

DOIN'S

County Petty Sessions



Charles Walmsley and George Walmsley, labourers, Chipping, were summoned for a breach of the Game Act - Mr Eastham appeared for Mr Weld, of Leagram Hall, on whose land the offence was committed - John Dewhurst, gamekeeper to Mr Weld, stated that on the 26th August he was out shooting along with others, and he heard two shots on Saddle Side Fell, Chipping. This was about 4pm. Witness and another gamekeeper proceeded in the direction from which the shots came, and saw the two defendants coming off the fell. Charles Walmsley had a gun, but the other was without. Witness kept out of sight, and went to the top of the fell. He then heard another shot, and saw the defendants coming to the top of the fell. Witness and Marsden secreted themselves, and defendants passed them. Chas. Walmsley was within 20 yards of them, but he could not see the other defendant on account of the ground sloping. Charles Walmsley carried his gun ready for use, and fired at three grouse, but witness could not tell whether one dropped. After going a short distance George Walmsley fired at a bird. Chas Walmsley again fired at grouse, as also did George Walmsley. Defendants afterwards went on to Wolfhouse Fell, and witness heard seven shots. He heard 17 shots altogether. They afterwards caught George Walmsley, who would not say whether he had got a license or not. He took his gun. Chas Walmsley got away, but the same night witness saw him in Chipping, and he denied having been on the fell, and said he would go up in the morning either to witness or Squire Weld. Witness knew both defendants very well, having known them all their lives. George Walmsley had been up before the Squire for poaching previously, and had promised not to offend again. Squire Weld had exclusive right of the shooting on the farm. - By Mr Baldwin (who appeared for the defendants): Defendants' father, who was a farmer, had the right to pasture sheep on a portion of the Saddle Fell. Was quite satisfied that he saw Charles Walmsley - Thomas Parker, water bailiff, gave corroborative evidence. - Mr Baldwin, in defence, said the only question was as to the identity of Charles Walmsley. They admitted that George Walmsley was on the fell, but not for the purpose of killing game. It was somewhat singular that the gamekeeper should watch the defendants for 3 hours and not go near them. It was a foggy day, and the gamekeepers were mistaken when they said that Charles Walmsley was there. The defendants were the sons of a respectable farmer, whose relations had been the tenants of Lord Derby for a generation or two. - After the defendants had given evidence in defence the Bench retired, and afterwards fined George Walmsley 40s and costs, but dismissed the case against Charles Walmsley.

The Preston Guardian Wednesday 14 September 1881

A story of distilling at one of these lonely places was recalled by the late George Bleasdale in one of his "Jottings" in St Bartholomew's parish magazine (August 1971). Charlie (Cor) Walmsley would tell that his family had a home-made still when they lived at one of the Saddle-side farms. But theirs was not the only still, and occasionally the excisemen had a look round. Charlie's story went that one night they had been busy distilling and had got a two-gallon stone jar nicely filled when a messenger came to say that the Excisemen were on their way. The still was hurriedly dismantled and Charlie took the jar up Saddle Fell and hid it. Unfortunately after the scare was over he couldn't find where he had hidden it, and never did find it, though they searched long and often. "So" Charlie would say, "somewhere on Saddle Fell is a drop of real good stuff".