



CORONERS INQUESTS



Great Bedwyn

Inquest of James Long 1865

Taken before Mr Whitmarsh, on Monday last at Great Bedwyn on the body of James Long, 17 years of age. William Dowling, a boatman of Seend, stated that deceased was in his service. Between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the previous Saturday, they were just entering Great Bedwyn, on the Kennet and Avon Canal, with two boats loaded with coal, on their way to Hungerford. Deceased went ahead to fill the locks.

On approaching the Church lock at Great Bedwyn witness saw there was something the matter as the lock was not ready. It was not full, and one paddle was only up. On making search he brought up the body of deceased outside the head of the lock, and it appeared that whilst in the act of drawing up the second paddle he overbalanced himself and fell into the canal. The windlass was also there. The body might have been in the water twenty minutes before he came to the spot.

George Edwards, a gatekeeper on the railway deposed that a short time before the unfortunate affair, deceased passed along the towing path of the canal alone, whistling and singing, and he had a windlass on his shoulder. He saw no more of him until what had taken place.

Verdict – Accidentally Drowned.

Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette Thursday 23 November 1865