



William Frederick Meddick

The defendant in the case was William Frederick Meddick, of the White hart Hotel, Devizes. Supt Underwood said on June 29th a domestic servant named Lilian Elmes was walking along the Bath Road near the turning to Seend Station pushing her bicycle. With her was her mother. Defendant, who was driving a motor van, came up close behind and she remonstrated with him for not sounding his horn. His reply was "Get out of the way or I'll ride over you". It was alleged that he restarted his van, and that the front wheel caught the back wheel of the girl's cycle, knocking it over. The girl fell with the machine and was almost under the wheel of the car. After using bad language, defendant drove off at a fast speed. The bicycle with its buckled rear wheel was exhibited in the court.

Evidence was given by the girl, who said there was plenty of room for defendant to pass without running her down. A car coming in the opposite direction had passed and he had the whole of the road except for witness and her mother. Herbert James Elmes, the girl's father, who was about 20 yards in front, said he put up his hand to stop defendant, but he refused to pull up, and used bad language. A second witness, Percy James Hughes, a market gardener of Bromham, who was driving a motor van which had just passed prosecutrix and her mother said he heard a shout and glanced round to see defendant's car knock the bicycle out of the girl's hands. During the witness's examination, defendant exclaimed that it was a "concocted story and that the witnesses were committing perjury". PC Matthews detailed a conversation he had with defendant, who said he saw two women in the road and a large lorry approaching. He sounded his horn and kept his hand on the horn for some distance, travelling slowly as he did so. The couple in front took no notice, so that he was forced to stop before he came to them. The front wheel of his car touched the back wheel of the bicycle. He told then they ought to be prosecuted for obstructing the highway.

Giving evidence on oath, the defendant said he had only been in Devizes a month, and was engaged in moving his goods from Bath to Devizes at the time of the alleged offence. The woman and girl in the road looked round twice when he blew his horn and defiantly refused to get out of the way. His speed was a walking pace. He came on as far as he could and then stopped.

Dr Rumboll reminded defendant that the others had as much right in the road as he has.

Defendant: they were not on the side, but the crown of the road.

Dr Rumboll: Would it not have been prudent to have waited until the other car was clear?

Defendant said he agreed. He stopped for some time, but the woman and girl defiantly refused to move. He also said he had been driving for a long time, but had never had a case against him.

No other witnesses were called for the defence, and the Bench, after a short adjournment, decided to convict, and imposed a penalty of £1 and 10s costs. Dr Rumboll said as it was his first conviction, they would not suspend defendant's license.

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