



Crime News

Bishopstone

1881

A Dishonest Shepherd

Swindon Police Court – Thursday

Edward Farmer, 50, shepherd, of Bishopstone, was charged with stealing 20 wooden rails, value 10s, the property of Mr. W. Dore, farmer, of Bishopstone, on the 6th inst. The prosecutor said he had missed from his upper farm a quantity of wood, including 30 rails and 5 posts. He gave information to the police. The wood now produced by P.C. Read was that he lost. Prisoner was in his employ as shepherd. P.C. Read said from what he heard he searched the prisoner's residence, and found the wood house 17 rails. Overhead he found, concealed under the ceiling, five posts and three other rails. Also a bag of wool and a quantity of loose hurdle wood, and two boards. In the kitchen he also found two bags of chips, part of a post, and a quantity of rails cut up in lengths suitable for the fire. He charged prisoner with stealing the wood, and he admitted bringing it home from down near the barn, saying he saw it lying about and thought he would move it, before his master saw it. Prisoner's house was two miles from the farm house, but only 100 yards from the barn.

Prisoner said he would plead guilty, but he denied that he had any felonious intent in what he had done. He had to put up a sheep pen, and this was what he had left, and thought it no harm to take it.

The Bench said they would not be doing the proper thing unless they sent the accused to prison, and they committed him for one month's hard labour.

Swindon Advertiser and North Wilts Chronicle, 23 February 1881