



CORONERS INQUESTS



Inquest Reports 1845-1938

1845

Inquest by Mr. Whitmarsh, - At Badbury, on the body of John CULLEY, waggoner to Mr. BRUNSDEN of Stratton. Deceased was returning home from Marlborough with a loaded wagon, when on going down the hill by the Plough Inn, the horses ran away and deceased, in the act of getting down, fell under the wheels, and was killed on the spot. Verdict – Accidental death. [Reading Mercury 06-12-1845.](#)

1846

At Stratton St. Margaret on the body of Kate PICKETT, nearly 15 years, who had been living in service of respectable family. From evidence of another servant, she had recently been given notice to quit. Mother had visited on morning of death as girl was low of spirit. On leaving the mother told her to be good, she replied, do not be surprised if you do not see me again! About 2 in the afternoon, she became sick and went to her room. By 5 she was no better and would not eat. Between 7 & 8 she was visited again and being no better the doctor was called. She died about 15 minutes later. The doctor examined the body which was in an inflamed state indicating poison. Verdict: death by poison. [Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 23-07-1846.](#)

1847

Before W. B. Whitmarsh – on the body of William PAGE, 83. The widow stated he had left home in morning to help neighbour with winnowing some clover seed. It had been decided to put off work to following day. Talking as they returned across an allotment field, the neighbour noticed Mr. Page had gone quiet. Looking round he found him dead on the ground. [Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 04-03-1847.](#)

At Stratton St. Margaret on the body of John DANCE, 19 years. William Leighfield deposed that he was a porter at the Swindon Station, and at the previous evening between five and six o'clock, as he was crossing the line near the goods shed, he saw the deceased between some trucks, and whilst in the act of getting away he was caught between the buffers. Deceased fell to the ground as soon as the truck parted, and soon afterwards he was conveyed to his lodgings at Stratton. He could not walk, and complained of internal injury, and in the course of the night he died. Verdict – accidental. [Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 21-10-1947.](#)

1851

At Stratton St Margaret, near Swindon, on the body of John HOUSE, 36 years of age. The deceased was at work in company with Thomas ANSELL, on Tuesday afternoon last, between four and 5 o'clock, on the Great Western Railway, in Stratton cutting. As the up express from Exeter was coming along, they both got away according to Ansell's statement on the down line. He then went a few yards to get some small bolts, and on turning round he missed the deceased. Having looked about, he found him one hundred and thirty yards off in a gutter, on the north side of the railway towards Shrivenham. His clothes were all torn to pieces, and his body was dreadfully injured, causing instantaneous death. Witness was of opinion that deceased had gone back to the up-line for the purpose of removing a bar which was leaning against a transom, thinking it might not be cleared by the terrain, thus causing the accident. The bar he found about thirty yards further on and bent. The driver of the train stopped on purpose at

Shrivenham station, giving information of what had taken place, when superintendent and others immediately came to the spot. Verdict – Accidentally killed. *Salisbury & Winchester Journal Sat 14-06-1851.*

At Stratton St Margaret, on the body of Fanny LARGE, 6 years of age, whose parents live in a cottage adjoining the Wilts and Berks Canal. She had only been missing a few minutes, when the mother went out in search for her daughter, and discovered her bonnet floating in the water. The father was called, who immediately jumped into the canal, and took out the deceased, who was lying dead on the bottom. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 10-07-1851.*

1852

Inquest at Stratton on the body of Ann Kirby, 46 years of age. The deceased was hay making in a field when she was suddenly taken ill, and having reached home, she became insensible and died from exposure to the sun. Verdict accordingly. *Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 17 July 1852*

On Friday, Mr. George Reynolds and his wife were on their way home from Swindon, when near the village of Stratton St. Margaret, one of the wheels of the gig in which they were travelling came off, and Mr. Reynolds and his wife were precipitated into the road, both receiving very severe injuries. *Unknown Newspaper 1852*

1854

Inquest at Stratton, on the body of John Hyde, 18 months old. The mother had gone to the parish to a shop, and during her absence deceased drank some boiling water from a kettle, which brought on inflammation, and caused his death a few hours afterwards. Verdict accordingly. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 2 April 1854*

1855

Inquest on body of William Wakefield, an aged man. It appeared in evidence the deceased called at a house on his way home from church, and whilst standing against the door leading into the street, he suddenly fell down and expired. Verdict, Visitation of god. *Salisbury & Winchester Journal, 4 August 1855*

