

RADIO PAYMENT – 1934

REALISTIC DRAMA

Suitable Years: 5 to 10

Number of Students: 5

Cast:

Narrator

Clerk

Magistrate

Thomas Adams - *Plaintiff*

Frederick Jones – *Defendant*

The names of the characters could be changed to suit the gender of the actor

Venue:

York Courthouse Complex, 1874 Courtroom

Synopsis:

By 1934, only minor court cases were heard in the York Courthouse. This play about money owed for a radio, has been adapted from a case that is reported in the York Court records for 1934.

Costume:

The names of the characters could be adapted to either male or female. They would be dressed neatly in clothes from the 1930s. A suit, shirt and tie with neat hair, slicked down and leather shoes. Women would wear a neat dress with stockings and leather shoes. They would have very neat hair, little makeup and wear gloves and a hat.

York Courthouse Complex has some costumes available for student use.
Ask at time of booking.



RADIO PAYMENT – 1934

NARRATOR By 1934, only minor court cases were heard in the York Courthouse. This play is adapted from a case that is reported in the York Court records for 1934. The names have been changed. There was no need for a jury in a case like this. The magistrate would hear the case and make a decision.

A lot of cases at this time involved debt. Times were hard and many people had no jobs. When they couldn't pay their bills, the people they owed money to could take them to court. The magistrate would listen to both sides of the story and try to find a way for the debt to be cleared.

A pound was equivalent to two dollars, a shilling was roughly the same as ten cents and a penny was the same as a cent. In 1934 a working man's pay could be less than three pounds a week so a radio for thirteen pounds was a big luxury.

CLERK 10th of December 1934. The case of Adams versus Jones.

MAGISTRATE Mr Adams, you are the plaintiff. Can you please explain your case to the court?

THOMAS ADAMS My name is Thomas Adams and I own a radio business in York. I build and install wireless radios. Mr Jones bought a radio from me and he still hasn't paid for all of it.

MAGISTRATE Tell the court how you know Mr Jones.

THOMAS ADAMS He came to see me about getting a radio set and said that he would pay me in cash. The radio cost thirteen pounds, eight shillings and sixpence. I told him that if he did not pay cash he would have to pay extra for tax and interest.

MAGISTRATE Please continue.

THOMAS ADAMS I went down to his farm about fifteen miles out of York. After I installed the radio and got it working, Jones said that he could only pay five pounds as deposit. He said that he would pay the rest after shearing was over and he got his wool cheque.

MAGISTRATE So Mr Jones paid you the deposit? When was that?

THOMAS ADAMS That was the tenth of December last year ...1933. Later on he rang me to ask if I would come down to his place again as the radio wasn't working. When I got there I found that one valve had lifted out of its socket. I fixed the fault.



MAGISTRATE Was the radio under guarantee?

THOMAS
ADAMS No. I charged him a pound for the time it took me to go out to his farm again. I asked him if he still wanted the radio as I had another buyer for it. He said that he did want it.

MAGISTRATE By your reckoning, how much does Mr Jones still owe?

THOMAS
ADAMS He still owes me thirteen pounds fourteen shillings and sixpence. That's including interest and money for two trips down to his place.

MAGISTRATE You may step down.

(turning to Mr Jones)

Mr Jones. You have heard the plaintiff Mr Adams state his case. Please explain your version of events to the court.

FREDERICK
JONES When I bought the wireless Mr Adams said that he would give me a good price because the radio was an old model that had been used for demonstrations.

THOMAS
ADAMS *(Mumbles to himself)*

FREDERICK
JONES I asked him if he would install it and he brought it down the following week. He said that he would give me free service for fourteen days. The next day we couldn't get it to work. I got my brother to ask him to come out again. Adams told my brother to check the valves, but we had already done that.

MAGISTRATE So he didn't fix the radio?

FREDERICK
JONES Well, yes he did in the end. Adams came out and found that the aerial was cut through. He said that he was looking at someone else's radio nearby so it was not out of his way. He shouldn't have charged me for that visit at all.

MAGISTRATE Did you then pay him for the radio?

FREDERICK
JONES I paid him five pounds on the tenth of December, as Adams said. I only had the set on trial. That's why I didn't pay the whole amount.

MAGISTRATE You've kept a radio for which you have only paid five pounds?

FREDERICK
JONES *(very angry)* Adams told me that he would give me commission for any other radios I could find buyers for. I found two. And he shouldn't have charged me any extra

either.

MAGISTRATE Mr Jones you clearly entered a contract to purchase the radio. Judgement is for the plaintiff for fourteen pounds three shillings and sixpence. I also order you to pay three shillings and sixpence court costs. You have twenty-one days to pay.

Next Case!

