

Rushton
Charge of Attempted Murder
Spring Assize 14th March 1878

Thomas Hawkes 16 Labourer was indicted for shooting with a loaded gun at Charles Elliot with intent to kill and murder him, at Rushton on the 20th November 1877.

A Second Count charged him shooting with intent to do Grievous Bodily Harm.

Mr Monkton appeared for the prosecution Prisoner was not defended. It appeared from the evidence of the Charles Elliot a coachman in the employ Of Mr Hamborough of Pipewell Hall, that about half-past three in the day In question he and a keeper name Tyrell were returning from Market Harborough when they saw three men one of whom was the prisoner. The keepers suspicions were raised that the prisoner had a gun in his pocket and consequently after the horse and trap had been put up, he and Elliot returned towards the place where they saw the men, as they arrived there they saw two of them standing on a bank beside the road the third one being in the field beating the hedge towards him Hawkes was one of those standing on the side of the road and he had a gun, the man with him was named Goode.

It was quite light and both Elliot and the keeper saw him distinctly, as soon as the men saw Tyrell and his companion they went of in the direction of Desborough and Elliot who was the lighter of the two men was requested by Tyrell to pursue them. Elliot was about 150 yds from the prisoner, Goode and the other man when they made their start, after a run of a short distance the men turned round and began to throw stones and threatened to knock of Elliot's head.

Again after another run of a short distance pursued by Elliot again they stopped and a cartridge being put in a gun Goode called to Elliot to stop if he went another yard he would be a dead man Elliot replied he would follow them and they continued their flight towards Desborough across some fields one of which was stubble here two of the men called out "shoot him" and almost directly after the prisoner pointed the gun at Elliot and discharged it something Elliot thought was a bullet passed close to his leg and entered with a thud into the ground nearby.

The men continued their journey towards Desborough and Elliot heard one of them say "give me a bullet Ill do for him next time " the pursuit was continued by Elliot and Tyrell who shortly caught up but prisoner and his friends had made good there escape

Subsequently on the 4th Dec 1877 prisoner was placed with five other men in the Police Station at Kettering the keeper Tyrell and Elliot was shown in and immediately identified him as the man who had committed the offence

complained of. Hawkes denied the charge or that he has ever been out with Goode, he still adhered to the statement but made no speech in defence. The jury after a short deliberation returned a verdict of guilty on the second count His lordship commenting on the gravity of the charge sentenced prisoner to Penal Servitude for five years.

This Piece was taken from the Northampton Mercury which can be viewed at Northampton Library