



Policeman facing a felon

Transportation For Assaulting Policeman

At Salisbury Assizes

Stephen Lodge was indicted for assaulting Luke Ranger, a constable, in the execution of his duty, and cutting and wounding him, with intent to kill him, or to do him some grievous bodily harm.

Mr Slade conducted the prosecution, and Mr Rowe defended the prisoner.

Luke Ranger stated that he was one of the police, and on duty in a brick-field at Fisherton, on the 29th of Dec. He heard two men coming up a garden adjoining the brick-field. When they came up to him, he saw that one had a bag of coals, and the other a knob of coal. They rested against the hedge, and one of them said, "There is someone standing there." He immediately showed his lantern. They threw down the coals, and ran away. He ran after them, and caught Lodge going through a second hedge. He pulled him back, and asked him what it was they had thrown down? He would not speak. They then had a struggle in the garden, when witness was thrown on his back. Prisoner knelt upon him, and said, "Damn your eyes, you are no man. I'll do for you!" Witness struggled again, and got upon the prisoner.

He had his left hand towards the prisoner's neck, and with the right hand he was taking out his hand-bolts, when he felt something pierce his knee. He let him get up. The other man came back, and tried to rescue him. He held him fast, and said "You have almost done for me." He called out, "Cooper, he is one of the Salisbury Police." The other man ran away. Witness had hold of Lodge, who dragged him down the garden, and got into a sink-hole. Witness went round to the other side, dragged him out, and took him into Fisherton-street, where he met with another policeman, and gave him into his charge, while he went back to find the coals. He brought them out into the street. He then put one hand-bolt on Lodge, and the other on his own wrist. From the pain and loss of blood, he does not know what happened till he got to the station-house. He went to the Infirmary, where he remained seven weeks and three days.

Cross-examined by Mr Rowe. Did not hear what the Doctors in the Infirmary called the wound, as they talked Latin, which the witness did not understand. Did not call it a desperate struggle. Calls a desperate struggle when three or four men are on him at once. Has had many such when in the London Police. Was in the London Police three years.

Charles Lenton, one of the City Police, was going near the place on that night, and on hearing a struggle went towards the spot: met the prisoner running away, and Luke Ranger close behind. Could not tell whether he had hold of the skirt of the prisoner's coat. Ranger told him to secure the prisoner, while he went and fetched the property. Cooper, another policeman, came up, and went with Ranger and one brought a sack with some coals, and the other a lump. He felt Ranger's leg, and found the trousers torn or cut, and wet with blood. He asked him how it was done. He said he thought it was done in getting through a hedge.

Jas. Robertson, a surgeon, was called to see the prosecutor at the Wheat Sheaf Inn. There was a cut on the inside of the left leg, just above the knee. It was a clean cut. I must have been made by some sharp cutting instrument; it could not have been done with a rail. It could not have been done by falling on a flint, from the position of the wound.

Mr Rowe addressed the Jury on behalf of the prisoner.

Mr Justice Erskine summed up, and the Jury returned a verdict of Guilty.

The learned Judge sentenced the prisoner to transportation beyond the seas for 15 years.

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