

Hempstead snippets

Tuesday, August 27th 1844

GREAT BARDFIELD PETTY SESSION, AUG. 19.

Before J. E. Brise, Esq. Chairman; J. Walford, T. White, W. H. Leyton, Esqs. and Rev. B. E. Lampet.

THE HEMPSTEAD FIRE.

Sarah Jobson, aged 16, nursemaid in the service of Mr. Bacon, of Bull's Bridge Farm, Hempstead, was brought up for further examination, charged with setting fire to a straw stack, the property of her master. Mr. Bacon deposed to the damage done, and that he had been obliged to scold the girl the same morning for neglecting the children.

Harriett Stock deposed—*I am housemaid in Mr. Bacon's service; about a quarter to eleven I was going from the scullery to the dairy and saw smoke in the road arising from the back of the barn; I ran round and saw the stack on fire, and immediately gave the alarm; about ten minutes before, I saw the smoke; the prisoner Sarah Jobson came out of the stack-yard with the baby in her arms. About a fortnight ago, on the morning of the fire, at Blagdon Farm, Hempstead, prisoner said, "I should like to see a good fire;" some day since then she said, "I should like to see all my master's buildings on fire;" and once she said, "If the straw was set fire to in the stack-yard it would be sure to light the buildings."*

Catherine Rumball stated—*About half-past ten I saw Sarah Jobson come from the stack-yard; it was about ten minutes before the fire broke out; when she came in I asked her to fetch some water; she said she did not feel well, she had a pain within her; I said "Your looks do not pity you."*

John Brazier, a boy, about 12 years old, in the service of Mr. Bacon, deposed—*I was churning butter in the dairy about ten minutes before the fire broke out; I saw Sarah Jobson come from the stack-yard; she asked me to go and get some eggs, but I could not. After the fire, in the afternoon, I said to her,—"You set the stack on fire;" she said, "I did not."*

Superintendent Oakley deposed—*I arrived at the fire in the afternoon; I proceeded to make enquiries as to the origin of the fire, and the prisoner, Sarah Jobson, said, "I was in the scullery about a quarter to eleven, when Harriet Stock called out, 'where does that smoke come from?' and then we ran behind the house into the ley, and saw the stack on fire. I think I was last in the stack-yard before the fire broke out. I went about half an hour before to look for eggs—there was a nest in a wagon-load of straw." The prisoner then went with me into the yard, and said, "the fire broke out there," pointing to the corner of the stack, about a yard and a half from the barn; she then said, "the nest was on the side of the wagon nearest the stack; I brushed the eggs out with a bush from the nest, and master Major Bacon picked them up; I had the baby in my arms, and master Major was with me all the time in the stack-yard. When I went to look for the eggs I saw the stack, but did not go near it; there was no smoke then, I am certain. I washed and dressed master Major, and am sure he was with me, because I could not pick up the eggs with the child in my arms."—Superintendent Oakley further deposed that the distance from the wagon to the stack pointed out by the girl was about 17 paces as he stepped it, and from information he afterwards received he took the prisoner into custody.*

Harriet Stock and Mrs. Rumball were recalled, and proved that Master Major Bacon was in the wood-yard quite away from the stack-yard, at play with a younger brother, at the time the prisoner stated he was in the stack-yard with her.

P. C. Moor 8, deposed that he arrived at the fire soon after the alarm was given, and found an egg about 4 paces from the part of the stack where the fire broke out. On searching the prisoner's box, he found a small quantity of tobacco, which Mr. Bacon identified as having been taken from his pocket two days before. While conveying the prisoner before the magistrate, her mother said to her, "You will be sure to go to prison;" prisoner answered, "What for, mother, —if I was in the stack-yard no one saw me set it on fire."

Inspector Smith deposed, the prisoner was in his custody on the night of the 16th inst. and stated, "If I were to say I lit the stack people would believe me—I'm not so soft." She afterwards said, "They cannot harm me as no one saw me set the stack on fire."

The prisoner denied the charge, and was fully committed for trial at the next assizes.

Friday, June 10th 1881

HEMPSTEAD.—FIRE.—On Sunday morning the Oak public-house, at Hempstead, and the out-buildings belonging thereto, a small thatched shed excepting, were totally destroyed by fire. Some thatched cottages adjoining narrowly escaped. The fire was first observed by Mr. Josiah Andrews, a neighbouring farmer, between four and five o'clock in the morning. He at once gave the alarm. Mr. John Knight, veterinary surgeon, the occupier, and his wife and family, got up as soon as they could, and saved as much of the furniture as they were able. It was, however, considerably broken by removal. The property burnt is as follows:—The Oak public-house, lath and plaster, partly slated and partly thatched; one barn, one shed, and one stable, thatched; also part of one of the adjoining thatched cottages, together with Mr. Knight's veterinary fittings, drugs, instruments, &c.; the furniture in two bedrooms, and the clubroom, three barrels of beer, half a barrel of stout, a quantity of gin, rum, brandy, whisky, cigars, tobacco, pots, and glasses, cart and harness, hen and nine ducks. Mr. Knight's furniture is insured in the Essex and Suffolk Equitable. Inquiries as to the cause of the fire have been made by Sergt. J. Skinner and P.cs. Cook and Copping, but at present it remains a mystery.

