



Coroner's Inquest Report

Inquest of William Joachim

Suicide

An inquest has been held at Hankerton, near Malmesbury, before Mr. Baker, on the body of William Joachim, aged 71. The deceased was a small butcher and a carrier to Cirencester. From the evidence of William Chivers it appeared that the deceased had been rather low lately, owing to pecuniary circumstances. He told witness on the previous Tuesday that he could see visions of a knife brandishing in the air before his eyes, and that he was tempted to cut his throat. Witness begged him not to entertain such notions, as no one would harm him. It appeared from his wife's evidence that the deceased partook of breakfast early in the morning, and then went to the stable to milk the cow. Mrs. Joachim shortly after found him sitting on some straw, and she thought the horse had kicked him, but the deceased told her he had cut his throat. The poor woman was horrified and ran for Mary Garland, a neighbour, and on their return they found him alive. The wife ran outside and fainted away, while Mrs. Garland ran for Mr. Joseph Painter, another neighbour, who at once came, and found that the deceased had cut his throat a second time and was quite dead, his head being nearly severed from his body. Dr. Kiuneir, a surgeon residing at Malmesbury, proved being sent for about 8 a.m. He found the body of the deceased lying in the stable. His throat was cut from ear to ear, dividing the tissues, Etc, down to the vertebral column. A knife which the deceased used in his business as butcher was found lying by his side covered in blood and he was of opinion the throat had been cut the second time, as Mrs Chivers said her husband spoke to her when she first saw him. The connection with the vocal cords was completely severed. From the position of the body he was of opinion that the deceased committed suicide, but not having attended him lately he could not speak as to his state of mind at the time. The coroner, in reviewing the evidence, thought it was to be regretted that after deceased had been heard to make use of threats to destroy his life, that medical advice had not been called in and the deceased put under proper restraint, which most probably would have saved his life. The jury returned a verdict that the deceased committed suicide by cutting his throat with a butcher's knife while in a state of temporary insanity.

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