



# *Coroner's Inquest Report*

## *Inquest on Daniel Hale*

### **SAD SUICIDE AT STRATTON**

### **A SHOCKING DEATH**

### **INQUEST AND VERDICT**

At the White Hart Inn, Stratton Cross Roads, on Monday last, Mr. W. E. N. Browne, County Coroner, and a jury, of whom Mr. Edward Hoddinott was foreman, held an inquest on the body of Daniel Hale, age 45, striker of Kingsdown, who was found in the Canal with his throat cut on Saturday evening last.

Evidence of identification was given by Susannah Benett, a sister of the deceased, who said that for the past eighteen months he had lived with her. He was a man of quiet disposition, and she had never heard him express a desire to destroy himself. He left the house on Saturday morning in a very excited state. He had had a letter on the 9th inst., and after reading it he crushed it up and wandered about the place. He did not seem quite the same man, and when she asked him what was the matter he said that a relation had sent him in a bill for £2 10s.; he did not owe it, and he would not pay it. Since then he would not sit at meals with them, and seemed altogether changed. On Saturday morning he got up to go out and said "Good bye; I'm off." She asked him to confide in her, and he said, "\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ drove me off my head, and I'm off." [sic:- gaps as printed]. He snatched his hand away from witness's, and went away. She never saw him alive again.

The Coroner: He has had some money left him recently; has he not?

Witness: Not that I know of.

Alfred Springford said he saw the deceased lying on the Canal path on Saturday afternoon about four o'clock. He thought the man was asleep, and passed on, but when witness came out of his house half an hour later he saw the deceased floundering in the water. He immediately ran to him and pulled him out, but he died three minutes after being taken from the water. His throat was cut, and a razor was lying on the bank beside him.

Dr. Muir, of Stratton, said he was called on Saturday evening and saw the body on the Canal side. His throat was cut, and death was due to a cut throat. His clothes indicated that he had been in the

water.

P.C. Knight produced a letter found on the deceased. It emanated from a local solicitor's office, and informed the recipient that a sum of £78 had been placed to his sister's and his credit in a Building Society.

The Coroner: But that cannot be the letter that depressed his so.

A Juror: Perhaps the sister could tell us more about it.

The sister was re-called, but stated that she could not tell where the letter she had referred to could be.

On the back of the letter which was produced by the constable there was scrawled in pencil.  
" \_\_\_\_\_ caus me done this." [sic: gap and text printed exactly].

Questioned as the £78, the sister stated that the money was left under the deceased's father's will, over which there had been some litigation.

A verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily insane" was returned by the jury.

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