



Devizes District Petty Sessions
Monday, April 13th
Before Colonel Oliver, Major Grubbe, Mr. Locke, Mr. Colston, Rev. A Smith,
and Mr. Schomberg.

James Rawlings and William Willis were summoned for committing a violent assault upon William Pearce, a mason, of Erchfont.

The parties had, it appeared, been drinking together at the Bell Inn, Lydeway, where a dispute arose about wages (defendants being in Pearce's employ), and on Pearce leaving the house he was followed by Rawlings and Willis, one of whom threw a large flint stone which struck the defendant on the head, producing a most frightful gash, and knocking him almost senseless to the ground, after which they kicked and treated him in a very brutal manner. The Magistrates said they had some doubt whether they would be justified in sending the case to the sessions; they should, however, mark their sense of the defendants' brutality by inflicting a heavy penalty, and should fine Willis £5, and Rawlings £3.

A lad named Michael Tilly (apparently not more than 17 or 18 years of age) was summoned to show cause why he should not be bound to keep the peace towards his father, an aged man, living in Horton. The details of the case unfolded a most unhappy history of domestic strife; the father, it seemed, was a drunken husband; and the son prompted to violence by the scenes of unkindness he was in the habit of witnessing towards his mother, turned his father out of his own house. The Bench said, the conduct of the father appeared to be so bad, that they should decline interfering in the matter.

Paul Wiltshire, summoned to the last Petty Sessions, for the non-payment of poor's rates due to the parish of Bishops Cannings, on the ground that he was exempt as an occupier of a cottage belonging to the Kennet and Avon Canal Company, (and situated upon the banks of their stream near Horton bridge,) was today ordered to pay the amount demanded, no one appearing on behalf of the Company to show cause to the contrary.

Several poor persons from Potterne were summoned for the non-payment of poor-rates. Most of them appeared to be cases of great hardship (the condition of the parties being little better than that of paupers). As the vestry, however, had refused to exempt them, the Bench had no alternative but to grand distress warrants.

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