



Robbery on London Road Near Winterbourne Stoke

Early on Sunday evening last, as Mr. Whitmarsh, a dissenting minister of Amesbury, was returning from Wily to that place, he was stopped on the London road, at a spot near Grant's barn, between Winterbourne Stoke and Stonehenge, by two men and a boy, who dragged him from his horse, and robbed him of his watch and about thirty shillings in silver. Mr. Whitmarsh was met soon after by Mr. Dyer, blacksmith of Winterbourne Stoke, who accompanied him to Amesbury, and gave prompt information of the robbery to Mr. Smallbones, of the George Inn, who immediately dispatched men in various directions in search of the robbers, and we hear two men have been taken up on suspicion. It is supposed that the men and boy who committed this robbery, are the same persons who had been seen the previous day encamped on the down with a cart and couple of horses. The boy, it is said, has impeached his associates, and confessed they were the same parties who, a night or two previous, stole sheep from Mr. Long's fold, at Amesbury. It is strongly suspected that these fellows form a section of the gang who robbed Mr. Dean, of Imber, on his return from Devizes fair on Monday se'ennight.

Devizes Gazette, Thursday, 31 October 1839

Salisbury Assizes

Charles Hillier and Thomas Harnham were charged with having, together with one Henry Dyer (otherwise called Henry Rough, not in custody), feloniously assaulted and robbed Mr. William Whitmarsh, at Winterbourne Stoke. The prisoners were also charged with having stolen sheep, the property of Frederick Tabor, South Newton. William Whitmarsh was returning on Sunday the 7th of October, from Stapleford to Amesbury; he was a Wesleyan preacher; about twenty minutes to nine o'clock, he observed three men coming towards him; he was on a pony; one of them said Hallo! and took hold of the bridle; another took hold of his leg on the other side; the third pushed the pony towards the hedge; they each had a stick; from the men pushing and his leaning, the pony fell with him; they held him by the breast; put one hand over his mouth and the other his eyes; another then took from his pockets half-sovereign, a shilling and a key; his watch was fastened round his neck with a guard; the one took his hand from his eyes, and held his head to take the guard over; held his head, and Hillier his thigh; it was dark when he left Stapleford; the moon had not then risen; after they had his watch, they continued to search for other property; he told them they had taken all; they said the pony was gone on, and they left him, going towards Stoke. The above testimony was supported by that of John Fidler, Stephen Witt, William

Leversuch, Charles Whitmarsh, and Jacob White; and the Judge having summed up, both prisoners were found guilty, and sentenced to fifteen years transportation.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal, Monday, 16 March 1840

OPC Note:

Charles Hilliar was transported to Van Diemen's Land on the ship "Lord Lyndoch" (3), tried at Wilts Assizes 5 March 1840. Embarked 5 September 1840, arrived 5 February 1841. Aged, 31, born in Dorset, he was a butcher by trade, married, his wife's name was Mary, with 2 children.

Thomas Harnham was also transported on the same ship. He was married, with 2 children, his wife Sarah lived in Salisbury. He gave his native place as Bradford.

Source - Tasmanian records