



## **Breach of The Anthrax Order**

The Anthrax Order. Wiltshire farmer's Breach. Fine of £5 and £1 14s 6d Costs. Thomas Harding, of Odstock, was summoned at the Salisbury County Petty Sessions on Tuesday for a breach of the Anthrax Order of 1899.- Mr W Trethowan appeared for the defendant, who pleaded not guilty.

Superintendent Longstone said it was alleged that Mr Harding had committed a breach of the regulations with respect to the removal of manure which had come into contact with an infected animal. On Friday, April 12th, witness received from Mr Parr, the veterinary inspector appointed by the Board of Agriculture and the local sanitary authority, a notice of an outbreak of anthrax on the premises of Mr Thomas Harding at Odstock. He at once proceeded to Odstock, having previously telegraphed to the sergeant at Downton and the constable at Charlton to meet him. He gave instructions to Mr Harding with reference to the cremation of a heifer which had died, and also gave directions that the manure in the yard should be piled into heaps and disinfected with lime. He left PC Cox in charge to see that the directions were complied with. The following morning he received a telegram from PC Cox stating that Mr Harding had persisted in removing the manure before it was disinfected. He (the superintendent) went over to Odstock and told Mr Harding that he was wrong, and that the manure should have been disinfected. He replied "That is all rubbish", but it was not rubbish. He found that the manure had been carted along a trackway which led past 14 houses and by a dairy where there were more than 80 cows.

Mr T H Parr, who gave evidence, said he directed Mr Harding to remove the manure from the corner of the yard where the animal had died and have it cremated with the carcase of the heifer. He had first examined the carcase of the heifer and he found that there was no hemorrhage from any of the natural passages. If there has been there would have been grave danger that any portion of the manure of the yard might have been infected. In regard to disinfection, Mr Harding should have acted under the directions of the Superintendent of the Police as laid down by the Board of Agriculture.

P.C. Cox stated that on visiting the premises on April 13th he found that some 40 loads of manure had been removed from the yard to a place near the Homington road before it had been disinfected.

Superintendent Longstone said the manure in any case must be moved to a place approved by the local inspector. The order as to disinfection was given as a preliminary instruction to be followed by directions as to the removal of the manure, but Mr Harding did not wait for these directions. – Mr Trethowan said the defendant in this case did what he was told to do by Mr Parr, who, moreover, had authority to give the directions carried out Mr Harding. The whole point of these proceedings, he thought, was that there had been a little jealousy on the part of Superintendent Longstone because he considered the veterinary inspector was interfering with his offices: - Superintendent Longstone: Not at all.

The Chairman remarked that the point to consider was whether the law had been complied with.

Mr Trethowan said the defendant had to endeavour to carry out the instructions of two different men, and he chose to follow the advice of the veterinary surgeon. In future cases he thought the veterinary surgeon and the police superintendent should put their heads together and come to a decision to what was to be done. Mr T Harding said Mr Parr's directions was that several loads of the manure around the animal's carcase should be taken out and burnt with the carcase. Two loads were taken out, but he was informed that Superintendent Longstone had one

load brought back again into the yard, where there were 36 head of cattle. On the morning after the heifer died, the witness, bearing in mind Mr Parr's advice, thought it would be wise to have all the manure removed as soon as possible from the yard, and a portion of this work was done. The place selected for the disposal of it could hardly have been a bad site, because the remainder of the manure was subsequently deposited on the same ground. In cross-examination, defendant admitted that the manure was not disinfected before removing.

Mr John Harding, son of the defendant, also gave evidence.

The Bench decided to convict, and imposed a fine of £6, with £1 6d costs.

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