



Guilder Street c2015

Malt Robbery

City Petty Sessions - Monday. Present: The Mayor, (T. Pain, esq.), James Bennett, James Hussey and R. Hetley, Esqrs..

Robert Harfitt, who had absconded, and for whose capture a reward of £5, had been offered, was brought up, having been apprehended under the following circumstances:

On Saturday last, as Mr. Higgins, of the King's Head Inn, was on his way to Southampton, he happened to see the prisoner, near Earldoms Gate, about 8½ miles from this city, and gave him into the charge of Jeremiah Cooper, the gate-keeper, by whom he was handed over to the city police.

Harfitt made a statement to Cooper, the effect of which was that the robbery would never have been detected, had not widow Marshment been looking out of her window, as the malt was being conveyed along the passage leading to Hayter's pigsty. The elder Hayter knew when it was coming, and unlocked the gate. The prisoner also told Superintendent Blake that on the Saturday preceding the robbery, Thomas Wootton came to his house and asked him to go with him. He at first refused, but afterwards consented, and joined Wootton at Mr. Taunton's malt-house, in Guilder-lane. The door was open.

They put up five sacks of malt, which they conveyed to Hayter's, and placed against the door of the pigsty. The elder Hayter came out and opened the door, and afterwards told them that he had locked the malt up. Harfitt then left Wootton, who called upon him on Sunday evening, and said that the affair had been found out. He picked up the sacks, in which the malt was placed, a few days before in Exeter Street. Wootton told him that he would satisfy him for the part he took in the transaction another time. The prisoner was committed for trial.

Police – Yesterday. Before the Mayor and Richard Hetley, Esq. James Harfitt was charged with being concerned in the late robbery of malt, from the stores of Mr. Taunton, in Guilder Lane. The prisoner was apprehended in consequence of a statement made by T. Wootton (who has already been committed), at the trial, to the effect that he (the prisoner) assisted in carrying the bags in which the malt was placed from the house of the elder Harfitt, and that he also helped to fill and convey them to Hayter's pig-sty.

Mr. Superintendent Blake asked for a remand, which was granted. The prisoner will be brought up for further examination on Wednesday next.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal, Saturday, 23 June 1855