



Found Hanging from a Tree at Netherhampton

A Determined Suicide

The body of the man David Dilkes, who pleaded guilty at the Salisbury City Quarter Sessions on June 25th to a charge of attempting to commit suicide by stabbing himself on May 22nd, was found yesterday (Friday) morning; hanging by his handkerchief, from a tree in the Hare Warren, near the road leading from Netherhampton to the Race Plain, life being quite extinct.

It will be remembered that Dilkes was liberated after his trial on his own recognisance. In the course of the evidence then taken it appeared that he had been living in Salisbury for three or four months before his first attempt on his life and during part of that time had been drinking heavily. He had endeavoured to rejoin the army, in which he was formerly a Private in The Royal Horse Artillery, but had been rejected owing to his discharge being marked "addicted to drink". Since his release Dilkes had had no fixed home.

He had been working again for the L and S W Railway Company, by whom he had been previously employed. It did not appear that he had again given way to drink.

The inquest was held at The Victoria and Albert Inn, Netherhampton, yesterday evening before Mr. R. A. Wilson, Coroner for the district and a jury of which Mr. F. T. Tutt was the foreman.

The first witness called was Mr. William Pember of Bemerton, a foreman in the employ of L and S W Railway Company, who stated that the deceased worked under him and he had last seen him at 5.30 p.m. of the previous evening. He identified him as the same man who was tried at the Salisbury City Quarter Sessions for attempting to commit suicide on May 22. He had been working under witness since he was discharged and had been earning 4s. 3d. per day. The deceased had been very steady since he had worked for the Railway Company, drinking nothing but ginger beer. On the previous evening he seemed very quiet, but this was his usual manner. There was no unpleasantness between Dilkes and his fellow workmen.

Edwin Dimmer, carter, of Netherhampton deposed that soon after 7 o'clock that morning he was passing along the Race Plain Road with his wagon, when he noticed a man hanging in the wood about 30 yards from the road. He went to him and cut the handkerchief by which he was suspended from a bough of one of the trees. He then found that the man was dead. The feet of the body touched the ground. He did not know who the man was. Witness at once sent for the police.

P.C Keats said he saw the body laying at the foot of a tree in Hare Warren about half past eight. Part of a handkerchief was around the neck, but it was quite loose. A piece of handkerchief was also tied to one of the boughs of a tree. The body was cold. He searched it and found a variety of articles, including army papers, a copy of Dilkes recognisance, a pocket book and pawn tickets, with 3s. 11d. farthing in money and a metal watch. There was no writing in the pocket book. This concluded the evidence.

The coroner pointed out that the only question for the jury to inquire into was whether the deceased was of sound or unsound mind, when he took his life. They knew that the man at one time had been a heavy drinker, but apart from the despondency which sometimes resulted from such a habit, there appeared to be no reason for his having committed suicide.

After a short consultation the jury returned a verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily insane"

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