



Nisi Prius Court, Salisbury March 1841

Britain v. Oram

Mr. Stone opened the case for the plaintiff, and Mr. Sergeant Bompas said it was a matter arising from Mr. Britain, who is a surgeon at Bath, attending the defendant and his wife, who resided at Bratton: and that the action was brought to recover the sum of £225 for journeys and attendance, of which there were eighty or ninety, at £4 each, between 1838 and 1840, at a distance of twenty miles; and that the defendant considering £60, would be an ample payment, had paid that sum into Court.

William Budd. – I am a farmer residing at Bratton, I know the plaintiff and the defendant. Mr. Britain, who resides at Bath, attended my wife, whose complaint was that of dropsy, and by his care and attention she was cured. In November, 1838, defendant came to my house, and inquired for Mr. Britain, and engaged him to attend himself and wife. He said it would be expensive, living as he did at Bath; but the defendant said that would be of no consequence.

Charles Chivers. – I am an attorney residing at Bath. I know Mr. Britain: have gone with him once or twice to Bratton, and in October 1839, to defendant's house, and saw plaintiff dress defendant's leg, which was in an ulcerated state.

Henry Coats. – I am a surgeon, residing in Salisbury. The usual charge for attendance on illness at a distance of twenty miles would be five guineas, as a person having much practice would be taken so far from his own circle.

This being the case for the plaintiff, Mr. Erle, with whom was Mr. Butt, addressed the Court for the defence, and called John Gibbs, who said, I am a surgeon in the practice at Westbury. The rate of charges usual in this neighbourhood is 1s. 6d. the first mile, and 1s for all after.

Caroline Brown. – I lived with Mr. and Mrs Oram four years. I often saw Mr. Britain there. Mr. Oram had a bad leg, and Mrs Oram was considered dropsical.

Mr. Sharland. – I am a surgeon at Westbury: have practiced there nine years. I charge 1s. 6d. for the first mile and 1s afterwards for my journeys.

Mr. Sergeant Bompas then addressed the jury; and after his Lordship had summed up, a verdict for the plaintiff was given for fifty three journeys, at £2 each journey, being £106, or £46 above the £60 paid into the Court.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal, Monday, 8 March 1841