



Crime and Punishment

Oaksey

Court Case

George Cargill Todd

George Cargill Todd, farmer, of Dean Farm, Oaksey, near Malmesbury, Wiltshire, was fined £20, had his driving licence disqualified for 12 months and was ordered to pay £2 6s 6d costs, at Cirencester Police Court on a charge of dangerous driving of a car.

On the evening of October 31, Todd's car was in collision with a cycle ridden by Mr Jack Stanley Price (23), of Whiteway, Cirencester, who died within a few minutes from his injuries. There was an alternative charge of careless driving, and Todd, who was represented by Mr R G Micklethwaite, pleaded not guilty to both charges. After Todd had been found guilty on the major charge, the summons for careless driving was withdrawn.

Supt J H Jotcham explained that Price was accompanying Miss Elizabeth Mary Short to her home at Coates. They were travelling towards the direction of Tetbury and the car was also proceeding that way. Price was abreast of Miss Short and as they neared the entrance to College Farm, a car approached from the direction of Tetbury. When the car reached the cyclists, defendant's car collided with Price's machine.

Measurements taken afterwards showed that the cycle was carried to the middle of the road 70 feet from where the accident took place. Defendant's car pulled up 264 feet away from the accident point. While the cyclist was lying in the road it was run over by another motorist.

Supt Jotcham showed the magistrates the damaged bicycle, and pointed out that there was no reflector at the rear. There was a reflector bracket, however, and he would call evidence to say that the machine had been fitted with a reflector 14 days previously.

The following day Todd called at Cirencester Police Station and made a statement.

Cecil Reynolds, cycle mechanic, employed by Messrs Farrell's, of Cirencester, stated that two weeks before the accident he did certain adjustments to Price's machine. The type of reflector on Price's machine was not old-fashioned. He had fitted a similar reflector to a machine recently.

In evidence, Todd said he had been driving for 15 years without ever being involved in an accident.

Mr Cyril Edwards, motor-cycle agent, of Cirencester, said that he was unable to obtain from the makers a similar reflector as that fitted to Price's machine, because the particular type was obsolete. He had conducted experiments with the type of reflector, however, and discovered that, when given a direct blow,

the glass broke at the first blow. He thought that if the glass had fallen out on the road after the accident, it would have been seen.

Mr Micklethwaite said that several theories could be submitted concerning the cause of the accident. It was possible that the reflector had been shaken off, or that Price was relying on the rear light and not carrying a reflector. If this was the case, then possibly he had switched out both front and rear lamps in error.

Gloucester Chronicle Thursday 24 November 1938

Cirencester magistrates yesterday refused to accede to an application made by Mr J S Sinnott, of Tetbury, on behalf of Mr George Cargill Todd, of Oaksey Manor, for the removal of the disqualification of a motor driving licence made by the Cirencester magistrates on November 23 last year.

Mr Sinnott said that Mr Todd in April was appointed Chief Air Warden for his district, and it was essential that his driving licence should be restored. Todd had been dependant on his wife for driving his car.

PS Thompson stated that Supt Jotcham had no objection to the removal of the disqualification of the licence. The Wiltshire Police also had no objection.

The magistrates having conferred in private, the chairman (Mr W I Croome) said that the magistrates had given very careful consideration to the application. They were fully aware of the position Mr Todd now held, but in view of the seriousness of the case, which resulted in the disqualification of the licence, they felt that they could not accede to the request.

Gloucester Echo Thursday 8 June 1939