



SOUTH WILTSHIRE
CORONER'S INQUESTS
(Dinton extracts)



John SCAMMELL 22nd November, 1918

5 year old's Unfortunate Meal

Mr R. A. Wilson (City Coroner) held an inquest (without a jury) at the Infirmary on Tuesday afternoon into the death of 5 year old John Scammell who died as a result of a rabbit bone lodging in his throat.

William George Scammell, of Dinton, said that his little boy, John Scammell & his daughter were having tea, which was composed of rabbit & vegetables when he got home from work at about 4.30pm on Monday, 1st November. He was in another room washing when the little boy shouted "Oh, Mammie, I have swallowed a bone". Mr Scammell & his wife tried to do what they could, but they could not get the bone out. The eldest son, Walter, then went on a bicycle for Dr Clay at Fovant, but the doctor said he couldn't do anything for the child & that they should take him to the Infirmary, which the mother did the same day.

Clifford William Patterson, house surgeon at the Infirmary, stated that he had seen the boy at about 6pm. He took the child to the x-ray room & he waited for the x-ray photograph. Shortly after he told Mrs Scammell she had better leave the boy in the ward for further examination, but owing to a misunderstanding the boy was taken away & was not brought back until the following Thursday – November 14th. The child was then in obvious distress & showed signs of bronchitis. The throat was examined by putting a finger down and the bone was felt to be fixed to the gullet. The child was given anaesthetic and the bone was removed by an operation. The child recovered and appeared to be comfortable. Later, pneumonia developed and the boy died on Monday at 9.30am.

In reply to the Coroner, the doctor said that the bone sticking in the throat prevented the boy from swallowing & he thought that some of the food may have got in the air passages & caused inflammation, which was followed by pneumonia.

A verdict was returned in accordance with the medical evidence.

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