



Crime and Punishment

Oaksey

Court Case

John Jones and John Smith

John Jones and John Smith, petty chapmen and pedlars, were charged before the magistrates at Malmesbury with hawking combs, steel pens, buttons, &c., without a license.

Sergeant Bustard deposed seeing the prisoners near Kemble on the previous Thursday. He was subsequently informed that they had called on the clergy and other respectable inhabitants at Oaksey, stating that they were about to emigrate to Australia, and wanted to make up £3 10s. Upon the strength of such representations, they obtained from various persons during the day the sum of 11s. He further stated that when the prisoners were at the Wheat Sheaf public-house they inquired whether any men servants slept at Eastcourt House, and whether any policemen lived in the village.

Prisoners in their defence admitted that they were hawking without a license, and that they obtained money by representing that they were going to Australia; they denied, however, having made enquiries about gentlemen's houses and their servants.

The Bench said the case was a bad one, and the defendants had subjected themselves to a severe punishment, but hearing nothing against their character before, they were inclined to be merciful. They were then ordered to be imprisoned for 14 days.

Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette Thursday 23 September 1858