



William Smith Alleges Theft Of Watch At Grovely

Highway Robbery

John Butcher and James Lewin, who had the appearance of navvies, were charged with stealing a silver watch and other property from the person of William Smith at Grovely.

The complainant, an elderly man, stated that he lives at Wishford, and is in the employ of Mr. Shergold. On Sunday evening last, he went to the Royal Oak Inn, at Wishford, where he saw the two prisoners in the tap-room. At ten o'clock they all three left together, and as the prisoners wanted lodgings, which they could not get, he offered to take them with him to Grovely, where he slept, and let them lie on some straw, in a barn, belonging to the landlord. Having gone about a mile on the road the prisoner Butcher caught hold of him by the throat and pulled him down, saying, with a threat, "Let's have your money." He then put his hand into witness's pocket, and took therefrom a silver watch, worth at least a pound. He also took from another pocket a knife and a shilling. After this he let the witness get up, and he went home to bed. The other prisoner was present at the time, and did not interfere. Witness saw both prisoners the next morning about four o'clock under a tree. He asked Butcher to give him his watch, and he said he knew nothing about it, and had never seen a watch.

George North, of Wilton, a policeman, deposed that from information which he had received, he apprehended the prisoners at their lodgings, and found that they had been out all night. Butcher said – "This is a pretty thing; allow us to have our dinners first?" Butcher admitted that they had been together at the public-house at Wishford, and said that when they left, Smith was drunk. The witness added that he had been to the place where the alleged robbery had taken place, but he could find no marks of a scuffle. The prisoners both denied knowing anything about the robbery. None of the property was found in their possession. The Bench discharged Lewin, but committed Butcher for trial at the Assizes.

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