Friday, June 24th 1881

GREAT BARDFIELD, JUNE 20.

Magistrates present—Colonel Brise, C.B., M.P., chairman; and the Rev. W. E. L. Lampet.

Walter Humphries and David Chapman, of Finchingfield, labourers, were summoned for neglecting to cause their respective children to attend school.—The case was proved by Mr. Charles Banbury, of Wethersfield, relieving officer and school attendance officer.—Neither of the defendants appeared, and each was fined 1s. and costs 4s., or seven days' imprisonment.—Mr. Chapman, who was present, applied for and was allowed a month to pay the money.

The licence of the Fox Inn, Finchingfield, was temporarily transferred from Arthur Wright to Henry William Stone, and that of the Oak Inn, Hempstead (recently destroyed by fire), from John Knights to Wm. Joseph Mortlock, of the firm of Hawkes and Co., of Bishop Stortford. A temporary building has been erected upon the site of the old premises for carrying on the business until the new house is built. It is stated that it will be commenced at once.

The landlords of the several inns at Great Bardfield, and those of the Boot and Crown beerhouses, applied by themselves or their agents, and were allowed an extension of two hours on the night of Wednesday, the 22nd inst., for Bardfield fair.

Monday March 2nd 1885

HEMPSTEAD.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.—About two o'clock on Friday morning a fire broke out at the workshop of Frank Turner, a blacksmith, at Hempstead. The place, being thatched, was soon destroyed and its contents, consisting chiefly of working tools, were all more or less damaged. A shed adjoining the shop, with a valuable cart therein the latter being the property of Henry Prior, a bricklayer, was also consumed, together with a thatched cottage standing near by, occupied by Thomas Bird, a retired blacksmith, and the greater part of the household furniture. The fire was fortunately seen by a young man named Adam Purkiss, who had been employed near by a night work. He roused the inhabitants, on the result might have been far more serious. The Saffron Walden Fire Brigade attended with their fire engines, and with a number of willing hands did good service in stopping the progress of the fire. Sergeant Fulcher, P.c.'s. Reed Robinson, and Whiting were in attendance. The house, shop, and shed were the property of the parish of Hempstead, and were insured in the Essex and Suffolk Equitable Fire Office. Mr. Bird's furniture is insured in the same office. Frank Turner, less fortunate, is not insured. The police made the usual inquiry as to the cause of the fire, which is at present unknown, but the general opinion is that it was caused by a defective forge in the shop, which had been used up to six o'clock on Thursday night.

Friday August 21, 1931

FIRE AT HEMPSTEAD

A fire occurred at the Forge House, Hempstead, belonging to the Parish Council. Mrs. Darkins and Mrs. Healey went for a walk up the road, and returned to the house to get coats. An oil lamp was used to light a cupboard, but the chimney fell off the lamp to the floor, causing a slight fire, which was extinguished. Smoke was afterwards discovered coming from a bedroom—in which a baby had been left asleep. Mr. Jack Drane broke a window, and with other helpers put out the fire. The baby, which was still sleeping, was safely rescued from the room, which was filled with smoke. The damage to clothing by the fire is estimated at between £40 and £50.

Friday, July 27th 1897

HEMPSTEAD.

STACK FIRE.—On Monday afternoon the Saffron Walden Fire Brigade proceeded to the farm of Mr. W. T. Coleman, of Wicklow Hall, where a straw stack from eleven acres was on fire. It was impossible to save the stack, but other stacks and the farm buildings were preserved. The damage is laid at about £30.

Friday, November 30th 1923

HEMPSTEAD.

FIRE.—At 3.30 on Tuesday morning a fire was discovered in a stackyard at Phillips Farm, belonging to Mr. Thos. Alfred Andrews. The outbreak was first seen by Mr. O. Reader, who saw the reflection of the flames from his window at Calthorpes Farm, half a mile away. Mr. Reader called Henry Foster, and together they went to the scene and aroused Mr. Andrews, who was in bed. A stack was well alight, and the men turned their attention to prevent the flames spreading to other stacks. In this they were successful, and the Saffron Walden Fire Brigade, which arrived at 6.45 a.m., under Major W. F. Ackland, found a good supply of water, and quickly had the fire under control.

Friday, March 27th 1931

HEMPSTEAD

FIRE AT POULTRY FARM.—On Saturday night a fire occurred at High Lea Poultry Farm, occupied by Mr. Wm. Wood. The poultry-house, three brooders, and 46 chickens were destroyed, and two wooden sheds were extensively damaged. The Saffron Walden Fire Brigade attended. The cause of the fire is believed to have been the overheating of a brooder.