

Crime and Punishment

Bowerchalke



Salisbury Petty Sessions

Monday

Charge of Assault in the Market Place

Mary Burdon, John Thick and Mary Thick, all of Bower Chalke, were summoned upon a charge of having assaulted George Lush, also of Bower Chalke, in the Salisbury market place, on Tuesday week. Mr E E P Kelsey, who appeared in support of the charge, said the complainant was a shepherd in the employ of Mr Mayo, of Bower Chalke, and it appeared from the instructions he had received that such was the state of feeling there that a farmer hardly dared to employ a labourer who did not belong to the parish.

The complainant was an excellent servant, but his life had of late been rendered miserable in consequence of the threats to which he had been subjected. Another man had been obliged to leave Mr Mayo from a similar cause.

Two or three weeks ago, a young man belonging to the parish broke one of Mr Mayo's hurdles, and the complainant appeared against him as a witness before the county magistrates at Salisbury. A penalty was inflicted for the offence, and on the complainant leaving the court he was set upon by the defendants and a number of other persons. They struck and kicked him, and he had some difficulty in releasing himself from the hands of the mob. He went to the Chough Inn, but seeing the mob at his heels Mr White sent him away, and he had to return to the Council House, where he remained nearly an hour, but eventually got away through a back door. A policeman came to the complainant in the Market place on his way back to the Council House, took his stick from him, and told the mob to stand back, but did nothing further to protect him.

The plaintiff gave evidence in support of the charge as stated by Mr Kelsey. He belonged to Alvediston, and was in the service of Mr Parham for nearly 20 years. Last ay week he gave evidence before the county magistrates court against some Bower Chalke people for breaking one of his master's hurdles. On leaving the court he was molested by the defendants and others. Jane Burdon said "We'll hang him up by the neck before he gets home". She also kicked him, and struck him. Mary Thick knocked his hat off, and John Thick took hold of his coat, and attempted to pull him backwards amongst the people. There were some Salisbury people in the mob, but a good

many of the others belonged to Bower Chalke. He had not ventured to go into the village of Bower Chalke since of an evening.

The two female defendants denied having touched the complainant, and Mary Thick said "she was only there to keep her son out of the crowd". The son denied, however, being near the place at all, and called a witness named Herrington, a porter in the employ of Mr Hatch, who stated that he was standing at Mr Sly's corner, talking to the defendant, when Lush and those who followed him went across the Market place from the Council House to the Chough. He saw Lush go into the Chough, and was certain that Thick had nothing to do with him up to that time.

In cross-examination, he stated that he first saw Thick coming down Endless Street. The magistrates having consulted the Mayor said they were of opinion that there was not sufficient corroboration of the complainant's statement to warrant a conviction. The balance of testimony was certainly on the side of the defendants, and the case must, therefore, be dismissed. They could not, of course, take cognizance of anything that happened at Bower Chalke: that was a matter to be dealt with by the county magistrates. The Bench regretted the occurrence of any disturbance in the Market place at Salisbury, and hoped that in future such a thing would be prevented by the police.

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