

Jane Buckler

Isle of Wight County Press – 7 March 1896

A WOMAN'S SHOCKING SUICIDE AT NEWPORT.

INQUEST, YESTERDAY.

Yesterday (Friday) morning Fredk. Blake, Esq., held an inquest at The Bedford, Newport, on the body of Mrs. Jane Buckler, 54, who had been recently living with her sister, at 16, Upper Field-place, and who on the previous day committed suicide under shocking circumstances detailed below: Mrs. Jane Burt, of 14, Upper Field-place, said she had known the deceased for years. Deceased's husband had been in the asylum for about 25 years. Deceased had lately been in the service of Mrs. Brett, of Ryde, as cook, and left her situation about a month ago because she wanted rest, as she seemed to be "run down." Witness did not see deceased after she came to live at Field-place, until the previous Monday, when deceased was hanging some clothes on the line of her sister's house. They only exchanged nods on that occasion. She did not ask how deceased was as she understood from deceased's sister that she did not like such inquires to be made respecting her. About 9.30 on the previous morning she was sent for and she went and saw deceased in the closet of her sister's house. She saw blood on deceased's clothes. Deceased was alive then. They took her indoors and sent for the doctor. Deceased expired in about 20 minutes. She never spoke. Deceased was dressed at the time, but had unfastened the front of her dress. Margaret Davison, a trained nurse, said she was sent for early in the morning to go to see deceased, and on going she found her walking about the house. She looked very strange, and in reply to a question as to whether she would go out for a walk she said she could not go out. She would sit down for a moment and then pace up and down saying "They will come for me. They will have me. I shall be gone to-morrow." An old woman deceased was formerly acquainted with had died, and deceased was under the delusion that she was the cause. Then deceased went out saying "I am going to the w.c." Witness asked deceased's sister if it was safe for her to go alone, and she replied that it was quite safe, and added that witness could watch from the kitchen window, which she did. In about three or four minutes witness told deceased's sister (Miss Noyce) that she had better go and see if deceased was all right. Miss Noyce did so and waved her hand to witness. Witness went to the closet and found deceased in a dead faint. With assistance they got her indoors. She saw that deceased had stabbed herself three or four inches below the left breast – she had stabbed herself six times. Deceased was never conscious after. She died in about 15 or 20 minutes. She could see as soon as she arrived that deceased was not responsible for her actions. Dr. Castle came immediately he was sent for and was with deceased when she died. – Dr. Hatton Castle said he had never attended deceased previous to the Thursday morning, when he was sent for. He found deceased lying on the back room floor, with a nurse kneeling beside her. She was unconscious. Witness saw a small wound about an inch long, and comparatively superficial, on the front of her throat, and on the left side of her chest, from three to four inches below and to the inner side of the left breast, were five or six punctured wounds. Her chemise was saturated with blood. Several of the wounds passed to a depth of from one to two inches in a slanting direction from right to left. She was pulseless and in spite of remedies never rallied. She did not appear to have lost a great deal of blood. She died about 15 or 20 minutes after his arrival. The penknife produced – a small tortoiseshell-handled knife with about a 1½in. blade – was afterwards found in the closet pan. Marks of blood were found on it, though it had been in the water. It was just such an instrument as would have inflicted the wounds described. Deceased must have used great force. As far as he could judge the cause of death was due to syncope, from shock and loss of blood. Supposing the knife pierced the heart or the pericardium, there would be a lot of blood in the chest. He believed that deceased had been under Dr. Groves for mental

aberration and that she had been admittedly out of her mind for some time. – The Coroner, in reviewing the evidence, said he did not know whether the jury wished to hear further evidence as to the state of deceased's mind for the last month or so. According to the police information, deceased had been much worse since reading of the death of her late mistress's caretaker through falling downstairs. – The jury agreed that they were satisfied on that point, though an opinion was expressed that it would have been better if either Dr. Groves or deceased's son had been summoned to give evidence. It was stated that Miss Noyce was too unwell to attend. – The jury returned a verdict to the effect that deceased committed suicide whilst insane.

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