



Destroying Thrashing Machine

Robert Stokes aged 30, Robert Willoughby aged 28 and Aminadab Smith aged 35, were put to the bar charged with destroying a thrashing machine, the property of William Smith of Highworth.

The prisoners were proved to have come with a mob, armed with sticks, hammers &c. on the night of the 24th of November to break machines. The prisoners were close to those who were breaking the machine but were not proved to have taken a very active part. One of the witnesses, a young lad, in giving his evidence, said that when the mob were going up to the house of the prosecutor, his brother said to them "Act like men, go and break the machine, but don't go up to the house." The mob on this went up and broke the machine.

The Court held that this was too much of leave given to bring home the crime of felony to the prisoners. They were therefore acquitted.

The Times, 8 January 1831