Preface

The strange story of Samuel Atkins, Mr. Pepys's clerk (Mr. Pepys would have said "clerk") is true. Even the dialogue is taken verbatim from Atkins's own recollections of his experience and from the stenographic records of his trial. I am responsible for the ordering of events, for the necessary background material, and for descriptions of moods and emotions. In the last I have been guided by a strict concern for Sam Atkins's character as he revealed it in a few personal letters and in his manuscript reports: "An Account of the Passages at my Several Examinations before the Committees of Lords and Commons" and "A Short Narrative of Samuel Atkins, his Case."

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J. H. W.

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