



Crime Reports

Milford

Murder near Salisbury

An extraordinary inquiry was held on Monday and Tuesday at Milford near Salisbury. It appears that on the previous Wednesday the body of a woman in an advanced state of decomposition was found in the river that runs through the hamlet of Milford, about 30 yards below a bridge over which passes the road to Laverstock.

The body was speedily identified by the keeper of a small Inn in Salisbury, as that of a woman who had been with a man and three children staying for some time at his house. The man getting his living by exhibiting in the city and neighbouring villages a "learned pig."

The inquest commenced on Thursday and then adjourned till Monday. In the interim the man was apprehended at a village near Blandford and was present during the remainder of the inquiry. He gave his name as George Woolford age 67.

It appeared from the evidence that on Palm Sunday the woman left the Newman's house abruptly, the man then being absent. An hour after this two or three witnesses met a man and a woman. The latter being a few yards in advance going at a quick pace down the road towards Laverstock Bridge.

One of them stated that as she passed, she heard the man say "I'll be **** if I don't." They believed Woolford to be that man. Another witness deposed that he, twenty minutes afterwards saw Woolford standing on the bridge alone looking into the water. Woolford it appeared returned to the Inn at 10 o'clock.

Several times afterwards he said he believed the old woman had drowned or hung herself. He and his family remained in the City for some days afterwards, and it appeared he made several inquiries about his wife, stating always that he believed she had committed suicide.

The medical evidence went to prove distinctly that there were no external marks of violence on the body and death was occasioned by drowning.

The prisoner stated he was not near the spot on the night in question and that his wife was out of her mind and had attempted suicide several times. This assertion his daughter denied.

The inquiry terminated at midnight on Tuesday, in a verdict of willful murder against Woolford, who was thereupon committed to the county gaol for trial.

Berkshire Chronicle, Saturday, 19 April 1845