

Sunshine Advocate

Driver of ill-fated car on traffic charges, Ronald Bowen Jack Martin

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Driver of Ill-fated car on Traffic Charges

A fatal accident in South Road, Braybrook, on April 28 last was recalled at Sunshine court on Tuesday when the driver of the car involved faced two traffic charges.

Victim was Ronald Bowen Jack Martin of Darley St., Braybrook, a pedestrian who was struck by a car driven by Kenneth Maxwell White, of Ann St., Posterny as he was crossing the road.

Sen. Const. T. Daly, who conducted the police case, said a Cooper's Court had been held and had returned a verdict on Martin of death by misadventure, charging the driver of a third car which ran over Martin as he lay on the road.

White was charged with speeding and driving at a dangerous speed. On the second charge he was fined £24 with £1/15/- costs, the first charge being withdrawn.

Pauline Veronica Campbell, of Beachley Street, Braybrook, shorthand typist, said she was on her way to a friend's place about 7 p.m. and had turned from Beachley Street into South Road.

A car travelling at high speed along the centre of South Road caught her eye and she watched it because of its speed and position on the road.

She heard a screech as of car brakes and then a loud bang and saw the shape of a body fall on to the roadway. The car went on for some distance.

SAW NO PEDESTRIAN

Miss Campbell said she did not see the pedestrian before he was struck. The weather was fairly fine.

Mr. R. Briglia (for White): What made you think the car was speeding? You are not a car driver, are you?

Miss Campbell: I could tell when it was going fast or not.

Mr. Briglia: What was the street lighting like? — I think there was a light on the corner. I am not sure.

"ROUGHLY 60"

Railway guard Garnet Lionel Wicks, Devonshire Road, Sunshine said he was driving along South Road on his way to some shops in Beachley Street and was about to make a right-hand turn when he saw a car coming at a good speed — roughly 60. When the other car was about 40 yards away he saw a body fall from it. The car stopped in a few feet. He did not know how fast back the impact took place.

The other car, driven by White, was in the centre of the road when he first saw it, and veered left slightly as it approached. It stopped about 30 or 40 yards before it reached him.

Mr. Briglia: How did you assess the speed of White's car? Wicks: I have been driving for 26 years.

Mr. Briglia: At night you would only see lights approaching. How could you say if it was doing 40 or 10? — If it had been travelling slow I would have been able to turn before it got there.

Did you see any pedestrians? Not before the man was struck.

What about the street lighting? — It is bad there.

LIGHTING BAD

Senior Constable Daly said he was summoned by radio to the scene. South Road had no white lines then, and the lighting was bad. It was a fine night.

He found that White's car had struck the pedestrian 244-ft. east of Darley Street. Duo from White's car indicated the point of impact, which was about 2-ft. on the incorrect side of the road.

He saw light brake marks, and 105-ft. farther west the brake marks were light, veering left, and it was another 131-ft. to where White's car stopped 16-ft. from the kerb and 14-ft. from the road centre.

White told him, said Sen. Const. Daly, that he didn't panic when he struck the pedestrian. If he had, and hit the brakes hard, he would have thrown the pedestrian in front of the car and run over him. The only thing was to brake slowly and try to balance the pedestrian on the bonnet.

TAXI EXPERIENCE

White said he had been driving taxis for five years. His speed along South Road would not be more than 35 mph. That day he had only three glasses of beer.

As he drove along South Road he saw a car in front of him, then he heard a bang and saw a man on the bonnet of his car. Street lighting in the vicinity was very bad. There was no light on the Darley Street corner, not even a fitting to hold a light.

Mr. Prowse: Wouldn't your car lights illumine the road? White: They were on low and didn't show a long distance.

Mr. Prowse said he was satisfied White's speed was excessive, otherwise Miss Campbell's attention would not have been drawn. Mr. Wicks also had the belief that White's speed was high, but the position from where he judged it would not help.

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