



SOUTH WILTSHIRE
CORONER'S INQUESTS
(Dinton extracts)



Fred BARNES 27th August, 1887

Horse cart overturns on 11 year old boy

On Wednesday an inquest was held at the Infirmary, before Mr George Smith, City Coroner, touching the death of Fred Barnes, of Dinton, a lad between 11 and 12 years of age, who met with an accident the previous day. Mr J Hicks was foreman of the jury.

Alfred Dyer, of Dinton, was the first witness. He said that he worked for Mr Thomas Jukes, a farmer and coal merchant. He was in charge of two horses and a wagon. Charlie Wright, who also worked for Mr Jukes, was in charge of a cart and one horse. They were both at Teffont on Tuesday. The deceased – Fred Barnes, who also lived at Dinton, was in the cart with Charlie Wright. They went into a harness maker's shop at Teffont together, some lads being outside in charge of the horses. On leaving the shop, the deceased got into the cart drawn by one horse. That was before the horse was turned to go home. The cart was empty. There were reins to the horse's head. Wright turned the horse to go home whilst the lad was in the cart. There was ample room for the cart to turn. The cart turned over and the boy's legs and body were under it. His head was under the front part of the cart. The witness, Alfred Dyer, said he took him out and the lad said, "Thank you, Alf." The Witness then put him against the wall and said, "Stop there a minute, Fred." Some woman folk came by and he was taken to a house, whence he was conveyed in a cart to his home, a distance of about a mile and a half. The accident happened at about 5.20 – 5.30 p.m. The road was level. The nearest medical man to Teffont was Mr Clay, who lived about two miles and a half away. The nearest medical man to Dinton was about the same distance. The nearest station was Tisbury.

By the Jury : The boy was not employed to go with the cart but only went for a ride.

Charles Wright said that he had occasion to go Chilmark for Mr Jukes, and the deceased went with him. On his return he went to the harness maker's for a lash for his whip and the boy went in with him. The last witness was also there. Mr Jukes' own sons (two) were in charge of the horses whilst witness and the others were inside. When the witness came out the boy got into the cart, and took hold of the reins and was turning the horses whilst witness was getting up behind. Witness found the cart going over and he jumped down. When he looked round the cart was right over. The horse went right over on its back. The harness was not broken. He had never known the horse have a fit and the animal was all right now. The boy was thrown over with the cart and the fore part of the cart came down on his head. Charles Wright, the Witness said he took him to Dinton and subsequently came with him to the Infirmary. Witness thought that the boy was at home about an hour before he started for the Infirmary. Witness went to look for the deceased's father but did not find him. A message was sent for a nurse who used to be at the Infirmary and she bandaged the boy's head.

William Barnes, labourer, of Dinton, said that he worked for Mr William King. The deceased was his son. He was in his 12th year. Mr Barnes was not at home when his boy was brought home after the accident, but arrived just before he was brought to the Infirmary. He did not know of it until he came

home and saw the boy in the van. Mr Barnes came to the Infirmary with his son. The boy was not accustomed to horses. He was not a venturesome boy.

The witness, Charles Wright, was recalled and said that there was not a horse tied on behind the cart as far as he knew.

Alfred Dyer was also re-called, and he was unable to say whether the spare horse was loose or not.

Raymond Johnson, acting house surgeon at the Infirmary, said that the deceased was brought to the establishment at seven minutes to nine. He examined him upstairs. There was a large wound on the scalp on the left side of the head slightly behind the ear. He could find no fracture of the skull. There was bruising round the right eye; also a broad graze across the right cheek. Witness could find no fracture of any bones. He could not swear whether the deceased was dead when brought to the door of the Infirmary, but he was so when witness examined him. Witness attributed death to exhaustion from loss of blood or from haemorrhage on the brain.

The Coroner observed that it struck him as very curious that the horse and cart should have turned over the way they did. It seemed unaccountable unless the horse crossed its legs and turned over in that way.

A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

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