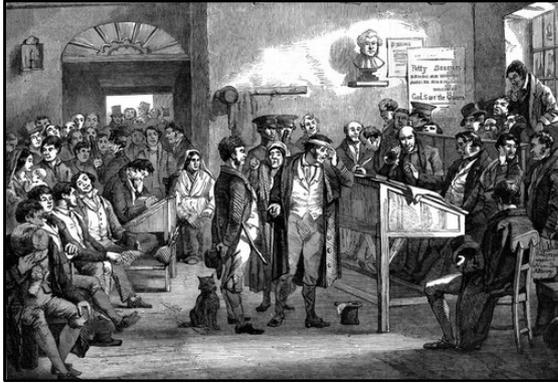


Cruelty to a Dog 1855

County Petty Sessions Salisbury



John Swyre, bailiff to Mr Burt, Winterbourne Earls, was charged by Elijah Porter, a shepherd, with having, on the 26th ult. cruelly ill-treated his dog, by firing the contents of a gun at it.

An old man named William Beavis deposed that he saw the defendant fire at the dog, which thereupon ran home, howling and bleeding, and he (witness) afterwards extracted two shots from the ear of the animal which, he believed, would lose the use of his right eye.

The defendant said that he did not deny shooting at the dog which had long been a great nuisance, as it was continually about the fields of his employer, disturbing the sheep. He had cautioned the owners of dogs in the neighbourhood to keep them out of Mr Burt's fields.

Mr Burt was examined, and said that the dog was in his fields from morning till night, and in the present scarcity of sheep's food, it was no small hardship to have the fold continually disturbed. He was with his bailiff at the time that the dog was fired at, and as it was 80 yards off, it was not likely that it could be much injured.

Porter, the owner of the dog was sworn, and said that the dog had not been out of his sight for a day or two before the occurrence and that when it was shot it was within 50 yards of the defendant.

Mr Burt doubted very much whether the dog had suffered, as it had been out since and he trusted that the magistrates would adjourn the summons for a week in order that the animal might be produced or examined by Mr Snow.

Mr Jacob said the Bench had no doubt about the matter, as the shooting had been admitted and it was distinctly proved that two shots had been taken from the ear of the dog.

The Bench had no hesitation in saying that the conduct of the defendant had brought him within the meaning of the Act against ill-treating animals. He had acted, no doubt, under the instructions of his employer, but that was no justification. Fined 10s and expenses, which were immediately paid.

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