign of the Cross in front of him. That will finish him and make him leave me alone." Nevertheless it was only towards the last week that the Rev. Minister desisted from coming and gave up visiting him.

"Our Lord manipulated this little period of calm in order to better prepare the prisoner. The angels were on our side. Under the powerful and generating inspiration of Grace, Sardiel entered more and more everyday into better dispositions. I can almost say that it was with happiness he awaited his execution.

"Bound with heavy chains to a pillar, never leaving his cell although the door of which was constantly open but guarded by armed soldiers, Sardiel has become as gentle as a lamb. His face now always smiling had lost that cruel and fierce look. His eyes which formerly threw out jets of fire, now were often wet with tears.

"'Never had I cried before' said he to us, nevertheless a single word of ours moved him to tears. He could not really imagine how all this came about, after having recited the Act of Contrition a person could sin again, "because" he said "one has almost sworn to God never to offend Him again. This oath given to God was almost inviolable. To fail to keep it was like telling a lie to God."

"We often asked him if he was not afraid of death. 'No' said he 'the anguish and agony of Our Lord in the Garden of Olives gives me strength. They treated Him as they have treated me but with this difference, that I deserved it. Judas after sitting down at table betrayed Him and my close friend, also the companion of all my crimes left me under pretext of supervising the movement of the soldiers sent by the Government, and he had gone to make known to them my hiding place. I have also seen him also marching at the head of those who came to apprehend me. Nevertheless if you meet him (Sri-malle) tell him that I am far from bearing him any grudge. All that has been for the good of my soul. Otherwise I would have died as I lived in the midst of my crimes. Kindly beg of him to change his life and above all not to compromise our friends. My punishment will be sufficient to make them renounce their criminal conduct."

"The fatal day approached. We increased the number of our visits in order to sustain him in his death agony. On the eve of his execution we administered to him the Sacrament of

Holy Baptism which he received in tears of compunction."

On the day of his Baptism he was asked if he wished to retain the name Sardiel. "Oh no" he said, "it is a name so stained with evil, it cannot be washed; it must be effaced altogether". The name 'Joseph' was given to him in its stead. (D 21).

Concurrently with his reception of Baptism a visible transformation was accomplished in him. His countenance lost its hardened appearance, and in manner he became gentle and tractable as a lamb. Though believing with child-like faith in all that had been taught him concerning the fruits of baptismal grace, yet he was amazed to think that one so vile as himself could be admitted to such blessings. He was heard saying to himself aloud, in the accents of humble tender gratitude; "Is it possible that I whose hands are stained with so many crimes and who never did a good deed in my life, shall be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven". (D 21).

The execution of the two prisoners was appointed to take place on the 4th of May, but for some reason or other unknown to the public, was put off till the 7th.

Wrote the 'Colombo Overland Observer' of 7th May 1864: "The postponement caused much disappointment to hundreds of natives who came pouring into Kandy from their several villages on Wednesday last and who were compelled to retrace their steps without witnessing the awful sight for which they had left their homes." This morning (7th May 1864), the assemblage of Kandyans in the town was very large. From an early hour were seen people coming in from all sides and up till the moment of the execution, the natives continued to pour in, in the direction of the gallows. The crowd in attendance was composed of men of all classes, Europeans, Burghers and Natives, the majority being of course Kandyans.

"The villagers appear to have come into town with all their families and what was surpris-

ing was to see the large number of women who were striving to secure positions whence a good view of the execution could be had. The great interest which the doings of Sardiel had excited was never so clearly seen as today when such large crowds came into Kandy for the sole purpose of witnessing his end." cf (D 1 h).

On the morning of his execution Sardiel was asked by Fr. Duffo the Catholic chaplain if he had committed, since his Baptism, any faults that troubled his conscience. "Oh no" he replied: "I took good care since then to do nothing that would leave a stain upon my soul." cf (D21).

