



# Crime and Punishment

## *Minety*

### **Court Case**

### **Alfred Wright**

At the Malmesbury Petty Sessions on Thursday last, Mr Alfred Wright, one of the relieving officers of the Chippenham Union, was summoned under the statute 9 and 10 Vic, c 66 s 6, by Mr James Smart, overseer of Minety, charged with having as such relieving officer, on the 20th July last, with intent to cause one Sarah Weldon and her family to become chargeable to the parish of Minety, given to the said Sarah Weldon the sum of ten shillings, for the purpose of conveying her and her family out of the parish of Chippenham to the said parish of Minety, and that in consequence of such conveyance the said Sarah Weldon and her said children became chargeable to the said parish of Minety, &c.

Mr J Phillips, clerk to the guardians of the Chippenham Union, appeared for the defence. The defendant admitted having given the half-sovereign to the pauper, but positively denied having given it to her for the purpose of conveying her to her settlement parish of Minety. On the contrary, he stated that it was not given him in the capacity of relieving officer at all, but that it was simply a subscription raised by a few charitable people in Chippenham, which he handed to the pauper.

Mrs Weldon, who was subjected to a rigid examination by Mr Phillips, distinctly adhered to her statement that the half-sovereign was given her by Mr Wright for the express purpose of taking her home.

The Bench, after a short conference, dismissed the complaint, at the same time, however, expressing an opinion that there were reasonable grounds of suspicion in the case, and that the guardians of the Malmesbury Union were fully justified in the course they had recommended. Mr Phillips concurred in the expression of the Bench, and the subject dropped.

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