



Not Guilty of Wreckless Driving

Trinity Quarter Session, Warminster Town Hall.

The Court was occupied for a considerable time in hearing an indictment against Leonard Maggs (38), Seend Park, Melksham, a well known Wilts agriculturalist and a director of the Wilts United Dairies, that on the 2nd March last, at Donhead St Mary, he, by furiously driving a motor car, did cause bodily harm to Ernest John Biddiscombe.

Accused pleaded not guilty. Mr F E Tucker prosecuted, and the defence was undertaken by Sir Henry Curtis Bennett, KC, and Mr Hold. It was explained that on the day in question the hill at Ludwell Hollow had frozen snow on the road, and in other parts it was slushy. The road was in about as bad and dangerous condition for motor traffic as one could well imagine. The prosecution put forward the plea that the accident happened through the reckless or wanton driving of the defendant. In evidence, prisoner said when he got to the cross roads before descending the hill into Ludwell he had no reason to suspect that he was going to get on to a worse surface that he had been on.

Sir H Curtis Bennett, addressing the jury for the defence said they were really trying this man because he really did have an accident. The cause of the accident was the sudden change in the condition of the road – a matter which prisoner could not have known was going to happen.

After an absence of nearly half an hour the jury returned a verdict of not guilty, and prisoner was discharged.

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At the Wilts Assizes at Devizes on Tuesday, before Mr Justice Roche, Ernest J Biddescombe, of Ludwell, Wilts and Reginald John Biddescombe his son, appeared as plaintiffs in a civil action, in which Leonard Maggs, of Seend Park, Melksham, a director of Wilts United Dairies, was defendant,

the claim being for damages sustained in an accident caused by a motor car which the defendant was driving on Sunday march 2nd. It will be recalled that as the plaintiff and his son were proceeding to church they were both knocked down and seriously injured.

There was a sequel at the Wilts Quarter Sessions held at Warminster in June, the defendant being acquitted on a charge of furious driving.

At the Assizes, Mr Rayner Goddard, Recorder of Bath (with whom was Mr S C Goodman) stated that an agreement had been arrived at under which defendant would pay £500 and costs, £20 to be allocated and invested in the interests of the son, a junior.

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