



Road Fatality

After being employed as a road patrol by the Automobile Association for only a week, Mr. Herbert George Ball, aged 24 of Clevedon, Somerset, received fatal injuries in an accident on Knoyle Down on Saturday. He lodged at Knoyle Down Cottage. He was coming out of the Pertwood-Chicklade road on a pedal cycle to go to Hindon, and in getting on to the main London to Exeter road collided with a car being driven by Mr. D. A. Brooks, a wireless engineer of Exeter. Ball was thrown from his machine on to the bonnet of the car, and received a fracture of the base of the skull. He died the same evening at Salisbury Infirmary.

The Salisbury City Coroner (Mr. A. M. Wilson) held an inquest at the Infirmary on Monday). Mr. A. B. Lemon represented Mr. Brooks, and the AA were represented by Mr. Ernest White of London.

Employed A Week

Collision At A Blind Corner

Evidence of identification was given by George Robert Ball, an unemployed beach attendant of Hill Road, Clevedon, father of the deceased man. His son, he said, had only been employed by the AA for one week. Witness was informed on Saturday that his son had met with an accident, and he came to Salisbury on Sunday. On arrival he was informed his son was dead.

PC Grant (East Knoyle) said the accident happened at the junction of the London-Exeter road with the Pertwood-Chicklade road. Witness went to the scene and found an Austin Seven car had been proceeding on the London-Exeter road towards London, and upon reaching the junction with the Pertwood-Chicklade road had collided with a pedal cyclist, who had come out of the side road on to the main road. He found Ball on the grass verge on the offside of the road. Dr. Beck, of Hindon, was there.

A High Wall

The Austin Seven was on the side of the road near where the man lay, with the off wheels on the grass verge facing towards London. On the Pertwood road, which was a minor road, there was a road sign, "Major road ahead". He ascertained that Ball was riding a pedal cycle to go Hindon to obtain correspondence which had been sent to an address there. In coming out of the Pertwood road he would have to turn right. His view of oncoming traffic on the main road would be obscured by a high wall. From skid marks on the main road it appeared that the driver of the car had applied his brakes 15 feet from the corner. The nearside wheels were then three feet six inches from his nearside. The brake marks continued for 27 feet from the point of impact, which was five feet six inches from the nearside. The marks then continued to the offside of the road for a

further 33 feet. The Pedal cycle was completely wrecked. The front of the car was damaged. He had since ascertained that the accident happened during Ball's dinner time, and that he was off duty.

Car Driver's Evidence

Clement Arthur Brooks, wireless engineer, living at 35 Cross Park, Heavitree, Exeter, the driver of the car, next gave evidence. With him, he said, were his wife and small son going to London. He came down the hill at 36mph. The road was perfectly clear and straight. He could not see any turning at all; it was perfectly blind. Suddenly a pedal cyclist emerged from his nearside ten or twelve feet farther on. He suddenly saw witness, and wobbled across the road towards the offside going in front of the car. Witness thought he lost his head. Witness swerved to the right to try to avoid him, but owing to the wobble of the cycle the car struck it. Ball appeared to go up in the air, strike the bonnet of the car, and fall on the grass verge. He saw no sign indicating a minor road ahead.

Fractured Skull

Dr. H. C. Ashley Harris, house surgeon at Salisbury Infirmary said Ball was admitted at 2.40pm on Saturday. He was unconscious, and died at 7.5 the same evening from the effects of a fracture of the base of the skull.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental Death".

Mr. Lemon expressed sympathy with the parents of Mr. Ball, and said that Mr. Brooks did everything he could to avoid the accident.

The Coroner said he agreed.

Mr. White offered sympathy with the relatives on behalf of the AA.

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