

'Dagger Farm.' Half a mile from the dwelling-house there is a field of four or five acres. It is a choice meadow, and the ewes and lambs generally get the first bite of the pasture in spring. Now, on the tenth day of April last, in this year of our Lord eighteen hundred and thirteen, Farmer Newcombe had in this field a flock of sheep and lambs to the number of about a hundred beasts. Upon the eleventh day of last April he himself chanced to be early abroad, and, passing that way, his eye was confronted by a picture of terrible havoc and disaster. Death had been busy in the night, and his poor silly sheep were decimated by a fearful destroyer. To say that they were decimated, indeed, is to tell your Worships less than the truth, for seven ewes and eight lambs had perished, while four other full-grown animals were so mangled that they had immediately to be destroyed. Thus Farmer Newcombe in a single night was robbed of eleven ewes and eight lambs. What had happened? Upon these fleecy mothers of the flock, your Worships, there had fallen a ferocious and powerful hound. A creature of enormous strength—a creature whose natural instinct for blood demanded this prodigious slaughter—had descended by night among the innocent sheep and slain and mangled nineteen of them. Now it is easy, your Worships, to ascertain the manner of animal guilty of this dreadful proceeding.