



SOUTH WILTSHIRE
CORONER'S INQUESTS
(Dinton extracts)



Luke TURNER 8th December, 1888

48 Year old Man Killed by Passing Train

Mr R. A. Wilson held an inquest on Monday at the Wyndham Arms Hotel, Dinton, relating to the death of Luke Turner, aged 48, a platelayer, of Dinton, who was killed by a passing train on Saturday night.

Edward Bracher, a carter at Teffont Mill, said that on Saturday night, at about 8.30 p.m., he was going from Teffont Mill along the line to Dinton Station. About 200 yards from the station he saw something and touched it with a stick. He thought it was a bundle, but on lighting a lantern saw it was a body. It was quite dark. The body was lying between the metals. Edward Bracher then went into Dinton Station and gave information to the police.

PS Brinsden, stationed at Dinton, said that on Saturday night about 9 p.m. he went to the spot where the body was found. It was on the down line about 200 yards from the station. He found the deceased between the metals on the down line. He at once recognised the body as that of Luke Turner. The deceased lived at the level crossing at Teffont Mill. He was lying on his right side with his face turned to the ground. His left leg was drawn up, and a portion of his right leg was under him. He was very much cut about. Part of his head was off and his bowels were out. He found his watch, which was damaged. It had stopped at 7.20 p.m. He had seen the deceased on the down platform at Dinton station, at 7 p.m. that same evening. He was with his father and mother. The Witness, PS Brinsden had asked Luke Turner, the deceased, how his daughter was. While they were talking he staggered back, and caught himself against the veranda on the platform. PS Brinsden thought he had almost fainted. He recovered himself. PS Brinsden then asked what was the matter, and his father and mother said "A little drop of beer." After the down train was gone PS Brinsden saw Luke Turner, the deceased, cross the line and go in the direction of his home.

A Juryman : Someone ought to have gone with him.

PS Brinsden (continuing) said the deceased passed Bishop and Cann, two porters, as he went down the platform. The porters were stood talking to each other. PS Brinsden saw Luke Turner, the deceased, go & stand under the lamp on the platform but the witness, PS Brinsden, said to the porters, "Do you think it safe, Charlie? Had you better see him down?" Charlie Bishop replied, "He is all right, sergeant; there is not much the matter with him." PS Brinsden saw him go to the end of the platform and get hold of the post. He seemed to have fallen, and must have caught hold of the post to save himself. PS Brinsden then saw him go round by the goods shed in the direction of his home. He appeared to walk fairly well then.

A Juror : It was not Mr Brinsden's place, I suppose, to see him home.

The Coroner : We will come to that afterwards.

Charles Bishop, signalman on the London and South Western Railway, stationed at Dinton, said he had known Turner for four years. Mr Bishop saw the deceased on the down platform on Saturday night, when the deceased saw his father and mother off by the train. He never spoke to him after four o'clock, when he was all right. Mr Bishop had bought two gallons of potatoes off the deceased but had no further conversation with him after four. After seeing deceased on the down platform he saw him under the lamp where the policeman

mentioned. Witness was not taking any notice of deceased as he (witness) was conversing with his mate about a hamper.

The Coroner : Did the sergeant call your attention to deceased?

Mr Bishop said that during the time he and his mate were speaking he heard the sergeant say, "If it had not been for the corner of the verandah on the opposite side he must have fallen over before the train came in." He made no reply, because he was not taking any notice of the deceased. Had he noticed anything the matter with deceased he should have seen him home.

By the Coroner : Between the time the deceased left the station and the time the deceased was found the 7.15pm down train from Salisbury passed. This train does not stop at Dinton. The train runs through Dinton at 7.29.

Mr Blount, the station master, to Mr Bishop : Did you hear the sergeant remark you had better go down with him? I did not hear anything of the kind.

Charles Cann, parcel porter, at Dinton, said he saw the deceased on Saturday night on the up platform just before the down train came but did not notice anything unusual about him. Mr Cann saw him again on the down platform, wishing his father and mother goodnight. The deceased wished his father and mother good-bye two or three times. He had hold of the carriage and his mother said "Stand back." The deceased, however, still held on to the train when she started, and he, Mr Cann, the witness, put out his hand and said, "Stand back, Luke." Witness could not say whether he had had any beer, but he appeared capable of taking care of himself. He seemed somewhat excited. He did not hear his father and mother say he had had any beer. After the down train had gone Mr Cann went across to the up platform. The deceased crossed to the up platform with the passengers who had come down by the train and then went into the office with some letters, and when he came out, Sergeant Brinsden and Bishop were talking together on the platform. Mr Cann heard the sergeant make the observation stated by Bishop but did not hear the sergeant ask Bishop whether it was safe. Mr Cann saw the deceased under the lamp, and he then saw nothing more of him.

Henry Abbott, Inspector of the Engineer's Department on the London and South Western Railway, living at Salisbury, said the deceased had been in the employ of the Company about eleven years. Luke Turner, the deceased had lived in the cottage at the level crossing for nearly five years and was a very quiet steady man. He had not a steadier man under him.

Bishop (recalled) said the deceased's father and mother had been to Dinton to see the deceased's daughter.

The Coroner said that it was quite clear that it was an accident. The only question was whether there was any neglect on the part of the signalman and the porter. If the deceased was in the state the sergeant described it was rather a risky thing for him to walk down the line by himself. The deceased might have been a little excited, but they might have thought he would get home all right.

Walter Blount, station-master at Dinton, said he saw the deceased on the platform wishing his father and mother good night and he saw Cann put out his hand to the deceased. Mr Blount saw the deceased falter as he went up over the step on the up platform. It was a high step and as this was a daily occurrence with passengers he took no notice of it. There appeared to be very little if anything the matter with him.

Abbott (recalled) said the deceased must have been walking in the four foot way. On either side of the line there was 6ft, which was room for a man to walk or even ride a horse.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

It appears that deceased's father is called Samuel Turner, and that he lives at West Tisbury.

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