



## CORONERS INQUESTS



### **Sarah Bessie Cave**

A woman named Sarah Bessie Cave, aged 47, wife of Frederick Frank Cave, a labourer of West Street, Wilton, was found drowned in the river near the Old Mill, Ditchampton, early on Tuesday morning. It appears that Mrs. Cave rose at about 3.30 am on Tuesday morning, and told her husband she was going to be doing some washing, which she had left undone the previous day. She promised to call him at 5.30 a.m., but on getting up and going downstairs at that time, he found that his wife was missing and no washing had been done. In consequence of a remark that the deceased had made the previous day about her either being found in the asylum or on the river, he went towards the latter place, and saw his wife's hat on the bank. He immediately summoned the police, and as soon as day broke, the river was drained, and deceased's body was found in the bed of the river.

The inquest was held in the Town Hall on Tuesday evening, by Mr. R. A. Wilson, County Coroner for the district. Frederick Frank Cave, the deceased's husband said that on the previous day when he saw his wife she seemed in her usual health, but did no washing, as she was accustomed to do. Witness returned home to tea at about 3.30 pm and after tea he went out again returning home at about 6.00pm. At that time the deceased said she was going to visit Miss Naish, he believed for the purpose of signing the Pledge, as she was in the habit of taking more than was good for her. When she returned she seemed very much upset, and said she would not have gone for the world. She added that her heart was breaking, and by the end of the week she would either be in the asylum or in the flower hole near the hatches. Witness went out about 8.00 p.m. and on returning just after 9.00 p.m., he found that his wife was in bed. He did not then hear any more of the deceased, as she slept in an adjoining room with her little daughter. He heard her getting up between 3.30 a.m. and 4.00 a.m. the next morning. Witness told her she was too early, but she said she was going down to do her washing. She then asked him what time he would like to be called, and he said 5.30 a.m. However when he went downstairs at that time, he found the room just as he had left overnight. After feeding his horses, he went toward the river and found the deceased's hat lying on some boards by the side of the water. He then went and informed the police of the matter.

The deceased had for the last 20 years continually threatened to do away with herself, whether she was sober or not, and she had said the same thing so frequently that he took no notice of it. The deceased did not say in the morning that she was going to drown herself.

Inspector Grant of the Wilts constabulary, stationed at Wilton, stated that in consequence of what the witness told him he proceeded, at about 6.00 a.m., that morning to the Old Mill. It was very dark at that time, and at daybreak he had the hatches closed. When the water went down he found the deceased's body lying flat on the bottom of the stream with her hands doubled behind her. She was lying in about 3 feet of water. He at once got the body out, and tried to restore animation by artificial respiration, but it was of no avail. The deceased was fully dressed, with the exception of her hat, and there were no marks of violence on her body. He had known the deceased for many years, but had never seen her the worse for drink.

Dr. R. Richmond, Surgeon, of Wilton said he examined the body of the deceased just after 8.00 a.m. that morning. Deceased's body was then lying on the bank of the river, quite dead. There were no marks of violence, and the appearance was that of a person who had been drowned.

The husband of the deceased informed the coroner of the fact that the deceased's father, who lived in Castle Street, Salisbury, hanged himself some years ago.

The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide whilst of unsound mind"

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