

CRF 1847 C10 1

Catherine Colligan

Judge Crampton

Kildare Place

1

March 30 1847

Sir,

At the late Assizes for the County of Kildare Catherine Colligan now a Prisoner in Athy Gaol was tried before me for the murder of Margaret Foran. She was found guilty & I pronounced sentence of death upon the convict & fixed Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> April next for the day of execution.

The circumstances attending the murder were not disclosed in evidence, but of the prisoners guilt there can be no doubt. & I cannot say that there is any thing in the case to mitigate the character of the crime – but I am induced notwithstanding to recommend the Prisoners case to the humane consideration of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant.

The convict tho neither lunatic nor idiot appeared to be very low in the scale of humanity & to have but very indistinct notions of the difference between right & wrong.

She is a married woman & her husband (who was entirely unconnected with the crime of his wife, and his home at the time when the crime was perpetrated) was the first person to institute enquiry & the first to bring the Police to the scene of his wife's guilt – Ignorant no doubt he was that it was by his own wife's hand that the bloody deed was done, but He still deserves some consideration for the promptitude with which he stepped forward to appeal the cause of justice – a promptitude not of common occurrence in this country with persons of his class.

I might have caused sentence of death to be recorded under the statute & then recommended a commutation in the usual form but I thought the enormity of the offence required a judicial sentence to be pronounced, while the circumstances which I have stated might justify an extension of mercy to the Culprit by the Crown -.

For these reasons I humbly take leave to recommend to his Excellency to spare the life of one who tho perhaps unfit to live is certainly most unfit to die & to commute the Guilty Prisoners sentence to Transportation for life -. I have the honor to be Sir your obedt. Humble Servant.

PC. Crampton.