1856

INQUEST – On body of William WAKEFIELD, an aged man. It appeared in evidence the deceased called at a house on his way home from church, and whilst standing against the door leading into the street, he suddenly fell down and expired. – Verdict, Visitation of god. *The Salisbury & Winchester Journal 04-08-1855.*

1857

At Stratton, on the body of Alfred Pound, a mason, 36 years of age. Deceased left home after dinner to go to a house in the same parish, to give instructions to William Jewell, also a mason, where he was to work. This witness stated that the deceased was in attendance there ten minutes, appearing the same as usual, when he said, "Bill, catch me, I feel faint." On his sinking, witness caught him in a chair. He breathed heavily for a moment and expired. Verdict, Visitation of God. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 26 February 1857*

1858

-INQUEST – at Stratton, on the body of Edward YEATES, 15 months old. Betsy SELLWOOD, of Hannington, stated that about half past 2 o'clock in the afternoon, as she was passing by the cottage of John YEATES, at Stratton, she saw some children crying, was told by one of them that deceased had fallen into the brook which runs at the bottom of the garden. On looking into the water, she saw the deceased floating, and on taking him out he was dead. The parents were from home at work. Verdict – Accidentally drowned. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 21-04-1859.*

At Stratton, on the body of Edward KIMBER, a coast guard pensioner, 71 years of age, who had been living in Whiteway, near Bristol. Deceased was on a visit to a relative of the above Parish. He had made a hearty breakfast in bed, when between 11 and 12 o'clock the same morning his niece went upstairs, as the sun was out, that he might take a walk. She found him sitting in a chair; he had commenced dressing himself. He tried to speak but

could not do so. Upon being put into his bed, he expired in a few minutes afterwards. Verdict – visitation of God. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 02-12-1858.*

1859

Before Mr. Whitmarsh At Stratton St. Margaret, on the body of Edward Yeates, 15 months old. Betsy Sellwood, of Hannington, stated that about half past 2 o'clock in the afternoon, as she was passing by the cottage of John Yeates, at Stratton, she saw some children crying, was told by one of them that deceased had fallen into the brook which runs at the bottom of the garden. On looking into the water, she saw deceased floating, and on taking him out he was dead. The parents were from home at work. Verdict - Accidentally drowned. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 21 April 1859*

1860

Before Mr. W. B. Whitmarsh. At Stratton St. Margaret on the body of Henry Fisher, blacksmith, 37 years of age. Deceased went to bed in his usual health at 11 o'clock in the evening. Soon afterwards he became unwell, and was a corpse in about 10 minutes. Verdict - Visitation of God. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette, 7 June 1860 & Swindon Advertiser & North Wilts Chronicle, 11 June 1860*

1861

At Stratton on the body of Eleanor BIZLEY, 8 months old. According to mother's statement, she brought her infant downstairs in the morning, in its usual health, when she dressed her, and sat her up in the cradle. In an hour she heard a sound like phlegm in her throat. She took the child in her arms, who became dark in the face, and died almost immediately afterwards from suffocation, produced by spasm of the glottis. Verdict – Visitation of God. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 17-01-1860.*

At Stratton on the body of Ann KARRAN, 34 years of age. Deceased had left her service in a clergyman's family at Dorchester, through impaired health, and whilst returning home to the Isle of Man, she made a visit to a fellow servant who had lately married at the above place. Mrs. BIZLEY stated that deceased had got up on the day of her decease, when she went upstairs to ask what she would take for her dinner and found her dead in bed. Verdict – Disease of the Heart. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 14-03-1861.*

1863

An Inquest was held at Stratton on the illegitimate male child of Margaret Fry. The baby had died during birth, Accidental. *Wiltshire Independent 06-08-1863.*

1864

At Kingsdown, on the body of James FOWLER, carter, 52 years of age. Deceased came home in the evening from his employment, took his supper, and retired to rest without complaining. As he did not arise the next morning so early as usual, his sister-in-law, at whose house he lodged, went to his door at six o'clock and called him, but having no answer she went into the room and found him dead in bed. It is appearing, that the cause of death was from disease of the heart, a verdict was returned accordingly. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 18-02-1864.*

1865

At Kingsdown, on the body of Vivian POCOCK, son of Mr. POCOCK, farmer of the same parish. It appeared in evidence that as deceased was passing in the street he was kicked by a colt, and died the following day from the injury received. Verdict – accidental death. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 27-07-1865.*

