



CORONERS INQUESTS



The body of a Seend woman, named Miss Esther Louisa Bigwood, was found dead and fearfully mutilated on the railway line, just below Devizes, on Wednesday evening. The deceased, who was elderly (63) and lived at Sell's Green with her mother, was seen on the towing path of the Kennet and Avon Canal at from 10 to 15 minutes past six, after which she appeared to have got on to the railway line which runs parallel with the Canal at a distance of a few hundred yards. She was run over by the motor rail car leaving Devizes for Trowbridge at 6.36 near the Pile Bridge, not far from Wragg's Wharf.

When the driver arrived at Bromham Halt he reported the matter to the official on duty there, who passed on the information to Seend, after which the local station master (Mr F Arnold) went to the spot. The police were communicated with, and Inspector Zebedee and Sergt Drew went down from Devizes and PC Matthews of Seend, also went to the spot.

The woman could not be identified at the time, but was later, after which the body was removed to her home at Sell's Green. Deceased had not been well of late; it is said she had been suffering from depression.

Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette Saturday 4 August 1928

Inquest

A graphic story of a woman's death on the railway line was related to the Devizes Coroner by an engine driver at the inquest on Miss Esther Louisa Bigwood (63) of Sells Green, Seend.

The driver, Mr A G Woodley of 35 Malmesbury Road, Chippenham, said he was driving his motor train down the Devizes bank when he saw a woman by the canal bridge. She walked up the railway bank as if to cross the line, but upon reaching the first rail stopped. She put her hands to her head, laid her head on the other rail. He immediately blew his whistle, sounded his gong and applied the brakes, and brought the train to a standstill. He went back and found the body with the head decapitated. There was plenty of time for the woman to have crossed the line had she wished.

Mrs Sarah Ann Trueman, mother, said her daughter had been in indifferent health lately and had been depressed. Her daughter went out for a walk between six and seven pm on Wednesday.

The Coroner returned a verdict that Miss Bigwood "permitted herself to be run over whilst insane."

Western Daily Press Monday 6 August 1928.