

OUR HISTORY

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HORSHAM PETTY SESSIONS

WILFUL DAMAGE AT WEST GRINSTEAD

Henry Laker, William Howard, Harry Brooker, John Mobsby, Frederick Laker, Raymond Laker, George Chandler, William Newman and Edwin Childs were summoned by Sir Raymond Burrell for committing damage to two panes of glass, one window blind, and two gates, to the amount of 12s. 6d. on the 18th October, 1890.

Mr. J. F. A. Cotching appeared for the prosecution, and said that on the previous Saturday a wedding took place at West Grinstead. The defendants assembled after the wedding at Mr. Walter Thomas Woolgar's house, who sent out two jugs of beer to them. Afterwards, however, they committed the damage mentioned. Two gates had been taken off their hinges, and windows broken. In two cases the defendants, on being charged, admitted moving the gates. One of the defendants was seen to throw a stone at the window. He (Mr. Cotching) would prove that the defendants were all together, and so were guilty. Walter Thomas Woolgar, living at Dial Post, West Grinstead, said he was cowman to Sir Raymond Burrell, and lived in a cottage belonging to the latter. Saturday last was his marriage day. On the night of that day he was at home with his wife and friends. The defendants came and sang outside the house at about a quarter past eleven. Witness asked his brother to take them out some beer, and about two quarts was given to them. They still remained outside, and used bad language. They beat the window with their hands, and he went out and asked them to go away. All the defendants were in his garden close up to the window. Brooker said if he wanted anything he could have it, and defendant understood it to mean a challenge to fight. They still remained and continued to beat the window.

He had not asked any of the defendants to his house, and he did not expect them. Witness pulled one of the defendants away from the window, and asked them to go away quietly. He went back indoors and sat down, and they still remained outside the window "singing about." Witness went out again, and on opening the door he found two gates put against the door, and a great stone in the middle of the sill, nearly a half-hundredweight. They ran into the road, and Brooker said "If you

come out into the road I'll take all five of you." Witness went indoors again, and after a little time three stones came through the window. The stone produced was the first one thrown. It came through the window and the blind, and struck the opposite wall. There were about half-a-dozen people in the room but fortunately it did not hit anyone. The two smaller stones (produced) came through together and broke another pane of glass. He saw nobody else outside the house but the nine defendants. He went out at once, and all were in the road except Laker and Howard, who came from the back of the house. Witness asked the two latter defendants to wait until the parish constable came, which they did. The gates were of wood, and small garden ones. They were not broken before the defendants paid him the visit. Samuel Stevens, steward to Sir Raymond Burrell, deposed to hearing of the damage on Sunday. It would cost 4s. To replace the glass in the windows, the gates 6s., and to repair the blind, 2s. 6d. William Gander, a farmer, of Brookland Farm, West Grinstead, who said his father was the parish constable, corroborated the evidence of Woolgar. When the first stone was thrown through the window a piece of glass went into witness's eye, and also in his hand. The stone throwing sent Mrs. Woolgar into a fit. Woolgar did nothing to provoke the defendants, and witness knew of no reason for such behaviour on their part.

Edwin Woolgar, a carter to Sir R. Burrell, living at Park Farm, said he was Walter Woolgar's brother. He deposed to being one of the marriage party, and took out about two quarts of beer to the defendants.

P. C. Carter deposed that at one o'clock on Sunday morning, from information received, he went to Woolgar's cottage at Dial Post, and noticed that two gates were taken off their hinges. They were lying about five yards from the front door. He went inside the house; glass was lying all over the room, and two stones were in the middle, whilst one was in a flower pot. There was a mark on the opposite wall, and one of the females was unconscious. He saw eight of the defendants on that day, and Chandler admitted removing one gate, which he said he tried to put on again. Frederick Laker admitted throwing one in the ditch, and wished to "pay and make it up." Mobsby admitted being there, and said the damage was done in a joke. All of the eight admitted being there, and Raymond Laker said he left before the windows were broken.

Defendants had to pay the costs and damages, and were each fined 5s., which came to something like 17s. each.

(Extracted from West Sussex County Times 1st November, 1890)

Family History.

33 year old Walter Thomas Woolgar married 26 year old Emma Pelling from Ashington. The 1891 Census shows the family living in Dial Post together with 5 year old daughter Ada Pelling born in West Grinstead (an illegitimate daughter?) Walter was a milkman.

By 1901 Walter, a cattleman, and Emma had moved to West Lodge, Shipley. Their 9 year old child Emma, born in West Grinstead in 1891 (after the census) was also in the house. But Ada, then aged 15, was a servant in the Brown household at Huddlestone Farm in Steyning.

By 1911 Walter a "cowman on farm" and Emma, still at West Lodge had been joined by Walter's father a 76 year old widower (born in Wiston). Ada, 25, had married Maurice Henry Millham in 1910. and had a son James Walter born in May, 1910. Their home was Garlands Lodge, The Haven, Billingshurst.

Emma, 19, was a parlour maid to the Campion household at the West Grinstead Rectory. In 1915 she married James Millham from Shipley.