

WELLINGBOROUGH Petty Sessions, Monday, July 5th 1858

Before W. Mackworth Dolben, Esq chairman; C. Hill, C. Sergeant J. Young, and H. M. Stockdale, Esqrs
Caught with the Spoils

Robert Hawkes and Charles Cooper, shoemakers, of Finedon, were charged with stealing two stone of "May Duke" cherries, value 7s., from the orchard of Richard Jacquest, gardener, of that place, early on the morning of Thursday, July 1st. The same defendants were also charged with stealing a quantity of green peas from the field of William Shrive, gardener. Joseph Evans, police-sergeant, said he was on duty about half-past four a.m., when he saw the defendants coming towards Finedon laden with peas and cherries. He charged them with stealing, and attempted to take them in charge, when they resisted, and Hawkes attempted to strike him. The cherries were in a basket, and the peas tied up in an apron. Witness took the fruit produced from defendants, and then apprehended them and brought them to the station-house. Found marks and traces of the plunder in all directions. Some peas appeared to have been stolen from Mr Sharpe's field, and many fields, gardens, and orchards had been plundered this season. James Downing said he lived at Burton Latimer on Friday morning, 2nd July Samuel Young of Finedon, came to witness and requested him to go before the magistrates and state that the defendants had bought the peas and cherries of him. Offered him 5s. if he would make this statement. Witness did not sell anything to defendants. Young is father-in-law to Cooper.

The prisoners being called upon for their defence, stated that they had been out searching for water-cresses, when they met a man they did not know, who offered them the fruit for sale, and they bought it of him.

Their worships not crediting this lame story, found them guilty, and committed them to prison for two months' each for the cherries, and one month each for the peas. Hawkes behaved in a very insolent manner before the bench, and was severely censured.

Mr John Scarborough, farmer, of Irthlingborough, then stepped forward and charged them with stealing a quantity of peas from his field on the morning of Sunday, June 27th. Complainant said he caught them in the field gathering his peas. They had a large dog with them Prisoners said they could prove an alibi, but were not provided with witnesses, as they did not know of the charge being brought against them.

The magistrates, at their request, adjourned the case until their release from prison. (In all probability this latter charge would not have been brought but for their bad conduct whilst under examination.)