

POLICE COURT.

SATURDAY, — In the Town Hall, before Mr. John King and Mr. William Tucker.

STEALING FROM HIS EMPLOYER.
A FATHER AND SON CHARGED WITH RECEIVING.

C.T. August 18, 1917.

George Erwood, of Fairmile, was charged with stealing a quantity of oats, value 25/-, the property of Mr. T. H. McArdle, on August 9th, and George Pardy and Levi Cecil George Pardy (his son), of Millhams Street, were charged with receiving the same, well knowing them to have been stolen.

Mr. Melvill Druitt appeared for the Pardys.

Thomas Henry McArdle, of Wick Lane Farm, identified the oats (produced) as similar to those he had in a loft over his stables at Millhams Street. The quantity was about two bushels and the value about 25/-. He had given no one any authority to remove them. He was away at market on Thursday, and returned about 7 o'clock, and missed them then. Erwood was employed by him, and knew where the oats were kept.

Stephen Butler, of 2, Jumpers Road, a carpenter and joiner, stated that on Thursday (the 9th inst.) he was at Mr. McArdle's stables at about 1.10, having his dinner. He saw Erwood come into the stable, and he said he was going to get some oats for Mr. Tinsley (who crushed oats for Mr. McArdle). He went into the loft and brought down some oats in a bag and dropped them on to the floor. The bag bursted, and he tied it up, putting the remainder of the oats into another bag, and took them away. The bags were similar to those produced.

P.C. Gould gave evidence of interviewing Erwood, who denied any knowledge of the oats. He was taken to the Police Station, and after further inquiries had been made he was charged with the offence.

Prisoner pleaded guilty, and the Bench convicted.

The hearing against the two Pardys was then proceeded with.

George David Summers, a labourer, of Pokesdown, stated that as he was having his dinner in the George Inn yard on Thursday, he saw a wagon and pony in charge of the younger Pardy. Erwood put two bags into the cart, and the lad drove off with them. The elder Pardy was not there.

P.C. Gould stated that he interviewed the two Pardys, who both denied that they knew anything about the matter, and they were taken to the Police Station. Witness and P.S. Davies, in company with George Pardy, visited the stables in Fairmile, and made a thorough search, but found nothing of the oats, and Pardy went to his work. About 1 o'clock the same day, witness went to St. Catherine's Hill in company with Sergeant Davies, and in a shed on an allotment found the two bags of oats (produced). About 2.30 the same afternoon witness saw George Pardy and told him what they had found. Pardy said "They have opened out with it, then. I told Erwood the day before not to take it. They put it in the shop in Fairmile, and I took it there this morning." They went together to St. Catherine's Hill to the shed, and Pardy said "Here it is. What I ought to have done was to take it back again." They went to the Police Station. Both Pardys were charged, but made no reply.

The elder Pardy pleaded guilty, and the younger not guilty.

Mr. Melvill Druitt submitted that there was no evidence before the Court that the younger Pardy was a party to the receiving. Summers saw Erwood put two bags of oats on the cart, but beyond that there was no evidence of possession or receiving of goods. Young Pardy had gone to the yard with his father; the latter then went away and left the son in charge. Erwood went to young Pardy as he was going out of the yard, and said he had got something he wanted him to take for him. Erwood then went to the stables and brought the sacks, which he at first said he wanted taken to Mr. Tinsley, and afterwards said to Fairmile. On the way there he told young Pardy to take them to his father. The lad was quite an innocent agent, instructed by Erwood to take the oats to his father. It was a serious matter for him, as he was joining the Marines next week.

The younger Pardy then gave evidence on oath, bearing out what Mr. Druitt had said. He

said he had no idea that Erwood had stolen the oats. He acted on Erwood's instructions to deliver the oats to his father. He did not assist in taking them to St. Catherine's Hill.

Mr. King said that defendant had run pretty close to the line, but as he was young they had decided to give him the benefit of the doubt, and give him another chance in life. It would be a lesson to him, and the best thing he could do was to join the Marines and get away from temptation.

Mr. Druitt appealed for leniency on behalf of the elder Pardy, and expressed his regret. He had eight children, six of whom were dependent on him.

Mr. McArdle appealed for Erwood, who had been in his employment a considerable time. He had been a hardworking fellow, he said, and he could not understand what had made him do it. Being allowanced in corn by the Government, he (the prosecutor) was bound to take action, as it was a serious thing for him if he were short. He would get into trouble if they came to measure his supplies.

Erwood was fined 40/- and the elder Pardy £4.