



Awfully Sudden Death



On Thursday last, an awful case of sudden death occurred at the French Horn Public-house. A man named Edward Douty, of Dinton, was drinking there in company with others, some of whom joined him in a song. Before it terminated, however, he appeared to all asleep, but in his companions attempting to rouse him, it was discovered that he was dead! It is stated that only a few minutes previously he was indulging in the most fearful of oaths, for which he was severely reproved. He was about 26 years old, and unmarried.

(Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette, Thursday 6th March, 1856)

To the Editor of the Salisbury and Winchester Journal.

Sir – There are two or three errors in your last week’s account of the most awful death that took place at the Penruddocke Arms (French Horn). The unhappy man Edwin (not Edward) Douty was 39 years of age (not 26), and in the coroner’s certificate to me it was stated that “he died from the effects of carbonic acid gas.” He had been cleaning out a well in the morning, but appeared, I am told, to be not at all affected by it, and afterwards partook of a hearty meal. He then went to Baverstock to purchase some plants, but not being able to obtain them at the time, he betook himself to the Penruddocke Arms (French Horn), which he never left alive. This is not the first terrible warning of the kind that has happened there, and appealed to those among us who indulge in strong drink and sit up late till they are inflamed by it. I pray god THIS may be received as a warning; but as little good came from the former sad occasion I feel but small hope. Men will sit on the same seat, and perhaps his familiar boon companions, with as little concern as of a dog or cat had died there. The ribald song will go on as if no Saviour had shed His blood for them and as if there were no judgment seat before which they shall one day stand to give an account of their conduct there.

I am, Sir, in much sorrow,

Your obedient humble servant,

J. C. STAFFORD, Vicar

Dinton, March 12, 1856.

(Salisbury and Winchester Journal - 15 March, 1856)