



Assault on Husband and Wife

Wilts Quarter Sessions Devises

The Queen on the Prosecution of John Kimber against Thomas King, of Alvediston, Charles Knight, of Coombe, Charles Thomas, of Shaftesbury, Augustine King, of Anstey, John Brothers, of Coombe, John Meatyard, of Alvediston, and Stafford Lane, of Bridmore

The defendants were indicted for an assault committed upon the prosecutor and his wife on the evening of the 7th of August last. It appeared, that on that day a grand dinner had been given by Mr. King to Captain Matthew, (the unsuccessful candidate at the last Shaftesbury election) and his friends, in a barn belonging to the former. A number of persons were assembled together on the outside, and some disturbance took place between a man named Stanley, and another named Sharp, and a fight was the consequence, in which the latter was beaten. Stanley being pursued by a large party, took refuge in the prosecutor's house, and about ten o'clock a considerable number of persons, some armed with sticks, forced open the prosecutor's door, pulled him out of his house, and most violently assaulted him. His wife went to interfere and beg for mercy, and she was treated in a similar manner. Mr. Hodges conducted the case for the prosecution and Mr. Bingham for the defence. The latter justified the assault, contending that Stanley had committed a breach of the peace, and that the defendants committed the assault in endeavouring to apprehend him, and by mistake, and to prove this fact several witnesses were examined for the defendants. Mr. Hodges, in a most eloquent and animated speech, replied, and very ably combated the law as laid down by Mr. Bingham, contending that not a shadow of evidence had been adduced to disprove or justify the assault, and calling on the jury to protect a poor man against a most violent and aggravated assault. The jury returned a verdict of Guilty against all the defendants except King and Knight and the Court inflicted a fine of £3 each, with the exception of Lane, who was fined only 1s.

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