

George Wiggins

Hampshire Telegraph - Saturday 6 August 1859

SUDDEN DEATH. - A coroner's inquest was held before F. Blake, Esq., and a very respectable jury, at the Bugle Inn, on Tuesday last, on the body of George Wiggins, Esq., of Brighton, aged 72, a gentleman in independent circumstances, and formerly a surgeon in the East India Company's service, who was found dead in his bedroom on the Sunday evening previous. It appeared, by the evidence of the waiters and chambermaid, that the deceased arrived at the inn on Saturday, apparently in good health, ordered dinner, and engaged a bed; that he rose on Sunday, and, after eating a hearty breakfast, went out as if for a walk, returning about twelve o'clock, when he retired to his bedroom and was thought no more of by anybody. At seven o'clock the chambermaid went to prepare deceased's bed for the night, when she discovered him sitting on the floor, fully dressed, with his head resting on the bed. Thinking he was asleep, she feared to disturb him, and went up again at eight o'clock, when he still retained the same position; and fancying she heard him breathe, she again left the room, requesting the waiter to go and wake him. The waiter, however, being too busy at the time, the visit was deferred until ten o'clock, when, being alarmed, she persuaded the boots to go up with her and rouse the gentleman. It was then found that he had been dead and cold for some hours. A bottle of some kind of stimulating medicine was found on the dressing table; and there was no doubt that the deceased had slipped off his chair whilst reading a newspaper and died immediately. E. P. Wilkins, Esq., surgeon, was sent for, but of course his services were not necessary. Mr. Wilkins having given his opinion that death was occasioned by disease of the heart, the jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased died by the "Visitation of God." We understand that the deceased, who was accustomed to travel about unattended, has left a considerable amount of property, but that he has no relatives in existence. A will has, however, been made, and the executor, a friend in London, arrived in time to identify the body and make arrangements for its interment, which took place the next morning at the Newport cemetery at Fairlee. We have also ascertained, since the inquest, that the deceased attended divine service at St. Thomas's Church in the morning, but (no doubt, finding himself unwell) left before the close of the sermon.

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