RK 310

Sheep-worrying article

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Farmer's dog cleared of sheep-worrying

50 YEARS AGO – 1969

ACCUSATIONS by a Newbold Verdon farmer that a neighbouring farmer's dog had been worrying sheep were dismissed by Market Bosworth Magistrates on Tuesday.

Mr William Esam, 42, of Halifax Farm, complained to the police after seeing a dog standing over the mutilated body of a dead sheep. He claimed the dog belonged to Mr Albert Statham, 65, of Church Street.

Mr. Statham denied that his dog had been involved in the incident with the sheep and said the dog, a Border Collie, was kept locked-up.

Mr Esam told the court he was in his farmyard one morning when he heard some sheep making noises which suggested they were disturbed by something.

He explained: "I went down to the fields as quickly as I could and I found a sheep lying there and a dog standing over it. The dog ran away as I approached. The carcass of the sheep was still warm".

Mr Esam said he complained to the police and later went to Mr Statham's house with a police officer where he identified a dog as the one he saw standing by the sheep.

In reply to Mr J. G. A. Headley, representing Mr Statham, Mr Esam denied he had a reputation for being "difficult" neighbour. He added: "Mr Statham and I have had differences of opinion in the past. Mr Statham would rather fall out with me than talk to me".

Mr Statham said he had owned the dog for 18 months and thought the animal had a kindly disposition. He added that he did not think a lone dog would attack sheep.

His wife, Mrs Mary Statham, gave evidence that the dog was locked in a shed at nights and chained up during the day.

After a brief consultation the magistrates announced that the complaint would be dismissed.