



John Wallis Titt, of Chitterne, (1841-1910)
the founder of Woodcock Ironworks in 1876,
and who produced wind engines.
Photo courtesy of Dewey Museum, Warminster.

Road Locomotive Case

Warminster Petty Sessions

Town Hall, Saturday. Before Lord Henry F. Thynne, M. P. (in the chair), the Rev. G. F. S. Powell, and Captain B. Helms.

A Legal Diffilcutly

Mr. John Wallis Titt of the Woodcock Ironworks, was summoned for that he, the owner of a locomotive, did, on the 13th of October, at Norton-road, Sutton Veny, neglect to have a man preceding the said locomotive a distance of twenty yards, contrary to the statute.

Edward Hurdle, police constable stationed at Sutton Veny, said that on Tuesday, the 13th October, he was on duty in Norton-road, Sutton Veny, about half-past one, when he saw the locomotive proceeding in the direction of Sutton Veny. There were two men in the engine, but there was no one in front. He called to the driver to stop, and said to him, "Where is the man in front? The driver told witness that he had nobody in front because he did not think it was necessary upon that road. He added that he had driven the engine for six years and never been summoned. Then asked witness if he could go on, but the latter said "Don't you move until you have someone go front. Subsequently the driver of the engine obtained the services of a boy and left.

This was the case, and upon being asked if he had any questions to put to the witness, Mr. Titt said he objected to go into any offence other than that with which he was charged in the summons. The

summons said the offence took place on the 13th October, which had fallen upon a Monday, but the constable gave his evidence for the 14th.

Witness: I am sure it was on a Tuesday.

Mr. Wakeman: And on what day of the month did Tuesday come?

Mr. Titt: On the 14th. If there is a case against me for the 13th I am prepared to go into it.

Mr. Superintendent Perrett: The man dated his report the 13th, and alluded to the offence as having taken place on that day.

Witness: It must have been on the 14th.

Lord Henry Thynne: Do you wish to have a fresh summons issued, Mr. Titt?

Mr. Titt, Yes, my lord.

Superintendent Perrett: I think, Mr. Titt, I told you that the offence occurred on the day your engines were being removed from Sutton to Tytherington.

Mr. Titt: I have a letter from you to that effect, but you have made a regular bungle of the affair all the way through, and I mean to take all the advantage I can of it.

Lord Henry Thynne, after consulting with the other magistrates and Mr. Wakeman, said the summons would be dismissed and a fresh one issued.

Mr. Titt: And what about my expenses, and the expenses of my witnesses, my lord? I must claim them, if you please. I have five witnesses here.

The Bench consulted, and eventually the Chairman asked Mr. Titt what witnesses he had.

Mr. Titt: I have Mr. Rugg and his carter, George Smith, besides three men of my own - Bissett, Davis, and Adlam.

Superintendent Perrett: I don't know what these witnesses are called to prove, my lord. If it is to prove that Mr. Titt's engine was not in the neighbourhood on that day, perhaps you will take that into consideration in awarding the costs.

Mr. Titt said the witnesses were present in order to prove that his locomotive was not in the neighbourhood on the 13th of October.

After some further consultation, the Bench decided to allow the question of costs to stand over until the amended summons is heard, the Chairman remarking that sufficient care had not been exercised in issuing the summons.

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