

judged an official summons would be necessary, in order to his being enabled to substantiate the several charges.

It was at first proposed that the trial should have taken place at or in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, where the said 54th regiment was then stationed; as not only the defendants themselves, but the principal part of those who might naturally be expected to be called upon as witnesses, were there upon the spot. But an urgent remonstrance and request of the said William Cobbett, supported by arguments which he offered, prevailed for holding the Court Martial in London, contrary to the wishes and representations of the defendants.

With this measure the said William Cobbett declared himself perfectly satisfied, and then proposed the names of such witnesses for whom he wished an official summons, fifty-two in number; all of whom were summoned or received orders to attend, with the exception of one serjeant of the 54th regiment, who as having been absent from the regiment on leave, it has since appeared did not receive any summons; and, with an exception of about three or four soldiers, who were prevented from giving their attendance by illness, all of them did actually give their attendance on the day of trial, when the Court Martial met for the purpose of proceeding upon the trial, and most of whom were called from Portsmouth to London, expressly in obedience to that summons, besides those who were cited as witnesses on the part of the defendants.

Notice was also given to the said William Cobbett of the day appointed for the sitting of the Court Martial, and repeated notices was left for him at his usual place of abode, and where he had by letter expressly desired letters upon this business to be left for him, but which last mentioned notice it has since appeared did not come to his hands, the said William Cobbett having, in the mean time, withdrawn himself and absconded.

Several letters from him to the Judge Advocate General, relative to the business during the period which intervened between the times of the issuing of the warrant, and of his absenting himself, will shew clearly that he had pledged himself to prosecute the charges with effect, and that it was incumbent on the defendants to be prepared to repel the same by every proper means in their power.

On the day which was appointed for the business, a General Court Martial, consisting of seventeen officers of distinct corps, none under the degree of a Field Officer, was purposely convened, and, together with the several persons who had been summoned as witnesses, waited more than an hour in expectation of the prosecutor's attending to offer proofs in support of his charges: a messenger was then dispatched to his usual place of abode, where letters had been used to be addressed to him, and where he had particularly desired that letters on other business should be left for him; which messenger returned with intelligence that the said William Cobbett had left his said place of abode two days before, not meaning to reside there any longer, and that he had not since been seen there, or heard of.