"It was a few minutes before 9 when Sardiel and Mammaley left the jail, accompanied by the Fiscal's officers, the executioners and others. The Military guard was nearly three times as strong as that which usually attends criminals to the gallows and was on this occasion under the command of an English officer. All available policemen in Kandy formed part of the procession. The Roman Catholic Minister, Rev. Duffo went with Sardiel from the Jail, and the Mohamedan Priest attended on the Moor man.

"It was quite clear that the prospect of death had completely unnerved the two unfortunate men. They were both pale and the moorman in particular appeared to be greatly affected.

"Sardiel walked pretty steadily, reading out of a book which he had in his hand but the Moorman was quite knocked down and scarcely once lifted up his head during the walk.

"The procession passed through the town at a funeral pace, until it reached the Hill on which the gallows had been erected" cf (D1 h).

The death sentence was then read by Mr. Templer, the Fiscal, and translated into Sinhalese to Sardiel by Mr. Wijesinha Mudaliar, the new interpreter of the Supreme Court, and into Tamil to Mammaley Marikar by

Mr. Casie Chetty's son-in-law, Mammaley "fell on his knees and made his last request to Mr. Templer that his body might be given to his relatives to be buried which request could not of course be complied with." cf (D3 f).

Sardiel nowever falling on his knees to the great astonishment of all the spectators received the last absolution from Fr. Duffo who says: "While they were adjusting his cord round his (Sardiel's) neck and binding his hands and feet, I suggested to him to offer all that to God and to unite himself with our Blessed Saviour crucified. 'Yes' said he 'I am very happy to do that. These cords have become to me cords of gold.'" cf (D 20)

Sardiel then turing to the vast multitude that had come to witness his execution addressed them thus: "People, be not so foolish or ignorant as I. What I did was foolishly done and to gain a name. I certainly have gained a name, but it has been dearly purchased when followed by this. Take warning by me." cf (D 3f)

"I am sorry for the criminal life I led. I am happy now to die in expiation for my crimes." (D 20).

The Examiner of 11th. May 1864 continues: "The white caps were then pulled over their faces, the two Executioners and the Moorish priest descending leaving the two who were so soon to be launched into eternity; and the Roman Catholic Priest praying for Sardiel." (D 3f) (I)

"Everything being reported to Mr. Templer as ready, he, having his back towards the scene the whole time, momentarily turned round to see that it was so, gave the signal; the bolt was withdrawn and both dropped leaving the Priest who had firm hold of the railing on the top. The poor wretches did not appear to struggle, but now and then from muscular efforts their hands would rise and drop with sudden jerks and in a few minutes all was still." (D 3f) Sardiel died as he was beginning to say the 'Our Father' (in

Sinhalese) "but his soul I am sure ended this sublime prayer in heaven." (D 20).

"About half past 9 their bodies were cut down and put into coffins and carried into a cart drawn by convicts to the burial grounds by the Katoogastota road, outside of which their bodies were buried and by 10 O'clock the gallows were taken down and all traces of the two murderers effaced." cf (D 3 f).

