



Committed for Trial for Theft of Corn

James Figgins, John Yates, and James and George Mead, were yesterday committed for trial at the next Assizes: the two former charged with stealing, and the two latter with receiving, knowing it to have been stolen, a large quantity of corn, the property of Mr. George King of this town.

James Mead has for a number of years carried on the business of coal-merchant and boat-master in Devizes, and has amassed property to the amount of £2000 and upwards, he has a wife and 8 children. George Mead is one of his sons; Figgins and Yates are two assistant porters in our market. At an early hour on Thursday morning last, Figgins and Yates were observed carrying some corn in the direction from Mr. King's, across the Market-place. Sometime afterward information of the circumstance was given to Mr. King, who immediately obtained search warrants, and Mr. Shakespeare (one of the Constables) proceeded to put them into execution. He found nothing, however either at the house of Figgins or Yates; but after some inquiries was induced to search the house of Mr. Mead.

Here he quickly discovered in a bin some corn (beans and a peculiar kind of Russian pease) which corresponded with the sample he brought from Mr. King's granary. On asking him how he came by it, Mead replied, that his son had purchased it; at the same time expressing his fears that it might not have been obtained honestly; adding, that he had frequently forbid his son from bringing any more corn there. In searching further, Mr. Shakespeare found some sacks marked with Mr. King's name; and on opening another bin he found 6 bushels more of the above description of corn.

In the bed-room he also found a quantity of pease.

On being again questioned, the father said he had bought them in Bristol; the son said he had bought them in Bath; but at length the son acknowledged having purchased some of them of Figgins and Yates. They were both then taken into custody.

On the following day, it was ascertained that Mead had two boats up the river; Mr. Shakespeare followed them within 6 miles of London, and found on board, 4 sacks of beans and pease mixed with chaff, and other sack marked with Mr. King's name. Altogether upwards of 30 bushels of corn have been recovered.

One of the witnesses against the prisoners, is a young man in the employ of Mr. Harrison, who saw Figgins and Yates enter the granary of Mr. King, and afterwards leave it with sacks on their shoulders - Yates also confessed "that they stole the corn and sold it to Mead." Mead pleaded hard to be admitted to bail, offering his own bond in £2,000; but the evidence against him was irresistible, and our excellent Chief Magistrate felt it his duty to commit him (with the others) for trial.

Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette, 21 June 1827

Extensive Theft of Corn

James Figgins, John Yates, and James and George Mead, were on Wednesday committed for trial at the next assizes: the two former charged with stealing, and the two latter with receiving, knowing it to have been stolen, a large quantity of corn, the property of Mr. George King, of Devizes. James Mead has for a number of years carried on the business of a coal-merchant and boat-master in Devizes, and has amassed property to the amount of £2000 and upwards; he has a wife and eight children. George Mead is one of his sons. Figgins and Yates are two porters in the market.

At an early hour on Thursday morning the 14th inst. Figgins and Yates were observed carrying corn in the direction from Mr. King's, across the Market-place. Mr. King afterwards obtained search warrants, and Mr. Shakespeare (one of the constables) proceeded to put them into execution; he found nothing at the house of Figgins or of Yates, but in the house of Mead he discovered some beans and a peculiar kind of Russian peas, which corresponded with a sample he brought from Mr. King's granary. In searching further, Mr. Shakespeare found some more sacks marked with Mr. King's name; and in a bed-room he also found a quantity of peas. On being again questioned, the father said he had bought them in Bristol; the son said he had bought them in Bath; but at length the son acknowledged having purchased some of them of Figgins and Yates. They were both then taken into custody. On the following day it was ascertained that Mead had 2 boats up the river; Mr. Shakespeare followed them within six miles of London, and found on board four sacks of beans and peas mixed with chaff, and another sack marked with Mr. King's name. Altogether upwards of thirty bushels of corn have been recovered. One of the witnesses saw Figgins and Yates enter the granary of Mr. King, and afterwards leave it with sacks on their shoulders.

Yates also confessed, "that they stole the corn, and sold it to Mead." Mead pleaded hard to be admitted to bail, offering his own bond of £2000; but the evidence against him was irresistible, and the excellent chief magistrate of Devizes felt it his duty to commit him (with the others) for trial.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal 25 June 1827