

William Wetherick

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SAD CASE OF DROWNING AT NEWPORT.

Shortly after noon on Wednesday last the body of Mr. William Wetherick, living in Castle-road, Newport, was found in the mill-pond at St. Cross. It was promptly recovered, and means were taken to restore animation, but unhappily without success. The deceased, who was 81 years old, was well known in most parts of the Isle of Wight. For very many years, in pre-railway times, he drove his own coach between Newport and Ryde. He was an accomplished whip, and "Wetherick's coach" was in those days an Island institution. The deceased was very greatly respected, and the intelligence of his death will occasion a feeling of sincere regret wherever he was known in life. An inquest on the body was held on Thursday afternoon, at the Falcon Inn, Castle-road, by E. F. Blake, Esq., coroner. Mr. N.H.T. Mursell was foreman of the jury. The first witness was Tom Curley, labourer, of Chain-lane, who stated that about quarter-past one on Wednesday he was passing the hatches at St. Cross mill, when he saw a hat and coat in the water, and on looking more intently he saw a man's face under the hat. He also found a stick on the wall. The body of the man was in a stooping position in about five feet of water, and he did not think it touched the bottom. It tried to move when he first saw it. Witness went for assistance and returned with Mr. Coleman and Mr. Way, who sent him to the mill to ask Mr. Cooper to bring something with which to pull the body out. Between them they got deceased out of the water, and they said he was dead. In reply to the Coroner, witness said they attempted to restore animation and sent for two doctors, and Dr. Waterworth and another came. More than five minutes elapsed between the time when he first saw the body and when it was got out of the water. - Frank Coleman, of West-street, in the employ of Messrs. Wood and Co., coal merchants, deposed to being called by the last witness, whose evidence he corroborated. After the body was taken out of the water witness thought the man was dead, but his eyes and lips moved. They did all they could to restore animation and sent for doctors. Dr. Barr was the first to arrive, and he had the body removed into the mill. The pathway was protected by a fence. The only way in which any one could get into the water would be by over-balancing or by an intentional act. He should say the fence was about 3ft. or 3ft. 6in. high. Only about five minutes previously witness had drawn a bucket of water from the place for his horses, and he was called by Curley before the animal had finished drinking it, so the body could not have been there long. - Hugh Cook, of Chain-lane, working at the Royal Brewery, said he had known deceased over 30 years. He last saw him alive just after one o'clock on Wednesday, outside the Brewery gates near St. Cross. Deceased was alone, and in reply to witness's salutation and inquiry as to his health he said he was "middling" and passed on. Witness thought he was walking rather quickly for a man of his years, but otherwise he noticed nothing peculiar about him. - Alfred George Harrison, solicitor's clerk, stated that he had lodged at deceased's house for the past two years. Saw him nearly every day, and last saw him alive about seven o'clock on Tuesday night. Witness asked him how he was, and he replied "About the same," or to that effect. He had been in failing health for some time, but he seemed a very contented sort of man, although he occasionally appeared somewhat depressed and unhappy. Witness knew of nothing occurring lately to worry him, beyond his failing health. Did not think he suffered much pain. Dr. Tuttiett attended him occasionally, and he was understood to say that deceased was only suffering from senile decay. - Dr. G.A. Barr deposed to being sent for and finding deceased lying on the pathway near the hatches. In his opinion he was dead, and he had no doubt death was caused by drowning. - The Coroner summed up the evidence, and the jury returned an open verdict.