

## Wardour Farmer Fined at Salisbury 1934



A calf with an amputated hoof, which was conveyed from a farm at Wardour to Salisbury Market, was the subject of a prosecution before Salisbury City Magistrates on Monday.

Harry Hobbs (23) of Terrace View, Fonthill Gifford, was summoned for causing unnecessary suffering to the calf by conveying it in a lorry when in a suffering state on June 4<sup>th</sup>, and Frederick John Burt (60), of Bridzor Farm, Wardour, for permitting the calf to be conveyed to market and exposed for sale.

The defendants pleaded not guilty and were represented by Mr H T Jones.

Salisbury Guildhall houses the Magistrates Court

Mr A Gordon Jones, barrister at law, who prosecuted for the RSPCA, stated that Burt was a farmer and Hobbs the driver of a cattle lorry. He understood that about nine months ago Burt had a calf which had the misfortune to be trodden on by its mother. In consequence, it was found necessary to amputate the lower joint of the right hind leg. The wound was dressed and eventually the base of the stump healed.

On June 4<sup>th</sup> the owner decided to send the calf to Salisbury Market. Hobbs was the driver of the vehicle in which the animal was conveyed and Burt assisted in the loading. Evidence would be called to show that when the calf was put into the lorry, the sump was bleeding. Hobbs, although stating that he did not notice the injury, was very dubious about conveying the calf on account of its malformity and he made a remark to that effect. At the market the condition of the calf soon attracted attention. The mutilated stump was bleeding freely and the animal appeared to be in considerable pain. A veterinary surgeon was called and the calf was taken away for slaughter.

Mrs Vivi Hilda Edith Higgins, of The Cottage, Old Sarum, stated that she noticed the calf with its right hind leg tied up in sacking. It was plunging about and was apparently in great suffering. The sacking was kicked off and she saw that the calf was bleeding profusely from the base of its mutilated leg. Frequently it was forced to put its stump to the ground.

Answering Mr H T Jones, Mrs Higgins said she informed the police not because she was particularly sentimental, but because she hated cruelty. The calf was a fine big beast and it looked as though it had been well cared for. Ernest Sidney Kent, of 70 Castle-street, Salisbury, said the calf seemed unable to keep still and it panted and foamed at the mouth. In his opinion it should have been killed at once in the market and not taken away to a slaughter house.

Inspector W D Barsby, RSPCA, said the stump of the right hind leg was raw and bleeding and the calf was obviously in pain. He interviewed Hobbs and Burt and obtained statements after cautions had been given. Hobbs said "I told the dairyman who handed the calf over that it ought not to go. Mr Burt assisted us to load. I did not notice any bleeding until the calf was tied up in the market". Burt said "During the loading this morning, the stump began to bleed. I did not know that the stump was raw and I did not think for a moment that I was doing anything wrong by sending the calf to market".

Mr H T Jones: supposing that the animal was not bleeding, would you have brought the case? Inspector Barsby: I should have reported the matter to headquarters. PC Saunders, who was called to the market by Mrs Higgins, stated that the calf was absolutely wild with pain. An employee of Mr Burt, Ernest Curtis, of Wardour, said that the calf's stump healed up after its hoof had been amputated. When the animal was loaded into the lorry he asked if it was all right to take the calf to market and Mr Burt replied "Quite all right". The stump was bleeding at the time from an abrasion on the side and not at the base. Mr E R Harding, veterinary surgeon, of Salisbury, said he did not order the calf to be slaughtered in the market because there were many women and children about. If the stump was bleeding at the time of loading, it was improper to send the calf to market and in his opinion it was a great mistake to convey the animal whether it was bleeding or not.

Burt, giving evidence, said he had farmed at Wardour for nearly fifty years and had never received a complaint concerning his treatment of animals. The calf was born at the end of January and as a result of an injury, the lower part of its right hind leg was amputated. The wound healed properly and the calf made fine progress. He thought it was in fit condition to be taken to market. During loading, the animal struggled because it had never previously been tied up and it sustained an abrasion on the side of its stump. The base of the stump was not bleeding or damaged. Although sold privately, after slaughter, the calf fetched £4 17s 6d. Hobbs stated that the bottom of his lorry was covered with sawdust to a depth of about two inches and he thought it was quite proper to convey the calf. He said he did not see any injury or blood when he loaded or unloaded the animal. He made a remark concerning the question of conveying the calf because it was the first time that he had seen one with only three legs.

Mr John Jeffrey, auctioneers, was called as a witness for the defence. He said he thought Mr Burt was quite justified in sending the calf to market after its stump healed. The animal was a fine specimen and it would have realised £7 10s in the open market. There was no delay in making arrangements for slaughter when it was discovered that the calf had injured itself. A lorry had already been summoned when the RSPCA inspector arrived. Mr Burt's cattle were always in splendid condition and witness was of the opinion that the injury to the base of the sump was caused after arrival at Salisbury.

Mr H T Jones submitted that the prosecution had failed to establish that Mr Burt had neglected to exercise reasonable care and he suggested that there was no evidence to show Hobbs was aware that the calf was likely to suffer. The Bench decided to convict but the Chairman, Mr C J Woodrow, remarked that he thought there was something to be said for both sides. Burt was fined £3 with £2 17s costs and Hobbs £1.

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