

BICYCLE STOLEN FROM PUREWELL. (C.T.1944)

Charged at Christchurch Police Court on Wednesday with stealing a tradesman's carrier cycle, the property of Ronald Albert Edgell, of 125, Purewell, Joseph Jean D'Avila Gregoire, a French Canadian, pleaded not guilty. An interpreter was present to translate the proceedings for the defendant.

In answer, to questions put by Inspector W. P. Thomas, witness (Mr. Edgell) said that he had left the bicycle outside 125, Purewell, between 8.30 and 9.40 p.m., on the 7th January, and when he returned for it he found it had gone. About a quarter of an hour later he reported the matter to the police. Mr. Edgell identified the bicycle in Court as his own, but the carrier and name plate had been removed. He valued it at £7 10s.

Pte. Noble Arnold Menzies gave evidence that he had met accused on 6th January, and on the 7th January had given him his bus fare to Christchurch because defendant had told him that he had no money.

Another witness, Cpl. James Edward Merlin, stated that he had made the acquaintance of Gregoire on the 10th January. He noticed a tradesman's bicycle at the back of the cookhouse and asked defendant if it was his. He made no reply, and witness then said to him, "If the bicycle is not it is a bad thing to have around."

Sgt. Hollis Houghton Hastings stated that he saw the accused on the 7th and noticed the bicycle between the 8th and 10th January.

P.C. King questioned the prisoner on the 21st January, and asked him how the bicycle had come into his possession. He replied, "I found it behind the kitchen." After being further questioned by P.C. King he was arrested and brought to Christchurch Police Station, where he was cautioned and charged with the offence. He stated, "On the night of the 7th January I went to Boscombe. I returned about 11 o'clock and I found the cycle behind the kitchen three or four days later." He said he had removed the carrier so that the cycle would be easier to ride. P.C. King had discovered the carrier and name plate hidden under some bushes in a nearby lodge.

The defendant's C.O. stated that to the best of his knowledge nothing had previously been recorded against accused.

Brig.-Gen. J. G. Browne (chairman) said that the various points brought forward pointed to the fact that the prisoner was guilty.

Defendant was bound over for 12 months under Probation of Offenders' Act.