



Crime and Punishment

Berwick Bassett 1850-1899

1860

William Minty, a vagrant, who stated that he had come out of the Marlborough Workhouse, and was found begging at Highworth (he being, as he stated, on his way to his home at Berwick Bassett), was committed for twenty-one days, with an intimation that when he left gaol he would find his home rather nearer Devizes than Highworth. **Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette Thursday 5 April 1860**

1863

John King, the collector of tolls at the Bath-road turnpike gate, and John Buckland, the collector at the Green Gate, were summoned by the Rev Mr Gibbons of Bulkington, for demanding and taking a toll of 4 ½ pence, on Sunday. The reverend gentleman stated that being on a visit at Berwick Bassett, he was (when toll was demanded of him) on his way to perform divine service in his own parish. - The Bench were satisfied that under the 32nd clause of the Turnpike Act, the collectors had no right to take the tolls in question, and on Mr Hulbert (the Clerk of the Trustees) promising to return them and pay the expenses in each case, the summonses were withdrawn. **Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette Thursday 11 June 1863**

1868

John Browning, a soldier, was charged with stealing, on the 8th inst, a coat of the value of 5s, the property of Isaac Wayling, at Berwick Bassett, and a waistcoat, value 2s, the property of George North, at West Kennet. The prisoner sold the articles he had stolen to George Liddiard at Avebury for 6s 6d. He was committed to Devizes Gaol for one month for each offence. **Reading Mercury Saturday 19 December 1868**

1883

George Bennett, a shopkeeper, was charged with stealing a napkin, a hat and sundry other articles, the property of Mr H A Rivers, at Berwick Bassett, on the 4 November 1883. Mr Ravenhill prosecuted, and Mr Lopes defended. Prisoner was formerly a foot man in the employ of General Pitt Rivers at Rushmoor, and during November last several shirts were missed and afterwards, it was alleged, found in the prisoner's house with the marks sewn over. The jury found the prisoner not guilty, and he was then put on his trial for stealing a chair and certain other articles mentioned in a second charge. In the which the prisoner was found guilty and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. **Western Daily Press Friday 5 January 1883**

1886

Mr Richard Roynon, farmer, of Berwick Bassett, applied for an ejectment warrant against Jacob Pearce, in respect to a cottage and garden. - The applicant was summoned at this court recently by Pearce for non-payment of wages and a verdict was given partly in favour of the latter, who was employed as a shepherd, and left through a very trivial matter, five or six weeks ago. He still occupied the cottage after notice had been given him to leave, and Mr Roynon required the cottage for another shepherd who he had hired. - The Bench granted the application, but suspended the warrant for 21 days in order that the tenant might receive legal notice.

Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette Thursday 7 January 1886

1890

County Police. Saturday

Thomas Davies, late of Devizes, travelling grinder, was brought up in custody charged with stealing a pair of spectacles, value 2d, at Berwick Bassett, on the 30th September ult. From the evidence of the prosecutor and his wife, Elizabeth Pearce, it appears that the prisoner, who sharpens saws principally for a livelihood, was plying his trade in the village on the 30th September and borrowed the spectacles to assist him in his work for a few minutes. He failed to return them and left the village. The next day they gave information to the police constable at Broad Hinton. - PC Bryant stated that he traced the prisoner to Swindon and apprehended him in a lodging house there at 10pm at night, and found the spectacles in his possession. He charged him with the theft and brought him to Marlborough. Prisoner now pleaded that he intended to return the spectacles, and the magistrates thinking there might be a doubt as to the felonious intent, discharged him. **Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette Thursday 9 October 1890**

1896

Philip Maskell, labourer, of Broad Town, was summoned for having, on the 13th January, at Berwick Bassett Down, used hare nets for taking game. Defendant produced a letter from his employer, Mr Loveday, who wrote that he had the right of killing rabbits on the land in question, and had given defendant permission to do so. The case was adjourned. **Reading Mercury Saturday 13 February 1897**