



Dedham High Street in 1897. Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebration was on 22nd June.

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**The Evening Star,
Ipswich, Friday
June 18th 1897.**

THE SHOOTING AFFAIR AT DEDHAM.

At Essex Assizes on Thursday, before Mr. Justice Mathew, John Denny (on bail) was indicted for causing grievous bodily harm to Rachel Balls, with intent to murder her, on February 16th, at Dedham. A second count charged the prisoner with feloniously wounding the prosecutrix with intent to do her grievous bodily harm. Mr. C. E. Jones appeared for the prosecution, and Mr. Muir for the defence. Mr. Jones said the prisoner was in the employment of Mr. Dunnnett, of Dedham, and was a man of perfectly good character, and the prosecutrix was the wife of another

man in Mr. Dunnnett's service, and also a man of exemplary character. Balls and the prisoner, so far as was known, were on good terms, though there was one little circumstance which had slightly ruffled the even tenor of their way. On Tuesday night, February 16th, Mrs. Balls was in her kitchen alone, her husband, who was a shepherd, being away at some farm attending to his duties. She had a lighted lamp in her hand, and hearing some noises in the road, out of curiosity opened the lobby door, and was about to go into her bedroom. The light she was carrying would show that someone was moving about the house, and also, of course, would show the position of the person who held the lamp. At the moment she entered the lobby she was struck in the face and

elsewhere several times with some shot. She became insensible from fright and shock, and remembered no more until her husband found her in the lobby bleeding from wounds in the face. It was evident, Mr. Jones continued, that the prisoner had had some drink that night, and that he got the gun, a double-barrelled one, from one his master's sheds. At about half-past eleven the same night, two or three minutes after the shots were fired, prisoner went to house of neighbour named Emeny, and when Alfred Emeny came out the prisoner said to him I have shot someone down at Balls' ; go and look what I have done."

MR. E. BEARD, land agent and surveyor, Colchester, produced a plan of Mr. Balls' house, while evidence bearing out the opening statement was given by the prosecutrix, Alfred Emeny, and Robert Emeny. In cross examination both of the last two witnesses said they had never seen the prisoner worse for drink, and they had always found him a peaceable and quiet man.

FREDK. W. BALLS, the husband of the prosecutrix, said that on the Saturday previous to February 16th, he met the prisoner. They exchanged "good nights," the prisoner, however, adding an offensive remark. Mr. Balls asked, "What's the matter " and prisoner replied, "You and your wife have been scandalizing me and my wife." Witness added that on the night of February 16th he found that six panes of one of the windows were broken by the firing.

DR. JAMESON deposed that he found the prosecutrix suffering from nervous shock, and from three or four pellet wounds in her face.

JOHN HUBBARD stated that he met the prisoner on the roadway, and the latter alleged that Mrs. Balls had been raising scandal about him.

MR. JONES: What did you say?

WITNESS: I said, "Never mind, John, what the women say." [Laughter.]

Evidence was also given by Mr Norman Dunnett and Police-sergeant Hatt, who stated that he found 80 shot marks on the frame the window in Mr. Balls' house. There were also numerous marks of pellets on the partition of the bedroom, while the curtains of window were also riddled. Witness produced the curtains, and a piece of the partition. Police-constable Ponder deposed to arresting the prisoner in a chaff-house on Thursday at Hill Farm, Dedham. Prisoner was in a very dark place, and covered over with two sacks, and in a very exhausted condition.

MR. MUIR, in addressing the jury, contended that no motive had been suggested for the prisoner to shoot with intent to murder anyone. If it had been the intention of the prisoner to murder anyone it was not likely he would have remained in the position he did when firing, but would have gone close up to the window, or at any rate fired as low as he could through the window, instead of high, for the pellet-marks were found the top of the partition and the window-frame, and some even on the ceiling. In fact, there was not the slightest intention on the part the prisoner to injure anyone but merely to alarm and scare, and possibly to do a little injury to the property. The Jury found the prisoner guilty only of unlawfully wounding the prosecutrix.

HIS LORDSHIP said the prisoner had given way to a malicious feeling and to drink, and it was very fortunate for him the injuries to the prosecutrix were not more serious. He (the Judge) should take into consideration the prisoner's excellent character, and should sentence him six months' hard labour.

Note: The trial took place just four days before the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Report on Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in Dedham.

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**Essex Standard -
Saturday 26 June
1897.**

Loyal Dedham celebrated the Jubilee by a series of Dinners, Teas, and Sports and an elaborate display of decorations etc. The fine morning was ushered in by the bells chiming a peal, whilst the Union Jack floated from the old church tower. At 1pm Messrs Saunders and Sons entertained about 70 of their employees, tenants, and friends to a most excellent repast at the Marlborough Head Hotel, the chair being occupied by the head of the firm, Mr. NAT SAUNDERS.

At 2pm a procession of school children, headed by the Ipswich Town Band, paraded up the street, and afterwards filed up to the church, where a short service was conducted by the Rev H. BIDDELL (curate-in-charge in the regrettable absence of the VICAR). The band was accompanied by the organ during the service and at its conclusion played the National Anthem.

The company afterwards adjourned to the old Grammar School playground, kindly lent by Mrs Penrose where a lengthened programme of athletic sports was carried out by a committee of the following gentlemen: - Dr. C. E. D. Malle, Mr. C. D. Malle, Rev. H. Biddell, Messrs. H. Evans, Percy Clover, and Mr. J. E. Saunders, jun.

After an interval the children adjourned to the new Grammar Schoolroom, where they and persons of over 65 years of age to a meat tea provided by a committee consisting of Re. H. Biddell, C. Fairhead, A. Thurston, E. Clover, A. Dunnage and W. Griffiths sec. Tea being ended the company again adjourned to the playground, and at the

conclusion of the sports dancing was kept till 9pm.

Also, at 1pm, Mr. Cottee gave a substantial repast to his employees at the Stud Farm, Lamb Corner.

Perhaps the most enjoyable reunion of the whole parish took place at the Grove, Dedham, the residence of Mr. R. Hamilton Lang, who on that day, became on his retirement Sir Robert Hamilton Lang after many years' arduous service as the Commissioner at Cairo.

At 1pm, by special invitation, about 70 or 80 persons residing in Lady Lang's visiting district assembled to partake of a most substantial collation, served in a most beautiful Arabesque tent erected on the lawn. The chair was occupied by Sir HAMILTON LANG.

After dinner the company enjoyed themselves with dances, afterwards adjourning to the Park, where a course had been laid out for a good programme of races. At the conclusion of the sports, the company again adjourned to the lawn, and after partaking of tea and dancing to the enlivening strains of the string band. The prizes were distributed to the women by Lady Lang.

Mr. James Hatfield Beck, of the Hill House, kindly entertained his past and present tenants and their friends to a substantial meat tea in a tent erected in his grounds.

Dancing, songs, and general enjoyment continued to a late hour, and it is great matter of congratulations that although the public-houses were open until late, and free beer *ad lib.* distributed, not a single case of intoxication was witnessed or reported through the village.