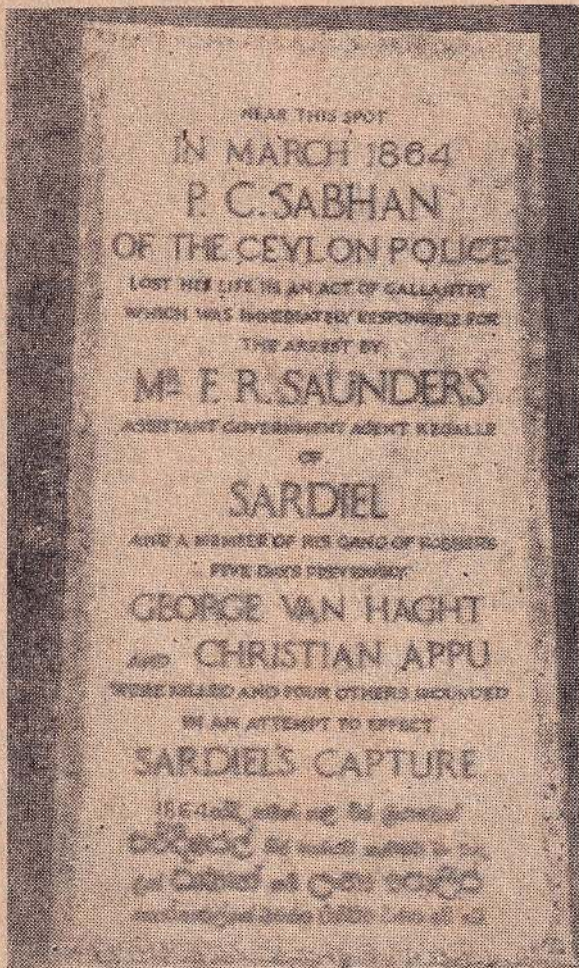
"Repeated applications had been made for the corpses" records Pippet, "but were refused and in order to prevent any attempt at forcible removal, a body of convicts accompanied the cart and guarded the grave." (PS 4) (2)

"Mr. Saunders praised the police; 'I must not fail' he wrote, 'to record my conviction that among that much maligned body of men, the Police, there are men who would face any danger and who if properly disciplined and suitably armed, would do credit to any constabulary in the world.'" cf (PS 4).

Among the rewards given by Government a sum of £35 was given to Sergeant Mohat who was also promoted to the rank of Head Constable.

£20 was given to Sergeant Muttu Samy who had been dangerously wounded on the 17th. of March. A pension of £2. 6s. a month for life was granted to Constable Sabhan's widow in recognition of the courage he had shown in the performance of a most dangerous duty. cf (PS 4)

In 1935, that is seventy-one years after the execution of Sardiel the gallantry of Constable Sabhan who lost his life in his attempt to capture Sardiel was commemorated by the erection of a stone tablet at the spot where the heroic man fell. The stone tablet was completed by Messrs A. F. Raymond and Co., at a cost of Rs. 145.00 supplied by the then Inspector General of Police Mr. H. L. Dowbiggin. The granite slab is 5 feet high, 3 feet wide and the lettering is embossed and polished. The Inscription reads as follows:



"NEAR THIS SPOT

In March 1864

P. C. SABHAN OF THE
CEYLON POLICE

Lost his life in an act of
Gallantry

Which was immediately
responsible

for the arrest by Mr. F. R.
Saunders
Assistant Government Agent,
Kegalle
of Sardiell and a member of
his gang of Robbers;
five days previously Geo. Van
Haight and Christian Appu
were killed and 4 others
wounded in an attempt to
effect Sardiell's capture."

ANNOTATIONS

(1) Sardiel's repentance and his edifying death had made a profound impression on the public mind. His was a transformation of grace so closely resembling the conversion of the Good Thief upon the Cross, who had been promised Paradise by the dying Christ.

(2) Mr. Henry W. Cave in his *Ruined Cities of Ceylon*, in 1896 has recorded how the popular imagination had believed that Sardiel would rise again from his grave. Mr. Cave describes how he had met at the Rest House at Kekirawa, a Kaffir who was at that time the Rest House Keeper. This man belonged to the Ceylon

Rifle Regiment. He was one of those who went to arrest Sardiel. After describing how they arrested Sardiel, he said "Sardiel was tried and hung. Then English people very afraid his master bringing him to life again and they got twelve European doctors to see that he was dead. Then putting into iron box and locking and making iron chains round and putting deep in the ground, and covering over with cement". Mr. Cave concludes that this Kaffir's story of the precautions taken after Sardiel's death, needless to say can only be attributed to the effect of such excitement on popular imagination" p. 30. (PS2).

THE END.

Printed by P. Don Nicholas for the Times of Ceylon, Ltd., at Times Building, Fort, Colombo 1,
and published by Rev. Fr. P. A. J. B. Antoninus, O.M.I., of Bishop's House, Chllaw.