



Thomas Rolfe, Theft Charge

County Petty Sessions - "Dealing Leniently"

A middle-aged man, of very respectable appearance, named Thomas Rolfe, a breeches maker, living at Amesbury, and who was said hitherto to have borne a most respectable character, was charged with having stolen half a gallon of lime, of the value of 1d., belonging to Mr. Thomas Sandell, fellmonger, of Amesbury. The defendant was seen to take the lime from the yard, but when challenged with it by the police denied having done so, but the lime was found in his back premises. In court the prisoner pleaded guilty, saying it was no use denying the fact; he did take the lime.

Mr. Sandell, the prosecutor, addressing the bench, said it was one of the most painful cases he had ever had in his life, for the prisoner had since he was a boy worked for him, (the prosecutor) and his father. His property, however, was very much exposed, and was a good deal pilfered, though he did not believe the prisoner had ever robbed him of anything before. He wished to make an example of him, but he hoped the Bench would deal with him as leniently as possible.

Lord Folkestone said he could not conceive why a respectable-looking man like the defendant should have committed such an act. He supposed Mr. Sandell would have given him the lime if he had asked for it.

Mr. Sandell replied, "Any quantity, my lord."

The prisoner said, the fact was that he was doing a little whitewashing, and falling short of a bit of lime, he went to his master's yard and took it from the heap.

The Bench, having consulted together, Lord Folkestone said, taking into consideration what the prosecutor had said on behalf of the prisoner, and hoping this would be a lesson to him, (the prisoner) and, his lordship added, that it would be a pretty severe one, the Bench would deal leniently with him.

He must go to Fisherton County Gaol for 14 days hard labour.

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