1866

At Stratton, on the body of Thomas TOOMBS, two years and three months old. The mother of the deceased stated that having been informed by another child that deceased was in the pond in her garden, she went to the spot and saw his tin cup at the edge, but could see nothing of him. Assistance was at hand, when deceased found deceased at the bottom, and took him out with a rake. He was nearly dead, but under

medical treatment he seemed quite revived. Next morning, however, fits came on and he died soon afterwards. It appeared from Mr. Dawson, surgeon, that the cause of death was from congestion of the brain and general want of nervous power, brought on from falling into the water. Verdict, in accordance with the medical testimony. *Devizes & Wiltshire Gazette 19-07-1866.*

1868

On Henry GINGELL, 2, of Stratton, suppressed measles from cold, returned. *Swindon Advertiser 13-01-1868.*

1869

SHOCKING ACCIDENT – The Danger of walking on the railway received another exemplification on Thursday, when Mr. Whitmarsh, coroner for North Wilts, held an inquiry respecting the death of Fanny HATHERILL, a young woman residing at Stratton St. Margaret, near Swindon. The inhabitants of the village in question are mainly composed of operatives in Swindon factory, who, in spite of repeated warnings and prosecutions, persist in going to and returning from the factory by walking on the main line of the Great Western Railway. On Wednesday evening the deceased woman was returning from Swindon when she was overtaken by the 4.10 express. The whistle was sounded, and the deceased became confused, and before she had time to run to the other side of the line she was struck by the buffer of the engine and the base of her skull fractured. She was taken up in a dying state, and the train backed into the Swindon station, where she died shortly after her arrival. The jury returned a verdict of 'Accidental Death'. *Western Gazette 31-12-1869*

Mr Whitmarsh held an inquest in this Parish, respecting the death of Jeremiah LOVEDAY, sawyer, 54 years of age. From the evidence it appeared that the deceased was returning home from work on the donkey cart, when Richard Woolford saw him passing by his cottage, at first walking, but afterwards he got up into the cart. As he was stooping to strike the donkey, and then leaning back, the reins broke, causing him to fall out onto the road. Woolford went to his assistance and washed his face, and afterwards Henry Barrett took him home in his cart. Mr Maclean, assistant to Mr Gay, attended early the next morning, and found him severely injured in the spine, which led to his death in three days after the accident. Verdict accordingly. *Swindon Advertiser 1869.*

1871

At Stratton, on the body of Frederick, son of Thomas Walter SMITH, who was found drowned in the Wilts & Berks canal. Verdict – Accidental death. *The Western Daily Press 08-07-1871.*

1881

Mr. Baker held inquest into death of Charlotte ELBROW, aged 64, wife of George ELBROW, retired baker. Deceased appeared well on Saturday when she left for Cricklade to collect money from Post Office. She had reached Penhill when she fell down dead. Dr. Fernie said that heart disease was probable cause of death, verdict accordingly. *The Wiltshire Times 19-02-1881.*

1888

On Friday. Mr. W. E. N. Browne, County Coroner, held an inquest at the 'Jacob's Ladder', on Edwin PAGE, 62, a mason of the village. He had left home at nine a.m., and did not return, his wife went to search and found him in pond. It appears he had attempted to cut his throat and then jumped in the pond. Verdict, suicide while temporarily insane.

North Wilts Herald 22-06-1888.

1894

On Wednesday. Mr. W. E. N. Browne, County Coroner, held an inquest on James CARTER, market Gardener, at Highworth Road, Lower Stratton. Deceased, who was 49 years of age, had done no work for twelve months, and at times suffered from mental depression. His wife said he was very delicate and constantly sick after eating food. Dr. Evans said he suffered from gastric catarrh. He had not attended him for the last six months. He attributed his death to syncope. The jury, of whom Mr. CLACK was foreman, returned a verdict to that effect. *Swindon Advertiser 12-05-1894.*

1929

Inquest on Friday on Norman Hubert Townsend of 89 Kingsdown Road, Upper Stratton, the young Corporation omnibus conductor, died from injuries after being run over by a bus. He had been riding his bike when he skidded on tram lines and fell under the bus. Verdict, accidental death.

North Wilts Herald 09-08-1929.

1938

Inquest on Thomas Alfred LOOKER, 2 years 9-month-old child of Mr. & Mrs. N A LOOKER of 194 Ermin Street. Mr. Harold Dale, Wiltshire Coroner, gave cause of death as asphyxiation cause by tiny splinter of wood, probably from a pencil.

North Wilts Herald 21-01-1938.