

WOMAN BOUND OVER ON "MISCHIEF" CHARGE

ATTACK STORY A "COMPLETE CONCOCTION"

POLICE at Wellingborough spent a total of 227½ hours and travelled 388 miles in trying to trace two men alleged to have attacked a Bozeat woman, only to find out later that the allegation was a "complete concoction," it was stated at Northampton Quarter Sessions, yesterday.

Before the Court was Rosa Ellen Drage (36), of Stonebank, High-street, Bozeat, charged with effecting public mischief by a false statement that she had been raped, causing police officers to devote time to the investigation of the allegation, at Bozeat, on May 16 last.

Drage, who had been committed from Wellingborough Police Court, pleaded guilty, and was bound over for one year.

GRAPHIC ACCOUNT

Major Manningham - Buller, prosecuting, said that on May 16 P.C. Forth stated that accused gave him a most graphic and detailed account of how she was set upon by two men.

The police immediately took action, and four policemen were engaged on inquiries for a period of 227½ police hours, and 388 miles were travelled.

Accused was then seen again by the police, and in an alleged statement said that the whole of her story was entirely false, untrue and a complete concoction. She said she made up the story to tell the people with whom she lived in order that it would account for her "condition which resulted from another form of conduct."

ALONE IN THE HOUSE

Det-Constable Perkins, Wellingborough, said the accused was born at Earls Barton. After leaving school she entered domestic service and was married in 1933. She had never been in any trouble before, and her husband was serving overseas.

Mrs. E. K. Lane, defending, said the case was a very sad one. The court had heard how a youth of 16½ who was billeted on the defendant, was successful in having intercourse with the woman against her will. She was alone in the house at the time, and did not cry out because her invalid mother was the only other person on the premises and she did not want to distress her.

She never complained after-

wards of the youth's behaviour because she thought that no one would believe her—not being able to control a youth of 16.

The police, said Mrs. Lane, had taken a statement from the youth in which he admitted the accusations. In May this year the accused believed, wrongly, as it turned out, that she was pregnant. This caused her very great distress, and she worked herself up to a state of frenzy. Her husband was in the Army, and she wondered what the neighbours would say.

She went to friends with the sole object of explaining away her "pregnancy," and invented this story. She never thought that the police would be called in, and was quite horrified when her friends sent for the police.

"This woman is not a criminal in the ordinary sense of the word," argued Mrs. Lane, and "my instructions are that she looks after her invalid mother half the night as well as during the day."

"Neither is it a case of a false accusation being made against a particular man, because she gave no description that could have led to the identification of any person."

Binding Drage over, the Chairman said the accused had acted more like a fool than a criminal.